

From: [Jeff Parnell](#)
To: [Sally Munk](#)
Subject: Varrovale Noise Review
Date: Thursday, 11 October 2018 4:38:02 PM

Hi Sally,

Thanks for the info you have provided. Following are what I believe are the salient points in no particular order:

- The Retreat Centre is a significantly sensitive noise receiver, which will experience an increase in road traffic noise from the development (which is a traffic generating development). The levels predicted are not high in absolute terms, but would be clearly audible anthropogenic noise sources.
- Assessment of the Retreat Centre does not fit well with road noise guidelines that at best deal with 'Passive Recreation' and 'Places of Worship'. The planning scheme does not seek to protect tranquillity in most instances, however if it did, this would be a compelling case. It may be more appropriate to consider this site somewhat akin to the way visual impacts are assessed. It is almost the intrinsic ambience that is the feature of the area.
- The Acoustic Report has not considered the primary uses of the area, and this is a significant deficiency in the report. If it had, it would have been obvious that the provision of noise barriers, or worse, air conditioners (so that doors and windows could be kept closed) is not a realistic option. These may work for offices or urban residences but not for tranquil retreats / monasteries where open outdoor space is the objective.
- The project seems to have been designed with little consideration of road traffic noise impact. Specifically, the Response to Submissions does not attempt to investigate mitigation by means of redesign of the project layout. In particular, the entrance to the development appears to be located in the worst possible position for noise impacts. On first inspection it would appear that there is considerable scope to reduce noise impacts by judicious design of the project site yet the Acoustic Report dismisses this option as being generally neither reasonable nor feasible because of the number of receivers.
- It would have been expected that options for the project to demonstrate best practice such as ensuring traffic to the site does not have to pass the most sensitive receivers (Retreat Centre, Monastery). This could be potentially achieved by having entrances to both the Nth and Sth on St Andrews Road with traffic controls to ensure they do not need to double back. The close proximity of the internal road to Varroville House is not justified despite being contentious for a number of reasons.
- Any future upgrading of St Andrews Road is likely to have similar if not greater impacts. This aspect needs serious consideration as any requirements for this project would (and probably should) have implications how the road is considered in the future. For example, it is not reasonable to require the proposal to redesign to minimise noise impacts, and then allow a road redevelopment that would have masked any noise from the project.

Happy to discuss further as required.

Regards
Jeff

Jeff Parnell
Noise Specialist

NSW Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39 | SYDNEY NSW 2001 | T 02 9274 6494 | E jeff.parnell@planning.nsw.gov.au

