

Presentation to NSW Independent Planning Commission

First, I would like to thank the Independent Planning Commission for the opportunity to state the case on behalf of the Concerned Scots Neighbours, Inc (CSN) which represents more than 250 people extremely disturbed by the behaviour of Scots College towards its neighbours as exhibited by the proposed Alterations and Additions to the Stevenson Library at its Victoria Road Campus. As the Commission is aware, the level of concern is so high that the Concerned Scots Neighbours, Inc commissioned Daintry Associates to review the State Significant Development Application of Scots College and subsequently made a submission outlining the wilful disregard that Scots College has both for the law and for the neighbourhood. I do not propose to restate the Daintry submission but rather highlight the specific concerns of the Community.

As neighbours of Scots College we are particularly concerned with the attitude of Scots College with

respect to its neighbourhood. We believe that the impact of any additional facilities must be assessed in terms of the cumulative impacts of developments over the last 20 years at Scots College across both its Bellevue Hill precincts and have particular regard to the 1,120 student cap imposed by Planning authorities which has been flagrantly disregarded by Scots College for many years.

A number of concerns have previously been raised in other forums about Scots College's development plans in that they are not in accordance with the 1992 Master Plan. In particular this includes the cap of 1,120 students and as the Commission is well aware there are far more students than that today.....in fact, in excess of 25% over the cap.

I wish to make it very clear that this is not an "anti-school" campaign. The Concerned Scots Neighbours are very supportive of schools that consistently meet "best practice" with respect to their development applications and at all stages scale the development so

that their neighbours are neither inconvenienced or interrupted. Pertinent examples include Cranbrook School and Kincoppal-Rose Bay. I am instructed on behalf of the Concerned Scots Neighbours to say that if Scots College designed facilities like other schools in the area - with internal drop-off and pick up facilities - the current student cap of 1,120 may be open to review within a proper environmental assessment. Unfortunately, despite decades of being encouraged by Woollahra Council and the Community to plan such facilities, as well as failing to convince the Land and Environment Court that its expansion is acceptable, Scots continues to fail to develop a master plan that would ameliorate the existing totally unacceptable traffic and parking conditions or make any serious attempt to resolve the problems Scots College has created. As a result Scots College continues to be in breach of a number of development consents.

Clearly the judgements of the Land and Environment Court, combined with the evidence provided by experts, that existing traffic, parking and safety impacts are

unacceptable, provide irrefutable evidence of Scots College breaking both the law and its “compact” with the community. Yet, to this day, Scots College continues to ignore the concerns of the community in which it resides.

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In our opinion any further expansion of the school is not acceptable without the existing appalling safety, transport, traffic and parking impacts being addressed. We note that Scots College is currently preparing two DAs. One would consist of an 80-space car park to be constructed under the tennis courts and the second DA would consist of a pupil drop off in Ginahgulla Road. Given the near 20 year history of obfuscating by Scots College we hold effectively no hope of these two initiatives being implemented voluntarily.

To provide further evidence to this already unacceptable situation let me quote one of the core objectives of the

Development Control Plan requirements for Educational Establishments.

The core objectives inter alia are

“to encourage a safe, efficient and co-ordinated traffic network which considers all users”

and which

“...do not unreasonably impact on the surrounding residents”.

Clearly, Scots College has failed spectacularly in this regard.

It is fair to say that Scots College has displayed a breathtaking disregard for the law as evidenced by three separate court cases as well as a condescending arrogance to the community.

Consequently, on behalf of Concerned Scots Neighbours, I submit, in the strongest possible terms, that the Independent Planning Commission make the implementation and approval of the abovementioned DAs a condition of consent for the Development of the Stevenson Library. Alternatively, you could consider deferring this application so it can be considered in conjunction with a proper contemporary Master Plan for the school.

We note, of course, that the abovementioned DAs do nothing to address the serious traffic concerns we have at the Mansion Road campus.

Finally, I thank the Commission for the opportunity to present the significant concerns that the Community has with regard to the plans of Scots College.

Simon Swanson

17th June, 2019