

14th June 2017

Mayor: Councillor John Medcalf

General Manager: Robert Hunt



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Proposed Highway Service Centre Condobolin

Lachlan Shire Council's announcement last week that it is calling Expressions of Interest (EOI) for a 24 hour Fuel Service Centre at Condobolin has largely been welcomed by the community.

The EOI is for the construction of a 24 hour Fuel Service Centre on The Gipps Way catering for large trucks.

The area will be known as a Tourism Precinct with a visitor information centre and cafeteria and will also be the site of the popular "Utes in the Paddock" outdoor gallery as well as the National Jockeys Memorial.

Lachlan Shire Council Mayor, John Medcalf, said while there have been some detractors the response to the precinct has been largely very positive.

"Council is working hard in its economic development efforts and it's through projects such as these that we will be able to increase the number of people coming to Condobolin which in turn will have a flow on effect to our local businesses and our local economy.

"It's important also to make sure our approach roads look good and our main street looks attractive as the improvement of the main street of a country town can be a cost effective way of encouraging economic development.

"Our aim is to attract people here and provide them with a pleasant stay even if it's only for a couple of hours or a few days. If they have a good experience they will tell others who will come here and so on.

"During the past week I've had some enquiries that the 24 Hour Service Centre will be bad for local businesses and why are we doing work on this and the main street instead of on our roads.

"I hope some of the queries people might have will be answered with the following questions and answers" Mayor Medcalf said.

Summary: Proposed Highway Service Centre Condobolin	
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Distribution: Local Media, Council Website, Council Face book page.	

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How will the 24 hour Fuel Service Centre affect local businesses?

While another fuel service station and cafeteria may affect businesses already supplying these services the entire tourism precinct is expected to attract many more visitors to the Shire which will have a flow-on effect for existing businesses. The entire shire will benefit by having a dedicated visitor information centre located with the cafeteria which will provide information about other attractions in the shire.

Are local businesses invited/encouraged to apply to the EOI tender?

Yes local Fuel service stations have been provided with a copy of the EOI and are encouraged to consider applying. The cafeteria is proposed to be leased to a private operator and locals can apply to operate that part of the business.

Where can the expression of interested documents be found?

Copies can be obtained from Council or the Tenderlink website www.tenderlink.com/lachlan

Where is the Tourism Precinct proposed to be located?

The site is opposite the South Forbes road as it intersects with the Gipps Way and is some 25 acres in area.

Who is paying for the service centre/ tourism precinct?

The 24 hour Fuel Service Centre will be fully funded by the successful tenderer. Council will be using grant funds and ratepayers' funds to relocate the utes and construct the new National Jockeys Memorial.

Why isn't the money proposed for this development being used to upgrade existing roads?

Council has a dedicated roads budget along with budgets for many other services provided by Council. The tourism budget will pay for the tourist attractions. Roads leading to the Tourism Precinct are currently being assessed and estimates provided to upgrade The Gipps Way, The Murie, etc to ensure they are passable in future flood events.

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What happened to the funding received for the 2016 floods and why have the roads not been fixed?

Council obtains Federal and State road grants which must be spent by June 30th otherwise Council has to give them back. The flood grants have to be spent within 18 months so Council is focusing on completing the current roads program which was delayed significantly due to the flooding. Flood money will be spent in the second half of this year and next year.

Wouldn't the money be better spent on improving existing businesses in town?

The money for the service station will be privately funded. The tourist attractions are needed to promote Condobolin and increase economic development in the Shire. Council is fortunate to receive the Utes in the Paddock which is already an iconic attraction.

Has flooding around the area of the proposed site been considered?

Yes it will be part of a detailed development application process. The ground level for buildings will be built up above flood levels and fuel tanks will be installed above ground.

What will it do for employment in the local region?

The service station will create jobs along with the cafeteria. The Visitor Information Centre will also require staffing. The total attraction is expected to increase employment in the shire due to the benefits of increased numbers of tourists spending locally.

Why isn't the Council trying to get a store to replace Country Target ?

Council has made enquiries with a number of stores selling similar products to the former Country Target Store. Unfortunately all have minimum population catchment areas of 7,500 or greater and will not open a store here. Council is continuing its enquiries and will be calling for Expressions of Interest from interested retailers in the near future.

RELEASE ENDS

Media Contact: Please contact Lachlan Shire Council Mayor, Councillor John Medcalf on 0429 937 248.

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