

## Notes for Independent Public Hearing Panel meeting - 4 November 2020

from Clare McElroy  
5 Wyatt Ave Belrose  
claredmcelroy@gmail.com

### DA2019/1420 - Alterations and Additions to John Colet School 6-8 Wyatt Avenue Belrose

Thank you for the opportunity to address to the panel. I regret that I'm unable to attend the teleconference. I'm making this submission because the assessment report from Northern Beaches Council has not responded to many issues I raised in my previous submissions for this DA, or else the assessment responses have been unsatisfactory.

The inconsistencies with the Desired Future Character statement and local planning controls have been discussed in some detail in my written submission to Northern Beaches Council for DA 2019/1420 and I would urge the panel to PLEASE read this previous submission as it contains a great deal of detail to support my objections – details that I do not have the opportunity to raise today.

I also addressed the Sydney North Planning Panel by teleconference on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019 regarding Mod 2019/0627, which relates to this DA.

#### **Car Parking.**

- The applicant has not provided, and cannot provide, enough on-site parking for staff. In accordance with Schedule 17, the applicant is required to have **one on-site parking space for each staff member in attendance**. This includes teaching and non-teaching staff. This was stated in the approval for stage 1 of the masterplan DA2015/0558.
- Council's assessment report for DA2019/1420 states that the approved provision of car parking on the existing school site is satisfactory in accordance with schedule 17. As explained below, the on-site parking provision is NOT in accordance with schedule 17 as there are insufficient spaces for all staff in attendance.
- According to the My Schools government website, John Colet School has **50 staff**. The school has based its parking plan (submitted for DA2015/0558) on the claim that it will have a total of 26 staff for 225 students and 28 staff for 285 students (see consultant's report below). Regardless of whether staff are full or part time, there is a huge discrepancy in the total number of staff claimed to be at the school.
- Traffic and Parking assessment report by McLaren Traffic Engineering for DA2015/0558. In this report, is the following statement:  
*"Section 5.2 Staff Car Parking Requirement The majority of the staff are part-time and the school currently has 26 staff (teaching and non-teaching) for 225 students. The staff increase to accommodate 285 students will be in the order of two (2) additional staff for*

*Stage 1 and in future by a further two (2) staff for 350 student level (i.e. 4 extra staff from 225 current to 350 student level). This will result in a total of 30 staff (teaching and non-teaching) at the 350 student level.”*

- According to my surveys, up to 27 staff vehicles are parking outside the school (this was on Mondays and Fridays) with a median weekly number of 18 staff cars per day. I live about 150 metres from the school and there are staff cars parked outside my house every school day. How can the school be providing all necessary parking when so many vehicles are unable to park in the school grounds?
- The fact that staff are finding parking on the street or in Wyatt Reserve car park is irrelevant. They are required to park on site. The fact that the school has insufficient space to provide the required on-site parking indicates that the site is too small and over-developed. The school has only a small frontage along Wyatt Avenue and all arrivals, departures and traffic are concentrated into an area of 100m or so. There are no other road frontages, unlike other schools in the area.
- In addition, parking spaces 9-12 are in the 10m side setback area of the site on the eastern boundary. This setback area is supposed to be free of car parking, buildings and structures. There is no recognition or assessment of this non-compliance in Council’s assessment report.

### **Building bulk, height and setback**

- The proposed building does not comply with provisions in the WLEP. The non-compliance with building height and setbacks, the visual impact and the inconsistency with the Desired Future Character statement, have been discussed in detail in my previous written submission. The original design was already non-compliant and intrusive. Why has council approved further changes to the design (Mod2019/0627) that push the non-compliance even further and increase the visual impact more? This is totally out of character
- In particular, *Clause 66 Building Bulk* in the WLEP. Instead of progressively increasing the setbacks as the building height increases, council has agreed to a *taller* design that *reduces* the side setback and allows for the lower section of the building to now be filled in so that it creates a solid visual bulk. I don’t see how the reduced side setback and design variation can be justified, other than that it is for the applicant’s convenience.
- The assessment response to the non-compliant 5m setback on the western boundary is that there will be adequate landscaping to soften the built form. This is an 11m tall uninterrupted wall that will be highly visible from the street, despite being a side wall. The landscape plan demonstrates that this will not be possible. The revised landscaping plan submitted with Mod2019/0627 shows that this vegetation screening is comprised of small shrubs and forbs and there are two small trees. There’s only 5m width which must accommodate “dense screen plantings” and a retaining wall. It is not believable to propose that the vegetation in the plan will in any way compensate for the non-compliant boundary setbacks and visual intrusion.

### **Landscaping**

- The amended landscape plan does not comply with recommendations made by Council's biodiversity officer for the masterplan DA2015/0558. Due to the endangered species *Grevillea caleyi*, and endangered Duffys Forest Ecological Community on site, no banksia and grevillea species are to be used and only native plants of local provenance are to be planted. This has not been done in the landscape plan submitted with this application. The assessment report has not recognised this. Nor has the planting for stage 1 complied with this condition.
- Additionally, stage 1 of the masterplan involved the removal of around 40 remnant native trees. This removal was justified by the applicant and approved by council on the basis that it would be offset by planting of 16 local eucalypts. The landscape plan has now been modified and there is not one local eucalypt species being planted as an offset. This is a high conservation area with an EEC on site and this is an unacceptable outcome.

### **Conclusion**

My family has been dealing with relentless DAs from this applicant for over 20 years. I cannot overstate the stress we continue to be put through, with almost yearly applications and modifications, usually arriving in time for the Christmas break, and the daily disruptions to neighbourhood amenity as we try to go about our business. The visual impact of the school, the traffic and parking disruptions, and the loss and degradation of the site's bushland continues to cause us great distress. It is beyond frustrating to see the applicant's continued non-compliance with previous development consent conditions and to see that legitimate and well-founded community objections continue to be brushed aside in council assessments. I urge the panel to cross reference council's assessment report with community submissions and previous approvals as I feel so much is being missed or dismissed.

Thank you for your time,

Clare McElroy