

**The Millers Point Community
Resident Action Group (MPCRAG)**



Ms Priti Cleary

information@planning.nsw.gov.au

c/- 42 Kent Street
Millers Point NSW 2000
26th April, 2020

SSD10340- Fort Street School- Cycleway Diversion and Upgrade

Dear Ms Cleary

We, the Traffic Committee of the MPCRAG) request a meeting between our Committee and relevant decision-makers to canvas alternatives to the proposed diversion of cycle-traffic throughout Millers Point during the planned upgrade to Fort Street Public School.

Background

The current plans associated with the Fort Street Public School upgrade propose to divert approximately 2,000 bicycles a day during the week from the current cycleway route down Watson Road, Argyle Street and Kent Street and 1,000 a day at weekends. This diversion will be in place for the duration of the build and for an unconfirmed period when the school is completed to upgrade the cycleway. Potentially up to 1,000 of these will use this route Monday to Friday during the morning peak. This will conflict not only with morning traffic, but, for the several months after the school is completed, with parents dropping off kids at the school and local residents and workers. 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 stop the traffic flow, so increasing the hazard level.

Our Concerns

We are extremely worried about the safety of people walking to or from work, tourists, and residents, especially children and older residents, as a result of the planned diversion of cycle traffic from the current cycle path from the Harbour Bridge to the Kent Street underpass. We note that the current cycle route will be closed from the commencement of construction until some months after the school is completed.

Not only will the streets become clogged, but based on current experience, bikes will move to the footpaths to avoid this traffic and move faster. Adult cyclists already race along the footpath when Kent St is clogged. The trend to motorised bikes makes this even more dangerous.

Cars exiting Observatory Tower, The Georgia, and Highgate would be unable to see a speeding bike quickly enough to stop. Other Kent Street buildings that may be concerned about the risk include the Langham Hotel, the fire station and retail outlets. Finally, we are very concerned about 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, we believe this situation will be extremely difficult to manage and police effectively. In addition, there are likely to be altercations between pedestrians and bikes. Not only is this dangerous, it impacts our harmonious neighborhood.

Opportunity for Expert Input and Local Knowledge

Our newly formed Traffic Committee's members have deep experience across Strategic Infrastructure and Transport Policy and Project Engagements, Traffic Engineering, Town Planning, Project and Operational Risk Management and Personal Injury Law. We are working with others with equally deep experience in major construction programs.

We are keen, as we are sure government and planners are, to avoid major traffic snarls, significant discontent, injury and possibly even deaths. We also understand that there is a need for alternate arrangements during the construction period. Some of our traffic committee members have already begun assessing the problem and made significant progress on an alternative solution.

The cycleway **must be built** before the main work on the school is commenced, to minimize the time it would otherwise be temporarily detoured along Kent St. Consideration also needs to be given as to how this time and the disruption can be further minimised. Our Committee is keen to provide the support required.

We request a meeting

We ask that the decision-makers meet with key members of our Committee before the project proceeds further.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Wright

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Chair, Traffic Committee, MP CRAG

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