



Request for SEARs

Proposal for State Significant Development

New Wright Block
University of New England Armidale Campus

Submitted to Department of Planning & Environment
On Behalf of University New England (UNE)

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Report Revision History

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This document is preliminary unless approved by a Director of City Plan Strategy & Development

CERTIFICATION

This report has been authorised by City Plan Strategy & Development, with input from a number of other expert consultants, on behalf of the Client. The accuracy of the information contained herein is to the best of our knowledge not false or misleading. The comments have been based upon information and facts that were correct at the time of writing this report.

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Appendix	Document	Prepared by
1	Concept Architectural Design Plans	BLP
2	Concept Landscape Plan	Arcadia
3	Survey Plans	UNSE
4	QS Report	DCWC

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) report has been prepared by City Plan Strategy & Development P/L (CPSD) on behalf of the University of New England (UNE) and accompanies a request for the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

UNE (i.e. the proponent/ applicant) is seeking approval for new development adjacent to Wright College at the University of New England, Armidale Campus (shown in Figure 1).



Figure 1: Approximate location of proposed development site (Wright College and Wright Block) in red and UNE Academic Campus in blue (Source: Nearmap)

In accordance with Part 4, Division 4.7 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), the proposal constitutes State Significant Development (SSD). The proposed development is also identified as State Significant Development (SSD) under Clause 15 of Schedule 1 of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (State and Regional Development SEPP) given that it is development for the purpose of UNE which is a tertiary institution and has a capital investment value (CIV) of more than \$30 million.

In accordance with Schedule 2, Part 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000, we hereby seek the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to enable the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to accompany an application for the proposal as required under Section 4.12(8) of the EP&A Act.

This report describes the site and its locality, as well as the proposed development. The report also includes an initial assessment of the proposal's potential impacts on the environment and how these will be considered and assessed.

1.2 Project Overview

This report relates to a concept design prepared by Billard Leece Partnership (BLP), a landscape concept design report prepared by Arcadia and a survey plan prepared by NESE.

UNE was formed in 1938 as the New England University College, a College of the University of Sydney. The University became fully independent in 1954 and pioneered teaching to external students by correspondence, making UNE Australia's most experienced provider of distance and now online education. UNE offers more than 200 courses at undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and higher degree research levels with options to study online or on campus.

The proposal is development for the purpose of UNE and includes the construction of new buildings adjacent to the existing Wright College buildings. The existing buildings within the complex were constructed approximately five years ago. The proposed development will include the construction of four (4) new buildings, being the North Block, South Block, West Block and the Hub Building. The Hub Building will comprise of administration facilities and communal spaces. The other three (3) blocks will deliver approximately 345 new beds. The residential blocks will also include study areas, meeting rooms and breakout areas. These spaces will be used for small group study sessions, college mentor sessions, group assignment work and the like.

The proposed new buildings will provide connectivity with the existing Wright College accommodation buildings. The existing Wright Centre located to the west of the existing college buildings is currently unused and will be demolished as part of the proposal. New parking areas will be provided in this part of the site.

The new buildings will provide on-campus accommodation which is affordable, safe, meets benchmarks within the university sector and complies with all current regulations for building and accessibility. The new development will focus on primary outdoor gathering places with secondary courtyards/landscaped areas directly located off each residential building.

1.3 Structure

This report is structured as per the following sections:

- **Section 1: Introduction** – Provides an overview of the project intent and report structure.
- **Section 2: Site and Locality Description** – Details the site and context in relation to the surrounding land uses.
- **Section 3: Proposed Development** – Provides details of the proposed development, which is to be the subject of a future EIS and consistent with the SEARs once they have been received.
- **Section 4: Environmental Planning Framework** – Outlines the planning framework applicable to the site.
- **Section 5: Impact Identification and Preliminary Assessment** – Identifies the key matters to be considered as part of a detailed assessment of the proposal within a future EIS.
- **Section 6: Consultation** – Provides details of consultation with relevant stakeholders
- **Section 7: Justification** – Provides an overview of the proposals consistency with strategic policy.
- **Section 8: Capital Investment Value** – Details the estimate cost of the development.
- **Section 9: Conclusion** – Provides a summary of the proposal and its potential impacts.

2. Site & Locality Description

2.1 Regional Context

The site is located within the established residential suburb of Armidale which is within the local government area (LGA) of Armidale. Armidale is located on the New England Plateau in northern New South Wales about midway between Sydney and Brisbane.

2.2 Local Context

There are several University of New England (UNE) sites in Armidale. The development site occupies part of the main Armidale campus and is located approximately 3km north-west from the city centre as shown in Figure 2.

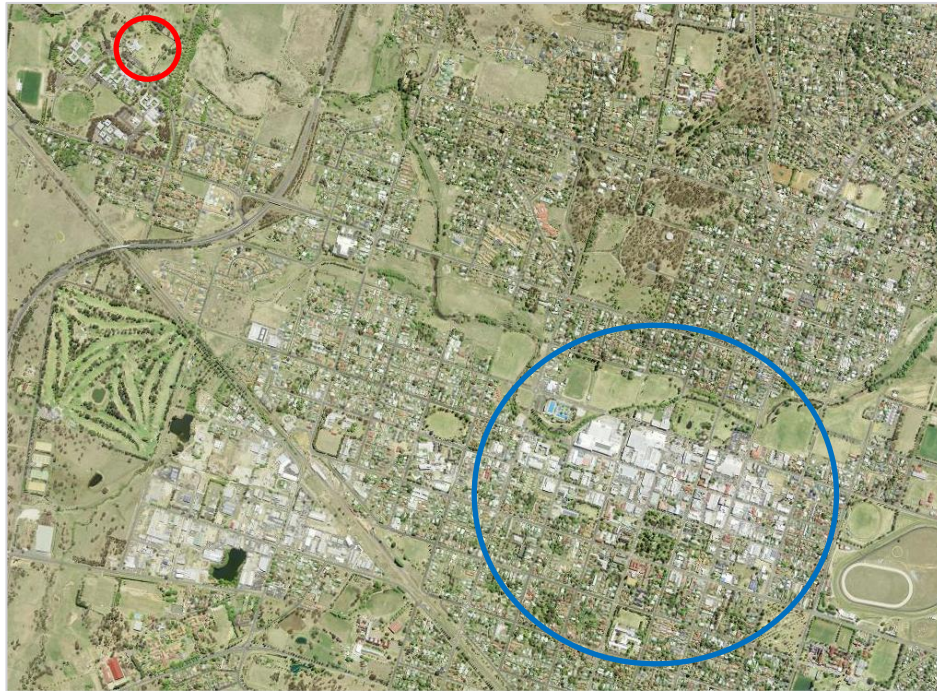


Figure 2: Location of development site (outlined in red) in relation to Armidale CBD (outlined in blue)
(Source: Six Maps)

The UNE Armidale Campus comprises of three distinct campuses. The Academic Campus, the Sporting Campus and the Bellevue Campus. The Academic Campus, also known as 'up top', is located in the northern section of the Armidale Campus. The Bellevue Campus, located in the southern section includes most of the residential colleges and sporting facilities. Each college typically includes a series of buildings. These college complexes are separated by open space consisting of sporting fields and open undulating land.

Six (6) residential college complexes are located on the UNE Bellevue Campus that are operated by UNE. The subject development site is located on the north edge of the Bellevue Campus.

2.3 Proposed Development Site

The subject site, known as UNE Armidale Campus, is legally described as Lot 10, DP1142199. The site is zoned SP2 – Infrastructure: Educational Establishment.

The focus of this request is the Wright College site which occupies only a small portion of Lot 100, DP 776508. The development area is illustrated at Figure 3 and Figure 4 below.

The development site is bounded by Abbott Road to the north and west, Elm Avenue to the east and Meredith Road to the south. To the north are large areas of open space. To the south is the Bellevue College complex and further to the south-west is Bellevue Oval. To the east/south-east is the Wright Village complex and to the west is the Robb College complex.



Figure 3: Aerial view of development site, approximate location of site outlined red (Source: Nearmap)

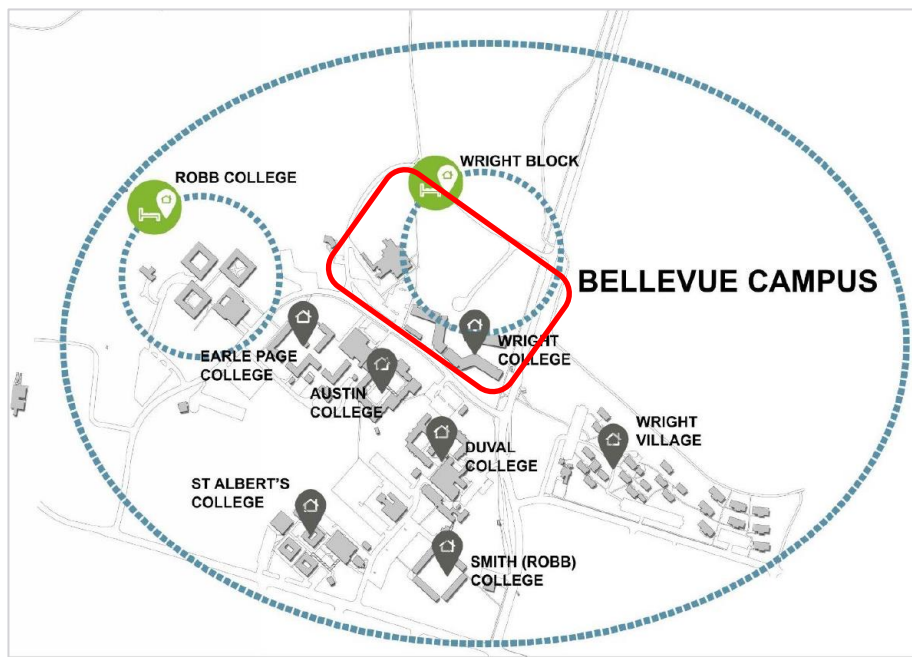


Figure 4: Site Location Plan, approximate development site outlined red (Source: Billard Leece Partnership)

2.4 Site features

The development site encompasses:

- **Existing development:** The Wright College buildings, which were constructed approximately five years ago, will be located adjacent to the proposed Wright Block buildings. The site currently contains the unused Wright Centre which is proposed to be demolished. The existing college complex also includes a car parking area fronting Meredith Road and associated landscaping.
- **Access and Parking:** Vehicular and pedestrian access to Wright College is currently via Meredith and Abbott Roads. A large car parking area is located between the Wright College buildings and the Wright Centre with frontage to Meredith Road.
- **Topography:** The development site falls +/- 12 metres from the south-west corner across to the north-east corner.
- **Utilities and Infrastructure:** The subject site is currently developed with access to important utility services including electricity, water, sewerage and telecommunications. The subject site also has existing connections to stormwater and drainage. A services statement will be prepared and appropriate services will be provided to cater for the requirements of the proposed development.
- **Heritage:** Under the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan (ADLEP) 2012 the UNE Armidale Campus is identified as containing an item of State heritage significance. In addition to the State listed item on the UNE campus site there are three locally listed heritage items and a State nominated heritage item located on and adjacent to the university site. The site is also located adjacent to an archaeological site.

Although the new development is proposed on Lot 100, DP 776508, Wright College is well separated from the heritage items which are situated in the northern precinct of the UNE campus or on adjacent sites. The new buildings, known as Wright Block, will be located on the southern side of the creek and has little contextual relationship with most of the heritage items. The row of elm trees at the entrance to the university (item I072) is the only item that will be within view of the new buildings. A summary of the heritage and archaeological listings are provided at Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 - Summary of nearby local heritage items

Item name	Address	Property description	Significance	Item no.
Elm Avenue, row of trees—entrance to University of New England	Elm Avenue	Road reserve	Local	I072
Post and rail fence	82 Boorolong Road	Lot 2345, DP 1123729	Local	I107
University of New England—the Lodge, sub-lodge, science block, shingled cottage	60 Madgwick Drive	Lot 10, DP 1142199	Local	I116

House and grounds, "Booloominbah"	60 Madgwick Drive	Lot 10, DP 1142199	State	I117
House and grounds, "Trevenna"	60 Madgwick Drive	Lot 10, DP 1142199	State nominated	I235

Table 2 - Summary of nearby archaeological sites

Item name	Address	Property description	Significance	Item no.
Site of Child's Brickworks	60 Madgwick Drive	Lot 1, DP 73498	Local	A043

- **Aboriginal Archaeology:** A search has found that no Aboriginal objects, sites or places have been registered on the subject site or within a 200-metre radius of the site.
- **Vegetation:** The existing Wright College site contains areas of scattered vegetation, including large trees and landscaping. The vegetation includes a mix of European and native Flora species. A survey plan showing the location of the existing vegetation on site is at Appendix 3. The LEP mapping does not indicate that there are any threatened flora species located in the study area. The design, however, proposes to maximize retention of existing trees and outlooks.
- **Bushfire:** The main academic campus located on the northern side of Dumaresq Creek contains land that is identified as being located within a Bush Fire Prone area on Council's mapping. The Bellevue campus, located on the southern side of the creek, contains limited vegetation and is not within close proximity of any bushfire affected land. Bushfire matters will be addressed in the EIS.
- **Flooding:** On-line mapping suggests that the site is not identified as being affected by flooding. Existing stormwater management provisions are currently in place on the campus site.
- **Watercourses & Riparian Zones:** The development site is located more than 200 metres from Dumaresq Creek. The proposed development will be well separate from the riparian zones and will not trigger any Integrated development requirements.

3. Proposal Development

3.1 Background

The University of New England was originally established in 1938 as the New England University College, a College of the University of Sydney. It became fully independent in 1954. The University of New England Armidale Campus has one of the most extensive residential college systems in Australia.

The proposed new buildings, known as Wright Block, have been designed to:

- Provide on-campus student accommodation which is affordable, safe and fit for purpose;
- Meet benchmarks within the university sector;
- Ensure a strong demand for student accommodation; and
- Comply with all current regulations for building and accessibility.

3.2 Development details

The proposal is development for the purpose of UNE and includes student accommodation within the boundaries of the existing university. UNE will be responsible for constructing and operating the student accommodation.

The proposed development will be located adjacent to the existing Wright College buildings which were constructed approximately five years ago. The existing buildings currently accommodate around 200 beds across two buildings.

The development site also currently contains the Wright Centre which was the original social hub for the first Wright College complex constructed during the 1950s. The Wright Centre currently has no defined use though is occasionally used for exams. The Wright Centre is located to the west of the existing college buildings and will be demolished as part of the proposed development. New and reconfigured parking areas will be provided in this part of the site.

The new buildings, known as Wright Block, will be located on a vacant green field south of Abbott Road and north of the existing Wright College and Wright Centre buildings. The proposed development will include the construction of four (4) new buildings, being the North Block, South Block, West Block and the Hub Building.

The Hub Building will comprise of administration facilities and a community hub which will be shared with the existing Wright College buildings. The other three (3) blocks are 3 storeys in height and will deliver approximately 345 beds. A mixture of various accommodation styles is proposed as follows:

- The North Block will comprise of 103 beds and will include 9 x studio apartments, 8 x 3 bedroom apartments and 15 x 5 bedroom apartments.
- The South and West Blocks will each comprise of 121 beds and will each include 15 x studio apartments, 8 x 2 bedroom apartments and 18 x 5 bedroom apartments.

The Wright Block buildings will also include study areas, meeting rooms and breakout areas. These spaces will be used for small group study sessions, college mentor sessions, group assignment work and the like.

The accommodation provided within the Wright Block buildings will serve largely non-local students who will reside on campus full time. The new accommodation has been designed to be fully self-contained. The proposed new buildings will provide connectivity with the existing Wright College buildings. The accommodation will provide a home to students while they study, with each facility being homely and providing a feeling of community and belonging.

The proposal also seeks to provide approximately 238 new car spaces for the development site. Additionally, the proposal replaces the 46 parallel car bays currently on Abbott road, which is a one way internal road. The bulk of these car spaces will be provided within the development site with the remainder provided as 90 degree parking spaces along Abbott Road, which will be reinstated as a two internal way road.

Preliminary concept plans for the Wright Block buildings prepared by Billard Leece Partners (BLP) and a landscape concept plan prepared by Arcadia are included at Appendix 1 and 2 of this report. The plans include location/floor plans, and indicative building envelopes and heights for the proposed new buildings. Extracts from the plans are provided at Figure 5 and Figure 6 below.

It is likely that construction of the proposed development will be in stages.



Figure 5: Extract from Concept Masterplan (Source: Arcadia)



Figure 6: Extract from Site Plan (Source: BLP)

4. Environmental Planning Framework

4.1 Strategic Planning

The strategic planning documents applying to the proposed development includes the New England Development Strategy 2010. The New England Development Strategy (WorleyParsons, 2010) was prepared for Armidale Dumaresq, Guyra Shire, Uralla Shire and Walcha Councils to inform the provisions of each Council's Local Environmental Plan.

The Strategy was adopted by each Council at the time and endorsed by the Department of Planning. The Strategy has a timeframe up to 2032 and identifies where growth and change is expected to occur, as well as the land use planning objectives and strategies to guide this growth and change.

This strategic document supports the continued use of the site for educational purposes and recognises the important role the university plays in attracting people from within and outside the Sub-region.

4.2 Statutory and Non-Statutory Planning Considerations

The following environmental planning instruments (EPIs) and development controls apply to the subject site and the proposed development, but are not limited to:

- Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979;
- Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Regulation 2000;
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (State & Regional Development) 2011;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007;
- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 - Remediation of Land;
- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 - Advertising and Signage;
- Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012;
- Armidale Dumaresq DCP 2012; and
- Armidale Regional Council Engineering Design Codes.

4.2.1 EP&A Act 1979 and EP&A Regulation 2000

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (the Act) is the principle planning and development legislation in NSW. The proposed development will require consent under the provisions of Part 4 of the Act and requires an application to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

The Minister for Planning is the consent authority for State significant development (SSD). Section 4.12(8) requires preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This document requests SEARs to assist with preparation of the EIS.

It is not anticipated that the proposed development will be classified as "integrated development" under section 4.46 of the Act and therefore will not require the concurrence of an external authority.

4.2.2 Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

The Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) commenced on 25 August 2017 and sets out, among other things, to establish a scientific method for assessing the likely impacts on biodiversity values of proposed development and land use change.

Under Section 7.7 of the BC Act, a development application for Part 4 activity is not required to be accompanied by a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) unless the development is likely to significantly affect threatened species.

The impacts of the proposed development will be negligible in terms of biodiversity loss. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not have a significant impact on biodiversity values identified under the BC Act and will not trigger any requirement to enter into the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme.

4.2.3 State Environmental Planning Policy (State & Regional Development) 2011

The State and Regional Development SEPP was adopted on 1 October 2011 and identifies development or sites that are considered to be classified as SSD or State Significant Infrastructure (SSI). SSD is generally classified based on its size, economic value or potential impacts on the environment.

Pursuant to subclause 8(1)(a) and (b) of the SEPP, development is declared to be SSD for the purposes of the EP&A Act if it is deemed to satisfy the following criteria:

8 Declaration of State significant development: section 4.36

(1) Development is declared to be State significant development for the purposes of the Act if:

(a) the development on the land concerned is, by the operation of an environmental planning instrument, not permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the Act, and

(b) the development is specified in Schedule 1 or 2.

The proposed development is a type of development that is not permissible without development consent under Part 4 of the EP&A Act and is development specified under clause 15 in Schedule 1 of the SEPP as follows:

15 Educational establishments

... (3) Development for the purpose of a tertiary institution (within the meaning of State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017), including associated research facilities, that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million.

Under State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017) tertiary institution means a tertiary institution, including a university or a TAFE establishment, that provides formal education and is constituted by or under an Act.

The proposed development is for the purpose of UNE which is a tertiary institution and includes student accommodation within the boundaries of the existing university. The University of New England (UNE) will be responsible for constructing and operating the student accommodation which will also include study spaces, meeting rooms and informal learning spaces.

It is considered that the proposed development is classified as SSD for the purposes of the EP&A Act and is required to be determined by the Minister. SSD applications must be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This document has been prepared to have the project registered as State significant and request the SEARs.

4.2.4 State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishment & Child Care Facilities) 2017 (Education SEPP)

The Education SEPP contains provisions to facilitate the construction of new and/or the upgrade/expansion of educational establishment including universities. It aims to streamline approval processes to save time and money and deliver greater consistency for such development across NSW. Overall, the SEPP balances the need to deliver additional educational infrastructure with a focus on good design.

Part 5 of the Education SEPP identifies specific development controls for universities. The development will consider these specific development controls within the SEPP

Clause 45(1) of the Education SEPP provides that development for the purpose of a university is permissible with consent in a 'prescribed zone'. Any land within the boundaries of an existing university or that is zoned SP2 Infrastructure is classified as a 'prescribed zone' under Clause 43 of the Education SEPP. The subject site satisfies both these categories.

Clause 45(7) of the Education SEPP further states the following:

45 Universities—development permitted with consent

(1) Development for the purpose of a university may be carried out by any person with development consent on land in a prescribed zone.

(2) Development for a purpose specified in clause 49 (1) may be carried out by any person with development consent on land within the boundaries of an existing university.

(3) Development for the purpose of a university may be carried out by any person with development consent on land that is not in a prescribed zone if it is carried out on land within the boundaries of an existing university.

(4) Subclause (3) does not require development consent to carry out development on land if that development could, but for this Policy, be carried out on that land without development consent.

(5) A university (including any part of its site and any of its facilities) may be used, with development consent, for the physical, social, cultural or intellectual development or welfare of the community, whether or not it is a commercial use of the establishment.

(6) Development for the purpose of a centre-based child care facility may be carried out by any person with development consent on land within the boundaries of an existing university.

(7) Development for the purpose of residential accommodation for students that is associated with a university may be carried out by any person with development consent on land within the boundaries of an existing university.

Development for the purposes of student accommodation on the university campus is therefore permissible with consent under the Education SEPP.

Part 7 of the Education SEPP relates to traffic generating development. Development for the purposes of an educational establishments that will result in the facility being able to accommodate 50 or more additional students and involves either a new premises or enlargement of an existing premises is considered Traffic Generating Development. If the upgraded accommodation will increase the number of students living on site to more than

50, then the proposed development will require the DA to be referred to Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) for comment.

4.2.5 State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

The proposed development will be subject to the relevant provisions within State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007 (ISEPP).

Clause 104 of the ISEPP ensures that the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) is given the opportunity to comment on development nominated as 'traffic generating development' in Schedule 3. The proposed development is unlikely to trigger the criteria under Schedule 3 of the ISEPP but must still be referred to the RMS under Part 7 of the Education SEPP if the upgraded accommodation will increase the number of students living on site to more than 50.

4.2.6 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 - Remediation of Land

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP 55) was introduced in 1998 to ensure consent authorities took into account land contamination or possible land contamination. Clause 7 of SEPP 55 states that consent must not be granted to the carrying out of development on land unless the consent authority has considered whether the land is contaminated and requires remediation.

While the UNE campus and Wright College site is currently used for student accommodation purposes and no change of use is proposed, a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment will be undertaken to consider any potential site contamination impacts associated with the separate demolition activities.

4.2.7 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 64 - Advertising and Signage

No signage is proposed as part of the development. Any building or business identification signage not being exempt or complying development under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008*, however, will address the requirements of SEPP 64 including the assessment criteria listed under Schedule 1.

4.2.8 Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan (ADLEP) 2012

The existing UNE campus site and proposed development area is zoned SP2 – Infrastructure: Educational Establishment pursuant to the ADLEP 2012. The SP2 zone permits with consent the purpose shown on the Land Zoning Map (i.e. Education Establishments), including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to development for that purpose. Development for the purposes of student accommodation including study spaces, meeting rooms and informal learning spaces within the boundaries of the existing university is therefore also permissible with consent under the LEP.

The ADLEP's definition of educational establishments is as follows:

'Educational establishment' means a building or place used for education (including teaching), being:

a) a school, or

b) a tertiary institution, including a university or a TAFE establishment, that provides formal education and is constituted by or under an Act.

This is consistent with the definition of 'educational establishment' under the Education SEPP.

It is recognised that the provisions in the ADLEP 2012 do not apply to the site as they are otherwise overridden by the provisions contained within the State and Regional Development

SEPP as applicable to the proposal. Nonetheless, the provisions of the ADLEP 2012 will be considered in the preparation of the application.

The relevant clause of the ADLEP are provided in Table 3:

Table 3 - Compliance with relevant clauses of the ADLEP 2012

Clause	Comment
2.1 Land use zones	<p>Special Purposes Zones: SP2 Infrastructure</p> <p>Educational establishments, including any development that is ordinarily incidental or ancillary to an educational establishment are permissible in the SP2 zone with consent under the Armidale Dumaresq LEP.</p> <p>Clause 45(1) of the Education SEPP also provides that development for the purpose of a university is permissible with consent in 'prescribed zones'. SP2 Infrastructure is listed as a 'prescribed zone' in Clause 43 of the Education SEPP. Clause 45(7) further states that development for the purposes of residential accommodation for students that is associated with a university may be carried out within the boundaries of an existing university.</p> <p>The proposed development is therefore permissible with consent.</p>
2.3 Zone objectives	<p>With respect to development for the purpose of an educational establishment the objectives of the zones need to be considered.</p> <p>Objectives of the SP2 zone are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide for infrastructure and related uses. ▪ To prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure.
2.7 Demolition	<p>The demolition of a building or work may be carried out only with development consent.</p> <p>The subject application does not seek approval for any demolition works which will be undertaken separately.</p>
4.3 Height of buildings	<p>No maximum permissible height applies to the university campus site which is zoned SP2 Infrastructure.</p>
4.4 Floor space ratio	<p>No maximum permissible FSR applies to the university campus site which is zoned SP2 Infrastructure.</p>
4.6 Exceptions to development standards	<p>Flexibility is provided in the LEP for certain development standards to achieve better outcomes by allowing flexibility in particular circumstances.</p>
5.10 Heritage conservation	<p>Development consent is required to erect a building on land on which a heritage item is located. The consent authority may, before</p>

Clause	Comment
	<p>granting consent to any development require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item concerned. A heritage impact assessment will be required as part of the DA.</p> <p>The consent authority must consider the effect of the development on the heritage significance of the place and any Aboriginal object known or reasonably likely to be located at the place by means of an adequate investigation and assessment. An archaeological due diligence investigation will be required as part of the DA.</p>
6.1 Earthworks	Earthworks must not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land. Any required earthworks will form part of the DA.
6.2 Flood planning	A stormwater management plan will accompany the DA and will ensure that any adverse impacts on the land on which the development is to be carried out and all adjoining properties are avoided or mitigated.
6.6 Essential services	Services that are essential for the development, including water, electricity, sewage management, road access and stormwater are to be available.

4.2.9 Armidale Dumaresq Development Control Plan (ADDCP) 2012 and Council Design Codes

Pursuant to Clause 11 of the State and Regional Development SEPP a Development Control Plan (DCP) (whether made before or after the commencement of this SEPP) does not apply to State Significant Development (SSD).

Notwithstanding this, the relevant provisions of the Armidale Dumaresq DCP and any other Council Design Code or Policy will be considered in the design and layout of the proposed new buildings with Wright Block.

5. Impact Identification and Preliminary Assessment

The following information has been compiled to assist the Department in the preparation of the SEARs for an Environmental Impact State (EIS), which is required to accompany the proposed SSD application for the proposed Wright Block buildings.

The key environmental considerations associated with the proposed development are outlined in the following section of the report noting that where not already done so, specialist consultants will be engaged, and the required studies will be undertaken to address these issues.

The expected environmental impacts associated with the proposed development that will be assessed in the EIS for the SSDA include:

5.1 Land Use and Operation

The main Armidale Campus is an established university site located in a rural and bushland setting. Dumaresq Creek dissects the site into a northern and southern precinct. The proposed development will be located within the Bellevue Campus which is located in the southern section of the overall university site. The Bellevue Campus includes most of the residential college complexes and sporting facilities.

Large areas of open space immediately surround the existing Wright College complex. Approximately 350 metres to the north-west of the college is Dumaresq Creek. Beyond this is the main academic campus in the northern section of the site.

To the south of the proposed development site is the Earle Page College and car parking areas. Beyond this, more than 350 metres away, the land is zoned for residential purposes. To the south-west is Bellevue Oval, to the east on the other side of Elm Avenue is the Wright Village and to the west is the Robb College complex.

The existing Wright College complex currently accommodates around 200 beds across two buildings. The proposed development will deliver approximately 345 new beds within the Wright Block buildings. The new buildings will provide students with safe and fit for purpose accommodation, together with other associated amenities.

The proposed development is unlikely to impact on the surrounding land uses given the development is for residential accommodation that is consistent with surrounding development. The new buildings will have minimal impact on the existing operations of the university, whilst the new car parking areas will provide additional parking facilities to support the university.

As part of the EIS, consideration will be given to nearby land uses and potential impacts such as tree removal, drainage, vehicular movements, noise and site management. As the proposed development is consistent with the existing university operations and will operate in a similar manner to the existing facilities, the potential impact on land use is likely to be mild to moderate.

5.2 Design and Streetscape Appearance

The built form will include the retention of the college buildings and construction of four (4) new buildings, being the North Block, South Block, West Block and the Hub Building. Collectively these 4 buildings will be known as Wright Block. The Wright Centre located to the west of the existing college buildings will be demolished as part of the proposed development.

The 4 new Wright Block buildings will be located on a vacant green field south of Abbott Road and north of the existing Wright College buildings. The new Hub Building will comprise the administration facilities and a community hub which will also be shared with the existing Wright College buildings. The other three (3) blocks are 3 storeys in height and will deliver approximately 345 new beds.

The proposed scale and mass of the new buildings is generally consistent with the existing built form. The character of the Wright Block buildings will also remain compatible with the

immediate locality. As part of the overall design of the buildings, consideration will be given to setbacks, building materials, associated landscaping, internal solar access, internal privacy and visual impact.

5.3 Transport and Accessibility (Construction and Operation)

The development site is located within walking distance of the main academic campus located on the northern section of UNE, with access available via pedestrian bridges over Dumaresq Creek.

Given the cool climate, however, most people typically drive to university. Given this is a regional university most of the students also own vehicles. On-site parking is currently available as part of the College complex and is accessed via Meredith Road.

The proposal will deliver approximately 345 beds across 3 buildings. Approximately 230 new car spaces will also be provided within the wider Bellevue Campus. The bulk of these spaces will be provided at the subject development site. The remaining spaces are proposed along Abbott Road.

The proposed carparking is more than the council requirement (69% compared to 50%). A Traffic and Parking Assessment will be prepared and will accompany the SSDA. The Traffic Report will assess traffic generation from the development and its impacts on the surrounding road network. Given the parking quantities involved, a campus wide parking strategy will be developed.

There will be an increase in traffic during the construction phase. Construction vehicles will include construction and delivery trucks and a crane for lifting construction materials and equipment into position. It is anticipated that there will be minimal changes in terms of traffic generation as a result of the proposed development.

5.4 Construction and Excavation

Building and civil works will be undertaken in compliance with the BCA, a Construction Management Plan, and relevant civil plans, to minimise related impacts.

The EIS will assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction of the Wright Block buildings and where appropriate, will propose appropriate mitigation and/or management measures to minimise these impacts.

A Construction Management Environmental Plan (CEMP), outlining methods to minimise and manage the potential impacts of the construction works on the environment, will accompany the EIS.

5.5 Sediment, Erosion and Dust

The Wright College complex has been used for university purposes for many years.

Construction activities have the potential to generate wind borne dust. Dry and windy conditions will generate additional dust from exposed soil. Movement of vehicles and wind conditions will therefore need to be monitored during construction and appropriate mitigation measures will need to be implemented. Environmental management measures are likely to only be required during construction, with the operational activities unlikely to result in any adverse air impacts.

Construction of the development also has the potential to result in erosion and subsequent loss of topsoil. Excess soil from construction will need to be managed on site or disposed off-site. A soil erosion and sediment control plan will be prepared to accompany the DA.

5.6 Bushfire

The main academic campus located on the northern side of Dumaresq Creek contains land that is identified as being bushfire prone. The Bellevue campus, located on the southern side

of the creek, contains limited vegetation and is not within close proximity of any bushfire affected land.

It is considered that a bushfire assessment prepared in accordance with Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006 is not required for the proposed development. Bushfire matters, however, will be addressed in the EIS.

5.7 Noise and Vibration

The Wright College complex is an existing university facility and is well separated from any sensitive land uses or noise receivers. The nearest residential area is located more than 300 metres to the south of the development site.

Noise from within the complex has the potential to impact on the occupants of the facility. Construction noise also has potential to impact on the surrounding university facilities. It is anticipated, however, that the daily operations post construction are unlikely to have a significant impact on the surrounding area in terms of increased noise.

A Noise Impact Assessment will be prepared to consider potential construction and operational noise impacts. The assessment will consider all relevant policies and guidelines including:

- Environment Protection Authority (EPA) 2000, Industrial Noise Policy (INP)
- Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) 2009, Interim Construction Noise Guideline (ICNG)
- Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water (DECCW) 2009, Assessing Vibration: A Technical Guideline
- Development Near Rail Corridors and Busy Roads – Interim Guideline (Department of Planning 2008).

Where required the proposal will incorporate noise control measures to minimise the impact of the proposed development on existing and future occupants.

5.8 Contamination

The existing Wright College buildings are currently used for university and accommodation purposes.

A Stage 1 Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) will be undertaken by a suitably qualified consultant to consider potential contamination issues and will accompany the future SSDA. As no change of use of the site is proposed, it is not anticipated that any significant contamination issues will be identified. If required, a Stage 2 Assessment including soil sampling will be undertaken and will accompany the SSDA.

A hazardous building materials survey will be undertaken as part of the required demolition works. Any structure containing hazardous materials will be demolished by a licensed asbestos removal contractor. During construction an 'Unexpected Finds Protocol' will also be adopted to address any unexpected soil contamination.

It is considered that the proposed development will be capable of satisfying the provisions of SEPP 55 and will not pose a risk to human health or the environment in terms of contamination and is suitable for university student related uses.

5.9 Vegetation and Tree Removal

The existing Wright College site contains areas of vegetation, including large trees and landscaping, mainly around the perimeter of the existing buildings. The vegetation includes a mix of European and native Flora species.

Given the development site has been subject to development and extensive disturbance, it is considered unlikely that the site contains any significant communities or habitats. The LEP

mapping does not indicate that there are any threatened flora species located in the study area.

Based on the proposed development footprints some trees will require removal for the new buildings. Careful consideration has been given to the building footprint to manage tree retention and removal.

An Arborist Report and Landscape Concept plans will accompany the DA. Existing trees and the open landscape are an important feature of the campus. The design proposes to maximize retention of existing trees and outlooks. Measures will also be adopted during construction to ensure that all trees located outside the building footprint are protected.

5.10 Flooding and Drainage

On-line mapping suggests that the proposed development area is not located in a flood zone. Existing stormwater management provisions are currently in place on the campus site.

Redevelopment of a site, including new building footprints and additional paved areas, has the potential to impact on surface flows. Additional or changed stormwater flows can also impact on drainage regimes and downstream properties. If stormwater is not adequately managed, it may cause drainage issues on site.

A stormwater management plan, including water sensitive design, will be prepared in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines to minimise operational water quality impacts and manage downstream water. The proposed drainage measures on the site will be included as part of the EIS together with any necessary mitigation measures.

5.11 Waste Management

Waste facilities are provided for the existing college buildings. The proposed development will utilise these existing facilities and where required additional services will be provided.

Construction waste is likely to include building material, soil, concrete and similar. The additional waste generated during operation of the Wright Block buildings is likely to be minor.

An assessment of the types and amounts of waste to be generated during the construction and operation of the proposed development will be undertaken and detailed in the environmental assessment.

5.12 Heritage - European

The UNE site contains an item of European state heritage significance. The house and grounds known as "Booloominbah" (I117) are located within the main academic campus located on the northern side of Dumaesq Creek.

In addition to "Booloominbah" there are three listed local heritage items and a State nominated item located on and adjacent to the university site. These include a row of elm trees at the entrance to the university (item I072), a post and rail fence on the adjoining site (item I107), the lodge, sub-lodge, science block and shingled cottage within the northern precinct of the university (item I116) and the state nominated house and grounds known as "Trevenna" (item I235) which is also located in the northern precinct of the university. The Archaeological site known as Child's Brickworks is located to the east of the university.

Although located on the same allotment as some of these heritage items, the Wright Block buildings will not be located within the defined state listed curtilage of "Booloominbah" and is well separated from most of the heritage listed items. The Wright Block buildings will be located on the southern side of the creek and will have little contextual relationship to the heritage items located in UNE's northern precinct. The proposed development will have no physical impact on the heritage items in the northern precinct and will not visually detract from them as they are located a considerable distance from the proposed development and are separated visually by existing development and vegetation. The row of elm trees at the entrance to the university (item I072) is the only item that will be within view of the Wright Block buildings.

A statement of heritage impact will accompany the SSDA and will address issues relating to the potential impact of the proposed development on the heritage items.

5.13 Heritage - Aboriginal

No Aboriginal sites, places or objects have been identified on the university site.

Given the Wright College site has been subject to development in the past it is considered unlikely that it will be of Aboriginal heritage significance. Environmental management measures, however, will be adopted during construction in the event of any unexpected finds.

The SDRP has also recommended that the project team engage and consult with the local Aboriginal community and the on-campus Aboriginal centre to incorporate site specific histories and narratives into the design of the project. As part of the SSDA process, Aboriginal culture and heritage will be considered.

5.14 Social and Economic Impact

There is ongoing need for quality education and associated student accommodation in Armidale. The new facilities will provide long term benefits for students and will provide less pressure to provide affordable accommodation in the nearby established residential areas.

This proposal will result in positive social impacts through the provision of new purpose-built facilities. The new buildings will also provide a positive economic injection into the area and the broader region by providing additional employment opportunities through the construction phases of the development.

The future environmental assessment will discuss the existing social and economic conditions and the potential impacts of the proposed development.

6. Consultation

Consultation with relevant stakeholders including Council, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), the office of the Government Architect NSW (GANSW) and other government agencies and the local community will be carried out as part of the preparation of the EIS for the proposed Wright Block buildings. In particular, consultation is required with:

- Armidale Regional Council;
- Government Architect NSW;
- Transport for NSW;
- Roads and Maritime Services;
- Heritage Council; and
- Local Aboriginal Land Groups.

An initial meeting was held with the State Design Review Panel (SDRP) on 11 July 2018. The SDRP has provided detailed recommendations to support the achievement of a high level of design quality. The next SDRP presentation is scheduled for 17 October 2018 and will respond to issues raised.

UNE also emailed Armidale Regional Council on 28 May 2018 to inform them that the SSDA process was commencing for this project. No response was received from Armidale Regional Council. No further consultation has been undertaken.

All consultation requirements identified in the SEARs will be met by the proponent as part of the SSDA process. The EIS will confirm how and when the community and other stakeholders have participated throughout the project and how required outcomes from participation have been achieved.

7. Justification

The proposed Wright Block buildings are consistent with the local planning controls for the site and are an appropriate response to the site and surrounding area.

In summary:

- The existing University is well-established and the proposed on-campus residential accommodation will support future growth for the University and Armidale.
- The proposed educational use is permissible with consent in the subject SP2 Infrastructure zone.
- The site is capable of providing residential accommodation with minimal environmental impacts.

The proposed new facilities will provide much-needed accommodation in an area where it can be readily supported. The provision of adequate on-campus student accommodation in this locality is important given that a large proportion of students are not local to Armidale and move specifically to the area to attend UNE.

The proposed new facility will maintain employment opportunities in the area while reducing the need for local housing providers to provide affordable, convenient, short-term accommodation for large numbers of students.

Given the site's context the proponent is seeking to ensure that well designed and considered built forms can be achieved on the subject development site to provide an excellent educational experience. The proposal will allow UNE to continue to provide high quality, safe and affordable accommodation that is now expected to be delivered by education providers.



8. Capital Investment Value

The Quantity Surveyor's report provided at Appendix 4 to this report confirms the proposal's estimated capital investment value as being \$40,982,910.00.

In accordance with Clause 15 (3) of State Environmental Planning Policy (State & Regional Development) 2011, development that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million for the purpose of a tertiary institution constitutes SSD. It is considered that the proposed development is classified as SSD.

9. Conclusion

This report relates to development for the purpose of UNE and includes demolition of the existing, unused Wright Centre and the construction of 3 new residential blocks and a Hub building at the University of New England, Armidale Campus. The existing Wright College complex currently accommodates around 200 beds across two buildings.

The proposed development includes the construction of four (4) new buildings and will deliver a total of approximately 345 new beds. A mixture of various accommodation styles will be provided as part of the proposed development. The residential blocks will also include study areas, meeting rooms and breakout areas. These spaces will be used for small group study sessions, college mentor sessions, group assignment work and the like.

The proposal also seeks to provide approximately 238 new car spaces for the development site. Additionally, the proposal replaces the 46 parallel car bays currently on Abbott road, which is a one way internal road. The bulk of these car spaces will be provided within the development site with the remainder provided as 90 degree parking spaces along Abbott Road, which will be reinstated as a two internal way road.

This SEARs request outlines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development and how these will be considered and assessed in the preparation of the required EIS. The statutory framework and associated approvals required is also outlined.

A range of specialist reports will be required to accompany the EIS including:

- Architectural plans
- Landscape concept plans
- Traffic and parking assessment
- Heritage impact assessment
- Arborist report
- Geotechnical and phase 1 site contamination assessment
- Drainage concept plan.

Based on the information available at this time, the potential risks to the environment from the proposed development are presented and discussed. The future environmental assessment will consider matters that affect or may affect the environment in relation to the proposed development and where appropriate mitigation measures will be recommended.

In light of the above, the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements are now requested for the purposes of preparing the required Environmental Impact Statement.