

## **SUBMISSION**

**PROJECT:** Woolworths Gladesville Mixed Use Proposal

**POSITION:** Against height variation, supportive of previously approved DA for seven storeys.

### **COMMENTS:**

#### **Opening statement**

The proposed development by the Woolworths Group overrides community sentiment, risks the safety of our communities most vulnerable and will further congest the existing transport network.

This site had developmental approval for a seven-storey residential building providing 50 new homes, in line with others in the area, and one I argue had significant support from the community. Following the purchase by the Woolworths Group, this project has continually grown, noting it was at one point poised as a 12-storey development and now on exhibition as 14 storeys. This has caused significant angst for the community the reasons for which will be outlined in the submission below.

Further, opening submissions for only 14 days is insufficient for residents and concerned parties to review the plethora of documents and comprehensively formulate their position / comments.

#### **1. Low to mid-rise housing / TOD plans**

Gladesville has been designed with midrise housing developments that blend in with the surrounding suburbia, a 14-story tower in this area would completely change the landscape and the community feel as well as set a precedent for other developments to follow (in relation to projects outside of the town centre, noting this development is approximately 1.2km to the town centre of Gladesville and 2km to Ryde).

Government moved to a model designed around transport hubs and town centres, residents have selected homes with this in mind. This project completely undermines the intention of that model, and places further strain on the one bus route (and only mode of transport given no metro development is in the pipeline), nor are there direct buses to nearby stations. Concerns surrounding transport will be covered in further sections.

Suburbs in the LGA with train and metro infrastructure already have significant residential development, exceeding housing targets which will be covered in following sections. Adding towers into Gladesville will take away yet another affordable suburban area for young families to own a piece of, noting that new builds are typically purchased by investors as first homeowners and young families do not

have the capital available and cannot await building completion. As outlined in the Federal Parliament report titled *Report on Foreign Investment in Residential Real Estate* "Treasury emphasises however that most dwellings in off-the-plan developments are purchased by domestic investors."

## **2. Our Lady Queen of Peace and Child Safety**

The location of this development as directly opposite a local primary school, not only raises safety concerns but significant privacy issues, noting that the higher floor apartments will be able to view directly into school grounds. Child safety particularly in early childhood education has been a topic of concern nationwide in recent months, this project disregards community expectations when it comes to child protection.

Noting TfNSW has ruled out entry and exit from Victoria Road, this will leave only local roads, currently used by school traffic for the entry and exit points for not only the proposed approx. 171 apartments but for locals shopping at the Woolworths. The safety of children should be paramount and valued over profit.

Further, and of significant concern, the constant flow of goods trucks to the proposed supermarket is incredibly concerning. Not only will this be disruptive, but primary aged students also lack necessary road safety awareness and there is substantive risk of serious injury or fatality if a driver is unable to see a small child when arriving or exiting the loading dock.

As a resident who has recently purchased in the area with the intention to grow a family and be part of the community, this project will likely cause us to relocate as our family grows as we cannot justify such risk.

## **3. Ryde Housing Targets and Existing Vacancies**

City of Ryde is already doing beyond their fair share of heavy lifting and is backing in community concern for scale of this project that continues to grow beyond their initial approval.

As in the most recent UDIA figures, City of Ryde has already achieved 57 percent of its five-year target of supplying 11,600 new homes by mid-2029, with 5,790 dwellings constructed to date. Maintaining the original approved seven storey development will not impact the council's capacity to reach their targets nor do they support the 14-storey proposal as evidenced in recent council minutes and media.

City of Ryde already has significant apartment availability for both purchase and rent:

- At the time of writing, there are approximately 700 apartments available for purchase across Ryde LGA (according to listings on realestate.com)

- Or 900 in Ryde and surrounds.
- There are 1300 properties currently available for rent in the local government area.

Understanding populations will continue trending up, its important the supporting infrastructure is available – hence the Governments TOD strategy. There is current consideration for a 12-storey development in the Gladesville town centre that aligns with this objective.

#### **4. Transport Network**

As previously stated, there is a singular bus route that transports residents in this area to the Sydney CBD / working precinct. The 500x is frequently overcrowded, delayed or cancelled, leaving residents with no alternative.

Community sentiment does not trust that the provision of extra 500x buses along this route would suffice, given cancellations occur the morning of. These issues have been raised with the Government by communities all along the route, with no tangible changes evident.

#### **Closing comments:**

There are significant merits to an additional supermarket in the area, however the selected site and accompanying 14 storey residential component contradict the Governments TOD strategy, put at risk the safety of students attending Our Lady Queen of Peace and places further strain on local transport networks.

There are two other major sites currently poised for this type of development that would be significantly more appropriate. The existing Gladesville Shopping Centre (in the town centre as per TOD strategy), or the site adjacent to the Sawdust Hotel and opposite an existing Dan Murphy store. This site has the existing road infrastructure that would support the addition of a large supermarket and would significantly reduce the safety risk of the nearby school.

The proposed and approved DA for a seven-storey development, achieved the housing benefits without the risks and concerns as outlined throughout this submission. In purchasing this site, the Woolworths Group was obviously aware of the development approval and has chosen to undermine the objectives of council and created significant angst in the community.

I implore you, to take seriously the concerns and understand that those opposed to this development for the majority are not against additional housing. However, such development cannot sacrifice the community we have built, the safety of our children and contradict Government planning strategies of which residents rely.