

Wednesday 23 April 2026

Mr Kieran Thomas

Director

Housing Delivery Assessments

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Locked Bag 5022

Parramatta NSW 2124

To whom it may concern,

SSD-86456706 – submission as an objection to the proposed development at 142–150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba

I, Keith Muir, of 48 Carlton Street, Katoomba, write to object to SSD-86456706. As a local resident living less than 2 km from the proposed site, I am deeply concerned by this proposal. I also wish to formally note that I was not previously notified of this development by the proponent.

Incompatibility with strategic planning and character

Katoomba relies on being a nature-focused tourism hub, and high-density residential development of this scale is entirely out of character with such tourism, as well as the surrounding dwellings. The site is poorly located for a spot rezoning; it is more than 2 km from the railway station and town centre. The proposed site is poorly located for high density development and is serviced only by narrow local roads.

Regulatory consistency and World Heritage protection

The Blue Mountains Local Government Area (LGA) was rightly exempt from the low and mid-rise housing mandates due to its environmental constraints. This area should also be excluded from the State Significant Development pathway to protect the integrity of the World Heritage property. The proposal more than doubles the height and density limits in the local environmental plan, in flagrant disrespect to decades of carefully crafted local planning rules.

Stormwater and environmental impacts

The proponent's stormwater strategy is an unacceptable imposition on public land, and regardless of any previous approvals, the existing ponds are now managed as water park elements. The proposal seeks to repurpose council-owned water features in the Planetary Health Precinct as sediment detention basins, apparently by digging them out to a suitable size. This development should be of a size and scale that it is possible to manage its own stormwater on-site, rather than dumping waste onto neighbouring public parkland.

Furthermore, the environmental assessment fails to protect endangered species, such as the Dwarf Mountain Pine in the World Heritage Area, and downstream endangered peat swamps in the Planetary Health Precinct. Increased sediment and altered hydrology could lead to the erosion and eventual destruction of these sensitive ecosystems.

Visual impact and tourism

Narrow Neck Road is a tourist gateway to the World Heritage Area. Visitors seeking relief from Sydney's intense development will instead be met by views of nine massed apartment blocks when travelling Narrow Neck Road or visiting the Planetary Health Precinct and Parklands. The visual impact analysis is inadequate, failing to assess how this development will be seen from within the World Heritage Area, such as from Mt Solitary.

Traffic and local infrastructure

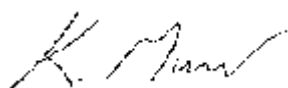
The proposal will generate hundreds of vehicle movements per day on roads unsuited to such flows. The route to the town centre includes significant pinch points on Stuarts Road and Neal Street where the road is effectively one lane wide. This will create safety issues and require complex traffic workarounds that will negatively impact the daily lives of local residents.

Exiting Stuarts Road right onto Narrow Neck Road will be far more dangerous. The view lines for this turn are limited and chance of collision shall increase if this major development is approved.

Conclusion

This proposal will fail to provide affordable housing and instead is likely to prioritise short-term rental markets that are outside the remit of the Housing Delivery Assessment (HDA). Given the potential impacts on the community, the Planetary Health Precinct and the World Heritage Area, I urge the department to refuse consent. I request that it be referred to the Independent Planning Commission that is a more appropriate determining authority for a proposal that is directed towards the short-term accommodation market for tourism.

Yours sincerely,



Keith Muir
48 Carlton Street
Katoomba NSW 2780

