

I refer to “Councillors want tower files access” and confirm that a majority of Councillors voted last Tuesday to grant the NSW Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) access to the files pertaining to the height increase in the Dee Why Town Centre from 6 storeys to 18.

I am disgusted that our community’s last chance to stop the high rise development has been sabotaged and thwarted by Councillors Julie Sutton and two Wake Up Warringah Party Councillors, Helen Wilkins and Michelle Ray who immediately put in a rescission motion on the decision to grant to EDO access therefore delaying and obstructing the EDO from being able to do their job.

Legal advice received says the only way to challenge the decision to increase height limits is for a breach of administrative law processes to be identified and taken to the Court. Council in November last year voted against Cr Kirsch and my motion to have a full review and seek an eminent QC’s opinion on the likelihood of a successful Court challenge. The excuse given then by the Mayor for voting this down was the costs to ratepayers of such a review and legal advice.

Residents subsequently approached the EDO to take up this important issue free of charge. The EDO has taken up our community’s cause but need immediate access to all documents for a proper review and assessment to take place.

Sadly, for any Court challenge to be mounted it must be lodged by 27 February 2009. Due to Councillors Sutton, Wilkins and Ray’s contempt for our community’s fight, their rescission motion ends any chance of a successful challenge as their rescission motion will not be dealt with until the next Council meeting on 24 February 2009.

It is a sad day for Warringah and its people and a sign of more development to come. The residents of Manly Vale will be interested to learn that during the debate of my motion, Cr Wilkins indicated her support for 18 storey developments being brought to Manly Vale!

Cr Vincent De Luca OAM