



Department of Education

Schools and Regional Services

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COR25157952

Martina Johnson
Acting Executive Director – Metropolitan Melbourne
Victorian Planning Authority
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Dear Ms Johnson

RE: RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE CASEY FIELDS SOUTH (EMPLOYMENT) AND DEVON MEADOWS PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN AND DRAFT AMENDMENT C295CASE TO THE CASEY PLANNING SCHEME

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 March 2025 providing the Department of Education (DE) with the opportunity to comment on the Casey Fields South (Employment) and Devon Meadows Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) and accompanying draft amendment to the Casey Planning Scheme as part of the public consultation process.

DE notes that the PSP allocates land for one (1) proposed government primary school and one (1) proposed government secondary school.

The number of proposed government school sites in the PSP is considered to be appropriate, with this assessment based on projected development within the PSP area of approximately 3,588 new homes to accommodate an estimated residential population of between 11,123 residents. It must be noted that this advice may change if the dwelling and/or population forecasts were to change significantly.

DE refers to the proposed government school sites as:

1. *Bandicoot Creek Proposed P6*
2. *Bandicoot Creek Proposed 7-12*

DE advises that the interim names of the proposed government school sites can be shared with other stakeholders and can be included in the PSP.

DE notes that it has provided extensive informal input and advice to inform the development of this precinct structure plan and has provided written comments to the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) dated 18 August 2023, advising that it was unable to support agency validation at that time due to insufficient information and unresolved issues, including land contamination.

DE appreciates that some of the issues raised have subsequently been addressed. However, there are still some outstanding issues, as outlined in the **Appendix**.

DE also notes Section 4.6.3 (Education) of the Background Report (February 2025, p.27), which presents VPA's assessment of the Victorian Government School Site Selection Criteria (the Criteria) in relation to the proposed government school sites. DE understands that the Devon Meadows Precinct is highly constrained leading to challenges identifying land that aligns with the Criteria.

DE recognises that potential contamination is a widespread concern throughout the precinct, and acknowledges the substantial efforts made to identify sites with lower contamination risks. However, DE remains concerned about the location of the proposed government secondary school site, given its medium risk of contamination.

According to the Criteria, proposed government school sites should not be located on contaminated or potentially contaminated land, as defined under Ministerial Direction 1, Section 6.

While DE acknowledges that a fully compliant solution may not be feasible in this setting, Planning Practice Note 30 (Table 3: Recommended Approach to Assessing Potentially Contaminated Land), states that a site can only be developed with a sensitive use if a Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment (PRSA) or an Environmental Audit Statement confirms the site is suitable for the intended use. This assessment must specify: (1) the conditions required for decontaminating the land, and (2) measures to ensure the site is safe for sensitive uses, including secondary schools. These conditions and measures must be agreed upon by the DE before site selection or approval.

If you would like to discuss the issues outlined in this correspondence further, you may contact [REDACTED] Senior Planner, Infrastructure and Planning Branch, Department of Education on [REDACTED] or by email: [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Infrastructure and Planning Branch
School Provision and Establishment Division

31/03/2025

Cc: *Mat Garner, Director – Metropolitan Melbourne, Mat.garner@vpa.vic.gov.au*

COR25157952: Casey Fields South (Employment) and Devon Meadows PSP Public Consultation Comment Table

Agency: Department of Education

Contact (name, email, phone): [REDACTED]

Date: 25-Mar-25

Item Number	Page Number	Reference Section Objective/Requirement/Guideline/Table/Plan/Appendix/Other	Agency comment Explain why the change has been requested
1	27	Background Report (February 2025)	<p>DE notes VPA's comments on the medium risk of contamination impacting the location of the proposed government secondary school site. DE also notes VPA's suggestion that an EAO be proposed to be applied to the site which means that it will be required to undergo an environmental audit prior to being redeveloped.</p> <p>DE wishes to highlight that application of the EAO does not ensure that the site (and potential implications to the co-located proposed government primary school site) will be able to be remediated to the point where both sites are suitable to accommodate sensitive uses.</p> <p>According to the Victorian Government School Site Selection Criteria, proposed government school sites should not be located on contaminated or potentially contaminated land, as defined under Ministerial Direction 1, Section 6.</p> <p>While DE acknowledges that a fully compliant solution may not be feasible in this setting, Planning Practice Note 30 (Table 3: Recommended Approach to Assessing Potentially Contaminated Land), states that a site can only be developed with a sensitive use if a Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment (PRSA) or an Environmental Audit Statement confirms the site is suitable for the intended use. This assessment must specify: (1) the conditions required for decontaminating the land, and (2) measures to ensure the site is safe for sensitive uses, including secondary schools. These conditions and measures must be agreed upon by the department before site selection or approval.</p>
2	28	Background Report (February 2025)	<p>DE notes both of the proposed government school sites are proposed to be located within a 500m amenity buffer associated with an existing egg farm business located on Devon Road. This does not align with Criterion no. 20 which states that sites for schools must maintain an appropriate distance from any potential hazards. DE notes VPA's comment that 'in the case of the amenity buffer, any potential hazard will effectively be avoided by the fact that the egg farm business will need relocate out of the precinct prior to either of the schools being delivered'.</p> <p>DE wishes to get clarity on the egg farm business intention and proposed timeframe for relocation.</p>
3	52	Table 9: Precinct Infrastructure - Proposed State Government Primary School (P6) - Description	<p>DE notes that under the 'Government school' categories where the Department of Education is marked as the lead area agency, the description of the item states the following: <i>'Land and construction of government school (incorporating potential joint-use oval with adjoining Council sports reserve as relevant)'</i></p> <p>DE requests that VPA remove the text in brackets as a potential joint-use agreement does not align with the purpose of the Table.</p>
4	52	Table 9: Precinct Infrastructure - Proposed State Government Secondary School (7-12) - Description	As above.
5	52	Table 9: Precinct Infrastructure - Proposed State Government Primary School (P6) - Description	<p>DE notes that under the 'Apportionment Ultimate to the ICP' column a portion of '100%' has been assigned for the Department of Education in error, as no ICP allocation is to be directed to DE.</p> <p>DE requests that VPA removes the '100%' reference and replaces it with an 'N/A'.</p>
6	52	Table 9: Precinct Infrastructure - Proposed State Government Secondary School (7-12) - Description	As above.
7	61	Table 11 Casey Fields South (Employment) Property-specific land use budget	<p>Land budget for all proposed government school sites has not been recorded in Table 11.</p> <p>DE requests that VPA updates Table 11 to include land allocated for all proposed government school sites.</p>