LET THE RECORD SHOW

To: Western Downs Regional Council, including the CEO, Mayor and Councillors.

I am speaking today about Council's *claim* that community engagement supports locating a Cultural Precinct inside Thomas Jack Memorial Park, Dalby.

After carefully reading Council's *own* 39 page *Community Engagement Repor*t, one thing became clear:

The community was never asked the *real* question. Not once.

THE QUESTION

Council repeatedly states that consultation shows support for the location.

But *nowhere* were residents actually asked:

"Do you want a Cultural Centre built inside your Park ?"

That question did not appear.

Instead, people were asked:

- what facilities they liked
- their values

That's not consultation regarding location.
That's consultation *around* a location already chosen.

THE "MOCK DEMOCRACY" EVENT

Many of us attended "Dotmocracy" — held in the park.

We were treated like children, handed sheets of coloured dots and asked to stick them on pictures of things we liked.

Trees ? Green space ? Parkland ? *All* Covered in dots.
The one option missing?

“Do you want a Cultural Centre built in your park ?”

That question was never asked.

CAP*, YAP* — AND THE ILLUSION OF CONSENSUS
*Community and *Youth Advisory Panels

Council repeatedly quotes CAP and YAP members support the park location.

But CAP and YAP members are:

- advisory participants,
- with opinions of their own

Quoting *selected* advisory *opinions*, is not community consent.

“THE PARK IS SAFER” — A FEELING, NOT EVIDENCE

A repeated claim is that the Park “felt safer”, but safer than what ?

Thomas Jack Park does feel safe, ***now***. It won’t feel safe, it wont *be* safe with huge facilities needing parking all around the perimeter and up and down streets - adjacent 2 Highways.
Having people park on busy streets is *more dangerous* than providing people with what they wanted - plenty of decent parking.

COUNCIL'S OWN DATA CONTRADICTS IT'S OWN CONCLUSION

Council's own survey* shows people want a Centre to:
*Have Your Say Survey

- be **accessible by car**
- be on a **large site**
- **not take away from green space**
- and provide **plenty of parking,** like we had at MyALL107 which council demolished.

These preferences are incompatible with building inside a park.

Yet Council looked at these responses and *still* chose the park.

That is not interpretation, it's *contradiction*.

PEOPLE WANT A CINEMA — AND THE PARKING REALITY

Most residents just want a **cinema**. We have everything else.

People chose "cinema".

Council chose "park".

And here is the critical part:

Every facility placed inside our Park —**creates pressure for parking**.

The RMA Engineering report leaves the door open for future internal carparks. *Source - RMA Traffic Impact Assessment - Dalby Cultural Centre*
*Page 40, 8.4.2 Internal car parking provisions - " A number of options have been considered for possible **additional car parking within the park…**".*

This means:

If development begins, <u>parkland is not protected.</u>
I noticed a pattern - the same thing is happening here in Chinchilla.
The pool is being demolished and rebuilt in Parkland !

THE NUMBERS

Only 2% of residents responded to the convoluted "Have your Say Survey" - which omitted the *premier question*.

FINALLY

The Councillors and Mayor, *never* even voted on, nor approved of the *Development Application* that authorises this project ! Whilst Councillors regularly vote on much smaller applications.

The Development Application was deemed Code Assessable under the Planning Act as a *Minor Change Application.* Because of this - a small group called the "Development Assessment Panel" approved it behind closed doors.

Constructing a $40 Million dollar Commercial Centre in our beloved *Park* - is *not* a minor change of use.

Were the Councillors and the Mayor washing their hands like Pontius Pilate, distancing themselves from a decision of enormous public consequence ?

THE TRUTH

Council never asked residents if they want a huge commercial centre built on top of their beloved park.

Therefore Council *cannot* claim consent, or that we chose it, or want it.

Council's conduct is *poor* governance, *mocks meaningful* engagement, and shows *no respect* for our Park, or culture of democracy. Councillors that were meant to represent us, **but *didn't***.

I am referring this Council's conduct to the Queensland Ombudsman.

Wulf von der Decken