

RE: Bay West Precinct Draft Land-use and planning strategy.

Dear Ms Ann-Maree Carruthers,

The draft land-use and planning strategy is an interesting document to read and could lead to the development of a more vibrant neighbourhood in the future. The document has a lot of information and it can be seen that the team has spent many hours over the details in developing the strategy.

As a disclaimer, my background is in Landscape Architecture and Planning, and my views on open space, community development, and planning are biased. I also acknowledge that my hour reading and exploring the documents will not uncover the intricacies and politics of the decisions made within the draft document.

The proposed rezoning to the Arncliffe and Banksia town centres are quite comprehensive, and both these two areas are quite complicated, as evidenced in the diagrams. Both town centres are bounded by natural and man made features, being the natural topography of ridges and hills, and the transport infrastructure of highways and rail.

The rezoning proposed stretches over all these features to create, in plan, a cohesive area of development of future residential and commerce. The singular massing of zones show a logical and practical area of development that would in theory work, if the whole area were to have minimum topographical difference, or numerous connections over the infrastructure.

The plans fails to address how topography affects the developments arising from rezoning. Evidence of this is the placement of high density residential zoning on the top of the hill to the west of Arncliffe town centre. This will potentially lead to overshadow of properties adjacent, and more importantly the town centre. It will also creating the impression of much taller and imposing developments when compared to similar developments in the valleys and low lying areas. Within these low areas is key transport infrastructure that will not change height over time, further creating a height juxtaposition to the new developments (keeping in mind Princes Hwy width is roughly a 7 storey building lying on its side).

The highway and rail corridor themselves prove as complicated in navigating. Referencing the *Figure 19: Infrastructure Map* of proposed and existing connections, there is a distinct lack of pedestrian and cycle connections to the town centres from the east. With only two proposed cycle connections, and no new road connections to the rezoned town centre, the community benefits are not evident. Any rezoning in the town centres will increase pedestrian, cycle, and vehicular traffic, these roads already deal with heavy loads and will only become more problematic in the future. The plan needs to investigate, or at least propose future investigation, of pedestrian connections over Princes Hwy and the rail corridor. These corridors should connect to open space on both sides of the infrastructure, and could be the instigators to creating new open spaces.

All the rezoning and potential increase in population, there seems to be almost no improvement in public amenity. The draft plan provides cursory commentary on upgrading some small parks, and developing the Kogarah Golf course, all of which will only provide the immediate area with amenity, and not the larger population with public open space and areas for community cohesion and socialising. With such drastic changes to the zoning of areas, an equal response is required for providing amenities for the community. A more thorough and comprehensive response is required for the development of new parkland on crown land, this is not an item that should be placed on the developer where square meters of open space will be traded for Section 94 contributions to a park on the other side of the LGA. Developers cannot be entrusted to provide meaningful public open space for the community, as all too often the developers are in it for profits as seen in developments like Wolli Creek. Open spaces are critical in the developments of community, and are a key component in community cohesion and socialisation.

The draft plan is a good look into the future and does address a lot of the constraints with developing and improving the Arncliffe and Banksia town centres. Further work is required to provide rationale for the decisions made in zoning topographically higher ground, and the less than optimal upgrades to open space.

I look forward to reviewing the revised strategy and plan, and the potential the rezoning may bring to the area.

Regards,  
Andrew Chau