

Bid to halt bottleshop 'set to fail'

By LIAM DUCEY

MAYLANDS' fight against a proposed First Choice liquor store, opposed by the wider community and the City of Bayswater, may be lost, Maylands MLA Lisa Baker says.

The bottleshop will be the key component of a planned three-storey development at 207 Guildford Road, the site of the old Cascades Tavern.

The City of Bayswater has already objected, but the decision is out of its hands with the fate of the \$7 million development application to be determined on February 1 by the Metropolitan Central Development Assessment Panel.

A WA Liquor Commission hearing was held late last year to determine if the proposed 868sq m bottleshop would be granted a liquor licence in the midst of significant community objection.

Ms Baker represented the Maylands community at the hearing, and while a decision has not yet been announced by the Liquor Commission, she believes the licence will be granted despite the objections.

"I stood up at the commission and gave nearly an hour's evidence on behalf of the community," she said.

"The Commission heard us, but I believe the balance of probability is against us winning either any concessions or major changes to what's being proposed.

"The liquor licence will be approved... that's my gut feeling."

Ms Baker said there was no recourse for the community against the decision and that the best-case scenario would be for a number of restrictions to be placed on the bottleshop to protect vulnerable members of the Maylands community.

"I don't think we can stop what's happening unless we went through to the Supreme Court, and certainly I don't, and the Maylands community doesn't have the \$100,000 it would take to lodge that challenge."

The *Eastern Reporter* understands a letter has been sent from the State Solicitor's office on behalf of the Health Department to the Liquor Commission outlining a number of restrictions that could be placed on the First Choice store if a liquor licence was granted.

These restrictions are believed to entail restrictions on the opening and closing hours of the store, the amount of alcohol able to be purchased by an individual and a restriction on the sale of alcohol for under \$10.

A Health Department spokeswoman said it would be inappropriate to comment while the matter was before the Liquor Commission.



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