



Lara Hibbard (front) with fellow concerned Hornsby Heights residents.

Picture: PETER KELLY

DANIELLE LONG

A MEETING intended to improve communication over plans for a phone tower at Rofe Park has done little to allay the concerns of Hornsby Heights residents.

Telstra lodged a development application on December 19 to install a 33m-tall 3GIS tower and an equipment shelter at Rofe Park which, if approved, would be 95m from Hornsby North Public School and on the same block as Grevillea Preschool.

As reported on March 13, parents were so concerned about health implications from the tower that they vowed to pull their children out of nearby schools.

However, Cancer Council NSW chief Andrew Penman told the *Advocate* it was "unlikely" the planned tower posed a cancer risk.

Hornsby councillors voted on March 5 to defer the DA until Telstra provided a Radiation Hazard Report, as well as modelling representing radiation patterns.

Telstra was also required to organise advertised meetings for concerned residents to provide more information – two of which were held at Hornsby North Public last week.

Telstra spokeswoman Jacqueline Crompton said existing Telstra phone towers in the immediate area operated well below radiation compliance levels.

"Our level of compliance is extremely high . . . we are not just getting by," she said.

Mrs Crompton said similar towers to the one proposed at Rofe Park were already operating at Hassell Park, St Ives, Boronia Park, Hunters Hill, and Killarney Heights Oval, Killarney Heights.

Hornsby Heights resident Lara Hibbard, whose three-year-old son Michael is to attend Grevillea Preschool next year, said the meeting failed to allay her concerns.

"I am still concerned that the tower will not be safe – there are just too many cancer clusters around mobile phone towers and unfinished studies, especially on the impacts to children," she said.