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7 February 2019

Carolyn McNally
Secretary
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms McNally,

Draft Plan - St Leonards & Crows Nest 2036

The Property Council of Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide comments to the Department of Planning and Environment (the Department) on the *St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036* (the draft plan) and other documents released for public comment in October 2018.

The draft plan includes a draft Land Use and Infrastructure Implementation Plan (LUIIP). The package of material reviewed for this submission includes the draft plan, draft local character statement, draft Green Plan, and proposed Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC). A separate submission will be made in respect of the proposed SIC.

Introduction

The Sydney Metro between Chatswood and the CBD received planning approval in January 2017 and construction is underway. The new railway is proposed to be completed by 2024. Therefore it is appropriate the planning controls applying to the St Leonards & Crows Nest precinct be reviewed to reflect the improved connectivity that will be delivered as a consequence.

The St Leonards and Crows Nest precinct is unique in that it straddles three local government areas (North Sydney, Lane Cove and Willoughby) and each council has an existing strategic planning framework in place at various stages of review. The Department's involvement in this process should deliver better planning outcomes and a more efficient process compared to the process currently managed by the local councils.

The draft plan builds upon and gives effect to the planning strategy that has been developed in the Greater Sydney Regional Plan and the North District Plan.

Timeline

The current planning exercise has been lengthy and at the end of this process, there will be no additional land zoned for development.

Although the draft plan will be given statutory weight through the issuing of a section 9.1 planning direction, subsequent planning proposals will be required for implementation.

The rezoning of St Leonards South precinct was initiated by Lane Cove Council in February 2016 with a request for a Gateway determination. A Gateway was issued by the Department in September 2016. The draft plan proposes an independent panel review the planning proposal.

It is disappointing that the Department-led planning process is unable to deliver more certainty regarding both timeframes and future development outcomes.

Land Use

The draft plan accommodates a mix of land uses within the plan area including housing, education, health, retail, employment and open space.

A limited number of land use changes are proposed in the draft plan. There are generally confined to sites located along the Pacific Highway. The plan proposes some mixed-use development through the B4 Mixed Use zone and retention of office development in the St Leonards core with the B3 zone.

There is very little change to land use zones elsewhere for various reasons excluding most of the precinct from any urban renewal opportunity.

Significant Sites

Five sites are identified as appropriate for additional height subject to further assessment and community consultation. These are generally clustered between the transport nodes. The identification of some of these sites is consistent with North Sydney Council's Crows Nest Planning Study adopted in May 2015.

The draft plan states that new planning controls for these sites should be developed through a Council-led planning proposal and another round of community consultation. Any development proposed on a Significant Site will be required to complete a rigorous design excellence process as well as demonstrate consistency with vision, design criteria and area wide design principles.

Despite the draft plan identifying several Significant Sites having potential for renewal and redevelopment, the complexity and uncertainty associated with the Department's planning process will contribute towards development opportunities being investigated elsewhere.

Implementation of Final Plan

Apart from the Crows Nest Metro Station site, there are no changes to the planning controls currently applying to land within the precinct. Despite the extensive consultation involved with the preparation of the LUIP, there is no certainty that new development in this precinct will reflect the proposals currently on exhibition.

It is understood that the final plan will be accompanied by a Direction under section 9.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* which will require future rezoning and development to be consistent with the final plan. In the absence of a Department-led rezoning, the proposed Ministerial direction is appropriate to ensure the final plan's outcomes are delivered.

The location of the existing St Leonard's station and the new Crows Nest Metro station in the heart of the precinct will increase its accessibility to and from other centres within Sydney's Eastern Economic Corridor. The future development of the precinct should leverage the transport benefits of the new Metro station as both a trip origin as well as a trip destination.

Please do not hesitate to contact Troy Loveday, Senior Policy Advisor on (02) 9033 1907 or tloveday@propertycouncil.com.au if you would like to discuss any aspect of this submission further.

Yours sincerely



Jane Fitzgerald
NSW Executive Director
Property Council of Australia