

# GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT NEW SOUTH WALES

03 December 2021

Kate Bimson,  
Project Director,  
Master Planning  
Pymble Ladies College  
Via email –  
[REDACTED]

**PROJECT:** Pymble Ladies College  
**RE:** State Design Review Panel – 25<sup>th</sup> November. Second Review

Dear Kate,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above project a second time. Please find below a summary of advice and recommendations arising from the design review session held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

GANSW commends the project team on the quality of their presentation that clearly articulated the rationale for proposed design decisions and changes made. While the significant challenges presented by the site's topography are acknowledged, concerns remain that the bulk and scale of the built form as currently proposed will create unacceptable impacts both within the site and adjoining context.

The following elements of the design approach are supported:

- The coordination between the landscape and architect consultant teams, and commitment to integrate the built form with the landscape.
- The additional consultation with Uncle Laurie Bimson (September and November), which has enabled a deeper consideration of Country.
- The landscape response to Country, through the planting of endemic species, recognition of seasonal variation, and the opportunity to use landscaped areas as part of the school's pedagogical approach.

The following commentary provides advice and recommendations for the project:

## Connecting with Country

1. It was acknowledged that the Grey House Precinct stands on Gameraigal not Dharug Country, as asserted.
2. Consider how the principles and values embedded in a particular place-based narrative or story might provide a framework to inform the architectural and landscape response.
3. The additional consultation with Uncle Laurie Bimson in September and November, which has deepened the identity for the school, is supported, and a commitment to further develop these strategies is recommended.
4. The term Songline has a specific cultural meaning and association for Aboriginal people, and as the response to Country is further developed,

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ensure that careful distinction is made between the creation of a song and a Songline.

## Site strategy and Landscape

5. It is acknowledged that the Masterplan prepared in 2019 highlighted the Grey House Precinct as a developable site for proposed built form, and that the precinct is being developed as a catalyst project. Given the landscape strategy for the Masterplan is being developed concurrently with the Grey House Precinct, allow time to enable this work to meaningfully inform the landscape and architectural design strategy for the proposal.

## Movement and accessibility

6. The significant challenges in accommodating the 8m level change within the immediate context of the proposal are acknowledged. Within each level demonstrate that universal access is provided between all spaces (including landscape and play space) adjacent to each other.

## Architecture

7. There are continued concerns that the significant height and bulk of the building is creating unacceptable impacts within the site and adjoining context. The 5 storey east and south elevations may overwhelm the adjoining two storey detached dwellings to the south and feel alienating to children of junior school age who use the eastern part of the Campus. Investigate more substantial solutions to mitigate this impact, as those presented were unconvincing.
8. In relation to the point above, consider reviewing the configuration of the brick podium, as stepping down the brick base to the east appears to intensify the perceived scale of the proposal's 4 storey ceramic facade, rather than if it were composed as a continuous horizontal datum.
9. The façade strategy appears to rely on glazing treatment to prevent glare and heat ingress. Consider how a horizontal shading strategy may improve access to daylight and enable greater access to natural cross-ventilation.

GANSW recommends that project return to the SDRP. The issues outlined above are to be addressed at the next SDRP session and in the Response to Submissions.

Please contact GANSW Design Advisor, Liz Bowra,  
Elizabeth.Bowra@dpie.nsw.gov.au if you have any queries regarding this advice.

Sincerely,



Barbara Schaffer  
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Chair, SDRP

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