



Mr Kevin Conolly MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Education

Councillor Darcy Byrne
Mayor
Inner West Council
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RML20/2406

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Dear Mayor

I write in response to your letter of 18 May 2020, to the Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning, regarding the proposed location of a demountable classroom at Dulwich High School and community access to Graham Green in Dulwich Hill. The Minister has asked me to respond on her behalf. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I have sought clarification and advice from the Department of Education on this matter and I am advised of the following.

The Department has considered a number of locations for the demountable in question and has decided on the edge of Graham Green, the school's sports field. This will enable the demountable classroom to be in a close proximity to other classrooms and will prevent it from impacting activities on the playing field. To help secure the demountable, the Department intends to fence it off from the field.

Dulwich High School can continue to use the sports field for student activities during school hours. Currently, community use outside of school hours can be facilitated as appropriate under the Department's Community Use of School Facilities policy.

Until recently, the Department-owned land was made available to the public under a license agreement with Inner West Council. When the Department consulted Council, it did not object to the proposal to install a demountable.

The Department and Inner West Council entered into the licence agreement for the use of Graham Green outside of school hours on 1 April 2017. The term of the licence was three years and it expired on 31 March 2020. The licence agreement contained an option for Council to extend for a further two years, and this lapsed on 30 September 2019. The licence is currently in a holdover period and may be terminated by either party providing two months' notice.

Inner West Council advised the Department on 22 May 2020 that *"Council did not exercise the option to renew during the specified period in the licence due to staff changes and COVID-19 impacts. Currently the licence is on holdover. Council would [now] like to renew the licence on the same terms and conditions."*

The Department is currently in discussions with the school Principal regarding future community use of the sports field. More information regarding the matter will be provided to Council in due course.

In relation to access, the thoroughfare between Charlecot and Fairfowl Streets (which passes Barnsbury Grove, on the south-eastern side of the school) is not Department property. The strip of land belongs to Inner West Council and the Department does not expect it will close. There is a second thoroughfare between Charlecot and Fairfowl Streets that runs through the school grounds. The Department does not intend to keep this open to the public.

The Department appreciates your concerns regarding the future of Graham Green and understands that this Department-owned site provides valuable green space for both the school and local community. However, the health, safety and wellbeing of students is the Department's top priority. The Department has been made aware of various safety-related issues that have come about through the controlled after-hours use of the playing field. This has resulted in the school being unable to safely access the site for sporting activities and physical education lessons.

For further information regarding the installation of the demountable, you may contact Mr Dean Slattery, Director of the Sydney local School Infrastructure office, by telephone on 0412 922 266 or email at dean.slattery3@det.nsw.edu.au. For further information regarding the licence agreement, you may contact Mr Tim O'Sullivan, Director, Property, School Infrastructure NSW, by email at Property@det.nsw.edu.au.

Thank you for your letter.

Yours sincerely



Kevin Conolly MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Education

30 June 2020