



UON Labor's Submission on the proposed UON City Campus Student Accommodation SSDA

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Discussion

UON Labor acknowledges the work put into making this new development as sustainable as possible. However, we fear that in some elements of the proposal sustainability has been used to disguise minimising cost, resulting in inadequate transport accessibility.

After reviewing the University's Parking and Transport Assessment of the site we note several issues that would be detrimental to student wellbeing, including:

1. No additional car parking

- a. 45 car parks merely replace the current parking footprint,
- b. The proposed car parking would result in 9 in 10 student residents having their job prospects restricted to the Newcastle CBD, or to areas immediately accessible to the Newcastle Transport Network, and its limited timetable.
- c. However, we do note this as an important measure in both reducing transport sector emissions, and curbing light vehicle traffic congestion within Newcastle's CBD.

2. Student safety at night

- a. With its location in the city, the proposed accommodation will be surrounded by major bars and nightclubs. Student safety could be threatened, as the area can become fairly unsafe towards the end of the week with a cyclical increase in alcohol use.
- b. Night-time transport access is a particular concern. As residents may be forced to wait in dimly lit areas for expensive carshare, or infrequent public transport services.

3. Insufficient new bicycle parking

- a. As noted in the Campus Student Accommodation Parking and Transport Assessment (Part 5). A Capacity of 50% or just 18 bicycle spaces are available at the neighbouring Q Building Bike Hub,
- b. In addition to the proposed 82 spaces, this only caters 22.5% of the 445 residents. Or in other words 345 students would be limited to walking or, at present, unreliable public transport to venture outside of Newcastle's CBD.

Our Recommendations

1. Increase new bicycle spaces to cater for 1 in 3 residents (140-150 bicycle spaces). This in addition to the spaces available at University House and The Q Building would adequately service residents, and further encourage the adoption of cycling as a legitimate means of transportation in Newcastle.
2. For the University of Newcastle to expand its Liftango carpool service. By purchasing 5 Electric light vehicles to be stationed at the new City Campus to provide residents with a 'pay-on-use' carpool service. Similar to trialled E-Scooter services.
3. Expand the Security Shuttle services with a Late Night Shuttle Service between University House, The Q Building and The City Campus. To ensure student safety and prevent transport isolation during off-peak hours.
4. Install sufficient lighting on paths between NUSpace and the proposed development to further ensure the safety of residents and the community.