

# Skyline is set to soar

## COUNCIL APPROVES PLAN FOR BOX HILL'S TALLEST BUILDING

Aura Jolly

A CONTROVERSIAL 33-storey Box Hill tower development will be a catalyst for further large-scale projects in the area that would support affordable housing, Whitehorse councillor believes.

Councillors voted 8-2 in favour of the Barton Group and AFX Group's application for a 114-metre tower at 545 Station St, on the corner of Carrington Rd, at last Monday's council meeting.

But the council has asked developers to amend plans to include more car parking.

The proposal did not meet the parking requirements under the council's planning scheme, allowing for only 288 car spaces.

Instead, the council has asked for a minimum of 408 car parks.

AXF Property spokesman Scott Jessup said the developers believed the car parking numbers required by the council were more than necessary, but they respected the council's position.

Mr Jessup said the project's approval was "an exciting outcome that will attract substantial investment into Box Hill".

Cr Robert Chong said investment and development were needed in Box Hill.

"This development will provide shopping facilities, attract more people and brighten Box Hill," Cr Chong said.

"If we don't do something to improve Box Hill it will fall behind other areas."

Cr Chong said it would be a "catalyst" for other large-scale developments in the area.

"It will help Box Hill cope with a demand for affordable housing," he said.

Cr Philip Daw said while he had some remaining concerns about car parking, he

### AT A GLANCE

- The tower will be called Sovereign Square
- It will have 419 apartments, including 13 three-bedroom apartments, 264 two-bedroom apartments, 70 one-bedroom apartments and 72 studios
- It will have five levels of underground parking
- There will be food and restaurant venues, office spaces, a gym and a pool
- The council has ordered developers to include 408 car spaces, instead of their proposed 288 car spaces
- A construction timeline is yet to be determined

believed the development was appropriate for Box Hill.

"Box Hill is a central activities area, there are no height limits and it would be totally unreasonable to oppose this development," Cr Daw said.

Councillors were torn over the decision, with Cr Helen Harris originally moving an alternative motion to refuse the permit, which was defeated 6-4.

Cr Harris said she was concerned the tower would worsen traffic congestion and parking problems.

Cr Raylene Carr said she believed there should be more than 900 car parks, with parking and congestion in the area already "a nightmare".

The council vetoed the group's original \$101 million proposal for a 39-storey tower in 2009.

The application was bound for the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal before then-Planning Minister Justin Madden intervened to reject it.

**What impact will the tower have on Box Hill? Email [whitehorse@leadernews.com.au](mailto:whitehorse@leadernews.com.au)**



An artist's impression of the Barton Group and AFX Group's 33-storey tower, which Whitehorse Council has approved to be built on the corner of Station and Carrington streets, Box Hill.