



Greenwich Community Association Inc

Submission to NSW Department of Planning and Environment

St Leonards and Crows Nest Station Precinct

Open Space (Green Open Space)



27 March 2018

Greenwich Community Association Inc (GCA) welcomes the opportunity to make a submissions to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DoP) in respect of planning for the St Leonards and Crows Nest Station Precinct (the Precinct) and hopes for further engagement in the process.

This submission relates to Open Space considerations in the Precinct and arising from the Precinct.

In this respect, the GCA welcomes the statement in the DoP Project Update December 2017 that open space will be a key consideration in the LUIMP.

The GCA will make additional submissions relating to other aspects of the Precinct Plan. These submissions will be forwarded under separate cover.



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Greenwich Community Association Inc

The GCA is an incorporated association, established for over 73 years.

The objects of the GCA are as follows:-

"The Association is established for community service purposes to do all things possible to further the interests of Greenwich and the Local Government Area of Lane Cove and to maintain and enhance the amenity of all residents and owners of property in Greenwich. The Association will not stand candidates for election to public office. It will not campaign for changes to the law or to government policy except where such activities are incidental to its primary object to enhance the amenity of Greenwich residents and owners."

The GCA holds annual elections for its committee.

Public meetings are held every alternate month and are open to all residents of Greenwich.

The GCA maintains a website www.greenwich.org.au and distributes a newsletter to over 2000 households prior to each public meeting.

Context of Submission

The suburb of Greenwich lies in the East Ward of the Lane Cove Local Government Area (LGA) – refer following page.

A portion of Greenwich is located within the Precinct, namely the area bounded by Pacific Highway, Greenwich Road, River Road and Park Lane.

The balance of Greenwich lies outside the Precinct, divided from the Precinct by Greenwich and River Roads.

The balance of the Lane Cove LGA within the Precinct is known as St Leonards South.

St Leonards South has traditionally been regarded as part of Greenwich, with long standing links and identification with Greenwich starting with children from the suburb attending Greenwich pre-schools and Greenwich Public School and with families accessing Greenwich infrastructure and services such as shops and doctors across Greenwich Road from the Greenwich Infants School.

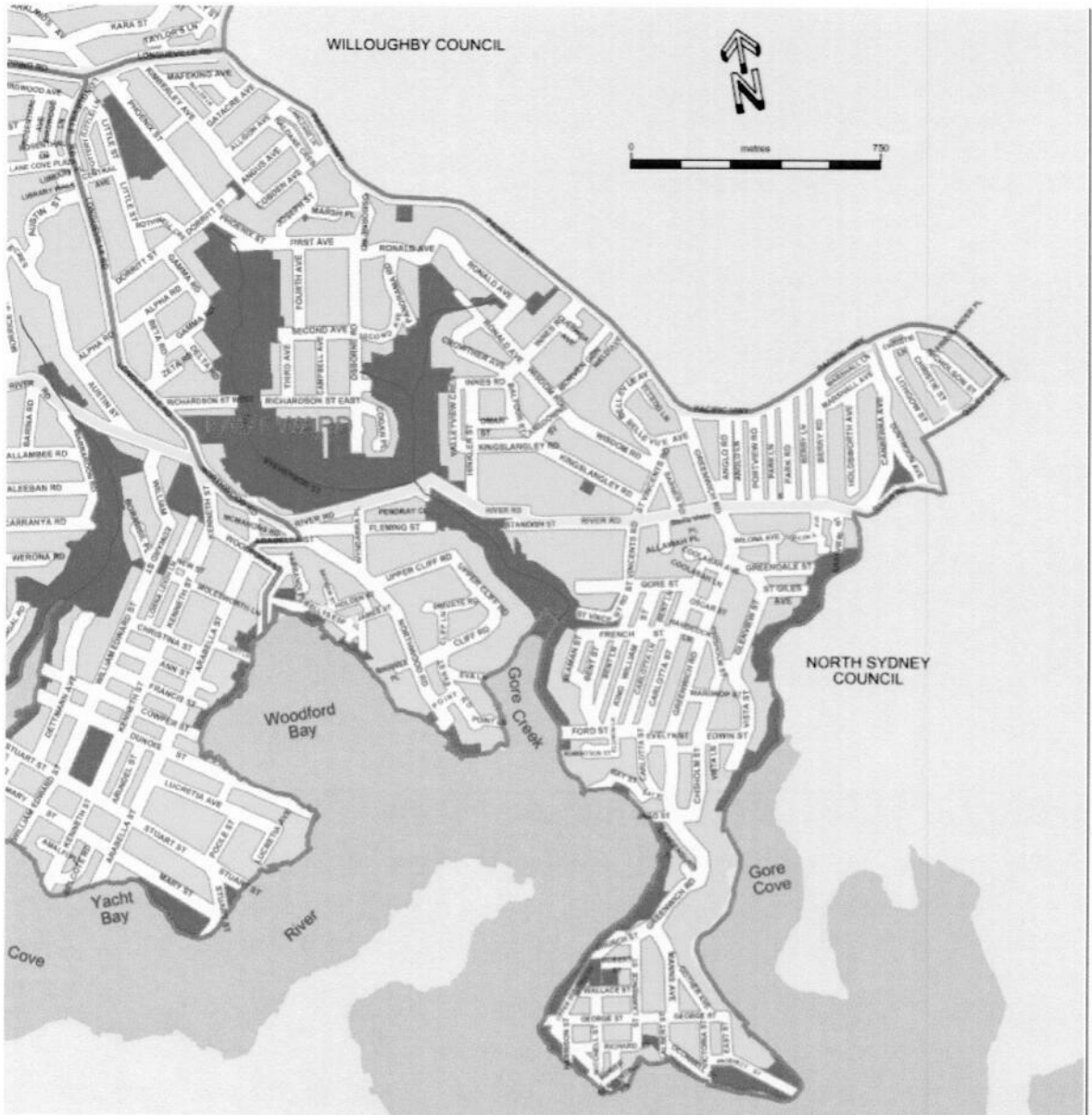
A portion of St Leonards South, namely the area bounded by Marshall Avenue, Park Road East, River Road and Canberra Ave, is the subject of a Planning Proposal by Lane Cove Council to rezone the area from R2 Low Density Residential to R4 High Density Residential. This is known as the St Leonards South Master Plan (SLS Master Plan).

Since the exhibition of the draft SLS Master Plan in early 2015, the GCA has consistently expressed concern to Lane Cove Council that the lack of coordination between the three Councils that control the St Leonards Crows Nest Precinct threatens optimal planning for the precinct. Furthermore, the GCA has been concerned that the lack of infrastructure and services proposed for the SLS Master Plan will lead to damaging impacts and strain on the already stressed infrastructure of Greenwich and adjacent areas.

In December 2017 the GCA resolved to request Lane Cove Council to cancel the SLS Master Plan. Council has not yet voted on whether it will or will not approve the plan.

In the light of the above, the GCA submission is made in the context detailed below:

1. the development landscape of the Precinct is as is (ie the SLS Master Plan area zoned R2 Low Density Residential and with current development), in addition to developments under construction or already approved by the relevant consent authority
2. comments made in this submission relate to the entire Precinct.



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Analysis of Existing Conditions

This submission is based on the preliminary analysis of existing conditions contained in the report prepared by Arup dated 1 February 2017.

The GCA is not in the position to verify the data contained in the report, especially in terms of detail outside the Lane Cove LGA, but the GCA agrees generally with the analysis of open space in the Precinct.

GCA's Definition of Open Space – "Green Open Space"

Discussion at recent DoP community sessions have suggested that the DoP's definition of open space may differ somewhat from the GCA's perception of what open space should be.

The GCA acknowledges that plazas such as the one proposed (but, we understand not finally signed off) for over the rail-line at St Leonards or galleries may be classified as "open space".

Spaces such as plazas and galleries can be easily incorporated into commercial and/or residential developments in the design and assessment process, through mechanisms such as VPA s or equivalent.

Whilst not wishing to undervalue the importance of plazas and galleries, the GCA is concerned that the DoP should not ignore the need for green open space that can be used for sport or recreational purposes. These spaces are vital for the physical and mental wellbeing of those who live and work in precincts of high density.

Such green open space would include:

- Parks
- Playgrounds
- Sporting ovals/playing fields.

Green open space will only be achievable through detailed and coordinated planning of a precinct in advance of consideration of individual development proposals.

The GCA is concerned that the amount of green open space in the Precinct is already well below what is required to meet the needs of the current population of the Precinct. This was reinforced by Arup.

The provisioning for adequate green open space must be a priority for planning of the Precinct.

Matching Objectives of the Precinct with Green Open Space capacity

The Precinct has been identified as an area for increased commercial and residential development.

Regardless of the focus of the GSC, the three LGAs in the Precinct have focussed on approving residential development, not commercial development.

It is intended that many of the new residents in the Precinct will rely on public transport – they will not have cars. Green open spaces will, therefore, need to be within walking distance of where they live.

This is a real challenge in the already intensely developed St Leonards/Crows Nest.



Constraints in Planning for Green Open Space in the Precinct

It is assumed that there are few parcels of land in the Precinct that could be regarded as “greenfields” sites, where the DoP can plan for green open space without the constraints of approved/current or completed development. Perhaps there may be some flexibility around the old ABC site which falls within the Willoughby LGA – this level of detail is not known to the GCA.

It appears to the GCA that the following general comments apply in respect of green open space in the Precinct:

- there is very little of it (Arup p 28)
- with the intense development in the Precinct already, there are few places to put it
- the development in the Precinct already has escalated property prices to the point that the cost of purchasing land to create adequate green open space is prohibitive
- the influx of workers foreshadowed by the GSC will generate demand for green open spaces for organised sporting activities at lunchtime and after work – just look at the Domain at lunchtime
- increased residential population will also add to demand for green open spaces
- if these people have no cars, as the government seems to envisage, the green open spaces surrounding the Precinct (Arup p 28) will not be easily accessible
- schools in and adjacent to the Precinct have almost no green open space that could be used by the general community (unlike schools in suburbs further away from the city) eg Cameraygal High has one basketball court on a busy corner of Pacific Highway, North Sydney Girls High has no large green spaces suitable for active/organised sport, North Sydney Boys has one reasonable area of green space in the middle of the school site.
- schools need to use existing parks for school sport (North Sydney Boys and Girls High use St Leonards Park regularly)
- this demand will increase as schools are built to accommodate the increased population
- concurrent and competing uses of a park eg school sport/ playgroups for toddlers may be dangerous
- topography of East Ward of Lane Cove is unsuitable for the creation of large recreational areas that can accommodate organised sport.

Present Situation – Some Green Open Space in Precinct but very little for active recreation

1. Gore Hill Oval

Arup notes that this oval is used for organised sport (p 28) with limited opportunity for informal recreation and play.

With the current program to replace the surface of the oval, it is likely that this space will be increasingly sought by organised groups, further eroding its potential for unstructured recreation

2. Gore Hill Cemetery

Good for reading and walking but inappropriate for active recreation

3. Pocket parks

These tend to be located at noisy corners on busy roads and are rarely used

4. Newlands Park

This park is on a sloping site and inappropriate for active sport

In the light of the considerations outlined in our submission, the GCA requests the DoP to:

1. finalise a clear benchmark for open space (including green open space) that has legislative force throughout NSW
2. include in the LUIPP open space (including green open space) provisioning of 2.34ha per 1000 population as per Lane Cove Council's Open Space Plan
3. designate in the LUIPP green open spaces (inside or outside the Precinct) that are suitable for concurrent use for active and passive recreation and are accessible by residents/ workers within 15 minutes by foot
4. designate as green open spaces only areas that have access to adequate sunlight and shade
5. ensure that the green open spaces are available to all within the Precinct regardless of which LGA is ultimately responsible for these spaces.

Failure to ensure access to adequate green open space in an area of high density like the Precinct will erode the liveability of the Precinct and will change the family oriented character that is valued by the Precinct communities.

