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Submission: I wish to oppose the proposed council office upgrade at the cost of \$17 million. Your council has recently removed playground equipment from 32 of 55 parks in the Clarence Valley due to lack of money for asset management maintenance and upgrade to the tune of \$5 million per annum shortfall (per Ashley Lindsey). Now, suddenly, you can find \$17 million to upgrade the council offices. How about you use that money to refurbish to playground equipment for the enjoyment and use of the ratepayers and residents of the Clarence Valley instead of using the money to create an "ivory tower" for the few. If you can find \$17 million for the upgrade, that is over three years covered in deficit for maintenance and upgrade of current asset management. The request in the "fit for the future submission" of 8% per annum increase in rates for 5 years and 10% for services for 4 years seems to be self-serving when you are pleading lack of funds to run and manage the Clarence Valley then you want this council office upgrade. Your intention to reduce and eliminate services could well be boosted with this money to save these services. I note with interest that the upgrade is to be undertaken by a Newcastle firm not a Clarence Valley business, so you encourage support a local but do not practice what you preach.

The following questions are raised regarding your proposal to reduce 5 council work depots to 2. What will happen with the surplus equipment? Do you intend to sell it off? What will that money be used for (hopefully not the council office upgrade)? What will happen to the current staffing levels, no equipment - no job, I would imagine? Will you contract out infrastructure work, leaving a possibility for more unemployment? From memory, I recall as a child living near Rushforth Road, there being discussions by adults regarding asbestos being under the sewerage works, which to my understanding is where one of the council depot's will be, if so, what how much will the remediation works be and has the soil testing already been undertaken?

Further to your efforts on community consultation for the council proposals, it is very poor. To display it in council office foyer and add a note in with the rates is not enough. Hardly anyone goes to council office so the majority of the community remain unaware of your actions. It could almost be seen as underhanded actions to push forward a council self motivated direction without the best interests, wants and needs of the community taken into account and put first.