



**Application number SSD- 27208140**

**Objection** to proposal for the site at 48 Victoria Rd & 2A & 2B Gordon Street Rozelle (referred to throughout as 2A Gordon St) being converted to accommodate a maximum of 200 students for St Aloysius College Rozelle Campus.

I am writing to object to the proposal for the use of the site at 2A Gordon Street as a school for St Aloysius on the basis of the traffic, safety and parking issues associated with the proposal.

I am a resident of Quirk Street Roseville, which is a short distance from the proposed site at 2A Gordon Street. I am particularly concerned about the traffic difficulties that the proposal will create by the need for the children to be dropped off and collected from school at around 8 AM each weekday morning and 3 PM each weekday afternoon during school terms. Of course, there is likely to also be earlier and later drop-offs and pickups arising from other extracurricular activities that will be conducted at the school.

#### All Roads Lead to Rome

I assume you have heard the phrase "All Roads Lead to Rome". In this particular case, the issue is that all roads in the area lead to the corner of Gordon St and Victoria Road, which is right where the site in question is situated.

There are particular traffic issues in the streets surrounding the site that will mean, if the proposal is approved, that there will be a very significant detrimental impact on the traffic in the area surrounding the school site - not only for the residents but also for the parents trying to drop-off and collect the children and safety issues for the children. Unless you know the surrounding streets and traffic flow for this part of Rozelle and Lilyfield it is difficult to understand quite how problematic the proposal is. I will endeavour to explain why it is particularly problematic in this objection.

Gordon Street, and particularly the lights at the intersection of Gordon Street and Victoria Street (which are adjacent to the site in question) are the only set of lights which allow a right hand turn onto Victoria Road that will then allow cars to feed back across the Anzac Bridge and into the city for all of the residents on the Rozelle Lilyfield (western) side of Victoria Road. That is thousands of homes and residents. While there are traffic lights at the intersection of Evans Street & Victoria Road and Darling Street & Victoria Road neither of those lights allow for a right hand turn onto Victoria Road to allow cars to travel back into the city. That means that the intersection of Gordon Street and Victoria Road is an extremely busy intersection most of the time but particularly in the mornings when people are travelling to work. At the top of Gordon Street it is one way between Prince Street and Victoria Road, so that it allows for two lanes of traffic to turn right onto Victoria Road. This section of Gordon Street is a clear way for about 2 blocks, with 'No Parking' from 7 AM to 10 AM in the left-hand lane, because of the level of peak hour traffic needs to travel along Gordon Street and turn onto Victoria Road whether turning right or left. The rest of Gordon St is 2 way for traffic in

both directions. So Gordon St goes from being 2 way to being only one way at the top, near St Joseph's Church and next to the proposed school site. However, the two blocks that are essentially from Quirk Street up to the lights at Victoria Road is a clear way and so no parents will be able to stop anywhere near the school in order to drop-off or collect the children. That means that for the 2 blocks closest to the proposed school no parent will be able to stop and drop off or collect children. The lower part of Gordon Street from Lilyfield Road up to Quirk Street, on both sides of the street, has cars parked as it is residents parking and anyone else who needs to park in the area. I can add at this point that due to WestConnex construction at the bottom of Gordon Street we do have significant additional cars endeavouring to park in our local street every day, being the WestConnex workers. That will continue until at least 2024 and means that on a day-to-day basis there is very little parking in the surrounding streets. That will mean that there is nowhere for parents to stop safely to drop off or collect the children anywhere along Gordon St.

#### Parents approaching the school to deliver/collect the children

1. For any parents who have travelled across the Harbour Bridge and then the Anzac Bridge towards the school the only choices for dropping off the children will be as follows: –
  - a) turning left onto Lilyfield Road and then right onto Gordon Street to travel up Gordon Street to deliver the children. For the reasons I have set out above this will be problematic as there is nowhere safe that parents can stop close to the school to deliver the children or collect the children.;
  - b) Travelling along Victoria Road to Maney Street and turning left into Maney Street, and then right into Quirk Street, and then right into Gordon Street. Maney Street and Quirk Street are small narrow streets with cars parked on each side, which means that it is only that that there is room only for one car travelling along, notwithstanding that the streets are two-way. The corner at Quirk Street and Gordon Street does not have very good visual down Gordon Street to the left, so all care must be taken when trying to turn right into Gordon Street. As Gordon Street will have traffic that is backed down it (as it currently does most mornings due to normal peak hour traffic let alone with the addition of parents delivering children to school) then it will cause a bottleneck where parents will not be able to turn from Quirk Street into Gordon Street easily. That is likely to cause traffic to further backup along Quirk Street and possibly Maney Street. Certainly, if there are 200 children on the site each day, even if only 25% of the need to be delivered or collected that is some 50 additional cars at around 8 AM every morning and 3pm each afternoon. There will be simply no way that the surrounding small streets will be able to handle that level of traffic without there being considerable gridlock on the surrounding streets. I note that Quirk Street is blocked off with no left-hand turn from Victoria Rd and so parents will not be able to access Quirk Street from Victoria Road.
2. For parents travelling from the north over the Iron Cove Bridge, the only way into the school site is to turn right at the lights at the corner of Victoria Rd and Darling St, then travel along Darling St to the corner of Denison St, turn left into Denison, travel down Denison to Alfred St, left into Alfred, travel along Alfred St to the corner of Gordon St then turn right into Gordon St. They will then face the same problems as everyone else and as noted above in driving along Gordon St to the school site.
3. For parents travelling from other parts of the Inner West, they will either travel along Darling St and turn into Denison St and then into Alfred and then Gordon St as above, or they may come along Lilyfield Rd and turn into Gordon St from Lilyfield Rd. Either way, they also end up on Gordon St to approach the school.

### Issues in the streets surrounding the proposed school site

Once everyone has arrived at Gordon St from whichever direction, they are then faced with a maze of dead end streets or streets that only allow a left hand turn onto Victoria Rd, so there is limited ways to exit the area, apart from the lights at the top of Gordon St that allow the left or right hand turn onto Victoria Rd. But the nature of the proposed school site is such that all the parents will end up at the lights at the cone of Gordon St and Victoria Rd trying to exit the area, which is right at the proposed site of the school.

The 2 closest side streets to the proposed school site are Prince St and Quirk St. Both are cul-de-sacs, and which have cars parked on each side. If parents turn into Prince Street in order to deliver the children or collect them then there is not sufficient room for them to be able to turn around and then exit Prince Street safely, as Prince Street is simply not long enough or wide enough to cope with a number of additional cars all seeking to do that at a similar time. The same problem occurs in Quirk Street. If parents think that they can turn into either Prince or Quirk Streets and wait in order to collect the children there is simply not enough room to do so. With the residents parked on either side of the road there is only room for one vehicle to travel along either Prince or Quirk Street in either direction, therefore parents trying to travel along either Prince or Quirk Street or double park or wait for the children will be unable to do so as they will not be able to turn around and then exit the street. I am reminded of the immortal words of the Eagles classic, Hotel California - "you can check out any time you like but you can never leave". While admittedly parents and students will be able to leave, they may well feel like they are stuck in the surrounding streets unable to easily exit the area.

- c) Whichever direction parents are going after delivering/collecting the children way, the only way to exit the area from the proposed school is at that set of lights at the corner of Gordon Street and Victoria Road. That intersection, as I mentioned above, is a main intersection for local traffic and is the only set of lights at which locals can turn right onto Victoria Road. It is also the only place that bike riders can cross Victoria Road, and is the closest intersection to the City for pedestrians to cross Victoria Rd as the pedestrian overpass at the bottom of Victoria Rd has been removed due to the WestConnex works and that means that all of the cyclists and all of the pedestrians that need to cross Victoria Road going towards the city are now feeding onto Gordon Street to cross at those lights. While pedestrians can cross further along Victoria Road towards Darling Street, the cyclists cannot. Accordingly, this intersection has been made the major intersection (notwithstanding it is small and narrow streets) for traffic that needs to feed into the City from all of the residents on the west side of Victoria Road in Roselle and Lilyfield for cars, pedestrians and cyclists.

### Previous issues with additional traffic across from the proposed site on Gordon St

The reason I know this will be a problem is that we have already experienced the problems caused by additional cars converging on these very streets recently. St Joseph's Church, also on Gordon St at the site in question, had a period over several months in 2020/2021 in which they arranged night-time classical music concerts at St Joseph's Church. Tickets were sold to the public and there were regularly between 100-200 tickets sold. So, on the nights when the most tickets were sold it was a similar number of concert goers attending the site as the number of students proposed. This caused absolute traffic chaos in the surrounding streets, damage to local's cars, and anxiety and frustration

to local residents. This has been acknowledged by the Church, by Father Richard, in a meeting on 30 March 2021 with local residents at which I was present. In fact, the Church promised, through Father Richard, that they would not hold any further concerts as they understood the traffic chaos that had been caused by having that many cars converge on the small narrow streets and the considerable distress that had caused local residents. While of course the current proposal does not relate to evening concerts, it is instead going to bring many cars to the same area even more often, every week day, five days a week, during all school terms. So the impact on the local streets and the local residents will actually be far worse than the concerts, because it will now be happening twice a day (around 8 AM and 3 PM) weekdays during school terms. Is it incredibly upsetting and disappointing to the local residents that the Church is now made this proposal when they are aware of the negative impact on local residents and the impact will be even worse than the concerts. I certainly feel that Father Richard and the Church have breached their promise to the local residents that they would not do anything to cause such enormous traffic problems in the local area as were caused by the twilight concerts.

When that twilight concerts were conducted by the Church and the many many concert goers in cars were trying to access the Church and park in the area, part of the problem was that they were trying to turn around in Quirk Street, Prince Street and Maney Street. Because there was no parking or limited parking available on those streets. As they are so narrow and there is not sufficient room to turn around residents' cars were damaged as the patrons of the Church concerts hit the cars when trying to turn around or drive along the street. I recall a neighbour watching a concert goer endeavouring to turn around, and they had to do a 21 point turn. Yes – a 21 point turn to get the car turned around as the room on the street was so narrow with cars parked both sides. There is also no easy way for cars to exit the area when the streets are clogged. It was so chaotic and there were so many complaints to Council that Council arranged their parking Rangers to attend on some evenings to book the cars that were parked in driveways/clearways etc. It was literally chaos every evening a concert was on, and the Church knows that. I do not understand why the Church is making this proposal when it has already been made clear by the Church's own actions, that the local streets simply can't cope with the additional traffic

I further note that the Church has obtained an approval for a Genesian Theatre in Maney Street. This will also have a significant impact on the local residents with the traffic that will come to the shows, as well as the actors, stage managers producers et cetera involved in the production including for any rehearsal periods. So, on top of us having a significant impact by the Theatre being approved, the Church is now proposing that there will be an even more significant detrimental impact to the local streets & the local residents on a far more regular basis.

It is simply untenable to add onto the burden already experienced by the local residents of having the Theatre, and a burden that was clearly acknowledged by the Church when the twilight concerts were being conducted, by now proposing the site as a school with a significant number of children that will need to be dropped off and collected each school day. The site currently has approximately 12 car spots which locals use. These will no longer be able to be used by locals and as I understand the proposal is that 4 of these will be used for teachers and the balance of the current car park will be made into outdoor space for the children. The impact of that is that there is less parking in the area, and there is nowhere on or near the site where parents will be able to pick up or deliver the children.

I have not mentioned the parents delivering or collecting the children on Victoria Road, as that is a busy major road, and is a clear way and no traffic is able to park or stop along Victoria Road, and it would be dangerous to try to do so.

There is simply no way that the number of children who will be attending school at the site can be safely collected and delivered, or that the local streets can cope with that level of traffic. I accept that not every child will be in a separate car, but even if only 25% to 50% of the children are driven to school or collected from school by car that is still 50-100 cars in the local area twice a day of school days and that will simply create traffic chaos. It will impact people that are doing their normal commute to the city as well as the local residents who live in the streets, the parents and children.

I do understand that the Church is trying to find a use for the buildings that are not currently being used however the current proposal is simply not a proposal that will be positive, and in fact it will have a significant negative impact. The negative impacts will be:-

- a) to the residents and the local streets and also to people more broadly in the Rozelle and Lilyfield area due to the traffic congestion that will be caused by the proposal,
- b) to the parents of St Aloysius because they will be stuck in traffic gridlock when trying to deliver and collect the children.
- c) To the children themselves both as to the ability to arrive on time or be collected on time, as well as their safety in and around the site. The children are not going to be able to be safely delivered to and from school. I am concerned that a child will be injured if delivered nearby to school in trying to navigate local roads when there is considerable traffic around them with parents and/or local residents stuck in gridlock traffic trying to exit the area at the lights at Gordon Street and Victoria Road, which are adjacent to the site in question.

As I said at the start of this objection, it is difficult to understand the particular difficulties that this will cause to traffic in the area unless you live here. I would be more than happy to speak to anyone about this in detail and even to walk or drive the local streets with anyone, including anyone from the Church and or St Aloysius, to explain why this would be such a problem. As I said I think this will be a problem for the parents of the school as well as the children and the local residents.

I am asking that the that the proposal for the site to be converted and used by St Aloysius be rejected.

I declare that we have not made any political donations, reportable or otherwise, in the last 2 years.