



MEDIA RELEASE - Tuesday May 6 2014

SCOUT HALL DECISION DEFFERED AGAIN

Stonnington Council has again deferred plans to demolish the historic 2nd Malvern Scout hall in Milton Gray Reserve in Malvern.

Council tonight voted 7-2 to defer a decision pending final advice from Heritage Victoria.

Heritage Victoria has already made a preliminary determination that: "The 2nd Malvern Scout Hall is significant at the local (not State) level as a good and intact example of a 1950s Scout hall and for its associations with the 2nd Malvern Scout troop (formed in 1908) and for its strong associations with the community of Malvern."

A final determination will not be made by Heritage Victoria before May 20 to allow public submissions to be made.

Cr Sam Hibbins spoke against the deferral motion: ""The best possible outcome would be to have a successful, strong, thriving Scout group working out of Milton Gray Reserve Hall."

Ben Lok, President of the 2nd Malvern Scout Group, says he hopes Council will finally heed the community's views.

"We are disappointed that Council has again deferred a decision on the Scout hall but we are undeterred," he said.

"Not only the local Scouts, but local families, the local school and local residents have all repeatedly voiced their support for this hall to remain in their local park.

"Council just needs to listen to the community and let our kids back into their local hall."

Last night's Council meeting attracted an overflowing public gallery (with some people having to stand), including young Cubs and Scouts, parents and families and many local residents.

The home of the 2nd Malvern Scouts has been in the balance since Council voted in April last year to demolish the recently renovated hall. Scouts had just resumed meeting in the hall, after the renovation, after an absence of 10 years.

Council has since consulted with the community over the hall. A landscaping plan for the Milton Gray Reserve did not include retaining the hall as an option, yet 46 of 78 responses opposed removing the hall.

Council's application for a permit to demolish the hall drew 45 objections and none in support.

And a report tabled at Council in February showed that that of 427 local residents surveyed by Council, 340 wanted the hall retained, 79 agreed with its removal, and 8 expressed no opinion – a vote of more than 80 per cent to retain the hall.

CONTACT

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