

To whom it may concern,

We have lived in St Leonards for over 20 years, so we have an excellent view of what it is like living in the precinct and can share our experiences of what makes the area great and what could be improved.

### **Mitigating the high impact of large scale development on residents and office workers**

We live opposite the Mirvac and Landmark developments (run by Lane Cove Council) and surrounded by another approximately 6 developments run by North Sydney council. We have lodged hundreds of legitimate complaints against the Lane Cove council sites and none against the North Sydney sites. This anomaly has been largely caused by 2 major issues in the Lane Cove DA hours:

- **Inappropriate High Noise Respite.** High noise was allowed from 7am in the morning 6 days a week reaching up to 82 dB (above 75dB is considered highly affected noise, the highest level of noise) with only a 1 hour respite allowed between 12noon to 1pm. High noise should only have been allowed from 9am to 5pm as per the NSW interim construction guidelines and there should have been a 1 hour respite every 2 hours as per the councils own noise pollution policies.
- **Inappropriate Saturday hours.** Hours of 7am to 4pm have been allowed with high noise from 7am (with a 1hour respite from 12noon to 1pm) rather than Lane Cove Council's own noise pollution policy of 8am to 12noon with no high noise at all on a Saturday. The EPA described the Saturday hours as totally unacceptable.

This created a situation where under normal circumstances the residents could not maintain their health and wellbeing. Please note these developments are expected to proceed for 3 to 4 years.

Adding to the misery of residents was:

- breaches of morning, lunchtime and evening DA times as well as jackhammering on a Sunday and illegal dumping in the middle of the night.
- Constant nightworks, we have had approx. 100 nights of nightworks in the last 6 months. I believe the number of nightworks could have been significantly less if the RTA had been more flexible in allowing a lane closure on Pacific Highway in non-busy daytime hours.
- High pitched beepers on the machinery all hours of the day and night.

This created a situation on many days where when normal hours were combined with breaches and nightworks that residents were subjected to over 20 hours of noise in a 24-hour period.

The residents have worked very hard to improve the situation by working with the council (by raising breaches) and the developers and Mirvac in particular have been very good working with the residents to help alleviate the effect of the inappropriate DA times. Both sites are currently following a 7am to 8am and 12 to 1:30pm high noise respite, they have generally stopped the breaches (Mircvac did this very early on, Landmark has taken longer and had more serious breaches such as illegal dumping and jackhammering from 7am on a Sunday). Additionally, Mirvac and Landmark have made changes to the beepers to lower the pitch while still maintaining safety and where possible do the noisiest work of nightworks earlier in the night. Saturday hours still remain an issue as 1 day of rest is simply not enough from large scale developments, they should be changed to start at 8am and end at 12noon (latest 1pm), also high noise should be brought into line with the NSW interim construction guidelines of 9am to 5pm with appropriate respite during that period.

Going forward the residents should not have to endure so much stress and time as well as serious effects on health and wellbeing to get survivable conditions (I hope in the future DAs are set more appropriately so we can get liveable rather than just survivable conditions).

My recommendations for the future are contained in the attached letter which I have previously emailed to the Lane Cove Council. I have offered to consult with the Lane Cove Council and I extend the offer to the people involved in this planning study. I have lived with highly intrusive construction day and night for the past year and have worked hard to improve the situation for myself and my neighbours through thorough investigation and reasonable arguments based on the DA and environmental standards set by the EPA, the councils and the NSW interim construction guidelines as well as working with council and developers. I would like to help ensure other people do not have to suffer the same way and can benefit from what we have learned, by simple steps being implemented by councils and developers to ensure a much higher quality of life for people living alongside construction. I believe St Leonards will have construction for the next 10 years or so, so this is a very important issue. With appropriate high noise respite (synchronised with surrounding sites), appropriate Saturday hours, appropriate setting of beepers on machinery and careful planning and consideration of neighbours when night-time work is required we can create an environment that allows developers, residents and workers to more peacefully co-exist in what will be many years of strategic development for the area.

### **Pedestrian walkways and safety**

As mentioned in the report, pedestrian walkways vary enormously. The experience ranges from dangerous (the intersection of Albany Street and Oxley Street) to comfortable (the wide footpaths required by North Sydney council for new developments).

We find the intersection of Albany Street and Oxley Street particularly dangerous, as it involves a high-volume intersection with low visibility (and often cars moving at relatively high speeds). We recommend the installation of metal barriers similar to other intersections in Crows Nest.

The walkway from St Leonards station through Sergeants Lane into Atchison Street is also very unpleasant, as cars and pedestrians need to share the road and as a pedestrian you have the option of walking in path of cars or in the gutter (there is no footpath). Also, cars turning right from Sergeants Lane into Christie Street are an issue as they need to go into the right-hand lane (which is the only area for pedestrians to walk) and then put pressure on pedestrians crossing when the lights turn green. A suggestion is to make only a single lane for cars, and to make a wide footpath for the pedestrian traffic (especially as North Sydney Council propose Atchison Street as the future corridor between St Leonards station and Crows Nest village)

We strongly urge a separate investigation on improving pedestrian access, with particular focus on current problem areas, with the report proposing specific improvements and a general requirement for wide footpaths and safe crossings for all new developments.

### **Lack of Open Spaces within central St Leonards**

We have found a lack of good open spaces within central St Leonards, and we usually use our car to access a park where we can walk and throw a ball around. With the projected increase in both commercial and residential residents, open space and parks are critical for the success and well-being of residents. Adding new open spaces and parks will help attract businesses and people to the area, and allow for a happier, more relaxed and therefore more efficient population.

### **Cycling**

We are keen cyclists and strongly support the creation of safe cycling paths within the precinct, as well as improved connections to other areas. Traffic within the precinct is very heavy, which makes cycling a stressful and unpleasant experience. Improving cycling paths will also help reduce traffic and strain on public transport by enabling residents and workers to use bicycles instead of cars/buses or trains.

### **Crows Nest Village**

We strongly agree with retaining the current form of the Crows Nest Village, as we love the mix of restaurants and shops in Crows Nest and consider this is one of the key features of the area. We urge the planning instruments to provide support and encouragement for small commercial businesses (especially restaurants and catering).

Thank you for your consideration and providing us with the opportunity to provide feedback.