

30 August 2018

Richard Arkell
Head of Operations
Meriden School

Via email –
rarkell@meriden.nsw.edu.au

PROJECT: Meriden School
RE: SDRP Lite – 21.08.2018

Dear Richard,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above project at this early stage in the design process. This review took place on 21 August 2018 and was attended by Meriden School, Urbis, AJC Architects, Oculus and an independent education design expert. A summary of advice and recommendations arising from the review follows.

Please note that this letter and subsequent letters of advice relating to the SDRP Lite will be distributed to the meeting attendees below.

Meriden School is spread across three sites and a project is proposed on each one. The panel commends the careful consideration of the architectural response of the projects to the surrounding context and buildings and supports the inclusion of the school's values into the design.

There are several aspects of the schemes which the panel either doesn't support or on which further clarification is sought. These are detailed below along with recommendations to enhance design quality. The panel recommends a second review before lodgement of the EIS (date and time to be confirmed by GANSW) which should address the following issues.

Centre for Music and Drama – Senior Campus

Site strategy and built form

The position of the building establishes a continuity with the existing buildings to the north and east, completing the built form of the senior school campus. This enables a substantial outdoor space to the west and the possibility for future additional amenities.

The panel supports the staggered approach to the eastern façade as a transition from the Wallis Auditorium. The panel also supports the entry slot which provides the transition between the Hope Turner Building and the proposal. The panel requires detailed elevations and photomontages to provide overall support to the built form and its relationship to existing buildings and the streetscape. Detailed information about the façade strategies, materials palette, finishes and colours should be provided at the next SDRP.

Arrival, access and circulation

The panel understands the complexity of the program, the constraints of the site and how the internal spaces and access to them needs to respond to different demands. However, due to the multiple options, the access does not appear equitable or intuitive.

The entrance providing connection to the under-croft of the Wallis Auditorium to the north, the transition space between the Hope Turner Building and the proposal to the east should be prioritised.

The levels and stairs inside the building may make it difficult to navigate. The panel recommends further resolution of level changes to ensure the number of stairs are reduced and equitable access is provided.

The stairs and ramps facing Margaret Street should also be simplified to provide an intuitive entrance sequence.

Amenity and sustainability

While the panel accepts that the uses of the building can be accommodated on the lower ground, daylight analysis is required to validate adequate illumination to these areas for morning, midday and afternoon. The panel would also like to see further evidence that these spaces receive natural light through the skylights and double screens of the building.

Landscape

The amphitheatre is a great space for gathering, informal education and open days. It is welcoming and however it looks like an entrance when the entrance should be as described above. The project team is encouraged to articulate landscape elements in the amphitheatre to ensure this space is not mistaken for the main entrance.

Lingwood Preparatory School Stage 2 – Lingwood Campus

Site strategy and built form

The position of the proposed building continues the u-shaped layout of built form around a heritage building and garden. The setbacks of the neighbouring properties are captured and the heritage-listed garden has been respected and extended as an outdoor space.

The diagrams and drawings shown do not explain the façade composition or materiality, including maintenance and sustainability properties, of the building or its relationship to the garden. The panel requires this information to be provided to ensure the overall aesthetic is understood. The panel also recommends further exploration of the suggestion of a contemporary interpretation of a traditional gable roof.

Arrival, access and circulation

The proposed building has its main orientation to the east- west, but the entry is to the north. The panel recommends the façade be articulated to create a sense of arrival and ensure clarity of wayfinding from Margaret Street.

Amenity and sustainability

The orientation of the building as well as the depth of the floorplate provides optimal conditions for natural ventilation and light to be explored during design development. The panel supports the setbacks in relation to the residential neighbouring property to mitigate any issues of views and privacy.

Landscape

The panel supports the enhancement of the existing landscape area including the reinstatement and use of the circular pathway, however a landscape plan explaining the trees to be removed and what is existing and proposed is required.

Vernon Road – Junior Campus

Site strategy and built form

An existing house located in a heritage conservation area has been acquired by the school and will be demolished to make way for dedicated open space.

The panel supports the conclusion reached by the heritage specialist that while the house is located in a conservation area, it is of poor quality and not contiguous with surrounding buildings. Further, the argument that the recently completed school auditorium ends the heritage streetscape to the south of Vernon Street is accepted.

Arrival, access and circulation

The proposed open space provides a great opportunity to create a network of open spaces, interconnected with the recently landscaped areas in the school. However, the panel recommends that the level changes between these spaces are optimised in order to avoid these being disjointed from each other.

Amenity and sustainability

The panel supports the provision of open space, but encourages the project team to provide different opportunities for active play by expanding on what is already provided such as the screening, pergolas and pockets of spaces along the northern wall.

The panel understands the field is elevated and therefore the impact of overshadowing by the house to the north will be minimal.

Landscape

The panel supports the proposed landscape along the street edge which will continue the leafy green character along Vernon Road.

The panel's recommendations are summarised below.

1. Refine architectural design strategies:
 - explore the relationships between the proposed built form of the Senior and Lingwood campuses front and their interface to Margaret Street
2. Review access and circulation:
 - Centre for Music and Drama – Senior Campus
 - provide intuitive and equitable access that clearly distinguishes the entrances
 - simplify external stairs and ramps to provide intuitive and direct connections to the undercroft space of the Wallis Auditorium
 - provide clear internal circulation which resolves level changes, reduces the number of stairs and provides equitable access
 - Lingwood Preparatory School Stage 2– Lingwood Campus
 - address the sense of arrival, clarity of wayfinding, façade and frontage to Margaret Street
 - Vernon Road – Junior Campus
 - optimise the level changes to avoid open spaces being too disjointed from each other
3. Improve amenity and sustainability:
 - Centre for Music and Drama – Senior Campus
 - undertake daylight analysis to verify natural light levels to the lower ground rooms
 - Vernon Road – Junior Campus
 - provide different opportunities for active play and articulate these in the open space

4. Improve landscape and open space:

Centre for Music and Drama – Senior Campus

- articulate landscape elements to the amphitheatre to distinguish this space from the main entrance off Margaret Street.

5. At the next SDRP, provide the following additional information:

- building elevations on both the Senior and Lingwood campuses, including along Margaret Street
- photomontages from within and outside of the campuses
- landscape plans
- detailed floor plans
- information about facades, materials, finishes and colours

Sincerely,



Emma Kirkman
Manager Design Review - Government Architect NSW
Chair, Meriden School SDRP Lite

CC	
NSW SDRP Panel members	Deborah Barnstone, Emma Kirkman (Chair – GANSW)
GANSW Design Advisor	Cristina Aranzubia
DPE	Iona Cameron, Prity Cleary
Project Team	Mark Louw – AJC Stephen Davies – Urbis Danielle Blakelly – Urbis Sarah Horsfield – Urbis Roger Jasprizza - Oculus

From: [Emma Kirkman](#)
To: [Sarah Horsfield](#)
Cc: [Anna Wang](#)
Subject: RE: Meriden School State Significant Development SSD 9692
Date: Wednesday, 8 May 2019 10:44:14 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Thanks Sarah, I look forward to seeing the proposal again.

Emma

From: Sarah Horsfield <shorsfield@urbis.com.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 8 May 2019 10:41 AM
To: Emma Kirkman <emma.kirkman@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Anna Wang <awang@urbis.com.au>
Subject: Re: Meriden School State Significant Development SSD 9692

Thanks for confirming Emma. The architects have taken the advice on board and our response to the advice will be clearly articulated in the EIS.

Regards

Sarah

Sarah Horsfield
Director Urbis

From: Emma Kirkman <emma.kirkman@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, May 8, 2019 10:33 am
To: Sarah Horsfield
Cc: Anna Wang
Subject: RE: Meriden School State Significant Development SSD 9692

Hi Sarah,

Apologies for the delay. I'm still comfortable with the strategy proposed i.e. a desktop review of the EIS when lodged. We'll be most interested in your response to our previous advice and I assume that will be clearly articulated within the application. To that end we'll review the response and provide feedback to the assessment team as part of the exhibition process.

Regards,

Emma

From: Sarah Horsfield <shorsfield@urbis.com.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 8 May 2019 10:24 AM
To: Emma Kirkman <emma.kirkman@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Anna Wang <awang@urbis.com.au>
Subject: Re: Meriden School State Significant Development SSD 9692

Hi emma

Just touching base on my email below. Can you give me a call when you are free to chat.

Thanks

Sarah

Sarah Horsfield
Director Urbis

From: Sarah Horsfield <shorsfield@urbis.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2019 11:07 am
To: emma.kirkman@planning.nsw.gov.au
Cc: Anna Wang
Subject: Meriden School State Significant Development SSD 9692

Hi Emma,

Hope you are well.

We are currently working through the EIS report and finalising consultants inputs for Meriden School State Significant Development SSD 9692. We aim to lodge the Test of Adequacy (ToA) documents the week of 20th May.

We have met the GANSW twice and had a "light" DRP session with one Panel member late last year.

You and I discussed after this meeting that due to smaller scale of the project and the consultation that had occurred with the SDRP and GA's in relation to this project that the best way forward was a desktop review of the EIS during exhibition by GANSW and possibly a DRP member.

I am just touching base to see if you are still ok with this approach or whether you would like us to book in another consultation session with GANSW and/or the DRP – noting our pending ToA submission.

Regards

Sarah

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(Monday Tuesday Thursday)

**SHAPING
CITIES AND
COMMUNITIES**



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Urbis recognises the traditional owners of the land on which we work.
[Learn more about our Reconciliation Action Plan.](#)

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