Willoughby Road, Hume Street Park and Ernest Place, because they are not enclosed by large buildings.

With the creation of new buildings, all opportunities to make the most of the sunlight should be considered. It’s also important to make sure the sunlight in parks and public spaces is maintained, to respect the character of the area.

The centre of St Leonards sits on top of a ridgeline, which means it catches the breeze in summer but can be prone to wind, especially between tall buildings and along the Pacific Highway. Many people view this as an unattractive feature of the area. Future development should ensure wind impacts are minimised.

**Local Economy**

The industrial area of Artarmon, the emerging health and education sector, the commercial centre around St Leonards Station, and the retail and hospitality hub of Willoughby Road, all contribute to the growth and success of the local economy. Crows Nest in particular enjoys the benefits that come from high disposable incomes, which allow residents and visitors to enjoy the local cafes, markets and shops. Crows Nest also enjoys a thriving creative community that many people would like to see grow. Spaces for the creative arts, hubs to foster ideas, public spaces and an appropriate mix of places to eat and drink and meet people are important to the community.

After consultation it is identified that many people would like The Forum and areas around St Leonards Station to become vibrant places to meet and be enjoyed by the broader community at all hours of the day, not just by commuters at peak times.

**Crows Nest village has a lovely community feel. It is pretty, green and leafy with a lovely open community area with restaurants, cafes and shops.**

Survey response, 2018
The lay of the land in St Leonards & Crows Nest
Quality open spaces and public areas, and how they are connected via tree-lined streets and recreation areas, are essential considerations for the St Leonards and Crows Nest community. It's important to bring the elements of nature that the community like into built up areas, and ensure that the natural and built environments are brought together in creative ways.

- **Diversity**: Many types of open space in the area to cater for all needs and ages.

- **Tree-lined streets**: Keep existing tree-lined streets and improve along busy pedestrian routes in the area.

- **Quality**: Improvements and expansion to some existing open space in the area.

- **Sunlight**: Keep public spaces in the area open to sunlight.

- **Connections**: Better connections to open space within and outside the area.

- **Plaza**: More plazas for people to meet, socialise and relax in the area.

- **Views**: Mixed opinions about protecting vs. capitalising on views.
Open Space

The community would like to see more open spaces where they can relax.

Public Open Space

One of the most important things to the community of St Leonards and Crows Nest is improving the quality and quantity of open space and the way these spaces connect both in and out of the area.

Light filled, spacious green areas are important and new development should, where possible, limit shadow or over crowdedness in these open spaces.

Speaking with locals identified large open spaces such as Gore Hill Park, Gore Hill Memorial Cemetery, St Thomas Rest Park, Newlands Park, Humed Street Park and Talus Street Reserve are highly valued, providing a place to exercise, relax and pass through the urban environment. More opportunities for the community to exercise, walk their dogs and socialise with family and friends would be welcome. Quality barbecue spaces and play areas for children are vital to families in the area, especially for those living in apartments.

Many would also value better links to surrounding open spaces such as Lane Cove Bushland Park, Naremburn Park and Smoothey Park.

The community considers the open space in the centre of St Leonards to be limited and opportunities to provide more open space are important to locals. Some people would like to see pocket parks in between large buildings, while others would like to see one large area of open space. Ensuring high-density development is supported by appropriate open spaces for a growing population is a must for the St Leonards and Crows Nest community.

Tree Canopy

The local community values the shade and the natural beauty of the trees along the streets, which offer a connection to nature, especially in such a built-up environment. The community generally values what the trees add to the character of the area, and would like to see more greenery and less concrete dominate the built-up areas. Locals want to make sure the existing trees are kept to flourish.

A lot of people would like to see more tree-lined streets in higher density areas such as along the Pacific Highway, Herbert Street, Sergeants Lane and other streets between stations.

Topography

The challenging topography of St Leonards and Crows Nest makes it difficult for people to get around in some areas. For example, Atchison and Chandos Streets, important walking routes between St Leonards and Crows Nest, are steep. Walking connections south of St Leonards, towards Wollstonecraft, are also steep. This needs to be considered to improve the comfort of locals when getting around.

Development located along the ridgeline enjoys sweeping views towards Sydney Harbour. This is considered to be one of the important draw cards for business owners to St Leonards.

Future development should, where possible, be considerate to the topography. Many people would like larger buildings in lower areas to minimise the visual impact. Others want to make the most of the fantastic views towards Sydney Harbour, as well as opportunities around the Pacific Highway, the new metro station and St Leonards Station.
Natural Environment

The St Leonards and Crows Nest area is highly urbanised and includes landscaped and designed spaces, such as street trees, rather than original bushland. While the community recognises the natural environmental elements of the area, there is further opportunities identified by the community to improve access to its natural assets such as Flat Rock Creek, Lane Cove Bushland Park, and the south bushland along Berry Creek and Willoughby Creek. Good access to these areas is of fundamental importance to the community, especially as the area grows.

Private Open Space

In many residential areas, backyards are a feature of the low-scale character of the area. Trees, gardens and plants, with green space between developments, give a sense of openness. Outdoor dining, space for children to play and private gardens all add to the ambience enjoyed by the community, and the people who live in the low-scale residential areas.

In higher density areas, private balconies provide space for relaxing and entertaining. Appropriately sized private open space should be incorporated into all new residential developments to cater for all family types of all ages.

Workers in the area highly value private open space such as courtyards, private plazas and forecourts. They use these areas to meet for lunch and relax on their breaks and should be considered in new development.

PREFERRED OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

- Local parks: 27%
- Plaza areas (paved/landscape): 21%
- Playground area: 20%
- Oval/sports fields: 19%
- Indoor sports/rec centres: 13%

Source: DPE community survey, February – March 2018

Survey response, 2018

“A great deal more needs to be done in terms of open green space and pleasant places for children and adults to sit or play. Very poor in terms of parks, gardens, community gardens ...”
Residents, workers and visitors of St Leonards and Crows Nest are keen to see the new development fit in with its surroundings. The community wants the lower scale form of Willoughby Road and the heritage areas to be kept, as they provide an escape from the higher density areas and buildings around St Leonards Station and along the Pacific Highway.

**Quality design**
Best practice design for new development that picks up the best elements of surrounding areas of the area.

**Building orientation**
Appropriate positioning and separation of buildings to ensure private and sunny spaces.

**Building setbacks**
Building setbacks are important at street level for new development, to help maintain a feeling of openness.

**Density**
Density controlled around St Leonards and along Pacific Highway.

**Transitions**
Appropriate and gradual height transitions from high-rise to low-scale areas.

**Crows Nest**
Retain low-scale village atmosphere in Crows Nest and heritage areas.

**Duntroon Avenue**
Good example of development with setbacks and height transition.

**Renewal**
Opportunity for improvements to appearance along Pacific Highway.

Residents, workers and visitors of St Leonards and Crows Nest are keen to see the new development fit in with its surroundings. The community wants the lower scale form of Willoughby Road and the heritage areas to be kept, as they provide an escape from the higher density areas and buildings around St Leonards Station and along the Pacific Highway.
Diversity

A greater variety of housing options to ensure people at all stages of life are encouraged to live in the area.

Density

There are mixed opinions about density in the St Leonards and Crows Nest area. Consultation found some community members do not want to see any more density in the area. Others, however, accept that increased density is necessary, as long as it is in the right location and is managed properly to provide the right services to support growth.

The area typically provides density around the major transport routes of St Leonards Station, as well as along the edges of the Pacific Highway corridor. Most people want to make sure that it stays that way.

Some people believe that additional density around the new metro station at Crows Nest is appropriate, however, that the centre of St Leonards should remain the densest area. Density should be focused on the Pacific Highway corridor and contained between the train stations into the future.

The community do not want to see any changes to heritage areas in Holterman Estate and Naremburn, nor do they want to see any increase in density in the Willoughby Road area or surrounding open spaces. They value what these areas provide for relaxation, away from the high-rise buildings in St Leonards.

There is a range of residential density, from single storey houses to high-rise apartments. Some of the community has identified development along Duntroon Avenue as a good example for new development in the area.

There are mixed views about appropriate density in St Leonards South, with some parts of the community supportive of increased development and others who want no change at all. Despite different views, it is agreed that any future change to the area should keep the leafy streets and be designed to be sympathetic to the area.

The community widely accepts the industrial area in Artarmon and the health and education area west of St Leonards Station as core functions to the needs and services of the community.

Height

Building heights are important to the community and there is some concern about the potential impact of introducing taller buildings in the wrong locations, which may impact on the character of existing heritage conservation areas, open spaces and low-scale suburbs.