



## PARRAMATTA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Incorporated in NSW)

UNDER THE VICE-REGAL PATRONAGE OF  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE MARGARET BEAZLEY AO QC  
GOVERNOR OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Hambledon Cottage  
63 Hassall Street  
(corner Gregory Place)  
Parramatta

*All Correspondence to:*  
P.O. Box 1384  
Parramatta NSW 2124

29 August 2022

Mr Stephen Dobbs  
Department of Planning and Environment  
Locked Bag 5022  
Parramatta NSW 2124

Dear Mr Dobbs

### **Gregory Place Harris Park Build-To-Rent SSD-31179510**

Parramatta & District Historical Society offers the below objections and comments on the proposed State Significant Development at 2A Gregory Place Harris Park.

By way of background, the Society has leased Hambledon Cottage from City of Parramatta Council since 1965 and has operated the cottage as a House Museum since 1966. Hambledon Cottage and the associated Coach House is also utilised as the Head Office of the Society and most of its member activities.

Hambledon Cottage, which was built in 1824 by John Macarthur, is an extremely important heritage site and is open each week for guided tours by the general public, community groups and school students. The parkland surrounding the cottage contains what is believed to be some of the oldest European tree plantings in Australia (bicentenary of tree plantings celebrated in 2017).

As the Society has been a tenant of Hambledon Cottage for over 57 years, and potentially the most impacted neighbour of the development, it was extremely disappointing not to be advised by the Department of Planning and Environment that submissions had opened. Accordingly, we have only had a few days to review the documentation on the website and formulate our response.

The Parramatta & District Historical Society main concerns are summarised as:-

- The cottage and its parkland setting amongst historic grand trees is widely recognised as one of the most important heritage vistas in Australia. This development will have an extremely detrimental visual impact on this site. Unfortunately, the limited views provided in the proposal do not accurately reflect this negative visual impact.
- The new buildings would clearly dominate the background of Hambledon Cottage from many viewpoints and this would not be offset by the suggested planting of additional trees and landscaping.
- This proposal would seriously impact the setting of three of the most important historic places in Australia - Elizabeth Farm, Experiment Farm and Hambledon Cottage. This

proposal uniformly increases the height across the former factory site and extends the built footprint further west.

- It is essential for the safety of visitors, including school children (2,500 in 2019) who have activities in the park around Hambledon Cottage and for the security of Hambledon Cottage buildings and gardens that the fence between the proposed development and the cottage be maintained. The fence will need to extend down to Gregory Place to prevent using Hambledon Cottage or its reserve as a short-cut to the new development.
- With 1,000 residents, the volume of traffic using the only vehicular access (Gregory Place) will be considerably in excess of present volumes – there is a need for traffic lights at the corner of Gregory Place and Hassall Street to prevent possible accidents.
- There appears to be no alternative possibilities as to an alternative vehicular access to the development other than through Gregory Place even though the EIS suggests that such alternatives need to be explored.
- Coaches bring and pick up Hambledon Cottage visitors, both adult groups and school children, and most park in Gregory Place – there is a need to provide a separate coach parking space on the western side of the street for this purpose – parking will probably be of a premium with many residents in the new development opting to park in Gregory Place.
- There are serious concerns about the disturbance during the demolition of existing buildings and construction of the new buildings, due to the indicated presence of asbestos. It should be remembered that James Hardie gave away free landfill at the time of the current development there – this landfill was found to contain asbestos – a close example is the current need to contain and/or remove asbestos in the neighbouring James Ruse Reserve.
- In this regard, due to the dust and pollution, there is mention that people may have to be moved away from near the site during such demolition & construction works and provided alternative accommodation – this does not cater for Hambledon Cottage and its operations as, whilst nobody actually lives on the site, it would mean that activities and visitors to Hambledon Cottage would have to stop which would cause a financial loss to its operation, thus appropriate compensation should be provided.

Yours sincerely



**Jeff Allen**  
(President)

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