

Dear Planning Committee

Project: Mars Data Centre – SSD-82052708 – 12 Mars Road, Lane Cove West

Subject: Objection to Proposed Data Centre Development in Lane Cove West

5 May 2026

I am a resident of Wood Street, Lane Cove West. My home is located adjacent to the intersection of Wood Street and Lloyd Rees Drive, approximately 50m from the site.

I am writing to formally object to the proposal to construct a large-scale 24-hour operational data centre at 12 Mars Road, Lane Cove West with a total overall power consumption of 81 megawatts (EIS confirms 81 but also reported as 90 MWs in other instances).

The basis of my objection is as follows:

1. There is an unacceptable cumulative negative impact of existing and proposed data centres in the Lane Cove West Business Park on local residents and the community through the compounding impact of noise and air pollution.
2. There is a detrimental cumulative negative impact of existing and proposed data centres in the Lane Cove West Business Park on local residents and the community by significantly reducing the amount of space available for businesses (especially small businesses) that service the community from this location .
3. The cumulative impacts of existing and proposed data centres in the Lane Cove West Business Park will exacerbate the housing affordability crisis by reducing available electrical and water grid capacity for new and affordable housing in the area.
4. The Visual Impact Assessment included in the EIS is misleading and incomplete. It cannot be considered adequate for the community or the assessment authority to appropriately and fairly consider the proposal in its current form.
5. The height of the building greatly exceeds that allowable under the DCP. The justification for the Clause 4.6 variation to height is flawed and not supportable.
6. The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment included in the EIS makes critical omissions. As a result, the findings and recommendations are inaccurate. It cannot be considered adequate for the community or the assessment authority to appropriately and fairly consider the proposal in its current form.

Each point of objection is further detailed below.

The compounding impact of current and proposed Data Centres will have an unacceptable negative impact on the local community in the short and long term, making the proposal unsupportable in its current form.

As outlined in Lane Cove Council's letter of objection, approximately 40% of the Lane Cove West Business Park is now occupied by operational or proposed Data Centres. It is clear that more data centres will be proposed and that a monoculture of data centres will proliferate, completely changing the purpose and character of the Lane Cove West Business Park. There is no benefit to the local

community, yet the community faces many negative impacts. The concentration of data centres in this location results in these negative impacts being unfairly concentrated on this community. The location of this proposal is directly adjacent to residential houses, Lane Cove West Public School and Blackman Park making it particularly detrimental to the local community.

The proliferation of data centres including this project and those like it will have significant long term negative impacts on the local community including:

- **The cumulative impact of noise and air pollution:** Noise generated from the 24/7 operation of these centres by cooling plant (typically located on roofs), diesel generators (49 proposed for this project alone), and trucks to service the 24/7 operations is a significant change from the character of the existing businesses park. Each new data centre will incrementally increase the detrimental impact on local residents and the community, compounding noise and air pollution on a 24/7 basis. This has not been adequately addressed in the EIS.
- **Significantly reducing amenity provided to local residents by the businesses currently located in the park:** It is clear based on existing and proposed data centres that the Lane Cove West Business Park will become a monoculture of data centres. The park currently has a diverse range of tenancies allowing a broad mix of businesses to operate and service the local community. These businesses are within easy walk, bus ride or short drive of residents. The proliferation of data centres will crowd out these businesses and have a negative impact on the amenity, convenience and vibrancy of the local community.
- **Exacerbation of the current housing affordability crisis by monopolising water and electrical infrastructure:** Sydney is in the middle of a generational housing crisis which can only be solved by increasing the supply of new housing. Lane Cove is an eminently suitable location for medium and high-density residential development due to excellent existing community infrastructure and amenity. It is serviced by excellent shopping, food and beverage, and community facilities in the Lane Cove Village. It has convenient access to mass public transport being serviced by the Lane Cove Bus Interchange and located in close proximity to Heavy and Metro Rail. The Council has invested heavily in sporting facilities including the pool, multiple sporting fields and new netball/basketball facility. There are multiple Public and Private Schools. Residents have access to high quality public parks and natural bushland is accessible.
The combined impact of the current and planned data centres will create a major draw on local electrical and water infrastructure. This will limit the ability to develop additional housing which is competing for water and electrical supply, increase the cost of delivering services to new apartment buildings, and permanently depress the supply of new affordable housing for young people in the local area. It is extraordinary that the State Government would prioritise the allocation of limited electrical and water infrastructure for data centres over delivering affordable housing for the community during a housing crisis.

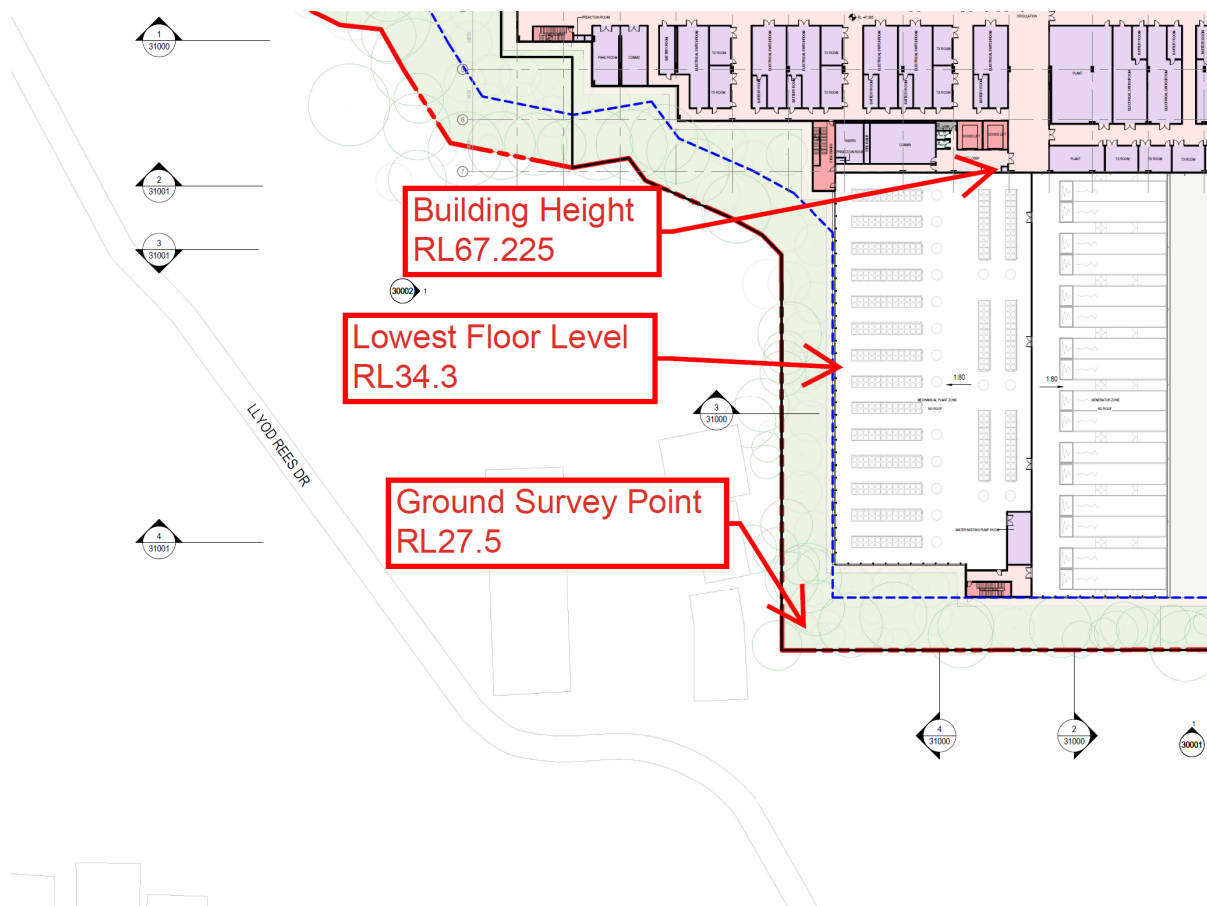
It is unacceptable for the Department of Planning to allow data centre development in Lane Cove to accelerate in an ad-hoc and unplanned manner. It will result in a complete change in the character of the area and increasing negative impacts on the local community. The Department must put a hold on any new approvals for data centres in the Lane Cove West business park until such time as the State can lead a comprehensive master planning process for the area to ensure data centres can be developed in a staged and sustainable way. Such a process must be in consultation with local communities and the local Council, and consider the cumulative impacts of construction and operations on the local community and local infrastructure. Specific limitations on certain sites

(including this site) will be required to ensure adequate buffers between data centres the sensitive residential and environmental areas surrounding the industrial area.

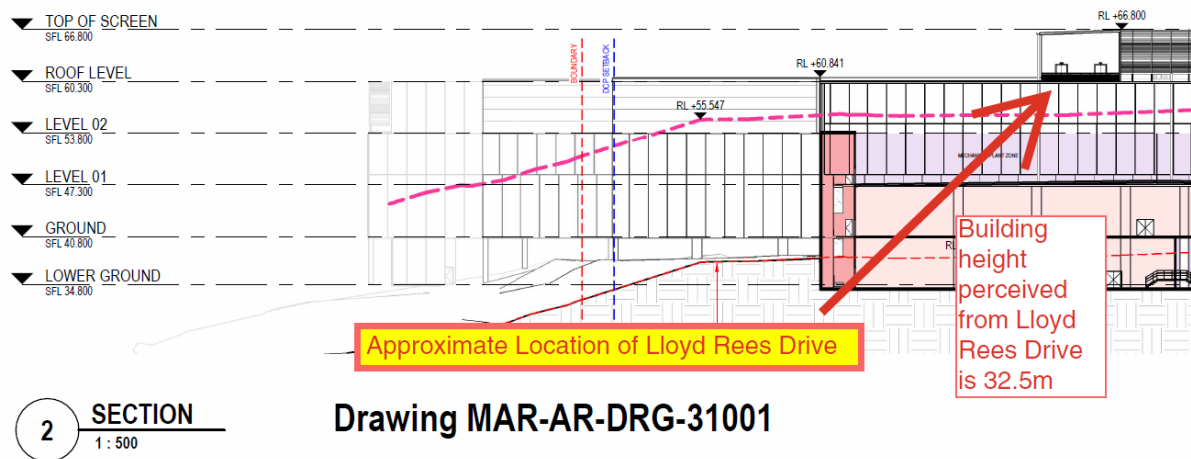
The Visual Impact Assessment is incomplete and misleading

The Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Urbis dated December 2025 has selected locations where the view of the building is obscured by trees in the foreground, and omits locations where the local community is most likely to view the development, particularly where the bulk is the greatest. For example, Lloyd Rees Drive is the only vehicular access to Blackman Park. This park is an important, highly utilised and much-loved community sporting a recreation facility. Both the ground floor and the top of the building will be visible from Lloyd Rees Drive. As illustrated in the markup of the building floorplan (below) and using data from the Site Survey prepared by LTS, **when viewed from Lloyd Rees Drive the visible building height will be 32.925m, almost double the allowable building height of 18m under the DCP. This is further illustrated by indicating the approximate location of Lloyd Rees Drive on the section (below).**

For the project to be properly understood by the local community and accurately assessed the authority, the Visual Impact Assessment must be updated to include locations where the impact is the greatest. This must include multiple locations along Lloyd Rees Drive and Wood Street including from the rear of adjacent residential houses. The community must be given additional time to comment once this information is provided.



Mark up op architectural drawing illustrating that the building height perceived from Lloyd Rees Drive is 32.925m



Mark up of architectural drawing illustrating that the building height perceived from Lloyd Rees Drive is 32.5m

The justification for Clause 4.6 variation to height is flawed and not supportable

The height of the proposal as lodged substantially breaches both the maximum permissible height allowed under the DCP and the local community's expectations for industrial uses adjacent to residences and community facilities. The proposed increase in height is without merit and creates significant negative impacts to local residents and the community.

The built form as submitted dominates and overpowers the adjacent community facilities including tennis courts, skate park, Girl Guides Hall and Scout Hall, and also the neighbouring freestanding residences. It far exceeds community expectations for bulk and scale in this location. The community reasonably expects that where industrial uses meet residential/community uses the Department will insist that the applicant takes additional measures to ameliorate negative impacts on residents at the zone boundary.

The clause 4.6 Variation Request submitted states the proposal has a maximum height of approximately 28.3 m, which represents a maximum height variation of 10.3m (57.2%) compared to the maximum height of building control of 18 m set out within the Lane Cove LEP 2009.

Whilst this 57.2% breach to the development standard is outrageous on face value, it also significantly understates the perception of the bulk and scale of the building at adjacent sensitive community and residential uses. The site falls away towards east and south where the sensitive uses are located. Therefore, the perception of overbearing height and scale is amplified at the sensitive uses by virtue of these being located downhill from the development.

The proposed amelioration of the height breach through building modulation is ineffective. Data Centres are by design huge blank boxes with inactive facades making amelioration through fine grained articulation and inclusion of active frontages impossible.

Given the community's reasonable expectation that the proponent will take measures to ameliorate negative impacts to sensitive uses across zone boundaries, the proponent should be required to:

- Consider whether this location within the Lane Cove Business Park is suitable for data centre use given it is the closest land in the business park to sensitive uses and there are many other suitable sites within the business park.
- Adequacy transition built form down to the sensitive community and residential uses to the east and south. The Variation Request states the proposal will be taller than existing industrial uses in the Lane Cove West Business park, which being the closest site to sensitive uses, is the exact opposite of what good urban design requires. The applicant should not only be required to comply with the DCP height limit, but also include further stepping down towards the eastern and southern boundary adjacent residences. The proposal should be required to be no higher than existing established trees when viewed from multiple locations along Lloyd Rees Drive and Wood Street.
- Conserve all existing trees along the eastern and southern boundaries to maintain existing screening.
- Provide increased landscaped zones above the minimum requirement currently provided on the eastern boundary. 15-20m within the proponent's own boundary should be considered the minimum given the overall bulk and scale typical of a data centres relative to the single and double story heights of adjacent residences.
- Ensure that the increased landscaped zone is designed to accommodate the movement of native animals including echidnas and bandicoots which are known to frequent the area.

The applicant's assertion that exceeding the DCP height limit is required to make the project feasible is clearly false. There is currently a building boom in data centres both in Australia and Globally demonstrating that they are currently a highly viable and profitable form of development.

The applicant has indicated that they must breach the height limit and overdevelop the site to create a facility in the 80-90 MW range which they state is required to be financially viable. In doing so the applicant expects the community to accept the resultant negative impacts so that it can meet its profitability targets. The requirement for 80-90MW minimum is not supported by the evidence of recent data centre developments. Recent data centre developments across Sydney, including those categorised as suitable for mega scalars by their operators, include sizes of 7MW, 8MW, 16MW, 20MW, 26MW, 30MW, 42MW, 45MW and 63MW. The proposed 80MW would make this one of the largest data centres completed in Sydney. The report states that the applicant does not yet have any occupiers for the data centre, therefore the requirements that the applicant is relying upon are merely speculative.

If the applicant does not own enough land to achieve their desired layout, they should either consolidate with neighbouring properties to secure the necessary footprint, or choose a use more suited to the size and dimensions of the land they currently own. It is not reasonable to expect the community to accommodate the extreme overdevelopment of this site to meet the applicants desired profit margin.

Further the zoning allows for a range of uses. There is no requirement for the applicant to use the land for a data centre at all if it is not financially viable. The existing light industrial buildings are mainly modern and well occupied by suitable light industrial users. The location and the existing improvements continue to be completely suitable and viable for the location, the improvements are not beyond their useful life, and there is no critical need for the applicant to redevelop the site if the DCP does not allow it to develop an alternate use at a viable scale.

The applicant's justification that they are below the allowable FSR is an anomaly of developing a data centre in a location where planning controls were designed for industrial and commercial uses.

Typical plant areas which would be excluded from the FSR calculations would be less than 3% of built form for industrial uses and less than 10% of built form for commercial uses. According to the applicants GFA schedule the applicant excludes 35,937sqm (equivalent to 62%) of the total 57,769sqm of built form from the FSR calculation. If a traditional industrial building with a built form of 57,569sqm was built, and assuming typical 3% of this is plant area, the GFA would be 55,842sqm and the FSR would be 1.63:1 which is well in excess of the allowable 1.0:1 under the Lane Cove LEP. The applicant is using an anomaly of a planning system to overdevelop the site and using this to justify breaching the height limit.

The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment contains omissions and is potentially misleading

The application includes a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment prepared by SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd dated 16 February 2026. The findings and recommendations in the report are based on unattended noise monitoring which was completed in the study area in February, March and April 2025. The report states *"The measured noise levels have been used to determine the existing noise environment and to set the criteria used to assess the potential impacts from the proposal."*

During this period there was extensive construction works being undertaken in Banksia Close directly adjacent to monitoring points L01 and L02. The works were being undertaken to construct a new water main under Banksia Close to support another data centre development in the Lane Cove West Business Park. The construction involved the use of multiple trucks, large excavators including rock breakers, road saws, compaction equipment, etc as illustrated in the photo below. The works were undertaken both during the day and the night due to the significant trenching required in the street.

The impact of these works on the background noise at monitoring points L01 and L02, and to a lesser extent L03, would have significantly increased the background readings particularly in the evening and at night. The report makes no mention of these works occurring at the same time as the monitoring which is a clear and egregious omission. The readings taken during this time cannot be considered representative of the background noise levels in this residential area. As a result, the integrity of the report is in question and does not meet the necessary standard required to support an application under the EPA Act.



Further, the report does not adequately address the cumulative impacts of the existing and proposed data centre developments in Lane Cove Business Park (refer Lane Cove Council objection referenced above), particularly at night in summer when all cooling systems are operating, or during generator testing. For example, the report states that the 49 generators in the project must be tested four times per year with a total run time of 155.2 hours, equivalent to over 20 standard business days. The report states there will be a spike in noise experienced at adjacent residences when generator testing occurs. This is an unacceptable impact on local residents considering this is equivalent to a month of generator testing each year for this one project. When extrapolated across the four existing and proposed data centres, this is equivalent to having all day generator testing every business day for a quarter of every year. The proponent must be required to fully attenuate noise emissions from generators to reduce the impact on local residents.

I thank the Committee for your consideration of these matters which are material.