

THE OWNERS – STRATA PLAN No 18027

The Grange Village, 2 McAuley Place, WAITARA. NSW. 2077

ABN NO: 27 184 844 263

Grange House

Ph: 02 9487 3666

Email: committee@grangevillage.com.au

2nd February 2023

NSW Department of Planning and Environment,

Locked Bag 5022,

PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

SUBJECT: Alterations and additions to Barker College SSD 31822612

SUMMARY

The residents at the Grange over 55's village at 2 McAuley Place, Waitara request the NSW Department of Planning and Environment to defer, or reject, the above mentioned Barker College development request until such time as the College negotiates with the RTA and other appropriate authorities to improve vehicle access to the Pacific Highway.

At present, as the report states, Unwin Road can at peak times have traffic queued from the Highway down to the intersection of Unwin and Clarke roads and beyond. This blocks traffic in Clarke Road wishing to turn up Unwin Road to the Highway or proceeding up Clarke Road to Yardley Ave.

There are viable solutions, but they have costs.

DETAILED SUBMISSION

BARKER COLLEGE TRAFFIC CONGESTION

The Grange is an Over 55's village of 176 units situated a 2 McAuley Place, Waitara. It currently has 238 residents and approximately 180 motor vehicles.

Unwin Road is the only road that provides access to the Highway between Woolcott Ave and Edgeworth David Ave if heading East toward Sydney. Many residents on the south side of Waitara including those at the Grange use Unwin Road to access the Highway be it to head East or West. Those travelling West can also use Yardley Ave or College Cr. For those heading East, the only alternatives are a detour up the Highway to Edgeworth David Ave, re-joining the Highway at the northern side of Unwin Road or alternatively head down Unwin Road to Russel or Edwards Road, turning onto Pennant Hills Road and re-joining the Highway at Pearce's Corner. The first alternative involves 6 sets of traffic lights, the second, an un-signalized dash across traffic lanes on Pennant Hills Road to access the right turn lanes onto the Pacific Highway.

As outlined in Barker's Transport impact statement, Unwin Road at times is at capacity and traffic can bank back to Clarke Road (see figure 2.17), which also impacts that four-way intersection. At the morning and afternoon peaks our residents state it can take over 10 minutes to access the highway from the Clarke Road/Unwin Road intersection. There have been occasions where drivers have assumed that cars that far back are just parked cars and have passed them only to discover it is the

queue of traffic waiting to turn onto the Highway. SIDRA modelling like all modelling can be manipulated, the picture Fig2.17 (and it is not a one off) states the position in black and white.

BARKER COLLEGE EXPANSION

We have all seen the expansion in size and numbers of private schools and given the state of public schooling and staffing we see no letup of this growth over the coming decades, it is therefore important to fix the Barker traffic problem now for the long term.

FEASIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE UNWIN ROAD CONGESTION

The Barker development proposal has made three suggestions. The main one being to widen Unwin Road allowing two approach lanes to the Pacific Highway. This would allow a separate left lane and reduce delay on the right and through movements. Given that Unwin Road is only 8.8 metres wide, and with the necessary width required for pedestrians on either side of this road near the Highway, it is doubtful that this could be safely implemented.

The Barker traffic report points out that vehicle movements out of Unwin Road onto the highway are impeded by the volume of students crossing from the north side of the highway at the western side of the Unwin Road and the wide highway intersection. The bulk of these students having come from the Waitara train station. Why are they crossing at this point?

It appears that Barker have staff located at the corner of Waitara Ave and the Highway aimed at stopping students from using the pedestrian push-button lights at that point to cross to the south side of the highway. We assume this is done in order to prevent students having to cross Yardley Ave which is devoid of traffic lights.

The Barker report points out that the Sydney Strategic Traffic Forecasting Model (STEM) is projecting a 9.1% per annum increase in vehicle movements north on Unwin Road. If these forecasts are allowed for, then as the Barker report states, the above suggested solution fails to solve the Unwin Road problem.

We believe there are two other solutions that should be considered. The first addresses the student volume crossing at the Unwin Road lights, the second the vehicle traffic on Unwin Road.

1. A student pedestrian bridge could be built over the Highway to move students from the north side of the Highway opposite the School, like bridges at Wahroonga and on Pennant hills Road at Normanhurst. Given the new west end access being built at Waitara train station most students are likely to use that, rather than the existing one onto Waitara Ave.
2. We believe the volume of Students crossing the Highway and delaying traffic out of Unwin Road, together with the projected volume increase in Unwin Road vehicle traffic can also be addressed by moving the pedestrian lights at Waitara Ave and the Highway some 40 metres West to the corner of Yardley Ave which is approximately 10 metres wide thus enabling a second right turn option on to the Highway for properties on south side. This would not impede the existing right turn from the Highway into Waitara Ave and at this stage there seems no need for a right turn from the Highway into Yardley Ave. This proposal would enable students to cross at Yardley Ave and proceed on the south side of the Highway to the College protected by traffic signals all the way. Parking on Unwin Road should also be limited to one side of the road 24/7 between the Highway and Russel Ave.

RECOMMENDATION

That approval of the Barker development proposal be deferred, or rejected, pending a State Government commitment to improve traffic movement from the south of the Pacific Highway between Woolcott Ave and the Westfield Shopping Centre and at the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Unwin Road.

Yours Sincerely,

Neil Buchanan.

Chairman SP18027.