



IPC GRANTS DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FOR BLUE GUM COMMUNITY SCHOOL

9 March 2021

The state's Independent Planning Commission has approved plans for a new school in Sydney's north.

The Blue Gum Community School will be built on a 3623m² site on Rosemead Road at Hornsby and involves the adaptive reuse of the existing heritage-listed home, Mount Errington.

The \$617,388 redevelopment will see the dwelling converted into a pre-school and primary school for up to nine full-time staff and 80 children, a new car park built on site, as well as the removal of trees and other landscape works.

The Department of Planning, Industry & Environment's whole-of-government assessment concluded the Project is in the public interest and approvable subject to conditions; however, it came to the Commission for determination because there were more than 50 'unique' public objections.

The community's key concerns – raised in submissions to the Department and Commission, including at a public meeting on 10 February 2021 – centered around the need for a new school, site suitability, heritage impacts, traffic and car parking, noise, tree removal and bushfire risk.

After carefully considering all the evidence, Commissioners Peter Duncan (Panel chair) and Adrian Pilton have today (Tuesday 9 March 2021) determined to grant development consent for the new school, subject to conditions.

"The Commission finds that the Project will provide a range of public benefits, including the provision of a new and alternative education option for the Hornsby [Local Government Area], the conservation and adaptive reuse of a heritage listed building and the provision of construction and operational jobs," its Statement of Reasons for Decision reads.

"The Commission finds that on balance, and when weighed against the Objects of the [Environmental Planning & Assessment Act], the principles of [Ecologically Sustainable Development] and the benefits of the Project, the impacts of the Project are acceptable and capable of being appropriately managed and mitigated through the measures required under the conditions of consent imposed by the Commission. The Commission finds the Project to be in the public interest."

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It added: “Based on its consideration of the Material, the Commission finds that the Project should be approved, subject to conditions of consent. The reasons for the Commission’s position are as follows:

- the Site is on land zoned R2 and the Project is permissible with consent under [Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013] and the [State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011];
- the Project complies with State and local strategic planning directions;
- the development of the Site for the purpose of a new pre-school and school is an orderly and economic use of the Site and will provide for an appropriate adaptive reuse of the existing heritage item; and
- any residual impacts from the Project can be appropriately managed and mitigated through the imposed conditions.”

The Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:

<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2021/01/blue-gum-community-school-ssd10444>

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