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Mr Denis Ghersinich  
Project Manager  
Valad Property Group  
PO Box N817  
GROSVENOR PLACE 1220

(Email: [denis.ghersinich@valad.com.au](mailto:denis.ghersinich@valad.com.au))

Dear Denis

## **Proposed IKEA Development Princes Highway, Tempe**

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I have considered the report prepared by Mr Terry Lawrence of Transport and Urban Planning (TUP) for Marrickville Council (which provides a review of my Traffic Report) and the submission by the Residents Action Group.

It is apparent to me that the report prepared by Mr Lawrence is highly adversarial to the extent that an opposing view is taken with every aspect of my assessment. My assessment has been closely scrutinised by the RTA and the Sydney Regional Development Advisory Committee including a detailed review of the traffic modelling.

The RTA has been very stringent in its review due to the concerns for any adverse impacts on the road system. The fact that the RTA has accepted the methodology and findings of the TTPA Traffic Assessment (while Mr Lawrence finds fault with every aspect) is evidence to the adversarial approach which has been taken.

### **TUP REPORT**

#### **Background**

It is understood that Mr Lawrence has prepared a number of reports for Council regarding the rezoning of land in the Tempe area for bulky goods. Although his report of November 2004 does make reference to the IKEA site it did not in fact replicate the proposed IKEA development of that time. That report also utilised traffic generation characteristics of normal bulky goods developments whereas IKEA traffic generation is somewhat different.

### **Transportation, Traffic and Design Consultants**

Mr Lawrence seems to suggest that IKEA could be satisfactorily accessed from Bellevue Street (only) provided that the recommendations which he made at that time (ie pedestrian bridge and widening of Bellevue Street) were undertaken. This of course is not the case nor is it the proposal now.

### Floorarea

A clarification has been sought from the architects in relation to the floorareas and their advice is attached. These areas are compared to the areas adopted in the Traffic Report in the following:

	<b>TTPA</b>	<b>Confirmed GFA</b>	<b>Confirmed GLFA</b>
IKEA	33,999m <sup>2</sup>	34,891m <sup>2</sup>	32,616m <sup>2</sup>
ATECO	4,460m <sup>2</sup>	4,530m <sup>2</sup>	4,144m <sup>2</sup>

Thus, the difference in terms of GFA is only some 1,000m<sup>2</sup> (or 2.5%) while there is also some very minor separate uses in the ATECO building (ie less than 2,000m<sup>2</sup>). To all intent these differences would not make any perceptible difference in the traffic generation assessment.

### Existing Traffic Conditions

Level of Service – the quoted Level of Service is as produced verbatim by the SCATES computer model. This model has been provided to and scrutinised by the RTA's Transport Management Centre and has been formally accepted as being satisfactory and correct (refer to Denis Wood 8396 1511).

### Traffic Generation

IKEA is unique, it is not just another bulky goods outlet, and people visit IKEA for the specific goods which they can purchase that are not available elsewhere. There is only one IKEA store servicing the Sydney Metropolitan area at the present time and it does not take a great deal of intuition to understand that 'custom' at the Rhodes store will reduce with the opening of other stores.

IKEA also clearly understands that attracting passing trade is a principal element of its custom. It is a fundamental tenant of IKEA development philosophy that sites/buildings must be prominent and highly visible to attract passing trade. It is unfortunate that Mr Lawrence could not source the criteria utilised for 'linked trip' assessment, however this is not necessary as it is appended to my report. The passing trade (linked trip) characteristic for a normal shopping centre is somewhat less than what it would be for IKEA, again due to its unique nature and attraction.

The Traffic Generation Assessment provided in my Traffic Report has been scrutinised and accepted by the RTA and the Sydney Regional Development Advisory Committee. The RTA's Development Guidelines clearly demonstrate that the traffic generation rate per 100m<sup>2</sup> reduces as the floorspace increases and it is stated in that document that additional floorspace will not attract a pro-rata increase in traffic generation.

IKEA is also quite different to normal bulky goods outlets which are in fact showrooms displaying goods that are held in and dispatched from separate warehouses. At IKEA the goods are held on-site and hence the 'nett' floorspace is significantly less than a normal bulky goods outlet even though it falls within the GFA definition.

In relation to the IKEA staffing the TMAP document prepared by TTPA identifies the following:

Administration	69 persons
Store	100 persons on weekdays
	200 persons on weekends

Administration staff work in the normal office band of 7.30am – 5.30pm whereas the store staff start at 9.45am in minimal numbers ‘ramping up’ to meet the peak trade at midday and early afternoon and tapering off through the afternoon and evening. Mr Lawrence should be aware that the RTA traffic generation rate for office is quite outdated and in fact the document acknowledges that the basis for this criteria even precedes the introduction of ‘flexitime’ (ie late 1970’s).

### Trade Area

TUP highlighted that the area located west of Unwins Bridge Road has potentially 30% of the population in the Primary Trade Area. This equates to approximately 6% of the population of the Total Trade Area (refer to table 3.1 in the Economic Impact Assessment) and thus is in accord with TTPA traffic assessment.

It is also quite apparent that while the primary Trade Area is shown extending to the west access is provided by the M5 East and other major roads such as Marrickville Road/Railway Road, Sydenham Road and Stanmore Road provide linkage to/from Tempe.

### Local Area Traffic Management

It is noted that the earlier assessments undertaken by TUP in relation to rezoning to permit Bulky Goods development in the area did not perceive any need for consequential local area traffic management.

The issues regarding the streets connecting between the Princes Highway and Unwins Bridge Road are historical and there has been agitation for some years by residents for change. The IKEA proposal has presented a fresh opportunity for the residents to agitate, however this large site will inevitably be redeveloped result in increased traffic generation.

The concern seems to be largely isolated to Union Street, however any change to eliminate the connective function of Union Street would be difficult because:

- \* it has traditionally served this function
- \* there is no real alternative while the introduction of constraints would have a significant impact on accessibility for residents in the area
- \* if its use were constrained it would result in the transfer of traffic to the other streets which have not had this traditional use.

### Treatment of the Highway

Agreement has been reached with the RTA in relation to the IKEA development scheme to:

- \* retain 3 southbound lanes along the Highway (by increased widening into the site to achieve right and left-turn bays)
- \* no change to the traffic lane arrangements at the Highway/Smith Street/Union Street intersection
- \* provision of traffic signals at the access intersection on the Highway incorporating pedestrian crossing facilities.

### **TAG SUBMISSION (Tempe Action Group)**

It is noted that there have been a number of developments since this submission was made, namely:

- \* the draft TMAP has been issued
- \* agreement has been reached with the RTA regarding the proposed treatment of the highway
- \* the RTA have provided advice regarding current action being pursued in relation to upgrading of this section of the Highway.

Obviously the residents submission has not had the benefit of these recent events.

### **Parking**

The residents are concerned that the proposed parking provision will be inadequate and this will result in IKEA customers and staff parking in the local streets where many residents are reliant on on-street parking. The Ministry of Transport letter suggests that the parking provision should be reduced as a means to enforce a reduced mode share to private motor vehicle.

Clearly there is a conflict with this issue and the residents would be alarmed at any reduction to what they already consider to be an inadequate parking provision. IKEA trading, like all major retail uses, is subject to pronounced trading peaks be they 'seasonal' or 'weather' related (eg rainy weekends which promote spiked demands).

The only alternative parking to that provided on-site will be in the residential streets to the west of the Highway. The proposed parking provision will be adequate to accommodate the normal super peak and staff demands. At the same time it is highly questionable, given the IKEA and TEMPE circumstances, that a constraint on parking provision will have any impact on mode share (as distinct to a normal employment use such as a commercial office).

### **Staff Numbers**

There is a significant difference between the total number of employees engaged and the number on-site at one time. The number on-site at one time and the start/finish profile are clarified in the TMAP document.

The maximum numbers at one time are as follows:

## Transport and Traffic Planning Associates

Administration	-	69 persons (Monday – Friday)
Store	-	100 persons (weekdays)
		200 persons (weekends)

### Future Road Network Circumstances

The RTA have advised that they are currently engaged on a 'Pinch Point Study' of the Princes Highway which is focussed on the Tempe – Sydenham section. The envisaged outcome is for:

- \* short term improvements involving extension of the existing tidal flow systems
- \* medium term improvements involving widening of sections of the Highway and Railway Road (required property requisitions have already been identified).

Agreement has been reached with the RTA in relation to the IKEA development scheme to:

- \* retain 3 southbound lanes along the Highway (by increased widening into the site to achieve right and left-turn bays)
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### Local Area Traffic Management

The traffic assessment undertaken adopted a pragmatic projection of traffic distribution which is independent to the Economic Impact Assessment. The statement that 50% of all traffic exiting from IKEA will be funnelled down Union Street is clearly incorrect. IKEA generated traffic will not be reliant on the use of Union Street or other minor streets connecting between the Highway and Unwins Bridge Road.

Any decision to curtail the connectivity provided by Union Street is a matter for Council and the RTA. The major road links of the M5 and Railway Road will serve to provide regional access to/from the west particularly when the RTA implements its scheme to upgrade Railway Road.

IKEA will not generate traffic in the weekday morning peak periods (the store will not open until 10.00am) and the peak activity (by far) occurs on weekends (ie not the weekday afternoon commuter peak period).

The introduction of LATM treatments needs to be carefully and equitably evaluated as it invariably has significant potential impacts in relation to:

- accessibility
- redistribution
- emergency services

Assessment for LATM treatments should only be appropriately undertaken in the light of established circumstances (ie details of traffic movements/changes). The appropriate process in relation to the IKEA issue would be to:

- \* undertake detail traffic surveys prior to construction of the development to establish the existing status quo
- \* undertake repeat traffic surveys subsequent to the opening of the development\
- \* undertake assessment to establish any need/change to the post development traffic circumstances
- \* undertake assessment of the available/appropriate treatments and potential consequences in consultation with the community and the traffic authorities.

It is understood that the developer is willing to fund a study undertaken with this process and any recommended traffic management measures which are approved by Council would be funded from the Section 94 contribution of some \$1.5 mill for such works.

### Projected Traffic Generation

The traffic generation assessment undertaken for the Concept Plan Application was based most appropriately on the detail IKEA patron activity characteristics. There is no more appropriate means of assessment particularly when the IKEA floorspace use includes warehousing of stock unlike normal bulky goods uses which are showrooms with external distribution warehouses.

The assessment has been very intensely scrutinised by the RTA and SRDAC and has been accepted. The application of projected Sydney region wide population growth and the like as undertaken in the TAG submission is simply not realistic or appropriate.

The extent of the traffic assessment accorded with the requirements stipulated in the DGR's document.

### Construction Traffic Management

It is not appropriate for detail planning for Construction Traffic Management to be undertaken prior to a 'builder' being involved in the process. It is the norm for there to be a Consent Condition requiring submission of a CTMP prior to the Construction Certificate being issued.

No doubt the particular concerns of the TAG submission in this regard are:

- \* construction vehicles using local residential streets
- \* workers parking in local residential streets
- \* dust and noise

In this respect it is apparent that:

- \* all local streets connecting between the Highway and Unwins Bridge Road have existing 'LIGHT TRAFFIC' restrictions which will preclude use by trucks (the CTMP will preclude use of Smith Street)

- \* the large site will be quite adequate to provide for all worker parking needs
- \* dust and noise will be dealt with by the normal criteria enforced by Council inspectors
- \* roadwork along the Highway will only be able to be undertaken in accordance with strict RTA controls.

#### Traffic Use of Smith Street

The designation of Smith Street for emergency vehicle access is purely at the request of the emergency service authorities. There will be no need nor intent to permit any other access to/from Smith Street.

The capacity of the proposed accesses on the Highway and Bellevue Street will be quite adequate and appropriate and it is assumed that a consent condition will preclude access via Smith Street (except for emergency services).

#### Pedestrian and Cyclist Provisions

The proposed development will make significant provisions for pedestrians and cyclists as set out in the TMAP document. These will include:

- \* an upgraded pedestrian/cyclist route along the eastern boundary side of the Highway and along Smith Street
- \* secure bicycle facilities and end of trip facilities.

#### Changes to Right-Turning Bays.

It is proposed to lengthen the right-turn bay at Bellevue Street (by shortening the bay at Samuel Street) solely to better accommodate both its existing vehicle demand and the increased future demand (including SACL). It has nothing to do with diverting traffic to Union Street.

It is not now proposed to make any change at the Smith Street/Union Street intersection.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ross Nettle', written in a cursive style.

Ross Nettle  
Director  
Transport and Traffic Planning Associates