

Community Consultation & Engagement Report

Proposed redevelopment: 13-23 Gibbons St,
Redfern

Client: Wee Hur Capital

Date: 17 December 2018

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Date	17 December 2018
Version	02

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1 Background

Elton Consulting was engaged by student accommodation developer Wee Hur to work with architects Allen Jack + Cottier to conduct initial community consultation and engagement for a proposed new project bounded by Gibbons Street and Margaret Street, Redfern. This project will be the Sydney launch development for Wee Hur.

The site, 13-23 Gibbons St at Redfern, has a land area of 1365sqm and is currently occupied by a four- to five-storey brick residential building, which is to be demolished. Wee Hur's development is expected to provide approximately 488 beds for student accommodation. The new building will be no more than 18 storeys. Due to the size of the project, it is classified as a State Significant Development (SSD).

The objectives of the development are to provide a commercially viable number and mix of student beds to a high quality architectural design, incorporating quality and functional communal spaces with a secure environment for its residents.

Elton Consulting's Community Consultation & Engagement Strategy (CCES) sought genuine consultation with stakeholders in the immediate area surrounding the development site in order to inform the design and development application process.

The engagement process aimed to:

- » Gather feedback from stakeholders to inform the concept design and assist in finalising the design and documentation phase of the project
- » Proactively identify potential issues and opportunities for consideration in order to reduce the risk of delays to the planning and construction processes
- » Reduce the risk of misinformation and demonstrate that potential impacts have been considered in planning
- » Facilitate the planning approvals process
- » Comply with the outlined environmental assessment requirements (SEARS)

2 Engagement overview

The Community Consultation & Engagement Strategy (CCES) identified known stakeholders and proposed a methodology to engage with them via multiple channels, including:

- » Phone calls
- » Face-to-face meetings and a doorknock campaign
- » Background collateral
- » Email

2.1 Stakeholders identified

Key stakeholder groups and individuals identified were owners and/or residents of the following properties:

- » The former Uniting Church Tonga Parish, 118 Regent St
- » The BP service station, corner of Margaret and Regent Streets
- » Strata management and residents of the 'Katia' residential complex, 1 Margaret St
- » Landowners and tenants of properties between 90 and 118 Regent Street

In addition, Elton Consulting sought engagement with the following community interest groups:

- » REDWatch
- » North Eveleigh Info (formerly known as 'Stealing Our Skies')

Feedback from community engagement and meetings with stakeholders form the basis of this report.

Note: architects for this project, Allen Jack + Cottier, and its consultants engaged with the following stakeholders separately:

- » City of Sydney Council
- » NSW Government Architect's Office
- » Roads and Maritime Services
- » Sydney Coordination Office within Transport for NSW
- » The Office of Environment and Heritage
- » The Environment Protection Authority
- » Sydney Water
- » SGCH (controlling 11 Gibbons St)

3 What we heard

3.1 Key themes

The community engagement process identified three key themes as concerns for owners and residents surrounding the 13-23 Gibbons St site:

- » **Noise** - concern about potential noise impacts on neighbouring properties once complete and tenanted
- » **Overshadowing**- concern about overshadowing of properties to the south of the site and reduced amenity
- » **Security** – concern that future tenants would pose a security risk to surrounding residents

There was minimal feedback about construction impacts and the aesthetics of the building's design.

3.2 Detailed feedback

Meetings with owners of nearby and adjacent properties

Meetings were arranged with the owners of two properties in the immediate vicinity of the site:

- » 1 Margaret Street – 'Katia' building strata management and strata committee
- » 118 Regent Street – former Uniting Church site owner

Each group received a presentation about the design of the project and the development application process. Below is the feedback received, and the responses provided by architects/project managers Allen Jack + Cottier (AJC).

Owners of 1 Margaret St ('Katia' complex)

Meeting 12/12/18 - Elton Consulting and Allen Jack + Cottier met with strata management (Harvie Strata Management) and the strata committee for the 1 Margaret St residential complex as part of their regular committee meeting.

Query/concern/expectation	Response
How will noise from the building be managed to minimise the impact to surrounding buildings? Expectations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Building footprint has been reduced to restrict vehicular access and promote pedestrian movement » Design has sought to reduce the 'wind-tunnel factor' » Communal space has been contained (internal) » Noted that significant traffic noise from Gibbons Street already impacted 1 Margaret St » Windows will have a limited opening gap in order to be compliant with construction regulations » The existing entry/exit will be removed. This, in conjunction with no facility for parking, should result in a reduction in noise impacts compared to the existing building
» The building's design would minimise noise emanating from the building towards 1 Margaret St	
» An acoustic report would be commissioned to determine how noise from the operations of 13-23 Gibbons St would impact 1 Margaret St dwellings	

Query/concern/expectation	Response
How many carparking spaces will the development have?	» No provision for carparking spaces and operations would integrate into public transport
Concern that students from country areas would increase carparking stress in the vicinity of the building.	» Building operations will promote active travel » A green travel plan would be implemented when operational
What type of commitment agreement would students sign?	» It is likely students would sign agreements that meet industry standards
Would like to see tenancy agreements of no less than six months.	
What standards will construction workers be held to?	» Construction contractors would employ industry standard agreements
Will the existing building at 13-23 Gibbons St be demolished?	» The building will be demolished, but an attempt will be made to retain the basement
Concern that 1 Margaret St building has suffered cracking for 15 years, however the causal factors have yet to be determined.	» (Response provided by Harvie Strata Management) A dilapidation report would be required before construction begins » The Construction Noise/Vibration Management Plan would consider 1 Margaret St
Will the developer have insurance?	» Explanation of the types of insurances required by certifying authorities were given
Have Aboriginal elders been involved in the process?	» Heritage research has been conducted, and this included consultation with the Aboriginal community
What type of signage is planned for the building? Will it be neon?	» External signage would not be illuminated » Signage is proposed for the top of the tower level and above the awning of the podium level
Would like there to be no overt signage on the building's upper levels.	
How many entrances will the building have?	» The building's entrances will adhere to the City of Sydney Council's street activation policy
Concern that the proposed Gibbons St entrance is too narrow and would form a choke-point.	
Will a café be accommodated on William Lane?	» Current plans indicate a provisional area for a future coffee cart in William Lane
Would not support premises having a liquor licence.	
What retail space would be on the site?	» The plan accommodates space for a small convenience store, café, small restaurant or mini-supermarket
What gathering spaces would be provided on the site?	» The design accommodates a communal lounge on the ground floor and a primary common space on the podium level (an outdoor terrace on level 4, facing Gibbons Reserve)
Concern about open space level with the top floor of 1 Margaret St (with additional concern about the transmission of noise).	
Is more detailed modelling/animation of the anticipated shadowing available?	» There is no plan to produce more detailed overshadowing modelling, nor an animation
Don't believe it's possible to produce an 18-storey building without overshadowing adjacent buildings.	
Would like to see more detailed overshadowing modelling should be provided.	

Query/concern/expectation	Response
The construction of student housing at 13-23 Gibbons St would negatively impact property values.	» Comment noted
Will the design provide allocated spaces for smoking?	» It is proposed for the building to be smoke-free » Building operations will observe strata bylaws
Would like to see more detail about Wee Hur Capital's operations	» Background information on Wee Hur Capital's other student developments in Australia was provided to Harvie Strata Management
Congregating 500 or more students in one area would pose a security risk, particularly if people congregated outside the building after hours. Would like to see the building staffed 24 hours per day to address security concerns.	» Feedback noted – the Operational Management Plan will address security concerns
When would the developer take the proposal to City of Sydney Council?	» It was anticipated a development application would be lodged in December 2018 or January 2019
What is the maximum occupancy?	» The proposal is for 488 beds
Will Margaret St be blocked off during construction?	» The construction traffic management plan will minimise negative impacts to traffic flow

Most queries and concerns raised by the strata committee for 1 Margaret St related to the operation of the facility.

Owners of 118 Regent St (former Uniting Church site)

Meeting 14/12/18 - Elton Consulting and Allen Jack + Cottier met with the owner of 118 Regent St, Jim Markakis.

Query/concern/expectation	Response
Why has the developer chosen student accommodation rather than residential?	» The developer sees the opportunity to respond to an undersupply of student housing
Will the building have classrooms?	» The building will not have classroom facilities
The new development will overshadow 118 Regent St.	» Detailed overshadowing plans were provided » The worst-case scenario for 118 Regent St would be three hours of daily full sun coverage in mid-Winter to the northern facade
How many carparking spaces will the development have?	» The building has no provision for carparking spaces
Suggested that if everything is permissible, the owner of 118 Regent St would engage with the development application process.	» Comment noted
Could see benefit in the development if restaurants were incorporated into the building.	» Comment noted

Doorknock engagement

On 30 November 2018, Elton Consulting staff conducted a doorknock and letterbox campaign of properties bounded by Gibbons, Marian, Margaret and Regent Streets, and into William Lane. They were able to make contact with seven occupants of properties within the campaign area, with the following results:

- » One occupant queried the timing for construction (reference material outlining the proposed construction timetable was provided)
- » One occupant queried the risk of noise from construction (reference material outlining the proposed construction timetable was provided)
- » One occupant commented that extending William Lane would be 'elaborate'.

Overall, occupants contacted appeared indifferent to the project.

Where contact could not be made with occupants, leave-behind materials were left (refer to *Appendices*).

Note: two properties within the engagement area were boarded up or abandoned/in a state of disrepair.

Community groups

Elton Consulting engaged with two community interest groups:

- » **REDWatch** (by phone)
Geoffrey Turnbull, on behalf of REDWatch, indicated he had read the SEARS material, but wanted more information. He indicated his group has a strong position on affordable housing, with the view that student housing was typically unaffordable. He also indicated he may request a briefing, but did not offer further comment. Background material was emailed to Geoffrey Turnbull.
- » **North Eveleigh Info** (by email)
'Adrian' responded via email, indicating the proposed development site was outside its normal scope of interest, but was interested in receiving more information, which was provided.

Unresponsive stakeholders

Persistent approaches were made to engage with the following stakeholders who were either unresponsive or did not respond before the conclusion of the community engagement period:

- » BP (for 116 Regent St)
- » Salvation Army/Oasis Transitional Accommodation (for 90 Regent St)

Contact logs can be provided for engagement with these stakeholders, upon request.

4 Recommendations

Elton Capital understands that, at the writing of this report, Allen Jack + Cottier had already undertaken to adjust the proposed design of 13-23 Gibbons St to address some concerns raised by stakeholders in this process, where appropriate.

Given the nature of the feedback received during the community consultation process, Elton Consulting makes two recommendations for Wee Hur Capital for future engagement processes:

- » Develop collateral providing detailed information about how the building would be operated, addressing key concerns raised (particularly noise transmission and security)
- » Develop collateral providing detailed information about the proposed construction process, outlining how negative impacts to surrounding areas are to be minimised

The information produced should then be used to inform stakeholders in the next community engagement phase.

5 Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1: leave-behind document

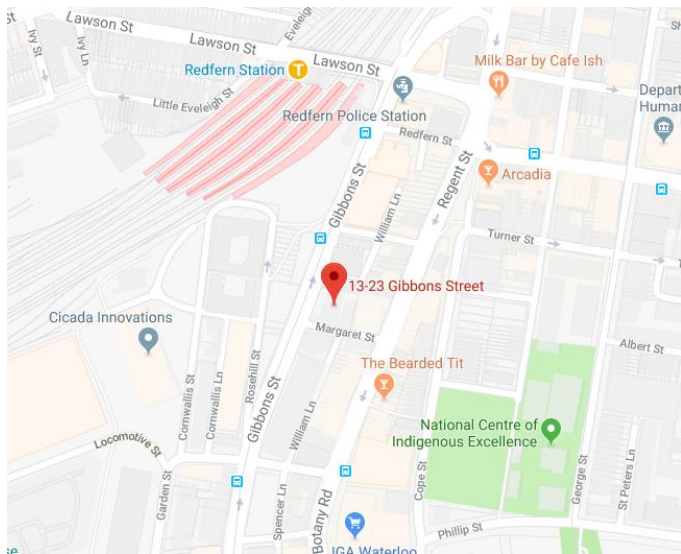
Information on new student housing project

13-23 Gibbons Street, Redfern

New student accommodation is proposed for 13-23 Gibbons Street, Redfern. If approved, the proposal will provide around 489 student beds and will extend William Lane with a view to providing community space and public art in the extended area. Subject to planning approval, construction of the new building will start in mid-2019 and take around 18 months, with residents taking occupancy in 2021.

About the proposal

The proposal involves redevelopment of 13-23 Gibbons St, Redfern to deliver student accommodation. The map below indicates the location and an overview of the main features of the proposal:



- » Maximum 18 storeys, with vegetation on the podium facade
- » Around 489 student beds
- » One retail tenancy to face Gibbons St (closing by 10pm)
- » Two communal terraces and communal amenities to include a laundry and bicycle repair/storage
- » William Lane to be extended to run behind the building (7m to the north, 11m to the south), with community space and the potential for public art

To the north of the site, at 11 Gibbons Street, is a former City of Sydney depot with approval for an 18-storey affordable housing building (unrelated to this project).

If approved, international property and construction company Wee Hur Capital will deliver the project. Wee Hur has constructed and is managing similar student accommodation buildings in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. Chippendale-based architects Allen Jack + Cottier are working with Wee Hur to develop the building design.

Once open, the building will be managed by a local student accommodation operator. This will include provision of after-hours security guards and/or mobile patrols.

Design and overshadowing

The project's design will be sympathetic to the surrounding area and occupants of neighbouring properties. All materials, including external finishes, will comply with the latest safety standards.

Care has been taken with the design to minimise overshadowing impacts and to allow as much solar access as possible to residential properties adjacent to the site. However, some properties immediately to the south of the site will be affected, particularly in the afternoon and evening.



*Perspective: south west**



*Perspective: podium close-up**

Design at 22/11/18

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vehicle access for residents, loading zone access and cyclist and pedestrian access to all properties adjacent to the site will be maintained at all times, as will existing bus stops. Temporary diversions may be required at times during construction to ensure the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and workers.

Construction times and proposed management measures will be detailed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Development Application (DA) at a later date. However, these will conform to industry standards.

Next steps

Design of the proposal continues to be developed. If you have any questions or feedback, please email us at 13GibbonsStreet@elton.com.au

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Development Application (DA) are also being prepared, which will outline the proposed design of the project as well as impacts during construction and operation and how they will be managed. The EIS and DA will be publicly exhibited from the end of 2018, with community feedback invited during the exhibition period.

More information

For more information or to provide feedback on the proposal, please email 13GibbonsStreet@elton.com.au

5.2 Appendix 2: 'sorry we missed you' card

30 November, 2018

Sorry we missed you

We came to speak to you about a proposed student accommodation project at 13-23 Gibbons Street, Redfern. If approved, the proposal will provide around 489 student beds and will extend William Lane with a view to extending William Lane in order to provide community space and public art.

An overview of the proposal is attached.

A detailed Environmental Impact Statement and Development Application are expected to be publicly exhibited from later this year for feedback.

If you would like further information, please email 13GibbonsStreet@elton.com.au

We encourage you to call us on 02 9387 2600, so we can update you on what is proposed.



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