

Don Clinch OAM

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For the attention of the Director – Key Site Assessments
Planning and Assessment,
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment,
G.P.O. Box 39,
Sydney. NSW.2001.

Dear Director,

State Significant Development Application Number SSD-10300.
Coffs Harbour Cultural and Civic Space.

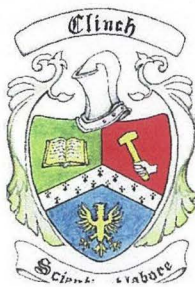
I strongly object to this proposal for the following reasons:

The building of the proposed structure will require demolition of existing buildings which will still not produce sufficient land on which to built the projected plans, because those plans do not contain an area of "performance space" as stated in the first stages; or any land left over to include that space, as well as some for expansion for future needs, and for adequate areas for fluctuating needs for parking, dependent on the fixture – if ever there will be a performance space.... e.g .The Coffs Harbour City Orchestra and other organisations are looking for a location for a practise area, lock up garage for instruments ,scenery and the like, prior to the staging of their performances... Where does it go? What about the number of dramatic organisations?

There is an option in the raw, but already designated to this whole enterprise and it's known as City Hill. Many years ago, the Government sold an area now 7.7 hectares on nicely located and contoured land with great and convenient location more towards the harbour part of the Cityu to the Council . There was supposed to be some money held in trust on the strict understanding that the land and money could only be used for cultural pursuits .It had a lot of great advantages including long access frontage to the wide road between Coffs Harbour and Sawtell. 7.7 hectares of attractive easily developed land, just waiting to be used with plenty of land left over for future civic use ,future parking ,and as yet conceived needs for non business/ non residential development.

City Hill. No need to sell anything – no need to demolish any buildings But the Council seemed to be obsessed with some sort of concept that involved / that involves ,help to stabilise the original shopping centre for Coffs Harbour -a reasonable walking distance away- in its blighted concept for a plan. And the Council, in doing that, appears to have joined in some other plan for a performance area to be built by the R.S.L. Club and administered by the R.S.L. which would have power to determine rents, users, for school performances etc., and the Council would receive no money as income at all. The real advantage from income for the investment of \$76,000,000., would seem to have been non-existent in the first place ! The details of this scheme seem to be held as a close secret. The major need- result from Council's spending of \$76,500,000how it all started off....is lost.

Over fifteen thousand people – said to be about three quarters of the City's adult population - who signed the protest forms- are obviously not convinced.....neither am I !



The Parking Factor.

The Planners have neglected practical consideration about parking. There is a parking building close to the subject building area. It was built subject to building data from experience projected from more than ten years ago. The stress of normal parking is augmented by attracting more vehicles into a confined area by concentrating the facilities in a smaller space which must again be the result of bringing more vehicles into a more concentration. Add a big ticket show in the new performance area at the RSL Club so close, and see how you go. Put all those same vehicles in what's left of 7.7 hectares, scientifically laid out, and it's not hard to imagine the difference. Coffs Harbour has already had three town halls and outgrown the lot and each one has been demolished. But nothing has replaced the one from 1990.....yet! The brief history written by local authority Tom Strickland OAM (attached) makes damning reading. And assuredly underlines the need to overtake the errors of the past, because the citizens have greater and more varied needs this time, in the right place. And copious parking is just one of them.....but very much 'copious', and in the right place. And it's much easier to get it right on 7.7 hectares. And there is plenty of significant roads in the city to deliver and absorb the vehicles, and they are main thoroughfares.

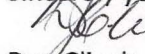
Some argument has been proposed that being away from the original city centre will cause inconvenience of access. Whilst the disputed location of the proposed construction is adjacent to commercial and on the perimeter of past residential development, people who want to use the facilities which are proposed will have had to get to the city centre by transport anyway. I concede it will be a longer trip. But it would not be long before some enterprising bus proprietor would include the deviation to include Council Administration, Museum, Art Gallery, performance centre, restaurant and other associated features which will come with the concept and the sense of space that 7.7 hectares will give. The sense of spacey vision will be attractive enough to get people over negative thoughts. More so than the glitter of massive areas of plate glass. The upkeep cost will be encouraging too!

Several years ago I spent a lot of spare time thinking about City Hill. And economic building. I went to Inverell where the Council had used prefabricated galvanised steel space frame buildings for an admired civic building. The cladding can be chosen from economy, attractive covering, longevity, sound and heat insulation, and Inverell's costs were a wonder for economy. The use of glass for Coffs Harbour's proposal of as much glass as possible generates vast costing for equipment, and the building will be close enough to the ocean, to attract salt.

Here's an opportunity to construct a cultural village within a rural environment. **Back to my thinking time again. In talks with people, it was suggested that some resistance to using the City Hill site might lie in the fact that it is the place where some koalas reside, and this might be a barrier. Include the development of attractions to take advantage of koalas. There are sufficient of the right trees to take advantage of their presence. Same goes for the suggestion that there is some real connection from the indigenous people's connection. There's 7.7 hectares!**

Can I suggest that there are sufficient advantages in a change of direction to a larger, simpler way of development of a facility which will include much more of the aspirations of the people of Coffs Harbour, and which will be there for an instant extension and ready absorption of concepts to embrace future desires?

Sincerely yours,


Don Clinch.

24/10/2019