



Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society Inc

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Lane Cove Council

PO Box 20, Lane Cove 1595

Via Email: service@lanecove.nsw.gov.au

Att: Mr C Wrightson, General Manager
The Mayor, Cllr Palmer and All Councillors

LCB&CS Submission: Council's Draft Local Housing Strategy – SU8406

The Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society (LCB&CS) thanks Council for the opportunity to make this submission.

We understand that Council is preparing this Strategy to respond to NSW State Government requirements to plan for increased housing over the next 20 years in accordance with targets, which, as stated, can be met without upzoning. We support this approach and trust that it will be acceptable to the State planning authorities.

Recommendations (overarching)

We generally support Council in the strategy objective to preserve and enhance character and heritage in Lane Cove. However, we consider that this objective has not been as clearly spelled out in the LHS as it warrants, particularly in the Vision Statement, the accompanying analysis, and subsequent recommendations.

In addition, there is little reference to the contribution of bushland to the overall liveability and amenity of Lane Cove. Rather it is presented more generally as 'natural environment' or, as an Environmental Constraint.

Recommendation: We strongly recommend that the document be reviewed to make sure that it reinforces the need to protect, maintain and enhance the characteristics that make Lane Cove special, including its bushland, foreshore areas, and leafy quality, etc. These values should be more clearly spelled out through the Strategy.

Specific comments and recommendations

While we have limited resources to commit to a detailed review, we offer the following suggestions. They all aim to reinforce our overarching recommendation to reinforce the need to protect and enhance the environmental and scenic quality of Lane Cove in the face of demands for increased housing.

The reference numbers refer to the relevant Sections of the Strategy.

1.3 Housing Vision

It is difficult to foresee how new residential development of the type proposed will be able to *'harmonise with our natural landscapes'* without further pressure on its viability. We understand that this statement was drawn from the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) as indicated in Section 3.2.2. However, we consider that the vision statements in this strategy should be reinforced by reference to the special environmental and scenic qualities of Lane Cove... These qualities should be conserved and enhanced and not eroded by inappropriate uses that potentially will destroy or diminish these natural landscapes.

Recommendation: The Vision statement and goal for Sustainability should state that new housing should, and its associated infrastructure should be designed and located to conserve the special environmental and scenic qualities of Lane Cove and their settings. The term 'natural environment' should be defined and include a reference to bushland and foreshore areas etc.

2.6 Character

Bushland in Lane Cove is not located just 'along creeks', as stated. This description appears to de-emphasise, rather than reinforce, the value of our natural environment.

Lane Cove's bushland is located in major reserves that are mainly located in valleys (which contain creek lines) and along the river foreshore. They are a major contributor to the character and liveability of Lane Cove that make Lane Cove so unique a suburb so close to the city.

Our bushland reserves are very accessible to residents (most residents are within 500m of a reserve). They contain a network of walking tracks through a variety of bushland. They are highly valued, well used and have been carefully maintained over many years. Reference should be made to the detailed definitions included in Council's Plan of Management for Bushland.

Recommendation: This section should be modified to accurately describe the bushland in Lane Cove and its value as a major component of the natural environment. It should be modified to state that it is more located in major reserves and locations such as foreshore areas. The term 'natural' should be clarified to acknowledge that some bushland areas have been regenerated or modified, so that those areas would not be discredited in future planning.

2.8 and 2.8.6 Liveability

We do not support the exclusion of bushland (and foreshore areas) from the analysis of liveability. The reason given for its exclusion is unexplained. It is not possible to understand why such areas would be excluded from any analysis of liveability. If this is a requirement (say, due to a template etc), then it should be stated. We note that bushland areas are indicated in Council's adopted Local Strategic Planning Statement (as indicated in Section 3.2.2). However, they should be included in the analysis undertaken in Section 2.8 of this strategy.

Recommendation: The maps should include bushland, bushland reserves and foreshore areas (or there should be a separate one), which should form part of the analysis. They are major components of liveability in Lane Cove. Their conservation would be a major factor in considering the appropriateness of housing types, in future planning decisions.

2.8.6 Overall Liveability

Does this section relate only to 'planning new infrastructure' Is it a guide for the location of new infrastructure only? Where does this section lead to and how does it inform the Action and Implementation Plan?

There should be a corresponding Recommendation and Action for Liveability in Section 7.0. It should aim to enhance liveability (and supplement the Actions for Sustainable Design). It should spell out the need to keep and enhance Lane Cove's special characteristics (including bushland) and continue to maintain and improve accessibility. (For example, greater connection, access, and extension to walkways along the Lane Cove waterfront for walking, would greatly improve 'Liveability' and increase access to open space areas).

Recommendation: The purpose of this section should be further explained, and its aims and role in establishing the parameters for new housing and housing types clearly spelled out. It should translate into a Recommendation and Action for Liveability in Section 7.0.

6.2.7 Preserve and enhance character and heritage.

Our experience over many years is that dwelling targets are continually reset by Government in response to development pressure and housing requirements. Lane Cove has exceeded averages for higher density housing, due to its distinctive character and high environmental qualities located so close to the Sydney CBD. We welcome that the targets can be met for the foreseeable future without rezoning.

However, it is essential that future development does not come at the expense of those environmental qualities that contribute to its liveability. Increased demands for sports fields and active recreation, even encroachment into bushland, threaten or result in the loss of our naturally green open spaces. This is happening already in Lane Cove. Therefore, we are wary of the recommendations contained in 6.2.7, which seem to accept some future erosion of the character and heritage of Lane Cove in the name of 'innovation and adaptation of the trends of the day'.

Recommendation: This section should strengthen the need to retain the high visual, heritage and character- based amenity of Lane Cove by conserving those elements that contribute to it. It should include an objective to ensure that new development does not adversely impact on areas of high environmental and visual quality, including bushland and foreshore areas, and the settings of such areas.

6.2.8 Incorporate sustainable design outcomes.

We support the priorities and recommendations in this section that aim to enhance the urban tree canopy, bushland, and waterways etc. However, they should be augmented to ensure that new planting in high density areas includes native tree planting in accordance with Council requirements.

Recommendation: This section should include requirements for planting of indigenous trees and shrubs, consistent with Council's landscape policy for residential development, which should be referenced in the section. This is particularly important in higher density development to provide habitat for existing wildlife and the retention of wildlife corridors.

7.0 Action and Implementation Plan

Recommendation: As this section draws together the recommendations of the previous sections, it should incorporate the above-mentioned recommendations, accordingly, including the addition of a Recommendation and Action for Liveability.

General Comment

Recommendation: The photo image on the front cover should show housing diversity, not just one type of housing i.e., flats. It should include images of gardens, planting, not mostly hard surfaces. It should be replaced with images that reflect better the primary character Lane Cove, as described in Section 2.6.

Conclusion

Our recommendations highlight the need to ensure greater emphasis on preservation of the special environmental and visual quality of Lane Cove within the document.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that the document be reviewed to make sure that future planning decisions support the need to protect, maintain and enhance the characteristics that make Lane Cove special, including its bushland reserves, foreshore areas, and leafy quality. These qualities should be spelled out more clearly in the various sections, including the baseline information contained in the analysis, and throughout the strategy generally.

We trust that Council finds these comments helpful and incorporates the recommendations into the adopted Strategy.

Yours sincerely,
Shauna Forrest, President, Margaret Bergomi
On behalf of the Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society.