

Re: SSD-68287712

Douglas Park Memorial Park

430-490 Douglas Park Drive, Douglas Park NSW 2569

To Whom it May Concern

I am writing to formally submit my objection to this proposed Development Application.

My concerns centre around the potential environmental impacts, increased traffic congestion, and the loss of community greens space. The area currently serves as a vital recreational hub for residents and visitors and plays an important role in supporting native wildlife.

In addition, I believe the scale and nature of the proposed development will adversely affect the character of Douglas Park, diminishing the unique sense of community that residents value. I urge the relevant authorities to carefully consider these issues and prioritise the long-term interest of the local community over short-term development gains.

Silica dust hazard

The site does not have enough soil depth for a standard cemetery, therefore there will need to be substantial rock ripping and excavation works into the sandstone and shale just below the surface to be able to bury a coffin/body at the regulated depth.

Silica dust generated during rock ripping and excavation into sandstone poses significant health risks. Exposure to airborne silica can cause respiratory illnesses such as silicosis and increase the risk of lung cancer. Residents, visitors, and those at St Marys Towers retreat are particularly vulnerable, especially older individuals and those with pre-existing health conditions. Local wildlife may also suffer, as inhaling fine dust particles can affect their respiratory systems and disrupt habitats.

Soil Depth

The proposed site lacks sufficient soil depth for safe and proper burials. Shallow soils risk exposing remains and can lead to contamination during heavy rains, undermining both public health and dignity.

Sewerage and Effluent Disposal

With no existing sewerage infrastructure, the development would require onsite effluent disposal. This increases the risk of groundwater pollution and may impact the surrounding environment, including nearby residential properties and onflow into the Nepean River.

Crematorium Gas Supply

The absence of a gas supply makes it impractical to operate a crematorium at the site. Without reliable energy sources, cremation facilities cannot function safely or efficiently, raising operational and environmental concerns.

Bushfire safety

The area has a high risk of bushfires, yet there are no safe or **speedy** evacuation routes for residents, staff or visitors. This lack of emergency access puts lives at risk during fire events. This became evident during the 2019/20 bushfire that swept through the Wollondilly. Most of the local roads were closed to all incoming traffic and only outgoing traffic allowing for residents of Douglas Park, Appin and Wilton to evacuate should the need arise. The residents of Tahmoor, Picton and surrounds had to evacuate along Menangle Road through Douglas Park as the Hume Highway and Picton Road were both closed due to the fire being so close. This soon became a bottleneck with thousands of residents trying to escape the flame zone.

Flooding

Flooding in the area can lead to burial runoff, and runoff from an onsite effluent disposal, contaminating the Nepean River and surrounding homes. This threatens local water quality and aquatic ecosystems, affecting both human and wildlife populations.

Public Transport

There is no public transport to the site. The proponent's suggestion of a bus service from Douglas Park trains station is unfeasible due to load limits and the narrow, one-way gorge road, leaving the site inaccessible for many, particularly those without private vehicles.

The site is totally unsuitable for such a large-scale commercial development owing to its isolation and significant infrastructure constraints. There are only three roads providing access to the area. Two of these traverse narrow gorges, sections of which are one-way, with Douglas Park gorge frequently closed during flooding events. The third access road connects to Picton Road, which already suffers from heavy local traffic congestion and is expected to worsen as Wilton housing development expands. The likelihood of Picton Road being closed due to traffic accidents further compounds accessibility issues.

Moreover, with a high proportion of funerals anticipated from the Muslim faith where attendance can reach 200 – 300 people per burial the local roads would be overwhelmed by such large volumes of traffic. This is particularly problematic given the absence of public transport to the site, making it inaccessible for many mourners and placing undue strain on the existing road network. This combination of limited access routes, frequent closures, and no viable public transport makes emergency response and everyday travel exceptionally challenging. The sites isolation not only impacts daily operations, but also raises serious concerns regarding safety and accessibility for large gatherings and routine services, Residents, staff and visitors would face considerable inconvenience and potential risk due to these persistent transport bottlenecks.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Kind Regards
Janene Splinter