

Ms Caitlin Hopper
Contact Planner
NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Objection submitted via NSW Major Projects Portal

30 April 2026

Dear Ms Hopper,

RE: SSD-86456706 Residential flat buildings at 142-150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the State Significant Development Application (SSD) 86456706 at 142-150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba.

Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment Inc (FOKE) is **objecting** to this proposal for the construction of nine four-storey buildings for 214 residential flats including 15% affordable housing and 52 serviced apartments, totalling 266 apartments.

Friends of Ku-ring-gai Environment (FOKE) has been advocating for the protection of Ku-ring-gai's outstanding natural environment for over 30 years, and like the Blue Mountains local government area is surrounded by national parks with high biodiverse environmentally sensitive bushland and remnant forest.

FOKE has a history of valuing and protecting the Greater Blue Mountains, particularly in advocating for the successful gazettal of the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area. FOKE also has great appreciation for the bushfire threats to the Blue Mountains as Ku-ring-gai is also one of Sydney's most bushfire prone local government areas.

FOKE supports development proposals that are respectful in design, scale, consideration of heritage, the environment and biodiversity, infrastructure and liveability.

FOKE argues that this proposal should be refused because it is a blunt, top down 'one size fits all' instrument, and does not respect the neighbourhood character, scale, heritage, environment, traffic or infrastructure constraints of this site in Katoomba.

Further elaborations regarding our objection are as follows.

Environmental Impacts

The proposal would have adverse environmental impacts. This site is adjacent to and within the catchment of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Immediately next to the site is a Blue Mountains Swamp. This Threatened Ecological Community feeds into the Katoomba Falls catchment where the Critically Endangered Dwarf Mountain Pine (*Pherosphaera fitzgeraldii*) grows. The proposal will increase hard surfaces negatively impacting on the surrounding bushland from increased stormwater volume and velocity flowing into the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

The proposal threatens the values of the Blue Mountains World Heritage listing, particularly with negative visual impacts from the nine four storey buildings impacting on the view lines looking to and from the World Heritage listed escarpments.

Bushfire risk

The proposal puts lives at risk. The Blue Mountains is one of the most bushfire prone areas in Australia and with a warming climate the trajectory is for more intense and dangerous bushfires. Narrow Neck Road is a narrow road and would be severely gridlocked by traffic congestion during a bushfire evacuation with the proposed additional 266 apartments (2 residents per apartment = 532 approx. additional residents and their 266 approx. additional cars). This population increase would make evacuation near impossible, risking death.

Undermining planning and democracy

The proposed Housing Delivery Authority (HAD) is an unacceptable pathway as it sidelines local government and local democracy. It overrides Blue Mountains City Council's Local Environment Plan (LEP) zoning controls for the site. It also contravenes the NSW Government Low and Mid-Rise Housing SEPP exemption to the Blue Mountains because of Blue Mountains World Heritage values and bushfire threats.

Excessive development

The proposal fails to respect the scale and form of the existing locality and would degrade the Narrow Neck Road precinct's character and amenity. The proposal would have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties.

The proposal risks overwhelming existing infrastructure including sewerage and electricity. The proposal is not ecologically sustainable and cannot sustainably support the proposed population increase.

The proposal sets a dangerous precedent for the entire Blue Mountains and threatens the values of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage.

FOKE reiterates its objection that this State Significant Development Application proposal for 142-150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba. The proposal should be rejected because it will have a negative and detrimental impact on local heritage, environment, traffic, urban design, neighbourhood character, visual amenity, liveability, tree canopy, open space, infrastructure and community benefit. The proposal also risks unacceptable impacts on the Blue Mountains' global World Heritage significance.

Thank you for considering the submission.

It is to be hoped that the Department will take on board our concerns and reject the proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Janine Kitson

Janine Kitson

VICE PRESIDENT

cc Ku-ring-gai Mayor and Councillors
cc Matt Cross MP Member for Davidson
cc The Hon Alister Henskens SC MP
cc The Hon Chris Rath MLC Shadow Minister for Planning
cc Nicolette Boele MP Member for Bradfield
cc Trish Doyle MP Member for Blue Mountains
cc Blue Mountains Conservation Society