

## Why doesn't our Council communicate?

Dear Community Member

The GCA was surprised to hear last Friday 22 June from an East Ward resident that he had been invited to present to a St Leonards South Urban Design Workshop to be held on **Wednesday 4 July** from 10am to 5 pm in the Cove Room in Council offices. The purpose of the workshop is described as an opportunity for invitees to present to an Urban Design Review Panel that has been convened to "analyse and potentially refine the proposed design elements of Council's draft plans" for St Leonards South and "to determine whether any amendments to the proposed built form or amalgamation patterns are warranted".

To our knowledge, no information about this Panel or the workshop has been sent to the more than 300 people who made, in some cases, very detailed submissions to Council about the St Leonards South plans. There is no mention of this Panel workshop on Council's website.

It seems that Council officers have reviewed all submissions and identified those they think raise technical issues. Invitations to present to the Panel were distributed on this basis but seemingly limited. We know of just one Greenwich resident and two others who live in other parts of East Ward who have been invited to attend, along with two developers. Given the high level of input from the community about the SLS plan, this low number of presenters is hard to understand.

The very narrow scope of the Design Review, the lack of information available to the public and the limited opportunity for participation does little to address the community's concerns about the St Leonards South consultation process.

The GCA requested Council to expand the chance for community members to present to this Panel but Council will not issue further invitations to the community. Council officers have, however, agreed that the GCA may pass on to Council any technical issues that it would like to have raised with the Panel. Sadly, this seems to be the only way Council will accept community input to the Panel.

So, if you want to have issue(s) considered by the Panel and are happy to use the GCA to ask for this, please email your discussion points to [southwood@bigpond.com](mailto:southwood@bigpond.com) by 5 pm on 1 July. Your requests will be collated without identifiers and sent to Council.

Council officers have made it clear that they will decide if any of the issues raised by the GCA will go to the Panel and whether the GCA will be permitted to present.

It is the view of the GCA (as endorsed at our general meeting on 20 June) that Council now has a clear indication from the community of the range and strength of concerns it has around the plans for St Leonards South. The current plan should be cancelled.

We call on our East Ward Councillors to move at the next Council meeting that Council officers should commence a series of detailed meetings with the GCA with a view to developing a new plan for St Leonards South that addresses the concerns of the community.