

## Director City Services Report No. CS7/17



**Subject:** Judge Lane, Randwick - Request for School Time Closure

**Folder No:** F2004/07158

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### Introduction

Claremont College has asked that Randwick Council consider the possibility of restricting motor traffic flow along Judge Lane during school hours, on school days. The college has requested this for the safety of staff and students who have a regular need to cross Judge Lane through the school day.

Council, at its Works Committee Meeting held on 11 July 2017, resolved that:

- "a) Community consultation be undertaken to assess the community's view regarding the possible part-time restriction on traffic in Judge Lane, as detailed in this report; and
- b) A report on this matter be brought back to the August Council meeting following the community consultation processes including current traffic speed data."

### History

Claremont College is located at 30 Coogee Bay Road and it also occupies the property at 23 Judge Street, Randwick.



In 2003 the Council approved a Development Application for alterations and additions to an existing dwelling at 23 Judge Street, for the purpose of its use as part of Claremont College Primary School. As a deferred commencement condition, the applicant (the College) was required to submit plans for the construction of a Shared Zone in Judge Lane. The Shared Zone plans were then to be approved by the Local Traffic Committee and the Speed Management Branch of the RTA; prior to the development consent becoming operational. These conditions were met, the Shared Zone was created and the school commenced use of 23 Judge Street for school purposes.

According to Transport for NSW Policy and Guidelines, a shared zone is a road where the road space is shared by vehicles and pedestrians (NSW Road Rule 24). Drivers must give way to pedestrians at all times (NSW Road Rule 83). Shared zones have a speed limit of 10km/h.

The college and local residents have raised a number of traffic safety concerns over the years. In particular one concern was the use of the lane for school drop-offs and pick-ups.

At a meeting in December 2013, the college principal indicated that this had been resolved by locking the gates from the school into Judge Lane and by educating and seeking the cooperation of parents. At the same meeting, the principal suggested that he would be seeking a part closure of Judge Lane "due to increased WHS obligations": and the safety of his students was paramount.

Following road safety concerns having been raised by the principal, Randwick Traffic Committee considered his request for a part time traffic restriction in the lane, during school hours, on school days.

The Traffic Committee recommended that:

1. it be noted that at this time there is no firm Council position on this matter;
2. it further be noted that Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has no objection, in principle, to the proposal provided that a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), be submitted to RMS once the Council had determined its position on the matter;
3. this matter be referred to the Council for consideration.

Following publication of the Traffic Committee minutes on Council's website, the Council was approached by the family of a very elderly resident who lived near to the school. The family explained to Council officers the unique difficulties which the proposal would create for the elderly resident when accessing a car parked in the on-street mobility parking space created for her use; in Judge Lane. Accordingly, the matter of the closure was not progressed any further at that time.

However, in order to address the then concerns of the school, the Council (through the Traffic Committee process) approved a narrowing of Judge Lane, at the school gates leading between the two campuses. The installation of 'speed cushions' was also approved. The intent of this narrowing was to ensure that pedestrians could see approaching vehicles, prior to stepping onto the travelled part of the road and also, that motorists could see pedestrians who were about to cross the road. The intent of the speed cushions was to reduce the speed of passing vehicles.



CS7/17

The road narrowing and speed cushions were installed in October 2016, at a cost of \$60,000. The installation of these devices has resulted in a 17% reduction in the 85th percentile speed of vehicles travelling along the lane.

In November 2016, the college sought the opinion of Suzy Colbran, Senior Work Health and Safety Advisor of the Association of Independent Schools NSW. Ms Colbran made a number of observations that are listed in Attachment 3.

In addition to a number of other considerations, one was to request that RMS undertake a road safety audit. Ms Colbran requested that if elimination of the hazard is not possible (i.e. the closure), the risk be minimised as far as reasonably practicable.

### Issues

In May 2017, the College principal contacted the Council concerned about road safety matters in Judge Lane. He asked that the proposal to restrict traffic from travelling along the lane, only during school hours, only on school days be again considered. The Principal advised that "with the current WHS expectations placed on schools, as well as the heightened sensitivities regarding children's safety, I implore that you please look favourably at my request..."

He further stated "... we are not asking to have Judge Lane blocked permanently.....my suggestion would be for a 'boom gate' style barrier to be installed at both ends of the laneway, and to have this closed on school days only between the hours of 8am and 4pm. Whilst I anticipate some objections will be raised by some neighbours, I emphasise that the school operates for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, 40 weeks a year (18% of the year)..."

In order to assess the likely traffic impacts of this proposal, the Council arranged for new traffic counts be undertaken. These traffic counts measure vehicle volumes and vehicle speeds.

Shown below is a summary of the results of the traffic counts:

| <b>Judge Lane<br/>(near rear driveway<br/>to 12 Heath Street)</b> | <b>85<sup>th</sup> percentile<br/>speed (km/h)</b> | <b>Average Weekday<br/>Traffic Volume<br/>(vehicles / day)</b> | <b>Average number<br/>of vehicles<br/>from 8am-4pm</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| May 2015                                                          | 29                                                 | 196                                                            | 95                                                     |
| July 2017                                                         | 24                                                 | 166                                                            | 83                                                     |

It can be seen from these results that, since narrowing the road and installing the speed cushions, the 85th percentile speed has been reduced by 17% (from 29 to 24 km/h); the average number of vehicles using the road on weekdays has been reduced by 30 vehicles (from 196 to 166 vehicles/day) and the volume of traffic using the road between 8am and 4pm has been reduced by twelve - from 95 to 83 vehicles.

The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed recorded is two to three times the sign posted 10km/h speed limit, which would suggest that many motorists are exceeding the speed limit. However, in a normal school zone of 40km/h this would be a great result.

Also, it should be noted that, given the low traffic volumes, the traffic impacts of redirecting traffic would be relatively minor. Of the average of 166 vehicles which use the lane on week days only an average of 83 now travel along the lane between the hours of 8am and 4pm. A part-time, daily restriction on motor vehicle traffic (school days only) between the hours of 8am and 4pm would basically eliminate any conflict between passing vehicles and pedestrians crossing the lane, but have impacts on local residents that utilise the lane.

Section 116 of the Roads Act gives Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) the authority to approve the erection of notices or barriers for the purposes of regulating traffic. This matter was considered by the Traffic Committee whereat the RMS representative stated that the RMS had no objection, in principle, to the proposal, and he advised that there were a handful of similar precedents within Sydney.

#### Consultation

The consultation was open for three and a half weeks from Friday 14 July 2017 to 9am Wednesday 9 August 2017.

The consultation strategy was designed to inform users of Judge Lane, Randwick about the proposal from Claremont College to close part of the lane on school days to vehicular traffic and also to find out the views of residents, ratepayers and people associated with the school.

The consultation activities were:

- A dedicated Your Say Randwick project page <http://yoursayrandwick.com.au/judgelaneclosure> which included information, a map, the request from the school, an online survey and a printable survey;
- A letter and a map dated 17 July posted to the residents and ratepayers of 300 properties surrounding Claremont College;
- A Facebook post to Council's 14,000+ strong Facebook page on 24 July 2017;
- Advertisement in *The Southern Courier*, page 10, 25 July 2017;
- A story in Council's weekly eNews sent to 20,000 subscribers on 19 and 26 July 2017
- Six A3 posters installed onsite;
- Email to 2,500 subscribers of the YourSay Randwick consultation website on 21 July 2017;
- Notification on the front page of Council's website and on the Current Consultations page; and

- Notification to Coogee and Randwick Resident Precinct Committees.  
Examples of communication

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>Have your say: proposed school day closure of Judge Lane, Randwick</b></p> <p>We want your thoughts on a proposal to partially close Judge Lane in Randwick on school days to allow students from nearby Claremont College to safely move around campus. [More]</p> <p>Like Tweet</p> <p><b>Randwick eNews – 19 July 2017</b></p>       |  <p><b>Have your say</b></p> <p><b>Proposed school day closure of Judge Lane, Randwick</b></p> <p>We want your thoughts on a proposal to partially close Judge Lane in Randwick on school days to allow students from nearby Claremont College to safely move around campus.</p> <p>To have your say visit:-<br/><a href="http://www.yoursayrandwick.com.au">www.yoursayrandwick.com.au</a></p> <p><b>Southern Courier advert 25 July 2017</b></p> |
|  <p><b>Judge Lane Part-time Closure</b></p> <p>Randwick City Council has received a request from Claremont College to close part of Judge Lane, Randwick. Claremont College is a K-6 primary school, which is located fronting Coogee Bay Road. The College has buildings on either side of...</p> <p><b>Facebook post – 24 July 2017</b></p> |  <p><b>Sign installed on Judge Lane</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

### Results summary

- Approximately 1,700 visits to the website
- 107 downloads of the letter from Claremont College
- 8 downloads of the printable survey
- 626 survey submissions (622 online and 4 paper)

In addition, Council received a number of written submissions via letter, email or post. All of these submissions opposed the proposed closure citing various concerns including privatising public space, expenditure of public funds, traffic impacts, impact on residents and the availability of other options to increase safety for children. A copy of these submissions will be provided to the Councillors.

CS7/17

CS7/17

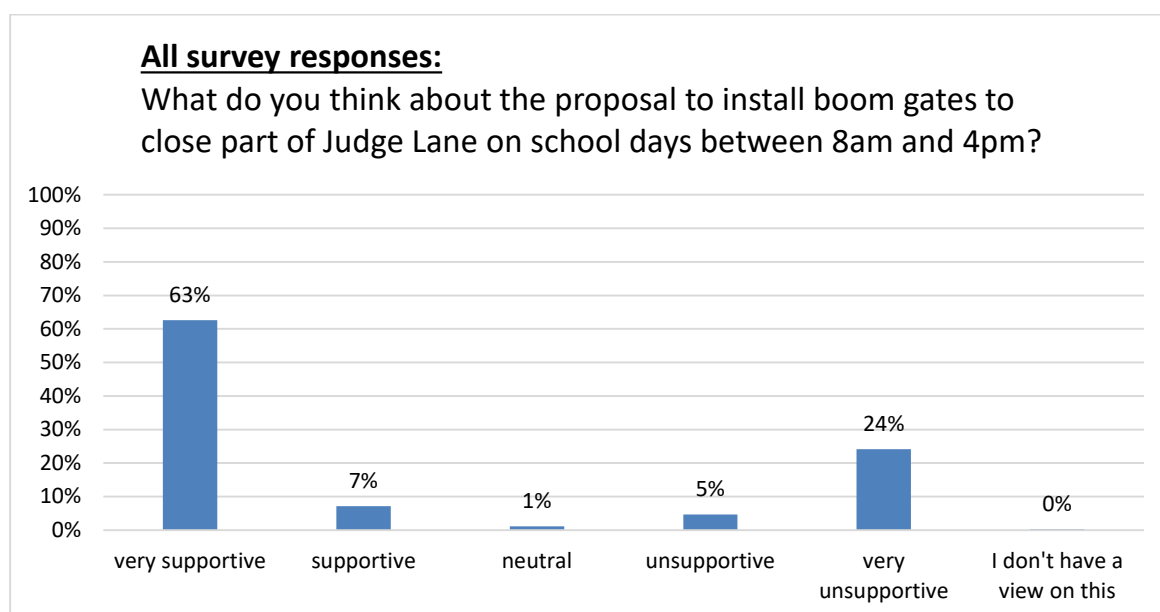
**Chart 1: All survey responses**

Chart 1 shows the raw survey results of all 626 survey responses. Of the total responses received 70% are supportive or very supportive while 29% are unsupportive or very unsupportive.

To further understand the views of respondents, the data was grouped by association. Responses from students or those who indicated they worked at the school or their children attended the school were grouped and another group was created for those who did not indicate an association with the school.

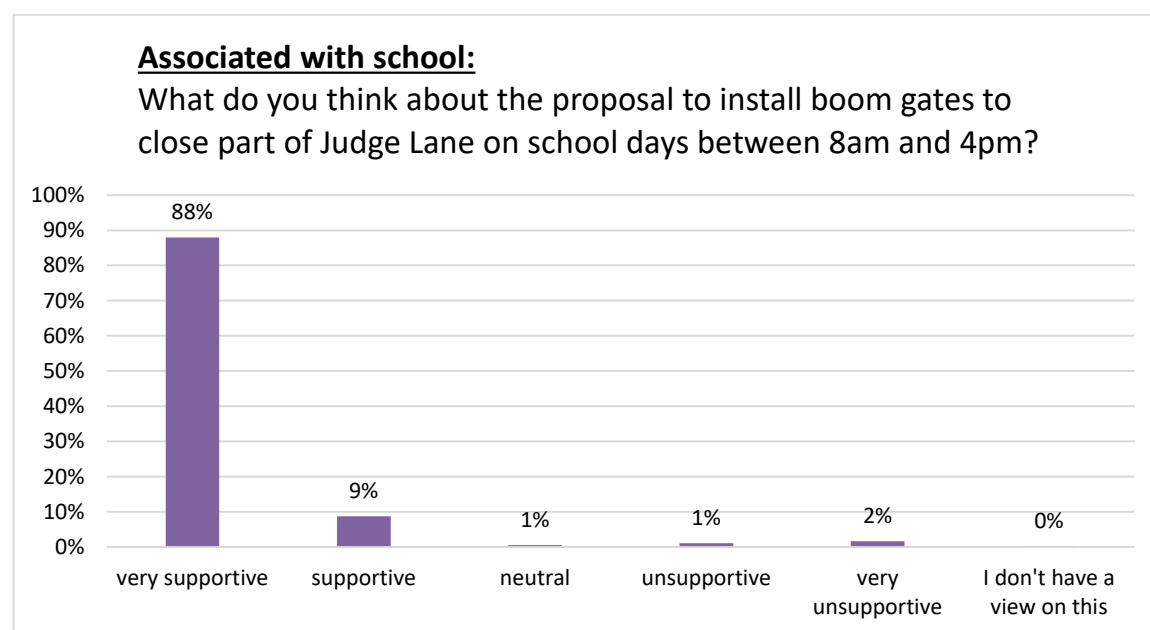
**Chart 2: Survey responses of those associated with school**

Chart 2 shows that of those who associated with the school, 97% were either supportive or very supportive of the proposal.

**Respondents not associated with school:**

What do you think about the proposal to install boom gates to close part of Judge Lane on school days between 8am and 4pm?

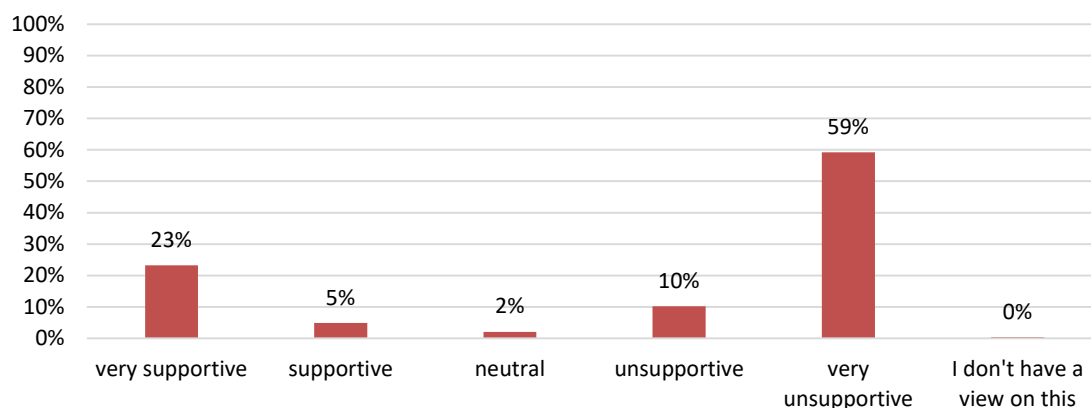


**Chart 3: Survey responses of those not associated with school**

Chart 3 shows that of those who did not indicate an association with the school, 28% are either supportive or very supportive while 69% are unsupportive or very unsupportive. The majority (93%) of those grouped as not associated with the school indicated their address as a Randwick City address.

**What do you think about the proposal to install boom gates to close part of Judge Lane on school days between 8am and 4pm?**

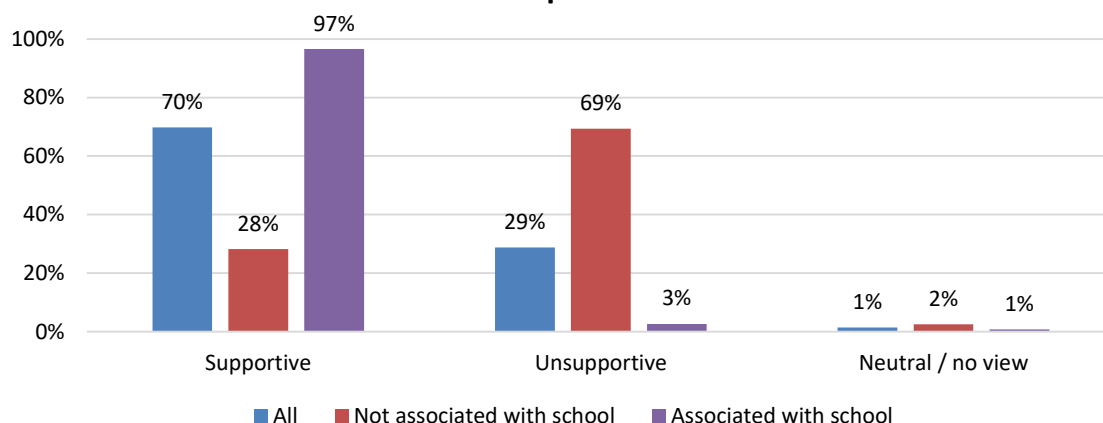
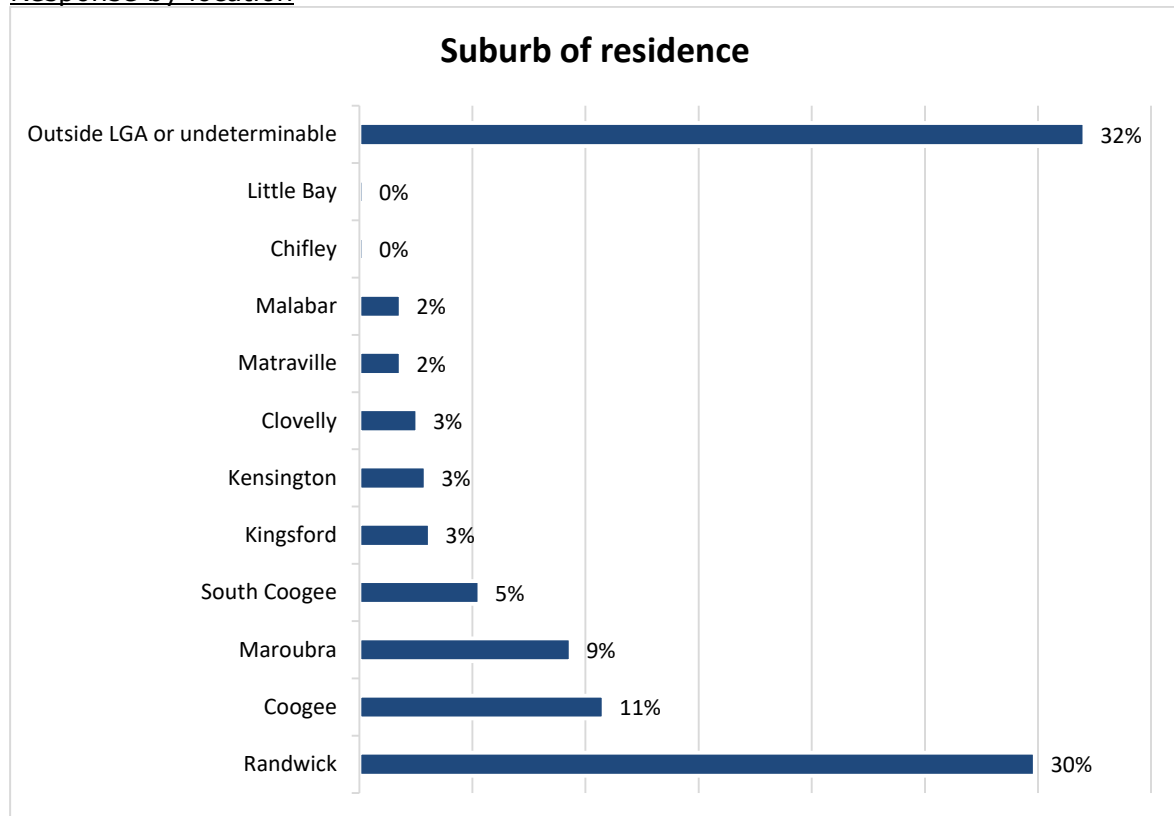


**Chart 4: Survey responses by association**

In summary, the results show a distinct split in community attitude dependent on association. Of all the responses received, some 2 in 3 are in favour, however when the data is further analysed and limited to those not associated with the school, the trend is reversed with some 2 in 3 against the proposal. Of those who indicated an associated with the school, it is clear there is strong support for the proposal.

Response by location**Chart 5: Suburb of respondents**

The majority of respondents indicated an address within Randwick City with most being from Randwick followed by Coogee and Maroubra.

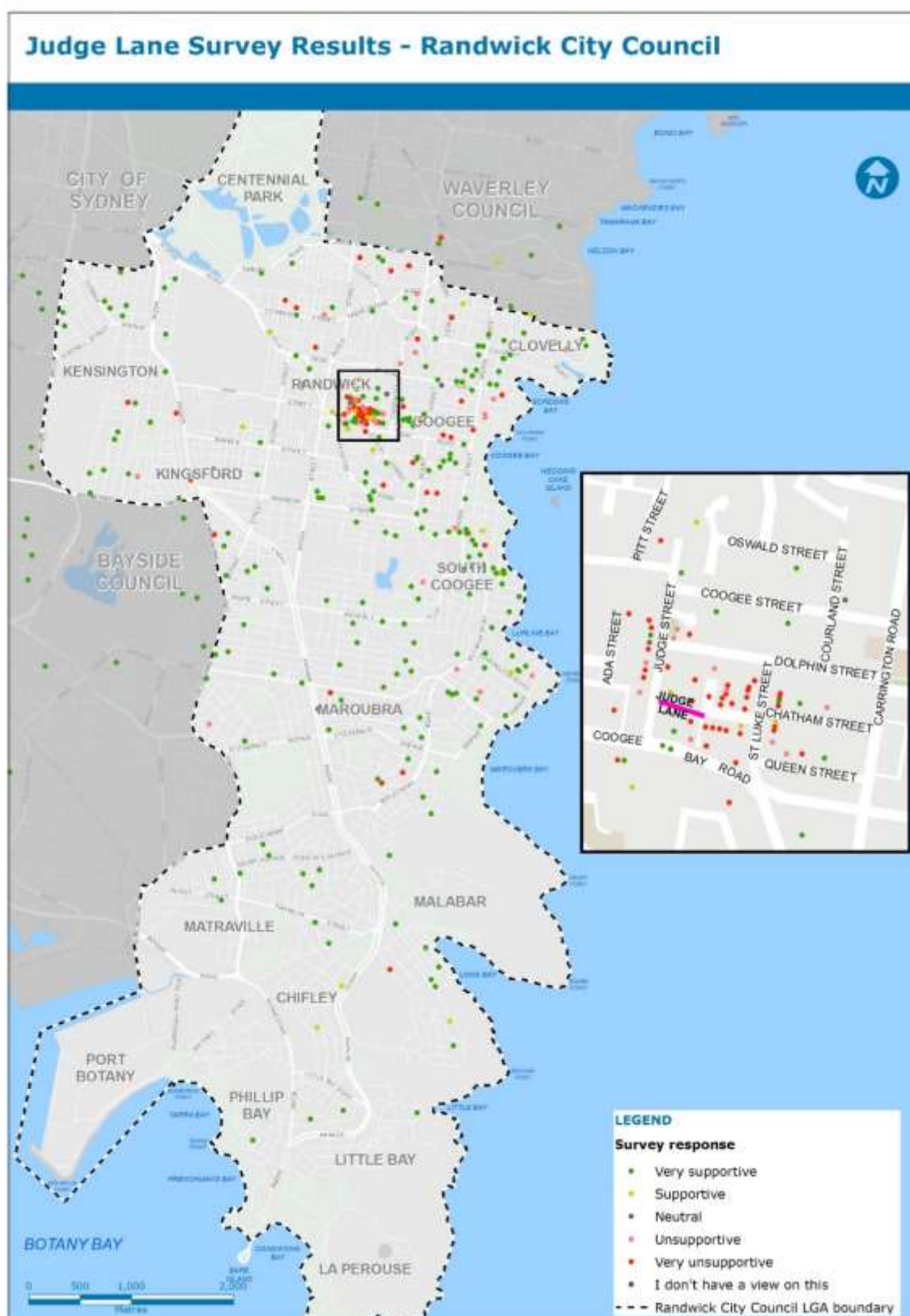


**Chart 6: Attitude of respondents by location**

Chart 6 maps the responses of people by attitude. It shows generally that more people who live or own property close to the school are opposed than those who live in other locations.

### Precinct response

The Randwick and Coogee Precincts were advised of the consultation and asked to address the issue at their respective meetings.

On 17 July 2017, the Coogee precinct resolved:

*Resolution 21/17: That the Precinct opposes the closure of Judge Lane as it would be the appropriation of public land for private use, and there are other options available such as lollypop control, zebra crossing etc.*

The Randwick Precinct did not submit a position on the issue.

### Social media

The consultation was posted on Council's Facebook page on 24 July 2017. The post received 32 reactions; 29 likes and 3 reactions of shock and anger. 19 comments were also made which were split between those supporting and those not supporting the proposal.

Those supporting the proposal were concerned about children's safety and some were supportive so long as pedestrian access was assured. Those not supporting the proposal were mostly against it because it is a public road.

### Free text response

In the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide a comment on what they thought of the proposal. Of the 626 respondents, 607 took the opportunity to write a response.

The nature of the issues raised in these comments is summarised in the attached table.

## **Relationship to City Plan**

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

- Outcome 6: A liveable city
- Direction 6c: The safety of our community is paramount and is acknowledged and supported through proactive policies, programs and strategies.
- Outcome 9: Integrated and accessible transport
- Direction 9d: Residential amenity is protected by appropriate traffic management

## **Financial impact statement**

At this time there have been no estimates of costings, however, it would be considered that the School and Council would have to come to some arrangement to apportion the cost of any signage, gates or other required facilities.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the outcome of the Community consultation, this is a polarising issue for the community. Given that the objective of any potential part time traffic restriction is pedestrian safety, it is considered that the Council should seek to commission an independent Road Safety Audit. Once completed, the outcomes from such an Audit will be reported to the Council for its consideration.

## **Recommendation**

That Council instigate an independent Road Safety Audit and a report be brought back for its consideration.

**Attachment/s:**

1. [↓](#) Summarised Comments Received from Respondents in the free text box of survey
2. [↓](#) Randwick Traffic Committee - 8 September 2015 - Minute Item 4.9 Judge Lane, Randwick - Road Safety - Road Closure - Claremont College
3. [↓](#) Traffic Observation - Suzy Colbran, Senior Work Health and Safety Advisor (AISNSW)

**CS7/17**

### Summarised Comments Received from Survey for Judge Lane

| Issue                                                                                                                                                    | Council response                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Current traffic calming and shared zone/speed limit seemed to be ignored; so boom gates may be the only way to keep kids safe                            | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Safety of the children should come first                                                                                                                 | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Currently dangerous when 2 cars try to pass on Judge Lane, often one has to reverse to let the other pass                                                | The Traffic Management facilities are designed to allow only one car at a time.                                                                                                                                       |
| Boom gates shouldn't have an impact because traffic is light along Judge Street anyway                                                                   | There will be some impact for local residents.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Alternative route around Judge Lane is not much further/longer                                                                                           | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Overpass pedestrian bridge should be considered                                                                                                          | The College should consider this.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| If installed, the lane needs to be accessible for pedestrians, prams, wheelchairs, bicycles etc.                                                         | If the proposal proceeds, Council will ensure the boom gates still permit access for pedestrians, cyclists and those in motorised wheelchairs etc.                                                                    |
| Claremont must address the issue of their car line and the congestion it causes; which is dangerous                                                      | Localised, temporary, congestion occurs at most Sydney schools especially in the afternoon pick-up times. Claremont's processes for loading students into cars are admirable compared to many other Randwick schools. |
| Boom gates would be safer for all pedestrians walking on the narrow footpath on Judge Lane                                                               | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Change the operating hours of the boom gates to 9am - 3pm so that parents can still use Judge Lane to get children to school if Dolphin St is blocked    | The objective of the proposal is to remove the possibility of school child conflicts with motor vehicles. Reducing the hours of the proposal as suggested would not address such conflicts.                           |
| Judge Lane is a steep slope and has restricted visibility at the top and causes care to drive faster up the hill; boom gates would make it safer         | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| It is a public road and shouldn't be taken over by a private school                                                                                      | If the proposal proceeds, Council would retain ownership of the road and access would still be permitted for pedestrians, cyclists and motorised wheelchairs when gates are closed.                                   |
| The safest vehicular egress from Gray St to Coogee Bay Rd is Judge Street, thus Judge Lane (right from St Luke Street to CB road too dangerous)          | Both intersections are performing safely – each site has had only one recorded incident in the last 5years both of which occurred late at night.                                                                      |
| No past incidents of children being injured or killed on Judge Lane                                                                                      | There are no incidents of which the Council is aware between children and passing motor vehicles.                                                                                                                     |
| Should consider other safety options first; overhead pedestrian bridge, lollypop crossing guard, stricter supervision, road safety education of children | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Concern that boom gates will restrict access for emergency vehicles                                                                                      | Prior to installing any gates the Council would check with each of the emergency services to ensure that the design accommodated their needs (eg. use of 'break-thru' gate, common key etc..)                         |

| Issue                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Council response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Judge Lane is the only route out for Heath St and Gray St residents during school car pick up and drop off when Dolphin St and Judge Sts are blocked by parents                                                                                                                         | Heath Street and Gray Street residents are able to use St Luke Street in order to leave the neighbourhood.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Will the school pay a fee?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Yet to be determined.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| If allowed the school will keep expanding and take over residential streets                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Noted, but this issue is beyond the scope of the current matter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Will set a precedence for other schools wanting to do the same                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | This type of arrangement has been undertaken in other parts of Sydney.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Would have to include speed humps on St Luke Street                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Noted, but this issue is beyond the scope of the current matter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| If accepted, car pick up/drop off line should only be on Coogee Bay Road (not Dolphin St)                                                                                                                                                                                               | Claremont has school drop-off lines along both Judge/Dolphin Streets and along Coogee Bay Road. The current Coogee Bay Road pick-up queue regularly extends toward the Coogee Bay Rd/Belmore Rd/Cuthill St/Perouse Rd intersection. Requiring the school to ONLY operate a Coogee Bay Rd pick-up line would likely result in queueing back into the Belmore Road / Avoca Street intersection. This would cause cumulative delays for all motorists along Avoca Street and would likely also delay bus operations. Such a proposal is not supported. |
| Who will pay for installation and maintenance? Who will manage the boom gates during the day?                                                                                                                                                                                           | Yet to be determined.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Suspect Claremont are moving to permanently acquire the lane                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Council has no information on the school's intentions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Put a right turn arrow at the lights on corner turning from Carrington Road on to Coogee Bay Road, would decrease traffic rat running up to Judge Lane                                                                                                                                  | Noted, but this issue is beyond the scope of the current matter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| What would happen to the two disabled parking spots?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Council would retain any required mobility parking spaces in the area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Install boom gates that automatically open when a car approaches, forcing the car to stop but not restricting access                                                                                                                                                                    | While this may reduce car speeds it would not ultimately remove the conflict between vehicles and students which is the school's aim.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Consider other safety options that benefits the whole community, not just the school; e.g. speed humps on Judge, Dolphin and St Luke Streets. Pedestrian crossings or closure of Judge and St Luke Sts at the end of Dolphin to stop through traffic and create community "green space" | Noted, but these issues are beyond the scope of the current matter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Not enough community consultation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| It will make Dolphin Street more dangerous to walk and drive along                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Recent traffic counts indicate that only 80 vehicles would be diverted into other streets over the eight hours of the proposed part time closure. Even if ALL of these diverted vehicles used Dolphin Street, only an extra 10 vehicles an hour would travel                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

**CS7/17**

| Issue | Council response                                                       |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|       | along the street ( on average - one extra vehicle every six minutes ). |