



# **BARR PROPERTY & PLANNING**

Continual Progress

## Scoping Report

(Request for Secretary's Environmental  
Assessment Requirements)

**St Philip's Christian College Charmhaven**

Lot 2 DP 809106

Arizona Road, Charmhaven

Prepared by Barr Property and  
Planning  
for St Philip's Christian Education  
Foundation

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# 1 Executive Summary

This scoping report supports a request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to guide preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a State Significant Development (SSD) application.

The proposed development includes a new non-government school on a greenfield site adjacent to existing urban development in the suburb of Charmhaven, located within the Central Coast Local Government Area.

The State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011 provides that a new school, regardless of capital investment value, is State Significant Development for the purposes of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act.

The applicant is St Philip's Christian College Education Foundation, an independent organisation that oversees a group of schools and early learning centres across the Hunter and Central Coast regions providing education to over 4,300 young people.

The new campus would ultimately comprise an Early Learning Centre, Junior, Middle & Senior Schools, DALE Special School, various outdoor and indoor sports facilities, and a performing arts centre.

The subject site is divided by a watercourse that flows in a northerly direction across the site, creating two potential development precincts. The school is proposed to be located within the larger of these two precincts fronting Arizona Road, which forms the site's western boundary.

While the proposed school is permissible with consent under the current land use zone, a request for the site to be rezoned is proposed be pursued concurrently with this SSD application. Rezoning is required to enable:

- amendment of the boundaries of the environmental zone through the site (which do not currently align with the riparian corridor to which the zoning appears to relate),
- the application of an "Infrastructure – Educational Establishment" zoning to the western part of the site (to reflect the intended long-term use of the site as a school)
- development of the eastern part of the site for other purposes.

Potential environmental impacts of greatest relevance to the proposal include:

- Impacts to biodiversity. Several threatened flora species are recorded on site. This will trigger assessment under both the (NSW) Biodiversity Conservation (BC) Act 2016 and the (Commonwealth) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999.
- Local traffic impacts. As schools are classified as traffic generating development, a traffic impact assessment will be required.
- Mine subsidence. The site is known to be affected by historic underground mining, hence geotechnical advice and approval from Subsidence Advisory NSW will be required.



This report includes the following information:

- Proponent details
- Details of proposed development
- Overview of strategic and statutory planning context
- Summary of potential impacts
- Completed and proposed stakeholder engagement
- Indicative site master plan



## 2 Proponent Details

Landowner and Development proponent:  
St Philip's Christian Education Foundation Limited

**The St Philips Christian College (SPCC)** group of schools leads the way in 'Whole of Life' education, catering to over 4,300 students from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12. SPCC currently consists of eight schools with multiple campuses located across the Hunter and Central Coast regions.

In 2020, SPCC purchased a 40-hectare site in Charmhaven for the purpose of creating a brand new campus capable of supporting the full suite of educational offerings in the rapidly growing north Wyong district.

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## 3 Project Details

### 3.1 Description of Project

The St Philip's Christian Education Foundation has identified an existing and growing demand for quality education in the North Wyong District, which is experiencing rapid population growth – particularly families with school-aged children.

In 2020 the Foundation purchased a 40-hectare parcel of land between Arizona Road and the Pacific Highway at Charmhaven, described as Lot 2 DP 809106.

SPCC Charmhaven is proposed to commence in 2024 as a K-6 school educating an initial enrolment of 500 students, growing to be a K-12 school educating over 1,500 students.

The State significant development application will incorporate, in addition to the K-12 school:

- an Early Learning Centre educating approximately 100 pre-Kindergarten children;
- a Dynamic Alternative Learning Environment (DALE) school for students in Years 3 – 12 who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder, social and emotional difficulties or a mild intellectual disability;
- sporting fields, outdoor courts and indoor courts and facilities;
- distinct outdoor recreation areas for the different cohorts (Early learning, DALE, Junior, Middle and Senior Schools);
- a chapel;
- an 800-seat performing arts centre, with an adjoining 100+ seat “blackbox” theatre;

The estimated capital investment value for the entire school is \$204.5 million.

A site master plan for the proposed development forms Appendix A to this Scoping report.

### 3.2 Alternatives Considered

The need and justification of the project is to meet the demand for quality Christian education in the northern Central Coast area. The site needed to offer a developable area of at least 10 hectares and ideally be easily accessible from the arterial road network, proximate to urban infrastructure, and central to the population catchment that the school is expected to draw from.

The land purchased by the school meets all of the above requirements and is of a size and configuration that facilitates additional development opportunities. Another site was investigated in the same area, however it was found to be too narrow to meet the bushfire setback requirements and to provide a large enough footprint for the school.



Consideration was given to locating the school on the eastern part of the site fronting the Pacific Highway, which would maximise exposure, however this option was discounted for the following reasons:

- The presence of a second-order watercourse traversing the site limits the development footprint in the eastern part of the site – particularly with respect to the need for a large flat area for playing fields.
- Native vegetation in the western part of the site is already highly disturbed, making the land more suitable for development.
- Arizona Road was seen to be more appropriate than the Pacific Highway as the location for the school's primary vehicular access.

### 3.3 Site Details

The site is described as Lot 2 DP 809106, Arizona Road Charmhaven. The site location within the North Wyong District is depicted in Figure 1 below. The site has an area of 39.92ha, and adjoins vacant land to the north, the Pacific Highway and residential development to the east, an existing light industrial area to the south, and Arizona Road and rural residential development to the west – as depicted in Figure 2 below.

The majority of the site is characterised by intact native vegetation with a mature canopy and a dense shrub layer creating a heath environment. The site contains an unnamed watercourse flowing in a northerly direction dissecting the site into a larger western section and a smaller eastern section. The lot has evidence of disturbance in the form of numerous informal vehicle tracks throughout the site as well as illegal dumping of rubbish which can be observed in various locations. Preliminary geotechnical advice indicates that the site subsurface typically consists of very stiff residual soil to around one metre depth, which is underlain by weathered sandstone.





Figure 1: Site Location (Source, Sixmaps 2020)

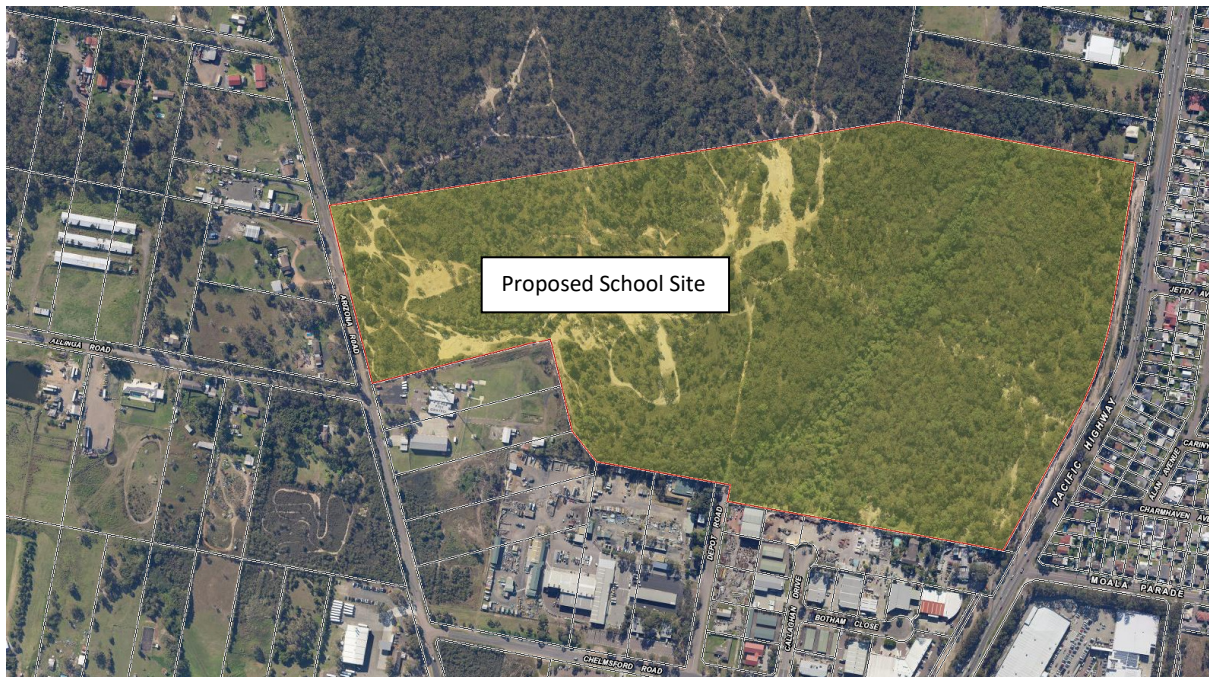


Figure 2 Development Site (Source, Adapted from Sixmaps, September 2020)



## 4 Strategic and Statutory Context

### 4.1 Statutory Context

The following legislation is relevant to the proposal:

#### Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

This is the Australian Government's key piece of environmental legislation. This Act enables the Australian Government to join with the states and territories in providing a truly national scheme of environment and heritage protection and biodiversity conservation.

#### Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979

This is the overarching legislation governing development assessment in NSW.

#### Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

The purpose of this Act is to maintain a healthy, productive and resilient environment for the greatest well-being of the community, now and into the future, consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

#### State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011

This policy provides that a new school, regardless of capital investment value, is State Significant Development for the purposes of the EP&A Act.

#### State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017

The aim of this Policy (also known as the Education SEPP) is to facilitate the effective delivery of educational establishments and early education and care facilities across the State by—

- (a) improving regulatory certainty and efficiency through a consistent planning regime for educational establishments and early education and care facilities, and*
- (b) simplifying and standardising planning approval pathways for educational establishments and early education and care facilities (including identifying certain development of minimal environmental impact as exempt development), and*
- (c) establishing consistent State-wide assessment requirements and design considerations for educational establishments and early education and care facilities to improve the quality of infrastructure delivered and to minimise impacts on surrounding areas, and*
- (d) allowing for the efficient development, redevelopment or use of surplus government-owned land (including providing for consultation with communities regarding educational establishments in their local area), and*
- (e) providing for consultation with relevant public authorities about certain development during the assessment process or prior to development commencing, and*
- (f) aligning the NSW planning framework with the National Quality Framework that regulates early education and care services, and*
- (g) ensuring that proponents of new developments or modified premises meet the applicable requirements of the National Quality Framework for early education and care services, and*



- of the corresponding regime for State regulated education and care services, as part of the planning approval and development process, and*
- (h) encouraging proponents of new developments or modified premises and consent authorities to facilitate the joint and shared use of the facilities of educational establishments with the community through appropriate design.*

*State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018*

The aim of this Policy is to promote an integrated and co-ordinated approach to land use planning in the coastal zone in a manner consistent with the objects of the Coastal Management Act 2016, including the management objectives for each coastal management area, by –

- (a) managing development in the coastal zone and protecting the environmental assets of the coast, and*
- (b) establishing a framework for land use planning to guide decision-making in the coastal zone, and*
- (c) mapping the 4 coastal management areas that comprise the NSW coastal zone for the purpose of the definitions in the Coastal Management Act 2016.*

*State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019*

The aim of this policy is to encourage the conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to support a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline.

*State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007*

The aim of this Policy is to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure across the State by—

- (a) improving regulatory certainty and efficiency through a consistent planning regime for infrastructure and the provision of services, and*
- (b) providing greater flexibility in the location of infrastructure and service facilities, and*
- (c) allowing for the efficient development, redevelopment or disposal of surplus government owned land, and*
- (d) identifying the environmental assessment category into which different types of infrastructure and services development fall (including identifying certain development of minimal environmental impact as exempt development), and*
- (e) identifying matters to be considered in the assessment of development adjacent to particular types of infrastructure development, and*
- (f) providing for consultation with relevant public authorities about certain development during the assessment process or prior to development commencing, and*
- (g) providing opportunities for infrastructure to demonstrate good design outcomes.*

*State Environmental Planning Policy No 55 - Remediation of Land*

The object of this Policy is to provide for a Statewide planning approach to the remediation of contaminated land.



### Wyong Local Environmental Plan 2013

This is the Environmental Planning Instrument governing land use within the Wyong Local Government Area. Its stated aims are:

- (a) to foster economic, environmental and social well being so that Wyong continues to develop as a sustainable and prosperous place to live, work and visit,*
- (b) to encourage a range of housing, employment, recreation, human services and appropriately located tourism-related development in Wyong to meet the existing and future needs of residents and visitors,*
- (c) to promote the efficient and equitable provision of public services, infrastructure and amenities,*
- (d) to provide for a range of local and regional community facilities for recreation, culture, health and education purposes,*
- (e) to apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development to guide future development within Wyong,*
- (f) to conserve, protect and enhance the environmental and cultural heritage (both indigenous and non-indigenous) values of Wyong,*
- (g) to protect areas of high scenic landscape value,*
- (h) to maintain and enhance the existing character, amenity and environmental quality of Wyong,*
- (i) to minimise risk to the community in areas subject to environmental hazards, including flooding, climate change and bush fires,*
- (j) to promote a high standard of urban design that responds appropriately to the existing or desired future character of areas,*
- (k) to encourage development that increases public transport patronage, walking and cycling.*

## 4.2 Wyong Local Environmental Plan 2013

### 4.2.1 Land Zoning

The site is zoned RU6 Transition and E2 Environmental Conservation under Wyong Local Environmental Plan (WLEP) 2013 as shown in Figure 3 below. It is noted that the zoning is unchanged in the Draft Central Coast Local Environmental Plan 2018 (which represents a consolidation of the Wyong and Gosford LEPs).

The objectives of the RU6 zone are:

- To protect and maintain land that provides a transition between rural and other land uses of varying intensities or environmental sensitivities.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
- To ensure that interim land uses do not have an adverse impact on the conservation or development potential of land identified for future investigation in the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan or Wyong Settlement Strategy.

The objectives of the E2 Zone are:



- To protect, manage and restore areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values.
- To prevent development that could destroy, damage or otherwise have an adverse effect on those values.
- To protect endangered ecological communities, coastal wetlands and littoral rainforests.
- To enable development of public works and environmental facilities if such development would not have a detrimental impact on ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values.

Educational establishments are prohibited in the RU6 Transition zone under the WLEP 2013. However, Part 4 of the Education SEPP provides that RU6 Transition is a ‘prescribed zone’ in which schools are permitted with consent.

As the proposed school site includes some land zoned E2 Environmental Conservation, within which schools are a prohibited use, the development is considered “partly prohibited by an environmental planning instrument”. It is noted that the E2 zoning within the site appears to be based on historic broad scale mapping and does not accurately align with the riparian corridors on the site. A more appropriate E2 zone footprint could be recommended in accordance with the BDAR and other investigations associated with the SSD application. Alternatively, it is noted that the EP&A Act provides that development consent may be granted to State significant development despite the development being partly prohibited by an environmental planning instrument.

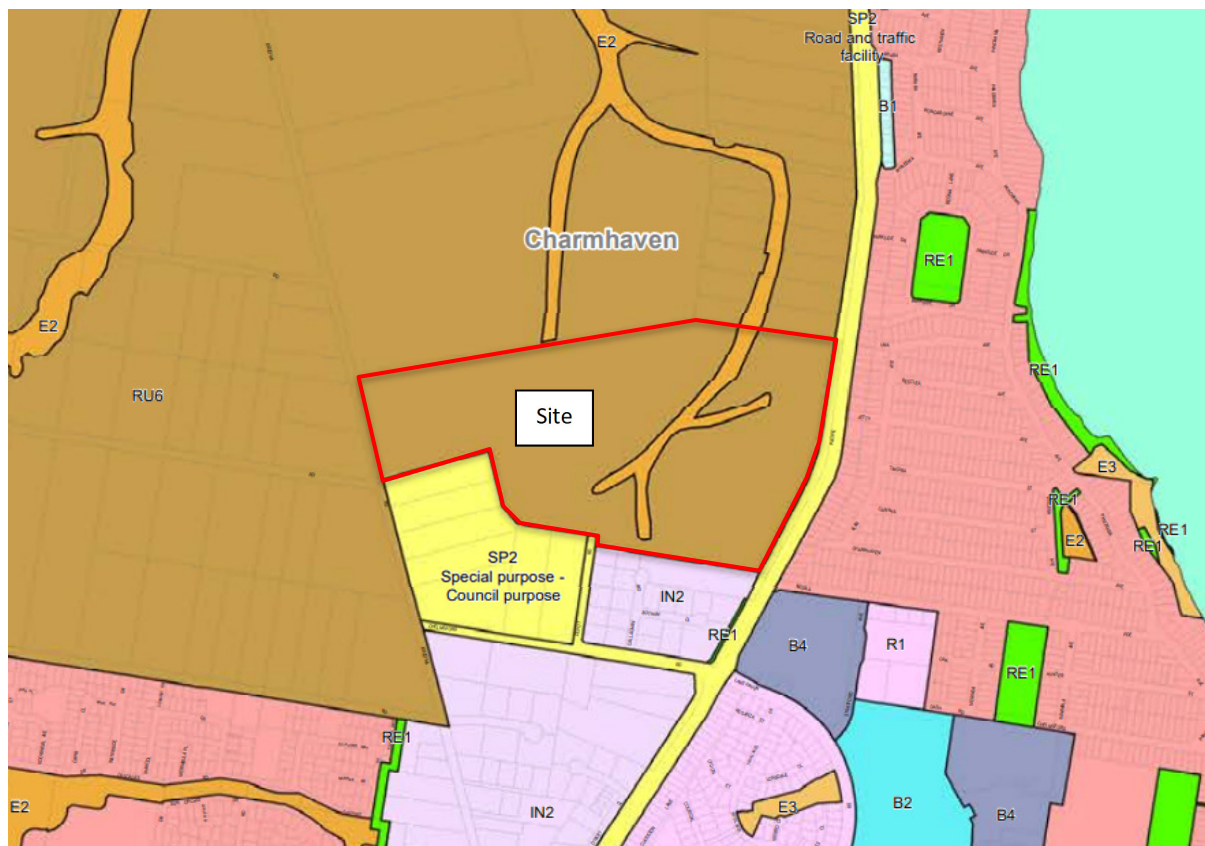


Figure 3 Land Zoning Map - Sheet LZN\_013 (Source Adapted from WLEP 2013, September 2020)





## 5 Matters and Impacts

### 5.1 Biodiversity

The site is within an area of 'high biodiversity value', as it constitutes habitat for the vulnerable plant species *Angophora inopina*. Preliminary assessment has identified that vegetation on the site consists predominantly of the plant community described as *Scribbly Gum – Red Bloodwood – Angophora inopina heathy woodland on lowlands of the Central Coast*. Vegetation within the riparian corridor of the creek consists of plant community *Broad-leaved Paperbark – Swamp Mahogany – Swamp Oak – Saw Sedge swamp forest of the Central Coast and Lower North Coast*. The condition of these plant communities ranges from high to low, and includes areas affected by recent bushfires. Parts of the site are affected by ad-hoc clearing generally associated with historic unauthorised access to the land.

Certain targeted flora surveys will need to be carried out in both Spring and Summer to cater for the different flowering times of threatened species which may be present on site. A Biodiversity Assessment Report (BDAR) will form part of the EIS for this application. While a large part of the site will remain undeveloped, it is anticipated biodiversity offsets may be required to facilitate the proposed development.

### 5.2 Traffic, Transport and Parking

The site will be accessed from Arizona Road on the west of the site. As schools generate a significant number of vehicle trips and high peaks in vehicle movements, there is a high likelihood that conditions of development consent for a school will include certain requirements for road infrastructure upgrades beyond the school's street frontage.

A traffic and parking impact assessment will form part of the EIS and will address issues relating to impacts on the existing road network and parking, arrangement of on-site parking, potential delays and peak traffic movements generated by the proposed development, as well as details of any linkages to existing and planned public transport.

### 5.3 Amenity

#### 5.3.1 Acoustic

An acoustic assessment will form part of the EIS and address potential acoustic impact on nearby properties, including adjacent tenancies to the west and any other sensitive noise receivers. The assessment will provide suitable measures to help mitigate against the potential acoustic impacts – both those generated by the school and potential impacts on the school from nearby industrial activity.

#### 5.3.2 Visual Impact

School buildings will have generous setbacks from all property boundaries and the application will be supported by a landscape master plan and visual impact assessment.



## 5.4 Risks

### 5.4.1 Bushfire

The site is located in a bush fire prone area vegetation category 1, with a vegetation buffer to running across the site from the South western corner to the northern boundary. The development will be required to meet the Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019 as development for a special bushfire protection purpose. Asset Protection Zones (APZs) will need to be established between school buildings and the hazard (i.e. bushfire-prone vegetation). The generous dimensions of the site will facilitate the creation and maintenance of APZs within the site boundaries.

The school would also require an emergency management and evacuation plan and a bush fire management plan.

### 5.4.2 Subsidence

The subject site is in a mine subsidence district. Preliminary geotechnical advice was sought to ascertain likely subsidence parameters. Structural Engineers have confirmed that the proposed school buildings can be readily designed to appropriately deal with the effects of potential mine subsidence.

### 5.4.3 Flooding

Council flood mapping indicates that the 100 year ARI flood extent is generally confined to the riparian corridor through the site and outside the proposed development footprint (see Figure 5 below).

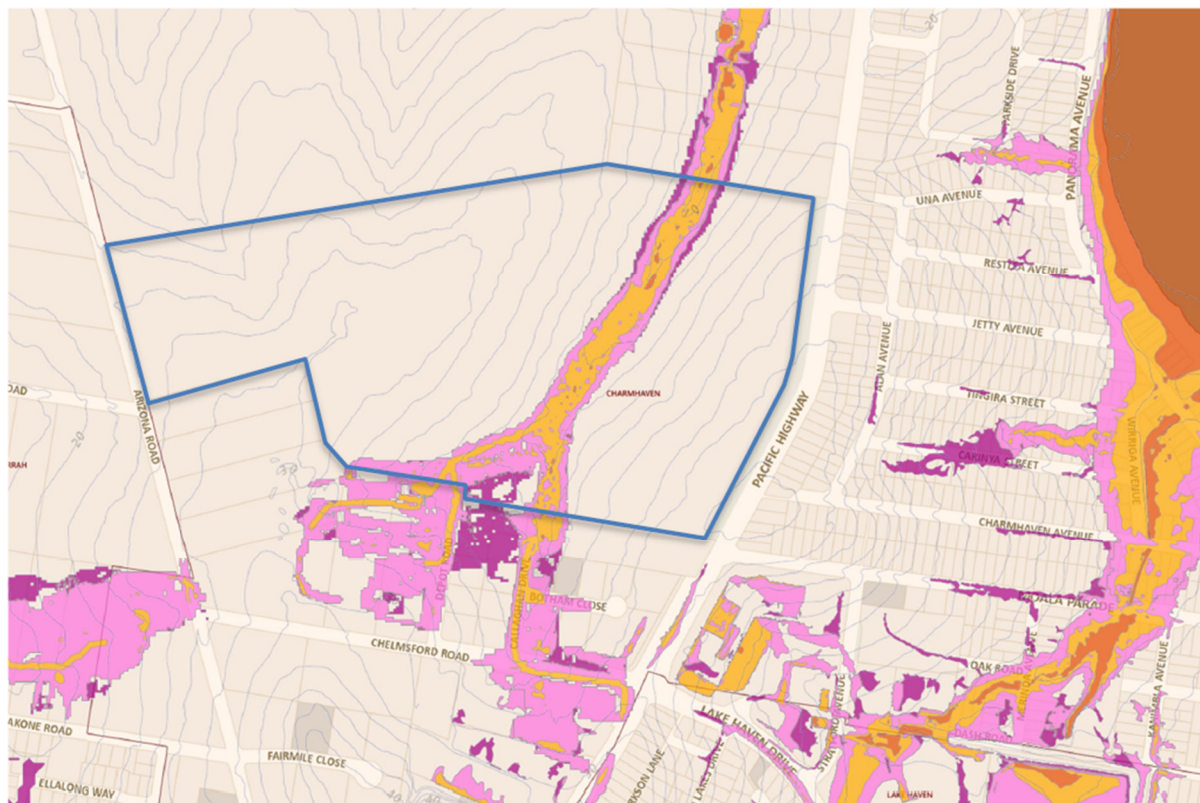


Figure 5: Flood Precincts (Source: Central Coast Online Maps)



## 5.5 Heritage

The site is not within a heritage area and there are no listed heritage items within the vicinity of the site. An AHIMs search revealed that no Aboriginal sites had been recorded in or near the site and neither had any Aboriginal places been declared in or near the site.

An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment is proposed to be undertaken as part of the EIS for the development.

## 5.6 Social and Economic Impacts

The proposed establishment of a new school at Charmhaven is based on demographic analysis which found that:

- SPCC Charmhaven is located within the Warnervale-Wadalba statistical area, which accounts for almost half (47%) of the new residential housing growth in the surrounding area, and in 2016 was home to 2,296 families with dependent children.
- Total population growth in the Primary Catchment Area for SPCC Charmhaven from 2017-2032 is forecast to be 45% (2032: 70,274; Census 2016: 48,397). Population growth in the Primary Catchment Area in persons aged 5-19 from 2017-2032 is forecast to be 49% (2032: 15,748; Census 2016: 10,518).
- The only existing independent school option within the Primary Catchment Area in which SPCC Charmhaven is proposed is Lakes Grammar (an Anglican school of 908 students in Warnervale).
- The growth in independent school enrolments over the past 10 years (at 68%) is twice as fast as the growth in Catholic schools (34%), and 17-times as fast as the Government sector.

The school, along with the proposed early education centre, will cater for children from ages 0 – 18. The development will also incorporate a DALE school – a Dynamic Alternative Learning Environment for students in Years 3 – 12 who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder, or a mild intellectual disability. Additionally, SPCC intends to establish a vocational education hub embedded in the light industrial area proposed to be developed on that part of the site fronting the Pacific Highway. This facility would facilitate delivery of the school's HSC SmartTrack program, which offers a practical alternative approach to Years 11 and 12, allowing students to complete the Higher School Certificate (Non-ATAR) in an independent adult-learning environment.

In short, the proposed development will have an extremely positive social impact in the North Wyong sub-region by providing a high quality, low-cost independent education offering to service a rapidly growing population.

From an economic perspective, the school will have a Capital Investment Value of \$204.5 million, with an initial investment of \$35 million. Total operating costs over the next 25 years are estimated at \$26 million per annum on average. On completion, the school is expected to support 125 full time equivalent jobs. The construction and ongoing operation of the school will thus provide a significant economic boost to the local and regional economy.



## 6 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

### 6.1 Stakeholders consulted prior to lodgement of Scoping Report

The school and/or their consultants have consulted with the following stakeholders prior to lodgement of this Scoping report:

Stakeholder organisation	Staff members
Central Coast Council	Director – Environment and Planning, Unit Manager – Development Assessment, Section Manager – Major Development Applications
Parliamentary Secretary for the Central Coast	Adam Crouch MP
Regional NSW	Director – Hunter and Central Coast Business Development Manager – Hunter & Central Coast
Transport for NSW	Director Development Services - Land Use, Regional and Outer Metropolitan
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment	Director – Hunter and Central Coast Director – Planning Delivery Unit Director – Social Infrastructure Assessments

### 6.2 Proposed consultation following issue of SEARs

In addition to the above, the following stakeholders are proposed to be consulted during preparation of the EIS:

- Neighbouring landowners
- State Member for Wyong
- Transport for NSW
- Subsidence Advisory NSW
- DPIE - Biodiversity Conservation Division
- The broader community (during public exhibition)



## 7 Conclusion

The proposed development of a brand new campus of St Philip's Christian College at Charmhaven will deliver high-quality, low-fee independent education to the rapidly growing northern area of the Central Coast. The school is intended to meet the increasing demand for private education and the development site is large enough to allow the school to grow into a full-service educational offering that reflects St Philip's pedagogical vision.

This report has identified the key issues associated with the proposed development to assist the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to prepare the SEARs which will guide the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Further stakeholder consultation will occur during preparation of the EIS and the public will have the opportunity to make submissions on the proposal when the EIS is placed on public exhibition.



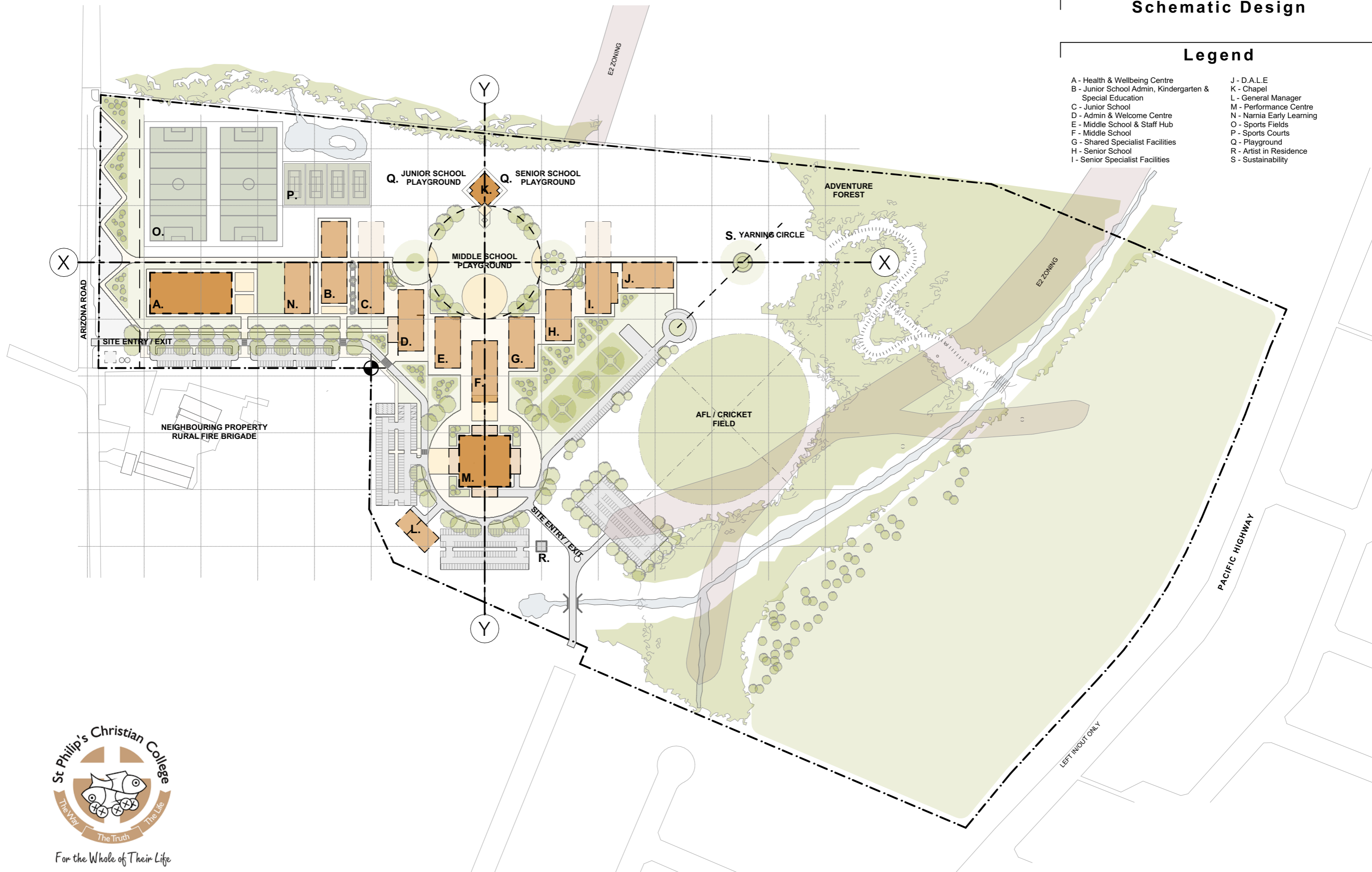
## Appendix A – Site Master Plan



# Schematic Design

## Legend

- |                                                           |                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A - Health & Wellbeing Centre                             | J - D.A.L.E               |
| B - Junior School Admin, Kindergarten & Special Education | K - Chapel                |
| C - Junior School                                         | L - General Manager       |
| D - Admin & Welcome Centre                                | M - Performance Centre    |
| E - Middle School & Staff Hub                             | N - Narnia Early Learning |
| F - Middle School                                         | O - Sports Fields         |
| G - Shared Specialist Facilities                          | P - Sports Courts         |
| H - Senior School                                         | Q - Playground            |
| I - Senior Specialist Facilities                          | R - Artist in Residence   |
|                                                           | S - Sustainability        |

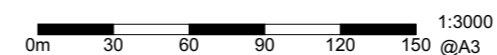


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RevG 08.02.21

### Proposed Site Plan - Wider Context

St Philip's Christian College Charmhaven  
Arizona Road, Charmhaven



**SHAC**

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