



# Alex Avenue Public School Modification 2

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State Significant Development Modification Assessment  
(SSD 9368 MOD 2)

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# Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition
<b>COLA</b>	Covered outdoor learning area
<b>Consent</b>	Development Consent
<b>Council</b>	Blacktown City Council
<b>Department</b>	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
<b>EP&amp;A Act</b>	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
<b>EP&amp;A Regulation</b>	Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Area
<b>RtS</b>	Response to Submissions
<b>SSD</b>	State Significant Development
<b>The Applicant</b>	Department of Education
<b>The Minister</b>	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
<b>The Site</b>	Part Lot 1 and Lot 2 in DP1244925, Farmland Drive, Schofields

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# 1 Introduction

This report provides an assessment of an application to modify the state significant development consent (SSD) for the new Alex Avenue Public School, Farmfield Drive, Schofields (SSD 9368). The application has been prepared by NSW Department of Education (the Applicant).

The modification application seeks approval:

- for minor design and landscaping amendments.
- to allow school staff to attend the site to undertake operational readiness works ahead of the formal operation of the development as a school with students in attendance.
- to alter school identification signage including to reflect the formal adopted name of the school being Galungara Public School.

The application has been lodged pursuant to section 4.55(1A) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

## 1.1 Background

The site is located at Farmland Drive, Schofields (the site) in Blacktown City Council (Council) local government area. The site is located approximately eight kilometres north-west of Blacktown central business district and 700 metres north-east of Schofields town centre and railway station.

The site is legally described as part of Lot 1 and the entirety of Lot 2 in DP1244925 and has an area of approximately two hectares. The site is an irregularly shaped parcel of land with frontage to Farmland Drive to the north.

As the site is in a developing area, Farmland Drive has only been constructed along the eastern two-thirds of the northern boundary of the site. The remainder is currently under construction, along with a future road to be known as Pelican Road, located along the western boundary of the site.

Construction of the school has commenced on site. The site and its surrounding context is shown in **Figure 1**.



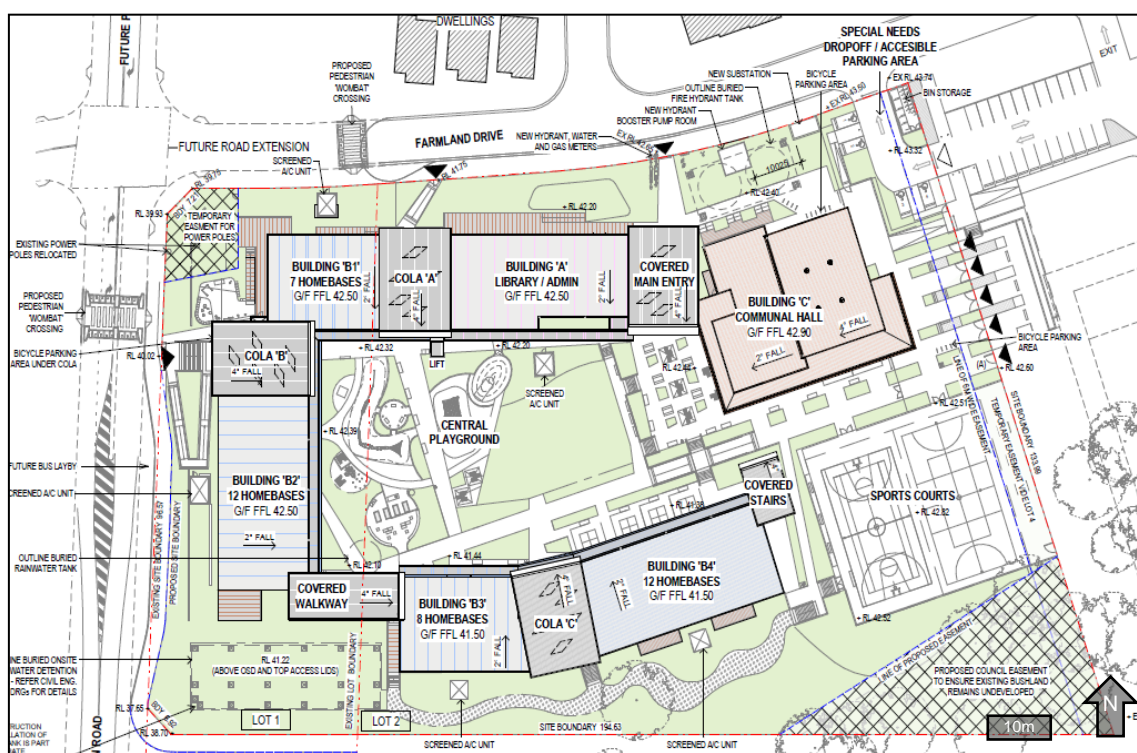
**Figure 1** | Conditions of the site in September 2020 (Base source: Nearmap 2020)

## 1.2 Approval history

On 21 May 2020, the Executive Director, Infrastructure Assessments, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister), granted consent for the staged construction and operation of a new primary school on the site for up to 1000 students.

The approved development consists of four learning hubs containing home bases, a hall with canteen and out of school hours facilities, library and administrative building, and associated works including covered outdoor learning areas (COLAs), landscaping, drop-off / pick-up facilities, car parking, signage and infrastructure works.

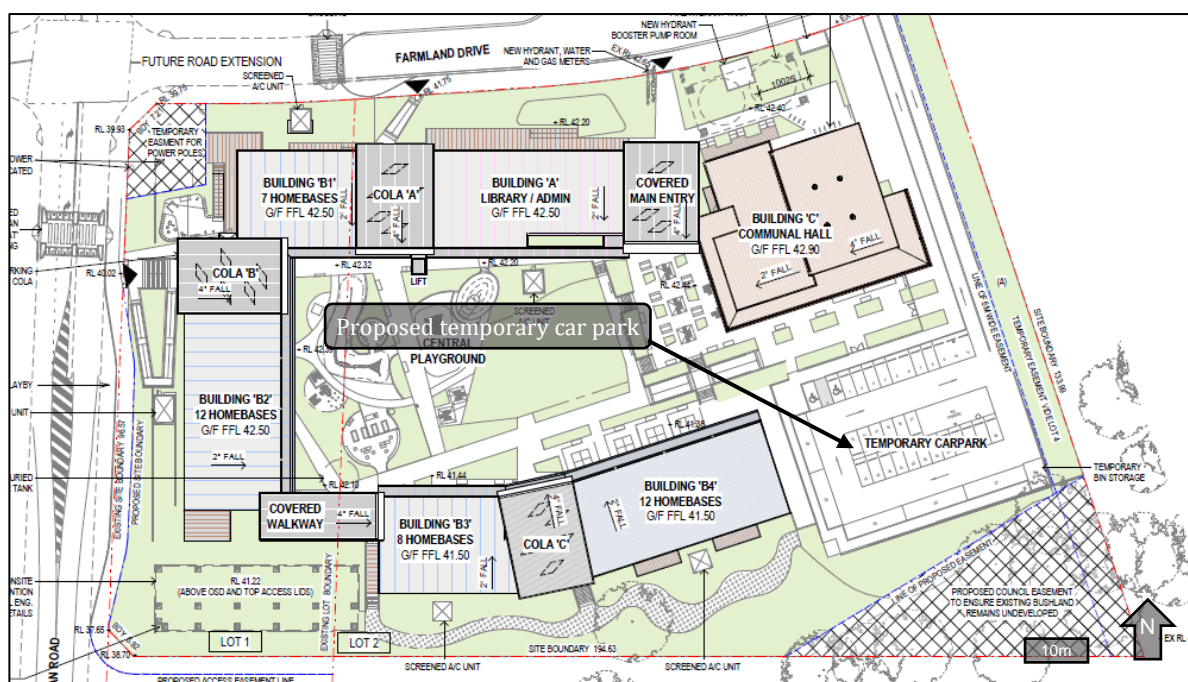
The approved site layout plan is provided in **Figure 2**.



**Figure 2 | Approved site layout (Base source: Applicant's Supplementary RtS 2020)**

The project includes shared use of a car park adjoining the site to the east under a joint use agreement with Council. 32 temporary car parking spaces and five drop off / pick up spaces are to be provided on site if the permanent off-site shared use car park is not provided by Council prior to Stage 1 operations. The location and layout of the proposed temporary car park is shown in **Figure 3**.





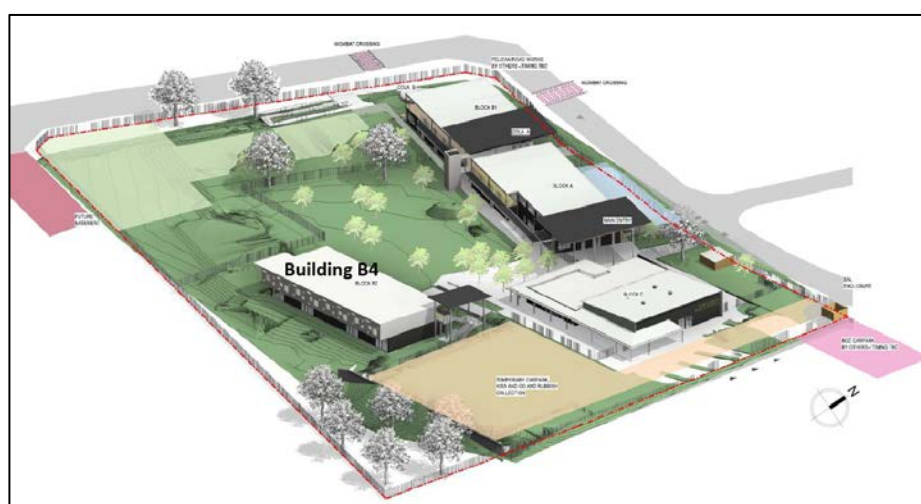
**Figure 3 |** Location of temporary onsite car park (Source: Department's SSD-9368 Assessment Report 2020)

## Separate modification applications

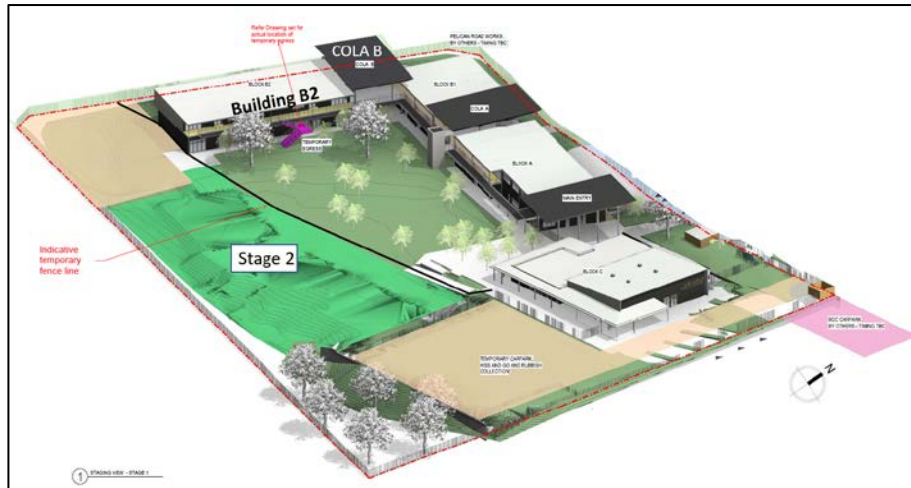
### Modification application 1

The development consent has previously been modified once. On 2 October 2020, the Director Social and Infrastructure Assessments granted approval of SSD 9368-Mod 1 for the minor modification of the approved staging plan for the development and associated amendments to staging related condition (A9) and definitions.

**Figure 4** and **Figure 5** provide a comparison of the original approved staging and the approved amended staging under SSD 9368-Mod 1.



**Figure 4 |** Original approved Stage 1- 3D view (Base source: Supplementary RtS 2020)



**Figure 5 | Amended Stage 1 - 3D view (Base source: SSD 9368 Mod 1 application 2020)**

The approved development (as amended under Mod 1) consists of two stages as follows:

- **Stage 1** involves the construction of the core school facilities, including library, hall, COLAs and basketball courts, and administration and staff facilities, along with home bases to cater for up to 600 students. Stage 1 includes Buildings A, B1, B2 and C. The Stage 2 area would be grassed to serve as additional play area during Stage 1 operations.
- **Stage 2** involves the construction of the remaining home bases and COLAs (Buildings B3 and B4) and final landscaping works to increase the school capacity up to 1000 students.

#### *Modification application 3*

A third separate section 4.55(1A) Modification Application (SSD 9368 Mod 3) was lodged on 29 October 2020 and was under assessment at the time of preparing this report. SSD 9368 Mod 3 seeks consent for further changes to the approved staging of the development including various amendments to conditions.

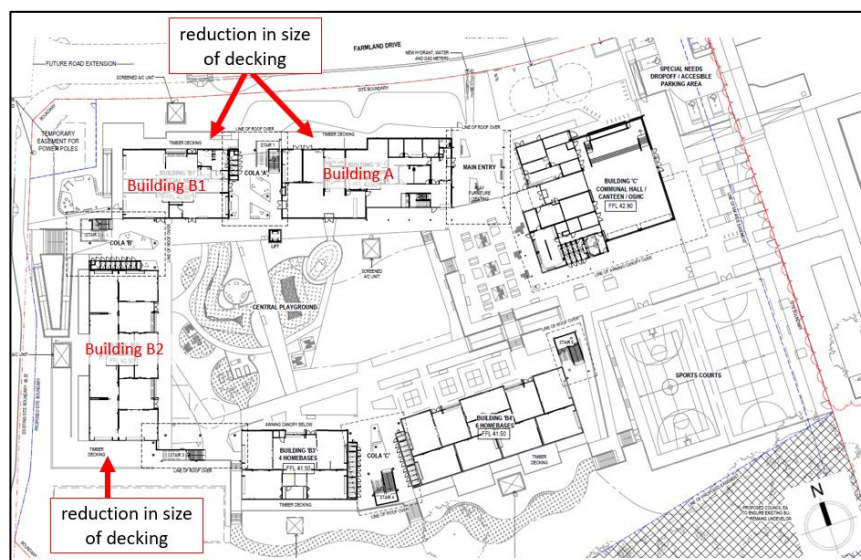
The subject application (SSD 9368 Mod 2) would not impact on the assessment of the proposed modifications under SSD 9368 Mod 3.



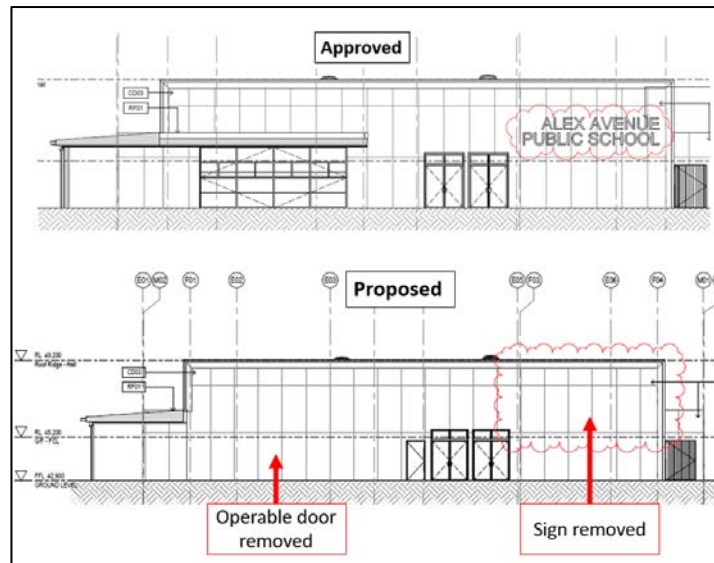
## 2 Proposed modification

The modification application seeks approval for the following minor design and landscaping amendments:

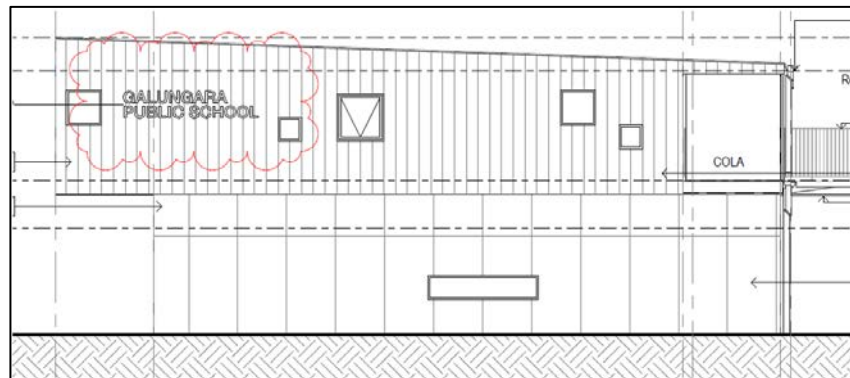
- reduction in the size of the decking surrounding Buildings A, B1 and B2 (**Figure 6**).
- internal and external design changes to Building C including awning changes and the removal of the operable door from the eastern facade of the hall (**Figure 7**).
- Internal design changes to Building A including provision of an additional wall and door for security purposes.
- changes to internal site security fencing, internal pathways and seating areas.
- installation of a 2.15m high temporary fence between the stage 1 and stage 2 works which would be removed upon delivery of the stage 2 works.
- provision of a gate and temporary footpath for early use access from Farmland Drive.
- changes to the planting schedule including species types (no reduction in the number of trees to be planted and no change to focus on native and endemic species).
- provision of additional bicycle parking spaces.
- relocation of the approved school identification sign from the eastern elevation of Building C to the western elevation of Building B1 and a change to the school name from 'Alex Avenue' to 'Galungara' (**Figure 8**).



**Figure 6 | Proposed modification to decking (Base source: Modification application 2020)**



**Figure 7 |** Approved and proposed east elevation of Building C (Base source: Applicant's RtS and Modification application 2020)



**Figure 8 |** Proposed sign on western elevation of Building B1 (Base source: Modification application November 2020)

The application also seeks to modify the consent to allow staff to enter the completed building on the site to undertake operational readiness work ahead of the formal commencement of operations of the new school. The Applicant advises that:

- staff would be provided with safe ingress and egress to the buildings where operational readiness work would occur, with access routes fences off from construction areas.
- up to 15 staff would be involved at any one time.
- full details of the proposed arrangements, including how activities would be managed to ensure safe operations and minimal environmental impacts, would be submitted to the Certifier prior to the commencement of any operational work.

### 3 Strategic context

The Department considers the development, to which the modification relates, remains consistent with its applicable strategic context given that it is consistent with the:

- *Greater Sydney Regional Plan - A Metropolis of Three Cities*, as it proposes new school facilities to meet the growing needs of Sydney.
- *Greater Sydney Commission's Central City District Plan*, as it would provide much needed school infrastructure and opportunities to share facilities with the local community.
- anticipated use of the site identified in the Alex Avenue Precinct Indicative Layout Plan April 2010.
- *State Infrastructure Strategy 2018 – 2038 Building the Momentum*, as it proposes new school facilities to support the growth in demand for primary student enrolments and facilitates sharing with communities.
- *NSW Future Transport Strategy 2056*, as it would provide a new educational facility in an accessible location.
- *Sydney's Cycling Future 2013*, as it would promote and cater for bicycle use through the provision of bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities.

The proposal would also provide direct investment in the region of \$43.9 million and generate more than 300 construction jobs and 70 operational jobs.

## 4 Statutory context

### 4.1 Scope of modifications

The Department has reviewed the scope of the modification application and considers that the application can be characterised as a modification involving minimal environmental impact as the proposal:

- would not increase the environmental impacts of the project as approved.
- is substantially the same development as originally approved.
- would not involve any further disturbance outside the already approved disturbance areas for the project.

Therefore, the Department is satisfied the proposed modification is within the scope of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act and does not constitute a new development application. Accordingly, the Department considers that the application should be assessed and determined under section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act rather than requiring a Section 4.55(2) application or new development application to be lodged.

### 4.2 Consent authority

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces (the Minister) is the consent authority under section 4.5 of the Act.

In accordance with the Minister's delegation to determine SSD applications, signed on 9 March 2020, the Director, Social and Infrastructure Assessments may determine this application as:

- the application had not already been referred by the Planning Secretary to the Independent Planning Commission at the time the delegation was issued.
- the application has not been made by a person who has disclosed a reportable donation in connection with the application.
- there are less than 10 public submissions in the nature of objection.

### 4.3 Mandatory matters for consideration

The Department conducted a comprehensive assessment of the project against the mandatory matters for consideration as part of the original assessment of SSD-9368. The Department considers this modification application does not result in significant changes that would alter the mandatory matters for consideration under section 4.15 of the EP&A Act and conclusions made as part of the original assessment.

## 5 Engagement

The Department did not give public notification of the application due to the minor nature of the proposed modifications. However, the modification was made publicly available on the Department's website. A submission was received from the adjoining landowner to the south (Lot 4 DP 1244925) which raised the following concerns regarding the modification application:

- unclear whether any changes are proposed to the southern portion of the school site where it adjoins Lot 4 in DP 1244925.
- section drawings 9001, 9002 and 9003 referred to on the submitted drawings (L-2002 P and L-2003) have not been provided.
- none of the plans appear to note where the 7000 series of sections drawings are located.

The Department requested the Applicant to respond to the comments made in the submission. The Applicant provided a Response to Submissions (RtS) that confirmed that the subject modification application would not result in any changes to the interface between the two sites from the original approval.

The Applicant provided a copy of section drawings 9001, 9002 and 9003 for the submitter's information. The Applicant advised that these indicative drawings were previously included in the Supplementary Response to Submissions under the original application (SSD-9368) to demonstrate the intent of both the temporary carpark and sports court arrangements. The Applicant also advised that as these drawings are not referenced in the consent and are indicative only, they have not been updated for inclusion under the modification application.

The 7000 series of section drawings were approved under the original consent and depict various typical detailed sections throughout the site including fencing and gates, tree planting soil depths, ramps and handrails and decks. The Department is satisfied that the proposed modification, including the 7000 series of section drawings, would not result in any changes to the direct interface between the subject site and adjoining Lot 4 DP 1244925.

## 6 Assessment

The Department has considered the modification application in the context of the original approved development in its assessment. Consideration of the key elements of the modification is included below.

### 6.1 Design and landscaping amendments

The proposed design and landscaping amendments are minor and would not result in any significant changes to the built form of the school in terms of approved gross floor area, building heights, building envelopes, civil and stormwater design and carparking arrangements. Accordingly, the Department considers that the proposed amendments would not result in additional environmental impacts such as overshadowing, noise or traffic impacts. The proposed amendments would be compatible with the overall design quality of the development, would not detract from the quality of the streetscape and would assist in providing the functional needs of the school.

The renaming of the school identification sign from 'Alex Avenue Public School' to 'Galungara Public School' does not result in an increase to the size or changes overall design of the sign. The new location of the sign would be in proportion with the façade of Building B1. The amended sign remains consistent with the provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy No 64 – Advertising and Signage.

Overall, the proposed design and landscaping amendments have merit and are supported.

### 6.2 Operational readiness

The Department considers that the use of the completed buildings on-site by staff to undertake operational readiness activities would be acceptable as:

- traffic movements to the site would be significantly fewer than that of the full operation of the school considered in the Department's original assessment. That assessment found that the local road network has capacity for the proposal.
- car parking demand would be minimal and arrangements are proposed that would minimise impacts on the local road network.
- operational readiness work would be undertaken from within the completed buildings and would generate significantly lower noise levels than expected from the full operation of the school considered in the Department's original assessment. That assessment concluded that the operational noise levels of full operation of the school would not have unacceptable impacts on surrounding sensitive receivers.
- the Applicant has proposed suitable arrangements for measures to be put in place to ensure the safety of staff during the construction of the uncompleted portions of the development.

Given the above comments, the Department considers that the proposed operational readiness work would not result in any additional environmental impacts as a result of traffic and parking or noise. Accordingly, the Department considers that the proposed modification to be acceptable subject to conditions that require:

- details of the proposed management arrangements to be submitted to the Certifier prior to commencement.
- the approved arrangements to be implemented.



- the number of staff involved not to exceed 15.

## 7 Evaluation

The Department's assessment concludes that the proposed modification is appropriate on the basis that:

- the design and landscaping amendments are minor and would not alter the approved building heights, setbacks or gross floor area of the development and would be compatible with the overall design of the proposal.
- the proposal would allow staff to make use of the completed portions on the site to ensure the school is ready to operate (and accommodate students) in early 2021.
- the proposal would not alter the nature of the development as provided in the original approval.
- the proposal would ensure the timely and effective operation of an essential service to the community.
- the proposal would not result in any additional significant environmental impacts.

Accordingly, the proposal is in the public interest and it is recommended that the modification be approved.

## 8 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Director, Social and Infrastructure Assessments, as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces:

- **considers** the findings and recommendations of this report.
- **determines** that the application Alex Avenue Public School Modification 2 (SSD 9368 Mod 2) falls within the scope of section 4.55(1A) of the EP&A Act.
- **accepts and adopts** all of the findings and recommendations in this report as the reasons for making the decision to approve the modification.
- **modifies** the consent SSD 9368.
- **signs** the modifying instrument (**Appendix A**).

Prepared by:



**Tahlia Alexander**  
Senior Planning Officer  
Social and Infrastructure Assessments

Recommended by:



**Jason Maslen**  
Team Leader  
School Infrastructure Assessments

## 9 Determination

The recommendation is **Adopted** by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KH', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

2 December 2020

**Karen Harragon**

Director

Social and Infrastructure Assessments

as delegate of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

# Appendices

## Appendix A – List of Documents

1. Modification report and amended plans

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/40091>

2. Instrument of modification

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/40091>

3. Consolidated Consent

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/40091>