

28 July 2026

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Via the NSW Planning Portal

Re: Objection to SSD-119545240 — Residential Flat Building, 40–76 William Street, Leichhardt

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a long-term resident of Leichhardt and I live close to the site at 40–76 William Street. I am writing to object to this proposal, and to the rezoning that goes with it, and to ask that both be refused. Although we plainly need more homes in Sydney, and I would happily support a sensible renewal of this old warehouse site, what I object to is the sheer size of what is proposed here, and the way it is being pushed through.

I note that a version of this development was refused by the Inner West Council, then by the Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel, and then by the Land and Environment Court in December 2023. It is surprising to me that the scheme now on exhibition is even larger than the one the Court refused, not smaller. It has grown from 181 apartments to 203, and from buildings of around six storeys to towers of up to eleven. The floor space the developer wants is more than six times what the site is actually zoned for. I find it hard to understand how a larger version of a rejected proposal can simply be put forward again, as though those earlier decisions never happened.

Put simply, eleven storeys does not belong here. Our streets are lined with one- and two-storey cottages and terraces, and the tallest buildings nearby are a few low apartment blocks. A cluster of towers rising to about 51 metres would loom over all of it. The developer tries to justify the height by pointing to apartment buildings in places like Alexandria, Redfern and Five Dock, but those are other suburbs. They say nothing about what suits this quiet, low-scale corner of Leichhardt, which is the neighbourhood the proposal should actually be judged against.

I am also worried about the shadows these buildings would cast. In the earlier case, the Court found that a much shorter version of one of these buildings would unacceptably overshadow homes on North Street that already get very little winter sun. That building is now almost twice as tall, yet the developer's material deals with the issue in barely a sentence, and never shows what would actually happen to individual homes. The shadow diagrams cover one day of the year, and do not include houses like ours which, going by the developer's own drawings, would still lose light. Before anyone decides this, there should be a proper, independent shadow study covering every home around the site.

A great deal has been made of the affordable housing on offer, but there is very little of it: 15 apartments, about 5 per cent of the building, kept affordable for only 15 years. That is strikingly low. A token 5 per cent, offered in exchange for a six-fold increase in floor space, is not a fair exchange, and it should not be treated as a reason to set aside the rules that apply to everyone else.

I am also troubled by how this is being decided. My understanding is that, because it has been declared "State significant," the application skips the Council altogether and will be determined by the Minister's department rather than by the independent Planning Commission, even though local opposition is strong. The Council's own planning controls no longer apply to it. And this is happening while Leichhardt is already being asked to absorb a huge amount of new housing under

the Council's A Fairer Future plan, which deliberately directs taller buildings to town centres and transport hubs rather than to quiet residential streets like ours, and which is itself still waiting on the Department's approval. Dropping a separate, oversized tower development on top of that, through a different door, undercuts any orderly plan for the area. On top of all this, the community has been given only about two weeks to read and respond to numerous, extensive, detailed planning documents. That is not enough time, and I ask that the exhibition be extended.

In short, I object to this proposal because:

- it is larger than a scheme that was already refused three times over;
- towers of up to eleven storeys are completely out of keeping with this low-scale neighbourhood;
- the overshadowing of surrounding homes, including ours, has not been properly assessed;
- the affordable housing offered is a small fraction of what comparable approved projects provide;
- Leichhardt is already carrying more than its share of new density under A Fairer Future;
- the loss of amenity to the local community that will be caused by this project is not justified; and
- the time given for the community to respond has been far too short.

For these reasons I ask that the application and the rezoning be refused. If the Department chooses to allow something on this site, I ask that it be limited to a genuine adaptive reuse kept substantially within the existing buildings, with the local planning controls left in place, the overshadowing of neighbours properly resolved, and a fair and lasting affordable-housing contribution.

I confirm that this submission does not contain any offensive, threatening or defamatory content.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Regards,

Rohan L
Leichhardt, 2040