

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

6/03/2021

Attention: Director – Social and Other Infrastructure Assessments

Dear Ms Coomar,

LORETO NORMANHURST SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT (CONCEPT PROPOSAL AND STAGE 1), 91-93 PENNANT HILLS ROAD NORMANHURST (SSD-8996) – OBJECTION

I am writing to object to the proposal from Loreto Normanhurst. Before commenting on my concerns within their proposal and its impact on the suburb of Normanhurst, I would like to express my frustration on the limited amount of time provided for public feedback/submissions. This will inevitably result in far less public objection to this excessive expansion of the school.

In the coming years, Loreto plan on almost doubling their student capacity and excessively expand their grounds to accommodate this student increase. Their plans have failed to consider the impact on all their neighbours, especially those living in surrounding streets who will be directly impacted by unsightly buildings and additional traffic. Lessons can be learned by the excessive and ludicrous expansion of Barker College in Waitara. This expansion in student numbers and buildings has led to significant congestion on Unwin Road, Clarke Road, Malsbury Road, College Crescent and Pacific Highway daily. Huge numbers of parents drop their children by entering the school from Unwin Road. They then drop their children inside the school and exit at the base of College Crescent, where they are forced to turn left into a narrow street and join a long line of traffic. The neighbours do not even get a reprieve on the weekends, due to school sports. This impacts significantly on people driving towards Hornsby from the Normanhurst and Waitara directions. Similar parent drop off routes are proposed within the Loreto proposal.

It is not reasonable or practical for this suburban community to accommodate this proposal from Loreto Normanhurst. My objections to **LORETO NORMANHURST SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT (CONCEPT PROPOSAL AND STAGE 1)** are outlined below.

- The proposal recently released by Loreto has not allowed the Normanhurst Community and surrounding suburbs enough time to respond.
- Loreto's submission fails to acknowledge or address student numbers as well as the current and future demands of its neighbouring schools- Normanhurst Boys High School and Normanhurst Public School and the strain these schools place on the community and the surrounding streets.
- The report fails to comment on the impact that the traffic will have on Normanhurst Road apart from the small mention of cars exiting from an early childhood centre.
- The traffic report indicated that the majority of students arrive at school by road. The proposed entry and exit points will result in excessive numbers of cars using Mount Pleasant Avenue, Osborne Avenue, Pennant Hills Road, Normanhurst Road, Fraser Road and Denman Parade.
- Neighbouring streets, particularly Normanhurst Road carry thousands of pedestrians per day as students make their way to and from the railway line.
- Teacher numbers will also increase significantly and bring more cars into the suburb.

- The proposed design of the new buildings are not sympathetic with the historic/heritage buildings nor are they in keeping with the residential zoning of Normanhurst.
- Any tree removed, should be replaced by two local native species of trees in order to replace urban canopy and minimise any biosecurity threat to surrounding bushland.

In addition, I would like to expand on and raise the following concerns:

Inadequate Traffic Studies and projections on impacts on the surrounding schools and Normanhurst Community.

The traffic studies report was conducted on the 7th of November 2019, when most year 12 students from Loreto and the adjacent Normanhurst Boys High School would have finished their HSC and consequently would not have driven, or been driven to school and would not have parked in surrounding streets.

The traffic studies do not acknowledge the traffic already generated by existing Loreto students and their parents accessing the school via Normanhurst Road, which is frequently used as a drop-off and pick-up site. It also fails to acknowledge the existing and projected needs of Normanhurst Boys High School and Normanhurst Public School as they continue to expand with population growth.

Loreto's traffic management plan includes creating a flow of traffic from Osborne Rd, through the Loreto school grounds and out onto Mount Pleasant Ave. Both streets are cul-de-sacs with no through traffic.

TTW Traffic Management report indicated the majority of children arrive at school by road

The number of Loreto students walking to and from the railway station using Normanhurst Road is astounding, yet according to the TTW report, this would reflect only 19.5 % of Loreto's current population. The school predicts that with the expansion proposal more than 25% of the school population would catch the train. This would mean that 500 students would be directed on foot up Normanhurst Road, which TTW describes as a 'key priority route'. The report also stated that more students drove to school than there were available car spaces, suggesting the strain on local streets by student parking.

As Loreto is a private school, it is assumed that most children living within Normanhurst attend schools outside of Normanhurst and this would be reflective of the statistic that only 3.8% of students from Loreto walk to school.

Loreto currently caters for children from Year 5 to Year 12. It is understood that the school plans on catering for children from Kindergarten as part of their expanding student numbers and school. As a result, it is expected that many of these younger students will arrive with their parents by car.

Impacts of surrounding schools upon the Normanhurst community are not accounted for

Normanhurst Road has two other expanding schools situated within close proximity to the proposed development whose students and parents access the schools using Normanhurst Road and Fraser Road. Currently Normanhurst Public School has approximately 400 students and is located on Normanhurst Road; Normanhurst Boys Selective High School has approximately 750 students and Loreto Normanhurst has approximately 1,100 students. These schools accommodate nearly 2,250 students and the congestion created in Normanhurst Road, Fraser Road and Denman Parade of a morning and evening is significant. In addition, commuters, people circling for parking spaces and those being dropped to the railway station add to the number of cars around the railway station and surrounding streets.

To highlight the issues with local traffic, it should be acknowledged that Normanhurst Boys High School is a selective high school and Loreto is a private school. This brings many students by train, bus and car to Normanhurst, but it also means that many secondary students living within Normanhurst catch the train and drive to other schools (e.g., Hornsby Girls, Asquith Girls, Asquith Boys, Pennant Hills Public School, Barker College, St Leo's College, Clarke Road School for children with disabilities etc). Loreto's plan to almost double its numbers could result in an increase of up to 800 extra cars entering Normanhurst daily. With population growth the numbers of students who are unable to attend their local private or selective schools will also generate increased car and pedestrian traffic exiting the suburb.

School buses use Normanhurst Road and many other motorists use Normanhurst Road to bypass Pennant Hills Road when the traffic is heavy – which is often, even since the opening of Northconnex. Normanhurst Road is also used to access Normanhurst West Public School.

Inadequate traffic diversions will result in increase congestion

Loreto's traffic management plan has cars filtering out of Mount Pleasant Avenue and turning left onto Pennant Hills Road. The RMS does not plan on installing another set of traffic lights at this intersection for those wishing to turn right towards Hornsby. These parents will inevitably use Normanhurst Road, turn right onto Fraser Road and then head back towards Hornsby or use Denman Parade, which also frequently has heavy traffic queuing at the roundabout.

The intersection of Pennant Hills Rd and Osborn Rd is difficult to negotiate, especially at peak times. It is proposed that traffic heading out of Osborn Road will be directed right onto Pennant Hills Road, however once again, those wishing to head towards Hornsby/ Waitara/ Wahroonga will use Normanhurst Road, Fraser Road, Denman Parade and other surrounding streets.

Most Loreto staff will drive to work

It is anticipated that an additional 70 teachers will be required to address the growing population at Loreto, which will require an increase in available parking as well as increased cars heading towards and leaving the school.

Development size and design out of keeping for the Normanhurst area and the historical buildings on the site.

The proposed buildings exceed the residential zoning of Normanhurst and detract from the historical and heritage value of the school and school grounds.

Replacement trees should be of indigenous species and two trees should be planted for every removed tree

The arboricultural assessment report highlights that the proposed development would require the removal of several trees. Those recommended for removal have historical value and are considered valuable tree canopy although these also noxious, invasive weeds and a biodiversity threat. Loreto's replanting plan should stipulate that any removed trees, should be replaced with two indigenous species to replace habitat and to minimise biosecurity risks in surrounding Sydney Turpentine Iron Bark Forest.

In summary, I object to this excessive expansion of Loreto, as will impact greatly on the community of Normanhurst and significantly increase the number of students, teachers, cars and buses who descend upon this suburb daily.

Declaration – I have not made a political donation in the last two years.

Yours sincerely,

Anonymous