

Unit plans spark concern

by Joni Scanlon

PLANS to redevelop a former service station site have Narrabundah residents concerned about the loss of commercial opportunities.

The old Ampol Service Station site at Kootara Crescent in Narrabundah has been vacant for about 25 years.

A development application for a two-storey multi-unit residential development with a single-level base-level car park was approved on May 1.

Old Narrabundah Community Council vice-president Austin Lynch said residents were concerned about losing the commercial status of the site.

The residents' group has also questioned aspects of the development, in particular the amenity of two units which would overlook the utility

alleyway and rubbish skip bins used by businesses at the Narrabundah Shops.

"We welcome the investment but we don't want rubbish, we want quality," Lynch said.

Old Narrabundah Community Council chair John Keeley said units 10 and 11 does not comply with basic amenity rules. On the development application shade diagrams show the units will get almost no sunlight into their living areas during winter.

"In between 9am and 3pm they're meant to get three hours (of sun) in their living area. It doesn't conform with the code but it has been approved," Mr Keeley said.

"We just want them to abide by the code. The code says they've got to have three hours; it doesn't meet the code, so who approved it?"

An Environment and Sustainable Development directorate spokeswoman said Rule 222 of the development code required that the development was sited to allow a minimum of three hours of direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm on the shortest day in winter onto the floor or internal wall of the main daytime living area of at least 70 per cent of apartments.

"More than 70 per cent of the units achieve this requirement and therefore the Rule 222 is met," she said.

"The planning and land authority maintains the development meets the relevant requirements of the Territory Plan and there are no 'code violations'."

One resident who asked to remain nameless described the planning rule as highly questionable.

"It's questionable because the rest of the units can be totally devoid of access to winter sun and to make things worse there is no requirement to ensure a pleasant outlook to compensate for no sun," the resident said.

The resident said the Narrabundah community was entitled to say they don't think the development was good enough when it reduced their commercial land and eliminated potential for future commercial opportunities.

"Narrabundah needs to maintain, not reduce, opportunities for commercial uses especially if we look at the

long term," the resident added.

The original development application approved for the site, which lapsed, had a mixture of commercial and residential. Mr Keeley said it had the support of Narrabundah residents and businesses because it was seen as an extension of the shops.

"The initial option was a mix of commercial and residential so at least the developer could get some sort of money out of it having that residential element. That went down well and was accepted through a community process," Mr Keeley said.

"We're not anti-development; we want it developed. It's a real eye sore and it's been here a long time."

■ Old Narrabundah Community Council will hold a public meeting on Wednesday at 7pm at the Tennis Hut on Kootara Crescent to inform residents of the issues.