

Traffic, Amenity and Materials comment

1. Summary

The proposed redevelopment is not opposed in principal, particularly where it replaces non-heritage structures with a cohesive and contextually sympathetic design. However, significant concerns arise regarding traffic congestion, access arrangements, residential amenity impacts and material appropriateness within a sensitive heritage precinct.

In its current form, the proposal risks undermining the character and functionality of the Paddington Village environment through increased vehicular pressure on constrained streets, inadequate consideration of real-world traffic conditions and insufficient mitigation of amenity impacts on adjacent and opposite properties.

2. Assessment of Traffic and Access Impacts

2.1 Existing Conditions

Shadforth Street and Liverpool Street operate under strained conditions, effectively functioning as a narrow one-lane corridors accommodating two-way traffic. Based on long-term observation, these streets already experience:

- Frequent congestion and gridlock
- Limited passing opportunities
- Regular instances of illegal parking
- Elevated driver frustration and road rage incidents

These existing deficiencies indicate that the current traffic environment is operating beyond optimal capacity.

2.2 Construction Phase Impacts

- Restricted access for excavation and transport vehicles
- Increased conflict between construction traffic and local vehicles
- Heightened congestion within already constrained roadways

While the submitted traffic assessment references established guidelines (e.g., TfNSW,2024), such frameworks are inherently theoretical and may not adequately reflect the practical limitations and behavioural patterns observed on-site.

2.3 Post Construction Traffic Load

Upon completion, the development is expected to introduce a substantial increase in both residential and commercial vehicle movements. Key concerns include:

- Increase daily traffic volumes entering and exiting via Shadforth Street
- Exacerbation of existing gridlock conditions
- Insufficient manoeuvring space for opposing vehicles
- Compounded safety risks due to constrained road geometry

The cumulative effect is likely to significantly degrade traffic flow and local accessibility.

2.4 Intersection and Turning Constraints

Particular concern is raised regarding the intersection of Oxford Street and Shadforth Street:

- The left turn from Oxford Street into Shadforth Street involves a sharp 90-degree angle combined with a changing gradient
- Simultaneous opposing vehicle movements are difficult to accommodate
- The manoeuvre is especially problematic for larger vehicles

This issue appears insufficiently addressed in the traffic assessment and will likely intensify under increased traffic volumes.

3. Residential Amenity Impacts

The proximity of the proposed vehicular entry and exit to existing heritage residences introduces several adverse amenity effects:

3.1 Noise Impacts

- Continuous vehicle movements (24 hours, 7 days)
- Increased engine, braking and acceleration noise
- Disruption to residential quiet enjoyment

3.2 Light Intrusion

- Headlight glare from vehicles entering and exiting the development
- Amplification of light impact due to steep gradient of access ramps
- Direct penetration of light into both levels of the opposite residences during night-time hours

These impacts represent a material degradation of residential amenity and require mitigation.

4. Evaluation of Traffic Assessment Methodology

The reliance on theoretical modelling and standard guidelines does not adequately capture:

- Site-specific constraints
- Existing inefficiencies in traffic flow
- Real-world driver behaviour and congestion patterns

Further in-situ investigations for all road users, both vehicular and pedestrian

5. Material and Heritage Considerations

The proposed use of Sydney Sandstone is noted; however, its sourcing and application must be carefully controlled to ensure compatibility with the surrounding heritage context. Specially:

- The material should closely match the sandstone used in nearby heritage structures, including The Victoria Barracks and terrace housing in Shadforth and Gipps Streets
- Highly grained or stratified from other areas of the Sydney Basin is considered Inappropriate
- Material selection should reinforce, rather than detract from, the established architectural character

6. Recommendations

To address the concerns outlined above, the following actions are recommended:

1. Comprehensive Traffic Reassessment

- Undertake detailed, site-specific traffic studies incorporating real-world conditions
- Re-evaluate traffic flow directs and access arrangements

2. Construction Traffic Management Plan

- Develop a robust addressing access, vehicle staging and congestion mitigation

3. Access and Intersection Redesign

- Reassess the Oxford Street-Shadforth street interface
- Explore design modifications to improve safety and manoeuvrability

4. Amenity Mitigation Measures

- Introduce design solutions to reduce noise and light intrusion (e.g., screening, ramp redesign, restricted where feasible)

5. Material Specification Review

- Ensure Sandstone selection is consistent with local heritage fabric
- Require sample approval by community prior to construction

7. Conclusion

While redevelopment of non-heritage structures can be supported in principle, the current proposal raises substantial concerns regarding traffic impact, safety and residential amenity within a highly valued heritage precinct.

Without significant revision and more rigorous site-responsive analysis, the development risks placing unsustainable pressure on existing infrastructure and diminishing the character and liveability off the Paddington Village community.