

**Willoughby City Council  
Ordinary Council Meeting  
Tuesday 12 June 2007**

**Agenda Item 22.1**

**Notice of Rescission Motion - Northbridge Plaza and Carpark**

**Presentation to Council by:**

**John Becroft, President of the Northbridge Progress Association**

AMP's plans for the expansion of Northbridge Plaza would almost double retail space. Traffic generation from the site would more than double. The Plaza would occupy the entire site including the car park, which is public land.

Northbridge Progress Association and local residents have objected strenuously to the shopping centre expansion as inappropriate and unnecessary in a residential suburb.

We represent 320 members. I know that most will not object to more residential units along Eastern Valley Way and Sailors Bay Rd, providing the traffic issues are handled well. I know that all of them will seek improvements to the condition and safety of the car park.

However, I don't expect ANY of our members to want additional retail space at the Plaza. Shops and cafes generate FIVE TIMES the traffic generated by residential units. And traffic is the Number One issue for Northbridge people.

Most importantly, the Association will not want Council to give up its ownership and control of the car park. We all dread the kind of high-rise development that could result if AMP were able to ask Frank Sartor to take over as consent authority.

More retail development would have a negative impact on nearby strip shopping precincts. It could also affect several other Willoughby suburbs through traffic generation and impact on local shops. Even Chatswood CBD retailers could be affected by a very much bigger shopping centre in Northbridge.

We were relatively comfortable with Council's May 14 meeting decision to invite AMP to submit a Masterplan with "roughly the same retail space".

The rescission motion as drafted tonight would give AMP far more freedom with its Masterplan. It would open the way to a real nightmare for Northbridge and surrounding suburbs. We urge Council to let AMP know that there will be a LIMIT on retail expansion.

I assure you that it's NOT just a handful of Northbridge NIMBY residents who are objecting. I haven't spoken to ANY of our members nor to any other Northbridge resident who is in favour of the Plaza expansion. Not ONE is in favour.

A meeting of 44 neighbours of the Plaza 10 days ago unanimously rejected the plans.

On past experience, we expect 100 to 150 to attend a big meeting we have organized in July.

A local Northbridge doctor is so concerned that, quite independently, she raised a petition among residents. The petition forms are already in several shops and businesses. The last I heard she had 300 signatures, increasing fast.

Two Northbridge residents are so angry that each has offered \$5000 to fund a campaign against the expansion and another is likely to do the same.

Our Association is supporting a new Willoughby community action group to oppose the Plaza's plans. We're providing financial and hands-on support.

We expect at least three other Progress Associations in Willoughby will support the action group. Castlecrag has already taken steps to be involved and Naremburn and Willoughby South are likely to do the same.

The action group is planning to retain legal and planning experts to advise it in coming months. Two have already offered pro bono services.

This is NOT just a NIMBY group. It's a group that is genuinely concerned that this proposal will change forever the character of several suburbs through greatly increased traffic, damage to local shops and businesses, and destruction of the "village" atmosphere in our suburbs that we value so much.

I urge you to put a limit on retail expansion at the Plaza. Thank you.