

Minmi Estate under review

BY MATTHEW KELLY

THE developer behind the latest stage of the \$200 million Minmi Estate proposal is seeking a review of a Joint Regional Planning Panel decision to refuse subdivision applications for the project.

The panel unanimously rejected the 2000 residential lot proposal following a lengthy public hearing on December 5.

It cited concerns about a lack of infrastructure, in particular road impacts, as a major factor in its decision.

Winten Property confirmed this week that it was seeking the review of the panel's decision relating to both the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie council area components. It did not

stipulate what aspects of the decision it was challenging.

The review will be considered by a different panel to the one which made the original ruling.

The City of Newcastle and residents joined forces to oppose the project.

The council highlighted a potential conflict between the estate and a planned major new access road to the Summer Hill Waste Management Centre.

Residents accused the developer of destroying local communities and the surrounding environment in the pursuit of profit.

In its determination, the panel said it recognised the importance of the site to "deliver much-needed housing for the growing re-

gional community and the economic benefits arising from the development of a new suburb".

However it said it had to be satisfied with the merits of the application.

The panel determination said the applicant contended "that they have provided sufficient documentation for the panel to be satisfied of the impacts, and impose a 'Grampian' style condition to ensure that works are in place before release of lots at specified times".

However Transport for NSW determined it and the panel did not have sufficient information to assess the impacts of the development.

The panel said it could not be satisfied about what works were required, when



Minmi residents and Cr Liz Adamczyk gathered on Friday to oppose the proposed development. Picture by Peter Lorimer

they were needed, who was responsible and the impacts arising.

"It is understood that no works can occur without upgrades to the regional network occurring," the determination said.

Winten argued that the project was in the public interest and that the proposed development was consistent with an approved concept plan for Minmi.

Company representative Christina Renner said during

the December panel hearing that a rezoning process had resulted in 1561 hectares of environmental conservation land to offset the development of the 512 hectares - a three to one ratio.

Winten estimates the development represents between 40 to 70 per cent of the 2036 greenfield housing targets for Lake Macquarie and Newcastle LGAs.

"This development is of great regional significance," she said.

"The site's strategic importance is identified through the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and the Greater Metro Plan 2018. Approval of these applications will unlock a substantial proportion of the Hunter Region's much needed housing stock," she said.