

Operational Community Communication Strategy

In the community – for the community

Project: SSD 10444

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Operational Community Communication Strategy for Blue Gum Community School (BGCS) has been prepared to satisfy Condition E8 of the State Significant Development conditions for the project (SSD 10444) and outlines the communication procedures and mechanisms to support operations at BGCS and manage relations with site neighbours.

For the purposes of this strategy, 'the community' means adjoining affected landowners and businesses, and others directly impacted by the school's operations. This strategy does not cover operational communications aimed at students, parents or guardians.

1.1. About Blue Gum Community School

Blue Gum Community School is a small, independent, co-ed community school which co-locates a 32-place preschool on the same site as a 48-place primary school.

Blue Gum's ethos is grounded in the Australian tradition of a 'fair go' – a strong commitment to social justice, especially the right of each child to feel valued; develop a sense of belonging; and be equipped with the essential academic and interpersonal skills for success and a meaningful life with others.

The School is located at 1 Rosemead Road in Hornsby and is opening in January 2022.

1.2. State Significant Development Conditions

This Community Communication Strategy has been prepared to address condition E8 of SSD 10444, which requires the following:

Operational Community Communication Strategy
E8. Prior to the commencement of operation, an Operational Community Communication Strategy must be submitted to the Planning Secretary for approval. The Community Communication Strategy must provide mechanisms to facilitate communication between the Applicant, the relevant Council and the community (including the affected landowners and businesses, and others directly impacted by the development), during the operation of the development. The Operational Community Communication Strategy must:

- (a) *set out procedures and mechanisms for ongoing engagement with the community;*
- (b) *set out procedures and mechanisms:*
 - i. *through which the community can discuss or provide feedback to the Applicant, including the details of the relevant contacts;*
 - ii. *through which the Applicant will respond to enquiries or feedback from the community;*
 - iii. *to resolve any issues and mediate any disputes regarding rectification or compensation.*
- (c) *identify how complaints will be considered, managed and escalated; and*
- (d) *include any specific requirements around traffic, noise and amenity.*

2. BEING A CONSIDERATE NEIGHBOUR

2.1. Community communication approach and objectives

BGCS will be guided by an approach to community communication which is centred on being a considerate neighbour. The community will be treated with respect and thoughtfulness at all times.

Community communication will be undertaken in accordance with the following objectives:

- Build BGCS's profile as a considerate neighbour and maintain positive relations with the community
- Provide tailored and timely communications to the community regarding operational matters, particularly for any extraordinary activities which may be of impact
- Ensure clear and consistent messaging to the community
- Manage any operational issues, questions or concerns from the community as they arise in a timely fashion
- Address community concerns in a thorough way
- Maximise and leverage opportunities for the community to get involved in school life.

2.2. Roles and responsibilities

Staff member	Role/responsibility
Principal	Responding to general enquiries and resolving complaints; coordinating the School's response to complaints. Maintaining the enquiries and complaints register (i.e. ensuring information is up-to-date, and thorough). Drafting and coordinating content for proactive community communication, such as notifications.
All staff	Understanding and applying the protocols and processes outlined in this strategy, as required.

2.3. Who is our community?

For the purposes of this strategy, 'the community' means adjoining affected landowners and businesses, and others directly impacted by the school's operations.

Figure 1 shows adjacent landowners within a 100m radius of the site, which includes under 25 lots of residential land and two aged care housing facilities. Figure 2 shows the broader local community within a 200m radius of the site, which includes under 100 lots of mainly residential land. The distinction between adjacent landowners and the broader local community is relevant to proactive communication activities, where some communications may only need to be targeted at adjacent landowners.

Figure 1: Adjacent landowners

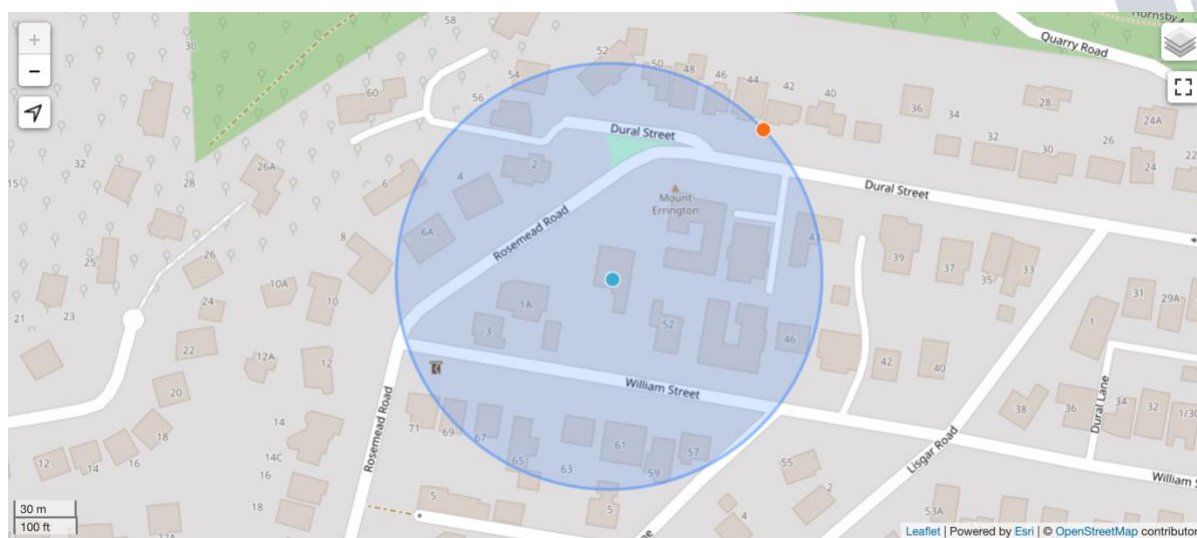
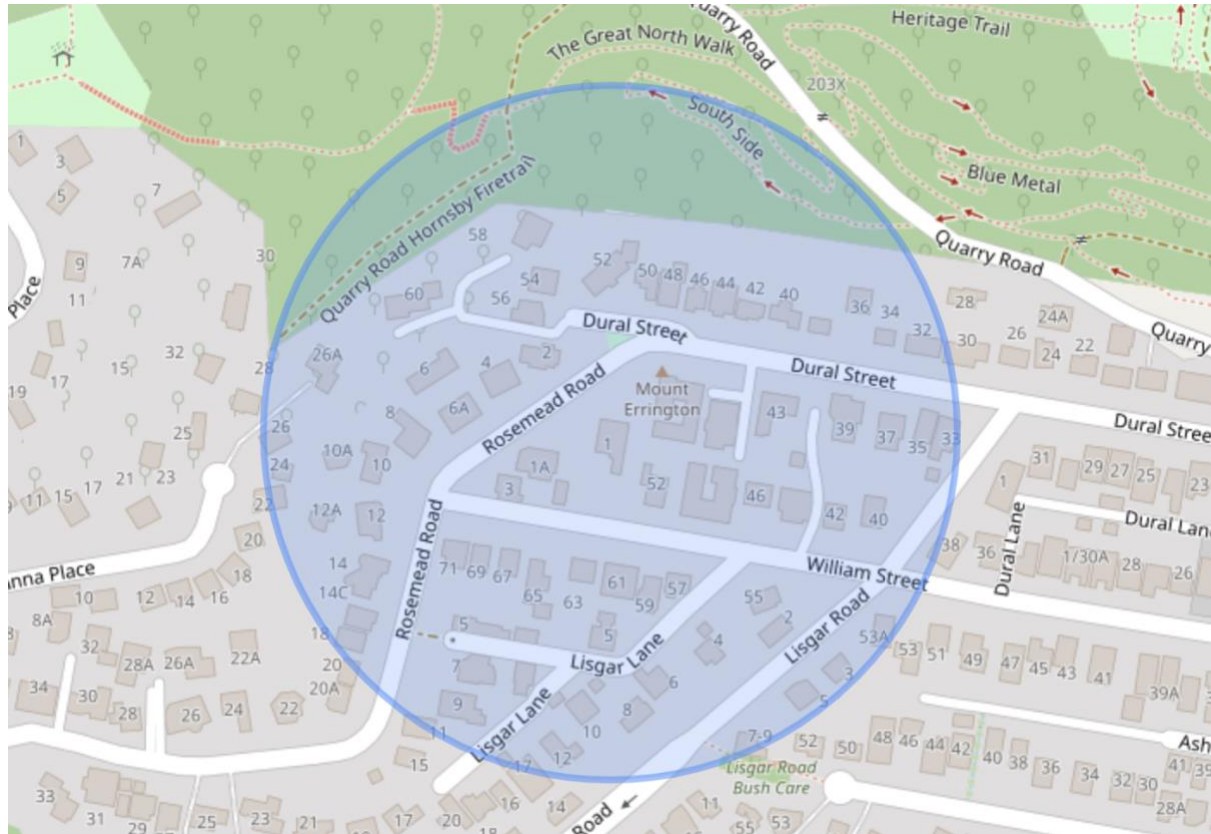


Figure 2: Broader local community



2.4. Communication tools and techniques

This section describes tools and techniques to support ongoing engagement with the community, and channels for feedback and complaints to be lodged.

Website

What / why

The BGCS Hornsby website (bluegum.nsw.edu.au) provides a comprehensive source of information for all stakeholders. It provides static content about the school as well as information regarding news and events. The website can also be a place for stakeholders to find contact details and link to the school's social media accounts.

The website has a broad audience and purpose, extending further than this strategy. It is a one-stop-shop for all information and will be updated regularly to ensure the community can feel assured they are always reading the most current information.

Letterbox and email notifications

What / why	Letterbox and email notifications will be used as the main channel for the BGCS to push out messages to the community regarding potential operational impacts. These will be sent at least five working days ahead of the relevant event/activity (unless an emergency) and clearly detail key information and where to go for further information.
Who	Adjacent landowners; and broader local community (depending on content / potential impacts)
When	As required, five working days prior to event of potential impact (unless an emergency).

Office phone and email

What / why	<p>The office phone and email address are key access points for the community to receive information and provide feedback; details are on the website and in all correspondence.</p> <p>A database of any complaints received will be kept to record the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • date and time of initial contact • contact details of community member or, if no such details were provided, a note to that effect • method by which initial contact was made • issues raised • copy/paste of email content / summary of phone conversation • copy/paste of school response
Who	All
When	Ongoing

Other online channels (General email updates, Facebook and Instagram)

What / why	Other online channels, including general email updates (to those who have subscribed via the website) and social media are used as out-reach tools by Blue Gum Community School. These channels will be used for broader purposes, but, in relation to this strategy, will complement letterbox and email notifications.
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	Social media will not be used for responding to complaints; rather, complainants will be redirected to the school email address for resolution of their concerns.
Who	All
When	Ongoing

3. MANAGING COMMUNITY ENQUIRIES, FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

This section describes the channels through which the community can lodge a query, feedback or complaint to Blue Gum, as well as the school's protocols for responding to such correspondence. Further information is provided indicating the process used to resolve issues and mediate any disputes that may arise in relation to the operation of Blue Gum Community School.

3.1. Channels

All community communication material will notify the following channels for enquiries, feedback and complaints:

Phone: (02) 9138 2019

Email: school@bluegum.nsw.edu.au

Any enquiries/feedback/complaints via other channels will be redirected to the above channels for response to ensure a streamlined approach and official response.

3.2. Response timeframes

Blue Gum Community School will manage community correspondence in a timely manner. Any correspondence received from the community, will be recorded, actively managed and resolved proactively by the school.

3.3. Complaints handling

This strategy classifies a complaint as an expression of dissatisfaction with an aspect of school operations, which requires resolution or response. Complaints are welcomed as an opportunity to improve and enhance Blue Gum Community School's position as a considerate neighbour.

Office staff will keep a record of any complaints made to the school (i.e. general enquiries will not be recorded).

Records will include details of the following:

- date/time of initial contact
- contact details of complainant or, if no such details were provided, a note to that effect
- method by which initial contact was made
- issues raised
- copy/paste of email content / summary of phone conversation
- copy/paste of school response.

3.4. Unreasonable complainant conduct

Unreasonable complainant conduct (UCC) is any behaviour by a current or former complainant which, because of its nature or frequency raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for the school or the complainant him/herself.

UCC may be divided into five categories of conduct:

- Unreasonable persistence
- Unreasonable demands
- Unreasonable lack of cooperation
- Unreasonable arguments
- Unreasonable behaviour/s.

In the case of UCC, the following steps will be undertaken:

1. Details of the alleged Unreasonable Complainant Conduct will be documented and provided to the School Principal (and School Board, as applicable) for review and investigation.
2. A determination will be made regarding how the complainant should be managed, e.g. restricting access to communications channels; limiting contact to a single; or if deemed reasonable in the circumstances, ceasing all contact. Where appropriate, the local Council and/or the local Police will be notified. The School Principal will respond to a written complaint that constitutes UCC advising the complainant accordingly.