



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



Tuesday 4 April 2017

An Executive Summary has been prepared and is attached to keep you updated on the future of the Whitehorse Centre. Please take the time to read this summary with its updated information on the following two options Council is considering for the future of this valued community facility:

- Option A (new centre) – the redevelopment of the centre based upon the findings of the Whitehorse Centre Business Case
- Option B (existing centre) - the refurbishment of the existing centre for a further 8-10 years before Council considers further financial investment or its closure. New information on what will be addressed and what is unable to be addressed with this option is identified in the attached summary document.

Council will consider the future of the centre as part of a two stage approval process:

Stage One:

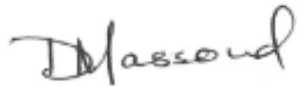
A Special Council Meeting will be held on Monday 10 April 2017 at 8.30pm in the Council Chamber located at the Whitehorse Civic Centre, 379-397 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading. A Report on the Whitehorse Centre for consideration by Council for this Meeting will be listed on Council's website by close of business Wednesday 5 April 2017 www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/Agendas-Minutes.html

Stage Two:

Council's Resolution once determined on Monday 10 April 2017 will be referred as a budget allocation for works to be undertaken and this will be part of Council's 2017/18 draft budget which is subject to the required statutory consultation period. Further information regarding Council's budget process can be found on Council's website www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au from 1 May 2017.

If you have further enquiries please contact the Arts & Recreation Development Department Administration on 9262 6371 or email ard.admin@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D Massoud', with a stylized, cursive script.

CR DENISE MASSOUD
MAYOR



Executive Summary - Whitehorse Centre

10 April 2017 Council Report

Whitehorse Centre – a community facility

The Whitehorse Centre is a community based facility serving the needs of its local community and beyond.

In the 2015/16 financial year:

- 77% of all centre bookings were made by City of Whitehorse clients
- 54% of theatre tickets were issued to Whitehorse residents showing strong local support for this facility
- 73.6% of bookings were community based not for profit organisations. For example Nova Music Theatre, Babirra Music Theatre, City of Whitehorse Band, Whitehorse Showtime
- 19.5% of bookings are for Whitehorse based programs. For example Parkland Advisory Forum, Women's Forum, Midweek Matinee Program, Professional Theatre, Music and Children's Program
- 6.9% of bookings were Commercial/Corporate organisations. For example Yarra Valley Water



Whitehorse Centre Project Consultation

Consultation began in 2010 and since then there has been four stages of community consultation:

- 2010 - SGL Whitehorse Centre Feasibility Study
- 2013 - Williams Ross Business Case
- 2015 - Williams Ross Business Case Community Consultation
- 2016 – JWS Research Findings

An accumulative total of this consultation has delivered findings from:

Independent telephone survey	1,100 responses
Online/hardcopy surveys	2,132 responses
Focus group sessions	24 sessions*
Stakeholder interviews	65 interviews
Written submissions	183 submissions
Total	3,480 individual submissions *Multiple participants in 24 focus groups sessions

2017/2018 Budget Update – Long Term Financial Outlook

Council provides the following update on the funding model for Option A and Option B:

- Council will not require any loan to undertake these works
- Council plans to undertake this project within the rates cap level as set by the Minister for Local Government
- Council would seek Federal and State Government capital support for this project

Funding Strategy	Option A - Redevelopment		Option B - Refurbishment
	2015/16 Budget	2017/18 Update	2017/18
Accumulated surplus	\$20m	\$30m	\$13.9m
Reserves	\$24m	\$48m	
Loans	\$34m	Nil	
Total	\$78m	\$78m	\$13.9m

Future Whitehorse Centre Options

After extensive community consultation, market research and business planning Council is considering two options for the future of the Whitehorse Centre:

Option A – Redevelopment (new centre)	Option B – Refurbishment (existing centre)
This option would estimate a building life in excess of 50+ years. Key components include an increase in the size and capacity of the foyer, main theatre, function room, rehearsal room	This option will extend the centre's life by 8-10 years after this point further capital investment or closure would be considered
An additional meeting room and studio theatre is included in response to market research findings	It will address some technical, access and infrastructure issues at an estimated cost of \$8.1 million. However, due to compliance requirements it will reduce auditorium seating by 26 seats and the function room size, it will not resolve all disability access and building code issues
A car park to service the centre, library, walker park and civic building	There would be no additional parking but there would be an upgrade to the paths, lighting, signage, loading dock and drop-off service for the centre
Building cost:\$60.4 million Deck car park cost:\$10.96 million / On-grade: \$3.5m Project costs: \$6.64 million	Building cost:\$8.1 million Car park cost:\$3.9 million Project costs: \$1.9 million
This redevelopment will require the centre to close for 24 months for works to be undertaken	This refurbishment will require the centre to close for 12 months for works to be undertaken

Facility Component Comparison Table

Venues / Hireable Spaces	Existing Centre	Option B Refurbishment	Option A Redevelopment
Main Foyer	300 people	300 people + 80-100 when Studio Room available – limited availability and operational cost implications	600 people
Proscenium Theatre	408 seats small/medium productions only	382 saleable seats including 8 wheelchair & carer positions small/medium productions only	600 seats including required wheelchair & carer positions almost all relevant shows
Studio Theatre	—	—	200 seat capacity variable format – tiered seats, flat-floor sub-divides into 2 studio/function rooms
Sound Shell Stage	Concert stage Rehearsal/dance studio	Concert stage Rehearsal/dance studio	Concert stage Rehearsal/dance studio
Meeting Room	—	—	Up to 20 people video-conferencing
Function Room	180 dining (warming kitchen – predominantly cooked off-site) 350 standing sub-divisible x2	180 dining (warming kitchen – predominantly cooked off-site) 350 standing sub-divisible x2	250 dinner-dance * 300 banquet * 600 standing event sub-divisible x3 or x4 * Full service kitchen
Rehearsal Room	Small rehearsal/dance studio does not match stage size 30 – class 130 – standing	Small rehearsal/dance studio does not match stage size 30 – class 130 – standing	Large, divisible rehearsal/dance studio matching theatre stage size sub-divisible x2

Capital Comparison Table

	Facility OPTION A	Facility OPTION A	Facility OPTION B
	<u>Multi-deck</u> car park	<u>Existing on-grade</u> car parking	<u>Existing on-grade</u> car parking
Building Works	\$60.40m	\$60.40m	\$8.1m
Car Park and Precinct works	\$10.96m	\$3.5m	\$3.9m Incl. loading dock and patron drop-off
Council Project Management and Contingency costs	\$6.64m	\$6.64m	\$1.9m
Total Project Costs	\$78m	\$70.54m	\$13.9m
Expected Building Life	50+years	50+ years	8-10 years

Whitehorse Centre — what's the problem?

Council identified that the future of the existing Whitehorse Centre was uncertain:

- Built in the 1980s it is over 30 years old and nearing the end of its working life
- It will become increasingly expensive to maintain
- Building services need to be entirely replaced - it is likely to have more frequent, unpredictable building and equipment failures
- There are areas of the centre that do not meet expected user access requirements
- Many spaces are functionally compromised and several important support spaces are missing
- The building is starting to limit community event and activity opportunities
- Research into future needs shows that it requires substantial upgrade and enlargement to serve the Whitehorse community into the future

The following slides provide comparisons of the exiting centre to other facilities:

Existing Conditions

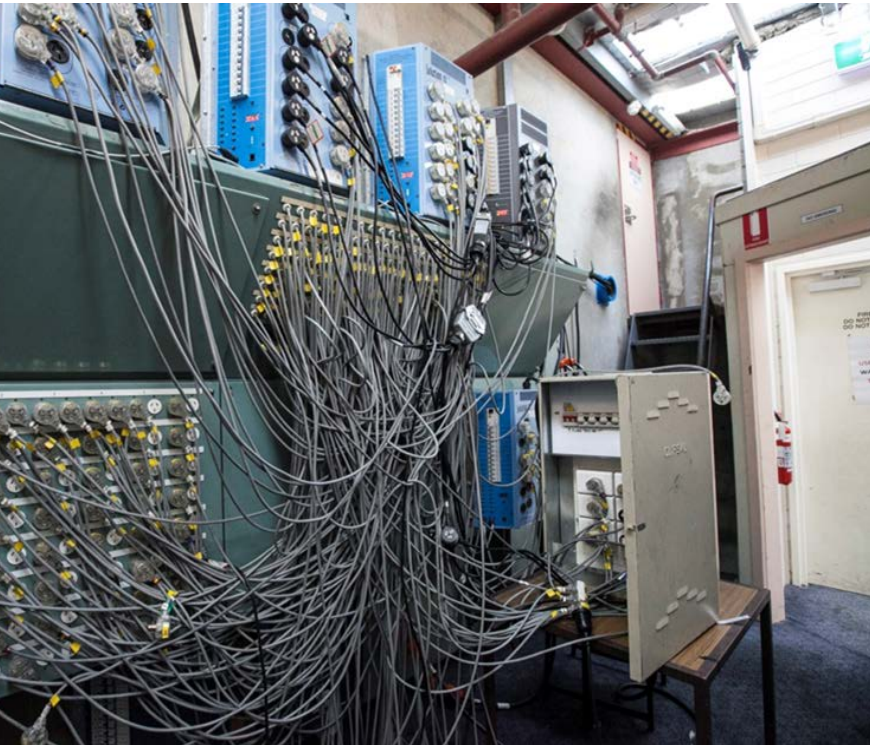


Whitehorse Centre - lighting work area



Drum Theatre Dandenong - lighting work area

Existing Conditions



Whitehorse Centre – lighting rack



Gold Coast Arts Centre— lighting rack

Existing Conditions



Whitehorse Centre – upstairs dressing room



Carriageworks NSW dressing room

Option A – Redevelopment – Concept Design



This is a concept design only of what a redeveloped facility may look like

Key Findings about the Whitehorse Centre

- The Centre is well regarded by hirers and the arts industry
- The current usage of the centre is high, in particular Thursday to Saturday in the latter part of the year
- Whitehorse Centre has close to 10% higher usage than the national average of similar theatres*
- Due to the current configuration and the need to share a small foyer space the centre is unable to accommodate multiple simultaneous events
- Foyer space is critical to patron experience and operating success

* Australian Performing Arts Centres Association, Economic Activity Report 2013

Key Findings: Recommended Hireable Spaces

Venues / Hireable Spaces	Existing Centre	Proposed Centre
Main Foyer	300 people	600 people
Proscenium Theatre	408 seats small/medium productions only	600 seats almost all relevant shows
Studio Theatre	—	200 seat capacity variable format – tiered seats, flat-floor sub-divides into 2 studio/function rooms
Sound Shell Stage	Concert stage Rehearsal/dance studio	Concert stage Rehearsal/dance studio
Meeting Room	—	Up to 20 people video-conferencing
Function Room	180 dining 350 standing sub-divisible x2	250 dinner-dance 300 banquet 600 standing event sub-divisible x3 or 4
Rehearsal Room	Small rehearsal/dance studio does not match stage size 30 – class 130 – standing	Large, divisible rehearsal/dance studio matching theatre stage size sub-divisible x2

Benefits of Redevelopment (new centre)

Venues / Hireable Spaces	Proposed Centre enables:
Main Foyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – pre-show hospitality, enhancing function experience / quality / multi-use – art exhibitions – ‘cocktail’ functions, civic events – in-foyer performances, recitals
Larger Proscenium Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – more economic for local groups that can attract larger audiences – be viable for commercial presenters who currently don’t hire the centre
Multi-purpose Studio Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lower cost option for community groups, performers – youth and children’s events – attract and build new audiences – creative development programs – attract and build new audiences – rehearsals /dance classes – increased capacity – functions – increased capacity and type of event
Function Room/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – multiple simultaneous events – larger function rooms serving hirers who currently don’t fit – much more attractive room meeting current community expectations
Multiple concurrent events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – more intensive activity & multi-use spaces – conference capability up to 600 people using all rooms
Sound Shell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – improved facilities would assist the valued festival season of 43,000 people

Plan One: Deck Car Park – cost \$10.96million



USE OF EXISTING COUNCIL CAR PARKING + DECK CAR PARK (553 SPACES)

Plan 2 :On-grade car parking

- An alternate plan to the deck car park is an on-grade plan.
- Utilising the existing precinct parking modifications must be made to:
 - Pedestrian paths leading to the centre
 - Improved lighting and signage on site
 - Traffic management modifications for patron drop-off/collection and loading dock
 - Flood mitigation measures to address current flooding issues
 - User education to advise of additional car parking capacity
 - Estimated cost \$3.5 million

On-Grade Car Parking - cost \$3.5 million



FULL USE OF EXISTING CAR PARKING (573 SPACES)

Option B - Refurbishment



Option B Refurbishment – issues addressed / not addressed

Option B is a refurbishment serving 8-10 year. After this point further capital investment or closure would be required. Option B will address some centre issues, however it will decrease venue capacity and will not resolve all disability access and building code issues.

This refurbishment will require the centre to close for 12 months for works to be undertaken.

Spaces	Option B – Refurbishment	
	Issues addressed	Issues not addressed
Main Foyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ New entry and Box Office queuing▪ Box Office and Admin office expansion to relieve some OH&S issues▪ New fixtures, counters and presentation for bar▪ Disability access upgrade to Studio Room external ramp entry▪ Opening up the Studio Room for Foyer expansion by operable wall when not in use by ballet school / function client	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No change to current limits on simultaneous events occurring▪ No foyer capacity increase, except when the Studio Room can be used in conjunction▪ Using Studio Room as Foyer will incur additional operating costs to prepare it / pack-down▪ Studio Room poor presentation as foyer space▪ Administration facilities remain undersized
Throughout building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Male and female toilets fully refurbished▪ Refurbish all internal finishes – flooring, walls, ceilings throughout▪ New light fittings throughout – energy efficient and greater controls flexibility▪ New air-conditioning and communication services throughout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Facility still not fully compliant to disability access, OH&S codes and best practice functionality▪ Lack of aspect to parkland setting largely unchanged

Option B Refurbishment – issues addressed / not addressed

Spaces	Option B – Refurbishment	
	Issues addressed	Issues not addressed
Proscenium Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace theatre seats – <i>reduced capacity</i> ▪ Provide complying wheelchair seats (8+8) - <i>subject to non-compliance Dispensation</i> ▪ Disability lift access to the orchestra pit ▪ Provide Stage Door security and access ▪ Improved disability access to the stage and lower change rooms ▪ Upper dressing rooms security (children's supervision) and amenity upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seating capacity reduced by 26 to achieve wheelchair seating semi-compliance: choice of locations still not achieved ▪ No capacity improvement to attract commercial presenters who currently don't hire the centre ▪ No change to ramp gradient onto stage from auditorium (non-compliant) ▪ No upgrade to poor OH&S access & head room for technical walkways and lighting bridges
Pros Theatre Technical Upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Motorised lighting bars ▪ Fly gallery & fly tower OH&S upgrades ▪ Increased lighting equipment ▪ Replacement of dimmers, patch bays ▪ New sound system ▪ Data cabling, stage management, communications, video upgrades ▪ Loading Dock canopy & leveller ▪ Workshop storage mezzanine & racks ▪ New audio-visual equipment ▪ Sound Shell technical upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No change to stage size ▪ Minor increase in technical storage ▪ Missing backstage supports spaces not included, eg Stage entry sound locks, Green Room, Tech workshop, Principal Dressing Rooms, Orchestra Room, Laundry, Stage Door security position, remaining storage requirements

Option B Refurbishment – issues addressed / not addressed

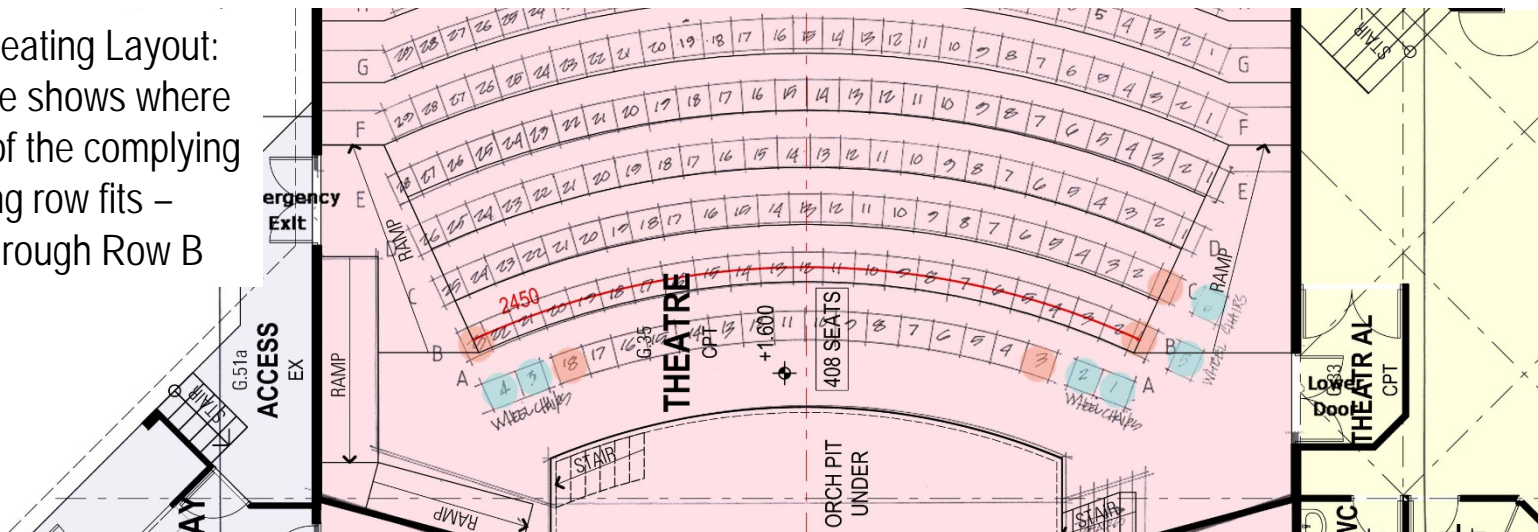
Spaces	Option B – Refurbishment	
	Issues addressed	Issues not addressed
Function Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement to room appearance – but area reduced from 232 to 227m² (5m²) due to access upgrades Potential natural daylight introduced New 'Distributed / Warming' kitchen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patron capacity reduced in some formats Still required to use as overflow of dressing rooms for large casts (lost usage opportunities) Not full on-site food preparation
Sound Shell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment/refurbishment of the faded mural to exterior of large panel doors New timber floor 	
Multi-purpose Studio Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not included

Option B Refurbishment – Auditorium seating reductions

The auditorium seating is original and requires replacement. To achieve 8 compliant seating positions + 8 carer seats it requires the loss of Row A and further seats in Row B (subject to detailed analysis - given the dimensional requirements for wheelchair seating it is highly unlikely that row A could be retained, and as row B would be substantially taken up with wheelchair positions it is unlikely that there could be a reasonable “part” row). Total seating capacity will reduce to **382** saleable seats for a code compliant situation – a loss of 26 seats.

Option B – Refurbishment	
Existing Auditorium Seating 408 saleable	Option B – Refurbished Seating Capacity 382 saleable
408 standard seats	382 standard seats
<u>6 wheelchair positions</u> (non-compliant)	<u>8 wheelchair positions</u>
414 total seats	390 total seats
- <u>6 carers</u> (complimentary seats, not sold)	- <u>8 carers</u> (complimentary seats, not sold)
408 seats available to sell	382 seats available to sell (-26)

Existing Seating Layout:
the red line shows where
the back of the complying
first seating row fits –
halfway through Row B



Option B Refurbishment – compliance upgrades

Spaces	Option B – Refurbishment	
	Issues addressed	Issues unresolvable – remaining non-compliance
Building and OH&S Regulations, Best Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nominal Occupancy 854: 760 patrons ▪ All new works would be code compliant ▪ New roofs insulation / energy efficiency ▪ Waterproofing & weatherproofing ▪ New building services plant, lighting, cabling ▪ Mechanical ventilation systems ▪ New seating flame & smoke indices ▪ Auditorium aisle lighting ▪ Loading Dock lift & canopy weather protection ▪ Exit Door hardware ▪ Signage ▪ Fire hydrant & hose reel ▪ Exit lighting replacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building structure not designed for earthquake loads ▪ Building not designed for energy efficiency eg walls, glazing, door & window seals ▪ Existing materials Early Fire Hazard compliance unknown ▪ Existing corridor & door widths remain non-compliant ▪ Smoke/thermal detection & occupant warning requires further investigation to determine compliance ▪ 1x male hand-basin shortfall on required fittings <p>Best practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administration facilities inadequate – eg no staff room ▪ Backstage facilities substantially under-sized for operation ▪ Storage inadequate affecting functionality, operational cost
Access Regulations / Universal Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessible entry via new airlock ▪ Studio Room north entry ▪ Stage, Backstage, Sound Shell access ▪ New accessible bathroom and dressing room ▪ Orchestra Pit lift access & exit upgrade ▪ Stairs accessibility upgrades ▪ Hearing augmentation systems to Theatre, Functions Rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Auditorium–Stage ramps non-compliant ▪ Wheelchair seating positions do not provide full choice of seating location ▪ Stage Door hallway widths & doors non-compliant ▪ Upper dressing rooms not accessible ▪ Fly tower, lighting bridges, technical access-ways ▪ Existing accessible toilets non-compliant but improved

Option B – On-grade car parking plan

- Utilising the existing precinct parking modifications must be made to:
 - Pedestrian paths leading to the centre
 - Improved lighting and signage on site
 - Traffic management modifications for patron drop-off/collection
 - Improve loading dock access to the centre – this will involve the removal of the sheds opposite the centre and relocation – additional cost not included in the building cost for Option A
 - Flood mitigation measures to address current flooding issues
 - User education to advise of additional car parking capacity
 - Estimated cost \$3.9 million

On-Grade Car Parking - cost \$3.9million



USE OF 250 CAR PARKING SPACES

The Whitehorse Centre will be considered by Council at a Special Council Meeting on Monday 10 April 2017 at 8.30pm in the Council Chamber

