



## Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy Consultation Outcomes Report

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# 1 Executive summary

The draft *Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy* (Place Strategy) is a 20-year plan to build on the established character of Frenchs Forest and shape the development of a town centre on the plateau through the relocation of The Forest High School. The Place Strategy plans for new jobs connected to Northern Beaches Hospital and new homes, social activities and community places.

The Place Strategy was available for public comment on the NSW Planning Portal from 23 July 2021 to 3 September 2021. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment invited stakeholders and community members to attend two webinars; book one-to-one phone briefings with a planner via Eventbrite (32 consultations booked); or provide written comment via Social PinPoint, email, webform or post.

The department received 341 submissions from community members and stakeholders from council, environmental organisations, local societies and advocacy groups.

This report, prepared by Elton Consulting, a WSP Company, on behalf of the department, summarises these submissions. It captures key sentiments and breadth of views without specifying every individual comment from stakeholders. This feedback will inform the final Place Strategy.

Overall, support is divided. Many submissions do not indicate a position but express excitement at some of the changes and concerns about others.

The most frequent comments raised throughout submissions relate to:

- » insufficient road infrastructure
- » lack of public transport options
- » higher density is/is not needed
- » more open green spaces.

**Figure 1 Word cloud**



## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 About the draft *Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy*

Frenchs Forest, 13 kilometres north of Sydney CBD and in the west of the Northern Beaches Local Government Area (LGA), sits at the crossway of two ridge lines that align with Warringah Road and Wakehurst Parkway.

The suburb offers a mix of natural and built environments, with easy access to bushland, local shops and a suburban business park. Already home to more than 9,000 jobs, investment in the Northern Beaches Hospital, road upgrades and the relocation of The Forest High School provides the opportunity to create thousands of new jobs and a new strategic centre.

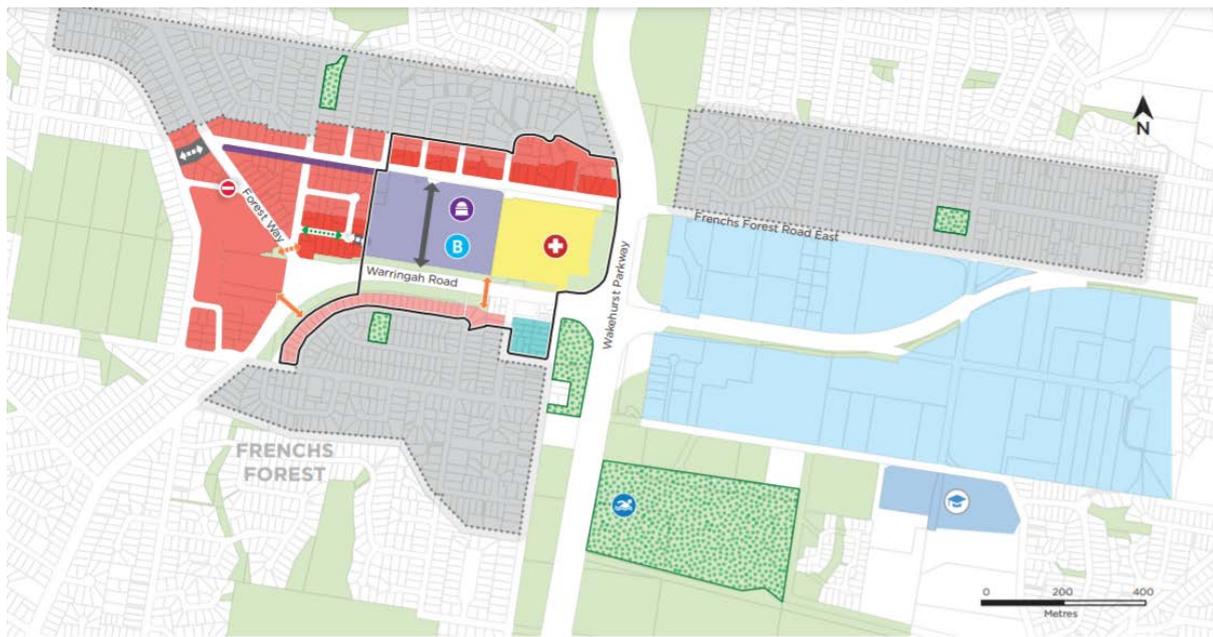
The draft *Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy* considers existing local character and community aspirations to create a new urban centre, anchored by the Northern Beaches Hospital. The Forest High School relocation to 187 Allambie Road creates the space for a new town centre including a village green and piazza, a community hub, flexible community spaces, a fresh food courtyard and night-time activities.

The draft strategy builds on consultation, technical studies and planning investigations commenced by Warringah Council in July 2014. This includes the Hospital Precinct Structure Plan, which sets out a three-phase delivery of approximately 5,360 dwellings and 2,300 new jobs over the next 20 years. *Frenchs Forest 2041* covers the Phase 1 area of the structure plan alongside the first road access upgrades.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is working with the community, Northern Beaches Council, School Infrastructure NSW, Transport for NSW and other state agencies to revitalise Frenchs Forest and create a new town centre.

The rezoning of Frenchs Forest will be state-led with a new planning framework that responds to the vision and objectives of the Hospital Precinct Structure Plan and provides an integrated approach for sustainable growth of Frenchs Forest.

**Figure 2: Draft Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy**



**Figure 2:** Hospital Precinct Structure Plan

Frenchs Forest Precinct	R3+ Medium density residential plus additional land uses	Future road closure	Future school site
Cadastre	SP2 Infrastructure	Proposed future bus interchange	Future investigation
Neighbourhood centre	Green link	Existing pedestrian overpass	Embellished open space
Mixed use	Mid block connection	New pedestrian/cyclist overpass	Open space
Jobs growth	New road connection	Town centre	
R2+ Low density residential plus additional land uses	Potential road widening	Aquatic centre	
R3 Medium density residential		Hospital	

## 2.2 Purpose of this report

This Consultation Outcomes Report overviews the key consultation activities and feedback received from the community and interested stakeholders during the exhibition of *Frenchs Forest 2041*.

This report summarises:

- » how the department engaged the community and stakeholders
- » the submissions received, who provided feedback and the mechanism for providing feedback
- » feedback from the community
- » feedback from government organisations and community groups.

The feedback summarised in this report will inform the final Place Strategy.

## 3 Exhibition details

### 3.1 Exhibition period

The department placed the draft *Frenchs Forest 2041* on the NSW Planning Portal from 23 July to 3 September 2021 for public comment. This was supported by:

- » updated content on the department's website
- » media release
- » electronic direct mail (EDM) to Frenchs Forest webpage subscribers, a reminder EDM and exhibition extension EDM
- » addressed letters to landowners in the precinct and postcards to residents in the precinct and surrounding area
- » advertisements in the Northern Beaches Review newspaper and a story in Manly Daily/Daily Telegraph
- » social media advertising on Facebook and posts on LinkedIn.

Engagement activities included:

- » one on one phone briefings with members of the planning team
- » two webinars held through Adobe Connect
- » a social pinpoint map.

#### 3.1.1 Project webpage

A Frenchs Forest precinct webpage provided additional information including the Place Strategy itself, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and technical reports. The webpage allowed people to have their say with links to make a submission, complete an online survey and leave comments on the Social PinPoint map.

- » The precinct webpage <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Priority-Growth-Areas-and-Precincts/Frenchs-Forest> recorded 5,093 page views by 4,117 unique users, spending an average 8:30 min on the page.
- » A vanity URL for the precinct webpage, <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/frenchsforest> recorded 12,888 page views by 10,557 unique users, spending an average 8:33 min on the page.

#### 3.1.2 Electronic direct mail

The department sent three EDMs during the exhibition period:

- » 'Have your say' distributed 23 July to 768 recipients.
- » Exhibition extension EDM distributed 17 August to 759 recipients.
- » Reminder email distributed 30 August to 757 submitters.

#### 3.1.3 Community postcards

In the first week of exhibition, the department distributed 5,100 postcards to residents of the precinct and nearby suburbs, as well as 103 letters to precinct landowners.

### 3.1.4 Advertising

Advertising included:

- » three ads were on Facebook from 23 July to 10 September 2021, reaching 179,051 users and generating a click-through rate of 2.18%
- » advertisements in the Northern Beaches Review on 4 August and 11 August 2021 and a story on 23 July in Manly Daily/Daily Telegraph
- » digital advertising in the News Corp network from 30 July to 13 August.

### 3.1.5 Engagement

Engagement methods included:

- » a social pinpoint map, visited 7,339 times by 2,670 users who left 96 comments
- » two webinars with the department and representatives from Northern Beaches Council and School Infrastructure NSW, with 85 people attending on 10 August and 59 people on 18 August
- » one-to-one 'talk to a planner' phone sessions attended by 32 people.

## 4 Submissions summary

### 4.1 Submissions process

To provide feedback, respondents could:

- » leave comments on the Social PinPoint map hosted on the project webpage
- » use the NSW Planning Portal and webform at <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/frenchsforest>
- » access the Northern Beaches Have Your Say Page at <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/french-forest-precinct>.

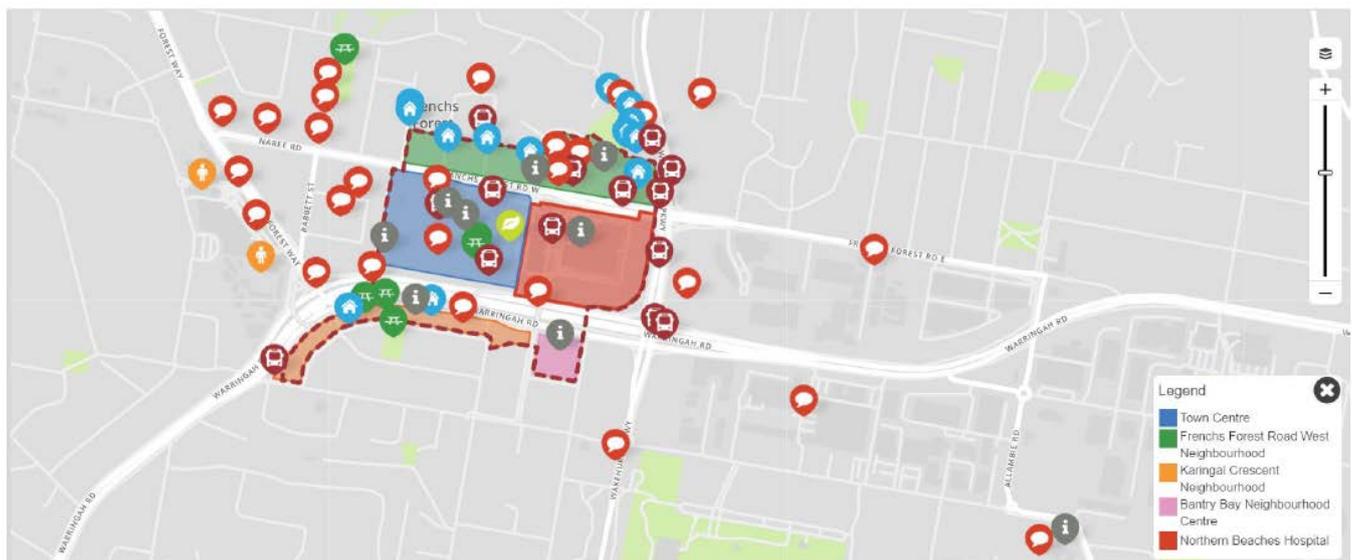
### 4.2 How submissions were received

The 341 submissions included:

- » 161 webforms via the department's website
- » 22 webforms via the Northern Beaches Council website
- » 56 detailed letters or reports
- » 96 Social PinPoint comments on the Frenchs Forest map.

Some submissions across different platforms were submitted from the same person.

**Figure 3: Frenchs Forest Precinct snapshot**



### 4.3 Who made submissions

Local residents and interested community members provided most submissions, with 326 from the community, predominantly residents or interested individuals, five from government organisations, three from community groups and seven from businesses.

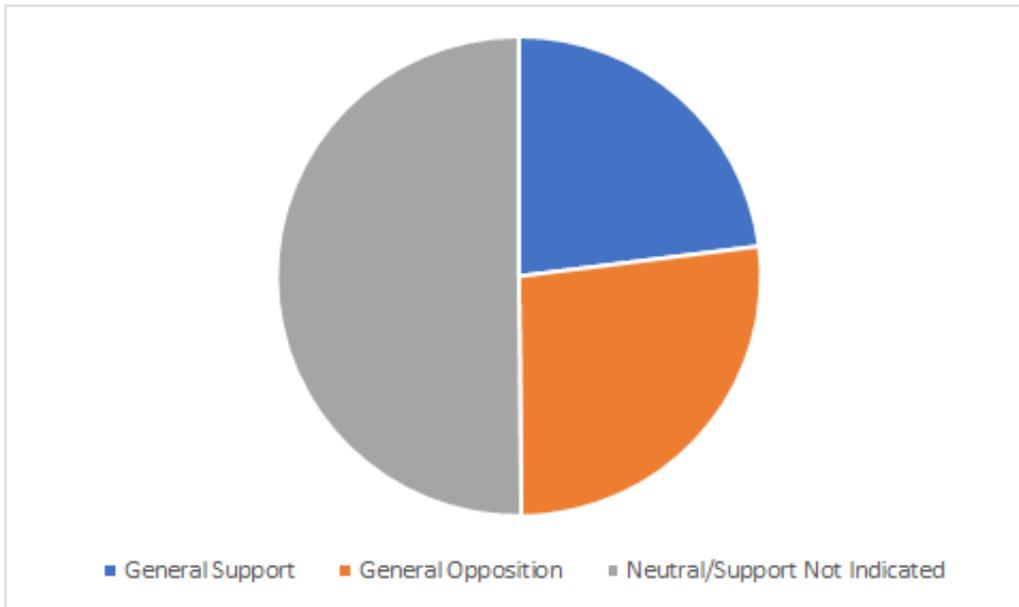
Where postcodes were provided, most were from postcode 2086 (Frenchs Forest and Frenchs Forest East).

## 4.4 General level of support

Few respondents specifically indicate support or opposition. There is an almost even mix of support and opposition from those who did. Many support the revitalisation of the area but others express concern about infrastructure and the level of development density.

Figure 5 is based on clear language indicating support or opposition. Submissions where this was not obvious are considered neutral, including submissions demonstrating mixed views across various aspects.

**Figure 4: Received level of support**



## 5 Community submissions

Of the 326 submissions from community members, most are interested individuals or residents from Frenchs Forest or neighbouring suburbs. Of these, 229 were received via email or the online webform and 97 were comments on the Social PinPoint map.

Most community submissions raise concerns about some part/s of the Place Strategy, mainly around:

- » higher density development
- » road infrastructure
- » public transport.

Table 1 summarises areas of interest. These themes and the response are outlined in sections 5.1 to 5.6.

**Figure 1: Key areas of interest identified by the community**

Raised in submission by the community	Proportion of submission %
Support for an increase in density	9%
Opposition towards an increase in density	16%
Insufficient road infrastructure	29%
Public transport	15%
Open spaces, parks or sports fields	13%
Environmental or historical impact	14%
High school relocation	13%
Local character retention	14%
Building height and FSR levels	13%
Town centre	12%

### 5.1 Higher density zoning

Frenchs Forest is proposed to provide 2,000 new dwellings with diverse housing options – including terraces, medium scale apartments and higher density apartments – across four character areas. Different zoning will allow gradual height reductions from the town centre to surrounding lower density residential areas.

Of the 24% of people who refer to the increase in density, 35% support higher density development and potentially allowing for more affordable housing. Some are disappointed with the reduction in medium density areas surrounding the town centre as that limits the range and number of possible dwellings. Many are excited about the rejuvenation of the area.

*“The market places interspersed with medium and high density residential, transport, business & open space will be highly successful & adored and welcomed by the next generation of Northern Beaches residents for decades to come.”*

The remaining 65% who oppose the increased density feel it is out of character for the area and will lead to further overcrowding in the Northern Beaches. Some respondents feel that the step down of the heights will lead to a disjointed look to some streets along the edge of the development.

*“The zoning has cut Bluegum, Gladys and many more small residential streets in half...”*

### **Building heights and floor space ratio**

Ten per cent of submissions raise concerns about the reduction of the height and floor space ratio (FSR) to 13 metres and 1:1 FSR in medium density zones. Many recommend an increase to at least 2:1, as development will otherwise not be able to proceed in those areas, potentially reducing the number of new dwellings. Some submissions note that developers will not be interested in pursuing development in the R2 low density zones and some R3 medium density zones due to:

- » the high cost of acquiring the land
- » the low return on investment due to the zoning limitations
- » affordable housing contributions
- » low FSR and increased setbacks.

## **5.2 Infrastructure**

Development within the precinct will be subject to a special infrastructure contribution (SIC) that, in conjunction with State agency budgetary procedures, will use planning agreements and monetary grants to fund infrastructure improvements. This will be put in place as population grows and will focus on walking, cycling and public transport connections to achieve a shift away from private car use.

A potential Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route connecting Dee Why to Chatswood along Warringah Road could service the town centre and connect to other bus services. The Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link will improve travel times and reliability for public transport.

### **Roads**

A common concern is the ability of the roads to cope with additional traffic. Of those who raise this concern, 98% feel the infrastructure is insufficient and needs urgent attention prior to development. Many feel the expectation that people will live and work in the area is unrealistic; more likely, people will commute to work in other areas, most likely by car.

The future Beaches Link Tunnel will alleviate some of the congestion; however, roads around the hospital and town centre are a concern, particularly if parking is insufficient and visitors park on surrounding streets.

*“The new Spit tunnel should [definitely] be built before starting this Frenchs Forest Development project to avoid already traffic [affected] streets becoming unusable due to traffic congestion.”*

### **Public transport**

Respondents raise concerns about the limited public transport while encouraging locals to leave their cars at home. The potential BRT is welcome; however, people believe express services to the city, Chatswood, Dee Why and the beaches with dedicated bus lanes will promote public transport use and some suggest the need for a train or metro line to handle expected population growth.

*“It is our firm opinion that provision for this solution (BRT), capable of satisfying development proposed in Phases 1-3 inclusive, should be included as part of the Phase 1 development.”*

## Parking

The increased density will bring extra cars into the area and some believe that not enough parking spaces will be provided in each development as well as the town centre, which could congest surrounding streets with visitor parking in addition to current on street parking by hospital visitors. People feel all new commercial, education and retail precincts need parking, although some expressed concerns that developments may not cater for residents, workers and visitors.

*“The small roads near the development already have parking problems due to high parking demands from the Northern Beaches Hospital.”*

## Bantry Bay Track

A narrow right-of-way road known as Bantry Bay Track is the only vehicle access point to 13 homes that front Wakehurst Parkway or Gladys Avenue. These residents rely on the Bantry Bay Track to connect to Frenchs Forest Road West to retrieve their mail and empty their garbage, as garbage collection is not available from Wakehurst Parkway. Additionally, Bantry Bay Track has no adequate drainage, which causes localised flooding during high rainfall.

Residents are concerned the proposed development at the entrance to Bantry Bay Track and the removal of an exit point to Frenchs Forest Road West will remove their access and effectively leave them landlocked.

## 5.3 Open spaces, walking and cycling connections

Opportunities for high quality, attractive and welcoming public spaces and pedestrian and cycling connections will positively contribute to Frenchs Forest's character. This includes:

- » 15,000sqm public open space within the town centre (including a 6,000sqm Village Green, Forest Parkland with walking and cycling paths and picnic areas, and a Central Piazza)
- » upgrades to Brick Pitt Reserve, Akora Reserve and Rabbett Reserve
- » new walking and cycling connections.

Twelve per cent of submissions emphasise the importance of green space throughout the area and the current lack of space for children's play. There is some concern that the high school's relocation to Allambie Heights will reduce the available sporting fields, noting many clubs use the school's grounds on weekends.

*“The Oval & playing fields are an excellent amenity and MUST be retained.”*

The walking and cycling connections are welcomed; however, 90% of submissions that raise this theme are concerned that the concept is not sufficiently developed. The area's steep hills limit walking and without dedicated bike lanes on Warringah Road, Forest Way and Frenchs Forest Road West, only confident riders will feel comfortable cycling on the road. This could also mean kids are driven to the new high school rather than riding their bikes, adding to road congestion.

*“The video shows a cycle/pedestrian way crossing Wakehurst Parkway from Fitzpatrick Ave East... It will be an important link for students to get to the School.”*

Some submissions comment on the design of the open space within the town centre, noting there should be ample opportunity for the community to enjoy this space. Suggestions include an amphitheatre, splash park and community garden, along with pop-up events and farmers' markets.

## 5.4 High school

The relocation of The Forest High School will enable:

- » a state-of-the art high school, where students will enjoy easy connections to transport, open space and sporting fields
- » the opening up of more than 60,000 sqm of ideally located land for a bustling new town centre.

Development of the new town centre will only begin after the new high school is built. The high school will be relocated to Allambie Heights near the Allambie Heights Public School and Warringah Aquatic Centre.

Of the submissions that address the relocation, 83% state it is not in the best interest of the students and area and that other areas in Frenchs Forest are suitable for a new town centre, such as the Forest Way and the business park.

Submissions note that the current school provides a large green break within existing development. There is an assumption that, with the new grounds being smaller than the existing site, ovals and sports fields would be reduced.

Some believe the new location does not appear to be serviced by walking and cycle tracks, leading to concerns that children would be driven to school, particularly those living west of the school, through the busy town centre. This would only add to the existing traffic congestion.

## 5.5 Town centre

Of the 12% of submission that address the town centre, there is a balance of excitement and concern. Those who look forward to the town centre think it will bring a 'wonderful vibe and community space that would bring people together; it would become a destination for locals and visitors.' Many suggest community events such as farmers' or twilight markets, a small stage, amphitheatre or rooftop gardens.

*"I would be very pleased to see community services and facilities including a library, meeting and community rooms for public activities/community groups together with a Northern Beaches Council customer service facility."*

Some submissions raise concerns about the effect of noise and light pollution from the cafes and piazza, as well as the residential dwellings, on nearby residents. Others question the need for more shops as Forestway Shopping Centre and Chatswood are a short distance away and have ample shops and services.

*"Social activity in the town centre "day and night" [...] will mean 24/7 noise. Because of the local topography, noise from the current school location can spread far and wide."*

## 5.6 Local heritage, character and environment

Fourteen per cent of submissions address the impact on the local environment and historical Hews House. This includes a belief that the local environment will be impacted by the removal of the high school and its oval, resulting in the loss of mature trees, as well as those along the neighbouring streets. There is a concern that the number of new trees planted would not equal those lost. Other concerns included that younger trees will take time to mature enough to grow a canopy that will provide shade and reduce heat island effect.

*"Many trees and plants will need to be removed for the proposed new school"*

Some submissions acknowledge the noteworthy buildings in the Frenchs Forest area and request the preservation of several historical homes such as Hews House, some of the first subdivision homes and architect-designed project homes, which are important and part of the local character of the area.

## 6 Community group submissions

### 6.1 Northern Beaches Strategic Community Group

Northern Beaches Strategic Community Group express excitement about the Place Strategy and appreciate the height limitations and the retention of green space, as well as high quality green building standards. In addition, the submission raises several expectations including:

- » a proper BRT east-west from Dee Why to Chatswood with an appropriate bus interchange and a clear plan on how it will be funded
- » underground parking and vehicular entry points from Frenchs Forest Road West to combat congestion
- » retention and appropriate relocation of Frenchs Forest Police Station
- » that the relocated Frenchs Forest High School is subject to Green Star rating requirements, with the design to include extension satellite class spaces, teaching aid facilities, outdoor greenspace classrooms and dedicated sporting facilities.

The submission expresses disappointment about unaddressed development issues such as scaled-down zoning within the streets off Frenchs Forest Road West.

### 6.2 Save Manly Dam Catchment Committee (SMDCC)

SMDCC raise concerns about the relocation of the Frenchs Forest High School, believing there is little information about the school other than the proposed location.

The submission notes the relocation to the edge of the Manly Warringah War Memorial State Park, which could impact the park's vegetation, habitat and scenic views. The submission notes this will need to be managed in construction and operation.

The submission requests an environmental assessment of the site and further analysis to ensure there are appropriate conditions to protect the environment, so that it can be managed sustainably in the future.

### 6.3 Bicycle NSW

Bicycle NSW believes the Place Strategy does not align to the ambitions for walking and cycling set out in several Northern Beaches Council plans and strategies. Specifically, Bicycle NSW is concerned there are no targets to indicate how walking and cycling will be incorporated into the precinct. The submission recommends:

- » Allocating road space to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, such as separated bicycle paths
- » futureproofing the active transport network
- » providing segregated infrastructure as shared paths are not suitable for high pedestrian and cycling activity
- » reducing speed limits to 30km/h on local streets with on-road cycle routes
- » focusing on end of trip facilities, parking, integration with bus stops and wayfinding
- » reducing dependence on private vehicles.

## 7 Government submissions

### 7.1 State agencies

#### 7.1.1 Health Infrastructure NSW

Health Infrastructure NSW supports the draft Explanation of Intended Effect and associated documents, and the proposed change to land use zones for the Northern Beaches Hospital Site to SP2. Its submissions notes infrastructure appropriately reflects current uses and the approvals in place.

#### 7.1.2 Northern Sydney Local Health District

Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLDH) commends the Department for development a Place Strategy that prioritises key issues such as sustainability, connectivity, liveability and building community. NSLDH recommends:

- » a second pedestrian and cyclist bridge near the intersection of Warringah Road and Wakehurst Parkway
- » considering a community garden and a dog park
- » clarifying the proposed percentage of increased tree canopy cover
- » establishing the BRT from Dee Why to Chatswood prior to new dwellings being occupied.

#### 7.1.3 Sydney Water

Sydney Water supports government growth initiatives and requests growth staging data and all proposed development in order to provide suitable servicing advice to the department and proponents. The submission supports:

- » the Place Strategy and green plan's contribution to irrigation guidance and stormwater retention, which can enhance pervious surfaces, reduce harmful levels of runoff to waterways and improve the quality of open space available
- » targeted implementation of cooling actions such as permeable surfaces, tree planting, vegetation and irrigation
- » sustainable and efficient water management methods to support the greening of recreational spaces and tree canopy planting
- » consideration of the use of recycled water
- » adoption of water sensitive urban design features such as rain gardens, street trees, green roofs and more
- » the NSW Government Urban Greening and Open Space objectives.

#### 7.1.4 Environment, Energy and Science Group (EES)

Environment, Energy and Science Group (EES) within the department notes the need for a biodiversity assessment report to assess the biodiversity values of the precinct and the new school site. The area contains remnant bushland, including the Duffys Forest Ecological Community. EES does not support rezoning the vegetated corridor along Wakehurst Parkway from RE1 to SP2, as this could result in the removal of vegetation.

Vegetation remnants on the western boundary as well as north and south of Warringah Road are shown as mixed use on the Structure Plan, but as open space on the Land Zoning map; EES suggests one map be corrected and the land rezoned E3 rather than RE1.

EES believes population increases will stress existing remnant vegetation and bushland reserves. It recommends new walking trails on the outside edge of the reserves to minimise impacts.

### 7.1.5 Transport for NSW (TfNSW)

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) notes potential transport issues if existing travel behaviours remain; the focus on reducing reliance on private vehicles is key.

Noting that the transport integration plan relies on the Beaches Link, the Beaches Link Team, along with TfNSW, will collaborate on a multi-modal integration plan. This should be comprehensive so that particular works do not preclude options or require rework later on. This will minimise community impacts during construction and deliver all of the required scope for an area in one hit. TfNSW opposes any new vehicular connections on Warringah Road between Forest Way and Wakehurst Parkway as this is a key strategic connection to the Beaches Link.

TfNSW notes that the area is serviced by bus routes with connections from Manly (two routes), Belrose (two routes) and Chatswood (two routes), yet frequency on some routes will need to increase with demand. The area will also be serviced by two rapid bus routes in 2036 (Dee Why to Chatswood via Frenchs Forest and Frenchs Forest to North Sydney).

TfNSW notes the following concerns:

- » Shared zones should be noted as “under investigation – not currently approved”.
- » The proposed special infrastructure contribution allocates less funding than preliminary investigations.
- » New traffic signals along Frenchs Forest Road West at the proposed town centre are opposed on road safety grounds, as this would mean there would be three sets of signals spaced approximately 90m apart.
- » New traffic signals along Frenchs Forest Road West and Sylvia Place are opposed on road safety grounds, as the two signals would be spaced 80m apart.

TfNSW has exclusive approval powers for the installation of new traffic signals. It recommends utilising the existing signals at Bluegum Crescent to enhance all movement access into the town centre. It recommends further detailed localised transport modelling as well as a reconsideration of the Draft Part G9 - Frenchs Forest Town Centre - Warringah Development Control Plan (DCP) 2011 with regard to the street network function and layout for Market Lane (west). The two intersections on Frenchs Forest Road West at Sylvia Place and the town centre should be a priority control intersection with restricted movements.

TfNSW, via the Beaches Link Team, has been communicating with Northern Beaches Council and the Department of Education about the design of the proposed new pedestrian/cycle bridge in the vicinity of Aquatic Drive. The existing land reservation acquisition (LRA) areas must be maintained and future transport infrastructure property needs must not be compromised by future development. The details and scope of transport infrastructure and services requirements needed to support the Frenchs Forest Precinct Stage 1 rezoning, remain unfinalised, including how the supporting infrastructure will be fully funded.

## 7.2 Northern Beaches Council

Northern Beaches Council supports the department’s role in coordinating the precinct planning and welcomes important strategic land use policy outcomes.

Council acknowledges the Place Strategy aligns with Council’s Local Strategy Planning Statement (*Towards 2040*), Local Housing Strategy and Affordable Housing Policy. However, Council is concerned about the certainty of a robust planning framework as well as the alignment of housing supply with infrastructure delivery.

Council raised the following issues:

- » Transport infrastructure needs to be resolved. Council does not support the proposed infrastructure solution as it only addresses 70% development capacity and requires further commitment to match Frenchs Forest’s growth with the required transport infrastructure.

- » Council is concerned about the cost and funding of infrastructure noting the timing of the rezoning and impact on Council's development contribution plan as well as the SIC and the identification of infrastructure items and how costs are distributed.
- » Council requests written confirmation from Property NSW and the Department of Education that the land required for the town centre open space and the land on which the police station is located will be dedicated to Council, free of cost.
- » Council recommends the department reference a 'community hub' in the final Place Strategy but remove reference to building footprint size and total floor space related to the 'community hub' building.
- » Council invites the department to build on the recommendations in the Sustainability Plan to elevate the role of sustainability as a key feature to create a flagship precinct.
- » Council believes a clear statutory planning framework is essential and recommends several improvements to the Explanation of Intended Effect (EIE), including a Ministerial direction and additional information to help meet *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019*.
- » Council appreciates cross government coordination, notably continued liaison with Property NSW and Transport for NSW.
- » Council requests the department's Eastern Harbour City team to continue to liaise with the Departments Housing Policy team to ensure all relevant statutory requirements have been met to implement the 10% and 15% affordable rental housing target in *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011*.
- » Council recommends an updated feasibility assessment that accounts for the infrastructure contributions likely to be imposed on development.

## 8 Industry submissions

### 8.1 Link Wentworth Housing

Link Wentworth Housing, a registered community housing provider, notes the commitments to a diversity of housing to residents particularly in character areas such as the town centre and Karingal Crescent Neighbourhood. The submission highlights the benefit of broader discussion to offer housing diversity in *tenure* as it will respond to varying household types and housing needs.

Additionally, the submission notes affordable housing should be considered essential social infrastructure, as a large proportion of potential new residents will consist of key workers in the local health and education sectors. Link Wentworth Housing encourages the department to consider a wider variety of social and affordable housing products.

### 8.2 REVELOP (Forestway Shopping Centre)

REVELOP owns Forestway Shopping Centre on 22 Forest Way, which is in the early stages of expansion. The submission raises objections to the Place Strategy, due to its potential impact on the shopping centre and welcomes further discussions with the department.

The submission notes that while the rezoning of the shopping centre will form part of Phase 3, it does not appear an adequate assessment has been made of the proposed Phase 1 rezoning and relocation of the business/commercial core to determine the impact it will have on existing commercial assets.

Additionally, the submission references the principles in Council's *Towards 2040* highlighting the priority to ensure the business park, town centre, hospital and Forestway Shopping Centre function together. The submission strongly recommends further assessment of traffic and employment.

### 8.3 Winten Property Group

Winten Property Group owns a prominent corner site at 122-126 Frenchs Forest Road West, which it notes has potential to provide high quality residential and mixed use development close to services and transport. The submission highlights the final Place Strategy must provide a flexible framework for the development of the site.

Winten recommends:

- » amending additional permitted uses for the Frenchs Forest Road West Neighbourhood Centre to introduce commercial and retail premises as additional permitted uses and remove the requirement for medical and health related uses to be provided at ground floor level of shop-top housing
- » redistributing height and FSR provisions and identify key corner sites as opportunities for design innovation and greater building height
- » requiring Council, rather than landowners, to underground powerlines
- » the department and council reviewing proposed affordable housing rates in the context of development feasibility.

### 8.4 Urban Taskforce

Urban Taskforce raises concerns about the feasibility of the Place Strategy, particularly the combined cost impost of the proposed affordable housing contributions and the proposed accompanying SIC. It emphasises that infeasibility leads to restricted housing supply, and that more housing supply across the Northern Beaches can drive down the cost of housing.

To address this, Urban Taskforce recommends:

- » not proceeding with the proposed 10-15% affordable housing contribution and instead reviewing development controls to contribute to housing supply and the meeting of Greater Sydney Commission targets
- » supporting design excellence provisions with development incentives and removing them for buildings less than 20 metres high, as this adds time and cost to the delivery of new homes and jobs.

## 8.5 SALA Solutions

SALA Solutions assists with the Jardin Frenchs Forest site, an over 55s residential apartment building at 5 Skyline Place in the B7 zone, approximately 250 metres from the proposed town centre.

SALA Solutions emphasises demand for seniors housing, and that it should not be placed 'on hold' until the Place Strategy is finalised. It acknowledges a proposed plan for aged care, yet notes that this does not provide for future housing for older Northern Beaches residents looking to downsize within the area.

SALA Solutions suggests the B7 land component forms a health and education precinct anchored by seniors housing, aged care, disability housing and affordable housing around a large tertiary university.

## 8.6 Williamson Building Corporation

Williamson Building Corporation supports the Place Strategy and the reduced minimum lot size from 600sqm to 255sqm. The submission notes this creates the opportunity to increase housing numbers, diversity and affordability near the hospital without having to rezone more land. To achieve this, Williamson Building Corporation recommends the reduction of minimum lot size of both sides of Gladys Avenue to 225sqm.

## 8.7 Shelter NSW

Shelter NSW focuses on people who don't own a home and struggle to meet housing costs. Shelter NSW supports the 10-15% affordable housing target and requests that all affordable housing remains affordable in perpetuity.

Shelter NSW notes the relocation of Frenchs Forest High School provides the opportunity to better leverage land owned by the Department of Education on Site A and encourages investigation to increase affordable housing from 15% to 20% and deliver up to 10% of social housing on this site.

## 9 Feedback on supporting papers

Ten submissions addressed the supporting papers, with these comments summarised below.

### Explanation of Intended Effect (EIE)

The EIE sets out proposed planning controls that will facilitate the vision for Frenchs Forest. A small number of issues were raised around:

- » minimum site size and frontage, FSR, along with other controls, and the viability of development
- » reviewing transport infrastructure at 70% residential development capacity, what this means for any future acquisitions and infrastructure capacity today
- » height limits along zone boundaries
- » whether the EP&A Regulation 2000 clause should refer to Council's development contributions plan
- » sustainability targets
- » potential E2 and E3 zones around the hospital to protect native vegetation
- » the affordable housing target
- » other specific issues around height limits and FSR in the town centre; Area 24 on Frenchs Forest Road West; Clause 6.7; referencing of minimum subdivision lot sizes; and undergrounding of power lines on Frenchs Forest Road West.

### Draft Frenchs Forest Green Plan

The Frenchs Forest Green Plan supports the planning of open space and urban canopy for the Frenchs Forest Precinct. Raised issues included:

- » transport solutions rather than just transport challenges
- » extending Primrose Avenue to Hilmer Street for a better walking and cycling solution
- » how best to manage stormwater
- » off road cycle routes or bushland tracks and protecting vegetation and biodiversity
- » best outcomes for planned open space
- » protection of biodiversity corridors.
- » retaining bushland at the corner of Wakehurst Parkway and Warringah Road.

### Frenchs Forest Transport Strategy

The Frenchs Forest Transport Strategy assesses the transport opportunities, constraints and impacts associated with the Place Strategy. Feedback included:

- » limited details of the proposed cycling routes or treatments
- » traffic impact for all three phases of the strategy and transport capacity at 70% completion of phase 1
- » the right turn lane at the Naree Road and Forest Way intersection; signalised extension of Naree Road to Grace Avenue; clarity around the closure of Russell Avenue
- » a potential Beaches Link integration plan
- » potential express bus services and potential future rails services
- » whether content is up to date, including all bus servicing, roadwork improvements and rapid bus routes
- » modelling for the intersection of Frenchs Forest Road West and Bluegum Crescent West

- » the signalisation of Wakehurst Parkway and Aquatic Drive
- » a potential separated shared path along the eastern side of Wakehurst Parkway between Warringah Road and Kirkwood Street (Seaforth)
- » whether active transport network facility types reference TfNSW's Cycleway Design Toolbox and the Walking Space Guide
- » the need for a place assessment needs utilising the *Practitioners Guide to Movement and Place*
- » whether Naree Road to Frenchs Forest Road is a walking and cycling corridor or a main street
- » encouraging active transport by reducing traffic volumes, speed limits and planting trees
- » proposed maximum residential parking rates
- » unbundled parking and decoupled parking
- » Green Travel Plan targets.

### **Frenchs Forest Sustainability Plan**

The Frenchs Forest Sustainability Plan maps out how development mechanisms and relevant planning instruments can achieve best practice sustainability. A submission noted it did not clarify the future of privately-owned vehicles and only focused on electric vehicles and eBikes requiring charging stations.

### **Flooding and Stormwater Study**

The Flooding and Stormwater Study assists with a water quantity, water quality and flooding assessment for the Frenchs Forest Planned Precinct. Feedback noted the modelling refers to the Flood Development Control Plan (DCP) Clause which is the 2017 version and was superseded in January 202 and that flood mitigation measures are not included yet there is "provision" to increase stormwater pipe capacities with no further explanation.

# 10 Conclusion

The 341 submissions received are divided between support and opposition.

Key feedback includes:

» **Unsuitable road infrastructure**

Major roads have recently been upgraded as part of the Northern Beaches Hospital Precinct Structure Plan; however, residents feel this will only meet current demand.

» **Lack of public transport**

Frenchs Forest is serviced by a limited number of bus services. A Bus Rapid Transit route is needed for current and future residents and to limit the number of cars on the road.

» **Increasing housing density**

The need for more housing in the area divides the community. While around half understand the need for it and feel the zoning strategy was well planned, the remainder fear 'overcrowding'.

This report captures the key sentiments and breadth of views of the consultation process, while not representing every comment.

This feedback will inform the final Place Strategy.

