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 Subject: REPRESENTATION ~ Rezoning of 6-8 Bridge Street, Ross  
 Date: 12 September 2017 at 4:41 pm  
 To: planning@nmc.tas.gov.au



Ross Clinic ~ opened in 1955

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Mr Des Jennings  
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REPRESENTATION ~ Rezoning of 6-8 Bridge Street, Ross ~ Draft Amendment - 01-2017  
 (Ref No: P17-121)

Dear Mr Jennings,

I suggest that this rezoning is not necessary, and that the Ross Clinic should be made available for community use.

This use could be as a community arts centre.

The building could serve as an HQ for the preparation of the next application to have the Ross Bridge be included on the National Heritage List.

I hope the Council will fund a heritage officer to prepare the next application.

When asked in 2015 why the Council wouldn't support the application, lack of funding was given as the reason the Council could not engage a heritage consultant.

This was not the case for the Council when preparing plans for the new Town Park, with a heritage consultant being engaged to help justify the development.

The new Town Park is not part of the history of Ross.

Did I mention that the new Town Park in Ross is not part of the town's history, heritage and tourist appeal?

The Ross Bridge is a highly significant part of the history of Ross, tourism in the Northern Midlands, and is the only bridge of its kind and era in the world with 186 stone carvings along its arches.

Could the Ross Bridge be of World Heritage value?

Should this case be tested?

First it must be included on the National Heritage list, and it turns out that this is a highly political environment.

So to succeed in the next application, the Council will need to get very serious, if it wants to see this happen.

After all, significant grants are available to National Heritage listed places, which are not available any other way.

Should the focus in Ross have been on the Ross Bridge, rather than a new and quite unnecessary Town Park?

What Ross really needs is a public car park.

The old Ross School oval could serve as a Town Park, which has the new public toilets in Ross, located right next to it.

Is that too logical for the Council?

And there is the 42nd parallel memorial right there already.

The Town Hall could be opened up with french doors onto the parklands.

In fact, the parking problem could then be solved in Ross, by making the land next to the Man O' Ross Hotel, into a car park.

This will work much better for Ross as a heritage town and tourist destination, which attracts so many visitors.

This will work better for the pub, so people visiting the unneeded Town Park won't come tramping through the pub looking for toilets.

With this intelligent rethink of planning in Ross, and with the old Ross School oval filling its natural role as a Town Park, instead of a car park, which has twice been floated now in Ross Local District Committee meetings, the Council will be able to adjust its binoculars in Longford and see that there are many hectares of other public land in Ross which can be improved as parklands.

This needs to begin by developing parkland along the river and along some of the unused Crown land road reserves.

There are around 11 kilometres of unused Crown land road reserve in Ross, each about 28 metres wide, and it is all public land now, which any member of the public has a right to walk along.

Improving the public land and walking trails near the Ross Bridge will improve the chances of being successful in the next application for National Heritage listing.

A map is included that shows the vast areas of other undeveloped public land in Ross.

## ROSS CLINIC AS A COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE

ROSS BRIDGE ~ The stone carvings on the Ross Bridge are quite an amazing body of convict art, and the Ross Clinic could serve as a place to show the meaning of this art to school groups and visitors to Ross.

Augmented and virtual reality technology can be used to improve this experience ~ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-04/augmented-reality-project-aims-to-enhance-tasmanian-tourism/8775796>

This same technology can be put to work to offer an improved experience of the history of Ross.

GRAVE ART ~ The Ross Clinic could also serve as a place to gather information on the art and stories found on old graves in Tasmania, beginning in Ross.

This is a project that I did some work with at an earlier time, raising funds to restore the grave of Susannah Musk, deciphering the text on the stone, which was hard to read, and then researching and writing the story of Susannah's Angel ~ <http://www.tasmaniantimes.com.au/index.php/article/susannahs-angel->

Information on restoring old graves can be gathered with a project like this, including techniques to better preserve and restore damaged stone.

As shown with Susannah's Angel, this project will lead onto historical research, family history and creative writing.

There is a great fascination with old graves, and a home for a project like this can hope to attract people from around Tasmania, from around Australia, and from around the World.

Understanding the stone art in the colonial graves, will also help people to understand the carved art of the Ross Bridge.

MIDGARD FIRE FESTIVAL ~ Our mid-winter festival is a good example of community arts activities in Ross.

Falling on Saturday July 7th next year, we have booked the Town Hall for activities including lantern making and the creation of fire drawings, to be burnt in the night, after the Viking dragon ship goes up in flames.

The Ross Clinic as a community arts centre would serve as a place where such activities tick over during the year.

## FEAR OF A FIRE SALE

In the application there is mention of selling the Ross Clinic.

After the old Ross School was subdivided off and sold, I strongly oppose this subdivision and rezoning, as it may also lead to the sale of the property.

The old Ross School, a gift to the people of Ross from the Tasmanian Government, could have served as a far finer community arts centre, art gallery, tennis club and part of a Town Park next to the Town Hall.

## UNFAIR COMPETITION

Considering there is a strong community role for the Ross Clinic that can be identified, the property should serve in a community role.

There are properties for sale and lease in Ross, and hardly ever a new business.

More businesses seem to close than open.

Putting the Ross Clinic on the market for lease or sale will be unfair competition to other property owners in Ross.

#### FALSE CONSULTATION

In the application I read ~

"The Ross Local District Committee considered the proposed rezoning at its June 2017 meeting where the committee generally supported the proposal and looked forward to the building being occupied again."

Getting a rubber stamp from the couple of members of the Ross Local District Committee, who do not consult with the Ross Community, is no real consultation with the Ross community.

The Ross Committee members are not elected, avoid public scrutiny, and do not serve with any mandate from the Ross community and all who pay rates to the Council.

#### REAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

I would be happy to work with Council in arranging a public meeting to discuss the community role of the Ross Clinic.

If the Council awakens to the need to be serious about history and heritage in Ross, Council representatives could speak to the mission to secure National Heritage listing of the Ross Bridge.

The community could then consider the role of the Ross Clinic in achieving this.

#### TOURISM

It is interesting to note this media report about regional tourism in Tasmania.

'Massive Growth in Overseas Visitors'

The Mercury, 6 September 2017

"Hordes of big spending American tourists have helped Tasmania record the nation's highest growth in overseas visitors - with a 13 per cent jump last financial year. Tourism Research Australia's International Visitor Survey has revealed a record 253,000 international visitors flocked to Tasmania in the year to June, spending a record \$457 million." ~ "Premier Will Hodgman said the strong result demonstrated the increasing strength of the Tasmanian brand overseas. "We have outlined ambitious new targets that would see an increase in the number of visitors staying overnight in our regional areas to 70 per cent (of all visitors to the state, meaning more visitors to our regions and a boost to our regional economies and local jobs," he said."

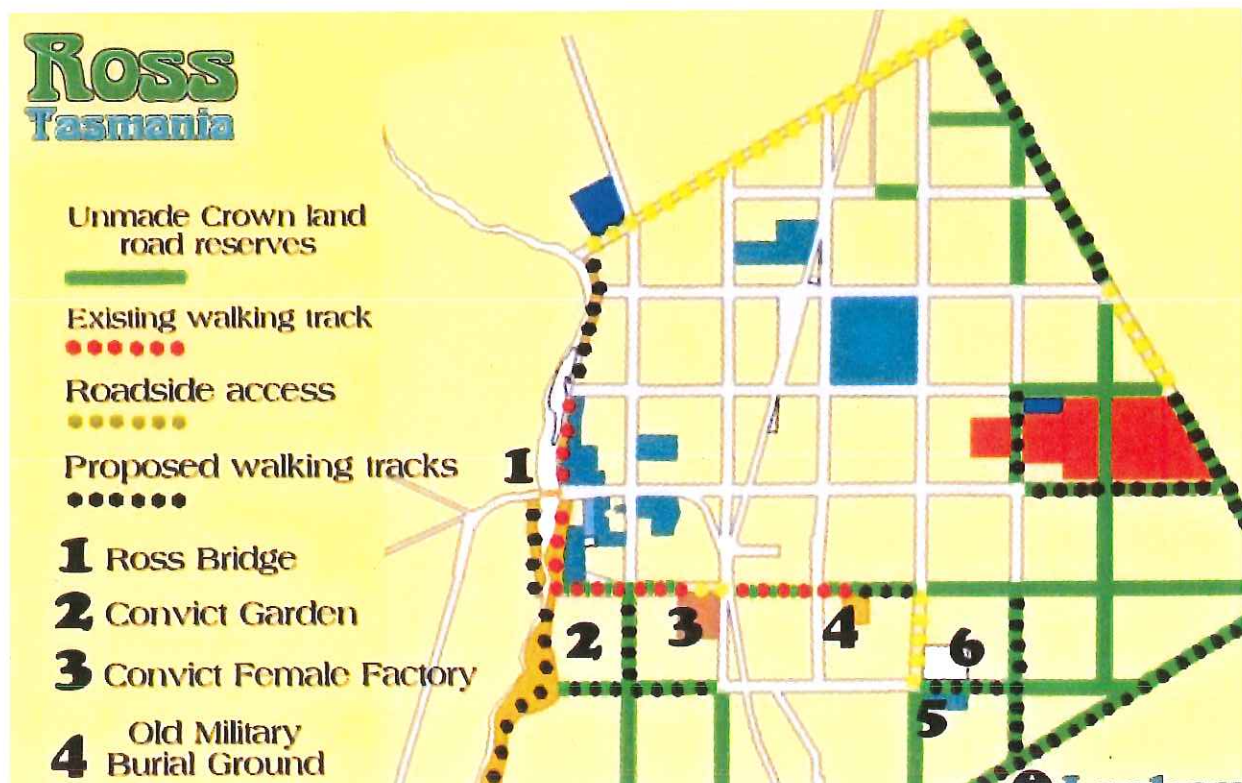
The role of the Ross Bridge and the Ross Clinic in adding to Tasmania's economy and cultural landscape, needs to be considered.

#### CONCLUSION

I strongly oppose this rezoning and subdivision, as the Ross clinic is needed for community use, arts and related heritage and tourism activities.

Yours sincerely,

Kim Peart



**5** Quarry

**6** Crown land



**LOOKOUT**  
Highest location  
around Ross

