

Submission to Parliamentary Public Works Committee

by John Watts

Erection of a Hub on Regent Square at George Town

The Parliamentary Public Works Committee sat in January 2006 to consider the George Town Hospital Redevelopment. The conclusion and recommendation was as follows –

The redevelopment of the George Town District Hospital will provide a combined hospital/community health services site that will serve the community now and into the future by providing a contemporary health facility that is adaptable to meet future needs. The schematic design submitted fulfils the objectives of the project providing a cost-effective facility of appropriate quality and flexibility. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted, at an estimated total cost of \$6,100,000.

The main submission with regard to the redevelopment included the following -

So our aim here at George Town, as we consider this new building, is to have a new and integrated one-stop facility which combines hospital services along with community health and welfare services. This notion of a one-stop facility was one of the crucial phrases that emerged when we first started talking about this back in about 2000. I think it is a neat little phrase which encapsulates the idea that health and community health and community welfare services are all on the one spot so everyone knows where to go. The opportunity for those services to work together for the good of the community is clearly enhanced. I think the other thing about our aims for the future is that we want to, as the Tasmania Together goal alluded to, focus on wellbeing.

We want to try and strengthen our health promotion and community health approach and obviously again this one-stop facility will give us the capacity to improve our information for the community. It has already become known as a place where, if you want to know something about what is going on, you can ring the hospital or ring the centre. We also want to try and offer comprehensive and accessible integrated services - that is, services that are available to the community where they are working together.

We want to provide those to individuals and to families in the whole community within this catchment area of George Town.

The George Town Hospital and Community Centre was built over two stages and opened with much fanfare by the now Premier, Hon. Lara Giddings (Minister for Health and Human Services), on 27th November 2007.

The hospital redevelopment contained all the essential services that are incorporated in a CFC, and despite claims to the contrary, those services have been available since that time. After a relatively short period of time Ms. Giddings then embarks on a programme to dismantle this integrated asset. In around 2009-2010 a decision was made to erect a Hub in George Town and remove the child and family services from the hospital precinct. The Hub would be about 300 metres from the hospital site. For some strange and ludicrous reason the CFC component was seen to fit better with a library, on-line centre and Service Tasmania, rather than with the health and hospital complex. For the now Premier to take this step must be a major shock and disappointment to the committee members that heeded the compelling arguments for the hospital redevelopment in 2006.

There has been no compelling argument made by the Health Department or Education Department during the whole process of seeking a Hub development to justify the removal of services from the hospital complex and then associate them with other unrelated services. There is no justification for an erection of a Hub on Regent Square, or in fact, anywhere else in George Town.

There is absolutely no justification for spending valuable taxpayer's funds on a Hub. The existing sites of the individual components are very close to Regent Square, or are actually sited on Regent Square. Child and family health is 100 metres from the square, Service Tasmania is merely across a road, and the library and on-line centre are situated on Regent Square about 50 metres from the proposed Hub. There is considerable building redundancy in central George Town and the Hub would create more redundancies at all sites from which the services would be removed. To spend around \$6 million would be a tragic waste of money which our Government claims to be in short supply.

The only reasonable justification to spend any public money on any of the services planned for the Hub development would be to build a stand-alone Child and Family

Centre (CFC) at the Port Dalrymple School, which is within easy access of the neediest and least resourced families in George Town. This is the next point to be dealt with in this submission.

The cost to erect a CFC at Port Dalrymple School would probably save at least 50% compared to the cost of the Hub. With numerous similar buildings erected elsewhere in Tasmania there must be off-the-shelf plans available to expedite the process.

The location of the Hub at Regent Square in an area remote from the main residential districts seems to be a deliberate ploy to exclude the most disadvantaged people of George Town who do not have the resources to drive to the CFC in a town with no public transport system.

A person working in family welfare at another location in Tasmania (who wishes to remain anonymous for job security reasons) is aware of the situation in George Town and is fearful that the neediest residents are being excluded.

Any CFC should be located at George Town's major school (Port Dalrymple), which is in close proximity to the main housing area in the town, and where the most disadvantaged residents live. The Education Department own considerable unused land at the school. Other services located near the Port Dalrymple School include the Neighbourhood House, Wattle Group, community garden, Stephanie Alexander Garden, Vocational Education and Training (VET) and trade training. Residents can deliver older children to school and then avail themselves of the CFC and other services.

The location of the Hub on Regent Square seems to be an odd decision based on the fact that it is in an essentially non-residential area and outside the accepted walking distance (800 metres as defined by the applicant) from the two main residential areas of George Town. The family members of the LEG were mainly "middle-class" people associated with the South George Town Primary School, with their own transport available during the day. Residents from South George Town have about the same distance to drive to Port Dalrymple School as they would to Regent Square. The residents that seem to always be excluded from reasonable access to the Hub are those disadvantaged citizens that live in

Government Housing in the north of George Town and do not have the resources to travel to the Hub. George Town has no public transport system. Whether or not this is a deliberate ploy to exclude them is a matter for debate, and would they be made welcome if they arrived at the Hub? Residents of Housing Department homes are often transferred from outside George Town, removed from their family and friends, and then denied (as in this case) some of the resources that would make life more bearable for them. The current Hub location adds to their social exclusion.

The original preferred location for the CFC was at the Port Dalrymple School on Education Department land. The intervention of Ms. O'Byrne and the LEG seem to have changed this idea, which in the opinion of many was, and still is, the best option.

The erection of a Hub on Regent Square will have a detrimental long term effect on the values of the town with respect to the enormous potential for heritage and historic tourism in the George Town – Low Head area. When Lachlan Macquarie arrived in Australia in 1810 he embarked on a major project to improve town planning and to improve the quality of buildings. In 1810 he designed and named five towns in the Hawkesbury area of NSW (Richmond, Windsor, Castlereagh, Pitt Town and Wilberforce) and two in Van Diemen's Land (George Town and Elizabeth, the latter renamed New Norfolk). The town plan for George Town is still basically intact and is the best preserved of all Macquarie towns in Australia. All the towns were centred around a public recreational area, which in the case of George Town is Regent Square.

George Town has some of the best preserved early colonial history of any area of Tasmania and this is appreciated by the many interstate and overseas tourists that visit. There is also wider recognition of this history in Tasmania by the Education Department with colonial history now being part of the primary school curriculum. The town is playing host to an ever increasing number of school visits where at the three museums and by touring around the area they can be shown many prime examples of that heritage.

- **The Watchhouse Museum concentrates on the Macquarie plan and covers the George Town Female (convict) Factory.**

- The Bass and Flinders Centre concentrates on those explorers and has full scale replicas of the boats they used to make their discoveries.
- The Low Head Pilot Station Maritime Museum covers the maritime history from 1804 and includes Tamar River navigation, lighthouses and leading lights, the Low Head foghorn, Bass Strait telegraph cables, semaphores and signal flags.
- There are walking and cycling trails with available information to take people past places of historical interest.

As one of the very small number of people who has discussed our vibrant history with many thousands of visitors over the last few years (at the Pilot Station Museum) I feel that I am in a very strong position to judge their impressions of the area. Once people get to the George Town area they appreciate the beauty and serenity and lack of haste, appreciate learning more and seeing examples of our colonial history, and above all, love the fact that much of that history is still visible and has not been destroyed by “progress.” One only has to see the comments in the Maritime Museum visitor’s book to realise their experiences of fulfilment. The Watchhouse Museum and Pilot Station have large archives and will perform research. There is also a very strong and active historical society and numerous books have been written and are being compiled by members.

I can see George Town being part of group of early Macquarie towns for promotional purposes in the future, and using its history as the cradle of European settlement in the north of the state to promote its virtues. The area has so much visual history to assist school students from northern Tasmania with their Tasmanian history studies. It would be tragic to have to tell them that their own Department of Education was responsible for diminishing their experience.

The proposal to erect a Hub (incorporating a Child and Family Centre, or CFC) on Regent Square at George Town does not have a social licence from the people of that community and is being forced upon the citizens of George Town by an un-caring Government which has continually refused to negotiate with the wider community. It is interesting to note that the Government is currently evaluating anti-bullying legislation. It does not take much evaluation to determine who the bully is with regard to the Hub.

The Government insists that the CFC be incorporated in a greater Hub development and has given the impression that it is an all-or-nothing project on Regent Square.

The Minister for Children, Michelle O’Byrne, issued a statement from the Premier’s Office on September 15, 2013. In this she stated that *“the debate over the project had been lengthy and all interested parties had ample opportunities to have their say. We listened to all views and we investigated all options.”* I am afraid, Ms. O’Byrne, that this statement is far from the reality of the process, as no effort was made by the Minister to consult the wider community.

A large number of submissions to the George Town Council, petitions to Parliament and public meetings have shown that the people of George Town favour a CFC, but not on Regent Square. The numbers against the proposal have been shown on numerous occasions to be a massive majority.

The first building proposal (which ultimately failed) was submitted by the Education Department and approved by the George Town Council without such consultation. It was the effort of the people of George Town that raised the serious issues with this proposal in the public interest, and despite all their efforts, these were unheeded by a dysfunctional George Town Council, the Premier and Government Ministers.

As far as I am aware the LINC consultation with the public consisted of talking to one person – a reclusive Buddhist monk who rarely visits George Town. A number of families with young children were, as I understand, consulted in relation to the CFC component, resulting in the formation of a Local Enabling Group (LEG). This group seemed to be the only one with which any consultation (usually one way only) took place. It was comprised mainly of paid Government employees and a number of “middle-class” families. What about the remainder of the community? – surely they should be given the right to be consulted in the potential desecration of their important cultural heritage. Members of the LEG and in fact, some councillors, were either told or given the impression that the proposal was all-or-nothing on Regent Square. At one stage the members of the LEG voted unanimously (27 to nil?) for a separate CFC which did not incorporate the LINC, Service Tasmania, etc. All the push seemed to be coming from the Government and any compromises from consultation were not up for discussion.

A petition of ratepayers was organised to force a reluctant George Town Council to hold a public meeting. The required signatures were easily collected in about two days. A public meeting was scheduled under the independent chairmanship of Bob Gozzi. The Council advertised the meeting as required and a letterbox drop took place in George Town inviting anyone with an interest on either side of the debate to attend. Attendance was around 200 citizens. Government representatives from the proponents were also present. A number of motions were passed relating to the preservation and enhancement of Regent Square, but strongly opposing the erection of any further buildings on the square. The results were a maximum of 13 people voting against the motions, these being some representatives from the LEG and a number of George Town Councillors (and their families). All the motions had overwhelming support. This is a prime example of just how far out of touch the Government and Council are with the community. The motions passed at that meeting were never given proper consideration by the George Town Council, and no actions were taken on any matters relating to the plans for a Hub.

The organisation “Friends of Regent Square” (FoRS) was formed to initially raise funds to challenge the first decision by the George Town Council to approve the erection of a “civic building” on Regent Square. It was submitted by the Education Department and approved by the George Town Council despite the Planning Commission warning them that it would probably not conform to the George Town Planning Scheme. Membership of FoRS quickly rose to over 60 people, despite no active recruitment drive. These people, often self-funded retirees and pensioners, dug deeply into their pockets to contribute what they could, despite it resulting in some hardships. The cost of legal advice and the employment of a barrister to pursue the incorrect decision with RMPAT was about \$15,000. Although FoRS won the case and applied for costs, RMPAT decided not to reimburse those costs. This is an example of how difficult it is to obtain justice when opposing incorrect proposals submitted by the Government and its agencies. It also meant that future challenges down the track became unaffordable as most of these would involve Supreme Court actions. The cost to the Department of Education was in excess of \$60,000 and the George Town Council costs would have also been significant. What a waste of taxpayer’s money! The George Town Council also admitted during the RMPAT hearing that the LINC component was not in compliance with their planning scheme – so why was it recommended by them in the first place?

The AGM of the George Town Council in late 2012 was attended by at least 100 ratepayers, about half of which would have been members of FoRS. The performance of the George Town Council was taken to task, the Minutes of the last AGM not were approved due to omissions and inaccuracies, the General Manager's Report was not accepted as a true summary of the year's events, and a large number of motions were passed, including motions of no confidence in the General Manager and most councillors. The Mayor closed the meeting and walked out while ratepayers were still trying to propose motions. When the George Town Council dealt with some of these motions at the next Council Meeting, they changed the wording of many of the motions to suit themselves. All motions of significance were simply noted and immediately forgotten.

Ivan Dean MLC agreed to present a petition to Parliament opposing the erection of a Hub on Regent Square. Over 1700 people signed the petition, including over 1100 people from George Town. This would be the largest George Town petition in history and one of the largest presented to Parliament that year. It was estimated that around 90% of people passing the petition desk in Macquarie Street signed, or had already signed, the petition. The 10% who did not sign consisted mainly of people that felt compromised by their employment, were in favour of the Hub, or did not sign petitions. Support from the community was overwhelming. The presentation of the petition to Parliament had no impact on the Government, with the Premier and responsible ministers virtually consigning it to the rubbish bin. Listening to the public was not part of their agenda. The Mayor of George Town keeps claiming that only a noisy minority oppose the development, but feet on the ground by opponents clearly spread another message.

The Liberal Party conducted their own survey in George Town which also resulted in a vast majority of people indicating their opposition to the Hub on Regent Square. George Town residents offered to donate a suitable block of land, about one town block from Regent Square, to the Government, but this offer was also rejected.

The Local Enabling Group voted unanimously (27 to nil?) for a stand-alone CFC. In the end they agreed to the CFC being part of the Hub as they were apparently told it was on an all-or-nothing basis. One councillor recently told us that he voted for the Hub as he had the same understanding.

The Hub at Queenstown is dismantling with polytechnic education moved back to the school and management declaring to visitors from George Town that the CFC should have

been built near the school. The CFC in the Bridgewater Hub was built for aboriginal families, with the other CFC's in the area sited near schools. The Huonville Hub is often cited as a success but the CFC is not located in the Hub. The East Devonport unit is not associated with a library, etc. The Premier was recently extolling the virtues of the CFC at Beaconsfield, which is located at the Beaconsfield School.

The role of the George Town Council and the General Manager throughout this process is likely to be the subject of a formal review. This review would include their roles in the Hub development as well as a number of other issues that have been raised. Until the approval of the development application by the George Town Council is validated (or not) by such an inquiry, no further action should be taken by the proponent (Education Department).

The processes which have resulted in planning approval have been flawed and compromised and some doubt exists as to whether or not the planning decision made by the George Town Council is indeed valid. The role of the General Manager with regard to his close relationship with the developer as a member of the State Library Advisory Board, and as a strong advocate of the proposal in his role as Council Manager, needs to be evaluated by that same inquiry. A large number of issues were raised about the process during the nine days of Planning Commission hearings at George Town, but the Commissioner stated on numerous occasions that it was not within his jurisdiction to assess the means by which the planning approval was reached.

202 years ago Regent Square was designated by Governor Macquarie as the first public recreational place in Van Diemen's Land. If the Hub is erected on that public asset, it will no doubt be regarded by our descendants as a desecration of the trust placed by Macquarie in the future custodians of the square.

Future generations will say – “How can such a large and inappropriate structure have been allowed to be erected on such an important site?” The concept is so inappropriate it will be regarded in the future as one of those terrible planning disasters which occur from time to time.

John Watts 9th October, 2013

Tasmanian Library Advisory Board

Mary Bent
CHAIRPERSON
C/- LINC Tasmania
GPO Box 623
HOBART TAS 7001
Telephone 6233 7469

8 October 2013

The Secretary
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Secretary

GEORGE TOWN HUB

I write as Chair of the Tasmanian Library Advisory Board, which provides advice to the Minister for Education and Skills on Tasmanian library and related LINC services.

The Board has fully supported the establishment and evolution of LINC Tasmania, and its transition from an information keeper into a knowledge-based organisation that uses information to support and integrate a wide range of services, including adult literacy and learning, recreational activities, heritage services, community activities, and children's programs.

In past years, the Board has noted with great pride the enormous successes of the Huon LINC, which was established in 2005 as an innovative centre offering a combination of services to the community, with a strong focus on support for adult learning. Many adults in the Huon Valley, who may be isolated by poor transport options, have been able to undertake studies through the LINC facilities, and have received support from volunteer tutors and staff throughout this process.

Subsequently, the Board was excited by the allocation of funds to establish 4 additional regional LINC's in the 2008-09 Tasmanian budget as they saw that other needy communities would be able to receive a similar level of benefit through this initiative.

The Board has been kept informed of the process of planning and development for each of the proposed centres and has been concerned at the long delays in bringing the George Town hub into being. While they understand that some members of the community are concerned about the heritage values of Regent Square, the Board has noted that the Tasmanian Heritage Council has supported the development, and therefore considers that these concerns have been addressed.

The Board supports the proposed location for the hub as one that fulfils the criteria for easy accessibility, visibility, and convenience, and is a natural meeting place for residents from all parts of the town.

The Board wishes to highlight the critical need for a new facility to improve LINC service delivery to George Town. While the present location for the library was seen as adequate a few years ago, this pre-dates the development of the LINC service model and does not offer the spaces required for additional programs such as those on offer at Huon LINC.

For example, the Board is concerned that the George Town adult literacy program is limited in its effectiveness by the lack of suitable meeting rooms and other learning opportunities.

The George Town adult and family literacy coordinator operates from a small space in the George Town Library. This location ensures that there is easy access to the library's resources and that the library staff are available to support the literacy program and its participants.

This service model is available at each of the 7 urban LINC's (Kingston, Rosny, Hobart, Glenorchy, Launceston, Burnie, Devonport) and 3 regional centres (Queenstown, Bridgewater and Scottsdale).

The co-location of literacy coordinators with the library and other LINC services is a fundamental service principle for LINC Tasmania and one that has been shown to work very effectively in removing barriers to participation and encouraging adults to take the first steps into seeking help.

The George Town literacy coordinator has no access to suitable spaces for her tutors and literacy clients to meet in private. Arranging meetings in other buildings is often difficult and can act as a deterrent for clients who are even slightly hesitant about seeking help. The George Town hub will provide several dedicated one-to-one literacy meeting rooms in which adult learners can confidentially meet volunteer literacy tutors.

There will also be larger meeting rooms within the complex, which will be able to function as contemporary learning spaces, and will provide opportunities for learners to undertake further skill-based programs, eventually leading to formal qualifications for some. Bridgewater and Queenstown LINC's are currently supporting a number of clients undertaking University pathway courses. So far these are proving popular and successful and are a welcome addition to the opportunities available in those small communities.

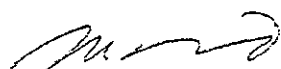
At George Town, integration with Service Tasmania and the new Child and Family Centre to create a service hub, will bring a wide range of community members to the facility and therefore make it easy for them to gain awareness of the number of programs on offer in the course of their visits. The centre will also be a place for casual meetings, relaxing, reading, checking the news, accessing internet or dropping in to see what's happening.

Being co-located with the Child and Family Centre will provide many opportunities for parents to improve their literacy skills in a safe and welcoming environment, helping parents to also support their child's language and literacy development in the critical early years.

The combination of services available from the hub will encourage greater participation in learning at all levels from all walks of life and is an important strategy in improving the long-term future for many of George Town's most disadvantaged residents.

The Tasmanian Library Advisory Board fully supports this proposal.

Yours sincerely



Mary Bent
Chairperson

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123, HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Ph: 1300 135 513 Fax: (03) 6233 5685
Web: www.dpac.tas.gov.au

**1 OCT 2013**

Mr Shane Donnelly
Secretary
Public Works Committee
Shane.donnelly@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr Donnelly

I enclose a submission from the Community Services Hubs Board in support of the George Town Community Services Hub.

A member of the Board would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Public Works Committee. To progress this matter, please contact me by email at greg.johannes@dpac.tas.gov.au or by telephone on 6270 5487.

Yours sincerely

Greg Johannes
Chair, Community Services Hubs Board

Attachment

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, HOBART TAS 7000 Australia

GPO Box 123, HOBART TAS 7001 Australia

Ph: 1300 135 513 Fax: (03) 6233 5685

Web: www.dpac.tas.gov.au



George Town Community Services Hub Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

I write as Chair of the Community Services Hubs Board to outline the Board's vision for the Community Services Hub in George Town.

The Board provides overarching governance for the Hubs model. The Board was established in 2011 and reports to the Premier. The members of the Board are drawn from the State Government¹ on the basis of their involvement in developing and overseeing integrated service delivery approaches. Operational management responsibility for the Hubs' three service partners is retained by the respective agencies.

In providing my submission, I note that the Director Learning and Information Network Centre (LINC) Tasmania; Director, Service Tasmania Unit; and the Co-ordinator of the Child and Family Centre (CFC) project have also prepared detailed submissions for the Committee's information.

This submission outlines the Government's strategic context for the Community Services Hubs, including:

- the impetus for the Community Services Hub model;
- the development of the Hub model in Tasmania since 2005; and
- the outcomes that the Hubs are delivering.

The impetus for the Community Services Hubs

Given its success in delivering a wide range of 'joined up' services and innovative programs in a regional community, the HuonLINC (opened in 2005) has provided a model for the subsequent development of the Hub concept.

The Community Services Hubs model:

- builds upon the early success of the HuonLINC;
- brings together two State Government initiatives with complementary objectives; and
- is aligned with national service integration developments.

¹; Department of Education; Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The Community Knowledge Network (now LINC Tasmania) was established in 2006 to make it easier for all Tasmanians to connect with services – particularly those needing support to develop skills and support in order to fully participate in work and community life.

Funding for a further four LINC's was announced in the 2008-09 State Budget. Service Tasmania was a partner in the LINC initiative from the outset. Research and community consultation commenced to determine which communities would be most likely to benefit from a LINC which brings together information and education with key government services. Queenstown and George Town were two of the sites identified for a regional LINC.

In early 2009, the State Government announced the CFCs, in response to the steadily growing body of research evidence from around the world about the critical importance of the early years and the need for a radical shift in the way services are delivered to children and families.

A major research exercise was undertaken analysing data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics²; administrative data from the Department of Education (DoE) (outcomes for children in Kindergarten and Prep years); and the Department of Health and Human Services (perinatal and child health data) to determine communities with a relatively high level of need. Other factors such as remoteness and economic downturn were also considered. As a result of this analysis, Queenstown and George Town were among the first eight sites announced for CFCs.

Given that both the LINC's and CFCs were to be tasked with providing 'joined-up' or 'seamless' services to their communities, discussions commenced on the scope to create a single service point in these communities in order to provide a vibrant mix of services, training opportunities, and community space.

During consultations, both the West Coast and George Town communities expressed a preference for a single site in the respective town centres.

What are Community Services Hubs?

The Community Services Hubs bring together, under one roof, a range of complementary State Government services that provide access to information, learning, government transactions and services for children and families in a friendly and welcoming setting.

The services based in the Hubs – CFCs, LINC Tasmania and Service Tasmania - are supported and encouraged to move away from traditional silos to explore ways of working together to focus on the needs of their clients and improve outcomes for the community in which they are situated.³ Non-government organisations operating programs from the Hubs are included in the collaborative approach to service delivery.

The Hubs are designed to be a welcoming community 'place' with flexible spaces and shared facilities for use by visiting government and non-government organisations and community groups to pursue integrated service delivery.

The benefits of the integrated service delivery approach are:

² Census 2006 data including the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).

³ It should be noted that of the 11 CFCs built to date (nine state-funded and two Commonwealth-funded) - only one, the Chigwell CFC, is operates as a 'stand-alone' facility. On the other ten CFC sites, DoE and Department of Health and Human Services employees work in partnership with a range of government and non-government service providers in adjacent services/settings. Co-location with 'like' services significantly enhances the capacity of the CFCs to collaborate with service providers and offer a 'one-stop shop' approach.

- Increased opportunities to support individuals and communities to be resilient, connected and confident - integrated services work in partnership with individuals and communities to identify, help shape, and access the services that they need.
- Improved services and increased use - government services are delivered from a single site that is easy to access. Staff are trained to understand and promote all services being provided, therefore increasing take up of services.
- Clients are prevented from 'falling through the gaps'. Staff are trained to work with individuals to identify their needs, and identify appropriate tailored services that meet those needs.
- A multi-skilled workforce provides an improved customer experience and more opportunities for clients to engage with them.
- A more efficient use of resources – administrative and support services are shared by users of the Hub, freeing up resources for the delivery of services to the community.

The development of the Hub model in Tasmania 2005 - 2013

The concept of the Community Services Hub model commenced development in 2005 with the opening of the HuonLINC. Since then the Hub model has been rolled out in three locations – West Coast, Bridgewater and Scottsdale.

Although each Hub is based on the core premise that service delivery is improved where services are co-located and staff work together to provide tailored services to individuals and communities, each Hub is different. A summary of the key features of each Hub is provided at Attachment 1.

The Community Services Hubs Board is also currently investigating the scope to adapt this model to alleviate the difficulties experienced by service providers and customers in two other remote locations, and deliver better outcomes for government and the community.

The Hubs complement other integrated service delivery initiatives being undertaken both local and nationally. An outline of two Commonwealth Department of Human Services initiatives is provided in Attachment 2.

The Hubs are already showing great promise

The Hub model is already delivering benefits for three regional communities. These sites demonstrate the potential of the Hub model to better support regional communities; improve community outcomes; and build community engagement.

The West Coast Hub has been open for over 12 months. It was designed in consultation with local communities to provide convenient, accessible and welcoming environments in which members of the community can access a range of services and facilities, including LINC, CFC, Service Tasmania and some education provision.

Clients access all three services through a common entrance which reflects the vision that the services will provide 'joined-up' or integrated services to clients.

Staff are trained to work across a number of areas and to present as a single workforce, not as individual service providers. This has resulted in a higher level of engagement from community members and providers as well as enabling service providers and their staff to deliver those services as efficiently as possible.

The presence of Service Tasmania within the Hubs/regional LINC sites is a key factor in ensuring that a wide cross-section of the community access the centres and come into contact with the range of services on offer.

Service Tasmania currently hosts Centrelink access points in Queenstown and George Town, (the George Town shop also carries out selected over the counter service on behalf of the Council) which increases the range of services available to the community and the capacity to draw a wide range of clients into the Hub, who can then be referred to other Hub services which may be of benefit or interest.

In addition:

- The West Coast Hub was a focal point for the organisation and delivery of the highly successful community festival marking the centenary of the 1912 North Lyell Mine Disaster.
- The LINC Submission provides details of the extensive range of services and activities currently being offered from the West Coast Hub which include play based activities for children and parents; adult literacy and support; access to training in foundation skills; access to University of Tasmania course; culture and recreational short courses; and opportunities for people to work as volunteers across the Hub.
- Since moving to the new shared site, the Bridgewater LINC has experienced a consistent increase in membership and loans (including 100 new registrations in the first month).
- Service Tasmania staff at Bridgewater has reported reduced aggressive behaviour from customers at the counter.
- Staff at Bridgewater use the building design strategically to capture specific audiences and target community programs to their interests (such as engaging clients in literacy programs).
- Borrowing from the LINC collections has increased significantly at these colocated sites:
 - The Bridgewater LINC experienced a 68 per cent increase in the number of items borrowed between August 2011 and July 2013.
 - The West Coast LINC experienced a 34 per cent increase in the number of items borrowed between August 2011 and July 2013.
 - Borrowings from Scottsdale increased by 170 per cent between July 2012 and July 2013.

Geographic location and design are key to the Hubs' success

Placement of the Hubs in a central, easy to access location has been integral to the success of the Hub model. This includes proximity to other services such as doctors, chemists, supermarkets and banks. This allows a visit to a Hub to be an easy adjunct to other business an individual may have to undertake, rather than constituting a special trip.

The architectural design of the Hubs underpins the concept of bringing services together under one roof (and breaking down silos) – there is a common entrance and an open welcoming lobby⁴. Customers are greeted as they enter and assisted to locate the service they require. Staff are encouraged to identify opportunities to 'cross-promote' services where appropriate – for example:

⁴ HuonLINC has a slightly different physical configuration.

- A customer registering a birth might be asked if they want to book a Child Health visit or be provided with information about Launching into Learning , DoE's birth to 5 program.
- A customer looking to develop some basic computer skills might be steered towards a literacy course or a vocational course run by another provider on-site.

As the services are under the one roof, these 'add-ons' can be negotiated in a friendly and supportive way, including introducing the customer to the relevant officer (a 'warm referral') when feasible. The front area of the Hubs is intended to be a 'community place' where people are welcome to explore the services on offer and interact with other community members. Various spaces are available for community activities.

Anecdotal evidence from the local community indicates that the Hub model is working and is making a real difference in the lives of locals. Feedback includes sentiments such as:

- It has given a boost to community morale – it's a great thing for the West Coast.
- The facilities are fantastic and staff are so helpful.
- People feel welcome at the Hub - it's getting people out of the house and bringing people together.
- Families new to the town find it a welcoming place and are able to meet new people there.
- Our children love coming here. The activities offered are great.

Conclusion

The West Coast Hub is a welcoming, vibrant centre which offers a wide range of experiences and programs. Increasingly other government and community service providers are using this facility to deliver their programs or outreach services. The collaborative approach to service delivery is bringing about real change in people's lives and improving outcomes for the whole community.

The George Town Hub will improve outcomes for the George Town community by bringing together a wide range of services in a modern, purpose built and accessible facility.



Greg Johannes
Chair, Community Services Hubs Board

10 September 2013

Development of the 'Hub' model 2005 - 2013

'Hub' sites	Services	Service Integration/Collaboration Features
Huon LINC Opened 2005	Service Tasmania Centrelink Library and online services Business Enterprise Centre Magistrates Court	Offers flexible access to services and programs. Supports clients into learning and employment opportunities. Flexible spaces for use by government, service providers and community. Separate entrances but services are linked internally.
West Coast Community Services Hub Opened 2011	LINC Tasmania Service Tasmania Child and Family Centre (CFC) Adjacent to the West Coast Council offices.	Shared purpose-built facility with a common entrance. Expanded role Service Tasmania - concierge and bookings. Centrelink access points hosted by Service Tasmania Cross-promotion of LINC and CFC services / activities. Flexible spaces used by visiting government and non-government organisations.
Bridgewater LINC Opened 2012	Includes Service Tasmania	Shared purpose-built facility with a common entrance. Co-located with Tagari lia CFC, a Commonwealth funded facility. LINC and Tagari lia CFC are internally connected with shared meeting rooms and training facilities.
Scottsdale LINC Opened April 2013	Includes Service Tasmania and Dorset Education and Training Centre.	Shared purpose-built facility with a common entrance. Shared counter for LINC and Service Tasmania. Centrelink access points hosted by Service Tasmania From July 2013, Service Tasmania is responsible for selected customer transactions on behalf of the Dorset Council.
George Town <i>Proposed - construction not yet commenced.</i>	LINC Tasmania Service Tasmania Child and Family Centre (CFC).	Shared purpose-built facility with a common entrance. Expanded role Service Tasmania - concierge and bookings. Centrelink access points hosted by Service Tasmania Delivery of selected over the counter council services. Cross-promotion of LINC and CFC services / activities. Flexible spaces used by visiting government and non-government organisations.

INTEGRATED SERVICES MODELS IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

The development of the Community Services Hub model reflects growing recognition nationally of the importance of service providers collaborating on-site to provide 'no wrong door' and 'warm referral' approaches in assisting people to access services in a timely and seamless way. It also reflects the recognition that clients can and do 'fall through the gaps' in the traditional 'siloed' government service delivery models. Two examples of collaborative or 'hub' approaches include:

Better Futures, Local Solutions - Burnie

- The Commonwealth Government's *Better Futures, Local Solutions* is a place based initiative that helps community partners to work together to address local participation challenges. Burnie is one of ten Local Government Areas selected nationally for the Local Solutions Initiative.
- Housing, mental health, drug and alcohol services and other programs deliver some of their services from the Centrelink site. *Better Futures, Local Solutions* aims to help families and individuals boost their work skills, find jobs and provide opportunities for their children.

baylink - Batemans Bay, New South Wales

- baylink brings together in one location Centrelink, Medicare, Child Support, CRS Australia and Australian Hearing services alongside Australian and state government agencies and community organisations.
- Also housed within baylink are the Australian Government Departments of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and Families and Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). State Government agencies included are NSW Family and Community Services (Housing NSW) and NSW Office of Communities (Aboriginal Affairs).
- baylink also hosts not-for-profit organisations and local community organisations such as Lifeline, Eurobodalla Family Support Services, and the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. Many other agencies operate from baylink on a visiting service basis.
- baylink aims to provide best practice in collaborative service delivery; opportunities to trial new ideas; and to develop better ways to 'join the dots' for the local people.

Shane Donnelly

From: gordon webb <gowebb@internode.on.net>
Sent: Monday, 30 September 2013 9:38 AM
To: Shane Donnelly
Subject: Works committee

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To Whom It May Concern

I wish to make a submission to the Works Committee re the Government building on Regent Square .

Regent Square is of Cultural Heritage significance for the whole community from the past and for future generations .

The services that are to use this Government Hub building are already functioning in GeorgeTown . The recipients are able to access these services easily at present so why change ?

If it is necessary to build this building why hasn't there been any consultation of the whole community about other sites . There are plenty of vacant land near the so called centre of Town .

Yours faithful Patricia Webb

34 The Strand

George Town Tasmania
Phone (03)63821627

10th October 2013

The Secretary
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000

Re: George Town Hub

Dear Sir / Madam

We would like to make a submission to the committee regarding what we feel, is the waste of government monies and the ongoing and relentless pressure being applied by the incumbent Labour Government Ministers on the rate payers of George Town to proceed with a 6.9 million development.

This development's sole purpose is to duplicate services already running in George Town. The building to be erected on Regent Square is simply shuffling offices and people around, it is very clear to the rate payers of George Town that the current building / offices will be left empty and will erode.

We will be seen by tourists as a ghost town and not worth visiting.

Quoting an extract from the 2006 No 6
Parliamentary Standing Committee on public works
George Town District Hospital Redevelopment at a cost of \$ 6,129,000
(pages 9 & 10)

- A master planning exercise was undertaken between March and July 2005
- Establish and function of the project team
- General consultation with stakeholders
- Consultant workshop
- Invitation for public review and comment
- Public display during "George Town on Show" and outside of the GTC offices
- Design Life, principles for best practice values have been considered.

None of the above procedure was offered to the rate payers of George Town in relation to the construction of this Hub, Linc and CFC building on Regent Square.

The process adopted by the GTC was to receive the application one day, have the planner assess the application, and 3 days later present it to our councillors in the Friday agenda, and a vote was called for and passed in council on the next Wednesday, done all in one week. This was reported to the TPC as being rushed.

This process by the GTC could not be investigated during the TPC hearing as it fell out of their scope reference, and it's the council and the governments lack of respect shown to the ordinary person, that this outcome has now divided our town so badly.

Regent Square was under a Crown Lease "UNTIL 2072"
Regent Square is for Public Recreation & Amusement
Regent Square is a Historic Macquarie Square and is unique in Tasmania

K & G Rabbett Submission

Regent Square was NOT and is NOT a vacant block.

Library:

There is no benefit to move the library from Macquarie Street to Macquarie Street a move of "35" meters". The current library would be vacant, fall into disrepair, and be a constant attraction for vandalism and eventually cost rate payers money to maintain an empty eye sore. This is definitely NOT a tourist attraction and not needed in the main street.

Meeting Rooms:

There is no benefit to move the meeting rooms from the Council Chambers and the meeting facilities currently in the GT hospital to Macquarie Street a move of "240 meters". Why would you leave the current meeting rooms vacant, simply to fill a new and unwarranted building that does not justify the cost to the rate / tax payers.

Service Tasmania:

Service Tasmania and the Council office co-exist in an open and secure working environment for all staff that handle and hold monies. This is currently in a very good position with in the town and is already under one roof, and it works well as a one stop shop for all residents. This building has good wheel chair access and wheel chair parking already in existence.

There is NO benefit to move Services Tasmania from the council chambers to Macquarie Street a move of "240 meters" leaving yet again more vacant space.

Car Parking:

In 2007 George Town Council obtained a loan of 2.75 million dollars a debt to be carried by the rate payers for the construction of the Memorial Hall extension.

The works included Macquarie Street Car parks Upgrade and as reported in the GTC Council Meeting 21st May 2008 has cost \$ 86,996.35 and only requires a final seal.

This area of upgraded parking, known as the gravel car park and used solely as car parking for tourist buses and car-o-vans only requires sealing, but remains unfinished only requiring a final seal as required by and pertinent to DA 2007/012.

This area of upgraded parking is now the subject of tender ID H205.
George Town Child and Family centre, LNC and Service Tasmania Shop

George Town Council and the incumbent government ministers have together denied our town, our parking, and our elderly residents, the right to adequate and easy local parking and to our young children the freedom to run and play in a central park.

As outlined during the TPC by Mr Turner and Mr Eaton that parking is not an issue they (the elderly can just park somewhere else, or go home and come back later.)

202/08 MEMORIAL HALL REDEVELOPMENT (cont'd)

ANNUAL PLAN

Key Area 2 – Corporate in section 2.2 provides that Council will continue to review assets and deal with them appropriately.

Key Area 5 – Infrastructure in section 5.2 Community Facilities provides that Council will continue to investigate, report and rationalise Council owned halls where appropriate.

FINANCES

The overall financial parameters for this building project were set by Council in December 2006 at \$3.25 million including loans of \$2.75 million, a grant of \$250,000 from the Australian Government and the balance from sale of assets primarily the Graham Fairless Centre.

As well as the actual building project Council budgeted in 2007/2008 for a number of other works in the Regent Square area. These are:

Memorial Hall Redevelopment	\$3,250,000
Macquarie Street Sewer Replacement	\$18,500
Memorial Hall Water Supply & Drainage	\$89,000
Memorial Hall Carparks Upgrade	\$76,000
Memorial Hall Forecourt	\$85,000

OFFICER'S COMMENT

The Memorial Hall redevelopment project costs to date are:

<i>Project</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Memorial Hall Redevelopment	\$3,250,000	\$3,274,507.70	\$24,507.70
Macquarie Street Sewer Replacement	\$18,500	\$17,758.59	-\$741.41
Macquarie Street Water Supply & Drainage	\$89,000	\$58,902.21	-\$30,097.79
Macquarie Street Carparks Upgrade	\$76,000	\$86,996.35	\$10,996.35
Memorial Hall Forecourt	\$85,000	\$87,671.28	\$2,671.28

As far as we are aware the Hall itself has all costs accounted for except for approximately \$7,000 credit for plumbing so it will reduce by that amount once this is received. The other jobs are almost completed and there may yet be minimal costs attributed to these projects.

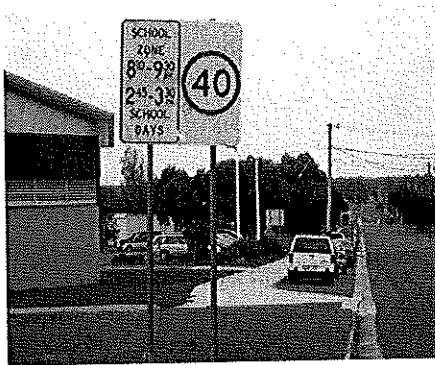
The over expenditure on the hall redevelopment is 0.75% of the budget and can be attributed to the unforeseen structural problems with the existing building. The water supply and drainage came in under estimate because we joint trenched services and the design changed after the budget was determined. The carpark upgrade includes the construction of the sub-base for the new carpark to prevent water penetration to the sub-grade. This preparation work will reflect in a cheaper cost for the final seal of the carpark.

Child and Family Centre:

The placement of this development on Regent Square would endanger the users of this facility, which is on Macquarie Street, George Towns major road and major event car park and will be operating within close proximity to 3 licenced premises, "180 meters" from the George Town Heritage Hotel and "50 meters" from the Bass and Flinders Centre and "250 meters" from the Pier Hotel.

As was reported to the TPC the CFC is currently located in the Agnes Street school district and is working well, so other sites in the near vicinity should be considered for the new CFC such as:

- The Education Department owns flat land near George Town Trade Training Centre and Port Dalrymple School and the CFC could be intergraded within the existing school precinct, with no interruption to the road usage as school traffic conditions and signage already exists.



Alternative site in Anne Street has been put forward for consideration as a CFC.

Quoting an extract from the 2006
Parliamentary Standing Committee on public works
George Town District Hospital Redevelopment
Re: Anne Street, George Town.

Limitations with Existing facility (page 6)

The site is conveniently located in George Town on the perimeter of the George Town shopping and local government precinct. This location provides for ready access to the public arriving either by foot, public or private transport. The private medical practice for the town (the Anne Street Medical Centre) is located next door to the hospital.

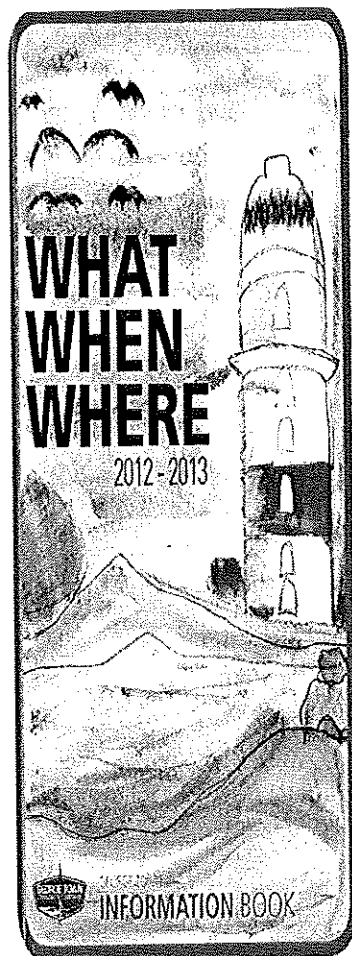
Why is land in Anne Street, across the road from this previously perfect position in town, now totally unsuitable for the ministers of the incumbent government.

K & G Rabbett Submission

Health Services:

The hospital's new extensions completed in 2007 at a cost of \$ 6,129,000 provides specialised medical services such as Child Health Clinics, Child Dental, Audio clinics, Baptcare Support and Centacare Workers.

The construction of another unwarranted building will again duplicate these existing services as shown in the current 2013 GT What When and Where Booklet, page 44.



HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDED AT GTH & CC:

TYPE OF SERVICE	WHEN	CONTACT
Paediatrician	3* Monday Monthly 1* Wednesday Monthly	6348 8972
Autism Psychologist	2* Monday monthly	
LDH Physio	Tues & Thurs PM	6380 3620
Community Nursing	Weekdays	6380 3645
Home Help/HCA	Weekdays	6380 3649
Meals on Wheels	Daily – not Thurs or Saturday	6380 3605
Child Health Clinic	Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri	6380 3618
Children's Dental Clinic	Monday – Thursday	6382 8975
Adult Dentist (healthcare card holders)	Thursdays & Fridays	6338 4100
David Casalegno Podiatry	Fortnightly – Fridays	0419 129 755
Community Podiatry	6 weekly Mondays/Thurs	63336 5155
Audio Clinic – private	Monthly – Thursdays	6334 1468
Drug & Alcohol	Fortnightly – Thursdays	6336 5577
GP North Psychologist	Weekly – Fridays	6331 3777
Continence Worker	Monthly – Tuesdays	6336 5108
Osteopathy	Weekly – Wednesdays	6334 9044
Cancer Support Group	Monthly	6382 1276
Laurel House	Monthly – Fridays	6334 2740
Dental Prosthetist	Weekly Wednesdays > 1700	6331 4168
GP North Diabetes Educator, Podiatrist, Dietician, Exercise Physiologist	Monthly – Wednesdays	6331 3777
Anglicare Financial Counselling	Monthly – Wednesdays	Clients phone: 1800 243 232
Baptcare Support Worker	Thursday & Friday	0488 039 333
Centacare Worker	Tuesday – Friday	0437 627 660
Centacare Worker	Monday – Thursday	6380 3612



Tasmania

44

Regent Square is now on the Heritage Register and has always been a public open space that was reserved for the people of George Town, and is the site of the Lions Club Grevillea Garden, and home to many mature trees, this brings birds to the park, and is an attraction for tourism to George Town.

There is NO benefit to George Town residents, from this short sighted decision, to lose all this parkland to an unnecessary and unwanted building.

K & G Rabbett Submission

GEORGE TOWN NEEDS A CFC and the best location is:

As reported in the Examiner 14th August 2013, the Premier Lara Gidding visited the Beaconsfield CFC and made the following statement.
Ms Gidding said the centre was very accessible in its position, adjacent to the town's neighbourhood house and primary school.

Why is the George Towns CFC on the other side of town, 1.7 kms away and not as commended by Ms Gidding built near Port Dalrymple School, Agnes Street George Town.???

THE EXAMINER, Wednesday, August 14, 2013 — 13

Premier pops in for cuppa and chat

PREMIER Lara Giddings stopped in at the Beaconsfield Child and Family Centre yesterday for a cuppa, a chat and a spot of light reading.

It was Ms Giddings's first visit to the centre since it was opened in January 2011.

It is one of 12 centres around the state that have been built with sup-

port from the state government since 2009.

"I think the beauty is they're been developed by people in the community," Ms Giddings said.

Ms Giddings said the centre was very accessible in its position, adjacent to the town's neighbourhood house and primary school and helped to develop early

learning connections for parents and children alike.

Community inclusion worker Heather Donaldson and centre leader Sirppa Khan both agreed that it was the people that made the Beaconsfield centre stand out.

About 165 families utilise the centre each week.

CONCLUSION:

WHY can't George Town have a new building to house a CFC in a location better suited to the school precinct and our Regent Square open space park lands and parking, like we had before the government took over.

Regards



Mrs Karen Rabbett
PO Box 11
George Town 7253



Mr Garry Rabbett
PO Box 11
George Town 7253

K & G Rabbett Submission

**SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
WORKS
PROPOSED HUB DEVELOPMENT GEORGE TOWN**

1. The George Town Community Does Not Support the Proposal being placed on Regent Square.

The community's opposition to this project was first expressed when an Information Forum in August 2010. About people attended the forum and almost all those who spoke at the forum said the building was too large for the square, that there should be no further buildings on the square and that the project should be located elsewhere. Since then there have been several petitions a public meeting and public opinion poll all of which have shown considerable opposition to the proposal. These include:

- a) Petition of 1150 signatories to the House of Assembly, March 2011.
- b) Petition of to the Legislative Council of 1788 signatories, May 2012.
- c) Public Meeting held by the George Town Council on the 21st December 2011
- d) Council Annual General Meeting Resolutions 2010, 2011, 2012.

2. Regent Square is OUR public park

It is the oldest public park in Tasmania. Older than City Park and Princes Square Launceston, older than St David's Park and Franklin Square Hobart.

It was established by Governor Macquarie for the use of the town, not of government.

It is a Crown reserve, reserved for recreation since 1891.

Since 1922 it has been leased to the Council and people of George Town exclusively for use as public recreation.

It is registered on the Tasmanian Heritage List for its association with Governor Macquarie, as a rare example of early town planning, and for its association with the people of George Town as a place of recreation and of community events.

3. Opposition to the Hub.

The idea of combining the LINC and the CFC into a Hub is opposed

There are 2 hubs – Bridgewater and Queenstown.

Bridgewater consist of the LINC, Service Tasmania Shop and a CFC for aboriginal children. There are separate CFC facilities located in each of the different primary schools. The Hub is also located in an area close to Bridgewater's Middle School, Grade 9-12 education complex and the Skills Training Centre, forming what is referred to as "a collection of related buildings that imparts an open village atmosphere rather than a large institution."¹ This makes for easy co-ordination between these facilities.

There is no such arrangement with the proposed site for the George Town Hub. The two secondary schools are more than a kilometre away, as are the two Skills Training Centres. The Post Grade 10 program is conducted more than 1.5 kilometres from the proposed Hub.

¹ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Bridgewater and Southern Midlands Learning Federation, p.10.

The Queenstown Hub consists of a LINC, a CFC and a Service Tasmania Shop. It also is on the same site as the Council Chambers and the former TAFE facility. The presence of Post-Secondary education programs in the centre gave it a good facility for post-secondary education, but the removal of the Grade 11-12 programs back to the Mountain Heights School means this advantage no longer exists. The Hub is a considerable distance from Mountain Heights School and the centre suffers from a lack of contact with some parents who have close liaison with that school. We have also been told of problems of co-ordination between LINC and the CFC over the use of the Hub's facilities and that the efficient running of the CFC would be greater in a stand-alone facility.

Huon LINC has no CFC, but is integrated with the post-Grade 10-12 VET courses. While it is some distance from the school, the co-location of the post-secondary education facilities gives it an edge. It also has some adult education programs. In George Town these programs are associated with the Wattle Group and Neighbourhood House, more than a kilometre away and located in the northern residential area of the town.

All other CFCs are stand-alone, close to residential areas and usually near schools. There is no need for these facilities to be co-located with the LINC, and that has been shown in New Norfolk, Devonport, Ravenswood and Burnie.

George Town's existing library and Online Access Centre ("Digital Hub") are working satisfactorily. The existing OLAC is well run and well supported by the community. Threatened with a loss of government funds, the Digital Hub is now funded by the Commonwealth Government. The Hub proposals are an unnecessary duplication of services. There is no need to move the library 50 metres into a new building, especially there is no expansion of room for the library in the new centre, and the potential for close liaison between the library and the Digital Hub already exists. Moreover, such a change will take services out of an already very much underutilized Council building, which has the ability to provide seven rooms for training. It has been suggested that the training rooms in the HUB would be available for community use. So are the rooms in the Memorial Hall and its extensions. There is NO community demand for extra meeting rooms.

By adding a new site for a new learning facility, placing the Hub on Regent Square is adding to the proliferation of post-secondary learning facilities VET, Grade 11/12, Skills training Centre, LINC. It also sits more than a kilometre from other existing facilities in the town such as Neighbourhood House, Wattle Group, Men's Shed, Grade 11&12, all of which are within 800m of the largest area of disadvantaged families. Having this in Regent Square places the Hub in competition with these groups and has the potential to threaten their viability.

4. Parking Problems

The Hub is proposed to be built on the site of a car park. This facility had been recommended in the Regent Square Landscape Master Plan. It had been made necessary to cater for the increased parking needed with the expanded Memorial Hall Complex. This means that car parking has been moved further into the Square. There are very few extra parking facilities planned to cater for the Hub.

Already pressure on street parking, and a revival of business in the town centre will see increased parking pressure in the central part of town. The Memorial Hall complex has the

potential for large-scale parking demands – it is capable of holding 800 people (Supper Room 50 guests; Memorial Hall 250; Graham Fairless Centre 500.)²

All this will place pressure to place further parking on Regent Square.

5. Lack of Proper Public Consultation

The only consultation was with the LEG group, which is not representative of the overall users of the Hub, contains a large number of public servants, and did not involve the local community until after the plans had been already drawn and the Council had accepted a request to rezone the land.

No consultation at all was had with users of the library or the On Line Access Centre.

There has been a total ignoring of the opinions of the community as expressed in meetings and in petitions.

6. The Project is in the Wrong Area

The main residential areas of the town are to the north east and the south of the town. They are separated from the business district by a belt of open space and institutional buildings such as Star of the Sea School, the Fire Station and a group of churches. The Hub will be some 500 metres down Macquarie Street from the roundabout at Macquarie and Goulburn Street. Almost all users of the central business district, whether travelling by car or on foot, enter at this roundabout. For pedestrians the hub is more than a kilometre from the overwhelming majority of the town's residences. There are other sites that are much more central to these residential areas.

The Proposed Child and Family Centre Functional Design Brief says the preferred site for a CFC is in the residential zone of a town, and that "It is generally considered that those living in close proximity and will walk to the Centre."³

Regent Square is the worst possible location of the areas surveyed in the State Infrastructure Planning System Report for the Child and Family Centre. It showed that the Memorial Hall was close to the smallest percentage of households of the five sites considered and that the only nearby residential area had the lowest percentage of children under 4 of the residential areas in the town⁴

This can be seen in the following table:

Percentage of Houses in George Town within Certain Distances of the Sites⁵

Location	Distance from the Location			
	All Houses		Govt Housing	
	≤400m	≤800m	≤800m	≤1200m

² George Town Council, Guide to Services 2013/2014.

³ Department of Education, *Proposed Child and Family Centre Functional Design Brief*, Version 4, July 2011, pp.5-6.

⁴ Strategic Infrastructure Planning System Report, map, p.29.

⁵ *ibid*, pp.32-40.

Pt Dalrymple School	6%	24%	36%	80%
Neighbourhood House	6%	25%	45%	80%
Hospital	5%	21%	26%	≥50%
Memorial Hall	3%	13%	only 1	≥50%
Sth GT Primary School	5%	20%	21%	≥50%

The SIPS Report commented, that **“Potential sites located in the central part of George Town ... are not very closely to the highest disadvantage households of the north, east and south of the township and therefore should not be considered as a future CFC location.”**

It concluded that the best accessibility for the whole of the township and easiest quick start potential would be by developing CFCs at both government schools in the town. If a single CFC was to be developed, then “locating at a site such as Port Dalrymple School or the neighbourhood house provides good accessibility for the highest disadvantage households to the north, east and south of the township whilst not being significantly further for southern households to travel compared to a CFC located in the CBD.”⁶

6. Effect on Business

The construction phase will bring in more money but this will be only temporary. In the long term will produce few extra jobs

It is a captive market. The nature of the municipality means the Hub will not attract many new customers into George Town, except during the construction phase. There will be no increased expenditure by users of the facility these people in the CBD unless it is at the expense of the few shops that are outside the area e.g. Friend Street Supermarket and School Shop in Agnes St.

It will create increased parking problems, especially since a high percentage of users will have to travel by car, considering the distance the Hub will be from the residential areas.

Will take away view into the square and detract from the amenity of Macquarie Street.

Peter Cox

On behalf of Friends of Regent Square

45 Tamar Avenue

George Town 7253

14th October 2013.

⁶ Ibid, p.43.

APPENDIX 1

Petitions to Parliament

a) Petition of 1150 signatories to the House of Assembly, March 2011.

The petition of the undersigned citizens of George Town municipality points out to the House the unqualified opposition to the building of a HUB, comprising a Learning Information Network Centre (LINC) and a Child and Family Centre (CFC), to the west of the Memorial Hall on George Town's historic Regent Square, an area that is currently zoned 'Public Recreation', and also to the proposed transfer of the recently refurbished Library and Online Access Centre from the Memorial Hall Complex to the new HUB. Your Petitioners therefore pray that the House recognise their genuine concerns for the historic and cultural values of Regent Square and ensure that: 1. No additional large scale buildings are erected on Regent Square – though minor sympathetic additions to the existing building may be acceptable. 2. The refurbished Library and associated services remain in the Memorial Hall complex. 3. The George Town HUB for the remaining services be located elsewhere, but NOT on Regent Square. AND The petition of the undersigned residents of the Municipality of George Town draws to the attention of the House that ongoing funding for the Community Managed Online Access Centres is insecure due to the LINC project being proposed in George Town by the State Government. Your petitioners therefore request the House to instruct the Department of Education responsible for funding the George Town Community Managed Online Access Centre to give its written assurance that it will continue to fund the George Town Online Access Centre and not cease its funding should a proposed LINC be built by the State Government in George Town.

b) Petition of to the Legislative Council of 1788 signatories, May 2012.

Tasmanian Residents draw to the attention of the House the Government's intention to place a large building on George Town's historic Regent Square for the Child and Family Centre (CFC), LINC and Service Tasmania shop, and the George Town Council's decision to rezone the land for that purpose.

Your petitioners therefore request the House to:

- (1) ensure that Regent Square's heritage and cultural values are recognised.
- (2) Support the community's wish to preserve Regent Square as public open space, with no further buildings.
- (3) Keep the LINC and Service Tasmania Shop in their present location and place the CFC on a new site.

Public Meeting Resolutions

1. That this meeting opposes the proposed new HUB building for Regent Square.

Against: 11 CARRIED

1. That no new building be erected on Regent Square.

Against: 11 CARRIED

2. That the On Line Centre remain in the Memorial Hall building.

Against: 6 CARRIED

3. That the Child and Family Centre be located elsewhere, but not on Regent Square.
4. Against: 12 CARRIED
5. That the George Town Council continue the enhancement of Regent Square as a public park and recreation area. CARRIED

Council AGM – 13th December 2010

1. That the George Town Council, if given the opportunity, refocus attention on alternative sites for the proposed LINC complex and encourage the Government and Education Department to have an open and imaginative mind to achieve the best outcome for George Town's long term future. CARRIED. This resolution carried at the AGMs of 2011 and 2012.
2. That Regent Square be retained as Public Recreation area.
CARRIED

Shane Donnelly

From: Jane Zimmerman <janez@inet.net.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 15 October 2013 9:35 AM
To: Shane Donnelly
Subject: Hub development Regent Square George Town
Attachments: submission.pub

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Mr. Donnelly

Attached is my submission re the Construction of a Hub on Regent Square in George Town.

Jane L. Zimmerman, M.D. AM

JANE L. ZIMMERMAN, M.D.

13 December 2011

Mr. Stephen Brown
General Manager
George Town Council

Dear Mr. Brown,

I wish to present a submission at the public meeting being held in the Memorial Hall December 14, 2011 to discuss the proposed Hub development on Regent Square.

I will preface my submission by stating that I am in favour of and see the need for a Child Care centre and training facility but not on Regent Square

1. Building the Hub on Regent Square will greatly diminish the area available for citizens and visitors to enjoy a valuable central parkland setting.
2. George Town has just been listed as a Heritage town and Regent Square forms a significant part of our history because of its connection with Governor Macquarie. We advertise George Town as the "oldest town in Australia" and a heritage tourism precinct was proposed for Elizabeth Street from Regent Square to York Cove. This proposed building is totally out of character with the heritage buildings in the area and would greatly detract from the current streetscape and heritage context of the Macquarie and Elizabeth Street precinct.
3. I question the concept of moving both the Library and Service Tasmania from their current sites as this will just leave more underutilised space in the existing ratepayer maintained buildings.
4. On a personal level I am of the opinion that the Hub will not only detract from the heritage streetscape but it will potentially deprive me of parkland views, the sense of light and space that I currently enjoy, privacy and possibly security. Part of my reason for settling in George Town over 30 years ago and purchasing my current dwelling was the town's historic aspect and the spacious atmosphere that Regent Square afforded the CBD and my dwelling.. If construction of the Hub proceeds it will block Regent Square off from the Macquarie / Elizabeth Street precinct to the detriment of the whole area

Sincerely

Jane L. Zimmerman, M.D.

P.O.BOX 399
GEORGE TOWN TASMANIA
AUSTRALIA 7253

Phone: 61 (0)3 63824333
Fax: 61 (0)3 63822437
Email: janez@southcom.com.au

Submission to Joint Standing Committee on Public Works
On the intended Linc Hub on Regent's Square, Georgetown.

Dr Sennin Charles

I am a hermit Zen monk residing in the George Town Council region. I have been involved with the George Town Library since 2007, when I campaigned against the downsizing of the Library resulting from extensions to the Hall.

As a result of these efforts, the GT Council eventually offered an alternative room (within the Hall complex) to house the On-line Access Centre (OAC), thereby improving the facilities of both the OAC and the Library.

When the intention to build the Hub in GT was announced, I was invited by the then Linc Director, Siobhan Gaskell, and the now current Director, Jenny Rayner, to be part of the consultation process. This was much to my surprise, as my campaign efforts had included exchanging sharp lead letters on the pages of the *Examiner*, and I had won that campaign.

I confess the relationship was not always easy going – it is not a quality I am renowned for – as I did subsequently seriously question the concept of the need to house all the facilities in one building, my doubt having being fuelled by some who are probably also going to submit. (I do talk to some of my opponents.)

It was a result of the responses I received to this questioning and that I finally grasped the concept of the Hub, and its significance to the greater GT community.

However, I again took issue with Linc when the space freed in the Library by moving the OAC was appropriated for the new Literacy Co-ordinator. This exchange was again constructive, and a solution was quickly and amicably negotiated such that sufficient library space was restored such that the annual children's programme could take place and the Literacy Co-ordinator retained an adequate office.

The advent of a Literacy Co-ordinator provided a new connection for myself, which eventually resulted in a push into the Bell Bay industrial area, which is the State's economic powerhouse. Efforts to establish an in-house programme stalled because of yet another economic downturn, but the contact with Companies (and their employees) in the area has continued.

I also facilitated direct consultation between members of the GT Historical Society and Linc Directorate, not because I believed in their cause but because I believed in their right to be heard. I was invited by the then Director to participate in those meetings, which I did and thereby ensured that the process was fair and open.

More recently I debated the Hub issue before the GT Chamber of Commerce, and as a result the Chamber decided to support the Hub and its being located on the main street (thereby avoiding the issue of the Square).

So whilst I do not represent any particular interest group (nor would I do so), I do think I have a reasonably well-informed view of the issues involved both for and against this building and its being sited on Regent Square. And I hope I have established that I am not an uncritical apologist for the Hub and its proponents.

The Hub

Regardless of the issue surrounding the Square, I am adamant that the Hub must be sited on the high (main) street. Worldwide, towns are dying and have died in their droves, largely due to facilities springing up outside the town. Anything that moves traffic away from the high street – even by half a block – will be a death-blow to the town.

Additionally, I believe the Hub is more than the sum of its parts, and to relocate its parts would be a tragic mistake. The function of the Hub is not, however, within my expertise to outline and defend – there are Linc personnel far more capable than I in this respect, but I am adamant that to split it would be a disaster, in terms of its function and in a more sinister way: I have heard it said that the Child & Family facilities should be located in part of the town “where those people live”. ‘Those people’ are also citizens of George Town, and it is despicable to talk in terms of ‘them and us’. Insisting that facilities are separated according to socio-economic boundaries is a ghetto mentality, and unconscionable.

As I understand it, the main objection is the placing of this building on Regent Square, which dates back some 200 years to the original city planned, a city which never transpired.

The Square was intended to be surrounded by public buildings and to serve as a place for respite and enjoyment, as well as for beauty.

The form of the Square – being a large, squared patch of ground surrounded by buildings – thus had a very specific intended function.

To me, form and function are indivisibly linked.

But the city never happened, and the surrounding land was sold off for private development, the GTC building on one side being something of a vestigial remnant of the original plan. What was left was simply the square, this being only part of its original form.

As to its function, it has never functioned on a day-to-day basis as anything like its intended use in the 200 years since. It has been a football pitch, and it has a now enlarged Hall with associated public facilities. A significant area is used as a car park for shoppers, which in my book at least, ranks rather low on the ‘public use’ scale, and hardly fitting with a functioning Town Square. .

The intended form and function of Regent Square never happened. What is left is a skeletal remnant of that vibrant dream.

Nevertheless, it is a significant public space, and its use must be decided carefully.

Thus, the question facing us is: does the intended Hub meet the test of providing a service and benefit for all the citizens of the town across the spectra of age, social status, income and any other demographic?

I believe it does, and that to put such a building of that size on the Square on the intended location would be entirely within the spirit and intent behind reserving this area for the use and enjoyment of the town’s citizens.

I would be willing to appear before the Committee if invited to do so.

THE SECRETARY
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
15.10.2013

I making this representation on behalf of the George Town Residents and Ratepayers Assoc, Inc. for which I am President and secretary.

Deborah (Debbie) Rainbow
Home address 117 Macquarie St.
George Town
Home phone 03-63821247

I hopefully have shown the committee what our group considers some of the key issues leading up to and the building of a Hub to make your committee aware of the:

- 1/ The lack of public consultation between government and the GT council and their failure to listen to residents of the area.
- 2/ The George Town council's failure to make good planning decisions and that poor decisions of the past will be inherited by future councils and ratepayers.
- 3/ Debt occurred by this council and past councils may hang around for years and may be a burden for the council and ratepayers in the future.

Yours sincerley
Debbie Rainbow

Development on Regent Square

1

Regent Square consists of c5.86 leased to the George Town council

Firstly in 1930s a hall existed on the southern side of the square fronting Macquarie Street. In 1950s a Memorial Hall was built on this site, delineated as PID 5001930 the rest of the area remained as open space PID 500 1929.

The management of this land would have been under the consideration as ;

12.5 Asset Management Sale Of Land

2/ a The General Manger is to keep lists or maps of all public land with in the municipal area and b make the lists and maps available for public inspection at any time during normal business hours.

Sale, exchange and disposal of all public land

2/ Public land that is leased for any period by a council remains public land during that period. ref; George Town Council agenda 24th April 2006

2006 Build In September consultants for Global Value Management ran a workshop about the matter. Of the 25 odd persons present only 11 adults and two children were members of the public. National Archives ABN 88 074 811 377.

Only those attending the workshop and those December's meeting of council were aware what really was intention of the council to happen. Ref Council meeting 12.12.2006 p 32 Memorial Hall Redevelopment project. To provide new facilities for both cultural and recreation activities The existing hall will be upgraded to provide for cultural activities will include new internal layout, a gallery, foyer, new toilet facilities, new green room and change rooms for back of stage. An additional hall will provide 2 highly serviced multi purpose areas. The rooms can be opened for recreation such netball, basket ball, badmington or judo. Both areas serviced by new kitchen and supper rooms.

An advertisement in the Examiner 20.01.2007 p 80 titled **Planning Applications** DA No. 2007/012 Redevelopment of Memorial Hall Building and Works of Historic Interest . Plans etc available for 14 days, representations for or against this plan were to be made at the same time. (3 Feb).

No one objected to this why would they? The hall, toilets, supper room etc. they were old dated and needed updating

On 6th March 2007 GT council sat a planning body as the Memorial Hall was heritage listed the application was discretionary the best zoning fit was public recreation. The discretionary use car park, indoor sports centre or place of assembly.

COST predicted \$2.9 mill. State funding was sort from Community and Recereations Grants but not received. A \$250,000.00 grant from Commonwealth Gov DOTRS Department of Transport and Regional Services.

A second instalment from DOTARS was received in 2008. Agenda 21.05.2008 p49

A furthur loan over 25 years was also taken out to cover the remaining debt.

Agenda 25.08.2010 6.2 Specified Departure The draft amendment includes a limitation on the siting of Civic Buildings to one corner of the site

The purpose of the amendment is to facilitate the future development of a LINC and CFC. This building was rejected at RMPT hearing on the basis it did not fit the zone classification of recreational but that of health and education.

Agenda 16.02.2011 p67 p69 The draft amendment the defined area of the siting of civic buildings is approx. 1.44ha out of a total area 5.85ha.

There was another attempt to get the Hub up and going and to fit into the civil planning description by Service Tas, Centrelink and rooms that was previously been shown as consulting rooms had now become meeting rooms.

WHITE ELEPHANT

The new complex firstly named as civic building (a hall) was later named a gymnasium has become a huge ugly white elephant for which we still do not own it has not even met anywhere its optimum usage. For the years 2010, 2011 and 2012. The recorded usage in total for the Graham Fairless Centre (gymnasium), supper room, kitchen, Memorial Hall and Jim Mooney Gallery for the years of 2010, 2011 and 2012 is 5369 hours out of a possible 26295 hrs.

The Graham Fairless Centre (gymnasium) has to my knowledge never been used for a sports event although there is occasional exercise programme. The design of the centre with its low off set windows may not be conducive to vigorous sports. A dance was held in it which resulted with several people suffering from vertigo because of the walls and windows asymmetrical design.

This monstrosity of a building is one of the reasons that the representative from Heritage Tas said would allow the construction of a Hub.

It would be fair to say we are concerned for the future of the Memorial Hall if the on-line centre ceases and the library is moved away. We fear the council will close the building and leave it in a state of disrepair until it they can pull it down.

Another building was the present council chambers proposed in 1977 and built in 1979 at an intended cost of \$1.1 million. This build when completed went way over budget and in the last few years has needed rewiring, hotwater services and still does not have a working audio system in the public council chamber. It has been reported that it cost up to \$30k to instal a new toilet. A proportion of this building the court room was closed and As well as new male and female toilet block in the Memorial Hall and gymnasium there is a shower block in the gymnasium.

REGENT SQUARE. Some gardens and the bandstand have been donated by local businesses or commuinty groups.

Very little has been spent on the square over the years many grants have been gained the most recent was for the istallation of seniors exercise equipment access to this has often been impossible because of bad drainage.

Drainage has been a huge problem especially this winter the ground quickly becomes sodden and most paths were are partly or totally submerged.

TOURISM

3

Tourism has become important to the town. The George Town council has lacked the insight for many years to the actual value the historic nature of the area. The council could not destroy every thing that connected this town to its history quick enough, to establish a so called industrial town. In the time I have lived here many fine buildings have gone but one thing only stayed the same our one and only Regent Square.

The stand alone Memorial Hall is nearly lost with the new build beside, to add another would make it obsolete. I have seen tourists even been asked by them what is that leaning building, what is that blob over there? My answer is that's the gym and that's the council chambers. Should we advertise that we are the town with the ugliest architecture? What message does it send to people when three car ring lock shed is erected at the front of the Hub on our main street?

THE HUB

No Feasability Study

The Hub remains what it is a social experiment, it may be desirable for the government agencies to co- locate their services but what of the users.

Much was done to establish an enabling group for the CFC c 40 people to see what their needs are but what of the other intended users. The Library and the Online Centre each deal with between 2,000-3,000 people a month. Many of the library customers are mature-elderley and the majority of those to the online centre are retired.As can be seen below 30% of the population is aged over 55 years.

FACTS ABOUT GEORGE TOWN

ABS percentage of residents of population of 6,906 persons 2007-2011

Children 0-14years = 20.6% Young adults 15-24 years= 11.2%

Adults 25-34 years = 10.2% Adults 35-44years=11.8%

Adults 55-64 years=14.9% Adults 65-74 years= 14.9%

Adults 75-84 years=4.8 % Adults 85- =1.4%

There are 560 parents with children 0-15 years but 263 people are single parents.

The Australian Bureau of Stastistics in 2011 George Town of having a low SEIFA (Socio-economically diasadvantaged). This term by ABS definition broadly defines peoples access to materials and social resources and their abiltiy to participate in society.

This is a damming report and could possible ring the death knell for the area. Should we seriously be consideringI the education our children are receiving at our schools?

It is one of the reasons the government has given for the placement of a CFC in George Town. As the CFC only deals with children 0-5 years where is the intended user base going to come from, are they going to to be sourced locally or is the government going to continue to bring would be users from other areas?

CENTRALITY

4

Much was made of the need for the Hub to be central to the CBD and the big advantage it would be to the businesses in the area. I have spoken to several business none of which feel they will get extra business because of the Hub position. Does having a Hub more central make any one's wallets more full?

The Hub intended to be built in George Town is only the second to be built in Tasmania. The first Hub at Queenstown which includes Service Tas, LINC and CFC services the population of Queenstown 2117, Zeehan 728, Strahan 824, Rosebery 922, Tullah 192= pop 4783 persons as well as Cormanston, Linda and Corinna. A vast area the nearest CFC being at Burnie 176km away.

The cost of funding the building of the Hub has been quoted to have risen to 6.9mill. How can any government or government agency be of the belief that this is a reasonable amount to spend to replicate services all ready in existence?

LINC The refurbishment of the library only was completed in the last few years and now has two computers which would appear to be the standard. We who use it enjoy easy access and its privacy behind closing doors.

Service Tas has reduced hours 10.30pm until 4.30pm 30 hours a week and its workers are housed inside the council building

Centrelink provides to computers and phones also housed inside the council building. Should this agency be considered as the Federal Gov. oversee it and is not funding its placement.

CFC The intended functions of the CFC seem unclear but a representative of the local enabling group spoke at a recent hearing and said" that the functions of the CFC had been up and going in George Town for four years". It would seem that some agreement had been made within the group albeit with out a dedicated venue but the group has been able to function. It is believed that very recently the P&F of the CFC have come out and said they would like a stand alone building. A kind offer of land for this building to be placed on elsewhere was made but never given any consideration.

Meeting Rooms

There are 6-8 rooms with in the Hub put aside for meetings three within the CFC area which would infer they relate to its workings. Three rooms off the foyer of unspecified usage that would provide limited meeting area. There are two other large rooms. One with access to the CFC and so again with limited use and privacy for the general public the other as we were given to believe was for an online-computer centre. As areas in which small children gather tend to be noisy bsides there over 30 other venues- meeting rooms available in George Town.

Much has been said of social-inclusion and emphasis has been placed on those opposing the siting of the Hub on Regent Square and that the opponents are against children and or those seen as deprived within the community. As a mother and grandmother this view offends me. I have lived in this town for 37 years and served this community for nearly 30 years as a volunteer. I think I am aware of the challenges we all face.

My first concerns was on the design and usage of the CFC is if staff and volunteers have to have security checks why not the people with children?

If the the CFC is for short term usage why is there a shower-toilet within the facility? Why are there several showers in the Hub?

Not only issues to do with child safety were not examined another concern is the overall safety of children but with the potential of the type of person who may be allowed to enter the building

My biggest concern from the beginning of this project is the safety issues. I have travelled around other CFCs and observed child minding-day care facilities. They all have one major thing in common their diligence when it comes to child safety. Most are entered through child (sometimes adult) proof fences and gateways. I fear for children who either exit the building on to a busy street or car park.

There does not seem to be any pedestrian thorough planned. Mr Terry Eaton traffic expert said at the recent TPC appeal that he had seen a Dier report unfortunately it was not made available to any one those who opposed the development. If the combined usage of 4,000-6,000 persons for the online centre and, library with out the other foot traffic the area will be a very busy place. There was report made at the time of the construction stating the need for extra parking. This parking will be under the foundations of the Hub. The architect of the Hub was repeatedly asked what was the size of the land needed for the Hub? There had only been a ground or floor plan available with out a scale. During the appeal on three occasions this amount was changed and much larger area was requested. This has us all worried that more of the park will be carved up for further construction.

Shane Donnelly

From: Richard Nicholls <rnarchitect@bigpond.com>
Sent: Tuesday, 15 October 2013 5:08 PM
To: Shane Donnelly
Cc: Richard Nicholls
Subject: GEORGE TOWN-Co Located Services HUB

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

WE HAVE MOVED

Dear Mr Donnelly

STANDING COMMITTEE PUBLIC WORKS - PROPOSED CO-LOCATED SERVICE HUB GEORGE TOWN

I would like the opportunity to make representations to the committee in person when it convenes on 22 October 2013. My apologies but I have run out of time to make my full submission at this time. However I understood from a brief conversation with you yesterday that I may be able to make a contribution after the formal deadline. In the interests of being clear in my intent I have provided a summary of my submission

Please find below a synopsis of my submission I propose to submit a more detailed submission in relation to following prior to the committee hearings, as an Expert in Architecture and Town Planning.

Problems with the current Proposal.

- No Unique quality offered by the proposed site that justifies development on Historic Square
- Unsound justification for the development that the Site is under used
- Proximity to a specific Supermarket
- Not socially supported

How the proposal contribute to the Social breakdown it is intended to remedy.

- Final Year thesis on 'Remaking the Street'
- Town Planning theory that erosion of the Urban Plan degrades community wellbeing and health.
- Destruction of cultural Heritage degrades community wellbeing and health

Availability of Suitable and Preferable Alternative Sites.

- SIPS report recommended site at Port Dalrymple School ignored
- YMCA site original one of three preferred sites
- Anne Street site in proximity to existing community Health Centre

Alternative solution to equivalent Service Provision.

- Cost Saving in alternative approach
- Existing service provision
- What happens to infrastructure which houses relocated services

Benefits and positive outcomes of an alternative approach.

- Release of \$3m for service provision
- Full broad community Support
- More suitable located to identified users and central location
- Proximity to Existing Service provision

Conclusion

Should you have any comments please do not hesitate to contact me. I should be in a position to follow up on this preliminary submission later tomorrow.

Yours sincerely

Richard

Richard Nicholls RAIA

For and on behalf of Richard Nicholls Architect Pty Ltd

richard nicholls architect

ABN 45 146 617 263
PO Box 5230
81 Cimitiere Street
Launceston TAS 7250
Australia
m int+61(0)4 1864 0824

w www.richardnichollsarchitect.com
e rn@richardnichollsarchitect.com



SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

GEORGE TOWN HUB

CULTURAL HERITAGE OF REGENT SQUARE

REGENT SQUARE - TASMANIA'S OLDEST PUBLIC PARK

Founded by Governor Macquarie in 1811 to be reserved for the use of the Town; surveyed by James Meehan in 1812; a recreation reserve since 1891, leased to the Council and people of George Town for purposes of Public Recreation and Amusement since 1922.

Generations grew up knowing Regent Square was a special place 'reserved for the people' for recreation, and many are still in disbelief that our Council could condone another large development, especially a government building on it. They are still upset about the 2007-8 Memorial Hall extension (referred to as a 'white elephant') that compromised the symmetry and amenity of the Square and the Hall and were built well-outside the reserved lease area; and also with the Council's failure to reinstate the parkland and gardens around the hall.

The redevelopment of the Memorial Hall complex followed a community survey and consultations by the Liberal Party led by the late and respected Sue Napier, with the intent of providing for the town's cultural activities for the next 50 years - it should not to be cluttered by government services and more parking. Doesn't George Town deserve to have such a place for cultural pursuits?

The large playground attached to the CFC will be fenced off from the general public and thus alienated from public use - contrary to purpose of this historically public 'open space'. During the 2010 Amendment/Development process, it was difficult to understand the dismissal of the 200 year-old Square's significance, while there was concern with the Memorial Hall (built 1959) because it was on the Heritage Register. The approved 2007 extension has undoubtedly compromised the symmetry and amenity of both the Memorial Hall and the Square, so why make it worse?

The reason Regent Square was not previously heritage-listed, is probably due to community's 'cultural belief'. Former trustees/councils were also fully aware of the 99-year Crown Leases that existed: the latest being one from 1 July 1973 for the purpose of a 'Public Building' (Hall site); and another from 1 July 1974 for the remainder of the Square with a condition that *'...the lessee will not use or suffer to be used the said demised premises for any purposes whatsoever other than Public recreation and amusement ...'*. They respected the terms of those leases.

In August 2006 it was recommended that ownership of Regent Square (2 Crown Leases) be transferred to the George Town Council - lessees since 1891. However, Regent Square was not included with other parcels handed over to GTC in the recent Crown Land decisions.

Crown Land Assessment and Classification Project

Consultation Report and Recommended Allocations for the Municipality of George Town - Aug 2006

B5 PID No. 6440533 5.86 hectares

Consider for ownership by Local Government Comment received re land transferred to local government, see discussion in 2.2.6 (a).

Georgetown Council has two leases on this property for Regent Square and a Memorial Hall.

Transfer to Local Government

2.2.6 Land Transferred to Local Government

(a) In most cases, the George Town Council supported the transfer of properties to their ownership. Council requested discussion to determine the extent of land transferred to them for some properties (PIDs 2094493 and 6436518).

Support noted. Details on the extent of property to be transferred will be finalised with Council prior to transfer.

With Regent Square permanently listed on the Tasmanian Heritage Register it was expected that its status as a public 'open space' would have been protected, despite a letter received June 2011 (before

assessment began) from Heritage Minister Brian Wightman advising heritage listing would *'not preclude the development of the LINC and CFC on Regent Square...'* This appeared to pre-empt the decision of the Heritage Council itself.

A "Trove" through online newspapers shows that Regent Square /'the Green' / Recreation Ground has always been a focal point for recreational pursuits, sports, demonstrations and celebrations of all kinds throughout its two centuries. Improvements over these years have been contributed by the community and it is a shame it has been so neglected for most of the last decade.

The 1999 Central Area Strategy and the 2007 Kelly Landscape Master Plan for Regent Square do not recommend any more buildings on Regent Square - it was to be the major green space in the centre of the commercial area. The 1999 report didn't even recommend more parking on the Square.

THE LINC HUB DEVELOPMENT

The George Town Planning Scheme 1991 has been amended - twice - to allow this previously prohibited development to be built on Regent Square. A costly appeal by residents to the Resource Management & Planning Appeal Tribunal was upheld in March 2012, but a 'legal loophole' was used to apply for the same development application in the same place in October 2012 - ironically, on the same day that the Tasmanian Heritage Council provisionally-listed Regent Square on the Heritage Register.

The Hub is half as big again as the Bridgewater Hub and although purported to be a Single Storey building, its maximum height of 6.800m, is of two-storey height, not much less than the stadium beside it. The significant visual impact will continue the barricade of tall buildings from the existing stadium right across to Elizabeth St, cutting off parkland views from two thirds of this section of Macquarie St and relegating Regent Square to a rectangular backyard behind the buildings.

A total area of 355m² is given over to Meeting Rooms that in the first set of plans were labelled 'Consulting', 'Training' and 'Parent' Rooms' to better fit the amended 'Civic' use in the Planning Scheme. There is no shortage of 'Meeting Rooms' in George Town - they are available either free or at a reasonable cost from almost every school, church, licensed premises, sports and service clubs, hospitals, etc both publicly and privately-owned (maybe 20 - 30).

Of course, these are training and consulting rooms as in all LINC plans, but George Town already has VET and other post grade 10 facilities near the Port Dalrymple School and two Trade Training Centres - one at Port Dalrymple and another at Star of the Sea College - both apparently underutilised. Placing the Hub on Regent Square will further fragment the post grade 10 educational provisions in the town.

Large scale plans of the first two versions of the GT HUB were on display in the foyer of GTC Chambers from 3 August 2010 - even after RMPAT upheld an appeal on 3 March 2012. These were taken down just prior to the October GTC Meeting when the S43A for the Hub was approved, and large scale plans of the latest version for this now \$6.9m development, referred to in all the advertisements, certification, planning scheme etc have never been on public display since. During 9 days of TPC Hearings numerous alterations were made to these plans, but the final version has not been seen.

OTHER HUBS & CFCs

From my research all other Child & Family Centres are built close to existing educational facilities, childcare, neighbourhood houses, or training facilities and several make use of existing buildings. Many include longer term Childcare. This is in line with the Functional Design Brief that CFCs be built in the residential areas within walking distance of the clientele. The SIPS initial recommendation was that the George Town CFC be built near the Port Dalrymple School, but some parents from other schools objected to the site. No others appear to be in the commercial centre of their town.

There are only two other Hubs - Queenstown's was built around the existing council chambers, library and school of mines, but post grade 10 has already moved back to the school and the CFC is failing to pick up 'passing trade' because it is not near a primary school.

Bridgewater Hub has a dedicated Aboriginal CFC with 'spokes' in 3 neighbourhood early childhood schools. At least 6 or 7 stand-alone CFCs have been built since these. The P&F of the George Town CFC unanimously voted in Aug 2012 for a stand-alone CFC.

LACK OF INFORMATION & CONSULTATION & COMMUNITY OPPOSITION

The wider community was neither informed nor consulted before the George Town Council agreed to amend its planning scheme to allow a Hub to be built on Regent Square. The only consultation was with the Local Enabling Group in regard to the CFC component. There has been no consultation in regard to the LINC or Service Tasmania.

On 2 Dec 2009 the Chair of the L.E.G. advised the Early Years Strategy Interdepartmental C'tee: *That the George Town L.E.G. recommends that the CFC be located in close proximity to the Memorial Hall complex*. The L.E.G. consisted of 'service providers' and public servants and others in paid employment, with only a few parents and the site selection was based on the results of a survey of only 76 returns.

However, GTC Minutes 27 May 2009 show the decision on the site was already made and Council approved the Amendment to the Planning Scheme well before 2 Aug 2010 when the community first learnt of this \$6m development at a Public Forum.

It was obvious that the majority of around 100 people who attended that forum were against any building on Regent Square. Since then public opinion has been expressed through numerous deputations, letters and emails sent to politicians, councillors and the media.

Two petitions (440 & 719 signatures) have been sent to the House of Assembly; one to the Legislative Council (1,788 signatures); and another to the George Town Council (442 signatures) requesting a public meeting which was attended by almost 200 people a week prior to Christmas 2011, who overwhelmingly passed motions rejecting the proposed Hub building on Regent Square. (Details attached)

There has been a continued strong community interest in any council meeting or planning forum where Regent Square has been a focus and where many questions relevant to the Square and the Hub have been asked. In Dec 2012 around 100 people attended the AGM of GTC and showed great dissatisfaction with GTC procedures in regard to public accountability and representation. A Rally on Regent Square on Sat 19 Oct 2013 is a response to the Premier's continued refusal to face the wider George Town community.

HERITAGE CONSTRAINTS

The Heritage Guidelines that stipulate no more than 25% of the Square be used for buildings, parking or road access to such will preclude any future additions to the CFC. This % will be reached if the Hub and associated parking and road access is built on the proposed site. Many CFCs include long term Childcare and if this is seen to be required, there will be no possibility of expansion on this site if the heritage guidelines are strictly enforced. Similarly with any additional parking that will almost certainly be required - even more of the park could be alienated from public use if it is allowed.

In Dec 2009 when giving reasons for the site decision the L.E.G. said: *'while acknowledging the increased walking distance it is the experience of community members that people are currently accessing services nearby including pushing prams.*

Why should the most disadvantaged section of the community have further to walk, when the SIPS recommendation would see them with a CFC in the vicinity of their homes, near their neighbourhood school and neighbourhood house?

The site on Regent Square is at the very end of the town's core business area and is further than the present library for those who walk. If they don't already visit the library when shopping at

Woolworths, they are NOT going to walk further to the CFC/LINC HUB. Does George Town need a \$6.9m HUB?

SITE - CENTRALITY? TO ALL SCHOOLS? TO TOWN CENTRE? YOUNG FAMILIES WHO USE IT?

This site is not central to the main residential areas and more importantly it is not convenient to the clientele who are in most need of the services of the CFC. Many of them have no transport and it is further for them to walk to this site. There are very few young families in the immediate residential area. It is also away from other facilities such as the Neighbourhood House, Wattle Group, Men's Shed, Community Garden, etc.

EFFECT ON ECONOMY OF THE TOWN

While acknowledging an initial injection to the economy with the building, it will not be ongoing.

There will be a loss of revenue from the lease of Council-owned, rate-payer funded facilities in the Memorial Hall (for the Library and Online Access Centre, Rhythm & Rhyme, etc) and for the Council Chambers (Service Tas. and possibly Housing Tas.)

The George Town Hospital & Community Health Centre was built as a multi-purpose building and was expected to provide for community needs for the next 15 years.

There will be no increased expenditure by these people in the CBD unless at the expense of the few shops that are outside the central area e.g. Friend Street Supermarket and School Shop in Agnes St. Loss of patronage could actually threaten the small shops' viability.

George Town is a captive market - one community with one main shopping centre and one supermarket - with a finite amount of money, the only 'competition' is from Launceston shops. The Hub will make little difference to the businesses opposite it - several of which are now closed and restaurants do not open until early evening. If drinks are 'on tap' in the Hub, even the coffee shops will not benefit.

With the downturn of industry George Town must look to improve its share of the heritage tourism market for survival. Since 2004 volunteers in the Watch House and other museums have promoted the town as a Macquarie Town - the focal point of that being the Square and other streets that 'The Father of Australia' planned in 1811. We should be preserving and improving the Square as a welcoming parkland at all costs.

PARKING

The 1999 Central Area Strategy recommends extra parking *be in the core business area in close proximity to the council chambers and Macquarie St between Anne and Sorell Sts.* However, Kelly in his landscape Master Plan placed two extra car parks north of the existing parks to accommodate the extra 120 car parks conditioned on the DA for the Memorial hall extensions - one to the east and the other to the west of the Hall - on the proposed site for the Hub!

This area is needed for parking every time there is a major function in the hall or on the Square or both. There is already pressure on street parking on many busy days, despite what the 'experts' say - they don't live here to see how busy it is, especially at lunchtime when workers from Bell Bay come into town for their lunch.

If business picks up and empty shops reopen, the 48 or more car parks on the Hub site will be required. The Memorial Hall complex has the potential for large-scale parking demands with - Supper Room (50 guests) Memorial Hall (250) Graham Fairless Centre (500) and a kitchen to cater for 250 inside or out. All this will create pressure for further parking on Regent Square and more loss of parkland. Virtually no extra parking spaces have been provided to cater for the Hub. The car parks in the Square provide parking for shop workers and clients in the main street and beyond to the south.

WASTE OF FUNDS

The completely refurbished library and online access centre were part of the Memorial Hall extensions opened in March 2008. These and the CFC programs are the main activities within this large complex, but they will be moved out to the HUB less than 30 metres away!

Service Tasmania is now conveniently housed in the foyer of the council chambers - about 100m from the hall and hospital but will be moved to the Hub. The Court Room and foyer, complete with toilet facilities (about 1/4 of the Council Chambers) has not been used for council purposes, apart from storage, since about 2002.

The new CFC will also see existing services relocated from where they are currently provided in the schools, halls, hospital, neighbourhood house, etc.

GEORGE TOWN HOSPITAL & COMMUNITY CENTRE - DUPLICATED?

<http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/REPORTS/gtdhr.pdf>

I have studied the 2006 Public Works Ctee reports on the George Town Hospital & Community (Health) Centre and note the stark differences in the community consultation and input (that I know took place) in comparison with the HUB project - and also with community acceptance.

There was much collaboration between the Hospital, the George Town Community Health and Welfare Committee and the adjoining Medical Centre, and extensive consultation with providers and stakeholder groups. This resulted in full support from the broader community for the project, which was planned as a **flexible multifunction facility that could be adapted to changing needs of the community.**

There was a conscious effort to avoid duplicating services that were already provided in the area eg radiography, ambulance service, residential aged care and rural health branch, etc and to work in with the adjoining Medical Centre, Ambulance Service, Aged Care.

If the GTH&CC is fulfilling the promises in the excerpts below, it is already doing what the proponents of the Hub propose to do. It appears the Hub will duplicating at least part of the role of this multi-purpose Health facility and it will result in services moving from the GTH&CC to the Hub.

Many residents express concern about the waste of money in duplicating what we already have. These excerpts show what the Hospital was to provide.

Phil Morris, A/Manager Strategic Development, Aged Rural & Community Health;

.. we have a partnership with the George Town Health and Welfare Committee to provide regional health services programs.... our aim here at George Town, ... is to have a new and integrated one-stop facility which combines hospital services along with community health and welfare services. This notion of a one-stop facility was one of the crucial phrases that emerged when we first started talking about this back in about 2000. I think it is a neat little phrase which encapsulates the idea that health and community health and community welfare services are all on the one spot so everyone knows where to go. The opportunity for those services to work together for the good of the community is clearly enhanced. ... We want to try and strengthen our health promotion and community health approach and obviously again this one-stop facility will give us the capacity to improve our information for the community. It has already become known as a place where, if you want to know something about what is going on, you can ring the hospital or ring the centre. We also want to try and offer comprehensive and accessible integrated services - that is, services that are available to the community where they are working together. We want to provide those to individuals and to families in the whole community within this catchment area of George Town.

the George Town Community Health and Welfare Committee support the redevelopment of the Hospital site to co-locate appropriate health and welfare services. Therefore the future role of the site is envisaged to

be as a multifunction facility... new primary health care services including a domestic violence worker, young parents' support, family counselling, a youth health worker, kinder-gym, exercise classes for the aged, and a range of other health education programs. These services address the need for community services reflecting in part the area's demographics.

The great thing about the building, ... is its location... very central to the town precinct and ... the medical practice, to the ambulance and to the university accommodation house. It is an excellent location and one which I would love to be able to duplicate in other places.

The Ctee concluded:

The redevelopment of the George Town District Hospital will provide a combined hospital/community health services site that will serve the community now and into the future by providing a contemporary health facility that is adaptable to meet future needs. The schematic design submitted fulfils the objectives of the project providing a cost-effective facility of appropriate quality and flexibility. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted, at an estimated total cost of \$6,100,000.

The GTH&CC was to provide:

In-Patient Care; Family Room; Treatment Room; Oral Health Service; Physiotherapy; Family and Child Health; Shared Consulting, Interview and Meeting Facilities; Community Health & Community Health and Welfare; Central Services

The following list is from the 2012-2013 edition of George Town's WHAT WHEN WHERE Information Book showing the services available at the GT Hospital and Community Centre.

HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDED AT GTH & CC:

TYPE OF SERVICE	WHEN	CONTACT
Paediatrician	3 rd Monday Monthly 1 st Wednesday Monthly	6348 8972
Autism Psychologist	2 nd Monday monthly	
LGH Physio	Tues & Thurs PM	6380 3620
Community Nursing	Weekdays	6380 3645
Home Help/HCA	Weekdays	6380 3649
Meals on Wheels	Daily – not Thurs or Saturday	6380 3605
Child Health Clinic	Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri	6380 3618
Children's Dental Clinic	Monday – Thursday	6382 8975
Adult Dentist (healthcare card holders)	Thursdays & Fridays	6336 4100
David Casalegno Podiatry	Fortnightly – Fridays	0419 129 755
Community Podiatry	6 weekly Mondays/Thurs	63336 5155
Audio Clinic – private	Monthly – Thursdays	6334 1466
Drug & Alcohol	Fortnightly – Thursdays	6336 5577
GP North Psychologist	Weekly – Fridays	6331 3777
Continence Worker	Monthly – Tuesdays	6336 5108
Osteopathy	Weekly – Wednesdays	6334 9044
Cancer Support Group	Monthly	6382 1276
Laurel House	Monthly – Fridays	6334 2740
Dental Prosthetist	Weekly Wednesdays >1700	6331 4168
GP North Diabetes Educator, Podiatrist, Dietician, Exercise Physiologist	Monthly – Wednesdays	6331 3777
Anglicare Financial Counselling	Monthly – Wednesdays	Clients phone: 1800 243 232
Baptcare Support Worker	Thursday & Friday	0488 039 333
Centacare Worker	Tuesday – Friday	0437 627 660
Centacare Worker	Monday – Thursday	6380 3612



This development has been opposed by the majority of the George Town community for last four years, it is a waste of public money and much existing infrastructure and it will not be in the right place to attract the very people it is intended to help, because it is too far away from their residential area. It will bring little money to the town apart from in the building phase.

I appeal to the Public Works Ctee to reject this development on Regent Square in line with the demonstrated wishes of the vast majority of the George Town community.

Submitted by:

Lorraine Wootton, 310 Low Head Rd, Low Head, TAS. 7253

Phone (03) 62 82 4412 or Mobile 0447 359 662

15 October, 2013.

PUBLIC OPINION / CONSULTATION re GEORGE TOWN LINC HUB

- June 1 2010 Education Department applied to rezone Regent Square to allow for Civic Building.
- July 16 2010 - Representations close - 6 received (officially)
- June 23 2010 GT Council decides to initiate Amendment re Civic Building on Regent Square.
- Unprecedented numbers of representations were received against on each Amendment and Development Application in relation to the Hub - 30 in Oct 2011 and 34? in Oct 2012

PUBLIC INFORMATION FORUM - around 100 people attended at very short notice

Advertised by GT Council in Examiner on **Sat 31 July 2010** as LEARNING INFORMATION NETWORK CENTRE (LINC) AND CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE PROJECT, REGENT SQUARE GEORGE TOWN
Held **4.00 pm Mon. 2 August 2010** in George Town Memorial Hall.

Around 100 people present with Mayor and GM, Ms Jenny Rayner (LINC) and Mr Brad Wheeler (Educ Dept) and some councillors also present.

The majority expressed concern with the lack of community information and consultation and were against any building on Regent Square. For most it was the first they had heard of it.

PETITION TO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY - 440 signatures

Tabled in House of Assembly by Michael Ferguson MHA 10 March 2011

The petition of the undersigned citizens of George Town municipality points out to the House the unqualified opposition to the building of a HUB, comprising a Learning Information Network Centre (LINC) and a Child and Family Centre (CFC), to the west of the Memorial Hall on George Town's historic Regent Square, an area that is currently zoned 'Public Recreation', and also to the proposed transfer of the recently refurbished Library and Online Access Centre from the Memorial Hall Complex to the new HUB.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that the House recognise their genuine concerns for the historic and cultural values of Regent Square and ensure that:

- 1. No additional large scale buildings are erected on Regent Square – though minor sympathetic additions to the existing building may be acceptable.*
- 2. The refurbished Library and associated services remain in the Memorial Hall complex.*
- 3. The George Town HUB for the remaining services be located elsewhere, but NOT on Regent Square.*

PETITION TO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY - 719 signatures

Tabled in House of Assembly by Michael Ferguson MHA 10 March 2011

The petition of the undersigned residents of the Municipality of George Town draws to the attention of the House that ongoing funding for the Community Managed Online Access Centre is insecure due to the LINC project being proposed in George Town by the State Government.

Your petitioners therefore request the House to instruct the Department of Education responsible for funding the George Town Community Managed Online Access Centre to give its written assurance

that it will continue to fund the George Town Online Access Centre and not cease its funding should a proposed LINC be built by the State Government in George Town.

**PETITION TO GTC CALLING FOR A PUBLIC MEETING - 443 signatures (270 in 1 day outside Woolworths)
Presented to George Town Council by Cr John Widdowson 19 October 2011.**

**PUBLIC MEETING - held 7.00 pm in Memorial Hall on Wed 14 December 2011
Attended by almost **200 people** and these six motions were passed overwhelmingly:**

- (1) That this meeting opposes the proposed new HUB building for Regent Square.
Against: 11 CARRIED
- (2) That no new building be erected on Regent Square.
Against: 11 CARRIED
- (3) That the Library and On Line Centre remain in the Memorial Hall building.
Against: 6 CARRIED
- (4) That the Child and Family Centre be located elsewhere, but not on Regent Square.
Against: 12 CARRIED
- (5) That the George Town Council take steps to ensure the preservation of Regent Square and its heritage values. **Against : 0 CARRIED**
- (6) That the George Town Council continue the enhancement of Regent Square as a public park and recreation area. **Against : 0 CARRIED**

**PETITION TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - 1,788 total signatures
Almost 1,200 from George Town municipality; 100 from Tamar; 210 - Launceston; 146 - other
Collectors agree that 90 - 95% of those approached, willingly signed, across all age groups.**

tabled in the Legislative Council by Ivan Dean MLC Tuesday, 15 May 2012

To the Honourable the President and Members of the Legislative Council, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the undersigned citizens of Tasmania

That your Petitioners draw to the attention of the House the Government's intention to place a large building on George Town's historic Regent Square for the Child and Family Centre (CFC), LINC and Service Tasmania shop, and the George Town Council's decision to rezone the land for that purpose.

And your Petitioners request that the Legislative Council will

- 1. Ensure that Regent Square's heritage and cultural values are recognised*
- 2. Support the community's wish to preserve Regent Square as public open space, with no further buildings*
- 3. Keep the LINC and Service Tasmania Shop in their present location and place the CFC on a new site.*

George Town Council - COUNCIL MEETING – 18 April 2012 - CONFIRMED MINUTES

073/12 MOTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING – PROPOSED HUB, REGENT SQUARE – HELD ON 14TH DECEMBER 2011 FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL

SUMMARY

This report details the motions that were moved at the public meeting held 14th December 2011 for consideration by Council.

DECISION

Moved: Cr Barwick / Cr O'Sign

That the following motions (a) through to (f) as moved at the public meeting held on 14th December 2012 be received and noted:

- (a) That this meeting opposes the proposed new HUB building for Regent Square.
- (b) That no new building be erected on Regent Square.
- (c) That the Library and On Line Centre remain in the Memorial Hall building.
- (d) That the Child and Family Centre be located elsewhere, but not on Regent Square.
- (e) That the George Town Council take steps to ensure the preservation of Regent Square and its heritage values.
- (f) That the George Town Council continue the enhancement of Regent Square as a public park and recreation area.

CARRIED

For: Crs Broomhall, Barwick, Parish, O'Sign, Burt & Geale

Against: Crs Cory, Gibbons & Archer

Public Forum re GT Draft Interim Planning Scheme 2012 - 19 submissions regarding the Zoning of Regent Square.

2013 - Petition calling for a Review of GTC - 1,192 signatures.

Lorraine Wootton.

15th October, 2013

Gerald O'Doherty,
37 Mary Street,
George Town, 7253

The Secretary,
Joint Parliamentary Committee on Public Works,
Parliament of Tasmania,
Parliament House,
Hobart, TAS. 7000

Dear Sir,

I would like the opportunity on 22nd October, 2013, to appear before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Public Works to voice my objections about the proposed George Town Hub Building, 26-67 Macquarie Street, George Town (Regent Square).

These are some of the issues I would like to address:-

1. Value for Public Money

A wasteful expenditure of \$6.9m on the unnecessary duplication of already existing, excellent, modern facilities, all within minutes of one another. For instance we already have a newly refurbished and upgraded library and online centre (line), modern Service Tasmania facilities at the George Town Council Chambers and a new George Town Hospital and Community Health Centre. The \$20m Hospital and Community Health Centre was built with the idea of centralizing these services, so why would you now decentralize them? Why would Government spend the money on building new ones when the community are perfectly happy with the modern facilities that we already have?

2. CBD Parking Problems

If the Hub development goes ahead, the Government and the Council have agreed to take 90 CBD parking spaces from businesses and residences, the spaces we all use when shopping. This represents over half of the CBD parking which has been available for approximately 60 years.

This had the potential to be detrimental in these lean times to some already struggling businesses and could cost jobs. At times there is already pressure on the CBD parking now. In the future, when the economy picks up and we have increased business, this will increase parking pressure even further.

Any competent town planner or business person would know that adequate parking spaces in the CBD are like gold. This situation is definitely not good

planning practice. Good planning practice would dictate that you plan at least 50 years into the future.

3. Lack of Public Consultation

At no stage have the George Town Council or the State Government properly consulted with the wider community. Therefore, in my opinion, they do not have a social licence to build on Regent Square. Quite to the contrary, Council and Government seem to have ignored repeated public concern from a large number of the community regarding the building of a Hub on Regent Square. This is the community's main public park and recreation area, hence, we are all stakeholders and should have been consulted. The only consultation was with the LEG Group, which is not representative of the wider community.

Some Examples of Petitions

- (a) Petition containing 719 signatures tabled in the House of Assembly, 10th March 2010;
- (b) Petition containing 440 signatures tabled in the House of Assembly, 10th March 2010;
- (c) Petition containing 443 signatures to call a public meeting presented to the George Town Council, 19th October, 2011;
- (d) Public Meeting held 14th December, 2011 approximately 200 people attended this meeting. These six motions were passed overwhelmingly:-
 - (1) That this meeting opposes the proposed new Hub building for Regent Square (Against:11, motion CARRIED).
 - (2) That no new building be erected on Regent Square (Against:11, motion CARRIED)
 - (3) That the Library and On Line Centre remain in the Memorial Hall building (Against:6, motion CARRIED)
 - (4) That the Child and Family Centre be located elsewhere, but not on Regent Square (Against:6, motion CARRIED)
 - (5) That the George Town Council take steps to ensure the preservation of Regent Square and its heritage values (Against:0, motion CARRIED)
 - (6) That the George Town Council continue enhancement of Regent Square as a public park and recreation area (Against:0, motion CARRIED)

Over 94% present, supported motions number one and two. It should be pointed out that two of the eleven people in the audience who voted against motions one and two, were George Town Councillors.

- (e) Petition containing 1788 signatures tabled in the Legislative Council, 15th May, 2012, the petition read as follows:-

"To the Honorable the President and Members of the Legislative Council, in Parliament assembled. The Petition of the undersigned citizens of Tasmania, That your Petitioners draw to the attention of the House the Government's intention to place a large building on George Town's historic Regent Square for the Child and Family Centre (CFC), LINC and Service Tasmania shop, and the George Town Council's decision to rezone the land for that purpose. And your Petitioners

request that the legislative Council will: (1) Ensure that Regent Square's heritage and cultural values are recognized, (2) Support the community's wish to preserve Regent Square as public open space, and (3) Keep the LINC and Service Tasmania Shop in their present location and place the CFC on a new site."

Still, our Mayor, some Councillors and Politicians insist there are only a small minority against the proposal to put a Hub on Regent Square. They have no evidence at all to support these claims unlike the above examples given by the Petitioners (they seem to be in denial).

4. Child and Family Centre (CFC)

All evidence shows that the community has no concern with the CFC component of the Hub and suggest it should be a stand-alone development on another suitable site as it was originally intended to be.

At a meeting of the Parents and Friends of the George Town Child & Family Centre, on 30th August, 2012, there was a unanimous vote for a stand-alone CFC. Since George Town's Hub was first suggested, seven other stand-alone CFCs have been built, close to residential areas and schools.

There are two main residential areas in the Town and they are to the North-East and the South of the Town and are well over one kilometer away from the Regent Square site, so are not within walking distance.

5. Alternate Sites

If you look at the George Town Council Report-Proposed Hub Locations George Town, dated 11th October, 2012, which was sent to the Department of Education, it is obvious there are other possible sites available for the proposed Hub. One in particular comes to mind, the site on the corner of Anne and Arthur Streets. Out of nine sites identified in the Report, it appears obvious that this site is the most suitable site, a lot more so than the proposed Regent Square site.

In an effort to save the Square, a local family has generously offered to donate this highly valuable large level site of 6530 square meters on which to build a CFC and/or Hub. This site is centrally located and close to community facilities and residential areas (free of any charge or conditions).

Why place a large Hub building on Regent Square which is our valuable park and recreation reserve (as it has been for over 200 years), when there is suitable alternate land available?

This being so, why would one take the recreational parkland of Regent Square off the families and children of our community?

In my opinion, this type of development would not be forced on the community of Launceston with their City Park or Princes Square or Hobart and their St Davids Park and Franklind Square. Regent Square is older than all of these. The

Government knows there would be a massive backlash from the people of Launceston and Hobart.

6. Not Fit for Purpose

I would suggest the Hub Building and all of its intended services are not all socially compatible and may well invite some potential security problems. I also contend the Hub being built right next to the Memorial Hall complex which has the ability to host large scale events. For example, supper room with bar facilities (50 people), Memorial Hall (250 people), Graham Fairless Centre (500 people). I think this makes the Hub development not fit for purpose as it is completely incompatible with the Memorial Hall complex as the Memorial Hall complex is available all year round to be hired out for large and small scale events. Who knows what these events may be, the potential is endless.

7. Historic Cultural Heritage Significance/Crown Lease

The land in question is under a 99 year lease from the Crown to the George Town Council. This lease began 1st July, 1974 and expires 1st July, 2073. The terms of the lease are as follows:-

- (i) That lessee will not assign underlet or part with the possession of the said demised premises or any part thereof;
- (ii) That lessee will not use or suffer to be used the said demised premises for any purposes whatsoever other than for the purposes of Public Recreation and Amusement for which the said demised premises were reserved by proclamation as aforesaid.

This makes the intentions of the lease very clear.

This should also make it very clear to the George Town Council and the State Government that this land was not meant to be used for the purpose they intend, particularly when there are other suitable sites available.

The whole of Regent Square is listed on the Tasmanian Heritage Register and is Tasmania's oldest park situated in George Town, Australia's oldest town.

Regent Square was planned in December 1811 by Governor Lachlan Macquarie.

- (a) Regent Square is of historic heritage significance for its ability to demonstrate early urban planning in Australia and the direct influence of Governor Lachlan Macquarie (1762-1824) upon the design of the first country towns in Australia;
- (b) Regent Square is one of only two examples of central town squares in Tasmania that demonstrate the direct influence of Governor Lachlan Macquarie in early town planning within Australia;
- (c) Regent Square and the surrounding town grid of George Town constitute a rare and predominantly intact example of a 'Macquarie


- Town', demonstrating the essential characteristics of Governor Macquarie's designs for the first country towns in Australia;
- (d) Regent Square has strong association with Governor Lachlan Macquarie who in 1811 selected the location of George Town, the location of Regent Square, and the placement of civic buildings surrounding the Square. Macquarie had a leading role in the social, economic and architectural development of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. The plan of the town with Regent Square as its central feature, was surveyed and drawn by ex-convict surveyor, James Meehan (1774-1826) to Governor Lachlan Macquarie's instructions.

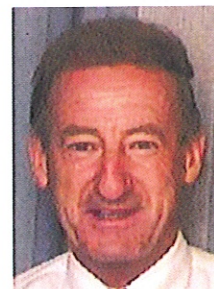
I would contend that you will probably have bureaucrats (paid public servants) on behalf of their ministers extolling the virtues of this project and reasons behind the project. In regard to this, I would argue the key issues would also apply if the project was on one of the other suitable sites, if the Government is genuine about this development.

It has been quite discerning that certain Government Ministers have stated in the past, that if the Hub does not go on Regent Square, it will go to Sorell. This is unfortunate because if their reasons for having these services were genuine, then they would not engage in such emotional blackmail.

I urge all members of the Public Works Committee to take off their political hats (as I know you will) and save our community from this well meaning but irrationally thought out location for this project.

Yours faithfully,


Gerald O'Doherty



IVAN DEAN MLC

Independent Member for Windermere
Legislative Council

9 October, 2013

The Joint Standing Committee of Public Works

shane.donnelly@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Committee Members,

This document refers to a recent meeting held at George Town and relative to the Hub/Child and Family Centre to be constructed at Regent Square.

I forward the following information and motions for your consideration and attention please.

On the 12 September 2013 at the request of Friends of Regent Square (FORS) I convened and chaired a meeting of Parties with Interest at George Town. George Town Mayor Roger Broomhall declined an invitation to attend. Those in attendance and representing a particular interest group were:

Bridget Archer – Deputy Mayor – George Town Council and Mother of four young children;
 Brian Gunst – Friends of Regent Square;
 Graeme Neilson – Friends of Regent Square;
 Peter Cox – George Town and District Historical Society;
 Lorraine Wootton - George Town and District Historical Society;
 Terri Cameron – George Town Chamber of Commerce;
 Alan Golley – George Town Chamber of Commerce;
 Peter Parkes – George Town Online and Digital Hub;
 Gerald O'Doherty – George Town Residents and Ratepayers Association;
 Debbie Rainbow – George Town Residents and Ratepayers Association;
 Jennifer Jarvis – Office of Premier – DpaC;
 Henry Pill – Office of Premier – DpaC

Mr Richard Nicholls was also present and kindly assumed the position of minute taker, and as such did not participate in the discussion.

The following motions were moved and carried:

- 2.1 The delegates support a stand alone Child and Family Centre in George Town
- 2.2 The delegates invite and encourage the Parents and Friends of the George Town Child and Family Centre, and representatives of the State, to meet and resolve to consider coming together with those delegates invited to this meeting.
- 2.3 The delegates encourage the Premier, as lead Minister, to suspend the progression towards the construction of the HUB on Regent Square in George Town until a proposed meeting of all stakeholders is held, to bring together representations from all participating mediation groups.
- 2.4 The delegates call on Michelle O'Byrne Minister for Children to reconsider the current design of the co-located service provision proposal, to [accurately] reflect the current needs of the wider George Town community.

Relative to motion 2.2 the George Town Child and Family Centre and Parents and Friends spokesperson indicated support for the meeting but within 48 hours, withdrew from that position.

The three remaining motions speak for themselves and you are urged to give each serious consideration. This is a matter that has caused much angst, friction and frustration within the town and it is now well time for some healing processes to be embraced.

George Town and the region needs a contemporary Child and Family Centre but it needs to be a development of the right design and erected in the most appropriate location. It is this community that will use the centre and have to live with it – not government Ministers and bureaucrats.

I respectfully request that you give consideration to the motions, particularly 2.3 and 2.4 and that you provide feedback through my office for the information of all delegates.

I thank you for your consideration of this important matter and look forward to your response, at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'I' followed by a horizontal line.

Ivan Dean MLC
Independent Member for Windermere

CC: *Premier Lara Giddings*
Brian Wightman MP
The Honourable Michelle O'Byrne MP
The Honourable Nick McKim MP
Honourable Will Hodgman MP
Jeremy Rockliff MP
Michael Ferguson MP
Peter Gutwein MP
Kim Booth MP

From: Desmond T Wootton
310 Low Head Road
Low Head TAS 7253
Phone: 03 63824412

To: The Secretary
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000

Date: 15th October 2013

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works – George Town Hub

The George Town and District Historical Society has been keen to see the preservation and improvement of Regent Square as the central park of George Town for many years. It made recommendations to the draft Regent Square Master Plan in 2007, and has written to the Council commenting on the need for the heritage values of the Square to be recognized and for proper interpretation panels be placed on the Square telling of the role played by Governor Macquarie in the foundation of George Town.

The Society also actively supported the successful application for George Town and Low Head to be classified as an historic town. This was, apart from other factors, based on the role of Governor Macquarie in the foundation of the town and the continued existence of the original street plan with Regent Square as the town's central square. This has been promoted by the Historical Society through its management of the Watch House Museum and by historic walking tours and other activities.

George Town has a rich heritage which still exists behind the modern façade of the town, and it has a proud history as the original site of the first European settlement in Northern Tasmania and as one of the five surviving towns founded by Governor Macquarie and surveyed by James Meehan, all containing a central square. We believe it is important to preserve and promote this heritage as a means of developing tourism in the town and diversifying the town's economy away from its present reliance on its industrial base.

The original application for rezoning the Square to allow for the hub to be built contained a statement that the land in question had no heritage values whatever. This was followed in the building application with comments on Governor Macquarie and the early development of George Town which were not true. As a result of the failure of the Government to address our concerns about the non-recognition of the heritage values of Regent Square, we applied for the Square to be placed on the Tasmanian Heritage List.

While we were successful in obtaining a heritage listing, we continue to be concerned that the true heritage value of the Square has not been recognized. This is shown by a letter from Dr D Snowden, Chair of the Tasmanian Heritage Council that states,

Determining the significance of the Square has not been a simple matter for the Heritage Council. It has been complicated by factors such as the degree to which Governor Macquarie's intention for the Square remains open to interpretation, the early abandonment of Macquarie's intentions for the town when little more than the street grid had been established and his vision far from implemented, and the relatively modest use and development of the Square (including its landscape) over time...¹

Each of these suppositions is incorrect:

- a) We know exactly what Governor Macquarie intended for Regent Square. He instructed surveyor Meehan to design the town in accordance with their discussions when they both had been at George Town in December 1811. Meehan's survey notes state that the Square was "intended to be reserved for the use of the Town &c." Over the next six years Macquarie closely followed the development of the town, giving instructions for the location of buildings and sending several shiploads of skilled convicts as artisans for their construction.
- b) The statement about 'the early abandonment of Macquarie's intentions for the town when little more than the street grid had been established and his vision far from implemented' is not correct. Poor supervision of the work and arguments between the Inspector of Works and the Commandant made progress very slow, but in May 1819 the town was far enough advanced for the Commandant to take up residence in the town. By 1820 12 brick buildings and houses, 37 wooden houses and 43 skillings had been erected.²

Governor Macquarie visited George Town in 1821, and was very pleased with its progress:

His EXCELLENCY derived particular Satisfaction from observing, that the Troops and Convicts have been respectively most comfortably accommodated; the former having a very good Barrack, and the latter neat Huts, with Gardens adjoining, sufficiently large to supply Vegetables in Abundance. The chief Buildings completed in George Town, are - the Commandant's House; Quarters for the Civil and Military Officers; a commodious Parsonage House; a Gaol; a Guard-House; and a temporary Provision Store; and there is a temporary Chapel; and a large School-House in Progress, and nearly completed.

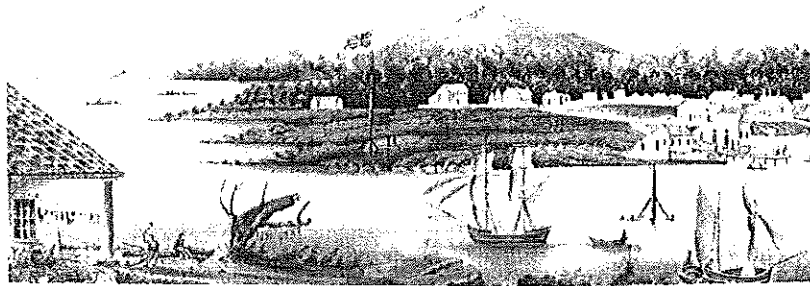
The Governor gave names to the town's streets and the Square, which was named after George the Prince Regent, who had recently succeeded to the throne as King George IV. By 1823 George Town had a population of more than 543, of who about 392 were convicts.³

This image of George Town shows the extent of the buildings in the town. Many of them survived until the 1880s and some until the 1960s, when they were demolished as the new industrial town was built.

¹ Letter from Snowden to Cox, 27/2/2013.

² *Historical Records of Australia*, Series 3, Vol.iii, pp.726.

³ *Historical Records of Australia*, Series 3, Vol.iv, pp.635-7.



George Town was not abandoned as a settlement when the headquarters returned to Launceston in April 1825. For many years it was the only sizable town on the north coast and an out-port for Launceston. Larger vessels unloaded their cargoes there, and all out-going ships had to be inspected to ensure there were no convicts aboard. Many convicts remained in the town, with a female factory occupying the clergyman's house. In 1827 a company of Veterans under Captain Darcy was posted to the town to provide for its administration, and a magistrate was appointed to head the administration in 1830. In the 1830s George Town became the main port for the export of livestock to Port Phillip and South Australia, and the Port Officer had his headquarters there. It also became increasingly popular as a holiday town.

c) The comment about 'the relatively modest use and development of the Square (including its landscape) over time' misinterprets the aim for Macquarie's central squares. None of them were intended as public gardens but as places for the use of the people of the town. Like Regent Square, the surviving NSW Macquarie town squares were all denuded of trees and used for grazing animals and sport and no attempt was made to 'beautify' them until the 1860s and 70s.⁴ They all became recreation reserves in the latter part of the 19th century and used as areas for sport. In Sydney Hyde Park was reserved for the same purpose. Historian Grace Karskens wrote:

This was no park in the modern sense - early Sydney people would not recognise today's garden beds, lawns, statuary and fountains, nor the grand rows of figs... There was 'not a tree upon it', no plantings at all and the space remained bare and open well into the 1840s ... Hyde Park, unencumbered by shrubs and trees and utterly unlovely, remained public open space for walking, races, exercise and games, the most popular by far being cricket.⁵

⁴ See McQuade Park Conservation Management Plan, pp.6, 17, 19; Richmond Park Conservation Management Plan, pp.8-9.

⁵ Karskens, G., *The Colony A History of Early Sydney*, p.204.



Hyde Park Sydney in the 1840s

Regent Square's development matches that of the public squares in the other Macquarie towns. It has been a reserve since 1891, was the town's main outdoor sports centre for eighty years until the early 1970s, and has since then continued as the venue for the town's main festivals and major events. Tasmanian Heritage Council Officer Boersma in his evidence to the Planning Commission, wrote,

"...the square's most significant characteristics are its position in a contemporary street grid, its intact curtilage and its character as a largely open space for community use all of which should be understood in the context of being part of Governor Macquarie's vision of 1811.

The Proposed development does reduce the heritage values of Regent Square by effectively creating a wall between the parkland and the western part of the Macquarie Street frontage. It also introduces a built structure onto the Elizabeth Street side of the square. It cuts off vistas from these streets into the square and it will remove the Lions Grevillia garden, which lately has been neglected and allowed to fall into its present disgraceful condition. Effectively it changes Regent Square from a central square facing the town's main street into a back yard.

It is too large for its site, allows no room for expansion within its envelope, will result in the further incursion of car parking into the Square and, because of the inadequate provision of further parking, will increase pressure for even further car parking areas on the Square.

There is no need for such a large building to be placed on Regent Square. The LINC part of the development could easily be retained within the existing Memorial Hall complex, and there are many alternative locations closer to the residential areas of the town where the Child and Family Centre could operate efficiently.

The development should be refused.

Desmond T Wootton

(Chairman – George Town and District Historical Society Inc.)

Graeme and Sue Neilsen
PO Box 63
GEORGE TOWN TAS 7253

Ph. 63821915 or 0418131876

14 October 2013

The Secretary
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

ATTENTION: Shane Donnelly shane.donnelly@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir,

We wish to make the following submission re Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works – George Town Hub advertised The Examiner, Saturday, September 14, 2013.

Please note the advertisement directed enquires regarding the details of the proposed works to a contact but that resulted in advice **that the details were not available to the public.**

This submission is therefore made without the benefit of viewing the intended final proposal.

We request that we be given the opportunity to address the Committee at the hearing to be held at George Town on 22 October 2013 and table a number of plans and documents relevant to our submission and unable to be attached due to our absence from our file location.

We reference our submission in relation to Public Works Act 1914 15 Functions of Committee (2) (a), (b) and (c) which relate to the stated purpose, necessity and advisability and present and prospective value of public work projects.

2 (a) "the stated purpose thereof"

During the approval process, and including the hearing to RMPAT which rejected the proposal the George Town Hub has been described in different variations, conflicting descriptions and confusing changing of footprint devoid of size measurements. Further several of the stated purposes are a duplication of services readily and successfully available to the George Town Community detailed later in this submission.

The concept and the building of two HUB facilities in Tasmania is now several years into implementation with no others we believe planned or being constructed. Evidence of the success of the limited number of HUB facilities built and operating is such that their purported benefits and stated purpose **has not been achieved** resulting in modification or relocation of certain components. Why hasn't the George

Town Hub planned many years ago on the basis of "academic or bureaucratic" hypothesis been subjected to critical review? If there have been design changes why is this documentation not available to the general public?

In reference to the George Town HUB, service providers along with the targeted user groups and their supporting community based Parents & Friends have specifically and consistently requested a **stand alone Child & Family Centre (CFC)** proven to be successful models in the other areas of the state. It is submitted that this proposal should be rejected in its present and costly form and the proposal and plans should be modified by redesign and downsized to accommodate a stand alone CFC. The following is a quote from the minutes of a recent meeting between two visiting service staff and the Parents and Friends (P&F) of the George Town Child and Family Centre when discussing possible alternative sites and the type of facility. **"From group discussions it became clear that there needed to be negotiation around the HUB/CFC. Using knowledge gained from the PMI review of both sites, and thinking about the needs of families, participants were asked to nominate what they felt would best suit the needs of the George Town community and ensure the success of the CFC into the future. The P&F of the George Town CFC recommends moving forward with the building of a stand alone CFC on the Regent Square site. The Regent Square site is the best fit for the criteria set by families as well as having other positive outcomes for the community. A stand alone CFC is recommended due to the unpopularity of the HUB and the community opposition to the doubling up of service buildings. It is felt that by building a CFC in close proximity to the existing Library and On-line Access Centre we could still provide integrated service delivery across services with easy access to the services for families."**

There are many proven and successful CFC models in other areas of the state. Their success and the much more economically efficient buildings meet the needs of their communities. Their stand alone CFC's are not integrated with other services. George Town already has established and/or recently upgraded services all centrally located. (Please refer to the reasons for the building of the George Town Hospital and Community Centre completed several years ago and subjected to objective scrutiny by the then Public Works Committee) The savings in providing a stand alone facility will be considerable and in the range of 50% of the estimated costs for the George Town HUB. By way of example the highly successful and recently completed East Devonport CFC cost \$3.1 million. The size of the user and targeted group, the demographics and geography of East Devonport are highly comparable to that of George Town.

2 (b) "the necessity or advisability of carrying it out..."

The George Town HUB is reported to include a new CFC, new replacement of existing Linc (Library), new replacement of existing On Line Centre/Digital Hub and new replacement of existing Service Tasmania facilities.

We submit:

1. A new CFC is a project deserving of placement in George Town. Whilst the location is not in the terms of reference of the Committee we submit that the proposed location which was rejected by RMPAT is not advisable. The many "Training Rooms" were changed to "Meeting Rooms" –

why? Other CFC's have "Training Rooms" The rejection of the HUB/CFC in its present proposed form would allow the spending of considerable state funds to be critically examined taking in all considerations.

During the whole process the proponents have consistently stated that there were no available funds to consider an alternative site for a HUB/CFC after the original preferred site adjacent to the Port Dalrymple School was rejected by some potential users. As part of the family who had offered to donate the equivalent of over eight (8) centrally located building allotments directly opposite the Hospital/Community Centre and Doctors Surgery and very near to Regent Square we are "gob-smacked" that this offer was not placed before the Planning Authority (Council) or the Planning Commission. This offer was a genuine alternative to meet the needs of the whole community with the obvious benefit for ALL stakeholders to have their needs met and the historic values of Regent Square being preserved for all time, a matter now confirmed and supported by the Tasmanian Heritage Council for the remainder of the square.

2. The replacement Linc (Library) is a costly duplication of an existing and successful service facility in the context of necessity and advisability. The current and recently government funded renovations and refurbishing of the George Town Linc was the result of co-operative and community based liaison between the George Town Council and the Education Department (Library Division) – 2007/8 in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Memorial Hall and new Graham Fairless Centre. The community needs are being fully and enthusiastically met by the existing facility which is situated less than 50 metres from the proposed new complex and central to the existing car park and adjacent to the On Line and Digital Hub facilities.
3. Similarly the George Town On Line Centre and the Digital Hub are lauded as a leading edge facility, adjacent to the existing Linc and the recipient of significant Federal funding. The success of the existing facility is beyond doubt although there could be an argument that more space will be required in the future. These facilities do not necessarily need to be incorporated into a complex containing a CFC. The professionals who provide the service, the volunteers and most importantly the users and those educated by the services are very content with their lot. In particular there is a clear and demonstrated "ownership" factor of this facility as an individual unit and of utmost importance significant degree of value and acceptance for those who are seeking confidential or discreet education and assistance. We therefore submit that a new On Line Centre/Digital Hub is neither necessary nor advisable. This has been up until now the consistent and espoused viewpoint of those who operate and work with user groups.
4. Service Tasmania. The necessity, advisability and stated purpose for a new and relocated Service Tasmania is questionable. All stated evidence by the proponent's purports to an extended service employing more staff than the status quo. This is not correct and is a costly and unjustifiable proposition. Service Tasmania will not employ 3 full time staff as stated. Due to many factors the existing Service Tasmania facilities situated in the conveniently and centrally located Council Offices with ease of access and parking is now on reduced hours employing only 2 part time staff. Every indication is that this trend will continue due to many of Service

Tasmania activities being able to be accessed elsewhere (eg Post Office) or on line. The necessity and advisability of a new facility is therefore questioned both in terms of need and cost. Please Note: The vacating of the established LINC, On Line Centre/Digital Hub and Service Tasmania facilities will have a negative effect on Council (ratepayer/community) generated revenue from government agencies and leave vacant spaces in our public buildings compounding an already depleted commercial sector. There has been no request by the George Town community or Council for new, upgraded or relocated Linc, On Line Centre or Service Tasmania facilities.

5. Wider Service Provision: The relatively recently completed George Town Hospital and Community Centre (GTH&CC) would be the envy of any comparable town, suburb or community not only in Tasmania but Australia wide. The state government funded facility was built and staffed to meet the immediate and expected expanded needs of a growth location. (Pulp Mill) The growth has not occurred but the facilities are provided. There is no need for duplication or relocation of successful and ongoing provided services. We will table a list of the services that are provided at the centrally located GTH & CC many of which are currently and successfully used by the proposed users of a CFC. The current GTH & CC has the space, facilities and staff and any movement of these professionals to rooms to be provided at the proposed HUB will be a costly duplication. It should be noted that the GTH & CC is just a short walk across Regent Square or a drive of no more than a suburban block.

2 (c) Present and prospective value of the work:

The purported HUB is far too large (actual dimensions have never been shown) and we submit that the committee should recommend a re-design and downsizing of the facility to respect the established needs of all stakeholders. This re-design should take into account an accurate and contemporary evaluation of the few existing HUB's to ensure that any unnecessary expense, duplication or lack of amenity arising from the progression of a facility which was planned several years previous and not benefitting from review or experiences of other existing facilities.

Any re-design and cost savings will enable a community with strong feelings of being disenfranchised to be involved with the professional provider to establish a CFC with any justifiable ancillary services and devoid of costly and unnecessary duplicated facilities.

A smaller size will result in a slight inconvenience of a short delay. There are several and associated significant factors that we seek to bring to the attention of the committee:

Other Associated Matters

1. We are advised that a Section 64 (LUPPA) appeal is being implemented against the George Town Council to complete a car park which formed a Condition of Development to build the Graham Fairless Centre (Hall Extension). This car park is part complete (already \$87,000 spent) to comply with the Conditions of Approval. This car park is the footprint for the HUB. Therefore there is the potential for the farcical situation to arise where the George Town Council is

- required to complete their stated compliance with their own Planning Scheme, spend many thousands of dollars to complete a car park which will be destroyed by the proposed HUB/CFC.
2. George Town has a unique physical demographics pertaining to the central shopping area which has influenced car parking space reserved in the 1930's and implemented from the 1950's. Several significant planning matters have been influenced over the years by forward thinking councils to maintain parking for commerce and community buildings. Figures will be tabled for the benefit of the committee to consider the impact of the loss of parking for the commercial sector and existing buildings on Regent Square if this project is not rejected. Lack of car parking destroys a commercial sector.
 3. There is currently a 100 year lease commenced in 1974 between the Crown and the people of George Town via their council over Regent Square for purposes solely for Recreation. The proposed HUB is not advisable in its present form as it will negate the rights of the community for current use of the whole of Regent Square. The Committee's responsibility to consider the "advisability" should be considered in so much as the existence of the lease was never made known to the Planning Authority (Councillors) nor was the car park Condition of Development Approval from the George Town Council made known to the proponents (Education Department). Hidden behind a long held community "Folk Lore" was an actual legal document held by both the Proponents (Government) and the Planning Authority (Council) but never made known to Councillors or the community.
 4. The George Town community is extremely concerned re the engineering problems that have resulted in the rendering of much of Regent Square absolutely unusable for many months of the year in relation to drainage issues as a direct result of the recently constructed hall extension. The exercise equipment/band rotunda and pathways have been inaccessible for many months and under water. Any further building works will exacerbate this problem. Is this advisable?
 5. We are informed that there is a complaint currently before or soon to be submitted to the Integrity Commission in relation to many matters pertaining to the this proposal process. The community has not been consulted and is unnecessarily stressed. Tens of thousands of dollars raised from concerned citizens has been spent questioning process that legal and planning professionals have described as being "fatally flawed". All to no avail. The communities own Planning Scheme was set aside and the Tasmanian Planning Commission unable to consider process could have approved a Pig Farm on Regent Square. The community is now appealing to a "Third Umpire" for the government to achieve a better result at a better price. We can do no more.

Recommendation

The wider and demonstrative majority of the George Town community should be respected for their consistent calls to save state funds and to preserve the history of their community with no negative outcomes for any individuals, user groups or stakeholders. We therefore respectfully recommend to the committee that the proposal be rejected in its present form and that a new

concept for a stand alone CFC be advanced with the support and inclusion of the wider George Town community.

Graeme and Sue Neilsen

Shane Donnelly

From: B_Gunst <bgun@iprimus.com.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 15 October 2013 4:31 PM
To: Shane Donnelly
Subject: George Town Hub

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Brenda McMahon (Gunst)
 bgun@iprimus.com.au
 11 Elizabeth St
 George Town 7253
 Tel 03 6382 3717

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Re George Town Hub

Good morning Shane

1. Community support or lack of for the Linc/Hub on Regent Square

There is evidence that demonstrates that the majority of the local Community does not support any further building on Regent Square

2. Other sites are available for such a building-if indeed it is appropriate for this town

3. Many people believe that the concept of the Linc/Hub is flawed

- a. Parolees and drug abusers reporting to the same site as small children is to invite problems
- b. Safety issues with small children and traffic
- c. Other areas eg. Queenstown and Bridgewater Hubs are not working well
- d. The CFC needs to be closer to the residential area and area where mothers without transport can reach the facility by foot. In winter and cold weather, George Town has very cold winds which are not conducive to mothers with small children venturing out over a long distance.

4. It is not economical or necessary to duplicate services that are already running well-eg library and digital hub. All the proposed services already run in George Town.

5. Parking issues.

Is it logical to increase buildings in a town and decrease the amount of available parking?
 This is a regional, coastal tourist town and when an event happens a central area is essential.
 Even with the economic downturn and some empty shops it can be difficult to find a parking spot. George Town has a history of being a town of booms and busts, so when things improve where will parking be available? This is a planning disaster future.

When there is nowhere to park, people shop elsewhere

6. Amenities

When we bought a property at no 11 Elizabeth St, 10 years ago, we were told that the park opposite was **never to be built on.**

There was a plan drawn up by Dr Andreas Kelly to develop and beautify the park, which the local Council received but has never acted on

A lease for 99 years signed in 1976 states that the park is for recreation and amusement of the people of George Town. It was not for a select group, to be covered in buildings.

A green open space is just good town planning and Regent Square was identified as George Town's most important space.

As we face retirement, there will be 2 years of building noise, dust and vehicle fumes from 7am to 7 pm Monday to Friday and Saturday 9-5pm.

When this building is functional there will be dramatically increased lighting, noise and fumes. The hours of function are not set and it seems that it will operate outside business. Apart from the planned number of employees, there will be huge increase in the number of users of the facility and this will impact on us. Instead of living opposite a park with a view to the other diagonal we will be opposite a large building which has no relationship to the history of the town.

7. Lack of local Input. Less than 80 families were consulted in the planning process. When public consultation was demanded by the local population the results were ignored. In fact the Council and Education Department hired lawyers (at public expense) to defend their position. It would have been so much simpler to talk about the situation before going to a legal battle. Locals raised \$15,000 for legal fees to uphold their position and won the RMPAT appeal. One week later the Council changed the zoning so that they could build anything on the Square. Only 2 Councilors understand the issues raised here.

8. Tourism. George Town is a historic town and Regent Square is now registered. Volunteers have for many years run 3 museums-Low Head, The Watch House and Bass and Flinder's Centre. As one of Australia's oldest towns it is a major drawcard for those interested in the history of this country.

9. TPC Hearing. The Chairman did not allow many objections because he said the matters raised were issues for the Supreme Court. Our small Community feel disenfranchised because they do not have the \$100,000 necessary to go there, nor in a democracy should there be any need

Yours sincerely

Brenda McMahon (Gunst)

Helen Flanagan

12 Esplanade South

George Town 7253

Ph 63821926 or email

Mr Shane Donnelly

Secretary

Joint Standing Committee on Public Works TAS

Dear Mr Donnelly, I wish to make comment on this proposal before your committee.

2a. The stated purpose.

This proposal was originally designed in a different format, and the Education Department undertook appropriate site investigations-many years ago . The preferred site then, after assessment of many sites, was Port Dalrymple School, or near to. Somehow it morphed, and an all under one roof model, with Service Tas, CFC, Online Access and LINC evolved, and relocated to the Heritage Listed Regent Square site. Duplication of many successfully running services are in this proposal, however, I will leave others to expand on that aspect. The presented documents have changed in intent and dimension, even throughout the recent hearings by the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Please avail yourselves of their report, as they allude to shortfalls which were not within their jurisdiction to investigate or elaborate.

2b.Necessity or advisability of carrying it out, and revenue?

I question the security aspect of this proposed development, of siting a CFC which requires a discreet entrance, in the vicinity of a Service Tas Centre, Online Access centre and LINC. Children in the 0-5years age group being accommodated in the complex, will need secured key front entry, as well as the discreet entry placed at the rear. I allude to custody issues and privacy. Secure fencing along the boundaries surrounding the playground which is attached to the CFC are a necessity for the same reasons.

I question the siting of the Literacy and Numeracy centre on this site. The initial choice at Port Dalrymple is close to the school, Trade and Training Centre, Neighbourhood House and Community Garden. These, and the residential areas surrounding this site, are where closer support can be delivered, and many potential clients live, and are already accessing services, in less public surroundings. Please read part of the transcript from the ABC 7.30 Report from 10/10/2013 which I include. It is referring to a client at the Huonville HUB.

7.30 Report available online as video with transcript, from the last item on the report that night.

MICHAEL ATKIN: While Cameron Moran has been prepared to put in years of hard work to boost his skills, he says others are too proud to admit they need help.

CAMERON MORAN: They wouldn't touch it. They say they don't need it.

MICHAEL ATKIN: Can there be a lot of shame and embarrassment when people come in?

GINA PORTER, LITERACY TUTOR: Very much so. They want to tutor at the weekend where the streets are not so busy. We have clients who walk in with newspapers over their head. We've had clients who start the journey and then leave straight away.

The immediate demography of the Regent Square site would house very few prospective clients for the CFC, necessitating considerable travel for young parents. It is questionable whether clients would present for Literacy sessions at this most public site.

Revenue? I suggest if Regent Square was established, and maintained, as the iconic parkland it should be, being in the centre of town, and attractions aplenty in George Town and Low Head and district, the Chamber of Commerce members would receive far greater monetary return from Open Space than further buildings on the Square. Integrity will be further eroded, and the diagonals so important to the Macquarie design –sadly destroyed. George Town should be a day trippers paradise- a Heritage Listed Picnic Park as a base, and amenities and activities aplenty for all ages. This is a better return for the community, and perfectly good sites are available elsewhere for the CFC, and or HUB, duplications aside.

2c. Present and prospective public value of the work.

What is the lifespan of these services? I believe some models are already failing due to site and staffing, (including volunteers) and attendance, or lack of clients. Why wreck the integrity of a Heritage Listed Square for this proposal, when it can be sited elsewhere, and community concerns are addressed on all fronts. The George Town community respects the proposal regards the CFC, but certainly not the site. The growth area regards clients and further residential growth cannot be Regent Square and surrounds, the shopping precinct and river negate any possibility of this. The proximity of the Bass and Flinders Centre, and mens Boat shed opposite the park, and the Heritage walk, all lend themselves to incorporating Heritage and Nautical themes, and workshop opportunities around and on the park.

With kind regards,

Helen Flanagan.

helenflanagan10@yahoo.com.au

