

To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Trinity Grammar School Redevelopment SSD 10371

Dear Prity

I am writing this objection to the above to you as concerned resident. My wife Heather Warton and I own and reside at 1 Victoria Square Ashfield, which is located 220m from Trinity Grammar. I apologise for the lateness of the submission which was unavoidable due to distracting priorities arising as a consequence of the COVID-19 situation. I hope that it can still be considered.

We object to the proposed development for the following reasons.

1. **Increase in Student and Staff numbers and consequent impacts.** The proposal is to increase student numbers from 1,500 to 2,100 (40% increase) plus an associated increase in staff by 44. The limit of 1,500 was determined in association with past Court cases as what the school considered necessary to cater for reasonable growth. From a resident perspective this was considered excessive.

The school has been increasingly becoming an issue in the 20 years we have lived in Victoria Square because of redevelopment of houses in Seaview Street impacting the heritage significant character of the area, increasing numbers resulting in additional traffic during school weeks and noise and parking issues during school events. Schools such as this, in a residential context that primarily serve students from outside the area, need to be subject to a Masterplan that sets limits to growth. This was the outcome of earlier expansion proposals of Trinity where they ultimately accepted a limit of 1,500 students *Trinity Grammar School v Ashfield Council [2007] NSW LEC 733*.

In 2014 Trinity sought to increase student numbers to 1,700 which was not approved by the Council and refused on appeal to the Court in [Trinity Grammar School v Ashfield Council \[2015\] NSWLEC 1086](#). The Court rejected that proposal and noted a few key points:

- Trinity had not objected to the 1,500 cap in the 2007 hearing.
- An increase to 1,700 would be a material change because of the impacts that would be generated.
- On merit the additional traffic impacts, and to a lesser extent noise, would be unacceptable.

Trinity is clearly seeking an alternate approval pathway in the hope that it will slip through or by proposing an increase substantially above what was rejected by the Court they will get some compromised increase close to what they sought. The detailed assessments considered by the Court can lead to only one conclusion – that no increase in student numbers is acceptable.

2. **Traffic and parking** – As outlined in the Court case the additional traffic impacts are unacceptable. The traffic increase during school terms also occurs in Clissold Street which affects us (being a corner site). Victoria Square is being used for parking by at least school students (that I have witnessed) on occasions. The traffic and parking issues worsen considerably when the school has events. Apart from the direct issues with traffic and road noise, there are serious road safety issues with speed and poor driver behaviour. Past development, including recent major complying development which could not be fully assessed and conditioned should have been accompanied by traffic calming measures, and this should be caught up by a condition if anything is approved on the school site.
3. **Heritage and Visual Impacts** – The impact of the proposed maintenance building and new entrance off Seaview Street is totally unacceptable. While there could also be unacceptable heritage and visual impacts elsewhere, we are only concerned with Seaview Street because of its immediate effect on Victoria Square.

Trinity managed to convince Council to let them remove some large mature Hills Figs street trees in the verge of Seaview Street about 1-2 years ago. This was on the pretence that they were affecting the existing residential

buildings. It turns out that these trees were opposite where the Maintenance building is proposed. The TPZs for these trees would have constrained the maintenance buildings and their removal now seems like an obvious contrivance.

Coming from the West along Seaview Street the maintenance building will be prominent, particularly as now the Fig trees are gone. The southern side of Seaview Street is the Victoria Square Heritage conservation area. The proposed maintenance building is a horribly designed building and compound in any residential area and in this case unacceptable replaces residential buildings that are important in the streetscape.

The maintenance building will be located on R2 Low Density Residential zoned land. The southern edge of the Trinity site is mostly zoned R2 and this importantly ensures that the character of the school merges with the heritage significant residential area to the north. It is understood that the school use is permissible but this does not mean that design of the development should not retain a residential character as intended for an R2 zone, which could appropriately involve adapting and using the existing residential buildings for any school use (not necessarily a maintenance depot).

A significant impact upon the heritage significance of Victoria Square will result. It will set the tone for Victoria Square when approached from the west along Seaview Street and diminish its setting.

I trust that the above comments will be considered in the assessment and I thank you in anticipation. Let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Paul Grech

Director



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