

**SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS**

CSIRO SYDNEY CONSOLIDATION PROJECT

Prepared by A Resident of Bradfield Road, Lindfield

2 October 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a supplementary submission though it appears futile.

It is easy to dismiss a sole voice in the wilderness, but that voice is merely indicative of the lack of consultation with the public and local community.

Responding to CSIRO's evidence to the Committee that the consultation was held outside the school holiday period.

That advice is somewhat misleading in that private schools had finished the previous week. The majority of families in this area attend private schools.

That the community consultation occurred in December is an old ploy used by governments of all levels in the knowledge that community members are busy attending to end-of-year business.

Public Transport Inadequacies

Bus services are the only public transport available to the CSIRO site.

Morning Peak 7.30am – 9.00am

From Lindfield Station to CSIRO	:	3 services only
From Macquarie Park to CSIRO	:	1 service only

Afternoon Peak 4.30pm – 6.00pm

From CSIRO to Lindfield Station	:	2 services only
From CSIRO to Macquarie Park	:	3 services only

Consequently, motor vehicle travel will be the primary mode of transport. It would seem to be a mindless decision in this day and age to move a government agency from a major and over-served transport hub to an isolated residential area with high bushfire and evacuation risks.

Responding to CSIRO's evidence to the Committee on Bushfires and Evacuation

CSIRO advised that it had an Emergency Management Plan prepared for bushfire attack. That plan, obviously, only relates to the CSIRO site and not the wider community, in that it does not provide for the evacuation difficulties of residents.

CSIRO's bushfire consultants, RPS Group, reported that:

"3.2 SFPP (Special Fire Protection Principles) means the occupants of the proposed development may be more vulnerable to bush fire attack and therefore may require greater protection as well as assisted evacuation."

This report has not considered the evacuation, assisted or otherwise, of the wider community. The area of Bradfield Road at the CSIRO gates is pivotal to the essential evacuation of residents, the babies in the opposite child care centre as well as CSIRO occupants. This then overflows to the intersections of Bradfield Road/Moore Avenue/Lady Game Drive and the Fiddens Wharf Road/Lady Game Drive intersection for all residents west of Lady Game Drive. It is also important to note that Lady Game Drive is impassable at both ends due to fires burning (as occurred in 1994).

In 1994 wildfire, residents had difficulty in getting out and emergency services were seriously constrained in accessing the area, due to the congestion and chaos at the CSIRO entrance/exit.

The RPS Group further report:

"3.4 Access

in the unlikely event of a serious bushfire, it will be essential to ensure that adequate ingress/egressare afforded the development."

The reference to *"the unlikely event of a serious bushfire"* demonstrates the lack of historical data considered during the assessment phase. This area has a history of serious bushfires over the recorded past 100 years, which occur around every 20-30 years (with smaller bushfires intermittently).

The western side of Killara and Lindfield is volatile as it lies directly in the path of the gale force north-west winds, being the most dangerous. This coupled with high summer temperatures, atmospheric humidity and topography are integral to the wildfires. As surely as night follows day, these conditions will again coincide and the only question is when.

The RPS Group recommended:

"4.0 Any proposed developments are to be linked to the existing mains pressure water supply and that suitable hydrants be clearly marked and provided for the purpose of bushfire protection."

While CSIRO's advice to the Committee was that staff are not there to fight fires, the various NSW Government fire services are and will be servicing the site. It is unacceptable that the residents have to fund these services through our insurance policies and council rates, while the CSIRO/Commonwealth Government contribute nothing.

In 1994 homes were lost when CSIRO drew on the area's mains water supply leaving properties south of its site without water. The outcry was strong, unrelenting and taken up by the media, reflecting poorly on CSIRO.

Misinformation was disseminated to those few residents that did attend the community consultation day when a CSIRO representative advised that it had a 180,000 litre independent water storage tank for fighting fires. This is incorrect. As was evidenced through the Coroner's Inquiry, the tank draws on the community's mains supply. Moreover, 180,000 litres is only the equivalent of three domestic pools and quite inadequate for a site the size of CSIRO.

CSIRO's water supply during fire events is critical if the rest of the community loses water to protect their homes.

It is unacceptable for the Commonwealth Government to advance its economic priorities at the expense of its citizens.

All documents associated with this proposal are being stored off site to be used in the event that any lives and/or properties are lost due to CSIRO preventing emergency service ingress, egress of residents or lost mains water supply due to CSIRO drawing it up. I understand the legal terminology is reckless indifference¹.

¹ In some cases there may be little difference between doing an act with an intention to kill (or to inflict grievous bodily harm) and doing an act in the recognition that it would probably cause death: *Campbell v R* at [311].