1.3 The Study Area

St Leonards and Crows Nest Study Area is located approximately 5 km north-west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD). It overlaps three local government areas: Lane Cove Council, North Sydney Council and Willoughby Council.

The area provides a unique urban condition, comprising a variety of land uses, including low, medium and high density residential and commercial developments, retail, industrial, education, medical and sporting facilities.

The morphology (pattern of urban settlement and development) of the area has been shaped by topography and the Pacific Highway, which runs along the ridge-line from the Sydney CBD in the south to Hornsby and beyond in the north. Development either side of the Pacific Highway quickly transitions in terms of density, land use and elevation, which also presents significant challenges for connectivity.

Some of the key features that start to define the area’s character include The Forum at St Leonards Station, Royal North Shore Hospital and Gore Hill Oval, Artarmon Employment (Industrial) Area, low-scale fine grain residential neighbourhoods in Naremburn and Crows Nest, steep topography along River Road and St Leonards South, and the vibrant retail and dining along Willoughby Road. This variation in character, form and function contributes to the unique ‘sense of place’ that defines the local area.