

Loreto Normanhurst

Proposed Modification to Approved Development SSD-8996

Your Ref: (SSD-8996-Mod-1)

I object to the proposed modification. My specific objections and the associated reasons are detailed below.

1. Primary School Carpark Extension

The existing carpark is set well back from Mt Pleasant Ave, and this setback was to be retained under the development as currently approved. As such the carpark would continue to have little visual impact.

However, as now proposed, the carpark will extend to Loreto's Mt Pleasant Ave fence. I see no provision for visual screening, no space to plant for screening and the carpark will be unsightly.

For the visual impact to be in keeping with the adjacent boarding accommodation, I would like to see the setback that has been required for the boarding accommodation, to also apply to the primary school carpark, with planting between the carpark and Mt Pleasant Ave to provide screening. I think it is fair to assume this would have been required for consistency between the boarding accommodation and the car park, had the carpark extension been included in the original development application.

If the lost parking spaces (perhaps four spaces) are essential, they could be provided by a small extension to the underground, multi-purpose carpark. There would be no visual impact and no change to the traffic balance between Mt Pleasant Ave and Osborn Rd.

As a final comment on this carpark, I believe it is located at the worst possible place for traffic to enter or leave the school. The carpark is at the crest of a hill and between the two halves of a double bend in the road. As recently noted by DC Traffic Engineering (2019 safety audit included as part of the development application for SSD-8996), sightlines at that point are poor. Increasing the volume of traffic entering and leaving at that point will increase the risk of collisions and create safety issues for local residents and for students, staff and others entering or leaving the school at that point (the carpark gates are adjacent to the school's Mt Pleasant Ave pedestrian gates).

2. Construction Traffic

The construction traffic plan shows all traffic entering and leaving via Mt Pleasant Ave. I think this will likely lead to serious traffic jams in Mt Pleasant Ave and will be an unwarranted imposition on Mt Pleasant Ave residents and other frequent users of the street.

At present, with cars parked on both sides of Mt Pleasant Ave, two cars cannot pass until one pulls into a gap (for example in front of a driveway) so the other can proceed. Two trucks are much less likely to find a suitable gap leading to an impasse.

Also, after completion of Stage 1 of the approved development, long queues will form along Mt Pleasant Ave at school peak times and probably for some time thereafter. I realise this differs from forecasts in the traffic studies done for SSD-8996 but I believe those studies greatly underestimated traffic numbers (amongst other matters). The studies allowed 48 additional vehicles in the PM peak due to the development (without explanation), I calculated 202 additional vehicles and would be happy to forward the calculations if required. Studies done for SSD-8996 show the intersection operating efficiently, my calculations show a saturated intersection with long queues forming along Mt Pleasant Ave and back through the link road.

With revised staging including an earlier increase in student numbers under the proposed modification (albeit with the same final student and staff numbers), serious queuing of school and local traffic could occur along Mt Pleasant Ave prior to construction of the boarding accommodation building. I understand that it is intended to avoid school peak times for movement of construction vehicles, but unless this can be strictly enforced with a reasonable buffer around those times to avoid overlaps and allow peak hour queuing to clear, construction traffic for the boarding accommodation will exacerbate the long delays in Mt Pleasant Ave caused by school peak hour traffic. Even outside school peak hours, construction traffic moving in both directions along Mt Pleasant Ave will be very disruptive for other users of the street.

On previous occasions, school construction traffic has entered the school via the lower Mt Pleasant Ave gates, unloaded there, and crossed the school to leave via Osborn Rd and its signalised intersection. This would share the disruption between residents of Mt Pleasant Ave and Osborn Rd, be less dangerous and be more efficient (avoids impasses and trucks can utilise a signalised intersection to more easily return to Pennant Hills Rd).

I think the construction plan should be amended to bring trucks in via Mt Pleasant Ave and out via Osborn Rd.