

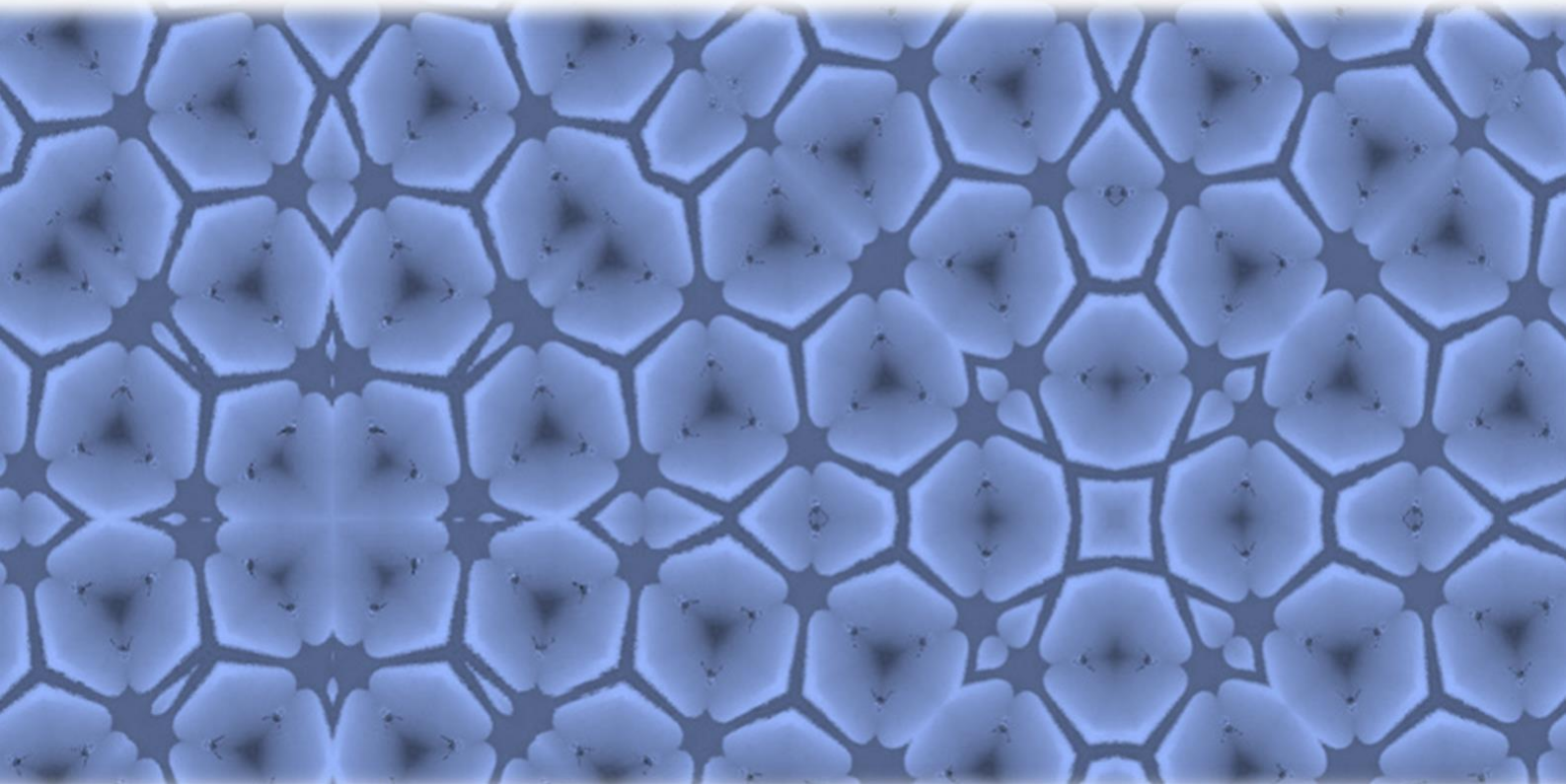


CLARE & GILBERT  
VALLEYS COUNCIL

# Clare Town Hall + Riverton Community Hall VISIONING REPORT

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July 2021



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Halls are almost 100 years and 150 years old respectively, built during times when agriculture and industry was growing rapidly in regional South Australia. Designed to be a place for social gatherings, interaction and entertainment, the Halls have served the cultural and social needs of the community for decades. Grand facilities that were used for theatre, recitals, and important social and civic functions such as debutante balls and presentations. Over the last 30 years however, with the advancement of technology, the commercialisation of social and cultural activities and changing societal expectations, the demand for these spaces has changed.

Whilst some of the smaller rooms attached to these Halls are often well used, the size and nature of the Hall spaces and the declining amenities has decreased demand based on both need and expected comfort levels. In other words, there are fewer events that require a large flat floor, a stage and people expect a higher level of comfort and better facilities i.e., air conditioning, comfortable seating, better acoustics and complimentary technology.

Despite the changes in demand and expectations of community members, both the Clare and Riverton Town Halls are much beloved by their communities. They provide a strong connection to place and reflect the heritage of the town. Many report their fondness of the facilities and recollect using them in decades previous, even if they haven't visited much since that time. In the context of these two opposing positions – where the Halls are loved but not well-used, it presents a dilemma for Council. This project was designed to address that dilemma and understand the best way to manage and utilise the Halls moving forward.

To create a vision for both facilities, a number of things were reviewed including the current usage and cost of the facilities and consultation with the community to understand their preferences and expectations. We also looked at the contemporary development and use of similar civic facilities in regional Australia. This provided insight into what's possible and how facilities like the Clare and Riverton Halls can provide economic, social and cultural benefit. The following provides a summary of what this process uncovered and what opportunities there are for the Halls that are possible and desirable.

## Clare Town Hall

The Clare Town Hall looms large on the landscape of the town's main street, many indicated their love for the building and mentioned the heritage nature as an important and defining feature. The community are very eager to see the facility maintained and believe with further development it could be a great asset for both Clare and the surrounding region. There is a desire to ensure the town still has access to a hall with a stage, where performances and larger functions can be hosted but the demand for this type of facility is limited. Within this context, the challenge is to ensure that a venue is available for these types of events but it is flexible and able to be used in other ways, for a range of uses, both large and small.

This project also revealed a number of previous documents that have been prepared over the last 20+ years that recommend the re-development of the Clare Town Hall. These documents reflect a long and recurrent desire for the Hall to be transformed into a more flexible space that offers cultural, social and educational opportunities. This along with research into how other Councils are re-inventing older civic spaces into vibrant civic and community hubs provided the impetus for the recommendations outlined in this report.

Three options are outlined in this document – from the “do nothing” approach that sees the Hall continue to be used as it is, possibly facing continued decline, to a more elaborate option that sees an internal redevelopment and activation. The latter option is obviously an expensive exercise and will require ongoing investment from Council but it would also provide significant benefit and support Council's economic and cultural strategic priorities. The community has been here before, with many discussions over the last few decades arriving at a similar point – The Clare Town Hall is an important community asset that could be an important centrepiece for a range of community and commercial activities.

**In summary, the recommendations involve:**

- Activation of the Hall in the short-term – with additional staff and resourcing to support the development of programs and activities.
- The development of a business case to support a more substantial redevelopment of the Hall into a Culture and Innovation Hub.
- A review of Council’s administrative and civic facility needs
- An invigoration of the Management Committee in the short-term, which sees it transform into an advisory group that supports and advises Council.

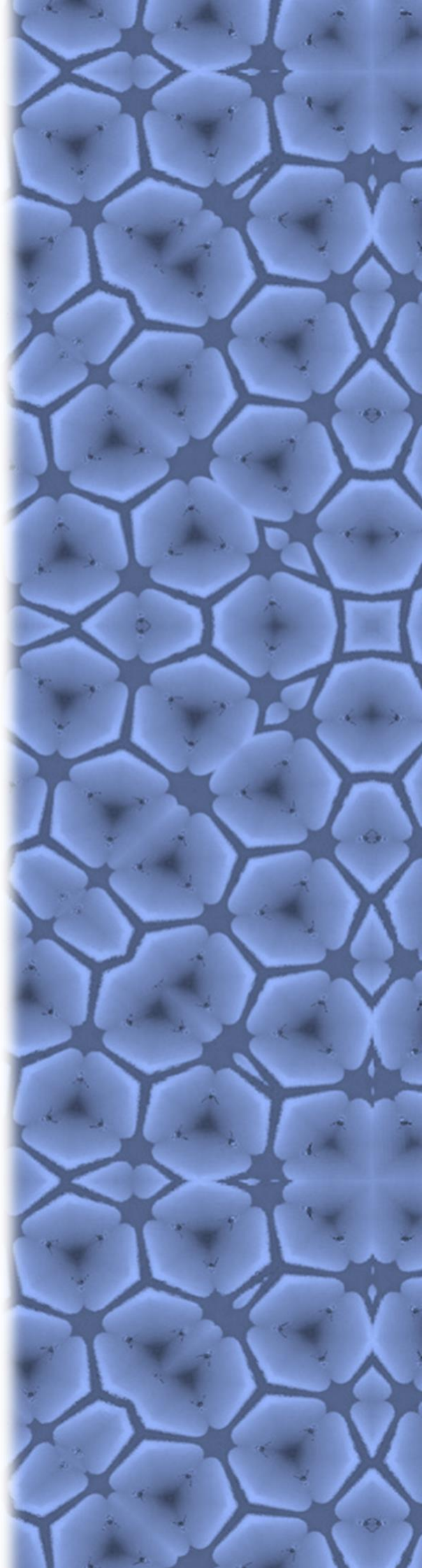
**The Riverton Community Hall**

The Riverton Community Hall is also a much-loved community facility that is reasonably well used on a weekly basis – particularly in the context of the size of the town. A number of community groups use the Hall including a local dance school, a group of quilters and the Probus Club and in the past a Youth Lounge was developed in an upstairs area at the front end of the Hall.

The Hall is dated, which discourages community use and significantly limits the commercial use of the Hall. Upgrades are recommended as part of this report – some minor and some more substantial but they do not involve significant structural changes. The upgrades, which reflect a modernisation of the Hall sit alongside an activation initiative that sees the re-development of the Management Committee and the establishment of a co-delivery model.

**In summary the recommendations involve:**

- Review the structure and electrics of the facility to ensure they are safe and inspect the kitchen to ensure it is suitable for public food preparation and service.
- Re-invigorate the Committee and provide resources for the activation of the facility in partnership with the community.
- Develop a masterplan that maps out the necessary upgrades of the Hall and implement over the next 3 – 4 years



# PART 1: CLARE TOWN HALL

## 1.1 Parameters for Development

### 1.1.1 Clare Town Hall Overview

- Opened in 1926 on the former site of Daniel O’Leary’s flour mill.
- Upstairs dressing rooms at rear of the building added 1985
- Barbara J Long Function Room added to the Southern side in 2003
- Designed by Chris A Smith – considered one of the leading South Australian exponents of the Art Deco Style, which is evidenced within the Hall.
- Town Hall Keeper engaged part-time to manage basic town hall use, cleaning and maintenance
- Not heritage listed but there is an “Heritage Adjacency” overlay which seeks to ensure development of the space aligns with nearby state and local heritage listed places.
- Zoned Township Main Street
- Up until recently managed collaboratively with a Town Hall Committee with support from Council. The Committee has gone into recess
- Previous management and development proposals created over the last 30 years – further information detailed later in the document.

### 1.1.2 Usage

Number of Bookings

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>Town Hall</b>	62	61	37	84
<b>Function Room</b>	127	161	170	151
<b>Clerk’ Office</b>	209	199	102	140
<b>Stan Scott Room</b>	166	148	63	63
<b>Notes</b>			Closures – Covid + Repairs	Closures – Covid

In conjunction with the Library, a range of community and private groups and individuals use the Clare Town Hall for a variety of activities. The following provides an indicative list of hirers / users from the 2020 – 2021 Year.

- Local Schools
- Nth Clare Football Club
- Carers and Disability Link
- Helping Hand Aged Care
- Clare Valley Grape and Wine Association
- PIRSA
- Diabetes SA
- Northern and Yorke Natural Resources
- Uniting Care Country SA
- SA Power Networks
- Legatus
- DEWNR
- Wool, Wine and Wheat
- ANZ Bank
- Tonkin Consulting
- Clare National Trust SA
- Livestock SA
- Cancer Council SA
- Rotary
- Probus
- Trees for Life
- URPS
- Clare Quilters
- U3A – permanent office
- Clare History Group

### 1.1.3 Income

The facility attracted **\$13,973** in venue hire fees for the 2020 – 2021 Financial Year.

Free use of the venue was provided to several users to the value of **\$17,577**.

Free use was provided to the Library, who used the facility more than usual in the last 12 months in order to comply with Covid-Safe social distancing requirements, the CFS, Red Cross, Rotary, Lifeline and the Riesling Trail Committee.

## 1.1.4 Facilities

Facilities	Details	Comments	
<b>Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timber Flat Floor</li> <li>Stage with proscenium arch</li> <li>200 – 220 Banquet / Cabaret style capacity</li> <li>350 – 400 Theatre style capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typical town hall in size and nature</li> <li>Structural issues with stage</li> <li>Concerns regarding stage height</li> <li>Access to Ennis Park</li> <li>Suitable for larger seated functions and events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In comparison with contemporary performing arts facilities the hall offers sub-standard performing arts experiences. This relates to general comfort (seating / climate control), acoustic quality, size and nature of the room and available equipment.</li> </ul>
<b>Back of House</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dressing Rooms</li> <li>Toilets</li> <li>Green Room</li> <li>Lower storeroom / multipurpose room.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dilapidated condition</li> <li>Intermittent issues with foul odours – possibly caused by septic issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green room currently used as storage for Library</li> <li>Lower storeroom used for storage of tables and chairs</li> </ul>
<b>Barbara J Long Function Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carpeted curved multi-purpose room</li> <li>60 – 90 capacity, depending on configuration</li> <li>AV Facilities</li> <li>Full Catering Kitchen</li> <li>Bar Service Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Functional multi-purpose space for small gatherings, meetings, workshops and forums.</li> <li>Good access to toilets – situated to provide access to Hall and Function room</li> <li>Used regularly by library for children’s and family programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tables currently stored in the corner of the room</li> <li>Separate access from laneway with good light</li> <li>Dated décor that could be updated.</li> <li>Very good kitchen with access to equipment and crockery</li> </ul>
<b>Stan Scott Meeting Room and Clerks Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small to medium meeting rooms situated at the front of the building</li> <li>Board Room Style set</li> <li>Suitable for up to 16 around the table or 30 in theatre style</li> <li>AV and Coffee and Tea Facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recently renovated, comfortable meeting rooms</li> <li>Not suitable for “wet area” workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly used by a range of groups</li> <li>Good main street access</li> </ul>
<b>History Group Rooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Front First Floor level</li> <li>Large main room (former Council Chamber)</li> <li>Several smaller spaces – used for storage</li> <li>Small kitchenette</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History Rooms open Weekly from 1 - 4 pm on Fridays + 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month 10am – 1pm.</li> <li>Stairs only access, which presents challenges for the group and for the public wishing to access facility.</li> <li>Public access available in large main room</li> <li>Visible damage to walls on the landing outside the rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several computers for public access research</li> <li>Council’s ICT Server housed in one of the rooms in this area.</li> <li>Toilets situated on landing</li> <li>Structural issue in roof in 2019 prevented access for some months prior to being repaired.</li> <li>Predominantly print based collection</li> </ul>
<b>U3A Rooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three small adjacent offices on the northern side of the front section of the building.</li> <li>Lockable door leading to medium sized room, two smaller rooms linked.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by U3A for storage and office.</li> <li>Some items stored for History Group also – items not easy to transfer up and down stairs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Parenting Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two medium sized rooms on the right-hand side from the front entry.</li> <li>Toilets and baby change area</li> <li>Sitting / feeding room and play area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed in 2020 based on availability of space and lack of suitable parenting facilities anywhere on the main street.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anecdotally well used and appreciated.</li> </ul>
<b>Ennis Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main street open space park situated between the town hall and the ANZ bank</li> <li>Public art, seating, lawn and shade available</li> <li>Included on the same title as the Town Hall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides pedestrian access through to the Old Main North Road and Mill Street at rear</li> <li>Important relaxed public space street</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to town hall provides opportunities for indoor/outdoor activities</li> <li>Markets hosted within the space</li> </ul>

## 1.1.5 Development Considerations

The vision and recommendations included within this report are provided within the context of the following:

### Other Facilities

#### Performing Arts Facility at St Joseph's School

As part of their expansion, St Joseph's School, situated on Victoria Road Clare is constructing a large multi-purpose facility that will be suitable for performing arts, functions and events. The facility will have retractable seating to accommodate 350 people in theatre style and able to accommodate 200 in banquet/cabaret style. The facility, which is due to be completed in November 2021 will have contemporary IT facilities including a large retractable screen and sound system and an adjacent commercial kitchen.

Discussions with St Joseph's Principal, Mr Peter Shearer, indicate the school is interested in broader use of the facility by external hirers. Whilst the focus will be on school use between 9am and 3pm, Monday – Friday, outside of these hours, the facility will be available for external use and with adequate notice, for significant events, it would also be available during school hours. Mr Shearer indicated his interest in working closely with Council to ensure the new School facility complements the Town Hall as a community venue and resource.

#### The Valleys Lifestyle Centre

Whilst it is not designed for performances or other "audience-based" activities outside of sport, the Valley's Lifestyle Centre would be suitable for larger indoor activities both independently and in conjunction with other venues for larger conferences. Some staging equipment would be necessary for this purpose but it is worth considering as a place where indoor markets, trade shows and a select type of live event may work for larger audiences.

#### Demand for Administrative + Civic Facilities

Anecdotally, there is evidence suggesting that Council is outgrowing its current facilities and will need to create a plan in response to future administrative and civic facility needs.

In recent years, the Clare Library has experienced an ongoing demand for more space, which increased with the social distancing needs created by Covid-19. The relocation of the local History Group, the storing of library resources in the Town Hall Green Room and the ongoing use of Town Hall facilities for programming provide evidence of this ongoing need.

In coming years, as the Clare and Gilbert Valleys region continues to grow, so too will Council. The current facility has limited capacity for growth in terms of office and meeting space and further facilities to accommodate Council's needs will need to be considered soon.

### Co-Working Space Demand

In 2019, Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North commissioned a report on the establishment of Co-Working Spaces in regions. This document details a range of considerations for the development of a Co-Working Space including Governance and Management options. The report was developed in response to indications suggesting there is interest in establishing a co-working space within the Clare region, but that it would take a key partner or stakeholder to support its development in the first instance. There is also anecdotal evidence that conditions created by the Covid-19 Pandemic have increased the demand for co-working and remote learning hubs in regional South Australia.

### Clare Main Street Activation

Any undertaking at the Clare Town Hall needs to align with efforts to ensure the vitality and viability of retail and hospitality businesses along the main street. Several premises along the main street are currently empty and a well-known retailer (Country Target) occupying a large premises. Any development associated with the Town Hall should support main street activation. It is also important to note that Council is implementing a main street urban plan and rebrand with new street furniture and public art being installed.

## 1.1.6 Previous Planning Documents

Several documents have been compiled in the past in relation to the development of the Clare Town Hall and opportunities for programs and activities. They provide an indication of the ambition and appetite that has been present within the community and Council for development. Some of the goals and objectives within the documents have been realised but others were not, for a variety of reasons including available funding and a lack of consensus relating to the development proposed.

The thinking and ideas within these documents have informed the vision and recommendations included in this document. These are held within the Council's records and can be viewed.

These documents include:

- **Clare Town Hall / Library Redevelopment Business Plan 2009 – 2012 + Feasibility Study Report**

*"This project redevelops the Clare Town Hall by installing a first floor within the fabric of the existing building. A large (700m<sup>2</sup>) flexible event space will be situated on the newly-created first floor and Clare Public Library will be re-located to the ground floor space."*

*"The convergence of the Clare Public Library outgrowing the capacity of its current premises and the need to revitalise the Clare Town Hall creates the opportunity to achieve greater utilisation of existing community assets. This can be done in a way that conserves the integrity and historical connection of the properties whilst adapting to the needs of a modern society"*

- **Town Hall Management Committee – Five Year Management Plan 1993 – 1998**

*"In the Town Hall there is an excellent core structure for improving the utilisation of cultural and community activities. The Management Committee is proud of the heritage of the Town Hall and equally proud of the prominent position it occupies in the town."*

*"...there is justification for an injection of capital funds. The supper room is little better than a storage room"*

It is assumed that this planning ultimately led to the development of the Barbara J Long addition in the early 2000's

- **Acoustics Report – Clare Town Hall 2011**

*In reference to the main hall "The area is used as a multi-function hall and reverberation time exceeds the recommended Rt times (secs) in the Australian standard".*

- **Eighty Years On: Business Plan for Clare Town Hall 2004**

*"The increased usage of the Hall and the associated facilities would mean a range of both social and economic spin offs for the Clare community. The Hall could be a major focal recreation facility for the Clare community and a wide range of external users with appropriate management and planning if it demonstrated economic feasibility"*

*Key Recommendations included the development of a multi-purpose complex that was suitable for meetings and gatherings, live performances, conference venue, exhibitions, weddings and other functions and community radio".*

- **Clare Town Hall Art Gallery Proposal 2012**

Presented to Council by the Mid North Visual and Performing Arts Association Inc.

*"Mission: That we establish the Clare Town Hall front lower-level rooms as an Art Gallery and Community History space to display and interpret art, photography and history".*

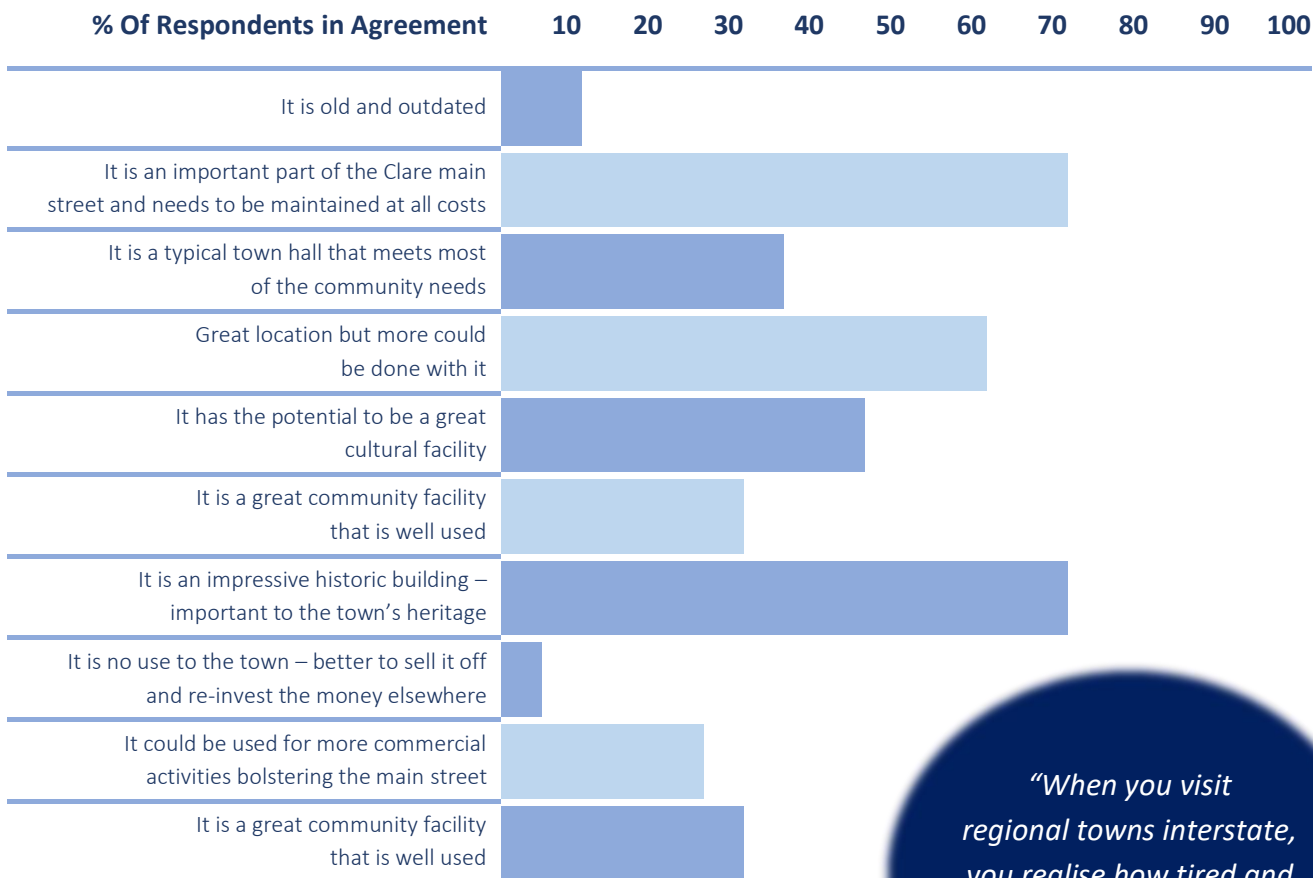


## 1.1.7 Community Perception + Priorities

Surveys were distributed to collect feedback from the community in relation to the current use and condition of the facilities and priorities and preferences for future use and development. The following provides an overview of the Survey results for the Clare Town Hall.

*“A clean slate view is needed for an alternative use, but a new civic centre should be seriously considered”*

### Perceptions of the facility:

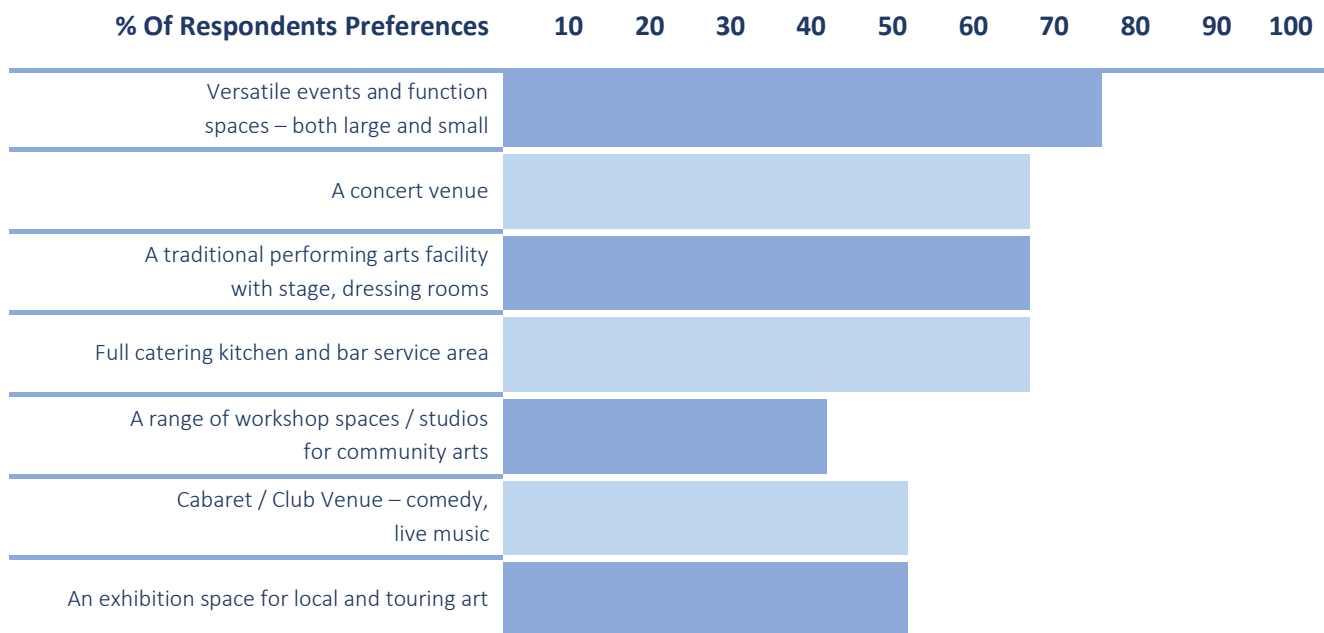


*“When you visit regional towns interstate, you realise how tired and poor functionality the Clare town hall is”*

### Things that respondents like about the Clare Town Hall:

Most Respondents	Many Respondents	Some / Few Respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historical significance of the building</li> <li>Location – main street</li> <li>Size – only place that can hold 400+ people</li> <li>Versatility – multiple spaces suitable for different uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Architecture</li> <li>Heritage exterior</li> <li>Barbara J Long Function Room</li> <li>Reasonable hire costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting room</li> <li>Access and parking</li> <li>Meeting rooms</li> <li>Great facilities but potential for more</li> <li>Nothing they like about the hall</li> </ul>

## Future Preferences and Priorities:



### Suggestions for Activities, Programs + Initiatives:

- University Hub
- Linking with Adelaide festivals
- Coordinator to promote events to visit Clare for our community
- Development into a community hub
- Marketing/promotion of facilities – should be marketed as a venue particularly for community groups
- Reduction in hiring costs to encourage more usage
- More free community events to bring people into the space
- Markets and smaller pop-ups promoting local produce and wine
- Annual eisteddfod
- Innovation + technology centre
- Visitor Information Hub

- Stage upgraded – resized and engineering and equipment improvements
- Lifts for accessibility – people want to get to the History rooms upstairs
- Licensed café
- Technology upgrades to sound/lighting booth and in general
- Development of a library/digital and community hub
- Bleacher type tiered seating, demountable to keep flat floor”
- Security upgrades inside and outside
- Barbara Long room is dated and needs upgrade
- Doorways – need to be wider, doors safer
- Better integration with Ennis Park

### Suggestions for Facilities Improvements, Repairs + Upgrades:

- Heating/Air conditioning & ventilation were common responses
- Upgrades to the facilities (kitchen, toilets, change/parent’s room, painting, floors)
- Improved acoustics
- Modernisation and alignment with Clare Valley Brand and main street upgrades

*“The traditional town hall format is outdated and only serves the needs of a small section of the community. Apart from indoor markets, the odd performance and dinner, it is a shame that the venue often sits empty. For Clare to prosper it needs a dynamic, multipurpose and modern facility which is scalable and adaptable to the needs of the community”*

## Other Survey Findings

**344 community members responded to the survey.**

**68% of the respondents suggested they were “Very Familiar” with the facility.**

**Almost 75% had hired the facilities or been part of a group that had hired the facilities.**

**69% of respondents live in Clare.**

In conjunction with the surveys several interviews with key stakeholders were undertaken and an Open Day was held at the Hall to encourage feedback from community members. The following provides an overview of key ideas and themes that emerged from these conversations.

- The Hall is much beloved, particularly for its heritage aesthetic but most appreciate that it no longer meets the needs of the community.
- Stakeholders report a great appreciation for the work of Town Hall Keeper, Jen Chestnut. Many feel that further activation of the facility would be possible if there was further investment in this role.
- Access to the History Rooms is critical both for visitors and group members/volunteers. Improving access to the facility will support the ongoing sustainability of the organisation.
- The Hall has been much more active in the past with stakeholders reporting periods where regular events were presented at the Hall including live music and theatre.
- The Town Hall Committee needs review. During the process of developing this report the Town Hall Committee went into recess. Whilst the reasons for this have not been made entirely clear, the stresses and extra responsibilities created by the Pandemic, volunteer burnout and the retirement of a key member of the committee may be attributed to this.
- Most agreed that the Town Hall needs further activation and development and is underutilised because of the nature of the building as a traditional “Town Hall”.

## 1.2 Vision

***The Clare Town Hall is a well-resourced and maintained hub that reflects the region's heritage and meets the community's civic needs.***

***It is a vibrant place that facilitates community, economic and cultural development for the local community and beyond.***

## 1.3 Objectives

To contribute to the vitality of the Clare main street

To foster activities which support the visitor economy

To offer a place for people to meet, interact, learn, participate and connect with others for social, educational, cultural and commercial benefit

To support the preservation and promotion of the region's heritage

To support business and industry development within the region

To facilitate community and cultural interaction

## 1.4 Options for Development

Three options for the management and development of the Clare Town Hall are detailed below. Whilst they can all be adopted as a goal unto themselves there is overlap and the potential to see them as stages of development. All of them see the ownership of the Hall remain with Council and reliant somewhat on the organisation to support and nurture the facility. It is recommended that Council continue to manage the facility in all three options in collaboration with other stakeholders.

### 1.4.1 Option One: Do Nothing

This option sees Council continue on the current path with the development trajectory remaining neutral. Ongoing maintenance would be required as is currently the case and Council would continue to manage the facility as a venue for hire. In other words, any activities undertaken within the facility would be dependent on external hirers to activate the facility and attract income to support up-keep.

Whilst there is a desire for improvements to the Hall, there is a great level of fondness for the Town Hall and it does provide a reasonable level of service for the local community. Its condition and the level of service it offers to the community is in line with similar sized communities throughout regional Australia. In other words, it is a typical “town hall” offering.

Repairs to the stage, to address engineering issues would need to be undertaken and regular maintenance would be required to ensure the facility remains safe but limited investment would be required by Council.

**Cost: Neutral**

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs will remain at current levels without a need for further significant investment</li> <li>• The Hall will continue to offer a traditional town hall experience – as a “grand” old hall, reflective of a bygone era.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facility will be unable to provide significant economic or cultural benefit to the community</li> <li>• The facility will continue to deteriorate over time with ongoing maintenance required without further benefit in terms of activity.</li> <li>• The facility fails to live up to its original purpose as a key civic facility that meets the needs of the community on a cultural and social level.</li> </ul>

## 1.4.2 Option Two: Rejuvenate + Activate

This option sees Council focus on activation of the existing space without investing in substantial infrastructure changes. It would include minor updates to the facilities to rejuvenate the space and give it a sense of renewal but would not see major structural changes undertaken. In conjunction with external hiring, Council would develop an annual program of activities and events within the facility, designed to support existing stakeholders and generate further community and commercial engagement.

**Minor facilities upgrades would include:**

- Rationalisation of storage facilities to increase useable spaces.
- Patch and paint throughout to refresh facility.
- Improved lighting and hanging facilities within the entry and former supper room – lower back of house.
- Improved lighting, sound and IT facilities.
- Review of access points to increase link with Ennis Park, the library and Clare Art House.
- Upgrades to change rooms and green room.

**Cost:**

- Estimated Capital Investment: \$600,000 to \$800,000 for aesthetic renewal and equipment upgrades
- Estimated Once Off Investment \$30,000 for brand development and digital platform development.
- Ongoing Operational Costs: \$120,000 - \$75k for Coordination, \$25k for programming + \$20k for annual maintenance program. It is estimated that the activation would attract both direct income – to Council as well as indirect income, that generates spending in surrounding businesses. The direct income would offset this cost by up to 50%, depending on the capacity for the role to attract further funding. Full economic impact would be identified within a business case if this option were to proceed

## Pros

- Positive economic impact for the community and surrounding businesses.
- Continued fulfilment of the Halls original purpose.
- Demonstration of both need and demand that may support further development.
- Development of activities that supports social connectedness in the context of recent health and environmental crisis.
- Maintains a flat floor / stage theatre for the community.

## Cons

- Ongoing operational investment required
- Initial capital and development investment required
- Limited infrastructure upgrades will continue to present challenges – retrofitting activities to fit the spaces available.
- Limited capacity to attract large audiences or major acts due to the quality of the facility.

### 1.4.3 Option Three: Redevelop – Clare Culture + Innovation Hub

Option Three sees a substantial redevelopment undertaken to improve the usability of the Clare Town Hall and foster a significant activation of the facility for cultural, social and economic benefit. This option reflects much of what has been discussed and recommended in previous planning activities and whilst it represents the greatest investment from Council it will service a number of Council’s broader strategic objectives.

One of the key challenges identified as part of the consultation is the need to maintain a larger flat floor “hall” facility, suitable for large events and performances, which may only be used a few times a year – or at the very most a few hours per week. The ideal is to create a venue that can offer a theatre / flat floor space for performance and large events but to ensure the space is flexible and useable outside of these activities.

Overall, this option aims to create a contemporary community hub that continues to meet existing needs, but also increase the flexibility of the Hall and improve its capacity to support business development, cultural tourism and education and foster strong community engagement. It will also provide for the administrative needs of Council in relation to increased meeting space and workshop / function facilities suitable for library public programs.

Option Three includes the following elements:

- **A major re-development of the facility from a capital perspective that includes**

First Floor	Proposed Physical Change	Impact / Outcome
Hall	The installation of a mezzanine level in the rear half of the hall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of additional flexible working space that can be used for a variety of activities, without impacting on the Hall’s capacity to host larger functions and performances.</li><li>• Space to host a co-working facility.</li><li>• Space to host a digital learning + development facility</li></ul>
*History Rooms	Upgrade of History Group Rooms for broader Cultural interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased access for members and the public</li><li>• Climate control to ensure preservation</li><li>• Updated education, research and interpretation facilities to foster better engagement in region’s heritage.</li><li>• More efficient storage</li></ul>
Dressing Rooms	Upgrade of Dressing Rooms – two dressing rooms + Green Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removal of items currently being stored</li><li>• Improved facilities for performers / visitors</li></ul>

Ground Floor	Proposed Physical Change	Impact / Outcome
<b>Hall</b>	The installation of moveable walls underneath the mezzanine level which enables it to be used as one larger space or multiple smaller spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases the flexibility of the hall for use by smaller groups for a range of activities.</li> <li>Provides meeting spaces for Hall Users, Council and other external hirers</li> <li>Increases functionality for the facility to be used for conferences and events.</li> <li>Ensures the Hall can still be used for larger functions and performances.</li> </ul>
	Installation of a Lift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to History Rooms – both public and storage areas.</li> <li>Provide access to Mezzanine including co-working space and digital learning spaces.</li> </ul>
	Installation of bi-fold doors between Ennis Park and Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases functionality of hall for a range of activities including markets and functions and events.</li> <li>Provides an indoor / outdoor access improving overall amenity of the Hall.</li> <li>Improves functionality of Ennis Park</li> </ul>
	Stage Upgrade – either improving functionality of existing stage by lowering height and upgrading rigging etc. or replacing stage with movable stage that can be moved in and out as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase stage safety and flexibility</li> <li>Maintaining use of stage for performances.</li> <li>Improves flexibility of hall for a variety of flat/floor activities including conference and events.</li> </ul>
<b>Storage Facilities</b>	Rationalisation / Review / Upgrade – clean out, repurpose where possible and add shelving and lockable cabinets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of spaces are currently being used for storage, including dressing rooms, U3A rooms, behind the stage, in the Barbara J Long Room and upstairs adjacent to the History Rooms.</li> <li>More efficient use of space.</li> <li>Enables existing spaces to be used for more relevant purpose e.g., exhibition, green room etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Barbara J Long Room</b>	Refresh of existing décor, repaint and removal of carpet etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modernises the space creating a more attractive offering for users – particularly in the conferences and events market.</li> <li>Increase functionality of the space improve ease of maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>Supper Room - Behind the Stage ground floor.</b>	Development into an exhibition space and installation of rear doorway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links with Clare Art House and Library</li> <li>Provides space for formal art and social history exhibitions – attracting tourists and locals</li> <li>Can double as small event / workshop space.</li> </ul>
<b>Town Hall Foyer</b>	Transform foyer into second gallery space with lighting and hanging capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides space for formal art and social history exhibitions on the main street – suitable for visitors and locals.</li> <li>Provides professional and modern entry space for the Hall</li> </ul>
<b>Clerk's Office + Stan Scott Room</b>	Transform into Business Incubation spaces to be leased out on an annual basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of small business in Clare</li> <li>Activation of Clare Main Street</li> <li>Encouraging businesses to take up empty main-street shops.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilities Overall</b>	Installation of IT Conferencing and digital facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase functionality and capacity for conferences and events.</li> <li>Access to digital facilities for meetings, distance learning, workshops, AV production etc.</li> </ul>
	Upgrade of integrated air-conditioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved functionality of the facility</li> <li>Increased viability for activities year-round.</li> <li>Financial savings generated through efficient heating and cooling of facility.</li> </ul>

## History Group Rooms

\*The inclusion of the History Rooms as part of this re-development is up for further discussion. Whilst from a cultural development perspective a history “facility” included within the building is a reasonable fit, interpretation and deeper engagement opportunities would be preferable. The History Group plays an

important role in the community but, like many groups of this sort, they have a limited number of active volunteers. Their capacity to align with the overall cultural vision for a redeveloped Clare Town Hall and what they offer will require further discussion. If not best positioned at the Town Hall a suitable space should be identified for the History Group that enables easy access for both members and the public and ensures appropriate storage and preservation of their collection. Future development and care of the History Group collection should be considered in conjunction with Clare and Gilbert Valleys Libraries and their history services and collection management.

If a suitable alternative is made available for the History Group to reside in, the space identified on the plans for the History Rooms could be utilised for other purposes. It could increase the footprint of the Co-Working Space, the Digital Learning Space or offer a larger leasable space for another ongoing tenant.

The storage rooms to the south of the History Group Rooms should be reviewed as part of the rationalisation of the overall Hall's storage capabilities. Currently there is a kitchenette, Council IT server room and storage area but these spaces could be used more efficiently.

### **The development of the following spaces / services / activities:**

Integral to the Hall's activation is the programming and use of the upgraded spaces detailed in the table above. The following provides an overview of how the spaces would be used / developed.

- **Co-Working Space** - The development of a Co-Working Space on the Mezzanine Level – to be developed by Council in conjunction with a community stakeholder group and/or private operator.
- **Digital Learning + Research Space** - The development of a Digital Development, Research + Learning Space on the Mezzanine Level – available for local history researchers, students undertaking distance education and small businesses and creatives needing access to quality digital facilities. Developed and managed in conjunction with other partners.
- **Cultural Program** - An annual cultural program similar to what is outlined in Option Two including a program of exhibitions, live performances and workshops. This would encompass the two exhibition spaces, the Hall stage as well as using the workshop spaces / meeting rooms beneath the mezzanine.
- **Meeting Rooms** - Meeting / workshop spaces suitable for community groups, the Library, Council Staff and local businesses, situated beneath the mezzanine level of the hall.
- **Functions + Conferences** - Development of the functions and conferences market using the facilities throughout, in collaboration with facilities at the St Joseph's School.
- **Business Incubation Hub** - Establishment of a Business Incubation Facility utilising the two front rooms of the Town Hall – the Clerk's Office and the Stan Scott Meeting Room. This facility would see the leasing of the two rooms at a substantially reduced rate to emerging small business operators for a twelve-month period. The aim would be for businesses to test their ideas in a main street location with a view, if proven viable, to relocate to one of the empty shopfronts in Clare at the conclusion of the 12-month period.

The business would be selected through an EOI process in collaboration with RDA. The initiative supports local business development and also supports ongoing activation and use of the main street premises. It would lend itself to a range of business types including local produce pantry, boutique retail, coffee shop, cellar door / tasting room or small gallery.



A further business incubation option could be offered to support a local producer – providing access on a weekly basis to the Town Hall Kitchen. A small food producer may be able to take their business to the next level with 1 – 2 days access to a commercial kitchen that meets regulatory standards.

- **Cultural Tourism Piloting** – Combining the strengths and focus of the Learning and Co-Working Spaces, the Business Incubator and the Cultural Program an initiative to pilot cultural tourism experiences would also be part of the facility programming. The experiences may be presented at the Town Hall or developed using the facilities and then presented / tested elsewhere.

**Cost:**

- Estimated Capital Investment: \$4 - \$6 million for construction of the mezzanine level, flexible meeting rooms below, installation of lift and upgrades throughout. Keeping in mind that a re-development of this nature would trigger the need for further compliance issues to be dealt with including disability access and fire safety
- Estimated Once Off Investment \$100,000 for project management, branding, website and launch.
- Estimated Ongoing Operational Costs: \$200 - \$300k. This is a very broad estimate very much dependent on the development of staffing and programming. A business case is recommended prior to proceeding, which would indicate not only the costs but the impact of the investment with both income generation within the facility as well as broader economic benefit.
- With the development of a gallery and suitable workshop spaces, that could be used by the Clare Arts Collective, Council could consider divesting the Art Haus property to support the development of the Hall.

**Pros**

**Cons**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Substantial positive economic impact for the region</li> <li>● Increased likelihood of small business sustainability</li> <li>● Substantial anchor to support main street revitalisation</li> <li>● Development of activities that supports social connectedness in the context of recent health and environmental crisis.</li> <li>● Maintains a flat floor / stage theatre for the community.</li> <li>● Capacity to meet with objectives relating to Cultural Tourism Strategy.</li> <li>● Improved access to digital facilities that support education and business development needs.</li> <li>● Improved remote learning capacity for the region.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ongoing operational investment required at a substantial level.</li> <li>● Substantial capital and development investment required presenting much greater risk.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

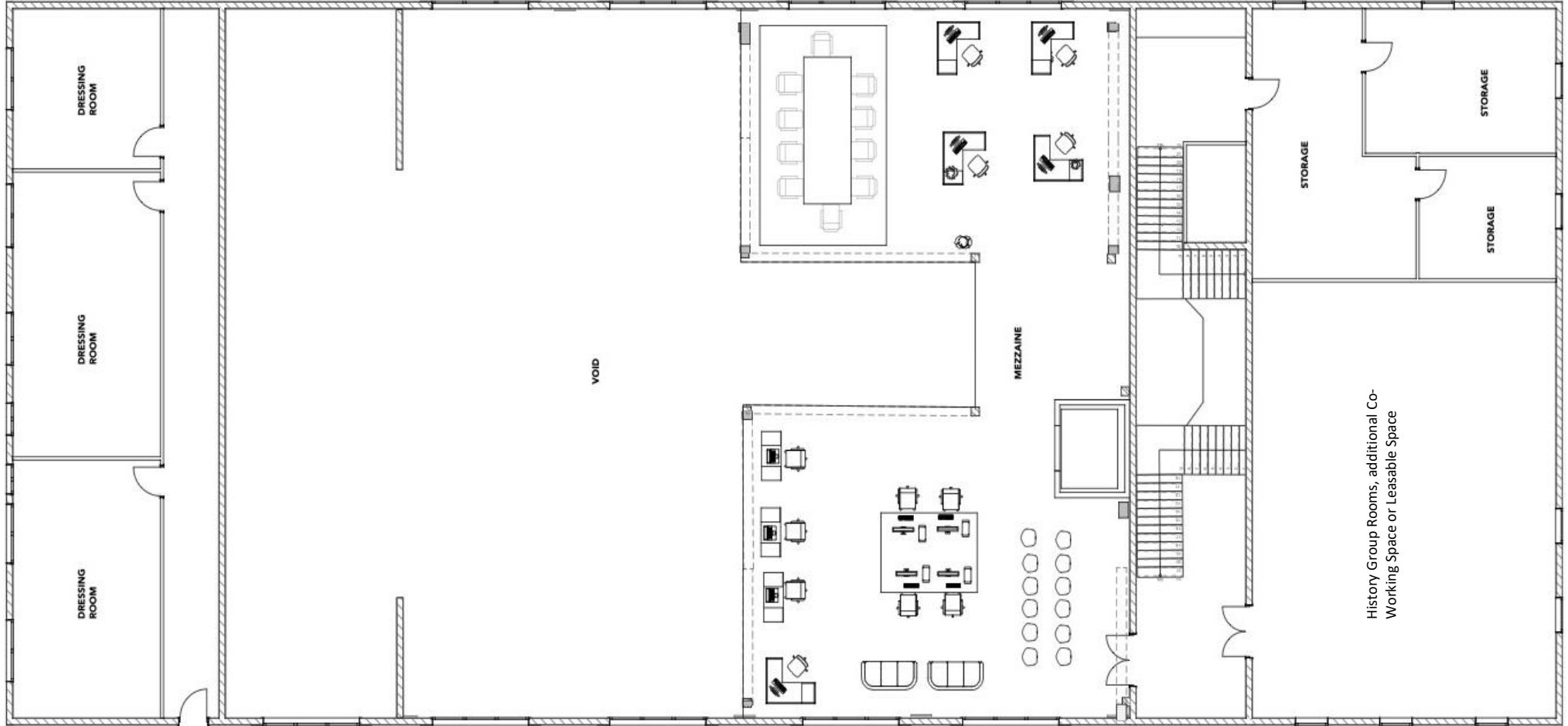
**Concept Plan + Images**

Images over the next few pages provide a visual impression of some of the areas detailed in Option 3. These are very much conceptual in nature and have been designed to give Council an understanding of what is possible and/or intended. If Council were to proceed, detailed concept plans would be developed and a business case devised to inform Council’s decision-making process and any changes or upgrades to the Hall, if desired.

Below: Clare Town Hall Ground Floor Plan



Below: Clare Town Hall First Floor



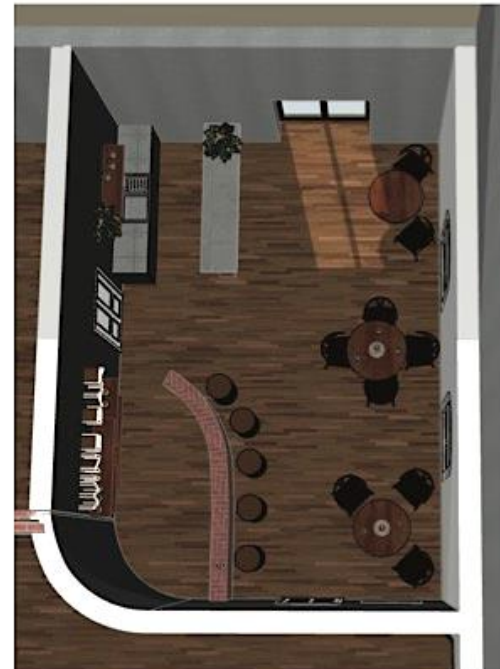


### **Business Incubator Facilities**

These would occupy the Stan Ellis and Clerk's Offices. A Wine Bar and a Boutique have been included in these examples as two businesses that would align with the activation of the Clare Main Street.

Left and overleaf is a mock-up of the boutique and the images overleaf are of the Wine Bar / Tasting Room.







### Gallery

These images provide an impression of the two proposed exhibition spaces. Above and to the left is a mock-up of a gallery in the front foyer of the Hall. Below / Overleaf is an impression of the former supper room at the rear of the stage. It reflects a rear entry that would link closely with the Library and Clare Art House.

Left, Above and Overleaf.





### **Co-Working and Digital Learning Spaces**

These images (above, left and overleaf) provide a basic concept for the development of a mezzanine in the Hall. The lower level could be left open for larger events or closed off with moveable walls to be used for workshops, meetings and gatherings. This option also allows for a smaller performance space in the Hall, suitable for intimate experiences that don't attract a large audience.

The upper level includes Co-working + Digital Learning Spaces, which can be utilised in a number of ways. There is also a lift, which will provide access to the Local History Rooms.





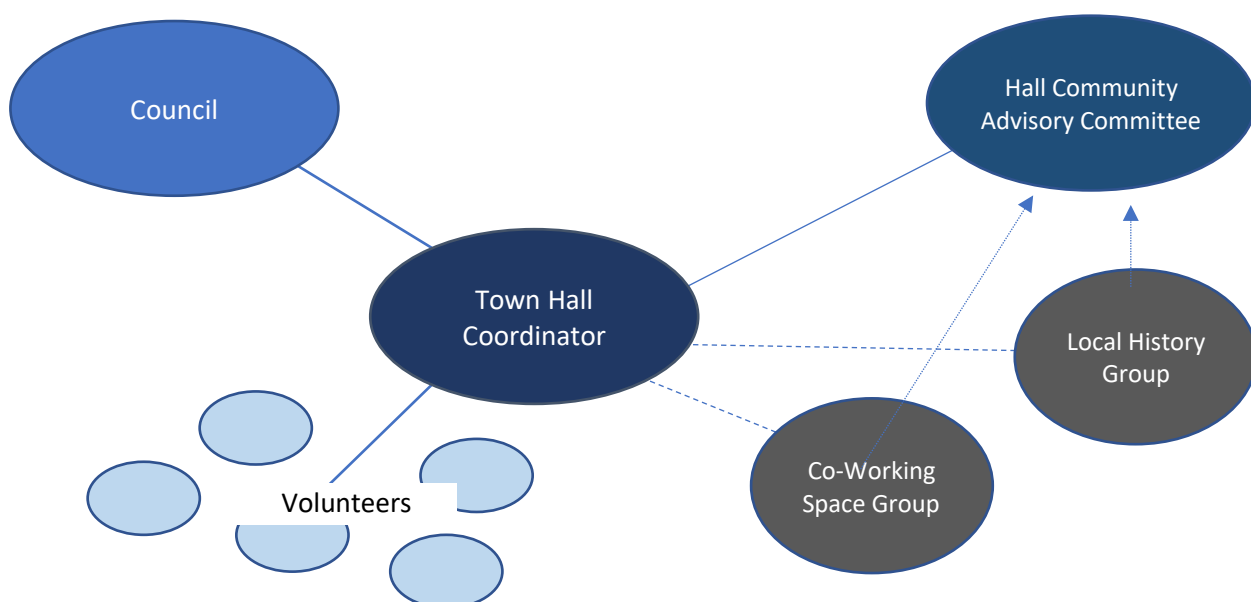


# 1.5 Governance

The Clare Town Hall is currently managed by Council at “arms reach” and a little lacking in clarity. There is a committee in place to oversee the management of the Hall from a usage perspective and a Town Hall Keeper is in place to oversee day-to-day operations and cleaning. This role is currently employed by Council but they report to the Committee. Bookings are managed through Council’s Customer Service team and as the owner of the building, maintenance is managed through Council.

As reported in this document, the Committee has decided to go into recess. If Council need or want a direct relationship with Community to support the ongoing management and/or development of the Hall, they will need re-establish / reinvigorate the Committee. The recommendation, detailed below, suggests Council should reinvigorate this Committee but to change its purpose to be more an advisory group that included key stakeholders from user groups including the History Group and the Co-Working Space Group and the Library. Further efforts to build a volunteer cohort is also advised with volunteers recruited to support the day-to-day running of the Hall and its activities.

The Management of the Co-Working Space is also an important consideration in the governance model. There are a number of options that would be further researched and tested in a full business case including a full leasing arrangement to an individual, company or group, to manage on Council’s behalf. The group could be a not-for-profit management committee developed by Council specifically to manage the Co-Working Space.



- Council: Owner of the Town Hall – employs the Town Hall Coordinator to manage the facility.
- Hall Community Advisory Committee – Provides advice to the Town Hall Coordinator in relation to programming, marketing and development of the Town Hall. It is made up of representatives from user groups as well as others with the appropriate expertise and connections with the broader community.
- Co-Working Space: Not for Profit or Commercial entity engaged to manage the Co-Working Space.
- Local History Group: Existing tenant that would continue its operations to preserve and promote local history and provide research tools as well as support other activities such as exhibitions, forums etc.
- Volunteers: People who would provide support for Town Hall Activities e.g., event set up and pack up, promotions, catering for community events, exhibition installation etc.

## 1.6 Staffing

For both Options Two and Three to be successful, the allocation of staffing resources will be critical. The development of a new role or the allocation of an existing staff resource would be required to coordinate the Town Hall activities. To resource a role of sort Council could consider the following:

- The development of a new role – part time initially, with a view to expanding the role as activities at the Hall increase and income also grows.
- The upgrade of the Town Hall Keeper’s role.
- The allocation of some of the new Cultural Tourism Role’s FTE to the development of the Hall. Keeping in mind, that the two roles are quite different.

**The key priorities for this role would include:**

- Development of a program of activities including live performance, exhibitions, workshops and industry events.
- Conference and Event Attraction – promoting the Hall as a venue for conferences, weddings and other community and corporate functions.
- Management and support of existing stakeholders and users to enhance and promote their activities.
- Development and implementation of Clare Town Hall Brand.
- Further placemaking activities within Ennis Park that complement Town Hall programming.

## 1.7 Recommendations

- a. To implement Option Two in the short term, focusing on the activation until a business case can be developed relating to Option Three. A decision then to determine the desire and nature of capital works and the investment required.
- b. To develop a business case for Option Three. This option aligns with many years of discussion that has concluded a community, commercial and cultural hub of this size and capacity is both desirable and feasible. The business case would include a review of possible management models with various components of a new facility managed in different ways. For example, the Co-Working Space may be leased out to a commercial entity or managed by a business collective.
- c. To undertake a review that looks at the long-term administration and civic facility needs of Council.
- d. To re-invigorate the Management Committee, in the short-term. A new Terms of Reference should be developed with expectation that this group becomes a key advisory / steering group to support activation and re-development. Recruitment of suitable influencers and stakeholder representatives, with this revised purpose in mind is recommended.

# PART 2: RIVERTON COMMUNITY HALL

## 2.1 Parameters for Development

### 2.1.1 Riverton Community Hall Overview

- Original Institute opened in 1874
- First floor added in 1879
- Stage and Supper Room (rear) added in 1914
- Kitchen and Supper Room Extension opened in 1930
- Extension and renovations (Bar and reconfigured entry) opened in 1985
- Bookings managed through the local History Centre
- Not currently Heritage Listed
- Zoned Township Mainstreet
- Managed by a Community Committee, which is a sub-committee of Riverton Community Management Committee

### 2.1.2 Usage + Annual Income / Expenditure

	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020	2020 – 2021
<b>Hall Bookings</b>	84	88	124
<b>Income</b>	4135	2995	4489
<b>Expenditure</b>	772	1853	750
<b>Net Income</b>	3363	1142	3739

The following provides an indicative list of hirers / users that have used the Hall.

- Football Club
- Riverton Community Management Meeting
- Private Hirers – weddings, birthday parties etc.
- Local schools
- Probus
- Dance School
- Quilting Groups
- Clare and Gilbert Valley Council
- Library
- Women in Agriculture
- Adelaide Guitar Festival
- Diners Club

## 2.1.3 Facilities

Facilities	Details	Comments
<b>Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timber Flat floor</li> <li>Medium sized stage</li> <li>160-person capacity Cabaret / Banquet setting</li> <li>300 capacity theatre style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to the supper room is limited and only available through passage alongside the stage</li> <li>Suitable for use a range of functions and events</li> </ul>
<b>Bar Service Area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bar service counter beside the Hall's flat floor including.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very dated brown brick décor</li> <li>Fridge and tap beer facility, which is not often used.</li> <li>Bar service area situated in through way between front entry and car park entry</li> </ul>
<b>Supper Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium sized multi-purpose room – carpeted with several tables</li> <li>80-person capacity</li> <li>Access directly through external door or via stage door</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well used facility by the community for a range of social and craft activities.</li> <li>Regular weekly / monthly users</li> </ul>
<b>Kitchen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service kitchen with a range of facilities</li> <li>Adjacent to the Supper Room with service window</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not a full regulation catering kitchen Somewhat dated – functional but may not meet regulatory standards</li> <li>It is necessary to walk through the Supper room and onto an external veranda in order to take food into hall.</li> </ul>
<b>Upstairs Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium sized carpeted multipurpose room</li> <li>Accessed through small doorway and narrow stairs from rear of Hall.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very dilapidated with possible structural issues.</li> <li>Used as youth meeting space for a period approximately 10 years ago</li> <li>A range of items remaining from youth facility use e.g., pool table, bean bags etc.</li> <li>Virtually unusable for public use due to limited access Houses an ICT Server</li> </ul>
<b>Storage Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small storeroom to the left of the Bar facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently used as storeroom but could be used as small office if required.</li> </ul>
<b>Toilets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets adjacent to the supper room exterior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible toilets only available from the exterior– no direct access from other hall facilities</li> <li>Limited parenting / baby change facilities</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toilets inside Hall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run-down, dated and small.</li> <li>Not suitable for disability access</li> <li>Entry and exit can cause distraction to Hall activities</li> </ul>

## 2.1.4 Development Considerations

The vision and recommendations included within this report are provided within the context of the following:

### Other Facilities / Developments

#### Proposed Recreation and Function Centre

A group of community people, primarily from the Riverton, Saddleworth Marrabel Football Club are in the process of scoping a redevelopment of their clubrooms, situated at the Riverton Recreation Ground. The concept is in its very early stages but the intention is to increase the size of the facility and integrate a larger function and event space.

It is anticipated that if a facility like this was established it would, in the short term, be a popular venue for private functions such as birthdays and anniversaries and also for the Club presentations. It is not expected to compete with the Community Hall in terms of other functions that require a stage or timber floor e.g., for Dance rehearsals. It is also

important to note that this project is reliant on Council support to some extent and will require substantial capital funding to be realised.

### **Hotel Central Riverton**

The Hotel Central Riverton has recently been renovated and is in the hands of new owners. This is a positive development, particularly in the context of the Riverton Main Street, which has number of empty shop fronts at the moment and has had businesses close. The Hotel, which is situated across the road from the Hall, is being positioned as a more “up-market” country pub with the capacity for functions that seat 70+ people.

### **Council Services**

Currently there is no direct access to face-to-face Council Customer Services within the Riverton community. During the first extended lockdown for the Covid-19 in the first half of 2020, Council resolved to temporarily close its branch in Riverton. The office, which is located in the main street is co-located with the Riverton RSL, History and Info Centre.

### **Culture + Heritage**

For a town the size of Riverton it has a visible cultural and heritage presence. The Riverton History and Info Centre is open three days a week and a substantial area within the main street is dedicated to heritage displays in the Scholz Park Museum. There is also a Heritage Walk that traverses through the community.

Riverton is also the home to one of South Australia’s most well-known artists, Robert Hannaford. Robert and his wife, have the Riverton Light Gallery, situated a few doors down from the Community Hall. As of October 2020, the Gallery is only open by appointment.

### **Riverton Main Street + Beyond**

As mentioned above, the Riverton Main Street has experienced a down-turn with several businesses closing down in recent years, for example ANZ Bank closed its branch down in Riverton in August 2020. There are several empty shop fronts and there appears to be little demand for retail or commercial space within the township at this time.

Increased demand for “country living” created by the Covid-19 pandemic may see demand for commercial space change in the coming months, but it difficult to know how this will translate over the next 2 – 3 years. There has been some recent housing development in Riverton recently and the population, whilst it is aging, is relatively stable. Growth in Roseworthy may see an increase in job opportunities north of Adelaide which may translate into growth opportunities in Riverton and surrounds.

## **2.1.5 Community Perception + Priorities**

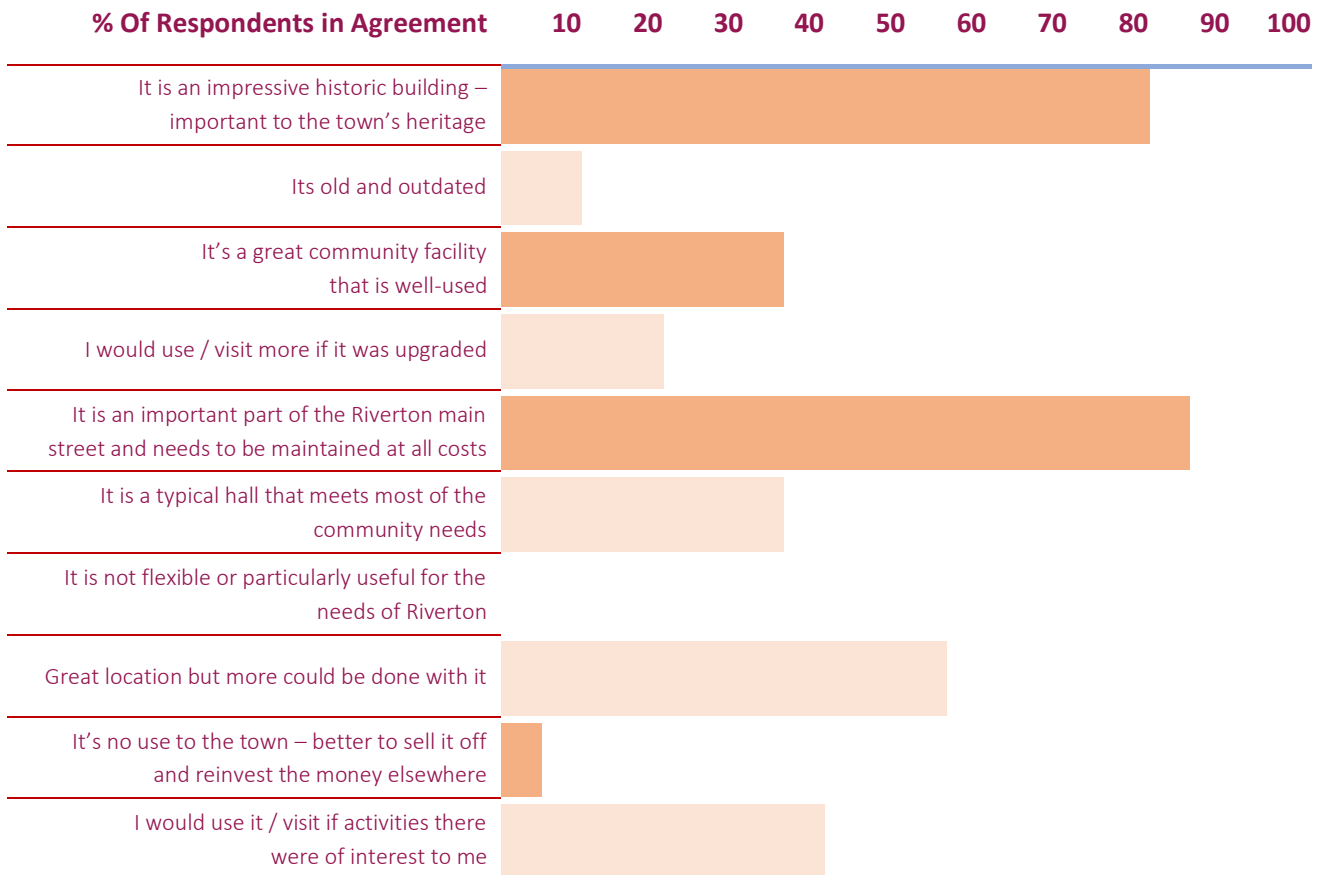
Surveys were distributed to collect feedback from the community in relation to the current use and condition of the facilities and priorities and preferences for future use and development. The following provides an overview of the Survey results for the Riverton Community Hall.

- **80 People responded to the survey**
- **80% of respondents live in Riverton**
- **75% of respondents suggested they were “very familiar” with the facility**
- **74% have hired the hall or been part of a group that hired the hall.**



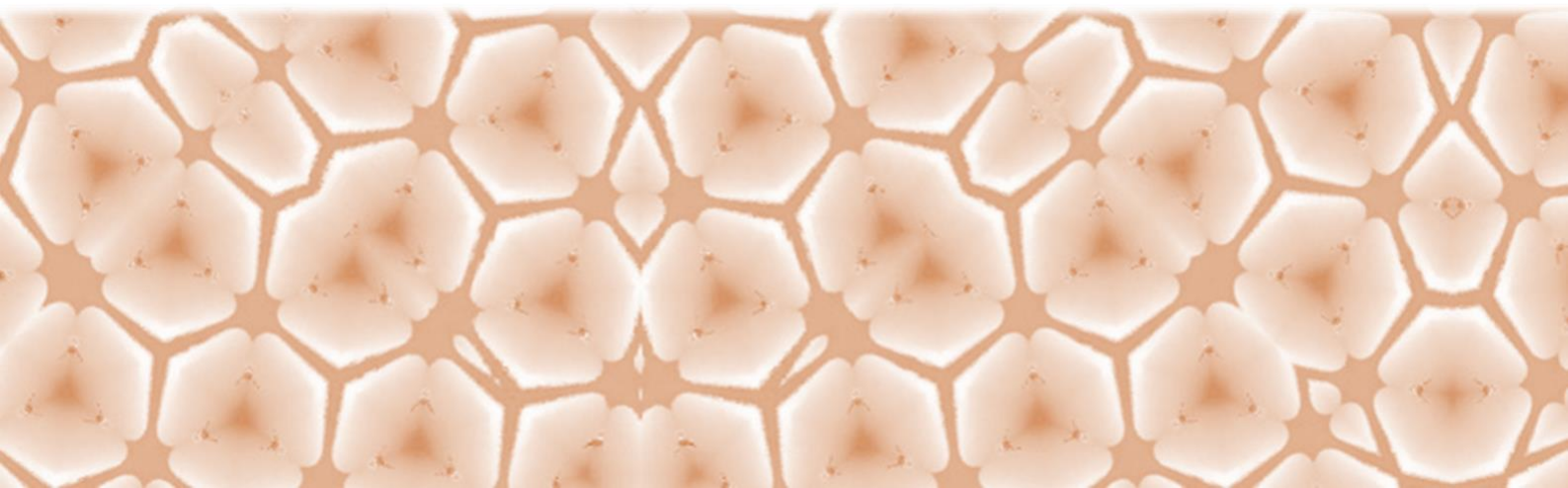
*“The hall’s current facilities would meet community needs if they were upgraded and then it needs to be better promoted.”*

**Perceptions of the facility:**



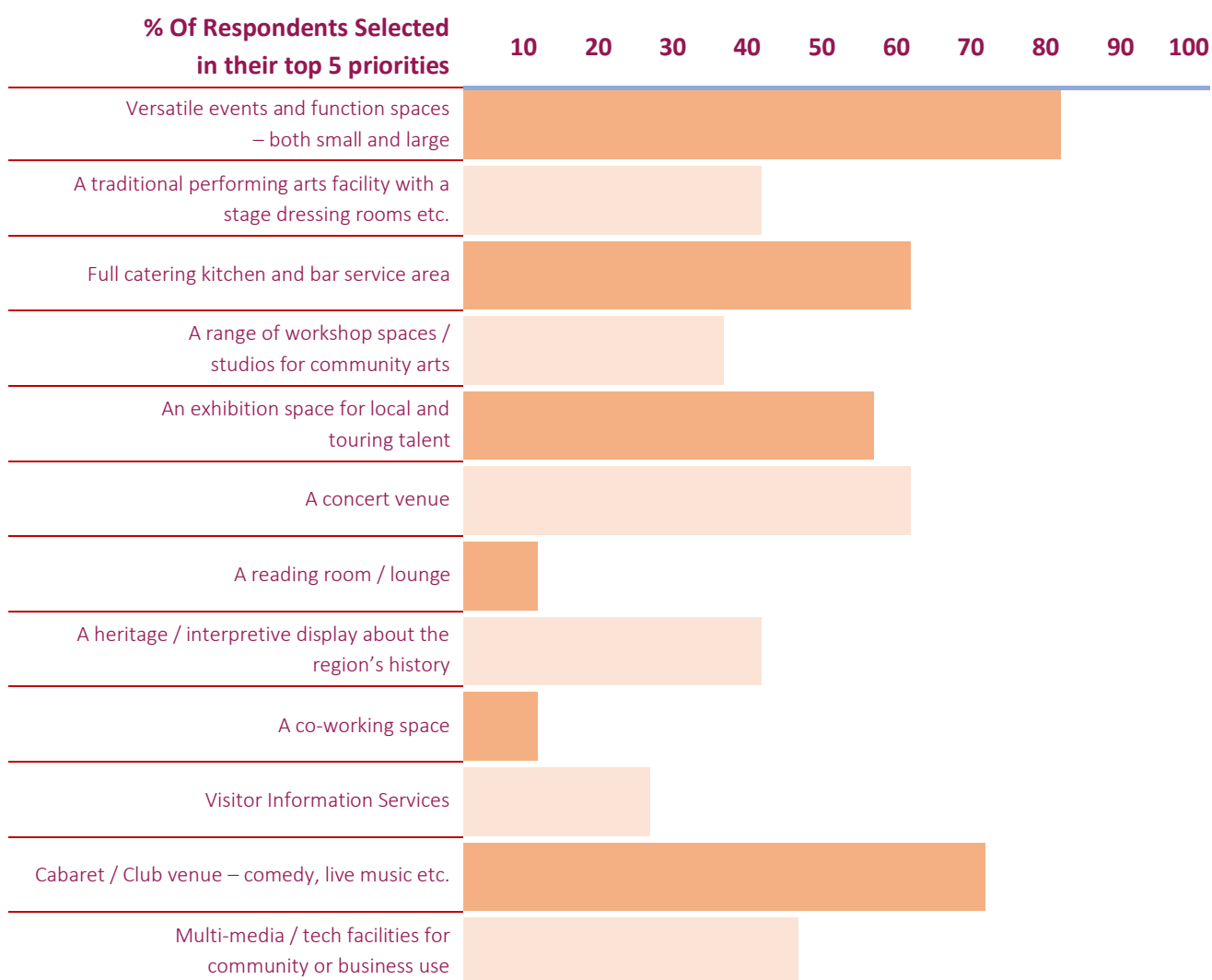
**Things that respondents like about the Riverton Community Hall:**

Most Respondents	Many Respondents	Some / Few Respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical significance of the building</li> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Versatility – multiple spaces suitable for different uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is provides for the community in terms of meeting and connecting</li> <li>• Access and flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability</li> <li>• Parking</li> </ul>





## Future Preferences and Priorities:



## Suggestions for Activities, Programs + Initiatives:

- More community events e.g., quiz nights, dances, dinners etc.
- Conferences and events – hire space
- Live performances – music, theatre, recitals etc.
- Movie film nights
- Markets
- Workshops, classes – craft, kid's activities, recreation e.g., indoor bowls.
- Social groups – coffee mornings, playgroups etc.
- Marketing to caravan / tour groups to use for gatherings

*“For the hall to remain a relevant and useful community facility, serious upgrades are needed”*

## Suggestions for Facilities Improvements, Repairs + Upgrades:

- Upgrade kitchen to ensure it meets food service standards
- Improved technology – lighting, sound and IT facilities e.g., Wi-Fi, projector and screen etc.
- Modernise facilities – fix walls and paint and update bar area
- Ensure regular maintenance – particularly electrical
- Update toilets and improve parenting facilities
- Improve heating and cooling
- Update equipment
- Ensure disability access throughout

## 2.1.6 Other Findings

In conjunction with the surveys, meetings with community members and stakeholders were undertaken. The following provides an overview of key ideas and themes that emerged from these conversations.

- The Hall is a relatively well used facility and valued by the community. It has regular groups of people that use it for activities, which are important community connections.
- As indicated in the surveys, the Hall needs updating and many feel that a refresh would encourage further use and position the facility to be more attractive for external hirers.
- There is a desire to activate the Hall with a range of cultural, social and recreational events and activities but volunteer burnout and capacity are barriers to development. The redevelopment of a market and the establishment of regular community and cultural gatherings were particularly popular ideas.
- The community indicated that upgrading the hall would make it a more attractive proposition for external hirers – particularly weddings and corporate events. Branding and marketing would be necessary to make this work, but income could subsidise other community-based activities.

## 2.2 Vision

***The Riverton Community Hall is a vibrant and accessible civic space utilised for a range of public and private activities and events.***

***It contributes to the social fabric of Riverton and provides a place for community members to share, learn and connect.***

## 2.3 Objectives

**To support volunteers to manage the hall and develop activities**

**To maintain a fit-for-purpose accessible community hall**

**To provide opportunities for the community to enjoy a range of activities that support a strong community**

## 2.4 Options for Development

The Riverton Community Hall is a much-loved and well-used community civic space. In general, it is meeting the needs of the community as a place to gather for a range of activities. The following outlines two options for Council to consider in relation to the development of the Riverton Community Hall.

## 2.4.1 Option One: Do Nothing

The Hall is relatively well used and valued by the community, and whilst there are opportunities to improve the amenities and activate the Hall, it could continue to be useful to the community as it currently stands. Ongoing maintenance will be required with both Council and the Management Committee contributing to repairs and general up-keep over time. Some specific inspections are recommended including the structural integrity of the upstairs area at the front of the building, electrical compliance and safety and ensuring the kitchen is suitable on a regulatory level for public food preparation and service.

**Cost: Neutral**

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Costs will remain at current levels without a need for further significant investment – pending recommended inspections.</li><li>• The Hall will continue to be used as a general space for regular community activities and gatherings.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Hall will continue to deteriorate with limited maintenance undertaken.</li><li>• Potential for community, cultural and economic benefit will not be realised with limited growth potential in the Hall's current state.</li></ul>

## 2.4.2 Option Two: Rejuvenate + Activate

This option involves a range of opportunities for improvements and development of the Hall and the activities that are undertaken within the facility. It involves a number of upgrades to the facility, which can be easily staged over time. The upgrades will support the further activation of the space and ensure that it is a more attractive proposition for external hirers.

**Facilities upgrades would include:**

- General refresh throughout – patching and painting walls.
- Modernisation of the Bar Area – maintain some of the timber features but either render and/or paint brickwork.
- Install bi-fold doors between the hall and the bar area. This creates a better reception area when people arrive for activities or performances, provides privacy for people using the hall, limits performance interruptions and enables the two spaces to be used separately. For example, a dance class could be happening in the Hall and a small meeting or reception could also be happening in the Bar area. When performances or events are on, a guest may arrive for a performance, provide their ticket, get a drink and move into the Hall for the show.
- Upgrade the kitchen – the kitchen is functional but it is possibly not commercial standard, which it needs to be for both current and future use. In particular there is a need for a dishwasher, particularly in the context of heightened hygiene requirements created by Covid-19 risks.
- Enclose veranda between Supper Room and Hall. Currently the only interior access between the Supper Room and the Hall is via the north wings of the stage, which also involves going up and down stairs. This presents issues with food service from the kitchen, which is adjacent to the Supper Room and the Hall, either having to take food outside or via the stage, which is not ideal. It is possible but not professional.
- Installation of ICT facilities including WiFi, a projection and screen.
- Another upgrade, that is more optional in nature would be to create a courtyard sitting area in the car parking area between the Supper Room, Toilets and Eastern Bar/Hall entry doors. This would be of particular interest for functions and events and provide a green space adjacent to the Hall.

**NB:** There is an upstairs space at the western / front end of the Hall building that was set up and used as a Youth Lounge a few years ago. For a range of reasons, the space is no longer used but the equipment, décor and furnishings

remain, in a somewhat deteriorated state. This space could be transformed but given the very limited access to the space, which is currently via narrow stairs, it would be necessary to upgrade access via a lift for public or commercial use. Given the demand for additional space is limited and the cost to improve the access would be substantial it is not recommended that this space be upgraded. The community would prefer to see investment in upgrading other areas of the Hall. In time if things change it could be reviewed at a later date.

**Activation:**

In order to activate the Riverton Community Hall, some staffing resources will be required from Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council. This resource would be an officer who can devote 8 – 12 hours per week to reinvigorate the committee and support the activation of the Hall. During the consultation for this report the community indicated that there was an appetite for community generated activities within the Hall but a lack of coordination and volunteer burnout had made that difficult. With this in mind, the role would focus on the following:

- Reinvigoration of the Hall Committee, with a view to the further development and coordination of events. A Governance / Event Management model is outlined below to guide this development.
- Development of annual program of activities. The program does not need to be extensive and would, in the first instance, involve piloting activities in collaboration with community members. It would be a combination of regular smaller social groups, workshops, community events and cultural activities – bringing in performers / shows as well as providing opportunities for locals to exhibit and participate. Collaboration with Country Arts SA on their Shows on the Road Program and Festivals Adelaide would be part of this.
- Development, implementation of a Riverton Hall Brand and the development and distribution of collateral / advertising both analogue and digital. This would help attract external hirers and promote the venue as regional place to meet. Working with the Hotel across the road would be recommended, to support the use of the venue for commercial activities.

**Cost:**

- Estimated Capital Investment: \$300,000 for aesthetic renewal and equipment upgrades
- Ongoing Operational Costs: \$35,000 for Coordination and programming. \$25,000 for Coordination, \$6,000 for programming and \$4,000 for ongoing maintenance.
- It is expected that further income would be generated for the facility with programming expected to attract fees, and the improved facilities will see an increase in hire fees. This would be largely dependent on the required upgrades of the facility – without these, the viability of the venue as a commercial space-for-hire is limited.

**Pros**

- Positive community and cultural outcome for the community – supporting social connectedness, which is important in relation to isolation and the pandemic.
- Continued fulfilment of the Halls original purpose to provide a gathering and social place for the community.
- To provide some economic benefit – particularly in relation to activating the Riverton main street.

**Cons**

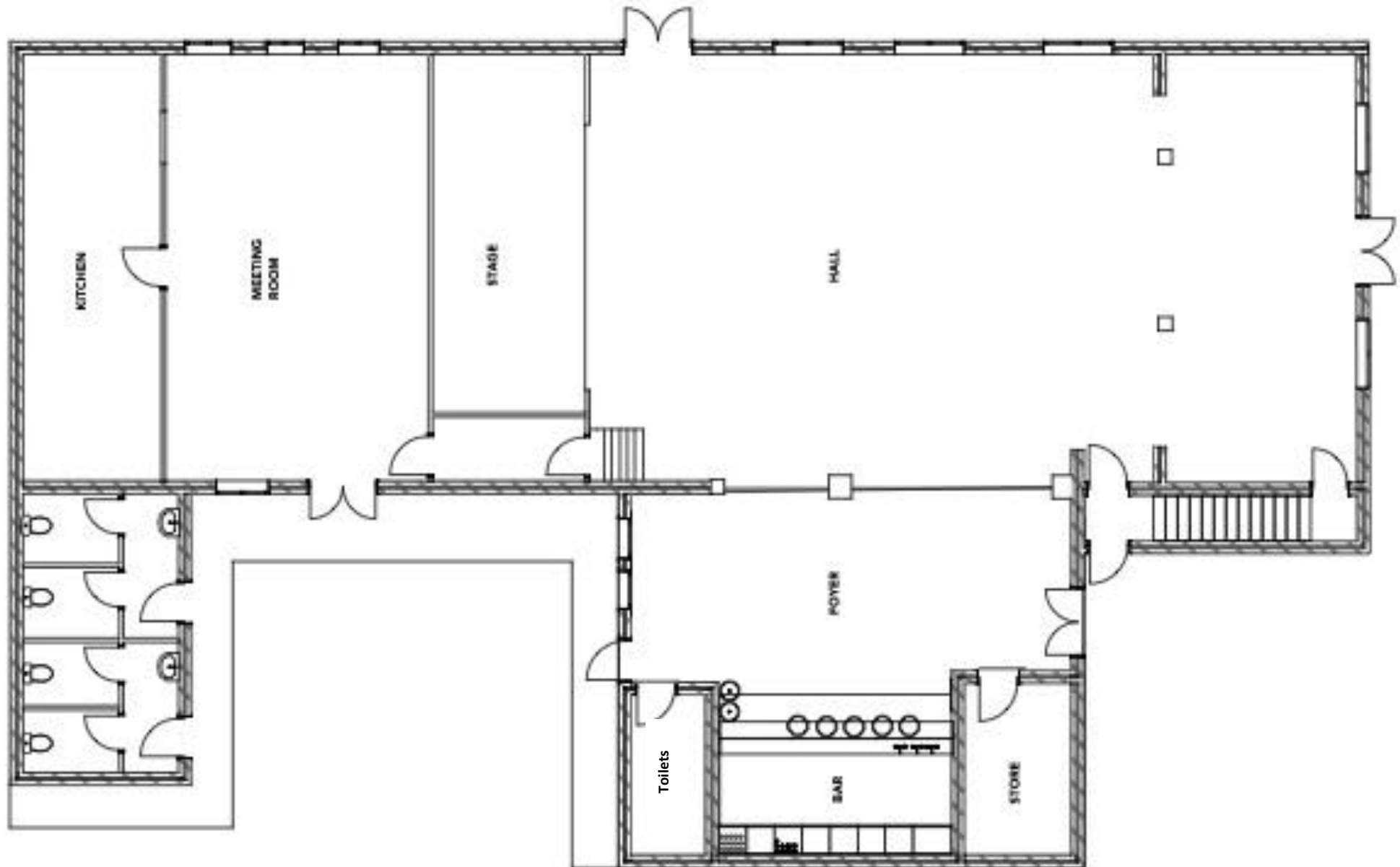
- Ongoing operational investment required
- Initial capital and development investment required
- Still considerable reliance on volunteer capacity to manage the day to day use of the facility.

**Concept Images**

The following concept image provides an impression of what the bar area could look like if it was updated. It provides a sense of how the facility might appear if it was modernised in some way.

**Below: Riverton Town Hall Floor Plan**

**Note: Not to scale – for discussion purposes only. Original Plans not available.**





### Bar Area

Upgrade / modernisation  
of the Bar Area.

Left and Overleaf







### **Bar Area / Hall Transition**

Upgrade / modernisation of the Bar Area with slightly different finishes.

Bi-fold doors between Hall and Bar Area – adding privacy, reducing noise, allowing separate use of both facilities simultaneously and creating a formal foyer / arrival space



## 2.5 Governance

The Hall is currently managed by a group of community members who are a sub-committee of the Riverton Community Management Committee. They are a very committed group, that meet 2 – 3 times per year to discuss any issues relating to the Hall's use and maintenance concerns. Bookings for the Hall are managed separately through the Riverton Local History Centre. Despite an interest in further development and growth in activities at the Hall, volunteer burnout and capacity prevent the group from progress.

The community consultation session for this project attracted over 25 people, which is a strong indicator of support and interest in the Hall's continued use and reinvigoration. Hence, reinvigoration of the Committee with community-led management and co-delivery of activities is central to this option.

### **A Co-delivery Model**

A co-delivery model that would support the activation of the Hall and combat some of the volunteer burnout involves the development of an Executive Committee and a series of sub-groups that develop activities once or twice per year. The Executive Committee would work closely with Council representatives on the management and maintenance of the Hall and oversee and support the sub-groups. With each sub-group developing just one larger or two smaller activities per year it avoids volunteer burnout and enables a greater variety of events that cater to different demographics.

For example, a group of High School Students might develop a couple of film nights, a parenting group may develop a toy and children's ware swap meet, a group of artists might develop an exhibition or a series of workshops. The activities would be included in an overall program for the Hall, promoted jointly and have the support of Council and the Executive Committee.

The model will require some time and effort to set up, which will require resourcing from Council. A consultation phase, followed by an expression of interest process and a commitment from Council to provide support and resources.

## 2.6 Recommendations

- a. To undertake a structural and electrical review to ensure the Hall is safe and an inspection of the kitchen ensure it is compliant in terms of food safety / service requirements – for a public use facility.
- b. To re-invigorate the committee and develop the co-delivery model and provide sufficient resources to support further activation of the Hall through community-based activities.
- c. Develop a master plan that maps out the upgrades that will improve the facility of 3 – 4 years – aligning growth in activities with development and modernising of Hall facilities.

# 3. NEXT STEPS

The following provides an overview the next steps for Council to consider in conjunction with the Recommendations outlined in Sections 1.7 and 2.6 for both the Clare and the Riverton Town Halls:

- Make a decision regarding both Halls and how Council is likely to proceed.

In relation to Clare, Option Two can be actioned with a view to undertaking further planning and research into the value and need of Option Three.

For the Riverton Town Hall, as the Recommendations suggest a Masterplan should be formulated and a timeline put in place to ensure the Hall is maintained and utilised in line with community needs. The reinvigoration of the Committee and the development of activities can also be actioned concurrently.

- Further Research including a Business Case for the Clare Town Hall and Master planning for both Facilities.
- A review of other Council administrative assets to ensure a “whole of Council” approach is considered prior to major investment.
- Identify and research potential funding sources that would support infrastructure redevelopments as identified in this document.



CLARE & GILBERT  
VALLEYS COUNCIL



**PLAY YOUR PART**

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This document has been developed by

**Maz McGann**

Principal Consultant

Play Your Part

In conjunction with Staff and Community Members

from Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council

July 2021

*Double sided*

**EIGHTY YEARS ON**

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**Business Plan for Clare Town Hall**

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Prepared for: Liz Connell

On behalf of: Friends of Clare Town Hall &  
Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council

Date: March 2004

*Section 2*  
*Executive Summary and*  
*Recommendations*

## 2.1      *A call to action*

This project has been facilitated, and this report formally commissioned, by the Friends of the Clare Town Hall. Yet the Town Hall is actually owned by the Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council, so much of the content of the report and its recommendations are directed towards the Council.

Implementing many of these recommendations will depend on the support of other agencies, such as Mid North Regional Development Board, Clare Valley Tourism Marketing, Country Arts SA, as well as Federal and State Government, for any hope of funding these proposals.

This report aims to not just say what should be done, but how to go about implementing its proposals. Hence its length.

With reports like this, it is tempting to just read the Executive Summary and the key recommendations. Even allowing for competing pressures on available time, I do urge the key stakeholders to make a point of reading Section 4.3 which is the report of the community consultation, which reflects a strong desire for the Town Hall to be upgraded and for it to become, once again, a vital part of the life of the community.

The specific recommendations within this Executive Summary have not been individually tested with the community groups I consulted, since many of them flowed from the entire process of this project, and some result from my own input.

Having been received by Council, I understand that it is likely that this report's recommendations will then be subject to public consultation.

## 2.2                      *This is not just about Clare*

Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council is the combined result of several processes of amalgamation from the time that Clare was governed by a corporation to its role today as a regional council.

There are eighteen communities in the region, each with its own Institute or equivalent of the Town Hall. For each community – as in every rural town (no matter how big or small) - this building plays a vital role and is symbolic of that community's identity. It is the same in Clare. Its Town Hall is a vital part of its history, its civic heritage and its community life.

Clare is different from other towns and townships within the district in that it is also perceived as a major regional centre, not just for these eighteen communities, but for the region beyond the Council boundaries.

Government and other services have become increasingly centralised in Clare. The town is an important service centre and supplier for the region's agricultural and viticultural industries. The Clare Valley is the very core of the tourism industry for the Mid North.

Lying at the heart of the town of Clare is a potentially attractive and evocative heritage zone focused around the Clare Town Hall.

Since 1994, proposals have been made as the result of various studies and community projects, all of which have advocated the upgrading of the so-called heritage zone and Ennis Park. The most recent of these studies is currently being considered by the Council.

Given the impact of the heritage zone and Ennis Park on the Town Hall, this report begins with a summary of previous studies and has drawn together their key recommendations which would impact on the building.

## 2.3      *Background issues*

The following are among the key factors which have been taken into consideration in this study:

- history of the Clare Town Hall and Barbara J Long Function Room and of the events which have taken place there
- historical/heritage character of the CBD
- socio-economic factors affecting Clare, especially population growth and changes within the population mix
- strategic plans for Clare and specific plans for CBD, especially Ennis Park Development

When considering the community's perceptions and expectations, the most comprehensive portrayal of this has been in the recent Positive Futures seminar and consultative process.

The current operation of the Town Hall complex has been assessed in close cooperation with Council staff, and this has highlighted several problems, the need for urgent remedies (proper care and maintenance, bookings procedures and overall management).

One of the most immediate issues requiring attention is that of access for disabled people.

The report includes an overview of current usage of the Town Hall, and the effectiveness of the most frequent activities which occur there:

- film nights
- dance classes
- Blue Light Disco
- series of annual and one-off events
- ongoing tenancies
- Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour
- regular use of Function Room



The report considers the relevance of the Town Hall to Clare's major industries:

- agriculture, wine, olives
- the emerging food sector
- tourism

Whilst aiming to provide an optimistic and positive picture of the potential scope of opportunities for usage of the Town Hall, I have been very mindful of the cost considerations and of the need to focus on self-funding activities.

As far as possible, this report aims to provide a practical guide on how to fulfil some of the objectives the community consultations has identified and achieve some of the recommendations set out herein.

There is an element of urgency about future consideration of the Town Hall's future, since over the course of the next 12 months or so, most of the current occupants of the Town Hall will be moving out: the Visitor Information Centre and Clare Valley Tourism Marketing, and the Council itself may in the future consider vacating the Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour for new premises, a course of action which has been recommended.

Thus the only ongoing occupant in the front part of the building would be the Centrelink Agency and the Volunteer Resource Centre.

The Town Hall and the Barbara J Long Function Room will continue to be available to hirers for events, functions and meetings. It will be administered by Council, but there are serious deficiencies inherent in this, and the accepted perception is that the building will be in decline until suitable alternative plans are put in place.

## *Strengths of Clare Town Hall and opportunities*

1. Size of Town Hall and its open canvass opportunities
2. Areas left vacant with departure of current occupiers/users
3. Clare's location
  - hub of the Mid North
  - its proximity to Adelaide
  - strategic location for other key towns in the region
  - also useful meetings location for regions beyond Mid North
4. Potential as resource for local industries
5. Location of Town Hall in CBD
6. Heritage appeal
7. Access to car parking
8. Clare's commercial strength (few vacancies, shortage of office space)
9. Strength of educational sector
10. Strength of tourism and role Town Hall can play
  - conferences and benefit to accommodation sector
  - entertainment for visitors
11. Community and people resources
  - Friends of Town Hall
  - untapped enthusiasm
  - community and service groups
13. Established activities in Town Hall

*Weaknesses of the Town Hall and problems facing its future*

1. Cost of any major works
2. Access for disabled people
3. Perceived as largely unappealing (heating/cooling etc)
4. Neglected and uncared for (need for caretaker)
5. Not seen as relevant to local major industries (wine industry has its own centre)
6. Limitations of potential along Main North Road (Transport SA)
7. Target for vandalism
8. Pressure on volunteers
9. Public Liability Insurance
10. Low level of financial return in its current format/usage

The **external features** of the building should be preserved because of its historic character, albeit that it is not technically a heritage building.

Council should enhance the **historical/heritage character of this part of the CBD**, including the proposed upgrading of the adjacent Ennis Park. This means implementing proposals which arose from previous studies relating to the CBD and Ennis Park and the *Places for People* project which is currently being implemented.

**The key conclusion is that the Council should confirm that the Clare Town Hall is primarily a community asset, notably as a meeting place and a venue for social gatherings and entertainment.**

We need to accept that the **cost** of upgrading the Town Hall to meet those objectives will be high and possibly prohibitive for the Council alone to consider. We therefore need to consider introducing some income-generating elements to provide revenue towards the cost of upgrading, maintaining and running the building.

I suggest upgrading the main facilities of the Town Hall for it to provide improved facilities for **live entertainment**, which can also be used for **conferences and meetings**, and to provide **commercial office premises** within the building for rental. There is a shortage of offices in Clare, and considerable demand exists for modern flexible office suites.

The **Barbara J Long Function Room** will continue to fulfil its role as a venue where community groups and external hirers can hold functions and meetings.

The main hall will continue to provide a **venue for a range of events**, but it needs to be **upgraded** for it to be able to stage live entertainment (including dance classes), discos, exhibitions, meetings, trade shows and other events needing a large floor space.

If the area upstairs is vacated by Council, it can be converted into a comfortable **studio theatre** to serve as a movie theatre, an intimate performance area and an alternative venue for conferences.

## 2.5                      Key recommendations

1. A **multi-purpose complex** serving the needs of the community but which also generates a positive financial return.
2. A venue for **meetings and gatherings**. Meetings rooms to be located in front area of Town Hall and in the backstage area and dressing rooms, when not needed for theatre purposes.
3. **Barbara J Long Function Room** to remain unaltered for functions.
4. A flexible venue for **live performances** in different layouts/formats:
  - **theatrical** performance by High School and other groups
  - **dance studio** area at rear of main hall
  - **disco** for youth and young adults
  - other purposes needing stage (**trade shows**, presentations)
5. In the event that Council agrees to relocate to other premises, an **improved cinema** to be located in the current chamber with café in Mayor's Parlour. Establish Film Society for adult moviegoers.
6. **Conference venue** for outsider hirers:
  - main hall for plenary sessions of large conferences
  - other areas for break-out sessions or smaller meetings
7. **Exhibitions** and events (Rotary Arts Show, Clare Valley Artists)
8. Display area in foyer for work of **local artists**.
9. Role for **other events** (Spring Garden Festival, Gourmet Weekend)
10. **Showcase** for local wine, tourism and food industries.
11. **Weddings and other functions** to be actively promoted with the Town Hall acting as a catalyst for a wide range of local businesses cooperating in this joint endeavour.
12. **Community Radio** established in front right offices of Town Hall
13. In order to provide much-needed ongoing revenue to help finance all the above, **construct an upper storey at the rear of the main hall** (accessible from current area upstairs) with offices to be let on a commercial basis, either to private sector or public agencies.

**Council is asked to consider and approve the following recommendations for immediate action:**

Section 4.2 of this report (pages 60-71) deals in detail with the way in which the Town Hall is currently managed and its shortcomings. If these are addressed and appropriate remedies put in place, many of the complaints from current users will be met.

1. Establish a Section 41 Committee of Management for the Town Hall including the Friends of the Clare Town Hall. Explore feasibility of establishing this as a Community Foundation, and obtain start-up funds from Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.
2. Designate a member of Council staff as Acting Manager for the Town Hall, pending the final outcome of this project.
3. Employ a caretaker to clean and maintain the Town Hall and keep a check on all safety equipment. (See note below)
4. Ensure a check is made after every activity.
5. Get professional advice to ensure on-stage and backstage areas are totally safe with proper exit lights and lit stairwells.
6. Improve access to Town Hall for disabled people.
7. Maintain fees at current level, but remove fees for ancillary services (everyday crockery and basic items like whiteboards).
8. Provide more specific checklist for hirers on where to find things.
9. Produce interim leaflet to promote the Town Hall.

**Note re caretaker:** The suggested duties of the caretaker are outlined in some detail in section 4.2. of the full report.

In my opinion, Council needs to find a committed individual who is prepared to work flexibly on a contract basis (under the direction of the proposed Acting Manager for the Town Hall) and paid on an hourly basis – initially for unspecified hours each week.

The contract should specify that he/she be willing to work on a flexible basis, with the major stipulation being that the Hall is properly cleaned prior to every booking and regularly checked for necessary repairs and/or maintenance, and that the venue is checked after each hiring.

Advertisements should be placed seeking tenders from individuals willing to provide these services – preferably not a contract cleaning firm, but an individual who can offer undertakings to be available as above.

## 2.7 *Medium-term recommendations*

1. Upgrade Ennis Park as per previous studies.
2. Pursue proposal for creation of a community radio station, operating from Town Hall. Seek individuals to form a steering committee.
3. Pursue proposal for a coordinated approach to develop a “weddings industry”, involving local businesses, with Town Hall as catalyst.
4. Upgrade facilities to encourage its use for conferences.
5. Encourage Clare Regional History Group to embark on a history of Clare Town Hall, with a view to a publication and exhibition.
6. Place any antique/civic furniture from the Council's early days in one of the meeting rooms. Display memorabilia in other rooms.
7. Consider installing reverse cycle air conditioning in Town Hall and Function Room (replacing gas heaters and evaporative system).
8. Improve signage at front of Town Hall.
9. Examine proposals from *Décor Made Easy* to make it easier for hirers to decorate hall for events without risk of damage or to safety.
10. Display winning paintings of Rotary Art Show in front foyer.
11. Improve Baby Care facilities in Town Hall.
12. Investigate ways of offering Town Hall as showcase to local wine, agricultural and food industries and of supporting tourism.
13. Explore opportunities for off-site storage of Town Hall equipment.

### Longer-term recommendations

1. Convert front areas on northern side of Town Hall into meeting rooms and adapt dressing rooms and backstage area for as alternative meeting venues.
2. Upgrade theatrical features of the Town Hall, as deemed necessary by the stakeholder group.
3. Purchase retractable seating units for use in Town Hall and other venues, such as the swimming pool.
4. Explore and implement proposal to create a gallery (with additional fixed seating) in the main hall and a mezzanine floor with offices.
5. Configure a self-contained area at rear of the main hall, using solid movable screens, to enable it to be used for disco, dance studio and studio performances.
6. Convert current Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlous into studio theatre and cinema, with cafeteria/bistro.