

Attention: Ms Michelle Niles, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Re: SSD-80211463 for 164-172, 174-194 William Street WOOLLOOMOOLOO NSW 2011

Mixed use development with in-fill affordable housing, 164 – 194 William Street, Woolloomooloo

Dear Ms Miles,

We are an impacted property owner at Strata Plan 20087, 5 – 15 Farrell Avenue, Darlinghurst (our building). We have owned and lived in this building since 2011.

We appreciate your attention on the matter of this development and the **significant implications that it has** for the owners within Darlinghurst and the very fabric of Darlinghurst itself.

As you would be aware, Darlinghurst to the south, and towards the south-east, and south-west of the proposed site, begins on a natural rise and slopes down towards Woolloomooloo in a concave, amphitheatre-like formation. This topography allows residents, particularly those with some elevation, to enjoy the views of Sydney's skyline, it's beautiful harbour, and its iconic landmarks such as the Harbour Bridge and Opera House. As NSW Portal document "*Request for SEARs Bayswater Stage 2.pdf*" states: "Visual – The site is located in a highly sensitive visual catchment..." and the Developer **must not be granted approval** to expand the developments scale above what has already been approved. The proposed building would stand as a large and intrusive structure obstructing the outlook, much like a stage being overshadowed by an oversized set piece placed in front of the audience.

Many residences, we included, have worked, saved, and paid significant amounts to become a part of this unique environment. It is deeply concerning that these long-held qualities could be eroded simply because a developer seeks additional profit under the guise of the NSW Affordable House Scheme with claim of State Significant Development (SSD).

To be clear, we are not apposed in general to the objectives of the NSW Affordable House Scheme. However, there must be careful and responsible consideration of **where** such oversized developments are approved and constructed. While there are undoubtedly suitable locations for this form of housing, 164-194 William Street **is not one of them**. Its placement would effectively insert a major visual obstruction in the centre of Darlinghurst's natural amphitheatre, undermining both the visual amenity and the planning intent of the area.

It is also disappointing that the Developers persistence means that we have been asked to participate in yet another round of feedback submissions. Prior to the approval of the Concept Development Application (D/2022/139) by the Central Sydney Planning Committee (CSPC) on 7th Dec 2023, two earlier rounds of community feedback were already undertaken (totalling 101 submissions) and were unsurprisingly predominantly negative. The first concept envelope was not endorsed by council, and the second was endorsed as a compromise, allowing the developer to operate within the envelope between the DCP and LEP guidelines. This resulted in a DCP non-compliance to the north and step-down to the west. This step-down became a key alley in the developer's formulation of an a **biased, and in some cases inaccurate**, view assessment which I will cover further down.

It should be noted that this approval came with a clear directive from the CSPC based on community feedback that the **development must not seek to increase building height any further than approved**. Residents should have comfort in knowing this directive will be honoured.

While the approval already represents an obstructive wall in front of our personal views, with loss of most of the Sydney icons (just the top of the arch of the Harbour Bridge remains in the approved envelope but is **completely blocked in the new proposal**) from our 7th storey equivalent vantage point (unit level 5) on the rise, we had at least taken some comfort in the CSPC's commitment to prevent any further height increase. Yet now we face the prospect of even more obstructive bulk that decimates the rest of our view and yet another round of community feedback, which, let's face it, can only become more negative than prior rounds.

As part of the current proposal, residents were invited to an online conference meeting to provide feedback where they were muted and not allowed to speak, with the only avenue to express their concerns via email. Furthermore, residents were requested to submit answers to a questionnaire, the outcome of which has not been published to our knowledge. This process, which feels like a box ticking exercise by the developer and combined with the ongoing efforts to exceed the previously approved building envelope, has left residents feeling both disregarded and disillusioned. We urge you and the NSW Planning Committee to **uphold the intent of prior approvals and protect what is left of the established visual and environmental integrity of the Darlinghurst view precinct**.

We note that many concerning aspects of the development have already been raised repeatedly in prior consultation rounds and are now only further exacerbated in the new proposal. These include:

- The overall scale being inconsistent with planning expectations
- The lack of regard for local heritage and the existing lower build form

- The departure from the concept approval and the DCP controls
- Overshadowing impacts, and
- Adverse effects on already substantial traffic and congestion

However, the remainder of this submission will focus primarily on:

- the significant adverse impact the building's scale will have on the local amenity in relation to view impacts, and
- the developers ongoing presentation of biased and inaccurate view assessments, which appear to mislead both planners and residents.

Bias and inaccuracies in View Impact Assessments

Prior to the concept approval in Dec 2023, during the public feedback period, we raised concerns with Council that the view impact assessments provided for our building (and other vantage points) were **biased and contained inaccuracies**. The Central Sydney Planning Committee (CSPC) acknowledged these concerns and subsequently worked in cooperation with our building to reassess the view impacts.

It should be noted that in the latest update *View Impact Analysis*, the developer has made no efforts to address or correct the biases and inconsistencies identified in the previous application round. Accordingly, if this unduly expansive development extension is to be considered at all, **a further reassessment of view impacts should be undertaken**.

Accordingly, we wish to reiterate our original concerns here for your consideration in relation to the new development proposal.

The bias and inaccuracies discovered in the 2023 View Impact still exist for the new *View Impact Assessment* and can be observed as follows:

1. No actual photos were taken from apartment balconies within the Palisades building at 5-15 Farrell Avenue

Although the developer was invited to our building to capture such photo's, they neglected to do so. Instead, they used a **drone positioned in Rosebank Park** on the western side of the building to take the images. This approach resulted in a **misrepresentation** within the *View Impact Assessment*, which incorrectly indicated that the vantage points were taken from our buildings balconies.

The image segment below is extracted from the document "*Appendix S Visual Impact Assessment.pdf*" (dated Sept 2025) and has been further marked up with a yellow circle and blue arrow for clarity.

Figure 1 – Viewpoints presented by Urbaine Designs with our markups included



The yellow circle highlights the primary view-sensitive area of the Palisades North Tower at 5-15 Farrell Avenue. This location is arguably one of the most significantly view impacted building, as the proposed development sits directly between these apartments and Sydney's iconic landmarks, however, there is **yet to be an accurate and unbiased viewpoint analysis performed** on this site. The blue arrow indicates the location from which the developer claims the drone photos were taken. If we focus on *viewpoint 9*, the document it states:

Viewpoint 9:

From Level 5, Palisades, Nos.5-15 Farrell Avenue. Northern tower. RL: 56.297
This view is from a drone positioned on the boundary of The Palisades and the eastern edge of Rosebank Park, in close proximity to the northwestern balcony of the selected apartment and at an equivalent standing height RL.

It also states:

Tenacity Assessment Summary:

Value of view: High.

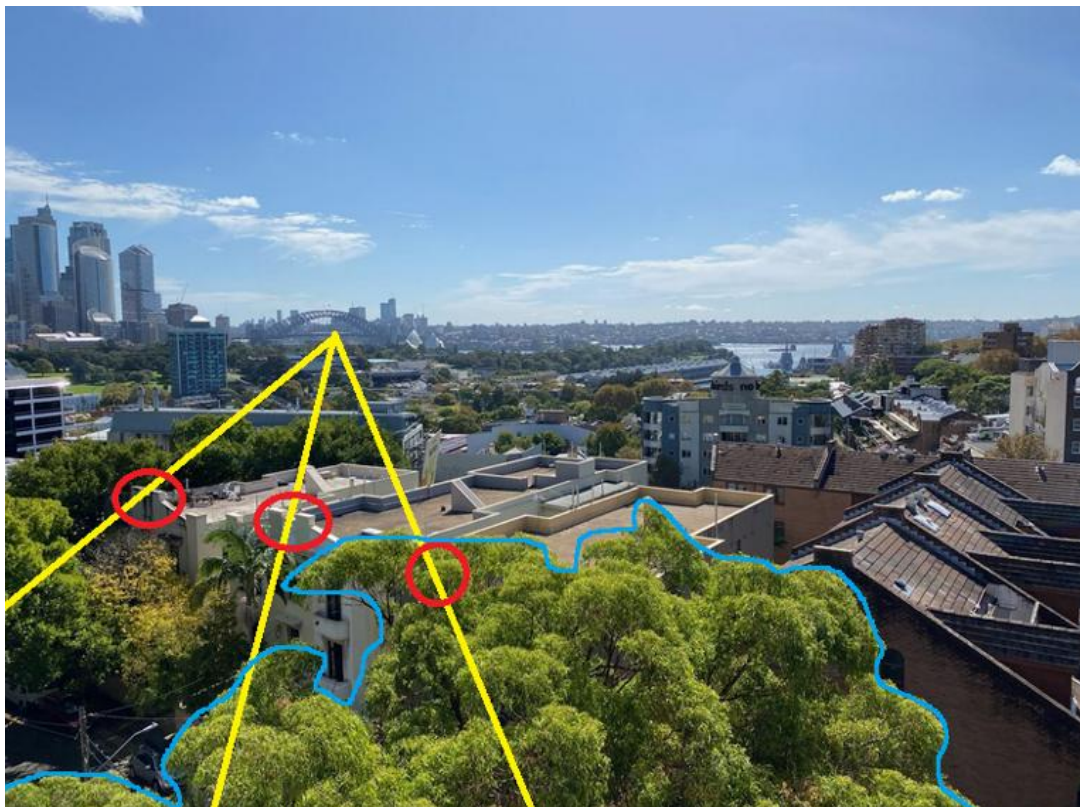
View location: Secondary living space – standing 1m behind balustrade (drone equivalent).

Extent of impact: Moderate-to-severe.

However, a straightforward analysis indicates that the view location shown does not represent the claimed drone equivalent of standing one meter behind the balcony balustrade for the indicated viewpoints.

The following photo was taken by us in April 2023 using an iPhone camera, from the actual location of the balcony of Unit 22 on level 5 (7th storey equivalent). This unit is on the north-west corner on our level and the photo was taken standing on the balcony behind the balustrade. Markups have been overlaid for guidance:

Figure 2 – Actual location of viewpoint 9 with markups included



The blue outline shows the large tree located at the front of our building. The yellow lines have been extrapolated through key points of the buildings across the road towards the Harbour Bridge to provide additional context regarding the balcony's true position in relation to its surroundings.

The following image, referred to as *Viewpoint 9* in the document “*Visual Impact Assessment.pdf*”, identifies the location as “*Level 5, Palisades, Nos.5-15 Farrell Avenue.*” The yellow mark-ups have been added again for guidance.

Figure 3 – Viewpoint 9 according to Urbaine Designs with our markups



From Figure 3 above, it is clear the drone photo was taken further west of the building than claimed by the developer. This is further substantiated by the following observations:

1. The alignment of the yellow lines (drawn through same key points)
2. The absence of the tree in front of our building, and
3. The evident close proximity of the top of the building at the west of Rosebank Park.

In the actual balcony position (Figure 2), the direct line of sight to the Harbour Bridge intersects the centre between the 2nd and 3rd yellow lines. In comparison, the developer’s photo (Figure 3) places this alignment well to the right.

Similarly, when observing the relative proportions of the front and side rooflines of the middle building across the road, the developer’s photo (Figure 3) clearly depicts a shorter and less elongated side building profile - consistent with a vantage point taken further to the west.

For additional spatial context, a Google Maps Street View image is provided below:

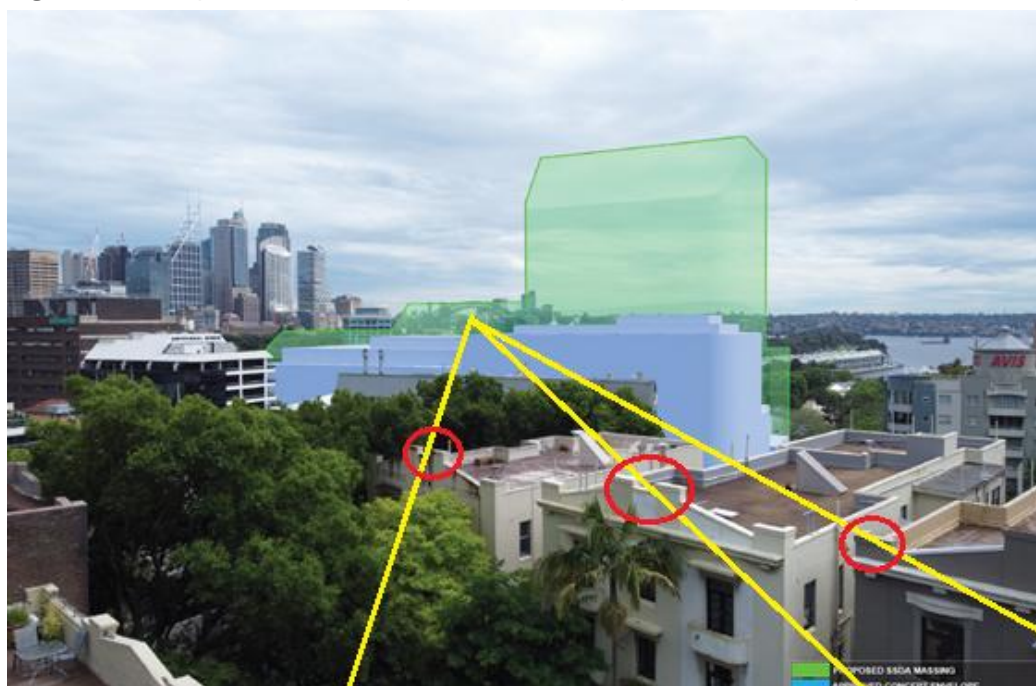
Figure 4 – Google maps street view image showing balcony, park and west building



It is evident that the **drone photos were taken from a position in Rosebank Park** away from our building.

In the new *View Impact Assessment*, Urbaine Design use the same photo showing the new proposed building envelope:

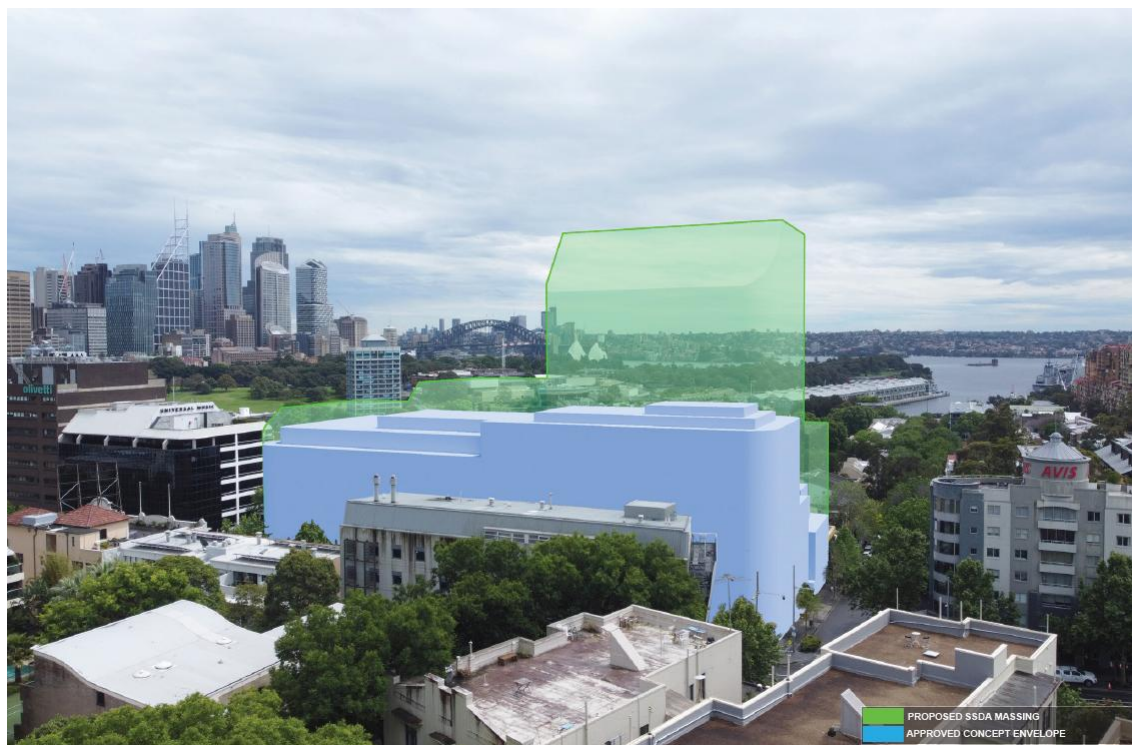
Figure 5 - Viewpoint 9 according to Urbaine Designs with our markups



At level 5 (7th storey equivalent), the Harbour Bridge is now completely obscured due to the increase in height of the buildings step-down. Levels 6 and above, however, may still appear to retain visibility through the stepdown due to the exaggerated angle. While the significance of this inaccuracy may be debated, it remains important because it is both **misleading and creates an illusionary impression** of retained view for the north-west balconies and particularly given that there are two additional sets of north facing balconies extending further to the east.

For example, below is the view impact for a top floor penthouse from the developers Rosebank park drone vantage (*viewpoint 12*):

Figure 6 – viewpoint 12 drone vantage point



The actual balconies, along with the two additional sets of balconies to the east of the north-western balcony, are now likely to have the remaining iconic landmark (Harbour Bridge) partially or completely obscured. It is **deeply concerning** that even a penthouse apartment on level 9 (11th storey equivalent), positioned near the top of the Darlinghurst rise, would see the top of the proposed development protruding above the highest part of the city skyline!

2. The drone photo heights are not consistent with the balcony heights of the Palisades

In document: *“Development Application 164-172 and 174-194 William Street Woolloomooloo - D2022139.pdf”* for council determination, the following image is provided and labelled as – *“Figure 56: Existing (top) and proposed building envelope (bottom) as viewed facing north from Level 3 at 5-15 Farrell Avenue, Darlinghurst”*.

Figure 7 – Urbaine Designs claimed balcony vantage for level 3 Palisades



However, this is instead the vantage point from unit 17, level 4 (6th storey equivalent) balcony. The vantage point from the level 3 balcony is lower than that depicted by Urbaine Designs. The adjacent Unit 11 on level 3 offers a better vantage point towards the Harbour Bridge, as shown below:

Figure 9 – Actual vantage for unit 11, level 3 (5th storey equivalent)



This clearly demonstrates that level 3 is positioned lower within the building than the vantage point claimed by the developer.

While its possible this instance could be a labelling error, by inaccurately indicating that the unit balconies are further west and at a higher elevation, the assessment **gives the misleading impression** that views are less obstructed and that the Harbour bridge remains visible from many apartments to the north-west of the Palisades building.

3. The View Impact Assessment was biased to include properties on the west side of Darlinghurst while the more impacted properties on the east side were omitted

The below image has been taken from document “*Visual Impact Assessment.pdf*” dated in April 2023 and includes additional markups in yellow, red and blue.

Figure 10 – Selected viewpoints for Urbaine Designs View Impact Assessment



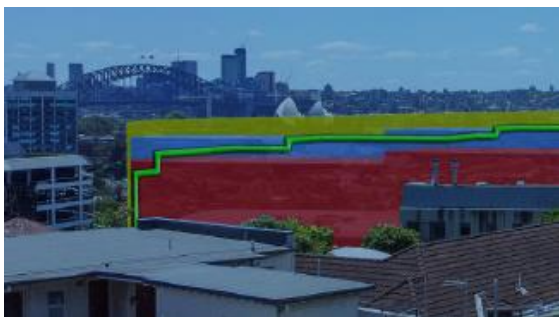
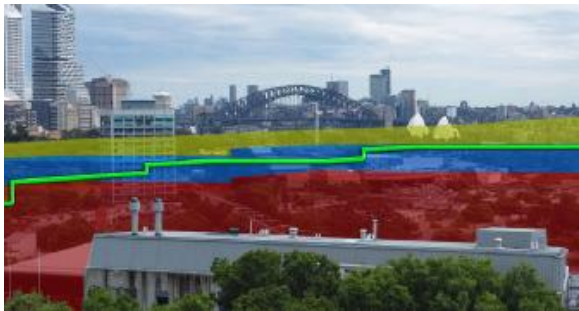
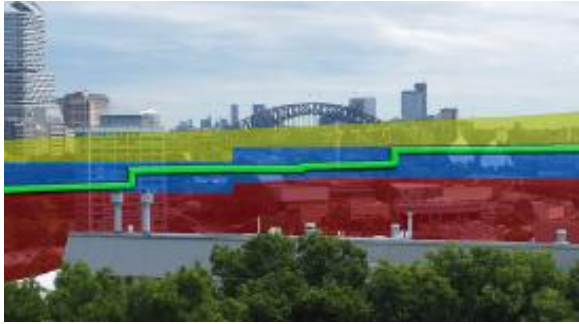
The red outline indicates the area on which the developer focused the *View Impact Assessment*. The yellow outline (and arrows) identifies the buildings that were omitted from the Assessment. The north-western balconies of the Palisades North Tower can also be considered omitted, based on the findings outlined earlier (blue arrow indicates approximate drone vantage point).

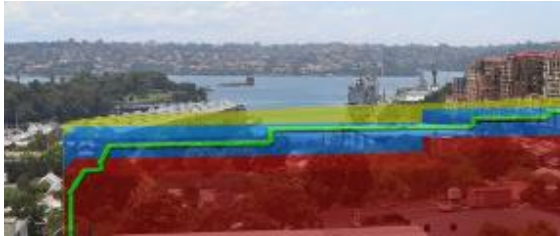
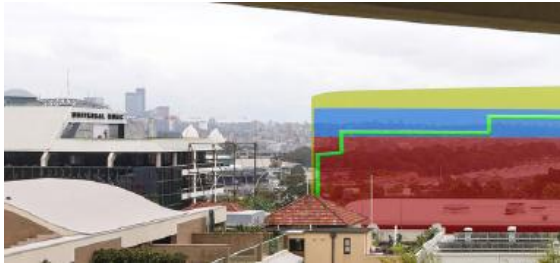
The buildings with yellow arrows have the proposed development directly in their line of sight to the Harbour Bridge and Opera House. **Why, then, were these buildings omitted or misrepresented in the View Impact Assessment?**

Several other vantage points in the *View Impact Assessment* appear to intentionally focus on retaining a view of key landmarks such as the Harbour Bridge, Opera House, or Fort Denison, near a step-down in the proposed building. However, these points of interest would be unlikely to be visible in the omitted properties.

Below are some examples of the developer’s efforts to portray a view retention of some points of interest. These are the same photo’s used in the new *View Impact Assessment*.

Figures 11 – 18 – Various Urbaine Design photo snippets near building step down





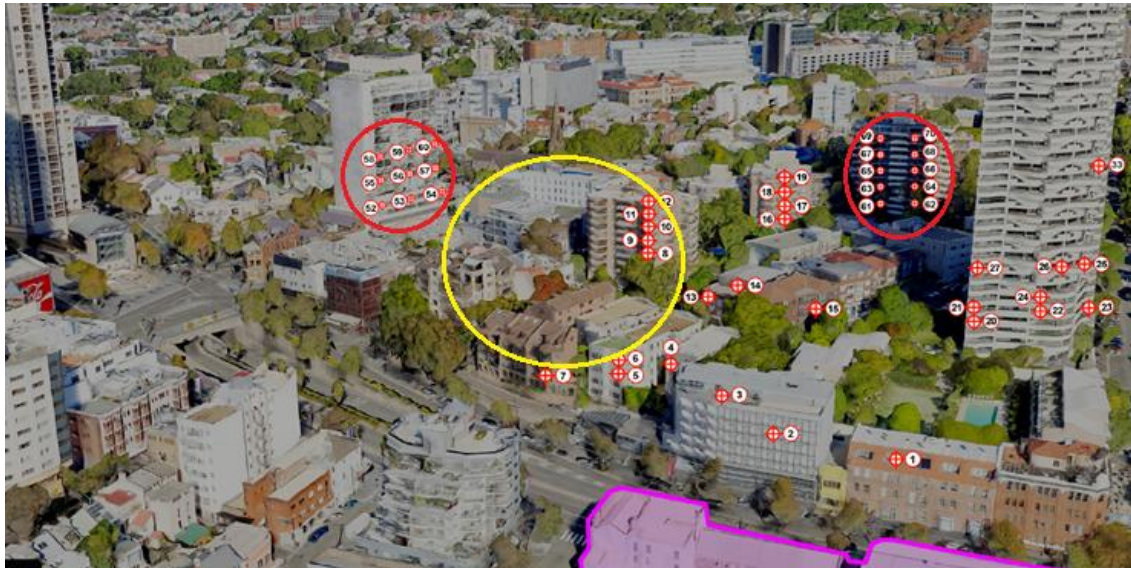
One would conclude that **photos were biased** towards vantages favouring less severe view impacts for the benefit of the developer in securing approval. The same vantages are used in the new *View Impact Assessment*.

New View Impact Assessment

The document named “*Appendix S Visual Impact Assessment.pdf*” released on 23rd Sep 2025 contains the latest *View Impact Assessment* for the newly proposed development.

As illustrated below, new viewpoints have been added, as indicated by the red circles. However, buildings within the yellow circle, who are again arguably amongst the most impacted, remain under-represented. This includes Palisades North Tower as explained in earlier sections. The newly represented buildings are located on either side of the proposed development, where some partial views may still be available.

Figure 19 – New selected viewpoints for Urbaine Designs new View Impact Assessment



On a separate but related topic, *viewpoint 28* in the original *View Impact Assessment* has been omitted from the new *View Impact Assessment*. This viewpoint is from the perspective of a pedestrian walking on the William Street overpass (along Darlinghurst Road). The previous image is provided below, along with an approximation of the additional tower protrusion of the new development proposal. This illustrates how substantially the outlook would have changed had it been included in the new *View Impact Assessment*, and the impact it will have for the passer by or local diner.

Figure 21 – Image showing previously approved building envelope on pedestrian outlook



View Impact Analysis on Our Property

The photo below illustrates the aspect and view of our apartment - unit 24, level 5 (7th storey equivalent) of Palisades North Tower, 5-15 Farrell Avenue. This photo was taken from our front balcony, behind the balustrade. Our unit is located on the north-east corner of the Palisades North Tower.

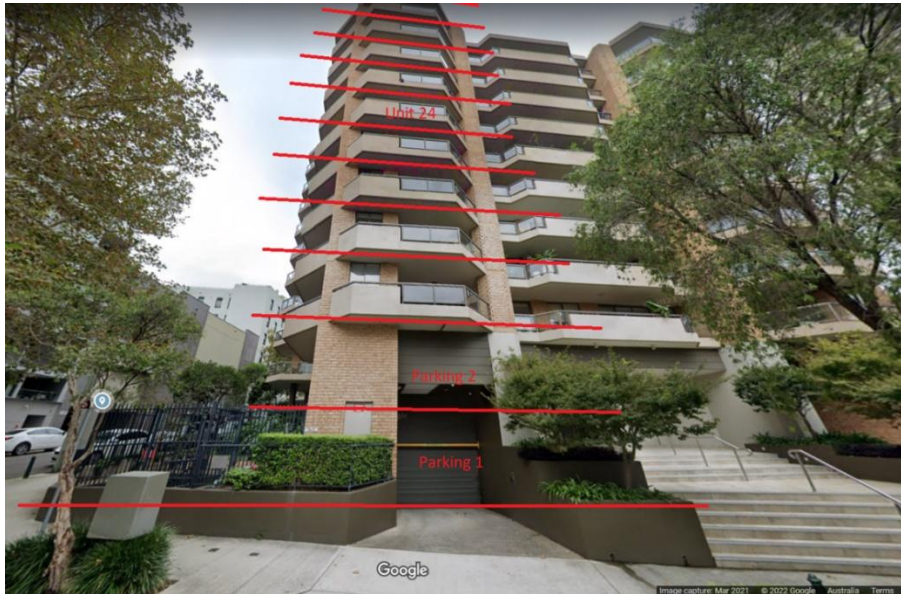
For clarification, level 5 is considered the 7th storey equivalent because the first two levels are occupied by residents and visitors parking as well as the reception area, therefore, level 1 begins at the equivalent of the 3rd storey. This is relevant as impacted view are more elevated than what the level numbers might portray.

Figure 22 – View from balcony at unit 24, level 5 (7th storey equivalent)



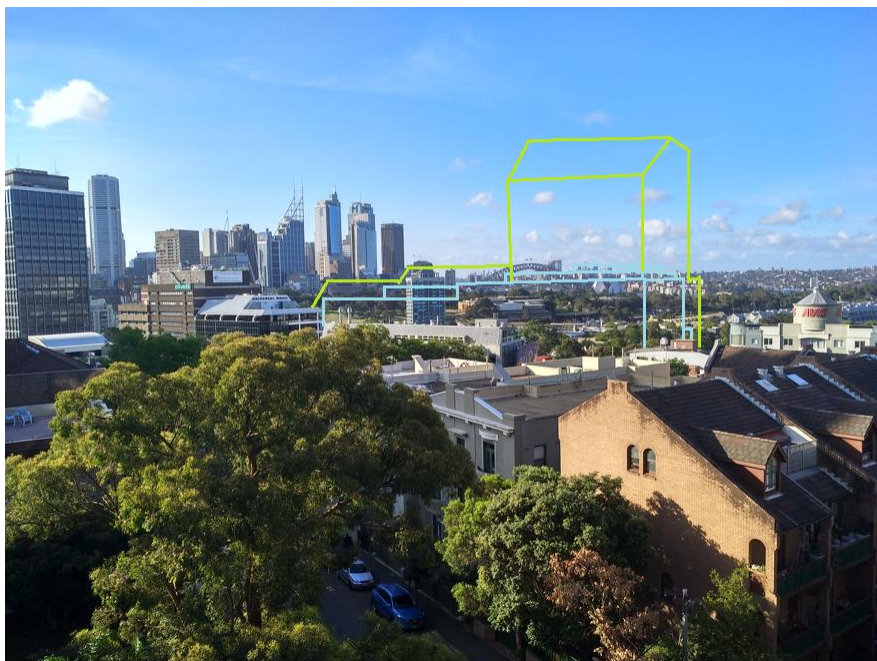
The image below, sourced from Google Maps Street View, shows the location of our unit within the building, positioned on the north-east corner.

Figure 23 – Front aspect of Palisades North Tower with location of unit 24



The next is based on the photo from Figure 22 and includes an outline estimation of the form of the newly proposed building envelope (in blue) compared to the approved concept (in green). When comparing this with the developer's representation of unit 22 in *Figure 6 - viewpoint 12 drone vantage point*, which is on the same level as ours, it demonstrates a reasonable accuracy of replication, with the building slightly rotated to reflect the differing angle from our unit.

Figure 24 – View impact from proposed building envelope on unit 24



From this, it can be seen that the approved concept envelope allowed a partial view of the upper arch of the Harbour Bridge, whereas the new envelope blocks it entirely.

Substantial bulk introduced by the new proposal

The new development proposal undoubtedly **exhibits excessive bulk** and is poorly located given the heights being sought, placing an unruly obstacle in the middle of the natural amphitheatre of Darlinghurst. While it includes the potential benefit of providing low-cost housing, the clear advantage lies with the developer, as it enables them to elevate the most marketable units to capitalise on the exceptional views, and this at the expense of existing residents. This is not view-sharing, it is view-replacement and profit-driven opportunism.

We thank you for your attention on this very important matter. This submission concludes with an image provided by Urbaine Design in document “*Appendix F_Clause 4.6 Variation Report (Height).pdf*”.

Figure 25 – Image illustration the excessive scale of new proposed building envelope



It is noteworthy to repeat the associated text located on page 15 of this document:

Overall, the proposed additional building height and massing has been sensitively and skilfully located on the site to enable view sharing across the site. This has been a key driver which has led to the relocation of mass from the western parts of the site to the eastern parts of the site, triggering the built form in those locations to exceed the height limit, in favour of promoting views across the site.

The below image demonstrates how the massing has been strategically positioned with respect to the surrounding developments to the south and southeast (in green).

Buildings to the south are view obstructed and the Horizon building is 43 stories high!

We trust that you will agree the sheer scale of the proposed development is **entirely inappropriate** for the residents and the established character of Darlinghurst.

Documents referenced in this submission

- *Visual Impact Assessment.pdf (March 2023)*
- *Development Application 164-172 and 174-194 William Street Woolloomooloo – D2022139.pdf (December 2023)*
- *Request for SEARs Bayswater Stage 2.pdf (February 2025)*
- *Appendix S Visual Impact Assessment.pdf (September 2025)*
- *Appendix F_Clause 4.6 Variation Report (Height).pdf (September 2025)*

Your sincerely,

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