The vast amount of public opinion is clearly behind Darwin having a Dan Murphy’s store. The majority have already made their sacrifice through the tough alcohol laws in place

A Dan Murphy’s store will give them nothing more than what other capital cities already have. And to the thousands of people from interstate who signed a petition opposing Darwin having a Dan Murphy’s; butt out of the Territory affairs and let Territorians decide their own destiny.

“Lives on the line”

NT News, 19 December, 2020, p. 7.

[Danila Dilba CEO Olga Havnen said] “This is unconscionable conduct. Juukan Gorge destruction is no different to the inevitable destruction of lives.” AMSANT CEO Mr Paterson said the decision was not the outcome wanted.

“Woolies and their board should have engaged and consulted with the community at the start,” Mr Paterson said.

“They pushed and pushed until they got the answer that they wanted, but we’re telling them there is still time to do the right and honourable thing by listening to our community and stopping this store.”

In making his decision to approve the Dan Murphy’s liquor licence the NT Director of liquor Licensing Phillip Timney said the applicant had noted the consultation criticism and consulted members of the proximate communities and proposed an Engagement Strategy.

“It is difficult to see how it is the applicant’s fault that the Bagot Community and Danila Dilba have declined to engage in the development and application of the proposed Engagement Strategy,” he said.

On Michael West Media, January 7, 2021, Lesley Russell writes :

**Labor backflip puts Coles and Woolies profits before indigenous health**

Less than two months ago, in November 2020, the NT legislature rushed through a bill to cut red tape and speed up approvals of liquor outlet applications, suggesting that the economy needed a boost after the affects of Covid-19. Then in December, a single public servant, the Director of Liquor Licensing, approved the four controversial licences.

Woolworths and Coles know there is staunch opposition to their plans. Steve Donohue, the managing director of Woolworths subsidiary the Endeavour Drinks Group, has said:

“We absolutely acknowledge the current levels of alcohol-related harm in the NT and the disproportional impact that this has on the Indigenous population.”

Nevertheless, the corporate response is to push ahead with a publicity campaign, arguing that it will listen to the community objections and somehow control the flow of grog.

PARTNERSHIP CLAIMS EMPTY WORDS

Their efforts at community consultation do not align with the “working together” community partnership claims on the company’s website. After persistent warnings from Indigenous health organisations, Woolworths acknowledged the growing opposition by announcing its own panel review in November (ahead of the final decision from the Director of Liquor Licensing).

This will be independent to the extent that it is headed by Danny Gilbert, a respected lawyer and advocate on Indigenous issues who is also Chair of the Business Council of Australia. But at the same time, Woolworths has also hired Craig Jones of RREDD, whose previous clients include many of the biggest mining companies seeking access to Aboriginal lands.