



High-rise hopes

There were outbursts of tears, confusion and anger in the meeting last Monday between Kellyville Ridge residents and developers but many described it as a rational and productive step forward – so far. **Erika Seymour** reports.

THE crowd of 250 gathered to discuss the development application for an eight-storey, 268-apartment complex with 23 shops on Mervale Road.

Residents said the development was too big for local infrastructure and would lead to traffic and safety problems.

They said it would devalue their properties.

Blacktown City councillors Nick Tyrrell, Allan Green and Alan Pendleton, Riverstone MP John Aquilina, Opposition spokesman for Planning Brad Hazzard, Hawkesbury MP Ray Williams and a representative of Greenway MP Louise Markus were at the meeting.

Mr Williams said the DA was for a site zoned for no more than two to three storeys. “The council rejected a previous application for

this site,” he said. “Now there’s an application which is five to six storeys above what’s permissible for this site and the developers have said they’re not willing to compromise on height.”

A residents’ representative, who asked not to be named, said the developers needed to think of the bigger picture. “They’ve taken care of *their* business and looked after *their* part of the world but no one is looking the big picture,” he said.

People moved to the area for detached homes and semi-rural living, Mr Williams said. “They didn’t move here for this type of development.”

For the developers, Kanebridge Group, director Marwan Rahme said he hoped residents would reassess their views once the project was exhibited.

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WHERE TO NOW?

THE council is requesting amendments to the draft development application before it exhibits the plan.

The public can then make submissions to the council which will, in turn, submit a report on the feedback to the Sydney West Joint Regional Planning Panel.

The panel will then meet with those who made the submissions before making a final decision on the DA.

To speak to the council about the DA: 9839 6000.

For more information about regional planning panels: jrpp.nsw.gov.au.



High hopes

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BLACKTOWN councillors have elected not to be on the panel for their area because they say it would tie their hands and shut them up.

Ward one councillors explained why they had chosen not to stand on the Sydney West panel at a public meeting to discuss a multimillion-dollar development application (DA) for Kellyville Ridge last week.

Joint Regional Planning Panels were introduced by the NSW Government in July to make decisions on regionally significant developments, such as those valued over \$10 million.

These panels comprise five representatives: two council-appointed and three state-appointed.

This means any council members could be easily out-voted.

Councillor Alan Pendleton said: "The role of a councillor is to represent the community. On these panels the hands of a councillor are tied behind his back."

Hawkesbury MP Ray Williams said the Kellyville Ridge DA was the first development of such magnitude to be assessed by a panel in the area.

"It really is quite a test case," Mr Williams said.

The new state planning laws are about to be tested at Kellyville Ridge, reports **Erika Seymour**.



Planned: An artist's impression of the proposed development

"For the area it's one of the early ones being tested. Regional planning takes away the right of councils to raise objections about inappropriate developments in their areas."

The Opposition spokesman for

infrastructure and planning, Brad Hazzard, told the meeting the decision was now with State Government.

"It's up to the community to make their voice heard loud and clear," he said.