

Review of Environmental Factors

Rouse Hill High School Upgrade

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Date: 9/05/2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Department of Education acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which the Rouse Hill High School Upgrade is proposed.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of Australia.

The NSW Department of Education is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

The NSW Department of Education recognises that by acknowledging our past, we are laying the groundwork for a future that embraces all Australians; a future based on mutual respect and shared responsibility.

Declaration

This Review of Environmental Factors (REF) has been prepared by DFP Planning on behalf of the NSW Department of Education (department) and assesses the potential environmental impacts which could arise from proposed upgrades at Rouse Hill High School, Lot 105 DP 1108407, 240 Withers Road, Rouse Hill.

This REF has been prepared in accordance with the *Guidelines for Division 5.1 Assessments* and any relevant addendum (the Guidelines), and the relevant provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EP&A Regulation) and *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (TI SEPP).

This REF provides a true and fair review of the activity in relation to its likely impact on the environment and the information it contains is neither false nor misleading. It addresses to the fullest extent possible all the factors listed in Section 3 of the Guidelines, the EP&A Regulation and the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In preparing the REF I have declared any possible conflict of interests (real, potential or perceived) and I do not consider I have any personal interests that would affect my professional judgement.

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5	Architectural and Landscape Design Report
6	Civil Engineering Report and Plans
7	Sustainable Development Plan
8	Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
9	Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report
10	Bushfire Assessment Report
11	Flora and Fauna Assessment
12	Transport Impact Assessment
13	Contamination Reports
14	Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Report

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AHD	Australian Height Datum
AHIP	Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit
AHIMS	Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
BC Act 2016	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>
BC Regulation	Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017
BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
BAR	Bushfire Assessment Report
BCA	Building Code of Australia
BFSA	Bush Fire Safety Authority
CA	Certifying Authority
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
Council	The Hills Shire Council
CWC	Connecting with Country
The department	NSW Department of Education
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DPHI	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Design Guide	<i>Design Guide for Schools</i> published by the Government Architect in May 2018
EP&A Act	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EP&A Regulation	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021</i>
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
EPI	Environmental Planning Instrument
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
FEBQ	Fire Engineering Brief Questionnaire
FM Act	<i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i>
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
GBCA	Green Building Council of Australia
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LSPS	The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance
NCC	National Construction Code
NPW Act	<i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>
NPW Regulation	National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2009
NSW RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service

Abbreviation	Description
NT Act (Cth)	<i>Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993</i>
Planning Systems SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021
POEO Act	<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>
Proponent	NSW Department of Education
REF	Review of Environmental Factors
RF Act	<i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>
Resilience and Hazards SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021
Roads Act	<i>Roads Act 1993</i>
SCPP DoE	<i>Stakeholder and community participation plan</i> , published by the NSW Department of Education October 2024
SDRP	School Design Review Panel
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SIS	Species Impact Statement
SVTM	State Vegetation Type Map
TECs	Threatened Ecological Communities
TI SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021
WM Act	<i>Water Management Act 2000</i>

Executive Summary

The Proposal

The proposal relates to the construction of a permanent classroom building and associated works (the activity) at Rouse Hill High School, 240 Withers Road, Rouse Hill (the site).

The proposal will increase the student capacity of the school from 960 students to 1,200 students to support existing and project enrolments associated with population growth in the Rouse Hill High School catchment area.

The associated works include a new emergency accessway from Caballo Street to comply with bush fire protection requirements.

Planning Pathway

The proposal involves works by the Department of Education (the department) (a public authority) within the boundaries of Rouse Hill High School. Pursuant to Section 3.37 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (TI SEPP), a permanent classroom building is classified as development which may be carried out without consent. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the TI SEPP and emergency accessway is classified as development which may be carried out without consent.

Therefore, the proposal is considered an 'activity' for the purposes of Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and is subject to an environmental assessment. For the purposes of this proposal, the department is the proponent and the determining authority and the required environmental assessment is in the form of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF). The REF has been prepared in the accordance with the *Guidelines for Division 5.1 Assessments* (DPE, June 2022) and the *Guidelines for Division 5.1 assessments - consideration of environmental factors for hospital and school activities Addendum* (DPHI, October 2024).

Consultation

Consultation will be undertaken with in accordance with statutory requirements under the TI SEPP and having regard to the *Community participation plan for new schools and major school upgrade projects undertaken under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act 1979* (Department of Education, October 2024) (SCPP DoE). Comments received will be carefully considered and responded to.

In addition, non-statutory consultation has been undertaken with a range of community and government stakeholders throughout the design process including The Hills Shire Council, NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW and the local community.

Environmental Impacts

The key environmental impacts identified in the preparation of the REF are as follows:

- **Bush Fire** - Part of the site is mapped as bush fire prone land. The entire site is already managed as an Asset Protection Zone (APZ). The new building is required to be built to certain construction standards (BAL-19) and emergency vehicular access from Caballo Street is required to be provided.
- **Tree Removal** – The available locations to site the new building are limited by bush fire constraints and existing school buildings. The proposed location requires tree removal. The environmental impact has been considered in this REF.

Other impacts have been considered as detailed in this REF.

Justification and Conclusion

Based on the environmental assessment undertaken as part of this REF, it has been determined that the proposal will not result in any significant or long-term detrimental impacts. The potential impacts identified can be reasonably mitigated and where necessary managed through the adoption of suitable site practices and adherence to accepted industry standards.

The environmental impacts of the proposal are not likely to be significant. Therefore, it is not necessary for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared and approval to be sought for the proposal from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act. The proposed development will not have any effect on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) and approval of the Activity under the Commonwealth EPBC Act is not required.

On this basis, it is recommended that the department determine the proposed activity in accordance with Part 5 of the EP&A Act and subject to the adoption and implementation of mitigation measures identified within this report.

1. Introduction

The NSW Department of Education (the department) proposes construct a two storey permanent classroom building and associated works at Rouse Hill High School, 240 Withers Road, Rouse Hill (Lot 105 DP1108407). The associated works include an emergency accessway from Caballo Street, bicycle parking, stormwater re-use/detention and landscaping.



Figure 1: Perspective of New Classroom Building

The proposed activity is required to meet existing and forecast enrolment demand at Rouse Hill High School and to ensure adequate emergency vehicle access.

The proposed activity is proposed to be undertaken pursuant to *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (TI SEPP) including an emergency accessway under Chapter 2 of the TI SEPP and the remainder of works including the permanent classroom building under Section 3.37 of the TI SEPP.

This Review of Environmental Factors (REF) has been prepared by DFP Planning on behalf of the department to determine the environmental impacts of the activity. For the purposes of these works, the department is the proponent and the determining authority under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act.

The purpose of this REF is to describe the proposal, examine and take into account all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment and to detail mitigation measures to be implemented to manage impacts.

The potential environmental impacts have been assessed in the accordance with the *Guidelines for Division 5.1 Assessments* (DPE, June 2022), *Guidelines for Division 5.1 assessments - consideration of environmental factors for hospital and school activities Addendum* (DPHI, October 2024), EP&A Act, the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EP&A Regulation) and the *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The assessment contained within the REF has been prepared having regard to:

- Whether the proposed activity is likely to have a significant impact on the environment and therefore the necessity for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to be prepared and approval to be sought from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act; and
- The potential for the proposal to significantly impact MNES on Commonwealth land and the need to make a referral to the Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy for a decision by the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment on whether assessment and approval is required under the EPBC Act.

2. The Site

2.1 Regional Context

Rouse Hill High School is located in the north-west of the Sydney Metropolitan Area within The Hills Shire Local Government Area (LGA). Rouse Hill High School is located to the west of Rouse Hill Shopping Centre (400m), Windsor Road (750m) and Rouse Hill Metro Station (700m) (**Figure 2**).



Figure 2: Regional Context

2.2 Rouse Hill High School

Rouse Hill High School has a street address of 240 Withers Road, Rouse Hill and is legally described as Lot 105 DP 1108407. Rouse Hill High School was first granted development consent by The Hills Shire Council on 9 August 2007 (Ref. DA 1293/2007/HC). **Figure 3** provides an aerial photograph of the site.

The site has a total area by title (**Appendix 2**) of 5.844 Hectares. The north-east boundary of the site has a length of 191.8m and adjoins Withers Road. The south-east property boundary is 249.3m and adjoins Ironbark Ridge Public School. The south-west boundary is 222.7m fronting Caballo Street and Ironbark Ridge Reserve. The north-west boundary is 388.25m and adjoins Bruce Purser Reserve. The topography of the site is characterised by a gradual fall of 14.53m (3.74%) from Withers Road to Caballo Street.

Rouse Hill High School contains 11 existing single storey school buildings towards the central and north-eastern part of the site. Uncovered sports courts, a covered outdoor learning area (COLA) and a secondary pedestrian access point are located to the south and south-west of the site.



Figure 3: Aerial Photograph

2.3 Proposed Activity Area

A site inspection was undertaken on 8 August 2024 as part of the preparation of this REF. **Figure 4** provides a site photograph of existing Building B (to which the new permanent classroom building will be adjacent). The trees shown in the site photograph have been approved to be removed under Council Tree Permit No. 261/2025/TR.



Figure 4: Site Photograph - Rear of Building B

Figure 5 provides a site photograph of the existing shelter to be demolished and existing cricket nets to be retained.



Figure 5: Site Photograph – Shelter to be Demolished and Cricket Nets to be Retained

Figure 6 provides a photograph of the cluster of trees approved for removal under Council Tree Permit No. 261/2025/TR (left of image) and trees requiring removal as part of this activity (right of image) to facilitate the provision of an emergency accessway.



Figure 6: Site Photograph – Cluster of Planted Trees

Figure 7 provides a photograph of Caballo Street in the approximate location of the required emergency accessway. The photograph details security fencing, tree planting, on-street parking and a pedestrian footpath which will require removal and/or augmentation to facilitate the emergency accessway.



Figure 7: Site Photograph of Caballo Street Vegetation

Figure 8 provides a perspective of the proposed activity in the context of the locality.



Figure 8: Perspective of Proposed Activity

2.4 Site Constraints and Opportunities

Consideration of site constraints has been undertaken through a review of the Section 10.7 (2 & 5) Planning Certificate dated 9 May 2022, mapping under relevant Environmental Planning Instruments (EPIs) and a review of specialist consultant reports. The key site constraints relate to bush fire. **Figure 9** provides the bush fire prone land map. The proposed activity presents an opportunity to improve bush fire protection measures at the site.

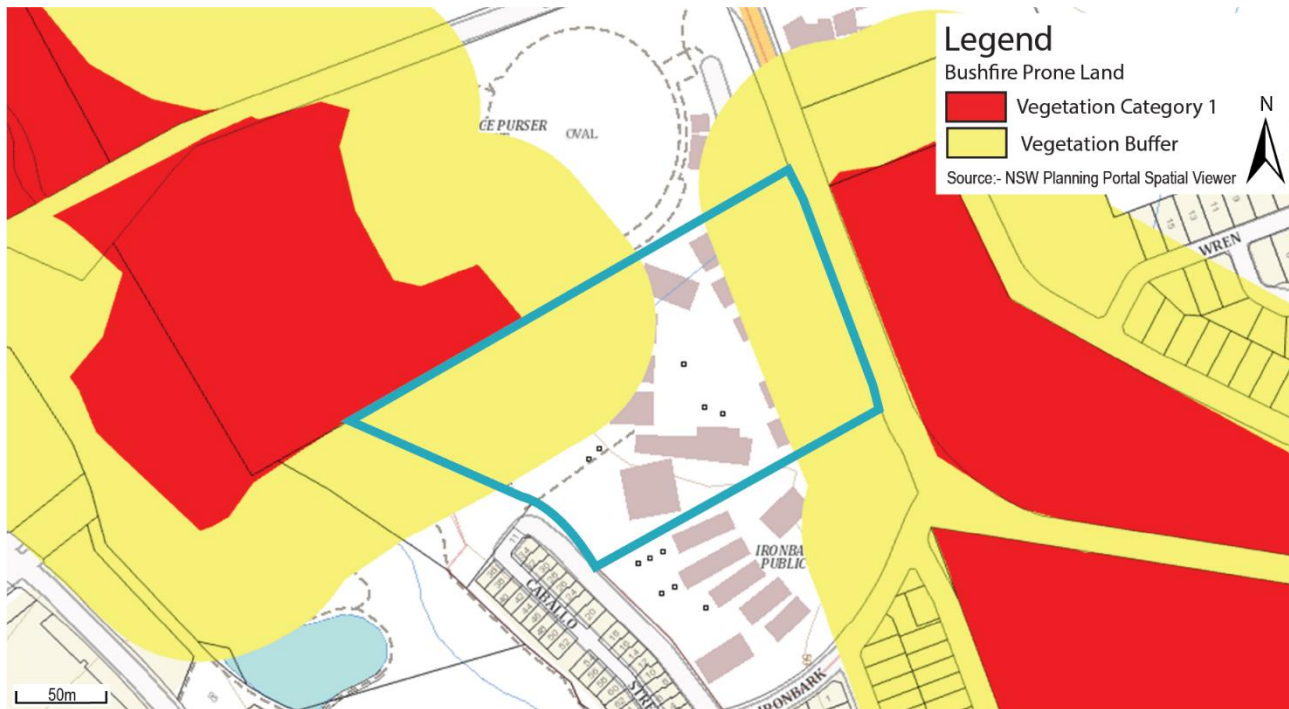


Figure 9: Bush Fire Prone Land Map

2.5 Related Activities

Development Application No. 1293/2007/HC was approved on 2 August 2007 by the Development Assessment Unit of The Hills Shire Council for an *Educational Establishment (High School) within the Rouse Hill Regional Centre*.

A shared use agreement is in place as a result of DA No. 1293/2007/HC for the use of the adjoining Bruce Purser Reserve car parking by Rouse Hill High School for parent drop off and student parking.

Tree Permit No. 261/2025/TR was approved by The Hills Shire Council on 19 February 2025 for the removal of 12 trees (as per the approved plan) within the vicinity of the permanent classroom building and associated works (excluding the emergency accessway).

3. Proposed Activity

The proposed activity is for a permanent classroom building and associated works including an emergency accessway from Caballo Street. **Table 1** provides a summary of key aspects of the activity with the following sub-sections providing a more detailed description.

Table 1: Summary of the activity

Project Element	Description
Site Area	5.844Ha (By Title)
Project Name	Rouse Hill High School Upgrade
Project Summary	Construction of a permanent classroom building including an emergency accessway.
Use	Educational establishment
Student and Staff Capacity	Proposed: 1,200 student permanent capacity and 125 staff
Car Parking and Bicycle Spaces	207 car parking spaces (existing) 60 bicycle parking spaces (40 existing, 20 proposed)
Height	10.5 metres, RL 59.186 and 2 storeys.
Canopy Cover	No net decrease in canopy cover at maturity (1:1 tree replacement).
Off Site Works	Emergency accessway

3.1 Demolition

The proposed activity includes the demolition of existing stairs, pathways and relocation of outdoor seating shelters as shown in **Figure 10**.

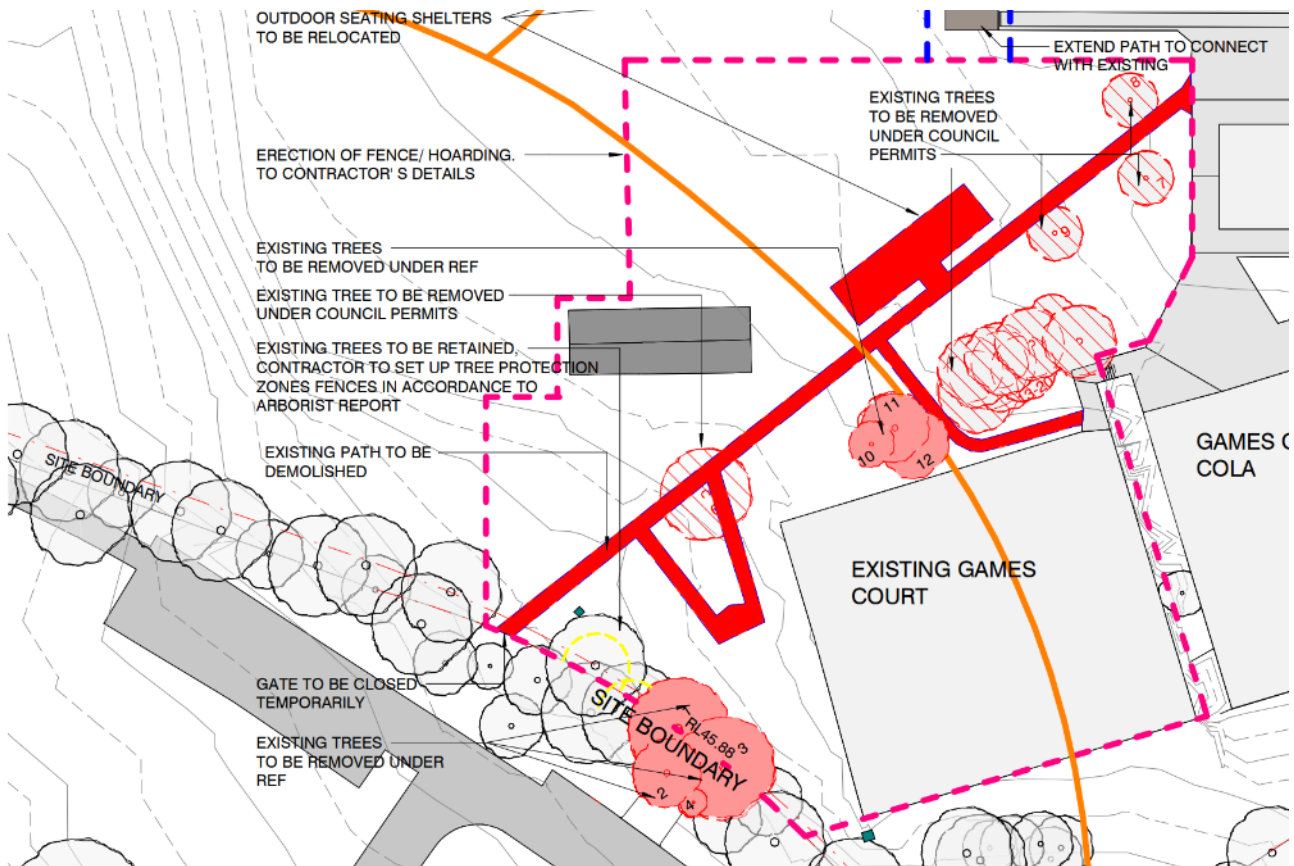


Figure 10: Excerpt of Demolition Plan

3.2 Tree Removal

The proposed activity will require the removal of seven trees to facilitate the emergency accessway, inclusive of four trees within the Caballo Street road reserve and three trees within the Rouse Hill High School site. 12 trees have already been approved for removal under Council Tree Permit No. 261/2025/TR. Removal of all 19 trees has been assessed under the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (**Appendix 9**).

3.3 Earthworks

The proposed activity will include earthworks for the pathways, building platform and emergency accessway. Earthworks range from 2.2m cut to 1.5m fill.

3.4 Permanent Classroom Building

The proposed activity includes the construction of a permanent classroom building known as Building L.

Figure 11 to Figure 15 provide excerpts from the Architectural Plans (**Appendix 3**).



Figure 11: Site Plan



Figure 12: North Elevation

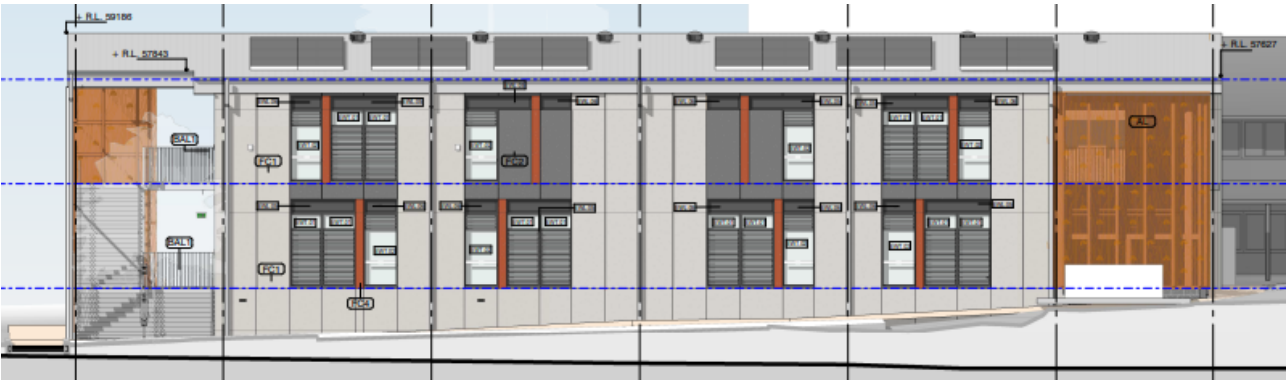


Figure 13: South Elevation



Figure 14: East Elevation

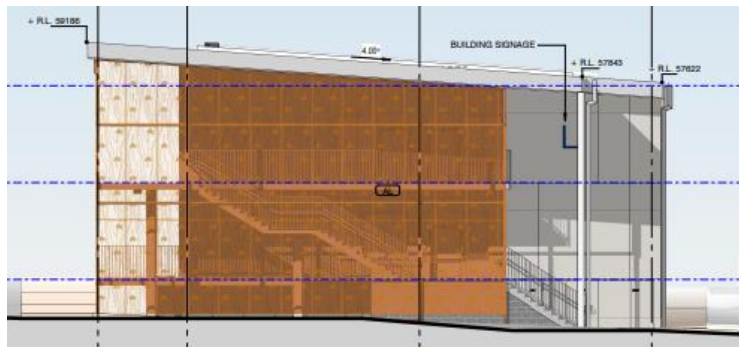


Figure 15: West Elevation

3.5 External Colours and Finishes

The proposed external colours and finishes for Building L include compressed fibre cement sheeting, metal roof and perforated metal screening/balustrading. Connecting with Country (CWC) design outcomes (**Appendix 5**) include a story motif on the exterior perforated screening and an interior colour palette inspired by local native trees.













<p>DURABLE ROOF</p> <p>Metal roofs 4 degrees fall towards circulation. Light reflectance material to improve thermal performance.</p>	  <p>Metal Roof (RF)</p>	<p>FACADE ARTICULATION</p> <p>Facade articulation is create by metal screening, feature cladding and walkways and balustrades</p>   <p>External Painting</p>  <p>Gutters & Downpipes</p>
<p>DURABLE CLADDING - LOWER & UPPER</p> <p>For areas where students will come in contact with facade cladding but are not subject to the same high traffic as the ground plane a durable pre-finished, colour-through CFC is proposed</p>	  <p>CFC Cladding & Feature (FC)</p>	<p>CWC PERFORATED METAL FALL PROTECTION POWDERCOAT</p> <p>Selected stair cores custom artwork applied to CFC Cladding</p>    <p>Powdercoats</p>
<p>ROBUST MATERIAL - CORE & WET AREAS</p> <p>Concrete and Blockwork are used for lift/services/ amenities core to provide structural stability and low maintenance .</p>	  <p>Blockwork - smooth medium grey (BW)</p>	

Figure 16: External Colours and Finishes

3.6 Emergency Accessway

The proposed activity includes the construction of an emergency accessway from Caballo Street. Rouse Hill High School does not currently have a vehicle access point from its frontage to Caballo Street. The proposed emergency accessway will be gate restricted, monitored by security cameras and restricted to emergency access only.

3.7 Parking

The proposed activity does not seek to alter the existing car parking arrangements. There are 97 car parking spaces on-site and 110 car parking spaces in the adjoining Bruce Purser Reserve, both accessed from Withers Road. The car parking spaces are subject to a shared-use agreement between the Department of Education and The Hills Shire Council.

The proposed activity provides a new on-site covered bicycle parking area (20 spaces) to service the Caballo Street pedestrian entrance. The existing bicycle parking area (40 spaces) will be retained adjacent to the Withers Road pedestrian entrance.

3.8 Pedestrian Access and Circulation

The proposed activity will replace the existing pedestrian access from Caballo Street (within the school boundary) and provide a new connection adjacent to Bruce Purser Reserve.

3.9 Waste Management

The demolition and construction phases of the proposed activity will manage waste in accordance with a Waste Management Plan (WMP) to be prepared as part of the CMP (Construction Management Plan).

The operational phase of the proposed activity will manage waste using the existing waste storage and servicing arrangements at Rouse Hill High School in accordance with DA 1293/2007/HC.

3.10 Stormwater Management

The proposed activity includes stormwater management as detailed in the Civil Engineering Report and Plans (**Appendix 6**).

Figure 17 provides an excerpt of the stormwater plan. Roofwater is collected in a 5,000 litre rainwater tank. Overflow and surface water is collected via an On-Site Detention (OSD) tank with a volume of 88.12m³. The OSD is located within the new covered bike parking area. The OSD connects into an existing stormwater line along the rear of the site.

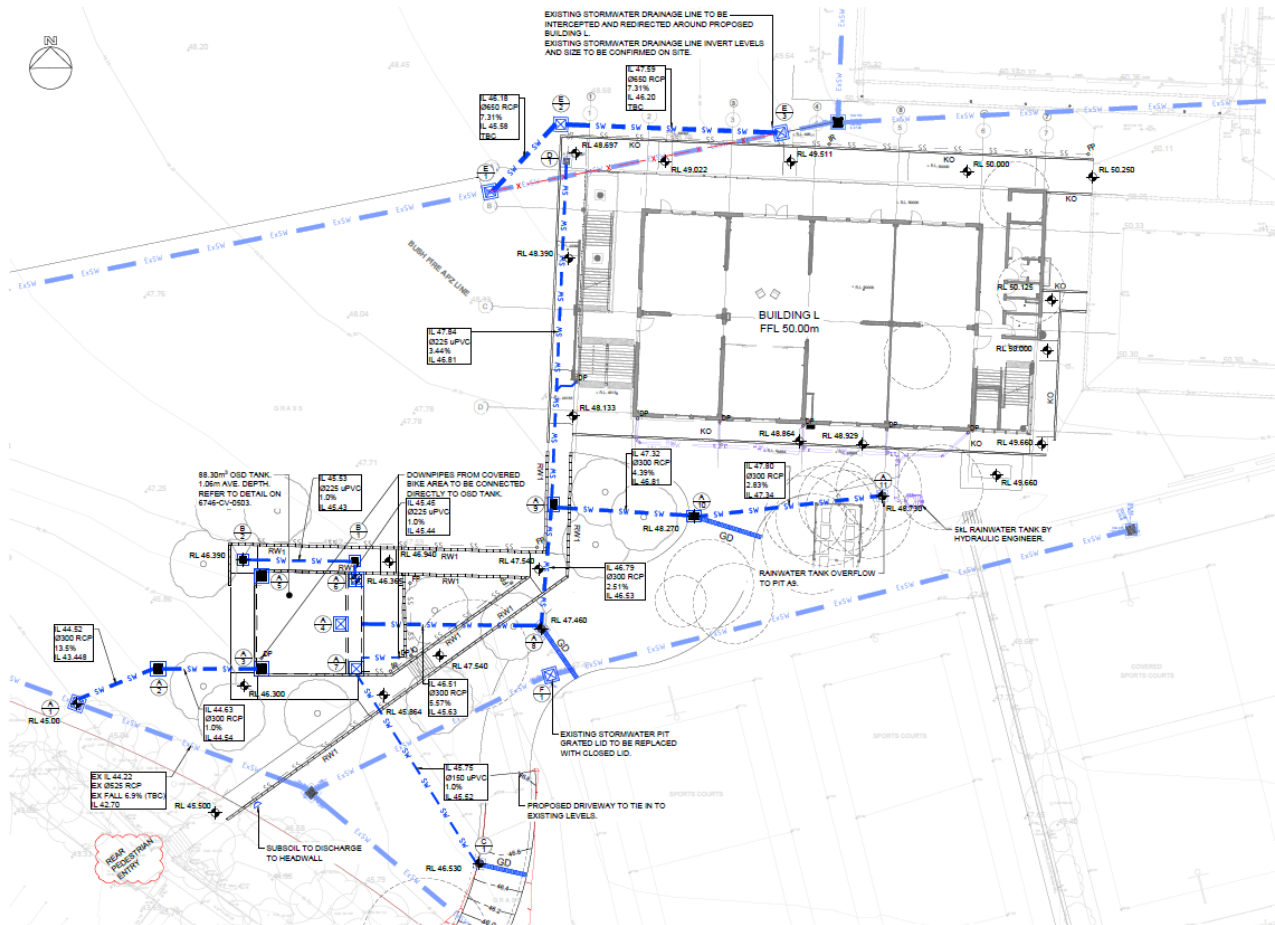


Figure 17: Stormwater Plan

3.11 Ecologically Sustainable Development

The proposed activity is targeting a 5 Star Green Star Design & As-Built v1.3 certification including the following key measures:

- 10% improvement in building fabric over NCC 2022 requirements;
- Air-conditioning systems exceeding NCC 2022 requirements;
- Rainwater collection and re-use; and
- 70.62 KW Solar PV system.

3.12 Landscaping

The proposed activity will include landscaping including planting (replacement trees, turf and groundcovers) and footpath and stair construction (**Figure 18**).



Figure 18: Landscaping Plan

3.13 Services

The proposed activity does not require any augmentation of existing sewer, water or electricity supply/capacity. The proposed activity includes minor adjustments to existing in-ground service routes within the site including sewer, electrical conduit and reticulated water.

3.14 School Capacity

The proposed activity seeks to increase the permanent classroom capacity from 960 to 1,200 students with a commensurate increase of staff to 125.

3.15 Construction

Construction Access

Construction access is proposed from Caballo Street as detailed in the Preliminary Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Construction Management

Construction management will include the establishment of erosion and sediment control measures and construction fencing around the activity site as detailed in the Civil Engineering Report and Plans (**Appendix 6**).

Construction Hours

Construction hours will be as follows:

- 7:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Saturday; and
- No work without prior approval on Sundays and Public Holidays

4. Proposal Need and Alternatives

4.1 Proposal Need

The activity is required to support enrolment demand at Rouse Hill High School. The activity will increase the permanent capacity from 960 students to 1,200 students which will assist in meeting existing enrolment demand.

4.2 Alternatives

The proposed activity has been developed following a consideration of options and alternatives to address the need identified above.

Figure 19 provides a summary of Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3 as described in **Table 2** below.

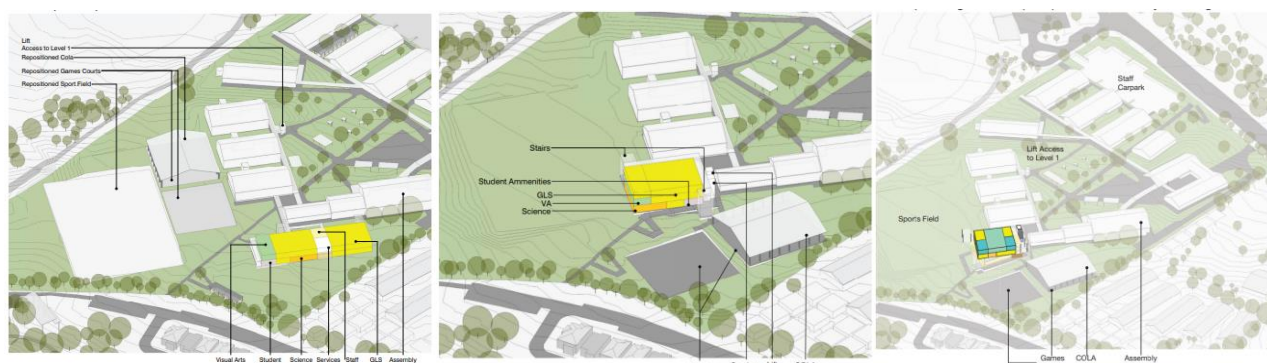


Figure 19: Design Alternatives (Left to Right: Option 1, 2 and 3)

Table 2: Assessment of Options and Alternatives

Option	Discussion	Preferred Option
Design Option 1	This option requires the relocation of the sports field, sports courts and COLA to provide a new two storey permanent classroom building adjacent to Ironbark Ridge Public School.	This option is not preferred due to the extent of adjustment to existing infrastructure.
Design Option 2	This option is a three storey permanent classroom building in a similar location to the resultant chosen Option 3.	This option is not preferred due to adjustments required as part of the Business Case.
Design Option 3	This option is a two storey permanent classroom building with an emergency accessway from Caballo Street.	This option is preferred but was required to be amended to address bush fire protection requirements including the provision of an emergency accessway from Caballo Street.
Option 4: Do Nothing	The do nothing option would require accommodation of the existing and forecast additional students within existing classrooms or within temporary structures.	This option is not preferred as it does not address current or future enrolment demand at Rouse Hill High School and would unduly strain existing infrastructure.

5. Statutory and Strategic Framework

This section of the REF describes the statutory framework under which the proposed activity has been assessed.

Section 2.109 of the TI SEPP lists an emergency accessway and associated vegetation/tree removal as development that can be undertaken as development without consent by a public authority on any land.

Section 3.37 of the TI SEPP lists the development that can be undertaken as development permitted without consent on an existing or approved government school. Rouse Hill High School is an existing and approved government school. A permanent classroom is one of the developments that can be undertaken as development permitted without consent in Section 3.37 (1)(a)(iii) of the TI SEPP.

Section 100B of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (RF Act) is relevant for the proposed permanent classroom building. A bush fire safety authority must be obtained from the NSW RFS before developing bush fire prone land for a special fire protection purpose. A school is listed as a special fire protection purpose.

The *Roads Act 1993* is a relevant consideration for works within Caballo Street. The department will be required to determine whether as a public authority any approval is required.

5.1 Permissibility and Planning Approval Pathway

This section of the REF identifies the relationship between the proposed activity and the planning framework.

5.1.1 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Part 5 of the EP&A Act applies to, amongst other things, development for which consent is not required under either Part 3A or Part 4 of the Act. The provisions of TI SEPP allow the proposed activity to be carried out as 'development without consent' under Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Accordingly, Part 5 of the Act relates to the proposed activity.

Section 5.5 of the EP&A Act places a duty on the determining authority to consider the environmental impact that may arise from undertaking the activity, specifically stating that:

“(1) For the purpose of attaining the objects of this Act relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment, a determining authority in its consideration of an activity shall, notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act or the provisions of any other Act or of any instrument made under this or any other Act, examine and take into account to the fullest extent possible all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment by reason of that activity.”

This REF has been prepared to assist the determining authority in fulfilling its statutory obligations under Section 5.5 of the EP&A Act.

This REF also considers the requirements of Section 6.28 of the EP&A Act and Section 170, Section 171 and Section 171A of the EP&A Regulation.

The TI SEPP aims to facilitate the effective delivery of infrastructure and educational establishments across the state and provides that various developments for the purposes of a government school are permitted without consent. The proposed activity is development permitted without consent as outlined at **Table 3**.

Table 3: Description of Proposed Activities

Division and Section within TI SEPP	Description of Works
2.109	The proposed activity comprises an emergency accessway which can be undertaken by a public authority as development permitted without consent on any land under Section 2.109 of the TI SEPP. Associated vegetation and tree removal can occur under Section 2.3(3) of the TI SEPP.
3.37	<p>The proposed activity comprises construction, operation or maintenance on behalf of a public authority within the boundaries of an existing or approved government school, including the construction of a permanent classroom.</p> <p>The proposed activity involves the construction of building(s) with a maximum height of 2 storeys which is less than the greater of four storeys or the height limit of 10m in the environmental planning instrument applying to the site.</p> <p>The proposed activity would not result in the contravention of any existing condition of the development consent currently operating (other than a complying development certificate) that applies to any part of the school, relating to hours of operation, noise, vehicular movement, traffic generation, loading, waste management or landscaping (refer to Table 4).</p>
3.38	Section 3.38 of TI SEPP sets out the notification requirements to the local Council and occupiers of adjoining land. Written notice will be given to the local Council and the occupiers of adjoining land. Any response received within 21 days of the notice being given will be considered.
Schedule 8	The activity has been designed in accordance with Schedule 8 as summarised in Section 2.2.1 and detailed in the Architectural Design and Landscape Report in Appendix 5 .

Activities permissible without consent require environmental impact assessment in accordance with Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act and are assessed and determined by a public authority, referred to as the determining authority. The department is the proponent and determining authority for the proposed works.

Additionally, section 5.7 of the EP&A Act states that an activity that is likely to significantly affect the environment must be subject of an Environmental Impact Statement rather than an REF. The effects of the activity on the environment are considered in Section 7 and have been assessed as a less than significant impact and can therefore proceed under a REF assessment.

Section 171(1) of the EP&A Regulation notes that when considering the likely impact of an activity on the environment, the determining authority must take into account the environmental factors specified in the guidelines that apply to the activity.

The *Guidelines for Division 5.1 Assessments* (DPE June 2022) and the *Guidelines for Division 5.1 assessments Consideration of environmental factors for health services facilities and schools*

Addendum (DPHI, October 2024) provide a list of environmental factors that must be taken into account for an environmental assessment of the activity under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act. These factors are considered in detail in Section 7 of this REF.

Existing Development Consents

The Hills Shire Council granted development consent to DA 1293/2007/HC for the construction of Rouse Hill High School. **Table 4** provides a review of the relevant conditions of consent in relation to Section 3.37(4) of the TI SEPP.

Table 4: Review of Conditions

Condition No.	Condition	Category	Compliance of Activity
1	Approved Landscape Plans	Landscaping	The landscaping within the proposed permanent classroom and associated works footprint are subject to Tree Management Permit 261/2025/TR and accordingly Section 3.37(4) of the TI SEPP is not contravened in relation to landscaping.
8	<p><u>Planting Requirements</u></p> <p>All trees planted as part of the approved landscape plan are to be minimum 75litre size. All shrubs planted as part of the approved landscape plan are to be minimum 200mm pot size.</p> <p>The <i>Casuarina cunninghamiana</i> shown on the approved landscape plan is to be replaced with <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> and the <i>Eucalyptus amplifolia</i> (Cabbage Gum) is to be replaced with <i>Eucalyptus moluccana</i> (Coastal Grey Box).</p>	Landscaping	
9	<p><u>Adhere to Approved Waste Management Plan</u></p> <p>The Waste Management Plan submitted to Council must be adhered to at all stages in the demolition/construction/design of facilities and on-going use phases. All waste material nominated for recycling must be reused or recycled. Dockets/receipts verifying recycling/disposal must be kept and presented to Council when required.</p>	Waste Management	The proposed activity does not seek to alter the existing operational waste management at Rouse Hill High School and accordingly Section 3.37(4) of the TI SEPP is not contravened in relation to waste management.
11	<p><u>Waste Collection</u></p> <p>Waste and recycling material, generated by the premises, must not be collected between the hours of 10pm and 6am on any day.</p>	Waste Management	
12	<p><u>Waste Management</u></p> <p>To ensure the adequate storage and collection of waste from the occupation or use of the premises, all garbage and recyclable materials emanating from the premises must be stored in a designated waste storage area.</p> <p>The waste storage area must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i). provided with a hose tap connected to the water supply; ii). paved with impervious floor 	Waste Management	

Condition No.	Condition	Category	Compliance of Activity
	<p>materials;</p> <p>iii). graded and drained to a waste disposal system in accordance with the requirements of the relevant regulatory authority (Sydney Water);</p> <p>iv). adequately ventilated (mechanically or naturally) so that odour emissions do not cause offensive odour as defined by the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997;</p> <p>v). fitted with appropriate interventions to meet fire safety standards in accordance with the Building Code of Australia.</p>		
24	<p><u>Roads and Traffic Authority Requirements</u></p> <p>Compliance with the following requirements of the Roads and Traffic Authority:-</p> <p>(a) The implementation of a 40km/hr speed zone across the frontage of the site and extending past the existing Ironbark Ridge Primary School in accordance with the requirements of the RTA attached as Appendix 1 to this consent.</p> <p>(b) The existing indented bus bay on the eastern side of Withers Road is required to be lengthened to accommodate two (2) buses.</p> <p>(c) The construction of:</p> <p>(i) An indented bus bay for five (5) buses along the Withers Road frontage of the site;</p> <p>(ii) A shared pedestrian/cycle path along the Withers Road frontage.</p> <p>(d) The submission of a Traffic and Parking Management Plan to Council's Manager Traffic for approval prior to the occupation of the school.</p> <p>(e) Parent drop-off and pick-up is not permitted along the Withers Road frontage. 'Bus Zone' and 'No Stopping' restrictions are to be installed by the applicant/developer.</p> <p>(f) All civil works along Withers Road are to be completed prior to the occupation of the school.</p> <p>(g) All works/signposting shall be at no cost to the RTA.</p>	Vehicular Movement	The proposed activity does not contravene existing vehicular movement conditions. The proposed activity introduces an emergency accessway to Caballo Street which does not contravene any condition of consent (such as a condition that restricts access from Caballo Street). Being the new access is limited to emergency vehicles only the existing student/staff vehicular movements remain as per the existing consent. Section 3.37(4) of the TI SEPP is not contravened in relation to vehicular movement.
42	<p><u>Landscaping Prior to Occupation of School</u></p> <p>The landscaping of the site being carried</p>	Landscaping	As above.

Condition No.	Condition	Category	Compliance of Activity
	out prior to occupation or use of the premises in accordance with the approved plan and being maintained at all times to Council's Landscaping Development Control Plan.		

The proposed activity would not contravene any existing condition of the consents currently operating (other than a complying development certificate) that applies to any part of the school, related to hours of operation, noise, vehicular movement, traffic generation, loading, waste management or landscaping.

5.2 Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The provisions of the EPBC Act do not affect the proposal as it is not development that takes place on or affects Commonwealth land or waters. Further, it is not development carried out by a Commonwealth agency or development on Commonwealth land, nor does the proposed development affect any matters of national significance. An assessment against the EPBC Act checklist is provided at **Table 5**.

Table 5: EPBC Act Checklist

Consideration	Yes/No
Will the activity have, or likely to have, a significant impact on a declared World Heritage Property?	No
Will the activity have, or likely to have, a significant impact on a National Heritage place?	No
Will the activity have, or likely to have, a significant impact on a declared Ramsar wetland?	No
Will the activity have, or likely to have, a significant impact on Commonwealth listed threatened species or endangered community?	No
Will the activity have, or likely to have, a significant impact on listed migratory species?	No
Will the activity involve any nuclear actions?	No
Will the activity have, or likely to have, a significant impact on Commonwealth marine areas?	No
Will the activity have any significant impact on Commonwealth land?	No
Would the activity affect a water resource, with respect to a coal seam gas development or large coal mining development?	No

5.3 Other Approvals and Legislation

Table 6 identifies any additional approvals that may be required for the proposed activity.

Table 6: Consideration of other approvals and legislation

Legislation	Relevant ?	Approval Required ?	Applicability
State Legislation			
<i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>	Yes	No	<p>The <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> (NPW Act) aims to conserve nature, objects, places or features of cultural value within the landscape.</p> <p>An AHIMS search was undertaken on 14 January 2025 which identified one (1) Aboriginal site near the subject site, however there are no AHIMS sites within the study area.</p> <p>An Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Report has been prepared by GML Heritage (Appendix 14). GML Heritage undertook a site inspection on 8 April 2024 and did not identify any Aboriginal objects or areas with archaeological potential. GML Heritage did not observe any Aboriginal objects during surface exposure. GML Heritage do not recommend further Aboriginal archaeological investigations.</p>
<i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>	Yes	Yes	<p>Part of the site is mapped as bush fire prone land. A Bush Fire Safety Authority under S100B of the RF act is required.</p> <p>A Bushfire Assessment Report has been prepared by Building Code & Bushfire Hazard Solutions Pty Ltd (Appendix 10). The activity has been designed in accordance with PBP 2019 and the NCC 2022 as required under specification 43 Building Code of Australia for certain Class 9 Buildings, including schools.</p>
<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>	Yes	No	An Accessibility Assessment Report was prepared by BM+G which has determined the proposal is capable of compliance with the relevant provisions of the DDA Act subject to further assessment of the design prior to issue of a Crown Certificate.
<i>Native Title (New South Wales) Act 1994</i>	No	No	A review of the National Native Title Register (NNTR) has not identified any Native Title Claims that have been administered by the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) on the subject site or in the immediate vicinity of the subject site.
<i>Water Management Act 2000</i>	No	No	The proposed permanent classroom is not within 40m of a watercourse (approximately 60m from nearest mapped hydra-line).
<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>	Yes	No	The site is not mapped as containing areas of high biodiversity values on the Biodiversity Values Map under the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> (BC Act). The nearest mapped area is approximately 310m

Legislation	Relevant ?	Approval Required ?	Applicability
			to the north-east of the site. A Flora and Fauna Assessment has been prepared by Ecoplanning (Appendix 11). The proposed activity does not have the potential to significantly affect the environment or significantly affect threatened species.
<i>Heritage Act 1977</i>	No	No	Rouse Hill High School is not listed on the Department of Education's s170 Heritage Conservation Register. No relics have been identified.
<i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i>	No	No	N/A
<i>Contaminated Land Management Act 1997</i>	Yes	No	The site is currently being used for a school and has been used as a school since 2007. A detailed site investigation (DSI) has been prepared by Douglas Partners (Appendix 13) which concludes the site is suitable for continued use as a school.
<i>Roads Act 1993</i>	Yes	TBC	Approval if required under Section 138 of the <i>Roads Act 1993</i> for the Caballo Street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temporary Construction Access; and - Emergency Accessway
<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	No	No	N/A
<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (Section 171A)</i>	Yes	No	Section 171A of the EP&A Regulation identifies relevant matters for consideration under the BC SEPP. The BC SEPP applies to the site as it is within the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment. An assessment of the relevant matters is provided in Section 7 of this REF.
State Legislation – State Environmental Planning Policies			
<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021</i>	No	No	N/A
<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i>	Yes	No	The BC SEPP is made relevant pursuant to Section 171A of the EP&A Regulation. An assessment of the relevant matters is provided in Section 7 of this REF.
<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022</i>	Yes	No	The provisions of <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022</i> do not apply to an activity under Part 5 of the EP&A Act. Notwithstanding, the provisions of the SB SEPP have been used to guide the sustainability measures proposed to be implemented as part of the activity as detailed in the Sustainable Development Plan prepared by JHA Consulting Engineers (Appendix 7).
<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and</i>	Yes	No	The site is currently being used for a school and has been used as a school since 2007. A detailed site investigation (DSI) has been prepared by Douglas Partners (Appendix 13) which concludes the site is

Legislation	Relevant ?	Approval Required ?	Applicability
<i>Hazards) 2021</i>			suitable for continued use as a school.
<i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Industry and Employment) 2021</i>	No	No	Chapter 3 outlines the provisions for signage. There is no signage proposed as part of the activity.

5.4 Strategic Plans

Table 7 considers strategic plans that are relevant to the proposed activity.

Table 7: Consideration of applicable Strategic Plans

Strategic Plan	Assessment
<i>Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities</i>	<p>A Metropolis of Three Cities aims to respond to the needs of Greater Sydney's people and the region's current and future structural challenges. The plan identifies three cities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Harbour City (Sydney CBD and North Sydney CBD); • Central River City (Parramatta CBD); and • Western Parkland City (Western Sydney Airport – Badgerys Creek Aerotropolis) <p>The proposed activity is within the Central River City. Central River City is focussed on health, education, research, professional, business and administrative services, noting this, the proposed permanent classroom is consistent with Central River City Plan.</p>
<i>Future Transport Strategy 2056 - Shaping the Future</i>	<p>The Strategy includes the aim of providing children with good access to reliable, accessible public transport to their local high school. The proposed activity is serviced regularly by buses which can also be used to access the Rouse Hill Metro station.</p>
<i>State Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2042 (Infrastructure NSW)</i>	<p>The proposed activity is consistent with this Strategy as it provides modern, digitally enabled learning environments for all students.</p>
<i>Central City District Plan</i>	<p>The proposed activity is consistent with the forecast growth in the education sector in the northwest area.</p>
<i>The Hills Shire Local Strategic Planning Statement</i>	<p>Rouse Hill High School is in the Rouse Hill Strategic Centre. The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) includes the following action for Council:</p> <p><i>Work with the Department of Education to build school infrastructure, and address the shortfall between planned provision and forecast population growth.</i></p> <p>The proposed activity supports this objective of the LSPS.</p>
<i>The Hills Shire Integrated Transport Strategy</i>	<p>The proposed activity is consistent with this Strategy and provides improved sustainable transport options through improving pedestrian connectivity and increasing bicycle parking. Rouse Hill High School is proximate to a future transport corridor from Box Hill to Rouse Hill which will further improve public transport options in the future if/once delivered.</p>
<i>The Hills Shire Environment Strategy 2019</i>	<p>The proposed activity includes removal of planted trees. The activity includes proposed tree replacement planting with species endemic to the locality. Improved tree planting spacing (currently planted in clusters) will likely improve canopy coverage in the</p>

Strategic Plan	Assessment
	medium to long term consistent with the Strategy.
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles	The original approval for Rouse Hill High School was referred to NSW Police to incorporate CPTED principles. The permanent classroom will be constructed with safety and crime prevention in mind. The emergency accessway will incorporate suitable security measures (gated and security camera).
Better Placed: Design Guide for Schools	The activity has been designed in accordance the Design Guide for Schools as detailed in Section 2.6 of the Architectural Design and Landscape Report (Appendix 5).

6. Consultation

6.1 Early Stakeholder Engagement

Table 8 provides a summary of early stakeholder (non-statutory) consultation undertaken to inform project development and preparation of the REF.

Table 8: Summary of Early Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder	Engagement
Aboriginal stakeholders	Stakeholders were consulted through the Connecting with Country process involving a Walk on Country on 9 June 2022. The proposed permanent classroom building incorporates a story motif on the exterior perforated screening and an interior colour palette inspired by local native trees.
Council	Council was consulted in a Pre-DA Meeting (1 July 2022). Key comments related to demonstrating adequate servicing and providing an assessment in relation to noise, stormwater, trees and landscaping. Section 7 of this REF provides an assessment of these matters.
Transport Working Group	The Transport Working Group (TWG) comprising Council, Transport for NSW, the department and Transdev reviewed the proposed activity on 24 May 2023 and 27 May 2024. Council raised no objection in relation to the adequacy of existing car parking or the proposed Cabello Street access.
NSW RFS	The NSW RFS was consulted in relation to the proposed bush fire protection measures.
FIRE NSW	Fire NSW was consulted through the FEBQ process.
Community Consultation	<p>The department has undertaken early community consultation as follows:</p> <p><u>Project Webpage</u></p> <p>A project webpage has been established since September 2022 with regular project updates provided.</p> <p><u>Community Information Session</u></p> <p>A community information session was held on Monday 24 February 2025 with 10 attendees and 3 school community members in attendance.</p>

6.2 Statutory Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with in accordance with statutory requirements under the TI SEPP and having regard to the SCPP DoE. This includes:

- sending notices to adjoining neighbours, owners and occupiers inviting comments within 21 days
- sending notices to the local council and relevant state and commonwealth government agencies and service providers inviting comments within 21 days

- placing an advertisement in the local newspaper
- making the REF publicly available on the Planning Portal throughout the consultation period.

Two submissions were received from Endeavour Energy and NSW RFS raising no objection to the proposed activity.

The Endeavour Energy response includes standard condition requirements including 'Dial before you Dig'.

The NSW RFS response supports the works subject to the mitigation measures contained in the bush fire report prepared as part of the REF.

The above requirements are capable of being incorporated into the Mitigation Measures (if not already incorporated) prior to the authorisation of the activity.

7. Environmental Impact Assessment

This section provides an environmental impact assessment for proposed upgrades to Rouse Hill High School.

The assessment includes an overview of the proposal and provides additional information for any specific environmental issue relating to the site which requires more detailed consideration.

The following environmental aspects are considered to be applicable to the site and the proposed works:

- Bushfire (**Section 7.1**);
- Trees (**Section 7.2**);
- Ecology (**Section 7.3**);
- Traffic, Access and Parking (**Section 7.4**); and
- Other Issues (**Section 7.5**).

7.1 Bushfire

The activity site is mapped as bushfire prone land (**Figure 9**). A Bushfire Assessment Report (BAR) has been prepared by Building Code and Bushfire Hazard Solutions (**Appendix 10**) to determine the bushfire risk to the site and activity and to provide appropriate mitigation measures reduce or eliminate potential impacts from bushfire.

Asset Protection Zone

An Asset Protection Zone (APZ) has already been established for the entire school site pursuant DA1293/2007/HC and accordingly no vegetation removal is required for the establishment of an APZ. The BAR recommends the APZ conform with *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019* (PBP 2019).

Construction Requirements

The BAR recommends the proposed permanent classroom building be constructed to comply with a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) of BAL-19.

Hydrant

The BAR recommends a new dual head pillar hydrant adjacent to the proposed permanent classroom building.

Services

The BAR recommends new services (electricity, gas and water) meet the relevant standards for bushfire protection.

Emergency Management

The BAR recommends the existing bushfire emergency management plan be updated to include the permanent classroom and comply with the current NSW RFS guideline.

7.1.1 Bushfire Mitigation Measures

The bushfire recommendations will ultimately be determined by NSW RFS through a Bush Fire Safety Authority (BFSA) under S100B of the RF Act which is reflected in the mitigation measure proposed in **Table 9**. The specific mitigation measures will be updated once consultation with NSW RFS has occurred as part of public exhibition of the activity.

Table 9: Bushfire Mitigation Measures

ID	Mitigation Measure	Timing
Bushfire		
GMM6*	Bush Fire Safety Authority The obtainment of a bush fire safety authority under Section 100B of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> for the activity and compliance with its requirements.	Throughout

7.2 Trees

The proposed activity will require the removal of seven trees to facilitate the emergency accessway, inclusive of four trees within the Caballo Street road reserve and three trees within the Rouse Hill High School site (**Figure 10**). 12 trees have already been approved for removal under Council Tree Permit No. 261/2025/TR. Removal of all 19 trees has been assessed under the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (**Appendix 9**).

Table 10 provides an overview of the trees requiring removal and the authorisation pathway.

Table 10: Tree Removal

Tree No.	Species	Height x Spread x DBH	Removal Authorisation
1	Iron bark (<i>Eucalyptus crebra</i>)	8 x 1.8 x 0.15	Part 5
2	Cootamundra wattle (<i>Acacia baileyana</i>)	2.2 x 2 x 0.05	Part 5
3	Forest red (<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>)	9 x 3.8 x 0.34	Part 5
4	Swamp she oak (<i>Casuarina glauca</i>)	5.8 x 2.2 x 0.16	Part 5
6	Claret Ash (<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa</i>) 'Raywoodii'	6 x 3.2 x 0.12	Tree Permit
7	Claret Ash (<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa</i>) 'Raywoodii'	5.5 x 1.9 x 0.19	Tree Permit
8	Claret Ash (<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa</i>) 'Raywoodii'	5.5 x 1.9 x 0.21	Tree Permit
9	Spotted gum (<i>Corymbia maculata</i>)	11 x 3.5 x 0.27	Tree Permit
10	Grey box (<i>Eucalyptus moluccana</i>)	8 x 3 x 0.15	Part 5
11	Lemon-scented (<i>Corymbia citriodora</i>)	14 x 4 x 0.32	Part 5
12	Forest red gum (<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>)	13 x 3.5 x 0.25	Part 5
13-20	Mixed group	15 x 4 x 0.27	Tree Permit

7.2.1 Tree Protection Mitigation Measures

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report concludes the activity is not likely to have significant environmental impacts in relation to retained trees subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures in **Table 11**. Tree replacement planting is considered in **Section 7.3** of this REF.

Table 11: Arborist Mitigation Measures

ID	Mitigation Measure	Timing
Arborist		
TMM2*	Project Arborist A Project Arborist is to be appointed to oversee arboricultural works for the activity. A Project Arborist is a person with a minimum Australian Qualification Framework Level 5 Diploma of Arboriculture or Horticulture qualification. Project Arborist Certification is to be provided: (1) Before commence of demolition or construction to confirm the Tree Protection Zone fencing has been installed; (2) At completion of the construction phase to ensure trees are all free of any construction damage.	Throughout
TMM3*	Tree Removal Tree removal authorised as part of this activity is limited to tree Nos. 1-4 and 10-12 and is to be undertaken by a qualified Arborist following AS 4374 (Pruning of Amenity Trees, 2007).	Construction
TMM4*	Tree Protection - Fencing Tree protection fencing is to be installed as per the Tree Protection Plan (Appendix 1 of the Arborist Report by Moore Trees) being a 1.8m high chain mesh fence (Appendix 5 of the Arborist Report), with appropriate signage (Appendix 6 of the Arborist Report) and maintained throughout the works until a Completion Certificate is issued.	Prior to the commencement of construction
TMM5*	Tree Protection – General The following activities are prohibited within the Tree Protection Zone of retained trees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erecting site sheds or portable toilets; Trenching, ripping or cultivation of soil (with the exception of approved foundations or underground services); Soil level changes or fill material; Storage of building materials; Disposal of waste materials, solid or liquid. 	Construction

7.3 Ecology

A Flora and Fauna Assessment has been prepared by Ecoplanning (**Appendix 11**). A field survey was undertaken on 18 February 2025 to determine vegetation communities, flora, fauna and fauna habitat.

Vegetation Communities

The flora and fauna report indicates that the State Vegetation Type Map (SVTM) includes a number of vegetation communities being wholly outside of the proposed activity area (**Figure 20**).



Figure 20: Mapped Vegetation Communities

The field survey concluded that vegetation within the study area was a combination of planted natives, exotics and exotic grassland.

Flora

The field survey recorded a total of 24 flora species within the study area of which 13 were native. No threatened flora species were observed.

Fauna and Fauna Habitat

The field survey recorded a total of seven fauna species within the study area all being birds common to urban environments. No threatened fauna species were observed.

Direct Impacts

Impacts to 0.17 ha of planted and exotic vegetation are expected through the removal of planted canopy trees, shrubs and grasses. No hollows or nests were identified in the trees to be removed. However, the loss of canopy trees and shrub layer may reduce foraging, roosting or refuge habitat for mobile flora species. A mitigation measure is proposed for replacement canopy planting (1:1) in order that there is no net impact to canopy in the medium to long term.

Indirect Impacts

Indirect impacts are likely to be limited given the low ecological constraints present however mitigation measures are recommended.

Legislative Requirements

A referral to the Commonwealth under the EPBC Act is not required. The field survey did not identify any Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) listed under the EPBC Act within the study area. One threatened fauna species listed under the EPBC Act, the grey-headed Flying-fox, has moderate likelihood of occurrence for foraging purposes only. The required impact assessment has concluded that given the small amount of habitat proposed for removal, the activity will not have a significant impact upon an important population of the species.

The proposed activity is satisfactory with respect to the BC Act. No TECs listed under the BC Act were identified in the study area. Two threatened fauna species listed under the BC Act, the grey-headed Flying-fox and Powerful Owl, have moderate likelihood of occurrence for foraging purposes only. The requirement test of significance has concluded that no significant impacts to threatened species will occur as a result of the proposed activity.

7.3.1 Ecology Mitigation Measures

The flora and fauna report concludes the activity is not likely to have significant environmental impacts in relation to retained trees subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures in **Table 12**.

Table 12: Biodiversity Mitigation Measures

ID	Mitigation Measure	Timing
Biodiversity		
FF1*	Pre-Clearance Survey A pre-clearance survey is to be undertaken 24 hours prior to removal of planted native and exotic vegetation by a suitably qualified ecologist to ensure fauna is not activity using the vegetation as breeding habitat.	Prior to the commencement of construction
FF2*	Exotic Vegetation All exotic vegetation removed as part of the activity is to be disposed of off-site at a licenced green waste facility.	Throughout
FF3*	Replacement Planting and Landscaping Nineteen (19) replacement canopy trees are to be planted (inclusive of the trees to be replanted under any relevant tree permit from The Hills Shire Council). Replacement canopy tree planting and any landscaping undertaken as part of the activity is to be flora species from local PCTs such as PCT 3320 and PCT 3321. Any landscaping undertaken as part of the works is also to use flora species from local PCT.	Construction

7.4 Traffic, Access and Parking

A transport impact assessment (TIA) has been prepared by Stantec Australia (**Appendix 12**). A preliminary construction traffic management plan (PCTMP) has also been prepared by Stantec Australia.

Traffic

The TIA indicates that the existing AM/PM total student vehicle movements is 316/211. The TIA indicates that the vehicle usage, factoring in broader traffic infrastructure upgrades (by others), is capable of being limited to 250 vehicles in the moderate mode share scenario. This is a reduction in the AM and a minor increase in the PM. Accordingly, the activity is not likely to result in significant traffic impacts.

Parking

The proposed activity continues to rely on existing car parking arrangements from Withers Road. The Hills DCP requires 165 parking spaces and approximately 207 parking spaces are available. In addition the proposed activity includes the construction of an additional 20 bicycle spaces resulting in a total of 60 bicycle parking spaces.

Emergency Accessway

The proposed activity includes the construction of an emergency accessway from Caballo Street. The emergency accessway will be utilised for emergency purposes only.

Construction

Construction access is proposed via Caballo Street (**Figure 21**). The PCTMP indicates construction workers are capable of using public transport and parking in Caballo Street subject to agreement with Council.

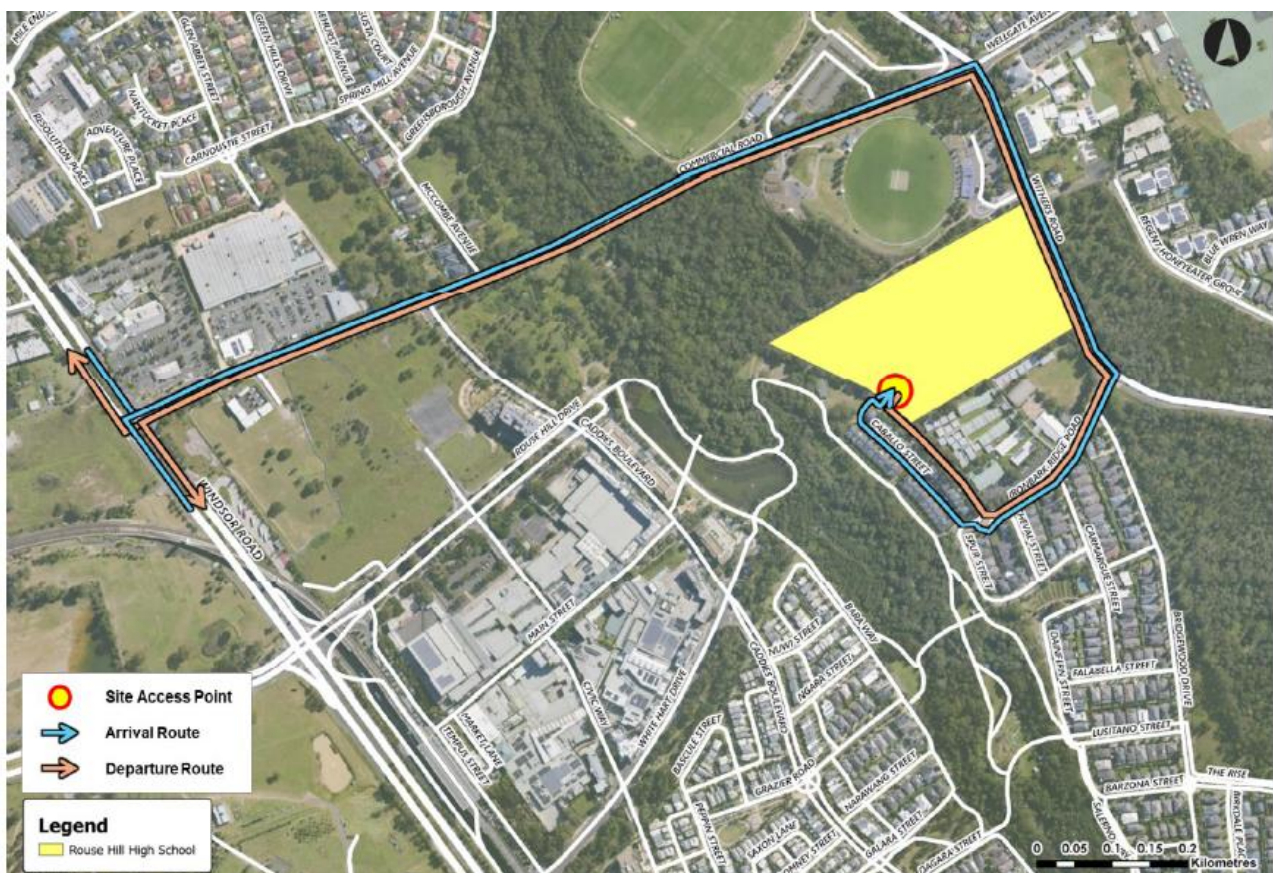


Figure 21: Proposed Construction Vehicle Route

7.4.1 Traffic, Access and Parking Mitigation Measures

The Stantec Australia reports concludes the activity is not likely to have significant environmental impacts in relation to parking and traffic subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures in **Table 13**.

ID	Mitigation Measure	Timing
Construction Traffic, Access and Parking		
CMM17*	<p>Construction Worker Parking</p> <p>Construction workers should be guided where appropriate parking is available around the site on induction and also be encouraged to use public transport services. During site induction, workers are to be informed of the existing bus and train routes servicing the site. Appropriate arrangements are to be made for any equipment/ tool storage and drop-off requirements.</p> <p>The Principal Contractor would be required to outline a schedule of worker start and finish times and demonstrate that this does not have any significant impact on local traffic activity. It is also expected that the Principal Contractor would be required to implement measures to reduce worker car travel, such as shuttle buses from key transport nodes or designated remote pick-up points as necessary.</p>	Construction
CMM18*	<p>Construction Vehicle Routes</p> <p>Construction vehicles are required follow specified routes as per the Preliminary Construction Traffic Management Plan prepared by Stantec Australia. The Principal Contractor is required to provide Traffic Guidance Schemes (TGSs) for the proposed works.</p>	Construction
CMM19*	<p>Traffic Management Measures</p> <p>Where pedestrian or cyclist routes are affected, accredited traffic controllers will be provided to manage the impact and minimise conflict between vehicles and pedestrians or cyclists.</p> <p>Where possible, construction heavy vehicle movements along Ironbark Ridge Road and Caballo Street will occur outside of school pick-up and drop-off periods.</p> <p>Traffic management measures (e.g. deployment of traffic controllers) will be provided along Ironbark Ridge Road, including intersection with Caballo Street to manage construction heavy vehicle movements.</p>	Construction
Operational Traffic, Access and Parking		
OPTMM2*	<p>Keep Clear Signage</p> <p>Implement keep clear signage across the school car park entrance pavement subject to agreement with Council.</p>	Prior to the commencement of operations

7.5 Other issues

Table 13 provides a summary of the other potential environmental issues including those assessed in the specialist consulting reports accompanying this REF.

Table 13: Summary of Other Issues

Issue	Consideration
Noise and Vibration	<p>An Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment has been prepared by JHA Services (Appendix 8).</p> <p>Noise Emission - Operational</p> <p>The report demonstrates compliance with operational noise emission limitations in relation to nearby sensitive receivers including the residential properties on Caballo Street subject to mitigation measures.</p> <p>Noise Emission – Construction</p> <p>The residential properties on Caballo Street will likely be impacted by construction noise during the works. The works are proposed to be undertaken in accordance with The Hills Shire Council's allowable construction hours being during Monday – Saturday 7am to 5pm. No work is to be carried out on Sunday or Public Holidays.</p> <p>Mitigation measures relating to noise and vibration are provided in Appendix 1.</p>
Contamination	<p>A Detailed Site Investigation has been prepared by Douglas Partners (Appendix 13) with supplementary advice from JBS&G on groundwater (Appendix 13).</p> <p>The proposed activity does not require remediation to be undertaken.</p> <p>The proposed activity does not change the approved use of the site which was previously determined to be suitable in relation to contamination.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, precautionary mitigation measures in relation to unexpected finds and prohibiting the use of groundwater for drinking water/irrigation are provided in Appendix 1.</p>
Hydrology, Flooding and Water Quality	<p>A civil engineering report and plans has been prepared by Enstruct (Appendix 6).</p> <p>Flooding</p> <p>The activity site is not flood affected.</p> <p>Water Quality</p> <p>The proposed stormwater design includes an On Site Detention (OSD) tank and rainwater tank (included re-use).</p> <p>The stormwater design is in accordance with the guidelines for the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment. Mechanical pollutant removal devices are proposed to be incorporated to remove gross pollutants, suspended solids, reduce nutrient runoff including nitrogen and phosphorous.</p> <p>The proposed stormwater connects to an existing stormwater line within the site.</p> <p>Section 171A(1) of the EP&A Regulation applies to the proposed activity and requires consideration of certain sections of <i>State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021</i> (BC SEPP) in relation to water quality/quantity, aquatic ecology, flooding and recreation/public access. The matters of relevance to the activity relate to water quality/quantity and the proposed activity includes the relevant measures to control the quality of quantity of water entering natural waterbodies in accordance with Council requirements. The mandatory considerations of the BC SEPP are considered to be satisfied in the design of the proposed activity.</p> <p>Construction</p> <p>The civil engineering plans include sediment and erosion controls measures.</p> <p>Compliance with the civil engineering requirements forms a mitigation measure in Appendix 1.</p>
Visual Amenity and Privacy	<p>The proposed permanent classroom building is substantially separated from the nearest residential properties on Caballo Street that no adverse visual amenity or privacy impacts are likely.</p>
Overshadowing	<p>The proposed permanent classroom building will not result in overshadowing of neighbouring residential properties. The proposed development will overshadow a small portion of the playing fields in the morning period mid-winter (Appendix 5, page 45).</p>

Issue	Consideration															
Aboriginal Heritage	<p>An Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence Assessment has been prepared by GML Heritage (Appendix 14).</p> <p>The <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> aims to conserve nature, objects, places or features of cultural value within the landscape. An AHIMS search was undertaken on 14 January 2025 which identified one (1) Aboriginal site near the subject site, however there are no AHIMS sites within the study area.</p> <p>GML Heritage undertook a site inspection on 8 April 2024 and did not identify any Aboriginal objects or areas with archaeological potential. GML Heritage did not observe an Aboriginal objects during surface exposure. GML Heritage do not recommend further Aboriginal archaeological investigations.</p> <p>An unexpected finds protocol is recommended as detailed in Appendix 1.</p>															
Waste	<p>Operational waste will be unaffected by the proposed works which is collected via a separate service driveway on Withers Road. The proposed works will result in the generation of non-hazardous waste. Waste management arrangements are proposed to comply with Council requirements and form part of the Demolition and Construction Management Plan (DCMP) as detailed in Appendix 1.</p>															
Environmental Heritage	<p>There are not heritage items on the site. The site is in vicinity of a local heritage item located known as “Lintbrae” House.</p> <p>“Lintbrae” House is located on the Eastern side of Withers Road, 250m from the proposed permanent classroom building.</p> <p>The new building will not be visible from “Lintbrae” house due to topography and existing builtform/vegetation. Accordingly, the proposed permanent classroom is not considered to detract from the heritage significance of “Lintbrae” house.</p>															
Social Impact	<p>The following table provides an assessment of social impact.</p> <table><tr><th>Type of Impact</th><th>Describe the impacts on the community and how they might be experienced, either positively or negatively</th><th>Discussion</th></tr><tr><td>Impacts on access – will there be an improvement to the quality of provision and a response to emerging and changing needs?</td><td>Increased emergency vehicle access.</td><td>The additional emergency accessway will provide an improved safety outcome for the school.</td></tr><tr><td>Impacts on privacy, overshadowing, peace and quiet, and visual amenity (views / vistas) - will there be significant change for neighbours and the local area during both construction and operation?</td><td>Tree removal for emergency accessway.</td><td>Privacy impacts will be minor as the proposed tree removal will only result in minor additional sightlines to residential dwellings and not into private open space areas.</td></tr><tr><td>Impacts on sense of place - will there be effects on community cohesion or how people feel connected to the place and its character?</td><td>Impacts on the sense of place will be minimal.</td><td>The site is already used for a school.</td></tr><tr><td>Impacts on the way people get around – will there be changes</td><td>Bicycle storage – encouraged active transport modes</td><td>The proposed bike storage providing students with a</td></tr></table>	Type of Impact	Describe the impacts on the community and how they might be experienced, either positively or negatively	Discussion	Impacts on access – will there be an improvement to the quality of provision and a response to emerging and changing needs?	Increased emergency vehicle access.	The additional emergency accessway will provide an improved safety outcome for the school.	Impacts on privacy, overshadowing, peace and quiet, and visual amenity (views / vistas) - will there be significant change for neighbours and the local area during both construction and operation?	Tree removal for emergency accessway.	Privacy impacts will be minor as the proposed tree removal will only result in minor additional sightlines to residential dwellings and not into private open space areas.	Impacts on sense of place - will there be effects on community cohesion or how people feel connected to the place and its character?	Impacts on the sense of place will be minimal.	The site is already used for a school.	Impacts on the way people get around – will there be changes	Bicycle storage – encouraged active transport modes	The proposed bike storage providing students with a
Type of Impact	Describe the impacts on the community and how they might be experienced, either positively or negatively	Discussion														
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Impacts on sense of place - will there be effects on community cohesion or how people feel connected to the place and its character?	Impacts on the sense of place will be minimal.	The site is already used for a school.														
Impacts on the way people get around – will there be changes	Bicycle storage – encouraged active transport modes	The proposed bike storage providing students with a														

Issue	Consideration		
	associated with traffic or parking in the area?		dedicated and secure bike storage facility, this will encourage more students to use active forms of transport when commuting to and from school, potentially reducing the reliance on private and public transport.
	Impacts on wellbeing - will there be benefits for students and the community associated with better school facilities, sporting facilities and grounds, and active transport options?	Improved school facilities including additional bicycle storage and pedestrian connectivity.	The proposed teaching facility and associated amenities will improve on the existing schools facilities. The new teaching facility will contain multiple accessible group learning spaces and science labs, with associated amenities.

7.6 Cumulative Impact

The construction of permanent classroom building and emergency accessway for Rouse Hill High School will support the rapid development and growing population of Rouse Hill. Rouse Hill has been subject to substantial development over recent years with the establishment of the Rouse Hill Metro Station. The site has been used as a school since the approval in 2007. The upgrades to Rouse Hill will provide for necessary social infrastructure to support this growth.

The proposed activity will further mitigate bushfire risk through the provision of an emergency accessway. The cumulative impacts to tree canopy from the removal of trees for the emergency accessway and permanent classroom building is mitigated through replacement tree planting which will result in no net loss of canopy in the medium to long term.

7.7 Consideration of Environmental Factors

Section 171(1) of the EP&A Regulation notes that when considering the likely impact of an activity on the environment, the determining authority must take into account the environmental factors specified in the guidelines that apply to the activity.

Section 171A of the EP&A Regulation sets out additional matters to take into account when considering the likely impact of an activity on the environment in a regulated catchment (refer to **Table 13** above).

The assessment provided in the sections above has been prepared to provide a detailed consideration of the factors that must be taken into account for an assessment under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act. These factors are summarised at **Table 14**.

Table 14: Environmental Factors considered

Environmental Factor	Consideration	Mitigation Measure Reference
Any environmental impact on a community?	<p>The community impacts that could arise from the proposed activity relate to construction traffic and parking, landscaping, bushfire, noise and vibration, stormwater management and social impacts. These impacts have been considered as part of this REF report, and where required, mitigation measures have been included to minimise potential impacts where they are unable to be avoided.</p> <p>The Rouse Hill High School Upgrade will have a beneficial impact for the community, through the provision of educational services to children and families in permanent teaching facilities, the addition of an emergency accessway, and expansion of on-site bicycle parking.</p> <p>During construction works, there are anticipated to be some impacts relating to noise and traffic. These impacts are temporary and are considered to be acceptable, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures.</p>	Multiple
Any transformation of a locality?	<p>The proposed activity will not result in any substantial transformation of the locality with the permanent classroom building being limited to two storeys and well setback from any public road.</p> <p>The Caballo Street emergency accessway is for emergency vehicles only and accordingly is unlikely to impact the locality of Caballo Street once operational.</p> <p>The loss of existing vegetation will be offset at a 1:1 ratio with replacement tree planting.</p>	Multiple
Any environmental impact on the ecosystems of the locality?	<p>Vegetation removal is limited to planted native or exotic vegetation and which are not part of TECs under the BC Act or EPBC Act.</p> <p>Environmental impacts on proximate ecosystems will be minimised with the use of sediment and erosion controls during construction.</p> <p>There are no foreseeable ongoing environmental impacts through the implementation of water quality measures.</p>	Multiple
Any reduction of the aesthetic, recreational, scientific or other environmental quality or value of a locality?	<p>There are no foreseeable reductions to the aesthetic, recreational, scientific or other environmental quality or value of the locality as a result of the activity in the long-term through the provision of replacement tree planting.</p>	Multiple

Environmental Factor	Consideration	Mitigation Measure Reference
Any effect on locality, place or building having aesthetic, anthropological, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific or social significance or other special value for present or future generations?	There are no foreseeable effects on any significant locality, place or building. Aboriginal heritage and environmental heritage have been considered and no areas/items of significance were identified (refer to Table 13).	Multiple
Any impact on the habitat of protected animals, within the meaning of the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> ?	The site is not mapped as an area of outstanding biodiversity values under the BC Act. The proposal is not likely to result in a significant impact as defined by the BC Act and detailed in the flora and fauna report accompanying this REF. No hollow-bearing trees were identified in field surveys. Pre-clearing management by an ecologist is proposed as a mitigation measure.	Multiple
Any endangering of any species of animal, plant or other form of life, whether living on land, in water or in the air?	The Flora and Fauna Assessment determined the activity will not likely endanger any species of animal having regards to the criteria within both the EPBC Act and BC Act.	Multiple
Any long-term effects on the environment?	There are no foreseeable long-term effects on the environment as a result of the activity.	Multiple
Any degradation of the quality of the environment?	The activity will require the removal of planted exotic and native vegetation. Suitable offset planting will ensure the environment is not degraded in the medium to long-term. The demolition and construction phase of the works will result in some short-term degradation. This can be appropriately managed by the contractor through the implementation of the mitigation measures.	Multiple
Any risk to the safety of the environment?	Subject to compliance with the mitigation measures, the proposal will not result in any risk to the safety of the environment. The activity has been developed having regard to the environmental constraints of the site and surrounding area.	Multiple
Any reduction in the range of beneficial uses of the environment?	There are no foreseeable reduction in the range of beneficial uses of the environment as the works are located within a school site and within a vegetated verge area on Caballo Street. Both existing uses will be maintained.	Multiple
Any pollution of the environment?	Impacts associated with pollution are capable of being managed through the implementation of mitigation measures during the	Multiple

Environmental Factor	Consideration	Mitigation Measure Reference
	demolition and construction phase.	
Any environmental problems associated with the disposal of waste?	There are no foreseeable environmental problems associated with the disposal of waste which will be required to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Council and contained within a Demolition and Construction Management Plan (DCMP).	Multiple
Any increased demands on resources (natural or otherwise) that are, or are likely to become, in short supply?	The proposal is unlikely to result in any increased demands on resources (natural or otherwise) that are, or are likely to become, in short supply.	Multiple
Any cumulative environmental effects with other existing or likely future activities?	The cumulative impacts are likely to be short-term and given the long-term benefits associated with the activity, are considered to be acceptable.	Multiple
Any impact on coastal processes and coastal hazards, including those under projected climate change conditions?	Not applicable.	Multiple
Applicable local strategic planning statement, regional strategic plan or district strategic plan made under Division 3.1 of the Act?	The Hills Local Strategic Planning Statement applies to the site and is addressed in this REF. The proposal is consistent with the expected land use of the site, being a high school. The proposal is for an additional teaching facility on the existing school site.	Multiple
Any other relevant environmental factors?	Not applicable.	Multiple

8. Justification and Conclusion

The proposed permanent classroom and emergency accessway at Rouse Hill High School are subject to assessment under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act. The REF has examined and taken into account to the fullest extent possible all matters affecting, or likely to affect, the environment by reason of the proposed activity.

As outlined in this REF, the proposed activity can be justified on the following grounds:

- It responds to an existing need within the community;
- It generally complies with, or is consistent with all relevant legislation, plans and policies;
- It has minimal environmental impacts; and
- Adequate mitigation measures have been proposed to address these impacts.

The activity is not likely to significantly affect threatened species, populations, ecological communities or their habitats, and therefore it is not necessary for a Species Impact Statement and/or a BDAR to be prepared. The environmental impacts of the proposal are not likely to be significant. Therefore, it is not necessary for an EIS to be prepared and approval to be sought for the proposal from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces under Division 5.2 of the EP&A Act. On this basis, it is recommended that the department determine the proposed activity in accordance with Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act subject to the implementation of mitigation measures identified within this report.