

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 13 December 2022 6:51 PM
To: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox
Subject: President Private Hospital Project

I am writing regarding the response the Department of Planning and Environment submitted to the Office of the Independent Planning Commission NSW regarding the redevelopment of President Private Hospital Kirrawee.

The demolition of Hotham House is a very sensitive issue for residents of the area and indeed the Sutherland Shire. If the plans are approved in the current format then it will without doubt be demolished, no matter what. It appears that the question of heritage is not being considered nor does it appear to be important to the developers or the Department, despite its status as a recently listed local heritage item.

The Departmental response includes lengthy explanations regarding how noise can “potentially” be reduced. While acoustic sound blankets may have some use in noise reduction, sound will still escape from the open top area. I have never been past a construction site that wasn’t noisy, even where acoustic blankets are present. I think the Department is drawing a long bow trying to convince anyone that if this construction goes ahead, noise can be greatly reduced.

The increase in traffic is my main concern. The Traffic Consultant advised: “that the speed of vehicles around the site would be relatively low due to queuing at the intersection in the peak AM period and that a splayed driveway would provide similar benefits to a slip lane. A splayed driveway was considered suitable to minimise the safety risk of traffic queues at the entry and exit driveways”.

I find this statement somewhat confusing. The Traffic Consultant is admitting that queuing at the intersection of President Avenue and Hotham Road already occurs. Traffic has the potential to be backed up past Acacia Road if this development goes ahead. How is it logical that the splayed driveway will minimise the safety risk of traffic queues at the entry and exit driveways? Many drivers are impatient; many drivers don’t use their indicators when changing lanes and many, many people don’t adhere to the speed limit, especially on main roads. Common sense would dictate any slipway on a main road, especially into a huge facility, always has the potential to cause accidents. President Avenue is a huge thoroughfare and is not all that wide. With the increase in traffic that would occur, the potential for an increase in accidents is a given. Also, pedestrians will walk across the entry and exits, no matter what. They will try and beat the traffic. That is also a given. It’s human nature.

An entrance and exit in Hotham Road would be disastrous. Did the Traffic Controller visit the site in the afternoon when people are picking up kids from school and coming home from work? It is often impossible to exit Bidurgal Avenue into Hotham Road at these times now, let alone make a left hand turn into President Avenue going south. Making a right hand turn into President Avenue from Hotham Road at these and other times is downright dangerous. There is no green arrow so there are many instances of people driving up Northwest Arm Road running the orange light and preventing cars from making a safe turn. This will be exacerbated 100 fold if this project goes ahead under the current plan and there are entrances and exits at Hotham Road.

The response also states:

“An Operational Transport and Access Management Plan is required under recommended condition E15 and requires that measures be developed to mitigate any potential queuing impacts resulting from vehicles accessing parking from President Avenue. While not described in the condition, measures could reasonably include the installation of signage, barriers or similar traffic control devices to restrict access to the underground carpark, or sections of the carpark, from President Avenue if traffic volumes were likely to contribute to unsafe conditions. The Department considers that

appropriate mitigation measures that address road safety and efficient traffic movement may be developed and adopted by the Applicant prior to construction.”

How are barriers and “similar traffic control devices” going to prevent queuing of traffic? There have recently been other construction sites on President Avenue between Gynea Bay Road and Acacia Road. There were barriers which caused lane closures. There were trucks coming in and out of the site, which caused lane closures and queuing and traffic jams. There were signs – that people didn’t read.

The Department report is full of government cliches and lots of words. I worked in the public service for 25 years, many of which were spent preparing ministerial responses and government reports. I know how to talk the talk. If this project goes ahead under the current plan, the Department and the hospital needs to be realistic and stop making gestures that can’t possibly be fulfilled.

There will be huge traffic jams and queuing, and I cannot even imagine the traffic chaos this is going to cause, despite the Traffic Controller’s report which is lacking to say the least. Perhaps traffic control personnel should spend a week in the area and do a thorough report, not just reporting on the AM peak traffic. I cannot believe any competent person could come to the conclusions regarding traffic and safety that are contained in this report.

There will be a significant impact on parking in the streets surrounding the area, initially during construction and then afterwards, because no one wants to pay for parking when they can get it for free. There will be noise, dust and lots of it. This is a given. It’s a construction site, after all.

Residents in every surrounding street will be significantly affected by all elements of the project if it is approved under the current plan. If this project is to go ahead, either under the current plan or a modified plan, the Department would do well to stop trying to cover up the affects it will have by producing these wordy reports that are confusing and long winded, and report the impacts this will have in an honest and realistic manner and in plain and simple language. Tell the truth.

Sharon Swinbourne

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