

CASULA COMMUNITY GROUP FOR RESPONSIBLE PLANNING INC
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Casula Community has fought a DA by the powerful cashed up alcohol industry for three years in an effort to stop the significant harm a three story, late night trading pokie pub would have on our old low socio-economic area. Fortunately the NSW Land and Environment Court found in the favour of the community.

The cost of that fight by some courageous lawyers, doctors, planners and Newcastle University who worked along-side the passionate 3,500 objectors that could see that they and their families would be severely impacted was between 300 and 400 thousand dollars. That was beside the cost of the legal team contracted by Liverpool City Council which recognized the likely impact as being akin to an atomic bomb being exploded in this fragile community. Money that the community as with others have no hope of finding. In comparison the \$1.8 million per annum per pokie machine placed the alcohol industry in a prime position to win.

It is suggested by the community that the proponent who wishes to bring pokie machines into any community should not only pay to prove that the machines will do no harm but to also pay for the same opportunities for communities to choose their own experts to even up the playing field.

In our immediate community we have a father who has run a successful business with all money going into the pokie machines every week and a wife who has worked and skimped and tried to provide for her son and daughter. A daughter that swears she will never marry or form any kind of relationship because she doesn't want to live like her mother and they have for years. Damaged beyond proving that the machines will have a positive impact on the community.

It is time the Government began to look and listen to local communities to have to prove the harm from these machines on individuals, families and communities. Time it provided a way forward for communities in a time when the communities are rapidly becoming invisible and most, if not all laws are for the benefit of the alcohol industry. Not that that really need the help as communities do as they have money pouring from the pockets of addicted individuals who are the fathers and mothers of those children who are left with nothing except learning and behavioural differences because of the trauma impact of living with a person who places a few minutes fun beyond their needs.

The Casula Community questions the fairness and validity of considering the impact of harms within 200 metre on Churches, schools and medical services with no surety of refusal of an application. There needs to be surety integrity and honesty with clear transparency that the people who help those who are addicted and their children into recovery mode are not impacted by having pokie machines tempting those they are assisting. Our community requests there is no limit on distance from the venue may object given that in todays world one can hop into their car and drive to venues easily and in short period of time. It is foolishness to think the only seriously addicted gaming addicts will live just 1 klm for the venue. The work and research of Kyros Kypri and Peter Miller has proven that the social impact harms go well beyond that short distance advocated by the alcohol industry and the Liqour and Gaming Minister.

When will our children and the negative social impact harms they endure matter?
When will the harm to communities such as Casula Community? It is not just the adults that are addicted it is the whole family that is impacted.

One community member experienced the trauma of meeting a child who talked about how he rarely goes home and sleeps in the green room night after night while his parent sleeps with other patrons and plays the pokies. Where is the responsible service afforded this child who looks clean and is fed but experiences a negative harmful lifestyle. No good enough, not here say and the nightmare continues for children such as these.

Yours Sincerely

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Spokesperson

Casula Community Group for Responsible Planning Inc