

Chris Doherty
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31 July 2016

Dear Sir / Madam

Submission in relation to the Forensic Pathology and Coroners Court at Lidcombe – Reference SSD 16_7545

I wish to make a submission **against** certain aspects of the above proposal.

I am a local resident with a keen interest in history and heritage. I live in the residential estate of Botanica which is on the heritage significant site of the old Lidcombe Hospital. This is an area with many families and children. The proposed Coroners Court and Forensic Pathology is also on the site of the old Lidcombe hospital – immediately adjacent to Botanica. I have serious concerns around the proposal which are as follows:-

1. Destruction of Heritage that is of exceptional significance

Appendix I – non Aboriginal heritage assessment of the EIS is flawed in that it missed some key points.

- i. The Coroner's court has its new public entry/exit (including vehicular exit) from Main Avenue, Botanica – which is actually **outside** of the facilities' site. This will require demolition of the historic brickwork and verges, and interrupt the streetscape of Main Avenue, which was preserved intact when Botanica was built. When the conservation plans for Botanica were prepared, Main Avenue was noted as being of **exceptional heritage** significance as it had the streetscape of being the historical main entrance into the old hospital. It is therefore highly inappropriate and to now construct a car park exit directly through this.
- ii. The Coroner's court has its public car park proposed to be built on the site of heritage significant Senior and Junior Medical officer's residences and Palm Circuit – which, if this goes ahead, will require these to be demolished. When the heritage plan for Botanica was prepared, these cottages and Palm circuit were noted as being of **high heritage significance**. Indeed, buildings of similar era and significance (such as the nurses quarters and superintendents residence) and the other half of Palm circuit, were required to be preserved when Botanica was built.

What message does this give around double standards, if buildings / roads in the old Lidcombe Hospital are required to be conserved by a private developer, yet equivalent and directly comparable buildings and roads are then OK to be demolished by the State Government?

2. The proposed traffic flow through Botanica

I have serious concerns with Appendix D1 – Traffic and Parking assessment. This also needs redrafting by the planners. In particular:-

- I. Main Avenue to Joseph St is left turn (Southbound) only. Visitors going Northbound from the new Court and morgue will have no choice but to drive through Botanica, which is acknowledged in Appendix D1 Traffic and Parking Assessment figure 8. This is highly appropriate and dangerous. I urge all involved to consider their duty of care to residents.
- II. In particular, Betty Cuthbert Drive, which is immediately opposite the proposed car park exit is a narrow road with 2 sharp areas of sudden curvature, designed to preserve heritage listed trees that date back to the 1800's. This road absolutely cannot cater for additional traffic of a public Coroner's court and Morgue that is a 24 hour facility.
- III. Further Botanica Drive has Central Park with a playground so children will be at great risk by the increased traffic. Botanica also has Ferguson lodge, for residents with a spinal cord injury who travel the estate in their wheelchairs and will also be at risk from the additional traffic.
- IV. I also note Appendix D1 Traffic and Parking Assessment did not consider that the Botanica Estate is not yet complete and there are additional apartments and homes being built – this is a fundamental flaw in the traffic modelling studies
- V. Having the main entrance to the proposed facility via Main avenue will also create parking problems in local streets as visitors will park in Botanica when the public car park is full or to avoid parking charges
- VI. I also note an error of fact in the traffic and parking assessment where the author justifies having the main entrance to the facility from Main avenue due to access to public transport. This is incorrect – the main bus service, M92, does not go via Main avenue, it goes via Weeroona road
- VII. Finally, the EIS notes that there will be potential to further expand the proposed coroners court and forensic pathology site, therefore exacerbating the traffic and parking issues in an unquantified way. There needs to be transparency around the holistic plans for the site and again, the fact that this 'hidden' additional vehicular traffic has not been quantified is most disturbing

In Summary, the main entrance to the proposed Coroners Court and forensic pathology and car park should NOT be from within Main Avenue, Botanica. Botanica is a residential estate and the plans as they stand will require destruction of key heritage items. The planners need to come up with a different proposal that has the main entrance to the facility from either Weeroona Rd or Joseph St, and a car park that does not destroy key heritage items.

Sincerely
Chris Doherty