



**EARTHSCAPE HORTICULTURAL SERVICES**  
Arboricultural, Horticultural and Landscape Consultants  
**ABN 36 082 126 027**

4<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Jill McLachlan  
Education Director  
Blue Gum Community School  
1 Rosemead Road  
HORNSBY NSW 2077

SSD-10-444

Dear Jill,

**Proposed Blue Gum Community School - SSD-10-444**  
**1 Rosemead Road, Hornsby**  
**Addendum [1] to Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report**

I refer your request to review the revised plans in relation to the abovementioned State Significant Development Application. I also refer to the previous Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report prepared by Earthscape [Version 3, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020] submitted together with SSD-10-444 for the alterations and additions to the existing dwelling and adaptive re-use for a new school (Blue Gum Community School) within the abovementioned property.

It is understood that Hornsby Council and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) have raised a number of concerns in relation to the proposal. It is understood that the issues raised have been considered and various design options reviewed in order to address these issues, resulting in an amended concept plan. The purpose of this addendum is to review the amended concept and address the specific issues raised in relation to tree and vegetation removal/impacts.

**1. On site Car parking**

Various options have been considered in relation to on-site car parking for the proposed school, including placing the required number of car parking spaces in different areas of the site and consideration given to on-street car parking in lieu of on-site car parking. With exception of the on-street car parking option, all of the other options would necessitate some level of tree removal. The option of placing the car parking area within the footprint of the former tennis court area will necessitate some tree loss. Whilst Council has asserted that this vegetation has some ecological value, all of these trees have been planted within the site within the last 20-30 years. They are not remnant of the original vegetation community, nor do they have any heritage significance, unlike much of the other vegetation within the site. The arboricultural assessment of these trees indicated that the majority of the trees affected by the car park were of low or very low retention value, with some relatively small trees of moderate value and no trees of high retention value (refer Appendix 5 of the abovementioned report). This area of the site is also relatively flat (due to the former tennis court), therefore requires minimal cut and fill to achieve a level platform, minimising the potential footprint of the proposed works. As such, this location is considered the preferred option for the position of the car park despite the number of trees to be removed to accommodate it.

The revised concept indicates that the car park has been flipped (mirror reversed), such that the pedestrian path (to be constructed using permeable pavement) is now located eastern side of the car park, with a narrow zone for planting between the car park and the western boundary. This provides a greater setback between the car park and T40 (a Blackbutt of high retention value, located to the east of the former tennis court/proposed car park) and reduces the encroachment to the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) of this tree (which

is an improvement over the previous layout). The revised layout also provides a far more logical and safer pedestrian connection between the car park and the building than the former layout. This amendment will lessen the planting zone between the carpark and the boundary, providing minimal opportunity for screening along this boundary. However, a physical screen could be provided in lieu of planting.

It is noted that concern has been raised about loss of amenity and the impact of loss of this vegetation on the adjoining property to the west (1A Rosemead Road). It should be noted that this property contains no trees or screen planting within the rear yard. The garage within this property is sited close to the common boundary which precludes any planting along the common boundary. In short, this property derives all of its amenity from the trees located within the subject site. No trees within the adjoining property will be adversely affected by the proposed works. It should also be noted that despite the loss of trees in the tennis court area, many more trees of greater dimension are located just beyond the court within the rear yard of the site and on the nature strip in William Street, none of which will be adversely affected by the proposed works. These will still be visible and contribute to the amenity of the site, surrounding properties and the streetscape.

## **2. Driveway**

The driveway has been designed to provide an entry utilising the existing driveway crossover with a one-way loop to provide a suitable drop-off zone, with a new exit and crossover near the western corner of the site. In order to provide for the traffic volumes proposed and comply with the required traffic standards, the driveway must be widened slightly, which will necessitate the removal of Trees T110 (Illawarra Flame), T111 (Cabbage Tree Palm) and T112 (Giant White Bird of Paradise). It is understood that both Council and DPIE have raised concerns about the removal of T111 & T112 in particular due to the detrimental impact on the integrity of the Heritage Item and its setting. It is agreed that these trees are likely to be early garden plantings and make a positive contribution to the amenity of the site. Consideration has been given to maintaining the width of the driveway or amending the alignment adjacent these trees in order to enable them to be retained. However, due to their proximity to the existing driveway, the traffic management requirements and the other site constraints, there are no feasible options that can be implemented without compromising these trees.

The feasibility of relocating T111 has also be considered, but the advice from a transplant contractor was that it would not be feasible due to the height of the palm and limited ability to relocate it to any other part of the garden due to limited access for cranes.

The amended layout will increase the encroachment to the TPZ of T87 (a small Blueberry Ash) from 29% to 39%. The original DA report noted the potential impact on this tree, with provisions recommended to minimise adverse impact. However, this increased level of encroachment would have a significant adverse impact on the tree which cannot be appropriately mitigated. As such, the revised layout will necessitate the removal of this tree. It should be noted that this tree is a relatively young and small tree (7 metres high x 5 metres spread) and can be replaced with a new tree of equivalent species elsewhere within the property to compensate for any loss of amenity in the short-term (a new tree of the same species could attain similar dimensions within 5 years of planting).

The revised driveway layout will also result in slightly increased encroachments to the TPZs of T97 & T100 (both Blackbutts) compared with the previous proposal. The encroachment to the TPZ of T100 would increase from 19% to 23% (4% increase) and the encroachment to T97 would increase from 19% to 20% (1% increase). However, it would be feasible to minimise adverse impact on these trees by siting the driveway close to existing grade to minimise the extent of excavation for the pavement sub-grade within the TPZs, as currently recommended in the abovementioned report (refer Section 9.1.8). It is still the preferred option to the alternative option of providing a vehicular exit to William street, as this would necessitate the removal of at least three trees and have adverse impacts on several other trees within the road reserve.

### 3. Fire Egress Stairs

T27 (a Bangalow Palm) is proposed to be removed for the fire egress stairs. Again, various options for relocating the stairs have been considered but there are really no feasible alternatives to the present location. The feasibility of transplanting T27 has also been considered, but unfortunately it is too close to the existing building to enable extraction of a suitable sized root ball. The tree is located within 1.5 metres of the verandah to the north and the wall of the dwelling to the west. Excavations to extract a rootball of a suitable size would potentially undermine the foundations of the building given the proximity and depth of the excavation required.

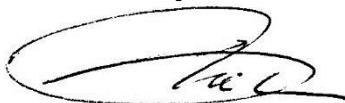
### 4. Asset Protection

The removal of T19 (Juniper) was recommended in the arborists report and bushfire report on safety grounds (refer to Appendix 7 of the arborists report). The tree leans toward the dwelling with corresponding heaving of the root plate area and most of the canopy overhangs the roofline. In my opinion the stability of the tree is suspect, and it should be removed on safety grounds. If it does fail (from overturning) it would cause damage to the building and has the potential to cause injury to any occupants. It should be noted that there are numerous other trees and palms in this area that still provide adequate screening between the proposed development and adjoining properties. The removal of this tree would not result in any significant loss of amenity in my view.

Note that this property contains a considerable number of trees in comparison to surrounding properties in the area and any other residential property of an equivalent size. Notwithstanding the extent of tree removal proposed, the proposed development has been designed to minimise tree loss and to maintain the best quality and most significant trees within the site and within the adjoining road reserves. A total of one-hundred and sixteen (116) trees are located within and adjacent the site, which has a total area of 3,623 square metres. This is roughly four times the size of a typical residential allotment in this area, which would typically support 10 to 15 trees. Of the forty-one (41) trees to be removed, twenty three (23) are of low or very low retention value, sixteen (16) are of moderate retention value and only two (2) are of high retention value (being T111 & T112 as noted at Point 2 of this Addendum). In contrast, twenty-three (23) trees of high retention value and thirty-four (34) trees of moderate retention value are proposed to be retained as part of the proposed development, which is considered to be a positive outcome compared with other potential types of development that the site may otherwise be subjected to.

If you require any further information regarding the above matter, please do not hesitate to contact me on 9456 4787 or 0402 947 296.

Yours sincerely,



**Andrew Morton**

Dip. (Arboriculture) [AQF5]

B.App.Sci (Horticulture),

A.Dip.App.Sci. (Landscape)

*Member of the Arboriculture Australia*

*Member of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)*