

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES TO QUESTION TIME TUESDAY, 28 JUNE 2016

The following questions were addressed to the above meeting. Some questions were adequately responded to at the meeting, however others required a more detailed response in writing.

This document includes both verbal and written responses.

Ian Russell asked:

I have 2 questions - first is a decision on April 16 2015 at the Development Panel meeting No 499 at Brougham Street office at 5pm. The panel members consisting of Mr M Sullivan, Mr R O'Loghlen, H Forsyth, J Bryce and the councillor representative Cr K Fisher, 55 Rees Road Avalon to Mr Ray Bartolo that no permit was given, for racing and breeding of racing dogs. He had 30 days to lodge with VCAT but he did not and still today has not a permit but has had a litter of pups and bylaws have not had him comply with Council. I have rang and spoken to Mr Leon Websdale on many times, but I get different stories on this about adoption. I would like to know what the Council is doing about this. I think I have been patient on this?

Steve Sodomaco, Acting General Manager Planning and Development, advised he would investigate the issue and respond back in writing.

The second one is about a property on Old Melbourne Road. The Property is at 5 Old Melbourne Road, Lara. This property is a 5acre zoned rural living.

Could you please tell me how this piece of land can be changed from a 5 acre farm to a hard stand truck parking bays for the plant across the road. On Avalon Road at 15 the owners have been refused a permit twice and now they are going to VCAT to have their case heard. We need to know who agreed to allow the development of the RTZ site without any public consultation or notification?

Steve Sodomaco took the question on notice for a written response.

An interim verbal response has been provided to Ian Russell.

Jennifer Tan Sing asked why does Council still give permission for the school buses (50 passing each other every morning and afternoon) to use our local residential street (Ruthven St, Newtown) as a shortcut, damaging our road, curbs, footpaths and residents cars? At a meeting with interested parties there were some untruths told and no valid reason was given as to why this still continues (after residents have complained for at least 8 years and that the time saved using our street is six minutes).

William Tieppo responded that Council doesn't give permission because it is a public road, and as such the buses are allowed to use it. Council is investigating improving infrastructure and working through other options resulting from the community meeting in relation to this issue last week.

Roger Smith addressed Council as follows:

Re Permit Application 692/2015. It is proposed that there be one week between the appointment of a Planning Panel/Committee on 28th June and the Committee Hearing on 5th July. Has the Panel already had access to or, in the intervening period, will the Panel have access to all the information provided to the Planning Dept ie. Application, Objections, external and internal reports? If not, why not? Also, on a related matter, will the Committee visit the proposed quarry site (and surroundings) so that they can apprise themselves of the appalling state of pre-existing quarries and the impact those quarries have on the Significant Landscape Overlay known as SLO1 - You Yangs?

Re Permit Application 692/2015. Biographies for the 3 Panel/Committee members make no mention of them having any knowledge of the international tourism industry. In the light of the Planning Dept's five line dismissal of the tourism industry's interests in its report dated 29th March 2016 (page 70 - this was the only mention of the impacts on tourism in the report).

How can we be assured that the Panel will be able to, a) assess our concerns in 3 minutes at the hearing? b) comprehend the significant deleterious implications to the inbound wildlife tourism industry of recommending an approval for the quarry?

Steve Sodomaco indicated Council has people before us tonight setting up a Section 191 Committee and we will receive their recommendation. We will visit the site and will take your issues into account.

The Panel is not as yet appointed.

Colin Wallace addressed the Administrators as follows:

Administrators, you have just confirmed the Minutes of the last Ordinary Meeting of Council, held on 10 May 2016. In the preamble to the section on Question Time it says: "Council's practice is to provide a separate document on its website setting out questions and responses including any more detailed responses which may be provided subsequent to the meeting".

As of 5pm today this has not been done and I am asking why, since there were questions asked at Question Time on 10 May 2016 which were taken on notice for a subsequent written response?

Dean Frost responded that he would investigate the issue.

A subsequent written response was provided by the Manager Customer Service & Council Business in the following terms:

I refer to the question that you raised during Question Time on 28 June 2016.

Please note that your question from the Council Meeting held on 10 May 2016 was included in the Minutes from that Meeting, and was subsequently published on Council's website. Your question was not published in the 'Question Time' document on Council's website because no written response had been provided at the time of publication.

I note that Council's CEO has now provided you with a written response, dated 27 June 2016 and that this response, along with your question, have now been published on Council's website (in the 'Question Time' document) for the Council Meeting held on 10 May 2016.

While I acknowledge that a written response was provided to you on this occasion, as previously advised to you, both verbally and in writing, Council will not acknowledge or respond to any further questions regarding this matter in future.

John Pettit asked:

- 1) Are all letters send by email to the Council Administrators received and read by them?
- 2) In a brief letter addressed to the Administrators and extending an invitation to them to visit the area to acquaint them of the environmental damage inflicted by the present quarries in the You Yangs area. The reply received was silent on the matter of the invitation to visit the area. I replied to the writer of the response from the Administrator's office pointing out the whole purpose of the letter was an invitation to the Administrators to visit the area and this was ignored. There has been no reply so I am asking the question, "Will the Administrators visit the area"? The land subject to environmental damage (Upper Hovells Creek and Lascelles Dam) from the proposed quarry is on private land contained within Woolloomanata Station.

Kathy Alexander responded that she had received and read the letters and that the Administrators would arrange a site visit of the area before making any complex decisions.

Sue Jones asked will the proposed Planning Panel and Council Administrators recognise concerns and interest beyond the Greater Geelong area in recommending and deciding on this application?

Our particular concerns are:

- 1) The negative impact of increased heavy traffic in neighbouring Little River and Balliang, as well as in Lara, including: safety for road users, particularly cyclists, safety at the many level rail crossings in the area and the impact on the historic bluestone bridges at Little River. The Grant Bridge is already damaged.
- 2) Detriment to the You Yangs precinct including Hovells Creek, an outstanding asset in both the Geelong and Western Melbourne regions for environmental education, recreation and tourism because of its geological, environmental and cultural heritage.
- 3) We note that, with proximity to both Geelong and Melbourne, the You Yangs have the added value to accessibility for bicycle and/or rail users, with potential as a destination for bicycle and walker trails in both regions.

Steve Sodomaco advised the whole purpose of the Panel is to raise and consider all of those issues. All submissions will be considered and recommendations put forward for Council's further consideration.

Marylyn Pettit asked:

- 1) We understand that the Lara Care Group (of which I am a member), wrote with urgency to the Chair of the Administrators, Dr Alexander on 24 June, following a letter from Council about the 692/2015 planning permit application received on 20 June, expressing serious concerns about the arrangement to establish a panel, propose it to Council at this evening's meeting and conduct a panel hearing at 3pm next Wednesday 5 July – all very short notice – in the middle of a working day, and during school holidays. We feel the timeframe is far too short and is unfair to many who might wish to attend the hearing. It is my understanding the only response has been an email received today advising the letter had been forwarded to Dr Alexander. Could you confirm whether this correspondence has been considered and what is the outcome regarding the Lara Care Group's request?

Steve Sodomaco acknowledged some people received their letter a lot later and did make comment in relation to the time.

Kathy Alexander advised she would investigate the rescheduling of the meeting to a more suitable time.

- 2) If the Planning Panel hearing goes ahead on 5 July, when will the panel be required to hand down its recommendation, who will it hand it to, and what will be the process from that point onward?

The Committee will prepare a report containing recommendations gained from this hearing which will then be presented to Council for their decision.