

Hilary Guthrie

Hornsby NSW 2077

hilaryguthrie@tpg.com.au

7 July 2020

Online lodgement of objection

Proposed development of 1 Rosemead Road, HORNSBY NSW 2077 as a school - SSD 10444, Blue Gum Community School

I am a local resident living in Old Man Valley, on the west side of Hornsby. I am most concerned by what is proposed as a new use, for a registered historical home, situated in a residential area at 1 Rosemead Rd. There are a number of areas of this proposal that will have an impact on the residents of the local area.

Hornsby Shire already has an abundance of excellent schools for the needs of all ages from pre-school to year 12. All of the existing schools have grounds and facilities that allow for students to develop in more suitable spaces, than in the small 'locked' area that is proposed here.

OBJECTIONS TO THE BLUE GUM COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROPOSAL

- **Heritage**

On Hornsby Council's website under Heritage, a photo of Mount Errington is featured, and it describes Mount Errington as an:

'outstanding Federation mansion. Good example of Federation Arts and Crafts Style. Distinctive design with long sweeping bellcast roof, central entry feature and projecting balcony above. Excellent condition. Original interior and landscape elements. State and local significance'.

It also mentions:

'Original doors and windows. Much of the interior is also original. Original gates with new low, symmetrical fence. Well planted grounds, retaining some original plantings. Under significance they use the terms 'Rare, Representative'.

As a local resident for 50 years I value this property and the unique value it brings to this area of Hornsby. Yet this application will severely impact on the beautiful home that is Mt Errington.

- **Loss of tree canopy and ecosystem**

How much of this 122 year old heritage property will actually be retained, particularly with the gardens? You only have to look at the tree location plan to realise what is at risk. It endangers not just the plants but the animals, particularly insects, birds, reptiles and mammals that have already built habitats here. This is an ecosystem that has developed over many, many years, that can't just be restored by new plantings. One

thing is certain, a huge total of this well-established ecosystem will disappear. Hornsby Sire Council has a strong tree management and preservation act that will be under threat by this proposal as noted below from the Council's website:

'These tree preservation measures are designed to protect the local amenity, landscape character and natural history of Hornsby Shire. The importance of trees is often taken for granted along with the benefits provided to the community such as social wellbeing, attracting people and visitors to the area, increasing property values, maintaining the environmental health of our region by protecting soil and water supplies, storing carbon and providing habitat for wildlife. Indigenous trees and many introduced species provide food, shelter and protection from predators for birds, animals and insects.

I question that with the proposed development this will still be true. All trees indigenous or introduced are an essential part of the ecosystem and yet I see important plants risk disappearing under this proposal.

- **Traffic movement and parking**

However the main issue I wish to address is the one about traffic congestion. Firstly I question why the original traffic study undertaken by the developer was directly outside 1 Rosemead Rd and opposite No. 4. This in no way reflects the true situation of the area. Any local will tell you that the majority of traffic uses William St even if their final destination is Dural St.

If you are heading south on Peats Ferry Rd and you want to get to 1 Rosemead Rd, you cannot turn right between 7am - 9am or 3pm - 6pm. Therefore the traffic must turn at William St. If you are coming north in the morning or afternoon you can turn left from Peats Ferry Rd, but after you get through the one way section of Dural St, the left hand side of the road is 'parked out' by commuters, who have nowhere else to park. This part of Dural St. then only allows traffic movement in one direction, so traffic has to give way to each other and this can often be very difficult.

This also applies to commuters parking in Frederick St, William St (now pretty well used for parking almost back to Rosemead Rd) and Lisgar Rd with all parking spaces gone by about 8am, which again narrows the roads. William St allows 3 hour parking on the southern side of the road until it reaches Lisgar Rd, so along with the pinch points (2), commuter parking, trailers, a campervan and the occasional boat, even though William St is wider, you can rarely get from Frederick St to Rosemead Rd without negotiating a polite 'give way'.

There are two blind corners that need to be considered as well. One is the corner of Dural St and Rosemead Rd just before the entrance to Mount Errington. The entrance is also obscured by a magnificent example of a very old *Araucaria bidwillii*, or Bunya-bunya Pine (I can attest to it being there for more than 50 years). Turning into the driveway from the William St end also becomes a hazard for cars travelling around the bend on the corner of Dural St and Rosemead Rd. The other blind corner is the corner of William St and Rosemead Rd. a particularly dangerous spot for cars turning either left or right out of William St.

Parking at the proposed site is interestingly discussed in the submitted proposal. If the pre-school/ school was to go ahead, they have listed 3 parking spots for staff and yet under which ever official guidelines pre-schools and schools are staffed, to meet the staffing/pupil ratio they need 3 teachers for every 25 pre-school student, 2 teachers for every 25 students, which equals 5 staff minimum. Therefore are 'extras' going to be parked on Dural Street or in the parking area designated for pre-school student drop off? Although Mount Errington grounds are large, they don't really give a very large space for outdoor free play, even if it was used at different times by small groups.

This proposal will greatly impact not only the residents who surround this site, but also those who live in the valley below. This is far more than those who just travel through it. With after school care and vacation care in the mix it will cause issues for at least 49 weeks of the year, from early morning until early evening. Considering how closely it is surrounded by residents who have been in the area for many years, the impact will be huge.

- Fire risk

Strong consideration needs to be given to the fact that Rosemead Rd/ William St is one of only two exits for residents from the valley below, the other being Valley Rd which leads into Pretoria Pde. Both roads are steep and have sharp bends but are valuable exits, particularly in an emergency, keeping in mind that the whole valley is designated as a bush fire prone area. Mount Errington is not in this 'designated bush fire prone area' but it is only just outside it. Hopefully the bush fire situations of 2019 -2020 will lead to changes in regulations. The consideration of, and problems with evacuation if a bush fire occurs, should be a main reason to rule out this development application.

The potential damage to this magnificent home's heritage, the direct impact on the property's ecosystem, the major traffic issues and very close proximity of this property to a bush fire area, should be given priority consideration when accessing this application.

My final query is that I see no 'development' notices on any part of the property. I thought this was a requirement.

Regards

Hilary Guthrie