

Items submitted by community members

Queanbeyan Community Meeting 19 May 2020



Question	Response
<p>Can the QPRC provide detailed costings and comparisons identifying why the CBD is charged 40% more than business Urban?</p>	<p>As highlighted in the draft Revenue Policy, Business CBD's average rate is \$10,950, while Queanbeyan urban businesses is \$9,154. It is recognised that a higher level of service is required within the CBD area, including cleaning of footpaths, installation of furniture, upkeep of gardens, maintenance of car parks and other services.</p> <p>Based on Office of Local Government data from the 2017-18 financial year, Group 4 councils (which includes QPRC) had an average business rate (not just CBD rates) of \$3,751 (excluding water, sewer and waste charges). QPRC's average business rate in 2017-18 was \$4,381 with Wagga, Orange, Goulburn Mulwaree, Broken Hill, Armidale and Albury all having higher average business rates.</p> <p>Council acknowledges the current state of the Queanbeyan CBD and has resolved a significant program of investment over the next 3-5 years to resource its CBD Transformation Strategy. Council acknowledges that the CBD of Queanbeyan should be a setting promoting openness, exchange and liveliness, and not the inactivity, dispersal of activity and underuse relative to its underlying potential. Council has progressively developed a framework of policies, masterplanning and land use controls in formulating its Queanbeyan CBD Transformation Strategy. The strategy is backed up by a six stage investment program to transform and revitalise the CBD. The initial stages are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Smart City Pilot and River Walk (FY 19) 2. Lowe Car Park incorporating Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct 3. Morisset car park 4. Rutledge car park 5. Monaro Corridor 6. Crawford Car Park
<p>The CBD Spatial Master Plan seems to acknowledge the problems outlined above and details how the QPRC is planning to address these. However, the plan appears to require a huge capital investment. We believe increased patronage, can only be achieved through urban in-fill and new business and or tenants in the CBD. In order to achieve this, a review of flood zones conditions is required. At present the flood zone restrictions prevent most residential developments in CBD. The majority of existing buildings, including units and residential housing, do not meet these</p>	<p>Council's CBD Transformation Strategy looks at increasing foot traffic in the CBD, both during the day and at night. To progress this, Council is proceeding with the construction of the Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct which is seen as the first step in the transformation of the Queanbeyan CBD. This development will free up a number of under utilised Council-owned buildings in the CBD which can be considered for a mix of commercial and residential developments, in turn increasing foot traffic in the area.</p> <p>Increasing the number of workers and residents in the Queanbeyan CBD will have a positive effect on local businesses.</p> <p>Following on from the CBD Transformation Strategy, Council has developed the Queanbeyan CBD Parking Strategy, Retail Plan, draft Place Plan and the CBD Spatial Master Plan. All of these plans are strategies are aimed at reinvigorating the Queanbeyan CBD.</p>

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<p>conditions. Accordingly, any new developments should not be subject to these strict conditions.</p> <p>What feasibility studies have been carried out to justify this investment (Queanbeyan CBD Spatial Master Plan)? For example, how have increases in patronage (and from where) to the CBD been calculated to justify CBD upgrades? There is a lot of competition from the Canberra market, especially Kingston Foreshore</p>	<p>The Queanbeyan Floodplain Risk Management Plan has recently been reviewed, however has not yet been adopted by Council.</p>
<p>All landlords of Monaro St contacted for input request angle parking with one lane traffic each way. Widening verges on Monaro St to accommodate space for alfresco dining is not considered appropriate for the following reasons. Queanbeyan weather is not conducive to outdoor dining; traffic noise makes for an unpleasant environment and there are insufficient businesses to take advantage of the widening. All landlords contacted also oppose the introduction of a clearway during peak times. In fact it would seem counter-productive to the desire to introduce alfresco dining in the street. Further, it not only takes away parking during busy periods but also represents an increased danger to pedestrians. A solution to some of these issues would be to revisit flood zone restrictions, introduce angle parking, develop a feasible CBD marketing plan and provide landlord grants to encourage increased usage of existing premises.</p>	<p>Plans for the upgrade of Monaro St are still in their early stages. Council is currently developing a community engagement strategy for the project and refining a project plan. Feedback will be sought from local business operators and property owners prior to the plans being finalised.</p> <p>Outdoor dining remains a popular option for businesses and Council remains committed to encouraging that across the LGA. To assist with this, Council has waived fees for footpath dining. It is anticipated that outdoor dining will become more popular post-COVID-19 restrictions as restaurants and cafes look to spread out their patrons. Businesses have the ability to include suitable outdoor heating, as is available in ACT suburbs.</p> <p>Additionally, the widening of footpaths is not just to encourage alfresco dining. Rather, it is a basic, well used and accepted urban design strategy to improve social amenity and pedestrian friendliness of a main street. Widened footpaths can increase the opportunity for retail displays on footpaths, outdoor working, social gathering, beautification amenity such as potted plants and outdoor furniture etc. In order to reduce the dominance of car traffic on Monaro Street also needs complementary action on the adjacent footpaths to increase the attractiveness of the public space for pedestrians – this can be accomplished by widening the footpaths.</p> <p>Increasing the quality of public realm which includes footpaths in Monaro St also provides a significant benefit for landlords and businesses by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public realm design has a positive impact on rental and capital values and, in particular, occupancy and take-up rates, as well as the overall market attractiveness of an area. • Public realm intervention can bring consequently about an improvement in human experience and real estate value through a change of image that attracts new dynamic tenants • Successful improvements in Monaro St could revitalise the area and act as magnet for people wanting to both live and work in a place that offers an attractive environment with consequent benefits for property values • Adding versatility to the street to cater for a range of new commercial activity • attracting more dedicated regular customers that have a higher propensity to spend • facilitates social interaction and quality of life for residents and visitors alike and engender civic pride in the CBD,

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging further good design in the locality or neighbouring areas, raising the standards of the wider area and multiplying value over time. <p>The social benefits attained by improving the public realm are immeasurable and well documented in research all over the world.</p> <p>Council's modelling shows that two lanes of traffic in each direction is required during the peak travel times.</p> <p>The Draft Queanbeyan Floodplain Risk Management Plan includes the allowance for residential above the FPL.</p> <p>QPRC would welcome the opportunity to work with businesses to develop a Marketing Plan for the CBD. This had been trialled in the past but received little support from the business community. QPRC would like to work with businesses during the Monaro St upgrade and support them with a number of initiatives including marketing support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council recently endorsed the exploration of developing incentives that support growth an activation within the CBD This includes examining such things as an Exemplar Catalyst Project program, Design Review Panel, Main Street Retail Zone and other associated incentives. QPRC would welcome discussion with any business on ideas to effectively generate activation.
<p>We note there are plans for multi-level car parking in Morisset St. Will this be paid parking?</p>	<p>No. Parking will remain free in Queanbeyan. This is confirmed in the Queanbeyan Car Parking Strategy.</p>
<p>Another general matter of concern is the manner in which the details of plans and developments of this nature are made available to the ratepayers. It is not good enough for such proposals to be simply placed on the Council's website for comment. Business owners often don't have the time or resources to regularly check the website to see if there is anything happening that will affect them. We believe council procedures should be changed so that business owners and ratepayers are notified directly, in the same way as occurs in respect to private DAs, when proposed plans and developments will affect them.</p>	<p>During the recent exhibition of the draft Queanbeyan CBD Spatial Master Plan, Council hand-delivered and delivered via mail postcards promoting the exhibition period and the business breakfast to launch the Spatial Master Plan to every business and property owner in the CBD. A similar process has been undertaken on a number of CBD-related projects, with Council mindful of ensuring both business operators and property owners receive the information.</p> <p>Council is currently in the process of developing a community engagement strategy for the Monaro St upgrade project and will include a number of methods to ensure businesses and property owners are informed and have the ability to engage in the planning from a very early stage</p>