

North Sydney Public School SSD-11869481

182 Pacific Highway, North Sydney

Objection by Edward Precinct

Edward Precinct objects to the above State Significant development application for North Sydney Public School known locally as the Demonstration School or the Dem.

It is noted that the school is close to the centre of our precinct which lies adjacent to and west of the Pacific Highway between Hazelbank and Mount streets. Our precinct has around 800 houses and apartments. This submission has been prepared by our management group.

Our Precinct Committee considers that the current proposed design does not respond adequately to this important heritage site or fit well into the local environment.

The design does not respond adequately to the Heads of Requirement of the key issues noted in the SEARs¹. Primarily the built form and urban design, trees and landscaping, transport and accessibility, stormwater and drainage, flooding and consultation with local residents and groups.

Built Form and Urban Design

The setback adopted for the new buildings is insufficient and is similar to that of an existing single storey building to the west inadequate for the tall three storey building proposed. The setbacks should vary with the heights of the buildings as they do immediately opposite in Bay Road.

The building lengths are out of scale with neighbouring development. There should be real modulation of these building lengths, not just vertical stripes. There should be spaces between the new buildings as there is with the buildings to the south.

The spaces provided between buildings J, I and G should be more like the spacing between the existing buildings F, D and A. If this were so, the proposed development would potentially be more in character with the existing Heritage School and development immediately to the south in Bay Road.

The roof form is out of character with the heritage buildings which have hipped, pitched terracotta tiled roofs.

The brick base and lightly coloured two-storey facade is out of character with the existing heritage buildings which are all face brick. The chosen GRC facade does not have the depth that the existing brick facades have and appears insubstantial by comparison.

The heights of the proposed buildings appear to breach the height standard for the site. The buildings' height would cause overshadowing of its Bay Road neighbours from noon in June which is significant. Additionally the public realm in Bay Road would be overshadowed all day in mid-June.

¹ Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for a State Significant Development (SSD) Applications

The new main building entry has poor amenity. It doesn't seem safe as there is no place to wait inside the school grounds except on stairs and entry ramps. The appearance to the street is mean and appears gaol-like especially in comparison to the current landscaped entry.

Finally we believe the illustrations of the proposed buildings are not adequate. For example the public realm along Bay Road is not clearly shown as the footpath is missing (on page 11 of the architectural drawings). Also the ground floor windows are not shown, falsely giving the appearance of a solid base.

Trees and landscaping

The proposed design removes too many mature trees. These trees have been planted over three decades by the school community to green both the school and North Sydney. Their removal produces a poor environment for the school children, their neighbours and the community of North Sydney. This green buffer provides an important protection for the school from the impact of traffic on Bay Road and the Pacific Highway.

Transport and Accessibility

The kiss and ride relies on McHatton St and Bay Road and doesn't use the substantial forecourt of the Pacific Highway and the substantial area of staff car parking. The proposal relies on the existing drop off arrangements, providing no solution to the congestion in morning and afternoon peaks but increasing the school population. This problem needs to be resolved, not ignored.

Stormwater and Drainage/Flooding

The Precinct Committee is aware that flooding has occurred in the area where the new buildings are proposed to be located. Substantial overtopping to the sandstone wall has also occurred. The overland flow path referred to in the EIS should be examined for a flood event of this nature.

Conclusion – Please Redesign the Project

In conclusion, the Precinct Committee urges the Department to redesign this proposed development. Only 143 additional students are accommodated but the currently planned design will lead to significant adverse outcomes for the neighbouring environment. It is anticipated that an improved design, addressing most if not all of the identified problems could be developed and implemented without a significant increase in cost.