

The Proprietors  
Strata Plan 52887  
313 Bronte Road  
Waverley NSW 2024

28 November 2014

The NSW Department of Planning & Environment  
Major Projects Assessments  
Planning Service  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

**RE: SSD 6339 St Catherine's School Campus Master Plan**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am writing in relation to the Master Plan DA and Stage 1 proposals lodged by St Catherine's School Waverley NSW.

My principle concerns are:-

**Overdevelopment of the site including Height and FSR**

St Catherine's School bounded between Macpherson, Albion, Leichhardt Streets, and Bronte Road. I have lived 313 Bronte Road for the past 34 years. In 1980 when I moved here, the school was not our neighbour and there was no major Junior School building on Leichhardt Street. Traffic and parking around the school area was much less heavy and the school had lower student numbers. As the school has grown it has bought up many residential properties including the one next door and increased its students and staff numbers. Its development over the years had been ad hoc, often beyond planning controls and with little concern for the surrounding residents. While the school has grown with bigger and higher buildings, with more students, the residential community has had to bear the increased pressure on traffic and parking with high buildings looming over residential property.

The school's property is currently zoned R2 – Low Density with a FSR limit of 0:6:1 with a building height restriction of 9.5 metres. Many existing school buildings are already over this height. Previous development outside planning controls have resulted in the school's existing FSR of 0:9:1, this is 50% over the FSR allowable for the site. The current proposal seeks to increase the FSR to 1:1. All of the buildings in Stage 1 will be built to a height of 14 metres to over 19 metres, which is 100 percent over the limit.

The school justifies these excessive breaches of the planning controls by arguing that most of its buildings are already over the height and FSR limits and therefore further increases are justified. This put plainly is an institution with a culture of ignoring planning laws wanting to continue to be allowed to do so. It is no wonder that the proposed works would stand in stark contrast to the surrounding residential area which respects the planning controls. It makes a mockery of planning laws, and the question remains for residents, if this goes ahead, what are the zoning limits and do they apply anymore? Minor increases are acceptable but 100 per cent over is really pushing it.

### **Intensification of use of the site including evenings and weekends and all year round use of the pool complex and 500 Seat Theatre**

Stage 1 includes the construction of a 500 seat Theatre, an Aquatic Centre with three pools (open all year round, early morning and evening, and weekends), an entertainment terrace, and a research centre and a new major entry off Macpherson Street with only 19 extra parking spaces. The school is relying on local streets for most of their current parking and all the additional parking generated by the operation of the proposed works.

The school is adding only 19 new parking spaces and will be reliant on on-street parking for all evening functions held at the school. Many are planned to commence from 5.30 to 6:00pm which will restrict residents who park on the street from finding spaces when they return home from work.

As residents, we will see impacts from these facilities being used 7 days a week, day and night. Further we are concerned about the potential for escalation of use day and night throughout the year. As a school, St Catherine's enjoys some privileges contained within the planning instruments, for example an exemption from requirements for off street parking. However, St Catherine's has diversified into commercial activities on their site, and their proposals for expansion increases these commercial activities in size and hours of operation. Consequently the consent authority for these proposals needs to treat St Catherine's as a commercial organization and diligently apply the planning controls appropriate for commercial operations.

In view of the added pressures on surrounding areas, we strongly urge that the number and scale of events per calendar year should be specified in the conditions of consent for this proposal. These events should be limited to the St Catherine's school only. The school should be required to provide Council and local Precinct Committees and nearby residents with 10 mins walk of the school, a calendar of events annually. Further, any increases in numbers or duration of events beyond that planned must be approved by a Development Application to Waverley Council.

### **Inadequate onsite parking (only 19 new spaces)**

As a result of poor planning over the years, the school has only 55 spaces for its official staff numbers of 202 and set to increase. The schools survey shows that 70% of all teachers currently drive to school, meaning at around 80 staff members are looking for parking on the streets, assuming the rest park in the school. This does not include tuck shop and other volunteers, cleaners and some students and visitors who drive to the school. These figures for these are not included in their submission.

With the proposed pool complex operating all week, early morning and into the evening, and with the two theatres (500 seat theatre and existing DJS theatre), seating up to 750 people on the site, it will be very busy and that does not include the operation of the Aquatic Centre at the same time. This will increase the parking impacts of the school in the surrounding streets with what is proposed. Parking impacts will be escalated in the evenings and all through the weekend. This is unacceptable for residents. Like any commercial business or landlocked school, St Catherine's should be required to provide adequate on-site parking for its operations in a residential area like Charing Cross.

### **Increase in an already saturated traffic congestion on Bronte Road, Leichhardt Street, Macpherson Street and Albion Street and surrounding streets**

The schools own survey revealed in this development application, shows that 60% of students get to school by private car, this means that around 600 students per day are being dropped off at the school. Current drops off zones are inadequate and parents double park, park in no standing zones and use residential driveways to drop off children. The schools survey also shows that no one rides a bike to school and only 14.5% use public transport. Around 50% of students live within 1.5 kilometres of the school campus and could walk to school. The school has no public transport or walk to school program.

The section of Bronte Road in front of our property is an example of where parents drop off children, in an area not authorised as a drop off zone. This is the section between 313 – 317 Bronte Road where three garages and a driveway exist. (See attached pictures in Appendix below). Frustrated parents who line up on the roundabouts and streets are dropping children off in driveways to avoid the congested drop off zones. This unofficial drop off zone is in regular use in the mornings and afternoons and has not been included in the Traffic Surveys tabled for this development application. At times some have blocked the driveway of this property and are desperate enough to park and leave their vehicle unattended, blocking access to the property.

The proposed works re-orient the school away from the Albion Street public transport route, and sets in stone the mindset of the school community that private car is the mode for getting to the school. This predominant use of the private car for student and staff movements to and from St Catherines has a major negative impact on the surrounding community and cannot stand in its current form, let alone be permitted to worsen.

St Catherines School is at this juncture in the history of its development. The consent authority for this development application needs the school to address the problems it already causing and allow no further exacerbation of those traffic and parking problems. This would require a range of changes:

- Re-orient entrance ways and people movement patterns within the school to embrace use of the public transport corridor
- Exploration of school special buses to take students to Bondi Junction and Randwick Junction. The 400 bus to Bondi Junction for example is only one stop from St Catherines School
- Encouragement of walking to school
- Drop off zones within the school boundaries, not in local streets
- At least 200 onsite car spaces for staff, theatre users and pool users

### **Increase in Students Numbers**

Charing Cross residents do not have a clear understanding of student numbers. In 2011 in its DA (DA 140/2011) the school stated it had 930 students in the Statement of Environmental Effects. In the approval for this development, authorized by the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP), it did not

authorise an increase in numbers and the school is currently in breach of this approval. (See below details in the Appendix) In the schools preliminary notes to the NSW Dept. of Planning for this proposal it stated it had 990 students. In its current documentation for this DA it states 970 students. What is the actual correct number?

For clarification any DA approval must cap the number of students enrolled at the school and this needs to be checked regularly with an Annual Audit. The almost 25% rise (230 pupils) in student enrolment over 15 years relates directly to traffic and parking and the increase must be considered to have a negative impact on residential neighbours.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

The Master Plan does not consider the cumulative impacts of its proposed development and the duration of its 15 year expansion program in the context of developments in the locality. This is a non-compliance with Director General Requirements.

In fact there are several other developments whose impacts will add to those of the school:

- Child-care centre opposite St Catherine's School at 23 Macpherson Street
- Child-care centre at Bronte Bowling Club in Varna Park at 16 Wallace Street
- Proposed redevelopment of the Bronte RSL at 113 Macpherson Street
- Proposed rezoning and redevelopment of Waverley Bowling Club (temporarily withdrawn)
- Approved redevelopment of Loreto Nursing Home, 363-7 Bronte Road, Bronte

The Master Plan should assess the school development's cumulative effects with these developments and the consent authority should assess the Application with a view to the total impact on the community.

### **No plan to provide parking for 75 construction workers per day for the next 15 years.**

In St Catherine's Stage 1 Construction Management Plan there are no arrangements for parking for construction workers. We request a plan of how the School intends to manage construction workers vehicles, such as use of public transport and bussing in from a parking station e.g. Bondi Junction. With an extra 75 vehicles on the street for the next 15 years a construction plan of management needs to take into account residents parking amenity.

### **Summary**

The above points highlight the need for a reassessment of the impacts that the school currently has on the local residential community and what it proposes. If St Catherine's intends to redevelop with higher and bigger buildings and more students, then the school needs to stop relying on the local community to absorb the impact. Its Master Plan needs to include at a minimum:

- A Drop off Zone within the school where it is safe to drop off students.
- Substantially more (at least 200 plus) on-site parking spaces to cope with the building of the new Theatre, Aquatic Centre and the increase in student numbers

- No high bulky buildings that loom over the residential areas and respect local planning laws
- A Cap on Student Numbers
- An analysis of the Cumulative Impact study of this development in the Waverley /Charing Cross Area
- A Construction plan of Management that considers parking for workers who will be on the site.

Yours Sincerely,

Danny Caretti

Proprietors Strata Plan 52887

313 Bronte Road

Waverley NSW 2024

## APPENDIX



Students of St Catherine's School dropped off in front of 313 Bronte Rd



Students of St Catherine's dropped off in front of Emergency Exit 317 Bronte Rd



Parents Parking and Drop Offs at the front of 313 Bronte Rd



Parking in front of 317 Bronte Rd by St Catherine's Staff and Parents

## Excerpt from SEE Statement from St Catherine's School for DA 140/2011 – March 2011 – Page 4 ( Re Student Numbers

St Catherine's School, 26 Albion Street, Waverley • Statement of Environmental Effects March 2011

### 2.2 Site Description

The grounds of St Catherine's comprises of a number of land parcels. The proposed development the subject of this DA relates to two site parcels: the broader school grounds, 317 and 319A Bronte Road<sup>1</sup> (legally described as DP 620417 and Lot 1 DP 231580 respectively) and 26 Albion Street described as Lot 560 DP1138118).

St Catherine's is irregular in shape and has an approximate area of 1.5 hectares. The school has frontages to Albion Street, Macpherson Street, Bronte Road and Leichhardt Street of approximately 140m, 180m, 75m, and 35m respectively.

Existing site access arrangements are illustrated on Drawing DA Appendix A. Student access is gained from the school's three principal entrances, i.e. Albion Street, MacPherson Street, and Leichhardt Street.

More detailed site survey plans showing site levels, existing built features is included at Appendix A.

The land is owned by the Council of St Catherine's School.

#### Existing Development

St Catherine's is an integrated kindergarten to Year 12 day school with a student population of approximately 930, and as noted in the school's history, is one of Australia's oldest independent girls schools.

Given the history and the recent building program being undertaken to improve the learning environment for students, there is a mix of buildings (including buildings of heritage significance) and more environmentally sustainable buildings.

The school grounds also include grassed areas, open air swimming pool, indoor sports complex. Other school sporting activities also take place including at the nearby Queens Park.

The heights of buildings vary across the school site from one to three storeys.

Included on land under the school's ownership are residential buildings at 319A Bronte Road, and 5 Leichhardt Street. The single storey building at 319A and the two storey building at 317 Bronte Road have previously been used as residences by school staff, and have since been vacated in order for the proposed development. Music classes have previously taken place in the building at 5 Leichhardt Street, but are now proposed to be relocated in order for the property to again be used as a residence (by the Headmistress).

An aerial image of the school grounds, which illustrates the distribution of buildings and the general areas of the two project sites, is provided in Figure 2. A site analysis is included at Appendix A. Photographs of sites within the school grounds are provided at Figures 3 - 13.

<sup>1</sup> It is noted that these two sites along with Lot 1 DP76210 are to be consolidated into one lot, rationalising the land to reflect the Innovation Centre development.



Excerpt from Notice of Determination from Waverley  
Council DA 140/2011 – RE Student Numbers

WAVERLEY COUNCIL

**Notice of determination**

**of a development application**

issued under *the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act  
1979* section 81 (1) (a)

---

*Details of the applicant*

JCA Architects

PO Box 156

DOUBLE BAY NSW 1360

---

*Details of the land to be developed*

Site: **26 Albion Street Waverley**

Development application no: DA-140/2011

Description of the development: Refurbish entry and undercroft for  
Administration Offices at 26 Albion Street and  
construction of a 3 storey Music/Visual Arts  
Wing addition to the Innovation Centre at 317-  
319A Bronte Road.

---

### *Decision of the consent authority*

Consent is **granted** subject to the conditions listed in **Attachment A**.

Conditions have been placed on the consent for the reasons outlined in Attachment A:

Date of this decision: 7 September 2011

Date from which the consent operates: 7 September 2011

Date the consent expires: 7 September 2016

---

### *Information attached to this decision*

- Conditions of the consent listed in **Attachment A**.
- A fire safety schedule, for a change of building use where no building work will be carried out.

## **1. HOURS OF OPERATION**

The hours of operation of the classrooms/studio within the addition to the Innovative Centre being restricted to between 8.00am and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.

## **2. STUDENT AND TEACHER NUMBERS**

**No increase in students or teacher numbers is approved under this consent.**