



Murwillumbah Education Campus

Social Impact Assessment

Client: School Infrastructure NSW

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background and project description

The NSW Department of Education - School Infrastructure has proposed the development of an education campus, including a primary school and high school, at the Murwillumbah High School site. The Murwillumbah Education Campus will bring together students from Murwillumbah Primary School, Murwillumbah East Primary School, Murwillumbah High School, and Wollumbin High School.

The Murwillumbah Education Campus project includes:

- » Demolition of some existing buildings
- » Refurbishment of existing buildings
- » Construction of new educational buildings and facilities that will reflect best practice and innovative education design principles.

1.2 Planning process and regulatory framework

According to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), a State Significant Development (SSD) is “...deemed to have State significance due to the size, economic value or potential impacts that a development may have” (DPIE, 2020). New or upgraded educational establishments are identified as a type of SSD.

This report is the Phase 2 SIA Report. It follows completion of a Preliminary Social Impact Assessment – Phase 1 Report that was completed and submitted to DPE in March 2021 as part of the broader request for Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

In relation to social impacts, the SEARs (issued on 5 May 2021) request that the EIS includes “a Social Impact Assessment prepared in accordance with the draft Social Impact Assessment Guideline 2020”. A Final *Social Impact Assessment Guideline* was adopted in 2021 and has been used for the purpose of this report.

1.3 Policy context

State policy context

The *NSW Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038* (Infrastructure NSW, 2018) highlights the need to ensure that school infrastructure keeps pace with student numbers, and provides modern, digitally-enabled learning environments for all students. This includes a need to “upgrade all existing permanent learning spaces to Future Learning environments over the long term”.

School Infrastructure NSW’s *2020 Delivery Strategy* (SINSW, December 2020) identifies a commitment to provide “the best learning environments at public schools across NSW to meet the needs of a growing student population”. The strategy identifies a series of new and upgraded school projects clustered into six geographic clusters of investment aimed at achieving economies of scale. The Murwillumbah Education Campus is one of those projects.

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guideline

DPE’s *Social Impact Assessment Guideline (SIA Guideline)*, and the accompanying *Technical Supplement* (2021), provide a rigorous framework to identify and assess social impacts.

Key steps of the SIA process as per the *SIA Guideline* are discussed throughout this report.

Local policy context

A review of Tweed Shire Council's key strategic documents¹ identifies that the population of the Tweed Shire Council area is projected to be in excess of 125,770 by 2036, an increase of nearly 38% on the 2016 population. Murwillumbah is identified as one of the key regional and population centres.

This means that there is a need to:

- » Continue the delivery of social and physical infrastructure, including schools, open space and community facilities
- » Cultivate a strong sense of community and feeling of safety and connectedness
- » Provide opportunities for young people by supporting education
- » Facilitate local employment opportunities including in education.

Strategic documents support shared use opportunities to enable the community to access infrastructure, such as schools, outside of school hours.

¹ Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020; Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027; Tweed Community Facilities Plan (2019-2036)

2 Methodology

This section describes the methodology that was used during to prepare this SIA. The methodology is consistent with the requirements of the DPE's *SIA Guideline* (2021). An author's declaration is provided in Appendix A.

2.1 Project establishment

Tasks included in the project establishment stage of the report included:

- » **Document review:** A review of relevant State and local strategies and policies was undertaken to inform the project's strategic planning context (**Section 1**).
- » **A site visit** conducted on 7 May 2021 to all four school sites.

2.2 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is an important aspect of SIA. In the case of the Murwillumbah Education Campus project, significant consultation was undertaken by SINSW before and during the preparation of the SIA. Details of the engagement process and findings are provided in **Section 3**.

Findings from this process were considerable and included direct feedback from the community and key stakeholders, as well as agency feedback provided during the preparation of the SEARs.

2.3 Social baseline development

The social baseline is presented in **Section 4** and involved the following tasks:

- » **Social locality definition:** GIS mapping was undertaken to determine the project's social locality. This stage provided the foundational work for the social baseline by determining the study area.
- » **Data collection:** data was sourced and organised as per DPIE's *SIA Guideline* (2021) impact categories. Data was managed to best align with the social locality; however, at times, this was not possible due to data sources and data boundaries.
- » **Analysis:** data was analysed to understand any differences within the social locality and between the social locality and surrounding areas. This enabled identification of potential areas that the project may impact.

2.4 Impact identification

Based on outcomes from engagement activities, technical reports and information about the project – expected and perceived impacts were identified (**Section 4**). Consideration was given to their nature (positive or negative), when they would most likely occur in relationship to project stages, which DPE impact category they align with (in accordance with DPE's *SIA Guideline* and *Technical Supplement*) and organised in themes for ease of discussion.

This has included a review of the SSDA package including:

- » *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment*, EMM, 11 October 2021 V3
- » *Draft SSDA Report*, Architectus, 15 October 2021 Issue B
- » *ACCESS Summary Report*, Group DLA, 19 April 2021
- » *Acoustic Assessment*, Acoustic Works, 13 November 2021
- » *Change Management Plan*, SINSW, n.d. Version 2.0

- » *Concept Design Report - 100% Submission*, Arcadia, 5 August 2021 Issue F
- » *Construction Management Plan*, Built, 2 December 2021 Rev:6
- » *Construction Traffic Management Plan*, Bitzios Consulting, 5 November 2021
- » *Consultation Report*, SINSW, February 2022
- » *Flood Impact Assessment*, TTW, 4 April 2022
- » *Educational Planning and Readiness*, SINSW, 24 May 2021 V0.4
- » *ESD Report*, E-LAB Consulting, 14 October 2021 Revision 1
- » *Final Business Case*, SINSW, 10 September 2020 0.17
- » *Final Heritage Report*, EMM, 3 December 2021 V1
- » *Green Start Buildings Pathway*, Integral, 8 June 2021 Issue 0.3
- » *Hazardous Building Materials Survey*, JBS&G, 22 October 2021 Rev A
- » *Landscape Concept Report*, Arcadia, August 2021
- » *Landscape Management Plan (Bushfire)*, BPAD, 21 August 2020 Version 1.1
- » *Landscape SSDA Report Draft*, Arcadia, October 2021 Issue A
- » *Murwillumbah Education Campus Concept Design Report*, Architectus, 5 August 2021 Issue F
- » *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, E-LAB Consulting, 2 November 2021
- » *Public Domain Plan*, Bitzios Consulting, 23 November 2021
- » *Report on Detailed Site Investigation for Contamination*, Douglas Partners, 7 June 2021 Revision 1
- » *School Transport Plan*, Bitzios Consulting, 4 November 2021
- » *Transport Impact Assessment*, Bitzios Consulting, 9 March 2022.

2.5 Impact assessment and prediction

Each impact was assessed using methods provided in DPE's *SIA Guideline* and *Technical Supplement*. These methods are detailed further in **Section 4**.

2.6 Social impact enhancement, mitigation and residual impact

Enhancement and mitigation measures were developed for each impact, in order to respectively enhance positive impacts or reduce negative impacts. Considering proposed enhancement and mitigation measures, each social impact was then reassessed to determine the social risk post-mitigation or enhancement. This process used the methods in **Section 4**.

3 Stakeholder engagement

3.1 Previous consultation

3.1.1 Previous consultation process

SINSW has conducted community and stakeholder engagement since the announcement of the project during 2020 and 2021. As described in the *Consultation Report* (DoE, 2022), engagement activities with stakeholders and the community included:

- » Project webpage launched on 28 October 2020
- » Project Reference Group comprised of the four school principals, DOE staff and project design team
- » School staff briefings
- » Meetings and workshops with P&C representatives of all schools in 2020 and 2021
- » Consultation with Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the local health stakeholders
- » Student Representative Council (SRC) feedback and sessions with each school's Aboriginal students
- » Project updates throughout 2020 and 2021, Community information hub event between 29 March and 1 April 2021 (in person), and virtual information sessions in November 2020 and September 2021
- » Online survey (15 December 2020 to 15 February 2021) distributed to the Murwillumbah Public School, Murwillumbah East Public School, Murwillumbah High School and Wollumbin High School communities, as well as the broader local community, interested parties and stakeholders. A total of 229 responses were received, more than half of which were from parents. All four schools were represented, with approximately 44% responses from people associated with Murwillumbah High School.
- » Specific engagement around the temporary accommodation of MHS during construction, including letter and information pack to school community, and workshop
- » Online survey with school communities regarding possible names for the future campus
- » Emails and call backs with the community.

A large quantity of existing consultation findings, including direct feedback from the community, was therefore available and reviewed as part of this SIA.

Findings from sessions that discussed the temporary accommodation of MHS students during construction was not made available.

SINSW held a Community Information Hub in Knox Park in Murwillumbah from Tuesday 5 to Thursday 7 April 2022. This followed the February / March 2022 floods and sought to provide updates on the project. A short summary of feedback received specifically in relation to flood levels was provided.

3.1.2 Findings

Engagement findings will be used and referred to in the impact identification and assessment sections of this report. Some general findings are however noted below.

Positive responses

Through the survey, approximately 22% thought the project had the potential to benefit Murwillumbah, noting that 30% did not answer this question and 13% were undecided. Potential benefits raised during the overall consultation period (i.e. as part of the survey and other engagement methods), included:

- » Improved local school facilities
- » Improved educational and extracurricular opportunities
- » Increased social opportunities for students
- » Local supplier and procurement opportunities
- » Shared community use
- » Heritage maintenance and protection
- » Benefits to students' wellbeing and attitudes towards education
- » General growth and added value to the town of Murwillumbah.

Negative responses

Approximately 36% of survey respondents did not think the project had the potential to benefit Murwillumbah. The most common concerns that were raised in the survey's open questions were:

- » School size, with some concerns that student-teacher ratios and class sizes will be too large
- » Consultation, with a desire for more consultation and dissatisfaction that the community was not informed during the project's proposal/early stages
- » Limited school choice in the region
- » Increased local traffic, existing limited public transport and the potential need, for some, to travel further to and from school.
- » Student wellbeing, bullying and behaviour management, with concerns that an increased number of students creates more bullying and behavioural issues, or pressure amongst students

Other concerns expressed in the survey and other engagement methods included:

- » Transition and managing change for students
- » Impacts of construction
- » Impacts on culture, community, and heritage
- » Future campus facilities and green/play spaces
- » Primary-secondary separation
- » Curriculum/subject choice
- » Closure of existing schools and sentimental attachment
- » Evidence of educational benefits
- » Impacts on wider community
- » Impacts on teachers and loss of jobs
- » Aesthetic/amenity/design
- » Future environment will not be as supportive for vulnerable and special needs students.

3.2 Engagement for this project

In addition to utilising previous findings described in Section 3.1, the following activities were conducted while the SIA was being prepared:

- » Participation in Student Representative Council meetings during Term 4 2020
- » Participation in Head Teacher and Principal meetings during Term 4 2020

- » Review of feedback received during the week of 13 September 2021 as part of a virtual room organised by SINSW – findings from this were considered as part of the SIA
- » Observation at two online stakeholder meetings with representatives of Parents and Citizens' Association meetings on 14 and 15 September 2021.

4 Social baseline

A social baseline is a summary of the existing social environment in which the project is located. The data gathered in this section acts as the baseline against which eventual social change is measured. A social baseline considers different geographic scales to understand relative social differences between areas of interest.

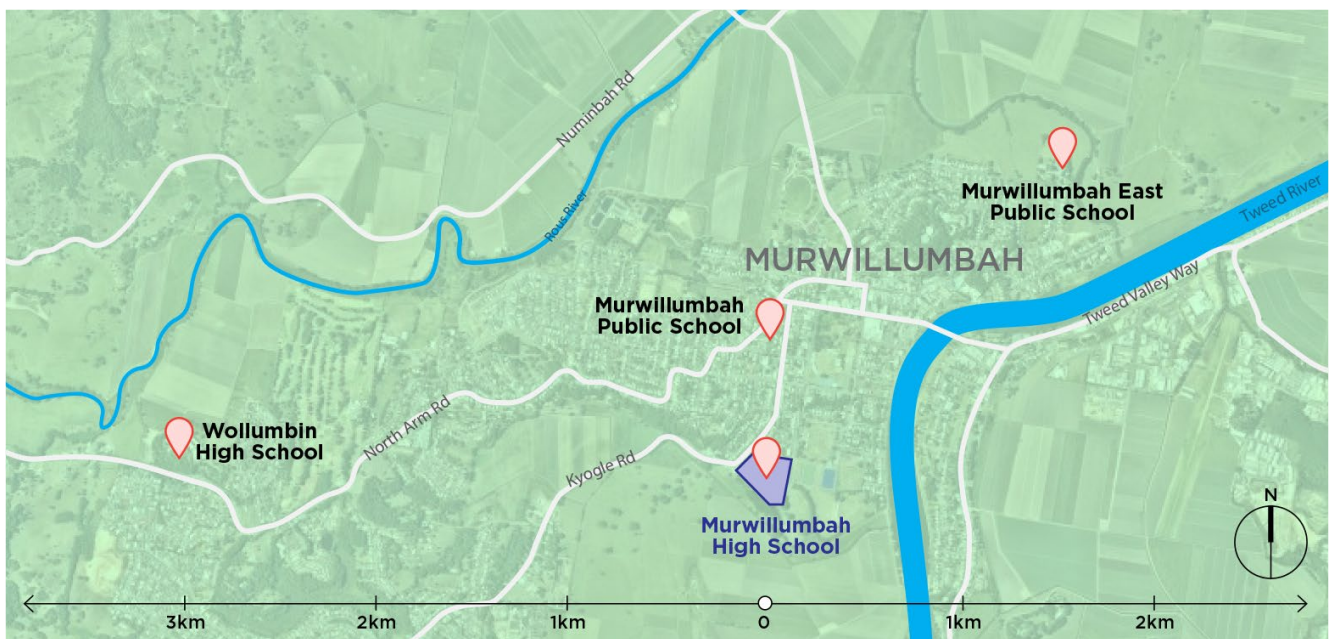
4.1 The site

The MEC Project proposes to amalgamate four local public schools, creating a K-12 campus on the site of the Murwillumbah High School. The proposed project site is located at 86 Riverview Street, Murwillumbah on land owned by the Department of Education (DoE).

As shown by Figure 1, the site is located on the edge of Murwillumbah between the suburb of Wollumbin and the town centre.

The school site is irregular in shape and has a total area of approximately 11.7ha. It is located approximately 1km from the Murwillumbah town centre and to the south of a well-established suburban area with residential properties. The site is bordered on the east, south and west by open rural landscape and is approximately 500 metres from the Tweed River. The school is bound by Riverview Street, High School Lane, Nullum Street and residential structures to the north; grassland/farmland to the west and south; and sports fields to the east.

Figure 4-1 Site location



Source: WSP, 2021

4.2 Social locality

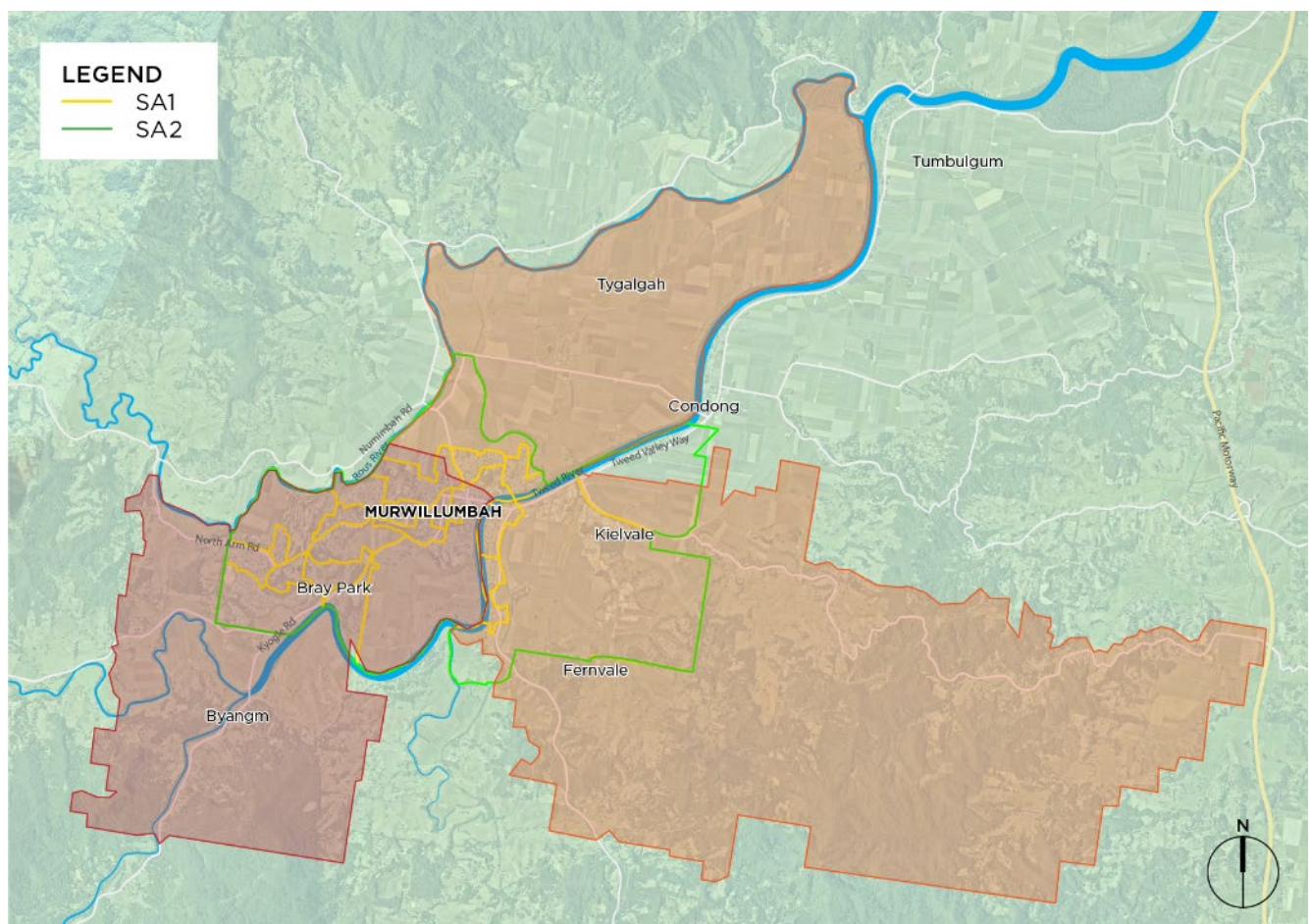
The identification of the social locality for this project has been guided by DPE's *SIA Guideline*. The *SIA Guideline* notes that there is not a standard or prescribed definition of a 'social locality'. A social locality, similar to a social area of influence, must be defined for each project considering its nature and its potential impacts.

It differs from the site location as it considers the nature and potential impacts of the project. Based on the nature and subject matter of the project (State significant and education infrastructure), the following areas have been determined as part of the social locality:

1. **The existing school communities** (students, parents, staff and other users/visitors) of the existing school sites, with the Murwillumbah High School the proposed site for the future campus, and the other three schools proposed for closure (with future use of the land still unclear)
2. **The existing school catchments**, representing the broader communities of each school:
 - » The Murwillumbah Primary School (MPS) and Murwillumbah East Primary School (MEPS) catchment areas consist of ABS state suburb (SSC) areas that make up the relevant geographic catchments. These are:
 - MPS catchment area: Murwillumbah SSC, Bray Park SSC, Byangum SSC
 - MEPS catchment area: South Murwillumbah SSC, Reserve Creek SSC, Palmvale SSC, Wardrop Valley SSC, Fernvale SSC, Kielvale SSC, Tyalgah SSC.
 - » The Murwillumbah High School (MHS) and Wollumbin High School (WHS) catchment areas consist of the wider Murwillumbah Regional SA2, which covers both school catchments. This is the closest statistical area to high school catchments. It is noted that this SA2, being a combination of the two high school catchments, will be assumed as a representation of the future catchment of the MEC.
3. **The town of Murwillumbah**, which includes all school sites and local community and can be used as a reference point to represent the local area. The Murwillumbah town area will be based on the ABS Murwillumbah Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) geographic area.

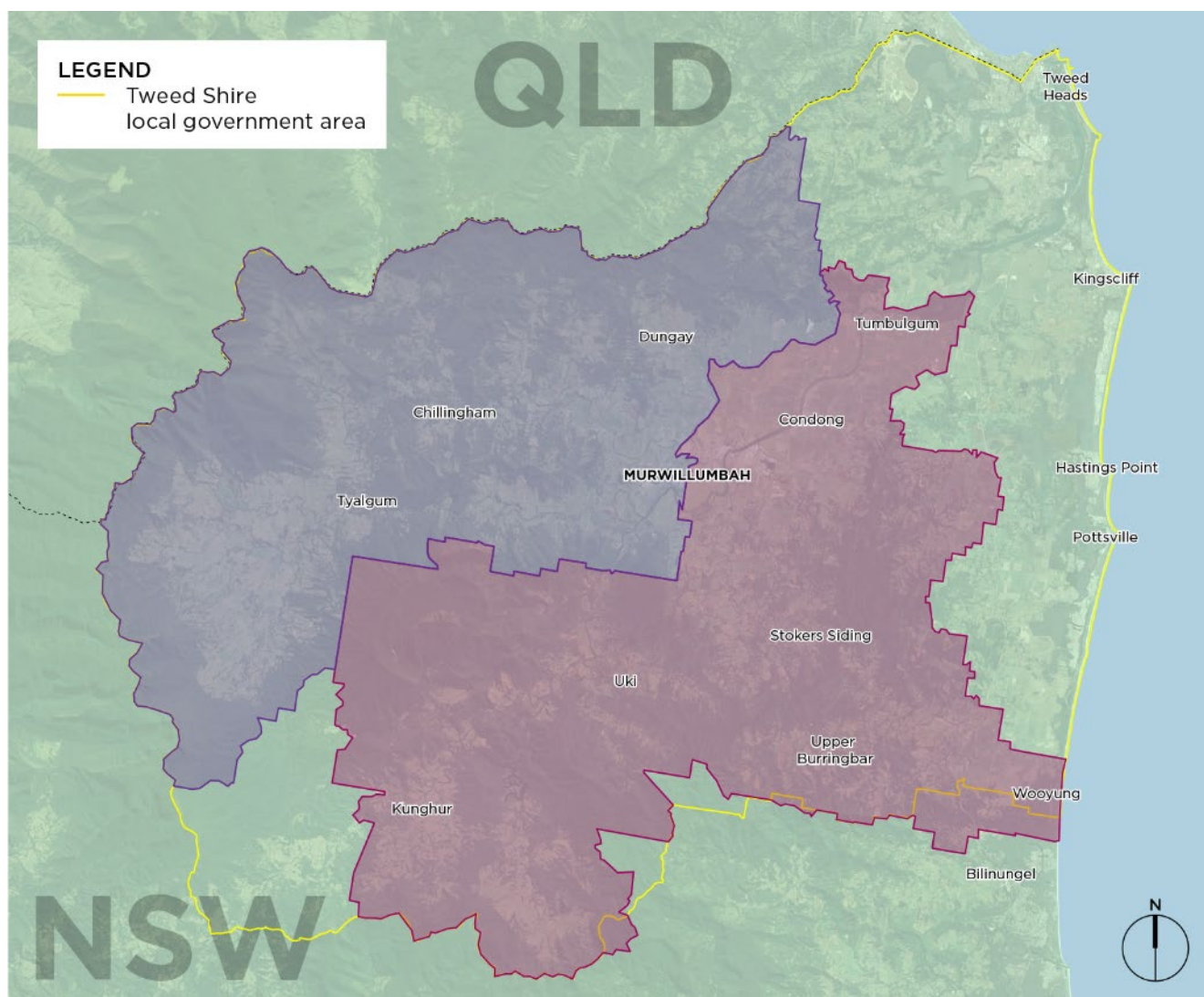
Together these geographical and statistical scales represent the social locality, as represented by Figure 2 and Figure 3 overleaf. Separate maps are provided for the two high school catchments and the two primary school catchments.

Figure 4-2 Primary School Catchments



Source: WSP, 2021

Figure 4-3 High School Catchments and LGA Boundary



Source: WSP, 2021

4.3 Baseline indicators

The *SIA Guideline* outlines eight categories to be used for identifying potential social impacts. The social baseline has organised indicators by these categories to create greater synergies between the impact assessment process and the social baseline. This is shown by Table 1 below, along with a description of data sources. Findings from technical studies were also incorporated in the baseline where relevant, as well as consultation findings.

Due to the nature of the project, the core community of relevance is the school community, which includes students and their families, staff, visitors, and users of all four schools.

Table 1 List of indicators and data sources

Category	Description	Indicators	Source
Way of life	How people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day	» Population	» ABS
		» Household composition	» ABS
Community	Composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions and people's sense of place	» Age	» ABS
		» Sex	» ABS

Category	Description	Indicators	Source
		» Type of school institution attending	» ABS
		» School enrolments	» MySchool
		» School capacity	» NSW Department of Education
		» Sense of community	» School annual reports, consultation
Accessibility	How people access and use infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by a public, private or not-for-profit organisation	» School choice	» ABS » MySchool
		» Travel modes	» School Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment
Culture	Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places and buildings	» Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents	» ABS
		» Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents students	» MySchool
		» Country of birth	» ABS
		» English proficiency	» ABS
		» Indigenous cultural values	» Heritage report, consultation
Health and wellbeing	Health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health, especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, and changes to public health overall	» Health and wellbeing	» Annual reports
		» Crime	» NSW Bureau of Crime and Statistics
Surroundings	Ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control and erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity	» Dwelling type	» ABS
		» Crime	» NSW Bureau of Crime and Statistics
		» Extreme weather	» Consultation
		» Visual amenity	» Design report, consultation
Livelihoods	Livelihoods, including people's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits	» Industry of employment	» ABS
		» Equivalised household income	» ABS
		» IRSAD	» ABS
		» Socio-education advantage and disadvantage	» ACARA

4.3.1 Community

Existing school communities

Children and staff

As shown by Table 2, current enrolment numbers were similar in both primary schools in 2020. Of the two high schools, MHS had the highest number of enrolments with 470 students in 2020, whereas WHS had 387.

It is noted that COVID-19 may have had some impact on recent enrolments, however student numbers have typically been declining yearly at all schools. Enrolments at all four schools declined between 2015 and 2020, most significantly at MEPS with a 22% decline (71 students).

Overall, teaching and non-teaching staff numbers have also decreased slightly across all four schools since 2015. It is noted that full-time equivalent (FTE) in Table 2 below includes both permanent and temporary staff.

The following table also shows that there appears to be a reasonable to significant level of capacity depending on schools, suggesting a degree of underutilised infrastructure.

Table 2 School student enrolments and teaching staff, 2015 - 2020

School	Murwillumbah East Public School		Murwillumbah Public School		Murwillumbah High School		Wollumbin High School		Totals 2020
Year	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	
Student enrolments									
Total enrolments	318	247	262	249	505	470	460	387	1,353
Capacity	-	278	-	370	-	1,160	-700*	-700*	
Staff									
Teaching staff	18	16	15	16	49	45	39	39	116
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	20	16.2	16.4	15.9	51.9	51.5	41	37.5	121
Non-teaching staff	10	8	6	5	16	14	11	13	40
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	5.9	5.5	2.6	2.5	14.7	13.8	7.2	6.9	29

Source: Myschool.edu and * source: DoE

Parents and families

Consultation revealed that each of the four impacted schools are considered to have separate school communities, both geographically and socially. Stakeholders including local parents, teachers and P&C members highlighted that the small nature of each of the local schools fosters distinct tight-knit communities consisting of students, families and staff. This was the case amongst primary school communities especially, where families typically live-in close proximity to campuses and each other. Some school community members also noted the prevalence of familial, historic and sentimental ties to schools that enforce distinct and separate school communities within the broader local and regional Murwillumbah community.

Student and parent satisfaction

Wollumbin High School

The school operates its own initiatives, such as the Wollumbin High School Podcast with 120 listeners on average per episode. Through COVID-19, the school purchased additional laptops to support families in their learning from home.

Student satisfaction: The 2020 *Tell Them From Me Survey* results indicated that 52% of students agree that they feel proud of the school.

Murwillumbah High School

No *Tell Them From Me Survey* results were available for MHS.

Murwillumbah East Public School

Parent satisfaction: The 2020 *Tell Them From Me Survey* results indicated that the majority of parents had a high satisfaction with their child's experience.

Student satisfaction: data from the *Tell Them From Me Survey* indicates that:

- » 61% of Aboriginal students feel good about their culture
- » 77% of students feel proud of their school
- » 34% feel that there is not enough shade at our school
- » 38% feel that they have a 'student voice' in the school
- » 89% feel that the canteen is a school facility that is well looked after
- » 77% feel that they display positive behaviour at school
- » 89% of students said they experienced feedback on their learning when learning from home
- » 71% of students said that they had enough resources when learning from home.

Murwillumbah Public School

Parent satisfaction: The 2020 *Tell Them From Me Survey* results indicated that 88.6% of parents felt welcome in the school.

Student satisfaction: data from the *Tell Them From Me Survey* indicates that 73% of students report feeling a sense of belonging within their school. This was a 6% increase from 2019 data.

Sources: Wollumbin High School, Murwillumbah Public School, Murwillumbah East Public School Annual Reports 2021

Visitors and users

Members of the local community identified some shared use activities at the existing MHS campus, referencing the existing green space surrounding the school that is used by residents and community members for recreational activities such as walking and informal sports.

As described in the *MEC Education Rationale* (DoE, 2021), MPS runs the following activities involving members of the broader community:

- » Choir rehearsal Tuesday nights and regional school band "drawing students from beyond the Murwillumbah cluster of schools" rehearsing every Thursday night.

Broader communities of each school and local area

Children, families and households

The population of each school catchment is of varying size, with the smallest catchment that of MEPS, with less than 2,000 people.

The proportion of children, however, remains relatively similar across all catchments, with approximately 5% of children aged 0-4 years, and between 8.8% and 9.8% of primary school aged children (5 to 11 years). Another 8%, approximately, are high school aged students (12 to 17 years). This is relatively consistent with the local township. Overall, the proportion of children in the Murwillumbah township is higher than in the LGA.

This is also consistent with the fact that the family households are the most common household type in the township (66% of all households). Out of family households, approximately 60% are families with children, and the average household size is 2.4 people.

There are no significant age group differences between school catchments, with the exception of a slightly larger proportion of people aged 85 and over in the MPS catchment, and a significantly lower proportion of people aged 70-84 in the MHS/WHS catchment areas, indicating that older populations may live closer to, or within, the township.

4.3.2 Way of life

Existing school communities

As confirmed during consultation and in the *Transport Impact Assessment*, most students who attend these schools live within the catchment areas. The WHS and MHS catchments are relatively large and encompass the smaller catchment areas of the primary schools².

Consultation identified that the physical quality of all four schools was a concern, and that school sites were outdated, tired and requiring renovation, with a general lack of refurbishments at all four campuses. The MEC *Education Brief* (DoE, 2021) identifies that

- » At least 50% of the existing high school teaching spaces and 50% of the existing public-school teaching spaces are not compliant with the current Educational Facility Standards and Guidelines, in relation to size and functionality
- » The majority of layouts do not support collaborative teaching practices and are undersized
- » The majority of buildings do not have the required information technology hardware, software and access to Wi-Fi to support future-focused learning.

Murwillumbah High School

The existing Murwillumbah High School campus was first established in 1929 as one of the first co-educational secondary schools in NSW. MHS has a strong presence in the local community, especially in the creative and performing arts and hosts an annual Arts Week event to showcase the school and broader community's talent.

The site includes buildings clustered in the north corner of the site, and fields in the south. The school buildings include 11 permanent buildings, sporting courts, sporting ovals and tennis court areas as identified in the MEC *Concept Design Building Services Report* (Northrop Consulting Engineers, 2021). The MHS campus features ample open green space and varied recreational areas, both covered and open.

The existing MHS buildings are generally described as being in varying conditions, with the library building in good condition, Building A lacking amenities, Building D in need of structural interventions and refurbishments.

Out of year 12 students that left MHS in 2020, 44% entered university, 20% entered TAFE and another 14% started employment (with another 10% seeking employment). In 2020, 15% of year 10 students and 46% of year 11 students left the school to move into post-school education, training or employment³.

² Bitzios Consulting, Transport Impact Assessment, 2021

³ Murwillumbah High School, MHS Annual Report, 2020

As described in the *MEC Education Rationale* (DoE, 2021), the school runs the following extracurricular activities:

- » Music band with rehearsals before and after school
- » Sports Excellence Program operating outside of school hours with up to 40 students. The program requires out of hours access to sports fields and courts, storage, workspace, and amenities.

Wollumbin High School

Wollumbin High School (WHS) was opened in 1995 and has remained a relatively small local comprehensive high school in Murwillumbah. The school presents itself as a high performing academic environment, with various curricular and extracurricular programs available for students to engage in. WHS has a clear focus on Indigenous education outcomes and offers various school programs to enhance the support and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through a collaborative whole-family approach. Visual arts programs are also noted as a key strength and priority at WHS (School Infrastructure NSW, 2021).

Out of year 12 students that left WHS in 2020, 40% entered university and another 33% started employment (and another 14% were seeking employment). In 2020, 7% of year 10 students and 19% of year 11 students left the school to move into post-school education, training or employment ⁴.

The school has a total of 39,000sqm of open space including an oval, courts and courtyard area (DoE).

Murwillumbah Public School

Murwillumbah Public School is a small K-6 primary school in Murwillumbah, established in 1873. The school prides itself on offering a 'family environment with the advantages of large school facilities'⁵. The guiding principles of the school focus on fostering sense of community and educating students about 'sustainable living', through recycling programs, and an on-site school farm.

As described in the *MEC Education Rationale* (DoE, 2021), the school runs a music band with rehearsals before and after school with up to 80 students. The special programs room is utilised at full capacity 4 days a week. The school has also recently started operating an out of school hour care (OSHC) service due to high demand.

On its website, the school describes itself as "leading the way" in providing advanced levels of technology and best teaching and learning practices, including with "ultra-modern teaching and learning spaces" with "flexible seating arrangement" and "future focused learning spaces"⁶.

The school has a total of 3,400sqm of open space including an oval and other play space (DoE).

Murwillumbah East Public School

Murwillumbah East Public School is a K-6 primary school first opened in 1958. A key goal of MEPS is to provide an educational environment that supports diversity amongst students, teachers and families. The school provides a range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students to engage in, including academic, sporting and creative programs, as well as a special education unit for students who require additional support.

As described in the *MEC Education Rationale* (DoE, 2021), the school has also recently started operating an out of school hour care (OSHC) service due to high demand.

The impacts of 2017 flooding at MEPS which damaged the school library and several classrooms was a key issue expressed during consultation. Demountable buildings were installed at the school immediately following the 2017 flood event to allow students to return to learning on site. The school is currently using eight demountable classrooms, including one for the library and three for support classes. The February / March 2022 floods have placed further pressure on MEPS, with damage in both permanent and demountable structures, including classrooms, library, canteen, administrative spaces and student toilets. The school was cleared and cleaned with a return to operations on 17 March 2022. Work is underway to repair and remediate impacted spaces.

⁴ Wollumbin High School, WHS Annual Report, 2020

⁵ SINSW, Murwillumbah Public School, <https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/schools/2/2687.html>

⁶ Murwillumbah Public School, About our school, <https://murwillumb-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/about-our-school/computer-studies.html>

Broader communities of each school and local area

Compared to other school catchments, the MPS catchment area has the highest proportion of children attending preschool and primary school (10.9%), as well as the highest proportion of individuals attending primary school, and tertiary education institutions. However, the proportion of students receiving primary, secondary and tertiary education was similar across all catchments, and WHS and MHS catchment had a slightly lower proportion of children in preschool and primary school (9.3%). A higher proportion of students attended government primary and secondary schools in comparison to catholic and other non-government schools across all catchments.

In the town of Murwillumbah there are two non-government primary schools, one non-government secondary school, and three non-government combined schools as described in Table 3.

Table 3 Non-government primary schools in Murwillumbah, 2020

School	School type	Year range	Enrolments
Mount St Patrick College	Catholic - Secondary	7 – 12	804
Mount St Patrick Primary School	Catholic – Primary	K-6	360
Sathya Sai College	Non-denominational – Combined	K-11	246
St Joseph's Primary School	Catholic – Primary	K-6	136
The Small School	Non-denominational – Combined	K-5	25
Tweed Valley Adventist College	Seventh-day Adventist – Combined	K-12	244

Source: Myschool.edu

Across all school catchments, a significantly higher proportion of residents have completed Year 10 than those that have completed Year 12. This is consistent with both the broader Murwillumbah SA2 region, and the Tweed Shire LGA. There is a TAFE campus in the Murwillumbah town centre that offers a range of technical and tertiary courses. Murwillumbah Community College also offers training, lifestyle and leisure courses for adult education.

4.3.3 Culture

Existing school communities

As shown by Table 4, the school with the highest proportion of Indigenous students was MPS, with WHS having the lowest. Since 2015, Indigenous student enrolment has remained similar, increasing slightly at MPS and MHS and decreasing slightly at MEPS.

The school with the highest proportion of students with a language background other than English was MEPS, and enrolments amongst this group have increased across all schools since 2015.

Indigenous students and students with a language background other than English may represent more vulnerable or marginalised groups within the school community.

Table 4 School enrolment cultural indicators, 2015 - 2020

School	Murwillumbah East Public School		Murwillumbah Public School		Murwillumbah High School		Wollumbin High School	
Year	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020
Student enrolments								
Indigenous students	12%	11%	11%	12%	7%	11%	7%	7%
Language background other than English	8%	11%	5%	6%	4%	8%	7%	8%

Source: Myschool.edu

MHS

The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report* (EMM Consulting, 2021) identified 18 Aboriginal stakeholder organisations/Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs), of which five were interested in the project and four were directly engaged in the field investigation. Discussions with RAPs identified the potential presence of 'red soils of the Cudgen soil landscape' in the area, which would connect the site to the 'Young Man and the Kangaroo Dreaming story'. While EMM assess that it is unlikely that the red soils of the Cudgen soil landscape are present this cannot be confirmed until removal of the structures and carparks occurs. MHS was also deemed to fall within the broader Aboriginal cultural landscape of Murwillumbah, with numerous culturally significant sites and views in the vicinity of the project site. The site has been subjected to high levels of disturbance through historical construction of the MHS, football ovals, agricultural sheds, canal and paddocks. Overall, the study area is assessed by EMM as having low archaeological significance.

In terms of non-Aboriginal heritage, the current MHS site features an original 1929 (circa) school building known as Block A, which has been identified as holding local heritage significance, noting it is the first public high school in the region and one of the oldest co-educational secondary schools in NSW (*Final Heritage Report*, EMM Consulting, 2021). The preservation and maintenance of Block A was highlighted as a priority amongst the school community during consultation.

Other sites recognised as holding cultural and historical value amongst the community were also identified during consultation, such as the Bruce Chick rainforest area and memorial gardens at MHS, and the reconciliation mural at WHS.

A guiding principle outlined by MHS is to provide inclusive learning environments and targeted programs for students of varying cultural backgrounds⁷.

It was mentioned during consultation that there are trees dedicated to past staff and students within the site.

WHS

As previously mentioned, WHS has a strong Indigenous program. The school also states that Indigenous leadership is strongly represented within the school's educational structure⁸. Wollumbin is the traditional name for nearby Mt Warning and continues to be a place of cultural and traditional significance to Indigenous people (*Education Rationale*, DoE, 2021).

MEPS

The school has a significant Indigenous support and cultural program, with dedicated teaching and learning support for Aboriginal students, and whole school programs.

⁷ SINSW, Murwillumbah High School, <https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/schools/2/2687.html>

⁸ SINSW, Wollumbin High School, <https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/schools/8/8596.html>

MPS

The school employs a full time Aboriginal Education Officer to support Aboriginal students and their parents.

Broader communities of each school and local area

The Tweed Shire Council describes Tweed Shire as a 'shared cultural landscape' and acknowledges the history and culture of diverse groups in the region, such the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, South Sea Islander, and Chinese communities that have long and significant ties to the area and land (*What's the Cultural Picture*, Tweed Shire Council, 2017).

Tweed Shire is situated on country belonging to the Bundjalung language group (*Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment*, EMM Consulting, 2021). The Tweed Aboriginal community generally recognises three main Aboriginal groups in the Tweed River Valley, these are the Goodjunburra people (Tweed Coast area), the Tul-gi-gin people (North Arm area) and the Moorang-Moobar people of the Southern and Central arms around Wollumbin. The Moorang-Moobar people are recognised as the local Aboriginal peoples of Murwillumbah (Tweed Regional Museum, 2020). This was re-enforced during consultation, where the Moorang-Moobar people were highlighted as the local custodians of the region, and the group's heritage and culture was emphasised as highly valued within the community.

Across the four school catchment areas, there was a similar proportion of individuals who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, ranging from 2.7% to 3.7%, which compared similarly to Tweed Shire more broadly (4%).

Across the four school catchment areas, the proportion of households where a non-English language is spoken ranged significantly. The MHS and WHS catchment had the highest percentage of non-English households (5.3%) which is similar to Tweed Shire more broadly (5.9%), but significantly higher than the MEP (1.8%) and MPS (2.2%) catchments. In the MHS and WHS catchment, the top languages other than English were German (0.5%), Punjabi (0.4%), French (0.3%), Spanish (0.2%) and Italian (0.2%).

Recently, Murwillumbah has become home to several highly influential and valued cultural institutions, most notably the Tweed Regional Gallery and the Margaret Olley Art Centre which attracts tourism from all over the country. Appendix B includes a list of cultural facilities and groups in the Murwillumbah and district area.

4.3.4 Health and wellbeing

Existing school communities

Consultation with each of the school communities revealed that the health and wellbeing of students is a priority, referencing the desire for improved, student focused health facilities to be integrated into local schools. One of the main areas of concern regarding health and wellbeing included mental health, with parents and teachers referencing the prevalence of issues such as suicide, depression, and anxiety amongst students, especially amongst those attending high schools. Students with disabilities, or those requiring additional support and care were also referenced during consultation as a potential vulnerable group. Consultation also identified students with neuro-divergencies (i.e., autism and ADHD) and respiratory conditions, who may be more at risk of experiencing negative health impacts due to on site construction activities.

WHS

A support team supports those from a lower socio-economic background. Graduate teachers were supported by the school community to complete their proficient accreditation.

MHS

Some buildings at the school do not have air conditioning posing a thermal challenge given the Tweed Region climate. The vegetation throughout the site provides shade and shelter and cooler passive environments for students.

Some buildings are not easily accessible as identified throughout the *Concept Design Report* (Architectus, 2021), and several buildings are not compliant with DDA requirements.

The school runs a Special Education Unit that provides programs for students with additional support and learning needs. A support team also supports those from a lower socio-economic background.

The *Contamination Investigation Report* identifies that the school is listed on the New South Wales Department of Education (DoE) schools asbestos register for building materials containing asbestos and the site has an Asbestos in Grounds Management Plan (AGMP)⁹. Lead-based paint is present on some windows and mould is currently an issue for several buildings.

MEPS

MEPS runs a dedicated Support Unit with two learning spaces, providing an alternative to mainstream education for students with additional support or learning needs. A Learning and Wellbeing team provides learning and financial support to identified families and students in need.

MPS

MPS employs three full time Learning and Support Teachers to work intensively with targeted students. A wellbeing teacher was employed 1 day a week in 2020 to work with children and staff.

The school also runs various assistance activities including fund support for excursions and morning tea/lunches for those in need.

Broader communities of each school and local area

Health services

The broader Murwillumbah area is well serviced by local health and wellbeing facilities, including the Murwillumbah District Hospital and the Murwillumbah Community Health Centre. The town also has several general practitioners, medical centres, and specialist services including a respiratory clinic, pathology clinic, mental health services, an optometrist and multiple dentist offices.

The main health facility in the local area is the Murwillumbah District hospital, which is a local community hospital that includes an emergency department as well as various specialist services and units.

Health indicators

Of the four impacted school catchment areas, MPS had the highest proportion of individuals who required assistance due to age or disability (8.6%) followed by MEPS (7.3%) which was similar to the broader Tweed LGA (7.1%). In the MHS and WHS catchment, a significantly lower proportion of the population required assistance at just 4.5%. However, the MHS and WHS catchment had the highest proportion of individuals who provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability (12.9%) which was similar to the LGA.

The school catchment areas fall within the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSW LHD). Data from the NNSW LHD revealed that from 2017 to 2019, 25% of children in the district reported suffering from asthma at some point in their lives, which was higher than the NSW percentage of 21% (NNSW LHD 2019). Asthma prevalence amongst children saw a significant decrease from 2005 to 2016, before increasing again from 2016 to 2019. Data also revealed that there were 156 intentional self-harm hospitalisations in the LHD from 2018 to 2019, and hospitalisations have increased 35% since 2001.

4.3.5 Surroundings

Surrounding built environment

MPS is located in a highly residential area, surrounded by residential properties, with roads on all four sides of the school block.

While MHS, WHS, and MEPS are all also in residential areas, they are all located on the outskirts of Murwillumbah and are bordered by green space or agricultural land along at least one boundary.

⁹ Douglas Partners, Report on Detailed Site Investigation for Contamination, 2021

The schools are also all in reasonable proximity to social and health services such as the Murwillumbah District Hospital, Murwillumbah Community Health Centre and the Murwillumbah TAFE.

MHS is surrounded by low and medium density residential land, with some mixed-use zoning and large areas of public recreation space to the east. The school site slopes from the entrance at Riverview Street to the lower playing fields adjacent to the agricultural land and a levy bank system to the south.

MEPS and WHS are more isolated, on the edges of the town (respectively west and east).

Natural environment

Murwillumbah is surrounded by the sea and mountains. The Tweed River runs through the town's centre and is a key landscape feature bordering the existing MHS campus.

The MHS site is surrounded by 'undulating subtropical terrain' which provides a backdrop to the school and local community (*Concept Design Report*, Architectus, 2021). Other notable natural landmarks in the local area include the Wollumbin National Park, the Mount Warning Rainforest Park, and Hattons Bluff Nature Reserve (*Landscape Concept Report*, Arcadia 2021). The local climate is generally hot and humid with heavy rainfall at times.

The MHS school site is well vegetated, with a variety of native and introduced fauna including many large established trees. As discussed, the school site is also within a flood prone area.

Consultation revealed that preservation of the local natural environment, flora, and fauna is highly valued amongst residents and members of the school community.

Flooding risk

As previously mentioned, MEPS continues to be at risk of being impacted by flooding due to its location in front of the flood levee. Following the 2017 flooding event, upgrades to MEPS were conducted to refurbish flood damaged areas and deliver improvements to outdoor areas including:

- » Demolition of flood damaged buildings
- » Refurbishment of school support unit, reception and administrative space
- » Fencing and landscaping upgrades, with new playground equipment and new covered walkway
- » Covered access and ramp to the hall
- » Improvement works to the school car park.

The school was impacted again by the February / March 2022 flooding event. Some areas of the site were impacted by flood waters, including ground level sections of some permanent buildings, demountables, the canteen, the General Assistant's space, paved areas and play spaces.

Damaged furniture, fittings and resources were removed from the school and indoor and outdoor areas were cleaned and sanitised. Students have been able to return to learning in unaffected areas and work is underway to repair and remediate flood damage.

It is noted that the majority of the MHS site is not flood prone and therefore the impact of both the 2017 and 2022 floods on the site was minimal. Lower sports fields in the south-eastern portion of the site were inundated, as well as the eastern edge of the site, but flood levels were well below current and proposed building floor levels.

Bushfire risk

The Bushfire Assessment (Blackash, 2021) identifies the MHS site as bushfire prone land, with bushfire risk associated with vegetation within the site, bordering the south-western boundary. Cane fields to the west of the school are also identified as potential hazards. There is no other bushfire prone vegetation within 100m of the site.

It is noted that the MHS oval has been used as an evacuation location, and the school has been used as an evacuation centre.

4.3.6 Accessibility

Existing school communities

Transport and travel

In terms of public transport, all four schools operate a 'well established and integrated bus service plan', which includes the following features:

- » 23% students of all students enrolled across all schools are within 400m of a bus stop and 88% are within 400m of a bus route¹⁰
- » Primary schools start and end times allow for bus services to collect students prior to high schools, which allows for both short, localised, routes as well as connecting to other services at Nullum Street (MHS)
- » MHS incorporates a substantial bus interchange facility and road space allocation on Nullum Street which allows various bus services from across the various Murwillumbah schools to interchange
- » The current bus network and operation results in buses passing through Murwillumbah's CBD road network and traffic pinch points during morning and afternoon periods. It was observed that buses would undertake numerous journeys between schools during these periods¹¹.

Appendix B shows the bus services and routes available to and from MHS.

The existing schools also provide Student Support Unit (SSU) for students with additional support and learning needs, involving subsidised transport options by TfNSW or other programs.

It is noted that 99% of staff across the four schools self-drive to and from school, mainly due to the limited availability of public transport and the fact that staff typically participate in before/after school activities/events. It is noted that 'the vast majority of (teaching) staff travel from outside Murwillumbah', with some staff coming from areas as far as Coolangatta, Kingscliff or Ballina.

Primary schools

The catchment areas for the two primary schools, MEPS and MPS are considerably smaller than the two high schools, and during consultation it was raised that many students and families walk to school. However, the *Transport Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021) demonstrates that more than half of all primary school students are dropped off (60%), and a significant number catch the bus (34%). Only 6% of primary school students were recorded walking and cycling as their primary travel mode.

MPS

There is no on-site staff parking, and road frontages surrounding the school are used for bus services and pick up/drop off zones.

MEPS

There is some parking on-site for parents and teachers, and the pickup/drop off zone and bus stops are located at the front of the school.

High schools

Both the MHS and WHS catchments are relatively large, and as such it is likely that a greater proportion of families will have to rely on car travel and/or public transport to access the school. Student mode share surveys regarding walking and cycling to school indicated that 93% of students stated "Too Far to Walk" as the reason for not walking or cycling, as identified by Bitzios (*Transport Impact Assessment*, 2021).

MHS and WHS are currently serviced by both public and school bus services. The public services are operated by Surfside Bus Lines as well as local services. Consultation revealed some concerns regarding transport and traffic surrounding the schools. Local public transport services were identified as somewhat lacking.

¹⁰ Bitzios Consulting, School Travel Plan, 2021

¹¹ Bitzios Consulting, Transport Impact Assessment, 2021

However, buses are well used by students, with 53% of high school students recording bus as their usual mode of transport to and from school (without specifying whether these are public and/or school buses). Of the students that do not catch the bus, 24% stated that the reason was 'no bus near my house'. Some others think the bus service is confusing (17%), too crowded (14%) or do not feel safe (12%). Approximately a quarter of high school students are dropped off.

Bitzios note that approximately 10% of high school students walk and another 7% cycle. As per the *School Travel Plan* (Bitzios, 2021), currently 4% of high school students drive to school however this is expected to increase throughout the year as senior students obtain a drivers license. Approximately 55% of students intend to drive to school by the end of each school year.

MHS

There are 18 formal on-site parking spaces for administration and staff, as well as 46 informal on-site spaces for staff and student parking (Bitzios Consulting, *Transport Impact Assessment*, 2021). A pickup/drop off zone (KND area) is located along the school's frontage on Riverview Street. However, the majority of drop-offs were observed on Nullum Street, with some informal pickups also occurring on Nullum Street. The afternoon traffic and pedestrian peak period was completed within 10 minutes during observations.

In terms of active travel infrastructure, there are two pedestrian access points at the MHS site, one on Riverview Street and one on Nullum Street. The school is described to be well connected to the city centre. Some existing paths are however narrow and uneven. The irregular topography surrounding the school, alongside the 'dispersed grid networks' has also limited walking pathway upgrades surrounding the site. There are no bicycle lanes or off-road cycle/shared paths provided surrounding the MHS site.

The existing traffic and congestion surrounding MHS at pick up and drop off times was also highlighted as a significant problem amongst residents, students, teachers and families during consultation. The MHS information booklet states that there is a high volume of bus, bicycle and pedestrian traffic on Nullum Street, and caution should be taken when driving around the school area.

WHS

Currently, WHS features parking, a pickup/drop off zone and bus bays all on site within the boundaries of the school.

Broader communities of each school and local area

Transport

The most common mode of travel to work across all catchments was car, either as driver or passenger. Very few individuals caught public transport to work, likely due to the lack of public transport services available within the catchment areas, as highlighted during community consultation¹². The number of individuals who walked to work varied between catchments, ranging from 1.3% in the MEPS catchment to 3.1% in the WHS and MHS catchments, in comparison to 2.8% in Tweed Shire more broadly.

Car ownership

In the broader community, most people own at least one car, and the most common number of motor vehicles per household was 2. The MHS and WHS catchment area had the highest proportion of residents that own a car (93.7%), whilst the MPS and MEPS catchment areas have a similarly lower proportion of car ownership (76.6% and 79.3% respectively).

Community and recreation facilities

The town of Murwillumbah has access to numerous sporting, recreational and community facilities, as outlined in Appendix B. The community also features various green spaces, parks, playgrounds and conservation areas, as well as a wide diversity of cultural facilities and sites.

¹² Tweed Shire Council, Tweed Shire Public Transport Network, 2016

Key facilities near MHS and MPS include the hockey, rugby and cricket fields which are located adjacent to the school on Nullum and Elizabeth streets, as well as the Murwillumbah Community Centre and Skate park, both co-located within Knox Park.

4.3.7 Livelihoods

Existing school communities

School staff

The four schools provide employment for teaching staff and non-teaching staff, such as cleaners, grounds keepers and teacher aids. As shown by Table 5, across all schools there is a total of 149.8 staff members, which includes 40.1 at the primary schools, and 109.7 at the high schools. The school with the most staff is Murwillumbah High School, with 59 teaching and non-teaching staff members.

These are full time equivalent (FTE) numbers and the actual number of people on-site at any one time may be higher. As noted by Bitzios (*Transport Impact Assessment*, 2021), there may be a total of 203 staff, all schools combined.

Table 5 Staff numbers

School	Staff (full time equivalent teaching and non-teaching. Includes permanent and temporary staff)
Murwillumbah High School	65.3
Wollumbin High School	44.4
Murwillumbah Public School	21.7
Murwillumbah East Public School	18.4

Source: Myschool.edu

Secondary education is a key industry of employment in the Bray Park and Byangum suburbs, and it can be expected that members of the secondary school staff community live in these suburbs.

Socio-Educational Advantage

The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) represents the average educational advantage of a school's population, which is calculated through an assessment of parents' occupation, parents' education, geographical location and the proportion of Indigenous students (*ICSEA*, Myschool, 2015). ICSEA values are calculated on a scale which has a median of 1,000 and a standard deviation of 100. They typically range from approximately 500 (representing schools with extremely disadvantaged student backgrounds) to about 1,300 (representing schools with extremely advantaged student backgrounds).

As shown by Table 6, the two primary schools, MPS and MEPS have slightly lower ICSEA indexes than the secondary schools WHS and MHS. The school with the highest ICSEA is WHS, and the school with the lowest is MEPS. The ICSEA for each school may be used to identify potential vulnerable or at-risk groups.

All schools rank close to the median and therefore have a relatively average level of socio-educational advantage. The schools are within the 25th to 31st percentiles which means that they are more socio-educationally advantaged than 25-31% of schools in Australia.

Table 6 Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage

School	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)	Percentile
Murwillumbah High School	969	31
Wollumbin High School	976	35
Murwillumbah Public School	958	27
Murwillumbah East Public School	954	25

Source: Myschool.edu

Broader communities of each school and local area

Employment and local industry

The unemployment rate is higher in the MHS and WHS catchment (6.8%) compared to the MEPS and MPS catchments (2.6% and 3.1% respectively).

Key industries of employment across the broader community generally include health (hospitals), aged care, and local government administration. Various types of agriculture are also some of the top industries of employment in the MEPS catchment.

Household income

Average household incomes across the school catchment areas ranged from \$933 to \$1,437. The most common weekly income bracket across all four catchments was lower middle, from \$650 to \$2,449. The proportion of households with a low weekly income is similar across all catchment areas and Tweed Shire LGA. The proportion of high-income households varied slightly but was highest in the MHS and WHS catchment.

Socio-Economic Indexes

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) use census data relating to income, employment status, literacy, English language proficiency, living conditions and many other measures to calculate a measure of socio-economic conditions. An area with all of its indicators equal to the national average will receive a score of 1,000.

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) summarises variables that indicate either relative advantage or disadvantage. This index contains indicators of disadvantage (above) as well as additional indicators of advantage (e.g., professional occupations, high income, higher education levels, larger houses). An area with a high score on this index has a relatively higher incidence of advantage and a relatively lower incidence of disadvantage.

All areas are ordered from lowest to highest score, the lowest 10% of areas are given a decile number of 1, the next lowest 10% of areas are given a decile number of 2 and so on, up to the highest 10% of areas which are given a decile number of 10.

Decile data shows that:

- » Areas in the MPS catchment are within deciles 2 or 4
- » Areas in the MEPS catchment are within deciles 1 or 4-6. Areas within higher deciles are
- » The Murwillumbah SA2 averages in decile 2 and the broader Murwillumbah Region averages in decile 4
- » The Tweed Shire is within Decile 5.

The Murwillumbah township is therefore composed of relatively less advantaged and more disadvantaged areas, compared to the LGA. The area within Decile 1 (the lowest decile) is South Murwillumbah SSC, within the MEPS catchment.

Implications of the baseline

Existing school communities

- » Enrolments at all four schools have been gradually decreasing over the last five years.
- » A large proportion of children at MHS leave school before completing year 12.
- » The existing facilities and buildings at the impacted schools likely require repairs, improvements and refurbishments due to age and weather damage. This includes MEPS which is currently using demountable classrooms and has recently experienced further damage following the February / March 2022 flooding.
- » Existing Tell Them from Me data identifies that students feel a sense of belonging in their schools or feel proud of their schools.
- » The schools value diversity and culture, and there is a relatively high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at all schools compared to the local Indigenous population.
- » Block A located on the existing MHS site was originally constructed in 1929 and is recognised as having historical and cultural heritage significance.
- » The schools provide local employment opportunities for both teaching and non-teaching staff.
- » The school communities are not experiencing particularly high or low levels of socio-economic needs. Some families may come from a lower socio-economic background and may require additional support or may be impacted in different ways by the project compared to those experiencing less disadvantage.
- » There is a small proportion of students considered to have additional learning or support needs and/or disabilities or experiencing mental health issues. MEPS and MHS respectively offer a Support Unit and a Special Education Unit. These students and/or their families may require additional support during the construction and/or transition phases of the project.
- » Many students and families walk to the primary schools, while there is more reliance on car travel and public transport to access the secondary schools.

Broader catchment and local areas

- » Overall, the population of the catchment area is generally younger than the LGA, with a higher proportion of parents and homebuilder aged population. The catchment areas also have a high proportion of family households, and households with children.
- » Most children within the relevant school catchment areas attend government primary and secondary schools.
- » Public schools are therefore an important part of the social infrastructure offer in Murwillumbah.
- » The majority of social infrastructure is located in the town centre, between MPS and MEPS, with recreation and community facilities, major health facilities, retail, childcare and aquatic facilities. Outdoor recreation facilities are located adjacent MHS.
- » The broader school community catchments have access to a range of social, health, recreation and assistance services, most of which are located in Murwillumbah Town.
- » Some community members, and existing or future school children, may be from a lower socio-economic background and require more support than other students. There are some areas representing some of the lowest levels of socio-economic advantage and highest levels of socio-economic disadvantage in Australia.
- » Public transport is somewhat limited in the catchment areas.

5 Impact identification and assessment and measures

This section of the SIA identifies, then assesses expected and perceived social impacts. Consideration is given to the nature of the impact (positive or negative), when the impact will most likely occur (project stage) and the relevant DPIE impact category (impact category). Consideration is also given to the distribution of impacts and how impacts may be different for people depending on the nature or location or groups. Some groups may be more or differently affected than others.

This section also identifies mitigation measures that have been identified to mitigate negative social impacts, as well as enhancement measures aimed at further strengthening social benefits, and monitoring measures.

5.1 Phase 1 SIA

A Phase 1 SIA report was prepared as per the *SIA Guideline* to accompany a Request for SEARS for the development. This Phase 1 report identified the following preliminary impacts:

- » Improved educational offer/ outcomes
- » Increased provision of shared social infrastructure
- » Inclusion of additional services and facilities
- » Improved employment opportunities
- » Increased access to public education
- » Change of school culture
- » Access / proximity to local schools
- » Traffic management
- » Sense of place
- » Construction impacts on students' learning
- » Engagement in process and influence.

SEARs were received on 5 May 2021.

5.2 Impact identification and assessment, and measures

Following the Phase 1 process, findings from literature and other technical specialists, detailed social baseline and engagement were used to refine the identification of impacts and understand their potential significance.

The impact assessment process utilised tools from the DPIE SIA *Guideline* and *Technical Supplement* (2021), to assess each impact in relation to its likelihood and its magnitude (i.e., extent, duration, severity/scale, sensitivity/importance, level of concern/interest).

These tools are further described in Appendix C.

An overall social impact significance is then attributed using the tool described in Table 7.

Table 7 Social impact significance assessment tool

		1 Minimal	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Transformational
Likelihood level	A Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Very high
	B Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very high
	C Possibly	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	D Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	E very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Source: *Social Impact Assessment Guideline and Technical Supplement*; NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment (NSW DPIE), 2021.

The following sections discuss the expected and perceived impacts of the Murwillumbah Education Campus. These are addressed in themes, as some impacts are related and can be categorised thematically.

Each section identifies the impacts, discusses their significance and recommends mitigation or enhancement measures. Enhancement and mitigation measures were developed for each impact, in order to respectively enhance positive impacts or reduce negative impacts. A series of measures were identified that are relevant for planning/design stages, while another series of measures are relevant for the longer-term operations of the school post-project. It is therefore not expected that SINSW should be responsible for all measures, particularly those that are more operationally focussed.

Considering proposed enhancement and mitigation measures, each social impact was then reassessed to determine the social risk post-mitigation or enhancement. A Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) is provided in Appendix D and includes two tables providing a full assessment of each impact pre and post-mitigation or enhancement measures, as well as a series of monitoring measures.

A summary of the key impact themes and the individual potential impacts are shown in the table below. Following the table more detail is provided for each impact including more information on the nature of the impact, its significance and proposed mitigation measures.

Table 8 Summary of identified impacts

Impact Theme	Categories of impacts
Closure of school sites and creation of an integrated campus	Reduction in number of schools, with impacts on choice and proximity
	Sense of belonging
	Closure of existing school sites and impacts on social networks
	School communities, cultures, and histories
	Employment implications
Increased activities at Murwillumbah High School	Impacts of school and class size
	Reduction in overall school capacity
	New or increased services
	Amenity impacts
Provision of contemporary facilities at MEC	Look and feel – Purpose built design
	Curriculum offer
	Future focussed learning
	Open space and play space
	Accessibility and inclusion
Communication, planning and construction	Communications
	Temporary relocation of MHS students
	Temporary amenity impacts

5.3 Closure of three school sites and one future integrated site

Proposal

The project will result in the amalgamation of four school sites into one and the closure of three school sites.

Identified impacts:

School communities:

- » Reduced school choice (all schools)
- » For some, inability to walk/cycle to the new school, with implications on physical activity and wellbeing of future students/families, particularly those who currently could walk/cycle to school. There may be a cost aspect of driving or using public transport which could be a more significant challenge for lower socio-economic households (WHS, MPS, MEPS)
- » For some primary-school families, the new MEC may be within shorter distance, possibly closer walking/cycling distance, with benefits on health and wellbeing (MPS, MEPS)
- » Spaces for students' bicycles, scooters and skateboards will be provided to support active movements (future MHS community)
- » Potential risk of reduced sense of belonging/pride for students (all schools)
- » Loss of place attachment to closing schools (WHS, MPS, MEPS)
- » Possible loss of casual or part-time employment with impacts on livelihoods and wellbeing (all schools)
- » Unlikely negative impacts on existing social networks, and potential increased social network opportunities for school communities (all schools)
- » Project is unlikely to result in impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage and there is potential for "numerous cultural heritage benefits". Landscaping will be inspired by Country, with yarning circles and cultural plantings including Indigenous plants to support culture and educational opportunities (MHS)
- » Unlikely social impacts associated with non-Aboriginal heritage impacts (MHS site)
- » Short term continuation of use of demountables at MEPS (MEPS)
- » The site will be designed to function during storm events (all schools), with avoidance of future impacts associated with flooding for MEPS school community (MEPS)
- » Changing school may result in stress and costs for school communities (WHS, MPS, MEPS)
- » Engagement to date has provided opportunities for school communities to experience a feeling of involvement and contribute to the future identity of the campus (all schools)
- » There may be some new costs and adjustments for the MHS community (MHS)
- » Potentially easier transition from primary to high school with health and wellbeing benefits (MPS, MEPS)
- » The design allows separation of age groups, creating a safe environment particularly for primary school children (all schools)

Local areas:

- » Concerns around future use of closing school sites and impacts on sense of place in surrounding areas (WHS, MPS, MEPS)
- » There may be positive effects on the amenity of the areas surrounding MPS, MEPS and WHS due to nil school-associated traffic (WHS, MPS, MEPS)

5.3.1 Choice and proximity of public schools

School communities

The project will result in one combined public primary and high school being available to the community, and therefore a reduction in the number of public school options families can choose from. This was a concern expressed during consultation, for the two following reasons:

- » There is a perception that with the amalgamation of schools into the one campus, families will not have the option to choose a school that best suits their individual needs. This was described by some as potentially being an issue in the situation where a student may experience difficulties or issues at the school.
- » For some families, the creation of the MEC will result in school being located further away and increasing distances to travel. This is likely to be an issue particularly for primary school families that are more likely to currently walk to school. This may be further amplified by the lack of public transport options in the town.

Consultation also identified that increased distances to school may require families to adapt and change their drop-off/pick-up routines. It may prevent families being able to walk to school, which would result in reduced physical activity for these families and a potential loss of the feeling of a local school and the associated sense of community. There may also be a cost implication of having to drive or use public transport to school instead of walking, which may be more significant for lower socio-economic households, noting that the cost for public transport may be subsidised for some children. The positive effects of walking to school on health and wellbeing were also identified, with some community members stating that it helps to enhance the sense of local school community.

It is noted that conversely, for other families, the inclusion of a primary school at the MEC may result in K-6 schooling being closer and more convenient than existing primary schools. For these families, it may have positive benefits including convenience, time saving, and health and wellbeing outcomes by enabling walking and cycling.

The *Transport Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021) identifies that currently, only approximately 4% of primary school children walk to school (and another 2% cycle). This increases to 10% of high school children who walk (with another 7% who cycle). The issue of increased distance may therefore affect high school children more than primary school children.

Given the currently low proportion of families who walk/cycle, the project should seek to maximise walkability and cycleability around the MEC site to get to school in the future. The *Transport Impact Assessment* also identifies that approximately 7% of children currently enrolled at all four schools will live within a 15-minute walking distance and 42% from a 15-minute bicycle ride from the proposed project site. Cycling may therefore be more adequate than walking given distances for those living within a 15-minute ride time. This may represent an additional cost for families.

The project will provide 34 storage spaces in proximity to the primary school and a total of 114 storage spaces for the high school (57 spaces located off Riverview Street and 57 spaces off Nullum Street). These will provide a mix of spaces for cycles, scooters and skateboards. It is unclear whether this is more than all existing schools combined. Other measures to support active movements are discussed in Section 5.4.

It is likely that most children/families will need to use public transport or car movements (refer to Section 5.4). As identified during consultation, there may be an additional cost to use public transport. Supporting families who may be more vulnerable and affected by this additional cost should be a consideration during the transition.

5.3.2 Impact on distinct school cultures and histories

School communities

The baseline identified that each school community appears to be relatively tightknit and there are large proportions of children who feel like they belong or feel proud of their school. "A strong sense of community" was an important characteristic of a great school for approximately 67% of survey respondents.

There is no direct evidence showing that bringing all school communities together will affect this sense of belonging, but a range of measures exist to promote sense of belonging and pride.

Research however has shown that involving students in the design process improves students' feeling of connectedness to their school. The range of wellbeing benefits which young adolescents gain through a participatory process including social inclusion, improved relationships with adults and communication skills. There can also be increased confidence and a sense of belonging when students know that they are occupying learning spaces that reflect their own needs as adolescent learners¹³. Discussions with staff, students and P&Cs occurred in 2020 and 2021. There have been staff development days, and P&C workshops at each of the schools, and combined student leadership meetings twice a term during 2021.

The project team has met with students of schools that have undergone a similar transition process to understand how they adapted to change¹⁴. Findings from this engagement have not been made available however it is a good indication that the culture of the schools is an important element that will continue to need consideration as the design progresses. The *Consultation Report* (DoE, 2022) also indicates that students, staff and parents have been involved in the change management process with discussions around the name of the future campus. This engagement to date has likely helped to build community ownership and identity of the future school, and this is encouraged to continue if future stages of the project allow, as well as during operations by school staff. It has been advised that other elements such as logo, motto, uniform will also be discussed which will support the building of a new school identity.

During consultation, some students and families further stated that they had historic and familial connections to schools, with parents and grandparents attending and working at the same campus over multiple generations. These factors have the potential to create strong emotional and sentimental ties between individuals and the school institutions. Some of the stakeholders in support of the project stated that they believed those in objection had a largely 'sentimental attachment to the old schools'. 'Place attachment' can be a strong binding force within a community, and the removal of such places can have potential impacts on wellbeing among community members¹⁵. There may be an opportunity for some place attachment elements of existing schools to be relocated to the future campus, such as the Murals and 'Sorry Wall' at WHS that was discussed during consultation. The project team has indicated that future consultation with school communities will also include discussions around transfer of physical items (e.g. artworks, archives) and the creation of MEC's own form of place attachment at the future campus.

Overall the physical impacts to the non-Aboriginal heritage fabric (Block A building) have been assessed as "moderate" with "minor" visual impacts. The *Final Heritage Report* (EMM Consulting, 2021) identifies that the heritage fabric (i.e. Building A) will be affected however this is necessary to achieve accessibility requirements. Multiple options were explored and the preferred solution constitutes "the least impact to the building in terms of location, visual impacts and physical impacts". EMM Consulting provide recommendations to mitigate or avoid impact to the heritage fabric and significance of the site. The preservation and maintenance of Building A was highlighted as a priority amongst the school community during consultation and the proposal results in the retention of this building and therefore no negative social impact is expected.

The overall importance of local intangible and tangible Aboriginal heritage and culture was also raised as a priority within the school community. The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report* (EMM Consulting, 2021) describes the site as having low archaeological significance and that the proposed development is unlikely to 'result in any intergenerational/cumulative loss to material culture'.

However, EMM describes opportunities to connect the site to its broader cultural history and there is potential for "numerous cultural heritage benefits", including "incorporating Aboriginal culture into the school curriculum as well as physically incorporating Aboriginal cultural heritage into the landscaping, artwork and building design". During consultation, Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) recommended the establishment of an "outdoor education facility and/or yarning circle" in the northwest of the campus. In addition, a series of three workshops were held to seek input from the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal teachers, students and community members, regarding how local Aboriginal heritage, culture and identity can be appropriately

¹³ Hughes H. et al, School Spaces for Student Wellbeing and Learning, 2019.

¹⁴ MEC Consultation – Combined High School P&C Workshop 27 April 2021

¹⁵ Anton, C. E. & Lawrence, C., Home is where the heart is: The effect of place of residence on place attachment and community participation, 2014

represented within built and landscaping features of the campus. This input has informed the architectural design and landscaping strategy. In response to this, Arcadia's *Landscape Report* (2021) describes that materials will be inspired by Country, with artworks and cultural plantings including Indigenous plants to support culture and educational opportunities. Yarning circles are also proposed, with the location to be confirmed during detailed design. An Indigenous cultural garden is proposed to the south-east of new buildings. These elements will be further detailed in future design work.

EMM Consulting also recommends that an Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan (ACHMP) must be developed by a heritage specialist prior to ground disturbance, as well as a heritage-interpretation strategy.

5.3.3 Operating employment implications

School communities

Consultation identified concerns that the project will result in an overall reduction of local employment/jobs, with associated impacts on the livelihoods and wellbeing of those who could lose their jobs.

DoE have confirmed that "no permanent staff member will lose employment as a result of this project".

Additionally, the project team has advised that 2020 staffing levels of all four schools will remain until the end of 2025 to allow for stability during the transition. After this time, staff numbers will be determined based on total student numbers and needs, in accordance with the staff entitlement rules that apply to all schools. Temporary and casual staff at all public schools in NSW are employed based on local needs.

DoE has explained that employment projections at 2026 (if current enrolments were to remain the same) estimate a total of 128 FTE roles, representing a reduction of 22 roles compared to the number of FTE roles identified in the baseline. However when the campus is operating at capacity, a total of 150 full time equivalent (FTE) roles are anticipated for the MEC (*Transport Impact Assessment*, Bitzios, 2021). This represents a zero reduction from the baseline. Based on the above, there may be a short-term reduction in roles until the campus reaches capacity. It is uncertain what the impact on temporary roles will be as these staff are employed by schools based on need. These staff members may be more vulnerable due to the non-permanent nature of their jobs and therefore be less resilient to change. The loss of part time and casual employment was specifically referenced during consultation, with school community members raising concerns that cleaners, administration staff and teacher aides may be most vulnerable to any reduction in staffing.

In the absence of any other public school in Murwillumbah, those who lose casual or part time employment may need to relocate, potentially creating change in people's lives that may be difficult to manage.

5.3.4 Existing school sites

School communities

In the short term, and within the MEPS community, there is a concern regarding the lack of foreseeable improvements and refurbishments at the current MEPS campus until the new school opens.

Demountables are in use at MEPS to replace flood-damaged permanent buildings which had to be removed. A program of work was undertaken in 2020/21 to deliver improvements at MEPS, including refurbishment of the demountables that are current accommodating the School Support Unit. The demountables are described as being well maintained and fit for purpose by SINSW. There was a concern from stakeholders that the current use of demountables and lack of overall upgrade of the school since 2017 floods may impact on current students' education and wellbeing.

For students currently learning in temporary spaces, it is unlikely that these spaces will be replaced before the transition to the new MEC Campus. It was also mentioned that there had been previous commitments to provide new permanent buildings at the school, further contributing to feelings of frustration and overall objections to the project amongst some the MEPS school community.

It is noted that the project will address these perceived inadequate conditions by providing contemporary spaces, albeit on a different site. Temporary and permanent structures at MEPS were impacted again by the February / March 2022 flooding event. The proposed building floor levels at MEC will be set at a level higher than the levels reached by 2022 flood waters (TTW, 2022). All new buildings will meet the requirements of Council's flood planning levels and be located at least 2.5 metres higher than the 2022 water level. Importantly, the development will also not create significant flood impact elsewhere. Given flooding constraints and recent damage on the MEPS site, the project will avoid the MEPS community being impacted by any further future damage to the school.

Being able to access the future school during flooding was a concern heard during consultation, including recent consultation held in April 2022. The proposed development's building and parking areas have been designed to ensure that school operations can continue or shelter in place can occur in flooding events if necessary, although there is no formal proposal that the MEC will act as an evacuation or recovery facility. It is noted that the proposed buildings will be adequately located to remain flood free, as well as the school entrance off Riverview Street allowing access to school for all storm events up to the 0.2% AEP (TTW, 2022)¹⁶.

Schools usually contribute to the identity and life of an area, and nurture local social cohesion particularly through relationships within the school community, including between parents living in one same catchment area. During consultation, a number of stakeholders highlighted that local school communities, with many students and families living in proximity to the school, help create geographic and social groups that engage with one another both inside and outside school times. This is particularly the case at the two primary schools (MEPS and MPS) where school catchments and enrolment numbers are significantly smaller.

With the MEC, all children will be relocated to the new campus together. The focal point that is the local school is being shifted to another location. There will unlikely be a loss of social ties between children or parents (unless families decide to change schools), as children will continue to attend the same school. The main differences will be access (as explored in Section 5.3.1), number of children/staff (as explored in Section 5.3.5) and change of environment (as explored in following sections). Significant changes to the school communities' social networks are unlikely. These may even be further expanded if all existing school communities are well integrated in the new MEC, as suggested during consultation.

There are concerns that the time of transition may increase workload for teachers. However, the likelihood, nature and duration of this is unknown at this stage. This is currently being assessed by DoE and plans are being put in place to mitigate any potential negative impacts.

Local area

Regarding other residents in local areas, consultation identified concerns associated with the uncertainty around the future use of existing school sites once they close (MEPS, MPS and WHS), including:

- » Some concerns regarding sense of place and surroundings. With less activity around three school sites, there are concerns about potential increase in crime and vandalism due to abandoned buildings
- » Changes to local sense of place and landscape but it is unclear what the impacts on people outside of school communities would be.

While the planning of these sites will be subject to future separate planning pathways, ensuring future sites are actively protected from any vandalism will be important to residents. Engaging the community in the future use of these sites would ensure that residents feel more included in the planning of their areas.

It is noted that the closure of three school sites may also result in benefits for local areas:

- » Reduction of traffic which could be associated with improved amenity for local residents: the extent of this has not been addressed in the *Traffic Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021) however it mentioned that MPS "will see a reduction in background traffic as a result of the MEC project". It can be assumed that this will also occur at the WHS and MEPS sites. There may be positive effects on the amenity of the areas surrounding MPS, MEPS and WHS.

¹⁶ TTW, Flood Impact Assessment, 2022

- » Reduction of noise associated with traffic and school activities which may also be associated with improved amenity for local residents: the extent of this has not been addressed in the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021).

5.3.5 Changing school

Consultation identified concerns in relation to students having to change school environment in order to join the new MEC, with concerns regarding:

- » Impacts on wellbeing due to a significant change in student's everyday way of life
- » Some noted though that it is likely that as a student changes school, their friends will change too which may help mitigate any stress or emotional impact
- » Cost associated with purchasing new uniforms and learning materials particularly for lower socio-economic families.

Change may be more difficult for some, particularly more vulnerable families, including those with special needs.

Similarly, research identifies that students are often underprepared for the emotional challenges that occur during the transition from primary to secondary school. It is described that "for adolescents in an unfamiliar school environment, social wellbeing is tested by the complexities of new relationships with peers and teachers and changing academic expectations"¹⁷. Research further suggests that an unfriendly, unwelcoming or unsafe school environment can also affect academic performance¹⁸. This includes:

- » Ensuring that students feel safe and free from bullying, victimisation and violence
- » Feeling of school attachment or connectedness.

Transitioning from primary to high school may be more difficult for children with lower educational results, from more vulnerable families or generally more disengaged from education.

In the case of this project, there will be a transition for children currently studying at MEPS, MPS and WHS, with potential impacts due to anxieties or increased costs, which the school could address by implementing adequate supports. However, for MEPS and MPS children, the transition from primary to secondary school will occur within a more familiar environment, with same peers and social ties, which may improve the transition process for students.

In addition, research suggests that transitioning from primary to secondary school is often associated with reduced physical activity and a more sedentary behaviour (which is already a common change as children age). A study by Marks et al.¹⁹ sought to identify whether this change is greater in students who undergo a change of school compared to students who remain within the same school environment in the case of a combined school. Compared to students who stayed in the same school, students who changed school reported a greater decrease in physical activity and intensity, as well as reduced likelihood to cycle to/from school.

Potential social benefits of a joint primary/secondary campus, that are associated with an easier and healthier transition to secondary school, may be further improved through the design of the school environment. Benefits of a combined campus were also recognised during consultation. It was described that minimising the number of school transitions for children could be associated with improved mental and emotional wellbeing.

Research also suggests that younger children may feel "intimidated and unsafe among older students in interstitial spaces such as pathways and stairwells"²⁰. Consultation also identified that a clear delineation between the primary and high schools was preferred. In this case, the design creates separation between primary and high school students including learning, administration, play spaces as well as canteens and access points. The primary

¹⁷ Hughes H. et al, *School Spaces for Student Wellbeing and Learning*, 2019

¹⁸ Kutsyuruba B. et al, *Relationships among school climate, school safety, and student achievement and well-being: a review of the literature*, 2015.

¹⁹ Marks et al., *Changing from primary to secondary school highlights opportunities for school environment interventions aiming to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour: a longitudinal cohort study*, 2015

²⁰ Hughes H. et al, *High School Spaces and Student Transitioning: Designing for Student Wellbeing*, in *School Spaces for Student Wellbeing and Learning*, 2019

and secondary school students will also have access to separate library facilities. The design locates facilities, including the Public-School Hall, the High School Gymnasium, the performance and fitness facilities, the health and PE facilities, and the movement studio, within separate areas of the same building so that the schools can consider sharing those spaces in the future if desired. It is assumed that these facilities will be used by each school separately and it will be the responsibility of the MEC to implement any shared uses in the future.

While separating age groups is important to ensure feelings of safety, particularly for younger children, it will likely be important to introduce the high school environment to primary students early on, to promote a feeling of safety before starting Year 7. A joint primary/high school campus facilitates this discovery process and ways to promote the transition should be explored.

Impact assessment, mitigation/enhancement and monitoring measures

Social risks in order of significance (starting with very high):	Social benefits in order of significance (starting with very high):
1. Reduced school choice (all schools) 2. For some, inability to walk/cycle to the new school, with implications on physical activity and wellbeing of future students/families, particularly those who currently could walk/cycle to school. 3. There may be a cost aspect of driving or using public transport which be a more significant challenge for lower socio-economic households (WHS, MPS, MEPS) 4. Changing school may result in stress and costs for school communities (WHS, MPS, MEPS) 5. Possible loss of casual or part-time employment with impacts on livelihoods and wellbeing (all schools) 6. Loss of attachment to closing schools (WHS, MPS, MEPS) 7. There may be some new costs and adjustments for the MHS community (MHS) 8. Concerns around future use of closing school sites and concerns about possible impacts on sense of place in surrounding areas (WHS, MPS, MEPS) 9. Potential risk of reduced sense of belonging/pride for students (all schools) 10. Short term continuation of use of demountables at MEPS (MEPS) 11. Unlikely social impacts associated with non-Aboriginal heritage impacts (MHS site)	1. Engagement to date has provided opportunities for school communities to experience a feeling of involvement and contribute to the future identity of the campus (all schools) 2. Spaces for students' bicycles, scooters and skateboards will be provided to support active movements (future MHS community) 3. The site will be designed to function during storm events (all schools), with avoidance of future impacts associated with flooding for MEPS school community (MEPS) 4. Project is unlikely to result in impacts on cultural heritage and there is potential for "numerous cultural heritage benefits". Landscaping will be inspired by Country, with yarning circles and cultural plantings including Indigenous plants to support culture and educational opportunities (MHS) 5. Limited impact on existing social networks, and potential increased social network opportunities for school communities (all schools) 6. The design allows separation of age groups creating a safe environment particularly for primary school children (all schools) 7. Potentially easier transition from primary to high school with health and wellbeing benefits (MPS, MEPS) 8. There may be positive effects on the amenity of the areas surrounding MPS, MEPS and WHS due to nil school-associated traffic (WHS, MPS, MEPS) 9. For some primary-school families, the new MEC may be within shorter distance, possibly closer walking/cycling distance, with benefits on health and wellbeing (MPS, MEPS)

Mitigation measures:

1. Identify ways to involve students and staff in future detailed design to maximise ownership and identity of the future school

Enhancement measures:

1. Finalise the location and design of yarning circle/outdoor education facility

-
2. In general, ensure adequate communication to the community about the MEC
 3. Explore the possibility of relocating items of sentimental significance from existing schools to the MEC
 4. Continue to consult with school communities to develop a positive new identity and culture for the new campus
 5. Recommendations as per *Final Heritage Report* (EMM Consulting, 2021)
 6. Support school communities during the change, until new school community is established or as long as considered required by MEC staff, with additional support for vulnerable members

Operations:

7. Work with Council to ensure that future sites are actively protected from any vandalism and that local communities are engaged as part of future plans for the sites
 8. Supporting families who may be more vulnerable and affected by the potential additional cost of public transport should be a consideration during the transition.
 9. Continue to support school communities throughout and post opening of MEC, with additional support for vulnerable members
 10. Support those who may lose their employment in securing alternative positions
-

2. Prepare Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan (ACHMP) and heritage-interpretation strategy as per EMM Consulting's *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment* (2021)
3. Continue engagement around designing with Country

Operations:

4. In general, ensure adequate involvement of the school community by the MEC with regard to identity and culture C
 5. Promote the integration of all school communities including children, parents and staff through programs and events
 6. Ensure that students are and feel safe, learn interpersonal relationships, receive support as needed and feel like they belong
 7. Promote walking and cycling with groups or initiatives like Walking school bus or Ride2School
 8. Identify ways to promote and improve the transition between primary and high school
-

Monitoring measures:

1. Schools to continue monitoring of staff's, students' and parents' satisfaction through surveys
 2. New MEC to monitor staff, students' and parents' satisfaction through surveys following opening
 3. New MEC to monitor travel modes to school
 4. New MEC to monitor health and wellbeing issues or complaints made by the school community
 5. Council/SINSW to monitor complaints or comments received in relation to closed school sites, maintenance and future plans
 6. School to monitor travel mode shares as per *School Travel Plan* (Bitzios, 2021)
 7. Unemployment in the local area
 8. Contractor and school to monitor number of locally procured businesses through future operations of MEC.
-

5.4 Increased activities at MHS

Proposal

The project will result in the amalgamation of four school sites into one and the creation of one combined campus.

Identified impacts:

School communities:

- » A larger school size is unlikely to negatively impact educational performance however there are concerns that should be addressed by adequate communication (all schools)
- » The wellbeing of students from more vulnerable groups may be more impacted than others by a larger school (all schools)
- » While there are concerns about increased violence at the MEC, there is no demonstrated association between school size and school violence (all schools)
- » There will be a range of new or increased services, including school community health facilities, available to the school community (all schools)
- » In the long term, 97% of the projected demand for staff parking will be provided on site and there will be sufficient parking for people with special needs to access designated parking areas (future MHS community)
- » There may be a temporary period with a shortfall of parking spaces for staff (between 2024 and 2025) which may result in some staff requiring off-site parking
- » In addition, 13 staff bicycle parking and end of trip facilities will be provided to support active movements
- » Students may be required to park within the local area potentially affecting the local amenity and creating real or perceived safety issues at night New pedestrian crossings will support safe access to school (future MHS community)
- » The kiss and drop facility will be shifted from Riverview Street to Nullum Street with likely minimal impacts on the school community (future MHS community)
- » A comprehensive review of the overall bus and school bus systems in Murwillumbah is being undertaken with no findings available to date. This may affect the school community and broader catchment area/local area (future MHS community).

Catchment area

- » The proposal has been designed to address existing and future demands for school places (future MEC)
- » Remaining concerns that the proposed will not address demands (all schools)
- » One additional support class for students with additional support or learning needs and overall improved quality of support unit facilities will benefit students and their families (all schools)
- » The design allows for the provision of a preschool should the need emerge
- » A comprehensive review of the overall bus and school bus systems in Murwillumbah is being undertaken with no findings available to date. Future changes to bus services will be required and may affect users in the broader catchment area (nature and extent of this is unknown at this stage)

Local area:

- » Potential impact of an upgraded school on local property prices, with positive or negative impacts depending on tenure and income (MHS)
- » The design allows for shared uses with the community should this be implemented (MHS)
- » There will be no overshadowing of adjacent properties due to new buildings (MHS)
- » New pedestrian crossings supporting safer movements (MHS)
- » Increased traffic associated with the proposal will not create substantial impacts on intersections in the surrounding areas (MHS)
- » Students who elect to drive will be required to park within the local area potentially affecting the local amenity (MHS)
- » Additional traffic to and around the MEC may be associated with additional noise generation (MHS)

5.4.1 Impacts of school and class size

Consultation identified concerns for educational performance due to a larger school size with impacts on educational outcomes. There is a concern that the project will result in larger classes and cohorts may create less personal, one-on-one learning environments that students are used to attend. "Personalised attention for all students" was an important characteristic of a great school for nearly 75% respondents of the survey run by SINSW.

Consultation also identified concerns for students' health and wellbeing in relation to school size, with particular concerns including:

- » Potential increase in social anxiety, stress, depression for students but also for their families who may be increasingly concerned
- » Increased risk of bullying and harassment due to bigger cohort and class sizes, a mix of primary and secondary aged students, or diminished wellbeing amongst students
- » Increased behavioural issues, drug use and crime amongst students, perceived to be caused by a broader range of age groups, increased stress or pressure due, or a lack of one-on-one support and care for vulnerable students, all due to a larger school environment.
- » Challenges for students with enhanced/special needs attending a school at a large campus.
- » Concerns regarding a potential increase in crime and violence, with MHS described as having anti-social behaviour problems, and concerns about bringing more students (and especially primary school aged students) into that environment.

There is conflicting evidence and no clear association regarding the impacts of a larger school on educational performance. There is also no clear association between school size and school violence. Many other factors can be linked to educational performance, behavioural issues or violence at school, including governance at school (schools and norms, supervision), family environment, and individual behaviours. Students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, with higher needs may be more impacted than others by a larger school²¹. While adequate support programs should be provided to all students, additional support for more disadvantaged children and families should be provided before, during and after the transition. Providing safe spaces in the design that students can utilise if they feel threatened or need time on their own may also help.

The educational literature does not show a consensus on the association between the size of classes and school climate. Some research does suggest that "higher student-teacher ratios" can be associated with "more negative teacher attitudes, lower expectations of students, higher student suspensions and poorer academic performance". Other research further suggests that smaller class sizes result in more individual attention from teachers²². The proposed class sizes at the campus will be consistent with NSW Department of Education guidelines regarding class size and teacher to student ratios. Student support unit class sizes will also be capped at 10 students per class.

Retaining similar levels of academic and wellbeing support, extracurricular activities, parent activities, would be an important consideration in the future.

The design of the MEC campus has utilised the latest research on contemporary learning environments. The design has been driven by creating a high-quality learning environment for students. While there are disagreements around issues like school size, it is important to note that the MEC has been designed specifically with student outcomes in mind. This is likely to be a very different learning environment than a school that was designed some time ago, or has grown organically, without the opportunity to focus the design explicitly on the creation of a good learning environment based on leading practice school design.

²¹ Darling-Hammond L. et al, High School Size, Organization, and Content: What Matters for Student Success?, Brookings Papers on Education Policy, 2006

²² Lamb S. and Glover S., Educational disadvantage and regional and rural schools, n.d., https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1228&context=research_conference

5.4.2 The proposal will address existing and future demands for school places

School communities

With a proposed new capacity of 582 primary school children and 1,140 high school students, the MEC is proposed to result in an overall capacity of 1,722 students. While this number is higher than 2020 enrolment figures, it does represent a reduction in overall school capacity. The new capacity of 582 students for primary school is a decrease on the current primary schools' capacity of 648. The new capacity of 1,140 secondary school students is a decrease on the current secondary schools' capacity of 1,860.

The issue of local population growth within Murwillumbah and local school communities was strongly expressed during consultation. Many parents, teachers and community members stated that they were concerned the proposed combined education campus would not be able to adequately accommodate local and regional growth, as the project is predicted to attract more families and students to the area.

It is however noted that:

- » Student enrolment numbers at the four impacted schools show a declining student population
- » Within the Murwillumbah township, the proportion of babies, primary school and secondary schools is forecast to decrease by 2041. The actual number of babies, primary school and secondary schools is also forecast to decrease between 2026 and 2041, indicating a likely decrease in demand for school places²³.
- » Including other areas surrounding Murwillumbah that are within the future catchment of MEC, there are overall 3,685 primary and secondary schoolers in the study area currently. This is forecast to increase to 3,876 by 2041²⁴. Using a ratio of 60% public enrolments and 40% non-government enrolments (consistent with current data), this would result in an increase of 115 enrolments which can be accommodated by the project.

The proposal therefore seems consistent with population forecasts and the school has been designed to accommodate projected growth to at least 2036. Community concerns are however noted and adequate information should be communicated to address these. It is also recognised that the attraction or 'pulling' power of a contemporary campus based on leading practice educational principles is somewhat unknown and may be a factor in the growth of future enrolments.

Local area

Consultation also identified that some stakeholders expressed positive views about the added value of the MEC to the local communities and town of Murwillumbah. The potential for associated business and economic growth resulting in community growth and improving general way of life amongst residents was recognised.

Some stakeholders were concerned about potential negative impacts relating to reduction in housing affordability, availability and cost of living. Research suggests that the quality of schools has the potential to increase property prices within the school's catchment and/or local area. Taylor (2013) states that improving the overall quality of schools can "increase the real estate value of houses in their areas" and in this way, "improving schools can be a method for improving neighbourhoods and stimulating economic growth"²⁵. While an overall increase in housing prices may be beneficial for existing property owners within the catchment, this may result in associated negative impacts on lower socio-economic and/or vulnerable groups, including existing renters.

²³ Tweed Shire, Forecast.id, 2021

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Taylor, L., Literature survey: The effects of school quality on housing prices, 2013

5.4.3 New or increased services

School communities

OSHC will continue to be provided on-site for primary school students and no social impacts are therefore anticipated.

There will be a range of new or increased services available to the school community:

- » There will also be three support learning spaces at the public school and six at the high school, compared to two support classes at MEPS and six support classes currently offered at MHS. The needs of students with special education needs at both primary and high school are currently only partially met because existing facilities do not allow for adequate withdrawal spaces and do not support the delivery of consultation and therapy on site. Providing one additional primary school support learning space, together with an improvement in the quality of facilities provided, is likely to increase not only the quantity but also the quality of special education services in the local community, an important benefit due to the overall anticipated increase in students with special needs²⁶.
- » In addition, the provision of school community health facilities will provide improved access to health services for students and their families. This is a significant offering and will be particularly important for more vulnerable members of the community who may not be able to afford or have access to healthcare services.

The design also allows for the provision of a preschool should the need for this emerge.

Concerns were expressed during consultation about the size of the hall, noting that the MPS hall is used 5 days per week for extracurricular activities. It is noted that there will be additional spaces available for extracurricular activities throughout the school. The allocation of spaces for extracurricular activities will be a consideration for operations.

Local area

The design also allows for shared uses of facilities with the broader community out of school hours. These are not yet finalised and will be an operational matter to be agreed with the future Principal/s of the MEC.

5.4.4 Accessibility

School communities

Consultation identified concerns around increased traffic and congestion around the site when the new school opens, due to an increase in students, private vehicles, and buses, with concerns about increased safety risks and potential accidents.

In terms of traffic generation, there will be an increase in families dropping off/picking up children, students driving/parking and staff driving/parking at or around the site.

The *Traffic Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021) identifies that:

A series of transport infrastructure upgrades are proposed by Bitzios and shown on the *Public Domain Plan* (Bitzios, 2021), including:

- » New pedestrian crossing on Nullum Street south of High School Lane and new pedestrian crossing on High School Lane. These are likely to support pedestrian safety, particularly that of children accessing the school, as well as that of the broader community in the area.
- » Upgrades to the bus interchange to provide passenger pick-up/drop off areas, signage and line marking. Noting that at the moment more than 50% of high school students use the bus, upgrades will support the effective continuation of bus services, and potentially an increase in utilisation associated with the increase in school students. Ensuring that bus services are sufficient and effective will be an important aspect to monitor

²⁶ DoE, Disability Strategy A living document, n.d.

in the future. Efficient public transport systems benefit people's lifestyles, and in this case are likely to benefit children's lifestyles by encouraging people to walk to/from bus stops. In the case of MEC, it is noted that some families are worried about school being located further apart and having to drive to the new MEC with associated time and cost spends. These spends may be relieved by efficient public transport for those with easy access to bus stops, noting that only 23% of all students live within 400m of a bus stop, but 88% live within 400m of a bus route (*School Travel Plan*, Bitzios, 2021).

It is noted that a comprehensive review of the overall bus and school bus systems in Murwillumbah is warranted with the amalgamation of schools. On-going consultation with TfNSW has commenced and a separate Bus Operational Plan for Murwillumbah will be required following approval of the SSD.

A change to bus services may affect the broader catchment area and town of Murwillumbah.

- » Removal of kiss and drop facility on Riverview Street, replaced with on street parking, and new Kiss and drop facility on Nullum Street. This is unlikely to affect the school community (this may affect the local area – refer below)
- » Three cycle parking facilities for bikes, scooters and skateboards
- » Upgrade to pathway along High School Lane
- » 148 student bicycle/scooter/skateboard parking and 13 staff bicycle/scooter/skateboard parking.

It is unclear whether proposed active infrastructure such as bicycle and scooter parking exceeds the currently provided infrastructure across all school sites.

Measures from the *School Travel Plan* (Bitzios, 2021) should be implemented to reduce car trips and maximise car sharing, walking, cycling and use of public transport. The *School Travel Plan* targets are as follows:

- » For primary school communities:
 - > Reduction of private vehicle movements by 25% for students and 17% for staff
 - > Increasing walking and cycling by respectively 1% and 8% for students and 5% and 7% for staff
 - > Increasing bus movements by 15% for students and 5% for staff.
- » For high school communities:
 - > Reduction of private vehicle movements by 6% for students and 17% for staff
 - > Increasing walking by 7% for staff however walking will be reduced by 3% for students
 - > Increasing cycling by 3% for students and 5% for staff
 - > Increasing bus movements by 6% for students and 5% for staff.

If successful, this will likely be associated with increased health and wellbeing benefits, reduced car dependency as well as reduced cost and time spent in the car with overall benefits on ways of live and livelihoods for families. It is recognised that opportunities for staff to avoid driving are limited, and the School Travel Plan recommends gaining staff feedback on cycling and associated facilities yearly.

Car parking

There will be increased demands for car parking mainly for students and staff. Various parking scenarios were reviewed, including on and off-site solutions.

It is recognised that many staff will likely require parking. A total of 150 FTE positions are expected at full capacity, with up to an additional 25 staff working in the DoE office. Using required parking rates identified by Bitzios, this represents a future demand for 165 spaces (*Transport Impact Assessment*, 2021). A total of 161 spaces are proposed which mostly responds to future staff's needs, also noting an additional 10 precinct parking spaces on Riverview Street. In addition, 13 staff bicycle parking and end of trip facilities will be provided to support active movements.

Bitzios further describe a period from school opening (mid 2024) until the end of Term 4 in 2025, when the MEC may have up to 203 staff on-site on any given day. It is not possible to accommodate additional on-site parking

during this period and off-street parking facilities will need to be utilised. Bitzios conclude that this should not significantly impact on the local amenity/community.

In relation to students, it is expected that approximately 45 students intend to drive when they get their licence, with 66 to 90 students driving by the end of each school year. On-site parking will not be prioritised for student use and students will need to utilise available parking facilities within the local area, where spare parking capacity has been observed. This may create additional movements within the local area with potential impacts on the local amenity/community.

Local area

Consultation undertaken as part of the *Transport Impact Assessment* identified that 'parking around schools is a key issue for Council across the Tweed Shire', with Council officers of the opinion that the proposed MEC development 'has the potential to introduce parking issues on surrounding streets' (Bitzios, 2021).

As per the *Transport Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021), the proposed infrastructure upgrades identified above will also impact the local area:

- » New pedestrian crossings supporting safer movements
- » With the kiss and drive area removed from Riverview Street, access to Riverview Street will primarily serve staff access/parking and DoE offices. It is expected that there will be negligible change around Riverview Street. The use of the parking area near Brisbane Street/James Street by students will create new traffic in this area that is possibly currently exempt from school traffic and already experiencing traffic associated with the sports fields. There could be an opportunity to explore the need for traffic calming measure in this area to mitigate any impacts on residents.

Excluding the MEC project, traffic rates are expected to grow by 2% in Murwillumbah. As mentioned above, there will be an increase in families dropping off/picking up children, students driving/parking and staff driving/parking at or around the site. Increased traffic associated with the proposal will not create substantial impacts on intersections in the surrounding areas. Some improvements may be required which should be worked through with TfNSW and Council as detailed planning progresses, particularly at the Riverview Street/James Street and Nullum Street/Wollumbin Street intersections.

Measures from School Travel Plan should be implemented to reduce car trips and maximise car sharing, walking, cycling and use of public transport. If successful, this will likely be associated with reduced traffic-related impacts and nuisances in the local area.

Additional traffic may also be associated with additional noise generation. As noted in E-LAB's *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (2021), an assessment of noise associated with additional traffic will be undertaken once car parking details are finalised.

There were also concerns regarding amenity impacts due to new buildings and structures on the MEC site. In terms of overshadowing, and based on shadow diagrams (*Concept Design Report*, Architectus, 2021), there will be no overshadowing of adjacent properties. Most of the visual impact in the long term will be on High School Lane along which the new primary school building will be located. The *Landscape Report* (Arcadia, 2021) identifies the 'memorial trees along Nullum street', as 'important screening and added privacy to School Boundary', which may help to mitigate some visual impact surrounding the site.

Impact assessment, mitigation/enhancement and monitoring measures

Social risks in order of significance (starting with very high):

1. The kiss and drop facility will be shifted from Riverview Street to Nullum Street with likely minimal impacts on the school community (future MEC community)

Social benefits in order of significance (starting with very high):

1. There will be a range of new or increased services, including school community health facilities, available to the school community (all schools)
2. One additional support class for students with additional support or learning needs and overall

2. Additional traffic to and around the MEC may be associated with additional noise generation (MHS)	improved quality of support unit will benefit students and their families (all schools)
3. A comprehensive review of the overall bus and school bus systems in Murwillumbah is being undertaken with no findings to date. This may affect the school community and broader catchment area/local area (future MHS community)	3. 97% of the projected demand for staff parking will be provided on site and there will be sufficient parking for people with special needs to access designated parking areas (future MEC community)
4. Students who elect to drive will be required to park within the local area potentially affecting the local amenity and creating real or perceived safety issues at night (future MHS community)	4. The proposal has been designed to address existing and future demands for school places (all schools)
5. The wellbeing of students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds may be more impacted than others by a larger school (all schools)	5. New pedestrian crossings will support safe access to school
6. Potential impact of an upgraded school on local property prices, with positive or negative impacts depending on tenure and income (MHS)	6. The design allows for shared uses with the community should this be implemented
7. Increased traffic associated with the proposal will not create substantial impacts on intersections in the surrounding areas and not result in substantial social impacts (MHS)	7. The design allows for the provision of a preschool should the need emerge
8. There may be a temporary period with a shortfall of parking spaces for staff (between 2024 and 2025) which may result in staff requiring off-site parking (MHS)	8. In addition, 13 staff bicycle parking and end of trip facilities will be provided to support active movements
9. Remaining concerns that the proposed will not address demands (all schools)	
10. While there are concerns about increased violence at the MEC, there is no demonstrated association between school size and school violence (all schools)	
11. There will be no overshadowing of adjacent properties due to new buildings (MHS)	

Mitigation measures:

1. Providing safe spaces in the design where students can retreat if they feel threatened or need time on their own may also help
2. Ensure continued and adequate communication with the community and respond to concerns about size of school
3. Traffic improvements may be required which should be worked through with TfNSW and Council as detailed planning progresses, as per *Traffic Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021)

Enhancement measures:

1. Recommend shared uses be explored by MEC in operations under the "Share our Space" program
2. Collaborate with the North Coast Primary Health Network / Healthy North Coast to ascertain needs and opportunities for school community health facilities
3. Conduct an assessment of noise associated with additional traffic, as per E-LAB's *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (2021)

Operations:

4. Ensure appropriate training of staff or recruitment of new staff for support units

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4. Finalise design of new transport infrastructure upgrades proposed in the *Traffic Impact Assessment* (Bitzios, 2021)
 5. Continue on-going consultation with TfNSW that has commenced regarding the preparation of a separate Bus Operational Plan for Murwillumbah
 6. Advocate to Council for the preparation of a Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan as per Bitzios recommendations in the School Travel Plan, and improvement of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support active movements to MHS
 7. Finalise and implement measures from School Travel Plan
 8. Advocate to Council to ensure adequate lighting and safety in the local area particularly after daylight hours.

Operations:

9. Implement School Travel Plan
10. Provide support to all during the transition however additional support should be provided for more disadvantaged children and families should be provided before, during and after the transition.

Monitoring measures:

1. SINSW/DoE/school to monitor enrolments and public vs non-government enrolments for mainstream and school support units
 2. School to monitor travel mode shares including use of kiss and drop facility, through annual student and staff survey, as per *School Travel Plan* (Bitzios, 2021). Also monitor proportion of students within a bus stop (to monitor any change in bus infrastructure)
 3. School to monitor satisfaction levels around accessibility, including feelings and perceptions of safety when coming to/leaving school through surveys with school community
 4. School to monitor accidents and complaints associated with access points
 5. SINSW/DoE/school to monitor shared use agreements for community use of school facilities
 6. Council to monitor economic impacts associated with the MEC, including business growth and housing affordability
 7. School to monitor that all current extracurricular activities are able to be conducted in the new MEC.
-

5.5 Provision of contemporary facilities at MEC

The project will result in new facilities at MHS, for all school communities.

Identified impacts:

School community:

- » The design will likely be associated with improved wellbeing for school communities (future MEC)
- » The new campus will be flood-resilient and MEPS children/teachers will no longer be required to use demountables (MEPS, future MEC community)
- » The building will be thermally efficient and maximise acoustic control and natural light (future MEC)
- » The project will result in an increase in educational opportunities. This may lead to a rise in the number of children completing Year 12, pursuing post-year 12 education or securing employment (future MEC)
- » Flexible learning spaces may be associated with positive student wellbeing and educational outcomes, improved student engagement and autonomy, and ability to collaborate (future MEC)
- » The project will provide sufficient open and play areas for students (future MEC)
- » There will be increased play opportunities for MPS children (MPS)
- » There will be outdoor covered learning areas and walkways providing all-weather outdoor opportunities (future MEC)
- » Some trees dedicated to past staff and students will be affected by construction
- » The proposed lifts, circulation paths within the site and entry points will address topography constraints and support inclusive access for all abilities (future MEC)
- » The sugar cane fields adjacent the school have been identified as a potential fire hazard (future MEC)

Local area:

- » n/a

5.5.1 Improved look and feel

School communities

Research suggests that the “look and feel of the physical environment had a social and emotional influence” on students²⁷, which is further defined as a negative association between “limited physical appeal of particular spaces [in particular uninvitingly dark and characterless classrooms]” and “sense of wellbeing”. There is therefore an association between the built environment and the social or emotional wellbeing of students. This includes “building age, climate control, indoor air quality, lighting, acoustical control, design classifications and overall impression”²⁸. The *ESD Report* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021) identifies that:

- » The proposed design incorporates efficient heat control measures such as shading and screens that maintain adequate daylight and views
- » The building will be thermally efficient and ensure insulation and ventilation with a combination of natural ventilation and air conditioning (air conditioning will be provided in each learning area)
- » Acoustic comfort will be optimised to ensure internal noise levels. A dedicated acoustic design response should be prepared as part of detailed design.
- » Natural light will be optimised with minimise glaring
- » Views have been optimised
- » Materials and finishes will minimise off-gassing to promote a better-quality environment.

²⁷ Hughes H. et al, High School Spaces and Student Transitioning: Designing for Student Wellbeing, in School Spaces for Student Wellbeing and Learning, 2019

²⁸ Kutsyuruba B. et al, Relationships among school climate, school safety, and student achievement and well-being: a review of the literature, 2015

Detailed design will identify any required measure to be consistent with a 4 Star Green Star Design and will include a full climate adaptation assessment.

The *Accessibility Capability Statement* (GroupDLA, 2021) identifies lifts in all new buildings (total of five lifts), as well as clear accessible pathways across the site. An access design strategy has been prepared to address existing accessibility constraints (e.g. topography, flooding and heritage). This will assist in reducing travel distances and minimising steep access paths between buildings. During detailed design, a range of compliance areas will need to be addressed to ensure appropriate circulation within and out of buildings, within the site, and linkages to the site. Performance-based access solutions will be required for Building A to ensure compliance as there are currently non-accessible areas. These solutions are to be developed as detailed design progresses. GroupDLA is of the opinion that the proposed design will be capable of compliance.

During consultation, some stakeholders noted that the current high school facilities at MHS and WHS are out-dated and require upgrades. For the MEPS school community, the project will result in some students no longer learning in demountable classrooms and benefitting from permanent and purpose-built learning spaces. Noting the current conditions of existing schools, new and refurbished spaces will likely be associated with benefits on student wellbeing and enhanced positive attitudes/enthusiasm towards education. The need to ensure building quality and resilience during weather events was again clearly identified during the February / March 2022 floods which impacted the MEPS school site. As previously mentioned, the site has been designed to be able to remain operational during weather and flooding events.

Informal spaces, such as “eating areas and corridors” as well as spaces that may be insignificant for adults, such as small nooks behind trees, have significance for students’ wellbeing and important considerations as part of the design. The *Concept Design Report* (Architectus, 2021) discusses the importance of gathering spaces within the school’s grounds, as well as ‘the spaces in between’, highlighting the importance of integrating a range of spaces and areas into the project design.

5.5.2 Curriculum

School communities

In addition to general learning spaces, there will be new or expanded specialised learning spaces for visual arts, trade skills (entertainment, hospitality), food and textile, sports and performance (gymnasium), health and PE, performing arts, agriculture, science, wood and metal. The *Concept Design Report* (Architectus, 2021) notes that the proposed trade skills are in line with key growth industries in the local and regional area and may help to retain young workers and professionals in the community and stimulate economic and industry growth.

Through providing additional opportunities, the project will result in an increase of pathways, which may lead to a rise in the number of children completing Year 12, pursuing post-year 12 education, or securing employment. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare links participation in secondary school to an increase in productivity, which often leads to “higher personal earnings and improved health and wellbeing outcomes”²⁹. Research also demonstrates that students who complete Year 12 are more likely to pursue further education and training, and transition more successfully into the workforce³⁰.

Consultation also appreciated that the project will likely provide varied experiences and increased choice of subjects, resulting in improved educational opportunities.

5.5.3 Future focused learning

School communities

The proposal will create new flexible learning spaces that will be adaptable and designed to enable contemporary learning approaches, with walls to arrange separated or group activities. The MEC will provide all students with access to technology.

²⁹ AIHW, Secondary education: school retention and completion

³⁰ ABS, Australian social trends March 2011, Year 12 attainment, 2011

Flexible learning spaces and student-centred pedagogy (where students become active participants), have been associated with positive student wellbeing outcomes, improved student engagement and autonomy, and ability to collaborate. In some cases, they have also been associated with reduced privacy and increased distractions for students. There are some acoustic design considerations to implement to ensure appropriate noise levels within and between classrooms³¹.

Research also suggests that flexible learning spaces such as those proposed in the MEC, compared to traditional classrooms:

- » Reduce sedentary behaviours such as prolonged sitting when coupled with student-centred pedagogy. Reduced school-day sitting has been shown to enhance cognitive function and breaking-up sitting improves cardio-metabolic health, reducing the risk of metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes³².
- » Benefit students' social, emotional, and physical wellbeing, with greater levels of interaction between students and teachers and among students, with positive associations with levels of motivation and engagement³³.

Low school engagement has been associated with problem behaviour and poor adolescent health, as well as risk of dropout, and improving engagement levels may therefore help prevent these³⁴. The direct impact of flexible learning spaces on educational outcomes is described in academic literature as difficult to assess, because of the complexity and variety of factors, including a change of school environment, teaching methods, social environment, which "could impact on students both individually and collectively with regard to attitude, motivation, behaviour, physical growth, and academic achievement"³⁵. Monitoring student engagement, academic results, as well as student and staff satisfaction would be an important aspect in the future.

It is also noted that one of the key goals associated with combined primary and secondary schooling is to "promote dialogue between the two phases" of education "which have traditionally remained separate"³⁶. Benefits of combined schooling may include a larger body of diverse teaching and non-teaching staff with varying levels of experience and expertise, shared facilities of a higher quality, a less isolated educational experience, and varied learning experiences for children of different age groups that may not otherwise receive such learning opportunities³⁷.

5.5.4 Open/play spaces

School communities

There was a concern expressed during consultation that the project will lead to overall loss of greenspace and outdoor play spaces across the four school campuses, with an overall concrete aspect of the school with implications for climate change and urban heat. Ensuring that there is "plenty of outdoor space for play, recreation and sport" was an important characteristic of a great school for approximately 65% of survey respondents.

The primary and high school elements will provide separate outdoor and play spaces.

The public school will include an open turf area, a covered outdoor learning area (COLA), games court, assembly court as well as outdoor classroom areas and a nature play area. It will achieve 16.40m² per student, above the 10m² per student guideline. This will be an improvement particularly for MPS children who do not have access to a games court. The possibility to relocate some of the existing play equipment in existing schools (when in good condition) to the new MEC is being investigated.

³¹ Vijapur, D. et al, A Ten-Year Review of Primary School Flexible Learning Environments: Interior Design and IEQ Performance, 2021

³² Kariippanon, K. E. et al, Flexible learning spaces reduce sedentary time in adolescents, 2019

³³ Kariippanon, K. E., Perceived interplay between flexible learning spaces and teaching, learning and student wellbeing, 2017

³⁴ Kariippanon, K. E. et al, Flexible learning spaces facilitate interaction, collaboration and behavioural engagement in secondary school, 2019

³⁵ Blackmore, J. et al, Innovative Learning Environments Research Study, 2011

³⁶ Hadfield, How can we get primary and secondary schools working together?, <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/may/08/collaboration-primary-secondary-schools-working-together>, 2013

³⁷ Ibid.

The high school will include four games courts, assembly area, COLA area, as well as a natural amphitheatre and social terraces for students to gather. It will provide 23.85m² of open space per student, well above the 10m² guideline.

There is no proposed change to the existing field in the southern portion of the site, which will be made available for both the primary and secondary schools once the MEC is operational.

There were concerns expressed during consultation about:

- » The future shared use of fields between primary and high schools. This will need to be managed during operations.
- » Preserving existing trees dedicated to past staff and students. At this stage, these are marked for retention on Arcadia’s Landscape Master Plan (*Landscape Report*, 2021). The project team has advised that the majority of these will be retained. Some will be impacted by construction and there will be consultation regarding appropriate recognition of their memorial or historical function.

COLAs and walkways will be covered and provide outdoor opportunities that can be used in a range of weather conditions. Accessible pathways for all abilities will also be provided to ensure adequate access to and between all school buildings.

Bushfire risk

The *Bushfire Assessment* (Blackash, 2020) identifies low threat vegetation within the site, which will be cleared for the future development which will eliminate the hazard. Maintenance recommendations are made by Blackash which will need to be reflected in the school’s landscaping plan of management.

The cane fields to the west of the site are identified as grassland hazard and Blackash recommend that a 36m Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is required between the cane fields the nearest proposed new building. Other recommendations by Blackash should be implemented in detailed design, including appropriate construction standards to ensure ember protection for any building within 50m of grassland hazard (though any buildings should be avoided within 50m of the south western boundary), and a series of measures listed in Section 9 of the *Bushfire Assessment*.

The design of any access into the site should allow safe access and defensible space for fire and emergency services. Blackash assess that the access provisions at MHS are adequate and meet performance requirements. Future detailed design should ensure appropriate accessibility for fire fighting appliances to all building elevations. Accessibility should include provisions for a perimeter access road constructed between any new building and the south western boundary, with the recommended 36m APZ.

With the school having been used as an evacuation centre, the current evacuation and emergency management arrangements (EMP) will need to be updated to consider any new developments and ensure consistency with relevant standards.

Local area

- » n/a

Social risks in order of significance (starting with very high):	Social benefits in order of significance (starting with very high):
1. Some trees dedicated to past staff and students will be affected by construction 2. The sugar cane fields adjacent the school have been identified as a potential fire hazard (future MEC)	1. The new campus will be flood-resilient and MEPS children/teachers will no longer be required to use demountables (MEPS, future MEC community) 2. The building will be thermally efficient and maximise acoustic control and natural light (Future MEC)

3. There will be outdoor covered learning areas and walkways providing all-weather outdoor opportunities (Future MEC)
4. The proposed lifts, circulation paths within the site and entry points will address topography constraints and support inclusive access for all abilities (future MEC)
5. The project will provide sufficient open and play areas for students (Future MEC)
6. There will be increased play opportunities for MPS children (MPS)
7. The project will result in an increase in educational opportunities. This may lead to a rise in the number of children completing Year 12, pursuing post-year 12 education or securing employment. (Future MEC)
8. Flexible learning spaces may be associated with positive student wellbeing and educational outcomes, improved student engagement and autonomy, and ability to collaborate (Future MEC)
9. The design may be associated with improved wellbeing for school communities (Future MEC)

Mitigation measures:

1. A 36m Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is required between the cane fields the nearest proposed new building as required by Blackash
2. Other recommendations by Blackash should be implemented in detailed design
3. Update the current evacuation and emergency management arrangements

Operations:

N/A

Enhancement measures:

1. Encourage that existing play equipment in existing schools be relocated to the new MEC when in good condition and where possible
2. Ensure existing trees dedicated to past staff and students are preserved as much as possible, and undertake consultation when this cannot be fully achieved to find adequate solutions
3. Ensure staff are trained to deliver student centred/ future learning methods and support student engagement
4. Identify any required measure to be consistent with a 4 Star Green Star Design and include a full climate adaptation assessment
5. A dedicated acoustic design response should be prepared as part of detailed design, as per *ESD Report* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021)
6. Address equitable and inclusive accessibility through detailed design as per GroupDLA's recommendations.

Monitoring measures:

1. SINSW/DoE/school to monitor student engagement and academic results
2. School to monitor student and staff satisfaction

5.6 Communication, planning and construction

Identified impacts:

School community (MHS and WHS)

- » Temporary relocation to WHS will ensure that the MHS community is separated from construction activities, allowing the adequate continuation of learning with an increased choice of subjects due to larger resources
- » Temporary relocation to WHS may create anxieties associated with changing school environment for the MHS community, as well as potentially WHS community that will need to adapt too
- » Temporary relocation to WHS will provide an opportunity to start building a joint school culture ahead of the transition to the new MEC.

Workers

- » Temporary job opportunities created during construction with associated improved or continued wellbeing for workers and families
- » There are several exposure risks particularly in relation to the presence of asbestos, lead base paints and lead containing dust throughout the site

Local area:

- » Engagement to date has resulted in changes to the project responding to community feedback
- » The *Construction Management Plan* identifies measures that will support safety for the MHS local area during works
- » Dust and air quality will be managed by strategies identified in the *Construction Management Plan*
- » Some works may occur out of standard hours
- » Noise and vibration associated with construction activities will affect the local area particularly residents north of High School Lane
- » Likely impacts on amenity of WHS local area during construction with additional traffic created by MHS attendance.

5.6.1 Communication and awareness

School communities and local area

The initial feedback on the concept of the MEC and the consultation undertaken for it caused some tensions in the community. During early surveys and community information sessions held in the town of Murwillumbah, some members of the community raised concerns regarding the level of community and resident consultation prior to the announcement of the MEC project. It is noted that formal approval and NSW Treasury funding for this project was provided in October 2020³⁸ and consultation followed shortly after, also in October 2020.

It now appears that many community members have accepted that a decision has been made to create the MEC. SINSW reports that the later rounds of consultation undertaken since September 2021 have seen the community demonstrate willingness to engage positively in the consultation process.

The engagement process of the SSDA phase has been comprehensive and included the following activities with school communities:

³⁸ SINSW, Post announcement project feedback: Community Engagement channels, 28 October – 13 December 2020, 22 December 2020

- » Several separate P&C meetings and presentations in 2020 and 2021, as well as combined high school or primary school P&C meetings
- » Throughout 2021, workshops with representative students from each school and workshops with representative Aboriginal students from each school
- » Information pack, online survey and workshops with school communities including students, parents, staff, to specifically discuss temporary accommodation of Murwillumbah High School during construction of the campus
- » Community workshops with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, LALC and local Aboriginal community
- » Online survey in December 2021 regarding possible names for the future campus, with more than 300 responses received
- » Meetings with Local NSW Teachers Federation representatives.

With broader community members, consultation included:

- » A project page on the SINSW website with regular updates
- » Virtual information session in November 2020
- » Online survey between December 2020 and February 2021
- » Drop-in community information session in March 2021
- » Virtual information session in September 2021.

Some consultation findings have also been a consideration in key project changes and this iterative process is considered to result in benefits for the community and likely increased ownership of the future campus. Project changes include:

- » Reduction of building footprint and concrete areas to increase open/green spaces
- » Modifications to circulation strategy to allow for more landscaped pathways
- » Changes to building layout to maximise retention of trees along Nullum Street and within the site
- » Clearer delineation between the primary and high schools
- » Changes to the location of school support units
- » Consideration of possible extensions to accommodate additional learning spaces if required
- » Changes to access points and traffic infrastructure.

Discussions around options for temporary accommodation of MHS and names for the future MEC are another example of direct community involvement in the project.

5.6.2 Construction impacts (MHS and WHS)

Construction operating hours are planned as follows, as per the *Construction Management Plan* (Built, 2021):

- » Monday to Friday Normal Working Hours: 7:00am to 6.00pm
- » Saturday: 7:00am to 1pm.

Some works may occur out of hours and approval will need to be sought if this occurs. It is recommended that the school communities and local area residents be informed of any out of hours works well in advance.

As identified above, construction is a key interest for the community. There will unlikely be impacts on MPS and MEPS during construction, as these school communities will continue normal activities until the transition.

As per the *Construction Traffic Management Plan* (Bitzios, 2021), “all existing MHS students will be relocated to the Wollumbin High School, as such no students or staff will be in the MHS grounds during the entire construction period”.

It is therefore expected that the MHS and WHS school communities and local areas will be impacted during construction.

MHS school community

On 9 December 2021, it was formally announced to school communities via a Community Update issued by SINSW, that the MHS school community will temporarily relocate to WHS during construction, from the beginning of 2023. The announcement material describes that “the department will support the two school communities to work together during 2022 to align teaching approaches, learning structures, operational processes, and school culture”.

This will clearly result in the MHS community being separated from construction activities, allowing the adequate continuation of learning in a non-disrupted environment, which is positive. There will likely be anxieties associated with changing school environment, particularly but not only for children.

There were concerns expressed during consultation about potential disruptions on students and staff at MHS, particularly due to dust, noise and vibration, and potential impacts on pollutant concentration and health. There were also concerns regarding asbestos in some buildings at MHS and potential impacts on health. With the MHS school community being fully relocated to WHS during construction, none of these impacts are expected.

Prior to this temporary relocation being announced, consultation was undertaken in November 2021 to seek feedback on various options for temporary arrangements. A summary of findings was available in the Community Update material. Key areas of interest were summarised and included:

- » Equal access to appropriate facilities, equipment and adequate indoor and outdoor space: learning at WHS will likely involve the establishment of temporary places. As temporary relocation occurs, it will be important to make sure that there is sufficient learning space, outdoor space, amenities and other common spaces (e.g. library, hall, canteen) to avoid a feeling of crowdedness
- » Minimise disruptions to learning and wellbeing for all: while the relocation will directly affect the MHS community, it will also affect the WHS community who will need to adapt and share their environment which may be disruptive. Effectively managing and minimising any risk of disruption to learning but also conflicts between students or anxieties through efficient planning, implementation, support mechanisms and change management will be essential. It is acknowledged that this provides an opportunity to work on school culture ahead of the transition to the new MEC. There will also be additional resourcing and more subject choices.
- » Support for staff: adequate support should be ensured for staff not to be or feel overloaded.

SINSW recognises the possible anxieties that this temporary relocation process is creating and has committed to continue engaging with school communities.

In relation to workers, the JBS&G’s *Hazardous Building Materials Survey* (2021) identifies several exposure risks particularly in relation to the presence of asbestos and lead base paints in some buildings, and lead containing dust throughout the site. A hazard material management plan should be prepared as part of detailed design, along with other air monitoring measures, which will support the safety of the construction site. Some areas were inaccessible during JBS&G’s inspections and should be included prior to works commencing.

WHS school community and local area

As mentioned above, it is likely that temporarily relocating MHS to WHS will create a range of impacts which are still uncertain at this stage. In addition to temporary changes to way of life and the way the school is functioning and the way the WHS school community experiences its space, it is anticipated however that this scenario could create temporary additional traffic around WHS which could impact on both the school community (combined WHS and MHS) and amenity of the local area. The significance of traffic increases has not been assessed in a specialist traffic report but this will be assessed as part of the process to design the temporary accommodation at WHS. Mitigation measures will be identified and implemented to manage impacts as required.

It is recommended that detailed information continue to be clearly communicated to all relevant parties including MHS and WHS school communities and local areas. Adequate infrastructure and support for all members of school communities should be provided to ensure continued access to school, continued safe learning and activities, including outdoor and extra-curricular activities with minimal disruption.

MHS local area

There were also concerns expressed during consultation regarding amenity and wellbeing impacts due to dust, noise and vibrations during construction, for residents of the area surrounding MHS. This may particularly affect households with members that work from home, home-school children, care for babies or small children, or are elderly/retired, as it is more likely these groups will be at home during the day (when construction activities occur). As mentioned above, dust and air quality will be managed by strategies identified in the *Construction Management Plan* (Built, 2021).

The *Construction Management Plan* (Built, 2021) identifies that:

- » Temporary site fencing will be erected in line with the site layout plan for each stage of works, along with appropriate signage
- » Pedestrian access routes will be identified on the site layout plan and will be maintained throughout all stages of construction. These access routes will be delineated from all vehicle routes to ensure the safety of pedestrians entering site and there will be strict access controls
- » All covered walkways will be adequately lit after hours and there will be video-surveillance.

The above measures will support safety for the local area during works.

Dust and air quality will be managed by strategies identified in the *Construction Management Plan* (Built, 2021).

In terms of noise, the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021) identifies that some construction activities will exceed noise criteria particularly during excavation works and this will particularly affect residential receivers north of High School Lane, as well as residents west of Riverview Street to a lesser degree. Vibration levels will also affect the local area and particularly those residents north of High School Lane. Mitigation measures are proposed to alleviate some of these impacts, including frequent and proactive communication with residents. Additional measures could also be further explored during detailed design to improve acoustic performance during construction, including noise barriers, as described in E-LAB’s report.

There will be additional traffic in the area during construction. The *Construction Traffic Management Plan* (Bitzios, 2021) identifies that 120 workers will attend the site daily during demolition and construction. During this time, estimated to last 6 months by Bitzios, workers and deliveries will access the subject site via two access points at Nullum Street and via one access point at Riverview Street. The refurbishment of Building A (3 months as estimated by Bitzios) will require 30 workers daily. During this time, workers and deliveries will access the subject site via a single access at Riverview Street.

The *Construction Traffic Management Plan* (Bitzios, 2021) also identifies that:

- » Workers are to park at the existing Hockey Tweed club parking area during weekdays, when demand at this facility is low. It is recommended by Bitzios to consult with the Hockey Tweed Club, Murwillumbah Mustang Rugby Club and Tweed Shire Council to discuss this measure.
- » During Saturdays, workers will be able to park within the MHS oval (as mentioned above), south of the construction zone and on Nullum Street. This will not change additional traffic needed to access the site but will prevent any conflicts with users of the sporting facilities.

In terms of construction workers, consultation also identified the opportunity to involve smaller and local contractors and suppliers.

Social risks in order of significance (starting with very high):	Social benefits in order of significance (starting with very high):
1. Temporary relocation to WHS may create anxieties associated with changing school	1. Engagement to date has resulted in changes to the project responding to community feedback

environment for the MHS community, as well as potentially WHS community that will need to adapt too	2. Temporary relocation to WHS may provide an opportunity to start building a joint school culture ahead of the transition to the new MEC
2. There are several exposure risks particularly in relation to the presence of asbestos, lead base paints and lead containing dust throughout the site	3. Temporary relocation to WHS will ensure that the MHS community is separated from construction activities, allowing the adequate continuation of learning with an increased choice of subjects due to larger resources
3. Likely impacts on amenity of WHS local area during construction with additional traffic created by MHS attendance	4. Temporary job opportunities created during construction with associated improved or continued wellbeing for workers and families
4. Noise and vibration associated with construction activities will affect the local area particularly residents north of High School Lane	
5. Likely impacts on amenity of MHS local area during construction due to construction traffic	
6. Some works may occur out of standard hours	
7. The <i>Construction Management Plan</i> identifies measures that will support safety for the MHS local area during works	
8. Dust and air quality will be managed by strategies identified in the <i>Construction Management Plan</i> .	

Mitigation measures:

1. Obtain permit to work prior to works being conducted in areas of potential disturbance, as per Asbestos in Grounds Management Plan (as per Douglas Partners' *Detailed Site Investigation for Contamination*, 2021)
2. Continue communication and information with school communities and overall Murwillumbah community about the project's progress
3. Continue engaging with the community to understand potential impacts of temporary relocation to WHS, address negative impacts and enhance any benefits. It is recommended that detailed information be clearly communicated to all relevant parties including MHS and WHS school communities and local areas.
4. Ensure efficient planning, implementation and management change including ahead of temporary relocation, to assist children as well as staff
5. It is recommended that local area residents be communicated any out of hours works well in advance
6. Mitigation measures as per *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021)
7. A hazard material management plan should be prepared as part of detailed design, along with other air monitoring measures and other recommendations of the JBS&G's *Hazardous Building Materials Survey* (2021)

Enhancement measures:

1. Local procurement and supplier opportunities – growth of local industry and businesses
2. Ensure that temporary relocation in WHS allows sufficient learning space, admin space, outdoor space, amenities and other common spaces (e.g. library, hall, canteen) to avoid a feeling of crowdedness for all members of school communities

-
8. Some areas were inaccessible during JBS&G's inspections and should be included prior to works commencing
 9. Discuss parking arrangement for workers with the Hockey Tweed Club, Murwillumbah Mustang Rugby Club and Tweed Shire Council as design progresses.
-

Monitoring measures:

1. SINSW/DoE monitor community feedback about project and temporary relocation
 2. Contractor to monitor involvement and proportion of local suppliers during construction
 3. Contractor to monitor complaints received during construction
 4. Contractor to implement noise and vibration monitoring measures as per *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021)
-

6 Conclusions

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been prepared to accompany an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that supports a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the Murwillumbah Education Campus.

This SIA has been prepared using the findings of a policy and literature review, review of technical studies, social baseline, and consultation feedback. It has followed the necessary steps of SIA preparation identified in DPE's *SIA Guideline* in order to identify then assess social impacts, and to develop enhancement and mitigation measures. Social impacts were assessed pre and post-mitigation/enhancement measures.

One of the possible benefits and key objectives of this project is increasing learning outcomes through the provision of flexible learning spaces. The Concept Design will provide these spaces, but the ongoing operation of these spaces and staff training and resourcing will be equally important to fully realise the potential of the school and fulfil its educational philosophy. Through the implementation of adequate operational measures, there is high potential for the design to create high social impacts with increased educational and social outcomes. The operation of the school is beyond the scope or influence of this SIA report and is not necessarily the responsibility of SINSW.

Other significant social benefits have been identified, including the following high and very high benefits:

- » For some primary-school families, the new MEC may be within shorter distance, possibly closer walking/cycling distance, with benefits on health and wellbeing (MPS, MEPS)
- » Spaces for students' bicycles, scooters and skateboards will be provided to support active movements (future MHS community)
- » Project is unlikely to result in impacts on cultural heritage and there is potential for "numerous cultural heritage benefits". Landscaping will be inspired by Country, with yarning circles and cultural plantings including Indigenous plants to support culture and educational opportunities (MHS)
- » The site will be designed to function during storm events (all schools), with avoidance of future impacts associated with flooding for MEPS school community (MEPS)
- » The proposal has been designed to address existing and future demands for school places although there are concerns that it will not (all schools)
- » There will be a range of new or increased services, including school community health facilities, available to the school community (all schools)
- » One additional support class for primary school students with special needs and overall improved quality of primary and high school support unit facilities will benefit students and their families (all schools)
- » 97% of the projected demand for staff parking will be provided on site and there will be sufficient parking for people with special needs to access designated parking areas (future MEC)
- » New pedestrian crossings will support safe access to school and benefit the broader area (Future MEC)
- » The new campus will be flood-resilient and MEPS children/teachers will no longer be required to use demountables (MEPS, future MEC community)The building will be thermally efficient and maximise acoustic control and natural light (Future MEC)
- » The project will result in an increase in educational opportunities. This may lead to a rise in the number of children completing Year 12, pursuing post-year 12 education or securing employment (Future MEC)
- » The project will provide sufficient open and play areas for students (Future MEC)
- » There will be increased play opportunities for MPS children (MPS)
- » There will be outdoor covered learning areas and walkways providing all-weather outdoor opportunities (Future MEC)
- » Engagement to date has provided opportunities for school communities to experience a feeling of involvement and contribute to the future identity of the campus (all schools)

- » Temporary relocation to WHS will ensure that the MHS community is separated from construction activities, allowing the adequate continuation of learning with an increased choice of subjects due to larger resources.

Some social risks were identified, including the following high and one very high impacts:

- » Reduced school choice (all schools)
- » For some, inability to walk/cycle to the new school, with implications on physical activity and wellbeing of future students/families, particularly those who currently could walk/cycle to school (MPS, MEPS, WHS)
- » Potential risk of reduced sense of belonging/pride for students (all schools)
- » Loss of attachment to closing schools for some (WHS, MPS, MEPS)
- » Changing school may result in stress and costs for school communities (WHS, MPS, MEPS)
- » There may be some new costs and adjustments for the MHS community (MHS)
- » Possible loss of casual or part-time employment with impacts on livelihoods and wellbeing (all schools)
- » There are several exposure risks particularly in relation to the presence of asbestos, lead base paints and lead containing dust throughout the site (workers)
- » Some construction activities will exceed noise and vibration criteria particularly during excavation works (MHS local area)
- » Temporary relocation to WHS may create anxieties associated with changing school environment for the MHS community, as well as potentially WHS community that will need to adapt too (MHS and WHS).

Enhancement and mitigation measures have been identified in the SIMP.

Monitoring measures have also been identified which are summarised below:

1. SINSW to monitor community feedback about project and temporary relocation and address complaints
2. Contractor to monitor involvement of local suppliers during construction
3. Contractor to monitor complaints received during construction
4. Contractor to monitor Noise and vibration monitoring measures as per *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (E-LAB Consulting, 2021)
5. SINSW/DoE/school to monitor student engagement and academic results
6. School to monitor student and staff satisfaction
7. SINSW/DOE/school to monitor NAPLAN results, Year 10/11/12 completion and post-school employment or educational outcomes
8. SINSW/DoE/school to monitor enrolments and public vs non-government enrolments for mainstream and special needs units
9. School to monitor travel mode shares including use of kiss and drop facility, through annual student and staff survey, as per *School Travel Plan* (Bitzios, 2021). Also monitor proportion of students within a bus stop (to monitor any change in bus infrastructure)
10. School to monitor satisfaction levels around accessibility, including feelings and perceptions of safety when coming to/leaving school through surveys with school community
11. School to monitor accidents and complaints associated with access points
12. SINSW/DoE/school to monitor shared use agreements for community use of school facilities
13. Council to monitor economic impacts associated with the MEC, including business growth and housing affordability
14. School to monitor that all current extracurricular activities are able to be conducted in the new MEC
15. Schools to continue monitoring of staff, students' and parents' satisfaction through surveys

16. New MEC to monitor staff, students' and parents' satisfaction through surveys following opening
17. New MEC to monitor travel modes to school
18. New MEC to monitor health and wellbeing issues or complaints made by the school community
19. Council/SINSW to monitor complaints or comments received in relation to closed school sites, maintenance and future plans
20. School to monitor travel mode shares as per *School Travel Plan* (Bitzios, 2021)
21. SINSW/DoE to monitor unemployment in the local area
22. Contractor and school to monitor number of locally procured businesses through future operations of MEC.

Appendices

- A Author's declaration
- B Community social baseline data
- C SIA guidelines
- D Social Impact Management Plan

A Author's declaration

This report was prepared by Sophie Le Mauff, Associate – Social Strategy and Outcomes at WSP Australia. Sophie holds the degrees of Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Planning, Masters Degree in International Architectural Regeneration and Development, a Masters Degree in Tourism Planning and Development and a Certificate in Engagement Essentials (IAP2).

It was reviewed by Steve Rossiter, Director – Social Strategy and Outcomes at WSP Australia. Steve holds a Bachelor of Arts with majors in Psychology and History, a Diploma of Education, a Masters Degree in Community and Regional Planning.

This Phase 2 SIA was prepared between August and April 2022, using rigorous, impartial and transparent methods. It was finalised on 08 April 2022. It contains all relevant information that was available at the time of writing, and to my knowledge does not contain information that is false or misleading.



Sophie Le Mauff, Associate – WSP Australia

Date: 8 April 2022

B Community social baseline data

B-1 Community

Composition, cohesion, character, how the community functions, and people's sense of place.

Population

Table A.1 Resident population, 2016

Resident Population, 2016										
	MPS Catchment Area		MEPS Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Residents										
Total	7,957	100%	1,995	100%	9,654	100%	8,944	100%	91,371	100%
Children aged 0-4	439	5.5%	98	4.9%	470	4.9%	467	5.2%	4,779	5.2%
Children aged 5-11	777	9.8%	166	8.3%	848	8.8%	854	9.5%	7,515	8.2%
Children aged 12-17	622	7.8%	161	8.1%	724	7.5%	724	8.1%	6,248	6.8%
Tertiary education/independence aged 18-24	499	6.3%	117	5.9%	540	5.6%	540	6.0%	5,699	6.2%
Young workforce aged 25 to 34	730	9.2%	199	10.0%	797	8.3%	802	8.9%	8,219	9.0%
Parents and homebuilders aged 35 to 49	1,374	17.3%	392	19.6%	1753	18.2%	1755	19.6%	16,042	17.6%
Older workers and pre- retirees aged 50 to 59	1,115	14.0%	334	16.7%	1850	19.2%	1844	20.6%	13,092	14.3%
Empty nesters and retirees aged 60 to 69	1,021	12.8%	322	16.1%	913	9.5%	1681	18.8%	13,275	14.5%
Seniors aged 70 to 84	990	12.4%	221	11.1%	470	4.9%	1117	12.5%	12,927	14.1%
Frail aged 85 and over	380	4.8%	48	2.4%	73	0.8%	131	1.4%	3,581	3.9%
Education										
Attending preschool or primary school	868	10.9%	176	8.8%	897	9.3%	957	10.7%	6,892	26.9%
Attending primary government school	433	5.4%	86	4.3%	432	4.5%	477	17%	4,582	17.9%
Attending primary non- government	304	3.8%	76	3.8%	328	3.4%	338	12%	2,310	9.0%
Attending secondary government school	336	4.2%	80	4.0%	338	3.5%	371	13.2%	3,083	12.0%
Attending secondary non-government	162	2.0%	49	2.5%	245	2.5%	196	6.9%	2,209	8.6%

	MPS Catchment Area		MEPS Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Attending university or TAFE institution or technical education	325	4.1%	91	4.6%	422	4.7%	422	4.7%	7,773	30.3%
Highest level of educational attainment										
Year 12	713	9.0%	217	8.8%	827	10.4	801	11%	9,415	12.4%
Year 10	1,007	12.7%	309	15.5%	1,133	14.2	1,164	16%	12,001	15.8%

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

Population projections

Table A.2 Population projections in Tweed Shire LGA, 2016 - 2041

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	Total change 2016 – 2041	% change 2016 – 2041	Av. annual growth 2016 – 2041
Tweed Shire LGA	93,742	97,767	102,185	102,185	86,923	132,221	38,479	41.0%	1.4%
NSW	7,732,858	8,414,978	9,011,010	9,560,567	10,077,964	10,572,696	2,839,838	36.7%	1.5%

Source: DPIE 2019, Population, Household and Implied Dwelling Projections by LGA (ASGS 2019).

B-2 Way of life

How people live, how they get around, how they work, how they play, and how they interact each day.

B-2-1 Housing and property

Household composition

Table A.3 Household composition, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEP School Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Couples with children	742	21.6%	201	23.4%	966	23.1%	867	29.70	8,652	22.5%
Couples without children	756	22.0%	205	23.9%	1163	27.8%	828	35.75	10,407	27.0%
One parent families	469	13.6%	112	13.0%	430	10.3%	552	6.73	4,278	11.1%
Lone person households	906	26.4%	197	22.9%	907	21.7%	1023	23.67	10,108	26.3%
Group households	109	3.2%	23	2.7%	272	6.5%	131	4.15	1,332	3.5%
Average household size	2.3 – 2.6		2.1 – 3.1		2.6		2.4		2.4	

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

Housing and dwelling characteristics

Table A.4 Dwelling summary, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEP School Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Separate houses	2,613	76.0%	795	92.5%	3282	97.0%	2,671	79.6%	26,346	61.7%
Medium and high density	731	21.3%	22	2.6%	11	0.3%	635	18.9%	13,648	32.0%
Other dwellings (inc. Caravans, houseboats)	50	1.5%	38	4.4%	60	1.8%	34	1%	2,318	5.4%
Occupied private dwellings	3,204	93.2%	802	93.4%	3383	90.6%	3,355	93.2%	38,497	90.0%
Unoccupied dwellings	223	6.5%	57	6.6%	353	9.4%	245	6.8%	4,208	9.8%
Non private dwellings	10	0.3%	0	0.0%	3282	97.0%	2,671	79.6%	4,208	9.8%

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

Table A.5 Housing tenure, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEP School Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Owned	1,104	32.1%	272	31.7%	1479	43.6%	1167	34.8%	14,809	38.5%
Purchasing	896	26.1%	216	25.1%	1106	32.6%	1008	30.1%	10,046	26.1%
Renting	933	27.1%	207	24.1%	676	19.9%	1040	31%	9,673	25.1%

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

Mode of travel to work

Table A.6 Mode of travel to work (persons 15 years and over), 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEP School Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Car as driver or passenger	2,142	26.9%	619	31.0%	2599	66.0%	2,599	66%	26,441	28.9
Walked only	122	1.5%	25	1.3%	121	3.1%	121	3.1%	992	2.8
Public transport	25	0.3%	3	0.2%	31	0.8%	31	0.8%	538	1.5
Worked at home	125	1.6%	60	3.0%	466	11.9%	466	11.9%	2,370	6.6

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

B-3 Culture

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to Country, land, waterways, places, and buildings.

Cultural indicators

Table A.7 Cultural indicators amongst students, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEP Catchment Area		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	292	3.7%	53	2.7%	311	3.5%	311	3.5%	3,616	4.0%
Households where a non-English language is spoken	179	2.2%	36	1.8%	192	5.3%	192	5.3%	2,285	5.9%

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

Cultural facilities

Table A.8 Cultural features, facilities and groups in Murwillumbah, 2017

Name	Cultural facility
Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre and collection	Art gallery/ museum
Mount St Patrick Primary School	Art gallery/ museum
Tweed Regional Museum	Art gallery/ museum
Murwillumbah Civic Centre and Auditorium	Performing arts centre

Murwillumbah Library	Library
Murwillumbah CBD heritage conservation area	Heritage site
Hartigan's Hill Conservation Area	Heritage site
Condong Mill Conservation Area	Heritage site
Aboriginal cultural heritage sites	Heritage site
Tweed Foodie Fest	Festival/event
Murwillumbah Performing Arts Festival	Festival/event
Murwillumbah Theatre Company	Arts group
Murwillumbah Art Trail	Festival/event
Regent Cinema	Cinema
Double Mask Theatre Company (youth)	Arts group
Monthly Trash and Treasure Market, weekly Farmers Market and annual Artisan Market	Festival/event
Landscape setting of Wollumbin / Mount Warning and the Green Cauldron	Heritage site
Tweed Valley Banana Festival	Festival/event
Tweed River Festival	Festival/event
Budd and McIlwraith Parks	Heritage site
Murwillumbah Showground	Multipurpose outdoors space
Knox Park including skate park and adventure playground	Multipurpose outdoors space

Source: Tweed Shire Council, 2017

B-4 Accessibility

How people access and use infrastructure, services, and facilities, whether provided by a public, private, or not-for-profit organisation.

B-4-1 Education

School enrolments, ICSEA and staff

Table A.9 School characteristics

School	Murwillumbah East Public School		Murwillumbah Public School		Murwillumbah High School		Wollumbin High School	
Year	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020
Student enrolments								
Total enrolments	318	247	262	249	505	470	460	387
Male students	173	133	117	120	273	238	216	196
Female students	145	114	145	129	232	232	244	191
Indigenous students	12%	11%	11%	12%	7%	11%	7%	7%

Language background other than English	8%	11%	5%	6%	4%	8%	7%	8%
ICSEA								
School ICSEA value	948	954	954	958	950	969	966	976
School ICSEA percentile	23	25	25	27	24	31	30	35
Staff								
Teaching staff	18	16	15	16	49	45	39	39
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	20	16.2	16.4	15.9	51.9	51.5	41	37.5
Non-teaching staff	10	8	6	5	16	14	11	13
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	5.9	5.5	2.6	2.5	14.7	13.8	7.2	6.9
Total FTE staff	25.9	21.7	19	18.4	66.6	65.3	48.2	44.4

Source: MySchool.edu, School Profile 2015 - 2020

B-4-2 Transport

Vehicles

Table A.10 Number of registered motor vehicles, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEP Catchment Area		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
None	237	6.9%	27	3.1%	67	2.0%	257	7.7%	2,104	6.0%
1 motor vehicle	1,222	35.5%	239	27.8%	944	27.8%	1,363	40.6%	13,777	39.3%
2 motor vehicles	1,016	29.6%	270	31.4%	1402	41.3%	1,122	33.4%	12,293	35.0%
3 or more vehicles	396	11.5%	164	19.1%	833	24.6%	451	13.4%	5,337	15.2%
Total – have a motor vehicle	2,634	76.6%	673	78.30%	3,179	93.70%	2,936	87.40%	31,407	89.50%

Source: ABS Quick Stats 2016

Table A.11 Bus services that service Murwillumbah High School, 2018

Bus service	Route
Murwillumbah Bus Co	Mt Burrell, Kunghur (up Midginbil Rd as far as Doon Doon Rd), Mt Warning Rd, Uki to Murwillumbah (connecting with other operators), Murwillumbah township including Condong
Singhs	Transports to Tyalgum from surrounding areas – Nth Arm Rd, Crystal Creek, Chilcotts Rd, Hopkins Crk Rd, Zara Rd, Pumpenbil Rd, Brays Crk Rd, Chillingham & Eungella, Summerville Circuit (Hundred Hills Estate)

Parsons	Pottsville via Mooball, Burringbar & Upper Burringbar, Stokers Siding via Tweed Valley Way and Dallis Park Dunbible, Cabarita via Clothiers Crk Rd, Nunderi, Farrants Hill & Condong
Surfside Buslines (Tweed Heads)	Pacific Highway, Tumbulgum, Duranbah, Cudgen, Kingscliff Terranora Rd, Banora Point, Tweed Heads
Brunswick Valley Coach	Crabbes Creek, Ocean Shores, Brunswick Heads, Main Arm, Mullumbimby
Gosel's Bus Service	Reserve Creek Rd, Kielvale, Palmvale Rd, Wardrop Valley, Fernvale Nimbin to Murwillumbah McAuleys Rd, North Tumbulgum, Dulguigan Rd to Urliup Kynnumboon & McCloys Rd, Tyalgah area, Tumbulgum Rd, Kane Rd & Racecourse Rd Mayes Hill, Hogans Rd, Crannys Rd, Upper Duroby Crk, North Tumbulgum, Majestic Court, Urliup Rd, Bilambil Commissioners Creek Rd a.m., Doon Doon Rd a.m. & p.m., Pretty Gully
Eviron Bus Service	Duranbah via Eviron & Duranbah Rd including Garden & Seven Oaks Avenues, Nunderi
Crossans Bus Service	Dungay, Tomewin
J&B Buses	Birrigan Pl, Booyong Pl, Blackwoods Rd, Boat Harbour Bridge to Kynnumboon Bridge, Brooks Rd, Queensland Rd & Nobbys Crk Rd
Websters Bus Service	Smiths Creek Rd, Hazelbrook Rd, Rowlands Ck Rd, Chowan Ck Rd, Ryans Rd, Palmers Rd, Byrrill Creek Rd, Commissioners Creek Rd p.m., Pretty Gully (delivers students to high school buses)

Source: Murwillumbah High School, 2018

B-4-3 Recreation

Table A.12 Community and recreation facilities in Murwillumbah, 2021

Name	Facility type	Address
Murwillumbah Community Centre	Recreation, community and sporting facilities	8-10 Nullum St, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Cricket Club and Les Cave Oval	Sporting facilities	10 Elizabeth St, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Pistol Club	Sporting facilities	10 Lundberg Dr, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Soccer Club	Sporting facilities	35 Moobal St, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Golf Club	Sporting facilities	23 Byangum Rd, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Mustangs (Rugby Club) and Stan Sercombe Oval	Sporting facilities	Nullum St, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Vulcans Junior ALF Football Club	Sporting facilities	Elizabeth St, Murwillumbah
Hockey Tweed	Sporting facilities	Brisbane St, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Tennis Club and Coast Community Tennis	Sporting facilities	Brisbane St, Murwillumbah
Tweed Regional Aquatic Centre	Sporting and recreation facilities	1 Tumblegum Rd, Murwillumbah

Murwillumbah Community Men's Shed	Recreation and community facilities	5-15 Durroon Ave, Bray Park
Rotary Club of Murwillumbah Central	Recreation and community facilities	233 Byangum Rd, Murwillumbah
Murwillumbah Community Garden	Recreation and community facilities	Moobal St, Murwillumbah
Bob Whittle Murwillumbah Airfield	Recreation facilities	Airfield Ave, South Murwillumbah

B-5 Health and wellbeing

Physical and mental health, especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, and changes to public health overall.

Assistance

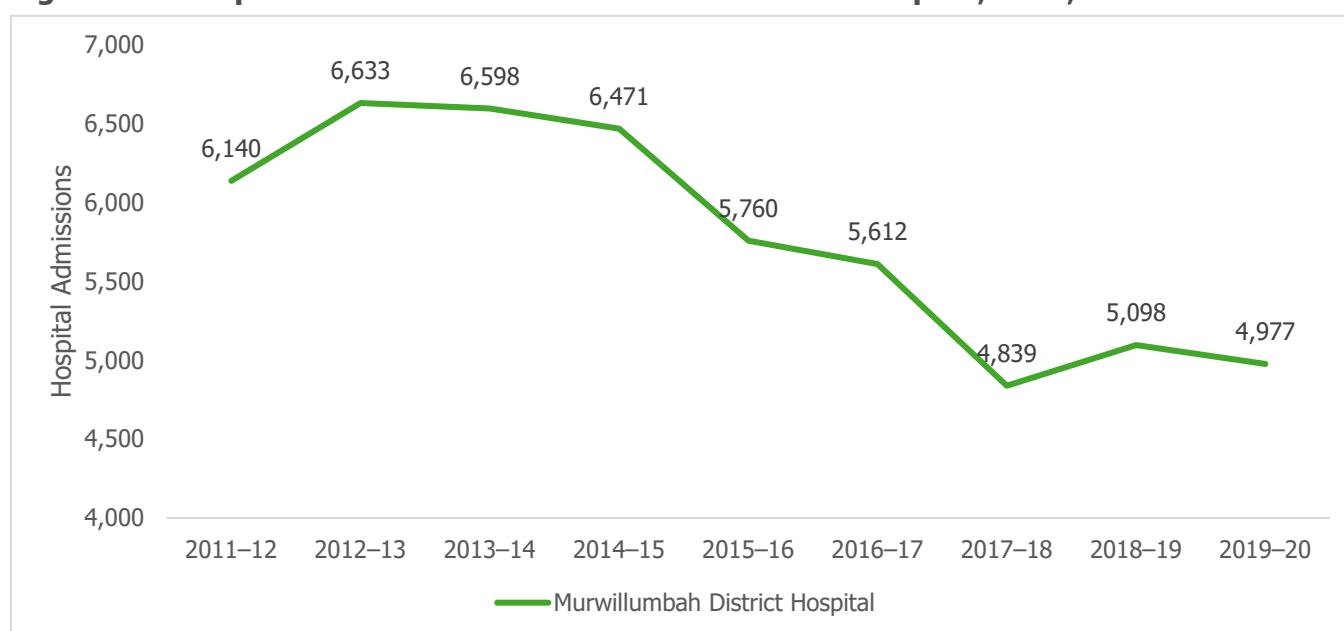
Table A.13 Assistance, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEPS Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Needs assistance due to age or disability	683	8.6%	145	7.3%	435	4.5%	784	8.8%	6,519	7.1%
Provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability (last two weeks)	789	9.9%	214	10.7%	1,025	12.9%	896	12.3%	9,198	12.1%

Source: ABS, 2016

Hospital admissions

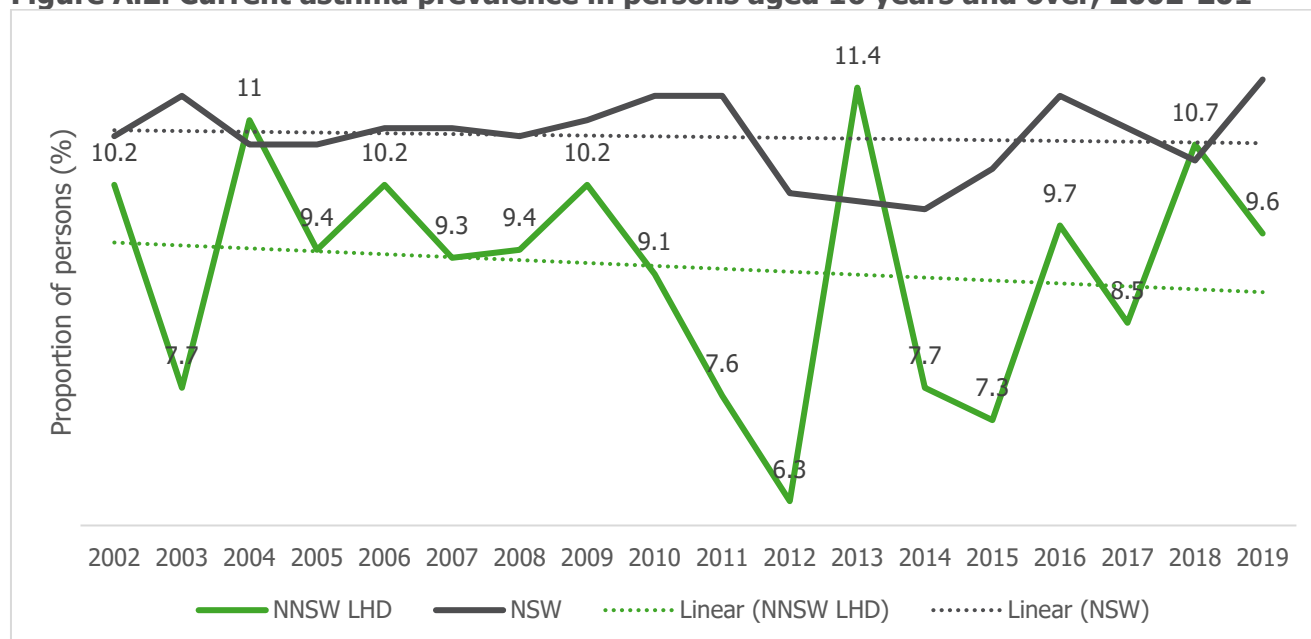
Figure A.1. Hospital admissions to Murwillumbah District Hospital, NSW, 2011 - 2020



Source: AIHW 2011 – 2020: Murwillumbah District Hospital.

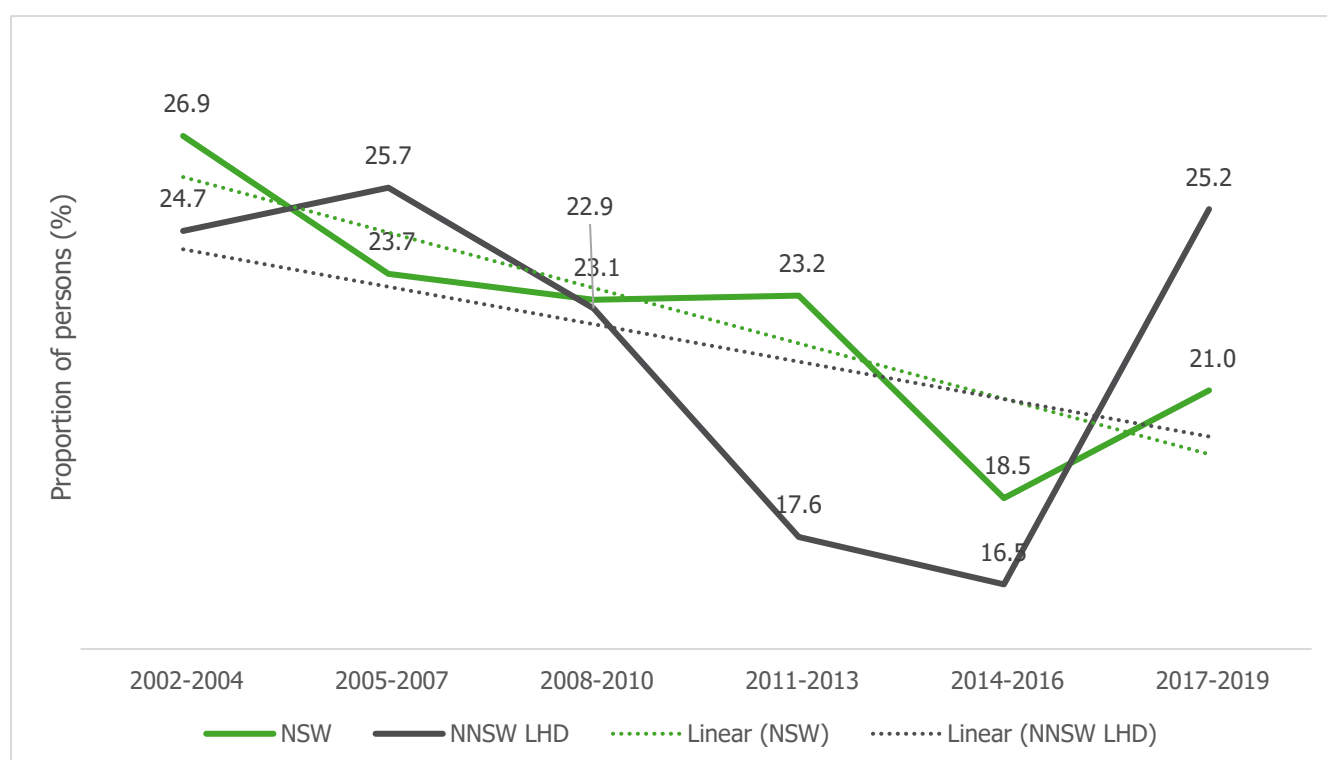
Physical health

Figure A.2. Current asthma prevalence in persons aged 16 years and over, 2002-201



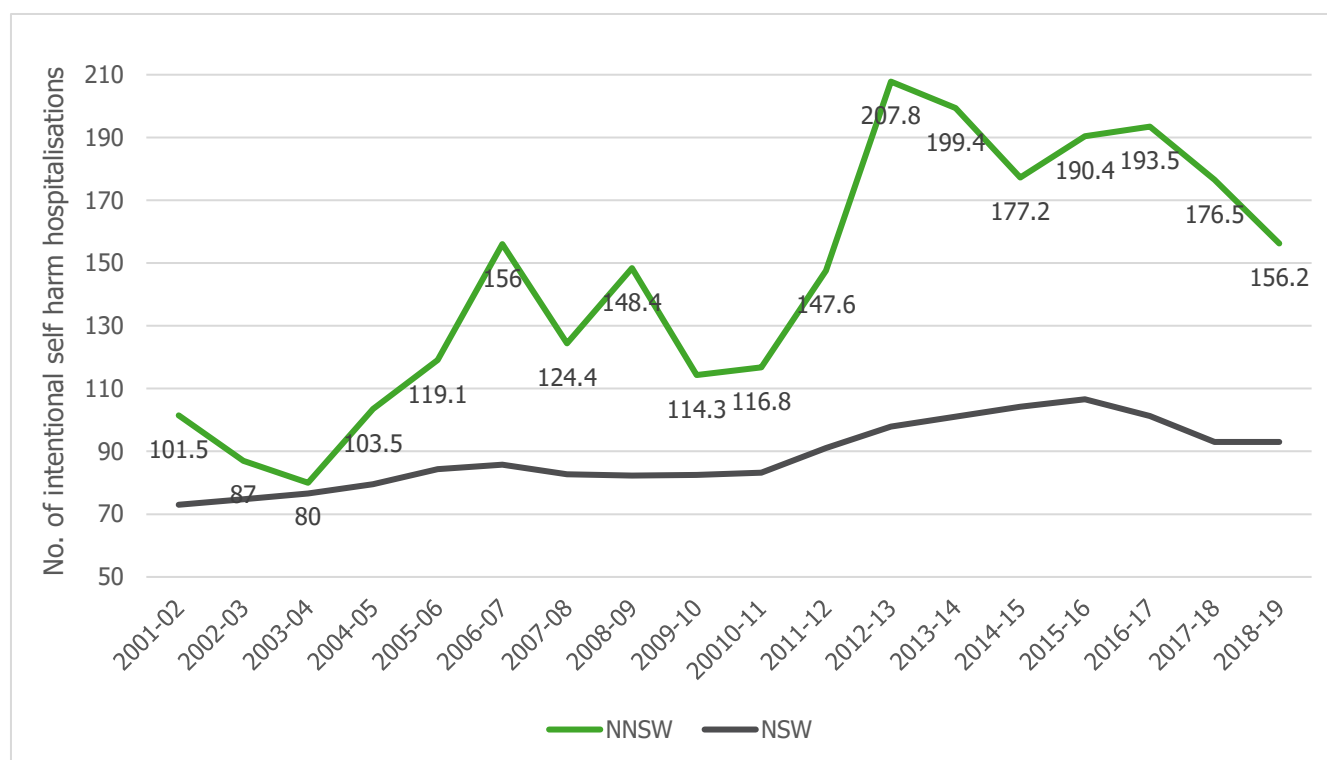
Source: NSW Health 2020, HealthStats NSW: Asthma prevalence, by LHD, trends.

Figure A.3. Asthma prevalence ever in children aged 2-15 years, 2002-2019



Source: NSW Health 2020, HealthStats NSW: Asthma prevalence in children, by LHD, trends.

Figure A.4. Intentional self-harm hospitalisations in persons aged 16 years and over, 2001-2019



Source: NSW Health 2020, HealthStats NSW: Intentional self-harm: hospitalisations, by LGA, trends.

B-6 Surroundings

Ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control and erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity

Public safety and crime

Table A.14 Crimes recorded in Tweed Shire LGA by premise type, 2016 - 2020

Premise Type	Education	Carpark	Health	Public transport
Domestic violence related assault	0	3	2	1
Non-domestic violence related assault	27	7	20	2
Sexual offences	6	0	1	0
Robbery	1	1	0	0
Break and enter non-dwelling	17	0	3	0
Motor vehicle theft	0	17	0	0
Steal from motor vehicle	0	51	0	0
Steal from person	2	0	0	0
Malicious damage to property	22	28	13	0

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2016 – 2020, NSW Local Government Area excel crime tables.

Table A.15 Age of victims of selected offences recorded by NSW Police in Tweed Shire LGA, 2016 - 2020

Victim's age	0 - 17	18 - 29	30 - 39	40 +	Unknown	Total
Sexual offences	100	nc	10	nc	1	nc
Non-domestic violence related assault	68	50	51	152	4	325
Intimidation, stalking and harassment	60	83	54	185	6	388
Domestic violence related assault	25	90	90	156	2	363
Homicide	0	0	0	nc	0	nc

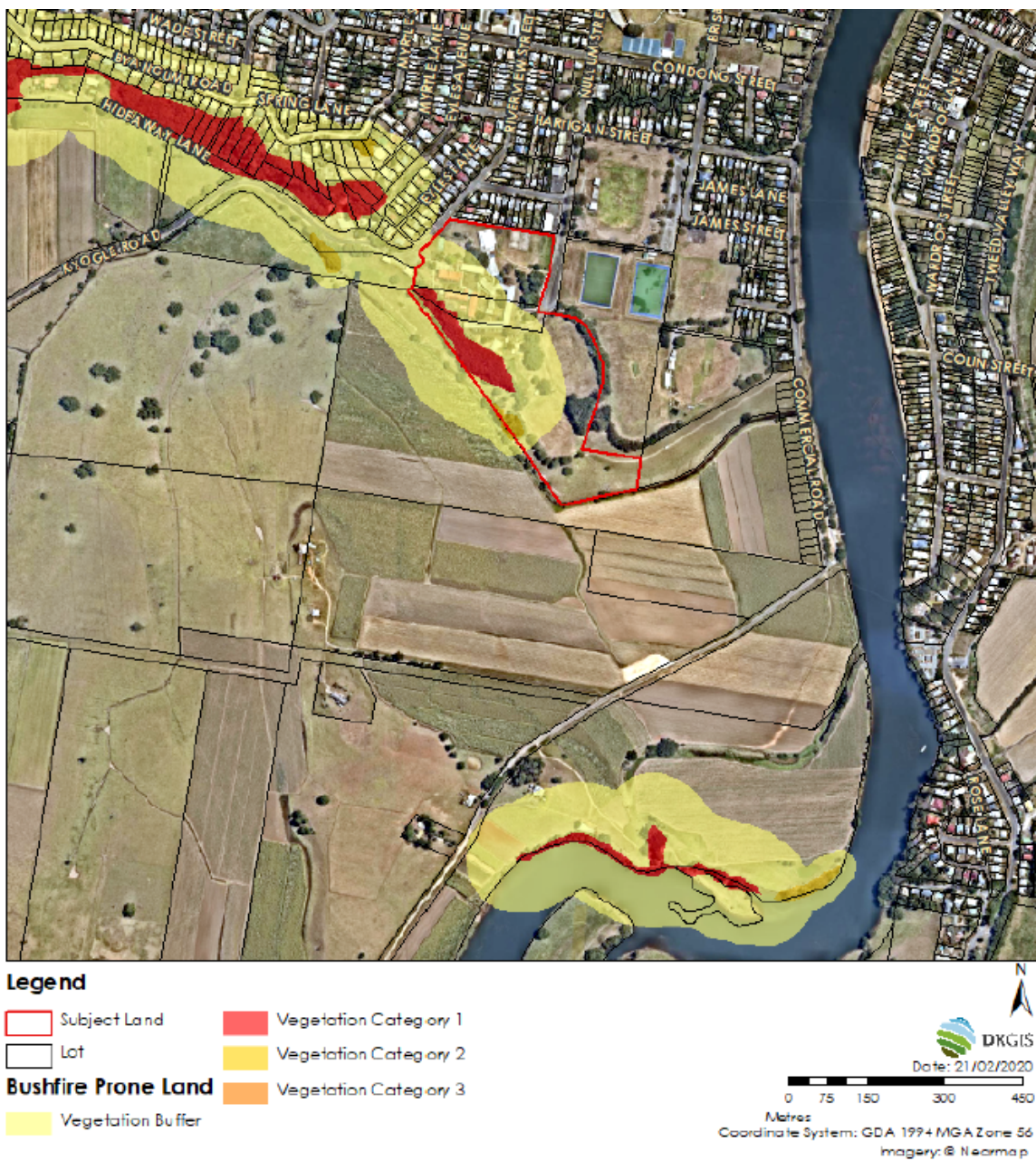
Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2016 – 2020, NSW Local Government Area excel crime tables.

Table A.16 Age of alleged offenders of selected offences recorded by NSW Police in Tweed Shire LGA, 2016 - 2020

Offender's age	10 - 17	18 - 19	20 - 29	30-39	40+	Total
Against justice procedures	30	9	82	65	92	278
Drug offences	25	31	136	83	121	396
Non-domestic violence related assault	22	5	13	20	23	83
Domestic violence related assault	17	5	32	39	58	151
Disorderly conduct	15	5	19	20	38	97
Intimidation, stalking and harassment	14	5	28	36	39	122
Malicious damage to property	14	5	27	16	16	78
Robbery	10	1	2	1	2	16
Steal from retail store	9	7	7	13	23	59
Motor vehicle theft	8	2	15	2	0	27
Prohibited and regulated weapons offences	8	1	26	24	19	78

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2016 – 2020, NSW Local Government Area excel crime tables.

Figure A.5. Bushfire prone land



Source: Blackash Consultants, 2020

B-7 Livelihoods

People's capacity to sustain themselves through employment or business, whether they experience personal breach or disadvantage, and the distributive equity of impacts and benefits.

Livelihood indicators

Table A.17 Livelihood indicators, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEPS Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)	860 - 923 6 – 8 (percentile)		889 – 968 9 – 37 (percentile)		969 13 (percentile)		907 13 (percentile)		956 47 (percentile)	
Household Income - average weekly household income	\$933 - \$1,104		\$1,042 - \$1,437		\$1,109		\$963		\$1,064	
Less than \$650 (low)	828	24.1%	159	18.5%	738	21.8%	893	10.0%	8,749	24.0%
\$650 to \$1,449 (lower middle)	1,162	33.8%	278	32.4%	1169	34.5%	1265	14.1%	12,897	35.3%
\$1,449 to \$2,499 (upper middle)	544	15.8%	144	16.8%	683	20.1%	1202	13.4%	6,669	18.3%
\$2,500 or more (high)	224	6.5%	62	7.2%	380	11.2%	245	2.7%	4,145	11.4%
Incomes not stated	321	9.3%	90	10.5%	85	2.5%	124	1.4%	4,038	11.1%
Top 3 industries of employment	-		-		Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) Aged Care Residential Services Local Government Administration		Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) Local Government Administration Aged Care Residential Services		Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) Aged Care Residential Services Supermarket and Grocery Stores	

Source: ABS 2016, Quickstats.

Employment

Table A.18 Unemployment, 2016

	MPS Catchment Area		MEPS Catchment		MHS and WHS Catchment Area (Murwillumbah Region SA2)		Murwillumbah SA2		Tweed Shire LGA	
Employed	2,900	36.4%	832	41.7%	3676	87.0%	3,015	33.7%	35,733	92.9%
Unemployed	243	3.1%	52	2.6%	288	6.8%	276	3.1%	7.8	7.1%

Source: ABS 2016, Quickstats

C SIA guidelines

The impact assessment and predication section of this SIA utilises tools from the *Guideline*. These tools have been used to complete the assessment of impacts.

Likelihood assessment tool

Likelihood level	Meaning
Almost certain	Definite or almost definitely expected (e.g. has happened on similar projects)
Likely	High probability
Possible	Medium probability
Unlikely	Low probability
Very unlikely	Improbable or remote probability

Source: DPIE, SIA *Guideline*, 2021

Magnitude assessment tool

Characteristics	Details needed to enable assessment
Magnitude	Extent Who specifically is expected to be affected (directly, indirectly, and/or cumulatively), including any vulnerable people? Which location(s) and people are affected? (e.g. near neighbours, local, regional, future generations).
	Duration When is the social impact expected to occur? Will it be time-limited (e.g. over particular project phases) or permanent?
	Severity or scale What is the likely scale or degree of change? (e.g. mild, moderate, severe)
	Sensitivity or importance How sensitive/vulnerable (or how adaptable/resilient) are affected people to the impact, or (for positive impacts) how important is it to them? This might depend on the value they attach to the matter; whether it is rare/unique or replaceable; the extent to which it is tied to their identity; and their capacity to cope with or adapt to change
	Level of concern/interest How concerned/interested are people? Sometimes, concerns may be disproportionate to findings from technical assessments of likelihood, duration and/or intensity.

Source: DPIE, SIA *Guideline*, 2021

Magnitude level assessment tool

Magnitude level	Meaning and examples
Transformational	Substantial change experienced in community wellbeing, livelihood, infrastructure, services, health, and/or heritage values; permanent displacement or addition of at least 20% of a community.
Major	Substantial deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an indefinite time, or affecting many people in a widespread area.
Moderate	Noticeable deterioration/improvement to something that people value highly, either lasting for an extensive time, or affecting a group of people.

Minor	Mild deterioration/improvement, for a reasonably short time, for a small number of people who are generally adaptable and not vulnerable..
Minimal	Little noticeable change experienced by people in the locality.

Source: DPIE, SIA *Guideline*, 2021

Social impact significance assessment tool

		1 Minimal	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Transformational
Likelihood level	A Almost certain	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Very high
	B Likely	Low	Medium	High	High	Very high
	C Possibly	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	D Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	E Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Source: DPIE, SIA *Guideline*, 2021

D Social Impact Management Plan

Assessment of expected and perceived impacts pre-mitigation/enhancement

What is the project doing	Impact	Impact category	Nature	Likelihood	Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity/ importance	Level of concern/interest	Magnitude	Rating
Closure of three school sites and one future integrated site											
Change in school choice and access	Reduced school choice (all schools)	Accessibility, Surroundings, Health and wellbeing, Way of Life, Community	Negative	Almost certain	MHS, WHS, MEPS and MPS communities	Announcement - Operations	Transformational	Moderate	Major	Major	Very High (A4)
	For some, inability to walk/cycle to the new school, with implications on physical activity and wellbeing of future students/families, particularly those who currently could walk/cycle to school.	Accessibility, health and wellbeing	Negative	Likely	WHS, MPS and MEPS communities	Operations	Transformational	Major	Minor	Major	High (B4)
	There may be a cost aspect of driving or using public transport which could be a more significant challenge for lower socio-economic households (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Accessibility, livelihoods	Negative	Possible	WHS, MPS and MEPS communities	Operations	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	For some primary-school families, the new MEC may be within shorter distance, possibly closer walking/cycling distance, with benefits on health and wellbeing (MPS, MEPS)	Accessibility	Positive	Possible	MPS and MEPS communities living within shorter distance of MEC	Operations	Minor	Major	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	Spaces for students' bicycles, scooters and skateboards will be provided to support active movements (future MHS community)	Accessibility Health and wellbeing	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community - children/staff	Operations	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	High (B3)
Impacts on school cultures and histories	Potential risk of reduced sense of belonging/pride for students (all schools)	Culture	Negative	Possible	MHS, WHS, MEPS and MPS communities	Operations	Transformational	Major	Moderate	Major	High (C4)
	Loss of attachment to closing schools (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Culture Community	Negative	Likely	WHS, MPS and MEPS communities	Operations	Moderate	Moderate	Major	Moderate	High (B3)
	Project is unlikely to result in impacts on cultural heritage and there is potential for "numerous cultural heritage benefits". Landscaping will be inspired by Country, with yarning circles and cultural plantings including Indigenous plants to support culture and educational opportunities (MHS)	Culture Community	Positive	Possible	Local community Existing and future MHS community Broader Aboriginal (Bundjalung) community	Construction - Operations	Moderate	Major	Major	Major	High (C4)
	Unlikely social impacts associated with non-Aboriginal heritage impacts (MHS site)	Culture	Negative	Unlikely	MHS community	Construction - Operation	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Low (D2)
	Short term continuation of use of demountables at MEPS (MEPS)	Accessibility Surroundings	Negative	Almost certain	MEPS community	Announcement - Transition period	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Medium (A2)
	The site will be designed to function during storm events (all schools), with avoidance of future impacts associated with flooding for MEPS school community (MEPS)	Surroundings	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community MEPS community	Operations	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)

What is the project doing	Impact	Impact category	Nature	Likelihood	Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity/ importance	Level of concern/interest	Magnitude	Rating
	Changing school may result in stress and costs for school communities (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Health and wellbeing Livelihoods	Negative	Likely	WHS, MPS and MEPS communities	Announcement - Operations	Transformational	Major	Moderate	Major	High (B4)
	Engagement to date has provided opportunities for school communities to experience a feeling of involvement and contribute to the future identity of the campus (all schools)	Culture Decision making systems	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community	Announcement - Operations	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	There may be some new costs and adjustments for the MHS community (MHS)	Livelihoods Way of life	Negative	Likely	MHS community	Transition period	Minor	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	Potentially easier transition from primary to high school with health and wellbeing benefits (MPS, MEPS)	Way of life	Positive	Possible	MPS and MEPS communities /future MEC community	Operations	Moderate	Major	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	The design allows separation of age groups, creating a safe environment particularly for primary school children (all schools)	Way of life	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community	Operations	Major	Major	Major	Major	Medium (C3)
Staffing	Possible loss of casual or part-time employment with impacts on livelihoods and wellbeing (all schools)	Livelihoods, Community	Negative	Likely	MHS, WHS, MEPS and MPS communities (staff)	Operations	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
Existing school sites	Limited impact on existing social networks, and potential increased social network opportunities for school communities (all schools)	Community	Positive	Possible	MHS, WHS, MEPS and MPS communities	Transition - Operations	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Medium (B2)
	Concerns around future use of closing school sites and concerns about possible impacts on sense of place in surrounding areas (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Surroundings Way of life	Negative	Possible	Local community WHS, MPS and MEPS communities Neighbouring residents	Operations	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Medium (C2)
	There may be positive effects on the amenity of the areas surrounding MPS, MEPS and WHS due to nil school-associated traffic (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Surroundings Accessibility	Positive	Possible	Local community WHS, MPS and MEPS communities Neighbouring residents	Operations	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Medium (C3)
Increased activities at MHS											
Increased student enrolments and school size	A larger school size is unlikely to negatively impact educational performance however there are concerns that should be addressed by adequate communication (all schools)	Way of life	Negative	Unlikely	School catchment areas	Operations	Minor	Minor	Major	Moderate	Medium (D3)
	The wellbeing of students from more vulnerable groups may be more impacted than others by a larger school (all schools)	Health and wellbeing Way of life	Negative	Possible	Future MEC community	Operations	Moderate	Major	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	While there are concerns about increased violence at the MEC, there is no demonstrated	Health and wellbeing	Negative	Unlikely	Future MEC community	Operations	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Low (D3)

What is the project doing	Impact	Impact category	Nature	Likelihood	Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity/ importance	Level of concern/interest	Magnitude	Rating
	association between school size and school violence (all schools)										
	The proposal has been designed to address existing and future demands for school places (all schools)	Community Way of life	Positive	Likely	School catchment areas	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Major	Moderate	High (B3)
	Remaining concerns that the proposed will not address demands (all schools)	Community Way of life	Negative	Likely	School catchment areas	Announcement	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Medium (B2)
New upgraded facilities and services to support health and wellbeing	There will be a range of new or increased services, including school community health facilities, available to the school community (all schools)	Surroundings	Positive	Almost certain	Future MEC community	Operations	Transformational	Major	Moderate	Major	Very high (A4)
	One additional support class for students with special needs and overall improved quality of support unit will benefit students and their families (all schools)	Way of life	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community	Operations	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (A3)
New building design	Potential impact of an upgraded school on local property prices, with positive or negative impacts depending on tenure and income (MHS)	Livelihoods Way of life	Positive and/or negative	Possible	MEC local area	Announcement - Operations	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	The design allows for shared uses with the community should this be implemented	Surroundings Way of life Health and wellbeing	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community MEC local area	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	The design allows for the provision of a preschool should the need emerge	Way of life	Positive	Possible	Local community All schools	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	There will be no overshadowing of adjacent properties due to new buildings (MHS)	Surroundings	Negative	Unlikely	MEC local area	Operations	Minimal	Minor	Minimal	Minimal	Low (D1)
Travel, parking and access infrastructure	97% of the projected demand for staff parking will be provided on site and there will be sufficient parking for people with special needs to access designated parking areas (future MEC community)	Accessibility	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community (staff)	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	There may be a temporary period with a shortfall of parking spaces for staff (between 2024 and 2025) which may result in some staff requiring off-site parking, affecting the local amenity	Accessibility Surroundings	Negative	Likely	Future MEC community (staff) Local area	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Medium (C2)
	In addition, 13 staff bicycle parking and end of trip facilities will be provided to support active movements benefitting health and wellbeing	Accessibility Health and wellbeing	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community (staff)	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Medium (C2)
	Students who elect to drive will be required to park within the local area potentially affecting the local amenity and creating real or perceived safety issues at night (future MEC community)	Surroundings Health and wellbeing Accessibility	Negative	Possible	Future MEC community (students) Local area	Operations	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)

What is the project doing	Impact	Impact category	Nature	Likelihood	Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity/ importance	Level of concern/interest	Magnitude	Rating
	New pedestrian crossings will support safe access to school	Accessibility Health and wellbeing	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community Local community Road users	Operations	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	The kiss and drop facility will be shifted from Riverview Street to Nullum Street with likely minimal impacts on the school community (future MEC community)	Accessibility	Negative	Almost certain	Future MEC community Local community	Operations	Minimal	Minor	Minimal	Minimal	Medium (A1)
	A comprehensive review of the overall bus and school bus systems in Murwillumbah is being undertaken with no findings to date. This may affect the school community and broader catchment area/local area (future MHS community).	Surroundings Accessibility	Negative	Possible	Future MEC community Local community Overall Murwillumbah community	Operations	Moderate – Major	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	Increased traffic associated with the proposal will not create substantial impacts on intersections in the surrounding areas and not result in substantial social impacts (MHS)	Surroundings Accessibility	Negative	Unlikely	Future MEC community Local community Road users	Operations	Minimal	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (D3)
	Additional traffic to and around the MEC may be associated with additional noise generation (MHS)	Surroundings	Negative	Likely	Future MEC community Local community	Operations	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Medium (B2)
Provision of contemporary facilities at MHS											
New upgraded facilities and speciality flexible learning spaces	The design may be associated with improved wellbeing for school communities (Future MEC)	Health and wellbeing	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community	Operations	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (C3)
	The new campus will be flood-resilient and MEPS children/teachers will no longer be required to use demountables (MEPS, future MEC community)	Health and wellbeing	Positive	Almost certain	MEPS community	Operations	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (A3)
	The building will be thermally efficient and maximise acoustic control and natural light (Future MEC)	Health and wellbeing Surroundings	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community	Operations	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	The project will result in an increase in educational opportunities. This may lead to a rise in the number of children completing Year 12, pursuing post-year 12 education or securing employment. (Future MEC)	Way of life Livelihoods	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community	Operations	Major	Major	Moderate	Major	High (C4)
	Flexible learning spaces may be associated with positive student wellbeing and educational outcomes, improved student engagement and autonomy, and ability to collaborate(Future MEC)	Way of life Health and wellbeing	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community	Operations	Major	Major	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (C3)
Upgrades to outdoor play/recreation	The project will provide sufficient open and play areas for students (Future MEC)	Way of life Surroundings	Positive	Likely	Future MEC community	Operations	Minor	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)

What is the project doing	Impact	Impact category	Nature	Likelihood	Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity/ importance	Level of concern/interest	Magnitude	Rating
spaces and landscaping	There will be increased play opportunities for MPS children (MPS)	Way of life Surroundings	Positive	Likely	MEPS community	Operations	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	High (B3)
	There will be outdoor covered learning areas and walkways providing all-weather outdoor opportunities (Future MEC)	Surroundings Accessibility	Positive	Almost certain	Future MEC community	Operations	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (A3)
	Some trees dedicated to past staff and students will be affected by construction	Surroundings Culture	Negative	Likely	MHS community	Construction Operations	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Medium (B2)
Lifts and accessible pathways will be provided	The proposed lifts, circulation paths within the site and entry points will address topography constraints and support inclusive access for all abilities (future MEC)	Way of life Accessibility	Positive	Possible	Future MEC community	Operations	Moderate	Major	Minor	Moderate	Medium (C3)
Bushfire risks	The sugar cane fields adjacent the school have been identified as a potential fire hazard (future MEC)	Surroundings Health and wellbeing	Negative	Unlikely	Future MEC community Neighbouring residents Local community	Construction Operations	Minimal	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium (D3)
Communication, planning and construction											
Project consultation	Engagement to date has resulted in changes to the project responding to community feedback	Community Decision making systems	Positive	Almost certain	Future MEC community Murwillumbah community	Announcement – operations	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (A3)
MHS will temporarily relocate to WHS	Temporary relocation to WHS will ensure that the MHS community is separated from construction activities, allowing the adequate continuation of learning with an increased choice of subjects due to larger resources	Way of life	Positive	Likely	Existing MHS and WHS communities	Construction	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	Temporary relocation to WHS may create anxieties associated with changing school environment for the MHS community, as well as potentially WHS community that will need to adapt too	Way of life, community, health and wellbeing	Negative	Likely	Existing MHS and WHS communities	Construction	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	Temporary relocation to WHS may provide an opportunity to start building a joint school culture ahead of the transition to the new MEC	Way of life, community, culture	Positive	Possible	Existing MHS and WHS communities	Construction	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Medium (C2)
	Likely impacts on amenity of WHS local area during construction with additional traffic created by MHS attendance.	Way of life, accessibility, amenity	Negative	Likely	WHS local area	Construction	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Medium (B2)
Construction of the MEC	Temporary job opportunities created during construction with associated improved or continued wellbeing for workers and families	Community, livelihoods, health and wellbeing	Positive	Almost certain	Murwillumbah community	Construction	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Minor	Medium (A2)
	Some works may occur out of standard hours and impact on residents' amenity/wellbeing	Community Health and wellbeing	Negative	Possible	Local community	Construction	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Medium (C2)
	The <i>Construction Management Plan</i> identifies measures that will support safety for the MHS local area during works	Community Health and wellbeing	Negative	Unlikely	Local community	Construction	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Low (D2)

What is the project doing	Impact	Impact category	Nature	Likelihood	Extent	Duration	Severity or scale	Sensitivity/ importance	Level of concern/interest	Magnitude	Rating
	Dust and air quality will be managed by strategies identified in the <i>Construction Management Plan</i>	Community Health and wellbeing	Negative	Unlikely	Local community	Construction	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Minor	Low (D2)
	There are several exposure risks particularly in relation to the presence of asbestos, lead base paints and lead containing dust throughout the site.	Community Health and wellbeing	Negative	Likely	Workers	Construction	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High (B3)
	Noise and vibration associated with construction activities will affect the local area particularly residents north of High School Lane	Community Health and wellbeing	Negative	Likely	Workers Local MHS area	Construction	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Moderate	High (B3)
	Likely impacts on amenity of MHS local area during construction due to construction traffic	Way of life, amenity, accessibility	Negative	Likely	MHS local community	Construction	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor	Medium (B2)

Re-assessment of social risk, taking into consideration recommended mitigation and enhancement measures

Impact	Nature pre-measure	Rating pre-measure	Mitigation / Enhancement	Nature	Likelihood	Magnitude	Residual rating
Closure of three school sites and one future integrated site							
Reduced school choice (all schools)	Negative	Very High (A4)	N/A				Very High (A4)
For some, inability to walk/cycle to the new school, with implications on physical activity and wellbeing of future students/families, particularly those who currently could walk/cycle to school.	Negative	High (B4)	N/A				High (B4)
There may be a cost aspect of driving or using public transport which could be a more significant challenge for lower socio-economic households (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Negative	Medium (C3)	1. Supporting families who may be more vulnerable and affected by the additional cost of public transport should be a consideration during the transition.	Negative	Unlikely	Minor	Low (D2)
For some primary-school families, the new MEC may be within shorter distance, possibly closer walking/cycling distance, with benefits on health and wellbeing (MPS, MEPS)	Positive	Medium (C3)	2. Promote walking or cycling with groups or initiatives like Walking school bus or Ride2School	Positive	Likely	Moderate	High (B3)
Spaces for students’ bicycles, scooters and skateboards will be provided to support active movements (future MHS community)	Positive	High (B3)		Positive	Almost certain	Moderate	High (A3)
Potential risk of reduced sense of belonging/pride for students (all schools)	Negative	High (C4)	3. Promote the integration of all school communities including children, parents and staff through programs and events 4. Identify ways to involve children and staff in future detailed design to maximise ownership and identity of the future school 5. Continue to consult with school communities to develop a positive new identify and culture for the new campus	Negative	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium (D3)
Loss of attachment to closing schools (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Negative	High (B3)	6. Explore the possibility of relocating items of sentimental significance from existing schools to the MEC	Negative	Possible	Moderate	Medium (C3)
Project is unlikely to result in impacts on cultural heritage and there is potential for “numerous cultural heritage benefits” (MHS). Landscaping will be inspired by Country, with yarning circles and cultural plantings including Indigenous plants to support culture and educational opportunities (MHS)	Positive	High (C4)	7. Prepare Aboriginal cultural heritage management plan (ACHMP) and heritage-interpretation strategy as per EMM Consulting’s <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment</i> (2021) 8. Finalise the location and design of yarn circle/outdoor education facility 9. Continue engagement around designing with Country	Positive	Likely	Major	High (B4)
Unlikely social impacts associated with non-Aboriginal heritage impacts (MHS site)	Negative	Low (D2)	10. Recommendations as per <i>Final Heritage Report</i> (EMM, 2021)	Negative	Unlikely	Minimal	Low (D1)
Short term continuation of temporary building use at MEPS (MEPS)	Negative	Medium (A2)	N/A				Medium (A2)

The site will be designed to function during storm events (all schools), with avoidance of future impacts associated with flooding for MEPS school community (MEPS)	Positive	High (B3)	N/A				High (A3)
Changing school may result in stress and costs for school communities (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Negative	High (B4)	11. Support school communities during the change, until new school community is established or as long as considered required by MEC staff, with additional support for vulnerable members 12. Continue to support school communities throughout and post opening of MEC, with additional support for vulnerable members 13. Ensure that students are and feel safe, learn interpersonal relationships, receive support as needed and feel like they belong 14. In general, ensure increased and adequate communication to the community, including during operations by school staff	Negative	Possible	Moderate	Medium (C3)
Engagement to date has provided opportunities for school communities to experience a feeling of involvement and contribute to the future identity of the campus (all schools)	Positive	High (B3)		Positive	Likely	Major	High (B4)
There may be some new costs and adjustments for the MHS community (MHS)	Negative	High (B3)					
				Negative	Possible	Minor	Medium (C2)
Potentially easier transition from primary to high school with health and wellbeing benefits (MPS, MEPS)	Positive	Medium (C3)	15. Identify ways to promote and improve the transition between primary and high school	Positive	Likely	Moderate	High (B3)
The design allows separation of age groups, creating a safe environment particularly for primary school children (all schools)	Positive	Medium (C3)	N/A				Medium (C3)
Possible loss of casual or part-time employment with impacts on livelihoods and wellbeing (all schools)	Negative	High (B3)	16. Support those who may lose their employment in securing alternative positions	Negative	Likely	Minor	Medium (B2)
Limited impact on existing social networks, and potential increased social network opportunities for school communities (all schools)	Positive	Medium (B2)	17. Promote the integration of all school communities including children, parents and staff through programs and events	Positive	Likely	Moderate	High (B3)
Concerns around future use of closing school sites and concerns about possible impacts on sense of place in surrounding areas (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Negative	Medium (C2)	18. Work with Council to ensure that future sites are actively protected from any vandalism and that local communities are engaged as part of future plans for the sites	Negative	Unlikely	Minor	Low (D2)
There may be positive effects on the amenity of the areas surrounding MPS, MEPS and WHS due to nil school-associated traffic (WHS, MPS, MEPS)	Positive	Medium (C3)	N/A				Medium (C3)
Increased activities at MHS							
A larger school size is unlikely to negatively impact educational performance however there are concerns that should be addressed by adequate communication (all schools)	Negative	Medium (D3)	19. Ensure continued and adequate communication with the community and respond to concerns about size of school	Negative	Unlikely	Minor	Low (D2)
While there are concerns about increased violence at the MEC, there is no demonstrated association between	Negative	Low (D3)	20. Providing safe spaces in the design where students can retreat if they feel threatened or need time on their own may also help	Negative	Very unlikely	Minor	Low (E2)

school size and school violence (all schools)			21. Provide support to all during the transition however additional support should be provided for more disadvantaged children and families should be provided before, during and after the transition.			
The wellbeing of students from more vulnerable groups may be more impacted than others by a larger school (all schools)	Negative	Medium (C3)		Negative	Unlikely	Moderate
The proposal has been designed to address existing and future demands for school places (all schools)	Positive	High (B3)	N/A			
Remaining concerns that the proposed will not address demands (all schools)	Negative	Medium (B3)	Communicate with school communities to confirm that the proposed campus has been designed to address existing and future demands	Negative	Unlikely	Minimal
There will be a range of new or increased services, including school community health facilities, available to the school community (all schools)	Positive	Very high (A4)	22. Collaborate with the North Coast Primary Health Network / Healthy North Coast to ascertain needs and opportunities for school community health facilities 23. Recommend shared uses be explored by MEC in operations under the "Share our Space" program	Positive	Almost certain	Transformational
One additional support class for students with special needs and overall improved quality of support unit will benefit students and their families (all schools)	Positive	High (B3)	24. Ensure appropriate training of staff or recruitment of new staff for support units	Positive	Almost certain	Moderate
Potential impact of an upgraded school on local property prices, with positive or negative impacts depending on tenure and income (MHS)	Positive and/or negative	Medium (C3)	N/A			
The design allows for the provision of a preschool should the need emerge	Positive	Medium (C3)	N/A			
There will be no overshadowing of adjacent properties due to new buildings (MHS)	Positive	Low (D1)	N/A			
97% of the projected demand for staff parking will be provided on site and there will be sufficient parking for people with special needs to access designated parking areas (future MEC community)	Positive	High (B3)	N/A			
In addition, 13 staff bicycle parking and end of trip facilities will be provided to support active movements.	Positive	Medium (C2)	25. Finalise and implement measures from School Travel Plan	Positive	Likely	Minor
There may be a temporary period with a shortfall of parking spaces for staff (between 2024 and 2025) which may result in some staff requiring off-site parking (future MEC community)	Negative	Medium (C2)	N/A	Negative	Likely	Minor
Students who elect to drive will be encouraged to park within the local area potentially affecting the local amenity and creating real or perceived safety issues at night (future MEC community)	Negative	Medium (C3)	26. Advocate to Council to ensure adequate lighting and safety in the local area particularly after daylight hours	Negative	Possible	Minor
New pedestrian crossings will support safe access to school	Positive	High (B3)	27. Advocate to Council for the preparation of a Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan as per Bitzios recommendations	Positive	Likely	Major

			in the School Travel Plan, and improvement of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to support active movements to MHS					
The kiss and drop facility will be shifted from Riverview Street to Nullum Street with likely minimal impacts on the school community (future MEC community))	Negative	Medium (A1)	N/A					Medium (A1)
A comprehensive review of the overall bus and school bus systems in Murwillumbah is being undertaken with no findings to date. This may affect the school community and broader catchment area/local area (future MHS community).	Negative	Medium (C3)	28. Continue on-going consultation with TfNSW that has commenced regarding the preparation of a separate Bus Operational Plan for Murwillumbah and ensure no negative impacts are created	Positive	Possible	Moderate		Medium (C3)
Increased traffic associated with the proposal will not create substantial impacts on intersections in the surrounding areas and not result in substantial social impacts (MHS)	Positive	Medium (D3)	29. Traffic improvements may be required which should be worked through with TfNSW and Council as detailed planning progresses, as per Traffic Impact Assessment (Bitzios, 2021) 30. Finalise design of new transport infrastructure upgrades proposed in the Traffic Impact Assessment (Bitzios, 2021)	Positive	Unlikely	Minor		Low (D2)
Additional traffic to and around the MEC may be associated with additional noise generation (MHS)	Negative	Medium (B2)	31. Conduct an assessment of noise associated with additional traffic, as per E-LAB's <i>Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment</i> (2021)	Negative	Unlikely	Minor		Low (D2)
New modern facilities at MHS								
The design may be associated with improved wellbeing for school communities (Future MEC)	Positive	Medium (C3)	N/A					Medium (C3)
The new campus will be flood-resilient and MEPS children/teachers will no longer be required to use demountables (MEPS, future MEC community)	Positive	High (A3)	N/A					High (A3)
The building will be thermally efficient and maximise acoustic control and natural light (Future MEC)	Positive	High (A3)	32. Identify any required measure to be consistent with a 4 Star Green Star Design and include a full climate adaptation assessment 33. A dedicated acoustic design response should be prepared as part of detailed design, as per ESD Report (E-LAB Consulting, 2021)	Positive	Almost certain	Moderate		High (A3)
The project will result in an increase in educational opportunities. This may lead to a rise in the number of children completing Year 12, pursuing post-year 12 education or securing employment. (Future MEC)	Positive	High (C4)	N/A					High (C4)
Flexible learning spaces may be associated with positive student wellbeing and educational outcomes, improved student engagement and autonomy, and ability to collaborate (Future MEC)	Positive	Medium (C3)	34. Ensure staff are trained to deliver student centred/ future learning methods and support student engagement	Positive	Likely	Moderate		High (B3)
The project will provide sufficient open and play areas for students (Future MEC)	Positive	High (B3)	35. Encourage that existing play equipment in existing schools be relocated to the new MEC when in good condition and where possible	Positive	Almost certain	Moderate		High (A3)

There will be increased play opportunities for MPS children (MPS)	Positive	High (B3)	N/A					High (B3)
There will be outdoor covered learning areas and walkways providing all-weather outdoor opportunities (Future MEC)	Positive	High (A3)	N/A					High (A3)
Some trees dedicated to past staff and students will be affected by construction	Negative	Medium (B2)	36. Ensure existing trees dedicated to past staff and students are preserved as much as possible, and undertake consultation when this cannot be fully achieved to find adequate solutions	Negative	Unlikely	Moderate		Medium (D3)
The proposed lifts, circulation paths within the site and entry points will address topography constraints and support inclusive access for all abilities (future MEC)	Positive	Medium (C3)	37. Address equitable and inclusive accessibility through detailed design as per GroupDLA's recommendations.	Positive	Likely	Moderate		High (B3)
The sugar cane fields adjacent the school have been identified as a potential fire hazard (future MEC)	Negative	Medium (D3)	38. A 36m Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is required between the cane fields the nearest proposed new building as required by Blackash 39. Other recommendations by Blackash should be implemented in detailed design 40. Update the current evacuation and emergency management arrangements	Negative	Unlikely	Minor		Low (D2)
Communication, planning and construction								
Parts of the school communities perceive a lack of consultation to date with an ensued lack of trust	Negative	High (A3)	41. Ensure comprehensive communication and information with school communities and overall Murwillumbah community about the project, with a range of methods and tools including face to face (noting current and possible future Covid-19 restrictions)	Negative	Possible	Moderate		Medium (C3)
Some works may occur out of standard hours and impact on residents' amenity/wellbeing	Negative	Medium (C2)	42. It is recommended that local area residents be communicated any out of hours works well in advance.	Negative	Unlikely	Minor		Low (D2)
The <i>Construction Management Plan</i> identifies measures that will support safety for the MHS local area during works	Negative	Low (D2)	N/A	Negative	Unlikely	Minor		Low (D2)
Temporary relocation to WHS will ensure that the MHS community is separated from construction activities, allowing the adequate continuation of learning with an increased choice of subjects due to larger resources	Positive	High (B3)	43. Ensure that temporary relocation in WHS allows sufficient learning space, admin space, outdoor space, amenities and other common spaces (e.g. library, hall, canteen) to avoid a feeling of crowdedness for all members of school communities	Positive	Almost certain	Moderate		High (A3)
Temporary relocation to WHS may create anxieties associated with changing school environment for the MHS community, as well as potentially WHS community that will need to adapt too	Negative	High (B3)	44. Ensure efficient planning, implementation and management change including ahead of temporary relocation, to assist children as well as staff 45. Continue engaging with the community to understand potential impacts of temporary relocation to WHS, address negative impacts and enhance any benefits. Continue providing detailed information be clearly communicated to all relevant parties including MHS and WHS school communities and local areas.	Negative	Possible	Moderate		Medium (C3)
Temporary relocation to WHS may provide an opportunity to start building a joint school culture ahead of the transition to the new MEC	Positive	Medium (C2)		Positive	Likely	Moderate		High (B3)

Likely impacts on amenity of WHS local area during construction with additional traffic created by MHS attendance.	Negative	Medium (B2)	47. Assess the impacts and significance of additional traffic around WHS and identify adequate mitigation to avoid impacts on local area	Negative	Likely	Minimal	Low (A1)
Temporary job opportunities created during construction with associated improved or continued wellbeing for workers and families	Positive	Medium (C2)	48. Local procurement and supplier opportunities – growth of local industry and businesses	Positive	Almost certain	Moderate	High (A3)
Dust and air quality will be managed by strategies identified in the <i>Construction Management Plan</i>	Negative	Low (D2)	N/A	Negative	Minor	Minor	Low (D2)
There are several exposure risks particularly in relation to the presence of asbestos, lead base paints and lead containing dust throughout the site.	Negative	High (B3)	49. A hazard material management plan should be prepared as part of detailed design, along with other air monitoring measures and other recommendations of the JBS&G's <i>Hazardous Building Materials Survey</i> (2021) 50. Obtain permit to work prior to works being conducted in areas of potential disturbance, as per Asbestos in Grounds Management Plan (as per Douglas Partners' <i>Detailed Site Investigation for Contamination</i> , 2021) 51. Some areas were inaccessible during JBS&G's inspections and should be included prior to works commencing	Negative	Unlikely	Minor	Low (D2)
Noise and vibration associated with construction activities will affect the local area particularly residents north of High School Lane	Negative	High (B3)	52. Mitigation measures as per Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (E-LAB Consulting, 2021)	Negative	Unlikely	Minor	Low (D2)
Likely impacts on amenity of MHS local area during construction due to construction traffic	Negative	Medium (B2)	53. Discuss parking arrangement for workers with the Hockey Tweed Club, Murwillumbah Mustang Rugby Club and Tweed Shire Council as design progresses.	Negative	Possible	Minor	Medium (C2)

