



10.0

Future Needs

10.0 Future Needs

Requests of the Queensland Government for financial support to develop new or improve existing, large sporting venues and stadiums, are frequent and come from local governments, sporting clubs and bodies, federal government and State agencies, including SQ.

The State should consider adopting a stadium decision making framework to guide and inform future investment in major sports facilities and venues.

10.1 Needs Assessment

Consideration of State support for major sports facilities should commence with an assessment of the need. This includes an assessment of existing capacity of SQ venues to meet potential demand as well as the likelihood of new content entering the Queensland market.

Capacity at SQ Venues

The Taskforce assessed each of the SQ venues for unused capacity and any service gaps in the SQ provision of venues.

Venue	Assessment of Existing Use	Anchor Tenants	Potential Existing Capacity
Suncorp Stadium (Brisbane)	Three anchor tenants (2 winter, 1 summer) plus regular one-off major sporting events Frequent concert use	Brisbane Broncos Queensland Reds Brisbane Roar	Capacity for at least 1 additional anchor tenant Capacity for more one-off events
The Gabba (Brisbane)	Year round use through AFL (winter) and cricket (summer) Venue now used for concerts	Cricket Australia Brisbane Heat Brisbane Lions	Capacity for additional anchor tenants Capacity for more one-off events
Cbus Super Stadium (Gold Coast)	Single tenant venue Low concert use and low one-off sporting event use	Gold Coast Titans	Capacity for additional anchor tenants Capacity for more one-off events
Metricon Stadium (Gold Coast)	Single tenant venue Low concert use and low one-off sporting event use Cricket commencing at venue	Gold Coast Suns	Capacity for additional anchor tenants Capacity for more one-off events
1300SMILES Stadium / North Queensland Stadium (Townsville)	Single tenant venue Low concert use and low one-off sporting event use	North Queensland Cowboys	Capacity for additional anchor tenants Capacity for more one-off events



Venue	Assessment of Existing Use	Anchor Tenants	Potential Existing Capacity
Brisbane Entertainment Centre (Brisbane)	High level of fit-for-purpose use Event size restricted by venue	Various sporting organisations and entertainment events	Small capacity for additional events
Queensland Tennis Centre (Brisbane)	Annual major event and regular one-off major tennis events High-level of community use	Brisbane International	Capacity for additional tennis and non-tennis events
Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre (Brisbane)	High-level of community and elite athlete use Low concert use and low one-off sporting events use (main stadium)	Various sporting and community organisations	Capacity for more one-off events
Sleeman Sports Complex (Brisbane)	High-level of community and elite athlete use Vacant land for future facility development	Various sporting and community organisations	Capacity for additional purpose-built sport facilities to be constructed

Table 10.1: Assessment of Unused Capacity at SQ Venues

Source: Stadiums Queensland Data

The Taskforce has identified existing capacity across the SQ portfolio, specifically in its stadium assets, for additional long-term and one-off content. Therefore, Queensland is well placed to accommodate any requests or opportunities for additional major events through the SQ portfolio as it has available capacity in the heavily populated south east Queensland and north Queensland catchment areas.

The assessment in Table 10.1 above shows that the five stadiums all have capacity to host additional content. Suncorp Stadium can likely only support one additional anchor tenant. Two or more anchor tenants may result in deterioration of the playing surface. This is less of an issue at venues such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground, for while it hosts 50 AFL matches per annum, the playing surface does not have to be regularly maintained to a standard suitable for football (soccer). The regionally based stadium at the Gold Coast and Townsville are single-tenanted venues that have the capacity for additional tenants and one-off major events.

All SQ venues, except for the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, have strong capacity to host additional content. The Brisbane Entertainment Centre is restricted in hosting some larger events due to the size of the venue. Sleeman Sports Complex has capacity in available land for use for future facility developments such as the recent Anna Meares Velodrome. The Queensland Tennis Centre is well utilised, but its Pat Rafter Arena facility has capacity to host more events, subject to development agreement restrictions on the hosting of non-tennis events at that venue. Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre is heavily utilised from a community use and athlete development perspective, but its main stadium has capacity to host additional one-off major entertainment or sporting events.

Finding 10.1

The five major stadium assets within the Stadiums Queensland venue portfolio have more than adequate capacity to host additional regular and one-off major event content.

Finding 10.2

Capacity exists at Suncorp Stadium for at least one additional anchor tenant. However, multiple new anchor tenants may impact the high presentation standards of the stadium such as the quality of the playing surface.

Need for New Venues

As the SQ capacity assessment identified, there are two categories of potential content that will dictate the need for new venues in Queensland – regular content (anchor tenants) and one-off major events (sporting events and concerts).

There have been numerous recent public statements of interest for new Queensland-based teams to be added to expanded national competitions, including:

- » Cairns / Papua New Guinea NRL franchise,
- » Central Queensland NRL franchise,
- » Second Brisbane / Ipswich / Logan NRL franchise,
- » Second A-League franchise in Brisbane,
- » Gold Coast-based Big Bash League franchise, and
- » North Queensland-based (Cairns and Townsville) Big Bash League franchise.

The Taskforce understands that expansion of national leagues is something the governing bodies are always considering but appear reluctant to progress in the near future. The known interest in new franchises does not equate to a need for new stadiums in Queensland for the following reasons:

- » any greater Brisbane region or Gold Coast-based franchise seeking to play at a rectangular venue would be able to be based at Suncorp Stadium or Cbus Super Stadium,
- » any Gold Coast-based Big Bash League side would be able to be accommodated at Metricon Stadium, and
- » any other franchises would be able to play at existing local venues with appropriate bump in facilities based on anticipated crowds.

Finding 10.3

There is no immediate need for the development of any new build stadium in Queensland because there is existing capacity in the current suite of stadiums.

This is further supported by previous analysis presented in Section 3, for example, Queensland is the only State Government in Australia that owns three regionally-based Tier 2 stadiums, so has an existing provision of stadiums that is more spread across the state than other jurisdictions.

Recommended changes to the way the State approaches the attraction of major events to Queensland will support regional centres that do not have an SQ venue including Cairns, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Fraser Coast, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba. Bringing major event content to these regional venues on an annual basis may reduce community interest in attracting additional national franchises to regional communities and the associated significant capital and operating expenses.

The finding that there is no current or foreseeable need for new stadiums in Queensland is reliant upon existing capacity within the current SQ portfolio being able to deliver new content requirements. This relies on the portfolio continuing to be fit for purpose and improved to meet market demands and community expectations. The priority for the State should be to focus on the existing SQ portfolio as opposed to the construction of new venues. The most effective way to deliver this into the future is to implement strategies that will maximise the use of the existing venues and extend their remaining useful life.

Recommendation 10.1

The Queensland Government should prioritise the attraction of semi-regular, one-off major event content to regional centres in Queensland that do not have Stadiums Queensland venues as a method of providing these regions with content without having to construct new stadium assets associated with additional national franchises.

Recommendation 10.2

The Queensland Government adopt a policy decision to prioritise the maintenance and enhancement and to maximise the use of existing stadiums in Queensland rather than build new stadium facilities.

10.2 Maximise Useful Life of Existing Stadiums Queensland Portfolio

The SQ venue portfolio contains ageing venues and there will be need to undertake asset replacement and enhancement works on some assets to ensure they remain fit for purpose, are relevant on the national / international stage and to have their useful life maximised. Without significant replacement and enhancement, the estimated remaining useful life of the SQ asset portfolio is shown in Table 10.2 below.

Venue	Remaining useful life (years)
Suncorp Stadium	18.1
Cbus Super Stadium	21.7
1300SMILES Stadium	14.8
Queensland Tennis Centre	20.3
Sleeman Sports Complex	9.9
The Gabba	11.6
Metricon Stadium	25.7
Brisbane Entertainment Centre	9.9
Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre	11.1

Table 10.2: Estimated Remaining Useful Life of Stadiums Queensland Venues, without enhancement

Source: Stadiums Queensland Data

As Table 10.2 shows, the SQ asset portfolio will be usable as major sporting venues for years to come. However, there is a point at which public and event hirer expectations are not met, particularly as assets reach the later stages of their life.

Only the Brisbane Entertainment Centre and Sleeman Sports Complex having remaining useful life under 10 years. Sleeman Sports Complex is a multi-purpose venue with multiple independent facilities located on site. As the oldest facilities are progressively updated, the remaining useful life of the venue will increase. The feasibility of a Brisbane-CBD located Brisbane Entertainment Centre replacement is currently being investigated by the State. Similarly, there are two venues with 11 years of useful life left – the Gabba and Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre. The Gabba is currently the subject of discussions regarding potential upgrades inside and outside the venue as part of the Cross River Rail project and these works would significantly increase the life of the asset. Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre currently has the new Queensland State Netball Centre facility scheduled to open in early 2019 and has recently replaced and upgraded the two synthetic athletic tracks at the venue. The Queensland Academy of Sport is based at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre within the western grandstand built in the 1970s ahead of the 1982 Commonwealth Games.

Finding 10.4

There is significant potential for the existing Stadiums Queensland venue portfolio to remain relevant and useful for the next 20 years in Queensland subject to moderate mid-lifecycle capital investment.

To estimate the capital enhancements required to maximise the use of SQ venues for the next 20 years and beyond, a high level forecast capital expenditure profile was utilised which helped the Taskforce assess proposed major investment into the SQ portfolio over the next two decades. While at a conceptual stage, the size of the investment identified is significant.

Despite this, there are strong community expectations that all of the events and SQ venues currently in Queensland will continue into the future. The capital investment required to keep the existing asset portfolio relevant and extend the life of the assets, through strategies such as mid lifecycle refurbishment, is likely to be significantly cheaper for the taxpayer than building new venues to replace the assets as their current useful life expires.

Finding 10.5

The capital investment proposed to extend the life of existing stadiums is likely to be significantly cheaper than the option of building new venues to replace the assets as their useful life expires.

Maximising the useful life of the SQ venue portfolio through mid-lifecycle capital investments will enhance SQ's ability to deliver the three intended benefits the SQ portfolio offers Queensland, which is to deliver major events, to provide participation opportunities in sport and recreation activities and to support the development of Queensland's elite athletes.

Finding 10.6

Investing in capital improvements of stadiums increases the ability to attract and retain events in Queensland, increase community participation opportunities and improve the development of elite athletes in Queensland.

Over the past 10 years SQ capital grants have remained steady. As a result, SQ has focused the bulk of its available budgets on maintaining the venues to ensure safety and continued operation. It is important that any future focus on capital enhancement should not come at the detriment of the existing maintenance regime or budgets. This focus on maintenance has constrained SQ's ability to undertake asset enhancement activities.

As previously discussed in Section 9.3, to best support the SQ portfolio deliver its objectives into the future, there needs to be a clear delineation between the role of SQ to fund planned and unplanned maintenance and minor capital works (up to \$3 million project value) of its assets.

To assist the State in planning for minor capital works and major capital works, the Taskforce recommends SQ be required to submit annual planned capital works updates to Government as part of the budget development processes.

Based on the annual capital updates, the Queensland Government will be well placed to plan and prepare for necessary funding of improvements to its major sporting venue portfolio to maximise its useful life and retain its relevance nationally.

Recommendation 10.3

Stadiums Queensland be required to submit a stand-alone, annual forward planning update to government well ahead of the annual budget process that details their rolling 10 to 20 year capital enhancement and replacement plan which includes short-term and long-term capital works estimates for the Stadiums Queensland venue portfolio.

10.3 Maximise Use of Existing Stadiums Queensland Portfolio

Section 10.1 identifies it would be cheaper and more efficient for the State to extend the useful life of the existing venue portfolio, rather than develop new or additional assets. In order to maximise the return on past investment, there is a need to maximise the utilisation of the SQ venue portfolio.

Many SQ venues have potential capacity to increase their overall utilisation, whether it be the hosting of additional sporting franchises, additional one-off major events or increased community usage.

Additional anchor tenants

As previously identified in Section 10.1, there is existing capacity in SQ's stadium assets to accommodate regular, seasonal hirers such as new NRL, A-League, AFL or Big Bash League franchises. Any new national league franchises that commence in the Brisbane, Gold Coast or Townsville regions, provided their sport fits the configuration of the existing SQ venues, should be based at SQ venues. The State should not consider the development of new venues within these catchment areas whilst there is capacity to accommodate major sporting events at existing SQ venues.

One-Off Major Events

One-off major events are concerts and ad-hoc major sporting event such as State of Origin, Wallabies tests, international cricket matches and World Cup matches in various sports.

All of SQ stadium assets (including the main stadium at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre) are capable of hosting concert events. Due to the cost of bumping in all stage and sound equipment necessary for these events, capital city locations are more likely to attract events than regional locations. Similarly, one-off major sporting events are more likely to be held at the Gabba and Suncorp Stadium due to the larger capacity of these venues with an increased financial return to the hirer. The Taskforce has identified that all of SQ's stadium assets have the immediate capacity to host additional one-off major events.

The Taskforce understands there is an increasing prevalence of competition between states to attract and retain these one-off major events, particularly sporting events, through either a commitment to increased capital funding of infrastructure or through an agreement with state tourism and event attraction entities to incentivise event promoters for the rights to host an event. Queensland is not currently as competitive in these activities. However the Taskforce has recommended methods through which the State can increase its potential in this area, including introducing an enhanced coordinated approach to major event attraction as described in Section 8.

Finding 10.7

All Stadiums Queensland venues have the capacity to host additional one-off major events. A competitive and coordinated event attraction strategy is key to increasing the number of major events at Stadiums Queensland venues.

Event Content and Venue Enhancements

Investments in significant sporting infrastructure across Australia have increasingly been tied to the securing of confirmed event content for the upgraded or new asset, as the following examples demonstrate:

- » **Melbourne Cricket Ground** – the AFL Grand Final will be played at the venue until 2057 in return for \$500 million in State funding towards AFL, which included upgrades to six local/regional AFL facilities, rebuild of the Melbourne Cricket Ground Southern Stand within the next 10 years and \$225 million investment in the AFL-owned Marvel Stadium and the surrounding Docklands precinct. (AFL media release 12 April 2018)
- » **Sydney stadiums** – while there is much ongoing public debate about the merits and final design of the proposed Sydney stadium redevelopments, the original NSW Government plan was to spend up to \$1.5 billion on redevelopment of Alliance Stadium, ANZ Stadium and Parramatta Stadium in return for the NRL Grand Final to remain in Sydney until 2042. (NRL media release 29 March 2018)

If the State were to give consideration to a significant capital enhancement to an existing stadium, or development of a new stadium, there should be consideration of any additional content guaranteed for the venue. Ideally additional content should be over and above what the anchor tenants would be expected to normally play at the venue and it should also protect any existing events from being poached by other States for example, retaining State of Origin matches.

Community Use of Stadiums and Venues

SQ already has in place standard fees and charges for the use and hire of all of its venues, which includes the stadium assets. SQ also has policies that provide concessional access and hire rates for community groups to use the stadiums and facilities. Community and not for profit groups may not be aware of the concessional access that is available.

Finding 10.8

Stadiums Queensland has standard fees and charges and policies that allow for concessional access and hire rates for community groups, however, community organisations are not necessarily aware of the ability to hire stadiums in Queensland.

Recommendation 10.4

Any significant capital works commitments to stadiums in Queensland should consider commitments from key sports for the securing of new and additional content to the venue, which does not cannibalise content at existing Stadiums Queensland venues.

It is important to note that stadiums exist primarily to allow the conduct of major sporting events, as there are a limited number of venues Australia wide that can accommodate these events. To ensure these events can be held, the stadiums need to meet strict standards that would typically be over and above what community users would require, for example the size of venue, levels of maintenance and the quality of playing surface. The MSF Act requires SQ to act commercially, which as a result sees commercial activity given preference. SQ manages to a hierarchy of use of SQ's stadium assets with international and national events being granted priority of use over regional, local and community use where a conflict exists.

Finding 10.9

The *Major Sports Facilities Act 2001* requires Stadiums Queensland to act commercially, as such, commercial activities are seen by Stadiums Queensland as being the priority for venue use over other uses, including community access.

International and national events are usually scheduled at least six to 12 months prior to the event, which allows for other users to be aware of potential windows of available use of the venue. Each of these has various continual processes, such as playing surface, amenities or accessibility maintenance being carried out in support of major events that may not allow concurrent use of the venue by community or other groups.

In support of SQ's existing access policies and community fees and charges, there needs to be an elevated public awareness of the potential use of SQ assets by community and other groups. SQ needs to implement a strategy that identifies accurate windows of usage availability, details the process through which venue hire can be sought and advertises these items more extensively than it does currently through low-cost means that might meet potential users. The Taskforce's intent is not to disrupt SQ's major event preparation, but to emphasise the importance of promoting and reporting on community use of its venues and the positive benefits that will be derived by the community, users, SQ and the State in achieving this.

10.4 Stadium Decision Making Framework for Government

Despite the Taskforce's finding that there is no current need for the development of new major sports facilities in Queensland, it is anticipated that there will still be requests for significant capital investment for major sporting venues. Decisions regarding future major investments should be made well in advance of the end of useful life of venues which is on average 16 years from now.

Recommendation 10.5

Stadiums Queensland to identify a minimum of 10 days per annum in which each of its main stadium assets are available for hire by community organisations at concessional rates and Stadiums Queensland should promote this as a new opportunity to the wider public.

Recommendation 10.6

An annual benchmark for the number of community uses of Stadiums Queensland stadium assets be established and reported against in the Stadiums Queensland annual report.

The Taskforce recommends the State consider adopting a stadium decision making framework to guide and inform future investment in major sports facilities, stadiums and venues. The stadium decision making framework may include the following components:

- » **Venue Scorecard Assessment** – to compare the functionality and potential of venues
- » **Venue Investment Criteria** – to assess the value of investing in venues
- » **Venue Responsibility Matrix** – to determine categories of venues the State has responsibility for.

The stadium decision making framework would assist with the consistent decision making approach to the assessment of future stadium investment proposals.

Recommendation 10.7

The Queensland Government consider adopting a stadium decision making framework to inform future investment in stadiums and major sports facilities.

Venue Scorecard Assessment

The Taskforce developed a venue scorecard to enable direct measurement and comparison of venues based on eight criteria in order to measure the relative “functionality” of venues. The scorecard framework was developed based on consultation with SQ and hirers and the experience of the Taskforce team and was designed to apply to rectangular and oval stadium infrastructure in Queensland. Full details of the scorecard approach is contained within the Interim Report (Appendix 1).

Criteria		Description
1	Utilisation	This criteria refers to the utilisation level of the venue, measured by the number of event days and the number of hirers.
2	Capacity	This criteria refers to the capacity of the venue relative to the average attendances of the events held at the venue.
3	Catchment	This criteria refers to the size of the catchment of the venue, being considered at both an absolute level and also relative to the capacity (i.e. number of seats) of the venue.
4	Quality	This criteria refers to the quality and availability of facilities at the venue including premium seating, food and beverage offerings, technology, proximity to the field of play, sight lines, player facilities, turf, media and broadcasting facilities, etc.
5	Economic contribution	This criteria refers to the contribution of the venue to the economic activity within the State and also the region in which it is located.
6	Financial viability	This criteria refers to the overall financial performance of the venue.
7	Transport connectivity	This criteria refers to the availability and adequacy of transport accessibility (private and public) to the venue.
8	Location	This criteria refers to the location of the venue relative to other hospitality and entertainment precincts for pre and post-game entertainment / activities.

Table 10.3: Venue Scorecard Criteria

In assessing venues against the criteria, each venue is given a rating of between 1 and 3 with 3 representing the highest score and 1 representing the lowest score. The maximum score for a venue is 10 with weightings applied to indicate the relative importance of each criteria. All criteria were weighted 10% except for utilisation and quality which were allocated weightings of 20%.

Criteria	Weight	Suncorp Stadium (Tier 1)	The Gabba (Tier 1)	Cbus Super Stadium (Tier 2)	Metricon Stadium (Tier 2)	1300SMILES Stadium (Tier 2)	Tier 1 Avg.	Tier 2 Avg.
Utilisation	20%	3	3	2	2	1	3.0	1.7
Capacity	10%	2	2	2	2	3	2.0	2.3
Catchment	10%	3	3	2	2	1	3.0	1.7
Quality	20%	2	1	3	3	1	1.5	2.3
Economic contribution	10%	3	3	2	1	1	3.0	1.0
Financial viability	10%	3	2	1	2	1	2.5	1.3
Transport connectivity	10%	3	3	1	1	2	3.0	1.3
Location	10%	3	2	2	1	1	2.5	1.3
Raw score	na	22	19	15	14	11	20.5	13.0
Weighted score	100%	9.0	7.7	6.7	6.3	4.3	8.3	5.6

Table 10.4: Summary of Stadiums Queensland Venue Scorecard Assessment

Source: Stadiums Queensland Data

Table 10.4 above represents how SQ's stadium assets performed against the scorecard framework. Suncorp Stadium recorded the highest raw and weighted scores of all SQ venues (22 out of 24 and 9.0 out of 10 respectively). 1300SMILES Stadium recorded the lowest raw and weighted scores (11 out of 24 and 4.3 out of 10 respectively), followed by Metricon Stadium (14 out of 24 and 6.3 out of 10 respectively).

The scorecard framework suggests those venues with low weighted scores (1300SMILES Stadium, Metricon Stadium and Cbus Super Stadium) have relative functional issues that may restrict the current and future “performance” of the venue.

The venue with the clear highest score, Suncorp Stadium, is the premier rectangular venue in Australia and based on the scorecard approach, would indicate there is less concern on the horizon about this venue’s future. This presents a potentially different decision making consideration for Government based not only on functionality but comparatively against venues in Australia as other states increase their investment in rectangular stadiums.

Finding 10.10

A venues scorecard approach is a robust method of measuring and comparing the relative functionality of stadium assets and should be included in any stadium decision making framework of the Queensland Government.

Investment Criteria

The Taskforce has developed a set of proposed criteria to guide future investment into Queensland’s stadium / venue portfolio. For clarity, the purpose of this stadium decision making framework is to guide significant investment decisions such as whether to undertake a major refurbishment, to significantly improve a venue, to replace a venue or to construct a new venue. It is not designed to be used to inform normal lifecycle capital replacement and maintenance activities throughout the venue’s economic useful life.

The investment criteria seeks to ensure the optimisation of performance of existing venues and to avoid investment that may hinder the performance of the existing SQ portfolio, which has already incurred significant State capital and operational investment commitments.

The proposed investment criteria includes stadium specific criteria as well as general major sports facility criteria. It also includes criteria for new venues as well as criteria for investment into existing venues.

Venue	Investment Criteria
New Stadium	<p>Investment should only be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Tier 1 raw score of at least 21 with a minimum score of 2 for each criteria. » Tier 2 raw score of at least 16 with a minimum score of 2 for each criteria. » if any increase in event days and / or hirers cannot be reasonably accommodated. » no net negative impact on the existing stadium utilisation. » certainty of the future event calendar / demand. » if appropriate funding is also made available for ongoing lifecycle capital requirements. » supported by a documented business case, including consideration of social and economic benefits and investigation of alternative funding mechanisms.
Existing Stadium	<p>Investment should only be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » if it will result in generating an improved venue scorecard. » if it is the result of a facility (or sub-component of a facility): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – not meeting relevant standards and not being in a fit for purpose condition, – being at the end of its useful life, or – having significant deficiencies as identified by the venue scorecard. » if there is certainty of the future event calendar / demand. » if appropriate funding is also made available for ongoing lifecycle capital requirements. » supported by a documented business case, including consideration of social and economic benefits and investigation of alternative funding mechanisms.
New Major Sports Facility	<p>Investment should only be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » if any increase in event demand cannot be reasonably accommodated. » no net negative impact on the existing venue utilisation. » certainty of the future event calendar / demand. » if appropriate funding is also made available for ongoing operating and lifecycle capital requirements. » supported by a documented business case, including consideration of social and economic benefits and investigation of alternative funding mechanisms.
Existing Major Sports Facility	<p>Investment should only be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » if it is the result of a facility (or sub-component of a facility): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – not meeting relevant standards and not being in a fit for purpose condition, – being at the end of its useful life, or – having significant deficiencies e.g. quality of facilities. » certainty of the future event calendar / demand. » if appropriate funding is also made available for ongoing operating and lifecycle capital requirements. » supported by a documented business case, including consideration of social and economic benefits and investigation of alternative funding mechanisms.

Table 10.5: Summary of Stadiums Queensland Venue Scorecard Assessment

Finding 10.11

The application of a stadium investment criteria, similar to the investment criteria outlined in this report, is a robust mechanism for evaluating and prioritising stadium and venue investment opportunities and should be considered by the Queensland Government.

Venue Responsibilities Matrix

The third component of a decision making framework needs to help determine what type and level of facility the State should have.

All venues that deal with sporting events and participation in Queensland are able to be categorised into broad groups according to the type and nature of the facility:

- » stadiums,
- » indoor sport / entertainment centres, and
- » participation venues.

It is important to categorise facilities into the broad groupings as a first step so that comparisons of venues in Queensland for investment purposes are made between similar-type venues. Within each category of asset type, venues can then be further separated into Tiers which can be used to describe the differences in scope, scale, complexity, usage, profile and standard of venues within each asset category.

Appendix 3 is a Venue Responsibilities Matrix that categorises assets by type and by scale and shows the land owner and operator of the venues. Appendix 3 shows there are clear differences moving through the Tiers of venues. For example, Tier 1 venues across all three categories are generally large, well maintained, international standard, iconic venues capable of hosting high profile events and large numbers of patrons/users, whereas Tier 4 venues could be generalised as being small, community venues serving local areas.

In regards to the SQ portfolio of assets, all SQ venues are identified as being either Tier 1 or 2 in the stadium and indoor sport / entertainment centres categories and Tier 1 in the participation facility category. What this implies is that SQ is responsible for the majority of those venues in Queensland that are large, complex, iconic and host large scale events.

Finding 10.12

Sporting venues in Queensland can be categorised and placed into Tiers to enable the State to consider its support of different types and scale of major sporting venues through a venues responsibilities matrix approach. This categorisation and Tier approach could be adopted by the wider sporting sector in Queensland as a way of communicating consistently with the Queensland Government regarding sporting venue support and should be considered for inclusion in any stadium decision making framework of the Queensland Government.

The identification of where SQ portfolio assets are located in the Tier matrix is an example of the subsequent analysis that the Tier categorisation of Queensland venues provides for, which is to identify the usual primary responsible entity for each Tier of venue.

Appendix 3 also provides the current ownership and operating responsibility for each Tier of facility across the three categories of assets. It also highlights those existing venues that are outliers to the venue responsibility matrix due to the current primary responsibility being held by an entity not typical of the rest of the Tier venues.

Finding 10.13

Under the Venues Responsibilities Matrix, Stadiums Queensland owns and operates Tier 1 and 2 stadiums, Tier 1 and 2 indoor sport / entertainment centres and Tier 1 participation venues, due to their nature, size and profile.

The combination of the Venue Responsibilities Matrix with the proposed investment criteria and the venue scorecard assessment approach provides the baseline for a stadium decision making framework that Government can utilise to guide and make decisions relating to support for major sports facilities.

11.0

Venue Specific Considerations

11.0 Venue Specific Considerations



North Queensland Cowboys vs Brisbane Broncos, Round 20
2013, 1300SMILES © Stadiums Queensland

11.1 1300SMILES Stadium

The 1300SMILES Stadium was transferred to SQ from the Willows Trust / Townsville City Council in 2004. The new North Queensland Stadium, currently under construction in Townsville, is scheduled to be operational prior to the start of the 2020 NRL season and is effectively a replacement of the ageing 1300SMILES Stadium. 1300SMILES Stadium will then become surplus to SQ requirements as a declared major sports facility at some stage between the end of the 2019 NRL season and the commencement of the 2020 season.

11.2 North Queensland Stadium

The new North Queensland Stadium is currently under construction and is scheduled to commence operations prior to the start of the 2020 NRL season. The stadium is being built as a replacement of the ageing 1300SMILES Stadium and has been planned to deliver event day operations superior to that of its predecessor, being located in the Townsville CBD near to existing hospitality precincts, incorporating public transport accessibility and being purpose built to modern standards.

The Taskforce's Interim Report (Appendix 1) considered issues relating to the commissioning of the new North Queensland Stadium and specifically identified that:

- » the transition to the new North Queensland Stadium will significantly impact venue operations, venue costs and venue related incomes, and
- » that service requirements for the new North Queensland Stadium including public transport, traffic management, policing and security continue to be considered as part of the design and construction of the stadium.

Artist's impression of stadium grandstand and field of play (July 2018)
© Department of Housing and Public Works



11.3 Suncorp Stadium

Suncorp Stadium is the premier rectangular stadium in Australia and has retained that status since its redevelopment in 2003, taking over from ANZ Stadium which itself had taken over that title since its development for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. However, the reputation of Suncorp Stadium is at risk from significant investment in rectangular stadiums in NSW which will occur over the next four years.

In order to remain competitive with the best new venues in the country, SQ will need to consider ways to enhance and refresh the venue over the coming decade and work closely with the Queensland Government to deliver this. The Taskforce understands the capacity is thought to be ideal from hirers who host sell-out events with the SQ hire agreement model enabling hirers to make significant revenue from the venue.

Improvements to Suncorp Stadium over time need to deliver better venue offerings. The logical location is the western stand. Redevelopment of this stand would significantly modernise the venue and elevate the corporate and premium seating offerings to a new level comparable with new southern venues. Technology within the venue could be improved as could other various amenities.

Finding 11.1

Suncorp Stadium will likely need mid-life capital improvements made to its infrastructure within the next five to 10 years in order for the venue to retain its status as the premier rectangular venue in Australia.



11.4 The Gabba

The Gabba was transferred to SQ from the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust in 2001. The Gabba has been in the public spotlight, following the redevelopment of Adelaide Oval (\$535 million) and construction of Optus Stadium in Perth (\$1.4 billion). There is strong potential for opportunity for the Gabba in the near future, with the introduction of a Cross River Rail station immediately adjacent to the ground by 2023.

Finding 11.2

The introduction of a Cross River Rail station immediately adjacent to the Gabba will provide an unmatched opportunity to significantly improve accessibility and connectivity for the Gabba venue and precinct.

The Taskforce's Interim Report (Appendix 1) identified a number of recommendations to improve the viability and performance of the venue in the immediate future, while also to prepare and support potential opportunities that come with the introduction of the Cross River Rail precinct adjacent to the venue and potential stadium improvement works:

- » The government put out to tender the management rights for the Gabba if it is cost effective to do so, to be undertaken on the basis of no frontline job losses.
- » The naming rights for the Gabba be put out to tender, subject to retaining Gabba in the stadium name.
- » Fast track the consolidation of ownership of assets adjacent to the Gabba to provide a once off opportunity to develop a seamless major entry and activation point for the Gabba.
- » That land declared under the MSF Act may be used for commercial outcomes by SQ or leaseholders, where a compatible social or community benefit can be demonstrated.
- » Enhancements to the Gabba be made in conjunction with stadium access improvements delivered through the Cross River Rail project and any potential 2032 Olympic bid.
- » DTMR to upgrade all Traffic Management Plans to ensure consistency with the principles based Traffic Management Plan framework.

Recommendation 11.1

Any significant internal upgrade or improvement to the Gabba should be carefully considered by Stadiums Queensland and the Queensland Government in alignment with the proposed stadium decision making framework.



11.5 Metricon Stadium

Metricon Stadium is a regional, single tenant venue that has underlying issues relating to reduced public transport options and is unique within the SQ and Australian sporting landscape due to its management arrangements. The AFL holds a long-term lease for the asset that includes all maintenance, asset enhancement and asset replacement responsibilities. The Gold Coast Suns hold a sub-lease with the AFL for daily management rights for the venue.

The Taskforce's Interim Report (Appendix 1) recommended the Government undertake certain actions that will help reduce the costs currently imposed on the Gold Coast Suns for event day costs and annual asset replacement costs.

The Taskforce estimates if the Interim Report recommendations are implemented, the Suns will potentially benefit from an improvement in their annual position relating to the operation of Metricon Stadium of approximately \$830,000, comprising:

- » reduction in annual Asset Replacement contributions of approximately \$440,000,
- » potential to generate new revenue from commercial opportunities of approximately \$250,000 per annum, and
- » annual public transport levy savings from application of the cap of \$140,000.

Finding 11.3

The implementation of recommendations of the Interim Report of the Stadium Taskforce may save the Gold Coast Suns, as the appointed venue management on behalf of the AFL, approximately \$830,000 per annum.

Gold Coast Suns Sub-Lease / Venue Hire Arrangements

Towards the end of the Taskforce's consultation process, the Gold Coast Suns wrote to SQ and to the Taskforce notifying of intent to seek alternative use arrangements for Metricon Stadium if the management of the venue remains unsustainable despite the implementation of the Taskforce's recommendations and the impending additional content. In order for SQ or the State to be able to influence the Suns hiring arrangements at the venue, the AFL would have to relinquish the lease back to SQ.

When Metricon Stadium was developed and the AFL lease was entered into, the State agreed to contribute capital funding to the development of Metricon Stadium and accept ownership responsibility, at nil ongoing cost to the State or SQ.

Finding 11.4

The State agreed to provide funding to the construction of Metricon Stadium if the AFL agreed the venue would operate at no cost to the State or Stadiums Queensland. The AFL lease reflects the terms agreed to in a Memorandum of Understanding between the AFL and the State at the time of the State approving funds to deliver the stadium.

Future Capital Enhancements

Future infrastructure requirements for Metricon Stadium are a matter for the AFL to consider. The design of the stadium to provide a capacity of 26,000 left the option for the venue to be increased to 40,000 if desired at a future point. Based on existing and anticipated utilisation, there is no current need for this expansion to be planned in forward estimates.

Finding 11.5

Metricon Stadium has a capacity of 26,000, the stadium was designed with the ability to increase this capacity to 40,000 if required. Based on existing and projected utilisation, there is no current need for this expansion.

Recommendation 11.2

The State adhere to the existing terms of the Metricon Stadium lease regardless of the operating model adopted by the lease holder, the AFL. Under the lease, the AFL are responsible for all costs involved with the operation, asset maintenance, asset replacement and asset enhancement of Metricon Stadium for the duration of the AFL lease.



11.6 Cbus Super Stadium

Cbus Super Stadium is a regional, single tenant venue that opened in 2008. The stadium has underlying issues relating to its location including a small land parcel for the type of facility, significant local road network issues (located on a cul-de-sac and lack of public car parking) and lack of options in the supply of public transport bus operators.

Interim Report

The Taskforce's Interim Report identified a number of recommendations to improve the operation of the venue on event day which would likely lead to improved access, new revenue generating opportunities and reduced event costs which is hoped will lead to an increase in patronage through enhanced event day experiences.

In regards to the Interim Report recommendations, it should be noted that many of the items that are intended to deliver a reduction in event day costs will be realised by SQ and not the Gold Coast Titans. This is due to the Titans recently entering into a long-term hire agreement with SQ which is a different hire model to the bulk of SQ hire agreements. SQ is the entity that holds the operating risk of not generating enough revenue from matches to cover costs. Therefore, any cost savings that are realised to venue costs (such as police, traffic management and public transport) will be realised by SQ.

The Taskforce considers the Titans hire agreement is amongst the strongest agreements in favour of the hirer in Queensland. As such, SQ will be operating Cbus Super Stadium at an increased operating deficit. It is anticipated that the combination of the new hire agreement and Interim Report recommendations will improve the financial viability of the Gold Coast Titans and place them in a much stronger and viable position for future seasons.

Future Capital Enhancements

Cbus Super Stadium is only 10 years old and is in very good condition. Therefore no significant works are scheduled by SQ until 2034 at which point it will need to undertake grandstand refurbishment works.

Finding 11.6

The recently entered into hire agreement for the Gold Coast Titans at Cbus Super Stadium has arrangements that strongly support the Gold Coast Titans, this in addition to the recommendations in the Taskforce's Interim Report should improve the operating position of the Gold Coast Titans, and has the potential to reduce Stadiums Queensland operating loss of hosting Gold Coast Titans events at Cbus Super Stadium.

Finding 11.7

No major capital works are currently required for Cbus Super Stadium for the next 15 years based on current usage.



11.7 Brisbane Entertainment Centre

The Brisbane Entertainment Centre was opened in 1986 and is an ageing venue nearing the end of its useful life. Despite its age and location (20km from the Brisbane CBD), the venue usually performs soundly due to the amount of concert and entertainment event content it attracts. The Taskforce understands that the development of a Brisbane CBD-based new entertainment centre would see an increase in this level of content coming to Queensland.

Finding 11.8

The Brisbane Entertainment Centre is an ageing venue nearing the end of its useful life. The location of the Brisbane Entertainment Centre does not meet contemporary standards for a major entertainment facility including limited access to scheduled high frequency and multi-modal public transport.



Replacement Entertainment Centre for Brisbane

The Queensland Government has committed \$5 million to develop a business case for the Brisbane Live proposal, which includes a 17,000 seat arena, similar to the LA Live complex. A CBD-located entertainment centre, such as the Brisbane Live proposal, would be a replacement for the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, and therefore there was little requirement for the Taskforce to closely consider the future of the Brisbane Entertainment Centre. If the Brisbane Live proposal did not proceed, an alternative replacement investment in a new entertainment centre would be required.

Finding 11.9

The Queensland Government has committed \$5 million to develop a business case for the Brisbane Live proposal. If a similar proposal is not to proceed, an alternative replacement investment for a new entertainment centre in Brisbane would be required.

To replicate the existing events held at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, any new entertainment centre in Brisbane would likely be declared as a major sports facility under the MSF Act. If this occurs, responsibility for the venue would then rest with SQ. The capital cost to construct a Brisbane Entertainment Centre replacement will be significant and there is potential for the State to be the primary funder of capital costs.

Future Use of Brisbane Entertainment Centre Site

If the Brisbane Entertainment Centre was replaced through the construction of a new entertainment centre in Brisbane, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre as an entertainment centre becomes surplus to SQ requirements. The Taskforce understands there would be continual need for the community sports hall facility. A standalone community sports hall would not meet required definitions under the MSF Act to be managed by SQ. It would be logical for this component of the Brisbane Entertainment Centre site to be transferred from SQ to the Queensland Government.



11.8 Queensland Tennis Centre

The Queensland Tennis Centre is leased to Tennis Queensland on a long term agreement with responsibilities for the asset and revenue surplus shared between Tennis Queensland and SQ. The venue hosts the successful Brisbane International tennis tournament annually and the Taskforce understands there is a mutually shared view that the venue's management approach works well for both parties.

To increase the viability of the Queensland Tennis Centre, Tennis Queensland is seeking to host additional, non-tennis events at the venue.

The lease between SQ and Tennis Queensland reflects the terms of the Queensland Government agreement with Mirvac to protect the amenity of the residential development adjacent to the Queensland Tennis Centre and built as part of the Queensland Tennis Centre's Public-Private-Partnership approach. Under the lease are conditions that do not allow the venue to specifically host rock concerts and regular non-tennis events.

The Queensland Tennis Centre was developed as part of the Tennyson Riverside Development with residential properties immediately adjacent. It is understood that the lease conditions mirrored the State's development agreement with Mirvac, which were established to limit the impact of the Queensland Tennis Centre on the Mirvac development.

The open aired design of the Queensland Tennis Centre would not likely be suitable to rock concerts but is suitable to host other types of non-tennis and low-impact events. Noting this, Tennis Queensland should pursue other compatible venue uses to help increase utilisation and viability within the parameters of the existing Development Agreement.



Future Capital Enhancements

As the venue was opened in 2009, it is in very good condition, with no significant asset replacement works required (outside of planned court surfaces), for at least 10 years. However, from a tennis perspective, there is interest in expanding the capacity of the venue to accommodate the Brisbane International tournament which has grown significantly since the inaugural event in 2010. Since the approval of the Queensland Tennis Centre, there has been land immediately to the east of the venue that has been quarantined from other development (a Transit Oriented Development is occurring immediately adjacent to the Queensland Tennis Centre) for the future expansion. The Taskforce understands Tennis Queensland views the future expansion as including a second undercover show-court with a capacity of over 2,000 along with other outdoor courts and facilities.

The Taskforce views the opportunity to incorporate other indoor activities such as non-tennis sport events or rock concerts will be limited in a venue such as this, so the primary use would likely relate to tennis and low-impact activities. The contract to host the Brisbane International expires in 2020 and Tennis Australia and TEQ are negotiating the future of major tennis events at the Queensland Tennis Centre. The State supported the development of the Queensland Tennis Centre on the commitment of regular major tennis events being held at the venue and this should be included in any consideration the State gives to supporting the expansion of the Queensland Tennis Centre.

Finding 11.10

The Queensland Tennis Centre was opened in 2009 and is in very good condition, with no significant asset replacement works required (outside of planned court surfaces), for at least 10 years.

Recommendation 11.3

Any expansion or upgrade of the Queensland Tennis Centre should be carefully considered by Stadiums Queensland and the Queensland Government in alignment with the proposed stadium decision making framework.

11.9 Sleeman Sports Complex

The Sleeman Sports Complex was transferred to SQ from the Brisbane City Council in 2002. Sleeman Sports Complex is one of two venues within the SQ portfolio that is used predominantly for community participation and elite athlete development, training and competition purposes.

The site has extensive infrastructure which also includes the Chandler Indoor Arena, Chandler Theatre, Queensland State Gymnastics Training Centre, Dry Diving Training Hall, State Weightlifting Facility and Chandler Lodge and Cabins. SQ has done extensive maintenance and improvements on all of the venues, but the majority of them are ageing and will continue to need minor investment to continue to deliver the current benefits and the site overall has a significant depreciation value attached to it.

This means that the venue typically operates at a loss due to its (largely) ageing and extensive infrastructure on site and the subsidised and non-commercial utilisation patterns. Unlike the other community facility, the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre, Sleeman Sports Complex does not host profitable major events (ie. concerts) and therefore it is a financial drain on SQ in an accounting sense. However, the venue has over 700,000 users per annum and delivers significant benefit to the Queensland community. The venue has seen significant one-off capital funding provided to it by the Queensland Government in recent years in order to deliver a national-standard BMX track, a second 50 metre pool at the Brisbane Aquatic Centre and the Anna Meares Velodrome which hosted the 2018 Commonwealth Games track cycling events.

Finding 11.11

The Sleeman Sports Complex is a significant contributor to Queensland community participation and elite athlete development outcomes. Recent infrastructure investment has confirmed its long term future, however the cost of managing the venue is increasing due to the age and expanse of facilities and subsidised utilisation.



Future Land Use Opportunities

One on-site facility that is now largely surplus to SQ and user requirements is the outdoor velodrome which has been replaced by the Anna Mearns Velodrome located elsewhere on site. This site presents a potential future opportunity for SQ to demolish the outdoor velodrome facility built for the 1982 Commonwealth Games and to utilise the site for commercialisation opportunities to introduce new revenue generating streams to the site, or to develop additional sporting facilities if SQ or Government determines a need to fund and construct a new facility.

Finding 11.12

Surplus land is available at Sleeman Sports Complex as a result of the planned decommissioning of the old velodrome that has reached the end of its useful life. Opportunities exist to develop additional sporting facilities or commercial opportunities that could reduce the operating deficit of Stadiums Queensland.

Recommendation 11.4

Stadiums Queensland explore commercial and or facility development options for surplus land including the old velodrome site at the Sleeman Sports Complex, noting that this development would require State capital funding.



11.10 Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre

The Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre was transferred to SQ from the Brisbane City Council in 2002. The Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre is one of two venues within the SQ portfolio that is used predominantly for community participation and elite athlete development, training and competition purposes. This means that the venue typically operates at a loss due to its (largely) ageing and extensive infrastructure on site and the subsidised and non-commercial utilisation patterns. Unlike the other community facility, Sleeman Sports Complex, the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre hosts occasional profitable major events (i.e. concerts) and therefore is a smaller financial drain on SQ in an accounting sense. The venue can have over 300,000 users in a year and delivers significant benefit to the Queensland community. The venue has seen significant one-off capital funding provided to it by the Queensland Government in recent years, including the Queensland State Netball Centre and the Queensland Academy of Sport Aquatic Recovery Centre which is helping the venue, in combination with the Brisbane Aquatic Centre, become the home of elite swimming in Australia. Additionally, SQ has been able to fund the full replacement of the two international-standard athletics tracks on site which now affords the venue the title of being the only location in Australia with two, 10-lane IAAF tracks.

Future Capital Enhancements

With the above mentioned developments and improvements, particularly the soon to be completed Queensland State Netball Centre, the long-term future of the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre as a major sport facility in Queensland is assured. However, there are still ageing assets on site, such as the western stand which was built for the 1982 Commonwealth Games and the main stadium's north, east and south aluminium grandstands which were originally installed as temporary stands for the Commonwealth Games. There is strong potential to continue and enhance the good outcomes for community use and elite athlete development that the venue currently delivers through ongoing enhancement and refurbishment of the site, including the development of contemporary facilities and office accommodation for an expanded sports house model.

The temporary grandstands are able to be retained but with a significant maintenance cost. The amount of events that utilise them (concerts and major entertainment events) is reducing over time as a result of better options at Suncorp Stadium and the expanding of the Gabba for one-off major events.

Finding 11.13

The number of major events that use all stands in the main stadium at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre are reducing over time as a result of better options being available at Suncorp Stadium and the expanding of the Gabba for one-off major events. The temporary aluminium grandstands at either end of the main stadium were built for the 1982 Commonwealth Games. The cost of maintaining these stands is inconsistent with the amount of use they receive for one-off major events.

Removal of surplus aluminium stands surrounding the main stadium oval at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre would open up the site to significantly improve site accessibility and circulation as well as providing additional space for future development of additional sporting facilities to support community participation or elite athlete development. The introduction of new space for development at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre could also be used for commercial initiatives that are compatible to the existing Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre utilisation while contributing to a reduced SQ operating deficit.

Finding 11.14

Removing the temporary grandstands would open up the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre site and allow for future further development of the site including potential commercial developments that could be used to reduce Stadiums Queensland deficit.

The Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre western stand is a mix-use facility with a significant indoor footprint that is the administrative and training headquarters of the Queensland Academy of Sport and contains high performance training spaces, gymnasium and an indoor sports hall. The stand also houses numerous community sport and recreation office tenancies (eg. Athletics Queensland, Little Athletics Queensland) as well as multiple function spaces that SQ is able to hire and utilise in support of major events such as concerts and national athletics championships.

Recommendation 11.5

Stadiums Queensland undertake a cost benefit analysis of retaining the existing temporary aluminium stands at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre. The stands should be removed if it is beneficial to the State or Stadiums Queensland to do so.



11.11 Playing Surfaces

SQ places a significant priority and focus on the development and maintenance of its grass playing surfaces. SQ retains ground maintenance staff in-house and closely manages the event timetable to provide the surfaces appropriate time to recover from periods of heavy use.

Finding 11.15

The playing surfaces for all Stadiums Queensland stadiums is generally considered excellent including the surface of Suncorp Stadium for the summer football seasons and is comparable in quality to that offered in similar venues in other states.

11.12 Sporting High Performance Centres

With respect to high performance centres within Queensland, such as Bupa National Cricket Centre, detailed consideration of these facilities is not in scope of this Final Report. However, the Taskforce is aware that many sporting codes are in regular contact with the relevant Minister in regards to their high performance facility needs through the development of a Queensland Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.

11.13 Ballymore

Ballymore is a rectangular stadium facility located in inner-Brisbane which is the spiritual home of rugby union in Queensland and is owned and operated by Queensland Rugby Union (QRU) under a deed of grant in trust (DOGIT), which was provided in 1973. Prior to the redevelopment of Suncorp Stadium, Ballymore was the host venue of Wallabies internationals and Queensland Reds matches. Ballymore had a capacity of 25,000 at that time and its current capacity is 18,000. It is noted that current use of the venue rarely approaches capacity due to the aging state of the facility.

The venue hosts the administration and training headquarters of the Queensland Reds and QRUs programs and has been the training venue for the Queensland Roar A-League sides. The Ballymore site, as it is currently constituted, is a relatively high cost venue, with the Taskforce understanding maintenance requirements are high for the QRU.

Finding 11.16

The Ballymore venue maintenance and operational costs are increasing and the asset is continuing to degrade with an annual net loss of \$1.5 million.

Ballymore as a Major Events Venue

The Taskforce is aware of the venue's history which includes obtaining Development Approval from Brisbane City Council for National Rugby Academy. The Development Approval includes scope to return the stadium asset to a functional major event venue.

Finding 11.17

The Queensland Rugby Union has a development approval to build a 24,000-seat stadium at Ballymore.

As a major event destination, the Ballymore site does not meet contemporary standards that the Taskforce has identified as preferred for major sports facility development in Queensland, as it is land locked, located in a residential neighbourhood and has limited potential for high frequency and multi-modal public transport. Further to those constraints, to bring the infrastructure on-site up to modern standards would require a significant capital investment that would not alleviate the underlying location issues the site contains.

The Taskforce recommends the Ballymore site should remain as a Tier 3 stadium and not be considered a major stadium facility (eg. Tier 1 or 2 under the Queensland venue responsibility matrix), either now or into the future.

Finding 11.18

The Ballymore venue is not ideal as a location for a major stadium facility as it does not meet contemporary standards for a major stadium facility including, limited road access to the site, close proximity to the residential neighbourhood and no access to scheduled high frequency and multi-modal public transport. The Ballymore venue is more aligned to being a training, club participation and administrative hub for rugby and compatible sports as opposed to being a location for a major stadium.

Recommendation 11.6

The Queensland Government to continue talks with Queensland Rugby Union around the intended future scope of the Ballymore site, in-particular the scale of developments to help fund the development of a sport and community centre. Consideration should also be given to any limitations that result from the current conditions of the Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT).

QRU Ballymore Vision

The QRU has a contemporary vision for the future configuration of Ballymore, which is to redevelop the site into a National Rugby Training Centre with particular emphasis on Rugby 7s. The Taskforce considers this a more palatable and appropriate future use of the Ballymore site as it more aligns with being a training and local use facility in the longer term. It is a central location in Brisbane which is attractive to training camps, sport specific expertise, local and regional competition and administrative bases. However, there is still a significant potential cost associated with this vision for the site.

Finding 11.19

To help fund the Ballymore redevelopment, the Queensland Rugby Union has a preference to unlock some of the land value on the site through residential and commercial development sympathetic with the local area, while retaining a majority use of the precinct for sport and recreation.

To enable the proposed associated residential or commercial development on parts of the Ballymore site, the QRU would seek ability to utilise parts of the land parcel that are currently controlled through the DOGIT.

To further minimise ongoing and capital costs for any future refurbishing of the site, the Taskforce recommends the QRU seek ways to minimise ongoing and redevelopment costs, such as demolishing ageing stands on site and containing the main oval to a community and training venue with capacity for small, community matches.

Recommendation 11.7

That the current Ballymore grandstands be demolished and a community facility be constructed that caters to training and local community rugby union matches.



11.14 Boutique Stadium

For the purposes of this report, a boutique stadium refers to the introduction of a State-funded and/or owned stadium that is located within the greater Brisbane region that has a capacity up to around half of the existing capacity of the Gabba (oval) and Suncorp Stadium (rectangular). Publicly, this has been proposed by sporting codes to host events that do not require the large capacities of the existing Brisbane SQ venues. The Taskforce has consulted with all key stakeholders that hire SQ stadiums in south east Queensland as well as governing bodies that would be key decision makers and drivers for the perceived need for a boutique stadium in the greater Brisbane region.

Finding 10.5 above identifies it is more fiscally responsible and viable for the State to maximise the utilisation of SQ's existing major sporting venues instead of constructing, managing and operating new assets.

Section 9 of this Final Report identified that SQ operates at a deficit, the addition of another asset would likely further deteriorate this position particularly without significant new income-generating content. Finding 10.1 of this Final Report also identified that the five stadium assets within the SQ portfolio, including Suncorp Stadium and the Gabba, have capacity to host additional regular and one-off major event content. The potential view that a boutique stadium may attract new concert and entertainment events to Brisbane is potentially a false economy argument as Brisbane is already well serviced for major concert events between Suncorp Stadium, the Gabba, the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, Sirromet Winery, the RNA Showgrounds and Brisbane City Council's Riverstage.

Finding 11.20

Capacity is available within the existing Stadiums Queensland portfolio, and other existing venues around Brisbane, to facilitate additional entertainment content. There is also more than adequate unused capacity at Suncorp Stadium and the Gabba to host additional regular or one-off sporting events.



Rectangular Boutique Stadium

The Taskforce has not identified a current or foreseeable future need for any new stadium or major sports facilities in Queensland. This would include a boutique rectangular stadium in the Brisbane region for the following reasons:

- » Suncorp Stadium has capacity to accommodate additional content,
- » there is currently no new or additional content at the major sporting event level that is likely to be attracted to Queensland based on the development of a new venue,
- » the clean stadium policy hire agreements in place for Suncorp Stadium allows for the hosting of events that have less than 10,000 patrons with reduced hire fees (as they are usually a percentage of ticket sales), and
- » event day costs for venue hirers that are controlled by the Queensland Government (police, public transport and traffic management) should be reduced once recommendations of the Taskforce's Interim Report and this Final Report are implemented.

Finding 11.21

Capacity is available within the existing Stadiums Queensland portfolio at Suncorp Stadium to cater for additional content including multi-year anchor tenants. Any increase in operating costs incurred to accommodate additional content would be exponentially less than the cost of developing and operating a new venue.



Oval Boutique Stadium

The Taskforce has not identified a current or foreseeable future need for a boutique oval stadium in the Brisbane region. This is primarily due to two reasons:

- » the Gabba has capacity to accommodate major sporting events requiring oval stadiums, and
- » there are already plans and proposals to construct a boutique stadium in Springfield by AFL Queensland and the Brisbane Lions that will accommodate the Brisbane Lions training needs as well as be a competition venue for smaller matches such as Brisbane Lions WAFL matches.

The AFL-preferred Springfield boutique stadium proposal requires \$30 million in capital funding to be realised, with the proponents seeking matching \$15 million commitments from the State (committed in the 2018/19 budget) and Federal Governments. The Taskforce understands the Queensland Government has confirmed it will match any Federal Government funding towards the facility up to \$15 million. If this facility proceeds, between the Gabba, Metricon Stadium and this venue, the AFL event day needs of south east Queensland will be met.

In regards to cricket, the Gabba and Allan Border Field (the existing boutique cricket venue in Brisbane) have capacity to accommodate additional match days. Cricket Australia and Queensland Cricket have plans for upgrades to Allan Border Field. The Taskforce understands a request for funding has been submitted to the Queensland Government. Any future upgrade of Allan Border Field, would likely lead to the relocation of some Sheffield Shield matches (annual matches in February to April post-Big Bash League season) from the Gabba to this venue.

Finding 11.22

Capacity is available within the existing Stadiums Queensland portfolio at the Gabba to cater for additional content including multi-year anchor tenants. Any increase in operating costs incurred to accommodate additional content would be exponentially less than the cost of developing and operating a new venue.

Recommendation 11.8

There is no current need for additional stadiums, either major or boutique, in Brisbane because there is current capacity for additional content within the existing venues that are managed by Stadiums Queensland and other existing operators.