

# Valleyart

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Dear Richard

I am aware that the Trustees of the Old Bega Hospital Reserve Trust have been lobbying and applying for grants to develop the site of the Old Bega Hospital since a tragic fire destroyed most of the main building. Prior to the fire, the site was operating as a successful community hub, revolved around local cultural activities. It has been a significant loss to our community since there has been no suitable alternative location from which many cultural groups could operate. Such activities have suffered in frequency, affordability and availability to Shire residents. Many group memberships have decreased.

As we have previously discussed, I believe that if the facility was to be renovated and upgraded to more modern standards and offered to Community groups for shared, permanent and temporary occupation, many organizations would avail themselves of its use. Previously, the Old Bega Hospital housed a café and an art and craft retail shop. With appropriate planning, vision and foresight, this site could easily support a permanent cafe, retail art and craft style shops and artisan group supported outlets.

Currently there is a successful "crafters market" operating in Bega which is having to move from one vacant shop to another, a local art group with nowhere to display exhibitions or market their wares and two other artists co-operatives which have been independently successful for years. The opportunity to bring these businesses together at one venue exists at the Old Bega Hospital Site. The potential tourism benefit from a cohesive cultural centre in Bega is tangible. The sustain ability of commercial businesses such as my art and craft supplies shop, "Valleyart" would become a very real prospect.

With the appropriate facilities attracting the tenancy of Cottage Industry and Cultural Groups to one site, the commercial activity would become a seven day a week constant. This would attract visitors to the area, support local small business and subsequently promote a 'self funding' community cultural centre for all to enjoy.

I wish you success with your applications for funding and look forward to being a part of a much needed Community Cultural Centre.

Warm regards  
Nicki Hall