



13083
9 April 2014

Mr Sam Haddad
Director General
Planning and Infrastructure
23-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: David Gibson

Dear Mr Haddad

**REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS
MLC BURWOOD SENIOR SCHOOL CENTRE, 45 PARK ROAD, BURWOOD**

We are writing on behalf of MLC School, the proponent for the redevelopment of the MLC Senior School Centre at 45 Park Road, Burwood. As the proposed development is for the purpose of an educational establishment and has a Capital Investment Value (CIV) in excess of \$30 million it would be State Significant Development (SSD) for the purposes of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

The purpose of this letter is to request the Director-General's Requirements (DGRs) for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed development. To support the request for the DGRs, this letter provides an overview of the proposed development, sets out the statutory context, and identifies the key likely environmental and planning issues associated with the proposal. Also enclosed is a Quantity Surveyors certificate confirming the CIV, together with preliminary architectural plans prepared by BVN Donovan Hill.

1.0 BACKGROUND

MLC School, founded in 1886, is an independent girls' school catering for 1200 students from Pre-kindergarten to Year 12, with 900 students at the senior school. MLC is a school of broad ranging opportunity and diversity and boasts an enviable record of providing an outstanding learning environment for girls, while working to meet their needs as individuals.

The Senior School is in need of redevelopment to remove inefficient and out-dated teaching spaces and replace them with modern learning spaces that reflect new models of teaching. The proposal will replace existing teaching buildings on the MLC senior school site with new learning facilities.

It should be noted that the proposed development will not increase student or staff numbers. The proposal is entirely focused on modernising the senior school's infrastructure and facilities to bring them in line with contemporary learning and teaching styles.

The proposal for a new Senior School Centre is further described below.

2.0 THE SITE

MLC School is located in the Burwood Local Government Area (LGA) approximately 400m north of the Burwood Town Centre and approximately 750m walking distance from Strathfield Station as shown in the Context Plan at **Figure 1**.

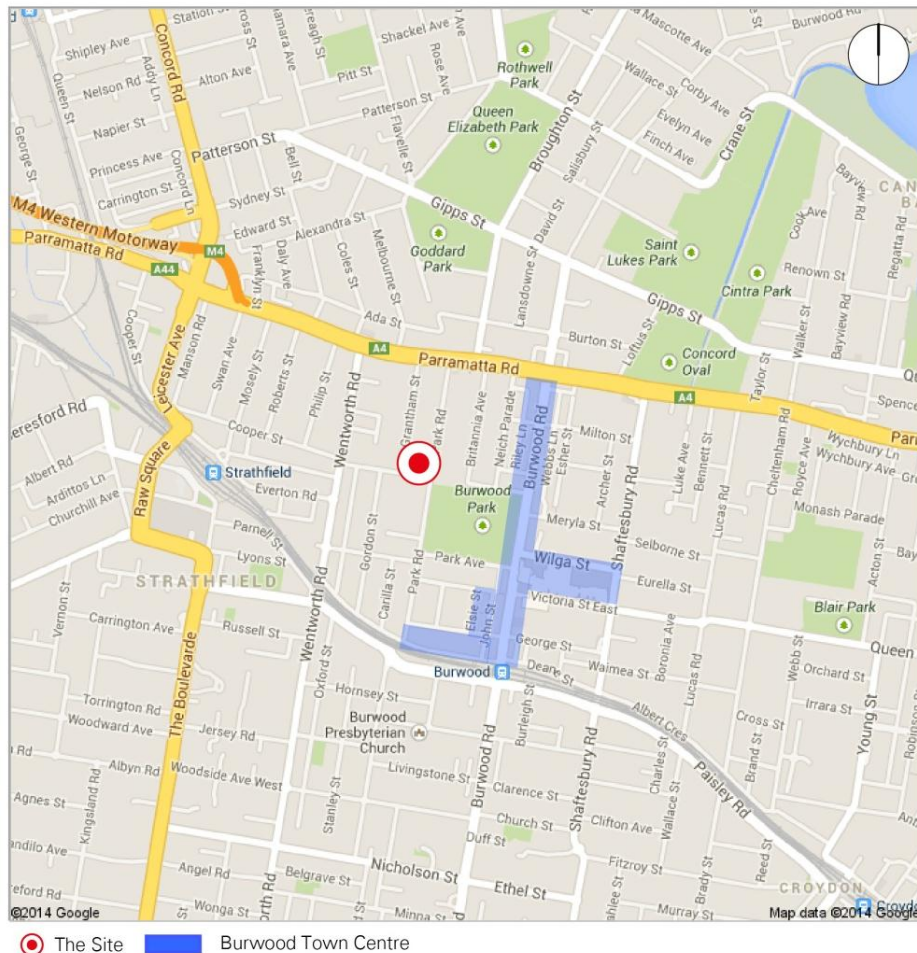


Figure 1 – Context Plan

Source: maps.google.com

The School campus occupies a number of sites as shown in the plan at **Figure 2**. The School's separate landholdings have a combined area of approximately 4.14 hectares. The proposal only relates to the Senior School (the site) as highlighted in **Figure 2**, which is made up of a number of lots with a combined area of the 12,487m². A legal description of the site is provided at **Table 1**.

The site is bound by Park Road to the east, Grantham Street to the west and Rowley Street to the south, with residential dwellings to the north.

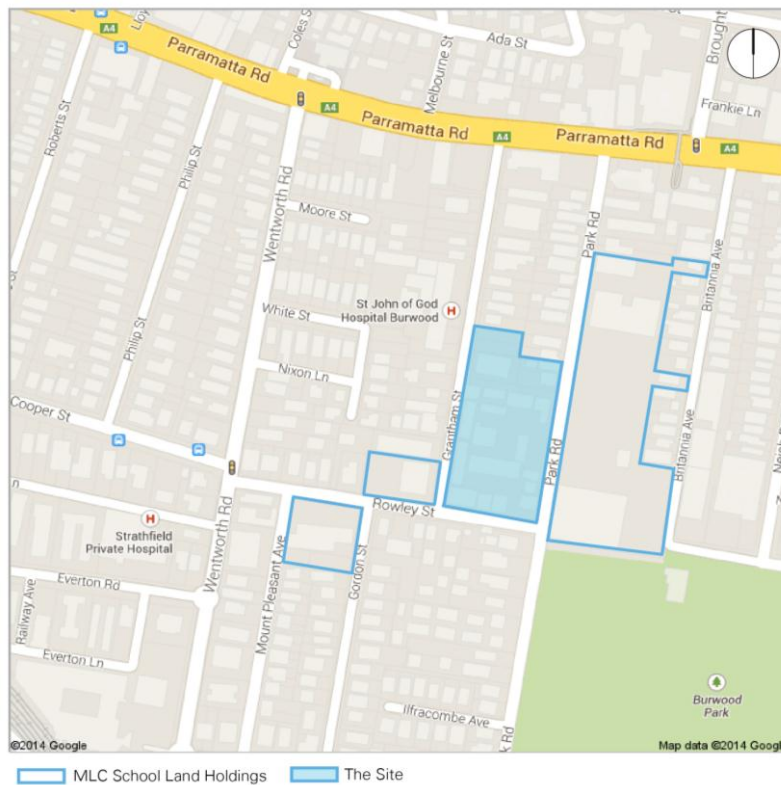


Figure 2 – Area Identification Plan

Source: maps.google.com

Table 1 – Legal Description

Address	Legal Description	Current use
45 Park Road	– Lots 1–11 and 13, DP 192161 – Lots 1–2, DP 580617 – Lot 1, DP 82742 – Lot 1, DP 71600 – Lot 19, DP 58580	School main campus
28 – 30 Grantham Street	Lot 1, DP 700411	School main campus
31A Park Road	Lot B, DP 337178	Single dwelling
33 Park Road	Lot A, DP 337178	Single dwelling

3.0 THE PROJECT

3.1 Objectives of the Proposed Development

MLC School has identified the need to redevelop existing senior school facilities in order to remove inefficient and old teaching spaces, and replace them with modern learning spaces compatible with new models of teaching.

The key objectives of the proposed scheme are to:

- Update and improve current learning spaces to meet new models of teaching;
- Improve staff spaces;
- De-clutter the site to increase usable open space;
- Improve ESD performance; and

- Upgrade the site to achieve Building Code of Australia (BCA) and *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) compliance.

As noted previously, the proposal will not increase the School's staff or student population.

3.2 Proposed Development

A summary of the key elements of the project is provided below, and is shown in **Figures 3** and **4**. Preliminary plans prepared by BVN Donovan Hill are attached.

The proposed development, including all landscaping works, will be carried out in one single stage. The proposal comprises:

- Demolition of:
 - residential dwellings at 31A and 33 Park Road; and
 - six school buildings.
- Construction and use of a new Teaching and Learning Building;
- Construction of a new Art Building;
- Alterations and Additions to the existing Year 6 Building;
- Refurbishment of the Independent Learning Centre to provide a senior's room and staff common room;
- Landscaping, including the planting of 32 new trees; and
- Removal of 22 trees.

The development will provide 1,678m² additional gross floor area (GFA), resulting in a total GFA of 11,462m² on this part of the MLC campus.



EXISTING

 Existing MLC buildings to be demolished

Figure 3 – Existing buildings to be demolished

Source: BVN Donovan Hill



Figure 4 – Proposed new buildings

Source: BVN Donovan Hill

4.0 PERMISSIBILITY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

The following strategic plans are relevant to the proposal:

- NSW State Plan 2021;
- Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036; and
- Draft Inner West Subregional Strategy.

The following legislation and environmental planning instruments are relevant to the proposed development:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*;
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007;
- State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land;
- State and Regional Development SEPP 2011;
- Burwood Local Environmental Plan 2012; and
- Burwood Development Control Plan 2013.

4.1 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) establishes the assessment framework for State Significant Development. Under Section 89D of the EP&A Act the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is the consent authority for State Significant Development. Section 78A(8A) requires that a development application for SSD is to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

4.2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

Under Clause 32 of SEPP (Infrastructure) 2007, proposals for new school buildings need to address the School Facilities Standards State government publications, including:

- a) *School Facilities Standards—Landscape Standard—Version 22* (March 2002);
- b) *Schools Facilities Standards—Design Standard* (Version 1/09/2006); and
- c) *Schools Facilities Standards—Specification Standard* (Version 01/11/2008).

These standards provide a guide for the development of new schools, new facilities at existing schools and the refurbishment of existing facilities to ensure the creation of an environment which is conducive to learning whilst being safe and robust in a school environment.

These standards will be considered in the design of the site.

4.3 State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land

State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 – Remediation of Land (SEPP 55) aims to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.

SEPP 55 will be addressed as part of the EIS.

4.4 State and Regional Development SEPP 2011

The State and Regional Development SEPP identifies development which is declared to be State Significant. Clause 15 of Schedule 1 of the policy provides that the proposed development as described herein, is State Significant Development, as follows:

Development for the purpose of educational establishments (including associated research facilities) that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million.

As the proposal is for the purposes of an educational establishment and has a total estimated CIV of over \$30 million, it would be considered SSD.

4.5 Current Zoning and Development Controls

Burwood Local Environmental Plan 2012

Burwood Local Environmental Plan 2012 (LEP 2012) is the applicable local planning instrument for the proposed development and establishes the relevant land uses and other development standards for the site. Specifically:

- The proposed school redevelopment is permissible in the R2 Low Density Residential zone.
- The proposal is consistent with the zone objectives as it will provide another form of land use that provides facilities and services to meet the day to day needs of the local residents.
- LEP 2012 sets a maximum height of 8.2m. The highest point of the new development at its maximum point is 15.263m. A request will be made to vary the height development standard in accordance with Clause 4.6 of LEP 2012.
- The FSR for this site is 0.55:1. The proposed FSR is 0.87:1. A request will be made to vary the FSR development standard in accordance with Clause 4.6 of LEP 2012.
- The site is a Heritage Item under LEP 2012, however none of the buildings that this proposal applies to are of heritage significance. A heritage assessment will accompany the application.

Burwood Development Control Plan 2013

Burwood Development Control Plan 2013 (DCP 2013) contains detailed built form and other development controls. Whilst there are no objectives or other controls in DCP 2013 specifically relating to schools, the proposal will have regard to the requirements applying to permitted development in the R2 zone, and for the built form of residential flat buildings.

Whilst it is proposed that the project will have regard to the key controls outlined above, it is noted that the Burwood Development Control Plan 2013 (along with any other DCP) will carry no weight in the assessment due to the status of the application as a SSD DA.

5.0 PRELIMINARY IMPACT IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

The impacts and risks associated with the proposal are summarised below and will be addressed in detail in the EIS. Overall, the risks from the proposal are considered to be low, as development is concentrated within the existing school grounds and will not generate any environmental impacts that cannot be managed appropriately.

5.1 Built Form

The proposal has the potential to impact on existing buildings and residential development in the wider locality. During concept design, a number of tests were undertaken to determine whether new learning spaces could be accommodated within the existing buildings, however this would have required a significant re-work of existing structural walls as the existing campus comprises many different buildings that have melded together over time, resulting in different floor levels and roof heights. In addition to challenges around making existing buildings accessible, this would have led to a costly, inefficient process and a compromised design. As a result, a new building presents the School with much better learning spaces, provides universal access and is a more economically efficient solution.

The EIS will address the height, density, bulk and scale of the proposed development within the context of the locality and will demonstrate that the proposal integrates with the local environment, and that the form, layout and siting of the buildings and facilities achieves optimal design and amenity outcomes.

In summary, the preliminary scheme is considered consistent with the existing development on the school site and the character of the area for the following reasons:

- Has been designed to consider existing school frontages and façades in an effort to create a continuous street frontage along Grantham Street, and an interesting and compatible street frontage along Park Road.
- Sits below the height of the existing tallest building on the site, being the Independent Learning Centre (ILC), which has a height of RL 43.3.
- Has been designed so that the proposed increase in bulk will be largely imperceptible from the public domain, and will be balanced by the additional 1,210m² of open space to be provided on the site.
- Uses materials and finishes which respond to the materials of the site's existing buildings, respect the architecture of the site's heritage buildings, and enhance the architectural features of the new buildings.

5.2 Heritage

The site is listed in LEP 2012 as Heritage Item I89. The Methodist Ladies' College is listed as *it is of local significance as a private school, which represents the rapid increase in population of Burwood as a favourable area for fashionable schools in the period around the turn of the twentieth century.*

No buildings of heritage significance are to be developed, modified or altered as part of the proposal. Further, the primary features that contribute to the significance of the site will be retained, and will continue to be highly visible and prominent elements in the Grantham and Rowley Streets and Park Road streetscapes.

Overall, the risks to the heritage values of the School buildings are considered to be low. The EIS will be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement.

5.3 Traffic and Parking

As there will be no increase to student or staff numbers, it is not anticipated that there will be any increase in traffic or additional demand for car parking. There are currently no parking provisions for staff, students or visitors on the site, and none is proposed as a result of this redevelopment. A substantial parking facility for the school is located on the Junior School campus.

A traffic and parking study will accompany the EIS.

5.4 Tree Removal and Landscaping

The proposal requires the removal of 22 trees from the site. The trees are not required as native fauna habitat and need to be removed as they are located within the footprint of the proposed new buildings. The trees do not contribute to the heritage significance of the site.

To compensate for this loss, a total of 32 new trees will be planted on the site. In addition, the proposal incorporates two large landscaped courtyards in the centre of the campus that will be utilised as break out spaces for students, as outdoor learning areas, and to improve the general amenity of the site. The proposed layout of the landscaped areas will increase the usability and functionality of the outdoor spaces and improve solar access. The landscaping for the site aims to provide spaces that:

- Are adaptable and flexible;
- Respond to building layout / function;
- Provide quality amenity for students, staff and visitors;
- Are safe and accessible for all; and
- Allow activation - all day / all year.

In total 1,210m² of additional open space will be provided, totalling 2,570m² of open space and landscaped courtyards on the site.

The EIS will be accompanied by a Landscape Concept Plan.

5.5 Sustainability

Opportunities to incorporate ESD measures within the project will be detailed within the EIS. Potential opportunities include incorporating natural ventilation where feasible and using measures to reduce artificial lighting.

5.6 Construction and Operational Impacts

The EIS will address and consider the construction and operation impacts of, or on:

- Noise and vibration;
- Staging/decanting;
- Construction traffic; and
- Dust.

6.0 CONSULTATION

MLC School and its representatives have met (in November 2013) with Burwood Council in relation to the proposal. The feedback from Council has been considered during development of the preliminary scheme.

Following declaration of the project as a SSD, and as part of the preparation of the EIS, MLC will undertake consultation in accordance with the DGRs.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The CIV of the project is over \$33,800,000 and in excess of the requisite SSD threshold of \$30 Million for educational establishment projects. A Quantity Surveyors Report prepared by Altus Page Kirkland is attached for reference.

On the basis that the project falls within the requirements of Clause 15 of Schedule 1 of the SRD SEPP being *development for the purpose of educational establishments (including associated research facilities) that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million*, MLC School formally requests that Planning and Infrastructure issue the DGRs for the project to facilitate the preparation of the EIS to accompany the DA for the project.

Should you have any queries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Kate Tudehope on 9956 6962 or via email on vgoldschmidt@jbaurban.com.au or ktudehope@jbaurban.com.au.

Yours faithfully



Vivienne Goldschmidt
Associate

Encl:
Quantity Surveyors Report prepared by Altus Page Kirkland
Preliminary plans prepared by BVN Donovan Hill