

Mamre Road Data Centre Campus Submission

Objection to SSD-92743706

Introduction

I write to formally object to the proposed Mamre Road Data Centre Campus for the reasons set out below. My concerns relate principally to the inadequacy of public consultation, the significant environmental and resource impacts of the proposal, and the cumulative burden created by the growing concentration of data centres in the surrounding area.

1. Inadequate public consultation and social impact assessment

A major concern is the insufficient scope and quality of public consultation undertaken as part of the Social Impact Assessment. As noted in the assessment, the newsletter distribution area was limited to selected parts of Kemps Creek, Badgerys Creek, South Creek and Mount Vernon, yet only four responses were received during the survey period. The report itself concedes that this was not a statistically significant sample.

This, in itself, should have prompted a far more comprehensive consultation process before any meaningful conclusions were drawn about community sentiment. A development of this magnitude, particularly one involving a hyperscale data centre with substantial energy, water and emissions implications demands a far broader and more rigorous engagement strategy.

At a minimum, further steps should have included consultation with residents across a much wider radius, direct correspondence to all affected residents through council, an extended survey period and a second round of active community outreach.

The cost of such efforts would have been negligible in comparison to the project's estimated multibillion dollar value. Yet residents such as myself, living within Penrith LGA and in suburbs likely to be affected by the proposal were not informed at all. I became aware of this development only through my own independent research.

This gives the unfortunate impression that the consultation process was treated as a procedural formality rather than a genuine attempt to understand and address community concerns. Where the initial response rate was so plainly inadequate, the proper course should have been to pause and improve consultation and not proceed on the basis of such limited input.

This issue is especially serious because a hyperscale data centre is not an ordinary industrial development. It should not be treated in the same way as a standard warehouse or factory. Data centres consume extraordinary amounts of electricity and

water, and their long-term impacts on surrounding communities remain insufficiently understood. Given this, it was incumbent on both the developers and government authorities to notify and engage a much broader population of residents who may be affected.

The environmental and social consequences of this proposal will not stop at the boundary of the consultation map. They will be felt across Penrith LGA and likely beyond. If the full extent of those impacts is not yet known, that uncertainty itself should be reason to halt the project until proper investigation and consultation have occurred.

For these reasons, I submit that the present consultation process is wholly inadequate and I request that the proposal be paused until a broader and more meaningful public consultation process has been undertaken.

2. Environmental and resource impacts

My second major concern relates to the environmental consequences of the proposed development, particularly its projected greenhouse gas emissions and heavy demand on electricity and water infrastructure.

The documentation indicates that the project will draw extensively from the electricity and water grid. This is deeply concerning. At a time when households are already grappling with increased energy costs and growing pressure on essential infrastructure, it is unclear how a facility of this scale exceeding 1GW in electricity demand will avoid contributing to further strain on shared resources.

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment is particularly alarming. The emissions data indicate annual peak operational emissions in 2032 of approximately 1.7 million tonnes of CO₂-e per year at maximum capacity, including an overwhelming proportion attributable to Scope 2 emissions from purchased electricity. Over the projected operational life of the campus, the total emissions are estimated in the many millions of tonnes.

What is most troubling is that the overwhelming majority of these emissions arise indirectly through electricity consumption from the grid. Even under more optimistic mitigation scenarios, the project still involves extraordinarily high carbon emissions over time. While the proposed response appears to rely in part on mitigation measures and carbon offsetting through Australian Carbon Credit Units, this does not adequately address the real and local burden created by the project.

Offsetting may assist with carbon accounting on paper, but it does not erase the physical and environmental consequences associated with generating and consuming such immense quantities of energy in this region. Planting or regenerating forests

elsewhere does not meaningfully reassure residents who must live with the immediate and cumulative environmental effects in their own community.

Further, the Air Quality Impact Assessment refers to mitigation measures such as water application, vehicle speed controls, handling protocols, monitoring programs and trigger response plans. While these measures may have some utility during construction and site operations, they do little to alleviate the broader concerns raised by projected long-term emissions and infrastructure demand.

There also remains a serious question as to whether current infrastructure is genuinely capable of supporting a development of this scale without adverse consequences for existing residents. I do not believe sufficient research has yet been undertaken into how the environmental and long-term health impacts of hyperscale data centres can be properly mitigated. Nor am I satisfied that the proposed use of freshwater for cooling can be described as sustainable in a region already facing population growth and increasing demand on finite resources.

For these reasons, I do not believe the Mamre Road Data Centre Campus has demonstrated an acceptable environmental profile, nor has it shown that its impacts on residents' health, air quality, water security and energy infrastructure can be safely managed. The project should therefore be paused until further independent research and planning are undertaken.

3. Cumulative impact of multiple data centres in the area

My third concern is the growing concentration of data centres already operating, approved or proposed within Penrith LGA and the broader Western Sydney region.

This proposal cannot be assessed in isolation. There are already other major data centre developments in close proximity, including other projects on Mamre Road and additional facilities in nearby suburbs such as Erskine Park and Horsley Park. Beyond that, data centres are also emerging across other parts of Western Sydney, including Eastern Creek, Seven Hills, Bella Vista, Marsden Park and beyond.

The cumulative effect of these facilities on electricity usage, water consumption, emissions, traffic, infrastructure demand and community amenity is potentially immense. Even if one project is said to be manageable on its own, the combined impact of several hyperscale facilities in one region raises much larger environmental and social concerns.

It is particularly troubling that residents living in close proximity to multiple such developments have not been comprehensively informed or consulted. In my case, despite living so close to these proposals, I was not notified and have consequently missed the opportunity to make submissions on several of them.

This pattern reinforces the sense that the pace of development is outstripping proper public accountability and long-term planning.

Conclusion

For all of the reasons above, I strongly object to the Mamre Road Data Centre Campus.

Approving this development would place an unfair burden on Western Sydney residents, who are already living amid rapid and constant development. While growth and innovation are important, they must occur in a way that is balanced, transparent and protective of the communities expected to bear the consequences.

It is not enough to justify such a project by pointing to carbon offsets or distant environmental programs. The people living in this region deserve to know how their air, water, infrastructure and quality of life will be affected in practical and long-term terms.

I respectfully ask that this project be halted until broader and more meaningful public consultation has been undertaken across the LGA, further independent research has been completed into the long-term environmental and health effects of hyperscale data centres, and the cumulative impacts of existing and proposed data centres in Western Sydney have been fully assessed.

The government's first duty is to its people. If we proceed now and only later discover irreversible environmental or public health consequences, it will be far too late to undo the harm that should have been prevented through proper caution, consultation and planning.

Additional questions requiring clarification:

In addition, I seek clear and precise answers to the following questions:

What is the total carbon dioxide emissions output from both of the data centres on Mamre Road, considered together rather than in isolation?

What independent studies exist regarding the long-term health, environmental and community effects of emissions associated with hyperscale data centres and their exceptionally high energy usage?

Further, if emissions from these facilities are proposed to be offset, how exactly are those emissions being offset within this suburb and surrounding local area, given that this is the community in which the data centres are physically located and where the impacts will be most directly felt?

Finally, recent heatwaves have already demonstrated the fragility of Sydney's power infrastructure, with some suburbs experiencing outages when the electricity grid was unable to cope with simultaneous peak demand from widespread air-conditioner use. In

that context, the approval of a project of this scale, one that would impose an enormous and continuous load on the grid raises serious concerns about further destabilising energy supply across Sydney. It is deeply troubling that, despite these very real and recent pressures on essential infrastructure, governments continue to permit the rapid concentration of large-scale data centres in suburban areas. To overlook these existing vulnerabilities and proceed with developments that may intensify them is not only short-sighted, but profoundly irresponsible.