

Ms Mary O’Kane,  
Chair, Independent Planning Commission of NSW,  
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street,  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms O’Kane,

**Re: IPC advice for St Leonards South Planning Proposal**

The St Leonards South (SLS) Planning Proposal (PP) has been prepared without regard for population density, open space ratio and the impact on public amenities and infrastructure. The result, without doubt will result in further overcrowding, overshadowing, congestion, poor public amenities and next to zero open space.

SCALE: The scale and height of the proposed buildings are vastly excessive. Development needs to be appropriately scaled to reflect existing Duntroon Avenue apartment buildings.

PLACE: This Planning Proposal will completely destroy the community atmosphere of the area together with the vibrancy. It isolates people in high rise buildings with no provision being made for any nearby public amenities such as cafes, playgrounds, a local grocery store or significant new outdoor space. Newlands Park would be subject to unacceptable cumulative overshadowing in the afternoon, and therefore it does not meet one of the key design principles of the Draft Plan. It will turn the area into a ghetto type development with people living in rabbit warren like conditions.

BUILT FORM: With both Lane Cove and North Sydney Council doing an excellent job of meeting or exceeding their housing targets, there is no good reason to jump from a low rise residential neighbourhood to a high rise residential neighbourhood. We do not need development as seen along Epping Road where the buildings look like shipping containers stacked on top of each other.

LAND USE: Do we need 2400 more units when 91.3% of St Leonards’ residents live in apartments according to the 2016 Census – and when there are almost 2000 high rise apartments under construction in Lane Cove Council area near St Leonards station? We need diversity of housing – affordable housing, social housing, 3 and 4 bedroom housing.

The Planning Proposal fails to deliver diverse housing, variety of land use or support jobs growth. Can this proposal support jobs? NO. In all probability most residents will be travelling out of the area to work then of course there will be the Air BNB who are here today and gone tomorrow. Given local councils are meeting housing targets would this land be more appropriately used to create new schools, new playing fields or an internationally competitive health, education, research and innovation precinct?

TOPOGRAPHY: The SLS precinct topography is quite steep. Some consideration needs to be given to providing basic community services / local corner shops within the neighbourhood.

I am closer to 80 years of age than 70 and consider myself very fit for my age and continue to play tennis but to lug bags of groceries up and down the steep slopes is impossible hence I will be forced to use my car. What about mothers trying to push a stroller or pram up to St Leonards – get real!

LIVEABILITY: A mass of high rise buildings with NO OPEN SPACE does not make for a liveable community. We are looking for a well-designed mix of open space to building and suitable open spaces for leisure and children. Both children and adults need to get out into the open spaces to picnic and play etc. It is important for both physical and mental health. This space is all but none existent. It would almost seem that a planter box is regarded as green space.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION and SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE: River Road and the Pacific Highway are already congested (not to mention the 'main streets' through St Leonards, Crows Nest and Wollstonecraft). An additional 2400 apartments will exacerbate the already heavy congestion, as well as making access to Royal North Shore Hospital Emergency Department extremely difficult. I live in Boronia Street just across from Newlands Park, River Road is increasingly becoming like a parking lot. Trying to exit Boronia Street in a motor vehicle is becoming a nightmare. To cross over River Road as a pedestrian can be hazardous, one can regularly see a mother with stroller stranded in the pedestrian refuge with cars whizzing past in both directions.

The social infrastructure is not in place to support what is in the pipeline. Schools, hospitals, roads, open spaces, sports fields and swimming pools are already overcrowded. No further approval of residential units ought to be approved until we fully understand the implications of what is already in the pipeline.

LOCAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE: Local GPs are closed to new clients. There are no close bulk billing departments. The hospital is already stretched and overcrowded and traffic impedes easy access to the Emergency department.

These monstrous high-rise apartment buildings are set to replace houses built in the early 1900's – will these new buildings last 100 years? Judging by what has already been constructed in this city this is highly unlikely. More rubble to go into landfill and further destruction of the environment.

I would ask that you take into account all the above points and stop further high rise development in the area.

Yours sincerely,



Lorna J Bassett

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26 May 2019