

# Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy

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NSW Department of Planning,  
Industry and Environment

December 2021





*Frenchs Forest 2041*  
*Place Strategy*

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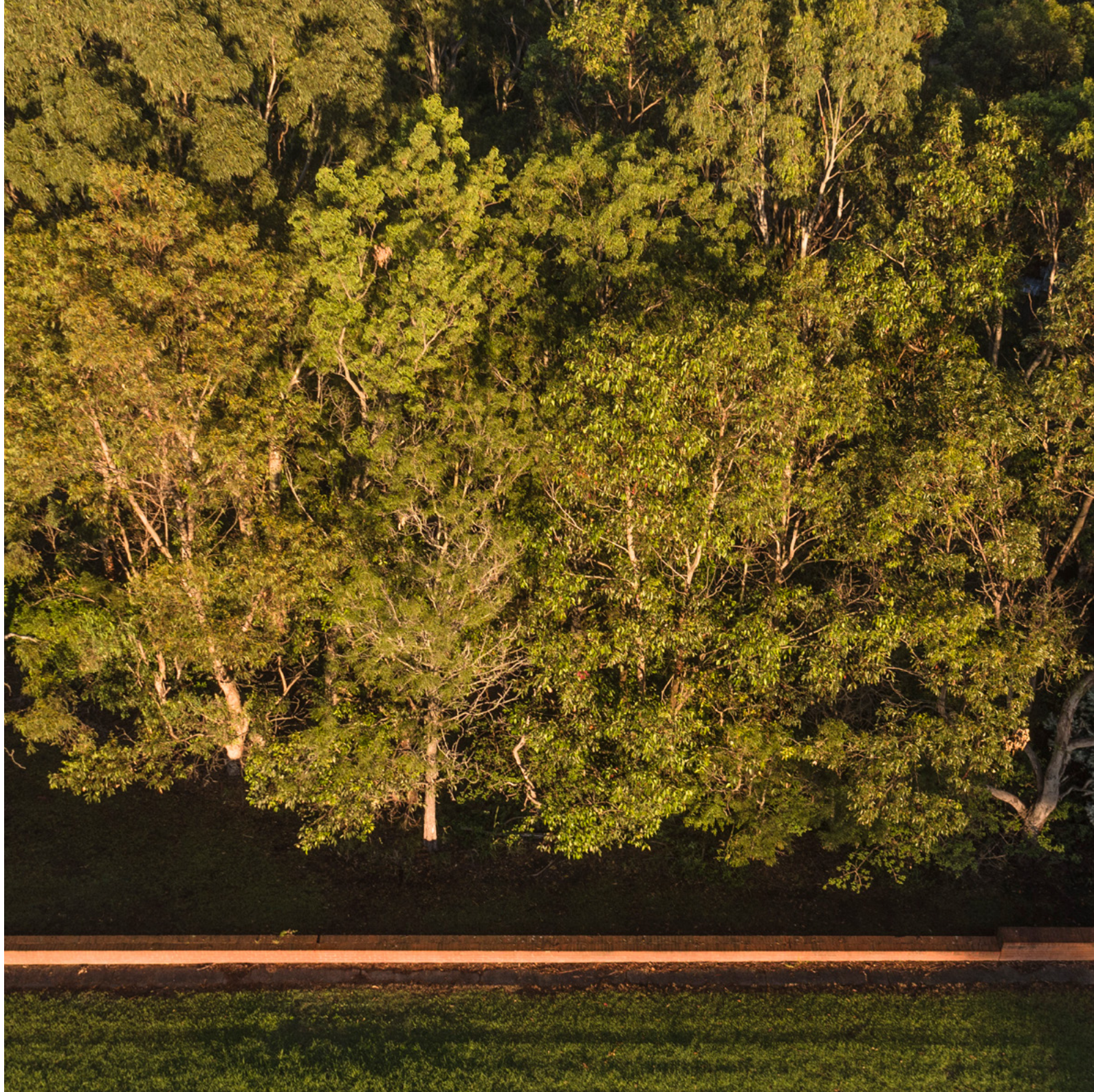
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## Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Gayamaygal and Garigal Aboriginal Clans, and pays its respects to all Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society.

Aboriginal people take a holistic view of land, water and culture and see them as one, not in isolation to each other. The Frenchs Forest Place Strategy is based on the premise upheld by Aboriginal people that if we care for Country, it will care for us.

*Cover photo by Mark Merton  
Artwork by Nikita Ridgeway*



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# Executive summary

## About the Place Strategy

*Frenchs Forest 2041* represents a new way of thinking for a well loved area with outstanding potential for sustainable, well managed growth.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* looks to create a town centre on the plateau through the relocation of The Forest High School, with new jobs connected to Northern Beaches Hospital and new homes, social activities and community places.

The new town centre, anchored by the new hospital, will capitalise on the \$500 million in regional road improvements, a future Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, and better connections to Sydney CBD, Macquarie Park and other centres on the Eastern Economic Corridor.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* reimagines Frenchs Forest as a thriving centre for the Northern Beaches through the creation of:



**15,000 sqm** of new public open space



A new **1,665 sqm** pedestrian plaza



A **new town centre** to expand retail, employment social opportunities



A **sustainable, low-carbon,** high-efficiency precinct



**2,000 new jobs** to support the emerging health and education precinct



A new, relocated **high school**



**2,000 new dwellings** with diverse housing options including terraces, medium scale apartments and higher density apartments



Easier **walking and cycling connections** and upgrades to local roads



A new **bus interchange** and direct access to the city



## Design principles

*Frenchs Forest 2041* looks to build on the established character of Frenchs Forest to guide and shape the development of the new town centre and the wider precinct. The following design principles provide the foundation to guide the renewal of the precinct while maintaining and enhancing the area's local character:

- preserve and integrate existing environmental assets
- create diverse, sustainable and accessible areas of open space in the town centre
- create an innovative social and cultural destination for people to gather and interact
- integrate pedestrian movement and convenience with accessible public transport
- prioritise pedestrians
- provide creative and adaptable workspaces
- create a safe, vibrant and active precinct that responds to people's needs
- make sure the built form enhances people's sense of place.

## Supporting information

*Frenchs Forest 2041* is informed by specialist technical studies that address:

- urban design and public domain
- transport
- employment
- social infrastructure needs
- tree canopy
- open space
- sustainability
- bushfire risk
- heritage
- site contamination
- flooding and stormwater
- economic feasibility
- utilities services.

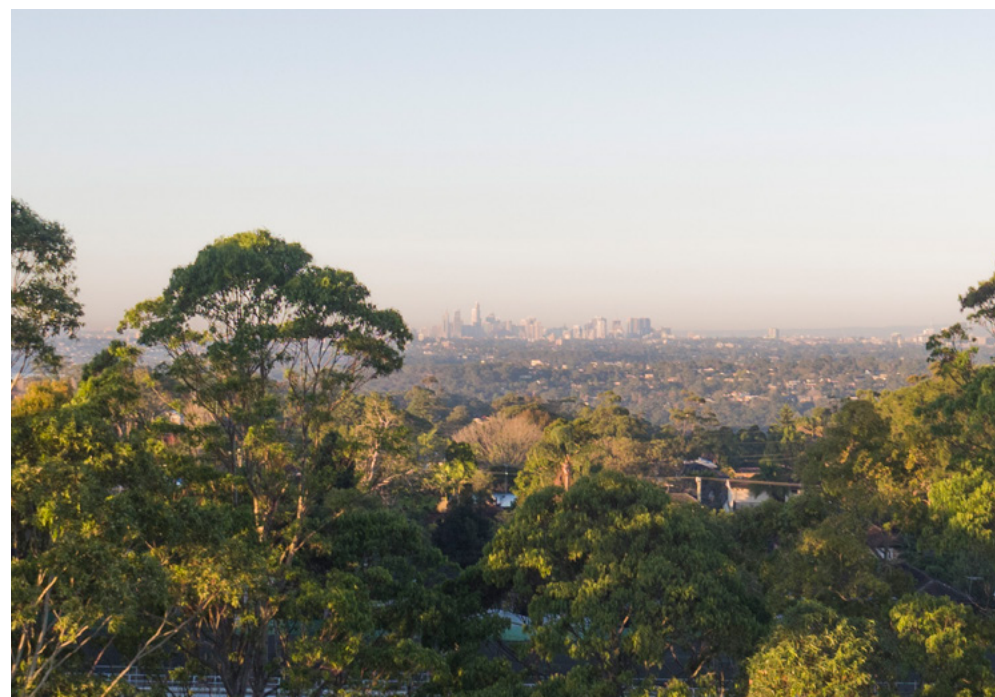
## Location

Located 13 km north of Sydney CBD and in the west of the Northern Beaches Local Government Area (LGA), Frenchs Forest is at the crossroads of major connections for the Northern Beaches.

The new Northern Beaches Hospital sits at this high point – a place that offered the Gayamaygal and Garigal people, traditional custodians of Frenchs Forest, clear views as far as Port Jackson to the south east,

Bantry Bay to the south west, and the coastline to the east.

People who live in Frenchs Forest today enjoy a pleasant mix of natural and built environments, with easy access to bushland, local shops and a suburban business park. However, public transport is limited; Frenchs Forest is a distinctly car-based suburb.





## Making it happen

*Frenchs Forest 2041* is a 20-year plan that establishes:

- 2,000 new dwellings and 2,000 new jobs for the area
- new public open space, green spaces and minimum tree canopy cover of 30%
- a diversity of homes, including terraces, medium scale apartments and higher density apartments
- a range of building heights from 2 to 12 storeys, with taller buildings near the hospital, no building higher than the hospital and lower-scale housing in the north and south
- up to 15% affordable housing in the town centre and 10% in surrounding areas
- the highest standard in architectural, urban design and sustainability outcomes
- commercial and retail uses, including a dedicated commercial core near the hospital
- a new neighbourhood centre on Bantry Bay Road that will bring Brick Pit Reserve to life
- a floor space incentive to achieve higher performance sustainability targets for energy and water.

## Planning for infrastructure

Infrastructure will be in place as the population grows, with infrastructure planning drawing from detailed technical studies and inputs from State agencies and Northern Beaches Council. This includes a focus on walking, cycling and public transport, to achieve a shift away from private car use.

A potential Bus Rapid Transit route connecting Dee Why to Chatswood along Warringah Road could service the new town centre and connect to other bus services. The Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link will improve travel times and reliability for public transport, freight and commuters while making it safer for pedestrians and cyclists.



*Frenchs Forest 2041* plans for new public open space and **30% tree canopy cover**





# Introduction

As the population across Greater Sydney grows, Frenchs Forest is the right place for a major transformation.

Around 13 km north of Sydney CBD and sitting at the crossway of 2 ridge lines that align with Warringah Road and Wakehurst Parkway, Frenchs Forest precinct is already home to more than 9,000 jobs. Investment in the Northern Beaches Hospital, significant road upgrades and the relocation of The Forest High School provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create thousands of new jobs and a new strategic centre, reducing the need for people to commute outside the Northern Beaches.

The Forest High School relocation to 187 Allambie Road, Allambie Heights creates the space for a new town centre at the heart of Frenchs Forest – a place with a village green and piazza, a bustling community hub, flexible community and public spaces, a fresh food courtyard, and night-time activities.

With the economic opportunities of the hospital and planned investment in the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, Frenchs Forest will be a sustainable, accessible and enriched centre within an attractive, leafy landscape.

**Figure 1:** Context map







*Frenchs Forest, as photographed in 1939 by Max Dupain  
Courtesy of State Library of New South Wales.*

## History

The Gayamaygal and Garigal people are the traditional custodians of the Northern Beaches. Cultural knowledge, historical records and the archaeological record provide an understanding of the material cultural and customs of the Aboriginal people of the Northern Beaches region.

Aboriginal places such as Lizard Rock and Moon Rock, approximately 3 km and 4 km north of Frenchs Forest respectively, provide examples of exceptionally significant places. The rich natural resources of the flooded valleys west and south of Frenchs Forest would have been an important subsistence resource for Aboriginal people.

Frenchs Forest's topography made it an important look-out for the First Fleet. With European colonisation, land grants were claimed from around the middle of the 19th century, including land sold to James Harris French (after whom Frenchs Forest is named) in 1859.

The Orchard site was an orchard for pears and kumquats from 1900 to 1960. The area was also used for a brickworks and agriculture before investment in transport such as the Wakehurst Parkway (1946) and Spit Bridge (1958) spurred on residential growth. The Forest High School opened in 1961.

Subdivision in the second half of the 20th century helped to form the suburb seen today – a place of larger blocks, leafy streets, a rich tree canopy, and predominantly lower-density, single and double storey homes.



## About Frenchs Forest 2041

Prepared by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in collaboration with Northern Beaches Council, *Frenchs Forest 2041* looks at Frenchs Forest today and establishes a strategic and principled approach for the vision of a town centre that retains the area's rich Aboriginal and European heritage, its leafy streets and larger blocks.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* carefully considers existing local character and community aspirations and seeks to create a new urban centre, anchored by the Northern Beaches Hospital. It establishes appropriate heights and densities while providing for new public spaces and balancing development with infrastructure capacity.

A precinct-wide approach to sustainability will improve green spaces, retain mature trees and deep soil and improve walking and cycling connections, while integrating quality public areas and buildings with future public transport.

The Place Strategy also ensures the highest standard of design excellence for buildings and the public domain.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* is informed by the *Greater Sydney Region Plan*, *North District Plan* and *Towards 2040*, Northern Beaches Council's local strategic planning statement. It is guided by Council's *Hospital Precinct Structure Plan* and represents the culmination of 6 years of planning and rich consultation with the community.

These documents recognise Frenchs Forest as one of 34 strategic centres in Greater Sydney – the major centres that can provide jobs, goods and services for a broader catchment of people – and as a health and education precinct where health and education facilities and services are co-located.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* also informs a state environmental planning policy (SEPP) to amend *Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011* (Warringah LEP).

## Previous precinct planning

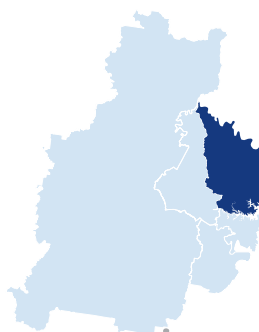
*Frenchs Forest 2041* builds on consultation, technical studies and planning investigations that the then Warringah Council commenced in July 2014. This includes the *Hospital Precinct Structure Plan*, which sets out a phased delivery of approximately 5,360 dwellings and 2,300 new jobs over the next 20 years.

Noting the need for about 12,000 additional dwellings in the Northern Beaches by 2036, Council's *Local Housing Strategy*, adopted in April 2021, refined the Structure Plan and strengthened the area as a sustainable health and education precinct. It finds that Council's Structure Plan (Phases 1 - 3) could accommodate up to 4,360 dwellings.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* covers Phase 1 area of Council's Structure Plan – this is prioritised alongside the first road access upgrades. It incorporates the Structure Plan's planning framework and focuses on the new town centre and transition areas to the north and south of the town centre.

Phases 2 and 3 are longer term propositions that will require significant regional road works, such as the proposed Bus Rapid Transit and Beaches Link before changes to planning controls are envisaged.

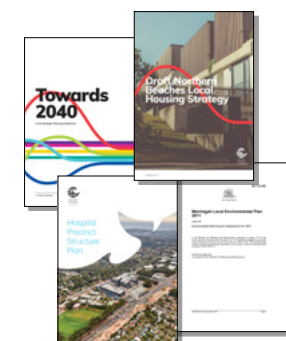
### Greater Sydney



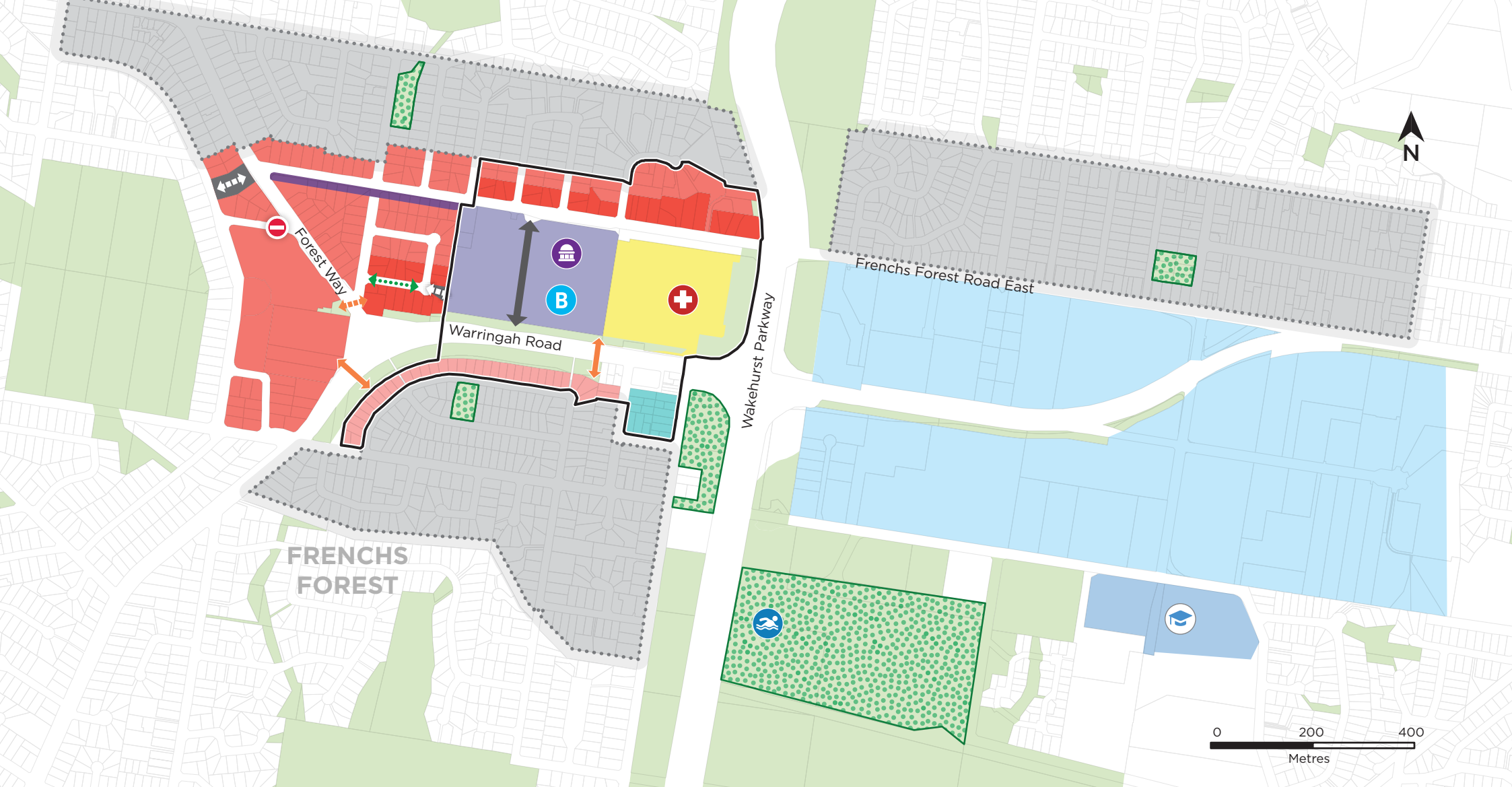
### North District



### Northern Beaches LGA









**Figure 2:** Hospital Precinct Structure Plan
















**Figure 3:** Existing zoning

-  Frenchs Forest Precinct
-  Cadastre

**Land Zone**

- |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  B1 Neighbourhood centre       |  R2 Low Density Residential |
|  B2 Local centre               |  RE1 Public Recreation      |
|  B7 Business Park              |  SP1 Special Activities     |
|  DM Deferred Matter            |  SP2 Infrastructure         |
|  E2 Environmental Conservation |                                                                                                                  |



## Exhibition process

A draft Frenchs Forest Place Strategy was placed on exhibition in the middle of 2021.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment held two webinars, online surveys and one-on-one phone briefings. It received more than 340 submissions to the exhibition.

This final place strategy is supported by a full package of information, including:

- Frenchs Forest State Environmental Planning Policy, to amend Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011
- Frenchs Forest Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) Schedule
- background technical studies
- summary information about the feedback received during the exhibition process.



## Background technical studies





# Vision

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*Frenchs Forest is an urban forest, with green streets and new open space, making a feature of the forest that has always shaped the site's story.*

*Frenchs Forest will provide character and great places; it will foster healthy and connected communities, attract families and encourage new business. It will set the benchmark for health and wellness, liveability and prosperity in a new urban centre.*

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# Objectives

*Frenchs Forest 2041* aims to:

- 1 Provide a clear vision and design principles for the future of Frenchs Forest
- 2 Plan for a mixed use centre on the current The Forest High School site to support a range of retail, civic, commercial and residential uses
- 3 Create and identify opportunities for high quality, attractive and welcoming public spaces and green links that positively contribute to Frenchs Forest's character
- 4 Provide a range of housing types and densities, including apartments, terraces and affordable housing, to improve housing choice and create opportunities for key workers to live close to the hospital
- 5 Create a new neighbourhood centre on Bantry Bay Road to activate Brick Pit Reserve
- 6 Promote Frenchs Forest as a self-sustaining precinct that integrates sustainability at a precinct level using industry-recognised building rating tools
- 7 Install green infrastructure, create green spaces, reduce heat island effect, reduce the environmental footprint, enhance ecosystems and create opportunities and spaces for people to relax outdoors
- 8 Relocate The Forest High School to create a state-of-the-art education facility that is within easy access of transport connections and recreation facilities.



# Big Moves

*Frenchs Forest 2041* is supported by five big moves - key interventions to realise the full potential of the precinct.

These are ambitious goals, requiring coordination and resourcing from multiple agencies. Their implementation will require, and will benefit from, extensive community consultation.

1

**Relocate and construct a new high school**

2

**Create a revitalised mixed use town centre**

3

**Strengthen an emerging health and education precinct**

4

**Establish a vibrant High Street**

5

**Build on the established character of Frenchs Forest to create a place for people**



## Big Move 1

# Relocate and construct a new high school

The relocation of The Forest High School will enable 2 major changes for Frenchs Forest:

- a new 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.

The site for the Forest High School is 187 Allambie Road, Allambie Heights, around one kilometre south east of Frenchs Forest Precinct. This site can be accessed from Allambie Road away from major intersections while remaining in the school catchment area. It is also near Allambie Heights Public School and Warringah Aquatic Centre.

Development of the town centre will only occur once the new high school opens. The high school site is free of heritage constraints and is already serviced by gas, water, sewer, electricity, stormwater and public transport.



*Proposed location of new high school*





Artist's impression courtesy of CHROFI

## Big Move 2

# Create a revitalised mixed use town centre

From the high school relocation comes the opportunity for a new town centre. This will offer:

- new places to live, with a diversity of around 1,000 new dwellings in the town centre and 1,000 dwellings in transition areas, including 15% affordable housing in the town centre and 10% in surrounding areas, equating to up to 250 homes for key workers such as hospital staff
- new jobs in a thriving health and education precinct, supported by the Northern Beaches Hospital, commercial spaces and connections to the local business park
- new open spaces to complement the bushland setting and new community facilities
- a mix of shops, restaurants, cafes and places for people to gather or relax, day and night
- new provisions for sustainability and design excellence to create a high quality built form integrated with the surrounding public domain and landscape



Big Move 3

Strengthen the emerging health and education precinct

The town centre can be a place for people to kickstart or restart their career within a health and education precinct centred on a 21st century hospital.

Observations of health and education precincts around the world as well as an understanding of local demographics indicate the feasibility of:

- a mixed use town centre that supports retail, commercial, health and education uses
- commercial uses such as free-standing office floor space, including co-working space for start-ups, and other uses such as a medical hotel and an aged care facility

- capacity to attract around 2,000 jobs, primarily in the allied health, recreation, education and accommodation sectors in addition to the 2,000 jobs expected at Northern Beaches Hospital
- new uses in the underutilised adjacent business park, especially if better integrated to the new town centre and hospital.

The business park could potentially evolve as a medical-related corporate businesses park alongside the hospital and a potential tertiary education presence.

The land use zoning includes a mix of retail, commercial and education uses.



Precinct land use

Approx. area

Retail

19,330 sqm

General commercial, hotel and allied health services

16,310 sqm\*

University, training and research

8,185 sqm

Retirement and respite day care

9,200 sqm

Community, indoor sport, childcare and library

9,670 sqm

## Big Move 4

# Establish a vibrant and safe High Street

Frenchs Forest Road West will be a safe, energised and tree-lined high street or boulevard for residents and workers.

It will be characterised by medium-rise living – around 5 or 6 storey buildings that will be designed as a transition from development on Frenchs Forest Road West. Space for retail uses will be designed to be no more than 10 m wide, allowing for a greater diversity and mix of retail activity.



Artist's impression courtesy of CHROFI



## Big Move 5

# Build on the established character of Frenchs Forest to create a place for people

Frenchs Forest's bushland, topography and culture are fundamental parts of the site's history. *Frenchs Forest 2041* aims to bring Aboriginal heritage and European agricultural heritage into public areas.

Mature trees are retained and the area's characteristics protected. The design takes advantage of the precinct's elevated topography, viewlines and forest, with open space designed to manage the steep topography in the west while also providing access to sunlight in public spaces.

The site's heritage will be incorporated into public areas and connections to natural assets such as Manly Dam. These connections will be part of a network of

active green links through the precinct and to local open space, currently inaccessible bushland areas and national parks, providing convenient pedestrian and cycle connections across major roads into the town centre.

There will be various new open spaces, a framework to increase the urban tree canopy, plans for an additional 732 trees and the embellishment of existing open space within walking distance of Frenchs Forest. Frenchs Forest will feature tree-lined streets, with avenue planting that provides natural shade and habitat.

Amendments to Warringah LEP introduce minimum areas for deep soil planting for vegetation in the new town centre.





Artist's impression courtesy of CHROFI



Frenchs Forest is a place for connections and opportunities – but it will have more heart than the built form of a 21st century hospital and efficient road network.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* plans for:

- around 15,000 sqm of new public open space in the town centre
- a co-located district library and multipurpose community centre space
- an indoor recreation centre with 2 indoor courts and, potentially, recreation spaces on the building rooftop
- aged care to accommodate around 250 beds
- a day care centre providing up to 150 spaces
- a community hub, co-located with space for the possible tertiary education facility, as well as a village green and piazza, flexible community/public space, a fresh food courtyard and active streets and laneways.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* sets a 40 m height limit in line with the hospital to create a varied skyline that fits in with the topography. Taller buildings in the town centre will step down towards neighbouring low density areas.

*Frenchs Forest 2041* plans for a genuine mix of 2,000 new homes

that will suit more people, including higher density living in the town centre and north of Frenchs Forest Road West, and low-rise housing diversity along Karingal Crescent.

Workers will be able to connect to the town centre, across Warringah Road, Wakehurst Parkway and Forest Way, creating a functional, cohesive place that combines the town centre, hospital, Forest Way Shopping Centre and business park.



# Connected places

The revitalisation of Frenchs Forest cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach, given that each area of the precinct has – or will have – its own character, building types and uses. *Frenchs Forest 2041* thinks about the precinct in 4 character areas:

- A** The town centre
- B** Frenchs Forest Road West Neighbourhood Centre
- C** Karingal Crescent Neighbourhood
- D** Bantry Bay Neighbourhood Centre

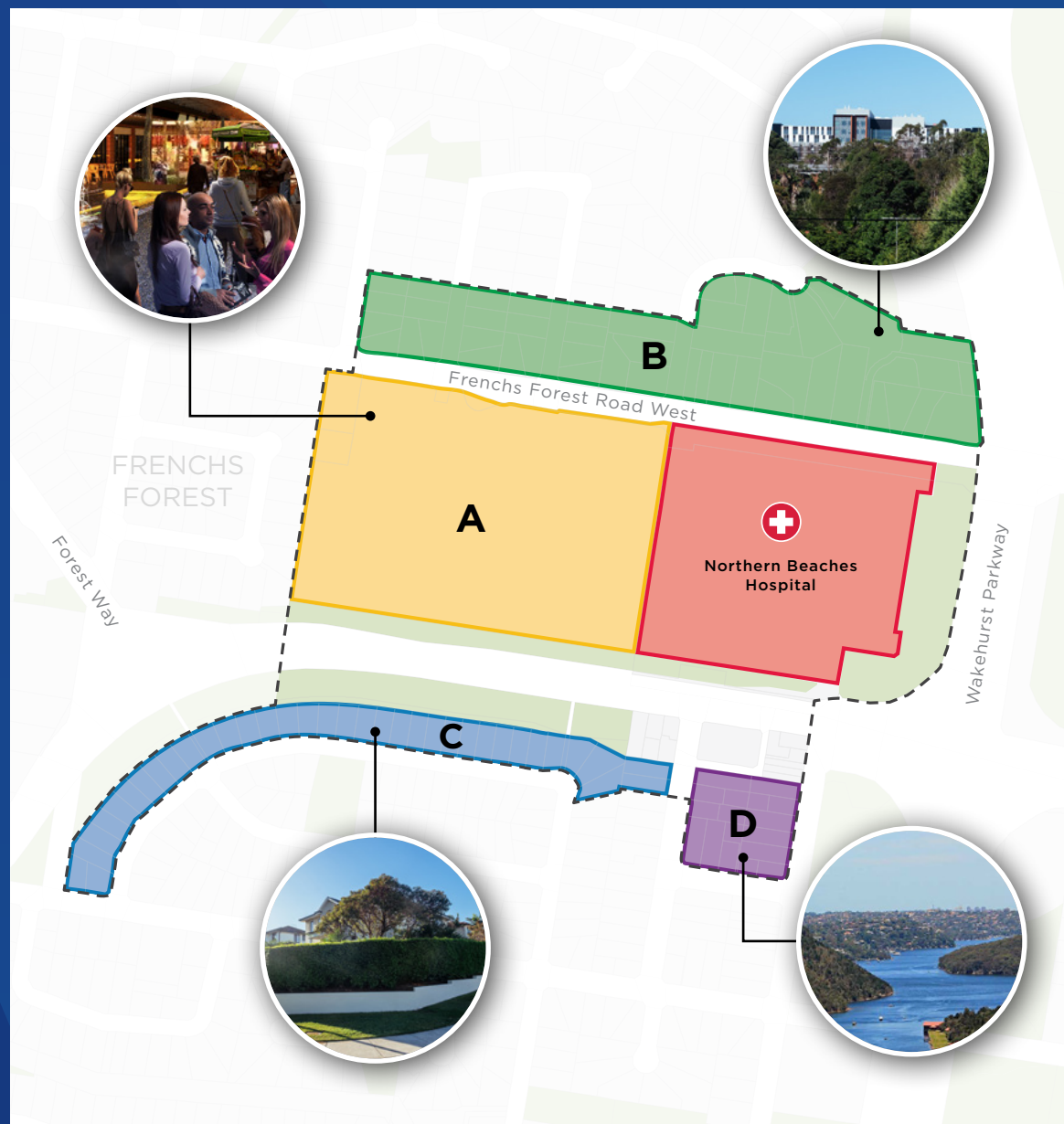


Figure 4: Character areas

## The Town Centre

The Town Centre will be the heart of a broader strategic centre, bringing together complementary economic uses, with the hospital as the anchor for a health and education precinct. It will be a hub of knowledge-intensive jobs, innovation and service delivery at the heart of the growing community.

The town centre will be an area of activity at most hours of the day and night. New and improved pedestrian routes will be well-lit, and businesses and homes will look out onto streets, creating an atmosphere of neighbourhood comfort and safety. People will enjoy cafes, restaurants, shops, public buildings, commercial and health-related uses and great open spaces.

Recognising the town centre as part of a connected, larger centre, *Frenchs Forest 2041* strives for:

- a flexible and adaptable layout that can evolve
- a genuine mixed use centre with diverse employment opportunities
- a strong health and education focus, including the potential for a future university
- a new community hub
- integration with the business park.

Public areas will embody the area's character, and will include:

- the 6,000 sqm Village Green
- the Forest Parkland, a 5,500 sqm urban bushland and adventure play area, with walking and cycling paths and picnic areas
- the Central Piazza, a 1,665 sqm public plaza and community hub.



Courtesy of Northern Beaches Council



The Town Centre features  
4 areas of character.

### The Civic Heart

The Market Quarter

Commercial Spine

The Boulevard

### The Civic Heart

The Civic Heart will be the central gathering place of the town centre, featuring the Village Green, Forest Parkland and Central Piazza, complemented by cafes and outdoor dining, extensive tree planting and community buildings.

The Civic Heart will be designed with lower buildings adjacent to these public areas, transitioning to taller buildings to the east and south. These buildings will be designed for maximum flexibility and adaptability for a range of community, education and retail uses.



## The Civic Heart

## The Market Quarter

## Commercial Spine

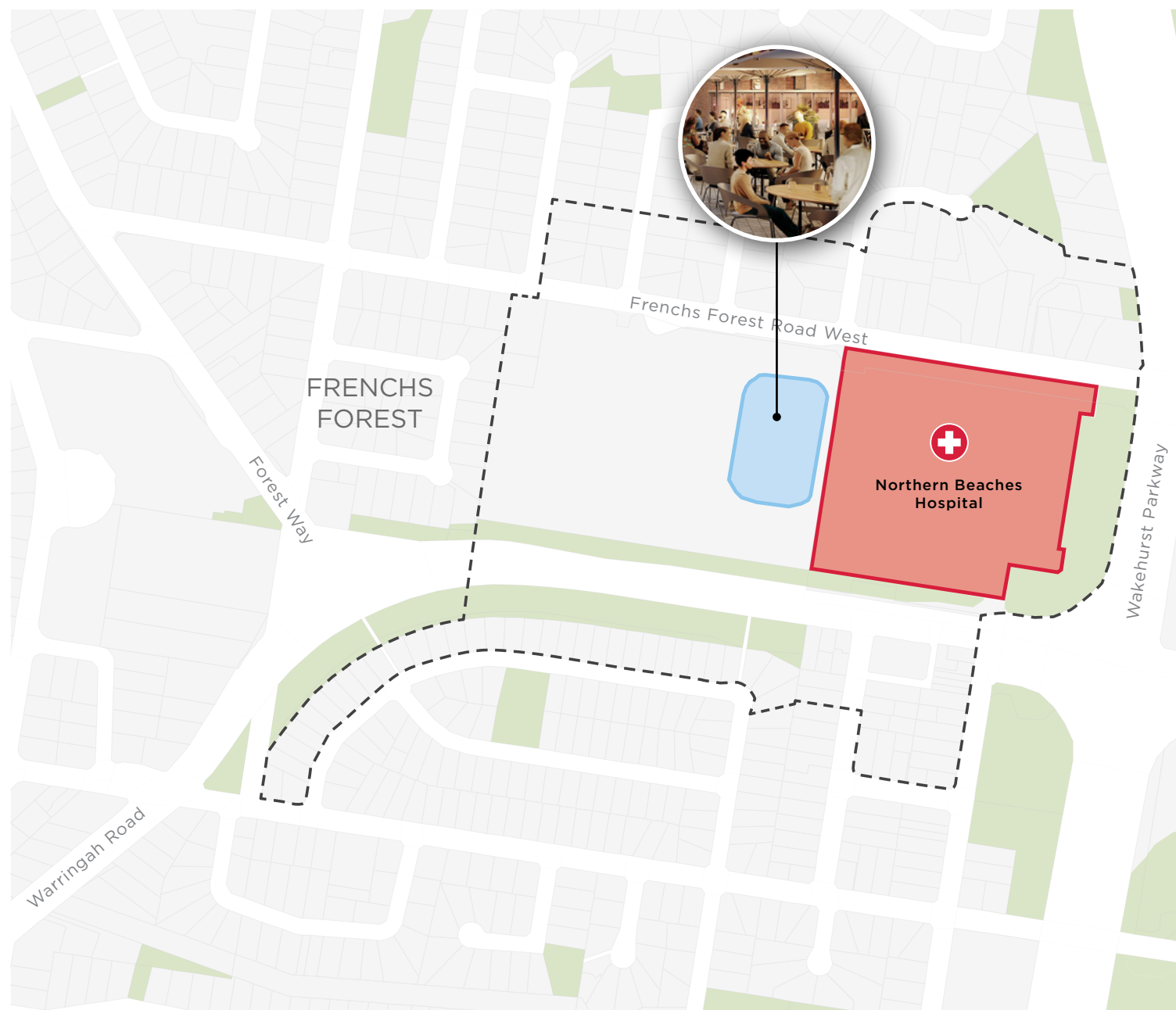
## The Boulevard

## The Market Quarter

The Market Quarter will be the busier, mixed use area that brings people together every day for local services, shopping or gathering.

It will have a high-rise urban feel, with buildings up to 12 storeys featuring apartments, with shops and services at ground level. Taller buildings will be designed with the right amount of separation, so that people feel a sense of openness and can still enjoy views beyond the town centre.

The Market Quarter will feature fresh food outlets, an underground supermarket and a sunken retail courtyard to bring people to the area day and night and on weekends. A new east-west shared connection between the Central Piazza and Northern Beaches Hospital will be lined with shops and businesses.





The Civic Heart

The Market Quarter

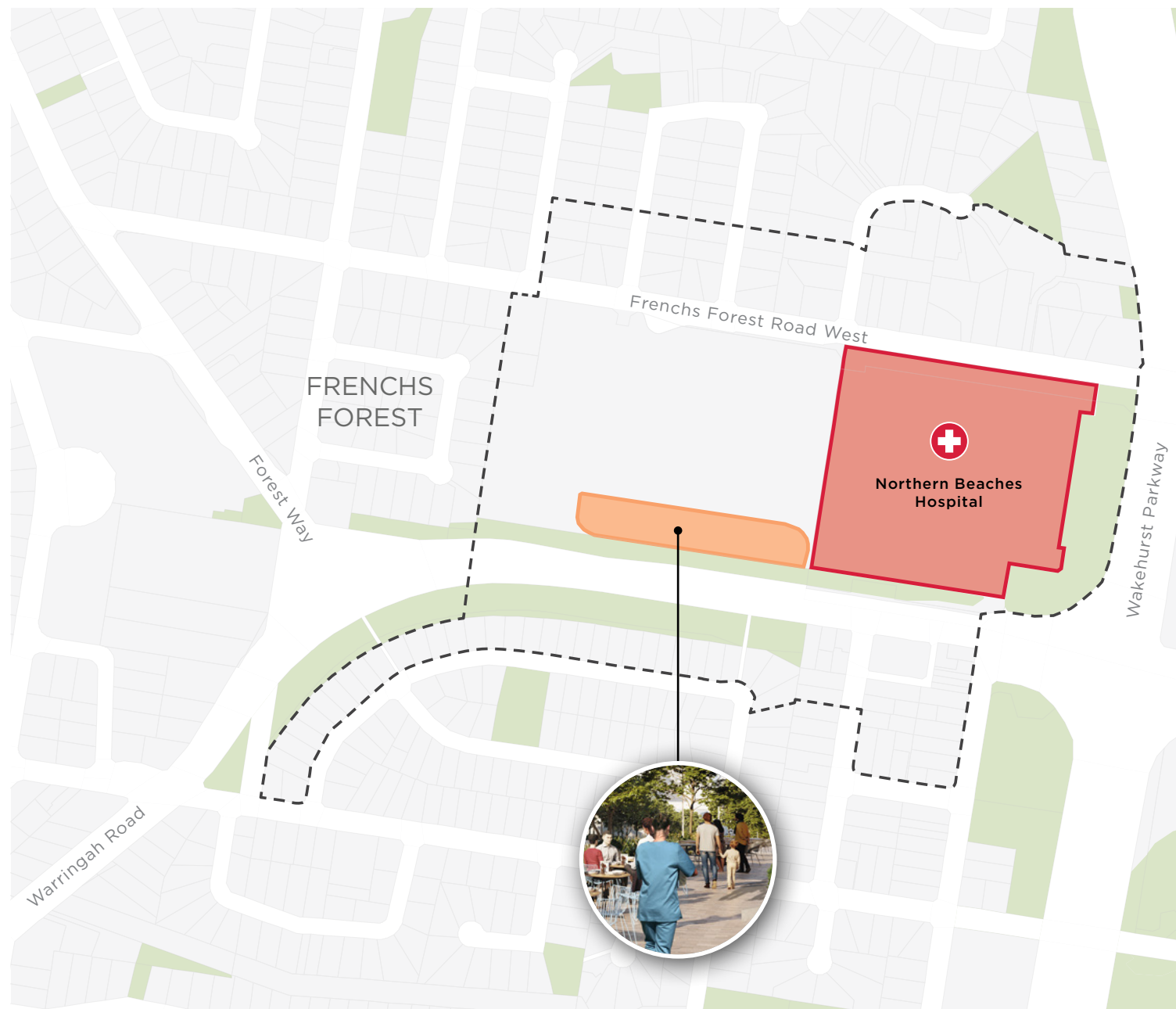
**Commercial Spine**

The Boulevard

### Commercial Spine

Warringah Road will be a new commercial address for Frenchs Forest and the broader Northern Beaches. Taking advantage of high exposure, a variety of commercial businesses will be able to select from a choice of flexible and adaptable buildings that can be adapted in a way that aligns with growth.

With diverse and high quality architecture, Warringah Road will be an attractive commercial address rather than somewhere to pass through. Landscaping will provide a buffer for residents. People will find it easier to walk around and along the Commercial Spine, so that those living south of Warringah Road can access the town centre safely and conveniently.





The Civic Heart

The Market Quarter

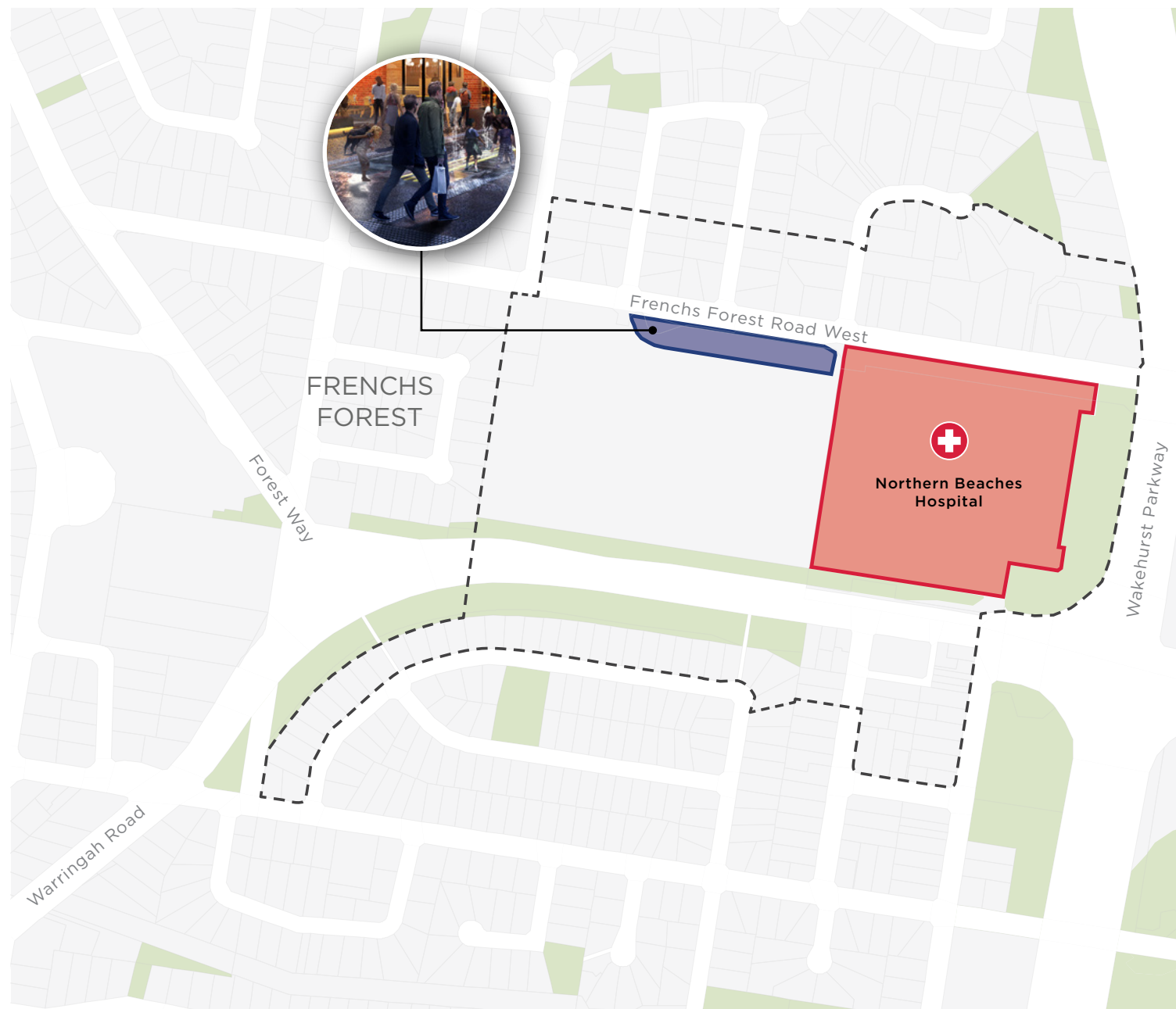
Commercial Spine

**The Boulevard**

### The Boulevard

Frenchs Forest Road West will be a vibrant boulevard and a new high street for Frenchs Forest. It will be the place that sets the gateway or arrival to Frenchs Forest and Northern Beaches Hospital.

It will be lined with a mix of apartments and plenty of activity, with shops and services. People will spend time on Frenchs Forest Road West – the generous setback and tree planting will make this a place to meander, while also incorporating adequate room for bus stops and cycling.







Artist's impression courtesy of CHROFI

### Actions for the Town Centre

- Create the town centre open space
- Develop a commercial core to accommodate new knowledge-intensive and medical-related jobs
- Create opportunities to recognise the past through heritage interpretation
- Use a water sensitive urban design approach with all buildings within the commercial core to aim for re-use targets of 50% from alternative sources
- Green Frenchs Forest by meeting a 30% tree canopy target, including 45% for town centre open space and 30% for the piazza
- Develop a public art strategy
- Incorporate carefully designed podium and tower setbacks to maximise solar access and deliver good urban design
- Provide an area for the community hub
- Incorporate active frontages with certain requirements
- Incorporate 100,000 sqm of basement parking, plus 7,700 sqm for underground supermarket, courtyard and retail space
- Ensure future buildings and public areas achieve the highest standard of design excellence
- Introduce a floor space incentive to achieve higher sustainability targets for energy and water.



## Frenchs Forest Road West Neighbourhood Centre

The Frenchs Forest Road West Neighbourhood will be an interface to surrounding low density residential areas, while also offering a diversity of housing for residents.

It will feature the new Frenchs Forest Road West high street and include medium rise apartment buildings up to 6 storeys to imbue an urban residential character to the north of Frenchs Forest Road West.

Mixed use buildings opposite the town centre on Frenchs Forest Road West will provide diverse and engaging ground floor uses along a busy streetscape. This will include medical and health related uses.

### Actions

- Provide an interface to the surrounding low-density residential areas and offer a diversity of housing
- Plan for the new high street of Frenchs Forest Road West, with a range of retail, office and medical uses
- Plan for apartment buildings and an urban residential character north of Frenchs Forest Road West
- Provide diverse and engaging ground floor uses in the mixed use buildings opposite the town centre on Frenchs Forest Road West
- Create a new high street focused on people and place, with no new vehicle access from Frenchs Forest Road West.

*Artist's impression courtesy of CHROFI*







## Karingal Crescent Neighbourhood

The Karingal Crescent Neighbourhood will be a place of low-rise medium density housing up to 3 storeys, carefully designed to create a new edge to the town centre that can also integrate with the existing residential neighbourhood.

This diversity of housing types within walking distance of the town centre will enhance the established residential character along Karingal Crescent. This will include a mix of dual occupancies, semi-detached and attached dwellings all within a walk of the town centre and Bantry Bay Neighbourhood Centre.

Compact housing types will create a new edge to Warringah Road, with landscaped setbacks and north facing rear gardens. Landscaped front setbacks, retention of existing trees and new tree plantings will integrate new development into the streetscape.

### Actions

- Establish site consolidation requirements
- Require landscaped and/or deep soil areas to make up 30% of site area
- Encourage compact housing types



## Bantry Bay Neighbourhood Centre

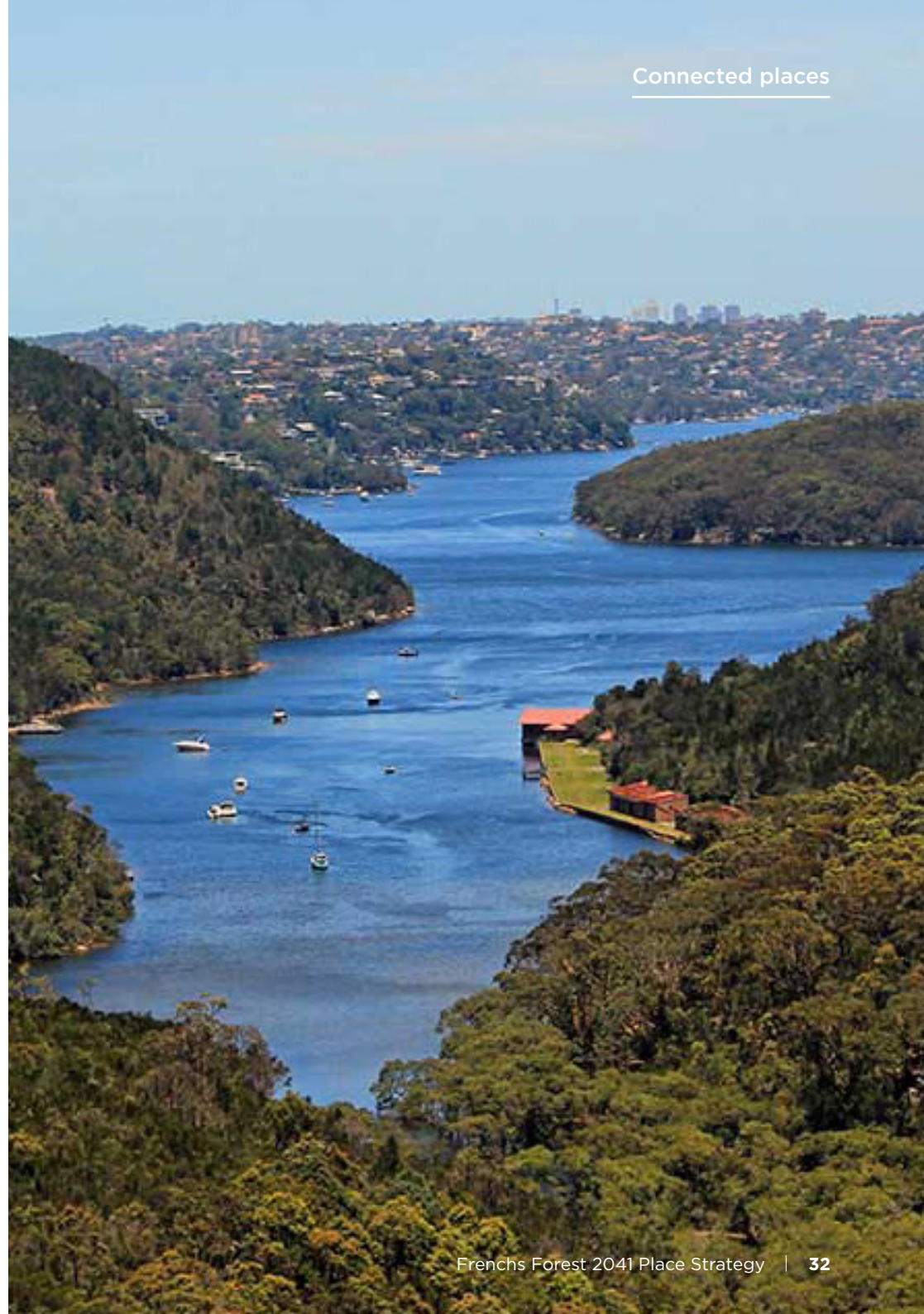
This character area is the larger block that sits on Warringah Road, in between Bantry Bay Road and Hilmer Street. It will offer new shops that will bring activity to Bantry Bay Road and Brick Pit Reserve and provide easy access for people living south of Warringah Road.

Bantry Bay Neighbourhood Centre's renewal will open opportunities to celebrate this rich history at the former Hews' Residence, with materials and landscaping that will provide a connection to the past.

Other renewal activity will bring ground floor retail uses on Bantry Bay Road and around Brick Pit Reserve. High quality medium-rise apartment buildings of up to 5 storeys will integrate with these neighbourhood shops and people will find it easy to gather within an area with wider footpaths, plenty of new street trees and improved local streets.

### Actions

- Create a new neighbourhood centre
- Identify site consolidation requirements to ensure good built form outcomes
- For residential flat buildings, ensure 30% of the site area is landscaped
- Develop basement parking





# Achieving the vision

The Place Strategy has informed changes to planning controls in Warringah Local Environmental Plan 2011. It has also informed an amendment of Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (the Regulation) to ensure the Place Strategy is a statutory consideration in future development applications.

Northern Beaches Council is preparing a development control plan (DCP) that sets out supporting built form and urban design provisions that complement the new planning controls. The finalisation of Council's DCP and development contributions plan will enable development applications to be progressed once the precinct is rezoned.





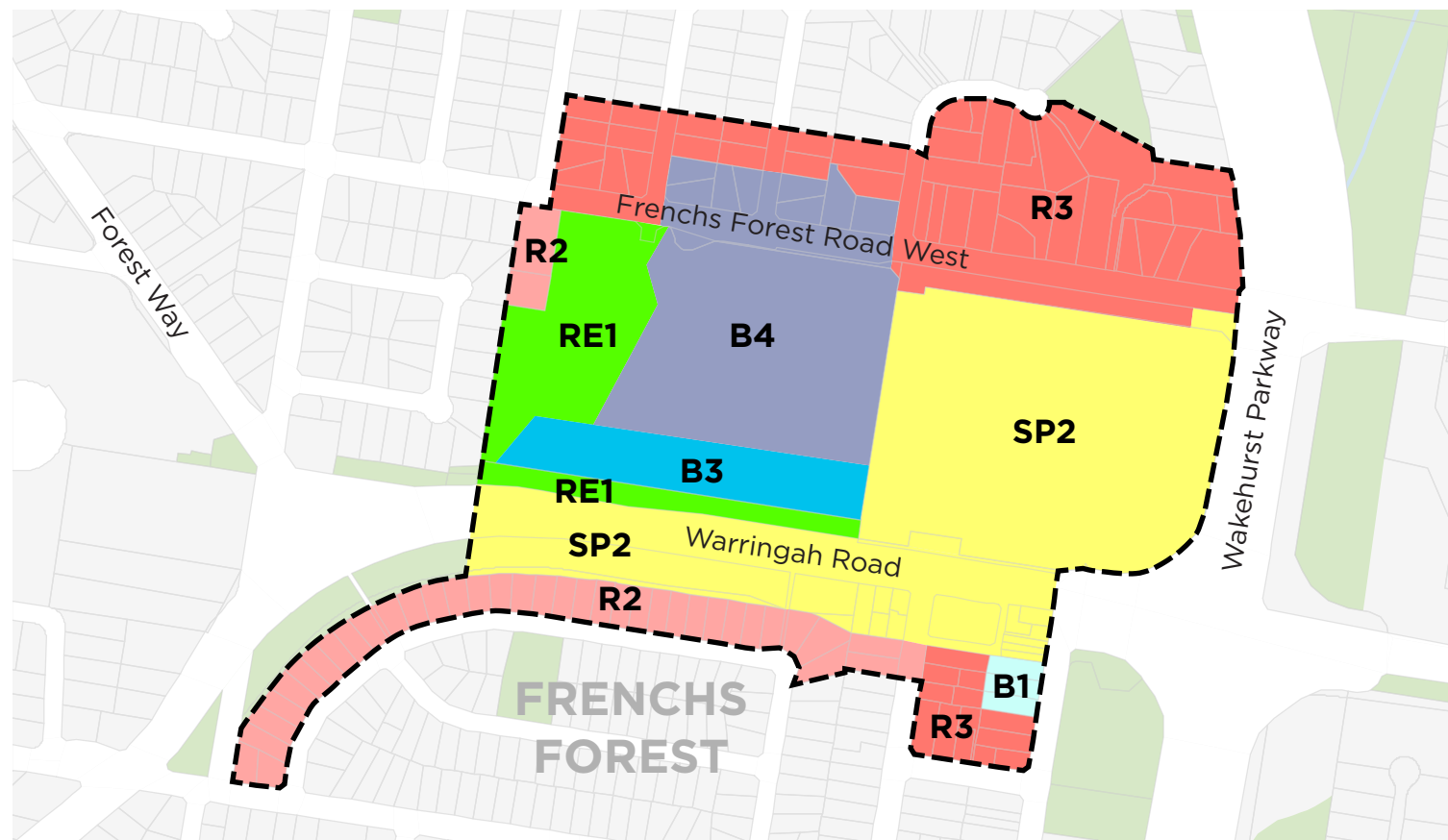
**Figure 5:** Proposed Frenchs Forest Precinct master plan. Credit: CHROFI





## Zoning

The new town centre (B4 Mixed Use) will be supported by new open space (RE1 Public Recreation) and retail, civic and commercial uses (B3 Commercial Core). To reflect the approved use of the Northern Beaches Hospital, the hospital site is rezoned from R2 Low Density Residential to SP2 Infrastructure (Hospital).



**Figure 6:** Land zoning

### Land Zone

|            |                            |            |                         |
|------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| <b>B1</b>  | Neighbourhood Centre       | <b>B3</b>  | Commercial Core         |
| <b>B4</b>  | Mixed Use                  | <b>R2</b>  | Low Density Residential |
| <b>R3</b>  | Medium Density Residential | <b>RE1</b> | Public Recreation       |
| <b>SP2</b> | Infrastructure             |            |                         |



## Building heights and floor space ratios

Building heights will depend on the character area, with the tallest buildings in the town centre, transitioning to lower scale buildings in the north and south. No building in the town centre will exceed the 40 m height of the hospital building.

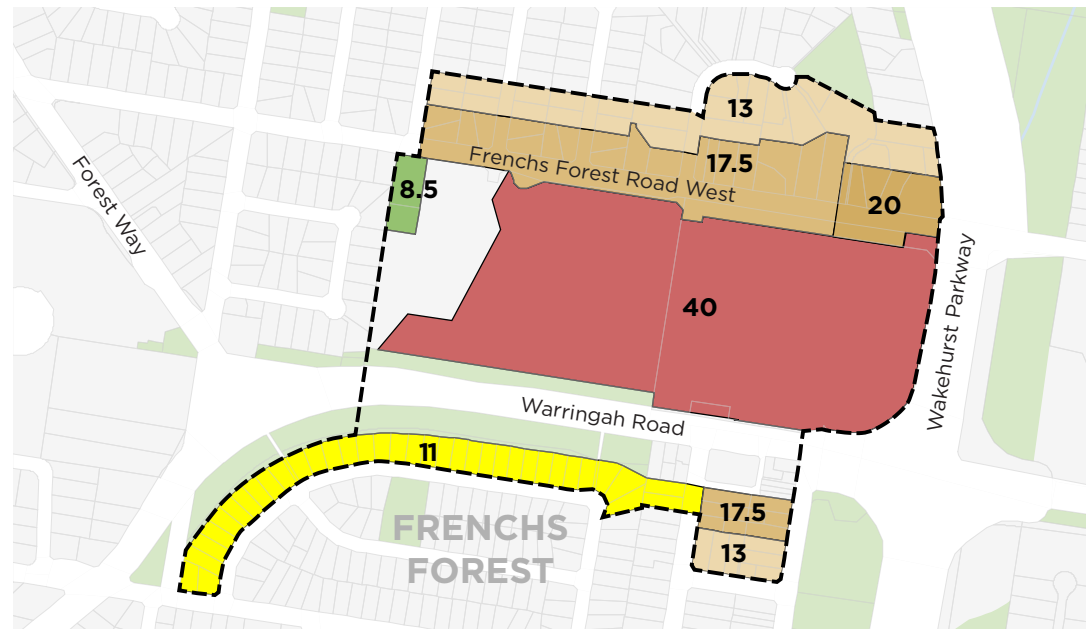
The proposed changes to the Height of buildings map for the precinct are illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 9 (over page) shows indicative heights for buildings in the town centre.

Floor space ratio controls establish the maximum floor area that can be built on a site and guide the bulk and scale of development. The proposed floor space ratio controls will ensure sunny streets and open spaces.

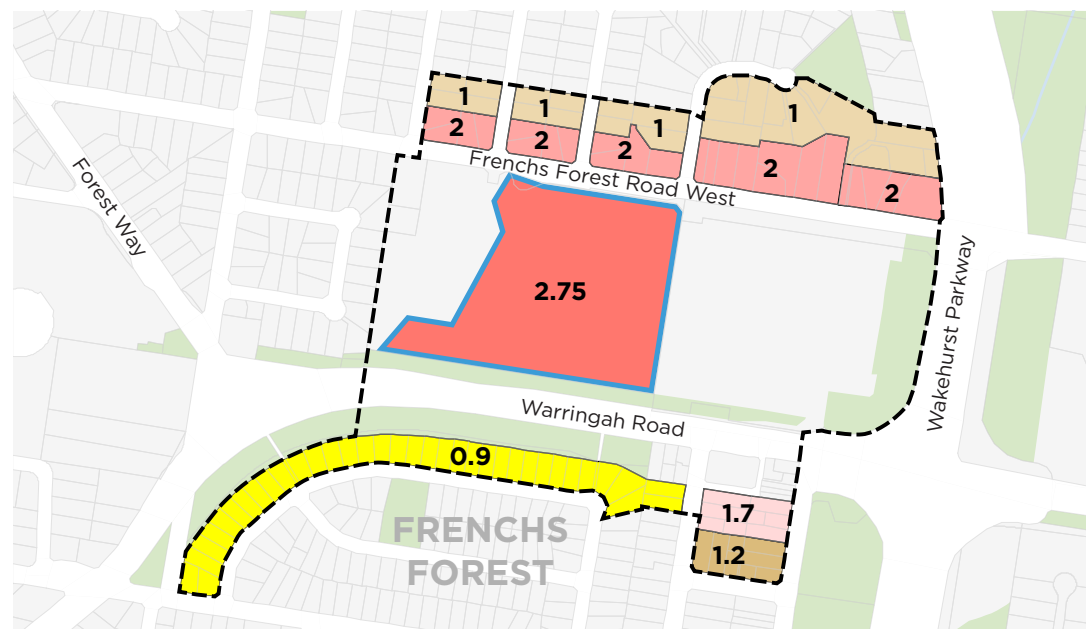
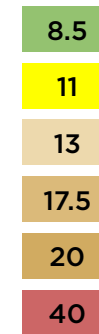
The greatest density is proposed in the town centre, near the hospital. The scale of buildings decreases in the north and south of the precinct so that new residential housing integrates with the existing residential neighbourhood. A 0.15:1 floor space bonus is offered in the town centre as an incentive to achieve higher sustainability benchmarks for energy and water. A maximum FSR of 2.9:1 can be achieved in the town centre.

The proposed changes to the floor space ratio map are illustrated in Figure 8.



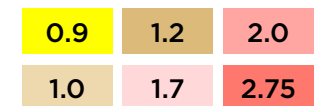
**Figure 7:**  
Height of buildings map


**Maximum height of building (metres)**



**Figure 8:**  
Floor space ratio map

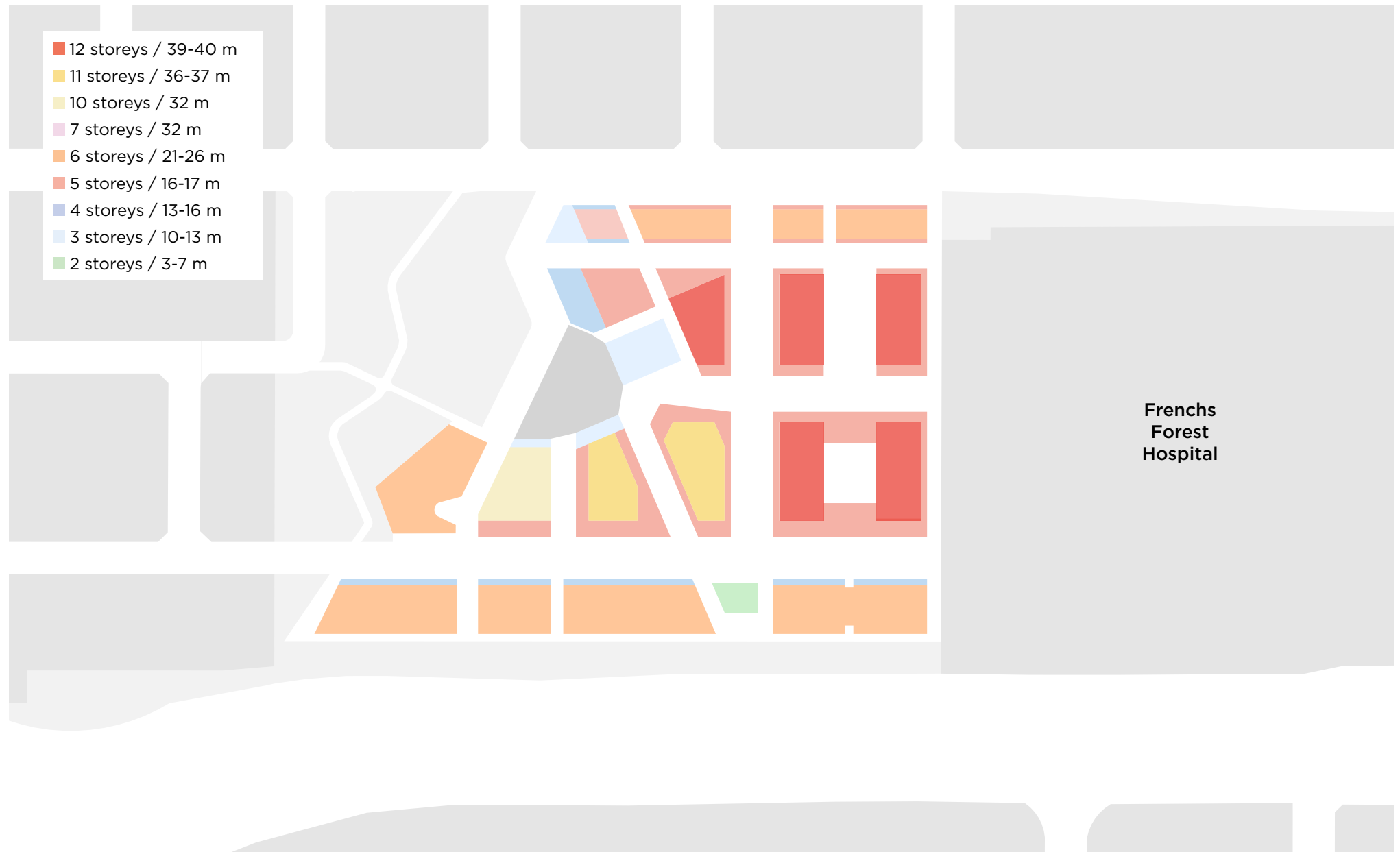
**Maximum Floor Space Ratio (n:1)**



 A bonus FSR of up to 0.15:1 (max 2.9:1) can be awarded for development within the town centre that exceeds BASIX Targets



**Figure 9:** Indicative town centre building heights. Credit: CHROFI





## Additional permitted uses

Additional uses permitted outside those allowed under land use zoning are designed to allow greater flexibility within the proposed provisions.

For land in the R3 Medium Density Residential zone on Frenchs Forest Road West, additional permitted uses will include business and office premises, medical centres and community health facilities, and shop-top housing and health consulting rooms at the ground floor level.

Dual occupancies, semi-detached dwellings and attached dwellings are permitted as additional uses in the R2 Low Density Residential zone along Karingal Crescent.

## Land for local roads

Future local road connections into the town centre from 137 Frenchs Forest Road West (Frenchs Forest Police Station), 16 Holland Crescent and 26 Holland Crescent will require land to be acquired by Council.

## Affordable housing

An affordable housing target of 15% for the town centre, and 10% for other areas, will be implemented via Council's Affordable Housing Contribution Scheme.

The affordable housing targets are based on residential floor space and will provide for up to 250 affordable housing dwellings.

## Transport capacity

To avoid adverse impacts on the road network, the Regulation has been amended to ensure the stage 1 concept development application for the town centre must be accompanied by a traffic and transport study prepared to the satisfaction of and endorsed by TfNSW. The study needs to demonstrate that there will be adequate transport infrastructure and capacity to service the town centre.





## Design excellence

Development must exhibit design excellence and reflect the design principles in *Frenchs Forest 2041*. A design excellence process will be applied to all development that is or will be higher than 12 metres or 3 storeys including review by the Northern Beaches Council Design Review and Sustainability Advisory Panel. This will ensure that new development meets the highest standards of architectural, landscape and urban design.

No design excellence bonuses (height or floor space) will apply to ensure heights and densities are appropriate. This means new buildings will be designed to respond to new public open spaces while also providing enough space for the expected increase in residents and workers.

**To exhibit design excellence, development will need to consider:**



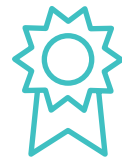
Proposed land uses and land use mix



Relationship of the development with other development in terms of separation, setbacks, amenity and urban form



Impact on view corridors, heritage and streetscape



High standard of architectural design and impact of development on the quality and amenity of the public domain



Excellence and integration of landscape design



Sustainable design principles including access to sunlight, natural ventilation, privacy, safety, energy, water and waste efficiency and re-use, and pedestrian, cycle and vehicle access



## Utilities services

The need to upgrade utilities infrastructure is best determined during the development process, based on the capacity of networks at that time. Further consultation with utility authorities is required to understand current capacities and future capital works priorities.

Recommended sustainability practices to reduce future demand on existing utilities services include:

- building designs that maximise natural light and optimise natural ventilation to reduce electricity demand for heating and air-conditioning
- rainwater tanks, modern tap fixtures and household appliances to reduce potable water demands
- 'NABERS' energy targets for non-residential buildings.

A low voltage (33kV) overhead transmission line along Frenchs Forest Road connects the Belrose and Warringah substations. There is no easement in place for the safety and maintenance of this powerline; if it remains in place, development cannot occur within 3 m of the existing property boundaries. Further Ausgrid limitations determine what activities can be carried out around the powerline.

Ausgrid confirms the powerline could be undergrounded, or be realigned, potentially from the corner of Wakehurst Parkway and Frenchs Forest Road to extend north along Wakehurst Parkway. The costs of undergrounding the powerline would be borne by the private developer, as a levy for this purpose cannot be collected under existing contribution schemes.

The Place Strategy amends Warringah LEP to require a developer to give adequate consideration to undergrounding existing powerlines on Frenchs Forest Road. Further consultation with Ausgrid is required.

| Utility     | Responsible authority | Utility requirements                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Water       | Sydney Water          | 2.2 km of 225 mm water main along Frenchs Forest Road                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|             |                       | 1 km of 150 mm water main along Warringah Road                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Sewer       | Sydney Water          | For development north of Warringah Road: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,165 m of 225 mm sewer main</li> <li>• 325 m of 300 mm sewer main</li> </ul>                                                                           |
|             |                       | For development south of Warringah Road: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 705 m of 150 mm sewer main</li> </ul>                                                                                                                   |
| Electricity | Ausgrid               | 1 x 1.3 km 11 kV feeder                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|             |                       | 1 x 1.8 km 11 kv feeder                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Gas         | Jemena                | Non-essential service so the viability of each request for supply is assessed individually.<br><br>Gas infrastructure is provided in the vicinity of the precinct so infrastructure is likely to be provided to support increased demand. |

# Infrastructure

Infrastructure is funded through a variety of mechanisms, including local and state infrastructure contributions, planning agreements, State agency budgetary procedures and monetary grants.

The proposed Frenchs Forest SIC is expected to provide funding up to **\$37.3 million** of State and regional infrastructure to support the new residential growth.

This includes:


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**\$5.3 million**  
Roads

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**\$10.9 million**  
Active transport and green links

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**\$1 million**  
Public transport

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---



**\$19.5 million**  
Education

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Development of significant transport uplift, in collaboration with TfNSW, to meet the growing needs of the precinct and the wider area.

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**\$600,000**  
Planning and delivery

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## Infrastructure contributions

In 2020, the NSW Productivity Commission reviewed the infrastructure contributions system in NSW to determine whether the system meets the objectives of certainty and efficiency while delivering public infrastructure.

The review contained 29 recommendations covering local and State infrastructure contributions. In March 2021, the NSW Government announced it accepted all recommendations.

The review recommends a broad-based regional charge, with the addition of new transport contribution charges for major transport projects, such as around new Sydney Metro stations, and strategic biodiversity contributions where needed.

This would require legislative change, with reforms expected to be implemented in 2022.

Until then, special infrastructure contributions (SICs) for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Illawarra Shoalhaven and Frenchs Forest will continue in parallel to the new regional charge framework.

In response, a Frenchs Forest SIC provides certainty to industry, State agencies and the community that the critical infrastructure to support *Frenchs Forest 2041* can be delivered.

The SIC can be transitioned to a new system, when adopted, in line with the principles of the Productivity Commission's recommendations.

The SIC charge rate and the infrastructure items to be funded by the SIC ensure that:

- infrastructure will maintain or improve places in and around Frenchs Forest.
- the vision and objectives of *Frenchs Forest 2041* are supported.
- the cost of the infrastructure is reasonable and fairly apportioned.
- the contribution is reasonable given its cost and development feasibility.

The charge rate is informed by development feasibility testing that considers development costs, margin, risk and sensitivity testing of local developer contributions and affordable housing.

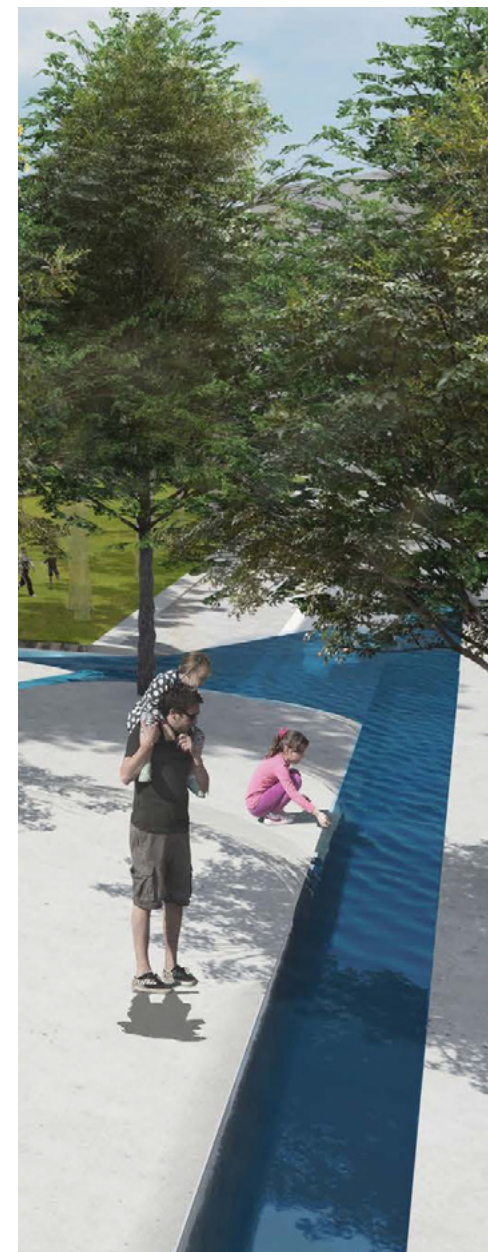
The SIC charge rate per additional dwelling is:

- \$6,500 – Charge Area 1 being land outside the town centre
- \$19,500 – Charge Area 2 being land inside the town centre.

The framework applies to new residential development that occurs as a result to planning controls or rezoning within the Special Contributions Area (SCA).

The SCA covers all 3 phases of Council's Structure Plan, meaning that \$37.3 million in SIC funding is the total revenue to be collected across this broader precinct area. At this point, SIC contributions will only be charged for development proposed in this Place Strategy.

Future development within phases 2 and 3 of Council's Structure Plan will only be charged a SIC contribution rate after these later phases have been rezoned. Timing will depend on further transport upgrades.



Artist's impression courtesy of Tyrrell Studio



Artist's impression courtesy of Tyrrell Studio

## Other funding mechanisms

Other funding mechanisms include:

- Grant funding, such as the \$150 million Strategic Open Space program and Parks for People program; or funding received by Council under the NSW Government's Precinct Support Scheme to upgrade Brick Pit Reserve, Akora Reserve and Rabbett Reserve.
- Land dedication through the relocation of The Forest High School and the sale of the site for the purpose of local open space, with Council's local contributions plan including a contribution toward the embellishment cost of the open space.
- Local contributions levied as a condition of development consent to fund or upgrade local infrastructure and facilities and acquisition costs for the Frenchs Forest Police Station, 16 Holland Crescent and 26 Holland Crescent.
- Local infrastructure, voluntary planning agreements and facilities and acquisition costs for the Frenchs Forest Police Station, 16 Holland Crescent and 26 Holland Crescent.
- State and local voluntary planning agreements, which, under planning legislation, a developer can enter into to provide State or local infrastructure associated with a change to planning controls or a development application in lieu of a contribution to the SIC or local contribution schemes.
- State agencies' capital works budgets, which recognises the limited capacity of contributions to fund the required infrastructure, and that some infrastructure improvements are required regardless of the growth anticipated in this Place Strategy.



# Appendix A

Strategic planning context

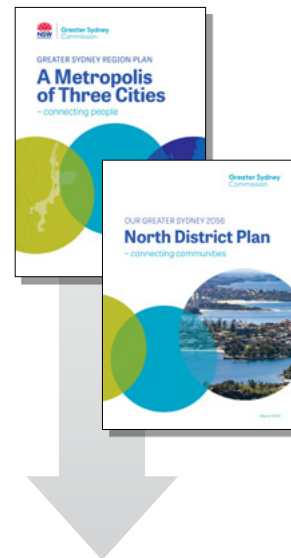


## Greater Sydney Region Plan and North District Plan

The *Greater Sydney Region Plan* establishes a 40-year vision to 2056 for Greater Sydney to be a metropolis of three cities, enabling most people in Greater Sydney to get to their nearest strategic centre within 30 minutes by public transport.

The Region Plan is supported by five district plans that guide the implementation of the Region Plan at a district level and act as a bridge between regional and local planning. Frenchs Forest is located within the North District and is included in the *North District Plan*.

The *North District Plan* has identified that an additional 92,000 homes will be needed in the district by 2036. Of this, Frenchs Forest will accommodate around 2,000 new homes. The District Plan also establishes a baseline target of 12,000 jobs for the Frenchs Forest area by 2036 (from 9,300 in 2016). The more ambitious target is for 13,000 jobs. *Frenchs Forest 2041* incorporates these targets.



The *North District Plan* sets a target of **12,000 jobs** for Frenchs Forest by 2036



## Transport and infrastructure planning

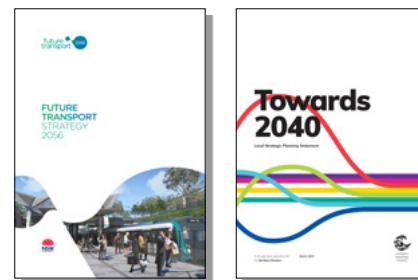
The *Future Transport Strategy 2056* sets the vision and direction for NSW transport investment. It includes a movement and place framework to ensure that transport supports the character of the places and communities.

Council's *Move - Northern Beaches Transport Strategy 2038* echoes this ambition. It aims for a quarter of all trips in Northern Beaches LGA to be made by public transport by 2038, and for a 30% reduction in trips by cars in the same period.

The *State Infrastructure Strategy* sets out the NSW Government's priorities for the next 20 years. It identifies the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link. The potential of the Beaches Link has been considered in the technical investigations.

A potential Bus Rapid Transit route connecting Dee Why to Chatswood along Warringah Road could service Frenchs Forest and connect to bus services utilising Beaches Link. This commitment is unfunded and detailed investigations are required.

Until this work commences, it is reasonable to assume that any transport improvements on the corridor from Dee Why to Chatswood would benefit Frenchs Forest. This is reiterated in *Towards 2040*.





## Planning for a healthy environment

The Premier's Priorities shape the work of State agencies. Two of these are relevant for the planning of Frenchs Forest as a leafy, green place:

- 'Greener public spaces' – increasing the proportion of homes in urban areas within 10 minutes' walk of quality green, open and public space by 10 per cent by 2023
- 'Greening our city' – increasing the tree canopy and green cover across Greater Sydney by planting one million trees by 2022.

These priorities are supported by the planning for the Greater Sydney Green Grid, as well as the broader Five Million Trees Program, which is funding the work of councils to plant thousands of more trees across Greater Sydney.

The NSW Government's \$150 million Strategic Open Space program aims to secure and improve green space across Greater Sydney. The Parks for People program is the initial \$50 million that is being spent across Greater Sydney to create better access to open space – this latter program will fund a new park alongside Wakehurst Parkway.

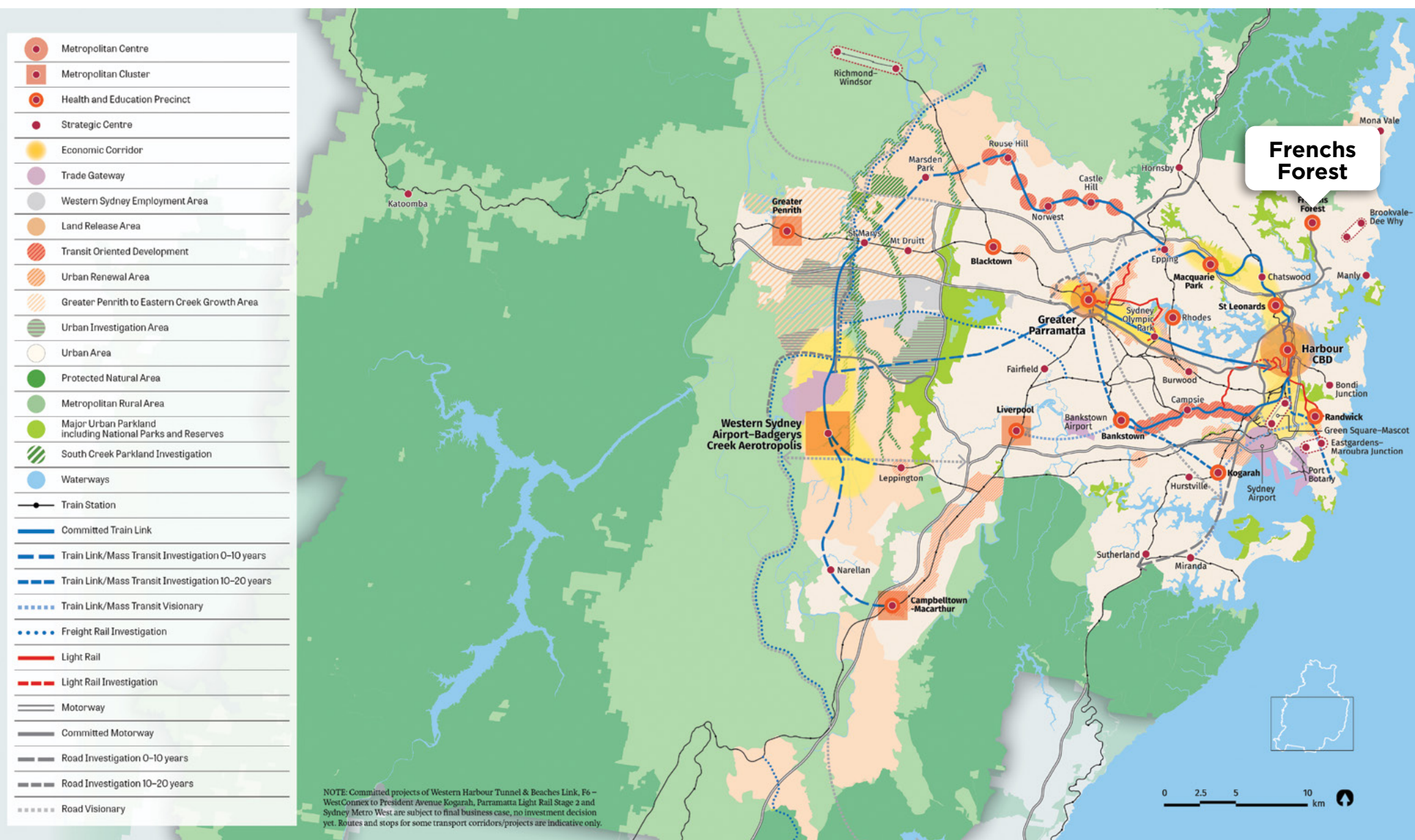
*Artist's impression courtesy of Tyrrell Studio*



## Local planning

*Towards 2040* outlines priorities and actions for the Northern Beaches over the next 20 years. Priority 23 is for Frenchs Forest to be a sustainable health and education precinct. This priority includes the following principles for the broader Frenchs Forest area:

- Establish Frenchs Forest as an active mixed use strategic centre with a variety of housing and employment options integrated with the area's bushland
- Deliver a low-carbon precinct with high efficiency in energy, water and waste
- Strengthen Frenchs Forest business park, focusing on attracting health-related businesses
- Ensure the business park, town centre, hospital and Forestway Shopping Centre function together
- Use Northern Beaches Hospital as a catalyst for new health and education jobs and businesses
- Provide high amenity, safe and accessible public spaces and facilities that are active day and night
- Transition new housing appropriately to existing low density residential areas
- Prioritise walking in the town centre and provide connections to the broader active and public transport network
- Improve public transport and regional cycling routes to Chatswood and Spit Bridge.

**Figure 10:** Frenchs Forest in the context of Greater Sydney



# Appendix B

## Technical analysis



| Analysis                                     | Findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Urban design strategy and public domain plan | The potential of additional road capacity and future mass transit, along with the hospital, business park, schools and a possible tertiary education facility, are a unique point of difference. A suitable transition to surrounding residential areas and stronger connections are essential, as are new health and education uses.                                                                                                                 |
| Transport strategy                           | Based on current travel preferences and traffic patterns, road infrastructure for the precinct may reach capacity at approximately 70% development build out. This may not be the case if the desired shift in travel preferences to public transport occurs. The road network will be monitored by the relevant road authorities and assessed through the development application process and any interventions will be determined if a need arises. |
| Employment strategy                          | The hospital and adjacent business park can be leveraged to attract investment and employment. A mixed use format to support a range of retail, commercial, health and education uses is required. A mismatch between the proportion of older residents in the LGA and working aged adults will require more commercial and medical services for older people.                                                                                        |
| Social infrastructure needs assessment       | Higher density living will see a different demographic make-up in the future – more cultural diversity, more students, new employees, working-age residents, and more people living in single or couple households. Social infrastructure will need flexible and multi-use facilities.                                                                                                                                                                |
| Tree canopy audit                            | The tree canopy cover of 28% is mainly on private land and mainly planted native and exotic trees. Most trees are 5m to 25m and semi-mature.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Bushfire strategic study                     | The location of the site in relation to key transport routes ensures the site is well separated, in perpetuity, from any contiguous fire run. Therefore, it is likely that future development of the site would be able to meet the requirements of Planning for Bushfire Protection, and from this perspective, there are no significant bushfire constraints that should incur the rezoning.                                                        |

| Analysis                                     | Findings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sustainability plan                          | The unique potential of government-owned land in single ownership can encourage precinct-scale solutions in terms of high performance buildings, precinct energy cycle, precinct water cycle, precinct waste cycle, and connections and active transport.                                                                                                                                                    |
| Heritage assessment                          | The assessment identified the potential sensitivity of natural outcrops of sandstone for the occurrence of Aboriginal shelter and engraving sites that may require further investigation. Other opportunities for heritage interpretation include former Holland's Orchard and Commemorative Grove and the former Hews' Residence.                                                                           |
| Preliminary site contamination investigation | It is unlikely that significant contamination would preclude rezoning in Frenchs Forest. Potential local contamination at the former service station on the corner of Hilmer Street and Warringah Road can be managed during development.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Flooding and stormwater assessment study     | Mainstream flooding is unlikely, with potential for only minor flooding of residential properties north of Frenchs Forest Road. The existing draining easement will need to be maintained and stormwater pipe upgrades may also be needed. Council's flood planning controls are appropriate and Council's gross pollutant and nutrient limits can be met using at-source treatment as development proceeds. |
| Feasibility testing                          | Feasibility testing in normal market conditions confirms that the density thresholds for land uses proposed in Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy are likely to be acceptable to the market on any reasonable time horizon.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Utilities services study                     | The potable water, sewer, electricity, gas and telecommunications networks servicing Frenchs Forest will require upgrades to service additional demand.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



