

Submission concerning Residential Development with In-Fill Affordable Housing at 2-8 Highgate Road, Lindfield

Application Number: SSD-78493518

Mark and Rowena Gracey, 26 May 2025

Residing at 54 Treatts Rd, Lindfield, 2070.

To whom it may concern,

Rowena and I have concerns with, and do not support the proposed development SSD-78493518 on Highgate Road. We have outlined these below and labelled our responses according to the SEARs requirements.

[8 Visual Impact; 5 Design Quality; 6 Built Form and Urban Design; 22 Environmental Heritage]

The proposal is too large and not in keeping with a gradual transition from the denser railway areas to the HCA areas. The scale and bulk to this development results in an abrupt transition into the calm, leafy, heritage suburb of Lindfield. With Rowena being resident in Lindfield and nearby Killara for over 20 years, she has a longstanding appreciation for the local area.

In our personal view, the building is aesthetically unpleasant, mostly brown, looks from the outside like it is - a very high density development with echoes of 1970s infill such as this building on Military Road in Mosman. Superimposed and allowing for c50 years, there is a striking resemblance (Military Road is on the left for the avoidance of doubt). At least the Mosman one is facing the highway and not nestled amongst Mosman heritage buildings and family homes.



[9 Transport; 11 Water Management; 12 Ground and Groundwater Conditions; 19 Flood Risk; 23 Public Space]

Lindfield's road, drains, and parking barely cope with the existing population and this development offers no contribution to improving the public infrastructure. This building alone adds 89 apartments and 228 bedrooms into a residential street that currently holds 4-5 houses. It offers 131 parking bays which hints at the likely impact on the traffic.

This submission cannot be read without also considering the developer's twin submission SSD-79261463, **"Residential development with in-fill affordable housing - Reid Street and Woodside Avenue, Lindfield"**. This SSD adds a further 89 apartments and 127 parking bays. So in total these two submissions add 178 apartments and over 250 parking bays.

The additional car bays will add significant issues for circulation which is already a problem, particularly at: (1) the lights at Balfour St / Pacific Hwy; (2) the lights at Tryon Rd / Archbold which are already bursting during peak times.

The cars will also add to street congestion when they are not garaged. This is already bad with limited commuter parking.

[8 Visual Impact; 5, Design Quality; 6 Built Form and Urban Design; 22 Environmental Heritage]

These developments are 9 (Reid) and 10 stories (Highgate) and considerably change the scale and style of the current apartments which are situated near the station in Lindfield. The existing apartments such as those that exist along Havilah Road or Milray Street are more sympathetic in setback and heights. The existing buildings are almost all covered by mature trees and the top of the buildings do not noticeably exceed the tree line. They are also often built in low-lying areas, which also helps them blend in.

The scale of this project will make it visible even from Treatts Road, where we reside, despite being on higher ground.

Rowena and I would be supportive of developments at Woodside and Highgate that are in keeping with existing apartments along Havilah and Milaray with a height of c5 stories and c20m.



[8 Visual Impact; 5 Design Quality; 6 Built Form and Urban Design; 22 Environmental Heritage; 23 Public Space]

We object to the principle where a developer can leverage new and untested state laws (the TOD) to profit from constructing the most dense building they can without any obligation to contribute to the community infrastructure. This is a dangerous precedent. Developers must improve community spaces where their profit relies on leveraging an already strained local infrastructure. This building is too big at 89 dwellings and any high density development should come with a significant infrastructure contribution from the developer to support it. There is no investment in public open space; There is almost no child-friendly open space within the apartment itself so this will all spill over in streets and Lindfield itself, which is already has limited children's playgrounds.

[18 Social Impact; 22 Environmental Heritage]

Lindfield is a very important heritage area with gardens, vegetable patches, and clean air. The irony of this development is that when Lindfield was first set up in the 1800's, people moved here to escape the pollution and overcrowding in Sydney. The family of Ethel Turner (author of Seven Little Australians) moved to Lindfield from Paddington for a healthier life. As a result of this early settlement, Lindfield still has some magnificent heritage houses. This development is encroaching on these residences and owners will start to question the merit of maintaining these houses. The heritage area deserves better protection from infill and crowding.

[4 Engagement]

A final point I would like to bring attention to is that writing this is very difficult for a resident. We have had to wade through mountains of paper, decipher technical planning terms, and navigate a bureaucratic planning process. I encourage you to rethink the way you ask for feedback from residents and the obligations you place on developers.

The developer should have to pay for independent investigations rather than their own, biased and self-serving surveys which are then portrayed as if they have taken feedback from Residents. Neither Rowena nor I have been contacted other than by the developer in its biased and myopic survey which I refused to answer as it was not independent. If the council or the State Government wants to understand its impact on residents, it needs to invest in better engagement and communication.