


SUBMISSION FORM

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Signature 

I do NOT wish to make a personal submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered.**

** The reason I do not wish to be heard is the absence of suitable publicly available information to which one could speak intelligently on the following issues:

A NEW CIVIC OFFICE BUILDING \$53.71m (Volume One, P 29)

This is the largest new initiative announced in the Draft Community Plan and the largest structure to be erected in Christchurch since the Gallery.

The absence of transparency surrounding this process should make the Council ashamed.

- It is not discussed at all in the Summaries of Major Proposals Pp 29-38
- There has been no encouragement of public debate by the public that will have to pay for this bureaucratic palace
- There is no indication to the public that any of the following have been considered:
 - need (as opposed to wish)
 - priority over other public projects (when we are told, for example, that there is no money for household organic waste collection and that the ocean outfall is a severe strain on finance)
 - local government responsibility to reuse existing structures (when most of the CBD lies empty)
 - location and urban design considerations (when the Council is theoretically supporting revitalisation of the inner city and protection of the heritage character of Lichfield Street and environs).

The appearance at present is of a Council eager to provide for itself ahead of its ratepayers and even more eager to keep that fact quiet by discouraging debate. The solution is easy: make the proposal widely known and discussed, allow it to be a major election issue as it should be, and let those standing for office make their position on the issue clear so that voters may take that into account when they decide which candidates to support.

Is Christchurch City Council a democratic structure or is it not?

B BOTANIC GARDENS STAFF AND VISITOR FACILITY AND GREENHOUSE REPLACEMENT \$10.35m (Volume One, Pp 29-30)

Tucked at the bottom of a list of innocuous and inexpensive items like plant labelling and internet access we find a new entry building, presumably the bulk of the cost \$10.35m. The absence of transparency in this disingenuous placement should make the Council ashamed. There is no indication to the public what is being planned, or where, or that any of the following have been considered:

- need for a single large structure on parkland (as opposed to wish)
- urban design considerations in one of the most loved (and lucrative) areas of the city
 - where is this building to be?
 - what design considerations are to drive it?
- alternatives such as the use of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery
 - this has many advantages
 - the McDougall is not physically or stylistically well connected to the Museum (whose uses for it are at present vague), and the proposed link (yet to gain resource consent) damages the fabric of the McDougall
 - the McDougall is of sufficient size to allow the uses wished for by the Botanic Gardens staff and Friends
 - use of the McDougall avoids the erection of a new structure on park land
 - the McDougall's classical styling is precisely suitable to a garden structure being reminiscent, in this predominantly English landscape park and gardens, of 18th century classical garden structures in the great parks of England
- or an alternative such as smaller separated pavilions to reduce the impact on the landscape (why do staff facilities and a café have to be in the same building?)

The proposals for the restyling of Rolleston Avenue by the removal of the fence, creating a "piazza" (not a feature of English Gothic Revival townscape), and perhaps (how can the public know?) the placement of a major new structure at what is now the entrance to the gardens can only bring horror at the extent of despoliation this Council is prepared to visit on this, the best, area of Christchurch. Both the Peacock Fountain and new bridge are violent and vulgar interventions that show no understanding of the English park landscaping heritage into which they are inserted but do simultaneously show, it must regretfully be said, an aesthetic derived from the suburban shopping malls of America where garish novelty is used to part the consumer from his money. There is no need for this behaviour on Rolleston Avenue or anywhere in the Gardens because every survey shows that the landscape tradition, as it is, is precisely what is loved and what draws people to the area. That is what is "relevant". Spoil it at your peril.