

2 April 2019

Ms Prity Cleary  
NSW Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Cleary

**Objection – SSD 17\_8993 SCEGGS Darlinghurst Concept DA and Stage 1 DA**

Thank you for the providing an opportunity to lodge an objection to the SCEGGS Masterplan Concept and Stage 1 documents. After reviewing the SCEGGS Masterplan I wish to provide my feedback and concerns:

**1. Student numbers and support staff:**

I remain unclear with regards to the actual vs. proposed staff and student numbers that are expected to be in place once the plan has been completed. The application states that no increase in staff and student numbers will occur. The masterplan indicates that the school has 900 students from kindergarten to year 12 currently; however, the traffic impact assessment states that there are 185 staff and 931 students (178 kindergarten to year 4 and 753 year 5 to year 12). This should be clarified.

I note that the proposed DA also proposes an option for SCEGGS to include a childcare centre for 90 children. The master plan fails to address how these additional student numbers would be accommodated, much less the increase in teaching staff and support staff required to support the childcare centre. These additional students and teachers will add further traffic and parking congestion to the neighbourhood.

In order to understand how the proposed childcare centre could impact the surrounding neighbourhood, I would request that the proposed staff numbers and proposed student numbers be included in the application.

For many years the neighbourhood surrounding SCEGGS has experienced traffic management issues including double ranking of buses and cars, vehicle congestion and parents picking up and dropping off their children during peak periods. I believe that any consent to this plan require that SCEGGS maintain the current approved student numbers. Given the current traffic issues, increasing student and staff numbers will add further traffic congestion and slow traffic flow even further.

The provision of a childcare centre should be excluded from the Concept DA. There is insufficient information within the proposal and no details regarding its future impact to the surrounding residences and traffic flow to be able to fully understand the long term impacts.

## **2. Proposed gross floor area concern**

The proposed increase of over 3,000 square metres of Gross Floor Area claims that this will not generate higher levels of traffic as existing student numbers and staff populations will not change.

However, if a childcare facility is added to the existing SCEGGS premise the proposed increase in student and staff numbers will increase the levels of traffic due to the increase in student numbers.. The request to increase the Gross Floor Area should be reviewed further and all impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood be fully reviewed before any approval is considered.

## **3. Exemption to Section 94 contribution concerns**

I believe that consent to this plan require a Section 94 contribution be a requirement before the proposal can proceed as there will be a net population increase, as discussed in section 1.

## **4. Traffic management concerns**

The traffic generated by SCEGGS along Forbes Street has been an ongoing challenge for residents of the Horizon for many years. The school has not been able to successfully address traffic congestion along Forbes Street. The traffic generated by student drop off and collection each day has not been resolved after many years.

Forbes and Bourke Streets are very narrow and we have seen buses double ranking and parking behind each other, reducing the drop off area for parents and causing further congestion.

The Traffic Impact Assessment included as part of the Masterplan DA suggests that SCEGGS could deploy supervisors to manage traffic; however, SCEGGS have not put this into place. I believe that SCEGGS must provide authorised traffic controllers at both the Forbes and Bourke street entrances to fully address this issue.

Traffic congestion is made worse because SCEGGS have closed St Peters Street, formerly a public street. The street remains closed both during and after school hours as well as on weekends. It is not clear if SCEGGS was ever granted permission to close a public street. The street is now only accessible at the sole discretion of SCEGGS, which further restricts local traffic. I would request that any consent to this DA require SCEGGS to provide 24-hour, 7 day a week access for the public to use St. Peters street. I would also like to see all school pickups and drop offs moved on to St. Peters street to reduce the double ranking along Forbes Street. This was in place previously for many years and SCEGGS functioned normally.

Should SCEGGS be allowed to incorporate a child care facility, I believe that most parents will drive and stop their vehicles to drop off and collect their children. I noticed that the Traffic Impact Assessment does not address the additional traffic impact of the proposed child care centre and does not address it in the context of the current traffic environment. This is an important consideration which will impact vehicle access throughout the entire neighbourhood. I would request that any DA consent prohibit the development of a child care facility at SCEGGS as there is no proposal to address the additional traffic impact it would generate.

## **5. Design excellence competition concerns**

It appears that the proposed development is likely to exceed a CIV of \$50M given the proposed scope of works. I believe a competitive design process should be established before approval is granted.

## **6. Wilkinson House concerns**

I believe that SCEGGS request to demolish Wilkinson House has not been properly considered. This building is a listed heritage building and is included in the East Sydney Heritage Conservation area. The proposed building would completely remove all traces of the current building. Although the master plan acknowledges the heritage value of the existing structure it makes no attempt to protect the building.

Wilkinson House has been a key part of the Forbes Street streetscape for decades and removing it adds no aesthetic or public value.

I strongly support Option 2 described in the Heritage Assessment - retain the existing building façade and adapt the interior for future use. Both SCEGGS and their architects have expressed this as a potential outcome they would consider during public consultations. The DA should not be approved unless option 2 is agreed.

While it is important for SCEGGS to continue to grow and improve their facilities, it is also important that the community and neighbourhood needs are included in this planning discussion. I would hope that a reasonable outcome can be achieved in consideration of the points raised above. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

