

# appendix 6 – Preliminary Client Brief

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CAIRNS  
Cultural Precinct  
Cairns Regional Council

*A Place for Everyone*

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**CAIRNS CULTURAL PRECINCT**

**PRELIMINARY CLIENT PROJECT BRIEF**

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Issue v1: 1 March 2011

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### *Disclaimer*

*All information in this Preliminary Client Project Brief is provided to the best of Council's knowledge as at March 2011, however will be subject to change as the Cultural Precinct project develops through the masterplanning, design, statutory approval and construction phases. This preliminary brief will be developed into a final client project brief during the early phases of the project, in response to the developing concept design and with input from the architect and other members of the design team. Proponents preparing submissions for tenders and others intending to make commercial decisions in relation to the Cultural Precinct project should make their own inquiries to verify the accuracy and relevance of supporting documentation at the relevant time.*

**DATE OF ISSUE:** 1 March 2011

**Author:** Linda Cardew, Cultural Precinct Project Manager

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## ATTACHMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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1. **ATTACHMENTS FORMING PART OF THE PRELIMINARY CLIENT PROJECT BRIEF** *(Note: drafts may be subject to change)*
  - 1.1 Cairns Cultural Precinct – Outline Theatre Design Brief (Draft)  
Marshall Day Entertech (Feb 2011)
  - 1.2 Cairns Cultural Precinct – Outline Acoustic Design Brief (Draft)  
Acoustic Studio (Feb 2011)
  - 1.3 The Cairns Regional Museum Exhibitions and Public Programs Concepts Interpretation - Report to inform the Architectural Masterplan Design Brief (Draft)  
Queensland Museum (Feb 2011)
  
2. **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY**  
*(Note: All documents listed have been included for completeness on the CD issued as Part 7 of the Tender. Documents marked \* have been issued previously as part of the EOI).*  
  
Cairns Cultural Precinct Collateral\*
  - 2.1 Cairns Cultural Precinct Brochure – DL (Factsheet)
  - 2.2 Cairns Cultural Precinct Brochure – A4
  
3. Cairns Regional Council Planning & Policy Documents
  - 3.1 Cultural Plan 2009-2014\*
  - 3.2 Indigenous Employment Strategy 2009-2012\*
  - 3.3 Access & Equity Policy No. 1:06:16
  - 3.4 Cultural Diversity Policy 1:06:17
  - 3.5 Corporate Plan 2009-2014
  
4. Cairns Cultural Precinct Concept Planning Report\*  
Architectus, Total Project Group & Positive Solutions (January 2010)
  
5. Cultural Precinct Development Economic Impact Study\*  
AEC Group (December 2009)
  
6. Cairns Port Authority Cityport White's Shed Building Report\*  
Sinclair Knight Merz (December 1998)
  
7. Cairns Port Authority White's Shed Heritage Matters Status Report\*  
C&B Group (March 2004)
  
8. Cairns Cultural Precinct Buffer Area Issues report  
RPS (December 2010)
  
9. Land Use Plan (complete)\*  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  
10. Land Use Plan General Codes Volume 5  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  
11. Cairns Performing Arts & Cultural Precinct Proposed Site Boundaries\*  
FNQ Ports Corporation Ltd (October 2010)
  
12. Amended site plan "Lease A Plan"  
FNQ Ports Corporation Ltd (Issue 12 January 2011)

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13. Aerial photographs of the Cairns Cultural Precinct Site (x 4)\*  
Cairns Regional Council (2010)
  14. Inundation Map of Proposed Cultural Centre Site  
Cairns Regional Council (October 2010)
  15. Cairns Cultural Precinct Review of Noise Issues  
Ask Consulting Engineers (May 2010)
  16. Stage 3 Contamination Assessment Cityport Precinct 3  
Golder Associates (March 2005) – NOTE this report will be updated in early 2011.
  17. Land Use Plan Volume One – Administrative & Assessment Requirements  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  18. Land Use Plan Volume Two: Cityport Local Area Plan, Plan 3 View Corridors  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  19. Land Use Plan Volume Two – Cityport Local Area Plan, Plan 4 – Major Open Space Areas  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  20. Land Use Plan Volume Two – Cityport Local Area Plan, Plan 5 – Road Network  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  21. Volume Two Cityport Local Area Plan  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  22. Volume Two Cityport Local Area Plan, Plan 1 Precincts  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  23. Volume Two Cityport Local Area Plan, Plan 2 Heritage Area  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  24. Cityport Heritage Precinct Preliminary Proposal  
Cox Rayner Architects with C&B Consulting (October 1999)
  25. City Port South Master Planning Traffic Engineering Report  
GHD (April 2007)
  26. Cityport Development Noise and Air Quality Study  
Ask Consulting Engineers (June 2008)
  27. Volume Three: Seaport Local Area Plan  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  28. Volume Three: Seaport Local Area Plan, Plan 1 Planning Areas  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  29. Volume Three: Seaport Local Area Plan, Plan 2 View Corridors  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  30. Land Use Plan Volume Three – Seaport Local Area Plan, Plan 3 – Road Network  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)
  31. Volume Three: Seaport Local Area Plan, Figure 1 Seaport Local Area  
Cairns Port Authority (November 2006)

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32. Drawings

- 32.1 Traffic Counts  
Cairns Ports (2009)
  
- 32.2 Cityport South Services Drawing 1 of 2  
Cairns Ports (February 2009)
  
- 32.3 Cityport South Services Drawing 2 of 2  
Cairns Ports (February 2009)
  
- 32.4 Aerial Photograph (small)  
Cairns Regional Council (2007)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*“Great cities have great places, and great places are the results of great visions...If you just say you are going to do all of the bread and butter things as well as you can, I think you miss the opportunity to say “how do we take ourselves to the next level? How do we do something truly transformational for a city that has so many incredible opportunities like Cairns does?”*

*...If you live in regional Queensland arts and culture has to be...just as important to liveability as schools and hospitals and roads. It doesn't matter where you live, you should be able to access arts and culture. It's important to who we are, and it shouldn't be that you can only ever see great shows or aspire to seeing a great orchestra if you travel out to bigger centres or capital cities...*

*...Importantly [the Cultural Precinct] provides the opportunity to provide a whole new destination for visitors from other parts of Queensland, Australia and the world.”*

*Premier of Queensland: Anna Bligh (Cairns 2010)*

The Cairns Cultural Precinct project offers a one in 50 year opportunity to shape the public face of the commercial and cultural heart of Far North Queensland. It is more than simply replacing an ageing Civic Theatre, and it is more than providing better cultural facilities for the existing community. The Cultural Precinct project recognises that Cairns, as a major regional centre, plays a critical role in the development and operation of not only far North Queensland, but provides a portal and a vital connection to the Pacific Rim.

The Cultural Precinct project recognises that the strength, viability and growth of a major regional centre is dependent on the ability of the city to provide the suite of facilities and open spaces that support the social and economic well-being of the region. In the past two decades Cairns has emerged as a desirable, exciting, innovative and competitive city. Its population is consistently growing and it has a higher than average proportion of young people. The region has attracted professionals from all disciplines to its tropical lifestyle and it needs to retain and nurture expertise, and the growing expertise of its young community, at all levels. The opening of James Cook University a decade ago has provided opportunities for study in a range of specialised areas including tropical expertise, creative industries and indigenous studies, and facilities are needed to provide support the professional and vocational pathways for graduates. The region's communities are diverse, aspirational and hungry for opportunities.

The beauty of the Wet Tropics environment, and the World Heritage Listed areas of Reef and Rainforest continue to attract large numbers of international and national tourists. Specialists from around the world attend conferences in Cairns, with the city's Convention Centre consistently recognised as one of the best and most desirable in the world. The creative industries employ almost as many people in the region as all sectors of the marine industry, turning over approximately \$300 million a year. The digital economy and technology offers opportunities to now link remote communities, culturally and physically, with performers and artists in the region.

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Far North Queensland also has many stories that need to be told – from the rich cultural history and heritage of the region, to the stories of place-making and the protection of the unique Wet Tropics environment. All residents and visitors, but particularly young indigenous people, organisations involved with the teaching of indigenous and creative studies, need access to information and educational opportunities that a regional Museum, its programming and exhibitions could provide.

In the way of beautiful and much visited waterfront cities around the world, the city of Cairns has entered a new age of maturity, with its development recently acknowledging and responding to the proximity of the working harbour, the marina and the foreshore.

It is in this context that the Cultural Precinct is to be developed. At a fundamental level, the project is about responsible actions of a local government authority in meeting the increasing expectations of the community and legislation regarding the quality of public facilities, accessibility, occupational health and safety, public safety, and the role of strategic town planning in addressing and directing urban development. At a more visionary level, the Cultural Precinct project has the opportunity to identify and respond to the community's future needs, the city's growth, and the region's place and contribution to Australia and its Pacific neighbours.

Through the thoughtful and skilled collaboration of each member of the design team, and through the team's relationship with the community, there will be every opportunity understand the contribution that can be made in these unique circumstances, and to achieve and deliver a truly transformational outcome.

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## **2. WHY THE CULTURAL PRECINCT? Its place in the City and in the Region**

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### **2.1 MEETING CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS**

In 1994 it became apparent that the Cairns Civic Theatre was no longer able to adequately accommodate the community's very diverse needs. After only 20 years, Queensland's first regional theatre suffered from inadequate back of house and front of house facilities, accessibility issues, occupational health and safety issues, and insufficient flexibility. However, despite its many shortcomings, the Civic Theatre has continued to operate for a further 16 years as a venue for professional touring shows, entrepreneurs' productions, and is available for hire by a range of cultural, educational and other users. The theatre is well respected as an established and popular regional theatre venue, but various studies have shown that it is neither cost-effective, nor operationally effective, to close the Civic Theatre for an extended period of time to undertake major refurbishments. It was considered uneconomical to increase the seating capacity in the building and has been generally accepted for at least ten years that a new building would be necessary to meet future demands and standards.

In 2008, after a number of site and design concepts had been considered, and following ongoing user needs consultations and analyses during that decade, the site now known as the Cultural Precinct site became available. Formerly part of the Cairns Port Authority lands, the site was no longer required for strategic Ports uses. Viewed by Ports North as a "buffer zone" lying between the CityPort and the SeaPort precincts, it became apparent that the redevelopment of the site could offer the local and regional resident, visitor and business communities significant opportunities if comprehensively and intelligently planned. The location of the site, adjacent to the Cairns CBD, with its proximity to public transport, parking, retail and commercial facilities, could support patronage from a catchment of 200,000 or more people from across Far Northern Queensland and beyond.

The potential availability of the site meant that Council could create a centrepiece for the city – a public and cultural precinct that would meet the community's cultural needs, but could go that much further, to achieve a development that makes a lasting and valuable contribution to the city and the region. The opportunity to cluster complementary facilities meant that the site could become a catalysts for future growth, supporting regional development and commercial investment to a greater degree than simply providing a performing arts centre.

It was clear that the "do nothing" option, was not a responsible option. Failure to provide accessible public facilities and safe public open space, at least to a standard that met current community needs would effectively deny this important regional centre the opportunity to flourish as a "complete" city. In the absence of suitable facilities, the opportunity for local gathering, community celebrations, community learning and the performing arts would fade away. The social benefits and identity generated by a city's gathering place would not be enjoyed. CBD businesses would not benefit economically from the support that a major community and cultural centre could bring to the city.

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## PROJECT GOALS

The planning, design and delivery of the new Cultural Precinct is guided by the following key goals. These goals will remain relevant throughout the design and construction phases and will underpin all operations and management roles.

### **Goal 1 To meet community need**

Council's first priority was to determine current and future community need for community and cultural facilities through comprehensive research and consultation undertaken over the past eight years, and to address the identified community needs within the various policy and management frameworks of Council in order to provide enduring solutions.<sup>1 2</sup>

### **Goal 2 To achieve the highest and best use for the land**

The site is to comprehensively masterplanned, taking into consideration its context adjacent to the waterfront, the working Port and the CBD. The use of the site is to be optimised to ensure that future land use and development reflects its value.

The development of the site is to enhance the urban structure, legibility and liveability of Cairns' central city precinct, complementing adjacent facilities and creating the potential to stimulate adjacent development.

### **Goal 3 To ensure design excellence and accessibility**

The buildings and the public open space are to be designed to meet environmental targets as advised by Council, and will demonstrate leadership by local government in the planning, design, construction and operation of public buildings. The venues, facilities and public spaces will be functionally excellent – demonstrating efficient, clever and practical design that clearly responds to the client brief and community needs. The architecture is to be innovative and is to earn an iconic status from the community's recognition of its exceptional functionality, and its intelligent response to the extreme climatic and environmental challenges of the Wet Tropics. The Cultural Precinct is expected to make an outstanding contribution to the public realm, clearly defining the identity of Far North Queensland. The Cultural Precinct is to be accessible by all sectors of the community, irrespective of ability, age, cultural or financial circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> [A Regional Performing Arts Centre for Cairns](#) Positive Solutions (2002)

<sup>2</sup> [Cultural Plan 2009-2014](#) Cairns Regional Council

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**Goal 4            To encourage community critique and comment**

The community is to be actively and inclusively consulted at all stages throughout the project, with the consultation program structured to ensure equal opportunity for all community sectors to review and critique proposals and plans. Consultation is to occur before major decisions are taken by Council, ensuring that community opinion is considered at the appropriate times. Council aims to maintain an open and transparent program of communication, via a range of media, as the project developed and is committed to doing so through construction and after opening of the building.

**Goal 5            To reflect the character of the Cairns Region and Far North Queensland**

The Cultural Precinct is to balance a broad vision, the search for excellence and local identity within the project. The region's Indigenous cultural heritage is to be reflected in the buildings and the spaces, developing and projecting a strong sense of respect, belonging and place. The Cultural Precinct is to contain references within the internal spaces to the diverse past and contemporary cultural richness of the region, reinforcing a place-specific identity. A public art program, closely integrated with the architect's vision, and developed in consultation with the Traditional Owners and visual arts practitioners, is to be developed as an integral part of the project's design and construction.

**Goal 6            To support economic growth**

The design, management and operation of the building is to meet Council's quadruple bottom line objectives: social, environmental, economic and cultural outcomes: The place and the building, with its suite of venues and facilities, are to provide improved employment opportunities and business viability within the region, and to support local business by the creation of jobs, people, business and industry. Opportunities for training and pathways to employment, particularly for Indigenous people are to be created throughout all stages of the project.

**Goal 7            To ensure responsible financial management**

The Cultural Precinct project will be supported by a coordinated cost management process inclusive of the architectural building works and all disciplines. Quantity surveying is and will continue to be an integral part of the risk management process, identifying and defining Council's areas of potential exposure, and implementing strategies to minimise end costs without sacrificing value. Cost estimation and cost planning techniques are to be value management driven in order to optimise the capital works budget, rather than solely minimise cost.

While the procurement of the works has not yet been decided, the developing design will be subject to ongoing review, to ensure that design intent is maintained within the applicable cost parameters.

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**Goal 8 To identify and manage risk**

Council has and will continue to communicate and consult with internal and external stakeholders as appropriate, at each stage of the risk management process and concerning the process as a whole. The external and internal context within which the project sits is well understood and clearly defined. Events that could prevent, delay or enhance the delivery of the Cultural Precinct project have been identified and defined and are reported monthly as part of a structured risk management process.

The range of potential risks and consequences continue to be analysed and evaluated, with cost effective alternatives identified and assessed for consideration by Council.

**Goal 9 To deliver the project efficiently through sound governance and administration**

A structured, transparent and accountable project management, communication and reporting process was established early in the project and approved by Council. The project is well documented and publicised, with monthly Standing Committee meetings (comprising all Councillors) open to the public, with agendas, reports and Council decisions published on Council's website. An independent probity adviser and auditor will be engaged to review compliance with the Cultural Precinct Probity Plan, and will continue to be engaged at key stages to ensure that processes are conducted with fairness to all parties, particularly in relation to tendering.

**Goal 10 To plan for efficient, cost effective operations**

As owner, Council will control the operations and management of the Cultural Precinct site, its performing arts venues, facilities and public open space, and will be in accordance with Council's operational plans, the Cultural Plan, and Council's Access and Equity Policy. The management and operation of the Museum facilities will be decided at a later date.

The Cultural Precinct project may present several formal opportunities for community ownership and participation in the development and management of the cultural facilities, and there may be a range of opportunities for Council to establish a governance structure for the Precinct's operations to ensure continuity of focus in the promotion of the arts in all forms, and opportunities for education through the arts in our community through the Cultural Precinct.

**Goal 11 "The world's most liveable city...."**

The vision Cultural Precinct is a vision for a sustainable and liveable City, a thriving CBD, and a special place, accessible by all. It is to be a project created by and endorsed by the community, designed and managed by a team of Australia's most highly respected consultants with a long term commitment to the project.

The new Cultural Precinct will contribute significantly to the Region's "coming of age" by offering educational and performing arts facilities, and open space of a quality and standard befitting the communities that will use it.

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### 3. THE CULTURAL PRECINCT SITE

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#### 3.1 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

Council acknowledges and respects the traditional owners of the land on which the cultural precinct is proposed to be developed. From the commencement of the project, throughout all design phases and beyond, it will be a goal of the project team and Council to invite and consider the views of the traditional owners and the broader communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To assist Council in firstly performing its legal obligations, Council has obtained professional advice regarding its obligations under relevant legislation in relation to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and other indigenous land issues that may arise in relation to the site to determine what further investigations, and/or dialogue with the local indigenous groups may formally be required.

Council has also commenced formal and informal discussions with traditional owners, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples regarding the proposed cultural uses for the site, with Indigenous performing arts and visual arts practitioners, and with the broader Indigenous community regarding the functional design of the facilities. These consultations will be ongoing throughout project.

Council's solicitors have assessed the project for Native Title and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage compliance against each of the compliance options under the *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) and the Cultural Heritage protection provisions in the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* (ACHA) and the Guidelines made pursuant the ACHA.

The Due Diligence Report concludes:

- § In relation to Native Title compliance, native title has been extinguished over the Cultural Precinct site. No further native title compliance is required in order to build on the site.
- § In relation to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage compliance, the Project is unlikely to require an environmental impact statement (EIS) under environmental legislation. If the Project does require an EIS, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan will be required under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*.

#### 3.2 SITE OWNERSHIP

The site is owned by Ports North Corporation Pty Ltd ("Ports North" or "Ports") and is identified as Strategic Port Land under the Ports North Land Use Plan, however the site is not required, nor intended, for Ports' future operational use.

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The Cultural Precinct comprises a site area of approximately 1.5ha which is part of a larger lot of Strategic Port Land (Part of Lot 10 on SP214821 and Lot 9 on SP113632) which encompasses Precinct 3 in the Cityport Land Use Plan and part of the Commercial & Business Planning Area in the Seaport Land Use Plan. Ports has advised that the final site configuration will be determined as part of lease negotiations at which point the specific site boundaries will be defined. There is an existing stormwater drain through the site and a corridor for the future CRC's City drainage project. For the portion of the Cultural Precinct that sits within the Seaport Land Use Plan, the proposed use is not currently contemplated by that Plan.

The site sits back from the waterfront. Over the past two decades, nearby land, also owned by Ports and also located back from the waterfront, has been sold or developed for commercial uses unrelated to the Ports operations.

An understanding of the relationship of the site to the surrounding area, the working Port and the Cruise Terminal, the waterfront pedestrian linkages, the Cairns Convention Centre and the CBD is essential. The depth of this understanding will encourage a creative response to the opportunities available for the use of the site.

### **3.3 SITE ACCESS**

Site access for consultants to Council for the purpose of necessary site investigations, studies etc, is available further to the Site Access Deed of Agreement between Ports and Council, setting out the terms of available access.

### **3.4 SITE TRANSFER TO COUNCIL**

A site analysis for the purpose of the feasibility study was undertaken for DPW Project Services and Council, by consultants to the project in 2009. In 2010 after the feasibility was completed the State Government announced its intention to transfer the site to Council by way of a long-term lease at a nominal rent. The site area proposed by Ports North differs from the original feasibility area.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.5 PROPOSED SITE TRANSFER TERMS**

Ports has advised that the site will, subject to Ports North Board and Ministerial approval, be leased by Ports North to Council on a 99 year lease at a peppercorn rental. To date, there have been no negotiations regarding lease conditions, however Council understands and acknowledges Ports' concern that the working Port should be able to continue to operate and expand over time within the CityPort and SeaPort Masterplan framework.

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<sup>3</sup> An amended indicative site plan dated 12 January 2011 is included in the supporting documentation on CD ("Lease Plan A")

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The draft lease defines a series of site requirements that will need to be complied with and signed off by Ports. These include but are not limited to design, construction and operation, vehicle access for Port activities, integration with the Cityport project, provision of transition and buffer zones to Port operations at Wharves 7/8.

Consultants to Ports have developed a “Buffer Area Issues Report” which details the buffer requirements and design interaction with Cityport, for the purpose of guiding the designers of the key Port operational requirements for the site.<sup>4</sup> Compliance with these guidelines will be a lease condition.

### **3.6 WHITE’S SHED**

The development of the site must accommodate the State heritage-listed structures within the building known as White’s Shed, which sits within part of a broader heritage - listed waterfront precinct.<sup>5</sup> Heritage approval must be obtained for the adaptive re-use of this building.

Expert advice received by Council is that the building itself will not be suitable for development for a museum *collection*, however it does provide opportunities for development for related and complementary commercial spaces, workshops, arts, or educational facilities.

With respect to the proposed retail, commercial, workshop or any educational use of the site, minimal analysis has been undertaken at this stage. This work will be progressed in conjunction with the design and advisory team and community stakeholders.

### **3.7 SITE CONTAMINATION**

The site is contaminated as a result of former uses associated with the working Port. An early assessment report (2005) is provided with the supporting documentation. A detailed assessment was completed in early 2011 and after review by Council, the information will be available for the appointed architect.

### **3.8 FLOOD AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

Council holds detailed information and inundation modelling regarding flooding and storm surge risk, as well as information regarding current and future stormwater infrastructure and management.

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<sup>4</sup> Cairns Cultural Precinct Buffer Area Issues report – RPS (December 2010)

<sup>5</sup> Information relating to White’s Shed is included in the supporting documentation.

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### **3.9 GEOTECHNICAL**

A preliminary geotechnical study for the site (including the identification of acid sulphate soils) is expected to be commissioned in March/April 2011.

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## 4. URBAN PLANNING CONTEXT

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The Cairns City Centre plays a pivotal role in the economic and social fabric of the region. Under the far North Queensland 2009 to 2031 Regional Plan, the Cairns City Centre is identified as the principal regional activity centre. Significant economic activity and employment is focused in and around the city centre which will involve into a tropical, transit- oriented community with Cairns-style character strongly reflected in the design and function.

The Cairns City Centre Strategy was completed in April 2010 and provides the genesis of the CBD masterplanning work that is currently underway and due for completion in mid 2011.

In previous decades, the Cairns City Centre was focused on the northern waterfront, with the tourist precinct stretching along The Esplanade and the blocks deeper within the city centre that contain the working commercial areas of the CBD. The shopping centre, Shields Street and the lagoon currently form an axis of activity in the city centre. More recently, with the development of Port lands to the eastern edge of the city centre overlooking Trinity Inlet, a new leisure and commercial precinct has begun to emerge to the west. The development of the Cultural Precinct will create a third node in the urban framework of the CBD, connecting land use, clusters, public spaces and transport. It highlights the potential of a defining triangle of development of the city centre to embrace the anchors of the shopping centre, Shields Street, the lagoon, and the Port lands boardwalk. This triangle also defines a circuit of high-amenity public spaces along the waterfront and the city centre.

The master planning work which is currently being undertaken by consultants to Council, will provide the following:

- § an integration framework that brings together the various technical studies that Council has undertaken in the past, leading to the development of an important technical and thematic foundation - the masterplan. This will confirm the vision for the Cairns City Centre, providing a clear direction to the city, supported by an urban analysis of former, movements, placemaking and activity
- § a clear urban structure that will provide legibility for visitors, locals and developers
- § direction on clusters of activity and how those clusters might be shaped in the future
- § direction regarding place-based design, including permanent residential accommodation, retail, tourism and commercial development typologies
- § direction regarding public spaces within public routes
- § design elements to reinforce Cairns' unique identity
- § streetscape improvements and other fine grain elements, and sustainability initiatives
- § guidance on statutory controls relating to good urban design outcomes and guidelines on all aspects of public realm design
- § a masterplan document that identifies and describes potential catalyst projects.

The Cultural Precinct is regarded as a priority catalyst project for the development of the CBD and the resulting economic growth.

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## 5. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

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### 5.1 PORTS NORTH AS ASSESSMENT MANAGER

The development of the Cultural Precinct site is governed by the Cairns Port Authority Land Use Plan. The Ports Authority is the Assessment Manager. Council has no regulatory role in the development or regulatory role in the ongoing operations of the site. Ports is also the land owner and lessor.

As a guide, and in summary form only, Ports requires:

- § the Precinct to be designed so that it acts as a physical and sound barrier between the city and wharf 7 to 8
- § maintenance of Ports operations taking into consideration traffic, security and operational requirements of wharves 1-6 and wharves 7 and 8
- § the design to accommodate the interface and separation between the precinct and the adjacent road and wharf
- § the soundproofing of the performing arts Centre in all operational modes
- § vehicular access from Wharf Street to the wharves
- § integration of the site with the CityPort
- § information previously provided by Ports on noise, dust and odour to be reviewed and extrapolated to take into consideration future growth in Port operations, and to ensure that the Precinct design fully mitigates any potential noise conflict due to adjacent port uses
- § the Port and Port users stakeholders group to be engaged to fully understand the existing and future operational requirements of the facilities, and to provide a detailed report that identifies operational matters and mitigation measures incorporated in the design to address these potential conflicts
- § design in accordance with the “Buffer Area Issues Report” which provides Ports’ minimum design outcomes needed to address the “buffer” function of the site, to achieve Ports’ required separation between the CityPort and SeaPort precincts. The design outcomes will need to comply with the Buffer Area Issues Report and will also need to independently assess the various operational, security and traffic matters as detailed above.

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## **6. CIVIC, COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL USES**

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### **6.1 CIVIC USE**

The Cultural Precinct will be first and foremost the public home of the communities of the Cairns Region. The functional designs of the venues and the open space areas are to be developed to provide public gathering and celebration spaces for the regional communities' numerous civic and cultural celebrations, and events. Recognising the importance of community pride and community identity in supporting social sustainability, civic use at the Cultural Precinct will be based upon principles of inclusiveness and equity of access. The Cultural Precinct is to be *a place for everyone*. It is to be a Place where all who live in, work, visit or who identify with the region, may come to participate in the events and occasions that celebrate the community's sameness, and its diversity. It is to be a Place that offers educational and learning opportunities – inspirational, motivational and memorable.

Cairns Regional Council will be an important user, not only owner, of the Cultural Precinct. Council is frequently regarded as an innovative leader in the delivery of services, programs and opportunities for the community that many other Councils cannot, or do not provide.

For example, Council has an active festival and events program which includes the presentation of shows and artists of exceptional quality through the Civic Theatre, the Tanks and other venues.

The range of events currently staged by the Council's Events Team attract community groups, seniors, children, visitors and tourists, providing a strong incentive for retailers, shoppers and business people in the area. Many of these programs address needs from other client groups within the region, such as seniors, and people of Indigenous and multicultural heritage, providing a wide range of culturally diverse activities.

Council's use of the Cultural Precinct will facilitate the extension and enhancement of current services in accordance with Council's existing policies, and the creation of new activities to meet identified, but as yet unsatisfied, community needs.

### **6.2 PUBLIC PLAZA USE**

The public plaza and open space must interface seamlessly with the nearby Cruise Terminal and related waterfront areas, much of which will be developed over the coming years in accordance with the CityPort Masterplan. For visitors arriving by cruise ship, the plaza and the public buildings of the Cultural Precinct will be among their first experiences of Australia and the tropics. The plaza (and the site) are to be strategically and appropriately linked to its immediate neighbours, and are to be designed so as to encourage and improve pedestrian amenity.

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The public plaza and other outdoor areas will provide functional, environmental, social and cultural benefits. The type of activities to be supported by the open space design include

- § Australia Day celebrations
- § NAIDOC week
- § Chinese New Year
- § Harmony Day
- § heritage displays
- § carols by candlelight
- § outdoor exhibitions
- § outdoor films.

As the most identifiable landmark in the Cairns CBD, the Cultural Precinct will be the preferred destination point for meeting friends or colleagues. It will provide the “town square” or public gathering place which is currently lacking within the surrounding urban framework. Highly accessible, it will interface with the CityPort boardwalk, leisure and commercial facilities, and will be surrounded by lively and active spaces, complementary retail and foyer spaces, all of which will provide passive surveillance and an inherent level of safety. The public plaza is to be highly visible from Grafton Street, and will include performance space for lunchtime concerts, buskers, and jazz groups.

It is intended that the Cultural Precinct be a focal point of social activity for the city, in particular, as a meeting place, at lunchtime, after work, and during business hours. Increased pedestrian activity will encourage longer trading hours in the city, seven days a week. With more people on the streets and shopping areas, the result will be a safer CBD, particularly after usual business hours, into the evening.

### **6.3 COMMUNITY USE**

Community organisations using the Cultural Precinct venues may be large or small, and may or may not derive an income from their activities. These community organisations are characterised by their purpose and objectives or membership, not by their level of income. In general, these organisations and groups will, to some extent, receive a reduction in hire rates to assist in their use of the Cultural Precinct.

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Examples of community use are:

- § Cairns Symphony Orchestra
- § Cairns Choral Society
- § Community Theatre companies
- § Community Dance Groups
- § Educational Seminars
- § Heritage displays
- § Community art exhibitions
- § Community and school music festivals
- § School annual speech nights
- § Disability organisations events.

#### **6.4 ARTS AND CULTURAL USE**

Cairns is one of the most culturally diverse cities in Australia and is the gateway to millions of tourists every year visiting Far North Queensland. The new Cultural Precinct will provide a unique cultural showcase for local, national and international creative talent from wide and varying backgrounds.

The Cultural Precinct will provide 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities for the western performing arts including orchestral symphony performances, chamber music, dance and opera, and must also be appropriately designed and accessible for a diverse range of Indigenous and multi-cultural performance. The Cultural Precinct offers the prospect of combining a wide range of art forms and linking them to other Australian and international venues via new technology, and the design of the Precinct must include this functionality.

The Performing Arts Centre and the Cultural Precinct must be designed holistically to address all performance and audience requirements and expectations, incorporating spaces that bring together performance, eating, viewing, gathering, multi-media and social networking.

In the 20th Century the advent of radio, recording, film, TV and finally the internet changed how the performing arts may be experienced. In the past decade, the advance in social media has pushed us into a new realm of possibility with communication via Facebook, Twitter and personal blogs. Improved audio and video reproduction quality, combined with high speed broadband, has resulted in the ability to stream and deliver information at a previously unattainable quality and at a cost that is no longer prohibitive.

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To take account of this change, the Cairns Cultural Precinct aims to be the most technologically advanced centre for the performing arts designed in Australia. The building will be briefed to include a technical infrastructure that will enable this vision to be realised. All venues will be capable of extensive video projection and the presentation of multi-media. The provision of an audio and video suite, and control rooms in each venue that can accommodate broadcast and video equipment, will enable live performances to be recorded, mixed and shared in a way that will bring people together from the city to regional and remote communities. For many, this will provide access to a wide range of performing arts for the first time.

The Cairns Cultural Precinct will become a distance performing and learning centre enabling performances from remote areas of outback Australia or the Pacific Islands to be seamlessly connected.

There is a great opportunity in Cairns to develop performing and visual arts unique to the region which have a rich indigenous and multi-cultural heritage and for the Cairns Cultural Precinct to become a significant cultural asset for the far north.

The vision for the performing arts centre at the Cairns Cultural Centre is that it should be:

- § a performing arts centre for the whole of Northern Queensland and for the Pacific Rim
- § sensitive to the unique requirements of Indigenous and multi-cultural artists and audiences
- § technologically advanced
- § a living cultural space
- § accessible to local artists and groups
- § a hub that reflects Cairns' unique cultural diversity
- § a place for teaching, storytelling, learning and cultural educational
- § a place that positions Cairns as a respected centre for the creative arts.

Examples of cultural use may include:

- § Indigenous performance and celebration
- § A place for story telling through the museum facilities
- § Multicultural community celebration and performance
- § Western performance including Queensland Symphony Orchestra
- § Dance including Bangarra Dance Company
- § Chamber music including Musica Viva
- § Theatre performance including Bell Shakespeare Company
- § Opera companies including OzOpera
- § Music Cabaret
- § Film Festival events
- § New media arts events
- § Temporary art exhibitions and displays curated by professional organisations

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## 6.5 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND MUSEUM FACILITIES:

### The Cairns Regional Museum<sup>6</sup>

***Tenderers should note that an owner, operator and funding have not yet been secured for the Museum and spatial planning is undertaken at this stage for the purposes of site masterplanning and development of preliminary budgets.***

Council's Cultural Plan and Corporate Plan both provide that Council will support the State Government in the provision of a Regional Museum. As a first step Queensland Museum (QM) has accepted a formal invitation from Council to adopt the role of lead Museum consultant. QM has prepared an outline planning brief in line with contemporary museum ideology, that specifically addresses the needs of the Far North and the opportunities presented by the Cultural Precinct site, for the purpose of developing the site Masterplan.

The Museum planning report sets out the proposed programming and functional spaces required to support the site masterplanning and the design concept options.<sup>7</sup> This planning report is provided as a guide to spatial requirements and will be updated and amended as required in conjunction with Council, the State Government and the design team.

Queensland Museum states that a modern and contemporary museum must play a significant role in its community by providing social, cultural and economic benefits. It must take a stance, have important stories to tell and messages to convey. It must be a driver to change in the way of community behaves and individuals think and interact with one another and the environment in which they live. A museum must be useful to its community by providing a safe place to express ideas bravely and to learn new things.

The planning report for the Museum explores possible narratives for a range of exhibitions and programs that go beyond built and curated spaces the Museum, and describes the value it could provide to the community. The exhibitions imagined capture evidence of the richness of the region-culturally, socially, environmentally, and economically, but are to also speak frankly about the challenges from an historical and contemporary perspective.

Cultural heritage and the telling of stories of significance will be incorporated within the following concepts, exhibitions and public programs for the new museum:

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<sup>6</sup> This is a working title only.

<sup>7</sup> The Cairns Regional Museum Exhibitions and Public Programs Concepts Interpretation – Queensland Museum Report to inform the Architectural Masterplan Design Brief (Feb 2011)

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**(a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre**

This is proposed to be a centre focussing on traditional and living cultures. This centre would combine exhibition galleries and spaces for cultural practices and performances with inside and outside adjoining spaces. It would feature artist workshops and interpretation centres with products for sale. QM appointed Ms Trish Barnard, Senior Curator for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and the Repatriation Program, at the Museum of Tropical Queensland, Townsville to guide this work.

**(b) Queensland Centre for Cultural Diversity – multicultural communities**

Research and training facility to help safeguard Pacific Islanders and Papua New Guinea intangible heritage cultural practices and processes. This centre will link to formal and informal training programs. QM appointed Dr Maria Friend, Museum development Officer for Far North Qld, QM to undertake this work.

**(c) A Centre for Social Memories: Cairns – the Port for North Queensland development**

This centre is proposed to house a significant photographic display on the development of Cairns – the port to North Queensland and facilities for recording social memories linked to the new National History Curriculum. It will also incorporate a children’s activity centre. QM appointed Dr Joanna Wills, Converge Heritage and Community, Cairns, to undertake this work.

**(d) A sense of place – safeguarding World Heritage sites**

This section of the Museum will provide a contemporary interpretation of biodiversity issues specific to the Far North, and deal with our personal and collective responsibilities to protect and maintain our natural assets. It will include a hands-on science/interpretation centre linked to the new National Science Curriculum. QM appointed Dr John Hooper, Head of Biodiversity and Geosciences Program and Allan Morrison Schools Coordinator, QM to undertake this work.

**6.6 EDUCATIONAL USE**

The site presents a number of opportunities for education and further learning, associated both with the performing arts and with the Museum facility.

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A possible use for Whites Shed, in a Museum context is to utilise the unique space for development into a versatile multi-use facility incorporating fully functional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carving and sculpture workshops open to visitors. For example, this working space could incorporate an interpretation of the first contact between European settlers and the traditional owners, as well as the heritage sugar bagging equipment, highlighting the original features of White's Shed, such as the large timber beams and structures.

Queensland Museum suggests that fully functioning workshops and facilities could be provided for carving, sculptures, silk dyers, and ceramicists with viewing areas for the public. Whites Shed could also support school group activities documenting local histories and provide outside school hours and vacation-care activities, as well as become the site of popular museum holiday programs.

Other opportunities may exist and will need to be explored by Council, the community and other partners, including tertiary institutions, over the coming months.

## **6.7 COMMERCIAL AND CORPORATE USE**

Commercial and corporate use of the Cultural Precinct will contribute significantly to economic growth in Cairns with a flow on effect to the region while the income from corporate hirers will assist Council's ability to subsidise use by community organisations. Use of the Cultural Precinct by local and regional business for corporate events, conferences and business tourism is to be encouraged and integrated into the annual events and hire schedule.

Examples of commercial and corporate use include:

- § Local and regional business events
- § Business seminars and training
- § Television studio rehearsals
- § Industry Award nights

## **6.7 USE ASSOCIATED WITH BUSINESS CONVENTIONS: supporting the Cairns Convention Centre**

The Cairns Convention Centre has been voted in the top four Convention Centres in the World every year since 2002, including World's Best in 2004. The Cultural Precinct site is located close to the Cairns Convention Centre, and the relationship offers an important opportunity for the Cultural Precinct facilities to complement and support large conventions through the provision of plenary space.

The Cultural Precinct site masterplanning studies must consider and include the opportunity to provide a physical connection to the Convention Centre to allow delegates to move easily between the two sites.

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## 6.8 FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICES

The provision of food and beverage services at the Cultural Precinct is an integral part of the cultural and recreational experience at all levels, and facilities will be required throughout the buildings or venues. Patrons using the Theatres require access to bars and light refreshments prior to performances and during the intervals. Civic functions and events require catering. Private hirers will require catering facilities.

The Museum planning proposes the integration of a good-quality restaurant that can provide catering options from breakfast through to lunch and dinner, as well as themed events that will enliven the space. The extension of the museum experience through the restaurant and its co-location with workshop facilities, will allow a strong representation of the people, cultures and stories that the Museum will strive to preserve and interpret. QM has suggested that the dining experience would be unique if it allows diners to view the creation of unique art, followed by the potential to purchase artworks produced on site, from the adjacent retail shop. Developing the restaurant around the activities on site would deliver a point of difference to the offering which is highly desirable to corporate groups to functions and venue hire. The restaurant will drive visitation and provide new museum audiences as well as increase the length of stay and ultimately “the spend” per head.

The types of food and beverage services required are expected to include:

- § bar service
- § speciality restaurant serving Indigenous foods
- § light refreshments
- § events catering, including finger food
- § food services will be cook-chill (ie prepared off site, reheated on site).

Community organisations frequently support their events with the provision of food and must be able to prepare their own food at little or no cost. Recently, community stakeholders, particularly those of Indigenous and multicultural heritage, have confirmed a strong desire for a purpose built, multipurpose kitchen and catering facility. This is described in more detail in the Outline Theatre Planning Brief, and will be developed more fully in the coming months.

The food preparation facilities and space must be designed to be sufficiently flexible so as to enable access by the diverse range of users.

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## **6.9 RETAIL USE**

Investment in complementary retail space to enliven and activate the use of the Cultural Precinct, and to generate a level of commercial income to support the public use of the facilities, will be an important element in the success of the site. Retail space may take the form of a specialty restaurant, cafés and bars, a museum shop, arts shop or gallery, tourist information centre or similar. The retail space must complement, not compete with, CBD retail space.

The 2009 Cultural Precinct feasibility study proposed 1400 square metres of retail space. This is the minimum area that should be allowed.

## **6.10 CARPARKING, PUBLIC TRANSPORT, TAXIS AND BICYCLES**

The Cultural Precinct will generate a variety of parking patrons including short stay visitors, patrons of shows and others. Not all will be regular users of the car park and many will not be familiar with its layout and operation. For many casual visitors to the Cultural Precinct, the carpark will be their first and last experience of the facility. A good first impression and ease of use is imperative to ensure repeat business and consistent income.

Other significant users will be the large delivery vehicles servicing retail tenancies, the museum, users of and visitors to the performing arts facilities, special events vehicles into the open space and vehicles associated with waste and recycling. Theatre loading is briefed separately. Large vehicles up to semi trailer size delivering stage scenery, technical and theatre equipment for performances and shows in the Theatre, rehearsal spaces or for the plaza are expected.

Provision is to be made for emergency vehicles and taxi drop off (including disabled taxi-drop off), enabling patrons and visitors to travel directly to the lifts servicing the cultural venues, museum and open space. Arrival by public transport, with a short stay, lay-by facility for private buses, are to be incorporated.

The on-site carpark of approximately 300 – 400 cars will be supported by a separate, multi-storey public carpark providing approximately 600 spaces, on a nearby site recently purchased by Council for this purpose.

Bicycle parking and end of trip facilities including showers and lockers are to be included.

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## **7. FUNCTIONAL EXCELLENCE**

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The following functional descriptions of the proposed spaces, performing arts centre, museum and associated facilities, and the preliminary acoustic design, are intended to provide a general overview to inform the development of the site masterplan and conceptual design options. The descriptions are not intended to be exhaustive and are only accurate as at March 2011 and will be subject to change as the full architectural brief is developed following the selection of the preferred option.<sup>8</sup> The attachments comprising Outline Theatre, Acoustics and Museum Design Briefs are presented in final draft format and will be subject to some changes during the course of ongoing community consultation. Full design briefs will be developed after the preferred design concept option is approved.

### **7.1 LANDSCAPE**

The wet tropics rainforest is an emblematic component of Cairns' regional identity. Shade, shelter, prevention of glare, permeability to breeze, and evapo-transpiration are key benefits of trees in public open spaces and will be essential for the success of any open public plaza. At an urban scale, strategies of landscape treatment provide a means to visually link distant components of the urban structure of the city. For these reasons, it is important that landscape considerations should inform the earliest phases of this project.

The need for specialist landscape architecture input is essential and the design team will need a good understanding of tropical landscape design issues, a good understanding of endemic flora and fauna species and local ecologies, and site specific issues of exposure to high winds, heavy rain, marine salt spray, working Port conditions and the consequences of site remediation process for future landscaping.

These landscape issues if not fully considered, could threaten the success of an otherwise good design proposal. On the other hand, a strong and inventive landscape strategy could well provide a key element of the success of a precinct design.

The design should allow the public open spaces and landscape to reflect and celebrate the tropical lifestyle and act as open-air cultural gathering spaces.

The architect's input into the selection of the Landscape architect will be sought.

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<sup>8</sup> All users of this document requiring further information must refer to the drawings and specifications current at the time, and ensure that updated information is obtained as required.

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## 7.2 ARCHITECTURE

The site feasibility study and related work was consolidated in the Cultural Precinct Concept Planning Report (2009)<sup>9</sup>. The Report expresses the vision for the site to be:

*...“a magnetic and memorable form and place of National, State and Regional significance for Cairns. It is to include:*

§ *A world class performance space – a highly flexible performing arts facility, of international standard that can stage a broad diversity of cultural events.*

§ *Vibrant gathering space – a locus of multi-cultural performing arts, tourist and cultural facilities, and a gateway centre to the arts and culture and natural environment of the Cape.*

§ *A captivating architectural form particular to Cairns and recognised around the world.”*

The built form together with the open space should enhance the visual identity of the City of Cairns, and serve as a marker of arrival for cruise ship passengers, conference delegates and visitors to the city.

The architecture should respect, reflect and celebrate the cultural practices and aspirations of the traditional owners of the land, the citizens of greater Cairns, the communities of Far North Queensland and the broader South Pacific region.

The design must comprehensively respond to the extreme climatic conditions of the wet tropics, giving high priority to user amenity, accessibility, to the selection of suitable and durable materials, and the long term maintenance and operational costs.

The built form should innovatively and successfully incorporate heritage elements and site-specific considerations within the project.

The Cultural Precinct must demonstrate excellence in environmentally sustainable design in the wet tropics.

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<sup>9</sup> Refer Supporting Documents

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### **7.3 PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE (Main theatre, studio theatre, rehearsal space, community hub, front of house and back of house spaces)**

The Cultural Precinct will be a visual and performing arts and educational centre capable of bringing together remote areas and communities of rural and outback Australia and the Pacific. The performing arts centre will be designed and managed to attract Australian and International shows, concerts and other performances. It will also nurture local actors, dancers and musicians and support educational programs in performance, stage design and production.

The venues and the spaces are to be loved by those who use them: performers, patrons, children, promoters, technicians, front of house and back of house staff. The performing arts centre is to be intelligently designed, demonstrating a true appreciation of the very specialised requirements of both contemporary and traditional performing arts, of Indigenous and multicultural arts and celebration, and multi-media performance, screen arts, broadcast and production facilities and operation. All facilities, including back of house spaces must be accessible by performers, audiences and staff with a disability, and their carers.

From the outset, the functionality of the performing arts venues has been given a high priority, and an Outline Theatre Design Brief<sup>10</sup> and an Outline Acoustic Design Brief<sup>11</sup> have been prepared by consultants to Council, to inform the Masterplanning and Conceptual Design phases. These Briefs are attachments to this Preliminary Client Brief. Full theatre and acoustic design briefs and specifications will be developed following the selection of the preferred design concept option.

The Outline Theatre Design Brief provides details of the infrastructure that will be required to allow the performing arts centre to be proactive in creating an artistic environment which will encourage excellence in the creative arts and provide an exciting and rich experience for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

To ensure the venues meet Council's performance objectives for the range of uses, acoustic excellencies also a priority. The Outline Theatre Design Brief should be read in conjunction with the Outline Acoustic Design Brief.

The Outline Theatre Design Brief also address the site constraints and the proximity to the working Port and its operations, including site and building access and egress. This understanding will be further developed in conjunction with a maritime consultant engaged by Council.

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<sup>10</sup> Cairns Cultural Precinct – Outline Theatre Design Brief – Marshall Day Entertech (Feb 2011)

<sup>11</sup> Cairns Cultural Precinct – Outline Acoustic Design Brief – Acoustic Studio (Feb 2011)

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Over the past decade and during the time that consultation with Cairns communities has been undertaken by Council, there has been a revolution in multi-media, digital broadcasting and most recently social media. Recent focus groups (held in January 2011) addressed the changes in the current expectations of performers and audiences, and concluded that Cairns had the opportunity to develop a unique performing arts centre that can record, transmit and interact with remote towns and communities in Far North Queensland, Australia and the Pacific Rim.

There was a desire expressed during the consultation process that the performing arts centre should be “future-proofed” as far as possible by including the latest technical infrastructure.

The consultation process also reinforced the need for community access to rehearsal spaces. The concept of a community hub servicing local groups and individuals was identified.

### **7.3.1 Performance Space 1 (main theatre)**

The main performance space will be a flexible format multifunction auditorium with the seating capacity in any mode of not less than 1000 seats. This auditorium is a replacement of the 670 seat civic theatre and will also accommodate live music performance. There will be an orchestra pit and a deployable orchestra shell. The main performance space will be designed with a proscenium opening, orchestra pit and forestage, and orchestra shell. Technical facilities will include audio, lighting and observation, projection facilities, power winches with approximately 66 lines, a fully integrated sound system and other technical equipment.

The main users will be:

- § drama and theatre
- § dance and ballet
- § opera
- § symphony and chamber music
- § musical theatre
- § physical theatre
- § jazz, rock and popular music
- § school events and eisteddfods
- § civic functions, community celebrations and public lectures.

### **7.3.2 Performance space 2 (studio theatre)**

Performance space 2 will be a flat floor, flexible space with retractable seating in a technical gallery. The retractable seating system will enable a variety of performance styles and production types to be accommodated. The design is to enable a variety of presentation formats including end stage, arena, short and long traverse, and thrust. The seating capacity will vary depending on the format that a maximum of 450 seats is desirable.

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The main users of this studio theatre have been identified as:

- § drama
- § dance
- § recitals
- § musical theatre
- § cinema
- § cabaret
- § live music
- § physical theatre
- § fashion shows
- § functions
- § lectures.

### **7.3.3 Main rehearsal room**

The main rehearsal room will have the same floor area as the stage of performance space one and will incorporate retractable seating from minimum audience of 150 to 200.

For rehearsals, this room would be used in large and small orchestral groups as well as the opera/dance/Broadway/drama. A public use, the room would be used to small-scale performances, banquets and performance art. The rehearsal room will provide entry level performance and rehearsal space for community use, and for other organisations wanting rehearsal or audition space.

### **7.3.4 Community hub**

The community hub will consist of a number of independently accessed meeting rooms plus rehearsal, recording and multimedia spaces that will be directly linked to external performance spaces and community kitchen facilities.

The vision for the community hub is to bring together a number of spaces that are accessible to small groups and individuals involved in drama, dance, music and multimedia.

The community kitchen will be accessible to indigenous and multicultural groups to prepare foods associated with festival, cultural celebrations and performances.

A recording studio with adjacent control room will be suitable for recording a variety of music from local rock bands and indigenous and multicultural groups, to small classical performances. The studio will also become an important facility for the recording of oral history.

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### **7.3.5 Outdoor performance spaces**

Outdoor performance spaces will be located throughout the precinct and should be designed to accommodate a variety of indigenous and multicultural activities, jazz and rock performances and other community events.

The outdoor performance spaces will have protection from sun and rain per performance and audience they will be each equipped with power, technical cabling infrastructure and structures that will enable reading and lighting to be installed.

### **7.3.6 Front of house, foyers and public spaces**

The foyer is a large important public space shared between all performance spaces and the Community Hub. This will be one of the main areas of architectural planning and should ideally be an attractive space to the community during the day. Its main function is to provide a socialising space before, pre-performance, at intermission and during the day. It is a potential revenue source and will have bars at each level, and may have a small gift bookshop, box office and catering services for community functions.

The foyers are to be welcoming and designed to embrace and enliven the performance experience. They may provide Museum and gallery spaces<sup>12</sup> and be capable of accommodating live performances and multimedia presentations.

The foyers should be of sufficient volume to provide a sense of occasion and have sufficient sound absorption in the ceiling planning to reduce noise built up during high levels of occupancy.

All external entrances to foyers and public spaces must be provided with protection from torrential rain and strong winds.

### **7.3.7 Back of house**

Details of all front of house and back of house accommodation are contained within the Outline Theatre Design Brief. All front of house and back of house facilities are to at least equal the quality and functionality of similar-sized regional venues elsewhere in Australia.

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<sup>12</sup> This flexibility is discussed further under [Museum](#) below.

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## 7.4 THE CAIRNS REGIONAL MUSEUM

Tenderers should refer to the spatial planning report prepared by Queensland Museum which is an attachment to this Preliminary Client Project Brief.<sup>13</sup>

The proposed new Museum must reflect the dynamic and complex community in which it resides through integrated spaces, activity centres for knowledge generation and dissemination of ideas, created events and public programs which complement its exhibition program. It will be an integral part of the Cultural Precinct and the design of the facilities and spaces should seek to optimise the opportunity for sharing resources for operational efficiencies and to achieve a seamless experience for Precinct visitors.

The new Museum will require 1500 – 1700 square metres of dedicated museum space which should merge with interwoven areas for individual reflection, small social interaction and group activities.

In addition there is a requirement for front of house and back of house facilities that could potentially be shared in part or whole with the performing arts centre or other facilities. There is also scope for front of house functions to be incorporated into common reception and booking areas, theatre and performance spaces, hospitality and retail outlets, public facilities, group induction areas, workshop and activity spaces. Back of house spaces could comprise staff offices, volunteers' spaces, loading dock and crate storage spaces, exhibition preparation areas and collection storage.

Queensland Museum suggests that workshops could be developed within White's Shed in partnership with tertiary institutions or other educational bodies to not only return an income to the Museum, but to provide Cairns with a much-needed space where traditional artisans can utilise tools in a supportive workplace health and safety accredited environment to produce material not specifically catered for by other Cairns-based workshops or art centres.

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<sup>13</sup> The Cairns Regional Museum Exhibitions and Public Programs Concepts Interpretation – Queensland Museum Report to inform the Architectural Masterplan Design Brief (Feb 2011)

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## **8. ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCESSIBLE DESIGN**

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This section should be read in conjunction with all other briefing documents, and is intended as a guide for the masterplanning and conceptual design phases, rather than a definitive and exhaustive list of requirements. The Brief for accessibility and accessible design, including marketing, programming materials, signage etc will be further developed later in the architectural design phases, in conjunction with other Design Briefs.

Through its Corporate Plan, Council aims to provide the best possible balance of services to all areas and sectors of the community, and to remain professional at all times in dealing with the many issues affecting the region and its people. Council strives for innovation to ensure its systems and procedures reflect the highest possible standards in quality service provision for all members of the community.

The Cultural Precinct is to offer an unprecedented level of accessibility provided by no other regional performing arts venue in Australia.

### **8.1 Access and Equity Advisory Group**

For many years Council has been involved in meeting the needs of people with a disability primarily through its Access and Equity Advisory Group (AEAG) whose mission is “To enhance the quality of life for people with a disability within our diverse community in our unique environment through excellence of service and leadership.”

Together with other stakeholders, the AEAG will work as a reference group for the Cultural Precinct project, to review and critique the developing design to ensure it is successful in providing equitable access for all who live, visit or work in the region.

The AEAG provides a forum for people to table concerns and to develop solutions to access issues. The AEAG comprises a number of community representatives who have a disability and service providers from the disability sector, together with nominated councillors and staff. The AEAG has responsibility for the implementation and management of Council’s Access and Equity Action Plan which provides a review of the policies and practices, and a framework for communicating with both staff and the community about issues affecting people with a disability.

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## 8.2 Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)

The Access and Equity Action Plan also provides a framework to enable Council to comply with the goals of the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), the Queensland Anti Discrimination Act 1991 and the new Disability Access to Premises Standard.

## 8.3 People with a disability in the Cairns Region

Approximately 23%, or almost one in four of people resident in the Cairns region, self identify as having a disability. Disabilities can include physical, intellectual, sensory or psychiatric disabilities. Disabilities can be permanent or temporary, debilitating or not, clearly defined or hidden. For many people physical barriers to access - poor building design or lack of facilities means that use of public facilities is not possible. For others, the way in which cultural programs are presented may be inaccessible due to a range of specific needs including unaffordable levels of ticket pricing, lack of public transport, or inadequate signage. For artists and performers with differing abilities, appropriate design and management policies are critical to the performing arts facilities.

## 8.4 Accessible design requirements

The following requirements are to be integrated with the architectural design of the facilities. The list is not exhaustive and will be confirmed, as a result of community consultation, at the completion of the Conceptual Design phase.

### (a) Building and public open space access

The integrated design of the Cultural Precinct should allow a person with special needs access throughout the site. As a patron enters the site, clear paths of travel are to be designed from the street through the open spaces, into the foyers, to the entrances of the performance venues from maximum ease of engagement with the built form.

#### The following design elements are to be included:

- § Independent access to the buildings through powered doors should be provided in all available areas.
- § Wheelchair access is to be provided at every principal entry point into the precinct and venues.
- § There is to be convenient lift access from accessible parking bays.
- § **Public stairways are to be designed in accordance with AS 1428.2.**
- § Public stairs are to include contrasting nosings and tactile indicators.
- § Provision is to be made for wider doors and door circulation space for easier access than required by the BCA.
- § Lift access to all public levels and back stage areas is to be included to enable full participation of the people with disabilities, including employment opportunities.

- 
- § Lifts are to include in-car voice announcements and other features as specified by AS1735.12.
  - § Appropriate levels of slip resistance should be achieved without depressed grouting or recessed paving.
  - § Access to landscaped areas is to be provided wherever practical.
  - § Drinking fountains are to be accessible by people in wheelchairs, and by children.
  - § Outdoor seating is to be comfortable, and of varied height or style, some with arms to enable less able bodied people to easily get up.

**(b) Carers' facilities**

- § The needs of carers must be acknowledged and addressed in the design, including the provision of seating, facilities and appropriate support spaces.
- § A parents / baby room is to be provided.

**(c) Safety**

- § Places of refuge within fire isolated exits with communication systems are to be provided
- § Where the design includes fire stairs, places of refuge will be provided for people in wheelchairs and will include powered door openers.
- § Storage locations for evacuation wheelchairs are to be provided within the places of refuge, consistent with the DDA.
- § Places of refuge are to be fitted with an emergency communications system enabling people with a physical disability to communicate with emergency services
- § Strobe lights are to be provided in appropriate locations are emergency warning systems to people who are deaf to comply with AS 1428.2.

**(d) For people with a vision impairment**

- § changes in floor surface texture to signal changes in levels
- § clear external signage and guide maps, and appropriate light levels
- § Internal stairs within theatres to be provided with illuminated nosings consistent with the DDA and AS 1428.
- § Indoor and outdoor lighting will provide appropriate lux levels to comply with AS 1428.2.
- § Indoor and outdoor lighting will provide low levels of glare.
- § Tactile and Braille signage is to be installed throughout the development identification and way of finding consistent with the DDA.
- § Tactile indicators and directional signage are to have an arts and cultural focus
- § an interpreter's position in the control room at the theatre the simultaneous commentary that visually impaired and translation using infrared technology
- § The luminance contrast on doors, glass walls, hand rails and floors must achieve a 30% minimum permanents contrast with background to comply with AS 1428.2.

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**(e) For people who are hard of hearing**

- § augmented listening systems to cover the theatres and adjoining bar areas to facilitate a seamless communication access to people with hearing impairment
- § EWIS systems are to provide appropriate dB output to comply with AS1428.2.
- § Hearing augmentation systems should be employed for auditoria, foyers, box office, bars and other public areas.

**(f) Theatres and performance spaces, foyers**

- § A variety of wheelchair spaces, together with seating for carers, should be provided in different locations in each auditorium and access to seating to comply with AS142 8.2, the Access to Premises Standard, and the BCA.
- § Sightlines to the stages are to be maintained for wheelchair positions.
- § There are to be removable seats to provide accessible seating positions and for children's shows.
- § There are to be a variety of seating widths to accommodate larger bodied patrons.
- § A clear path of travel should be provided from the theatre auditorium to the stage for people using wheelchairs.
- § All service counters, bars, and ticketing areas are to comply with **AS 1428.2**.
- § AV screen system display is to provide appropriate text size and style.
- § Accessible furniture and equipment selections are to include wheelchair accessible counters at the box office, and customer service areas for both customers and staff.
- § Adjustable height tables are to be provided to facilitate wheelchair access.
- § The rehearsal space is to provide affordable performance space as an entry-level hiring opportunity to new arts groups in a culturally significant building
- § Any carpet in the building should have an appropriate level loop, and firm backing to provide appropriate wheelchair access.
- § Back of house facilities are to be completely accessible for performers and are to include tactile indicators
- § Wide corridors for greater access in back of house and stage areas
- § Accessible showers are to be provided for performers in all dressing room levels and close to the rehearsal room.
- § Dressing rooms are to have clothes hanging facilities at a suitable height for people in wheelchairs.

**(g) Toilets**

- § Accessible toilets adjacent to each group of male and female toilets, including back stage areas.
- § Toilet cubicles in either gender specific toilets to include features that people with an ambulant physical disability.
- § Powered sliding doors to all accessible toilets

- 
- § Accessible toilets and cisterns are to have protruding buttons; basins with accessible mixer taps.
  - § A small children's toilet in both male and female toilets is to be provided, a lower height basin in each and a lower height urinal in the male toilets suitable for use by a child.
- (h) Parking is to include:**
- § Accessible parking bays positioned close to lifts.
  - § Bicycle and motor bike facilities
  - § End of trip facilities for cyclists
  - § Motorised scooter parking
  - § Parking ticket dispensing machines are to accommodate limited reach and pull ability.
  - § The help button should be within easy reach, stand out (not flush with) the fixture, with hearing augmentation.

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## 9. SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

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### 9.1 OVERVIEW

The Cultural Precinct aims to achieve a 5 star Green Star rating equivalent, demonstrating leadership in the sustainable design of public buildings and place-making by Local Government.

The development is to be designed to achieve high standards of energy efficiency and water conservation, life cycle analysis for selection of materials, waste minimisation, low greenhouse gas emissions and an operational plan to maintain the standards for the life of the building.

Council values and places a high emphasis on the sustainability objectives in the areas of:

- § management
- § indoor and outdoor environment quality
- § energy
- § water
- § materials
- § land use and ecology
- § emissions
- § transport
- § innovation.

These goals are similar to the categories used in a five-star Green Star rating and to the categories used by the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) across the majority of rating schemes. At this time however there is no applicable green star rating tool for performing arts buildings and so the Cultural Precinct is unable to seek a formal green star rating.

The design of the site and the buildings should address the climatic extremes of the wet tropics, throughout all phases and types of use. In addition, consideration of the building life cycle is critical. The building and services design, and the selection of materials and finishes must confidently and successfully address the user demands, maintenance and operational costs brought about by extreme humidity, torrential rain, intense sun and heat, and the potential for flooding and storm surge. Council will be seeking advice on the appropriate cyclone rating for construction.

The provision of shade and shelter, suitable planting, natural ventilation and airflow, to achieve a high level of user amenity is fundamental to the design.

Council encourages innovation across the site and in the performing arts centre in particular. Fundamental to innovative design will be the use of initiatives and design elements to reduce the carbon footprint, particularly for facilities that traditionally use high levels of power for stage lighting and mechanical services. In addition such design elements should consider visually pleasing aesthetics and multipurpose functionality.

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Further initiatives will be the selection of water efficient fittings, waterless urinals, water metering, a fire-test water re-use system with temporary storage for test water, and a water efficient irrigation system.

Sustainable materials should be selected including sustainable timber (FSC certified) and materials with a high percentage of re-cycled components. PVC products are to be minimised. Waste recycling storage is to be included.

Carpet, performance space seats, and furnishings will be selected with environmental considerations in mind, including the environmental accreditation of the manufacturer, durability, re-cycled content, design for re-use and disassembly, packaging and life cycle.

All insulation will be free of ozone-depleting gases in manufacture and composition. All refrigerants in the design are to be zero-ODP.

External lighting should be designed so no direct beams of light are directed beyond the site boundaries or upwards without falling directly on a surface for the explicit purpose of illuminating that surface.

Bicycle parking and end of trip facilities are to be provided for staff and visitors.

A detailed Brief will be developed by relevant consultants in conjunction with Council staff.

## **9.2 CARBON EMISSIONS REDUCTION POLICY**

Council is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing its impact on climate change. Council acknowledges that by taking early action and managing its carbon emissions, it will be less costly in the future.

In December 2009, Council adopted a carbon emissions reduction policy. The policy applies to Council, its associated infrastructure and the community. The policy establishes Council's intent with regard to greenhouse gas mitigation/carbon reduction. In partnership with stakeholders and relevant agencies Council aims to:

- § be carbon neutral by 2020, and will actively reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 50% on 2007/08 levels by 2020
- § develop new council buildings to minimise energy/water/waste usage
- § manage all of Council's operations to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions
- § accurately measure and monitor Council's greenhouse gas emissions on an annual basis

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### 9.3 SUSTAINABILITY SCORECARD – SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Council has developed **Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines** to provide practical guidance on the incorporation of Council's sustainability objectives into purchasing activities across Council. The Guidelines apply to all materials, products and services purchased by Council, including items procured by third parties (such as contractors) on behalf of Council. The relevant principles are repeated below for the purpose of defining what Council means when it refers to *sustainability*.

Consideration should be given to the following four principles when making procurement decisions and procuring materials, products and services.

#### 9.3.1. Improving resource efficiency

Procurement of materials, products and services should aim to utilise resources in the most efficient manner possible. This will range for example from utilisation of recycled products, to specification of sustainable/renewable materials, to engagement of consultants and contractors with a demonstrated ability to improve resource efficiency in Council projects.

The following are key items for consideration:

- Energy and water efficient options
- Options that reduce fuel consumption, such as hybrid, electric or gas vehicles, plant and equipment
- Options to use renewable power from solar or wind, or to use gas instead of electricity
- Options to reduce private vehicle usage and air travel
- Products and materials that are recycled or contain some recycled materials and/or materials that are sustainably harvested or produced materials (look for manufacturer's certification)
- Products and materials that are recyclable and compostable at end of life, or options that minimise waste production, particularly toxic waste production.

#### 9.3.2 Conserving biodiversity

Through effective specification and procurement, Council can ensure infrastructure and development projects minimise adverse environmental impacts and conserve biodiversity.

The following are key items for consideration:

- § Technologies, measures and strategies that manage stormwater flow and quality, erosion and the risk of toxic chemicals being released into the environment.
- § Technologies, measures and strategies that reduce or eliminate potential harm to flora and fauna.
- § Technologies, measures and strategies that reduce air pollution.
- § Technologies, measures or strategies that deliver conservation or rehabilitation benefit for water ways and terrestrial habitats.

- 
- § Products and materials that have been manufactured in a way that manages environmental harm at the time of production.

### **9.3.3 Enhancing community health and wellbeing**

Community health and wellbeing should be considered in procurement decisions with the objective of increasing community amenity, services and disaster response. For example, impacts on community health and well-being will be a key consideration in planning and the selection and procurement of land for infrastructure development, recreational areas, or other Council works.

The following are key items for consideration:

- § Options to improve the quality of open space available to the community.
- § Options that manage or reduce risks to the community posed by natural hazards.

### **9.3.4 Delivering sound governance and economic management**

Procurement should aim to support the local economy, facilitate the long-term sustainability of Council and ensure the safety and well-being of Council staff and the community.

The following are key items for consideration:

- Options that support the local economy through engagement of locally-based service providers and procurement of locally made, supplied or products or materials.
- Options that consider operational and maintenance costs in the long term and capacity of Council staff or the local community to undertake maintenance.
- Options that improve staff safety, well being and work practices and/or make jobs easier or safer.

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## **10. PUBLIC ART AND HERITAGE**

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Together with the building design, public art is to represent the diverse past and the contemporary cultural richness of the region and the wet tropics, thereby reinforcing a place-specific identity. From the earliest possible stages in the project, the design team must work closely with representatives from the Indigenous communities, visual arts practitioners and Council's Public Art Advisory Committee to achieve a close integration of the architecture with the works of art and craft required to bring the project to completion.

The public art program has not yet been briefed.

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## 11. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

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A detailed brief will be provided after the completion of the conceptual design phase.

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## **12. BUILDING SYSTEMS**

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A brief for the key electrical services and building management system, power and lighting, communications, audiovisual and emergency warning systems, and security services, will be developed at the completion of the conceptual design phase.

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## 13. OPERATIONS

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The different facilities and uses at the Cultural Precinct require detailed consideration be given to the varying operational requirements of the specific venues. The management of the performing arts venues is discussed below, and may or may not include the delivery of catering services. While the operation of the carpark supports the entire facility, it may be managed as a separate facility by a specialist operator, or as a subcontract by a specialist venue manager, or alternatively may be managed directly by Council. Again, the retail leasing and management may be undertaken by a specialist agent, or directly by Council. Facilities management may be undertaken by specialist staff engaged by Council, or may be outsourced. It is intended to make these decisions as early as possible so that a cohesive and coordinated management structure for the whole of the site is in place, well prior to the opening of the building. The input of venue and facilities managers will also be required during the design phases.

### 13.1 PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE MANAGEMENT

Preliminary Business Plans for the use of the Cultural Precinct Performing Arts Centre and for the Regional Museum were prepared in 2009/2010 at the time of the development of the site Feasibility Study.<sup>14</sup> Further to a funding grant provided by the Qld State Government in 2011, further business planning will follow the development of the site masterplan and two design concept options. The business plan will be again reviewed during the construction period with the programming, marketing and venue operations also finalised over that time. Council recognises that it is essential that the venues open with planned programs and budgets, and that the estimates of income and expenditure are achieved.

Although Council will own the new Cultural Precinct venues and facilities, at this very early stage of the project, the governance and management structure is yet to be determined. Options could include the management of all or part of the building by specialist in-house staff, or alternatively the venues could be managed externally under contract. In either case, Council's broad management objectives are to:

- § balance community and commercial use
- § achieve certainty of income
- § achieve certainty of expenditure
- § engage skilled and experienced operators
- § manage risk
- § enhance the reputation of the Cultural Precinct
- § ensure the open space is a space for the whole community, regardless of age, ability, income, gender or ethnicity
- § ensure equitable access for the community to all facilities
- § maintain Council's assets to a high standard.

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<sup>14</sup> Refer *Cultural Precinct Concept Planning Report* Project Services, Architectus, Positive Solutions (2009)

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Council seeks to optimise (although not necessarily maximise) the use of all venues to ensure the resident, visitor, business and arts communities are served in the best possible manner, as cost effectively as possible. Planning for routine and long term maintenance and the upgrading of the buildings and infrastructure to achieve the intended life cycle is also an essential consideration, and provision will be made for these costs in the Business Plan.

In assessing the options for the management of the various venues within the Cultural Precinct, Council will consider the type of use of each venue (and in particular the relationship between community and commercial use), the level of income to be achieved, the management expertise and skills required, the programming, and standards applied to similar venues located elsewhere. In summary, the Cultural Precinct Performing Arts Centre management is expected to include venue management, technical management, marketing and business development, programming management and box office management. An area to be explored is the opportunity to undertake facilities management across all venues, including the museum and public open space.

### **13.2 CATERING AND BARS**

The provision of food and beverage services, and the opportunity for community groups to self-cater are important user considerations. With regard to commercial catering, at this stage it is assumed that the majority of the food will be prepared off-site and brought in, ready to be reheated and served.

The kitchen and bar design, and technical equipment specification, food storage areas, glass storage, and dishwashing facilities, will be prepared by commercial kitchen consultants.

### **13.3 RETAIL LEASING AND MANAGEMENT**

As described elsewhere in this Brief, the project provides the opportunity to develop complementary workshop, educational, retail or commercial space on site to support the public facilities. Management of these facilities and spaces will be determined as the project progresses.

### **13.4 CARPARK**

Council has yet to determine the preferred options for carpark management and operations to support the objectives of all uses.

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## 13.5 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

The management and maintenance of the building assets, services and most equipment, security, the planning of capital improvements, and statutory compliance and Council reporting requires quite different skill sets from the management and delivery of programming, performance, ticketing, hire and use of the community and cultural facilities.

The Cultural Precinct facilities management is expected to include the following which will be later specified in detail: facilities management, occupational health and safety, compliance, environmental, energy, consultant reporting and technical advice.

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REFERENCE: 2011011 v 8.1

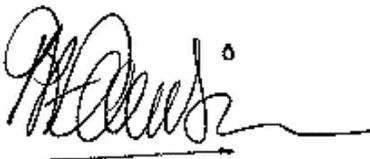
PROJECT: CAIRNS CULTURAL PRECINCT  
OUTLINE THEATRE DESIGN BRIEF

CLIENT: Cairns Regional Council  
51 The Esplanade  
Cairns QLD 4870

ATTENTION: Linda Cardew  
Manager Cairns Cultural Precinct Project

DATE: 4 March 2011

MARSHALL DAY ENTERTECH



Peter Fearnside  
Managing Director

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APPENDIX A CAIRNS PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE AREA SCHEDULE

**DOCUMENT STATUS**

Version	Purpose	Date delivered	Reviewed by
v4.3	First draft issued to client	1 February 2011	C Gamble
v6.1	Second draft issued to client	4 February 2011	C Gamble
v7.0	Third draft issued to client	9 February 2011	C Gamble
v8.1	Issued to PCG	4 March 2011	C Gamble

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## 1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Introduction

Cairns Regional Council is developing the Cairns Cultural Precinct on a 1.5ha site adjacent to Trinity Wharf.

Cairns Cultural Precinct will be a visual and performing arts and educational centre capable of bringing together remote areas and communities of outback Australia and the Pacific.

The performing arts centre associated with the Cairns Cultural Precinct will be designed and managed to attract Australian and International shows, concerts and acts. It will also nurture local actors, dancers and musicians and support educational programs in performance, stage design and production.

The objective of the outline theatre design brief is to advance the development of the architectural brief and support the architectural design process. The brief provides details of the infrastructure that will be required to allow the performing arts centre to be proactive in creating an artistic environment which will encourage excellence in the creative arts and provide an exciting and rich experience for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

The brief concentrates on describing the requirements and special relationship of each space in broad terms, leaving detailed description of each room to follow as the brief is developed.

The brief should be read in conjunction with the outline acoustic design brief prepared by Acoustic Studio.

### 1.2 Consultation

The Cairns Regional Council has undertaken extensive consultation with community and arts industry groups over the last 10 years.

In January 2011 focus groups sessions were held in Cairns with representatives of the performing arts industry, indigenous and multi-cultural groups and neighbouring ports operators and local business. The object of the latest consultation was to bring the project up to date and to test the scope and broad design of the performing arts centre.

Tele-conferences were also held with arts organisations in Queensland and other states in Australia.

There was an urgency expressed during the latest consultation process that the performing arts centre should be built.

Consultation with the arts industry groups indicates that the capacity of the Main Auditorium should be at least 1,000 seats while 1,200 seats would allow for expected growth in audience numbers.

Over the decade that consultation has been undertaken there has been a revolution in multi-media, digital broadcasting and most recently social media. The focus groups addressed the changes in the expectations of audiences and concluded that Cairns had the opportunity to develop a unique performing arts centre that can record, transmit and interact with remote towns and communities in Far North Queensland, Australia and the Pacific Rim.

There was a desire expressed during the consultation process that the performing arts centre should be future proofed as far as possible by including the latest technical infrastructure.

The consultation process also reinforced the need for community access to rehearsal spaces. The concept of a community hub servicing local groups and individuals was identified.

Discussion with major performing arts companies identified potential areas of growth in audience numbers. Opera Queensland and Opera Australia productions currently tour biennially in regional Queensland but would consider additional tours if a suitable venue was available. There would be an opportunity for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and other companies to expand their current touring programme in Cairns if a suitable classical music venue was available.

### 1.3 Vision

Cairns is one of the most culturally diverse cities in Australia and is the gateway to millions of tourists every year visiting Far North Queensland. The new cultural precinct will provide a unique cultural showcase for local, national and international creative talent from wide and varying backgrounds.

The cultural precinct needs to provide 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities for the western performing arts including orchestral symphony performances, chamber music, dance and opera, and must also be appropriate and accessible to indigenous and multi-cultural groups. The prospect of combining these art forms and linking them to other Australian and international venues via new technology is exciting, and the design of the precinct must facilitate this.

The performing arts centre and the cultural precinct must be designed holistically to address all performance and audience requirements and expectations, incorporating spaces that bring together performance, eating, viewing, gathering, multi-media and social networking.

In the 20th Century the advent of radio, recording, film, TV and finally the internet changed how we experienced the performing arts. In the past decade, the advance in social media has pushed us into a new realm of possibility with people posting on Facebook and Twitter and blogging about their experiences in real time. Improved audio and video reproduction quality combined with high speed broadband has resulted in the ability to stream and deliver information at previously unattainable quality and at a cost that has previously been prohibitive.

To take account of this change the Cairns Cultural Precinct will be the most technologically advanced centre for the performing arts designed in Australia. The provision of an audio and video suite and large control rooms in each venue that can accommodate broadcast and video equipment will enable live performances to be recorded, mixed and shared in a way that will bring people together from the city to regional and remote communities. For many this will provide access to a wide range of performing arts for the first time.

The building will be briefed to include a technical infrastructure that will enable this vision to be realised. All venues will be capable of extensive video projection and the presentation of multi-media.

The Cairns Cultural Precinct will become a distance performing and learning centre enabling performances from remote areas of outback Australia or the Pacific Islands to be seamlessly connected.

There is a great opportunity in Cairns to develop performing and visual arts unique to the region which have a rich indigenous and multi-cultural heritage and for the Cairns Cultural Precinct to become a significant cultural asset for the far north.

The vision for the performing arts centre at the Cairns Cultural Centre is that it should be:

- A performing arts centre for the whole of Northern Queensland and for the Pacific Rim
- Sensitive to the unique requirements of indigenous and multi-cultural artists and audiences
- Technologically advanced
- A living cultural space
- Accessible to local artists and groups
- A hub that reflects Cairns' unique cultural diversity
- A place for teaching, storytelling, learning and cultural educational
- A place that positions Cairns as a respected centre for the creative arts.

#### 1.4 Project scope

This project scope has been developed around the user needs analysis undertaken by Council over an extended period of time, and has also drawn on the venues and spatial requirements identified during meetings held by focus groups in January 2011.

The brief has taken into account the likely growth in local performing arts activity that will occur when the new performing arts centre opens in addition to predicted changes to the number, size and nature of touring productions that will be attracted to the new facilities.

The existing business plan for the Cairns Cultural Precinct is based on a performing arts facility with two performance spaces with seating capacity of approximately 1,000 and 300–450 respectively, and all necessary front and back of house and rehearsal facilities considered appropriate for such venues. A rehearsal studio will also act as a third performance space.

The second phase of the Cairns Cultural Precinct project will see the development of the Cairns Regional Museum which at this stage incorporates the heritage listed "White's Shed".

## 2.0 THE SITE

### 2.1 Location, boundary and site area

The cultural precinct occupies a site that overlooks Trinity Inlet.

The site has an area of 1.5ha. It is relatively flat and bounded by Wharf Street to the west, Trinity Wharf 6 to the east, a port access road to the south and landscaping associated with the recently refurbished Wharf 5 to the north.

The site provides a buffer between the working port of Cairns and the City of Cairns. It is strategically located across Wharf Street from the Cairns Convention Centre.

### 2.2 Constraints

The site is subject to tidal surges that would indicate that consideration should be given to elevating the buildings to form a podium above flood levels. Consideration will therefore have to be given to the movement of audiences up to the podium and of more concern loading and unloading to the stages without the use of freight lifts

One of the first important design issues that will need to be establish is the stage levels in relationship to grade and access.

The site is adjacent to a working port and alongside workshops. This results in noise at all times of the day and night from shipping, the movement of freight and goods, industry and the movement of small and large vessels.

The heritage listed "White's Shed" is located on the site. It is currently proposed to incorporate "White's Shed" into the proposed museum but this should not prevent a design that uses this area as part of the performing arts centre being developed.

### 2.3 Ingress and Egress points

The existing traffic flow around the site is complex and variable. The access road that links Wharf Street with wharves 3 to 5 is used by buses moving passengers to and from cruise liners, large and small commercial vehicles supplying the cruise liners and other vessels and general port traffic. Commercial vehicles associated with the Cairns Ports also use this access road.

At present it is considered appropriate that car park ingress and egress is via Wharf Street and the performing art centre loading dock is accessed via the port access. However alternative traffic management systems should be explored.

Sufficient manoeuvring and standing room needs to be provided for large trucks to load and unload at the same level as the stage.

## 2.4 Connection to Cairns Convention Centre

Consultation with the management of Cairns Convention Centre indicated that a covered elevated connection across Wharf Street is highly desirable. This would enable conference attendees and the public to enjoy easy access to the cultural precinct and for the performing arts spaces to be used as additional conference venues.

The location, width and form of this connection should be an integral part of the design of the precinct.

## 3.0 ROOM SCHEDULE

Appendix A provides an indicative room schedule with net floor areas and indicative ceiling heights.

## 4.0 MAIN PERFORMANCE SPACE

### 4.1 Overview

The main performance space will be a flexible format multifunctional auditorium with a seating capacity in any mode of not less than 1,000 seats. The maximum seating capacity will be 1,200 seats. The seating capacity should not include the seating on the orchestra pit.

Performance Space 1 is a replacement for the 670 seat Civic Theatre but will also accommodate live music performance.

There will be an orchestra pit and a deployable orchestra shell.

The main uses have been identified as:

- Drama & theatre
- Dance & ballet
- Opera
- Symphony & chamber music
- Musical theatre
- Physical theatre
- Jazz, rock and popular music
- School events & Eisteddfods
- Civic functions and public lectures.

The form of the room should maximise intimacy and provide a close visual and acoustical relationship between audience and performer. Side balcony ledges or boxes will help to achieve this.

It is important to minimise the proscenium width in this multi-purpose auditorium to create an intimate and well focused room. Most users, including Opera/Dance/Broadway, will not require a width of more than about 15m; however, full size symphony performance needs a width of 18-20m.

To avoid a large difference in proscenium widths for performance types a successful approach is to bring the orchestra partly into the room over the orchestra pit and a lift extension. This has the dual advantage of reducing the proscenium width to about 16m, which improves the room form as well as placing the orchestra visually and acoustically in a desirable concert hall relationship with the audience.

#### 4.2 Auditorium

The auditorium should be designed in accordance with the following broad specification:

- It is envisaged that the auditorium will be rectangular with a maximum width of 26m and a maximum length to be 28m
- The auditorium will have 2 balconies with a maximum overhang of 5 rows and a minimum height of 14m
- There will be a need to vary the acoustics of the auditorium by deployable absorption. Variable volume is not considered appropriate
- The distance from the front of the stage to the rear of the auditorium should be no great than 28m
- There should be forestage rigging positions, lighting bridges and additional follow spot positions at the rear of the auditorium
- Additional box booms, balcony front and side stage lighting positions should be provided
- Audio, lighting and projection control rooms should be provided at the rear of the auditorium.

#### 4.3 Proscenium Stage

The stage of the main performance space should be designed in accordance with the following broad specification:

- Proscenium opening should be variable from 13m to 20m wide and 7m to 9m high with a default opening of 14m wide by 8m high
- Acting area 20m wide by 16m deep
- The side stage should be at least 15m wide on each side in addition to the acting area

- A rear stage should be provided that is 20m wide and 10m deep. Full flying is not required over this area but rigging beams should be provided
- Access from rear stage to loading dock is required to be via an acoustic door at least 4m wide and 6.5m high
- The flytower height should be 26m to underside of the grid
- Backstage space for crossing 2m wide is required.

#### 4.4 Orchestra pit and forestage

- An orchestra pit lift with two sections should be provided. The first a Broadway / Mozart pit and extended forestage at 2.5m and the second for opera and at 1.95m equivalent to 2 seat rows
- The orchestra pit lifts should be 18m wide with seat wagons and seat wagon storage
- The maximum orchestra pit size should be 18m wide, 3.5m deep and a minimum head height of 2.5m
- This extended orchestra lift arrangement would be also be used for assembly/lectures
- The orchestra pit should extend no more than 1.5m under the stage
- The orchestra pit should be capable of accommodating an orchestra of 40
- Structural steel work for forestage overhead rigging should be provided.

#### 4.5 Orchestra shell

- A deployable orchestra shell is required to accommodate an orchestra up to 100
- The orchestra shell shall fit the stage opening of 18m and be designed to provide seamless architectural internal design
- The depth of the orchestra would be approximately 6.5m downstage of the proscenium and 6.5 upstage providing a total symphony shell depth of 13m. The dimension downstage would be 18m
- The orchestra shell shall be capable of rapid deployment and should be stored off stage in a designated zone
- The orchestra shell will incorporate bench seating suitable for a choir of 80.

#### 4.6 Seats and sightlines

- To achieve optimum sightline and avoiding excessively steep rakes or excessively high and steep balconies the room should be designed, in section, to "second row vision" and all seating staggered

- Seat widths should average 550mm with front to back spacing but a minimum of 950mm. Provision should be made for distributed universal access and variable width seating to state code or beyond.
- At least 50% of seating should be at stalls level.

#### 4.7 Technical systems

- A suite of control rooms including audio, lighting and observation need to be provided at the rear of stalls level
- Within the room, central and forward of the balcony will be a sound mix cockpit adjustable in size with removable seats and platform floor
- At the rear of the first balcony is a projection suite and above the second balcony a follow spot room with space for 3 spots
- Two lighting bridges would be provided as well as side lighting galleries and boom positions both sides of the proscenium
- The stage should be equipped with power winches with approximately 66 lines at 200mm centres each with a WLL of 500kg. Each line set shall incorporate full load sensing and readout capabilities
- The flying system shall be of the latest international standard and allow a minimum of 20 lines flying simultaneously under full load and speed
- A full surround sound system shall be provided and the speakers should be integrated into the architecture of the auditorium interior
- All requisite stage lighting, sound system, audio visual and other technical equipment should be provided
- There will be rigged speaker clusters at the proscenium wall as well as distributed speakers throughout the house.

### 5.0 PERFORMANCE SPACE 2

#### 5.1 Overview

Performance Space 2 will be a flat-floor, flexible space with retractable seating and a technical gallery. The retractable seating system will enable a variety of performance styles and production types to be accommodated.

Consideration must be given to manual handling loads of removable elements and staffing requirements and costs to 'turn around' the space from one configuration to another.

The design should enable a variety of presentation formats including:

End stage  
Arena  
Short and long traverse  
Thrust.

The seating capacity will vary depending on the format, but a maximum of 450 seats is desirable.

The main uses have been identified as:

Drama  
Dance  
Recitals  
Musical theatre  
Cinema  
Cabaret  
Live music  
Physical theatre  
Fashion shows  
Functions  
Lectures.

The space will not be purely a black box drama theatre and should have internal finishes that complement its uses.

## 5.2 Auditorium

- The auditorium should be rectangular of dimensions 20m wide, 27m long and 10m high
- A fixed seat balcony with side galleries and an adjustable floor system
- There will be a need to vary the acoustics of the auditorium by using motorized absorptive banners or curtains
- Retractable seating system in banks of approximately 100 capable of being relocated within the auditorium
- The stage should have direct and level access to the scene dock through a sound rated loading door 3m by 3m high.

## 5.3 Floor and walls

The floor will be sprung for dance and have loading capacity appropriate for the weight of the seating units in both their retracted and extended positions with full audience on variations.

If the seating unit is to be moved or stored or set up in a variety of locations within the auditorium, the floor coverings and floor loadings in all of these places need to be appropriate to facilitate movement.

Manual handling is a major consideration in the turnaround from one style of space use to another. A design stage risk assessment should be conducted to ensure that compliance with the manual handling code of practice can be achieved in relation to the seating system. We strongly advise that the retractable system be driven by electric motors and not manually extracted or retracted.

Walls of the auditorium to include full height vertical sections of unistrut channel at 2.5m spacing.

Floor to include rigging points for circus and other uses

#### 5.4 Technical systems

- Possible power rigging system consisting of approximately 40 line sets each with a capacity of 500kg rigging system
- Full flying is not required in this space however a comprehensive suspension rigging system shall be provided
- A series of catwalk bridges 6.5m above stage at 3m centres over the stage and audience with an up and down stage rigging beam system above
- Comprehensive sound and AV systems are required.

### 6.0 BACK OF HOUSE

#### 6.1 Overview

Back of house accommodation is required to support management, technical crew and artists with their work.

The back of house is a working performing arts factory and needs to be planned and designed taking into account all necessary material handling, OH&S, and circulation requirements so that the process of loading and unloading of scenery and production equipment, construction and erection of sets and the running of productions is undertaken in an efficient and safe manner.

There is a need to provide large numbers of performers especially children close to the stage for Eisteddfods and school performances.

#### 6.2 Accommodation

The back of house accommodation will include:

- Stage door and security
- Individual dressing rooms
- Assessable male and female dressing rooms for up to 200 and overflow corridor areas

- Production and technical offices
- Accommodation for technical crew rooms
- Green Room for 100
- A separate wardrobe and laundry for each performance venue
- Loading dock at the same level as the stage of both performance venues sized to take two semi-trailers
- Workshop and storage construction spaces
- Piano and instrument store
- Recording suite
- Storage for risers / chairs etc
- Scene painting dock
- Circulation areas
- Access for rigging equipment
- Cleaners and chemical storage cupboards with sinks.

## 7.0 MAIN REHEARSAL ROOM

### 7.1 Overview

The main rehearsal room will have the same floor area as the stage of Performance Space 1 and will incorporate retractable seating for a minimum audience of 150-200.

For rehearsal, this room would be used for large and small orchestral as well as for opera/dance /Broadway/drama. For public use, the room would be used for small scale performances, banquets and performance art.

The rehearsal room should have direct access for the public from front of house foyers and back of house for performers. Reasonable access should also be provided to the scene dock for scenery and equipment.

To humanize the space, the room could possibly be glazed to the outside with the windows provided with blackout blinds.

The room could have a perimeter technical gallery 1m wide at 3.5m above floor level for easy access to lighting instruments. The gallery at the audience end would be 2.5m wide for open control/projection equipment accessed from the floor by a spiral stair case.

## 7.2 Room

- Rectangular 23m long, 14m wide and 8m high
- Adjustable acoustics would be required in the form of banners or curtains
- Sprung floor for dance
- Mirror and ballet bars on two adjacent walls
- Retractable seating to accommodate up to 200
- Fixed lighting bars and overhead facilities for hanging.

## 7.3 Technical systems

- There should be a suspended lighting/suspension 1.2m by 1.2m pipe grid at 5.5m above floor level over the entire room
- Comprehensive sound and AV systems are required.

## 8.0 COMMUNITY HUB

### 8.1 Overview

The community hub will consist of a number of independently accessed meeting rooms plus rehearsal, recording and multi-media spaces that will be directly linked to external performance spaces and community kitchen facilities.

The vision for the community hub is to bring together a number of spaces that are accessible to small groups and individuals involved in drama, dance, music and multi-media.

The community kitchen will be accessible to indigenous and multi-cultural groups to prepare foods associated with festival, cultural celebrations and performances.

A recording studio with adjacent control room will be suitable for recording a variety of music from local rock bands and indigenous and multi-cultural groups to small classical performances. The studio will also become an important for the recording of oral history.

The multi-media suite adjacent to the recording studio will have black curtains, green screens and theatre lighting. This community space will accommodate up to 50 people and will be flexible enough to be converted into a gallery, performance or workshop space.

## 8.2 Accommodation

- Recording studio and control room 100m<sup>2</sup>
- Multi-media suite 60m<sup>2</sup>
- Three meetings rooms of total area 75m<sup>2</sup>
- Performers changing rooms with wet and dry areas for the application and removal of body paint
- Community kitchen 200m<sup>2</sup>.

## 9.0 OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE SPACES

### 9.1 Overview

It is not considered appropriate to provide a large outdoor performance venue that rivals the existing sound shell at Fogarty Park. The outdoor performance spaces will be located throughout the precinct and will accommodate a variety of indigenous and multicultural activities, jazz and rock performances and other community events.

The outdoor performance spaces will have protection from sun and rain for performers and audience. They will each be equipped with power, technical cabling infrastructure and structures that will enable rigging and lighting to be installed.

Provision will be made for the display of temporary and permanent public art installations.

Toilets and changing rooms will need to be provided in close proximity to the outdoor performance spaces.

### 9.2 Stages

- Three small raised timber stages approximately 10m wide by 4 m deep
- Offstage space
- Storage space
- Overhead grid
- Access performers changing rooms with wet and dry areas for the application and removal of body paint.

### 9.3 Technical infrastructure and wiring

- Power Supply; 3 phase and 240v
- Audio power supply
- Lighting rigging positions

- Sound system infrastructure
- AV system infrastructure.

## 10.0 FRONT OF HOUSE, FOYERS AND PUBLIC SPACES

### 10.1 Overview

The Foyer is a large important public space shared between all performance spaces and the community hub. This will be one of the main areas of architectural planning and should ideally be an attractive space for the community during the day. Its main function is to provide a socializing space before, pre-performance, at intermission and during the day. It is a potential revenue source and will have bars at each level, a small gift book shop, box office and catering services for community functions.

The foyers will be welcoming and designed to embrace and enliven the performance experience. They will provide museum and gallery spaces and be capable of accommodating live performances and multimedia presentations.

Foyers should be of sufficient volume to provide a sense of occasion and have sufficient sound absorption in the ceiling plane to reduce noise build-up during high levels of occupancy.

All external entrances to foyers and public spaces must be provided with protection from torrential rain and strong winds.

A restaurant with seating for 200 and a café of 100 seats for pre-performance and general dining will be linked to the Foyer. The restaurant should also be directly accessed from the outside.

Retail outlets, bars and restaurants should have the capacity to operate independently of the performance spaces and foyers with access to staff change rooms and public toilets at all times. They will require a dedicated loading dock, storage facilities and rubbish removal.

Ideally the management's offices should be located close to the front of house.

### 10.2 Accommodation

Front of house accommodation will include:

- Front-of-Theatre marquee and entrance areas
- Carparking for 400
- Covered drop off zones
- Foyer
- Box Office

- Cloak room
- Bars and catering area with refrigeration and cool store
- Restaurant with 200 seats
- Café with 100 seats
- Rubbish rooms, recycling and bin store
- Toilets with close proximity to auditorium and bar
- Management offices
- Cleaner cupboards and storage area
- Support areas, break out rooms, VIP spaces
- Provision for other activities such as foyer entertainment and exhibitions
- Office accommodation
- Storage
- Function spaces
- Meeting/Board room.

## 11.0 UNIVERSAL ACCESS

### 11.1 Overview

The Cairns Cultural Centre will be capable of being accessed and enjoyed by people with disabilities in the same way as any other member of the public.

### 11.2 Wheelchair access

Wheelchair users and people with walking disabilities should be able to access all public areas of the precinct by the same route as able-bodied people and enjoy easy access to all services.

Universal access is required to all seating areas and control rooms.

### 11.3 Hearing augmentation systems

The Disability Discrimination Act requires provision of hearing augmentation system to allow equal access to all abilities. Australian Standard AS 1428.5 provides guidelines for the scope of these systems in theatre buildings. Hearing loops will be required in various locations, including, foyer, ticket office, and of course the theatre auditorium.

### 11.4 Vision impaired

To aid the vision impaired the building will be designed with good colour contrast in choice of materials particularly relating to floors, steps ramps and signage.

Clear signage of sufficient size incorporating Braille must be provided in all areas.

The capability to provide audio description of all performances should be available.

## 12.0 BUILDING SERVICES

### 12.1 Mechanical service

The performing arts venues and associated spaces will need to be fully air-conditioned and provide a suitable level of comfort for audience, artists and production staff.

Performance space 1 will have a displacement air-conditioning system with air being supplied via diffusers in the seats and to below seats or in the floor.

All performing arts spaces, side stages and instrument storage will require humidity control to protect musical instruments.

Stage supply and exhaust systems will require to be separately isolated to allow the use of stage smoke and haze effects.

Individual temperature adjustment will be provided in all dressing rooms

### 12.2 Electrical services

Stage and technical positions within the performance spaces will require significant power supplies for lighting and stage equipment. The remaining building will have moderate power requirements.

Stage lighting and power systems will be designed to have sufficient capacity to meet the demands of major theatrical productions.

A separate stable "clean" power supply or "green power" will be provided for sensitive sound and audio/visual systems. This will consist of dedicated switchboards and sub-circuit wired to strategic technical positions.

### 12.3 Technical infrastructure and wiring

The Cairns Cultural Centre Precinct will be cabled to enable real-time network technology for the integrated transport and routing of multi-channel 3G/HD/SD-SDI video, multi-channel audio, Inter-communications, control and data.

Structured cabling pathways will be established throughout the precinct and within venues to provide initial and future cabling requirements.

All technical systems will use OS1 Single-mode Fibre as the primary transport medium and venues will be connected via a redundant ring of multi-core Single-mode Fibre. This Single-mode Fibre network will form the core cabling technology for the precinct. Zero Water Peak OS1 Single-mode Fibre will be the standard used to maximise the useable spectrum (bandwidth) of the fibre.

While the precinct will be integrated to enable a "Connected Community" the designed cabling topology will be implemented to ensure no single point failures can transpire.

The adoption of Coarse Wavelength Division Multiplexing (CWDM) will increase channel capacity while keeping the number of fibre cables to a manageable level.

Cabling within venues will comprise of OS1 Single-mode Fibre and Category 6A Shielded copper cable thus ensuring high speed and wide bandwidth transport is maintained to every connection point.

Distributed Node Rooms will be established at strategic points throughout the precinct to service the venues. The Distributed Node Rooms will be built to telecommunication carrier standards i.e. redundant environmental control, power and security. A fundamental part of the distributed design will ensure that in the unlikely event of failure of one or more Node Rooms, catastrophic precinct failure will not occur.

Interface to outside communities will be achieved through the National Broadband Network (NBN) thus enabling all Australians with high-speed and wide bandwidth interaction to the Cairns Cultural Centre Precinct. Connection to the NBN will be via redundant links.

#### 12.4 Fire services

The fire services systems in the Cairns Cultural Centre Precinct will be part of a complete fire engineering solution.

Fire systems within the performance spaces will consist of automatic detection systems. Where there is a proscenium there will be a fire curtain and drencher system or fully sprinkled stage or back-stage areas.

A safe system of isolating the fire systems on stage will be developed to enable smoke and fire detectors to be isolated from the fire brigade in circumstances where stage smoke, haze or pyrotechnics are being used.

APPENDIX A  
CAIRNS PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE  
NET AREA SCHEDULE

1.0 PERFORMANCE SPACE				
No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Seating area	Stalls 600 seats	548m <sup>2</sup>	
		Balconies 600 seats	600m <sup>2</sup>	
.02	Stage	Proscenium 12m to 20m wide 7-9m high. Acting area 12m deep and 20m width.	544m <sup>2</sup>	26m
.03	Stage apron	3m minimum deep stage apron.	54m <sup>2</sup>	
.04	Orchestra pit	Orchestra Pit to accommodate up to 40 players.	72m <sup>2</sup>	
.05	Orchestra pit undercroft		24m <sup>2</sup>	1.5m
.06	Seating wagon store		104m <sup>2</sup>	1.8m
.07	Pit assembly area	Access to stage and stage apron	30m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.08	Pit Assembly area	Access to stage and stage apron	15m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.09	Rear stage and crossover		100m <sup>2</sup>	10m
.10	Lighting Et Box Booms	Two on OP Et PS side. 3 platform levels with connecting stair. Connect to light bridges and fly galleries	50m <sup>2</sup>	
.11	Lighting Bridges	3 no. at 1.5m wide and 20m long. Plywood floor on steel frame.	120 m <sup>2</sup>	
.12	Sub-stage	Possible us as store subject to Fire Regulations	144 m <sup>2</sup>	4m
.13	Grid	Open grid floor constructed from steel channels. Includes top loading gallery. Allow for winching hatch.	300m <sup>2</sup>	
.14	Winch rooms	OP Et PS side	100 m <sup>2</sup>	4m
.15	Flying gallery	Allow for one OP and one PS Fly Gallery with minimum 20.6m clear separation. Plywood floor on steel frame. Suspended from grid. Minimum 2m wide.	50m <sup>2</sup>	
.16	Trap room		160m <sup>2</sup>	
.17	Sound Shell storage		50m <sup>2</sup>	10m
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>3065m<sup>2</sup></b>	

2.0 BACK OF HOUSE (TECHNICAL)

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Loading dock/deliveries	Located as extension of back of stage. Sized to fit two semi-trailers and rubbish container. Awning to provide covered loading area. Access to adjacent workshop	150m <sup>2</sup>	6m
.02	Holding area/temporary store	Should be secure	25m <sup>2</sup>	9m
.03	Rostra and chair store	Easy access to stage	60m <sup>2</sup>	9m
.04	Piano store	Easy access to stage	20 m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.05	Instrument store	Easy access to stage	10 m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.06	Platform stage	Easy access to stage	25m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.07	General storage	For props etc	40m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.08	Lighting store and workshop		30m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.09	Rack rooms		45 m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.10	Dimmer Room	High heat load	30m <sup>2</sup>	4m
.11	Sound, Video, Electronics workshop		30m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.12	Production office	For visiting Managers	12m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.13	Technician Offices	8 offices and meeting room	100m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.14	Technical Staff Change Room	Include lockers and shower	45m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.15	Wardrobe/Costume Repair	Workbench and Ironing area	25m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.16	Laundry	Two laundries each with 4 Industrial Washing Machines & Dryer	40m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.17	Rubbish Store	Close to Loading Dock	10m <sup>2</sup>	4m
<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>697m<sup>2</sup></b>	

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3.0 BACK OF HOUSE (PERFORMERS)

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Star Dressing rooms	Four star dressing rooms each to accommodate two people with ensuite bathroom. Close to stage. 4 at 20m <sup>2</sup>	80m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.02	Practice room	Four practice room adjacent Star Dressing Rooms	80m <sup>2</sup>	3.5m
.03	5 Person change rooms	Four 5 person change rooms with shared ensuite bathroom 4 at 30m <sup>2</sup>	120m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.04	12 Person change rooms	Three 12 Person Change Rooms at 60m <sup>2</sup> each includes adjacent bathroom area	180m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.05	Wet & dry change room	Two wet and dry change rooms for body painting	50m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.06	Wig and makeup room		20m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.07	First aid		20m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.08	Green Room	To accommodate 100 people. Include small kitchen area. External terrace area preferred.	100m <sup>2</sup>	4m
.09	Stage Door Office	Adjacent to theatre loading dock area	10m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.10	Band Room	For assembly, warm-up and instrument case storage use multi-use space.	75m <sup>2</sup>	4m
<b>Sub Total</b>			<b>735m<sup>2</sup></b>	

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#### 4.0 FRONT OF HOUSE (TECHNICAL SPACES)

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Sound control room	At rear of auditorium	40m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.02	Lighting control room	At rear of auditorium	30m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.03	Follow spot rooms	At rear of auditorium each side and centre	20m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.04	Projection Suite	At rear of Auditorium. Soundproof room. Access from Foyer	15m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.05	Crying Room/Directors/ Interpreters room	At rear of Auditorium. Soundproof room. Access from Foyer	15m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>120m<sup>2</sup></b>	

#### 5.0 FRONT OF HOUSE (INCLUDING ADMINISTRATION)

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Foyer Areas	Distributed over floor levels	1,200m <sup>2</sup>	5-6m
.02	Box Office	Connect to general office. Possible external transaction	30m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.03	Box office manager		10m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.04	Female toilets	30 WC distributed	150 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.05	Male toilets	6 WC and 16 urinals distributed	120 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.06	Disabled toilets	3 Unisex	9 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.07	General Office	To accommodate 20 staff plus area for records storage.	160 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.08	Manager's Office	Adjacent to General Office. Direct access to Foyer. Include sink and bar fridge	25m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.09	Friends of theatre office		15m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.10	Office Store and Tea Area		20m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.11	Cloakroom	Close to entrance	15m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.12	Friends of theatre store	For bollards, display boards, etc	20m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.13	Artwork store	Climate Controlled. Could be located near Loading Dock	25 m <sup>2</sup>	3.5m
.14	Sick room	Room for bed and basin	10 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.15	Bars	Single long counter or multiple bars. Separate coffee and water	50m <sup>2</sup>	5-6m
.16	Bar Store	Includes Cold Room	20m <sup>2</sup>	3m
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>1879m<sup>2</sup></b>	

6.0 PERFORMANCE SPACE 2

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Studio Space	For performance, rehearsal and other uses. Floor area 27m long x 20m wide. 350-400 retractable seats. Direct access from Foyer. Sprung timber floor. Equip with perimeter gallery, lighting bridge and pipe grid. 10m high ceiling. Corner entry	540 m <sup>2</sup>	10m
.02	Studio Space balconies		160 m <sup>2</sup>	
.03	Technical balconies		120 m <sup>2</sup>	
.04	Seating store		45 m <sup>2</sup>	3m
.05	Dressing rooms	Two 6 person with bathroom attached	50 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.06	Green room		30 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.07	Offices	Two	30 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.08	Wardrobe		20 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.09	Store		20 m <sup>2</sup>	2.8m
.10	Rehearsal Space	Direct Access from Loading Dock and Side Stage. Easy access from dressing rooms and  Approximate size 14m x 14m. Sprung timber floor.  Equip with perimeter gallery, lighting bridge and pipe grid. 10m high ceiling. Consider corner entry.	200m <sup>2</sup>	6m
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>1215m<sup>2</sup></b>	

## 7.0 COMMUNITY HUB

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	Function Rooms	For use for community	100m <sup>2</sup>	
.02	Meeting Rooms	Three 12 person rooms.	100m <sup>2</sup>	
.03	Recording studio and control room	High level of sound insulation	100m <sup>2</sup>	
.04	Multimedia suite	Drapes and lighting	60 m <sup>2</sup>	
.05	Community Kitchen	Commercial Kitchen	200m <sup>2</sup>	
.06	Kitchen Stores		15m <sup>2</sup>	
.07	Destination Restaurant	Separate Access. Link to Foyer and including undercover external dining areas	200m <sup>2</sup>	
.08	Coffee Shop	Link to foyer. Include undercover and external areas	30m <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>805m<sup>2</sup></b>	

## 8.0 ANCILLARY AREAS

No.	Room	Remarks	Net area	Height
.01	External Performance Areas		250m <sup>2</sup>	
.02	Car Parking	400cars	1,200m <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>1,450m<sup>2</sup></b>	

## SUMMARY OF FUNCTION AREAS

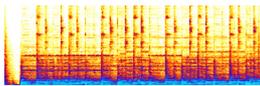
No.	Area	Net area
1.0	Performance space 1	3065m <sup>2</sup>
2.0	Back of House (Technical)	697m <sup>2</sup>
3.0	Back of House (Performers)	735m <sup>2</sup>
4.0	Front of House (Technical Spaces)	120m <sup>2</sup>
5.0	Front of House (including Administration)	1879m <sup>2</sup>
6.0	Performance space 2	1215m <sup>2</sup>
7.0	Community hub	805m <sup>2</sup>
8.0	Ancillary Areas	1,450m <sup>2</sup>
<b>TOTAL NET AREA</b>		<b>9966m<sup>2</sup></b>

# CAIRNS CULTURAL PRECINCT

## OUTLINE ACOUSTIC DESIGN BRIEF FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

**Issued**  
March 2011

# DRAFT

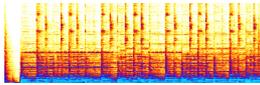


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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Cairns Regional Council is proposing the develop the Cairns Cultural Precinct at a harbour side site located to the south of Cairns CBD and to the east of the Cairns Convention Centre. A major component of the Precinct will be a Performing Arts Centre housing a number of performance facilities and the associated support spaces for these facilities.

It is recognised that the performance facilities will be acoustically critical and sensitive spaces, providing excellent acoustics that enhance the experience of both performer and audience.

A study by Cox Rayner + Positive Solutions was commissioned by Council in 2007 to examine the feasibility and business case for a regional performing arts centre<sup>1</sup>. In summary, this study presented the key features of a new performing arts centre as follows:

- *A 1,000 seat main auditorium with stage facilities suited to concerts, drama, comedy, circus, dance, musicals, civic and community events.*
- *A 300-400 seat studio theatre for smaller events such as cabaret, chamber music, jazz, contemporary dance, extended seasons of plays, school shows, world music, art-house cinema, exhibitions and corporate events.*
- *A spacious foyer that will also serve as an alternate performance space or function area.*
- *A rehearsal room that will service events on the main stage and the studio theatre, in addition to local dance schools, community orchestras and the like. It will also be available to be used for intimate events such as classical soirees, and art exhibitions.*
- *An outdoor performance area that will be used to animate the precinct. This may feature brass bands, world music, free family concerts, movies under the stars or small circus events.*

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<sup>1</sup> Cox Rayner + Positive Solutions, *The Cairns Regional Performing Arts Centre, Feasibility and Business Case Study into a Regional Performing Arts Centre*, p 4, 2007

- *A destination restaurant and a coffee shop to serve the needs of theatre patrons, but this will also help to animate the precinct from breakfast through to dinner time, every day. This will also generate additional revenue to be offset against operational costs.*
- *Ample parking will be provided on site in an undercover car park with a capacity for 421 vehicles. The location of the centre will enable the car park to serve the central business district during the day and the performing arts centre in the evening. It will also be able to provide additional parking for concerts, exhibitions and sporting events held in the Cairns Convention Centre.*
- *The facility will enhance the capability of the Award-winning Cairns Convention Centre. The Performing Arts Centre will be located adjacent to the Cairns Convention Centre and will enable operational synergies between these two complexes that could see the theatre facilities being used for plenary sessions or breakout sessions for major conferences. Similarly, the theatre will reduce the need to turn-away significant touring events by utilising spaces with the Cairns Convention Centre at peak times.*

In December 2011, Council commissioned the preparation of two Outline Design Briefs for the Project as follows:

- An Outline Theatre Design Brief to be prepared by Marshall Day Entertech Pty Ltd.
- An Outline Acoustic Design Brief to be prepared by Acoustic Studio Pty Ltd.

Both these Outline Design Briefs will be included as supporting documents to be issued to an architect selected and commissioned to prepare two concept design options for the Cultural Precinct, including the Performing Arts Centre.

This document forms the Outline Acoustic Design Brief.

## **1.2 Consultation and project definition**

A series of focus group sessions was carried out in January 2011 with representatives of the performing arts industry and indigenous and multicultural community groups. The purpose of the consultation was to re-examine the needs of the Cairns community *and to test the scope and broad design of the performing arts centre*<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Marshall Day Entertech, Spec v6.1 2011011, *Cairns Cultural Precinct Outline Theatre Design Brief*, p 1, 2011

Following these consultations, Marshall Day Entertech developed the definition of the various components of the Performing Arts Centre.

In the context of this Outline Acoustic Design Brief, the relevant spaces are as follows:

- The Main Performance Space (Performance Space 1).
- Performance Space 2.
- The Recording Suite located in the Back-of-House, linking all venues.
- The Main Rehearsal Room.
- The Recording Studio and dedicated adjacent Recording Control Room of the Community Hub.
- The Outdoor Performance Spaces.

### **1.3 The purpose of the Outline Acoustic Design Brief**

The purpose of this Outline Acoustic Design Brief is to inform the architect of the impact the acoustic requirements of the above spaces will have on the site. In particular, guidance is required as to how these acoustic requirements will affect the overall massing of the project.

This Brief includes the following:

- A general discussion of the relationship between acoustic performance and auditorium/performance space function.
- The acoustic rationale of each of the performance and rehearsal spaces.
- A statement defining the desired acoustic for each of the performance and rehearsal spaces.
- The form of each of the performance and rehearsal spaces.
- The design implications of each of the performance and rehearsal spaces.
- A discussion of the impact of the existing noise environment on the design of the performance and rehearsal spaces.

This Brief should be read in conjunction with the Outline Theatre Design Brief.

# 2 Acoustic Performance and Auditorium Functionality

## 2.1 The role of functionality

It is now well recognised that different performance types require different room acoustics, and that a single "multi-purpose" hall cannot provide a high quality acoustic environment for a large range and variety of performances. Accordingly, modern halls are designed for specific uses, and performing arts centres commonly include a number of venues designed to maximise the "reach" of the centre across a wide spectrum of performance types and user needs.

The "right" acoustic conditions for speech and music are very different. Our perception of the quality of speech and music is profoundly affected by the ways in which a room modifies the sound field generated within it. Just as we listen to both speech and music for different emotional reasons, our notion of acoustic quality is different for both speech and music. With speech we listen for audibility, intelligibility, clarity, and a natural sounding voice. With music we also listen for audibility, clarity and a natural sound, but an excellent musical acoustic will deliver much more. Fullness of tone, a sense of loudness and dynamics, reverberance, a sense of spaciousness and envelopment in the sound, a sense of intimacy with the performance, and a tonal colour in the music that is rich in bass without rumble, and brilliance without harshness are some of these subjective characteristics of excellence.

But even this is an oversimplification. Speech may be part of a dramatic production, the vocal parts of an opera, a keynote address, a lecture, a welcome address at a wedding reception, or conversation between visitors at an exhibition. Music may be the performance of a modern symphony, a Mozart string quartet, a piano recital, a jazz band, a school choir, an opera score, pre-recorded background music for a community event, and so on, all of which require different environments to sound "excellent".

It is against this background that the concept of "excellent" acoustics must be judged, and the realisation that excellence in acoustics is uniquely linked to the functionality of a particular performance space.

## 2.2 The need for variable room acoustics

A performance space will need to incorporate some method of varying the room acoustic in order to achieve a range of internal room acoustic environments that suit the range of intended uses and performance types.

In simple terms, this means that the reverberation time of the performance space needs to be appropriately long for unamplified “classical” music performance, with the ability to reduce the reverberation time to a more suitable value for speech based performances and amplified speech and music.

There are limits to the extent of acoustic variation that can be achieved, and the physical laws that relate reverberation time to both room volume and sound absorption govern these limits. As a consequence of these physical constraints, a common approach includes the following principles:

- Include several performance spaces of varying room volumes and seating capacities to maximise the acoustic “reach” of the overall Centre.
- Design the halls with sufficient room volume to achieve the higher reverberation times required for unamplified music for the given seating capacity. In these modes the reverberation time of each hall will be governed by the room volume and the sound absorption provided by the audience and seating.
- Include the facility to increase sound absorption with the deployment of acoustic banners, panels, curtains, etc. on the side and rear wall surfaces of the hall.

The acoustic design of the Cairns Performing Arts Centre shall follow these principles.

## 3 The Acoustic Rationale

The acoustic rationale of each of the performance/rehearsal spaces is derived from the functionality of each space developed from the early feasibility study by Cox Rayner + Positive Solutions and the recent community consultation.

### 3.1 The Main Performance Space (Performance Space 1)

The Main Performance Space will be a flexible format multifunctional auditorium with a seating capacity in any mode of not less than 1,000 seats. The maximum seating capacity will be 1,200 seats.

Performance Space 1 is a replacement for the 670 seat Cairns Civic Theatre but will also cater for live music. There will be an orchestra pit and a deployable orchestra shell.

The main uses have been identified as:

- Drama and theatre.
- Dance and ballet.
- Opera.
- Symphony and chamber music.
- Musical theatre.
- Physical theatre.
- School events and Eisteddfods.
- Civic functions and public lectures.

This range of uses represents a wide spread of acoustic requirements.

In an acoustic context, the range of uses can be grouped as follows (in no particular priority):

- The performance of live, unamplified music such as orchestral and chamber music.
- Unamplified speech based performances such as drama.
- Amplified speech and music performances.

Each of these three groups has its own acoustic requirements. Some will be similar across the range of uses (such as the need for quiet internal sound levels and the need for the absence of disturbance from intrusive noise), but some will differ between the groups. In particular, the room acoustic requirements for music will differ from those for speech and amplified speech and music performances.

To understand this difference between each type of use we have presented a discussion of the general acoustic requirements of each group and the subjective ways in which humans perceive acoustic quality for these differing performance types.

### **The performance of live, unamplified music**

In this context, live, unamplified music refers to orchestral, chamber ensemble and recitals.

The perception of acoustic quality in a music performance venue consists of a number of independent (but correlated) subjective descriptors. Most (but not all) of the descriptors can be quantified by one or more technical criteria, often described as objective acoustic parameters. These parameters relate to specific acoustic goals that form the basis of any concert hall or opera theatre design to achieve an excellent acoustic. The successful achievement of all the stated goals is necessary, as they all contribute to a unified listening experience.

#### **Absence of background noise and unwanted noise intrusion**

Musicianship involves conveyance of emotion, of dramatic contrasts. Background noise limits the dramatic possibilities of the performance and so the absence of noise is essential to allow the artists freedom to play or sing extremely quietly. The sound of the performance is cleaner, clearer and more exciting when there is no audible background noise. Similarly, there must be no intrusion of noise from outside the Hall from either the general ambient environment, or from other venues and rehearsal spaces within the Precinct.

#### **High degree of strength, impact, power, loudness**

A primary goal for a concert hall should be a strong sound for unamplified orchestral music. Overall acoustic excellence is judged in large part on the impact of the sound. The goal for most orchestral music performance is to achieve the greatest possible strength whilst retaining the required balance between the sections of the orchestra or ensemble.

#### **Warmth and solid low frequency impact**

A concert hall should have strength and impact in the low frequency (bass) range to transmit the visceral excitement of the bass drum and tympani, the palpable "thump" of double bass and celli pizzicati, the strength of the tuba. It must also achieve an overall warm tone colour for the strings and each of the other orchestral sections. One can have too much warmth if the bass is too strong relative to the treble, but a hall with excellent warmth will give the appropriate degree of preference to the bass and tenor ranges.

### **Acoustic intimacy, appropriate envelopment and sense of spaciousness**

Acoustical intimacy is a sensation that one is enveloped by the sound, as opposed to being distanced from it. In an intimate acoustic, a listener feels acoustically close to, and indeed part of, the performance.

### **Reverberation loudness and duration - Instrumentation and repertoire**

A listener's sense of the sound lingering in a hall has several attributes:

- The length of sound decay.
- The level (loudness) of decay.
- The level of running reverberance (influences "blend").
- The timbre of the decay.
- The spaciousness/envelopment of decay.

For symphonic performance (and to a lesser degree chamber music performance) the goal is to provide reverberance in the presence of clarity.

### **Accurate, natural tonal character of the sound**

The timbre of the sound should be as the musicians create it, and as they intend it. When a player makes a smooth sound, it should carry to the rear of the hall as a smooth sound. A rough sound should carry as a rough sound. This does not mean the hall should have extreme clarity, but that the hall should be faithful to the musician's ability and intention.

The loudness of high, mid, and low frequencies should be in pleasing balance. The violin tone should be warm, and not harsh or strident. The brass tone should be warm when desired and brilliant when desired. Both performers and audience want to hear an excellent rendition of the tonal quality of the various instruments.

### **Loudness balance between sections of an ensemble**

The audience should hear an excellent balance between the various sections of an orchestra. This is highly dependent on the performers and the conductor, but the acoustics of the hall should make it easy for the conductor and players to achieve the desired balance in the hall.

The conductor and musicians must hear each other in an appropriate balance so that they can judge how their sound is balanced in the audience area. If preference is to be given to any orchestral section(s), it is generally to the strings. The balance in the audience should be reasonably close to that at the conductor's position.

### **Flexibility**

The goal of flexibility is to achieve excellent sound for a wide range of repertoire composed in a variety of cultures over the last several centuries as well as the next century.

Early orchestral music was written for small rooms of the court, with the orchestra at audience level. Music was light and agile. The small rooms supported the small performing forces well.

As concert music moved into the mid and late 17th century, works were created for larger orchestras and larger halls. The ballroom form became known as a room form that was favourable to orchestral music and this form became the basis of the classical European rectangular concert hall of the 19th century, such as the Grosser Musikvereinsaal in Vienna (1870) and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam (1888).

Modern halls are now used for the full range of the western European repertoire and room acoustic flexibility is recognised as an essential component of the modern hall.

### **Avoidance of acoustic problems and deficiencies**

The following room acoustic problems and deficiencies must be avoided:

- Roughness and harshness, stridency, glassiness, edginess, distortion, boominess, "glare", and other unnatural or unpleasant colouration of the frequency balance.
- "Dead areas" which are symptoms of poor distribution of the sound.
- Echoes or muddiness, which are caused by flutter or long-delayed discrete sound reflections.

### **Speech based performance**

For speech-based performance such as drama, the acoustic perception of a performance space is dominated by the need of an audience for high levels of speech intelligibility, as opposed to the multi-dimensionality that applies to music.

It is essential to create a strong sense of shared experience between audience and performer. Intimacy, both acoustic and visual, must take a high priority in the design.

The performance space must be quiet, allowing a sufficiently extended dynamic range to exist. Performances must be able to occur undisturbed from any noise intrusion from external environment, adjacent theatrical support areas and other parts of the building or development unrelated to the hall. Ambient or background noise from building services must not be distracting to critical listeners.

The audience must perceive a high degree of speech intelligibility. Reverberance should be appropriately limited to maximise the direct to reverberant sound level and so achieve the required levels of intelligibility. The sound level must be adequate, allowing a large dynamic range; the tonal colour should be neutral with no emphasis on any particular frequencies.

Actors must be able to hear each other optimally. They must be able to feel adequate support from the auditorium so that they find it easy to fill the space with sound rather than having to force their voices against the properties of the space.

Finally, acoustic errors such as focusing, image shifts away from the physical location of the sound source, and echoes must be eliminated.

## **Amplified speech and music performance**

For amplified speech and music performances, the acoustic perception of a performance space is dominated by the quality of the sound system and the electro-acoustic interface of the auditorium and the loudspeaker system. Short reverberation times are required across a wide frequency range, particularly at low frequencies.

Once again the performance space must be quiet to allow an extended dynamic range to exist. Performances must be able to occur undisturbed from any noise intrusion from external environment, adjacent theatrical support areas and other parts of the building or development unrelated to the hall. Ambient or background noise from building services must not be distracting to critical listeners.

The avoidance of acoustic errors, particularly focussing and unwanted reflections from the surfaces within the hall is essential.

## **The recommended auditorium form**

In order to provide an excellent acoustic for the range of performance types nominated for the Performance Space 1, the new hall should be a rectangular hall, based on the classical 19th century European halls (refer the Grosser Musikvereinssaal in Vienna and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam).

The halls are sometimes called "shoebox" halls. The characteristics of these halls that profoundly affect their acoustic quality include the following:

- The proportions are roughly a double cube (i.e. 1:1:2 – W:H:L) giving a relatively constrained width versus length and high ceilings.
- Rear and side galleries with very small overhangs.
- Heavy, acoustically reflective interiors.
- Ornate, decorative interiors creating acoustically diffuse surfaces.

The design specification for Performance Space 1 has been presented in the Outline Theatre Brief. This specification takes into account the acoustic geometric requirements and is repeated below with added points relating to acoustic performance.

- It is envisaged that the auditorium will be rectangular with a maximum width of 26 m and a maximum length of 28 m.
- The auditorium will have a minimum height of 14 m (from the flat floored stalls to the underside of the ceiling).

- The auditorium will have two balconies with a maximum overhang of five rows at the rear.
- Side galleries should have no more than three rows of seats, and preferably two.
- The overhang of the balconies/galleries should be limited, with the depth beyond the overhang not exceeding the height at the opening.
- The interior of the auditorium will be finished with dense, acoustically reflective materials. Light weight panels shall not be used, including thin panels of timber and/or metal. Timber floors are acceptable in the stalls and galleries/balconies provided they are installed as a monolithic construction and not suspended over any air gaps or voids.
- Acoustic diffusion over a wide bandwidth will be required within the auditorium. Consequently the form and finishes of the interior will need to support considerable dimensional variation on all surfaces.
- Variable room acoustics shall be incorporated using deployable sound absorption on the rear and side walls. Variable volume is not considered appropriate.
- Seats should be average 550 mm wide with row widths of minimum 950 mm.
- At least 50% of the seats shall be at stalls level.
- A full fly tower and wing space is envisaged.
- An orchestral pit will also be provided.
- An orchestra shell shall be used to close off the fly tower and wing space when the auditorium is used for unamplified music performances (symphony, chamber music and recitals). A strong sense of connection between audience and performer must be achieved in this performance mode with the performance space defined by the stage and the orchestra shell feeling “within the space” of the auditorium, rather than being behind the proscenium.
- The auditorium, stage and side wing spaces must be quiet, with no disturbance from either background sound levels or from the intrusion of sound from the general external environment, or from simultaneous performances in other venues in the Precinct.
- Very high levels of sound insulation will be required for the auditorium. This will be best achieved by surrounding (buffering) the auditorium envelope with supporting front-of-house and back-of-house areas. Multiple layers of massive, dense materials with large distances between layers will be required where the buffering of the envelope cannot be achieved (e.g. the roof of the auditorium, the upper level of fly tower, and the rear or side stage walls).

## Music from non-western traditions

The above discussion of the acoustic requirements of Performance Space 1 is based on music performance that has developed within the western European tradition. However, it is recognised that within today's multicultural Cairns, there may well be performances in the hall that come from outside this tradition, and that a western “concert hall” with its long reverberation time may not necessarily be ideal for such performances.

Non-western musical forms often have a greater emphasis on clarity and detail in the ensemble parts. Typically such performances were held out-of-doors, and this influences that way in which the performance is perceived and responded to. Examples of such performances include indigenous Australian music, Chinese opera, sitar and sarod recitals from the Indian subcontinent, and gamelan performances from Indonesia.

We have already discussed the concept of variability in the hall's acoustic, brought about by the use of acoustically absorbent banners or panels that can be used to reduce the reverberation time of the hall. These variable acoustic devices will serve to make the hall more suitable for the performance of music from outside the European repertoire, in addition to improving conditions for speech based uses, small chamber music ensembles solo recitals, and performances with amplified speech and music.

## 3.2 Performance Space 2

Performance Space 2 has been broadly defined in the Outline Theatre Brief as follows:

*It will be a flat-floor, flexible space with retractable seating and a technical gallery. The retractable seating system will enable a variety of performance styles and production types to be accommodated.*

*The design should enable a variety of presentation formats including:*

- *End stage*
- *Arena*
- *Short and long Traverse*
- *Thrust.*

*The seating capacity will vary depending upon the format, but a maximum of 450 seats is desirable.*

*The main uses have been identified as:*

- *Drama.*
- *Dance.*

- *Recitals.*
- *Musical theatre.*
- *Cinema.*
- *Cabaret.*
- *Live music.*
- *Physical theatre.*
- *Fashion shows.*
- *Fashion shows.*
- *Functions.*
- *Lectures.*

*The space will not be purely a black box drama theatre and should have internal finishes that complement its uses.*

Performance Space 2 will again be a flexible performance space presenting a range of room acoustic conditions to accommodate performances from unamplified music such as chamber music and solo recitals to speech based drama and amplified speech and music.

All of the subjective acoustic parameters applying to Performance Space 1 shall also apply to Performance Space 2.

The particular characteristics of Performance Space 2 will be:

- The auditorium should be rectangular in form, with dimensions 20 m wide, 27 m long, and 10 m high.
- There will be a fixed seat balcony with side galleries.
- Variable room acoustics shall be provided by the use of deployable sound absorption (banners or panels) on the auditorium walls.
- Acoustic diffusion on the walls and ceiling will be required.
- The space must be quiet, with no disturbance from either background sound levels or from the intrusion of sound from the general external environment, or from simultaneous performances in other venues in the Precinct.
- The use of front-of-house and back-of house areas to acoustically buffer the auditorium.

### 3.3 The Main Rehearsal Room

The main rehearsal room will be the main rehearsal studio and will have the same floor area as the stage of Performance Space 1 and will incorporate retractable seating for a minimum audience of 150 to 200.

The space must be quiet, with no disturbance from either background sound levels or from the intrusion of sound from the general external environment, or from simultaneous performances in other venues in the Precinct.

The room acoustic must provide a high degree of musical and speech clarity in order to best support the rehearsal process. Variable sound absorption is required to enable the reverberation time and clarity levels to be changed for different rehearsal types and performance styles.

The space should be rectangular in form, with dimensions 14 m wide, 23 m long, and 8 m high. Variable room acoustics shall be provided by the use of deployable sound absorption (banners or panels) on the walls. Acoustic diffusion on the walls and ceiling will be required.

### 3.4 The Recording Suite located Back-of-House

The Recording Suite will be a professional recording control room linking all venues, (Performance Spaces 1 and 2, the Main Rehearsal Room, and the Outdoor Performance Spaces). It will provide mix-down and post-production facilities in its own right. It will have video links to all served venues.

The Recording Suite will provide an acoustically and vibration isolated environment in which the recording engineer can operate recording equipment, balance levels, communicate visually with musicians and performers and accurately assess the quality of the recording.

The acoustic properties of the Recording Suite should not colour or alter the natural sound of the recording. The frequency response and reverberation characteristics of the room should be smooth and predictable. Listening conditions should not vary substantially from one position to another. The Control Room must be able to accommodate a variety of musicians and performers, producers and visitors in such a way that mutual interference is eliminated and a natural flow is maintained.

The minimum internal room volume of the Recording Suite shall be 80 m<sup>3</sup>, with a minimum ceiling height of 3.5 to 4 m. The external shell of the control room should be at least 20% greater than the internal room volume.

Sound absorption treatment shall be applied to all room surfaces (walls and ceiling). An internal zone of 300 mm off the walls and ceiling shall be allowed for this treatment.

### **3.5 The Recording Studio and Control Room in the Community Hub**

The community hub will consist of a number of independently accessed meeting rooms, plus rehearsal, recording and multi-media spaces that have direct access to a number of external performance spaces and community kitchen facilities.

The vision for the Community Access hub is that it will bring together a number of spaces that are accessible to small groups and individuals who are involved in drama, dance, music and multi-media.

In terms of this Outline Acoustic Brief, the Recording Studio and adjacent Control Room represent the critical and sensitive acoustic spaces, the needs of which should be addressed in the future concept plans. The general acoustic requirements of the Recording Studio and Control Room are discussed below in order to assist in developing the concept plans.

The Recording Studio and adjacent Control Room will bring together people and equipment in such a way that the performance of each complements the other: equipment will be visually and physically accessible and people will be accommodated in a comfortable manner that enhances both their ability to work and the acuity of their aural perception.

#### **The Recording Studio**

The recording studio is to provide an acoustically and vibration isolated environment for music and speech. It shall be an independent, structurally isolated room utilising box-in-box construction. Both masonry and lightweight forms can be acoustically accommodated.

The acoustic properties of the Recording Studio should not colour or alter the natural sound of the recording. The frequency response and reverberation characteristics of the room should be smooth and predictable.

The minimum internal room volume of the Recording Studio shall be 280 to 320 m<sup>3</sup>, with a minimum ceiling height of 4 m.

Sound absorption treatment shall be applied to all room surfaces (walls and ceiling). An internal zone of 300 mm off the walls and ceiling shall be allowed for this treatment.

## **The adjacent Recording Control Room**

The Control Room will serve the Recording Studio, as well as enabling mix-down and post-production facilities in its own right. It will have direct visual connection with the Recording Studio.

The Control Room will provide an acoustically and vibration isolated environment in which the recording engineer can operate recording equipment, balance levels, communicate visually with musicians and performers and accurately assess the quality of the recording.

The acoustic properties of the Control Room should not colour or alter the natural sound of the recording. The frequency response and reverberation characteristics of the room should be smooth and predictable. Listening conditions should not vary substantially from one position to another. The Control Room must be able to accommodate a variety of musicians and performers, producers and visitors in such a way that mutual interference is eliminated and a natural flow is maintained.

The minimum internal room volume of the Control Room shall be 80 m<sup>3</sup>, with a minimum ceiling height of 3.5 to 4 m. The external shell of the control room should be at least 20% greater than the internal room volume.

Sound absorption treatment shall be applied to all room surfaces (walls and ceiling). An internal zone of 300 mm off the walls and ceiling shall be allowed for this treatment.

## **3.6 The Outdoor Performance Spaces**

The Outdoor Performance Spaces will be located throughout the precinct and will provide the opportunity for a variety of indigenous and multicultural activities.

The Outdoor Performance Spaces will have protection from sun and rain for performers and artists. They will each be equipped with power, technical cabling infrastructure and structures that will enable rigging and lighting to be installed.

In terms of this Outline Acoustic Design Brief, there are no acoustic issues associated with the Outdoor Performance Spaces that will impact on the planning and concept design of the Precinct, beyond those detailed for the other venues.

# 4 Planning and Design Implications

## 4.1 The Main Performance Space (Performance Space 1)

### The recommended form

The hall should be based on the traditional rectangular "shoebox" form of classical European concert halls. This form features a relatively narrow width and high ceiling, with high levels of acoustic diffusion on the walls and ceiling.

### Room volume and overall dimensions

The occupied design mid-frequency reverberation time (RT) should be 1.8 s (without the deployment of variable sound absorption). To achieve this, with a seating capacity of 1000, the room volume of the auditorium should be set between 8,500 and 9,000 m<sup>3</sup> at this planning stage. However, it may be necessary to revise this volume slightly during later design stages as accurate calculations of the RT are made. This room volume does not include the volume behind the proscenium.

For this planning stage, the hall should be constrained to the following dimensions:

- The width of the hall should be 18 to 20 m in the stalls, widening to a maximum of 26 m across the side galleries.
- The maximum length of the hall should be 28 m.
- The minimum height of the hall should be 14 m.

### Construction materials

The hall should be constructed of heavy dense materials, such as concrete or masonry.

### Lightweight panels

Lightweight panels (timber, plasterboard or other sheet materials) must be avoided within the hall.

### Auditorium floor

The floor of the hall should be timber rigidly bonded to the concrete floor slab below, e.g. parquetry. Suspended timber floors are acoustically undesirable because they can potentially introduce excess low frequency sound absorption into the hall.

## **Buffering with ancillary spaces**

The hall should be buffered by ancillary spaces at lower level to create high sound insulation between the hall and the external environment. Where the fly tower protrudes above the bulk of the building, the external walls will need to be of double masonry or concrete construction with a 500 mm cavity between.

## **Sound lobbies**

Entrance to the hall shall be via sound lobbies in all cases. A minimum of three doors shall exist between the interior of the hall and the external environment in all cases.

## **Ceiling**

The ceiling of the hall should be dense and sufficiently stiff to avoid low frequency sound absorption. Typically this is achieved with concrete construction. The external roof above the ceiling may be lightweight, but a ceiling cavity of at least 2m will be required.

Broadband acoustic diffusion shall be incorporated into the underside of the ceiling form.

## **Air-conditioning**

All air-conditioning plant should be located in separate plant-rooms located remote from (not adjacent to) the hall. An under-seat supply, displacement system is consistent with the requirements of low velocity and self-balancing arrangements and should be considered.

## **Variable acoustics**

The hall should incorporate acoustic tuning devices to increase the amount of acoustic absorption within the hall, thereby providing the ability to reduce the reverberation time to increase the flexibility of the hall. These devices could be either panels or banners that cover the full area of all the side and rear walls of the hall. A 400mm zone will be required for these devices.

## **Acoustic diffusion**

The internal walls and ceiling will require significant acoustic diffusion treatments in the form of modelling and detailing. A zone of 500 mm off the inner faces of the walls and ceiling should be allocated for this acoustic diffusion.

## **Orchestral shell**

An orchestral shell is required to close off the fly tower and side stage volumes for music performances such as symphony and chamber music ensembles and recitals. Traditionally orchestral shells were dense, heavy structures, but this introduces issues of functionality and storage. Conversely, lightweight shells and panels introduce excessive low frequency sound absorption, which has a negative impact on the overall room acoustic quality (for music). Compromise solutions feature lightweight shells and panels designed with high

levels of structural stiffness to partially address this conflict between mass and low frequency sound absorption.

In any event, lightweight panels and shells without high levels of stiffness shall not be used to form the orchestral shell.

## **4.2 Performance Space 2**

### **The recommended form**

Performance Space 2 will be a flat-floor, flexible space with retractable seating and a technical gallery. The retractable seating system will enable a variety of performance styles and production types to be accommodated.

### **Room volume and overall dimensions**

The occupied design mid-frequency reverberation time (RT) should be 1.4 s (without the deployment of variable sound absorption).

The hall should be constrained to approximately 20 m wide, 27 m long and 10 m high.

### **Construction materials**

The hall should be constructed of heavy dense materials, such as concrete or masonry.

### **Lightweight panels**

Lightweight panels (timber or other sheet materials) must be avoided within the hall.

### **Auditorium floor**

The floor of the hall should be timber rigidly bonded to the concrete floor slab below, e.g. parquetry. Suspended timber floors are acoustically undesirable because they can potentially introduce excess low frequency sound absorption into the hall.

### **Buffering with ancillary spaces**

The hall should be buffered by ancillary spaces at lower level to create high sound insulation between the hall and the external environment.

### **Sound lobbies**

Entrance to the hall shall be via sound lobbies in all cases. A minimum of three doors shall exist between the interior of the hall and the external environment in all cases.

## **Ceiling**

The ceiling of the hall should be dense and sufficiently stiff to avoid low frequency sound absorption. Typically this is achieved with concrete construction. The external roof above the ceiling may be lightweight, but a ceiling cavity of at least 2m will be required.

## **Air-conditioning**

All air-conditioning plant should be located in separate plant-rooms located remote from (not adjacent to) the hall. The system shall be low velocity and self-balancing.

## **Variable acoustics**

The hall should incorporate acoustic tuning devices to increase the amount of acoustic absorption within the hall, thereby providing the ability to reduce the reverberation time to increase the flexibility of the hall. These devices could be either panels or banners that cover the full area of all walls of the hall. A 400mm zone will be required for these devices.

## **Acoustic diffusion**

The internal walls and ceiling will require significant acoustic diffusion treatments in the form of modelling and detailing. A zone of 500mm off the inner faces of the walls and ceiling should be allocated for this acoustic diffusion.

## **4.3 The Main Rehearsal Room**

### **The recommended form**

The Main Rehearsal Room will be rectangular in form, with dimensions 14 m wide, 23 m long, and 8 m high. Variable room acoustics shall be provided by the use of deployable sound absorption (banners or panels) on the walls. Acoustic diffusion on the walls and ceiling will be required.

### **Construction materials**

The Main Rehearsal Space should be constructed of heavy dense materials, such as concrete or masonry.

### **The floor**

The floor of the Main Rehearsal Space should be timber. A suspended timber floor over a concrete slab is acoustically acceptable.

## **Buffering with ancillary spaces**

The Main Rehearsal Space should be buffered by ancillary spaces to create high sound insulation between the space and the external environment.

## **Sound lobbies**

Entrance to the Main Rehearsal Space shall be via sound lobbies in all cases. A minimum of three doors shall exist between the interior and the external environment in all cases.

## **Air-conditioning**

All air-conditioning plant should be located in separate plant-rooms located remote from (not adjacent to) the space. The system shall be low velocity and self-balancing.

## **Variable acoustics**

The Main Rehearsal Space should incorporate acoustic tuning devices to increase the amount of acoustic absorption within the hall, thereby providing the ability to reduce the reverberation time to increase the flexibility of the hall. These devices could be either panels or banners that cover the full area of all walls of the hall. A 400mm zone will be required for these devices.

## **Acoustic diffusion**

The internal walls and ceiling will require significant acoustic diffusion treatments in the form of modelling and detailing. A zone of 300mm off the inner faces of the walls and ceiling should be allocated for this acoustic diffusion.

# **4.4 The Recording Suite located Back-of-House**

## **The recommended form**

The Recording Suite shall be a structurally isolated box-in-box construction.

It should be symmetrical bilaterally (front to back).

Sound absorption treatment shall be applied to all room surfaces (walls and ceiling). An internal zone of 300 mm off the walls and ceiling shall be allowed for this treatment.

## **Room volume and overall dimensions**

The minimum internal room volume of the control room shall be 80 m<sup>3</sup>, with a ceiling height of 3.5 to 4 m. The external shell of the control room should be at least 20% greater than the internal room volume.

## **Construction materials**

Both masonry and lightweight forms can be acoustically accommodated.

## **Buffering with ancillary spaces**

The Recording Suite shall be buffered by ancillary spaces to provide high sound insulation to the external environment and other high noise generating areas.

## **Sound lobbies**

Entrance to the Recording Suite shall be via sound lobbies in all cases. A minimum of three doors shall exist between the interiors of the Recording Suite and the external environment in all cases.

## **Air-conditioning**

All air-conditioning plant should be located in separate plant-rooms located remote from (not adjacent to) the Recording Suite. The Recording Suite shall be served by separate system with no shared ductwork. The system shall be low velocity and self-balancing.

# **4.5 The Recording Studio and Control Room in the Community Hub**

## **The recommended form – Recording Studio**

The Recording Studio shall be a structurally isolated box-in-box construction.

Parallelism should be avoided.

Sound absorption treatment shall be applied to all room surfaces (walls and ceiling). An internal zone of 300 mm off the walls and ceiling shall be allowed for this treatment.

## **The recommended form – Control Room**

The Control Room shall be a structurally isolated box-in-box construction.

The Control room should be symmetrical bilaterally (front to back).

Sound absorption treatment shall be applied to all room surfaces (walls and ceiling). An internal zone of 300 mm off the walls and ceiling shall be allowed for this treatment.

## **Room volume and overall dimensions – Recording Studio**

The minimum internal room volume of the control room shall be 280 to 320 m<sup>3</sup>, with a minimum ceiling height of 4 m.

## **Room volume and overall dimensions – Control Room**

The minimum internal room volume of the control room shall be 80 m<sup>3</sup>, with a ceiling height of 3.5 to 4 m. The external shell of the control room should be at least 20% greater than the internal room volume.

## **Construction materials**

Both masonry and lightweight forms can be acoustically accommodated.

## **Buffering with ancillary spaces**

The Recording Studio and the Control Room are to be buffered by ancillary spaces to provide high sound insulation to the external environment and other high noise generating areas.

## **Sound lobbies**

Entrance to the Recording Studio and the Control Room shall be via sound lobbies in all cases. A minimum of three doors shall exist between the interiors of the Recording Studio and the Control Room and the external environment in all cases.

## **Air-conditioning**

All air-conditioning plant should be located in separate plant-rooms located remote from (not adjacent to) the Recording Studio and the Control Room. Each room shall be served by separate systems with no shared ductwork. The system shall be low velocity and self-balancing.

## 5 The Acoustic Relationship to the Port

The proposed site of the Cairns Cultural Precinct is adjacent to the main Cairns Port. As a working port, noise-generating activities can occur at any time day or night, and continue over a number of days. As a consequence of this geographic relationship, the Cultural Precinct and the performance spaces of the Performing Arts Centre will be exposed to these noise levels emanating from the Port.

It will be necessary for the concept designs proposed for the Performing Arts Centre to recognise this important relationship between the Port and the Centre: that the Centre must be designed and constructed with sufficient sound insulation to allow the Port to continue its operations without disturbing the activities and performances within the Centre.

Section 4 above sets the broad sound insulation principles to meet this requirement for each performance space and rehearsal space.

It should be noted that Performing Arts venues are often located in built-up urban areas exposed to high levels of transportation noise, and so it is the norm rather than the exception that high levels of sound insulation are required for such buildings. The approaches outlined in this Outline Acoustic Design Brief describe these normal approaches that should be applied.

## 6 Conclusion

The consideration of the Performing Arts Centre proposed for the Cairns Cultural Precinct offers the opportunity to provide a series of dedicated, high quality performance and rehearsal spaces, with each of the spaces offering excellent acoustics for a range of nominated functions.

This report explains the relationship between acoustic excellence and auditorium use, and demonstrates the benefits of having a number of spaces serving different groups of activities and community needs. This approach returns the most cost effective solution and building utilisation within a performing arts context.

The basic acoustic planning requirements are discussed for each of the proposed performance and rehearsal spaces. The inclusion of these requirements in an architectural master planning study and concept design will ensure that the fundamental building blocks are in place to achieve acoustically excellent venues.

DRAFT



# **The Cairns Regional Museum\***

**exhibitions and public programs  
concepts interpretation**

**queensland museum report to inform  
architectural master plan design brief**

*\*working title*

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## 1. Executive Summary

A modern and contemporary museum must play a significant role in its community by providing social, cultural and economic benefits. It must take a stance, have important stories to tell and messages to convey. It must be a driver for changes in the way a community behaves and individuals think and interact with one another and the environment in which they live. A museum must be useful to its community by providing a safe place to express ideas bravely and learn new things.

The proposed new Museum for the Cairns region (the Museum) must reflect the dynamic and complex community in which it resides through integrated spaces, activity centres for knowledge generation and dissemination of ideas, created events and spaces for social integration. It needs to offer a museum experience that reads as a journey rather than the traditional museum showcasing of a series of 'pods' telling discreet stories.

The activation and success of this new Museum will lie in its ability to continually provide innovative and inspiring created events and public programs which complement its exhibition program. It will be through these activities that the Museum will engage with its community to create a valued community asset and civic place.

The new Museum will be an integral and integrated part of the Cairns Cultural Precinct. It will be essential for the Performing Arts Centre and the Museum to work together sharing resources for operational effectiveness and for the achievement of a seamless experience for precinct visitors.

This report explores possible narratives for a range of exhibitions and programs that go beyond built and curated spaces for the new Museum and explores the value it could provide to its community. The exhibitions imagined capture evidence of the richness of the region – culturally, socially, environmentally, economically but speak frankly about the challenges for this area both from an historical and contemporary perspective. It is clear that there are many stories to tell from the Yirrganydji people's first point of contact with European people in 1876 on the site of White's Shed, the stories and experiences of migrants from many ethnic backgrounds who have settled in the region, the role that the port has played in growing and shaping the far north of Queensland, and the natural and anthropogenically induced threats to the unique and fragile Far North Queensland (FNQ) geo- and ecosystems.

It is anticipated that the new Museum would require 1500-1700sqm of dedicated museum space which should flow seamlessly merge with interwoven areas for individual reflection, small social interaction and group activities. These spaces would incorporate long term and temporary exhibitions, a children's activity centre for young families, and a hands-on science centre for 7-14 years olds. In addition there would be a requirement to provide a range of front and back of house spaces which could potentially be shared in part or whole with the Performing Arts Centre or other facilities within the proposed cultural precinct. Front-of-house functions could be incorporated into a common reception and booking area, theatre and performance spaces, hospitality and retail outlets, public facilities, group induction area, workshop and activity spaces. Back-of-house shared spaces could comprise staff offices, volunteer spaces, loading dock and crate storage spaces, exhibition preparation areas and collection storage.

Much of the work on the site will be conditional upon the decision 'to collect or not collect'. Active collecting brings with it a unique set of challenges not the least of which is storage. There are a number of non-collecting museums which deliver unique and innovative programs through long term loans and a dynamic program of temporary exhibitions. This report supports a limited active collecting policy which is tightly focussed around the distinctive character of the Cairns region with exhibitions to be supported through community and institutional loans.

The proposed Ports North site and most particularly White's Shed will require significant rectification and remodelling. The Shed is not suitable for original collection material either as storage or exhibition spaces. It does, however, offer some unique opportunities. Through the integration of the Shed as an active training and workshop space with catering and dining it has the potential to provide a destinational experience for visitors – both locals and tourists alike. There are few places in the world where a casual restaurant diner can witness the exchange of Indigenous craftsmanship from the comfort of a dinner table and then purchase the item from the retail shop as they mingle in the curated foyer space of a world class Performing Arts Centre.

Workshops could be delivered in the Shed in partnership with TAFE or similar educational bodies to not only return an income to the Museum but to provide Cairns with a much needed space where traditional artisans can utilise tools in a supportive workplace health and safety accredited environment to produce material not specifically catered for by other Cairns based workshops or art centres.

Core to the success of the Museum will be the value of the relationships with the local community. Careful consideration must be given to the naming of the Museum so as to ensure that it is a unifying symbol for Cairns and its regional communities while offering a welcoming and inclusive place for all visitors as well as providing a strong marketing profile for the tourism industry.

It is important to the proposed cultural precinct that this site be enlivened both day and night. It will provide the initial introduction for cruise ship visitors and other tourists to the region and will become a guide to what the surrounding area has to offer. It may also be the last stop before national and international travellers depart the region offering a final enlivening experience to cement a very positive impression of Cairns. It will also become an area of great pride to the local community as they look to it to provide a special place for social and cultural interaction for all ages as well as high quality, international standard entertainment and experiences. Consequently the precinct must deliver a changing, innovative, exciting range of exhibitions, performances, engagements and experiences to locals and visitors. This will be best achieved if the partners in the precinct work very closely together to share values and resources.

## 2. Report

This report provides an interpretation of previously identified key themes into exhibitions and public programs for the development of a museum in Cairns. This work is to be used to inform the Architectural Master Plan Design Brief to be undertaken by Cairns Regional Council in February 2011.

### 2.1 Purpose

This work has adopted a modern approach to museum development and seeks to embed the following into the new Museum:

- Iconic status
- Connection to the past and future
- Epitome of environmentally sustainable design and innovation
- The museum as a community hub
- Richness of visit and spatial experience
- Collections on wider display
- The museum as event
- A focus on children and intergenerational family visits.

### 2.2 Scope

The following key tasks have been addressed as part of the work:

- Interpret the major identified curatorial themes into possible exhibitions and public programs.
- Consult with key stakeholders including community members regarding the interpretation of themes.
- Provide details of scope of work to inform architectural Master Plan Design Brief.

This report also provides some comments and observations in relation to the major themes and other elements based on museum expertise as well as community consultation outcomes.

This report has addressed the development of the concepts into thematic elements which can be explored through a range of exhibitions, public programs and other created events as well as through the design of the building's internal and external spaces. Central to the approach is the need to clearly maintain each thematic element while providing an integrated treatment of the entire museum's subject matter. In essence the museum offering provides a view from many lenses for the treatment of each theme demonstrating the many influences of the FNQ experience. For the purposes of this report only, each concept is explored independent of the others so as to allow a thorough brief for each. The Report argues very strongly for a flexible integrated approach to the identified themes which are totally inter-related.

### 2.3 Project Team

In order to undertake this project, the Queensland Museum (QM) has consulted museum specialists from areas including:

- Community engagement;
- Biodiversity;
- Multi-cultural community heritage;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage;
- Exhibitions and public programming;
- Collection storage and conservation; and
- Public venue management.

### 2.4 Consultation

In undertaking this work QM has conducted meetings with internal and external stakeholders as required including a public meeting with representatives from the following:

- Traditional owners of the land on which the Museum is proposed to be built
- Cairns Regional Council
- Cairns and regional representatives of culturally diverse communities

- Historical societies and local museums.

## **2.5 Supporting documents**

A comprehensive list of useful [sources](#) is listed at the end of this report.

### 3. Visitor Experience

Throughout the new Museum and ideally the wider cultural precinct, visitors will experience historical narratives, tangible objects, physical interactions, tactile experiences, social interactions, skills development opportunities and memorable events.

#### 3.1 Themes

The themes previously identified to be interpreted into exhibitions and public programs for the new Museum are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre

The Museum will provide visitors with experiences of and context for the ancient history of the region unique to FNQ, which includes traditional ancestral stories associated with key sites that are often destination points for visitors.

It will showcase the diversity and uniqueness of the region within a relatively small area of country and the traditional knowledge that has sustained the environment (World Heritage listed) for thousands of years including Indigenous people's arboreal knowledge of artefacts and medicinal products used in everyday living.

Significantly the Museum will help visitors to gain an awareness of the journey for Indigenous people since European settlement and impact of that cultural disruption. It will help visitors to develop a better understanding of the contribution of Indigenous peoples to contemporary society and the rich cultures presented. This includes breaking down the misconceptions of FNQ's Indigenous people presented through the 'hybrid' tourist products so readily available in Cairns.

This centre will combine exhibition galleries and spaces for cultural practices and performances with inside and outside adjoining spaces. It will feature artist workshops and interpretation centres with quality products for sale.

- Queensland Centre for Cultural Diversity

The aim of the Centre for Cultural Diversity will be to document and present the experience and heritage of diverse groups of migrants who settled in FNQ. In addition to documenting the experience of individual persons or community groups, the programs of the Centre will facilitate a cross-cultural dialogue between diverse groups of FNQ residents. Visitors will be provided with a better insight into the richness and diversity of local cultural traditions and will be able to find information about their compatriots who migrated to FNQ. There is a role for a research and training facility to help safeguard Pacific Islander and Papua New Guinean intangible heritage cultural practices and processes. This centre will link to formal and informal training programs.

- A Centre for social memories: Cairns – the port for FNQ development

The Centre for Social Memories will concentrate on two major aspects of the region's history: the significance of Cairns as a port for FNQ and how it has helped shape the region's development and settlement. Further, the Centre will explore the experience of living in FNQ via a changing exhibition that integrates social memory and contemporary collecting. It will concentrate on photographic interpretation and recording social history complementing the role of other cultural heritage collecting organisations in the region especially the Cairns Historical Society. The Children's Activity Centre will enable very young visitors and their families to explore through play, many of the concepts underpinning the exhibition program.

- A sense of place – safeguarding World Heritage sites

This theme will provide a contemporary interpretation of biodiversity issues specific to Far North Queensland and deal with our personal and collective responsibilities to protect and maintain our natural assets. In addition, a hands-on science centre will provide a unique learning centre linked to the new National Science Curriculum, dedicated to 7-14 year old children, visiting in school or family groups. Through interactive exhibits, students will explore the natural heritage values of FNQ and contribute to efforts to safeguard these values for future generations.

## **3.2 Audience**

This study has used previous consultation recommendations in relation to expected audiences to develop exhibitions and public programs concepts. Broadly the following audiences are considered the key groups to visit the new Museum:

- Intergenerational family groups from Cairns and the local region;
- International visitors – young adults and students;
- Inter and intra state (domestic) visitors – older adults; and
- School groups – primary and secondary school students.

## **3.3 Exhibitions and Public Programs**

The visitor experience of the new Museum will be delivered through a series of integrated exhibitions and public programs. While the permanent exhibitions form the backbone for the new Museum, the travelling exhibitions and the public programs or created events will bring the Museum to life.

There are many years worth of public programs and created events that can be developed from the myriad stories from this region. Engaging a good quality creative museum events team will ensure that the space is continuously enlivened with contemporary programs and must-do activities for all visitors.

Using web-based interpretation devices and links to online exhibition spaces the new Museum experience will be further extended and evolved.

## 4. Site

This report has addressed the proposed site as the FNQ Ports Corporate Limited, Ports North site identified as the proposed Cairns Performing Arts and Cultural Precinct. This land is located adjacent to Wharfs 4 and 5 and Wharf St, Cairns. The site is currently unoccupied and contains the heritage listed White's Sugar Shed as the only building albeit in very bad repair.

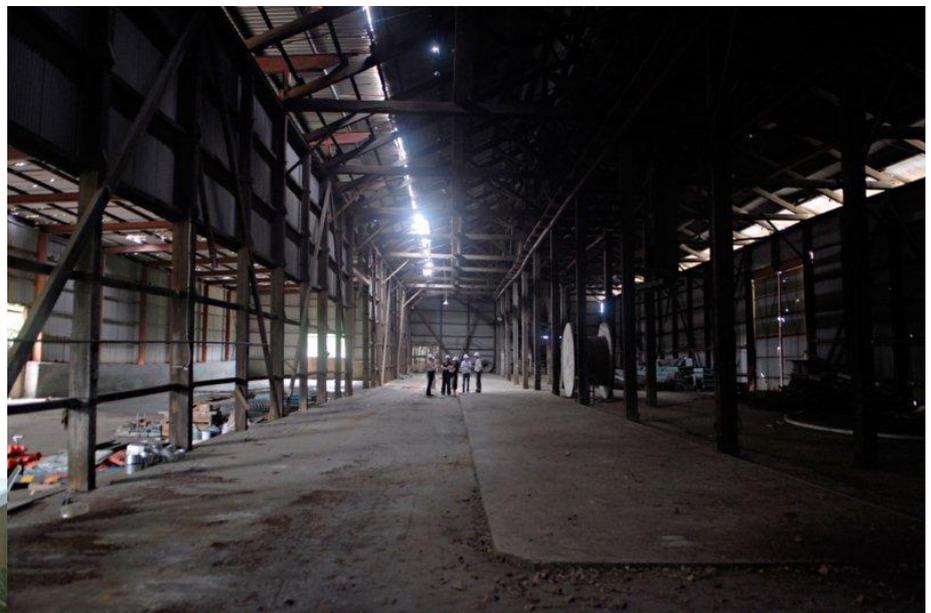
Should the site change altogether the concept briefs outlined in this report are transferable. There are some elements that utilise the location as part of the larger wharf site however a similar assessment and analysis could be undertaken if the site is to change. The major concepts and their interpretation would be unlikely to change significantly.

### 4.1 White's Sugar Shed

According to the Traditional Owners, European people made first contact with Yirrganydji people in 1876 on the site of White's Shed.

There are a number of potential uses for this structure all of which would require significant rectification and renovation of the building.

*Inside White's Shed, January 2011. The flooring consists of concrete laid on top of the heritage listed timber boards which are breaking down in various areas. Bagging machinery can be seen suspended in upper right corner.*



- White's Shed is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register and contains historically significant sugar bagging equipment.
- Its conservation status and material condition are unknown, but suspected to be poor.
- This building appears to be significantly below the water level of the adjacent Trinity Inlet which would make it unsuitable for original collection objects storage or display.
- Structural problems with the Shed mean that remodelling will require careful liaison with heritage architects and advisors. Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) will require permits for any demolition, or major alteration of this element. Further, there are known contamination issues with the site that will need to be addressed.

*Exterior White's Shed, January 2011, note the heritage listed railway tracks in the foreground.*

- The Shed contains evidence of early construction including sugar bagging machinery (noted in the Queensland Heritage Register statement of significance as rare and should be preserved in situ where possible).
- The Shed is likely to include remnants of original timber (although white ants have caused significant damage) which should be preserved and interpreted.
- The heritage significance of White's Shed could be interpreted via web-based audio interpretation packages and pod casts. This has the benefit of providing additional information whilst reducing the amount of physical impact or material exposure. This approach could link with other areas around the site (such as the Ports North Terminal) to enable visitors to explore the sites built heritage in more detail.
- An interpretive link with the building's previous use will assist redevelopment. There is potential to digitally simulate the working machinery and mix with recorded sounds and memories of a working wharf, oral histories of the port, and process of getting sugar ready for transportation etc.



*Image of the Wharf St side of White's Shed in flood recently.*

The ideal use for this unique space in a museum context would be to develop the venue into a versatile multi-use facility incorporating fully functional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carving and sculpture workshops open to visitors. This working space could incorporate an interpretation of first contact between European settlers and the traditional owners as well as the heritage bagging equipment and highlight the original features of the shed such as the large timber beams and structures.

Fully functioning workshops and facilities could be provided for carving, sculptures, silk dyers, and ceramicists (the priority would be for carvers and sculptors) with viewing areas for the public. To date Cairns has received significant funding through Arts Queensland for the development and production of 'fine art' with painting and printmaking mediums (in 16 art centres across Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands) heavily promoted through the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair each year.



*Michael Anning's paddles and shield*



*Aurukun sculptures*

The Shed could also support school group activities documenting local histories and provide outside school hours and vacation care activities as well as become the site for popular museum holiday programs.

The integration of a good quality restaurant that can provide catering options from breakfasts through to lunch and dinner as well as themed events will enliven the space. The extension of the museum experience and mission through the restaurant and its interrelationship with the workshop allows a strong representation of the people, cultures and stories that the Museum will strive to preserve and interpret.

The dining experience would be an opportunity to see the creation of a unique piece of art developed in situ with the potential to purchase it from the adjacent retail shop. Developing the restaurant around the activities within the Shed deliver a point of difference to the offering which is highly desirable to corporate groups for functions and venue hire. The restaurant will drive visitation and provide new museum audiences as well as increase length of stay and ultimately spend per head.



*Palettes restaurant, at the Denver Art Museum*

## 4.2 Conservation and environmental controls

It is important that the new Museum site be sealed from any sea air and meet museum standards for air conditioning and climate control. In order to facilitate exhibitions which house original objects and artefacts the building will need to achieve these agreed standards or be unable to host such events. Travelling exhibitions will require the host site to comply with exhibition specific environmental and security provisions. The building must not be subject to possible water inundation and must ensure that any possible inundation occur only to areas of the building which do not affect basic plant and equipment or any collection or collection related material.

### Lighting

- Exhibition area – in accordance with National Museum Standards – low lux levels – consult with QM Conservation staff at design stage.
- Consideration should also be given to lighting in White's Shed, to ensure minimum impact on any significant material.
- External
  - No broad window space to allow natural sunlight to filter into exhibition spaces. UV specific glass should be used on any windows or spaces that link the outside with the interior (particularly around the Children's' Activity Centre)
  - Well lit with artificial lighting to maximise security and features of building aesthetic.

### Sound

- Ambient sound scapes filtered through into courtyard area (will attract curious visitors immediately) and simulated sound of sugar machinery in action/working wharf in the White's Shed area.
- Mobile smartphone downloads purchased at reception desk for voice guided tour of exhibition spaces.
- Acoustics are critical in listening spaces and quiet spaces for contemplation.

### General storage requirements (collection storage is dealt with in section 5)

- Essential to provide secure storage for Education props and equipment adjacent to areas where school groups are addressed or holiday program activities operate.
- Storage of props and equipment close to performance space/theatre.
- Storage of display cases, crates and dividers close to every gallery space to minimise handling.
- Storage of tables and chairs next to conference room/s and for additional catering during events associated with café/restaurant area.
- Consideration also needs to be given to the storage of audio and audio-visual material.

### Loading dock and crate storage

- Loading dock platform area 10 x 15metres – for manoeuvrability of delivered material
- Dock Leveller for compliant delivery of exhibitions and other large material
- Monorail Crane from Loading Dock to service Lift
- Large Service Lift – H4 x W3 x D7metres to accommodate large objects – from loading dock it should access exhibition area and collection store on an upper level.

### 4.3 Operational integration

Consideration has been given to the location of the proposed Museum within the cultural precinct and the wider port site and how these partners will interact and what operational efficiencies might be gained to better guarantee ongoing viability.

Museums have typically been relegated to daytime operations providing good community spaces, education opportunities, and other tourism and entertainment options. The new Museum should take this role and extend it into an enlivened place full of nighttime activities carefully integrated within the cultural precinct's program of events. This kind of joint programming will provide a good platform for sharing resources and spaces. There is also a possibility to stage short dramas in the exhibitions space, usually presented as evening programs. For example, 400 years of Dutch exploration in FNQ could be celebrated by a dedicated exhibition and a special artistic program run by the Performing Arts Centre (for successful examples, see Museum of Sydney and National Trust of NSW). This plan sees opportunities for the intermingling of museum 'matter' into the performing arts venue spaces which will provide a unique foyer time experience for performing arts patrons guiding more visitors to both experiences.. Opportunities for this kind of sharing include:

- Reception, box office, foyer and gallery displays curated by the Museum. This shared space should be able to cater for all visitors easily. It will provide a Welcome to Country with curated displays as well as act as the staging point for visitors to the precinct. It will provide an introduction to the Far North and highlight near neighbours in Asia and the Pacific region.
- The space must be able to comfortably manage cloakroom facilities for both the Performing Arts venues as well as Museum school groups (although it would be highly unlikely that this would ever be at the same time). It should be close to the café/restaurant and other facilities such as parenting rooms and toilets. It must be under cover with good access to public transport, bus parking and car parking and provide access via ramps.
- Front of House staff between both entities
- Loading dock and receiving/dispatch facilities
- Facilities maintenance and management
- Marketing and promotional activities and services
- Performance spaces
- Car parking
- Café and restaurant
- Retail outlets

This approach will deliver operational efficiencies particularly for staffing and provide better service to visitors from a team who will have ownership of the whole precinct.

### 4.4 Vertical integration

There is no requirement for museums to be confined to single story buildings. The visitor experience will perform well over several levels provided that the thematic strategy gives strong consideration to the flow of the Museum's narrative.

Any approach to vertical integration should include escalators and lifts that can accommodate groups, strollers and wheelchairs with ease.



*Newly renovated Ashmolean Museum in Oxford in UK*

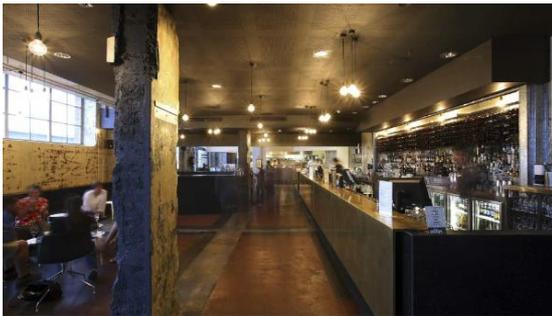
### 4.5 External integration

Extensive use of public art, based on artefacts and objects, can be used to draw visitors to the site. This is ideal when the location and use of the art provides a clear story or narrative to draw the visitor along. The building itself should also be an interpreted space or place.

The external areas of the Museum will require seating space and shade covering, and ideally should have a view of the surrounding hills and inlet as part of a contemplative space.

Potential options to provide evening activation include:

- Performance spaces available to external courtyard for evening performances (without public having to access Museum exhibition areas).
- Museum shop can be opened for evening events which faces out onto courtyard for revenue opportunity, and remains closed off from entry into exhibition spaces.
- Galleries can be opened for evening events in foyer area of Museum without Museum opening main exhibition area.
- Staff access and exit through side security door of Museum (not front main door).
- Use video projections on inside or outside walls visible from outside. Could depict any number of themes including working wharf, simulation of wharf equipment.
- Opportunities exist to link with local musicians who integrate history and regional themes into their work and perform in other spaces within the performing arts centre (i.e.: Andy Collins; Kamerunga).
- Heritage themed theatre restaurant with a facility (utilised for Art house and for community theatre (similar concept to 'Village Theatre' at Sanctuary Cove, Gold Coast or Pizza and Pipes in Seattle) which incorporates the rustic aesthetic of the sugar industry and remnant bag stacking machinery and history just as the Turbine Room was included in the Powerhouse at Brisbane.
- The development of a high quality restaurant which specialises in produce that has an Indigenous or regional connection would be an ideal addition. Successful examples include the Mitsitam Native Foods Café at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington DC. This café enhances the museum experience by providing visitors with the opportunity to enjoy the Indigenous cuisines of the Americas and to explore the history of Native foods.



*Bar Alto, Powerhouse, Brisbane*

*Turbine Room, Powerhouse, Brisbane*



## 5. Collection

### 5.1 Collecting

This report supports a limited active collecting policy which is tightly focussed around the distinctive character of the Cairns region with exhibitions to be supported through community and institutional loans. The new Museum should be an active tightly focussed collecting institution seeking out a limited number of objects that closely reflect the distinctive character of the people, the region and its history with loans from other institutions, the local community and local groups should be used to complement the collection. This issue remains to be decided by Council and the community.

There is also the issue of community pressure for a communal collection store as there is no professional standard facility available in FNQ to house significant artefacts belonging to local museums, individuals or cultural groups.

The decision to collect or not to collect is key to ensuring adequate storage space and also to address community expectations. Having a large and extensive collection does not necessarily mean that a fine program of exhibitions and public events will ensue. Large collections that are object rich are also intensive to manage, maintain and preserve as they require large climatically controlled storage facilities often located close to the museum itself. They also require a significant conservation investment in staff and laboratories in which to undertake this restorative and preventative work. The humid environment in Cairns makes this task even more difficult and throws up special challenges that will need to be addressed often through expensive environmental control solutions.

The following collection priorities should be considered:

- Returned and repatriated items,
- Short term loans,
- Items that are personally held by members of culturally diverse communities who have indicated their desire to donate objects to the new Museum which would be of value to the institution.

There is no requirement for the new Museum to collect local material as this is comprehensively undertaken by the Cairns Historical Society.

The concept briefs in [Section 10](#) of this report provide an initial assessment of the collections in the Cairns area which may be of interest to the proposed Museum.

### 5.2 Collection Policy

If a collection is to be acquired then there is an imperative to develop and implement a collection management, development and preservation policy in accordance with best practice and the new Museum's approach to this subject. This will ensure that appropriate practices are consistently applied particularly in terms of collection growth. This will allow good management of donations as well as collection access. Indigenous material guidelines within the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005* must be consulted. This can include stories about co-existence with local farmers i.e. Kuku Yalanji people's access to cultural site.

It will also be important to ensure that permissions and acknowledgements are compiled as part of any collecting (in association with any partner institutions).

### 5.3 Collection Storage

Objects without interpretation provide a different form of engagement to visitors. The visitor is provided with a back-of-house experience as an exhibition allowing them to see how objects are cared for and providing access to significantly more objects than curated exhibitions. There are examples throughout the world where museums open their collection stores in this way eg Powerhouse Discovery Centre Collection Stores, Castle Hill. Queensland Museum South Bank in Brisbane has adopted a similar approach through its Getting Sorted



exhibition, below.

There are also some very good examples of innovative and effective museums both international and local that

*Getting Sorted, Queensland Museum South Bank*

have no collections of their own or very limited ones. The Museum of Brisbane is one which accesses other collecting institutions and/or community objects and curates exhibitions accordingly.

Most galleries and museums will 'buy in' or loan objects as required to provide an ongoing dynamic suite of exhibitions and public programs without the need for the infrastructure of an active collecting organisation.

The new Museum will require adequate collection storage which considers three key issues:

- **Quality:** a solution needs to be developed which provides storage of sufficient quality to ensure future preservation and development. The solution also needs to be cost effective and modular to allow for ease of modification.
- **Access:** storage space needs to be designed which allows ease of access to collections for both staff and external users. In addition there is a growing demand and public expectation that collections will be available for public access and viewing.
- **Security:** secure storage is required to prevent unauthorised access. In some cases the degree of security needs to be greater due to legal requirements or cultural sensitivities.

The basic provision for collection storage which achieves compliance with national standards will be necessary. A compactus setup is an ideal way to efficiently deliver easily controlled and organised storage space. The recommendation would be to ensure a limited amount of space to around 200m<sup>2</sup>. There is no imperative to locate this on site as there are limited benefits of co-location with the Museum.

- Storage buildings/facilities should be designed with minimal external wall penetrations to minimise dust, pests etc. and have a double airlock on every entrance for the same reason.
- Stores must have environmental controls plus high quality HEPA filters on all inlets. As many of the Cultural Diversity Collection objects and documents are irreplaceable ephemera or have been made of organic materials, a strictly controlled environment will be necessary.
- Room temperature maintained at 20 degrees centigrade, controlled and monitored humidity at 55% RH.
- Fluorescent tube fixtures throughout store and limited to when in use by collection staff.
- Open shelving systems, locked cabinet facilities, horizontal plan drawers
- Small isolated secure facility for Secret Sacred objects and Human Remains (although museum policy is not to collect such material it is occasionally deposited by public for repatriation or transfer from another institution). Include a respectful viewing room when Indigenous people wish to 'visit' the material.
- Study room - for objects to be placed on tables for access by researchers or community.
- Due to the nature of the migration process, most of the objects brought by communities arriving from overseas are portable and relatively small. Once fully developed, the collection could number around 8,000 -10,000 objects, including digitised documents, photographs, oral history recordings and cinematic documentation.



In order to better determine the physical requirements of a storage facility some decisions will need to be addressed including:

- What range of object types will be stored – and therefore what specific storage systems are required?
- How much material is to be stored – sizes and quantities?
- How is the collection to be arranged?
- What other facilities and space will be required in addition to collection storage?

Once the above decisions have been made and the data collected, work can commence on converting the information into the actual quantity and size of each type of storage system required. The final step will then be to determine the actual layout of the new storage area. At this point additional assistance can be provided to the

architects on more specific concerns relating to the construction of the building, including such issues as appropriate fire suppression options, lighting requirements and environmental control measures.

#### Community Collection Store (CCS)

There are few suitable institutions and facilities in the region which are presently able to house collections and a number of small community groups with no collection storage capacity. Some community members have articulated a desire to have a separate storage facility to better store existing community or personal collections. This type of community collection store has a precedent in the Moreton Bay Regional Council area at the Caboolture Heritage Village.

Determining the specific requirements of a CCS is a very complex issue and needs careful consideration of a diverse range of issues to ensure the future development provides the best possible outcome for collection protection, storage and development whilst supporting the needs and expectations of both the Regional Council and the local community.

This CCS would not form part of the new Museum.

### **5.4 Conservation**

It is recommended that very limited local preventative conservation services are considered for the proposed Museum as the Museum of Tropical Queensland (MTQ) has an excellent conservation facility in Townsville. Opportunities to achieve cost efficiencies for the new Museum through sharing this facility would be worth considering. Accessing MTQ's conservation services will provide:

- appropriate equipment for isolation and quarantine, cleaning, packing, storage mount preparation with compliant chemical storage facility
- A freezer facility for pest management and quarantine of organic material and other before entering museum premises as collections and displays could be compromised.



- Mulgrave Settlers Museum – located in Gordonvale
- Cairns Migrant Resource Centre
- Wet Tropics Management Authority
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
- Australian Institute of Marine Science
- Department of Environment and Resource Management

### 6.3 Other stakeholders

There are local stakeholders who will provide important feedback on concept development. These stakeholders also represent potential partners for co-promotion of the Museum as they offer complementary visitor experiences not presented by the Museum. There are also collecting organisations which will need to be consulted for loans and other collection related support:

- George Skeene, Yirrganydji elder and historian with Cairns Historical Society
- Djabugay Tribal Aboriginal Corporation
- Jeannette Singleton, Yirrganydji Tribal Aboriginal Corporation
- Walker family, Kuku Yalanji Cultural Habitat Tours
- Mossman Gorge Aboriginal Tours
- Yidinji representative and elder
- Dr Rosita Henry, JCU
- Bob Dixon, linguist
- Timothy Bottoms, historian and local researcher
- Roy Gray, Gunggandji elder, linguist and historian
- Cairns and District Chinese Ass. Inc (CADCAI)
- CARMA (Olive Tau)
- Cook Islanders Community Ass.
- Croatian Club Cairns
- Filipino Cultural Society of Cairns Inc.
- German-Austrian-Swiss Ass.Inc.
- Hmong Community Group (separate in Cairns and Innisfail)
- Indian Community, Gordonvale
- Italian Community Centre Ass. Inc.
- Japan Australia Society in FNQ Inc.
- Kenya Community Centre of FNQ
- Maori Culture Club
- PNG and Wantok Association
- Polish Community (Maria Starr)
- Australian South Sea Islander Club
- Sikh Association of Cairns
- Sri Lankan Cultural Society
- Thai Association
- Timorese Community
- Tablelands Regional Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Cook Shire Council
- Cairns Family History Association
- Cairns Library
- Innisfail Historical Society
- Innisfail Library
- State Library of Queensland (John Oxley Library)
- Queensland State Archives
- National Museum of Australia
- National Library of Australia
- Australian War Memorial
- National Film and Sound Archives

## 6.4 Other commercial bodies

The new Museum should benefit from partnering with the cultural centre to create 'packages' for tour groups and individuals to include a visit to the Museum, tickets to a performance, dinner and catering options as well as travel. Developing productive partnerships with airlines, cruise ships, backpacker groups and organisations and other distributors will build strong promotional avenues to drive visitation to the site.

Ports North are undergoing a major site redevelopment process adjacent to the site for the proposed Cairns Regional Museum. Opportunities to collaborate with Ports North on a 'whole of site' interpretation strategy could be beneficial.

There will be opportunities to develop strong commercial partnerships to achieve sponsorships and other corporate giving arrangements to augment and support the Museum.

## 6.5 Volunteer programs

A strong volunteer program providing a two way community engagement could be established for the Cultural Precinct working across the Museum and performing arts centre whereby providing a strong sense of integration for the local community.

## 7. Education, training and schools

Opportunities exist for the development of linkages with schools and education programs

- Smithfield and Trinity Beach State High have been running Aboriginal language and culture subjects for some years.
- Tropical FNQ Institute of TAFE, Cairns - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Visual Arts program
- JCU – Anthropology and History programs
- UMI Arts
- KickArts

The Queensland Government is also promoting excellence and opportunities for Indigenous students post secondary school or through TAFE courses to maximise the growth of creative capital in FNQ through the Department of Education and Training program 'Regional Excellence in Arts and Cultural Hubs'. A workshop that is always operational with revenue potential would greatly benefit the community by providing a facility where artists can utilise the tools in a clean work environment to produce material not specifically catered for by other Cairns based workshops or art centres. In addition to this, the Tropical FNQ Institute of TAFE in Cairns has introduced an elective subject 'Produce contemporary material culture informed by traditional techniques QLD215MAT01A' for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Visual Arts program to encourage traditional carving skills presented as contemporary expressions.

## 8. Corporate and Support Services

Apart from a standard suite of corporate and support services the following list gives some specific requirements noted for this new Museum:

- A budget for maintaining digital technologies and online components (and general equipment maintenance in a gallery designed to be fairly reliant on technology).
- A collections database to manage material acquired through the FNQ Memory Room (could be done in partnership with Cairns Historical Society).
- Specific attention should be given to the needs of volunteers in the Museum.
- Physical access for older visitors will be important for the general operation of all galleries/spaces which will also require wheelchair access. Barriers to prevent water access, particularly for Children's Activity Centre outdoor area will also be required.
- Wireless and internet access - It is essential that the Centre for Social Memories has wireless internet access. This will facilitate onsite interaction between visitors, via institution specific social media applications but also enable interpretive social media.

- Staffing requirements – will require dedicated curatorial staff, as well as other operational staff. Of particular importance will be a creative events and public programs team who will develop a range of activities year round to activate the site day and night.
- FNQ memory room will need to be staffed by at least one employee and potentially another VSO who can help with digital story telling.

## **9. Commercial opportunities**

- Venue hire – identify and promote appropriate spaces including workshop
- Carparking
- Retail – specialising in local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander products especially generated by the Museum/training centre, sale of historical books, historical images and artworks for the region
- Catering – engage caterers for both the Museum hire spaces as well as the café/restaurant. Catering outlets should be designed so that they easily become evening city venues, wedding venues, and host special events without access to the exhibition spaces.
- Paid entry to the Museum
- Workshops and training opportunities
- Holiday programs
- Paid Museum skill development public programs – e.g. photographing objects, recording family histories, preserving records etc.
- 'White Glove' tours – pre-booked in small groups with a fee for exclusive 'back of house' tours.
- Opportunities to link with the agricultural/food businesses to promote FNQ produce and use only local produce in catering outlet/s to promote regional recipes, tastes and produce.

## 10 Concepts/Briefs

### 10.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre

Prepared by: Trish Barnard  
Senior Curator Cultures and Histories  
MTQ, QM

#### Exhibition concept

##### Two separate cultures – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (TSI)

The new Museum will include in its scope stories and information encapsulating Indigenous experience in the Cairns region from Innisfail in the south to Wujal Wujal in the north and west to Crystal Cascades. A narrative about TSI people in Cairns within the appropriate chronological reference from 1890s onwards will be a separate but integrated element of this scope. The narrative of the new Museum will also include information and stories relating to neighbouring Aboriginal groups.

##### Traditional and living cultures

The Cairns region is rich in ancestral traditional knowledge that can be easily conveyed with tangible material and images. It is also rich in historical stories of Indigenous contact with Europeans, government intervention with the introduction of designated 'reserves' and Missions, survival narratives, and interaction with agriculture. It is also a significant region for cultural continuity despite intervention and disruption. Traditional owners honour custodial responsibilities working with State government rangers for environmental management. It is therefore important to convey contemporary aspects. This could also include narratives about heroes from Indigenous communities who are held in high regard across Australia and inspire younger people.

The Indigenous component of the Museum could stand alone although there will be many opportunities to integrate Indigenous information throughout the archaeological, biodiversity, agricultural and contemporary stories to reaffirm the diversity and value of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures. This would be developed by liaising with traditional owners and community groups.

#### Communication objectives and methods

Tiered information will deliver key messages about Indigenous culture in the region to a broad audience:

- The first tier presents information to a junior audience from 5-12 years – this can be done as the first line at the top of each interpretative display panel or as a 'children's trail' with which children explore and engage in a museum experience of their own. This can be prompted by icons strategically placed throughout all exhibitions focused on key points that they could relate to and learn from. This age group visit with their families or as part of school visits. This group is also likely to seek items from the Museum retail shop. This tier also informs the 'minute man' type visitor who seeks a hasty visual delivery as their quick museum experience, yet will gain a basic insight into the exhibition narratives and still learn key messages.
- The second tier presents information to an older more inquiring audience 13-20 years through simpler and easily read language with a maximum 50-80 word limit - this age group will pursue 'Fact Sheets' for further reading. This group visits as part of school visits or revisits with their family.
- The third tier presents information to an adult audience which is more articulated factual information with a maximum 100-150 word limit and will also seek further information or purchase material from the Museum retail shop related to topics that have stimulated their interest.
- All texts and audio works must be developed by curatorial team in consultation with appropriate community representatives.
- Appropriate terminology for Indigenous Australians must be used in accordance with 'Museums Australia' guidelines and spelling for language groups as prescribed by the Native Title register.

The key messages will be:

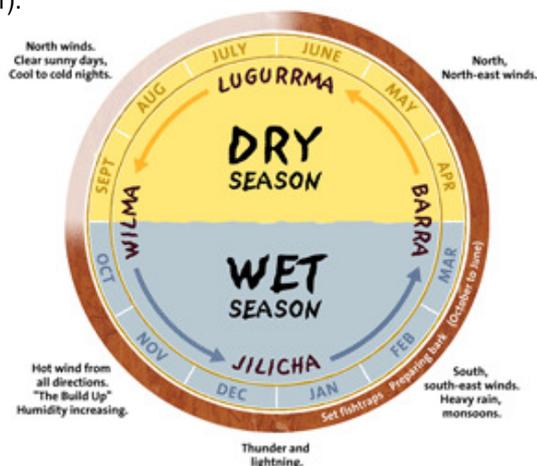
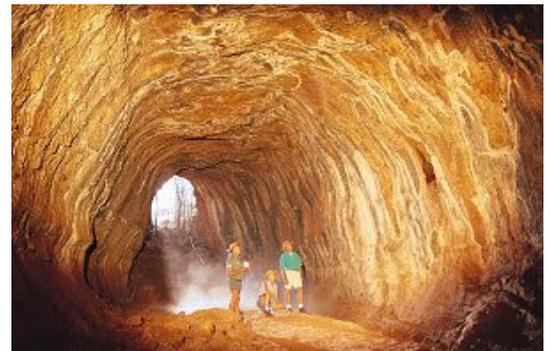
- The **ancient history** of the region unique to FNQ, which includes traditional ancestral stories associated with key sites that are often destination points for visitors.

- The **diversity and uniqueness** of the region within a relatively small area of country and the traditional knowledge that has sustained the environment (World Heritage listed) for thousands of years and Indigenous people's arboreal knowledge for day to day use – artefacts and medicinal.
- Gain an **awareness** of the journey for Indigenous people since European settlement and impact of that cultural disruption.
- Develop a better understanding of Indigenous peoples **contribution to contemporary society** and the rich cultures presented. This includes breaking down the misconceptions of FNQ's Indigenous people presented through the 'hybrid' tourist products so readily available in Cairns.

### Visitor experience

Visitors from each demographic will experience a unique Museum that engages them both intellectually and physically:

- Historical narratives with tiered information to deliver key messages.
- Tangible objects displayed with extended object labels of contextual information – max 30 words.
- Physical interactives such as grindstones, a canoe (see notes below), virtual spearthrower game, suspension footbridge over simulated Barron Gorge (kids to also look for images in that landscape of specific rocks culturally significant trees and animals), firemaker twirling interactive (see note below), suspension bridge, entry through a replica 'Lava Tube', gold bar to lift near the Mt Mulligan display, kids to paint their own 'shield' design on a paper template, large taxidermy Cassowary for photo opportunity (near ancestral story about it), a Seasonal Calendar (choosing what fish you can catch at what time of year) etc.
- Specific tactile experience for visually challenged people with small doors on wall boxes opening to reveal a variety of replicated textures – ie crocodile skin, snake skin, prickly lawyer cane. In addition to this sounds of water dripping through limestone etc.
- Lava Tube (right) – replica made to provide entrance to a more 'tactile' kid's zone at beginning of exhibition narrative. Inside children can feel texture of limestone walls and aforementioned replicated textures.
- Firemaker - Voice of old Aboriginal man that is activated as the person approaches the Firemaker (traditional board with a drill stick inserted into the eyes on the board) – "Help me make a fire the traditional Bama way, rub fast on the drill stick and push down hard onto the firemaker board at the same time" (Bama being name for rainforest Aboriginal people) – information around interactive to explain concept of 'firestick' farming and maintaining the land. (refer to Questacon's 'Burarra gathering' exhibition interactive).
- Canoe navigation – Voice of old Aboriginal man that is activated as the person approaches the canoe (fibreglass replica) "hey hurry up we need to get home, you jump in and paddle and I will tell you which stars to follow"....stars are illuminated on low ceiling panel above canoe positioned toward a scene depicting the Cairns coastline (refer to Questacon's 'Burarra gathering' exhibition interactive) and canoe has a replicated traditional mangrove paddle. (Which will be near an information panel about valuable mangrove environment and tree with canoe scar).
- Grindstone interactive – see National Museum example – large flat granite stone and children use muller or pounder to demonstrate grinding action.
- Example of a Seasonal Calendar (right) – images of animals and fish on outside of the calendar wheel and children push buttons to get a response from a light within the appropriate season and time to catch them.



## Audience

- International visitors will acquire a greater understanding of the diversity of rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and restore the integrity of cultures that are misinterpreted and often compared to the ‘real desert Aborigines’.
- School groups will engage with hands-on activities and access to local story tellers and traditional owners, and TSI leaf weaving, Aboriginal basket making, bush food tasting talks etc., and learning based activities which will align with primary and secondary curriculum.
- Indigenous communities will be engaged by opportunities to:
  - Conduct official ‘welcome to country’ for visiting dignitaries and tourist parties.
  - Participate in project specific work placements to learn basic skills to care for collections and develop displays.
  - Present story telling and performances to audiences.
  - Participate in the workshop facility to produce carvings, sculptures and mediums other than ‘fine art’ painting and printmaking (preferably it will be aligned with the TAFE or UMI program for an outcome both for the artist and the Museum).
  - Work as Indigenous trainees in curatorial, exhibition preparation workshop (carpentry etc), hospitality, education, public programs or front of house.

## Permanent exhibition elements

1. ‘First Australians’ - According to customary protocols there should be a message by video or interpretative text panel ‘welcoming visitors onto country’ (but no didgeridoo for ambient sound – use clapsticks and perhaps local Aboriginal musician David Hudson).
2. First display narrative focuses on Undara Volcanic National Park. Includes archaeological information presented in a fun manner for children to also understand middens, carbon dating etc, and can reference past dinosaur activity and ice age effects in the region. Artefacts can be displayed in recessed cases into the wall (which can be accessed by staff from behind display walls). Highlights archaeological evidence of occupation by Aboriginal people dating back thousands of years.
3. The second narrative could be a photo wall with text panels to reference Chillagoe/Mungana Caves National Park and Undara Volcanic National Park which consist of caves and lava tubes over 1550 square kilometres of country, and unique to FNQ because they are the remains of the Earth’s longest flow of lava originating from a single volcano that violently erupted about 190 000 years ago. Mt Mulligan is also considered a most significant cultural site and called Ngarrabullgan. The Djungan people have avoided camping on this tabletop mountain, because of the spiritual power of Eekoo, the malevolent spirit that resides at Lake Kungarra.<sup>1</sup> Eekoo had played a role in the creation of the mountain and will cause great sickness to those who do not abide by cultural law.

*Mt Mulligan*



*Rock art at Mt Mulligan*



There is also archaeological evidence of occupation by Aboriginal people in shells and wallaby bones that have been carbon dated to around 40,000 years old, making it the oldest occupied site in Queensland.<sup>2</sup>

4. The third narrative could reference the local Aboriginal concept of ‘Bulurru ‘ and ‘story places’ with an Aboriginal creation story such as Gudju-Gudju the Rainbow Serpent, who rose up from the sea and pushed through the earth in the form of a carpet snake to create the sacred Story water place, the Barron Gorge on

<sup>1</sup> Native Title Tribunal application, No: QC97/6, 19 February 1997, p.24.

[http://www.nntt.gov.au/Applications-And-Determinations/Registration-Test/Documents/gc01\\_38\\_05112001.pdf](http://www.nntt.gov.au/Applications-And-Determinations/Registration-Test/Documents/gc01_38_05112001.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> DAVID, B., ‘Ngarrabullgan: Geographical Investigations in Djungan Country, Cape York Peninsula’, Monash University, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 143-156.

Djabugay country. Also before the great flood, the Gunggandji people once walked across to Fitzroy Island from Cape Grafton which was once a great hunting ground that stretched to the original coastline at the Barrier Reef. Middens have been found across the sea floor which revealed occupation before the last major rise in sea levels more than 15,000 years ago. According to the Djabugay, Gunggandji and Yidinji people of FNQ, two brothers Damarri and Guyala argued and angered the rainbow serpent who created a storm that raised the sea level over the stretch of land that once connected the mainland to Fitzroy Island.

- A spectacular back lit large image of Barron Gorge with a suspension bridge in front for children to walk over would convey the experience of walking across the gorge as a fun interactive.
  - Within the image of Barron Gorge could be Mayula – Robb’s Monument – the story about man and woman who had the wrong relationship and were from same moiety/skin groups (the Burrabana, wet season moiety) and the Gurra-gurra (ancestors) punished them by turning them into stone.
  - Display cabinets –introducing the very oldest Aboriginal objects from the region – ie: Morahs, Ooyurka’s and Gundji, Nutstones - These tools are found in the rainforests of north-eastern Queensland. Aboriginal people used rocks to carve holes in the surface of a stone to hold nuts.
  - Position aforementioned canoe interactive in this area too (Activity example C).
  - Introduce information about trade with Torres Strait Islanders.
  - If a panoramic view of local landscape is used the following sites are significant to Aboriginal people and can be identified with arrow indicators and brief stories of their creation - Bunda Djarruy Gimbul - Lamb Range; Bunda Damarri - North Peak; Yalngiri – Chrystal Cascades; Garndal Garndal - ; Bunda Burrawungal - ; Mirimbi – Red Bluff; Mayula – Robb’s Monument; Din Din - Barron Falls; Bana Bidagarra – Barron River; Bunda Dibandji – Bare Hill; Gurii-anda – Kuranda or is it Ngunbay - place of platypus?; Munu-munu - Flaggy Creek; Bunda Bugal - Black Mountain; Budaadji - Mowbray River; Ngarrabullgan – Mount Mulligan. Wangal Djungay - Double Island meaning place (home) where the fast-moving Storytime boomerang landed. It is also associated with Gudju-Gudju the Rainbow Serpent.
5. Narratives relating to biodiversity information about the uniqueness of the region should include some information about these creatures and plants being used by Aboriginal people and as totems (dugongs, turtle stories etc.) Flora of region - examples
- Milky pine - *Alstonia scholaris*, or Foam bark - *Jagera pseudorhus* immersed into the water to stun fish
  - Blue quandong, *Elaeocarpus augustifolius* - Flesh of fruit is eaten after it softens and is also a favourite food for Cassowaries.
  - Blue quandong - *Elaeocarpus grandis* - Being a light weight wood it was suitable for the large wooden shields made by Aboriginal men and the buoyant timber could also be used to float across a river.
  - Sandpaper fig, *Ficus coronata* - The furry fruit is dark when ripe and eaten raw, after the skin is removed. Leaves are used as sandpaper when making shields.
  - Stinger Awareness - This presents an opportunity to deliver information about the jellyfish and dangers of the Cairns region. Irukandji jellyfish is associated with the local Yirrganydji traditional owners.
6. Fifth narrative to introduce ‘Environmental Sustainability’ - habitat for local Aboriginal people and unique traditional use of their Bulmba, homelands for thousands of years and managed according to cultural and spiritual laws for Gurrabana – wet season and Gurraminya – dry season.
- Information and diagrams about djimburru, interconnecting walking tracks through the regions’ rainforest used for groups to meet annually at Palm Cove or for trading, feasting and to undertake initiation ceremonies.
  - Display panels about traditional plant use, including medical purposes – see South Australian Museum small perspex box imbedded in wall to exhibit plant samples. Highlight some of the research done in the region working with traditional owners.

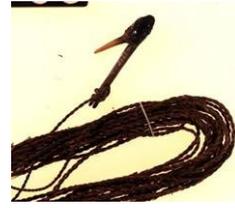
- Display Aboriginal historical objects/artefacts made from traditional materials – ie: firemakers, shields, nautilus necklaces, bags, baskets, canoe paddles from mangroves etc



*Incomplete basket  
from lawver cane*



*Bicornual baskets  
unique to NO*



*Fishing lines made from  
bark fibre with hooks*



*Shield made from  
Buttress root of native fig*

- Reference mangrove environment - roots burnt and ash rubbed onto body as insect repellent.
- Include 'Firemaking' interactive with information about 'firestick' farming.
- Include 'Grindstone' interactive.
- Include 'Seasonal Calendar' interactive.
- Provide information about cyclones including the concept of a cyclone being 'sung' (or summoned) in traditional times.
- Note: Alan James, from 'Al et al' designed the six display panels of the 'Heritage Node' (right) on the Cairns Esplanade that explores the region's Indigenous history and cultural heritage, and developed in consultation with Yidinji and Yirrganydji elders in September 2003. Information presented in this Museum is not duplicating literally, or even contradicting these panels.



7. Sixth narrative – European settlement 1876 at Gimuy, a favourite drinking well on Yirrganydji country along the coastline and established Cairns after gold and cedar had been discovered. Present information about the decline of Aboriginal people/Bama due to suffering famine or disease from Gadja (ghost spirit or white man)/ European occupation. This display area also introduces European history of the region.

- There are excellent photos of a wall of warriors armed with shields confronting settlers in defence of their homelands.
- Inward loan of local breastplate – contact Jeannette Singleton from 'Yirrganydji Tribal Aboriginal Corporation' for display of: 'Born c.1865 Billy Jagar's 'King Plate' or breastplate had disappeared for 60 years after his death at a Cairns fringe camp in 1930s, but two American sisters returned it to the traditional owners in Cairns' (Extract from: 'The Long Journey of Billy Jagar's Breast Plate', 5/11/2006 2pm, Suzanne Gibson, 'Hindsight' ABC Radio National). Include photo of Jagar wearing his breastplate held at the Cairns Historical Society.
- Display 'post contact' type objects including interpretative panels about:
  - Mission times - after the *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897* was implemented in Queensland to 'protect and control' them, a 4000 acre reserve was established in 1913 on the banks of Munu-munu, Flaggy Creek near Kuranda. It was called 'Mona Mona Mission' and administered by the Seventh Day Adventists.
  - Cairns Aboriginal reserves at English Street and Lyons Street.
  - Stolen Generation - Following an Amendment to the Act in 1910, children with light skin or from mixed parentage were forcibly removed from their homes, placed into 'State institutions' or adopted by non-Indigenous parents. This policy of assimilation continued until the 1970s. There are many significant stories from the Cairns region – notably about Kuku-Yalanji woman Wilma Walker (now passed away but family still live in Mossman) being secreted in a twined basket by her grandmother to avoid authorities.
  - Torres Strait was incorporated into State of Queensland in 1879.
  - Coming of the Light 1871 London Missionary Society.
  - Cross cultural belief systems.
  - Protectionist acts to include TSI 1904+.

- 
- Spread of Pentecostal religion through TSI people across FNQ .
  - Inward loan facsimiles of Ephraim Bani and Kala Waia’s watercolour paintings held at the John Oxley Library depicting traditional ancestral stories.
  - Pearling industry.
  - Selected artefacts from QM collection – lots of cultural narratives to be presented.
  - Australian Museum also has best collection of 19th century TSI artefacts.
  - Tom Mosby is also an excellent source for TSI history in Cairns.
  - Missionaries began to bring people from Torres Strait into Cairns region around 1900.
  - Display early colonial European objects associated with area.
8. Seventh narrative – Agriculture in region - Bama engaged as labourers on the plantations and mines by the late 1890s. A cotton plantation established at Wrights Creek near Edmonton in 1916 called ‘Gossypium Park’ was the first operator to employ all Aboriginal labour.
- QM has a considerable collection of artefacts made by Aboriginal employees at Gossypium Park for display.
  - Display early settler objects and information about the non-Indigenous pioneering families.
  - TSI men were coming to FNQ to work on sugar plantations and support their families back home on the islands 1930s+.
  - Display a statue of a cane cutter bent down holding old cane knife.
  - Display objects and stories associated with all cane cutting labourers .
  - Cairns Historical society is the best source for objects to support this display area.
9. Multi-cultural display areas in the Museum will include references to interrelationship between Aboriginal people and migrants.
10. Contemporary narratives
- Contemporary shields and artefacts made locally by Michael Anning, Paul Bong and Napoleon Lui etc that draw on cultural knowledge passed down and designs from historical artefacts held in collections.
  - Performers – local groups who have sustained a career in the industry or achieved a local or national profile. Traditional dancers in a modern world and, contemporary performers reinterpreting traditional stories and ceremonies.
  - Festivals – Laura etc
  - Simple text for understanding legal obligations under the *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005* and ‘Native Title’. This can include stories about coexistence with local farmers ie Kuku Yalanji people’s access to cultural site.
  - Information about FNQ Indigenous Ranger Programs where traditional knowledge is utilised today.
  - ‘Who’s who in FNQ?’ – displayed on interactive rotating triangular shaped poles imbedded into walls: Some examples are included below however community involvement is needed to complete this:
    - Dr Dawn Casey - from Atherton Tablelands - during the 1970s and 1980s her public service career spanned from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in Canberra, to the Senior Advisor to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and she is now the Director of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney.
    - Henrietta Fourmile
    - George Skeene – local historian from Yirrganydji Cairns group
    - Pat O’Shane – Mossman
    - Thanakupi – lived at Trinity beach during career as leading potter but from Napranum group
    - Pastor Don Brady, Mossman
    - Shakaya - Naomi Wenatong and Simone Stacey – singers from around Cairns.
    - Bob Maza (1939-2000) – Yidinji (mother) - Actor/Writer/Director
    - Mick Miller – Kuku Yalanji
    - Doreen Mellor – from Ma’mu rainforest people and now Director of Development, National Library of Australia
    - Monica Stevens – Yidinji/Kuku Yalanji – choreographer

### **Collection availability/identification**

- QM - Aboriginal and TSI material collected from the FNQ region around Cairns since the 1880s.
- The Australian Museum in Sydney and the Anthropology Museum, UQ have significant collections.
- The Cairns Historical Society has a good collection of both Indigenous and early settler material, particularly an excellent photographic collection and maps.

## 10.2 Queensland Centre for Cultural Diversity

Prepared by: Maria Friend  
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### Exhibition concept

#### FNQ as a Meeting Place

For several centuries FNQ has been a meeting place for people of diverse cultural traditions. During the last 150 years this process has intensified and the region's history has been shaped to a significant extent by its proximity to the Pacific Islands and South and South-east Asia. Today Cairns, as well as the adjacent areas, are not only home to people who speak more than 100 languages, but have become a place where local residents and almost two million tourists from all over the world meet on an annual basis.

The local population of FNQ belongs to one of the most diverse communities in Australia. While the Australian Bureau of Statistics census data does not provide a clear indication of a person's ethnic affiliation (the questions related to place of birth or a language spoken at home capture a much less than actual number of migrant families and their descendants), they can still be useful as a general indicator of the cultural diversity of the region. The 2004 Multicultural and Indigenous Profile of Cairns conducted for the Cairns City Council Local Area Multicultural Partnership Program (LAMP) program indicated that 18% of the Cairns population was born overseas, with five most common birthplaces being the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Japan and the Philippines. While the European and Australian-born proportions of the population continued to decline, the numbers of Asian and South-Pacific born people were increasing. As regards language diversity, between 100 and 110 languages were spoken in Cairns, with the most common languages other than English being Italian (13% of all LOTE speakers), Japanese (11%), German (7.7%) and Indigenous languages (7%). While the numbers of European language speakers had decreased, Japanese, Maori, Pidgin, Hmong and Papua New Guinean languages experienced the strongest increase.

The high numbers of the multicultural population is characteristic not only of the urban area of Cairns, but is typical also for the nearby agricultural areas of Innisfail, Mareeba and Dimbulah. Following the ABS census data as well as information provided by local communities, it is estimated that at the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century the most significant groups of migrants in FNQ were English, New Zealanders, Papua New Guineans, Hmong, Japanese, Filipinos, Germans, Italians and Chinese. The category of "New Zealanders" encompasses an ethnically diverse population with a large proportion of Maori people and Cook Islanders. In addition, South Pacific Islands are represented by groups of Tongan and Samoan people. During the last decade a number of refugee families from several African countries have been resettled to Cairns, in addition to Nepalese refugees from Bhutan.

It is important to stress that FNQ has been an ethnically diverse area since the beginning of the establishment of permanent settlements in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century the population of Cairns, Port Douglas, Atherton, Innisfail, Cooktown and Croydon featured 20-30% Chinese migrants from Guangdong Province. The descendants of the early Chinese settlers still live in this area and are active community members.

Although over the years all of these diverse community groups have made FNQ a richer place - culturally, economically and spiritually - their contribution has been only rarely acknowledged in the programs of local community museums. In 2001-2002 members of the Museum Advisory Committee at Cairns City Council examined the major themes of collections and exhibitions of FNQ museums. The Committee found that cultural diversity was absent or seriously under-represented in local museums and urged the Museum Development Officer to include in her programs a series of community-based exhibitions that would address issues related to the migrant heritage and cultural diversity of the region.

As a result of this initiative, during the years 2001-2010 the Museum Development Officer for FNQ curated or helped to organise the following exhibitions:

- Two exhibitions exploring the experience of diverse groups of European migrants who arrived in Cairns as displaced persons (DPs) in the aftermath of WW2
- Three exhibitions with the Papua New Guinea community celebrating PNG Independence Day

- Two exhibitions celebrating Polish community festivals (Polish Christmas in Australia and Polish Easter in Australia)
- Two exhibitions with the Hmong community, exploring their refugee experience and the transformation of their textile art since arrival to Australia
- Three exhibitions organised in partnership with the Chinese community of FNQ, two of which showcased the Chinese temple collection and the third one “Queensland Dragon. Chinese community of FNQ” which presented the contribution of Chinese migrants to the development of FNQ was a touring show, supported by an Arts Qld major grant.

In addition, migrants’ heritage and experience have featured in two other major exhibitions:

- in “Sharing Their Legacy” the stories of Babinda and Innisfail Italian communities forcefully resettled to South Australia during WW2 were told
- in “Beacons of Faith” (organised with the Gordonvale Museum) the religious traditions of the local Sikh community and Chinese people were showcased.

It is important to stress that with the exception of Chinese temple displays, all exhibitions showcased private collections of community members (objects, photographs and documents) who were most generous and enthusiastic in presenting to the wider audience their cultural traditions and migrant experience. On several occasions the MDO was assured that the community members would be very keen to donate to a museum their personal memorabilia and collections, providing there was an institution interested in running such programs.

Ten years of close collaboration with a range of culturally diverse communities of FNQ can be recognised as a ‘pilot stage’ from which future programs of activities for the Centre for Cultural Diversity at Cairns Regional Museum could be developed.

### **Communication objectives and methods**

The aim of the Centre for Cultural Diversity will be to document and present the experience and heritage of diverse groups of migrants who settled in FNQ. In addition to documenting the experience of individual persons or community groups, the programs of the Centre will facilitate a cross-cultural dialogue between diverse groups of FNQ residents. Interstate and overseas visitors will be provided with a better insight into the richness and diversity of local cultural traditions and will be able to find information about their compatriots who migrated to FNQ.

The programs of the Centre will be implemented through research, collecting, training and a range of public programs, including permanent, temporary and on-line exhibitions. The Memory Room will allow visitors to the Centre to document their stories of migration, while an alternative approach will be facilitated through an on-line database.

In addition, a special ethnic community database will be created (available on-line and to the general audience in a public space of the Museum) listing various ethnic groups of FNQ, their history, achievements and celebrations, contact details etc. This program will help to establish more direct links between visitors to the region and local community groups.

The Centre will have a strong focus on educational programs and will develop a range of activities relevant to the school curriculum.

The Centre will facilitate a range of community programs and support community events and celebrations, such as national days, Harmony Day, Refugee Day etc. It will support community festivals of a relatively small scope; larger events, like the annual Multicultural “Wave” festival organised by CARMA, most probably will require a larger space, like the one on the Esplanade.

The Centre will also assist with the transfer of skills within the community and if appropriate, also cross-culturally, by running a series of workshops, demonstrations of traditional technologies, skills and knowledge.

As regards curatorial approach, the Centre will document tangible as well as intangible cultural heritage by presenting it as a dynamic phenomenon, placed in a wider cultural and historic context. For example, a particular experience of FNQ migrants will be presented not as an isolated case but placed in the overall context of the Australian migration policy of the day or, if relevant, the political situation of the country from which the migrants originated. The programs of the Centre will help the public to understand the social, economic and historical circumstances that shaped various communities. Rather than glorifying migrants’ achievements, the Centre will

stimulate debate over some of the more controversial aspects of Australia's history such as 'blackbirding', the White Australia policy and its impact on the FNQ population, forceful assimilation of the migrants, the treatment of 'enemy aliens' during WW2, as well as the sometimes hostile reception of new refugees. Current issues related to migration policy of Australia will be addressed through public programs.

As currently none of Queensland's museums runs active programs documenting migrants' heritage, it is possible that Multicultural Affairs Qld would support some of the Centre's activities.

Due to the proximity of Cairns to the Pacific Islands - especially Papua New Guinea, as well as Southeast Asia, the Centre, in its external programs, will establish links with similar institutions in the Asia/Pacific region, acting as a research and training facility to safeguard Pacific Islanders and Papua New Guinea cultural practices and processes, including intangible heritage. The training programs for museums and cultural centres in the Pacific could be funded by AusTrade or run in partnership with a relevant ICOM committee.

In terms of space and facilities; while the storage and presentation of tangible heritage will require the environmentally controlled conditions of the usual museum standards and will be conducted indoors in a purpose-constructed building, there will be a need for a substantial outdoor space, used for demonstrations and performance. This outdoor space could be shared with the proposed Civic Theatre.

### **Visitor experience**

As Cairns is for many international visitors the first port of entry to Australia, some of the Museum displays should provide a wider historical background, presenting local events and topics in a national context.

In terms of exhibition programs, the Centre will host permanent, temporary and digital exhibitions. If possible, migrants' experiences should be integrated with other sections of the permanent displays of the Museum, rather than presenting these stories in isolation. It is important as well to explore the interaction of the migrants with the wider community, for example the relationship between Chinese migrants and Aboriginal communities of FNQ during the Gold Rush (examples: Hopevale, Cooktown, Croydon).

Permanent exhibitions - some of the proposed themes for permanent exhibitions:

- The Dutch and mapping of FNQ
- Lt. Cook and the Guguu-Yalanji people: cross-cultural encounter and the first reconciliation in Australia
- Chinese migrants in FNQ goldfields
- 'Black-birding' and South Sea Islanders in FNQ
- The multicultural nature of the sugar industry
- Japanese divers and the pearling industry of Torres Straits
- Sikh community of FNQ and their religious traditions
- American armies in FNQ during WW2
- Internment of FNQ Italians during WW2
- Paronella Park – dream of a Spanish migrant
- "Displaced People" - migrants from Europe after WW2 and Hartley St migrant centre
- Australia's colonial legacy and Papua New Guinea community of Cairns
- Hmong refugees from Laos and their textile art
- African refugees
- Becoming Australian: the first and second generation of migrants
- From assimilation to multicultural Australia
- Multicultural FNQ – dream or reality?

Some of the exhibitions' themes may explore experiences that are common to many migrants – feelings of loss and alienation in a new social environment, as well as response to the discovery of new life, hope and opportunities.

### Temporary gallery

A dedicated exhibition space to assist community groups to present various aspects of their cultural heritage (like a series of exhibitions "Know your neighbours") or celebrate special events like National Day celebrations, Harmony Day, Refugee Day, etc.

This space should also stage cross-cultural exhibitions exploring the individual response to universal themes, such as “My family” or “My animal friends”. Projects of this kind are particularly effective in bringing together diverse community groups and establishing a cross-cultural dialogue. (For example the exhibition “Beacons of Faith. Religious Traditions of Gordonvale” brought together Sikh, Australian, Chinese and Aboriginal people).

This gallery could also showcase contemporary art as practiced by displaced artists, for example exploring the difficulties of being an artist in a different culture to your own.

### On-line exhibitions

A significant amount of information and a series of exhibitions will be available on-line, designed as an educational tool for school programs.

It is proposed that on-line programs will be established prior to the opening of the physical space of the Centre, as it will help to organise relevant collections and assist with the community engagement in proposed programs and events.

### Public programs

The Centre will liaise with other organisations in Cairns (government departments, JCU, community groups) in order to run a range of public programs especially cultural awareness workshops, family history workshops, demonstrations presenting traditional skills and technology of diverse community groups, oral history workshops, etc. These workshops may bring some revenue, although it will most probably be very limited. The same refers to the sale of objects and products made by local artists and craftspeople.

To run these programs, a dedicated workshop space will be required.

The Centre will support a program of Community Cultural Festivals showcasing the community’s cultural activities that will include music, dance, craft demonstrations and food.

As community festival participants are not professionals, their participation in the festival will be covered by the Museum’s public liability insurance.

### **Audience**

The stories of migration should appeal to a wide audience as, unless of Indigenous descent, all people of Australia share the legacy of migration. Growing interest in family history should also make this place relevant to a number of community members.

The Centre for Cultural Diversity, as an educational organisation, should be of particular interest to local schools and its programs should link to the secondary curriculum. The history of migration and some of the cultural diversity programs should be presented through a range of interactive programs for primary school students.

Older local residents should be able to document their migrant experience in the Memory Room.

Multicultural exhibitions will be of interest to international visitors who, in addition to exhibitions, through a range of digital programs, will be provided with information about the history and contribution made by their compatriots to this part of Queensland. For example, US visitors will learn about the American troops stationed in Gordonvale and Cairns during the Second World War; Spanish – about the Paronella Park dream; Chinese – about the gold rush and 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinese settlements in FNQ; Japanese – about pearl diving in the Torres Straits and the introduction of rice cultivation to the region, etc.

Digital databases of contacts with local community groups and forthcoming events will permit facilitating contacts between visitors and local community groups.

In developing programs considering a wider audience, it would be important to contact TTNQ regarding their advice on space requirement and the most suitable programs for international visitors. For tours, an ample space for bus coaches has to be provided and the exhibition space designed to accommodate larger groups of visitors.

### **Collections**

The experience of organising more than a dozen exhibitions based on loans from community members indicate that there are extensive resources of potential materials that could become the core of the multicultural collections of the proposed Centre. As local community museums do not implement active collection policies and in principle

do not document migrants' experiences, in most cases there is little general awareness of the existence of such collections.

The exceptions are the Chinese temple collections (Innisfail, Atherton and Cairns) containing 19<sup>th</sup> century artefacts usually produced in China, all of which have been recognised as collections of national significance. In the case of Innisfail and Atherton these collections form an integral part of existing historical buildings. In Cairns, however, the collection is represented by approximately 240 objects currently kept in storage. Although the Chinese community of Cairns (CADCAI) which is the custodian of this collection, has plans to display it in its future Cultural Centre, it may be possible to negotiate a loan of several objects from this collection for display at Cairns Regional Museum.

QM also has a range of artefacts relevant to the history of FNQ migrants, especially Italians, South Sea Islanders and Chinese. It is important to investigate the full scope of these collections and find how many of them could be moved to Cairns Regional Museum. Queensland State Library and Queensland State Archives should be approached to locate photographs, documents and other relevant material.

QM also has a small collection of Chinese material collected from the Cairns region from George Fong On who arrived in 1880s, a Chinese scale from 1840s used at Palmer River to support gold prospecting stories, and an object from Wah Day to include in the agriculture story.

Examples of collections that in the future might be transferred to Cairns Regional Museum through a loan or purchase:

- **Hartley Street Migrant Centre** - for several thousand Europeans who arrived after the Second World War as Displaced Persons, Hartley Street Migrant Centre was their first home in Cairns. There is an extensive collection of photographs documenting life at the Centre, a selection of artefacts associated with the camp, personal documents related to migration as well as personal possessions (for example, garments in which people arrived in Australia, children's toys made in the camp, trunks in which personal possessions were kept during travel, etc). A sample of these collections was presented during the Euroharmony exhibition, celebrating Harmony Day at Cairns City Council.



*Hartley St Migrant Centre, Cairns 1950s - home to several thousands of migrants who came after WW2 from Europe as "DPs" – Displaced Persons.*

- **Internment: Italian community of Babinda** -documents and objects related to the forced internment of the FNQ Italian community in 1942 are in private collections of community members as well as in QM and Australian Sugar Industry Museum collections (displayed during the "Sharing Their Legacy" exhibition)
- **Hmong community of FNQ (refugees from Laos)** - there is an extensive collection of textiles and costumes, as well as photographs documenting the escape from Laos, the stay in refugee camps in Thailand as well as documenting the continuity of their cultural practices in Australia. A large embroidered cloth (*right*) documenting the war in Laos has been transferred from the JCU collection to Cairns Regional Council (stored in Migrant Resource Centre). It is accompanied by a series of scanned images documenting the escape from Laos and a dozen costumes and fabric samples.



- **The Dutch and the mapping of FNQ** - dutch navigators, who in 1606 visited the west coast of Cape York, provided the first maps of the Australian land. The Museum Resource Centre has three facsimiles of these maps, obtained from NSW Library.
- **South Sea Islanders collection** - “Refined White” exhibition organised by the Australian Sugar Industry Museum in 2001, revealed a range of artefacts documenting the contribution of this community to the sugar industry, many of them on loan from the QM collection.
- **Pacific Islands collections** - the Museum Resource Centre has a limited number of objects from Papua New Guinea and other Pacific Islands (approximately 20 items). There is a possibility to develop these collections further by transferring other relevant artefacts from the Material Culture Unit at JCU, for example the collection of traditional PNG pottery.  
The Cook Islander community in Cairns continues making *tivaevae* quilts as well as having some examples of these textiles originating from the Cook Islands that could be considered for the collection.

### Oral history and intangible heritage collections

Oral history is an important aspect of migrants’ intangible heritage and such collection should be organised very soon, well before the opening of the Museum. At this stage very few migrants’ stories have been documented – mainly of the Chinese people and Italians. The Centre should run an active oral history program that would also document experiences of recently arrived migrants.

Music, songs, dances and other aspects of folklore which are frequently recreated in Australia to express groups’ identity, should also be documented. The same refers to other aspects of intangible heritage, especially the transfer of skills and traditional knowledge and their application to the Australian milieu.



*Samoan children performing at the opening “Christmas in Poland” exhibition. As the Polish community is composed mainly of elderly people (WW2 migrants), Samoan community was happy to assist.*

### Educational collections

On several occasions various community groups have stated that they expect the proposed Museum to teach their Australian-born children about the cultural traditions of their countries, especially by demonstrating relevant examples of artefacts made using traditional knowledge and skills. While in some instances there may be community members with such skills and the Centre could facilitate that learning process, almost certainly there will be a need to organise several small collections to be used as educational material for children and youth. Relevant community groups could be asked for assistance in organising such material, while in some instances such artefacts would be sourced from the remaining collections of the Material Culture Unit at JCU in Cairns and Townsville (for example, Papua New Guinea ceremonial art and pottery, examples of Polish folk art, everyday objects used by Chinese people, etc).

### Other models to consider

- **Museum of Immigration, Melbourne** - the Museum documents and presents stories of migration and cultural diversity in Victoria through permanent and temporary exhibitions and online facilities (Discovery Centre, Info Sheets). Vibrant community engagement program (Cultural Festivals).
- **Migration Museum, Adelaide** - dedicated to the preservation, understanding and enjoyment of South Australia’s diverse cultures. In addition to permanent and changing exhibitions, it features Settlement Square with engraved pavers on which migrants may engrave details of their arrival in Australia (similar concept to the National Maritime Museum).
- **Migration Heritage Centre, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney** - virtual Heritage Centre with a range of online exhibitions and resources; promotes migration heritage across NSW, also outside Sydney. An interesting

model that could be applied at the initial stage of development of the Qld Centre for Cultural Diversity and, at a later stage, complement by exhibitions and community programs at the Cairns Regional Museum. The Centre is a NSW government initiative supported by the Community Relations Commission.

- **The Centre for Cultural Understanding and Change, Field Museum, Chicago** - the Centre uses problem-solving anthropological research to identify strengths and assets of culturally diverse communities of Chicago. It helps communities to identify new solutions to critical challenges such as education, housing, health care, environmental conservation and leadership development. The programs are not focused on the preservation and celebration of migrants' history but rather on practical application of migrants' cultural skills and diverse approaches in solving everyday problems. Current projects include engaging diverse community groups in the Chicago climate change program; addressing social and environmental concerns and helping organisations and policymakers in the development of sustainable programs. The projects are accompanied by displays in the Museum building. The program 'Cultural Connections' guides visitors to more than twenty ethnic museums and cultural centres in Chicago, providing extensive support information for teachers, parents, etc.
- **Museum of Migration and Diversity, Spitalfields, East London** - innovative museum programs staged in an old Huguenot residence (17<sup>th</sup> c. refugees from France); of particular significance are education programs and the involvement of children – as exhibition curators – in exploring the history of local migration.



*Members of Papua New Guinea at the opening "Christmas in Poland" exhibition at Cairns Regional Council*



*Members of diverse faith and ethnic groups at the opening "Beacons of Faith" exhibition at Gordonvale Museum. The exhibition presented diversity of religious traditions of Gordonvale and was made entirely of objects, photographs and documents provided by the community. For the Sikh community members, it was their first visit to the Museum.*

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## 10.3 A Centre for social memories: Cairns – the port for FNQ development

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Cairns

### Exhibition concept

The Cairns Regional Museum has the potential to explore the north tropical coast and Cape York Peninsula through a range of themes and stories. For the purposes of this concept brief, the following major areas have been considered: Cairns, the Atherton Tablelands, Cooktown, Croydon, Normanton and the Palmer River.<sup>3</sup>

The Centre for Social Memories will concentrate on two major aspects of the region's history: the significance of Cairns as a port for FNQ; and how the environment has shaped the region's development and settlement. Further, the Centre will explore the experience of living in FNQ via a changing exhibition that integrates social memory and contemporary collecting.

The Centre for Social Memories will be an interactive and participatory space that explores the historical and contemporary experience of living, working and visiting FNQ. This concept brief aims to:

- Use the significance of Cairns Port and White's Shed to define and explore the key developmental themes in the region;
- Use experience and emotions as key interpretative tools to engage local, intra and inter-state and international visitors;
- Integrate participatory activities for older residents and school students that are centred around the collection of documentary and visual material and recording of oral history (according to key collection themes and for the purpose of integrating into displays);
- Incorporate an interactive "memory room" or "reminiscence room" for community workshops, that promotes the use of social media production, collecting, recording and conservation;
- Use interactive kiosks to explore key regional historic themes and that promote other museums/ historical societies;
- Use mixed media to present themes and collection elements; and
- Include an activity centre/space for children in the exhibition area that flows into an outside space, and which provides orientation for specific educational activities.

### Exhibition: Cairns: The Port for FNQ

- A permanent exhibition (largely photographic) that orientates visitors (tourists) to the region and connects them to, and interprets, the site;
- Include sections of White's Shed, where the story of sugar at the port will be explored (particularly digital technology such as touch screens, mobile interpretation applications and digital simulations);
- Explores and interprets the history of the site, and introduces the major historical themes that have influenced the development of FNQ;
- Visual link with entry if possible;
- Interpretive and static displays, some Audio Visual activities.

### Key messages:

- Why Cairns? (The battle to be the major port in FNQ – Port Douglas, Cooktown, Geraldton (Innisfail), Cardwell);
- What brought settlers to the north originally? (gold, mining, pastoralism, the search for productive land);
- What was early Cairns like?
- How has the wharf changed over time? (the built history of the wharf development, link to White's Shed);
- How has working life on the wharf changed;
- Exports - what have the major commercial activities of the wharves been (transportation of commodities);
- Arrivals – what types of migrants have arrived in Cairns via the port and wharves (e.g.: early Chinese, Italian/southern European sugar workers, travellers); and
- How have the wharves linked the town to other activities? (Tourism, World War II).

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**Key needs:**

- Circulation space and thoroughfare;
- Wall space for projection of aerial photographs showing street scenes of Cairns and the wharves area; and
- Touch screen access booths in White's Shed.

Changing exhibition space: Living in the tropics

- A changing photographic, audio and/ or audio visual display that explores the “experience” of living in FNQ;
- A contemplative gallery space, will need seating; and
- Needs to be adjacent to the FNQ Memory Room (see below).

The aim is to present stories that reveal, inspire and prompt ways of understanding a central question: “what is/was it like to live and work in FNQ?” This concept links visitors and locals, and allows them to explore, communicate and understand this question via historical and contemporary experience. The question can be used to explore the themes identified above, and can reach across the different towns within the region. Further, it can be used to explore Indigenous and non Indigenous Australian experience, and explore multinational experiences. By using experiences as concepts to explore the region, it aims to present the human and social dimensions of the region.

This approach has the potential to link the ‘Centre for Social Memory’ to other sections in the Cairns Regional Museum conceptually (particularly to Aboriginal and multicultural experience), visually, and particularly educationally. It can also be used for communities to showcase particular issues.

Keywords for defining experiences developing this section could include:

- Extremities (living with heat, monsoon, cyclones, distance and remoteness, houses on stilts);
- Threats (living in a hostile climate, with potentially threatening animals);
- Exotic (living in a lush and abundant landscape, that has different smells, sounds, tastes and landscapes to other parts of Australia);
- Resilience (living with remoteness, difficulties, disappointments, particularly associated with work such as mining, agricultures; sugar, infrastructure development, and overcoming natural disasters, moveable houses);
- Communal (being part of a local and diverse community; adapting to necessity; sharing; creation of local cultures, multiculturalism); and
- Inspirational (living in a landscape of promise that can inspire arts, music, technical advances, medical heroism etc).

This exhibition could be located along a wall space to create a “living wall of stories” and would require seating and listening areas.

FNQ Memory Room

- An interactive space/workshop area that is adjacent to the main “Living in the tropics area” and which stimulates participatory visitor engagement with the Museum’s themes.
- This would be a partnership project with the Cairns Historical Society and Museum, and would focus on working with intangible material culture (oral history, recording of traditions etc) and integrating it in to other Museum projects, such as a digital archive and/or online collection material. It will include workshops for school groups, reminiscence workshops for older local audiences, and provide interactive workshops for locals (particularly relating to conserving photographs and materials in tropical environments). Material collected will be incorporated into changing exhibition displays.
- Could be located in the centre of the gallery space as a visual ‘memory’ engine room’ – or enclosed in a glass space so that it is quiet yet visible and accessible. However, must be accessible to older local audience;
- Could integrate a series of remembrance programs to generate intangible cultural heritage collection which could be presented online and in the galleries. E.g.: Remembering FNQ at war, remembering the cane.
- Material collected could be integrated into a Picture Cairns type of online archive, or filter into the collections currently held by either the Cairns Library or Cairns Historical Society.

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**Key activities:**

- Recording of oral histories;
- Scanning/collection of visual material based on a defined collecting policy (linked with local institution?);
- Creation of digital stories;
- Creation of online content; and
- Preservation workshops (for locals for photographs).

**Key needs**

- Listening spaces
- Recording spaces – must be sound proof, friendly and secure
- Seating and work tables, including computers

**Thematic and regional kiosks/booths**

- Stand alone kiosks/ booths that link to major historic themes that explore the interaction of people and the environment.
- Allows visitors to explore specific themes that have influenced the region's development. Many of these will showcase specific geographic regions, and will provide links to other historical societies, heritage trails, interpretive experiences and collections.
- Engaging titles could be taken from some of the significant historical titles that have been produced from the region, e.g.: Sugar Heaven (Jean Devanny), Gentlemen of the Flashing Blade (Bianca Balanzategui), Dairying: Cows in the Vinescrub (Anne Stratham) Red North (Diane Menghetti).
- Changing display infrastructure that incorporates visual material (particularly photographic and ephemeral) and that is supported by web-based audio interpretation packages and pod casts (using MP3 players, 'smart phones').
- Will incorporate signposts that direct visitors to the broader region and other collections;
- Could be located in a floor space area that outlines major regional geography (outline map)
- Seating and listening areas required

**Children's Activity Centre**<sup>4</sup> The Children's Activity Centre will introduce young visitors to the Museum as they learn about various maritime activities on the deck of a sailing ship. This unique play space will interactively engage children in fishing, moving cargo and people, ocean, rivers and marine life as well as traditional canoe and water craft building. Elements of successful children's activity spaces include:

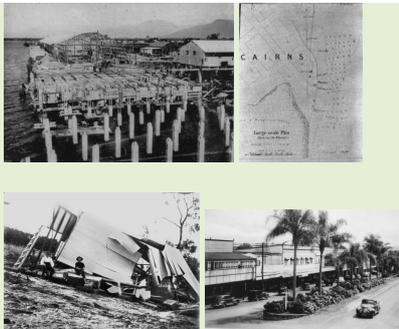
- Inside and outside facility where possible;
- View of water to reflect the theme;
- One large iconic structure for group interaction and younger school children's orientation space (plus play space). Suggest using a recreated deck of Cook's boat;
- Number of smaller craft based on Torres Strait and Pacific Islander boats;
- Aboriginal canoe near entry and invitation to come and play;
- Port loading and unloading facilities for play moving cargo;
- Quiet corner for reading and story telling and sleeping for babies;
- Plenty of seating for parents with good line of sight to view children's play;
- One entry and exit point only for parental supervision of multiple small children;
- Pram bay;
- Toilet and parenting facilities in very close proximity
- Coffee shop nearby so parents can retain supervision of their children at all times.

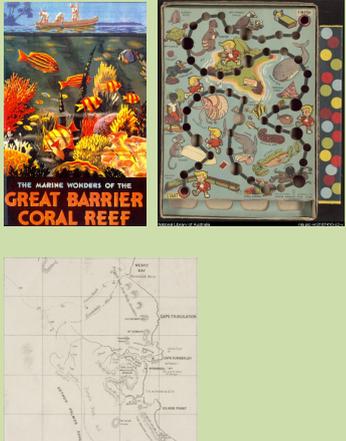
**Audiences**

Children	Children's Activity Centre - under 6 year olds
Secondary School	Link to secondary curriculum, digital storytelling in the FNQ Memory Room; Living in the tropics
Older local residents	FNQ Memory Room; Living in the tropics
International Visitors	Cairns: the Port for FNQ; Living in the tropics.

## Collections

The most significant social history material culture for use in the Centre for Social Memories is held by the Cairns Historical Society. Their collection of images, archival material and ephemera has the ability to creatively explore a range of stories outlined by the themes above. It is significant because it presents a visual record of the changing landscape, settler nationalities and their associated activities. Largely two dimensional, it does, however, also contain some audio recordings and oral histories. Other material will have to be used via short term loan arrangements with other heritage agencies. A brief overview of potential collections interest follows:

Collecting agency	Key material	Examples	Themes
In situ	Sugar sheds Bagging machinery		Sugar Cairns Wharves/ transportation Migration
Cairns Historical Society	Photographs Documentary – maps, cartoons, illustrations, books, newspapers, Audio – oral histories, sound recordings		All
Cairns Library	Images		
Innisfail Historical Society	Seepoy family portraits		Migration Community
Innisfail Library	Black and white photographs, particularly of the 1918 cyclone		Climate, building
JCU	JCU Picture archives (including significant material relating to: E. Banfield Bloomfield track – conservation movement re declaration of Wet Tropics		Conservation
QM	Richard Daintree Collection		Pastoralism, settlement
State Library of Queensland (John Oxley Library)	Harriet Brims photographic albums Frank Hurley photographs Alfred Aktkinson photographs Murray views postcards		Community Mining Sugar

Collecting agency	Key material	Examples	Themes
Queensland State Archives	Building blueprints and architectural drawings Images, particularly from the <a href="#">Lands Department, Survey Office, Cartographic Branch, Photographic Section</a> ; Railways Department Queensland Government Tourism Bureau Premier 's Department Mapping, survey maps		Community Tourism Multiculturalism
National Museum of Australia	Glass plates of Richard Daintree		
National Library of Australia	Travel posters Ephemera – games Maps – early survey and discovery such as Dalrymple		Agriculture Mining Tourism
Australian War Memorial	Photographic collection depicting WWII in the Cairns and Atherton Tablelands District Artwork by R Emerson Curtis depicting the Cairns and the Atherton Tablelands District		World War II Community
National Film and Sound Archives	Home movies, particularly tourism visits to region	n/a	Community
Individuals	Many locals with significant personal collections. Work with these individuals regarding display/collection could be one of the research aims for the centre.	n/a	All

## Public programs

Links to potential online public programs

Agency	Comments	Link
BBC Wales	“Capture Wales” - digital storytelling project from BBC Wales that use a thematic approach to exploring life in Wales	<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/yourvideo/queries/capturewales.shtml">http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/arts/yourvideo/queries/capturewales.shtml</a>
Australian Museum	“My Museum” - online collecting and self-curating	<a href="http://australianmuseum.net.au/Sign-up">http://australianmuseum.net.au/Sign-up</a>
National Museum of Australia	Anzac Pilgrims – online digital storytelling project about Anzac and travelling to Gallipoli	<a href="http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/community/anzac_pilgrims/">http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/community/anzac_pilgrims/</a>
Museums and galleries of Scotland	Digital storytelling, collection and online exhibitions	<a href="http://www.rememberingscotlandatwar.org.uk/">http://www.rememberingscotlandatwar.org.uk/</a>

## Workshops

- Recording oral histories
- Conserving material culture
- Photography workshops – landscapes
- Audio visual workshops – animating heritage

**Events and activities**

- Festival of museums – annual display of work by different museums from around the region (in physical or other formats;
- Bush poetry readings – link to local ABC competitions;
- Online programs and community exhibition galleries that are showcased throughout the year;
- Music – could link with local artists who integrate history and regional themes into their work and perform in other spaces within the performing arts centre (i.e.: Andy Collins; Kamerunga)

**Other models to consider**

Museum	Comments	Images
National Museum of Australia	Using the National Museum of Australia’s Eternity exhibition as an example, but focusing on themes and extremes that depict the tropics. Key elements in Eternity include screen based modules that allow audio visual	
Immigration Museum, Melbourne	Integration of personal stories in to the display connects well with visitors, Mixed 2D media, not necessarily object heavy, but able to convey experiences	

## 10.4 A sense of place – safeguarding World Heritage sites

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### Exhibition concept

The natural history of FNQ (from Cairns to Torres Strait and across to the Gulf of Carpentaria) is defined by its biogeographic history, climate and the rapid progression (by Australian spatial standards at least) of changes across the transect from the marine ‘blue mud’ and terrestrial savannah vegetation in the Gulf region, to the wet tropics cloud forests, to pristine and highly accessible coral reefs in close proximity to the coast on the narrow continental shelf of the GBR, out to the coral reef-topped ‘seamounts’ in the Coral Sea. These features are partially captured within the two World Heritage Areas (WHAs) in this region – the Wet Tropics WHA and the Great Barrier Reef WHA. They are also further represented in a number of lesser well-known sites that are on the Commonwealth Heritage or National Estate Lists (such as Low Island and Low Islets Lightstation off Port Douglas, Barron Gorge NP, Cairns Tidal Wetlands, “Mermaid” shipwreck off Gordonvale, the Daintree rainforest and Daintree River sites, etc.), or as yet unrepresented on any heritage lists but otherwise potential drawcards to visitors in this region based on their unique geomorphological and/or biological features (such as the extinct volcano cinder cones and crater lakes at Seven Sisters, Lake Barrine and Lake Eacham).

The biological components of these unique FNQ geo- and ecosystems are fragile, threatened by both natural and anthropogenically induced change, including climate change impacts. The major theme for this exhibition is to signpost these ecosystems, interpret the more significant aspects of them to encourage physical visitation, and to promote their value by engaging visitors in the concept of a rapidly changing biological world that deserves cherishing.

The exhibition will showcase these features and their locations (e.g. provide an interpreted sample of the real thing, that visitors can experience prior to their prospective visits), how they came to exist (their geomorphological evolution and historic biogeography), their value to Indigenous humans (i.e. traditional values of biodiversity and their special places), western social and economic benefits (such as providing genetic diversity for the production of food and new medicines), environmental values (such as the continued functioning of ecosystem services that filter our water and the air we breath), and the threats they are facing and what we (humans) can do to safeguard their continued existence.

Elements of the exhibition would include:

- An ecosystem-level (landscape or seascape) approach for its natural history displays of the iconic World (WHAs) and National Heritage Areas (NHAs).
- Use authentic (prepared/ articulated) faunal collections of vertebrates (birds, mammals, frogs, fishes), and some externally armoured invertebrates (such as insects, spiders and other soil arthropods, corals, echinoderms).
- Models and reconstructed fossils and soft bodied marine invertebrates.
- Manufactured objects (such as plank-butressed trees and other vegetation).

### Subtheme: The Nature of the Peninsula.

This introductory subtheme would orientate visitors to the significant features of the Cape York Peninsula, including its World Heritage Areas (Wet Tropics of Queensland, The Great Barrier Reef) and other areas of major natural significance (e.g. Torres Strait, Gulf of Carpentaria, Mornington Island, Great Artesian Basin, specific rainforests such as the Daintree, coral fringed ‘seamounts’ in the Coral Sea arising from the Abyssal Plain, extinct volcanoes in the Atherton region, etc). This could be presented as a north-south and/or east-west transect bisecting the Peninsula. It would act as an interpreted signpost to these features, encouraging visitation, and thus



*Morning glory cloud phenomena over the Gulf of Carpentaria, Unique in all the world and shrouded in mystery, the Morning Glory arrives regularly each spring. (source: [http://www.drobbears.com/m/mornina\\_alorv/index.html](http://www.drobbears.com/m/mornina_alorv/index.html))*

aimed fairly at the tourism market comprising international visitors, inter- and intrastate visitors.

### **Subtheme: Formation of the Peninsula.**

The Cape York Peninsula is nature's corridor into Queensland. Over geological history it has been a pivotal landbridge periodically connecting with and isolating Australia from the world's largest tropical and most biodiverse island (New Guinea), corresponding to the episodic changes in glacial minima and maxima and sea level changes, with its own geologic and volcanic history. This subtheme would show, through models and interactives the shaping of the Peninsula, the exposure and flooding of the Gulf, the rises and falls of the inland sea, the periodic formation and destruction of the Great Barrier Reef, the expansion and shrinkage of the wet tropics rainforests as Australia becomes an increasingly arid continent, etc. This fauna and flora, the geomorphology in which it resides, and the climate that both shapes and threatens its very survival are unique to the wet tropics. The target audience would be the inquisitive tourist, intergenerational family groups, and school groups who may know of the existence of these places but not the reasons for their existence, or indeed that they are unique, once remnants of a mighty wet tropical biota covering much of what is now Australia.

### **Subtheme: The Migration Pathway.**

The most recent landbridge connection became submerged as recent as 12,000 years ago during the end of the last glacial maximum (end of the Pleistocene). It was open for around 2.5 million years, providing a conduit for free migration of life between the connected islands. This connection is reflected in today's tropical genetic diversity. The present day Australian wet tropics flora and fauna are remnants of a common biota that was shared by these two land masses. This included pulses of human migrations into Queensland through this narrow corridor. Long periods of separation between the landmasses allowed the Australian and New Guinean biota to evolve in isolation such that today there are obvious commonalities and also marked differences (i.e. concepts of mixing of the southern Gondwanan and northern Tethyan species producing distinct biogeographical regions, etc). This subtheme would show the importance of the opening and closure of this connection by highlighting those similarities and differences. An element of the exhibition would also show that this Migration Pathway is still very much alive, with the continual invasion of pests and people via the Torres Strait islands.



*Islands of the Cape York Peninsula. Remnants of a past landbridge*

*(source: cairnsunlimited.com)*

### **Subtheme: Life hangs on.**



*Cloud forest at Mossman – as the temperature rises and cloud altitude increases these forests are under threat from rain ! (source: <http://www.grantdixonphotography.com.au/galleries/image.php?id=1326&gid=15>)*

The gradual (and more recently, rapid) aridification of Australia is reflected in the last remnants of a once much more widespread fauna and flora. The shrinking living ecosystems (most notably the forests of the wet tropics), the periodic coral bleaching events on the Great Barrier Reef, the fossil evidence for the nature and extent of these changes can serve as poignant reminders of how fragile living ecosystems are, and the concept of natural and anthropogenically-induced climate change (and other changes such as habitat destruction, overfishing, losing our national parks to death, etc) would be introduced by this subtheme. Concepts of practical action, such as continued legislation for large scale wilderness preservation (e.g. WHAs, National Parks, GBR Representative Areas Program, Qld Govt Wild Rivers, Steve Irwin Reserve, etc), as well as personal actions such as how to reduce carbon footprints, how to behave in WHAs and National Parks, etc etc, could be woven into this theme.



*The Torres Strait Islands – stepping stones across time*

(source: <http://www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/2006-07/html/profiles/profile06.htm>)

*Tree Kangaroo, Cape York, a rainforest inhabitant of the wet tropics and New Guinea (source: topicsplanet.com)*



*Highly endangered Cassowary with less than 1500 individuals thought to exist in the wild (source: <http://www.terrageria.com/photos/?keyword=rainforests-australia>)*



*Where rainforest meets reef: Cape Tribulation, a vital connection between rainforest nutrient runoff and the adjacent coral reefs, under threat by deforestation*

(source: <http://www.terrageria.com/photos/?keyword=rainforests-australia>)

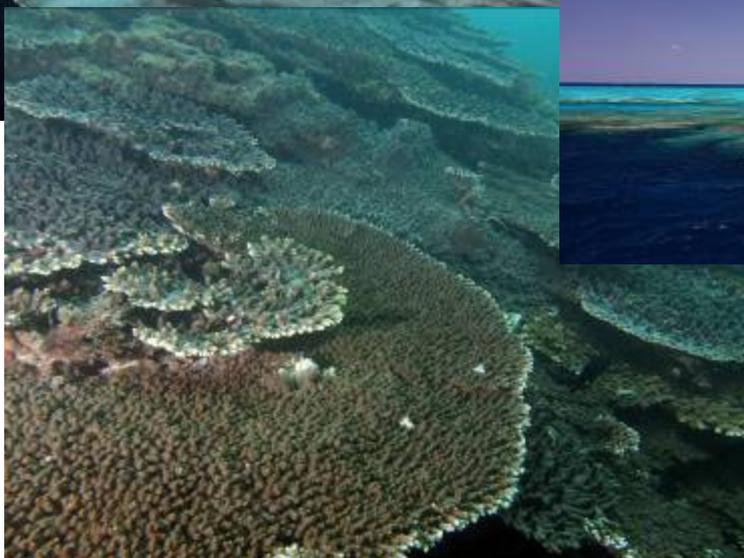
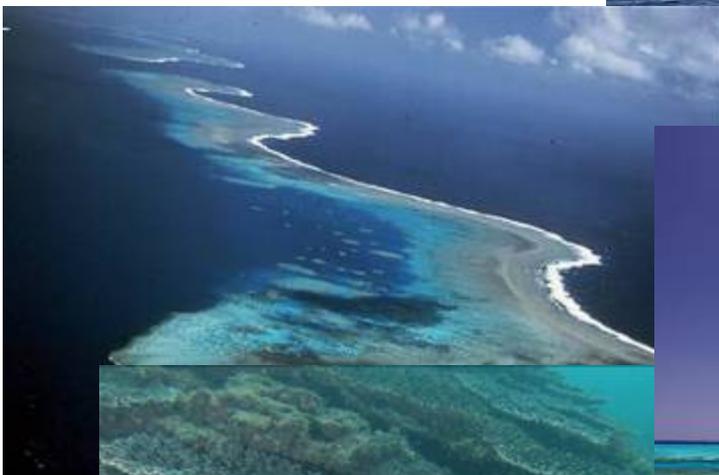


*The Low Isles off Port Douglas in the 1920s, an inshore low wooded islet with fringing coral reefs, and the important location of the earliest comprehensive study of coral reefs worldwide in 1928-1929 (source: Reports of the GBR Expedition, QM)*

*The Low Isles today, with the lighthouse buildings still serving as a field research facility (Source: kilcullenbridge.blogspot.com)*



*Below, Ribbon Reefs, in the clearer waters of the outer Great Barrier Reef (source: QM)*



*Osprey Reef, above, a remote coral-topped 'seamount' on the edge of the submerged Queensland Plateau in the Coral Sea, rising from the Abyssal Plain (source: <http://www.pbase.com/gravitino/image/89939909/original>)*

*Acropora plate coral, left, on the Great Barrier Reef (source QM)*

*Osprey Reef: Clear nutrient poor waters away from the coast in the Coral Sea offer habitats different from those on the adjacent Great Barrier Reef, together with some of the worlds best diving (source: mikeball.com)*



*Chambered nautilus, an ancient lineage of molluscs and subject of long term research and monitoring program at Osprey Reef*

*(source: nevillecoleman.com.au)*



*Clear deep waters make Osprey Reef a mecca for oceanic predators (source: prodive.com.au)*

## Exhibition elements

*Permanent exhibition.* The introduction, signposting and interpretation of the natural world of the Cape York Peninsula are fundamental to a museum in the wet tropics – it is largely why visitors go there. Also, given the intensity, complexity, and object rich nature of this exhibition it would need to be designed as a permanent feature, but with the flexibility of periodically changing the cameos used to typify each feature/ ecosystem. This, while the small components might change, the big picture large objects (e.g. buttressed tree, coral reef etc) would remain constant.

### Science centre- Reef and Rainforest – On the edge

The concept of this Museum space focuses on elements that differentiate it from other centres in the region that also have reef and rainforest themes. The reef and rainforest theme will have a strong emphasis on the relationships that exist between the marine and terrestrial environments overlaid by the impacts that human activities have on the balance of these relationships. Other local interpretive centres do not explore these relationships in such an integrated way. Some of the local human activities to be explored would include: agriculture, forestry, recreation, urban development as well as the relationship of indigenous people to these environments. To in order to better understand and appreciate these relationships, the visitor will engage in an exploration of some of the key physical and biological elements that form these two environments. The role of the mangrove environment could also be explored as a key edge environment.

A second differentiation for this centre will be the target audience. The centre will focus on local stories and inputs as well as catering for a diverse audience. However, the primary target would be the younger audience who will engage with the space in a number of different scenarios; as families including older members; as part of school groups, or as part of groups participating in special programs. The younger audience would draw from both local and visitor populations.

To engage the younger audience the space would be designed to firstly engage the audience before then providing opportunities to explore the key elements of the centre. There would be a balance between content delivery and interactive opportunities to explore and form ideas. Integral to the exploration and formation of ideas would be providing opportunities for participation in small and larger group interactions. This implies space for small discussion and reflection as well as spaces for group activities and workshops that are integrated with the exhibition spaces. In short, the focus will be on providing immersive experiences that facilitate rich interactions and deep understandings.



Element	Implications for design	Examples
Interpretation of the reef and rainforest that focuses on the relationship between the terrestrial and aquatic environments.	Content to be provided through objects and specimens presented contextually with support from a variety of media that uses textual, auditory and visual approaches.	Multisensory approaches Contextualized presentation of content and ideas Virtual guides
Interactive investigations of the elements of the reef and rainforest environments.	Space provided for groups and individuals to participate in a variety of learning activities that will include role playing and gross motor activity.	Space for activities for groups of 20-30
Close up study and interpretation of specimens that live in the reef and rainforest environments.	Stations that include: Specimens that can be handled Investigative tools Knowledge database for detailed study	Marine specimens Terrestrial invertebrates Microscopes Hand lenses Computer knowledge base
Posing and finding answers to questions about the elements of the reef and rainforest worlds		

<b>Element</b>	<b>Implications for design</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Engaging in intergenerational learning opportunities through stimulating exhibits and activities.	Exhibits stimulate discussion by posing wonder and challenge. Visitors are provoked to respond to major environmental issues associated with the reef and rainforest.	Dioramas Live exhibits Invertebrate colonies
Exploring the reef and rainforest worlds through immersive activities that include tactile, aural and visual experiences.	Some features might include: Tactile opportunities that allow specimen handling Multisensory experiences of the rainforest environment.	Touch tanks Rainforest microclimate
Interpretation of the reef and rainforest that focuses on the relationship between the terrestrial and aquatic environments. The mangroves would be a key edge environment to be explored.	The edge environment featuring specimens that live there: Adaptations of organisms to their environment.	Close study of adaptations of organisms for performed functions.
Impact of human activities on the rainforest and reef environments: Impacts of changes to the environment on organisms. Interactive investigations of the elements of the reef and rainforest environments.	Games and role plays that relate advantages of physical features to successful living. Sustainable reef and rainforest management by indigenous peoples. Cultural interpretations of the reef and rainforest by indigenous people.	Space for role plays Workshops that utilize reef and rainforest resources by indigenous people.

**Collection availability.**

The permanent exhibition would be object rich, and rely on accessibility to preserved/ articulated/ modelled/ reconstructed or manufactured specimens' objects. Sufficient planning for acquiring, taxidermy, preparing or manufacturing collection objects would be essential.

There are diverse image libraries of the wet tropics ecosystems and biota already existing within agencies such as the GBRMPA, WTMA, QM etc. Partnering with these agencies would ensure easy access to this large existing resource.

**Conservation requirements.**

Unlike the living ecosystems in the wet tropics, this exhibition would need to be strictly controlled for climate and pests, depending on how many authentic versus manufactured objects are used.

**Storage requirements.**

Ideally an ongoing program of turning over small portions of the exhibition would ensure repeat visitation by locals, and also enable rapid response to emerging environmental issues (e.g. recent pest incursions) or achievements (e.g. rediscovery of presumed extinct or Rare and Threatened species, etc). Specimen storage (including frozen collections for taxidermy) and preparatory capabilities (especially taxidermy) would be essential to refurbish components of this exhibition over time.

**Public programs & interaction with other site partners**

This exhibition offers opportunities for both generalist (e.g. on-floor tours) and specialist communication spaces (e.g. dedicated lecture theatre). There are huge opportunities to leverage the exhibition as a focal point for professional meetings, interacting with other convention facilities in Cairns.

## 11. Projected space requirements

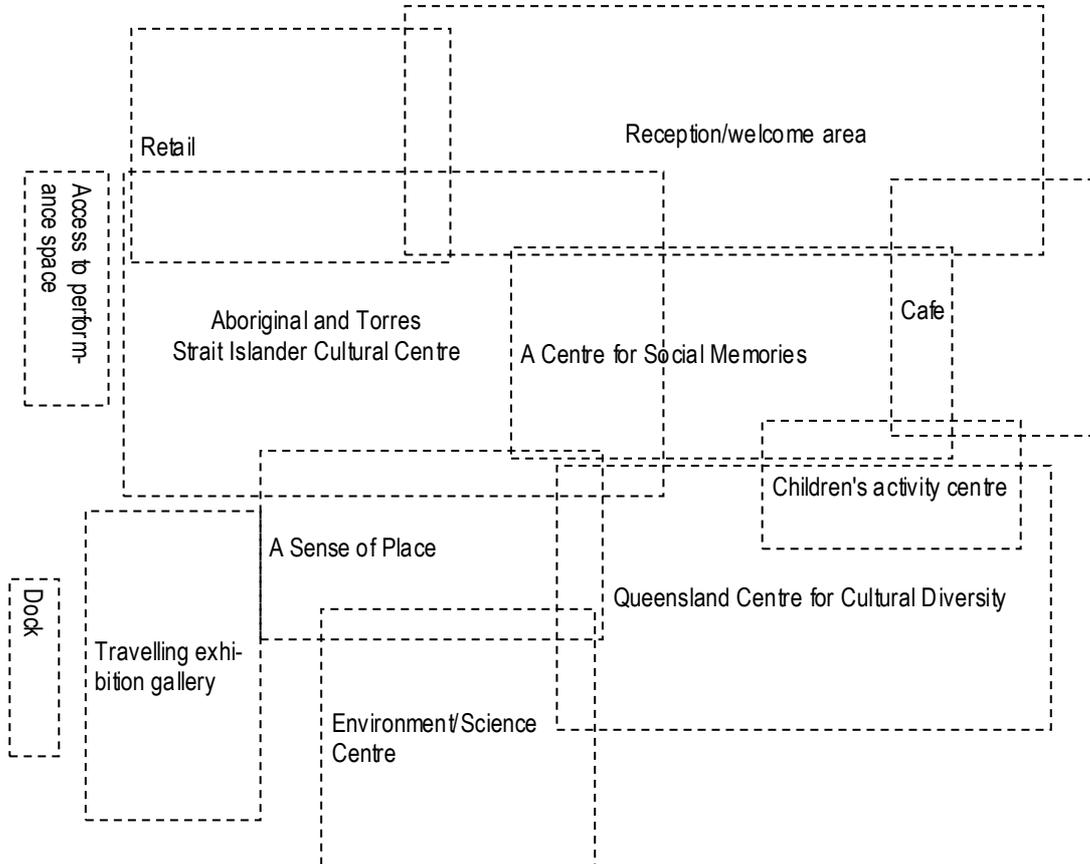
Based on consultations and the concept briefs the new Museum would require the following exhibitions and associated spaces: Although some indication of thematic display spaces is indicated below this is only a guide as gallery spaces can be very flexible and elements of each story told in different spaces e.g. integrated into one of more themes or in reception/introductory foyer/ outdoor spaces etc.

Theme	Space required	Special considerations
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre	300sqm	Inside and outside adjoining spaces with access to performance space and storage area for props and audio visual equipment. Small conference rooms to accommodate small audience performances or cultural workshops ie weaving. Open space off from café area to accommodate cultural workshops as part of Public Programs. Large courtyard area in front of Museum to accommodate Smoking Ceremonies or other cultural practices close to entrance (and performance space). Courtyard/balcony off from storage area and a seminar room on office level to accommodate private smoking ceremonies for Repatriation.
Queensland Centre for Cultural Diversity	300sqm	For cultural awareness workshops, family history workshops, demonstrations presenting traditional skills and technology of diverse community groups, oral history workshops Dedicated outdoor/indoor space such as a theatrette with screen, data projector, DVD, etc for outdoor activities (for example, in an enclosed courtyard space) a kitchen, marquee, trestle tables, chairs and a range of other furniture and sound equipment will be required.
A Centre for Social Memories	200sqm	Could be located along a wall space to create a “living wall of stories” and would require seating and listening areas. Interactive space/workshop area that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seating and work tables, and workshop space to run memory and reminiscence sessions;</li> <li>• computers and space for people to view photographs and add to the collective knowledge about the collection</li> <li>• a recording booth and access to power for computers/ recording equipment</li> <li>• scanning/collection of visual material;</li> <li>• access to toilets/bathroom close by</li> </ul>
	Children’s Activity Centre 200sqm	Inside and outside facility based on a harbour and boat theme, large deck of a sailing boat for younger school children’s orientation space (plus play space); Number of smaller craft based on Torres Strait and Pacific Islander boasts, good circulation space and access to objects to promote learning experiences Port loading and unloading facilities for play; View of water to reflect the theme with seating for parents with good line of sight to view children’s play; Café, toilet and parenting facilities in very close proximity.
A sense of place – safeguarding World Heritage sites	Permanent exhibition 300sqm	To recreate a transect across major ecosystems, it is envisaged that significant height be allowed for e.g, showing the rainforest canopy.
	Science centre 200sqm	Space for visitors to engage at stations with objects. Allow for school group visits.
Travelling Exhibition Gallery	200sqm	for touring exhibitions with an option of being enlarged to 400sqm from adjacent gallery spaces to accommodate large travelling displays
Reception	80-100 pax standing	Capable of comfortably providing box office, cloakroom and general reception for up to 100 visitors at a time.

## 12. Functional diagrammatical representation of visitor experience

The diagram below shows the integration of all thematic elements in the Museum as well as the need to co-locate some functions. These relationships could occur vertically or horizontally. (diagram not to scale)

Functional diagram of new museum exhibitions and co-located services



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### 13. Other References

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*Standards in the Museum Care of Larger and Working Objects*, Museums and Galleries Commission 1994,  
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*Standards in the Museum Care of Costume and Textile Collections*, Museums and Galleries Commission 1992,  
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