



APPLICATION NAME: Meadowbank Education & Employment Precinct School Project: Modification 4.

APPLICATION No: SSD-9343-Mod-4

I Wish to reject the proposal to the Modification 4.

SUBMISSION from:

Leigh Smart, Owners Representative of the 46 property owners in the Employment Precinct occupying approximately 6 hectares of land bounded by Hermitage Road in the west, Victoria Road to the north, Rhodes Street to the south and Mellor Street in the east.

I am also a Director of Formula Chemicals (NSW) Pty Ltd which owns and occupies 4 properties in Hermitage Road, namely 82, 84, 86 & 88 and have done so for the past 48 years.

I was born in West Ryde some 73 years ago and still live in Melrose Park. I have 5 children and 13 grandchildren of which 6 will be attending the new School Project so safety is one of my greatest concerns.

I have an intimate knowledge of the area and attended Meadowbank Boys High School in my younger days.

Regarding the changes envisaged by Modification 4, I strongly object based on the following information.

I have been involved in the school's project right from the initial community engagement discussion and sorry to say our Group and our recommendations have fallen on deaf ears.

I declare that I have not made any reportable political donations in the last 2 years.

Deletion of the shared path along the western side of Hermitage Road: REJECT.

The construction of the existing pathway that runs from Victoria Road to the entrance of the Sydney Water Corporation is and has been a white elephant since its inception.

I have never seen a bicycle use this path as it is extremely hazardous to enter or leave as you must cross busy Hermitage Road in both directions. Since Council found that that they could not extend this pathway through to Rhodes due to the underground services, it is a path to nowhere.

At present the owners on the opposite side of the proposed path, the eastern side of Hermitage Road have been experiencing flooding issues from stormwater discharge from the Sydney Water Corporation site.

An inspection of the site will indicate a spillway for the discharge of stormwater over the existing path, erosion of the proposed grass area caused by large quantities of stormwater illegally being discharged from their property and the recent collapse of a major retaining wall adjacent Laboratory which collapsed across the proposed path closing Hermitage Road with repairs taking several months to complete.

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I have been informed that School Infrastructure believes there will be a low volume of pedestrian foot traffic down Hermitage Road. This data is flawed. The City of Ryde Submission dated 22nd November 2021 prepared a transport study by GTA Consultants/Stantec which indicated they believe there could be as much as **650 cycle trips per day** that would use this proposed extension of the pathway.

A further note regarding this fact that I have not been successful in determining where these bicycles would be located on the school site. Even if you discount this number to say 200 bikes, then where will they be safely stored, securely locked and undercover.

If the extension of the pathway is rejected, then the pedestrian traffic will have to use the eastern side of Hermitage Road where there is an existing footpath which is in poor condition with uplifted and broken concrete.

The problem is that there are currently 15 car crossing driveways to the existing business on this side of the road which will have to be negotiated by small children right up from the age of primary to high school.

If the pathway was to be extended on the other side of the road, then the pedestrians would only have to negotiate one traffic driveway in Sydney Water Corporation.

If the children must use the eastern side of Hermitage Road, then they will have to cross Hermitage at the intersection at Victoria Road, then cross the pedestrian crossing heading towards Office Works, then back again across Hermitage if they want to go to 7Eleven for a slushy or Krispy Kreme donut on the way home.

There is currently a footpath on the southern side of Victoria Road on the north of the Precinct in front of the Sydney Water Pumping Station, but this stops at the railway underpass, it goes nowhere.

This needs consideration for if the children were to walk the full length of Victoria Road, then the only option is to run across 6 lanes of Victoria Road in peak hour with disastrous effects.

They won't walk back to the intersection to cross safely.

There has been a suggestion that exclusion fencing be installed the full length of Victoria Road but there is currently a driveway into the Engineers Cottage so the children could try and cross the road at this position.

The sequencing of the traffic lights at this intersection will have to be changed for several reasons.

Firstly, there is no pedestrian crossing on the eastern side of the intersection. Currently you must cross 3 roads to get to the other side.

Secondly, cars coming down from the north on Hermitage can't make it through the light change so what they do is come through the lights at high speed, do an illegal U turn at high speed in our forecourt (private property) putting the safety of our staff at risk, then speed up Hermitage to catch the left turn arrow back onto Victoria Road.

We are now trialling traffic cones on our front boundary, and this is having some effect but if this illegal practice continues during school hours, then the safety of our school children will be put at risk. The cones are removed at 3:00pm (close of school hours) when we close our business, and this is the period we experience the most traffic doing illegal U turns in our forecourt. Children will have to negotiate approximately 58m of exposed driveway.

I am aware that the children currently attending Marsden High School do a similar thing that I am alluding to when they head off to KFC or McDonalds after school. It becomes a meeting place to catch up with your friends before you walk home.

This is what kids do and you won't stop them. They will take the shortest route. I have been told that yellow 'footprints' are going to be added to the concrete paths to direct children in the other direction.

Best luck with that.

Regarding the operation of Formula Chemicals, our forecourt is extremely busy every day with us loading and unloading our own 6 heavy vehicles, i.e., GCM 38,000kg.

All our supplies are bought in daily on heavy vehicles and we operate 7 forklifts in this area.

Our site operates 24/7.

I have recently engaged a Traffic Management Company at my own expense to best advise us on how to improve the safety of pedestrian and future school children walking past our site.

When I was first alluded to the fact that the footpath would not go ahead, I asked what their **PLAN B** was. Sorry to say they had no PlanB.

Right from the initial planning stages of the School Precinct we put a proposal together for our **PLAN B**. It was simple, cost efficient and most of all considered the safety of the school children.

At present the footpath in front of the COLA stops on the corner of Hermitage and Rhodes Street. It would be a simple task to continue the path up through the back of the Sydney Water property, up adjacent to the rail track and then cross Victoria Road with a pedestrian bridge and then any school children would not have to travel along Hermitage Road. It would include a high cyclone fence on either side of the path to stop children wandering off into the Sydney Water Corporation site. There would be no interaction with any vehicles entering and leaving the businesses, no need to change the traffic lights sequencing, no need for further pedestrian crossings, no installation of safety fences. It is a win win situation.

There is no reason why it can't be done as when I attended Meadowbank Boys High School there was a similar pedestrian pathway adjacent to the rail line and within the TAFE property running from the station to the school. It worked perfectly fine.

Deletion of requirement to provide upgrade of street lighting: REJECT

As you are fully aware, the School Precinct is adjacent to a large Industrial Area and sorry to say this attracts undesirable people looking at taking advantage of any opportunity they can find.

Lighting in the surrounding streets is dismal and I have been forced to provide my own in-house lighting for my companies properties.

It is essential to therefore improve the lighting not only in front of the school but also the adjacent streets. It is not good enough to dismiss this opportunity especially when you think this schools will be using these facilities at all hours of the day for meetings, presentations and performances and OSH after hours.

At present I find cars are parked in our forecourt in Hermitage Road of a night for TAFE as most of the students are not able to pay for parking. I assume this will be the same once the carparks are

finished. I believe there is only 50 spaces available within the school grounds which won't even cover the number of Teachers attending school, so the hard-working teachers will be forced to on street parking making the situation worse for the adjacent property owners. During winter, it becomes darker earlier, and it is imperative that female teachers feel comfortable walking to their cars.

I am at a loss to understand that during the design process there was no provision to provide a greater number of onsite car parking spaces both for teachers, students, and visitors. As everyone is aware, soon as children reach the age to gain drivers licence, they do so, so now children in the final years of high school have cars and there has been no provision for them to park on site.

Of course, if you look outside the box, you will understand that adjacent to the School Precinct there is a large amount of unused land in the Sydney Water Corporation property, surely this could be used for this purpose.

Government has never been backward in obtaining private land from individuals so I can't see why this land could not be acquired from another semi government institution.

What an opportunity missed!

Good street lighting deters criminal as they prefer to lurk in the dark.

Changes to pedestrian Crossings at following intersections.

- **See Street: REJECT.** City of Ryde has already dismissed this change as this is required for pedestrian access when approaching the school from Bowden, Macpherson, see Street and Angus Street. Safety is the most important aspect and should not be compromised.
- **Rhodes Street/Macpherson Street: REJECT.** I believe this is the proposed Kiss & Ride area as this is going to cause chaos from what I have seen at other school areas. Sorry to say, most drivers do not know how to legally use these areas.
- **Hermitage & Rhodes Street: REJECT** I assume a pedestrian crossing will need to be constructed if the pathway does not go ahead as the children will have to use the eastern side of Hermitage Road. This has always been a difficult corner to navigate as there are rumble strips in the middle of the road and with parking near each corner it is difficult to not end up on the incorrect side of the road. As I have indicated elsewhere, we must bring our large trucks to our site through these narrow streets. In conjunction with the pedestrian crossing, I have found the installation of calming devices which reduces the width of the street. This would be totally unsatisfactory for our operation as our large vehicles need extra room to navigate tight corners. I am sure this factor has not been considered with the construction of any of the pedestrian crossings within the precinct.

I am concerned that parents will use my large forecourt as a Kiss & Ride drop off point so they do not have to negotiate the congested traffic, buses etc that will be in Rhodes Street. This will also keep them away from the Council Rangers who frequent these areas. I can see them doing illegal U turns in my property to save them travelling several blocks to Bowden Street as this is the only other traffic signal-controlled intersection in our Precinct to get back to Victoria Road.

It should be noted that large heavy vehicles entering our site must enter the precinct from Bowden Street end and come down past the School Precinct as the corner of Victoria Road and Hermitage Road coming from the city is too tight to allow access unless the truck goes over the median strip on the incorrect side of the road.

I have also noticed the installation of sections of concrete pathway between the footpath and kerb and guttering on Rhodes Street which I assume will be used for Kiss & Ride or as Bus Stops. This tends to give the impression that these are safety zones which they are not.

Construction hours variation: REJECT. Residents and Businesses have complained about the inconvenience of the construction and the hours of work right through the construction period for current breaches in working hours and noisy diesel operated cranes. My employee must come to work at least an hour before start time just to secure an on-street car park as the subcontractors arrive early and take up all the spaces. As much as School Infrastructure reiterates the same old rhetoric that they have supplied ample parking, i.e., 120 on site car spaces, it is just not true. On Saturday 11th December 2021 I arrived at work at 6:00am to create this submission and there was not one space available in Hermitage Road and to make matters, none of the Owner/ Occupiers were open at that stage.

This is an ongoing problem, and I don't want to see their construction hours extended because they are tardy with their construction.

Why should we have to suffer?

Conclusion

One of my major concerns is that some people within School Infrastructure Team are reluctant to meet and consult with the community and what we will find is that we will be left with problems that we have to live with a project that does not meet with the schools, community, and local business needs.

You may find my comments negative, but those that know me, know I have been in favour of the development of this part of West Ryde. Over the years our precinct has often been treated as the poor cousin in our municipality.

This now gives us the ability to revitalise this area and hopefully soon a vision for the Employment Precinct will further enhance this area.

I therefore respectfully request that these amendments are **REJECTED** in the best interest of everyone concerned.

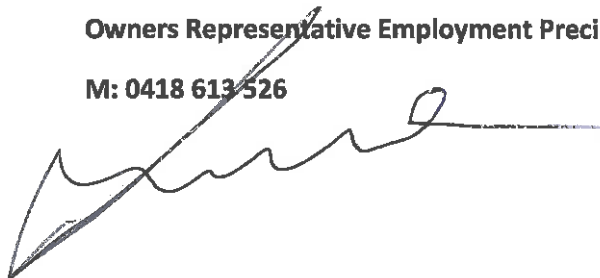
All the matters I have raised have been in the best interest of the school children and the community.

LEIGH SMART

Director; Formula Chemicals (NSW) Pty Ltd

Owners Representative Employment Precinct

M: 0418 613 526

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leigh Smart', written over the printed name and contact information.