

The Director,
Sydney Central Urban Renewal,
Department of Planning and Environment,
GPO Box 39,
Sydney, NSW 2001

18 Victoria Street,
Greenwich, NSW 2065

ST LEONARDS + CROWS NEST 2036

Dear Sir,

I write to comment on the draft St Leonards and Crows Nest 2016 Plan. Before making specific comments, I should record that I attended your department's briefing session in Lane Cove on 11th December, then Lane Cove Council's facilitated community consultation on the following day, so am reasonably well informed.

You might also like to note that I have been a Greenwich resident for 42 years, am a former president of the Greenwich Community Association, and was an elected councillor of Lane Cove from 2004-2008.

General comment

Before commenting on points of detail, I should record that Federal population targets and the lack of determined efforts to decentralise are putting intolerable pressure on Sydney's urban growth – currently running at close to 100,000 per annum.

The current frenzied construction boom is adversely affecting all of our lives, and our Federal and State Governments should do more to scale this back, and more to promote industry and jobs in country areas to reduce metropolitan growth pressures.

As a result of increased urban population pressures, our quality of life is deteriorating.

- We have less amenity and green space, and less sunlight,
- Our travel times are increasing, in spite of efforts to add new rail infrastructure.

Much of this is, alas, inevitable. But we need to do more to prevent an already deteriorating situation becoming too rapidly worse.

St Leonards South

Greenwich residents have enormous concern about the density of the proposed development, and the pressures the current proposals would put on this area if allowed to proceed in its present form.

I believe that much of these pressures have arisen because speculative developers acquired options on many properties in this area and then subsequently bought the residents out at greatly inflated prices. They will now naturally wish to maximise their economic returns.

I accept that this area must ultimately be developed to a higher population density, but:

- The proposed population increase is too high, and should be reduced by at least a third, and
- There is grossly inadequate easily accessible green space for the new residents.

Some of the latter problem may be ameliorated if safe pedestrian access can be provided under (or perhaps over) River Road to Smoothy Park and hence Berry Island lying walking distance to the south.

I recognise that the planning authority for St Leonards South is currently Lane Cove Council. A large number of residents made their many concerns very clear at a special Council meeting on Monday 6th February.

Crows Nest Area

We appreciate the State Governments efforts to bring better public transport to this area and hence encourage long-due redevelopment. Once again, however, the scale risks becoming overwhelming with consequent risk of loss of our quality of life.

The proposed building heights in the Crows Nest area are excessive in my view.

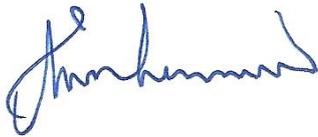
The greatly increased local population from this area and also from St Leonards South threaten add greatly to local road traffic problems. Increased pedestrian movement across the Pacific Highway at Crows Nest and St Leonards will also potentially create problems. These may be ameliorated by partly mechanised pedestrian underpasses as, for example across Pacific Highway in North Sydney.

There is too little open space near the new Crows Nest metro station, and the amenity of the area as presently detailed seems very poor.

I am concerned about future traffic problems in the area, and think that better provision needs to be made for more off-street parking.

Lastly, I am very concerned at the current lack of detail about where new schools will be built. There will be a very large increase in school population, and the current augmentations of the two Greenwich schools will not be able cope with this. These children need good access to sunlight and open space.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom U Lawson', written in a cursive style.

Tom U Lawson