

7 July 2025

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Mr Stephen Dobbs
Contact Planner

We are writing to oppose the proposed development of seniors housing units at 1 & 3 Skyline Place Frenchs Forest (SSD-69850712).

My wife and I are residents in the Over 55's Development known as *Jardin* at 7 Skyline Place Frenchs Forest. Having lived in the Jardin complex since September 2023 we believe we are in a good position to make some observations about the proposed development at 1 & 3 Skyline Place.

My wife and I acknowledge that the demand for quality housing solutions is high and that there needs to be further investment in seniors housing. However, we have a number of reservations/concerns about the proposed development and believe that the proposal in its current form should be declined.

Having examined the development proposal for 1-3 Skyline Place, our major objections are due to the bulk, scale, height, density, design and functionality. Our concerns and objections are as follows:

1. Traffic Issues in Skyline Place.

The traffic report has not accurately determined the traffic flows already occurring in Skyline Place, especially associated with the commercial businesses and medical practice already operating at 7 Skyline Place. Furthermore, the report significantly underestimates the projected traffic flows post development of 1, 5, and 3 Skyline Place. The report has also not taken into consideration the fact that 3 Skyline Place had been vacant for a considerable period but is now a bus depot with considerable traffic activity.

Post development of the entire site, the total number of off-street car parks will be over 1,000. Our experience is that "Seniors" tend to live quite active lives which often includes several car trips per person per day. It must be remembered that some residents are not retired hence the assumptions that Seniors infrequently enter and exit the car parks is grossly flawed. In addition, the commercial businesses (e.g. the medical practice and café) generate a lot of short-stay vehicle movements, as demonstrated in 7 Skyline Place. There is also no mention of the impact of construction vehicles on the traffic conditions in Skyline Place over the next 10 years, which has been demonstrated to be significant with the current construction works on 5 Skyline Place. This is exacerbated by the size of the trucks coming and going along the narrow street.

Parking of construction vehicles should also be required to be on-site and not adversely affect the limited street parking.

All of the above issues will lead to unacceptable traffic congestion and potential safety issues for residents and other users of Skyline Place.

There are a considerable number of pedestrians already using Skyline Place and this will increase with further development. The increased traffic flows will cause further safety concerns for pedestrians crossing Skyline Place. The proposed raised pedestrian crossing near the entrance to Skyline Place will be a dangerous and unwanted addition given the speed with which vehicles turn into Skyline Place.

2. Bulk and Scale - Building Heights and Density

The density of the proposed development is too much. Both 7 and 5 Skyline Place have an FSR of about 1.93:1 yet the proposed development proposes an FSR of 2.66:1 for 3 Skyline Place and 2.15:1 for 1 Skyline Place. This density is inappropriate and represents overdevelopment. The density for 1 and 3 Skyline should be similar to 7 and 5 Skyline Place.

The building heights for the proposed development are excessive and inappropriate for the location. The development site is uphill and east of 7 and 5 Skyline Place and the heights of the proposed buildings are considerably higher than the buildings on 7 and 5 Skyline Place, potentially creating overshadowing and overlooking issues.

Both 7 and 5 Skyline Place were approved after careful consideration by the Land and Environment Court who set a precedent for acceptable density and heights for Seniors living in this location. The proposed development significantly exceeds that precedent.

3. Fire Safety Issues

The proposed heights of the buildings are inappropriate for Seniors. In a fire emergency the reduced mobility of a Seniors community creates challenges in escaping down the fire stairs. We have had approximately 5 fire emergencies in 18 months at 7 Skyline Place and exiting 5 levels has been difficult for many of our Seniors residents. Higher buildings would be even more inappropriate and increase safety risks.

Existing and proposed safe evacuation assembly points have not been considered in the proposal.

4. Other Design Issues

In addition to the above issues, the design of the proposed development is inappropriate in several respects:

- The provision of communal open space for the number of apartments is inadequate.
- The layout of the buildings will create a wind tunnel along Skyline Place.
- The issue of safe pedestrian movements in Skyline Place and crossing Frenchs Forest Road has not been adequately considered.
- The hill up to the existing Romford Rd traffic lights is challenging for many residents with reduced mobility. Consideration of traffic lights at the intersection of Skyline Place and Frenchs Forest Rd should be considered.
- 50% of mature trees are to be removed which will adversely affect the birdlife and other environmental aspects of the Skyline Place locality.

5. Inadequate Engagement with the Existing Seniors Community

Community engagement with the existing Seniors community at 7 Skyline Place (Seniors prototype) has been superficial.

Engagement sessions were performed after the design was complete and did not capture learnings from the first stage Seniors development at 7 Skyline Place. The sessions provided limited information only about the design details and did not encourage meaningful input from residents about how the development may affect them.

We are generally supportive of Seniors housing developments similar to the type and scale of 7 Skyline Place, however, the proposed development is too dense, overdeveloped and potentially unsafe and will adversely affect the overall amenity at Skyline Place.

In conclusion, and for the above reasons, we ask that the Development Application for 1-3 Skyline Place be declined.

Thanks and regards

Brian and Elizabeth Bennett