

REQUEST FOR SECRETARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS SCOPING REPORT

THYNK ACADEMY ERINA
PRIMARY SCHOOL & CHILDCARE
110-112 CHETWYND RD, ERINA

11 DECEMBER 2019

THYNK
ACADEMY

20 STANLEY ROAD
EPPING NSW 2121
M: 0413 946 551
simon@thynk.com.au

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1 Introduction

In accordance with Part 4 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), this document is a request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to guide the development of **THYNK** Academy Erina, Primary School and Childcare Centre (the 'School') at 110-112 Chetwynd Rd, Erina (the 'site').

The proposal will seek consent for the staged development of a small independent primary school and childcare centre. The ultimate development will educate a maximum of 210 primary school students (Kindergarten to Year 6) and 20 pre-school children (3 to 5 years of age).

The development will comprise of the adaptive reuse of the existing residential dwelling, the construction of new school buildings, car parking and landscaping works.

The proposed school will deliver a unique educational model, dedicated to delivering the highest standard of education, utilising the latest teaching techniques and technology. The school will aim to offer its model of quality education to the local community by operating on the following basis:

- best practice pedagogy and teaching;
- non-for-profit organisation with a tiered, low fee structure;
- priority enrolment for families living within a defined local catchment;
- not aligned with any religious group or religious philosophy;
- not aligned with any individual cultural or ethnic group;
- transparent, efficient and accountable; and
- compact size and capped enrolments.

This development is a new school. Pursuant to Schedule 1 Clause 15 of the State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (SRD SEPP), development for the purpose of a new school (regardless of the capital investment value) is state significant development for the purposes of the SRD SEPP.

The purpose of this report is to provide information to support the request to the Secretary. To assist in identifying the SEARs for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed development, this report provides:

- An overview of the site and context;
- A description of the proposed development;
- An overview of the relevant planning framework and permissibility; and
- An overview of the likely environmental and planning impacts.

2 Site and Locality

2.1 Regional Context

The site is located at 110-112 Chetwynd Rd, Erina, approximately 5kms east of the Gosford Town Centre (see Figure 1 – Regional Context). The property comprises 2 existing allotments with legal title Lot 4 and Lot 5 DP22536. The site is rectangular in shaped with a 40m frontage to Chetwynd Road and a total site area of 4,047sqm.

Figure 1 – Regional Context Plan



Map Source: Google

2.2 Local Context

Although the site is zoned R2 low density residential, the site is located at the transition between a variety of different land uses (see Figure 2 – Local Context and photos provided in Annexure A).

To the west of the site is a significant commercial development, whose tenants include, a gymnasium (currently vacant), dance studio, childcare centre as well as a mix of business and bulky good uses. The concrete western wall of the adjacent commercial buildings have been constructed on the boundary of the site.

Kendy Caravans and Trailers is located to the north of the site. Although the Kendy site is zoned R2 Low Density Residential, we understand that the business is approved through existing use rights and there have been discussions in relation to the potential to rezoning of this site to commercial, similar to zoning of the properties to the west.

Residential homes are located to the north east and south of the site. Small rural properties are located to east of Chetwynd Road. The 1.57Ha rural property immediately to the east of the site includes a 550sqm industrial shed, directly opposite the site. The shed houses a family owned car mechanics business, JC Auto Erina.

Figure 2 – Local Context Plan



3 Local School Context

3.1 Existing Public Schools

The THYNK Academy mission is provide a high-quality education for the children in local neighbourhood and positively contribute to the local community as a whole. To facilitate this mission, the proposed Site is located in between the existing local primary schools and at the outer edge of their enrolment catchments (see Figure 3 – Local School Context Plan).

3.2 Existing Private Schools

There are 3 independent schools in the local area as shown in Figure 3. These schools provide education services to select group of families based upon religion and/or ability to afford relatively high enrolment fees.

3.3 The THYNK Academy Difference

THYNK Academy will be a unique independent school as it will be designed and operated to be as inclusive as possible for the children in the local community. The inclusive nature of THYNK Academy means that unlike traditional independent schools, which relying on drawing a select

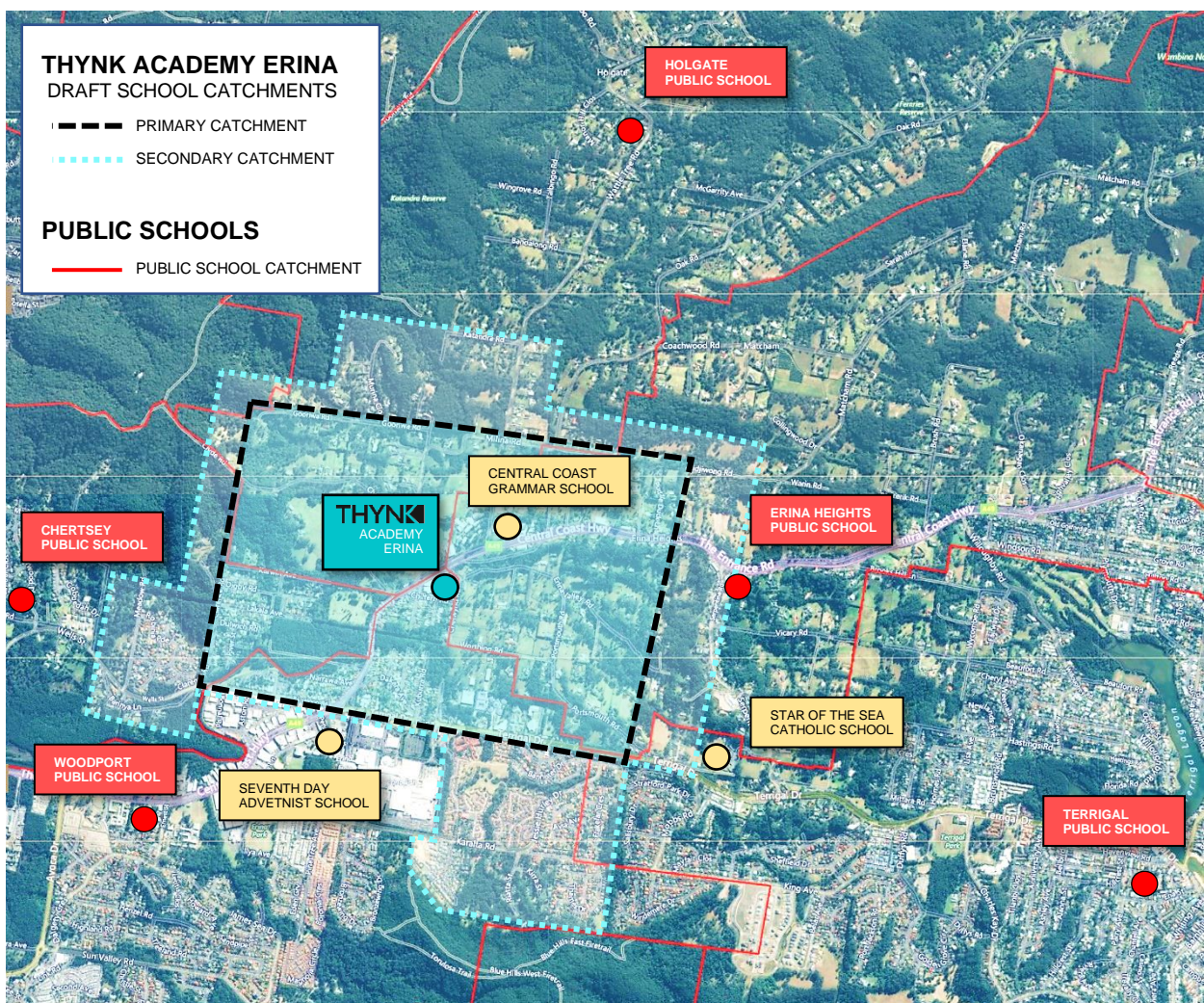
group of students from a large area, THYNK Academy will be implementing policies to attract students from the local area.

THYNK Academy will prioritise the enrolment of local students by adopting a series of catchment boundaries (shown indicatively in Figure 3). First enrolment priority will be offered to families living within the Primary Catchment. Places will only be offered to children living within the Secondary Catchment if vacancies can't be filled from the Primary Catchment. The only exemption to the Priority Catchment enrolment system will be for staff directly employed at the school. Prioritising the children of staff will help meet the THYNK Academy objectives of attracting and retaining the highest quality teachers and staff, creating an inclusive community and minimising school commuting trips.

In the event that the enrolment applications from families within the Primary Catchment exceed the available places in a given year, new students will be randomly selected from the list of new Primary Catchment enrolment applications.

Not only does the focus on the local children provide the opportunity for THYNK Academy to become embedded in the physical and social fabric of the community, it also provides improved community health and urban amenity outcomes by facilitating a larger number of children that are able to walk or ride to school. It will also facilitate local community connections.

Figure 3 – Local School Context Plan



4 Proposed Development

The **THYNK** Academy Erina, Primary School and Childcare Centre comprises the staged development of a small independent primary school and childcare centre at 110-112 Chetwynd Road Erina.

The ultimate development will educate a maximum of 210 primary school students (Kindergarten to Year 6) and 20 pre-school children (3 to 5 years of age). The proposed development will be completed in 3 stages as described in the following sections:

4.1 Stage 1 – Primary School (30 students, K-2)

Stage 1 of the development will comprise the adaptive reuse of the existing residential dwelling to create the classroom and administration areas required to educate a maximum of 30 students (see Figure 4).

Car parking and kiss and ride areas will be provided within the front setback of the Site. Play areas will be provided behind the school building.

Figure 4 – Proposed Development, STAGE 1



4.7 Stage 2 – Primary School (110 students, K-6) & Childcare (20 children, 3-5 years old)

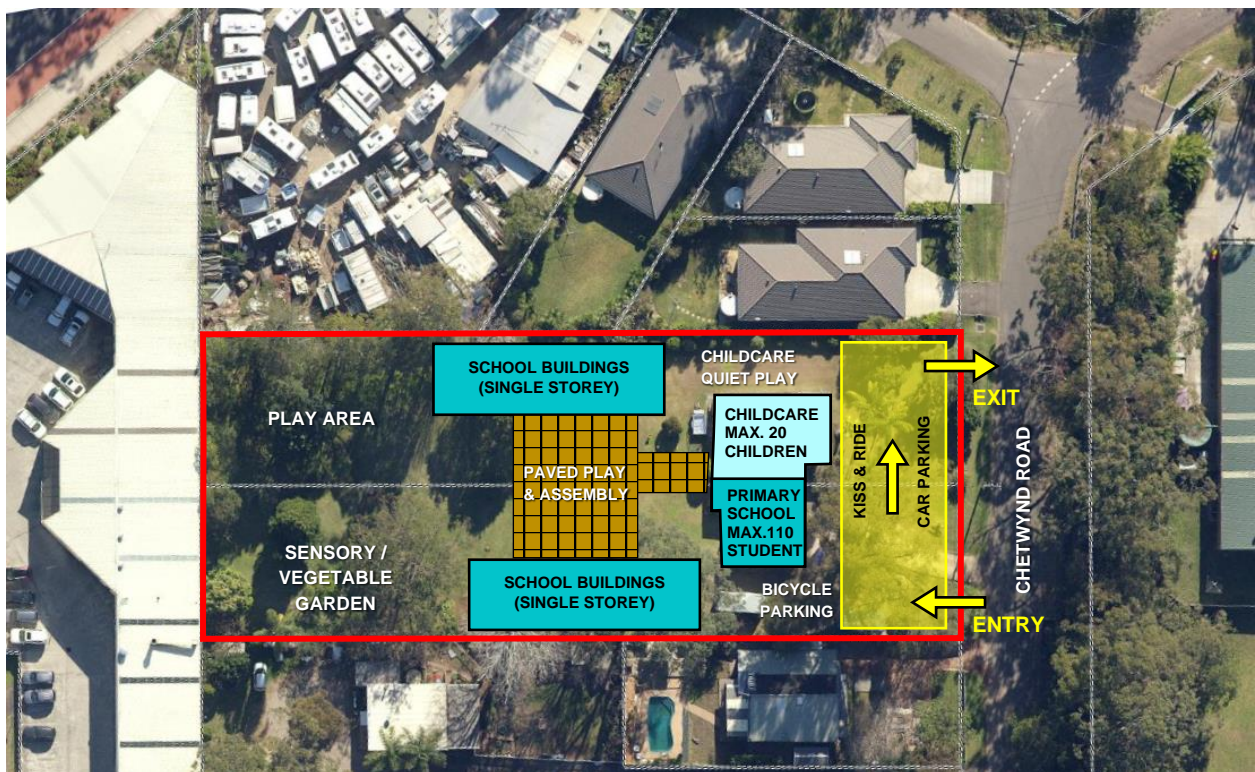
Stage 2 of the development will include the construction of new school buildings along the northern and southern boundaries of the Site. The buildings will be single storey in height. The facades adjacent to the boundaries will be designed to maintain visual and acoustic privacy for the adjoining properties.

Extensive glazing will be provided to the building facades facing the paved play area. This will provide light filled learning areas within the classrooms and visual connection with the outdoor play spaces.

The location of the new buildings will provide an acoustic buffer between the main paved play area and the adjoining residential properties. The landscaping design at the rear of the site will locate quiet spaces, such as a sensory garden, to the south of the site in order to limit the impacts on the existing house to the south. Active play areas will be located in the north west corner, where there are adjoining commercial land uses.

The car parking in the front setback of the property will be expanded to provide the required parking for the school and childcare as well as the kiss & ride areas within the site. To maximise the safety and efficiency of vehicular movements, separate car park entry and exit points will be provided at the southern and northern end of the site respectively.

Figure 5 – Proposed Development, STAGE 2

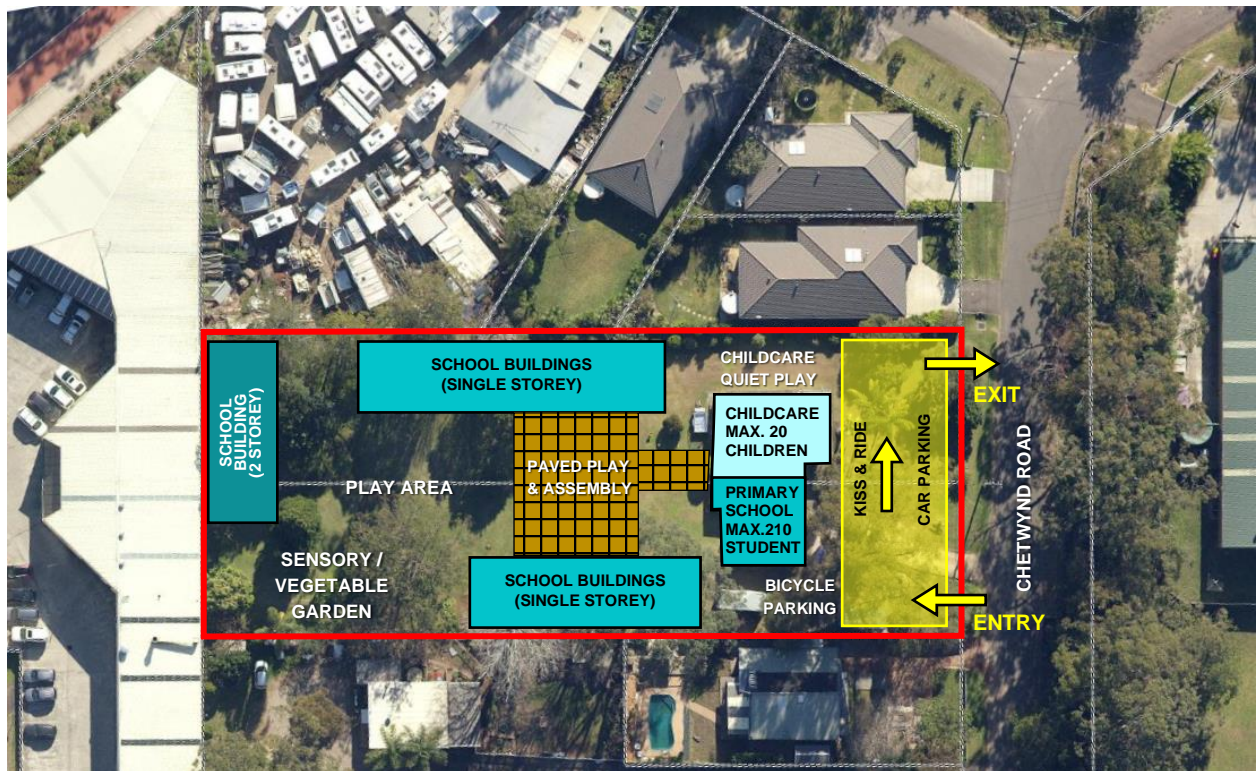


4.8 Stage 3 – Primary School (210 students, K-6) & Childcare (20 children, 3-5 years old)

Stage 3 of the development will include the construction of a new two storey school building in the north west corner of the site (see Figure 6). This location is adjacent to non-sensitive commercial land uses; the solid concrete wall of the bulky goods buildings to the west and the caravan/trailer storage area to the north.

The car parking in the front setback of the property will be expanded to provide the required parking for the school and childcare as well as the kiss & ride areas within the site.

Figure 6 – Proposed Development, STAGE 3



5 Planning Framework

5.1 SEPP (State and Regional Development) 2011

Pursuant to Schedule 1 Clause 15 of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (SRD SEPP), development for the purpose of a new school (regardless of the capital investment value) is state significant development for the purposes of the SRD SEPP.

5.2 SEPP (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017

The aim of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017 (**SEPP Educational Establishments**) is to *facilitate the effective delivery of educational establishments and early education and care facilities across the State*.

The proposed school is defined as an Educational Establishment under the SEPP Educational Establishments.

Section 33 of the SEPP Educational Establishments provides a definition of a “prescribed zone” as a listed land use zone, which includes Zone R2 Low Density Residential.

Section 35 of the SEPP Educational Establishments provides that the *Development for the purpose of a school may be carried out by any person with development consent on land in a prescribed zone*.

Section 35 of the SEPP Educational Establishments also includes the following provisions:

- (6) *Before determining a development application for development of a kind referred to in subclause (1), (3) or (5), the consent authority must take into consideration:*
 - (a) *the design quality of the development when evaluated in accordance with the design quality principles set out in Schedule 4, and*
 - (b) *whether the development enables the use of school facilities (including recreational facilities) to be shared with the community.*

The proposed school will comply with the design quality principles set out in Section 6.

5.3 Gosford Local Environment Plan 2014

The property is located within the Central Coast LGA and the development is to be considered in the context of the Gosford Local Environment Plan 2014 (GLEP2014).

The site is zoned R2 Low Density Residential (see Figure 7). The GLEP2014 development standards applicable for the site are described in Table 1 below.

Figure 7 – Land Use Zoning Map
 (extract from Zoning Map LZN_015C)

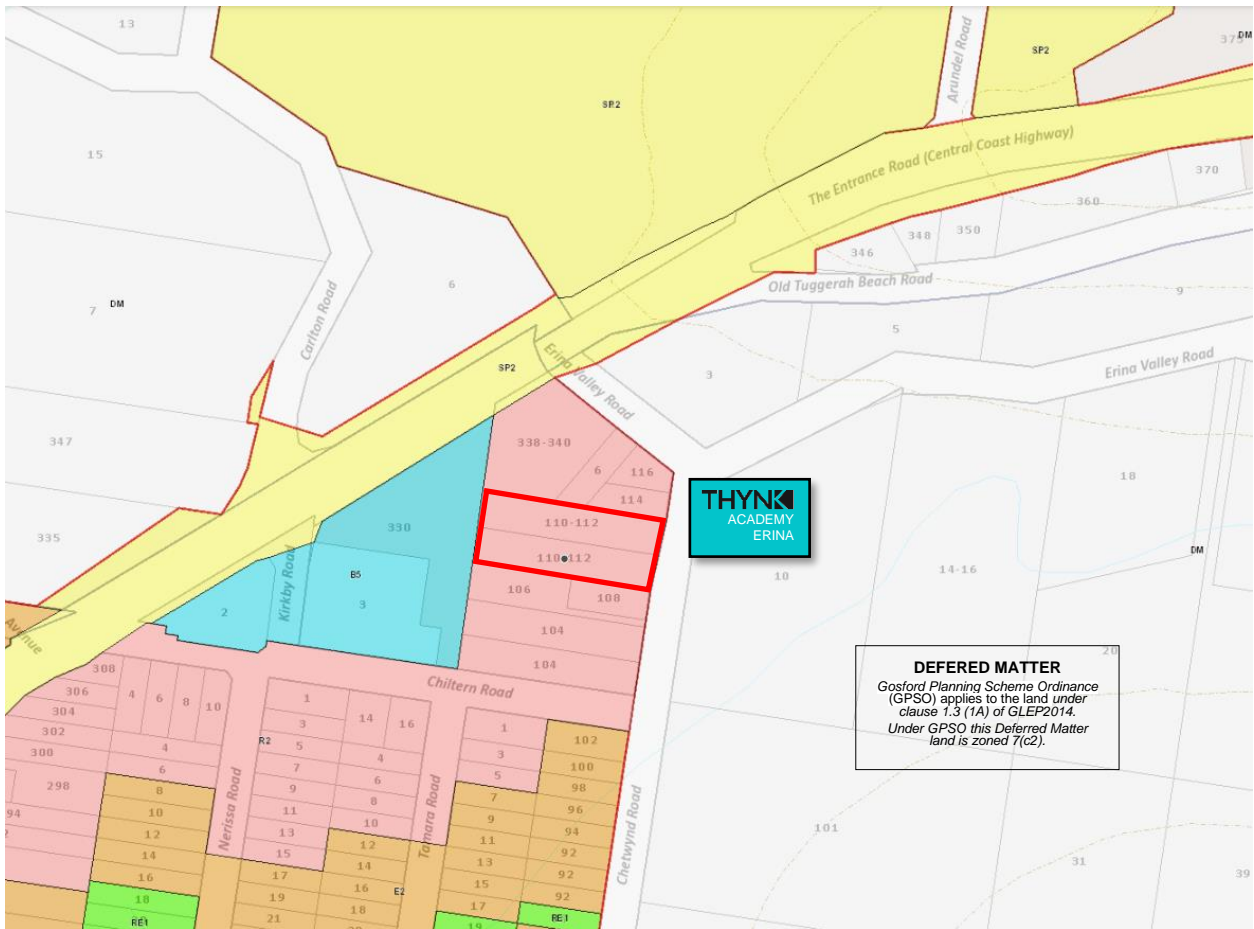


Table 1 - Gosford Local Environment Plan 2014 Development Standards

ITEM	DETAIL
Zoning	R2 Low Density Residential
Zone Objectives	<p>To provide for the housing needs of the community within a low-density residential environment.</p> <p>To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents.</p> <p>To ensure that development is compatible with the desired future character of the zone.</p> <p>To encourage best practice in the design of low-density residential development.</p> <p>To promote ecologically, socially and economically sustainable development and the need for, and value of, biodiversity in Gosford.</p> <p>To ensure that non-residential land uses do not adversely affect residential amenity or place demands on services beyond the level reasonably required for low-density housing.</p>
Permissible Uses	Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boarding houses; Boat sheds; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Group homes; Home-based child care; Home industries; Hospitals; Neighbourhood shops; Places of public worship; Respite day care centres; Roads; Secondary dwellings; Seniors housing
Minimum Lot Size	Minimum lot size – 550sqm
Maximum Building Height	Maximum building height – 8.5m
Floor Space Ratio (FSR)	Maximum FSR – 0.5
Acid Sulphate Soils	<p>Acid Sulphate Soil Code 4</p> <p>Requires consent for works beyond 2m below natural ground surface or works.</p>
Flood Planning	The site is affected by the 1% AEP flood extent. However, the adjoining property to the south of the Site is flood affect.

The proposed primary school is categorised as an Education Establishment, which is not a permitted use in the R2 Low Density Residential zone of GLEP2014. However, as described below, the proposed school is permissible under the provisions of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017, which prevails to the extent of any inconsistency with the GLEP2014.

6 Preliminary Environmental Assessment

This section identifies the potential key environmental impacts of the proposed development that will need to be addressed as part of the EIS.

6.1 Visual and Landscape

The site is not identified as being visually significant.

The proposed development will involve the retention and adaptive reuse of the existing house on the site. The new school buildings to be built in Stage 2 will be located behind the existing dwelling and single storey in height and therefore will not impact on the existing streetscape.

The car parking located in the front setback of the property will be landscaped to minimise its impact on the streetscape.

6.2 Overshadowing

The proposed development will not increase overshadowing of neighbouring properties.

The adaptive re-use of the existing building will not involve any modifications to the building envelope, while the new buildings in Stage 2 will be single storey in height. The two-storey building proposed to be built in Stage 3 will be located in the north west corner of the site, thereby only overshadowing the school property.

6.3 Noise

The existing ambient noise conditions at the Site are suitable for the proposed school and childcare centre. Existing background noise is generated by the Central Coast Highway and the adjacent commercial activities. However, the distance to Central Coast Highway (in excess of 50m) and the shield afforded by the surrounding buildings means that existing noise levels are relatively quiet.

The design of the proposed school will manage the impacts of noise on the adjoining properties. The location of the new buildings will provide an acoustic buffer between the main paved play area and the adjoining residential properties. The landscaping design at the rear of the site will locate quiet spaces, such as a sensory garden, to the south of the site in order to limit the impacts on the existing house to the south. Active play areas will be located in the north west corner, where there are adjoining land commercial land uses, which are not sensitive to noise.

6.4 Traffic and Parking

A Traffic and Parking Impact Assessment will be provided to determine the likely impacts and identify mitigation measures. The likely impacts are expected to be minor for the reasons detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Traffic and Parking Preliminary Impact Assessment

TRANSPORT FACTOR	PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT
Road Connections	The site is located in a permeable low traffic environment with good connections to major roads, including access to the Central Coast Highway via the roundabout at Kirkby Road and the left out from Erina Valley Road.
Road Network Capacity	The existing road volumes immediately surround the development are low due to the semi-rural nature of the area and limited amount of through traffic. The existing road network will have capacity to accommodate the proposed development. The development is likely to have a positive impact on the traffic network because the school will prioritise local enrolments. Not only will this provide the opportunity for children to walk or ride to school, it will also mean that the travel distance for children that are driven to school will be shorter.
Public Transport	<p>Bus Stops are located along the Central Coast Highway, almost 400m walking distance to the north east and south west. It is not anticipated that THYNK Academy students will utilise these Bus Stops given the age of the students.</p> <p>THYNK Academy will consider offering a school mini-bus pick-up drop off service for families located in the outer areas of the school catchment. The compact nature of the school catchment will enable the school bus to efficiently pick up/drop off students. The school bus would also be available for excursions and off-site student activities.</p>
Walking & Cycling	The enrolment priority of local students will enable a significant number of students to walk or ride to school. It is acknowledged that the road network surrounding the proposed school is not well serviced by footpaths nor bicycle paths. THYNK Academy will encourage safe travel to school using programs such as a “walking/riding school bus” and walk/riding safety awareness.
On Site Car Parking	Parking will be provided in the front setback of the Site and the will meet or exceed the requirements of the parking provisions of Gosford DCP2013. Separate entry and exit driveways from Chetwynd Road will be provided to maximise efficiency and safety.

6.5 Stormwater Drainage

The existing stormwater system for the site includes two points of discharge from the property. Rainwater collected from the roof of the existing dwelling and ground runoff from the eastern part of the Site discharges into the Chetwynd Road stormwater system.

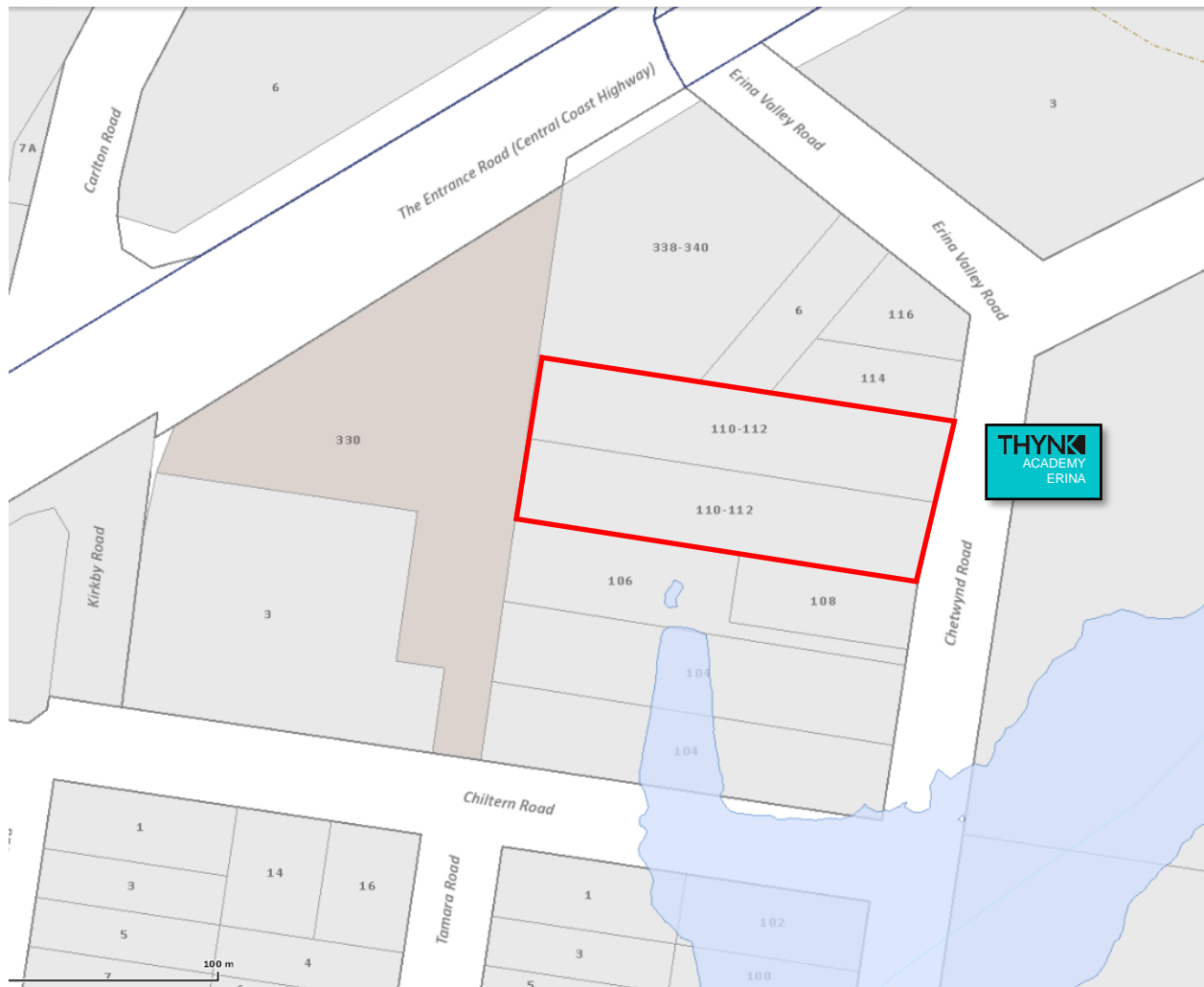
Surface flows in the rear of the property drain to a minor site depression and then into to the natural water course within Lot 2 DP561144.

The stormwater management systems for the Site will be designed in accordance with Council’s DCP Chapter 6.7 – Water Cycle Management.

6.6 Flooding

Whilst there is a minor depression within the rear of lots 4 & 5 DP 22536, it is not flood prone. According to Council's flood mapping the adjoining Lot 2 DP 561144, No.106 Chetwynd Road is the first flood prone property in this area. For the location of the flooding in this area refer to the extract from Council's flood map in Figure 8.

Figure 8 – Central Coast Council Flood Mapping Extract
Blue areas indicated extent of 1% AEP flooding



6.7 Flora and Fauna

The site is currently maintained as a private garden for the existing dwelling house. Central Coast Council's mapping indicates that part of the site contains remanent native vegetation, categorised as Xr (cleared with rural land use) and "disturbed – canopy only".

The existing trees on the site are a mix of native and exotic species. The proposed development will consider the retention and incorporation of the existing trees in the landscape design for the site.

6.8 Waste Management

Construction and operational waste management plans will be prepared to accompany the SSD application.

6.9 Bushfire

The property is within a bushfire zone and as a result will require referral to the Rural Fire Service (RFS) for assessment. While Council's bushfire mapping shows this site as a Category 1 hazard, this is not consistent with the existing ground conditions. A bushfire assessment was undertaken as part of DA 38939/10, for the subdivision of original adjoining lots 2 & 3 DP 22536. The report prepared by Building Code & Bushfire Hazard Solutions with reference number 100469 found that the closest bushfire hazard was 140m from the site. The subdivision related to DA 38939/10 has been completed and 3 dwellings now occupy this land (current legal titles Lot 11, 12 and 13 DP1163174). Based upon the previous mentioned bushfire report, the closest bushfire hazard to the proposed structures is over 100m away, which does not create a bushfire hazard.

6.10 Utilities and Services

The Site is well serviced by all essential utilities and services. An assessment of the capacity of the existing utilities to accommodate Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the proposal will be investigated as part of the development application preparation.

7 DESIGN QUALITY PRINCIPLES

SEPP Educational Establishments requires the development to be evaluated in accordance with the design quality principles set out in Schedule 4 of the SEPP.

The proposal will respond to the design quality principles as follows:

Principle 1 – context, built form and landscape: The proposal involves the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and the construction of new low-rise buildings, which are considered an appropriate scale for the surrounding context. The only 2 storey building proposed for the Site is to be located adjacent the existing bulky goods and commercial enterprises to the west and north of the Site.

Principle 2 – sustainable, efficient and durable: The proposal will provide positive social and economic benefits for the local community particularly in terms of job creation, community based projects, reducing pressure on surrounding public schools and reducing vehicle kilometres travelled for school commuting. The adaptive re-use of the existing building is an environmentally sustainable outcome that minimises the demand on new building materials and creation of waste. The new buildings will incorporate sustainable design principles.

Principle 3 – accessible and inclusive: The proposal will comply with relevant provisions for accessibility for people with disabilities. The school will aim to offer its model of quality education to the broadest possible cross-section of the community by operating on the following basis:

- not aligned with any religious group or religious philosophy
- not aligned with any individual cultural or ethnic group
- non-for-profit organisation with low fees

Principle 4 – health and safety: CPTED measures have been incorporated into the design and management of the site to ensure a high level of safety and security for students and staff. The orientation of the existing building and the extensive use of glass provides passive surveillance to the proposed playground and cola areas. The proposed outdoor play areas will be fenced and secure student access provided.

Principle 5 – amenity: The proposal will contain high quality facilities, spaces and equipment for use by students and staff. These will provide students with an enhanced learning environment. •

Principle 6 – whole of life, flexible and adaptive: The proposal involves refurbishment of the existing building and the construction of new buildings that are designed to ensure flexibility and longevity.

Principle 7 – aesthetics: The proposal will have high quality external finishes, which will be aesthetically pleasing. The proposal is an appropriate scale and form for the local context.

8 Consultation

Initial contact has been made with the duty planner at Central Coast Council and some of the surrounding residents and business owners.

Informal consultations with stakeholders continue to be undertaken prior to lodgement of the development application. Formal consultation with the Central Coast Council and the community will be undertaken during the formal exhibition process required by the SRD SEPP.

9 Conclusion

THYNK Academy proposes the development of a new small primary school and centre based child-care centre at 110-112 Chetwynd Road, Erina.

The THYNK Academy neighbourhood model provides a unique opportunity to create a school that is immersed in the physical and social fabric of the community via the following principles:

- best practice pedagogy and teaching
- affordable and tiered low fee structure
- priority enrolment for local students
- respectfully not religious/ethnic based
- transparent, efficient and accountable
- compact size and capped enrolments

The proposed school and will positively contribute to the education of local children, facilitate community connections and provide broader community benefits through reduced school commuting trips.

The proposed development is in keeping with the surrounding context and the environmental impacts can be managed through the good design principles which will be detailed in the formal development application.

ANNEXURE A – EXISTING SITE PHOTOS

**PHOTO 1.
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH
SOUTH WEST VIEW**



**PHOTO 2
CHETWYND RD VIEW**





**PHOTO 3
VERANDAH VIEW**



**PHOTO 3
REAR YARD VIEW**