

# HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT



*St. Mary and St. Mina's Coptic Orthodox College*

No. 339 Forest Road, Bexley

April 2019 | J3475

**Weir  
Phillips**  
**Heritage  
and Planning**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Preamble**

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in conjunction with a Development Application for the construction of a childcare facility at No. 339 Forest Road, Bexley, New South Wales.

The site is located within the Bayside Council Local Government Area (Bayside Council was formed in 2016 after the merger of Botany Bay and Rockdale Council). The principal planning control for the site is the Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP 2011). The site is listed as a heritage item by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the LEP 2011 and is in the vicinity of heritage items identified by this Schedule. Under Part 5.10 of the LEP 2011:

#### **(4) Effect of proposed development on heritage significance**

The consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause in respect of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or area concerned. This subclause applies regardless of whether a heritage management document is prepared under subclause (5) or a heritage conservation management plan is submitted under subclause (6).

#### **(5) Heritage assessment**

The consent authority may, before granting consent to any development:

- (a) on land on which a heritage item is located, or
  - (b) on land that is within a heritage conservation area, or
  - (c) on land that is within the vicinity of land referred to in paragraph (a) or (b),
- require a heritage management document to be prepared that assesses the extent to which the carrying out of the proposed development would affect the heritage significance of the heritage item or heritage conservation area concerned.

The appropriate heritage management document in this instance is a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS).

This statement has been prepared at the request of the owners of the site and accompanies plans prepared by Couvaras Architects.

### **1.2 Authorship**

This statement has been prepared by Louise Doherty, B.Sc.(Hons), Bldg.Cons., and James Phillips, B.Sc.(Arch), B.Arch, M.Herit.Cons.(Hons), of Weir Phillips Heritage.

### **1.3 Limitations**

A detailed history of the site and a full assessment of significance to NSW Heritage Division standards were not provided for. The history contained in this statement was compiled from the readily available sources listed under Section 1.6 below.

An Aboriginal history and assessment was not provided for. No historical archaeology was carried out on the site.

## **1.4 Methodology**

This HIS has been prepared with reference to the NSW Heritage Division publication *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002 update) and with reference to the Council planning documents listed under Section 1.6 below.

## **1.5 Physical Evidence**

An inspection of the property and the surrounding streetscape took place in February 2019 and March 2019. Unless otherwise stated, the photographs contained in this statement were taken during those site visits.

## **1.6 Documentary Evidence**

### **1.6.1 Published**

- Attenbrow, Val, *Sydney's Aboriginal Past: investigating archaeological and historical records*, NSW, UNSW Press, 2002.
- 'Bexley home science girls look back with pride' St George and Sutherland shire leader, online article, October 22 2013 - 11:00AM
- Geeves, Philip & Jervis, James, & Rockdale (N.S.W. : Municipality). Council 1954, *Rockdale, its beginning and development*, Municipal Council of Rockdale, [Rockdale? Australia]
- Hatton, D. J & Hurstville Historical Society 1979, *Hurstville 1770-1850*, Hurstville Historical Society, [Hurstville, N.S.W.]
- John Sands' Ltd, *John Sands, Sydney and Suburban Directories*, Sydney, John Sands' Ltd, various dates.
- Rathbone, R. W. 1980, *A history of Bexley*, R.W. Rathbone, Bexley [N.S.W.]
- *St.Mary & St. Mina's Coptic Orthodox College Website*, <http://stmary.nsw.edu.au/history/>, viewed 20th February 2019
- 'The Suburbs of Sydney, No. XXVII-Hurstville: A History of its Progress', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October, 1925(?). *Mitchell Library Newspaper Cuttings*, Vol. 159.

### **1.6.2 Historic Photographs**

- NSW Lands Department, (*Aerial photograph over Forest Road, Bexley*), 1943. SIX Maps.

### **1.6.3 Planning Documents**

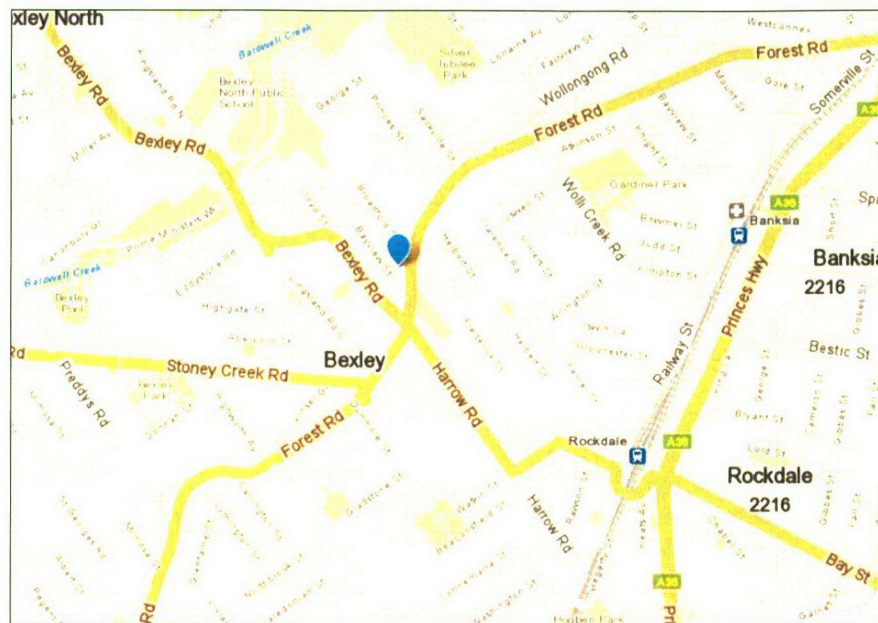
- *Rockdale Local Environmental Plan 2011*.
- *Rockdale Development Control Plan 2011*.

### **1.6.4 Heritage Inventory Sheets**

- *Original Bexley School Buildings*, No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 330153
- *Bexley Primary School*, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley, NSW 2207. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 2330152
- *Pedestrian Bridge at Bexley Central Primary School*, Forest Road, Bexley, NSW 2207. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 4305025

## 1.7 Site Location

No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley is located on the eastern side of the street (**Figure 1**). The site is identified as Lot 11 Plan of D.P. 857373.



**Figure 1:**  
The location  
of the subject  
site.  
Whereis.com.au

## 2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 The Site Before 1870

Present-day Bexley is located on traditional lands of the Bidjigal people. The band's territory is thought to have extended from Cooks River in the north to the Georges River in the south. The first contact between the Aboriginal people of the Botany Bay region and Europeans occurred eighteen years before the arrival of the First Fleet when the *Endeavour*, under Lieutenant James Cook, anchored in Botany Bay on 29 April, 1770 and stayed for eight days. Cook explored the area immediately surrounding Botany Bay, noting the mouths of the two rivers that would later be known as the Cooks and Georges Rivers. While little contact occurred between the two peoples. Members of Cook's party made the earliest known written descriptions of Sydney's original inhabitants.

Three major language groups were thought to have occupied the Sydney region at the end of the eighteenth century. Dharug was the most predominant language over much of the Cumberland Plain. The eight known coastal Dharug-speaking bands are frequently referred to as the Eora, meaning 'here' or 'from this place'.<sup>1</sup> The Eora occupied the area across the southern shores of Sydney Harbour, from Botany Bay in the south to Parramatta in the west.

The Aboriginal people within reach of Port Jackson and Botany Bay absorbed the full impact of the European invasion of 1788. With no resistance to European diseases, the Eora were decimated by an outbreak of smallpox in 1789-90. Traditional lifestyle was

<sup>1</sup> The term Eora is problematic. It is used today in a variety of contexts to refer to the people of the whole of the Sydney region or just those of the Port Jackson and Botany Bay area. Refer to Val Attenbrow, *Sydney's Aboriginal Past: investigating the archaeological and historical records*, NSW, University of New South Wales Press Ltd, 2002, pp. 33-4. The meaning of the term is also contested, with other sources suggesting that it combined the words 'yes' and 'country' or 'place.'

further disrupted by the loss of lands. Conflict followed from the meeting of two fundamentally different cultures. Within 40 years the pre-colonial way of life had all but disappeared from the Sydney region.<sup>2</sup> The intensive development in the district has destroyed much of the evidence of Eora settlement.

## 2.2 Early European Settlement in the Rockdale Area

In 1795, George Bass and Matthew Flinders traced the George River twenty miles beyond the place where John Hunter had completed his survey six years earlier. Their reports of good soil along the river bank- 'equal to any on the banks of the Nile of New South Wales'- prompted the foundation of a new settlement at Bankstown in 1797.<sup>3</sup>

The suitability of land for farming was not the only characteristic of interest to the early colonists. As the number of brick buildings in Sydney began to increase, the search for sources of lime for mortar extended to the Aboriginal middens along the shores of Botany Bay and the Cooks and Georges Rivers. Equally attractive were the thick forests of iron bark, blackbutt, stringybark and blue and red gum that covered the area.

For the greater part of the nineteenth century, European use of this area was limited by the difficulties of access into and out. The earliest principal mode of access was by river; travel overland was slow and depended on a limited number of river crossings. The main land route was by way of Punchbowl Road, through Enfield to the Liverpool Road.<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, the traveller could attempt to ford the river at Tempe; this crossing, however, was both tidal and deep. These transport challenges in turn dictated patterns of settlement.

Several events of the late 1820s and the 1830s drew attention to the undeveloped potential of the area to the south of the Cooks River. In 1828, prominent Sydney merchant Alexander Brodie Spark purchased *Packer's Farm*. Here, on the banks of the Cooks River, he built *Tempe House*. Completed in 1836, Sparke is said to have entertained over 500 people, including leading colonial figures, in his first year of residence.<sup>5</sup> Organised hunting parties passed through the area as Sydney gentlemen sought to emulate the lifestyle of their English counterparts. Less salubrious were the area's associations with outlaws. In 1834, for example, the murderers of Dr. Wardall were hunted between the Cooks and Georges Rivers. The second significant event of this era was the gazettal of the Parish of St. George, announced in the *Sydney Gazette* on 16 May, 1835. The parish encompassed the later Municipalities of Rockdale, Kogarah and Hurstville and part of Canterbury.<sup>6</sup> The most significant event of this period, however, was the completion of the Cooks River Dam in 1839. While unsuccessful in its purpose of improving Sydney's water supply, the dam wall provided the first direct land route between Sydney and the St. George District.

The road across the dam was not officially marked until it became part of Mitchell's Line of Road to the South Coast in 1843. This road, one of the last major projects carried out by convict labour in New South Wales, more or less follows present-day Forest Road. Contemporary to the construction of the Illawarra Road, the older brindle track which gave access to the grants between the Cooks and George's Rivers

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<sup>2</sup> Val Attenbrow, *op cit.*, 2002, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Flinders, cited in D.J. Hatton, *Hurstville 1770-1850*, NSW, Hurstville Historical Society, undated, p.3.

<sup>4</sup> 'The Suburbs of Sydney, No. XXVII-Hurstville: A History of its Progress', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 October, 1925(?). *Mitchell Library Newspaper Cuttings*, Vol. 159.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, p.15.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p.5.

was straightened and improved and given the name Rocky Point Road.<sup>7</sup> The improving of these two routes encouraged an influx of sawyers, charcoal burners, shingle splitters and, to a lesser extent, small farmers and market gardeners.

The wider area comprising the Parish of St. George began to develop slowly, but steadily during the 1840s. The 1841 census records that there were 453 people living in the parish. Of the 87 houses in the parish, 80 were of timber and 7 of stone or brick. At the time of the next census, held in 1846, the population had grown to 611 people.<sup>8</sup>

### 2.3 A Grant Called Bexley

The subject property was first alienated from the Crown during the above period. The site lies on part of a 1,200 acre grant (Portion 142) made to James Chandler on 19 October, 1831 under the hand of Governor Ralph Darling. Chandler named his grant *Bexley*, after Bexley Heath in his native Kent. It was variously referred to as *Bexley* or *Bexley Park*.

Chandler arrived in New South Wales in 1820 as a 'man of substance'. He soon set up as a general merchant in Pitt Street. His first land purchase was 100 acres known as *Sylvester's Farm* in what is now North Bexley and Clemton Park in 1822. His grant of 1831 adjoined this farm. As for many early grants, the land was promised to Chandler in 1822 but not formalised as a grant until 1831.

Chandler's estate covered the greater part of Rockdale, the whole of Bexley and large areas of North Bexley and Kogarah. Chandler's grant was a lawless area; he was troubled by thieves, who stole money, stock and timber. One year after obtaining title to his land, he mortgaged Bexley to John Connell. In June 1833, the land was divided into 27 portions of 25 to 100 acres each and offered the land for lease for 21 years. The advertisements in the local press at this time provide a good picture of contemporary Bexley and highlight the promise of a new government road from Sydney, the value of the timber, the presence of good water sources, the availability of game and the richness of the soil.<sup>9</sup> The sale, however, was not successful and the land was again mortgaged.

Three years after the failed subdivision, Chandler offered Bexley as a whole by outright sale. This offer was taken up by Charles Tompson of Clidesdale, an emancipist, wealthy grazier and land owner. Tompson purchased the 1,300 acres for £991/15/0.<sup>10</sup> Tompson never resided at Bexley. There follows a confusing period of mortgages and defaults. Tompson made several attempts at outright sale, without success. The area was still too far from Sydney and too lawless to attract much attention.

By 1850, Charles Tindell of *Fairy Meadow* in the County of Camden, had redeemed the outstanding mortgage of the property and obtained the freehold. It is during his period of ownership that settlement in the area really began. Six years later he subdivided part and sold the residue, around 800 acres, to John Garsed, who soon went bankrupt. By 1859, the greater part of Bexley was owned by William Alexander Wolfen, Sydney merchant and consular representative for Sweden and Norway.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p.23.

<sup>8</sup> D.J. Hatton, *op.cit.*, undated, p.9.

<sup>9</sup> Various contemporary advertisements cited in P. Geeves and J. Jervis, *op.cit.*, pp.20-21.

<sup>10</sup> P. Geeves and J. Jervis, *op.cit.*, p.22.

In 1884, the trainline to neighbouring Hurstville was opened which increased the desirability of land within Bexley. The land was subdivided into estates such as the Lynton Park Estate at Bexley Heights. The locality map included with the advertising material shows the only school in the locality as being on the eastern side of the railway track in the present day suburb of Rockdale.

In 1885, the local residents petitioned the Government to erect a school at Bexley. The government refused stating that there was adequate capacity at the neighbouring schools in Arncliffe, Kogarah and Hurstville. The government also alleged that the request was motivated by developer self interest and that they were seeking a school to increase the desirability of their land.

Despite the Governments earlier assertion that public school was not necessary, the subdivision and development of the region in the mid-1880s had resulted in rapid population growth and the previously mentioned neighbouring schools were operating above their student capacity. The development of an additional school was finally approved.

The first Bexley Public School opened on the subject site in 1887. The heritage inventory sheet for the subject site stated that in the opening year they had 103 pupils. By 1889, the student body had more than doubled to 258. By 1900, this had increased to 337 pupils.<sup>11</sup>

In 1888, Tenders were called for the construction of a teacher's residence, refer to Figure 2.

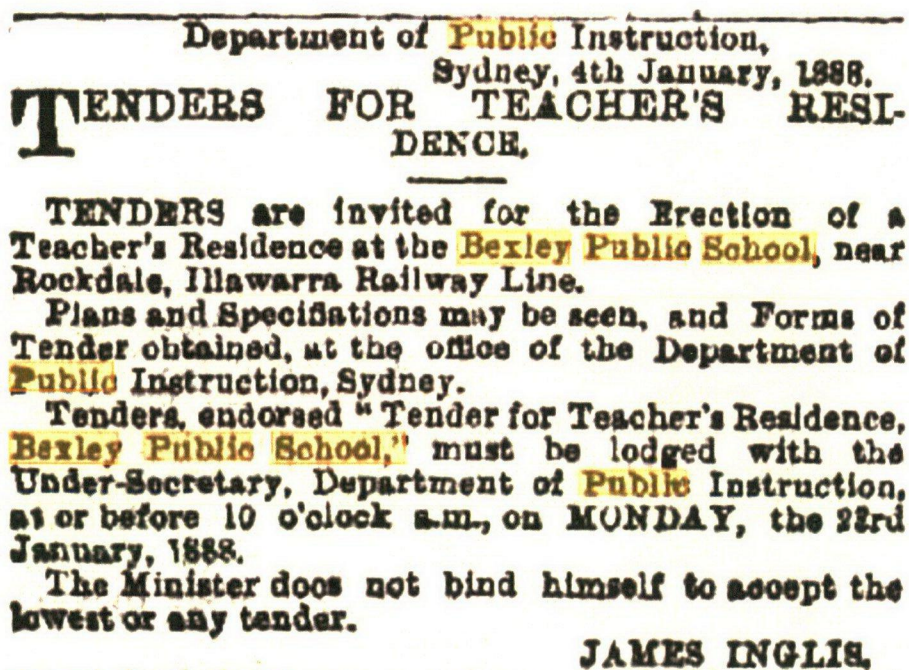
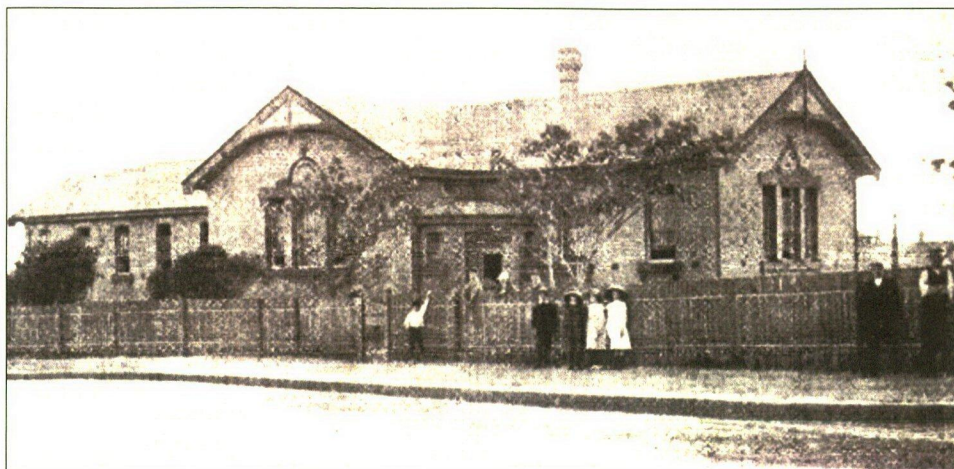


Figure 2: Tenders for Teacher's Residence

Source: 'Advertising', The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW : 1883 - 1930), 9 January 1888, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Original Bexley School Buildings, No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 2330153

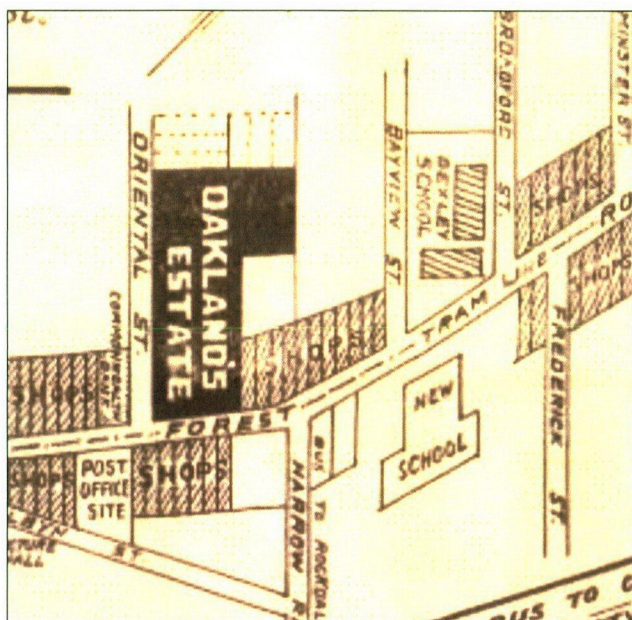


**Figure 3: 1914 Image of Bexley Public School**  
Source: St George & Sutherland Shire Leader

The school was not the only sign of progress in Bexley. By 1900, four churches had been erected along with a post office and one hotel.

In 1917, overcrowding necessitated the construction of a second building. The new two storey building accommodated the older students whilst the original smaller building became the infants school.

Further expansion of the school occurred in 1922 when the Department of Education acquired the land on the eastern side of Forest Road. The new site contained a Victorian villa known as 'Loretto' set on a 4 acre block. Initially, 'Loretto' was converted into four classrooms before being demolished and the current primary school constructed<sup>12</sup>.



**Figure 4: Locality plan extracted from the 1924 advertisement for the Oaklands Bexley Estate**

State Library New South Wales File Number FL10413276

<sup>12</sup> Bexley Primary School, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley, NSW 2207. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 2330152

Between 1938 and 1962 the original school buildings on the subject site were used as the Bexley Home Science Secondary School. This was an all girls school specialising in domestic subjects such as money handling, ironing, cooking and sewing.<sup>13</sup> **Figure 5** provides the 1943 aerial of the site. This image depicts the original school building and 1917 two storey school building. Also noted are some, now demolished, out buildings along the western boundary and the undeveloped southern section of the site which appears to contain a boundary wall or landscape feature. The neighbouring primary school is noted as being located to the south. By the time of the 1943 aerial, 'Loretto' had been demolished and replaced with the current primary school building.



**Figure 5: 1943 Aerial of the site showing the location of the proposed building is indicated by the red arrow.**

The 1943 aerial also shows that there was no established planting to the southern end of the site. The perimeter trees are immature and the garden to the south of the school building appears to be an area of lawn. The nature of the zig zag like structure to the centre of the lawn is unknown; however, the length of its shadow indicate that it was a low structure.

In the late 1990s, the Department of Education sold the subject site. It re-opened in February 1999 as the primary school of the St. Mary's and St Mina's Coptic Orthodox College. The school began with eighty students, spread across four classes from kindergarten to grade three. Staff included four teachers, a co-ordinator, a financial manager and a secretary.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theleader.com.au/story/1854959/bexley-home-science-girls-look-back-with-pride/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://stmary.nsw.edu.au/history/>

The current owners have undertaken works to the site including the construction of a Cathedral in the late 1990s. A development application was lodged in 2002 for the installation of a new storage shed and BBQ area. This application was amended in 2004 to include awnings to the storage shed.<sup>15</sup>

Within the last 10 years a new three storey class room and sports facility have been constructed to the south of the Cathedral. Further modern changes are also noted to the original school building including the construction of brick additions to the western elevation and a modern glass link which connects the two sections of the original building.

### 3.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

#### 3.1 The Site

For the following, refer to **Figure 6**, an aerial photograph over the site, and to the survey that accompanies this application. To match the accompanying plans Forest Road is referred to as being to the east.



**Figure 6: An aerial photograph showing the subject site and its surrounds.**  
SIX Maps.

<sup>15</sup> *Original Bexley School Buildings*, No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 2330153

The subject site is irregularly shaped. It has a northern boundary of 68.39m; an eastern (Broadford Street) boundary of approximately 112.06m; and a western (Bayview Street) boundary of 163.47m. The site area is approximately 8388 square metres. The boundaries of the site are defined by a modern metal railing fence.

The general landscaping of the site is largely used for car parking and vehicular access with some small garden beds. The site contains several mature trees detailed in the arborists report accompanying this application. The site contains no playing fields or outdoor playing space at ground level.

The site contains several permanent structures. The buildings remaining from the original Bexley Public School use of the site include the:

- the two original 1892 single storey rendered masonry school buildings; and
- the 1917 two storey brick and render class room building.

As noted in **Section 2.4** of this report, the current owners have occupied the site since 1999 and have undertaken development works including the construction of a Cathedral to the northern boundary of the site and the construction of a three storey classroom and sports facility located between the Cathedral and the 1917 two storey classroom building.

The two original 1892 school buildings are closely located together and have been linked in the modern era by a glass and brick addition. This pair of single storey, painted brick buildings are set on painted sandstone bases. The buildings have a pitched roof clad in corrugated iron. The principal elevation of the 1892 school building is noted as being the eastern elevation addressing Forest Road. The main entry to the building is located via the splayed porch shown in the 1914 image of the building, see **Figure 3**. Also noted to the eastern elevation is the street facing gable end which includes a group of three multipaned double hung sash windows located beneath a decorative moulding bearing the construction date of 1892. The windows share a protruding painted moulded sill and lintel. There are two religious iconography panels which have been added to the building by the current owner. The gable end detail is repeated to the southern most gable.

The remainder of the eastern elevations of both single storey structures are simply decorated with painted brick walls set on a painted sandstone base with slender multi-pane windows separated by religious iconography panels.

The west elevation, addressing Bayview Street is considered to be the rear of the building it is noted as having undergone alteration with the addition of a small brick extension, metal awning, two storey brick gable end and glass addition between the two older buildings, refer to **Figure 12**.

The two storey inter-war era building to the north of the 1917 classroom has face bricks to the ground floor level and rough rendered masonry to the first floor. This building has pairs of sliding sash windows, a metal roof and four evenly spaced painted rough rendered tall chimneys with terracotta pots.

The Cathedral is a large modern brick structure comprised of a central two storey height building set beneath a curved parapet. The building is flanked by two square towers. The main entry is set beneath a curved modern porch structure accessed from Bayview Street.

The recently constructed school building and sports facility addressed Bayview Street. It is a three storey modern brick and render building. The roof of the building is surrounded by a metal cage and appears to be used as a sports facility.

**Figure 7- Figure 15** illustrate the existing building on site.



**Figure 7:**  
Entry porch  
visible from  
Forest  
Road.



**Figure 8:**  
Decorative  
gable  
visible from  
Forest  
Road.



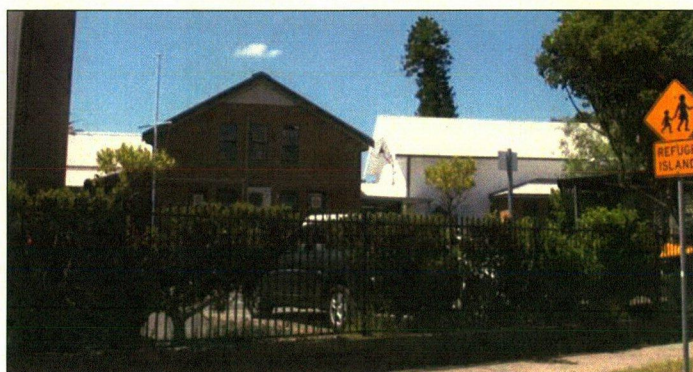
**Figure 9:**  
Southern most  
gable.



**Figure 10: Image showing the two 1892 School buildings.**



**Figure 11: 1892 school building as viewed from Bayview Street.**



**Figure 12: Brick and glass additions between the two original school buildings.**



**Figure 13: Inter-war era two storey classroom building.**



**Figure 14: Cathedral.**



**Figure 15: Recently built school building and sports facility.**

### 3.2 The Proposed Area of Works

The proposed area of works is located within the southern tip of the site. This area currently contains a number of lightweight metal clad gazebo style structures which have been progressively added to the site since the early 2000s. These structures, refer to **Figure 16- Figure 18**, lie on a concrete slab and appear to be used for storage and outdoor catering purposes.



**Figure 16:**  
Lightweight  
metal  
structures in  
the proposed  
area of works.



**Figure 17:**  
Lightweight  
metal  
structures  
dating from the  
modern era.



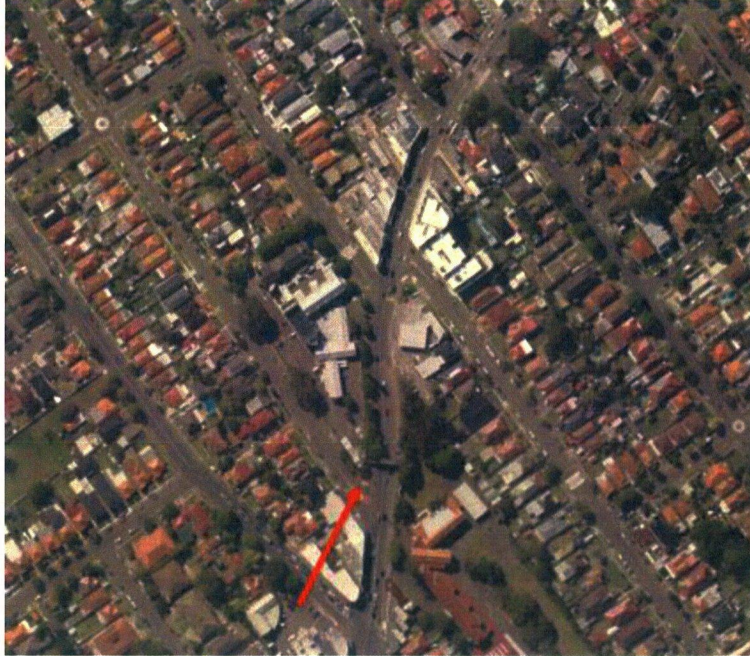
**Figure 18:** Metal  
structures as  
viewed from the  
neighbouring  
pedestrian  
bridge.

### 3.3 The Surrounding Area

For the following, refer to **Figure 19** below.

#### 3.3.1 The General Area

No. 339-377 Forest Road is located within a predominately residential part of Bexley, with the exception of commercial buildings lining Forest Road. The surrounding residential streets demonstrate a mix of the strict grid formation pattern associated with the residential subdivision of the area and the sweeping line of the original roads established prior to residential subdivision. The principal streets have irregularly spaced street trees. The housing stock is generally that of free-standing single storey dwellings.



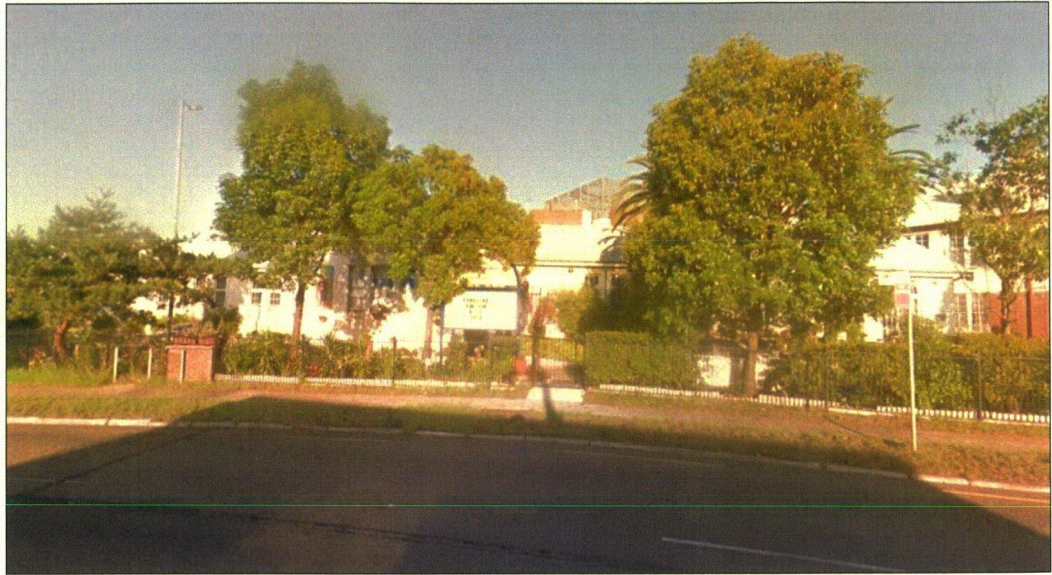
**Figure 19: Site location**  
slx maps

#### 3.3.2 Forest Road

Forest Road is the main thoroughfare running in a north south direction from Arncliffe in the north to the suburb of Lugarno in the south, which is located on the banks of the Georges River. The section of Forest Road in the vicinity of the subject site is wide road and carries traffic in both directions. Clearways and parking restrictions limit street parking. There are footpaths with concrete curbs and concrete guttering along both sides of the street. There are few street trees, most of the landscaping is "borrowed" from the neighbouring lots. Slight changes in direction along the street prevent a through vista.

As shown in **Figure 20**, views to the subject property from Forest Road are partially obscured by mature vegetation.

The section of Forest Road in which the subject site is located is characterised by commercial properties, such as shops, a service station and educational campuses. The residential character is comprised of residential flat buildings. To the south of the site is a pedestrian bridge providing access to the eastern side of the street and a sound wall behind which the Bexley Public School is located. Refer to **Figure 21**.



**Figure 20: View of the School building as seen from Forest Road.**  
googlemaps



**Figure 21: Pedestrian Foot Bridge and sound wall concealing Bexley Public School.**

### **3.3.3 Broadford Street**

Broadford Street, which runs along the eastern boundary of the subject site, is a residential street. Two lanes carry traffic in either direction with parking lining both sides of the street. There are footpaths, nature strips, concrete curbs with concrete guttering and irregularly planted street trees along both sides of the street.

The built form is characterised by one and two storey free standing residential dwellings. The buildings are date from the Inter-war era to the present day. Refer to **Figure 22.**



**Figure 22: General Character of Broadford Street**

Googlemaps

#### 3.3.4 Bayview Street

Bayview Street runs to the west of the subject property between Forest Road and Bardwell Creek. Bayview Street is a residential street that carries traffic in both directions with parking lining both sides of the street. There are footpaths, nature strips, concrete curbs with concrete guttering and irregularly planted street trees along both sides of the street.

The built form is characterised by one and two storey free standing residential dwellings. The buildings are noted as dating from the Federation era to the present day. Refer to **Figure 23 -Figure 26**.



**Figure 23: View towards the junction of Bayview Street and Forest Road**



**Figure 24: Typical example of the building stock within Bayview Street.**



**Figure 25: View to the site from the junction of Forest Road and Bayview Street. The arrow indicates the location of the 1892 school building.**



**Figure 26: The 1911 School building as viewed on approach from Bayview Street.**

### **3.4 Integrity and Condition**

Externally, the subject site demonstrates a high degree of integrity. The original school building, the 1917 two storey building remain discernible. The original buildings are noted as being well maintained and in good condition.

The recent additions to the school of the Cathedral and school building and sports facility are noted as being located separately from the earlier development phase. The style of these buildings can clearly be read as modern additions to the site added by the current occupants. It is considered that these additions do not diminish the integrity of the earlier buildings and enable them to continue to be used for educational purposes.

### **3.5 Streetscape Contribution and View Corridors**

The school while well-maintained makes a neutral contribution to the surrounding streetscapes. This is largely due to privacy planting around the perimeter of the site.

The State Heritage Inventory sheet for the subject property identifies that the buildings have aesthetic significance due to their prominent location on a bend in Forest Road. As demonstrated in **Figure 20** this view has been reduced by vegetation and planting along the eastern boundary of the site.

The building is not visible from the junction of Forest Road and Bayview Street, refer to **Figure 25**.

The principal view corridors towards the site are obtained directly from Forest Road and Bayview Street. On approach the site is largely screened by adjoining buildings.

## 4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 Summary of Existing Citations and Listings for the Site

No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley:

- Is listed as an item of local heritage significance by Schedule 5 Part 1 of *Rockdale LEP 2011*.
- Is located within the immediate vicinity of local heritage items as defined by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Rockdale LEP 2011*.
- Is located within the immediate vicinity of heritage items identified on the Department of Education and RMS s.170 registers.

The site:

- Is not listed as a heritage item on the State Heritage Register under the auspices of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*.
- Is not located within the boundaries of a Heritage Conservation Area as defined by Schedule 5 Part 2 of the *Rockdale LEP 2011*

### 4.2 Established Significance of No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley

The State Heritage Inventory sheet for the subject property provides the following Statement of Significance:

*This school is significant as one of a number of schools established in the St. George area, during the late nineteenth, early twentieth century. It is aesthetically significant as a prominent building on a bend in Forest Road.<sup>16</sup>*

### 4.3 Heritage Items in the Vicinity of the Site

The subject site is located in the vicinity of the following s.170 NSW Heritage Listed items

- Bexley Primary School, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley

*'A two storey brick school building in a prominent location on Forest Rd., historically part of the earlier school development across Forest Rd. The school provides physical evidence of the rapid development growth in the area in the early twentieth century. The school has broader significance in that it is representative of State education in Rockdale in the mid twentieth century.<sup>17</sup>*

- Pedestrian Bridge at Bexley, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley

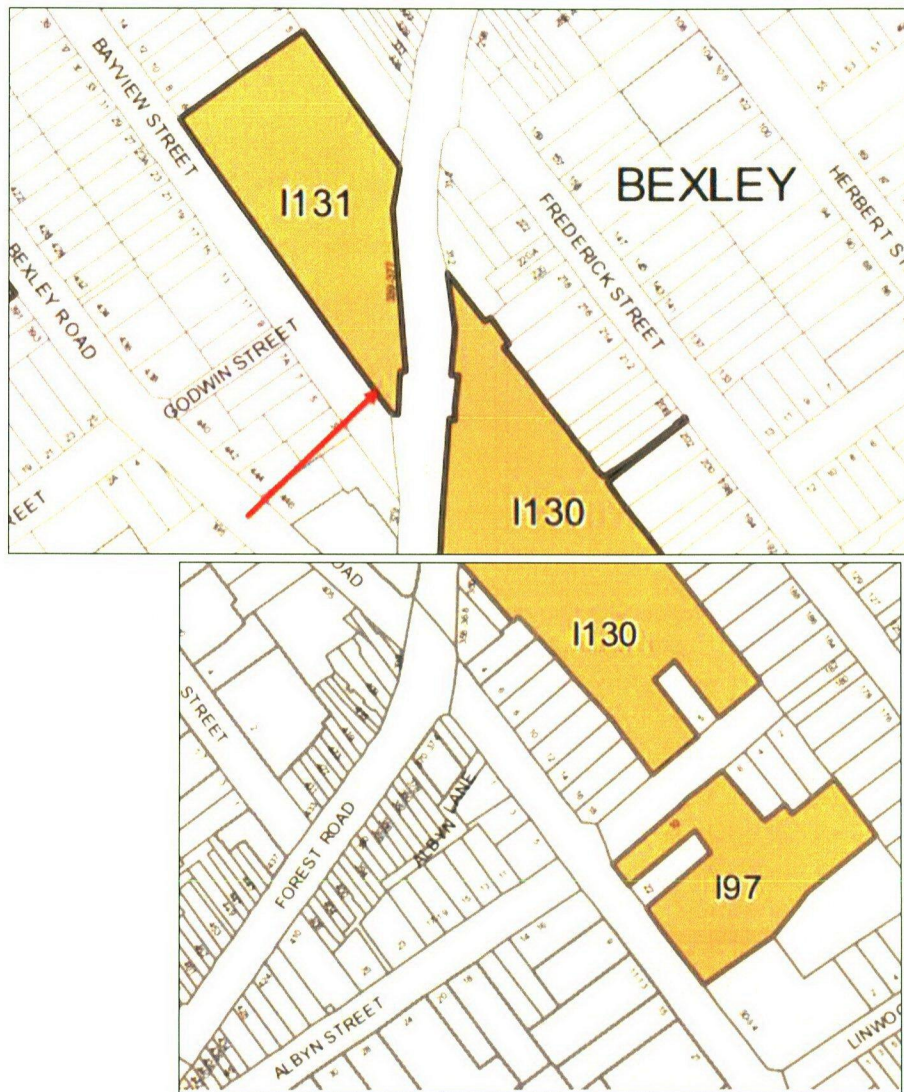
*Bexley Central Public School footbridge has historic and social significance at a local level because it is an early application of road safety awareness within the Rockdale municipality, and also in the State. This utilitarian steel beam structure, which has provided a service to the local community for over fifty years, was instituted at the crossing between the infants and primary campuses of the school in 1953. The footbridge was constructed at the urging of the school and*

<sup>16</sup> *Original Bexley School Buildings*, No. 339-377 Forest Road, Bexley. State Heritage Inventory Database No: 2330153

<sup>17</sup> *Bexley Primary School*, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 2330152.

*the local community, in order to safely convey students across busy Forest Road. It replaced a student Safety Patrol at this crossing, which had been operation since the 1930s. Bexley Central Public School footbridge is one of two remaining footbridges built on busy main roads in the Sydney metropolitan area, at school sites, in the early to mid twentieth century. The other notable, extant early footbridge is the Macquarie Street footbridge at Silverwater, built by the DMR in 1940.<sup>18</sup>*

For the following, refer to **Figure 27** a detail of the heritage plan from the Rockdale LEP 2011. In this plan, heritage items are coloured brown and numbered and Conservation Areas are hatched in red. The arrow marks the site. 'In the vicinity' has been determined by physical proximity to the site, existing and potential view corridors and the massing and scale of the proposed works.



**Figure 27: Detail of Rockdale Heritage Plan. The subject site is indicated by the red arrow. Rockdale LEP 2011 Map 003 and 004**

<sup>18</sup> Pedestrian Bridge at Bexley Central Public School, Forest Road, Bexley. State Heritage Inventory Database No. 4305025

## 5.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

The following should be read in conjunction with the plans prepared by Couvaras Architects that accompanies this Application.

It is proposed to remove the existing single storey multipurpose metal clad structures located to the southernmost point of the site and construct a modern childcare centre. The childcare centre will comprise an underground parking area, with a two storey building. The childcare centre and associated facilities will be located to the first floor with an external play area to the roof top area.

Materials include concrete structure, timber finished vertical aluminium batten screen, folded steel framed windows protruding from the façade, powder coated aluminium framed windows and doors and natural vegetation.

## 6.0 Method of Assessment

The following considers heritage related issues only. It does not consider compliance or otherwise with numerical controls unless non-compliance will result in an adverse heritage impact. Refer to the Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) that accompanies this application.

The proposal is assessed with a full understanding of the requirements for Heritage Impact Statements provided by the NSW Heritage Division publication *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002 update) and the relevant objectives and controls provided by the *Rockdale LEP 2011*.

Consideration has also been given to the *Rockdale DCP* which provides the following objectives for heritage conservation:

- A. To ensure that new development respects the natural and built heritage significance of Rockdale
- B. To conserve heritage items, including significant fabric, their curtilage and settings
- C. To ensure new development does not have an adverse impact upon the heritage significance of heritage items
- D. To encourage the reconstruction of heritage items that have been unsympathetically altered, including reinstatement of missing elements
- E. To ensure there is a sympathetic relationship between new built form and the historic streetscape in which a heritage item is located.<sup>19</sup>

## 7.0 EFFECT OF WORK

### 7.1 Assessment Under Part C Section 1.2 Demolition

The *Rockdale Development Control Plan 2011* supplements the provisions and controls of the *Rockdale LEP 2011*. Part 4 Section 4.1.2 of the *Rockdale DCP 2011* provides the following objectives and controls for the conservation of significant buildings, landscape elements and special places that contribute to the heritage significance of the former Rockdale Council area. In this section the proposal is assessed against those objectives.

Objective	COMMENT
A. To ensure that new development respects the natural and built heritage significance of Rockdale.	The proposal is consistent with the intent of this objective. The proposed works will facilitate the continued historical use of the site for education purposes.

<sup>19</sup> *Rockdale DCP 2011*, Section 4.1.2

	<p>The proposal seeks to introduce a modern layer of development separately located from the existing buildings on site. The proposed location of the new building will preserve the principal views of the original school building from Forest Road.</p> <p>The contemporary design and materials will ensure that the building provides a modern layer of development that is easily read as dating from the modern era and does not replicate or mimic the appearance of the older buildings on site.</p>
<p><b>B. To conserve heritage items, including significant fabric, their curtilage and settings.</b></p>	<p>There is no proposed intervention to the significant fabric of the original school building.</p> <p>The proposal will result in the removal of several trees. However, the majority of the trees proposed to be removed were found to be in poor health, refer to the arborists report accompanying the development application. The proposal seeks to augment the retained trees with the incorporation of additional landscaping which will enhance the general setting and appearance of the site.</p> <p>The proposed building is located within the established lot curtilage of the school complex. The proposed development has been designed to follow the southernmost boundary of the site. In doing so there is considered to be adequate separation between the original school buildings and the new development allowing both buildings to be read separately.</p> <p>Furthermore, the proposed location and the high-quality contemporary design of the proposed building will also enhance the presentation and setting of the site as viewed from Bayview Street and Forest Road.</p> <p>The proposed development will improve the setting of the pedestrian bridge and, due to its location on the opposite side of Forest Road behind a sound wall, will not impact the neighbouring school building.</p>
<p><b>C. To ensure new development does not have an adverse impact upon the heritage significance of heritage items.</b></p>	<p>The proposal is consistent with this objective.</p> <p>The early school buildings will continue to be used for their original purposes and the proposed works will facilitate the continued historical use of the site for education purposes.</p>

	<p>The proposed building will add a layer of modern development, which responds to the requirements of St Mary's and St Mina's Coptic College to provide an early childhood education facility for their community, without extending or altering the existing buildings.</p> <p>The contemporary design and materials will ensure that the building provides a modern layer of development that is easily read as dating from the modern era and does not replicate or mimic the appearance of the older buildings on site.</p> <p>The proposed location of the new building will preserve the principal views between the school building to and from Forest Road.</p>
D. To encourage the reconstruction of heritage items that have been unsympathetically altered including reinstatement of missing elements.	Not relevant to this application.
E. To ensure there is a sympathetic relationship between new built form and the historic streetscape in which a heritage item is located.	<p>As noted above, the proposed building will be located within the immediate vicinity of the original school building. The proposed contemporary design and use of contemporary materials will ensure that the building provides a modern layer of development that does not replicate or mimic the appearance of the original Bexley Public School buildings.</p> <p>The relationship will also be maintained and enhanced by the retention of several mature trees which will be supplemented by additional landscaping which will enhance the general neighbourhood setting.</p> <p>The proposed building has been designed to follow the boundary of the southern tip of the site. This will ensure that the proposed building is set back from the original single storey school and maintain the existing view angles to and from Forest Road.</p>
<b>Development of Heritage items</b>	
<b>Controls</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
4. Any proposed development must conserve the setting of the heritage item and the significant views to and from the heritage item.	<p>The proposed building will be located to within the immediate vicinity of the original Bexley Public School buildings. The proposed building has been designed to follow the boundary of the southern tip of the site. This will ensure that the proposed building is set back from the original single storey school and</p>

	maintains existing view angles to and from Forest Road.
5. Development of a heritage item must ensure that the scale, form, materials, finishes and fenestration of the new work does not have a negative impact upon the heritage significance of the item.	<p>The proposal complies this control. The proposed building has been designed to provide an additional education facility at the school thus continuing the ongoing educational use of the site. The proposed modern design provides for a modern layer of occupation that compliments the original building.</p> <p>The building is noted as being larger than the neighbouring single storey school building. The appearance has been minimised by the contemporary design of the structure the use of timber and the proposed car parking area to the ground floor which will allow view across the site between Forest Road and Bayview Street.</p>
6. Additions to a built heritage item must be located at the rear. Additions or alterations to the front are not permitted unless for the purpose of restoration or reconstruction.	<p>Not applicable to this proposal.</p> <p>The proposed building is a free standing modern structure located to the south of the site. Views to the principal elevation, addressing Forest Road, will not be impeded by the proposed location of the new building. Furthermore, the current views from Bayview Street will be maintained.</p>
7. Two storey additions to a single storey heritage item must be in the form of a pavilion or an extension at the rear which is not highly visible from the public domain. Second storey additions to the principal building form are not permitted; however rooms in the roof with rear facing dormer windows appropriate to the building style may be acceptable.	<p>Not applicable to this proposal. The proposed works are comprised of a new building located separately to the original school buildings. The proposed development is necessary to meet the demand for early childhood education as part of the St Mary's and St Mina's Coptic College facility.</p> <p>The proposed building will enable the college to provide early childhood education, without extending or altering the existing buildings.</p>
8. Original verandah roof forms must be maintained. Where the roof of a building is to be replaced it must be done using the same material and the separation between the main roof and any verandah roofs must be maintained.	Not applicable to this proposal.
9. Original face brick work or stone must not be rendered or painted.	No works are proposed to the existing buildings.

10. Original finishes and materials must be retained. Some examples of original materials are: tessellated tiles on paths and verandah floors; front stair riser tiles; tuck pointed brickwork; rock-faced sandstone foundation walls; quoins with vermiculation; gable ends decorated with timber battens and shingles; timber or iron valences, posts, brackets and balustrades; slate roof tiles; terracotta Marseille roof tiles; leadlight glazing; spear headed iron picket fences.	The finishes of the original Bexley Public School buildings will not be altered as part of this development.
11. Reconstruction must only be undertaken where physical and/or documentary evidence provides adequate information regarding the original building detail.	No reconstruction works are proposed.
12. Development of a heritage item must conserve original landscape features of significance such as original fences, sandstone retaining walls and sandstone walls. The original level of front yards must not be raised to the same height as the front verandah.	Not applicable to this proposal.  There are no identified landscape features of significance. The arborists report did identify an Aleppo Pine ( <i>Pinus halepensis</i> ) to the Forest Road boundary which is a Lone Pine planted as an Anzac Memorial. This tree will not be impacted by the proposed development
13. Where off street car parking is required elsewhere in this plan it may not be a requirement if the property is a heritage item and the provision of parking would have a detrimental impact upon the significance of the item.	The additional off street parking has been incorporated into the design and will be located to the basement and ground floor level of the proposed building.
14. New garages are to be located behind the rear building line of the principal building form.	Not applicable to this proposal.
15. Satellite dishes, air conditioning units, solar collectors and water tanks must be located so as not to be visible from the public domain.	Not applicable to this proposal.
16. If an archaeological assessment identifies the potential for significant archaeology then the applicant must comply with the provisions of the Heritage Act 1977 and the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. The opportunities and constraints identified in the assessment must then inform the proposed development	As noted in section 1.3 of this report, an Archaeological Assessment was not provided for.
<b>Development in the Vicinity of Heritage Items</b>	
<b>Control</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
17. Any proposed development located adjacent to or nearby a heritage item must not have an adverse impact on the	The proposal meets this control.  The proposed development will not negatively impact the setting of the

heritage item including its setting and curtilage.	<p>pedestrian footbridge or the neighbouring school.</p> <p>As noted previously the school is located on the opposite side of Forest Road and largely obscured from view by a sound wall. This will not be altered as part of this development.</p> <p>The setting of the neighbouring heritage item will be maintained and enhanced by the retention of several existing mature trees and by the proposed additional landscaping.</p> <p>The corner of the site will be activated by the proposed development, enhancing the setting of the pedestrian bridge.</p>
<p>18. Development adjacent to a heritage item must be designed:</p> <p>a. to be of a similar scale and proportion so that the item or place of heritage significance is not dominated or overwhelmed, and</p> <p>b. to pay particular attention to the design elements such as the style and pitch of roofs, parapet walls, proportions of window and door openings and external materials and colours.</p>	<p>Notwithstanding the concealed nature of the neighbouring school building, it is noted that the proposed building is consistent in scale and height as the neighbouring footbridge and school. The proposed building will not dominate or overwhelm the neighbouring heritage items.</p>
<p>19. Where new development is proposed adjacent to a heritage item in a street of buildings similar to the heritage item, then the new development must maintain the historic streetscape pattern.</p>	<p>Not applicable. The development is located within a school complex which is noted as not currently following the historic streetscape pattern.</p>

## 7.2 Effect of Work on Nearby Heritage Items

- Pedestrian Bridge at Bexley, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley

The proposed works will have no impact on the ability to understand social and historic significance of the item. The pedestrian bridge will remain visually prominent from Forest Road Bexley and the functionality of the item will not be impacted by the proposed development.

The ability to view the item from the public domain is undiminished.

- Bexley Primary School, No. 330 Forest Road, Bexley

Bexley Primary School is concealed from view by a sound wall. The proposed development will not be visible in conjunction with the neighbouring school.

This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared in conjunction with a DA for a new building at No. 339-377 Forest Road. The existing buildings on the site will be retained and a modern education facility will be added to the southern tip of the site. The proposed building, by means of its contemporary appearance and use of modern materials, will make a positive contribution to the streetscape. The set back from the original building will maintain the existing view angles and visibility of the original Bexley Public School buildings from the street.

The site's traditional use as an education facility will be maintained and enhanced by the additional services provided by the new building.

The proposed materials, finishes, colours and articulation of the proposed building will not mimic or replicate the original building on site and are clearly indefinable as a high-quality addition to the site dating from the modern era.

The neighbouring heritage listed items will not be impacted by the proposed works.

The proposed works fulfil the objectives for works as set out by the *Rockdale LEP 2011* and the *Rockdale DCP 2011*.