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ABN 74 118 972 973

## EILEEN O'CONNOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL

For Catholic Schools  
Broken Bay

84 Gavenlock Road, Mardi, NSW

Issue Date: 07.04.25



# Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements

## Development Details

Application No: SSD-67173718  
 Project Name: New Eileen O'Connor Catholic School  
 Location: 84 Gavenlock Road, Mardi NSW 2259  
 Lot 9 Section 4 DP3368 within Central Coast  
 Applicant: Catholic Schools Broken Bay

The following documentation has been prepared to support the State Significant Development Application for the above project and in accordance with the Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 as follows:

|           | Issue and Assessment Requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Relevant Section of this Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <b>7.</b> | <b>Trees and Landscaping:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|           | Assess the number, location, condition and significance of trees to be removed and retained and note any existing canopy coverage to be retained on-site.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Refer to landscape drawings L03-L05<br>Refer to Legend on L04 & L05 for total existing retained tree canopy coverage across the site is 2.7%                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|           | <p>Provide a detailed site-wide landscape plan, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>details the proposed site planting, including location, number and species of plantings, heights of trees at maturity and proposed canopy coverage (as a percentage of the site area).</li> <li>provides evidence that opportunities to retain significant trees have been explored and/or informs the plan.</li> <li>considers equity and amenity of outdoor play spaces.</li> <li>demonstrates how the proposed development would:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contribute to long term landscape setting in respect of the site and streetscape.</li> <li>mitigate the urban heat island effect and ensure appropriate comfort levels on-site.</li> <li>contribute to the objective of increased urban tree canopy cover.</li> <li>maximise opportunities for green infrastructure, consistent with Greener Places and having regard to any bush fire risk.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to landscape drawings L04 &amp; L05 for planting plans, L06 for Plant Schedule<br/>Refer to Legend on L04 &amp; L05 - total proposed tree canopy coverage across the site is 8.7%.</li> </ul> <p>Total retained and proposed tree canopy coverage is 11.4% across the site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Landscape Report. Section 1 - Landscape response to SDRP comments - Point d)</li> <li>Refer to Landscape Report. Section 1 - Landscape response to SDRP comments - Point h)</li> <li>Refer to Landscape Report. Section 1 - Landscape response to SDRP comments               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer - Points a), b), c), d) and j)</li> <li>Refer - Point k)</li> <li>Refer to Legend on landscape drawings L04 &amp; L05. Total retained and proposed tree canopy coverage is 11.4% across the site</li> <li>Refer - Point a), b), d) and k)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN REPORT

### SECTION 1.

#### LANDSCAPE RESPONSE TO SDRP COMMENTS

- a) The front carpark landscaping is more extensive helping to soften the built form at the entry to the building. Tree planting to the front setback and carpark help to screen the building, provide a buffer to neighboring properties as well as provide shade.
- b) A gathering space set within the landscape brings the community into the site and allows for community engagement with the space. It provides a sense of identity and a transition space from the street to the site.
- c) The plants selected in the front carpark directly relate to the Tuggerah grassland inspired front facade treatment. The drift planting representative of the typical landscape of the area creates interest and is a nod to the grassed landscape prior to settlement.
- d) *Acacia longifolia*, a species native to the region, has been strategically planted along the northern boundary to provide both an acoustic and visual buffer to neighboring properties. This species holds cultural significance for the local Indigenous community and was included on a preferred plant species list provided by Tracey Howie of Wannangini Pty Ltd, an organization specializing in cultural education and heritage management that is 100% Aboriginally owned and operated. This tree also provides habitat for native bird life contributing to biodiversity protection.
- e) Trees have been retained where possible and removed according to the Arborist report. Additional tree plantings have been added complying with RFS requirements.
- f) Acknowledgment of the extended landscape surrounding the school - The wetlands and bushland, by retaining a grove of trees within the rear carpark that provides a nod to the natural surroundings.
- g) The landscape is designed around the natural contours of the site.
- h) The complexity of previous designs has been simplified by removing items and creating more seamless spaces that flow into each other.
- i) Consideration has been made for student mobility throughout the site, ensuring inclusive and immersive play spaces. The central ramp designed around the natural contours of the site, leads from the lower level to the top level, offering views across the play space for reflection, connection, and supervision. Various play areas have been created to cater for the student's needs and varied accessibility requirements.
- j) Incorporation of more natural elements within the playground
- k) Contributes to long term landscape setting, through the incorporation of trees planting where possible whilst complying with bushfire requirements.
- l) Trees have been added where possible to comply with bushfire requirements to mitigate the heat island effect. Natural turf has been used where practical.

## **SECTION 2.**

### **CONCEPT DESIGN - DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY**

We envisage traversing the site as a journey, honouring the Darkinjung people and their heritage through spirituality and storytelling whilst promoting reflection.

Our design aims to respond to the broader cultural and Darkinjung country, fostering a deep connection to the local environment. This helps recognise the importance of protecting and caring for the land and creates a sense of belonging and place.

Reflective of the land it resides on, the concept embraces and celebrates the topography. On the upper-level playground, there is a gathering space for spiritual and cultural connection, akin to Mount Yengo—a local significant meeting place for indigenous clans.

The surrounding ground surfaces with patterns etched into the concrete emulates water movement, reminiscent of the local streams and creeks that feed into the Tuggerah Lake System. These waterways have been crucial historically and continue to be so in the modern day for the Aboriginal custodians.

The Indigenous Dreamtime story of Biامي and Mirrabooka and the creation of the Milky Way is translated into the ground surfaces of the upper-level playground. Textured concrete with exposed aggregate replicates the stars in the river of the Milky Way, while the Southern Cross stars are represented by shiny stainless-steel inlays. The Southern Cross reflects Catholic beliefs and the Dreamtime story of Mirrabooka.

Sandstone block seating offers opportunities for outdoor learning sessions and general passive seating for eating and gathering. Adjacent to the gathering and seating areas are active play zones, including in-ground trampolines, swings, and a climbing frame with a slide.

A ramp traverses the slope, connecting the lower playground. The central area of the playground remains clear and open, allowing children to run and providing clear sight lines for teachers to facilitate play in both playgrounds.

At the bottom of the ramp is a small circular gathering space dominated by a large Southern Mahogany, which provides shade and serves as a focal point. This tree symbolizes the Tree of Life, drawing people together in harmony and connection to the country.

The lower playground features a bike track, dance stage, and basketball court/PE area. Garden beds with hardy, low-water-tolerant indigenous plants soften the hard surfaces, providing interest through texture and colour for students while connecting them to the natural environment.

To provide shade and soften the built environment, new trees have been thoughtfully selected. Reflecting the nearby wetlands and bushland, the chosen trees include Casuarina, Corymbia maculata, and Hymenosporum, which harmoniously integrate with the natural surroundings.

**SECTION 3.**

**GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

- Quiet spaces for self-regulation and active play areas have been included. Plant selections are carefully considered for safety (non-climbable for hypermobile students, non-toxic, and free from choking hazards) and sustainability.
- A predominantly indigenous native plant community selection fosters a strong connection to the location and the land, ensuring a variety of textures and forms with a vested interest in sustainability through material selection and low-water-use planting.
- Materials have been chosen for their low environmental impact, local sourcing, and potential for recycling and repurposing.
- Material and colour choices are inspired by the country on which the site resides, complementing the school's branding and colours. High importance is placed on material texture to provide interest and inadvertently impart knowledge and connection to the country for the children playing within the space.
- Located in a bushfire zone, all materials, plant selections, spacing, and positioning comply with strict bushfire codes.

## REFERENCES

### **Design Guide for Schools**

Government Architect New South Wales

### **Draft Greener Spaces Design Guide**

Government Architect New South Wales

### **Urban Green Cover in NSW**

Office of Environment and Heritage

### **Better Place - Connecting with Country**

Government Architect New South Wales

### **The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)**

### **National Construction Code (NCC)**

### **Australian Standards (AS)**