**Subject: Cammeraygal High Senior Campus - DA214/17-149**

I am writing in my capacity as a member of the Cammeraygal community to raise my concerns about the Department of Education’s proposed design for the new West Street Senior Campus. I understand the planning proposal for this project will be considered by your Panel. One particular aspect of the proposed design is of significant concern: the lack of sufficient active recreational space. I outline below the details of my concerns and an alternate proposal put forward by the Cammeraygal community.

The Department’s Development Application

* The submitted DA is for the repurposing of the West Street site which includes largely internal works to the existing building and the construction of a mixed-use hall/indoor court that will be accommodated in a new single-storey building elevated above the existing ground level. This will be built on current open space.
* The elevated structure complicates disabled and emergency access, requiring travel to the hall through the main school building rather than directly from the car park.
* The entry to the hall is at the opposite end of the site to the car park and is invisible from the street making public access difficult and lengthy. This compromises security and affects the ability for the hall to be used by the community.
* The proposed site for the hall is on the largest active recreational space for a campus planned to have a capacity of 600 students by 2020.
* This proposed hall is the only active recreational space for a campus planned to have a capacity of 600 students.
* The construction of the hall significantly reduces outdoor recreational space. The outdoor area that will be accessible to students is less than 4m2 per child.
* The proposed design has several structural limitations. The pitched roof precludes options for future expansion.

The Cammeraygal Community’s alternative proposal for the hall

* The request from the Cammeraygal community is to revise the design of the new hall by aligning the footprint of the building to the level of the car park, to design a more efficient plan which reduces the size of the building, and make the roof flat which would provide a rooftop multi-purpose recreational space accessed either from level 1 of the school or via external stairs from the ground.
* This adds approximately 1000m2 of recreational space which could be configured in a variety of ways to cater to the needs of the diverse student body.
* In addition, the flat roof structure supports further expansion of the space, for example the addition of a new level of classrooms, if student enrolments exceed current planning estimates.
* The Cammeraygal P&C’s alternate proposal has a lower height making it less obtrusive to neighbours, and enables better solar penetration across the site. It also provides level disabled and emergency access directly from the car park, and can be secured separately to the rest of the school providing the option for out-of-hours use without impacting security for the overall campus.

Rationale for the Cammeraygal Community’s proposal

* Physical activity is one of the leading modifiable risk factors for mortality and morbidity among adults (WHO)…Patterns of activity in adulthood are often established during adolescence, making it an important period for promoting physical activity[[1]](#footnote-1). A school needs to provide different, flexible spaces and facilities which ensure inclusion and accessibility. These spaces should be provided not only for mandatory activities but to encourage and support non-mandatory activity during recess and lunch, both indoors and outdoors. With devastating and life-long impacts from sedentary lifestyles now a reality, it is important that the senior campus (catering to 15-18 year olds) provides opportunities for students to have the best possible chance of a healthy, active life at a time when study stress peaks. The Department’s proposal of a single court in the hall catering to 600 students is woefully inadequate and puts the physical and emotional wellbeing of our children at risk.
* Providing a number of multi-sport courts will also be of enormous benefit to the community due to the existing and ongoing shortage of playing facilities available for community use within the local government area.
* The feeder schools for Cammeraygal High School (Cammeray Public, Anzac Park Public and North Sydney Demonstration School) continue to have strong student growth (33% over the last three years). This, in addition to the impact of the light rail corridor through the catchment and anticipated apartment construction driving further student growth, strongly indicates that current planning estimates for Cammeraygal High student numbers will be exceeded. There are no further plans for high schools on the lower north shore which places significant pressure on the Cammeraygal campus to meet the demand. Ensuring the senior campus has been thoughtfully designed to facilitate easy expansion, as the Cammeraygal community’s proposal does, would appear to be in the best interests of both the Department of Education and the community.

How your panel can help

* We request that the Planning Panel separate the project into two parts for approval – works on the existing facilities, and the construction of the new hall.
* As the refurbishment of the existing building is largely internal works we request that approval is given for these works so that tender documentation can proceed. This will prevent delays to the progress and completion of the majority of the site, and will mitigate the risk that the Senior Campus is not completed in time for its January 2019 opening.
* We request that the design and construction of the new hall and recreational facilities be considered on its own; that the Planning Panel give in principle support to the Cammeraygal P&C scheme; that the Department be instructed to adopt the P&C scheme; and that the Department be required to work collaboratively with the school and the P&C.

Thank you for your urgent attention to our request.

Yours sincerely

1. “A Schools-based Intervention to Promote Physical Activity among Adolescent Girls” – University of Wollongong study commissioned by DoE. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)