

Elizabeth Elenius, Convenor
9C/2 Bowman Street
PYRMONT NSW 2009
Tel: 9571 9727; 0409 552 117
Email: eelenius@bigpond.net.au

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Mr Adam O'Connor,
Department of Planning & Environment,
Level 22, 320 Pitt Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr O'Connor,

I apologise for the lateness of this submission. I have been away from Sydney for some months due to a family member being in the final stages of terminal cancer. Pyrmont Action has been very involved in all aspects of the campaign for a new school to serve current and future members of the Pyrmont and Ultimo communities over many years and we trust that you will consider this late submission.

Background – We remain unconvinced that the new school as planned to be situated on the current school site of 0.3 ha will meet future needs of the school, in the light of the vision for the Bays Precinct adopted by the NSW Government. However, having lost the battle to have the school located on publicly owned land in Wattle Street, we accept that the current proposal which will accommodate up to 800 students is about all that can fit on this very small site.

General Comments – Generally, the architects have produced a proposal of high quality, given the space constraints. We particularly support provision of a full-sized multi-purpose sports facility which can be used by members of the community out of school hours.

Issues of Concern

- *Open Space* – When the school is at capacity, we question whether enough space has been allowed for the children to run and play, noting that most students currently live in apartments, and there are NO public sporting facilities of a size to support competitions in Pyrmont or Ultimo. The only open space currently available is at Wentworth Park, and there are now a number of competing demands for the use of that space such that Ultimo PS students are rationed to 2 sessions of 40 mins each per week. *This proposal must ensure that students have sufficient space for physical exercise.*
- *Assembly Hall* – We understand that during community consultation, and in discussions with the Planning Advisory Group, proposals were put forward which would have led to a larger assembly hall involving



cantilevering part of the building over the existing pedestrian bridge over Wattle Street. As it stands, the hall and adjacent covered outdoor space will only accommodate around 300 people, necessitating split assemblies. *We recommend the enlargement of the hall by cantilevering it over Wattle Street.*

- *Access* – The current proposal provides for only one lift, to serve up to 800 students plus staff, within a multi-level facility. This is patently inadequate and would have a severe impact on the ability of the school to cater for students and staff with disabilities. According to lift consultants, modern electronic lifts only have an effective life of 15-20 years as opposed to older mechanical lifts that with regular maintenance and repairs have a much longer life. A complete lift replacement between ordering, removal of the old lift including car and installing the new lift can take the better part of a year. Repairs and rebuilds in between are also time consuming. A second lift is therefore essential, if access is to be maintained in the event of lift outages. *We recommend the inclusion of a second lift to ensure adequate capacity for disabled staff and students and continued access to higher floors if a lift is not operating.*

We remain very disappointed that the Government has embarked on this program of squashing large numbers of students into multi-storey school facilities on tiny sites, particularly in the inner city area, but accept that this plan is about the best the architect could do given the Government-imposed limitations of the site at Ultimo, bar the issues we have identified above.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Elenius, Convenor
cc Alex Greenwich MP

