

**MM1/24 RYDE CIVIC CENTRE - Mayor, Councillor Sarkis Yedelian OAM**  
**File Number: CLM/24/1/1/8 - BP24/28**

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**BACKGROUND**

In late 2015, Council made the decision to vacate the administration centre at 1 Devlin Street, Ryde and took up a lease of office space at 3 Richardson Place, North Ryde.

In early 2018, Council resolved to re-establish its civic and administrative presence on the Devlin Street site through the development of a new administration and civic centre and the provision of enhanced community facility space.

In 2021, the vacant Devlin Street administration centre and the community hall – which was still in use at that time - were demolished.

Due to Covid and other factors, the redevelopment of the Devlin Street site failed to eventuate prior to financial irregularities being identified with the funding that had been set aside for the Ryde Central project.

The Office of Local Government (OLG) confirmed that the funds for the project had been illegally transferred from externally restricted reserves into the internal Ryde Central reserve. The OLG supported the movement of these funds back into their externally restricted reserves. These fund transfers meant that there was insufficient funding for Council to be able to proceed any further with the project.

Subsequently, at its meeting of 28 November 2023, Council resolved to defer the construction of any new administrative and/or civic building at the Devlin Street site until sufficient funding could be identified by staff.

In view of the time it will take for staff to develop suitable funding strategies, it is crucial that Council consider interim alternative uses of the site that will enable early public benefits to be realised. A notice of rescission was considered by Council on 12 December 2023, but was lost.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council:

- a) Reaffirm its commitment to undertake the Ryde Central project when suitable funds are available through prudent financial management, that ensure Council remains fit for the future and there are no adverse impacts on the provision of council rates, services and programs.
- b) Reaffirm its commitment to retain public ownership of the site.

**MM1/24 (continued)**

- c) Explore options in the short term for the use of the 1 Devlin Street site for public open space, achieved by filling the excavated area within this financial year and report back to Council on what is required to provide designs, cost estimates and feasibility of the required works, including a funding strategy.
  
- d) Investigate how historic photographs and images can be incorporated into the design, to acknowledge and create awareness of the iconic history of the Ryde Central site.

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.

Report Prepared By:

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**Mayor, Councillor**