

From: [Abigail Kazal](#)
To: [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)
Subject: Weigall Sports Complex Sydney Grammar School
Date: Thursday, 28 October 2021 8:31:06 PM

To: Independent Planning Commission Panel

Re: Weigall Sports Complex, Sydney Grammar School (SSD-10421)

Please find my submission below, which is followed by the Assessment of key issues in the DPIE Assessment Report.

I am the daughter of an elderly resident of 29-31 Lawson St, Paddington, who will be severely impacted by the proposed development. I have been involved in advocating for my elderly mother's needs in this matter, helping her previously submit an objection, as English isn't her first language.

I have major concerns about the conclusions of the DPIE Assessment Report, in that it appears to favour the needs of the Applicant over those of the surrounding residents, particularly those on the southern border of the proposed development, of 29-33 Lawson St. I have provided details of these concerns in the section on Assessment of Key Issues in the DPIE Assessment Report.

I resided in one of the units of 29-33 Lawson St from age 13 to 27, and thus have a good understanding of the location in question and the needs of the residents. This building is public housing, and thus provides a home for people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions, as well as other vulnerabilities. Reading through the Report as well as the associated documents, I was extremely concerned by what appears to be a gross underestimation of the impact of this development, particularly in terms of severe and devastating loss of vista and outlook (including sunlight and warmth, fresh airflow, privacy), as well as noise, exhaust and light pollution. What I find most disturbing is that Sydney Grammar would choose this specific site for their very substantial development, which is immediately adjacent to *the most* densely populated area of their grounds. Their choice is unreasonable and un-neighbourly. There is ample space on the grounds to consider sites that have minimal impact on surrounding residents, for example, on the northern border adjacent to New South Head Road. The existing building along this border as well as the historical Sydney Stadium that functioned on this site from 1908 to 1970 attest to the stability of the foundations in this area, as opposed to the flooding risk elsewhere on the grounds.

I am deeply concerned about the suffering this proposed development would cause my mother and her neighbours. They would in effect be living on a construction zone for at least two years, with almost constant drilling and blasting, with the resulting noise, vibration, dust and pollution, as well as the removal of mature trees adjoining the property. There will be a main road immediately in front of their building, with the almost constant car traffic of drop off/pick up and associated noise and exhaust fumes. The opening hours of the sports complex will be from 9am to 10pm Monday to Sunday, including the use of multiple basketball courts and swimming pools. This is an unacceptable level of activity in such close proximity to a residential area. It is an understatement to say that by choosing this site for their proposed development, Sydney Grammar are being extremely inconsiderate of the surrounding community. Furthermore, it is grossly unreasonable and unfair to expect the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community to shoulder the burden and endure the impact of a development that would service the needs of only the most privileged and well-resourced of society.

Yours sincerely,
Abigail Kazal

Assessment of key issues in the DPIE Assessment Report

I strongly disagree with the assessment of the key issues in the DPIE Assessment Report. Overall, it appears that the needs of the Applicant were prioritised to those of the surrounding community, particularly the residents of 29-33 Lawson Street, Paddington. Specifically, key issues were either minimised or ignored entirely. These are detailed below.

Incorrect assessment of view loss/overshadowing

The Report states that “the Department is satisfied that **the Applicant has demonstrated that the building at this location would have an acceptable level of amenity impacts (view loss, overshadowing and overlooking) on apartments within 29-33 Lawson Street, 9 Vialoux Avenue, 24 Alma Street and 12-16, 18-28 Neild Avenue (assessed in Section 6.3.)**” This conclusion is based on an analysis undertaken by the Applicant, which included photos of the current views from unit 18/29-31 Lawson St (on page 50 of the Assessment Report and page 15 of the Applicant’s Response to Submissions 23 April 2021). These photos incorrectly depict a very limited view, being taken from the bedroom rather than the lounge room and at an extreme angle to the left, rather than straight ahead. I have attached here recent photos from the loungeroom of this apartment that depict the actual, correct view. I am aware that my mother allowed representatives from Sydney Grammar to take these photos during this ‘analysis’ process, not expecting that the images would subsequently be intentionally manipulated to create a misleading impression of limited views and outlook. Please note that the large tree in the view is a deciduous tree, shedding its leaves fully over the winter months, thereby allowing sunlight and warmth into the apartments and common garden area. Considering the actual outlook evident in these correct photos, the impact of the proposed development should be re-assessed as severe and devastating. The proposed development would cause severe reduction of light and sunlight, loss of warmth in winter, loss of fresh air and harbour breezes and loss of distant vista.

Inadequate consideration of noise impact

I note from Sydney Grammar’s Response to Submissions (page 18), the sports complex is proposed to be in use from **9am to 10pm Monday to Sunday**, including the pools and basketball courts. Given the proximity of the complex to residential units of 29-33 Lawson St, this would constitute an unacceptable level of noise and disturbance. This was not addressed adequately by the Report.

Inadequate consideration of building and water infrastructure impacts

Another key issue that the Report failed to address adequately is the impact of the proposed development on the infrastructure of the buildings on the southern border, particularly 29-31 Lawson St. This building was originally built mid-century, when there was considerably less development in the area. The recent substantial development of Neild Avenue nearby led to structural damage in the building of 29-33 Lawson St, including cracked walls and plumbing issues (including sewage overflows and burst pipes), leading to very significant impacts on the residents. It is doubtful that the current infrastructure of this site could adequately support the proposed development.

Inadequate consideration of alternative sites

The other major concern with the DPIE Assessment Report is inadequate consideration of alternative sites for this development on the Weigall Playing Fields. For example, the corner of New South Head Rd and Neild Avenue, Rushcutters Bay, would be an ideal location in terms of its distance from residential

areas. The fact that there is a current building on that location shows that it is minimally affected by flooding. Indeed, historically this was the exact location of the Sydney Stadium, a substantial sporting and entertainment venue with a seating capacity of 15,000. Built in 1908, it was demolished in 1970 to make way for the construction of the Eastern Suburbs Railway (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney_Stadium).

Failure to consider the human impact

The fact that the building at 29-33 Lawson St is public housing means that the residents constitute some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged of our society. They are often the least able to adapt to negative changes due to limited resources. For example, the cost of arrangements that could mitigate negative impacts such as double glazing of windows or correcting structural damage caused by the construction of the development would be prohibitive for these residents. They would also have the least capacity to move if they struggled to adapt, leading to increasing strain and escalating disability. By contrast, The Applicant represents the most privileged of society, with ample resources at their disposal. Surely the minimal extra work and funds required in choosing an alternative site for this development, such as the corner of New South Head Road and Bayswater Road suggested above, would be well within their capabilities. It is grossly unreasonable and unfair to expect the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people to shoulder the burden and endure the impact of a development that would serve only the most privileged and well-resourced of society.



