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NSW Planning | SSD-93020230

Monday 30 March 2026

Submission on proposed unit tower blocks on Redan Street, Mosman

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this DA. In summary, I think that the present proposal is not in the public interest and should be rejected. The proposal is incompatible with the existing urban plans, urban landscape, planning objectives and community expectations.

The Mosman Council 'Scenic Protection Area' has been in place for many many years, shaping appropriate development. It is a core pillar of all the Mosman urban plans and has been for about the last 60 years. Maintaining this Scenic Protection Area has not been easy - I know as I was an elected Councillor on Mosman Council for 13 years from 2008 till 2021. But the Scenic Protection Area has delivered two particularly valuable outcomes for Mosman, for Sydney and for NSW:

1. Landscaping and containing the visual impact of development; maintaining dominance of vegetation over buildings. This is integral to the whole look and feel of Sydney Harbour.
2. View sharing - avoiding a situation where every new development blocks views from existing homes, and over-development cascades up and down the slopes.

The proposed development might be considered a 'State Significant Planning Breach' as well as an SSD. It appears to be exactly the type of over-development that the Scenic Protection Area was introduced and maintained to prevent. If 'urban planning' means anything at all in NSW, then this development will be rejected.

To me, this is the over-riding issue and reason to reject the proposal. However, there are many other issues, which I have listed in Appendix B.

Thank you for considering my submission. I am happy to discuss any aspect.

Kind regards
Tom Sherlock

Appendices:

- A: Pictures of Balmoral slopes from the water (I am a regular kayaker)
- B: Other issues
- C: Commentary on the failure of urban planning which has lead to this proposal

Appendix A: Pictures of Balmoral slopes from the water (I am a regular kayaker)

Note there are no height poles to indicate the size and scale of the proposed development, but there is no doubt that it would be prominent.

Northern end of Balmoral Beach, Bathers Pavillion.



Southern end of Balmoral Beach, swimming enclosure (cloudy).



Appendix B: Other issues

1. Massive excavation (up to 10m into sandstone). The whole idea of the NSW government's Low and Mid-rise Housing Policy was to put development near public transport. This development is clearly not aligned to this. 106 car spaces seems extreme. The depth of excavation means noise and disruption with rock cutting and extraction. Underground water sources and courses will be disrupted. Neighbouring homes are put at risk.
2. Even after all the allowances use by the proposal, the design is non-compliant. It exceeds height limits.
3. Heritage impact to adjacent heritage-listed 36 and 38 Redan Street which will be overshadowed and diminished by this unsympathetic giant.
4. Vehicular access and safety, and pedestrian access and safety, both during and after construction; Redan Lane is narrow with no footpaths.
5. This design makes a mockery of inclusive housing with the 11 'affordable' units having separate 'poor door' access from Redan lane.
6. The 2-week window for community feedback is woefully inadequate, considering the size, scale and impact of the proposal.

Appendix C: Commentary on the failure of urban planning which has lead to this proposal

There is one respect in which the proposal is a skillful and intelligent design. This is the way that that it has used and applied various planning rules and constructs, created with good intent by the NSW government; but the intent of the developer is not to address the housing crisis or add in a positive way to the built environment of Mosman. Instead it appears to me that the developer is cynically using the planning rules to maximise commercial advantage to the detriment of both the Mosman and the wider NSW community.

Of course, it is the duty of NSW Department of Planning to serve the wider community, rather than the narrow commercial interests of the developer and their backers.

How has it come to this? Largely because the NSW government's Low and Mid-rise Housing Policy has been created as a 'one-size fits all' policy across all Sydney metro areas. This is a naive approach, and unscrupulous developers are happy to cherry-pick rules and locations to take full advantage of this naivety.

I note that the developer attempts to lessen the bulk and scale of the Redan Street proposal by suggesting that Mosman will be developed at a similar scale behind the proposed building. It seems much more likely to me that a combination of land values and construction costs mean that the only large developments in this part of Mosman coming from the Low and Mid-rise Housing Policy will be those that can take views and therefore be sold as 'premium luxury apartments'. It seems unlikely that a developer would invest in building behind the proposed building. It seems much more likely that other developers would use the precedent of this proposed development, if it were to be approved, to build other large developments down the slope towards the water. Again, this is precisely the planning and development scenario that the Scenic Protection Area has sought to avoid.

Being no longer on Council, I am not up-to-date on all the developments that are in-progress or planned for Mosman. But I am aware of several developments where there was a building with, say, 6 apartments and the new development, using the Low and Mid-rise Housing Policy, has actually halved the number of apartments in order to sell them as up-market luxury apartments. So much for addressing the housing crisis.

What would be a more sensible and effective approach be for the NSW government? The more effective approach would be to work with and through councils. Councils have much more local knowledge than the state Department of Planning and so know what is likely to work in their areas. I am pleased to read of some Sydney councils where this collaborative approach is happening, with a greater likelihood of positive results for both housing and communities.

I am aware that the Minister for Planning has meet with the Mayor of Mosman, and my understanding is that Mosman Council is developing an alternative approach to urban development for Mosman, which again seem much more likely to deliver positive results for both housing and communities.