

MEDIA RELEASE

ROPES CROSSING "PUB" APPROVED AMIDST PROTEST

19 March 2009

After heated debates during the Blacktown Council's 18 March 2009 ordinary meeting, the development application for a huge hotel/pub in the middle of a residential area at Ropes Crossing was passed. Labor councillors joined by Independent Councillor Allan Green voted to approve the development amidst strong protest of the residents.

Independent Councillor Russ Dickens' motion to defer Council's decision to examine in detail its social impact was lost on party lines. Councillor Dickens attacked Labor councillors bedding with developers with scant consideration of how a pub could affect the quiet life in a residential neighbourhood.

Liberal Councillor Jess Diaz supported the move for deferral to have more time to study the report, particularly the social impact statement made by someone at the behest and paid for by the developer. "It is clear how alcohol and gambling in the middle of a residential area, close to proposed primary and secondary schools will affect the community. Everyday news bring us the horror of alcohol and gambling addictions. The low image of Blacktown areas bordering Ropes Crossing will suffer more," Councillor Diaz said.

In a public forum portion of the meeting, local residents represented by Mr. J Janski outlined their objections and raised their concerns about the social impact statement carried out when there were only six residents at Ropes Crossing. Mr. Janski pointed out its flaws and inconsistencies which any development conditions including the plan of management would not forestall antisocial behaviour including excessive alcohol consumption and gambling.

Council completely ignored how gambling can affect people by simply noting that it has nothing to do with gaming licenses other than approving the premises.

"This is a decision that this Council voting now will be haunted in the years to come. When the concerns of residents about crimes, gambling and alcohol are in the news shaming Blacktown, this Council will have a lot to answer for ignoring the public interest," Councillor Diaz concluded.

Enquiries: Brightly@diazlawyers.com Mobile 0403060492
Ref: 0906