

CROWS NEST METRO: SUBMISSION ON OVER-STATION CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

As an architect and long-term Crows Nest resident I write in strong support of North Sydney Council's current height & zone controls for the Crows Nest Metro amalgamated site. Therefore I vehemently object to the Crows Nest over-station concept proposal.

The buildings above the Crows Nest Metro station must support the planned designation as a Health and Education Precinct by bringing more jobs into the area to meet the jobs target set by the Greater Sydney Commission.

Sydney Metro purports to provide Design Excellence which their proposal defines as providing an "outcome of high quality architectural, urban and landscape design" in alignment with their declared aspiration to provide a high-quality Public Domain. Sydney Metro also claim to be proud of their record in Design Excellence despite providing nothing of the sort for past major projects such as Mascot.

Prudent planning for the future Design Excellence of our local public domain will make sure there are:

1. NO changes in planning controls for the Crows Nest Metro site.
2. NO residential development on the Crows Nest Metro site.
3. NO building on Block C of the Crows Nest Metro site – provide additional open space, effective (non-linear) tree canopy and visual link to Hume St park.
4. NO car parking on the Crows Nest Metro site.
5. NO more than 25% site coverage if activation of Clark Lane and Hume St is to provide functional open space and effective tree canopy without debilitating wind downdraft effects.

Rather than residential buildings, this site must continue as a vital employment and business generating retail/commercial/service district without the encroachment of residential development which does nothing for jobs or business.

1. The building/s above the Metro must be part of an education hub. The building/s could contain: early learning centre; high-tech technology park; TAFE branch specialising in technology, hospitality, cooking, film; comprehensive high school; language/ music/ drama/ dance school/s; barista training and/or a culinary institute.
2. The buildings above the Metro must contain services and activities that maintain and improve the health of the community: medical services; alternative health care; recreational spaces such as swim pool, indoor rock climbing, indoor soccer, volleyball, table tennis; performance space; cinemas; a new community centre; more childcare; a start-up hub and serviced offices.
3. The buildings above the Metro must become a destination that brings people and jobs to the area – not more high-rise residential towers. The proposal pays lip service to public domain with a 'podium community roof' which will be subject to strong wind downdrafts and overshadowed for most of the day.
4. the metro site provides a rare opportunity to add to the scarce open space in the centre of Crows Nest, particularly with potential surrounding residential and commercial development. The precinct planning reports talk of a 'network of open space' where none is proposed. The opportunity exists at the Metro site to provide a visual, landscaped pedestrian link to Hume Street Park from the Highway across Site C and the southern part of site A.

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5. The over-station development must provide a weather-protected public building-to-building pedestrian link over or below the Pacific Highway (an obvious omission at Mascot).
6. Priority for pedestrians and cyclists must be provided over convenience for vehicles. The proposed car lifts and laneway queuing noted in the Traffic Report will detract, not improve, the public domain.
7. Generous street setbacks to allow for realistic tree canopy and mitigate wind downdraft must be a priority, particularly to the laneways and Pacific Highway. The proposal has dimensioned architectural plans, elevations and sections that OMIT the street setback dimensions. By scaling it appears the meagre setbacks are less than 3m which counteracts the Metro's supposed commitment to the public domain. Design excellence for the public domain would provide a connected green space with tree canopy from the Highway to Hume Street Park.

In summary Sydney Metro need to brief their consultants to provide Design Excellence in accordance with North Sydney Council's current height & zone controls.