



5th August 2018

Andrew Beattie
Team Leader, Social
Infrastructure Assessments
320 Pitt St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

CATHERINE McAULEY CATHOLIC COLLEGE, 507 Medowie Rd, Medowie
(SSD 8989)

Dear Andrew,

The Government Architect NSW has been asked to provide independent design review commentary on State Significant Development application SSD 8989. Please find our response below.

This review is based on the Environmental Impact Assessment prepared by de Witt Consulting, focusing on the following:

- Architectural drawings prepared by Webber Architects (Appendix 23)
- Design Verification Statement prepared by Webber Architects (Appendix 26)
- Landscape drawings prepared by Moir Landscape Architecture (Appendix 27)
- Traffic Impact Assessment (Appendix 18)
- ESD report (Appendix 39)

Preliminary plans for this proposal were reviewed by GANSW in February and March this year, and this response references comments from those reviews, with additional commentary arising from the information provided in the EIS.

The proposed new precinct, comprising new primary and secondary schools, an early learning centre, a chapel and associated external works are generally supported, with key concerns noted below:

Concept

Design procurement through a design competition is commended. It is noted that the design statement (Appendix 26) includes concept sketches and diagrams that were produced for the competition submission and are now largely superseded. As the design has changed during the design development phase, updated diagrams should be provided to explain and support the rationale for the current proposal.

The campus is currently in a semi-rural setting but no information has been provided to show how it will integrate with potential future development in the surrounding area, as requested in GANSW review 13.02.2018.

There is good provision for community access to the campus facilities. We support the use of the school buildings to secure the inner campus, instead of perimeter fencing.

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Access and parking

There appears to be little provision for pedestrian access to the campus, with no footpaths shown on the proposed Medowie Rd / South St intersection upgrade.

The extent and configuration of car parking has a significant impact on the proposal, particularly in terms of pedestrian amenity / safety and campus identity / presentation. This has been a key issue since the preliminary review sessions with GANSW. While some improvements were made during the review period – between meetings one and two, this issue has not yet been adequately addressed.

Provisions for car parking seem excessive. There are 272 formal spaces (44 more than required by the Port Stephens DCP) with an additional 50 informal spaces as well as 12 on site bus bays which will be used for car parking outside key bus drop off/ pick up times. The combined impact of these, together with a complex internal road system, creates an extensive asphalt terrain that dominates the campus frontage.

Bicycle parking has been provided but it is located at the far end of the secondary campus. While this is practical in terms of proximity to change rooms (which can double as end of trip facilities) it should be more centrally located to promote bicycle use by staff and primary students.

Sustainability

It is noted in the ESD report (Appendix 39, p9), that rooftop PV panels are proposed. These are not shown on any of the architectural drawings. As the design concept is based on a radial set-out, most buildings are not optimally oriented for efficient PV operation. We are concerned that future PVs will require awkward and unsightly support structures to orient the panels towards the sun.

Landscape and open space

The landscape design strategy is concentrated on the open spaces within the school, with relatively little consideration of the main campus frontage which is dominated by parking areas, bus bays, access roads and power lines. More consideration should be given to the use of landscape to mitigate these visual and amenity impacts and to improve the character of the Medowie Road frontage.

There is no information about tree canopy targets in accordance with NSW Urban Tree Canopy Targets (ref. GANSW's Greener Places), as requested at GANSW review 13.02.2018.

On the basis of the materials submitted, our design recommendations are;

1. Provide updated site strategy sketches and diagrams to support the current proposal.
2. Provide drawings showing potential future development of the surrounding area.
3. The proposed design for the Medowie Rd / South Street intersection (Appendix 36) should be modified to provide for pedestrian crossings and future footpaths to both sides of both streets.
4. Review parking provision, including justification for visitor and overflow parking.
5. Review parking configuration to reduce impact of the parking areas at the main school entry. Consideration could be given to distributing parking to other less prominent locations on the campus. (GANSW review 27.02.2018)
6. Disperse bicycle parking locations across the campus.
7. Amend roof plans and elevations to show proposed PV installation.
8. Review landscape design of parking areas to *'soften the impact of the parking, queuing and drop off zones'* (GANSW review 13.02.2018)
9. Identify tree canopy targets in accordance with *NSW Urban Tree Canopy Targets* (for further guidance see: *GANSW's Greener Places*)

Sincerely,



Olivia Hyde
Director Design Excellence
Government Architect NSW