

Launceston Tennis, Community and Events Centre

Project Summary – April 2019



1. The Launceston Regional Tennis Centre – Current Status

The LTRC consists of nine hard courts and two synthetic clay courts (all flood-lit for night-time play) and has stadium seating for 330 people. The centre currently services nearly 19,000 participants per annum. The participants comprise club members, social players, public casual players, coaching students, competition, school children and teachers, tournament entrants and a few other small user groups. It is managed by Tennis Tasmania.

- Centre management currently operates from a shipping container and hires in significant amounts of temporary infrastructure for international tennis events such as the Launceston International.
- The LTRC has minimal facilities for members, casual players and no tournament operations, meeting or media spaces.
- The facility is located in Launceston’s major sports precinct - the Elphin Sports Precinct and Indoor Centre, which includes cricket, soccer, AFL and basketball/badminton facilities. The precinct does not contain a permanent pavilion, changing space (male and female) or administration hub and are inadequate to support high levels of shared use and community access

2. Proposed Launceston Tennis, Community and Events Centre

Tennis Tasmania and Tennis Australia consider that the development of the Launceston Tennis, Community and Event Centre (LTCEC), which includes a multi-functional event operation and community facility, will meet the current and future needs of one of Australia’s leading regional tennis precincts. It will provide facilities that would enable new partnerships with community groups and organisations. It will also deliver significant social benefits and sustainable, positive economic outcomes over a significant period.

- The proposed LTCEC will include new multi-purpose community spaces and provide the current world class playing facility with greater capacity to successfully attract and operate elite tennis events, serve community tennis and provide for additional sport and community needs.
- The proposed development incorporates a two-level events operation and community facility which includes:
 - Participant facilities, office space, event operations and shared community use areas
 - Function space for internal and external use, meeting spaces and shared community areas
 - Dedicated female and DDA compliant change facilities
 - Pro-shop and café/kitchen
 - Physiotherapy and other allied health consult rooms
 - Undercover viewing deck to Centre Court and Show Court 4
 - Innovations such as Book A Court – remote court booking and automated facility access

3. Social and Economic Benefits

The project strongly aligns with many national, State and local policies including Tennis Australia's Facility Development and Management Framework – Tennis 2020, Tennis Tasmania's Facilities Strategy 2015 – 2020, Greater Launceston Plan (City of Launceston and neighbouring LGAs, Tasmanian Government, Federal Government), City of Launceston's Vision 2020.

- The LRTC is currently is a leading Australian tennis and events venue – attracting international, national and state level tennis events that generate significant benefit for the region's visitor economy. However, the inadequate tournament infrastructure means that these events are constantly under threat of being lost to alternative regional centres that have better facilities and high levels of recent investment, such as Bendigo (VIC), Marrara (NT) and Blacktown (NSW).

Event Impact

- The Launceston International, commencing after the Australian Open, is the precinct's signature event. The event attracts just under 150 players (many in the top 100) – with 97% originating from interstate and internationally. The event requires approximately 50 staff and officials – again mostly from interstate and internationally.
- This event directly follows the Burnie International which prompts movement amongst visitors to Tasmania travelling from Burnie to Launceston. Both events benefit from being back-to-back, providing quality opportunities for players who are often coming direct from the Australian Open. This creates exponential economic benefits to Tasmania and the regions.
- Based on an assessment of the attending players and staff, with an average stay of 75% of the total event days, there were 1063 accommodation nights occupied in Launceston resulting from the event. As the event runs off the back of the Australian Open, the players are often travelling in large groups, with coaching and support resources, other friends and family. Furthermore, in 2017 more than 2000 spectators also attended the tournament.
- The LTCEC also plays host to numerous other tournaments year-round, where players are competing for Australian Ranking points. These include Australian Money Tournament (Gold / highest tier of sanction), three Junior Tournaments and a range of Junior Development Series, Seniors 35+ and Hot Shots run events that engage the developing players and those seeking competitive experience.
- The development of the LTCEC would ensure retention of these events and have the potential to attract other future leading tennis events.

Economic impact

Economic impact analysis conducted by REMPLAN demonstrates the following key outcomes from LTCEC construction and operation:

- Visitor expenditure generated by the key events currently held at the LTCEC is estimated to be over \$2.125m per annum and expenditure by visitors at the key events supports up to 23 jobs in Launceston.
- The majority (70%) of this visitor expenditure is generated by spectators. However, players travelling with their player support entourage generate more than \$561,000 from the four key events alone.
- REMPLAN also estimated that the total output generated in the economy of Launceston, including all direct, industrial and consumption effects, is estimated at up to \$3.901 million.
- This is estimated to support 15 direct jobs in accommodation and food services and retail trade. The construction phase of the LTCEC is expected to generate the following economic benefits for the economy of Northern Tasmania (with flow on effects)
 - Output – Gross turnover of \$8.835 million
 - Employment – Supporting an additional 27 short-term local jobs
 - Value-Added - \$3.208 million of value-added.
- The operational phase of the LTCEC will support up to 15 direct jobs in the region.

Community Partnerships

- Tennis Tasmania (TT) will take a partnership approach to community development through the LTCEC. It is currently actively engaging with local community stakeholders such as schools, community organisations, the Elphin Sports Centre, the University of Tasmania and others to develop relationships that will work for the community and for tennis. TT intend to engage in partnerships that provide year-round social benefit, that engage youth and serve all ages, genders and abilities.
- Cycling Tasmania has also committed ‘in principle’ in relation to shared administration use of the facilities, access to function space and a partnership for the future participation growth of both sports in Northern Tasmania.

4. Operation and Management Model

Tennis World management

- Tennis World is a business unit of Tennis Australia that delivers industry leading facility management. Tennis World has management responsibility for Melbourne Park tennis courts and the Australian National Tennis Centre (VIC), Albert Reserve Tennis Centre (VIC), Sydney Olympic Park (NSW), Canberra Tennis Centre (ACT) and Millswood Tennis Centre (SA). Management of these venues allows Tennis World to implement business strategies and operations that are deemed as 'best practice' and lead successful implementation and operation of key strategies for the long-term future and development of the sport.
- Through the proposed LTCEC the opportunities for a professionally managed service experience at the site will support a sustainable business model. The newly developed site will benefit from the Tennis World management model as part of the Tennis Australia business unit designed to deliver industry leading programs and services within the community.
- Establishing the Tennis World model within the site provides opportunities within the Launceston community to engage in proactive healthy activity in a variety of programs catering for all genders, ages and abilities. This allows the project to delivery high level outcomes including employment opportunities, community activity and health benefits and the most sustainable platform for the long-term success of the sport.

Tennis World and Tennis Tasmania

- Tennis Tasmania and Tennis World have the opportunity to deliver best practice venue management, programs, systems and procedures at the LTCEC. This partnership will help to raise the standard of tennis delivery across the state through the success of a proven and professional management model that has the capacity to educate and support other tennis operations and operators (clubs and volunteers) while actively engaging with the community and encouraging tennis participation in a range of programs and initiatives designed to grow the sport of tennis.
- Tennis Tasmania would benefit from having the tennis operations at the site driven by Tennis World which allows TTAS resources to be allocated and focussed on servicing tennis across the territory. The LTCEC would benefit from efficiencies in Tennis World centralised support structures in administration, marketing, quality assurance and partnership opportunities through suppliers and, where appropriate, sponsorship.