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25 July 2017

Subject: University of Wollongong Molecular and Life Science Building

We should like to make a submission with regard to the above proposed development.

In general, the building will be of great benefit to the community and we support its construction.

However, the University is seeking exemption from the payment of S94 contributions. It is not clear what the level of these contributions would be as there is no indication of the foregone quantum of these in any of the documentation that has been provided. However, for a development of this nature, one assumes that it would be significant.

There are several references in the EIS Exhibitions documents to the new access to the University that will be created by Roads and Maritime Services when it constructs the new Mount Ousley interchange.

For example, Appendix K Parking and Traffic Assessment by Caldwell and Kent Consulting contains the following:-

3.9. M1 Princes Motorway Mount Ousley Interchange Project – RMS

The Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) are planning a new interchange on the M1 Princes Highway at the intersection of Mount Ousley Road. The interchange will replace the existing configuration of the intersection and significantly improve the free flow of traffic. The M1 typically has significant daily truck traffic which greatly affects the safe operation of the road, as light vehicles tend to weave between lanes to avoid them.

The new interchange will include a new entrance into the northern section of the campus. Considering that many students are likely to be travelling from the northern suburbs of Wollongong or the Sutherland Shire, a large proportion of traffic currently on Northfields Avenue will be diverted to the new northern entrance. This will have the impact of alleviating potential traffic congestion during AM/PM peaks within the streets surrounding the campus.

The interchange will include a pedestrian walkway across the Freeway. This will provide better connectivity to the on-street parking within the suburbs of Mount Ousley and Fairy Meadow – which will in turn potentially reduce on-street parking demand within the suburb of Keiraville. There is currently a commuter car park located off Mount Ousley Road that will be retained or perhaps relocated (RMS, Nov 2016).

High level plans have been conducted for the new entrance which includes an access road joining onto the northern P5 car park. The RMS have conducted community consultation on the project, and there were concerns raised that the new entrance may impact parking supply within the P5 car park. Considering that the plans are preliminary high level designs, we should not speculate on the impacts they will have on parking supply – as the design could easily be modified to provide minimal or negligible impact on car parking spaces.

A snapshot of the high level design has been included below:



Figure 12 – M1 Interchange Project

The Proposed Mount Ousley Interchange

Section 3.9 introduces the proposed Mount Ousley Interchange and its connection into the main campus. As discussed above, the forecast traffic impacts will not be significant enough to warrant additional road works or changes in the road network.

Should the Interchange proceed, we can expect that any traffic friction experienced at the existing campus entrances will be ameliorated. This will in turn increase the capacity of the overall road network absorbing any additional traffic generation from new developments within the campus.

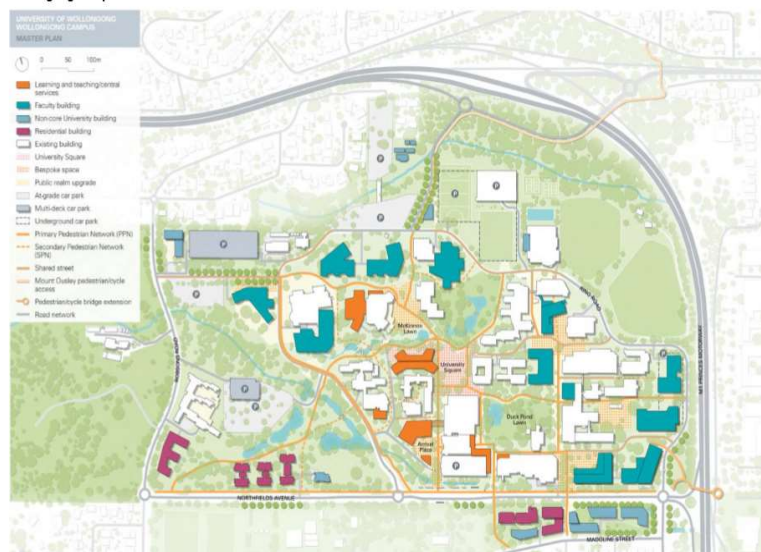
These extracts indicate that there are currently traffic and parking problems at the University. The University expects these problems to be reduced with the construction of the new interchange.

Also the Environmental Impact Statement contains reference to the University of Wollongong Campus Master Plan which also seeks campus access via a similar interchange:-

University of Wollongong
Molecular and Life Sciences Building

JACOBS

Figure 5.2: University of Wollongong Campus Master Plan



Source: University of Wollongong Campus Master Plan 2016

The problem with both the RMS and University access proposals is that the only access is via the existing Mount Ousley Road which will cause more traffic to come via the Princes Highway exit from the M1 motorway from the south. This exit along with the other exits is already highly congested.

The Environmental Impact Statement includes the following statement:-



In section 5.6 of the EIS the University indicates that it will seek an exemption from the payment of S94 contributions (pages 41 and 42).

It is our view that the University could assist the local community and Roads and Maritime Services as well as achieving the aims of the master plan by contributing to the provision of additional parking in the north of the University grounds. This parking could be used by university staff, students and commuters from Sydney and those heading to Sydney who could park and car pool.

The RMS proposal is shown below:-



Figure 12 – M1 Interchange Project

If an off-ramp for traffic coming from the south is provided in the area marked in red (or similar), there is an alternative point of access for those wishing to access the University site from the south. This would also be a useful point of access for commuters from the south to the option 1 parking proposed by RMS. The option 1 parking site would also be more accessible from all directions than the option 2 parking site proposed by RMS. Thus it appears that the option 1 location would be an excellent location for a multi-storey car park which could be used by a variety of users and so it would be an excellent and enduring contribution to the local community by the University.

For this reason, we ask that consideration be given to the University assisting the local community by making appropriate S94 contributions whether monetary or in kind to ensure that the access to the proposed northern campus entrance is available to staff, students and commuters from the southern parts of the Illawarra via a new off-ramp from the M1 and that the RMS option 1 parking be the preferred location for the interchange construction.

Yours faithfully,

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