

20 January 2026

Lachlan Hutton  
Senior Planning Officer  
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Dear Lachlan,

Please accept this as our submission **AGAINST** the proposal SSD -83721209 for **307-315 Parramatta Road Leichhardt** (the Site). Our detailed reasons are set out below.

**EXCESSIVE BULK AND SCALE AND AGAINST LOCAL CHARACTER OF AREA**

The Site had an approved Development Consent D/2017/477 for demolition and construction of a mixed use development containing basement car parking, ground floor commercial tenancies and 4 residential levels containing 24 residential units.

Despite the approved consent, in 2021 a new DA/2021/0727 was lodged seeking 2 basement levels, ground floor retail premises and 5 residential levels containing 32 residential dwellings and communal open space on the roof. This application was rejected by the LEC principally on grounds that the bulk and scale of the development is excessive and not compatible with the form and scale of development in the locality (refer [2023] NSWLEC 1081).

The LEP compliance table submitted with the current proposal misleadingly states compliance to a number of planning controls, but these are only compliant if the rezoning and other control changes sought by the Developer are permitted. Notably, the Site was not included in the recently announced Minns Government Parramatta Rd corridor rezoning proposal.

Potentially the Site was not included in this rezoning proposal because it has already been extensively studied by local and state authorities for potential higher density. These studies considered site restraints, community impacts and desired future character. From these studies:

- PRCUTS recommended 22m (6-7 storeys) and FSR of 3:1; and
- Inner West Council's (**IWC**) Our Fairer Future Plan recommends 23.3m (7-8 storeys) and FSR of 3:1 (with some incentives).

Despite the above, the Developer submitted a Concept Plan for the Site for which was for ~ 38m (10 storeys) and 2 basement levels and FSR of 4:1. This Concept Plan was approved by the Minister and supported (with conditions) by IWC as set out in its letter dated 30 May 2025.

Now despite the Concept Plan approval, the Developer is seeking even further height to 65m (16 storeys) and 4 basement levels and an FSR of 6.2:1 (refer page 16 of the EIS Rev F).

The approach by Developers to incrementally push for more and more allowances for their own benefit despite existing approvals and controls, and a perceived lack of will by Authorities to put an end to this approach, erodes public confidence in the certainty of the planning system.

It also appears that either the TOD or IWC's Our Fairer Future Plan (if approved) achieves the Inner West's housing targets without the need for these further proposed dwellings.

The proposal is grossly non-compliant with the existing LEP controls, the proposed controls under either PRCUTS or the Our Fairer Future Plan and also the approved Concept Plan, is of excessive bulk and scale and will have a negative impact on the character of the local area, including traffic and heritage, and should be rejected.

#### **DEFICIENT TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

This assessment is based on a traffic survey taken across 4 hours on a single day on Thursday 17 November 2022 (refer page 28 of the Assessment). This data is now more than 3 years old and inaccurate as:

- (a) the data was taken when COVID was still impacting the community;
- (b) the key intersection of Catherine St/Redmond St was changed by public domain works undertaken by Inner West Council and completed after 17 November 2022; and
- (c) it does not consider the high traffic and parking demand from church services and events at the GGC Life Church which commenced operations at nearby 2 Catherine St.

Nor does the assessment reference the “*Future Modelling Report Inner West Sydney Suburbs including Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy*” prepared by Cardno in March 2022 for the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment and IWC. This report took its own traffic data and concluded:

- for the AM Peak (refer page 36):  
*“At Parramatta Road / Catherine Street / Phillip Street, most movements on the side roads perform at LOS E or worse in both hours. The highest delay is on the right turn movements. By the second hour, the average delay on Catherine Street exceeds 200 seconds.”*
- for the PM peak (refer page 57):  
*“All movements on Catherine Street are LOS F in both hours.”*

The Cardno report more accurately represents the daily situation (although its data is out of date for the same reasons as above) that the Redmond St/Catherine St/Parramatta Rd intersection frequently turns into gridlock.

Traffic backs up Catherine Street from the Parramatta Rd/Catherine St intersection due to vehicles crossing from Phillip St in the opposite direction preventing cars turning right from Catherine St onto Parramatta Rd, and also pedestrians crossing Parramatta Rd to/from the nearby bus stops preventing vehicles from Catherine St turning left or right onto Parramatta Rd. The back up of vehicles on Catherine St then delays vehicles turning right from Redmond St onto Catherine St. Vehicles waiting to turn right from Redmond St prevent vehicles wanting to turn left from Redmond St onto Catherine Street.

Redmond Street is a single lane traffic street but experiences high use as access to Catherine St. This is contributed to by nearby Hay St and Balmain Rd being single traffic lane, one-way streets, and also a No Right Turn during peak hours from the next cross street up (Styles St) onto Catherine St.

It is only a matter of logic, supported by the Cardno report, that the proposed development will significantly worsen the current untenable traffic situation and there is limited extra traffic capacity in the immediate area. Developers should not be permitted to create chaos and then walk away.

In the absence of a proper Traffic Impact Assessment, no proper consideration can be given to this issue and the proposed development should be rejected.

#### **DEWATERING AND INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT**

The proposal states it is not an Integrated Development under s4.46 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (refer page 2 of the EIS Rev F).

However, the proposal recognises that dewatering will be required as part of the basement excavation and has included a Dewatering Management Plan in Appendix 19A. Dewatering means a water management work approval is required under s.90 of the *Water Management Act 2000*. The requirement for this approval makes the proposal an Integrated Development under s4.46 of the EP&A Act.

In the absence of an approval required as part of an Integrated Development, the proposal is not capable of acceptance and must be rejected. If the correct approval process is not followed it may be subject to a Class 4 Judicial Review challenge.

#### **UNACCEPTABLE HERITAGE IMPACTS**

The proposed development will dominate the nearby heritage listed items, particularly the neighbouring Albert Palais building at 2 Catherine Street and 8-16 Catherine St houses nearby, along with other items such as the (previously known as) Bald Face Stag Hotel at 343-345 Parramatta Road, Leichhardt. Consequently, the proposed

development will diminish the value of these heritage items and their contribution to the streetscape and character of the area.

The development also will dominate the commemorative Pig Lane traversing the Hay St carpark, which acknowledges the former use of the area as a piggery.

Development on the Site should be sympathetic to the existing heritage items and in keeping with the heritage conversation area. As nearby comparators:

- 448-446 Parramatta Rd, Petersham – under construction is 4 part 5 storey mixed use development;
- 458-460 Parramatta Road, Petersham - DA/2025/0316 submitted for 7 storey mixed use (currently under appeal in the LEC for deemed refusal).

The dominant form of the proposed development and its impact is not specifically addressed in any other supporting documents, including the Visual Impact Assessment Report prepared by Urbaine, thus not enabling any consideration on this point. In the absence of such consideration, the proposed development should be rejected.

#### **GEOTECHNICAL CONCERNS**

The Geotechnical Investigation consisted of two bore holes being drilled (refer section 3.1 on page 10). It was reported that these were affected by groundwater seepage (refer section 3.1). We understand that there is a natural underground waterway along Redmond St crossing into Albion St and Whites Creeks Lane and the Site is within a flood zone.

Adequate consideration must be given to this issue including any potential subsidence/collapse due to the natural underground waterway as a result of the significant excavation that would be required for 4 basement levels. Any subsidence/ground collapse on or around the Site would be devastating to local properties and would likely significantly impact Parramatta Road.

Waterproofing defects are a common problem and a focus of the Building Commissioner.

#### **INADEQUATE EXHIBITION**

The timing of the proposal resulted in an exhibition period across the Christmas/NY and summer school holiday period. Despite any representations by the Applicant of community consultation, the notification received from the Department is the only communication we have had regarding the proposal.

Additionally, the Applicant refers to the proposal as 'shop top housing'. Such a description allows the Developer to claim compliance with the planning control, even though calling 15 levels of residential use above a single retail ground floor 'shop top housing' is arguably misrepresenting the true nature of the development. The

description as 'shop top' may also have caused some residents to not examine the proposal in detail.

Given this is a significant project and noting the immense impact to the local community, it would be only fair and reasonable to provide additional notifications and allow additional time beyond the conclusion of the summer school holiday period for submissions to be made.

**CONCLUSION**

We kindly request to be kept updated on the progress of the application and the assessment of the above points.

Yours sincerely

*Sam & Megan Jenkins*

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