

27 May 2022

Attn: Louise Kerr  
Director, Planning & Place  
PO Box 82  
Manly NSW 1655

Dear Louise,

**RE: Authorised Vehicle Zone fronting Drummond House, 22 Wentworth St**

I write on behalf of the Board of Royal Far West, regarding the critical importance of retaining the Authorised Vehicle Zone situated outside the Drummond House building at 22 Wentworth Street. This reserved zone is absolutely fundamental to the safe care and effective management of patient movement within Royal Far West. To remove this zone will present a very significant risk of serious harm to Royal Far West clients, staff and family members and potentially local residents of Manly.

Royal Far West is a charity, nearing its 100th year. It has been based in the heart of Manly, caring for rural children and their families since 1924. Royal Far West is thus one of Manly's oldest, established residents. The charity is dedicated to improving health outcomes for children in rural and remote communities. The charity has contributed to the economy of Manly for nearly 100 years, as rural people come here to receive treatment, enjoy the amenity of Manly and purchase goods and services from local providers. Manly has proudly hosted Royal Far West for all these years and has enjoyed the kudos and special significance that RFW brings to the town.

The services provided by RFW today involve integrated health, education and disability services for children with complex and diverse developmental vulnerability and disability. Our large, multi-disciplinary team of clinicians works with the Royal Far West School (part of the NSW Department of Education) to support children and their parents/carers in the Centre for Country Kids. Families stay in Manly and are accommodated onsite in our Drummond House guesthouse. In addition, clients and carers regularly need to visit associated services which we need to provide patient transport for, including visits to BlackDog Institute, RNS Hospital, Sydney Eye Hospital and other specialist appointments.

These children who visit from isolated and remote rural towns are typically unfamiliar with the ways of the city. For many of them, they have not left their hometown before and not ever visited the ocean. They therefore come with a sense of awe and wonder as well as a high degree of naivety and lack of awareness about

street and traffic awareness. They are vulnerable in many ways and require close attention, supervision and care when they are staying at Royal Far West.

Our Manly beachside location is central to the integrated care model and is where we provide our most complex children and families with specialist services, support and respite. The parents and carers who accompany these patients are often themselves stressed, anxious and not 100% focussed on their surroundings due to fatigue and the pressure of managing the children in their care. This leaves them also vulnerable to dangers that present from car, truck and bicycle traffic.

### **Current State & The Need**

Located outside Drummond House is an 8.8m long on-street zone that permits use for 'Authorised Vehicles' as signposted. Royal Far West uses this on-street Authorised Vehicles zone on a daily basis to facilitate the transport of patients and families to specialist appointments, therapeutic recreation programs and other activities. It is acutely important that this zone be preserved for the safety of the Royal Far West patients, carers and staff.

RFW acknowledges Council's traffic engineer's previous comments on the use of the on-street Authorised Zone. RFW has designed off-street parking for its smaller buses and those vehicles no longer use the street zone when parked. In 2019, in consultation with Deputy Mayor Candy Bingham and with the support of Mayor Michael Regan, RFW negotiated an agreement with Council to halve the designated space that we previously used in this reserved zone. By giving up half our designated space, we returned two public car spaces to the community. That negotiation was conducted in good faith and to the benefit of the community as well as RFW. RFW's larger vehicle, required for transporting larger numbers of people, is too big to be parked under the building (the existing CCK basement entry is physically limited to a head height entry of 2.35m, which restricts the large RFW bus from entering the basement) and it was always intended that this bus should have access to the remaining (halved) Authorised Zone outside Drummond House on Wentworth Street.

It is critically important for Royal Far West to have this safe place in front of the Drummond House building to facilitate the drop-off/pick-up of RFW's clients. As previously mentioned, RFW provides child disability services, with the majority of RFW's clients being children with varying complex developmental vulnerabilities and disabilities. These children require close supervision from RFW clinicians, carers, volunteers and staff and cannot simply be picked-up/dropped-off in the same manner as less vulnerable, more advantaged children.

All of our clients are under strict supervision at all times and you will be aware of the high level of security that has always typified RFW's clinical, school and accommodation buildings. Many of these children are recognised as "runners, jumpers and bolters" meaning they are very quick to exit walkways, entrances and exits without taking due care of their surroundings. The reason why the reserved

area is directly outside the entrance to Drummond House and CCK is critically important and not by accident – it allows for the least possible chance of children moving unsupervised into the streets where they can be hurt, lost or disoriented or cause hurt to other people or property.

Further, from a facilities perspective, Royal Far West receives many deliveries to allow the charity to effectively operate day-to-day from ready-prepared meals to laundry/clean linen services. RFW intends to accommodate as many deliveries to the basement as possible to service CCK and Drummond House, however this may not always be viable given that some vendors have vehicles that are restricted by the existing basement entry head height. It is proposed that the existing Authorised Zone also be occasionally utilised as a loading zone for RFW deliveries, when the large RFW bus is out on a trip.

The health and safety of all of RFW's visitors is vital to the local community as well as RFW. Our reputation as a caring community is strong in rural Australia and none of us want that reputation to be tarnished because the Manly community cared more about one more public car space than the children it has famously supported for nearly 100 years.

I hope this letter provides you with further insight into the importance of maintaining the Authorised Vehicles zone for the safety of our visitors and operations of the charity. I am willing to make any representation necessary to give you insight into our service and the reason why rural families love coming to Manly and RFW so much. Please continue to keep us safe.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [jacquie@royalfarwest.org.au](mailto:jacquie@royalfarwest.org.au) if you require further information or wish to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely



Jacqueline Emery  
**Chief Executive Officer**

**cc: Joan Treweek OAM, RFW Chair**  
**Michael Regan NBC Mayor**  
**Candy Bingham NBC Deputy Chair**  
**Lindsay Cane AM RFW Project Director**