

30 March 2014

Development Assessment Systems and Approvals  
NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure  
GPO Box 39 Sydney, NSW, 2001.

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cc: [cmoore@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cmoore@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr McManus,

**University of Sydney's Campus Improvement Program 2014-2020 State Significant Development (SSD 6123)**

I am a resident of Darlington and I have been granted an extension until 31 March 2014 to make a submission in regard to the above State Significant Development (SSD) application.

I made my initial objections to the CIP on the [redacted] and I now make further objections. Would you please read and consider this submission together with my initial submission which I have included below.

- **Height, Scale and Location of Buildings**

I object to this massive building program which would increase floor space by a massive 68% from 555,600m<sup>2</sup> to 937,800m<sup>2</sup> with building heights of up to 19 storeys.

The height and bulk of the proposed buildings are too great for the low rise heritage conservation residential precinct in which the University sits.

I object to the proposed 3 storey building in Shepherd Street and the "multidisciplinary building" opposite the Sports Centre both of which will overlook residents homes in Shepherd Street, Calder Road, Lander Street, Boundary Street and Abercrombie Street.

The University should be required to create green buffer zones between its buildings and residential buildings.

- **Separate Development Applications**

I object to all new buildings and any refurbishments of existing buildings within the Campus Improvement Program (CIP) being approved under this one SSD.

Each new building or refurbishment of an existing building should be subject to individual development applications so that the dimensions, scale and use of each building is specified and conditions are imposed upon approval.

All new buildings should be set back from the street and located well within the University boundaries.

- **Heritage**

I object to the University's proposal to completely infill the backyards of every heritage listed terrace house (bar 3) from 86 – 130 Darlington Road with 3 storey extensions.

The National Trust has given these terraces an "A" rating – "highly intact". The University should not be allowed to degrade the heritage value of these terraces which are very close to the Golden Grove Conservation Area.

- **Noise**

The University has never provided acoustical buffer zones between its noisy activities and developments in Darlington and the local residents. The **Campus Improvement Program** is no exception. The university has an “in your face” mentality which brings high impact buildings right up to the interface with residential Darlington whilst creating and maintaining green quiet spaces in the heart of the university for the benefit of students and University staff.

The Darlington campus has multiple sources of noise, including plant such as noisy cooling towers and large air-conditioning units most of which run 24/7.

Why can the University operate large noisy plant 24/7 when residents who live only a few metres away are restricted to using their much smaller quieter domestic air conditioners between the hours of 8am and 10pm?

### **Cumulative noise**

The NSW Protection of the Environment Operations Act restricts a developer from generating operational noise greater than 5dba (decibels) above the normal background noise level.

This law should apply to the University as a whole not to each new development.

Otherwise each new development simply becomes part of the background level of noise for the next development.

The background level of noise steps up with each new building being considered in isolation.

Therefore acoustical surveys conducted by the University give a distorted baseline for background noise. This is because the measurement includes all of the existing noise produced by the University.

If the true cumulative impact of University noise were discovered I believe that it is likely that the University would be in breach of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act on a daily basis even without the many large new developments proposed in CIP.

**I request that the Department of Planning and Infrastructure make it a condition of consent for the CIP that the University must establish the true level of background noise in residential Darlington by turning off all of its plant before noise measurements are taken.**

When I asked the University's former Contract Administration Manager – Mechanical Services, if all plant equipment complies with environmental laws he said he didn't know and indicated that it was not his responsibility to find out because the equipment was installed and maintained by outside contractors.

This is an example of my next point.

The University management refuses to implement governance arrangements that ensure that its noise is constantly managed. Instead it largely relies on local residents to alert it to emerging noise issues such as deteriorating or faulty plant.

The residents are the canaries in the university's coal mine. This is despite residents pushing for effective governance arrangements for over 10 years. The University does not even have a public noise impact policy.

**Consent to the CIP should not be granted until the University:**

- 1. Develops a public noise impact policy;**
- 2. Maintains effective governance arrangements that ensure compliance with the policy without relying on residents to complain about each new noise issue before corrective action is taken.**
- 3. Creates substantial green buffer zones between new university buildings and residents to reduce the impact of noise.**

- **Infrastructure**

I object to increasing the student population from 49,500 to 60,000 by 2020 because the local infrastructure cannot even cope with the existing number of people coming into the area as it is. The plan should be withdrawn until local infrastructure, including footpaths and access to Redfern Station, are improved to cope with the increased population.

- **Traffic and Parking**

The University should be required to encourage short term parking in new underground carpark areas otherwise residents would be unable to park within reasonable walking distance from their homes. There would be traffic chaos as university visitors/students/staff drive around and around our suburb looking for "free" parking.

The University must not remove the ability of students and staff to drive through the campus because it would force more traffic into residential Darlington. University traffic should be arriving at and departing from the campus via the main arterial roads such as City Road and Parramatta Road not via the residential streets of Darlington.

The proposed Service Centre on Shepherd Street should not be permitted because it would concentrate heavy truck movements in the narrowest part of the street whereas now these movements are spread out. It would be far more appropriate for the Service Centre to be situated near the intersection of Shepherd and Cleveland Streets i.e. the University gate beside Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering.

Butlin Avenue should not become a shared zone between traffic and pedestrians because it would be impossible to drive safely around students wandering around like sheep. Creating a shared zone could lead to the closure of Butlin Avenue to car traffic which would make it extremely difficult for local residents to move in and out of their suburb. This move would be fiercely resisted by the community

- **Service Centres**

I object to the proposed Service Centre on Shepherd Street as it will bring heavy, loud vehicles onto a residential street. As it will be positioned on the narrowest part of this street, it will also create a dangerous traffic hazard.

A more appropriate location for the Service Centre would be near the intersection of Shepherd and Cleveland Streets. This would mean the heavy service vehicles could enter and exit from the main arterial road of Cleveland Street and would therefore be kept off residential streets.

### **Conclusion**

At one of his rare public meeting which took place at the Aboriginal Settlement in Darlington in 2010 the University Vice Chancellor publicly stated -

"One of the things that has come back again and again is that the University, quite frankly, is ashamed of not being very good neighbours," Dr Spence said. "And if we are going to talk about being an institution that has community roots then those community roots ought to begin with those communities around the campus."

Nothing has changed. The Vice Chancellor should still be ashamed as he continues to push a policy of high impact developments on the periphery of the University where they adversely impact upon residents whilst at the same time creating tranquil green spaces in the heart of the University for the benefit of students and university staff. The CIP is a gross betrayal of the residents of Darlington.

I would be very disappointed if Planning NSW continues to support this unjust University development policy.

The University of Sydney's Darlington Campus sits in a residential precinct, residential Darlington does not sit in a University precinct.

Would you please acknowledge receipt of this submission.

Sincerely yours

John berry

30 Calder Road

Darlington, NSW 2008

4 March 2014

Development Assessment Systems and Approvals  
NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure  
GPO Box 39 Sydney, NSW, 2001.

Dear Mr McManus

**University of Sydney Campus Improvement Program 2014-2020 – State  
Significant Development (SSD 6123) – Submission and Objection to EIS**

Thank you for allowing me a short extension of time for the preparation and lodgement of my submission.

I am a resident of Darlington and a neighbour of the USYD and below are my initial objections to the CIP. I have been denied procedural fairness because of the lack of community consultation and as a result I will require further time to study the plan and to make further objections.

The proponent has failed in many instances to observe the requirements of the Director General and I request that the plan be withdrawn and relodged once all of the Director General's requirements have been met.

**OBJECTIONS**

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

The University of Sydney has failed to comply with the following Director General's Requirement -

**"During the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), consultation must be undertaken with the relevant Commonwealth Government, State or local authorities, service providers, community groups and affected landowners. In particular you must consult with: ...RAIDD – Residents Acting In Darlington's Defence."**

No individual residents or community groups were ever consulted during the preparation of this major development plan or before its lodgment with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

The Vice Chancellor, in response to community complaints about the erroneous inclusion of resident's names in Appendix N Consultation Outcomes, confirmed in writing that the community had not been consulted regarding the CIP-

**"There is no suggestion that these community stakeholders were being consulted about the CIP in this reference".**

**FLORA AND FAUNA**

I object to the University's plan to destroy Darlington's Eucalypt Grove on Shepherd Street at the interface of the engineering campus and residential Darlington and to replace it with a 3 storey building overlooking resident's homes.

This grove was planted 20 years ago by the University at the behest of local residents to help soften the ugly "brutalist" concrete and brick engineering buildings overlooking residents homes.



*Photograph of the Darlington Eucalypt Grove taken through the lounge room window of resident's home at 65 Calder Rd Darlington*

In **10.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, TABLE 11 – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ISSUES RAISED AND CIP RESPONSE**, the University states -

**“Buffer zones (no social events and provision of acoustic treatments) (are) planned along residential streets that have a public interface with the University campus.”**

The University has not demonstrated how it will provide any buffer zones between proposed new University buildings and activities and residential buildings in order to protect residents current (albeit fragile and compromised) levels of privacy and from additional noise impact.

Indeed a rare, albeit small buffer zone, exists already between the large ugly engineering buildings on Shepherd Street and the much smaller nearby residential terrace houses. The University is proposing to destroy this buffer zone, a grove of 19 mature Eucalypt trees, along with the fauna that inhabit it and use it as a transitional bridge, and construct a 3 storey building overlooking resident's yards and homes thus seriously degrading resident's amenity.

The University's **Ecological Assessment Appendix L\_Flora and Fauna** states that the University's tree canopy should be preserved, not destroyed -

**\*“The large number of mature tree provides a canopy of relative importance.”**

**“There is a likelihood of occurrence at the site for the Grey-headed Flying Fox, the Eastern Bentwing Bat, the Little Bentwing Bat and the Large-eared Pied Bat. Potential impacts to these species would be as a result of the loss of foraging habitat.**

**“As well as providing potential food and habitat for threatened and other fauna on the campuses, the mature tree canopy provides an island of connectivity within the highly urbanised Sydney city area.”**

**“The trees at the University campus provide a significant contribution to the local landscape and form an important component of the wider urban forest within the City of Sydney jurisdiction.”**

**“A Tree Management Plan has been developed by the University which aims to maintain and increase the present canopy cover at the Camperdown and Darlington Campuses.”**

**“Recommendations: Avoid removal of mature trees and protection of trees in proximity to**

**building/refurbishment sites. Minimise loss of open space.”**

***Birds Nest – Tree C, Darlington Eucalypt Grove***

***Resting Native Birds -Tree G, Darlington Eucalypt Grove***

The University has an obligation to act on its ecological assessment and recommendations and not be permitted to destroy the Darlington Eucalypt Grove and open space.

The University should be required to protect its tree canopy and the fauna which depend on it for habitat and as a bridge.

**The City of SYDNEY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN 2012** requires the following of the University -

**“Enhancement of the landscape campus setting by accommodating open spaces within precincts.**

**Retention and addition of vistas to open spaces or landmark buildings. “**

The University should implement the Council Plan by not destroying the Darlington Eucalypt Grove. If the grove were bulldozed and replaced by a 3 storey building the open vista from Shepherd St to the Engineering Lawn and the landmark PNR building beyond would be lost.

The University should protect what little privacy from the University the residents of Calder Rd, Shepherd St and Boundary Rd have remaining by preserving this green buffer between the ugly University buildings and residential homes.

**NOISE and RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

**Operational Noise**

The Director General's “Environmental Assessment Requirements” requires the University to include in its EIS –

- **potential environmental impacts associated with the development.”**
- **adequate baseline data;**
- **consideration of potential cumulative impacts due to other development in the vicinity;**  
**and**
- **measures to avoid minimise and if necessary, offset the predicted impacts, including detailed contingency plans for managing any significant risks to the environment.**

The University, in its EIS, has failed to do any of the above.

It has not indicated that it has or will provide “adequate baseline data” of plant and other noise.

It has not acknowledged operational plant noise, and the cumulative affect of new plant noise and existing plant noise.

It has not detailed measures to minimise and offset predicted impacts of plant noise close to residential buildings

The University has not acknowledged the potential cumulative impact on residents of any of the many sources of noise on the University campuses.

### **Noise from change in Land Use – Passive and Active Events**

The University proposes to designate certain area of the Darlington and Camperdown campuses as either for “Active” or “Passive Events”.

The University proposes that the Cadigal Green, 150 metres from residential buildings will be used for Active Events”.

Mr Stephane Kerr, Project Director Campus Improvement Program, has confirmed to residents that Active Events will include amplified music and speech and could be during daylight hours and/or at night.

The University has not demonstrated what “measures to avoid, minimise and if necessary, offset the predicted impacts” it would introduce.

There is a suggestion in the plan that certain areas could be used for outdoor film screenings and corporate events which have the potential to adversely impact nearby residents.

Many of Darlington’s nearby residents are shift workers who need to sleep during the day, work from home or who value their peaceful amenity. We submit that the Cadigal Green should be used for passive, therefore relatively quiet events, only.

### **OVERDEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Sydney University is seeking approval for a 68 per-cent increase to its Camperdown - Darlington campus floor space by the end of 2020. This will accommodate a 21 per-cent increase in students on the campus as well as 4,000 units of “affordable” student accommodation.

By any objective measure this is a gross overdevelopment.

Of particular concern is the stress that this will place on levels of pedestrian traffic on local footpaths. It is now virtually impossible to walk safely to Redfern station along Lawson St without being forced into the gutter by the sheer mass of students during the morning and late afternoon hours.

#### **Summary**

I object to **SSD 6123** and request that the plan be withdrawn because -

1. Proponent has failed to fully observe the requirements of the Director General
2. ++Failure to consult community
3. Destruction of the Darlington Eucalypt Gove
4. Failure to provide for buffer zone between residential buildings and large University developments
5. Failure to address The Director General's “Environmental Assessment Requirements” in relation to EIS
6. Failure to address cumulative impact of noise and operational plant noise in particular
7. “Active”, therefore noisy events in close proximity residential buildings
8. Gross overdevelopment fails to address stressed infrastructure of Darlington.

Sincerely yours

John Berry

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NSW 2008

