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Residents fear losing animals if school approved

Posted April 28, 2008 08:00:00

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A Barnsley resident says if a proposed private school to be run by the Exclusive Brethren is approved, neighbouring residents could be forced to get rid of their animals.

The plans for the primary and secondary school, which would cater for more than 120 students, will go before Lake Macquarie council tonight. Council officers have recommended the development be refused and the Exclusive Brethren have already lodged an appeal in the Land and Environment Court.

Resident Gary Callinan says the school does not fit in with the semi-rural area.

"Even though it might be zoned that they could put the school in there, in our part of Barnsley we all have our animals," he said.

"So far, if the school goes ahead, the Brethrens are quite within their rights under the legislation [to say] that we can't have our animals, because animals are not allowed to be within 12 metres of the boundary of the school yard.

"That will totally change our lifestyle."