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**Date:** 06 July 2017

**Our Ref:** PR131235

**Via:**

Attn: Caroline McNally  
Secretary  
NSW Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms McNally,

**RE: Proposed new Hurlstone Agricultural High School, Western Sydney University, Hawkesbury**

**Re: Request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)**

RPS has been engaged by Conrad Gargett Ancher Mortlock Woolley on behalf of NSW Department of Education (DoE) to assist in the planning and design of the new Hurlstone Agricultural High School (Hawkesbury) located at the Western Sydney University site.

As the proposed development comprises an educational establishment and has a Capital Investment Value (CIV) in excess of \$30 million it is categorised as State Significant Development (SSD) for the purposes of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).

In accordance with Clause 3 of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation) and Schedule 1 (Clause 15) of State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (State and Regional Development SEPP), the NSW Department of Education (DoE) requests the use of Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for a proposed new agricultural high school at Western Sydney University, Hawkesbury. The site is within the Hawkesbury Local Government Area (LGA).

The purpose of this document is to request SEARs for the purpose of preparing an EIS. This SEARS request relates only to the school and not the boarders facility, which will be a separate application.

## 1. Background

### Site Details and History

The proposal is located within the Western Sydney University site (Lot 2 DP 1051798). The address is 2 College Street, Richmond. It is located approximately 50 kilometres to the north-west of the Sydney CBD, and approximately 2 kilometres south of Richmond Town Centre (refer **Figure 1** and **2** below).

The site makes up a portion of Lot 2 and is approximately 12.2 hectares in area. Western Sydney University is located to the north east of the site. The Chesalon Nursing Home adjoins the site's north western corner. Adjoining the site's north eastern corner is the university's Microbiology department. Rural land uses adjoin the majority of the remaining site boundaries. .



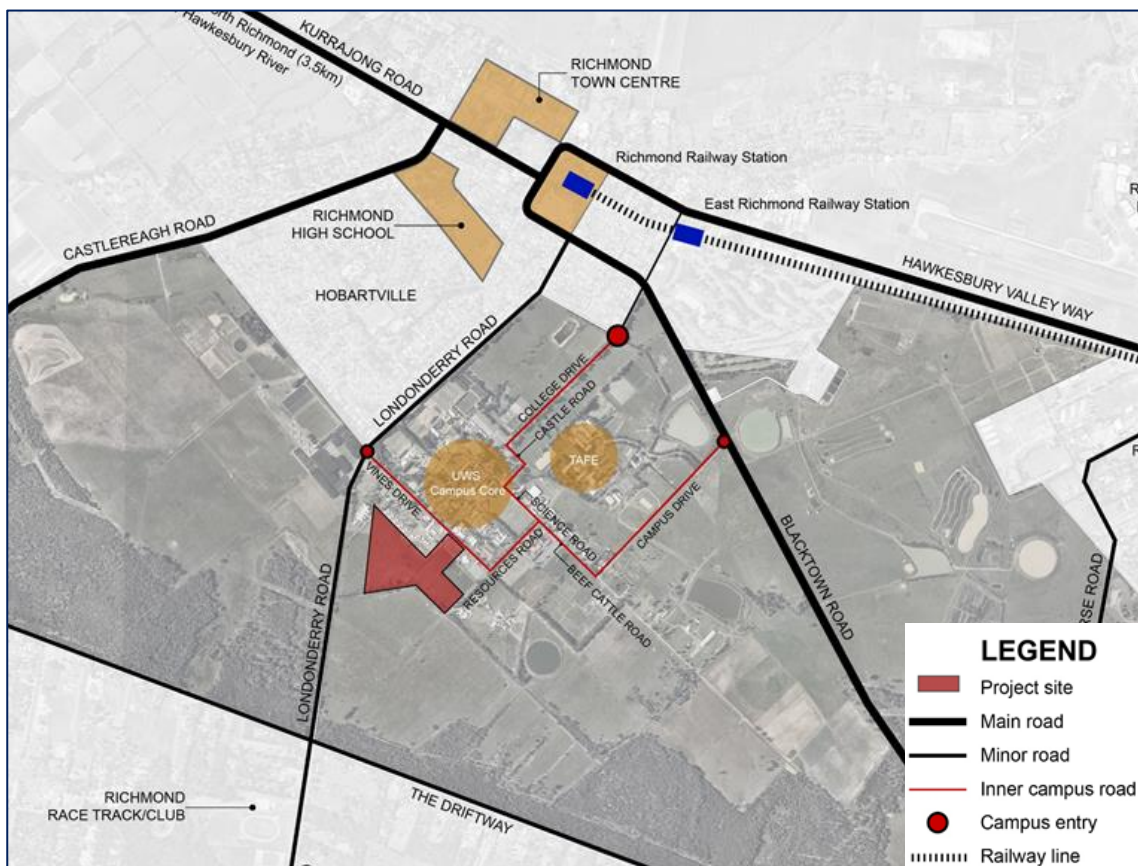
**Figure 1 Metropolitan Context Plan (approximate location of site indicated with red dot)**

Source: Six Maps



**Figure 2 Local Context Plan**

Source: Six Maps



**Figure 3 Site location plan**

Source: Conrad Gargett

### Description of the Proposed Development

The Department of Education proposes to construct a new agricultural high school for up to 1,500 students with an estimated construction budget in excess of \$30 million CIV, within the Western Sydney University site (refer **Figure 33** above).

The new high school will replace the existing Hurlstone Agricultural High School location at Glenfield. The new school is to be constructed in collaboration with Western Sydney University at Hawkesbury on the Western Sydney University campus. The new high school will have boarding facilities and will have immediately accessible and integrated university links to progress agricultural and “STEM” (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning innovation.

The school will be fully selective, will include boarding facilities, and will have access to 1,400 hectares of agricultural land suitable for learning about modern day farming practices.

It is intended that the high school will enroll its first cohorts into Year 7 and 11 in 2020. It will be fully operational from 2024. The existing high school at Glenfield will remain fully academically selective and a new name will be determined following widespread community consultation. The current school at Glenfield will continue to cater for boarders until 2022.

The Hurlstone Agricultural High School is being moved to another site and existing students are encouraged to continue their studies. In the moving of the school, the DoE will undertake extensive consultation with parents and the alumni communities to ensure the heritage aspects of the school are maintained.

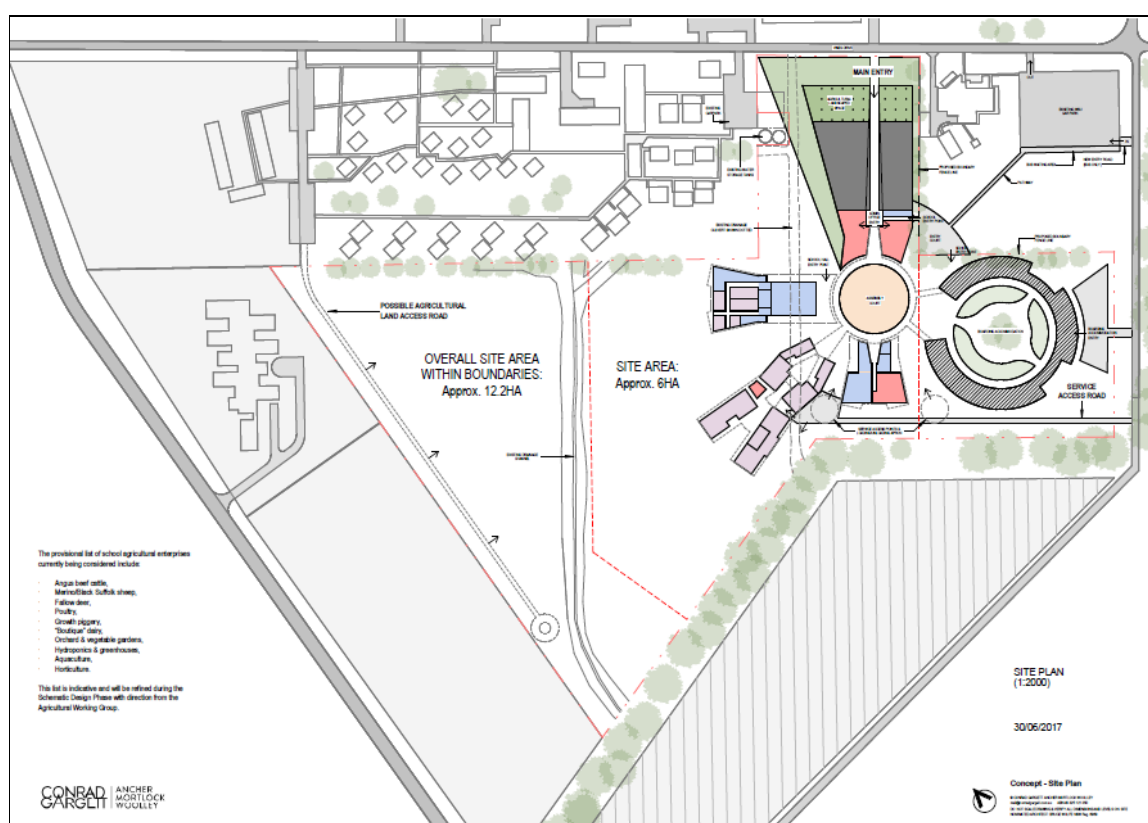


The proposed school is being architecturally designed and will take into consideration the intended purpose and character of the area. The site is not identified as being visually significant. A Landscape Plan will be included as part of the application submission.

The proposed school will have a direct ongoing social and economic benefit, by providing educational and employment opportunities to the Hawkesbury LGA as well as the broader community.

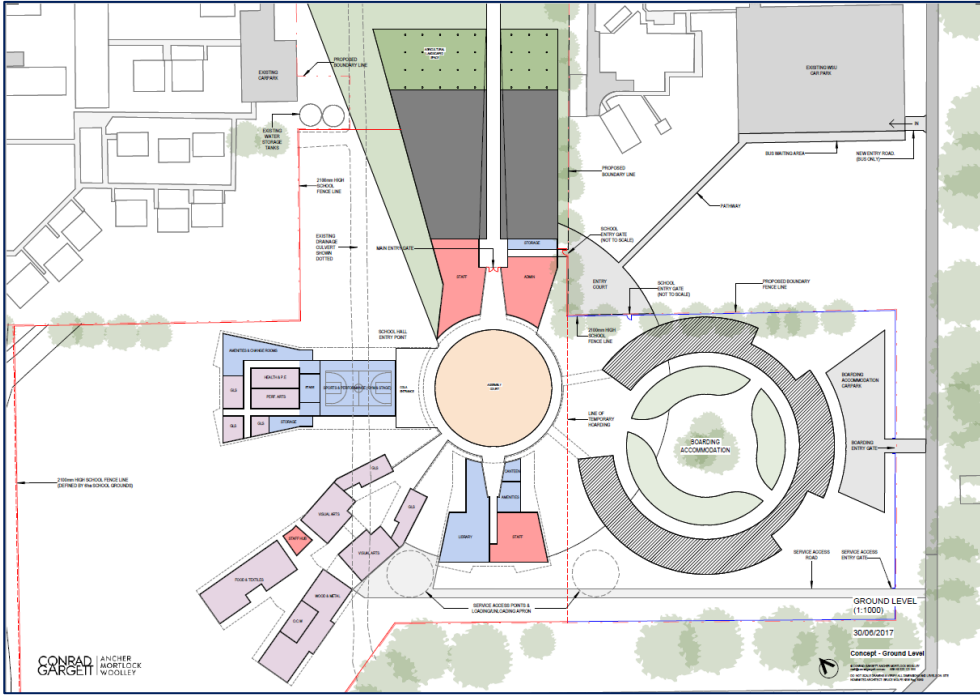
Concept Plans of the ground level, level 1 and level 2 of the proposed agricultural high school are attached and excerpts are shown below.

This SEARS request relates only to the school and not the boarders facility. This will be a separate application.

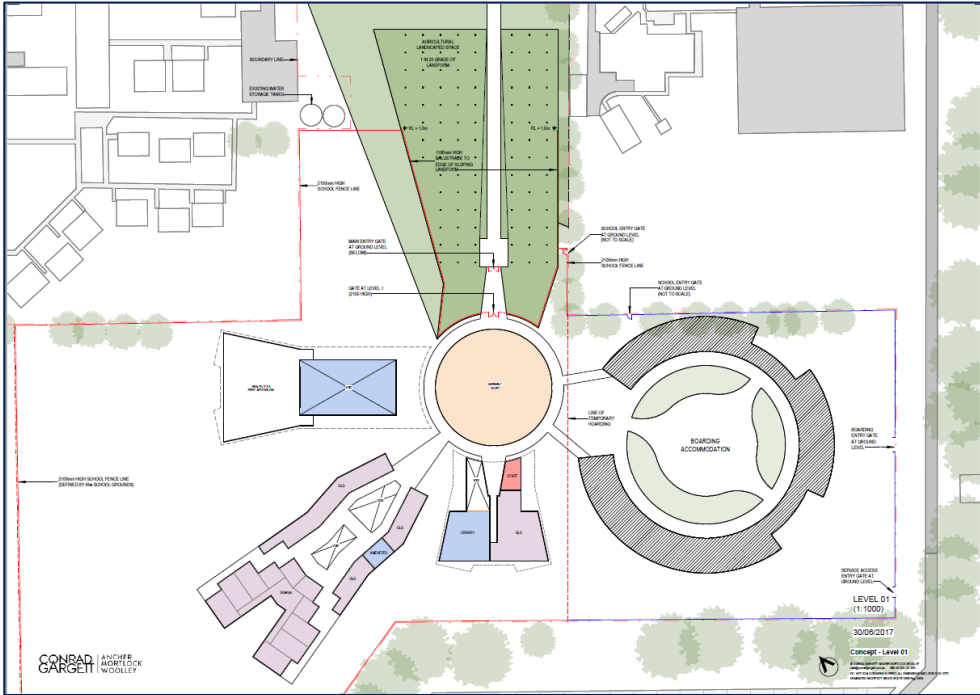


**Figure4 Ground Level Concept Plan**

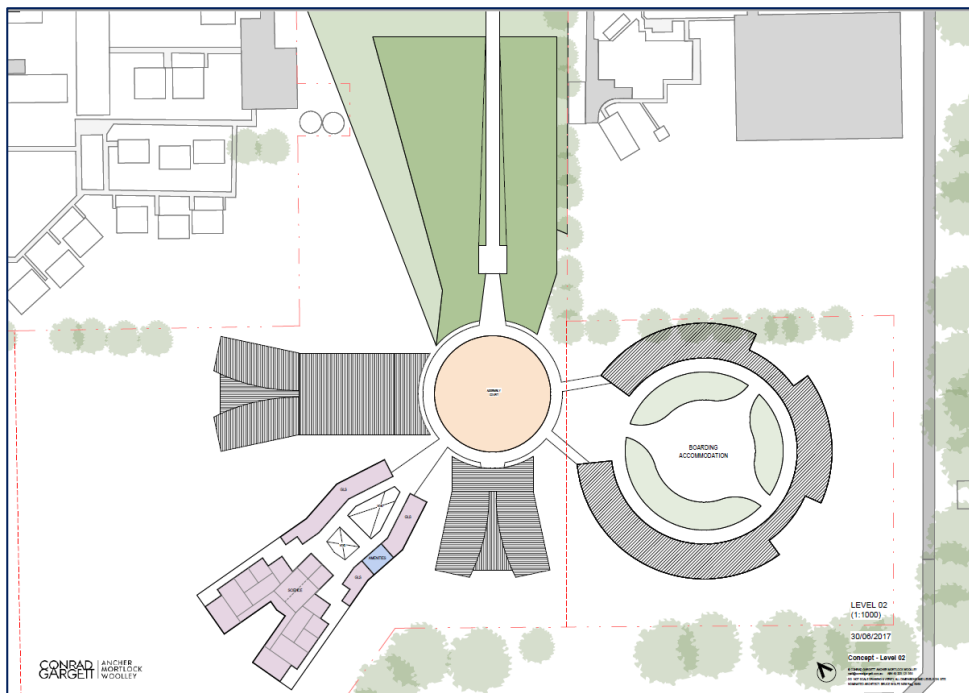
Source: Conrad Gargett



**Figure 5** Ground Level Concept Plan  
Source: Conrad Gargett



**Figure 6** Level 1 Concept Plan  
Source: Conrad Gargett



**Figure 7 Level 2 Concept Plan**

Source: Conrad Gargett

## 2. Justification

As outlined above, the new high school is intended to replace the existing Hurlstone Agricultural High School location at Glenfield. The new school is to be constructed in collaboration with Western Sydney University at Hawkesbury on the Western Sydney University campus, with integrated university links to progress agricultural and “STEM” (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning innovation.

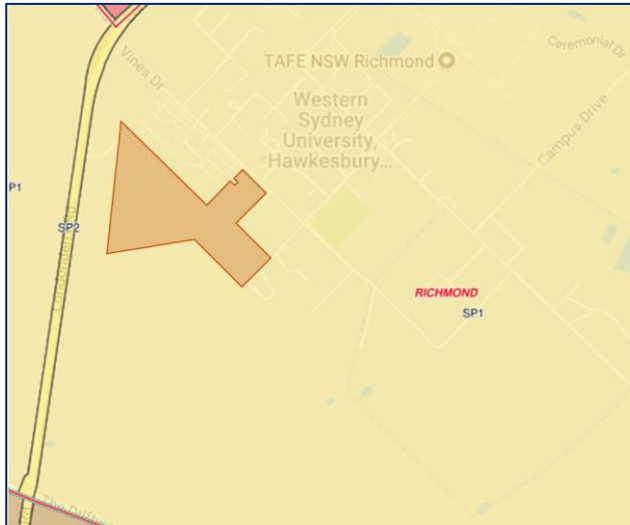
The site can accommodate a development of this nature with minimal potential conflict with surrounding development.

## 3. Statutory Planning Context

### Zoning and Permissibility

The site is zoned SP1 – Special Activities (Education) pursuant to the *Hawkesbury Local Environmental Plan 2012* (HLEP) (refer **Figure below**).

Educational establishments are permitted with consent in the SP1 zone under the provisions of HLEP. *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* (Infrastructure SEPP) provides that development for certain purposes may be carried out by or on behalf of a public authority with and without consent on land in a prescribed zone if the development is in connection with an existing educational establishment.



**Figure 8 Land Zoning Map Extract – Hawkesbury LEP 2012 (site shaded orange)**

Clause 29 (2) of the Infrastructure SEPP provides that development without consent can only be carried out where the development does not allow for an increase in:

- (i) The number of students at the educational establishment, or
- (ii) The number of staff employed at the establishment,

that is greater than 10 per cent (compared with the average of each of those numbers for the previous 12 month period). In addition, the development is not to necessitate an alteration of transport or traffic arrangements. The proposed development does not meet the criteria for consideration as development without consent.

State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 (State and Regional Development SEPP) provides (at Clause 8) for development for the purpose of educational establishments (including associated research facilities) that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million is identified as “State Significant Development” (SSD). This is prescribed within Schedule 1 of the State and Regional Development SEPP. Clause 89D(1) of the EP&A Act states that the Minister is the consent authority for State Significant Development.

## Height and density

The site is not subject to a maximum building height control or maximum FSR control under HLEP.

## Heritage

No heritage items are identified on the LEP maps as being located on the site. Heritage item I9 “Administrative block, blacksmith shop and stable square” is in the vicinity of the site.

## 4. 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.

## **Traffic and Parking**

A detailed Traffic and Parking Report will be prepared. Impacts to be addressed include:

- impacts on the road network;
- parking demand;
- public transport usage; and
- pedestrians and cyclists.

## **Heritage and Archaeology**

There are no known heritage items located on the site. As noted above, there is a heritage item in the vicinity of the site. A Heritage Impact Assessment will be required to determine any impacts of the proposed development on the nearby heritage item and the potential for impacts on Aboriginal heritage.

## **Noise**

An Acoustic Impact Assessment will be required to determine the impacts of construction and operational noise. The assessment would highlight likely impacts and identify mitigation measures.

## **Stormwater**

A Stormwater Management Report and plans will be required to provide details of the proposed stormwater system and to determine the impacts of future flows and volume on the downstream receiving environment.

## **Flooding**

The site is identified in the Hawkesbury City Council's "*Hawkesbury Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan*" (dated July 2012) as affected by the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) from the Nepean River. In addition to the regional flooding from the Nepean River, the site is also affected from a localised flooding caused by a channel/s running across the site

A Flood Study / Report will be required to identify likely flooding impacts on the site and appropriate mitigation measures.

## **Flora and Fauna**

Impacts on existing trees, proposed tree removal and the safety of all existing trees on site will need to be determined. This will require the preparation of an Arboricultural Report.

Preliminary investigations using the Department of the Environment and Energy's Protected Matters Search tool and NSW Bionet have not identified any endangered species or ecological communities on the site. If it is determined that there is the potential for impacts on endangered species or ecological communities, an Ecological Impact Assessment will also be prepared.



## Soils and Geotechnical

A Geotechnical Report will be prepared to accompany the SSD application. The site is identified within the LEP as containing Class 5 Acid Sulfate Soils.

## Contamination

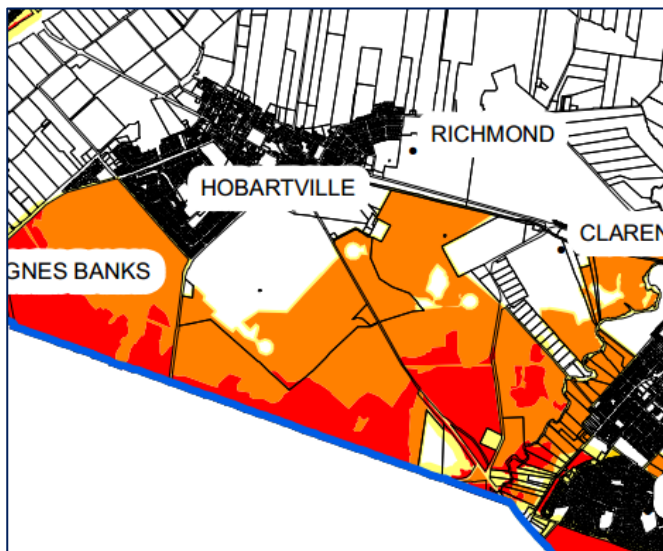
A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment will be prepared to accompany the SSD application. If the Phase 1 Assessment recommends the preparation of a Phase 2 Assessment, this will also be appended.

## Waste Management

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

## Bushfire

Some of the site may be bushfire prone land – refer Council's Bushfire Prone Land map below. If this is confirmed by a bushfire consultant, a Bushfire Threat Assessment report may be required.



**Figure 4 Bushfire Prone Land map**

Source: Hawkesbury City Council website

## Visual and Landscape

The proposed development is being architecturally designed and takes into consideration the intended purpose of the buildings and the character of the area. The site is not identified as being visually significant. A Landscape Plan/s will be included as part of the SSD application.

## Utilities and Services

Utilities information will be provided with the SSD application to advise of existing capacity and required upgrades to service the new development. Environmental impacts of any new service lines or trenches may need to be considered.

## Social and Economic

There will be direct ongoing social and economic benefits as a result of the proposed new school. Educational and employment opportunities will be enhanced within the Hawkesbury LGA.

## Cumulative Impacts

The likely environmental impacts associated with the proposed high school development will be assessed in the context of the existing Western Sydney University uses adjacent to the site, and other nearby land uses.

The potential cumulative impacts are likely to be minor. Appropriate mitigation measures recommended by specialist reporting to reduce environmental risk will be implemented by the proponent.

## 5. Strategic Planning Context

### A Plan for Growing Sydney (Metropolitan Strategy 2014)

Released in 2014, *A Plan for Growing Sydney* is the NSW Government's 20 year strategy for Sydney's metropolitan area. The plan provides key directions and actions to guide Sydney's productivity, environmental management and liveability through the delivery of housing, employment, infrastructure and open space. This is in light of the key challenges facing Sydney including a population increase of 1.6 million by 2035, and an additional 689,000 new jobs and 664,000 new homes by 2031.

In response to these challenges, the plan identifies four main goals:

- A competitive economy with world-class services and transport.
- A city of housing choice with homes that meet our needs and lifestyles.
- A great place to live with communities that are strong, healthy and well connected; and
- A sustainable and resilient city that protects the natural environment and has a balanced approach to the use of land and resources.

The strategy also outlines a number of relevant directions, namely:

**Goal 1:** *A competitive economy with world-class services and transport*

**Direction 1.10:** *Plan for education and health services to meet Sydney's growing needs*

**Action 1.10.1** *Assist the Department of Education and Communities, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools of NSW to identify and plan for new school sites throughout Sydney*

**Direction 1.11:** *Deliver infrastructure*

**Action 1.11.3** *Undertake long-term planning for social infrastructure to support growing communities*

The development of the new Hurlstone Agricultural High School at the Western Sydney Hawkesbury campus has already been identified by government for major investment.

The provision of key infrastructure, such as schools, to support growth and urban renewal and match population growth is a key action of the Plan. With the projected increase in the younger

population, the moving of the agricultural high school to the new site and redevelopment of the existing site for a new high school is important in meeting the infrastructure needs of the future.

The Greater Sydney Commission will update a *Plan for Growing Sydney* during 2017 including reflecting new policy directions of the District Plan once finalised titled *Towards our Greater Sydney 2056* is a draft update to *A Plan for Growing Sydney*, and forms chapter 2 of all the draft district plans.

### **Draft District Plan (West District)**

The *Draft West District Plan* is applicable to the site, with Richmond located in the south east of this district (refer **Figure 5**). Still in draft stage, the District Plans were on public exhibition until the end of March 2017. The plans will be finalised following review of the submissions received. The plans are designed to coordinate and align planning that will shape Greater Sydney and strengthen connections between State and local government planning initiatives.

The *Draft West District Plan* provides some key actions that are applicable to the site and its redevelopment:

#### **Action L15: Support planning for shared spaces**

*Outcome: Increase in the provision of community facilities, including open space*

##### *4.8 Responding to people's need for services*

###### *4.8.1 Education infrastructure*

###### *4.8.2 Plan to meet the demand for school facilities*

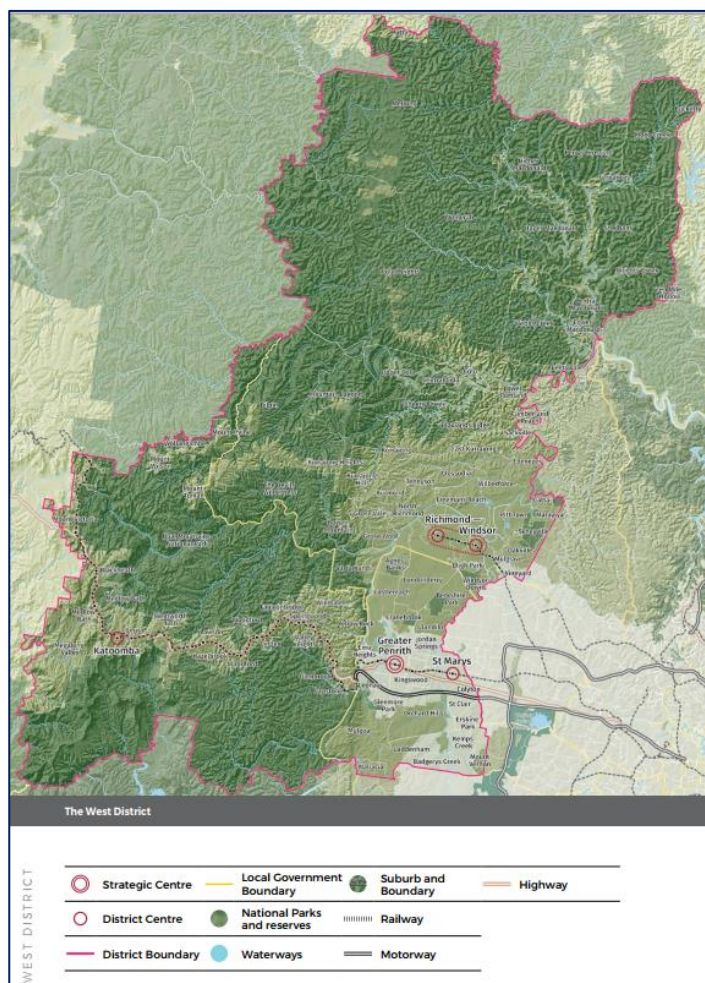
#### **Action L16: Support planning for school facilities**

*Outcome: Improved education infrastructure decision making*

The West District Plan states that by 2036, significant growth in the primary and secondary school-aged population is expected to result in an increase in school enrolments of approximately 16,000 or 28% based on the current enrolments in government and non-government schools.

The Hurlstone Agricultural High School at Western Sydney University's Hawkesbury Campus is identified in the District Plan for major investment.

Through the provision of the new high school, the ability to accommodate for the projected increase in secondary school-aged children in the area will increase, helping to prevent education shortfalls in the future.



**Figure 5 Draft West District**  
Source: Draft West District Plan 2016

## 6. Relevant Planning Issues to guide the SEARS

The EIS for the project will address the full range of relevant environmental planning issues.

The likely categories include:

- Statutory and strategic planning context, including key relevant legislation and planning instruments, permissibility and development controls and standards;
- Built form and urban design, (height, bulk, scale, amenity, connectivity, appearance, use, materials, signage etc.);
- Environmental amenity (view loss, solar access, privacy, noise etc – impacts of and upon the development);
- Traffic, transport and accessibility;
- Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) measures;
- Noise and vibration impacts;
- Survey;



- Contamination;
- Geotechnical;
- Heritage / Archaeology / Aboriginal heritage;
- Contributions;
- Staging;
- Drainage and stormwater management;
- Civil / earthworks;
- Flooding;
- Bushfire;
- Arboricultural;
- Ecology;
- Services and utilities (existing and proposed);
- Waste management (construction and operational);
- BCA/ fire safety report;
- Preliminary Construction Management Plan;
- Drawings, plans, elevations, and materials schedules;
- Landscape plan; and
- Evidence of consultation.

As the school will have greater than 50 students and access to a road, under Schedule 3 of the Infrastructure SEPP it will be a 'traffic generating development' and will be required to be referred to the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) for comment.

## 7. Consultation

Community and stakeholder consultation is crucial in ensuring the success of the project and a variety of different methods will be employed to provide information and obtain feedback from the local community.

Mace, the project managers will coordinate and lead a Programme of stakeholder management and engagement activities throughout the design and construction phases of the projects. A detailed communications plan has been developed and will be provided separately. A summary shown in table below;

**Table 1** Communications Plan

Engagement objective	Suggested activities	Proposed audience	Key project deliverable supported
Project Definition/Scoping	Preparation Document review Start-up meeting	Client and Project Team	Services Delivery Plan (SDP)

Engagement objective	Suggested activities	Proposed audience	Key project deliverable supported
Provide clarity about purpose and approach	Development of a communications and engagement strategy	Client and Project Reference Group (PRG)	Communications and Engagement Strategy
Effective integration with project team	Attend PRG meetings	Client and PRG	Meeting attendance/minutes
Enable proper planning for effective engagement	Project Management and co-ordination with corporate communications at DoE	Client Communications & Media Team	Meeting attendance, update strategy
Project information update and feedback	Community consultation workshop including concept design display	Stakeholders and affected community	Reports on feedback & interaction
Understand consent authority expectations and non-negotiable requirements of community engagement	Face to face meeting	Consent Authority	Summary report on engagement requirements for SSD / SEARs Application
Identify expectations of key stakeholders	Letter to all identified stakeholders. One on one meetings with key stakeholders Outputs from workshop and focus groups identified above	Key Stakeholders as agreed with PRG	Summary report on key stakeholders and expectations
Contribute to project definition	Prepare chapter for the project definition and concept design report based on outcomes from above tasks	Client and Project Reference Group (PRG)	Project definition and concept design consultation report
Provide information to support comments on the project Proactively manage issues as they arise	Review project risk plan Notify stakeholder groups & invite participation	All	Schematic design and statutory approval consultation report
Consultation outcomes report to support planning approval process	Reporting in appropriate format	All	Consultation outcomes report

Engagement objective	Suggested activities	Proposed audience	Key project deliverable supported
Gather and analyse feedback received during SSD / SEARs Application exhibition	Facilitate public exhibition of the SSD / SEARs Application Analyse submissions	All	Report on SSD / SEARs feedback and key issues
Show how consultation has influenced the final outcome	Reporting. Show how consultation has influenced the design, and identify reasons why ideas not carried forward have not been	Interested community and stakeholders	Detailed design consultation report

## Community Consultation

As part of the communications strategy for the project DoE engages with the local community throughout the planning, design and construction phases to obtain feedback. This consultation includes letter box drops, newspaper advertisements and community information booths. In addition, a project specific website will be developed that will be accessible to the public and will provide up to date information on the project status.

## Newspaper advertisements

Newspaper advertisements will be placed in the local paper to notify the community of the proposed development and upcoming information booths.

## Information Booths

Information booths will be held at the new school site at regular interval throughout the planning phase of the project. These sessions will provide the community with an opportunity to obtain up to date information and provide their feedback on the proposed development which may be incorporated into the design.

## Consultation with Authorities

We will engage with authorities as required. These authorities are likely to include RMS, Office of Environment and Heritage, Transport for NSW and Hawkesbury City Council.

## 8. Conclusion

The NSW Department of Education proposes the development of a new Hurlstone Agricultural High School at the Western Sydney University Hawkesbury campus, to replace the existing Hurlstone Agricultural High School at Glenfield.

The project satisfies the criteria for a 'State Significant Development' under Clause 8 of the State and Regional Development SEPP, with the CIV of the proposed educational establishment exceeding the \$30 million threshold.

The subject site is ideal for the proposal given the location in the grounds of the Western Sydney University campus, enabling accessible and integrated university links. In addition, no significant constraints to development are anticipated.

On the basis that the proposed school satisfies the criteria for a State Significant Development, the NSW Department of Education formally requests the Department of Planning and Environment to issue the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements for the preparation of the required EIS to accompany the SSD application.

Yours sincerely

**RPS**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Muir'.

Claire Muir  
Principal Planner

Attached: Conrad Gargett Concept Plans