

TO: Kirstyn Lindsay, Consultant Planner

FROM: Luke McKinlay, Landscape Architect

DATE: 11/06/2021

SUBJECT: **LUC-2020-405.** Smooth Hill Landfill. Landscape Comments

Hi Kirstyn,

The following is in response to your request for comment on the above application associated with the resource consent to establish a land fill at 700 Big Stone Road, Brighton within Designation D659 – *Proposed Smooth Hill Landfill – Proposed Landfilling and Associated Refuse Processing Operations and Activities*.

The following comments are restricted to addressing the potential effects of road upgrades associated with the proposed Smooth Hill Landfill and take into consideration the further information provided by the applicant on 31 May 2021.

The Proposal

Enabling works associated with the landfill will include upgrades to McLaren Gully Road from its intersection with State Highway 1 to the access into the site on Big Stone Road. The upgrade is proposed to accommodate a sealed, two-lane carriage width of 7m with swales either side.

Several changes have been made to the initial design, following a s92 request, which include a realignment of McLaren Gully Road. There are identified wetlands on both sides of McLaren Gully Road. Initially, a larger area of these wetlands was to be affected by the proposed road widening. Following these most recent revisions, the area of wetland affected by the widening will be reduced to approximately 16.5m².

The proposed widening will result in earthworks either side of the existing road. The VLA that supports the application indicates that cut batters generally reach a maximum of between 2- 4m at 1(v):0.3(h). However, due to constraints within the roadway around wetland areas, these batters will reach up to 7.4 – 7.6 m in two locations (chainage 2860 and 2440) at a grade of 1(v) in 0.2(h). The applicant is proposing that these slopes will be scarified and hydroseeded where possible or left to *weather and tie-in with the surrounding vegetation*. There will also be localised areas of fill extending up to 6m, but predominantly between 2 and 4m at (1v):2(h).

View location 4 of the VLA provides a visual simulation of the appearance of the proposed upgrade works at the intersection with SH1.

In addition to earthworks associated with road widening, some localised removal of existing gum trees within the road reserve will occur in the vicinity of 108 and 109 McLaren Gully Road.

Comments

These comments focus on the visual and landscape effects of the proposed upgrades of McLaren Gully Road (including its intersection with State Highway 1) and Big Stone Road.

It is agreed with the applicant that during construction, earthworks required as part of the proposed road widening and realignment will create some temporary adverse effects associated with disturbing existing landform and vegetation and exposing worked ground. It is agreed that all completed cut and fill batters should be seeded with grass as soon as possible to restore a cover of vegetation and enable visual integration in this rural setting. It is noted that, based on observations of existing cuts, the clay conditions of some of these surfaces may make it difficult for successful establishment of vegetation. Nevertheless, it is recommended that hydroseeding is attempted on all cut faces, including the two highest areas at chainage 2860 and 2440.

It is acknowledged that the reason for these highest cuts relates to the attempt to avoid wetland areas where possible. As such, it is considered that any potential adverse effects on amenity values associated with the cuts should be seen in this context. Further, it is noted that there are no residential properties located near the largest/highest cut areas. As such, effects on visual amenity will largely be restricted to transitory views available to passing motorists.

While the road upgrade has been realigned to avoid as much of the nearby wetland areas as practicable, it is noted that the proposed widening of the road will result in the removal of approximately 16.5m² of wetlands. It is accepted that these water bodies adjoin an established road corridor, which passes through a modified rural environment. It is agreed that from a landscape amenity/natural character perspective, the removal of 16.5m² of wetland will result in a relatively low level of effect. Any ecological effects of this loss, in the context of other proposed ecological planting associated with this application, are not considered as part of these landscape comments.

The gum trees proposed to be removed near 108 or 109 McLaren Gully Road do not appear to serve a critical visual screening function for the residents of either 108 or 109 McLaren Gully Road. Both dwellings are set well back from the road edge and both properties contain well-established vegetation that will act as a visual buffer between the dwellings and the road. As such, it is considered that the removal of the gum tree will have relatively low effects on the amenity of the residents of these properties and the general amenity of the surrounding area.

Recommended condition:

The following, or similarly worded, condition is recommended if consent is granted for this application.

- *All cut and fill batters are to be hydroseeded with grass as soon as possible and not later than completion of the road upgrade works.*

Regards,

Luke McKinlay
Landscape Architect

Site Photographs:



Figure 1: Near proposed cut area at chainage 2440



Figure 2: Near proposed cut area at chainage 2860



Figure 3: Gum Trees to be removed



Figure 4: Existing vegetation surrounding dwelling at 108 McLaren Gully Road



Figure 5: Dwelling at 109 McLaren Gully Road