



Robert Keskull  
6 Spotted Gum Ave  
Lidcombe  
NSW 2141

**Director – Social and Other Infrastructure Assessments**  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Department of Planning  
Received  
18 AUG 2016  
Scanning Room

**REF: SSD 16\_7545**

Dear Director,

Please find below my submission regarding development 16\_7545 Forensic Pathology and Coroner's Court, corner of Joseph Street and Main Avenue, Lidcombe.

I wish to express concern regarding the placement of the public access for this new facility via Main Avenue, Botanica.

**Traffic and Public Risk:**

Botanica is a residential estate with narrow and curved streets designed to discourage through traffic. Narrow roads and blind curves result in near-collisions daily. These streets are reduced to one vehicle width when cars are parked. Traffic often needs to stop or reverse to avoid collision. Placing parking restrictions on wider through streets such as Botanica Drive or Caroline Chisholm Drive is not the answer. This would only lead to parked cars totally blocking access to smaller, narrow streets such as Spotted Gum Avenue and Pepper Tree Road.

It is inappropriate to route public access to a major facility through these streets.

While Main Avenue may seem wide when viewed in isolation, any access to Main Avenue is through the narrow streets of Botanica Estate.

If the public entry/exit to the new Forensic Pathology and Coroners Court is via Main Avenue then any visitors heading north will need to find an alternate route through the residential streets of Botanica, as Main Avenue only provides an exit southbound onto Joseph Street. In addition, the intersection of Main Avenue & Joseph St is on a blind crest, visibility is poor and traffic on Joseph St moves at high speed. Severe traffic accidents will occur on this intersection.

Botanica is home to many families with small children who often run across roads without looking. Botanica residents are familiar with the roads and conditions so fortunately no accidents have occurred to date.

The Coroner's Court will receive members of the public from across New South Wales. These visitors cannot be expected to have familiarity with these narrow winding streets. Many of these visitors will be distressed and disorientated. Visitors to the Coroner's Court will be driving through the unfamiliar streets of Botanica Estate, placing residents at risk.

I am extremely concerned that pedestrian injury or death will result from a planning decision to route public access through Botanica streets.

Please advise,

What steps is your department taking to ensure public safety in and around Botanica estate?

What steps will be taken to ensure the safety of road users on the Joseph Street & Main Avenue intersection?

**Heritage Values:**

Main Avenue and parts of Botanica Estate are graded as having Heritage significance. This development proposal disregards the heritage value of Main Avenue, which was the formal entry c1896 to Lidcombe Hospital when Rookwood Asylum was established. It is graded in the 2002 Lidcombe Hospital Site Conservation Management Plan (CMP) by Godden Mackay Logan as an element of exceptional significance.

The Gatehouse at Botanica on the intersection of Main Avenue and Joseph Street is heritage listed. If Main Avenue becomes the access road for the public car park the intersection of Main Avenue and Joseph Street will become manifestly more dangerous and expose the Gatehouse to the risk of damage.

The avenue of hoop pines and phoenix palm trees along Main Avenue is graded as an element of exceptional significance in the CMP. Construction of the proposed public entry/exit from Main Avenue, Botanica will require demolition of the historic brickwork and verges and interrupt the streetscape.

The public entry as proposed cannot possibly satisfy Heritage requirements which were, and are, mandatory for private owners and developers.

Questions:

Will Heritage significant trees and curb structures be preserved?

If not, why is the NSW Government exempt from its own Heritage rules?

From now on, will private developers also be exempt from Heritage requirements within Botanica Estate and the local area in general?

**Alternative Public Access:**

Public access to the Coroner's Court should be via major roads such as Joseph Street or Weeroona Road. This will improve safety and reduce the impact of this development on existing residences and roadways.

Public entry via Weeroona road is most appropriate, as the Weeroona Road & Joseph Street intersection is controlled by traffic lights and allows access in all directions: North, South, East and West. Also, traffic on Weeroona Road is slow-moving. Alternatively, a separate, clearly signposted entrance and slip lane off Joseph St, between Main Avenue and Weeroona Rd should be considered.

Sincerely,



Robert Keskull

August 16, 2016