

Advice of Expert Steering Committee

20 July 2017

Dear Administrator,

This Expert Steering Committee was established in June 2017 by you as the Administrator of the City of Parramatta Council to provide advice to the Council to help inform Council's decisions regarding the sale of the Riverbank land and the creation of a new cultural precinct.

In preparing its advice the Expert Steering Committee has: considered the Heads of Agreement; assessed advice prepared by Deloitte; received briefings from both staff of the NSW Government and of the Council and considered key Council policy documents including its *2017-2021 Cultural Plan*.

The Expert Steering Committee recommends that the City of Parramatta Council enters into the Heads of Agreement for the reasons outlined in our attached report.

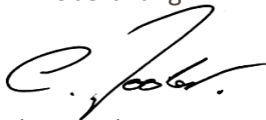
This is a natural progression for the City in raising the status of the arts in Western Sydney; the construction of an enhanced Riverside Theatres and a world class museum; and in the ongoing commitment to the delivery of Council's *Cultural Plan*.

The Committee looks forward to the delivery of this exciting new cultural precinct on the Parramatta River which we consider will stimulate and facilitate exploration, innovation, education and creation of new and local cultural and artistic productions.

Regards



Dr Robert Lang



Chris Toohar



Rhonda Hawkins AM



John Kirkman

Advice of Expert Steering Committee to the Administrator - July 2017

This Expert Steering Committee was established in June 2017 by the Administrator of the City of Parramatta Council to:

- provide advice to the Council on its negotiations with the NSW Government regarding the sale of lands to support NSW Government's investment in a flagship world-class museum in Parramatta and other cultural investments; and
- provide advice on the business case being prepared to inform Council's decisions.

In preparing its advice the Expert Steering Committee: considered the Heads of Agreement as negotiated between the parties; assessed advice prepared by Deloitte for the Council; received briefings from both staff of the NSW Government and of the Council, including Robert Love, Riverside Theatres Director; and considered key Council policy documents including its *2017-2021 Cultural Plan*.

The Expert Steering Committee recommends that the City of Parramatta Council Administrator enters into the Heads of Agreement for the following reasons:

- As a result of the agreement an exciting new cultural precinct will be established along the Parramatta River benefitting locals, residents from across Sydney and tourists alike and vibrantly engaging people of all ages in culture across a range of art forms. The precinct will include a new flagship Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, an enlarged and upgraded Riverside Theatres and a new pedestrian connection across the river.
- In addition to its key cultural and community benefits, Deloitte estimate by 2028 the new cultural precinct will grow the regional economy by at least \$106million (NPV) and increase local employment by 150 FTE.
- Under the agreement, the NSW Government will pay the commercial value of Council's Riverbank land and also undertakes to deliver a world class arts and science Museum in Parramatta - a new Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

- The upgraded Riverside Theatres will take the legal form of an equal joint venture between the Council and NSW Government to be located on the current site, which will be leased from the Council under a long term lease. We consider that as an equal joint venture partner the NSW Government will have a strong vested interest in its success; and in it creating programming and it commissioning content for this exciting new Western Sydney cultural initiative.
- In addition, we welcome the Council's decision to commit \$40million of its proceeds from the sale of this land to the implementation of the *Cultural Plan* over the next 20 years.
- While the upgrade of the Riverside Theatres is subject to preparation of a business case, we note that in the event that this business case is not satisfactory the NSW Government will pay the Council \$100 million cash to be invested as Council prioritises.
- We commend the Council for prioritising Western Sydney arts and for developing this strong partnership with the NSW Government which will have long term benefits for the City, Western Sydney and more broadly for the State.
- The NSW Government has advised the Committee that after an extended period of negotiation with the Council, it is critical to the success of the Museum project that the Heads of Agreement is executed before August 2017.



Dr Robert Lang



Rhonda Hawkins AM



Chris Toher



John Kirkman