

SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK HIGH SCHOOL

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (19:29): I speak again on infrastructure within my electorate, particularly the proposed Sydney Olympic Park high school. The community has fought for a decade for this school. As the name suggests, it was always intended that the Sydney Olympic Park high school would go into Sydney Olympic Park. Geographically, that would make sense. It is the centre of the peninsula and it is accessible from Newington and Wentworth Point where 24,000 to 25,000 people are going into high rises, and there is one road in and one road out. On the other side, it is also very accessible from the Carter Street precinct development where 6,200 high rises are being built.

Sydney Olympic Park Authority made three offers of sites within the Olympic Park precinct, which the Government found unsuitable. Sydney Olympic Park Authority is a government agency and acts at the discretion of the Minister. There were significant community concerns at the time that a commercial wave pool could be placed on car park P5 of Sydney Olympic Park, which is a large site that is very suitable for a high school. But a high school site could not be found within the precinct! At the end of the day, the Government announced that it is putting this high school on a site at Wentworth Point that previously was made available for Peninsula Park. The Government proposed it would open that park in 2016. We are now in 2022 and that parkland has not been built. It is on land owned by RMS and the State Government had a responsibility to build parklands for the 11,000 apartments that have been built there.

When this was announced I gathered the P&Cs together and said, "We can fight to get this back into a better spot, but you've waited a decade for this school. I'm happy to do what the community wants me to do." They said, "Linda, we have waited far too long. There are far too many students waiting to go to schools who just cannot get into public schools in the catchment area. Even though it's not an ideal site, we will cop that just to get our high school." They will cop it, even though going into the peninsula to drop off and pick up children from school will create a huge traffic issue. That is particularly so because it is co-located to the Wentworth Point Public School, which is also on a small and constricted site.

They had already given those concessions, which meant that they lost open space and they had to accept a higher density. So when the development application for this high school was lodged, they were furious to find out that they were not getting a 1,500-student capacity school, as recommended by the Department of Education. Instead, they were getting only stage one, which catered for 800 students and that stage two would possibly be built at a later time. Everybody in that peninsula knows that this Government's record on high schools is appalling. The Government has put 50,000 people into a peninsula which was supposed to have three schools—Wentworth Public School, Carter Street public school and a new high school in Sydney Olympic Park. At every step this Government has not delivered the capacity that is needed nor has it made the funding available.

Wentworth Point Public School was meant to open in 2017 but it opened in 2018. The Department of Education said that it needed a capacity of 1,000 students, but the Government built it for 400 students. It was at capacity on day one, and it now has 15 demountables. The new Wentworth Point high school is being built. I have written to the Government and said that the community is furious about its two-stage build. Instead of coming back to me, saying, "Look, we understand the frustration with the two stages. We understand the community's need so we're going to build it," it said, "Funding is not available for stage two. You're getting only 800 students because funding is not available for stage two." In that same letter it mentioned funding for Carter Street public school. The letter states:

... funding will be assessed against competing projects in schools as part of the budget process. At this stage, a timeframe of when funding may be approved is not available.

This school was included in the Government's master plan for which half of the apartments have already been built, but there are no plans to fund the school. It is a disgrace.