

Sandra Hudson

21 February 2011

The Director
Mr Sam Haddad FVIPA MAICD
Director General
Department of Planning
Level 1, 23-33 Bridge Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir

**Graythwaite – Over Development by Shore School
Concept Plan (MP10_0149) and Stage 1 Project Application (MP10_0150)**

I live directly opposite Graythwaite Park on Union Street and wish to express my strong concerns and opposition to the proposed redevelopment plan as submitted by Shore School under Part 3a.

Graythwaite is a very important part of Sydney's history and an important space for North Sydney and McMahon's Point. This was summed up by our local member Jillian Skinner who said in August 2009:

*"If Mr Rees won't halt the current sale by public tender process, he should impose conditions on the sale to guarantee the protection of the heritage building and **stop any development on any of the grounds** that are not already encumbered....."*

"This site is too important to simply have it swallowed up, it must be retained for public use."

I share Mrs Skinner's concerns that the development will have a marked effect on Union Street and in turn on the suburb of McMahon's Point and make the following specific comments:

1 Lack of Community Consultation

Apart from a brief and I understand fruitless meeting with 2 representatives of the precinct committee, there has been no community consultation. Given the importance of the site, this is totally inadequate and demonstrates arrogance and a total disregard for the local community.

On this ground alone the application should be refused as it is a basic premise of part 3a that public consultation take place.

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2 Traffic

The development plan as submitted by Shore proposes a building that will house an additional 500 students and 50 staff.

The traffic in our suburb and Union Street in particular is already beyond that desirable for a residential neighbourhood. An additional 500 parents dropping off their children or worse students driving and parking in the area doesn't bear thinking about. It is currently nearly impossible to park in the area and getting in and out of the suburb in peak hour is difficult.

I note that Shore has prepared a traffic report however I believe this to be inadequate and as such, my neighbours and I are commissioning an independent traffic report. The current report was undertaken in May last year when a number of the commercial premises in the area were vacant and before the canonisation of Mary MacKillop.

As an example of the issues we face, I think it was interesting to note that last week, friends of ours, who have a son attending Shore, asked us for a mark up of free parking spaces in the area as their son now drives to school and is finding it difficult to find a park in the area. Students currently park in resident 2 hour space and then move their cars. Imagine how much worse this will be when the additional 550 students and staff arrive.

3 Consuming our suburb

Shore School is currently and progressively acquiring all properties in the area and then walling in the precinct. This gradual progression of the school is and will destroy the historic character of McMahons Point. McMahons Point is a "village suburb" however as more and more space is consumed by the school it will not be long before this character is permanently lost.

This must be stopped.

4 Loss of Public Green Space

The green space provided by Graythwaite Park must be preserved for the use of local residents. North Sydney and McMahons Point are typical of Sydney's older suburbs, being densely developed and relying on local parks for recreation and green space. Accordingly, any existing green space is vitally important and must be preserved for the community.

5 Heritage

I note that Shore has provided a Heritage Report and Draft Conservation Management Plan (CMP).

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I am advised that it is a requirement of any application under Part 3a to have an **adopted** CMP and accordingly, the application should be rejected as it fails the basic test of meeting the Director General's requirements.

I am also advised that the Heritage Report is deficient as it fails to even mention the World War II bunkers under the lower paddock and an historic water course.

Given these omissions, residents are commissioning their own heritage report.

6 Trees

The application would result in 85 trees, including three 100+ year old Historic fig trees, being removed. The development would also be very close to an historic bamboo plantation that would almost certainly die as the new school building is too close.

7 Anzac History

This site represents a significant part of our ANZAC history. So much so, that the RSL planted a "lone pine" on the site to honour dead Anzac's and the role that Graythwaite played in their history. The Shore plan removes this Tree and prevents public access to this historic house and grounds.

Summary

I am making this submission now as I am concerned that the public consultation and lack of notification by the Dept of Planning to local residents has been designed to minimise any objective review of these plans. I note that most of my neighbours and none of the residents in Bank Street were initially notified of the application. It was only after objections that the time for lodging submissions was extended, and then only by 2 weeks.

I believe that this development is so significant in its effect on our suburb that most residents in North Sydney, Kirribilli, Waverton and McMahons Point would want to have their say. Furthermore, given its historical significance to our ANZAC history, it would be of interest to all Australians. Accordingly, I call on the Government to hold a Public Enquiry into the development.

As noted above, we are commissioning heritage and traffic reports. As these may take time to complete, I request additional time be granted to enable these reports to be considered should the Department decide to continue processing the part 3a application notwithstanding its obvious deficiencies.

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In closing I again quote from Mrs Skinner:

"The Graythwaite building is beautiful and still has a great structure that must be lovingly restored and maintained as an important heritage building. The grounds and gardens should continue to be kept, maintained and open to the public. They are the lungs of North Sydney."

"This is a beautiful space tucked in a densely developed area in the heart of North Sydney"

Yours faithfully

Sandra Hudson

Note: Original signed copy to be posted.

From: Sandra Hudson <hudson888@optusnet.com.au>
To: Ben Eveleigh <ben.eveleigh@planning.nsw.gov.au>
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 12/03/2011 12:21 pm
Subject: Online Submission from Sandra Hudson of N/a ()
Attachments: second submission to DoP.pdf

Graythwaite ? Over Development by Shore School

Concept Plan (MP10_0149) and Stage 1 Project Application (MP10_0150)

Further to my letter of 21 February I wish to add to my submission in respect of the above.

For the record, I repeat, I live directly opposite Graythwaite Park on Union Street and wish to express my strong concerns and opposition to the proposed redevelopment plan as submitted by Shore School under Part 3a. I confirm that I have made no political donations.

In my previous submission I expressed concern in respect of the increased traffic into an already congested area. I noted that Halcrow had provided traffic support for the Shore development but expressed severe reservations as to the validity of this report.

I believe that Shore themselves have, in their in-house publications and directions to students, completely undermined the Halcrow report and specifically acknowledged that the current situation is both unsafe and unreasonable to local residents. On this basis alone, the proposed redevelopment, resulting in 500 additional students and 50 additional staff should be rejected.

To quote Shore:

?Prep Peek dated Fri 18 Feb 2011

Pick-Up and Drop-Off

Thank you to all parents who have been thoughtfully and co-operatively negotiating the difficult circumstances of Edward Street particularly of an afternoon. Your care and patience has been greatly appreciated in ensuring our students arrive and leave the school safely.

Please be mindful of our neighbours who often have to negotiate heavy traffic simply to come and go from their premises. Now that the year is well underway and students have settled, it would be pleasing to see more students utilising the public transport facilities available. I encourage those yet to do so to give it a go!?

(NB. The entrance to Edward St is right across from Nth Sydney Demonstration School - putting local school students at more risk so senior students can get to sport on time)

?The Shore Weekly Record . dated Fri 18 Feb 2011

NOTICE TO PARENTS STUDENT DROP OFF AT BLUE STREET GATE

Parents are requested not to park across the Blue Street gate or park illegally while dropping off their sons in the area. These practices pose a significant safety risk to our students, as well as inconveniencing other motorists using the area. Given the high level of fitness of our boys a short walk along the footpath would not cause them any difficulty.

North Sydney Council officers will be policing the area on a regular basis to ensure parents are complying

with the law.

G. J. Robertson DEPUTY HEADMASTER?

They also advise their parents as follows:

?Parents are requested to approach the school via Edward St rather than coming up Mount St as congestion in Mount St is unsafe and an impediment to the buses attempting to transport senior students to Northbridge. "

?Pick-up- after School Clubs

If you are early, please park in the nearby streets and walk to school.?

This is clearly not acceptable to local residents. Shore have effectively walled in their compound but insist on exporting their traffic issues to the community.

Furthermore, Shore has recently told students not to drive to school, and if they do, not to park in Bank Street and finally have stopped students leaving the school at 2 hour intervals (as was their practice) to move cars from one 2 hour residents space to another.

I also note that in the Halcrow traffic report, which supposedly justifies the development on page 19, in relation to Preparatory School Drop-off and Pick-up Facility:

"Observations indicate that some congestion occurs at peak PM pick up period. This suggests that the facility is approaching capacity under its current operation management?

Condemned by their own words!

In light of the above and instructions to students, parents and presumably staff, it seems a further traffic report prepared for residents would not reflect the true situation as effectively, Shore are distorting the true situation.

Therefore, in the absence of a professional report to rebut the Halcrow findings, and as a lay person, I would like the Department to have regard to the following additional matters:

Halcrow Report

? The Halcrow report talks about how many additional seconds we might be delayed at traffic lights. While this is an issue, the main issue we face is speeding vehicles, safety and lack of parking. These items were not addressed.

? The effect of a 1/3rd increase in staff and students has, in my view, been totally underestimated and as stated above, Shore themselves believe the current situation is unsafe.

? They do not address how the traffic is to be managed into and onto Union Street with side by side driveways. The proposal provides for major traffic flow into and out of the school grounds, using not just the current entrance in Union Street, but also the newly acquired entrance via Graythwaite. This will become a nightmare for traffic, twice a day, as long stream of parents' cars travel west up Union Street to turn into the school, blocking other traffic as they wait for a gap in the oncoming traffic flow, and then loop out again, cutting across the parents still queued and attempting to turn into the school. These entrances are on the crest of a hill and suffer from westerly sun in the afternoon ? an accident waiting to happen!

It should also be noted that a number of the drivers are learners who take the opportunity to drive to and from school. Only increasing the prospect of an accident.

? There will also be even greater congestion caused by visitors to the school during events such as parent/teacher nights. The proposal ignores these access and congestion problems and arranges that their impacts occur in public streets rather than within the school grounds.

? The boosted student numbers will only the current poor conditions worse. The traffic

survey commissioned by the school, inadequate though it was in terms of actual responses to questions, still demonstrated very clearly that a large proportion of students arrive at school in private vehicles.

? The Halcrow report was undertaken on a 'typical school day'. This was in May 2009 before the canonisation of Mary McKillop and the opening of the 'Ark' building in North Sydney. Both have resulted in significant increases to traffic congestion.

? Office premises in McMahon's Point and North Sydney are currently not fully occupied and in particular, Diageo's new office and the old 2UE building on Blues Point Road were vacant at the time of the Halcrow report.

? The report does not address resident amenity and is written from the school's perspective which while interesting is not relevant as they sit behind their walls and do not interact with or it seem to care about the community beyond their boundaries. What is relevant is the effect on residents, office workers and people outside the compound. Areas not addressed include:

? Saturday sports drop off and pick up

? Truck deliveries at night and in the early hours of the morning, there are MANY now, and presumably these will increase

? Kids cruising for parking and car shuffling

? Parking

? Safety

? The report is self contradictory in that the text talks of nearing capacity, but the graph shows peaks exceeding capacity.

? There is no discussion on how construction traffic will be managed. Again this will have a very significant impact on local roads and residents.

Usage Survey

Turning now to the survey that formed the basis of the Halcrow report. It is evident that the results of this survey are of poor quality, and do not offer a reliable guide to the actual situation.

In Section 2.4.1, page 14, the report states:

"About 830 people responded to the survey (i.e. 667 students and 163 staffs), which is about a 46% survey response. While the data set is not perfect, it does provide a very definite picture of typical travel patterns."

Actually, the picture is a lot less clear than claimed.

The problem is that even though 830 people responded, many of them skipped some or most of the important questions.

For example:

? Only about 20% of students answered the question of whether they arrived at school as a driver or passenger

? Only 14% answered the question about how many other people were dropped off from the car they travelled in.

? Only 6% answered the question about how many people in total were dropped off from the car they travelled in.

? Only 14% answered the question about where they got out of the car.

? Only 6% answered the question about how many other people were in the car.

And perhaps most importantly,

? Only 6% answered the question about where they parked.

Furthermore, there has been no attempt to determine whether the differential response rates for different categories of respondent have a material effect on the interpretation of the responses.

In summary, on the basis of what has been reported, it is difficult to regard the results of the Halcrow report and travel questionnaire as representative of the actual situation.

Conclusion

The proposed development on the Graythwaite site by Shore should be refused as it is an over development in a residential area. It should be refused on the grounds set out in my original letter and furthermore, on traffic grounds alone, no addition to the numbers of staff and students should be

allowed.

Yours faithfully

Sandra Hudson

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Submission for Job: #4267 MP 10_0149 - Graythwaite Concept Plan

https://majorprojects.onhiive.com/index.pl?action=view_job&id=4267

Site: #2350 Graythwaite

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