

ITEM NO: 16

SUBJECT: **PRECIS OF SELECTED CORRESPONDENCE, 19/02/2008**

FILE NO: C00680

Recommendations:

That the Précis of Selected Correspondence be received and appropriate letters forwarded where necessary.

1. 31/01/2008 - 9 petitioners

From The Mount York Road Association to Council Officer Denis McKeon requesting that the Council advise in writing on what action will be undertaken regarding a heavy haulage business operating from vacant lots at Mount York Road, Mount Victoria.

2. Received 4/02/2008 - 571 petitioners

Residents urging Councillor Terri Hamilton to vote against the demolition of the Lawson Mechanics Institute and to support an investigation of alternative funding opportunities for relocation of the hall.

3. Received 5/02/2008 - 10 petitioners

Residents requesting the restoration of Glen Road, Katoomba and specific reason why it is excluded from road restoration program.

4. Sent 6/02/2008, letter from the General Manager

To the Hon. Phil Koperberg, Member for the Blue Mountains regarding further funding for Lawson Community Hall (Attachment 1).

5. Sent 6/02/2008, letter from the General Manager

To the Hon. Eric Roozendaal, Minister for Roads regarding further funding for Lawson Community Hall (Attachment 2).

Attachment 1

Office of the General Manager

Reference File: F01815
08/8761

6 February 2008

The Hon Phil Koperberg
Member for Blue Mountains
Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water
107 – 109 Macquarie Road, Springwood
SPRINGWOOD NSW 2777

Dear Mr Koperberg,

SUBJECT: Lawson Community Hall

I refer to your letter dated 26th November 2007 and the Mayor's response dated 17th December 2007 regarding the above subject.

Having received your letter and subsequent correspondence from the RTA, an urgent investigation was undertaken into the implications of accepting the RTA offer, the results of which were reported to the Council on 29th January 2008. Council resolved to note the RTA offer and the content of the staff investigation and considered that there is greater overall community benefit in retaining the management direction contained in the adopted Plan of Management for 284 Great Western Highway, Lawson which entails demolition of the Hall.

Notwithstanding this position, Council also resolved to begin urgent discussions with you and Minister Roozendaal, together with relevant RTA officers regarding further funding for the refurbishment of the Lawson Community Hall. Council has limited resources and is concerned that the investment required to refurbish the Hall to a standard that will meet community expectations is currently beyond its means.

If the Hall was to be retained, it would need to be refurbished to provide a facility to a standard acceptable for general community use. Preliminary estimates to achieve this are of the order of \$575,000 plus fees for design documentation and relevant approvals (includes an allowance to relocate the portico). Estimates have not been prepared for the ongoing maintenance of the Hall, but the building is aged and will need significant works in the short to medium term.

As you are aware, the consistent prior advice from the RTA when questioned as to whether the road could be realigned in order to retain the Hall, was that this option had been considered and was unacceptable. This advice dictated the options available to Council and strongly influenced Council's focus on managing the property to accommodate the RTA's requirements. Council outlaid considerable resources in exploring options for managing this site based on RTA plans for the upgrade of the Great Western Highway, including the potential relocation of the Hall. Two draft Plans

of Management were exhibited and extensive community consultation processes were undertaken.

In light of your successful negotiations to date would you please make representation on behalf of the Council to the NSW Government and in particular the Minister for Roads, the Hon Eric Roozendaal, for provision of additional funds to enable Council to take up the offer to retain the Hall.

Unless there is provision of external funding to meet the costs of retaining the Hall, the Council considers that it must proceed to seek demolition of the structure due to lack of adequate resources for the Hall's refurbishment. There are tight time constraints in dealing with this matter and accordingly, your response to this request is sought by 29th February 2008 to enable the Council to determine it's position.

If you would like further information or would like to meet to discuss Council's request please contact me on 47805518.

Yours faithfully

PHIL PINYON
General Manager

Attachment 2

Office of the General Manager

Reference File: F01815
08/10146

6 February 2008

The Hon Eric Roozendaal
Minister for Roads
Level 36 Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister,

SUBJECT: Lawson Community Hall

I refer to recent advice from the Hon Phil Koperberg, Member for Blue Mountains regarding the outcome of his representation to you as Minister for Roads which resulted in a review of the design of the Great Western Highway adjacent to the Lawson Community Hall. This design review has provided the opportunity to retain the main body of the Community Hall.

Having received this advice, an urgent investigation was undertaken into the implications of accepting your offer, the results of which were reported to the Council on 29th January 2008. Council resolved to note the offer and the content of the staff investigation and considered that there is greater overall community benefit in retaining the management direction contained in the adopted Plan of Management for 284 Great Western Highway, Lawson which entails demolition of the Hall.

Notwithstanding this position, Council also resolved to begin urgent discussions with you and Minister Koperberg, together with relevant RTA officers regarding further funding for the refurbishment of the Lawson Community Hall. Council has limited resources and is concerned that the investment required to refurbish the Hall to a standard that will meet community expectations is currently beyond its means.

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resources in exploring options for managing this site based on RTA plans for the upgrade of the Great Western Highway, including the potential relocation of the Hall. Two draft Plans of Management were exhibited and extensive community consultation processes were undertaken.

Please indicate your response to this request for additional funds to enable Council to take up the offer to retain the Hall. Unless there is provision of external funding to meet the costs of retaining the Hall, the Council considers that it must proceed to seek demolition of the structure due to lack of adequate resources for the Hall's refurbishment. There are tight time constraints in dealing with this matter and accordingly, your response to this request is sought by 29th February 2008 to enable the Council to determine it's position.

If you would like further information or would like to meet to discuss Council's request please contact me on 47805518.

Yours faithfully

PHIL PINYON
General Manager