



THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY Inc.
For Community and Heritage
Est 1964

For the attention of: Aditi Coomar
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Suite 15.02, Level 15, 135 King Street
Sydney NSW 2000

29 October 2021

Dear Aditi

**STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT SSD - 10421
WEIGALL SPORT COMPLEX, SYDNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL, NEILD AVENUE PADDINGTON**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a further submission regarding this proposal.

The Paddington Society notes that the Draft Conditions of Consent stipulate a number of Design Amendments to the eastern components of Building 1 (Sports Complex building).

Most welcome are Amendments B1 (a) and (b).

These require increasing the setbacks from the southern boundary by 4m for Level 1, plus a further 3m setback increase for Level 2 of the Multi-purpose Sports Halls to the east of the stair core.

These amendments should mitigate to some extent the reduction of solar access to a number of the north facing habitable rooms of several apartments at 8 Vialoux Avenue and 25 to 33 Lawson Street.

Amendment B1 (d) is also welcome; it requires including non-trafficable areas plus roof-top planting along the southern edges of both relocated roofs of the Multi-purpose Sports Halls.

If such planting is well maintained, the above amendments will provide some token compensation to those residents who will still suffer greatly reduced amenity from the loss of views and outlook towards the north and north-east resulting from the overall bulk and scale of Building 1.

Amendment B1 (c) is unclear; it requires relocating the Building 1 eastern floor plates as noted above, and also elevating the relevant parts of the northern wall above the ground floor outdoor circulation space and bleacher seating.

It is unclear from the available documentation whether this eastern part of the building will therefore be reduced or increased in height as a result of this amendment?

- We trust - and request - that the overall 17m building height should be *reduced* to further mitigate the loss of views, outlook and amenity of the most affected neighbouring residents.
- We also request that the Conditions of Consent should include a requirement for further modulation of the Building 1 built form, including the northern wall, as well as reducing the circulation core height and its roof-line overhang, in order to reduce the apparent bulk and mass of the building when viewed from Neild Avenue and all surrounding viewpoints to south and east.

Amendment B2 (a) requires amendment of the Neild Avenue pedestrian entrance and path to retain and protect three significant mature trees in addition to those listed in Condition A2.

The Society welcomes retention and protection of these mature trees on this very special site.

It is very disappointing that the Draft Conditions of Consent do not presently address many other major concerns and objections noted in the Paddington Society's submission of 17 December 2020.

Major concerns in that submission included:

- Broad planning initiatives for the total valley floor
- Landscape sensitivity
- Amount and location of car parking
- Built form, height, bulk and scale
- Overshadowing
- Loss of views and outlook from adjacent housing
- Location of utilities and services
- Vehicular access and removing school traffic from local roads
- Management of construction and
- Lack of public benefit

We will not repeat all of the Society's objections here; some are partially addressed in outline on the preceding page, but we ask the Commission to refer to that earlier correspondence.

We have noted that many of the submissions from residents in neighbouring properties, as well as comments of Woollahra Councillors and some staff members recorded during recent consultations have shared and elaborated on many of the same (and additional related) concerns and objections.

The Society's supplementary comments include:

Planning on the Valley Floor / Amount and location of car parking

Building B: we reiterate our objection to the construction of this above-ground parking structure, degrading the existing unobstructed views of open space from Lawson Street and the public domain.

The central row of Alma Street palms is heritage listed in WLEP 2014 and the view north from Lawson Street is listed as a significant view / vista in WDCP 2015, Chapter C1 Paddington HCA.

Located almost on the eastern boundary, very close to Alma Street, the two level unroofed building will be intrusive, the vista blocked and dominated by the structure and the upper level of parked cars.

- No amount of landscaping will make the siting of this structure acceptable, but if it is to be approved, it should be relocated further towards the west and north to allow planting of a dense landscaped screen along the eastern boundary and the southern facade. (However, see below **)

Vehicular access

Local road congestion: the Society again maintains that there should be no further traffic beyond that presently generated in the residential local road network of Alma and Lawson Streets and Vialoux Avenue, all of which are already under regular congestion stress due to existing Weigall sporting events and SGS Preparatory School related term time vehicular traffic.

Drop off and pick-up of students already severely disrupts local residents on a daily basis, with slow moving queuing vehicles in these and surrounding streets during school terms and sport periods.

Imposing additional two-way vehicular traffic from students and supporters visiting the Sports Complex will create unacceptable additional traffic burdens on surrounding residents. The traffic burden will extend well beyond the present hours of use of the existing sporting facilities.

- The Society has consistently noted that, at the very least, all vehicular site ingress, should be from Neild Avenue. Alma Street should be for egress only for school-activity-related traffic.

**** Recommendation**

- Since parts of Building 1 floor plates are to be relocated northwards as required in B1 (a) and (b), we ask the Commission to re-examine the Society's recommendation (to the SGS design team during 2020 consultations) that, with accompanying minor adjustments to the floor plates of the western parts of the building, an under-cover west-to-east driveway link can be created for school drop-off and pick-up traffic.
- Access from Neild Avenue can be combined with the proposed delivery and service access.
- The driveway link can provide a one-way (possibly two-way) path, which will also provide associated visitor carparking for sporting event days.
- The drop between the relative ground levels of Vialoux Avenue / Alma Street and the Valley floor will allow for landscaping screening and concealing the driveway and the incoming / exiting vehicles from both the Lawson Street flats and the playing fields. The driveway / parking zone length will be equivalent to (or greater than?) the driveway / parking length in Building 2.
- **This is a once in a lifetime planning opportunity to resolve both the problems of access and congestion for daily pick-up / drop-off plus the additional traffic and parking pressures created by intensification on the site related to the Sport Complex usage.**
- **Importantly, it will also eliminate the need for construction of Building B, with all the attendant negatives outlined above. If the need for further additional car parking can actually be demonstrated, surface parking, suitably screened by landscaping can be accommodated elsewhere on the valley floor for sporting event days.**

Construction traffic and site management:

- We are aware that Councillors and some staff share our concerns about the major detrimental impacts of the traffic and construction management proposals and have proposed that site access should be via the northern part of Neild Avenue, with egress closer to the southern part of Neild Avenue. **The Society supports such a proposal, or a variation thereof.**
- We repeat our previous submission that, with some 500m of peripheral arterial and regional roads adjoining the northern and western site boundaries, construction traffic **must not rely** on access from and egress to the southern local road network, as is presently proposed.
- **The proposed construction traffic routes on the narrow local roads are unacceptable.** Adverse impacts on residential amenity in the precinct *and* on the SGS community and beyond will be considerable in terms of safety, noise, fumes, vibration, dust and environmental pollution, as well as risk of potential damage to private property, street landscape and public infrastructure.
- **We reaffirm our strong advocacy for relocation of the proposed routes;** the narrow local roadways of Vialoux Avenue, Alma and Lawson Streets should be prohibited for construction traffic and trucks of all sizes.
- **On-site parking must also be provided for construction workers and site management, in addition to on-site work zones.** Parking pressures in the already over-stretched local road network must not be further exacerbated during the 18-24 month construction period.

Cumulative construction management and on-going post-construction impacts:

We repeat our concern about potential prolonged disruption to local residents if construction and site management are not coordinated with timing of the adjacent redevelopment on the Hakoah site.

Hours of work and construction programs must be coordinated for both sites and be consistent with Council's standard hours of work, including for noisy operations.

- We have previously welcomed the SGS proposal to establish a Community Consultative Committee, which includes local residents and community representation.
- It should continue to operate post-construction, to review and comment on hours of use of the completed Sports Complex and playing fields and the impact of visitor numbers and management of the overall facility on the local and wider community.
- We have previously advocated for responsive and effective on-going complaints and response procedures and urge that this be included in any conditions of consent.

Public benefit

This proposal presently provides little public benefit while having significant detrimental effects on the neighbouring area in terms of the loss of views and outlook, overshadowing, increased, and increasing, traffic movements and car parking pressures and loss of amenity.

We share the hope of other local schools, the Council and the community at large that community use of the new Sports Complex facilities will eventuate, and urge the Commission to ensure that such future use does not remain a theoretical concept expressed only during past community consultations.

The Paddington Greenway

The extensive SGS site includes green areas along Rushcutters Creek and the railway viaduct, identified by Council, the City of Sydney and the local community as part of an enhanced and linked green pedestrian and cycling corridor. It will create and enhance active transport links between Centennial Park and Rushcutters Bay.

The State government has endorsed this proposal, including it in the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment Discussion Paper, 'A 50 year Vision for Greater Sydney's Parklands' and has awarded a grant to Council to progress the planning and design of the Rushcutters Creek section of the proposed Greenway.

- We note that the SGS proposal includes preparation of a Green Travel Plan and that this is included in the Draft Conditions of Consent.
- The Paddington Society joins with Council in strongly advocating for the inclusion in the Conditions of Consent that the SGS continues to liaise with and support the proposed Greenway in the future, if that project proceeds.
- This is not an onerous exchange for the considerable uplift in site facilities and value potentially achieved by approval of the Sports complex proposal.

CONCLUSION

We repeat our previous submission that this development presents an opportunity to resolve key issues of ongoing concern to the Paddington community and beyond; if properly resolved they would provide an enduring legacy to the local community as well as great benefits to SGS.

Yours faithfully



Will Mrongovius President, The Paddington Society, per EH Tel: 