

Segal has council under siege

Kingscliff development meeting only option to ending court battle

DN 19.10.07 page 5

BY PETER CATON

BUSINESSMAN Dr Stephen Segal is increasing pressure on Tweed Shire Council to come to the table and talk to him about his Kingscliff development plans, warning the alternative is a continuing costly court battle.

He also says he would welcome a public meeting or debate over his proposal for a district centre, including a major supermarket on the

site of the old Kingscliff sewerage treatment plant which his company Gales Holdings bought from the council.

His comments come on top of yet another court victory earlier this week when the NSW Land and Environment Court upheld his appeal against the council's refusal to allow him to temporarily graze cattle on the sewerage plant site.

But yesterday the council insisted it had been trying to talk to Mr Segal

and wants to stay out of court.

Executive officer Genevieve Slattery said the administrators had met with Mr Segal last November and since then senior staff had met with him. One manager only two weeks ago had tried to arrange another meeting.

The dispute is alarming the Kingscliff Ratepayers and Progress Association which yesterday announced it is asking NSW Planning Minister Frank Sartor to intervene.

The association's acting secretary Barbara Fitzgibbon said the conflict between the council and Gales had blocked formulation of a new 'Locality Plan' for development in Kingscliff because the council kept deferring action pending the outcome of the row.

Mr Segal warned litigation would continue because Gales had "no alternative while Council refuses to have meaningful discussions to reach a compromise".

He said public statements by the administrators revealed "they are totally misinformed and ignorant of the issues related to Gales".

"We believe they are not reading the information that Gales has provided them, and maybe they are being provided false and misleading information by the Council".

Dr Segal claims the planned district centre would provide "many hundreds of millions of dollars to the local economy".