

Matthew Todd

29 January 2021

Planning and Assessment
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
Parramatta NSW 2124

Dear Sir/Madam

**Saint Ignatius' College Riverview Redevelopment Stage 2
Application Number SSD-10424**

I do not support the proposed building design, known as Ignis Stage 2, that is the subject of Application (SSDA) SSD-10424 in the current form for the reasons as outlined below. The proposal also fails to address the valid concerns about architectural language, façade materiality and detailing, and bulk/massing raised by the GANSW SDRP (in both Sessions 1 and 2 held late 2020).

The current design proposal by PMDL does not, in my professional opinion, achieve design excellence (anticipated in the GANSW in developments of this scale and visibility) as does not adequately address the site context and will date quickly.

My personal understanding and appreciation of the Riverview Campus dates back almost 40 years, and combined with formal qualifications in architecture and landscape architecture, professional experience of over 25 years and my area of specialisation (education and public building design), I feel I am more than qualified to comment on the proposal.

My concerns with the current design include:

- The proposed design lacks the timeless qualities of the existing heritage buildings on site (eg. Old Main Building) which have over a period of 100 years consistently demonstrated their robustness by accommodating change over time.
- The current design proposal is a 'foreign object' on the campus, that appears to take cues from the unfortunate design language of the recent the Therry Building project and offers only superficial reference to the context in the architectural design language - the landscape architecture is more successful in this regard.

- The material selections proposed are contrary to the written text in the Site Analysis and Existing Building Material section of the report (p.11)
- Inelegant façade and proportions of the proposed design do not mitigate the building mass and bulk (and its understandably deep floorplate due to functions and pedagogy). There is a lack of rhythm in the façade proportions and subdivision that could take cues from the underlying rhythm of the traditional buildings on campus. Not in seeking to replicate the traditional but to analyse and understand the inherent design characteristics that these buildings possess and why they endure.
- Massing at the East end of the building is far too bulky and the architectural gesture of a canted façade is overwrought and unnecessarily fussy. The bulkiness could be mitigated by vertically breaking into smaller forms (with them potentially offset in plan). This could reflect the internal functions House Areas in that area of the floorplate.
- The architects state they decided to deliberately move away from horizontal expression of the nearby buildings (acceptable in of itself) but then in massing the building, the three major vertical forms to the NE fail to appreciate the scaling of the façade and fenestration of the existing heritage context underpinning the character of the campus and school ethos.
- This is exemplified in the relatively crude (over scaled and disproportioned) masonry reference in the cladding proposed.
- Any form of aluminum panel (either solid or composite) proposed for the façade or soffit is not supported. Under the current Australian Standards for testing façade panels & systems, there remains an inherent fire risk in locating (even if solid) aluminum panels located overhead egress paths and heavily student occupied zones. This risk requires very specific mitigation during documentation and construction phases.
- There is a lack of activation at Ground level due to the functional planning decisions, for example, locating the Paper Store and Print Office on the desirable Eastern end of the building due to aspect and views. This is a lost opportunity for new student spaces.
- Winter Solstice solar diagrams are not included and appears that the external 'Podium' student spaces would be in shade for most of lunch time.
- Gestural response to campus address of the NE façade is supporting in principle however due to the fussiness of the proposed design, realisation of this principle relies on refined detailing and fabrication to be successful.

The design review comments of the GANSW SDRP in Session 1 (21/8/20) Item 03 which states the design proposes “a new style that is superfluous and increases the visual clutter” and consequently requires simplification. These wise words from the panel are effectively ignored by the architects in their design response and report commentary. Similarly comments (Item 05) regarding bulk and mass of the three primary forms not only dominating the context but also actually make the form unintentionally bulkier.

I fully support the GANSW SDRP comments on the proposal and the SSDA documents demonstrate that proponents have not adequately addressed the valid issues and concerns raised in the architect's reports and drawings.

As required to disclose; I have not made any reportable political donations made in the previous two years.

Your sincerely,



Matthew Todd

BLArch, BA (Arch), B.Arch (1st Class Hons), RAIA, RLA

Registered Architect NSW #6680

Registered Landscape Architect #880