

# REQUEST FOR SEAR'S

Hawkesbury Centre of Excellence



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16 February 2021

## REQUEST FOR SEAR'S

### Document status

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### Approval for issue

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16 February 2021

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## Contents

1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2	SITE AND LOCALITY .....	2
3	PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION.....	4
4	ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK.....	6
4.1	Statutory planning considerations .....	6
4.2	Strategic planning framework.....	6
4.3	Permissibility and development standards.....	6
5	IMPACT IDENTIFICATION AND PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT .....	8
6	JUSTIFICATION .....	11
7	CONSULTATION .....	12
8	CAPITAL INVESTMENT VALUE .....	13
9	CONCLUSION .....	14

## Figures

Figure 1	Locality plan .....	2
Figure 2	Aerial photo of Lot 2 and project site area .....	3
Figure 3	Proposed Site Plan (Source: NBRS and Partners).....	5

## Appendices

Appendix A Preliminary Architectural Plans

# 1 INTRODUCTION

RPS has been engaged by NSW Department of Education (DoE) to assist in the planning and design of the Hawkesbury Centre of Excellence (Hawkesbury CoE) off Londonderry Road, Richmond NSW. The proposed educational facility will be located within the Western Sydney University (Hawkesbury Campus) site and involves the construction of a new centre that will be a contemporary agricultural education facility delivering world class agricultural and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. It will also include general learning spaces, administration facilities and on-campus short-term living accommodation. The project value is in excess of \$30 million dollars.

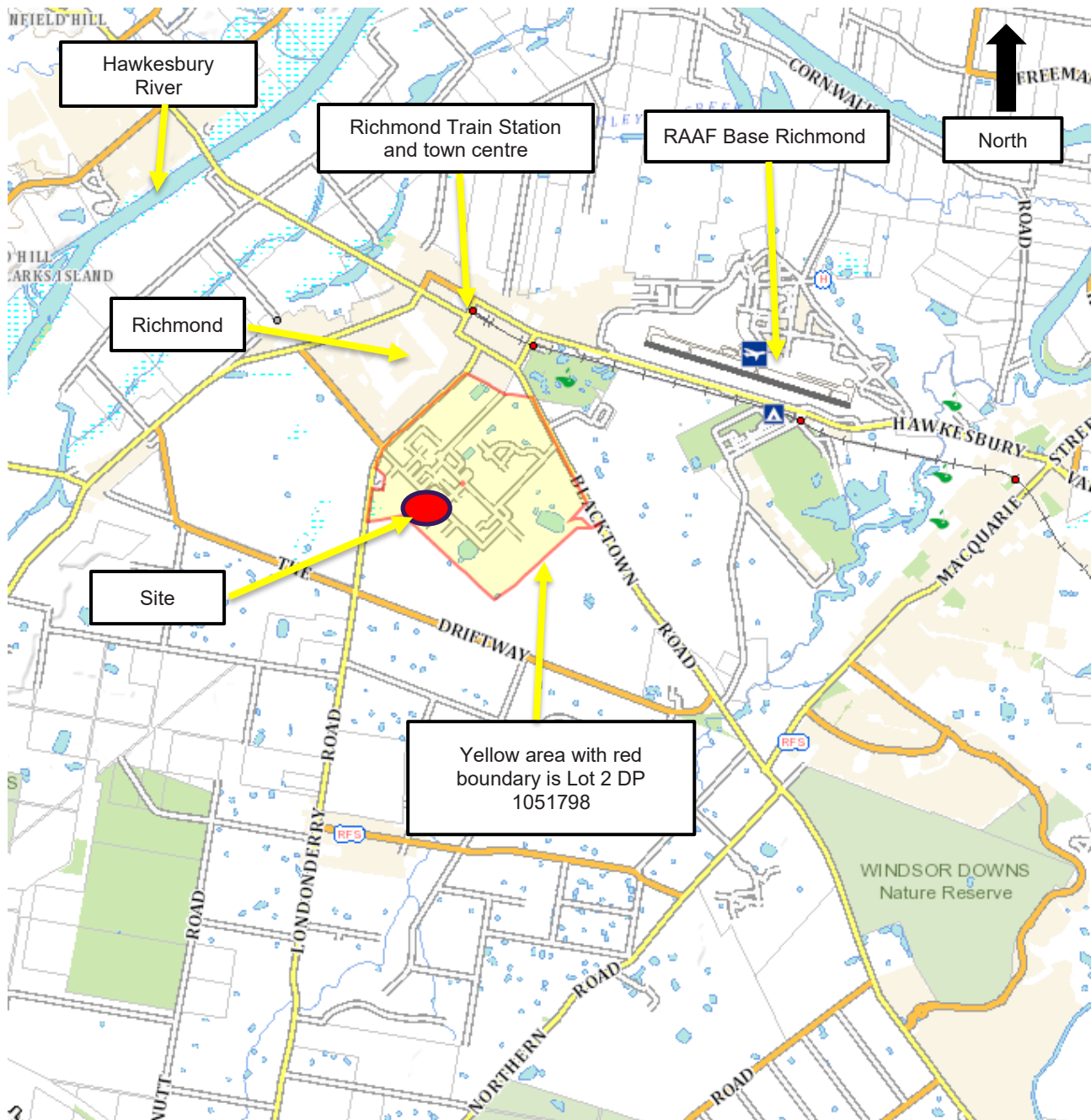
As the proposed development comprises an educational establishment and has a Capital Investment Value (CIV) in excess of \$30 million it is categorised as State Significant Development (SSD) for the purposes of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

In accordance with Clause 3 of Schedule 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000* (EP&A Regulation) and Schedule 1 (Clause 15) of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (State and Regional Development SEPP) the proposal is classified as SSD and the DoE requests, based upon the information provided in this document, the issue of Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the project. The issuing of SEARs will enable the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) to support the SSD application.

## 2 SITE AND LOCALITY

The proposed development is located within the Western Sydney University (Hawkesbury Campus) site (WSU Hawkesbury Campus), which is approximately 13.2 km<sup>2</sup> in area over multiple land parcels. The proposed development will be sited on Lot 2 of Deposited Plan (DP) 1051798, which has an area of approximately 7.3 km<sup>2</sup> and is located off Londonderry Road, Richmond. The site will be leased to DoE on a long-term basis.

The proposed development site is situated approximately within the centre of Lot 2. It is located approximately 50 kilometres to the north-west of the Sydney CBD, and approximately 2.7 kilometres south of Richmond Town Centre as illustrated in **Figure 1**. The site is within the Hawkesbury Local Government Area (LGA).



**Figure 1** Locality plan

(Source: Six Maps)

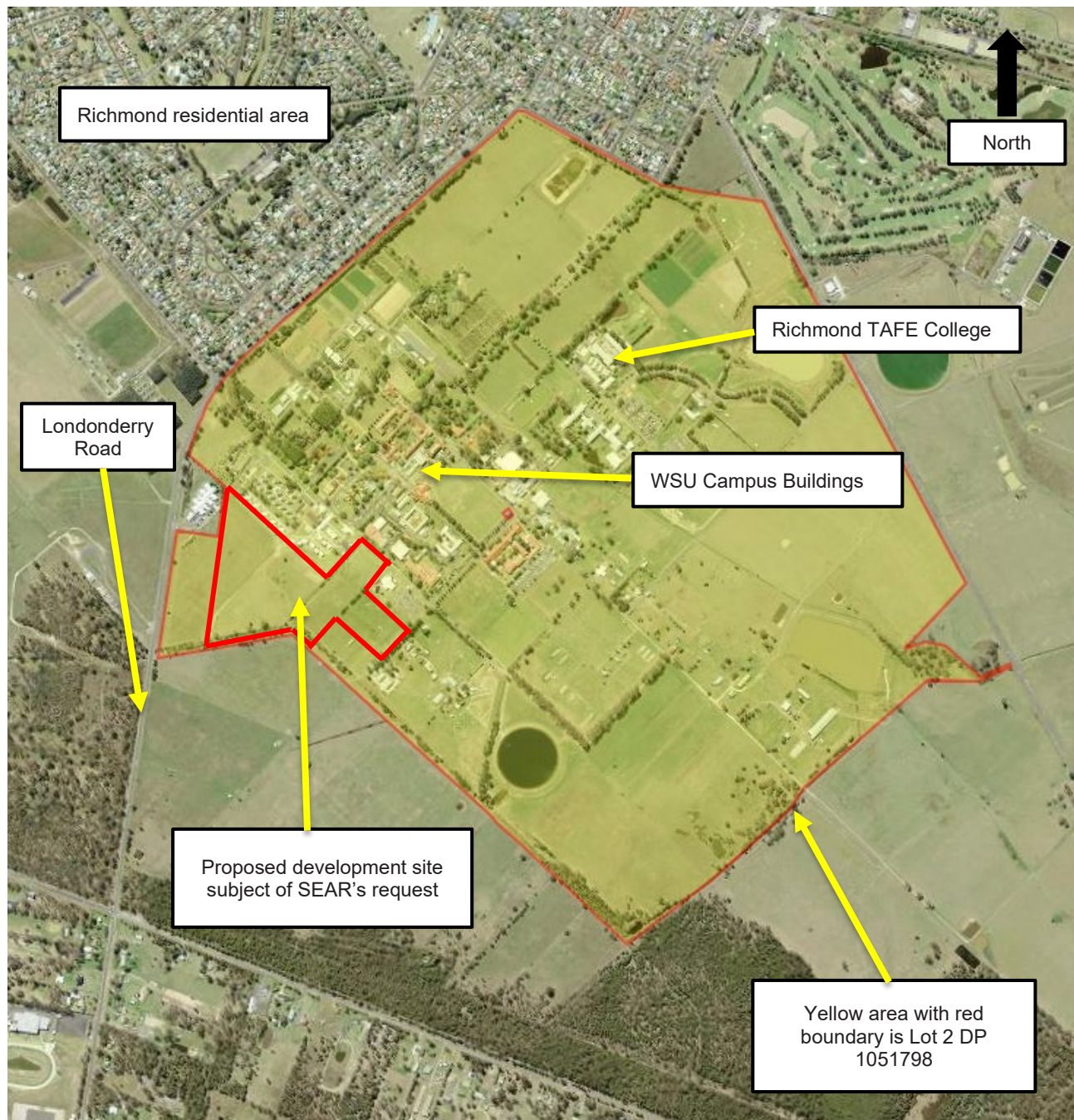


## REQUEST FOR SEAR'S

The proposed development will be located on an area of Lot 2 and occupy approximately 11.9 ha. Lot 2 contains a number of buildings associated with the WSU Hawkesbury Campus.

**Figure 2** is an aerial photo identifying the extent of Lot 2 DP 1051798, the location of the existing Richmond TAFE, existing WSU Campus buildings, the proposed development site and other features.

The proposed development site is largely cleared with only a small number of exotic and native tree species remaining. The site is relatively flat with a small gradient from north to south.



**Figure 2** Aerial photo of Lot 2 and project site area

(Source: Six Maps)

### 3 PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

A summary of the key elements of the proposal is provided below, and is supported by preliminary architectural plans prepared by Consulting Architects NBRS & Partners which are contained in **Appendix A**.

The Hawkesbury CoE will be a contemporary agricultural education facility delivering world class agricultural and STEM education. The Centre will involve farming enterprises, learning facilities for up to 380 students and a short-stay accommodation facility with 60 beds to support agricultural teaching and learning opportunities for students across the State and in particular from regional and rural NSW. The site location enables partnerships with the WSU, Richmond TAFE, Richmond High School and industry, through integrated programs and early entry pathways into tertiary education.

The project will include the construction and use of a new educational establishment and short-term living accommodation including:

- Administration Unit (Building A) close to Vines Drive.
- Staff parking facilities off Vines Drive.
- Three (3) separate teaching / learning areas (Buildings B, C and D) within the centre of the site and connected to each other via COLA structures.
- Dining hall and indoor recreation area, canteen and amenities (Building E).
- Short-term accommodation block (Building F).
- General car parking facilities adjacent to Building F.
- Agricultural tools storage shed, building and communications rooms and green house (Buildings G and H).
- Agriculture plots and facilities as per EFSG requirements.
- Proposed service road.
- Landscaping.
- Bicycle storage.
- Improvements to infrastructure and stormwater drainage where required.

The general layout is illustrated in **Figure 3**.

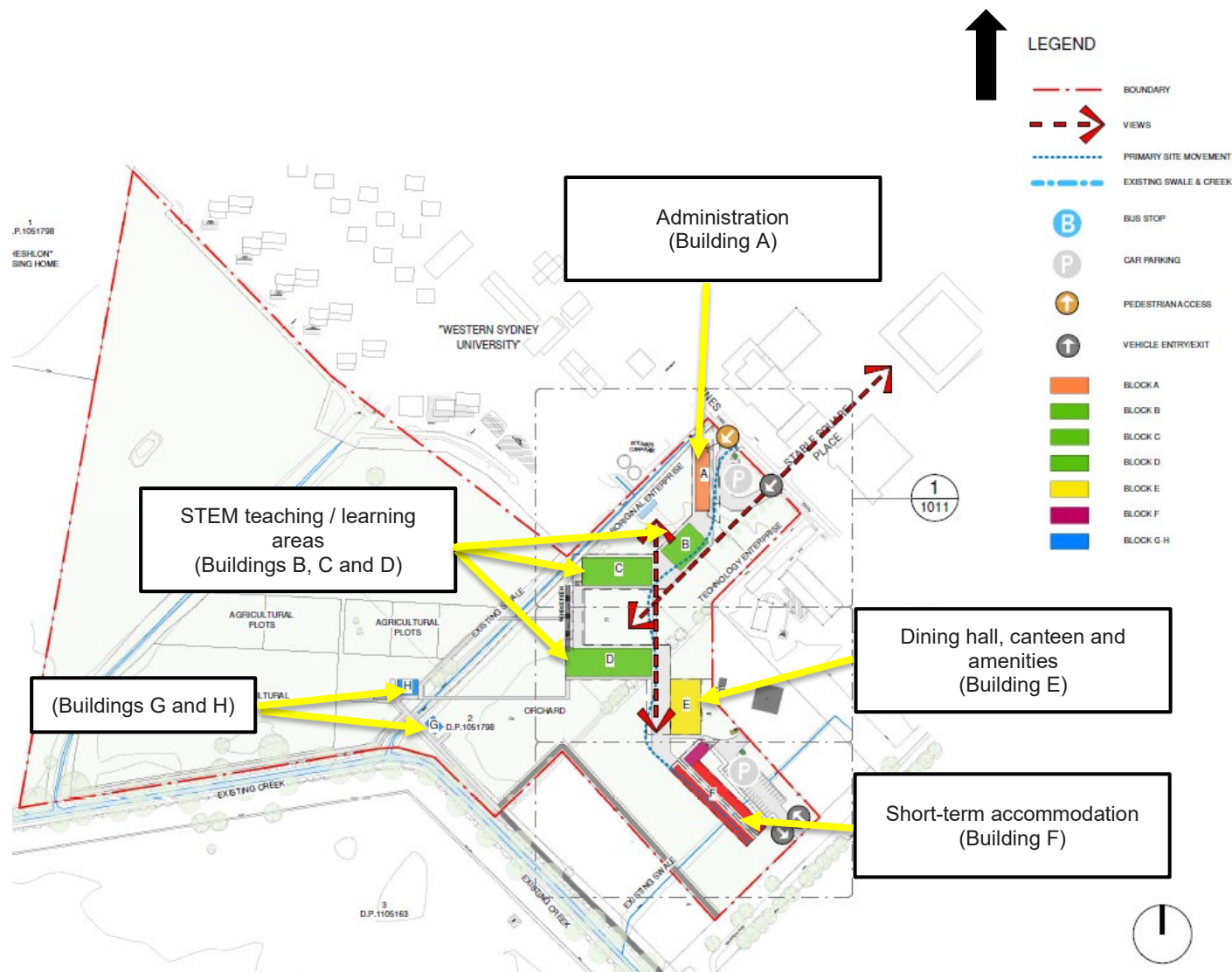


Figure 3 Proposed Site Plan (Source: NBRs and Partners)



## 4 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### 4.1 Statutory planning considerations

The legislation and environmental planning instruments applying to the proposed development include, but are not limited to:

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000.*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011.*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017.*
- *State Environmental Planning Policy No. 55 - Remediation of Land.*
- *Draft State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing Diversity).*
- *Hawkesbury Local Environmental Plan 2012.*

### 4.2 Strategic planning framework

The strategic planning documents applying to the proposed development include the following:

- Western City District Plan.
- A Plan for Growing Sydney.

### 4.3 Permissibility and development standards

The site is zoned SP1 – Special Activities (Education, Agriculture, Research Station) pursuant to the *Hawkesbury Local Environmental Plan 2012* (HLEP 2012).

Educational establishments are permitted with consent in the SP1 zone under the provisions of HLEP 2012. *State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007* (Infrastructure SEPP) provides that development for certain purposes may be carried out by or on behalf of a public authority with and without consent on land in a prescribed zone if the development is in connection with an existing educational establishment. The definition of education establishments under HLEP 2012 is as follows:

*Educational establishment means a building or place used for education including teaching, being:*

*a) a school, or*

*b) a tertiary institution, including a university or a TAFE establishment, that provides formal education and is constituted by or under an Act.*

Clause 35 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017* (Education SEPP) provides that educational establishments are permissible with consent in 'prescribed zones'. SP1 is listed as a 'prescribed zone' in Clause 33 of the Education SEPP. The proposal is permissible with consent under the Education SEPP.

Part 4 of the Education SEPP relates to Schools and prescribes specific development controls. Clause 35 - development permitted with consent, Subclause (6) states that before determining a development application, the consent authority must take into consideration.

- (a) the design quality of the development when evaluated in accordance with the design quality principles set out in Schedule 4.

Schedule 4 provides a list of seven (7) School Design Quality Principles. Any SSDA will demonstrate, in detail, how the proposal will respond to the design quality principles listed in Schedule 4, which are as follows.

- Principle 1: Context, built form and landscape.
- Principle 2: Sustainable, efficient and durable.

- Principle 3: Accessible and inclusive.
- Principle 4: Health and safety.
- Principle 5: Amenity.
- Principle 6: Whole of life, flexible and adaptive.
- Principle 7: Aesthetics.

In terms of Principle 1 the subject site is large enough to ensure it can accommodate the proposal such that it integrates with the surrounding landscape. The concept design has been developed incorporating the requirements of DoE and consideration of previous master planning and key stakeholder input.

The concept design responds to the needs of the school and maximizes the enterprise area, and at the same time provides much desired farming facilities. It incorporates developments in pedagogy and the movement towards individualised learning and teaching and incorporation of technology into curriculum implementation.

These provisions will also ensure any operational impacts are reasonable, and generally, minimal. Other principles will be detailed in the architectural design statement accompanying the EIS.

## 5 IMPACT IDENTIFICATION AND PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

The expected environmental impacts associated with the proposed development that will be assessed in the EIS for the SSDA include:

- **Transport and Accessibility** (Construction and Operation). A comprehensive Traffic Impact Assessment will be prepared as part of the SSDA. This will assess traffic generation from the development and its impacts on the surrounding road network, as well as nearby intersections, the parking generation and the feasibility and impacts of the proposed circulation and parking. Public transport and other modes of transport will also be assessed.
- **Ecologically Sustainable Development**. The EIS will include details of how ESD principles will be incorporated in the design and ongoing operational phases of the development. A separate ESD report will be provided with the EIS.
- **Heritage**. No heritage items are identified on the HLEP 2012 maps as being located on the project area. Heritage item I9 “*Administrative block, blacksmith shop and stable square*” and Item I10 Grand-Stand are located on the overall land parcel (Lot 2 DP 1051798) and are located to the north-east. A statement of significance and an assessment of the impact on the heritage significance of the heritage items on and adjacent to the site in accordance with the guidelines in the NSW Heritage Manual (Heritage Office and DUAP, 1996) and Assessing Heritage Significance (OEH, 2015) will be prepared.
- **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage**. An Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (January 2018) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (April 2018) were prepared as part of SSD DA 17\_8614 for the site. These documents will be updated to reflect the current project description.
- **Social Impacts**. Schools are recognised as providing a valuable social contribution to communities in terms of education and personal development generally. The proposal will provide a new school to meet the demands for the growing community. An assessment of the social consequences of the school's location will be carried out. Commentary will be provided in the main EIS and will include impacts of the development on community services and management measures required to be implemented to avoid potential issues associated with school aged students being in close proximity to university accommodation.
- **Noise and Vibration**. A Noise and Vibration Assessment will be prepared. Noise impacts associated with both the construction and operational phases of the development will be assessed in accordance with the NSW Environment Protection Authority NSW *Noise Policy for Industry*, with particular consideration to the nearest proposed residential receivers.
- **Biodiversity**. The site is largely cleared with only a small number of exotic and native tree species remaining. The site is not located on biodiversity certified land. A Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) was prepared as part of SSD DA 17\_8614 for the site. The BDAR will be updated to reflect the current project description and will assesses the biodiversity impacts of the proposed development in accordance with the requirements of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, *Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017* and Biodiversity Assessment Method.
- **Utilities**. The site will have all essential services made available. Commentary on the provision of potable water, fire water, sewer, gas and electricity will be provided within the EIS. A utilities report will be prepared and identify any infrastructure upgrades required off-site to facilitate the development and any arrangements to ensure that the upgrades will be implemented on time and be maintained. The utilities report will also provide an infrastructure delivery and staging plan, including a description of how infrastructure requirements would be co-ordinated, funded and delivered to facilitate the development.
- **Stormwater Drainage / Soil and Water / Civil Engineering**. A preliminary stormwater management plan for the development will be prepared that details the proposed drainage design for the site including on-site detention facilities, water quality measures and the nominated discharge point. A sediment and erosion control plan will also be prepared along with an assessment of salinity and acid sulphate soil impacts, noting the site contains Class 5 Acid Sulfate Soils.
- **Flooding**. The site is located on land that has a level above the 1 in 100 year flood level of 17.5m AHD for the locality, and consequently flood consideration under Clause 6.4 of HLEP 2012 does not apply. However, the land is below the probable maximum flood level. Hawkesbury City Council advises that

the site is subject to riverine flood related development controls. A Flood Evacuation Management Plan will be prepared and will summarise the flood risks within the site, identify preparation measures that should be undertaken and provide an action plan with steps to be completed during a flood event.

- **Waste Management.** Demolition and construction waste will be appropriately managed to mitigate the environmental impact of the proposed development. A Waste Management Plan will be prepared.
- **Contamination.** A Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) Report and a Remediation Action Plan (RAP) were prepared as part of SSD DA 17\_8614 for the site. These documents will be updated to reflect the current project description.
- **Bush fire.** A Bush Fire Assessment Report was prepared as part of SSD DA 17\_8614 for the site. The Report will be updated to reflect the current project description and will address the requirements for Special Fire Protection Purpose Development as detailed in *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019 Guidelines*.
- **Aviation.** The site is located 2.3 km south of the nearest boundary of the RAAF Base Richmond. The Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) map prepared for RAAF Base Richmond, being RAAF Base Richmond 2014 ANEF map, identifies the northern most tip of land within the Western Sydney University (Hawkesbury Campus) site as being within the 20 ANEF contour. Notably Lot 2 DP 1051798 and the development site are relatively remote from the 20 ANEF contour. More detailed commentary on aviation will be provided in the EIS however a report prepared by a suitably qualified aviation expert is not considered necessary for the EIS.

In addition to the above the EIS will include the following specific matters:

- An executive summary.
- A complete description of the development, including:
  - Consideration of the cumulative impacts due to all other developments in the vicinity (completed, underway or proposed).
  - Measures to avoid, minimise and if necessary, offset predicted impacts, including detailed contingency plans for managing any significant risks to the environment and triggers for each action.
  - A consolidated summary of all the proposed environmental management and monitoring measures, identifying all commitments included in the EIS.
  - The reasons why the development should be approved and a detailed evaluation of the merits of the development, including consequences of not carrying out the development.
- Statutory Context, Strategic Context and Policies.
- Built Form and Urban Design. Architectural plans and Architectural Design Statement will address:
  - The height, density, bulk and scale, setbacks and interface of the development in relation to the surrounding development, topography, streetscape and any public open spaces.
  - Design quality and built form, with specific consideration of the overall site layout, streetscape, open spaces, façade, rooftop, massing, setbacks, building articulation, materials and colours.
  - How Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles are to be integrated into development and provide a CPTED Report.
  - How good environmental amenity would be provided, including access to natural daylight and ventilation, acoustic separation, access to landscape and outdoor spaces and future flexibility.
  - How design quality will be achieved in accordance with Schedule 4 Schools – design quality principles of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017* and the GANSW Design Guide for Schools (GANSW, 2018).
  - How services, including but not limited to waste management, loading zones, and mechanical plant are integrated into the design of the development.
- The Architectural plans and Architectural Design Statement will provide a detailed site and context analysis to justify the proposed site planning and design approach including massing options and



preferred strategy for future development. Photomontages or perspectives showing the proposed and likely future development will be provided.

- Tree removal and landscaping – An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and a detailed Landscape Plan will be prepared.
- Environmental Amenity – Architectural plans and Architectural Design Statement will assess amenity impacts on the surrounding locality. The development is predominately single-storey and a wind impact assessment is not considered necessary. The site is not of high scenic significance and a view impact assessment is not considered necessary.
- Site survey.
- Planning Certificate – 10.7(5) of the EP&A Act.
- Staging plans and commentary.
- Estimate of jobs created during construction and operation.
- Quantity Surveyors Report (CIV)
- Structural Design Statement.
- BCA Report.
- Accessibility Report.
- Preliminary Construction Management Plan.

## 6 JUSTIFICATION

The proposed educational establishment is consistent with the local planning controls for the site (SP1 - Special Activities (Education, Agriculture, Research Station)) and is an appropriate response to the site and surrounding area.

The new facility is to be constructed on land within the WSU Hawkesbury Campus and will include Agricultural STEM learning spaces, general learning spaces and administration facilities. The site location enables partnerships with the WSU, Richmond TAFE, Richmond High School and industry, through integrated programs and early entry pathways into tertiary education.

The site can accommodate a development of this nature with minimal potential conflict with surrounding development.

## 7 CONSULTATION

Preliminary community consultation on the Hawkesbury CoE was conducted in February 2020 to inform the project master plan and final business case.

Further community and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken throughout the duration of the EIS preparation and delivery. The EIS will confirm how stakeholders and the community have participated throughout the project and how required outcomes from participation have been achieved.

Colliers International, project managers on behalf of DoE will coordinate and lead a programme of stakeholder management and engagement activities throughout the design and construction phase of the project.

Colliers International, the consultant design team and DoE will engage with WSU and service authorities as required. These will include:

- Hawkesbury City Council.
- Transport for NSW.
- Office of Environment and Heritage.
- Sydney Water.

## 8 CAPITAL INVESTMENT VALUE

A Quantity Surveyors report will be provided with the EIS. Initial estimates indicate a capital investment of \$56 million dollars.

In accordance with Clause 15 (1) of *State Environmental Planning Policy (State & Regional Development) 2011*, development for the purpose of a new school (regardless of the capital investment value) constitutes SSD. The proposal is therefore classified as SSD.



## 9 CONCLUSION

This request relates to a proposed educational facility upon a portion of the WSU Hawkesbury Campus. The Hawkesbury CoE involves the construction of a new centre that will be a contemporary agricultural education facility delivering world class agricultural and STEM education. The Centre will involve farming enterprises, learning facilities for up to 250 students and a short-stay accommodation facility with 60 beds to support agricultural teaching and learning opportunities for students across the State and in particular from regional and rural NSW.

The proposal is classified as SSD on the basis that it falls within requirements of Clause 15(1) of Schedule 1 of the SEPP SRD, being "Development for the purpose of a new school (regardless of the capital investment value)"

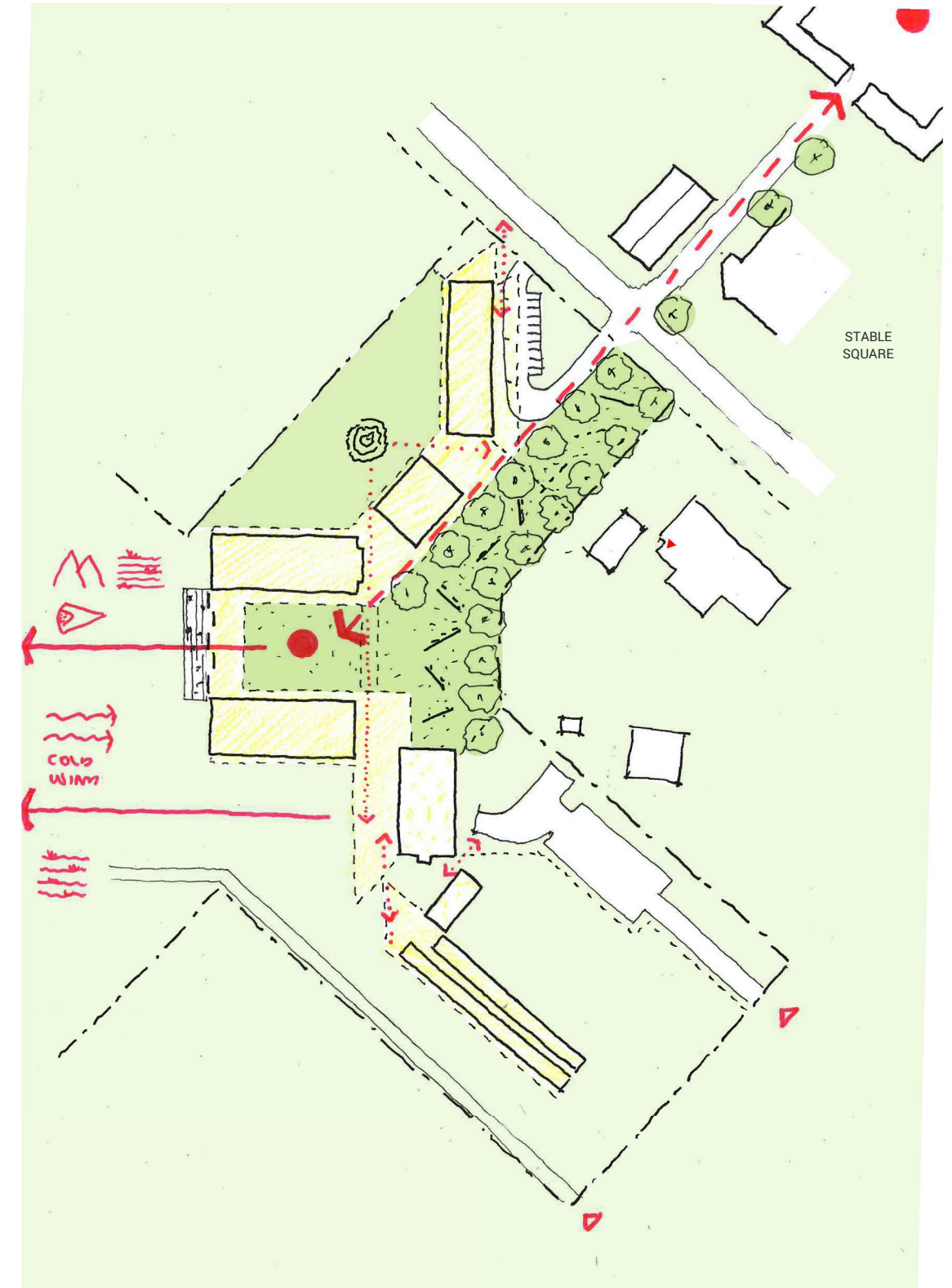
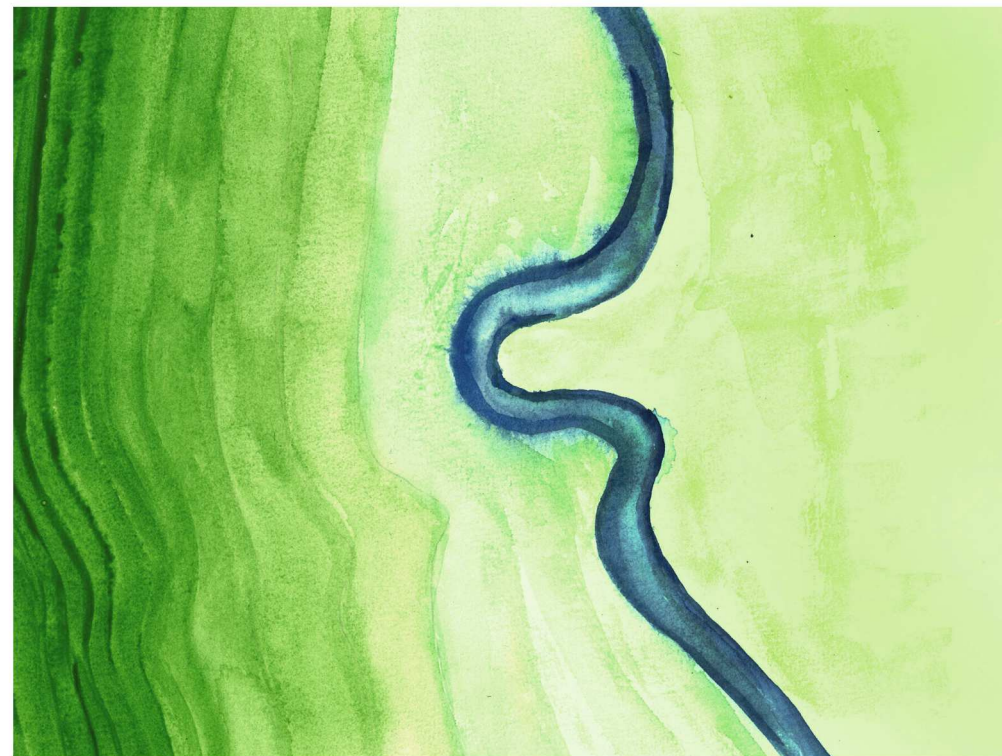
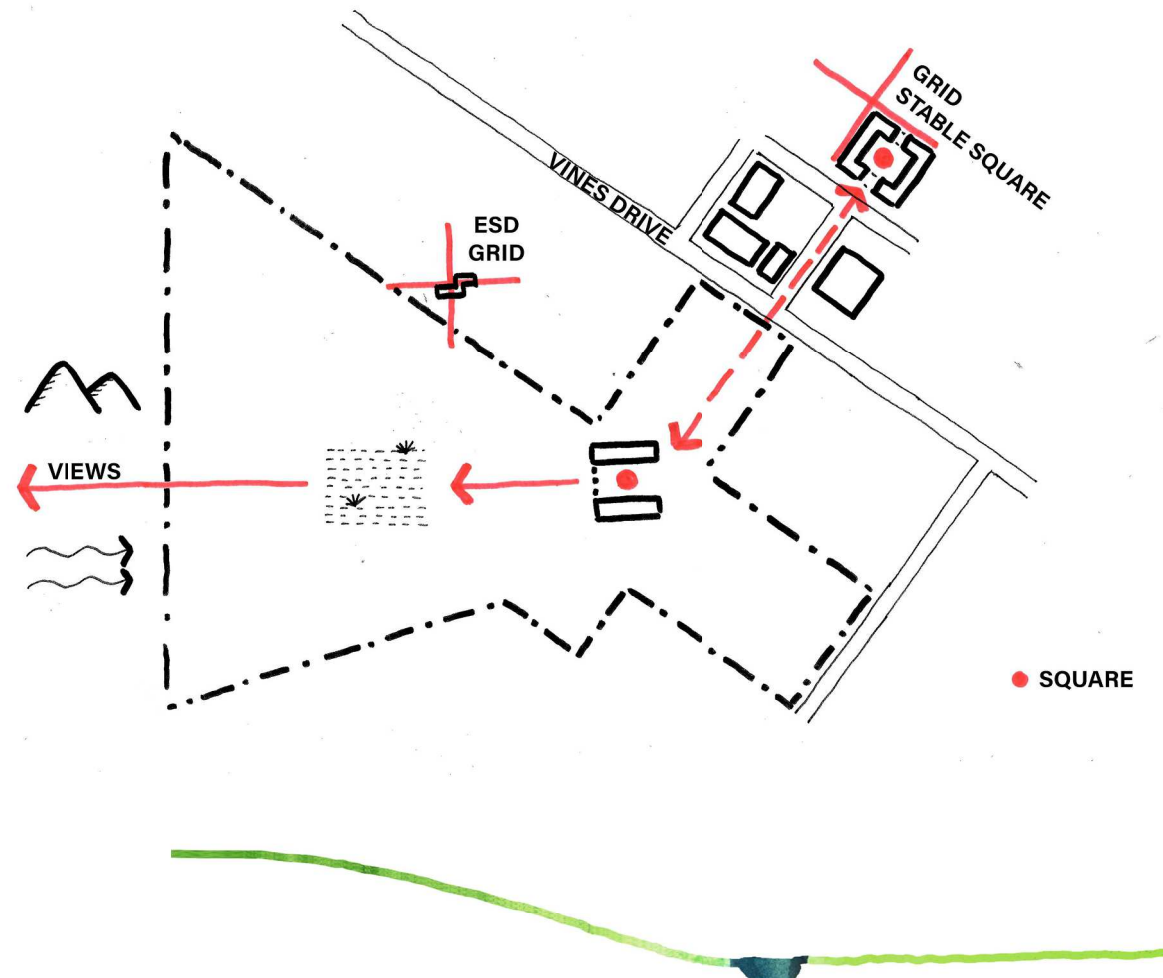
This request has identified potential environmental impacts associated with the proposal and how these impacts will be assessed in a subsequent EIS.

In light of the above, the SEAR's are now requested for the purposes of preparing the required EIS.

## Appendix A

### Preliminary Architectural Plans

# Concept

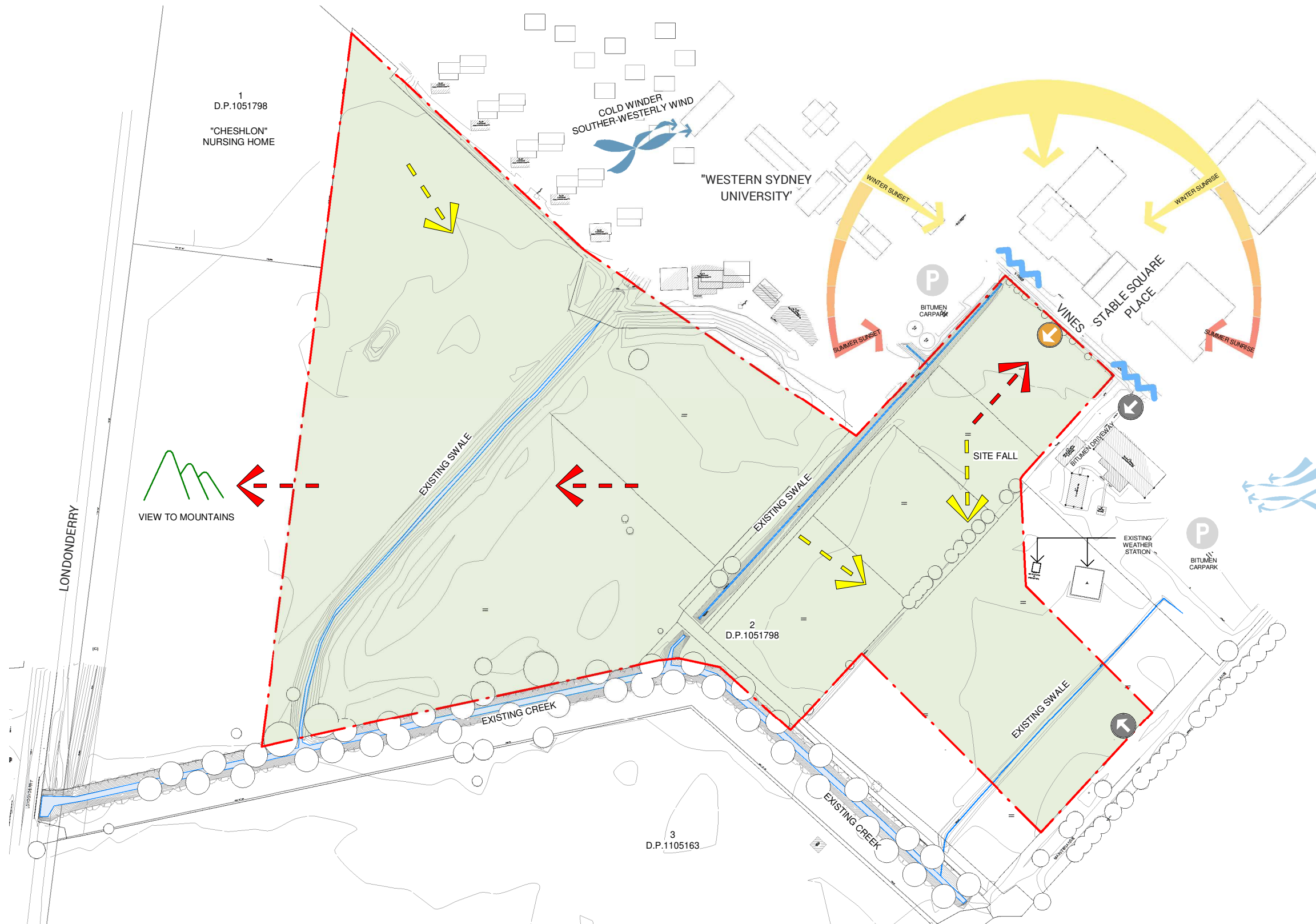




# Existing Site Plan Analysis

## LEGEND

- BOUNDARY
- SITE FALL
- VIEWS
- EXISTING SWALE & CREEK
- HOT WINTER WINDS
- COOLING SUMMER BREEZES
- SUN PATH DIAGRAM
- PRIVATE ROAD (NOISE ISSUES)
- B BUS STOP
- P CAR PARKING
- ↑ PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
- ↑ VEHICLE ENTRY/EXIT
- ⬤ SUMMER MORNING
- ⬤ SUMMER AFTERNOON
- ⬤ WINTER MORNING
- ⬤ WINTER AFTERNOON

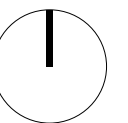
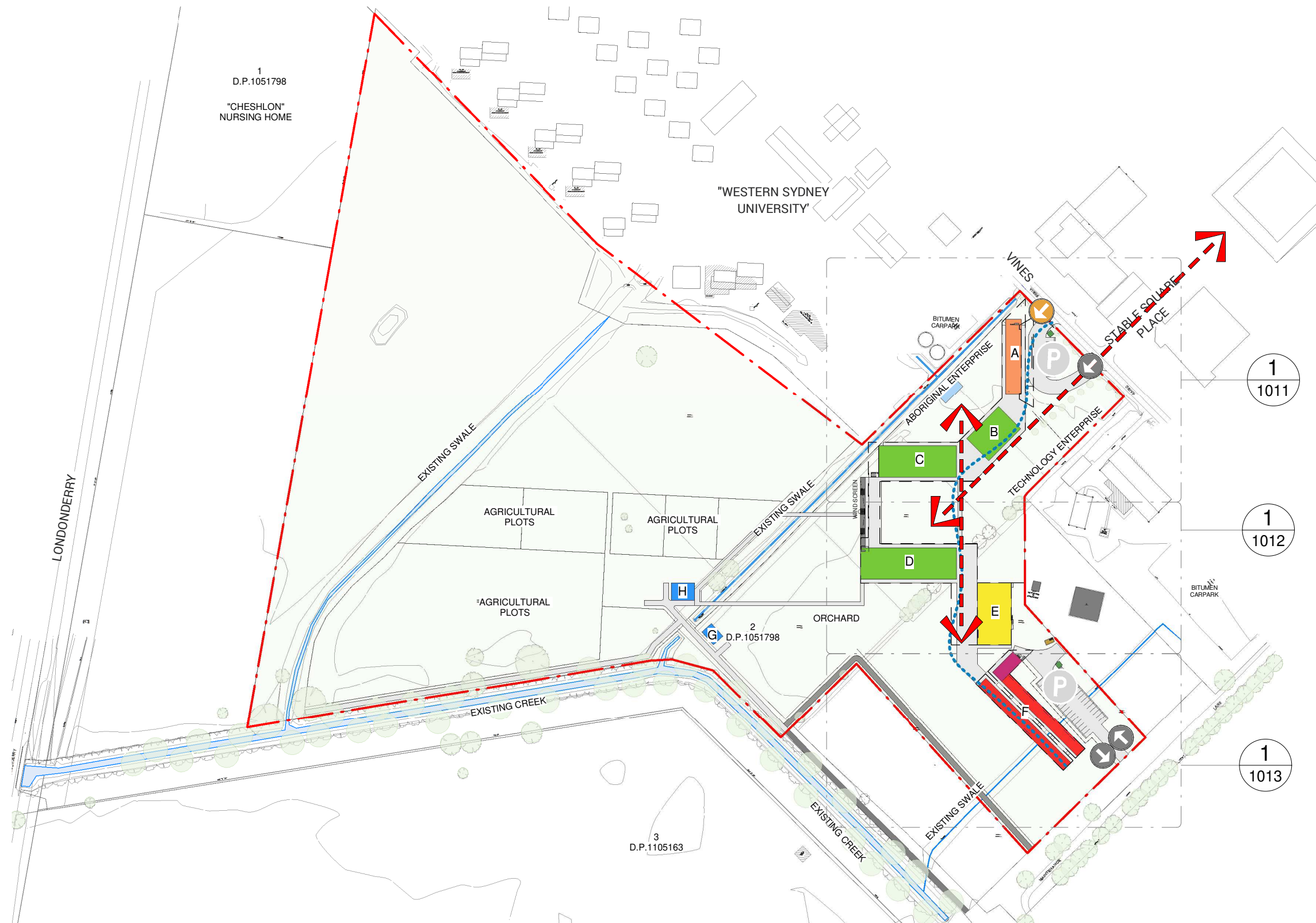




# Proposed Site Plan

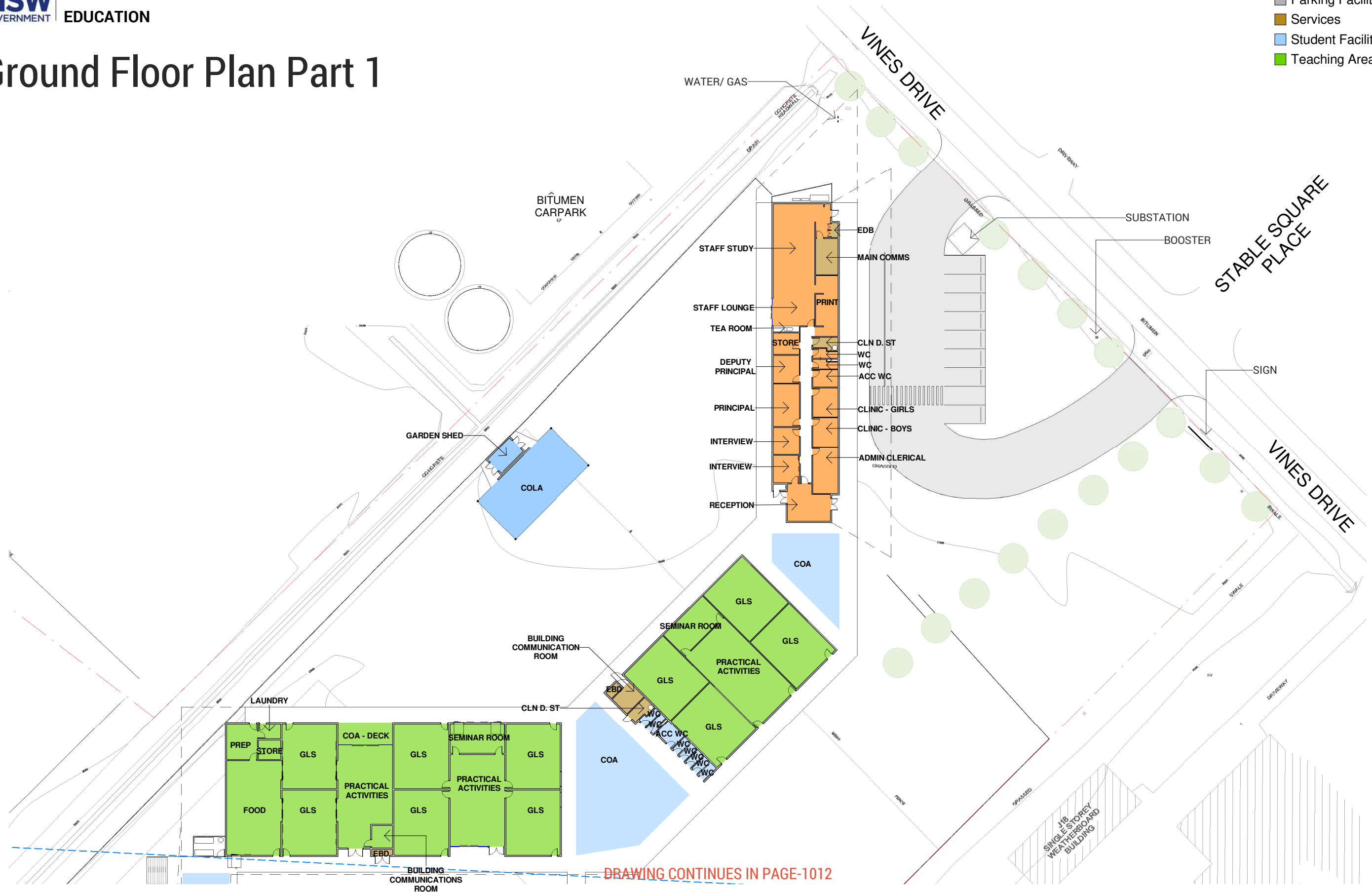
## LEGEND

- BOUNDARY
- > VIEWS
- PRIMARY SITE MOVEMENT
- EXISTING SWALE & CREEK
- B BUS STOP
- P CAR PARKING
- ↑ PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
- ↑ VEHICLE ENTRY/EXIT
- BLOCK A
- BLOCK B
- BLOCK C
- BLOCK D
- BLOCK E
- BLOCK F
- BLOCK G-H

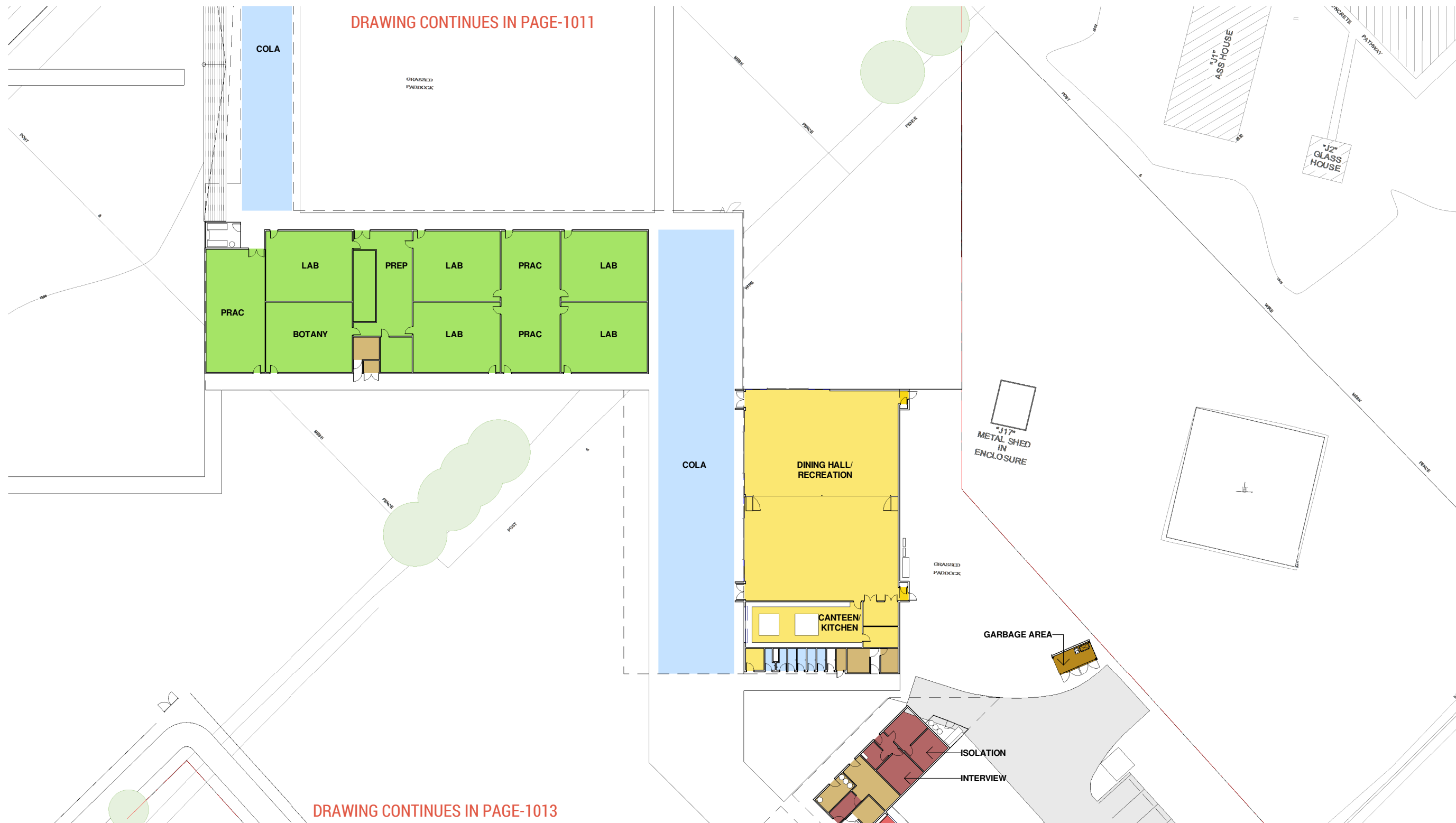


# Ground Floor Plan Part 1

- Administration Unit
- Parking Facilities
- Services
- Student Facilities
- Teaching Areas

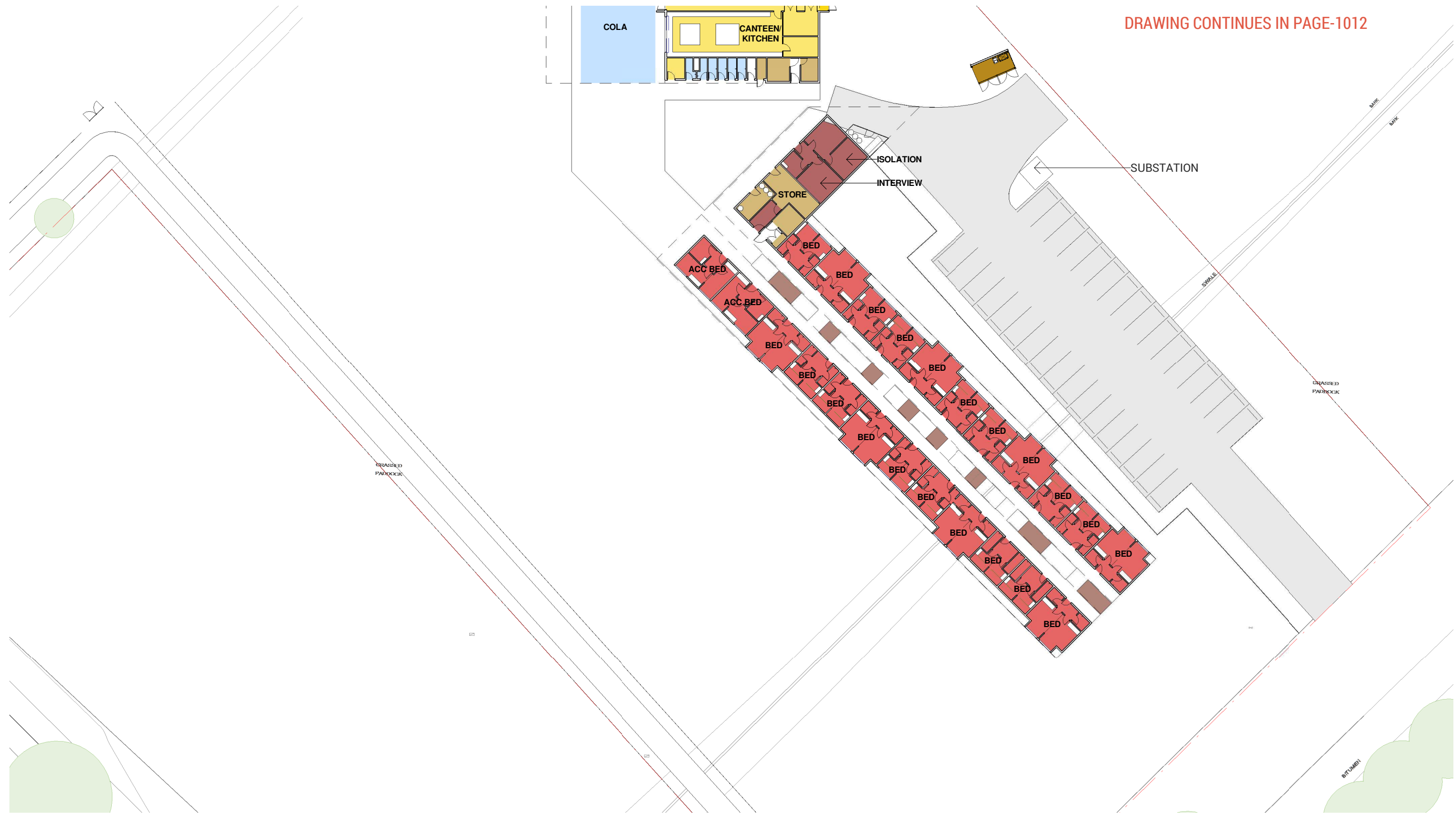


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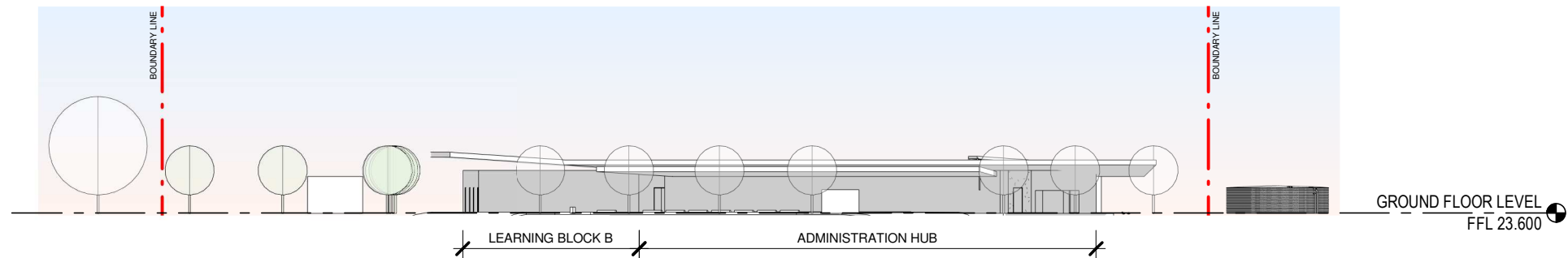
# Ground Floor Plan Part 3

- Accommodation Facilities
- Dining Hall
- Parking Facilities
- Services
- Student Facilities
- Well Being

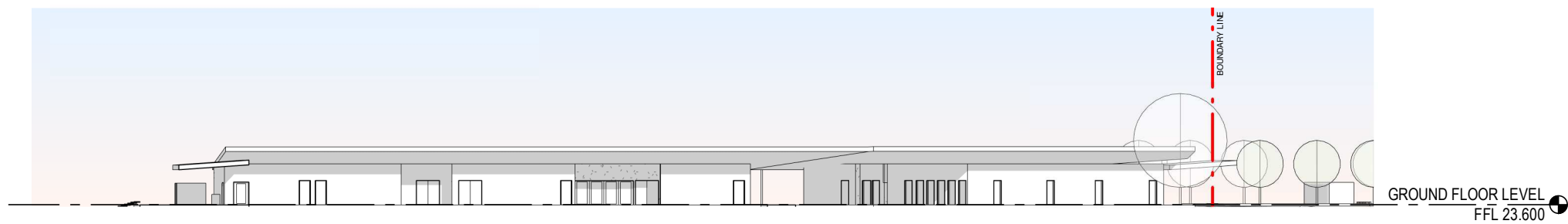




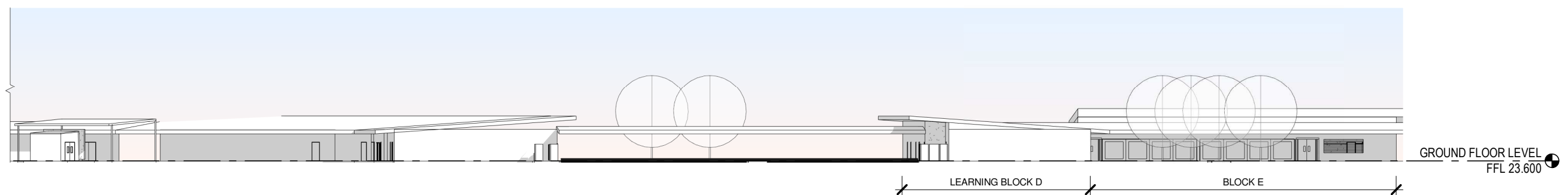
# Site Elevations



① VINES DRIVE STREET ELEVATION  
1 : 500

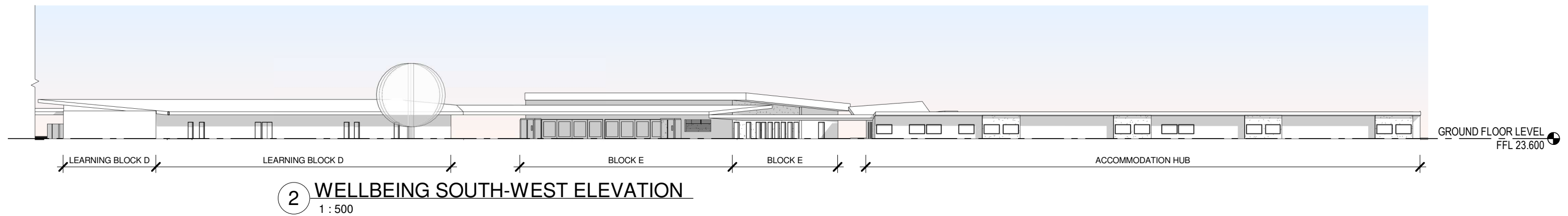
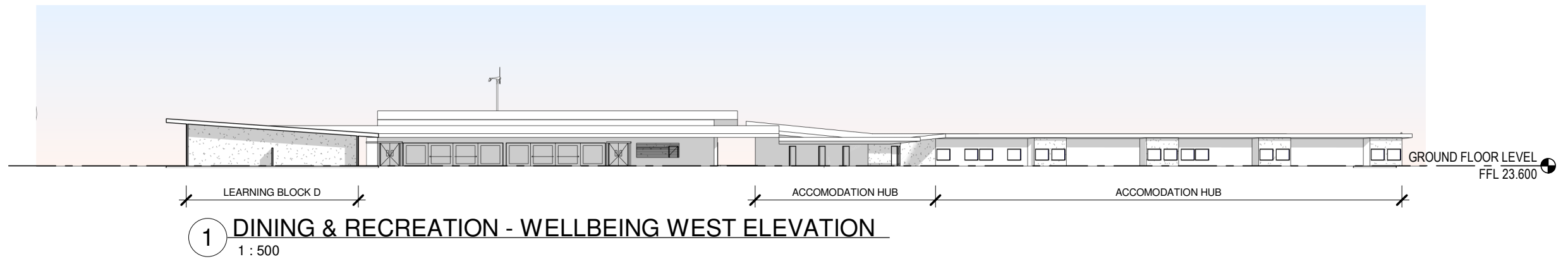


② LEARNING BLOCKS C&B SOUTH ELEVATION  
1 : 500



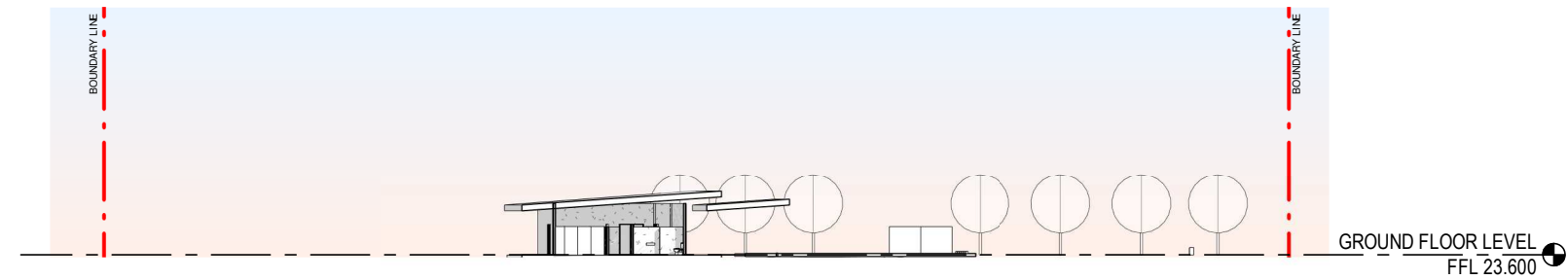
③ LEARNING BLOCKS WEST ELEVATION  
1 : 500

# Site Elevations

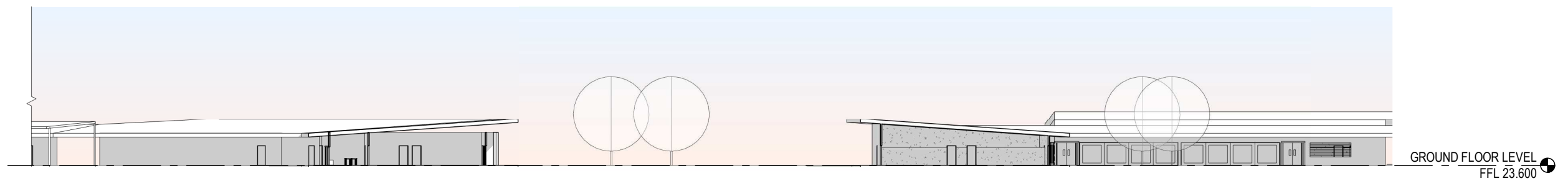




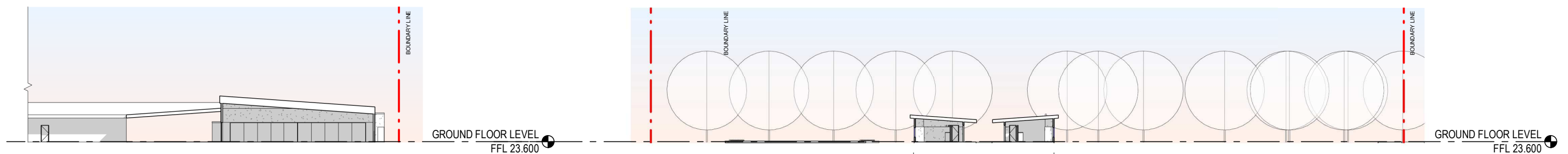
# Site Sections



1 BLOCK A - SOUTH SECTION  
1 : 500



2 BLOCK C & D - WEST SECTION  
1 : 500



3 BLOCK E - SOUTH SECTION  
1 : 500

4 ACCOMODATION HUB NORTH-WEST SECTION  
1 : 500