

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
Harvest Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Simon,

Re: Petition No 79 – High Road Hotel, Parkwood

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a response in support of petition No 79 – provided and signed by members of the local community, in reference to the demolition of the High Road Hotel in Parkwood, to make way for a Coles Shopping Centre

The petition was signed by over 2500 people who agree that they will be losing an important part of the local area, many of whom were unaware that any such plans were going ahead until the petition was provided. Most people heard of the development through word of mouth and rumours. It is the general consensus from the local community that Coles were not forthcoming in their plans and had it pushed through the Canning Council with minimal consultation from the community itself.

It is understandable Coles own the site in question however, it appears that the planning and legal processes currently in place, do not protect the community and fail to ensure we are given a voice regarding large scale projects that have an outreaching affect on our lives.

Initially the community was of the understanding that Coles plans were to pull down part of the High Road and retain a section of the pub with the redevelopment, so that the community still had somewhere to go. We have had the opportunity to meet with Coles representatives, and it seems these plans have been changed. It is of the understanding the reason for their change is to have more car parking bays. It is clear they had no intention of keeping the High Road.

All of these plans have of course been approved by the City of Canning council, which appeared to take a step back when our concerns were raised, stating Coles were not breaking any laws so they obliged to approve Coles submission. Likewise the Canning Council did not in anyway consult with the general public and/or question Coles in regards to whether losing the pub all together would be at a loss to the community. I believe as a spokesperson of the local community, there is an onus on any local council to get a general feel of the public before such large-scale plans are rubberstamped. It appears these laws have again let us down.

The High Road Pub is a local icon and has been for over 50 years. It is a social hub that is used by a large number of the community for a range of reasons, be it sharing a beer with a friend, hosting various celebrations from birthday's, anniversary's, sporting club functions and to social events such as quiz nights, local live music arts and even catering to events such as the AFL Grand Final, Melbourne Cup luncheons, Saint Patrick's Day and Australia Day. Over the years patrons have made friends there, met their partners and generally enjoyed a good time in its relaxed atmosphere. When the liquor licence was originally issued to the High Road Hotel (formerly Riverton Hotel), it was issued on the basis that a hotel would provide a certain amount of community amenity and cater to a variety of customers such as young adults, families, community and sports groups who hold functions there.

The High Road Pub is the only local establishment in the area that offers a place for people to go after work to have a drink, relax and unwind. There are no other pubs in the area, the closest being the Burrendah Tavern and Market City Tavern- which do not provide the same amenity as the High Road. It is possible this loss will lead to a rise in drink driving as those afforded the luxury of having a local to walk, will have to seek other forms of transport to get to and from pubs.

We have recently seen the demise and demolition of the Lynwood Arms in a neighbouring suburb and this seems to be a trend of late with liquor establishments in Perth being pulled down only for big business to move in and transform the land for their own gain. It feels as if we are losing parts of history as well as available social hubs becoming a thing of the past. I can tell you that such intended areas are paramount to the social wellbeing of the communities they stand amongst. Not to mention areas available that are licenced and big enough to host related events. We do not want to be left with a "booze barn" selling take-away liquor only, including further concerns that have been raised including increased traffic flow, pressure on small businesses etc.

We hope that you take in to consideration the petition provided by the public with over 2500 people firm against the complete demolition of the pub. Had we more time we are sure that we could double that response. We are hoping that the community are given a voice, and the opportunity to come together and negotiate, we are optimistic Coles return to their original plans of redeveloping the site and retain a section of the pub for the local community to patronize.

We are asking that planning and related legal processes be changed as they take power away from the community, in having a say about what their needs are. We don't need another supermarket.

We thank you for your time and look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Kindest Regards

Ryan and Tanya Woosnam
Saving the High Road Committee

8 April 2015