

Monday, 20 December, 2010

Proposal to support 17,000 new jobs for Frenchs Forest

A proposal to develop part of Frenchs Forest as a major medical, jobs and retail cluster around the proposed northern beaches hospital, and create up to 17,000 new jobs, has been released for public feedback.

The Department of Planning has placed a number of key planning documents on exhibition, including a State Significant Site study and proposed new zonings and planning controls to facilitate the growth of Frenchs Forest.

Frenchs Forest, on Sydney's northern beaches, has been identified as the proposed site for the future northern beaches hospital.

It is also listed in the *Metropolitan Plan for Sydney 2036*, as a new potential specialised centre, able to perform a vital economic and employment role.

The Department's Acting Deputy Director-General Plan Making and Urban Renewal, Neil McGaffin, said the study of the precinct - which spans approximately 2.5km from east to west - is on public exhibition until February 7, 2011.

The Department has worked closely with NSW Health, and has consulted with various State agencies and Warringah Council during the preparation of the State Significant Site study. The Department engaged consultants Cox Richardson to help prepare the study.

"Frenchs Forest is located only 15km from the Sydney CBD and is strategically located along the east-west economic corridor for northern Sydney, which extends from Brookvale/Dee Why in the east to Macquarie Park in the west," Mr McGaffin said.

"Plans for a new hospital would mean both a significant investment in vital infrastructure, and an opportunity to holistically plan for a specialised centre to complement the health services.

"This would assist in creating additional jobs closer to home for northern beaches residents, reducing commuting times.

"Frenchs Forest has the potential to become a major transit-oriented destination, delivering opportunities for a large number of high-quality jobs, health services and living at the gateway to Sydney's northern beaches."

The precinct currently includes a business park and low-density residential, along with education, retail, and ancillary health services.

It is proposed to create development opportunities for mixed use, business park, residential and commercial uses.

“There is potential for Frenchs Forest specialised centre to employ 25,000 people - including 12,000 new jobs and 5,000 jobs at the proposed hospital - and provide up to 1,300 additional homes,” Mr McGaffin said.

“Frenchs Forest could make a very significant contribution towards the target of 23,000 new jobs needed in the North East region by 2036.”

Mr McGaffin said Frenchs Forest already had some existing technology and biomedical research businesses and there was a chance to attract more similar businesses to the health and research cluster.

The study proposes that the development of the specialised centre could occur over a number of stages.

He said the study emphasised the unique natural features of Frenchs Forest which would need to be preserved.

“The location, amenity and natural beauty of the area would be preserved and enhanced by promoting an area to live, work and play in an ecologically, environmentally and economically sustainable way,” Mr McGaffin said.

He said the study identified a range of measures to improve the vibrancy and attractiveness of Frenchs Forest to workers and residents, including improvements to pedestrian amenity and transport initiatives.

“The State Significant Site study is on exhibition until February 7, 2011, and I encourage interested members of the public to lodge a submission providing feedback during this time.”

The study will be available on the Department’s website www.planning.nsw.gov.au, or can be viewed at:

- Department of Planning Information Centre, 23-33 Bridge St, Sydney;
- Warringah City Council, 725 Pittwater Rd, Dee Why;
- Forestville Library, 6 Darley St, Forestville;
- Warringah Mall Library, 145 Old Pittwater Rd, Brookvale.

Submissions may be:

- Sent to Director – Strategic Assessment, Department of Planning, GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001;
- Faxed to (02) 9228 6570;
- Emailed to plan_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au

Department of Planning media contact: Laurel-Lee Roderick (02) 9228 6128