
OBJECTION — SSD 97528708 142–148 & 160 Oxford Street, 13 Gipps Street, 6 Shadforth Street, Paddington

March 2026

I object to this development application and asks that it be refused.

What is being proposed

The application is for an 8-storey apartment building (approximately 32 metres tall) with ground-floor commercial space, on a site at the corner of Oxford Street and Shadforth Street, Paddington. It would contain 40 apartments, replacing 32 existing dwellings, and includes four levels of basement parking for 83 cars.

I am a long-term Paddington resident. I live here because I appreciate living in this historic environment and the close-knit community it engenders. I have always regarded myself as a passing custodian of this place and am grateful for all those who saved it from destruction in previous times. An approval of this development would be an appalling betrayal of all those who have labored for decades to ensure that this cultural treasure endures.

I support appropriate development in Paddington and provision of new infill housing, particularly genuinely affordable housing. This proposal however will result in substantial loss of genuinely affordable housing and their replacement with grotesquely large luxury units in a building that will significantly damage the Paddington Heritage Precinct. It is absolutely the wrong building in the wrong place at the wrong scale. There is no public interest benefit in allowing this development. In fact there is a manifest Public Interest benefit in refusing this application.

Specifically, I object to:

The Heritage Impact

The single largest impact is the damage to the heritage significance of Paddington and the Victoria Barracks in Particular. The Applicants Heritage Impact Assessment is an entirely facile and misleading justification piece. The assessors should arrange to have a genuine Heritage Impact Statement prepared to base their assessment on.

This site is in the heart of the Paddington Heritage Conservation Area (HCA), one of the most significant and intact historic precincts in Australia. The HCA is recognised for its exceptional unity of scale, character and urban form and streetscapes.

Directly opposite the site are the sandstone perimeter walls and gateway of Victoria Barracks, which is listed under federal heritage law as a Commonwealth Heritage place. The gateway and bounding walls are only about 3 metres high. An 8-storey building directly opposite would

visually overwhelm them, and the proposal sits on the same axis as the main Barracks building, meaning upper floors would be visible from the Parade Ground — an area of exceptional heritage significance.

The applicant's own heritage consultants advises that this a "moderate" impact! Read “extreme” for that! I do not consider that this is in any way an acceptable outcome for a precinct of this significance.

The building is simply too big for this location

At 8 storeys and approximately 48 metres wide, this building would be completely out of scale with its neighbours — mostly 2-storey terrace houses and cottages, some only metres away on Shadforth Street.

The local planning rules (the Woollahra LEP) set a height limit of 9.5 metres on this site — about 3 storeys for good reasons. The State Government's housing policy allows for the disregarding of the LEP control for heights up to about 28 metres (this proposal exceeds that) for this type of development. The Planning Minister has publicly advised that heritage impacts and other usual considerations will continue to be considered even with the new Housing Policy instruments. A building with this disproportionate bulk and scale of this will have undeniable, unacceptable impacts on heritage, character and amenity.

Three comparable and recent developments nearby — the former Royal Women's Hospital redevelopment (Paddington Green), 432–440 Oxford Street, and 60 Oxford Street Woollahra — have all been successfully developed at a compatible scale, within or close to the applicable height limits. There is no reason this site needs to be treated differently.

The loss of genuinely affordable housing.

The applicant is using the State Government's affordable housing bonus to justify the extra height. We support affordable housing, but:

The proposal replaces 27 existing studio and 1-bedroom units with 10 "affordable" units. The net result is a significant loss of genuinely affordable, smaller dwellings from the area. The "affordable" rent only needs to be 20% below market rate, which will still be out of reach for almost anyone who genuinely needs affordable housing. This affordable housing bonus is being used to add two extra floors of large, luxury 3-bedroom apartments — some with rooftop terraces and pools — rather than more affordable homes. It's a travesty that the affordable housing bonus should apply here.

Parking is excessive

The proposal includes 83 car spaces — well above the 39 spaces that local planning guidelines indicate as appropriate for this accessible, this for a well-serviced location close to bus routes and the town centre that is the notional basis for the zoning relied upon in the Housing SEPP. The

already struggling road network of this part of Sydney is to be further burdened by additional traffic movements. An impost on the community at large for the benefit of a very select few!

I request

That the Department refuse this application. I also ask that a Public Hearing be held before the Independent Planning Commission to allow the community a proper voice in this decision.

Paul Bardsley

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Paddington 2021