

To:

Director, Sydney Central Urban Renewal  
Department of Planning and Environment  
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From:

Office-bearers

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**St Leonards and Crows Nest**

**Draft Local Character Statement**

**Submission.**

**At page 10 Heritage and culture and at page 18 Density: Spelling Correction. "Holterman Estate" should read "Holtermann Estates". There are 4 Holtermann Estates in Crows Nest. They are named after Bernard Holtermann.**

We note that the Local Character Statement reflects the vision initiated through what some might regard as limited community consultation. Some might also argue that while the Draft Local Character Statement, the Draft 2036 Plan, and the Draft Green Plan seek to provide a local framework for the Greater Sydney Commission's regional strategy (which seeks to overcome problems arising from ad hoc planning with a long-term, principle-based vision of the 30-minute city) it appears to have been already subverted by Sydney Metro's approach to over-station development. Primacy appears to have been given to value capture. High-rise, essentially residential buildings along the ridgeline of the Highway can reap a premium from views. A hotel which some may see as an upgraded version of serviced apartments, providing few jobs, again relies on ridgeline views to maximise commercial return. The GSC vision of a commercially dynamic strategic centre, a health and education precinct providing jobs for the North Shore's well-educated, professional work-force (the principle of employability) is transformed into essentially a dormitory suburb. As a spokesman for a major developer argued before the Local Planning Panel regarding a planning proposal for a major commercial core building in St Leonards, fortunately not supported by the Panel, "St Leonards does not really need much commercial floor space. Residents can work at Macquarie Park". With some uncertainty in the property market, the local community relies on you, the professional planners, to respect the vision of the local community and the GSC's framework for a long-term, dynamic city. Respecting the low-scale character of the heritage conservation areas and Willoughby Rd Village with its fine grain requires sensitive transitions. The Village, a highly competitive retail strip, relies on good solar access for its outdoor dining areas. In an area seriously deficient in open green space, good solar access is pivotal for our civic centre, Ernest Place, and projects like an expanded Hume Street Park and a new plaza on Willoughby Rd between Burlington St and Falcon St. Small but high quality open space with good solar access is essential for liveability, sustainability and community under the impact of densification. So also is connectivity and proper traffic management by reducing dependence on the private motor vehicle.