



SYDNEY GRAMMAR'S \$54-MILLION SPORTS COMPLEX HIT WITH STRINGENT CONDITIONS

5 November 2021

Plans for a multimillion-dollar sports complex at a Sydney school have been approved subject to stringent conditions aimed at reducing impacts on neighbouring residents.

Sydney Grammar School sought development consent for the Weigall Sports Complex, a new three-storey sports and recreation facility comprising two indoor swimming pools, four multi-purpose courts, spectator seating and associated amenities at its Weigall Sports Ground at Paddington, in Sydney's east.

Under the \$54.4-million proposal, an existing pavilion, tennis courts and car parking areas at the southern end of the Neild Avenue site would be demolished and 19 trees removed to make way for the new sports complex, a split-level car park building, landscaping works, signage and a new kiosk substation.

A whole-of-government assessment undertaken by the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment concluded that, subject to appropriate mitigation of the identified impacts and revisions to the sports complex through recommended conditions to reduce view loss, the proposal can be approved; however, the Commission is the consent authority for the state significant development application because the Department received more than 50 public objections during exhibition.

Commissioners Peter Duncan AM (Panel Chair) and Professor Richard Mackay AM were appointed to consider the application and make a determination. The Commissioners met with the Applicant, Department, Woollahra Municipal Council, including local councillors, as well as Mr Alex Greenwich MP, the State Member for Sydney. They also undertook a virtual site inspection and an in-person tour of the surrounding neighbourhood.

The Commission sought community submissions on the proposed development, conducting a letterbox drop of neighbouring properties to notify residents of the opportunity for them to have their say. Concerns raised in written submissions to the Commission primarily related to building location and built form, view loss, amenity impacts, noise, traffic and parking, tree removal, and a lack of community benefit.

After carefully considering all the evidence, the Commission has today (Friday 5 November 2021) determined that development consent should be granted for the Application, subject to stringent conditions.

“After obtaining further details of the design of the new sports complex, the Commission has concluded it demonstrates design excellence and provides facades with a good level of articulation; and that it will relate well to the public domain along Neild Avenue,” the Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision reads.

“It has, however, imposed conditions in response to adjoining residents’ concerns about the development’s amenity impacts, including requiring the Applicant to further set-back part of the sports complex to allow for improved solar access and sky views for neighbouring apartments. The Commission will also require a proposed electrical substation fronting Neild Avenue to be moved or redesigned to minimise its visual impact.”

The Commission also imposed a condition requiring the refinement of the design of the split-level car park building in response to locals’ concerns about the appearance of that building within the valley floor

Construction hours will be limited under the conditions of consent to minimise the impact of noisy works on residents, while construction traffic will be required to enter and exit the site via Neild Avenue and avoid using residential streets as far as reasonably practicable.

And the Commission, recognising the benefit of the Weigall Sports Complex to the broader community, has imposed conditions to ensure access to the facility for local residents – particularly those most impacted by the development

The Commission also noted concerns regarding the development’s potential consequences for the delivery of the proposed Paddington Greenway – a pedestrian and cycling path linking Darlinghurst and Woollahra.

“The Commission has noted the Applicant’s in-principle support for the Greenway and has imposed conditions requiring further consultation and consideration of potential routes for the Greenway in or around the site,” it added.

The Commission’s Statement of Reasons for Decision is available here:

<https://www.ipcn.nsw.gov.au/projects/2021/10/weigall-sports-complex-sydney-grammar-school>

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