

Submission – Major Projects

10,14 and 14a Stanhope Road, Killara NSW 2071

Project Details

Application Number	SSD-81890707
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Assessment Type	State Significant Development
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Development Type	In-fill Affordable Housing
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Local Government Areas	Ku-ring-gai
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Exhibition Start-End Date	07/05/2025 - 03/06/2025
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We offer this submission as concerned citizens of Killara. We are proudly Sydney-born and raised. We have lived in Marian Street Killara continuously since 2019 and have either grown up in the area and/or had a longstanding association with Killara and surrounding suburbs through direct family connections.

Further to this we have direct lived experience over many decades living in properties in medium and high-density areas in various areas of Sydney. This is supplemented by a thorough understanding of Strata law and its practical implications.

We object to this development on several grounds which are detailed below.

Designation as a State Significant Development [SSD]

Australia's immigration levels have been at significantly higher levels (double the pre-pandemic levels) and the physical and social infrastructure has not and cannot match this acceleration. This is to the detriment of Australia's economic performance and quality of life in economic and social terms. The Federal Government immigration policies require the State Government to provide services and infrastructure without adequate planning, coordination or funding.

In turn the NSW State Government attempts to bypass Council and local community-focused planning processes through the SSD and TOD mechanisms via developer commitments to the provision of social and affordable housing. This is an attempt to compensate for the Federal and NSW Governments' policy failures in providing and incentivising affordable housing to the community-at-large. This development is the current example of this top-down policy prescription being experienced by the Killara community. Kuring-gai Council planning processes and community consultations appear to have counted for nothing.

The proposal allows for 23 units to provide in-fill affordable housing for a minimum of 15 years with a commitment to provide 2% (3 units) to be managed in perpetuity. This has the appearance of a policy formulation slanted to force higher density outcomes at the expense of a genuine and enduring commitment to social and affordable housing.

Design Quality

The project does not meet the quality of best design in the area which we would assess as the Mirvac development on 10 Marian Street. This has an FSR 1.3:1 and features the retention of green space and trees with good spacing to the boundary. It is to be contrasted with the recent development at 6-8 Marian Street which is built to the boundary and has not retained any material green space.

The application claims that communal open space will be provided on the ground floor and on roof terraces. This provides significantly less grassed open space or deep soil space than surrounding buildings which are at a far more human scale. We also comment from a practical perspective that the assertion that a roof terrace or 'communal recreation spaces' will be used by residents to commune is a conceptual architectural fantasy.

It is remarkable that the submission makes no mention of laundry facilities as the failure to make such provision creates the unsightly hanging of laundry in balconies that is increasingly prevalent throughout Sydney as densification is pursued.

Built Form and Urban Design

The proposal is out of scale to the area's built forms and approval would set a dangerous precedent for future development in Killara. The building height and mass of the buildings is excessive and incompatible with recent developments in Marian Street and Culworth Avenue. The application adopts an *au fait accompli* tone implying that this development is merely the first of many future developments of large scale in the Killara area. This is at odds with the recent analysis and community consultation by Kuring-gai Council which resulted in the adoption of a TOD Alternate Preferred Scenario.

The site is surrounded by apartment buildings on the southern and western sides which are significantly lower than the large 3rd building of 10 storeys. The urban design aspect and attention to human needs must be paramount rather than maximisation of developer profit.

Surrounding apartment buildings on Marian Street and Culworth Avenue built in the last 15-20 years are compliant with the Ku-ring-gai Local Environmental Plan 2015 [KLEP2015], designated as R4 High Density Residential, with a maximum height of 17.5 metres and FSRs of 1.3:1 and minimum lot sizes of 1,200 sqm. This compares with this proposal which seeks to maximise planning parameters to apply a maximum building height of 28.6m and an FSR 3.25:1. This increase in building density is a significant uplift and is too high an increment in density to be compatible with the surrounding Killara area.

Environmental Amenity

We are concerned about the shadowing of surrounding properties (in particular 12 Stanhope Road) as well as the closeness of Building A to the boundary with 10 Marian Street.

Visual Impact

The proposal would add significant building bulk to residents' outlooks from all directions. No consideration in the application has been given to the visual impact experienced by residents viewing from the west or north-west of the property.

The applicant provides several photos with superimposed views but nothing is presented from the west or north-west aspects which would also be affected. There is much enjoyment gained from some of the magnificent protected trees and the open skies that are a feature of the area and this would be impinged upon by such large scale 10 storey buildings on the immediate horizon.

Transport

The assumptions are that 195 parking spaces will accommodate the needs of 135 additional apartments. We contend that this is insufficient as many apartments will have more than one vehicle.

The traffic modelling in the proposal does not reflect current experience of resident behaviours and underestimates the trips by apartment. It is observable that many parents choose to drive their children to school and we contend that trips at peak hour (including Saturdays) will be far higher than that quoted by the Traffic Impact Statement.

Stanhope Road is currently a busy feeder road to and from Pacific Highway and is not sufficiently wide to cater to large traffic volumes with cars having to slow down to pass. There is already significant queuing in morning and evening peaks particularly at school drop-off and pick-up times. This will be worsened by cars accessing the driveway.

This development will worsen traffic build-up not only on Stanhope Road but the following specific intersections and feeder roads in the area:

- a) Right hand turn from Pacific Highway to Fiddens Wharf Road
This lane regularly overflows onto the right lane of Pacific Highway, particularly travelling south. We understand that Kuring-gai Council plans an upgrade of this intersection.
- b) Fiddens Wharf Road
This is a single lane carriageway leading to Lady Game Drive. Traffic travelling East to the Pacific Highway intersection can regularly bank up to the roundabout on Grassmere Road and would only worsen. Right hand turns to Pacific Highway are often difficult and also contribute to traffic build-up on Fiddens Wharf Road.
- c) Lady Game Drive
This is a very important feeder road west to Lane Cove Road and south to Delhi Road that is single carriage only. It is increasingly crowded even now, particularly at peak times and needs to be urgently considered in any infrastructure planning.
- d) Werona Road and Stanhope Road intersection
Stanhope Road leads east via a single lane bridge over the railway to the Werona Road intersection. This is inadequate provision for cars travelling east (including significant school traffic to East Killara and East Lindfield) and south to shops at Lindfield Station. Any right hand turns are liable to cause delays. Further there is insufficient provision for pedestrian safety at this intersection with a footpath only on one side of the bridge and no crosswalks.

e) Culworth Avenue

This is a local road that is used to access Killara Station and is also used by many residents in surrounding streets to access their homes. It is very narrow and wholly inadequate now, especially when cars are parked. This would only be worsened by the proposed development.

The addition of 135 new units will also negatively impact on parking provision in the surrounding area. It is typical in apartment buildings that visitors spaces are often used by residents for 2nd cars and the low ratio of visitors spaces provided means greater stress on surrounding street parking. Culworth Avenue is regularly parked out with cars also using railway land to park cars. Marian Street already has limited street parking for residents and is often impinged upon by commuters avoiding parking fees in the railway car park. Kuring-gai Council does not provide resident parking permits nor regularly police the area such as occurs in other Council areas.

Noise and Vibration

We experienced some 2 years of noise and disruption due to the construction of 4-8 Marian Street, Killara. It is vital for quality of life, particularly for many elderly residents, that construction noise be limited. Large trucks also regularly travelled at speed down Marian Street and damaged low-hanging tree branches on significant trees.

Further, there should be specific limitations on the queuing of construction trucks running diesel engines on residential streets. This impinges on residents' quality of life and negatively impacts the needs of workers working from home who require quiet for concentration and effective electronic communications.

Trees and Landscaping

One of the hallmarks of the "leafy North Shore" is the significant tree canopy that is under threat in many parts of Sydney with the wholesale clearing of building sites for the convenience of developers and builders. It is essential that the forest on the Western side of the current 14 Stanhope Road property be fully preserved. The property fronts a section of Stanhope Road that provides a remarkable streetscape of magnificent trees.

The proposed removal of 2 trees on the Eastern side should be avoided as the impacts on surrounding residents will not be compensated by the proposed landscaping plan.

The landscaping does not allow for sufficient setback to the boundary, particularly on the rear of the site backing onto 10 Marian Street.

The arborist report is equivocal on the need for further assessment of stormwater drainage and the possible impact of building works on the retention of trees. This appears to offer an avenue to backtrack on initial representations.

Biodiversity

It is vital for the ecosystem that the trees in the north-eastern corner in particular be maintained to accommodate the wildlife which is a feature of the North Shore.

Social Impact

There has been an observable breakdown of community spirit on the North Shore since large scale developments have proliferated in recent years. There is an inherent lack of

ownership and contribution to the community environs as populations have become more transient, increasingly likely to rent than own, and not share traditional Australian standards of community living or public engagement. This is evidenced by the now endemic practice of dumping of apartment fixtures and furniture on the street by vacating residents and/or landlords. There is also more persistent graffiti in recent years through Killara and surrounding suburbs.

The approval of large-scale developments such as proposed will only add to the isolation of residents in 'little boxes' where they do not mix in community settings which is much more likely in smaller scale developments where residents can meet and work together more readily.

Longstanding residents regularly express dissatisfaction and powerlessness at the changes being wrought to their community and environs through increasing development without regard to social and physical infrastructure.

Environmental Heritage

Stanhope Road is characterised by several stately homes, with several classified as heritage items. This character is further enhanced by the canopy of trees shading the street. When viewing the Kuring-gai Council planning documentation there was comfort drawn from the designation of the Stanhope Road Conservation Area as a means to preserve this special local environ. However the SSD process is being used as a mechanism to override these important human considerations of heritage and sense of place.

As regular walkers on Stanhope Road we are dismayed by the impact of this application on beautiful homes from 4 through 12 Stanhope Road being overshadowed by large scale 10 storey developments that are not sympathetic to the current aesthetic.

Public Space

There is a significant deficit in the provision of public facilities, including public libraries which the accompanying report notes. I would also add that the Kuring-gai Council area is also deficient in provision of swimming pools, particularly as the increasing density puts more demand on such sporting and fitness facilities. There is only one aquatic centre in the Kuring-gai LGA servicing some 127,000 residents compared to other areas such the Inner West LGA or City of Willoughby which have multiple pools which service approximately 30,000 residents per pool.