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NEWS

SCHOOL'S OUT

By ELLEN VAZ

THE sound of birds in the morning will be replaced by buses and bells if a new school development goes ahead on the north-eastern fringe of Orange, according to residents of the area.

More than 60 residents of rural-residential subdivisions near the intersections of Dalton Street and Ophir Road gathered on Saturday to voice their concerns about the planned school for children of the city's Exclusive Brethren community.

The development in Priest Lane will consist of a two-storey building with an administration block.

Residents Joanne Tom and Martin Williams said the plan was not in keeping with the rural nature of the area.

"Most of the people around here bought their five-acre blocks to have some space and privacy. Being such a huge building it will impact on the lifestyle, views and rural outlook. The building will be about 15 metres from our fence line," Mrs Tom said.

Mrs Tom said residents would be concerned about any development of that size and nature.

"If we'd known there was going to be a school or any building of that size next to us we would definitely have thought twice about buying the block. We would object to any building of that size," she said.

The school's engineer, trustee and CEO also attended Saturday's meeting to discuss the project with residents.

CEO Colin Pascoe was not available to comment when the Central Western Daily contacted him yesterday.

Mr Williams said residents also had concerns about the impact of traffic and the presence of asbestos-containing rock on the proposed site.

"It's a very narrow road. There is no room for parking and there is no pedestrian access. Even in the development application there is no pedestrian access planned for the school and I can't see how you can have a school without it," he said.

The development application has been submitted to Orange City Council.

It is proposed that the school will have 100 students and 20 staff and operate from 7am until 6pm.

Mr Williams encouraged residents to have their say about the development.

"It will be a fairly unsightly thing on the approach to Orange. It's not in keeping with the zoning," he said.



NOT IN OUR BACKYARDS: Joanne and Kelvin Tom and fellow residents of rural-residential areas on the north eastern fringe of the city protest against a proposed Exclusive Brethren school development on

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