



Pemulwuy Project Redfern – Precinct Three

Public Feedback Report

NSW Government Planning & Environment – Website Submissions

MP06_0101 MOD 2 Pemulwuy Project Redfern – Concept Plan Modification
SSD 8135 Pemulwuy Project Redfern – New Student Accommodation Building

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Introduction

The NSW Government Planning & Environment has received significant public feedback in relation to the proposed modifications in Precinct Three of the Pemulwuy Project. The Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) is seeking approval of their modified concept to build a 24-storey building for student housing. The building will comprise of 522 rooms, intending to accommodate 596 student beds. The DA application for Precinct Three has received 229 submissions of public feedback, 98 of which were on the State Significant Development application (SSD 8135) and 131 on the Modification Request (MP_06_0101 MOD 2).

This report provides an analysis of the public feedback received for the proposed plan for Precinct Three of the Pemulwuy Project.

First, it identifies the categories of objections submitted and the map of the area considered. Then it summarises the objections and considers the objections within the Redfern area and within the extended areas for:

- MP06_0101 MOD 2_Pemulwuy Project Redfern – Concept Plan Modification (PART 1) and;
- SSD 8135_Pemulwuy Project Redfern – New Student Accommodation Building (PART 2)

The number of objections from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy is also identified, and a summary of common concerns is provided in conclusion.

Categories of Objections

A review of all submissions identified 7 categories of objections:

Aboriginal to student housing ratio: Objection to housing for 596 students, which is considered highly disproportionate to the affordable housing available for the Aboriginal people in the area.

No additional recreational space: Objection to a lack of additional space to accommodate an influx of people in the area.

Size and scale: Objection to the size and scale of a 24-storey building in comparison to the surrounding buildings and homes in Redfern.

Traffic congestion and parking: Objection to the increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic within the area and the lack of parking to support this congestion.

Design excellence, culture and heritage: Objection to a design that is considered to not match the local character of the area detracting from the local community, culture and heritage.

Lack of consultation on plan and alterations: Objection to extreme proposal changes from planning a 6-storey to a 24-storey building with little notice received on the proposed modifications.

Overpopulation of students: Objection to a lack of safety planning for overcrowding and the possible social implications caused by an overpopulation of students in an area considered to have existing issues with noise, alcohol and drug use.

Maps of the Area

The map below illustrates the area of Redfern (highlighted in blue) and the extended areas outlined in dark blue. The outlined boundaries are the main point of discussion in relation to the affected areas of Precinct Three of the Pemulwuy Project.

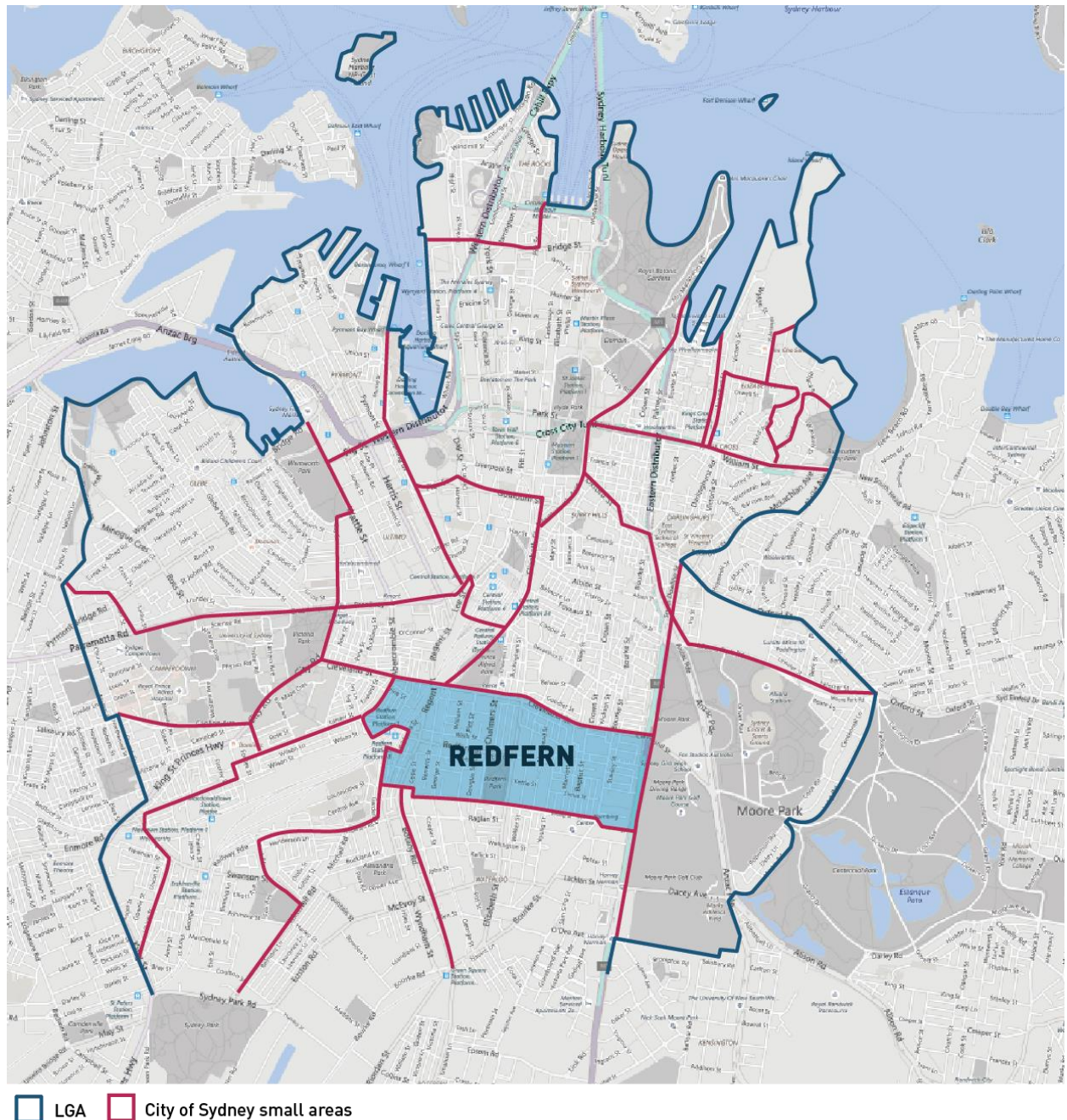


Image 1.

The map below illustrates the location of the site development (Precinct 1, 2 and 3) within the Redfern area, which includes Darlington.

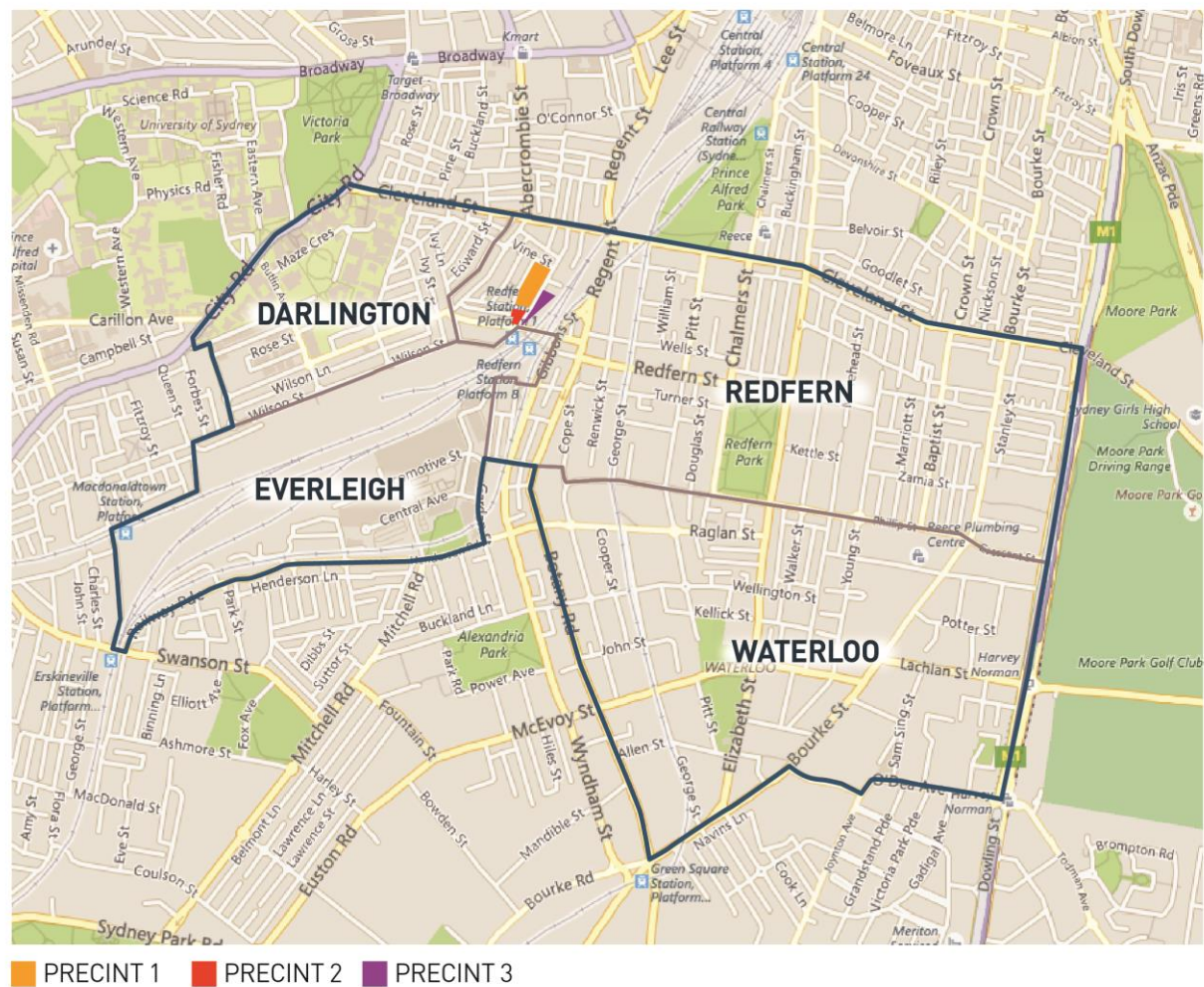


Image 2.

PART 1: MP06_0101 MOD 2 Pemulwuy Project Redfern – Concept Plan Modification

Summary of Submissions

The recent submissions for the Modification Request reveal a total of 131 responses received from the public.

From the 131 submissions retrieved, 95% of the people object, 2% support, and 3% commented on the proposed changes in Precinct Three of the Pemulwuy Project (See table 1).

72% of the submissions are from within the Redfern area and 28% from within extended areas (See table 2).

MP06_0101 MOD 2		
Objectors	124	95%
Comments	4	3%
Supporters	3	2%
Total Submissions	131	100%

Table 1.

MP06_0101 MOD 2		
Redfern Area	94	72%
Extended Areas	37	28%
Total Submissions	131	100%

Table 2.

Objections from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy

There is 1 submission from The Aboriginal Tent Embassy for the Modification Request. The submission reveal that the most significant complaints revolve around 5 objections:

- Size and scale
- Lack of consultation on the plan and alterations
- Design excellence, culture & heritage
- Overpopulation of students as a result of this development.
- Unbalanced Aboriginal to student housing ratio

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy have expressed their concern on the negative visual impacts that a 24 storey building will have on the surrounding area. The modification fails to achieve design excellence as the building stands out of character with the surrounding neighbourhood, which is rich in Aboriginal culture and heritage. Further to their concern, the unbalanced ratio of Aboriginal to student housing will further displace the Aboriginal people from 'The Block'. The 99 year lease on this property will take away any Aboriginal control over the land for the next century.

Objections Within the Redfern Area – MP06_0101

72 percent of the submissions were made from people located within the Redfern Area. The graph below illustrates the objections raised from these residents.

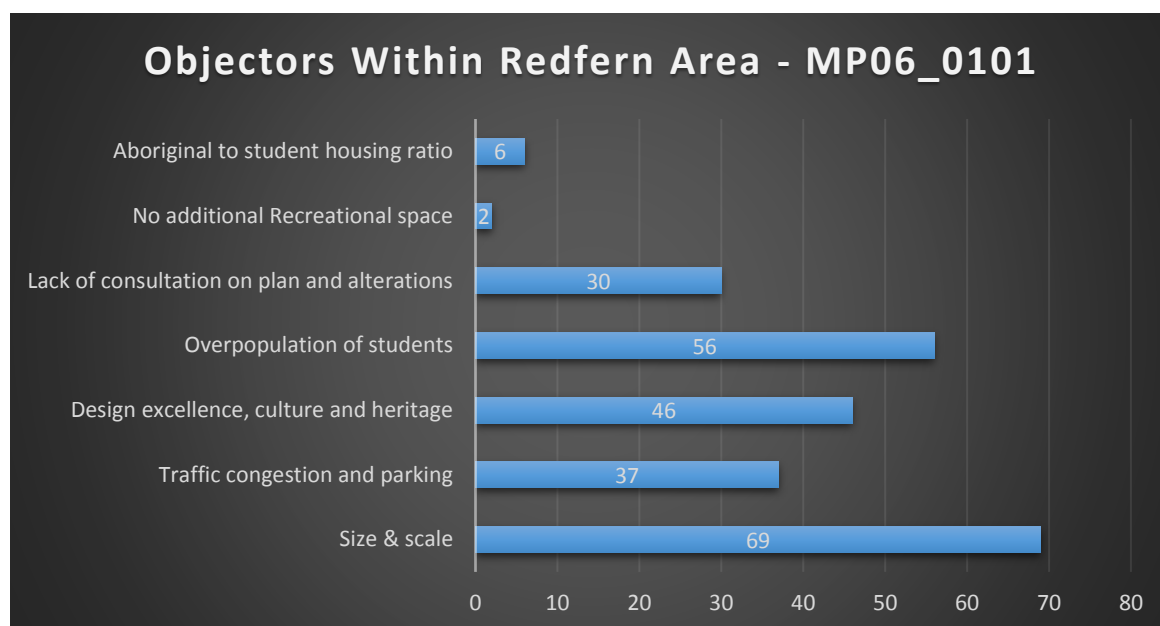


Image 3.

Primary Objections

We observe that the most consistent points addressed by the objectors are in relation to:

- Size and scale, and;
- Overpopulation of students

A 24-storey building in Redfern is described by the objectors as dramatically disproportionate to the surrounding buildings and homes. The objectors identified the negative implications of the height in particular. This includes:

- overshadowing (loss of sunlight)
- the creation of a wind tunnel effect
- the invasion of privacy for surrounding homes
- the loss of scenic views
- a loss in property value for the lower scale residences.

Coinciding with this, the objectors fear that a building of this size will create an overpopulation of students that will increase the social problems that already exist in the area such as noise, pollution, drug and alcohol use.

Secondary Objections

Residents within the Redfern area are also concerned with the proposal's failure to meet design excellence; the increased traffic congestion and the lack of consultation on the plan and alterations.

The proposed development is adjacent to a conservation area and is considered aesthetically modern. In the objectors view, this threatens to detract from the community culture by introducing modern features to an area predominately built of terrace homes and heritage buildings such as the Redfern Railway station.

Other objections include the lack of additional recreational or green space, and the unbalanced ratio of Aboriginal to student housing available in the area.

Objections Within Extended Areas – MP06_0101

28 percent of the submissions are from residents within extended areas. The graph below illustrates the objections raised by the residents within the extended areas.

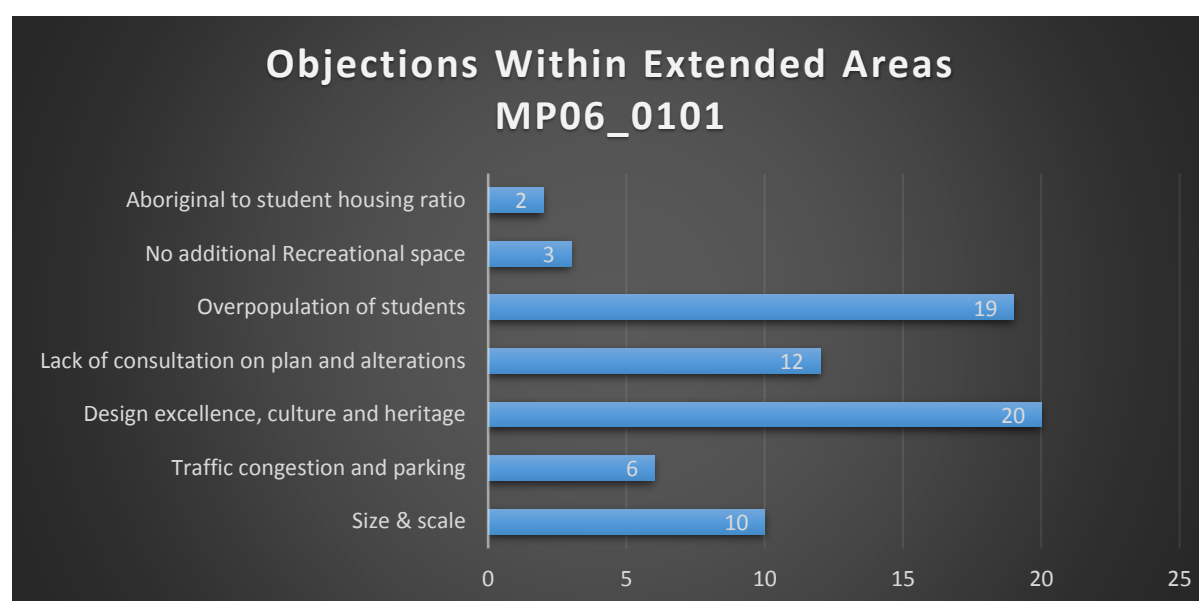


Image 4.

Primary Objections

The main points addressed in the submissions from residents of extended areas include objections to:

- design excellence, culture and heritage
- the overpopulation of students in Redfern.

The objectors believe that the modern design and size of a 24-storey building will negatively impact the area and affect its culture and heritage. They also fear that a building of this size will create an overpopulation of students that will increase social problems such as noise, pollution, drug and alcohol use.

Secondary Objections

Residents of extended areas are also concerned with the lack of consultation and alterations on Precinct Three. They object to the size and scale of the project and its implications on traffic congestion and parking. As visitors from other areas believe they will struggle to find parking in what they already consider a dense neighbourhood.

Other objections include the lack of additional recreational or green space, and the Aboriginal to student housing ratio within the area. Submissions have reiterated the importance of “The Block” remaining under the supervision and custodianship of Aboriginal people. Therefore, residents believe affordable housing for the local community should be prioritised over housing for what would essentially be international students.

PART 2: SSD 8135 Pemulwuy Project Redfern – New Student Accommodation Building

Summary of Submissions

The recent submissions on the State Significant Development application reveal a total of 98 responses.

From the 98 submissions retrieved 92% object, 7% support, and 1% commented on the proposed changes to Precinct Three of the Pemulwuy Project (See table 3).

58% of the submissions are from within the Redfern area and 42% are from within the extended areas (See table 4).

SSD 8135		
Objectors	90	92%
Comments	1	1%
Supporters	7	7%
Total	98	100%

Table 3.

SSD 8135		
Redfern Area	57	58%
Extended Areas	41	42%
Total Submissions	98	100%

Table 4.

Objections from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy

There are 14 submissions from the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the State Significant Development application. These submissions reveal that the most significant complaints revolve around 4 objections:

- Size and scale
- Lack of consultation on the plan and alterations
- Design excellence, culture & heritage
- Overpopulation of students as a result of this development.

There is a major concern in relation to the unbalanced ratio of student to Aboriginal housing available within the area. The 99 year lease also removes any opportunity for 'ownership' and voice over this land and its history. A major concern of whether student housing of this capacity is sustainable for a 99 year lease.

Objections Within the Redfern Area - SSD 8135

58 percent of submissions are from within the Redfern area. The graph below illustrates the objections raised by the residents within the area.

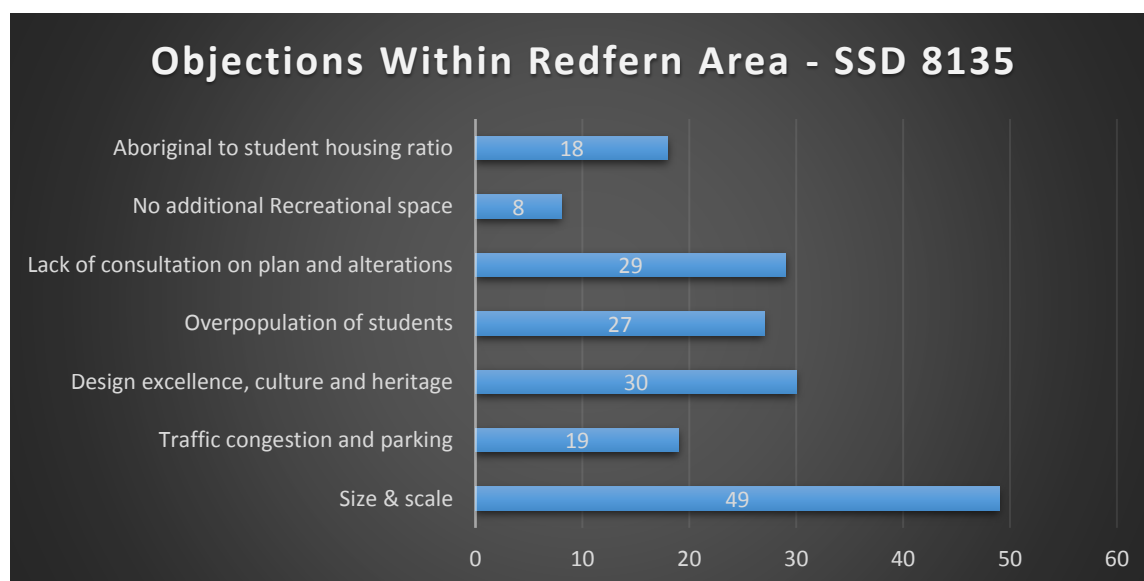


Image 5.

Primary Objections

The main point of concern for objectors living in the Redfern area pertains to the size and scale of the student housing. A 24-storey building in the heart of Redfern is viewed as disproportionate compared to local buildings, as the closest high-rise building is at Lawson Square at 12-storey high. The 24-storey modification becomes double the height of Lawson Square, and significantly larger in comparison to the surrounding buildings and homes.

Secondary Objections

The most common secondary concerns include:

- Overpopulation of students
- Lack of consultation on plan and alterations
- Failure to achieve design excellence to preserve culture and heritage of the local community.

The objectors believe that the overpopulation of students may displace the Aboriginal people who are from the area. Further, the overpopulation of students is also feared to have negative implications which can lead to noise pollution, and the increase of alcohol and drug abuse.

Objections to the alterations from original plans express discouragement of a 24-storey increase and encourage the importance of including a bridge to reduce foot traffic, and more amenities that benefit the Indigenous community.

Other objections include traffic congestion and parking, no additional recreational or green space included within the plan, and the unfair ratio of student to Aboriginal housing within the area.

Locals are concerned with the minimal amount of affordable housing available for Aboriginal people in comparison to available student housing. The objectors consider the unbalanced numbers to be unfair to the Aboriginal community. Residents have expressed the need for the AHC to prioritise housing for the local community.

Objections Within Extended Areas – SSD 8135

42 percent of submissions are from within the extended areas. The graph below illustrates the objections raised by the residents within the extended areas.

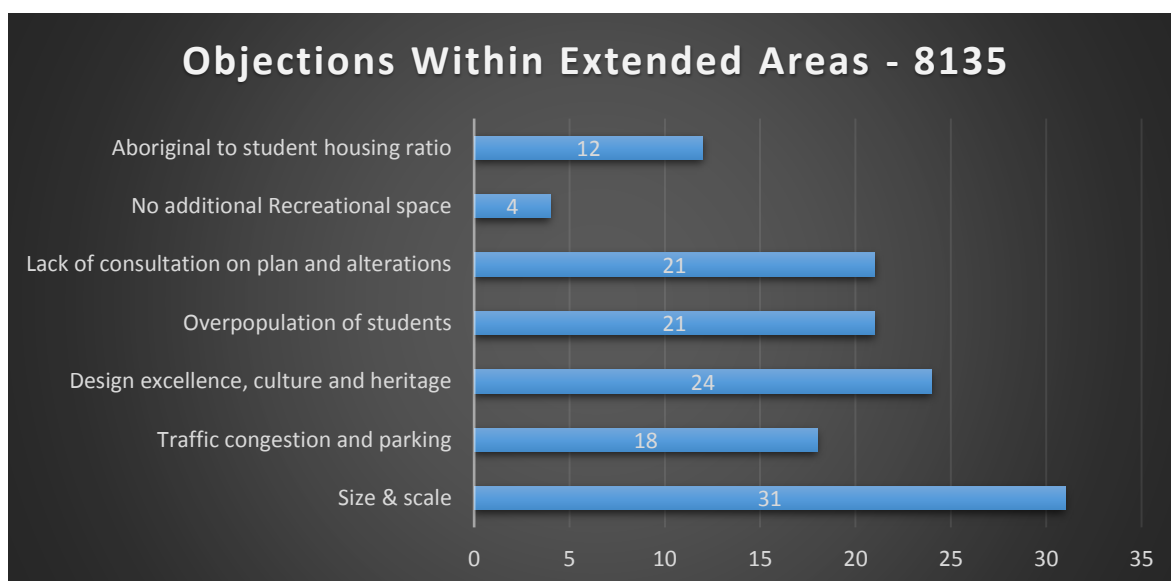


Image 6.

Primary Objections

The main objections addressed by the residents within the extended areas include:

- Size and scale
- Failure to achieve design excellence and preserve the local culture.

The Height of the proposed 24-storey building is deemed unnecessary to have in such close proximity to the city. Residents of extended areas feel there is a need to preserve the local culture and 'feel' of Redfern, which is embedded in the history of the Indigenous community.

The objection of the height stems from the lack of visual appeal that will come with a high rise in the neighbourhood, which according to the objectors will stand out in a negative way – taking away from the 'historic charm' of Redfern.

Secondary Objections

Secondary objections include an overpopulation of students which can potentially further displace Aboriginal People who are in need of more affordable housing; lack of consultation on plans and alterations; traffic congestion and parking; and the overpopulation of students in the area.

Other objections include the lack of additional recreational or green space, and the highly unbalanced ratio of Aboriginal to student housing available in the area.

Conclusion: Common Concerns

According to the analysed data, there are common concerns portrayed through most of the objections received from both MP06_0101 and SSD 8135 both within the Redfern area and the extended areas.

The size and scale, overpopulation of students, design excellence, culture and heritage appear to be a considerably higher concern over others. However, there is still significant feedback in relation to the lack of consultation on alterations and the concern of increased traffic congestion that will follow from Precinct Three.

Size and scale

The strong objection to the size and scale is consistent throughout most submissions made by residents within Redfern and extended areas. The objectors have expressed their concern for the height and bulk of a 24-storey building in Redfern, which in their view will negatively impact the existing amenity of the area.

Overshadowing of the surrounding homes and public spaces is feared to cause some loss of sunlight for most surrounding properties as they are considerably lower in scale. Further, residents who are currently exposed to scenic views identified that the new development would block existing views from the Anzac bridge to Barangaroo in the affected areas.

The 24-storey building will also impose on the nearby residences, which will threaten privacy and safety according to the objectors. Many have mentioned their fear of losing property value if the development goes ahead.

The size and scale of the project is also feared to have a negative impact on the 'feel' of what the objectors consider to be a historic and cultural neighbourhood.

Overpopulation of Students

Another major common concern from the size of this development is in relation to the social implications caused by the overpopulation of students.

The objectors fear that 596 students will cause overcrowding in the Redfern area. Some residents feel that the area is already oversaturated with student housing. Their concerns refer to having an influx of people within the demographic that will be living in this housing, which will most likely be international students, who have no long-term interest in the community.

Further, in the objectors view, the influx of students will cause noise pollution, and drug and alcohol use which, they believe, are already an existing problem in the area. Having an excess amount of students in the neighbourhood for a temporary time is also feared to threaten the safety and quality of life for all residents in that area.

The locals are worried the overpopulation of students will threaten the sustainability of the local community, especially referring to the Indigenous community. The objection to student housing also relates to the unbalanced ratio of available housing for students to Aboriginal people. Residents of Redfern and the extended areas would like the AHC to prioritise this land for the Aboriginal people, and they fear student housing of this size and capacity will only further displace the people in this community.

Lastly, it has been repeatedly expressed by objectors from both Redfern and extended areas, that there is not enough infrastructure in place for an increase of 596 students.

Design excellence, culture and heritage

The objection of design excellence, culture and heritage is another strong commonality expressed throughout the submissions from residents of Redfern and extended areas.

The objectors believe that the building does not match the character of the area, which is next to a conservation area. They disapprove of the design of the student accommodation building, as they fear it may also influence further development of massive high rises in the area. If further development takes place, residents believe the preservation of indigenous culture and heritage in the area will be threatened.

The project is considered aesthetically modern. In the objectors view, this threatens to detract from the community culture by introducing modern features to an area predominately built of terrace homes and heritage buildings such as the Redfern Railway station.

Alterations from the original plan have left many residents disappointed, as some features that were considered positive or helpful aspects to this development may no longer be included. A pedestrian bridge to reduce traffic congestion and an art gallery to display Indigenous Art was said to be one of the 'selling' points in the original proposal. Failure to deliver these promises have left residents disappointed as they feel the development does not support enough cultural amenities.

The overall most prevalent concern of residents relates to the size and scale and how it will negatively impact the surrounding neighbourhood and Indigenous community of this area. In particular, the height is mentioned throughout the submissions. Many were and are content with the original proposal for a 6-storey building as they believe it will not negatively impact the area as much.



Public Feedback Report

Pemulwuy Project Redfern – Precinct Three