

Ref: SSD-11233241

14 July 2021

Mr Navdeep Singh Shergill
Senior Planner
Social and Infrastructure Assessments
Department of Planning Industry and Environment
Parramatta 2150
Navdeep.SinghShergill@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Singh Shergill

Exhibition- Murrumbateman Primary School Project

Yass Valley Council is very supportive of a new primary school for the Murrumbateman community. Council staff have had productive and ongoing dialogue with the Department of Education (DoE) in relation to planning for a school over a number of years. Despite Council expressing concerns regarding the small area of the site selected, as well as the traffic issues presented due to the adjacent Barton Highway, we have endeavoured to work with the design team to achieve a good outcome for the community, including future students.

Council would like to see the following issues addressed during the assessment of the application:

-School bus bay: While Council's preference has always been that it be accommodated on site, it is recognised that the limited area of the site constrains this option. We continue to urge TfNSW to reconsider the option of an indented bus bay on the Barton Highway frontage, with pedestrian barriers. This would allow a bay of sufficient length to accommodate buses, and not require staggering of bus arrival times or queuing elsewhere on the road network. It would also allow children to wait on the school grounds prior to bus arrival, thus providing options for weather shelter as well as removing the requirement for students to be accompanied by staff off the school grounds. Council would be supportive of the existing bus stop/shelter located immediately to the south on the Barton Highway to be removed and replaced with this bay, which could also be utilised by other (commuter) public transport buses in the evening en route to Yass.

Council is concerned about the student safety issue which will be created by students having to cross the Murrumbateman Health Hub driveway/carpark to get to and from buses. Again, this would rely on staff supervision off site of every child travelling by bus- which in our experience in other schools in the Yass Valley, is not guaranteed. In addition Fairley Street is a very narrow street, which was not designed to accommodate a bus bay and the associated movements associated with it. There are also

commercial developments proposed on the site adjacent to the Health Hub which will also increase traffic conflicts at this point.

Council is concerned with buses and other vehicles exiting back onto the Barton Highway turning right (south). While the traffic study indicates there is some spare capacity at these intersections, the wait times – particularly in the mornings will be significant, especially at Hercules Street, given the traffic volumes travelling into Canberra for work each day. Council urges consideration of upgrades to the intersection of Barton Highway and Hercules Street to support the buses and other vehicles turning right at this location.

-South pedestrian entry: This entry location is subject to resolution of the existing Aboriginal Land Claim over the Crown Land where there is an existing pedestrian path. From our discussions with NSW Crown Lands, it is understood it applies to LOT:7300 DP:114411. In the event that this claim is successful, access from this point is not available.

While locating an entry here provides connectivity into the older established part of the Murrumbateman community, the location of the bicycle parking/storage adjacent to the southern gate presents a security concern, as there will be no surveillance of this area- particularly during class times. It is suggested that this bicycle parking be relocated adjacent to Block C.

-Limited site area: The NSW Government architect requested that future expansion options be illustrated to demonstrate the current proposal will not impact future opportunities. The response and solution by DoE to add extra classrooms along the eastern boundary if needed, is a poor response to this request. It would further reduce the available playground area and have a negative impact on the Barton Hwy character by presenting a continuous built form- particularly if 2 storey in scale.

Council disagrees that a feasibility assessment of acquiring all or part of the old school site (Crown Land) is unnecessary- the additional land area is clearly needed to improve the amenity of the area available and provide some scope for future expansion.

In addition, Council is concerned with a comment addressing the SEAR's: "Joint Use of Recreation Grounds has not been agreed to at this stage". While this was requested in early discussions with the DoE, it needs to be reiterated that Council strongly opposes this until such time as the proposed Murrumbateman Bypass is constructed due to the significant safety risk to students crossing the Barton Highway.

-Easement Extinguishment: The water main off Fairley Street was installed inside LOT 302 to service the then proposed commercial development and the Murrumbateman Health Hub. It is a Council water main inside a private lot, thus the easement.

With the proposed development of the school, if the section of the water main beyond the Murrumbateman Health Hub is not required then the easement could be extinguished. However, this needs to be confirmed with Council's Water and Sewer Manager as well as the hydraulic designer who

has made assumptions based on the water main existing layout. There is also stormwater main running to the side of the water main which services the Fairley Child Care/Commercial Area as well.

-Errors within EIS: There are a number of errors which appear to have arisen by the application being prepared concurrently with the Googong School. While some of these appear minor in nature i.e. references to Aprasia Avenue, there are others which suggest process may not have been correctly followed. The reference to the Bungendore Regional Independent newspaper to call for RAP involvement is of concern, as it does not circulate in the Yass Valley and it is unknown whether notification to RAPS was undertaken as required?

Council is grateful for the opportunity for ongoing input into this project, and looks forward to continuing working with DoE for the delivery of a primary school at Murrumbateman.

Yours Sincerely



Liz Makin
Manager Strategic Planning