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Ms Kiersten Fishburn
CEO Liverpool City Council
Locked Bag 7064
LIVERPOOL BC NSW 1871
cc. James Flynn

Dear Kiersten,

Firstly, may I congratulate the staff for the opportunity to comment on the community facilities strategy paper. It is fair that I commence this submission with my fervent view that selling off council facilities is not an option that I can support and a reminder that once sold none of these pieces of land nor the embellishments will be available to council again. I therefore strongly oppose the sale of almost all based on my knowledge that under present planning instruction, no new community buildings can be built with Section 94 moneys and that future buildings will need to be paid for using rates money. I also do not agree that removing facilities in one area to provide better ones in another is a fair deal for residents, especially those in long time established areas that will not benefit from possible future changes to developer funding.

I am however a realist and that the long-term neglect of many of these facilities leaves them wanting for significant attention, it is also noteworthy that said neglect could have been avoided if past governance was as keen on maintenance as they were on selling assets. That said, all is not lost for the majority and I believe a stay of 36 months to allow time for a concerted effort in making them worthy assets and not burdens is warranted and would allow additional time to experiment with new ideas to raise their profile and usage. If not successful this process could be revisited in three years.

I will address individual properties further however for the vast majority placing signage on the externals of most of these buildings to grow awareness of the possibilities would go a long way to address the idleness and lack of use. Not one of the buildings I visited had any external indication that they were available for rent by locals from council... a couple didn't even indicate they were council owned buildings and available at all. Simply put a "Did you know you could rent me?" sign with contact details on the external of the building would go a long way into raising awareness that they could be rented/hired. A short survey of residents around me proved that more than 90% of those asked had no clue that council either owned community buildings nor that they could be rented for special occasions or functions. That is more than disappointing.

It is also worth noting that some of our buildings are being leased permanently and that some of those are done so at below cost retrieval level. While supporting local groups is admirable, some need to be cost neutral even if not profitable.

I will not comment on child care facilities as I believe they are now cost neutral or close to and offer a significant high-class service to the local community.

Kemps Creek community Hall has been a contentious facility for many years now, the agreed replacement by the present tenant has never come to fruition and the inability of locals to use the facility has caused much discontent and angst. This building is well past simple repair and while I strongly oppose the sale of the land I do understand the facility is edging on dangerous and needs to be decommissioned. To that end, baring in mind the new release areas and pending airport, this particular block of land and prime location should be retained, even if the building requires demolishing, so that a future building opportunity remains for council and the community.

The Roller Skating rink has also been a facility that has caused much concern to some residents and its ties to particular charities in the area has never been appropriately addressed in my opinion. I must admit that I believed it had been sold in conjunction with the 1 Hoxton Park Road sale and that it may now be owned again by council and on investigation I noticed it being used recently. If that is by an organization for profit their rents should reflect that and be reinvested in the maintenance ongoing.

Rosebank Cottage is a significant historical building of enormous importance, and while I understand the present use does not allow access I do believe this to be a loss to the community and would prefer the present hirer be provided with another equally suitable site to allow Rosebank to return to the historical trail and allow for open days and tourists. Having such an amazing asset closed to the community all the time is regrettable and the tenant could be provided with another suitable, private and dedicated facility. I do acknowledge that its use does significantly protect it from damage or vandalism however a different use could allow it to be accessed on occasion and returned to the historical significant agenda.

I will concede that the two buildings in Lurnea, CT Lewis and The Geriatric Hall, that lay empty could be sold to provide affordable/social housing options and the funds received used to fund the Phillips Park embellishments or master plan. I think in fairness to the long-term residents bordering those facilities, that a height restriction should be imposed, such as townhouses or two stories no more. While they are likely zoned higher rise, being on a main road of sorts, putting those residents at a disadvantage is unreasonable.

Liverpool district men's shed, this is quite the conundrum, considerable funding has been given to this important community group. As well as providing the building, Council contributed a lot of money to help

outfit the present facility while all the while in complete knowledge (not to the general community however) that they had planned to sell off the land. I did cover this in my submission to the budget and delivery plan and am still not satisfied that the community has been well served by what is partially deception and partially opportunism. To my knowledge no future venue has been found and the mens shedders are again 'homeless'.

Rather than go through the entire list of buildings I strongly urge the council to reconsider 'rationalising' and spend some time promoting the use of the building and revisit the situation in a few years time. Hopefully by then the usage will increase, funds become available to refurbish and maintain these valuable assets, especially as I mentioned earlier that they would never be possible for "us" in the future as land prices increase and funds become fewer. I am happy to discuss individual buildings however believe that what I've covered adequately indicates my view on the majority.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment, I do hope others have considered these assets as important as I and that the suggestions I've made can be considered and the facilities maintained.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Signe'.

Signe Westerberg

Resident, Rate payer and Passionate Liverpoolian.