

**ANGEL PLACE
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Department of Planning Industry and Environment
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To whom it may concern,

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT - MERIDEN SCHOOL, STRATHFIELD - S4.55 (1A) SSD-9692

BACKGROUND

Urbis has been engaged by Meriden School, Strathfield to prepare the following Heritage Impact Statement (HIS). On 20 March 2020, the Department of Industry and Planning (DPIE) approved a SSDA for a range of building and landscape works across the three Meriden school campuses, including works within the Senior campus, as detailed below:

Alterations and additions to Meriden School consisting of:

- *demolition of the music centre on the Senior School, the existing business office on the Prep School and the house and garage at 4 Vernon Street on the Junior School currently used as the uniform shop.*
- *site remediation and excavation on the Junior School and Prep School.*
- *construction of a new three storey Music and Drama Centre with two basement levels at the Senior School.*
- *construction of a new two storey Administration and Student Centre building at the Prep School.*
- *construction of a new outdoor landscaped space with outdoor furniture, pergola and noise barrier at the Junior School.*
- *a change of use at 4 Vernon Street from a residential dwelling to an educational establishment.*
- *ancillary public domain works, landscaping, drainage works and service connections.*

Modifications to this SSDA have been proposed. The proposed modifications primarily relate to alterations to the proposed landscape design at the south-west corner of the Senior School campus located at 10-28 Redmyre Road, Strathfield. No other changes are proposed to the approved SSDA.

This HIS has been prepared to accompany the Section 4.55 (1A) modifications to the approved SSDA 9692.

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Meriden School is located across three campuses which are within close proximity to one another, however, are not contiguous landholdings. The campus which is the subject of this S4.55 application involves the Senior School Campus which is located at 10-28 Redmyre Road, Strathfield. The legal description of the Senior School Campus is Lot 101 of DP 862040.

The proposed modifications are located in the south-western corner of the Senior School surrounding the existing Drama building, addressing Margaret Street. The Drama building is a single storey brick building with gable roof with regularly placed floor to ceiling windows set along its north, west and south elevations. The building is a typical example of a late-twentieth century utilitarian education building. The Drama building is surrounded by grassed lawns, and tiled pathways.



Figure 1 – Aerial view with the Senior School Campus outlined in red and location of works in blue
Source: SIX Maps, 2020

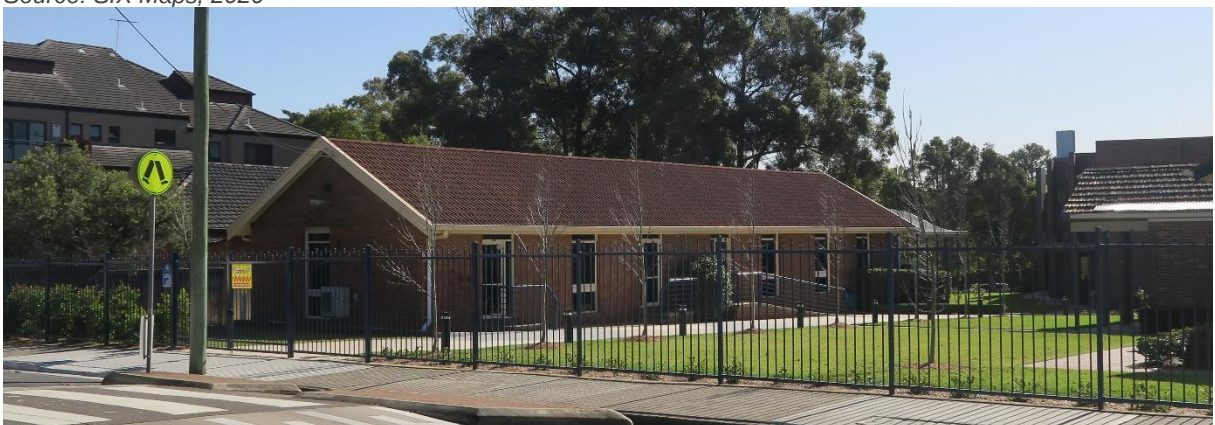


Figure 2 – View of Drama building on Senior Campus viewed from Margaret Street.



Figure 3 – Looking north-east from south of Drama building



Figure 4 – Existing paving and lawn located to the east of the Drama building

HERITAGE LISTING

The whole of the Senior School Campus is identified as an item of local heritage significance as 'Item 187 Meriden School', under the *Strathfield Local Environmental Plan 2012* (LEP). The subject site is also located directly opposite the Lingwood Prep School which is an item of local significance 'Item 187 Lingwood' - Victorian house and garden (formerly Braxton)', under the *Strathfield LEP 2012*.

This HIS is therefore required to assess the heritage impact of the proposed amendments to the approved works of SSDA 9692 on the heritage significance of the subject site.

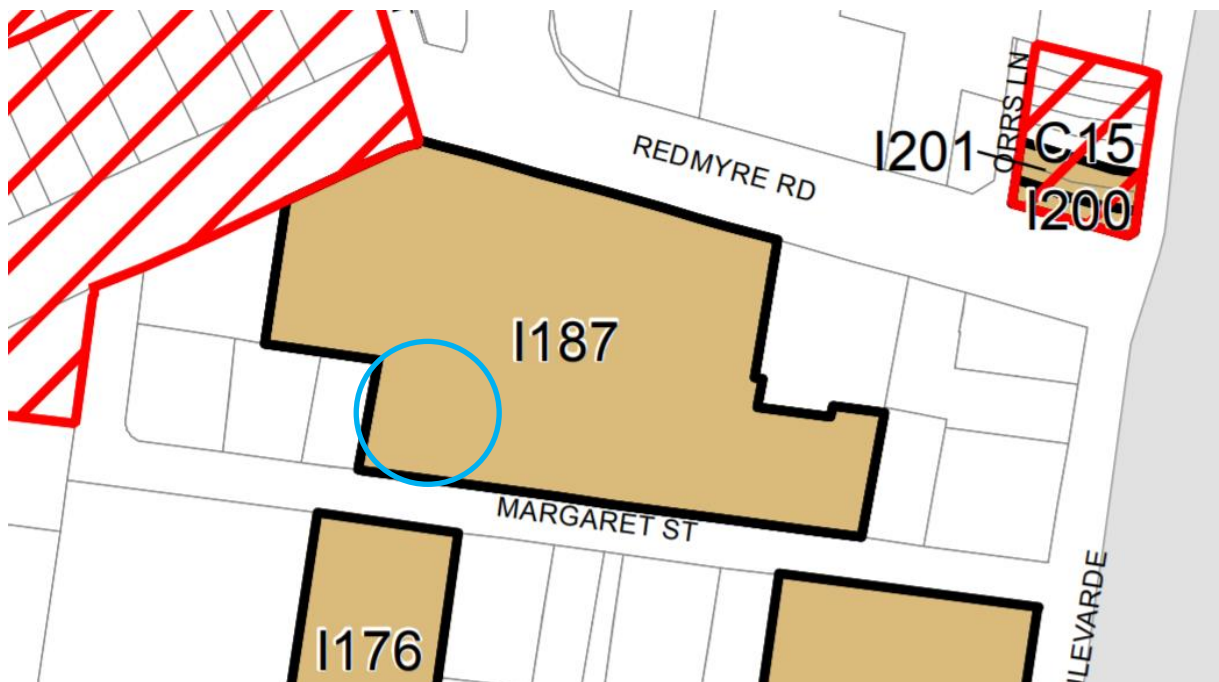


Figure 5 – Extract of heritage map, with the Senior School Campus identified as I187 and the location of the proposed modifications circled in blue.

Source: *Strathfield LEP 2012, Heritage Map 005*

The following statement of significance for Meriden School has been extracted from the NSW State Heritage Inventory listing for the place:

In 1897 Mrs. Monkton established a school in her home in Agnes St. The house was called Meriden. When her husband died she moved to a small cottage in Woodward Ave, in 1907. In 1908 Miss Bertha Turner purchased the school and established it as the Meriden Private School for Girls. It was later moved to a site on The Boulevarde and finally to Redmyre Road. She bought the property next door and in 1926 she returned to England and the school was purchased by Strathfield citizens headed by Mr. Maitland Brown. In 1929 it was taken over by the Church of England. The main building is a two storey symmetrical brick school that is the focal point of the vista along Raw Square. It has a slate roof, arched fanlights to ground floor windows, projecting brick bays to either end, iron gates and hedge to Redmyre Road. Meriden School is of local significance for its social and historical associations in the development of Strathfield.

Urbis concurs with the above statement of significance, and we have had regard to this established significance in the discussion of potential heritage impact in this letter.

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

The Section 4.55 application seeks approval for amendments to the approved DA (2014/23), as follows:

- Landscape design changes to the west of the Centre for Music and Drama (CMD) building as the result of retaining the Drama building located between the CMD and the western boundary. The Drama building was approved for demolition under Local DA DA2014/023, therefore a Section 4.55(1A) modification application is concurrently lodged with Strathfield Council to retain this building.
- Propose a new OSD tank and relocate the rainwater tank to the rear of the CMD building.
- Increase the Senior School student capacity by 130 senior students. Student capacity within Junior and Prep Schools remain unchanged.
- Seek for an alternative Green Star certification process for the CMD and Administration and Student Centre at the Lingwood Prep School. In addition, to amend to 4 star Green Star rating for both buildings, which reflect Best Practice.
- Housekeeping amendment to Condition C10.

Urbis has reviewed the architectural plans prepared by AJ+C Architects dated 3 September 2020 and the landscape plans prepared by Oculus dated September 2020. An extract of these plans is provided below.



Figure 6 – Extract of proposed modification plans, Level 0 floor plan

Source: AJ+C Architects, DA2100, Issue B, 03/09/2020

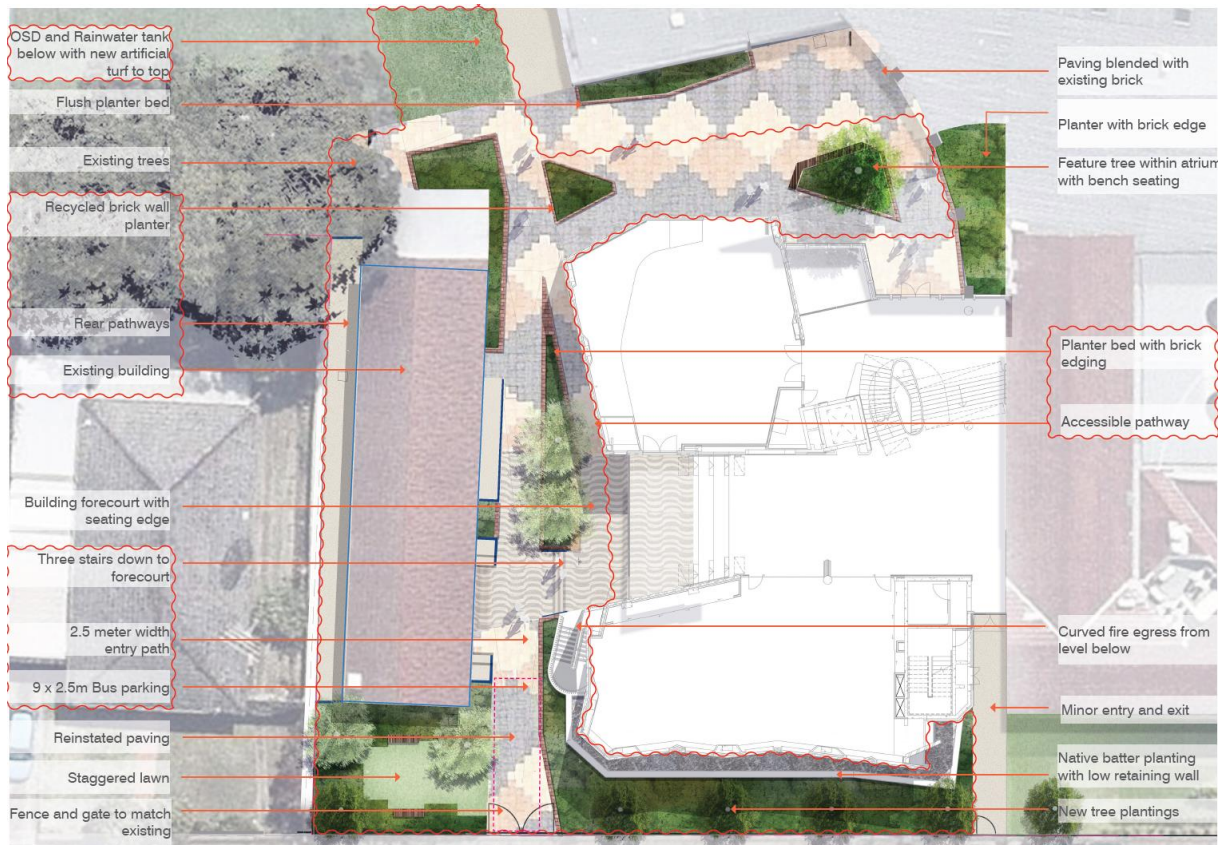


Figure 7 – Extract of proposed modification plans, proposed ground plan

Source: Oculus, Meriden School Centre for Music and Drama, SSDA Modification Rev B, p. 3.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The elements of significance within the broader heritage listed property of Meriden School are generally confined to the Redmyre Road front to the north-west, including the Wallis Hall building. The proposed modifications will primarily involve modifications to the approved landscaping to the east of the CMD and around the retained Drama building. No elements which contribute to the established heritage significance of the Meriden School are proposed to be removed or altered and the works are confined to the south-western corner of the site, away from the principal Redmyre Road frontage.

The proposed modified landscaping would remain in keeping with the minimal and low scale planting that was originally approved under SSDA 9692. Due to the retention of the Drama building,¹ however, the proposed tree-lined corridor originally located to the east of the new CMD has been reduced to a narrower pathway to accommodate the retained building. Despite this, the view lines from the Senior School Campus towards the south to Lingwood on the opposite side of Margaret Street would still be maintained, ensuring that the two sites are visually connected and maintaining the historic connection between the two sites.

The areas of soft landscaping too have been reduced and a different arrangement of planter beds and pathways have been proposed to the east of the new CMD. Despite these changes to the landscaping design, the proposed landscaping would still ensure a positive heritage outcome as a result of the improvement of the site's presentation to the public domain than in its current form.

In addition, a new OSD tank is proposed to be located to the north of the existing Drama building and the existing rainwater tank is proposed to be located adjacent. The placement of the rainwater tank and OSD tank would not impact any significant fabric or elements of the site and would be placed below ground level and covered with artificial turf. It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse heritage impacts on the site from their installation as they will not be visible once installed.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the proposed amendments to the approved SSDA will not result in any adverse impacts to the heritage significance of the Meriden School. The proposed modifications to the approved SSDA 9692 therefore are supportable from a heritage perspective.

Yours sincerely,



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¹ A modification to DA2014/023 which proposed its demolition is concurrently lodged with Strathfield Council to retain this building.