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7 August 2009

The Hon Kristina Keneally MP  
Minister for Planning  
Level 35 Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

**Garvan St Vincent's Campus  
Cancer Centre and UNSW Virology**

I make this submission as State Member for Sydney on the proposed Concept Plan, Garvan St Vincent's Campus Cancer Centre and UNSW Virology Centre.

St Vincent's Hospital, Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute and Garvan Institute are broadly supported and well appreciated by the community. I have worked hard with St Vincent's Hospital to ensure continuing NSW Government support for the operation and balanced development of the hospital and associated facilities.

As a local representative, I have the responsibility to work for a balance between the need to expand inner city institutions like St Vincent's, residents' rights to reasonable amenity, and the promotion and protection of the area's vitality, history and heritage.

***This proposal crams buildings onto the site, which would bury and overshadow the Victor Chang Institute, destroy the scale of Victoria Street, generate traffic in an already congested area and cast shadows on nearby parkland and adjacent houses. Heritage items are proposed for demolition without adequate consideration.***

**Inconsistent with Masterplan**

The development now proposed is inconsistent with the 2005 Masterplan prepared by the applicant and presented to the local community at a meeting about the then proposed Victor Chang facility, as the long-term plan for the site. I share residents' anger that these commitments, which had broad community support, have been disregarded.

***Approved plans should reflect the 2005 Masterplan that was presented to the community.***

**Traffic Impacts – Access and Circulation**

Approval for the Victor Chang Cardiac Institute development in 2006 included a Special Condition to prevent traffic accessing the loading docks and basement car park from West Avenue with a traffic diversion device at the intersection of West Avenue and West Street, and two raised devices on West Street at the car park and loading dock entrances. The devices were a response to concerns that the development would increase traffic movements in adjacent residential streets.

(2)

Residents tell me that many vehicles still use West Avenue to access the car park and loading dock and do a “three-point-turn” or reverse once on West Street. They say that local traffic has increased and pedestrian safety has reduced, as they predicted in their submissions on this earlier development. Given the failure to enforce the Special Condition, I share community alarm that local traffic conditions particularly for West Avenue and Barcom Avenue will significantly deteriorate with the removal of the devices on West Street as part of the proposed developments, allowing direct access to the car park and loading dock from West Avenue.

I support residents’ call for the Department to work with the applicant and the local community to prevent breaches of the Special Condition for the Victor Chang facility before approving new developments that will increase traffic to West Avenue and Barcom Avenue.

***A decision on the proposals should be deferred until access to the site via West Avenue is prevented.***

### **Traffic Impacts – Parking and Congestion**

The initial Traffic and Parking report for the Victor Chang facility estimated that the total demand for spaces across the entire St Vincent’s Research Precinct would be 114 spaces *after* completion of that development. It justified a *reduction* in the number of car spaces because of what it described as an “**over provision**” of parking on the site. The Environmental Assessment stated that use of the “good public transport links” would be encouraged through “limiting parking spaces”.

I understand that the current O’Brien building redevelopment for the relocating Caritas mental health and alcohol and drug services also includes additional parking to cater for other hospital staff.

Traffic plans for these latest development proposals support increased parking, largely to address what it refers to as an *existing* “shortfall at the hospital”. Residents tell me that this inconsistency with previous traffic plans demonstrates that these latest plans have been purposely tailored to support the proposal for increased campus car parking.

Staff at the proposed developments will be predominantly research staff, and not generally work on-call or late shifts. They will have access to buses on Oxford Street, Flinders Street, New South Head Road and Burton Street, as well as the Kings Cross rail station. Provision of 400 to 500 car parking spaces in this precinct will make it easier to drive and encourage staff and visitors to use their cars instead of public transport, increasing local traffic congestion. I am very concerned that the facilities will use this over-provision of parking as a way to generate income at the expense of increased traffic congestion and local amenity.

The proposed Transport Management Plan is limited and will do little to discourage private vehicle use. I believe that St Vincent’s Hospital and Research Precinct facilities should play a leadership role in supporting sustainable transport, including greater use of cycling and public transport.

***Parking space provisions should be significantly reduced to prevent traffic congestion and encourage use of alternative forms of transport including bus, train, walking and cycling.***

### **Building Heights and Form**

The concept plan envisages the Cancer Centre with 11 storeys above ground and the Virology facility with 9 storeys above ground. These proposed heights will **grossly tower over the surrounding local area**, which is made up of terrace houses to the east and small cafes, terrace houses and small apartments to the west. These heights will have significant impact, overshadowing and visually detracting from this village precinct.

(3)

Local residents are outraged that these proposed heights have drastically increased from the Masterplan they were shown at a public meeting when the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute development was proposed. Residents tell me that they were told then that the Cardiac Research facility, which is eight storeys above ground, would be the highest building in the St Vincent's Regional Precinct with subsequent buildings to be lower including a new building on the proposed Virology Centre site that gradually steps down in height as it reaches West Street.

Both proposed developments are higher than, and enclose the Victor Chang facility, and the proposed Virology Centre has no setback at all. ***I share local residents' concern that this disregard of recent commitments devalues the community consultation process.***

***Development in the St Vincent's Research Precinct should be consistent with previous commitments to maintain residential amenity, the integrity of the Victor Chang Institute and to preserve streetscapes.***

The excessive building heights will block winter sunlight from a number of terrace houses on West Street in the afternoon, and from Green Park in the morning. Afternoon sun is an essential source of heat and comfort to residents of inner city terrace homes. The proposed developments will force them to increase their use of electricity for heating and light and will reduce their quality of life and increase emissions.

Green Park provides essential open space for Darlinghurst, which has very low levels of public open space and where most residents have little to no private open space. This park's amenity will be seriously reduced in the mornings when the excessively high Cancer Centre blocks sunlight.

***The height of the proposed developments on the site should be reduced to prevent overshadowing of local terrace houses and Green Park.***

### **Terrace and Heritage Buildings**

The proposed developments involve demolishing terrace buildings on Victoria and Liverpool Streets. I support residents' disappointment that buildings that have contributed to the character of the Darlinghurst village will be lost.

No effort has been made to visually integrate the terrace at 431 Liverpool Street, which is to be retained, with the new development.

In particular, I share strong community concern about the loss of a heritage-listed terrace at 372 Victoria Street, which is a fine example of a three-storey Victorian terrace and is in good condition. It is not good enough for the Heritage Report to dismiss its local heritage significance because the authors do not consider it "rare" or "matching" adjacent properties. This shows a lack of understanding of *local* heritage. The City of Sydney Heritage Development Control Plan 2006 (DCP) is about preserving buildings that illustrate the local history and characterise many of the City's villages and neighbourhoods, which applies to 372 Victoria Street. The aim of the DCP is to recognise, celebrate and conserve the historic environment for present and future generations.

Both 372 Victoria Street and 429 Liverpool Street do in fact "match" the adjacent buildings, which although changed, still maintain the original design.

### **Sustainability**

The proposed developments fail to specify a responsible approach to global warming leading to climate change. The designs do not meet current benchmarks in sustainable public buildings such as the Surry Hills Library and Community Centre which improves environmental performance through naturally cooled and filtered air, maximum use of natural light, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting and re-use.

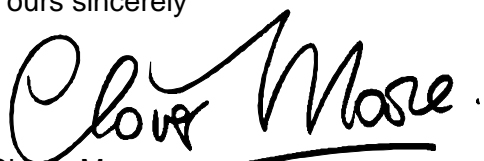
(4)

All public buildings should set an example and particularly those associated with a university, should reduce their environmental footprint to ensure their long-term sustainability. Like residents I am disappointed that the proposal does not take this unique opportunity to provide a modern sustainable facility.

***The amended developments should be required to achieve benchmarks in environmental performance, energy and water conservation and reuse, and in greenhouse gas reduction.***

***The current proposal requires significant amendment before it can be approved. The applicant should work with the City of Sydney Council to achieve a workable alternative along the lines of the City's proposal and consult with affected local residents.***

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clover Moore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clover Moore  
**Member for Sydney**