



65 Homebush Road, Strathfield NSW 2135
PO Box 120, Strathfield NSW 2135 | P 02 9748 9999 | F 02 9764 1034
E council@strathfield.nsw.gov.au | www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au | ABN 52 719 940 263

Adam Flynn
Director Social and Infrastructure Assessments
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

21 October 2022

State Significant Development (SSD) – Alterations and Addition to Meriden Senior School

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed SSD – Alterations and Addition to Meriden Senior School. This includes the construction of two new buildings, one of which will be in place of an existing lawn area. While Strathfield Council appreciates the necessity to accommodate additional students within the School, there are significant concerns pertaining to the historic character of the streetscape, retaining ground level open space and insufficient details on traffic impacts.

Historic Character

Maintaining streetscape character and amenity is important. The Strathfield Town Centre has a distinct boundary with the quaint Redmyre Road Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) which includes local items and a suburban feel. Meriden straddles these distinct localities. Currently, the landscaped open space area within the School adjoins the HCA and provides an appropriate transition to the Town Centre.

The proposed DaCa building in place of this landscaped area will negatively impact this transition. Further information needs to be provided on how the size and scale of the development will integrate with the nearby HCA. The buildings present significant bulk and scale to the public domain. It may be that further screening and stepping down in building scale is required.

In addition, the materiality and colours of the two proposed buildings do not sensitively relate to the HCA of which it forms a visual 'entry'. The materials should incorporate the fine grain detailing characteristic of the HCA. The contemporary concrete panel and glazed facade will provide a bronzed appearance. These are foreign elements in the streetscape and represent a lost opportunity to enhance the visual catchment of the HCA. Hues and materials more reflective of the HCA should be incorporated.

Open Space

The two proposed buildings will reduce the overall ground level open space within the School. The loss is proposed to be offset by an outdoor roof terrace within social science building located on the eastern boundary. It is considered that this compromise is inadequate from an amenity perspective. Ground level

open space with deep soil landscaping provides superior amenity for students compared to similar open space on upper levels. There are also secondary benefits in terms of stormwater percolation and reduction of the urban heat island effect. Accordingly, more should be done to protect existing ground floor lawn areas. This is particularly since, with the future increase in scale of development within Strathfield Town Centre, overshadowing of ground floor open space will only increase. The more ground level open space is retained, the greater the likelihood that a portion will retain solar access at any one time.

Given the potential for intensification within the Strathfield Town Centre, any extensions to the school should seek to provide a capacity that can accommodate this growth. This includes an increased demand for play areas within the school. Given the reality of the growth, any loss of ground floor open space is unlikely to ever be reclaimed. Accordingly, its protection becomes critical.

Notwithstanding the comments above relating to protecting ground floor open space, there also exists opportunities to increase open space on the upper levels. This includes the potential for an outdoor roof terrace on the proposed DaCa building which should be investigated. The proposal currently utilises this rooftop area only for plant services and solar panels.

Traffic

The proposal seeks to extend an existing driveway on Redmyre Road to allow for two-way access into the new basement within the proposed DaCa building. The basement is proposed to have 53 staff car parking spaces and an off-street pick up and drop off area. The application has been reviewed by Council's Traffic Engineer and it is considered that a more detailed traffic study should be requested from the applicant. This should include detailed plans on the proposed deceleration lane and 7m extension to the existing median strip on Redmyre Road. In addition, further traffic modelling should be produced on the impacts of the new car park to the surrounding streets. (Note: A final detailed design will be required to be submitted to Council for approval by the Strathfield Local Traffic Committee).

Conclusion

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback on the SSD. As addressed above, Council have concerns over the character, open space and traffic impacts of the proposed development. We trust these will be addressed as part of the assessment process.

Please contact Jake Brown – Planner on 9748 9999 or jake.brown@strathfield.nsw.gov.au for any further correspondence and keep us up to date with progress. We look forward to seeing the outcome of the proposal.

Kind Regards

Kandace Lindeberg

Acting Director Planning & Environment / Manager, Planning, Place & Development

