

To Whom It May Concern,

I object to SSD-86456706, the proposed mixed-use development at 142–150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba.

This proposal is inappropriate for Katoomba and the Blue Mountains World Heritage setting due to its scale, infrastructure impacts, bushfire concerns, precedent effects and incompatibility with the character and environmental sensitivity of the area.

The proposal seeks approval for 218 apartments, 52 serviced apartments, restaurant and commercial uses across nine large buildings on a highly sensitive site. The development also relies on concurrent amendments to height and floor space controls under the Blue Mountains LEP specifically to accommodate the project.

My key concerns are as follows:

1. Infrastructure and Traffic Impacts

Katoomba's road network and local infrastructure are already under strain, particularly during weekends, holiday periods, and bushfire emergencies. Narrow Neck Road is not designed to safely absorb the traffic generated by a development of this magnitude.

The proposal would significantly increase vehicle movements, parking demand, service traffic, and pressure on local infrastructure in an area with limited road capacity and constrained evacuation routes.

The cumulative impacts of this development together with other recent large-scale developments in the area have not been adequately addressed.

2. Bushfire Risk and Emergency Evacuation

The Blue Mountains is a known bushfire-prone region with a documented history of severe fire events and evacuation challenges.

Importantly, the NSW Rural Fire Service pre-DA advice identifies "non compliances in relation to Bush Fire Protection Measures" and specifically raises concerns regarding "Emergency and Evacuation Planning" and impacts on neighbouring bushfire-prone land developments.

Given the scale of the proposal and the limited evacuation capacity of the surrounding road network, the risks to residents, visitors and emergency services during a major bushfire event are serious and should weigh heavily against approval.

3. Incompatibility with the Blue Mountains Character and Heritage Landscape

Katoomba is internationally recognised for its environmental, scenic and heritage significance. The Blue Mountains economy depends heavily on tourism, landscape values and the unique low-scale mountain character of the town.

This proposal represents an urban scale of development that is fundamentally inconsistent with the established character of Katoomba and the surrounding World Heritage landscape. Approval of this project would permanently alter the visual and environmental character of the area and undermine the qualities that make the Blue Mountains a globally significant tourism destination.

4. Dangerous Planning Precedent

The proposal is particularly concerning because it seeks site-specific increases to building height and floor space ratio controls through a concurrent rezoning process.

If approved, this would create a precedent for similar high-density developments throughout Katoomba and the Blue Mountains, progressively eroding the planning controls that currently protect the area's environmental and scenic values.

The cumulative impact of repeated exceptions of this kind would fundamentally change the nature of the Blue Mountains.

5. Reduced Community Consultation

I am deeply concerned that this project has been removed from normal council assessment processes and instead assessed through the State Significant Development pathway.

The SSD process has substantially reduced the role of Blue Mountains City Council and limited meaningful local input into a proposal that will have major long-term consequences for the region.

6. Concerns Regarding the State Significant Development Process

While the proposal has been declared SSD through the Housing Delivery Authority process, the development is fundamentally a large residential and tourism-related project within a highly environmentally sensitive regional town, rather than infrastructure of clear state

significance. The use of the SSD pathway has removed the proposal from ordinary local assessment processes and reduced the role of the local community in decision-making. I am also concerned that the public exhibition and objection period has been limited to only 14 days. For a proposal involving extensive technical documentation, major environmental and infrastructure impacts and long-term consequences for the Blue Mountains, this timeframe is inadequate and does not allow for meaningful community participation or proper review of the material.

The shortened consultation period undermines public confidence in the assessment process and is inconsistent with the level of scrutiny that a development of this scale and sensitivity requires.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I believe this proposal is inappropriate for this location and should be refused.

The development is excessive in scale, incompatible with the environmental and heritage significance of Katoomba and the Blue Mountains in general, raises unresolved bushfire and evacuation concerns, places unacceptable pressure on infrastructure, and would establish a damaging precedent for future overdevelopment in the Blue Mountains.

Many long-standing Labor and environmentally conscious voters in the Blue Mountains are increasingly concerned that fast-tracked development pathways are undermining the environmental and planning protections they have historically supported. There is a growing sense that communities who have consistently supported progressive environmental policies are no longer being meaningfully heard when developments of this scale are proposed in sensitive regions.

I appreciate that the Blue Mountains has often been considered a politically secure electorate. However, issues such as environmental protection, democratic planning processes and the long-term future of the region matter deeply to many residents, and people do remember decisions that they feel fundamentally alter the character and integrity of their communities.

I hope these concerns are taken seriously before public trust is further eroded.

I request that the application be refused.