

From: Kerin Booth

Postal address Westbury 7303

To The General Manager, Mayor and Councillors
Meander Valley Council
10 August 2021

Submission to the Meander Valley Council Re the Northern Prison currently proposed for the Westbury Conservation Reserve otherwise known as the Brushy Rivulet Marney's Hill Nature Reserve.

Firstly, I'd like to thank the MVC Council for inviting submissions about this development proposal and finally holding a public meeting about the issue, albeit, after they were required to do so.

My submission includes several questions I would like to see answered, either at the meeting or in writing. These questions are as follows and in bold type:

Why did the Council wait to hold a Public Meeting, until they received a petition, organised by Westbury Region Against the Prison group, required Council to do so?

Is the Council intending to have further community consultation about this major development proposal?

Is it on public record that previous and current Councillors have supported the proposal for a Northern Prison to be situated in the Meander Valley Municipality?

As I understand, ex-Mayor Shelton, ex-Mayor Perkins, Councillors Wayne Johnson, Michael Kelly, Tanya King and by association through standing as Liberal Party Candidates, Councillor Stephanie Cameron and ex-Councillor Susie Bower have all shown their support for the Northern Prison in their municipality and yet Council has not held a fair or proper community consultation process.

Should Councillors be able to publicly show support for a Northern Prison being developed in the Meander Valley municipality? Given that Councillors are expected to consider applications without bias, through the planning process, should they be able to vote on the development if the proposal gets to the development application stage?

In order to be unbiased, will the Council revoke previous motions supporting a Northern Prison or Correctional Centre?

Have the current Councillors been made aware that the current site which the State Government is proceeding with for their proposed development, is on a property that was intended for reservation under the National Reserve System?

Will the Council request a briefing of the natural values of the Westbury reserve site, from Sarah Lloyd (OAM) who has been studying and documenting the natural values on this site, including several threatened species of Flora and Fauna?

As outlined in the Brushy Rivulet – Westbury CONSERVATION COVENANT PROPOSAL the (70 Ha) property has numerous natural values, including suitable habitat for a range of rare and threatened species. The TLC is supportive of the property's conservation (as originally intended) through the Revolving Fund mechanism.

The TLC believes the property (PID 7031141) on Birralelee Road, Westbury should be conserved as originally intended through the Private Forest Reserve Program, contributing to the National Reserve System."

The Tasmanian Land Conservancy is a partner with the state government Department, DPIPW, so its criticism of this proposed development is even more potent when it is so reliant on State and Federal funding.

As I understand, the previous Planning Scheme had a Priority Overlay for Habitat.

Why has this overlay been dropped off the new Planning Scheme?

Will the Council reinstate the environmental protection for this site due to the importance of habitat for threatened species?

Does Council know why the Minister for Corrections decided she wanted a Northern Prison on this nature reserve site?

Will the Council reason with the Minister, that there have been other far more suitable offers of land with low natural values, such as the land near Rocherlea offered by soil scientist and land owner, Andrew Nowakowski.

As published in the Meander Valley Gazette (9th Oct 2020), "Andrew Nowakowski and his two siblings offered 100 hectares at 278 Lilydale Rd, but it was after the due date for expressions of interest and Ms Archer told Mr Nowakowski that he was too late.

'In reply, her letter to me said no places were being considered outside the expressions of interest process

'Then, lo and behold, she moved the prison site from 135 Birralelee Road to the Brushy Rivulet site further down Birralelee Road, which was definitely a site outside the expressions of interest process', he said.

'I reoffered my site, thinking that they might look at it again, but no.

'I believe that even if the government doesn't take our site seriously, they should open up the expressions of interest process again', he said."

Can the Council please ask the State Government Minister for Corrections, why she abandoned the Government's own Expression of Interest process, when she shifted her focus from the site near the Westbury industrial area, to fixate on a Nature Reserve that should have by now been set aside for protection under the National Reserve system, while rejecting submissions of other more suitable sites, supposedly because they were outside of the original Eol process?

I understand that Launceston City Council has over 1000 hectares of land that would be potentially far more suitable for a development of the scale of a prison, which would require substantial services, such as could be provided closer to a major centre. A Northern Prison near Westbury will be burdensome to Council and the community, as there are no services, not even water or sewerage, and inadequate roading, police and fire services, especially for a prison surrounded by bushland.

Will Council support the call for a new Eol process to find a more suitable site, not necessarily in the Meander Valley Council Municipality?

Has Council decided that a Northern Prison must be situated in the Meander Valley Municipality?

Will the Council consider having a briefing from Greg Barnes Barrister and prisoner advocate, about the need for another prison? Certainly, the Council should be encouraging the Minister for Corrections to meet with him as he is very knowledgeable about rehabilitation and the causes of recidivism which is affecting prisoner numbers in Risdon Prison.

I do not believe that more than half a billion dollars should be allocated to a new prison when there are housing shortages and a shortage of rehabilitation programs and social services, and that recidivism, possibly due to these factors, is very high.

The probability of negative impact from a big new prison on the Westbury and Birralee community is very high. The changes that will occur to the Westbury region due to the imposition of a Prison are largely unknown. The community have not been sufficiently consulted and I believe the Council should be supporting the wishes of the community who they represent.

From: Lynn Bricknell
Sent: Thursday, 12 August 2021 5:07 PM
To: Meander Valley Council Email
Subject: northern prison

- I am concerned regarding the northern prison and the way the council and councilors have conducted the Expression of Interest to have the prison in the district (Ashley detention site) without getting ratepayers opinions on the topic. Even more concerning is the way that councilor's have in past have had a hand in this decision and are pushing their own agenda rather than the rate payers of the district.
- I am increasingly concerned about the council lack of interest in consulting the ratepayers, where is the consultation, Do we want a prison in our district, Will it be a benefit to the ratepayers to have it built so close to town. Where is the economic benefit of it or will it be a drain on council and ratepayers.
- As a tourist town, how will this project effect it. Is there a economic report that can be accessed by public that shows this will benefit us.
- My concern regarding the prison is the proximity to the town. By having a 270 bed maximum security prison so close to our town will become decremental to the town's reputation, as it has already called the Westbury Prison, not the Northern Prison. Increase in crime and vandalism is also a large concern
- The lack of concern for the wildlife including the endangered species that currently reside in the reserve. Proving that this land should be zoned and be environmental managed by parks and wildlife, as was originally intended.
- The amount of environmental damage to the flora and fauna in the reserve already, before it has even reached the planning stage to the council, who will decide whether it proceeds.
- The increase in traffic on a road that already has dangerous aspects, with black spots, an accident waiting to occur
- How will site be managed with sewerage and water. Will this increase my rates? Will there be a guarantee not to leak into to river. Will there be regular inspection to ensure this does not occur
- The state government has understaffed the current prison in south, how will this this resolved for a northern prison
- As a ratepayer of 2 properties in the area, can council say show how this project will be a benefit to the town and not something that as ratepayers, will have to be paying for in years to come.

I look forward to hearing your answers to these points
Regards
Lynn Bricknell

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

SUBMISSION AND QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON PROPOSAL AT WESTBURY BY DAVID GIBSON OF WESTBURY.

SOME 20 MONTHS AGO MINISTER ARCHER WITH OTHERS DECLARED THAT WESTBURY WAS THE PREFERRED SITE FOR A NEW STATE MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON. THAT'S WHEN THE DAMAGE FOR WESTBURY STARTED. IT IMMEDIATELY SPLIT THE TOWNS FOLK WITH SOME BEING HAPPY TO CONTINUE LIVING IN THE HISTORIC VILLAGE OF WESTBURY OTHERS SEEING A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY FOR THE TOWN TO EMBRACE A 270 MILLION DOLLAR STATE PROJECT WITH SOME OF THAT FLOWING BACK INTO THE COMMUNITY. THAT WAS WHEN THE STIGMA FOR WESTBURY STARTED. I AM AWARE OF NUMEROUS TOURISTS WHO HAVE ALREADY AVOIDED THE TOWN. THAT'S A SHAME.

ITS ALSO A SHAME THAT WESTBURY WAS SELECTED FOR THE SITE. MANY LOCAL PEOPLE WERE CLEARLY UPSET, PARTICULARLY WHEN IT APPEARS THAT A PREVIOUS COUNCIL EMPLOYEE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS SUBMISSION WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. THAT IS NOT WHAT I CALL WORKING TOGETHER.

THIS PROPOSAL HAS EXPOSED A FESTERING WOUND FOR THE STATE GOVERNMENT WITH ITS CONTINUAL FAILURE TO ADEQUATELY STAFF RISDON PRISON LEADING TO ALL SORTS OF ISSUES, ONE BEING A MASSIVE COST TO THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY WITH HIGH WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIMS. CAN THE MINISTER EXPLAIN HOW THE PRISON SYSTEM HAS GOT TO THIS STATE? DOES THE STATE NEED ANOTHER PRISON? WILL IT BE OPERATED THE SAME AS THE PRESENT ONE? IF OUR CURRENT PRISON SYSTEM IS FAILING HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY OF WESBURY BE SATISFIED THAT A MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON WILL BE RUN WITH ANY DEGREE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY?

A 90 MILLION DOLLAR EXTENSION IS BEING CARRIED OUT AT RISDON RIGHT NOW. SURELY ONE PRISON IN TASMANIA IS ENOUGH TO FUND. WOULD THE FUNDING OF MORE JUDICIAL OFFICERS TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING CRIMINAL MATTERS BE FAR MORE COST EFFECTIVE THAN BUILDING A DUPLICATE PRISON?

SHOULD THE PRISON BE PURSUED, IT WILL BE USING MONIES THAT COULD BE SPENT ON HEALTH, RAMP PREVENTION, EDUCATION, POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE. THE PROPOSED MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON WILL AT FIRST COST AN ESTIMATED 270 MILLION DOLLARS THEN CONTINUE TO COST MILLIONS. THERE IS NO RETURN ON INVESTMENT HERE. I SEE GOVERNMENT DUPLICATION AND WASTE.

IN MY OPINION, THE CONCEPT THAT WE NEED A NORTHERN PRISON IS A CROCK. MANY PRISONERS DO NOT WANT VISITORS, MANY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS DO NOT WANT TO VISIT THEIR OFFENDING INMATES AND THEN TRAVELLING TO RISDON FROM UP NORTH IS ONLY 2 OR 3 HOURS ANYWAY. HAS THE GOVERNMENT CONDUCTED AND RELEASED ANY STUDY TO JUSTIFY THE NEED FOR ANOTHER PRISON?

THE SELECTION OF WESTBURY FOR THE SITE OF THE MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON SEEMS ODD. WESTBURY HAS LITTLE BANKING, PASSING POLICE SERVICES, VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE AND AMBULANCE SERVICES. THIS MEANS LOTS OF UNNECESSARY DRIVING FOR ALL SERVICES REQUIRED FROM NEIGHBOURING CITIES. THAT'S JUST UNPRODUCTIVE TIME WASTING. THE LOGICAL SITE FOR ANY NORTHERN PRISON WOULD HAVE BEEN LAUNCESTON WHERE THERE ARE SOME SERVICES AND

PEOPLE WHO MAY WISH TO WORK AT A PRISON. IF THE PROJECT IS SUCH A GREAT THING FOR NORTHERN TASMANIA, WHY HAS THE CITY OF LAUNCESTON NOT BEEN SELECTED?

DOES THE MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL TAKE ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CARE AND CONTROL OF ITS NATURE RESERVES? IF SO, WHAT STEPS HAVE THE MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL TAKEN TO STOP THE STATE GOVERNMENT GUTTING THE NATURE RESERVE AT THE BRUSHY RIVULET, THE NOW PREFERRED SITE OF THE MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON?

THE PROPOSED MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON IS AN ESTIMATED 270 MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT. A MAJOR PROJECT FOR THIS STATE WHICH EQUATES TO THE CREATION OF A SMALL CONFINED TOWN IN ITSELF WITH AN EVEN MORE DEMAND THAN MOST ON PEOPLE FOR STAFF, EMERGENCY SERVICES, POWER, GAS, WATER, SEWAGE, WASTE REMOVAL, TRANSPORT, HEALTH, CIVIL WORKS, COUNCIL SERVICES AND THE LIKE. WHY HAS THE MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL FAILED TO CONDUCT A POLL OF THE WESTBURY COMMUNITY TO GAUGE ITS SUPPORT OR NOT? AT THE SAME TIME THE MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL MIGHT POLL ALL OF THEIR COMMUNITIES. PERHAPS THE TOWN OF DELORAINE OR PROSECT MIGHT WELCOME THE PROJECT. WE ARE RATEPAYERS. WE BELIEVE WE LIVE IN A DEMOCRACY. WE HAVE A RIGHT TO OUR OPINION. WE HAVE A RIGHT TO BE HEARD.

THE COMMUNITY IS WELL AWARE THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT SUBMITTED ITS DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR THE PROJECT. HAVING KNOWN FOR SOME 20 MONTHS THAT THIS MASSIVE PROJECT IS PLANNED BY THE GOVERNMENT, WHAT STEPS HAVE THE MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL TAKEN TO ADDRESS THE COMMUNITY OF THE IMPACT OF SUCH A PROJECT, AND WHAT IMPACT STUDIES HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN TO PREVENT COMMUNITY STRESS AND HOW THE LOCALS WILL COPE WITH THEIR INCREASE IN RATES AND REDUCTION IN PROPERTY VALUES?

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MEANDER VALLEY COUNCIL FOR HOLDING A PUBLIC MEETING. AFTER TWO PETITIONS, AFTER DARK, AFTER HOURS, FAILING TO USE THE WESTBURY TOWN HALL, IS HARDLY WORKING TOGETHER, JUST HEADBUTTING. ANOTHER WORKSHOP REQUIRED.

NOT SEEING COMMUNITY HERE.

SIGNED; DAVID GIBSON