

27 April 2020

NSW Planning, Industry & Environment

Attention: Ms Priti Cleary
information@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Madam

Fort Street Public School, Upper Fort Street, Millers Point (SSD-10340)

I am writing in relation to the above development application (DA) which was advised by letter dated 1 April 2020 from Karen Harragon, Director Social and Infrastructure Assessments.

As a resident of Millers Point, I have significant concerns about a particular safety aspect of the planned upgrade to Fort Street Public School. I am very concerned about the planned diversion of cycle traffic from the current cycle path from the Harbour Bridge to the Kent Street underpass and its impact on the safety of people walking to or from work, tourists, and residents, especially children. I note that the current cycle route will be closed from the commencement of construction until some months after the school is completed.

The current plan proposes to divert approximately 2,000 bicycles a day during the week and 1,000 bicycles a day at weekends from the current cycle route to travel down Watson Road, Argyle Street and Kent Street. This diversion will be in place for the duration of the development and then for an unconfirmed period when the school is completed to upgrade the cycleway. I estimate that up to 1,000 cyclists will travel this route Monday to Friday during the morning peak period. This will conflict not only with morning traffic, but with parents dropping off children at the school and local residents and workers once the school is completed.

Kent Street has cars parked on both sides of the road most weekdays with one lane in each direction plus parking, principally for residents. There are also a number of pedestrian and vehicle crossings to hinder the traffic flow, so increasing the hazard level. Not only will the streets become clogged, but based on current experience, cyclists will move to the footpaths to avoid this traffic and thus move faster. Adult cyclists already race along the footpath when Kent St is clogged. The trend to motorised bikes makes this even more dangerous.

The drivers of cars exiting Observatory Tower, The Georgia and Highgate may be unable to see a speeding cyclist quickly enough to stop. Other Kent Street buildings that may be concerned about this risk include the Langham Hotel, the Fire Station and retail outlets.

Finally, I am particularly concerned about the risk to children being dropped off and picked up if the cycleway is not kept well away from these points going forward.

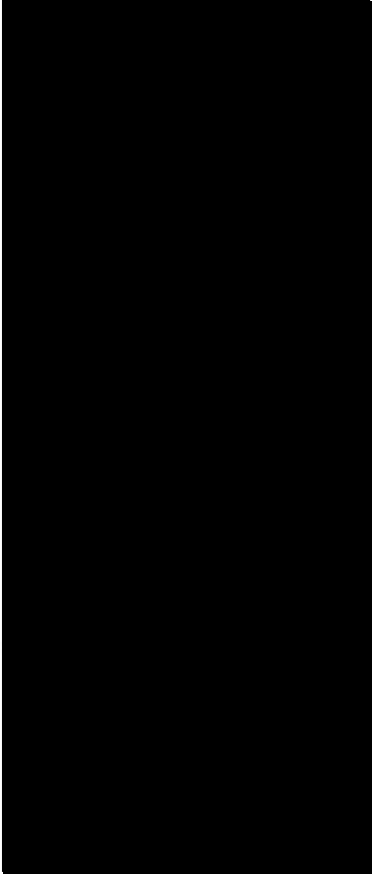
Apart from the risk to pedestrians, I believe this situation will be extremely difficult to police effectively. In addition, there may well be altercations between pedestrians and cyclists. Not only is this dangerous, it impacts our harmonious neighborhood.

I believe there are alternatives that would help solve this problem. Like you, I am keen to avoid major traffic snarls, major discontent, injury and possibly even deaths.

I understand that the Traffic Committee of the Millers Point Community Residents Action Group is already investigating alternative solutions to resolving this specific issue. I ask that you arrange to meet with them urgently to develop an acceptable solution before progressing further.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area, obscuring the name and any handwritten notes or dates that might have been present.