

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

Organisation: Great Lakes Council
Name: Mr Keith O'Leary
Position: General Manager
Telephone:
Date Received: 02/09/2008

The Committee Manager
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY 2000

Contact: Keith O'Leary
Telephone: (02) 6591 7202

Attachment: CD Arts & Culture Civid Precinct

Dear Ms Watson,

**RE: INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENTY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL
INFRASTRUCTURE OUTSIDE THE SYDNEY CBD**

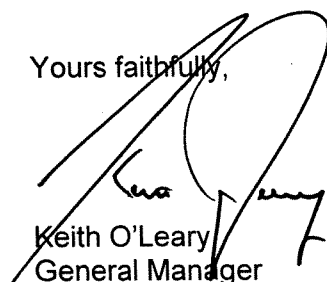
Great Lakes, located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, is a comfortable 3 to 4 hours drive north of Sydney and has a rapidly expanding population of approximately 34,000.

Its residents enjoy a diverse lifestyle. The combination of 5 national parks, 10 state forests, mountain ranges, rolling hills and valleys, a triple lake system, numerous rivers and 27 beaches has turned the Great Lakes into a major recreational area. Main industry sectors in the Great Lakes include retail trade, health and community services, tourism, fishing and construction.

Financial Sustainability Report prepared by Professor Percy Allan of Review Today Pty Ltd identified Council's long term financial position as unsustainable. The Review Today Financial Sustainability Review identifies the burdon of infrastructure backlog has resulted in Council not having the capacity to maintain existing cultural infrastructure, namely the 20 public halls which are the main venues for the public to practice and share their arts and cultural activities. Council has not been able to resource new infrastructure to meet changing and increasing community needs, due to the need to find essential maintance of existing infrustrucure across all Council Service areas.

The Great Lakes area does not have a public gallery or entertainment centre. Council has undertaken planning toward development of a 'Civic Precinct' that could include a new library, auditorium and regional gallery. Council will be seeking financial support from the NSW Government for construction of this site.

Yours faithfully,



Keith O'Leary
General Manager

The following points were requested for response by Councils

Relevant Council arts and cultural planning or strategies

Based on the new 'Planning and Reporting Guidelines for local government in NSW', to be legislated early 2009, Great Lakes Council is preparing an Integrated Great Lakes 2020 Strategic Plan. The future of 'Arts and Culture' in the Great Lakes will be articulated in the Great Lakes 2020 Strategic Plan.

Great Lakes Council is actively undertaking development of a Cultural Plan as part of the Integrated Planning Framework. A Cultural Plan will be informed by the Strategic Plan. The Community Engagement Program of the Integrated Planning Process has included arts and culture.

There has been a strong response from residents desiring improved maintenance of existing cultural infrastructure and also for the provision of new venues for the visual and performing arts.

Qualitative results from the Great Lakes Community Census 2008
Question #32, where participants nominated 'Ideas to improve quality of life'.

The following were the comments regarding 'Arts and Culture':

• Highlighted items relate to requests for cultural infrastructure

#	Comment	Time of Census completion or data-entry
1.	Keep the old School of Arts	Thu, 4/17/08 1:50 PM
2.	Don't sell/demolish the Arts hall	Thu, 4/17/08 12:19 PM
3.	Encourage arts and craft tutoring in community shelter	Thu, 4/17/08 10:48 AM
4.	festivals	Thu, 4/17/08 7:55 AM
5.	Over rated	Tue, 4/15/08 12:57 PM
6.	Purpose built performance space - access to various sizes	Tue, 4/15/08 11:11 AM
7.	promotion of local artists - entertainment centre with an permanent exhibition area for local art & craft	Mon, 4/14/08 4:51 PM
8.	Less sport more arts & culture	Mon, 4/14/08 11:59 AM
9.	see community facility - meeting place	Mon, 4/14/08 11:45 AM
10.	encourage participation	Mon, 4/14/08 11:28 AM
11.	Acceptance of arts & culture as an integral part of life	Mon, 4/14/08 11:00 AM
12.	Is progressing slowly but adequately	Fri, 4/11/08 4:20 PM
13.	new community centre with provision for performance spaces	Fri, 4/11/08 11:59 AM
14.	art shows, galleries are good for tourist and locals how about a regional gallery of the best local artists and works	Fri, 4/11/08 11:01 AM
15.	GLC support art groups, shows, galleries regional gallery of local artists	Fri, 4/11/08 9:19 AM
16.	More perceived council involvement	Thu, 4/10/08 3:00 PM
17.	Encourage local participation - already strong	Thu, 4/10/08 12:35 PM
18.	Plenty of artistic people in town	Thu, 4/10/08 11:29 AM
19.	allow for growth	Thu, 4/10/08 9:48 AM
20.	healthy, but always can e expanded	Wed, 4/9/08 10:42 AM

21.	not interested	Tue, 4/8/08 1:16 PM
22.	Gallery of local work available to tourists	Tue, 4/8/08 12:43 PM
23.	Not my field	Tue, 4/8/08 8:35 AM
24.	Available	Mon, 4/7/08 9:34 AM
25.	PROVIDING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE ARTS AND A PLACE TO EXHIBIT WILL IMPROVE ARTS AND CULTURE	Mon, 4/7/08 6:34 AM
26.	Promote the arts more. Make the community aware of the varying arts that exist and give them equal exposure to sports.	Sun, 4/6/08 12:25 PM
27.	great need for a hall for cultural activities	Fri, 4/4/08 2:48 PM
28.	more interaction among children	Fri, 4/4/08 1:52 PM
29.	looking forward to a conservatorium in the area	Fri, 4/4/08 1:24 PM
30.	Travelling shows available to all	Fri, 4/4/08 9:12 AM
31.	Art gallery at forster in prominent location	Thu, 4/3/08 1:41 PM
32.	A gallery like Manning	Thu, 4/3/08 11:41 AM
33.	Conservatorium of Music and a full scale regional art gallery. Council should provide scholarships to disadvantaged children or struggling families who would like to have their children taught an instrument. It's an opportunity that can have amazing results for some children who otherwise would never venture into the realm of music/arts and success.	Wed, 4/2/08 8:16 PM
34.	Specific art and cultural centre	Tue, 4/1/08 2:04 PM
35.	Support of arts and events in the local area e.g. NCAC Style Riot	Mon, 3/31/08 7:45 PM
36.	Community Hall / Performance Space available	Mon, 3/31/08 11:27 AM
37.	A need for a venue specifically for shows	Mon, 3/31/08 10:43 AM
38.	Always	Mon, 3/31/08 10:16 AM
39.	Turn the idea of a "Civic Precinct" into reality. Include a modern library (able to service a developing and expanding community far away from any quality tertiary institution), meeting rooms and facilities for performance and exhibition space. AND a public hall	Sun, 3/30/08 3:17 PM
40.	new school of arts building	Sat, 3/29/08 4:33 PM
41.	Going OK	Fri, 3/28/08 12:46 PM
42.	entertainment centre similar to MEC	Thu, 3/27/08 2:06 PM
43.	Built by residents	Thu, 3/27/08 11:59 AM

44.	Performances by groups in all areas not just larger towns	Thu, 3/27/08 10:53 AM
45.	Encourage participation of young people	Thu, 3/27/08 10:30 AM
46.	Encourage big acts and theatre productions to come to the region	Thu, 3/27/08 8:32 AM
47.	Including teaching Aboriginal culture at schools more	Thu, 3/27/08 7:57 AM
48.	Opera on the beach - Aboriginal arts Festival	Thu, 3/27/08 7:46 AM
49.	too much wasted money , it's all baloney	Wed, 3/26/08 6:27 PM
50.	Organise bigger park concert with clubs at least 2 x year	Tue, 3/25/08 12:57 PM
51.	Specific venues and support required.	Mon, 3/24/08 12:12 PM
52.	Encourage	Fri, 3/21/08 9:01 AM
53.	PUB NOISE - Amplified, loud bands is a no no	Thu, 3/20/08 2:18 PM
54.	We need performing arts centre as a society is boosted by its arts & culture activities	Thu, 3/20/08 9:45 AM
55.	A new building on Forster Hall site in Little Street	Thu, 3/20/08 8:30 AM
56.	user pays	Wed, 3/19/08 7:39 PM
57.	Develop central performance area for Forster	Wed, 3/19/08 12:17 PM
58.	are important	Mon, 3/17/08 7:13 PM
59.	Subsidies to allow national groups/individuals to stage performances locally.	Mon, 3/17/08 2:17 PM
60.	it doesn't have to be a PM glasshouse but a venue where the locals can experience and enjoy bigger productions	Mon, 3/17/08 11:58 AM
61.	A quality community centre	Sat, 3/15/08 5:45 AM
62.	beach displays of sculpture or ... Wright Park and outdoor art shows not indoor, see artists at work	Fri, 3/14/08 7:58 PM
63.	Larger local markets, more often, support our local growers/ artists, more produce stays local not shipped to Sydney!	Fri, 3/14/08 2:55 PM
64.	Sponsorship of visiting musical groups	Thu, 3/13/08 7:27 AM
65.	...	Wed, 3/12/08 8:18 PM
66.	A music conservatorium would be an asset for the area.	Wed, 3/12/08 1:43 PM
67.	n/a	Tue, 3/11/08 1:36 PM
68.	Council Cultural Officer;	Mon, 3/10/08 3:01 PM

Qualitative results from the Great Lakes Community Census 2008
Question #32, where participants nominated 'Ideas to improve quality of life'.

The following were the comments regarding 'Community Facilities':

- Highlighted items relate to requests for cultural infrastructure

#	Comment	Time of Census completion or data-entry
1.	Library excellent	Tue, 5/27/08 10:10 AM
2.	dunno	Fri, 5/9/08 9:59 AM
3.	chill	Fri, 5/9/08 9:55 AM
4.	More parks and safe beaches with free parking	Thu, 4/17/08 1:05 PM
5.	Hall and sports field for Smith's Lake	Thu, 4/17/08 12:50 PM
6.	Provide some in the area	Thu, 4/17/08 12:37 PM
7.	Need more	Thu, 4/17/08 12:19 PM
8.	A heated pool is badly needed for disabled people	Thu, 4/17/08 8:49 AM
9.	Maintenance outdoor facilities	Wed, 4/16/08 1:37 PM
10.	help to all sporting clubs for kids	Tue, 4/15/08 8:10 PM
11.	Something to occupy teenagers - events, skateparks & sporting opportunities	Tue, 4/15/08 1:41 PM
12.	Need better maintenance	Tue, 4/15/08 1:11 PM
13.	Council maintain properly	Tue, 4/15/08 12:57 PM
14.	Better public performing arts facilities are essential	Tue, 4/15/08 11:58 AM
15.	walk and cycleways	Tue, 4/15/08 11:28 AM
16.	Provide bus service for Smiths Lake to Forster - Community Health Centre	Tue, 4/15/08 9:44 AM
17.	sufficient	Tue, 4/15/08 9:19 AM
18.	Replace Little St hall with similar community facility	Mon, 4/14/08 3:17 PM
19.	Youth clubs	Mon, 4/14/08 2:11 PM
20.	Newspaper, newsletter etc. relating to Great Lakes	Mon, 4/14/08 11:59 AM
21.	provide local community halls and recreation space	Mon, 4/14/08 11:45 AM
22.	Large community hall with large dance floor	Mon, 4/14/08 11:28 AM
23.	Desperate need for civic centre	Mon, 4/14/08 11:00 AM
24.	Picnic areas & commons	Mon, 4/14/08 9:40 AM
25.	Hospital with emergency facilities	Mon, 4/14/08 9:08 AM
26.	We need a entertainment venue near shops	Mon, 4/14/08 8:57 AM

27.	Support community associations	Fri, 4/11/08 2:56 PM
28.	Halls - general purpose for communities	Fri, 4/11/08 2:07 PM
29.	Community youth facility as stated previously. All services and everything a young person needs in one facility	Fri, 4/11/08 1:55 PM
30.	centres where individual groups can have a permanent day/1/2 day of week to meet and or create	Fri, 4/11/08 12:43 PM
31.	Tennis court and playing Paddock needed at NAC	Fri, 4/11/08 11:01 AM
32.	Public jetty at north arm cove	Fri, 4/11/08 10:49 AM
33.	Great lakes Council please support our community library. (NAC)	Fri, 4/11/08 9:19 AM
34.	24 youth centre broader than PCYC concepts - including job skills development - work for the dole programs	Thu, 4/10/08 6:01 PM
35.	the lakes and port stephens waters are the major attraction to us and our friends and family it is becoming more difficult enjoying the waters with the many stringent controls. there are no public boat ramps in north arm cove no public jetties disable persons have no safe access to the "marine park"	Thu, 4/10/08 3:43 PM
36.	fix up the park at limeburners creek village.	Thu, 4/10/08 3:28 PM
37.	Forum for people with problems	Thu, 4/10/08 3:00 PM
38.	community building to house all of our groups	Thu, 4/10/08 2:49 PM
39.	easier access ramps and crossings elec wheelchairs	Thu, 4/10/08 2:34 PM
40.	Community hall req'd (capacity 250-300	Thu, 4/10/08 1:01 PM
41.	Childrens playgrounds	Thu, 4/10/08 12:56 PM
42.	More doctors nurses and hospitals in rural areas	Thu, 4/10/08 12:25 PM
43.	Play ground BBQ area for bungwahl	Thu, 4/10/08 12:16 PM
44.	A facility with all community services together	Thu, 4/10/08 11:29 AM
45.	HN needs a new community hall	Thu, 4/10/08 10:50 AM
46.	Childrens playground near center of town	Thu, 4/10/08 10:45 AM
47.	Quite adequate- need a bigger hall	Thu, 4/10/08 9:48 AM
48.	heated Pool	Thu, 4/10/08 8:54 AM
49.	Road safety issues need addressing, tea gardens public toilets and playground	Thu, 4/10/08 8:28 AM
50.	cultural precinct	Wed, 4/9/08 8:03 PM
51.	Extending community bus to Forster every Friday	Wed, 4/9/08 1:00 PM
52.	A community hall to replace school of arts	Wed, 4/9/08 12:36 PM
53.	Maintain levels of meeting halls	Wed, 4/9/08 10:42 AM
54.	Fine as is	Tue, 4/8/08 1:16 PM
55.	Many staff have been on the council too long and should be replaced.	Tue, 4/8/08 8:58 AM

56.	Plenty	Tue, 4/8/08 8:35 AM
57.	Good	Mon, 4/7/08 11:49 AM
58.	NEED FOR MEETING ROOMS TO ALLOW GROUPS TO MEET - NOT AT THE RSL.	Mon, 4/7/08 10:36 AM
59.	9 am each weekday practically no available car parking for Library and Council office - all taken up by EMPLOYEES!!	Mon, 4/7/08 10:12 AM
60.	Specifically identified and located.	Mon, 4/7/08 9:34 AM
61.	NEED TO BE CONSTANTLY UPGRADED	Mon, 4/7/08 6:34 AM
62.	Low cost community facilities for organisations/preschools to stage events, education or shows	Sat, 4/5/08 9:30 AM
63.	walkways/cycleways on lake edge and ocean	Fri, 4/4/08 2:33 PM
64.	A public hall is essential	Fri, 4/4/08 1:24 PM
65.	for suits to wake up and realise that people are finding it hard to exist on low wages- high rent because they want to make more money to fly overseas for holidays and buy another house so someone can rent it.	Fri, 4/4/08 12:03 PM
66.	Parking in business are- footpath	Fri, 4/4/08 11:21 AM
67.	public hospital	Fri, 4/4/08 10:41 AM
68.	public hospital	Fri, 4/4/08 10:23 AM
69.	Put more money into them	Fri, 4/4/08 9:12 AM
70.	Public hospital - forster	Thu, 4/3/08 2:30 PM
71.	Would like to see a green waste collection ie. once a month At present there is no green waste collection at all - have to drive to dump and borrow trailer	Thu, 4/3/08 2:18 PM
72.	We need more as the area grows	Thu, 4/3/08 1:41 PM
73.	Mobile Library	Thu, 4/3/08 11:41 AM
74.	We have a marvellous YMCA We need more instructors and less management	Thu, 4/3/08 11:26 AM
75.	smiths lake recreation park for kids	Thu, 4/3/08 11:26 AM
76.	Restore forestry roads and picnic areas. National parks too restrictive and inefficient	Thu, 4/3/08 11:14 AM
77.	More park seating	Thu, 4/3/08 10:35 AM
78.	cycleways, community hall for downtown Forster, theatre	Wed, 4/2/08 10:23 PM
79.	As above and below	Wed, 4/2/08 8:16 PM
80.	a community youth center for Forster/Tuncurry.	Tue, 4/1/08 6:44 PM
81.	Community / Public Multi-purpose building	Tue, 4/1/08 2:04 PM
82.	More mobility parking in front of doctors rooms	Tue, 4/1/08 12:35 PM
83.	Indoor sports facility	Mon, 3/31/08 4:18 PM
84.	Beautification of town - increasing cycleways/walkways	Mon, 3/31/08 12:40 PM

85.	Smiths Lake Recreation Park	Sun, 3/30/08 2:09 PM
86.	shade sails at parks	Sun, 3/30/08 12:33 PM
87.	more and affordable meeting places, parks in towns, public transport	Sat, 3/29/08 4:33 PM
88.	Wharf facilities at Hawks Nest	Sat, 3/29/08 11:43 AM
89.	Youth centres	Fri, 3/28/08 10:54 AM
90.	50m pool at Forster aquatic centre	Thu, 3/27/08 2:15 PM
91.	always provided by the initiative of the community	Thu, 3/27/08 2:15 PM
92.	A public phone box	Thu, 3/27/08 1:33 PM
93.	More parkland play/sport areas	Thu, 3/27/08 1:19 PM
94.	built by the residents	Thu, 3/27/08 11:59 AM
95.	good rapport with community is essential from all council officers	Thu, 3/27/08 11:26 AM
96.	Support implementation of new facilities eg. Multi-purpose centre, pool	Thu, 3/27/08 10:53 AM
97.	Finish Nabiac pool now	Thu, 3/27/08 10:30 AM
98.	need toilets at pool	Thu, 3/27/08 10:26 AM
99.	The public library service is only average	Thu, 3/27/08 10:02 AM
100.	Something to keep children off the road	Thu, 3/27/08 9:57 AM
101.	Community hall for Forster needed	Thu, 3/27/08 7:57 AM
102.	Sustain an oyster festival / encourage fish farming in Wallis lake	Thu, 3/27/08 7:46 AM
103.	There are no public toilets in the centre of wharf street, and the ones either end of the street are appalling.	Wed, 3/26/08 8:45 PM
104.	More financial support to increase services at facilities	Wed, 3/26/08 2:14 PM
105.	Amenities at North Boomerang, North Blueys Beach and Cellito Beach	Wed, 3/26/08 11:13 AM
106.	More information on availability	Wed, 3/26/08 10:00 AM
107.	More public buildings - meeting rooms etc.	Tue, 3/25/08 12:09 PM
108.	Public toilets in Tuncurry	Tue, 3/25/08 10:47 AM
109.	Heated Tuncurry pool for all year swimming (beside memorial hall).	Tue, 3/25/08 9:45 AM
110.	Library needs funding for education, and the aged population.	Mon, 3/24/08 12:12 PM
111.	A Community Youth Centre, where sports such as Basketball, volleyball etc can be played	Sat, 3/22/08 8:09 PM
112.	better maintained	Fri, 3/21/08 1:36 PM
113.	Strive for improvement where possible	Fri, 3/21/08 9:01 AM
114.	AT LEAST 2 GARAGE COLLECTIONS FROM PARK AND STREET BINS X 7 DAYS A WEEK.	Fri, 3/21/08 8:06 AM
115.	Provide for larger entertainment centre, live theatre, and orchestral performances	Thu, 3/20/08 5:10 PM
116.	A proper Public Hall	Thu, 3/20/08 2:52 PM

117.	ENCOURAGE FARMERS MARKET LOCALLY	Thu, 3/20/08 2:18 PM
118.	Target toward young people	Thu, 3/20/08 1:36 PM
119.	Entertainment centre	Thu, 3/20/08 1:29 PM
120.	Target for younger generation	Thu, 3/20/08 12:03 PM
121.	Frequently publish data about community facilities available	Wed, 3/19/08 9:34 PM
122.	more street seating available as there are many elderly people who need this facility	Wed, 3/19/08 9:31 PM
123.	Bridge Forster/Tuncurry needs more lanes or another bridge	Wed, 3/19/08 11:14 AM
124.	3. Provide Protection to all the 2 to 3 metre deep drains around town so cars pushbikes and other vehicles can't fall in and kill people and children.	Wed, 3/19/08 11:06 AM
125.	South Forster has no child playgrounds, eg. Cape Hawke estate has a heavily timbered reserve above Akala Ave only! Children don't use it instead they play cricket and football on the roads.	Wed, 3/19/08 8:18 AM
126.	Delivery of 'extra' to outlying areas, rural estates	Tue, 3/18/08 3:26 PM
127.	Playgrounds needed South Forster	Tue, 3/18/08 2:43 PM
128.	reasonable hours to walk dogs off leash in local parks	Tue, 3/18/08 12:36 PM
129.	More parking on water front at Tea Gardens especially public wharves, We have had friends come down form QLD and Up form Sydney on there big boats and get to Tea Gardens and have no where to park there boats and there fore go back to the big Marinas and spend there money there,	Tue, 3/18/08 8:20 AM
130.	BBQ's are poorly cleaned in many locations throughout GL	Tue, 3/18/08 8:00 AM
131.	Increase library hours.	Tue, 3/18/08 7:37 AM
132.	expand the library	Mon, 3/17/08 7:28 PM
133.	sport and rec facilitties for the children	Mon, 3/17/08 11:58 AM
134.	Public toilets in North Arm Cove	Mon, 3/17/08 8:25 AM
135.	Improved public health facilities including public hospital beds and after hours services	Sat, 3/15/08 5:45 AM
136.	improve what is already existing in community halls or use Clubs	Fri, 3/14/08 7:58 PM
137.	Stick to the basics - leave special needs to special needs groups	Fri, 3/14/08 9:11 AM
138.	Better safer roads	Thu, 3/13/08 5:37 PM
139.	improvement of gym and aerobic facilities at the aquatic centre	Thu, 3/13/08 8:46 AM
140.	If the RTA is not prevented from using Option E - with its dangers of boulder falls and landslides (part of it would be located 13 metres below the current surface of an existing landslide) some people will have no life because, as is likely to be the case with the long-term cancer 'cluster' in Crawford Street, they will die from the effects of diesel fume inhalation.	Wed, 3/12/08 8:18 PM
141.	An up to date Community Hall for Forster/Tuncurry that can be utilised for music events and other community activities.	Wed, 3/12/08 4:31 PM

142.	Keep all libraries open and improve library facilities and provide more books.	Wed, 3/12/08 11:21 AM
143.	What about "A smile a day for every body"	Tue, 3/11/08 3:42 PM
144.	The introduction of the graffiti clean up service, (founded by a local citizen and financed by the Council in Forster) is a terrific idea. Such private citizen ventures should be promoted which serve the whole community. Perhaps news articles which do this should be considered and accepted and the individuals awarded with personal achievement awards to further give incentive for other people to create such services.	Tue, 3/11/08 3:33 PM
145.	Maintenance	Tue, 3/11/08 1:36 PM
146.	Pool heating, basketball, bicycle paths & tracks	Tue, 3/11/08 10:43 AM
147.	Modify old halls for current day uses - adaptable spaces for meetings etc.	Mon, 3/10/08 3:01 PM

Based on this expectation, the Great Lakes Cultural Plan is likely to prioritise this activity.

Great Lakes Council's 'Great Lakes Arts Network' s355 Committee has a Management Plan for 2005-2007

KEY GOALS	AIMS	STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBILITY and partnerships	TIMEFRAME
Facilities and Venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document and promote existing arts and cultural venues and their facilities • Utilise full potential of and increase access to existing arts and cultural venues • Identify needs of existing community venues to enhance their arts and cultural use • Identify opportunities to use outdoor, unusual or "boutique" locations for arts and cultural activities • Work with Council to identify long term needs for major cultural facilities 	Produce a Cultural Venues Data Base / Directory listing existing venues and their capacity and facilities	GLAN in consultation with Council staff – possible advertising partnerships	Short Term 2005-2006
		Undertake a Cultural Venues Audit identifying needs of existing facilities to enhance their arts and cultural use and to identify gaps in venues	GLAN in consultation with Council staff and with assistance of professional expertise.	Medium 2006-2007
		Work with Great Lakes Council to ensure that arts and cultural considerations are integrated with community facilities, open space, urban design, Civic Precinct planning to include public art policy	Great Lakes Council – Cultural Plan to address long term cultural facilities development Partnerships – NSW Ministry for the Arts; Arts Mid North Coast.	Medium 2005-2007

This plan will be replaced by a Business Plan informed by the Cultural Plan.

Great Lakes Council is represented on the Arts Mid North Coast Board and pays an annual Council membership. Arts Mid North Coast undertakes a range of regional arts and cultural planning processes including:

- Creative Industries
- Aboriginal Arts
- Management Plan

Council is developing plans for a new 'Civic Precinct' that could include a new library, regional gallery and auditorium. Refer to case study at end of document

Great Lakes Council is represented on the Mid North Coast Conservatorium Board which is undertaking planning toward establishment of a conservatorium to serve the region.

Council's experience with the State grants process

In regard to state funding of cultural projects and infrastructure in the Great Lakes:

- Great Lakes Library Service received financial support for the construction of a new library in the growing community of Hawks Nest Tea Gardens. The funding of \$100,000 was through the Library Council of NSW 'Special projects funding'. The library was opened in 2003.
- Through the 2008-2009 Hunter Area Assistance Scheme, the North Arm Cove Community Centre received \$36,100 funding for build materials in the construction of a 'cultural annex' extension. The project is now complete with the community centre's new capacity accommodating workshop space for visual arts groups, exhibition space and a community library.

The amount of funding spent on arts and cultural activities

The 20 public halls under the care and management of Great Lakes Council are the main venues for the public to practice and share their arts and cultural activities.

The Council public halls are spread across the LGA, predominantly in rural communities. These are characteristically of weatherboard or fibro construction, have high ongoing maintenance costs and are under-used by the local communities. Council has recognised the need for improved cultural facilities in the Forster Tuncurry and the Hawks Nest Tea Gardens districts, both of which experience higher than average population growth rates, and both lack cultural facilities to meet the needs of the present and future populations. In addition to hall facilities, Council also owns a number of other buildings that house historical societies and other community organisations that provide services to the community that can be regarded as being under the heading of arts and culture. Council is 'landlord' to community groups that provide services across a wide range of these endeavours, in the vast majority of instances no rental is charged, Council provides the facilities as a community service.

During 2007 and 2008 Great Lakes Council commissioned a series of reports from a Sydney-based consulting group, Review Today Pty Ltd to assess Council's position in terms of achieving sustainable infrastructure services and finances. Among other things, the Terms of Reference required the consultant companies to:

- Assess the state of existing Council infrastructure,
- Estimate the cost of fixing the existing infrastructure and renewing it in the future,

- Compare the cost of infrastructure and services under existing Council policy with that of alternative scenarios that fully rehabilitate, renew and maintain infrastructure.

Below is the Executive Summary from the Asset Management Review. The Report itself indicated that Great Lakes Council has a \$26 Million infrastructure backlog and at present under-invests in infrastructure by \$6.4 million a year. If this continues, Council will have an infrastructure backlog of \$100 million in ten years.

1. Executive Summary

With \$465 Million in assets, Great Lakes Council has a significant portfolio of infrastructure to replace and maintain. This places considerable pressure on Council resources with a demand for increased funding each year to keep up with ageing and degraded assets.

Funding for infrastructure Maintenance and Rehabilitation/ Renewal has been described as the biggest management challenge in local government (Allan 2006, Inquiry into financial sustainability of NSW local government). Great Lakes Council are making positive steps towards addressing this challenge, and commissioned Review Today to assist them in ascertaining an up-to-date view of their financial status and the condition of their infrastructure portfolio for the purpose of identifying future funding requirements.

This report is concerned with GHD's review of the annual Rehabilitation/ Renewal and Maintenance expenditure requirements to sustain the Great Lakes Council Asset Portfolio going forward, conducted in February 2007.

Based on our analysis we have concluded that Council have a present Rehabilitation/ Renewals and Maintenance Backlog of approximately **\$26.1M** and are proposing to further under-invest (In Backlog, Enhancements, Rehabilitation/ Renewals and Maintenance) going forward at an average rate of **\$6.4M** per year under the Existing Spending Policy (Against the Preferred Spending Scenario). Adopting this strategy would result in a further decline in the condition of assets, having a negative effect on service performance. In financial terms, Council would experience a rise in Maintenance costs and a potential future Rehabilitation/ Renewal and Maintenance Backlog in the order **\$99.8M**, 20 years on.

It should be noted that all values within this report are estimated at today's prices and do not take account of inflation.

From the same report, the condition of Council assets was audited. The results of this exercise are detailed below:



Table 2 Asset Condition Distribution Data Input Table

Condition Rating	Description	% In condition
10	An asset that has failed and is no longer serviceable should not remain in service. There would be an extreme risk in leaving the asset in service.	0.40
9	An asset in extremely poor condition with severe serviceability problems and needing Rehabilitation immediately. Could be a risk to remain in service.	2.15
8	An asset in very poor overall condition with serviceability now being heavily impacted upon by the poor condition. Maintenance costs would be very high and the asset would be at a point where it would need to be rehabilitated.	5.38
7	An asset in poor overall condition. The deterioration would be quite severe and starting to limit the serviceability of the asset. Maintenance costs would be high.	10.35
6	An asset in fair to poor overall condition. The deterioration condition would be quite obvious. Asset serviceability would now be affected and Maintenance costs would be rising.	15.19
5	An asset in fair overall condition. The deterioration in condition would be obvious and there would be some serviceability loss.	21.62
4	An asset in good overall condition, but with some obvious deterioration evident, serviceability would be impaired very slightly.	17.05
3	An asset in very good overall condition but with some early stages of deterioration evident. The deterioration could still be minor in nature and causing no serviceability problems.	16.26
2	An asset in excellent overall condition. There would be only very slight condition decline but it would be obvious that the asset was no longer in new condition.	7.56
1	A near new asset with no visible signs of deterioration often moved to condition 1, based upon the time since construction rather than observed condition decline.	4.05
0	A new asset or an asset recently rehabilitated back to new condition.	0.00
Total		100

Based upon the information from Table 2, we are able to display the current Condition Distribution for the set of Pavement assets (see Figure 2). The graph indicates that 21.62% of the Test asset set modelled, are in condition 5.

Note: As part of GHD's analysis we implement this exercise for each individual asset set.

Another extract from the Review Today Report shown below shows that at the present time (2007/2008) there are some \$5.5M worth of building maintenance works outstanding. These works would need to be completed before any enhancement of additional works would logically be commenced. It has been recognised that the growth areas within the LGA such as Forster Tuncurry and Hawks Nest Tea Gardens are lacking in adequate cultural facilities, however Council lacks the funds to undertake the construction of new infrastructure works to meet these needs.

Observations

We estimate that the current Rehabilitation/ Renewals and Maintenance Backlog is in the order of \$26.1M. Table 7 below shows the breakdown of this \$26.1M as it is attributable to the major Asset Groups.

Table 7 Present Rehabilitation/ Renewals and Maintenance Backlog

Asset Group	Present Backlog
Roads	\$14.5M
Buildings	\$5.5M
Concrete Structures	\$3.3M
Timber Structures	\$Nil
Roadside Furniture	\$ Nil
Commercial Assets	\$1.5M
Stormwater Assets	\$0.3M
Natural Assets	\$1.0M

Possible courses of action for Council include taking out increased borrowings or loan funds to address the backlog in infrastructure maintenance and repair, and to renew assets that are coming to the end of their useful life. At present, there are insufficient funds to maintain the existing buildings to an adequate level of maintenance, in an average year, mainly only safety concerns and risk management works are carried out.

Against this background of buildings that are coming to the end of their useful life, Council does not have the funds to build new assets to meet the needs of a changing society that requires a different mix of public building types than has historically been the case. This Council has 20 public halls, spread across the LGA, predominantly in rural communities. These are characteristically of weatherboard or fibro construction, have high ongoing maintenance costs and are under-used by the local communities. Council has recognised the need for improved cultural facilities in the Forster Tuncurry and the Hawks Nest Tea Gardens districts, both of which experience higher than average population growth rates, and both lack cultural facilities to meet the needs of the present and future populations.

It is all but certain that the level of infrastructure enhancement necessary to meet the needs of these areas will be beyond the financial capacity of this Council without the assistance of the State Government. The Review Today Reports provided extensive modelling that detailed the capacity of Great Lakes Council to undertake infrastructure enhancement under three different scenarios. In summary, these were a continuation of the Existing Policy, in which monies are committed to the enhancement of infrastructure and buildings, a Responsive Policy of increased spending on enhancement of assets, and a Restrained

Expenditure Scenario in which there was a freeze on enhancements and NO new buildings are constructed.

Annual infrastructure enhancement over the next decade has been estimated as costing an average of \$7.7 million under the Responsive Scenario, however without a substantial change in revenue sources, this is impossible for Council to achieve. There is a clear link between the effects of rate pegging and Council's ability to commit funds to the enhancement of infrastructure projects such as the construction of new facilities to promote the areas of arts and culture.

The situation is reflected in the following two extracts from the Great Lakes Council Annual Report 2006/2007, which are reproduced below:

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Council manages nearly 50 building assets throughout the Local Government area. The community uses these buildings for a variety of cultural, social, educational, health and welfare purposes. The buildings include public halls, community centres, childcare facilities, historical buildings and cemeteries.

The range of buildings is distributed right across the Local Government Area, with most of the rural towns and villages having a community hall. Generally, these were built by the community and passed over to Council during the 1980s and 1990s as the cost of maintaining the building became too great for the individual town/community to support.

Asset maintenance works generally fall into one of two categories, these being either planned/scheduled works or repairs due to failure, damage or vandalism. Due to the steadily decreasing amount of funding available each year, the number of planned/scheduled works were further scaled back again for the 2006/2007 period. Some buildings were allocated only sufficient amounts to deal with failure, damage or vandalism events, with no scheduled building improvements.

ASSET STATUS REPORT

	<i>Estimated investment needed to bring assets condition up to satisfactory standard</i>	<i>Estimate of annual expense needed to maintain asset at satisfactory standard</i>	<i>Value of current year expenditure to maintain asset</i>
<i>Land (Cemeteries)</i>	<i>\$100,00</i>	<i>\$120,000</i>	<i>\$72,650</i>
<i>Buildings</i>	<i>\$900,000</i>	<i>\$135,000</i>	<i>100,000</i>
TOTAL	\$1,000,000	\$255,000	\$172,650

- Public Halls
- Baby Health Centres, Doctor's Surgeries & Premises
- Pre-schools, Kindergarten and Child Care Premises
- Meals on Wheels Kitchens
- Senior Citizens Centres

- Tuncurry Adult Education Building
- Historic Buildings, Courthouses, Museum Premises
- Community Transport Garage
- Community Centre and HAAC Offices
- Arts and Crafts Buildings

- Six Cemeteries
- Internal Roadways and Car Parks
- Fences
- Lighting
- Signage

- Seating
- Footpaths
- Watering and Irrigation Systems
- Grave Digging Equipment

COMMENTARY ON STATE OF ASSETS

Community Services Buildings

The Community Services Section of the Corporate and Community Services Division is responsible for the management of nearly 50 building assets throughout the Local Government area. The community uses these buildings for a variety of cultural, social, educational, health and welfare purposes. The buildings include public halls, community centres, childcare facilities, historical buildings and cemeteries.

As may be expected, there is a wide range of different building types of varying ages distributed throughout the Local Government area. These vary from heritage-listed buildings built by the AA Company at Stroud in the 1800's, through to Arts and Crafts buildings and Community Transport garages constructed in the past 10 years. The great bulk of these assets are in reasonable condition, although the older buildings require more maintenance and some are approaching a part of their life cycle where significant investment will be required within the decade. As these buildings age, foundations and roofs need upgrading as well as renewal of outdated and non-compliant kitchen facilities.

Due to reduced funding for the maintenance and repair of public buildings, this has been a year of repair works rather than programmed maintenance. The renewal of kitchen facilities program that commenced in 2000 has been placed on hold for a year in the hope of obtaining funding for the work in the following year.

A factor that impacts upon the budget requirements for Community Services building assets has been changes to public expectations and building legislation. In particular, this applies to the need for improved disabled access to facilities generally and, indeed for a distressingly high number of Council's buildings, the provision of accessible toilet facilities. Unfortunately, the ongoing program to construct disabled toilet facilities for buildings has had to be paused for the 2006-2007 period due to a lack of funding. Prior to this year there had been an ongoing program for the construction of access ramps and disabled toilet facilities, with steady progress made over the previous eight years. It is expected that this program will take up to another four to six years to complete when funding is again available to meet the capital construction costs.

The level of investment required to bring every building up to a reasonable condition level is estimated to be in the order of \$1.2m. Of particular concern is the state of the Forster School of Arts building located in Little Street Forster which is suffering from problems with the structural piers that support the building.

Other forms of financial commitment towards arts and culture

Council has a S355 sub committee named the Great Lakes Arts Network. (GLAN) This Committee has a broad membership of individuals who represent both formal groups/organisations within the Great Lakes LGA as well as comprising individual's involved with the arts. Council has no dedicated Cultural Officer, and this Committee provides formal comment of matters pertaining to the arts and culture as well as working towards the development of programs to support the arts. This group has identified the need for additional cultural facilities within the Forster Tuncurry area. In recognition of this fact, the Committee's Strategic Plan includes the following elements:

- Produce a **Cultural Venues Data Base / Directory** listing existing venues and their capacity and facilities
- Undertake a **Cultural Venues Audit** identifying needs of existing facilities to enhance their arts and cultural use and to identify gaps in venues

- Work with Great Lakes Council to ensure that arts and cultural considerations are integrated with community facilities, open space, urban design, Civic Precinct planning to include public art policy

Council is a financial member of Arts Mid North Coast, paying an annual membership fee of some \$8,000 per annum. It is estimated that the amount spent on the maintenance of cultural facilities per annum is in the order of some \$100,000 per annum. The Great Lakes Arts Network receives funding of some \$3,000 per annum from Council. The Great lakes Concert Band also receives funding support of \$3,000 per annum, as well as being covered under Council's insurances. Additional funding is provided to community groups through Council's annual Community Grants program, it is estimated that some \$20,000 per annum is provided through this means of support.

Whether Council has a full time arts or cultural officer or dedicated staffing

Great Lakes Council does not have any arts or cultural officers. However:

- The Community Development Coordinator does attend Council's 'Great Lakes Arts Network' s355 Committee and oversees Council's role in delivering on projects. The officer's time for this activity is extremely limited as it only forms a small component of the role.
- The Integrated Planning Coordinator is facilitating development of a Cultural Plan. The officer does attend some meetings of Council's 'Great Lakes Arts Network' s355 Committee as part of the process.
- Council's library services staff provide some cultural services.

The absence of a Cultural officer has been identified as an ongoing challenge. Council's 'Great Lakes Arts Network' s355 Committee has an expired management plan, parts of which were not implemented as there were no staff available or designated.

The significance of any partnerships with private sector funding or private sector sponsorships in the area of arts and culture

Please refer to Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan Case Study

Any issues related to the implementation of the arts/cultural grants program OR with the implementation of the arts and cultural strategic plan

Please refer to Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan Case Study

The following themes were suggested for inclusion in submissions by stakeholders

1. Issues of public and private funding and allocation of resources

Please refer to Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan Case Study

2. Suitability of public infrastructure for arts and cultural life

The Great Lakes Library Service remains one of the most heavily patronised per capita in NSW. This is reflective of an older community with considerable disposable time. Currently, the Great Lakes Council provides access to the library through a central library at Forster, a branch library at Tea Gardens and library service points at Bulahdelah, Nabadah and Stroud. With the exception of Tea Gardens all facilities fall well below accepted library standards for size and are generally around twenty years old. The situation is particularly severe for the central library at Forster. Since its opening in 1988 the Forster Library's catchment population has risen by approximately 70%, without any increase in size to the building.

The 20 public halls under the care and management of Great Lakes Council are the main venues for the public to practice and share their arts and cultural activities.

3. The desirability of locating cultural facilities in close proximity to create hubs

Great Lakes Council is currently researching the infrastructure needs of organisations in the area. Results of this research will inform planning (Excerpt below)

9. Infrastructure to accommodate organisations

Council is researching infrastructure needs of organisations; both now and into the future. The results will inform planning for the provision of infrastructure to accommodate organisations.

56. Does your organisation have an office or facility in the Great Lakes area?

☐ Yes

☐ No

57. Is your organisation needing to improve your facilities / office in the Great Lakes area now or in coming years? If not, skip to Question 67 (the next section)

☐ Yes, we already have a facility but it does not meet our current needs

☐ Yes, we already have a facility here but need to expand

☐ Yes, we already have a facility here but will need to relocate as the building may be redeveloped in the near future

☐ Yes, we are planning to establish new services or an office in the area

☐ No, we are already established in the area

☐ No, we are not planning to establish a services or office in the area

58. Would your organisation be interested in co-locating with other services?

☐ Yes, as we can share facilities that we otherwise would not afford on our own

☐ Yes, this will improve referrals and relationships between services

☐ No, we want to remain discreet for our clients

☐ No, we want to remain separate to maintain our own identity

59. Are you interested in attending a meeting with other organisations to further develop the planning for a community facility?

☐ Yes

☐ No, but please keep me informed

☐ No

60. If your organisation is looking for new facilities, what are your needs and how important is it that you have access:

	Essential	Desireable	Not needed at all
Office space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serviced office (equipped and administration support)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service delivery space to work with clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interview / consultation rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
workshop / event space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
meeting rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (eg: security, waiting room, catering kitchen, child friendly)			

61. How intensive would your use be?

	Exclusive use - full time	Shared - used part time by our service	Shared - used occasionally by our service
Office space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serviced office (equipped and administration support)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service delivery space to work with clients / public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interview / consultation rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workshop / event space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting rooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (eg: security, waiting room, catering kitchen, child friendly)			

62. Where would be a suitable location for your service / office to be based?

☐ Bulahdelah
 ☐ Forster
 ☐ Hawks Nest / Tea Gardens
 ☐ Nabrac
 ☐ Pacific Palms
 ☐ Stroud
 ☐ Tuncurry

☐ Other (please specify) _____

63. Do you have any forum plans / proposals?

☐ Yes
 ☐ In development
 ☐ No

64. What is the arrangement for your current service accommodation?

☐ Own
 ☐ Subsidised rent
 ☐ From home

☐ Commercial rent
 ☐ In kind (no cost)
 ☐ NA - no space to operate yet

65. If your organisation pays rent for your current accommodation, how much do you pay per week? (optional)

☐ Less than \$100
 ☐ \$100 - \$200
 ☐ \$200 - \$300
 ☐ \$300 - \$400
 ☐ More than \$400

66. If your organisation were to be accommodated in a one-stop-shop, would you be interested in being a financial partner in the construction of the facility?

☐ Yes
 ☐ Depending on terms
 ☐ No

If so, what could be brought to the table by your organisation?

4. Accessibility of cultural and arts education

The closest Conservatoriums of Music to the Great Lakes is 2hrs travel to Newcastle, and 4 hours north to Coffs Harbour. Musicians have to leave the region to develop a career in music.

Great Lakes Council is represented on the Mid North Coast Conservatorium Board which is undertaking planning toward establishment of a conservatorium to serve the region, in collaboration with Greater Taree and Port Macquarie Hastings Councils.

5. Economic impacts on communities

Please refer to Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan Case Study

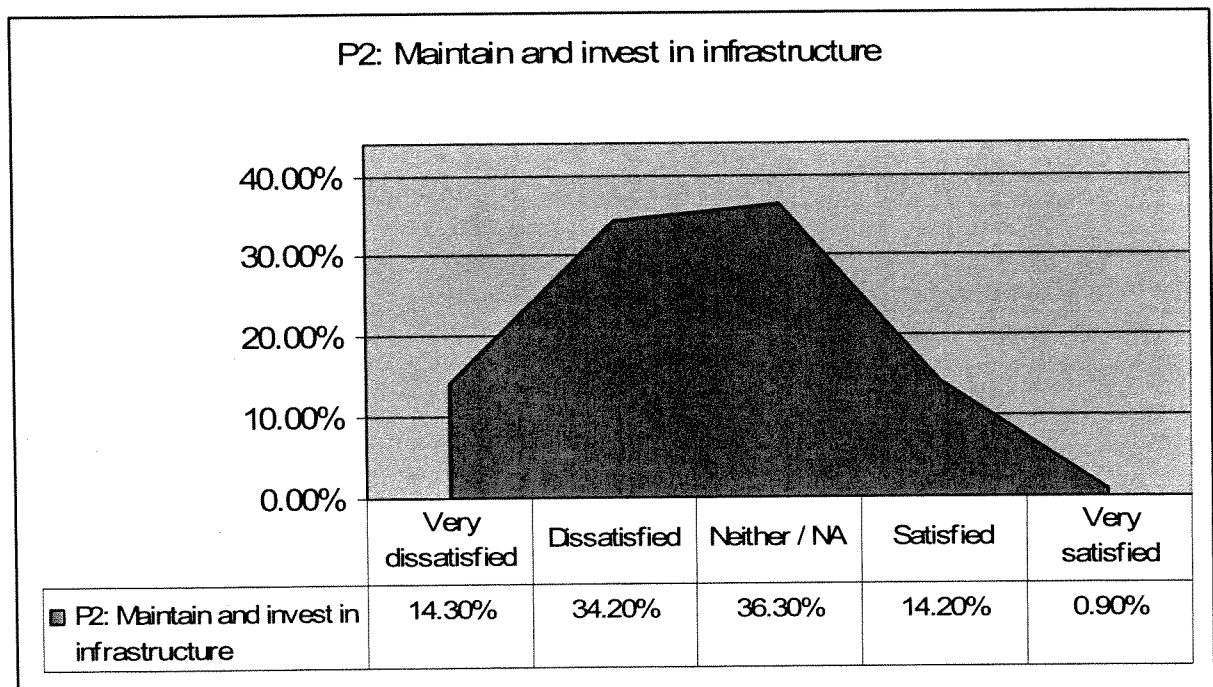
6. The adequacy of the NSW State Plan and desirability of a cultural plan for the state to maximise diversity of access, with reference to the Tourism masterplan and other relevant planning strategies.

The NSW State Plan is a great start that will be enhanced when it is informed by integrated strategic plan developed at a local government level.

A state cultural plan would be a useful direction as long as it is resourced for implementation and is informed by the cultural and strategic planning undertaken at the local government level.

Great Lakes Council has conducted a Great Lakes Community Census 2008 which included a section where respondents commented on the performance of all levels of government in delivering on the NSW State Plan priorities.

748 respondents participated in assessing how governments 'Maintain and invest in infrastructure'. 48.5% were dissatisfied while only 15.1% were satisfied. The remaining 38.3.4% was either neutral or believed it was not applicable to them.



Great Lakes Community Census 2008, Great Lakes Council

7. Any other relevant matters

Great Lakes Case Study - Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan

2006

Great Lakes Council identified in 2006 that the Forster School of Arts Hall, located in close proximity to the Forster CBD/tourist precinct was in disrepair.

The existing Hall is used for a small range of regular community activities such as weekly tae-kwon-do lessons, monthly grower's markets and cooking displays, and various other irregular community and social gatherings.

Structural investigations were undertaken and it was confirmed that Council would require up to \$500,000 refurbishing the hall to a safe state for use by the community. (please refer to Council reports and presentation 11 December 2007 attached)

In response to the report detailing the cost of refurbishment, Council determined that the funds may be better spent on redeveloping the site for a new facility which could accommodate a range of alternative uses. As a result, a community survey was undertaken to investigate the potential future uses of the School of Arts site. The community survey identified a range of facilities – multi-function hall, library, community meeting rooms, facilities for youth, performance halls/spaces etc. (Survey findings and Council presentation on 11 Dec 2007 attached)

Coincidentally Council commenced an urban design and density review of high and medium density residential areas in 2006, which incorporated the Forster CBD/tourist precinct. This study incorporated the preparation of a residential development masterplan for a large vacant privately owned site directly opposite the School of Arts site.

2007

The overlapping timelines of the School of Arts Survey and the Urban Design Review led to the identification of a strategic opportunity to have a Masterplan prepared to consider the future development potential of the 'Forster Civic Precinct' – potentially incorporating the School of Arts hall site, the private residential site and adjoining Council and Crown land. (please refer to Council reports provided, in particular the 30 October 2007 report)

The consultants undertaking the Urban Design Review then developed a project outline and timeline for the Masterplan process, from the initial community consultation through to the holding of an architectural competition for the potential redevelopment for the Precinct.

The resolution was made to undertake the masterplan project without a source of funding for the consultant investigation into the potential of the redevelopment, the internal Council project management; the holding of public meetings, advertising or any other aspect of the project.

The physical constraints of the site and needs of the community have been considered in detail, however, the unknown aspects such as final land uses and actual funding of the redevelopment, have not been determined.

2008

The initial investigation process has considered the findings of the School of Arts Community Survey, the prominent location of the site and the demographics and tourism focus of the Great Lakes. The findings of the investigation have shown that the civic focus of the site requires a major community 'attractor' to be located on the site e.g. a library, but that a range of arts and cultural activities could be accommodated on the site and provide synergistic relationships between the buildings, spaces and uses of the site.

The Masterplan process is at the stage of going on public exhibition for further community input into the possible built form of the development and possible activities and land uses on the site, but still there is no firm plan for sourcing funding for the ongoing management of the project, the undertaking of an architectural competition or for the actual development of the site.

The Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan is a large scale example of a Council arts and cultural strategy being prepared in an ad hoc fashion, as a result of a community need, without any funding for the actual process of investigation, or funding for the potential constructed outcome.

The following responses to the matters of interest to the Inquiry are provided on the basis of this Civic Precinct Case Study.

- **Any relevant Council's arts and cultural planning or strategies**

The Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan planning process was identified in response to structural concerns regarding an existing Council asset used for a range of arts, cultural and community activities. The project has not been undertaken as part of an existing arts or cultural plan or strategy for the Great Lakes local government area, nor has any source of funding been obtained for the development of the project.

- **Council's experience with the State grants process**

Council's expectation of the State grants process as it relates to the Civic project is that once we have an agreed concept/masterplan, then Council may be able to actively apply for funding for certain aspects of the project. i.e. if the concept incorporates a library Council will have Section 94 funds available and may be able to apply for funding assistance to assist in the planning and construction of this aspect of the development.

- **The amount of funding spent on arts and cultural activities**

As it relates to the Civic project, there were no funds directly allocated or available to investigate the development of a future 'arts and cultural' facility. The funding for the planning aspects of the project has been redirected from other Council sources and there is essentially no funding available for any development which may occur as a result of the Civic project.

- **Whether Council has a full time arts or cultural officer or dedicated staffing**

Council has no Arts or Cultural Officer on staff.

- **The significance of any partnerships with private sector funding or private sector sponsorships in the area of arts and culture**

The Civic project commenced with the idea of a potential public private partnership to assist in funding development of the public land for a range of community facilities, including facilities suitable for arts and cultural activities. The public private partnership concept was subsequently disregarded through the investigation phase of the project as being too complex in a legal and logistical sense.

- **Any issues related to the implementation of the arts/cultural grants program or with the implementation of the arts and cultural strategic plan**

No arts or cultural grants program or strategic plan is currently in place within Great Lakes Council which is relevant to the Civic project.

1. Issues of public and private funding and allocation of resources

There appear to be no public or private sources of funding available to Great Lakes Council for the preparation of or implementation of projects such as the Forster Civic Precinct Project.

Funding for the preparation of the Civic project by external consultants has been allocated from other projects on Council's work program.

Funding for staff resources to project manage the Civic project has also been allocated from other projects on Council's work program. Given the scope of the project and the limited staff resources available within Council a strategic planning officer has been assigned to the ongoing management of this project on an overtime basis in lieu of a funded arts and cultural officer.

Funding for the completion of the Civic project to built form, is currently unavailable and Council will investigate sources of funding only when a concept plan, land uses and activities have been agreed upon and allocated to the potential site redevelopment. i.e. until such time as plans are available to submit with funding applications, no external funding sources appear to be available for a project of this scale or scope.

2. Suitability of public infrastructure for arts and cultural life

Council have very limited public infrastructure for arts and cultural activities. The majority of arts and cultural activities occur in existing public assets which inappropriate in scale, facilities and location based on population. (please refer to public halls information in Council presentation 11 December 2007)

Council have no public infrastructure works programs or funding available to accommodate the development of appropriate facilities for arts and culture at this time.

In addition to a lack of actual infrastructure for arts and cultural facilities/activities, Great Lakes Council has insufficient public infrastructure and services (and funding for the same) available to improve accessibility, adaptability and viability of the assets currently used for these activities.

3. The desirability of locating cultural facilities in close proximity to create hubs

The community have expressed a strong desire for the provision of performance, arts and other cultural activity facilities in the School of Arts survey, which have promoted the provision of such facilities as part of the Forster Civic Precinct Masterplan project. (please refer to School of Arts Survey, 30 October 2007 Council report, and Council Presentation 11 December 2007 attached)

4. Accessibility of cultural and arts education

Council have very limited public infrastructure for arts and cultural activities. The majority of arts and cultural activities occur in existing public assets which inappropriate in scale, facilities and location based on population.

As a result there are no facilities available for the development of cultural and arts education programs within the Great Lakes, outside of those provided through the Community College, Arts and Crafts programs and the like.

5. Economic impacts on communities

The economic impacts of not having appropriate facilities are compounding within the Great Lakes as our population grows and our population ages:

- there are no funds available to develop arts and cultural facilities in the areas of demand and population growth within the Great Lakes;
- individuals must travel outside of the shire to experience a diverse range of arts and culture i.e. performance art and regional exhibitions;
- the lack of public services, transport and infrastructure in the Great Lakes makes travel difficult for the majority of the population who then do not have the opportunity to experience arts and cultural activities which may be of interest to them.

6. The adequacy of the NSW State Plan and desirability of a cultural plan for the state to maximise diversity of access, with reference to the Tourism Masterplan and other relevant planning strategies

The NSW State Plan may be made more effective through the provision of:

- funding to local government for the establishment of arts and cultural officers within Councils;
- funding for appropriate investigation into the art and cultural needs and desires of the community;
- funding for the development of strategic plans for the provision of facilities and services for arts and culture education and activities appropriate to the population; and
- public funding of the development and long term maintenance and adaptation of arts and cultural facilities.

7. Any other relevant matters

Allocation of funding is often directed to 'regional centres' in the same way that infrastructure funding is allocated to regional centres.

The importance of the provision of funding based on projects on a local scale is increasing in areas outside of the State governments identified 'regional centres' due to our:

- ageing population;
- reduced funding for public services and infrastructure to enable equitable access to regional centres; and
- the increased cost of living and travel for our residents.

These matters are of growing importance in areas such as Great Lakes Council which has the oldest population in the state and the fastest growing aged population in the state, for whom such issues severely restrict their opportunities to access an appropriate 'cultural facility'.