



DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF DONVALE

www.drpa.org.au

Residents Rejoice As Council Rejects Application To Build A Multipurpose Function Centre and Sporting Venue in Low Density Residential Zone

“A Bridge Too Far”

Applause followed a very close vote as councillors voted to support the refusal of the application submitted by the Coptic Orthodox Church to build a Multipurpose Building (Sporting Venue and Function Centre) in the quiet neighbourhood of Donvale, in Manningham’s Mullum Mullum Ward, on the old Whitefriars Monastery site.

Approximately 40 local ratepayers, many dressed in their “Stop The Dome” T-Shirts, gathered to hear the decision passed down by council at the meeting. Of note both Cr. Meg Downie and Cr. Stephen Mayne indicated to those gathered that “the building in question was quite simply too big for the area”.

Cr. Mayne continued on to describe the proposal as “a bridge too far”, and to ask council officers how many buildings in the municipality of Manningham currently meet or exceed the height of the proposed Multipurpose Building, to which the response was: “very few”. Most of these are in the Doncaster Hill precinct, and none were identified in Donvale.

Cr. David Ellis raised concerns regarding the intended purpose of the venue for use as a sporting facility versus a function centre, and also what guarantees the local community (outside of the Coptic Church) would actually have to use the centre, as have been claimed by the church, but which were not stated on the planning application.

The main DRPA objections to the proposal centred on the large footprint (approximately 1 acre) and the height of the building above ground level (approximately 21m at the highest point, at one end of the building). The building could easily accommodate a 2,000 person dinner function, and the ensuing potential level of visitors and traffic would certainly have a detrimental impact on many hundreds of local residents.

Donvale RatePayers Association Inc (DRPA) president, Kristian Tkatchenko, said: “This is the right decision by council. As residents we welcome the Coptic Orthodox Church into our neighbourhood. All we ask is that they respect that this is a Low Density Residential Zone and that we need to protect the environment and tranquility that has attracted so many of the local residents to the area, including the Coptic Orthodox Church themselves. A building of this nature as currently proposed does not fit within our neighbourhood.”

A couple of neighbours to the property in question were visibly relieved when the decision was made. They had brought along images that showed how the proposed development would tower over their backyard, taking away any privacy and blocking

The Donvale RatePayers Association Inc.
PO Box 2480, Ringwood VIC 3134
Email – info@drpa.org.au



DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF DONVALE

www.drpa.org.au

out most of the afternoon sun.

Concern was raised during “Questions from the Public” as Cr. Ivan Reid, who does not represent Mullum Mullum Ward, had met with the developer prior to the council meeting and had not met with the DRPA. Cr. Reid then proceeded to aggressively campaign for the development.

Over the past year the DRPA has been working with local residents and Mullum Mullum Ward Councillors Meg Downie and David Ellis to make sure that residents’ voices were heard. Cr. Downie had visited the site and met with both the developer and local residents on numerous occasions to consider both sides of the argument before making her decision.

Council received 78 written objections to the development and DRPA submitted a substantial report outlining the effects a development of this nature would have on the local area, along with a petition signed by 249 residents opposing the proposed development of the site.

The final Council vote was 4 in favour versus 4 against, with Manningham Mayor Charles Pick casting the deciding vote for a motion to issue a NOTICE OF REFUSAL to the applicant

While leaving council chambers Kristian Tkatchenko stated: “We are happy with the outcome although we would have liked council to send an even stronger message that this level of over-development is not acceptable in this area. In the end the DRPA is here, and will continue to be here, to work with Manningham Council and to give Donvale residents a voice.”

Donvale RatePayers Association Inc.
(all available for quotation)

For further comment on this release please contact:
president@drpa.org.au or call 0408 065 289