

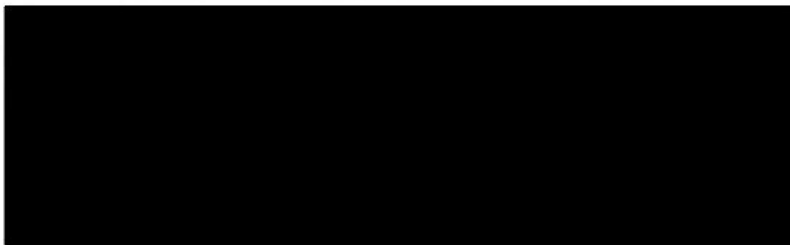
SUBMISSION ON A NOTIFIED RESOURCE
CONSENT APPLICATION

FORM 13 - Pursuant to Sections 95A, 95B, 95C, 96,
127(3), 137(5)(c) and 234(4) of the Resource Management Act 1991



Submitter

Name *DR AMANDA LYNN*
Contact Person
(if different from above)
Postal Address
Home Phone
Cell Phone
Email



Details of the Proposal to which this Submission Relates

Name of Applicant *Masterton District Council / RUSSELL HOOPER CONSULTING*
Address of Proposal *64 Chapel St, Masterton*
Application No. *RM 240 135*
Description of Proposal *Demolition of Masterton Town Hall + Municipal Buildings*

Details of Submission

My submission:

- Supports the whole proposal
 Opposes the whole proposal
 Supports part of the proposal
 Opposes part of the proposal

In the event this application is subject to a Resource Consent Hearing. Do you wish to be heard in respect of your submission?

Yes No

If others make a similar submission I will consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing

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Submission Statement

The specific parts of the Proposal that this submission relates to.

DEMOLITION OF THE HERITAGE BUILDING
AND POTENTIAL DISRUPTION / DESTRUCTION OF
THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE PER THE
ATTACHED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT.

Decision you want the Council to make:

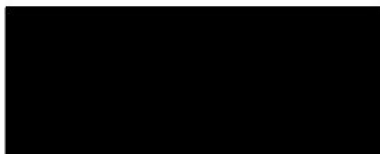
Grant the Consent

Decline the Consent

Grant the Consent with Conditions

Signature

To be signed by the submitter or person authorised to sign on behalf of the submitter.



Name A. LYNN

Date 10/2/25

Important notes for the Submitter

1. In accordance with the Privacy Act 1993, submissions will be made available for viewing by Council and members of the public. *PRIVACY ACT 200 / NO PUBLICATION OF CONTACT DETAILS*
2. This form is for your convenience only. You may make a submission that addresses the points above in a letter or other suitable format.
3. Submissions will not be returned, so please keep a copy.
4. A copy of your submission must be sent to both Council and to the applicant.

Submission on the Resource Consent Application No RM240135 for the Demolition of Masterton

Town Hall and Municipal Buildings

To: The Masterton District Council

From: Dr Amanda Lynn, PhD

Date: 10 February 2025

I do not support the Masterton District Council's resource consent application RM240135.

The heritage listed building locally referred to as the Masterton Town Hall (formerly incorporating the Municipal Buildings) located at 64 Chapel Street, Masterton (legally described as Part Section 104 Town of Masterton, held in Record of Title WN343/105) should be:

- Retained as a protected heritage building
- Protected as an archaeological site
- Strengthened to 80% NBS
- Refurbished to fulfil its prior purposes as a Town Hall and Municipal Offices-allowing a sensitive extension where appropriate and designed by a Heritage Architect. Or otherwise sensitively repurposed.
- Governed by an independent Heritage Board (not under control of the Masterton District Council) that oversees its strengthening, refurbishment, and future maintenance.

In my opinion, the Masterton District Council has not met its obligations to New Zealand or the Masterton Community in relation to the Community's precious Toanga/Treasure. I refer to the Heritage Architects report (and photographs), and the archaeological report. The building has not been properly asset managed for what appears to be more than a decade, despite it providing an in-situ protection for an archaeological site of unknown value. Its story has become one of demolition by disuse and despair—this should be corrected, not exacerbated.

My assessment of the community is one of becoming disaffected by processes of "consultation" that have been similar to the process of demolition by disregard of the heritage building itself. The community is suffering from despair from being consistently disregarded. This is their heritage. To fail to value that, is to fail to value them.

Masterton is a region whose history is one of relative isolation, and of the natural beauty of place conjoined to the beauty and fortitude of its people—both Iwi Māori and the settlers who made the decision to live alongside them. The land upon which the Masterton Town Hall rests, belongs to the people of Masterton. The archaeological site holds aspects of history that are sacred until shown otherwise through expert site excavation. In the walls, floor, roof – every part of the heritage building is the DNA of many hands, working together, in the spirit of a determined community that has set Masterton apart from other Regions of New Zealand.

If the price of an extension to Waiata House and the creation of a dark building, is the loss of a piece of New Zealand's history – that price is too high. Looking back at prior consultations and planning – there was never a need to demolish Masterton's heritage.

Key Concerns

I support the following list of concerns put forward by the Masterton Residents and Ratepayers Association. MRRA raise the following:

- The \$25M budget for a new Masterton Town Hall was arbitrarily set, without a clear business case or financial feasibility assessment.

- Cost escalations in large-scale projects are common (e.g. Wellington Town Hall's cost increased from \$70M to \$329M). There is a high risk that this project will similarly exceed budget estimates due to the limited design information available. The cost is already estimated by RPS Group in the Project Cost Plan at \$34.6M and is largely based on assumptions and benchmarked rates.
- The cost of retaining the façade is estimated at \$3.6M, which is comparable to the \$3.5M proposed for complete demolition.
- An updated quantity surveyor assessment is required to determine the current costs of demolition and any new construction, reflecting today's economic conditions.
- There is a lack of transparency regarding the ongoing operational and depreciation costs of a new Town Hall, which could create further financial strain on ratepayers, with the trickle-down effect on those residents who rent.
- The Council claims that the Town Hall must be demolished or remediated by 2026, yet recent legislative changes extend compliance deadlines for EQ prone buildings until 2031. This means there is no urgency to proceed with demolition now.
- Alternative uses for the buildings, such as community spaces, commercial developments, or heritage precinct attractions, have not been adequately explored (e.g. a heritage or arts hub that celebrates the history of Masterton while generating tourism revenue; community co-working spaces that support local entrepreneurs and non-profits; a multi-purpose cultural events centre to attract visitors and businesses to celebrate our diverse population).
- Demolition will result in significant construction waste, contradicting sustainability goals. Retrofitting or repurposing existing structures aligns with sustainable building practices, reducing material waste and energy consumption. Modern construction methods often use cheaper materials, resulting in a shorter building lifespan compared to the solid construction of the existing structure.

In addition, I support the concerns raised by the MRRA in relation to economic and social impact analyses, and the lack of a business case.

Masterton District Council has failed across the past decade to raise external funds supporting their various plans for a Town Hall, or Civic Centre – there is no case, and no investment has been forthcoming.

Impacts on other businesses and venues is unknown, and it is unlikely that this will be a solid investment in economic development for the region. There is no comparative analysis of opportunity costs from diversion of ratepayer capital from other potential projects.

Although the land upon which the heritage building stands was gifted to Masterton, no analysis of the Deed has been provided for consideration by the people.

It is unconscionable for a Heritage structure of such significance to be demolished when the Masterton District Council has undertaken such limited due diligence and has not even agreed with the people of Masterton any specific plans for future builds.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] in my opinion:

- the economic analysis presented from 2020 was weak at the time of the analysis, but with time, medium term Covid19 impacts, a weak economy, and global instability it cannot be tabled as viable evidence of due diligence.
- the current Government's move away from projects such as regional events centres and toward a more commercially focused approach to regional investment does not align with

such heavy investment—it does not align with destruction of current assets, let alone heritage assets.

- No coherent case has been made for the destruction of this asset on either social or economic grounds and tabled evidence is loosely patched together, not meeting the requirements for a business case to the standards outlined by Treasury.
- There is no design, no plan to achieve.

From a social development perspective, Masterton’s community assets are generally loved for the way that they bring families out into the open to share time together in relaxed and ‘unfussy’ ways. This is a town of friends and family, of picnics and playgrounds. Environments like its heritage buildings and places are well known and offer a sense of belonging, of comfort, of connectedness to the past, and a bridge to the future. Reopening the heritage building in a way that is welcoming, open to all, and filled with light, sound, and purpose suit the culture of the region more.

Retain the building, protect the site, and reopen it to those whom it was always intended to serve.

Conclusion

I do not support the Masterton District Council’s resource consent application RM240135.

The Heritage listed building locally referred to as the Masterton Town Hall should be retained, strengthened and its dignity restored. It belongs to the people, in perpetuity.

Sincerely,

Dr Amanda Lynn, PhD

(Please retain confidentiality/privacy of all contact information under the Privacy Act 2020).

