



# **SCEGGS Wilkinson House DA**

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES REPORT

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**Client:** SCEGGS Darlington

**Date:** 19 November 2021

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<b>Reviewed by</b>	Petra Fowler
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<b>Date</b>	19 November 2021
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<b>Version</b>	Final
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# 1 Overview

This Engagement Outcomes Report is prepared on behalf of the SCEGGs Darlinghurst Limited (the applicant) to accompany a State Significant Development Application (SSDA 19989744) for the adaptive re-use of Wilkinson House (the Site), located on the existing main school ground at 215 Forbes Street, Darlinghurst.

Conditional Development Consent was granted by the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) on 22 May 2020 to the Concept DA (Concept SSD 8993) for the redevelopment of SCEGGs at its main campus located at 215 Forbes Street, Darlinghurst (the Campus), excluding St Peter's Precinct and 217 Forbes Street.

Development Consent was not granted for Stage 1 works to Wilkinson House, including the demolition of existing Wilkinson House, excavation of a basement and construction of a new 4 storey building for general school purposes. The Concept Approval only approved the existing building envelope of the Wilkinson House. The proposal for Wilkinson House was not approved with the key reason being preservation of heritage.

This is the first detailed SSDA under the Concept Approval (SSD 8993), for the adaptive reuse of Wilkinson House for general school learning areas and sport facilities to support the senior school, including alteration and additions to the existing Wilkinson House. Once a block of flats, a boarding house and currently used as classrooms, the internal structure of the building provides limited flexibility, lighting, acoustics and ventilation making it unsuitable as a learning environment.

In response to feedback that the earlier design was not in keeping with community expectations to preserve local heritage and character SCEGGs undertook a voluntary design competition process with a brief to create large, flexible and well-lit learning spaces to support the school's aim to provide an optimum learning environment that allows for the ongoing evolution of best practice teaching and learning while also celebrating and conserving the significance of Wilkinson House.

The concept design by Smart Design Studio was selected as it best met the brief and aims to secure the future of the building by rejuvenating it while delivering 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning spaces.

Community and stakeholder engagement presenting the new proposal for Wilkinson House was designed to reengage with key stakeholders with a high level of interest identified in consultation on the Masterplan 2040 as well as the wider local community.

Feedback has been considered in finalising of the preliminary design and detailed SSDA for Wilkinson House, which will be lodged with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and expected to be placed on public exhibition in the third quarter of 2021.

## 1.1 Objectives of the community consultation

Community and stakeholder engagement was designed to:

- » ensure local community and stakeholder awareness of the proposed adaptive reuse of Wilkinson House including alteration and additions design and provide the opportunity to ask questions and make comment
- » reengage with community and stakeholders who had expressed a high level of interest in the earlier Concept SSDA to identify whether previous heritage concerns had been addressed
- » reach out to the wider local community to share the new proposed preliminary design for Wilkinson House and provide the opportunity for feedback
- » understand key areas of interest and inform planning and construction processes.



## 1.2 Agency and Council Engagement

Engagement with City of Sydney Council and NSW Government agencies aimed to identify whether concerns raised in response to the earlier proposal for Wilkinson House had been addressed and to inform the finalisation of the development application and planning for construction.

## 2 Communication and Engagement

A range of engagement and communications targeted key stakeholders while also engaging with the wider community. Communications and engagement channels were designed to directly engage with the surrounding community and to reach the wider local community.

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### Community update - letterbox to nearby residents

In August 2021, an A4 notification was distributed to approx. 2200 properties surrounding SCEGGS school campus. Due to COVID-19 restrictions no supporting doorknock was undertaken.

The notification can be viewed at Appendix A. The distribution map can be viewed at Appendix B.

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### Project email address and hotline

Project specific contact details, email address and phone number, were communicated to community and stakeholders.

As at 26 August 2021, two emails were received and one call was received – excluding any emails and calls related to registrations for the online sessions.

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### Community and stakeholder sessions

A community information and feedback session was held on Thursday 19 August 5.30pm-6.30pm.

Key stakeholder groups who had previously had a high level of interest in the earlier proposal for Wilkinson House were offered sessions.

Owners in the Horizon building, located directly opposite Wilkinson House, proceeded with a session held on Wednesday 18 August 5.30pm-6.30pm.

The Thomson Street residents group and East Sydney Neighbours Association (ESNA) took the option to attend the community information and feedback session on Thursday 19 August rather than a separate session.

The presentation for both sessions can be viewed at Appendix C

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## 3 What we heard

### 3.1 Key insights

Consultation offered an opportunity to capture feedback and the following key themes emerged.

**Design of new building** – there was overwhelming support for the preliminary design noting the sensitive treatment and enhancement of the historic building’s facades and roof. Some respondents considered the design of the lift tower could be more sympathetic to the character of the building.

**Construction management** - there was a high level of interest in traffic and access during construction. Key considerations identified were, the potential impact of construction worker parking on local on-street parking, noting recent experience with another local significant construction project, and traffic flow and safety in relation to truck movements.

**Traffic and access** – it was noted that the proposal for Wilkinson House would have no impact on current school operational traffic. There is ongoing interest in improving current operational traffic flows around the school with some respondents suggesting the removal of bollards at the end of Forbes Street to allow traffic flow between St Peters Lane / Premier Lane and Forbes Street.

### 3.2 Detailed feedback

Detailed feedback has been collected during planned engagement activities as well as through general enquiries made to the project team.

#### Stakeholder session - Horizon building

The Horizon Building Strata Committee and owners / residents’ session Wednesday 18 August 5.30pm-6.30pm online via Zoom with COVID-19 restrictions not allowing for an in person session. Email invitations were sent to property owners by Strata Committee representatives providing the link to the meeting.

12 attendees participated in the online session. The facilitated session included an introduction by the Head of School and presentation by key project team members representing architectural design, planning, heritage and traffic.

Attendees were invited to ask questions and share their thoughts.

#### Proposed alteration and addition to Wilkinson House

- » Grateful for the school taking the recommendation to host a voluntary design competition.
- » Very pleased with the outcome and design as it preserves the existing building as much as it deserves to be retained.
- » Advocate of the design competition and supportive of the outcome.
- » Particularly pleased with the new roof design.
- » Roof design is genius, will improve the building.
- » Pleased that the school will have better facilities, and the residents have preservation and improved treatment of the front of the building.
- » Interest in the lift design asking about the choice of a curved structure and dark colour.

The project team noted that the lift design is still very much at a concept design stage and will be further refined. The challenge being that the specific materials need to meet the relevant fire safety compliance.

- » Interest in light pollution and high levels of illumination onto neighbouring properties.

They also advised that the lighting has a baffle so illumination is downward and designed to minimise impact on neighbouring residences.

### **Construction management**

- » Concerns around large trucks entering the street and awkward turning circles causing congestion.
- » Need to consider the number of buses on Forbes Street and truck movements.
- » Would like to see traffic controllers will be in place.

The project team noted that there would be further opportunities to consult when the project progressed to engaging a contractor and drafting of the Construction Traffic Management Plan. Activity would be focused on St Peters Street where possible. Traffic controllers will be in place.

- » Will there be road closures.

Possibly one early on to install the tower crane and later to remove it, this permanent crane onsite will then reduce movements and blockages.

### **Traffic and access - operational**

- » Consider opening up Forbes Street on to St Peters Lane permanently to help with congestion.

The school noted that blocking access to St Peters Lane was purely a decision by the council who control the local roads and the school would not object to reopening.

## **Community Information Session**

A community information and feedback session was held on Thursday 19 August 5.30pm-6.30pm online via Zoom with COVID-19 restrictions not allowing for an onsite drop-in session. The session was promoted through a community update letter inviting members of the public, including neighbours and local residents, and the school community to register to attend.

Seven community members, including community group representatives, attended the online session. The facilitated session included an introduction by the Head of School and presentation by key project team members representing architectural design, planning, heritage and traffic.

Attendees were invited to ask questions and share their thoughts.

### **Proposed alteration and addition to Wilkinson House**

- » Roofscape is really clever, good interpretation of what was there before, in a constrained building telling the story is great, had thought it was a challenging brief and apart from the lift tower believe the architect has done a great job.
- » Would like to see the exterior lift design pared back, quite bold in its statement and is reminiscent of the unattractive Liverpool Street development.
- » Prefer not to see brick on brick, liked the glass concept.
- » Is the lift a necessity – could it be located inside the building.

The project team noted that the lift design is still very much at a concept design stage and will be further refined. Proposes to soften the design, the lift should be secondary to the building. The challenge being that the specific materials need to meet the relevant fire safety compliance. A lift is a requirement for accessibility and the team explored including it inside the building however it proved difficult to fit without destroying the existing foyer which is a significant element of the building and is being retained in the proposed design.

- » Is there internal significant heritage.

The Conservation Management Plan for Wilkinson House grades the various elements of the interiors in terms of their contribution and demonstration of the place's overall significance. The entrance lobby and lounge hall are recognised as being of high significance and will be retained in situ in the proposed design.

The existing staircase poses a major limitation for the buildings in terms of fire risks and accessibility, it is proposed to be removed and a new central staircase introduced that references the materiality of the former.

Interpretative devices are proposed to ensure that the story of the early history of the building and design continue to be told through floor and ceiling inlays and sophisticated window designs for the balcony openings to ensure these spaces continue to be read as balcony openings from the exterior.

- » Prefer that the door on Forbes Street was not used as general access to the building.

The project team advised that retaining the door for heritage interpretation was a specific design choice and reaffirmed that the main access will be via the school gates.

- » The copper down pipes are very appealing but must be mindful to have them secured as the Church development had their pipes stolen.
- » The proposed alteration and addition to Wilkinson House is infinitely better, it's good to see that the school has come up with something that is respectful of the beautiful building the local community respects.

**Construction management**

- » Ensure there is effective traffic management, concerns that any condition of consent preventing construction workers from parking on the street are not effective as compliance is not enforced, raised the example of a current local construction project.
- » Would like to see some parking for construction workers provided within the school site.
- » Management of trucks on Forbes Street.

The project team noted that there would be further opportunities to consult when the project progressed to engaging a contractor and the drafting of the Construction Traffic Management Plan. It is proposed that site access and activity would be on St Peters Street where possible. A range of measures will be considered such as those used in CBD construction where there is limited on-street parking available.

**Traffic and access - operational**

- » Would like to see St Peters Street boom gate kept permanently open, not sure why it continued to be blocked off.

The school noted that blocking access to St Peters Street was purely a decision by the council who control the local roads.

### 3.3 Summary of what we heard and response

Summary of what we heard	Response
<b>Design /heritage</b>	
» Strong support for proposed alteration and addition to Wilkinson House design from all community members who shared their thoughts	N/A
» Very supportive and appreciative of the preservation of historic character	N/A
» Strong support for roof design	N/A
» Would like to see the lift tower design reviewed, consider the material and colour	The Lift design has progressed to a glass structure that delicately sits clear of the Wilkinson House peripheries. The extension is recessive and is set back from Forbes Street.
» Lighting impact on neighbours	Mitigations already incorporated – downward illumination, light levels, number of lights

Summary of what we heard	Response
<p>» Heritage significance of internal structures</p>	<p>The Conservation Management Plan for Wilkinson House grades the various elements of the interiors in terms of their contribution and demonstration of the place’s overall significance. The entrance lobby and lounge hall are recognised as being of high significance and will be retained in situ in the proposed design.</p> <p>The existing staircase and its associated vestibules are graded as being of Moderate significance. However, as the existing staircase poses a major limitation for the buildings in terms of fire risks and accessibility, it is proposed to be removed and a new central staircase introduced that references the materiality of the former.</p> <p>The original balconies and former layout of the original flat buildings too are proposed to be removed; however, interpretative devices are proposed to ensure that the story of the early history of the building and design continue to be told through floor and ceiling inlays and sophisticated window designs for the balcony openings to ensure these spaces continue to be read as balcony openings from the exterior.</p> <p>While it is proposed to remove original fabric from the interiors, it is considered appropriate that the building is adaptively reused to serve the evolving needs of SCEGGS, particularly in consideration that a major part of the place’s significance is vested in its association with SCEGGS Darlinghurst.</p> <p>The team have consulted extensively with the Government Architect’s Office, who support the proposed level of intervention. Consultation has also been undertaken to the City of Sydney Heritage team to gather their feedback on the CMP which has in turn guided the design approach for Wilkinson House’s adaptive reuse.</p>
<p><b>Construction management</b></p>	
<p>» Construction traffic management will be important to maintain local on-street parking and ensure safety and traffic flow</p>	<p>Refer to the draft Construction Traffic Management Plan submitted as part of the SSDA and would be finalised prior to start of construction</p>
<p>» On street parking by construction workers</p>	<p>Refer to the draft Construction Traffic Management Plan submitted as part of the SSDA and would be finalised prior to start of construction</p>

## 4 Council and agency engagement


### 4.1 City of Sydney

Meetings were held with Council on 14 April, 17 August, 30 September and 21 October 2021.

Engagement focused on:

- » Heritage and Conservation Management Plan (CMP)
- » Design

What we heard	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Support for the external change/additions to Wilkinson House noting the overall changes, externally, would result in no significant heritage impact</li> </ul>	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Council noted that the design as presented is likely to comply with the policies of the CMP</li> </ul>	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Council confirmed the location of the lift is appropriate, minimal visual impact to the street and a sensitive addition, noted the care taken in considering shape of the lift, material and colour selection</li> </ul>	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Proposed external conservation was positive, noting:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Reconstruction of the roof                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– noted the retention of the existing roof line</li> <li>– supported the change in material noting the original material had previously been replaced</li> <li>– supported replacement of eaves soffit (to match existing)</li> </ul> </li> <li>&gt; Linking the eaves and the lift addition is supported and sensitive</li> <li>&gt; Recessed balcony, natural ventilation, steel frame and sun control blinds are positive and contribute to enhancing the internal amenity and will clearly be read as new insertions</li> <li>&gt; Proposed new location of the staircase was positively received being in the location of the former lightwell</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	N/A

What we heard	Response
<p>» Confirmation of the angle of the solar panels</p>	<p>The solar panels are mounted flat to reduce additional height and impact to the streetscape</p>
<p>» Noted the consideration of both education needs and retention of heritage fabric.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>» Given the change to the inside of the building the proposal should consider more internal interpretation and improve the experience of using the space by adding a layer of richness to it, telling a story - especially relating to the spatial relationship of the foyer</p> <p>The foyer of the MLC building was given as an example</p> <p>More internal fabric could be considered for interpretation and use - reuse of joinery (skirtings, architraves, picture rails, doors etc.) and further interpretation of original layouts in floor inlays for the common spaces where terrazzo is proposed - bronze inlays suggested</p> <p>Support the selection of grey terrazzo for the stairs</p>	<p>The ceiling treatment to the General Learning Areas (GLA) retain the memory of the former plans of Wilkinson House.</p> <p>The perforated acoustic ceilings are contrasted with a smooth finish, tracing the former plans. This treatment was initially only proposed for the GLA's, but following our consultation with City of Sydney Council, we agree that the common areas would benefit from another layer of detail to tell the story of the building's past life.</p> <p>Brass inlay strips trace the plans of what once was with the continuation of the ceiling treatment to all common areas.</p> <p>The layer of detail to doors to both classrooms and staff offices, give a contemporary reinterpretation of the period, with panelled break ups and jamb detailing as seen in the central stair CGI image below.</p> 
<p>» Confirmed the floor levels would remain with request for details to be resolved where floor levels clash with the window openings</p>	<p>New concrete slabs are proposed with floor levels being at similar RL's to the existing</p>
<p>» Confirmed the foyer would be retained and no excavation below is proposed noting risk associated with construction disturbance and potential structural integrity</p>	<p>Details on how the foyer will be retained during demolition and construction will need to be detailed at a later stage</p> <p>Structural Integrity will be addressed in the Structure Report</p>



What we heard	Response
<p>» Support for the proposed interpretation of original staircase</p> <p>Consider how the stair interpretation could be included as part of the proposal - acknowledge that it will need to be worked through with an artist</p> <p>Wynyard train station was put forward as an example</p>	<p>Refer the 'Artist Collaboration' section of the Design Report submitted as part of the SSDA for detail on proposed interpretation</p>
<p>» Noted interpretation is likely to be a condition of consent suggested the design should include some strategy on the proposed interpretative devices</p>	<p>N/A</p>

## 4.2 Government Architect NSW (GANSW)

The project team met with State Design Review Panel on 4 August, 17 August, 30 September, 21 October 2021. What was heard and the project team response are detailed in the Design Report prepared by smart design studio and submitted as part of the SSDA.

## 4.3 Transport for NSW

Consultation with Transport for NSW is outlined in the Traffic and Access Report prepared by Traffix and submitted as part of the SSDA.

## 4.4 Services

Consultation was undertaken with Ausgrid and Sydney Water as detailed in the Utilities Report submitted as part of the SSDA.

# A **Community newsletter**

# SCEGGS WILKINSON HOUSE

Community Update August 2021

## WILKINSON HOUSE UPDATE

SCEGGS Darlinghurst is planning for a new, heritage-sensitive redevelopment of Wilkinson House to create engaging and functional learning spaces.

Feedback during consultation on the previous concept plan in 2018 has been considered and a new design is proposed. It was decided to hold a design competition with a brief that sought to address the concerns of neighbours and stakeholders, while providing purpose designed functional learning spaces in a heritage building designed for other uses.

The design, by Smart Design Studio, retains the existing character of the unique, historic Emil Sodersten designed building while delivering important functional classroom spaces. Heritage sensitive, the design proposes the retention and rejuvenation of the well-preserved exterior on Forbes and St Peters Streets. The main access to Wilkinson House will be from within the school campus and not via the doors located on Forbes and St Peters Streets.

## Community Information Session

We are committed to ongoing engagement with the local community and invite you to attend a Community Information Session Webinar. You will have the opportunity to find out more about the new proposed concept, the design process and considerations for the construction phase and share your feedback.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts about the concept design for the Wilkinson House redevelopment.

Regards

Jenny Allum  
Head of School



**Indicative concept design**  
Artist's impression for illustrative purposes

## Community Information Session Webinar

Thursday 19 August

5.30pm-6.30pm

Registration is required, to register please email:  
[sceggsdarlinghurst@elton.com.au](mailto:sceggsdarlinghurst@elton.com.au)

## Contact us

For more information please contact our community liaison team.

**Email** [sceggsdarlinghurst@elton.com.au](mailto:sceggsdarlinghurst@elton.com.au)

**Phone** (02) 9272 5483



SCEGGS DARLINGHURST

## **B Distribution area**



Cook + Phillip Park

East Sydney Private Hospital

Kings Cross

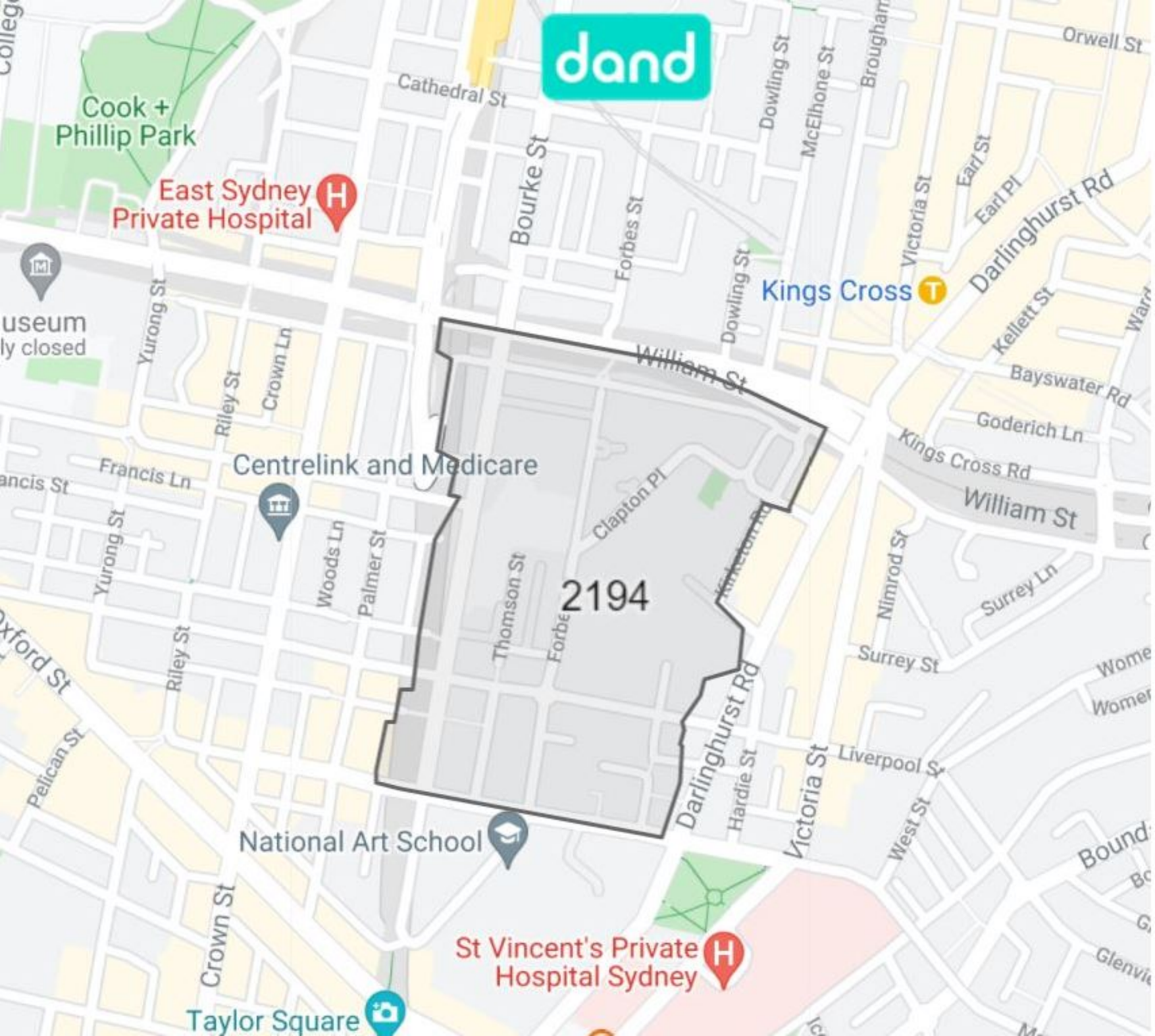
Centrelink and Medicare

2194

National Art School

St Vincent's Private Hospital Sydney

Taylor Square



# C Presentation





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## Agenda

- 5:30 Welcome
- 5:35 Planning context and heritage
- 5:40 Design concepts
- 5:55 Q&As
- 6:10 Construction and Traffic management
- 6:15 Q&As
- 6:25 Wrap-up

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**Planning Context**

- Concept Plan and Stage 1 SSDA Approval 2020 (SSD 8993) > Stage 1 works for Wilkinson House was not approved.
- This application is the first detailed SSDA under the Concept Approval for the adaptive reuse of Wilkinson House.
- SSDA Process including consultation.

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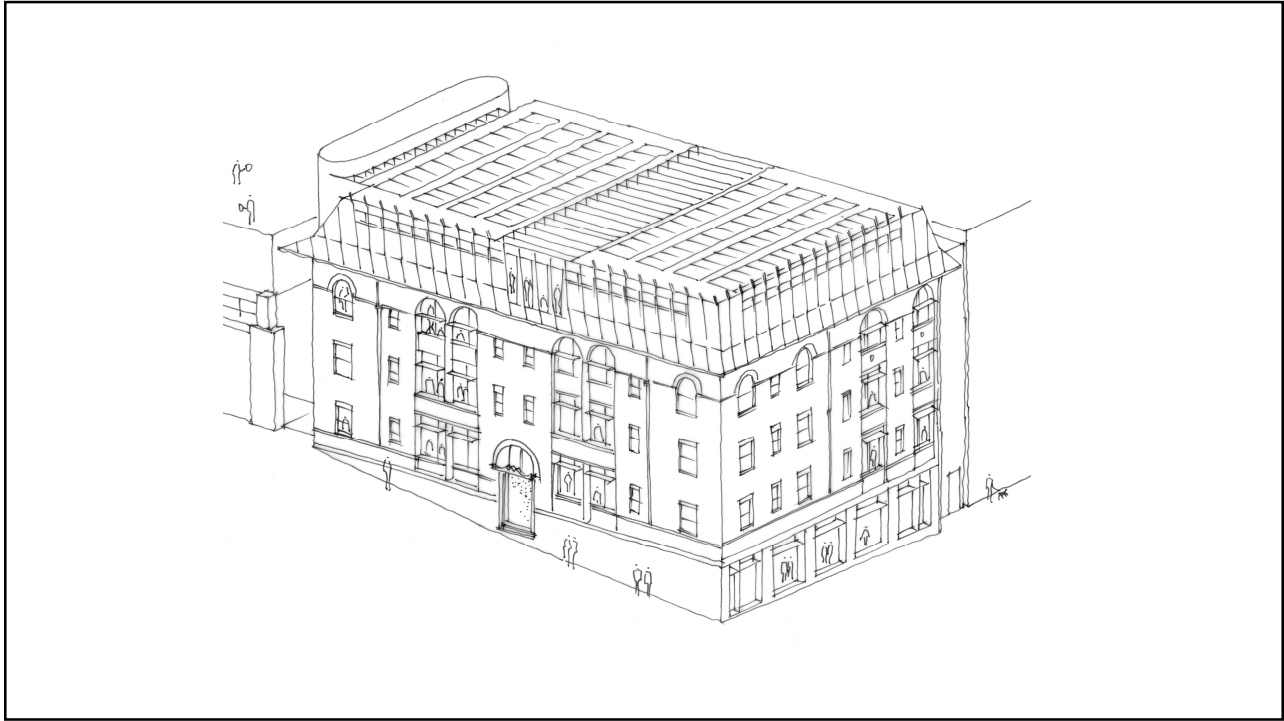


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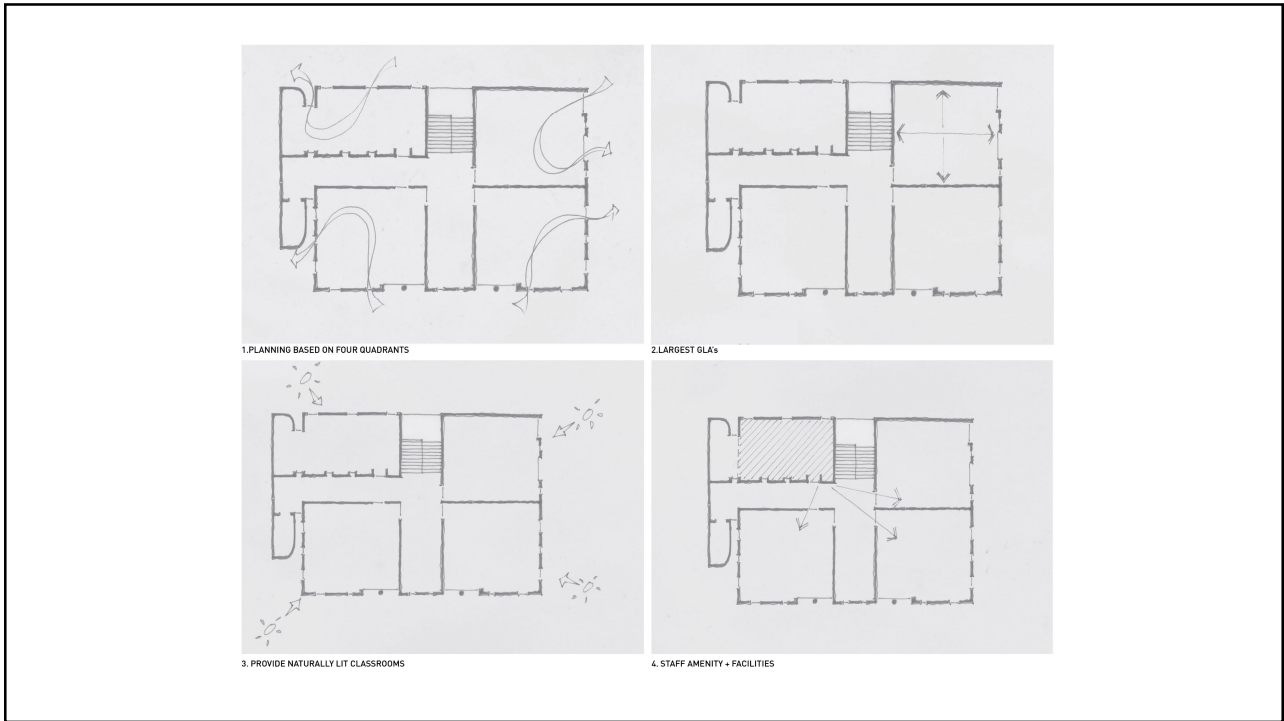


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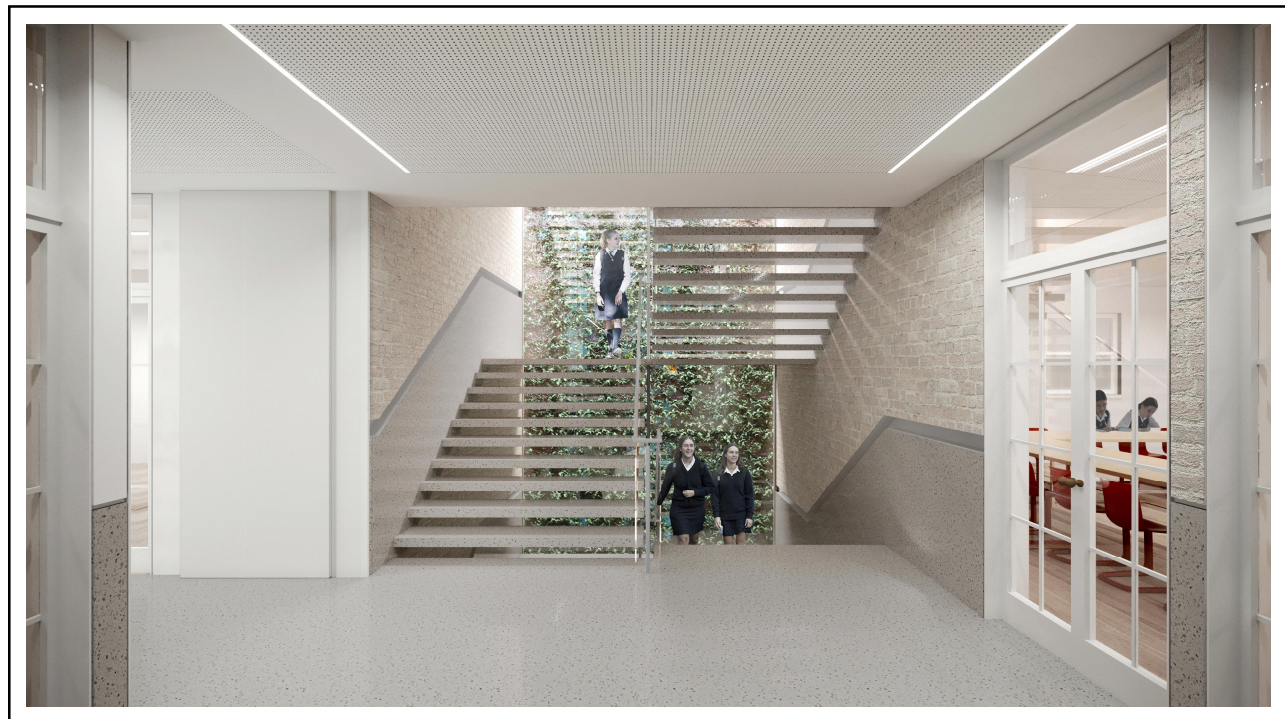
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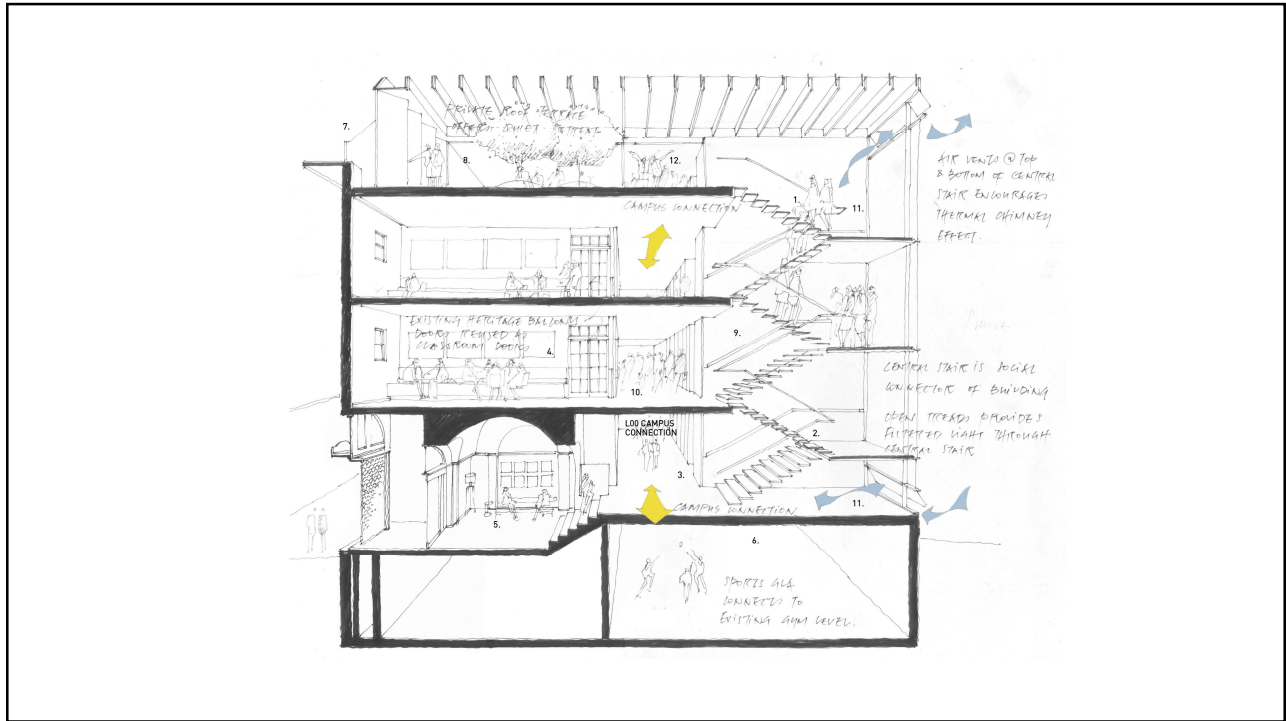
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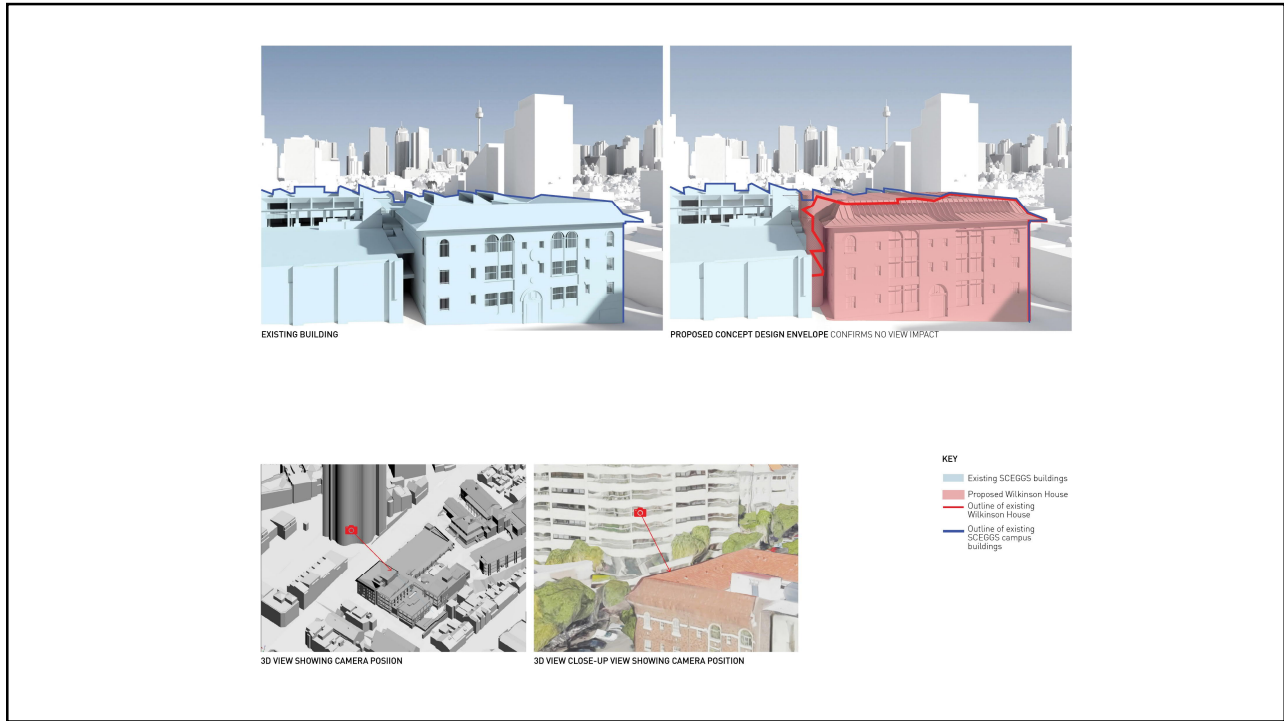




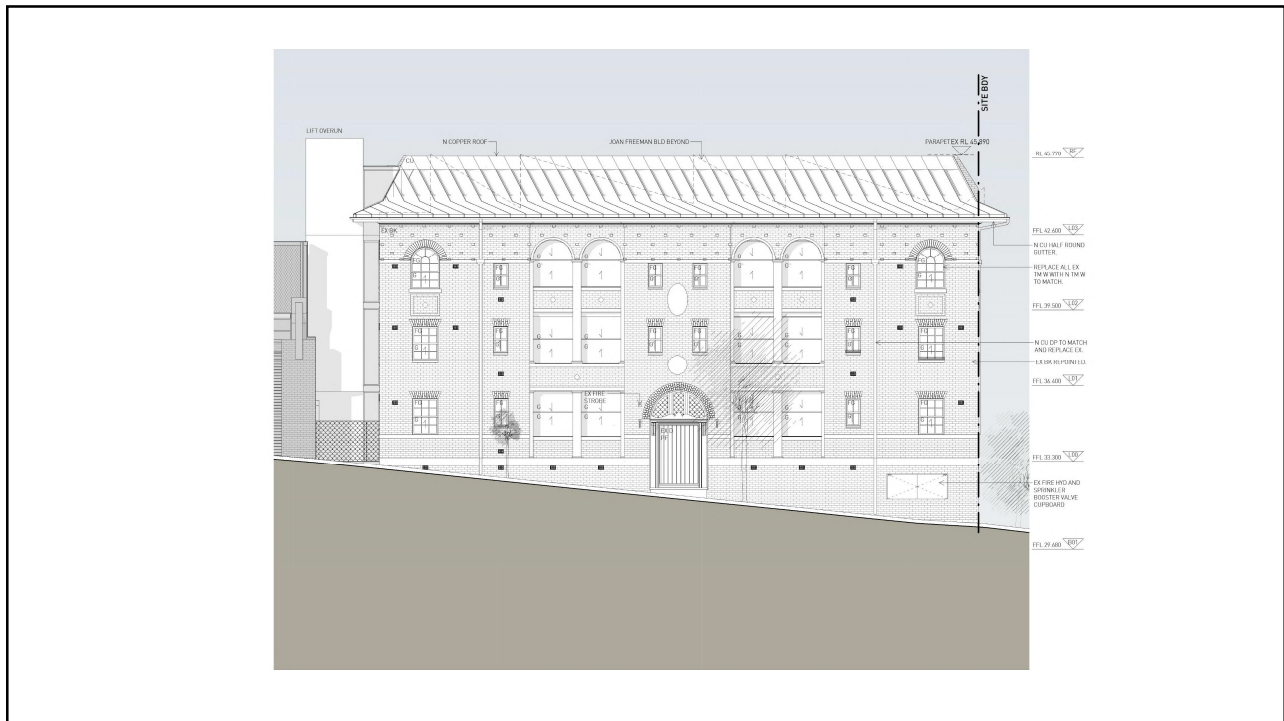
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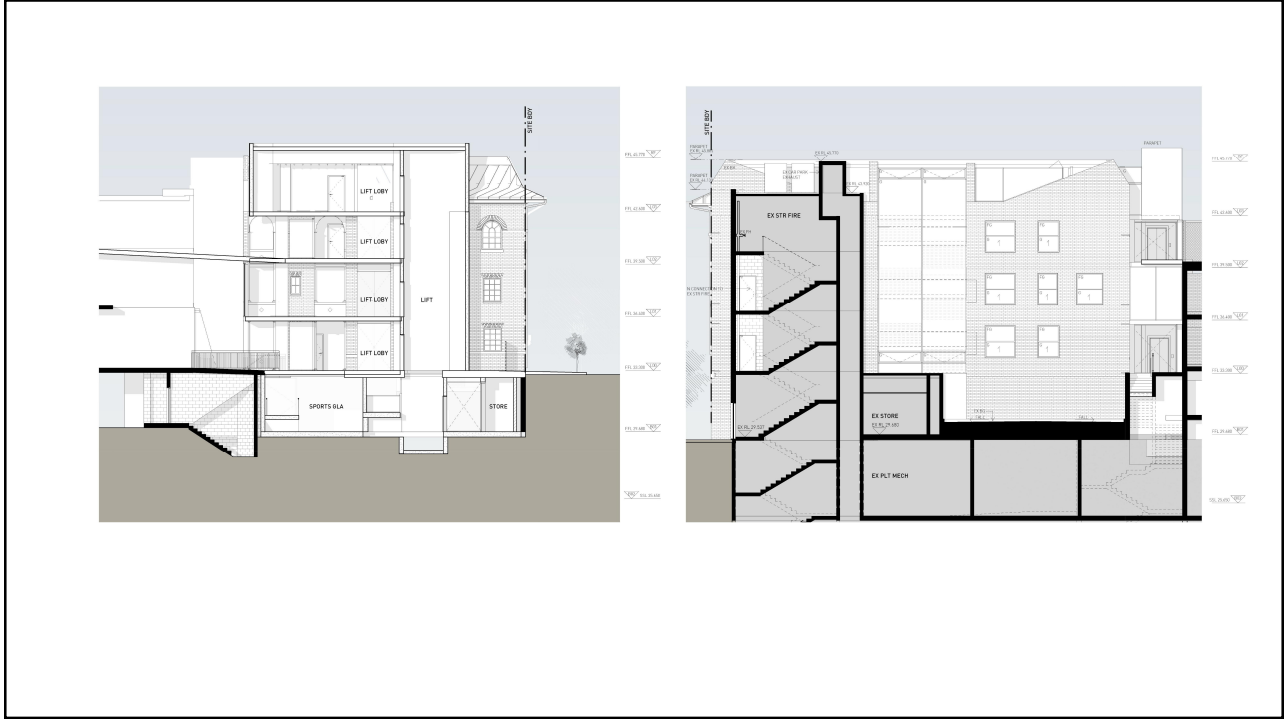
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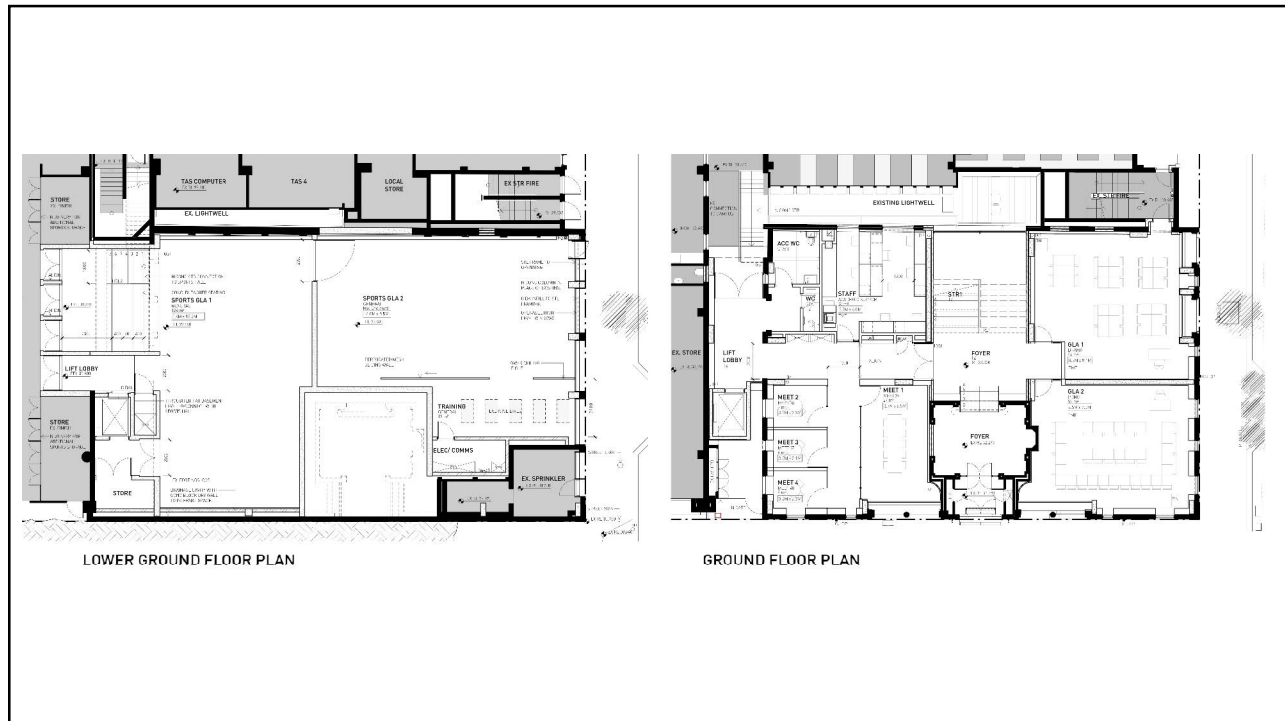


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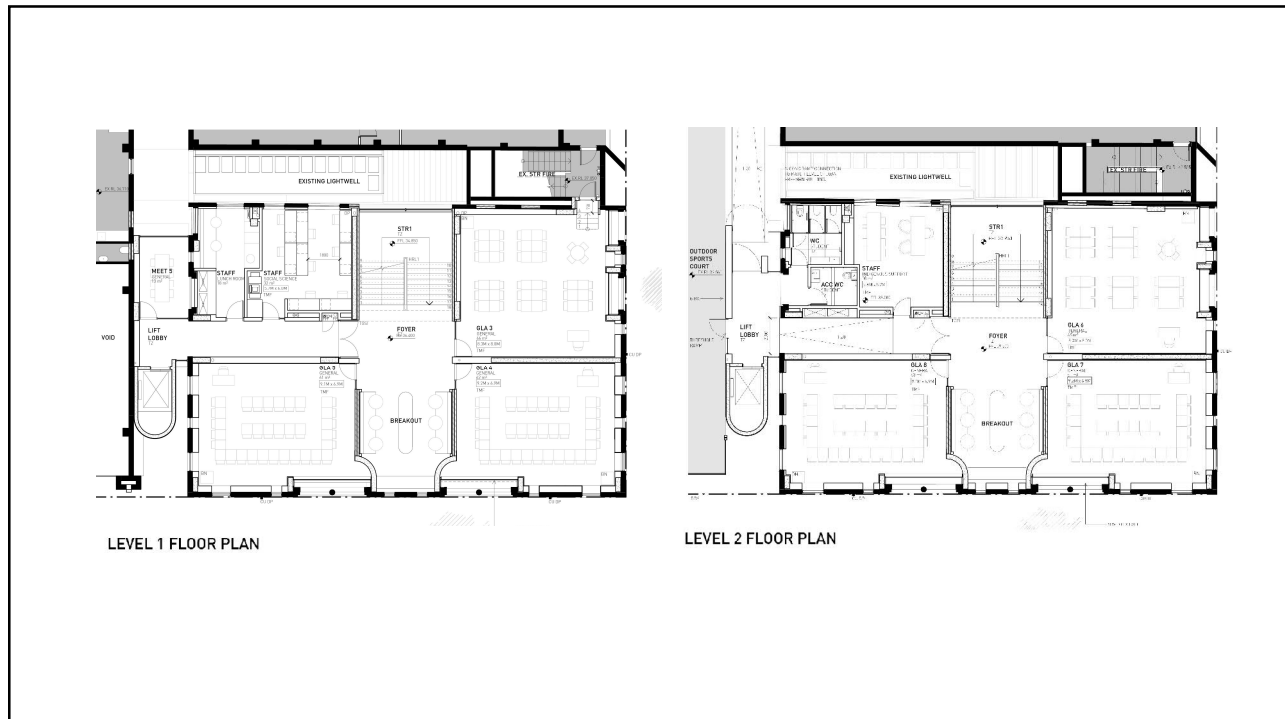


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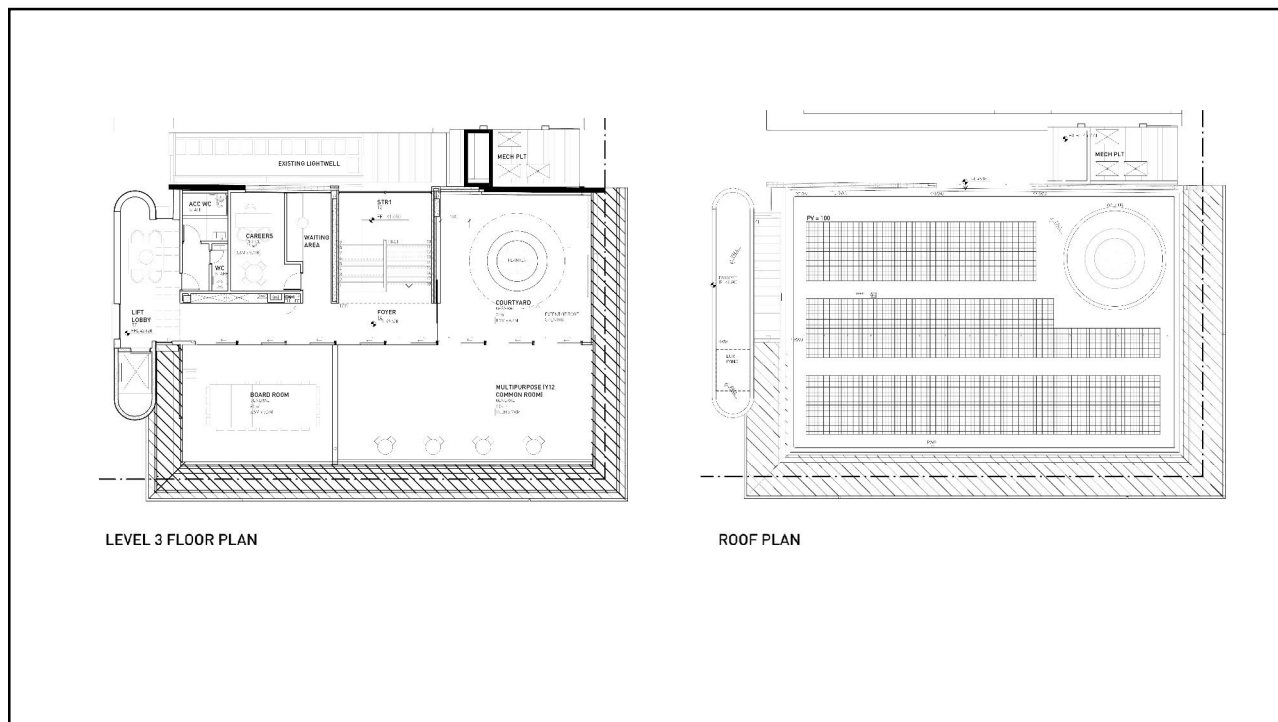




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## Q&As

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## Construction Phase

### Steps

- Tender process for construction contractor to follow DA
- Preparation of Construction Management Plan aligned to conditions of consent
- Preparation of Construction Traffic Management Plan aligned to conditions of consent
- Implementation of final plans as approved by DPIE
- Timeframes for on-site work - about 18 months

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## Construction and Construction Traffic Management



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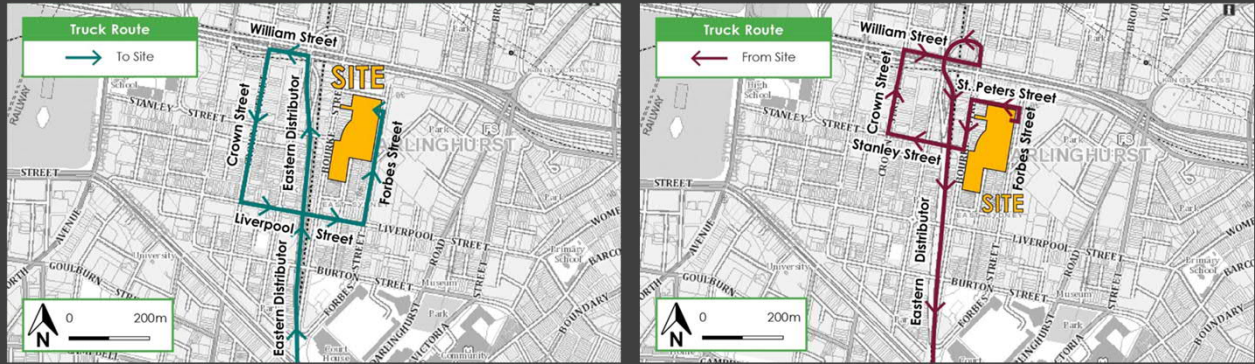
## Construction and Construction Traffic Management



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# Construction Traffic Management



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## Q&As

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