



**TOWER 2, LEVEL 23
DARLING PARK, 201 SUSSEX ST
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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04 June 2018

Ms Karen Harragon
Director, Social and Other Infrastructure Assessments
Level 22
320 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Karen,

RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS (BUILT HERITAGE) SUPPLEMENTARY LETTER - LINDFIELD LEARNING VILLAGE

INTRODUCTION

Urbis has been engaged to prepare this response to submissions for State Significant Development Application SSD8114, which involves additions and alterations to the former UTS Ku-ring-gai Campus (originally the William Balmain Teachers College). The subject site is located on Eton Road in Lindfield and identified as an item of local heritage significance by Ku-ring-gai Council, item: I422 (Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015).

This letter is an addendum to both the Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) prepared in June 2017 and the Response to Submissions prepared in November 2017 both by Urbis. Refer to the HIS for a full description, history and assessment of significance for the site.

The purpose of this letter is to provide comment from a heritage perspective on the proposed construction staging within the previously proposed development. This application seeks partial development consent for the school.

In order to address bushfire related matters and permit a school for 350 students to be opened for Term 1, 2019, the SSD8114 has been amended as follows:

- Removal of the childcare centre from the SSD application
- Creation of phases within the previously proposed construction stages

The purpose of this letter is to provide comment from a heritage perspective on the amended application, specifically as it relates to Phase 1 as outlined below.

PROPOSED WORKS

The proposed construction staging/phasing is as follows:

- Construction Stage 1
 - Phase 1 – School for 350 students accommodating a 100m Asset Protection Zone (APZ)
 - Phase 2(a) and (b) – Phase 2a includes the remaining area of Construction Stage 1 as previously proposed (minus the childcare centre), while Phase 2b includes the repurposing of the Phase 1 area. Phase 2 will accommodate 1,000 students (inclusive of the 350 students in Phase 1) in three home-bases
- Construction Stage 2 – No changes to previous proposal.

External Works (Built)

This letter is prepared on the understanding that there are no external physical works which differ from those assessed as part of the original SSDA and in the HIS (dated June 2017).

Key elements of the external works for Phase 1 are as follows:

- The previously proposed childcare centre is no longer proposed. However, the rooftop structure as previously proposed for the childcare will have the function of a covered outdoor learning area (COLA) and outdoor play areas.
- New lift overrun and fire stair
- Fencing and green space around the perimeter of the site
- Construction of a 4m wide access trail for bushfire trucks to the south of the building
- Traffic and transport infrastructure associated with the parking and drop off/pick up area

Tree Removal and Landscaping Works

In order to establish a 100m APZ around the perimeter of the Phase 1 School, Urbis has been advised that significant tree removal will be required across portions of the site as illustrated in **Figure 2**. For the purposes of the Biodiversity Assessment (refer **Appendix K**) and to assess the worst-case scenario, complete tree removal within Lot 2 has been considered. It is expected however, that some trees and vegetation are expected to remain within this area of the site subject to this area of the site meeting inner protection area standards.

In addition, Phase 1 will include new landscaping to the immediate north of the building and roundabout to allow outdoor play by students. The proposed landscaping is detailed in the Landscape Concept Plan at **Appendix B**.

Internal Works

A fire wall is proposed to separate the Phase 1 School from the section within the APZ.

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

In summary the previous HIS concluded the following in relation to the proposed works:

- The reuse of the place as a primary – secondary school is appropriate as it constitutes its continued use as an educational establishment and facilitates the most minimal physical intervention of any other conceivable adaptive reuses. Specifically, the new use allows for the reuse of many of the principal existing elements which can be reused for their original purpose including the auditoriums, the cafeteria and the gymnasium.
- The overall form and massing of the building is an element of exceptional identified significance and the proposed works have been developed with cognisance for this significance. It is considered that the proposed external alterations including the installation of various fire stairs and the roof structure to level 7 would not notably change the form of the building. Rather the existing building is of such a robust character that it lends itself well to necessary contemporary additions whilst still presenting as a unified series of modulated elements which culminate in a fine representation of the Brutalist style.
- It is understood that significant internal reconfiguration as proposed is necessary for the heritage item to function. While the proposed use of the building is the most sympathetic of any other conceivable use, the spaces were designed for the education of tertiary level students and the accommodation of a large number of staff in small offices. The proposed reuse of the building for younger students requires larger spaces and greater transparency in fabric. As such it is appreciated that the internal demolition is necessary to facilitate the desired sympathetic reuse of the place. Notwithstanding it is appreciated that many of the replacement glazed walls would be introduced along generally the same alignment as the existing brick walls such that the essential layout of the public spaces would be retained and referential to an Italian Hill Village as originally intended.

It is understood that the only works in addition to those previously assessed in the HIS dated June 2017 include the tree removal as detailed in Figure 1, and the temporary fire wall to separate the phase 1 school from the section within the APZ. These are both assessed individually below. The previous assessment set out in the HIS dated June 2017 and summarised above is considered to apply to all other works proposed in the amended application. Pending the completion of all stages of construction, which would see the building fully utilised for its sympathetic purpose, the heritage outcome would be the same as previously assessed in regards to the remaining works.

Tree Removal

In order to establish a 100m APZ around the perimeter of the Partial School, Urbis has been advised that significant tree removal will be required across portions of the site as illustrated in **Figure 2**. For the purposes of the Biodiversity Assessment (refer **Appendix K**) and to assess the worst-case scenario, complete tree removal within Lot 2 has been considered. It is expected however, that some trees and vegetation are expected to remain within this area of the site subject to this area of the site meeting inner protection area standards.

It is appreciated that the subject proposal to remove the trees will allow for the implementation of the Phase 1 School, which will accommodate the student intake for 2019 while the appropriate measures for the reuse of the remainder of the school, from a bushfire perspective, are developed. It is also appreciated that although the trees within the immediate context of the school would be removed, the broader landscape setting would be retained and would contribute to the significance of the place.

However, it is noted that part of the design intent for the place was that the building responded to and was nestled within an untouched landscape setting. The quote below has been sourced from the assessment of significance for the item. Denuding the site of any trees will have an impact on the setting.

The subject proposal to remove trees within the zones will only allow use of the northern section of the buildings. The use of the remainder of the site may necessitate a much greater area of tree removal which will be subject to a future assessment hence the current proposal has the potential to irrevocably impact on the setting without any guarantee of enabling the full future use. Even so, it is understood that at this time, there is no perceived future use for the place without the removal of the trees as proposed and the implementation of the Phase 1 school.

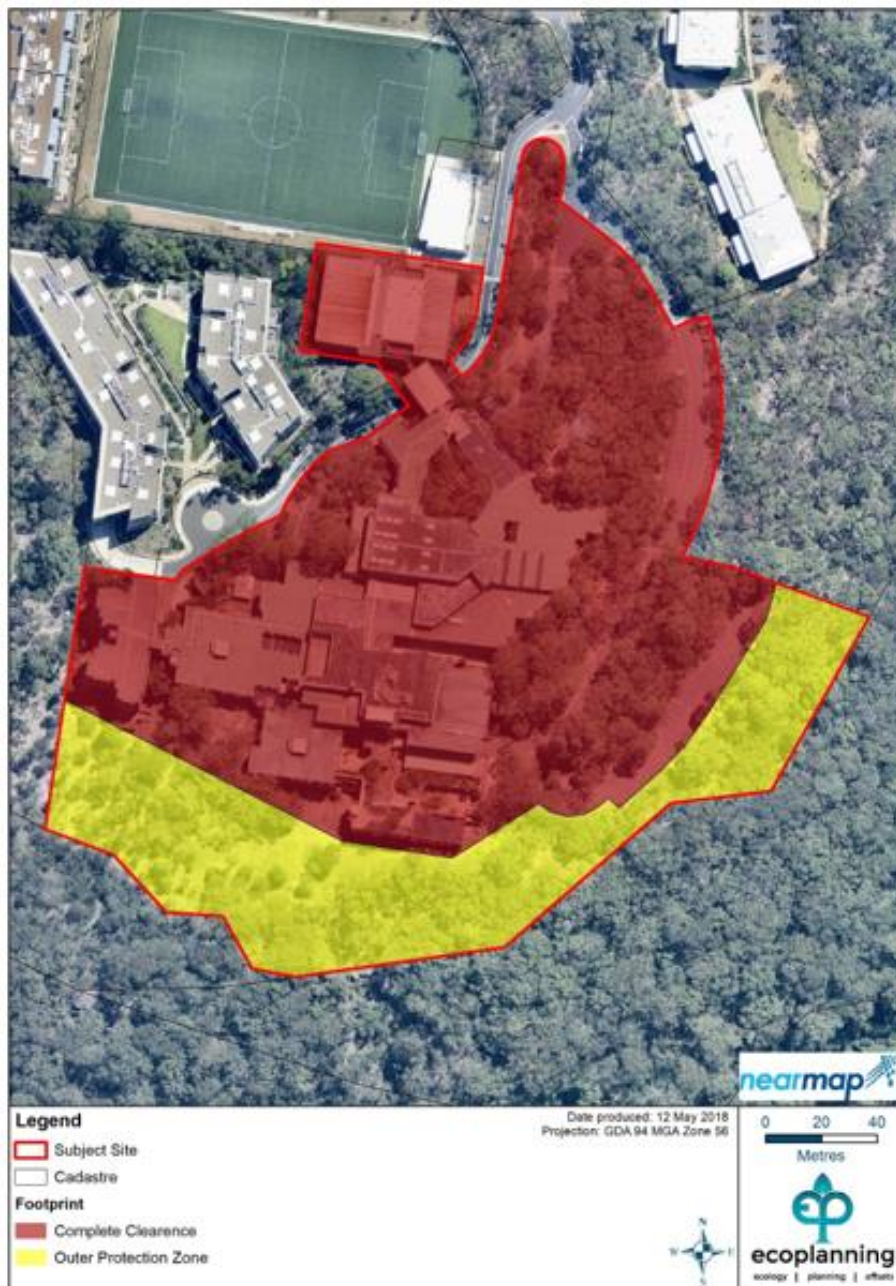
The following quote has been sourced from the assessment of significance for the item:

The significance of the carefully designed relationship between the College and the natural environment cannot be underestimated. The consideration given to the integration of the buildings into the site with as little impact on the existing topography/landforms, and native vegetation as possible, was the result of a clear and conscious effort to integrate the built and natural environments. The fact that this goal was successfully achieved in the building of the College, and the impact this had on contemporary design and landscape architecture, gives the College a high degree of significance for its ability to successfully demonstrate the attributes of an influential design in the development of Australian Architecture and Landscape Architecture in the second half of the 20th Century. In this respect the UTS Ku-ring-gai Campus was quite different from some other contemporary tertiary educational institutions such as the Mitchell College of Advanced Education at Orange, which was developed on a highly modified former agricultural college site.

Bruce MacKenzie's landscape design for the UTS Ku-ring-gai Campus is a fine demonstrator of his philosophy that existing contours, rocks and trees can be the main determinants of composition. His intervention was "just sufficient to make [the landscape] more habitable so that the marks of change are barely discernible".

The often-subtle juxtapositions between built elements and soft landscaping and remnant bushland on the site demonstrate the careful attention to detail that went into the landscape design. This is reflected in the great variety of outlooks achieved from internal spaces.

Figure 1 – Proposed tree removal.



Source: EcoPlanning May 2018

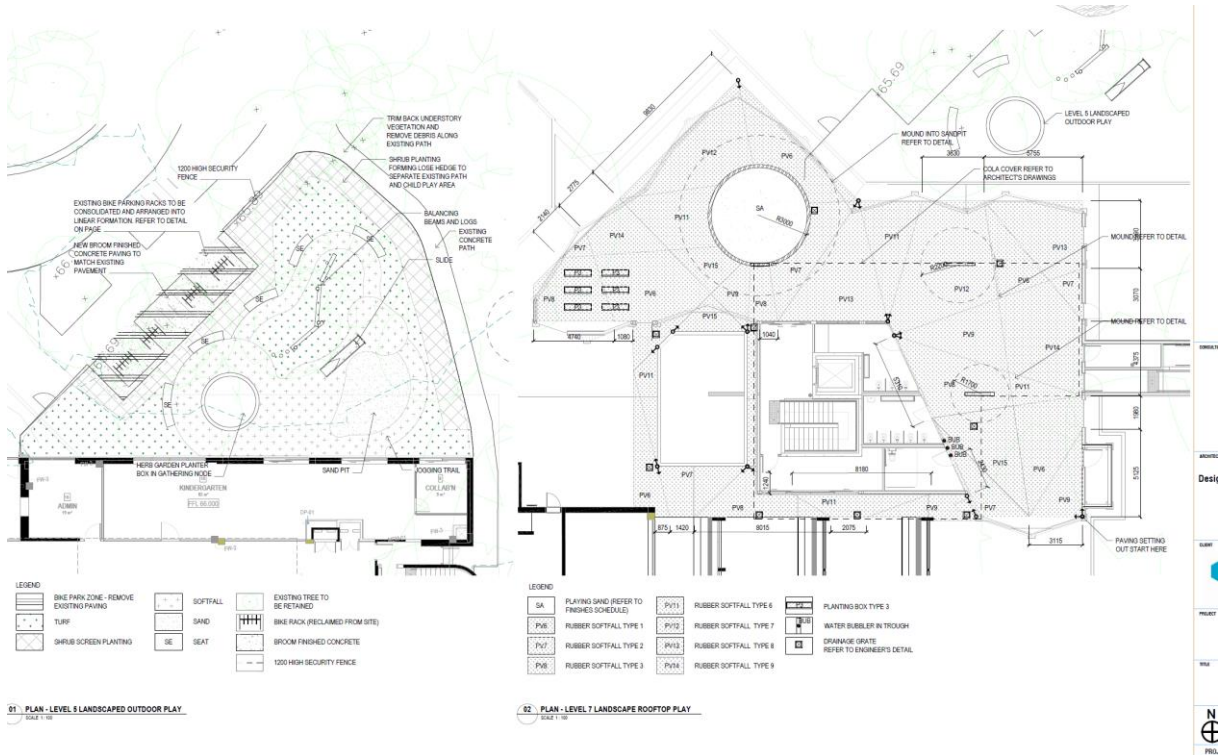
Landscaping Works

There will be some new landscaping to the immediate north of the building and roundabout to allow outdoor play by students. Concept plans have been provided to Urbis at this stage for review. It is not considered that a play area in this space would have a detrimental impact. However, the space is located adjacent to a significant and characteristic façade. It should continue to contribute to the natural bush setting of the subject building. Specifically, it should retain a predominance of native vegetation.

Figure 2 – View towards area for proposed play area.



Figure 3 – Proposed playground area.



Source: DesignInc

Fire Wall

There is a fire wall proposed on the alignment of the fire protection zone.

The fire wall would intersect key spaces including the cafeteria and may present as an ad hoc addition. It is however recognised as a necessary measure to ensure the school is able to function in a limited capacity by 2019 and is therefore an acceptable impact.

It is noted however that the use of the balance of the site is contingent on the implementation of an appropriate fire solution. Similar to the removal of the trees assessed above, this action does not guarantee the future adaptive reuse of the remainder of the building. It is however understood that there is a requirement to accommodate the first intake of students for 2019 and that failure to do this may result in the site not being reused as proposed.

It is recommended that a methodology be prepared for the construction of the wall which ensures that it is reversible. This would ensure that the southern portion of the school can be seamlessly incorporated into the Phase 1 school pending an appropriate bushfire resolution. It also ensures that there would be no permanent impact on the building should the remainder of the school not be reused, and the Phase 1 school vacates the site in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations set out in the HIS dated June 2017 are reiterated below in relation to the revised application:

- A methodology should be prepared for the cleaning of the concrete in consultation with the heritage consultant.
- A genuine effort must be made to retain the extant timber ceiling of the existing library area. A methodology should be prepared for the removal and salvage of the ceiling and its reinstatement, after the installation of services. A methodology should also be prepared for the installation of services through the ceiling such that removal of fabric is minimised;
- Detailed design development should be subject to ongoing and demonstrated heritage consultant input as a condition of consent. Areas for further design development which should be subject to heritage consultant input include but are not limited to the following:
 - Application of any coloured panels to the facades;
 - Landscaping including play equipment in courtyards and application of shade structure/s;
 - Opportunities for retention of built in furniture;
 - Areas for application of new floor finishes (epoxy, bright coloured carpet).

The following additional recommendations are set out in response to the amended application:

- Complete tree removal is proposed under this application as a 'worst case scenario'. To mitigate some of the negative heritage impact of denuding the site of all trees Urbis strongly recommends that the number of trees for removal be considered carefully and minimised as much as possible.
- A methodology should be prepared for the installation of the fire wall in conjunction with the heritage consultant such that it is entirely reversible.



CONCLUSIONS

The majority of the works have been assessed under the HIS dated June 2017 and the same conclusions summarised herein apply. This letter deals only with Phase 1, and the minor additional works including the tree removal, landscaping and fire wall.

While the immediate holistic use of the site is preferred it is appreciated that the amended application facilitates the alteration of the previously proposed construction staging so to allow for the implementation of a Phase 1 School which meets RFS requirements until strategies for the treatment of the balance of the site are finalised. It is understood that the implementation of a Phase 1 School is necessary to ensure that the site can accommodate the immediate requirements of the Department of Education and therefore be used holistically as a school in the future. This is in accordance with Urbis' assertion that the meaningful adaptive reuse of a place is necessary in ensuring its conservation and ongoing maintenance which is of the utmost importance.

The only additional physical works to implement the Phase 1 School would be the fire wall separating the school from the remainder of the building which is currently located within the APZ, tree removal within the APZ and minor landscaping works to the north of the building for a play area. The complete tree removal is recognised as necessary for the immediate use of the school however the impact on the significant setting of the item as quoted above in this letter should be acknowledged. The fire wall would intersect key spaces including the cafeteria and may present as an ad hoc addition however it is recognised as a necessary measure to ensure the school is able to function and is therefore an acceptable impact, failure to do this may result in the site not being reused as proposed.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alexandria".

Alexandria Barnier
Senior Consultant