



HORNSBY CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

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Director of Social Infrastructural Assessment
Attention: John Doubleday

Re Blue Gum School proposal at 1 Rosemead Rd, Hornsby (Heritage Home), DA/1119/2019

Dear Sir.

Our Society previously lodged a submission with Hornsby Shire Council on 22/1/2020 concerning this proposed development.

This Development Application (DA) has been carefully reviewed in full on line on Hornsby Shire Council's web site and we advise that we object to the proposal for the following reasons.

- This heritage home should be preserved intact with no modifications to the building or grounds. This DA is seen as a thin edge of the wedge for future proponents to modify this lovely heritage home which is seen as one of the most beautiful within this shire and situated within a high Heritage Conservation Area. The home and its gardens must remain intact in their entirety.
- All of the mature trees were large trees at the time that the Mason family moved into the home in 1953 and many are now 100+ yrs old, far more than the 40+yrs stated in the arborist report. Many of these trees and shrubs are rainforest plants which have attracted many birds which the Mason family have been recorded during their 49yrs occupancy and include: Lyrebirds, Satin Bowerbirds, White headed Pigeons, Painted Button-quail and Topknot Pigeon (*Lopholaimus antarcticus*) an uncommon nomadic. The loss of the proposed trees on this large property together with the planned activities will result in these shy birds not visiting the vicinity.
- The internal modifications: widening of doorways with removal of architraves and original doors, removal of an internal wall, installation of additional toilets and base flooring for these wet areas, balustrade modifications and other modifications entail changes to the historical heritage values. The wonderful old staircase balustrades, architraves and other internal woodwork are made from Australian Red Cedar (*Toona ciliata*). These proposed modifications would render it almost impossible to restore this heritage home to its original fittings and design. There is a full marble fireplace in the study of the ground floor. These feature details were not even mentioned in the Heritage 21 report.

- The removal of the magnificent tree (*Angophora costata*) was later seen to be reasonably healthy, those doubtful upper branches could have been trimmed or removed without destroying the whole tree especially before any DA approval.
- The planned number of students (80) will result in an increase in traffic in Rosemead Rd, Dural and William Sts. These streets are narrow and the resultant increase will cause additional problems in traffic overcrowding which are now difficult enough due to resident and commuter parking on both sides of the streets. William St. has to carry the burden of traffic and services the western end of Rosemead Rd housing settlement in the valley. It can be difficult at most times of the day to negotiate where it is necessary for vehicles to pull over to the kerb to allow those cars travelling in the opposite direction to pass. The report on the anticipated road traffic though these roads does not appear to have a realistic balanced outlook to this problem. These roads are too narrow for an increase in traffic and cannot be widened.
- The mains water pressure for the west side of Hornsby was carried out by the Fire Brigade approximately 3 years ago and found to be barely adequate to supply the existing residents. (This was brought to the attention at a meeting with HSC and Matt Kean MP). In the event of a severe bushfire, low water pressure combined with road traffic difficulties in these streets, could make the outcome catastrophic. It is considered that water storage tanks should be installed.
- We consider that it is totally inappropriate for a school to be situated in this beautiful location.

Has your department notified all residents in the vicinity of this site that it is now open for public exhibition?

Has your department called for all submissions previously lodged with Hornsby Council regarding this development application to be forwarded to you? We have written to Council concerning this matter but have not received any confirmation.

We sincerely hope that this development should not be given approval.

Yours sincerely

David Martin
Secretary
On behalf of our President: Richard Mason

23/07/2020