



planning consultants

Consultation and Communication Report

Pacific Brook Christian School

72-74 Maitland Street, Muswellbrook

Prepared for: Pacific Brook Christian School
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1 Introduction

This Consultation and Communication Report (Report) has been prepared to outline the consultation undertaken by Pacific Brook Christian School and the project team from May 2020 to support the proposed new Pacific Brook Christian School at 72-74 Maitland Street, Muswellbrook.

The purpose of the consultation process was to ensure stakeholders and the community were informed about the proposal, and ensure they had the opportunity to provide feedback prior to the submission of the State Significant Application (SSDA) to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), in accordance with the requirements of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued by DPIE for this project. Specific SEARs applicable to this Report are discussed in **Section 2.3**.

The consultation process enabled Pacific Brook Christian School and the Project Control Group (PCG) to review feedback and incorporate stakeholder and community ideas/ concerns into the final master masterplan for the proposed new school.

This Report provides a background discussion to the consultation requirements of the project, together with a review of the consultation approach and activities carried out. The Report then summarises the stakeholder feedback and identifies where the project has responded to this feedback.

This Report should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by DFP Planning which supports the proposed new Pacific Brook Christian School.

2 Background

2.1 Site Description

The site is triangular in shape, with a northwest/southeast alignment and has an area of 2.432 ha. The site is bound by Muswellbrook Golf Course along the north-eastern boundary, Maitland Street along the south-western boundary and residential properties to the south-eastern boundary (see **Figure 1**). The site address is 72-74 Maitland Street and is legally described as Lot 100 in Deposited Plan (DP) 1261496 (see **Figure 2**).

The site is generally level with a slight slope to a watercourse at the north-west boundary. This watercourse flows northeast into the adjoining golf course and on to Muscle Creek via a series of dams on the golf course. Muscle Creek flows west into the Hunter River which at its closest is 1.3 km north-west of the site. Stormwater management currently on site is pit and pipe and overland flow.

72-74 Maitland Street was previously used for forestry plantation purposes and is mapped as Muswellbrook State Forest. The site is no longer used for this purpose and currently sits as an empty and underutilised site.

The main vehicular access to the site is from Maitland Street, as well as pedestrian access. Existing vehicular parking on site includes open air at grade parking spaces facing Maitland Street.

In terms of travel, Muswellbrook is approximately three (3) hours from Sydney, three hours (3) from Dubbo, two (2) hours from Tamworth and 90 minutes from Newcastle.



Figure 1 Aerial image of site boundary

2 Background

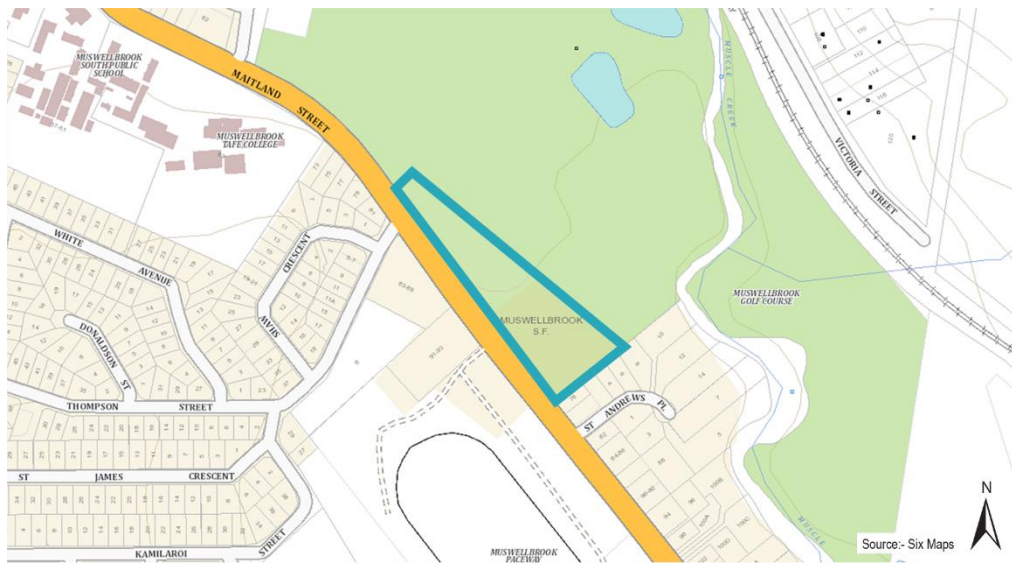


Figure 2 Site Context

2.2 Project Description

Pacific Brook Christian School proposes the staged construction of a new school at 72-74 Maitland Street, Muswellbrook. This will involve site preparation work (including remediation), the removal of 96 trees (7 within Stage 1), civil works, infrastructure works, landscaping, signage and construction works in stages over the next 10 years.

The masterplan will support high-quality educational outcomes to meet the needs of students within the local community through the provision of the following facilities:

- Administration building and Library;
 - One (1) staff and student amenities block;
- Junior School facilities;
 - Ten (10) General Learning Areas (GLAs);
 - Two (2) Specialist classroom;
 - One (1) Store; and
 - Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA)
- Middle School facilities;
 - Seven (7) General Learning Areas (GLAs);
 - One (1) Science classroom; and
 - Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA)
- Senior School facilities;
 - Eight (8) General Learning Areas (GLAs);
 - One (1) Specialist classroom;
 - Three (3) TAS classrooms;
 - Two (2) Food Tech classrooms;
 - One (1) Art classroom;
 - One (1) Drama classroom;
 - Four (4) amenities block;

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- Three (3) Store; and
 - Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA)
- Hope School (special needs) facilities;
 - Four (4) General Learning Areas (GLAs);
 - One (1) Specialist classroom;
 - Four (4) Shared Withdrawal rooms;
 - One (1) Office;
 - One (1) Staff room;
 - One (1) Interview + Therapy room;
 - Three (4) amenities block;
 - Three (3) Store; and
 - Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA)

The masterplan will ultimately consist of the following:

- Maximum student capacity of 656;
- Maximum 65 staff;
- Multi-Purpose Hall;
- Agricultural teaching facility;
- Maintenance and bus area;
- On-site Parking (67 spaces, inclusive of 1 accessible);
- Bike parking x 36;
- Internal pathways;
- Kiss and drop off areas;
- Bus stop;
- Waste Storage and collection area;
- Signage;
- Bush Chapel
- Removal of 96 trees (total);
- Landscaping (including Bush Chapel);
- Infrastructure works;
- Earthworks;
- Secondary emergency vehicle/ large vehicle access;
- Acoustic and safety fence; and
- Widening of existing vehicular access from Maitland Street

Stage 1 of the masterplan consists of:

- Site remediation;
- Removal of 7 trees;
- Facilities for a maximum of 140 students and 16 staff, including:

2 Background

- One (1) administration and staff area;
 - One (1) staff and student amenities block (including one (1) end of trip facility);
 - Five (5) General Learning Areas (GLAs);
 - One (1) Science classroom; and
 - Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA)
- Internal pathways;
- On-site Parking (15 spaces, inclusive of 1 accessible);
- Bike parking x 6;
- Kiss and drop off areas;
- Bus stop;
- Bin storage and collection area;
- Signage;
- Infrastructure works; and
- Widening of existing vehicular access from Maitland Street.

2.3 Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements

The SEARs for the State Significant Development were received in April 2021. The requirements in relation to consultation are set out as follows:

During the preparation of the EIS, you must consult with the relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups, relevant special interest groups, including local Aboriginal land councils and registered Aboriginal stakeholders and affected landowners. In particular, you must consult with:

- *the relevant Council.*
- *Government Architect NSW (through the NSW SDRP process).*
- *Transport for NSW.*

Consultation should commence as soon as practicable to inform the scope of investigation and progression of the proposed development.

The EIS must describe and include evidence of the consultation process and the issues raised and identify where the design of the development has been amended in response to these issues. Where amendments have not been made to address an issue, a short explanation should be provided.

Targeted consultation in accordance with the draft Social Impact Assessment Guideline 2020 (Department of Planning, Industry and Environment) must also occur where there is a requirement to prepare and submit a Social Impact Assessment.

This Report responds to these requirements and provides information that enables assessment of the proposed development against the consultation requirements of the SEARs.

3 Consultation Approach

3.1 Consultation Objectives

The consultation and community engagement objectives for the proposal include:

- Informing stakeholders and the school community of the project to seek input into the overall outcome;
- Ensure indigenous history is acknowledged and incorporated into the design;
- Build relationships between the school and stakeholder and members of the local and indigenous communities; and
- Provide a high-quality education facility for the local community.

3.2 Community Engagement Activities

The design team along with the school have pursued a range of community engagement activities throughout the design process as outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1 Community Engagement and Activities	
Activity	Strategic Intent
Term 1 2021	Community newsletter and emails from Principal with invitations to discuss project with Principal.
Term 2 2020 (9 th May)	Advertisement for registrations of interest for consultation from Aboriginal people or organisations with cultural knowledge relevant to the area
Term 2 2021 (13 th May)	Meeting with Wanaruah elder at Lands Council to invite feedback by Indigenous landowners in Muswellbrook.
Term 2 (2 nd June)	National Reconciliation Week Flag Raising Event – Principal met with Ochre Opportunity Hub to share ideas on design for proposed school
Term 3 (Week 2)	Meeting with PBCS families and Principal to share plans for Maitland Road and engage in open discussions surrounding the needs of families.
Terms 1-3 and ongoing	Engage with local Wanaruah man on plan for yarning circle/ meeting place concepts

3.3 Consultation Activities

The Archaeological Consultant, Social Impact Consultant and Project Control Group (PCG) have undertaken consultation with a range of key stakeholders and community members in regard to the proposed new school.

The PCG is comprised of the School Principal, project managers, architects and town planners. Input into the PRG meetings were also sought from specialist consultants and indigenous stakeholders. Consultation activities undertaken by the consultant and PCG team are outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 2 Consultation Activities			
Date/s	Targeted Stakeholders		Activity/Matters Discussed/Matters Resolved
23 January 2020	Muswellbrook Council	Shire	Planning Proposal and DA, range of planning controls and constraints applicable to the site and relevant to both PP and DA applications (refer Section 4.2).
14 May 2020	PCG meeting1		Discussion on client brief, rooms required and scope of works
21 January 2021	PCG meeting 2		Demolition DA works and preparing for Planning Proposal
4 February 2021	PCG meeting 3		Planning Proposal program and SEARs request preparation

3 Consultation Approach

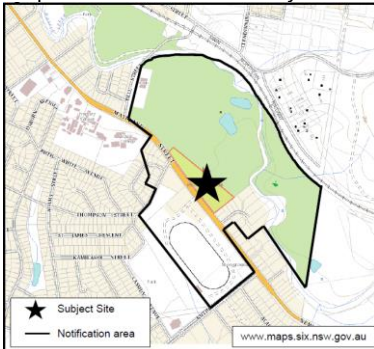
Table 2 Consultation Activities

Date/s	Targeted Stakeholders	Activity/Matters Discussed/Matters Resolved
18 February 2021	PCG meeting 4	Preparing for SDRP01, Masterplan and Stage 1 design
4 March 2021	PCG meeting 5	SDRP01 feedback discussion
23 March 2021	PCG meeting 6	Refining masterplan design as a response to SDRP comments
15 April 2021	Additional meeting	On site meeting with Principal, local indigenous contacts, client Mark Smith, and Muswellbrook council planner.
15 April 2021	PCG meeting 7	working for BGA submission
May 2021	Local Indigenous consultation	Discussion on the strategies where we can incorporate indigenous culture into the design of the school.
28 April 2021	PCG meeting 8	Discussion on SEARs checklist, distribution to consultant team
12 May 2021	PCG meeting 9	Project program monitoring and preparing for SSDA
June 2021	Landscape Team	Discussion of the outdoor meeting places, how they can mimic indigenous tradition of gathering in small circles in the bush and natural surrounds.
26 May 2021	PCG meeting 10	Discussion on presentation for SDRP02
9 June 2021	PCG meeting 11	SDRP02 feedback discussion
July 2021	Wonnorrua Elder	Discuss the school design and the facilities it will provide to the local students
23 June 2021	PCG meeting 12	Working to finalise submission for SSDA
7 July 2021	PCG meeting 13	Discuss timing of draft reports and Council's position of Planning Proposal. Discuss staggered bell times. Discuss meeting with Aboriginal Elders
12 August 2021	PCG meeting 14	Discuss requirement and timing for meeting with TfNSW. Update on SSDA progress. Discuss NESA inspection dates. Discuss outstanding items to be addressed in SSDA – Consultation Report and operational Management Plan.
18 August 2021	Transport for NSW	Matters raised in SEARs submission, entry/exit and associated traffic impacts, Muswellbrook Bypass project.
25 August 2021	PCG meeting 15	Discuss outcomes of TfNSW meeting. Update on SSDA progress and consultant reports. Discuss project program.
9 September 2021	PCG meeting 16	Discuss TfNSW feedback. Update on SSDA progress. Discuss updates to masterplan. Seek minutes from TfNSW.
23 September 2021	PCG meeting 17	Update on SSDA progress. Discuss Operational Management Plan
7 October 2021	PCG meeting 18	Discuss amendments required to SSDA documents. Discuss assessment timeframes. Update on Planning Proposal.
28 October 2021	PCG meeting 19	Discuss DPIE feedback and documentation to be amended. Discuss neighbour notification once SSDA lodged.
4 November 2021	Muswellbrook Council Shire	Discussion on Maitland Street/ Thompson Street intersection and likely commencement date and footpath requirement along Maitland Street.

3 Consultation Approach

3.4 Communication Activities

Table 3 outlines the communication actions undertaken to keep stakeholders and communities informed about this proposal.

Table 3 Communication Activities		
Date/s	Targeted Stakeholders	Activity
27 April 2020	Statutory Agencies: • DPIE Climate Change & Sustainability (now Heritage NSW) • Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS) • Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) • Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (WLALC) • Office of the Registrar, Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW) (ORALRA) • Native Title Services Corp (NTSCorp)	Letters requesting the details of Aboriginal people who may hold cultural knowledge relevant to the study area and who may wish to be consulted for the project were sent to several statutory agencies.
11 May 2020	Letters sent to identified individuals and organisations. Letter sent via email if address provided; and by post where email not available	A total of 13 Aboriginal people and organisations registered an interest in being consulted for the project.
2 June 2020	Registered Aboriginal Parties	Information sent to Registered Aboriginal Parties about the project, the sampling strategy and the methodology for undertaking the assessment of cultural heritage significance for review and comment
21 August 2020	Draft ACHAR sent to Registered Aboriginal Parties for review and comment	No further comments received.
30 May 2021	Properties in immediate vicinity of site 	Letter to outline proposal and invite comment on any issues
30 May 2021	Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (letter returned to sender)	Letter to outline proposal and invite comment on any issues
30 May 2021	Hunter Valley Aboriginal Corporation	Letter to outline proposal and invite comment on any issues
30 May 2021	Hunter Youth Services	Letter to outline proposal and invite comment on any issues
30 May 2021	Muswellbrook Showgrounds	Letter to outline proposal and invite comment on any issues
15/4/2020 to 28/10/2021 (19 Meetings)	Project Reference Group	Discussed scope of works, SEAR's requirements, input from indigenous stakeholders, refining masterplan and SDRP feedback to amend the masterplan to include feedback from SDRP, local indigenous contact, Council and SDRP

4 Stakeholder Community Feedback

Stakeholder and community feedback has been fundamental to the development of this proposal. Feedback was sought from stakeholders and communities through the consultation activities and communication channels listed in **Section 3**.

4.1 Community Feedback

Interactions with community members raised key themes, including:

- Traffic noise and safety of entry/ exit to site;
- Social impact to neighbours through additional noise;
- Removal of unsafe trees; and
- Incorporation of aboriginal history into the design.

4.2 Stakeholder Meetings and Correspondence

Table 4 outlines a summary of the key consultation undertaken with the primary stakeholders of the project, as defined and required by the SEARs.

Table 4 Stakeholder Meetings and Correspondence			
Stakeholder 1	Key Dates	Key Issues Discussed	Outcomes
Muswellbrook Shire Council	23 January 2020	1. Contamination – EPA accredited Auditor to sign off on Remediation Action Plan	Contamination and Remediation Action Plan have been prepared.
		2. BDAR required	BDAR has been prepared.
		3. SEPP (Koala Habitat) – applicable as land is mapped	SEPP (koala Habitat) 2021 has been addressed in the EIS.
		4. Archaeology – potential in Alluvium – ACHA required	An ACHA has been prepared.
		5. Flood – Site affected by flood – flood certificate/ flood planning level required	A Flood Impact Assessment has been prepared.
		6. Easements – easements to be provided over services. • 3m required adjacent residential properties • Sewer line along Maitland Street	Easement along Maitland Street (sewer) have been retained).
		8. Planning Proposal to be endorsed by Council prior to lodgement of SSDA with proposed R1 zone	Correspondence with DPIE and further correspondence with Council was undertaken to determine when the SSDA can be lodged.
		7. Thompson Street – Upgrade expected to commence March 2020	Works not commenced but factored into Transport Assessment.
		9. Developer Contributions – Water headworks contribution	Council to advise through condition of consent
Government Architect (GANSW) NSW	3 March 2021	The GANSW State Design Review Panel (SDRP) provided feedback on the proposed design and approach which related to enhancing the following aspects of the project: • Connection with Country;	Consultation with Registered Aboriginal Parties has provided input into how 'connecting with country' could be designed into the landscaping and overall project design.

4 Stakeholder Community Feedback

		• Parking Traffic and Masterplanning • Architecture and Built Form Concepts; • Landscaping	Matters relating to parking, traffic, architecture, built form and landscaping were revised for additional review at the SDRP 2 meeting (see comments below).
Wanaruah Aboriginal Council	Elder/ Land 13 th May 2021	Presented proposal and feedback sought	Aboriginal Land Council gave glowing response to intent for planning to include yarning circle, bush tracks, bush chapel, bush tucker gardens, Aboriginal artwork incorporated into design.
GANSW	23 June 2021	The GANSW State Design Review Panel (SDRP) provided feedback on the proposed design and approach which related to enhancing the following aspects of the project: • Connection with country • Masterplan and car parking	Detailed design response provided in supporting documentation to address comments and issues raised by GANSW.
Transport for NSW (TfNSW)	18 August 2021	Discussion related to: • Existing bus arrangements • Design of entry/exit • Road cyclist safety • Northbound parents returning to town • Impacts of staggered bell times • Muswellbrook Bypass – update from team • Fencing for pedestrian access / safety • Provision for parent parking for short stay visits to school • Location and design of parking area including access points in response to SDRP comments.	Responses to various issues include: • Consultation with bus service providers has commenced. • Entry/exit reviewed in response to TfNSW feedback. • Review of fencing and access/safety to be incorporated into final design. • School to incorporate staggered bell times. • Bypass not likely to impact projected figures. • Location and design of parking area not of concern to TfNSW and is supported in current arrangement.

4.2.1 Consultation with Council Regarding Planning Proposal

At the 23rd January 2020 meeting with Council, the proposed Planning Proposal to rezone the site and other supporting maps was also discussed. It was advised by Council that their preferred zone for the site was R1 General Residential. Extracts relating to the Planning Proposal discussion are shown below.

'With regard to the proposed rezoning of the former Forestry Nursery site (72-74 Maitland Street, Muswellbrook), I can confirm that our early planning discussions nominated the following as issues to investigate/analyse:

- *Ecological significance of the site, including mapping under the Koala SEPP (which has now been replaced);*
- *Potential for Aboriginal cultural significance;*
- *Flood affectation and need for flood information to be provided;*
- *Accredited auditor to be engaged to oversee contamination and remediation works;*
- *Traffic Impact assessment and movement systems; and*

4 Stakeholder Community Feedback

- *Servicing the site and the possible need for easements.*

The site adjoins an existing developed residential area and Golf Course. For these reasons Council prefers that the site be zoned R1 General Residential to be the same as the zoning of adjoining land, provided the relevant environmental considerations (such as ecology, flooding, contamination) are able to be satisfied.

While the site has frontage to the New England Highway (called Maitland Street at this location), zoning the site to a business zone is not supported as:

- *It would encourage a proliferation of ribbon development;*
- *Muswellbrook has sufficient undeveloped business zoned land in close proximity; and*
- *Business uses would create amenity impacts for adjoining residential properties.*

Muswellbrook Shire Council is currently operating with very limited strategic planning resources. As a result, I would support the rezoning of the site being undertaken as part of the SSD process for the school. This approach would also likely be easier for the public to comprehend, although if the school did not proceed other uses permitted in the R1 zone would be assessed on merit by Council'.

5 Project Response

Feedback from consultation has been considered in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement. **Table 5** provides a summary of the key issues that emerged and the resultant project response.

Table 5 Project Response		
Key Issues	Project Response	Relevant Report
Flood		
Flood affectation	The buildings are proposed to be sited above the flood planning level as noted in the Flood impact assessment.	Flood Impact Assessment Architectural Plans
Easements		
Provision of easements	Easements have been provided over the sewer along Maitland Street and a 3m stormwater easement provided along the boundaries to residential properties to the south-east.	Architectural plans
Traffic Noise and Safety of Entry/ Exit to Site		
Safe vehicular access Noise generation from traffic	Entry/ exit to site has been designed in accordance with TfNSW requirements. Traffic noise to the operation of the school is reduced through the placement of the buildings being setback from Maitland Street. An acoustic wall is proposed along the boundary to the residential properties to reduce noise from the carpark/ waste area.	Traffic Impact Assessment
Car parking		
Car-park location	Alternate car park locations were considered, however not supported due to noise generation, existing easements ensuring the built form sits outside of the flood extents.	Architectural plans Architectural Design Response Traffic Impact Assessment
Amenity Impacts to Neighbours through Additional Noise		
Additional noise	Acoustic wall along boundary from waste area to Maitland Street. Minimise windows facing residential properties.	Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. Architectural Plans
Removal of Unsafe Trees		
Unsafe trees	Removal of trees as per arborist report.	Arboricultural Impact Assessment
Connection with Country/ Incorporation of Aboriginal History into the Design		
Inclusion of Aboriginal history	Incorporate yarning circle, meeting place and bush chapel into the school design	Architectural Plans Architectural Design Response

6 Appendices
