

Camden Residents' Action Group

Incorporated

Camden – Still a Country Town

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9 May 2024

Dear General Manager,

Re: 2-4 John Street, Camden

DA s4.56 Modification: 2008/644/11¹

Modification to the approved Reduced Levels on the architectural plans relating to Buildings 4 and 6.

It is not clear from the documentation why the plans for the 9th modification to consolidate buildings 4 and 6 into one building with additional seniors living units were required to be redrawn by different architects. This 11th modification would appear to be for a minor modification to the design of the slab. However, we take this opportunity to again express our dissatisfaction, as expressed in our previous submissions, with the process that has led to this point of community incredulity with what is appearing on the old high school site. Modification applications appear to be lodged at each stage of the development, so we expect even more.

The development, was and is non-compliant with the LEP height limit and DCP storey controls. The community understood the contamination issues of the site and could see the social advantages of seniors and aged care residents being in easy reach of town facilities and that the town would be likewise invigorated.

¹ To approved development: *Staged redevelopment of the Former Camden High School Site comprising: demolition of disused school buildings, remediation of contaminated land, earthworks, staged subdivision, the erection of 26 multiple-unit dwellings, 162 self-contained seniors living dwellings, 76 bed residential care facility, 51 bed motel, restaurant, cultural & community centre, medical centre, ancillary shops, under croft car parking and landscaping works*

The 2008 Statement of Heritage Impact² stressed the importance of integrating the seniors' living development into the proposed conservation area of the old town. In particular, consolidation of buildings is not consistent with this original impact statement. It emphasises that to more effectively blend into the old town, the bulk of the facility should be broken into smaller buildings, that street frontages should read as two-storey with varying setbacks and that the historic development pattern should be respected. We particularly object to the 5th modification, consolidation of Buildings 3 and 5 and the 9th, consolidation of Buildings 4 and 6 and refer to our submissions on them.

We do not believe that what is appearing onsite is consistent with what was originally approved. We cannot understand how consolidation of buildings and crowding ever more on to the site, whilst reducing activation with and connections into the town with community facilities and shops is consistent with the original spirit of the approval. Nor do we believe that it is substantially the same development that Councillors approved in 2009.

The overscale, grossly over-height monoliths with little in the way of softening setbacks as required in the original Statement of Heritage Impact that are overtaking the site and streetscapes close to the town farm and within the traditional country town layout is disrespectful and inconsistent with the Camden's status as a heritage rural town. It is not what the community signed up for or what Councillors in 2009 understood they were approving on behalf of the community. Although all school buildings have been demolished, it is also highly disrespectful to the community that the photographic archive record of the High School, a condition of consent has not been produced³.

With so many modifications, the original concept has been lost and there is no longer any attempt or even lip service paid to integrate the development into the human scale fabric and community of the town. Please stop this steady erosion of what the community expected out of this development.

Yours sincerely,



Glenda Davis
President

² Rappoport 8 July 2008 *Former Camden High School Site Statement of Heritage Impact*

³ This condition of consent (8 September 2009: 5.0 (4)), to be met prior to issue of an Occupation Certificate, states ***Archival Record - The buildings and their setting be recorded through photographic archival recording in accordance with the most recently published guidelines set by the Heritage Branch, Department of Planning prior to their demolition.***