



1 February 2023

Mayor Palmer
Clr Leah Anderson
Clr Glen Dunckley
Clr Matthew Bailey
Mr Stephen Peart
Mr John Maretich

SUBMISSION ON PLANS FOR LITTLE BEACH AMENITIES BLOCK DEVELOPMENT

Public Meeting held 25 January 2023

1. Council officers provided a briefing to residents and users of the Little Beach toilet, change room and disabled facilities on its plans for upgrading the amenities block. A report on progress and timing of works was also given. There were around 20 members of the public present.

Project details (information provided on the project)

2. The project is part of a general upgrade of Little Beach facilities funded from a mix of funding from Council and State grants including The NSW Regional Tourism Activation Fund and the Recreational Fishing and Camping Facilities Program.
3. Council officers advised that, to qualify for the grant funding, the designs must comply with the provisions of State and National standards requiring unisex configuration and a separate building to house disabled facilities. (Those present sought details on the reasoning for such provisions).
4. Accordingly, Council's Plan is to replace the existing block with two new buildings located on the northern section of the grassed reserve closer to the boat ramp. The overall footprint will be larger and an open space will separate the two buildings. Change room facilities are proposed. All facilities (cubicles) including change rooms and the disabled facility will be unisex. An entirely new access ramp for the disabled will be provided directly to the beach (the existing ramp at the southern end of the beach will become redundant).
5. Tenders have already been called for construction and any variation or deferral of the tender would necessitate a resolution by Councillors.



6. This project is listed to commence in February 2023.

Concerns and Queries Raised

7. Residents were dissatisfied with the lack of adequate consultation during the design process and the apparent rush to put the project to tender in December 2022.

8. A number of people queried the need for replacement of the existing block which they regarded as being a reasonably sound structure which, with some refurbishment, could continue to serve its purpose. The very substantial cost of a complete rebuild was queried.

9. There had been considerable effort to establish a vegetative screen (effective) of the existing block from nearby residences.

10. Concerns were raised as to the move away from male and female facilities to be replaced with unisex for all components. Changing rooms incorporating clothing hangers and showers are considered by many to be a preferred arrangement especially for families and the elderly.

11. Apart from the disabled toilets, only three unisex cubicles are proposed for general public use.

12. It was pointed out that Little Beach and its boat ramp is a very high use area at peak holiday and weekend periods where a traditional separate male (with urinal)/ female configuration may better cope with such heavy demand.

13. No mention has been made of consultation with the users of this facility to check on the acceptability of the unisex arrangements. The users typically include an ethnically diverse composition which may have special preferences. One female at the 25 January meeting expressed displeasure with sharing toilets with males (on cleanliness grounds).

14. Concern was raised in relation to the increased building footprint and the proposal for two separate buildings in what is a limited grassed reserve. The open space between the two buildings will not be attractive for picnics and other recreational uses.

15. Local residents have concerns that the skillion roof design results in significantly higher structures with increased impact on views.

16. Has Council considered the suitability of the skillion roof design at the Little Beach location which is exposed to high wind and mini cyclone events?

17. The view was expressed that, from observations, there had been little evidence of anti-social behaviour at the Little Beach amenities apart from the occasional graffiti.

18. Is there an approved Council Policy on the design of public amenities?

19. Did Council consider seeking a variation from State or National the design standards before proceeding with the proposed design.?

Suggested Way Forward

20. Council should release detailed plans together with an explanation of why they have adopted unisex, separate building and skillion roof designs/configuration.

21. Further consultations with users, local residents and the community would seem to be essential. (The 2 February on- site meeting is appreciated by all concerned)

22. If necessary, Council should consider a resolution to defer the tender process.



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