

SSD-90134958 - 100 Edinburgh Rd Castlecrag

I have some comments to make in opposition to the proposed development by Conquest at 100 Edinburgh Rd.

For protection against egregious developments and actions, planning controls have been carefully developed by Willoughby Council and implemented over many years. The controls that are in place are appropriate to the area, its residents, its businesses and its natural features. The controls relating to Castlecrag are targeted at regulated growth and sensitivity to heritage. I see no reason to over-ride the controls that are in place. This site at 100 Edinburgh Rd is not suitable for SSD applications.

Community members work with Council guidance to enhance the suburb and its features. There are numerous Bushcare groups and advisory groups which give time and effort for the betterment of the suburb, with native planting, weed control, maintenance of bushland pathways, etc. The purpose of all these volunteer inputs is to maintain Castlecrag's reputation as a unique, bushland and heritage zone. Conquest's proposal mocks the efforts of local people who work to retain and enhance the essence of Castlecrag.

The location of the proposed development could not, in any way, be considered a transport hub. Trains and Metro are several kilometres away, and the frequency of current bus services is already insufficient. Conquest has ignored the principle of locating housing density near transport facilities.

Likewise, the amount of vehicle traffic will increase and quickly become an issue. I note that the existing intersection between Eastern Valley Way and Edinburgh Road was modified only in recent years to introduce controlled left and right turning for each road and to optimise existing traffic flows that are already at capacity. Although the traffic lights operate optimally, it's very clear that the intersection cannot absorb greater vehicle numbers.

Conquest's community consultations have been virtually meaningless. The second session showed that nothing put forward by the community at the first session had been taken into account at all, let alone acted on. If the Planning Panel believes that Conquest has carried out meaningful community consultation, then the Panel is mistaken.

It seems to me as though the developer has not looked at the size, shape or location of the development site, but has simply pulled a plan out of the file. It seems doubtful if the developer even knows his proposal is for Castlecrag, since all the location photos on the hoarding at the site show surrounding suburbs - Northbridge golf course, Cammeray Bridge, Northbridge Baths. There is no evidence that Conquest has any regard to the special nature and nuances of the Castlecrag location, since no awareness or appreciation of the nature of the locality and its history and importance have been displayed. The unfavourable atmosphere prevailing at the consultation sessions hasn't made any impact either.

Construction of two large towers at the entrance to Castlecrag will result in untold damage to the essence and historical value of the suburb. The adverse impact of siting this development adjacent to the Griffin Conservation Area is incalculable.

I urge the Panel to reject the proposal.

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Castlecrag