

BATEMANS BAY MACKAY PARK PRECINCT

ASSESSMENT OF PREFERRED ARTS AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

FINAL DRAFT

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1. Introduction

1.1 Catalyst for the Project

In settling the purchase of the former Batemans Bay Bowling Club site in July 2016, Council has secured all of the land west of the Princess Highway across from the town centre in public ownership. The balance of the site is a Crown Reserve under Council control.

Community responses to a request for ideas on the future of the site have been positive and generally consistent with the development outcomes envisaged by Council.

Council has also called for preliminary expressions of interest in partnering with Council in the redevelopment of the site. The four submissions received indicate private sector interest in the site with submissions identifying some of Council's preferred development opportunities including a new aquatic centre, an arts/ cultural facility, conference and events space, tourism accommodation, restaurant/ cafes, senior accommodation, and the integration of existing sports fields into future development.

Council since resolved at its meeting on 22nd November 2016 to pursue the development of formal proposal documents for the preferred mix of development outcomes within the Precinct, including an aquatic strategy and potential components of an arts and cultural facility.

Otium Planning Group, assisted by other consultants, was engaged to assist Council in progressing the project.

1.2 Scope of Project

The overall objective of the Batemans Bay Mackay Park Precinct Plan and Business Case project is to prepare a concept plan and business case for a potential public-private partnership project which will be utilised as a document to support grant funding applications. Specifically, the assessment of preferred arts and cultural facilities is one of 5 outputs required for the project and comprises:

- An assessment of preferred arts and cultural facilities within the precinct - ie, what would an arts and cultural facility within the precinct look like/ contain
- Utilising the 2010 Situational Analysis Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Report and the draft 2016 Arts and Cultural Strategy, review and provide recommendations on the most appropriate arts and cultural offering within the precinct.
- Include an evaluation of the impact of an arts and cultural complex on the level of business activity within the Batemans Bay generally and specifically on other arts / cultural facilities
- Establish current business activity levels and projected levels following redevelopment based on sound and reliable criteria

1.3 Study Approach

The study approach to this component of the overall concept plan and business case has comprised:

- Analysis of population and tourism data for Batemans Bay catchment & Eurobodalla Shire as a whole
- Analysis of Council planning documents
- Review of relevant external reports and studies
- Meetings with Council officers
- Meetings with representatives of Council's Sunset Committee for this project
- Identification of existing facilities for arts/ cultural facilities
- Benchmarking of arts/ cultural facilities in regional and coastal communities
- High level analysis of impact on existing businesses and arts/ cultural facilities



2. Population & Tourism Profile

2.1 Population Characteristics

The main population characteristics of Eurobodalla Shire as a whole are as follows:

- As at 2016 the Shire population was 38,025, with projected growth of 6,749 persons by 2036, making a total estimated population by that time of 44,774.¹
- This figure is much higher when non-residents and visitors are taken into account (refer section 2.2)
- There are three main planning catchments - Batemans Bay, Moruya and Narooma
- The estimated 2016 catchment population for Batemans Bay is 18,201 increasing to an estimated 21,702 by 2036 as outlined at **Error! Reference source not found.** below². The catchment could extend more broadly for certain activities if regional scale facilities are developed.
- The median age of the Eurobodalla population as at 2016 Census was 54 years³, which is vastly higher than NSW as a whole (38). 55.4% of the shire population is aged 50 and over compared to 34.6% for NSW as a whole. The population will age much faster than NSW as a whole.
- Eurobodalla has a lower proportion of children and teenagers aged 0-19 (19.2%) than NSW as a whole (24.5%)
- Median weekly household income in Eurobodalla is lower than NSW as a whole (\$939 compared to \$1,486) and the Shire has a higher index of disadvantage than both Regional NSW and NSW as a whole
- From information provided by Council, approximately 38% of ratepayers do not live in the Shire.

Table 1: Current and Project Population by Catchment and Locality (Source: <http://forecast.id.com.au/eurobodalla/home>)

Area	2016 Population	Estimated 2036 Population	Change 2016-2036
Batemans Bay			
Batemans Bay - Catalina	4,045	4,524	+479
Batemans Bay Rural Hinterland	2,584	2,950	+366
Malua Bay - Lilly Pilli - Rosedale - Guerilla Bay	2,524	3,625	+1,101
Surf Beach - Batehaven - Sunshine Bay - Denhams Beach	5,891	6,526	+635
Surfside - Long Beach - Maloneys Beach - North Batemans Bay	3,157	4,077	+920
Total	18,201	21,702	+3,501
Moruya			
Moraya Rural Hinterland	2,684	2,859	+175
Broulee - Tomakin - Mossy Point	3,097	4,140	+1,043
Tuross Head	2,283	2,432	+149
Urban Moruya - Moruya Heads	3,626	4,807	+1,181
Total	11,690	14,238	+2,548
Narooma			
Dalmeny	2,087	2,327	+240
Narooma - North Narooma - Kianga	3,478	3,868	+390
Narooma Rural Hinterland	2,568	2,660	+92
Total	8,133	8,855	+722
Total Eurobodalla Shire	38,024	44,795	+6,771

¹ Eurobodalla Population Forecasts. <http://forecast.id.com.au/eurobodalla/home> (accessed 4/08/17)

² ibid

³ 2016 Census. http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA12750?opendocument



2.2 Sea Change Impacts on Population

A 2013 report⁴ for the National Sea Change Task Force sought to quantify the temporary populations associated with holiday homes along the Australian coastline, situated in so called sea change localities. These were defined generally as those areas becoming increasingly popular as retirement centres for baby boomers in particular - of which Eurobodalla Shire is one.

The report notes that sea change localities experience a substantial influx of holiday makers during weekends and holidays as well as those that stay overnight. When the non-resident population, total equivalent full time residents from tourist accommodation, a percentage of visitors who stay with friends and family, plus day visitors are taken into account, the study estimated Eurobodalla Shire Council's daily average population in 2011 at 48,978.

2.3 Overview of Tourism Characteristics

Tourist visitation has a significant impact on the Eurobodalla population, particularly during Summer months. Key points to note include:

- Tourism's value around one third of the total Eurobodalla economy⁵
- Data contained in the 2016 Eurobodalla Tourism Monitor⁶ indicates the following:
 - For the 5 years from 2012 to 2016 there was an average of 1.3M visitors to Eurobodalla Shire (refer breakdown at Table 2)
 - 57% were domestic overnight visitors - mostly families with children or older retired couples, mostly from Canberra or Sydney, staying an average 3.7 nights
 - 41% were domestic day visitors, mostly older retired couples or families with children, mostly from the South Coast or, to a lesser extent, Canberra.
 - The largest proportion (34%) of domestic overnight visitors stayed in private accommodation (visiting friends and relatives) while a further 11% stayed in a private residence.
 - 22% stayed in a caravan park or commercial camping ground while a further 5% stayed in non-commercial camping
 - 22% stayed in hotels/ resorts and a further 11% stayed in a rented house or apartment
 - The main destination is Batemans Bay (59% of overnight visitors and 45% of day visitors). A further 9% of overnight visitors and 2% of day visitors had a main destination of relatively nearby Broulee-Tomakin.
 - The 5 year average visitation to Batemans Bay is 324,000 and 11,000 to Broulee-Tomakin.
 - *Comparatively few overnight visitors and day trippers (<5%) engaged in arts/ heritage activities* (categorised as attending theatre, concerts, other performing arts, festivals, fairs or other events, visiting museums/ art galleries, art/ craft studios, historical/ heritage buildings, sites or monuments)
- The Draft Eurobodalla Destination Action Plan⁷ includes a number of arts-related objectives, namely:
 - Work with relevant local groups and stakeholder agencies to develop heritage, arts and cultural, and wellness tourism experiences to complement nature based and regional food experiences (\$5.3), and
 - Support event organisers to create new, innovative and brand-aligned events and festivals that complement Eurobodalla's unique aspects (nature-based, regional food, recreation, sports, heritage, arts and culture) that appeal to visitors and residents, and identify opportunities to refresh and enhance successful, existing events and festivals

⁴ University of Adelaide. "National Sea Change Taskforce. Time and tide: moving towards an understanding of temporal population changes in coastal Australia." April 2013.

⁵ Eurobodalla Shire Council. "Business Development Strategic Plan 2014-2018" (p11)

⁶ Jo Mackellar, Destination Research. Eurobodalla Tourism Monitor. Dec 2016

⁷ Dr Meredith Wray. "Draft Eurobodalla Destination Action Plan". (2017-2021)



Table 2: Visitors to Eurobodalla Shire (Summary 2012-2016)

FIVE YEAR AVERAGE	DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT	INTERNATIONAL	DOMESTIC DAY TRIP	TOTAL
Visitors	746,750	25,000	530,140	1,301,890
Av night stay	3.7	4.5	n/a	
Lifecycle	Lifecycle families with children (39%) Older retired persons (21%)	Older people 55+ (35%) Young people, 20-30yrs (17%)	Families with children (27%) Older retired couples (33%)	
Source markets	Canberra (30%) Sydney (24%) South Coast (11%)	UK/Europe (62%) Nth America (16%) Asia(11%)	South Coast (61%) Canberra (23%) Sydney (7%)	

- In order to increase overnight visitor expenditure by 25% and the number of overnight stays by 25% the Draft Eurobodalla Destination Action Plan also identifies a number of challenges to overcome, including:
 - Revitalise Batemans Bay as an appealing gateway for the community and visitors to Eurobodalla
 - Overcome aging accommodation infrastructure
 - A need to attract new investment for infrastructure and tourism product development
 - Pursue and support new and existing festivals and events that are key drivers of visitation to help overcome seasonality and generate increased visitor awareness of Eurobodalla and its experiences
 - Eurobodalla Destination Action Plan



3. Review of Planning and Arts/ Cultural Documents

3.1 Planning Context

- Batemans Bay is identified as a major regional centre under the 2006 NSW Government South Coast Regional Strategy, and the Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan, 2016.
- Improving the diversity and quality of residential and commercial space in the town centre has been identified as “...critical to the development of Batemans Bay as a tourist destination and regional service centre.”⁸

3.2 Batemans Bay Visioning Project

- Council documentation produced for the Batemans Bay Town Centre Vision and Growth Project⁹ identified a range of challenges including:
 - Population growth (including in Canberra and surrounding areas)
 - Tourism trends
 - Traffic, transport and parking
 - Climate change
 - Ageing population
- Outcomes of a recent visioning workshop¹⁰ involving local business owners, land owners and community members identified a number of key values for Batemans Bay which were developed into the following vision statements:
 - A place that gains inspiration from water.
 - A connected place with reasons to stay and take it easy.
 - A place that people want to promote.
 - A place that provides a welcome, safe, inclusive environment.
 - A place where the community takes responsibility for each other.
 - A place that takes advantage of proximity to other places.
- Supporting the vision of providing a welcome, safe, inclusive environment, workshop participants suggested that arts groups, the Chamber of Commerce and others (including accommodation providers) work together more to coordinate/ bring events, particularly in the off season.

3.3 2016 Cultural Strategic Plan (Draft)

The draft strategy has not yet been adopted by Council. It notes that Eurobodalla attracts a large number of artists as residents and holiday makers. There are over 700 members of arts groups and societies in Eurobodalla. These artists present 600-800 events per annum aimed at local audiences and take the form of exhibitions, workshops, talks, performances and concerts. Eurobodalla hosts four regional arts festivals, two major regional arts prizes and markets in each town that attract participants from across the region.

The draft Plan states that Eurobodalla is well situated to “...be part of regional touring circuits predominantly for national and international musicians but including theatre and gallery presentations.” Among other things the Plan proposes that Council undertake to “...seek creative use of existing venues and facilities as well as prioritising the arts in the planning of new infrastructure.”

⁸ XPACE architecture + urban design & SWA Simon Whibley Architecture. “Revision of Building Heights for Batemans Bay Town Centre”. Jan, 2016.

⁹ Eurobodalla Shire Council. “Batemans Bay Town Centre Vision and Growth Project: Workshop Booklet”. Nov 2016

¹⁰ KJA Engaging Solutions. “Batemans Bay Visioning Workshop Report”. Dec, 2016.



The document notes that at both federal and state government levels, funding for the arts has been reduced in recent budgets. The drop in funding at the state level has affected all disciplines and art forms especially small to medium sized organisations. However the Plan notes that the value of the arts to economy and social impact, particularly in terms of cultural tourism and arts and health. South East Arts has released its Arts and Health Strategy and will be producing a Cultural Tourism Strategy in 2018.

In 2016, Council undertook consultation in cultural planning and town visioning, via an extensive citizens jury and staff jury process. The consultation process determined that arts and creativity is of high importance to the Eurobodalla community. Five key focus areas emerged from this consultation:

1. Creative literacy
2. Arts and tourism
3. Arts and community well being
4. Indigenous art
5. Arts, venues and public spaces

Two of these five key focus areas are of particular interest to this project - namely Arts and Tourism, and Arts, Venues and Public Spaces.

3.3.1 Arts and Tourism

Tourism is described as Eurobodalla's largest industry with the visitor economy worth over \$405M and supporting 25% of the workforce. Cultural and heritage tourism is noted as a niche market segment in the tourism industry, largely unexplored in Eurobodalla but with enormous potential due to the number of creatives and creative products in the region.

Cultural tourism includes attending festivals, fairs, theatre, concerts or other performing arts; and visiting art craft workshops or studios, museums and art galleries. The Draft Cultural Strategic Plan cites Australia Council research which notes a rise in interest in cultural tourism both in Australia and abroad.

The Draft Plan has a number of aspirations under the Arts and Tourism theme, including:

- Package arts with other tourism products - Arts and food; Arts and destinations; Arts and accommodation; Arts and markets
- Developing arts festivals as a tourism product
- Increase visibility of arts and artists within the tourism structure

3.3.2 Arts, Venues and Public Spaces

This theme includes the aspirations that:

- Eurobodalla's towns have well appointed venues to attract quality exhibitions and performances to our Shire, and
- Eurobodalla's venues provide a sophisticated but affordable platform for local arts products

Specifically, in relation to the proposed Mackay Park redevelopment it suggests the following:

- Contemporary design (has to look good from the outside)
- Black box theatre space
- Flexible seating
- Flexible grid
- Good acoustics/ sound engineering
- Indoor/ outdoor (seasonal capacity)



- Foyer hanging space
- Dressing rooms and amenities that can attract professional touring
- Café and town square space
- Connection to the town centre in an interesting way
- We stay sensitive to the Bay Theatre Players

3.4 2010 Situation Analysis Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Report

This study was commissioned by Council as part of the process of reviewing its 2006-2010 Cultural Plan. The study was commissioned in order for Council to “...better understand the nature of arts and cultural activity in the Shire and the infrastructure needed to further develop the arts and cultural life.” It was also initiated in response to recommendations contained in the 2006-2010 Cultural Plan to:

- Investigate the feasibility of developing a public/ private sector partnership for the provision of a community facility in Batemans Bay that meets the local needs of arts and cultural activities, and
- Consider in the 2006-2010 Management Plan the commissioning of a Feasibility Study for a Regional Cultural Centre that investigates and makes recommendations regarding the possible functions, preferred site, construction cost estimates, and management and partnership options

The study included an analysis of existing infrastructure and usage, extensive consultation with arts and cultural organisations, and a strategic direction for the development of suitable performing and visual arts facilities.

The study noted that consultation undertaken for the 2006-2010 Cultural Plan identified that the most significant issue was the “...lack of appropriate and affordable arts and cultural facilities at the local, district and regional level” and that existing venues had real constraints for the successful delivery of arts and cultural activities due to “...inappropriateness of size, access, affordability, and characteristics such as lighting, acoustics, storage, and seating”.

The consultation process undertaken for the 2010 Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Report included:

- Interviews with tourism, Eurobodalla Tourism, South East Regional Arts, Perfex, a wide range of arts/ cultural organisations and Council officers
- Surveys of arts and community organisations, schools and individual artists (promoted on radio and in local papers)
- Meetings with various committees and interagency groups (eg Youth Advisory Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Sunset Committee and Arts Exchange)
- Public workshops in Batemans Bay (2), Moruya (1) and Narooma (1) all of which were promoted in local media

Information from background research, surveys and consultations was used to map the cultural landscape in the Shire. The study found that “...Eurobodalla is actively involved in the arts as demonstrated by the large number of community organisations” and that, excluding people who attend performances/ events/ films there are an estimated 6,500 residents participating in the arts which represents almost 21% of the Shire’s adult population.

The “overwhelming consistency” of consultation inputs was that although arts organisations are adept at utilising any space available, a “...lack of suitable spaces for arts practice in the Shire is hindering the capacity for participation in and development of the arts in this community”. The study noted that artists are more likely to earn their income from selling or exhibiting their work outside the Shire given the low quality of exhibition spaces.

Specifically, for Batemans Bay, the consultation process revealed the priority issues for arts infrastructure provision as:



- Lack of specific purpose exhibition and performance space (different sizes were suggested)
- Lack of sufficient workshop spaces for rehearsals and visual arts

Key improvements suggested by participants in the consultation process were:

- Suitably designed venue for performing arts suitable for visiting performers
- A place for the celebration of culture
- Storage space
- Centrally located exhibition space (some said community gallery and others a regional gallery)

Importantly, the study found that:

“...while residents will travel for participation, they are generally reluctant to travel across the Shire to attend activities unless there is a major attraction or significant reason to do so”

And

“...because of the relatively low fixed incomes of residents in the Shire, affordability of participation (through fees, venue hire and exhibition costs)... and attendance (ticket prices) was indicated in the consultations as a major factor in residents’ participation in the cultural life of the Shire”

The study noted a number of existing organisations and activities in Batemans Bay including:

- South Coast Music Society Concert program (5 per year)
- Annual Bleus Festival
- Literary events
- Bay Theatre Players
- U3A
- Batemans Bay Arts and Crafts Society
- Pastel Society
- Embroiders and Woodcraft Guilds
- Quilters
- Several community arts and crafts groups
- Dance groups

A range of venues were identified including:

- Soldiers Club
- Former Bowling Club
- Catalina Country Club
- Hotels
- Eurobodalla Shire Library
- Batemans Bay Community Centre
- Batemans Bay Museum
- Cafes and bars hosting small scale music acts
- ARTery and Tosh Gallery (occasional professional arts workshops)



The report cites consultation participants as advising that “...activities take place in anywhere that can [be] found whether suitable or not.” With the exception of Batemans Bay Community Centre which is heavily utilised, most Council owned facilities are under-used most likely because of their location, design, access difficulties, condition, lack of parking or climate control.

A benchmarking exercise of 8 Councils in close proximity, or with similar demographic profiles, to Eurobodalla. These Councils comprised:

- Bathurst
- Bega Valley
- City of Mandurah
- Great Lakes
- Greater Taree
- Queanbeyan
- Wangaratta
- Shoalhaven

The benchmarking included analysis of these Councils’ arts/ cultural facilities including operating budgets.

In summary, the benchmarking exercise showed that “...providing cultural capacity requires a solid and ongoing financial commitment to build, purchase, repair, renovate or otherwise improve community cultural facilities such as performing arts centres and regional galleries.”

The report noted that these types of facilities represent a major investment and ongoing operational costs and that the authors were advised that “...performing arts centres across the country are subsidised from between \$600k and \$1.2M per annum.” While these venues are expected to generate revenue to contribute to operating costs they are “...regarded as a community service rather than profit making enterprises.”

None of the existing facilities in the Shire are built to service the specific requirements of the diverse range of arts interests as outlined at which include:

ACTIVITY TYPE	REQUIREMENTS
Dance	Sprung timber floor; air conditioning; change rooms; acoustic separation from other spaces
Visual arts workshop space (wet)	Vinyl or sealed washable concrete floor; storage, good lighting; ventilation/ extractor; washing up area for materials
Visual arts workshop space (dry)	Cleanable floor; good ventilation; storage
Exhibition space (excluding touring exhibitions) ¹¹	Natural and artificial lighting; hanging mechanisms; gallery standard walls; floor capable of accommodating heavy works without plinths; storage
Performance space	Raked seating; sprung stage floor; backstage; wings; dressing rooms; storage; loading dock; sound and lighting equipment; acoustic treatment and acoustic separation from other spaces; sound/ lighting control booth and foyer

Compared to Council’s investment in sporting facilities its level of investment in arts and cultural infrastructure is described as minimal particularly given the high levels of participation in the arts and its contribution to the well-being of the community.

The report summarises a number of potential Council, State and federal Government funding sources that were available at the time of writing.

¹¹ These have strict dust, humidity or light control requirements



In arriving at a recommended hierarchy of arts facilities across the shire the report proposed ten (10) principles and values which underpin the provision of future infrastructure. These included that:

1. The selection of location of the facilities is critical to achieve high levels of utilisation and achieve good access by as many of the Shire's residents as practicable.
2. The facilities have a visual profile in their community and are designed to welcome and encourage use.
3. The scale of infrastructure is to reflect Council's resource limitations, the *relatively small size of the Shire's population and be affordable*¹².

The report recommended that there be three (3) small arts hubs of clustered activity within the Shire in the three major towns of Batemans Bay, Moruya and Narooma and that each centre has access to some performance space, spaces for the creation of work, and to exhibit visual art work.

Importantly, the report notes that this model of provision, as opposed to the creation of a single arts hub within the Shire, was recommended because:

- Each of the towns has different arts and cultural landscapes and needs. This model allows for each hub to respond to these differences and to help to build on their distinctive characters and strengths.
- The often small and intimate nature of the way the arts are practiced in the Shire and the size of the audiences would be compromised by having a single large venue.
- As the consultations indicated, there is an unwillingness of Shire residents to travel the length of the Shire to attend/participate in activity on a regular basis.
- To manage a larger scale regional facility for example, the Q Performing Arts Centre in Queanbeyan with an operating budget in 2009-10 of \$715,870.00, would be at considerable cost to Council.
- The cost to hire larger venues will be more expensive for hirers and is anticipated to be unaffordable for most groups.

In respect of the Batemans Bay Arts Hub the report proposed two possible locations - Hanging Rock (adjoining the library and university) or upgrading the existing Community Centre. [It should be noted that this report pre-dated Council's acquisition of the former Bowling Club site and proposed development of the precinct.] Advantages and disadvantages of each site were summarised. Advantages that would apply equally to the Mackay Park site include:

- Central to the town which offers other amenities and convenience for users including car parking.
- A new building used for arts purposes (such as performance or gallery) could make a strong physical statement representing the creative aspects of the Shire to the local community and tourists.
- Sale of the Community Centre could be used to contribute to the cost a new building

The establishment of an arts centre in Batemans Bay was recommended as an immediate priority of this study. The proposed spatial elements are outlined at Table 3 below:

¹² Author's italics



Table 3: Proposed elements of arts/ cultural facility at Batemans Bay

SPATIAL ELEMENT	APPROX AREA (M2)
Performance Space	
Intimate 150 seat performance space for touring and local performances (built and equipped to a basic functional standard to ensure affordability of construction and hire fees) comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tiered seating • Stage/ wings/ backstage • Acoustics • Lighting and sound • Screen for presentations/lectures/films. • No fly tower 	300m ²
Box office	4m ²
Loading bay and storage area	40m ²
Bio box and light storage	8m ²
Dance studio with sprung floor	100m ²
Visual Arts Spaces	
Community gallery	60m ²
Classroom area (for wet arts)	50m ²
Storage	50m ²
Total Estimated Area	662m²
Community Centre	
Activities room	100m ²
2 x meeting rooms (for use by library and U3A or other groups)	50m ²
Foyer	60m ²
Kitchen	10m ²
Centre manager office	20m ²
Toilets	20m ²
Total Estimated Area	260m²

3.5 Hanging Rock Precinct and Business Plan 2013

This project comprised the development of a Business Feasibility Study and Concept Master Plan to guide the future management operations and development of the Hanging Rock Regional Community and Sports Precinct. It included the development education, arts, community sports and recreation components and analysis of financial viability.

The report reviewed existing arts, cultural and conference venues in Batemans Bay and noted that they have limited flat floor exhibition and breakout spaces and there is no public gallery or exhibition space in the Shire. It reported that there are “...limited performing arts, exhibition space and conference venues of the size/capacity and quality to host larger local events or to attract professional touring products or larger professional conferences/exhibitions to Batemans Bay.” The report concluded that there is a lack of quality performing arts and gallery spaces in the Shire; that existing venues have small seating capacity of up to 300 seats¹³; and that existing conference venues lack exhibition space, additional auditorium and break out rooms.

It cited industry trends that indicate “...touring shows require at least 400 seat venues to become financially viable. Similarly, industry trends for events, indicates most leisure and business events are up to 500 persons and involve exhibitions/ tradeshows as part of the event.”

Four main arts centre market segments were identified (p55) as summarised at Table 4 below:

¹³. NB: +Consultation with the Batemans Soldiers Club undertaken by Otium Planning Group for this current study has revealed a seating capacity of 500 in its main auditorium.



Table 4: Main market segments and patron profile contained in Hanging Rock Precinct Plan report (2013)

MARKET SEGMENT	MAIN ELEMENTS	TYPICAL PATRON PROFILE
Performing Arts	Music Musical theatre Orchestral/ Opera Physical theatre/ Ballet	Usually made up of adults, slightly older and women, coming with friends and target groups children, young adults etc. attracted for entertainment and social values and participating in locally produced performing arts & theatre (ie local dance, bands, theatre etc) or to attend professional touring music and performance shows.
Creative & Fine Arts	Gallery & exhibition Arts & crafts Arts programs Working creative arts hub Retail & investment	Usually made up of adults, and targeted groups, predominantly attending facilities to view fine arts and craft exhibitions, or artists working on and demonstrating their craft, or to purchase arts and crafts. This market is attracted for entertainment, learning, self-actualisation, investment and socialising.
Education	Training & professional development Early learning/ outreach Talent search Libraries/ History & Heritage Research	Usually made up of children and adults wishing to enhance their performing & fine arts and craft skills. This market also includes government & National Government Organisations involved in industry development & capacity enhancement services and individuals and groups attracted for learning & research.
Events and Functions	Business Events Conferences Exhibitions & Trade Shows Social Functions Festivals Hospitality - Eat out & socialise	Usually made up of corporate & government management & employees attending conferences and business to business functions. Largely made up of visitors to the area from local and intrastate source markets, supplemented by national and international visitors. Also includes families attending leisure and home shows, children, young people, adults and social groups wanting to experience music and multi-faceted festivals and events, a growing market sector.

The report cites APACA data¹⁴

The report cites APACA data which indicates that “...locally produced content and community use make up a majority of performing arts centre usage (55%), followed by the Events & Functions Market (37%) and Touring Shows (8%).”

Benchmarking of performing arts centres in similar sized communities was undertaken as part of the study, namely Wangaratta, Warrnambool, Wodonga and Shepparton. Their review of other facilities found that successful venues have a high profile CBD location but are subsidised by government (some to a very high cost). The net operating deficit at Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre was reported as \$600,000 and at Eastbank Performing Arts Centre at Shepparton the net deficit was reported as \$790,000.

The review of other facilities also found that a minimum of 500 seats was required to attract commercial shows that are commercially viable; multiple spaces to enable concurrent occupancy are necessary; multi-purpose, flexible and scalable spaces that allow for longer term and local production at a lower cost are needed.

A household telephone survey of 405 randomly selected residents undertaken as part of the study found that:

- Older adults (50+) had by far the highest levels of participation, particularly in art gallery/ exhibitions, arts and crafts, musicals and theatre
- People in their middle years predominantly participated in community festivals and events
- Younger people had significantly higher participation in music festivals and cinema
- In seeking reasons for non-participation, lack of facilities did not feature prominently

¹⁴ Australian Performing Arts Centre Association (APACA). “2011 Performing Arts Centre Economic Impact Report”.



- 70% or more of survey respondents rated the quality of venues for plays, musicals, music festivals, film and cinema, community festivals and events and art gallery exhibitions as good
- 58% of survey respondents rated the quality of venues for music - jazz as good, while 57% of respondents rated the quality of venues for arts and crafts as good.

The main venues used for different types of arts/ cultural activities were:

ART GALLERY EXHIBITIONS	ARTS & CRAFTS	COMMUNITY FESTIVALS & EVENTS	MUSICALS	MUSIC - CLASSIC/ SYMPHONY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batemans Bay High School (9) • Mechanics Institute, Moruya (7) • SoArt Gallery (6) • Olive Tree, Batemans Bay (5) • Bodalla Art Gallery (4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batemans Bay High School (7) • Soldiers Club Batemans Bay (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oyster Festival Narooma (6) • Moruya Riverside Park (4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay Players Theatre (10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Bernards Church (5)

The study contained two options in relation to the development of arts/ cultural facilities in Batemans Bay:

1. Option 1: Regional Performing Arts and Conference Centre

This comprised a 500 seat auditorium of 3,500m² containing the following:

- Stage
- Lift pit
- Foyer/ exhibition space
- Green room
- Dressing rooms
- Multi-purpose rooms/ creative studios
- Administration
- Café/ bar/ catering
- Plant/ storage/ circulation

2. Option 2: Creative Arts Development Hub

This option comprised a building of approximately 1,700m² incorporating:

- Small contemporary theatre space (200-250 pp seating capacity)
- Flexible staging & seating
- Permanent exhibition space
- Foyer/ function/ exhibition space
- Green room
- Dressing rooms/amenities
- Multi-purpose/program/training rooms (2)
- Artists workshops (4)
- Reception/box office/administration/meeting rooms
- Bar/cafe
- Plant/storage
- Back of stage & access
- Circulation/access



It should be noted that both options were projected to operate at a substantial deficit. Projections for Option 1 included aquatic and indoor sports centre components and anticipated an average annual net deficit of \$627,000 per annum for the first 10 years of operation. Option 2 did not incorporate aquatic or indoor sport components and was projected to operate an average annual deficit of \$488,000 for the first 10 years.

3.6 Eurobodalla Citizens' Jury Report, 2016

In 2016, Council established a Citizens Jury to consider the following questions:

- Is Council spending our money on the right things?
- If not, what should change?

Their report identified 9 areas where they saw opportunities for improvement or refinement. One of these nine areas was described as "Arts Development". The Jury reported that the art produced in the Shire is "one of the things that makes us unique" and is "...a potential tourism drawcard." Its report included the recommendation that "...Council should ensure that the potential for a performing arts base is considered in the redevelopment of the Mackay Park precinct." (p15)

3.7 Community Research - Long Term Resource Planning

A 2012 study undertaken by Micromex Research¹⁵ involved the recruitment of 733 residents and rate paying non-residents to collect feedback on Eurobodalla Shire Council's proposed resourcing strategies. The sample size of 507 residents provided a maximum sampling error of approximately +/- 4.4% at 95% confidence, while the sample size of 226 non-residents provided a maximum sampling error of approximately +/- 6.5% at 95% confidence.

The study asked residents and non-residents about their views on the importance of both a Regional Aquatic Centre and Regional Performing Art Centre being built in the next 10 years. 30% of residents and 24% of non-residents rated a Regional Performing Arts Centre as 'important' or 'very important' while 44% of residents and 49% of non-residents rated it as 'not very important' or 'not important at all'.

When 'somewhat important' responses are included, 55% of residents and 51% of non-residents rated the development of a Regional Performing Arts Centre as at least somewhat important.

¹⁵ Micromex Research. "Long Term Resource Planning for Eurobodalla Shire Council. Community Research Report." Jan 2012



4. Current Facility Provision

There is a range of facilities that are utilised for arts and cultural activities in Batemans Bay and other parts of the Shire. Many of these are not purpose built facilities but are adapted for arts uses. Venues include:

VENUE	DESCRIPTION
Batemans Bay Soldiers Club	Flat floor seating for up to 500 in carpeted main auditorium. Multi-room configuration potential via operable walls. Stage. Bar/ catering. Not suitable for performing arts due to time required for bump in/ bump out. Used by wide range of community groups for meetings, functions, displays etc (mostly free of charge).
Catalina Country Club	Seats 200 theatre style in function/ event space that can split into 2 or 3 smaller spaces. Used for meetings, exhibitions, banquets, weddings, functions etc.
Batemans Bay Community Centre	Multi-use floor space (approx 230m ²) with timber floor. 3 x meeting rooms, office, small display area, courtyard. High use venue used for wide range of arts, education and community activities. Flat floor seating for <200. Seen as too small for many performance activities.
Batemans Bay High School	Single basketball court size hall with timber floor (non-compliant run-off space). Built 1987. Stage and small backstage. Hosts a visiting band concert once a year (catering done by Rotary) with flat floor seating. Used by local dance groups for rehearsals and end year concert. Used for exhibitions by Craft Arts of Batemans Bay Inc (2-3pa)
St Bernards Church	Church venue with slightly raked permanent seating. No stage. Used by South Coast Music Society for 4 concerts per annum. Venue can seat up to 500. Not used for other events.
St Bernards Primary School	Multi-purpose hall funded via Federal Government BER program. Synthetic floor marked for basketball (non-compliant run-off in parts). Small stage. Not used for community/ cultural events. Main user is judo.
Coachhouse Marina Resort	Various room configurations. Can cater for up to 300 in marquee. Hosts annual Writers Festival.
Bay Playhouse	97 seat venue owned and run by not-for-profit group Bay Theatre Players. Stages 3-4 productions per year which draws audiences from across the Shire. Not hired out to other groups for performances.
Batemans Bay Visitors Centre	Land of Many Waters Gallery used to showcase local artists' work.
Batemans Bay Library	Meeting room. Used for small group talks.
Malua Bay Surf Club	Used by for exhibitions by South Coast Pastel Society
Various community centres, Church and private halls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malua Bay Community Centre Tomakin Community Centre Salvation Army Hall, Batemans Bay Anglican Church Hall CWA Hall, Batehaven Durras Progress Hall Nelligen Hall Batemans Bay Scout Hall 	Used for variety of small displays, exhibitions and meetings
Retirement Homes	Used for various U3A classes.
Numerous small retail art gallery/ micro businesses	Retail exhibition spaces.
St Mary's Primary School Performing Arts Centre	Purpose built performing arts facility built under Federal Government BER program in 2010. Stage, lighting/ sound equipment, good acoustics. Flat floor seating. Small backstage. Community use for events varies from year to year (eg used during Jazz Festival). Main regular use is yoga, pilates, film group. Used for dance class rehearsals/ performances during school holidays.
Private homes	Used for a range of U3A activities and storage space



5. Consultation

Targeted consultation with members of the Sunset Committee appointed by Council for this project was undertaken and other key stakeholders identified by Council including venue managers and commercial operators. Meetings were also held with a number of Council officers.

Issues raised in the external consultation included:

- Up to 50% of turnover for businesses occurs in the Christmas and Easter holiday periods
- Many businesses in Batemans Bay have failed due to the long off season
- Visitors come mainly from Canberra and Sydney
- Need to develop infrastructure that supports the fact that Batemans Bay is the commercial hub of the region
- Most felt that a performing arts/ cultural facility in Batemans Bay should be a hub for the Shire as it is the main gateway to the Shire from Canberra and Sydney
- The CBD needs more activation with more activities/ events outside the tourist season
- There is an opportunity to capitalise on the new international flights linking Canberra to Asia
- Batemans Bay is not currently capitalising on Canberra opportunities due to the absence of tourism product
- Development of the Mackay Park precinct should be a tourism-driven site which is a catalyst for growth in Batemans Bay, but needs to be consistent with a broader vision for Batemans Bay as a whole and the updated Destination Management Plan.
- Decision-making should not be rushed
- There is insufficient collaboration to cross-promote tourist opportunities
- Some indicated that Eurobodalla is a price sensitive and older community and many older residents do not like to travel, especially at night (eg the St Mary's School performing arts facility in Moruya is seen as a good space but regarded as too far to travel)
- The demographics of the region means good disability access and internal mobility must be taken into account in design
- Lack of car parking, bus parking, and long vehicle in the CBD is an issue - especially with the removal of other spaces
- Road access into the Mackay Park precinct should be improved
- There must be a good linkage between the Mackay Park development and the CBD
- Need to create a pathway linkage around the site
- Need to take into account indigenous links to the site and showcase in design and art works
- There is a concern about linking an arts/ events facility with high rise apartments, hotel or retirement accommodation due to potential noise conflicts
- Existing venues are 'make-do' for exhibitions and performances and lack break-out spaces
- A 150 seat venue is seen as too small by the arts community
- An arts/ cultural facility should be multi-purpose and contain a large open space for exhibitions/ performances with seating for around 400-500, stage, lighting, sound, plus ancillary spaces, food and beverage, wet/ dry workshop space, meeting areas, storage, and good disability access.
- The facility should cater for touring shows, performances, art exhibitions, U3A activities, dinners, travel expos



- There is a lot of competition for the wedding market in Batemans Bay
- The Soldiers Club is heavily used by community organisations (500+ uses per year) for a wide range of activities including displays, meetings, school formals etc. The vast majority of this community use is free of charge
- The Soldiers Club has minimal use for arts events/ activities. The venue is not suitable for performing arts events due to the bump-in/ bump-out time required by users and many arts groups do not like the association of family oriented events with gaming operations
- Many commercial music events are not viable as promoters require a guaranteed rental, bar proceeds are lower than usual spend, and regular patrons are displaced.
- Most conferences in the region are smaller (100-300) due to the time/ difficulty of access from Sydney and lack of places to accommodate 100+ visitors
- There is a lack of 4 or 5 star accommodation in Batemans Bay.
- The observation was made that a hotel development on the site should fit in with the broader vision for Batemans Bay, and would impact on other proposed developments unless Council addresses other things to improve tourist capacity (eg expansion of the marina)
- The existing Visitor Information Centre should be integrated with the site and possibly incorporate an oyster interpretive centre
- The Putt Putt complex at Mackay Park has been a popular part of the Mackay Park site for 35 years



6. Benchmarking of Arts/ Cultural Facilities

A benchmarking exercise of eight (8) art/ cultural facilities across NSW, Victoria and Queensland was undertaken. These comprised venues in neighbouring shires, towns with similar populations, coastal towns, and/ or facilities mentioned during the consultation process. The centres benchmarked were:

- Bega Valley Commemorative Civic Centre
- Lighthouse Theatre Warrnambool
- Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre
- Queanbeyan Performing Arts Centre
- Albury Entertainment Centre
- Mildura Arts Centre
- Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre
- Orange Civic Theatre

Information sought included:

- Facility composition
- Population profile
- Funding arrangements
- Operating performance and cost
- Type of events/ activities
- Economic impact (if available)
- Centre data contained in the 2016 APACA Economic Activity Report¹⁶

6.1 Key Learnings

Key points to emerge from the benchmarking were:

- Facilities with one dedicated theatre space only generally present as less viable than multi-purpose facilities with one or two performance spaces and additional meeting rooms. Flexible spaces enable a broader range of uses.
- Facilities with approximately 500 - 1,000 maximum capacity appear more viable.
- All centres operated at a substantial net annual deficit ranging from \$250,000 to \$2.15M. Of the centres with a Shire-wide population <60,000 the median deficit was \$625,875. This is somewhat higher than the projected average annual deficit of \$488,000pa for the first 10 years of operation of a Creative Arts Development Hub as outlined in the 2013 Hanging Rock Precinct & Business Plan (p14) but consistent with 2010 benchmarking of average arts facility subsidies of \$600,000 to \$1.2M (p9).
- State of the art sound, audio and audio-visual equipment is critical in attracting large scale events.
- All venues source large scale commercial events, but are also well-utilised by local theatre/ arts groups and other community groups.
- Patrons at all venues are generally willing to travel up to an hour or more to an event.
- At least three of the venues contacted believed an arts/ cultural venue in Batemans Bay would be beneficial for the area and would generate increased opportunities for the touring arts sector in the broader region.
- It was commonly stated that arts/ cultural facilities are “like libraries and sporting fields” in that they are first and foremost a community facility provided for public good and community benefit.
- A strong local arts and cultural community can have a significantly positive effect on the use and success of the venue.

¹⁶ Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, Economic Activity Report, 2016. Prepared by Ruth Hodgman/ Visual Focus



Detailed information about each centre benchmarked is provided in the tables below.

BEGA VALLEY COMMEMORATIVE CIVIC CENTRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Bega Valley Shire Council (NSW) 2015 Population 33,475 (profileID) Median Age 48		
Description	Function and event spaces across 2 floors with flat floor and individual seats. Access to upper level is via wide staircase or lift. Kitchen, bar, stage, dressing rooms, storerooms, amenities on ground floor. Kitchenette, bar, store rooms amenities and offices on upper level. Total floor area approximately 1,257m ² (Ground Floor) and 791m ² (First Floor).		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Merri-winga Auditorium Large open auditorium approx. 24 x 16m (388m ²). Large stage (145m ²) with 2 dressing rooms backstage. State of the art sound and lighting. Flat floor with individual moveable seats.	500 theatre 250 banquet	Performing arts Presentation events Banquet dinners Exhibitions Conferences Some sports events, such as martial arts. Social dance events Graduations and formals Large weddings
	Gulaga Room Smaller function room (150m ²) that can be sectioned off from main auditorium with operable wall	100 theatre 50 workshop	Performance/ rehearsal Information forums Seminars Workshops Smaller cabaret style performances
	Gulaga Foyer Main entrance/ ground floor lobby (205m ²) Fully glass outer walls. Serviced by a bar.		Product launches, cocktail events, private social functions, entertainment events.
Meeting Rooms	1 Large meeting room (169m ²) with balcony and dedicated audio visual system.	100 theatre style 50 workshop (at tables)	Bega Valley Shire Council Chambers Larger meetings, workshops and seminars
	2 small meeting rooms (each 32m ²) that can be joined to create a larger space. Equipped with display screens.	15 each (at tables) 40 (theatre style combined rooms)	Small meetings and workshops.
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	Opened 26 January 2016	\$7 million	Combination of Council, government and loan. No private sector funding.
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl. depreciation)
	9,827 in 2016, made up of 3,442 for meetings and 6,385 for events.	No data collected as yet. Conference attracted attendees from Canberra and wider.	Council budget for total facility operation and management is \$250,000 .
Events	Concerts & performing arts - e.g. The Tuxedo Tour, Sydney Comedy Festival Showcase Sydney Writers Festival, Economic Summit. Not currently part of a touring arts or events circuit as Council does not fund any programming and therefore does not provide funds to purchase shows, however this is on the radar and discussions are being held with Arts NSW.		
Economic Impact	No research to date.		
APACA Economic Activity Report	No information.		



Lighthouse Theatre Warrnambool			
LGA & LGA Population	Warrnambool City Council (VIC) 2015 Population 33,644 (profileD) Median Age 38		
Description	Cultural and entertainment centre that was initially opened for performing arts use in 1983 and underwent a refurbishment in 2012. Includes main auditorium theatre and studio theatre, dressing rooms, green room, commercial kitchen, foyer and bar area.		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Main Auditorium With proscenium arch and the latest theatre technology - lighting, audio, audio-visual, hearing loop, stage, backstage.	575 fixed raked seating	Concerts, musicals, awards presentations, seminars, lectures, conferences, trade shows etc.
	Studio theatre Approx. 290m ² Flexible black box style space with parquet flooring and variable seating bank.	157 retractable tiered seating. Can be moved to multiple configurations. 275 sit down dinner	Dinners, conferences, functions, seminars, weddings, intimate theatre, trade shows, cabaret, comedy shows etc.
	Lighthouse Foyer Includes access to bar.	575 standing capacity.	Cocktail functions, presentations, trade shows, launches etc.
Meeting Rooms	Meeting room attached to studio theatre with retractable wall that can provide access to the studio.	70 theatre style 20 at round tables	
	Green Room can be used as a meeting space	50-60 for meetings	Dance schools, meetings, rehearsals etc.
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	Originally the town hall in 1891. Theatre in 1983. Refurbishment 2012	\$2.2 million \$8.9 million	For \$8.9M refurbishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2.1M Federal Govt. • \$4.8M State Govt. • \$0.9 Local Charity & Philanthropy • \$1.1M Council
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl. depreciation)
	2015/16 28,060 paid entrances (i.e. ticketed events) 24,746 unpaid Total = 52,806	Largest centre in the region, so attracts high calibre events that patrons are willing to travel to. 80% of patrons from within Warrnambool Shire and the remainder being from within 1-2 hours drive and some further afield.	\$299,000 (2015/16) Note: High contingency of volunteer staff used in ushering roles, which saves approx. \$150,000 per annum in salaries. Total volunteer hours in 2015/16 were 2,725.
Events	Caters for a range of events that are either put on by the theatre itself or by commercial hirers. These include drama, dance, music, opera, theatre, lectures, seminars, conferences, trade shows, dinners, weddings etc. In 2015/16 there were 100 productions, 55 lectures/ seminars/ conferences, 36 workshops, 164 meeting and other small scale events and over 400 separate acts. Very busy theatre for a community of this size with more than 1 event every day. The theatre is a member of various regional and state performing arts associations and receives Regional Partnership Creative Victoria funding, which helps to fund events.		
Economic Impact	No direct analysis of economic impact for the Shire, however broader analysis has been undertaken at a state level by the Victorian Performing Arts Association. The Venue Manager believes there needs to be a mix of activities provided at such centres and a balance of entrepreneurial focus versus community support. Such facilities should be considered in the same vein as libraries etc. where they are provided for the public good and Council determines the value of the facility to the community and therefore the level of support Council is willing to provide.		



LIGHTHOUSE THEATRE WARRNAMBOOL	
Additional Comments	<p>The centre is within 1.5 - 2 hours of smaller centres in the region. Community demand, audience size and financial viability are the three factors that event promoters consider critical in venue choice and that have capacity to draw audiences from further afield. The Venue Manager stated that contrary to popular belief that performing arts centres shouldn't be provided in neighbouring towns/ shires, it is actually beneficial to have centres in neighbouring areas as this opens up greater networks and creates shared programming and marketing opportunities. There are successful models where this has occurred, for example in east Victoria where there are three centres within 40 minutes of each other.</p>
APACA Economic Activity Report	<p>Population serviced: 55,000 Performance spaces: 2 Distance from Capital City: 257km Total Capacity: 743 Annual Turnover: Not provided Annual Attendance: 61,620</p>



SHOALHAVEN ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Shoalhaven City Council 2015 Population 100,147 (profileID) Median Age 46		
Description	Entertainment centre with a main auditorium and smaller theatre and several meeting rooms. Facilities include a café, visitor information centre, dressing rooms, rehearsal spaces, green room, backstage amenities, storage and plant rooms. Total floor area is around 100m x 100m excluding car parking and surrounds.		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Main Auditorium Theatre Full stage and orchestral pit State of the art lighting, audio and video Retractable seating over 4 levels Stage (27m x 12m) 2 dressing rooms	Flat floor mode: 1,000 Raked theatre style 4 levels: 900 (retractable) Raked theatre style 3 levels: 700 (retractable) Raked theatre style 2 levels: 500 (retractable) Dinner mode: 450	Concerts, conferences, theatre, performing arts, sport, expos and trade shows, weddings.
	Studio Theatre Smaller, versatile theatre room. Retractable seating. 19m x 1m 'Black Box' flat floor. Opens to main foyer. Sprung plywood floor. Dressing rooms with amenities.	Flat floor mode: 200 Theatre style (raked): 192 single bank of 18 seats wide, 12 rows deep) 80 (round tables)	Alternative theatre, conferences, expos, rehearsals.
Meeting Rooms	Gallery	110 theatre style 35 (tables)	
	2 meeting rooms	29 (tables) each 30 and 60 in theatre style	Workshops, conference breakouts, presentations, tutorials, meetings, seminars.
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	Opened in 2008	\$27 million	Predominantly Council. Approx.. \$3 million in state and federal grants.
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl depreciation)
	Door counters 2016 have recorded 100,000 visits in the 6 months since July 2016. This includes all people walking through the doors (i.e staff, café patrons, event patrons etc.) and has increased since the inclusion of the Visitor Information Centre on site.	Determined by type of event and whether or not it is being held in Wollongong. People willing to travel up to one hour, however less likely if an event is being held in Wollongong.	Council Operational Plan states \$2.15 million net cost , however this includes depreciation and loan fund .
Events	Major events include concerts, performing arts events, trade shows and exhibitions, conferences. Generally hold a major event weekly. September and January are quiet. Major conferences with national and international delegates occur every 3-4 years. Minor usage daily. Generally do not accept repeat events within 2 years unless very popular. There is no touring arts circuit as such, however they attend Performing Arts Industry Forums to view products that are coming onto the market and then negotiate with the individual event promoters. Operate their own creative program of events, which is funded by Council (\$30,000 per annum).		
Economic Impact	No information available.		
APACA Economic Activity Report	Population serviced: 120,000 Performance spaces: 2 Distance from Capital City: 160km Total Capacity: 1,100 Annual Turnover: \$1.9M Annual Attendance: 54,223		



QUEANBEYAN PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (NSW) 2015 Population 56,554 (profileD) Median Age 37		
Description	Premier entertainment centre in Queanbeyan. Performing arts venue with theatre and exhibition space. Includes bar facilities, lounge and care areas. Total floor area is unknown.		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Theatre Fixed theatre-style fold-up seating Sound and lighting Orchestra pit, which can be covered. Dressing rooms. Computerised box office.	346 theatre style	Live theatre, concerts, forums, conferences, conventions, movies, music or film festivals, awards ceremonies, digital, video and audio recordings, television or radio broadcasts, HSC exam performances, performing arts workshops etc.
	Exhibition Space 14 x 8 metres art exhibition area, with storage and a large selection of plinths available for 3D work.	120 (cocktail)	Art exhibits and exhibitions, fashion parades, demonstrations, dinners, cocktail parties, cabaret, lectures.
Meeting Rooms	Does not have any meeting/ additional rooms. The Program Manager feels this is a weakness of the centre as additional space such as rehearsal space to complement the main theatre would be beneficial.		
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	Completed February 2008	Approx. \$9 million	Council State Govt. \$1.25 million Federal Govt. \$550,000 No private sector funding Local theatre company paid for curtain (\$50,000)
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl. depreciation)
	26,000 to 32,000	Depending on what is being presented, people are very willing to travel up to one hours drive. 60% of patrons come from Canberra and 10% from the surrounding region.	\$776,750 operating deficit.
Events	Live theatre, concerts, forums, conferences, conventions, movies, music or film festivals, awards ceremonies, art exhibitions, fashion parades, dinners, cocktail parties. The frequency of events varies depending on what events are touring and when. Must be flexible and variable in that you must be available at the dates and times the events require, otherwise you miss out. Approx. 10-12 touring events per year with the gaps filled by local events. Do produce in-house and buy local content.		
Economic Impact	No formal studies that the Program Manager is aware of, however the centre brings in a huge amount for the local area. During major events, all restaurants are full. Accommodation is not so heavily booked as patrons often stay with friends or relatives.		
Additional Comments	The Program Manager has knowledge of the Batemans Bay theatre scene and commented that there is a strong, thriving theatre community in the area with lots of interest in the arts. He believes a performing arts facility would be very beneficial for the Batemans Bay community. Suggested that The Q theatre capacity of 346 is too small and would recommend a larger facility to ensure viability. The best he has seen are Penrith (580 capacity concert hall, 90 seat studio, 2 foyers, 2 bars, 27 meeting rooms used for used for private music lessons) and Dubbo (500-seat theatre, 750 seat flat auditorium, 105 seat breakout room).		
APACA Economic Activity Report	Population serviced: 443,409 Performance spaces: 1 Distance from Capital City: 10km Total Capacity: 346 Annual Turnover: Not provided Annual Attendance: 30,181		



ALBURY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Albury City Council (NSW) 2015 Population 51,722 (profileID) Median Age 37		
Description	Premier entertainment venue catering for performing arts, business events and the conference market. Several rooms of varying sizes suitable for small to large scale events. Includes bar facilities, full technical facilities and disabled access. Total floor area is 1,200m ²		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Main Auditorium Full technical facilities, light and sound, data projection, excellent acoustics and sight lines. Adjustable stage, VIP lounge or media room, foyer space.	818 in tiered seating over two levels (495 in stalls, 313 in gallery).	Presentations, theatrical performances, keynote addresses, seminars,
	Banquet Hall (657m ²) Moveable walls allowing creating of three separate spaces. Audio-visual equipment including data projection and conferencing. Fully equipped sound system. Bar, office and cloakroom, removable staging, in-room LED lighting.	750 (theatre) 360 (boardroom) 360 (classroom) 360 (U-shaped) 540 (banquet) 750 (cocktail)	Exhibitions, product launches, presentations, meetings, gala dinners, cocktail functions, weddings, concerts, themed events.
	Convention Wing (865m ²) Combination of the Banquet Hall and the Elizabeth Room allowing a large space that can be used whole or divided into five separate spaces.	1000 (theatre) 500 (boardroom, classroom, u-shape) 750 (banquet) 1200 (cocktail)	Large scale exhibitions, cocktail functions, gala dinners, events needing large space.
Meeting Rooms	Elizabeth Room (208m ²) Intimate space with moveable walls, private courtyard, access off main foyer, bar facilities, full technical capabilities.	230 (theatre) 108 (boardroom, classroom, u-shaped) 200 (banquet) 230 (cocktail)	Exhibitions, product launches, presentations, meetings, corporate functions and cocktail events.
	Intimate theatre space with tiered seating, technical facilities, foyer space of 106m ² .	Tiered seating for 177 people (theatre style)	Large team meetings, planning days, conference break-out sessions, keynote speaker presentations, meetings, small theatrical events.
	Boardroom Intimate meeting room with balcony at either end, video conferencing facilities, data projection, natural lighting.	20 people boardroom style or banquet	Small team meetings, training sessions, private lunches.
	Chandelier Room (65m ²) Elegant room with floor to ceiling windows, licensed bar, full technical facilities.	50 (theatre) 20 (boardroom, classroom, u-shape) 50 (banquet) 70 (cocktail)	Breakfast and lunch meetings, VIP functions, cocktail receptions, boardroom meetings, special events, intimate dinner parties.
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	Opened May 1964	£230,000	Local Council through long and short loans. The total loan was £200,000. Community donations amounted to £30,000.



ALBURY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE (CONT'D)			
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl. depreciation)
	60,000 to 70,000 depending on the types of events held.	Catchment is approximately 180,000 and patrons are prepared to travel up to an hour, sometimes further depending on the performance.	Approx. \$450,000 to \$500,000 excluding building depreciation, but including equipment depreciation.
Events	Small to large scale concerts, expos, conferences, product launches, theatre, musical theatre, ballet. Events occur all year round, however January is historically a quiet period with basically nil events. Some products are presented from the touring arts circuit.		
Economic Impact	No, only market research on brand and users.		
APACA Economic Activity Report	Population serviced: 180,000 Performance spaces: 1 Distance from Capital City: 320km Total Capacity: 818 Annual Turnover: \$1.9M Annual Attendance: 63,828		



MILDURA ARTS CENTRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Mildura Rural City Council (VIC) 2015 Population 59,898 (Mildura-Wentworth); 31,298 (Mildura) (Mildura Development Commission, 2014) Median Age 39 (ABS, 2011)		
Description	Theatre and regional art gallery with sculpture park and licensed café and heritage listed homestead. Total floor area is unknown.		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Theatre with proscenium arch, dressing rooms and backstage facilities, rehearsal studio, full theatrical audio, lighting and projection.	444 permanent tiered seating.	Cultural events, conferences, forums, recitals, graduations, performances.
	Foyer and Surrounds 9m x 11m Flexible space that can be set up per needs. Theatrical audio and lighting, staging, blackout curtaining, portable bar, podium. Located on ground floor with access to licensed café/ bar and amenities. Connects theatre and gallery.	80-90 cabaret style seating 100-120 theatre style seating 100-200 standing cocktail style	Cabaret events, intimate performances, cocktail parties, business seminars and workshops, launches.
Meeting Rooms	Rehearsal Studio 7.3m x 12.3x plus amenities. Directly connected to the theatre. Equipped with kitchenette and amenities. No disabled access.	20-30 boardroom style 50-70 theatre style 80-100 standing	Workshops, meetings, rehearsals, auditions and training sessions.
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	2012 (most recent development which was for the theatre component)	\$8.1 million	Council: \$2.2 million State Govt: \$3.2 million Fed Govt: \$2 million No private sector funding.
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl depreciation)
	67,000 theatre only. With gallery included (all same entrance) up to 80, 000 to 90,000.	One of the biggest municipalities in Victoria. People travel up to 2.5 hours to an event. Nearest performing arts centres is 2.5 to 3 hours away.	Estimate \$1.5 to \$2 million, however this also includes the gallery and historical homestead. All programming is covered by Creative Victoria funding. Council funds cover staffing and asset management and maintenance.
Events	Drama, comedy, music, physical theatre, dance, children's theatre, conferences, master classes, workshops, school productions, ceremonies. Frequency of events depends on the time of the year. Averages 2-3 events per week. Part of the touring circuit for commercial events.		
Economic Impact	Not recently. A review of the Master Plan and Business Plan is due and this will include some economic analysis.		
APACA Economic Activity Report	Population serviced: 51,373 Performance spaces: 2 Distance from Capital City: 400km Total Capacity: 544 Annual Turnover: \$1.5M Annual Attendance: 67,300		



GLADSTONE ENTERTAINMENT CONVENTION CENTRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Gladstone Regional Council (Qld) 2015 Population 67,464 (REMPAN, Gladstone Community Profile) Median Age 35 (ABS, 2011)		
Description	New multi-purpose convention centre that has recently undergone expansion and multi-million-dollar redevelopment.		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Theatre Tiered seating, state of the art audio, lighting and communications infrastructure, dressing rooms, showers and toilets, green room, rehearsal rooms available.	Permanent tiered seating for 674 people	Conferences, speakers, presentations, concerts, theatre performances.
	Event Halls Versatile space that can be configured as one hall x 850m ² or individual halls of 500m ² down to 180m ² . Ideal for large-scale events. Operable walls to suit individual needs. Fully equipped removable stage and audio equipment.	Hall A 1800 (cocktail) 900 (theatre) 500 (cabaret) Halls B, C, D & E range from: 150 to 360 (cocktail) 120 to 270 (theatre) 60 to 170 (cabaret)	Gala dinners, trade shows, expos, conferences.
	Foyer and Piazza Area Dedicated reception area with bar, outdoor area and adjacent to Lightbox Espresso and wine Bar.	400 (cocktail) 100 (cabaret)	Cocktail parties
Meeting Rooms	Conference rooms Suitable for small to medium sized events. Can be divided into three, two or one large space. Multi-functional rooms with full business facilities and modern audio, visual and communications technology.	Conference Room A (175m ²) 150 (cocktail) 100 (theatre) 70 (u-shape) 80 (cabaret) Rooms 1, 2 & 3 are 55m ² , 75m ² and 175m ² and range from: 30-60 (cocktail) 15-50 (theatre) 14-30 (u-shape) 20-40 (cabaret)	Meetings, seminars, small conferences.
Construction & Funding	Construction Date Reopened January 2014	Capital Cost \$18M (redevelopment convention centre around an existing theatre). Current value is \$33 million.	Funding Combination of local government and Ports Corporation who had an interest in terms of extra car parking and office space.
Operation	Visitation per Annum 40,000 to 45,000 (includes community engagement activities such as markets, street parties, free concerts etc. Theatre ticket sales are around \$27,000.	Catchment & Accessibility Immediate region - travel up to 1.5 hours maximum.	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl. depreciation) \$1.7 million + draw on a CSO from Council of \$779,000 to subsidise the public carpark so that it remains a fee carpark) and to run public program activities (lots of community engagement activities).
Events	Concerts, festivals, musical theatre, performances, conferences, expos, markets. Take regional tours when possible. Approximately 45-50 theatre performances per year. Combination of commercial tourers, in- house programs, purchased programs. Subsidise local community groups, dance schools, schools etc. to use the centre.		
Economic Impact	No information available.		



GLADSTONE ENTERTAINMENT CONVENTION CENTRE

**APACA Economic
Activity Report**

Population serviced: 67,464
Performance spaces: 2
Distance from Capital City: 518km
Total Capacity: 1,675
Annual Turnover: Not provided
Annual Attendance: Not provided



ORANGE CIVIC THEATRE			
LGA & LGA Population	Orange City Council (NSW) 2015 Population 41,809 (profileID) Median Age 36		
Description	Purpose built performing arts centre with main auditorium, green room, kitchen, backstage, laundry, production desk, dressing rooms. Council also has a Flat Floor Town Hall with an 800 seat capacity, however the Civic Centre is the main performing arts venue.		
Exhibition Area	Room/ Space	Capacity	Uses
	Auditorium with proscenium arch. Stage with sprung hardwood floor, orchestra lift/ pit, lighting, stage lighting, audio visual, audio.	Raked continental seating for 518.	Theatre, concerts, performing arts, conferences, seminars.
Meeting Rooms	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction & Funding	Construction Date	Capital Cost	Funding
	1976 with upgrade of seating and carpet in 2008. Ongoing upgrades to sound, lighting and fire management requirements.	\$6m	100% Council funded
Operation	Visitation per Annum	Catchment & Accessibility	Net Operating Cost to Council (excl depreciation)
	45,000	Generally up to 1 hour travel time. Dubbo theatre is 1.5 hours away and Bathurst is 40 minutes away. Neither have a great impact on the Orange theatre. Conversely it ensures more choice and allows touring events to schedule a “clean run”. Generally the theatres program differently and service slightly different markets that complement each other.	Approx. \$1.2M , however varies.
Events	Major conferences and meetings occur once or twice a year. Multiple weekly events - local, national and international touring products, concerts, theatre, drama etc. and rehearsals. Member of Australian Performing Arts Centres Association and NSW/ ACT performing arts networks that assist in sourcing state and national funding and touring providers.		
Economic Impact	An economic audit was done from a tourism perspective on Orange, Bathurst and Dubbo.		
APACA Economic Activity Report	Population serviced: 100,000 Performance spaces: 1 Distance from Capital City: 255km Total Capacity: 502 Annual Turnover: \$2.1M Annual Attendance: 44,990		



6.2 2015 APACA Economic Activity Report¹⁷

The Australian Performing Arts Centres Association (APACA) is the peak body for performing arts centres in Australia. APACA conducts an Economic Activity Survey every two years to measure the extent of operations and economic activity of member performing arts centres across Australia.

Key points from the report that are pertinent to planning for an art/ cultural facility in Batemans Bay are summarised below.

6.2.1 Venue Capacity & Spaces

Of the 83 centres represented in the survey, 74% have either one or two performance spaces, while 40% have only one performance space. Only 12% have four or more spaces.

Venues with one performance space and venues with three performance spaces achieved the highest average occupancy rate (59% each).

Table 5 below shows that 38.5% of performing arts centres surveyed had a total seating capacity of over 1,000. This is the total combined seating capacity of all performance spaces. Almost two thirds (58%) comprised venues with total capacities of between 251 and 1,000.

Table 5: Venue Capacity

	UP TO 250	251 - 500	501 - 750	751 - 1,000	OVER 1,000
Number of Centres	3	17	17	14	32
Percentage	3.6%	20.5%	20.5%	16.9%	38.5%

6.2.2 Visitation

Average visitation, based on the above capacities are detailed in Table 6. Note, calculations were undertaken by Otium Planning Group using the figures provided in the APACA report and were based only on those centres that provided data.

Table 6: Average Visitation by Venue Capacity

	UP TO 250	251 - 500	501 - 750	751 - 1,000	OVER 1,000
Average Visitation	Not recorded	25,135	67,653	98,637	Not recorded

6.2.3 Ownership & Management

Overall, 78% of respondent centres are owned by Local Government, with 66.3% of these being managed directly by the LGA. In NSW, most (86%) centres are managed by local government, while 9% are managed by an association or company limited by guarantee, and 4.5% are managed by a statutory authority.

6.2.4 Financial

Government subsidy represents approximately one third of all income (34%) with Local Government being the most significant government contributor (79%).

Financial overviews categorise the venues by annual turnover and show the total income, expenditure and the net result for each category. In the category: 'up to 1 million in annual turnover', eight venues were included. Each of these operated in a regional area servicing communities with an average population of 85,000 or less.

¹⁷ Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, Economic Activity Report, 2016. Prepared by Ruth Hodgman/ Visual Focus



The results indicate that:

- Total income for these 8 venues was \$5,630,514. Of this, 52% was earned income, 48% was federal, state or local government funding and only 0.13% was private support.
- Total expenditure amounted to \$6,092,800.
- A total net loss was calculated of \$462,286, which across the eight venues averages out to \$57,686. If government sources of income are excluded, the average deficit per facility extends to \$395,616.
- The largest expense was labour (45.33%). This was also the case for all venues with labour accounting for 41.3% of all costs.
- Turnover was found to maximise for venues with three performances spaces.

6.2.5 Activities

In NSW there were 12,100 total activities in performing arts centres. Of these, 10,618 were performances and were attended by approximately 1.4 million people.

12% of events in NSW centres were non-arts events, compared with 33% nation-wide. This suggests the importance of performing arts venues as a community resource fulfilling a variety of needs not necessarily related to arts.

Community events (i.e. activities produced by amateur performance groups, dance and drama school concerts, etc.) accounted for 38% of total activities in NSW and 52.2% nationally. The remaining 62% in NSW were commercial activities and commercial performances.

The average utilisation rate for all performance spaces was 59%.

6.2.6 Catchment

The effect of a venue's distance from a capital city on turnover was calculated. The results showed that there was no discernible relationship between turnover and distance from the nearest capital city.

However, when excluding venues 1,000 or more kilometres from a capital city and those within 10km from a capital city, those within 41 to 150 kilometres of a capital city were clearly generating more turnover (\$2.97M) than those 11-40km (\$1.88M) and more than 151-350km (\$1.46M).

6.2.7 Additional Key Points

Three additional points reflected in the report are particularly relevant to planning for an art/ cultural facility in Batemans Bay:

- Venues continue to be important community resources, with high levels of subsidised community and non-arts related activity undertaken within these facilities.
- Playing Australia alongside each State's touring funding programs is essential in the activation of national touring particularly for venues located in regional and remote communities.
- Performing arts venues generate artistic, social and economic benefits for communities.



7. Preferred Arts/ Cultural Facility Mix

Based on the findings of the background research, consultation and benchmarking, this section of the report outlines the suggested purpose, design intent and facility mix elements for an arts/ cultural facility located in the Mackay Park Precinct.

7.1 Objective

The purpose of the facility would be to serve as a hub for visual arts, performing arts, music and other events/ exhibitions, visitor information, and day to day community activities for Batemans Bay and the wider Shire.

7.2 Design Overview

The overall design intent would be as follows:

- A boutique multi-use community hub that maximises flexibility of use of internal spaces. It would feature robust, functional materials with an attractive frontage to the highway.
- Design would be reflective of the environmental and coastal character of Batemans Bay.
- The functions of the existing Visitor Centre and Batemans Bay Community Centre would be incorporated into the facility.
- The building would be co-located with the upgraded Aquatic Centre with a shared foyer/ reception/ merchandising/ food and beverage area for aquatic/ arts/ Visitor Information functions which enables economies of scale to be maximised from a capital and operating cost perspective.
- The shared entry point will provide a welcoming entry area that allows users to relax and socialise before entering the various activity areas.
- Electronic member entry systems for aquatic centre patrons would need to be adopted to reduce overcrowding at reception.
- Environmentally sustainable design principles would be a pre-requisite.
- Building orientation and design would enable the facility to service outdoor events on the adjacent playing fields.
- The building would have connectivity to the CBD with walk/ cycle path access circuit around the entire precinct
- Public art and Indigenous art would be incorporated into the design of the facility.
- Excluding shared areas servicing Aquatic, Visitor Information and Arts/ Cultural areas (eg entry foyer, offices, food and beverage - see below) the floor area of the building would be approximately 1,100m² - 1,200m². Shared areas could comprise approximately 600m².

7.3 Design Elements

1. Main Auditorium

- Flat floor main auditorium with retractable seating for up to 500. While substantially less seating may satisfy many uses, the capacity to ramp up to 500 seats will enable touring shows or larger events to be accommodated.¹⁸
- Flexible stage/ grid
- Backstage/ wings/ dressing rooms
- Contemporary sound and lighting

¹⁸ Floor area required to accommodate 500 retracted seats in storage mode is approx. 100m²



- Good acoustics
 - Presentation technology/ screen
 - When seating is not in use, floor space would be utilised for a range of exhibitions, displays, meetings or community activities currently provided for in the main hall area of the Community Centre.
2. Support Spaces
- ‘Wet’ arts workshop/ classroom space with washable floor area
 - Large meeting room with operable walls
 - Small meeting room
 - Soundproofed, versatile dance/ rehearsal studio space with sprung timber floor
 - Kitchen
 - Music/ recording studio
3. Visitor Information Centre
- Soundproofed small theatre to showcase the region
 - Community gallery designed to accommodate moveable displays and wall space for visual arts.
4. Ancillary Spaces
- Toilets
 - Loading bay
 - Storage areas
5. Shared Areas
- Large open space foyer area with reception desk to cater for Aquatic, Arts/ Cultural and Visitor Information centre
 - Administration offices
 - Reception area linked to administration offices and food and beverage areas.
 - Food and beverage area servicing both arts/ cultural centre and aquatic centre patrons
6. Parking
- Car parking
 - Long vehicle parking in close proximity to main entry



8. Impacts of an Arts/ Cultural Facility

This section undertakes a brief evaluation of the potential impact of an arts/ cultural facility on Council operations, on the general level of business activity within Batemans Bay, and on other arts and cultural facilities. This is a high-level assessment that is intended to illustrate key issues and opportunities.

This section addresses the following topics:

- Potential net operating cost
- The size and structure of the Batemans Bay economy, including the structure of employment and economic output;
- The existing state of tourist activity, including the number and origin of visitors, tourist expenditures, and accommodation;
- The impact of seasonality on business activity and visitor accommodation in Batemans Bay
- Potential opportunities arising from development of a new arts and cultural complex, and
- An overview of potential implications for existing arts/ cultural facilities

8.1 Operating Cost

The need for the development of an arts/ cultural facility in Batemans Bay has been identified for some time. However, from previous studies undertaken for Council, benchmarking of arts/ cultural centres in regional areas with shire-wide populations between 33,000 and 60,000, and review of APACA performance data¹⁹, an average operating deficit in the order of \$625,000 per annum could be expected. The development of a Business Case for the development of aquatic and arts/ cultural facilities at the Mackay Park Precinct will analyse projected operating deficits.

8.2 Existing Business Activity and Employment in Batemans Bay

In order to understand existing business activity in Batemans Bay, we draw upon a May 2016 report on the drivers of economic growth in Eurobodalla Shire prepared by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR, 2016), as well as supplementary information as needed. The data in this report relates to the entire Eurobodalla Shire, rather than Batemans Bay alone. However, it is likely to provide a good indication of local trends given that the Batemans Bay catchment area accounts for just under half (18,054) of the estimated 2016 population of the shire (37,701) (refer **Error! Reference source not found.**, p**Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

¹⁹ Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, Economic Activity Report, 2016. Prepared by Ruth Hodgman/ Visual Focus



Table 7 below summarises NIEIR's estimates and forecasts of key economic indicators for Eurobodalla. From 1995 to 2015, Eurobodalla's gross regional product (GRP) increased at an average rate of 1.4% per annum. Employment in the Shire increased at an average rate of 1.1% per annum, resulting in rising living standards (measured in terms of GRP per worker). The share of Shire residents who were employed held constant at around 34-35% over this time period. This is low relative to the national average, reflecting the Shire's high proportion of retirees.

Broadly speaking, NIEIR expects these trends to continue, with ongoing increases in employment and GRP. In the future, the share of Shire residents who are employed is expected to fall slightly, reflecting an aging population.



Table 7: Key economic indicators and forecasts for Eurobodalla (NIEIR, 2016)

Year	ESTIMATES					FORECASTS			
	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Shire gross regional product (2013 \$m) ²⁰	777	900	1,023	1,004	1,031	817	1,031	1,288	1,562
Shire employment ²¹	9,839	10,965	12,458	12,966	12,227	13,057	14,040	14,955	15,738
Shire population	29,667	32,730	35,536	36,677	37,740	40,298	43,676	47,157	50,382
Gross regional product (2013 \$m) ²²	990	1,126	1,361	1,342	1,365	1,236	1,503	1,838	2,194
Employment of Shire residents	10,182	11,329	13,120	13,644	13,265	14,123	15,145	16,015	16,854

In 2015, Eurobodalla’s economy was heavily weighted towards consumer-facing service industries, including:

- Retail (15.5% of employment and 9.2% of GRP)
- Health (15.1% of employment and 12.0% of GRP)
- Construction (11.9% of employment and 10.1% of GRP); and
- Accommodation/ Food (11.4% of employment and 9.1% of GRP).

This reflects Eurobodalla’s focus as a tourism and retirement destination, and the resulting demands for retail, accommodation, housing, and health services. Tourism plays a large role in supporting economic activity in Eurobodalla. According to a report by Tourism Strategy Development Services (2016), in 2015/16 approximately 3,300 casual, part-time, and full-time jobs in Eurobodalla were directly supported by tourism, as well as a further 1,600 jobs that were indirectly supported by the flow-on effects of tourism expenditure on the local economy.²³ In other words, roughly 27% of employment in Eurobodalla was directly related to tourism.

However, some tourism-related sectors are relatively small. In particular, arts and cultural services accounted for a low share of the Shire’s economy - around 1.6% of employment and 2.3% of GRP. NIEIR notes that arts and cultural services may represent an opportunity to improve economic performance “...given relative proximity and links to Canberra and the region’s capacity for lifestyle attraction”. More generally, a key to achieving higher value from tourism will be “...attracting more visitors from interstate and overseas and developing appropriate leisure opportunities for higher spending visitors” by offering unique experiences that draw upon Eurobodalla’s natural beauty.

8.3 The Performance of the Tourism Sector

In order to understand the performance of tourism in Batemans Bay, we draw upon several recent reports. Once again, the data in this report relates to the entire Eurobodalla Shire, rather than Batemans Bay alone:

- A December 2016 Eurobodalla Tourism Monitor prepared by Destination Research
- A November 2016 report on tourism volumes and expenditures in Eurobodalla prepared by Tourism Strategy Development Services (TSDS, 2016).

The following table, adapted from Destination Research (2016), summarises total tourist volumes to Eurobodalla over the last five financial years. In the average year over this period, there have been 530,000 domestic day visitors, 747,000 domestic overnight visitors, and 25,000 overseas visitors.

²⁰ NIEIR’s estimates of the gross regional product generated by people working in the Eurobodalla Shire area, regardless of where they live.

²¹ NIEIR’s estimates of the total number of people employed in Eurobodalla Shire, some of whom live outside the Shire.

²² NIEIR’s estimate of the gross regional population generated by people living in the Shire, regardless of whether they work in another area.

²³ Many of these jobs are part-time or casual. Accounting for this, the equivalent of 2,480 full-time jobs were directly supported by tourism, as well as 1,280 jobs that were indirectly supported.



There was an annual average of 2.8 million annual guest nights in the Shire, predominantly from domestic overnight visitors. In other words, Eurobodalla’s tourist economy is heavily oriented towards domestic tourism. In terms of trends:

- The number of domestic day visitors has been volatile between years but rose significantly between 2011/ 12 and 2015/ 16
- The number of domestic overnight visitors rose 12% over this period; and
- The number of overseas visitors rose 21% over this period, from a lower base.

Table 8: Recent trends in tourist volumes in Eurobodalla Shire (Destination Research, 2016)

VISITOR CATEGORY	YEAR	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	5-YEAR AVERAGE
Domestic day visitors	Number (000s)	488	620	366	470	706	530
	Nights	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Domestic overnight visitors	Number (000s)	702	705	778	764	785	747
	Nights (000s)	2,547	2,684	2,875	2,950	2,719	2,755
International visitors	Number (000s)	24	21	26	25	29	25
	Nights	105	123	101	144	91	113
Total	Number (000s)	1,214	1,346	1,170	1,259	1,520	1,302
	Nights	2,652	2,807	2,976	3,094	2,810	2,868

Table 9 below presents information on average length of stay and tourist expenditures over this period. This shows that domestic overnight visitors account for the vast majority of total expenditures.²⁴ While overseas visitors tend to stay longer than domestic overnight visitors (4.5 days vs 3.7 days) they spend significantly less per night (\$81/night compared with \$147/night).

Table 9: Eurobodalla visitors’ length of stay and expenditures, 2011/ 12 to 2015/ 16 (Destination Research, 2016)

VISITOR CATEGORY	AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY	AVERAGE SPEND PER TRIP	AVERAGE SPEND PER NIGHT	ESTIMATED TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENDITURE (\$M)
Domestic day visitors	N/A	\$116	N/A	\$61
Domestic overnight visitors	3.7	\$445	\$147	\$332
International visitors	4.5	\$327	\$81	\$8

Table 10 below summarises the types of accommodation used by domestic overnight and international visitors to Eurobodalla. Key findings from this analysis are as follows:

- It is common for both domestic and international visitors to stay in private accommodation, mostly visiting friends and relatives (VFR). 28% of international visitors and 42% of domestic overnight visitors stayed in private residences. This in turn reflects the prevalence of holiday homes.
- Overseas visitors were more likely than domestic visitors to stay in hotels / resorts or in guest houses / B&Bs, but less likely to stay in rented houses / apartments.
- International visitors were also more likely to stay in non-commercial campgrounds

²⁴ These figures were calculated by multiplying average spend per visit against number of visitors. They may not reconcile exactly with estimates from other sources.



On the whole, this indicates that Batemans Bay has a range of accommodation options, all of which attract a reasonable level of demand. The availability of holiday homes may limit demand for paid accommodation.

Table 10: Types of accommodation used by visitors to Eurobodalla, 2011/12 to 2015/16 (Destination Research, 2016)

Accommodation type	DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT VISITORS		INTERNATIONAL VISITORS	
	Number (000s)	Share	Number (000s)	Share
Guest house / bed & breakfast	9	1%	1.1	4%
Rented house / apartment / flat	77	10%	1.2	5%
Caravan park / commercial campgrounds	165	22%	6.5	24%
Hotels / resorts	150	20%	7.7	29%
Non-commercial campgrounds	38	5%	2.7	10%
Private residence	81	11%	N/A	N/A
Private accommodation (visiting friends and relatives)	230	31%	7.4	28%
Total	750		26.6	

8.4 Impact of Seasonality on Businesses in Batemans Bay

The above analysis indicates that tourism, primarily from domestic sources, is an important driver of business activity in Batemans Bay. Tourist spending directly supports around 27% of overall employment in Eurobodalla, with further indirect ‘flow-on’ effects.

Tourism activity in Batemans Bay is highly seasonal, with peaks during the summer and troughs during the winter. In winter quarters, average occupancies are in the range of 32-40%, compared with occupancies in the range of 47-58% during summer quarters. This suggests that overnight tourist activity is roughly 50% higher in the summer months than in the winter. Domestic day visitors are likely to be more heavily weighted towards the summer months. Moreover, there is likely to be a ‘peak of the peak’ during school holidays, when many people tend to schedule holidays.

While quarterly economic data is not available at a sufficiently granular level to make a precise estimate, it is likely that seasonality in tourist arrivals poses challenges for the Batemans Bay economy. For instance, tourism-related businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and local attractions, may not be able to take on full-time staff due to varying levels of demand throughout the year.²⁵ This is reflected in the high share of Eurobodalla residents who work outside of the Shire - as shown in Table 7 (p36), a net total of 1,000 workers from Eurobodalla commute to jobs in other local government areas.

Seasonality is likely to contribute to low economic productivity in tourism-related sectors, as tourism operators may be unable to hire and train full-time staff, as well as reducing incentives to invest in better tourist facilities due to difficulty in earning a consistent return on fixed costs. Furthermore, limited availability of full-time work is likely to discourage people from living full-time in Batemans Bay and reinforce its position as a retirement and visitor location, rather than as a place that attracts working-age residents and young families. While there are also some benefits to seasonality, such as the ability for workers and ecosystems to recover during the off-peak season, these issues tend to reduce the ability of tourism to make a sustained positive contribution to host communities.

²⁵ See Lee et al (2008), *Seasonality in the tourism industry: Impacts and strategies* for a further discussion of this issue.



8.5 Potential Economic Opportunities from a new Arts/ Cultural Facility

The development of new arts and cultural facilities in Batemans Bay can make a positive economic contribution to the local community. There are three primary types of benefits that can, in principle, arise from developing new facilities:

1. First, these facilities could host events that attract new visitors who would not have otherwise visited Batemans Bay. This will lead to increased economic activity in the Batemans Bay area due to tourist expenditures.²⁶
2. Second, if these facilities attract tourists during off-peak seasons, they will increase low off-peak utilisation of tourism facilities and contribute to overcoming issues with a lack of full-time employment and low productivity identified above.
3. Third, these facilities are likely to benefit Batemans Bay residents by hosting new events or cultural programming. Many facility users are likely to be local to the area, and benefits to these users should not be discounted although they will not necessarily result in higher economic output.

In all three areas, the benefits of new arts and cultural facilities will depend upon the quality of the offering and the degree to which they diversify local arts and cultural offerings. If new facilities simply substitute for existing facilities, they are likely to have relatively limited economic benefits and limited benefits for Batemans Bay residents. Conversely, if new facilities diversify the local tourism offering by providing new programming that attracts visitors from different sources or during off-peak periods, they may result in significant benefits.

In principle, investing to develop Batemans Bay's arts and cultural services offering could be beneficial for tourism. NIEIR (2016) noted this sector as a potential area of opportunity for the Eurobodalla area, based on its relatively small contribution to the area's employment and economic activity in spite of the strong role that tourism plays in the local economy.

At this stage, it is not possible to analyse potential outcomes in detail. However, scenario-based analysis could be conducted using the data presented in this section. Scenarios could be specified that reflected:

- The scale of the facility and the types of events that it would seek to host
- The timing of these events - ie whether they take place during the peak or off-peak seasons
- The share of these events that would have otherwise been hosted at existing facilities; and
- Alternative assumptions about the number of tourists that may attend each event, and the share of these visitors who would otherwise not have visited Batemans Bay.

These scenarios could be used to estimate the resulting impacts on tourist expenditures, based on figures for average spend per tourist summarised in Table 9 (p37), accommodation occupancy during off-peak periods (adjusting for the fact that many visitors stay in private accommodation), and business activity and employment.²⁷

Some potential benefits, such as the benefits that local residents' derive from improved arts and cultural facilities, may be harder to estimate. Community support for the redevelopment of the Mackay Park Precinct suggests that local residents are likely to value improved facilities. However, the value that residents may ascribe to better facilities may be hard to determine in advance.

²⁶ However, we caution that these impacts will not necessarily represent a net gain for the Australian economy as a whole, as these visitors may have otherwise travelled elsewhere in Australia.

²⁷ Employment impacts could be estimated based on the current ratio of tourism-related employees to visitor expenditure. Visitors spend a total of around \$400 million per annum in Eurobodalla, and around 3,300 jobs are directly supported by tourism. This implies that \$120,000 in tourism expenditure is associated with one job. This is a high ratio, reflecting the fact that the local tourist industry purchases inputs from outside the region and hence only a share of tourism revenues will be retained to support local employment.



8.6 Impact on Arts/ Cultural Facilities

Existing arts/ cultural events are mostly conducted in ‘make do’ venues that are not purpose built for these activities or are unsuitable for other reasons. This limits the potential for the region to secure other events/ activities. The development of an arts centre in Batemans Bay was recommended as an immediate priority of the 2010 Situation Analysis Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Report and the draft 2016 Cultural Strategic Plan states that Eurobodalla is well situated to be part of regional touring circuits predominantly for national and international musicians but including theatre and gallery presentations.

No major impact on existing arts/ cultural facilities in the Shire would be expected if a new venue was developed.

Within the Batemans Bay catchment area, the only dedicated performing arts facility is the small Bay Playhouse, a 97 seat venue owned and run by not-for-profit group Bay Theatre Players. This facility is not hired out to other groups for performances.

Community halls, schools, Churches and surf clubs are used for exhibitions and performances. None of these facilities are purpose-built arts/ cultural facilities and impacts would be minimal.

The Batemans Bay Soldiers Club has a main auditorium with stage capable of seating up to 500. The venue is considered by management to be unsuitable for performing arts activities due to the time required for bump in/ bump out and disruption to other activities. Moreover, arts/ cultural groups do not like using licensed gaming clubs to stage family oriented events.

Commercial music concerts are not generally pursued by the Soldiers Club. The promoters of these events typically require a guaranteed ‘gate’ which, when coupled with reduced bar proceeds and disruption to normal patron activity, makes them a marginal proposition. The Soldiers Club is used by a wide range of community groups for meetings, functions, displays etc (mostly free of charge). The club would not be disadvantaged if these activities were to relocate to an Arts/ Cultural facility.

The Coachhouse Marina Resort in Batemans Bay currently hosts an annual Writers Festival which is understood to attract about 200 participants. This event could potentially be lost to this venue if tourist accommodation is available at the Mackay Park Precinct. Boutique music events at hotels would not be expected to be impacted as these activities are best suited to that environment.

There are numerous small, privately owned art gallery spaces in the Shire. The gallery space would be intended to showcase the work of local artists and a small gallery space already exists at the Visitor Information Centre.

No comment on the potential impact on existing businesses of a potential arts/ cultural facility hosting conferences, functions, weddings etc is made in this report other than to say, while it is understood there is potential for regional scale conferences, few conferences of 300 or more are held in Batemans Bay due to the difficulty of accommodating more than 100 at a venue. It is also understood that the wedding market in Batemans Bay is understood to be quite competitive.



9. Warranty and Disclaimer

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied its own experience to the task, we have relied upon information supplied by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.