SUBMISSION BY JOHN FITZGERALD ON BEHALF OF HAYBERRY PRECINCT

My name is John Fitzgerald. I make this submission on behalf of the Hayberry Precinct. The Hayberry Precinct is a community organization concerned with one of several spatial divisions of the North Sydney local government area. We represent the views of the residents in this spatial division to the North Sydney Council, other local governments and other government bodies, such as yours, where appropriate. The Hayberry Precinct is located to the south east of the St Leonards South Precinct. The nearest point of the Hayberry Precinct: the intersection of Falcon Street with the Pacific highway, is about 600 m distant from the St Leonards South Precinct. So, although Hayberry Precinct is not the “next door neighbour” we are only “two doors down the road” from the St Leonards South Precinct.

The principal reason for this submission is to express the serious concern residents of the Hayberry Precinct hold that if the proposed rezoning in the St Leonards South Precinct is approved it will only be a matter of time before a similar proposal is made in connection with the Hayberry Precinct. In other words, our principal concern is the precedential effect of the proposed rezoning.

Over the last two years we have watched one development after another in the St Leonards area. Some have been completed, some are still under construction and some, such as the proposed rezoning, are yet to be approved. Taken together all these developments will transform the St Leonards area. The view of the Hayberry Precinct is that this transformation should be limited to the St Leonards town centre and then diminish quickly as you move away. In previous consultation sessions with the Department of Planning the Hayberry Precinct has expressed the view that high-density development should not expand beyond its current boundaries and certainly no further towards the Hayberry Precinct than Oxley Street. This is still our view.

It is the view of the Hayberry Precinct that the St Leonards South planning proposal lies outside the current boundaries of high-density development in the St Leonards town centre. It follows that our view is the proposed rezoning to permit high-density development should be refused.

It is the view of the Hayberry Precinct that if high-density development were to be allowed in the St Leonards South Precinct it would represent a significant departure from the pattern of development so far. The primary reason for taking this view is that this planning proposal concerns an existing residential area of low density and considerable age. Unlike the pattern of redevelopment in the past it does not transform an existing area of low density commercial buildings. Quite the opposite. By permitting this planning proposal you would be, in effect, announcing that existing residential areas of low density and considerable age which surround the St Leonards town centre can also be transformed into high-density development. This would be the first departure from the previous pattern of redevelopment. This is the precedential effect we claim.

You will not be surprised to learn why the Hayberry Precinct takes this view. We are an existing residential area of low density and considerable age and we border an existing area of low density commercial buildings. We are next. This is our fear. What has happened in the St Leonards South Precinct will happen in the Hayberry Precinct.

We note that the independent planning panel for North Sydney has previously rejected a proposal for high-density redevelopment in the Hayberry Precinct. You may be familiar with it: the so-called “triangle site” bordered by the Pacific Highway, Alexander Street and Falcon Street. On that occasion a development proposal grossly out of character with the surrounding area was rejected. And rightly so. On this occasion we ask you to do the same.

The Hayberry Precinct claims the St Leonards South planning proposal is grossly out of character with its surrounding area. We focus only on one reason: the rapid increase in population density. I note that Mr John Hancox in his oral submission on behalf of Wollstonecraft Precinct at the recent public meeting drew attention to this fact. We add our voice to his.

Our claim comes from comparison between the projected population increase from the planning proposal and the current population density. The Australian Bureau of Statistics community profile for the postcode area 2065 (catalogue number POA 2065) based on the 2016 census discloses that this postcode area, which includes both the St Leonards South Precinct and half the Hayberry Precinct had a population of 30,019 in an area of 5. 7 km². This is a population density of 5284 people per square kilometre. The St Leonards South Precinct will have a population of in excess of 4800 in an area of approximately .093 km². This is a population density of 51,613 people per square kilometre. Approximately 10 times the population density of the surrounding area in 2016.

I wish to emphasise the St Leonards South planning proposal will bring population increase on top of the population increase that will occur anyway from existing proposals for redevelopment of the St Leonards town centre. If this proposal goes ahead the result will be not just rapid increase in population density in the St Leonards South Precinct but elsewhere in the St Leonards town centre.

That such a rapid increase in population density in the middle of our local area could be even contemplated is a matter of great sadness and disappointment for the residents of the Hayberry Precinct.

We do not propose to elaborate on the strain such a rapid increase in population density will put on our local area. Other speakers at the recent public meeting did so far better than we could. We believe realization of the rapid increase in population density should shock you.

In summary, the St Leonards South planning proposal calls for too much high-density development too soon. You should reject it.