



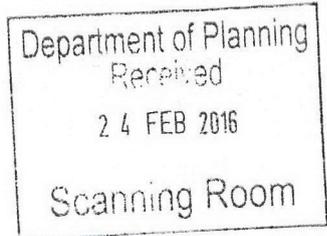
Education



PCU064221

DOC16/96979

Anne-Maree Carruthers
Director, Urban Renewal
NSW Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Ms Carruthers,

Re: Draft Priority Precinct Proposals – Bella Vista, Kellyville and Showground

Thank you for your letter of 18 December 2015 relating to the above. We have reviewed the documents with reference to the Government schools located in the priority precincts and have prepared our submission accordingly.

Background

The Department of Education (DE) recognises that the Government must balance competing funding priorities for the state at a time when the school population is rising at a fast pace. In order to accommodate this growth, fundamental changes are required in how DE plans, funds and builds school infrastructure into the future. DE is managing this by realigning its asset portfolio to better match this demand over the long term through better strategic planning and partnerships.

On a statewide basis, the Department is supportive of the shift in planning decisions and policies which encourage:

- the infrastructure costs of additional teaching spaces and associated facilities to be funded by developer contributions;
- optimising size, amenity and function of existing schools so that they afford greater choice and provide contemporary teaching spaces for students;
- facilitating out of hours shared use of education facilities such as ovals and halls;
- the removal of planning policy barriers to schools development;
- land dedications and appropriate zoning in areas where a new school is required;
- streamlined planning approvals for new education infrastructure.

The Planning Proposal

Government school student numbers across The Hills Shire have grown significantly in recent years and this is anticipated to continue. This poses significant challenges for DE to plan for future school growth.

The Department does not support the location of the proposed new high school due to its proximity to Glenwood High School and also the absence of suitable playing fields. Additionally the requirement for a new school at this location has not yet been determined as planning for educational infrastructure for the wider area is not yet complete. It is likely that a number of existing high schools will be expanded prior to the provision of a new school.

NSW Department of Education- Asset Management Directorate

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Should it be determined that a new high school is required our preference is for a site located adjacent to shared full sized playing fields.

Voluntary Planning Agreements

Funding for school infrastructure at a time where land availability in The Hills Shire is limited and entry costs are high, is a challenge. Consequently, funding some infrastructure costs through developer contributions or land dedications can be considered. Should the opportunity arise, DE would be responsive to enter into negotiations with NSW Planning and Environment, The Hills Shire Council and developers for the granting of Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs).

Opportunities

As Sydney's population grows, so does the demand for community facilities and sports fields. Schools, local councils and community organisations all have resources they could share to help meet this demand whilst improving community relationships and fostering social cohesion.

DE is also intent on exploring opportunities with Council and other community partners for joint or shared use of community facilities such as before and after school care, gyms, sports fields and libraries.

Should you require further information please contact Lesley Moodie, Senior Assets Planner on 9561 8255 or Lydia Awad, Statutory Planner on 9561 1130.

Yours sincerely



John Neish

Director, Planning & Demography

19/2/16 February 2016

c/c Michelle Cramsie, Senior Planning Officer, NSW Planning & Environment