

Save Our Station Ballarat Inc

MEDIA RELEASE

Public Meeting reaffirms Community Action

7 October 2018

Save Our Station held another public meeting at the VRI Hall last Saturday (6 October). An enthusiastic group of vocal supporters were in attendance, as were Mayor Samantha McIntosh, and councillors Grant Tillett, Daniel Maloney and Jim Rinaldi, Liberals Josh Morris, Amy Johnson and Andrew Kilmartin, and also Victorian Socialists candidate Tim Gooden. No Labor representatives attended.

SOS recapped its recent Month of Action during September, and thanked supporters for distributing pamphlets to 20,000 homes. Lobbying of politicians had brought mixed responses. Sharon Knight's recent opinion piece in the Courier was seen as desperate, Labor digging in for no change.

Liberal member for Western Victoria, Joshua Morris recounted to the meeting a pledge given by Shadow Public Transport Minister, David Davis during his visit to Ballarat Station earlier in the week. "If elected, a Liberal National government will seek to renegotiate the contract for the station redevelopment. As it currently stands, there is no coherent plan for the site," said Mr Morris. "We will work with the community to help fix this mess that Labor has created."

SOS Secretary John Barnes said, "This raises the political stakes and puts the Liberals ahead on this issue at present. It is, however, only a first step. It now needs to be backed up with some funding promises. At the least, this needs to cover the costs of traffic management works in Nolan St, and fixing the disability access issues in the Train Hall."

"We will be keep campaigning to get this commitment from Liberal and Labor," he said.

Mayor Samantha McIntosh outlined some of the behind-the-scenes lobbying by Ballarat City Council. "The big one that stands out for us is disability access," she said. She and councillor Tillett conceded that the handing over of planning control by the previous council had compromised the ability of the current council to advocate as strongly as they might wish.

Following a valuable Q&A, the meeting then agreed on a plan for the next seven weeks, including another letterbox drop across the Wendouree and Buninyong electorates.

"If anyone wishes to assist by volunteering or by making a financial donation, details can be found on saveourstationballarat.com" said Mr Barnes.

Save Our Station Ballarat Inc is a non-partisan, pro-development, not-for-profit community group formed for the purpose of seeing a 21st century transport hub with all abilities access and adequate car parking for future commuter needs, celebrating Ballarat's unique rail heritage at our historic central Ballarat rail station

Help Save Our Station Precinct

Our campaign is about getting the very best outcome for our community and its rail commuter needs into the long-term future.

What do we want to achieve?

- *a 21st century all-abilities accessible transport hub, with adequate parking for the long term future.*
- *the station precinct redevelopment contract with the developer be renegotiated, not ripped up.*
- *the sale of land and the historic Goods Shed must not proceed.*
- *the proposed apartments must be built on another site entirely.*
- *the developer needs to complete the already-started multi-level car park and to create another 500+ car park spaces at ground level.*
- *the developer is the only one in a position to expedite the urgent works necessary to make the Goods Shed structurally sound, environmentally safe and watertight.*
- *the rail station facilities be restored and upgraded;*
- *the north and south rail platforms be linked via an under rail line pathway with lifts.*

saveourstationballarat.com

About **Save Our Station Ballarat Inc**

Save Our Station SOS Ballarat was established in the middle of 2016 by a number of concerned citizens who were independently concerned about the poor public consultation on this project, and the direction in which it was headed with no benefit to the community.

SOS Ballarat objectives:

- To encourage investment in the rail precinct that will ensure its future effectiveness as a transport hub, whilst avoiding development that limits the future transport opportunities.
- To promote investment in the short term for redevelopment of the site consistent with a long-term vision for it to be an effective and efficient fully integrated transport hub for the century ahead.
- To preserve through appropriate re-use, as much of Ballarat's outstanding and unique rail heritage as is possible.

SOS believes that:

- the Ballarat Rail Station precinct has long been a case of demolition by neglect on the part of successive governments.
- it is essential that the government redirect the \$30m+ proposed to be given for largely non-transport uses to a commercial developer. It should all go towards public transport improvements. This will do much to set the site up as an effective fully integrated transport hub for the decades to come. It should protect and sympathetically re-use our heritage Goods Shed as an all-abilities accessible (DDA compliant) bus interchange.
- the Andrews Labor Government must review its plans and ensure capacity to accommodate a local, regional and airport bus interchange on the site and provide at least 550 additional car parks to service the precinct now, whilst making provision for future multi-storey parking for a further 1000 cars.
- the Andrews Labor Government must cancel building a hotel/serviced apartments/convention centre/retail at the Ballarat rail station precinct. The land is needed to meet Ballarat's transport demands in the medium and long term.
- the Andrews Labor Government is indefinitely leaving the station platforms without access for people with mobility challenges. The \$30m+ spend must result in DDA-compliant connections between platforms, the bus interchange and car parking.
- the Andrews Labor Government doesn't recognise the significance of the station's heritage assets, and by proposing to sell the freehold title for half the site, including the historic Goods Shed, will ensure its loss and future destruction.

For and on behalf of Save Our Station SOS Ballarat Group

Background for journalists.

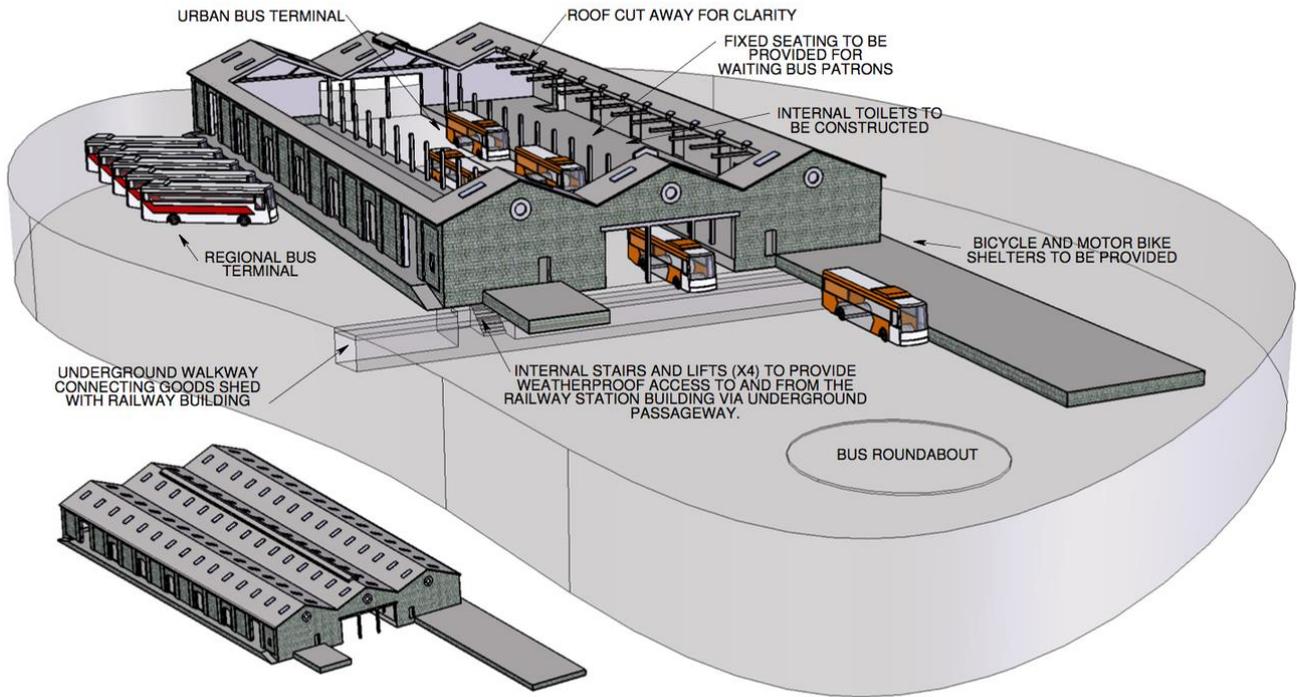
Here is a table which lists the original announcement of the Andrews government, the SOS reaction and the 'fix' offered by the government.

Design Oversights	SOS critique	The 'fix'	Estimated cost to taxpayers \$(m)
Sharon Knight's office announces that the 130 existing car parks will be retained in the new development.	SOS counts 480 existing spaces (confirmed by Courier).	Pellicano plans announce a 270 space, 2-level car park. 6-months later.	6
Pellicano 270 car park spaces on 2-levels.	Pellicano plans are ridiculed for the number of lost public car parks (210).	Andrews government announces an extra \$2m for a third level, with spaces totalling 407.	2
Local bus interchange built in Lydiard St.	SOS supports local campaign to bring local buses into precinct as part of transport hub.	Andrews government announces it will bring local buses into the precinct. It is only when the concept plans for the bus interchange are published that this is seen to be at the expense of the relocation of the regional bus interchange.	5
Legal requirements for making the current Station accessible for people with disabilities is overlooked.	SOS combines with Grampians disAbility Advocacy and the Disability Discrimination Legal Service to lodge a complaint with VCAT.	Lift, ramp and overhead walkway to be announced to achieve DDA compliance. Overhead solution will seriously compromise the Station heritage.	15
Traffic management treatment for bus and car entry/exit from Nolan St is not included in Pellicano or VicTrack plans	SOS pressures BCC, who declare they will not contribute anything toward Nolan St works. They collaborate with RDV on traffic light solution	Three lane entry/exit design at Nolan St, along with lane changes and traffic lights in Nolan St to be announced.	2
Over-runs on car park and bus interchange construction for storm water detention, building footings, fire services and sewer relocation.	SOS requests for details on these issues from RDV never responded to formally.	Sneaking these funds into DDA compliance announcement anticipated.	3

SOS Alternative redevelopment plans, costed at \$26m (net) (and included allowances for regional and local bus interchanges; DDA compliance; storm water detention; Nolan St traffic management works).



**ISOMETRIC VIEW OF PROPOSED BUS TERMINAL
LOCATED IN EXISTING GOODS SHED
BALLARAT RAILWAY PRECINCT**



Courier Survey on attitudes to Station Redevelopment (March 2017):

Over only five days, more than 600 people took the opportunity to complete the survey devised and conducted independently by The Courier. Although this is not a random survey, the results were so emphatic, there can be little doubt about public sentiments over the Station. The following table provides a summary of results:

Question	Yes %	No %	Don't know	Total votes	
Agree that major investment is needed in the precinct?	90.43	9.57		606	
Support government plan to sell part of the site?	5.68	91.32	3.00	599	
Does spend of \$25m meet current expectations on:					
• Car parking?	13.52	81.76	4.72	636	
• Rail and bus improvements?	27.23	69.75	3.02	595	
• Disability access?	21.61	62.95	15.44	583	
Do you think it will activate the site and CBD?	11.57	84.96	3.47	605	
Highest Priority for redevelopment?	Current and future transport % 73.9	Heritage preservation and re-use % 19.74	Job creation % 1.96	Private investment in area % 4.4	613
Preferred future use of the heritage Goods Shed?	Bus interchange: regional, local & airport % 77.72	Convention/exhibition centre % 15.58	Other % 6.7		597