

12 October 2021

Department Planning Industry & Environment
Director, Social and Infrastructure Assessments
Social & Infrastructure Assessments
4 Parramatta Square 12 Darcy Street
PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

Attention: Brent Devine (Principal Planner)

Dear Brent,

**RE: Allambi Care – New Educational Establishment, West Wallsend (SSD-21822247)
Response to Submissions**

This letter has been prepared in response to DPIE's correspondence for SSD -21822247 dated 30 September 2021. We are confident that this letter, the landscape drawings, and the additional information attached address each item from your Response to Submission (RtS) as outlined below:

1. Internal alterations and additions

As detailed in the EIS and Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI), given the previous commercial approval on the ground floor of the building where the school will operate, there are minimal works proposed as part of this application. The bulk of the works is to the ground floor interior of the building to convert a large, long room to two Classrooms and form a small Library off Classroom 2. As detailed on the Architectural drawings, a new internal stud wall will be erected to create division between the 2 classrooms and library.

The Breakout Space involves removal of a raised platform shown in the photo below which was previously installed to cover over the area where the former bar space and services was located.



The kitchenette depicted on the Architectural Drawings will remain effectively unchanged except for new benchtop and appliances and will be utilised by staff and student only.

2. Management of separate uses

The existing layout of the building with separate access points for the approved youth refuge (group home) on the first floor and proposed school at ground level enables both uses to operate independently of each other.

The building has comprised 2 separate uses since 2009, with the youth refuge (group home) approved on the first floor by way of Complying Development and commercial premises (DA 2152/2008) on the ground floor. At no time during this period have the respective undertakings been accessed or utilised by the respective tenants.

The kitchenette on the ground floor will be utilised by staff and student at the school only.

Separate entrances to each level are currently provided, with this arrangement to continue. Students will access the school directly off Carrington Street through the main foyer coming to school each day with their youth worker.

Residents of the group home accessing their residents via the stairs at the rear of the building.

As currently exists, each use / level will continue to have its own key system which restricts staff and occupants from entering areas which are unrelated to them.

As detailed above, the building has operated as 2 separate uses since 2009, with the first-floor use being a youth refuge (group home) since this time. The maximum number of people residing at any one time on the first floor is 5. The residents of the first floor, in most cases, either attend mainstream school or have employment within the community and therefore it would be uncommon for residents to be onsite during school hours.

Further, as detailed in the EIS, the school itself, will offer several flexible support avenues, times, and learning spaces to suit individual student needs. It will also offer a range of programs that target identified needs and explore different opportunities through experiential learning programs. Realistically, there would be no more than 12 students on site at any one time, 6 per class. 2 classes running at the same time.

Students will have a range of learning spaces that will cater for this. These include, but are not limited to:

- The Learning Centre (Charlestown)
- The community (Beaches, local parks, local libraries etc)
- The students out of home care (OOHC) placement

The Learning Centre has operated since 2013 within Allambi Care's main administration building without conflict. Whilst it is acknowledged no one resides within Allambi Care's main administration building it is anticipated, given the limited number of children attending the school and the limited number of people residing in the building the potential impacts on residents of the youth refuge will be minimal if at all. As detailed in the EIS, the Learning Without Wall's Program entails learning off site, this, coupled with the fact that residents of the youth refuge are predominantly off-site during school hours will reduce any potential impact on residents.

Furthermore, as detailed in the Noise Assessment submitted with the EIS ***"Since the time in which children are involved in outdoor play is limited, the potential impact associated with these noise emissions is minimised. The AAAC considers a total limit of 2 hours outdoor play per day at a child-care facility reasonable to apply a criterion that the LAeq,15min noise level emitted from the outdoor play area does not exceed the background noise level by more than 10dB at the assessment location."***

As Allambi Care will manage both the youth refuge on level one and the proposed school on the ground floor, this will enable staff and management to monitor the operational noise and implement noise mitigation and management should any impacts arise as it would not be in the interest of either operations to be negatively impacted upon.

3. Outdoor learning space

A landscape plan can be found in **attachment 1**. Covered seating will be provided for staff and students. There is the potential for garden beds to be incorporated into this area to provide an area for students to plant and learn about different plants and vegetables. As detailed in the EIS and earlier in this correspondence, students will have a range of learning spaces and activities. Below is an example of an outdoor classroom established as part of the existing Learning Centre at Charlestown (Lake Macquarie).



The hills hoist on site is associated with the group home on the first floor and will be separated from the school and outdoor learning space by fencing.

4. Fencing

The proposed fencing will consist of black palisade fencing approximately 1.8m high like that which currently exists at Allambi Care's main administration site and popular at many schools throughout the state.



Existing fencing onsite at Allambi Care's existing Learning Centre

Lot 12 (Section B) DP 2252 will be utilised as an outdoor learning space. As detailed on the landscape plan, access to this area will be provided from a door in classroom one as well as a gate off Carrington Street which will be key locked with staff associated with the school having access.

5. Bicycle parking

The school will specialise in education for vulnerable young people in out-of-home care who have experienced disadvantage and/or trauma. It aims to provide a safe and welcoming space in which a young person can experience acceptance, healthy connections, and positive relationships with educational staff for them to engage or re-engage in formal education.

Allambi students are typically in the care of Allambi and will come to the school with their Support Worker, it is unlikely that any student would walk, ride or use public transport to get to and from school.

Notwithstanding, Allambi Care are happy to incorporate bicycle parking onsite.

6. Surrender of Existing Development Consents

If it is a legislative requirement to surrender existing development consent that applies to the ground floor of the former Clyde Inn Hotel (DA2152/2008 approved by Lake Macquarie City Council on 12 June 2008), see attached, then Allambi Care will do this.

Allambi Care would ask however that this not be enforced until such time that the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has completed their assessment and it is confirmed that Allambi Care is a registered and accredited non-government independent special assistance school.

A copy of DA 2152/2008 and DA 2152/2008/A consents are now provided in **attachment 2**.

7. Construction jobs and timeframe

Given the proposed development is for a change of use, physical works on site will be limited and mainly associated with internal fit out.

It is anticipated 2 jobs will be created with works to be completed within 1 month.

8. Submissions

We understand exhibition of the development application including the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed education establishment ended on 29 September 2021 and the during the exhibition process three (3) submissions were received. For the purpose of this RtS we have identified the submission from Redfern (name withheld) as Submission 1, the submission from Keith Nott as submission 2 and Lake Macquarie City Council as submission 3.

Submission 1 states:

"Section 7 of SEARs refers to a heritage report to be done. This report is missing from the application. Also, as an education facility, does the design need to be done in accordance with the Educational Facility Standards & Guidelines."

A Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) has been prepared by John Carr Heritage Consultant and was included in **Appendix 6** of this EIS. Furthermore, as detailed in Section 6.6 of the EIS, Onsite consultation has occurred with Council's Strategic Heritage Planner and Heritage Assessment Planner as well as John Carr. No potential impacts are anticipated.

In response to submission 1 reference to *the Educational Facility Standards & Guidelines*."

The Educational Facilities Standards and Guidelines (EFSG) are intended to assist those responsible for the management, planning, design, construction and maintenance of new and refurbished school facilities. The EFSG is a suite of information to aid in the planning, design and use of **NSW Department of Education school facilities** and are therefore not relevant in this instance.

Submission 2, supports the program however has requests *'the overseers /carers do there (sic) job and other people are NOT affected in a bad way'*

Given the limited number of students and the ratio of staff to student numbers we do not anticipate the school operations to impact upon the existing neighbourhood amenity of West Wallsend. Notwithstanding, as with all Allambi's undertakings, we will make ourselves available to meet and discuss concerns or issues should they arise.

Submission 3, states, *'Council has no objections to the development as proposed.'*

We trust that the above correspondence in relation to DPIE's Response to Submissions adequately addresses all concerns raised by DPIE during the assessment of the subject development application. The proposal has been formulated having full and proper regard to those matters raised by DPIE as well as having regards to the relevant development controls and to the environmental qualities of the site and its surroundings. The development comprises a permissible form of development that predominantly complies with all the provisions of the relevant environmental planning instruments.

Thank you in anticipation of your assistance in this matter. We look forward to hearing from you regarding the approval of this application in its current form. However, should you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned on 0427 425 441.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Wade

Town Planner

Attachments:

1. Landscape Plan
2. DA 2152/2008 & DA 2152/2008/A Development Consents.