

NSW Department of Planning & Environment

St Leonards & Crows Nest 2036, Draft Plan

Submission from the Outdoor Media Association



01 THE AUSTRALIAN OUT OF HOME INDUSTRY

Outdoor Media Association (OMA) members advertise third party products on digital and traditional signs across a variety of Out of Home (OOH) formats and locations, including airports, bicycle stations, billboards, buses, bus stations, cafés, doctors' surgeries, medical centres, office buildings and lifts, pedestrian bridges, railway stations, shopping centres, taxis, trains, trams, universities and street furniture.

OMA members make significant economic contributions to government and the community. Each year, OOH contributes close to \$647 million to Australia's GDP and supports 3,100 jobs. Most OMA members are Australian owned and operated, with profits going back to the Australian economy. Four OMA members are ASX listed, with two in the Top 200. The industry provides a revenue stream to government, returning \$1 in every \$2 of revenue in rent and taxes.¹ In 2017, OMA members donated \$36 million in media services and advertising placement to over 220 community groups and charities.

The industry delivers essential services and savings; OOH built and maintains \$352 million of public infrastructure. The 17,664 pieces of public infrastructure delivered by OOH make our cities more user-friendly – the industry is investing in innovation and providing digital utility such as Wi-Fi and wayfinding services. OOH is one of the most trusted channels to broadcast government and community awareness messages, including road safety, public health and community service campaigns.

02 THE OUTDOOR MEDIA ASSOCIATION

The OMA is the national peak industry body that represents 80% of Australia's traditional and digital OOH media display companies and production facilities. Part of the role of the OMA is to help develop policy and regulation for outdoor advertising that is fair and equitable to governments, the community and the industry. The industry's aim is to deliver high quality, well-designed and innovative signs that provide economic and utility benefits to communities.

¹ Deloitte Access Economics (2016). "Out of Home Adds Value: Out of Home Advertising in the Australian Economy," Outdoor Media Association.

03 INTRODUCTION

By 2050, it is predicted that 94% of Australia’s population will be urbanised.² How we design modern metropolises to be not only functional, but also vibrant, connected, and accessible places where people thrive as they live, work and play, is one of the great challenges – and opportunities – of our times. Not only do our urban environments need to deliver core services more efficiently, and with less environmental impact, they also need to be imbued with a sense of vitality and reflect the diversity of their populations.

OOH advertising is one of the connectors between cities and their people, and is a growing media channel in Australia and around the world; the reason for its success is that it continues to deliver a range of key benefits to modern cities and their inhabitants, including:

1. It is the last true broadcast channel, with a large and growing audience
2. Signage influences and enhances the character of a city
3. OOH delivers technical utility to cities and their inhabitants
4. The industry is a Government partner, providing revenue, infrastructure and a communication channel
5. Good OOH advertising makes our roads safer

04 ST LEONARDS & CROWS NEST 2036 DRAFT PLAN

The OMA is generally supportive of the Draft Plan for St Leonards and Crows Nest that seeks to revitalise the area ahead of continued predicted growth.

Specifically, we recognise that the Plan seeks to ensure that St Leonards and Crows nest will be:

- A vibrant community
- A place that protects its past
- An accessible place
- A well-designed place
- An employment hub
- A greener place

Advertising and signage are an integral part of the streetscape in commercial centres, shopping villages and mixed-use areas, providing information to people on business locations, products and services. We strongly believe that the OOH industry can make a positive and discernible difference to the community and local area in each of these identified fields.

The OMA encourages the NSW Department of Planning & Environment to engage directly with it and its members to achieve positive and mutually beneficial outcomes.

The OMA would like to meet with the Department to present case studies of OOH’s contributions to cities throughout Australia, relevant to the St Leonards & Crows Nest precinct to ensure that the Plan incorporates and benefits from the importance of outdoor advertising.

05 OOH IS A TRUE BROADCAST CHANNEL

Out of Home (OOH) advertising is the only growing traditional media channel. With digital

² United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDEASA), Population Division (2012). “An Urban World”. Available at <https://www.unicef.org/sowc2012/urbanmap/#>

disruption causing significant losses in audience and revenue for most traditional media, and OOH advertising reaching more and more people – 12.6 million Australians, seeing up to 30,000 advertising faces every day – OOH is the last true broadcast channel. Delivering information and ideas to the public is an important role, one that continues to grow as OOH audience growth outstrips population growth in Australia: since 2010, OOH audiences have grown 23%, and our population has grown by 14.9%.

06 OOH AND THE CHARACTER OF A CITY

The OOH industry is unique in that its signs form part of the urban landscape and therefore play a role in shaping the narrative and character of cities. Innovative, unique, creative signs make a positive contribution to the local character and vibrancy of our streetscapes, whether advertising a local events, cultural institutions, community issues such as the same sex marriage debate, or advertising for goods and services. OOH headlines many things and experiences that are part of what makes a diverse city.

OOH can respect the heritage of place while embracing modernity and enlivening a place. Signs are designed to be compatible with the environment in which they are placed and not to obstruct key vistas, view corridors, sunlight or breeze flows.

07 OOH TECHNOLOGY AND MODERN CITYSCAPES

Technology is now an indelible part of our shared existence, radically expanding the realm of the possible while contracting the time we all expect things to take. This has altered people's expectations of responsiveness from public services and utilities, and in general raised the bar for interactions between service providers and audiences.

With just over 50% of the OOH industry's advertising revenue now coming from digital media, the industry is benefiting from the digital age. As our cities work to improve connectivity, digital signage plays a vital role in communication, messaging and way-finding. The OOH industry has been at the forefront of interactive technology in cities, offering quantifiable benefits to the community, including:

- **Community benefit**: Digital signs can be used at short notice for emergency messaging such as severe weather warnings and missing child information (known as Amber Alerts). The NSW Government, in fact, recognises this value, spending \$4.3 million last year on road safety, public health and community messages, making it one of the industry's largest clients.
- **Utility**: Digital signs help locals and visitors alike navigate the city, offering maps and up-to-date traffic information, pollution counts, and road closures. This democratization of information allows everyone access to the same technology, while offering cities the ability to do more for its people.
- **Vibrancy**: We know from research undertaken by the City of Sydney that 67% of people expect large cities to promote the use of technology in advertising.³ Digital signage is vibrant, has high image quality and is visually interesting, contributing to placemaking and the creation of exciting and lively urban spaces.

³ Sweeney Research, City of Sydney Outdoor Communication Report – July 2014.

- **Environment:** Digital screens produce no PVC or vinyl waste and can be designed to be energy efficient. With the touch of a button, ads can be changed, which means safer environments for our installers and less disruption to traffic on busy city roads.

08 OOH CONTRIBUTIONS TO GOVERNMENT, ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY

Advertising and marketing play a fundamental role in the Australian economy and are significant drivers of economic growth, contributing some \$40 billion of value in 2014. This means advertising is responsible for contributing approximately 2.5% of the Gross Domestic Product. For every person directly employed by advertising, another three people are reliant upon advertising for their jobs. Over 200,000 people in the workforce are there due to advertising.⁴

The OOH channel delivers more benefits still, with 50% of OOH revenue returned to government and other landlords in rent and taxes. Furthermore, in 2015, the OOH industry in Australia provided more than 17,600 items of infrastructure for use by the community, including pedestrian bridges, bus shelters, retail kiosks, telephone booths, park benches and bicycles. In NSW alone, the OOH industry is responsible for the upkeep of 7,291 pieces of public infrastructure including bus shelters, park benches, bins, public toilets, kiosks and pedestrian bridges; these items have a replacement value of \$162.6M.⁵

The OOH industry also plays an important role in the community, supporting the arts, sports and charitable organisations. In 2017, the OOH industry donated advertising space valued at more than \$36 million to over 220 community groups and charities.⁶

OOH advertising is widely used by government bodies to advertise community messages such as road safety messages and health awareness campaigns. A significant portion of the NSW Government advertising spend was dedicated to road safety, public health and community service campaigns that used OOH signs to share health and community messages, improve driver behaviour and prevent the loss of life on our roads.

In 2018, the Outdoor Media Association partnered with DrinkWise to contribute a portion of OOH revenue to fund vital education campaigns to improve parent's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours around alcohol consumption. With just under \$2.5 million worth of assets donated for the cause, the first two-week campaign went live in September 2018, and was seen by 11 million Australians.

09 OOH COMMITMENT TO SAFETY ON OUR ROADS

With 50% of revenue from OOH signs being returned to Government through rent and taxes, OOH advertising is a major contributor to the cost of improving public transport and roads. In 2016-17, Transport for NSW received \$30.8 million from advertising revenue, including OOH panels at bus shelters. These funds were then reinvested into road infrastructure, safety upgrades and education campaigns, all of which contributed to making NSW roads safer for all

⁴ Deloitte Access Economics (2015). "Advertising Pays: The economic employment and business value of advertising," Communications Council.

⁵ Deloitte Access Economics (2016). "Out of Home Adds Value: Out of Home Advertising in the Australian Economy," Outdoor Media Association.

⁶ OMA (2017). OMA Annual Report 2017.

users.

The Outdoor Media Association has undertaken research on driver behaviour in the presence of advertising signage, using eye-tracking glasses and a vehicle recording device.⁷ The research found that:

- Drivers spend the same amount of time (average 78%) with their eyes on the road whether in the presence of digital, static or on-premise signs.
- There is no significant difference in the length of time people look (fixation duration) at digital signage compared with static signage.
- Drivers maintain the same safe average vehicle headway (distance between themselves and car in front) in the presence of all signage types.
- Over 99% of all glances towards advertising signage were less than 750 milliseconds, which is the minimum time needed by a driver to perceive and react to an unexpected event.

In 2018, the OMA partnered with The Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) to investigate the impact of digital signs on driver behaviour. The study, focused on two busy intersections, found that signage may actually have a positive impact on the way that we drive – it appears that the presence of digital billboards may focus lateral attention on the road ahead, reducing visual distraction and improve driving performance.

010 SUMMARY

Out of Home advertising contributes to vibrant urban areas by broadcasting information and ideas to the community at large. With public attitude testing undertaken for the City of Sydney finding 67% of people ‘expect any large city to promote the use of new technology in advertising’,⁸ OOH can breathe life into spaces and both imbue and reflect a sense of place.

The OOH industry can play a role in enhancing the visual amenity of St Leonards and Crows Nests’ streetscapes; signage is a recognisable feature and is an integral part of commercial centres, shopping villages and mixed-use areas, providing information to people on business locations, products and services. Furthermore, as governments invest in making cities ‘smart’, OOH is a key partner delivering wayfinding, wifi, emergency messaging and other key innovations. OOH advertising sustains thriving economies and delivers benefits to the community and government through infrastructure, revenue and community messaging.

Digital signage is a central feature of many of the world’s leading urban centres, and the OMA strongly believes that the OOH industry can partner with the NSW Department of Planning to support its work ensuring the St Leonards and Crows Nest precinct is an attractive, sustainable and vibrant place for residents, workers, businesses and visitors for years to come.

We also attach to this submission a copy of the **OMA Model Advertising Devices Code: NSW**, that outlines best practice guidelines for the regulation of outdoor advertising.

⁷ Samsa, C. (2015). “Digital Billboards Down Under: Are they distracting to drivers and can industry and regulators work together for a successful road safety outcome?” 4th International Driver Distraction and Inattention Conference, NSW, November 2015.

⁸ Sweeney Research, City of Sydney Outdoor Communication Report – July 2014.