

THE **ABBOTSFORD** CONVENT FOUNDATION

1 March 2011

Letters to The Editor
Saturday Herald Sun
PO Box 14631
Melbourne VIC 8001

Dear Sir

Your article, "Kid's Farm Land Grab" (Saturday 26 February 2011) gave readers a misleading and incomplete picture of a proposal to erect a school building on land at the Abbotsford Convent. There is no threat to land owned by the Collingwood Children's Farm. As this was the major thrust of your article, your readers are entitled to the following facts :

1. The Sophia Mundi Steiner School is a foundation tenant of The Abbotsford Convent Foundation- a not for profit organisation.
2. The Collingwood Children's Farm is our immediate neighbour whose aims and aspirations we share and support
3. The Collingwood Children's Farm will not lose any of their land should the proposal currently before Heritage Victoria ultimately gain the relevant planning approval and proceed.
4. The land known as the "goat's paddock" forms part of the total Abbotsford Convent site, owned and operated by The Abbotsford Convent Foundation.
5. The proposed new classrooms will have a footprint of 460 m2 which will take up less than 10% of the "goat's paddock"
6. For many years the ACF has permitted the Collingwood Children's Farm to graze animals on various paddocks within the site. This practice is intended to continue.
7. The Sophia Mundi Steiner School, aside from being a well-regarded long-term tenant, fulfils a key aim of the Master Plan for the Abbotsford Convent in providing for an Arts, Heritage, Cultural and Education precinct as envisaged by the State Government in initially handing over the site to the Abbotsford Convent Foundation.

The in-principle support for the Sophia Mundi Steiner School to construct further classrooms on the site was granted after careful consideration of the matter and is on the basis that the design was such that it was limited in its impact on the site and was in accordance with the heritage overlay of the site – the latter of which is currently before Heritage Victoria for assessment.

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Chair Abbotsford Convent Foundation

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