

Re: Proposed Development on William Street, Darlinghurst

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to express my objection to the proposed mixed-use development on William Street, Darlinghurst. I am a long-term resident of The Horizon and have lived in the area for over twenty years. My concerns relate to the impacts on view corridors, suitability of the proposed retail and commercial components, traffic implications, and the placement of affordable housing within the building.

1. View Loss and Precedent for Height

The proposal includes an 18-storey tower that will significantly obstruct established view lines toward Sydney Harbour, the Opera House, and the Harbour Bridge. These views are a defining and inherent characteristic of residential living in this precinct. They have been secured at substantial personal and community cost, reflected in both purchase prices and long-standing council rate assessments.

The proposal would transfer the value of these views away from existing residents to the project developer, who would almost certainly position premium residential apartments at the upper levels for sale. This represents a clear economic gain to the developer at an equal and opposite loss to existing residents and the surrounding urban environment.

2. Retail and Commercial Space: Unsuitable Location

The assertion that William Street is an appropriate location for activated street-level retail is not supported by the well-observed commercial reality of the area.

William Street is primarily a high-capacity vehicle feeder route into and out of the CBD. It is not, and has never been, a retail destination. Over the last two decades, local strip shopping has declined markedly, as consumer behaviour has shifted toward high-amenity, multi-store shopping centres such as Westfield Sydney and Westfield Bondi Junction. These centres offer parking, climate comfort, and retail variety — advantages that William Street cannot provide and cannot be retrofitted to deliver.

The lack of parking and the heavy traffic environment make ongoing retail tenancy highly unlikely to be viable. Evidence of this is visible in existing vacant and underperforming retail frontages along the street.

3. Outdoor Dining and Urban Amenity

The proposal includes outdoor dining and activated street-front uses. However, William Street is a noisy wind tunnel with constant traffic, narrow pedestrian space, and significant overshadowing. Existing food outlets do not and cannot utilise outdoor seating effectively for these reasons. It is not an appealing environment for customers nor an atmosphere conducive to public amenity.

4. Traffic and Local Street Network Capacity

Increasing the number of residential dwellings along William Street will intensify traffic volumes on side streets that are already narrow, constrained, and not capable of expansion. These streets were not designed for modern multi-residential vehicle movements and are already under pressure. Additional congestion will diminish safety and accessibility.

5. Affordable Housing: Suitability of Location

I fully support the principle and necessity of increasing affordable housing in Sydney. However, this particular location does not offer the conditions required for stable and supportive long-term living. William Street is a high-noise arterial corridor with limited walkable access to affordable services, everyday shopping, and community facilities.

Providing affordable housing should be guided by proximity to community support services, access to everyday amenities, integrated local networks, and liveability. This site does not meet those criteria. Its inclusion here

appears more aligned with facilitating planning approval and increasing the value of upper-level private apartment sales rather than strategically addressing housing need.

Conclusion

This proposal delivers concentrated benefit to the developer while imposing permanent and significant losses in amenity, view value, and liveability for current residents and the broader neighbourhood. It introduces retail and public use spaces in a location where the market demand and environmental conditions do not support them, and it places affordable housing in a setting that does not provide the necessary support or daily practicality for its residents.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposal be rejected or substantially re-designed to:

- Reduce height to protect established view corridors,
- Remove or significantly limit retail and outdoor dining components,
- Assess alternative, more appropriate sites for affordable housing provision.

Thank you for your consideration.

A Resident of The Horizon, Darlinghurst NSW