

ST LEONARDS AND CROWS NEST PRECINCT

DRAFT LOCAL CHARACTER STATEMENT SUBMISSION

As an architect and long-term local home-owner, living within the Crows Nest Holtermann Estate Conservation Areas, I write to vehemently object to the **concurrent public exhibition** of the Draft Local Character Statement (DLCS), 2036 Plan and Metro Over-station Development. While I support the DLCS forming the basis of our future planned development it has clearly been ignored in the design of the 2036 Plan and Metro Over-station development documents presented to the public for comment. Do not repeat the future disaster of the Victoria Cross Over-station development.

There is no evidence in other exhibited St Leonards/Crows Nest planning documents of the DLCS being used as "a critical element of design" that "should underpin and inform the objectives of our suburbs". Merely 'updating the plans to respond to feedback' as provided in Step 2 of the DLCS will be insufficient. All planning must start again from scratch!

The 2036 Plan and the Metro Over-station development must have the following critical elements that the DLCS presents so clearly "to ensure the best outcomes are achieved":

PLACE:

- Sunlight must not be further diminished – high-rise developments steal the sunshine from others no matter how 'slender' their design;
- Wind tunnel effects are already a feature of St Leonards after only a few close-set high-rise developments being completed -future development must prevent the same in Crows Nest.

LANDSCAPE:

- Identify public land for public open space – the Metro site is public land that must be used to increase open space – greenery, sunshine, tree canopy, playground, water, workplace lunch areas, dog walking, basketball hoops, skate park...;
- The existing train line and the Warringah freeway are public land that due to topography offer air space opportunities (eg north of St Leonards station and north of St Thomas Park) for additional open space bridging infrastructure and thereby creating quieter neighbourhoods;
- New private developments must offer substantial open space – either at ground level beneath buildings (less retail) or by generous northerly street setbacks.

BUILT FORM:

- Height transitions must be adhered to for every development – especially those of state significance. The Crows Nest 'village' is a matter of scale both in the immediate vicinity and medium distance outlook. The Metro sites are in close proximity to Hume Street Park and the 'village' so must respect the DLCS intentions for visual amenity and sunlight.

LAND USE:

- Affordable housing must be a priority, must be compulsory in every multi-residential development – the area is losing affordable housing while mega-structures are built for profit;
- The Metro sites must help meet community needs – a hotel and high rise resi tower do not;
- Less emphasis on residential/retail/commercial, more attention to the stated needs in the DLCS: entertainment, sport facilities, playgrounds, pedestrian zones, pre-schools, schools, galleries, libraries, swimming pool, theatre, dance studios, community hubs.

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MOVEMENT:

- Signalised traffic light improvements are insufficient - wider footpaths, pedestrian plazas, pedestrian-activated laneways, cycle routes;
- Car stackers and car parking at the Metro sites must be abolished if the laneways are to be successfully activated, pleasant places.

Conclusion:

I object to the insignificant contribution of the DLCS to planning for the St Leonards Crows Nest Precinct. We deserve a more considered, realistic approach to provide a desirable precinct for people to live and work within a healthy, sustainable environment.