



21 April 2020

Independent Planning Commission NSW
Level 3
201 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000
ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au

Dear Madam/Sir

Written Objection – SSD-8993- Concept and Stage 1 Development SCEGGS Darlinghurst

My wife and I welcome the opportunity to comment on the masterplan developed by SCEGGS for its facility in Forbes Street Darlinghurst.

This development cannot proceed without addressing long term traffic management and related safety issues, we therefore wish to register our objection.

Traffic Management

In 1999 Master Plan, South Sydney Council endorsed development plans for SCEGGS on condition that the school also improve nearby St Peter's Street, because of concerns to public safety. In 2002, residence agreed to the closure of St Peters Street during certain times to discourage illegal and antisocial behaviour. Now, in 2020 there is no evidence of any antisocial behaviour and no justification for the road to remain closed, even when the school is not operating 42% of the days per year and every day and night. However, public safety is still a problem, but now caused by illegal parking and numerous traffics offences occurring every day by the student parents and school transports agents, yet SCEGGS refuse to addresses the current problem or future implications.

Both SCEGGS and the City and Sydney choose to ignore the traffic management issues yet the new development will increase traffic and only compound the problem. In the 1998 application, as in the current development application, there were no indication the number of students would increase yet since the road closure occurred the student numbers have grown from 890 to 932, increasing traffic congestion. However, the 45-place childcare centre proposed in the latest submission does not factor in the impact of additional traffic movements. Because of the age of these children they will need to be escorted from the car therefore requiring parking and not be dropped off.

It is most disappointing that Sydney City Council recently refused to reconsider a trial re-opening of St Peters Street. The purpose of a trial was to gather facts to make an informed decision on the suitability of an alternative option for the improvement of something that is not working safely or to the optimum outcome of the residence. The trial was cancelled based on the 18 replies received from 504 letters inviting residences feedback. The net difference between those in favour and those

against were 3, representing 0.05% of the dwellings affected by Forbes Street traffic use and 0.002% of residence affected, this is not a sufficient number to stop a trial.

Access to Shorter Ln, Thomson Street, Clapton Place and Farrell Ave is only via Forbes Street and should a medical or fire emergency occur at the 256 Horizon apartments or the 285 neighbouring dwellings while there is any traffic congestion, especially during peak drop off times, there is a very real risk of a catastrophic event. Access via St Peters Street is closed by gates operated only by SCEGGS, denying an alternative entry, even when the school is not operating at weekends, school and public holidays.

School buses continually block traffic movement because of the bus length as they try to enter St Peters Street due to road gardens and the gates install to close street access.

City of Sydney also approved a major business office redevelopment at the corner of Forbes Street and Liverpool Street, which has only just commenced which will also attract further traffic movement and parking congestion in Forbes Street. As this is only a recent application it is unlikely to be factored into the SCEGGS development.

The SCEGGS 2008 Jane Freeman science building approved development was not completed until 2013 creating excessive noise for many years. Any approval should be subject to a strict tight time frame, noise compliance and a pre-approved traffic management plan, all with penalties for non-compliance.

In addition, I find it difficult to understand the demolition of Wilkinson House has been approved, yet buildings less significant throughout Sydney CBD have at least their facade retained. I believe Emil Sodersten designed the Australian War Memorial in Canberra "the first national architectural monument" in Australia and that Wilkson House may have been his first project. If the Royal Australian Institute of Architects felt Emil Sodersten deserved the Interior Architecture Award be named after him, surely Wilkson House deserves the same recognition and should be retained.

Yours sincerely

John Janik