

# GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT NEW SOUTH WALES

23 March 2022

Kate Bimson,  
Project Director,  
Master Planning  
Pymble Ladies College  
Via email –  
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@pymblelc.nsw.edu.au

**PROJECT:** Pymble Ladies College  
**RE:** State Design Review Panel – 16<sup>th</sup> March 22. Third Review

Dear Kate,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above project a third time. Please find below a summary of advice and recommendations arising from the design review session held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

The considerable work undertaken to address issues raised in the previous advice provides a better understanding of the proposal and is commended. GANSW commends the project team on the quality of their presentation and the clear rationale for proposed design decisions and changes made.

The following elements of the design approach are supported:

- The consultation with Uncle Laurie Bimson, which has provided the opportunity to deepen the school's connection with place-based stories and reinforce the students and parent's relationship with the site.
- The comprehensive landscape response to Country through the planting of endemic species, the recognition of seasonal variation, and the development of the wild edge, which has translated initial landscape gestures into a contemporary consideration of place.
- The considerable work to the façade to lessen the visual impact of bulk.
- The layered façade strategy which provides a well-considered response to the blue gum and blackbutt woodland.

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The following commentary provides advice and recommendations for the project:

## Connecting with Country

1. Consider embedding cultural practices within the school to strengthen the relationship with Aboriginal Elders and create opportunities for ongoing education, knowledge building and cultural awareness.
2. The creation of teaching and meeting spaces within the landscape to foster the relationship between people and the landscape is commended. Explore opportunities to expand this approach to the broader campus and how this rich connection might extend beyond the site to the riparian zone of the nearby Creek.
3. Whilst the D'harawal calendar was referenced in the presentation instead of the calendar for the local area, it was acknowledged that this was used to suggest a similar logic of the seasons, and to provide insight into the interconnected cycles of weather, plants, and animals.
4. As the landscape master plan is developed, investigate how areas such as the 'wild edge' might create opportunities to improve the site's ecology and biodiversity.

## Site strategy and Landscape

5. Reinforce the formal landscape approach on the north-west side of the building and the 'wild edge' along the south-eastern site boundary through the planting palette, species and hardscape materials to amplify the contrast between these landscape characters.
6. Develop the understory planting along the south-eastern edge to provide biodiversity and additional noise mitigation and visual privacy for the adjoining residential dwellings along Pymble Avenue.

## Movement and accessibility

7. The challenges of the significant level changes within the site, and particularly to the north of the Grey House Precinct are acknowledged. Given the connection to the John Reid Building has been identified in the Masterplan as a key learning spine, explore opportunities in the current and future masterplan stages to provide this as a more equitable connection.

## Architecture

8. The façade changes, including the raised brick podium, the level two recess, the upper level setback to the east, and the continuous expression of the awning will assist in mitigating the visual impact of the bulk, and are supported.
9. The development of the brick podium is positive. As the brick base is further developed and detailed, explore how the materiality and form of the brick might amplify the expression of depth and texture in the façade.
10. In addition to providing greater façade articulation, the continuous bronze awning will also provide improved sun and weather protection, which is positive.

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11. Clarify the impact of the proposal on the solar access of the adjoining properties, as this has not been clearly demonstrated. Provide existing and proposed diagrams identifying the quantum of solar access to the living area glazing and the principal private open space of affected properties to demonstrate if a reasonable level of solar access will be maintained for the adjoining properties.
12. Drawings are to be updated to include, section markers, north points, and scale bars.

The issues outlined above are to be addressed in the Response to Submissions.

Please contact GANSW Design Advisor, Liz Bowra,  
Elizabeth.Bowra@dpie.nsw.gov.au if you have any queries regarding this advice.

Sincerely,



Barbara Schaffer  
Principal Landscape Architect  
Chair, SDRP

Distribution:

NSW SDRP Panel members	Marc Deuschle, Matt Chan, Craig Kerslake, Barbara Schaffer (Chair)
GANSW Design Advisor	Liz Bowra
DPIE	Nahid Mahmud
Pymble Ladies College Willowtree Planning	Kate Bimson, Allan Stewart, Kate Hadwen Sally Prowd, Zara Bennett
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