

**PUBLIC FORUM
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS
22 March 2017**



Questions – Katrina Willis

Queanbeyan Central Business District Redevelopment

Further to responses to Public forum questions on 22 February 2017 that: “There were other parties with an interest in developing Council’s CBD properties or adjacent properties”:

1. If there was more than one party interested in developing Council’s CBD properties or adjacent properties, on what basis did the Council decide to deal exclusively with the parties behind the unsolicited proposal?

Response – General Manager

Proposals were received from more than one party for different CBD sites owned by Council. It was considered appropriate to deal with the proposal that utilised buildings that would become redundant as a result of Council staff and tenancy moving into the Queanbeyan HQ to be constructed at 257 Crawford St. Other proposals will be considered as their scope matures.

2. Has the Council signed the Heads of Agreement with the parties behind the unsolicited proposal? If so, will the Council publish the agreement on its website?

Response – General Manager

The Agreement has been executed. The content is commercial in confidence at this time.

3. The Administrator Tim Overall in public statements described the proposed redevelopment of the CBD as a \$400 million, ten-year project. What is the basis of this estimated value and time period of the proposed redevelopment?

Response – General Manager

An estimate of the value of the proposed developments was provided by the developers who put forward the unsolicited bid. That figure was combined with the value of the refurbished Queanbeyan Council Headquarters, the sale of Council-owned building and other public domain works.

4. Is the Council aware of disquiet among sections of the Queanbeyan business community about the proposed addition of commercial and retail premises when so many CBD properties are currently vacant and some have been vacant for a considerable period of time?

Response – Economic and Community Development

One of the main goals of these developments is to increase the amount of people living and working in the Queanbeyan CBD and in turn that will increase the customer base for retailers in the CBD.

5. **Has the Council undertaken or commissioned research into the capacity of the local economy to absorb the additional commercial and retail premises envisaged in the CBD redevelopment strategy? If so, what were the outcomes of the research? If not, why not?**

Response – Economic and Community Development

The CBD Transformation Strategy specifies that a Retail Plan will be completed and integrated with other plans such as a Placemaking and Laneways Plan, Tourism Plan Transport plan, Parking Plan, Economic Development Strategy and CBD Masterplan Renewal to help revitalise the CBD. The Retail Plan will examine opportunities to revitalise Retail and its role in creating an identity for Queanbeyan CBD.

6. **Has the Council undertaken or commissioned research into the impacts on small towns and villages surrounding Queanbeyan and which are part of the QPRC of additional commercial and retail premises envisaged in the CBD redevelopment? If so, what were the outcomes of the research? If not, why not?**

Response – Economic and Community Development

Enhancing local economic performance and local economic prosperity within QPRC Local Government Area is a continually evolving pursuit. QPRC is working with businesses particularly in Bungendore and Braidwood areas and has established excellent working relationship with the Bungendore Chamber of Industry and Commerce, has established business networking forums in both towns and supports business retention through sponsoring training programs. An Economic Development Strategy will be completed to help identify ways to build on each community's unique endowments to progress economic advancement opportunities.

7. **What measures is the Council proposing to implement to ensure a proportion of the new residential units proposed as part of the CBD redevelopment are designated as affordable housing?**

Response – General Manager

The opportunity to incorporate affordable housing options in the CBD is under consideration.

Ellerton Drive Extension – Intersection Upgrades

Further to consideration of this matter in 2016, please provide an update on progress of intersection upgrades identified in the Googong and Tralee Traffic Study as being required alongside the construction of the proposed EDE:

8. **Has design work for the intersection been completed?**

Response – Assets and Projects

The traffic modelling work identified various intersections that require improvements irrespective of whether Ellerton Drive Extension was in place or not. These intersection upgrades are required due to our population growth increasing the traffic volumes on the Queanbeyan road network and not Ellerton Drive Extension being constructed.

In regards to the Ellerton Drive Extension, this project will require minor intersection upgrades at the Old Cooma Rd/Ellerton Drive intersection and the Old Sydney Rd/Ellerton Drive intersection. These upgrades are minor and have been included in the project budget and planning.

Council has completed preliminary designs for the following intersections:

- a) Canberra Avenue and Cameron Road
- b) Yass Road and Hincksman Street
- c) Yass Road and Silva Avenue
- d) Jerrabomberra Circle – Council resolved in March 2016 to take no further action.
- e) Uriarra Road and Ross Road
- f) Uriarra Road and McKeahnie Street

NSW Roads and Maritime are looking at the following intersections:

- a) Lanyon Drive and Tomsitt Drive – investigating improvements including traffic modelling, geotechnical investigations and utility surveys.
- b) Yass Road/Bungendore Road/Ellerton Drive intersection – have undertaken traffic modelling which shows the intersection functioning acceptably in the near future. RMS will continue to monitor this intersection.
- c) Lanyon Drive and Canberra Avenue – no state funding provided at this stage for investigative work.

Other intersection improvements are relatively minor in nature (eg. no right turn signs) and do not require designs at this time.

9. Is there an estimate for the cost of the upgrades?

Response – Assets and Projects

No cost estimates have been undertaken for these intersections, with the exception of the traffic signals replacing Jerrabomberra Circle. These traffic signals were given the preliminary estimate of \$8.5m, however following community consultation, Council resolved not to proceed with the design at this stage.

10. What is the source of funds for the upgrades?

Response – Assets and Projects

The funding source for these upgrades will generally be from the development groups (eg. Googong, Tralee, ACT, all other Queanbeyan) generating the need for the improvement. Part 4 of the South Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan Traffic Analysis investigates the percentage of traffic each of these development groups adds to the respective intersection and converts this to a funding percentage that the development group needs to contribute towards the cost of the intersection improvement.

In the cases such as the Googong Township, Council includes these percentages of costs in the planning agreement for the development.

Occasionally, Council is successful in receiving Government funding to contribute to the cost of improving intersections.

11. When are the upgrades scheduled to occur?

Response – Assets and Projects

The timing identified in the Googong and Tralee Traffic Study is shown below. The performance of the intersections will continue to be monitored by Council and timing may be adjusted.

- a) Canberra Avenue and Cameron Road – By 2031
- b) Yass Road and Hincksman Street – by 2026
- c) Yass Road and Silva Avenue – by 2026
- d) Jerrabomberra Circle – Council has resolved to take no further action on the proposed intersection upgrade
- e) Uriarra Road and Ross Road – by 2031 (taken from North Crestwood Traffic Study)
- f) Uriarra Road and McKeahnie Street – by 2031 (taken from North Crestwood Traffic Study)
- g) Lanyon Drive and Tompsitt Drive - by 2018
- h) Yass Road/Bungendore Road/Ellerton Drive – by 2018
- i) Lanyon Drive and Canberra Avenue – by 2018

Some of the intersection improvements are very minor - Lanyon/Gilmore (no right turn), Yass/Shropshire (no right turn) and Yass/Thuralilly (no right turn). These will be completed when required.

As stated above, improvements at G, H and I are now being managed by the RMS and timing will be dependent on RMS studies, recommendations and funding.

Ellerton Drive Extension – council newspaper advertisement

With regard to the Council advertisement published in the Queanbeyan Age/Chronicle of 28 February 2017:

- 12. What is the source of the claimed 38% reduction in travel time? Please provide a reference in the Googong and Tralee traffic study.**

Response – Assets and Projects

Part 2 of the South Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan Traffic Analysis 2014 Report involved the analysis of a limited number of 2031 network improvement scenarios including a do nothing scenario, all required improvements and two other scenarios including and not including Ellerton Drive Extension. Table 14 and 15 in this report outlines the comparative of performance indicators of each scenario including travel time. This report is available on Council's website at <http://www.qcc.nsw.gov.au/Services/Roads-and-Traffic/Traffic-Studies/Traffic-Studies>

- 13. Please advise whether this claimed reduction in travel time includes traffic flows originating outside the previous Queanbeyan City Council area, including residents of the ACT.**

Response – Assets and Projects

The traffic model used in developing both the Googong and Tralee Traffic Study (2031) and the South Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan Traffic Analysis 2014 included all Queanbeyan roads as well as collector Canberra roads, actual traffic counts on both Queanbeyan and Canberra roads, census data for both Queanbeyan and Canberra, growth forecasts for both Queanbeyan and Canberra and infrastructure programs for both Queanbeyan and Canberra.

Barracks Flat intersection

14. Was the Barracks Flat intersection completed on schedule or was it late?

Response – Assets and Projects

The project had an initial construction schedule of 10 weeks (weather permitting). The construction commenced on 16 May 2016 and was due to be completed by the end of July 2016, however the intersection wasn't opened to traffic until 9 November 2016 due to significant weather delays.

15. If late, by how much and why?

Response – Assets and Projects

15 weeks. The main cause of delay was the greater than average rainfall experienced during the construction period which is summarised in the table below. There were some other delays cause by conflicts between new work and existing underground services (Telstra, NBN and Gas).

	Mean Rainfall (mm)	Actual Rainfall (mm)	Days of Rain
May	42.9	47.6	7
June	40.9	144.2	18
July	40.9	71	21
August	45.7	46.2	9
September	52.1	149.2	13
October	61.4	43.6	12
Until 9 November	64.6	0	0

Observations were drawn from Canberra Airport {station 070351}

16. Why were there many days during the construction period where no work appeared to being done on the Barracks Flat intersection?

Response – Assets and Projects

The pavement was often too wet to work on productively.

17. What can QPRC tell us about how well the Barracks Flat intersection is working?

Response – Assets and Projects

The intersection is performing as expected. As it is only an interim intersection solution, there were several compromises in the design.

The traffic signals were constructed to aid vehicles exiting Barracks Flat Dr during peak times. With Cooma St/Old Cooma Rd due to be ultimately duplicated from Southbar Rd to Googong Dam Rd around 2026, Council opted to construct an interim upgrade to cover the period of time until Cooma St is duplicated.

Prior to commencement of the detailed design for the interim project, Council carried out community consultation with two concept designs:

- A non-signalised seagull (similar to the function of the intersection between the Kings Highway and the Weetalabah suburb) This solution offered a better level of service to all users of the intersection but removed right turn movements for users of Thornton Rd.
- A signalised intersection which offered a lower level of service but maintained all turning movements and guaranteed allocated gaps in the traffic (via the signal phasing).

The public feedback to Council was heavily in favour of the traffic signals. Other factors considered in the design were

- minimising current costs and reducing the works that will need be replaced at a later date (2026).
- the reduction of traffic on both Cooma St and Barracks Flat Drive with the opening of the Ellerton Drive Extension

A dedicated left turn lane into Barracks Flat Dr would improve the performance of the intersection however the additional lane would have added significant cost to a project due to the underground services that would have to be relocated: gas, Telstra and NBN. When the Ellerton Drive Extension is opened there will be a significant reduction of traffic on Cooma St, and coupled with the additional entry/exit points to Fairlane Estate will improve the level of service to users at this intersection.

Council is working with Roads and Maritime Services to optimise the sequencing of the signals at Barracks Flat Dr and Southbar Rd.

18. Will the same contractor who worked on the Barracks Flat intersection work on any of the other intersections?

Response – Assets and Projects

All tenders are evaluated against a set criteria to ensure capability and risk are considered in addition to price. The evaluation panel which is made up of at least three staff members, who individually assess each tender. In addition to assessing the tender documents provided by the contractor, the evaluation team will draw on Council's past experiences with that contractor and will also contact other organisations that the contractor has worked for in order to get an account of their performance. This information is used to score the contractor in terms of capability and risk.

We are unable to predict the results of future tender evaluations.

Communications and publicity budget

19. With regard to the Council's current communications activities, what is the total annual budget for these activities for 2016-17?

Response – Economic and Community Development

The total operational budget for the Integrated Planning and Communications team is \$345,000. This includes employee costs for three staff members.

20. Does this total include the cost to create a new website? If not, what is the cost of the website upgrade?

Response – Economic and Community Development

No. The development of the new website is funded from the \$5m merger assistance grant which was provided by the NSW Government following the merger. Following the

procurement process, Council accepted a proposal from Open Cities. Open Cities works on a subscription fee, based on population, which for Queanbeyan-Palerang is currently \$55,000 per annum. The first three years of the website subscription fee are funded from the \$5m merger assistance grant. Savings related to web costs achieved during that three-year period from the general fund will be set aside to pay for the fourth and fifth year of the subscription fee.

21. What is the total 2016-17 budget for:

- **advertising**
- **events, for example, Oktoberfest (\$25,000)**
- **the QPRC newsletter**
- **other information products and services or the new regional area?**

Response – Economic and Community Development

Each cost centre has a budget attached for advertising, however in regards to the communications budget, figures are:

- Advertising: A number of pieces of legislation require Council to advertise certain information in newspapers that circulate in the local region (some fortnightly). To ensure Council meets this legislative requirement, the For Your Information ad appears in the Queanbeyan Age/Chronicle, Braidwood Times and Bungendore Weekly each fortnight. Currently that costs around \$92,000 per annum. The communications budget includes a further \$5,000 for additional advertising, including social media advertising and special publications.
- Council's total budget for events for 2016-17 was 237,000 and this included funding for
 - Seniors Week
 - Multicultural Festival
 - Queanbeyan River Festival
 - Children's Day on the Park
 - Ad-hoc events
 - Canberra Symphony Orchestra
 - Christmas Parties – Queanbeyan, Braidwood and Bungendore
 - Reconciliation Walk
 - Queanbeyan Gift
 - Arts Trail
 - Clear Water Sculpture Competition
 - Youth Beyond Blue
 - White Ribbon Day

The budget for these events includes staff time, event set up (marquees etc), advertising, printing etc. At the January meeting, Council resolved to consider \$25,000 of funding to assist with promotion for Oktoberfest. This will be included in the draft budget for 2017-18.

- QPRC newsletter: printing of QPRC News costs \$4,000 per edition, while delivery is around \$3,000 per edition. Total annual cost (six editions) is around \$42,000. Prior to the merger, the former City Life newsletter was an eight-page newsletter and printing and distribution of that cost around \$12,000 per edition and \$72,000 per year.
- No other additional information products or services have been developed at this stage.