

Remarks to Council August 11 2008

I'm Malcolm Lye, secretary of Northbridge Progress Association. I wish to speak about the Northbridge Plaza Masterplan situation and clarify the position of the Association.

As you know, there are two committees established by Council overseeing the Plaza Masterplan process – a Technical Working Group and a Reference Committee. By invitation of Council, I represent NPA on the Reference Committee and a consultant town planner represents NPA on the technical committee - NPA funds his fees, so far, to the extent of about \$13,000. I believe that the technical committee considers our planner a very useful resource.

At the Reference Committee meeting last Wednesday, the technical committee presented a recommendation to “investigate a potential range of Masterplan scenarios that reflect the outcomes of the Stage 1 analysis”, some of which would exceed the “approximately 10%” retail expansion limit for the Masterplan resolved by Council in June last year.

The recommendation was supported by AMP and Council officers but not by the NPA representatives nor by the Council representative, Cr Trevor Morgan.

Both Cr Morgan and I registered in the Reference Committee minutes our opposition to investigating any scenarios greater than Council's 10% constraint.

Cr Morgan and I proposed that results of work to date should be presented to Council before any scenario work commences. This was the process contemplated in the original plan and schedule for the Masterplan.

Nevertheless, we were told that the technical committee had decided to proceed with investigating retail expansion proposals greater than 10%.

This puts NPA in a difficult position. We have strongly supported Council's 10% resolution. A meeting of 150 members and residents in July last year accepted Council's 10% constraint. We're bound by our members' resolution. We also have a lengthy advice from our Public Officer, who is a lawyer, that we cannot participate in work that contravenes the resolutions of Council or of our membership.

We're now faced with the prospect of withdrawing our representative planner on the technical committee if the proposed work on retail expansion scenarios greater than 10% proceeds.

NPA suggests – and I believe Cr Morgan agrees – that the Technical Committee should not be examining scenarios greater than 10% because by doing so, it would undermine Council's resolution and possibly also mislead AMP.