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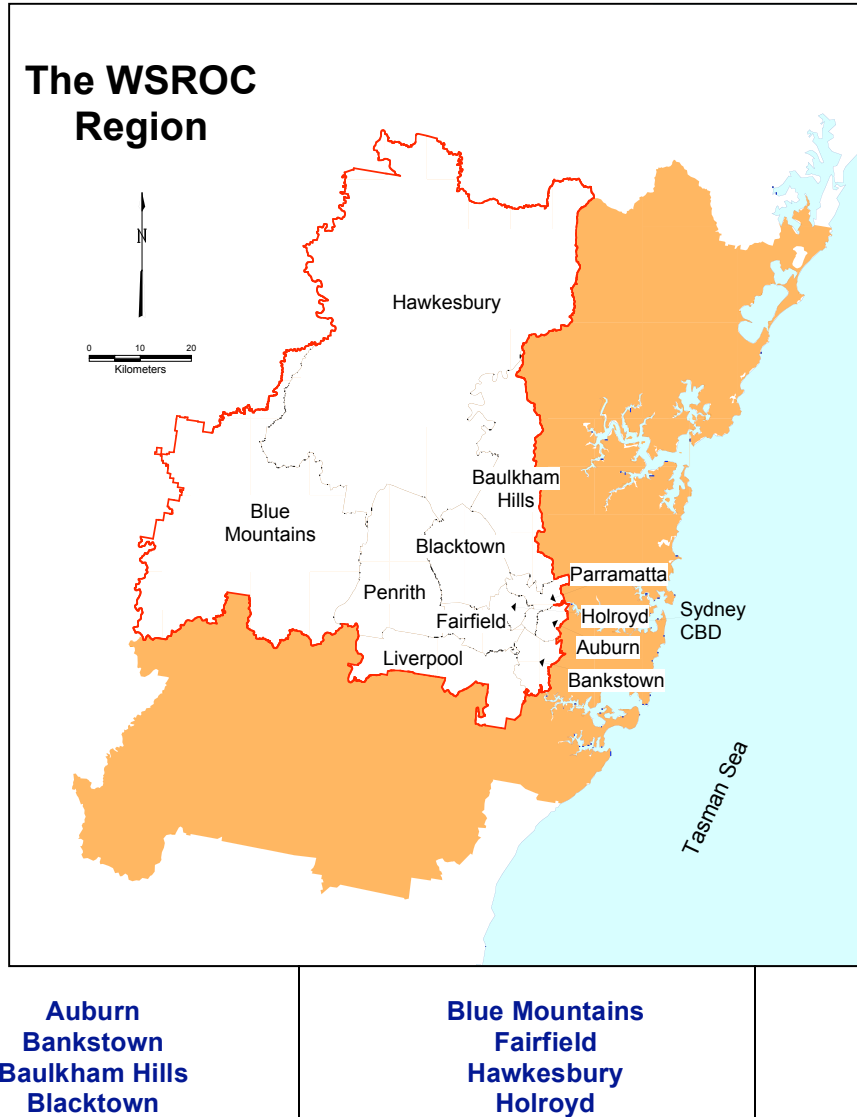
INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTSIDE THE SYDNEY CBD

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**SUBMISSION TO THE NSW PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE INQUIRY:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTSIDE
THE SYDNEY CBD**

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INTRODUCTION

The Chairman of the Public Works Committee, Legislative Assembly announced the *Inquiry into the Development of Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Outside the Sydney CBD* in July 2008 and submissions were sought by Friday, 29 August 2008.

WSROC welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the development of arts and cultural infrastructure outside the Sydney CBD and applauds the broad approach that promotes a whole of government investment in cultural development in NSW to assist it to move forward as a national and international leader.

The relevance of the arts and cultural life has recently emerged as critical in considerations of social and cultural capital, participatory citizenship, quality of life, sustainable development and environmental sustainability. The arts can contribute to economic development, creative industries, participation, democracy and citizenship and to well-being. Cultural and community development practices can deliver healthier cities, through what the World Health Organisation has referred to as 'an enlarged vision of health'. Furthermore, culture and the arts are closely linked to economic development, with creative industries emerging as critical for economic development, employment opportunity, innovation and capacity for effective engagement within the 'new economy'.

WSROC is concerned that NSW commits less per capita funding to the arts than any other State which has a negative effect on the arts and cultural sector within NSW to the extent of making it unsustainable. Extensive and careful planning, development and assessment have already taken place, especially in the Western Sydney region, to develop infrastructure and programs to address the backlog of deficit.

In 2005 WSROC launched *Authoring Contemporary Australia* a strategic framework for the cultural development of Greater Western Sydney. Produced with the co-operation of the fourteen councils of GWS, along with cultural institutions and organisations, artists and cultural consultants, State agencies and peak bodies, it aimed to strengthen collaboration between all these groups. It would therefore be of considerable concern to WSROC if the objectives of this partnership were to be undermined by a lack of funds and focus no longer being dedicated to the Western Sydney region.

In its Strategic Plan 2004-2007, Arts NSW acknowledges that in the face of increasing globalisation, the notion of place has become an especially important organising element in cultural, social and economic terms where people want to participate in creating meaning and identity, and that local government has an increasingly pivotal role. The outcomes of this review should incorporate this perspective and also honour the commitments made by Arts NSW to the Cultural Accord 3 to "maintain and further develop the working relationship between State and Local Government."

This response to the review has been prepared by WSROC in consultation with member Councils, however it should be noted that it does not necessarily represent all their views. Some of these Councils may have made their own submissions to the review, which should be considered separately and in addition to this response.

RESPONSE TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. ISSUES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

1.1 Public funding

As identified in WSROC's first response to the NSW Cultural Grants Review, funding for the arts sector in Western Sydney has not been adequate to address the backlog of unmet needs in facilities and programs. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that Western Sydney is one of the fastest growing regions in the State. Over the next twenty years Western Sydney will accommodate over half the population growth in NSW – approximately 600,000 people. Continuing attention is needed to ensure that services are equitably distributed (both to and within the region) and that access to arts and cultural activity for Western Sydney's communities continues to improve and does not fall further behind.

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy, as a multi-disciplinary place-based approach to capacity building, continues to be central to addressing the legacy of under-development and managing the rapidity of new urban development in Western Sydney, while continuing to nurture and celebrate Western Sydney's distinctive arts and cultural activity. The Strategy has made a significant impact in the region and has gone some way towards redressing the imbalance of funding in the Sydney metropolitan area and has also been effective in fast tracking the development of arts and culture in Western Sydney.

This Inquiry needs to place a renewed emphasis on increasing resources to Western Sydney to address the continuing gaps of unmet need through the Western Sydney Arts Strategy.

1.1.1 *Resourcing existing infrastructure*

There is still an imbalance in the way Western Sydney "flagship" cultural institutions are recognised within the funding program. They are developing audiences of comparable size to those of our State arts institutions. Population growth, further audience development from a growing arts scene across Sydney and the State and improved marketing strategies will further increase these regional audiences.

Regional arts organisations no longer concentrate only on local exchange for their programming, but operate on a regional and State basis in the same way as CBD organisations. As a result, strategic intervention is still required and the level of funding provided needs to recognise the value and contribution of Western Sydney arts product.

1.1.2 *Staffing*

As well as physical infrastructure, the Western Sydney Arts Strategy has supported Local Government and NGOs to deliver their cultural programs and to employ curators, cultural development officers, education officers and directors. Since 2001, over \$10 million has been provided through the Western Sydney Arts Strategy to arts and cultural programs, artists and staff. However, staff levels in Western Sydney's cultural institutions are comparatively low compared to the more sustainably resourced Sydney CBD arts organisations.

Many Western Sydney arts organisations lack the financial capacity either to employ enough staff with particular artform expertise to develop programs and product to meet organisational aims and community expectations or to employ administrative staff to undertake necessary support duties. This has promoted a short-term project culture with limited resources for longer term strategic planning, full program development, research and audience development. Further NSW Government funding is needed to address these staffing shortfalls.

This situation also places a huge demand on volunteer staff, of which there are comparably high numbers in Western Sydney's cultural infrastructure. For example, Campelltown Arts Centre has over 200 volunteers. This is commendable in terms of community engagement;

however, working with volunteers brings challenges around training and coordination that further impacts on staff time. Many of the duties undertaken in our arts centres require specialist skills and upskilling volunteers may not meet this need because trained volunteers often move to paid work elsewhere.

The NSW Government has recognised the significant contribution that volunteers make to local communities. The identification of volunteering as one of the 34 Priorities in the State Plan and the appointment of a Minister for Volunteering indicates that the support the volunteering community deserves is now acknowledged. It is hoped that this will involve action from Recommendation 23 of the Report of the NSW Cultural Grants Review which indicates that the DET / Arts NSW working group should consider whether TAFE training might benefit the volunteer sector.

Another issue for Western Sydney Councils is the lack of cultural development officer positions within councils including Liverpool, Hawkesbury, Wollondilly and Auburn. In councils without cultural development officers this work is being undertaken by other staff, adding to their workloads including managing centres or fulfilling wider community development roles. Further State government funding is needed to position cultural development as a key priority activity of councils.

1.1.3 Programming

- Achieving sustainable growth for regional and sub-regional arts organisations

The major regional and sub-regional cultural infrastructure of Western Sydney including its flagship cultural institutions was originally established through local government. However, these institutions now operate and have impact beyond the boundaries of their original local government areas and even beyond Western Sydney. State Government investment has enabled these institutions to develop innovative cross-disciplinary programming models, but the transition to adequate and sustainable levels of operational funding is increasingly a crucial issue.

As outlined at 2.1.1 of WSROC's first response to the NSW Cultural Grants Review (Attachment 1), the State Government needs to extend its relationship with local government in Western Sydney through the increased and long-term support of these major regional flagship organisations by developing tri-partite funding arrangements with the Federal Government. Clearly defined pathways to triennial funding should be articulated for organisations currently receiving annual funding. This pathway should take the form of clear objectives, targets and guidelines on what they would need to demonstrate in order to move to triennial funding. Multi-year funding would provide certainty to plan more projects of high significance and larger scale.

- Application processing

Key issues also relate to timing matters involving Arts NSW funding processes. Coordination needs to occur between funding bodies, councils and arts organisations to avoid financial and calendar year non-alignment. Also, grant guidelines are normally released each year in February/March with applications due in May/June/July and funds released in November/December. In 2007 grants were not made available until February 2008 and it is only now in late August that Guidelines are released for 2009. There are also serious concerns in Western Sydney that Arts NSW's current restructure will further impede funding processes.

The new program structure will require a transition period adequate for organisations to restructure and address staffing roles and programs for the full implementation phase. This requires consultation and training to avoid any potential lost opportunities from lack of knowledge and also any cuts to scheduled programs. Also, a sufficient overlap time period is needed to ensure all programs and services can be migrated into the new funding arrangement.

1.1.4 Further development of the Western Sydney Arts Strategy

- Addressing inconsistent rates of development in particular artform areas

Arts NSW should support those artform areas that are particularly underdeveloped in Western Sydney, including music and literature and specifically cross-cultural musical forms, literature appreciation and children's literature. Western Sydney is in urgent need of a Children's Literature Centre. The establishment of specialist animateurs (especially in the areas of music and literature) need to continue to be appropriately located and resourced by Arts NSW for Western Sydney.

Further support is needed for professional and artistic development for artists, especially emerging and non-mainstream artists. Senior and emerging fellowship categories could be considered to address areas of disadvantage. Emerging and disadvantaged artists could be provided with developmental advice and services on a 'case work' basis which is particularly relevant for the region's high numbers of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

- Developing a strategic approach to Indigenous arts development

Arts NSW need to fulfil its promise of an Indigenous Arts Development Strategy for Western Sydney as outlined in the 2006 Progress Report on the Western Sydney Arts Strategy. Preliminary work has begun in this area involving an Arts NSW Indigenous Officer and Western Sydney Arts Strategy staff, however, this requires a significant increase in funding. Western Sydney is home to the largest urban Aboriginal population in Australia, with concentrations in the northwest and southwest of the region. Further concerted consultation, support and coordinating effort is essential.

A Western Sydney Indigenous Arts Strategy needs to include:

- a comprehensive audit of Indigenous arts activity
- existing and potential organisational capacity and resources, with detailed recommendations for action to address issues including creation of education and advocacy resources to reflect and encourage recognition
- support for the development of local artists' networks and cooperatives
- provision of spaces for exhibition, performance, rehearsal and studios
- audience development and better opportunities for exposure of Indigenous artists' work
- analysis of education and training needs for Indigenous artists and how these might be met

As stated at Recommendation 23 of the NSW Cultural Grants Review, the DET / Arts NSW Working Group should consider whether TAFE training might benefit Indigenous artists. It is hoped this recommendation is implemented. The model for delivery should be based on employing Indigenous staff to teach and coordinate programs (as is the case with the TAFE Hunter Institute of Technology with its Aboriginal Education and Training Unit) rather than there being only Aboriginal Support Sections (as is the case with TAFE Western Sydney Institute and South Western Sydney Institute). Also, any delivery requires attention to the geographic dispersion of Western Sydney's Indigenous peoples.

- Audience development, arts promotion, communication and critical debate

A Western Sydney based and focused arts publication could showcase the activity of the region and act as a communications channel for the region's arts networks, as well as improving the profile of the region's activities and events in the mainstream Sydney and national media. This would assist with touring product and opening up national and international opportunities.

This area is particularly important given the cuts to all Fine Art courses at the University of Western Sydney and cuts to and consolidation of TAFE arts and creative industry-related courses in Western Sydney. These changes have severely impacted on the capacity of the region to link artists physically and professionally to create a critical mass of activity and dialogue for support and professional development.

Developing audiences requires commitment to extensive research on existing users and non-users of our facilities and programs. Tailored research is needed for our culturally diverse communities and multi-purpose arts centres. Arts NSW needs to be further empowered in their role to undertake this activity to assist Western Sydney organisations to achieve growth in outreaching to the community. The region's organisations are awaiting the first phase of research undertaken by Arts NSW in this area.

- Heritage

Further support is needed for the collection, management and interpretation of moveable and intangible heritage of Western Sydney. There is a need to recognise the important cultural collections held by councils as well as to jointly encourage greater integration of the operation of Local Government cultural facilities including libraries, museums and art galleries. These programs must include provisions for oral history, songs and stories (including those brought by refugees and migrants) within structures of multiple histories.

This area is particularly important given the implications of the Heritage Act Review that resulted (even before the review was completed) in the restructuring of the Heritage Office into the Department of Planning as well as reduction in the protection of heritage such as changes to the State Heritage Register. The State Heritage Register needs to be comprehensive to reflect the broad cultural heritage and history of NSW and to provide a valuable reference resource. As such it needs to contain historic, maritime, archaeological, moveable, natural and Indigenous history that should list heritage values.

Currently, the State Heritage Register under-represents the natural, culturally and linguistically diverse population and Indigenous history of Australia. This severely limits further development of Indigenous cultural and other migrant heritage which in turn impacts on cultural tourism, product opportunities, and possible use of buildings as cultural infrastructure or filming locations that is becoming critical as the Sydney CBD area is "filmed-out".

1.1.5 Hard Infrastructure

- Western Sydney's infrastructure deficit

It is important to note that parts of Western Sydney are still disadvantaged. Research undertaken by the University of Western Sydney's Urban Frontiers Program a *New Vision for Western Sydney – Options for 21st Century Governance*, April 2002 stressed the following:

"Decades of under-investment of policy and fiscal resources in Western Sydney by successive State and Federal Governments have left many of the region's cultural, social and environmental needs unmet. The legacy of this 'undernourished' development includes mounting social and environmental problems, including hardening pockets of poverty and social exclusion, a dwindling and fraying public sphere and ever-increasing ecological stress"

The report also pointed to "newly forming pockets of disadvantage in older suburbs outside public housing estates". The authors noted that a lack of access to life enhancing opportunities was resulting in locational disadvantage that "may severely diminish the ability of relatively affluent households to make use of and enjoy their income".

The University of Western Sydney research has mapped the census-based Index of Socio-economic Disadvantage at the local collector district (CD) scale. This shows that disadvantage was associated with many CDs in the middle and outer suburbs of Sydney, especially to the west and south-west. It also stressed that 'severe disadvantage' was not the sole preserve of the larger public housing estates. Large tracts of Western Sydney standing out as locations of severe disadvantage have very low proportions of public housing.

Some suburbs have certain economic and social characteristics that may be called 'multiple deprivation'. While the characteristics are not necessarily interdependent or causally related, they tend to congregate in specific urban environments.

Social, environmental, cultural and economic issues therefore need to be considered together in an ecological way. This involves making environments more liveable; building a mix of

housing types and tenure in each local area; improving public transport infrastructure and service levels; preserving a level of self-sufficiency in locally produced fresh food; building in opportunities for every day physical activity through safe and appealing design of neighbourhoods; and access to recreational and cultural activities.

The social costs of the inadequate provision of social and cultural infrastructure are harder to quantify than some of the environmental and political costs of not providing adequate sewerage, drainage or surfaced roads. However, there is no doubt that when home buyers move into new areas with large mortgages or other debts, young children, few friends or family support nearby, there are costs that can occur in terms of family breakdown, illness, alcoholism and drug dependence. These costs are not just borne by individuals but are passed on to the whole community.

1.1.6 New release areas

As the result of assigning human services provision such a low priority, or by adding it only after the major physical planning issues have been resolved, communities in new release areas have functioned neither effectively nor efficiently. A lack of access to appropriate and timely services and facilities, aggravated by the relative isolation of new residents from support mechanisms, including existing family and friends, is likely to result.

Despite a wealth of literature that can be pointed to concerning these issues, it would appear that lessons from the past have not been heeded. The following quote from a report published in 1999 by the Rouse Hill Community Planning Team entitled "What and When; Community Services in Rouse Hill Development" highlighted a similar range of issues to those flagged 25 years earlier. The concerns were summarised as follows:

"This 'fringe of the fringe' style of development will lead inevitably to a complex system of suburban isolation and the subsequent range of social consequences that will arise. This may include domestic violence, marriage breakdown, child protection issues, substance abuse, low civic pride, unemployment and high crime rates. This area, as with many of its predecessors in the urban expansion of Australian cities, requires the urgent involvement of government at all levels, communities and community organisations in pro-active planning"

The demands of a rapidly developing new community are rather different, both in terms of type and timing, than in more established areas. The priority services and facilities required must be identified and then considered in terms of the 'minimum' or 'baseline' essential services together with those that are 'desirable'. This is particularly important for the initial residents, who are likely to suffer specific disadvantages associated with the long lead times for provision of major facilities or services, often compounded by the relative isolation from any existing social infrastructure. This is particularly relevant in terms of cultural infrastructure planning as it is proven to be the case that it is the lowest on the priority of developers.

To some extent facilities are the easiest component to provide as they have an obvious and direct relationship to the physical planning program. The need for services is harder to assess because resource allocation is more subject to prevailing ideologies and political priorities. For example, there is generally no dispute about the need for a school, yet there is likely to be some debate about the extent of cultural services that should be made available for newcomers as has been the case with the loss of planned cultural facilities at Camden.

1.1.7 Further cultural infrastructure needs in Western Sydney

Cultural planning at the regional level for Western Sydney needs to continue to be long term, strategic and dynamic, strongly linked to wider social and land use planning processes, such as *FutureWest* (WSROC's Regional Planning and Management Framework) and the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy.

Arts NSW through the Western Sydney Arts Strategy has been able to work with councils to identify regional cultural priorities, the need for coordination and integration of local cultural policies and implementation plans, lobbying, research, information gathering and sharing and identifying opportunities for collaborative projects. As a result of this planning, Western

Sydney's new growth in cultural infrastructure has focussed on a nodal network of provision across the region and it is within this framework that further intraconnection is needed. The suitability of a network model for planning in Western Sydney is explained in section 4.

The planning of further infrastructure for the region should take into account the underdeveloped artform areas in Western Sydney as well as gaps in services and facilities already in the region. Affordable studios for art production are needed based on traditional community art centre models as well as statewide or regional centres for Indigenous arts, children's literature and art development, migration heritage and culture, and professional production studios for visual arts (including new media such as a Western Sydney Metroscreen), music (including rehearsal and recording) and performance (including the requirements of a sprung floor for dance).

The Parry Report of the Review of Public Library Funding also identifies regional infrastructure, where a 'converged' facility may well yield an improved result for communities, however that report suggests the re-focus of funds currently available for program innovation to capital works projects.

Libraries funding needs to be increased with additional funds provided for capital works projects so that their provision does not impact negatively on program development and innovation. The significant capital infrastructure growth in Western Sydney was achieved through an additional special purpose allocation from Government. The idea of 'convergence models', while it has merit, may not suit larger population areas where separate and recently constructed facilities already exist. This is the case in Blacktown where the State Government has made significant investment in the Blacktown Arts Centre and the new central library. Council is currently pursuing opportunities for integrated programming between the arts centre and the library, and is looking at 'convergence' models (including with sport and leisure services) in its smaller suburban libraries.

As part of the planning process, it is suggested that an audit be conducted in consultation with councils of local and State government owned buildings with potential for reuse as cultural infrastructure. This audit (which would require State Government funding) would need to consider issues such as renovation and maintenance costs. A long term planning approach is needed to determine which buildings could be purchased for potential arts industry related uses, their heritage value and the potential of their geographic location to service current or future population needs.

Further planning could then assist with identifying gaps for prioritisation to metropolitan, regional, sub-regional and local initiatives. This would need to be done by recognising the importance and the need to strengthen new and existing assets/infrastructure as major attractors for social and economic prosperity. The State has had a long history of acquiring strategic road or rail corridors for the future needs of transport, the same could apply for the arts. Planning groups involving Arts NSW, State Property Authority and local council could drive this program.

This is particularly important in terms of learning from gentrification processes in other parts of Sydney that saw a collapse of creative industries in them because of lack of planning. Gibson¹ outlines trends of suburbs that had early associations with artists, bohemian movements and 'alternative' subcultures that then become districts of creative industry activity, and sites of gentrification and urban renewal. He points out that given these grassroots producers are the most vulnerable to property market fluctuations they are often forced to move out of the area, decreasing the numbers of creative producers from which commercially 'successful' winners might be sourced.

Although in the short term this may bring benefit through relocation of these creative producers to Western Sydney (as is shown by high artist numbers in the Blue Mountains), Western Sydney could suffer the same consequences through lack of foresight and planning. Gibson² provides strategic examples of cultural structure investment such as Marrickville Council's publicly owned studio spaces and non-profit arts district at Addison Road.

¹ Gibson, C in University of New South Wales and Historic Houses Trust, *Talking About Sydney*, 2006, p192

² Gibson, C in University of New South Wales and Historic Houses Trust, *Talking About Sydney*, 2006, p195

WSROC's second submission to the Cultural Grants Review provides an indicative rather than a definitive list of the priorities of individual councils as identified by councils' cultural officers during 2007. More recent comments articulating some of the broader cultural infrastructure planning issues are outlined below. Further information should be sought from individual councils.

Auburn

Auburn has limited availability and access to appropriate venues and facilities for cultural and arts activities or events, particularly for the performing arts and visual arts. Auburn has only one art gallery (the Newington Armoury within Sydney Olympic Park) which is not accessible to most of Auburn's residents, and no museums. The area has a number of multipurpose community centres that are not suitable for broad-based arts and cultural activities such as workshop, studio, and exhibition and performance space.

Heritage items including heritage conservation areas and unified streetscapes are limited in number as are imaginative artworks that contribute to placemaking, best practice contemporary building design as well as distinctive and innovative landscaping and streetscape improvements. Auburn's built environment, its public spaces and streetscapes are part of the area's culture and sense of place but they can only make only a positive contribution to Auburn's cultural distinctiveness.

Bankstown

Bankstown is currently at a stage of implementing its cultural precinct plan with an arts centre being the first priority.

Baulkham Hills

Baulkham Hills requires assistance with their Civic Cultural Centre proposed for the Castle Hill Town Centre with its emphasis on performance. Satellite art production and community involvement spaces are also needed.

Blacktown

Blacktown Council is currently working with Aboriginal tribal groups from the Sydney basin in the planning for an Aboriginal heritage and cultural centre to potentially be located in Blacktown.

Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains was designated the State's inaugural City of the Arts some years ago, due to the strength of the artistic and creative communities, cultural activity and its position as a key national tourism destination, however the City lacks substantive purpose designed dedicated cultural facilities for the arts.

This gap is being addressed to a significant degree with the development for visual arts, of the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre (regional City Art Gallery & World Heritage Interpretive Centre), in partnership with state government and the private sector. However at this stage funds are not available to develop any Performing Arts facilities for the mountains.

Camden

The proposed development of a cultural centre at Oran Park and Turner Road in the Camden local government area requires further research to determine usage, size and nature and requires firm commitment that an appropriate facility to meet future needs will be delivered as there are specific unmet needs in exhibition and performance space. In October 2007 Elton Consulting highlighted that both Oran Park and Turner Road needed a branch library, youth centre, district community centre and district cultural centre. These plans in late 2007 were changed to a branch library, community resource centre, recreation and youth centre and aquatic centre.

The only saving mentioned was derived from reducing floor space required for the district cultural centre to one third of that previously sought. This is on the assumption that a hall will not be provided in this facility, and that community arts workshop space will be incorporated into the proposed recreation centre. 18 sqm per 1000 people is reduced to 6 sqm per 1000 people.

The planned cultural facility floorspace is 202 sqm that includes exhibition space in foyer and community arts in the recreation centre. Other delivery is left to be provided in a larger regional facility. If the choice for a regional facility is to be made then a plan for this based on research should be undertaken addressing access concerns.

Also, the scaling down of centres to multi-purpose double-storey buildings may not produce the most desirable outcomes because of access issues around lifts, the prevention of good cross-ventilation eco-design options, and sound issues for art production. There are more complicated legal issues around multi-use, and some of the use areas suffer in this arrangement (ie, basketballs near exhibitions). Therefore, single storey precincts are more cost-effective, suitable and adaptable.

Campbelltown

Campbelltown emphasised the need for direct support for arts particularly through provision of artist spaces and an increase in professional theatre spaces.

Fairfield

Fairfield identified the need for local artist studios including space for post production editing suites (because filmmaking is a strong arts stream in Fairfield) as well as creative groups that are forming from newly arrived communities, such as in the area of music.

Fairfield City's network of complementary cultural facilities encourages residents to experience their whole City through creative activity, rather than privileging one location as the centre of arts and cultural activity.

Hawkesbury

Hawkesbury requires space for studios, storage, artist in residence programs and performance.

Holroyd

Holroyd is investigating development of an Arts and Cultural Centre and renovating disused facilities into artist residencies and/or studios. There is a lack of available exhibition spaces, in particular for emerging artists and cultural practitioners and a demand for dedicated, professional arts exhibition facilities. Public art is also a priority.

Parramatta

Parramatta requires support for its proposed new generation centre and gallery as well as other initiatives within its Arts Facilities and Cultural Places Framework that identifies further cultural infrastructure plans and community hubs.

Penrith

In Penrith the Penrith Valley Cultural Precinct (located in St Marys) is undergoing the last of the large infrastructure improvements that is outlined in the current masterplan for the site. The final stage is the redevelopment of a memorial hall and the creation of an outdoor piazza area. In terms of further infrastructure needs this will be somewhat guided by the developing demographic profile of the precinct over the next years. Future infrastructure needs for this precinct include artist studios and space for emerging arts.

Accessibility for people with disabilities is a challenge when retrofitting any council facility, including cultural infrastructure. The cultural precinct in St Marys has had considerable costs associated with access yet it is critical to ensure that all physical access barriers are removed.

Wollondilly

Currently there are limited facilities in the Wollondilly Shire highlighting major gaps in the arts and cultural facility asset portfolio of the Greater Western Sydney Region and a shortfall in the Western Sydney Arts Strategy. Council needs support and assistance with regional planning for their Wollondilly Regional Cultural Centre within their proposed precinct for Picton. This will provide community space for meeting, art exhibition and performance. There is a further need for an Aboriginal Keeping Place and Cultural Heritage Centre.

This is particularly important given the limited resources and capacity of Council to raise revenue to develop arts and cultural infrastructure, a cultural plan or employ an arts and cultural officer to drive and champion this project. Some of these issues relate to an outreach servicing funding structure that is often granted on a Macarthur wide basis with many resources located in Campbelltown, inaccessible to the local community.

1.1.8 Public spaces as infrastructure

The State Government through a number of agencies led by Arts NSW should support a 'living city' concept by assisting to encourage mixed use development that puts forward the inclusion of creative production and artists workspaces within CBD environments and funding programs that support place activation programs creating opportunities to animate the cities in terms of both the look and feel of the place and people's experiences of it.

Well-designed public spaces are essential for creating strong communities and vibrant town centres where people can celebrate community spirit and share special events. In Western Sydney, the public spaces must respond to a diversity of cultural influences that are key to the region's emerging identity. However, most councils have only limited resources to deliver outcomes in this area.

The Queensland and Western Australian governments have been national leaders to implement strategies to assist with development of public space programs. For example, the Queensland Government's Built-In Policy came into effect in 1999. Through this policy all government departments commit at least two per cent of each capital works budget over \$250,000 to integrated art and design. This has recently been expanded to include a much broader strategy that also takes in major events and festivals. This type of policy could be introduced in NSW. Parramatta City Council leads the area of public art policy in Western Sydney, partly because of its vision in developing a program with formal provisions in the City's Development Control Plans and the nature of the area.

However, most councils in Western Sydney do not have the partnership opportunities provided in Parramatta, and so required funds cannot be leveraged to create substantial public artworks. It is therefore recommended that the NSW Government develop and implement a State policy for Public Art with appropriate programs and allocated funding within Arts NSW.

1.1.9 Enhancement of infrastructure relevant to the cultural sector

- Public Transport

Residents of Western Sydney have for many years suffered from poor accessibility and transport difficulties. In addition to a lack of access to health and welfare services and facilities, a far greater effort is needed to travel to work, shopping opportunities, recreation and cultural facilities in the region compared to other part of Sydney. The inability of young rural people, particularly those in remote locations, to access inexpensive public transport to attend alternative opportunities (including cultural activities) is also having flow on effects such as increased anti-social behaviour.

There is a need to increase the accessibility for all residents of the region to these facilities, opportunities and services, both locally and throughout the region. This will be addressed to a great extent by the provision of the public transport infrastructure planned by State Government such as the North West Metro, the South West Rail Link and (potentially) the Western Metro which will link major centres in the region, as well as strategies such as the development of bus corridors. However, more north-south links will be needed.

- Telecommunication infrastructure

The State should advocate to the Commonwealth Government to improve and implement broadband infrastructure and access arrangements across Western Sydney. This development should match supply with future and current demand for these services and needs to be developed and coordinated at a local level. The NSW government needs to maximise access to the Commonwealth funding available to it to support this infrastructure development in NSW. This is particularly important for high-tech artists and creative industries in the Blue Mountains and South Western Sydney involved with new media, film and other art

business users. Also, library infrastructure requires access to broadband to assist with lifelong learning strategies as well as Western Sydney's plans for education networks and cultural tourism as outlined below.

One stated intention of the new Commonwealth Government is to ensure an effective roll-out of access to broadband facilities to areas outside the capital cities. However, previous models for service delivery appear to have been driven from a supply side model without balancing it with demand side considerations. While telecommunications is primarily a Commonwealth responsibility the NSW Government does have a State broadband network connecting many rural towns with optic fibre and other broadband. The State has entered into a commercial arrangement with a private provider to expand this network and priority needs to be given to parts of Western Sydney.

The current existing disadvantage in some parts of Western Sydney will be compounded unless the availability, standard of service, reliability and price regime of broadband services is addressed and provided equitably.

1.1.10 Soft Infrastructure

- Re-location and co-location of Sydney CBD cultural organisations

The NSW Rural and Regional Task Force Report to the Premier (March 2008) recommends that the NSW Government convene a dedicated group involving local government, relevant representatives from NSW and Commonwealth Government agencies and the proponents of existing regional investment attraction initiatives towards defining a coordinated and focused Regional Investment Attraction and Relocation Marketing Strategy for NSW. This strategy needs to incorporate Western Sydney's cultural sector as a priority that could form the basis of a packaged funding agreement between the three levels of government. State owned and managed cultural infrastructure could be developed in Western Sydney.

The NSW Government though Arts NSW could provide incentives to new or expanding arts businesses that are able to move their base of operation to Western Sydney or extend their reach through a physical presence in Western Sydney. Several Sydney CBD organisations have Western Sydney operations such as the Powerhouse Discovery Centre at Castle Hill that is a partner of the Powerhouse Museum.

- Regionally placed staff and outreach programming/partnering

Sydney CBD and statewide cultural organisations could base increase local footprint delivery such as the housing of the Accessible Arts Western Sydney staff based in Blacktown. It is through direct engagement that people gain a full understanding and can devise strategies to meet the region's unmet cultural needs and also it provides a more central location for those positions servicing all of New South Wales.

As outlined in WSROC's response to the Cultural Grants Review, all Arts NSW funded State owned cultural institutions and appropriate major organisations, as well as programs or festivals should demonstrate how they have extended their reach to Western Sydney as part of their funding application processes. This should also include partnerships to develop product within Western Sydney. The latter is particularly important as collaborative processes will assist our cultural organisations to leverage funding to co-develop product whilst bridging inequitable funding arrangements. Partnerships could include sharing of residency programs across several Western Sydney locations. CBD Sydney and peak organisations would need financial incentives to participate.

- Participation for community harmony

Differences in NSW arise in the area of access, where distance and population density has adversely affected the availability or quality of services provided. Scaling down available services or delivering them only in larger centres is one of the primary triggers that may encourage the decline of smaller communities or their capacity to sustain social and cultural activity. These issues are particularly relevant for Western Sydney's outer areas, especially the rural communities in the Wollondilly, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury local government areas.

Community perceptions concerning increased tensions over the escalating rates of crime and vandalism in particular nuisance crime perpetrated by juveniles was not only attributed to poor public transport as mentioned earlier in the Rural and Regional Taskforce Report, but also the lack of diversionary activities.

“Respondents noted that there was a direct correlation between the ability of young people to access well supervised entertainment, sport and recreational activities with the level of crime in a community. This was supported by trials conducted in western NSW which increased the range and availability of diversionary activities over the holiday period which resulted in the lowest ever crime rates for these communities.”

The arts in Western Sydney plays a critical role in the area of social cohesion and community harmony and is particularly important for our culturally and linguistically diverse and refugee communities.

1.1.11 Changes to Section 94 Developer Contributions

WSROC has strongly opposed the recently-announced changes in the framework for developer contributions to local government. The changes impact on and potentially contravene point 1 of the Council’s charter under the Local Government Act, which states that Councils should:

Provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that these services and facilities are managed efficiently and appropriately.

Under the changes, both State and local contributions can now only fund “attributable” infrastructure and land requirements for population growth in new developments rather than infrastructure requirements driven by general population growth (i.e. it will only be possible to levy for a limited range of infrastructure arising directly from the development of land).

These cuts appear to have been made in the wake of developer pressure to reduce State development levies associated with the Growth Centres. Even though Section 94 contributions are a well-established and accepted mechanism for providing local infrastructure, it would appear that Councils and communities will bear a disproportionate share of the cuts the Government has imposed, supposedly to improve housing affordability.

As a result there will be fundamental and far-reaching impacts on the provision of cultural infrastructure. Whilst amendments to the legislation have reduced some of the impacts, it will still be much more difficult to provide a wide range of suburb or district LGA-level facilities beyond the area being developed, no matter how fragmented. The new measures turn back the clock to the days when Councils were only able to provide “pocket parks” and low-quality, uneconomic, poorly located and fragmented community and cultural infrastructure. As arts and cultural facilities require staffing levels that are difficult to sustain across a number of such facilities, this is an extremely critical matter.

The changes have major implications for all Councils. In major growth areas for example, albeit will be more difficult to take a strategic long-term approach to the provision of infrastructure especially if development occurs on a fragmented, multi-front basis. The seven-year limit is also completely unrealistic in light of the long time span over which many release areas are developed.

In redeveloping urban areas the changes will also be much more difficult to provide community infrastructure based on combining contributions from local developments to provide suburb or LGA-level infrastructure to cater for population growth. The Government seems to assume that the new residents in these developments will be able to use existing facilities but in many areas these facilities are inadequate or non-existent. Similarly, in rural and rural-fringe areas, Councils often combined Section 94 contributions from local developments to provide district or township level facilities, which is the only way in which dispersed communities can be serviced.

These changes are occurring at a time when Councils are financially stretched and simply are unable to pick up the shortfall. There seems to be an assumption that these facilities are frivolous (based on a few extreme examples supplied by the development industry) which they are not, or that they can be provided through rate increases even though the State Government refuses to contemplate a rate increase of the magnitude required to pay for them. Grants are generally not of a scale to fund the infrastructure needs of a large urban development and the resulting inability to levy district-wide community/cultural or recreation facilities will represent a substantial lost opportunity for the community..

Even if rates could be increased, this means that the current population will be subsidising district-wide infrastructure for the future population, despite having already contributed towards existing facilities which will be used by future residents.

While the costs of construction and operation of some social infrastructure facilities such as schools and TAFEs, hospitals and emergency services will still be borne by the State Government, the changes also ignore the significant difficulties local government already experiences in levying contributions for Crown development.

The State Government should ensure that Councils have:

- a. The power to adequately levy developments at both the local and regional level that create or increase the demand for infrastructure;
- b. A central role in partnership with State and Federal governments in the planning and development of regional infrastructure strategies (with Arts NSW input for cultural infrastructure); and
- c. The ability to provide input to major infrastructure planning and development that may affect their area or region.

The State Government should provide adequate financial resources to Local Government to enable it to fulfill its responsibilities to the community. Issues of maintenance and retrofitting existing buildings for compliance with Building Codes (especially those relating to accessibility) are costly and particularly relevant to older suburbs of Western Sydney where buildings are being re-configured as new cultural infrastructure such as the St Mary's Precinct in Penrith and the Fairfield Arts Centre.

Also, within this priority area there is a need for funding towards an Arts NSW led development of an integrated approach to heritage conservation and interpretation across Western Sydney, which includes Councils' roles in managing and maintaining the archaeological, built, environment, moveable, cultural and intangible heritage.

1.2 Role of private sector funding, sponsorships or trusts for regional arts and cultural funding and infrastructure

1.2.1 Private funding

The investigation of planning concessions to the private sector could be considered to encourage the integration of the arts to address broader objectives of city improvement, community and cultural development and cultural heritage. Research of public and private partnerships needs to be undertaken to develop models that may be relevant for cultural infrastructure funding. Also, arts sponsorship including the culture of private investment should be researched.

The State Government needs to engage the business community and provide leadership to encourage philanthropy in the arts. The Australian Business Arts Foundation in NSW could learn from leading examples in other States whilst further developing its understanding of the cultural sector in Western Sydney. For example, a partnership between Australian Business Arts Foundation in South Australia and Harris Scarfe Australia resulted in matched value sponsorships between a small business and an arts organisation.

In recent years there has been a number of multi-community regional marketing/investment attraction initiatives established for the benefit of regional NSW involving the State Government. Western Sydney needs to consider being included in any future plans or draw from these to develop cultural development initiatives.

1.2.2 Funds and trusts

Modelled on the Victorian Regional Infrastructure Development Fund, a five-year fund could be set up in Western Sydney which would provide grants to local councils and other relevant organisations for development or upgrading of cultural infrastructure. The scheme should make funds available for arts and cultural facilities, civic improvement programs including those aspects relating to the built environment including public art, landscaping and related design.

1.2.3 Incentives and whole of government coordination

The State government could assist with any Western Sydney arts partnership/sponsorship ventures through offering Payroll Tax Incentives to more fully integrate the arts into Regional Business Investment. This could lead to greater philanthropic activity and investment in the arts as shown by the 10BA film production period of the 1970s. Other NSW Government incentives could include reductions in Workcover levies, the development of red-tape reduction and compliance cost minimisation programs for small to medium sized arts businesses across NSW.

As outlined by the NSW Rural and Regional Task Force³, a fresh whole-of-government approach to business development (including creative industries) needs to be taken:

“Regional economic development depends on the ability to attract and retain business in regional areas. New business attraction and expansion of existing businesses is partly dependent on infrastructure support. Business funding offered by the Governments of neighbouring States to provide infrastructure critical to the operations of a business places NSW regional locations at a competitive disadvantage”.

The Regional Task Force reports the complexity of finding access to regional development assistance in NSW is due to the “apparent multiplicity of regional development organisations, including lack of clarity over the specific financial support available to support economic development that has contributed to the competitive disadvantage” which could explain why some opportunities have not been realised in Western Sydney.

The Rural and Regional Taskforce identifies the:

“...need to develop a coherent approach to business development in NSW. There is a perception that the support provided is disjointed and lacks strategic vision. There is a need to ensure that a systematic and clear process is developed so that business attraction and growth can identify the support available, planning requirements and infrastructure support readily identified and determined, and support such as training and skill developed aligned to meet the needs for regional development.”

The State Plan has identified state and regional development as key priorities (P1 & P6). The Taskforce has identified that to pursue these priorities in rural and regional areas action is required to clarify the support available from the multiplicity of relevant agencies.

In addition to resolving the confusion over regional development organisation the NSW Government needs to ensure that it is able to provide appropriate financial support for regional economic development. Engendering an attitude of collaboration, sharing and education around inter-generational equity would also assist development.

³ Rural and Regional Taskforce, Report to the Premier, 2008, p 57

2. SUITABILITY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL LIFE.

2.1 Mechanisms and support in place to ensure the importance of art and culture to be taken into account when planning new regional centres and undertaking urban consolidation.

2.1.1 Arts NSW

Stakeholders within the Western Sydney region clearly look to Arts NSW to take a leadership role in relation to the activities and policies of other State Government departments which impact on cultural development, as well as at Local and Federal Government levels.

Arts NSW's Strategic Plan 2004-7, *Priorities for the Arts*, clearly articulates the importance of leadership by nominating it as one of its strategic priorities. Leadership addresses the role of arts and culture in the social life of the State by 'better integrating the arts and culture with other arms of government', in order to 'generate more opportunity, more activity, more jobs and greater engagement in the arts' (p.9).

The Cultural Planning Guidelines give further impetus to this process, articulated as they are as part of a broader initiative 'to embed cultural development processes into the objectives and operations of Government agencies so that a whole-of-government approach to cultural development can be achieved' (Cultural Planning Guidelines, p.5).

2.1.2 Arts NSW in collaboration with other State Departments

Arts NSW has an important role to play in making explicit links between cultural development and broader development agendas within the State public sector. This includes, in particular, the Department of Planning; the Department of State and Regional Development; the Office of Western Sydney; the Roads and Traffic Authority; the Ministry of Transport; the Department of Housing; the Department of Education and Training; the Department of Community Services (and particularly the Communities Division); Department of Health; Department of Commerce (Industrial Relations); the Community Relations Commission and so on.

The cultural interfaces of these State agencies are currently under-developed. Clear points of contact within those agencies are needed to interface with Arts NSW and to mirror the increasing level of integration within local government of cultural development and planning with processes of urban development and regeneration, economic and employment development, and environmental sustainability.

The Government should ensure that Arts NSW has meaningful and substantial participation in the Department of Planning's processes to inform planning for the Government's arts investment in new areas of Western Sydney. This should include consideration of cultural development both in the regional cities as well as major and emerging centres.

Arts NSW should also be empowered to reinforce the importance of arts investment in planning for newly developing areas, regional centres and areas still subject to urban consolidation, linking arts and cultural development to the broader planning agendas within State agencies, planning more strategically to accommodate changing infrastructure demands and recognising the scale of the social and cultural transitions that are taking place in the region.

Western Sydney's cultural development is dependent on the State Government agencies becoming more involved in the arts sector and creative industry development. WSROC endorses the NSW Rural and Regional Taskforce Report to the Premier that calls for a review of the role of the various State government agencies, departments and boards involved in economic development activities, including but not limited to, the Department of State and Regional Development, Regional Development Boards, Business Advisory Services, and Business Enterprise Centres. The objective being to ensure the effective utilisation of

resources and to increase the level of project funds which are available. This requires a proactive engagement with learning about the arts sector including creative industries.

WSROC further endorses that the State Government initiate discussions with the Commonwealth Government aimed at streamlining the number of regional development bodies thereby reducing duplication of effort across NSW. As noted by the NSW Rural and Regional Taskforce that applies to Western Sydney, there is a perception that there are too many players, often with limited actual resources, competitive tendencies in some quarters and problematic communication which invariably leads to fragmented or duplicated effort.

There also needs to be greater devolvement of power and funds to Western Sydney through Department branches such as State and Regional Development. For example, State and Regional Development in Parramatta have been particularly keen to support the Western Sydney film industry through providing support to create a presence on the New South Wales Film and Television Office website's locations section as well as the creation of a Western Sydney Film Liaison Officer position that is provided in every other region in New South Wales by the Department.

A new Regional Delivery Framework has been developed to support the regional delivery of the goals, priorities and targets of the NSW State Plan. The Western Sydney cultural sector needs to be a priority in this program so that focussed attention can assist in better coordinating State agency activities in the region.

Regional Coordination Management Work Plans would provide agencies with a vehicle to drive, summarise and communicate with stakeholder initiatives that could assist the cultural activities. As noted by the Rural and Regional Taskforce, notwithstanding these developments there is a sense that even greater "focused" effort is required and that some agencies appear to be relatively poor at engaging with other relevant agencies on some important issues. It is hoped that Priority Delivery Plans would provide Government and Cabinet with a mechanism for holding agencies accountable for the delivery of outcome improvements. There is a need for greater engagement with the arts sector by key agencies such as the Greater Western Sydney Economic Development Board, State and Regional Development and the Department of Premiers and Cabinet.

There are regular meetings on a broad range of specific matters between senior regional staff of NSW Government agencies and senior cultural staff of councils. While this practical working arrangement is strong between many councils and agencies such as Arts NSW there are some agencies which appear to be less inclined to maximise this relationship. These relationships need to be developed so that local government is treated as an equal partner.

2.2 Support through Arts NSW for local councils to undertake integrated cultural planning/planning for cultural infrastructure.

Arts NSW has an important role to play in linking arts and cultural development to broader development agendas within State agencies. The Western Sydney Arts Strategy is significant in that it has been implemented within an arts policy context which places an increasing emphasis on the strategic importance of cultural planning, taking into account arts, culture and local identity when planning regional centres and urban consolidation.

As outlined above, Arts NSW needs to become better resourced and more empowered in its role to undertake these tasks and work with other State agencies. The identified role in advocating to other agencies needs to be backed up by a Cabinet directive. Further strategies to do this include the employment of a permanent Chief Executive Officer for Arts NSW so that more stable advocacy for the arts can be made within State Government.

Arts NSW needs to be further developed in the following areas which will require additional funding and staffing:

2.2.1 Research Role

WSROC supports the further development of Arts NSW to expand its role to include a research arm to inform its policy and decision-making as well as an education, mentoring and marketing role to provide strategic assistance to the development of the arts in NSW.

Arts NSW should undertake research and develop resources to support cultural development within the State and support feasibility and research studies that have the potential to lead to broader based financial support for creative industry development for Western Sydney to create new local jobs for the growing population of the State.

Arts NSW should undertake research to provide further information on the possible productive engagement between the arts and corporate sectors and, in partnership with groups of artists and smaller arts organisations, undertake feasibility studies on providing flexible, affordable, local and accessible multi-purpose studio and rehearsal space and spaces for small-scale exhibitions, performances and workshops.

As cultural development is often conducted on a project-by-project basis with little opportunity for evaluation, cumulative documentation of projects would enable best practice model building of innovative community engagement and project implementation.

2.2.2 Marketing and Promotion

Arts NSW could provide a marketing and promotion service to assist in marketing regions, such as Western Sydney, individual companies and programs as well as innovation in the creative industries sector.

2.2.3 Mentoring Role

Arts NSW could provide an advice service to individual artists, groups and organisations in a wide range of areas including auspicing, copyright, public liability, volunteerism, moral rights, policy, marketing, etc and explore options for auspicing projects on a State-wide level.

2.2.4 Training and Education Role

Arts NSW could play a role in developing resources and providing training programs and ongoing advice on research areas outlined above as well as:

- Art in the development and redevelopment of public space

This training is particularly critical in Western Sydney to ensure urban development and regeneration creates places that sustain diverse communities at the same time as they addressing the challenges of increasing population densities. Support needs include:

- Advice to councils on project development and management, including contracting artists, funding, establishing multi-disciplinary urban design teams;
- Advice and assistance with the development of local public art policies as part of cultural planning processes;
- Advocacy, information and referrals; and
- Development through mentoring, training and professional development for public artists from within the Western Sydney region.

- Negotiation in the developer environment

This area is particularly important in the context of the quick pace of new development (and the implications of changes to Section 94 contributions for cultural facilities and services).

- Arts Access

The Arts Access program be continued and further developed to include a wider audience within Western Sydney (see Education section).

2.3 Outcomes from the Western Sydney Arts Strategy, and possibility of plans to replicate the Western Sydney Arts Strategy in other regions

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy has been particularly important because as an equity program it has recognised the one third of the State's population in Western Sydney and provided the arts development focus it has deserved to address part of the backlog of unmet needs in the region. Although WSROC encourages focussed planning in all areas of NSW Western Sydney needs to remain a priority for Arts NSW as there is still a long way to go before its cultural development is equal to what is taken for granted in other areas of Sydney. As Australia's third largest economy it is still not given the attention that it deserves as a major contributing region to the nation's wealth.

This dedicated Western Sydney Arts Strategy position in Arts NSW has been and continues to be critical to the ongoing support and further development of arts in Western Sydney. It allows for areas of need that fall between the mainstream programs to be identified, opportunities for cooperation and resource sharing to be exploited and strategic interventions to be made that contribute significantly to cultural development at the level of integrated infrastructure. The position enables the Western Sydney Arts Strategy to move forward in ways that are relevant and effective for our region.

The program manager's role assisted by:

- providing the State Government with a better understand the role played by local governments in the region's arts sector;
- providing invaluable support and advice to Councils and arts organizations;
- brokering partnerships with a knowledge base on what was acceptable and possible;
- providing matched funding;
- helping local governments to give greater funding commitment to fast-track developments and funding positions;
- providing strategic operational advice;
- building on successes; and
- adapting plans to the growth and change in the region.

Over the long term, equity in access and participation for Western Sydney residents should be integrally supported within mainstream public sector arts programs. This can be ensured through the program manager for Western Sydney's reporting and evaluation benchmarks against equity and priority indicators. This dedicated position is critical for the ongoing support and further development of arts in Western Sydney as it allows for areas of need that fall between the mainstream programs to be identified, opportunities for cooperation and resource sharing to be exploited and strategic interventions to be made that contribute significantly to cultural development at the level of integrated infrastructure.

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy was specifically designed to meet the needs of the region and so a similar planning and collaboration process is desirable but how other region's needs are met must be done on an individual basis

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy has been excellent in terms of wider planning to meet artform needs taking into account geographic issues through the creation of multi-artform venues and sharing throughout the region. However, it suffers from a perception that the infrastructure phase is now complete when there are many artforms without dedicated specialist venues including dance (with a needed sprung floor), Indigenous arts, music, and production / studio spaces for visual and performing artists and local government areas within Western Sydney without any or adequate art production and showcasing spaces.

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy was developed to support a thriving educated artistic community that is no longer sustained through the availability of education at the University of Western Sydney (see area concerning education) that has resulted in relocation of many artists to the CBD. This has impacted negatively in many ways that will become more severe

over time as future generations of Western Sydney artists lack local access to professional pathways and training.

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy has also assisted in gaining funding support from councils and a longer term commitment from the State Government. However, cultural infrastructure is facing critical sustainability challenges because of the lack of State and Local Government funds for ongoing program development and staffing.

3. THE DESIRABILITY OF LOCATING CULTURAL FACILITIES IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO CREATE HUBS.

Cultural precincts or hubs do generate a critical mass of activity in one location, and attract audiences, visitors and workers to a variety of venues and cultural facilities, arts and creative industries incubator infrastructure including restaurants and other leisure attractions. Councils such as Parramatta are pursuing this within a CBD framework with several exciting cultural infrastructure precincts currently in the planning stage.

However, the opportunities to develop these are limited in Western Sydney. Mixed use or 'convergence' facilities or precincts are a viable option for suburban or smaller urban centres, and where populations are spread over large geographical areas. These can include co-location of community, neighbourhood, library, childcare and art/cultural facilities involving indoor and outdoor spaces. These precincts form part of complementary networks of cultural facilities both within each local government area and in dialogue with the regional planning as implemented through the Western Sydney Arts Strategy. Regional concerns must be considered with any local planning for infrastructure to ensure that audience peaks are not exceeded. Western Sydney's multi-purpose art centres also provide the co-locative pollination opportunities provided by hubs.

Western Sydney also has many outreach cultural institutions and it is critical for their sustainability that intra-local government area public transport is radically improved as mentioned above. Cultural development is shifting the 'centre-periphery' perception of Western Sydney that has oriented itself towards the CBD for its cultural consumption. The M7 'orbital' road has transformed the travel topology of Western Sydney by linking centres such as Blacktown, Bankstown, Fairfield and Liverpool, providing an important north-south corridor. This corridor will also provide an important inter-regional transport link between the North-West and South-West Growth Centres.

International models of creative industry development include those that begin as en-route stopovers such as Silicon Valley that was a stop for people travelling to the ski fields. This aspect could be further developed for outer Western Sydney commuters through planning the M4 frontage in strategic ways.

3.1 Plans or current structures/arrangements for funding large scale arts and cultural infrastructure development outside of the big seven institutions based in the Sydney CBD.

In 2002, the Government announced a major capital infrastructure package of \$14.9 million under the Western Sydney Arts Strategy. Since then, the Strategy has disbursed an extra \$5.32 million for capital infrastructure, enabling the most substantial advances in physical infrastructure for the arts in Western Sydney on record.

Casula Powerhouse (\$7.44 million) refurbished space now has 7 galleries, two new floors, a new 328-seat theatre, and café and retail space

Campbelltown Arts Centre (\$3.32 million) - refurbished Centre now has a 180-seat theatre, rehearsal studios, workshops, and café and gallery.

Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre (\$1.9 million grant from Arts NSW + \$4.5 million from DET) - now has a new 380-seat theatre, 23 music studios, two recital rooms, two orchestral rooms, box office, administration area, foyer, restrooms and bar.

Blacktown Arts Centre (\$1.035 million) - converted former church in a multi-purpose art space, including theatre and galleries.

Penrith Regional Gallery & the Lewers Bequest (\$1.65 million) - now has a new gallery, café, research library and archive.

Hawkesbury Regional Museum (\$1.15 million) - new fit-out and construction of the new Museum at Windsor

The upcoming **Arts Hub at Bankstown** (\$1.5 million) - Council is in the design phase of a major new arts hub to house local arts organisations.

Other capital grants have been provided for **Fairfield School of Arts** (\$140,000) and **Liverpool PCYC Recording Studio** (\$300,000 grant).

The Strategy has also distributed over \$1 million to Local Government and NGOs for capital works such as the **Information and Cultural Exchange** (ICE) SWITCH Multimedia and Digital Arts Access Centre, the Parramatta Artists' Studios and Margaret Farm Artists' Residencies.

In 2008, a \$240,000 grant to Parramatta City Council will go towards the **Connection Artists Place**, an arts space to be located in the CBD of Parramatta that will house key local arts organisations.

Further recent grants have been made from Treasury (\$5 million each) for the **Blue Mountains Cultural Centre** and **Parramatta Regional Art Gallery**.

As State Government funding for cultural infrastructure from Arts NSW, Department of Education and Treasury this represents a clear need for whole-of-government approach to cultural infrastructure development as well as the need for further advocacy on the importance of the arts to be included in all State Government responsibilities.

In the examples provided above most of this funding was matched by Local government, however, this model cannot continue because of the increasing inability of councils to provide matched funding. Any new cultural infrastructure funding arrangements need to include a substantial greater injection from the State Government and possibly tri-partite arrangements with the Federal Government or other Departments of the State Government such as Education, Health and Heritage.

3.2 Implications for the availability and priority of cultural infrastructure funding in relation to the Metropolitan Strategy and regional strategies.

WSROC supports in principle the development of sub-regional strategies as part of the Metropolitan Strategy as well as specific strategies such as the Western Sydney Arts Strategy. The Government should ensure that Arts NSW has meaningful and substantial participation in the Department of Planning's processes to inform planning for the Government's arts investment in new areas of Western Sydney. This should include consideration of cultural development both in the regional cities as well as major and emerging centres. Arts NSW should:

- reinforce the importance of arts investment in planning for newly developing areas, regional centres and areas still subject to urban consolidation;
- link arts and cultural development to the broader planning agendas within State agencies
- plan more strategically to accommodate changing infrastructure demands;
- recognise the scale of the social and cultural transitions that are taking place in the region; and
- use the multi-disciplinary and place-based model throughout NSW.

In the context of the implementation of the State Plan, WSROC also urges the State Government to acknowledge the strategic role of local cultural facilities, including their:

- Contribution to the sustainability of arts and culture in NSW;
- Accessibility which encourages increased participation and integration of people in community activities;
- Contribution to the character of our suburbs and communities; and
- Role in presenting our authentic community culture, and empowering communities to control their own representation.

Concerns have been raised regarding definitions and nominations such as:

- Outer urban councils such as Wollondilly, Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury have experienced ongoing difficulties in navigating through Government and non-Government definitions of 'metropolitan', 'country', 'regional' and 'rural'. A specific Interface Council Program will help overcome this by providing a pool of funding for councils that cover both metropolitan and rural areas.
- Councils who have not benefited from being nominated for cultural infrastructure or as being designated as regional centres or regional cities.
- Any focus must take into account the perceptions of residents and their preferred uses. For example, Auburn residents do not access Sydney Olympic Park Authority as readily as may be perceived because of several planning issues.

3.3 Existence of any audit of the cultural venues or cultural infrastructure that exists in NSW outside of the Sydney CBD and Metropolitan area.

Relevant projects may include:

- Arts NSW is currently conducting an audit of all residency opportunities in New South Wales. This would capture most cultural infrastructure.
- Audit of Public Library Buildings in NSW prepared for Gosford City Council by BBC Consulting Planners, August 2007.
- Professor Ross Gibson of the University of Sydney is conducting a five year ARC funded research project on creative industries in regional NSW.
- The Artstart program run by Bronwyn Braham from the TAFE NSW Access and General Curriculum Centre provides comprehensive links to most arts organisations in NSW.

3.4 Arrangements that are in place to ensure an equitable spread of arts funding across regional and rural NSW.

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy has been a leading model in this area and issues of geographic spread, population levels and densities, merit and artform development need to be considered with any future developments.

The proposed increased role of Regional Arts NSW as identified in the report of the Cultural Grants Review will impact on this area.

3.5 Effectiveness of Cultural Accords – partnerships with local government, which encourage local councils to invest in the Arts and to develop cultural life in local government areas.

Local Government is integral to the health of the arts sector in New South Wales. It is disappointing that the Cultural Grants Review did not consider the role of Local Government as a partner with the State in arts development. The accord between Local and State government in New South Wales should be strengthened and there should be formal consultations with councils regarding the recommendations of this report.

Further partnership development needs to occur and can include:

3.5.1 Further development of regional arts strategies

The Western Sydney Arts Strategy has provided vision and skills that has impacted on local government expenditure in highly productive ways. For example, Blacktown Council's allocation of \$40,000 for a cultural plan in 1999 has grown to arts and cultural development expenditure of \$800,000 annually. The Western Sydney Arts Strategy support has been a catalyst for commitments to art and cultural development in the region by other levels of government, other cultural institutions and the private sector.

3.5.2 *Partnership building between Economic Development sections of State Government and Local Councils*

This review could initiate a partnership and mandate with Western Sydney's councils where Economic Creative Development is seen as a core function of local government with the arts being understood as an economic driver through its ability to provide innovation and link with broader services including cultural tourism and new industry development.

4. ACCESSIBILITY OF CULTURAL AND ARTS EDUCATION.

4.1 Art and creative industry education

Greater Western Sydney (GWS) has many unmet needs from a history of neglect and this is particularly true in the fine art and creative industry training, with recent further decline from both TAFE NSW and the University of Western Sydney (UWS) from a consolidation of delivery to few campuses within the region and cuts to courses.

Improving arts learning outcomes for young people, both as artists and audiences, requires long-term cooperation between Arts NSW and educational authorities such as the NSW Department of Education (DET), TAFE and Universities. This is particularly important if the State Government is to reach its State Plan target of a 10% increase in visitation of and participation in the arts by 2016. WSROC has taken a lead role in the arts education area because of the situation in Western Sydney.

Greater Western Sydney's total population of 1.8 million is larger than that of Perth (1.5 million). In 2006 in four Perth universities alone over 7,600 full-time students were offered and studied creative arts (that included visual and performing arts studies in 39 courses), compared to only 2,300 full-time creative arts positions made available by the University of Western Sydney (UWS). Students could only select visual and performing arts studies from UWS's four courses. Western Sydney now has no university-based visual or performing arts training, even though just over a decade ago it reportedly housed 100 staff and 1000 students in this area.

Existing TAFE course delivery in GWS requires wider or higher level delivery in photography, visual arts, events management and music. Design and illustration, theatre performance, multimedia, screen and digital media, and textile clothing and footwear are not offered in the region. An analysis of the TAFE NSW statewide arts and creative industry course offerings was provided in WSROC's second submission to the Cultural Grants Review that is at Attachment 2. The Blue Mountains area that has a high concentration of artists continues to be provided with no arts or creative industries training by TAFE NSW. TAFE Western Sydney Institute and South Western Institute for 2008 and 2009 continue to be scaled down compared to other areas of Sydney, particularly in the high-technology creative arts areas.

At the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting of 20 December 2007 the Commonwealth and State Governments agreed to focus on addressing the issue of skills shortage as a national priority in 2008. Skills shortages impede economic growth and limit enterprise expansion and diversification to some degree. Addressing skills development is increasingly central to any regional development strategy both now and in the future. The diverse range of professional expertise in a range of disciplines is going to need the expertise provided through arts and creative industry education.

4.1.1 *Western Sydney's Arts and Creative Industries Education Network*

In September 2007 a Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) taskforce comprising Councillors and senior staff from councils across Western Sydney was set up to explore alternative options for the provision of tertiary arts education in the region in the wake of the University of Western Sydney's decision to suspend intake to its sole remaining contemporary arts degree in 2008.

This Mayoral Arts Education and Creative Industries Taskforce (MAECIT) also have the brief to consider the wider issues of this education sector including TAFE course delivery and

creative industries training. As a result, discussions commenced with other institutions and a partnership was forged with Griffith University Queensland College of Art (QCA) with its closely related Southbank TAFE, and the University of New South Wales College of Fine Arts (COFA). These institutions were viewed as being the most suitable because they have two of the most robust and leading art schools in Australia and they are involved with face-to-face delivery that promotes currency with art practice as well as access to educators, artists and networks. The MAECIT is currently further developing its relationship with QCA in a bid for the Federal Government's Creative Industries Innovation Centre program.

If the bid for the Creative Industry Innovation Centre (CIIC) is successful, it has been agreed that it will be located in Western Sydney. Blue Mountains, Penrith and Parramatta Councils developed proposals to house the centre as part of the application process. Arts education delivery form part of the proposed service delivery that would provide a staged and supported process for further development of Griffith University's activities in the region. Partners in the bid include Melbourne University (Victoria College for the Arts), Charles Darwin University and Curtin University as well as overseas arts institutions in America, UK and India and key organisations such as the Jewellery Innovations Centre in Birmingham.

The MAECIT is aware that apart from this training being important for the development of skilled artists so local stories can be told and appreciated within Western Sydney and nationally, creative industry training is critical to the future of Western Sydney with its diminishing old-industrial base and rapidly growing population. The last decade of worldwide research into creativity and the industries that arise from it has demonstrated that the generation of wealth in the new economies depends on the production of innovative services and experiences driven by ingenious ideas and creative processes within working communities. Imaginative and practical training for job opportunities for local people (including the large population of mature workers) will skill people for the knowledge economy and the associated service, entertainment, design and communications industries.

Understanding Western Sydney's geographical distances, transport problems and socio-economic disadvantage, the MAECIT have agreed that Western Sydney is potentially a world-standard model for the design and governance of networked educational delivery venues. As Ross Gibson has noted:

"Western Sydney has two complementary qualities that make it an optimal location for a multi-nodal, networked approach to cultural development and creative industry training:

- (a) the region is geographically dispersed enough to require excellent online communication systems
- (b) but it is also 'contained' enough to allow workers in the various nodal concentrations to meet regularly, face-to-face, via the physical transport system.

Studies of distributed organisations have shown that the ability to combine broadband communication with regular scheduled meetings in the 'real-world' represents the most efficient means of integrating geographically dispersed organisations. Greater Western Sydney is of a scale well suited to such an efficient arrangement. This fulfils the necessary conditions for strong networks: rich nodal concentrations connected on resilient, equable and extensive communication channels."

As a result for the need for a plan to build on existing assets in all the Western Sydney Local Government Areas, WSROC's Regional Cultural Development Coordinator has been working with council staff to conduct an audit of local educational delivery, possible venues for educational delivery and possible curriculum specialisation areas based on factors such as current cultural infrastructure, artform specialisation, neighbouring cultural organisations and community demographic issues. The serious issues of environmental and social sustainability within the region, including the large cultural mix, has also indicated a clear need for the new structure to be embedded within the fabric of the local community.

The development of this new arts and creative industries education network is now at a stage where full support of the NSW State Government is required to assist local government and Griffith University to move this proposal forward. The Rural and Regional Taskforce noted the pragmatic and strategic understanding of rural and regional communities to the interdependence of education, training, employment and business development. These communities are seeking leadership from the Government through innovative alternatives connecting these elements. Through local champions some communities have been able to demonstrate viable options to achieve this end.

One example is the Gwydir Learning Region which is a collaborative partnership involving local schools, TAFE campuses and Adult and Community Education providers, the universities (predominantly the University of New England), the local council, local businesses and the local community. Driven by strong local champions and willing partners in an economically disadvantaged area, the authors believe the benefits of the model to be:

- encouragement of lifelong learning and attraction of the mature aged back into education and vocational training
- integration of education and training to meet local business needs and employment opportunities
- the development of education / career pathways
- the better use of infrastructure (both buildings and other facilities)

The model demonstrates that different models can respond to local need and circumstance and that the connection between education, skills development to support local economic activity, and the local community is critical in achieving sustainable and viable communities.

There appear to be opportunities for sound regional development through building a strong nexus between education and vocational training; identification of skill needs of local businesses; the provision of clear pathway for individual careers and success; and cooperation between local stakeholders.

As with Western Sydney's proposed model of delivery, there are many benefits to the social and cultural fabric of the region. Western Sydney galleries and performance spaces will also benefit from being able to sustain their relationship with skilled local artists to present their product and in turn the local community will benefit from seeing their local stories being told as well as being presented with professional career pathways.

4.1.2 Indigenous Arts Education

Western Sydney is home to the largest urban Indigenous population in Australia, with concentrations in the northwest and southwest. TAFE Western Sydney and South Western Sydney do not deliver any of the accredited courses offered elsewhere in the State such as Aboriginal Visual and Performing Arts (Cert 1 to 4), Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts (Cert 1 to 4), and Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Tourism (Cert 3).

The CIIC network aims for specialist nodes in Indigenous Arts/Creative Industries to specifically assist Indigenous people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Griffith University has the only Indigenous arts degree in Australia. Charles Darwin University can link with Western Sydney to link the two most highly concentrated Indigenous populations in Australia for education and artistic practice, and Western Sydney can draw from the highly developed marketing expertise of the Northern Territory region.

4.1.3 Other learners experiencing disadvantage

The creative arts training area is also critical in providing people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, particularly in the Central sub-region of Western Sydney, with positive learning experiences and skills to assist them with learning English that they will need to gain employment in the new job markets.

At the time of the 2006 Census the number and proportion of those speaking English not well or not at all in the North-West Sydney sub-region of Western Sydney was 14,780 or 7.6% of

overseas born persons aged 5 or more years, compared with 14,474 persons or 12.9% in the South-West sub-region and 68,552 persons or 24.2% in the West-Central sub-region. In other words, almost one in four of the overseas born population in the West-Central sub-region of GWS were found to speak English badly or not at all compared with 1 in 8 in the South-West and 1 in 13 in the North-West. These findings are particularly significant in the light of recent analysis that has highlighted the growing socio-economic divide that is occurring in Western Sydney.

The nodal configuration of the CIIC development will also assist people from low socio-economic backgrounds as well as people with disabilities because of the reduction in transport costs and possibilities for online participation. The opportunities provided by fast broadband can also provide people who are Deaf or have a hearing impairment to understand broadcast lessons. "Home-based" creative industry owners will benefit from the availability of courses in the region that will provide access to skill development and information to assist with developing new market opportunities.

In the short term people in Western Sydney face the fact there is very little education in this area provided for them locally and that the implementation of the CIIC program may take several years because of the unknown factor of fast broadband access and relevant support from government sectors to provide the infrastructure and support necessary for this network to be realised. This may lead to our talented people relocating outside the region to access further opportunities.

4.1.4 Libraries

In recognition of the vital role that public libraries play in the education of people of all ages, the NSW Government should review the funding it provides to public libraries, with a view to increasing its contribution to a significant proportion of the required revenue. In conducting this review, opportunities to better link libraries to broader educational and training opportunities using broadband such as proposed with the Western Sydney Arts and Creative Industries Education Network as mentioned above, as well as other existing service providers.

The lower than average education levels in many parts of Western Sydney indicates the importance of people being able to access opportunities for learning outside the mainstream educational institutions. Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and the elderly, as well as people from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds often need assistance with accessing mainstream community life. Newly arrived migrants or refugees are particularly vulnerable community members who require supported pathways to wider education through the literacy programs and specialist learning resources. Western Sydney is the principal destination for refugees settling in NSW, and public libraries provide an essential service to this group.

Public libraries are meeting these needs through innovative educational programs and services. Users can access contemporary forms of popular culture and new forms of creative expression leading to a greater sense of community connection whilst improving literacy and creative skills. It is imperative that library resources and facilities are continually upgraded to meet the impacting trends relating to this need as well as the growing Western Sydney population.

Western Sydney also has lower participation levels in tertiary education than in other regions and this reflects not only a lack of access to education but also inadequacy in the resources that support and enable course completion. For example, Western Sydney students from low socio-economic backgrounds often cannot afford computers or internet access at their homes and home-life conditions can present difficulties for them in studying at home. The lack of adequate public transport in many parts of Western Sydney results in high levels of car dependency, high transport costs and long journey times to access the limited facilities that are available in the region.

Public libraries offer a safe, quiet and accessible place for these students to pursue their study. Also, students studying by distance education or those who cannot easily access the

distant campuses of UWS because of transport difficulties or safety concerns, rely on public libraries to complete their study.

The State Government could work towards a renewed partnership with the Federal Government to fund public libraries as was developed in the Whitlam era.

4.1.5 4.1.6 State Government programs needing further enhancement

- TAFE NSW

In the short term TAFE NSW could further develop the arts sector in Western Sydney by providing a wider range of arts related courses across more campuses to assist with individual artist professional development as well as skills and opportunities for workers to create new jobs and businesses for creative industry development including cultural tourism.

The delivery of Fine Art courses to Greater Western Sydney is currently highly developed across several areas including Fine Arts, Ceramics and Design at Nepean and Campbelltown. A comprehensive music program is offered at the Narimba campus as well. However, there is a need to further expand these courses to include other areas to provide potential students with the opportunities to meet travel requirements that are a very serious concern in Greater Western Sydney with limited public transport options.

For example, with a high concentration of artists in the Blue Mountains there is a need for local courses that can be catalysts for local industry development in exhibition, sale and promotion of visual arts products.

- Arts Access Strategy

Through the Arts Access Strategy Arts NSW and DET have provided government school students in years 5 to 8, who are otherwise unable to access live performances in dance, drama and music and exhibitions in galleries and museums, with the opportunity to participate in these experiences. It also exposes isolated communities to professional artists as artists-in-residence, and includes a performing arts touring program. It is recommended that the Arts Access program include Western Sydney schools in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage and Western Sydney artists and arts organisations in the program.

4.1.6 Primary and secondary level art education

There needs to be a stronger dialogue between State Government agencies and a willingness to support further opportunities for diverse student learning across the curriculum at Primary and Secondary school levels.

The primary curriculum is particularly confused with key learning areas such as the creative arts remains relatively marginalised. The Board of Studies Parents' Guide for the NSW primary syllabus provides creative arts key learning areas (including visual arts, music, drama and dance) as equating to only 6 to 8% of any given school week. This means between only 1.5 -2 hours are being delivered each week. Appropriate resources and equipment are also not provided. These factors impact on teachers' exposure, experience, confidence and willingness to deliver on solid outcomes in the creative arts.

Opportunities exist to enrich teaching delivery through interaction with professional artists and supporting educational institutions to design, develop and deliver authentic learning experiences. For example, Arts Victoria funds "the Artists in Schools" program that creates the opportunity for practicing professional artists to work with young people in primary and secondary schools. It involves schools and communities in creative partnership projects while providing students, teachers and artists with diverse and challenging learning experiences.

5. ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES

5.1 Tourism

Tourism is a potentially major growth area for Western where it already accounts for about 40% of total employment in the Blue Mountains. The tourism sector in Western Sydney is very underdeveloped with day-trippers providing the majority of business. Given the projected reduction in long haul travel due to rising air fares and other factors, the domestic tourism area could assist with new jobs in Western Sydney. The State Government could take a strategic role in the following actions in conjunction with Federal and Local Governments:

- Increase Government funding for tourism and tourism infrastructure and marketing in the region and ensure that Western Sydney can access all relevant funding programs to support tourism development.
- In particular, fund and support the marketing of the region as a distinct destination in its own right. This should involve Western Sydney councils and relevant bodies such as the Greater Western Sydney Economic Development Board, the Sydney Olympic Park Authority, etc in the development of regional tourism strategies and potentially the creation of a regional tourism marketing and promotion position located within Western Sydney.
- Undertake comprehensive data collection on tourism in Western Sydney.
- Provide funding to assist in the development of improved public transport services to facilitate tourism access to Western Sydney, including faster rail links, the retention and improvement of the Parramatta Ferry service and support for the provision of more flexible tourist-friendly fares.
- Develop stronger partnerships between the agencies and organisations in the cultural and tourism sectors. This could include:
 - Working with Western Sydney's culturally diverse community to develop its potential as the basis for a vibrant cultural tourism industry;
 - Developing the relationship between tourism and the region's emerging creative economy
- Develop strategies to engage with the suppliers and managers of cultural tourism and heritage venues to improve the viability of galleries, museums and performance providers to assist in identifying "tourism" ready products and to support the development of niche tourism packages and campaigns such as agricultural tourism, events-based tourism, cultural/heritage tourism, food tourism and education tourism.
- Assist in developing Western Sydney Indigenous products and experiences with linkage to or combined with mainstream activities and experiences to capitalise on the fact that Western Sydney is home to the largest Indigenous urban population in Australia.
- Facilitate the development of a range of tourism initiatives specifically involving councils.
- As stated at Recommendation 23 of the Cultural Grants Review, provide TAFE training in the volunteer sector that includes the area of tourism.

5.2 Creative Industry Development

Current thinking about creative industry development needs to expand to include not only urban regeneration based on creative industry led development, but strategies to assist suburbs and regions outside cities. The momentum behind the development of cultural industries can no longer be focussed exclusively on the culturally advantaged and technological avant-gardes. The divide between the traditional and contemporary forms of cultural production need to be bridged through technology and by developing cultural entrepreneurship from the grass roots up.

The proposal WSROC has submitted with lead organisation Griffith University for the Creative Industry Innovation Centre addresses these issues. The network would provide numerous physical hubs and integrated communication systems to distribute knowledge and resources/training evenly within Australia whilst helping establish industry benchmarks. This

would assist new national development away from the current perception of a “one approach fits all” proffered by the domination of one organisation.

The NSW State Government should take a lead role in developing this proposal in collaboration with the other States involved. This proposal builds on WSROC’s plans for networked educational delivery and would bring one of the most robust and leading art schools in Australia to Western Sydney. The bid includes some art education delivery and that could lead to Griffith University’s greater presence in the region. Such a process would need to be staged and supported and the NSW Government in collaboration with the other State partners could provide this.

Other State Government strategies can include further support to Arts NSW to work closely not only with other organisations responsible for cultural development and policy, but also those charged with economic and employment development. WSROC looks forward to the release of the *Creative Industries in NSW Report* that Arts NSW has undertaken with the Creative Industries section of State and Regional Development.

6. THE ADEQUACY OF THE NSW STATE PLAN AND DESIRABILITY OF A CULTURAL PLAN FOR THE STATE

Local councils in Western Sydney are broadly supportive of the State Plan and encouraged by its emphasis on deepening collaboration between councils and state agencies. This is highlighted by the comment on p. 144 of the State Plan which states:

“...There will also be a greater level of formal consultation with local government. For example, Government agencies will consult with local government as they develop their contributions to the State Infrastructure Strategy. We will also look to work more effectively with individual councils, in particular through alignment of their strategic plan with the NSW State Plan...”

WSROC supports the development of a NSW Cultural Plan to complement the NSW State Plan and Metropolitan Strategy and furthermore, to “embed cultural development processes into the objectives and operations of state government agencies so that a whole-of-government approach to cultural development can be achieved.”

An overarching NSW Cultural Plan will articulate a long term vision for arts and cultural life in NSW, and assure local councils of the state government’s commitment to cultural development. It would connect with the Australia Council for the arts and local government arts initiatives. A NSW Cultural Plan would also enable Arts NSW to work more strategically with (and leverage funds from) other state government departments. However, any plan that is derived needs to be embraced in a whole of government approach and receive adequate funding to implement goals.

A number of state government departments are logical “partners”, including Planning, Heritage, Aboriginal Affairs, Education and Training, Tourism, Sport and Recreation and Citizenship. The focus of these partnerships would be to implement arts-based approaches to address broader social, environmental, urban and economic development issues.

WHAT IS WSROC?

WSROC represents the 11 councils of Western Sydney. The organisation was formed in November 1973 and became a company limited by guarantee in 1991. All member councils make an equal annual contribution to the operating costs of WSROC and have equal voting rights.

The decision-making body of WSROC is the Board, consisting of two voting Directors from each member council. The Board's role in managing the organisation is supported by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) which meets between Board meetings. The organisation is resourced by a regional secretariat, with professional and support staff. A number of professional committees and groups of staff from member Councils also meet regularly to assist in implementing the work program and to discuss major regional issues. These professional committees, member councils, the secretariat, the EMC and the Directors themselves all provide advice and recommendations to the Board.

The Board determines WSROC's work program through a strategic planning forum and workshops held every four years. This process is complemented by annual forums, which review and modify the work program as required. The work program centres on WSROC's primary role - to lobby for the councils and communities of Western Sydney. The organisation conducts research and prepares regional reports and submissions to support this advocacy role and also works to develop resource sharing and other co-operative projects between member Councils. WSROC also manages a number of projects, which are either funded jointly by its members or from external sources.

WSROC has a reputation for considered policy analysis and advocacy on a wide range of issues affecting the residents of Western Sydney. These include public transport, roads, economic development, urban planning and management, environment, employment, community services and a range of local government issues. WSROC is responsible for improvements in many of these areas and has helped to create many of the region's institutions and agencies.

WSROC's Mission

Our mission is: to secure - through research, lobbying and the fostering of co-operation between councils - a sustainable lifestyle for the people of Western Sydney and the provision of infrastructure such that no one should have to leave the region to have access to the sorts of amenities, services and opportunities others in urban Australia take for granted.

WSROC - A REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

Councils:	Eleven: Auburn, Bankstown, Baulkham, Hills, Blacktown, Blue, Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith
Area:	5,773 sq km. The largest council is Hawkesbury (2,793 sq km), the smallest Auburn (32 sq km). The majority of land in GWS* (over 60% by area) is in National Parks, reserves, special protection areas, regional or local parks, with the majority of this land being in the Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury.
Population:	The region** had a population of 1.5 million (1,484,000) at the 2001 Census , ranging from Blacktown (over 255,000) to Auburn (just under 56,000). Western Sydney** has a younger population profile than that for Sydney as a whole, reflecting high growth rates. Average annual growth from 1996 to 2001 was 1.7%. Highest was Liverpool (5.6%), lowest Fairfield (no growth). This represents 37.6% of Sydney's population . By 2019 it is estimated Western Sydney will have a population of over 1.9 million or 38.7% of Sydney's population . Blacktown will have over 337,000 residents and Liverpool will have increased by almost 70% to over 260,000. In total, five of the region's LGAs (Bankstown, Blacktown, Fairfield, Liverpool and Penrith) will have populations over 200,000, Baulkham Hills and Parramatta will be over 150,000, Holroyd will have nearly 100,000 residents and the three smallest LGAs (Auburn, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury) will all be over 80,000
Ethnicity:	In 2001 33.9% of the population were born overseas , compared to 31.2% in Sydney. The proportion of those born overseas is increasing faster in Western Sydney than it is in Sydney as a whole, up from 25% per cent in 1981 to 34% in 2001. In Fairfield and Auburn over half (53%) of the population were born overseas at 2001.
Households:	There were 490,337 households at the 2001 Census , ranging from over 82,000 in Blacktown to just over 17,000 in Auburn, or 34% of the Sydney total. Between 1981 and 2001 household numbers in

WSROC submission to the development of arts and culture infrastructure outside the CBD inquiry

GWS* increased by 192,701, or 54%, substantially higher than the growth in households in Sydney over this period (35%). In 2001 there were 2.8 persons per household in Western Sydney, down from 3.4 in 2001.

It is estimated that by **2019 there will be 223,485 additional households in the region**, an increase of 46%. In Greater Western Sydney the figure is estimated to be over 258,000. DIPNR has estimated that by 2031 an additional 150,000 dwellings will be required in new release areas (90,000 at Bringelly and 60,000 at Marsden Park). WSROC estimates about 105,000 will be needed.

Families: **In 2001 55% of all households were couple families with children**, compared to 51% in Sydney. Twenty-seven percent were families without children (32% in Sydney) and 16% single parent families, compared to 15% in Sydney. **However single parent family numbers have risen by 40% from 1991**, compared to a 30% increase for the whole of Sydney.

Tertiary Education: **94,290 Western Sydney residents** attended either a TAFE or university in 2001, with just over half (47,925) at TAFE and 46,365 at university. 6.3% of the region's population were attending a tertiary institution compared to a Sydney average of 7.3%.

Auburn had the highest total percentage in tertiary education (8.2%) and also at TAFE (4%), whilst Baulkham Hills had the highest level of university attendance (5.1%). Penrith had the lowest total tertiary attendance (uni and TAFE combined) of 5.4%.

In 2003 the University of Western Sydney had about 33,000 places or 18.5 per 1000 people in Greater Western Sydney. This compares to ratios such as 42.8 per 1000 in WA and 73.1 in the ACT. Over 70% of students attending UWS live in Greater Western Sydney. A similar proportion of students at UWS are also the first members of their families ever to attend a university course.

Economy: Greater Western Sydney*** produces more than **\$54 billion in economic output annually**, making the region Australia's third-largest economy (after Sydney CBD and Melbourne). This is expected to grow to \$61 billion by 2005. 150 of Australia's top 500 companies are located in the Greater West.

Employment: **722,167 people GWS* residents were in the workforce in 2001**, an increase of 21% from 1991. Nearly 70% of the workforce was employed in the region, which had 80 jobs for every 100 resident workers (the difference is due to the number of people resident outside GWS* who have jobs in the region).

The industries that were the most self-sufficient in employment were Education (102 jobs per 100 resident workers), Manufacturing (94) and Agriculture (94); the least were Finance & Insurance (45) and Communication Services (52).

Unemployment rates have recently fallen across the region and are now much closer to each other and the Sydney average than at any other time over the past 20 years. Fairfield/Liverpool, for example, has now fallen to 6.3% in the March 2004 quarter (unadjusted). North Western Sydney had 7% unemployment and Central Western Sydney just 3.6% for the same period, compared to a Sydney average of 5.4%. However there are still areas of high unemployment and participation rates have also declined.

Housing: **Average housing prices have risen by 69%** since 2000, whilst incomes of those aged 25-34 (the key first home buyer age group) have increased by only 22% in the same period. This means that the average number of "salary years" required to buy a house has increased 39%, from 8 to 11.1 years

Transport: **Just 17% of all journeys to work are made by public transport in GWS***, compared with 22% in the rest of Sydney. Of these trips 15% are by train and only 2% by bus (compared with 16% and 6% respectively in the rest of Sydney). Car trips account for 76% of the region's commute to work compared to 69% in the rest of Sydney. The figures for public transport use on all workday trips and for all weekend trips are even lower, just 7% and 2% respectively.

Since the 1970s over 100km of motorways have been constructed to serve Western Sydney; the M7 Orbital, currently under construction will add another 40km and complete the region's motorway network.

In the period since the 1930s, however, the rail network in Western Sydney has lost three branch lines and had less than 20km of rail track added: the extension of the East Hills Line to Glenfield, the "Y" link at Harris Park and the Olympic Line. The process of sectorising the rail network currently underway will bring operational benefits but further delay expansion of the network.

Environment: The heavily-urbanised **Cumberland Plain** supports less than 26% of the original cover and is subject to intense pressure for development. 54 plants and 59 animals are listed as rare or threatened in GWS* and biodiversity is under threat from continuing fragmentation and degradation of habitat, the impact of pollutants, weed invasion and introduced species.

Western Sydney's size and location result in **poor air quality**, as the Blacktown Ridge gives the region a separate low-level air shed from the rest of Sydney. Other factors include high motor vehicle use, clusters of manufacturing industry and the regional circulation pattern of air from the Sydney-Wollongong area. This problem is exacerbated by historically poor public transport and heavy reliance

on motor vehicles.

The region falls across three major catchments: the Hawkesbury-Nepean, Georges River and Sydney Harbour/Parramatta River. Waterways in these catchments are subject to pressures from demands for drinking water, agriculture, sewage treatment and other industry uses; pollutants from stormwater, agriculture run-off and sewage disposal; and demand for recreational use of the rivers. Water for domestic use in the greater Sydney metropolitan region comes mainly from the Hawkesbury-Nepean and managing this demand is a significant issue given the current drought and a rapidly growing population.

There is potential for salinity outbreaks in all Council areas in the region, with Blacktown, Fairfield, Holroyd, Liverpool, and Penrith Councils most likely to be affected

Electricity generation capacity located in the region is approximately 345 Megawatts, less than 3% of total state generating capacity, yet the region is home to more than a third of the State's economy and 25 % of its manufacturing activity. The majority of stationary (non-transport) energy demand in Western Sydney is met by electricity (72%) and gas (20%). Most of the electricity consumed in Western Sydney comes from coal-fired generators.

Road transport is also a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions with **total transport related energy use estimated to account for approximately 14% of total emissions** and a quarter of energy related emissions.

GWS: Greater Western Sydney including Camden and Campbelltown as well as WSROC but excluding Wollondilly.*

*The Region**/Western Sydney**: the WSROC Region only*

*Greater Western Sydney***: All 14 WSROC and MACROC Councils including Wollondilly.*