

## **The Southern Argus – Letter to the Editor**

I am writing in response to last week's front page story in an attempt to redress some of the inaccuracies regarding Council supposedly 'not looking ahead'.

We need to be very clear that the community consultation we are now undertaking is about much more than any one proposal, be that Mr Richards' or any other.

It is completely inaccurate to purport, as last week's piece does, that "Council say they are listening to the residents of Strathalbyn and that the residents want no change." I have to ask your anonymous writer 'when' did Council ever say that residents wanted no change? That baseless assertion is blatantly untrue and clearly designed to be inflammatory.

The whole reason we're undertaking broad and detailed community consultation right through until January 19, 2018 is to gauge what change our community does want.

And let's be very clear, the proposed changes to the Development Plan haven't been plucked out of thin air. They are in direct response to what the community told us they wanted when we consulted with them on the Strathalbyn Town Plan in 2014.

While there is clearly an economic driver to Mr Richards' argument, Alexandrina Council has a duty to all the residents of Strathalbyn to take their interests and concerns into consideration.

To suggest Council does not want jobs or growth is simply ludicrous. What we want is balanced and considered growth that protects the very essence of what makes Strathalbyn unique.

Unlike Mr Richards, we don't have a single barrow to push and we are committed to listening fairly and evenly to the feedback we receive during the consultation process.

Ultimately, the future of Strathalbyn is in the hands of our entire community, not just a single person.

**Keith Parkes, Mayor, Alexandrina Council**

**ENDS.**