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SUBMISSION

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2/151 Orlando Street
COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450

20 October 2019

ATTENTION: DIRECTOR – KEY SITE ASSESSMENTS

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT,
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENT,
GPO BOX 39,
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Director,

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

I OBJECT TO THIS PROPOSAL AND DESIRE AND REQUEST THAT A PUBLIC HEARING BE HELD.

The reasons why I object to this proposal are:

1. This proposal does not address and fulfil the most pressing cultural needs of this community because it does not include a performing arts centre which this community has been without since the town hall or Coffs Harbour Civic Centre was demolished in the early 1990's to make way for a car park for the Cex Club.
2. This proposal because of the inclusion of new administrative offices for Coffs Harbour City Council, is unable to take advantage of grants currently available through Create NSW and Infrastructure NSW's Regional Infrastructure Fund. This means the community is being asked to borrow and fund the repayment of \$46 million of ratepayer's money. This is totally inappropriate on two levels. Firstly there are many projects in the community which need addressing regardless of CHCC's claim that they have a "zero" backlog of necessary maintenance programs and secondly this community is one of the least financially viable communities due to its high retirement population limited employment opportunities and the second highest youth unemployment rate in the country.
3. Although this project has been touted as a predominately cultural project more than 60% of the building will be given over to council administration offices including the rooftop garden which will be unavailable for public access. This flies in the face of a community which has been waiting for meaningful cultural development for over 30 years.

4. The inclusion of council administrative offices in the project is a totally unnecessary inclusion as CHCC already has two perfectly suitable buildings within 200m of each other one of which is in itself a remarkable example of the architectural style of its era. This particular building was constructed with a view to enabling the addition of not one but two extra levels to allow for the CHCC's future needs. The second building Rigby House also has extra floor space in it which is currently leased giving the community added income.
5. In order to fund this project CHCC requires the sale of the aforementioned council administration offices along with the Coffs Harbour Regional Museum which was established just 5 years ago at cost to the community of \$1.6 million dollars. This is totally unacceptable as firstly it is a total waste of the resources invested in this facility and secondly it is proposed these assets be sold at up to 10% below valuation. According to the Office of Local Government it is not permissible for "community" assets to be sold at 10% below valuation. At least two of the assets fall into this category.
6. The Coffs Harbour community was given just 5 working days to assess and respond to the report released in June 2018 revealing an increase in costings from a \$46 million dollar proposal to the current proposed but not substantiated cost of \$76 million.
7. The proposed site of this building does not allow for future growth nor does it offer any ambient lead into the site which is an accepted element to a cultural precinct giving visitors an opportunity for relaxation, contemplation and immersion in their experience. Rather this site is located in a congested and restricted area of the Coffs Harbour CBD hemmed in on side by a six story car park and on the other by one of its busiest thoroughfares.
8. This proposed location experiences severe traffic congestion between the hours of 2.30 and 4.30pm at a time when it would be most used by parents bringing young children to use library facilities.
9. The proposed location of this building is renowned for its lack of available parking even with its close proximity to a multilevel car park making access difficult for regular local users and visitors alike.
10. The proposed site and the design of the building do not reflect the broad values of the community of Coffs Harbour nor the cultural experience expected and valued by visitors to a coastal regional city in NSW.
11. The lack of connection to this project is well evidenced by the presentation to the NSW parliament on 24th October 2019 by the Member for Coffs Harbour Gurmesh Singh of a petition signed by 15,000 residents and ratepayers of the LGA.

12. The petition to presented to the parliament is in stark contrast to the 230 stakeholders with whom council engaged during its consultation process.
13. The spread of library facilities across 3 levels makes it inherently difficult for people of different ages and mobility to manage their visit to the facility. Parents with children of different ages will find attending to the needs of the each at once challenging. For those with mobility issues traversing elevators across three levels is an unnecessary burden to their already challenged circumstances.
14. The socio economic benefit to the community is not commensurate with the cost of the project to the community given the socio economic reporting in the DA gives the project a score of just 4.7 out of 10 based on triple bottom line analysis.
15. As this project does not introduce to the CBD of Coffs Harbour any facilities, be they cultural or civic, that do not already exist within 200m of the proposed site there will be according to the Office of Local Government no tangible increase in value to the CBD.
16. This project denies the residents and ratepayers of the Coffs Harbour LGA the opportunity to have a meaningful and broad based cultural experience which reflects the aspirations of the community and at the same time offers an opportunity to showcase the beauty and diversity of the community and the environment in which it exists.
17. This project denies the residents and ratepayers of Coffs Harbour LGA the possibility of creating a cultural precinct which would make enhance Coffs Harbour as a cultural destination and create opportunities for culturally based tourism and income by the inclusion of a versatile performing arts space, gallery, environment centre, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Centre, conference facilities and tourist services.
18. This project denies the residents the opportunity of seeing an elevated 25 acre site set in a greenfields location with ample opportunity for parking on a major arterial road amongst other cultural facilities and immediately connected to sporting education and health facilities which was purchased over 30 years ago and caveated by the Federal Government for the purpose of creating permanent an enduring cultural facilities.
19. This project releases onto an already glutted CBD commercial rental market two multi story buildings adversely affecting the potential for private landlords to lease or develop their properties.
20. This project is clearly an erroneous abuse of Coffs Harbour City Council's responsibility to "use council resources *ethically, effectively* and *efficiently*" as is required under section 430 of the Local Government Act.

In the past two years, I have not made any reportable political donations.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Leonard.