

# SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

4 APRIL 2012

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## AGENDA ITEM C7

### MARTINBOROUGH TOWN HALL HEARING

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Council with information about the Martinborough Town Hall hearing held on 26 March 2012.

#### **Recommendation**

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*

#### **1. Summary of Hearing**

Following the close of the submission period, a hearing was held between 9.00am and 10.50am on 26 March 2012 to hear submissions on the future of the Martinborough Town Hall. After a brief public participation period submitters were each given 10 minutes to speak to their written submission and to answer any questions from the hearing panel.

- 11 submitters were heard in total
- 6 supported strengthening the existing hall
- 3 were neutral
- 1 was for demolition
- 1 was for building a new hall

Perry Cameron spoke in the public participation period on behalf of the Lake Ferry Rate Payers & Residents Association. Mr Cameron suggested that the wider community needs must be taken into consideration before a decision can be made about the Town Hall. Mr Cameron supplied a list of functions that community facilities should ideally accommodate (see minutes).

**David Kershaw** preferred strengthening the hall to preserve an historic building and ensure its availability for future generations, and commented that the acoustics and size lent itself to a wide range of events. When questioned by Councillor Napier about any work required beyond strengthening, Mr Kershaw agreed that improvements to the interior, kitchen and toilets would be sensible, completed in stages.

**Angela Sears** changed her submission to strengthen the old hall as it was the cheapest option. Ms Sears said that refurbishment would also be necessary to make it worth using, consulting all community groups to confirm their intended use of the hall.

**Noel Thomas** was in favour of strengthening and maintaining the current hall, but had concerns about financing the work as the district has a relatively small number of ratepayers.

**Jim Hedley** pointed out that 1 district with 3 town halls now has an opportunity to downsize, and that money would be better spent elsewhere. Mr Hedley said that regardless of repairs the building is earthquake prone, and asked if anyone were killed in the Town Hall did the Council want that on their conscience.

**Ian Cresswell, Jim Clark and Winifred Bull**, on behalf of the Martinborough Town Hall Committee (MTHC), were all in favour of strengthening and spoke individually. **Ian Cresswell** preferred to strengthen the unique and historic hall even if it isn't very beautiful, then refurbish gradually according to the plans provided by the Martinborough Town Hall Committee. **Jim Clark** believed the media presented the hall in an unfavourable light by using photos of the less attractive side of the hall. Mr Clark suggested the negativity around preserving the hall is from people who have not used it and therefore do not realize the benefits, like excellent acoustics for musical and theatrical performances. **Winifred Bull** recognized that 75% of the submitters want a facility of some kind. Ms Bull said the three town's halls compliment each other, and if the existing Town Hall is strengthened and refurbished the community will support it for theatre and ballet and similar. Councillor Napier asked the MTHC if refurbishment is necessary as well as strengthening, and all agreed.

**Richard Rudman** considered that the cost estimates were 50% light and that the information provided is too limited to make a decision. Mr Rudman submitted a letter from the New Zealand Historic Places Trust in 2005 to SWDC, recommending a conservation plan and thanking Council for its conservation work to date (see minutes).

**Conor Kershaw**, on behalf of the Martinborough Business Association, recommended a multi-purpose building (a Community Centre rather than a Town Hall) with one large area and smaller rental areas to the sides to encourage use and revenue 5 days a week. Mr Kershaw was neutral on whether this Community Centre would involve strengthening the current hall, or building something new.

**Hiatt Cox** supported Conor Kershaw's statements and said new uses for the hall must be developed before we commit to spending money, and that the youngest and brightest of the community should lead this conversation.

**William Benfield** discussed the seismic risk of older buildings and his related work on similar sized buildings in Wellington, and recommended building something new if funds allow. Mr Benfield suggested that strengthening would require perpetual fund raising as building codes changed, and base isolation, if required, could cost \$5million. Mr Benfield

also supplied an additional written comment in support of his original submission (see minutes).

Although the views were varied, the clear messages from the submitters were:

- People want a hall of some kind in Martinborough
- The interior layout and general use requirements are uncertain at this stage
- If the hall is strengthened it will also need to be refurbished

## **2. Where to from here**

At the culmination of the submission period and after some discussion officers were requested to prepare a report that addressed four specific issues;

1. More accurate costs were required for Council to make a robust decision;
2. What would the implications of any particular option be on rates;
3. What percentage of the Building Act requirements would the proposed strengthening works achieve, and would this work be future proofed against any legislative change that required a higher threshold.
4. Is base isolation required in the strengthening proposal.

### **2.1 More Accurate Costs (item 1)**

Michelle Grant from Eastern Consulting has indicated that in order to provide more detailed and accurate cost projections for each of the rebuild or strengthening options, engineering and architectural design work would have to be completed. These final design plans would then allow the quantity surveyors to provide final accurate costs. This design work would take up to 6 months and at significant cost. It is envisaged that this final design work would only be undertaken when a preferred option is identified.

Therefore the only figures that are available to Council are those that were provided by Maltbys in their report dated September 2011, and modified to exclude the refurbishment costs and included in the consultation document produced by Council.

### **2.2 Rate Implications (item 2)**

With regards to potential effects on rates, the simple equation is that for every \$1,000,000 Council borrows rates will increase approximately 1%.

The table below sets out the options, the estimated costs, and the anticipated rates increase for each.

<b>OPTION</b>	<b>COST ESTIMATE</b>	<b>APPX. RATES INCREASE</b>
1- Strengthen the hall	\$1,345,000	1.4%
2- Demolish the hall, retain the façade and arch, and build new hall	\$2,308,000	2.3%
3- demolish the hall and build a new one	\$2,238,000	2.2%
4- Demolish the hall and don't rebuild	\$82,000	0.08%

The costs associated with options 2 and 3 above that address rebuilds can be somewhat extrapolated to bigger or smaller buildings, by dividing the total costs by the proposed building size of 707m<sup>2</sup>. Based on these figures it would cost approximately \$3,250 per square meter to build a new hall. Therefore a new facility with a GFA of 550m<sup>2</sup> may cost \$1,795,473.

### **2.3 Building Act Requirements (item 3)**

The strengthening work has been preliminarily designed to achieve as near as is practicable to 100% of the standard for new buildings, with no individual element achieving less than 70%. The hall currently achieves 20% of code for the main hall, 10% for the supper room, and 5% for the storage lean to. The current requirement is for the structure as a whole as an EPB to be at least 33%. The proposed strengthening works would comply with any anticipated future increase in the threshold requirement.

### **2.4 Base Isolation (item 4)**

Base isolation was reviewed with the initial strengthening options for the Martinborough Town Hall. The building has no near neighbours and as such would in theory lend itself to base isolation. However this option was ruled out for two reasons;

- Large open volume space buildings such as this hall do not lend themselves to economic base isolation. The structural diaphragms stiffness (required by base isolation) across the building is difficult to achieve with such long high lengths of walls.
- The cost was seen as prohibitive, and meant that other strengthening options were initially assessed as more favourable.

Contact Officer: Glenn Bunny, Group Manager Planning and Environment