

ITEM NO: 2**SUBJECT: STORAGE FOR THE BLUE MOUNTAINS MUSICAL SOCIETY****FILE NO: F03368-08/74255**

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council receive and note this report.*
 2. *That the Council write to the Blue Mountains Musical Society, confirming previous advice that the Council does not currently have any suitable storage facilities available.*
 3. *That the Council advise the Blue Mountains Musical Society of the community facilities being acquired, the likely timing of their availability to the community, and in accordance with the Community Buildings Policy, the process that will need to be followed to apply to occupy these buildings.*
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Report by Group Manager, Community and Corporate:**Background**

In September 2007 the Blue Mountains Musical Society (BMMS) approached the Council, requesting discussion on the options for the improvement of storage facilities for the BMMS.

Discussions were held with the BMMS in October 2007 and again in December 2007 regarding the matter. The BMMS was advised that regrettably the Council does not have any suitable facilities currently available for their use.

At the Council meeting of 11 March 2008, it was resolved:

"That a report come to the Council on possible options for assisting the Blue Mountains Musical Society with costume storage."

(Minute No. 437, 11/3/08)

A report was presented to the Council at the 24 June 2008 meeting and the Council resolved:

1. *That the Council receive and note this report.*
2. *That this matter be referred to the Community and Facilities Working Party for the Working Party to develop options for housing the storage needs of the Blue Mountains Musical Society.*
3. *That the Working Party report back to the Council as soon as possible."*

(Minute No. 535, 24/6/08)

The matter was discussed at the Community and Facilities Working Party of 29 July 2008. A range of possibilities were canvassed among staff and Councillors, including those scheduled

later in this report. The Community and Facilities Working Party was unable to identify any viable additional opportunities.

Report

It is understood the Blue Mountains Musical Society currently has three storage facilities, none of which are Council owned:

- Greenway Lane, Springwood, (privately leased).
- Scrivenor Lane, Springwood, (privately leased).
- Lawson Road, Springwood (storage container on road reserve outside Springwood Council Depot – there is not room for this facility to expanded).

The Greenway Lane location is the facility utilised for costume storage and is the facility the Blue Mountains Musical Society is most desirous of replacing.

The options investigated in detail are as follows:

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- *The placement of storage containers at Springwood Depot.* This is not considered suitable, as it would raise a number of security problems in regard to access by non-council staff to the depot, as well as OH&S issues with unauthorised persons accessing the site.
- *The use of the Faulconbridge Church Hall at 585 Great Western Highway, Faulconbridge, which the Council is in the process of acquiring.* This is not considered suitable for storage only, as the LEP Zoning of Living General applicable to the property, does not permit stand alone storage facilities as the primary purpose for occupation.
- *The use of the Integral Energy Building at Springwood Avenue, Springwood, which the Council is in the process of acquiring.* This is not considered suitable for storage only, as the LEP Zoning of Village Housing applicable to the property, does not permit stand alone storage facilities.
- *The use of the Old Scout Hall at Fairy Dell Reserve, Springwood Avenue, Springwood.* The Council resolved on 10th June 2003 (Min 220) to demolish this building. Recent advice is that a Plan of Management is required prior to demolishing this building which is on Community Land. A Plan of Management is currently being prepared. In addition to this resolution of the Council, there are major access constraints, lack of passive surveillance and the LEP Zoning of Recreation – Environmental Protection, does not permit stand alone storage facilities.
- *Renting of commercial storage facilities* has also been investigated. A standard garage sized facility (6.0m x 2.7m) in either the Blue Mountains or Penrith, ranges in cost from \$260/month to \$340/month (\$3,120 - \$4,080 / per annum).

Storage within community buildings is generally permissible if the storage use is ancillary to the primary approved use of the facility. Therefore the use of a building such as the Faulconbridge Church Hall as a community building may provide some storage for the user group, if the building was used primarily for a purpose defined in LEP2005 as a 'Community Building'. Community Buildings are those owned by the Council or under the management, care and control of the Council, and used for community purposes. Such uses include a

meeting room, club room or exhibition space and DA approval is required before the use can commence.

Underlying the request from the Blue Mountains Musical Society is the question of the Council's involvement in their need for storage facilities. While the contribution of the Blue Mountains Musical Society to the cultural richness of the Blue Mountains Community is well recognised, there are many worthwhile community organisations including sporting groups that regularly seek the assistance of the Council in providing storage space for their resources and equipment. Many of these requests cannot be fulfilled by the Council.

Process for Community Groups to Occupy a Community Facility.

The Community Buildings Policy requires the Council to call for expressions of interest from the community for the use of the facility, such as when a community building becomes vacant or is newly acquired (as will be the case with the Faulconbridge Church Hall and Integral Energy building). Submissions are assessed on their merits by the Premises Review Panel, and the recommendations of the Panel are reported to the Council for determination.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications with the recommendation in this report.

Conclusion

All possible Council owned resources have been considered in an effort to assist the Blue Mountains Musical Society with their storage needs, however, the Council does not currently have available any suitable facilities for the use of community groups for storage. The Community Buildings referred to above may however be available in the future, for use by community organisations. This will not be until such time as the Council completes the acquisition of the properties, completes a Plan of Management if required for each of the sites, and conducts the Expression of Interest process for each of the facilities.

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