



Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society Inc

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21 October, 2019

We thank Chris Pelz, Strategic Planner, Lane Cove Council for the extended submission time, email 16 October, 2019.

RE: Submission on Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)

We are pleased to have the opportunity to comment on Council's Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement. We note the importance of the new LSPS in directing the 20 year strategic vision of land use within the LGA and its significance in promoting Lane Cove's unique characteristics and local identity. It is thus a crucial document in guiding growth and change for the coming 20 years as the broader statutory plans are executed at local government level. The Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society (LCBCS), established in 1971, advocates for the protection and preservation of Lane Cove's bushland and the conservation of the area's natural environment and built heritage. With this mission we offer general comments on the draft statement and where appropriate comments on specific aspects and actions.

General Comments

Lane Cove's Natural Heritage

We commend Council on bringing together statutory requirements of the North District Plan and Lane Cove's LEP and DCP in this first LSPS. The draft statement has captured Lane Cove's special features, in particular the importance of tree canopy, species diversity, as well as resident vicinity to bushland as a unique feature of its open space areas. However, we believe that this special feature should be stronger and more prominent in the LSPS. Rather than form the last of the planning priorities, sustainability should be a driver of the planning priorities. It is fundamental to climate resilience. The LSPS on p. 32 refers to "embracing heritage" but there is natural heritage as well as aboriginal, historical and building heritage. All need recognition in the planning priorities.

Planning and population

Population growth is the driver of the North District Plan and hence the requirement of how to accommodate further population growth becomes central to the LSPS. Page 10 refers to the North District Plan estimate of 41% by 2036. This is huge in comparison to other councils, in fact the second highest after Ryde which has a far larger physical area than Lane Cove. It is impossible to see how this target can be met and not erode totally Lane Cove's unique natural heritage. We support Council in taking a strong stand against this high requirement and hope that it will strongly argue the case for lower targets. Lane Cove has consistently outperformed its targets to date. While St Leonard's South, if it proceeds, would allow Lane Cove to meet this very high target, we urge Council to push back against any further growth requirements.

The character of Lane Cove has already been visibly altered with the level of high density development of the past decade, with a number of high density developments such as the Mowbray Precinct severely impinging on and stressing the sustainability of adjacent urban bushland. The LSPS should thus

incorporate strategic guidelines for zoning and growth to take account of the characteristics of urban bushland pockets. These could include:

- No further high density zoning or development adjacent to bushland (eg within 100 metres of the perimeter of bushland reserves).
- All future zoning adjacent to bushland should remain / be R2 zoning.
- All further high density zoning to be only along major roads (eg Pacific Highway and Epping Road) in the vicinity of public transport.
- Public transport becomes a major priority for this to become a real priority.
- The provision of infrastructure (such as schools, health, sewerage systems, stormwater management and control) would be unsustainably overloaded with a 41% population increase. It is hard to see how Lane Cove could sustainably cope.

Planning and Liveability

The pockets of urban bushland, the special characteristic of Lane Cove, is central to liveability. They provide respite to residents, encourage passive recreation and exercise and showcase the area's natural heritage and beauty. Liveability is also about housing and quality of our urban areas and built environment. Here too the LSPS could be stronger and more proactive. It would be good to focus Lane Cove as a leader in urban and sustainable design, not just adding to the housing mix, but emphasising sustainability, quality and design.

Further, the characteristic of the suburb as urban bushland must come in the forefront of all zoning / rezoning considerations. This includes the strategic guidelines discussed above. It should also place in the foreground the landscaping vision of Harry Howard, which can be appreciated in the older high density areas of Lane Cove North (eg Helen, Ralston, Stokes Streets) with pockets of open space interspersed, the preservation and planting of local indigenous species and the provision of wildlife corridors between urban / built environment and bushland.

The LSPS refers to planting local species. The importance of local indigenous plantings are crucial to climate resilience and their role in this can be strengthened by stressing this for both public and private land. In this area too the strategic aim should be to make Lane Cove public space serve as a showcase for local flora with the preservation of local species and habitat restoration as a primary aim to maintain the character of Lane Cove.

Urban Bushland

What makes Lane Cove unique are its pockets of urban bushland and the variety of bushland (eg harbour foreshore / coastal enriched sandstone, river foreshore, estuarine swamp / saltmarsh / mangrove forest , coastal escarpment littoral rainforest, Sydney Turpentine Ironbark among the recorded Endangered Ecological Communities). Bushland is central to Lane Cove's character. There are not many examples of such suburbs in Sydney. Many new residents as well as visitors to Lane Cove express surprise to encounter "the bush" within just a few kilometres of the CBD. As such it serves a more prominent and guiding role in the LSPS.

Bushland acquisition is central to a future vision for Lane Cove's natural heritage, its viability and the suburb's liveability. Hence there should be an active strategy and policy, embedded in the LSPS, of acquisition as a central component of bushland protection. There should be a specific action under Planning Priority 10. We note reference on p. 30 of the LSPS to bushland acquisition through the voluntary planning agreement process. However, it simply refers to "opportunity to consider". The Plan needs stronger and more positive statements and hence the suggestion to incorporate as a strategy on bushland acquisition and consolidation.

We are pleased to have had the opportunity to comment on the Draft LSPS and look forward to learning how community consultation has influenced the final version.

Ruth Neumann

On behalf of the LCBCS Committee