

YOUR VIEW *DN 6.8.05*

Council misled by planners

THE decisions of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal on July 29 are of great importance to the Tweed Shire.

The tribunal found after a costly three-day hearing with Gales as applicant, that the retail study for the Tweed Shire was complete in January 2004, even after the first and second reports described by council planners as only drafts, and that all had apparently been withheld from councillors, and altered and amended.

When Gales sought to have them released, many sections of the retail studies were deleted, suggesting considerable censorship.

The tribunal found that none of these sections or the actual retail studies should have been withheld by council, and now are available to the public. Important relevant sections are available on Gales website www.gales-kingscliff.com.

The important significance of the findings are that three major council studies and proposals have been invalidated by what appears to be incorrect, misleading, and the withholding of important information by the strategic planners under Mr Jardine.

1. The Geolink study for the rezoning of the sewer plant site was corrupted by Mr Jardine withholding vital information, in stating that a retail study would not be available for some time, when it was already completed and available.

2. The November Core

study was invalidated by Mr Jardine misleading the consultant in not informing them that more than 30 hectares of adjacent suitable land was available for the district centre. The consultant was thus led to believe that a district centre could not be accommodated on the Chinderah site.

3. In addition, Mr Jardine informed the consultant that council's policy was to have the district centre near the beach, when council had passed a motion that no further consideration be given to any district centre in that area.

The Core studies found that there was a need for an additional supermarket in Turnnock Street, and a sub-regional centre near the Chinderah roundabout, that area being the only suitable location available in the whole shire, and consideration could start now (see gales website).

That means that the the findings of the extensive Tweed Futures Study and the 2004-24 draft LEP that there is no need for a district centre on the Tweed Coast for a decade or two, with limited expansion in Kingscliff, ignore the final retail study now available after seven years, and have been based on incorrect information.

It is interesting that the retail studies, Tweed Futures and draft LEP have been under the control of Mr Jardine, the transcripts of court evidence show that his behaviour has been inappropriate (see gales website).

It appears that much of the very considerable expenses

associated with these plans could have been wasted due to the inappropriate actions of council's strategic planning under Mr Jardine.

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