

Community Consultation & Engagement Report

Proposed redevelopment: 90-102 Regent St,
Redfern

Client: Wee Hur Capital

Date: 25 September 2020

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1 Background

Elton Consulting was engaged by Wee Hur Capital to work with architects Allen Jack + Cottier (AJC) to design and deliver a community consultation and engagement program in support of the environmental assessment requirements (SEARS) for a proposed redevelopment of 90-102 Regent Street, Redfern. The SEARS was issued by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in November 2019.

Wee Hur has a proximate student accommodation redevelopment project at 13-23 Gibbons Street in Redfern.

The proposed site is bounded by Regent Street to the east, Marian Street to the north, William Lane to the west and the site of a former BP service station to the south and is currently occupied by two buildings on two amalgamated sites:

- » 90 Regent St: two-storey attached terraces with ground-floor retail
- » 98-102 Regent St: four-storey mixed-used building with ground floor retail.

The property acquisition process was completed in late 2019 and the existing properties will be demolished if the proposal is approved. A Development Application (DA) and accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are currently being prepared for submission to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and Wee Hur is anticipating lodgement in October 2020. These documents will outline the proposed design of the project and any impacts during construction and operation and how they will be managed. It is anticipated that the EIS and DA will be publicly exhibited in late-2020, with community feedback invited during the exhibition period.

The proposal includes the following key features:

- » An 18-storey building with approximately 408 beds in 381 studio, twin, and dormitory rooms
- » A small provision for retail space on the ground floor
- » Outdoor communal spaces within a secure environment for residents
- » Widening of the William Lane footpath to improve pedestrian safety and comfort
- » Back-of-house areas for communal amenities for occupants including a laundry, gym and bicycle storage.

Due to the value and location of the project, it is classified as a State Significant Development (SSD) under section 4.36(2) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and Schedule 6 of the SSP SEPP. The proposal recognises the project's location within a State Significant Precinct (SSP) and is designed to respond to the SSP including:

- » Supporting the ongoing development of the town centre by providing a high-quality building that is compatible and consistent with recent and approved developments to the north and west of the site, including student accommodation and affordable housing.
- » Providing employment-generating activities and residential development compatible with the surrounding non-residential uses.
- » Maximising uptake of public and active transport options given the site's proximity to Redfern Railway Station and various bus routes. The site is also ideally located for student accommodation as it is within walking distance of several tertiary institutions including University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney (UTS), TAFE NSW Ultimo Campus and Notre Dame University Sydney.

Elton Consulting's Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (CSES) sought meaningful 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:

- » Comply with the requirements of the SEARs for this project
- » Gather feedback from stakeholders to inform the concept design and assist in finalising the documentation phase of the project

- » Assist in facilitating the future planning approvals processes
- » Reduce the risk of misinformation about potential project impacts, and demonstrate that these have been considered in planning and design
- » Communicate the developer's commitment to transparency in the engagement, planning and development processes
- » Establish a 'no surprises' approach so that stakeholders largely know what to expect during future planning approvals phases.

2 Engagement overview

The CSES identified known stakeholders and proposed a methodology that would provide meaningful opportunity for engagement via a number of channels, including:

- » Telephone calls
- » Face-to-face and online meetings (subject to prevailing COVID-19 requirements)
- » A doorknock
- » Project collateral
- » Dedicated project email address and telephone hotline.

2.1 Stakeholders identified

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

- » Strata management, owners, residents and commercial tenants of 7-9 Gibbons Street, Redfern (mixed-use building)
- » Strata management, owners, residents and commercial tenants of 157-161 Redfern Street, Redfern (mixed-use building)
- » Iglu Student Accommodation, operators of student housing at 66 Regent Street, Redfern, and their residents and commercial tenants
- » Richardson and Wrench Newtown, owners of 118 Regent Street, Redfern
- » BP, owners of the former service station at 116 Regent Street, Redfern
- » Strata management and residents of the 'Katia' residential complex, 1 Margaret St
- » Property owners, tenants and residents of properties on:
 - > Regent Street between Redfern and Margaret Streets
 - > Gibbons Street between Redfern and Margaret Streets
 - > Cope Street between Redfern and Turner Streets
- » St George Community Housing (SGCH) - (controlling 11 Gibbons St)

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

Table 1 Over view of engagement undertaken

Stakeholder groups	Engagement channels and purpose	Timing
» Strata management, owners, residents and commercial tenants of 7-9 Gibbons Street, Redfern (mixed-use building)	Initial telephone calls were made to each of these stakeholder groups to:	02/09/2020 to 21/09/2020
» Strata management, owners, residents and commercial tenants of 157-161 Redfern Street, Redfern (mixed-use building)	> Confirm contact details	
	> Provide verbal overview of proposal	
	> Provide initial opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback	
» Iglu Student Accommodation, operators of student housing at 66 Regent Street, Redfern, and their residents and commercial tenants	> Offer opportunity for face to face or online meeting	
» Richardson and Wrench Newtown, owners of 118 Regent Street, Redfern	» Email sent to each of these stakeholders to:	
	> Send project information	
» BP, owners of the former service station at 116 Regent Street, Redfern	> Confirm offer of face to face or online meeting	
» Strata management and residents of the 'Katia' residential complex, 1 Margaret St	> Provide contact details for further information, to ask questions or provide feedback	
» REDWatch	> Strata managers and owners were asked to distribute the project information to residents and tenants.	
» North Eveleigh Info (formerly known as 'Stealing Our Skies')	Second round telephone contact was made with 'Katia' and REDWatch to offer further opportunity for face to face or online meeting.	
» St George Community Housing		
» Property owners, tenants and residents of properties on:	Doorknock conducted to:	11/09/2020
> Regent Street between Redfern and Margaret Streets	> Provide verbal overview of the project	
> Gibbons Street between Redfern and Margaret Streets	> Provide initial opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback	
> Cope Street between Redfern and Turner Streets	> Provide contact details for further information, to ask questions or provide feedback	
	> Hand out written information about the proposal	
	> Letterbox drop 'sorry we missed you' cards if not available at time of doorknock	
» St George Community Housing (SGCH)	Online meeting to:	21/09/2020
	> Go through plans	
	> Provide opportunity for questions	
	> Invite and record feedback	
» All stakeholders	» Dedicated project hotline and email inbox	02/09/2020 to 25/09/2020

3 What we heard

3.1 Key themes

The community engagement process identified four key themes as concerns for owners, commercial tenants and residents surrounding the proposed site:

1. **Parking** – lack of available parking both during construction and at end state.
2. **Overshadowing**- concerns about shadowing of properties to the west of the site.
3. **Proposed accommodation type** – concerns that student accommodation would bring disruptive and noisy activities and misuse of drugs to the area without the benefits of a boost to the local economy, as students do not have high levels of disposable income.
4. **Boost to local economy and businesses** – bringing more people into the area can only be a good thing, which is particularly important given there has been less people in the area due to the impacts of COVID-19.

We note the somewhat contradictory feedback for (3) and (4) indicate a lack of consensus from stakeholders regarding their views on potential inputs to the local economy resulting from the development.

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

3.2 Detailed feedback

Of the nine stakeholder groups contacted by telephone and email, only SGCH requested a meeting.

Meeting with SGCH

An online meeting was held on 21 September 2020 with SGCH which, with City of Sydney, is developing affordable and social housing units at 11 Gibbons Street, an adjacent site to the west of 90-102 Regent Street. This meeting was part of broader, ongoing discussions between Wee Hur, AJC, SGCH and City of Sydney as part of the planning and design of their respective developments.

SGCH was briefed on the current plans and artists' impressions for the proposal and given the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Below is the feedback received, and the responses provided by AJC and Wee Hur.

Query/concern/expectation	Response
What are the current plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The plans are very close to those that will be submitted to DPIE and generally similar to the plans we last discussed. » The proposed height remains at a maximum of 18 storeys, although the bulk and scale of the building is now smaller. » The podium height has been minimised to reduce overshadowing and the height of the podium and tower are designed to comply with the Redfern Waterloo design guidelines. » The total height of the building is lower than technically allowable. » Improvements have been made to the façade which will feature fish and hunting imagery that is indigenous-inspired. » The design is intended to reduce the 'wind-tunnel factor'.
Privacy and amenity - queries regarding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The Western terrace would feature heavy awnings. External spaces would be time-managed and access-controlled. » There are a range of mitigations that could be considered, including perimeter planter beds, opaque glazing and angled louvres.

Query/concern/expectation	Response
» Direct views from western communal terrace into bedrooms and living areas	» A permit for illuminated signage has not been sought, but this is desired for the Regent Street and William Lane facades. The potential impacts of light spill for SGCH residents is understood and there would be additional opportunity to comment.
» Illuminated signage and resulting light spill	» The accommodation would be subject to a plan of management and rules around noise, security, guests and hours of operation would apply. » Wee Hur's building would be set back to allow 18m between the two buildings. The envelope for Wee Hur's building mirrors the form of the SGCH development. » Most windows from the common rooms face north / north west and not directly onto Gibbons Street.
Common rooms	» Common rooms are on level 9 and level 15. Most windows are to the north / north west and not directly west to Gibbons Street.
William Lane	» The intention is to drive activity along William Lane and develop something along the lines of an urban park. » William Lane would be utilised for bicycle and pedestrian access, with bollard-controlled access for waste collection and service vehicles. » SGCH and Wee Hur will maintain dialogue around opportunities to run events and other activities that would activate William Lane, which has the support of City of Sydney.
Overshadowing and wind tunnels	» The height of the building's podium has been minimised to reduce overshadowing. » Tree planting will be used to manage wind issues and down drafts.
Timeline	» Wee Hur intends to lodge a DA within the next month. » As site neighbours, SGCH will be notified and have opportunity to provide further feedback while on public exhibition.

Follow up to meeting with SGCH

In response to the feedback provide by SGCH, AJC wrote to SGCH to propose the following changes:

- » Angled louvres to the western facing windows of the level 2 outdoor terrace windows to direct views up and down the lane, rather than across to the apartments in the podium of the SGHC development.
- » Obscure film to the western windows of the gym on level 2 raised from 1500mm / 1600mm to 1800mm to address the potential of higher sight lines e.g. someone standing on a treadmill.
- » The use of the terrace would be subject to a plan of management that restricts the hours of use, types of uses and also controls amplified music.

AJC will continue to consider the feedback provided by SGCH and ensure that each of these design matters are addressed in the final drawings.

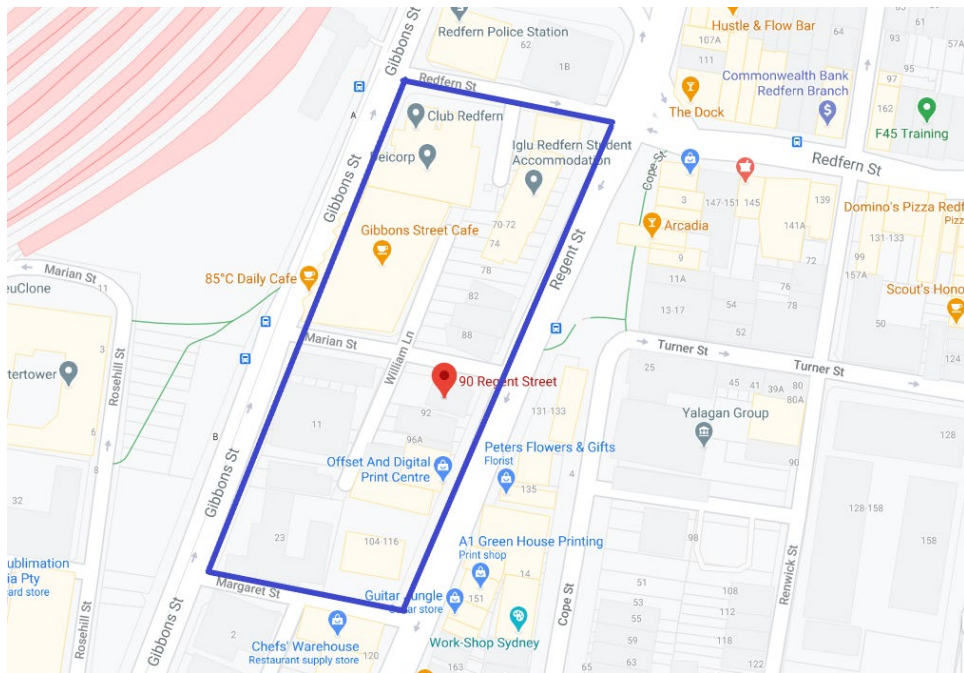
Doorknock engagement

On 11 September 2020, Elton Consulting staff conducted a doorknock and letterbox campaign of properties bounded by Regent, Redfern, Gibbons and Margaret Streets, and into William Lane. The majority of people engaged during the doorknock were either neutral or had no position on the proposal. The following comments capture the overall sentiment and nature of feedback received:

- » *"Accommodation should be affordable so that residents can spend money at local businesses which would boost the economy and contribute to the local community."*

- » *"... parking is already a major concern. There is not enough parking for residents, businesses and tradespeople commuting to Redfern for their work on the various construction sites."*
- » *"There are not enough people around, particularly due to COVID. Bringing more people into the area will bring a needed revamp and will be positive for business."*
- » *"Bringing more students to the area doesn't add to the community. Students are there for around 3 years then move away, they don't have a long-term commitment to the area."*
- » *"I am concerned about wind tunnels and overshadowing on our business."*
- » *"We understand change is necessary but feel that Redfern is losing its charm and there is not much we can do about it now."*
- » *"I am very supportive, build it higher and bring as many people as possible into the area."*

Doorknock catchment area:



Unresponsive stakeholders

Community groups

Elton Consulting sought engagement with two community interest groups:

» REDWatch (by phone and email)

Elton Consulting spoke by telephone to Geoffrey Turnbull, on behalf of REDWatch, on two occasions. On the first occasion, Geoffrey was given an overview of the project and requested project information. Project information was emailed to Geoffrey and then followed up with a further telephone call. On the second occasion, Geoffrey confirmed he had received the information but had not yet had the opportunity to review. Geoffrey said he would review the information and contact Elton Consulting if he had any questions, feedback or wanted to organise a meeting. At the time of this report, no response has been received.

» North Eveleigh Info (by email)

Elton Consulting emailed the group, this being the only contact channel that we could identify, to provide project information and propose a meeting. At the time of this report, no response has been received.

Site neighbours

Elton Consulting sought engagement with the below site neighbours via telephone and email. Elton Consulting spoke to each of the relevant property owners, strata and development managers, provided an overview of the proposal and invited questions and feedback. Project information and an invitation to meeting was also sent. At the time of this report, no response has been received.

- » Deicorp Properties (owners of 7-9 Gibbons Street, 157-161 Redfern Street)
- » Lefand Building and Facility Management Solutions (property managers of 7-9 Gibbons Street, 157-161 Redfern Street)
- » Iglu Student Accommodation (operators of 66 Gibbons Street, developing 80-88 Regent Street)
- » Jim and Matthew Markakis (owner of 118 Regent Street, former Uniting Church)
- » BP (for 116 Regent Street, now sold)
- » Harvie Strata (strata manager of 'Katia' at 1 Margaret Street)

A consolidated contact log can be provided upon request.

4 Conclusion

A number of communications and consultation activities have been undertaken during the development of the proposal to date and many of the key concerns raised by stakeholders during the consultation period have already been considered in the design and typology of the proposed building and the management measures that will be implemented upon its occupation.

Ongoing engagement with site neighbours will continue to grow understanding of how the building has been designed and planned to:

- » Mitigate impacts, including overshadowing, wind tunnels, privacy and amenity
- » Complement the surrounding area, including celebrating indigenous heritage
- » Optimise the use of active and public transport through its student typology, location and proposed green travel plan
- » Minimise operational impacts through a proposed plan of management and restrictions on the use of common and outdoor amenities.

5 Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1: project information flyer

Information on student accommodation project

90-102 Regent St, Redfern

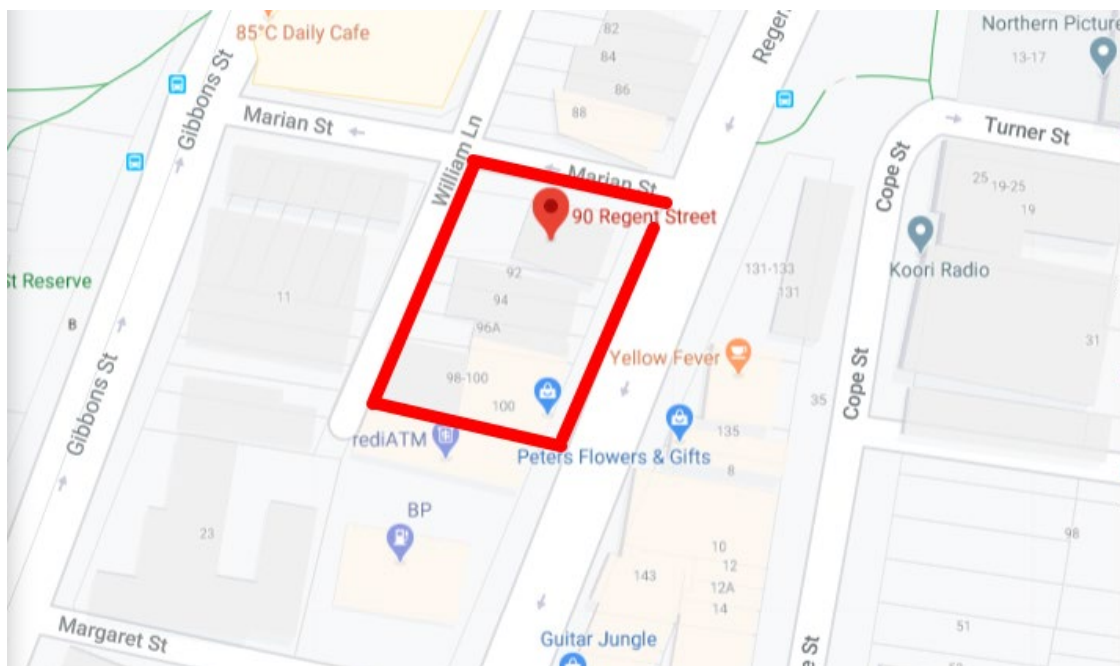
A new student accommodation project is proposed for 90-102 Regent St, Redfern. The proposed site is bounded by Regent Street to the east, Marian Street to the north and William Lane to the west. If approved, the proposed building would provide 408 beds across 381 studio apartments as well as a small retail space. Subject to planning approval, construction of the new building would start in late 2021 and take approximately 20 months, with residents taking occupancy in mid-2023.

About the proposal

The proposal involves redevelopment of two buildings currently occupying two amalgamated sites:

- » 90 Regent St: two-storey attached terraces with ground-floor retail
- » 98-102 Regent St: four-storey mixed-used building with ground floor retail

The current site area is 1317 sqm and is zoned 'Zone E: Business – Commercial Core', which permits residential & retail use with development consent.



Key features of the proposed new building include:

- » A total of 18 storeys, with ground floor retail (120 sqm), outdoor communal space (386 sqm) and 17 levels of residential accommodation
- » 408 student beds across 381 apartments comprised of:

Studio apartments (single) = 332

Dormitory apartments (single) = 16

Twin Studio apartments = 27

- » Active frontages along Regent St and Marian St, with residential access from Regent St and William Lane
- » Back-of-house areas for communal amenities for occupants including a laundry, gym and bicycle storage (135 spaces).

If approved, The Trust Company Australia (Ltd), acting for WH Regent Trust, would deliver the project. Chippendale-based architects Allen Jack + Cottier are project-managing the development application phase of the project

Design and overshadowing

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

While care has been taken to allow as much solar access as possible to adjacent sites, some properties immediately to the south of the site would be affected, particularly in the afternoon and evening.

Artist impressions:



Regent Street façade



William Lane façade



Regent Street corner

Construction timetable

Subject to planning approval, the new building would be constructed between late 2021 and mid-2023.

The construction and traffic management plans for the project would allow vehicle and pedestrian access to all properties adjacent to the site to be maintained at all times, as would existing bus stops. However, 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 and will conform to industry standards.

Next steps

Design of the proposal is continuing. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Development Application (DA) are also being prepared for submission to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. These documents will outline the proposed design of the project as well as the potential impacts during construction and operation and how they will be managed. The EIS and DA are to be publicly exhibited in late 2020 with community feedback invited during the exhibition period.

More information & feedback

For more information or to provide feedback on the proposal, please contact us by email: 90RegentSt@elton.com.au or call us on 1800 749 275. You can also visit the DPIE website at <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/25711>.



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5.2 Appendix 2: 'sorry we missed you' card

11 September 2020

Sorry we missed you

We came to speak to you about a proposed new student accommodation project at 90-102 Regent Street, Redfern. If approved, the proposal will provide around 408 student beds with a small provision for retail space. The proposal also includes the widening of the footpath along William Lane to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

An overview of the proposal is attached.

A detailed Environmental Impact Statement and Development Application are expected to be put on public exhibition in late 2020, providing further opportunity for community feedback.

If you would like further information or to provide feedback, please email 90RegentSt@elton.com.au or call us on 1800 749 275.



