

Ms Karen Harragon,
Director,
Social and Other Infrastructure Assessments,
Planning and Assessment,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment,
Locked Bag 5022,
Parramatta,
NSW 2124.

29 June 2020.

Dear Ms Harragon,

Development Application: SSD 7539 Darlington Terraces Mixed Use Development – University of Sydney

We are residents of Darlington and we object to the above Development Application (DA). We are writing in support of the 3 remaining older residential homeowners of Darlington Road who have lived in their homes all of their lives and who will be directly and negatively affected by this proposed development if it is allowed to go ahead in its present form. The detrimental impact on the quality of life of these residents in the way of noise, light pollution, loss of amenity and general disturbance has not been considered by the University at all.

We object to the DA for the following reasons: -

- 1. Development is not for Educational purposes:** we object on the grounds that the SSD is predominantly for student accommodation and not an education establishment. These are individual terrace houses and come under a normal development application and should be assessed by the City of Sydney local Government body. The University has already swamped the small suburb of Darlington in student accommodation and the current situation with COVID-19 sees these premises vacant and unused. The University of Sydney should not be allowed to go into the accommodation business. The reason for its existence is to educate people, not make money from expensive accommodation.
- 2. Tree 25:** the arborist's report states that Tree 25 is in good health and structural condition. We object to the removal of this tree or any other trees within any of the gardens of the Darlington terraces. But we do agree that the University should be made to plant more trees to counteract all the trees that have been lost due to their ongoing developments within Darlington.
- 3. Preservation of heritage value:** the Darlington Road terraces have been listed as heritage items by the National Trust with an "A" rating. They are part of the designated Golden Grove Conservation Area. Despite this, the University plans to fill in the entire backyards of all but three of them with massive modern three-storey extensions. No-one else in Darlington is allowed to build such a structure in their backyard; why should the University be allowed to? Like the rest of the landowners and homeowners in the community, the University should be made to follow the rules, especially as these proposed structures will have such a massive impact on the lives of their 3 remaining neighbours.
- 4. Terraces owned by University of Sydney:** the University of Sydney has owned most of the terraced houses along Darlington Road for some time now. The University has allowed these heritage terraces to deteriorate over the years since owning them so that they have become almost dilapidated. The cost of repairing these buildings should not be part of the development costs as keeping your property in a state of good repair is something that all homeowners are all obliged to do over time for the safety of the community. The cost of repairing the Darlington Terraces is an entirely separate cost and should not be considered with the cost of the DA for the external buildings. This is, therefore, a maintenance issue and should not be considered as part of the DA.

5. **Size of buildings:** if this development goes ahead the houses in which these 3 remaining long-term older residents live will be completely surrounded and hemmed in by the towering new 3-storey buildings housing hundreds of young students. The proposed new buildings will cause extreme over-shadowing issues for these 3 residents. The quality of life of these 3 residents will suffer greatly because of the loss of light and the feeling of being closed in.
6. **Use of buildings:** as residents of Darlington we are already subjected to the loud and drunken behaviour of students staggering home on any night of the week because of all the new large student accommodation buildings in the area. This will only be compounded if this development is allowed to go ahead. The effect on the lives of the 3 remaining long-term older residents of Darlington Road will be horrific. If the proposal is allowed to proceed then the University buildings should not be used for student accommodation but for teaching and research purposes only. At the very least they should be made alcohol-free zones at all times.
7. **Destruction of Darlington:** this proposal attempts to carry on the University's long tradition of destroying Darlington's heritage. To date, the University has bulldozed 650 Victorian terraces, a Victorian Gothic Revival Public School, Town Hall, Post Office and other important buildings in Darlington. The University should be directed to preserve and restore these culturally significant terraced houses. It is one of the last remaining terraces of its type in the state. Once they have been restored the University should use the buildings for educational and research purposes and not for student accommodation.
8. **Damage to residents' houses:** the residents are concerned about potential damage to their houses which will occur if this development proceeds. Clearly, with such large building works occurring in very close proximity to their homes, there is the very real prospect of the residents' homes cracking and deteriorating as a result. Thorough dilapidation reports should be carried out on the homes of the 3 remaining older residents both prior to and after any development work by structural engineers of the residents own choosing. The residents should be adequately compensated for any damage which is found to have occurred.

We feel that it is important for the University to address the concerns raised in our submission so that the University can demonstrate that it is willing to listen to the views of the local community and not just ride roughshod over them.

The University of Sydney's proposed development clearly does not consider the 3 remaining older residents who have lived there all their lives nor does the University show them any regard at all. To approve of the development in its current form would simply not be fair at all.

We hope that the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment will consider our objections when the decision on the DA is being made and especially consider the 3 elderly gentlemen who will be greatly affected if this development is to go ahead.

Yours faithfully,

Mary Ellen McCue and Colin Sharp,

Darlington,
NSW 2008.