

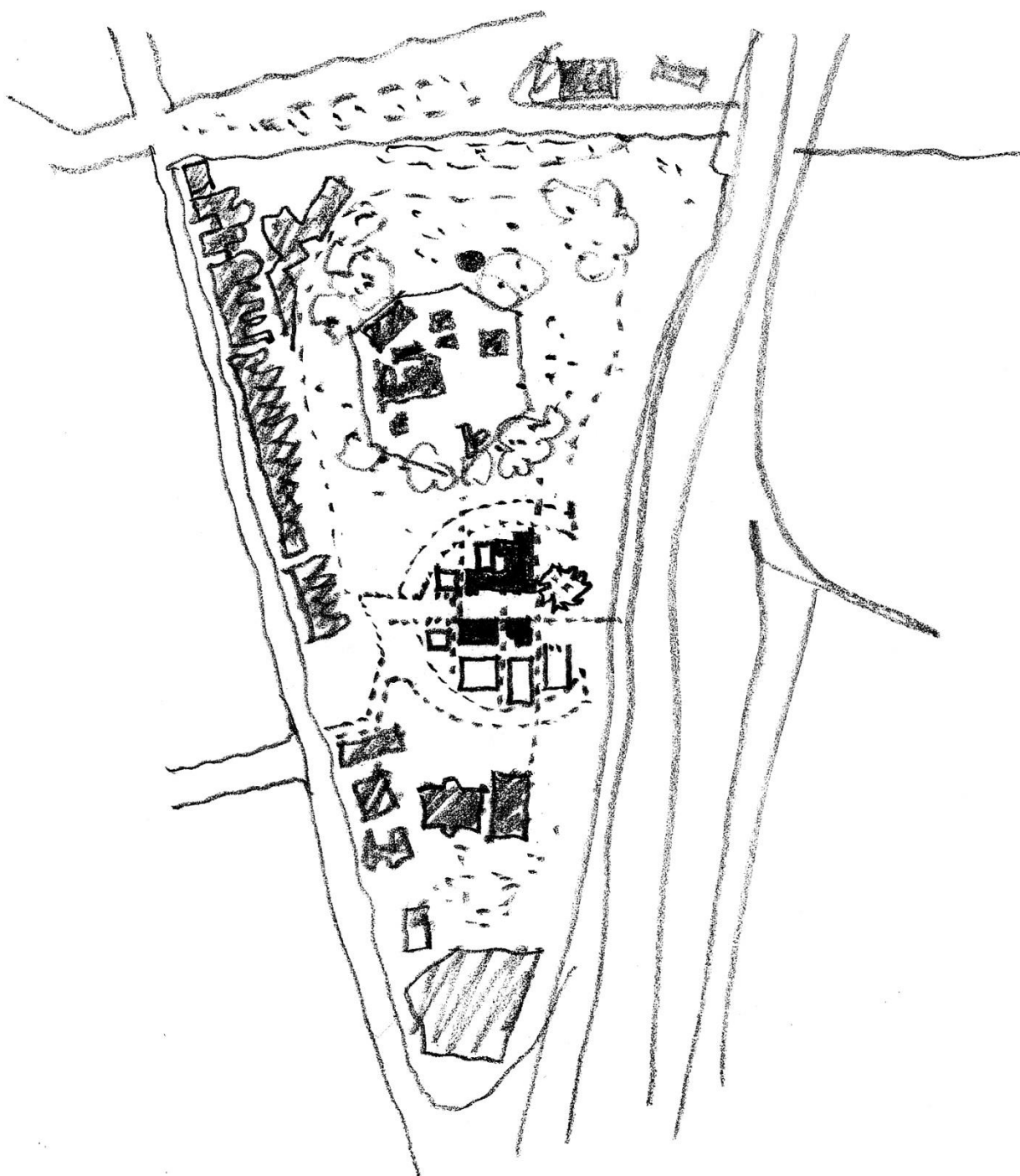
Fort Street Public School Operations Statement

SSD 10340

Prepared by Ethos Urban

For School Infrastructure NSW

21 February 2020



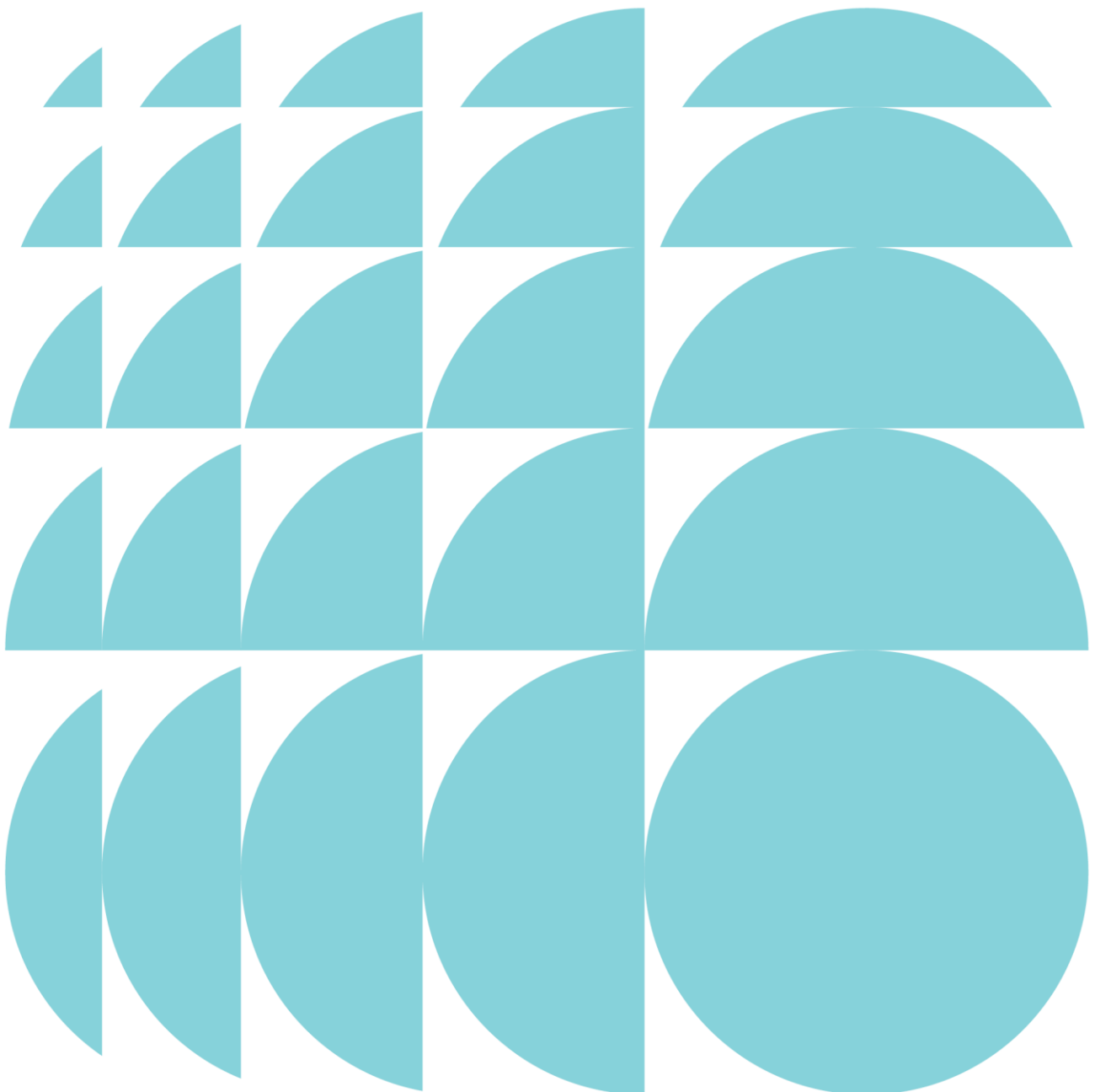
ETHOS URBAN

Operations Statement

Fort Street Public School
Upper Fort Street, Millers Point

Submitted to Department of Planning, Industry
and Environment
On behalf of School Infrastructure NSW

February 2020 | 218945



CONTACT

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21 February 2020

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1.0 Introduction

This Operations Statement has been prepared by Ethos Urban on behalf of the Department of Education – School Infrastructure NSW (SINSW) to support the State Significant Development (SSD) Application for the redevelopment of Fort Street Public School (FSPS), within the City of Sydney LGA.

The preparation of an Operations Statement is a requirement of the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the project. Specifically, the SEARs require that the following operational matters be addressed:

- *Provide details of the existing and proposed school operations, including staff and student numbers, school hours of operation, and operational details of any proposed before/after school care services and/or community use of school facilities.*
- *Provide a detailed justification of suitability of the site to accommodate the proposal.*
- *Provide details of how the school will continue to operate during construction activities of the new primary and secondary school, including proposed mitigation measures.*
- *Provide details regarding management of student safety in accessing and departing the school site in the peak periods, beyond the limits of the school grounds, and in particular how that traffic will be separated from cycle traffic associated with the cycle path.*
- *Provide detail regarding impact of construction on events including weddings that held in Observatory Hill Park. Include details of arrangements to prevent impacts on events with consideration given to the impact of construction.*
- *Provide evidence of liaison and agreement with the City of Sydney and the Observatory in relation to this issue.*

This Operations Statement addresses the matters specified in the SEARs and outlines the existing and proposed management arrangements for FSPS. It demonstrates that the site is suitable for ongoing use as a public school and that construction impacts on the surrounding receivers and public domain can be appropriately managed to minimise any adverse impacts.

2.0 Site Context and Proposed Development

2.1 Site Location and Context

The site is located at Upper Fort Street, in the north of the Sydney CBD within the City of Sydney LGA. The site is located south west of the southern landing of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and adjacent to the Sydney Observatory. The site is surrounded on all sides by the Cahill Expressway as it becomes the on-ramp to the Bradfield Highway. The site is connected to the surrounding areas by one road bridge and two pedestrian bridges.

A site context map is provided at **Figure 1** and an aerial photograph of the site is shown at **Figure 2**.

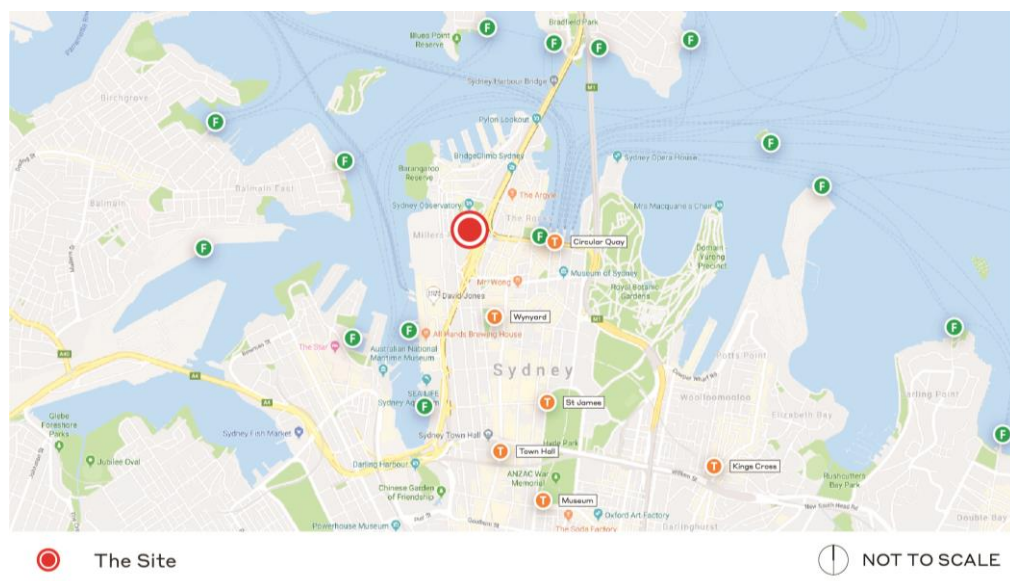


Figure 1 Site context map

Source: Google Maps + Ethos Urban



Figure 2 Site aerial photograph

Source: Nearmap + Ethos Urban

2.2 Proposed Development

Approval is sought for the expansion of FSPS to accommodate a total of 550 primary school students. Specifically:

- Site preparation, demolition and excavation
 - Site remediation.
 - Demolition of the southernmost school building, the garage and storage shed west and east of the Bureau of Meteorology Building (the Met/the Met Building), and the toilet block adjoining the main school building.
 - Selective removal of various elements of the main school building, as well as minor and insignificant elements of the Met Building and the Messenger's Cottage to facilitate refurbishment and future use of these buildings.
 - Bulk excavation works to facilitate the new southern buildings and onsite detention.
 - Tree removal.
 - Installation of hydraulic and electrical services.
- Land use
 - Use of all buildings for the purpose of a school.
- Refurbishment of existing buildings
 - Retention, refurbishment and extension of the existing Fort Street Public School, including construction of a new roof and rooftop additions.
 - Retention and refurbishment of the Met Building and internal alterations and additions.
 - Retention and minor alterations and additions to the Messenger's Cottage.
- Construction of new buildings
 - Construction of one new building on the western part of the site for a staff room.
 - Construction of two new, interconnected school buildings on the southern third of the site.
 - Construction of a new communal hall and canteen building.
- Landscaping
 - Retention of the existing large fig tree.
 - Landscaping works throughout the site, including construction of a new amphitheatre, new central plaza, and a multi-purpose forecourt.
 - Landscaping of roof gardens on top of the new southern buildings and the existing Met Building.
- Other works
 - Works to the existing entrance road, including alterations to the Bradfield Tunnel Services Building.
 - Modifications to existing pick-up / drop-off arrangements.
 - Provision of signage zones.
 - Installation of on-site detention.

3.0 Existing and Proposed School Operations

Provide details of the existing and proposed school operations, including staff and student numbers, school hours of operation, and operational details of any proposed before/after school care services and/or community use of school facilities.

3.1 Student and Staff Numbers

The maximum capacity of the school under the FSPS Master Plan is 600 students with approximately 40 staff. The SSD design caters for 550 students with approximately 37 staff. The anticipated opening capacity and before and after school care numbers are provided in **Table 1** below. There are currently 220 students and 17 staff at the school.

Table 1 School student and staff numbers

Year	Staff	Students
Opening Capacity (2023)	26*	391
Maximum Capacity	37*	550
Before and After School Care	17*	250**

*A ratio of 1:15 staff per student has been applied

**This is the maximum number of students that could be accommodated for out of school hours care and is subject to receiving a dispensation from minimum area requirements. The actual number may be less. These students will be attending FSPS and are not additional to the maximum student capacity of the school.

3.2 Hours of Operation – Standard School Operation

Standard school hours are 9am to 3pm, Monday to Friday.

The precise scheduling of classes and activities is to be determined, however the tables below illustrate indicative start and finish times.

Start Times

Start times for extra-curricular activities and first lessons are outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 2 Start times

Time	Activity	Group	% of students (nom)
8:00am	Extra-curricular	Maths club/sports team training etc.	10%
9:00am	First lesson	N/A	45%*

* Assuming before school care operates at capacity, with students arriving at any time between 7:00am and 8:30am as described in Section 3.3.

Finish Times

Finish times for extra-curricular activities and final lessons are outlined in **Table 3**.

Table 3 Finish times

Time	Activity	Group	% of students (nom)
3:00pm	Final lesson	N/A	45%*
4:00pm	Extra-curricular	Dance group, sports activities etc.	10%

* Assuming after school care operates at capacity, with students finishing at any time between 3:00pm and 6:00pm as described in Section 3.3.

3.3 Hours of Operation – Before and After School Care

The school will operate between the hours of 9am and 3pm, Monday to Friday. Extra-curricular activities occur between 8am and 9am in the morning and between 3pm and 4pm in the afternoon. Approximately 10% of the school population is expected to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Before and after school care will share the use of the school facilities during the morning period (7:00am - 8:30am) and the evening period (3:30pm - 6:00pm). The operator will also be able to offer holiday care during the 12 weeks of holiday periods, between the hours of 7:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday. Before and after school care will operate on a regular daily (Monday-Friday) basis between 7:00am – 8:30am and 3:30pm - 6:00pm. School teachers will be on-duty between 8:30am – 9:00am. The number of students to be accommodated in out of hours care is still under review, however the maximum number of children able to be accommodated in before and after school care at FSPS would be 250 students, or approximately 45% of school students.

3.4 Community Use of School Facilities

Selected facilities, including but not necessarily limited to the communal hall, library and outside areas, may be operated outside of standard school hours on a “user pays” basis. Hours of operation are anticipated to be between 6:00pm – 10:00pm on weekdays and during weekend periods. Weekend usage times are to be determined but could be expected to be within 6:00am – 10:00pm. The communal hall in the east of the site may be available for hire by local sporting groups, the Australian Electoral Commission and local community groups. The hall can cater for up to 250 people. Outdoor areas and the library may also be used outside of hours by community groups.

4.0 Suitability of the Site

Provide a detailed justification of suitability of the site to accommodate the proposal.

The site is suitable for the proposed development, as outlined below.

- **Continuation of education uses on the site** – The proposal seeks to continue the use of FSPS, which has been operating since 1849. Whilst the site is constrained, the development has been designed to sit comfortably within the context of the site and its surrounds and will enable the continued provision of education facilities at Fort Street.
- **Utilisation of existing structures and heritage fabric** – Responding to the site’s heritage and archaeological significance has been a key design consideration. The design seeks to showcase the layered history of the site and its different uses over time. The design retains and adapts heritage significant fabric, and responds to heritage views and vistas.
- **Consistency with site zoning and relationship with surrounding uses** – The proposed land use is permissible within the zone, being the B8 Metropolitan Centre and is consistent with the objectives of the zone. The proposal responds to the site’s context within Observatory Hill and Miller’s Point, and will improve connections with the surrounding precinct including immediate neighbours in the National Trust and the Sydney Observatory Museum, as well as providing better connections to the surrounding park lands and also the wider Millers Point community.
- **Ability to manage environmental impacts** – Environmental impacts associated with the proposed development are capable of being managed and mitigated. This EIS demonstrates that heritage, traffic, visual and construction impacts can all be appropriately managed. Further, the site is capable of being remediated to ensure its suitability for the proposed use.
- **Access to public transport** – FSPS is one of the best-connected schools from a public transport and walkability perspective, being within walking distance of multiple heavy rail, future Sydney Metro, light rail, bus and ferry transportation options. This makes the site suitable for increased student capacity, with opportunities for increased non-car mode share to minimise impacts on traffic and parking.
- **Increased school capacity** – The proposal responds to the immediate and future demand for primary school facilities, providing capacity for up to 550 students (an increase of 330 students). The redevelopment of the site will accommodate demand both within the catchment of FSPS and the broader Inner-Sydney Primary School Community Group, which is currently over-capacity.

- **Improved education facilities and opportunities for access to open space** – The existing buildings are not compatible with modern teaching practices and significant works are required to the Met Building to make it safe for students. The development will provide significantly improved education facilities to meet current and future pedagogical methodologies. The proposal also improves access to outdoor space and provides more opportunities for outdoor learning. To further optimise access to outdoor play space, FSPS is currently reviewing their timetable to consider options such as staggered lunch and recess times.
- **Adaptive reuse of Bureau of Meteorology** – The Met Building is dilapidated and in a state of disrepair. The proposal seeks to adaptively reuse the Met Building for a new library, with an accessible outdoor roof space ensuring that this heritage significant building is able to be used and enjoyed by students and members of the public.
- **Opportunities for community use of school facilities** – A number of the school's facilities, including but not necessarily limited to the communal hall, library and outside areas (including the rooftop of the Met Building) may be operated outside of standard school hours on a 'user pays' basis by the community, providing significant new facilities for the public.

5.0 Operation During Construction

Provide details of how the school will continue to operate during construction activities of the new primary and secondary school, including proposed mitigation measures.

Students and staff will be decanted off site during the construction period.

6.0 Student Safety During Pick-up and Drop-off

Provide details regarding management of student safety in accessing and departing the school site in the peak periods, beyond the limits of the school grounds, and in particular how that traffic will be separated from cycle traffic associated with the cycle path.

Pick-up and drop-off arrangement are discussed in the Traffic Impact Assessment prepared by Arup and submitted with the EIS.

A formalised pick-up and drop-off area is proposed in the east of the site, within the new entry plaza located off Upper Fort Street. The proposed arrangements include modified kerbside arrangements along Upper Fort Street and Watson Road. Queuing for up to 30 vehicles will be accommodated along Upper Fort Street with an additional 18 in an overflow queue along Watson Road. No Stopping zones are proposed at the bend between Watson Road and Upper Fort Street and midway along Upper Fort Street in front of the access gate to the incident response area, to enable vehicle passing to occur.

There is currently a pinch-point on Upper Fort Street at the access point to the school. It is proposed that the road be widened to 6m (kerb to kerb) at the pinch-point, to enable two-way traffic flow and to facilitate a smooth flowing car line during drop-off and pick-up periods. To allow for widening of the pinch-point, works to the existing Cahill Expressway ventilation building are required. Consultation with RMS is underway to determine appropriate ventilation arrangements.

Proposed changes to the Sydney Harbour Bridge Cycleway, being undertaken separately by RMS, will potentially impact the proposed development. The existing cycleway is located to the east of the site and cyclists currently exit the dedicated cycleway onto Upper Fort Street. The proposed cycleway will comprise a dedicated cycleway running adjacent to Upper Fort Street (to the west). SINSW has been working closely with RMS to ensure that the plans for the proposed cycleway align with the design for Fort Street Public School.

Since works within the school may be completed prior to the cycleway upgrade works (timing is not yet certain), a phasing strategy has been developed so that the school can function under both scenarios (prior to/during construction of the cycleway and after construction of the cycleway). Prior to construction of the cycleway, cyclists will use Upper Fort Street to access the Harbour Bridge. As shown in **Figure 3** (left – Phase 1), under this scenario the school entry gate is located within the school site to allow cyclist passage along Upper Fort Street. Once the

dedicated cycleway is complete, the school entry gate will be relocated to the northern FSPS boundary on Upper Fort Street, as the road passes over the Cahill Cut, as shown in **Figure 3** (right – Phase 2).

During construction works at FSPS and whilst the new cycleway is under construction, a cycle detour would be required. The Review of Environmental Factors for the cycleway (exhibited in November 2017) suggested a route around the site via a temporary ramp on the Sydney Harbour Bridge stairs, which would continue onto Watson Road, Argyle Street and Kent Street, connecting to the Kent Street cycleway. Pedestrian and cyclist management is addressed in the Preliminary Construction and Pedestrian Traffic Management Plan prepared by Arup and submitted with the EIS.

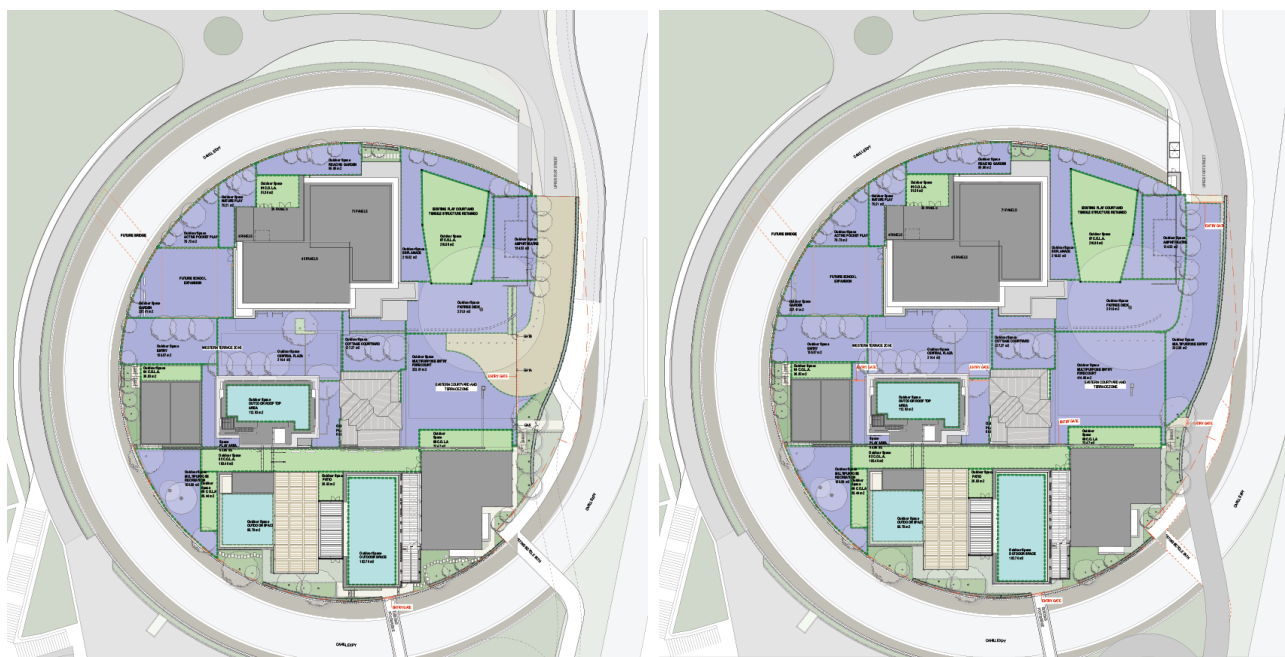


Figure 3 Phasing plan: Phase 1 prior to cycleway upgrade (left) and Phase 2 after cycleway upgrade (right)

Source: FJMT

6.1 Summary of Proposed Access Arrangements

The following diagrams summarise the proposed access arrangements described above.

Prior to opening of the new cycleway:

- The school grounds will be closed overnight and during the school day;
- The gate will be located within the FSPS site (shown by the red line at **Figure 4**) to enable cyclists and pedestrians to continue to use Upper Fort Street;
- Vehicle access to the school grounds will be limited to between 8.30am – 9.00am and 3.00pm – 3.30pm for drop-off and pick-up; and
- During pick-up and drop-off, cyclists and pedestrians will be managed to avoid conflicts with vehicles on Upper Fort Street as they access the school.

These arrangements are shown in **Figures 4** and **5**.

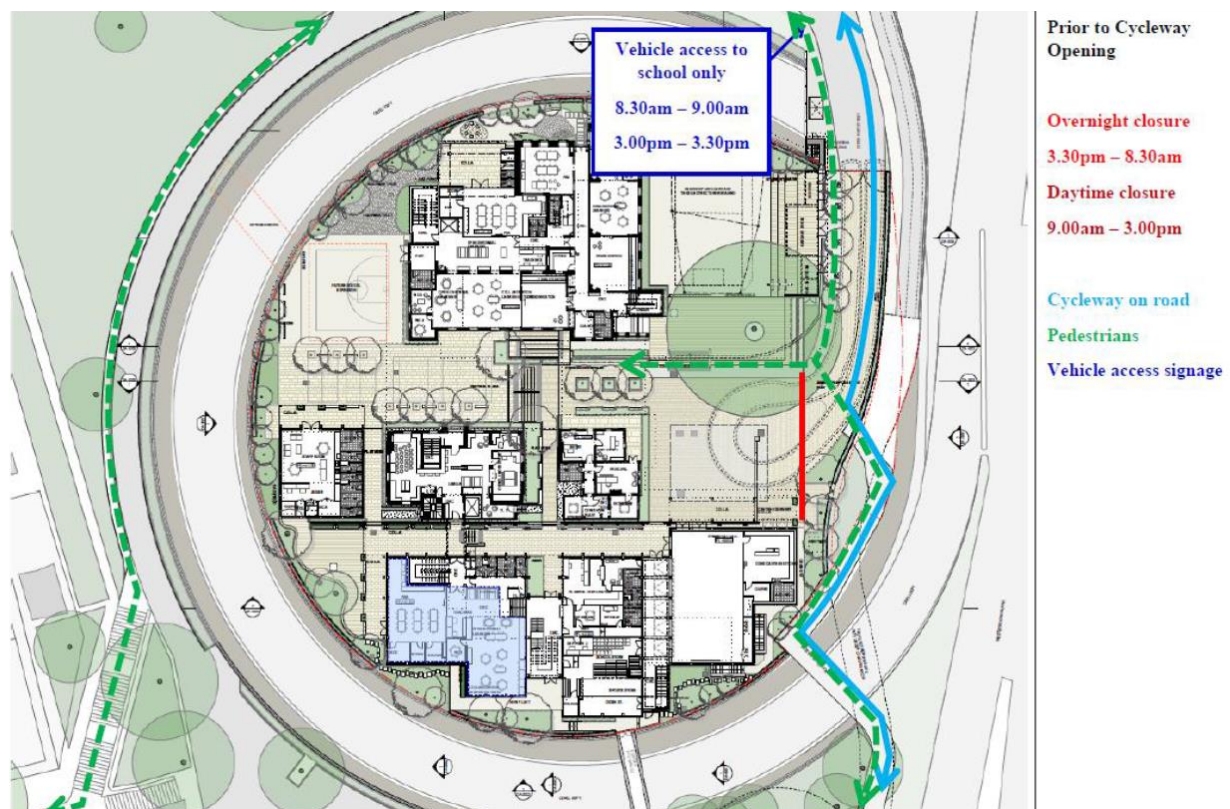


Figure 4 Prior to cycleway - overnight and during school hours access

Source: Arup

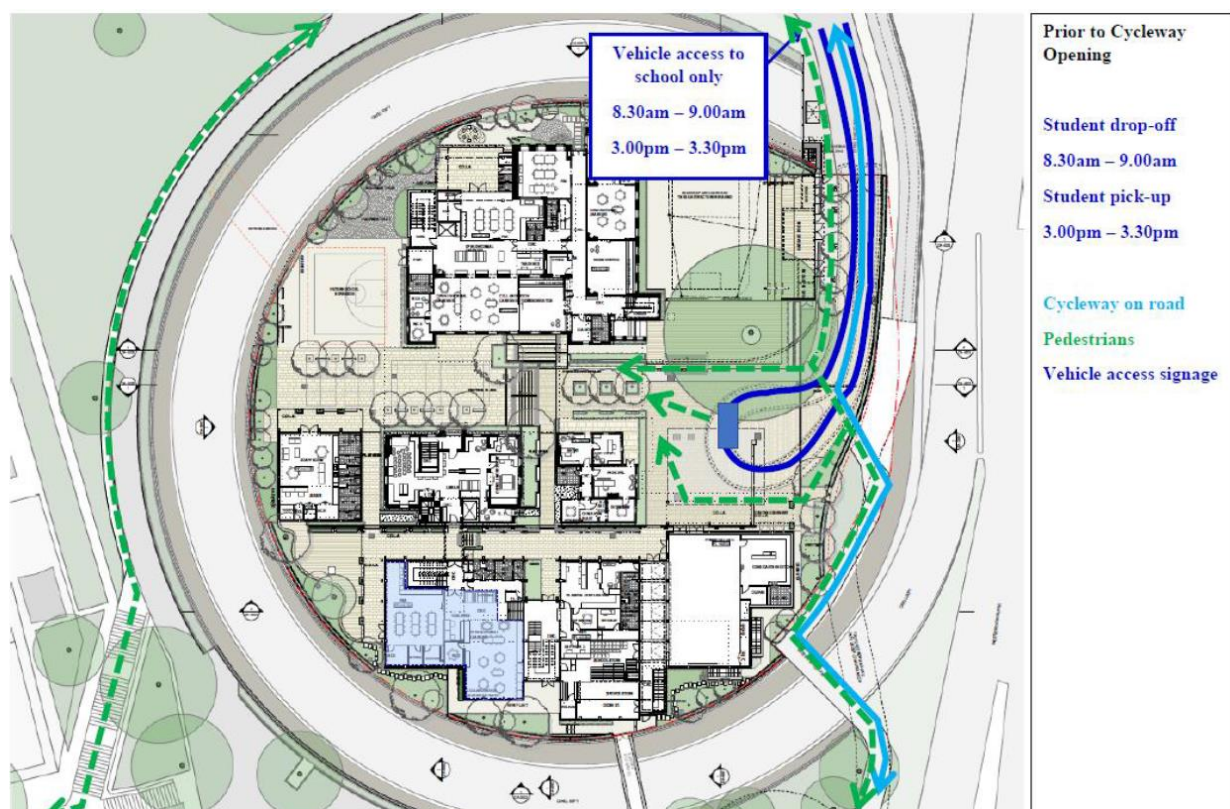


Figure 5 Prior to cycleway - drop-off and pick-up access

Source: Arup

After completion of the new cycleway:

- The school grounds will be closed overnight and during the school day;
- The gate will be located at the northern boundary of the FSPS site (shown by the red line at **Figure 6**);
- Vehicle access to the school grounds will be limited to between 8.30am – 9.00am and 3.00pm – 3.30pm for drop-off and pick-up;
- Cyclists and pedestrians will use dedicated paths on the eastern and western sides of Upper Fort Street; and
- There will be no interaction between pedestrians/cyclists and vehicles.

These arrangements are shown in **Figures 6 and 7**.

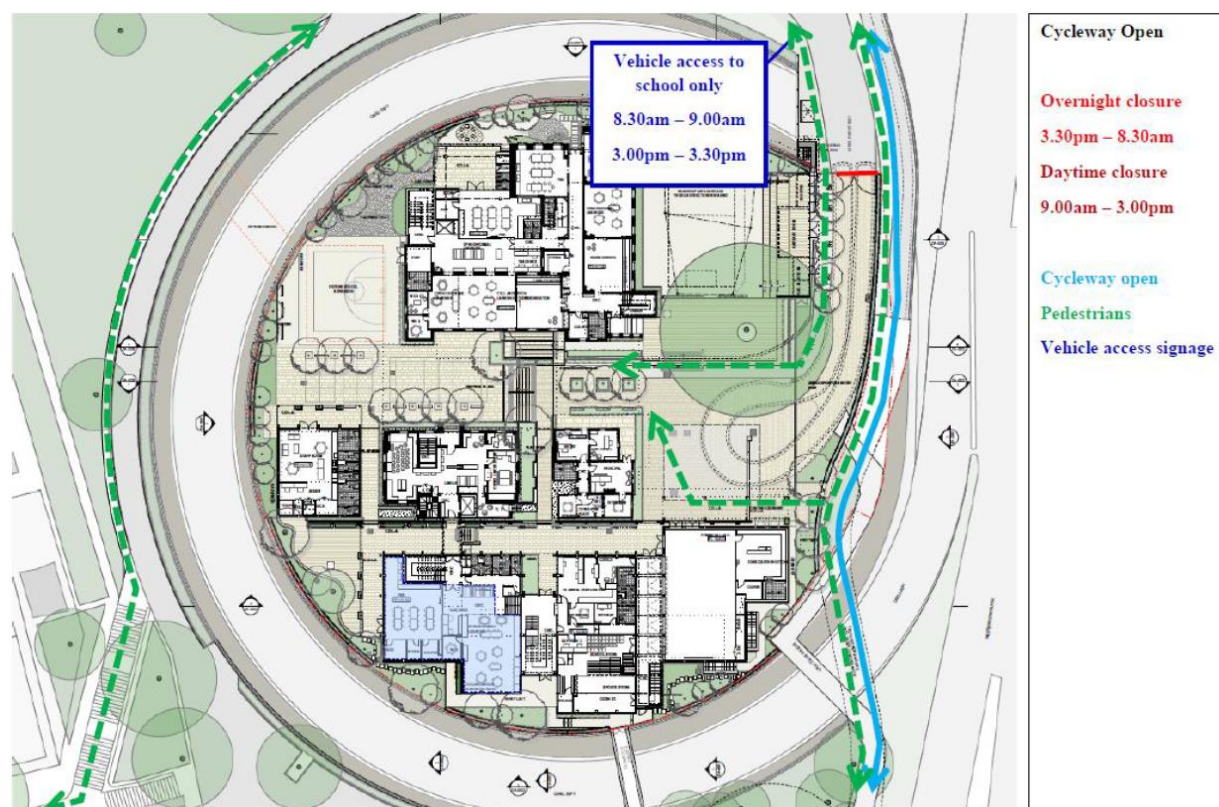


Figure 6 Cycleway open – overnight and during school hours access

Source: Arup

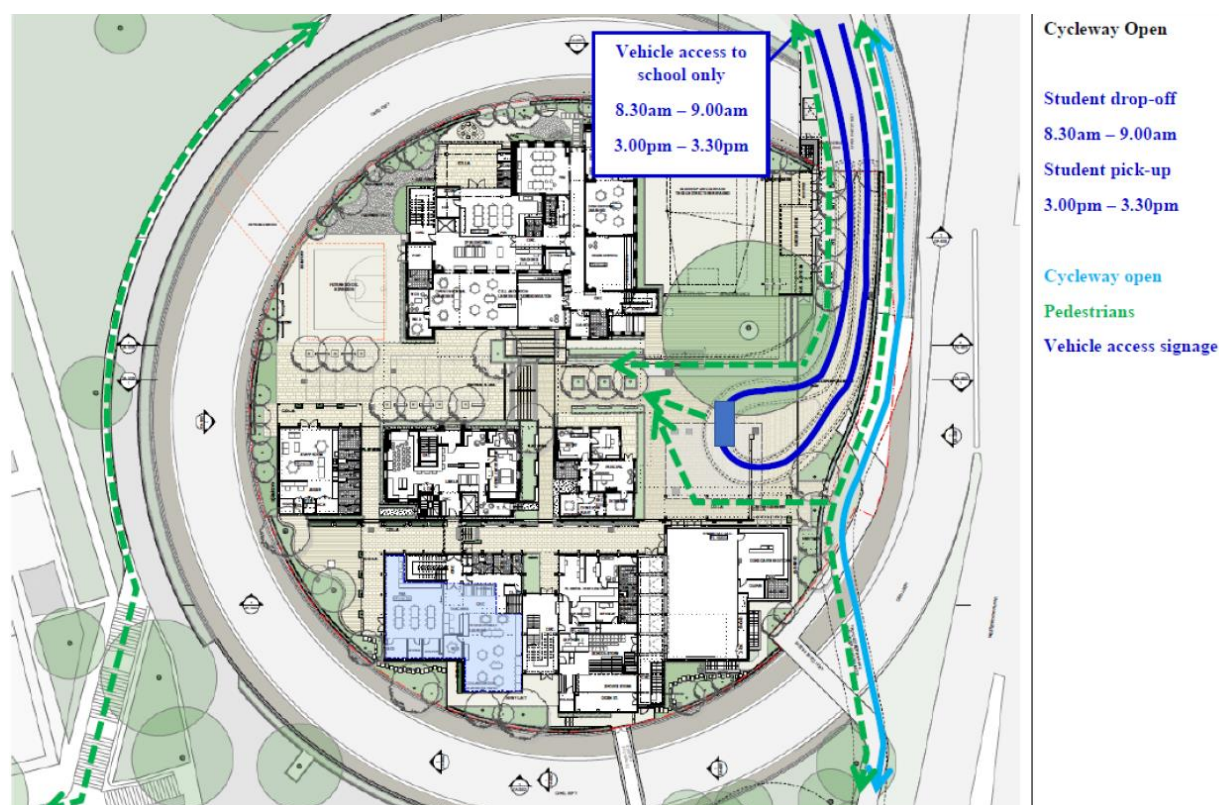


Figure 7 Cycleway open – drop-off and pick-up access

Source: FJMT

6.2 Consideration of Alternative Vehicle Drop-off and Pick-up Locations

A number of alternative vehicle drop-off and pick-up locations were considered to remove the need for vehicles to enter the school grounds.

Opportunities were considered to use existing kerbside conditions on Kent Street and Argyle Street, however this would require the removal of permit holder spaces. It would also only provide a limited number of spaces, which would limit proper operation and likely result in queuing and blocking traffic flow.

Use of the Observatory Hill roundabout was also considered. However, this would require a number of changes to the park. It would also provide a shorter queue length than what can be provided within the school site, is removed from the school site and provides a limited waiting area.

On this basis, the use of the internal drop-off/pick-up is considered appropriate with a suitable operational management plan in place.

7.0 Construction Impacts on use of Observatory Hill Park

- Provide detail regarding impact of construction on events including weddings that held in Observatory Hill Park. Include details of arrangements to prevent impacts on events with consideration given to the impact of construction.
- Provide evidence of liaison and agreement with the City of Sydney and the Observatory in relation to this issue.

Construction management measures are discussed in the preliminary Construction Management Plan prepared by Johnstaff Projects and the Preliminary Construction and Pedestrian Traffic Management Plan prepared by Arup (both submitted with the EIS). A summary of consultation activities undertaken to-date, including with City of Sydney and the Observatory, is outlined in the Consultation Summary Report prepared by Johnstaff, also submitted with the EIS.

During construction, the following actions will be implemented to minimise the impacts of construction activities on surrounding receivers, including users of Observatory Hill Park:

- Installation of construction work zones and the monitoring and maintenance of such;
- Monitor compliance of the Traffic Management Plan and the safety and environmental controls to be listed in the Construction Environmental Management Plan or elsewhere;
- Clear display of contact details on the site temporary fencing for community information and contact in case of emergency;
- Make arrangements for the notification to surrounding properties of activities which may affect their amenity, including the provision of a 24-hour contact point; and
- Consultation and participation with the local community to address concerns and assess possible community initiatives.

Further, all construction vehicle access on Upper Fort Street will be managed to limit impacts on events. Construction management will include ongoing liaison with City of Sydney regarding booked events and potential limitations this places on construction activities on these days.

8.0 Conclusion

This Operations Statement addresses the matters specified in the SEARs and outlines the existing and proposed management arrangements for FSPS. It demonstrates that the site is suitable for ongoing use as a public school and that construction impacts on the surrounding receivers and public domain can be appropriately managed to minimise any adverse impacts.