



***PRESERVING AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST GARDEN SUBURB***

***P.O. BOX 85, HUNTERS HILL, N.S.W. 2110***

30-7-2018 St Joseph's SPC SSD Submission  
30 July 2018

**ST JOSEPHS COLLEGE Sports Courts Project SSD:  
PROPOSED NEW BASKETBALL ARENA AND GYM  
SUBMISSION**

(Based on documents downloaded from NSW Planning Environment SSD 17\_8970, dated December 2017, plus those presented to Council's Conservation Advisory Panel June 2018)

**Introduction**

The sites for the College's proposed Basketball Complex and the Healy Gymnasium are wholly within Hunters Hill Council's Heritage item No 1242 (St Josephs College) as well as being within Council's General Conservation Area, which means any proposed works must pay particular attention to following the heritage objectives set out in Council's Local Environment Plan and its Development Control Plan that relate specifically to heritage.

**A) THE PROPOSED BASKETBALL COMPLEX**

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The Basketball Complex, which includes 3 covered courts, spectator seating with 180 seats, change rooms, a commercial-sized kitchen, entrance foyer, meeting rooms, classrooms and basement parking for 85 cars, is massive, designed not only for the use of St Joseph's students but also for competition matches between school teams.

**Location**

The proposed structure is to be built on four existing outdoor basketball courts, which provide a green space within the walled College campus and a generous setback from the surrounding residential area for the large multi-storey structures within. As well, the proposal reduces the number of courts available.

**Building size**

As would be anticipated, in order to accommodate three basketball courts which, without including the runoff all round, spectator accommodation and other facilities, measure 28m x 15m, the building is approximately 95m x 34m taking up an area of 3,230m<sup>2</sup>. This is a substantial area (it would accommodate more than four individual house lots of 700 m<sup>2</sup>, the minimum subdivision area in this part of Hunters Hill).

**Building Height**

At the corner of Luke St and Gladesville Rd, its walls are approximately 14m high and the roof is higher still. This is almost twice the maximum wall height that is allowed in the adjacent residential streets of 7.2m.

### **Building Street Setbacks**

In Hunters Hill's consolidated DCP, the minimum street setback for residential development is 5m. The massive 14m high walls of the basketball complex are set back less than 2m from both Luke St and Gladesville Rd frontages. The roof of the proposed structure extends another 2m above its walls.

### **Building form**

The structure is of an industrial scale completely at odds with the residential scale and character of the surrounding streets, particularly Luke St. The style of the building has been described as "brutal," "stark" and "industrial."

### **The proposed building will have the following negative impacts:**

- **On the heritage item itself:**
  - The replacement of the existing outdoor basketball courts with this massive building will destroy the garden setting of the existing buildings in this part of the college campus and will completely change its character.
  - The creation of the underground carpark will increase the number of vehicle movements within the campus, adversely impacting on pedestrians.
  - Views of the various buildings and landscape features within the campus will be obliterated.
  - The heritage-listed stonewalls to Gladesville Road and Luke St will be overwhelmed by the scale of the new structure's walls, which are set back less than 2m from the site boundary, which is to say nothing of the potential for serious damage to the walls as a result of the construction, which may in fact need to be demolished and rebuilt. As well, the demolition drawing shows the street trees in Luke St, on public land being 'demolished and replaced'.
  
- **On the surrounding streets and Conservation Area**
  - The character of Luke St will be virtually destroyed by this massive 14+ metre high wall extending 95m along Luke St, and 34m along Gladesville Rd.
  - The impact on Gladesville Road will completely change the character of the street, which, apart from the shops at the junction with Ryde Rd, is essentially low-rise residential.
  - There will be significant over-shadowing of the existing properties in Luke St to the serious detriment of the existing amenity of residents living here, particularly the loss of afternoon sun in winter.
  - There will be significant sound problems as a result of the thump of balls and players on the courts plus the 180 spectators cheering them on.
  - There will be problems created by additional need for on-street parking for spectators in the surrounding area when sporting events take place – particularly offensive for events scheduled out of school hours or at night.
  - There will be problems with spectator traffic coming and going through the College, particularly through the Gladesville Rd Entrance.

### **Impact Summation**

The proposal will have an extremely negative impact on both the heritage listed College, and the surrounding Conservation Area. Council and the Local Planning Panel must not support it.

## **B) THE GYMNASIUM BUILDING**

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The Gymnasium building appears to have two separate areas plus an office, a physio room and a toilet and shower. Unlike the Basketball Complex, it does not appear to be designed for spectators or competition use.

### **Location**

The location for the proposed building is to be built in existing landscaped courtyard adjacent to the historically significant stone Chapel building that faces Mary Street. The building will take up most of the courtyard and will require the removal of a number of existing trees and shrubs.

### **Building size and height**

From the documentation it is difficult to precisely determine the size of the building. However, by scaling off the drawings, it would appear that its roof is approximately 39m x 21m or 819m<sup>2</sup>, which is bigger than the minimum building lot size of 700m<sup>2</sup>. The ceiling height will be around 6m, which is typical for a gymnasium.

### **Building Setback from Mary St**

The setback from Mary St is approximately 6m, which is in line with buildings in the rest of the street.

### **Building form**

The building form is rectangular with a single pitched roof (approximately 15 degrees) and from the perspective drawings the external materials appear to be a combination of dark charcoal metal panels above brown coloured timber or metal panels. The form and finishes are quite alien to the existing surrounding buildings:

- the chapel walls are rusticated sandstone with arched windows, and
- the adjacent Brothers' Residence, whilst not being a building of any particular distinction, has walls of light coloured brick that do not clash with the stone colour.

### **The proposed building will have the following negative impacts:**

- **On the heritage item itself:**
  - The major impact of the proposal results from the destruction of the existing landscaped court between the Brothers Residence' and Chapel.
  - Like the Basketball complex, this will change the existing character of the campus for the worse.
  - The proposed materials to be used and the form of the proposed building are completely unsympathetic to those of the existing
- **On the surrounding streets and Conservation Area**
  - The character of Mary Street will be negatively impacted through the loss of garden space between the two existing buildings and through the imposition of the proposed, unsympathetic gymnasium.
  - Whether there is any impact caused by noise or on-street parking needs to be further investigated.

### **Impact Summation**

The proposal will have a negative impact particularly on the heritage-listed Chapel and College campus. Its impact on the surrounding Conservation Area will not be as stark as the proposed Basketball Complex, however loss of views of the Chapel and the replacement of open landscaped space with an unsympathetic building will negatively impact on that part of Mary St.

### C) THE COMMUNITY'S INVESTMENT IN THE COLLEGE

The local community has a direct investment in the college as a result of:

- Its exemption from the payment of rates on their property, while the community continues to fund the maintenance and upkeep of the surrounding streets and playing grounds that are used from time to time by The College
- Its exemption from income tax
- Its funding by both state and federal government with the federal government funding private schools at twice the rate of public schools.

### D) CONCLUSION

By virtue of being classed as a State Significant Development, The College is not necessarily bound by the LEP controls that every other ratepayer is required to abide by. This does not absolve The College from has its moral duty to do the right thing by the community and to respect the objectives and controls set out in Hunters Hill Council's Local Environment Plan and its Development Control Plan as it applies, not just to its own heritage listed campus, but also to the neighbourhood.

What the College is proposing with these two buildings will have a significantly detrimental impact on the local area and flies in the face of the objectives of Hunters Hill's planning controls.

The Trust urges Council and the Local Planning Panel, which will ultimately assess the proposals, to reject both in their entirety.

### Appendix

Specifically, the proposal fails to address several of the requirements referred to in the proposal document '*St Joseph's College Sports Courts Project (SCP): REQUEST FOR SECRETARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS, December 2017 / 16037*' prepared by *Robinson Urban Planning*.

#### 5.1.1 (p11)

There is no evidence that the project will promote **jobs**, apart from during demolition and construction, or improve **education results**

#### 5.1.2, Goal 3 (p11)

There is no evidence that the project will '**Revitalise existing suburbs**'

#### 5.2.2 (top of p13)

The project fails to '**enable the use of school facilities ... to be shared with the community**'

### Table 2, 'Compliance with Education and Child Care SEPP – Schedule 4 – School Design Quality Principles (pp14 – 16)

**Principle 1:** the project fails to '**contribute to the streetscape and mitigate impacts on neighbouring sites**'

**Principle 3:** It is simply not true that '**SJC facilities are currently shared with the community during school holidays**'. And while 50% of students may board at the school, most go home during term vacations, and very few remain through the summer vacation.

**Principle 5:** The project fails to meet the stated standard.

**Principle 7:** The proposed building height, bulk and scale simply are NOT '**appropriate for the site and maintain the existing educational form and character of school buildings**' and certainly will **not** ;*have a positive impact on the quality and sense of identity of the neighbourhood*'.

