

Petition to City of Botany Bay Council for a Public Meeting to discuss

Bunnings Development DA 11/224

December, 2011

We are concerned local residents and wish to register some objections to the DA, in its current form, for the site on the corner of Smith Street and Denison Street, Eastgardens. We also request a public meeting to discuss these concerns and get clarification on aspects of the proposed development.

1. In the first instance, we question whether this area needs another large box-type hardware store, and we further question the *impact* of another large Bunnings store on small retailers, given that there is already a large Bunnings in neighboring Mascot, in Randwick, and a DA proposal for a 20 000 square metre Bunnings store on Euston Road, in neighboring Alexandria, which, when completed, would make it the largest hardware store in Australia.

It would appear that such a localised monopoly would have a very detrimental effect on smaller hardware & homeware retailers in the area, effectively destroying competition.

2. **The Bunnings DA cannot really be assessed fully without its partner DA from Orica which has not been submitted.** The matter of a new traffic light intersection on Denison with an extension of a street from the Botany Industrial Park is dependent on the Orica DA.
3. The Bunnings DA presents traffic statistics from the two intersections of Smith and Wentworth Avenue with Denison Street. It states that *it is Council's intention to close off Smith Street* (on the corner of Denison) to through traffic, yet **no survey was done to establish a baseline for traffic on the two intersections of Boonah and Fraser Avenues with Denison Street.**
4. Given that two large Bunnings stores exist or are proposed for neighboring areas (Mascot & Alexandria), this third Bunnings store would necessarily derive the bulk of its customers from the eastern suburbs – south of Clovelly (where there is already another existing store) down to La Perouse. That is, the bulk of traffic to the store would be coming from the east. If it is the Council's intention to close off Smith Street, then traffic could be expected to use the residential Boonah and Fraser avenues to access the store.

Closure of the Denison Road ends of Boonah Avenue and Fraser Avenue should be explored together with Smith Street, so that Bunnings traffic is routed along Wentworth and Denison Avenue, roads that are more capable of handling such traffic.

Residents would appreciate some formal statement by council that this may take place as a consequence of DA approval. This however should be discussed by residents in a meeting/forum setting to hear various opinions and arguments.

5. The DA is particularly dismissive of traffic concerns that residents already have in connection with the redeveloped Hensley Field. It states (Traffic Impact Assessment, p.12) that, **“athletic meetings typically involve sporadic/spread arrivals and departures throughout the events”**. This is debatable but makes the assumption that Hensley field is only used for athletics. This is not the case. On busy sporting days, there are en masse arrivals and departures (i.e. not sporadic), with parking continuing up Smith St to Bunnerong Road, and into Fraser and Boonah Avenues. The ground is used for soccer games and training, and whilst provision is being made for a variety of other “ball sports”, the traffic and parking requirements of the field can only be expected to increase.
6. The DA states that **“the development will not result in any adverse traffic impacts on the road system”** (Traffic Impact Assessment, p.15). This is a gross underestimation of the current traffic and parking issues in the area, and a gross disregard for the effect such a development will bring to the neighborhood. Such statements offer no solution for increased future demand. It does not even recognise there are traffic issues present already! Similarly, it does not take into consideration the road/parking infrastructure requirements of the Orica industrial units and retail spaces proposed for the other side of Denison Road.

Both Wentworth Avenue and Denison Street are already dedicated truck corridors to Port Botany with projections estimating a 70% increase of truck traffic within 10 years (Dept. of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources).

7. The Noise Assessment (p. 17) states, **“The predicted noise levels comply with the criteria at residential receivers during the daytime period. Noise levels marginally exceed in the evening due to truck deliveries...”** and **“Noise levels in the commercial yard areas exceed the SNC* criteria ...”**
(City of Botany Bay’s Standard Noise Criteria)*

The operating hours of the store (up until 9 pm) will give residents little respite from traffic and noise associated with the operation of the store. Even if large truck deliveries were to be made within the operating hours of the store, the design of the “truck road” on site for deliveries, with its 3.5 - 5 metre noise barrier backing onto residents in Rhodes Street and Smith Street is unsatisfactory.

Given the expected lifespan of the building and the fact that a 420 space “undercroft” carpark is built into the design, the delivery truck route should similarly be constructed beneath the store to negate truck noise and delivery noise, and avoid the construction of an unsightly 3.5 - 5m “sound wall”. Large internal lifts could shift goods onto the shop floor.

The “undercroft” carpark should be constructed “underground”, in such a way that it is acoustically sealed from the surrounding streets. The truck delivery path should be integrated into the underground car park. High walls do not provide as efficient an acoustic seal as an underground delivery path.

Further more, residents are already subjected to loud and long-winded Public Address announcements from Hensley field when it operates for school carnivals during the week and during other events at weekends, as well as various alarms, sirens and pressure releases, albeit on a random basis, from the Orica plants. Public Address systems operate in other Bunnings stores. **A Public Address System operating within the site - given that there is a “commercial yard” and ‘garden centre” external to the building - would add to the cacophony and disturbance of the neighborhood. This is not addressed in the DA.**

7. **The “surplus lots” on Smith Street have no purpose allocated.** Residents do not know what they are to be used for, or if vehicular access to the site is to be made through these lots, or if this is planned at some future time. This is unsatisfactory.
8. **Denison St is designated a Dangerous Goods Route.** The increased traffic to and from the proposed development and its effect on the safety of residents surrounding the Dangerous Goods Route is not addressed at all.
9. This is a large development for the area. Without the Orica DA to consider at the same time, the traffic light intersection comes into question and residents only have the opportunity to understand half the story. In other words, we are not in a position to appreciate the full picture – of industrial units and large warehouse or retail spaces constructed on the other side of Denison Road, and won't be until the Orica DA is submitted and made available.

Because of the high level of residential concern, and the concerns of local business people, it seems sensible then, to have the entire matter presented at a public meeting and forum – with representatives from the Dept. of Planning, Bunnings, Orica and Council present, together with residents and local business people. We feel the plans submitted with the letter to residents from Council are simply unsatisfactory to appreciate the enormity of the development and its impact on the local area.

Not all residents are able to comprehend the large volume of material submitted with the DA and a model or an artist's rendering projected on a screen, together with a question and answer session, would go a long way to ensuring that all residents and stakeholders understand what is proposed and what the consequences are for the neighborhood.

Therefore, **we request a public meeting about this DA at the earliest.**

Thank you for taking on board the above points.

Yours sincerely,

Concerned local residents