

Strategic Planning Referral Response

Application Number:	DA2023/1757
Proposed Development:	Demolition works and major alterations and additions to Forest Way shopping centre including road infrastructure works and a pedestrian overpass on Forest Way
Date:	06/03/2024
To:	Gareth David
Land to be developed (Address):	Lot 20 DP 1209801 , Forest Way FRENCHS FOREST NSW 2086

Officer comments

STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Discussion of reason for referral

The application has been referred as the subject site is identified within Phase 3 of the Hospital Precinct Structure Plan (2017), adopted by Council on 1 August 2017.

The site is currently zoned E1 Local Centre under Warringah LEP 2011 and development consent is required for alterations and additions to the Forestway Shopping Centre.

Hospital Precinct Structure Plan and Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy

Council has adopted the Hospital Precinct Structure Plan (HPSP) to guide future land use planning decisions in Frenchs Forest over the next 20 years. Whilst the HPSP is not a statutory document, it is used to guide the strategic intent of the area.

The subject site is identified for uplift for residential uses in Phase 3 with a R3 Medium Density Residential zone, maximum 40m building height and maximum floor space ratio of 2.2:1. Phase 3 is dependent on the delivery of significant regional infrastructure such as The Beaches Link Tunnel and/or an east-west bus rapid transit system from Chatswood to Dee Why.

The proposal does not impact on the strategic objectives of the State Government's Frenchs Forest 2041 Place Strategy, which focuses on the creation of a new town centre identified as 'Phase 1' in Council's HPSP. As part of the HPSP, an economic impact assessment demonstrated that the proposed additional gross leasable area (GLA) could be accommodated alongside the future town centre with no major impacts to the Frenchs Forest trade catchment.

Consideration of Application

The Application is for alterations and additions to the Forestway Shopping Centre. In particular, the development proposes to expand the existing retail GLA from 9,242.3sqm to 14,018.5sqm (additional 4,776.2sqm), increase the number of car spaces from 348 to 505 spaces (additional 157 spaces), partial demolition and reconfiguration of the existing shopping centre, demolition of the existing multideck car park, car wash and liquor store and construction of an at grade car park with two basement levels. Works associated with Forest Way include the removal of the existing signalised pedestrian crossing at Forest Way, provision of a new signalised intersection for left and right turns into and out of Forest Way, construction of a concrete median in Russell Avenue to restrict the Russell Avenue driveway to left in/left out movements, and construction of a pedestrian footbridge over Forest Way.

Matters for consideration are discussed below.

Land Use

No issues are raised with the proposed land uses and expansion of the retail GLA. As part of the HPSP, an economic impact assessment demonstrated that the proposed additional GLA could be accommodated alongside the future town centre with no major impacts to the Frenchs Forest trade catchment. It is considered that the expansion of this local shopping centre is a logical response to a growing population and changing consumer demands. The proposal includes additional floor space for a supermarket, food, service/office, retail shops, medical and gym uses. New floor space for a swim school and car wash are also proposed. The proposal creates a wider range of non-retail uses that will widen employment opportunities and services.

With regards to the future residential outcomes for the site envisaged in the HPSP, Strategic Planning cannot support the application in its current form without the submission of a Structural Engineers Report (prepared by a suitably qualified Engineer) in order to verify that the proposed building design (new structures) can accommodate residential towers above (as specified in the HPSP – maximum building height of 40m, maximum 2.2:1 FSR).

Pedestrian Footbridge

The proposed pedestrian footbridge will need to be resolved with Council's Traffic Engineers and Transport for NSW. It is likely that further information will be needed on ownership and maintenance requirements.

Strategic Planning supports the proposed pedestrian footbridge as this is identified in the HPSP to improve pedestrian and cycling connectivity. No objection is raised to the proposed location as this will improve future connectivity with the proposed Green Link along Holland Crescent, which will link to the future town centre.

Vehicular Access

Vehicular access and associated roadworks will need to be resolved with Council's Traffic Engineers and Transport for NSW.

The development proposes a new signalised entrance on Forest Way comprising one access driveway and three egress lanes, with left-in/left-out and right out traffic movements.

In relation to the HPSP, Council is proposing the closure of Russell Avenue, upgrades to Grace Avenue and the extension of Naree Road across Forest Way to facilitate Phase 2 and 3 developments. This has been modelled extensively and is considered to be the most appropriate traffic solution for the broader transport network.

The proposed new signalised intersection at Forest Way would compromise this arrangement and is inconsistent with the HPSP. Strategic Planning cannot support the application in its current form without concurrence from Transport for NSW and Council's Traffic Engineers on the proposal's traffic arrangement.

In conclusion, the application cannot be support in its current form unless the following matters are addressed:

- 1. The provision of a Structural Engineer's Report (prepared by a suitably qualified Engineer) in order to verify if the proposed building design (new structures) can accommodate residential towers above (as specified in the HPSP – maximum building height of 40m, maximum 2.2:1 FSR);**
- 2. Concurrence from Transport for NSW and Council's Traffic Engineers on the proposal's traffic arrangement.**

Other/Further Strategic Investigations

Greater Sydney Region Plan	Y	The proposal provides additional jobs, goods and services in the Frenchs Forest Strategic Centre
North District Plan	Y	The proposal provides new businesses, diversifies the range of activities to support a future health and education precinct and reinforces the centre as an employment hub which addresses Action 29, 35 and 36
Northern Beaches Hospital Precinct Structure Plan	N	The proposal is inconsistent with the R3 Medium Density Residential zone proposed for the site, which would prohibit commercial premises

The proposal is therefore unsupported.

Note: Should you have any concerns with the referral comments above, please discuss these with the Responsible Officer.

Strategic Planning Conditions:

Nil.