


Review of Environmental Factors Decision Statement

New high school for Schofields and Tallawong

Table 1: REF Details

Document Name	Review of Environmental Factors – New high school for Schofields and Tallawong
REF Date	06/08/2025
REF Version No.	12
Portal Reference No.	P5-2025-38
Location	Part 201 Guntawong Road, Tallawong (Lot 1 DP 1316541)
Summary of Proposed Activity	<p>Construction and operation of a high school, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition, tree removal and associated earthworks. • Student learning hubs and other core facilities, and a hall. • On-site transport infrastructure including a staff car park, pedestrian and vehicular access. • Site landscaping including sports courts, a sports field and tree planting. • Associated stormwater and utility works including installation of a new substation <p>Ancillary works including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades to Nirmal Street within the site boundary. • Construction of a shared path along Nirmal Street frontage. • Provision of a kiss and drop zone along Nirmal Street. • Construction of a wombat crossing on Nirmal Street.
Prepared by	Urbis, Christopher Croucamp
Assessments Manager Endorsement	<p>I certify that I have reviewed and endorsed the contents of the REF document and the Decision Statement and, to the best of my knowledge, it is in accordance with the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>, the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021</i> (EP&A Regulation) and the Guidelines approved under section 170 of the EP&A Regulation and the information it contains is neither false nor misleading.</p> <p></p> <p>Helen Mulcahy – Senior Manager, Early Learning and Assessments</p>

The Review of Environmental Factors (**REF**) has been assessed and considered in accordance with the requirements of sections 1.7, 5.5, 5.7 and 5.10 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)*, sections 171 and 171A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EP&A Regulation)* and the Guidelines approved under section 170 EP&A Regulation.

In considering the activity and for the purpose of attaining the objects of the EP&A Act relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment, the NSW Department of Education (**the department**) has examined and taken into account to the fullest extent possible, all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment arising from the activity, as addressed in the REF including any necessary mitigation or management measures.

The REF is supported by specialist investigations and studies that have assessed the following matters and key impacts:

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
- Bushfire
- Contamination
- Design Quality
- Flooding
- Transport, traffic and access
- Tree removal and biodiversity

The REF provides an environmental assessment of the activity against the requirements of Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act and the EP&A Regulation, including but not limited to:

- *Guidelines for Division 5.1 Assessments*, prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment, June 2022; and
- *Guidelines for Division 5.1 assessments—Consideration of Environmental Factors for Health Services Facilities and Schools* prepared by DPHI, October 2024.

Notification of the activity occurred in accordance with s3.38A of *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 (TI SEPP)* and having regard to:

- the *Stakeholder and Community Participation Plan for New Health Services Facilities and Schools* published by DPHI in October 2024; and
- the *Stakeholder and Community Participation Plan* published by the Department of Education in October 2024.

The REF was publicly exhibited on the NSW Planning Portal for 28 days from 14 March 2025 until 10 April 2025. Written notice was provided to neighbouring and nearby property owners and/or occupants in vicinity of the proposal. The relevant local council, Blacktown City Council, was provided written notice of the proposed activity on 12 March 2025, as well as relevant State and Commonwealth government agencies and service providers on 12 March 2025.

Seven submissions were received during the exhibition period, comprising five submissions from government agencies, including Blacktown City Council, and two submissions from the community. There were no late submissions.

As part of ongoing discussions with the local community regarding the establishment of a high school on the site, together with the Government Architect's Connecting with Country consultation process, the department has identified the opportunity to provide a shared learning hub for Aboriginal education as part of the activity.

It is noted that the operational requirements for this shared learning facility would be determined in consultation with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG). The REF indicates that the facility would be provided within the existing project footprint and would not involve increasing impacts to any identified AHIMS site. However, as the physical form of this element of the project has not been confirmed, it is anticipated that it would be the subject of a future planning approval (addendum to the current REF).

The activity has considered the issues raised in submissions received during the consultation period and these submissions have been addressed in the assessment of the proposed activity. As the determining authority, the department is satisfied that appropriate consultation has been undertaken, having regard to the relevant stakeholder and community participation plans.

This determination is made following consideration of the matters in sections 1.7, 5.5, 5.7 and 5.10 of the EP&A Act, and section 171 and section 171A of the EP&A Regulation. This determination is also made following consideration of the design quality of the development, evaluated in accordance with the design quality principles set out in schedule 8 of the TI SEPP and the design principles set out in the *Design Guide for Schools* (May 2025) published by the NSW Government Architect.

The REF has considered the potential impacts arising from the proposal, including any impacts on critical habitat and threatened species, populations and ecological communities and their habitats in accordance with Part 7 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (**BC Act 2016**). The REF has also assessed the need for referral to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (**EPBC Act**).

The REF identifies a range of environmental outcomes and safeguards as mitigation measures that would be required to avoid or reduce environmental impacts. The mitigation measures for the proposal are included at **Appendix 1 of the REF** and additional or amended measures are listed in **Attachment 1**.

The additional mitigation measures have been included to:

- require the creation of relevant easements on adjoining land to accommodate the temporary APZs required to manage bushfire risk to the school
- require a Construction Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan
- ensure the internal stormwater system is designed to cater for excess runoff and overland flows within the site
- ensure the external flows along Nirmal Street are contained and diverted away from the site
- ensure the structural stability of the temporary retaining wall to withstand the forces of floodwaters and debris
- ensure the temporary retaining wall is set at a minimum height above the PMF event

- rectify an omission and ensure an Operational Emergency Management Plan is prepared for the school
- formalise the requirement for ongoing consultation with TfNSW in relation to confirming bus scheduling and services to support the school operation
- ensure the Flood Emergency Response Plan (FERP) considers climate change and the Hawkesbury-Nepean Flood Plan
- ensure the FERP is reviewed as further information becomes available for the surrounding developments, and considers the timing for ongoing reviews and updates

Three mitigation measures have been amended to:

- correct omission in the Long-Term Environmental Management Plan
- ensure the Travel Access Guide reflects the evolution of transport services and infrastructure as the area develops
- ensure adequacy of the Kiss and Drop facility and that any impacts on local roads are identified and addressed

As an authorised person on behalf of the department who did not prepare the REF, I discharge the duty as a determining authority under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act and conclude that based on the REF document and other information provided:

- the proposed activity is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment and therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required;
- the proposed activity will not be carried out in a declared area of outstanding biodiversity value and is not likely to significantly affect threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats or impact biodiversity values, meaning a Species Impact Statement and/or Biodiversity Development Assessment Report is not required;
- the proposed activity may proceed as it is consistent with the State Government's plan to expand public education in Western Sydney and responds to the areas needs for secondary education facilities which is experiencing significant population growth and it generally complies with, or is consistent with all relevant legislation, plans and policies;
- mitigation measures are required to eliminate, minimise or manage environmental impacts and have been addressed at **Appendix 1** of the REF and at **Attachment 1** of this Decision Statement, and endorsed and amended by the Assessments Manager at **Table 1** of this Decision Statement; and
- the proposed activity is not likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance, or on the environment of Commonwealth land, and therefore referral to the Minister under the EPBC Act is not required.

Having regard to the above, and having the power to exercise the functions of the determining authority under Part 5, Division 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and Part 8, Division 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EP&A Regulation), the proposal as described in the REF at Part 201 Guntawong Road, Tallawong is **APPROVED** on behalf of the department and may proceed without the need for further assessment, subject to compliance with and implementation of the following:

- The REF and associated appendices;
- The Mitigation Measures included at **Appendix 1** of the REF and the additional and amended measures listed in **Attachment 1**; and
- All other relevant statutory requirements, including approvals, licences, notifications, permits, and authorisations.

Yvette Buchli

Yvette Buchli

Executive Director – Planning and Assessments

26 August 2025

Attachment 1

Additional Measures

BMM1A (new measure to be inserted after BMM1) Prior to operation

Easements must be registered for the implementation and maintenance of temporary Asset Protection Zones identified in Figure 7 of the Bushfire Hazard Assessment Report prepared by Blackash and dated 28 February 2025.

CMM2A (new measure to be inserted after CMM2) Prior to construction

Prepare a Construction Traffic and Pedestrian Management Plan (CTPMP) to inform construction workers and heavy vehicle movements on safe traffic flow and minimise disruption to surrounding areas. The CTPMP must include a Construction Worker Access Management Plan (CWAMP) to outline strategies and measures to manage how construction workers access a construction site including carpooling initiatives. Workers will be required to avoid parking on residential streets where possible.

SWMM5A (new measure to be inserted after SWMM5) Design and Construction

Sufficient drainage provisions should be provided around the buildings to fully contain and/or divert anticipated stormwater runoff and overland flows generated from within the site for all flood events up to and including the 1% AEP.

SWMM5B (new measure to be inserted after SWMM5A) Design and Construction

Sufficient drainage provisions should be provided within the construction of Nirmal Street to fully contain and/or divert anticipated stormwater runoff and overland flows generated from Nirmal Street catchment area for all flood events up to and including the 1% AEP.

SWMM7A (new measure to be inserted after SWMM7) Design and Construction

Verification from a suitably qualified structural engineer must be provided to the DoE Project Lead and the DoE Post Approvals and Compliance Team demonstrating that the temporary retaining wall has been designed with flood compatible materials and components that withstand the hydrodynamic forces from moving flow, the hydrostatic forces applied by still-water and debris in flood events up to and including the PMF.

SWMM7B (new measure to be inserted after SWMM7A) Design and Construction

The height of the temporary retaining wall will need to be above the PMF. Detailed design and modelling will need to determine if the level is to include any freeboard, taking into consideration flood behaviour along the wall .

OPMM11 (new measure to be inserted after OPMM10)

Prior to commencement of Operations

An Operational Emergency Management Plan (OEMP) shall be prepared in accordance with the DoE emergency management policy and requirements. The EMP shall be submitted to the Project Lead and DoE Post Approval and Compliance Team prior to the commencement of operations.

OPFMM1A (new measure to be inserted before OPFMM1)

Prior to the commencement of Operations

The Preliminary Flood Emergency Response Plan (FERP) is to be reviewed following the detailed design stage, including consideration of *the Hawkesbury-Nepean Flood Plan* and climate change, prior to operation.

OPFMM1B (new measure to be inserted after OPFMM1A)

Prior to commencement Operations

The Flood Emergency Response Plan (FERP) is to be reviewed prior to the commencement of operations and as further detailed design becomes available for the surrounding roads and development sites. The updated FERP is to document the timing and any requirement for ongoing reviews and updates.

OPTMM9 (new measure to be inserted after OPTMM8)

Prior to commencement of operations

Consultation to continue with TfNSW Bus Planning Team to confirm future service provision and scheduling to support the school.

Amended Measures

(amendments and deletions in ~~striketrough~~ and additions in **bold text**)

LCMM7 Long term Environmental Management Plan

Prior to commencement of operations

Where the remediation strategy results in onsite containment of material, Prepare a Long-Term Environmental Management Plan shall be prepared and implemented. The Plan shall be submitted to the Project Lead and DoE Post Approval and Compliance Team prior to the commencement of operations.

OPTMM7 School Travel Coordinator

Operations

Within the first 12 months of operation appoint a School Travel Coordinator, establish a School Transport Committee, and prepare a Travel Access Guide (**TAG**). **The TAG shall be reviewed and updated annually for the first two years of operation in tandem with the School Transport Plan required by OPTMM8.**

OPTMM8 School Transport Plan Operations

Update the School Transport Plan annually for the first two years and include a review of the Kiss and Drop operations. **The results of the review, together with any management measures which may be required to address queuing on surrounding streets or other adverse traffic impacts shall be provided to both DoE's Transport Team and the School Transport Committee.**