

Objection to Development Application: 142-150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba

Formal Letter to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

To: The NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Date: 28/04/2026

Reference: Residential Flat Buildings - 142-150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba (HDA Pathway)

Subject: Formal Objection to High-Density Development at 142-150 Narrow Neck Road

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed construction of nine four-storey buildings at 142-150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba.

My Connection to the Blue Mountains

As a resident of Sydney, the Blue Mountains is not just a weekend getaway for me; it is the "jewel in the crown" of New South Wales that I proudly show off to every overseas visitor I host. Over the years, I have taken dozens of international guests to Katoomba to experience its unique heritage character and breathtaking natural views. This area is a global icon, and the proposal in question threatens the very qualities that make it a world-class destination.

1. Impact on Tourism and Cultural Identity

The charm of Katoomba lies in its "mountain village" atmosphere and its low-scale integration with the landscape. Visitors come to see the wilderness, not four-storey, urban-style apartment blocks that belong in a Sydney suburb. This development is significantly larger than anything currently permitted in the LGA. If we allow high-density development to degrade the visual and cultural amenity of Katoomba, we jeopardise the international reputation of the Blue Mountains as a pristine World Heritage destination.

2. Environmental Concerns and the World Heritage Area

Narrow Neck is a sensitive ecological gateway. I am deeply concerned that this development sits adjacent to the Blue Mountains Swamps, which feed the Katoomba Falls catchment. These swamps support the Critically Endangered Dwarf Mountain Pine. The increase in hard surfaces and stormwater runoff from 266 apartments will inevitably

degrade these protected ecosystems and, by extension, the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area that my guests and I value so highly.

3. Safety and Bushfire Risks

Through my frequent visits, I am well aware of the geographical constraints of the Mountains. Increasing the population density on Narrow Neck Road—which has extremely limited evacuation routes—is dangerous. Placing hundreds of additional cars on narrow local roads during a bushfire emergency is a risk to human life that cannot be mitigated by the developer.

4. Objection to the HDA Pathway and Precedent

I am particularly concerned that this project is bypassing the Blue Mountains City Council via the Housing Delivery Authority (HDA). Local planning controls (the LEP) exist for a reason: they account for the unique environmental and safety needs of the Mountains. Overriding these controls sets a "green light" precedent for high-density sprawl across the entire LGA, which would permanently alter the character of the region.

Closing Requests

- **Reject this proposal** as it is incompatible with the scale, landscape, and safety requirements of Katoomba.
- **Visit the site** to understand the impact this high-density build would have on the surrounding visitor destinations and sensitive environments.
- **Exempt the Blue Mountains LGA** from the HDA pathway to ensure that local expertise and environmental protection remain at the forefront of planning.

We have a responsibility to protect the Blue Mountains for both locals and the international community. This proposal fails that responsibility.