

**Submission
No 37**

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF SCHOOL
INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Future of Milperra WSU Campus

Date Received: 11 February 2022

Save the Western Sydney University Bankstown Campus (Milperra)

To: The NSW Upper House Education Committee

Re: Inquiry into the planning and delivery of school infrastructure in New South Wales

Dear Committee

We would like to draw your attention to the proposed destruction of the Western Sydney University Bankstown Campus (“Milperra Campus”).

The Milperra Campus is currently zoned for educational use and has been used for public educational purposes for over 100 years. It was the site of the original Milperra Public School, established in 1918 on the historic Milperra Soldiers Settlement. When Milperra Public School celebrated its centenary in 2018, the school and local community participated in a celebratory march commencing from Milperra Campus. The very streets surrounding the site are heritage items under Schedule 5 of the Canterbury Bankstown Consolidated Local Environmental Plan 2021.

Western Sydney University (“WSU”) has partnered with Mirvac for the redevelopment of the Milperra Campus for housing (Planning Proposal RZ-3/2020). The proposal will involve:

- Rezoning the property R1 General Residential
- Demolishing the purpose-built educational buildings and facilities situated on Milperra Campus
- Constructing 430 new residences.



Milperra currently has approximately 1,300 residences. When this project is combined with Mirvac's other Milperra proposal to build an additional 330 new residences on the Riverlands Golf Course, the combined effect is a **58% increase** in the number of residences in Milperra. On 24 August 2021, Council voted unanimously against the rezoning proposal proceeding to Gateway. However, WSU/Mirvac applied for a review of this decision and on 10 December 2021, the NSW Government Sydney South Planning Panel overturned the Council's decision and determined that the proposal should proceed to Gateway.

Milperra Campus land was formerly government land. WSU (under a former name) was given the Milperra Campus land for notional/nominal consideration to establish a public tertiary education facility.

For this reason, ministerial consent is required due to subsection 24(2A) of the Western Sydney University Act 1997 (NSW), which provides "The Board must not alienate, mortgage, charge or demise any lands acquired by the University from the State at nominal or less than market value except with the approval of the Minister."

Disappointingly, the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education (Minister Lee) has already provided his consent to this development. Minister Lee, a former long-time employee of WSU, provided his consent in April 2020, when our community was first grappling with the local consequences of a global pandemic. The process was conducted without any public consultation process.

Barney Glover (Vice Chancellor of WSU) has told the media that they intend to use income from sell-offs of "old campuses in unpopular locations" to finance their move to new locations close to transport.¹ The Milperra Campus is being sold-off as spare parts, when it is actually a beautiful, character-filled campus with buildings and infrastructure that could be repurposed as a public school.

We are writing to you to speak out against the destruction of the Milperra Campus and to ask the Committee to take action against this.

We urge you to please take the time to watch this video so you can appreciate the buildings, facilities, native trees and open space that will be destroyed for, in part, private profit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkItYhyi77Y>

To bulldoze these purpose-built educational facilities would be a tragic loss, especially considering so many children across Western Sydney are learning in demountables.

The site should be retained for use in public education, particularly with the growing demands on our local schools and the fact that our local area is in desperate need of a co-educational high

¹ <https://www.afr.com/policy/health-and-education/university-generates-income-through-land-development-in-the-face-of-government-cutbacks-20190219-h1bgm6>

school. The site should also be considered for a K-12 school, a school of excellence or special sports high.

Submitted by residents, workers and concerned citizens of Milperra and surrounding areas.

For more information, please follow us on: <https://www.facebook.com/MilperraFuture>