Principles of Quality Design for Schools

Design Quality Principles listed within the *State environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) for Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities 2017* are to be employed when designing new schools and school building upgrades, these principles are a set of values that enable a common understanding between school developers, design teams, school staff, students and community when designing new school buildings or building upgrades. According to Education SEPP 2017, the principles of Design Quality for state significant development are as follows:

1. **Context, Built Form & Landscape**
   Schools should be designed to respond to and enhance the positive qualities of their setting, landscape and heritage, including Aboriginal cultural heritage. The design and spatial organisation of buildings and the spaces between them should be informed by site conditions such as topography, orientation and climate. Landscape should be integrated into the design of school developments to enhance on-site amenity, contribute to the streetscape and mitigate negative impacts on neighbouring sites. School buildings and their grounds on land that is identified in or under a local environmental plan as a scenic protection area should be designed to recognise and protect the special visual qualities and natural environment of the area, and located and designed to minimise the development's visual impact on those qualities and that natural environment.

2. **Sustainable, Efficient & Durable**
   Good design combines positive environmental, social and economic outcomes. Schools and school buildings should be designed to minimise the consumption of energy, water and natural resources and reduce waste and encourage recycling. Schools should be designed to be durable, resilient and adaptable, enabling them to evolve over time to meet future requirements.

3. **Accessible & Inclusive**
   School buildings and their grounds should provide good wayfinding and be welcoming, accessible and inclusive to people with differing needs and capabilities. Schools should actively seek opportunities for their facilities to be shared with the community and cater for activities outside of school hours.

4. **Health & Safety**
   Good school development optimises health, safety and security within its boundaries and the surrounding public domain, and balances this with the need to create a welcoming and accessible environment.

5. **Amenity**
   Schools should provide pleasant and engaging spaces that are accessible for a wide range of educational, informal and community activities, while also considering the amenity of adjacent development and the local neighbourhood. Schools located near busy roads or near rail corridors should incorporate appropriate noise mitigation measures to ensure a high level of amenity for occupants. Schools should include appropriate, efficient, stage and age appropriate indoor and outdoor learning and play spaces, access to sunlight, natural ventilation, outlook, visual and acoustic privacy, storage and service areas.

6. **Whole of Life, Flexible & Adaptive**
   School design should consider future needs and take a whole-of-life-cycle approach underpinned by site wide strategic and spatial planning. Good design for schools should deliver high environmental performance, ease of adaptation and maximise multi-use facilities.

7. **Aesthetics**
   School buildings and their landscape setting should be aesthetically pleasing by achieving a built form that has good proportions and a balanced composition of elements. Schools should respond to positive elements from the site and surrounding neighbourhood and have a positive impact on the quality and character of a neighbourhood. The built form should respond to the existing or desired future context, particularly, positive elements from the site and surrounding neighbourhood, and have a positive impact on the quality and sense of identity of the neighbourhood.
Context, Built Form and Landscape I

Throughout all phases of design, the Lake Cathie Public School masterplan has respectfully considered the future neighbouring residential community and furthermore the existing streetscape presence of the school. The following criteria have been emphasized to maintain respectful built form and contextual design excellence:

a) Respect and respond to its physical context, neighbourhood character, streetscape quality and heritage
b) Consider interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage and native flora & fauna within the design of buildings and open spaces in consultation with local Aboriginal community
c) Respond to its natural environment including scenic value, local landscape setting and orientation
d) Retain existing built form and vegetation where significant
e) Include tree planting and other planting that enhances opportunities for play and learning
f) Ensure landscaping improves the amenity within school grounds and for uses adjacent to the school
g) Be informed by a current Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and consider local heritage items both on the school site and in the local neighbourhood
h) Take advantage of its context by optimizing access to nearby transport, public facilities and local centres
i) Consider height and scale of school development in relationship to neighbouring properties.