



BELLINGEN SHIRE COUNCIL

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OUR REF.: wjl
File: G 6-4

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14 July 2004

The Committee Manager
Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Submission on the Joint Use and Co-location of Public Buildings

In 1988 Bellingen Shire Council contributed significant funds (in excess of \$120,000) towards the cost of works involved in the construction of carparking and associated roadworks for a Multipurpose Centre within the grounds of the Bellingen High School.

The project was "sold" to Council on the basis that the Multipurpose Centre would provide a much needed facility for the school and public at large.

Council is party to an agreement which provides it with representation on a Management Committee, which is delegated with the authority to manage the Centre.

The Bellingen High School has exclusive use of the Centre during school times and members of the public may hire or use the hall outside those times.

Some 16 years down the track the Multipurpose Centre is a great venue for school presentations, activities and sports however I believe that the Centre is under utilised by the public.

The Committee is not active in promoting the Centre and the day to day running of the Centre is undertaken by the school.

Council manages a number of public halls and citizen centres within the town and has not become overly involved in the Multipurpose Centre's management.

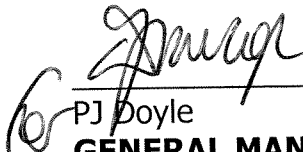
Basically the Centre is now almost exclusively used by the School though I understand that some minor public use does occur from time to time.

Though the facility is of great benefit to the school I believe that it is greatly under utilised by the public.

As a result I believe that the Centre has been somewhat of a failure and in hindsight, Council would have been far better off spending its money on upgrading its public facilities as they seem to be far more utilised by the public than the Multipurpose Centre at the Bellingen High School.

I thank the Standing Committee for giving Council the opportunity of provide comments on its experiences on this issue.

Yours faithfully,


PJ Doyle
GENERAL MANAGER