

Martin Kaplan
Unit 2 / 30–32 Cowan Road
St Ives NSW 2075

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Major Projects Assessment Team

Submission – Objection to Amended SSD Application
SSD-88948458 – Proposed Residential Flat Building with In-fill Affordable Housing
5–9 Cowan Road, St Ives

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Objection to amended development proposal – 5–9 Cowan Road, St Ives

I write as a resident of Unit 2, 30–32 Cowan Road, St Ives, to lodge my continued and strong objection to the amended application for the proposed residential flat building with in-fill affordable housing at 5–9 Cowan Road, St Ives.

I previously objected to the original proposal and, having reviewed the amended plans, remain firmly opposed to the development. In my view, the amended proposal does not materially reduce the impacts previously identified by residents and the community. Rather, it is simply an intensification of the previous matters and objections raised, dressed up as “refinement”, which certainly does not reduce the overbearing impact of the development on Cowan Road and surrounding properties.

The amended proposal remains fundamentally excessive in height, bulk, scale and density. It continues, in substance, to present as a 9-storey residential flat building entirely out of keeping with the established low-rise, landscaped residential character of Cowan Road and the broader Ku-ring-gai garden suburb context.

The amended plans do not cure the original problems with the scheme. On the contrary, they reinforce concerns regarding overdevelopment of the site.

In particular:

- the proposed height has increased from 29.69 metres to 30.6 metres, exceeding even the already uplifted Housing SEPP bonus height;
- the number of apartments has increased from 74 to 77 dwellings;
- the gross floor area remains effectively unchanged;
- communal open space has been reduced;
- parking has been reduced despite the increase in dwellings.

These changes do not represent a genuine reduction in impact. They instead demonstrate a continued push for greater development yield at the expense of local amenity and character.

The core issue remains excessive height, bulk and mass. Cowan Road is not Mona Vale Road. It is a local residential street with a distinct landscaped and low-rise character, limited road capacity and sensitive interfaces with established homes, the church, neighbouring properties and the golf course setting.

The proposal remains incompatible with that context and would create an overbearing and visually dominant built form wholly inconsistent with the surrounding locality.

I also remain deeply concerned regarding privacy, amenity and visual impacts on neighbouring residents. The amended proposal relies heavily on privacy screens, translucent glazing, balcony treatments and defensive design measures in an apparent attempt to mitigate overlooking and amenity impacts caused by the excessive scale of the building itself.

In my view, these measures do not demonstrate good design outcomes. Rather, they confirm that the building is simply too large and too intensive for the site.

Traffic, parking and safety concerns also remain unresolved. Cowan Road already experiences significant congestion and traffic pressure associated with surrounding residential uses, the shopping centre, deliveries and local through-traffic. The reduction in parking spaces while increasing apartment numbers is not a sensible planning outcome and will inevitably exacerbate existing parking and traffic issues within the local road network.

Construction impacts would also be severe and prolonged for nearby residents, including noise, dust, truck movements, construction parking and disruption to residential access and safety.

I further note the applicant's reliance on an affordable housing component as justification for the scale of the proposal. I do not object to genuine affordable housing. However, I object to the use of a limited affordable housing component as a planning mechanism to justify what is otherwise an excessive and inappropriate built form outcome.

The inclusion of features such as a golf simulator is plainly inconsistent with the purported affordable housing narrative advanced by the applicant and highlights the fundamentally commercial nature of the proposal. In my view, the affordable housing component appears to be little more than window dressing intended to facilitate an otherwise unacceptable development outcome, without properly addressing the real concerns consistently raised by residents regarding excessive scale, bulk, privacy impacts, safety issues and traffic consequences.

The amended proposal continues to represent a significant departure from the prevailing character of Cowan Road and would establish an undesirable precedent for similar overdevelopment within local residential streets.

For these reasons, I strongly object to the amended application and respectfully request that SSD-88948458 be refused.

Yours faithfully,

Martin Kaplan
Unit 2 / 30–32 Cowan Road
St Ives NSW 2075