

Sydney Metro Crows Nest Over Station Development

28 September 2020

RE: Submission regarding amended OSD plans exhibited September 2020

Your revised plan notes five key amendments purporting to have listened to the community concerns, but in my opinion they have failed to do so:

Page.9: Heights: States you say you have made “amendments to the building envelopes and heights, including a 20 per cent reduction in the overall size of the building envelope”. From what I can see you have reduced the height of one building from 27 storeys to 21. In reality this is only a 7.4m as they are now commercial storeys.

- As per my original submission, I believe these heights still do not respond “sensitively to the character of the surrounding areas” as you suggest. They are totally out of keeping with the local character and the need for them is not justified. They overshadow the lower rise buildings of Crows Nest and will create a canyon along Pacific Highway.

Page.10: Affordable housing: Says 5 per cent of residential area could be provided as affordable rental housing, but may be given as a monetary contribution.

- If affordable housing is provided as a monetary contribution, it may end up being located nowhere near the station. This seems contrary to the point of having affordable housing. This should be located within the development.

Page.57: Overshadowing: you state that avoiding overshadowing at Ernest Place would “require the top two levels of the building to be reduced by half (around 700sqm of lettable space) at the northern end”. You state that Sydney Metro considers this a “sub-optimal outcome” and list 7 reasons for this being suboptimal, none of which are related to community concerns.

- If the “building form is compromised” and “the top two floors of office space are compromised” – then the answer is simple: remove them!
- The only a sub-optimal outcome if two floors are completely removed, is for the property developer receiving reduced profits. They are the only ones for whom this outcome would be “suboptimal”.

Page.60: Community space: The potential community use space has been removed as it was apparently unsupported by Council who preferred to get funds to use elsewhere.

- Community spaces should be included in developments as there is no guarantee that any offsite facilities built with the levies will be easily accessible to the new residents who inhabit these buildings.

Page.65: Pedestrian access: there was a suggestion for the inclusion of a pedestrian tunnel under the Pacific Highway, but constraints were put forward, including “the customer catchment on the western side of the Pacific Highway is limited by steep grades and easy access to Wollstonecraft Station”.

- This comment is astounding as for those who live west of the site. We have constantly been told that Crows Nest Station is part of the justification for high rise developments on the west of the

highway, calling them “transit orientated developments” and driving the determination to allow excessive heights at this location.

- For example, the contradiction is clear when viewing the St Leonards South rezoning, which substantially relies on justifying the higher density zoning on the fact that the 5000+ new residents will have the option of using Crows Nest Station.
- Crossing Pacific Highway, a main arterial road, needs to be made easy. If no improvement is made to existing crossings the new station will not be as accessible as it should be.

Page.85: Setbacks: The setbacks at ground level are completely inadequate. One only has to view the completely un-pedestrian friendly frontage of nearby recently completed Mirvac towers (“St Leonards Square”) on Pacific Highway to see what we could be in line for. The poorly planned setbacks here significantly hinder pedestrian amenity and in fact create dangerous situations where narrow pavements put walkers alongside busy roads. There is no amenity for cycle access on what is now a popular route for food delivery services.

- Building setbacks should be increased if this is to truly be a pedestrian focused environment and future proof by including cycle amenity.

Page.88: The Interchange Access Plan (IAP): this appears to be a vital document so it should be prepared in conjunction with these plans. Too many important issues are unresolved, including how pedestrians and cyclists will safely access the site from all angles.

- Mandated minimum requirements for access should be provided in this plan, rather than leaving it to ultimate property delivers to resolve, who seem unable to sufficiently cater for pedestrians and cyclists in a sensible manner.

Page.100: Parking: The Amended Scheme proposes 49 less car parking spaces than the Exhibited Scheme, and 37 less car parking spaces than was located on the site pre-demolition.

- Despite this being a new train station, history to date shows that people are not giving up their cars. For example, when Embassy was completed in Marshall Ave, St Leonards, directly opposite the station, the first thing new residents did was apply to Lane Cove Council for resident street parking (and were rightly refused as being ineligible). More recently North Sydney’s mayor has begun a mission to increase the amount of parking allowed in developments.
- As much as I support and use public transport, removing sufficient parking is not having the impact Councils desire and adequate parking should be included.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these plans.

I do not consent to my name and details being published.