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THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY Inc.  
For Community and Heritage  
Est 1964

The General Manager  
Woollahra Municipal Council  
PO Box 61, Double Bay NSW 1360

21 October 2015

Attention: Mr G Fotis, Planning and Development Division

**RE DA 438/2015/1**

**30 Alma Street, Paddington**

**Stage 1 concept proposal Development Application pursuant to Section 83B of the EP&A Act for building envelopes and indicative use of White City for a multi-purpose sports centre and registered club facilities including heritage interpretation strategy**

Dear Sir,

In principle The Paddington Society supports the ongoing use of the site for tennis and for private recreation purposes.

However we have a number of significant objections to this application. The application has some serious impacts on White City as a significant place, the Rushcutters Bay basin as a significant place and Paddington as a significant place.

The Society is extremely disappointed that the previous White City DCP 2007, the subject of years of Paddington community input has been abandoned.

To support the principles of the application we also have a number of comments and suggestions to improve what might be approved.

### **Stage 1 Application**

We would welcome an understanding of what Hakoah Club is actually seeking approval for. What drawings might actually be approved? MPDA 1050 A? MPDA 1061-1066A? It is important for us to understand what might be approved and what might be the considerations of any Stage 2 DA's.

## **Subdivision Application**

The subdivision application seems to assume the Stage 1 Application is approved? As the Maccabi site has no street access the relationship between the easements on the subdivision with the concept plans for Hakoah are important as the vehicular access required to the Maccabi tennis courts could impact the pedestrian environment of White City. It is important that any consent has strong consent conditions to support the quality of the pedestrian domain.

## **White City Heritage**

It seems that the proposed subdivision seeking 9 tennis courts is a key move that affects the ability to interpret the existing Centre court from a heritage point of view?

Whilst we appreciate the important retention of some elements of the existing fabric and the interpretation strategy the key elements of the heritage significance of White City, being the open valley and the Centre court, seem to have been impacted or lost in the proposal?

We object to the curved shape of the proposed clubhouse as contrary to the existing form of White City.

We object to the way that the clubhouse projects out into the open valley floor.

Note that the previous White City DCP 2007 identified that the new clubhouse should fit within the existing building footprint.

We object to the height of the proposed clubhouse in the open valley floor and to its obstruction of the skyline view across the valley from Neild Avenue.

We object to moving existing truss structures from their existing location at the western end of Glenmore Road

The commitment to the interpretation strategy should be a strong condition of consent.

The commitment to retention of existing heritage elements should be a strong condition of consent.

We also note that contrary to the statements made in the application White City is listed by the National Trust.

## **Heritage Landscape of White City and Rushcutters Bay**

The proposal as presented indicated there was little or no understanding of the wider context into which this site fits and how the proposal may respond to the landscape of the valley floor. This requires an understanding of the history of development of the area, the visual attributes

of the landform, the ecology of the valley and the landscape vegetation which supports it. A landscape strategy would establish the principles into which all development should fit in order to maintain a cohesive whole.

The Conservation Management Plan states it does not address landscape? The Conservation Management Plan should develop principles for the whole open valley of Rushcutters Bay. This is a significant failing of the application.

For example the impact of the proposed trees in the open valley floor should be reviewed. It may not be appropriate to fill the open valley with trees.

Note that the previous White City DCP 2007 identified minimising tree and shrub planting within the valley floor

## **Height**

Whilst there is an argument for heights that are similar to some adjoin heights at Grammar and existing heights on site these heights are pulled back from the “main open bowl” or open valley floor that is a very significant aspect of White City and Weigall. Built form is at the edges. The proposed “Clubhouse” building projects into the “main open bowl” by some 45 metres to the west of and 25 metres north of the alignment the existing north stand/clubhouse.

Consequently we do not agree that the new “clubhouse” defines an edge of the open valley floor. We suggest that the “clubhouse” should be lower as it intrudes into what we call the “bowl” and will be a significant bulk. We submit that this building be set at RL 16.45 to the top of the roof top of roof in compliance with the existing LEP.

The stand seating seems quite steep and impacts on views from the clubhouse to the valley floor from the lower level of the clubhouse.

## **Height exceeds 11.5m height control**

The request for exemption does not seem to address the matters raised above? Note that the maximum height requested for the “Clubhouse” exceeds the height of the parapet at Whites across Glenmore Road, far from the open valley floor of White City.

We object to the proposed height of the clubhouse and submit it should comply with the existing LEP.

Note that the previous White City DCP 2007 identified a maximum clubhouse height of RL 12.5 AHD.

## **Form of the clubhouse/grandstand proposal**

The banana shaped form of the grandstand appears as an alien element on the site. It cannot be justified in terms of view lines as this is a rectangular field and only serves to put spectators further from the action. This building should be reconsidered as a more regular and simple rectangular form which would sit more comfortably with the Paddington built-forms.

Note that the previous White City DCP 2007 identified that any new clubhouse building should fit within the outermost alignment of the existing clubhouse and the four grandstands.

## **Form and density**

Whilst much of the site is open it is unfortunate that the overall result is one of overly dense development which has been shoe-horned onto the site. This is further emphasized by building forms and footprints such as the grandstand which intrudes uncomfortably into the site and the valley floor.

## **Trees**

It seems that the consequence of the extent of the basement proposed to the site boundary is to remove all the trees on the western site boundary. A basement located away from this boundary could see the retention of these trees. We object to the removal of these trees along the western boundary.

There are 8 significant trees along the boundary of Hakoah and Maccabi along Glenmore Road. We object to the removal of any of these trees.

## **Pedestrian access**

There does not appear to be strong pedestrian access from Alma Street and through to the various proposed facilities? The entry point at Alma Street is very narrow and it would appear that the entry point is proposed to be shared between vehicles and pedestrians. We object to this poor and unsafe public domain outcome.

The Paddington Society is disappointed that the public pedestrian access from Alma Street to New South Head Road and to Maloney's Lane is no longer a requirement.

Note that the previous White City DCP 2007 identified that link.

## **Parking and access**

The Glenmore Road frontage is a significant public frontage for White City.

We object to the child care access and drop off/car park. It would be highly visible from Glenmore Road and Cambridge Street and the 3D imagery on the impact of this seems misleading to us.. Does the drop off and pick up actually work in a safe and secure manner? We suspect it would also bury the stepped landscape form proposed down from Glenmore Road.

The car park dramatically exceeds the Council requirements.

The access bridges/ramp will impact existing trees on Glenmore Road

The entry on Glenmore Road does not seem to be accessible for vehicles coming from east and south? We suspect very unsafe U turns would be encouraged at the foot of Cambridge Street. Traffic from the east would have to find routes to the roundabouts at Goodhope and Lawson and up at Five Ways to be able to approach the childcare proposed access from Glenmore Road.

We object to the access and car park proposed from Glenmore Road.

Council requirements be satisfied with access via Alma Street through the basement car park.

With regard to the increase in car parking from the 80 or 90 places today to 270 spaces will the proposed parking ensure there is no additional parking pressure on surrounding streets, particularly places of unrestricted parking?

### **Sydney Grammar School dual vehicular access**

Whilst it is recognized that road duplication may ease school pick-up traffic, it is most inappropriate for this to cross the valley floor which results in proposed tree-planting to hide the scar. A principle of design, if there were a broader landscape assessment, would surely be to keep the valley floor open. A total master plan for the precinct may find an alternative solution to this issue.

### **Traffic**

As noted above we are not sure that your traffic consultants quite appreciate how the narrow streets of this part of Paddington actually work. As noted traffic from the east cannot access the proposed child care drop off and car park without long journeys to Goodhope Street. This is a very poor outcome.

Any alternative would to create a very dangerous situation at the foot of Cambridge Street.

### **Stormwater , drainage and deep soil planting**

The proposal increases the area of impervious land. Is there any way that the area of impervious land can be increased above what exists today? We submit that a condition of consent should require additional pervious land, not less impervious land.

## **Car park exhaust**

Adjoining residents are very concerned at the location of the car park exhaust near their properties. During winter the cold air settles in the valley trapping fumes at the bottom of the valley.

## **Lighting impacts**

It seems that field lighting could have a serious impact on neighbouring residents? Any consent should require careful controls on light spill and hours that lighting will be used.

## **Additional tennis hard courts**

50% more hard courts will impact acoustic environment of the neighbouring Paddington Gardens

## **View impacts**

Council should require 50mm focal length view before and after, particularly views from Neild Avenue, down Cambridge Street and from Glenmore Road. The view analysis does not appear to be at a consistent scale and seems misleading to us. The clubhouse in particular will have an unacceptable impact on view into the open valley floor.

We do not agree with the viewpoints selected by the applicant, for example the view from the corner of Glenmore Road and Cambridge Street.

## **Trafficable roof gardens**

What assurance might Paddington have that these will not be used for functions and events, noise etc?

## **Child Care**

We would support the provision of child care, but object to the proposed access from Glenmore Road. Child care access should be required from Alma Street

## **Benefits to the Paddington Community**

Whilst respecting that the proposal provides many benefits for the wider community and that facilities on the site may well serve and be of benefit to the local residents, there appears to be no tangible benefits or concessions to the local community that soften the edges of the development. The development appears to have largely been considered from an internal perspective and no-one appears to be looking after the external public domain.

By public benefits we mean tangible, physical attributes which improve the atmosphere and character of Paddington and are not left-overs from the proposal. If taken on board as part of the design brief these actions can help provide a framework for the development and become an attribute by which the development is known.

By public benefits we mean: pedestrian access through the site; open space which may be dedicated for public use or the most likely benefit would be to provide a linear park along the full Glenmore Road frontage, at the level of, and as an extension to the sloping roadway. This gesture would provide a full stop to Paddington, a linear connection to Trumper Park, and act as an upper level terrace to the valley form, reinforcing it and delineating the White City site.

### **Key objections**

These issues were put to the Hakoah Club at a meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> October and we look forward to a positive response to the issues.

- **Curved clubhouse shape and form**
- **Clubhouse projection into the valley floor beyond the existing clubhouse**
- **Height of the clubhouse**
- **Movement of western trusses**
- **Trees proposed within the valley floor**
- **Removal of trees on the western boundary**
- **Child care parking and drop off on Glenmore Road**
- **Confusing and dangerous traffic access to child care on Glenmore Road**
- **Significant tree removal on Glenmore Road**
- **Increased impervious land**
- **Sports lighting**
- **Lack of Paddington public benefits**

## Key consent issues

- Recognition of White City DCP 2007
- Heritage interpretation strategy should be a requirement
- Heritage elements to be retained should be a requirement
- Recognition of National Trust listing
- Valley floor landscape strategy
- Pedestrian access to and through White City
- Frontage to Glenmore Road
- Access to Grammar sports fields
- Car park exhaust impacts on adjoining residents
- Consistent 50m focal length view impact assessment
- Trafficable roof garden impacts
- Benefits to the Paddington Community

In summary The Paddington Society supports the continuing use of the site for private recreation. But the proposal requires modification to achieve an excellent outcome for White City, the open valley floor of Rushcutters Bay and for Paddington.

The Paddington Society has no conflicts of interest under the Act.

Yours faithfully



**Will Mrongovius**  
**President**  
**The Paddington Society**

