

Submission against the residential apartment development proposed for 142–150 Narrow Neck Road, Katoomba.

I am a resident of Leura who shops, socialises, undertakes community advocacy, bushwalks, and rock climbs in the Katoomba area.

My objections to this development are as follows

Location consultation affordability geological risk

LOCATION The location is entirely unsuited for such a development for bushfire, transport, streetscape, and natural heritage reasons. **Bushfire:** The Narrow Neck area is directly exposed to fire fronts. Putting dense development in this area is recklessly unsafe. Evacuation of the proposed hugely increased numbers of residents along the narrow and winding Narrow Neck Road could not be achieved in the required time frame for safety. **Transport:** the proposed development is not walkable. It is over three kilometres from shops, services, trains, schools, TAFE, and most workplaces. The proposed development would be served by the one bus that finishes at 8pm. All residents would be forced to drive everywhere, increasing living costs and deterring essential workers, the poor, the elderly, the disabled, and families. (It's clear that the development is not planned to serve any of these groups.) Further bus services cannot be added as the tourist traffic to the nearby Scenic World already prevents bus timetables being adhered to. **STREETSCAPE** The proposed development is a gross overdevelopment for the area. It bears zero visual relationship to surrounding housing stock and massively exceeds the allowable height and density. The design does not even meet basic Apartment Design Standards, with units lacking access to sunlight and natural ventilation. No one is fooled by the usual greenwashed artists' impression depicting planter boxes that are never installed. **NATURAL HERITAGE** The proposed development breaches the Protected Area Escarpment and would be visible from the UNESCO World Heritage Area. The Blue Mountains National Park is unique in providing a high-quality wilderness experience very close to a global city. The Blue Mountains' visitor economy is largely based on wilderness experiences and perceptions of peaceful nature. This special proximity to such experience must be preserved. It should never be encroached upon for profit. The proposal is a breach of the social contract.

LACK OF REQUIRED CONSULTATION The required consultation has not happened, with many Narrow Neck residents saying they were not contacted. The Blue Mountains City Council is a direct neighbour of the proposed development and was not consulted. I spoke directly to a Gundungurra elder who said they had not been consulted. The adjacent former golf course is used by many people recreationally, and they were not given an opportunity to consult. Crucially, the proposal fails to meet NSW Rural Fire Service consultation requirements. This lack of the required consultation is evidence of bad faith, showing a contempt for due process, for bushfire safety, and for community values.

AFFORDABILITY The proposed development is thin on detail about how it plans to provide affordable dwellings. It appears that the development is using the promise of affordable housing to achieve grossly excessive height and density with little intention of actually delivering affordable housing. With the development literally

kilometres from employment, transport, and services and therefore not suited to essential workers, and with 52 serviced apartments, it would seem that this is an AirBnB/hotel accommodation enterprise dressed up as housing and including mention of affordability to increase height, density, and therefore profit.

GEOLOGICAL AND HYDROLOGICAL RISK The proposed development is in an area of geological instability. Just a few dozen metres from the proposed development was a massive cliff calving event (Dogface Wall) and two landslides that have closed Glenraphael Drive to vehicles off and on since 2022 and caused a walking track to be permanently re-routed. To undertake excavation for a massively overdeveloped site in this unstable area appears reckless to say the least. The area is also hydrologically sensitive, with runoff from the site entering the Sydney drinking water catchment. With its plan to clear native bushland, sustained building and excavation, and huge increase in hard surfaces, I am not persuaded that the proposal mitigates the risk of excessive runoff and contamination of our drinking water.

This proposal will not address housing needs. It is greedy and anti-community and must not be allowed to proceed.

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