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St Leonards Crows Nest Draft Local Character Statement – Submission

I support the content of the Draft Local Character Statement in principle, but am concerned that the Plan will not deliver on a number of the Guiding Principles.

Before continuing, may I flag an inaccuracy in the map graphic used for depiction in all the Plans and Statements used and covering the St Leonards/Crows Nest area. That is, that the area north of Chandos St and east of the railway line as far as Wheatleigh St is actually Naremburn, although the way it has been depicted would suggest it was part of Crows Nest. This area is also part of the City of Willoughby, not North Sydney, and because it is a Local Conservation Area has a very different Local Character look and feel to the high density commercial buildings on the South side of Chandos St.

For the PLACE Guiding Principles:

- Significant sites, high-rise buildings and inadequate solar protection are hemming in Crows Nest and the low to medium-rise residential area of St Leonards. **Access to sunlight and wind impacts need to be prioritised**

For the LANDSCAPE Guiding Principles:

- **More public open space needs to be created, funded, and delivered as a matter of urgency.** The area is already well below reasonable open space guidelines, especially when considering many of the population live in apartments.

For the BUILT FORM Guiding Principles:

- **Taller buildings** and higher densities should be concentrated around St Leonards Core but with appropriate transitioning, and **must stop at Oxley Street**. Development of sites between St Leonards station and Oxley Street should be designed to avoid a solid wall of tall buildings and wind tunnels and protect solar access. High rise anywhere along the Pacific Highway south of Oxley Street (including the Crows Nest Metro OSD) must be avoided, so that the Crows Nest Village will be protected.
- “Gradual sensitive height transitions” are not being provided in the Lane Cove Council area of the Plan, nor in recently-approved buildings such as 100 Christie St, within the North Sydney area – **high rise of up to 50 storeys overlooking low-rise areas is not acceptable. Equally so for Crows Nest.**

For the LAND USE Guiding Principles:

- There **should be significantly less provision for high rise residential** – an over-provision of residential units already means more needs to be done to provide for the “diverse range of employment opportunities”, “better mix of office spaces for different business sizes and types”, and to “provide a mix of housing types.....to ensure that households at all stages of life are encouraged to live in the area”.
- Infrastructure (especially schools) needs to be continually factored into future plans as population growth maintains consistent pressure on existing facilities.

For the MOVEMENT Guiding Principles:

- **A detailed traffic management plan is needed** before further rezoning and high rise developments are approved.
- “Connectivity improvements to and around St Leonards and Crows Nest stations” and “opportunities to safely cross the Pacific Highway” must be prioritised to handle the expected 10,000 pedestrian movements per hour in peak hour.

As a final comment, the concept of the Draft Local Character Statement is to be applauded. But it appears a significant portion of the Draft 2036 Plan was written before this Character Statement was finalised, and many of the aspects of the Character Statement are not reflected in the Draft 2036 Plan.

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Date: 8th February, 2019