Feasibility Study
For a Concert Hall
In Townsville

Prepared by: Jennifer Bott AO
Date: July 2017
Photography by: Michael Fellows
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2. **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my appreciation for information and advice in the development of this report from the following people:

- Councillors Doyle and Coombe, Townsville City Council
- Jeff Jimmeson, Townsville City Council
- Rhonda Vetter, Townsville City Council
- Meg Frisby, Townsville City Council
- David Williams, Pure Projects
- Don Morris AO, Prue Projects
- Michael Fellows, Photography
- The Arts Community of Townsville

3. **Introduction**

I was appointed by the Townsville City Council (TCC) to undertake this feasibility study for a concert hall in Townsville. I attach my biography as reference which demonstrates my background in music, arts funding, philanthropy and arts infrastructure.

The agreed framework for this review was as follows:

- Assess, analyse and summarise the assumptions and progress to date in the feasibility of a recital/concert hall in Townsville.

- Explore and assess the possible usage and revenue streams for the hall with particular focus on the impact of location, design and scale of the business model(s). This would include discussions with potential uses, both practicable and opportunistic in nature.

- Research and analyse the business models and sustainability of other recital/concert halls in Queensland, Sydney and one of two regional cities.

- Develop one or more scenarios with business cases for the TCC to consider regarding the proposed developments.
4. **Consultations**

I conducted three days of initial stakeholder consultations in Townsville, meeting with the following organisations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eisteddfod</td>
<td>Jeff Nielsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Community Music Centre</td>
<td>Simon McConnell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Concerto and Vocal Competition</td>
<td>Cris Dall’Osto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier Reef Orchestra</td>
<td>Judy Hunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANQ</td>
<td>Lorna Hempstead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFCM</td>
<td>Justin Ankus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Throttle Theatre Company</td>
<td>Madonna Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancenorth</td>
<td>Jessica Devereux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Luna Youth Arts</td>
<td>Hilary Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TheatreiNQ</td>
<td>Terry Brabon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croft Gilchrist School of Dancing</td>
<td>Robyn Gilchrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of the Theatre</td>
<td>Ray Dickson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Little Theatre</td>
<td>Ian McDougall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Choral Society Inc</td>
<td>Kaye Hinds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Teachers Assoc Q</td>
<td>Christine Pulvirenti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Roberts School of Dance</td>
<td>Andrew Reynaud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Marie-Claude Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Enterprise Limited</td>
<td>Briget Woods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 RAR Band</td>
<td>Glenn Rogers and Andrew Ryder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSL Pipes and Drums</td>
<td>Norman Laing and Ian Reid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thuringowa Brass Band Inc.</td>
<td>Mick Cutler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Brass Band</td>
<td>Noel Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville-Thuringoaw Pipes and Drums</td>
<td>Greg Pritchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Concert Bands Inc.</td>
<td>Les Nicholson and David Salisbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pimlico State High School</td>
<td>Richard Newell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Catholic College</td>
<td>Julie Bruce</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to these arts community meetings, I met with a number of key Council staff, as well as:

- The Chamber of Commerce
I appreciated the presence and practical advice of Councillors Doyle and Coombe for most of these meetings.

Following these Townsville base meetings, I have conducted a wide range of meetings in person, by telephone and have conducted extensive research on performing arts complexes in a range of situations.

Pure Projects were open and generous in sharing their work and drafts reports which I appreciated.

In addition, I have interviewed:

- Dancenorth, Townsville, QLD ~ Deanna Smart (by telephone)
- Riverside Theatres, Parramatta, NSW ~ Robert Love, AM
- Illawarra Performing Arts Centre, Wollongong, NSW ~ Simon Hinton
- City Recital Hall, Angel Place, Sydney, NSW ~ Elaine Chia
- Empire Theatre, Toowoomba, QLD ~ Kerry Saul
- Gladstone Entertainment Centre, Gladstone, QLD ~ Carly Quinn
- The Concourse, Chatswood, Sydney, NSW ~ Greg Khoury
- Belconnen Arts Centre, Belconnen, ACT ~ Daniel Ballantyne
5. Background

a. Why A Concert Hall?

What does a dedicated concert hall model mean?

- ‘Shoe-box’ shape usually
- Little wing space
- No fly-tower (for scenery)
- No proscenium arch around the stage.
- No carpet
- No curtains

These elements are all necessary for a good theatre venue, but are negative in terms of loss of sound volume and reverberation time in a concert hall. Generally, what is good for theatre is bad for a quality music acoustic. This is why most cities have both kinds of venues.

Ideally it should have a raked floor although a flat floor with movable seating significantly adds to flexibility but at the cost of the quality of sightlines and musical experience. There are increasingly flexible building, seating and fit-out options available, which should be explored (refer Belconnen Arts Centre’s new masterplan).

b. Townsville Profile

Townsville has a significant population of nearly 200,00 people, with a regional population of close to 400,000. It is diverse in terms of its people and industry sectors.

According to the census, the main occupations in Townsville are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Occupations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Personal Service Workers</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and Administrative Workers</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and Trades</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery Operations and Drivers</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main industries people from Townsville work in are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industries</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **What Is The Problem We Are Trying To Solve?**

Townsville has a significant gap in its **demand** for cultural facilities (i.e., physical infrastructure), and the **supply** of these facilities. It has a very active arts community, particularly in music. It also hosts the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, the largest chamber music festival in the Southern Hemisphere, which attracts well over half its audience annually from interstate. Townsville is also the home of the nationally and internationally acclaimed contemporary dance company, Dancenorth. It host a huge range of music organisation such as the Barrier Reef Orchestra and the Eisteddfod.

The TCT is booked out at least two years in advance. Community groups whose activities are planned well in advance with a predictable calendar can secure bookings long before touring companies are in a position to book tours. The lack of space in the TCT’s forward calendar also affects the possibilities of building audiences and nurturing local talent through collaborations, festivals, local productions and other entrepreneurial opportunities. The dominance of community bookings (70%) also negatively impacts on the economic model for Civic Theatre operations.

Thus, not only is there a need for another cultural facility - but this is also an opportunity to fill the gap in the nature of the venue – i.e., a concert hall which would meet the demand locally, and externally for music presentations.

There is also significant shortage of corporate and commercial spaces for functions, conferences and events in the CBD. The decentralised character of the city – and the consequent lack of vibrant CBD are all related issues which have influenced the recommendations of this review.

As well, the viability of such a venue would be significantly enhanced by its ability to generate commercial hires – not only in the all but in associated venues and foyers.

7. **Overview**

The five priority outcome areas identified in the Townsville Community Development Strategy are:

- People in Townsville take pride and contribute to their community – encouraging pride, recognition and times of celebration relating to the community’s diversity, heritage, culture and achievements.

- People in Townsville enjoy a safe, active and healthy lifestyle – building a community that is safe, supportive and promotes healthy activities.

- An inclusive, involved and engaged community – valuing and respecting the contribution of all community members, regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity, cultural background or length of residency. A commitment to cooperate, collaborate and network to achieve positive outcomes for the community.
People in Townsville are skilled, resourceful and resilient – building upon local assets, capacities, creativity, diversity and existing initiatives; and facilitating opportunities and experiences that enable all residents to see and experience their community as a place of potential opportunity.

A sustainable, innovative and creative community – better planning and research to understand community needs, respect for diverse cultures and arts, and support for innovated and sustainable initiatives”

The investment in cultural infrastructure in Townsville – and specifically a fit for purpose concert hall will help achieve ALL of the priority areas outlined above. There is a high level of skilled engagement in music and the arts now – but with great potential for more attractive offerings and for growing audiences and participants.

KPMG, in their 2016 review of the financial models for a new cultural centre stated:

‘The Arts and Cultural facilities of Townsville, were built in the 1970’s for a ‘Twin Cities’ population of around 70,000 or region population of 150,000. There has been little substantial capital investment since that time. They now fail to serve the Townsville population approaching 200,000 and a region of 400,000.’

In my review of the literature and work done to date in this area, I was impressed with the comprehensive, practical and pro-active outcomes of the Councillor’s workshop on culture infrastructure and suggest that an updated version of this implementation plan still provides constructive and positive path forward.

In the presentation to Councillors the following Arts Snapshot was quoted:

- Townsville is home to 188 cultural organisations, and participation in culture and creative events, organisations and activities is above the national average.

- The arts and cultural sector directly injects millions of dollars into the local economy each year, and the ‘associated’ spend of visitors through connected industries contribute more.

- Three of the top five visitation destinations in Townsville are cultural (TCT, Perc Tucker Gallery, Reef HQ).

- Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing areas globally, and cultural sophistication markets us to the world.”

It should also be noted that the Social Impact Assessment for a major cultural facility in Townsville stated in its Executive Summary:

“There is no element of the Townsville community that would not stand to benefit from this development. A major cultural facility would actualise both a socially and economically sustainable future for the capital of North Queensland.”

Townsville has a very active and engaged arts community – with a very strong music thread within this. There is much to be proud of – and great opportunities for growth.
The biggest barriers in Townsville not only to growth in volume, but to a vibrant, integrated, engaging arts and cultural life are:

- The significant lack of suitable venues for the full spectrum of arts activities from touring concerts to productions to community cultural events.

- The absence of a lively, welcoming Townsville Central Business District (CBD) which is an attraction in itself and which encourages innovation and partnerships. The ‘CBD’ issue in the city affects our three biggest target groups: Millennials, tourists and locals.

- Leadership and vision for the arts in Townsville reflecting what can be possible with some investment, commitment and bold positive ideas.

The key elements of the Pure Projects Master Plan Report which are completely consistent with my analysis are based on a belief that quality arts and entertainment offerings need to be part of an overall experience. People are buying experiences not products – in and around the visit to the gallery, the Indigenous cultural experience and/or attending a concert; they want to walk, shop, sightsee, eat and drink in a memorable, quality manner – whether they are 21, 41 or 61 years of age – and whether they are a tourist with two days in Townsville or a resident planning a well-deserved day/night off.
8. Community Feedback

I would like to acknowledge the arts community of Townsville who have been constructive, positive and patient during the numerous consultations in which they have participated over recent years. I certainly hope that this report, together with the Pure Projects Report, leads to a short to medium term investment in the new and upgraded facilities so desperately needed. This is not just about meeting the needs of local arts organisations, it is about audiences, artists, tourists, children and families.

In my stakeholder conversations with the local arts community, some of the issues raised were:

a. Outdoor Venues

Significant comments were received about the need for several good quality outdoor venues which would meet the needs of many community groups particularly brass bands, pipes and drums. The concerns with the current outdoor venues are that:

- There is generally no shade for either performers or audiences.
- No storage facilities for instruments, audio equipment, furniture.
- Facilities for patrons.

b. Large Scale Concerts

Large scale concerts from popular, to jazz, to blues, folk and classical in the 1,000 – 2,000 range are not catered for. The Entertainment Centre is too big (3,000) for popular concerts but too small for huge crowds – which can use the Cowboys Stadium. It is an expensive space to hire because it is basically a basketball stadium. It needs to be set up to serve as an entertainment centre and could be renovated and made adaptive for more flexible usage.

c. Storage Issue

Many of the larger music groups, such as the Barrier Reef Orchestra need a safe, secure, dry accessible storage area for musical instruments and other equipment.

d. Other Comments From Community Consultations

- The TCT is booked out at least two years in advance so touring shows (which would build audiences) often sidestep Townsville.
- Local groups book the TCT long before touring groups are able to plan.
The current TCT bookings are 70% community and 30% professional touring. (This means, the financial sustainability is undermined and audience development is diminished.) Most cultural complexes I surveyed, supported by local Councils, had at most, a 50/50 community or touring/professional hiring framework.

Community bookings come first at the TCT – and as a result, over the last 30 years, the community perceives an enormous decline in the number and quality of touring shows there.

There is potential for growth – for example, five high schools have orchestras and would like the Eisteddfod to pull together a symphony orchestra competition.

While there is some conservative resistance to moving away from traditional time slots, some stakeholders feel that more variety in performance times would mean greater utilisation of existing and new venues – for example, 11:00am Tea and Symphony Concerts; 1:00pm (mid-week); 5:00pm (Sunday) – all great examples of slots that work in other places. Significant anecdotal evidence that moving performances times in the evening to 6:30pm or 7:00pm brings success.

James Cook University (JCU) graduations are held in the Entertainment Centre while CQU’s with much smaller numbers are held at Rydges.

AFCM has no real option to expand. More importantly extraordinary artists are performing in a poor acoustic and in an inferior environment.

C2 @ the TCT was billed as a television studio for the V8’s – but has never been used as such.

Need for a small to medium theatre is also a significant need (as well as the concert hall), but seems to have fallen off the agenda. A fit for purpose small theatre with 250 - 500 seats would satisfy a significant number of community groups.

For visitors, the position of the TCT is problematic – no public transport, no eating precinct, no accommodation, uninspired bar and catering.

Suggestion that Townsville consider holding an International Youth Arts Festival (like Aberdeen, Scotland).

General concerns about the lack of public transport and what this means for pressure on parking, young people and tourists.

A reflection that sports and the arts are seen as sitting/working comfortably together in large cities – but less so in the regions where it is seen as a great divide – particularly in Townsville.

Council has a very fine art collection much of which is currently in storage.

Overall shortage of storage space and rehearsal space.

The Court House is very small, has no permanent fixtures for lighting, no wings, no stage, no dressing rooms and no storage.
- Recent season in the Queens Gardens was popular – 200 patrons each night for 11 nights. You could buy dinner or BYO. About $70.00 per head for the show including a meal.

- Paucity of dance performances because of lack of hiring spaces. Dancenorth is a highly acclaimed company both nationally and internationally but is not presented as such in Townsville.

e. **Alternate Venues**

There are a variety of other venues – principally school and church halls as well as retirement village facilities. The Council owned facilities should be systematically upgraded. Some of these are utilised by arts groups in the community and others could be used more frequently. A brief summary of these follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Venue</th>
<th>No. of Seats</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old School of Arts Building (Dancenorth Headquarters)</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>Needs renovation and upgrading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Magistrates Court Building</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>No stage, no wings, no storage, no dressing rooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlyle Gardens Hall</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Proscenium arch, stage, reasonable sound and lighting equipment, adequate change rooms, good parking, attached bar and restaurant, not central – but potentially good for local theatrical and musical theatre presentations. Potential audience in immediate environments. Community groups hiring fee: $450; more commercial hires: $750 - $950.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIMPAC – Pimlico High School facility</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>10m × 7m stage, 3m wings, dressing rooms, seats. Plans to enlarge facility to 450 seats. (please see ‘Further Insights’ below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Catholic Community Hall</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverway Arts Centre</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Not in CBD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Kreipp Auditorium at JCU</td>
<td></td>
<td>No storage, good acoustics, costs $500, no piano, good acoustics, non-CBD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aitkenvale PCYC</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Limited stage, bring your own lighting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reid Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>Empty much of the year, cannot be used for storage etc because it needs to be emptied when V8 is on. Toilet facilities but no showers, kitchens etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kith and Akin, Ingham Road</td>
<td>180 - 200</td>
<td>Flat floor, air conditioning, deck at front.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further Insights

Additional Notes on PimPAC

This school and its hall is a good case study of the challenges and opportunities of the music venue issue in Townsville. Richard Newell attending the community consultation session and provided the following facts:

- Pimlico High School (PHS) has 1,700 students, 300 of whom are in the instrumental music program.

- The school is limited in what it can do in the community, for example; charity concerts, because of the lack of venues.

- The school has always been very accommodating in terms of community use of its hall – but this is reaching breaking point. The school is often significantly inconvenienced – and the impact, in terms of space and cost invariably leads to a choice between what is good for the school and its students – or the needs of the community at large.

- The musical and theatrical talent in Townsville is extra-ordinary in depth and breadth – and should be a source of pride and celebration by the community.

- PHS students have played in the City Recital Hall (Angel Place, Sydney), and loved it. Townsville needs a concert hall like this – but perhaps smaller to enhance the music – making happening here.
9. Review of Some Relevant Performing Arts Centres

a. Riverside Theatres, Parramatta, NSW

Robert Love AM, Director

General

Robert Love is a highly respected arts administrator who has been in his role at Riverside for over 16 years. He joined Riverside in 2000 when the theatre was 12 years old.

Riverside Theatre has 3 theatres; a 750 seat, proscenium arch; a 215 seat musical theatre space with a flat floor (which was meant to be a gallery); and an 88 seat meeting room. They use the big theatre for events like the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Robert serves as Artistic Director and CEO but there is a Programming Coordinator who programs in areas such as Access, Disability, Youth Arts and Education.

Broad programming from ‘Live from the Met’ movies of the Metropolitan Opera and National Theatre Live (NTL) (UK) to Comedy Festivals and accessible family and children’s shows have over time built a wide and diverse audience and an abiding bond between Riverside Theatre and the Parramatta community.

The quality of Riverside’s publications and its leadership in advocating a vision for the future of cultural life in Western Sydney is a tribute to their director, Robert Love and the respect as a community partner they have built over the years.

Financial Structure

There are 20 FT staff and 20 FTE’s in cleaners, ushers, etc. Attendances top 200,000 per annum. Turnover is $8M per annual of which $2M comes from the Council. There is no federal funding. Sources of income: hirers, ticket sales, catering and bar sales, state grants for specific programs.

Riverside is huge in the cultural community space. The other threads are Riverside Productions and professional presentations which often need some Riverside Theatre investments.

Limited parking and lack of ‘break-out’ spaces severely limit corporate/commercial use of Riverside. There is a huge market for school speech nights, etc, but Riverside is not big enough.

They have just received $200,000 per annum, for four years for the National Theatre of Parramatta – a NSW State Government and Crown Foundation investments in Western Sydney.

Hire Fees: Community rate is 85% of commercial rate.

Legal structure was originally a company limited by guarantee with the Lord Mayor as Chair and local MP, business people are on the board. However, it went broke and Council had to pay the debts so structure was changed to pull it back into Council.
Now, Robert is a Council employee but there is an external advisory board with an independent chair, four Council members, and two arts people. Robert feels it needs to be more influential externally.

b. Illawarra Performing Arts Centre, Wollongong, NSW

Simon Hinton, Director and CEO

General

Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) and Merrigong Theatre Company is one of the great success stories of regional culture centres. Its director, Simon Hinton seems to be an inspiring, efficient, skilled leader who is building stakeholder support and establish IPAC as an important and vibrant part of Wollongong. Given the size and industrial history of the city, it may be a useful model in many ways for Townsville. It is also a city with a successful university – transitioning from an industrial city to a mixed economy.

Simon and his team are now (as of 2 ½ years ago) in charge of the Town Hall (next door) as well.

Council is the sole member of the IPAC company. There is an ‘independent’ board comprising of nine members – three of whom are Council representatives – usually the General Manager, Mayor and a Councillor. The other six are appointed by Council, comprising of community, arts and business leaders. Chair is elected by the board (currently Wayne Morris, Illawarra Mutual Benefits).

IPAC was built in the 80's, opened by HRH Prince of Wales, and the late Diana, Princess of Wales. Simon started in 2005 – by which time most equipment and facilities needed to be upgraded.

Programming

A recent initiative was to hire the Spiegeltent and present shows there in the open space between IPAC and the Town Hall – a $40,000 investment. It was a success – but risky. 15,500 attended the events there – of whom 38% of ticket buyers were not on the database! Thus, a great marking and outreach initiative.

There are three key program areas:

- Artistic Program

Hosting, commissioning and producing one to two productions per annum and then touring it to other centres. It is part of the subscription season and requires the investment of about $300,000 per annum.

- Strategic Program

These programs are produced by IPAC, and they take the risk on outcomes, for example: Speigeltent (activation of arts precinct and new audiences development – see above); Melbourne Comedy Festival Road Show.
- Hirer Events

This includes community hirers, commercial, contemporary music, tribute nights. This category is a lease 50%++ of all nights. Some hirers events move to Category 1 and 2.

Corporate Hirers: very little at IPAC – more in Town Hall.

IPAC has a (one day a week) Education Coordinator and a Community Engagement Officer. Some of the programming initiatives they have built included:

- A creativity camp.
- A young playwrights group.
- Saturday Drama School for school aged children at the Drama Studio, IPAC and is run by Fiona Gab Finley.
- Independent artist programs called ‘Made from Scratch’.

They also receive a triannual grant of $50,000 from the Australia Council and $50,000 from Arts NSW for a program called ‘Local Stages’ – which is for venues to become producers.

Simon particularly reinforced the important leadership role he and others in similar positions have in their communities – as advocates, to influence opinion to build stakeholder platforms, to build resources, to make art happen, to engage communities.

Financial Structure

The Council has a five-year contract with IPAC Limited. The director is not a Council employee but the board is an arm of the Council with external representatives (see above).

The Council assumes the cost of the capital assets – it spends $650,000 per annum on capital spending 1.5% of total asset value annually. Turnover of IPAC is $6M per annum.

IPAC runs its own bar and catering services.

Wollongong City Council’s grant to IPAC Limited is treated by the latter as a grant – similar to the (state government) Create NSW and the Australia Council. It is paid irrespective of financial performance or need in any given year – but is paid in return for the delivery of agreed services outlined in the agreement. It is indexed annually by CPI. Accounts for IPAC Limited are separate and there is no mechanism for Council to top up the grants, cover losses or return dividends or surplus to the Council. The current grant is about $1M per annum split over two grants of roughly $500,000 each – one grant for managing IPAC Limited and delivering a program and the other grant for managing Wollongong Town Hall.
c. City Recital Hall, Angel Place, Sydney, NSW

Elaine Chia, CEO

In 2015, the City of Sydney Council (CSC) decided to review its management and governance arrangements with the City Recital Hall (CRH) (see Appendix 10).

In brief summary, they moved from a outsourced operation (Pegasus) to a specifically established Not For Profit (NFP) body with an independent board who appoints their director.

More starkly than other case studies the CRH demonstrates the upside of moving from a ‘hall for hire’ mindset to an entrepreneurial, partnership oriented, open-eyed view of the possible in any given environment.

CRH was purpose built for fine music – chamber music, jazz, piano recitals etc and is the only venue of its type in Sydney.

Its original management structure was contractual relationship with a management service company (Pegasus) and the fee from CSC to Pegasus was to meet the annual deficit. Not a model designed to drive growth and positive financial outcomes.

The CSC decided to appoint Positive Solutions to review management options for the hall in the future. Their recommendation (in 2015) which has since been implemented, was to establish a dedicated not for profit organisation as the most appropriate model.

The other models considered were:

- Direct operation by the city.
- A contract with an existing not for profit organisation.
- Contracting management services from a commercial venue manager.

The advantages of the dedicated not for profits organisation are:

- Capacity to generate philanthropic income.
- Ability to build corporate sponsorship.
- Opportunity to build collegial links with Australian and international venues.
- More suitable staffing approaches.

It also meant that an experienced and skilled board could be recruited – charged with responsibility for building non-government income, managing risk and financial results, developing programming and audience development strategies.

“In this model, the city could move the funds currently allocated for property management services to the grants program. The new entity would apply for funding from the city in return for delivering cultural, social and economic objectives detailed in the agreement.
The city can expect measurable improvement in the amount of performance activity at the venue as well as growth in income from non-government sources. To enable the company to occupy the CRH and achieve these objectives under the funding agreement, the city would also sub-lease the CRH to the new company for a nominal hire.1

References

- Cultural Subcommittee, Page 2, 23rd March 2015, Item 3
- Future Management and Governance Models for City Recital Hall, File No.: 5113103.003
- Company Constitution for City Recital Hall
- Board Membership – City Recital Hall

CRC today has ‘Deductable Gift Recipient’ (Australian Taxation Office) status as a company limited by guarantee. It has outstanding board membership and leadership with Renata Kaldor as Chair and Tim Cox as Deputy Chair. There are three members of the company: CSC, the Chair and Deputy Chair of CRH.

The venue was 17 years old in 2015 when this change happened. It was sitting under ‘property’ not ‘culture’ within the CSC. The move was made when Rachel Healey (now joint Director of the Adelaide Festival of Arts) reached the conclusion that the Cultural Plan for Sydney was never going to be implemented with impact and imagination by a ‘hall for hire’ structure/mentality.

Elaine Chia reports quarterly to the CSC against agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s). She can pitch for capex separately. The city is the principal sponsor – at 8% of turnover.

The challenge for the CRH is to move its brand from “the hidden gem” and to unlock the social, economic and cultural value of the hall. The premise applied to all the cultural facilities in Sydney is ‘how are they contributing to the artistic fabric of the city?!’

CRH now does joint marketing with its key presenters (Música Viva, The Brandenburg Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra) – rather than treating them just as ‘hirers’.

They are increasingly trying to market to tourists. For the first time, developing brochures look to sell hybrid subscription packages (4-5 shows). They are investing in improved equipment (projections, audio equipment) and commercial presenters such as the Comedy Festival, Sarah Blasko etc, are now seeking opportunities. Sponsorship and philanthropy are in the very early stages. There are now 500 subscribers/members of CRH.

There are three income streams being developed for growth:

1 Ref: Cultural Subcommittee, page 2 23 March 2015 item 3 future Management and Governance MODELS FOR City Recital Hall file No: 5113103.003
- Business development, e.g. AGM partnership with the IVY Group nearby (because of limited foyer space for catering).

- Sponsorship and philanthropy.

- Commercial revenue.

They are growing their business by developing activities such as lunchtime concerts, Flash Mob Choir and cabaret nights during special events such as VIVID.

Flash Mob Choir is a free event – whereby their database receives an sms 72 hours before the event. A conductor or chorus master then leads whoever turns up (no RSVP’s) – numbers have been 40 – 500 to learn to sing a piece of iconcic, popular or quirky music. It just costs CRH the fee for a couple of hours to the music director – and overheads.

CRH decided to tap into the VIVID market by turning their foyer into a live music venue – with a cash bar – and on another foyer level a DJ plus bar, $30 per ticket, marketed by VIVID, huge success (sold 800 tickets).

So far, they have found very little cross over with any of these audiences but they are building different audiences and building a data base.

They do not have an education program of their own but have a large number of education hirers.

Goal of CRH: to sell out every show, whether its own or a hire. To present approximately 50% classical music and 50% other; to present approximately 100+ own shows and present 100+ business development, 110 from key presenters (stable). Last year CRH presented 163 shows and events.

The three aspirational wishes for the physical space:

- A small flat floored performance space.

- An orchestra room backstage.

- A café/restaurants commercial outlet.

Financial Structure

Under the contract below, CSC and Pegasus, the city was responsible for the deficit debit/income and expenditure. There is clearly no incentive for the contractor to drive this to a zero investment.

Under the current arrangement, there is an agreed sliding scale of investment by the city over five years. In 2015/2016 the CSC, which included start-up funding was 13.8% of turnover. This year, 2016/2017 is is 8%.

The CRH will seek, beyond the five-year deal, to move to a sponsorship arrangement with CSC for agreed programs and cultural outcomes.
d. Empire Theatre, Toowoomba

Kerry Saul, Manager

Kerry Saul, has been there for 20 years – but manager for the last six years.

General

The Empire Theatre has a staff of 18 full-time and three to four part-time. They use volunteer ushers.

They get an audience of about 750 for the QSO. In 2014, they added a small black box theatre with a flat floor, called the Armitage Centre. They also have a studio and a church theatre (four venues in total).

Programmatically there is an Artistic Planning Team under Kerry. Millennials are mainly catered for through concerts of contemporary music. The Empire Theatre has an active children’s program – with some families travelling huge distances to attend. There are regular drama classes for Grade 2 through to young adults.

Financial Structure

The beautiful art-deco Empire Theatre is much loved and operates as a separate accounting entity to Council. There is a separate provision for capex. Net subsidy for the year is approximately $650,000 or 23% of turnover. Council is the sole shareholder.

There is vibrant growth in musical theatre and always one in-house production a year which is the life – blood of the creative process.

There is no formula to the mix of programming and hires but a website review reflects a lively, diverse, quality offering.

e. Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre, Gladstone, QLD

Carly Quinn, CEO

General

Population approximately 69,000.

Carly has only been in the role for two years. She has a direct contract to Council. She manages both the theatre (675 seats), and the convention centre (which includes board rooms and a conference centre). These are basically two businesses – a commercially oriented convention centre and the theatre which is a mixture of community cultural activities, entrepreneurial presentations and touring shows.
Financial Structure

The Council provides a community service obligation fund of $911,000 out of which Carly takes out salary support of $111,000 to manage these activities, leaving a budget of $800,000.

Three programming threads in the theatre (NFP; touring, entrepreneurial) NFP hiring rates are 40 – 60% of the rack rate.

Overall 73 presentations are NFP and 157 are commercial.

Catering - Outsourced bar of which theatre gets 13% of sales.

They also manage all signage, flags as well as the Library for the Council.

At the moment, total costs (or agreed deficit) of the entire operation to Council (including the community obligation fund) is $2.1M but Carly’s KPI’s are to reduce this to $1.5M per annum.

Youth Programming - They spend $65,000 per annum on kids programming. They have a very successful Children’s Festival.

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The Concourse, Chatswood, Sydney, NSW

Greg Khoury, Director

General

The Concourse, Chatswood is an initiative of Willoughby City Council – managed by Century Venues on a 5+5 years contract. Century Venues has a programming/entrepreneurial arm called Century Entertainments. CV runs a variety of theatrical facilities including the Enmore Theatre (inner Sydney). The Factory Theatre, the Old Vic in Newcastle and The Comedy Store, Sidetrack, Fusebox, Metro.

The Concourse at Chatswood was designed as a multi-performing arts venue, hotel, bar and restaurant precinct. In fact, the hotel has only very recently opened – without significant ‘break-out’ spaces and this has diminished the potential for significant commercial convention traffic which was seen as the financial backbone of the venture.

There are three venues at The Concourse – hosting 600 events – with 170,000 ticketed attendees. A 500 seat theatre; an 830 seat auditorium plus 170 seats in boxes; plus a 150 seat flexible black box with a flat floor.

The vast majority are straight hires and shared risk.

Financial Structure

Total subsidy is approximately $720,000 per annum.
In the licence agreement with Willoughby City Council, six key organisations were listed as priority customers/clients. Unfortunately, there was not an agreed cultural plan which The Concourse was expected to deliver against.

The Concourse hosts a lively children’s program – the Wiggles, Bell Shakespeare and Christine Dunstan’s productions.

Programming for millennials is the most difficult area but a recent discovery; Final Factory, video games and production was a hit. In general, a real gap in creative programming for millennials.

When the Concourse was first mooted and built, it had a great champion in the then Mayor, the late Pat Reilly, which helped enormously during those inevitable challenging times.

The Library, which is also part of the complex, gives great vitality to The Concourse during the day as do the five restaurants on site. There is parking underneath. The bars are operated by Century.

Other comments of interest by Greg Khoury:

- There is a great need for rehearsal space – a big market.
- The producing role, is very undercooked in Australia.
- Marketing of arts programs in particular, needs to be distance from Council. It needs fleet-footed, creative, flexible processes.
- ‘Hall for hire’ model is dying or should be shot. It’s all about ideas, partnerships, building audiences and collaborations.

### g. Belconnen Arts Centre, Belconnen, ACT

Daniel Ballantyne, CEO

The Belconnen Arts Centre (BAC) founded in 2009, is a great example of a cultural centre, an arts organisation developing a unique character/brand and pursuing targeted programs and markets for maximum impact.

In a city renowned for its national cultural institutions as well as its highly educated and engaged audiences, BAC has placed itself firmly in its community and with key target audience and participation goals.

It is a beautiful physical space on the water’s edge – and offers flexible multi spaces very suited to visual arts and crafts, dance, music and workshops. In addition to four-year funding from the ACT State Government, BAC has this year been successful in securing Australia Council grants and funding the Catalyst Fund. They have achieved this because of a highly innovative and well-developed program designed to work with people with disabilities.
These include:

- IGNITE a creative project enabling artists with disabilities to pursue their creative practice.

- Dance for Wellbeing nurtures us all as creative beings through movement and has resulted in dance programs for people with Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, Multiple Sclerosis and hearing impairment. ACT Health has given multi-year funding for this program.

There are usually four exhibitions per annum and two workshops.

BAC is under the Arts ACT – it’s an outsourced facility with boards appointed on a rotational basis.

The great news is that there is a new $15M development approved and happening, incorporating new performing arts spaces – retractable seating, a mobile stage and better spaces for performing arts. There will be 390 seats in the new hall.

In summary, Daniel and his board have sold the vision, mission and fixture of BAC as a 21st Century Town Hall. A place for celebration, talking, debate, cultural activities, education, town meetings – and a platform for expression of our community in all its forms.

Financial Structure

BAC earns 25% of its own income from commercial hires for weddings, auctions, etc. The total budget is $1M.

Notes: Plan for the new development, Strategic Plan 2015 – 19; Annual Report 2016; all enclosed in hard copy report.

Addendum

In the course of researching this report, I have collected a wide range of hard copy material that I will log with a hard copy of the report. These would be very useful for future cultural managers of both the TCT and the TCH.
10. Waterfront: Priority Development Areas (PDA)

The PDA vision describes and enables a path forward for the development of Townsville. It informs future decision making for the new cultural facilities by:

Accepting the decisions of the past which have led to a highly decentralised city hub.

Recognising that the future is about a vibrant, beautiful city making the most of its natural resources; the beach, that magnificent coast, Magnetic Island, the Port, its cultural and sporting prowess, its Indigenous culture, its proud history.

The decision to rebuild the CBD through the lens of the PDA vision is a decision about Townsville’s aspirations as a city. It has many strengths – JCU and CQU, the military sector, the port, some sporting and culture infrastructure. But if significantly increased tourism is to be part of Townsville’s future with all the jobs, wealth and diverse offerings that it can include then a decision that needs to be made about what that end goal/brand/vision is – and infrastructure decisions need to follow suit.

Role of (subsidised) venues/organisations is to deliver the cultural policy outcomes as determined by Council.

11. Indigenous Culture

There is a remarkable silence and invisibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture in Townsville.

I believe that there are both symbolic and practical steps can be taken to address this – an Indigenous cultural policy and implementation plan could seek to present a culture of Indigenous arts in all publicly funded institutions; acknowledgement of country should be the norm for all public occasions; special programs and experiences for tourists could be developed, and most importantly new infrastructure, be it cultural facilities, roads or community centres named, should be named to reflect local Indigenous history. The stories these names reflect need to be shared, and owned by the people of Townsville.

12. Governance and Management

I refer elsewhere (page 19) to some of the different models which performing arts centres and Councils can consider.

There are some abiding principles however which are worth stating and which drive choices, which can be made.

a. The far most dominant practice in well performing arrangements between Councils and cultural centres are:

   - Clarity in the cultural plan and goals of the Council.
− **Articulating KPI’s and holding specific organisations responsible for delivering them.** All flows from this – financial support becomes a contract for implementation.

**b. Leadership** – at both the governance and management level. The community needs it, the arts organisation needs it, accountability requires it. A common thread to, not only my stakeholder consultations, but also in my interviews with Directors and CEO’s of other cultural centres, is the power of leadership. There certainly is no ‘one size fits all’ model – but cultural centres, concert halls and indeed communities that have a vibrant and diverse cultural life are usually shaped and driven by cultural leaders.

The ‘hall for hire’ model does not work anymore. Vision for the arts and culture in any city usually refers to diversity, excellence, access, innovation but who delivers this? People do, not buildings.

Thus culture leadership from Council - be it an advisory committee, responsible manager, heads of cultural institutions (Council assets), as well as volunteer chairs and NFP CEO’s play a crucial role in ‘connecting the dots’ of a city’s cultural life.

To what end, this leadership? What is the point? Artists have an enormously effective way of telling our stories, communicating often without words our deepest feelings of identity, of love and loss, of fear and hope. Townsville has fine writers, musicians, dancers and artists – let’s see them tell the story – of the Port, the Army and RAAF, of the farmers, of the indigenous people and of the people who chose to make Townsville home. This is what the arts can do.
13. Townsville Civic Theatre (TCT) and the Townsville Performing Arts Centre (TPAC) Proposal

TCT was opened in 1978 with extensions completed in 2009. There have been various alterations and improvements since – including a planned closure next year. It is currently booked out at least two years ahead. It is currently utilised by the community about 70% of the time and by professional touring groups 30% of the time. Local groups can also book three years ahead before any professional touring groups would be planning their tours. Approximately 110 hirers per annum are knocked back – let along scope for entrepreneurial presentations.

The TCT is a good facility with considerable potential for further development. The current usage of the theatre often plays to its weaknesses not its strengths. It has a proscenium arch – and is carpeted. It was built to house theatre productions and other spoken word events. It does not have a good acoustic for music – but because of the lack of venues it is significantly used as a music venue.

Implementation of the recommendations of my report as well as the Pure Projects recommendations will not only address the diverse venue needs of Townsville but will enable the TCT to be utilised and valued for its strengths.

I would recommend that consideration be given to any new developments of the TCT focus on the Ross River bank and vista, as well as potential development of Reid Park as a partner. Improvements to bar and catering arrangements are also recommended as part of an overall investment in the TCT.

With many music events held elsewhere there should be a significant increase in both state company tours, commercial shows and other entertainment options for the people of Townsville should be held at the TCT. Two presenters I have spoken to in the past few months thought that TCT was closed – an assumption that I corrected of course.

I do respect and acknowledge the enormous amount of work that has gone into the development of the TPAC proposal. The main reasons that I am not supporting this proposal is:

- The TCT location is out of the CBD and is quite isolated from any other facilities.
- Significantly investing in new facilities at the TCT is counter-productive to the goal of enlivening the CBD of Townsville and exacerbates rather than solves current challenges.
- While the location is not perhaps an issue for locals with cars, and an established interest in participation or attendance at arts events at the TCT, it is a significant negative factor for everybody else in the target market – particularly international and national tourists, and young people without cars.
- We know that people want a series of attractive entertainment and catering options packaged formally or informally around their arts attendance. This is not available at the TCT.
14. Funding A New Cultural Centre

My review of other performing arts centres leads to the unhappy conclusion that the current business plan for the TCT is an expensive and inefficient model delivering less than ideal outcomes. Ironically, building a second significant cultural facility – and investing in some improvements to other existing faculties such as Reid Park, the Entertainment and Convention Centre and outdoor venues will create a healthier model for the TCT – both in terms of its programming, profile and financial model.

At the moment, major community usage of the TCT at lower rates for local organisations is having the ‘double – whammy’ effect of blocking more lucrative bookings and reducing hire fee income.

I do also believe that a more independent model for governance and management tends to maximise ownership of outcomes including more proactive and creative programming; seeking grants, sponsors, donors and partners for programs and new initiatives. Certainly, the longer the perceived distance from government, the greater the opportunities for philanthropy.

Of the case studies I undertook, the vast majority of successful performing arts centres seemed to be running with grants from their city Council between $650,000 to $1.4M or between 8 – 24% of turnover. This is significantly less than the current $3.4M deficit which is the TCT ‘subsidy’. I want to emphasise this is not about poor performance or maladministration – it is about the business model.

I recommend a three year plan to reduce this deficit by half thus freeing up about $1.5M per annum to invest in other cultural resources.

The sources of funding available to cultural centres are:

- Local Council/government - State government
- Federal Government - Sponsorship
- Philanthropy - Box office
- Bars and catering - Retail
- Hiring charges – financed between commercial, NFP and local community

Successful cultural centres drive most if not all of these income areas aggressively. Please note that government funding does not just mean ‘arts funding’. It could be from the Health Department or Aged Care (please see Belconnen Arts Centre).

Please also note that the most successful cultural centres are utilising their spaces in innovative ways – multiple uses in one day; creative uses of foyers (see Angel Place during the VIVID festival).

For the establishment/building costs of the concert hall/new cultural centre, I would assume that it would also be a possible recipient of the Smart Cities Initiative as well as other possible support from the three levels of government and other development opportunities. I know from my very recent experience with both state and federal cultural institutions that the chances of funding success are considerably enhanced when there is a well-developed masterplan that has been endorsed and can be championed by community and cultural leaders. Having a ‘shovel-ready’ plan with all the surrounding issues thought through and articulated by stakeholders is very powerful.
15. Conclusions

My overall summary of the cultural facilities situation in Townsville and the case for a concert hall is as follows:

- There is a significant gap in cultural, civic and corporate function facilities in Townsville. This is negatively affecting the local community in its music-making and audience engagement – but it also significantly impedes the growth and vitality of the city’s entertainment and cultural life because it limits the presentation of exciting and attractive national and international presentations. This in turn has an effect on the tourist experience of Townsville – exacerbated by the absence of a vibrant, diverse CBD with a wide range of retail, cultural, Indigenous, food and wine experiences which would reflect Townsville and its brand.

- Townsville is a city of hidden gems – physically beautiful but lacking a core vision which links the threads, addressing this requires a fulsome vision of what cultural life in Townsville might be – and strong leadership to deliver it.

- There is certainly demand and capacity for a concert hall which could be well utilised by both the local music community, touring shows and other (school and corporate) events. Ideally this should be 1000 seats – perhaps 850 in stalls plus 200 in a gallery (or thereabouts). In developing the new cultural facility, I also conclude that a small (250 seat) black box, flat floored studio with theatre seating would be a low-cost addition which would give further options for rehearsals, performance and studio. Some permanent storage, space for musical instruments, audio equipment, retractable seating and catering equipment should also be included. Further, good sized foyers with bars and a bistro/café give not only options for audiences but open up corporate and educational markets for the use of the hall plus drinks and functions in the foyers or just utilisation of the foyers (see City Recital Hall, Angel Place, Sydney). I have examined in detail the three developed optional plans for the new concert hall and associated facilities. These are: The Hive (Queens Hotel), Central Park and Townsville Performing Arts Centre (TPAC).

- In addition, I would like to recommend that strong consideration be given to adding a small gallery to the concert hall complex. A flat floored small gallery with a high ceiling (four to eight metres high) has the potential to be utilised for social functions, events, trade exhibitions, arts exhibitions and music. It would not be an expansive addition within the overall development and has the ability to improve the business model.

Note: TCC has a collection of over 3000 works of art which are largely held in storage. The Perc Tucker Gallery faces the constant annual dilemma of balancing touring exhibitions and presenting the collection. Currently they present about four exhibitions per annum of about eight to ten weeks each with about 100 works from the collection in each show. This means that in any given year, approximately 13% of the collection is on show.

The overall conclusion I have reached is that for Townsville to lift its cultural and tourism offer for its own community and for visitors, it needs to:

- Build a new concert hall with other complementary facilities as outlined above.
- Free up the TCT to not only offer more tours and shows but to be a presenter, an entrepreneur and a partner. It is clear that the huge percentage of community events at the TCT severely undermines its financial viability as well as forcing it into a ‘hall for hire’ model, rather than a more imaginative and creative note as entrepreneur, presenter and partner.

- Revitalisation of the Convention Centre so that it becomes a viable venue for large touring acts as well as conferences and conventions (without the presenter wear and the costs of converting it from a basketball stadium to a convention or entertainment centre.

- There is enormous potential for a focus on Indigenous arts and culture – a place of celebration, of learning, of engagement. I would also recommend that the development of the new concert hall as well as the refurbishment of the entertainment centre and the Indigenous Cultural Centre offer opportunities to name the centres after significant Indigenous leaders or places or nations. This is a great opportunity for sending new messages about Townsville.

- Outdoor Spaces - From the community consultations I undertook, it was clear that some music organisation’s needs could be relatively easily addressed by installing shade for performers and audiences, storage facilities for instruments and some basic facilities. This will need to be researched more specifically and I think there are some low cost, high impact solutions here.

- Reid Park – This facility is utilised for the V8 for four to eight weeks per annum. The rest of the year, it could be utilised much more with some basic investment in kitchen facilities and showers etc. A relatively small investment would enable the space to be better utilised throughout the non V8 weeks, for rehearsals and workshops.

The issue of location is crucial to this decision. Good facilities are not only about design and space and economies of scale. I believe there are two compelling principles here; the first is the nature and connectedness of the experience customers will have at the venue – be they attending a cultural event, a trade event or a school speech night. Secondly, the strategic overview of the future development of the city. What are the Council’s priorities for development and for future partnerships?

Using these criteria, my recommendation is for the new concert hall to be constructed in either the Hive/Queens Hotel development or Central Park.

The Hive/Queens Hotel location has the great advantage of linking the beautiful and popular Strand area to the CBD. To co-locate with the Museum of Tropical Queensland, to co-locate with restaurants, bars, retail, business and accommodation options, closer pedestrian links to not only these facilities but to the ferry terminal as well – and the utilisation of iconic building with new development make this a highly attractive choice.

The Central Park proposal also has many positive and attractive features. It would exploit a good view – and be easy walking distance to Palmer and Flinders Streets. A pedestrian bridge across the river to new parking facilities would also be addressed as part of the big picture. It would be clustered with the new stadium and a foreshadowed Indigenous Cultural Precinct.

Both these sites build assessible, colourful, attractive facilities into a lively CBD of Townsville in the Priority Development Areas framework.
I believe that the location of the TCT – which requires car transport to access – rules it out as a desirable option or a city wanting to enliven its CBD and rejuvenate its cultural offerings.

I do believe the TCT can and will have a new lease of life it if can release dates, rethink its role and become a proactive, entrepreneurial theatre like so many of the venues I have researched. It is a terrific venue which can do more. However, this isolation impacts not only transport options – therefore does not keep with building tourism options – but also distance affects catering and ‘experience’ options. When you buy a ticket to an event at the TCT you have one bar and one very limited café option. If you happen to be attending 10 or more performances for an event such as the Australian Festival of Chamber Music you have the same single option for eight days. This is not an ideal festival experience nor is it for a regular theatre or concert attendance.
16. **Summary of Recommendations**

    **a.** Build a concert hall with 800 – 1,000 seats – raked floor, shoe-box design with a stage (no proscenium arch or carpets).

    **b.** In the surrounding cultural complex ensure there is:

    - A flat-floored small gallery/room (with a ceiling height of four to eight metres) social functions, events, trade exhibitions, rehearsals, workshops and music.
    - A small black box studio space for theatre, workshops, rehearsals, a recording studio etc.
    - Storage for instruments, props and equipment.

    **c.** The new concert hall/cultural facility should have well positioned, large foyers which can be used for functions and can be easily serviced by attractive bars and a café/restaurant on site.

    **d.** The Hive/Queens Hotel site and Central Square are the preferred alternative locations depending on other developments – because both are within walking distance to the CBD and other related experiences. Appropriate parking needs to be addressed in both plans and easy pedestrian access for parking areas.

    **e.** An Indigenous name for the complex and excellent design values are crucial to the branding and embrace of these facilities.

    **f.** The governance and management should be as independent as the TCC can achieve to both maximise ownership, leadership and gravitas – but responsible to TCC for efficient delivery of KPI’s and financial obligations. The clear correction between the policy and who will deliver it needs to be made clear and transparent.

    **g.** Marketing of activities in all TCC’s major cultural facilities need to be at arm’s length from the Council. Sponsorship and philanthropy, other government grants and flexibility in charging – from commercial to NFP need to be part of the management’s repertoire of leverage for good business outcomes.

    **h.** Funding a Youth Festival (national and/or international) Townsville should be explored – and potentially put to tender. This is one of several ways of addressing the millennial challenge which Townsville faces. Improving the Entertainment Centre to attract more big national and international concert attractions will also help – as will cabaret options at the new concert hall cultural complex.

    **i.** Improved facilities at existing outdoor venues – storage for instruments and audio equipment; shade for performers and audience etc.

    **j.** With enhanced space from new facilities will come scope for developing new programmes at all venues including:

    - Producing local shows.
    - Present Dancenorth in larger local venues.
- Expanding arts education options on weekends.
- Cross-over activities with cinema presentations.
- Greater scope for business functions and community events such as trade fairs, speech days and graduations, memorials, tributes and annual general meetings.

k. Seek to show more of the city’s 3,000 strong art collection in other spaces such as the new cultural complex as well as other foreshadowed developments. (Refer Pure Projects Reports).

l. Review the role and structure of the Arts Advisory Committee (AAC), so that it is smaller, with key local and national arts leaders – able to advise TCC on how to achieve their strategic goals. Fixed terms, fewer meetings, clear objectives will all help improve the impact of the AAC and enable it to operate as effective strategic body to assist Council make meaningful operational and policy decisions.
17. References

a. The Prue Projects reports are now on the TCT website: 
   economy/transforming-townsville

b. City of Sydney
   C_ITEM03.pdf
   UNCIL_ITEM10.pdf
   UNCIL_ITEM10.pdf
   C_ITEM03_ATTACHMENTA.pdf

c. Positive Solutions, Kangaroo Point  QLD
   Brisbane based arts consultancy. Has done work on government/independent models
   www.positive-solutions.com.au

d. Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, Glebe  NSW
   www.apac.com.au

e. Illawarra Performing Arts Centre, Wollongong  NSW
   www.merrigong.com.au

f. Riverside Theatres, Parramatta  NSW
   www.riversideparramatta.com.au

g. Belconnen Arts Centre, Belconnen  ACT
   www.belconnenartscentre.com.au

h. The Empire Theatre, Toowoomba  QLD
   www.empiretheatre.com.au

i. The Concourse, Chatswood  NSW
   www.theconcourse.com.au

j. City Recital Hall, Sydney  NSW
   www.cityrecitalhall.com
k. 11. Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre
www.gladecc.com.au

l. ‘Oh You Beautiful Stage!’
Benchmarks for Performing Arts Centres VAPAC (2011)

m. Federal government’s Smart Cities Initiative
City Deal for Townsville

n. Arts Gallery North Queensland/Cultural Creative Precinct Building Requirements:
Visioning document, May 2013

o. Culture Matters: prepared by Gallery Services, Townsville City Council 2017


q. Waterfront: Townsville City Council Waterfront Priority Development Area

r. Social Impact Assessment: A Major Cultural Facility in Townsville by James O’Reilly,
Community Planning and Development Officer

s. Townsville City Council: Performing Arts and Events Strategy, 2016 – 18


u. Arts and Culture: Townsville Cultural Infrastructure Councillors Workshop

v. 2014 – 17 Community Development Strategy

w. Townsville Performing Arts Centre (TPAC) Proposal

x. Griffin Group Proposal for the Hive/Queens Hotel Development

y. Central Park Proposal
18. **Biography ~ Jennifer Bott AO**

Jennifer Bott is a professional mentor, board member, project manager and consultant. She is the Chair of the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) and Advisor, Innovation and Development at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House. She also serves as a Trustee of the Australian Museum, Director of the Bundanon Trust and is a board member of the Sydney Orthopaedic Research Institute, the Canberra Writers Festival and the NIDA Foundation Trust.

During 2013/14, Jenny served as Acting Director and then Special Advisor at the National Portrait Gallery of Australia. Prior to this she conducted a major review of External Relations for the Art Gallery of New South Wales as well as the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute.

She was Chief Executive of the University of New South Wales Foundation from 2006 to October 2012. The Foundation generates philanthropic income for the University from business, foundations, alumni and other sources and built its annual fundraising income from $5M in 2006 to over $24M in 2012. Jenny was a member of the Executive Team of the University reporting jointly to the Vice-Chancellor and to the Chairman of the Foundation Board (the Chancellor).

Jenny was awarded an AO in 2012 for distinguished service to the arts through executive and leadership roles in national cultural organisations, and to the development of policy reform initiatives promoting funding and best practice.

From 1999 to 2006, Jenny was the CEO of the Australia Council, the Australian Government’s arts funding and advisory body. During her tenure as CEO, the Australia Council generated significant new funds for the arts through the Major Performing Arts Enquiry, the Orchestras Review, the Contemporary Visual Arts and Crafts Inquiry and new government initiatives such as New Australian Stories and Books Alive (now Get Reading). These successful new investments in the arts involved working closely with state and federal governments, analyzing the desired outcomes and engaging significant respected business and community leaders to drive solutions. An important part of the Australia Council role was Australia’s international cultural program which included the Venice Biennale and the Musee du quai Branly project in Paris.

Before joining the Australia Council, Jennifer spent seven years as General Manager of Musica Viva Australia. Previous to this she was National Director of AFS International Programs, an international student exchange and intercultural learning program. She has also held senior management and Board positions at Opera Australia and the Arts Council of Australia.

She is a member of Chief Executive Women, Vice-President of Australians for the Reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures, a life member of the Opera Australia Benevolent Fund, a Life Member of Musica Viva Australia, a Friend of Carers NSW and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Jennifer is also a community representative of the Review Panel for the Royal Australian College of Physicians.
From 2009 to 2013, Jenny was Chair of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music based in Townsville. She was a board member of Opera Australia, UNSW Press and the Australian Institute of Arts Management, Deputy Chair of AFS International Programs (New York), Chair of Australasian Classical Music Managers’ Association and also participated in the Sydney Leadership Program 2002 (Benevolent Society of NSW). She was also Australia’s Cultural Commissioner for the Athens 2004 Olympics as well as a member of the Australia International Cultural Council.

An English and History teacher by training, Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Arts degree (University of Sydney), a Diploma of Education (University of New England) and has trained extensively in organizational development, management and commercial mediation. She has studied counselling subjects to support her professional mentoring building towards a Graduate Diploma.

Jenny is an Australian citizen of excellent health and enjoys music, cooking, Rugby Union, reading and walking.