



QCBC Newsletter – October 2026

From the Editor

Welcome to this special edition of the QCBC newsletter. The newsletter is different in that it is shorter and is published as an extra edition. The decision to offer this special edition was as a follow up to the September newsletter considering the upcoming AGM (October 24th). In the September newsletter, and at a special members meeting, there were two quite topical matters that seemed to need a bit more space. One was the possible unification with Brisbane Bridge Centre, and the other was possible relocation and/or development of our existing Club at 67 Ipswich Road, Woolloongabba. In the September newsletter I invited members to submit letters to the editor. I promised that I would send any letters on to the Board for their response. Two letters were received: one is published below and the other is not (because it was anonymous).

Kathleen Fahy

Letter to the Editor: Does QCBC need to move soon?

For over 2 years, the Board has been trying to understand how the high level of property development activity in the area, particularly given declaration of the Woolloongabba Priority Development Area (PDA) in 2023, will impact on us. (Annual report QCBC AGM 2023-24). Do we have a clear idea of what, if anything, we need to do to stay in our current home?

It is reassuring to know that the Board will not proceed with any offer without presenting it to members for a vote (260729 Email from QCBC President: Member Update – July 26). However, it would be very useful and constructive for the Board to share the information gathered, offers received and responses with members in real time. A more transparent and collaborative approach, informed by the experience of the membership, is a way to try to find solutions that are in the best interest of the members.

The Board has given the following three reasons for why we may need to move soon:

1. Disruption from construction on adjacent sites

Any central location for our bridge club, (particularly if sited close to public transport) risks disruption from building noise. Is the potential of future noise a good reason to change locations?

During any development, the law requires that traffic access must be maintained. The Contractor for the building project would be responsible for managing the traffic, so minimal disruption to us.

2. Rising Costs

The Board has made it clear that costs are going up, but is this forcing us to move? What options might we have to supplement our income? The Club signed a 20-year lease with Bishopp in 2024, locking in a rental income (Annual Report 2023-24 AGM). Are there any further rental (e.g. chess club) opportunities?

3. Resumption

The Board has expressed a concern that our club may be resumed prior to the 2032 Olympic Games. Under Queensland's Acquisition of Land Act 1967, the government can only resume private land for a recognized public purpose. The process requires a legal justification, fair compensation, and a formal 'Notice of Intention to Resume'.

However, now that the Olympic Stadium is moving to Victoria Park, our land has been rezoned as Precinct 3 for mixed-use development of 25 plus stories. This has significantly increased the value of our property. If the government really wanted to resume the property it would have made more sense to go ahead with the resumption before re-zoning which is the cause of the massive increase in land value.

In the unlikely case that the Bridge Club was ever resumed, it may even be financially preferable to a private sale. This is because, in addition to the market value paid for the property, the Club would also receive compensation. Such compensation would likely include removal expenses, legal costs, stamp duty for a replacement property, reimbursement of costs incurred in negotiating the resumption and compensation for any interruption to the running of the club.

Is it a good idea to be moving now?

My understanding is that the overwhelming preference of the members is to remain where we are. **This could be confirmed by a survey of members.** Whilst acknowledging that the Board will consult with members before having a plan to sell the club, it is disturbing that idea of moving from our current home is presented, by the Board, as an ‘opportunity,’ as opposed to a potential threat to member well-being (*QCBC Newsletter*, June 2026). Chasing options, when we all agree that we are very well-served by our current home, risks becoming an ongoing drain of our time and resources.

In the near future, we will see massive delays and cost blow outs on competing projects. In the lead up to the 2032 Olympic Games and the commencement of major infrastructure projects the property market is rapidly changing.

The Board’s *Assessment of Options* indicates the most favoured option for a club in this position is to ‘monetise its land asset’ in a deal with developers to occupy space in a future ‘mixed-use tower’ (*QCBC Newsletter*, June 2026).

This is a **high-risk** option for many reasons including the following:

- Queensland is facing a peak construction labour shortage of between 35,000 and 50,000 workers alongside serious material supply disruptions ahead of the 2032 Olympic Games. These shortages will drive up costs and cause delays (Construction Skills Queensland: Imagining Queensland’s Future Construction Workforce, 2026).
- If the developer, or builder, goes bankrupt or enters administration before completion, we are left with no building and no capital in the short and possibly longer term. Building is already a high-risk business with a record 3,490 construction companies bankrupted in 2024-25 (<https://theconversation.com/housing-construction-costs-are-already-rising-increasing-risks-of-builders-going-bust-279329>).
- Escalating build costs and delays can lead to unanticipated costs which we may not be able to afford such as market rent.
- The space delivered to us by the developer may not be quite what we expected, may require expensive fitout and running costs may be far higher than we expected and can afford.
- More complex and expensive maintenance costs, insurance premiums, unexpected expenditures such as leaking roof, lift repairs etc for the building complex including common spaces.
- Usually, the low rent associated with such development deals jumps to the commercial market rate after several years. Market rent would be unaffordable for the Bridge Club.
- Tax implications - Capital Gains Tax (CGT)? GST?
- We are lucky to have in the order of 50 car parking spaces. It is doubtful that we can achieve this number on another site in a comparable location. A balance between the number of carparking spaces and the amount of floor space provided is a big factor for developers determining the financial viability of commercial and residential development. 50 car spaces to be set aside for a Bridge Club; for example, is enough to meet the parking requirements for over 40 x 2-bedroom apartments.
- It is highly unlikely that we could find a location as good as what we have now. The assumption that *the PDA's active ground-floor requirements effectively incentivise developers to include it* is questionable, for example, the PDA Precinct 3 zoning does not include community use (although we retain existing use rights in our current premises).
- At the ‘QCBC & BBC Coming Together’ meeting (21 Aug 2026), the Board presented an option to redevelop the BBC property to meet our future needs. This carries high risks in terms of cost, security of tenure and satisfaction of

members. We would be trading our current home, a freehold asset, for an investment in council-owned premises with a standard lease term of 4 years. The other purpose mentioned for a 'unified site' is the use of the BBC premises as a temporary home while we wait for our new club to be built by a developer. This would involve considerable costs (that would never be recovered) to upgrade to a suitable standard.

We won't get a new Club for free. If we trade our current club in a deal with a developer, our asset will be gone and we will face ongoing, and unknown, costs and a much-reduced income earning potential. If the Board wants to continue along the path of selling our club and location then, before proceeding any further, **I urge that members be surveyed to be sure that members agree.**

Marci Webster-Mannison

Board Response to the above Open Letter to the QCBC Board

Thank you for taking the time to put forward your views and for raising several issues for consideration by the Board and the wider membership.

The Board recognises that our current premises are highly valued by members, and in a perfect world we would simply stay here, however it is prudent for the Board to periodically consider the Club's future property arrangements and any risks to the status quo. This consideration needs to be approached carefully, with the interests of members and the long-term sustainability of QCBC at the centre of the process.

As outlined in the September newsletter, the Board is currently undertaking an exploration and evaluation of property options. No decision has been made to sell the Club's property or to relocate, and no such decision will be made without appropriate consideration of the interests of members and, ultimately, a mandate from members.

The purpose of the current process is therefore not to advocate for a particular outcome, but to ensure that QCBC understands its position and the alternatives available to it should circumstances change or an opportunity arise. This includes considering the option of remaining where we are, as well as viable alternative arrangements and development opportunities. The Property Working Group is examining these matters from financial, planning, taxation, operational and member-impact perspectives.

There is, however, an important practical limitation on how much information can be shared while this work is underway. Expressions of interest, proposals and submissions received from potential purchasers, developers or other parties are commercial-in-confidence. They cannot appropriately be circulated more widely while discussions and assessment are continuing. Protecting that confidentiality is important both to QCBC and to maintaining the Club's ability to assess opportunities objectively and, where appropriate, negotiate from a position of strength.

That does not mean that members will be kept in the dark. If, and when, the Board reaches a sufficiently clear position on any material proposal or direction, the matter will be brought to members with the appropriate information and opportunity for consideration. Any proposal involving a fundamental change to the Club's property or location would require the appropriate member involvement and approval.

In the meantime, any member who would like greater visibility of the work being undertaken, or who has relevant experience, expertise or ideas that could assist in the qualification and assessment of property options, is very welcome to join and contribute to the Property Working Group.

Constructive involvement from members is valuable, and the Board welcomes it. The objective remains the same: to protect the Club, preserve what members value about QCBC, and ensure that any decision about our property is made based on sound information and in the long-term interests of the Club and its members. Thank you again for contributing to the discussion.

Sameer Pandya
Property workgroup leader

UPDATE FROM THE BOARD

Energy Retailer

The Board continues to look for practical ways to reduce the Club's operating costs and make every dollar work harder for members. A significant amount of work has recently gone into reviewing our electricity arrangements, including the revenue we receive from the digital signage (Bishopp) outside our facility and the frankly disappointing returns from our solar feed-in tariff.

Following this review, we have moved to a new retailer - Origin Energy, which we conservatively expect will improve the Club's bottom line by at least \$6,000 a year. The next step is to investigate a battery installation, taking advantage of the current government rebates. This should enable us to make better use of our solar generation, and importantly, reduce our electricity purchases during the more expensive evening peak periods through the battery.

Council Rates

Another area where the Board has been working diligently is with our Council rates. Over the past six years, the Club's rates have increased by a substantial 74.80%. We believe it is important that we make our case directly to Council, particularly given the community role the Club plays and the nature of our organisation. After considerable research and preparation, the Board has now formally written to the Lord Mayor of Brisbane seeking rate relief, supported by detailed information and a carefully considered rationale. There is no guarantee of the outcome, but we believe it is important that we make the strongest possible case on behalf of the Club. We will keep members updated as we receive a response and the matter progresses.

It's AGM season

It's not as exciting and emotional as the footy finals season, we grant you, but it is the AGM which is an important occasion for the Club. This year, the AGM is on Saturday 24th October; at 12 noon. We will put on light refreshments and, in a blatant attempt to make it appealing for you to turn up at the AGM, there is a red point session straight afterwards. The finance report is loaded into the website so you can see how we're going (pretty good result this year). I'm also preparing an Annual Report which will be on the website shortly.

At the AGM we will hit the highlights of the annual reports, and you'll vote in the new Board. Because of an unusual feature of QCBC's Memorandum and Articles (aka constitution), 6 of the 7 Board positions are declared vacant this year. Five Board members are re-nominating, so we need at least one more nomination. If you know a member who could be a good candidate, please encourage them to nominate. If you are interested in nominating, feel free to talk to me, or any board member, about what's involved. We'd love to talk with you. If there is more than one new nomination you, the members, will vote and make the decisions.

Of course, one of the most important components of the AGM is to give members the opportunity to ask questions of the Board. It's all about accountability and your participation is highly valued.

Annette Hogan and Sameer Pandya