

313/141 McEvoy St
Alexandria 2016
Mob 0418336226

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Development Application SSD 8373 – Alexandria Park Community School
Redevelopment, Park Road, Alexandria 2015

I am writing to voice my concerns over some elements of the proposed redevelopment of Alexandria Park Community School, Park Road, Alexandria.

I am a resident of 141-143 McEvoy St Alexandria, in the block of units that adjoin the southern boundary of the school. It was very disappointing to read the EIS and note our residential building has been ignored – despite our strata appearing on Appendix D Site Survey. We have living and sleeping spaces facing the school and require consideration in this development process.

We have been overlooked in terms of privacy, building proximity and mass, noise, overshadowing, green boundary, outdoor classroom noise, rooftop facility noise and general demolition/rebuilding noise.

In particular, these are some of my concerns

1. Building setbacks

At the southern boundary, the southern hub buildings seem to be situated 5 metres off the boundary. Even residential buildings require a minimum of 12 metres between buildings. The 5 metre setback will also interfere with existing mature tree branches and root systems so we request the buildings be moved north to enable the mature trees to survive and reduce the “prison wall” effect that the new high buildings will present to us.

2. Building Mass

The 5 story and 3 storey buildings all exceed the allowable height limit of 15 metres. The buildings would present a WALL in front our apartments that also cuts out light, greenery, breezes and skyline. In the case of the “3 storey” buildings on the southern boundary, all plans show fixed screens and shade structures on the Southern Hub rooftop which exceed 15 metres and will constitute a 4th storey in terms of mass, what we see, solar access and skyline line of sight.

Can we please have the solar access, wind effect and noise effect on 141 McEvoy building included in the plans as we have been omitted so far.

Please note that the current building is 2 stories, and set back approximately 10 metres from the southern boundary. So there will be MAJOR impacts by raising the building (fixed and floating structures) to double (4 stories) and moving it 5 metres closer to the boundary. It is not a matter of “minor” impact as stated in the EIS – it is major and affects our quality of living and financial investment in our homes.

3. Noise

I am particularly worried about the noise impacts of a number of the plans.

a) The EIS states local residential buildings are largely empty during the day. This is NOT true. Our building alone has residents at home during the day due to parenting duties, working from home, sickness, retirement, employment format etc. We will all be affected during school hours, not to mention extended usage hours.

b) Rooftop active areas on the Southern Hub buildings southern boundary (diagrams show a basketball court which will NOT be acceptable). As a parent, I am keenly aware of the noise kids make and the outdoor classrooms will bring the noise closer to our bedrooms facing the school boundaries. Ballsports are particularly noisy with the bouncing balls and exuberant sounds of active kids. Most classes these days also have music, video, laptops etc to accompany classes and create more noise. And school bells are necessarily noisy, especially the current electronic versions. Note: the original plans described to residents did NOT include the “passive” rooftop which linked all the southern buildings so this is in breach of original plans.

I and other neighbours seek removal of the rooftop playground in front of our building.

c) School hours – these days all schools operate more than 9 am – 3 pm hours, with breakfast clubs, before school activities like music classes, before/after school care. Not to mention the government trials of opening school facilities to the general public in school holiday times. It is a false argument to say the precinct will only operate “during school hours”.

d) Before/after school care – currently located on the northern side of the buildings, this facility is valuable no doubt and also very noisy until 6 pm weekdays. It will be important to keep the screaming kids on the northern sides of the buildings.

e) Outdoor classroom on southwest corner is adjacent to a number of residential buildings and walls which will amplify sound. As discussed above, kids are noisy and bring sound machinery in an area that has no sound absorption. This facility should be relocated.

f) Open outdoor play area adjacent to southern boundary – this area, small as it is, will become a sound amplification area as it will have metal wall (southern boundary) and brick

walls on all other walls. Sound bounce is already a problem in this space and it will become worse. External surface treatments will be necessary to manage noise bounce from existing residential areas/verandas as buildings will introduce more hard surfaces with limited sound absorption.

g) Community Centre hours – it would be natural to expect it will be rented more frequently and bring more event/party noise and will request that all visitors will be using the north facing areas, not the south facing ones, within time restricted agreements.

h) School bells – I have experience of listening to electronic school bells from 8 am every day for 6 days a week (Saturday community school included). It will be necessary to limit the times and volume of bells, particularly on any outdoor or rooftop areas.

i) Cleaners – please ensure commercial cleaning is done within regular business hours and not in the middle of the night with noisy vacuums etc.

4. Greenery

Essentially, it is extremely important that the mature trees on the southern boundary are kept in tact. These will ameliorate some of the damage caused to the environment by this oversized development, and create a softening green screen.

(courtesy of a neighbour)

The proposed positioning of the development so close to trees numbered 87, 88 & 89 would change the solar access & hydrology to such an extent that it is unlikely they would survive.

In the Arborists report, that the trees numbered 87, 88, 89 have been marked “recommended” for retention. We would like assurance that these trees are ‘definitely’ to be retained as they provide shade, aesthetics & some privacy for both residents and students. In addition these trees are home to various fauna including birds, ring tailed possums and local fruit bats.

I also note that the proposed buildings appear to be in the drip line of these trees. Our concern is that unless the building is set back sufficiently from these trees that they will die as a result of being too close to the building. Plus provision needs to be made for growth as Tallwood trees can grow up to 40m in height. It is of immense importance to retain as many trees as possible for the good of the wildlife, students, local residents and the environment as a whole.

We seek assurance that the trees will survive and thrive to meet their potential. By moving the development to the north away from the trees & by removing all proposed paving in the drip line of the trees.

5. Privacy

As stated, 141 McEvoy St has not been recognised as a residential building in the EIS. This means windows facing our building may not have been considered in terms of visual privacy, especially for rooms above the CoreTen fenceline. Can we have assurance that window coverings (and soundproofing, sound absorption) will be included in requirements for buildings facing the southern perimeter?

6. Lights

Currently the outdoor corridor light at the Community Centre casts light on a yellow brick wall which reflects to my bedroom and lights up the entire ceiling. And the pre-school frequently leaves lights on all night/weekend/holidays in glass door rooms so we get light pollution for long periods of time.

Could you please require consideration of lighting effects, both outdoor and indoor. It's important because these lights will always been on overnight, throwing light on our properties. It can easily be managed by requiring classroom lights go off, and outdoor lighting have directional covers.

In summary, I acknowledge the suburb requires schools but cannot for the life of me understand how 2200 students will physically be able to walk to school on the narrow footpaths, let alone enjoy a fruitful school life on such a small area. Not to mention the negative impact on all the surrounding housing, traffic, facilities, transport etc.

I note that one of the plans shows blue dotted lines including the school premises AND neighbouring commercial blocks on McEvoy, Loveridge and Power Streets. If the blue lines means the Department of Education/government owns that land then it seems prudent to consider using that land in the precinct redevelopment.

I will be happy to discuss my issues in greater detail if you require.

regards

Ellen McFarlane
313/141 McEvoy St
Alexandria 2015
0418 336 226