

# To: NSW Dept Planning, Housing & Infrastructure

## Re: Planning Proposal / Development at 8–10 New Mclean Street, Edgecliff

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### Introduction

I write to object to the proposed redevelopment of 8–10 New Mclean Street, Edgecliff. While the need for additional housing in Sydney is widely acknowledged, developments of this scale must demonstrate that they can be accommodated without overwhelming existing infrastructure and while delivering genuine community benefits.

In this case, the proposal raises serious concerns regarding **traffic congestion, road safety, emergency access, and the loss of relatively affordable housing in one of the Eastern Suburbs' most accessible locations**. In its current form, the development appears likely to impose substantial impacts on the surrounding community while delivering **limited public benefit in return**.

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### Existing traffic conditions

New Mclean Street already functions as a **major access corridor for the Edgecliff precinct**, rather than a quiet residential street. It serves as a key entry point for several major facilities, including:

- Edgecliff railway station
- Eastpoint Food Fair
- Edgecliff Centre
- Eastpoint Tower

As a result, the street carries a **high and diverse volume of traffic**, including:

- residents from nearby apartment buildings
- shoppers accessing the two shopping centres
- service and delivery vehicles
- commuter pick-up and drop-off traffic associated with the railway station

These combined uses mean that New Mclean Street already experiences **significant congestion and queuing**, particularly during peak commuting hours.

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### Intersection bottleneck

The intersection of New Mclean Street with New South Head Road Darling Point Road is a well-known traffic bottleneck.

Vehicles exiting New Mclean Street must merge into heavy through-traffic on New South Head Road. In particular, **turning right from New Mclean Street into New South Head Road is already extremely difficult**, often requiring drivers to wait extended periods for a safe gap in traffic.

Vehicles frequently queue along New Mclean Street waiting to exit, particularly during peak periods.

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### Traffic generation from the proposed development

The existing building at the site contains approximately **106 residential units**.

The proposed redevelopment would increase this to **approximately 256 residential units**, supported by a large basement car park reportedly containing **more than 400 parking spaces**.

Even conservative traffic modelling assumptions suggest that such a development would generate **hundreds of additional vehicle movements per day**, including many during peak commuter periods.

All of this traffic would funnel into **New Mclean Street**, and ultimately into the already constrained intersection with New South Head Road and Darling Point Road.

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### Cumulative development pressure

This proposal must be considered alongside other development pressures affecting the **New South Head Road corridor**.

Additional residential and commercial development in the precinct will produce **cumulative traffic increases**, feeding into an intersection that already struggles to manage existing volumes.

The likely result will include:

- longer queues on New Mclean Street
  - increased delays exiting the street
  - greater difficulty turning right onto New South Head Road
  - increased driver frustration and unsafe manoeuvres
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### Peak stacking effects

Traffic in the area does not occur evenly throughout the day. Instead, it frequently **“stacks” during peak periods when multiple traffic generators operate simultaneously**.

These include:

- commuter traffic associated with the railway station
- shopping centre traffic
- local residential traffic
- school drop-off and pick-up traffic

When these peaks coincide, the result is **short-period congestion that already overwhelms the intersection and surrounding streets**.

Introducing a large increase in residential density will significantly intensify this peak stacking effect.

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### School traffic impacts

Traffic conditions are further complicated by substantial **school-related traffic movements**.

The site sits directly opposite **Ascham School**, which generates considerable vehicle traffic during school drop-off and pick-up periods.

In addition, there has been public discussion of a potential future **public high school on the site of the Edgecliff Centre**. If this proceeds, the surrounding roads would need to accommodate **substantial additional school-related traffic**.

These factors further limit the ability of the local road network to absorb additional vehicle movements generated by new development.

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### Emergency vehicle access

New Mclean Street effectively operates as a **cul-de-sac serving a dense residential and commercial precinct**.

During peak congestion periods, traffic queues can extend along the street, potentially **impeding access for emergency vehicles**, including ambulances, fire services and police responding to incidents in nearby buildings or within the station precinct.

Increasing traffic volumes in this constrained environment risks **delaying emergency response times**, particularly during the same peak periods when congestion is already most severe.

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### Parking provision inconsistent with transit-oriented development

The proposal reportedly includes **more than 400 parking spaces for 256 apartments**.

Such a high parking ratio is difficult to justify for a development located immediately adjacent to **Edgecliff railway station**, one of the Eastern Suburbs' major public transport nodes.

Planning policy increasingly promotes **transit-oriented development**, where higher density housing near railway stations is designed to encourage public transport use and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

Providing a very large quantity of parking appears to **encourage car ownership and additional traffic**, undermining these planning objectives.

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## Loss of affordable housing near a major transport hub

A further major concern is the **effective loss of relatively affordable housing currently located within walking distance of Edgecliff Station**.

The existing building contains more than one hundred apartments, many of which represent comparatively more attainable housing options within the local area due to their age and configuration.

The proposed redevelopment would replace this housing with a much larger complex that includes **only two designated “affordable housing” units**.

This outcome appears inconsistent with broader NSW planning objectives that seek to **increase the supply of affordable housing in locations close to public transport, employment and services**.

The provision of only two affordable units within a 256-apartment development does not represent a meaningful contribution toward those objectives.

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## Net community benefit

Large redevelopment proposals typically justify increased height, density and scale by demonstrating a **clear public or community benefit**.

However, in this case the proposal appears to deliver **limited community benefit relative to its impacts**.

The development would:

- significantly increase traffic congestion in an already constrained location
- intensify peak-period congestion through traffic stacking
- risk delays for emergency vehicle access
- encourage private vehicle use through excessive parking provision
- replace relatively attainable housing with higher-cost apartments
- provide only **two affordable housing units** despite the scale of the project

Taken together, these outcomes raise serious questions about whether the proposal delivers a **genuine net benefit to the local community**, particularly given the significant impacts it is likely to impose on surrounding infrastructure and residents.

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## Consistency with planning objectives

Under the framework established by the **Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979**, development should promote **orderly land use, sustainable infrastructure outcomes and positive community benefits**.

Given the existing traffic constraints, the limited affordable housing outcome, and the scale of the proposed development, it is difficult to conclude that the proposal satisfies these broader planning objectives.

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## Requested actions

Given the concerns outlined above, I respectfully request that NSW Government:

1. **Reject the proposal in its current form**, as the scale of development appears incompatible with the capacity of the surrounding road network.
2. If the proposal is to proceed to further consideration, require the following substantial revisions and investigations:
  - A **comprehensive independent traffic assessment** that properly evaluates peak stacking effects, cumulative development impacts and intersection capacity.
  - A detailed **emergency vehicle access assessment** during peak congestion periods.
  - A **significant reduction in parking provision** to align the development with transit-oriented planning principles.
  - A **substantially increased affordable housing component**, commensurate with the scale of the development and its proximity to major public transport.

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## Conclusion

New Mclean Street already plays a **critical access role within the Edgecliff precinct**, serving major commercial centres, residential buildings, nearby schools and a key public transport hub.

The proposed redevelopment at 8–10 New Mclean Street would significantly increase traffic pressures on an already constrained intersection while delivering **minimal affordable housing and limited broader community benefit**.

For these reasons, I urge NSW Government to **carefully reconsider whether the proposal, in its current form, represents an appropriate outcome for the Edgecliff community**.

Yours sincerely,  
Caroline Haski  
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