Planning Proposal for St Leonards South Residential Precinct

South St Leonards is an unsuitable area and simply cannot accommodate this proposed level of high density. Replacing 138 houses with 2400 units is a gross overdevelopment of the area, especially when considering the accumulative effect of the developments that have already occurred and those currently underway in Artarmon, Lane Cove, Crows Nest, Wollstonecraft and North Sydney.

A planning proposal has recently been approved for the development of 460 new units in Artarmon at the Chanel Nine site. I understand that the schools in the local area are already full.

Hundreds of apartments have already been completed in Lane Cove and although they are not fully occupied as yet, once families move into them then traffic will further increase (along River Road and Pacific Highway) and strain will be placed on schools that are already operating at full capacity. Families will be forced to apply to schools out of area hoping for a favourable outcome that will also require further travel time on the already congested roads.

St Leonards does not have a primary school or high school and with the proposed increase in population this definitely needs to be addressed now. We need to be consulted as to where new schools might go and the facilities that they will offer and be able to properly assess it as part of the overall plan.

St Leonards does not have a church and therefore there's no opportunity for the community to utilise the hall to accommodate for social or recreational activities like after school care, playgroup, dance classes and those types of things.

St Leonards does not have a library. One really needs to leave St Leonards in order to access all necessary facilities.

Despite all of the development that has already occurred to date in the area, there has been little attempt to improve the surrounding facilities or create anything new. Currently, the only supermarket is a small IGA at the St Leonards train station, it is without parking facilities therefore making it impossible to do a big family shop. You can only buy what you can carry. There's no designated kiss-and-ride at the station and no taxi zones. The nearest swimming pool is a good bus ride away at Lane Cove or train ride away at North Sydney and interestingly enough, Trent Zimmerman, our local MP, is campaigning for Commonwealth funds to actually fix up the pool there at Lane Cove. There's nowhere to kick a football around in the local area and there is nowhere to have a barbecue and for children living in the units, well, they definitely won't own a pet.

There is very limited open space for the number of residents in South St Leonards. Newlands Park is shaded and is situated on a site with very difficult topography. Gore Hill is used for sport and is continually booked out by Willoughby Council and shouldn't really be included as green space with this plan.

Please consider the social impacts of this plan. Mental health and obesity are major issues for some and I have not seen any studies that been undertaken to address this.

The Royal North Shore Hospital has already indicated its concern at being able to manage the demands that an increasing population will bring. It is not coping now and there is nowhere else to send people once the hospital reaches crisis point.

I have my own medical issues and I need to access both the hospital and the specialist centre at 66 Pacific Highway, St Leonards. The specialist centre does not have its own dedicated car parking and therefore patients rely on the off street and metered parking close by. I understand that Lane Cove Council intends to remove the parking spaces in order to improve the exit capacity from Berry Road to the Pacific Highway.

Traffic congestion in the local area has reached an unacceptable level and is only going to get worse when you consider the amount of development proposed for the area. River Road is bumper to bumper with traffic during peak periods and is a very dangerous road to navigate when walking from Canberra Avenue St Leonards to the Wollstonecraft Station since there is a small island in the centre of the road. An over the road bridge is really required, but then there is only a pavement on one side of the road.

It is important to note that at a Lane Cove Council meeting on 20th August, councillors unanimously moved a motion to write to the then Planning Minister, Anthony Roberts requesting an immediate moratorium on new development. They unanimously recognised and agreed that infrastructure was not keeping up with the pace of development. Gladys Berejiklian also placed a hold on development in Ryde for the very same reason.

It seems that although developers are desperate to get this development plan moving exploiting as much air space as possible. They have also advised of their lack of ability to meet their obligations in providing for infrastructure contributions.

Please see that attached article from The Sydney Morning Herald 6th January 2019 where it states the following “Sydney is already more densely populated then Chicago and Los Angeles, and the need for supporting community infrastructure such as pools, libraries and green space continues to grow”.

In respect to my submission I would like to advise that it has been very difficult in trying to access information from Lane Cove Council. I visited Council on three separate occasions asking to view files and was instead asked to apply for information by making a GIPA application at a cost of $30 per application. I made three application at a cost of $90 and then had to pay an additional fee of $180 before information would be released. I find this process discriminatory in the fact that those that can afford to pay for information can receive it and those that cannot are denied access.

Please think about the social impacts of this plan. I would like to see the plan scrapped and completely rethought with community being on board from day one. I would definitely like to see town planners planning the city rather than developers whose motives may only be financially driven. Spot rezoning by developers is not the way forward for St Leonards. I have been advised that this plan could be pulled except that there would be consequences. I’m yet to determine what the consequences are despite asking.

Please think deeply when considering this development on steroids plan. It is the biggest social experiment of our time, mass high density everywhere – the proposed development consisting of numerous imposing towers, unattractive and littering the skyline.

Lisa Perry, [redacted]