



It is extremely disappointing to see culture and the arts barely mentioned in the draft proposal of over 80 pages, particularly after attending the Greg Clarke lecture organised by the Department of Planning, when he spoke so eloquently about involving the arts and cultural sector in planning.

Too often we see Artpreneurs being unable to get the backing and support from the various levels of government to start art events. Witnessing what happens around Australia in city and regional communities has fired me up to make sure Newcastle and the Hunter can also have a cultural tourism economy. We need to find the right mix of government funding, sponsorship and benefactors to fund contemporary art spaces throughout Newcastle so Artists and makers can grow their little businesses.

It is telling that in the first paragraph in section 2.2 refers to an example of public art (James Cook Memorial fountain) in Civic Park that was created how many decades ago?

“Art and culture makes a city stimulating and memorable and can contribute to the beauty of a city. Examples of public art in Greater Newcastle include the James Cook Memorial Fountain in Newcastle City Centre and the Kurri Kurri murals that showcase the history and heritage of the area. Thriving art and culture are great indicators of a city’s pulse and will be a palpable presence throughout Greater Newcastle.”

We need to be envisioning public art programmes that go beyond creating public artworks that refer back to colonial and merchant heritage. We need to see public art programmes that provides the platform for cutting edge design and pieces that will engage and excite. Newcastle’s own street art around has happened despite Council and State Governments inaction and lack of funding. And now that the city is developing they are slowly disappearing being painted over or demolished for a rebuild.

We need to ensure a framework that creates opportunities for the abundance of creative people the Hunter have and to help them grow their

own mini businesses through grant funding, business mentoring and actually providing places to work and retail. There is a very strong argument for a cultural tourism economy to be nurtured across the Hunter. We only need to look to MONA in Tasmania and the tourism boom that has occurred to know we can create our own cultural tourism economy. Marry that with our sand dunes, beaches and beautiful city and we are on a winner.

Our proposal is to establish a cultural institution in Newcastle city centre that can facilitate and showcase the best of the Hunter. To bring together the Arts, Hunter wineries and Foodies to cross promote to tourists.

It is essential that future planning policies can ensure we can enact below:

Vision

To be renowned as a destination with an extensive program of events that will appeal to the whole Hunter community and tourists alike. To showcase the wonder of Newcastle, It's artists, writers, creators and food and wine providores.

Purpose

Our purpose is to transform how people feel about Newcastle through diverse cultural experiences and create a vibrant striking place that people will want to come to again and again.

Values

We can offer core values to really empower the community to feel and be engaged and feel that ownership and responsibility for the Station.

This site should be seen as a distinctive arts and cultural icon.

Resilience

We need to establish a strong organization and adopt an entrepreneurial approach that is constantly renewed and form partnerships across the business sector.

Activation

The site should be a catalyst for cultural development, bringing together the creative sector with the business and entrepreneurial sector.

Business model

It will be imperative that we develop a business model that is robust and provides financial independence through uses that generate income and still provide opportunities for community events.

Sponsorship

Seek sponsorship opportunities for some events so we can truly stimulate the arts community

Strategic plan

Develop a strategic plan that priorities activation of the site, placemaking, viability and good governance, and we would lead to position the site as a leading arts, cultural and learning precinct.

Mix of:

Hunter made wares

Art studios

Workshop spaces

Festivals – music, food, dance

Outdoor cinema

Art education – the rise and rise of the handmade

“kidpreneurs” – help children and schools with kid markets

Fairs and showcase festivals – textile, ceramics, forging, glass blowing.

This can be developed not only as a place for the community to come together, but also as an economic driver, offering a large audience to its small businesses and offering new infrastructure for Newcastle’s creative economy.

Leah Fawthrop and over 30 Hunter Artisans

Creative Village Newcastle

