

8 March 2011

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

**RE: GRAYTHWAITE PROJECT APPLICATION
PART 3A APP. NO: MP10-0150**

My wife and I are the joint owners of our family residence which is located at 99 Union Street, McMahon's Point. Our home is directly opposite the existing southern entry to Shore school which adjoins the school's recently acquired Graythwaite property. This property is currently subject to a Part 3A Development Application before the NSW State Government Department Of Planning.

As ex-parents of Shore school we have been well aware of the school's long held desire to obtain additional land for expansion around its existing North Sydney site. Although the purchase of the Graythwaite property was always the most obvious solution for the school's requirements, we note that this purchase remained extremely controversial throughout the process and that numerous objections were voiced by many members of the local community and beyond.

We are writing to voice our concerns in relation to the proposed development and the process under which this new development has been presented to the surrounding neighbourhood:

1. PROCESS

In view of the heightened emotion that accompanied Shore school's purchase of Graythwaite we believe that the NSW Department Of Planning should not allow the development of the property to proceed until there has been a much more extensive period of full and transparent disclosure to the local community of all the proposed stages of the development.

In our opinion this period should include opportunities for the local community to voice their opinion through public interaction with the developer. We do not consider that a one month's circularisation of the plans via the NSW Department Of Planning's website is anywhere near sufficient to allow the impact of such a large and complex development to be properly scrutinised by all interested parties within the local neighbourhood.

Furthermore we are concerned about the application of the Part 3A process to a development which places a very large amenity such as a school within a residential community. By their very nature schools (particularly private schools) are comprised of students and teachers who typically live away from the physical location of the school. Hence their limited interaction with the surrounding neighbourhood is unlikely to provide any real appreciation of the particular character of the local area. For this reason we believe that the involvement of Local Council in the development planning process would generally offer a better outcome for the local community.

At the very least, in order to replicate the involvement of Local Council we would expect that the NSW Department Of Planning **MUST ENSURE** that a Part 3A Application of this type involves a sufficient level of public local consultation. We consider this Application to have been very deficient in this respect.

2. TRAFFIC CONGESTION & PUBLIC SAFETY

We note the preparation of the traffic report as part of the Development Application. Whilst we are unable to challenge the car counts and factual information contained in the report, we would make the following observations:

- An additional 500 students plus 50 teachers at Shore school will very significantly increase the volume of car and pedestrian traffic along Union Street. It would appear from the plans that the Union Street gates are to become the main entrance to the school. With much higher numbers of daily student drop-offs/pick-ups and deliveries through the front gates this will greatly exacerbate the traffic flows and general congestion in Union Street.
- The proposed new entrance to Shore school is close to the crest of the hill in Union Street. Hence visibility for cars travelling in opposite directions is limited as they approach the entrance turn area. With the prospect of large groups of children milling around the front gates, we are concerned for both vehicle and pedestrian safety. Union Street is already a busy single lane through-road which many commuters rely on for their daily passage to and from work. It is likely that this section of Union Street will become unnecessarily dangerous for commuters, students and the local residents.

3. LOWER TERRACE – LAWN SPACE SHOULD BE MANDATED

We note that the Development Application states that it is intended to maintain the Lower Terrace area as open lawn space. This is no doubt offered as an “olive branch” to appease those who opposed the loss of the public park-space amenity when the property was sold to Shore school by the NSW State Government.

There is however also mention in the Development Application of levelling this Lower Terrace area. This would not seem necessary unless the school envisages an alternative use for the space. We are concerned that the school could have an alternate plan for this space which it has not yet articulated in any of the public material.

Given the importance of this “green space” to the local environment and the local community, we would ask that the Department Of Planning makes specific reference in its approval to this area by prohibiting its use for any purpose other than as a garden/lawn area. To allow otherwise would be in direct contradiction of the wishes of the local community.

SUMMARY

We make our submission in good faith and hope that the NSW Department Of Planning can appreciate the concerns that we have raised.

We have made no political donations in the last two years.

TONY & NINA DAVIDSON

(registered joint owners 99 Union Street McMahons Point NSW 2060)

Copies to:

- The Hon. Tony Kelly, MLC – Minister for Planning, Minister for Lands – planning@lpma.nsw.gov.au
- The Hon. Joe Hockey MP – Federal Member for North Shore & Shadow Treasurer – joe@joehockey.com
- Ms Jillian Skinner – Member for North Shore & Shadow Minister for Health – Jillian.Skinner@parliament.nsw.gov.au
- Mr Brad Hazzard MP – Shadow Minister for Planning – Wakehurst@parliament.nsw.gov.au
- Mr Ben Eveleigh – Planner, NSW Department Of Planning – ben.eveleigh@planning.nsw.gov.au
- Ms Genia Mccaffery – Mayor, North Sydney Council – mayor@northsydney.nsw.gov.au