

9.1 Site Options - Proposed Aboriginal Child and Family Centre



**Ballina Aboriginal Child and Family Centre
February 2011**

Background

NSW Department of Human Services, Community Services is establishing nine Child and Family Centres across New South Wales as part of the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement and *Closing the Gap* agenda. The Centres will provide integrated services for children aged 0-5 years and their families, based around a child care or preschool service.

The Indigenous Early Childhood Development (IECD) Partnership Agreement aims to address health and wellbeing outcomes of Indigenous children. It is based on the evidence of the importance of providing a range of coordinated support services for children and families.

Indigenous children are the main target group however the Centre will cater for all children from a low socioeconomic background.

The locations for the Centres were determined based on a number of factors, including the number of children less than 4 years (projected over the next ten years); the number of women aged 10-19 years (projected over the next ten years) and the capacity of the existing local child and family services to work in an integrated way.

This means that Ballina was selected because of the expected growth in the number of children and the strengths it currently demonstrates in its early childhood services. This strength has already been evident in our discussions in Ballina to date.

Community Services is working closely with a community nominated group, the Local Reference Group and NSW Public Works to establish a new Centre. After canvassing many sites the Local Reference Group determined Porter Park as a preferred site for the Centre as it can meet the size requirements for a child care centre with maximum placements, it has capacity to also include parent and health services and it is within walking distance for a large number of families with babies and small children.

Demographic data at local collection districts level has been sourced from the ABS 2006 Census and it further supports Porter Park as an ideal site. Analysis from this data¹ finds that

- there is almost double the population of Aboriginal people residing near Porter Park than Treelands Reserve
- there are three times more Aboriginal children aged 0-9 years residing near Porter Park than Treelands Reserve
- Aboriginal children aged 0-9 years is approximately 42 per cent of the total 0-9 year old population residing near Porter Park

¹ ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing – collection districts (CD) 1071402, 1071415, 1071410, 1071413

Why is the Centre Important

The relatively poor socioeconomic and health status of Indigenous people and families has been well documented for example lower employment rates, education attainment and lower life expectancy of Indigenous Australians when compared with non-Indigenous Australians are just a few indicators of disadvantage. Research² has identified a key set of indicators that highlight Indigenous peoples' exclusion from mainstream social and economic opportunities. It concluded that Indigenous children were among the most socially disadvantaged in Australia. Compared with other Australian children, children living in Indigenous households were

- less likely to be living with a parent
- had lower weekly household incomes
- more like to be living in families which are more reliant on income support
- more likely to have parents who left school early
- less likely to have a parent in paid employment

Many Indigenous families miss out on early childhood services even though they stand to benefit most. Early childhood experts advocate an integrated delivery of services, including antenatal services, child and maternal health services, parenting and family support services, and early learning and child care, as the best delivery platform to ensure families actually receive the support they need³.

It is important that action in this area includes provision of parent and family support services. Evidence shows that early childhood programs are most effective when they support parents' active participation in their children's development.

The Centre for Ballina will incorporate the range of fundamental support services that are required to give the best start to families with babies and small children.

Services the Centre will deliver

The core service to be delivered from the Centre is child care for children 0-4 years old. The Centre will also act as a hub in offering a coordination of services such as family support, parenting programs, and playgroups as well as health services including immunisation clinics and early childhood nurse services. The opening hours of the Centre will largely be in keeping with usual hours for child care services (8am – 6pm) however as there will be community space at the centre as well other groups may wish to use the facility during some evenings or weekends for other events. Importantly the Centre will operate from a universal or population based approach, as opposed to targeted services.

Local benefits of the Centre

As a family and community hub, the Centre is seen as an asset and it is intended to enhance the neighbourhood for everyone's enjoyment. There will be new jobs created through the establishment of the Centre to operate its services and local businesses will benefit given the need to acquire equipment and material on an ongoing basis. Ballina will own a unique Centre, designed to represent its local culture. It will be a model of service innovation given it is one of the first to commence as there is only a handful of these in New South Wales and in Australia.

² *Daly and Smith (2005); and The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2008 - AIHW*

³ *Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (2004) Indigenous Parenting Project, P 13.*

For further information on the Centre please refer to Attachment 1 Ballina Aboriginal Child & Family Centre, Information Package November 2010.

The Site

Three siting options for the Centre on the Porter Park site were presented to ascertain the most advantageous site location. Refer to attach drawing, POM-A05 for the options considered,

Option 1 was chosen for the following reasons summarised below,

- The Centre occupies a corner of the site with little interference to the remainder of Porter Park
- The remainder of Porter Park can be retained as a cricket oval for junior and 4th grade club cricket
- The visual corridor from Hayman Street to Daydream Avenue to be retained
- The site is adjacent to one neighbour property only

The existing area of Porter Park is 18,560sqm of which the proposed site area for the Centre is 3,800sqm inclusive of the proposed building footprint of 870sqm, the car park of 600sqm and open space areas, thereby leaving 14,760sqm of open parkland remaining. Please refer to drawing POM-A01 for further information. As you can see from this drawing consideration has been given to the existing use of the Park as a cricket field with the Park able to retain both Junior and 4th grade cricket club matches.

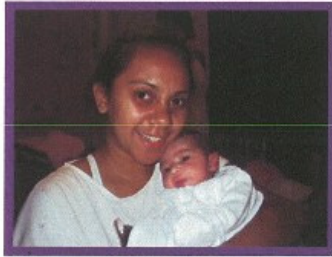
Reference to drawing POM-A02, shows that considerations have been made of the views from Hayman Street into Porter Park. It is proposed that the building will enhance the streetscape of Hayman Street with the Centre broken down into clusters to enable pavilion like structures. This will give the proposed Centre a conventional scale similar to the existing neighbouring properties. It will also make use of similar materials in its façade treatments and the building edges will be softened by the use of landscaping and a generous setback from the Hayman Street footpath.

The aesthetics and noise impacts have also been considered for neighbouring residents refer to drawing POM-A03 for further details. The proposed Centre will be designed in response to an appropriate acoustic investigation. The acoustic report will investigate noise levels externally to the Centre and internally from the Centre. Appropriate wall treatments and landscaping will be designed to minimise the neighbouring properties impact.

Ballina Aboriginal Child & Family Centre



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There are nine Child and Family Centres being developed across New South Wales as part of the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership Agreement. The Department of Human Services (Community Services) and the Premier and Cabinet are leading the implementation of this commitment.

The Centres will provide integrated services for children aged 0-5 years and their families, based around a child care or preschool service. As this Partnership Agreement is part of the 'Closing the Gap' agenda for all Governments, the clear focus of the centres is to provide a place where Aboriginal children and families can access culturally sensitive and easily accessible support.

Aboriginal children are the main target group however the Centre will cater for all other children from a low socio economic status. This is due to evidence of how Aboriginal people are faring in Australia (and locally) and is based on, but not only limited to the following brief statistics. On average Aboriginal people die 17 years earlier than all other Australians, Aboriginal babies have higher infant mortality rates and are 3 times more likely to be born premature than other babies. And Aboriginal children are not attending early childhood education prior to school, as compared to other children.

The locations for the Centres were determined based on a number of factors, including the number of children less than 4 years (projected over the next ten years); the number of women aged 10-19 years (projected over the next ten years) and the capacity of the existing local child and family services to work in an integrated way.

This means that Ballina was selected because of the expected growth in the number of children and the strengths it currently demonstrates in its early childhood services. This strength has already been evident in our discussions in Ballina to date.

The funding package for the Centres include fixed term funding for the centre management and operating costs as well as one off funding for design and construction of a new building. There is no funding to acquire land.

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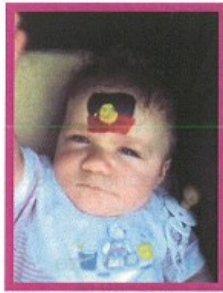
The Local Reference Group and Community Services developed a detailed set of criteria in short listing and selecting the site for the Centre. The key criteria for the selection of a preferred site included, the size required to meet Childrens Services regulations for number of placements determined, capacity to also include the collocation of other parent/family and health services, a location that can be easily accessed and near the children and families of whom the Centre is designed for and be culturally appropriate and acceptable to the local Aboriginal community.

Porter Park, West Ballina is ranked as the preferred as it can meet the size requirements of a centre with maximum placements and have capacity to include space for parent and health services. Porter Park is within walking distance of the social and public housing estate where families with young children reside. It also has the largest Aboriginal population in Ballina town. There were a number of other sites considered as well.

The Centre funding will include one off funds for design and construction of a new centre building and fixed term funding for centre management, operations and provision of an early learning and/or child care services. A competitive tender process is being undertaken and almost finalised. A community based not for profit organisation will likely manage the Centre and its operations and also deliver the early learning and/or child care services.

The local Aboriginal community, via the Local Reference Group has worked very closely with Community Services in local planning and decision making for the Centre. The Centre project is viewed as a community owned project and the Local Reference Group indicates that the local Aboriginal community will continue to have active involvement in the Centre development and in its operating and growth into the future. The partnership with the Local Reference Group has been the core strength to the Centre project.

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Local Community

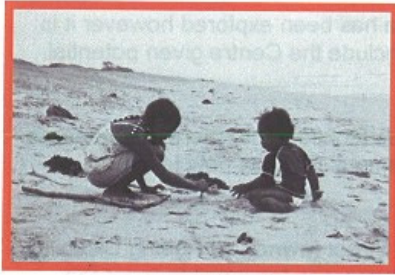
The most significant aspect of the Centre project has been the engagement and participation of the local Aboriginal community. To achieve this, the local Aboriginal community determined who and how it would be represented and a Local Reference Group has been established from local community members and Aboriginal community organisations that have a role in child and family services. The membership of the Local Reference Group is as follows and includes a balance of men and women and residents of both Ballina and Cabbage Tree Island.

- Parents
- Elders
- Youth
- Ballina Cabbage Tree Island Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service
- Bullinah Goori Services Actions Group (Aboriginal interagency)
- Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Bunjum Aboriginal Cooperative Ltd.

The Local Reference Group has developed a vision paper (attached) for the Centre which has been an influential tool for planning.

The Local Reference has worked very closely with Community Services in local planning and decision making for the Centre. The Centre project is viewed as a community owned project and the Local Reference Group indicates that the local Aboriginal community will continue to have active involvement in the Centre development and in its operating and growth into the future. The partnership with the Local Reference Group has been the core strength to the Centre project

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Site Options

The funding package for the Centres include fixed term funding for the centre management and operating costs as well as one off funding for design and construction of a new building. There is no funding to acquire land.

Porter Park, West Ballina (Ballina Shire Council managed land) is ranked as the preferred site by the Local Reference Group. Porter Park is the preferred site because

- it can meet the size requirements of a centre with maximum placements and its capacity to include space for parent and health services
- its within walking distance of the social and public housing estate where families with young children reside
- is the largest Aboriginal population in Ballina town

The space required for the Child and Family Centre will only be a small proportion of the land available in Porter Park (approximately 1/6 is required). There is scope within the design and development of the Centre for consideration to be given to ways in which the Centre might contribute to the land in Porter Park becoming more useful for all our local children and families, such as through upgrading of sports facilities or creating a new playground for children and families to access.

The process in identifying and ranking sites has been a considerate one over the past eleven months. Further to this the other sites that have been considered include the following.

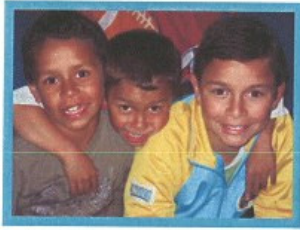
- Housing NSW land in Tamar Street Ballina was too small to meet the requirements of the Centre.
- Space within the grounds of the Ballina Public School (Department of Education and Training known as DET) was deemed not appropriate by the Local Reference Group due to access issues. The space is towards the rear of the plot with no direct street access or limitations for an increase in traffic.

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- DET land in Quays Drive in West Ballina has been explored however it is understood that this will not be able to include the Centre given potential future plans.
- TAFE Ballina campus in Canal Road was looked at but there has been an expansion of buildings on the current campus that has now taken up all available land.
- An area behind the Biala School in Fox Street (owned by Ageing Disability and Homecare) was identified but the space was too small to meet the requirements of the Centre.
- Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council lands were canvassed however all lands have high environmental protection. Cabbage Tree Island can no longer have significant capital works as its existing infrastructure is fragile.
- Treelands Reserve, Ballina Shire Council was requested as a potential site and declined due to Council wishing to preserve the site for projected future Council provided facilities. In further deliberations of other sites it also became the position of the Local Reference Group that this site is not equipped to cater for the Centre building including the requirements of an outside play area.
- Land at Canal Road Saunders Oval, Ballina Shire Council was also considered. And it was rejected as existing plans are already underway for this site.

The Local Reference Group has expressed its intention to enhance Porter Park for everyone's enjoyment and to work transparently in the design and construction phase for the Centre.

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The Building

NSW Public Works will be managing the design and construction of the Ballina Child and Family Centre on behalf of Community Services and the Local Reference Group.

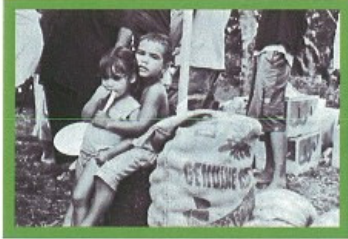
The Government Architects Office is currently developing a concept design that will assist you and members of the local community to get a picture of what the centre will look like (attached are two examples of footprints of the site. These are indicative footprints only). In general terms the Centre will be a licensed child care service; it will have the necessary space for children to play outside as well as provide a welcoming space for families to attend the centre for playgroups, parenting courses, and to see the maternal and child health nurse.

The size of the Centre will largely rely upon the number of placements the child care service is licensed for under the NSW Childrens Services Regulations. The maximum number of placements a centre can be licensed for is 59 which require a centre to be the size of 3000m² (inclusive of external play area and car parking). Porter Park, which is currently the site being investigated for the building of the Centre is approximately 18,000m² (not including the walk/cycleway south of the Park).

The building and landscape design must incorporate Crime Prevention and safety through the Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. A minimum cost allocation for maintenance is a mandatory requirement of the Centre manager to ensure the building and its surrounding areas are able to be kept safe, clean and aesthetically appealing.

Community input into the design process will be undertaken and the Local Reference Group has made particular requests about the environmental impact of the centre, and that it will be a building in keeping with the existing infrastructure.

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S ervices

The National Partnership Agreement provides a framework for the model of service delivery in each Centre, based around the provision of some form of child care and other child and family support in particular maternal and child health services, parenting groups and early literacy programs.

Families with Aboriginal babies and small children 0-5 years old are the primary target group for services however the Centre will support all children from a low socio economic status. The service mix specific to the Ballina Child and Family Centre has been discussed by the Local Reference Group and it is anticipated that a long day care or preschool, maternal and child health checks, family support, parenting groups and supported playgroups are what are anticipated to be delivered from the Centre.

The opening hours for the Centre will largely be in keeping with usual hours for child care services (8am-6pm) however as there will be community space at the centre as well other groups may wish to use the facility during some evenings or weekends for other community meetings and events.

There will be no commercial services operating from the Centre. It is important to note that the Centre and its services will be managed by a not for profit incorporated organisation. Majority of the services to be offered from the Centre will be free and the child care service will either be no fee or low fees. The whole intent of the Centre is to support our most vulnerable children and families in our community and this can only be done by offering affordable and accessible support services.

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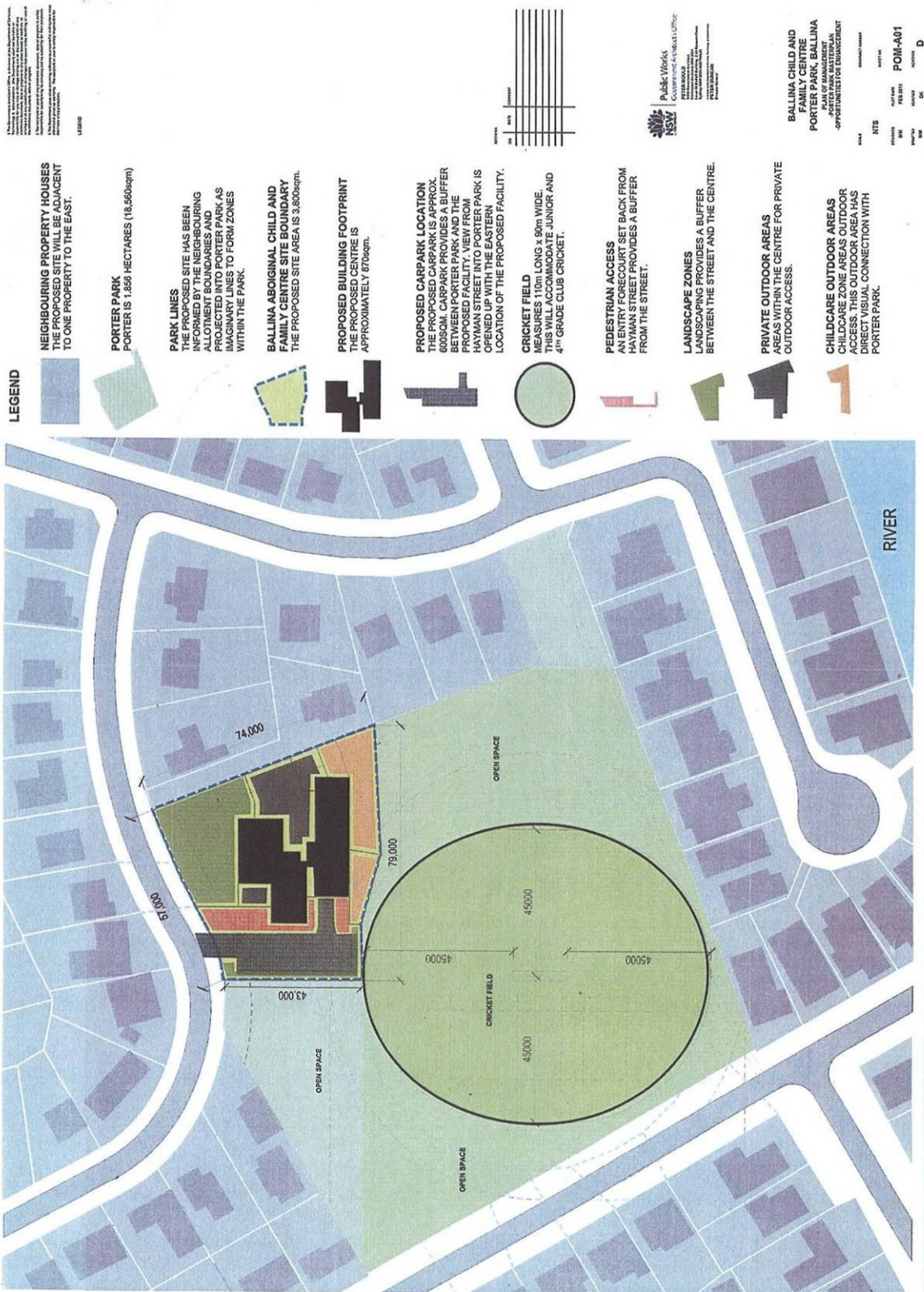


Contacts

For Further information you may contact

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Katherine Emerton	Project Manager, NSW Public Works	66 26 5670	Katherine.Emerton@services.nsw.gov.au

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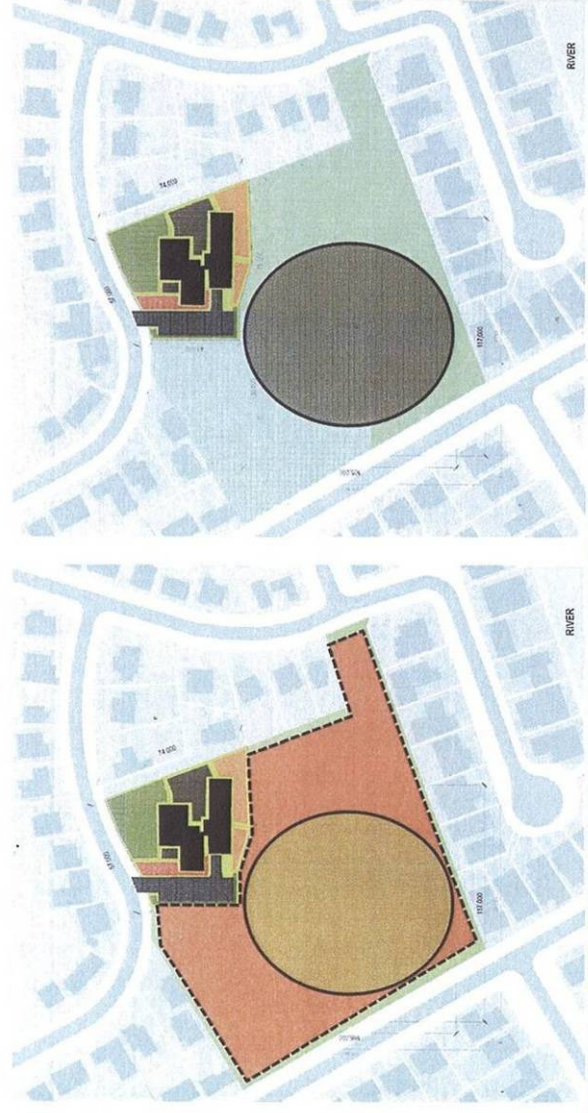
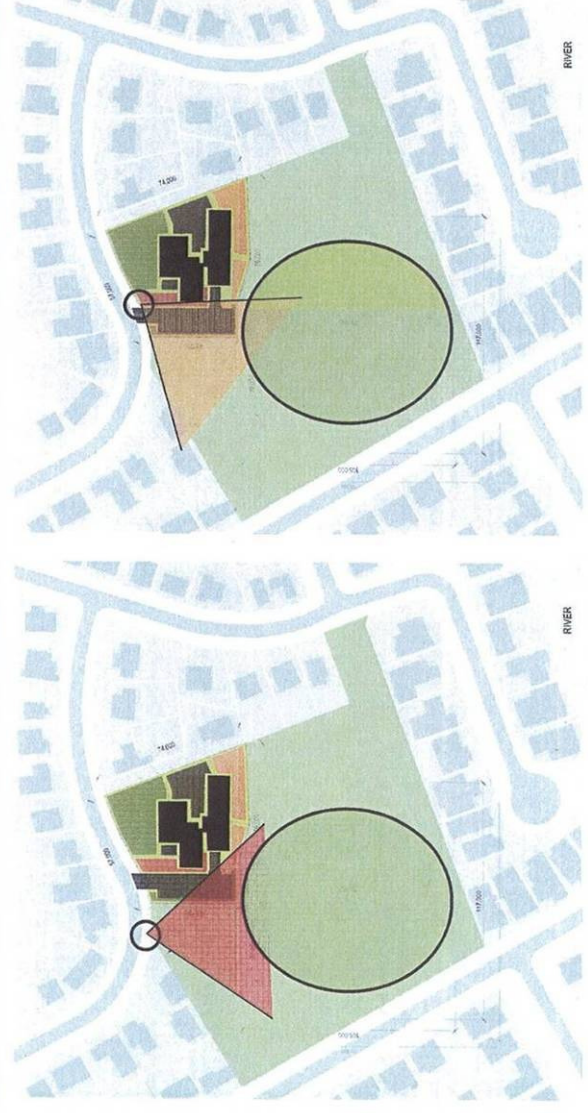
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 BALLINA NSW 2463
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 FAX: 02 6620 2001
 WWW.PUBLICWORKS.NSW.GOV.AU

VIEW FROM HAYMAN STREET INTO PORTER PARK.
 THE VIEW CORRIDOR INTO PORTER PARK IS MINIMISED BY PLACING THE PROPOSED BUILDING FOOTPRINT TO THE EAST OF THE PROPOSED SITE.

VIEW FROM HAYMAN STREET INTO PORTER PARK.
 THE VIEW CORRIDOR INTO PORTER PARK IS MINIMISED BY PLACING THE PROPOSED CARPARK TO THE WEST OF THE PROPOSED SITE.

PORTER PARK
 EXISTING AREA - 18,550sqm
 PROPOSED SITE AREA - 3,800sqm
 REMAINING AREA - 14,760sqm

CRICKET FIELD
 MEASURES 110m LONG x 90m WIDE
 THIS WILL ACCOMMODATE JUNIOR AND 4TH GRADE CLUB CRICKET.



THE BUILDING AESTHETICS

THE BUILDING WILL ENHANCE THE STREETSCAPE OF HAYMAN STREET
 THE FACILITY HAS BEEN BROKEN DOWN INTO CLUSTERS TO ENABLE PAVILION LIKE STRUCTURES, THIS WILL GIVE THE PROPOSED FACILITY A CONVENTIONAL SCALE SIMILAR TO THE EXISTING NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES.
 IT WILL ALSO MAKE USE OF SIMILAR MATERIALS IN ITS FACADE TREATMENTS.
 THE BUILDING EDGES WILL BE SOFTENED BY THE USE OF LANDSCAPING AND A GENEROUS SETBACK FROM THE HAYMAN STREET FOOTPATH.

DATE	NO.	REVISION

Public Works
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BALLINA CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE
 PORTER PARK, BALLINA

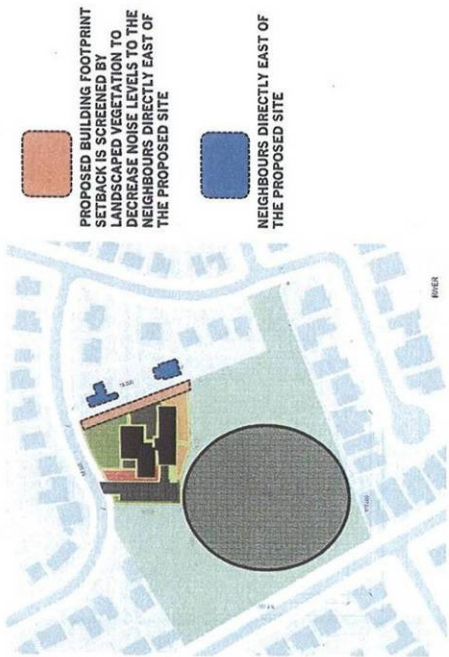
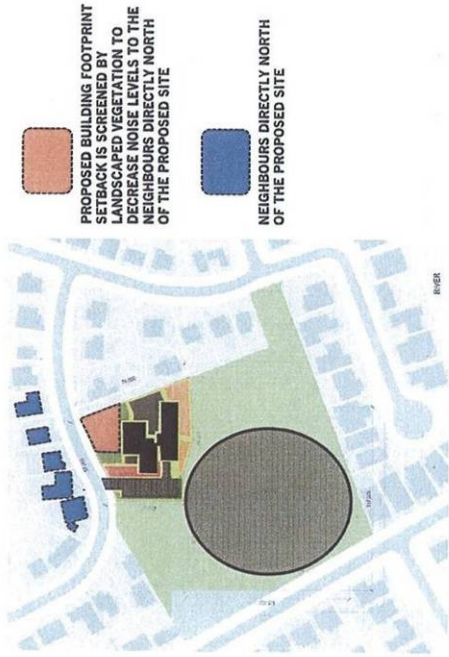
PORTER PARK
 - EXISTING AREAS
 - PROPOSED SITE
 - CRICKET PITCH LOCATION

NTS
 DRAWING NO. POM-A02
 DATE 06/02/11
 DRAWN BY [Name]
 CHECKED BY [Name]

LEGEND

Proposed Building Footprint
 Setback is screened by landscaped vegetation to decrease noise levels to the neighbours directly north of the proposed site

Neighbours directly north of the proposed site

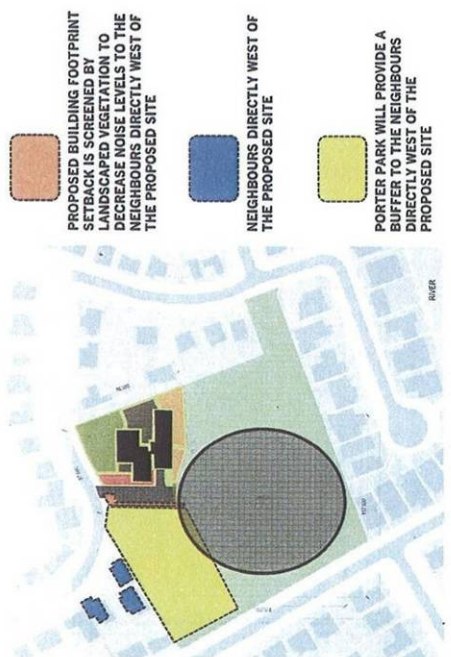
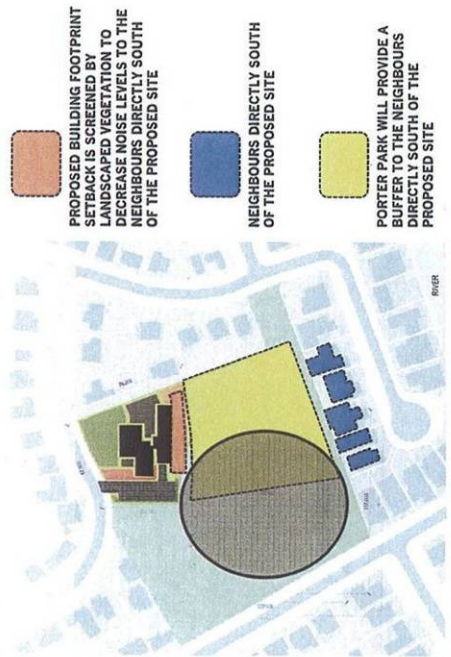


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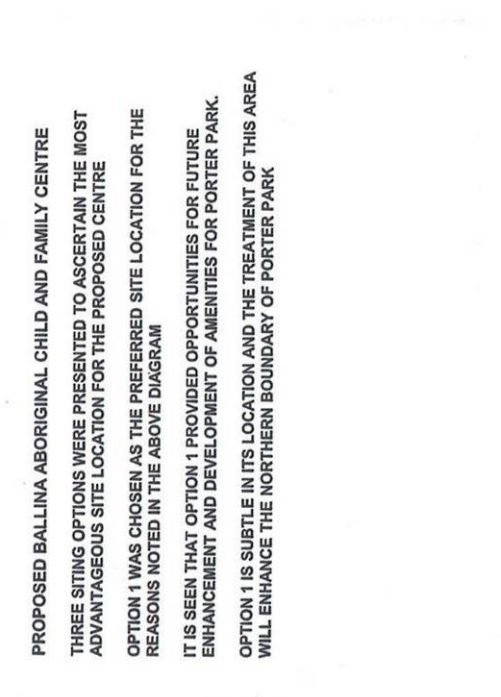
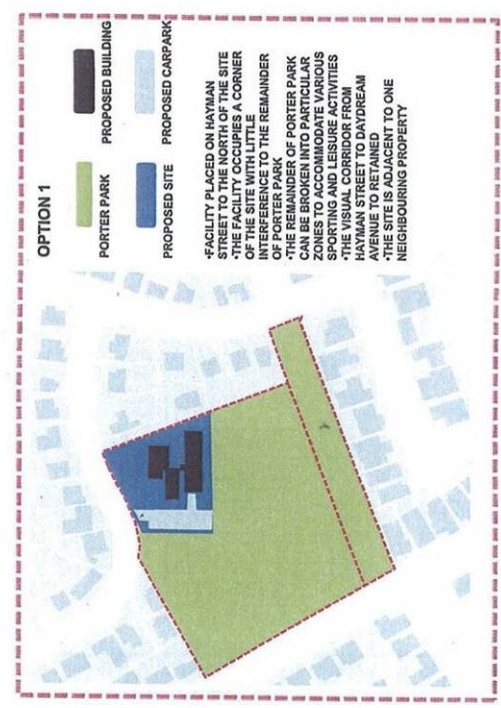
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BALLINA CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE PORTER PARK, BALLINA
 PLAN OF MANAGEMENT FOR BALLINA CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE IN RELATION TO THE AMOUNT OF ADJOINING LAND AND ADJOINING PROPERTIES

DATE: 15/02/2011
 DRAWN BY: [Name]
 CHECKED BY: [Name]
 APPROVED BY: [Name]



Ballina Shire Council
 24/02/11



NO	DATE	REVISION

NSW
 Public Works
 Government Architect
 PORTER PARK, BALLINA
 PLAN OF MANAGEMENT
 -PROPOSED FACILITY SITING
 OPTIONS

BALLINA CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE
 PORTER PARK, BALLINA
 PLAN OF MANAGEMENT
 -PROPOSED FACILITY SITING
 OPTIONS

DATE: 15/02/2011
 DRAWN BY: NTS
 CHECKED BY: NTS
 PROJECT NO: POM-A05
 SHEET NO: 001
 SCALE: 1:500
 STATUS: B

PROPOSED BALLINA ABORIGINAL CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

THREE SITING OPTIONS WERE PRESENTED TO ASCERTAIN THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS SITE LOCATION FOR THE PROPOSED CENTRE

OPTION 1 WAS CHOSEN AS THE PREFERRED SITE LOCATION FOR THE REASONS NOTED IN THE ABOVE DIAGRAM

IT IS SEEN THAT OPTION 1 PROVIDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF AMENITIES FOR PORTER PARK.

OPTION 1 IS SUBTLE IN ITS LOCATION AND THE TREATMENT OF THIS AREA WILL ENHANCE THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF PORTER PARK

West Ballina Open Space Assessment

16/2/2011

The overall provision of open space in West Ballina is below the traditional standard of 2.83 ha per 1000 persons. There is currently 8.36 ha of open space in West Ballina, which is a shortfall of 3.63 ha on the traditional standard.

Council's adopted Open Space Strategy is however directed towards assessing different types of open space and the appropriate corresponding catchment sizes. Local parks are the only form of open space that is assessed at a local level i.e. West Ballina, Ballina Island, East Ballina etc. The table below indicates that the provision of local open space in West Ballina meets Council's adopted standard.

The level of provision of District Parks and Playing Fields are assessed at a district level i.e. Ballina, Lennox Head, Alstonville Plateau, Wardell and Cumbalum.

The Ballina Open Space Strategy is also directed towards the centralizing of playing fields to provide greater flexibility for sporting events, and to achieve economies of scale in respect to the maintenance and the provision of facilities. Single field facilities are increasingly becoming redundant for organized sports. It is accepted that people travel some distance to attend "home ground" playing fields.

The area of playing fields in the Ballina District (which includes West Ballina) meets Council's adopted standard of 1.7 ha per 1000 persons. These fields are provided largely in centralized locations and as such, if an assessment is made at a local level there will be a shortfall in some parts of the District Catchment. i.e. West Ballina where there is a 3.07 hectare localized shortage of playing fields.

The provision of open space based on area is not always the best indicator of a satisfactory level of provision, with the number of winter and summer playing fields sometimes a better indicator.

There is a 3.1 field surplus of cricket fields in the Ballina District where the Porter Park cricket field is retained. Notwithstanding that there is an overall shortage of 4.7 winter playing fields in the Ballina District, there will be no change in the number of winter playing fields if the Aboriginal Child and Family Centre is located on Porter Park, as one field will still be able to be provided.

The shortfall in the winter playing fields in the Ballina District is currently reduced from 4.7 to 2.7 by the provision of 2 playing fields on the West Ballina Primary School site. These fields are available at the discretion of the Department of Education while ever it has no firm plans for the site.

The deficit of winter playing fields is also overcome by a more efficient use of fields in centralized locations.

West Ballina Open Space Assessment

Assumes that a cricket field will be maintained on Porter Park

	West Ballina				Ballina District Catchment					
Estimated population 2007	4,234				26,450					
	Existing (ha)	Required as per Council standards (ha)	Shortfall / surplus	additional unsecured facilities - West Ballina Primary School	Existing (ha)	proposed addition to Sanders Oval	TOTAL	Required as per Council standards (ha)	surplus/s shortfall	additional unsecured facilities - West Ballina Primary School
Passive	0.09									
Buffer	1.00									
Access	0.32									
local parks	1.39	1.40	-0.01							
district parks	1.43	2.12	-0.69		21.04		21.04	13.23	7.82	
Playing Fields	4.13	7.20	-3.07	3.04	43.1	1.8	44.9	44.97	-0.07	3.04
regional open space	0.00	1.27								
TOTAL	8.36	11.99	-3.63							
No. of Winter Playing Fields	2.0	5.1	-3.1	2.0	25.0	2.0	27.0	31.7	-4.7	2.00
No of Summer Playing Fields	1.0	1.3	-0.3	1.0	11.0		11.0	7.9	3.1	1.00

NOTE The Ballina Open Space Strategy is predicated on the demand for playing fields & district parks being assessed and provided on a district basis