



Lynda Voltz MP

Member for Auburn

The Hon Rob Stokes MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, and
Minister for Transport and Roads
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Minister,

I write to you regarding the current Development Application (Application Number SSD-11802230) for the proposed Sydney Olympic Park High School and would ask that this correspondence be forwarded as a submission for the public exhibition.

I have met with representatives of the local school P&Cs for the catchment area and my comments reflect the concerns raised with me on behalf of the school community.

Two Stage Process

There is significant concern, that whilst both stages are included in the development application, stage two is unfunded. Importantly, as Annex 6 notes on page 26 the number of buildings has doubled since 2016 census and there is still significant development still to come

I would note that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) states:

There is a forecast shortfall of 5,755 student spaces within the Strathfield Secondary School Community Group (SCG) by 2036. This overcrowding is not constant across the SCG but is forecast to be heavily concentrated in the western portion of Concord High School's existing live in catchment.

It goes on further to state:

Without intervention there will be 48 students per learning space in Concord High School, contrasting with a forecast of 28 students per learning space in 2026.

This means that in a few years, over 40% of students already do not have a learning space in a high school within this catchment area. Furthermore, local parents are aware of the 6,200 dwellings under construction in the Carter Street precinct, the continued decisions by NSW Planning to increase the height of other buildings above the Master Plan such as 23 Bennelong Parkway and an application to increase Block H to forty stories which is currently before NSW Planning.



Mezzanine Level Lidcombe Centre
92 Parramatta Road, Lidcombe NSW 2141
P (02) 9737 8822 F (02) 9737 8844
E auburn@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Parents are obviously also concerned that a school that is built in two stages will result in students facing years of construction during their study terms. This has the potential to draw students away from the new high school and undermine the functioning of the school from the outset. The NSW Government has now also announced a Stage Two build on Wentworth Point Public School although the details of this construction and timeline are unknown.

I would also note that the NSW Government proposes to develop the site adjoining the school on land owned by Transport for NSW and, as previously stated, a significant housing development will also be constructed opposite the school on a site known as Block H

The local community is well versed in promises to build infrastructure that does not eventuate and is therefore sceptical regarding the delivery of Stage Two. Indeed the high school is being placed on the site of the Peninsula Park, a commitment of the original Master Plan for the area and the important foreshore access, which was originally promised by the NSW Government to be delivered in 2016 by Transport for NSW.

I would also draw your attention to the failure of the NSW Government to build the adjoining Wentworth Point Public School to the capacity identified by the Department of Education at the time. This has created enormous difficulty for the local area with local primary schools overflowing. The NSW Government is now placing double storey demountables on this small school site the school and has now announced a previously unrevealed Stage 2 build also at this adjoining school.

The school community is completely opposed to a two stage build and I would urge that the NSW Government be directed to ensure that all stages of the school are built concurrently and to the capacity required to avoid a repeat of the current infrastructure shortfalls.

Lack of Required Playing Space

As you would be aware there is a requirement for schools to have 10 m² playing space per student. In its current format this development application does not meet that requirement and therefore should be rejected or amended to include the play space that is required for both stages.

The inclusion of Stage two is dependent on a future agreement and development application that deals with the construction of the long promised Peninsula Park. Without any details on this application, or commitment on the promised open space under the original Master Plan for this area, the annexing of a sports field size space of this land and 30 car parking spaces either does not meet the requirements of open space promised to the people of Wentworth Point or fails the NSW Government's own playing space per student requirement.

I would note that on page 52 of the EIS:

"The additional play space requirements resulting from Stage 2 will be met by the future playing field to the north. Stage 2 will not operate until the northern playing field has been delivered."

But also notes that the playing field and its interface with the foreshore now falls outside the scope of the project (P85). On page 86 of the EIS the following is included:

“1.8 meter high perimeter fencing”

What is not made clear in this application is whether the sports playing field, that the NSW Government is relying on for its play space requirements, will be surrounded by either a 1.8 meter high perimeter fence or any other type of barrier on land that has been reserved and promised for public use under a RE1 zoning.

Given that the development application for the field is not included at this time then the application for Stage two fails. Likewise the NSW Government is effectively hiving off 8,800m² for a school recreation facility and a carpark for the school from lands set aside for parklands without any commitment for public access.

It is disingenuous for the EIS to state, as it does on page 73:

“The RE1 land within the site is no longer required for the purposes of open space”

These lands were promised to be delivered as open space in 2016 and the NSW Government has had them fenced off from public access since that time, denying local residents of much needed and promised open space and foreshore access in a densely populated high rise area, due to their failure to build the long committed Peninsula Park that the entire peninsula development relied on.

Transport

The EIS and the Transport Access Impact Assessment (TAIA) leave some significant questions unanswered. Firstly the census data notes that 67% of Wentworth Point residents travel to work by car and is used in the TAIA on page 26. What it neglects to also outline is that in Newington 68% of people travel to work by car and unlike Wentworth Point it is not high rise and therefore has a different travel behaviour. I am unclear why only Wentworth point which is the closest proximity to the school is outlined rather than the other significant suburbs further away. I am also surprised that the traffic study was undertaken in the week that the Easter Public Holidays begin.

The TAIA states that 30% of students will be ‘kiss and drop’ and notes this will be 452 at full capacity. Yet the ‘kiss and drop’ zone, with only eight spaces, is directly after a roundabout that is both the entrance to the largest car park on the peninsula and the site of the development of block H. There is also no information regarding a turning circle for cars to leave the Burroway Road, which is a dead end street and the site of two other major building projects being undertaken on both sides.

While traffic flowing in to the school will be going against the peak hour flow, traffic leaving the school will not and it should be noted there is only one road in and out of the peninsula. I think the expectation that 60% of students will walk or bike to the school is ambitious.

The TAIA states that (p iii):

“a total of nine public bus routes heading towards the school in the morning”

I am not sure what these ‘nine public bus routes’ are but as the report notes later (p18) there are actually two bus routes the 533 and the 526 that travel anywhere near the school. Both

these services have long been at capacity. As a result a private bus shuttle is currently operating, but only at the whim of the property developer Bilbergia, who are funding the temporary service.

The report also states, on the one piece of transport infrastructure that would make a difference, particularly for students in the Carter Street precinct (p10 TAIA):

“the second stage of the Parramatta Light Rail is not yet confirmed by the NSW Government, thus the discussion concerning Sydney Olympic Park new high school should not rely on the implementation of the Parramatta Light Rail”

For some reason the report also notes the construction of the Metro. I fail to see any benefit that this new infrastructure, when it is built, will have for students in the catchment. While the rail itself runs through Silverwater and Newington, there is not one stop between Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park. There would be no student in the catchment who would use this transport to get to school particularly as the next stop is North Strathfield.

Likewise there would be no student attending the proposed high school by ferry.

The reality is the only likely modes of transport to the school will be the 533 and 526 bus routes which are already at capacity and the shuttle that may or may not still be available. This will mean that students, particularly from the Newington, Sydney Olympic Park and Carter Street ends of the catchment are as likely to be driven to school as opposed to the optimistic view that children will get on their bike and ride.

This decision of some parents to drive their children is also compounded by the ongoing failure to install traffic lights at the dangerous intersection of Bennelong Parkway and Hill Road and the lack of pedestrian crossings along the stretch of Hill Road.

I believe the traffic management for Burroway Road are lacking as they do not provide enough ‘kiss and drive’ spaces, safe turning options after departure, and fail to take into consideration other developments happening nearby and the co-location of the school.

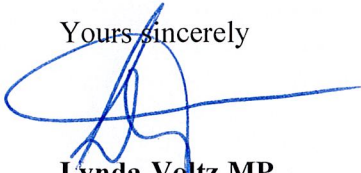
Conclusion

Local residents are unhappy that this has been the chosen site for the school as it is the least accessible for the students in the catchment. As the name suggests, the intention was for the school to be located in Sydney Olympic Park. However, after a decade of waiting, and in the interests of efficacy they have accepted this site rather than spending further years fighting for a site the NSW Government should have identified in the first instance.

What local residents will not accept is a two stage construction and the disruption this will cause to students and the ongoing viability of the school itself. I would urge that this development application be amended to ensure that both stages of the construction are built concurrently.

If you require any further information do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Lynda Voltz', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lynda Voltz MP
Member for Auburn

Cc: Minister for Education