

**Submission on SSD 6339 (St Catherine's School Master Plan)**

We are the owners of Unit 6, 4 Macpherson Street, which is next door to St Catherine's School, the site of the proposed development. Our unit is directly opposite the existing swimming pool.

We strongly object to the proposed development on the following grounds:

- Lack of demonstrated need for such an extensive and high-impact development;
- Inadequate justification of the submitted proposal over alternative means of providing enhancements to existing school facilities; and
- Substantial loss of amenity for adjoining neighbours and other nearby residents.

In particular the following issues relate to our loss of amenity:

- Substantial increase in traffic in the school vicinity;
- Substantial loss of access to sunlight;
- Substantial loss of open green space due to the replacement of the existing swimming pool;
- Loss of mature trees;
- Impacts of construction activity.

The basis for objection and more detail on the issues relating to loss of amenity are set out in more detail below.

*Lack of demonstrated need for the development*

It is asserted that the school needs the additional facilities. Nearby residents are expected to endure significant loss of amenity to provide for this without compensation. The additional facilities will result in a highly built-up school site with significant loss of already limited open space.

*Inadequate justification of the proposal over alternative means of providing adequate enhanced facilities*

There are numerous old buildings in the same block as the school. One alternative means of providing enhanced facilities would be to acquire additional land. Given the scale of the proposed expenditure, there is insufficient evidence that such alternatives have been properly considered. The lowest cost solution is not sufficient justification where the impact on nearby residents is so significant.

Other alternative approaches would include extension of existing school buildings and/or demolition of existing school buildings to enable higher building/s.

*Substantial increase in traffic in the school vicinity*

There is already massive impact on nearby residents in the morning before school and in the afternoon after school. The school vicinity is in a state of near gridlock for substantial periods each day. A major proportion of this peak traffic is associated with school-related vehicle movements, principally parents dropping students off or picking them up. With the proposed increase in student numbers, the increase in vehicle movements will result in yet further local congestion. There is already substantial loss of parking

during school pickup and drop-off times. The proposed small reduction in car spaces on Macpherson Street dedicated to pick-up/drop-off will hardly compensate residents for the increased disruption.

The school appears not to take any responsibility for student transport. There appears to be minimal provision for pedestrian or bicycle travel. The provision of private buses for student transport would appear to offer potential for reducing vehicle movement in the area.

The proposed larger performance hall will undoubtedly give rise to more night events at the school, thus extending the hours of disruption to residents. School parents already park illegally in our complex without regard to the needs and rights of residents.

#### *Substantial loss of access to sunlight*

The shading diagrams indicate substantial impact on units on the western side of our building. This is of particular concern during winter months when the solar access affords considerable amenity and sense of well-being. Instead, following the proposed development, residents will be confronted by an ugly high wall in place of grass, trees and open space. The loss of this amenity in a high density urban environment is a major concern to us.

#### *Impacts of construction activity*

While the Preliminary Construction Plan sets out ways of reducing the significant impact on nearby residents, there is little reason to have confidence in the efficacy of these measures. Experience with earlier projects on the site has been that the tradesmen involved have little regard for the needs and rights of nearby residents. One example was the trespassing by a surveyor without any consultation. Others include disruption of access to residents' parking in Leichhardt Lane.

#### *Loss of mature trees*

The loss of a number of mature trees in an environment where such long-lived and substantial trees are rare and precious is unacceptable. An alternative development plan which preserved the existing open space would be to the benefit of school users as well as nearby residents. While the preservation of some trees is noted, a number of these will become invisible to residents due to the additional building on the site.

R.W. and O. Calvert