



St Andrew's College

ESTABLISHED 1867

St Andrew's College  
University of Sydney NSW 2006  
Telephone 02 9565 7300  
Facsimile 02 9565 7310  
[principal@standrewscollge.edu.au](mailto:principal@standrewscollge.edu.au)  
[www.standrewscollge.edu.au](http://www.standrewscollge.edu.au)  
ABN 54 817 100 51

Mr P McManus  
NSW Planning and Infrastructure  
Metropolitan and Regional Projects North  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

7 March 2014

Dear Mr McManus,

**Submission on the University of Sydney – Campus Improvement Plan**

Following our correspondence last week, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit a response to the University of Sydney submission. Please find the St Andrew's College submission attached.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require clarification on any points included in this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Wayne Erickson

Principal

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY  
CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
Architectural Commentary

For

St Andrews' College

March 2014

## Background to the College Submission

During 2011, a masterplan study for the renewal and expansion of the accommodation needs of the College commenced. This has led to the submission in December 2013 of a Stage 1 Masterplan DA with the City of Sydney for the redevelopment of the College campus delivering additional student residential accommodation in support of the broad accommodation strategy of the University. This process saw consultation with the University and involved discussion with representatives from CIS. However there was limited detail provided on the University's own intentions for the Camperdown and Darlington Campuses and specifically the Health Precinct.

The broad architectural aims of the College masterplan are to

- Provide up to 600 beds on the College campus
- Maintain and respect the high value heritage buildings of the College
- Renew and augment the landscape setting of the College, including the oval, acknowledging that key buildings in the immediate precinct are viewed 'in the round'
- Provide better linkages to the University and foster a better physical relationship between both institutions
- Underpin the core aims of the masterplan with a strong commercial basis and foster opportunities for engagement with adjacent landuses – particularly health care.
- Develop architectural planning principles for new buildings respecting the 'campus style' of buildings in a landscape setting

The aims of both masterplans are complementary and have the potential to work together, particularly at the interface of the College and the University. A clear aim of the St Andrews masterplan is to address the poor presentation and lack of connection at the Gadigal Lane boundary with the University. While the aims and objectives of the CIP are supported in broad terms, there are matters of detail and concern that work against these joint objectives.

## Site Analysis and Context

The College concurs with the site analysis on page 65 of the EA - the current Bosch group buildings are oppressive and do not foster a good sense of connection between University and College. The blank walls and blocky forms are unpleasant to look at and do not allow pedestrian connection between the University Oval and the St Andrews Oval. These are pragmatic buildings that offer no positive identity to the immediate precinct or University. Demolition is encouraged. The Blackburn building is best described as a neutral contribution to the precinct and could probably be replaced with a better contemporary building.

## Vehicular and Pedestrian Access





The key proposal to raise the principal ground floor to align with the St Andrews oval is supported. However the final level may need careful consideration as the natural ground level at the intersection of Western Avenue and Gadigal Lane is approximately 2m higher than the oval.

The intentions to foster pedestrian links between the University, the College and the Hospital is supported and there is potential for the interface of the new development and the College to have a series of colonnades and walk ways that bind the two entities together in a stronger and more cohesive manner. The exact detail of these connections will require consideration in the future design stages of the University and College projects to ensure security and land tenure is clearly understood.

It is understood that delivery docks will be required in the new development and the access to docks is not clearly articulated in the CIP masterplan. The College intends to use Gillespie Hall on the corner of Western Avenue and Gadigal Lane as a social hub and café that makes a purposeful entry statement for all college residents in the immediate precinct. It would be regrettable if Gadigal Lane became a major service road and became an unsafe zone for pedestrians. Service docks and parking access should be distributed to several locations in the precinct. Access for clinical waste and patient access for new facilities which have a clinical focus should be negotiated with the Hospital as these uses are contrary to the high level aims of making a pedestrian and student focused residential campus.

The college would add that the vehicular access to the Western Avenue Carpark could be greatly improved as part of a new vision for traffic management in this precinct. The entry portal to the 1965 carpark is a major impediment to successful connection between the health precinct and the college oval.

#### Open Space, Contextual Relationships and Built Form

The proposed envelopes and block arrangement of the Health Precinct requires considerable refinement to ensure a good relationship with the adjacent Colleges. While there is acceptance that the existing buildings can be demolished and replaced with new facilities, the current forms as expressed in the documents could result in similar blocky forms that are 2-3 times the size. The University should prepare a more detailed Design Principles report that articulates the commitments to architectural setbacks, materials and architectural expression – as the College has done for its masterplan.

The College argues that the height of the Chris O'Brien building should not be used as the new benchmark for the height of buildings in the precinct. This building was approved in a context where local input was not encouraged nor considered. It is too high and overwhelms adjacent buildings of the College and the Hospital. It is also a considerable distance from the Health Precinct and has little real connection to this part of the University. The College argues that the tallest building of the Hospital at RL 63.4 is a more appropriate benchmark for maximum height, rather than RL 77.1. It is also suggested that the height of all new buildings along the St Andrews boundary and the frontage to Wesley College be no higher than 3 storeys. An additional 2 storey can be added to these



building blocks if there is at least 6m setback and the top two storeys are articulated in a way that distinguishes them as more 'roofscape' than massive walled elements.

While the intention to provide large regular foot prints suitable for health teaching and research is understood, the College questions the arrangement and setout of the key building blocks. The decision to align the buildings east west is not explained and seems contrary to the aims of protecting key open spaces of the University community. The new buildings would significantly overshadow the College Oval, which is widely used by the whole University Community. The College would like to see other options for the alignment and disposition of the envelope blocks as it is possible that a north south orientation would result in an equally good outcome. It is possible that a north south arrangement would result in the tallest building on the Hospital boundary - where there is greater context for a building that is 40m tall.

The College suggests that the following key parapet heights be considered:

- Podium – RL 27.1 to RL 27.5 (with consideration of portions at RL 29)
- Oval and Street Edge – RL 39.7 – RL 40.0 (assume three floors of 4.2m)
- Inner edge of perimeter buildings – RL 48.1 – RL 48.5 (2 additional floors of 4.2m)
- Central Building – RL 56.5 – 60.0 (7 floors of 4.2m)
- Outer Building – RL 64.9 – 65.5 (9 floors of 4.2m)

Obviously the number of floors is dependent on the servicing needs of the particular building.

It is acknowledged that the planning diagram on page 68 of the EA indicates that the University wishes to provide 'Connectivity with St Andrews College'. This is supported and the College will work with the University to ensure that this occurs, however the current footprint is harsh and unrelenting and will require considerable articulation and architectural expression to achieve this aim. There are many ways that this can be achieved and a planning envelope should not constrain future opportunity, however as noted above, a Design Principles report could articulate key issues or commitments that both the University and the College can rely upon in the future. Key themes include:

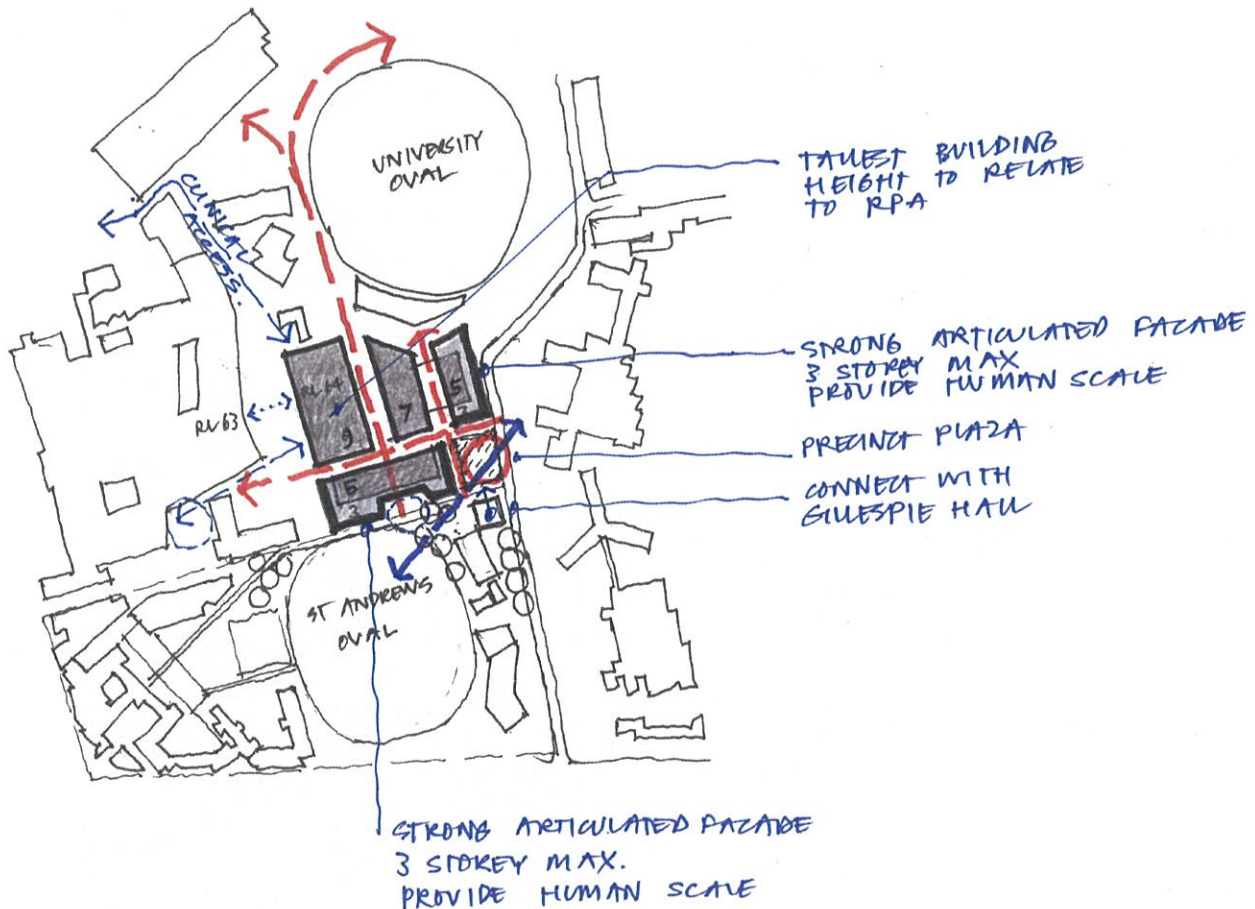
- Materiality and expression
- Articulation and separation of forms
- Setbacks and access points.

A key concern of the College centres on the intentions for the small corner block directly opposite Gillespie Hall. The College Masterplan envisages a new entry plaza with the hall directly connected to the public space. This is intended to be a positive connection between University and College and the College would like to see a more



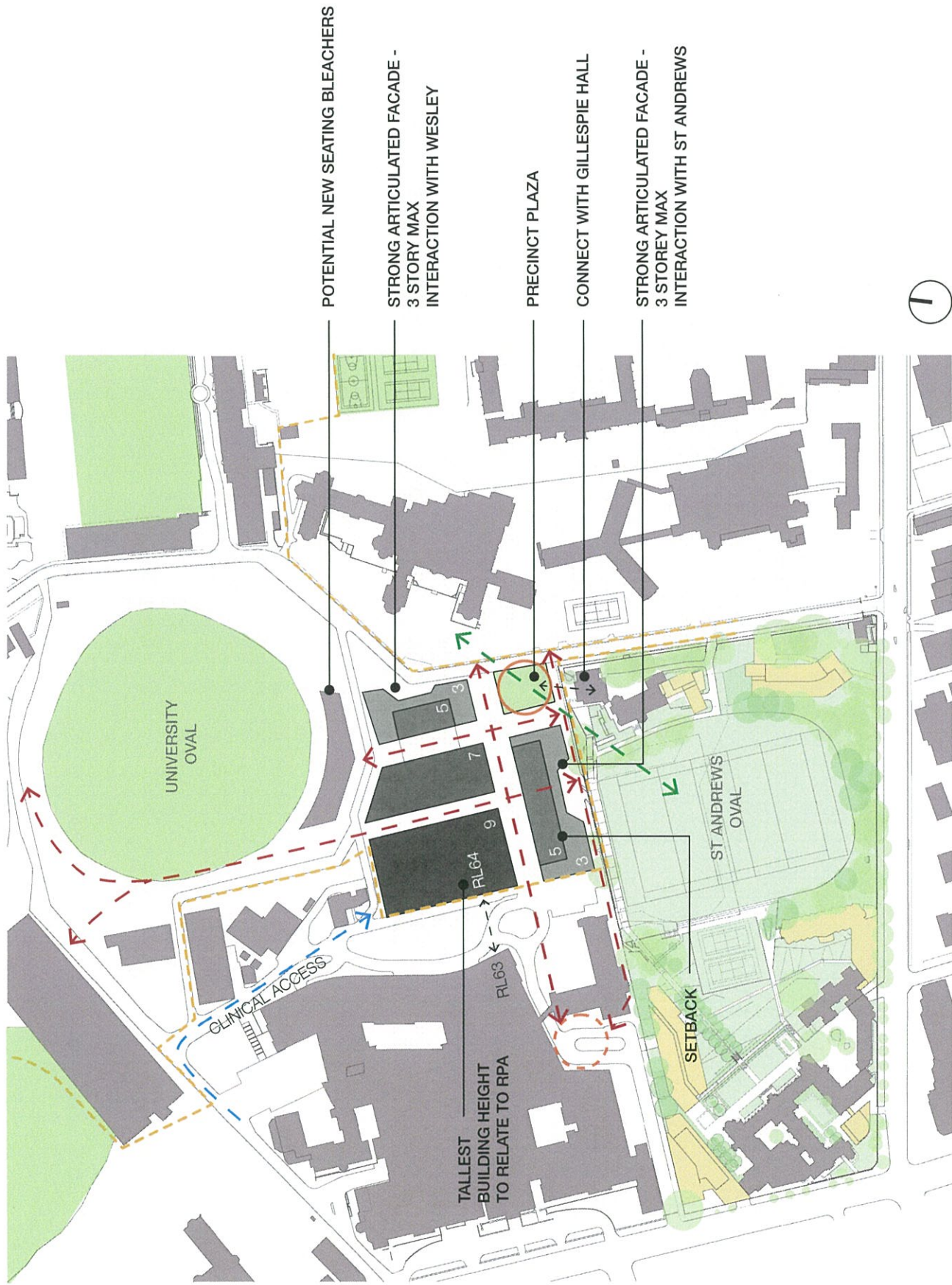


purposeful approach on the opposite corner of Gadigal Lane. Removal of this envelope block and reallocation elsewhere would enable a new precinct plaza that gave clear identity to the new building group and also enabled the Gillespie Hall to sit comfortably with the new precinct. It should be noted that Gillespie Hall is a single storey building with a ridge height of 36m not 41m as shown on the University diagram. Further, Gillespie Hall is characterised as a building with a strong roof form that makes up half of the built form. The proposed buildings of 4-5 storeys directly opposite are inappropriate.



Diagrammatic analysis of envelope forms





POTENTIAL NEW SEATING BLEACHERS

STRONG ARTICULATED FACADE -  
3 STORY MAX  
INTERACTION WITH WESLEY

PRECINCT PLAZA

CONNECT WITH GILLESPIE HALL

STRONG ARTICULATED FACADE -  
3 STOREY MAX  
INTERACTION WITH ST ANDREWS

TALLEST  
BUILDING HEIGHT  
TO RELATE TO RPA

CLINICAL ACCESS

SETBACK

UNIVERSITY  
OVAL

ST ANDREWS  
OVAL

