



Mr Cameron Woods
CEO
Town of Bassendean
35 Old Perth Road, Bassendean, WA 6054

RE: Development Approval Application – 94 West Road, Bassendean – Sustainability Statement

Dear Mr Woods

It is with pleasure that we present our development application for a bespoke, family owned and operated Early Learning Centre at 94 West Road, Bassendean. As requested by the planning team, we are happy to provide a specialised Sustainability Statement to be incorporated into the development.

Background

Early Learning Centre design requires a unique understanding of the developmental needs of children to create a stimulating and age appropriate learning environment whilst adhering to high regulatory standards. Safety is paramount, with a focus on using non-toxic materials, secure entry points, and equipment meeting high safety standards. Sustainability is also crucial, emphasising natural light and ventilation, with outdoor spaces that foster a connection with nature. This design incorporates stimulating and calming elements, including areas for active play, quiet reading, and creative exploration to support various developmental activities. The designed functionality and efficiency are essential for smooth operations, while flexibility is key to accommodate different activities and learning programs, critical reflection and developmental & community growth (for a long term local family operator). This flexibility may involve universal room design, movable furniture, adjustable lighting, and modular/pack away play equipment.

Green, natural and landscaped outdoor areas play a vital role in our design, providing opportunities for physical activity, exploration, and learning about the natural world within the centre's layout. Our thoughtful ELC design integrates a residential feel whilst encompassing safety, sustainability, flexibility, and functionality to create enriching environments for early childhood learning. This centre includes optimised internal visual transparency, allowing staff to supervise children effectively across different areas of the centre. This design element also creates a sense of openness and connectivity within the space, promoting interactions among children and between children and their caregivers.

Using design elements that reflect the local community and cultural diversity improves the sense of belonging and identity for children and families. These can include artworks, materials, and in this case the residential architectural features that celebrate local area, character and environments, creating a 'home away from home'. These are all important considerations in design whilst allowing for room for centre development and growth within the Quality Improvement Framework via embedded practices, tailored to child led development requirements, shaped by critical reflection and meaningful relationships with parents and the community.



Early Learning Centre operations are governed by a National Quality Framework¹ which includes a number of regulations and standards incorporating extensive measures related to sustainability and ongoing quality improvement and assessment of Sustainability, over and above the planning frameworks. Of note are the:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012²; and
- National Quality Standard³

Further, the Building Permit application has additional and separate requirements under Section J focused on the energy efficiency requirements for buildings.

In support of our development application however, please find details below of some of the sustainability measures to be incorporated both in the physical structure of the development, and ongoing child care operations.

DRP feedback – Principal 5 - Sustainability

We note the following feedback and recommendations as provided in the ‘Design review report and recommendations’⁴ and provide our responses below:

5a. The Panel acknowledges and commends the focus on sustainability principles in the day to-day operations and programs offered by the childcare centre. There is an opportunity to further enhance this program by introducing clear and visible sustainability outcomes into the building and landscape design.

We appreciate the panel’s recognition of the extensive measures undertaken by our early learning centres as part of our ongoing curriculum. As noted above, early learning centres are rated against a National Quality Standard, and sustainability is embedded throughout the seven quality standards under which we are assessed. Sustainability measures, including programming, pedagogical, built form and physical sustainability measures are reviewed at least quarterly by most stakeholders and improvements critically reflected and assessed on an ongoing basis under the National Quality Framework.

We are thrilled to advise we have achieved an ‘Exceeding’ rating against Quality Area 3 – Physical Environment at our sister centre in South Perth. The intent and purpose of Quality Area 3, aligns to Principle 5 – Sustainability of “*Good design optimises the sustainability of the built environment, delivering positive environmental, social and economic outcomes*”⁵

In awarding the highly acclaimed Exceeding rating, the following observations were reported by the Regulatory Body Assessor:

“The service has embedded a number of environmentally responsible practices into service operations, including recycling stations, a vertical garden and development of a community garden. A sustainability project competition engaged all children, families and educators in a project to develop sustainable practices reflective of their Sustainability Action Plan and a

1 <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about>

2 Education and Care Services National Law (Western Australia), Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012

3 <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

4 DRP meeting held 9 February 2024

5 National Quality Standard | Information sheet, QUALITY AREA 3 THE ENVIRONMENT AS THE ‘THIRD TEACHER’



‘Garden to Plate’ program encourages children to harvest plants grown in their edible garden for use in their meals and cooking experiences. The service’s community garden is located in the front of the service, accessible to everyone in the community. This aligns with the service philosophy which emphasises the importance of connection with nature and the growth of children’s environmental responsibility.”

We will endeavour to incorporate similar standards and programs in Bassendean to achieve the high sustainability outcomes we have been awarded for. Other ongoing activities and measures include, but are not limited to:

- Recycling and repurposing
- Ongoing encouragement and active programs to reduce waste
- Being water wise across all aspects of the centre and program– reuse of water, awareness of turning off taps etc.
- Responsible selection of toys and play equipment – sourced locally where possible
- See further below

Please note centres are also evaluated on the basis of their engagement with community and parents to develop programs including those related to sustainability. As such, sustainability must be an evolving practice within the centre (otherwise risks penalising components of our quality rating) and not all measures can or should be in place from the outset as quality of impact of sustainability measures are heavily linked to community and parent engagement and role modelling of ongoing improvements to the children, as a key part of the important role of teaching the next generation.

5b. The Panel encourages the engagement of an ESD professional to consider measures built into the design, including selection of materials, electric vehicle charging points, heat pumps, water catchment and optimal performance location of solar panels.

Many of these issues will be addressed through Building Permit stage aligned and as a requirement of the Section J certification for compliance and given the extensive built form and educational sustainability requirements in the National Quality Framework we need to avoid triplicating this into three separate reports (pre-planning, Section J building permit, Education and Care Regulation reporting).

Our Section J report (delivered post planning approval) pre building approval will address the energy efficiency requirements for building, (thermal performance, energy use for heating and cooling, lighting, hot water systems and air conditioning systems etc) typically covering Building Fabric: Insulation requirements, glazing requirements and building sealing, Building Services: Requirements for heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) systems, hot water systems and lighting and Energy: Energy Monitoring and on-site energy sources.

The current architectural design of 94 West Road, Bassendean has allowed for provision of

- **electric vehicle charging** station provisions
- additional bike racks and **end of trip facilities** promoting walkability and reducing vehicle trips
- pram locks to promote **walkability** for parents and reducing vehicle trips
- inclusion of **permeable paving** in car park increasing greenscape, water use and reducing heat



- **Renewable energy:** provision for Solar
- **Energy Efficient/LED lighting**
- **Passive design internal:** Utilising passive design principles such as natural ventilation, daylighting via skylights, large extended verandahs and strategic building orientation has minimised the need for mechanical heating and cooling.
- **Passive design External impact:** High use of natural light, light colouring on façade and fencing and shade sails and large extended verandahs
- **Water Conservation:** ability to installing water-saving fixtures like low-flow toilets, faucets can significantly reduce water usage.
- Wooden fencing and **natural playground materials** (no metal and minimal artificial non sustainable products)
- Many openable windows and ventilated door screens allowing for good **natural ventilation**, airflow and indoor air quality
- Large proportion of **site landscaping** and mature trees
- Outdoor Spaces: outdoor play areas have been designed with natural elements like trees, gardens, and **permeable surfaces** which not only benefits children's well-being but also promotes biodiversity, heat reduction and reduces stormwater runoff.
- incorporating **green rooftop terrace** for play with landscaping and reducing heat on roof
- and its **location of a community facility**, nearby to a primary school and local café promotes sustainability via adding to the **walkability of the community** (reducing car trips within the suburb to other centres)

The current submitted Use of **Early Learning centre** within the built form allows for extensive sustainable and environmental practices and community engagement via the design and operations allowing for future

- high use of **water conservation** practices in operations (eg all drink water is used to water plants)
- High use of **Sustainable materials and Recycled materials** in operations (eg natural resources, Remida Membership)
- Embedded **Sustainability Action Plan** and end to end **Waste Management** and recycling (recycling and composting programs within the centre can encourage sustainable waste management practices and reduces landfill waste).
- Green walls and **sustainable gardens**, vegetable and herb gardens will be included in operations as part of build out of centre (must be done post occupancy with community and parent consultation as per quality framework to achieve optimal outcomes)
- Framework to optimise energy use and explore renewable energy
- High **Community** aspect (community space which is highly efficient hub for families)
- Extensive outdoor play requirements providing indoor/outdoor open air and ventilation
- **Locally produced/sourced** items (mud kitchens, custom wood climbing etc and recycled materials)
- Educational Opportunities: Incorporating environmental education into the curriculum and design features, such as interactive displays about renewable energy or nature-based learning spaces, helps instill sustainability values in children from a young age.

Further in relation to ESD incorporation into preplanning stage we note that selection of materials will be finalised in conjunction with section J specialist advise and requirements for optimal energy



efficiency and sustainability measures, consultation with the installer of the solar panels in advance of the installation will occur to ensure optimal solar and energy performance. The Landowner also has experience in working and partnering with BrightConnect which are a WA based company who deliver sustainable, innovative products and solutions for power, water, and broadband (at Building Permit stage).

5c. The panel would encourage the consideration of more access to northern light and limit unshaded east/west openings.

'Ventilation and natural light', and *'Outdoor space – shade'* are well addressed in the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012 NQF and above and is considered in detail post Use approval at Building Permit stage. We can advise however that skylights have been incorporated to address the northern light access, and shade sails can be incorporated to the openings, in addition to the current design which has extensive verandah areas which provide shading, whilst respectfully contributing to the residential streetscape.

5d. The inclusion of permeable paving to the carpark is supported

Noted and we appreciate this support.

Hopefully this statement has provided sufficient detail into the layers of sustainability design and operational sustainability and ongoing reporting behind the above Planning application and we are more than happy to meet to discuss further.

Kind regards

Kelly Chapman

Director – Rpoint Properties
Briscola Pty Ltd and Studio 64 Group