

# Roleystone Theatre

## **Background**

In February 2018 the Roleystone Theatre was closed for safety reasons. The integrity of the building had deteriorated to a point where it could no longer be repaired and major structural work is now required in order for it to reopen for any purpose.

In summary;

- A 110sqm public hall was built in 1922 with funds raised by the Roleystone Progress Association
- Over ensuing decades the hall became home for what is now the Roleystone Theatre Group with extensions added to the building to what has become a 520sqm theatre. While not an ideal configuration, the theatre has been used by RTG over the past 85 years or so to present productions from small scale theatre to large scale musicals
- Significant community interest has been generated following the closure of the theatre with fairly unanimous support for the theatre to be retained
- A report was considered by Council's Community Services committee on 4/12/18 which outlined the history of the building, the activities on the Roleystone Theatre Group, the importance of the building to the history of the development of the area and options for Council to consider for the future. **(The report, including preliminary concept plans is attached)** Committee's recommendations are to be considered by the full Council meeting on 17/12/18 where a decision on next steps will be made. For convenience the recommendation of Committee which is detailed in the attached report is;

## **RECOMMEND**

**C37/12/18**

### **That Council:**

- 1. Commit to the reopening of the Roleystone Theatre for occupation and use;**
- 2. Proceed with finalising a design that reflects the current scale, noting:**
  - a) The main hall is to be repaired; and**
  - b) Flytower to be restored or replaced; and**
  - c) Other areas of the building to be rebuilt to similar sizes at current standards;**
- 3. Consider and seek funding sources in preparation for consideration as part of the 2019/20 budget;**
- 4. Consider user arrangements that support the Roleystone Theatre Group as a primary tenant but considers opportunities for others.**
- 5. Commission a heritage assessment and impact statement.**

**Moved Cr M Geary**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**(7/0)**

**Project detail (a description of the demolition of some areas, and building onto the hall etc).**

- The original 1922 hall is to remain and possibly the flytower, although it is likely the flytower will need to be replaced due to its condition. All other parts of the current building (the additions to the original hall) are to be demolished and replaced.
- The original 1922 hall is the most significant in terms of heritage with the remainder of the current building having some (in the case of the flytower) or no heritage value.
- A preliminary concept plan has been developed (attached) from which a refined plan will be finalised of a similar scale to the current building

**Total Project Cost:**

- Approximately \$3.8Million

**Federal Funding Sought:**

- \$3.8Million

**How many jobs will be created / supported during construction?**

- Based on the City's economic impact modelling analysis, which is informed by *economy i.d.* data, 11 jobs will be created/supported during the construction phase

**Can the project be split into sub-components/ stages? (if so, provide breakdown)**

- No – It would be far from ideal to split the construction. Additional costs would be incurred to demobilise and then mobilise contractors and there would be ongoing significant disruption to the activities presented at the theatre.

**When could project work commence?**

- Assuming funding can be secured, in the 2019/20 financial year

**What benefits will this have for the wider community.**

- An iconic building that has strong links with the history and development of the City of Armadale community will be retained
- An integral part of the character of the local community which attracts visitors and tourists to the area
- Ongoing support for community activities, in particular, community theatre. Some key points regarding Roleystone Theatre are;
  - RTG presents between 4 – 6 productions per year
  - RTG productions are very popular with around 15,000 attendances over the past 5 years
  - Community Theatre is a significant opportunity for performers, artistic staff (eg, directors, lighting designers etc) and technical personnel to gain invaluable experience prior to embarking on professional careers in the arts
  - The theatre supports significant volunteering opportunities through the administration and presentation of its activities
  - The building can be used for many other community and social activities

**Risk assessment (funding options, timelines or community opposition)**

- Major risks associated with the project are;
  - Financial risk – currently no funds are available for the project and given the City's current reliance on external grants for other major projects, there is a low probability of significant external funds from other sources. This is the most significant risk to the project proceeding

- Community Opposition could have been a potential risk however very strong community support has been expressed to retain the theatre. Any residual community backlash to the project would be mitigated if significant external funds are secured.
- Construction risks – construction is expected to be straightforward and of simple lightweight construction and so not seen as a high level risk
- Compromising Heritage significance is a potential risk, however the City is well aware of its obligations in this area. Officers have been in contact with heritage bodies and would continue to do so should the project proceed

**Has a funding application been made for this project of the current government?**

- No

**Project supporters (list) :**

- Roleystone Theatre Group – 80 members
- Council
- Roleystone Community College (648 letter received from students)
- 47 letters of support from individual community members
- A conforming petition containing 4,424 signatures from community members
- A non-conforming petition (change.org) containing 1,654 responses

**Project opponents (list) :**

- No opposition to the redevelopment of the theatre has been formally received by the City

*At the Chair's request, Committee agreed to discuss item 2.1 as the first item on the Agenda as there were members of the public attending in relation to this item.*

*Councillor Butterfield disclosed that she works at the Roleystone Community College. As a consequence, she advised that there may be a perception on the basis of her non-financial interests that her impartiality on the matter may be affected, but declared that she would set aside this association, consider the matter on its merits and vote accordingly.*

## **2.1 - ROLEYSTONE THEATRE**

WARD : HILLS  
FILE No. : M/630/18  
DATE : 2 October 2018  
REF : YL/NK/WS  
RESPONSIBLE MANAGER : Executive Director  
Community Services

### **In Brief:**

Council at its meeting in August 2018 resolved (in part) to receive a report on the needs and feasibility analysis of the Roleystone Theatre that identifies options for the future of the building. (T61/8/18)

This report presents the Roleystone Initial Theatre Needs and Feasibility Report November 2018 and presents options for Council to consider in regard to the future of the Roleystone Theatre.

### **Tabled Items**

Nil

### **Officer Interest Declaration**

Nil

### **Strategic Implications**

This report aligns with the following Outcomes and strategies in the City's Strategic Community Plan;

- 1.1 A strong sense of community
  - 1.1.1 Provide opportunities to connect individuals to each other and the wider community
  - 1.1.2 Build interdependent and resilient community groups
  - 1.1.3 Value and celebrate our diversity and history
  - 1.1.4 Foster local pride
- 1.3 The community has the services and facilities it needs
- 4.3 Financial sustainability
  - 4.3.2 Pursue non-rates revenue opportunities

### **Legislation Implications**

Nil

### **Council Policy/Local Law Implications**

Nil

### **Budget/Financial Implications**

Costs associated with the preparation of this report amount to approximately \$31,000 plus officer time, with costs met from existing budget allocations. Estimated costs related to any subsequent reports can be identified once Council determines how it wishes to proceed.

There is currently no provision in the Long Term Financial Plan for any redevelopment works for the Roleystone Theatre as outlined in the attached report.

### **Consultation**

Consultation for the Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report is outlined in the Methodology part of the report.

## **BACKGROUND**

The City closed the Roleystone Theatre in February 2018 to ensure the safety of the public following identification of structural issues with the building. This was reported to Council in February 2018 (T5/2/18).

At the time, the Roleystone Theatre Group (RTG) was about to commence a production of 'Robin Hood, the truth behind the Tights' which was relocated and presented at Cecil Andrews College, Seville Grove in March 2018. RTG was also well advanced in planning for the musical 'Annie' which, with the assistance of the City, was relocated to the Kalamunda Performing Arts Centre and presented in May 2018.

Following the February report to Council which preceded the closure of the theatre, a structural report was commissioned with the findings presented to Council in August 2018 (T61/8/18). In short, the structural report determined that significant structural rectification works are required in order for the theatre to be fit for any future use. The decision of Council at the August meeting was as follows;

### *RECOMMEND*

*That Council:*

1. *Note the current condition of the Roleystone Theatre building as presented in this report.*
2. *Endorse a needs and feasibility analysis for the facility that identifies options for the future of the building taking into account:*
  - *The activities and aspirations of the Roleystone Theatre Group*
  - *The heritage values of the facility*
  - *Options for the facility to continue to support the theatre group at the same level or at a reduced level*
  - *The cost of the proposed works and how they may be funded*
3. *Notes that the City will offer assistance to the Roleystone Theatre Group to help with planning for the short term.*
4. *Receive a further report on the needs and feasibility analysis as outlined in point 2 of this recommendation by December 2018.*

This report presents the Key Findings relevant to the Needs and Feasibility analysis as noted in Point 4 of the resolution.

The Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility November 2018 Report as attached to this report has the following Key Findings:

### **THE ACTIVITIES AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE ROLEYSTONE THEATRE GROUP**

- The RTG is a well-established and recognised community group that has significantly contributed to the social and community fabric not only in Roleystone area but wider afield.
- The RTG has demonstrated it has community support which is evidenced by the number of individual submissions made during the development of this report and also statistics from their productions conducted since 2013.
- RTG has been able to demonstrate sound financial management in regard to their activities.
- RTG attract members and audiences from a range of areas, including the City of Armadale depending on what productions are planned and presented.
- RTG participates in other community focused events other than their core activity of performing arts.
- RTG continues to operate and is using Roleystone Hall as a temporary home.
- RTG is currently considering how to maintain a schedule of activities while the theatre building is closed.
- RTG is willing to take up the pro-bono strategic planning assistance being offered by relevant peak organisations.
- Options for local performance venues include outdoor spaces, the Roleystone Hall and Armadale District Hall, plus local school facilities whilst the Roleystone Theatre is closed and pending Council decisions on its future.

### **THE HERITAGE VALUES OF THE FACILITY**

- The Roleystone Theatre is listed in the City's Municipal Heritage Inventory (MHI) 2008 which provides information on:
  - Aesthetic Value
  - Historic Value
  - Social Value
  - Rarity
  - Management Category – Roleystone Theatre is rated as B
- As a Management Category B, a Heritage Assessment and Impact Statement should be undertaken before approval is given for any major redevelopment.

- A Conservation Plan for the Roleystone Theatre was developed in 2000 which provides a guide for future planning and works if and when they are contemplated.
- Roleystone Theatre is listed on the National Trust's List of Classified Places, which does not have a statutory role, rather it is primarily for education and advocacy purposes.
- The Heritage Council rejected an application in 2002 for the Roleystone Theatre to be entered onto the Register of Heritage Places with the advice that it did not have sufficient cultural heritage significance.
- As part of any decision on the future of the Theatre, recognition and celebration of the social value of theatre as a symbol of sustained community effort in contributing to the history of the area would seem essential and appropriate.

**OPTIONS FOR THE FACILITY TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE THEATRE GROUP AT THE SAME LEVEL OR AT A REDUCED LEVEL INCLUDING HOW WORKS MAY BE FUNDED**

- Previous structural reports and recent concept plans for works on the Roleystone Theatre indicate a cost between \$1,657,000 and \$3,648,000.
- Concept Designs 1 and 2 presented are at either end of a scale, being what would be the cost of returning the Theatre back to a community hall and the other reinstating it as functioning performance space.
- Concept Design 1 overall footprint is larger than the current building, includes three fundamental function areas, Front of House, Performance, Back of House and caters for similar size audience and a range of productions as currently provided by RTG.
- The overall footprint of Concept Design 1 could be reduced however it may compromise the functionality of the facility for RTG current activities.
- Concept Design 1 has also considered making the building more multi-functional to enable a wider range of potential user groups and community members to benefit from a redevelopment which is a requirement for external funding.
- Concept Design 1 is a starting point of what would be required to continue to support RTG at the same level and RTG could operate from a smaller facility.
- If it is determined to explore retaining the Roleystone Theatre then further work would need to be undertaken to ascertain the most cost effective scenario.
- Further consultation with RTG is required to identify what elements of Concept Design 1 could either be omitted or reduced with the aim of reducing the overall cost.
- Roleystone Hall is currently being used as a temporary home for RTG. Minor modifications are being made to provide secure storage and make it more suitable for theatre performances.

- Roleystone Hall is an alternative option for a permanent home for RTG with other venues being used for performances including the Armadale District Hall and outdoor spaces.

#### **THE COST OF THE PROPOSED WORKS AND HOW THEY MAY BE FUNDED**

- The funding of major community infrastructure project comes from municipal funds and external sources including Developer Contributions and Government grants.
- Developer Contributions would not be applicable to the Roleystone Theatre project.
- Government funding is usually only a contribution towards projects.
- Multi-use community infrastructure is one key argument for external funding.
- Alternative venues are available for RTG activities and this may reduce the external funding probability.
- Generally the possibility of external funding is highly unlikely given the Theatre's current lack of multi-use spaces and its heritage classification management level B.
- There is no provision in the City's Long Term Financial Plan for upgrade or redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre building.
- The City uses a Framework that consists of 4 weighted criteria (Need, Multi-use, Availability of funding, Fit for Purpose) to assess major community infrastructure projects to determine priorities and inclusions in the Long Term Financial Plan.

#### **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

Using the Key Findings of the Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility November 2018 Report the following options are presented for consideration.

1. Redevelop the Roleystone Theatre to a full functioning performing space at an estimated cost of \$3,648,000 as outlined in the Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report noting that external funding is highly unlikely and that municipal funds would be required for most, if not all of the project. Whilst it would appear that the footprint of Concept Plan 1 is larger, it does however have the same functionality as the current Theatre building, only better designed and more practical and can be argued that it meets Council's requirement of supporting the RTG at the same level.
2. Restore the Roleystone Theatre original hall only at an estimated cost of \$1,647,000 as outlined in Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report noting that external funding is still considered unlikely and that municipal funds would be required for most, if not all of the project. RTG could use this building as a base for rehearsals workshops set build etc. but not as a performance venue.



3. Undertake further Concept Design work with the aim of reducing the overall cost of any redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre building including how the building could accommodate additional potential groups and users so as to strengthen the argument for external funding.
4. Consider other alternatives to redeveloping the Roleystone Theatre that still provides a venue for the Roleystone Theatre Group, with the most likely being modifications to Roleystone Hall as outlined in the Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report.
5. Not proceed with any further considerations for the redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre and consider other options for the site.

**Officer comments:**

Option 3 would be a balanced approach to recognising the social and heritage value of the Roleystone Theatre and would still provide a basic venue for Roleystone Theatre Group to have as a home for smaller performances with alternative venues being used for larger productions. Council would need to consider how the project would compete with other community infrastructure projects if it wished to fund the project taking into account limited external funding opportunities. For consistency the Community Infrastructure Assessment Framework would guide that consideration.

Equally, if Council wished to consider the most effective cost benefits and increased likelihood of external funding then the option of modifying the Roleystone Hall would need to be the logical and practical alternative albeit not meeting the social and heritage value of the Roleystone Theatre, nor being the preference of the RTG.

**COMMENT**

It is evident that the Roleystone Theatre has played a significant part in the City's social and community history which has clearly been demonstrated. There are significant financial implications for any works to the facility that Council needs to consider and how as a project, it competes with other community infrastructure that it wishes or needs to provide.

In addition to the financial implications, it is important that the project is perceived in two ways, how Council can best support RTG to continue its activities and the emotional and historic attachment that the Roleystone Theatre presents for the City of Armadale community.

If Council wishes to proceed with alternatives the following is proposed as a process timeline:

	Issue	Action/Outcome	Comment	Timeline
1.	Structural Issues Identified	Theatre closed for community safety	Council Report (T5/2/18)	February 2018
2.	Structural Report	Significant structural rectification works required in order for Theatre to be fit for any future purpose	Council Report (T61/8/18)	August 2018
3.	Needs and Feasibility Report	Further work to be undertaken in regard to concept designs and/or modifications to Roleystone Hall	Current	December 2018
4.	Concept Designs and Modifications	Possible Councillor Workshop/s		February / April 2019
5.	Funding Models investigated	Includes External Funding opportunities		May 2019
6.	Recommendations on future of Roleystone Theatre and impacts of recommendations	Council Report		May/June 2019.

## OPTIONS

Options that Council may consider are itemised in this report.

## CONCLUSION

Given the ad hoc, (albeit well intentioned) way that the theatre building has evolved and been added to since 1922, and the stresses the additions have placed on the overall building, it is not hard to see that there would always come a time when a decision would be needed on a major redevelopment of the theatre.

While the timing of the closure has been inconvenient, alternative arrangements are being made to assist RTG to maintain its performance activities, and with the theatre now in a basic maintenance mode there is no imperative to make an immediate decision.

It is acknowledged, however that a timely decision on the future of the Roleystone Theatre is preferable and that Council should have all relevant information to assist its decision making. The process timeline presented in this report should enable that to occur within the 2018/19 financial year.

### Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Undertake further Concept Design work with the aim of reducing the overall cost of any redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre building and giving consideration to how spaces could accommodate additional potential groups and users so as to strengthen the argument for external funding.
2. Consider other alternatives to redeveloping the Roleystone Theatre that still provides a venue for the Roleystone Theatre Group, with the most likely being modifications to Roleystone Hall as outlined in the Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report.

- Note the process timeline presented in this report that would indicate an anticipated decision on the future of Roleystone Theatre in the 2018/19 financial year.

#### Committee Discussion

*The Executive Director Community Services informed the Committee of community support and submissions for the Roleystone Theatre to date including;*

- 648 letters from students from the Roleystone Community College
- 1 video submission
- 47 letters and emails via staff and info
- 4424 signatures on a conforming petition and 1654 signatures on a non-confirming online petition – submitted and tabled by Cr G Nixon at the 27 November 2018 Ordinary Council Meeting, and was referred to the Community Services Committee when considering this matter.

*The Committee paged through the Report and discussed community consultation and submissions, funding options, renewal and asset management, heritage values, usage and design options. As such there was unanimous support by Committee for Council to commit to reopening the Roleystone theatre. The recommendation was amended to reflect Committee's discussion.*

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. [Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report November 2018](#)

#### **RECOMMEND**

C37/12/18

#### **That Council:**

- 1. Commit to the reopening of the Roleystone Theatre for occupation and use;**
- 2. Proceed with finalising a design that reflects the current scale, noting:**
  - a) The main hall is to be repaired; and**
  - b) Flytower to be restored or replaced; and**
  - c) Other areas of the building to be rebuilt to similar sizes at current standards;**
- 3. Consider and seek funding sources in preparation for consideration as part of the 2019/20 budget;**
- 4. Consider user arrangements that support the Roleystone Theatre Group as a primary tenant but considers opportunities for others.**
- 5. Commission a heritage assessment and impact statement.**
- 6. Commit to the use of Roleystone Hall by the RTG until such time that the Roleystone Theatre is reopened.**

Moved Cr M Geary  
**MOTION CARRIED**

(7/0)

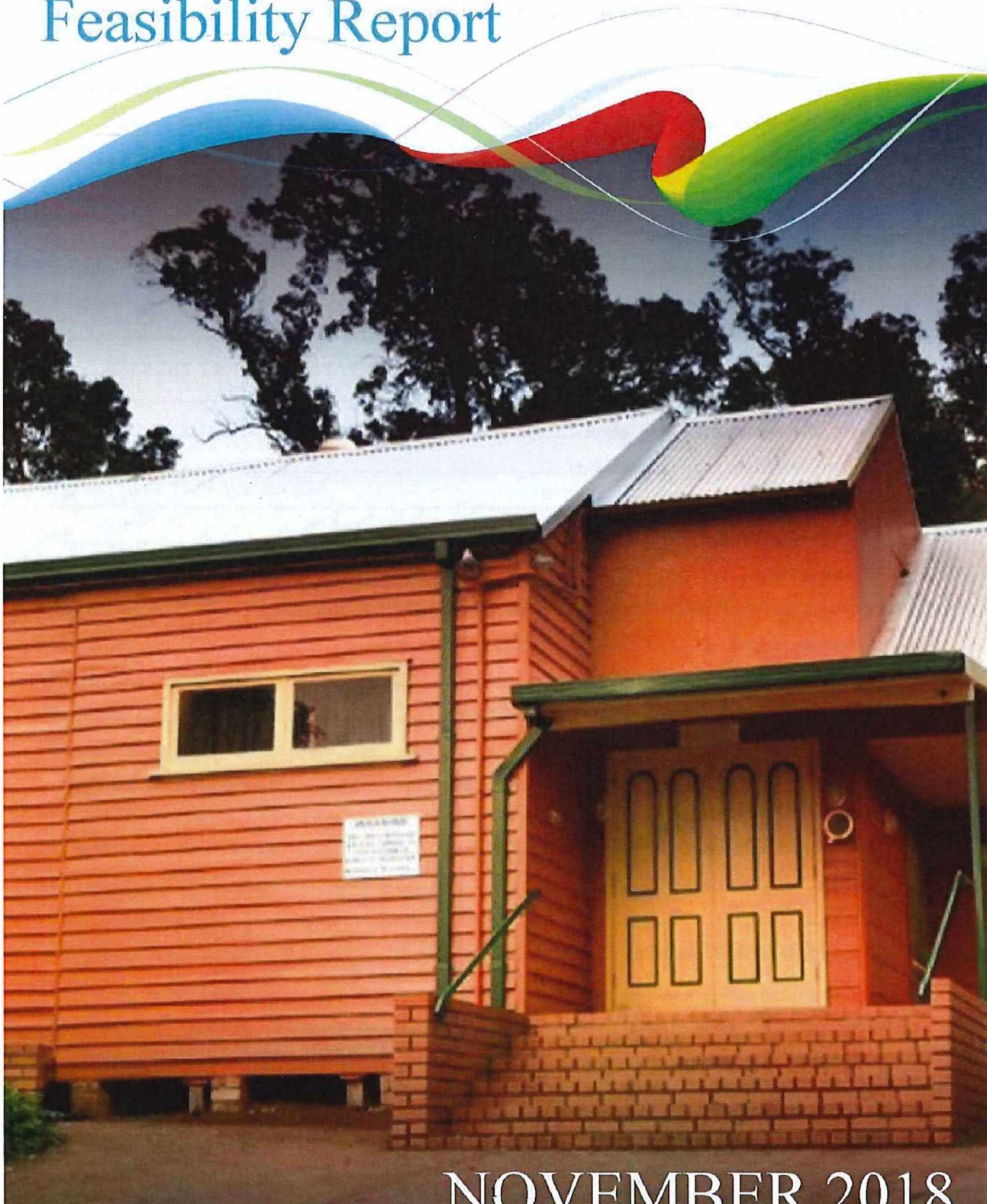
Amended  
at the  
Council  
Meeting  
of 17  
December  
2018.

*All attending members of the public left the meeting, the time being 07.59PM.  
Mayor Zelones and Crs Shaw, Silver, and Nixon left the meeting, the time being 07.59PM.  
Ms J Steele And Mrs W Stanley left the meeting, the time being 07.59PM.*

Roleystone theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report

November 2018

# Roleystone Theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report



NOVEMBER 2018

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The City is responding to significant structural issues of the Roleystone Theatre which were identified as a result of building inspections conducted during 2016/17. The Theatre was subsequently closed in February 2018 and following consideration of a detailed structural report remains closed pending a Needs and Feasibility Report to provide information for Council to make decisions of the future of the facility.

### Scope of the Needs and Feasibility Report

The scope of this Report is to identify options for the future of the building taking into account:

1. The activities and aspirations of the Roleystone Theatre Group
2. The heritage values of the facility
3. Options for the facility to continue to support the theatre group at the same level or at a reduced level including how works may be funded
4. The cost of the proposed work and how they may be funded

This report is an *Initial* Needs and Feasibility analysis as depending on how Council intends to proceed, additional work may be required for external grant applications.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This report has been compiled using the results of consultation with the following:

1. Roleystone Theatre Group- regular meetings including:
  - A design workshop involving 5 RTG members, Heritage Architect, Theatre Specialist, Structural Engineers and CoA officers on 26 September 2018
  - A Special General Meeting of RTG members and the broader community on 16 October 2018, attended by approximately 60 people and attended by CoA officers.
  - Submission by RTG. (Appendix 1)
2. Heritage Council of WA
3. National Trust (Perth Office)
4. Consultant Architect
5. Theatre Consultant
6. CircuitWest - peak body for professional performing arts presenters and venues
7. Independent Theatre Association – peak body for amateur community theatre groups and venues
8. Lotterywest
9. LGA owned Performing Arts Centres \*



Roleystone theatre Initial Needs and Feasibility Report

November 2018

- a. Don Russell Performing Arts Centre – City of Gosnells
  - b. Kalamunda Performing Arts Centre – City of Kalamunda
  - c. Koorliny Arts Centre – City of Kwinana
10. Local Government Theatre spaces and groups \*
- a. Stirling Players - City of Stirling
  - b. Endeavour Theatre - City of Stirling
  - c. Murray Music and Drama Club – Shire of Murray
  - d. Melville Theatre Company – City of Melville
  - e. Tivoli Club – City of Melville
  - f. Limelight Theatre – City of Wanneroo
  - g. Kalamunda Dramatic Society – City of Kalamunda
  - h. Garrick Theatre Club Inc. – City of Swan
  - i. Harvey Recreation and Cultural Centre – Shire of Harvey
  - j. Old Mill Theatre – City of South Perth
  - k. Playlovers - City of Nedlands
11. Schools with performing arts spaces \*
- a. Kelmscott Senior High School
  - b. Carey Baptist College
  - c. Cecil Andrews College
  - d. John Wollaston Anglican Community School

12. Relevant City departments

\*Feedback on Consultations 9, 10 and 11 detailed in Appendix 3

### 3. ACTIVITIES AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE ROLEYSTONE THEATRE GROUP

Roleystone Theatre became incorporated in 1985. Prior to that it was known as the Roleystone Choral and Dramatic Society which had formed in 1933 and was based at the original 'Old Roleystone Hall' which was built in 1922 using funds raised by the Roleystone Progress Association. The 'Old Roleystone Hall' is now known as the Roleystone Theatre and continues to be the home of Roleystone Theatre Incorporated known for the purposes of this report as the Roleystone Theatre Group (RTG).

The RTG has provided a submission for this Report as part of their advocacy for their organisation in relation to the future of the Roleystone Theatre building. It is not intended to fully replicate the contents of the submission in this report so the full submission has been included in Appendix 1 for reference.

RTG's current membership is around 70 and reflects an age range from young children through to the more mature, with their oldest member being 80 who is still performing. The membership numbers change depending on the shows presented each year and the cast crew numbers required. Many don't retain their financial membership from year to year and join for the year they are in a production.



RTG presents between 4-6 productions per annum comprising of once off concerts and galas to seasons of up to 10 performances for the one production.

This averages out to about 35 individual performances per year. Performances range from small scale theatre productions though to large scale musicals.

The number of performers and support personnel for productions can vary from a total of 20 through to around 50. Likewise audience numbers will vary from show to show.

The popular musical 'Oklahoma' is an example, which RTG presented in 2017 and ran for 10 performances and was close to selling out Roleystone Theatre's capacity of 132 every night. A total of 1,192 seats were sold of a possible 1,320, an average of 119 per show. A lesser known play 'Unwanted Wishes' presented in 2013 ran for 5 performances and attracted an average of 53 patrons per show.

Both are seen as successful given forecast audience expectations, high performance standards and effective budget management. It is important to note that success in performing arts should not be measured in audience numbers alone. Ensuring broad appeal is vital and creating and presenting a diverse range of performances that involve and appeal to different parts of the community is also very important.

There is a mix of residents and non-residents amongst performers and other personnel (directors, choreographers, technical crew etc.). Like other community theatre groups, RTG invites directors to submit proposals for productions and then holds auditions for the various roles in them. Many of the directors and cast members, particularly for lead roles in larger productions participate in a circuit of community theatres with some being residents of the City and others not.

Audiences are attracted to the Roleystone Theatre from a catchment beyond the City's boundaries. Recent surveying by the group indicates that about 50% of theatre patrons are residents and about 50% are visitors to the area.

The RTG submission indicates that for the period 2013-2017 approximately 15,000 people have attended productions at the Roleystone Theatre.

In addition to the production shows, RTG offers Junior/Youth Workshops and has initiated fund raising events (2011 Kelmscott Bushfire) and enabled opportunities for charity nights (Roleystone Chaplaincy). The members have assisted with providing roving entertainers for Perth Zoo events and created a Roleystone Theatre Christmas Choir for the City's Carols by Candlelight. The Theatre itself has been used as a venue for local schools, dance schools, community groups and musicians.

It is evident that the RTG is and has been an influential organisation that has tapped into and built community spirit from its inception, not only in the Roleystone area but from further afield. Its positive impact is evidenced not only by historical data (\*'Sixty Wonderful Years' <http://members.iinet.net.au/~terrye/RolyTheatre.html>) but also by the large number of individual submissions received as part of this process.

## Financial

It was stated in the August 2018 Council report that RTG entered into a lease for the theatre in June 2013, prior to which RTG occupied the building under an annual hire arrangement. This information is incorrect. RTG entered into a lease with the City for the theatre in 1993 for a 10 year term with a further 10 year option which was exercised. There was no option to renew and so, as was reported in August, a new lease was entered into in 2013 for a period of 5 years with an option for a further five years.





It was prior to 1993 and not 2013 as previously stated that RTG occupied the theatre under an annual hire arrangement. Following the closure of the theatre, the 5 year option which was due to be considered in June 2018 was not exercised.

As the lessee of the theatre building RTG has been responsible for operating costs and capital upgrades.

The following table lists a summary of some of the costs as incurred by RTG as well as the previously mentioned ticket revenue for the period 2013 – 2017;

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Average \$ per year</b>
Operating costs (2014-2018)		
Utilities		
Insurance	\$74,589	\$14,918
Security		
General maintenance		
Capital upgrades (2014-2018)	\$52,643	\$10,528
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$127,232</b>	<b>\$28,428</b>
Ticket sales (2013-2017)	\$218,766	\$43,736
<b>**Variance</b>	<b>\$76,622</b>	<b>\$15,308</b>

It is important to note that the variance is not an operating surplus. The amount identified as a variance is required to assist in meeting all production costs such as set construction costs, marketing, any professional fees etc.

## Current Activities

RTG is currently considering how to maintain a schedule of activities while the theatre building is closed. Regular meetings between the RTG and the City has identified that a focused and strategic approach to the short term, where a range of venue options and performance types is a necessity. This strategic thinking would be valuable with or without a decision on the theatre building as the focus of planning becomes the activities of the group rather than the facility.

Part of the consultation informing this report involved meeting with the Executive Director of Circuitwest which is the peak body for professional performing arts presenters in WA, who also happens to be the president of the Independent Theatre Association, the peak body for community based theatre groups in WA.

An outcome of the consultation is that pro bono strategic planning assistance has been offered to RTG to help develop a short and longer term strategic plan for the group. RTG has expressed a willingness to take up this offer which is currently being facilitated by the City.

With the closure of the Theatre building, the City has been supporting RTG to continue to operate and maintain a locally based program of performance activities. Roleystone Hall has been identified as a temporary home and one of a number of venues that the group can use for its activities. The City is undertaking minor modifications to the Hall to provide secure storage and make it more suitable for theatre performances. Other venue opportunities include outdoor performance spaces and the redeveloped Armadale District Hall.

The Armadale District Hall will have an audience capacity of around 300 and will have good basic theatrical backstage and technical facilities, should be suitable for larger scale productions like popular musicals and could be used for one or two productions a year.



## 4. THE HERITAGE VALUES OF THE FACILITY

Information on the heritage values of the theatre are drawn from its listing in the City's Municipal Heritage Inventory 2008 and from the Conservation Study for the Roleystone Theatre: 2000.

### Municipal Heritage Inventory

It is noted that the *Municipal Heritage Inventory* (MHI) is currently being reviewed and the City contracted heritage consultancy practice *Stephen Carrick Architects* to undertake the review and update of the City's MHI. The City recently called for nominations of new places to be assessed for adding to the MHI and it is anticipated that during 2019 a revised and updated MHI will be presented to Council for advertising draft documentation for public review and submissions.

Key elements of the MHI listing for the Roleystone Theatre are as follows;

### Significance

**Aesthetic Value:** The style, scale and colour of the building, particularly the original hall and fly tower, coupled with the elevated location and surrounding bushland, make the place a recognisable landmark.

**Historic Value:** The Roleystone Hall (now Theatre) was typical of a community hall built by community funds and used for a variety of social community events in the early to mid-1900s, particularly those constructed in semi-rural areas.

The place is associated with the Roleystone Choral and Dramatic Society, which was formed in 1933 and has been used by the Roleystone Theatre Group since that time.

The place is associated with John Buckingham and Fred Fancote, who built the original Roleystone Hall and who were both prominent community members in the district.

**Social Value:** The place is valued by the community as a long-standing venue for entertainment and social functions, and continues to be used for this purpose.

**Rarity:** The place is one of a few small theatre groups to have remained performing at its original location since the 1930s and to have purpose-built areas to facilitate the performance of a wider range of productions.

**Management:** Management Category B

Management categories recognize varying degrees of importance and range through a rating scale of A+, A, B, C, D and E, where A+ is the considered to have the highest value and E the least. A+ indicates that a heritage place is listed in the State Register of Heritage Places and A indicates places that are considered to have potential for State listing.

**Category B** is described as follows;

*Worthy of a high level of protection. Maximum encouragement to the owner should be provided under the \*City of Armadale's Town Planning Scheme to conserve the significance of the place. A Heritage Assessment and Impact Statement should be undertaken before approval is given for any major redevelopment. Incentives to promote heritage conservation should also be considered.*

\*The City of Armadale's Town Planning Scheme No.4 Schedule A (Supplemental Provisions to the Deemed Provisions) requires planning approval for the demolition of any building or structure which is entered into the City's MHI.



## Conservation Plan

A Conservation Plan is the principal guiding document for the conservation and management of a heritage place. The main objective of a Conservation Plan is to ensure that decisions are made with regard to the cultural heritage significance of a heritage place.

A conservation Plan for the Roleystone Theatre was developed in 2000. The objectives of the Conservation Plan are to;

- Assess the cultural and heritage significance of the Roleystone Theatre and associated elements within the site;
- Determine the extent of the cultural heritage significance ;
- Determine the nature and extent of any intrusive elements within the precinct;
- Establish an appropriate policy for the place; and
- Recommend guidelines for the future management of the place to maintain and enhance its cultural significance.

A conservation plan provides a guide for future planning and works if and when they are contemplated. It does not compel an owner to undertake particular works but rather to ensure any works if undertaken are informed by the heritage values of the place and use good practice in heritage understanding.

## National Trust (WA) Listing

Roleystone Theatre is listed on the National Trust's List of Classified Places. The List of Classified Places does not have a statutory role; its purpose is educational in that it supports advocacy activities, the establishment of Heritage Appeals (tax deductible accounts for conservation works) as well as being an important record of Western Australia's heritage.

## Heritage Council of Western Australia

An application proposing the Roleystone Theatre be entered onto the Register of Heritage Places was made by the City in 2002. The advice from the Heritage Council at the time was that the theatre did not have sufficient cultural heritage significance at the State level for entry onto the register.

## Comment on Roleystone Theatre's Heritage Values

A consistent theme throughout documentation relating to the theatre is its Social Value. While the Heritage Council of WA did not consider the theatre had relevance at the State level for it to be entered on to the Register of Heritage Places it noted in its assessment;

*"As one of the first community buildings constructed in Roleystone, Roleystone Theatre contributes to the community's sense of place by providing an ongoing reminder of the effort of the early residents to provide the area with community facilities."*



## 5. OPTIONS FOR THE FACILITY TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE THEATRE GROUP AT THE SAME LEVEL OR AT A REDUCED LEVEL

The facility was built in 1922 on approximately 110 square metres on Brookton Highway. Many additions and alterations have been made to the building since 1922 funded by RTG, external sources and from time to time the City. The building now has an overall footprint of around 520 square metres including stage and backstage facilities; a foyer entrance, bio box, fixed tiered seating, props room, make up and dressing rooms, public toilets and a fly tower.

It is important to understand how community theatre groups operate and the relationship they have with venues so as to determine what works would be required for the current facility to support RTG at the same or reduced level.

To assist with this understanding and inform this Report, in addition to RTG, consultation has taken place involving:

- 13 Community theatre groups
- Local Government Authorities that support community Theatre groups and those that own and operate professional theatres
- Peak bodies for professional arts presenters and community based theatre groups

The consultation identified that community theatre groups operate in a number of different ways and from a range of facility types. Community Theatre Groups operate from venues of widely varying standards, sizes and capabilities. Some are not ideal but the groups make them work; much like the Roleystone Theatre group which in 1933 began using the original 118sqm Hall or about 1/4 the size of the current building.

Some groups share facilities and some have dedicated spaces and whilst specialist theatrical functions are highly desirable for theatre groups and also for an enhanced audience experience, a dedicated theatre is not necessarily essential.

### **Trends in the provision of performing spaces**

The publication; *Performing Arts Connections Australia, 2017 Economic Activity Report* states that the average utilisation rate across all performance spaces within centres was 58% in 2017 across Australia and 67% in Western Australia.



The publication *Local government guide to growing community wellbeing through the performing arts*: (CircuitWest, May 2018) states that:

- Arts centres are now seen as having a strong alignment with 'community building' and benefits – a shift from a 'home for performing arts' to a 'place of innovation and learning.'
- Performing Arts Connections Australia biennial online survey – 78.3% of all respondent centres are owned by local government and 66.3% are managed directly by LGAs.

The Independent Theatre Association WA advised that with the exception of one community theatre, Local Government provides facilities, in one form or another, for all community theatre groups in WA.

### Scenarios, concept designs and estimated costs

The structural assessment of the building that was undertaken and reported to Council in August 2018 was the first step in establishing a base line from which to inform options. It was noted at the time that the scenarios and estimate costings had been developed by a structural engineer who had heritage experience, however they were indicative only and would need to be tested through the consultation phase of this Needs and Feasibility report.

The scenarios and indicative costings reported in August 2018 were as follows:

#### Scenario 1

Reinstate the theatre in full to the current design, but in accordance with contemporary standards and building requirements. These works with the associated estimated costs are:

Item	Description	Estimate
1	Main auditorium roof structure replacement and walls stabilisation	\$210,000
2	Replacement of fly tower to current scale	\$600,000
3	Complete electrical reticulation replacement	\$200,000
4	Asbestos removal throughout the whole building complex	\$140,000
5	Demolish ancillary buildings and replace with equivalent space	\$600,000
6	Refurbish balance of building to match new/upgrade works to BCA	\$500,000
7	Contingency provision (25%)	\$550,000
8	Professional fees (15%)	\$400,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,200,000</b>



### Scenario 2

Reinstate the theatre to a lesser standard that may allow the Theatre Group to operate effectively (this scenario would need to be tested in consultation with the RTG and other technical experts):

Item	Description	Estimate
1	Main auditorium roof structure replacement and walls stabilisation	\$210,000
2	Replacement of fly tower with smaller stage structure	\$500,000
3	Complete electrical reticulation replacement	\$200,000
4	Asbestos removal throughout the whole building complex	\$140,000
5	Demolish ancillary buildings - replace with minimum requirements	\$300,000
6	Refurbish balance of building to match new/upgrade works to BCA	\$500,000
7	Contingency Provision (25%)	\$460,000
8	Professional fees (15%)	\$280,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,590,000</b>

### Scenario 3

Perform a total heritage rehabilitation of the building, reflecting the heritage origins of the buildings, but would not permit the use of the building as a performance venue. These works would likely include the following:

Item	Description	Estimate
1	Main auditorium roof structure replacement and walls stabilisation	\$210,000
2	Replacement of fly tower with original outer wall replica	\$30,000
3	Complete electrical reticulation replacement	\$200,000
4	Asbestos removal throughout the whole building complex	\$140,000
5	Demolish ancillary buildings and not replace	\$160,000
6	Replace current entrance complex with original replica	\$130,000
7	Removal of auditorium seating and supporting structures	\$20,000
8	Refurbish balance of building to match new/upgrade works to BCA	\$500,000
9	Contingency Provision (25%) <sup>8</sup>	\$350,000
8	Professional fees (15%)	\$210,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,950,000</b>



The additions made over time to the Theatre building have added capacity and capabilities, but they would not have been constructed as they have if a new building was being built from scratch. Replacing existing spaces which the above Scenarios, without identifying how functionality could be improved, may not be the most cost effective option.

To determine how functionality could be improved and bearing in mind the focus of supporting RTG at its current or reduced level, a consultant was appointed to develop two concepts with cost estimates:

1. To restore the facility as a functioning theatre as cost effectively as possible
2. To restore the original Hall only

These two concepts would test the opposite ends of the Scenarios (1 and 3) previously presented as above.

Concept design 1 uses the functions of the current building as a starting point. It takes into account how the design can be reconfigured for more effective functionality. In addition, the audience foyer area and performers' assembly areas backstage have been enlarged to better cater for the numbers of people using the building and a toilet/shower has been included backstage for performers. The overall footprint is larger as it incorporates a central courtyard as a low cost additional activity/circulation space.

In the most basic terms concept design 1 caters for a similar size audience to the current building (actually slightly smaller) and for a range of theatrical productions from those with small casts of just a few people to large scale musicals with complex staging, amplification, live music and a cast and crew of up to 50 people.

This concept design should be looked at as a starting point and a working document for discussion about what a redeveloped theatre could look like and therefore what it could cost.

There is no doubt that the RTG could operate from a smaller facility. The rationale behind the concept design as presented is that it provides information about all of the elements of a theatre to enable discussion about which could be prioritised.

In looking at the concept design and in considering options is useful to think about three fundamental functions;

1. Front of House  
Entrance, foyers, box office, public toilets, bar/kitchen
2. Performance  
Auditorium, stage, backstage, side stages, set/props management areas loading dock
3. Back of House  
Performers' assembly area (Green Room), dressing rooms, make up room, performers toilets



A consideration in developing concept design 1 is making the building more multi-functional to enable a wider range of potential user groups and community members to benefit from a redevelopment. This also provides for additional revenue to assist in meeting operational costs and is more likely to attract external funding for the required works.

Concept Design 1 Estimated Costs

Item	Description	Estimate
1	Demolition Works	\$230,000
2	Existing Hall Upgrade	\$195,000
3	New Extension	\$1,974,000
4	On Costs – Contingencies etc.	\$788,000
5	Extra over for 1600 Higher Fly Tower	\$54,000
6	Hall Fit Out – Provisions for retractable seating / contingencies	\$132,000
7	Specialist Equipment – Sound/Lighting, Stage rigging, Roof beams	\$149,000
8	Loose Furniture	\$126,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,648,000</b>

Note: A major consideration of this Concept Design is the rock excavations that would need to be undertaken and which would be a significant cost.

Concept design 2 presents an option at the other end of the scale and focusses on the original 1922 hall. Modern amenities have been added with the result being a modest stand-alone community use building. RTG could use this building as a base for rehearsals, workshops, set building etc., but not as a performance venue.

Concept Design 2 Estimated Costs

Item	Description	Estimate
1	Demolition Works	\$226,000
2	Existing Hall Upgrade	\$194,000
3	New Extension	\$512,000
4	On Costs – Contingencies etc.	\$308,000
6	Hall Fit Out – Provisions for retractable seating / contingencies	\$132,000
7	Specialist Equipment – Sound/Lighting, Stage rigging, Roof beams	\$149,000
8	Loose Furniture	\$126,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,647,000</b>





Appendix 2 – Concepts 1 and 2.

## Comparison

Scenario 1	Scenario 1 Cost Estimate	Concept Design 1	Concept Design 1 Cost Estimate
Reinstate the theatre in full to the current design, but in accordance with contemporary standards and building requirements.	\$3,200,000	Restore the facility as a functioning theatre	\$3,648,000 (QS)

Scenario 3	Scenario 3 Cost Estimate	Concept Design 2	Concept Design 2 Cost Estimate
Perform a total heritage rehabilitation of the building, reflecting the heritage origins of the buildings, but would not permit the use of the building as a performance venue.	\$1,950,000	Restore the original hall only	\$1,647,000(QS)

The major differences between the Cost Estimates of Scenarios to Concept Designs is the Hall Fit Out, Specialist Equipment and Loose Furniture.

## Considerations

RTG has worked hard over many years to increase the functionality of the theatre. While far from an ideal configuration the current building has a fair degree of performance; front of house and back of house functionality. These areas could be made smaller to suit a budget, the consideration being how much the functionality can be reduced before the building can't really operate effectively as a theatre.

One scenario may be to drastically reduce the back of house and stage configuration to cater for smaller theatre shows but not large scale musicals. These could be presented at other venues. At the same time the audience capacity could be reduced which would allow front of house spaces and associated requirements to be reduced.

There would be some savings to be made by slightly reducing all of the spaces (except the original Hall), however the difference would be minor compared with the legacy of a less than optimum design. The degree to which these types of adjustments reduce the cost would need to be weighed up against the decision to build what would amount to a compromised facility.

Performing arts organisations including theatre groups plan for a range of activities that involve varying numbers of performers and support personnel, and attract audiences of differing sizes. If a facility is to cater for this entire range it needs to have the capacity for larger productions. Some compromise at the larger end of the scale is always possible; performers are well use to operating in 'squeeze' venues. However the degree to which backstage facilities, for example can be reduced to cope with 50 performers and support crew is limited.



## Other potential options

Whilst not a requisite of the Needs and Feasibility Analysis scope, it is worthwhile exploring other potential options for the RTG.

Ongoing consultation with RTG has focused on ensuring the group continues to operate in the City and maintains a locally based program of performance activities. Roleystone Hall has been identified as a logical temporary home for the RTG and one of a number of venues that the group can use for its activities.

RTG has expressed the view that permanent closure of the theatre may bring about the demise of the group. While RTG has said it would like the theatre to reopen so that it can continue to operate as the group's home, there are alternatives that could be considered so the group could continue its activities. If it eventuates that the theatre is to remain closed, RTG would need to change the way it plans and the way it operates.

It has become more evident as alternative venues are being investigated for temporary use by RTG that Roleystone Hall presents as an option to consider as an alternative long term solution if Council determines that redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre is not financially viable.

The Hall was built in 1973 as a multi-purpose facility as a sports hall (predominantly for badminton which was popular at the time) and for other community activities. It has a large main hall with a capacity for 367 people, a meeting room, a stage with limited backstage facilities, kitchen and some storage. It has not been used as a sports facility since 2016 and its use by other community groups is low as illustrated in the following table;

Year	Casual bookings	Type of casual bookings	Regular hirers	Types of regular hirers (1 - 2 bookings each per week)
2018	32	Cultural groups, fundraisers, private functions	2	Home school and Pilates
2017	44	Cultural groups, fundraisers, private functions	3	Karate, Pilates, Home school
2016	37	Cultural groups, fundraisers, private functions	3	Ladies badminton, Pilates, Karate
2015	26	Cultural associations, dance practice, collectables shows, private functions		

The current low usage means that it is quite straightforward to schedule RTGs activities alongside other bookings.

As noted earlier in this Report, some minor modifications are being undertaken at the Hall to help RTG operate from the venue on a temporary basis. More significant modifications would be highly desirable if the Hall was to become a permanent home for RTG.



These more significant modifications are likely to include acoustic treatment of walls; installing an acoustic ceiling, installing lighting bars, installing other technical cabling and fixtures, more flexible lighting configurations, installing retractable seating and a reconfiguration of the stage and backstage areas.

Investigating designs and costs for additional modifications to Roleystone Hall has been outside the scope of the current analysis; however it may be useful to identify what is involved for a future comparison with a redeveloped theatre if Council determined it wanted to explore this as an option. The types of modifications described would reduce the Hall's use for sports activities (as a result of a reduced ceiling height) but it would significantly increase its functionality for other uses such as theatre, live music as well as the types of bookings that the Hall currently attracts.

In addition to the Roleystone Hall, the redeveloped Armadale District Hall, as well as outdoor spaces are options for RTG as alternative performance venues.

## 6. THE COST OF THE PROPOSED WORKS AND HOW THEY MAY BE FUNDED

A summary of the costs of proposed works including what has been excluded from the Estimated Costs would indicate that it is from \$2 - \$4million depending on what outcome is determined.

External capital funding for community facilities such as the Roleystone Theatre is generally through Lotterywest. The City has been quite successful in receiving Lotterywest grants for community facility projects in recent years. A \$1.5Million grant was received for the \$2Million Greendale Centre redevelopment; \$1Million for the \$4Million Armadale District Hall redevelopment and \$4Million for the \$4.5Million Seville Grove Library/Champion Centre redevelopment.

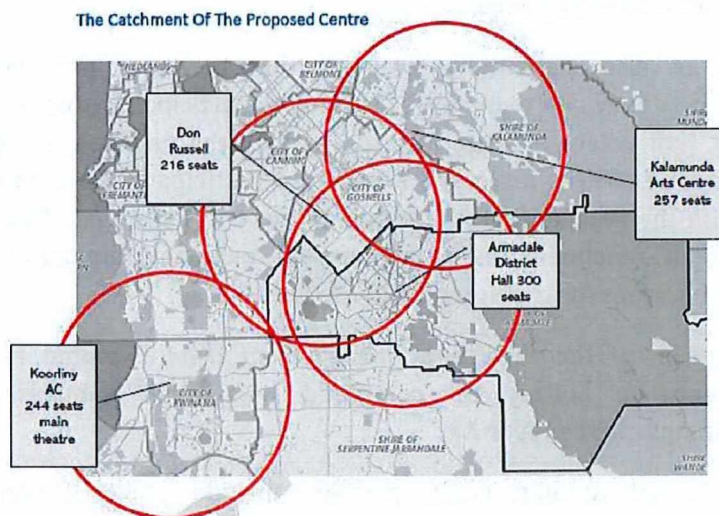
Lotterywest require a thorough analysis of need and an exploration of alternatives as part of a submission. This was the case for the three aforementioned projects with significant work undertaken to prepare cases to argue for funding.

The other significant Lotterywest consideration is for facilities that are multi-use or have general community use spaces. The Roleystone Theatre may be seen as a single use and the argument that it contains other alternative community use spaces would need to be strong if an application would be considered favourably.



## Exploration of alternatives

The South East region is relatively well served with theatres and facilities with professional standard theatrical functionality. The recent *Armadale Multi Art Centre Needs Assessment: February 2018* which was commissioned by the City to investigate what a significant professionally operated performing arts facility would look like and what it may cost, notes other facilities in the region as follows;



Distances from Roleystone Theatre to the venues identified are;

- Armadale District Hall 9km
- Don Russell Performing Arts Centre 18km
- Kalamunda Performing Arts Centre 23km
- Koorlini Arts Centre 36km

While none of these venues could provide exclusive year round access to the RTG, consultation with other LGAs that operate theatres indicates that there is significant capacity for them all to provide some access for productions.

Local schools identified as having performing arts spaces include;

- Kelmscott Senior High School
- Carey College
- Cecil Andrews College
- John Wollaston Anglican Community School

The facilities at these schools are limited for theatre activity; however they may present opportunities for some types of performances

RTG has been able to relocate to alternative venues following the closure of the Theatre at short notice.



Those alternatives were the Kalamunda Performing Arts Centre, Cecil Andrews College and the Roleystone Hall. While not ideal, they allowed RTG to present seasons more or less as planned. With more notice it is likely that more suitable arrangements could have been made.

Given there are alternatives, maybe not ideal in RTG's view, but alternatives none the less, it is less likely that Lotterywest would prioritise this project over and above others that it assesses that may demonstrate a more compelling need.

Lotterywest funding is also potentially available for heritage initiatives, projects are typically prioritised where they aim to increase community participation and access. This was the case with the District Hall where funding was allocated to the new spaces rather than to the restoration of the hall itself. Where increased access and participation is coupled with heritage initiatives, such as with the District Hall, the argument becomes stronger. This is one reason to make facilities more multi-functional and to increase the range and numbers of potential users, besides the other logical reasons for providing multi use facilities.

The heritage classification of the theatre at management level B would most likely lessen the project's importance to Lotterywest compared with other submissions they would receive involving buildings rated an A or A+.

Other sources of external funding could possibly include public fundraising, loans to RTG, sponsorship or philanthropy. Given the substantial amount required for even a modest redevelopment, it would appear that those alternatives would seem less likely to raise the amounts required.

With regard to a loan, burdening a volunteer group with debt, if they were able to secure funds in this way, would pose a significant risk to the group and ultimately to the City should the group be unable to meet payments.

The likelihood of securing significant external grants for a theatre redevelopment is considered highly unlikely and it would to Council to fund most if not all of a redevelopment project. In which case Council may wish to consider what level of municipal funding it would be comfortable with as a contribution to a theatre redevelopment.

There is no funding allocated in the Long Term Financial Plan to upgrade or replace the Roleystone Theatre. As is the case when any community facility project is identified, they are investigated, assessed and then considered against other projects for inclusion in the Long Term Financial Plan. Part of this process is identifying opportunities for external grants and other contributions. Facilities in the City's high growth areas are funded through developer contributions and facilities in older areas attract community infrastructure grants from agencies such as Lotterywest, the Department of Sport and Recreation and from time to time through federal infrastructure grants.

To a greater or lesser degree, municipal funds are used to complement external grants for construction costs. This is the process that has been used for recent projects in the City's older areas such as the Aquatic Centre redevelopment, Greendale Centre redevelopment, Armadale District Hall redevelopment, Frye Park redevelopment and the Seville Grove Library/Champion Centre redevelopment.



Council currently uses an Assessment Framework to determine priorities for major projects identified through the Community Hubs Master Planning Initiative which could be equally applicable for stand-alone facilities such as the Roleystone Theatre.

Using this Framework would assist in determining if Council wished to consider the Roleystone Theatre in that context and where it would compare with other major projects in the City's Corporate Business and Long Term Financial Plans.

## 7. KEY FINDINGS

### The activities and aspirations of the Roleystone Theatre Group

- The RTG is a well-established and recognised community group that has significantly contributed to the social and community fabric not only in Roleystone area but wider afield.
- The RTG has demonstrated it has community support which is evidenced by the number of individual submissions made during the development of this report and also statistics from their productions conducted since 2013.
- RTG has been able to demonstrate sound financial management in regard to their activities.
- RTG attract members and audiences from a range of areas, including the City of Armadale depending on what productions are planned and presented.
- RTG participates in other community focused events other than their core activity of performing arts.
- RTG is currently considering how to maintain a schedule of activities while the theatre building is closed.
- RTG is willing to take up the pro-bono strategic planning assistance being offered by peak organisations
- RTG continues to operate and is using Roleystone Hall as a temporary home.
- Options for local performance venues include outdoor spaces, the Roleystone Hall and Armadale District Hall, plus local school facilities whilst the Roleystone Theatre is closed and pending Council decisions on its future.



## The heritage values of the facility

- The Roleystone Theatre is listed in the City's Municipal Heritage Inventory (MHI) 2008 which provides information on:
  - Aesthetic Value
  - Historic Value
  - Social Value
  - Rarity
  - Management Category – Roleystone Theatre is rated as B
- As a Management Category B, a Heritage Assessment and Impact Statement should be undertaken before approval is given for any major redevelopment.
- A Conservation Plan for the Roleystone Theatre was developed in 2000, which provides a guide for future planning and works if and when they are contemplated.
- Roleystone Theatre is listed on the National Trust's List of Classified Places, which does not have a statutory role, rather it is primarily for education and advocacy purposes.
- The Heritage Council rejected an application in 2002 for the Roleystone Theatre to be entered onto the Register of Heritage Places with the advice that it did not have sufficient cultural heritage significance.
- As part of any decision on the future of the Theatre, recognition and celebration of the social value of theatre as a symbol of sustained community effort in contributing to the history of the area would seem essential and appropriate.

## Options for the facility to continue to support the theatre group at the same level or at a reduced level including how works may be funded

- Previous structural reports and recent concept plans for works on the Roleystone Theatre indicate a cost between \$1,647,000 and \$3,648,000.
- Concept Designs 1 and 2 presented are at either end of a scale, being what would be the cost of returning the Theatre back to a community hall and the other reinstating it as functioning performance space.
- If it is determined to explore retaining the Roleystone Theatre then further work would need to be undertaken to ascertain the most cost effective scenario.
- Further consultation with RTG is required to identify what elements of Concept Design 1 could either be omitted or reduced with the aim of reducing the overall cost.
- Roleystone Hall is currently being used as a temporary home for RTG. Minor modifications are being made to provide secure storage and make it more suitable for theatre performances
- Roleystone Hall is an alternative option for a permanent home for RTG with other venues being used for performances including the Armadale District Hall and outdoor spaces.



## **The cost of the proposed works and how they may be funded**

- The funding of major community infrastructure project comes from municipal funds and external sources including Developer Contributions and Government grants.
- Developer Contributions would not be applicable to the Roleystone Theatre project.
- Government funding is usually only a contribution towards projects
- Multi-use community infrastructure is one key argument for external funding
- Alternative venues are available and this may reduce the external funding probability.
- Generally the possibility of external funding is highly unlikely given the Theatre's current lack of multi-use spaces and its heritage classification Level B
- There is no provision in the City's Long Term Financial Plan for upgrade or redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre building.
- The City uses a Framework that consists of four weighted criteria (Need, Multi-Use, Availability of Funding and Fit for Purpose) to assess for major community infrastructure projects to determine priorities and inclusions in the Long Term Financial Plan.





## 8. CONCLUSION

The Roleystone Theatre is acknowledged as being a facility that has contributed significantly to the Armadale area both historically and socially. The RTG is enthusiastic and passionate about their activities and the relationship with the building.

The essential consideration is how a redeveloped Theatre would be funded given the possibility of external funding is highly unlikely for reasons outlined in this report.

In conclusion and within the scope of this Report and its key findings the following are options to be considered in regard to the future of the Roleystone Theatre building:

1. Redevelop the Roleystone Theatre to a full functioning performing space at an estimated cost of \$3,648,000 as outlined in this report noting that external funding is highly unlikely and that municipal funds would be required for most, if not all of the project. Whilst it would appear that the footprint of Concept Plan 1 is larger, it does however have the same functionality as the current Theatre building only better designed and more practical, and can be argued that it meets Council's requirements of supporting the RTG at the same level.
2. Restore the original hall only at an estimated cost of \$1,647,000 as outlined in this report noting that external funding is still considered unlikely and that municipal funds would be required for most, if not all of the project. This would meet the minimum requirements of RTG with other spaces being utilised for larger productions.
3. Undertake further Concept Design work with the aim of reducing the overall cost of any redevelopment of the Theatre building including how increased community space and usage could strengthen the argument for external funding.
4. Consider other alternatives to redeveloping the Theatre that still provides a venue for the Roleystone Theatre Group, with the most likely being modifications to Roleystone Hall as outlined in the report.
5. Whilst not a key finding of this report, the option of not proceeding with any further considerations for redevelopment of the Roleystone Theatre, demolish the building and consider other options for the site.

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