

2 October 2024

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To Whom it may concern,

We are writing to object to the approval of State Significant Development application SSD-61618229 -UON City Campus Student Accommodation, believing that the proposed development is grossly unfair on the amenity of surrounding residents, visually due to the height of the proposal, and experientially, given the lack of the provision of any parking in a neighbourhood already lacking sufficient parking.

Building Height

The height of large sections of the proposed building present a substantial loss of visual amenity to neighbouring apartments, particularly those to the south of the proposed development. The height limit for the site under the Newcastle City Council DCP is 30m (RL 32.500 above the highest ground level of RL 2.500 in the south-western corner of the site), but as we understand it, a raised limit of 1.350m to RL 33.850 was previously approved in a master plan under State Significant Development SSD-9262.

The definition of height limit in ALEP 2010 is "*building height means the vertical distance between ground level (existing) and the highest point of the building, including plant and lift overruns, but excluding communication devices, antennae, satellite dishes, masts, flagpoles, chimneys, flues and the like*". Under this definition, any building element over RL 33.850 is non-compliant with the master plan height limit set down by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces on 21 May 2020 in SSD-9262.

The proposed building is, therefore, largely above the height limits of both the LGA DCP and an increased limit previously approved in the SSD-9262 master plan. The following building elements are above the DCP and approved height limits:

Building Element	Proposed RL	Height above DCP (RL 32.500)	Height above SSD- 9262 (RL 33.850)
Cooling Towers	RL 40.900	8,400mm	7,050mm
Lift Overrun	RL 37.400	4,900mm	3,550mm
Western Parapet	RL 36.800	4,300mm	2,950mm
Central Plant Room	RL 36.650	4,150mm	2,800mm
Southern Parapet	RL 33.850	1,350mm	0mm

Whilst the approved SSD-9262 height limit of 1,350mm above the council DCP limit is disappointing enough, the fact that the proposal includes elements that are 8,400mm above the DCP level, along with the parapet of the entire western portion of the building 4,300mm above the DCP level, and a central plant room 4,150mm above the DCP level, seem to point to a gross over-development of the site and a serious breach of public trust in flagrantly disregarding the visual amenity of neighbouring properties by proposing a building that will be well above compliant height limits.

Carparking

Likewise, the provision of no parking spaces in the development can only exacerbate the constant parking issues that affect the surrounding precinct. Whilst the Newcastle City Council DCP does not prescribe required parking numbers within the Newcastle city centre precinct, a calculation of the number of spaces required if the development was anywhere else in the Newcastle LGA is staggering. With a minimum requirement of 1 parking space per dwelling and 1 visitor spaces per 5 dwellings for a building with 381 residential dwellings, there would be a requirement for 458 parking spaces, not including the visitors and staff of ground floor tenancies. The provision of no parking spaces is stark in comparison to 458 plus required spaces elsewhere in the Newcastle LGA.

Anyone attempting to park in the surrounding precinct can attest to a major undersupply of car parking, particularly after 5pm. Individuals and groups travel from surrounding areas to visit the Civic theatre and the many restaurants found in the Honeysuckle and Newcastle West precincts, often failing to find a parking space within walking distance of their destination. Whilst the Council has promoted a city that does not require parking due to the provision of better transport infrastructure, this is far from the situation currently. To ask a family from west of Newcastle to drive to the outskirts of the city centre and continue travelling via public transport is ridiculous, and somewhat dangerous given the anti-social behaviours often displayed from early evening onwards. As residents of the precinct, we witness these parking problems and anti-social behaviours on an all too regular basis.

We applaud the University of Newcastle's sustainability initiatives and their wish to lead the way with its developments, but to provide no parking in not only this proposal, but also within the Q Building and NUSpace buildings in their city campus precinct, shows a total lack of regard for their neighbouring residents who have to suffer the consequences of the university's actions.

The University promotes the use of their NUSpace shuttle service, where students park at the Callaghan campus, commuting in to the city via a shuttle bus service. It is impossible to fathom that the University believes that the 445 residential occupants of the proposed building either don't own a car, or are willing to park 8km away and wait for a shuttle service. It is very obvious that many occupants will park in the surrounding areas, further congesting an area already sadly lacking in car parking.

We request that the current proposal be rejected until such time as the height limits are revised to comply with statutory limits, and a substantial number of carparking spaces are provided, rather than exacerbating a problem that is already plaguing the precinct.

Yours sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is on the left, appearing to be 'Trevor', and the second is on the right, appearing to be 'Megan'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Trevor & Megan Hefren