

St Leonards Crows Nest Draft Local Character Statement – Submission

I support much of the content of the Draft Local Character Statement, but somehow what is included in the Draft Local Character Statement appears to have been “lost in translation” in the 2036 Draft Plan. There are many positive aspects contained in the Draft Local Character Statement, but they appear to be “feel-good” words and statements that have not been used to guide the content of the 2036 Draft Plan. **In fact, the discrepancies are so great that it appears the majority of the plan had been written before the community consultation on the Draft Local Character Statement occurred.**

It seems that while having a Local Character Statement might be desirable it would appear superfluous, however, if never implemented, adhered too and ignored even while being considered!

The most significant areas of the Draft Local Character Statement which have not been incorporated into the Plan from each of the Guiding Principles are:

BUILT FORM: Taller buildings and higher densities MUST be concentrated around St Leonards Core, and definitely kept to the Pacific Highway – no spread into the current low to medium rise areas, including St Leonards South. There should be no high rise past Oxley Street – Crows Nest Village must be protected.

The “gradual sensitive height transitions” you mention in the Draft Local Character Statement are not currently being provided in the Lane Cove Council area of the plan – 50 storeys currently approved, which are adjacent to low and medium rise areas in St. Leonards, Naremburn, Wollstonecraft and Crows Nest, are totally unacceptable.

LAND USE: There needs to be much less provision for high rise residential – there is more than enough high rise residential already built and approved in the area. The Draft Local Character Statement refers to a “better mix of office spaces for different business sizes and types”, and to providing a mix of housing types to “ensure that households at all stages of life are encouraged to live in the area” – more needs to be done to ensure these two guiding principles can be implemented

PLACE: Already built and currently approved high-rise towers, especially those in St Leonards, and inadequate solar protection are seriously impacting the lower and medium rise residential areas in St Leonards, Wollstonecraft, Naremburn and Crows Nest. Access to sunlight must be given a higher priority – especially in regard to overshadowing of the little open space we have.

LANDSCAPE: The draft plan area needs more open and green space. All of the projected population increase will live in apartments, and therefore the need for

open space is even more critical. We already have less open space than is reasonable, and what we have comes nowhere near to meeting the recommended guidelines of 2.83 hectares/1000 population.

MOVEMENT: A comprehensive traffic management plan is needed and must be acted upon before any rezoning and high rise developments are approved.

St Leonards South Planning Proposal

I would now specifically like to comment on the Planning Proposal for St Leonards South, since it appears to be well advanced, and how it will not meet several of the guiding principles contained in the Draft Local Character Statement.

PLACE: Newlands Park, the **only** open space in the area of any significant size will be severely **overshadowed** after 3.00 pm by the towers proposed for St Leonards South – just the time when children will be using the park after school. The proposed 19, 15, 12 and 10 storey buildings on Canberra Avenue must be significantly lowered to prevent any additional overshadowing of Newlands Park during the crucial after school hours. Newlands Park will already be severely overshadowed in the morning from the recently approved, but yet to be built towers on the Pacific Highway in the Lane Cove council area – 88 Christie Street, Landmark and Mirvac – almost 2,000 apartments.

LANDSCAPE: The new open space proposed for the proposed developments in St Leonards South (with 4,800 new residents) is seriously inadequate. The huge recently approved JQZ development at 88 Christie Street, St Leonards, (654 apartments – 1300 residents) referred to Newlands Park as the open space available for its residents. I would imagine the adjoining development, Landmark (495 apartments – 990 residents), also used Newlands Park as the available space for its residents. How many residents can around the 1 hectare of open space that is Newlands Park provide for?

BUILT FORM: *Guiding Principle 1* – St Leonards South both inside and outside of the proposal area is currently a low rise to medium rise area – taller buildings up to 19 storeys proposed in St Leonards South contradict the Guiding Principle of concentrating taller buildings and higher densities around St Leonards Core and the Pacific Highway.

Guiding Principle 4 – Towers of 19, 15, 12 and 10 storeys do not reflect best practice design, nor do they pick up on the best elements of surrounding building types – the development in Duntroon Avenue is from 5 – 7 storeys – this development appears to have considerable support not only from the community and council, but also from the DPE, as it features so prominently in all of the Draft Plan documents.

Guiding Principle 5 – The St Leonards South development as proposed will not in any way meet this guiding principle in relation to “gradual sensitive height transitions from high-rise to low-rise areas”. To do so, building heights must be

reduced on the four perimeter streets of St Leonards South. **Lower rise of 2 storeys maximum must be provided on the east side of Park Road (to protect the adjoining residential areas to the west), likewise on River Road to protect the single storey dwellings on the south side of River Road.**

It is especially important to reduce the proposed heights of the towers in Canberra Avenue. As mentioned earlier, the Duntroon Avenue development has popular support from the community, council and DPE. The proposed heights of 19, 15 and 12 storeys will severely affect the livability and amenity of the residents of Duntroon Avenue, not to mention the overshadowing which will result in Newlands Park - this has already been referred to above.

A reduction in heights on the perimeter streets of St Leonards South would also ensure that the following Land Use Guiding Principles could be met:

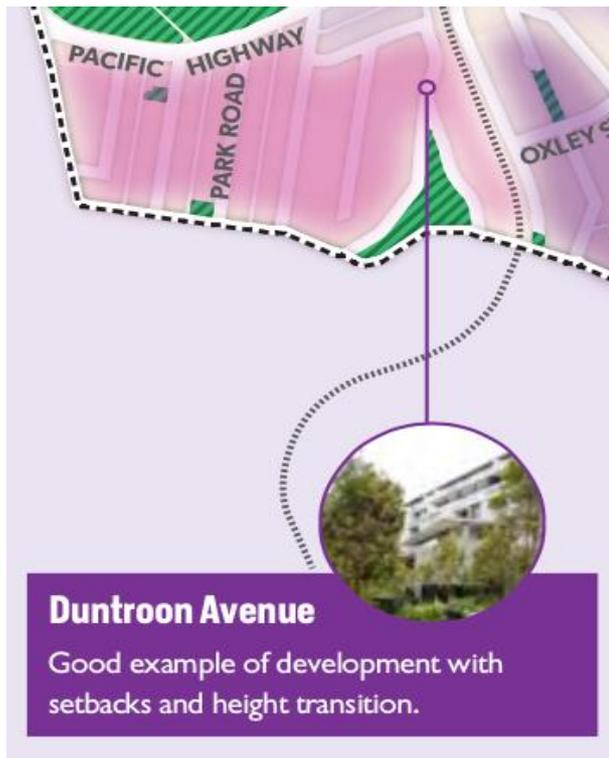
LAND USE: [Guiding Principle 3](#) shows that the community wants a “mix of housing types at different price points to ensure that all households at all stages of life are encouraged to live in the area”. Many people in the area are looking for quality downsizing opportunities, or opportunities to raise a family with a little bit of outside space. They don’t want to live in high rise towers. **Where are the low-rise apartments, the town houses, and the terraces?** By reducing the heights of the towers throughout the whole development, **but especially on the perimeter, a mix of housing types can be provided.** This is also a fairer solution for existing residents just outside the boundary of the proposal area.

On the walk around in St Leonards South in March of 2018, it was clear from many of the participants on the walk, that Duntroon Avenue is the type of development people like, and would be accepting of in the area – people just do not want any more high density high-rise towers!

The DPE staff obviously took on board the feedback they heard from the participants on the walkaround, as the Duntroon Avenue property features prominently in the Draft Local Character Statement and in the St Leonards Crows Nest 2036 Draft Plan as an example of good design, good setbacks and height transition, and is shown as an example of what new development in the area should look like.

For example:

From Page 17 of the Draft Local Character Statement



Also on Page 17, this is the Duntroon Avenue development:



From page 18 of the Draft Local Character Statement:

There is a range of residential density, from single storey houses to high-rise apartments. Some of the community has identified development along Duntroon Avenue as a good example for new development in the area.

From page 19 of the Draft Local Character Statement, this is the Duntroon Avenue development: - the same photo is also on pages 25 and 27 of the Draft 2036 Plan document:



Clearly the Duntroon Avenue development is one which appears to have the support of the DPE, as it is used **frequently** in both the Draft Local Character Statement and the St Leonards Crows Nest 2036 Draft Plan as the example of the type of development which may be appropriate for the St Leonards Crows Nest area, and which the community would be supportive of. Your comment on page 18 of the Draft Local Character Statement: *“Some of the community has identified development along Duntroon Avenue as a good example for new development in the area.”*

Why then will the Duntroon Avenue properties be surrounded by developments bearing no resemblance to them, if the DPE and the community say it is the type of development people like?

Why is there nothing proposed in the St Leonards South proposal which remotely resembles the Duntroon Avenue development?

I believe my suggestions above, which will have the effect of reducing the density and the heights of the St Leonards South proposal, as well as providing a genuine mix of housing types, will go a long way towards gaining acceptance amongst the

community. In the community I also include current residents of the area, including those in the remaining streets of St Leonards South whose properties have not been included in the rezoning proposal. They will probably still be upset that they will not achieve for their properties the \$6.5 M which was the average price paid to residents in the streets where properties have sold, but they will no longer be looking at 10 and 8 storey apartment buildings, but lower rise buildings, which should be acceptable to them.