



Presentation to the Public Forum  
Eurobodalla Shire Council Meeting  
Tuesday 13 September 2022

Mr Mayor and Councillors  
General Manager

I am Alan Russell. I am the Manager of Eurobodalla Meals on Wheels, and I am supporting the proposal put forward by Ross Thomas on behalf of U3A.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this morning. This is the third time I have had the occasion to address the Council and I value the chance to bring to your attention matters which may assist you in your deliberations.

This is the first chance to speak to this new Council and if I may, I wish to congratulate you on the manner in which you have been addressing the concerns of the community and creating a new era in the life of the Council. You have a short term of only three years but already you have made a difference and this I believe will continue and establish a wonderful foundation for our future.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the General Manager for her work and wish her well in retirement. I can only imagine that the role must be very demanding, and you have always been open to hearing from my organisation, and me, when I have had to raise a matter. I appreciated the responses to my letters and your knowledge when we have met at various times. I wish you well.

Today U3A and Eurobodalla Meals on Wheels are addressing a community need and we ask that you look at your land reserves so that you may assist us.

We are not asking for cash. We are not asking for a monetary grant. In fact, we will pay you...rent.

What we are asking for is a parcel of land on which we could put some demountable buildings so to cater for the needs of our organisations.

Earlier in the year we met with the Mayor to discuss this concept and left for each Councillor our proposal. We were hoping that this may have seen discussion amongst you as you started planning for your term of 'community engagement' as a focus of this Council.

But we heard nothing from you as a Council, and only one Councillor responded, and the acknowledgement was appreciated.

However, we did receive a letter from Director Arthur saying that our proposal was not going to proceed. This we found disappointing.

We found this disappointing as our idea appeared to have not been heard and while we believed you had our original paper, it wasn't until we met with the Deputy Mayor, and the Mayor on Zoom, on Friday 19 August, that this was confirmed as she had one with her when we met, we heard nothing.

We found this disappointing as it appeared that the old systems were still in play and that proposals from the community were not being considered by you as a Council but given to staff to respond to.

So, what is it we are asking for?

The proposal would involve the Shire Council assisting two Shire wide organisations through the lease of some council land. For this land we would pay you a rental.

The proposal would involve these two Shire wide organisations putting buildings on the site which would assist them to run their operations. There is no cost to Council.

The proposal would involve the two Shire wide organisations managing and operating the buildings put on the site. There is no cost to Council.

The proposal would see the two Shire wide organisations assisting a large section of our older, and sometimes frail members of the community catered for through stimulating classes and social gatherings. There is no cost to Council.

The proposal would see the two Shire wide organisations contributing to the wellbeing, reablement and social interaction of older members of the community. There is no cost to Council.

We believe that the parcel of land, in the Batemans Bay area, and the establishment of a centre would bring benefits to the Shire, and to the Council and there is no cost to Council.

These benefits would be the

- Wellbeing of older community members
- Reablement of older community members
- Contributions of knowledge of our highly credentialed community members to others
- Socialisation of older community members
- A centre which caters for the needs of older community members

Why are we seeking this parcel of land?

Because there is not enough capacity within the community for us to create the learning and social hub for the older and more frail members of the community. Some may say that this is not true and that there is capacity within Council facilities and will produce a report highlighting this thought.

Presently, the spread-out nature of the meetings being held in homes, some community facilities and church halls does not create the togetherness and harmony needed to build a viable community group....let alone a learning environment. As a former Principal, I could speak more on this topic.

The arguments put to us by the previous Council, over spaces available to the community, are only partially true. There was the argument that Council had underutilised community facilities which needed to be used and that the new Bay Pavilions facility would add to this capacity.

As we explained to the Council at the time, these spaces would not be viable and suitable due to the spread-out nature of their locations, available time spots, and accessibility for the older person.

The Bay Pavillions is a wonderful building, and I am pleased to have been part of the Sunset Committee which heard of the plans and developments and made some contributions to the design of the final facility. But, as was noted throughout the development discussions, the booking of spaces would not guarantee continuity of availability.

We agree that we want productions and performances to be here as often as possible. This would see bookings of some spaces having to be cancelled for the needs to the performing company. So, we would be regularly hunting for another space. This has been confirmed with staff at the facility.

We are therefore asking Council for a parcel of land...we are not asking Council for funds to erect a building, nor are we asking Council for funds to maintain the facility. But we are asking that the older people of the community are not forgotten, that their welfare is important, and that they deserve YOUR consideration of this proposal.