

1 April 2019



Ms Prity Cleary
Assessment Officer
NSW Department of Planning & Environment
via email: Prity.cleary@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Cleary

re: Name: SCEGGS Darlinghurst Concept and Stage 1 DA
 Application No.: SSD 17_8993

I have lived in Darlinghurst since 1991, and on Forbes St, Darlinghurst, since January 2001. As a local resident, I wish to object to the proposed development on the SCEGGS Darlinghurst campus, on a number of grounds:

1. Loss of heritage buildings:

The 1920's building on the corner of Forbes St and St Peters St is slated for destruction, to be replaced by a building that has no engagement with the surround streets. The proposed replacement on this site is essentially an internal-facing structure that creates a boundary wall-like effect on the corner of Forbes and St Peters streets. The proposed structure replaces a human-scale façade that relates to the streetscape with a monolithic form with no entranceways or relationship to the street.

Additionally, on the SCEGGS Darlinghurst campus is one of the remaining Villas of Darlinghurst, dating back to the early colonial expansion of the settlement of Sydney. The 1830's villa, Barham, will be completely cut off from Forbes St by the proposed new building.

2. Loss of significant views:

The proposed 7-storey building on the southern perimeter of the SCEGGS site is 2.8 metres taller than the existing height of the current Old Gym Building. (It is noted that the released height diagrams incorrectly implied that the height increase was only 1.1 metres taller than the existing structure, potentially misleading local residents and other interested parties.)

I live in one of the terrace houses on Forbes St, and if the proposed development is approved, I will lose my iconic view of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. This impact has not been properly assessed prior to the design of the SCEGGS redevelopment – during the community

consultation meeting conducted by SCEGGS, the potential for local residents to lose our views was not even raised as a possibility. It is my understanding that the loss of my iconic view is not in accordance with the Land and Environment Court's principles on "view sharing". Furthermore, the proposed 7-storey building does not comply with current height restrictions on the site. As such, what SCEGGS is proposing is to overdevelop the southernmost part of their site, above current height restrictions, for maximum negative impact on neighbouring properties, resulting in loss of iconic views (as well as overshadowing and impacting on privacy).

3. Overshadowing and privacy concerns

As proposed, the 7-storey structure planned for the southern perimeter of the SCEGGS site will result in the terrace houses on the northern end of Thomson St, Darlinghurst, being completely overshadowed, with loss of all northern light, and some loss of western light. The northernmost terrace houses will be rendered permanently in shadow by the proposed development.

Additionally, the excessive height of the proposed 7-storey building will impinge on the privacy of residents in the terrace houses at the northern end of Thomson St. Students and other users of the proposed building will be able to look into what are currently private courtyards and terraces.

4. Excessive bulk of the proposed 7-storey southern SCEGGS campus building

The proposed 7-storey structure is not in keeping with the 19th century character of Thomson, Forbes and Bourke streets, both in terms of proposed design, but also in height and other dimensions. The positioning of this over-sized building on the southern perimeter of the SCEGGS campus is such that it causes maximum negative impact on neighbouring properties, in terms of overshadowing, visual impact and privacy. It seems almost as if the designers deliberately positioned it to minimise its impact on the school grounds, and maximise the damage to neighbouring properties.

As the elevation drawings show, the proposed 7-storey building will form a giant multi-storey wall that transects the block bounded by Forbes, St Peters, Bourke and Liverpool streets. As noted above, the new barrier-like structure will doubly impact on the closest residents in terms of light, shadow and privacy.

5. Rationale for the proposed SCEGGS development

I am extremely concerned about the lack of rationale for the proposed development. During the consultation meeting held at SCEGGS in late 2018, no rationale was provided for the size, bulk and height of the proposed 7-storey southern perimeter development. The actual intended function of this oversized building was not clarified. Attendees at the meeting were advised that it could be used for classrooms, or a swimming pool, or possibly other uses. Given that the proposed structure does not meet current height restrictions, and will cause permanent damage to the 19th century neighbourhood in which it sits, the lack of a rationale is deeply concerning.

I specifically asked if SCEGGS was planning to increase the number of students, given the lack of clarity of purpose communicated by the school at this meeting. I was advised that this was not the case, however, I am very concerned that the proposed increase in floorspace on

the SCEGGS campus will be later used as a justification to exceed the current cap on students.

Should you wish to contact me to verify my details, I may be contacted as follows:

[REDACTED]

I do not wish my details to be released to SCEGGS or parties acting on behalf of SCEGGS.

Yours,

[REDACTED]