

Submission to Planning Portal

SUBMISSION IN RELATION TO SSD APPLICATION 93776214 (Chatswood Grand Residences Mixed Use Development)

849, 853, 859 Pacific Highway; 2 Wilson St; 8 Wilson St

I am writing to make a submission objecting to the above proposal.

I am a resident of the Altura apartment building at 11 Railway Street, within the Pacific Place development, which lies to the south of the subject site on the southern side of O'Brien St. My apartment is on the 12th floor and is at the northern end of the building, and includes views towards the north and northeast from my dining and living areas, directly towards the site.

I have objected to previous applications and planning proposals relating to this site, including the planning proposal PP2021/007 submitted in 2022 (**2022 Proposal**); and application SSD-96564253 for "early works" which is currently awaiting determination (**Early Works SSDA**).

I note that the Early Works SSDA was described when exhibited as being for construction of eight basement levels, whereas in fact the submitted plans proposed nine basement levels plus a "mezzanine" basement level – more properly characterised as ten basement levels, or even eleven if the lower fire stair and lift pits are also included. A criticism of this application was that was made in a vacuum, as it was intrinsically dependent upon the ultimate form of development to be approved above, given that the amount of carparking required below ground would depend on the development which it was to service. That application did not consider the traffic impacts of provision of parking for around 500 vehicles on surrounding streets.

OVERDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

It is noted that the proposed development has changed significantly from that which was submitted to the Housing Delivery Authority in April 2025, which was for (inter alia) two 46-storey residential towers with 450 apartments, six basement levels, and other uses. The comparison table on p 20 of the Environmental Impact and Rezoning Statement (**EIRS**) demonstrates how this proposal has grown substantially, now proposing two 60-storey above ground levels, 552 apartments, and (effectively) ten basement levels (including mezzanine) and lift pits.

The feasibility analysis on EIRS pp 31-32 is deficient. The only options considered, aside from the current proposal, are:

- A "do nothing" option
- Proceeding with existing approvals DA 2024/47 (for a 28-storey mixed use development) or SSD 74319707 (for a 36 storey mixed use development).
- Concurrently dealing with this proposal and the Early Works SSDA

There is no consideration of any possible lower-density alternatives (other than the existing approvals) that might mitigate the impacts of the current proposal. For example, there is no clear explanation, other than in the most general of terms, why the proposal submitted to the HDA in 2025 for a lower scale development is not a feasible alternative. [This should not be construed as implicit support for such a development.]

Approval of the 2022 Proposal saw an increase in the permissible height of buildings from 24m to 90m and an increase in permissible FSR from 1.5:1 to 6:1 for the portion of the site previously zoned R4. This proposal seeks a further increase in height to 209.5m and FSR to 17.8:1. These increases are as follows, looking in particular at the controls prior to approval of the 2022 Proposal:

	Initial control in 2022	Approved under 2022 Proposal/% increase over initial control	Sought in this proposal/% increase over 2022 Proposal/% increase over initial control
Max height	24m	90m 275% over initial control	209.5m 133% over 2022 Proposal 773% over initial control.
FSR	1.5:1	6:1 300% over initial control	17.8:1 196% over 2022 Proposal 1087% over initial control

This table demonstrates the significant expansion in height and density from controls applicable to the site 4 years ago, as well as the very significant expansion even from the variations approved under the 2022 Proposal. This is sought without significant examination of alternatives, or clear justification for why the current standards as approved recently under the 2022 Proposal are now (apparently) so significantly inadequate.

Clauses 4.3(1) and 4.4(1) of the Willoughby LEP 2012 sets out the various objectives of the present height and FSR controls. Although a substantial portion of the site is currently within a zone nominated for high density development, the appropriate cap on density is still identified with reference to the height and FSR controls. Such a significant increase of FSR on a single spot site would be contrary to various objectives, including those relating to:

- (a) The environmental capacity of the land;
- (b) Limiting traffic generation
- (c) Minimising disruption of views and loss of privacy
- (d) Managing bulk and scale to suit the purpose and objectives of the zone
- (h) Providing open spaces with good sunlight access (as the development will substantially overshadow the Pacific Place private open space and units)
- (i) achieving transitions in building scale and density

In particular, the proposed development will cause significant impacts by way of overshadowing, view sharing loss, and traffic impacts.

It is curious that this development seeks, effectively, a change of the development standards on the site relating to building height and FSR, rather than following the more conventional course of seeking a variation by way of a cl 4.6 objection. Given the magnitude of variations which are sought to development standards that themselves were imposed following approval of the 2022 proposal, it cannot be said that those standards are outdated, or were imposed without due regard to the circumstances of the site – rather, they are site-specific standards. It is hard to see how any cl 4.6 objection could be upheld in these circumstances.

It is also unclear how the significant uplift sought in the development potential of this site fits with matters of availability of necessary community services and facilities offsite (such as additional places in schools for residents, and provision of additional public open space, recreational facilities and community services). The demand on existing services is likely to be increased significantly by this development, together with others proposed or approved in the immediate facility. It is unclear whether the resultant impact on demand for community facilities will be adequately addressed, particularly in circumstances where a proposed new school at the former Metro Dive construction site at the corner of Mowbray Road and the Pacific Highway has been cancelled, and replaced with further residential apartment proposals.

In summary, all the above factors point to the proposed development and associated rezoning as being a significant overdevelopment of the site. In particular, there is no demonstration of how housing demand might be met by distributing new residences more broadly both within Willoughby and other local government areas, rather than concentrating provision in a small number of enormous towers with significant impacts on the surrounds (as discussed below).

OVERSHADOWING

Solar access diagrams are provided at Drawings HAD-600 and 601. These diagrams indicate very significant overshadowing impact on both private open space areas within Pacific Place, and on individual units within 11 Railway Street (including my own). Whilst some of the expected future loss is due to other approved residential tower developments (particularly those approved west of Anderson St), the most significant loss comes from the current proposal. In particular, with reference to the winter solstice:

- Afternoon sun will be almost completely lost to the private open space areas of Pacific Place;
- Almost all sun from the east and north to apartments at the northern end of Pacific Place will be lost, with impacts most marked between 9am and 1pm.
- In particular, most east-facing apartments in 11 Railway Street are likely to lose their solar access entirely, and many are likely to become noncompliant with solar access requirements under the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) due to loss of solar access to living/dining areas (as opposed to bedrooms).
- The B2E Townhouses on the eastern side of Pacific Place (1 Day St) appear likely to lose almost all solar access, once the proposal is considered in conjunction with other already approved developments. At present these apartments are reliant on western

sunlight around 2pm-3pm and the shadow diagrams show this almost completely obscured.

Aside from the solar access diagrams, there is no apparent analysis of the extent of view loss and overshadowing of apartments in Pacific Place. Significantly, most of the northern apartments in 11 Railway Street have their main orientation to the north/east, and the proposal will remove a significant amount of the existing solar access to these buildings. The western rooms are bedrooms for which solar access is of lesser importance. While p 86 of the EIRS mentions that impact to 11 Railway Street and other buildings is “most prominent” between 11am and 1pm, it omits to mention that the living areas of many apartments are in the affected area, and do not receive solar access from the west. In particular, whilst some part of buildings may maintain 2hrs of solar access on the winter solstice, it is not demonstrated that this access is to the living areas of homes as required by Objective 4A-1 of the ADG.

The Applicant should be required to demonstrate, with reference to architectural diagrams of the various floorplates within Pacific Place (including 11 Railway Street) and other affected buildings, the amount of reduction in solar access each apartment will experience, and whether this reduction renders the apartments non-compliant. Ideally, the Applicant should propound a design with no net loss of compliant solar access in Pacific Place or any other surrounding developments (though Pacific Place, and in particular the Altura building at 11 Railway Street and B2E townhouses, are the most likely existing buildings to be impacted).

At present it is hard to see how the Applicant can justify the statement at p 16 of the EIRS that outcomes for overshadowing and solar access impacts are acceptable. With reference to the claims on p 57 of the EIRS regarding solar access, the apartments in the proposal itself may exceed the ADG benchmarks, but it would appear that (at least without further analysis) the same cannot be conclusively said of surrounding properties which will lose significant amounts of solar access.

VIEW SHARING/LOSS; PRIVACY IMPACTS

The Visual Impact Report in relation to the 2022 Proposal analysed view loss from over 70 identified viewpoints, both public and private. In comparison, the corresponding report for this proposal examines only five viewpoints, several of which are a considerable distance from the proposal, and none of which illustrate the likely view loss from private viewpoints, including private open space areas of surrounding developments.

In particular, the report does not seek to address in any meaningful sense the anticipated view loss from within the immediately adjacent building at 11 Railway Street, where the view loss is likely to be severe. The only apparent reference is in section 3.4 (p 15).

Views from apartments at the northern end of this building (including my own) include views of Lane Cove National Park, Garigal National Park, and the distant ridgeline along which Warringah Road runs through Frenchs Forest and north of Allambie Heights. At the very least, in a conventional analysis methodology (such as that adopted by the NSW Land and Environment Court in *Tenacity Consulting v Warringah Council* [2004] NSWLEC 140), the value of these views to significant natural features would be described as Medium, and tending towards High. However, this visual context is ignored in section 3.4. the locations inspected

during fieldwork (Fig 7, p 11) did not appear to include any private locations, and are a minimum of several hundred metres from the site.

The omission of any analysis of the views from apartments is a significant flaw in the application, and the application cannot be properly evaluated unless a full view analysis of views from private spaces within apartments is provided.

I was unable to locate clear indications of separation distances between the southern tower of the proposal and the northern end of 11 Railway Street. Previous proposals for this site have proposed separation distances considerably less than the minimum separation distance of 24m specified in Section 2F of the ADG for buildings over 25m tall. If this is also the case for this proposal, view loss of the views towards the north/northeast will be significant for all units at the northern end of 11 Railway St.

Privacy is also potentially an issue, with the architectural plans showing that living areas and bedrooms in the southeast corner of the southern tower are designed with significantly sized windows looking directly towards the units at Pacific Place. This has been minimised in the southwestern apartments, but not in the southeastern corner apartments. If this is addressed by removing the windows or replacing them with smaller windows at height, solar access to those apartments will be compromised. The need to address privacy and reduce the potential for overlooking to the south (or, from the existing building at 11 Railway Street towards the north) will substantially affect the ability to provide proper amenity to these units.

TRAFFIC

Inadequate parking provision

The Transport Impact Assessment dated 10 April 2026 (TIA) demonstrates that there is a likelihood that parking demand from all uses (residential, visitor and non-residential) will significantly outstrip the available supply. It estimates a parking requirement of 613 spaces for residents, including 581 spaces for standard accommodation and 32 in relation to affordable housing, based on the requirements of the Housing SEPP. However, the proposal provides for only 487 residential spaces – a shortfall of 126 spaces. Moreover, the proposal provides only 12 visitor parking spaces, which appears a gross underallocation given the number of apartments.

Likewise, the provision for non-residential uses is inadequate, with a total 12 spaces provided compared to the 19 required under the Willoughby DCP (see Table 5, p 18). In particular, it is a matter of concern that the TIA suggests that if childcare parking spaces are filled, parents will be directed to occupy one of the 12 visitor parking spaces, further reducing availability to visitors of the development.

The proposal for provision of bicycle spaces appears to misunderstand controls. Any requirement to provide bicycle spaces should be to provide such spaces as independent and dedicated spaces for bicycle use. Instead, the TIA suggests (p20) that residents will need to park bicycles within their storage units – thus significantly reducing the available storage space. Under the Willoughby DCP, the proposal requires 114 bicycle spaces, but in effect it appears that only 63 are to be provided if one discounts the use of storage units as a complying bicycle

space. The DCP (Part F, Table 3) provides that residents be provided with Class A or B bicycle parking spaces, which require secure locked facilities separate to residents' own storage areas.

The lack of adequate visitor parking is of particular concern as visitors who arrive by car to find all spaces occupied are likely to be forced out to find parking on the surrounding streets. The TIA suggests on p17 that residential visitor carparking that overflows these spaces should be sourced in public carparking areas within the Chatswood CBD, without consideration of the other uses for the benefit of which these spaces are provided and which have need of these spaces.

Traffic generation

The volume of traffic generated by this development (even if limited to the lower levels of traffic arising from inadequate provision of residential carparking) has the potential to severely compromise the local road network.

There is a fundamental flaw in the traffic forecasting, which is that the TIA only deals with increased traffic movements compared to the development approved in 2025. However, that proposal did not model the traffic access and egress pathways proposed for this development; nor is it clear whether that proposal modelled a situation which included the impact of other approved and proposed development in the immediate vicinity, including in particular the SSD proposal for around 500 residential apartments at the corner of Railway Street and Pacific Highway (845 Pacific Highway), for which the EIS is currently in preparation.

In particular, the former development did not include the proposed median strip along Railway Street opposite O'Brien Street, which will result in all traffic from the development now turning left from O'Brien Street and proceeding south down Railway Street, where all traffic will pass the carpark entrance to Pacific Place at the roundabout opposite Day St. This is a material change in the expected conditions which should be modelled for the entirety of the traffic generation expected.

Railway Street is currently frequently used during weekends and week nights for replacement railway bus services, which often park along the street occupying many of the available parking spaces and causing congestion. These services do not appear to have been taken into account in the modelling in the TIA (nor were they clearly taken into account in modelling the development approved in 2025). I have found during such occasions that the intersections in the vicinity of Pacific Place fail, as banked up traffic can significantly impede anyone from turning right out of the Pacific Place driveway to head north, or turn from Pacific Highway into Railway Street, as traffic grinds to a standstill. Obviously, this situation will be exacerbated with the addition of vehicular movements associated with a carpark accommodating over 500 vehicles. This also does not take into account further increases which may occur due to any development approved at 845 Pacific Highway, particularly if (as is likely) traffic egress from that development is into Day Street and then Railway Street.

For the above reasons, access via O'Brien Street as proposed is likely to pose significant difficulties. It is noted that Transport for NSW has indicated a preference for vehicular access to be via Wilson Street rather than O'Brien Street (TIA p 3), which makes sense given the safety and efficiency concerns raised by TfNSW and which I have alluded to above. I accept that access directly to and from the Pacific Highway is undesirable and I would support any vehicular access being via Wilson Street rather than O'Brien St. This would significantly

reduce anticipated impacts on Railway Street and the already compromised function of this area, let alone difficulties likely to arise if traffic from the 845 Pacific Highway site is added.

There is also a potentially misleading statement in the third bullet point on p10. It is strictly correct that only service vehicle access to Altura is provided from O'Brien Street, but all other vehicular access to Altura (and also Epica at 9 Railway Street) is via Railway Street via the same roundabout that all traffic from the site will need to use. Therefore, conflict with traffic from both Altura and Epica will occur.

Also, I am concerned that the traffic generation rates adopted appear to have regard at least in part to Journey to Work Census data (p 5), and the assumption that most of the residents of the site will choose to work in the Chatswood CBD, thus reducing work-related vehicle trips. This assumption appears hard to justify (and also assumes a corresponding increase in the number of available jobs in the Chatswood CBD, also unjustified).

The functionality of the roads network in the vicinity of the site appears to be based on the *Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy 2036*, a document issued in 2021 (TIA pp 26-7). I expect this Strategy and its underlying modelling relied upon in the TIA does not factor in the wide range of development that has since been approved, or for which approval is currently sought, following a revised approach to housing delivery as demonstrated in the current provisions of the *Housing SEPP* and associated planning framework. It cannot be relied upon as a predictor of functionality in the current revised situation.

For the above reasons, I have significant doubts as to the validity of the TIA. It should be subject to an independent review to examine (inter alia) whether it properly responds to the above issues, including in particular the cumulative impacts of other approved and prospective development in the vicinity.

WIND IMPACTS

The area in the vicinity of the site (particularly along Railway Street, and the Chatswood Station precinct) is frequently subject to intense winds, which can be at such strength that it is difficult for pedestrians to navigate pathways.

I note that the assessment of wind/air tunnel impacts has identified some areas on the development site which will have potential impacts due to the development design. I am concerned that the assessment does not extend far enough offsite to identify exacerbation of existing problems nearby, particularly when compared with other approved or proposed development in the vicinity. Appropriate design modifications should be incorporated so as not to increase the existing problems with wind impact in the locality.

Yours sincerely,

Kay Norton