

[REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 10 March 2019 4:06 PM

To: Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Re: Submission for Muswellbrook Council for not increasing Council Rates

Good Morning,

Please find attached submission for Muswellbrook Council for not increasing Council Rates.

Would appreciate being anonymous regarding the Council as I would like to work with them on a DA exempt house improvement.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Good Morning,

I would like to submit to object to the Muswellbrook Council ongoing 15% rate increase.

I believe the council is obsessed with several projects that I believe are not in the community and ratepayers interest.

(My apologies – it jumps around a bit – however I hope you get my drift.)

The 2 projects that I have concerns over:

- The Proposed Entertainment centre – disguised – actually appears to be for concerts – design includes sunken orchestra pit
- The Proposed relocation of the Muswellbrook Council Chambers to the council owned building at “Campbells Corner” in the main street of Muswellbrook.

Overview:

- Muswellbrook council last audited in 2013 – and received a Moderate Rating.
- Since 2013 Muswellbrook has continued to purchase Commercial Buildings in the main street area – apparently includes the Woolworths Building and site, Muswellbrook Marketplace, and the old RTA building
- The Building at Campbell’s Corner is also owned by the Council. Apparently the upstairs area is currently rented to the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music. I am not skilled enough to see in the journals what rent is paid. I am not sure where the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music where they get their money from – however it must be substantial as they sponsored the Annual Christmas Party Extravaganza at the Race Track in December.
- I have been unable to find the word “relocation” in any of the documents submitted to IPART. I cannot believe a major cost such as Council Relocation would not be in any long term plans or costing’s?
- I believe the push behind the relocation from the Current purpose built Council Chambers is to move back to the centre of the Main Street to give it more “Activity”. In Muswellbrook – there are currently two Major shopping areas – the existing Woolworths Building and Area and the South Muswellbrook Fair. The majority of recent residential construction has been in Muswellbrook South and close to Muswellbrook Fair. I believe that the Council has been a bit shocked by the success of Muswellbrook Fair – they have been able to attract Harvey Norman, Service NSW and Aldi. Muswellbrook Fair has tremendous level parking with shade covers and easy to get in and out. I cannot believe how bad the parking at the Woolworths site is – there is hardly any level sites and they have jammed 3 undersize car parks in between the building support posts. (I still cannot believe they are to standard), Cars are damaged every day – shopping trolleys regularly roll away. I actually have friends that live in North Muswellbrook that shop at the Fair because of the car park. Because

of the success of Muswellbrook Fair – less people are shopping at the difficult to park Main Street Area. To move the Council Chambers down to the Main Street to give it more “activity” I believe is wrong. Level the parking and I believe people will return.

- Apparently another reason for the move is that it fits with the “Strategic Plan” that has been written for the area encompassing the Original Main Street Area – however – the “Strategic Plan” does not take into account Muswellbrook Fair and even the bulky goods development proposal of the Showground Site – I believe the Council is naïve if it thinks Retail is not changing.
- The Dust – Muswellbrook Council keep quoting that their rates are cheap – compared to Rates in Newcastle – the council is ignorant to the fact that the Dust over South Muswellbrook is atrocious. The rates should not go up until the dust is fixed.
- The Odour – South Muswellbrook Treatment Works -the ongoing “odour” from the treatment works. I understand that there is a project well underway to improve the “odour” and I would have thought that improvements should start coming soon. (I have been informed that I am not to use the work “stench” as it is an odour). Rates should not go up until this odour is fixed. The current set-up fails in hot weather.
- Drugs – Muswellbrook has a bad drug problem – and the council continues to deny it – I cannot find any reference to Community help for the drug problem. (Unless it comes under the \$65k Jobs Creation Project?) – You can word search the complete Council Web Site and find no reference to “Drugs”.
- I do not have any issue with the proposed improvements to the recreation area
- I am not sure when another Audit is required – however I believe it will now be less than moderate.

Kind regards,

██████████

██████████

12.6 RELOCATION OF COUNCIL CHAMBERS STEERING COMMITTEE

Find
relocation
Previous Next

205 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs Scholes and Bailey that:

1. Council establish a Council Chambers and Administration Relocation Steering Committee with the following functions:
 - (i) To provide advice to Council on the relocation of the Muswellbrook Council Chambers and Administration to the Muswellbrook town centre; and
 - (ii) To accept such further delegations the Council may choose to give it.
2. The Council Chambers and Administration Relocation Steering Committee be constituted as follows:
 - (i) Councillor Woodruff (as Chair);
 - (ii) the Mayor;
 - (iii) the Deputy Mayor;
 - (iv) the General Manager;
 - (v) a staff member appointed by the General Manager; and
 - (vi) such other non-voting staff members in an advisory capacity as determined by the General Manager.

in the absence of any of the councillors set out in (i) to (iii) any other councillor nominated by the Committee Chair or Acting Chair



From December 2018 Ordinary Minutes

19.6 2017-2018-0275 - REGIONAL ENTERTAINMENT CONFERENCE CENTRE - DESIGN COMPETITION PANEL RECOMMENDATION

202 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs Rush and Bailey that:

1. Council not accept any tenders for Contract No: 2017-2018-0275A - Consultancy Services for Muswellbrook Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre, on the basis that all tenders departed from the concept design.
2. Council enter into negotiations with FJMT Pty Ltd with a view to entering into a contract in relation to Contract No: 2017-2018-0275A - Consultancy Services for Muswellbrook Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre as they had the highest panel ranking and public support.
3. Council award the winning design to FJMT Pty Ltd.

From December 2018 Ordinary Minutes – from the minutes – it appears as though preferential decisions are made on the run at meetings.

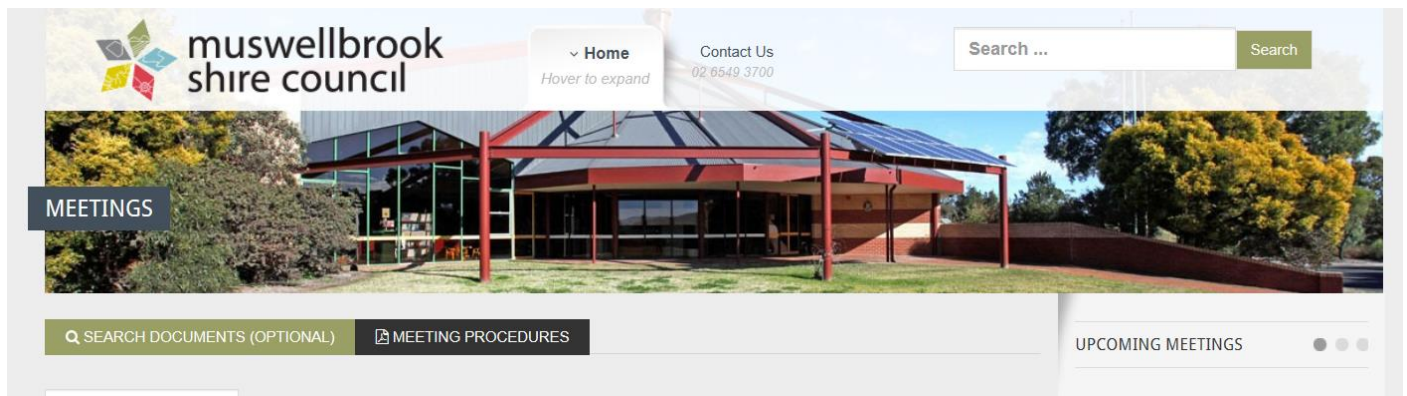
19.7 POTENTIAL CIVIC PRECINCT PURCHASE

203 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs Rush and Bowditch that:

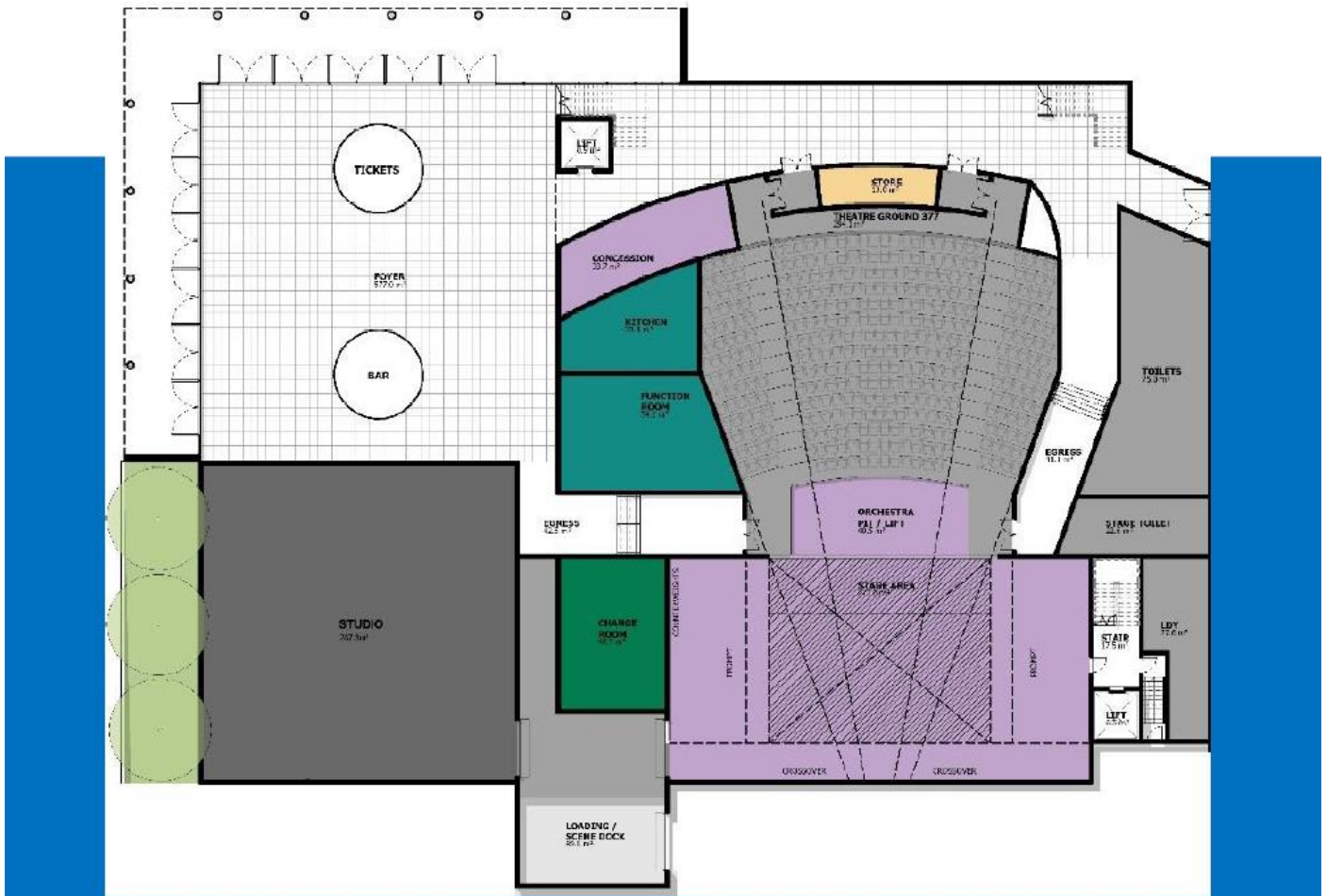
Council:

1. Proceed with the purchase of the property as identified in the report subject to the vendor's remediation of site included in the contract.
2. Authorise the General Manager to negotiate and execute all other relevant

Snapshot showing council buying more commercial property in the Main Street Area.



The Purpose Built current Council Chambers are apparently to be handed over to a junior music school – I cannot believe that the proposed relocation to the main Street for apparently 80 people has been passed and underway. Apparently \$250k has already been spent on the planning for the move. (Unable to find reference in journals) I feel sorry for the staff as they have been told that they can't park near Campbell's Corner. The cost to modify old retail buildings to current office standards will be a very significant cost to rate payers – and will still have to complete for a carpark.



I believe that the current design is not suited to Muswellbrook and will be underutilised. I am unable to find out if it is proposed that locals will attend regularly or is it designed to bring in people from outside. At present – due to mining and industry – motels in Muswellbrook consistently have the “No Vacancy” sign illuminated. Muswellbrook is a strong horse town – I cannot believe that proposed buildings in Muswellbrook do not dovetail to the local strengths – how can this building be of use to locals? The majority of Entertainment Centres can cater for activities other than just concerts.

17 QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

17.1 EPA NOTIFICATION OF INCIDENTS

Cr McNeill advised that he had received a high level of emails regarding dust levels and inquired whether Council was notified by the EPA when complaints were received?

Cr Rush advised the meeting that Council is only informed when Council is the complainant.

Ms Pope advised the meeting that Mines are required to publish a register of complaints and that this is available on their websites.

Cr Scholes also advised the meeting that incidents are reported to the respective Community Consultative Committees.

Snapshot from December Meetings – Council does not want to know or acknowledge that the dust is an issue.

About 33,100 results (0.27 seconds)

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<https://www.muswellbrookchronicle.com.au/.../urgent-staffing-increase-needed-in-hunte...>

Sep 10, 2018 - [REDACTED]

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