



Wesley College

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A College of the Uniting Church in Australia within The University of Sydney

Mr Peter McManus
Planner
NSW Planning and Infrastructure
Sent via email
peter.mcmanus@planning.nsw.gov.au
Lodged electronically on Planning and Infrastructure website

26 February 2014

Dear Mr McManus,

I am writing in reference to a notice we received in relation to the following development

USYD Campus Improvement Program - SSD 6123

Wesley College is a residential College within the bounds of the University of Sydney, and its heritage buildings face Western Ave, directly opposite the existing Bosch Building. Having perused the above application, we wish to comment on the impact of the precinct known as-

Precinct D - Health, Camperdown Campus in the wider USYD Campus Improvement Program - SSD 6123

Built form issues

We note that the Medical Precinct has a planned GFA of some 75,500 sq m, which is substantial by any definition. Stacked vertically, this is a 35 storey bulky building that rivals a Barangaroo tower. Obviously such a vertical expression is totally out of character for this precinct, so an attempt has been made in the envelope design to minimise impact. However we have direct concerns as follows -

- The built form along Western Ave has no setback and appears to be 3 levels high. That is a fundamental change for the current Western Ave character in this precinct. The current buildings are residential and are basically 2 and 3 story high buildings with significant setbacks (That being St Andrews, Wesley and The Women's College).
- Only the existing Bosch Building has no setback but it is only currently 1 storey high. We believe that the overbearing height of the envelope is a bad urban design outcome, and either height must be reduced or setbacks introduced to improve the urban design result.
- We note that the Western Ave edge is described as an "active edge, which is highly desirable, but activity normally only occurs at ground level, so the best result would be retail / active at the street face level with a setback above.
- We note that the bulk of the buildings are setback into the middle of the medical precinct site, but building heights of 62M and 49M are shown presenting as blank vertical walls to Western Ave. These walls are approximately 16 stories and 13 respectively, and clearly the envelopes have been planned to soften impact on St Andrews Oval, but at the expense of a reasonable urban design outcome as it presents to Western Ave and the residential Colleges (Wesley and Women's) that look out in the westerly direction.

There needs to be significant re-working of the building envelopes to soften the impact of the building bulk as currently presented. As it stands, it will completely change the character of this low scale heritage precinct within the university.

Traffic issues

We comment on the small amount of information presented regarding traffic and note the following-

- Proposed access diagrams do not show any intended vehicle routes to the proposed car park, so we assume it will be an expanded carpark accessed from Western Ave only. Any intensification of traffic along the southern part of Western Ave is of major concern, as the intersections at Carillon Ave gates together with the gates themselves severely restrict capacity for vehicles at this entry. While the roadway is two way, only one car can pass through the gates at any time. Is it possible to create access direct from Missenden Road into the car park?
- Service access is shown at the southern end of the proposed development which in turn will not impact Wesley College in itself. However, combined with vehicular access to the car park mentioned above along Western Ave from the south, it will impact on the narrow western pedestrian footpath in a significant way.

We trust that the University and its planners will take these comments on board and develop more enlightened solutions for the next stage of planning. As always we are only too happy to discuss our views with the appropriate team at any time. I can be contacted by email lsutherland@wesleycollege-usyd.edu.au or by telephone (02) 9565 3311.

Regards



Lisa J Sutherland
Master