

REFERRAL RESPONSE – ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

FILE NO: DA2015/315/1

ADDRESS: 163A Victoria Road, Bellevue Hill

PROPOSAL: Alterations and additions to the existing Bellevue Hill Public School – including the demolition of buildings, the construction of a new school building and the refurbishment of the existing buildings

FROM: Emma Hawkins, Senior Sustainability Officer

TO: Brett Horgan

I refer to the following documents received for this report:

- Statement of Environmental Effects, prepared by City Plan Strategy and Development Pty Ltd, dated 18 June 2015
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report, written by Bluegum Tree Care and Consultancy, dated June 2015

Relevant Legislation:

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Woollahra Council Documents:

- DRAFT Woollahra Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2015-2025

Other Documents:

- Biodiversity Study for the Waverley Local Government Area, May 2011

SUMMARY

Under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, Council, as the consent authority is to take into consideration the likely impacts of the development including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality (S79C 1(b)).

The significance of Bellevue Park as a key component of an urban wildlife corridor between habitat areas in Woollahra and Waverly, and its role in providing a food source for the Grey-Headed Flying Fox (listed as a vulnerable species by the NSW and Commonwealth

Governments) has not been identified. The environmental impacts of the development have not been assessed sufficiently.

COMMENTS

Under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, Council, as the consent authority is to take into consideration the likely impacts of the development including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality (S79C 1(b)).

Bellevue Park contains a number of mature Fig trees, and is a foraging site for the Grey-Headed Flying Fox, which is listed as vulnerable under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth).

Bellevue Park is also an important component of the urban forest and wildlife corridor connecting habitat areas in Woollahra and Waverley. The Biodiversity Study of the Waverley Local Government Area (May 2011) shows the linkage that Bellevue Hill Park provides between Thomas Hogan Reserve and Cooper Park (p.37). The DRAFT Woollahra Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2015-2025 (www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/bcs) recognises Bellevue Hill Park as a Locally Significant Habitat Area (p8-13), and recognises the corridor identified in the Biodiversity Study of the Waverley Local Government Area.

The significance of Bellevue Park as a key component of an urban wildlife corridor between habitat areas in Woollahra and Waverly, and its role in providing a food source for the Grey-Headed Flying Fox (listed as a vulnerable species by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments) has not been identified. The environmental impacts of the development have not been assessed sufficiently.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following information is required before further assessment of the application can be undertaken:

At a minimum, an Assessment of Significance ('7-Part Test') on the following actions with relation to the Grey Headed Flying Fox, and other listed species likely to forage or reside in Bellevue Park be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist:

- Significant pruning of Tree Number 4 – Hills Weeping Fig;
- Removal of Tree Number 5 – Hills Weeping Fig;
- Significant pruning of Tree Number 6 – Port Jackson Fig (Significant Tree Register); and
- Removal of Tree Number 6 – in the case that major root loss and significant pruning leads to tree removal

It is recommended that the Statement of Environmental Effects be amended to include the findings of the Assessment of Significance, and any additional assessments completed as a result of the findings of the Assessment of Significance.

The assessment of significance is the first step in considering potential impacts. If it is found that a significant effect is likely, further consideration will be required.

Emma Hawkins
Senior Sustainability Officer