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The Editor
Northern Daily Leader
27 Bourke Street
Tamworth NSW 2340
Via email: mail@northerndailyleader.com.au

Dear Editor

Proposed Sale of Council Car Park Kable Avenue and Ray Walsh House

The Tamworth Regional Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc (TRRRA) is a non-profit association whose charter is to represent to Tamworth Regional Council (TRC) and other government bodies on behalf of TRC residents on matters that affect their interests by any person, organisation, or government body.

The below comments are made as a matter of public interest to assist the Tamworth Regional Council in its decision making.

Ray Walsh House (RWH) has had \$2 million spent on removal of all the internal walls and floor coverings. We are told by a reliable informant that the asbestos lagging around the air conditioning above the false ceilings is still in place. We have also been told that all of the fittings in the Tamworth Regional Council (TRC) Chambers and meeting room on the fourth floor, many being historical artefacts, have been removed and disposed of as waste, as have all of the floor coverings throughout the building. Essentially the interior of RWH has been gutted. The source of the original asbestos issue does not appear to have been addressed.

The information released under freedom of information contains details of plans for refurbishment and remediation of RWH. Any amounts that contain estimates of costs have been redacted,

What emerges is a reckless disregard for the preservation of a major community asset valued at \$50 million and amortised to \$28 million in the TRC 2023 financial statements.

Rumours persist that RWH is to be sold to developers, possibly for demolition, along with the RWH carpark.

Recently it has also emerged that TRC is talking with CBD property owners about possible sale of their premises to TRC for redevelopment as Council Chambers, with building construction probably at a cost of around \$100 million.

It appears that none of the Councillors, at least at a formal level, have been notified of these discussions or proposals.

This is the same Council requesting a rate increase of approximately \$7 million in 2025/26 and \$14 million in 2026/27.

We now have some notion of how TRC will spend that money and how soon they will come back to the community for more rate rises.

The Councillors need to be much more active in holding the TRC bureaucracy to account.

Yours sincerely

Tamworth Regional Residents and Ratepayers Association

Cc Tamworth Regional Council
Councillors Tamworth Regional Council