



THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY INC
FOR COMMUNITY AND HERITAGE
EST 1964

For the attention of the Hon. Paul Scully MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
Email: office@scully.minister.nsw.gov.au and osec.corro@dpie.nsw.gov.au

15 December 2025

For attention: Ms Kiersten Fishburn, Secretary, NSW Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure

Dear Minister and Ms Fishburn,

**Mixed use development with infill affordable housing – Oxford and Verona Street, Paddington
SSD-87245208 13-17 Oxford Street and 2 Verona Street, Paddington**

On behalf of The Paddington Society, we note the following regarding the above proposal.

The Society acknowledges and supports redevelopment of this site, including 13-15 Oxford Street and 2 Verona Street, the latter two sites both containing developments which do not contribute to the urban streetscape of the Heritage Conservation Area.

We support the extension of the street awning along the whole frontage, the articulated façade and the inclusion of four theatres - the theatres are much desired community resources, greatly valued, well patronised, and previously provided on this site.

However, we believe that the apartment façade design is over scaled and should be modified relative to that of 1 Oxford Street.

We note the following objections, recommendations and concerns:

The theatres proposed in Basement 3 have poor accessibility (3 floors down from street level) and would be better located in Basement 1, with a more strongly articulated entry from Oxford Street, and a strong stair link (preferably glazed) from Ground Floor to that Basement 1. The current arrangement is likely to reduce patronage and commercial viability, and will thus be less in the Public Interest, as well as reducing the value of the cultural and creative floor space.

The increase in car parking provision from that set out in the Scoping Application is *not* supported, with the proposal increasing from 1 to 2 basement parking levels (from some 30 spaces to 50 spaces).

This additional basement will require more extensive excavation and ongoing groundwater pumping, which will increase environmental impacts, additional risks to adjacent and surrounding properties and increase the traffic burden in local roads, for this very accessible location.

The upper-level unit sizes are massive, even apart from the two penthouses, e.g. 168 m² plus 52 m² balcony for 2-bed unit (unit 5.01) and 301 m² plus 68 m² balcony for 3-bed unit (unit 6.02). These are excessive when compared to the minimum ADG guide of minimum 70 m² + 10 m² balcony and 90 m² + 12 m² balcony respectively.

The proposal would better achieve State housing objectives if the upper levels accommodated more reasonably sized apartments, rather than these ultra luxurious units in this very well serviced location.

The number of Affordable dwelling units on the site will be *decreased* in this proposal.

Currently there are 27 one-bed units, renting at c \$700 per week, whereas the proposal will provide just 14 Affordable units, to be rented only for 15 years at 20% lower than the median rental for the suburb, which is highly likely to be considerably higher than the current rental.

Since the proposal depends on the provision of Affordable units in order to gain an additional two upper floors, which will have access to valued and highly profitable harbour views, we ask that the proposal provides a minimum of 23 Affordable units, i.e. 15% less than currently, in line with the City of Sydney LEP 2012 Amendment no. 109 re Dwelling Retention, applied to Affordable unit numbers.

The 7-8 storeys proposed is too high in the Heritage Conservation area and in the streetscape of Oxford Street. Nearby institutional buildings on more prominent corners. (St Vincents Hospital and Notre Dame University) are only 5-6 storeys high, while the building to the east across Verona Street is only 4 storeys high. (See Figures 16 and 19 of the EIS)

The visual impact statement does not properly consider this change of scale, stating that 'Public views are generally transitory'. A better solution would be to match the height of the adjacent street wall of the 25 Hours Hotel, (i.e. a street wall 1 storey lower than proposed) with any further storey to be well set back from both streets (4m setbacks). Street wall alignment is good urban design practice on a major street, noting that the building will be very visible from multiple Oxford Street viewpoints.

Basement 1 should be setback to Oxford Street, to ensure viability of the existing London Plane trees. Arborist advice regarding pruning of branches for the proposed facade should also be required.

Protection of Busby's bore is a significant concern. We ask and believe that any approval must include robust conditions for its accurate identification, in case the plotted extrapolated position is at variance with the reality. Protection against nearby excavation should be an essential condition.

The ground floor entries to the Terraces appear to be over-scaled in relation to the modest height and dimensions of the adjacent Rose Terrace dwellings.

Impacts on Rose Terrace: Although the application acknowledges the significance of Rose Terrace, we note that there still appear to be unacceptable impacts on this heritage listed terrace group.

The ADG recommends 18m separation between habitable rooms, yet the proposal has balconies and bedroom windows 11-12m away from habitable room windows of the tiny Rose Terrace dwellings. The proposal should include privacy screens to south facing windows and balconies to units at all levels, perhaps with the exception of those for Level 5 and 6.

RLs on the drawings indicate some 2m of excavation for the new Verona St terraces below the adjacent wall of Rose Terrace. Since these existing buildings are structurally fragile, stringent conditions are required to protect them from any damage caused by this level of excavation.

Nos 16, 18 and 20 Rose Terrace, in the north-east group, will be the most affected by loss of sunlight to habitable spaces from this development. We ask that DPHI assessors make a detailed check of the solar diagrams, to ensure that at least the DCP minimum of sunlight is retained for these tiny houses.

The Paddington Society's concerns regarding the proposal are based on all of the above, and we trust that the Assessment team will take our concerns into consideration during the assessment.

Yours faithfully



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