



Education

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Cc: Lara Christie
Principal
Catalina Developments
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Dear Matthew

**Re: Alex Avenue Proposed School Site (Pelican Road)
Opportunities for Shared and Joint Use with Blacktown Council**

I write to you following the meeting with Lesley Moodie and Catalina Developments on 27 November 2015 regarding planning issues adjacent to the proposed future primary school site at Alex Avenue (referred to as Pelican Road).

Background

The Department of Education (DoE) confirms that its land requirements for the Pelican Road area been reduced from that shown on the current Indicative Layout Plan (ILP) April 2010 (attached).

The current ILP was prepared on the basis of a high school plus primary school for a total of 9ha being in Pelican Road area. However the new Ponds High School (opened in 2015) also in Alex Avenue Precinct has subsequently altered education service needs. There is no longer a requirement by DoE for 6 hectares of high school lands at the Pelican Road area.

The DoE do however have a continuing requirement for land for a primary school (standard site size of 3 hectares) located on the corner of Pelican Road and an as yet unnamed road. Subject to funding approvals, this site we envision will be designed and delivered to accommodate up to 1,000 public school students.

As you are aware, in order to facilitate outcomes for their residential development Catalina, as the current owner of the proposed school lands, enquired whether DoE could potentially reduce the standard size of the school site from 3 hectares to 2.5 hectares (refer attached) if a joint use arrangement can be facilitated.

Joint Use Agreement Can Reduce Site Size

The DoE schools strategy to meet population growth pressures is to drive more efficiency in land holdings by accommodating more students on individual sites and also turn to joint and shared use arrangements, especially for sports and playing fields.

As Sydney's population grows, so does the demand for community facilities and sports fields. Schools, councils and community organisations all have resources they could share to help meet this demand.

As per the current Alex Avenue ILP, the school site is immediately adjacent to the Council's playing fields creating an opportunity to share open space requirements including playing fields and car parking. This would avoid unnecessary duplication of infrastructure providing mutual benefits for all parties.

The Department is keen to promote joint use of facilities with councils as part of the changing mindset in planning and building the schools of the future. Promoting joint use will however need better up-front planning because Joint Use Agreements can be complex and require long term commitment. The Department proposes to further foster joint use by:

- Investigating and preparing standard agreements
- Coordinating agreements with independent facilitators
- Piloting joint use planning with councils

In addition we would also seek Development Control Plans for precincts such as Alex Avenue to also support and assist in the delivery of Joint Use outcomes.

The DoE also notes that the existing statutory instrument to support the Alex Avenue ILP specifies that Council has a reservation over the land identified for playing fields and the DoE for schools, which provides both the Council and DoE with a level of certainty that a long term joint use can be achievable.

Revised ILP and Statutory Planning Proposal

The DoE is willing to support a land use planning scheme as follows:

1. Amend the ILP as drafted by Catalina Developments as shown in the attached plan of sub division.
2. Reduce the land under reservation and zoned for schools from 9 hectares to 2.5 hectares.
3. The 2.5 hectares be immediately adjacent to land also reserved and zoned for future council oval(s).
4. The Development Control Plan for Alex Avenue precinct is amended to support the inclusion of a Joint Use Agreement between Council and the DoE for the Pelican Road Precinct being in place prior to the establishment of a school or oval.
5. The servicing of school lands and ovals (for roads, footpaths etc) are funded under the Alex Avenue S94 Plan.

Should the Council be also be willing to support this planning scheme proposal, the DoE is prepared to reduce the primary school site from the standard 3 hectares to 2.5 hectares.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Lesley Moodie on 9561 8255 or email lesley.moodie2@det.nsw.edu.au.

Kind regards


John Neish

Director Planning and Demography

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