

Walkerville Village – Council votes ‘yes’ to say ‘no’.

At its meeting on Wednesday Council voted to accept the recommendation to not proceed with seeking authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare the Planning Scheme Amendment C89 request to rezone 2075 Walkerville Road, Walkerville to the Special Use Zone “Walkerville Village Zone”. The Special Use Zone would have facilitated the creation of an integrated residential tourism development across approximately 90ha.

In a debate that had many in the gallery confused, the vote was to carry the motion, but the recommendation was framed in the negative: so effectively Councillors voted ‘yes’ in order to say ‘no’.

The common themes of the debate were around adherence to the town planning policies and strategies that are in place, while the alternate view was based on the project’s promise to bring jobs and economic development to the region. While growth is welcomed, the policies reflect how and where that growth should occur and have been developed with the community.

Ultimately the vote was close, with those arguing for Council to follow the established policies winning out four votes to three (Cr Hutchinson-Brooks did not participate in the debate due to a conflict, while Cr Kennedy was an apology).

Council’s Chief Executive Officer, Tim Tamlin, said of the outcome, “While Council officers have spent a great deal of time working with the proponent, there was no getting around the fact that the proposal was contrary to many of the strategies and policies we have in place.

“By voting not to seek authorisation from the Minister, the Councillors have endorsed the policies and strategies we have in place, which is very heartening. As a number of Councillors said during the debate, if there is a need to change the policies then we can look at changing the policies, but endorsing proposals that run contrary to what’s in place creates uncertainty for everyone.”

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