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**From:** Karine and Adrian Stehmann Jones  
**Sent:** 12/05/2025 9:18:36 PM  
**To:** Council Northernbeaches Mailbox  
**Subject:** Submission on DA2023/1757  
**Attachments:** Submission on DA20231757.pdf;

To whom it may concern,

Please see attached our submission on the proposed development of DA2023/1757 at the Forestway Shopping Centre (Lot 20 DP 1209801).

We acknowledge the importance of renewing the Forestway Shopping Centre to service local businesses and residents and look forward to seeing this development come to realisation. However, there are a range of issues which need to be further considered. In its current form, the proposed development should not be granted development consent until the recommendations provided in the attached are implemented or investigated.

Please direct this submission to Steve Findlay, Manager of Development Assessment.

Best regards  
Adrian Jones Karine Stehmann-Jones  
M: + [REDACTED]  
E-mail: [REDACTED]

12 May 2025

Steve Findlay  
Manager Development Assessment  
Northern Beaches Council  
via Northern Beaches Council Planning Portal

Dear Steve,

## PLANNING SUBMISSION ON DA2023/1757 (AS AMENDED)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you for the opportunity to prepare a submission on DA2023/1757. Whilst we acknowledge the importance of renewing the Forestway Shopping Centre to service local businesses and residents, there are significant concerns with the proposed entry and exit from the development, and the development's misalignment with the intended outcomes of the *Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy*. In its current form, the proposed development should not be granted development consent until the recommendations provided in this submission are implemented or investigated. This submission outlines the reasoning for these concerns and suggests potential alternatives to resolve any negative impacts.

### 2. AREAS OF CONCERN

#### 2.1. PROPOSED VEHICLE EXIT ROUTE

As Forest Way is a state-owned classified road, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) are the consent authority for the proposed works to Forest Way. In their letter dated 7 March 2025, TfNSW outline that they are not supportive of the proposed right hand turn out of the site and into the southbound lane of Forest Way. In Council's re-notification letter dated 8 May 2025, it is noted that this right-hand turn lane has been removed from the proposed development. As a result, traffic exiting the proposed development and heading southward towards Forestville and Chatswood would be directed along Russell Avenue, Grace Avenue, and then Fitzpatrick Avenue. The traffic modelling prepared by McLaren Traffic Engineering dated 16 January 2025 has not assessed the potential Level of Service (LoS) at these intersections in the pre- and post-development scenario. Therefore, it is unclear whether this is a suitable route for the proposed traffic loads. Further, this "rat-run" would send traffic past the Frenchs Forest Public School which is subject to a school zone from 8am-9:30am and 2:30-4pm as well as a number of speedbumps (refer to **Figure 1** below). The AM school zone period coincides with the AM peak period outlined in the McLaren Traffic Engineering report and would further worsen the current traffic conditions. This is an incredibly unsafe outcome.

Figure 1 Proposed traffic route



To summarise, the key issues with this strategy are:

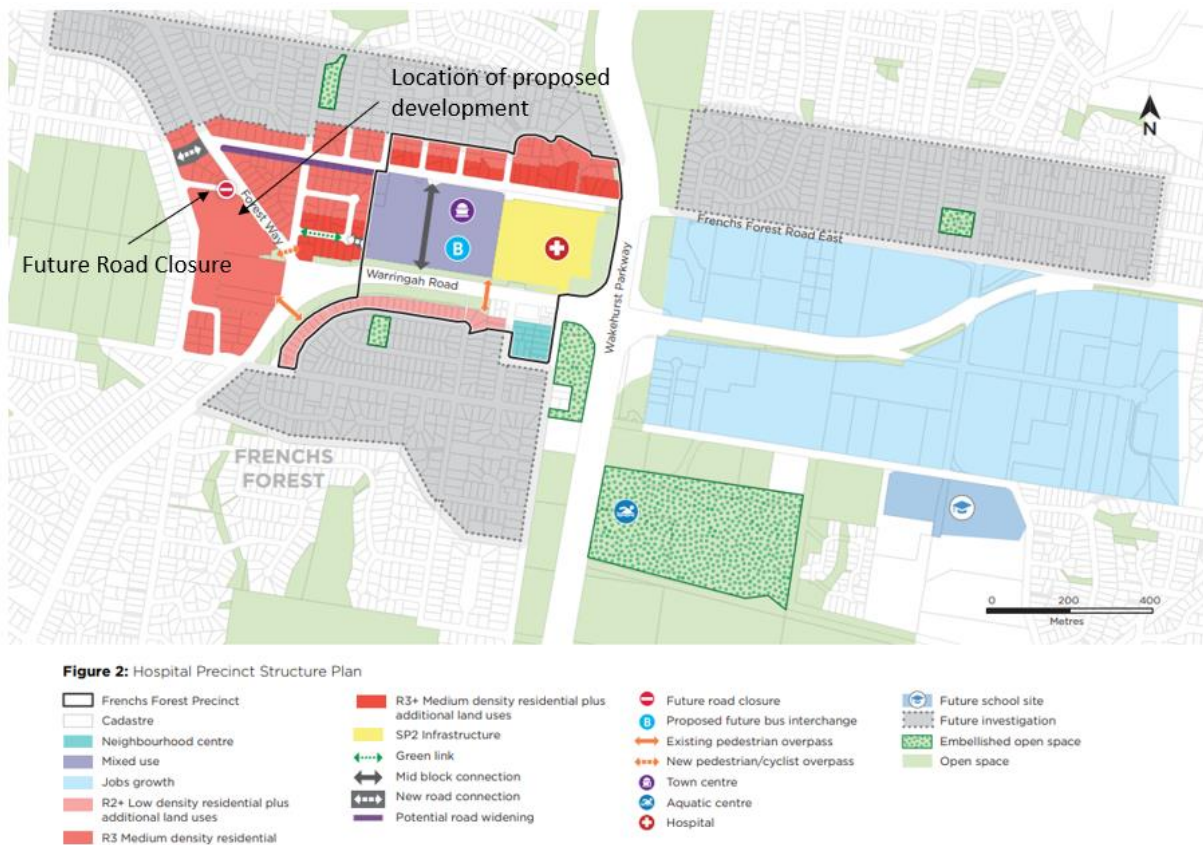
- **The lack of traffic modelling for the proposed exit route.** Without SIDRA modelling for the proposed route, it is unclear whether the vehicle trips generated by the proposed development can be adequately serviced by these existing intersections.
- **Safety of school students and residents.** The proposed route passes the Frenchs Forest Public School and may result in an unsafe environment for school students, visitors and residents. This section of Grace Avenue is narrow with unrestricted parking permitted on both sides of the street as well as a speed bump and pedestrian crossing. This section of road is unsuitable to service the proposed development.
- **Broader impacts on the traffic network.** As shown by the faint red line above, vehicles may use this route to continue along Grace Avenue towards Forestville as the Fitzpatrick Avenue and Warringah Road intersection does not permit right hand turns. This could have an adverse effect on intersections within the Forestville Town Centre which have not been modelled.

## 2.2. MISALIGNMENT WITH THE FRENCHS FOREST 2041 PLACE STRATEGY

### 2.2.1. Road Closure

As outlined above, the proposed development seeks to utilise Russell Avenue to service vehicles exiting the site and heading towards Warringah Road via Grace Avenue and Fitzpatrick Avenue. However, the Structure Plan located on Page 11 of the Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy (**the Place Strategy**) and shown below, identifies Russell Avenue as subject to future road closure.

Figure 2 Future road closure



It is unclear how the proposed development will operate if Russell Avenue is closed in the future, and particularly how vehicles will exit the site of the proposed development, as well as loading access along Grace Avenue. If Russell Avenue is closed, trucks will be either be directed along Grace Avenue from Adams Street and Prince Charles Road or from Fitzpatrick Avenue. Neither of these options are suitable for truck access and need to be reconsidered.

### Recommendations:

- Relocate the loading dock access from Grace Avenue to Forest Way to minimise potential future impacts on residents once Russell Avenue is closed.
- Consider alternative strategies for vehicles exiting the site and using Russell Avenue in the case that Russell Avenue is subject to a future closure.

### 2.2.2. Removal of footbridge across Forest Way

The proposed development, as amended, removes the footbridge across Forest Way that was previously proposed by the development. This footbridge is a key element of the Place Strategy as it will provide residents on the western side of Forest Way with a safe pedestrian connection to the future town centre at the existing Forest High School site. Whilst it is understood that the construction of this bridge will require land acquisition, it is unclear as to why this has been removed and has zero regard for the future intended outcome of Frenchs Forest. Instead, the amended development will now include an “at-grade” crossing on Forest Way, similar to what is currently provided. This presents no net-benefit to the community and will maintain the current underperforming traffic network (LoS of “D” identified in the McLaren Traffic Engineering modelling).

**Recommendation:** The originally proposed footbridge should be reinstated. In the case that this can’t be achieved, alternative strategies for the safe passage of pedestrians to the opposing side of Forest should be investigated, except for the proposed “at-grade” crossing.

### 2.2.3. Lack of consideration for strategic planning

Section 4.15(1)(b) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* requires consent authorities to consider the likely impacts of the proposed development, whether they be social, environmental or economic. The Amended Statement of Environmental Effects prepared on 20 December 2023 states that:

*“Given the long term time frame which gives no certainty that there will be change, along with the suggestion in the LSPS that the Forest Way Shopping Centre can coexist with the new town centre, there is no need for any detailed consideration of this local strategy. It is noted however that the strategy identifies a footbridge crossing Forest Way close to the existing vehicular access to the subject site. The plans provided with this DA show a future overpass bridge in concept only to confirm that this is possible.”*

An extensive range of technical reporting and assessment was involved in the establishment of the Place Strategy. In assessing the likely impacts of the proposed development, the consent authority should consider the impacts of the proposed developments deviation from the intended outcomes of the Place Strategy. The above statement is misleading and suggests that development may not occur in the Frenchs Forest Town Centre. This is incorrect as the Forest High School is in the process of relocating, with students relocating in Term 1 2026. Following this, it is likely that the current school site will be developed for a range of land uses.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the proposed development prepare a complete assessment against the intended outcomes of the Place Strategy to ensure consistency, and that the likely impacts of the proposed development (as required under S4.15(1)(b)) are duly considered.

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Ultimately, DA2023/1757 should be refused in its current proposed form, unless the following can be resolved:

- **Traffic Modelling:** The preparation of traffic modelling for the proposed exit route along Russell Avenue, Grace Avenue and Fitzpatrick Avenue. This modelling should also consider the broader traffic impacts of the proposed development on the Warringah Road / Brown Street, and the Warringah Road / Ferguson Street intersections as these are likely to be used by patrons of the shopping centre.
- **Safety concerns:** The applicant should consider how traffic may be calmed along Grace Avenue to minimise traffic related safety concerns to school children, parents and residents. This could include works-in-kind upgrades to Grace Avenue such as chicanes, speed bumps, and narrower intersections.
- **Loading Dock:** Relocate the loading dock access from Grace Avenue to Forest Way to minimise potential future impacts on residents once Russell Avenue is closed.
- **Russell Avenue Closure:** Consider alternative strategies for vehicles exiting the site and using Russell Avenue in the case that this road is subject to a future closure.
- **Footbridge:** The originally proposed footbridge should be reinstated. In the case that this can't be achieved, alternative strategies for the safe passage of pedestrians to the opposing side of Forest should be investigated, except for the proposed “at-grade” crossing.
- **Place Strategy Assessment:** It is recommended that the proposed development prepare a complete assessment against the intended outcomes of the Place Strategy to ensure consistency, and that the likely impacts of the proposed development (as required under S4.15(1)(b)) are duly considered.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to prepare a submission on DA2023/1757. We acknowledge the importance of renewing the Forestway Shopping Centre to service local businesses and residents and look forward to seeing this development come to realisation. However, there are a range of issues which need to be further considered. In its current form, the proposed development should not be granted development consent until the recommendations provided in this submission are implemented or investigated.

It is our opinion that the matters raised above do not required a complete redesign of the proposed development and are only ensuring that a level of amenity is achieved for nearby residents whilst balancing the commercial needs of the centre owner and tenants.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Jones and Karine Stehmann-Jones  
42 Grace Avenue, Frenches Forest 2086