

Application No: MP07_0158 MOD 2
Abercrombie Street Precinct University of Sydney

Date: 19 September 2013

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Address: 392 Abercrombie Street,
Darlington, NSW, 2008.

I object to these modifications for the following reasons:-

1. Deletion of conditions B9, D1 and G1 related to ESD green star rating

I object to the conditions B9, D1 and G1 related to green star being deleted in the proposed modification. These conditions specifically refer to the building achieving a minimum 5 star green star rating (4 star = Best Practice, 5 star = Australian Excellence, 6 star = World Leader).

The condition states:

Ecologically Sustainable Development

B9. The project shall identify all reasonable and feasible design, operational and construction measures required to target a minimum 5 star green star rating. Details are to be clearly identified in relevant construction plans and construction management plans

Abandoning the green star standard would be a breach of the University's own Environmental Policy which states in part:-

"1. Policy Statement

The University of Sydney is committed to environmental best practice, and to the continual improvement of its environmental performance, recognising its obligations both locally and globally.

The University aims to lead in defining best environmental practice, and will set its own demanding standards where none exist."

and

“2.4 The University Estate

The University is committed to sustainable design principles in land-use, transportation, landscape and building planning and construction.

The University aims to minimise adverse environmental impacts of University buildings, landscaping and developments over the whole of their lifespan.”

At a recent community information session on 5 September 2013, the Project Director from John Holland said that these conditions should be deleted because the University will not be able to afford the ongoing costs of maintaining the building if they have to meet these conditions. This would be a very unsatisfactory reason for the University to abandon its own key principles “in defining best environmental practice”.

The University has committed to building this massive complex and should therefore commit to the conditions that have previously been approved by the Department of Planning in regard to the minimum 5 star green star rating. If the University cannot commit to the ongoing maintenance of a minimum 5 star green star rating for reasons of cost then they should scale down the building to a more appropriate size with less costly ongoing maintenance in order to achieve a minimum 5 star green star rating.

I do not believe these conditions should be deleted or watered down in any way. The University has described the proposed new Business School as a “world class facility”. The onus should therefore be on the University to set world class standards in regard to environmental sustainability with this new building. After all, as stated in the Environmental Policy, **“The University aims to lead in defining best environmental practice, and will set its own demanding standards where none exist.”**

2. Modifications to Level 4, increasing building height and bulk

I strongly object to the proposed change which indicates the addition of a dining area on level 4 in the C pod of the K-shaped building directly opposite residential houses on Abercrombie Street. There was absolutely no built structure or rooms of any kind at all on this level on the plan contained in the Preferred Project Report approved by the Department of Planning in November 2012. The addition of the dining area increases the height and bulk of the building along Abercrombie Street. Residents have always objected to the height and the bulk of the building and, after consultations with the University, accepted what was approved by the Department of Planning.

I also object to the increase in the floor area in the B pod on level 4. Again, this will increase the height and bulk of the building.

I believe that it is unfair and unreasonable of the University now to attempt to increase the size of the building with these modifications. The University should not be allowed to increase the height and the bulk of the building from what has originally been approved by the Department, especially where the building is directly facing residential homes.

I object to the changes on level 4 because it will also mean an increase in the number of people using these areas and therefore an increase in noise affecting residents living close to them.

3. Re-orientation of pods A and B fronting Codrington Street

I am concerned about the “re-orientation of pods A and B fronting Codrington Street”. It appears that the angle of the 2 pods is proposed to be much more acute and therefore could possibly have a negative effect on the health of the large Sydney Blue Gum tree which stands between them. The Approval conditions stipulated that this great tree should be retained. The City Of Sydney Council battled along with the community to have this tree preserved and it would be devastating if the tree were now to be damaged in the construction of the new building.

4. Amended landscape and public domain design

The Landscape Design Statement attached to the Modification Application refers to the planting of “locally endemic Blue Gum trees” in Blue Gum Park on the corner of Abercrombie and Codrington Streets. I welcome the planting of many trees in and around the whole Abercrombie Precinct Development (APD) site to replace those cut down to make way for the construction of the APD.

5. Consolidation and centralisation of rooftop plant

I object to the modification which refers to the “consolidation and centralisation of rooftop plant” if this means that increased noise will be generated by the building. Plant equipment will be running 24 hours per day, seven days a week and should be located as far as possible from residential buildings and surrounded by noise attenuation material.

6. *Proposed location of café*

I object to the proposed location of the café in the APD being on the ground level of the B pod of the K-shaped building and facing into Abercrombie Street. It would bring with it increased noise, a large increase in the number of pedestrians on Abercrombie Street, and would generate an excessive amount of rubbish. It would also take trade away from local businesses along Abercrombie Street, many of which are run by local families who will suffer financially if the café is located on Abercrombie Street.

The café should be internal to the APD and well away from Abercrombie Street or at least contained within the A pod which points towards Codrington Street and the Sports Centre.

I object to the café operating outside of normal business hours. It is unfair of the University to propose to generate further unnecessary noise in the neighbourhood after business hours.

7. *Proposed position of open terraces*

I object to all open terraces on the B and C pods in the APD which are oriented towards residents' houses on Abercrombie Street. They would adversely affect the amenity of local residents through a large increase in noise caused by people using the terraces. In addition these terraces would impinge on the privacy of those residents living in close proximity. The terraces should be moved to the side of the building facing the existing Economics and Business Building and restricted to use in business hours only.

The University, where possible, should keep its noise within the confines of the University grounds, which is consistent with the University's own Environmental Policy.

8. *Effects of Noise, Dust and Vibration on Darlington Public School*

As a parent of a child at Darlington Public School, I am very concerned about the fact that the University has failed to consider the potential impacts of the construction's noise, dust and vibration on the operation of the school and the safety and wellbeing of the children. I am attaching a letter which sets out this concern in detail.

As an affected local resident, I hope that the Department will take the objections I have raised into consideration when making its decision on this application.

Yours faithfully,
Mary Ellen McCue.