Submission on behalf of the Young Community and Residents Association regarding Young High School Library and Joint Use Community Facility.

Appendix I Heritage Impact Statement (Note: bears the title Young High School Redevelopment and Community Facility)

and Appendix L Draft Social Impact Statement. (Note: bears the title Young High School Hilltops Joint Use Library).

This submission refers to the inadequacy of the GML Heritage Impact Statement and the community consultation undertaken for this project and hence the report filed which describes that consultation. It also notes inadequacies in the social assessment report. I have criticism of the document "Conservation Management Strategies" but no time to detail these here.

My qualifications to comment. In addition to my master degree in Heritage conservation. , I am a professional architectural historian. I have researched and published, inter-alia, about the history and Heritage of Young. I was a member of the 355 Arts & Culture Committee that advised the Young Council and which proposed to Council that a study of the towns cultural infrastructure be commissioned.

Others have commented on the inadequate community consultation undertaken before this project was launched and during the process leading to this application, and the secrecy which has dearly cost the tax-paying and rate-paying community. The report on the Community Consultation is misleading and reports institutional consultation when these were instruction sessions not consultations. This is particularly so of the 'Steering Committee,' of which I was a member, the meetings of which were for many months un-minuted. The lack of consultation produced:

- months of expense for in-park designs;
- The failure of GML Heritage to consult the local museum and Historical society.
- The failure of GML Heritage to accept information I provided after I saw their draft Report. (When GML heritage were appointed, I suggested to the 'Steering Committee' 'liaison' officer I be put in contact with GML Heritage to provide assistance. I was told I could forward questions to them).

GML produced an inadequate report, which:

- Fails to take into account and to evaluate various historical persons and events associated with the precinct
- Provides an ill-informed inaccurate description of the precinct itself.

I note that the study area of the HIS includes two buildings which house the Young Regional School of Music. Had the Education Department itself conducted an assessment of its assets before embarking on this project and properly consulted, a considerably cheaper and less intrusive solution to its need for altering those assets might well have been found. However the Department has a cavalier attitude to its assets. Six native Cabbage Tree Palms (thirty metres high) lining the fence along Campbell Street were cut down in November 2017 for no apparent reason; they provided fronds for use in making 'cabbage-tree hats' – the main work of the prisoners held in Young gaol – and were therefore a valuable heritage item in the precinct. Such deliberate carelessness appears to be symptomatic of current attitudes at play in the NSW Department of Education.

I make the following comments on the GML report:

Section 1 Background

At 1.3.2 the report refers to nearby heritage items which will not be impacted by this development; I consider that this entire precinct, properly assessed, is impacted by any change and these must be appropriately managed; vistas are a crucial part of Heritage. The entire precinct was included on the (now without statutory force) Register of the National Estate.

At 1.3.3 the report states that a nomination for State Heritage listing 'for listing lands including part of the study area' is before the Heritage Council. This is not correct. The nomination includes the entire precinct of Carrington Park including the Catholic group of structures opposite, the former Primary School (now Arts centre) and the Bunya Pines formerly in the school playground.

Section 2.3. The Statement of Significance is insufficient.

- The Dept. of Heritage has noted in its response to this application that the site, being the place on July 14th 1861 where rioters attacked the police who were holding prisoner the leaders of an earlier riot:
 - is a key moment in the history of racism in Australia considering that the Lambing Flat Anti-Chinese riots immediately led to the restriction of Chinese immigration to NSW and in the long term contributed to the formation of the White Australia Policy;
 - it is the second major battle that occurred between miners and police during the Goldrushes, the first being the Eureka Stockade in 1854; and
 - it was the second time the *Riot Act* was read in NSW history and was the first effectual reading of this act.

I would add that the park itself originally formed part of the Police Encampment and was the actual place where othe largest and most violent riot on the goldfield took place, in July 1861, when the police were holding ringleaders of the (anti-Chinese) race riots in the lock-up. The battleground of the riot (now the park and former primary school precinct) was below the stockade fence, across which police fired. This event, the greatest insurrection against law and order in the history of New South Wales, is not given adequate weight in the heritage report, yet it was the reason for the subsequent structuring of the whole site to give its present character. The report only mentions the reading of the Riot Act, without identifying the exact area where that action occurred, yet it is identified by a sign on Campell St. There can be no doubt that the number of rioters, not less than a thousand and in some estimates three thousand, would have taken up all the area that is now the Park, the nearby section of Campbell Street and the upper level of the area now occupied by the Church and Arts Centre grounds.

- It is vital to identify the actual siting of the police stockade, courthouse and lockup, because that then places the position of the rough timber fence defending the camp in relation to subsequent transformations. Indications on old plans of the police encampment erected within a few months of the discovery of the gold show a scatter of small structures, including police barracks, court-room, lock-up, stables, cottages for the magistrate and the gold commissioner among others; all these were scattered across the site now occupied by the high school itself, behind a log fence in a line running roughly south-east from the position of the westernmost Hoop Pine that stands today at the end of the iron picket fence, at an angle that would meet the south-western corner of Gordon Street.
- Removal of any part of that picket fence would have taken away the last remaining indication of the former stockade fence over which police and rioters clashed. So the fence itself is of the highest significance.

I would add that as the symbolism of the site is enhanced by the courthouse because what we see on that day is that the State, in the shape of the Colonial Government, stood for the protection of all persons regardless of race, and the behaviour of the vastly outnumbered police, who only retreated when they ran out of bullets, was consistent with this attitude. I would note that the decision of the Gold Commissioner to recommend Chinese immigration be restricted was on the grounds that he was unable to maintain law and order in any other way. The Commissioner had arranged for fleeing Chinese miners to be protected and sheltered on nearby Currawong Station. Details such as this set the period in vivid context: they establish the fragility of what was the frontier. (Until this time the area where gold was discovered in what is now Young was 'beyond the limits of location' that is, although they could graze with a licence, the State did not provide police or other systems. This has a bearing, in this district, on the history of the interface of the indigenous people of the area, the Wiradjuri, and the White Family, who had arrived in 1830-1 and established a pastoral holding. They did so with the assistance of Wiradjuri elders, who learned pastoral industry skills and worked with the family.

Wiradjuri people sustained the pastoral industry through the gold rush, when settlers left work to make their fortunes.

- The assertion that the association with law and order is correct as far as it goes but as explained above fails to connect the various stages of occupation with the deep symbolism of the stand of the police.
- The High School indeed has a long association with education, as the Courthouse was handed to the Education Department for use as a school in 1924.
- The courthouse certainly has aesthetic significance, the style adopted in the colony from early days; this is a particularly Roman example. The single courtroom was one of the largest in the state; its giant Ionic portico could be seen from most parts of the town. The structure was built of brick with cement stucco surface lined to resemble stone; the great fluted columns are nearly ten metres tall with deeply moulded capitals that were cast separately and raised to position. The pediment displays the Royal Coat of Arms and the date in Roman numerals '1884', although the building was not completed until 1886. Disparaging contemporary remarks are quoted about the building of this courthouse, but they do not take into account the need to counter the negative impact of lingering memories from the riots, and the fact that anti-social and racist sentiments had an ongoing effect on society. The assessment notes the gardens and fence: but does not mention what is unique to Young; that is, that the visitor can stand in front of this building and experience what the visitor in 1886 saw: none of the grander courthouses in Regional NSW or the capital has the effect of emphatic assertion of authority. This is partly due to the sloping site, but also to its quiet situation. The glorious Darlinghurst Courthouse is set lower than spectators and utterly dominated by Taylor Square traffic, the impressive Yass courthouse fronts a busy street, Goulburn is again lower and across a wide made road from its park, as is Orange and Bathurst's park is at its rear, the front addresses a major Street. If built heritage is valued and maintained, it surely must be to convey as genuine an experience as possible for the scholar the student and the casual visitor.
- James Barnet indeed designed the courthouse and others like it; but this assessment fails to mention it was built by John Gough, who also built the local Railway Station, which, as this document goes on to say, is a counterpart of the courthouse. Born in Victoria, Gough was a founder of the New South Wales Labour Party, (the Labour Electoral League,) the first political Labour movement in Australia. Elected to the NSW parliament in 1889, he was one of Labour's five-member leadership group formed in 1891. His mother was Australian-born, and his maternal grandmother was half-aboriginal.
- The police residences are not examples of Federation architecture, they are in the High Victorian Style of courthouse period and indeed bear, in the cast iron of the verandah: *VRI Victoria Regina Imperatrix*: Queen Victoria died in 1901 as the colonies federated. The failure to observe this simple but obvious architectural

element (which was noted in the description of the courthouse) raises one of many questions as to the authority of this assessment.

2.3.1 Level of Significance

My points above indicate why I consider this building, indeed this precinct to be of State Significance.

Table provided: I do not agree that Building EE, the current School library, has little significance: I am concerned about proposed alterations.

2.4.2 It is difficult to match the numbers on the various plans and at least one tree is incorrectly described. The Landscape report(s) should be re-done and re-submitted for public scrutiny

2.4.4 States that the place does not achieve State Significance. GML Heritage failed to accept the information I provided as to the existence of a passage between the old Gaol and the Courthouse. This tunnel alone elevates the site to State Significance and must force a re-design of the proposed building.

2.4.9 I agree that no new building should dominate the courthouse or the remaining elements of the Gaol. The proposed structure, twice as big as the Courthouse, sprawling across the precinct and having an unsympathetic design will draw the eye to itself rather than respect the existing historic structures.

3. Carrington Park. This section has a concerning number of omissions, and the description misrepresents realities.

3.2 Physical Description.

The report mentions the plaque on the reconciliation tree, but fails to note the many other small plaques found throughout the park, commemorating individuals and occasions; it is important to ensure those which commemorate tree planting, and that the trees are not removed. I would recommend the form of these and other signs in the park be used to develop any signage in the precinct. I note that the design proposal has a signage style which does not refer to the signage in use in the park, indeed appears generic. The report fails to mention the Gingko biloba tree (Chinese Temple Tree) with two limestone blocks from Young's sister city and the associated plaque planted to celebrate Young's sister-city relationship with Langzhou. This relationship resonates with the anti-Chinese riots on the site. The memorial element is redolent in the park's entrance gate-piers, bearing, on marble plaques, the names of Young Town Bandsmen who served in the first war. The piers have been rebuilt upon the base of the originals, and the plaques re-instated on them – the report seems to consider all the structure to be recent and of low significance. The Band Rotunda, built in 1912, also bears a plaque, to the memory of the first bandmaster; the rotunda itself forms the focus of the central spine and main north-south path. Its importance as the principal structural feature and as a memorial is not highlighted in the report, yet it is of high significance as a local memorial and for its aesthetic contribution to the park. The Young Band was established very early and is one of the longest continually running musical societies in Australia.

- The description states that the park is surrounded on four sides by roads. This is **completely inaccurate**, and clearly intended to advance the project by what is referred to in the EIS and the traffic report as 'Re-instating Currawong Street'. The reason for this falsification is clear: the site chosen for the facility has grave access issues. Fudging a Heritage report is not an appropriate response to such a problem. I note that this report states that there is a long history of educational association 'from the first half of the 20th century.' In Heritage, there are no each-way bets; if mid-20th century is a long history to be taken into account, early 20th century is longer.
 - The dirt track along the front of the Courthouse and gaol was gazetted as an 'Unnecessary Road' in **1910**.
 - It was gazetted for "Recreation" in **1939** and at that point incorporated into the Park. The sweep of lawn in front of the courthouse enhances that structure's Heritage importance. The resumption of the original track's alignment would unacceptably reduce the area of the Park.

The report notes the White memorial, and that Sarah Musgrave's name has been added: it fails to note that Musgrave was John White's daughter and the first European to be born in the district, and that her account of her family indicates great respect for Wiradjuri people. Oddly, the description of the memorial refers to the drinking fountain as a fountain, giving quite the wrong impression.

Construction Year. These notes are replete with errors.

- The anti-Chinese riots were all in 1860-1.
- The area was gazetted as a place of recreation in 1886
- And gazetted as 'Young Park in 1888
- The list omits that road was declared 'unnecessary' in 1910
- The park was renamed Carrington Park in 1889
- Lord Carrington retired in 1890, not 1895, and not 5 years before the Young park was named after him.
- The area was not 'a flat piece of land opposite the police camp'. From the Gold rush this sloped area was a fenced police horse paddock; the area was used as a recreation ground from early days.
- The list states that 'the Eastern end of Carrington Street was closed in 1939.' This is incorrect. The track below the palisade fence was a *section of a planned road known as known as Currawong St West*. When this section was declared an unnecessary road in 1910, the street ran west from Caple Street.
- South of the Courthouse, and a little way up Campbell St, East Currawong Street began. In the 1960s East Currawong St was re-named Gordon St. It runs east. When East Currawong Street became Gordon St, the name of the Street running West from Caple Street became simply Currawong St.

3.3 Carrington Park

The report entirely underestimates the importance of town's electrical power scheme. Young was the first town in the *British Empire* to provide a power system for municipal, commercial and residential use. Paris installed electric lights in the same year as Young, the first major European Capital to be so lit, and became known as 'the city of light'; Young was Australia's town of light: what is more the power supply was underground. While other councils and cities, including London, Ottawa, Cape Town and Delhi were establishing gas-fired plants, visits to inspect Young's system recorded from Wollongong and Newcastle (among others).

The report suggests that the installation of Tamworth's Direct Current street lighting was as important as Young's system. Tamworth's was a form of incandescent lighting, and only supplied to light streets. Young had a three-phase Alternate Current system. AC is the system in general use today and its development in Young shows the vision and ambition of its Council, led by George Cranfield, the 'boy mayor'. The comparison is as if Tamworth and Young had no horses, then Tamworth got a donkey and Young three horses, a draught horse, a racehorse, and a hack. I note that upon seeing the draft report I emailed GML to this effect, but my information was ignored.

Light standards along the main spine were original to the park from the time it was opened in 1888; these were reinstated recently because the Young Council wished to memorialise the man and the event, the first light standard in the park is the original standard, with the name of the mayor George Cranfield and the date. Lord Carrington, the colony's governor visited Young in November 1889 ceremonially to 'switch on' the town's electrical lighting, (it had been in use since April that year.) the park was renamed in his honour. George Cranfield, acting mayor in 1889, welcomed the governor and hosted the celebrations.

The report fails to identify the very unfortunate modifications to the bandstand, which structure requires restoration.

The report *misrepresents* the area incorporated into the park from 1939. The whole of the dirt track was incorporated. A carpark was established north of the TAFE *in the 1970s* when Young Technical College (then the Gaol tenant) became the TAFE.

The report refers to a section of a 'dense vegetation' at the Western end of the park.

As the photograph of the park entrance used in this report is a 1996 image supplied by the National Library, it appears that no careful investigation was conducted by GML or other consultants. Anyone examing the detail of the park would report on the careful planting of three charming separate gardens, at the South Western edge of the Park. I note that the **EIS at 3.1 Landscaping and public domain** states: design strategy has been provided in the Design report at Appendix C, with Landscape plans in Appendix E. The Landscape Strategy is based on the following principles:

- Create a legible and accessible site
- Learning through Landscape
- Create a sense of community; and
- Create a sustainable and adaptive landscape.



This statement is risible in the context of the damage that is planned for this area of the park. The 'dense area of vegetation' referred to in the GML report is a carefully conceived area of planting and paths painstakingly designed so that visitors to the park can *learn* about what the very visible sign at the centre of the three garden sections describes as 'waterwise planting'. In the event that the claims that it were appropriate to introduce a made pathway from Campbell St below the palisade fence could be substantiated, it would be necessary to bulldoze two thirds of this area of planting. Before the project proceeds, Hayball architects should be required to explain how 'Learning through landscape' equates with obliterating these gardens. Three of the principles the Landscape Strategy claims to adopt are nothing but ironic if these gardens are eradicated.

GML does not include a description of these gardens in its Heritage Impact Statement; and this again raises the issue of their investigative capacity and objectivity. These gardens are a material reminder of the gradual understanding of settler communities about Australian conditions, and that a municipal authority

wished to share knowledge about species appropriate to the country, and that this was done not on paper or through the internet or media advertising but by actualising the theory. The community was clearly engaged with this project; the sign acknowledges contributions from both official funding bodies such as LandCare and local businesses.

The omission of this area from any report implies that the exhibition period of these plans for this project is a farce. I find it distasteful to think that this can be so, but there can be no other explanation for the wilful lack of consultation, avoidance of local knowledge and advice that has characterised the process.

3.4 Themes

Australian Theme I would add Electricity supply as an important theme.

Mining and Pastoral expansion might also be considered in this context.

NSW Theme

I would add the Gold Rush.

Local Theme

As to "making public gardens...see previous comments

Comparable items

In my view these would first be parks associated with Courthouses, especially in Regional areas. Bathurst, Goulburn and Orange have been mentioned above. One could then compare courthouses such as Yass and Berrima, and Sydney courthouses. Parks to compare would include grander ones such as Albury but I would look for avenues of species such as Kurrajongs; the use of indigenous species began in Young in the mid 1880s and is evident in the park.

3.7 Curtilage I note the deliberate specious reference to the alignment of Currawong Street. There is and (as explained above) *never was* a Currawong Street. Both the White Memorial and the nearby elm lie within this alignment.

3.8 Heritage Significance

Criterion B (Historical Association) I would here include Cranfield and Gough.

Criterion C I have already drawn attention to the many errors and lack of contextualisation in this report, and do not wish to repeat myself here, except to note again that under Criterion C (Aesthetic significance) the incorrectly named Currawong Street is said to be 'obscure but recoverable'. This (possibly intentional)

misunderstanding of the term *Aesthetic* implies that rather than a dirt track, a boulevard of some beauty would be *recovered*. For many years, since the second half of the twentieth century, the *aesthetics* of the park have included a sweep of grass to the palisade fence, which uninterrupted view enhances the beauty of the park and the Barnet building. Of the many imposing Classical court-houses built by James Barnet in his thirty years as Colonial Architect, this one in Young is one of the very few which stand in an un-intruded landscape from where its dignity and scale are fully appreciated. There was no made road, this was simply a rutted unformed cart track, so the plan to upgrade it cannot be seen as *recoverable*, but as *inappropriate development*.

Criterion D (Social Significance) I note that it seems that when this report was submitted no assessment has been done on this basis, and assume that such an assessment would note the very high significance of the place to the town and district, that it is in continual use, for recreation, quiet contemplation, family picnics, weddings, funerals, municipal events, concerts, playing, reading, and lounging on the grass. An understanding of the park emphasises the degree to which alterations to the precinct must be contained and appropriate.

Criteria E and F. I note the existence of the passage through which prisoners were taken to and from the courthouse and Gaol, and which elevates these two criteria to State Significance, and that my information about this was disregarded by the consultants.

Summary

This report misconstrues the notion of Federation period. Except for the bandstand, The buildings to which it refers are all built in the mid to late 1880s and in the High Victorian style. Young's Federation architectural period took place when NSW recovered from the 1890s slump.

I would add the Waterwise gardens and the green sward which abuts the new and original palisade fences to the items which must be preserved: the spurious reference to the 'Currawong Street alignment open space' should be deleted.

4.0 TAFE College

The Gaol was dedicated for use as a public school in 1932.

If gatehouse is iconic this should render it of State Significance.

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Brief comments on the Ethos Urban Draft Social Impact Statement.

This report is inadequate.

4.5 Social infrastructure analysis

The perils of a desktop review are here demonstrated. On a map of Young the writer circles an 800 metre catchment area from the High School Site and suggests the walking time to various facilities. The writer is apparently unaware that the CBD is in a valley and the School on a hill on the Southern slope of that valley. Ethos Urban is situated in the temperate city of Sydney. Young's climate has all the qualities of an inland continental situation: high heat in early and late summer, regular extreme temperatures in midsummer, and bitter frosty winters with winds off the snow. The draft statement states 'This assessment has identified and mapped social infrastructure within a local catchment of 800m from the site, a distance equivalent to a 10-15 minute walk.' Such a walk up a hill takes longer than 10 minutes, and is exhausting for anyone in harsh weather conditions, especially if one is encumbered with a walking frame, or a small child or two or (the report does not contemplate) or on a mobility scooter. And in the extremes of weather, even longer, and even less likely to be attempted.

The writer repeats the details of the proposal and what one might describe as the usual clichés in those reports. I have no comment on the needs of the High School, but the question arises when reports associated with this proposal include

• 'There are significant levels of educational disadvantage within Young. Analysis by SINSW identifies that students attending the school have a lower than average level of educational advantage. In the broader Hilltops LGA community, only 38% of residents have completed Year 12.'

Perhaps the protagonists of the project, the various consultants and indeed SINSW officials are unaware that in the early 1960s Young established the first school outside Sydney for intellectually disadvantaged children, and that families whose children needed support flocked to Young. As the first children grew too old for the School, the group of women who had established the school opened what is now the largest NSW provider of Disability Services outside Sydney. This must account for the relative educational disadvantage in the region.

The report acknowledges that the school has declining enrolments: it is unclear then why it would not be cost-effective to refurbish the present facilities rather than build another. The suggestion that redevelopments on the TAFE site have limited access to the TAFE's facilities (namely the multi-media room) is unexplained: it is available at any rate to members of the wider community. As indeed are multiple meeting rooms, throughout the CBD; many with very good kitchens and in places such as the

Services club or pubs, where refreshments and meals are available. These meeting rooms are free of charge. It is unclear why organisations inveigled into supporting the facility are expected to use meeting rooms or relocate to spaces for which they have to pay. In addition, the provision of a café in competition with other commercial premises is in conflict with Council's policy. Should the school want to provide access to information about Wiradjuri culture it would be easy to do so without attaching any centre to another facility: such 'learning' would have to be after hours. As indeed would access to other facilities such as the art spaces. The clear expectation is that 'art' will remain a hobbyist occupation in the facility: part time access, no gallery space worth exhibiting professional work, no capacity to leave work on the easel, on the plinth, beside the wheel with a damp cloth and return the next day. The CIMP clearly makes the point that the building which houses the current Community Library would make an excellent visual arts space once the Library has relocated. The CIMP also locates Infrastructure that only requires an upgrade to serve the Community well; this is around the CBD and creek; all within walking distance of each other and the centre of town.

4.6 Community and stakeholder consultation

The consultant at his desk has relied on other reports to inform his assessment of the Consultation process. He notes that a Project Reference Group has been established to: 'Act as a conduit between the project and the community, providing informed feedback into the project; and endorse various stages of the project, including the design.' No community representatives are on that committee, and the question as to whether Community Library representatives are members is unclear. The makeup of the 'Community Committee' is unknown. A "Steering Committee', the concerns raised through which have been completely ignored, was apparently appointed simply for show. Very little information in an accessible form was provided and feedback ignored. The Society of Artists was promised a regional gallery, and is disappointed. The Community Hub explains it has no plans to relocate. Nor has the Multicultural Society.

Some feedback seems to have seeped through. As the main protagonist for the project was made aware of facilities already available in the town, various notions in the plan: a community kitchen, an early leaning centre (over the fence in the TAFE) a state of the art film and recording studio (available on one's phone and facilities available elsewhere in the Music School and the Southern Cross Centre) disappeared. The café appears to have morphed into a café bar in response to an understanding of Council's policies not to compete; how this will improve social cohesion is unclear. Nor do community members understand how having to pay for meeting rooms instead of having them without cost improves communication. A darkroom is provided, to the mystification of the local Camera Society, who converted their darkroom to a kitchenette 10 years ago. As the plans and reports

were not made available until the height of the Cherry Season, when the community was flat out with volunteering or feeding stock in the drought, and was given only 28 days to respond to hundreds of pages of detailed expertise and only one set of hard copy plans was made available only during Council hours, the assertion that Community engagement is crucial to the process is revealed to be propaganda.

The Report claims 'the relocation of the existing Young Library meets Council's strategic objectives as identified in the Cultural Infrastructure Masterplan (2014).' This is blatantly untrue, the CIMP states very clearly that the library should be located in what it identifies as the precinct it mapped out after extensive consultation with the relevant stakeholders.

This submission is on behalf of an association formed by concerned citizens when it was realised that the Carrington Park precinct was under threat from this development. Our members are all involved in work, other organisations, volunteering and and the time these plans were finally made available coincided with the busiest time of the year and an ongoing drought. This was disabling, and many more submissions would have been made if there had been enough time and an adequate number hard copies to scrutinise. We would like to see many of these reports re-worked, the project re-designed. We consider the project will not benefit the community as it duplicates available facilities and the site is, even if heritage considerations are swept aside, inaccessible for most library users.

Joseph Kinsela

President, YCARA

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