



Wesley College

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A College of the Uniting Church in Australia within The University of Sydney

26 February 2013

Submission in Response to Application for State Significant Development SSD 5087-2011 University of Sydney- Science Research & Education Facility (Australian Institute of Nanoscience)

We would like to lodge the attached submission for consideration in relation to the proposed Australian Institute of Nano Science at the University of Sydney.

We are a residential building adjacent to the proposed new building and we accommodate Sydney University students, with normally 225 students in residence, and expanding currently with a new floor being added which will bring our total numbers to 260 by the end of 2013.

The precinct within the University that the new Nano Science building will sit within has predominantly been a residential precinct and with the addition of this new building, the nature of this precinct will significantly change. While Wesley has had the Physics building and St Paul's as neighbours in the precinct, there is no entrance or traffic of any kind flowing from the current Physics building opening onto Wesley College. The only traffic in this space has been residential pedestrian traffic and cars passing through a single lane thoroughfare at the back of Wesley and St Paul's. This thoroughfare is on Wesley property, with a 'right of way' for St Paul's. This is a quiet zone within a busy University.

A building of the significance of the Nano Building will have a major impact in relation to noise issues and traffic flow in our area. Its size and its relationship with our building are also important. Its style of use, with offices and large lecture theatres will impact on us, if not considered carefully.

The building design needs to take into account our use of building as residential and acknowledge this in its design considerations and proximity to our building line.

There has been little consultation with us as the closest neighbour in the design process so far. This has been very concerning as we are independent of the University and therefore not part of the internal process and rely on the University to provide us with the necessary information.

Our residents and their study environment is my primary concern. I need assurance from the design process that this will not create significant noise and traffic flow concerns for my resident students.

I look forward to a response and working to ensure the best possible outcomes.

Yours sincerely

Lisa J Sutherland
Master

**Submission in response to Application for State Significant Development
SSD 5087-2011 University of Sydney - Science Research & Education Facility (Australian
Institute of Nanoscience)**

On behalf of Wesley College, we make the following submission on the above application.

Background

Wesley College is a residential college within the Sydney University immediately to the west of the subject site and sharing a common boundary with it. Whilst Wesley is not a land owner (the land is owned by the University) Wesley occupies land defined by survey and granted by the University forefathers to the Uniting Church in 1909, in perpetuity.

Wesley College is in the construction stage of a significant upgrade to its Purser Wing, a pure residential wing, adding an additional 42 bedrooms, at a cost of some \$5 million. It is the Purser Wing that is immediately adjacent to the proposed development and we make no apologies for protecting our assets and the future well being of our residents.

Certain aspects of the Science Research (Nano) development as depicted in the current application will have a significant and negative impact on Wesley College, in particular the residential Purser Wing. Those impacts flow primarily due to the proposed building location and form along its western boundary.

We understand that there is opportunity for the Nano Building and Wesley to happily co-exist, but consultation on the impacts we raised below would be highly desirable. We understand that there is opportunity during this major project application phase for many of these issues to be addressed, and we are open to consultation and discussion on alternate solutions at any time.

The proposal as lodged considers impacts to residents of St Pauls in relation to design considerations and visual, noise, privacy, traffic circulation, and other impacts. However these considerations have not been taken into account for Wesley College. This oversight seems very unusual, again, in light of the fact that Wesley is the proposal's nearest and existing residential neighbour.

We have identified an number of issues of concern. They are listed below in no order of import.

Items of significant concern-

1. Ill-conceived west boundary location.

The drawings depict a new subdivision boundary running roughly north - south from behind the Wesley substation to the back of the existing Physics building.

It is a boundary that has been plotted on a masterplan without any reference to the landform, topography or existing infrastructure improvements that exist in the area. The Applicants drawing A-1013 clearly shows the boundary slicing through the existing carpark at an unrelated angle almost eliminating the access driveway to the carpark at its northern lower end.

Although the existing carpark is on St Pauls land, Wesley College has enjoyed the benefit of this carpark over many years by sublease from St Pauls. The design of the boundary and its

non- relationship to the topography is ill-conceived, and it then follows that the building bulk, parallel to that boundary is equally unrelated to the physical features of the sites edge.

A boundary that reflected the slight NNE aspect of the existing carpark would be a very significant improvement.

2. Insufficient building setback on its western boundary.

The current design shows a building of some 10+ metres height above the current ground levels but setback from the western boundary by only 4 metres. This would be considered a minimal setback for a 10m high building in any situation, and presents a very tight urban solution to a building on a large acreage campus.

Any chance of softening the impact of the wall and the minimal setback is eliminated by the use of a "plenum" for 2m of the 4m setback. The plenum is in fact a 3m deep open trough and the current drawings do not indicate any mesh or handrails at the top. The trough will simply become a giant garbage collector and attract rats and other vermin. It is a most unattractive and badly resolved edge detail along the complete 40m frontage of the building facing Wesley College.

Given there is less than 2m remaining from boundary to deep plenum wall, landscaping will be limited to minor shrubs as there is insufficient room for deep rooted planting to soften the west walls impact. We suggest that increased setback, wall modulation, softening or other devices are essential to ensure the building is a good neighbour in an urban design context.

3. Unsympathetic west wall treatment.

The whole of the west wall facing directly at the Purser Wing of Wesley is a precast concrete panelled wall some 7m high above ground and 40m in length. It has no modulation nor fenestrations and faces the adjoining heritage Wesley College which has with intense brick detailing and rhythmic fenestrations. The blandness of the facade treatment is clearly shown on drawing A 1601. A harsher treatment and poor urban design consideration of a neighbour could not be thought of !

At the upper level of the Nano building there is office accommodation overlooking a 2m wide roof terrace. The western terrace however is not accessible from the offices which have small narrow vertical awning sash windows. This terrace is openly visible from the existing first floor and new second floor of Purser wing, and of concern is that the terrace will remain a lifeless windswept space due to its lack of access. Careful design considerations could make a significant improvement of this aspect and turn a negative impact into a positive one.

4. Overshadowing of a residential building.

Purser Wing is a strictly residential building with each student bedroom having one window only with access to daylight. All bedrooms facing east are potentially impacted from the presence of the Nano building in terms of over shadowing, and the potential elimination of direct sunlight that can penetrate into the bedrooms. The shadow diagrams supplied, dwg A-1051, are small in scale and we cannot be certain that morning winter sun is not lost from some bedrooms.

The accuracy of the shadow diagrams is in question in relation to actual floor and ground levels as, for example, on dwg A-1051, 3pm Dec 21 diagram shows a lengthy shadow cast by the substation building behind the Purser Wing, when in fact at the east edge of the substation roof is virtually at ground level and no shadow will be cast.

The applicant should be asked to check the shadow studies and provide larger detail drawings of winter shadows at 9,10 and 11am June 21st. The correct way of illustrating non-impact on Purser would be elevational studies of the shadows on the Purser east wall.

5. Potential Noise issues with the Nano Building.

Wesley College is extremely concerned about the noise levels that will emanate from the Nano Building. The body of the EIS states that noise modeling was carried out to assess impacts from the Nano plant room, and that based on this modeling, no impacts were identified to St Paul's – identified as nearby residential sensitive receivers. AECOM's study clearly did not include any computerised modeling of noise expected from the AIN facility. In preparing their Noise Study, AECOM carried out three tasks: monitoring of existing industrial background noise in the area at St Paul's, monitoring noise coming from comparable plant rooms elsewhere on the Sydney University Campus, and determining noise limits the AIN proposal must achieve for sensitive receivers at St Paul's according to the EPA's Industrial Noise Policy. Wesley was not considered.

The AECOM Noise Study does not draw a conclusion about whether the expected noise from the AIN plant room will achieve project specific noise criteria or adhere to the EPA's Industrial Policy Guidelines. The Noise Study notes only the noise coming from similar plant rooms on the Sydney University campus, and the main materials used in their construction. The Noise Study states that this information is provided so that the designers of the proposed AIN plant room can take into account the noise levels achieved at similar facilities.

Wesley College's concerns are that noise generating components of the plant room have not been identified, adequate noise modeling has not been carried out, and impacts to the Wesley residents have been completely ignored. Other noise generating components have not been discussed, such as back-up generators or HVAC systems. Because Wesley is clearly a nearby residential sensitive receiver the noise impact to Wesley should be formally assessed and if necessary, specific noise mitigation measures should be included. Given the proximity to the adjoining residential Purser Wing, then Wesley insist that a strict condition of consent be included, as is normal, that all plant not exceed background dBA at the boundary by more than 5dBA at all times. We emphasize at all times as Wesley is a residential facility and noise impact will be noticed most profoundly during the night.

Wesley does have recently commissioned records of the ambient background noise at the east face of Purser Wing as a point of reference and future comparison.

6. Consultation Process.

There has been no consultation with Wesley College – and Wesley is the nearest neighbouring residential land use (other than St Paul's College future extension). The proposal notes that consultation has taken place with St Paul's, however Wesley has not been provided with an opportunity to learn about the proposal and its planned features.

We have had one meeting with the developers which was well after the application was lodged. That meeting was somewhat inconclusive as our comments could not be taken on board, as the developer was in the process of tendering the project on a D&C basis, and they clearly stated they needed flexibility to allow differing approaches to emerge from that process. As the proposal's nearest residential neighbor, Wesley College requests continued consultation with the developers to ensure our concerns can be discussed in detail.

7. Pedestrian Links and pathways

The Eastern Ave to Wesley College pathway access (Fig 5a- body of the EIS report Page 15) is of concern. Specifically, it appears that pedestrians will utilise the pathway between Wesley College's Purser Wing and Physics building.

The development is seeking 24/7 operations (P30) and there are a large number of students envisaged with access to the Southern Entry from Fisher Road. There is no consideration of potential noise or privacy impacts related to students using the passageway past the Purser Wing rooms, where students study, sleep, and generally require privacy.

The body of the EIS references an Arup Transport Impact Report when assessing pedestrian routes. However, the Arup Transport Impact Report assesses a completely different pedestrian route (Page 4/5) to the one discussed in the body of the EIS (Page 15 Fig 5a). It appears that the EIS has taken a different approach to what Arup's specialist consultants advised and this should be substantiated. Access to the AIN building should not be designed to include/promote access through the Wesley Pathway, and potential impacts to Wesley should be assessed, and mitigation measures must be to be put in place to actively discourage it.

8. Construction Noise

The EIS states that construction is assessed as part of a separate DA to Sydney City Council. Wesley requests that the normal and standard protections are conditioned as part of any consent conditions to ensure that construction noise is limited in both volume and time of day.

9. Light Spill

No light spill assessment has been included in the EIS, which would provide detail of anticipated light impact of the development on Wesley. Given that Purser Wing is purely residential and nighttime light spill is of major concern, we request such a study is undertaken, and controls also be imposed that limits security lighting and spill to minimum levels..

Summary

Wesley College has significant concerns about negative impacts on its wellbeing due to this proposed development as it is currently presented. We believe that there is opportunity for the Nano Building and Wesley to happily co-exist, but consultation on the impacts we have raised would be highly desirable.

We understand that there is opportunity during the design development phase for many of these issues to be addressed and we repeat that we are open to consultation at any time.



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