

A Performing Arts and Conference Centre for Nelson?

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and worked out the type of facility we need and can afford...

what do you think?





When you see touring international shows advertised on TV with a list of towns that doesn't include Nelson, do you feel you're missing out? The Nelson City Council is making progress towards a Performing Arts and Conference Centre for our region. It will not only put Nelson on the map for touring musical and theatre shows, but will also be a multi-purpose venue we can be proud of for large events such as graduations and tradeshows. The proposed adjoining Conference facility will contribute to the economy as a centre for the larger conferences that will make use of our vital tourism infrastructure year round.

Council has found a site, done the sums (with some expert help) and worked out the type of facility we need and can afford. It is now time to consult with you, the people of Nelson, and to hear what you think about this proposal.

1

A long time coming

In the mid-nineties, Council came close to purchasing the Majestic Theatre, which had a stage, seats for 1200 and had been used for some live performances, but the building burnt down. The Millennium Centre Trust was formed soon after and began the research into the type of performance facility that would best suit Nelson's needs.

In the meantime, Nelson has remained one of the few New Zealand cities of its size without a large auditorium venue suitable for theatrical events. The result for the Nelson Tasman region is that performances and events are missed due to the lack of a suitable venue. In the last 13 years several reports have demonstrated the need for a suitable large performance auditorium and conference facility in the Nelson Tasman region. Research has shown a strong demand from a range of users, from touring events to local productions, and for public and civic functions such as College and NMIT graduation ceremonies.

2

Meeting the need

In the 2009-2019 Nelson Community Plan, the Nelson City Council allocated \$28 million towards the cost of a suitable Performing Arts and Conference Centre. Four million dollars had earlier been budgeted to the purchase of a site. In June this year Council enlisted the help of project management company, BECA, to develop a design brief and early design proposal for a Performing Arts and Conference Centre on the Rutherford Hotel Holdings site next to the Rutherford Hotel. This site is proposed because it is close to the CBD and Nelson's largest hotel and proposed conference facilities. Additionally, the site is within easy walking distance of other accommodation. Nearby restaurants and bars mean there is no need to duplicate that infrastructure elsewhere.

BECA reported back that a quality Performing Arts and Conference Centre can be provided on the Rutherford Street site within the \$28 million budget. It is now time for a Special Consultative Procedure to inform Nelson residents about the type of venue the region could have and to gauge views and opinions on the suitability of the proposal.



The Performing Arts facility

Council proposes a Performing Arts facility next to the Rutherford Hotel. It will have:

- A 1200 seat main auditorium, with continental styled tiered seating
- Approximately 900 seats in the main gallery and a further 300 seats in the circle
- An arched Roman style stage (proscenium) of width and depth suitable for orchestral performances, theatre and classical and modern dance
- An appropriate fly tower (A fly tower is the structure above the stage that allows for scene changes and lighting etc)
- Backstage facilities of a high standard
- High quality, adjustable acoustics for opera, theatre and popular music performances
- A foyer and entrance with associated ticket sales, administration, merchandise, food and beverage sales
- Circulation space from the foyer
- Provision for use by physically impaired patrons, including ramps and lifts to elevated spaces
- Urban landscaping to provide easy access to the venue from the CBD, including way finding from CBD car parking areas
- Sheltered entries and drop off areas for buses, coaches and cars.
- Physical links to the Conference Centre

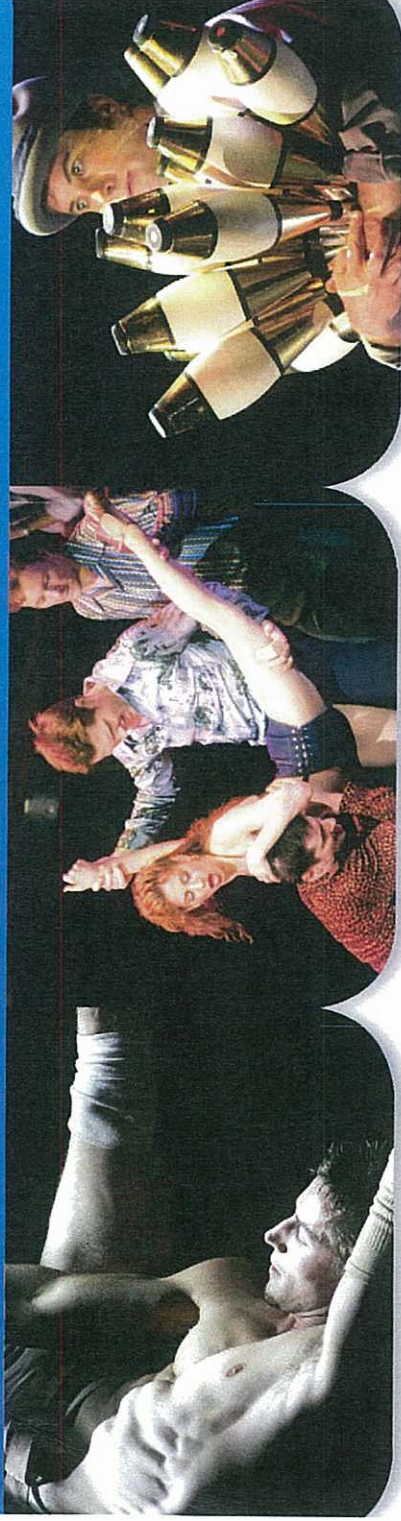
- 1 Entrance Foyer
- 2 Stage & Auditorium
- 3 Administration Area
- 4 Performers Area
- 5 Service Area



Proposed Performing Arts facility footprint - main entrance from Selwyn Place.



Proposed Performing Arts facility footprint - main entrance from Nile Street West.



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The Conference facility

As part of the conditions of the draft sale and purchase agreement, between Rutherford Hotel Holdings Limited (RHHL) and Council for the RHHL site, RHHL will contribute to the Performing Arts and Conference Centre by providing the Conference Centre as an extension to the existing Rutherford Hotel. The Conference Centre will provide:

- A 700 seat capacity (combined over two rooms)
- 500 seat dining capacity (combined over two rooms)
- Eight or more breakout rooms (some flexible with moveable walls to allow joining)
- Media facilities
- Physical links to the Performing Arts facility

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Why do we need a multipurpose Performing Arts and Conference Centre?

The indoor performance spaces presently available in Nelson are the Suter, the Nelson School of Music and Theatre Royal, the Cathedral, the Trafalgar Centre and school halls; the last two having flat floors, moveable seating and poor quality acoustic performance. The Suter, Nelson School of Music and Theatre Royal are not large enough and the Cathedral is restricted in the types of performances it can be used for.

Both local and touring performances typically require a capacity in the range of 1000 to 1500 seats.

Upgrades and developments of theatres elsewhere in New Zealand in the last decade confirm this; examples include Palmerston North (Regent Theatre 1400), Napier (Municipal Theatre 993), North Shore (Bruce Mason Theatre 1200), Dunedin (Regent Theatre 1800) and Invercargill (Civic Theatre 1000).

Nelson will continue to miss significant touring performance. Local musical, drama, and school productions will be forced to use less suitable facilities until a new Performing Arts and Conference Centre is developed.

6

When might construction start if the proposal is approved?

If the proposal goes ahead, the start date for construction of the Performing Arts and Conference Centre is programmed for 2010 – 2011, with an official opening in late 2011 or early 2012.

Please note that this proposal is not an amendment to the Nelson Community Plan, as that plan has been passed and included the allocation of \$32m for a Performing Arts Centre. What we do want to hear from

you is your views on this proposal which includes more detail on what services and features we will get for the budget, the location proposed and the additional support information on the private development of a conference centre that would adjoin the Performing Arts Centre. Hence this Special Consultative Procedure is taking place before Council can make a final decision. Please read on and consider making a submission. Given that this statement of proposal is only 6 pages it is also the summary of the proposal.



Social Considerations

The Performing Arts and Conference Centre will contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of the region and will give Nelson the ability to attract and retain an active drama and musical sector. It will increase the national and international profile of the Nelson Tasman region, and improve access to out-of-region shows for Nelson residents.

Type of performances

The Performing Arts and Conference Centre would allow Nelson to attract and stage a wide range of performances. A sample includes the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, National Opera, National Youth Orchestra, Royal New Zealand Ballet, the National Youth Choir, touring contemporary music acts, WearableArt@ mini shows, cultural events, large religious gatherings, the Royal NZ Navy Band, Comedy Festival touring acts, the Big Sing Choral Festival, tribute shows such as Pink Floyd, Abba,

Bee Gees etc, Southern Jam Jazz Festival, touring children's shows (Wiggles, Hi Five etc), Court Theatre productions, Country Music Awards and touring Irish dance shows.

Function space

The foyer will be big enough to be used for pre-and post event functions, or to be used independently as a function venue.

Showcasing Nelson, the Performing Arts and Conference Centre will stand out among existing facilities in the region. It will generate a sense of community and contribute to an improved sense of place, allowing the region to come together as a community. The design will draw on local resources, experience and the talent of local craftspeople.

A legacy for future generations

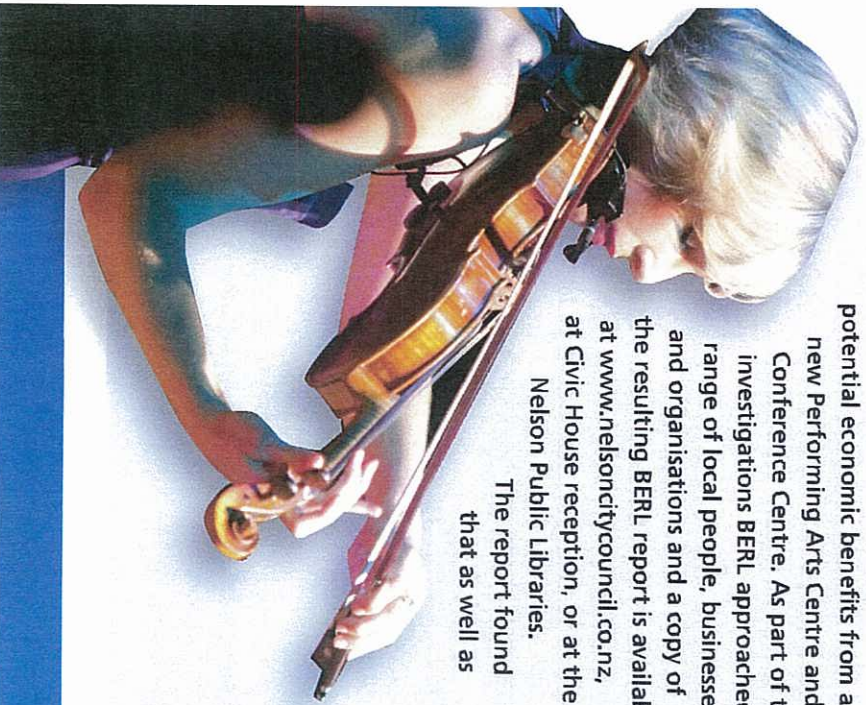
The proposed centre will be built for the enjoyment of present and future generations.



Economic Benefits

Researching the potential

The Council appointed Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) to assess the potential economic benefits from a new Performing Arts Centre and Conference Centre. As part of the investigations BERL approached a range of local people, businesses and organisations and a copy of the resulting BERL report is available at www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz, at Civic House reception, or at the Nelson Public Libraries. The report found that as well as



providing a venue for arts, the centre will provide economic spin-offs for the region. It stated that audience numbers attracted to shows such as the Topp Twins leave no question the region can fill the proposed Performing Arts Centre, but expressed uncertainty that it would be the case for all shows. The report looks at two scenarios: a high scenario, based on work by the Nelson Millennium Centre Trust, suggesting around 45 shows a year and a more conservative scenario based on 22 shows a year (although with setup and rehearsals the real activity level in the facility would be much higher). In the 22-show scenario, the Performing Arts Centre would produce \$900,000 per year in local spend by touring groups and out-of-town visitors, generate \$370,000 in GDP, and create 11 ongoing full time jobs; add in the flow on impacts and this increases to \$1.3 million to local spend, \$570,000 in GDP, and 13 jobs. The more optimistic 45-show scenario results in direct output of \$1.7 million, GDP of \$690,000, and 20 new jobs; rising to \$2.4 million local spend, to \$1.1 million GDP, and 25 jobs when flow on impacts are added.



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Financial Considerations

Capital cost

The conceptual design is based upon a maximum budget of \$28 million, including design and project management. This budget is comparative to similar theatre developments elsewhere in New Zealand.

Annual costs

Once the Performing Arts and Conference Centre is up and running, it will cost approximately \$3.8 million per annum. This is interest, depreciation and ongoing running costs. These running costs, including staffing, maintenance, energy, consumables and utilities, are likely to be around \$430,000. The total funding amount per year also includes repayments of the loan taken out for the project. These amounts have already been provided for in our draft and final Nelson Community Plan (LTCCP), which is why Council considers the project to be affordable.

Is Tasman contributing?

The proposed facility will benefit and be used by the region. The Tasman District Council has not included a contribution as part of its current Long Term Community Plan. However the Nelson City Council will continue to encourage TDC to contribute to this important regional facility at both a capital and operational level.

Large conferences

Currently the Rutherford Hotel is our largest conference venue with capacity for around 300 delegates. A larger conference centre to be built by Rutherford Hotel Holdings would increase the use of the Performing Arts facility and attract an estimated six larger conferences (700 people) per year to Nelson. The ability to host larger conferences would create significant spending outside the current peak tourism season, helping to address the tourism industry's seasonality issues identified as a key priority in the Nelson Tasman Regional Tourism Strategy.

The BERL report notes that extra hotel beds would be needed to support these extended conference facilities. Outside the scope of this proposal, this additional accommodation would need to be developed by private interests.

Links to Conference Centre

Shows can be included as part of the entertainment at conferences. In this way, the Conference facility and the Performing Arts facility would work together to support regional economic development. The enlarged Conference facility would also have potential links with tourism and arts events in the region. At the very least, the region's ability to stage large indoor and outdoor performing arts events adds to its attraction as a conference destination.

Trade display space

This will evolve during the design stage. The Performing Arts facility will be able to work alongside the Conference facility to offer display space, possibly in the foyer. There will be a physical linkage between the two buildings that could also be used as display space.

Council debt levels

The proposed Performing Arts and Conference Centre will add \$32 million (\$28 million for the facility and \$4 million for the site) to Council debt, i.e the debt level in the Nelson Community Plan would be lowered by \$32 million in 2012/13 without the development.

Additional funding sources?

Council will be strongly seeking additional sources of funding to contribute towards the project. Saxton Field and the Theatre Royal are good examples of facilities that have gained funding support locally and nationally. The businesses of our region have been generous in supplying donations in kind and we expect this would be the case again for a performance facility that will be a source of great civic pride.



Environmental Considerations

Sustainability

Sustainability features will be integrated within the Performing Arts and Conference Centre and included throughout its design and operation. The development would target a green star rating of not less than five stars, including acoustic and thermal insulation, rainwater harvesting for re-use in toilets etc, low energy lighting, and passive solar heating.

What will it look like?

The Performing Arts building is yet to be designed, but the aim is to create an iconic facility for Nelson. The building is expected to have a fly tower between 20m and 24m high.

Where do I park my car?

The site is just a short distance from the CBD and its main use will be in the evenings and weekends, therefore people will be able to park in the Montgomery car park and other central city parks.



Have your say

More consultation activity

Saturday Market Stall, 31 October - a chance to speak to councillors and senior staff about your thoughts on the proposal.

Public Open Day, Monday 9 November - your chance to speak to councillors, staff and the architect about the proposal. Venue: Council Chamber, Civic House, 3-7pm. Just drop in anytime.

Councillors and senior management are also happy to speak to community or special interest groups about the proposal. If interested, please contact the Chief Executive's secretary on 546 0242 to arrange a time for Council to speak to your group.

For more information

You can get further copies of this Statement of Proposal, and other information including the BERL report from the Civic House 110 Trafalgar Street or call 546 0200 to get one posted. You can also visit www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz or one of the Nelson Public Libraries.

How do I make a submission?

You can use the form in this Statement of Proposal, or alternatively you can complete the online form at www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz, write a letter marked PACC Consultation to Council at P O Box 645 Nelson 7040 or email your thoughts to enquiry@ncc.govt.nz with the subject line PACC Consultation.

How do I get to the Performing Arts and Conference Centre from the CBD?
Urban design features will be developed to help people 'way-find' via attractive signage and lighting.

How will this facility impact on neighbouring streets like Nile Street west?

The building (fly tower) will not be as high as the Rutherford Hotel. Traffic design features will include an entry and exit flow for buses and service vehicles.

What sort of noise levels will the facility create?

The Performing Arts and Conference Centre will be built to contain noise and events held there will be subject to normal noise requirements. The Resource Consent process will cover this.

Please note all submissions are made available for public and media viewing.

Speaking at a hearing

Please indicate if you wish to be heard in support of your submission. If you do not, it will be assumed that you do not wish to speak.

All those submitters who wish to be heard will be advised of hearing times after the close of the consultation on 24 November 2009. If you have any questions on how to make a submission call the Council on 546 0200.

How do I lodge my submission?

Drop off your submission at Civic House, 110 Trafalgar Street, Nelson or post to PACC Consultation, Nelson City Council, Freepost 76919, PO Box 645, Nelson 7040
You can also make an online submission at www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz or email Council at enquiry@ncc.govt.nz with the subject line PACC Consultation.

What happens now?

Hearings for those submitters who wish to be heard will be held over four days – Tuesday 1 December through to Friday 4 December 2009 (inclusive as required).

Council will then consider submissions and a final decision will be made at the Council meeting of Thursday 10 December 2009.

Performing Arts and Conference Centre - Submission Form



Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____ Email _____

This consultation opens on Friday 23 October and closes at 4pm on Tuesday 24 November 2009

Public Information statement: Please note all submissions are made available for public and media viewing

You can talk about your submission to Councillors in hearings scheduled for early December. Please indicate if you wish to speak to the Council in support of your submission Yes No

Note: if you do not answer this question Council will assume that you do not wish to speak.

The Council is keen to get the community's view on the proposed development of a Performing Arts and Conference Centre on the Rutherford Street site. Please indicate your view on the proposal and give comments (you do not have to tick a box if you feel they do not apply, you can simply make a comment) .

I support the proposal

Comments: _____

I support the proposal, but have some reservations (please note these in comments)

Comments: _____

I'm not sure

Comments: _____

I do not support the proposal

Comments: _____

Please make any other comments.

Please attach additional sheets if needed

Please tell us about yourself

It would be helpful if you could fill out the following panel. The information is used by Council to improve consultation methods. This is voluntary and is not used for any purpose other than this consultation.

Gender Male Female Age Under 20 20 – 39 40 – 59 60 and over
Location Nelson Tasman Elsewhere, please specify _____



THANK YOU, YOUR SUBMISSION IS APPRECIATED