

Isabella Kershaw - 52 Eltham Street: Strong Objection

I am an immediate neighbour to this development, living at 52 Eltham Street Gladesville. This is a small single residence cottage separated from the subject site by just one other small single residence cottage next door. I strongly object to this development's accommodation as a State Significant Development under the HDA Pathway and concomitant Rezoning Pathway in its entirety, for the following important reasons:

1. Disproportionate scale and excessive overdevelopment

The current proposal for a 14 storey structure is massively disproportionate to the surrounding low-density residential infrastructure, and is highly disrespectful to the existing character of these quiet suburban streets. It exceeds zoning and local height limits by an enormous 10 storeys, and lacks any precedent in the surrounding area. A structure of this size will cast major shadows that will kill gardens including my own, eliminate solar access, invasively overlook private residential properties, and produce gross visual pollution. Residents of Eltham and surrounding streets deeply value the integrity of our beautiful, communal and peaceful neighbourhood, and it is profoundly unfair to encroach so heavily on our right to the quiet enjoyment of our homes. This will hugely detriment the characteristics of our neighbourhood which residents of Gladesville value so profoundly. We respect our neighbourhood's beautiful heritage architecture, productive and pleasant gardens, and suburban quality, and are concerned that a precedent for huge scale SSD development will erase the uniquely charming atmosphere of this locality, which should be preserved for the enjoyment of current and future generations of residents.

2. Traffic and parking impacts

Eltham Street is a single lane, one way, local road that cannot appropriately absorb the retail and residential traffic impacts of this development. A significant population of disabled, aged, child and animal residents surrounding the proposed precinct make it extremely unsafe to drastically increase vehicle transit through Eltham and surrounding streets. A Woolworths alone may attract 200 or more vehicles per hour during commercial peak hour, as well as the vehicles of hundreds of new residents. Parking is also in extremely short supply on Eltham Street and is mainly available on the street. The inevitable increase in traffic along Eltham Street would make parking extremely difficult, and impact the safety of pedestrians. Furthermore, the precinct's location directly opposite a primary school invites a massive safety risk to child pedestrians and their families.

3. Public transport impact

Gladesville does not have the requisite public transport infrastructure to absorb the many hundreds of new residents this and surrounding developments would bring. Buses (501 & 500x) are already extremely crowded, with lines extending around street corners in peak hours, unreliable arrival times, and drivers often unable to allow passengers to board due to buses being full. We are not a Transport Oriented Development Zone, and there are no public plans to provide rail or light rail services in our area. Increasing the frequency of buses will not be sufficient to accommodate many hundreds of new residents.

4. Impact on local native fauna species

The development lot itself and surrounding lots are home to a wide variety of protected native species. These include ringtail possums, sulphur crested cockatoos, ringtail possums, blue tongue lizards, rainbow lorikeets, corvids, kookaburras, skinks, native bees and tawny frog mouths all of which are regularly present on the subject lot, Eltham and Westminster. I raised the presence of these species multiple times with Woolworths developers and representatives, but note that this concern is totally absent from their records of community consultation, and that their biodiversity due-diligence has not been met. In fact, one Woolworths representative stated at a community information session, referring to the presence of ringtail possums inhabiting the actual development site itself, that we should be glad to “get rid of these rats”. I have provided photographic evidence of native animals on the subject site and neighbouring sites, including my own only one door down. The impacts of this construction, including habitat loss, habitat relocation, increased traffic, vibrations, dust and construction noise, pose an unconscionable threat to the wellbeing and safety of local protected native fauna. Woolworths has made a concerted effort to obscure and conceal resident concerns about this fact, and the Minister and Department have clear statutory obligations to address these matters. We request that a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report, Biodiversity Certification Assessment Report or Biodiversity Stewardship Site Assessment Report be procured to assure compliance with the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and protect the safety of the beautiful native creatures with whom we share this area.

5. Disability access requirements

I live with my grandmother who is totally blind, has significant mobility issues and moderate to severe hearing loss. Changes to traffic conditions along Eltham Street, including the suggested construction of a roundabout directly opposite our home, will create major discriminatory safety and wellbeing risks for her as a severely disabled person. She will no longer be capable or confident to manage her waste collection and bins, water her front yard or safely enter and exit her property to access her community. She has lived in this street for twenty years, is a disabled aged pensioner, and enjoys independence as a direct consequence of now threatened features of this neighbourhood including the one way flow of light traffic, a quiet environment where vehicles are audible, familiarity with the layout of the neighbourhood, and relationships with neighbours. This development would eradicate that independence. It would also eradicate her primary hobby, which is vegetable gardening, due to the obstruction of solar access. Woolworths representatives are well aware of my grandmother’s condition and disabilities, but made no effort to consult with her on accessibility and impacts, even as an immediate neighbour to the site. She is furthermore an aged pensioner with extremely limited income, and cannot afford to move elsewhere, notwithstanding the adverse impact this development will have on her property value.

6. Privacy and personal safety issues

This development includes plans for residential balconies to overlook private residential gardens including my own, and primary school grounds. The privacy and safety of residents and school children is put at significant risk by this feature. As a blind person, my grandmother would be unaware if a resident of this neighbouring building were violating her privacy against her knowledge. I would no longer feel comfortable or safe to spend time quietly and privately in my own backyard for simple pleasant activities like sunbathing, gardening, singing or drawing. As a very young woman living only with my vulnerable grandmother, the potential invasion of my privacy on my own property by large numbers of new and unfamiliar residents is very concerning. Furthermore, I do not want to be surrounded by CCTV or surveillance cameras in my own street,

especially whilst other retailers like Coles are increasingly procuring CCTV and surveillance contracts from companies like Palantir which breach data privacy. I do not want to live next door to a corporation surveilling the street frontage I will pass every day. It makes me feel unsafe, not safe.

7. Not fit for purpose

This development will not deliver affordable housing to the people who need it most, nor will it supply meaningful amenity to Gladesville residents. Our area already has access to a Coles, Aldi, Woolworths and Harris Farm within 1 to 5 minutes of this site. There are many many cafes in these and surrounding streets, as well as doctors surgeries, dentist, gyms and restaurants all within very close walking distance. A mixed use precinct is already slated for development at the Coles Gladesville site and will adequately service residential needs. Woolworths is grossly disinterested in the provision of convenient amenity for residents or affordable housing and is merely exploiting this deregulation loophole supplied by the NSW Government to generate unwarranted profit on retail and crappy housing that will date rapidly and remain unaffordable to people who are actually housing insecure and priced out of the market. It furthermore does not improve the public domain, but produces unwanted visual pollution, transport overburdening risks and major traffic issues.

8. Lack of public license for the HDA Scheme

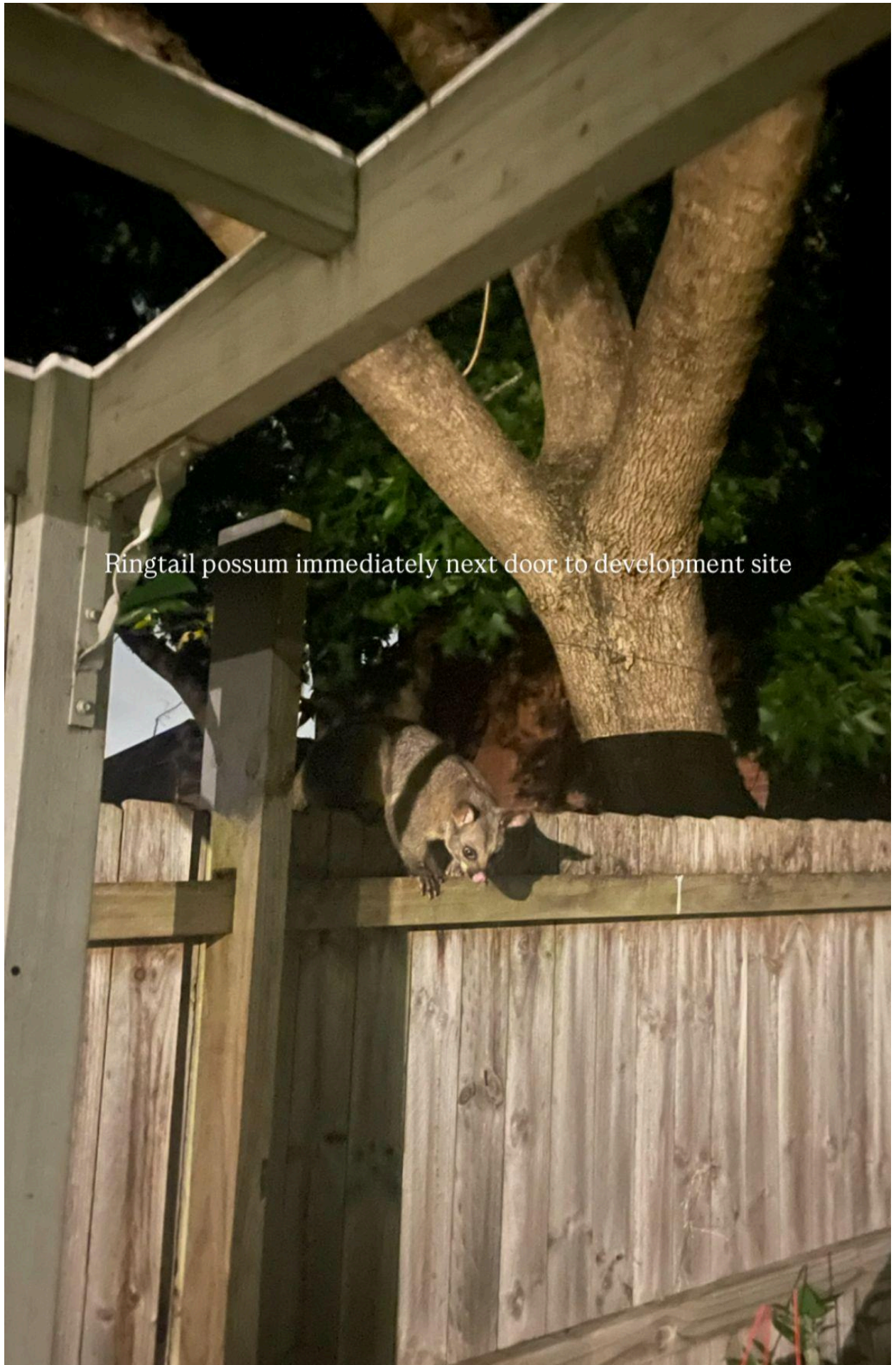
Have you driven past housing in Mount Druitt or Blacktown recently? The HDA pathway is a shameful abdication of the NSW Government's responsibility to deliver affordable housing that is fit for purpose. High density residential development must be environmentally appropriate, serviceable by appropriate transport and social infrastructure, and developed with the needs of communities in mind. This development fails miserably to this end. The HDA Scheme transparently deregulates the NSW Planning environment to the benefit of corporate developers without due consideration for the destructive impact on local communities. Meanwhile, wait lists for social housing are in excess of ten years. Under the HDA scheme, residents are cheated of local planning measures, local council representation, accepted zoning provisions and their right to enjoy a conventional notice period of four weeks, now halved. Meanwhile, developers are afforded huge concessions under SSD and rezoning approvals which they lack public license to implement. It reflects extremely poorly on the NSW Government and only compounds the frustration of NSW residents who want to see a sustainable and equitable solution to the housing crisis. I encourage the people reviewing to look beyond their legislative environment to empathise conscionably with the severe negative impact this development will affect on Gladesville residents, mostly aged-pensioners and young families. This development does not give meaningful priority to housing issues in NSW, but to corporate developers like Woolworths, even at a time when public trust in the retailer is at an all time low.



Rainbow lorikeet on Eltham street,
one among a huge flock that lives in
the trees along Eltham Street

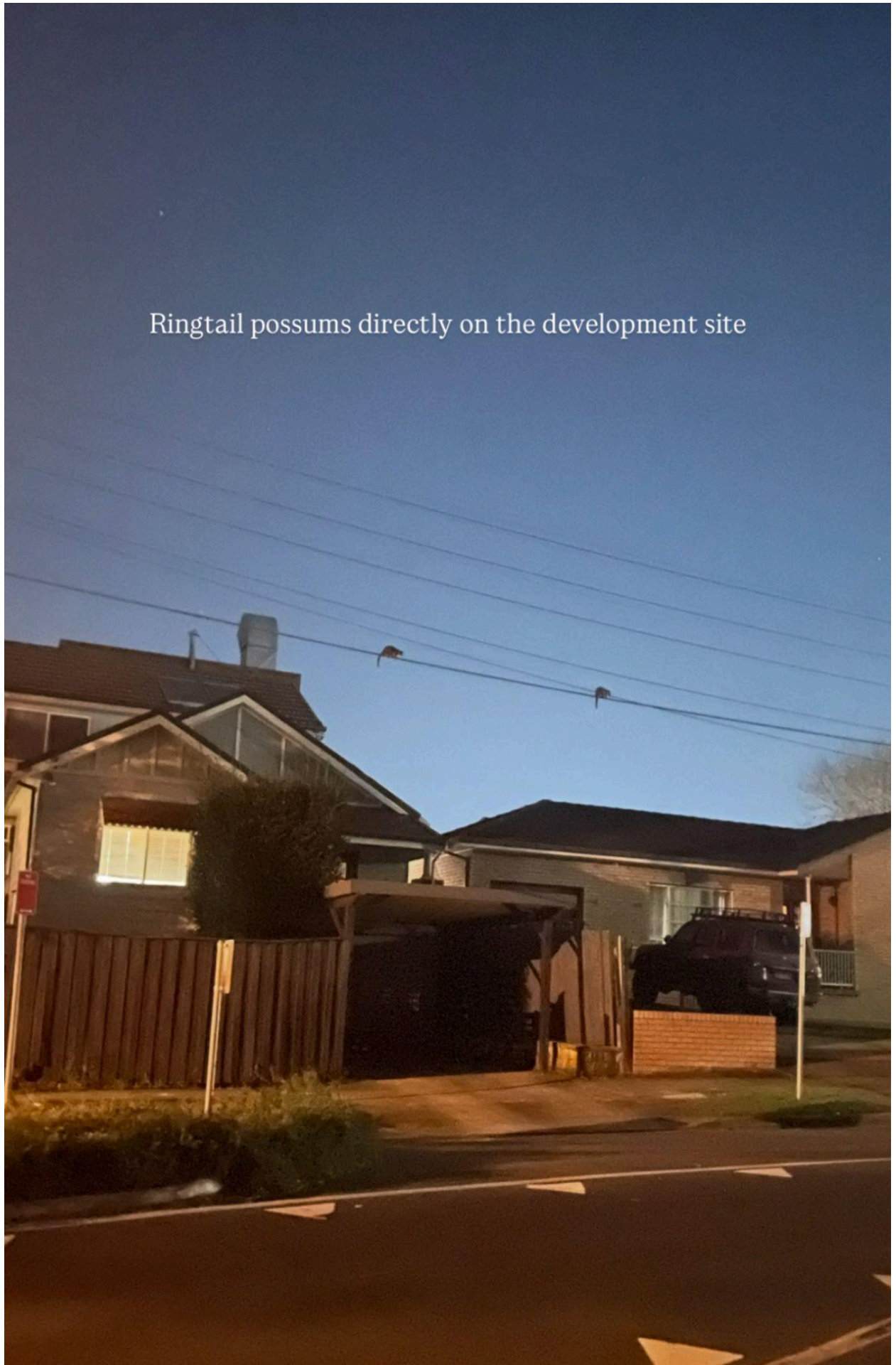


Blue tongue lizard at 52 Eltham Street, one property over from development site, enjoying sunlight which will no longer be available if this development is approved



Ringtail possum immediately next door to development site

Ringtail possums directly on the development site





Tawny frog mouth directly on development site

Butterfly at 52 Eltham Street





baby magpie at 52 Eltham Street next door



Corvid in front of 52 Eltham street



Native bee at 52 Eltham Street, pollinating flowers
which will die if this development is approved



Sulphur crested cockatoos in trees immediately neighbouring development site, again part of a large flock residing in the street