



Greenwich Community Association Inc
Submission to The NSW Department of Planning and Environment

Rezoning of Crows Nest Sydney Metro Site

Due Date for Submissions 3 December 2018

Background

The Department has prepared a Rezoning Report that proposes to amend North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2013 to facilitate the Integrated Station Development on the Crows Nest Sydney Metro site.

The Greenwich Community Association (GCA) is a non-profit incorporated community forum dedicated to gathering and promoting the views and interests of the residents of Greenwich. It was established as an association over 70 years ago and has extensive experience in the planning issues affecting the community – see our website:

<http://www.greenwich.org.au/>

The GCA objects to the rezoning proposal and provides feedback in the following sections.

Increased Building Heights

Increasing the heights results in a very bulky development which is evident from the illustrations in Metro Detailed Design Study. It will overlook and overpower other sites in the vicinity especially those to the east towards Willoughby Road.

The increased heights of the towers will also cause substantial overshadowing of residential areas to the west of the Pacific Highway. This is shown clearly in the Design Testing section of the Metro Detailed Design Study which notes overshadowing all morning up to 12:00pm in mid-winter.

The Study shows two towers on Site A which has some benefits but there seems to be no impediment to the construction of a single tower which would only add to the bulk and overshadowing of the developments and to their impact on the surrounding streets.

A development of no less than two towers on Site A should be mandated.

Increasing the FSR

The increase in the FSR will result in 350 apartments on the sites. Increasing the amount of residential space allowed on the sites will increase the population in the area which will already be excessive with the current developments in and around St Leonards. Many

members of the community have expressed serious concerns about the massive growth in population in the Precinct.

Increasing the population in the Precinct will have a major impact on infrastructure and this is one of the greatest community concerns. Education and community facilities are addressed in part in the St Leonards Crows Nest 2036 Draft Plan but the road system in the Precinct is finite. In spite of attempts to reduce the dependence of residents, workers and the general public on cars and to increase active transport opportunities the greater population will inevitably generate more traffic. Thus traffic increases will have a major detrimental effect on the road system surrounding the Precinct. The population in the Precinct should be limited and capped at every opportunity where the Department can take some leadership.

Many of the apartments in the development will be substandard as indicated in the solar insolation testing illustrated in the Metro Detailed Design Study. There has to be a better solution.

Increasing the Non Residential FSR

This is a positive step but there should be more commercial space to contribute towards a better balance in the precinct of commercial and residential. Developers have a clear preference for residential development so it is left to the Department to take the lead and require a larger proportion of commercial development on the sites. At least the southern tower on Site A should be fully commercial. This will overcome its limitations as a residential development and have the effect of reducing the overall population of the precinct. The 2,700 sqm allocated for commercial on Site C is not a sufficient proportion and should be increased, even allowing for the hotel/commercial space of 15,200 sqm on site B.

The location of the sites above the Metro Station and within easy walking distance of St Leonards Station and their proximity to the cafes, restaurants and shopping opportunities in Crows Nest will be attractive to commercial tenants. Strong commercial developments on the sites could provide a catalyst for the rebirth of St Leonards/Crows Nest as a major employment centre.

Design Excellence

We acknowledge that a clause addressing Design Excellence as set out in The Heads of Consideration section in the Crows Nest Metro Site Rezoning Proposal will be inserted in the North Sydney LEP. However to ensure the best outcome it would be appropriate that a fully independent design review panel, with community representation, assess compliance with the Clause. Their meetings and findings should be publicly accessible and available. An open and transparent process would give the community a greater level of comfort that the highest standards are being maintained.

Outcomes of the Draft Plan

From experience, the community is naturally wary of the progress of development from draft plans such as this one through LEP, DCP, DA and into the finished built form. In the past, many of the aspects that the community has commented on and expressed preferences for in a consultation process get lost or are watered down over time. This

happens through a negotiation and appeals process between councils and developers. The community has little or no visibility of these activities and little weight has been given to its views when they are expressed.

To retain the confidence and support of the community it is incumbent on the Department of Planning and Environment and the Minister to review the existing processes so that the outcomes of the community consultation is in fact delivered in the finished project. Community confidence in the NSW planning system must be restored.

It is clear that many in the community in St Leonards Crows Nest and the surrounding areas are extremely concerned about the growth in population and the over development inherent in the St Leonards Crows Nest 2036 Plan and the Rezoning of the Crows Nest Sydney Metro Site as proposed. To demonstrate that the Department is listening to the community and is engaging in genuine community consultation clear and demonstrable changes must be made to the St Leonards Crows Nest 2036 Draft Plan.

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