

I am writing to **object to the development application by DKO under State Significant Development Application SSD-79276958 in Trafalgar Ave and Valley Road Lindfield** because this is a case of developer opportunism rather than considered and strategic urban planning. As a life-time resident I am deeply concerned about the detrimental impact this enormous development will have on our neighbourhood and broader community.

Let me be clear: I am not opposed to development. As a potential downsizer with kids wanting to be able to buy in the area in which they grew up, I welcome thoughtful growth and change in Ku-ring-gai. However, what is being proposed is not thoughtful – it is opportunistic, profit-driven and entirely out of keeping with the scale, character and needs of the local area. TOD is changing the rules but that should not be interpreted as a free-for-all for developers regardless of the negative impact for all who will live in the surrounds.

This application represents the worst of the "profit over planning" approach that has too often in the past defined urban development in NSW. I strongly endorse Dr Tony Richards' concept of the "missing middle" and his critique of past planning decisions being steered by those with deep pockets and staying power, rather than by urban planners serving genuine public interest. The result has been outcomes enriching developers while failing communities, of which this proposal is another example.

I was encouraged by recent efforts by the NSW Government to correct this imbalance—particularly through Minister Paul Scully's push for "density done well." But let me be equally clear: the DKO proposal is not an example of this approach. It is a throwback to outdated, developer-first construction; it is not integrated and considered urban planning. It is being rushed through under the guise of the State Significant Development (SSD) pathway, with minimal community consultation AND moments before Ku-ring-gai's alternative approach is presented.

Furthermore, the proposal appears to be exploiting a short-term planning loophole, strategically taking advantage of the period between the gazettal of Transport-Oriented Development (TOD) guidelines and the release of Ku-ring-gai Council's updated urban planning option, which Minister Scully said he would consider. When we were being courted for our property in Roseville, several developers and agents openly outlined this deliberate strategy to push approvals through the brief window when TOD was in place but before KMC's alternatives were made public. Most residents, in good faith, waited to see the outcome of council's process. DKO, however, moved swiftly to lock in agreements with a small subset of landowners.

If approved, this development risks leaving a damaging legacy, especially when KMC is poised to present a well-researched, community-supported alternative that will deliver necessary housing in a far more balanced and sympathetic way. The very tall development sits alone atop a hill as a beacon to poor or rather, no planning. It will stand in its rushed and ill-considered form at an impractical mix of narrow and one-way lanes just because of the site the developer managed to secure.

**Scale and location** are of concern. To date, development higher than 3-4 storeys has been limited to the highway and railway corridor, often in association with retail precincts. While current housing circumstances may well demand an increase on that height, this must be done in a considered manner, by planners rather than profit-driven developers. While taller structures may be necessary, they cannot be allowed to pop up individually: integrated planning is an absolute must. This particular development sits right on the fringe of the TOD area AND outside of the development area proposed in Ku-ring-gai's alternative way forward. There are serious issues of overshadowing, privacy and solar access arising from the proposed form.

**Traffic flow** is of particular importance. While more and more residents have been jammed in, there has been no corresponding upgrade in roads to accommodate the volume of traffic they carry nor improve their run-down and pot-holed state. As a result, many drivers peel off and use what are now well-established "rat runs" from Gordon through to Boundary Street, Roseville.

Traffic increasingly circulates on a series of narrow residential streets where parking either side often reduces two-way traffic flow to a single lane. Overlay this with school zones, speed bumps and inhibitors and endless no-right-turn restrictions and it creates a daily dogfight. There are so few exit points in Lindfield and Roseville for traffic to head north, the addition of 220 additional residences on that particular “rat run” will bring an already overloaded system to a standstill.

Lindfield Avenue has always been a busy thoroughfare but while the addition of highrise apartments on the eastern side with a much-expanded retail precinct brings undoubted benefits, the additional traffic banks up. Balfour Street under the rail bridge provides one of the very few exits from the area (Roseville, Lindfield, Killara) with safe access to the north, but feeding from Lindfield Ave sees it jammed and nigh on impassible at many hours of the day. Bringing hundreds of additional vehicles without considering traffic impact is poor planning practice.

**Heritage** must also be considered in context. The proposed development lies in a Heritage Conservation Area and yet offers no transition to the far lower density which surrounds it on all sides. It may not be a case of destroying individually marked heritage houses, but each property directly involved and those surrounding the site contributes to the heritage nature of the locale. Again, a wholistic approach is required to assess where to best locate the additional residences rather than opportunistically putting them where the developer managed to buy land.

History can only be destroyed once. The decision to what – if any – history is to be destroyed and what should replace it requires independent and integrated assessment and planning. It cannot be allowed to be the decision of an opportunistic developer.

It is time to stop previous bad habits of pushing through one-off developments without considering the impact on the local area. There is a much better chance of successfully minimising the negative impacts through the process of rational, strategic and integrated urban planning to achieve “density done well” rather than simply approving one-off ad hoc developments such as this one from DKO.

Yes, Ku-ring-gai has had previous “form” but yes, the announcement of TOD has seen the Council finally activated to deliver a considered, integrated plan which considers the far-reaching consequences and side-effects of increasing density for the benefit of all. Council consulted widely with the community and worked hard to serve its many masters. At least show them the courtesy of hearing them out rather than let individual developments sneak through.

Please do not dismiss me as wealthy “landed gentry”. My father’s study was curtailed by going off to WWII in PNG; my husband’s father was a boilermaker out west in Fairfield; we both were the first of our family ever to attend university under a Commonwealth scholarship or fee-free plan. This changed the course of our lives, on top of which we put in a lifetime of hard work mixed with lucky breaks and hard hits. I am lucky to live in such a nice area, and I want to share the experience BUT with care and consideration to ensure benefit for all.

The notion of just jamming in one-off developments and leaving remaining residents to solve the by-product issues is NSW planning of old. It is time to move forward in a wholistic fashion to successfully address the housing crisis, with plans to accommodate essential workers in appropriate locations and provide hope for the next generations who face the prospect of never owning their own home, let alone in the area in which they grew up. Density done well.

Marion Fagan