

We're all backing Our Place Balclutha



Geoff Blackmore



Mayor Bryan Cadogan



John Cochrane



Deputy Mayor Stewart Cowie



Gaynor Finch



Bruce Graham



John Herbert



Rachel Jenkinson



Michele Kennedy



Alison Ludemann



Hilary McNab



Ken Payne



Carol Sutherland



Bruce Vollweiler



Selwyn Wilkinson

Let's talk. Balclutha War Memorial Hall



OPTION 1 UPDATE THE CURRENT FACILITY AS IS

Continue with the repairs and upgrades signaled in Council's 2015/25 Long Term Plan, budgeted for at \$1.9M.

WHY IS THIS BEING CONSIDERED?

- The hall has heating issues and is under utilised, suggesting it is not the community's preferred venue for events and activities in its current state.
- It needs major work to meet compliance and seismic strengthening standards.

WHAT MIGHT THIS OPTION INVOLVE?

The following work was signaled in the 2015/25 Long Term Plan:

- Maintenance of the stage and fly tower
- Renewal of the boiler
- Heating and ventilation upgrades
- An internal repaint
- An upgrade of the toilets and entry foyer.
- The addition of portable 'theatre' style removable seating was also to be considered as part of the overall upgrade.

WHAT IS IT LIKELY TO COST AND HOW COULD IT BE FUNDED?

Council's planned expenditure: Council has budgeted to spend nearly \$1.9 million during the next 9 years. About half of that is for planned basic renewal work (stage, fly-tower, boiler, ventilation and repaint) and the rest on improvements (upgrade of toilets, foyer and removable seating).

The way halls are currently funded, would mean that the improvements would generate a rates increase of approximately

\$23 per year on each Balclutha rates bill, and \$1.30 year across the district. This would take effect after 2018/19.

Cost to operate the hall facility under this option: The hall currently costs approximately \$155K per year to operate. This would rise to \$230K from 2018/19 as the proposed upgrade gets paid off over time.

WHAT ARE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS?

All major work on the hall was put on hold while Council worked through the Balclutha streetscape upgrade.

Any work on the hall now needs to include earthquake strengthening requirements. We now know that the hall is structurally sound, but the fly tower is not. We need to decide whether this is important to retain, downsize, or should the tower be demolished as part of any redevelopment to the Hall? Under this option the hall would be more modern and practical, with some upgraded facilities. This may not be enough make full use of the venue and meet current and future needs of the community, the traveling public and for promoters looking to bring events to Balclutha



Above:
An artist's impression and some early ideas of what the Memorial Hall area could be like.

OPTION 2 MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY & VISITOR HUB

Redevelop the War Memorial Hall to create a multi-purpose arts and heritage hub, incorporating an auditorium, exhibition space, visitor i-Site and Council service centre.

WHY IS THIS BEING CONSIDERED?

- Feedback suggests the hall no longer meets the needs of 21st century community life.
- The community needs a more flexible, attractive venue that will also take us into the future.
- Tourist numbers are expected to increase and a destination facility would help Balclutha capture a share of this market.

WHAT MIGHT THIS OPTION INVOLVE?

In 2015, consultation with arts and heritage groups looked at future possibilities for the hall and surrounding green area. This feedback discovered the following ideas might work well:

Theatre/hall space for 300 – 400 people

We are hearing the hall area is too large for most events. In other communities, a flexible space that can seat 300- 400 people in theatre style seating which can also be reconfigured for larger events works well.

Museum/heritage display space and additional space for short term exhibitions and events

With support from arts and heritage groups we could develop a hub within the hall that would include both static displays and exhibition space for local or traveling exhibitions. Otago Museum could be a willing partner in a museum outreach programme at Balclutha should there be a suitable heritage development.

A smaller theatre of around 50 seats suitable for movies and or meetings/ performances

Balclutha has talked for years about needing a picture theatre, now may be the opportunity to create this space.

Enhanced meeting and office spaces & tenanted community spaces

There is a demand in Balclutha for short-term rental office space and meeting rooms for agencies visiting from out of town. Creating

space to meet this demand and areas that local groups can hire permanent or short term fits well with the current trend for cooperation in the community.

Site redevelopment to meet current needs and expected tourism growth in the district

Visitor and new resident numbers continue to grow. It is important to offer a modern information and service centre that is user-friendly and easily accessible.

The possibility of dedicated space for Clutha District Council and community archives

It is a legal requirement that councils have archive space that meets national standards. Council has no dedicated archive space at the moment. Creating extra capacity in an archive space and renting it to others like the local museum or neighbouring councils could provide a potential income stream to the refit.

Development of a multi-use space on the upper level

To maximize use of the complex, adding a new space on the second floor would open up several options. Would you like to see the library relocated here, or a café space that could be leased to local business owners, or further arts or museum exhibition space? This would help maximise the use of the complex.

This is an opportunity to think outside the square about what this upgraded facility could be. This concept relies on a group of people in the community getting behind it. A model similar to the Cross Recreation Centre could work, but would be reliant on the community taking ownership and driving the project, with Council support. The pros and cons would be more fully identified in a feasibility study.

WHAT IS IT LIKELY TO COST AND HOW COULD IT BE FUNDED?

The preliminary estimates for the development described in this option is \$5.4M.

A full feasibility study including costing, plans and budgets would need to be completed before taking this project to the next stage. CDC has \$1.9 million in the budget for renewals and improvements to the hall. Leveraging off this as core funding, alongside a community partnership could enable the community to raise additional external funding towards this project.

It is too early to know in detail the costs of running the facility, and the potential income it could generate. A combination of Clutha District Council operating grant, office space rental, hall hire, gallery hire, meeting room hire, lease of spaces within the building and sponsorship, are possible ways to keep ongoing costs down. There are a number of successful multi- purpose facilities in New Zealand that could be used as costing models.

A feasibility study would provide more certainty about the operating costs, however Council's contribution could be limited to the level of the Hall's current operating cost, with the intention of not having an impact on rates.

WHAT ARE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS?

By using the \$1.9 million already budgeted, and the value of the building itself, the community could potentially end up with a much more practical user-friendly building that would be fit for purpose for the future.

Retaining the i-Site at this facility is an important factor in its longer term sustainability.

Any improvements to the facility must complement other key facilities in Balclutha, for example the Cross Recreation Centre and Balclutha Centennial Pool.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK...

It makes sense to talk to residents and ratepayers before money is spent and decisions are made about the future of the hall.

Are there other options or ideas for Balclutha Memorial Hall you think should be considered?

What do you think of the options so far?

You will find a pull out feedback form in the middle of this document. Fill it in and return it to tell us what you think.

OPTION 3 DEMOLISH & RELOCATE CURRENT I-SITE

Walk away from the current War Memorial Hall and look at seeing what other facilities in the town could possibly fill this function

WHY IS THIS BEING CONSIDERED?

- Questions are being asked about whether there is a real need for Council to be providing long term support for both the Memorial Hall facility and the Cross Recreation Centre.
- Could one centre fill all the town's recreational, cultural and heritage needs?

WHAT MIGHT THIS OPTION INVOLVE?

Option 3 would involve relocating the i-Site and the other tenants to elsewhere in the town and demolishing the hall.

WHAT IS IT LIKELY TO COST AND HOW COULD IT BE FUNDED?

This option would need to include costings for:

- Relocation of the i-Site, including possible property purchase and fit out
- Cost to demolish the current hall.

Estimated funding for operating the facility: Nil – as the facility would no longer be operated. However, there would be ongoing costs to operate an i-Site.

WHAT ARE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS?

It is a War Memorial Hall which gives it special significance and historical importance.

Would the community life of Balclutha be severely disrupted if there were no longer a town hall?

Are there other community facilities and halls within the town that could fill the current and future needs of the community, if the hall was no longer there?



“If we do nothing, nothing is what we will get.”

Ken Payne.
Balclutha Ward Councillor

Why is Our Place Balclutha important to you?

Because Balclutha is a centre point for the whole community: a place that needs to cater for us all; a place to shop, play, eat, be entertained, work, or just relax.

Why is input from residents important?

We've been busy working towards a plan with Balclutha's future in mind. Now more than ever we need your feedback to help with that plan and make the best decisions on your behalf.