10 December, 2010

SHOALHAVEN CANCER CENTRE A STEP CLOSER

Planning Minister Tony Kelly has asked the NSW Department of Planning to prepare a planning proposal to rezone the Nowra site proposed for the Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centre.

Shoalhaven City Council wrote to the Minister requesting he appoint a planning authority other than Council to prepare the rezoning proposal.

It actively lobbied for funding for the centre and has therefore a conflict of interest, while it’s also the trustee of the preferred site, Nowra Park.

“The proposed rezoning of 1.4 hectares of Crown land within Nowra Park, adjacent to the Shoalhaven River and west of Nowra town centre, from open space to special uses (health services facility), is a matter of regional planning significance,” the Minister said.

“The site would need to be rezoned before a project application for the facility can be lodged with the Department and assessed.

“The site adjoins Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital, located at the northern end of the park, and the proposed cancer centre would be structurally linked to the hospital, so there is merit in considering a rezoning for the site.”

The Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centre was identified as part of NSW Health’s Radiotherapy Services Strategic Plan 2016 and has already been allocated $23.8 million in federal funding and $10 million from the NSW Government.

Member for Kiama, Matt Brown, welcomed the announcement and the added bonus of job creation.

“The centre has the potential to create 37 jobs for health professionals, 352 construction jobs and 462 indirect jobs,” Mr Brown said.

“Rezoning the site is an important first step towards making this very important health facility a reality for residents of the Shoalhaven and the South Coast.”