

MLC Tania Rattray

MLC Rob Valentine

Ms Jen Butler

Mr Felix Ellis

95 Emmett St

Park Grove

Burnie, 7320

Saturday, 18 December, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity of submitting my thoughts in the matter of the relocation of the Burnie Court House. I did attempt to make a submission via the normal processes, however I found it difficult to work out how and, under the impression that the process required me to address criteria if I wanted my submission to be accepted, I found very little in regards to submissions and details of the Burnie court relocation. I understand that you do not have to accept my submission, but I will be grateful for your consideration of the points I raise.

I was in attendance at the public meeting, but was not able to stay longer than 2 hours as I have a family with two children still at home. Scott Hennessey was very approachable and informative and encouraged me to submit my thoughts via an email to him when I needed to leave.

One of the issues, but by no means the most important, is the traffic in the area. The road system does not support the amount of traffic that comes to the area. From 8:15 until 9 in the morning and 2 p.m. until well after 3, the roads are clogged with traffic travelling to and from the four schools and the crèche in the area. Workers travelling to and from employment and collecting children from after school or crèche care create a lesser but still considerable problem. With new subdivisions under construction in 3 directions, the roads will only come under more pressure. I don't understand how this pressure can be relieved in an already populated area when the reasons for congestion are not negotiable.

The traffic comes to a complete halt and makes an emergency response more problematic, if not impossible, and was one of the reasons we avoided a house in the area when relocating my elderly parents.

Retired policeman as security for the facility seems a half baked idea. Why are the police retired? How long will they want to continue that work for if they already chose to retire from the force? How easy will it be to employ retired police in Burnie? Having been deployed to the area after training may mean they may choose to return to family or a more populated area.

Travel causes issues for people whose work is shared between the courthouse and another location as well as adding to traffic in the area. Burnie has a small police force and travel is wasted time and lawyers sending underlings to represent lesser clients because of a full schedule and interrupted work time result in less efficient lower quality service. Relocation of that workforce to be more local to the courthouse further corrupts the residential area and fragments our struggling CBD further.

For those employed in the CBD, or travelling to town on 'pay-day', a quick trip to the courthouse to take care of paperwork becomes more difficult.

I hesitate to generalise as I understand that not everybody who accesses the court system is a dangerous criminal, however for some it is a way of life and the most common view of the existing courts is one where people congregate around the front of the building, smoking, gossiping and often participating in loud arguments. For some a court appearance is not unusual, a part of their social norms.

There are often delays in court hearings, as stated by Jen Butler in the public meeting. Delegates from the Justice Department stated that a cafe was not a favourable idea because they wished to avoid creating a social area. However when people need to wait and want something more substantial than a Mars bar from a vending machine, there are few options except two already very busy IGA stores or hospital facilities. This further wastes the time of those in the legal profession who must sometimes spend significant portions of their day at the courthouse. It seems some sort of food outlet would be required. Aside from the loss of business to several outlets in the CBD, this is problematic because it creates a situation where people must pay the prices set by the supplier. Without competition this could make the products unaffordable for much of the community.

Small children walk to and from the primary school unaccompanied every day. Schools do not have security, but on foot, the quickest route back to the CBD is via Burnie Primary School grounds.

There's a bus stop right outside the building that my teenage daughters use regularly, it is a regular pick up/ drop off point for Burnie high school students, and one stop away from the bus stop used by other teenagers from Hellyer College and the elderly residents or visitors to Umina Park throughout the day.

Buses are not equipped with security personnel and drivers need to have their attention on the road. What happens when a group leaves en masse on one bus and arguments break out or targets are victimised? At least in the CBD, people are distracted by other tasks they must complete, catching different buses at varied times and giving tempers time to cool if they are affected by an unfavourable result in the courts. Perhaps all this seems rather far-fetched, but I've seen this behaviour and believe it must be considered.

It's unfortunate that our government cannot modify their practices and engage in community consultation before spending large amounts of money planning for something that may not even eventuate. It may only be in the thousands, which they regularly spend without obvious strain on the public purse, however it's still money wasted and makes a backward step to repeat the process elsewhere disagreeable.

I spoke with Steve Kons to ask if the council had been approached by the government in regards to available premises or seeking feedback on their plans. Steve told me no, no contact at all. This seems ludicrous and cements my feeling that the Justice Department is more interested in managing the negative effects of relocating the court house on their own business than the impact on anybody else.

Burnie CBD is struggling. So many of the buildings in our CBD are empty. To take to take the courthouse from the CBD does not support Burnie's community at all. In fact quite the opposite. I understand that this may be local government's job, but surely it's not the state government's job increase the problem?

It seems that the Justice Department have carefully considered only the issues that will affect the site and the safety of the people who work there. Very little consideration has gone to the overall effect on

the local or wider community and as long as it's not in their back yard, they are unmoved by the local perspective.

While I understand that to redevelop the existing Court House is not practical, the money spent on this redevelopment seems a great amount more than the original amount quoted for the existing Court House. The money that would have to be redirected to deal with the issues resulting from this relocation is not factored in and will further impede Burnie's progress.

Michael Ferguson says that there's nothing unusual about having services in residential areas. While there is logic to a hospital or an educational facility positioned in a residential area, I cannot see the benefit in having a court house in a residential area. Where else is this considered reasonable in the state?

It seems that Burnie's future is being decided by people who have very little to do with Burnie and for whom the impact would not be felt. Any communications that have happened between the Justice Department and locals seem to have been inadequate or misrepresented in the report.

Daily we read about prosecution child sex offenders in our courts. We hear about assaults in various contexts and watch our insurance prices vary depending on the security of our area. The Liberal government should not be taking that further from the CBD into anybody's community or further from the police station.

Last night I drove past A young family who's backyard faces the proposed area. Three small children closely monitored by a few adults were jumping up and down on the pavement waving and smiling at cars driving past - perhaps to view their Christmas decorations. Will that family stay if this plan is accepted? Will another family want to live there? Will they be happy to put Christmas decorations on their front lawn? I suspect not And I urge you to reject this planning application and keep the courthouse in the CBD.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust my thoughts will resonate with you in some way and provide some insight to the issue at a local level.

Sincerely, Alison Cruickshank.