

Submission Re: Redevelopment of the Lourdes Retirement Village, Killara

The Lourdes Retirement Village is characterised by its location as part of a unique bushland context. Such an environment typifies the kind of backdrop underpinning Aboriginal customs, heritage and traditions.

It is imperative that any redevelopment initiative for Lourdes Retirement Village reflects such lineage in a genuine and fully researched manner. The available documentation associated with SSD-88004956 points to a very limited engagement with Aboriginality.

Aside the identified fire, evacuation, and potential emergency risks in tandem with the site, the due recognition of Aboriginality as part of this redevelopment initiative needs to take into account Aboriginal culture, which prioritises minimal environmental impact. This is exemplified by, for example, low-rise habitable structures, minimising the impact upon the environment as much as possible.

Rather than adopting a well-integrated indigenous perspective to integrate the Lourdes Retirement Village as part of this bushland setting, the new development proposal largely separates residents from the natural environment. This is through multi-level blocks, and the adoption of an asset protection zone where much of the ecosystem that residents currently occupy, to be denuded of foliage bordering forest; breaking bushland corridor and interdependent relationships between various animal and plant systems existing over a long period of time, destroying the existing ecosystem that interconnects with the retirement village and is part of its identity. The name, Killara, is Aboriginal and translates as 'always there' or 'permanent'. Since time immemorial, a low-rise and low-density character has typified Killara, at least until recently. The new development proposal contradicts this identity by disrupting this interconnection as outlined above.

The Yerrabingin 'Designing with Country' (DWC) report of February 2026, points to a limited engagement with the principles underpinning aboriginal cultural heritage. The multi-storied independent living units (ILU) forming the keystone of Levande's proposal amounts to a contradiction in terms, when placed alongside an in-depth understanding of aboriginal culture. The limited first nations consultation as part of Levande's initiative has shown itself to be inadequate. The extrapolation of such principles is in short supply in the approach forming part of this redevelopment.

It is not a coincidence that the current architectural layout of Lourdes Retirement Village is an unassuming, low profile arrangement, currently facilitating ease of entry/exit for dwellings as well connection to facilitating a lifestyle where people have their feet on the ground, literally and metaphorically.