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Carlingford, N.S.W., 2118

August 16, 2016

Mr. P. McManus,  
Department of Planning and Environment,  
G.P.O. Box 39,  
SYDNEY. N.S.W. 2001



Dear Mr. McManus,

**SSD16\_7534 Western\_Sydney Stadium**

Enclosed some comments about the above application to expand the Stadium in Parramatta Park. Especially that it breaches conditions of World Heritage listing, an expertise above and beyond the purview of the New South Wales Government.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to apply myself to the actual document on public display but obtained material from my visit to the Stadium last Saturday week. I had many questions of those working at the Department of Planning/consultants information marquee. I must say they were generous with their time.

With the unfortunate timing of Science Week there have been severe restrictions on my time, however, I believe my sentiments against the development have been expressed that no further development is ever allowed at this site or in Parramatta Park and another site now be sought for the activities on this sports ground.

To do otherwise is an on-going threat to the remaining area of Parramatta Park (previously 200 acres), Old Government House - both World Heritage listed. But also the Parramatta War Memorial Swimming Pool, none of which are recoverable.

To proceed will compromise community needs which are rising under present LEPs.

There are too many conflicts of operational interests from the Stadium location. The War Memorial Swimming Pool, Amphitheatre, Cathedral, itemised in following pages.

We, in Parramatta, the only city founded in the same year as Sydney (on 2<sup>nd</sup> November), the Cradle City of the Nation, is under severe threat in respect of several classes of heritage and any hope of establishing a real and flourishing tourism industry which will drive itself on the back of those high value heritage acknowledgements - and proper rehabilitation of Fleet Street. That is, only without buildings in courtyards, etc, so we will be the laughing stock of the first few tourists, their lack of fulsome recommendations, and residents of Fremantle and Port Arthur.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs.) E. Boesel

Encl.

## SSD 16\_7534 Western\_Sydney Stadium

19<sup>th</sup> August, 2016

I inspected Pirtek(?) Stadium on 6th August and was able to take a set of the printed material that was available. The project is a retrograde step for Parramatta.

This application shows no genuine concern for the World Heritage Parramatta Park and Old Government House or surrounding activities at St. Patrick's Cathedral, War Memorial Swimming Pool, the Amphitheatre or Prince Alfred Park.

The issues here in Parramatta are:

- it is World Heritage Parramatta Park land;
- subject of two court cases which the Friends of Parramatta Park won, the existing stadium only exists by State Government's retrospective legislation;
- PUBLIC takes priority over leased land - the stadium is exclusionary;
- leased land is for only a specified use yet seems to disregard impacts;
- ever more uses are still imposed on our park and seem to be an on-going effort to ensure there will never be a tourist industry in Parramatta;
- entrenching this stadium is indefensible - it will ever be more, more & more;
- public open space in Parramatta is ever-decreasing and the stadium just adds another blow with a larger footprint and access areas;
- the land needs to be given back to all the people;
- the amphitheatre exists for any events and presents no conflicts.
- multiple planning documents are for a rapidly increasing residential density;
- this proposal deals them out of a necessity - young families to have flat access to the War Memorial Swimming Pool;
- The Golf Course site is incompatible with school groups and serious training session times including diving, because of the appalling traffic#;
- the swimming pool is a WAR MEMORIAL and it has priority where it is;
- the Golf Course site is impossible for a pool because of . . . . . a significant hill for young families or grandparent carers to push strollers, toddlers and a baby up that hill and all the things the young require;
- overshadowing of a pool by tower residential buildings - see LEP, etc.;
- it is imperative that children learn about water and learn to swim early;
- older people mainly do not do hills yet swimming as exercise is lauded;
- therapy does not discriminate between age groups or levels of incapacity\*;
- the entrenchment of this stadium and the intention to destroy an essential community asset is indefensible;
- then there are many traffic generators in the immediate area and concentrically around the actual Parramatta CBD, worse in peak periods;
- last year as I was going to St. Patrick's Cathedral on Christmas Eve I was stunned to discover there was an evening match at Pirtek. For me, I do not care about the football/events 'schedule'. December 24 and 25 have been celebrated long before any current code of football was invented;
- will football be cancelled when there is a concert in the Amphitheatre? It is difficult to get major artists who may only have one night to give a concert;
- Pirtek Stadium was always going to be and is, an intrusion on Parramatta Park and our diverse community of interests. Football has no priority over community values, needs or nationally unique heritage. Enough is enough!
- Is the Stadium proposal to ensure Australia's and World Heritage tourism in Parramatta will not detrimentally affect Sydney?

# Does the proponent's traffic study take these multiple issues into account? No.  
\* My seriously injured son had to do months of therapy at Parramatta Pool after intensive care and 3 months in Westmead Hospital. The effort to get there by public transport was extremely difficult. But the approaches from public transport was at least flat. He could never have reached the Golf Course site alone.

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Any type of approval for this application will only be the first of many for further expansion. An expansion of Pirtek Stadium is irresponsible, unethical, destructive of our community and tourism which is 24/7 industry. The SSD demeans community needs which are the essential basics of society. There has been no serious move to address utterly inadequate roads or proceed with the long-proposed *three ring-roads*. Peak periods can be the only hours when many people can get to our pool for training (Olympic potential?) and lessons. A real values by-pass!

Even more than seven years ago it took me three-quarters of an hour to get through the Parramatta CBD and immediate approaches for meetings at Parramatta Park Trust administration buildings in Parramatta Park at 6 or 6.30 p.m.

### **Background**

There was a significant court case against the stadium won by the Friends of Parramatta Park. It was appealed and the Friends of Parramatta Park won again. The then government, having been defeated twice did not accept the judgement - the separation of powers or any respect for decisions of the law (?), and passed retrospective legislation to allow the development.

### **Future Directions**

There appears a total disregard for anyone or anything outside the remit of stadium proponents over the years. Anyone else, community needs, the values held by most of the population here, such as the unique history, specific to this area, the majestic siting of Old Government House, view catchments or the hard-won World Heritage listing, a condition of which was preservation of view catchments of 360 degrees (not narrow view corridors). Often called curtilage, it has to be sufficient of the original surroundings to impart the 'aura' of the siting of the building or object and views, that is, how it felt to be there then. Residential populations of Parramatta are rapidly increasing (check the zonings) and all of us and future Australians need to have their World Heritage unimpaired. So much for 'TRUST'!

Since that 'approval' by retrospective legislation, incremental encroachment is ever onward (that is well beyond treelines) until Parramatta Park is built out so even the topography can no longer be recognised\*. Recall that Parramatta Park was once 200 acres! This unacceptable impost must stop! The limit was reached years ago.

The stadium has long been in the way and we always knew it would be so. As was the projection the proponents would never be satisfied. This site is still wrong, a total waste of millions. While greater needs for the rest of us are again deferred!

### **Parramatta Park Views**

Views. The photos exhibited are tunnel vision and not views. Views are VIEW CATCHMENTS. Such as when goes to a lookout - Echo Point for example!

1. Views are everything that is taken in by peripheral vision and 360°!
2. In World Heritage designated sites - intrusions into those view catchments are forbidden. A semblance of that former era by a curtilage and expansive view catchments are required. This Pirtek Stadium proposal fails those basic requirements completely.
3. It is quite devastating that a photograph which appears to be taken of the proposed stadium area from the amphitheatre but quite low down, shows the quite disruptive intrusion of a higher roofed stadium. So how much worse is a photograph taken from Government House itself? Shock treatment and totally unacceptable to anyone and in contravention of World Heritage listing.

\* The Amphitheatre, originally designed to retain the significance of The Crescent and to have natural acoustics, assumed its current shape due to an 'afterthought' decision of Parramatta City Council at the works stage. Parramatta Park and its World Heritage classification belongs to us - all of the people - all Australians. Remember us?

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## **Tourism**

Dead in the water if this goes ahead just as it will be if the government proposal for North Parramatta is allowed. Reallocate the funds from the stadium to a North Parramatta unencumbered by any towers in essential recreation parade and courtyard areas, preserving photo opportunities for tourists, local, intra- and interstate and international. Then we would really have something and a tourism industry which would take care of itself.

We, the people, tourists and future tourism value our heritage. No other area has the equal. And, visitors need a variety of accommodation not the one-size-fits-all.

A restored North Parramatta as it was, will bring visitors not only to Fleet Street but to the central CBD for restaurants and shops, then on eastwards for Elizabeth and Experiment Farms and Hambledon Cottage.

Are the stadium proposal funds to ensure pre-eminence of Sydney-centric tourism?

## **Parramatta North - tourism for everyone**

Visitors usually flock to an 'Old City' in any urban area world-wide. First on any list! If the present Fleet Street plans proceed, initial visitors will soon get the word across the globe that Fleet Street is so compromised it is not worth getting out of Sydney. That ill-considered flow-on affect will also discourage potential visitors to the above lovely colonial cottages and their history to the east of Parramatta CBD.

**Note:** the substantial curtilage for these three icons.

The stadium is only for a group of people and is exclusionary. Parramatta Park and War Memorial Swimming Pool are for all. People need more passive recreation so funding should be transferred to North Parramatta and the WMSPool.

The stadium has limited use as it is rectangular and so restrictive. Again, is this stadium proposal funding to ensure pre-eminence of Sydney-centric tourism?

## **The stadium plans - and lack of planning or lateral thinking**

I was amazed at the opportunities which were by-passed.

1. A small re-orientation a little to the north-east and a metre or two moved forward north, would allow the War Memorial Swimming Pool to remain.
2. Will the Stadium roof be blanketed with solar panels? If not, why not?
3. The playing field is to be fully destroyed by construction, therefore, why cannot there be several levels of underground parking for park users too, reducing the numbers of ground-level spaces? The 'dive' structure could be from the existing carpark losing minimal spaces.
4. The excavation could be lower than car parking space levels and permit the stadium/field to be forever below any treeline from any direction. And less summer shadow over the War Memorial Swimming Pool.
5. A fair number of spectators already currently use public transport.
6. The proposed 'light rail', or its route does not serve the stadium very much at all. A red herring! Indeed it is certainly not going to bring too many additional patrons to the stadium. The bulk of transport users must be served first based on in-depth, region-wide origin and destination studies in the peak periods. It is then those users and their families who become familiar with change nodes and use rail for peak and off-peak trips.
7. So, I saw little point in having the keen Parramatta Light Rail group there.
8. Light rail is one street corner to another like a more manoeuvrable bus. It is not a distance mode and especially in Parramatta, must never be allowed to take or use any road space. Bring back all of our Church Street Mall.
9. Taking road space for light rail disrupts essential trips to Parramatta for deliveries, dental, optical, checkups, specialists, legal matters, court and government institutions. How do others from say, the Blue Mountains area or Glenbrook get to Westmead hospital when they are ill, incapacitated and

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trains do not stop there? If one is ill, one goes to where that specialist works and operates. It is not a choice!

Fix the main lines, connect the natural nodes so infill planning, if required can occur. Until then no base exists. Buses are more flexible.

The above section is to show that Stadium plans have surely not come from a planner. Not for a minute does the above support approval as the proponent is just too rapacious. A planner is a big picture lateral thinker yet still across the detail of the intervention and so can devise solutions that enhance not detract from the significant assets this community has in the city and throughout Parramatta Park. When all factors and existing community requirements - the landscape, 360° view catchments and the highest heritage status is taken into account, a building envelope could be developed, discarded, redeveloped until the impact of a large proposal becomes NIL. The periphery and all impacts are part of planning. This one fails. I would like to see the design brief which may explain the restriction.

State Government Report (as in *The Parramatta Advertiser*, August 10, 2016) has apparently said. . . *the new stadium would improve livability in western Sydney and deliver major events to the region.* How? We already have the Amphitheatre!

#### **Reallocation of funds**

Millions. A massive amount for an increase of 7,000 spectators. Which in any case might be accommodated in the existing structure. The height increase of the proposal, a real threat to World Heritage listing of Old Government House seems far and above what may be necessary when the stadium and field could be sunk into the ground with an additional underground levels (+ two?) for parking.

There is so much needed in Parramatta and a stadium is definitely not one of them. Very many more residents than 7,000 have moved into Parramatta with more to come and needing passive recreation. The new residents are and will be diverse so the existing Stadium footprint must be returned to the passive recreation classification of Parramatta Park.

Every cent set aside for the Stadium must be allocated to revitalisation of North Parramatta's Fleet Street and the War Memorial Swimming Pool where it is.

That is, a Fleet Street without towers or diminution of existing colonial courtyards. To proceed with current plans for North Parramatta Fleet Street is to turn off our tourism tap. All those photographs which will not be taken and sent around the world to families, friends and hostel noticeboards, with those towers in the way! Transfer those funds for restoration only and lease to small businesses. So there will be continuous, daily tourist trips, not one-offs as the stadium would be. Fleet Street is where the future of tourism is. Or would it be so good it would threaten Sydney? And again, our Amphitheatre exists for events and presents no conflicts.

#### **Rejection of the Western Sydney Stadium proposal outright**

The stadium proposal is gambling with Parramatta's future. Gambling is for losers. The existing Stadium and proposals for expansion are a threat to the things of real unique value to all: the War Memorial Swimming Pool, World Heritage Parramatta Park and Old Government House. Their status requires essential curtilage and view catchments, World, National or State Heritage. These are sufficient major multiple negatives to demand rejection of the Stadium application. This threat to the War Memorial Swimming Pool, an essential part of our community and its needs, must be denied. The War Memorial Swimming Pool will have a higher usage as new residents join us closer in to the Parramatta CBD in apartments. Activity at the War Memorial Swimming Pool will spread across the day, increasing in summer, rather than intense, short events in a stadium. Indeed, a family can go out for a whole day there - not in the stadium. The War Memorial Swimming Pool can accommodate high quality training with the number of lanes and the diving tower.

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I will not countenance any activity at the existing stadium which will interfere with the Amphitheatre concerts or church services at Easter from Good Friday (actually the night before, vigils and long pilgrimages from places as far as Blacktown) to Easter Sunday (variable dates each year) or Christmas (from 5.30ish on Christmas Eve. (No, I am not an avid church-goer.)

Due diligence is required when it comes to the total community. The Stadium proposal demonstrates so far that the users of the present Stadium have no compunction about 'others'. It is not that they do not know 'other' exists. So much publicity is in almost every shop months ahead that there are religious feasts, processions, services or 'concerts'. And if a match interferes with a concert in the Amphitheatre or Prince Alfred Park, football is not the priority; it is the OTHERS - ALL OF US WHO CARE and whose diverse activities do not interfere with football. The stadium proposal is the other way round with no regard to the essence of Parramatta. This is not anti-sport but demonstrating yet again this stadium was, is and ever will be in the wrong location. Location, location, location, location, location.

If a significant artist is booked for the Amphitheatre, they usually have commitments years ahead elsewhere in the world and such a coup for Parramatta will always take priority. A full electronic concert will always interfere with any other activity, and is unacceptable. It could result in forced refunds to patrons if the Stadium has any type of contrary match or booking. And would the Stadium bear that cost of a failed concert at the amphitheatre and reimburse the artist and patrons?

Certainly, it seems the Stadium proposal is intent on ignoring all diverse community values including World Heritage listings by world experts and not easy to come by. That status is very special whereas the stadium can never compete, only destroy.

This stadium was always in the wrong place yet with only thoughts of later entrenchment. The existing structure must be the final incarnation - for all time!

But we, the majority and all the new residents to come, are looking to the future and the necessity to preserve the highest value, most unique things we have for future generations - also the remit of governments. I have forgotten the details of that court judgement and appeal, but as Parramatta is rapidly increasing its residential component it is the passive recreation which attracts and is demanded.

The Stadium and this expansion proposal to Parramatta's detriment, its people and potential tourist industry is wildly excessive, unpalatable and wrong. Yet a daily/all day activity and right for all Australians, to learn to swim, dive, train, compete, have therapy, be accessible\* (no hills) to all, is cast aside for ever greater human cost!

### **Relativity**

New South Wales must be a laughing stock in Fremantle and Port Arthur as tourists pour into their World Heritage listed locations, preceded by State and National Heritage declarations. Parramatta's heritage pre-dates much of those sites. The significant heritage fabric important to Australia's colonial history is here in Parramatta. But it is the afore-mentioned which are pulling in the tourist dollars.

Realign the priorities. One-off national and world heritage against a stadium which could have any number of locations elsewhere without harm to Parramatta's core. No contest! And there is no tourist dollars in compromised heritage anywhere.

The current Stadium is the ultimate limit which can ever be allowed and the application in the SSD must be rejected in full, so future sites elsewhere are sought. There can be no encouragement for any future incremental development which will be the inevitable product of any approval of this SSD. Any approval ensures unsustainable losses to the national fabric of - World Heritage. Stadium encroachments of land and air space must stop here!

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