

# Council defers decision on music festival

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Cessnock

MOUNT View residents are hopeful Cessnock councillors will vote against a proposed music event in the quiet rural township after it was deferred to the next council meeting later this month.

Event organisers SASH want to hold a sleepout event at Cedar Mount View Resort over a weekend in May where live music would play on three stages.

They would aim to create an "Alice in Wonderland experience filled with colour, excitement and tranquillity" for 1500 people, but residents strongly oppose the idea because they think it would interfere with the peace and tranquillity of the area, and possibly have a negative impact on wildlife.

A verdict was not reached at last night's meeting because only two-

thirds of the councillors were in attendance.

A vote was taken to determine whether the councillors in attendance would vote to pass or reject the application, and the majority voted in favour of deferring the matter to April 16.

Resident Simone Spence spoke against the proposal and said the community was concerned that Mount Vincent and Mitchell roads were too narrow to accommodate the 500 cars expected to use them.

She said the council took a truck up the road to investigate how it would cope, and when it met a car along the way, the car had to reverse back up the road until there was a safe place to move over and allow the truck to pass.

"My husband and myself, on Monday night, helped a young driver recover a vehicle from its side ... he was travelling too fast

around a corner," Ms Spence said.

"He was lucky another vehicle was not coming the other way."

If the event is approved, Ms Spence wants council to assure residents that people leaving the event will not be drunk in the area and annoy nearby residents.

Garry Warnes, who spoke in favour of the event, said it would attract "young professionals" between 25 and 35 who had money to spend, and were the same group of people being targeted in Hunter Valley tourism campaigns.

He said three events that attracted 300 people had been held at the resort over the past six years, and there had not been any problems with vehicles using the road or patrons leaving the event.

He said the promoter organised more than 160 parties every year and the event would have a "controlled environment".