

Dear Sir, Madame,

Proposed development by Hycorp

This submission sets out my strong opposition to the proposed development by Hycorp of a 9 storey apartment building comprising 247 apartments in a heritage conservation area. If approved the development will irrevocably change the heritage nature of the suburb to the detriment of current residents and future generations.

Failure to Engage with the Community

Of particular concern is the failure of the developer to comply with the legal requirement to engage with the community to seek their input and to base their development application in light of community feedback. I believe that the application should be rejected or at least withdrawn and re submitted once this critical aspect of the submission has been complied with.

The applicant's claim that they "letter box dropped" 1,300 homes in the area of the development is demonstrably incorrect as evidenced by the large number of residents who received no notification and of those that did receive a 'flyer' it was received too late for them to attend the community drop in session.

I have personally canvassed residents in Victoria Street and Wandella Avenue and none of the people spoken with had received the developers "flyer"

Only 5 people attended the drop in event which should have been an indication to the applicant that their community engagement was not working. Of the 5 attendees a number were owners of sites being sold to the developer and therefore conflicted.

Hycorp were fully aware of the contentious nature of their application due to the ongoing and very public actions being undertaken by the Council to prevent developments such as theirs in the heritage conservation area. The Council's effective community engagement when preparing their alternative development scenarios clearly demonstrates the public opposition to development such as this in the heritage conservation areas to the east of the railway.

As a minimum Hycorp should have taken further pro-active steps to effectively engage with the community and fulfill their statutory obligations when preparing a valid EIS.

Conflicts With the Council's Preferred Development Scenario

When preparing their application Hycorp were aware of the alternative planning options being considered by Council and the community feedback to these options however they failed to take these into consideration when preparing their application. I believe that the Department need to assess the application based upon the TOD guidelines but taking into consideration the intent of the Council's preferred scenario.

To approve a 9 storey development within the heritage conservation area would be entirely inconsistent with the Council's Preferred Scenario and the wishes of a significant majority of residents.

Lack of Infrastructure

In addition to these fundamental issues I am also very aware of the negative impact this development would have on local infrastructure, in particular the local road network, street parking, school capacity and water/sewer infrastructure. I don't believe that any of these issues have been adequately addressed by the applicant. On the contrary I believe that the EIS has been prepared with the intended aim of highlighting the positives and disregarding or misleadingly downplaying the negatives.

Affordability

The "affordable" units within the development will not be "affordable" to essential service workers, first home buyers etc as a consequence of the high market value of the units by virtue of the location.

Conclusion

The applicant has failed to lodge a compliant EIS due to their lack of engagement with the community and consequential lack of community input into the project design.

Once compliant the application should be assessed taking into consideration the Council's Preferred Scenario as supported by the majority of Ku rin gai residents. On this basis the application should be rejected and developer activity directed to areas identified in the Preferred Scenario for increased density.