

# Assessment Officer Report

PA2402880, 28 Drage Road,  
WEST WODONGA.



Officer Assessment Report  
Development Approvals & Design

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# Executive Summary



Key Information	Details		
<b>Application No:</b>	PA2402880		
<b>Received:</b>	23 April 2024		
<b>Statutory Days:</b>	30		
<b>Applicant:</b>	Victory Lutheran College		
<b>Planning Scheme:</b>	Wodonga		
<b>Land Address:</b>	28 Drage Road, Wodonga		
<b>Proposal:</b>	Buildings and works associated with a new Student Services building and the display of business identification signage.		
<b>Development Value:</b>	\$ 3.094 m		
<b>Why is the Minister responsible?</b>	In accordance with the schedule to Clause 72.01 of the Planning Scheme, the Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for matters relating to the use and development of land for an education centre on the same land as an existing primary or secondary school if the estimated cost of development is greater than \$3 million.		
<b>Why is a permit required?</b>	<b>Clause</b>	<b>Control</b>	<b>Trigger</b>
<b>Zone:</b>	Clause 32.08	General Residential Zone – Schedule 1 (GRZ1)	Buildings and works associated with an Education centre – Clause 32.08-10
<b>Overlays:</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Particular Provisions</b>	Clause 52.05	Signs	Display of business identification signage in a high-amenity (Category 3) area – Clause 52.05-13
<b>General Requirements and Performance Standards:</b>	Clause 53.18	Stormwater Management in Urban Development	
	Clause 53.19	Non-Government schools	
<b>Cultural Heritage:</b>	A CHMP is not required.		
<b>Total Site Area:</b>	95,630	m <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Building Footprint:</b>	602.72	m <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Height:</b>	2	storeys excluding plant	
	8.4	metres	
<b>Referral Authorities:</b>	Not applicable		
<b>Public Notice:</b>	Aside from notifying the municipal council under section 52(1)(b), notice of the application under section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Act) was not provided because it was considered that the application will not cause material detriment to adjoining properties, nor does the planning scheme require notice to be provided to any other agency.		
<b>Delegates List:</b>	Not required		



## Application Process

1. The key milestones in the application process were as follows:

Milestone	Date
Pre-application meeting (DTP & applicant)	23 January 2024
Application lodgement	23 April 2024
Further information requested	2 May 2024
Further information received	26 June 2024
<b>Decision Plans</b>	Plans prepared by Rob Pickett Design (Job no. 7608), titled 'Proposed Student Services Building and dated 15 May 2024 (6 sheets) as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site Plan – Existing/ Proposed, Dwg no. A01</li><li>• Floor Plan – Existing, Dwg no. A02</li><li>• Floor Plan – Proposed, Dwg no. A03</li><li>• Floor Plan – First Floor, Dwg no. A04</li><li>• Roof Plan/ Section A, Dwg no. A05</li><li>• Elevations/ 3D views, Dwg no. A06</li></ul>
<b>Other Assessment Documents</b>	Stormwater Management Plan, Rev A prepared by SJE Consulting, dated 31 May 2024  Sediment Control Plan prepared by SJE Consulting (Job no. 800978) dated 25 June 2024 (2 sheets) as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General Arrangement Plan, Dwg no. 800978-C-01, Rev C</li><li>• Sediment Control Plan, Dwg no. 800978-C-02, Rev C</li></ul> Car parking, Bike facilities and Noise Impact summary, prepared by Victory Lutheran College dated 4 April 2024  Toilet requirements summary, prepared by Victory Lutheran College dated 4 April 2024  Site Photographs supplied by the applicant as received on 23 April 2024  Master Plan as approved by Victory Lutheran College in October 2023.  Certificate of Title Volume 11139 Folio 845 issued on 11 April 2024  Register search statement issued on 30 January 2024 showing the removal of section 173 agreements.

2. The subject of this report is the decision plans (as described above).



## Proposal Summary

3. The proposal can be summarised as follows:

Key Information	Details
<b>Proposal:</b>	Construction of a building and associated business identification signage
<b>Land parcel area:</b>	95,630 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Subject site (including associated landscaping)</b>	898 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Building Footprint:</b>	602.72 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Height:</b>	8.4m
<b>Setbacks:</b>	113m to closest adjoining residential land along eastern boundary 193m to LaTrobe University Albury Wodonga campus located immediately to the north.

4. Specific details of the application are set out below:

- Demolition of what is currently referred to as the Hudson building which currently houses a computer classroom, ICT department, College Chaplain and male/female/accessible toilets.
- Removal of existing garden beds and an existing concrete paving area and sheltered walkway structure, removal of ground level doorway to existing Tim McInnes Library building.
- Cut back covered outdoor learning area roof structure to accommodate new building.
- Construct a new Student Services Centre building (Student Services building) which will connect through to the existing Tim McInnes Library building at ground level and house the following:
  - Ground level (603 m<sup>2</sup>):* rooms to accommodate rooms for small group work (to assist students with additional learning needs), counsellors, director of wellbeing, speech therapist/ occupational therapist, sensory room, first aid area with bed bays and associated bathroom, toilet facilities (including an accessible toilet) with external hand wash basins.
  - First floor level (456m<sup>2</sup>):* staff office and break out facilities to accommodate primary and secondary school staff including meeting rooms and quiet areas.
- Pedestrian access to be via existing external walkways and via the existing Tim McInnes Library building to the south (at ground level).
- Associated landscaping incorporating raised garden beds, segregated seating areas, shade trees to the building's north-western edge and new stormwater grated pits to connect the new development to the existing on-site stormwater system.
- The display of two non-illuminated business identification signs (each measuring 0.3m x 1.0m) on the east and west elevations of the proposed Student Services building.
- There is no proposal to increase the number of teachers (FTE) or students currently on site at any one time in respect of this permit application.

5. The applicant has provided the following 3D concept images of the proposed Student Services building:

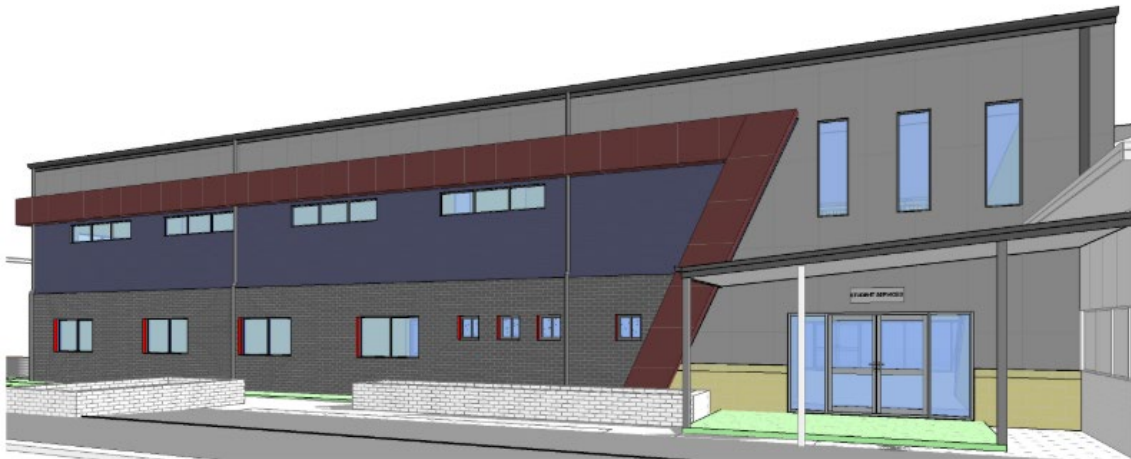


Figure 1 West elevation  
(Source: Decision Plans)



Figure 2 East elevation  
(Source: Decision Plans)

## Site Description



Figure 3: marked up aerial photograph  
(Source: Planning Report submitted in support of application)

7. The existing school campus land has frontages to Drage Road (approximately 301 metres), an arterial road to the south, and Derwent Way (approximately 279 metres), a local road to the west, and an overall area of approximately 9.5 hectares.
8. The site is formally described as Lot 301 on Plan of Subdivision 610931Y. The title submitted in support of the permit application indicates that there are no section 173 Agreements registered on title. It is noted that the three section 173 Agreements referred to in the planning report submitted in support of the application were ended with the council's consent and removed from the title on 31 October 2023 (Dealing nos. AX345244Y, AX345256R and AX310348H).
9. The campus comprises various buildings, landscaped areas, sports fields, play areas, car parking areas and an existing on-site stormwater detention basin (also described as wetlands) as depicted in the decision plans. These and the location of the proposed Student Services building (in the centre of the school campus directly to the north of the Tim McInnes Library building) are shown on the school's most recent masterplan document (see below).



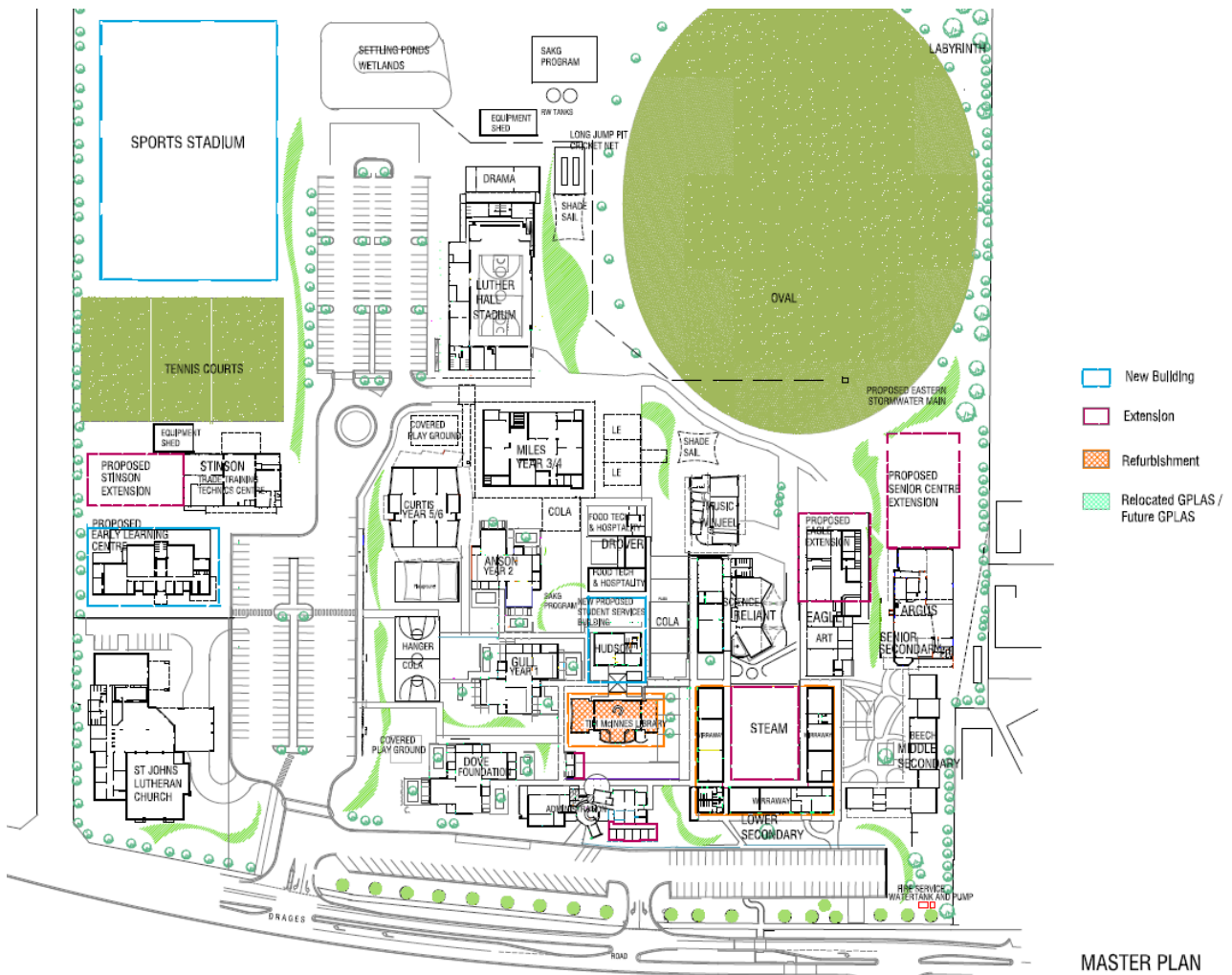


Figure 4 Victory Lutheran College Masterplan, October 2023 showing location of subject site in blue (Source: Permit application)

### Site Surrounds

10. The surrounding development consists mainly of single-storey modern residential development featuring hipped or gabled rooflines. Accordingly, the application describes the subject site’s surrounding context as predominantly residential in character.
11. Development surrounding the site can be described as follows:
  - To the **north** of the site: the subject site shares a boundary with the adjoining Latrobe University, Albury Wodonga Campus and some residential properties
  - To the **south** of the site: bounds Drage Road the opposite side of which comprises a residential area surrounding the periphery of the Wodonga Golf Club.
  - To the **east** of the site: residential development and Gordon Craig Park and linear parkland.
  - To the **west** of the site: residential development, pocket parks and other uses compatible with the Mixed Use zoning and its designation under the West Wodonga Enterprise Park Framework Plan. Further west, there are a number of landholdings in the Industrial 1 Zone (including a large site owned and operated by Visy Board) as well as a Public Use Zone (associated with the operation of the West Wodonga Treatment Plant) located further to the north-west.





12. Context images showing the existing Hudson building and covered walkway areas (which are to be demolished) and the location of the proposed Student Services building within the school campus as submitted by the permit applicant are set out below.



**Figure 5 View to subject site from the west showing the Hudson building on the left, the covered walkway to be demolished and the Tim McInnes Library building to the right  
(Source: Permit application)**



**Figure 6 View of existing Hudson building to be demolished from the covered outdoor learning area  
(Source: Permit application)**



Figure 7 View to the covered walkway and seating area to the south of the existing Hudson building  
(Source: Permit application)



## Municipal Planning Strategy

13. The following objectives and strategies of the Municipal Strategic Statement of the scheme are relevant to the proposal:

Clause	Description
02.01	Context
02.02	Vision
02.03-1	Settlement
02.03-4	Natural resource management-catchment management
02.03-5	Built environment and heritage
02.03-7	Economic development-Employment and tourism

## Planning Policy Framework

14. The following objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework of the scheme are relevant to the proposal:

<b>Clause 11</b>	<b>Settlement</b>
11.01-1S	Settlement
11.03-6S	Regional and local places
11.03-6L	West Wodonga Enterprise Park
<b>Clause 14</b>	<b>Natural Resource Management</b>
14.02-1S	Catchment planning and management
<b>Clause 15</b>	<b>Built Environment and Heritage</b>
15.01-1S	Urban design
15.01-2S	Building design
<b>Clause 19</b>	<b>Community Infrastructure</b>
19.02-2S	Education facilities
<b>Clause 17</b>	<b>Economic Development</b>
17.01-1S	Diversified economy


15. The assessment section of this report provides a detailed assessment of the relevant planning policies.

## Zoning and Overlays

### Applicable Zone/s

16. A planning permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works for a Section 2 'permit required' use pursuant to Clause 32.08-10 of the GRZ headline provision. The purpose of the GRZ is:
- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
  - *To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.*
  - *To encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport.*
  - *To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.*





17. The following sections include a discussion of how the proposal responds to these requirements.

## **Applicable Overlays**

18. It is noted that the subject site is not affected with any overlay controls.

## **Particular and General Provisions**

### **Provisions that Require, Enable or Exempt a Permit**

#### **Clause 52.05 - Signs**

19. Clause 52.05 applies to the development land for the display of signage and associated structures.
20. Clause 32.08-15 confirms that land within the GRZ is in Category 3 for the purposes of the sign controls at Clause 52.05.
21. A permit is required to construct and display business identification signs in Category 3 – High amenity areas.

#### **Clause 52.06 – Car Parking**

22. Among other things, Clause 52.06 applies where there is proposed to be an increase in the floor area of an existing use.
23. Before the floor area of an existing use is increased the number of car parking spaces required under Clause 52.06-5 must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
24. The applicant has confirmed that the number of students and staff on site at any one time is not proposed to be increased as a result of the permit application. Accordingly, no approval is sought or required pursuant to Clause 52.06.

### **General Requirements and Performance Standards**

25. Clause 53.18 applies to the buildings and works of this application. The clause includes standards and objectives in respect of the stormwater management and site management objectives for buildings and works (Clauses 53.18-5 and 53.18-6 respectively).
26. Before deciding an application, the responsible authority must consider, among other things:
  - the capacity of the site to incorporate stormwater retention
  - whether stormwater discharge from the site will adversely affect water quality entering the drainage system.
  - the capacity of the drainage network to accommodate additional stormwater.
  - whether the stormwater treatment areas can be effectively maintained.

## **Relevant Strategic Documents**

### **Policy document**

27. Clause 11.03-6L West Wodonga Enterprise Park, directs responsible authorities to consider as relevant the Wodonga Enterprise Park – Design and Development Guidelines (Wodonga City Council, March 2007) when applying the West Wodonga Enterprise Park Framework Plan.



## Referrals

28. There is no requirement in the Scheme for the application to be referred to any external agencies.

## Municipal Council Comments

29. Wodonga City Council (the council) confirmed on 18 July 2024 that it does not object to the permit application.

## Notice

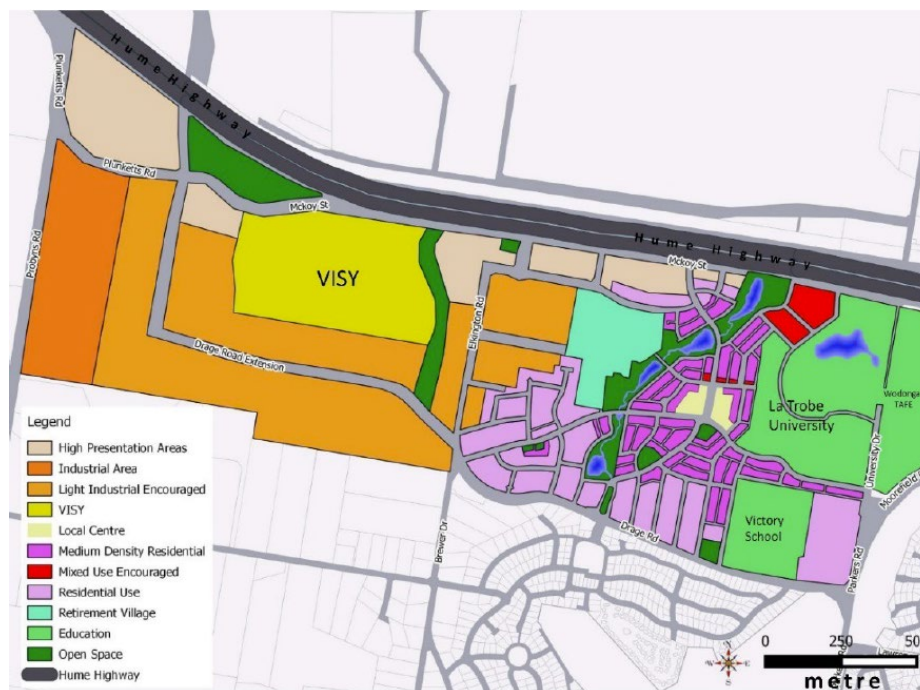
30. The application is not exempt from the notice requirements of section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 under the relevant GRZ control.
31. The application was not advertised other than notice being provided to the council pursuant to section 52(1)(b) of the Act as it was considered the application would not cause material detriment to any person because:
- none of the properties adjoining the subject site directly abut or have direct line of sight to the proposed buildings and works or signage.
  - the proposed Student Services building is centrally located within the existing school campus (see Figure 4) and is setback more than 110 metres from the closest adjoining property.

## Key Considerations

33. The following are deemed key considerations in assessing the acceptability of the application:
- the location of the proposed Student Services building within the existing school campus.
  - the incorporation of energy efficiency and stormwater management measures as part of the proposed buildings and works.
  - the compatibility of the proposed signage given the subject site's surrounding context.

## Strategic Direction and Land Use


34. The Planning Policy Framework encourages appropriate land use and development that enhances the built environment, supports economic growth, meets the community expectations on retail and commercial provision, delivers diversity in housing supply to meet existing and future needs, and integrates transport and infrastructure planning.
35. A review of the relevant planning policy indicates that the proposed Student Services building is consistent with the municipality's vision. To that end, it is noted that Wodonga's population is young in comparison to the state and regional average and is expected to grow over the next 12 years (see clause 02.01-Context). The municipality prides itself on combining the liveability associated with living in the country with the opportunities of a metropolitan area (see clause 02.02-Vision). The importance of enhancing the municipality's educational facilities is also acknowledged in local policy (see Clause 02.03-7-Economic development – Employment and tourism).



**Figure 8 West Wodonga Enterprise Park Framework Plan**  
(Source: Clause 11.03-6L of the Scheme)

37. Clause 11.03-6L – West Wodonga Enterprise Park, notes that the Wodonga Enterprise Park – Design and Development Guidelines (Wodonga City Council, March 2007) should be regarded as relevant. The Enterprise Park Design and Development Guidelines document states:





*This document outlines the important building siting, design and landscape matters that should be taken into account when undertaking new development within those areas of Enterprise Park (or modifying existing premises/ sites).*

...

*In short Council will support developments of high-quality commercial design and architecture that reflects the future desired image, form, and character of this regionally significant development initiative (p.3).*

38. In light of the above, the Enterprise Park Design and Development Guidelines document will be referred to as appropriate through the assessment of this application.

## **Buildings and Works**

39. The zoning provisions have been considered in respect of the application.
40. Noting the purpose of the GRZ as referred to above in this assessment, it is considered the proposed Student Services building will serve to enhance existing educational facilities (both in terms of services available to students and accommodation for teaching staff). This upgrade of on-site facilities for an Education centre use which is acknowledged in local planning policy (Clause 11.03-6L) will serve to address local community need. The buildings and works associated with the delivery of the proposed Student Services building will result in the expansion of education facilities to meet the existing and future education needs of the community in line with state government planning policy (Clause 19.02-2S).
41. The decision guidelines of the GRZ headline provision have been considered and it is noted that the proposed Student Services building and associated signage:
- is consistent with the purpose of the GRZ.
  - is compatible with adjoining residential use and will serve to enhance facilities associated with an ongoing Education centre use which serves the local community's needs.
  - the design, height, setback and appearance of the proposed buildings and works are appropriate given its central location within the existing campus buildings.
  - the modest landscaping proposed is appropriate in the context of the existing school campus.

## **Height and Setbacks**

42. The Enterprise Park Design and Development Guidelines notes that the West Wodonga Enterprise Park precinct is intended to be a high-quality architectural design of street frontages, combining with a landscape setting. Among the other listed attributes, the Guidelines document notes a "harmonious integration of 1, 2, and 3 floor/ level architectural forms of high aesthetic quality" (p. 2).
43. The decision plans indicate that the proposed Student Services building will have an overall building height of 8.4 metres and consist of two distinct levels which will serve to separate the building's very distinct purposes. The ground level will be dedicated to student welfare and housing appropriate services, while the upper level will serve to provide both the primary and secondary school staff/ teachers with updated meeting, office and break out areas. Bearing in mind the designated institutional use of the land under the West Wodonga Enterprise Park Framework Plan at Clause 11.03-6L and the location of the proposed Student Services building within the land parcel, it is considered that the height and setback of the built form is acceptable and accords with the preferred character as described in the relevant planning policy.

## **Design Detail**

44. The architectural response is consistent with the subject site's existing context and will feature external cladding comprising "Shale Grey" Colorbond roof sheets, and "Manor Red" and "Deep Ocean" Colorbond metal wall cladding and "Gunmetal Grey" aluminium composite panels.
45. The utilitarian design of the proposed Student Services building is considered appropriate given its location amongst existing school campus buildings. It is considered the height, scale and mass of the structure is



appropriate given the intended nature of an educational facility (see Clause 19.02-2S) and its location within an existing school campus.

46. Further consideration of the proposed Student Services building's environmentally sustainable design and stormwater management design features are set out below.

### **Signage**

47. Non-illuminated business identification signage is proposed to be installed on the proposed Student Services building's east and west elevations at ground level. Each of the business identification signs will consist of a 0.3m<sup>2</sup> grey aluminium composite panel featuring "Deep Ocean" lettering (see Dwg no. A06 of the Decision plans).
48. It is considered that the proposed business identification signage is compatible with the visual appearance and the desired future character of the area and is therefore acceptable.
49. Accordingly, it is recommended that the permit include conditions addressing the following:
- when the signage approval will expire (in accordance with Clause 52.05-4)
  - that the business identification signage will need to be removed on the signage permit's expiry (as required by Clause 52.05-9).

### **Amenity and Microclimate**

#### **Overshadowing and weather protection**

50. It is noted that the landscaped area proposed to be established around the proposed Student Services building will be located along the north and western edges of the building. Consequently, those garden areas will receive appropriate levels of sunlight throughout the day. It is observed that the school campus appears to benefit from ample north-facing outdoor areas to accommodate students who wish to enjoy greater sunlight access throughout the course of the day.
51. The eastern edge of the proposed Student Services building forms part of the school campus' existing Covered Outdoor Learning Area (which is proposed to be altered to accommodate the new built form). Accordingly, the two-storey structure will not adversely impact access to sunlight along this edge of the building which is specifically intended to offer weather protection to students and staff throughout the school year.
52. In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed Student Services building and associated works will afford students and staff acceptable outdoor amenity.

### **Landscaping**

53. The proposed landscaped area which is to be located along the proposed Student Services building's north and north-western edge will feature canopy trees (such as a Lemon Scented Tea Tree), productive garden beds, pathways and outdoor seating.
54. It is noted that this landscaped area features synthetic grass. The applicant has suggested that this is consistent with the treatment of other equivalent spaces adjoining buildings throughout the school campus and has been found to be easier to maintain and functional for the existing school. Accordingly, given that the decision plans also make provision for stormwater grated pits throughout the proposed landscaped area to ensure that rainwater can be appropriately redirected away from the area to the existing on-site detention pond (to the north of the campus land).
55. It is considered that the proposed landscape area bordering the edge of the proposed Student Services building appropriately responds to its site context, enhances the built form, creates safe and attractive spaces and supports cooling and greening of urban areas in line with planning policy at Clause 15.01-2S.



## Sustainability

### Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)

56. Based on the decision plans, the proposed Student Services building will include:
- Roof top solar panels,
  - R05 insulation in the ceiling and between floor levels.
  - canopy trees along the proposed Student Services building's north-west edge to offer
57. In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed Student Services building constitutes a satisfactory design response which appropriately supports environmentally sustainable development in line with State planning policy (see Clause 15.01-2S).

### Stormwater Management

58. The application is supported by Stormwater Management Plan prepared by SJE Consulting dated 31 May 2024. It confirms that
- [t]he existing drainage network has been operating effectively to date and the proposed [Student Services building] will be connected to the drainage network which will discharge to existing wetlands (p.5).*
59. Section 3.2 of the Stormwater Management Plan goes on to acknowledge that the existing wetlands have the capacity to treat the proposed and existing Education centre's building infrastructure and goes on at section 4 to set out the steps essential in maintaining the drainage system.
60. Local policy acknowledges the need to encourage the flow of stormwater run-off from urban areas to be minimised (Clause 02.03-9-Infrastructure).
61. The Stormwater Management Plan is accompanied by Sediment Control Plan prepared by SJE Consulting (Job no. 800978) dated 25 June 2024 (2 sheets) which also supported the application. It is considered that the application appropriately identifies measures to minimise the quantity and retard the flow of stormwater from the proposed Student Services building and associated works and proposes appropriate measures to filter sediment and minimise nutrient contributions from being discharged into the existing wetlands in line with planning policy (see Clause 14.02-1S-Catchment planning and management).
62. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Stormwater Management Plan (comprising the document dated 31 May 2024 and the 2 sheets comprising the Sediment Control Plan) be endorsed and that a condition is included on the permit to require that the relevant maintenance measures are met to the satisfaction of the Wodonga City Council.

### Native Vegetation

63. No native vegetation is proposed to be removed.

### Other Matters

#### Cultural Heritage

64. A cultural heritage management plan is not required in circumstances where the subject land is not located in an acknowledged area of cultural heritage sensitivity.



# Recommendation



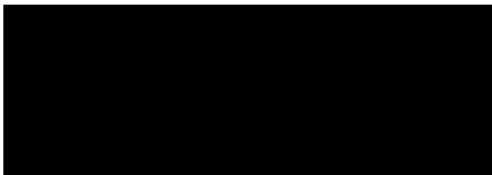
65. The proposal is generally consistent with the relevant planning policies of the Wodonga Planning Scheme and will contribute to the provision of updated education facilities within the land parcel designated as the Victory School site on the West Wodonga Enterprise Park Framework Plan (as set out at Clause 11.03-6L).
66. The proposal is supported by the council.
67. It is **recommended** that Planning Permit No. PA2402880 to construct a building or construct or carry out works for a primary and secondary school and display business identification signage at 28 Drage Road, West Wodonga be issued subject to conditions.
68. It is **recommended** that the applicant and the council be notified of the above in writing.

**Prepared by:**

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

- No Conflict**
- Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:
- Completed the **Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form**.
- Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form on to the hardcopy file.
- Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Name:



Title:

Signed:



Phone:

Dated:

24 July 2024

**Reviewed / Approved by:**

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

- No Conflict**
- Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:
- Completed the **Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form**.
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- Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Name:



Title:

Signed:



Phone:

Dated:

26 July 2024