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**Address to the Independent Planning Commission**

**On the**

**Proposed St Leonards South Precinct (SLS)**

**Monday 20 / 05 / 2019**

**Peter Deane**

Commissioners,

I, like most residents in this area am not against development. However the development needs to be carefully planned, targeted to the communities' future needs, supported by suitable infrastructure, with land form and geography taken into account. Bearing this in mind, I would like to highlight to you, some of my concerns with the St Leonards South Precinct (SLS) Proposal, and the way in which it has been developed.

Firstly I refer to Page 2 (4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph) of the letter from the Minister to the IPC dated 20 December 2018, in which he states;

*"Furthermore the Commission may also wish to inquire with Lane Cove Council about the outcomes of a Community Workshop in relation to the draft 2036 Plan, held on 12 December 2018, if this is not captured in Council's Submission."*

Community Consultation is captured on Page 6 of the Council's submission however, I can state categorically (as I took part in the Workshop), that this summary is sadly distorted and incorrect.

Of 12 identified items or issues the results have been summarised by Council as follows:

- 8 items (issues) supported
- 1 mixed view
- 1 acknowledgement
- 1 Preference
- 4 only items of concern

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Principle	How satisfied are you with the proposed Plan to address this Principle?				
	Highly unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Highly satisfied
Movement	28	8	5	2	0
Landscape	20	21	5	1	1
Place	23	16	5	2	0
Built form	27	15	2	1	1
Land use	22	18	2	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>

If you were to scan only this page, you would form a view that the Community Workshop supported SLS by more than a ratio of 2:1. Unfortunately you would be forming a totally incorrect view, as

buried in the back of the report on Page 26 of the 27 Page report under “community sentiment” the true results are revealed and the depth of the community concern as expressed at the Workshop, is shown.

Also, ignored totally by Council but formalised in the Workshop Consultant Facilitators Report is a matrix summarising the Workshop Satisfaction results (extract below). This matrix bears no similarity to Page 6 of Council’s Submission.



*Appendix 1: Satisfaction Results from Workshop Consultant Facilitators Report*

This matrix forms part of my talk today (copy handed to you), so I will not go into detail, however in total, of the items and issues discussed:

- **86,5% of attendees were either highly unsatisfied or unsatisfied**
- **8.3% were neutral**
- **5.2% were either satisfied or highly satisfied.**

What a different picture this presents to Page 6 of Council’s submission, and bearing in mind extraordinarily’ Council invited the SLS developers, and multiple persons from the developers attended the Community Workshop, so you can draw your own conclusions as to whom would have expressed “satisfaction” or “high satisfaction”.

Finally what is even more troubling, in this age where total transparency is encouraged, during the same month of the Workshop (December 2018), Council Planning Officers were meeting with the SLS developers, presumably to assist these developers to ensure correct documentation is produced for their submissions for Planning Assessments.

We are aware that these meetings took place but we are told under “Freedom of Information Request” that no records/minutes exist of these meetings.

### **Housing Targets**

We are told by Lane Cove Council, that SLS is required to meet housing targets. However, when we speak to the GSC, they say that this is not the case.

Lane Cove Council with developments already completed or underway, will well exceed the only targets set so far (ie. For year 2021). No other future targets have been set, and the GSC has told us, that any future targets will be set with Council, following Council’s completion of a Housing Strategy

Plan, which is supposed to be completed sometime middle of this year. However we understand that the Lane Cove Council has not yet commenced this strategy.

### **Employment**

As we live so close to the city, and also because the new Metro line is being established, I understand that development must and will occur. I understand the principles of the 2036 Plan, which is based on developing increased employment.

With the high-rise residential blocks either just completed or under construction or approved ready to start construction, few areas will be left in which to create additional employment around the St Leonards / Crows Nest hub.

The construction of these blocks plus SLS have been developer driven for residential units, with little thought to future employment.

It is therefore to me astounding that Lane Cove Council have actively promoted SLS.

### **Market Demand for Residential**

To add 2400 units in high density, high-rise apartment blocks of generally 10-19 storeys, laid out in linear fashion in this small area known as SLS, is most inappropriate and will cause many problems which have not yet been addressed.

Lane Cove Council have not yet completed its Housing Strategy Plan so they/we have no idea of the real residential demand and what the future demand might be for low density (houses), medium density (town houses and low rise unit blocks), and high density (high-rise unit blocks).

### **Residential Transition, Overshadowing and Play Space**

The current developer lead proposal has no transition from low density housing to the proposed high rise unit blocks.

Newlands Park (the only real usable park in the area) will be overshadowed in mid-winter at 3pm, just when children who have been at school all day, need to come out to run and play.

There is almost no additional play space created for the 5000 approximate additional residents for SLS, and to suggest that they cross the highway to the new artificial grass and child's play area at Gore Hill Oval is dangerous and not sustainable.

On Saturday last, I was at Gore Hill Oval attending my granddaughter's birthday. The oval, team warm up space (ie. the bank surrounding the oval) and child's play area were being heavily used, enjoyably by all ages and teams. However, it was at capacity.

To add approximately 4000 new residents from the 2000 high rise units along the highway (previously discussed), plus 5000 more residents from SLS, with no additional recreation space is plainly and seriously wrong.

### **Schools**

New schools are discussed in principle in the 2036 Plan, however nothing has been fixed and any further development – namely SLS, must not occur until accurate forecasts of school requirements have been complete, budgets approved, and land identified, ready for purchase.

The existing primary schools are either at or very near capacity, and new buildings are under construction at Greenwich public School's two campuses, just to satisfy natural population change and growth without including any demand created by SLS.

### **Infrastructure and Community Facilities**

We do not know how the existing infrastructure (power, water, telecoms, and sewer) will stand up to the additional loads imposed by SLS, as Council has refused to release any information they have.

However we do know that the roads, such as the Pacific Highway and River Road are at capacity at various times during the day.

Whilst the Council is planning to formalise two lanes in either direction, along certain sections of River Road, the bottle neck of the bridge over the railway near Duntroon Avenue, is ignored.

Therefore Council's proposal is ad hock and hardly likely to have any impact at peak hours.

2400 units (that is approximately 5000 new residents) are proposed into this small area called SLS. This population is approximately equivalent to that which currently exists in the entire area of Greenwich, with no additional community facilities apart from the new Metro line.

## Topography

It is also worth noting (but never mentioned in any reports) that due to the topography of SLS, most rail / Metro commuters to the City will access Wollstonecraft Station, not Crows Nest Metro Station, which will cause severe overcrowding on the City bound curved station platform. This is because the distance is less and the walk is downhill.

Additionally as now planned (or not planned), SLS residents will attempt to cross River Road near Newlands Park, heading for Wollstonecraft Station on a curve at the bottom of a steep hill with no traffic control. It will only be a matter of time (and quite quickly) before a serious accident occurs.

*Traffic lights will not fix this problem.*

In Conclusion, having pointed out the shortcomings of the SLS Proposal, and having stated that I support sensitively planned development, it is worth noting how well situated and integrated is the recent development, on Duntroon Avenue, backing on to the railway, overlooking Newlands Park and adjacent to SLS. This development of up to 6 storeys, with articulated frontage, nestling behind mature trees is a good example of the maximum density that could be supported within SLS, not the proposed block after block of high-rise.

Finally it is somewhat ironic, that Lane Cove Council, who fought against this development a few years ago, is now promoting this SLS over-development.