



OUT22/3047

Department of Planning and Environment  
Major projects Planning Portal

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**Major Project - Alterations and additions to St Philip's Christian College, Cessnock campus  
(SSD-10360337)**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment for the above proposal as per your correspondence dated 21 February 2022. The NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) Agriculture provides advice to consent authorities about the protection and growth of agricultural industries and the resources upon which these industries depend.

It is understood that the proposal is a state significant development for the alterations and additions to the existing campus of St Phillips Christian College, Cessnock on RU2 (Rural Landscape) zoned land. It is also understood that a new development application is required to be submitted in accordance with the Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities SEPP 2017 to undertake the proposed additions and extensions. The College is a permitted use (defined as an educational establishment) as it is in RU2 zone (a prescribed zone) under the Education SEPP in which schools are permissible with consent.

NSW DPI considers that the proposal is aligned with strategic planning documents at the state, regional and local level and has no objections from that perspective. It is noted, however, that the proposal is sited on land mapped as Class 3 under the Land and Soil Capability Mapping which is good quality agricultural land defined as having "moderate limitations and is capable of sustaining high-impact land uses, such as cropping with cultivation". Despite the high capability of the land for agriculture, the site is already used for an education facility and the proposal will simply extend the sites current use. It is also noted that the college is undertaking agricultural courses as part of the education program and that an agricultural precinct is proposed to enable the practical application of school learning in this field. This education component is highly relevant for a school located within an agricultural area and is fully supported by NSW DPI.

It is also noted that most impacts to surrounding sensitive receptors has been addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with mitigation measures proposed. However, potential land use conflicts between rural land uses and the college have not been addressed in the EIS. In particular, the clustering of buildings to the west of the site may result in conflicts with the adjacent vineyard, west of the college. Spray drift from chemical sprays is an example of where land use conflicts can occur. NSW DPI therefore requests that the proposed alterations and additions to the College address potential land use conflicts between surrounding agricultural land uses and the college, including any mitigation measures. The following should be addressed in relation to the proposal:

- the potential for the proposed development to adversely impact local agricultural production in the vicinity.
- the potential for land use conflict between the proposed development and agricultural land uses.

- whether the proposed development will encroachment on buffers around existing agricultural land uses and if so, the solutions proposed to minimise land use conflict.
- the potential impacts of neighbouring agricultural activities on the proposed development and the measures proposed to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse impacts.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response please contact Agricultural Land Use Planner, Wendy Goodburn on 0402 069 605.

Yours sincerely



16/3/22

**Tamara Prentice**  
**Manager, Agricultural Land Use Planning**