

Major Projects Assessment
Dept Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 2009
Sydney NSW 2001

24 June 2011

Objection

University of Sydney Abercrombie Precinct Redevelopment Application no MP07_0158

As a concerned Darlington resident I **object** to this proposed development for the following reasons:

- 1. Inappropriately sited over-scale commercial-style development causing loss of amenity**
- 2. Overshadowing of school playground and Abercrombie St**
- 3. Provision of land for public purposes substantially reduced and public amenity lost through park, tree and roadway removal**
- 4. Inappropriately sited car park adding more traffic to residential streets.**
- 5. Dangerously and non-amenably located car park entrance on a primary school pedestrian route.**

1. Inappropriately sited over-scale commercial-style development

1A The proposed development is vastly larger in mass and height than currently existing built environment. It would alter the area's character and reduce its amenity to an unacceptable degree. The current streetscape of Victorian residential terraces, a pub and three small-scale education-related buildings is appropriate for a shared residential/university/primary school area. ***The proposed development of a massive three level slab plus seven level tower block is inappropriately sited and unacceptable. The tower block should be deleted from the plan and the remainder substantially reduced in its height and bulk.***

1B The existing three level 19th century pub appears to have been used as a precedent to justify an three level proposed height right up to the site perimeter. This is unacceptable: the pub is modest in its footprint, corner location and local clientele, integrates visually with the nearby terrace residences of the same age and style and does not constitute a slab dominating an entire block.

Any development of this site should be maximum two levels to reflect the dominant existing buildings on the street.

1C The tower block introduces high rise to a low rise, largely residential area. This is unacceptable.

Any tower block should be sited elsewhere on the university's campus, where high rise already exists, away from its residential borders.

1D Several visual representations of the proposed tower block render the tower at about 50% translucency to reduce its visual impact. This is misleading, unethical and indicates the University is well aware of the negative impact this tower block would have on the area if built.

Visual communications should accurately reflect the real impact of the proposed development.

2. Overshadowing of Darlington Public School playground and Abercrombie St

The shadow diagrams indicate that in winter, the massive scale of the proposed development so close to the sites boundaries would cause up to 50% of Darlington Public Schools playground and Abercrombie St to be in shadow. This is unacceptable.

The proposed buildings should have their heights substantially reduced and be set back so the School and street experience no more shadow than they already do.

3. Provision of land for public purposes substantially reduced and public amenity lost through park, roadway and tree removal

The existing park bordering Abercrombie and Codrington Streets plus several roadways have been subsumed into the proposal's internal open space allocation. This directly contradicts the object of Section 5 (a)(iv) of the EP&A Act: the provision of land for public purposes.

Additionally, numerous mature trees from the existing park, lanes and streets are proposed for removal. The proposal indicates that majority of new trees would be planted in the internal open spaces of the proposal and the park would be removed to make way for part of the development.

Green space and trees should be sited on the development's two street frontages, not internally, to ensure green space is equally accessible to residents and University users alike and existing public amenity is retained. Additionally, to compensate for the loss of the roadways, more thoroughfares are required to enable easy public passage from one side of the site to the other.

4. Inappropriately sited and unnecessary car park adding more traffic to residential streets.

As the plan states, the site is well served by public transport, being five minutes walk from multiple bus routes and eight minutes walk from a major railway station. Generous cycling facilities are proposed. The plan states that

the development is to be peopled by existing staff and students rather than bringing in a new population. If this is the case, then for a truly green development there should be no allocation, and no expectation by occupants, of any new car parking on this site. Car parking on this site translates to additional car movements on local streets. Any perceived need for more University car parking should be addressed elsewhere on the campus near arterial roads. More cooperative planning and coordination between the University and public transport authorities would facilitate a greatly diminished need for staff and students to travel by car to the campus.

Any car parks required by the University should be sited so users gain entry from arterial routes such as City and Parramatta Roads, not local streets like Abercrombie St. The University needs to accept responsibility for improved coordination with public transport authorities to better meet its transport needs.

5. Dangerously located and unamenable vehicle entrance on a primary school pedestrian route.

5A The proposed vehicle entrance on Abercrombie St places heavy construction vehicles (and subsequently greatly increased car traffic if the car park is approved) right across a major pedestrian route for children attending Darlington Public School and Darlington Preschool. Twice a day dozens of preschool- and primary-age children and their younger siblings walk, scooter and cycle across the site of this proposed vehicle entrance.

This is not an acceptable site for a vehicle entrance to the proposed development due to the risks to school children. The entrance should be located on the Codrington St or Boundary Lane side of the site.

5B Staff and students at Darlington Public School and Darlington Preschool, along with the rest of the neighbourhood, would experience substantial loss of peace and amenity with the mass transit of heavy construction vehicles entering and exiting Abercrombie St right next door. As the construction phase is envisaged to last for up to 2 years, this is not a trivial concern.

Construction vehicles should not be permitted to transit through Abercrombie St. The educational environment of Darlington Public and Preschools and the residential environment of Darlington as a whole should not be diminished by heavy construction noise and traffic wherever possible.