

Development Assessment Systems & Approvals
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
Attn. Peter Mc Manus

**Re. University of Sydney Campus Improvement Plan 2014 - 2020
SSD13_6121 USYD**

Dear Mr McManus

I am writing to comment on the proposed redevelopment of buildings and sites within Darlington outlined in the University's Campus Improvement Program (CIP). This Program has been developed without any input and consultation with the local community, with community information sessions hastily provided after the original February closing date for submissions. This is not acceptable planning practice and contravenes the requirements of the Environmental Impact Statement to consult with community groups, residents, and groups representing local residents such as RAIDD and REDwatch.

I object to the massive scale and changes proposed in the CIP, particularly as they are concentrated on the edge of the campus and will impact heavily on the amenity of the Darlington area. I am concerned about the cumulative impact of this huge increase in the density of University facilities in the Darlington area and the resulting additional traffic, noise, pedestrian movements and congestion. Has the University adequately looked at redeveloping areas within its main campus or at acquiring properties in locations other than areas immediately adjacent to residential areas to facilitate its expansion? The concentration and centralization of the University campus will adversely affect the amenity and character of the adjoining inner city residential areas of Darlington and Camperdown.

I object to the large multi-storey buildings planned for City Rd which will dominate the suburb and overshadow surrounding streets, and are not of a scale in keeping with the heritage values of the surrounding residential area. City Road is positioned on a ridge and any further increases in building height will be exaggerated by the geography of the area as the land drops down from this ridge. Residents in the nearby streets do not wish to be hemmed in by large skyscraper buildings which will dominate the streetscape, throw residential and Darlington school areas into shade, emit light at night and hinder the privacy of residents in their homes.

I object to the proposed plans to build high-rise buildings on either side of the Institute Building (the former Deaf and Dumb Institute) on City Rd. This is a significant heritage building, and its architectural integrity should be preserved and protected. The construction of adjoining modern high-rise developments on the Sydney University Army Regiment site and the Merewether Building site will compromise the heritage of this section of the streetscape and dwarf the Institute building. This section of City Rd is also the gateway to historic King St and should be of a design and height sympathetic and in keeping with the heritage of the Newtown area. Furthermore any planning changes around

the Institute building need to be carefully considered. The proposal to construct an 8 storey building on the relatively small Sydney University Regiment site is an example of overdevelopment and disregard for heritage.

I strongly object to the plans to degrade the row of unique, largely intact original Victorian terraces on Darlington Avenue by building accommodation in their backyards. The uniform rear (and front) of this row of buildings is a fine example of Darlington's Victorian architectural heritage, and is one of the few (if not the only) highly intact examples left in this area, and thus should be preserved for future generations. These houses also border the Golden Grove Conservation Area and their heritage value should be protected.

I am concerned that the University's CIP in proposing to redevelop the land and its uses around Darlington and increase building heights will attempt to maximize land and floor space, and may be permitted to build right to the boundaries, eliminating most setbacks, and will not provide sufficient green space, trees or landscaping in these designs, despite bordering residential properties. The University should provide adequate screening with foliage and trees with sufficient landscaping particularly near the street and in areas closest to residential properties. This CIP strategy to centralize the University facilities in the inner city areas of Camperdown/Darlington may still prove inadequate to meet the future needs of the University, however the loss of open space, trees and wildlife, and the historic character of the area, will be permanent.

Even where the University incorporates green space into their designs these areas are generally not available and certainly not visible to residents. These designs do not compensate for the loss of green space around the residential area and should not be counted as public open space and not an adequate replacement for lost public open space.

I am also concerned about plans to remove mature trees and open space, and car parking at the corner of Butlin Ave and Darlington Ave, opposite the University swimming pool, as well as at the site bordering Shepherd St. The Butlin Ave site has a large number of Melaluca trees and other native trees and is also a busy area for cars and pedestrians, which will become even more congested when the University's new Business School is completed. The plans to build large below-ground car-parking facilities with commercial scale high rise on top at this site would place undue pressure on the surrounding Darlington infrastructure and add to further traffic build ups in Darlington and Newtown and around Redfern Station, as well narrow King Street. In addition the concentration of high rise developments in the City Rd and Butlin Ave will negatively impact on the community by increasing background noise levels with large scale air-conditioning and cooling plants and equipment which will be required to service these new buildings.