



Torquay Theatre Troupe Inc Submission Response to Surf Coast Shire Draft Budget 2018-19

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1. Key Points

- Requesting \$30,000 additional line item in 2018-2019 SCS Budget to design / draft detail plans and costs to rehouse Torquay Theatre Troupe (TTT)
- Proposal to adopt findings of 2015 LMH Consulting Arts Space Feasibility Study for Arts Facility (in part) at current Torquay Sports & Recreation Space (TSRS)
- Implementation immediately TSRS is vacated and in time for TTT 20th Anniversary (2021)
- Budgetary provision to “bump-TTT-in” to a theatre/ auditorium for 120-160 persons
- Utilises TTT’s existing, sound and staging assets valued at c.\$50,000
- Budgetary figures are based on discussions with Williams Ross Architects, retractable seating manufacturers Starena Group and mobile stage manufacturer Rotation NSW.
- Conforms to both Option 1 and Option 2 of LMH Consulting Report 2015
- Proposed benefits listed include dedicated arts space for the community, simplified usage of the Senior Citizens Centre, potential financial benefits to the Shire and improved storage and performance facilities for Torquay Theatre Troupe and development and show-casing of local talent.

2. Submission

This submission seeks to progress the remodelling of the “old basketball court” at Surf World identified in the feasibility study by LMH Consulting in 2015 as a potential Arts Space¹. Torquay Theatre Troupe (TTT) recognises similarities between the 2015 consultant’s report (option 2) and the TTT submission presented to Surf Coast Shire (SCS) in 2014.

Accordingly, TTT requests additional line-item(s) be included in the SCS Council Budget 2018/19 and beyond to provide funding for the following: -

- **2018/19: Further development and follow-up of both the**
 - (i) Schematic Floor Plans presented in 2014 by Torquay Theatre Troupe in 2014 and
 - (ii) Preliminary plans by Williams Ross Architects and costings for Options 1 and 2 by Quantity Surveyors Wilde & Woollard for LMH Consulting in preparation of the 2015 SFCS Arts Space Feasibility Study.

Capital costs for Options 1 and 2 were \$11.6 and \$5.7 million to remodel the entire building to provide a new foyer, administration offices, theatre and 250 seat auditorium, exhibition art gallery, 2 x workshop rooms and re-engineering of plant and services (Option 2) plus new dressing rooms, rehearsal room, green room and storage in a new extension to be built on the south end of the existing building (Option1). The LMH Arts Space Feasibility Study was presented before Council in July 2015 who resolved to ‘receive and note the details and inferences of the report’ (further details in Background Information below).

Torquay Theatre Troupe agrees that these plans and costs are appropriate for a fully-comprehensive Arts Precinct but proposes that as an interim measure, Council resolves to relocate Torquay Theatre Troupe to allow TTT continuing to produce quality productions in a dedicated space² for sustainability and growth. Funds are required to consult:

- architect specialising in performance space
- electrical engineer advice for 3 phase power for stage lighting facilities, general system capacity for the new operation, and Part J analysis
- mechanical engineering advice to design complying ventilation systems consistent with acoustic requirements
- acoustic sound engineering advice
- structural engineering advice to confirm floor capacity for retractable seating, and roof capacity to suspend theatrical rigging and equipment,
- building surveying advice to determine BCA/NCC requirements for the changed occupancy and usage as a Place of Assembly - Theatre (Class 9b)
- general advice on integration of TTT’s current theatrical assets valued at \$50,000 and convene workshops and discussion with performance user groups especially Torquay Theatre Troupe to incorporate community experience into the design
- cost the project management to procure the works required to “get TTT into the space” including “Bump-in” by 2020 in time for TTT’s 20th Anniversary
- Provide detailed costings for remodelling and installations

2018 – 2019: Phase 1: Architectural Design and Engineering	\$30,000
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¹ Surf Coast Shire Ordinary Council Meeting 28th July 2015 Item 4.3 Arts Space Feasibility Study

² TTT acknowledges the space will be available to other user groups on through a central booking system

2019-2020: Phase 2: Remodelling Surf World Basket Ball Court, Engineering works and Fit Out to accommodate the Torquay Theatre Troupe to be costed as part of Phase 1. Preliminary cost estimates by TTT based on discussion with architect, major suppliers for mobile-retractable seating for 120-160 persons, installation of mobile stage units, installation of partition walls and bio-box, installation of lighting grid and associated electric cabling, remodelling air conditioning suggests this may be accomplished for and INDICATIVE Capital Works cost of **\$500,000**

TTT suggests that funding for the redevelopment may come in part from community support in cash and in kind as well as SCS contributions.

Within the SFC Budget we respectfully suggest the appropriate allocation of these line items be split between

Theme 2 – Communities – Arts Developments
Theme 4 – Infrastructure – Contracts & Capital Works
Theme 5 – Development & Growth – Planning & Development

3. Background Information

LMH Consulting were contracted in 2015 to undertake an Arts Space Feasibility Study (June 2015). The study involved extensive consultation with sixty (60) community groups and 227 residents, practicing artists and government, including:

- Research of the consultation findings undertaken for the preparation of other Council documents
- ‘Talking posts’ in 4 towns involving 131 people - Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Torquay, Winchelsea
- Workshops/forums in 4 towns involving 40 people - Lorne, Torquay, Winchelsea, Anglesea
- A survey of community groups and practicing artists – 111 respondents
- A survey of residents – 116 respondents
- A survey of schools
- A survey of dance groups
- Benchmarking of facilities in 6 local government areas.

In addition, relevant research and consultation from other Council projects was incorporated into the project. As part the process, TTT had previously³ (i) submitted a plan for its use of the Sport & Recreation Space in 2014 and (ii) members cooperated with LMH and tabled a 22-page submission entitled “*Community Readiness for a ‘Black Box Performance Space’ as an interim step towards the longer-term development of a Multifunctional Social, Arts and Performance Facility in Surf Coast Shire/Torquay*”.

CURRENT STATUS:

LMH Consulting demonstrated both the need and community support for a dedicated Arts Space and identified the Torquay Sport and Recreation Centre (at Surf World) as the preferred site. A Schematic Floor Plan for the redevelopment was drafted by Williams Ross Architects⁴ draft and two options were costed by Quantity Surveyors Wilde & Woollard. The LMH report was presented to the Surfcoast Shire at the July 2015 Ordinary Council Meeting and Council resolved as follows:-

³ See Section 8

⁴ Williams Ross architects specialise in community arts facilities and have designed /project managed 20 theatres/performing and arts space projects including The Cube Theatre in Wodonga, West Gippsland Arts Centre in Warragul, Drum Theatre in Dandenong, Horsham Arts Centre, Lighthouse Theatre at Warrnambool and the performance space at Sacred Hearts School Geelong.

COUNCIL Resolution July 2015 That Council:	CURRENT STATUS
1. Receive and note the Arts Space Feasibility Study report.	1. No Change.
2. Note the feasibility study contains key findings to consider the Torquay Sport and Recreation Centre as a potential future art space.	2. Aligned with the TTT 2014 submission
3. Note the requirement for and availability of the Torquay Sport and Recreation Centre has yet to be formally considered.	3. It is now highly likely that the Torquay Sport and Recreation Centre will be replaced by a Multi-functional /3- basketball court facility and will become vacant by 2019/ 2020.
4. Note the opportunities to enhance arts and culture activity in existing Council buildings as identified in the Feasibility Study Report	4. Whilst other opportunities are identified LMH concluded that the Torquay Sports & Recreation Centre presented the optimum and tangible site for an Arts Precinct in Torquay.
5. Consider the possibilities for dedicated arts spaces as it develops its long term financial plan following the announcement of the State Government's rate capping model.	5. Three years have elapsed and SCS has now developed a long term 10-year budgetary process. SCS has commenced reconsidering possibilities for dedicated arts spaces and proposes to fund, as one example, a pop up art space in 2018/19.
MOVED Cr. Rose Hodge, Seconded Cr. David Bell CARRIED 7:0 on 28th July 2015	

The Torquay Sports & Recreation space is likely to become available in approx. 18 months (end 2019) as SCS is now finalising plans to develop a multipurpose sports stadium (including 3 basketball courts) to be completed by 2020. Accordingly, TTT submits that the time is now ripe for forward planning for the relocation of Torquay Theatre Troupe in 2021 on its 20th Anniversary.

4. Rationale

This proposed budget amendment allows a staged development of planning and execution to transform the Torquay Sport and Recreational Space (basketball stadium) into an operational community Arts Space.

The 2011 review of the Surf Coast Arts and Community Strategy 2009-2014 identified the desire for a dedicated Arts and Performance space. As part of the 2014/15 budget, a Feasibility Study for a Surf Coast Performing Arts Centre was conducted in recognition of the vibrant local Surf Coast arts and culture scene. The respondents to this survey, comprised of 116 group responses and 110 residential responses, indicated a strong community interest in arts and performance.

One 22-page response prepared by TTT members (in April 2015 available upon request) supported recommendations to the Surf Coast Shire Council Feasibility Study for an Arts and Performance Facility and demonstrated that several community groups would use a multifunctional arts space. It highlighted that Torquay Theatre Troupe, as the likely prime user group, has the technical equipment, administration and operational skills to transition to a new site 'now'.

Torquay Theatre Troupe Inc. made a seven (7) page proposal accompanied by a Conceptual Plan (Figure-1) and a PowerPoint presentation before Council on 8th April 2014 (see separate section listing TTT Prior Representations). This submission proposed an Arts & Performance Space be developed at the Torquay Sports & Recreation Centre at "Surf World". Details included a dedicated performance space with raked (potentially retractable) seating for 120 audience, changing room facilities (including 'green rooms'), storage, set-construction and workshop space, performing arts studio (for readings, rehearsals and education workshops), kitchen and beverages facility and two art gallery /lounges (foyer and mezzanine galleries).

5. Objectives of Proposed 2018/2019 Design Consultation

The purpose of the proposed 2018/19 consultation and workshops is to design and plan the roadmap towards integrating TTT's existing and considerable theatrical assets into the new space and scheduling a "bump-in programme" to establish the relocation of Torquay Theatre Troupe with full operability.

TTT assets comprise

- Hard /tangibles⁵ in the form of professional and generally state-of-the-art stage sound and lighting equipment/consoles, rostra, wardrobe, backstage workshop tools and general stage craft equipment and
- Soft assets in the form of theatrical skills and experience including experienced Directors, Stage Managers, Lighting & Sound Technicians (including contacts with international professionals) and Administrators with reasonable network contacts.

TTT is generally in agreement with the findings of the LMH Consulting "Arts Space Feasibility Study" and considers Option 2 would provide sufficient facilities for TTT programmes. Option 2 is very similar to the TTT floor plan proposed in 2014 except for the seating capacity being 250 rather than 120 patrons preferred by TTT. To adopt Option 2, TTT would need to discuss a plan to integrate its existing equipment (valued at about \$50,000 and representing a cost saving to the Shire) and redesign some storage and access to toilet facilities.

6. Proposed Benefits

- Secures a space for dedicated and integrated community arts in Surf Coast Shire covering performance, dance, visual arts/galleries, work shop, literary and seminar space
- As an interim measure this proposal will provide TTT with a 'home-base' for sustainable productions and growth (for example theatre workshops, youth theatre and theatrical festival(s)) and further development and show-casing of local talent.
- Rewards TTT for its considerable services to community and permits TTT to celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2021 in improved facilities
- Reduces pressure on Senior Citizens Centre floor and podium and releases meeting room/storage space at The Old Police Station (TOPS, garage and upstairs space) by relocation of TTT stored assets (lights, wardrobe, stage props, and flats etc)
- Provides an auditorium facility for other arts communities and potentially revenue generating visiting arts/performances
- Potential for TTT to provide technical and operating skills and advice to other users
- Potential for TTT to contribute to Operating Costs like to those currently carried at the Senior Citizens Centre
- Generates gallery facilities for periodic and/or static exhibitions thereby potentially generating a cost saving for Surf Coast Shire by deploying current rented arts space
- Undertaking a simple upgrade to get TTT in will ensure the future short-term use of the building rather than letting it degrade whilst vacant
- Enables development of increased community use to be tested before Council commits to a major investment

⁵ TTT assets comprises 16 channel sound mixer, PC and software, state-of-the-art light console with software ETC CS20, Jands FPX 12 channel dimmer, 32 x stage lighting (Fresnel's, cans, spots and DMX-LEDs), associated cables, workshop tools, rostra for raised seating for 50 patrons and/or staging, properties, wardrobe currently stored TOPS Torquay, and stage and carpentry assets currently stored in a 20 ft container in Bellbrae. Total value estimated at \$50,000.