

Our Reference: 376444
Your Reference: 376444
Contact Name: Cara Stoltenberg
Telephone: (02) 6799 6855

21 March 2017

The Director, Industry and Infrastructure Policy
PO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: SUBMISSION ON DRAFT STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY (EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND CHILD CARE FACILITIES)

Thank you for the opportunity to review the "Draft State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017" (Draft Childcare SEPP), which is proposed to provide the over-arching planning framework and also be supported by amendments to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, planning guidelines for child care, and development of a Code of Practice for non-Government schools.

Narrabri Shire Council (Council) has reviewed the Draft Childcare SEPP and other associated documents and is encouraged to see legislation being developed to assist with the short-fall in child care facilities currently being experienced within the Narrabri Shire, and other Local Government Areas within New South Wales (NSW). Currently, across our Shire many families face difficulties in finding suitable child care arrangements, with access to long day care facilities being limited and costly.

The proposed Draft Childcare SEPP looks likely to streamline the planning process to allow for more high-quality education and child care facilities across NSW. It is noted that such amendments to the current planning system with regards to childcare, both State and Local Government is better placed to respond to the increasing demand for child care and education services, while still delivering high-quality infrastructure and minimising adverse outcomes.

By aligning with the requirements from the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care Facilities, it is hoped the proposed Draft Childcare SEPP will:

- simplify and standardise the approval process for child care facilities, including broadening the range of development that can be undertaken as exempt development and complying development,
- set out clear planning rules for these developments, including where they can be built, what development standards apply, and consultation requirements, and
- establish state-wide assessment requirements and design considerations to improve the quality of these facilities and to minimise impacts on surrounding areas.

I trust this information is to your satisfaction. If you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Cara Stoltenberg, Town Planner, of Council's Development and Economic Growth Department on (02) 67996855 or caras@narrabri.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'H. Meppem' or similar, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr Tony Meppem

DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH