**Independent Planning Commission**

**Planning Proposal for St Leonards South residential precinct**

I object to the planning proposal for the St Leonards South residential precinct. The proposal fails to make provision for additional schools and sufficient green space for a growing population.

**Primary and secondary schools**

As a parent of two primary school aged children at Greenwich Public School, I have firsthand experience of the effects of an overcrowded school. Children do not have open space to play in, classrooms are full to the brim and “temporary” demountables are the norm.

The school was above capacity before the upgrade renovations that commenced this year. The school will be at or near capacity when the building works are complete. There is no capacity for the additional 4,000 residents from the St Leonards South precinct. From the transcript of the IPC hearing on 10 May 2019, the Education Department says new schools are needed for the additional residents. Planning for this type of infrastructure is required now. Space is generally quite lacking in this neighbourhood except when earmarked for residential towers.

We also lack comprehensive secondary schools here. The local high school is Hunters Hill High School for residents on the western side of the railway line. This is an hour bus commute each way for students. Cameraygal High School is a 10 minute walk away but we literally live on the wrong side of the railway tracks. There is a desperate need for a rebalancing of the secondary school boundaries. The St Leonards South residential precinct plans need to include secondary schools as well.

**Lack of green space**

Compared to other parts of the Lane Cove Council area, the St Leonards South/Greenwich area lacks open park space. Green space is not bushland. Residents of the St Leonards South/Greenwich area do not have ready access to parkland where they can picnic, take a walk and enjoy some green tranquility or let children run around or kick a ball.

Children need space to explore and develop. Children need sunlight. Children need fresh air. Adults need green space to relax and recalibrate. People cannot live if all they are surrounded by is concrete, dark shadows and artificial turf.

Being on the southern side of the ridge line there is very little chance for green space to thrive. Trees and plants need the sun to grow. Sadly, they cannot do this in the shadow of 10 storey buildings.

Both Crows Nest and St Leonards have been ignored or overlooked for decades because they sit where three local council areas intersect. Be on the wrong side of the street with the wrong issue and you can find yourself in a local council vacuum where no one can hear you scream. Vested property developer interests are now in play and residents voices cannot be heard over the shouting. Isn’t that ironic?

The developers by their own admission are not able to make the $15,000 per apartment contribution back to the local area. They cannot make the project viable. Then the project should not be permitted to proceed. The residents also do not think the project is viable. The answer is simple. No.

Sydney is growing and its resources are already strained. Lack of planning and foresight have meant that the city is now retrofitting infrastructure (such as the metro lines). We have an opportunity to properly plan what is needed to change the face of Crows Nest and St Leonards and make it fit for this century and the next. This requires time and proper consultation with current residents. Not more development applications.

The developers do not live here. We do.

21 May 2019