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Response to DTP Section 55 - Objection (PPR 49848/25)
3 Nortons Lane, Wantirna South

Introduction

Planning approval is being sought for the proposed development of the land parcel addressed as 3 Nortons Lane in Wantirna South, for the purpose of a primary school (Ascension College).

The current planning application is pursuant to the delivery of Stage 1 of Ascension College.

The planning permit application (Ref No. P/2025/6425) was submitted to the Department of Transport and Planning (Department Reference No. PPR 49848/25). Ratio Consultants prepared a Transport Impact Assessment report (22781T-REP01-F01, dated 9 September 2025) which formed part of the town planning submission.

Upon review of the application, the Head, Transport for Victoria (HTFV) has raised various concerns which are reproduced below verbatim and in *italics*:

High Street Road is a declared arterial road carrying high traffic volumes and providing a key east west movement function in the transport network.

The existing unsignalised intersection at High Street Road and Nortons Lane experiences high delays for right turn movements from Nortons Lane, reflecting limited safe gap opportunities and operational constraints.

The school traffic will rely on this intersection to access the site, and no intersection upgrade or supporting works are proposed.

The Transport Impact Assessment relies on behaviour-based measures to encourage left in and left out movements via nearby median breaks. Without physical treatments or intersection upgrades, unsafe right turn movements are likely to continue.

Limited pedestrian infrastructure restricts safe access to nearby bus stops on High Street Road, which constrains practical public transport use for students and staff.

Based on the above concerns, the Head, Transport for Victoria has considered this application and objects to the grant of a permit on the following grounds:

1. *The proposal is inconsistent with Clauses 18.01-1S, 18.01-2S & 18.02-4S of the Knox Planning Scheme, as it fails to demonstrate safe and efficient integration with the State Transport System; and*

2. *The traffic demand from the school would create unacceptable road safety outcomes at the High Street/Nortons Road intersection.*

HTFV note that they may reconsider its position if an access arrangement can be presented that addresses the road safety and operational issues at the High Street Road and Nortons Lane intersection.

This letter has been prepared in response to the abovementioned comment relating to the High Street Road and Nortons Lane intersection.

Development Proposal

It is proposed to develop the land parcel addressed as 3 Nortons Lane in Wantirna South for the purpose of a primary school (Ascension College).

The current planning permit application is pursuant to Stage 1 of Ascension College.

The area of works for Stage 1 is limited to the eastern portion of the site only and seeks to provide various portable classrooms, staff and student amenities, various playground areas and a soccer field within the area of works.

No changes outside the area of works are proposed as part of this application and as such, the existing buildings and vegetation that occupies the western portion of the site will all be retained throughout Stage 1.

Further consultation with the school has revealed that a staged delivery of students over time can now be accommodated. Specifically, the proposed student and staff numbers across Stage 1 for the proposed full build out of the staff and student numbers proposed for the school are described in

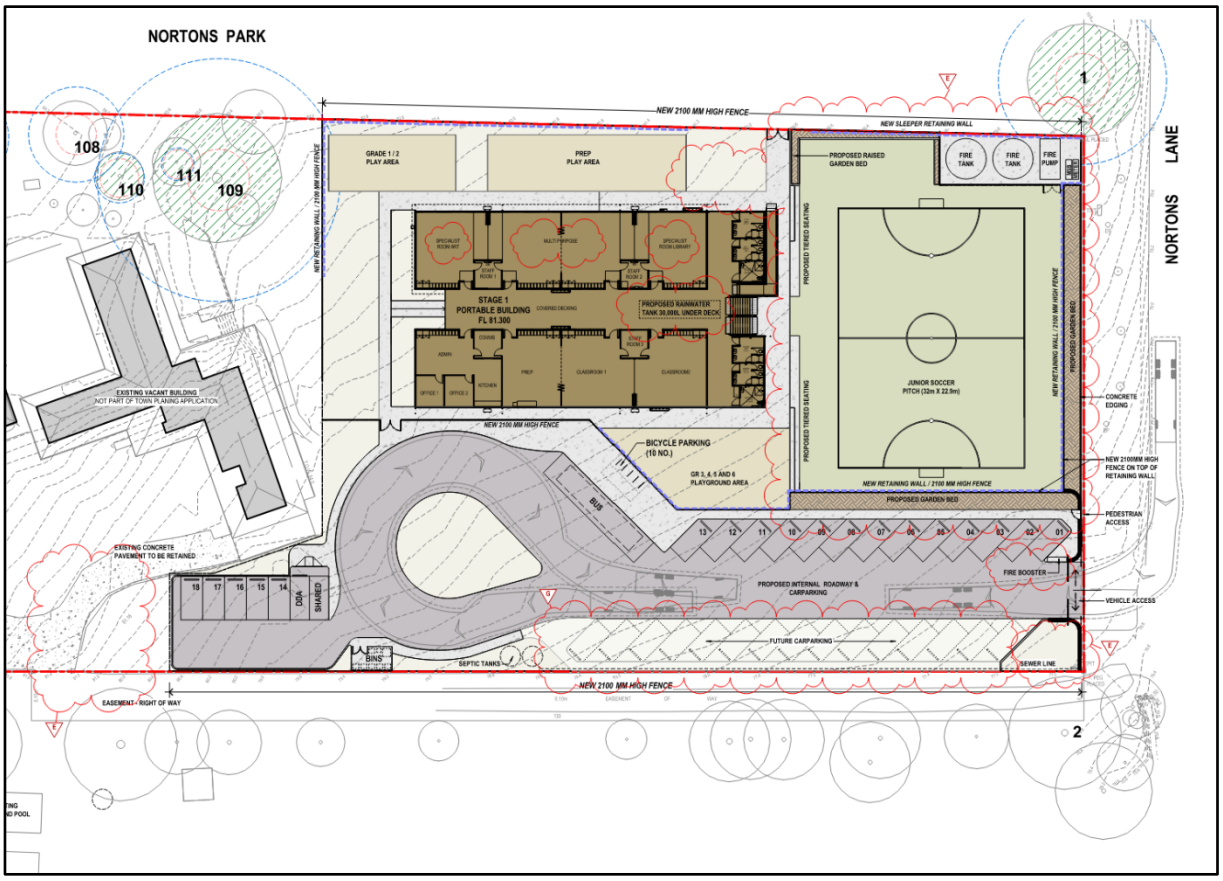
Table 1.

Table 1: Ascension College – Proposed Staging

Stage	Year	Student numbers (maximum)	Staff numbers (maximum)
Stage 1A	2027 (Grades P-1)	50	6
	2028 (Grades P-2)	70	7
Stage 1B	2029 (Grades P-3)	80	8
	2030 (Grades P-4)	100	10
Stage 1C	2031 (Grades P-5)	120	11
	2032 (Grades P-6)	130	12
	2033 (Grades P-6)	140	13
	2034 (Grades P-6)	150	13

The proposed site layout for Stage 1 is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Proposed Site Layout



Source: MSM & Associates Pty Ltd – Proposed Site Plan – Stage 1

A total of 19 car parking spaces (inclusive of one (1) accessible space) are proposed on-site for the initial build out phase of development. One (1) bus parking bay is also proposed on-site.

Vehicle access to/from the site is proposed via a 7.0-metre-wide crossover to/from Nortons Lane at the southeast corner of the site.

A roundabout is proposed at the western end of the main car parking area for the purpose of providing a convenient location for vehicles to turnaround on-site.

Response to DTP Concerns

Preamble

As described previously, DTP raised an item that all site generated traffic will be required to access the site via the High Street Road / Nortons Lane intersection. Due to the high volume of through traffic carried by High Street Road and the unsignalised configuration of the intersection, DTP are of the view there are potential operational and safety matters associated with the intersection accommodating the site generated traffic.

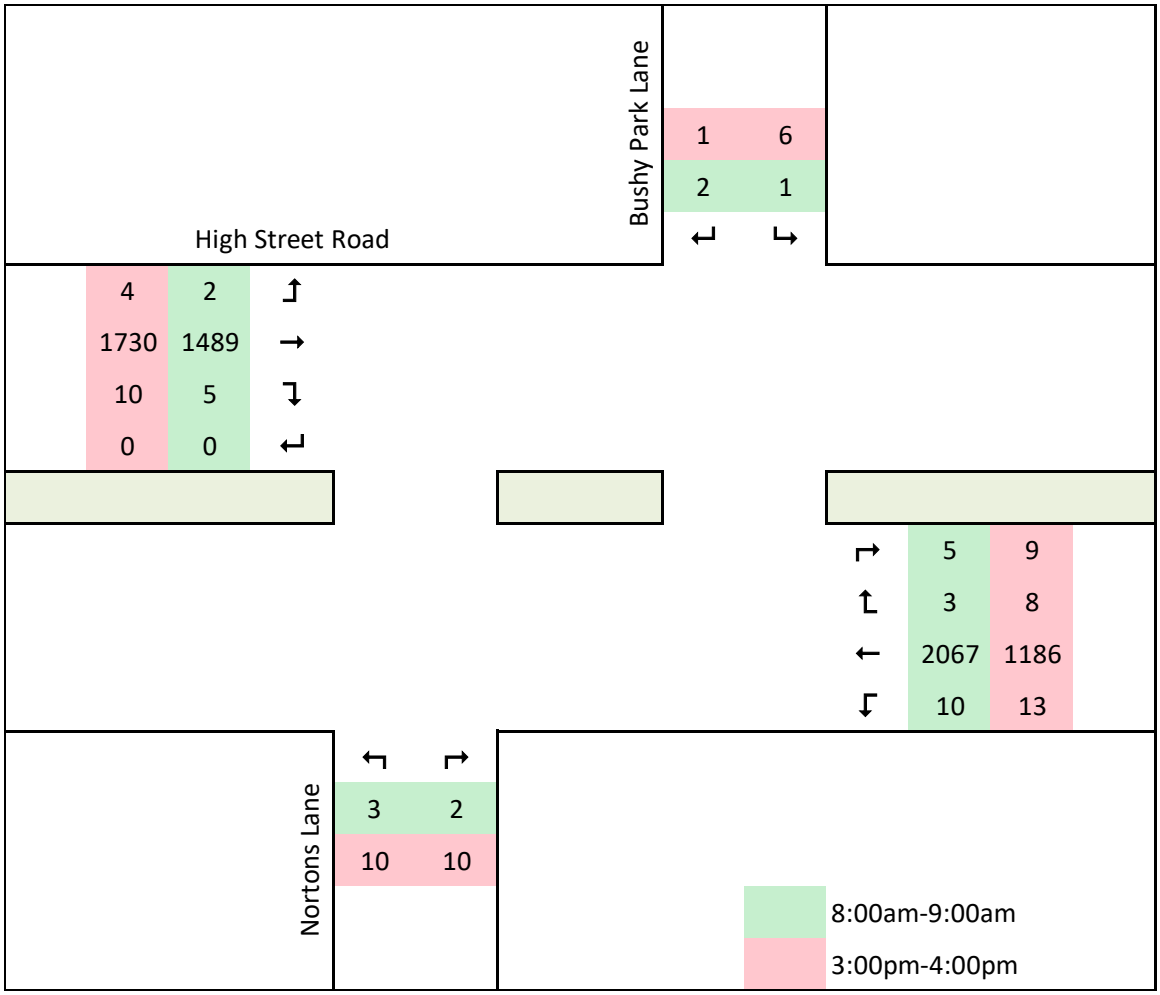
Existing Traffic Conditions

To understand existing traffic conditions at the Nortons Lane / High Street Road intersection, Ratio Consultants commissioned turning movement surveys on Thursday 29 May 2025 during the morning and afternoon peak periods.

Traffic volumes between 8:00am-9:00am and 3:00pm-4:00pm have been extracted from the survey results to gain an understanding of traffic volumes during the anticipated school peak hours.

The existing traffic volumes during the school peak hours are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Existing Traffic Volumes (School Peak Hours)



The traffic volumes presented in Figure 2 confirm that High Street Road carries a high level of through traffic during both peak hours. Moreover, there appears to be a tidal aspect to these traffic flows with much higher westbound volumes recorded during the AM peak hour and then higher eastbound volumes recorded during the PM peak hour.

Further to the above, it is evident that existing traffic volumes on Nortons Lane are low during the typical school peak hours.

Traffic Generation

The following traffic generation rates were adopted within Section 8 of the Transport Impact Assessment report that was provided as part of the initial town planning application:

— AM Peak Hour – 1.2 vehicle trips / student; and

— PM Peak Hour – 1.0 vehicle trips / student.

Further to this, the permit applicant has advised that the school will offer a private bus service to families whose child(ren) are enrolled at the school. For families that sign up for this service, a school bus will pick up students from their house and drive them to school each morning and then drive these students' home in the afternoon. This would be enforced and managed via a Transport Management Plan prepared and administrated by the school.

In order to present a conservative assessment on the high side, it has been assumed that half of students enrolled at the school will use the bus service.

The above traffic generation rates have been applied to the number of students expected to be driven to school each year within Stage 1 in order to estimate the level of traffic that will be generated by the school during the morning and afternoon peak hours and each day. These traffic generation estimates are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Estimated Traffic Generation

Year	Student numbers assumed driven to school [1]	AM Vehicle Trips	PM Vehicle Trips
2027 (Grades P-1)	25	30 vph	25 vph
2028 (Grades P-2)	35	42 vph	35 vph
2029 (Grades P-3)	40	48 vph	40 vph
2030 (Grades P-4)	50	60 vph	50 vph
2031 (Grades P-5)	60	72 vph	60 vph
2032 (Grades P-6)	65	78 vph	65 vph
2033 (Grades P-6)	70	84 vph	70 vph
2034 (Grades P-6)	75	90 vph	75 vph

[1] 50% of the maximum number of students for that year to account for students using the bus service.

Traffic Impacts

Noting the very high level of through traffic along High Street Road, it is recommended that right turn movements from Nortons Lane into High Street be banned during school zone hours (i.e. 8:00am–9:30am and 2:30pm-4:00pm). This restriction would be enforced via signage on Nortons Lane facing northbound motorists.

As a result of the abovementioned restriction, all vehicles departing the site would be required to disperse onto the broader road network by turning left from Nortons Lane into High Street Road. This is considered an acceptable arrangement when noting that less

gaps in traffic flow are required to accommodate left turn movements compared to right turn movements and also there are less potential conflict points for the left turn movement.

Having regard to the configuration of the surrounding arterial road network, the following is noted:

— Vehicles with a destination to the west of the subject site location will be able to continue using High Street Road to travel in this direction; and

— Vehicles with a destination to the east of the subject site location can utilise the median break situated approximately 300 metres west of Nortons Lane to undertake a U-turn and then travel east via High Street Road.

It is proposed to retain the existing access arrangements for vehicles turning into Nortons Lane (i.e. left and right turn movements into Nortons Lane will be permitted).

Vehicles approaching the school from the east will be able to turn into Nortons Lane via the existing left turn deceleration lane along High Street Road, which can be undertaken without having to have regard for any conflicting vehicle movements.

Vehicles approaching the school from the west will be able to turn into Nortons Lane via the existing right turn deceleration lane along High Street Road. Vehicles undertaking this movement will need to have regard for the westbound through movements along High Street Road as well as left turn movements into Nortons Lane, and wait for an appropriate gap in traffic flow.

The nearest upstream traffic signals (located at George Street) are approximately 900 metres away. Typically, no bunching of traffic is assumed if the offset to the nearest upstream traffic signals exceeds 800 metres. However, in this instance it is noted that there are only two (2) minor site access points along the southern side of High Street Road between George Street and Nortons Lane. Furthermore, both of these access points appear to be secondary access locations to their respective properties.

This is demonstrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: High Street Road between George Street and Nortons Lane

Source: Landchecker (image dated 20 August 2025)

Given that there will be a negligible volume of traffic (if any) entering High Street Road within this section, it is assumed that the level of bunching that would naturally be created in westbound traffic flow by the operation of the High Street Road / George Street traffic signals will still be present as this traffic travels past Nortons Lane.

Accordingly, it is expected that there will be sufficient gaps in traffic flow to accommodate vehicles turning right into Nortons Lane.

It is an industry accepted rule of thumb that by December (i.e. the month in which this letter was prepared) the road network is not operating under typical conditions. This is due to universities, a number of private schools and some higher year levels at public schools having finished up for the year. Accordingly, it was not possible for gap surveys to be undertaken during the preparation of this report to confirm the above assumption. These surveys could be undertaken when the road network returns to typical operating conditions (at the commencement of the 2026 school year) if deemed necessary by DTP.

Other Considerations

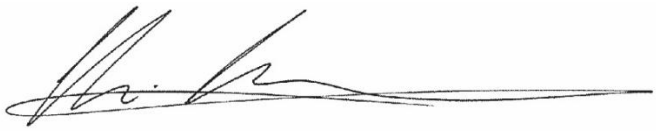
The school has advised that the school day start & end times could be staggered between different year levels. The result of this would be to allow the site generated traffic movements to be more spread out across each peak hour, ultimately mitigating the extent of queuing experienced at the Nortons Lane / High Street Road intersection.

This would naturally be enforced and managed via a Transport Management Plan for the school.

Conclusion

We trust that the discussion and analysis within this letter provides comfort to DTP that with the implementation of a right turn ban on Nortons Lane during school zone hours, the High Street Road / Nortons Lane intersection will operate in a satisfactory manner following the development of the subject site.

Should you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Jackson Hamill-Beach or the undersigned on (03) 9429 3111.



Chris Greenland
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Ratio Consultants Pty Ltd