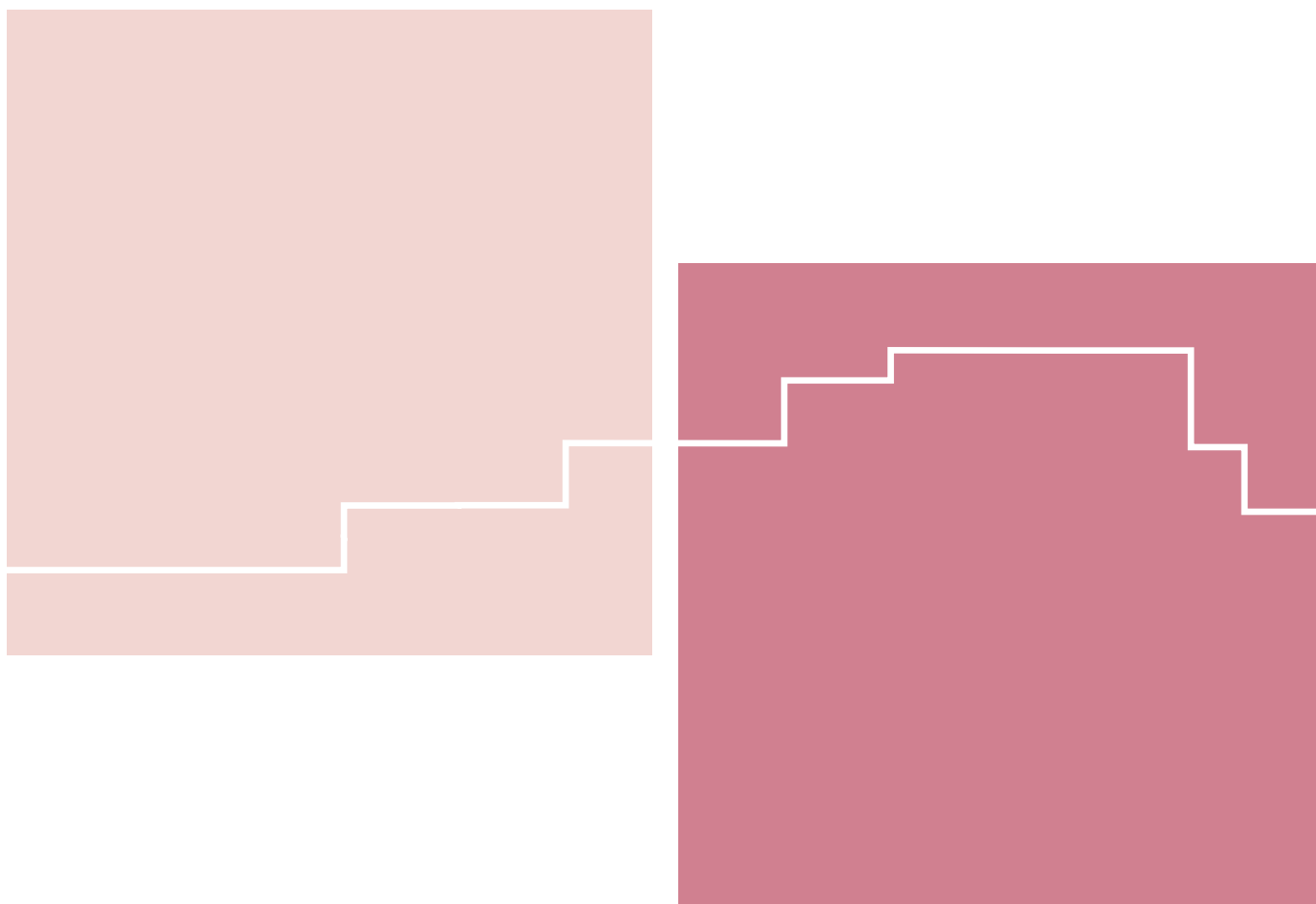


QUEENSLAND CULTURAL CENTRE

Conservation Management Plan



CONRAD
GARGETT

JUNE 2017

Queensland Cultural Centre Conservation Management Plan

A report for Arts Queensland

June 2017

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Introduction

The Queensland Cultural Centre is located at South Brisbane and comprises the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Museum and Queensland State Library. It was constructed between 1977 and 1988 in four stages for a cost of more than \$200 million. A fifth stage, The Playhouse Theatre, was completed in 1998 for a cost of \$61 million. Since the Art Gallery was opened in 1982, the Queensland Cultural Centre has been a resounding success with more than five million visitors in 2015.

The Queensland Cultural Centre is the responsibility of Arts Queensland, which leases the buildings to the respective statutory arts bodies:

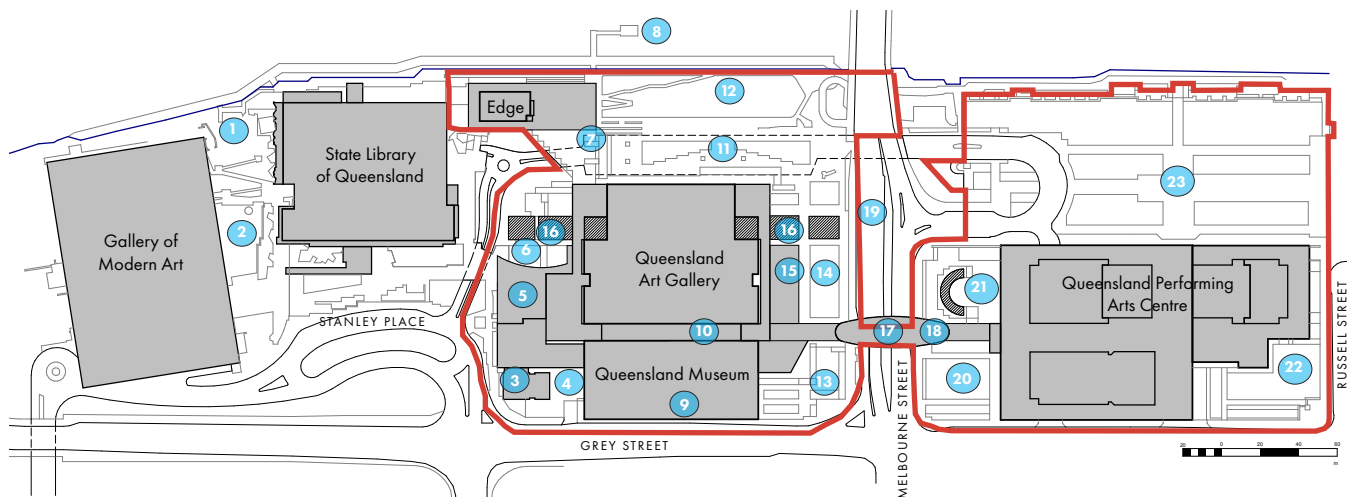
- Queensland Museum Board of Trustees
- Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees
- Queensland Performing Arts Trust
- Library Board of Queensland.

Part of the site was entered on the Queensland Heritage Register in June 2015 (Entry no. 602844).

Aims

The brief for this Conservation Management Plan is to:

- Provide a framework for the conservation and best practice management of the cultural precinct in recognition of its heritage values
- Provide guidance for future planning and the sensitivity to change of various elements of the built environment
- Be key to conserving and managing the precinct's heritage values into the future and will inform issues such as the future infrastructure planning and the overall asset management approach for the cultural precinct
- Outline conservation policies and management mechanisms that are appropriate to enable the heritage significance to be retained
- Where appropriate, recommend changes to curtilage, statement of significance and history of the place
- Be of an exemplary standard to inform future infrastructure planning for the cultural precinct.



1 Site plan, Queensland Cultural Centre with heritage boundary

Legend

1	Khuril Dhagun	9	Museum Garden	17	Melbourne Street Bridge
2	Maiwar Green	10	Pedestrian Mall	18	Melbourne Street Tunnel
3	Central Energy Plant	11	Art Gallery Plaza	19	Cultural Centre Busway Station
4	Museum/Art Gallery Dock	12	Embankment	20	QPAC Green
5	Pyramid Plaza	13	Museum Plaza	21	Cascade Court
6	Art Gallery Sculpture Courtyard	14	Pelican Plaza	22	Playhouse Green
7	Cultural Centre Tunnel	15	Umbrella Plaza	23	Cultural Forecourt
8	Pontoon	16	Water Mall		

Method and approach

This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) uses the method of investigation and analysis established by the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (the Burra Charter).¹ The Burra Charter emphasises the importance of a logical and systematic approach to undertaking a plan for conserving heritage places. The key elements are:

- Understand the place—including the history of the site, its design and construction, use and changes (Chapters 1–9)
- Cultural heritage significance—what makes the place special and what are the attributes that makes it important to Queensland (Chapter 10)
- Policy—principles and guidelines to guide management of the place to ensure the cultural heritage values are conserved (Chapter 11).

The approach adopted in drafting this CMP is to provide a document that is:

- Precise, clear, unambiguous and relevant
- Capable of being carried out
- Responds to the key issues for users and stakeholders and those responsible for the management of the place.

Study area

The study area for the CMP is defined in Figure 1 and aligns with the heritage register boundary. It is described as part of the cultural precinct at South Bank including:

- Queensland Performing Arts complex (QPAC)

¹ *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 2013. The process is outlined in detail in James Semple Kerr, *The Conservation Plan: a guide to the preparation of conservation plans for places of European cultural heritage significance*, National Trust of NSW, Sydney, 7th edition, 2013.

- Queensland Museum and Science Centre (QM)
- Queensland Art Gallery (QAG)
- The Edge, a separate building on the riverfront located beside (and managed by) the State Library of Queensland
- External areas, including Art Gallery Plaza, Embankment, Pelican Plaza, Umbrella Plaza, Museum Garden, Museum Plaza, Cascade Court, QPAC Green and Playhouse Green
- Melbourne Street pedestrian bridge
- Cultural Forecourt (owned by South Bank Corporation and managed by the Brisbane City Council).

The heritage listing does not include the State Library of Queensland, the Gallery of Modern Art and spaces including Stanley Place and Maiwar Green.

Supporting documentation

In conjunction with the development of this CMP, Conrad Gargett has prepared additional documentation to assist implementation of the CMP. This documentation has been prepared in consultation with Arts Queensland, Arts Property and Facilities and staff of the statutory bodies. The documents include:

- Heritage Manual
The Heritage Manual provides specific advice and guidance for the management of the cultural heritage values of the Queensland Cultural Centre. It explains how the policies in this CMP are to be used along with good heritage management principles set out in the Burra Charter. It outlines the procedures for approvals for works in accordance with the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*, including works covered by the general exemption certificate, works already approved by a current exemption certificate, and works which would require a new exemption certificate.
- Register of existing fabric, fixtures and fittings
- Register of significant, non-significant and intrusive elements
- Register of issues and pressures on the site
- Case studies related to the application of the CMP
- Queensland Cultural Centre Public Artworks—history and significance
- Floor plans—drawings of existing spaces and record of changes
- Landscape Building Information Modelling—commissioned separately by Arts Queensland
- Landscape graphical plans
- Review of Queensland Cultural Precinct Draft Master Plan (2014) in the context of heritage listing
- Photographic record—major external and internal spaces
- Staff training manuals.

Terms and definitions

This plan uses some words relating to heritage conservation practice—such as conservation, restoration and fabric—that have particular meanings. The meanings of these words are defined in the Burra Charter and are included in the Appendix (see p. 139).

Authorship

This Conservation Management Plan was prepared by Conrad Gargett in association with Thom Blake, Historian and heritage consultant.

Thom Blake researched and wrote the chapters on the history of the Cultural Centre and revised statement of significance. The individual buildings' architecture, the setting, landscape and fabric were investigated by David Gole (QPAC) and Luke Pendergast (QAG, QM & The Edge) with principal support by Robert Riddel. The policies developed to guide and protect the cultural significance of the Cultural Centre were prepared in collaboration between Conrad Gargett and Thom Blake.

Allan Kirkwood and Peter Roy assisted with advice on the design approach and history of the planning and construction of the Cultural Centre.

John Stafford researched the history and management of the external artworks. Peter Marquis-Kyle provided advice on the policies and reviewed the document. Alan Croker peer reviewed the document and commented on the structure and methodology.

Abbreviations

APT	Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art
BCC	Brisbane City Council
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
GOMA	Gallery of Modern Art
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
PWD	Person with disability
QAG	Queensland Art Gallery
QCC	Queensland Cultural Centre
QCCT	Queensland Cultural Centre Trust
QM	Queensland Museum
QPAC	Queensland Performing Arts Centre
QPACA	Queensland Performing Arts Centre Archives
QPAT	Queensland Performing Arts Trust
QSA	Queensland State Archives
SLQ	State Library Queensland

Chronology

5000 BP	Evidence of Indigenous occupation of Moreton region
1825–1840	Moreton Bay penal settlement established on banks of Brisbane River—limited use of the south bank for agriculture
1842	Moreton Bay declared free settlement
1844	First land sales at South Brisbane. Development of area and dispersal of Indigenous groups
1890	Major flooding of South Brisbane
1893	Two major floods in South Brisbane, Victoria Bridge destroyed
1899	Railway line to South Brisbane
1969	Decision to build art gallery at South Brisbane
1969–72	Acquisition of land at South Brisbane for art gallery
1973	Art gallery competition—won by Robin Gibson and Partners
1974	Cultural Centre project announced
1976	Construction commenced on Stage 1
1977	Jubilee Fountain opened by Queen Elizabeth II
1979	Construction commences on Stage 2—QPAC
1982	Queensland Art Gallery opened
1984	Construction commences on Stage 3—Museum
1985	QPAC opened
1986	Queensland Museum opened Construction commences on Stage 4—State Library
1988	State Library of Queensland opened Expo '88—major events at QPAC
1995	Construction commences on Stage 5—Playhouse Theatre
1998	Playhouse Theatre opened
1998	QCCT abolished and Arts Office responsible for the site
2004	Queensland Museum—new entrance and Sciencentre
2005–6	Millennium Arts project <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Alterations to Art Gallery▪ Construction of Gallery of Modern Art▪ Alterations and additions to State Library of Queensland
2009	Major alterations to Auditorium building for use as 'The Edge'
2009	Works to QPAC for disability access
2011	Major flooding of Cultural Centre in January
2011–12	Major alterations to Queensland Museum

I South Brisbane—historical overview

Indigenous occupation

On the 10 September 1825, Edmund Lockyer was preparing to travel up the Brisbane River from the Moreton Bay penal settlement. He recorded in his diary that he saw 'several natives on the opposite side of the river ...upwards of thirty men, women and children'.¹ They later crossed the river and 'remained looking at the buildings and the cattle for about an hour, and then went off, and were not seen again'. This group was probably part of the Coorpooroo community who occupied the south side of the Brisbane River.² They were part of a larger network of the Turrbul and Jagara peoples who occupied the Moreton Bay region. The Coorpooroo group was most intrigued by the activities on the other side of the river since Europeans had arrived six months earlier. Of puzzlement would have been what seemed extraordinary effort to build shelters and obtain food. For the Coorpooroo group, very adequate shelter could be erected much more quickly and efficiently, and food sources were available in abundance from nearby swamps, the river or the forested areas along the riverbanks.

Archaeological evidence indicates human occupation along the Brisbane River from at least 5000 years ago with the lowering of the sea levels and the formation of Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River as we know it today.³ For around 5000 years, the south bank of the Brisbane River has been a place of human activity: fishing, hunting, foraging in the forests, dance and song. So before the Roman Empire reached its zenith in Europe, before the rise of the great civilisations of Mesopotamia, before the Han dynasties of China, and before the enduring stone monuments were erected on the Salisbury plains, various groups of the Turrbul and Jagara peoples were living rich and productive lives along the banks of the Brisbane River.

The arrival of Europeans in 1825 would not have been cause initially for any alarm or concern. This was their land, their home, their country. Being displaced was incomprehensible and their history was one of continuous occupation from generation to generation. For the Coorpooroo community, the activities on the north side of the river in

1 JG Steele, *The explorers of the Moreton Bay District 1770-1830*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1972, p. 186.

2 JG Steele, *Aboriginal pathways in southeast Queensland and the Richmond River*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1984, p. 131.

3 HJ Hall, '20 000 years of human impact on the Brisbane River and its environs', in P Davie et al., *The Brisbane River: a source-book for the future*, Australian Littoral Society, Moorooka, 1990, p. 178.

1825 signalled the beginning of unimaginable changes and tragedy. The era of the penal settlement (1825-1840) would only have a minimal impact, but with urban development and farming they would soon face exploitation, abuse of their women, dispossession, and the devastating impact of diseases such as smallpox and measles. By the 1860s, only a small number of the Coorpooroo community was still living on their country but certainly not along the riverbank. No longer was it a place to fish or forage, or for song or dance.

Penal settlement

In September 1824, John Oxley led a party on the brig *Amity* to Moreton Bay to establish a penal settlement at Redcliffe. The party included Lieutenant Henry Miller, who was the Commandant of the penal settlement, soldiers with their wives and children, and 29 convicts. The site at Redcliffe soon proved to be most unsuitable for a penal settlement, and in May 1825 it was relocated to the north side of the Brisbane River, approximately 10 miles (16 kilometres) from the mouth.⁴ This site proved to be more suitable and soon became a substantial settlement of stone buildings including soldiers' barracks, stores, cottages, prisoners' barracks, a hospital and a windmill. Agriculture was undertaken outside the immediate bounds of the settlement at Kangaroo Point, Eagle Farm and South Brisbane. Land was cleared and cultivated at South Brisbane for growing maize. The Coorpooroo community did not, however, readily submit to this incursion on its land and saw the opportunity to raid the maize crops. One raid in 1827, however, had unfortunate consequences. When 'natives' were observed 'coming down in large numbers and stealing the maize', the Commandment Captain Patrick Logan sent soldiers across the river with orders to 'not injure the natives, but if obliged, to fire over their heads'. When the soldiers did encounter the raiding party, 'one unfortunate native met his death' in the encounter.⁵

In the history of South Brisbane and the relationships between Europeans and Indigenous peoples, this early encounter became a foretaste of more violence and distrust.

Early development: 1842–50⁶

When Moreton Bay was declared a free settlement in 1842, the advantages of settling on the south bank soon became evident. As the point of arrival from Ipswich and the Downs, the south bank was a logical location for ships to berth and the establishment of facilities to cater for the travelling public. Indeed, even prior to Brisbane officially being declared a free settlement in May 1842, the enterprising John Williams and John Davidson had opened a store on the south bank.⁷

From the outset of free settlement, the government did not fail to recognise the potential of the south bank. Commissioner for Crown Lands Stephen Simpson observed: 'as no good road can be formed to the north bank of the River, South Brisbane is likely to become the great place of business'.⁸ The first town plan of Brisbane, which was drawn in 1842 and based on a survey by Henry Wade, delineated a number of streets on the south side including Stanley Quay, and Grey, Hope, Russell and Melbourne Streets. This survey and how the land was subdivided would have important consequences, not just in the immediate future, but more than 130 years later when the Queensland Cultural Centre project was being developed. The 1842 subdivision comprised 16 portions with each block measuring 1000 links (200 metres) by 450 links (81.4 metres). These proportions allowed the subdivision of the portions into lots of varying sizes, and the boundaries and

4 JG Steele, *Brisbane Town in the convict days 1824-1842*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1985, p. 27.

5 Ibid., pp. 70-1.

6 The post-1825 history of South Brisbane in the chapter is a revision of Thom Blake, 'South Brisbane: an historical overview', *Queensland Division Technical Papers*, Institution of Engineers, Australia, Queensland Division, vol. 31, no.5, 1990, pp. 1-3.

7 Ross Johnston, *Brisbane: The first thirty Years*, Booralong Publications, Bowen Hills, 1988, p. 81.

8 Ibid., p. 73.

individual allotments would be critical in determining the size and siting of buildings for the Cultural Centre.

The first land sale was held in July 1842. Significantly, 36 blocks on the south bank were put up for auction compared with only 21 on the north side.⁹ In the latter part of the year, when the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company commenced fortnightly services to Brisbane from the south, it berthed its vessels on the south bank. The first facilities were crude—a large tree trunk six feet in diameter laid parallel to the river.¹⁰

South Brisbane residents were keen to capitalise on the advantages that side of the river possessed. In 1844 residents called on the government to set aside some river frontage for a public wharf which they were prepared to erect at their expense. The government refused, preferring to sell the land and allow private enterprise to construct facilities. A year later the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company did just that, purchasing two river frontages, and building a wharf and store.¹¹ The south bank, at least in terms of shipping, soon became the unrivalled centre of activity. By 1850, four-fifths of all goods imported and exported through the port were landed and loaded at the five wharves at south bank.

Despite the dominance of the south bank in the shipping trade, it was unable to withstand other pressures to become the centre of the activity on the Brisbane River. Throughout the 1840s, the issue of the site of a future northern capital was vigorously debated by Moreton Bay residents. Not only were there arguments over Brisbane versus Cleveland, but within Brisbane itself there was the issue of the most suitable site: North Brisbane, South Brisbane or Kangaroo Point. Despite the geographical advantages, the south side residents could not withstand the political influence of those who resided on the north of the river.¹²

Residents on the south side also lost the debate on the siting of a Customs House. In the late 1840s, there was considerable discussion on this matter, with South Brisbane, the north side and Kangaroo Point all being possible locations. Despite the obvious advantages of the south bank where most of the shipping was occurring, a site on the north was chosen. Undoubtedly the views of the sub-collector of Customs did not help the cause of the south side. He described South Brisbane as 'an unhealthy swamp that should be allowed to pursue its descent quietly into its natural state'.¹³

Losing the initiative: 1850–60

The establishment of the Customs House on the town reach of the river had important consequences for development on the south bank. Following construction of the building in 1850, shipping activity gradually focused on this section of the river. The greatest blow to South Brisbane's prestige as a shipping centre came when the Australasian Steam Navigation Company (formerly the Hunter River Steam Navigation Company) moved its operations to the town reach in the latter part of the decade. Apart from the proximity of the Customs House, the town reach offered greater depth for shipping.¹⁴

Another factor influencing the decline of the south bank, at least in terms of shipping, was the development of alternative routes to Brisbane. In 1849 a new road over the D'Aguilar range was opened.¹⁵ Consequently, traffic from the Burnett and Brisbane Valley did not

⁹ Ibid., p. 77.

¹⁰ Glen Lewis, *A history of ports in Queensland: a study in economic nationalism*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1973, p. 15.

¹¹ Johnston, *Brisbane: The first thirty years*, pp. 96, 100.

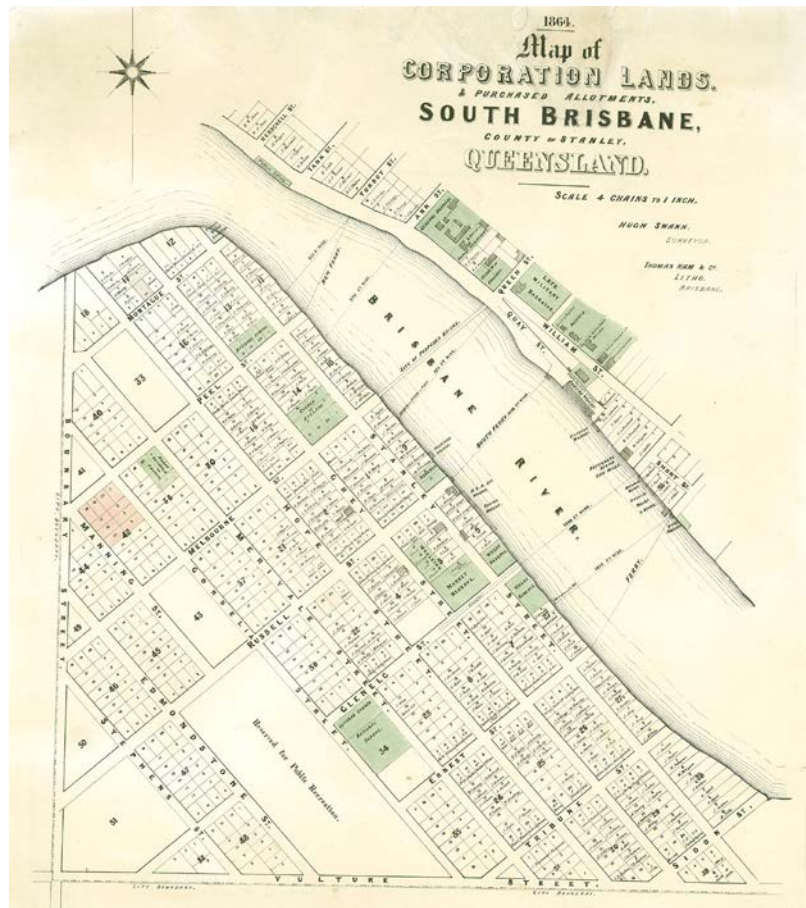
¹² Ibid., pp. 241, 245.

¹³ Ibid., p. 151.

¹⁴ Lewis, *A history of ports in Queensland*, p. 51.

¹⁵ Johnston, *Brisbane: The first thirty years*, p. 151.

2 Plan of South Brisbane, 1864.
The rectangular grid of the streets and allotments later influenced the location and planning of the Queensland Cultural Centre. (Thomas Hann, Map of Corporation Lands, SLQ).



need to pass through Ipswich and then on to South Brisbane; instead they were able to travel more directly to Brisbane from the north.

A residential sector: 1860–1880

By the 1860s, the south bank was clearly no longer the focal point for shipping activity. But the area took on another role throughout the 1860s and 70s as a residential sector. Between 1861 and 1871, the population increased fourfold from 1080 to 4222. By the end of the following decade, South Brisbane had more than 8100 residents.¹⁶

The attractiveness of the area for residential purposes was significantly enhanced by the bridging of the river. The idea of spanning the river was first raised in 1860, but another 14 years elapsed before a substantial structure was erected. The first bridge, which was built in 1866, was a temporary structure surviving for less than four years. In 1874 a more permanent bridge was constructed, which at the time was the most expensive project undertaken by the Brisbane Municipal Council.¹⁷

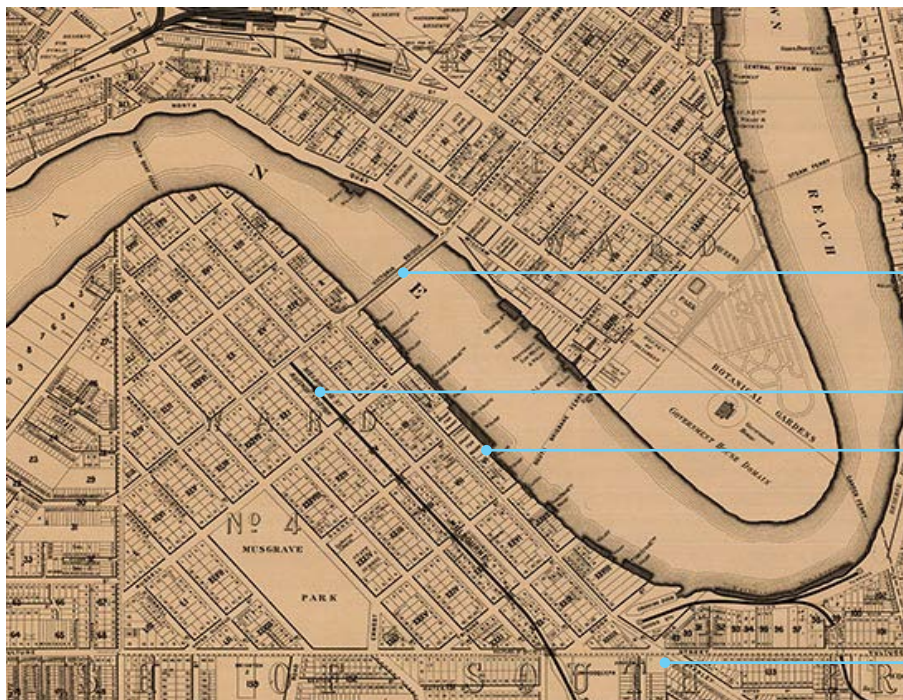
During this period, the south bank again had the opportunity to re-establish itself as a trading centre. In 1871, a parliamentary inquiry was held into the most suitable route for the railway line from Ipswich. The logical route was from Ipswich to the wharves at South Brisbane. However, the development of the south side was thwarted by more powerful interests elsewhere. The combined pressure of western suburb residents and city businessmen persuaded the government to construct the line from Ipswich to the north side via a bridge at Oxley Point (Indooroopilly). The elite of the western suburbs were

3 Victoria Bridge, built in 1874, boosted the development of South Brisbane (SLQ)



¹⁶ John Laverty, 'South Brisbane: The making of a city', in R Fisher (ed), *Brisbane in 1888: The historical perspective*, Brisbane History Group, Brisbane, 1988, p. 62.

¹⁷ Gordon Greenwood & John Laverty, *Brisbane 1859-1959: A history of local government*, Oswald Ziegler, Brisbane, 1959, pp. 65, 74, 93, 195.



4 Key facilities, South Brisbane, 1895 (Mckellar's official map of Brisbane and suburbs, sheet 8, QSA Image ID36675)

Victoria Bridge

South Brisbane Railway Station

Wharves, South Brisbane

South Brisbane Town Hall

desirous of having rail access to the city while the latter were keen to capitalise on the obvious benefits of the rail terminus close to the central business district.¹⁸

The boom period: 1880–1900

The 1880s, and to a lesser extent the 1890s, was South Brisbane's golden era. The growth mirrored in part the boom in the Queensland economy during this period, but other factors contributed to the development of the area. One undoubted boost to the area was the construction of a dry dock in 1881. The dock was used for ships requiring repairs and general maintenance. In the first two decades of operation, an average of 60 ships per year used the dock.¹⁹

Undoubtedly, the major impetus to South Brisbane's development in this period was the linking of the suburb by rail to the western line and the construction of suburban lines on the south side. When the line from Ipswich to Roma Street was finally completed in 1876, a major problem was still ready access to the wharves. West Moreton coal owners were particularly frustrated by the lack of access to deep water as their best market was in bunkering for ships. A number of possible options were entertained but the eventual decision was to construct a line from Corinda to South Brisbane. The line was opened in 1884 and terminated at Stanley Street adjacent to the dry dock. To take full advantage of the line, a coal wharf was constructed and opened in 1885.²⁰

The railway line attracted industry and commerce to the area. By the end of the 1880s, wharves extended from Victoria Bridge to River Terrace. Despite problems with the depth of the river, access to the Stanley Street station and the Woolloongabba goods yard was a decided advantage for companies using the south bank.

In the latter part of the 1890s, the south bank was provided with even better access to rail facilities. In 1894 Parliament authorised an extension of the railway line to Victoria Bridge. The line was completed in 1897 and served the various shipping and commercial enterprises along the south bank. Shipping companies operating at the time included

¹⁸ John Kerr & John Armstrong, *Destination South Brisbane: an illustrated history of the south-side railways of Brisbane*, Australian Railway Historical Society, Brisbane, 1984, p. 9.

¹⁹ FJ Brewer & R Dunn, *The municipal history of South Brisbane*, H Pole & Co, Brisbane, 1925, p. 113.

²⁰ Kerr & Armstrong, *Destination South Brisbane*, pp. 10–12.



5 Hardgrave's building, corner Stanley and Russell Streets, South Brisbane, c. 1889. The building accommodated a mix of offices and retail (SLQ 22203)



6 South Brisbane Railway Station opened in 1891 and boosted the development of South Brisbane

the Adelaide Steamship Co and John Burke Ltd. Other companies with wharf facilities included two flour milling firms, a timber yard, cold stores and the Brisbane Fish Market.²¹

The benefits of the railway line were not limited to attracting industry to the area. Equally important was the development of South Brisbane as the terminus for suburban and country lines gradually extended south and east in the latter part of the 1880s. By 1888, a line extended to Beaudesert, and in the following year Southport was also connected by rail to South Brisbane. 1889 also saw the completion of a suburban line to Cleveland.²² As a consequence of the opening of these lines, the Stanley Street station rapidly became a major passenger terminus. In turn, Stanley Street developed into one of Brisbane's major thoroughfares and retail centres. It was the premier street of the south side with 'well appointed shops of drapers, grocers, ironmongers, banks, offices and light industries'.²³

By the late 1880s, the intersection of Stanley and Vulture Streets was evolving as the civic centre of South Brisbane with a fire station, railway station and post office in close proximity. When the Municipality of South Brisbane was declared in 1888, the logical location for the construction of a Town Hall was in this precinct. But the development of this precinct into the administrative and civic centre of South Brisbane was undermined by the extension of the railway line to Melbourne Street in 1891. The construction of the Melbourne Street extension had important ramifications for the South Brisbane townscape. With the railway line terminating at the junction of Melbourne and Grey Streets, the Stanley and Vulture Street intersection ceased to be the focal point of activity for South Brisbane.

A constant threat to the viability of industry and commerce was flooding. During the 1890s, Brisbane experienced no less than six floods. Major flooding occurred in 1890 and 1893 (twice), with less severe floods in 1896 and 1898 (twice).²⁴ The 1893 floods had the greatest impact on the south bank. Flooding occurred twice within a fortnight with disastrous consequences for the city. For South Brisbane, the floods were a mixed blessing. On the one hand, retailers along Stanley Street such as Allan and Stark, that were already suffering a decline in business due to the opening of the Melbourne Street station, took the opportunity to relocate. The south bank did gain some temporary benefits from the floods. As a result of the destruction of the Indooroopilly rail bridge, all rail traffic from the Ipswich line was diverted to South Brisbane until a new bridge was constructed in 1896.

Throughout this period, residential growth continued in South Brisbane. The population almost trebled between 1881 and 1891 and by the turn of the century, South Brisbane had 25 000 residents.²⁵ Although it had a reputation as a 'workingman's suburb', it was also a desirable address for the city's upper classes. The ridges surrounding the suburb were attractive for the views, climate and proximity to the city. Indeed, in 1891 South Brisbane contained more of Brisbane's elite than in any other one suburb. Approximately 15 per cent of this group lived in the South Brisbane, Highgate Hill and West End during the 1890s.²⁶

Despite various setbacks since its foundation, by the turn of the century, South Brisbane had become a thriving suburb.

²¹ Kerr & Armstrong, *Destination South Brisbane*, p. 16.

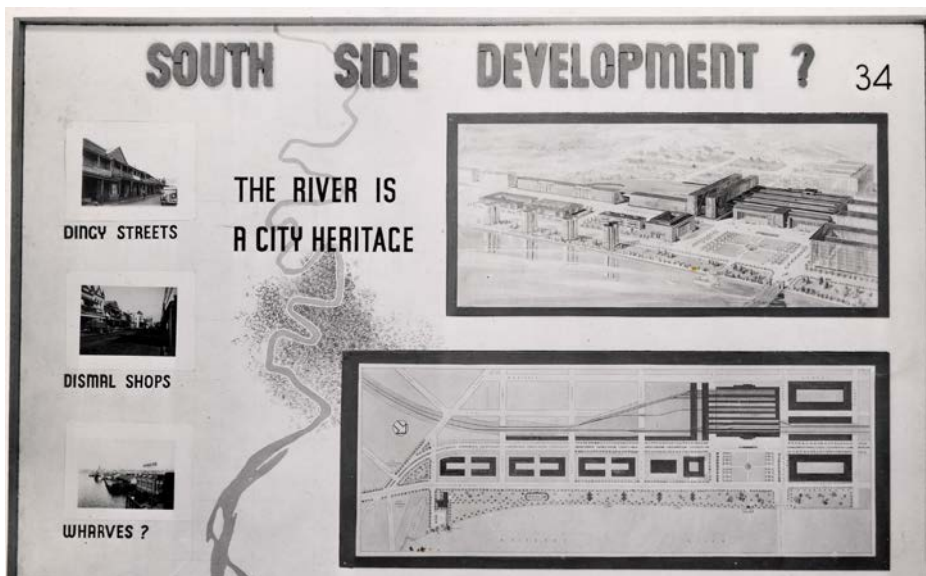
²² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²³ JHC McClurg, *Historical sketches of Brisbane*, Library Board of Queensland, Brisbane, 1975, p. 81.

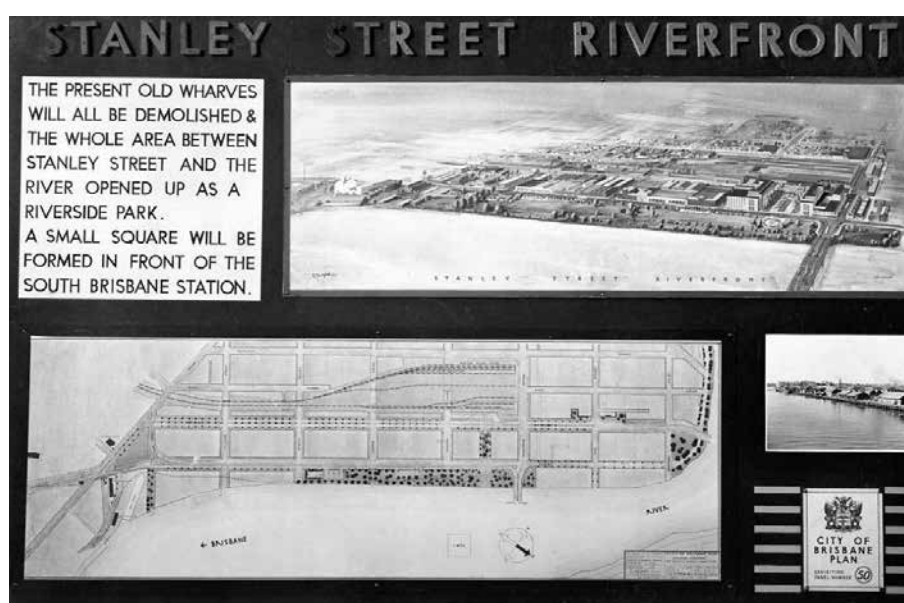
²⁴ Ronald Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s: a study of Australian urban society*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1973, p. 119.

²⁵ Lavery, *South Brisbane: The making of a city*, p. 62.

²⁶ Lawson, *Brisbane in the 1890s*, pp. 331-333.



7 Proposal for the redevelopment of the south side of the Brisbane River, 1944 (Brisbane City Council Archives)



8 Proposal for the redevelopment of Stanley Street, 1948. (Brisbane City Council Archives)

Decline of the south bank: 1900–1970s

While the south bank had some success in maintaining its prestige and vitality as a suburb in the early 1900s, it struggled to maintain the growth experienced elsewhere in Brisbane. The suburb's decline as a commercial centre and respected residential sector was due to several factors.

First, the south bank suffered as maritime activity was gradually relocated downstream. To accommodate larger vessels, wharves were built first in the Bulimba reach of the river and then later at Hamilton. The development of the Hamilton wharves began in 1923 and shipping firms from the south bank, town reach and Kangaroo Point areas gradually relocated to the Hamilton reach. By 1945, this area had become the heart of Brisbane's wharfage.²⁷

Another factor contributing to the decline of South Brisbane was the construction of new bridges across the river. While Victoria Bridge remained the primary link between the north and south of the city, the South Brisbane area, and Stanley Street in particular,

²⁷ Lewis, *A history of the ports of Queensland*, pp. 221-13.



9 South Brisbane in 1976
characterised by predominantly low
rise buildings with little development
in the previous decades (QPACA)

remained major thoroughfares. However, the construction of first the Story Bridge (1938) and more recently the Captain Cook Bridge (1974) diverted traffic from the area. As a consequence, commercial activity in the area was adversely affected.

The need to revitalise the south bank was evident even by the 1940s. In 1944 the Brisbane City Council in collaboration with the Commonwealth Department of Post-war Reconstruction hosted a town-planning exhibition in the City Hall. One poster focused on the need to redevelop the south bank 'for the people to use and enjoy' by establishing parkland along the riverbank.²⁸ A similar exhibition was held in 1948 and promoted the revitalisation of the Stanley Street riverfront with a park and small square in front of the South Brisbane station.²⁹ Nothing immediately eventuated from these proposals but they demonstrate that the renewal of the south bank was being considered as early as the 1940s.

By the late 1960s, there was little evidence of the area's former prosperity and status. Certainly, there was nothing to suggest the south bank was once seriously considered as the location for a capital. South Brisbane was arguably 'going nowhere'. Construction was limited, and business activity was declining. Certainly it was no longer a retail destination as suburban shopping centres flourished in the outer suburbs such as Chermside, Mt Gravatt and Indooroopilly.

But in late 1969, the announcement of a major building project at South Brisbane would signal the transformation of the area. The significance of this announcement would not be apparent for almost two decades when a Cultural Centre was completed and it became the catalyst for other major developments on the south bank.

²⁸ Brisbane City Council, Town and Home Planning Exhibition, 1944, BCC Archives, BCA0253.

²⁹ Brisbane City Council, Town Planning Exhibition, 1948, BCC Archives, BCA100.

2 A cultural centre for Queensland

Throughout the late 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, the major cultural institutions were accommodated in a range of facilities throughout Brisbane: the Queensland Museum and the Art Gallery in the Exhibition Building, the State Library in William Street, while performing arts companies utilised a variety of venues including the concert hall in the Exhibition Building, Her Majesty's Theatre and the City Hall (from 1928).

Proposals for a cultural centre: 1880s–1960s

The idea to amalgamate two or more of the key cultural institutions in Brisbane was first proposed in 1889 when the Department of Works held a competition for the design of a museum, art gallery and library. The competition was won by Charles McLay who proposed an imposing neoclassical building on a site in Wickham Terrace above Central Railway Station. Tenders were called for the project in March 1891 just as the government was facing a financial crisis and construction did not proceed.¹

The idea of a cultural centre was again canvassed in 1927 when Raymond Nowland, architect and town planner, addressed the Town Planning Association of Queensland on the development and beautification of North Quay. Nowland proposed an ambitious scheme that involved removing unhappy structures fronting the Brisbane River and replacing them with an enlarged public library and an art gallery.² Nothing eventuated, but in 1934, Nowland revisited the concept when working as a senior architect in the Department of Works. He was responsible for a scheme involving the redevelopment of Wickham Park fronting Turbot Street. Nowland proposed an ambitious project of three new public buildings: a dental hospital, art gallery and public library. *The Courier Mail* enthused about this 'Civic Cultural Centre', claiming that 'at last a Queensland Government has been brought to recognise the State's need of a national public library and a national art gallery worthy to bear those names, and to admit, also, some responsibility for repairing a long neglect of public cultural facilities in Queensland's capital'.³ The dental hospital was built (completed in 1941), but not the art gallery or library. They would have to wait.

As Brisbane emerged from wartime restrictions on construction and public works projects in the later part of the 1940s, attention turned to major civic improvement schemes including beautifying the city and cultural facilities. In 1948 a scheme was proposed to move the Supreme Court buildings further east along George Street and create a square with an



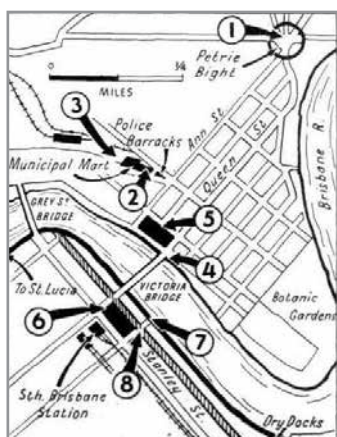
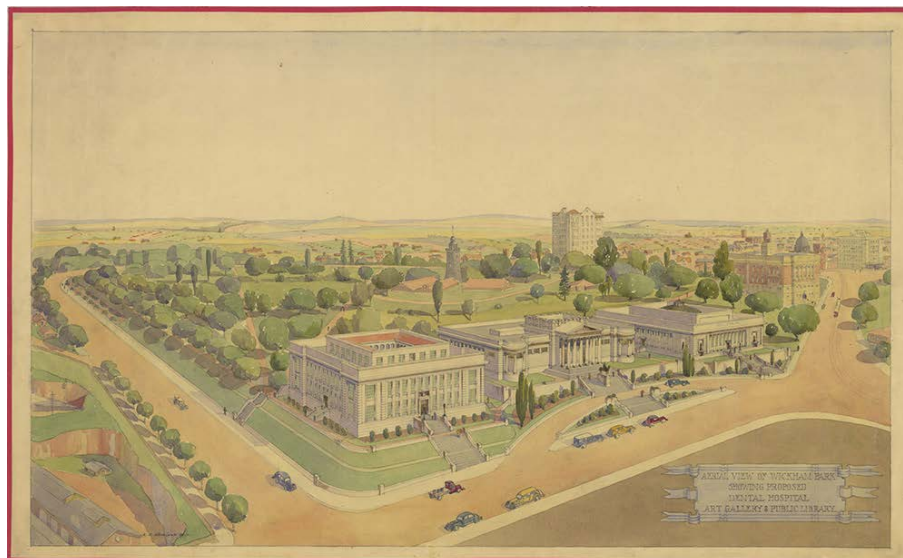
10 Plan of proposed Museum, Wickham Terrace by Charles McLay, 1891 (QSA Item ID108156)

¹ *Brisbane Courier*, 2 October 1889, 7 November 1889, 25 March 1891.

² *Brisbane Courier*, 27 February 1927.

³ *The Courier Mail*, 13 November 1934.

11 Wickham Park aerial view with proposed Dental Hospital, Art Gallery and Public Library, 1938 (QSA Item ID328720)



12 Plan of proposal for new public facilities in Brisbane including new Art Gallery [marked at 5] (The Sunday Mail, 14 March 1948)



13 Plan for location of Cultural Centre near Botanic Gardens, 1949 (The Sunday Mail, 30 October 1949)

art gallery and new state library.⁴ In the following years, the Lord Mayor, Alderman Chandler, proposed a scheme of creating a wider tree-lined Albert Street from the City Hall to the Botanic Gardens and that 'the Art Gallery and Conservatorium should be housed near the gardens, as well as an opera house and library'.⁵ Again, these schemes remained but dreams.

The idea of locating the art gallery near the Botanic Gardens continued to be canvassed in the 1950s. To celebrate Queensland's centenary in 1959, a proposal was submitted to Cabinet for the construction of a new gallery on a site near Government House at Gardens Point. The government responded enthusiastically and the Premier announced that a worldwide competition would be conducted for the design of the complex. The scheme quickly expanded into not only an art gallery, but also a multipurpose hall with seating for 1500 patrons for use for musical and dramatic presentations.⁶ This building was to be known as 'Pioneers Hall'. The complex would be funded by a mix of public donations and government assistance. A committee was established comprising prominent identities associated with the arts and chaired by the Premier. Problems, however, soon emerged with the proposal. First, the Brisbane City Council announced in April 1959 that it was considering extending George Street through to the river for a new bridge at Gardens Point. Consequently, the area of land for the proposed Cultural Centre would be curtailed. Secondly, potential art-loving benefactors were concerned that their contributions would be devoted to the 'Pioneers Hall' and not a new art gallery. After the euphoria surrounding centenary celebrations had subsided in 1959, the scheme was eventually abandoned.

Another site in the Brisbane CBD soon emerged as the possible location for a Cultural Centre. The Brisbane Municipal Markets had operated from a site fronting Roma Street since 1881, and in 1960, the Market Authority decided to relocate to a new site at Rocklea. A range of uses for such a prime site were soon forthcoming, including a proposal by the Brisbane Women's Club that it be reserved for a 'Cultural Centre, together with a self-governing Art Gallery with adequate car parking facilities provided'.⁷ The state government commissioned the architectural firm, Bligh Jessup Bretnall and Partners, to prepare a master plan of the Roma Street precinct. The plan included a new State Gallery

4 The Sunday Mail, 14 March 1948.

5 The Sunday Mail, 30 October 1949.

6 Australian Institute of Architects, 'Application for entry of a State Heritage Place, Queensland Cultural Centre, 4 August 2014', p. 22.

7 Proposed use of former Municipal Markets Reserve, 15 January 1969, QSA Item ID961644.

and Centre for Allied Arts located on the market site.⁸ While the government endorsed the plan and the location of an art gallery on Roma Street, the Brisbane City Council, which by this time had responsibility for the former market reserve, opted for a park.⁹ The council's view was that a cultural centre was best suited in the Botanic Gardens, as it had aspirations of developing a new botanic gardens at Mount Coot-tha.¹⁰ So like all previous proposals for a cultural centre, the Roma Street site had been abandoned by the end of 1968.

Within the Department of Works, however, the concept was still alive. The need for a new art gallery was a priority, but in late 1968, Roman Pavlyshyn, senior architect in the Department of Works wrote to the Director-General, David Longland, suggesting that the gallery 'should be part of a complex of buildings dedicated to cultural purposes, including an opera and drama theatre and the Queensland Museum'.¹¹ Longland pursued the idea with his Minister, Max Hodges, who then raised the matter with the Premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Hodges urged that a Select Committee be established to examine the need for a cultural centre, investigate the most appropriate site, and recommend methods of financing.¹² The Premier then referred the matter to the Treasurer, Gordon Chalk. Although in general agreement with the concept, Chalk maintained that a new art gallery was a 'matter of urgency'.¹³ Chalk was concerned that establishing such a committee would potentially delay for several years a new art gallery.

A new art gallery

From its beginnings in 1895, the Queensland National Art Gallery had occupied a succession of spaces in various public buildings. From 1930, it had been accommodated in the former Concert Hall in the Exhibition Building on Gregory Terrace. These facilities were less than adequate and the Board of Trustees lobbied the Queensland Government over an extended period for a purpose-built gallery. Finally in November 1968, the board convinced the government to act.

In November 1968, prominent Australian art critic and historian Professor Bernard Smith visited the Gallery and told *The Courier Mail* that 'one only has to be inside this gallery—even for 24 hours—to see that art in this institution is in a pretty sorry position'.¹⁴ The Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Sir Leon Trout, agreed. He asserted 'the gallery is hopeless' and publicly supported Smith's claims that art in Queensland was 'weedy and malnourished, and in a sense, suffering from cultural rickets'.¹⁵ These very public disparaging comments prompted an immediate response from the government. Within two days, the acting Premier, Gordon Chalk, announced an investigation into the future of the Queensland Art Gallery.¹⁶ In January 1969, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Queensland Art Gallery Site Committee.¹⁷



14 Sites identified for an art gallery: (1) Brisbane City Council transport depot; (2) Holy Name Cathedral site; (3) Riverside Drive, South Brisbane

8 Bligh Jessup Bretnall and Partners, *Plan for Redevelopment of Roma Street Area City of Brisbane*, Department of the Co-ordinator General of Public Works, Brisbane, 1967; *The Courier Mail*, 11 January 1967.

9 *The Courier Mail*, 16 November 1968.

10 Australian Institute of Architects, Application, p. 23.

11 Pavlyshyn, *Memoirs*.

12 Minister for Works and Housing to Hon. Joh Bjelke-Petersen, 10 January 1969, QSA Item ID957244.

13 Gordon Chalk to Hon. Joh Bjelke-Petersen, 21 February 1969, QSA Item ID957244.

14 *The Courier Mail*, 14 November 1968.

15 Ibid.

16 *The Courier Mail*, 16 November 1968.

17 Cabinet decision No 12536, 14 January 1969, QSA Item ID541022.

Site selection and planning—a new art gallery

The committee examined 12 possible sites, and then reduced the number to three for more detailed consideration: Holy Name Cathedral site, Fortitude Valley; Brisbane City Council Transport depot, Coronation Drive; and Riverside Drive, South Brisbane.¹⁸ The committee agreed that the site at South Brisbane bounded by Melbourne and Grey Streets and the Brisbane River was the most suitable, and in every way it appeared to be the most viable:

It was the Architecturally-preferred site;

The Brisbane City Council would be making a valuable contribution;

It was the site which would do most for the City of Brisbane;

There was potential for use of a similar block on the other side of Melbourne Street for cultural facilities.¹⁹

Some of the land was already in public ownership—state and Brisbane City Council—but a substantial number of privately owned allotments had to be acquired for the project. This became a lengthy process and some owners objected to the valuations.

Not until most of the land had been acquired did the government appoint a Steering Committee to provide a comprehensive report on the various requirements of the new Art Gallery, 'sufficient to form the basis for the preparation of the design and for the development of planning and construction documents for the new building'.²⁰ The committee was appointed in July 1971 and was chaired by Roman Pavlyshyn, Assistant Under Secretary in the Department of Works.²¹ Pavlyshyn was the principal author of the report and went on to play an influential role, not only in the development of the Art Gallery, but also the Cultural Centre.²²

The report was comprehensive and included recommendations on space requirements, costs, method of planning and construction, and a detailed planning brief. The committee concluded a building of 140 000 sq feet (13 000 m²) at an estimated cost of \$4.5 million was required.²³ The report alluded to the possibility that the site could be used to accommodate other cultural activities. The committee recommended that a two-stage architectural competition be held to select an architect for the design of the new gallery.

The planning brief was concise but thorough. It emphasised 'that the gallery should be an active and human place to which the visiting public will be attracted to participate in the enjoyment of the facilities provided by the gallery'. The brief, also noted, rather presciently, 'that it is possible that the future activities and requirements of the gallery may call for facilities which cannot be foreseen at present'.²⁴ Significantly, the planning brief

18 Queensland Art Gallery Site Committee, 'Proposed Art Centre Site Investigation', March 1969, QSA Item ID961664. The initial sites considered were: Exhibition Building site, Albert Park, Old Markets Roma Street, Botanic Gardens, Central Railway Station, block bounded by Wharf, Adelaide and Ann Streets, Holy Name Cathedral, Isles Lane, Treasury Building, Lower Edward Street, Riverside Drive near Victoria Bridge, Brisbane City Council transport depot Coronation Drive.

19 Ibid., p. 2.

20 New Queensland Art Gallery Steering Committee, 'Queensland Art Gallery Report', March 1972, QSA Item ID961664.

21 The other committee members were: AE Guymer, Director-General of Education; Sir Leon Trout, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; AJ Stratigos, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees; James Weineke, Director of the Queensland Art Gallery; Professor GE Roberts, Professor of Architecture, The University of Queensland; Peter Prystupa, Supervising Architect, Department of Works. (New Queensland Art Gallery Steering Committee, 'Queensland Art Gallery Report', March 1972, QSA Item ID961664. p. 2).

22 Although Pavlyshyn is not specifically identified as the author, it is clear from other reports he wrote and also the minutes of the Steering Committee on 26 October 1971, that he was responsible for drafting the text on which the committee then provided comment (Minutes of Steering Committee, 26 October 1971, QSA Item ID601046).

23 Land acquisition, site works and a car park were estimated at \$2.5 million, *ibid.* p. 6.

24 New Queensland Art Gallery Steering Committee, 'Queensland Art Gallery Report', March 1972, QSA Item ID961664, Appendix C, p. 4.

not only addressed issues such as functional requirements, the site and town planning issues, but also focused on desired design criteria. They included the following principles:

It is desirable that the building itself should be of the highest possible standard of architectural design. This does not mean that it should be either monumental or pretentious in character. It should be a building of its time incorporating the best techniques and materials available within the economic limits of the project.

A public gallery is a symbol of artistic and cultural development. It should have human qualities and attractions of a kind which encourage people to visit the collection, and to take pleasure in being in a place where the artistic achievements of the community are effectively but unostentatiously displayed for their enjoyment.

More informality should be the keynote which should also take advantage of the sub-tropical climatic conditions which prevail in Brisbane. The site on the Brisbane River selected for the building suggests that it should be outward looking to take advantage of the views of the tree-clad hills which form the setting for the city of Brisbane. The gallery will be seen to great advantage in views from across the river and from other vantage points in the city.

The fine, Mediterranean-like quality of the Brisbane climate is such that a building, light in colour, but carefully modelled to give interesting effects of light and shade might be most suitable ...

The landscaping proposals for the site should be an integral part of the total design. Courts for the display of sculpture and shaded areas for rest and relaxation should be included. The paving, lighting and furnishing of these areas to the relationship of the building and its setting to the river are all matters of particular design importance.²⁵

The design principles also addressed issues of space, volume and scale. The planning brief stressed that the 'relationship of the exhibition spaces or galleries to each other is of great importance' and that 'areas linking the display galleries should be attractively arranged, where possible, with views outside the building to provide contrast and to avoid museum fatigue'. The brief highlighted the importance of access and circulation, stressing that 'it is of the greatest importance that a major public building of this kind should have an appropriate address' and that 'the main public entrance should be clearly identifiable and attractively designed'.²⁶

The planning brief submitted in March 1972 was a key document in the successful design and development of the art gallery, due to its clarity, vision and understanding of the context and requirements for a modern art gallery. It was accepted by Cabinet and approval given to proceed with the project.²⁷

The competition

As recommended by the Steering Committee, a two-stage design competition was conducted. The assessors panel consisted of Sir Leon Trout, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Roman Pavlyshyn, Assistant Under Secretary, Department of Works, and Stanley Marquis-Kyle, representing the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. The first stage was to invite 10 firms on the register for Queensland Government work with the Department of Works to participate in the competition. These firms were all well respected Brisbane-based architectural firms.²⁸ The first stage closed in November 1972 and the names of the three firms proceeding to the second stage were announced in the following month.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 7-8.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

²⁷ Cabinet decision No 16829, 21 March 1969 QSA Item ID601046.

²⁸ These firms were: James Birrell and Partners; Bligh, Jessup, Bretnall and Partners; Consortium of Codd, Hopgood and Associates, HJ Parkinson and Associates, Blair M Wilson; Conrad, Gargett and Partners; Cullen, Fagg, Hargraves, Mooney and Cullen; Fulton, Collin, Boys, Gilmour, Trotter and Partners; Robin Gibson and Partners; Hall, Phillips and Wilson; Lund, Hutton, Newell, Paulsen; and Prangle and Crofts (Under Secretary, Department of Works, 15 August 1972, QSA Item ID601046).

They were: Bligh Jessup Bretnall and Partners; Robin Gibson and Partners; and Lund, Hutton, Newell, Paulsen. The second stage closed on 1 March 1973 and the winner of the competition, Robin Gibson and Partners, announced on 16 April 1973.²⁹ The assessors concluded that the 'winning design exhibits great clarity and simplicity of concept and relates admirably to the environment and site'.³⁰ Gibson later commented to the Steering Committee for the new Art Gallery that in 'developing the design to final completion it was necessary to keep in mind the original basic design philosophy' that had been articulated in the planning brief.³¹

Robin Gibson (1930–2014) studied architecture at The University of Queensland, graduating in 1954. As a student, he worked for a number of architectural firms in Brisbane, including the progressive Hayes and Scott practice. After completing his studies, Gibson spent two years in London, working in the offices of James Cubitt and Partners, Sir Hugh Casson and Neville Conder. Gibson returned to Brisbane in 1956, and after working in the office of Theo Thynne and Associates, established his own office. Throughout the 1960s, he gradually developed a reputation as a respected architect and increasingly won more important commissions such as the Kenmore Presbyterian Church (1968), Library and Humanities building at Griffith University (1973), Mayne Hall, The University of Queensland (1973) and the Central Library, The University of Queensland (1973).

The Gibson design

Of the three finalists, Gibson's winning design was the clearest in conception and illustrated by dramatic photographs of his project model. At that time the gallery was located along Grey Street where the museum is today, and between it and the river edge was parkland crossed by Stanley Street. The design contained some of the elements which appeared in the scheme as built, and included a series of parallel horizontal buildings stepping up as terraces from the river to Grey Street. Landscape was integrated into and around the buildings and a water feature, known as the Water Mall, ran parallel to the river and to the building. There was a physical connection to the river with a pedestrian bridge crossing Stanley Street to a pontoon in the water. There were courtyards either side of the Water Mall at the Peel Street end, and sculpture to be displayed on the river edge. In his submission, Gibson described his vision which closely answered the planning brief.

Works of art will provide visual participation, visual excitement and enjoyment for all and thoughtful enclosure of the space for human use is geared to the purpose of an exciting gallery visually related to the city and its people by a series of landscaped terraces linked with the river.

Lush greenery and sparkling fountains blend with the horizontal architectural planes and terraces to create an environment unique in Australia – a gallery design with an inbuilt flexibility to allow for expansion, the influence of time and varying future gallery demands ...

The simplicity of the external expression is the result of carefully analysed principles expressing the internal spaces and their relationships. The major orientation element externally and internally in the design is the integration of a mall of water which traverses the complex from north to south and which is flanked by public facilities and galleries ...

This mall commences externally as a sculptured wall of water and flows as a street indicative of the parallel movement of the adjacent pulsating life to the gallery and providing a lively and varied atmosphere along its length.

Externally, the gallery is seen as an ordered expression of the internal spaces presenting to the city a series of integrated landscaped roof areas and garden walls.³²

29 *The Courier Mail*, 17 April 1973.

30 *The Australian*, 17 April 1973.

31 Minutes of the Steering Committee for the new Queensland Art Gallery, 10 January 1974, QSA Item ID601046.

32 Robin Gibson, 'Queensland Art Gallery', *Queensland Architect*, July-August 1973.

After winning the competition, the government sponsored him an overseas trip by Gibson to visit art galleries and museums to assess worthwhile features for possible inclusion in the overall design.³³ Gibson travelled to six countries and visited 26 galleries and museums. They ranged from well established institutions such as the National Gallery in London and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, to newer galleries such as the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art at Humblebaek, Denmark (1958), the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin by Mies van der Rohe (1968), and the Oakland Museum in San Francisco (1968).³⁴ These and the other galleries provided Gibson with invaluable insights into space planning, lighting, appropriate finishes and features such as sculpture courtyards.

Gibson began working on the detailed design for the art gallery, but the program was delayed when proposals for a cultural centre re-emerged.

Re-emergence of a cultural centre scheme

While the art gallery project had been the focus of the government's attention, the plans for a cultural centre were not entirely abandoned. In March 1971, Alan Fletcher, Minister for Education and Cultural Activities, submitted a proposal to Cabinet for the acquisition of two blocks at South Brisbane for the State Library and Museum. Fletcher had the support of the Brisbane City Council, but the proposal was rejected.³⁵ By early 1974, the emergence of a range of issues coalesced to bring the need for a cultural centre at South Brisbane to the government's attention.

Just as much as a new art gallery was a priority, it had become increasingly clear that a new museum, state library and a state-of-the-art performing arts centre were also needed. In 1973, the Board of Trustees of the Queensland Museum had commissioned a feasibility study on the redevelopment of the Queensland Museum, as the conditions in the Exhibition Building were less than adequate.³⁶ The study investigated a range of sites and recommended a site within Albert Park with a building of 216 000 sq feet (19 565 sq metres) floor area.³⁷ This study provided a compelling argument for a new museum. Similarly, the State Library, occupying a building erected in 1879 with extensions in 1959, was in urgent need of additional space, not only for the collections but also for users. The Department of Works commissioned Robin Gibson and Partners to undertake a feasibility study to demonstrate how the existing building in William Street could be extended.³⁸

Although the state government did not own or operate a major performing arts venue, other than the SGIO Theatre which opened in 1969, the sale of Her Majesty's Theatre in 1973 was cause for grave concern about the future of the performing arts in Brisbane. The building had been the main venue for opera, ballet and dramatic performances since

33 Separately, the Assistant Director of the Art Gallery Raoul Mellish undertook a study tour of the United States and Europe as part of a Churchill Fellowship (<https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/fellows/detail/738/Raoul+Mellish>).

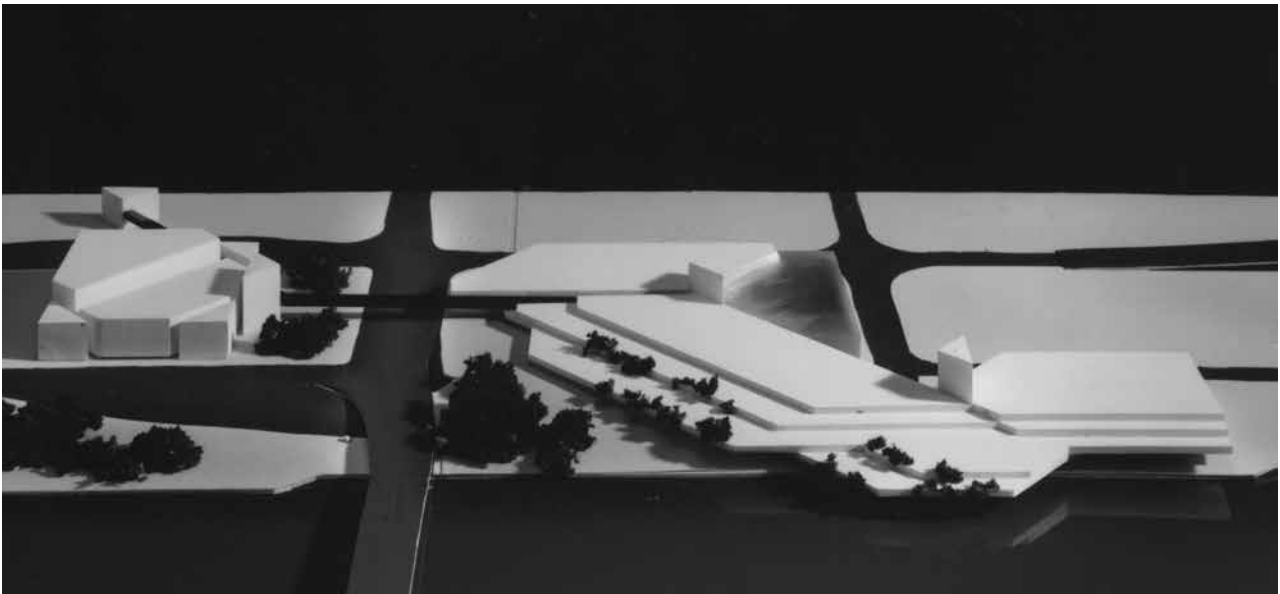
34 Robin Gibson, 1973 overseas study trip, Gibson archives. The galleries and museums visited were: Van Gogh Museum (Amsterdam), Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam), Rijksmuseum Kroller Muller (Otterloo, Netherlands), Victoria and Albert Museum (London), Hayward Gallery (London), National Gallery (London), Tate Gallery (London), Neue Nationalgalerie (Berlin), Louisiana Gallery (Humblebaek, Denmark), Kunsten-Museum of Modern Art (Aalborg, Denmark), Museum of Modern Art (New York), Whitney Museum (New York), Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago), Art Institute (Chicago), Field Museum of Natural History (Chicago), Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), Oakland Museum (San Francisco), De Young Museum (San Francisco), Berkeley Art Museum (Los Angeles), Museo de Art Moderno (Mexico City), Galleria de Historia (Mexico City), National Museum of Anthropology (Mexico City).

35 Architects Institute of Australia, Submission, p. 24.

36 Fulton, Collin, Boys, Gilmour, Trotter & Partners, *Feasibility survey redevelopment of Queensland Museum*, 1973, QSA Item ID315623.

37 A total of 17 sites were considered and three short-listed: Albert Park, Woolloongabba Rail Yards and Toowong East (currently bushland between Old Mount Coot-tha Road and Birdwood Terrace).

38 Plans, State Public Library feasibility study, QSA Item ID121879.



16 Model of the Cultural Centre prepared in 1974 (Richard Stringer QPACA)

1888. The new owners, the AMP Society, intended to demolish the building and redevelop the site.³⁹

In February 1974, Alan Fletcher, the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities, submitted to Cabinet a proposal for the acquisition of a site for a performing arts centre. Unlike the previous occasion when he sought Cabinet approval for land for a new library and museum, on this occasion approval in principle was given to investigate the question.⁴⁰ The suggested site was at South Brisbane to the north-west of the Art Gallery site. Two months later, the Premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, announced that 'Brisbane may get an Arts Centre'. In a media release he said the centre could incorporate the Queensland Art Gallery, the Queensland Museum, and a concert hall and facilities for live theatre, ballet and other performing arts. The Premier said he had asked the Coordinator General to undertake a feasibility study into the planning and financing of the centre.⁴¹

17 Article in Courier Mail, 15 November 1974, announcing Cultural Centre project



Such promises for a cultural centre were not new and dated back to the 1880s. But the question remained: when would a Queensland Government definitively commit to such an ambitious project as a cultural centre?

The member for Chatsworth, WD Hewitt, expressed his concerns in a speech in the Legislative Assembly in September 1974. He commented:

It is obvious that Brisbane needs a cultural centre and that urgent attention must be given to this matter ...Recognising that Her Majesty's Theatre is presently under the threat of the wrecker's hammer, I submit that some action must be taken to fill the vacuum that its closure would cause.⁴²

Hewitt surprisingly would not wait long for an answer. Unknown to most in government, the Treasurer, Gordon Chalk, had engaged Robin Gibson and Partners to assist in the development of a brief and prepare sketch plans and a physical scale model Cultural Centre at South Brisbane. This was a highly unusual approach. The task of preparing a Cabinet submission on a new major building project was the responsibility of the Minister for Works.

³⁹ The Courier Mail, 28 June 1973. Her Majesty's Theatre was finally demolished in 1983 and the Hilton Hotel and Wintergarden Shopping Centre built on the site.

⁴⁰ Cabinet decision No 20057, 5 February 1974, QSA Item ID569765.

⁴¹ Media release, 28 April 1974, QSA Item ID569765.

⁴² Queensland Parliamentary Debates, 11 September 1974, p. 720.

Chalk's intervention was motivated by two factors. First, with his commitment to the arts, he was determined to see that a cultural centre would definitely come to fruition. He was probably concerned that the Minister for Works, Claude Wharton, who was the Country Party member for the seat of Burnett, was more interested in promoting building projects that favoured the Country Party's rural constituency than a decidedly urban-based project. But for Chalk, the more compelling motivation to present a submission to Cabinet was the political environment in Queensland in the latter part of 1974. A state election was likely due to be held in December of that year—capitalising on disaffection with the Labor Party nationally—and Chalk, as leader of the Liberal Party, saw an opportunity for his party that had never previously arisen. The Liberal Party had been the junior partner in coalition with Country Party (National Party after 1972) since 1957. In the 1972 election, the Liberal Party had won 21 seats to the National Party 26 seats. Chalk realised if his party could win more seats than the National Party, it would be the senior partner and he would become Premier. The announcement of a firm commitment to build a cultural centre would enhance the Liberal Party's prospects in the forthcoming election, particularly in its urban constituency. The Liberal Party did indeed do well in the 7 December 1974 election, winning an additional nine seats. But regrettably for Chalk and the Liberal Party, the National Party won an extra 13 seats and remained the senior partner in the coalition. While the ploy to present the Cultural Centre project as a Liberal initiative failed politically, it nevertheless did mean that finally a cultural centre would happen.

Chalk announced his presented scheme to the public on 14 November 1974 as part of the Liberal Party policy launch for the state election in the following month. Chalk said the complex would comprise 'a museum equal to any in Australia; an outstanding art gallery; a performing arts centre; a new public library; and restaurant'.⁴³ On the day of the announcement, Chalk unveiled in his office a model of the complex prepared by Robin Gibson and Partners. *The Courier Mail* declared that leading figures in the arts community were unanimous that this was an 'imaginative and exciting project'.⁴⁴

The initial plans and scale model of the Cultural Centre differed in some key elements from what ultimately eventuated on the site. The general location of the principal four buildings was as finally determined. However, the 1974 model was distinguished by triangular and trapezoidal building forms, unlike the earlier art gallery design and the later, simpler rectangular expressions. The gallery was diagonally aligned to face Melbourne Street and the river and stepped to a plaza. An overhead walkway over Melbourne Street linked the two parts of site.

Chalk presented his proposal for a Cultural Centre at South Brisbane to Cabinet on 18 November 1974.⁴⁵ The submission outlined the current needs of the various cultural institutions and the advantages of an integrated and coordinated complex. Co-locating an art gallery, museum, library and performing arts centre would mean the sharing of car parking facilities, restaurants, mechanical services and some staff resources. In addition, the close proximity of the institutions had the 'potential for much needed interaction'. The total cost for the Cultural Centre, including land acquisition, car parking and site works, was \$45.4 million.⁴⁶

Cabinet agreed to the project and the following immediate action:

- Acquire the necessary land as urgently as possible
- Establish a body for the Performing Arts Centre
- Establish a coordinating and planning management body for the overall cultural complex.

43 *The Courier Mail*, 15 November 1974.

44 Ibid.

45 Cabinet decision No 21481, QSA Item ID541022.

46 Ibid.

The question remained—would this be the scheme that came to fruition? *The Courier Mail* editorialised that 'Queenslanders understandably have become cynical after 79 years of promises ...[and] there is nothing like an election to get things moving'.⁴⁷ But in this case they did.

⁴⁷ *The Courier Mail*, 16 November 1974.

3 Design and construction

The National-Liberal coalition won the 7 December election with a record 69 seats and wasted little time in commencing planning for the Cultural Centre. The Cultural Centre would be the largest building project undertaken by the Queensland Government and it was to require a concerted effort by politicians, public servants, consultants, contractors and the arts community to see it realised. Cabinet appointed an interim committee to consider critical matters for the project including the establishment of a performing arts body and a Planning and Establishment Committee. The interim committee reported to Cabinet on 14 January 1975 and both these key committees were formed without delay.

Management and oversight of the project

The formation of the Planning and Establishment Committee was one of the first critical decisions made by the government. This committee comprised senior public servants, a representative from the Brisbane City Council, and representatives of the Queensland Art Gallery, Library Board of Queensland, the Queensland Museum and the performing arts.¹ The committee was chaired by Sir David Muir, one of Queensland's most experienced public servants. No better choice could have been made in the selection of Muir for this role. Muir had served in the Queensland public service since 1932, including as official secretary to Premier Hanlon (1945–48), under-secretary of the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department (1948–51), Queensland agent-general in London (1951–64) and then director of the Department of Industrial Development (1964–77). Muir also had a great passion for the arts, particularly theatre and opera. He was Chairman of the Queensland Theatre Company (1969–77) and also President of the Brisbane Light Opera Company.² Muir's intimate understanding of government administration, and the esteem in which he was held by ministers and the public, played an invaluable role in the ultimate success of the Cultural Centre project.

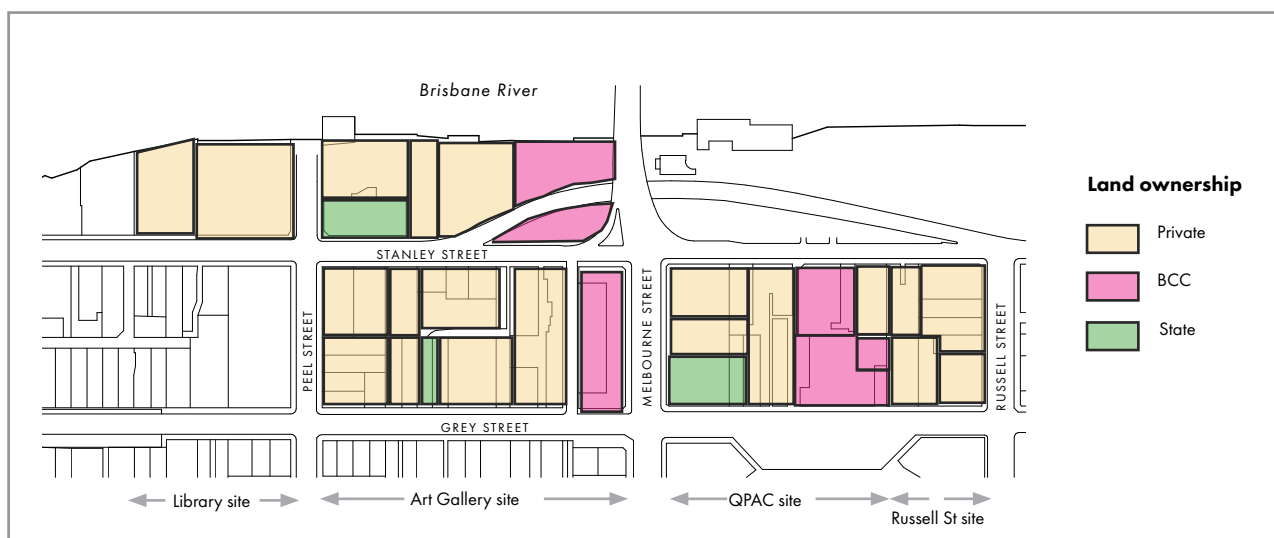
The Planning and Establishment Committee took an active role in the planning of the Cultural Centre. Because of the significant role that the committee would play in the project, a statutory body, the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust, was formed in March 1977.³ The Trust membership was similar to the Planning and Establishment Committee and Sir David Muir was appointed Chairman. The main functions of the Trust as defined in the legislation included:

- (a) To encourage and facilitate activities in artistic, scientific, cultural or performing arts through the State;

1 Cabinet decision No 21716, 14 January 1975, QSA Item ID69765.

2 Bronwyn Stevens, 'Muir, Sir David John (1916–1986)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/muir-sir-david-john-15780/text26969>.

3 The Trust was constituted under the provisions of the *Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Act 1976*.



18 Original ownership of properties acquired for Cultural Centre 1969–80

- (b) to recommend to the Minister, the buildings and other improvements that should be erected on the land comprised in the Centre and the location of the buildings and improvements.

The Trust fulfilled these functions until 1997 when it was disbanded and the Act repealed.⁴ Responsibility for the Cultural Centre was transferred to the Arts Office within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It is now administered by the Capital Asset Management section in Arts Queensland.⁵

Site acquisition

Acquisition of land for the Cultural Centre occurred in three stages: the Art Gallery site (1969–77); QPAC and Library sites (1975–79); and the Russell Street site (1978–80).

One of the original reasons for locating the Art Gallery at South Brisbane, apart from its proximity to the Brisbane CBD, was that the area had been in decline and so acquiring land would not be difficult or costly. The proposed site comprised privately-owned lots, lots owned by the Brisbane City Council and two lots owned by the Crown. Acquiring the land from private owners and the council was a protracted process. Some owners objected to the valuation of their property which delayed the acquisition process. The acquisition of the Brisbane City Council lots was achieved through a land swap of blocks in Ann Street that had been occupied by Forestry House, and which the council wanted to acquire for the development of Cathedral Square.⁶ The process took more than seven years to complete.

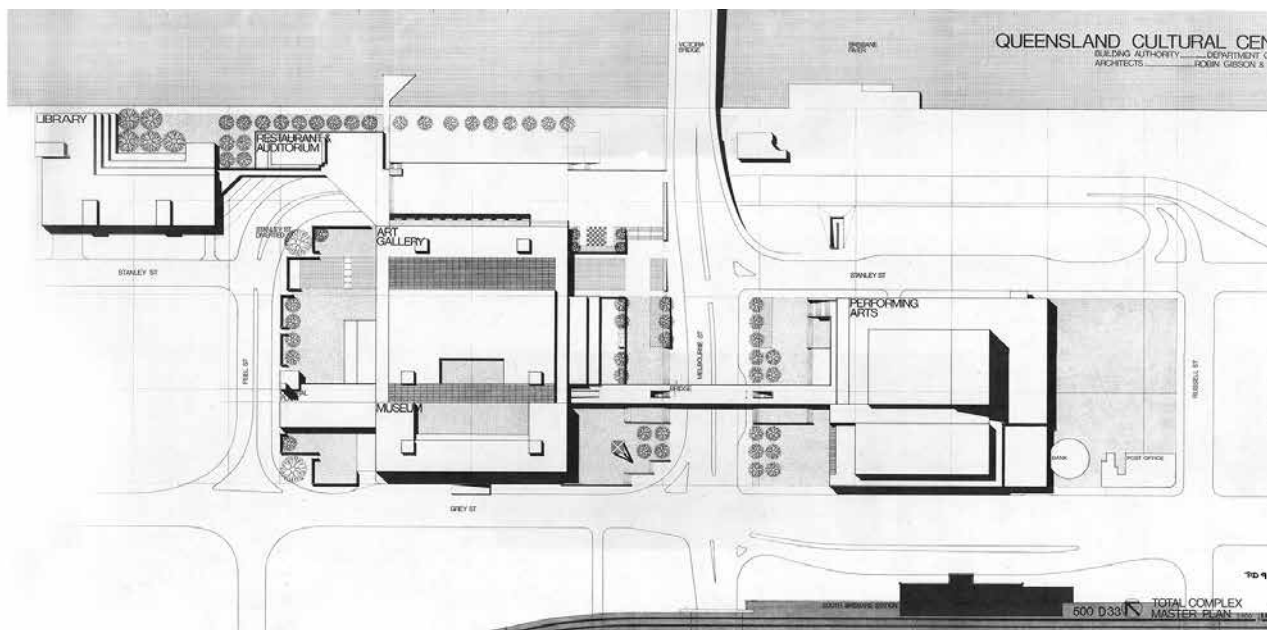
Acquiring the land for the site of the Performing Arts Centre was less protracted. In January 1974, Brisbane experienced major flooding when the Brisbane River reached its fourth highest level on record. South Brisbane experienced major inundation, but this had unexpected consequences for the program of land acquisition for the Cultural Centre. After experiencing the worst flooding in memory, private landowners were more willing to sell than perhaps they may have been earlier. Furthermore, there were fewer owners to negotiate with.

The intended site of the State Library was on lots owned by the Salvation Army and the Methodist Church. No doubt the January 1974 floods convinced both organisations that relocation was desirable. The Methodist Church operated St Helen's Hospital on its land

⁴ The Act was replaced with the *Arts Legislation and Amendment Act 1997*.

⁵ For a period the Corporate Administration Agency managed the Cultural Centre for Arts Queensland.

⁶ Cabinet decision No 26765, 11 July 1977, QSA Item ID569765.



and did not hesitate at selling as the facility needed to be upgraded. The sale allowed the church to purchase a new site at Toowong.

19 Master plan, Queensland Cultural Centre, 1975 (QSA Item ID329001)

Although most of the land had been acquired for the Cultural Centre by 1977, the Planning and Establishment Committee became aware of the need to possibly acquire even more property. The Chairman of the Arts Performing Committee, Sir Zelman Cowen, urged the government to acquire the remaining property bounded by Grey, Russell and Stanley Streets as it 'would be a tragedy if an incompatible building were to be erected on the site'.⁷ The government agreed and the lots were progressively acquired, even though there was no immediate or proposed use for the land. However, the acquisition of the lots at the Russell Street end of the block proved to be a wise decision and it enabled the expansion of the Performing Arts Centre in the 1990s with the construction of the Playhouse Theatre. If the government had waited another decade, the land may not have been available or could have been much more costly to acquire.

Design approach

One of the first actions of the Planning and Establishment Committee was to commission the architectural firm of Robin Gibson and Partners to prepare an integrated design concept for the Cultural Centre. As Gibson's office had already established its design skills and competency in winning the art gallery competition, it was an appropriate choice for this task. Apart from its art gallery design, Gibson and Partners had established a reputation for designing substantial civic buildings.

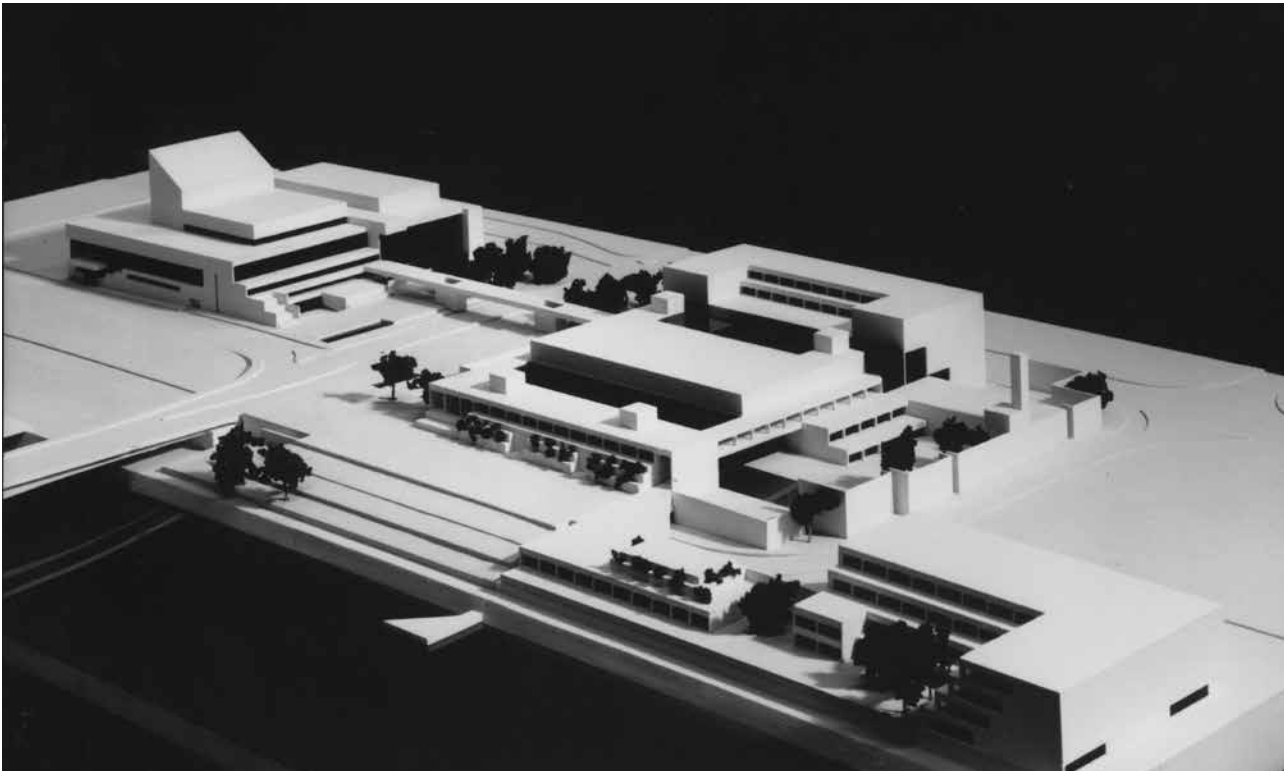
The practice brought to the project a well established vocabulary of materials and a clear methodology towards geometric form. There had been a conscious, progressive approach to structural development aimed at achieving stepped and shaded facades, in a horizontal format, in response to the Queensland sun and weather.

Concrete was the primary material in most projects, and Gibson explored various uses including two-way coffering for column-free space at Kenmore Presbyterian Church (1968); concrete coffering for a double-stepped facade at Mt Gravatt Teachers College (1970); concrete-ribbed and coffered floors for clear spans at Mathers, 78 Queen Street (1969); and innovative structural precast facade on Temple Chambers (1972). Ribbed and

20 Central Library, The University of Queensland (1973)



⁷ Minutes of Planning and Establishment Committee, 22 February 1977, QSA Item ID569765.



21 *Cultural Centre model, 1975*
(Richard Stringer QPACA)

coffered floors had been formed, variously, by using removable fibreglass pans, fibrous plaster and fibre cement permanent formwork and conventional plywood. Finishes to facade elements had ranged from white quartz render (Mt Gravatt Teachers College), to fine-ribbed vinyl liner (40 Queen Street, 1972), to raked render (The University of Queensland Central Library, 1973), to ribbed in situ concrete, bush-hammered (Mayne Hall, 1974).

Designing a complex on the scale of the Cultural Centre, however, was of a different order. One complex that clearly inspired and influenced Gibson was the Oakland Museum by architects Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo, with landscape architects Dan Kiley and Geraldine Knight Scott. Roche and Dinkeloo won a competition to design an interdisciplinary museum dedicated to art, history and the natural sciences on a disused public park in downtown Oakland. They produced a three-tiered, stepped-back building covered by a rooftop garden.⁸ Exposed concrete was the principal external material with recessed openings. When completed, the building was described as a daring assertion of landscape over architecture.⁹ Noted architectural critic, Ada Louise Huxtable, claimed it was 'one of the most thoroughly revolutionary structures in the world.'¹⁰ Gibson had visited Oakland in 1973, and aspects of the building would have resonated with his own approach, in particular the use of exposed concrete and a simple palette of materials. But he no doubt was inspired by the integration of landscape and architecture at Oakland.

The design report was prepared with assistance from: McWilliam and Partners, structural engineers; WE Bassett and Partners, mechanical, electrical and hydraulic engineers; Cameron McNamara and Partners, civil engineers; Rider Hunt and Partners, quantity

22 *Oakland Museum, San Francisco. Key elements are evident in the Queensland Cultural Centre*
(Geoff Thompson)



8 Kathleen John-Alder, 'The gardens, the greenhouses, and the picturesque view' in Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, et al., *Kevin Roche: Architecture as environment*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2011, p. 124.

9 Ibid, p. 125.

10 Quoted by David Sadighian, 'Museum without walls', in Eeva-Liisa Pelkonen, *Kevin Roche: Architecture as environment*, p. 79.

surveyors; Tom Brown and Associates, theatre consultants; Peter Knowland and Associates, acoustic consultants; and Paul Wallace, graphics consultant.¹¹ The report was prepared in close consultation with Roman Pavlyshyn, now the Director of Building in the Department of Works.¹² The principal elements of the scheme were:

- Performing Arts centre comprising a Lyric Theatre for opera and ballet, seating 1800, Concert Hall with capacity for 2000 and Studio Theatre for 400
- Queensland Art Galley with floor area of 13 000 m²
- Queensland Museum with floor area of 13 935 m²
- State Library with floor area of 11 200 m²
- Shared facilities, including central energy plant, auditorium and restaurant which would also serve as a convention centre
- Two-level car park for 500 vehicles
- A large, formally landscaped open space on each side of Melbourne Street to provide, with the pedestrian overhead bridge, a symbolic gateway to the city centre.¹³

The key design approach was summarised by Roman Pavlyshyn in his report to the Planning and Establishment Committee:

The architectural treatment of the complex of buildings will result in an articulated solid wall enclosure on its southern perimeters and in opening up of the buildings by glass walls towards the public spaces and the River. The buildings will be predominantly horizontal in character and will descend in terraced steps in the direction of the city and the River. Extensive use of plantings and landscaping as well as an imaginative use of water, in varying forms, will reflect to the best advantage Brisbane's unique climate. A vertical accent in the composition will be provided by a fly tower above the stage of the Lyric Theatre.¹⁴

The report also noted that the Performing Arts Centre would be designed so that it would be possible at a later date to add a drama theatre on the south-eastern end.

Design framework

In designing and constructing a group of buildings over a 20 year period, consistency was a major challenge. The function of the buildings varied greatly, from theatrical and gallery spaces to specialist conservation and artificers' workshops. Moreover during construction, different contractors were engaged and a large contingent of tradesmen and workers. The challenge of maintaining consistency throughout the Cultural Centre was addressed with significant decisions made early in the project: the use of materials, a rigorous geometric approach to design, and simple, 'pure' construction details applicable throughout the complex.

Form

The precinct's overall monolithic forms are expressive of their functions and the respective entities that occupy individual buildings. Great care was taken in the composition of built and landscape elements, especially as viewed from the river and CBD. Detailing of roof edges and projected forms which sculpt the roofscape respect an intended low-profile architecture. Linear form geometries are in parallel with the Brisbane River.

¹¹ Queensland Cultural Centre Building Authority, Progress Report, 14 October 1975, p. 1.

¹² Queensland Cultural Centre Trust, *First Annual Report*, 1977, p. 2.

¹³ Queensland Cultural Centre Building Authority, Progress Report, 14 October 1975, p. 2.

¹⁴ Ibid.



Materials

A hallmark of the Cultural Centre is the use of a simple palette of materials throughout: concrete and glass, with bronze, stone and timber detailing, with an integrated approach to the design of the architecture and landscape.

A monolithic, white, lightly sandblasted concrete finish was used throughout on the majority of vertical and horizontal surfaces in public spaces. To ensure a consistency of finish, it was necessary to source a guaranteed supply of the constituent materials for the requisite concrete mix to produce the desired end-result.

Robin Gibson and Partners collaborated with the structural engineers, McWilliam and Partners, who determined the necessary structural properties of the concrete. After much sampling of constituent product sources, the architects settled on a concrete mix that included: white cement from South Australia; fine white sand from Stradbroke Island; and fine and coarse aggregates from the Pine River. The desired concrete colour was carefully checked for each contract, by approval of sample panels, within the strict guidelines of the mix pre-set by the structural engineers.¹⁵ The result was highly successful, as a consistent finish was achieved throughout and the different stages of the project are not readily discernible from the concrete finish on each building.

Geometry of the Cultural Centre

Gibson's approach to the design of the Cultural Centre was based on an adherence to strict geometric rules and shapes, similar to the approach Robin Gibson and Partners had developed in the preceding years with projects such as the Central Library, The University of Queensland. The Cultural Centre is defined in plan by a grid based on a 3 metre unit. The dimensions of spaces and elements in plan are all multiples of 1.5. For example, the concrete pavement blocks used extensively throughout the site are 1.5 x 3 metres. In section, the basic dimension is 3.3 metres but broken down into half and quarter levels. The rigorous application of this grid ensured design consistency throughout the centre.

Construction details

A rigorous approach was adopted to simple, direct and uncomplicated detailing that was repeated throughout the complex. This included balustrading, cornices, skirtings, windows and glazing, doors and door openings, and concrete surfaces.

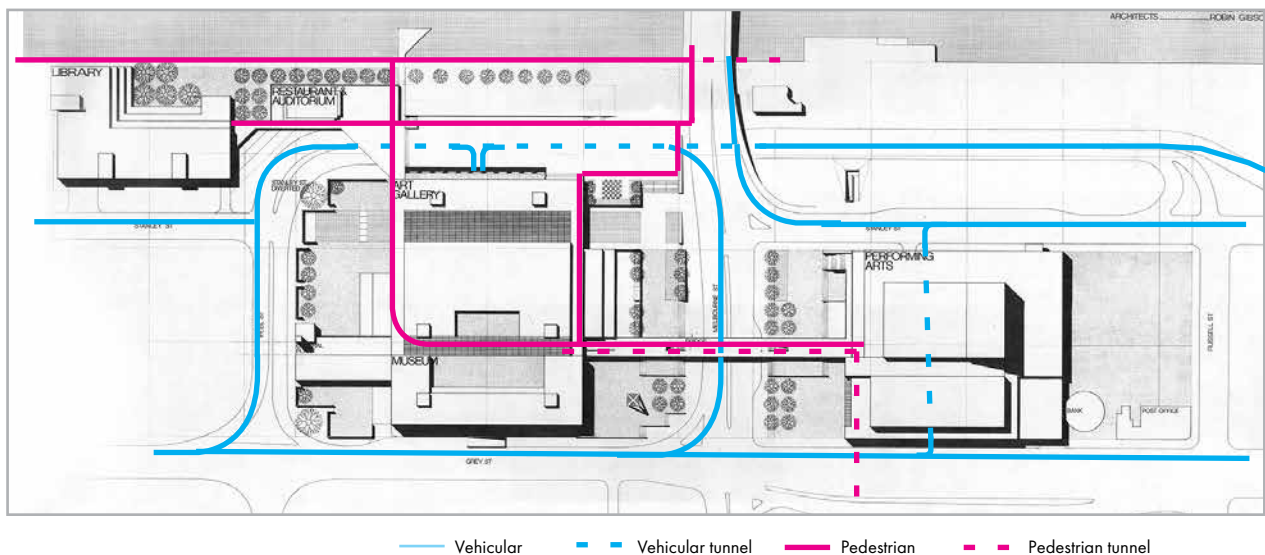
An integrated complex

The use of similar materials, the grid, cubic forms and construction details helped to shape the Cultural Centre as a unified, integrated structure to form a megastructure which was highly innovative in Australia at the time.

Grade separation

A challenge for the master plan in establishing an integrated complex was that the site occupied several city blocks and was subdivided by the existing road network. Responding to this challenge required addressing the requirements of vehicular and pedestrian circulation in and around the site. First and foremost was the rigid adherence to the clear separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The application of the concept

¹⁵ Allan Kirkwood, *Memoirs*.



23 Proposed vehicular and pedestrian circulation, Queensland Cultural Centre, 1975

of 'grade separation' was relatively new as an architectural device in Australia. Robin Gibson and Partners and their traffic engineers, Cameron McNamara and Partners, went to extensive efforts to alter the existing road network around the proposed Cultural Centre to achieve this objective.¹⁶ The major change to the road network was the realigning of Stanley Street to enable the construction of the Art Gallery Plaza above and what later became the Stanley Street tunnel.

Uninterrupted pedestrian circulation throughout the site was critical, and achieved with the extensive open spaces, walkways, a pedestrian mall and bridge, and tunnels. A key element of the pedestrian network was the Pedestrian Mall and bridge over Melbourne Street. It overcame the physical division of the site by Melbourne Street and unified the Performing Arts Centre with the Art Gallery, Museum and Library. The bridge was an innovative structure when completed, as the first purpose-built pedestrian bridge over a road in Queensland.¹⁷ Complementing the bridge was a pedestrian tunnel below providing a link from the Art Gallery car park to the Performing Arts Centre.

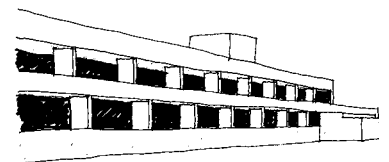
The intention of grade separation extended to links beyond the Cultural Centre site. The original scheme proposed in November 1974 included a pedestrian bridge to South Brisbane Railway Station (see Figure 23), but this later changed to a tunnel, although it was never built.

Detailing

The precinct is distinguished by its simple, direct and uncomplicated detailing. Meticulous attention to detailing removes entirely or strictly orders all visible signs of construction. Balustrades float, planes meet at recessed junctions, jambs are concealed, joints align and fixtures are set out on grid. The final simplicity of the built form was crafted and intentional.

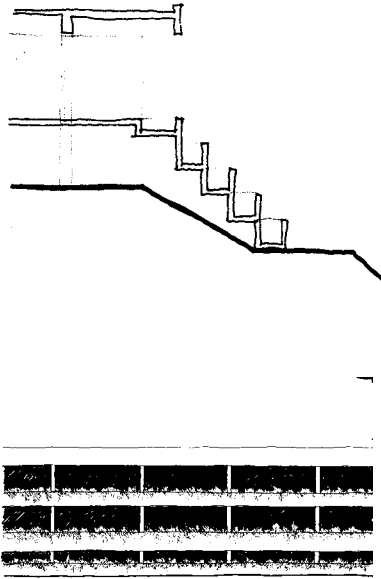
Recessed openings

A key architectural response to the subtropical climate and site was the intentional recessed openings to all building fenestration. From the interior, the frameless glass windows and doors provide an uninterrupted, and typical Queensland response to sheltered aspect



¹⁶ Robin Gibson and Partners had to consult at length with both the Department of Main Roads and the Brisbane City Council before its proposals were accepted.

¹⁷ Constructing this bridge was not a cheap exercise. Given that the volume of traffic on Melbourne Street in the 1970s was not high, it might well have been considered a luxury as crossing the street as a pedestrian would not have been difficult. Yet the Department of Works, as the building authority, did not question its value to the project or suggest it should not be built to reduce costs.



and diffusion of natural daylight. Externally, the recesses form a negative shadow, providing visual relief to the monolithic facades.

Terraced forms

The stepped terracing of planters, walkways and facades fuses the built elements within the landscape and elongates the horizontal nature of the precinct. Spillage plantings dissolve boundaries to the monolithic facades, providing visual relief and ambiguity to a defined building edge.

Contemplative spaces

Throughout the precinct, both internal and external spaces have been crafted with the intent to allow for contemplative intervening space. The orchestration of human-made elements such as prospect, levels, acoustics, privacy and promenades provides distinctive spaces, consistent with the functional program of the precinct.

Landscape as architecture

The use of landscape as architectural elements throughout the interior and exterior defines the precinct. Plantings were selected for their complementary form, texture and colour to enhance buildings and their formed public spaces. The consistent use of species mimics the minimal architectural palette, assisting in unifying the whole. The use of water as textural, acoustic and orientation device remains a principal characteristic of the precinct.

Construction

Given the complexity of the project, the construction of the Cultural Centre was divided into four principal stages and, within those stages, sub-stages as required.

Stage 1—Queensland Art Gallery

(The design and construction of the Art Gallery is discussed more fully in Chapter 5)

Stage 1A	1976–77	Works to the riverbank, floating fountain and pontoon, a pump house, electrical substation, walkways Contractor EA Watts Pty Ltd, \$1.56 million
Stage 1B	1977–78	Diversion of streets and services upstream of Victoria Bridge Bulk excavation of the art gallery and museum site Roadworks downstream of Victoria Bridge Contractor Thiess Bros Pty Ltd
Stage 1C	1978	Piling—contractor Frankipile Australia Pty Ltd
Stage 1D	1978–81	Art gallery, auditorium and restaurant, and car park Contractor Graham Evans Pty Ltd, \$19.1 million
	1982	Opening June 1982

Stage 2—Performing Arts Centre

(For details on the Performing Arts Centre see Chapter 6)

Stage 2A	1979	Site excavation, demolition and subway under Stanley Street Contractor Graham Evans Pty Ltd
Stage 2B	1979	Piling—contractor Frankipile Australia Pty Ltd
Stage 2C	1978–84	Building—Barclay Bros Pty Ltd, \$24.5 million
Stage 2D	1982–84	Fit-out with 25 separate contracts
	1985	Opening April 1985



Stage 3—Queensland Museum

(For details on the Museum see Chapter 7)

1983–85	Contractor Prentice Pty Ltd, \$18.3 million
1986	Opening October 1986

24 Model of the Cultural Centre, c. 1977, with more detail than shown in the 1975 model (Richard Stringer QPACA)

Stage 4—Queensland State Library

(For details on the State Library see Chapter 8)

1985	Site works
1985–87	Contractor Graham Evans & Co Pty Ltd, \$26 million
1988	Opening April 1988

Costing and funding the project

When Treasurer Gordon Chalk submitted a proposal for a Cultural complex at South Brisbane to the Cabinet in November 1974, the cost of the project was estimated at \$45.4 million. The major costs were the Centre for Performing Arts (\$12 million), Art Gallery (\$10 million), Museum (\$5.6 million) and State Library (\$5 million). The remainder of the costs were land acquisition, site works and consultant fees. The project was intended to be funded from consolidated revenue and loan funds.¹⁸

Soon after construction of the Cultural Centre commenced, the costs quickly escalated and the original estimated figure was substantially exceeded. By the end of Stage 4, the final cost was \$198 million (\$174 million for buildings and \$24 million for land acquisition).¹⁹ The fourfold increase in the cost of the Cultural Centre was due to two factors. First, the original costing did not include the lighting and stage machinery for the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall, furniture, the river fountain and pontoon, and other items such as the external artworks and the pipe organ. Secondly, the construction of the Cultural Centre coincided with a significant period of inflation in the Australian economy. Between 1974

¹⁸ Cabinet decision 21481, 18 November 1974, QSA Item ID541022.

¹⁹ QCCT Annual Report, 1993.

and 1988, the consumer price index increased more than 350 percent and annual inflation was above 10 per cent in several years. By comparison, in the 14 year period between 2000 and 2014, the increase in the consumer price index has been a more modest 58 per cent.²⁰ In this context, the fourfold increase from the original estimate of \$45.4 million to \$198 million was not excessive, particularly when the original not-budgeted costs are included.

The Queensland Government was fortunate that, as work on the Cultural Centre commenced, it was given a rare opportunity to fund the project that meant substantially less funding from consolidated revenue. In March 1975, Treasurer Chalk set up the Cultural Capital Development Fund to not only fund the Cultural Centre at South Brisbane, but also other cultural facilities throughout the state, including at Rockhampton, Townsville, Gold Coast and Redcliffe.²¹ Revenue for the Fund came from the Golden Casket Art Union. Since the 1920s, the government-owned Golden Casket had been used to help fund health services throughout the state. With the introduction of the Medibank scheme in 1974, the Commonwealth Government offered to fund the public hospital system with a sum equivalent to the amount being paid from consolidated revenue.²² This arrangement was an incentive for the government to withdraw the Casket money from the hospitals and replace it with consolidated revenue. For the Queensland Government, it was a win-win situation. More money for the hospital system and more funds for the South Brisbane Cultural Centre and other cultural centres throughout Queensland.²³

The Cultural Centre was not funded solely by the Golden Casket, but it did lessen the burden on consolidated revenue, and importantly, it allowed the project to proceed without the need for cost-cutting measures and enabled the quality of materials and finishes to be maintained throughout.

Jubilee Fountain

The installation of a fountain in the Brisbane River in front of the Art Gallery was not part of the original plans for the Cultural Centre. When the Queensland Government became aware that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was to visit the state in March 1977 as part of her Jubilee celebrations, it was keen to have her visit the Cultural Centre site even though only preliminary site works would have been completed. Architect Robin Gibson had worked for leading British architect, Sir Hugh Casson, in the 1950s, and he sought his opinion about what would be appropriate. Casson advised that the Queen would be reluctant to just lay a foundation stone—something more was needed.²⁴ Gibson proposed a large fountain in the river—it would be spectacular, and the installation achievable in time for the Queen's visit.

Queen Elizabeth II activated the Jubilee Fountain on 11 March 1977 and duly laid a foundation stone before a large crowd of official guests and the public. The ceremony was considered the highlight of the Royal visit to Brisbane.²⁵ Problems with the fountain soon appeared after it became operational. One immediate problem was that salt spray

20 Reserve Bank of Australia, Measures of consumer price inflation, <http://www.rba.gov.au/inflation/measures-cpi.html>.

21 Cameron Hazelhurst, *Gordon Chalk, a political life*, Darling Downs Institute Press, Toowoomba, 1987, p. 302.

22 *The Sunday Mail*, 4 July 1976.

23 Hazelhurst, *Gordon Chalk*, p. 302.

24 Robin Gibson, *Queensland Cultural Centre: architecture and design*, video recording, Steel Reinforcement Institute of Australia, 1990.

25 H Lowes, *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, 30 August 1977.



25 Opening of Jubilee Fountain by Queen Elizabeth II, 1977 (QPACA)

had affected some of the newly-planted foliage on the riverbank, planted as part of Stage 1. The less-salt resistant plants were subsequently replaced.²⁶ Another issue that came to public attention was the cost of operating the fountain. Within weeks of its opening, it was only operating for 40 hours per week, but at a cost of \$915 per week. The Minister for Works was queried in Parliament about why taxpayers could view only a 'hunk of metal floating in the river'.²⁷ But the most recurring problem was the scourge of all metal structures in contact with salt water—rust. By October 1977, the fountain was not operating properly, and architect Robin Gibson admitted that rust was a major problem, along with water pressure and wind.²⁸ Over the next eight years, the fountain was constantly being repaired, suffered from flood damage, and on occasion simply sank to the bottom of the river.²⁹ Eventually when it was taken away for repairs in April 1986, it was simply not returned to its location in front of the art gallery.³⁰ With repairs and ongoing operational costs estimated at \$250 000, the QCCT decided not to reinstate the fountain.³¹

Shared facilities

In the submission to Cabinet in November 1974, one of the arguments for a Cultural Centre was that it enabled the sharing of facilities between institutions. A central energy plant was constructed as part of the first stage on the corner of Peel and Grey Streets. Additions were undertaken in 1995 in conjunction with the construction of the Playhouse Theatre.

A 500-vehicle car park under the Art Gallery and Museum opened in 1982 for use by all visitors to the Cultural Centre. Another car park was constructed below the Library in 1988 and a third car park below the Cultural Forecourt in 1992.³²

²⁶ Barbara van den Broek to R Gibson, 3 May 1997, QSA Item ID600223.

²⁷ *The Courier Mail*, 25 March 1977.

²⁸ *The Courier Mail*, 21 October 1977.

²⁹ Cultural Centre Pontoon and fountain emergency procedures, 14 July 1983, QSA Item ID602523; *The Courier Mail*, 4 January 1985.

³⁰ Queensland Cultural Centre Trust, Annual Report, p. 6.

³¹ Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Minutes, 12 December 1986.

³² QCCT Minutes, May 1992.



26 Aerial view of Queensland Cultural Centre, 1986. This view highlights the extensive open spaces surrounding the buildings, with the Library under construction (Department of Natural Resources and Mines, QAP460145)

The Queensland Cultural Centre—a signature project

The Queensland Cultural Centre was a signature project for the architect Robin Gibson. It was also a signature project for the Queensland Government and in particular the Department of Works. The scale of the undertaking and its consistency over so many years are both rare and exceptional.

The project introduced much that was innovative, including its recognition of the Brisbane River as a positive attribute in its location and setting, as well as the integration of landscape as part of the design, in such a comprehensive way. The use of water throughout the site was on a scale that set it apart and Robert Woodward's contribution to its design gave it added significance. In a functional sense it has worked efficiently to a degree rarely equalled, particularly in the design of the performing arts venues which are equal to the best in the world. The quality of the pipe organ, furniture, lighting, signage, detailing, planting, water features and sculpture were all of a high order and have stood the test of time. As Jennifer Taylor has observed:

The concept for the Cultural Centre has been achieved and reinforced by the creation of a total architectural entity in which the whole is the sum of the parts and the whole is enriched by the presence of each part.³³

Architect Robin Gibson received several major awards for his work on the Cultural Centre, including the Royal Australian Institute of Architects' highest recognition, the Gold Medal, in 1989.

The exceptional qualities of the Cultural Centre were the result of a remarkable collaborative effort involving the architect, the Department of Works, as well as a range of consultants, engineers, artisans and contractors. The commitment to excellence in design and construction was maintained throughout. The Department of Works played a vital role in ensuring that all aspects of the project were adequately funded and the highest quality of materials, finishes and construction was maintained.

³³ Jennifer Taylor, 'Robin Gibson: RAIA Gold Medal 1989', *Architecture Australia*, September 1989, p. 50.

4 Landscape

From the earliest stages of the project, even when only an art gallery was being considered, landscape was identified as being an integral part of the project. In the planning brief for the Art Gallery prepared in 1972, the design criteria stated that:

The landscaping proposals for the site should be an integral part of the total design. Courts for the display of sculpture and shaded areas for rest and relaxation should be included. The paving, lighting and furnishing of these areas to the relationship of the building and its setting to the river are all matters of particular design importance.¹

Robin Gibson fully embraced these concepts in his design for the Art Gallery and later for the Cultural Centre. No doubt he was inspired and greatly influenced by the fusion of the landscape into the built form at Oakland Museum in California. Gibson embraced the innovative approach of Roche, Dinkeloo and Kiley that had not been employed up until that time in Australia. He said that the intention of his scheme for the Cultural Centre was 'to create an atmosphere of softness in which greenery, parkland, and river views will replace high-rise buildings and city ugliness'.² The intention was unquestionably realised when the Cultural Centre was completed in 1988, and even more so as the plantings have matured and become a dominant element of the precinct.

Robin Gibson and Partners initially engaged Dave Mryhum, a lecturer in landscape architecture at the Queensland Institute of Technology, to consult on landscape design for Stage 1A: the treatment of the earth mound to connect with the Art Gallery plaza. Subsequently Barbara van den Broek was appointed as the landscape architect, with responsibilities including landscape design within the architectural disciplines of the master plan and detailed building designs; plant species selections, recommendations and setouts; and documentation in the form of drawings and specifications for each individual building contract.³

Gibson did not regard the landscape of the Cultural Centre as confined to the boundaries of the site. Rather, he was acutely aware of its context with the broader Brisbane landscape and two of its principal attributes: the Brisbane River and the Taylor Range that forms a backdrop to the city.

From the outset in planning the Cultural Centre, Gibson saw the opportunity to greatly enhance the quality of the site by relating it to the Brisbane River.⁴ By rearranging Stanley

1 New Queensland Art Gallery Steering Committee, 'Queensland Art Gallery Report', March 1972, Appendix C, p. 8, QSA Item ID961664,

2 *The Courier Mail*, 12 March 1977.

3 Kirkwood, Landscape memoirs.

4 Robin Gibson, *Queensland Cultural Centre: architecture and design*, video recording, Steel Reinforcement Institute of Australia, 1990.



27 Embankment and towpath between Art Gallery and river, c. 1985 (Richard Stringer)



29 Art Gallery Plaza, c. 1985 (Richard Stringer)



28 QPAC Green, c. 1986 (Richard Stringer)



30 View across Water Mall to QPAC, c. 1987 (Richard Stringer)

Street and constructing a plaza over the street below, the Art Gallery was directly linked to the river. The Art Gallery plaza also served to provide a direct pedestrian link to the gallery from Victoria Bridge. The importance of the Brisbane River was reinforced by the construction of a towpath along the river edge. The towpath was constructed principally of Mt. Coot-tha bluestone. Barbara van den Broek selected this stone and had employed it in a number of her major civic projects. Today the 'towpath' does not seem to be exceptional or unusual. With timber boardwalks, and concrete pedestrian and cycle paths along both sides of the Brisbane River through the CBD, the concept of a riverside path is today commonplace. However, in the 1970s it did not exist, at least in Brisbane. Except for maritime-related activities such as warehouses and wharves, any building or public space turned its back on the river. The towpath was intended to provide access to the river edge. The use of the term 'towpath', associated with canals, suggests that Gibson, who no doubt would have experienced walking along towpaths in Britain, did not know of a more suitable term in the 1970s to describe a path along a riverbank. So much of the river edge through the city in the 1970s was characterised as an inaccessible mangrove-lined muddy bank.⁵

As well as the Art Gallery plaza, the other principal open spaces were adjacent to Melbourne Street. These spaces were similar in size but differed in their function and treatment.

One of the key devices to soften the harshness of the concrete finishes—both externally and internally—was the notion of 'spillage planting'. The landscape architect Barbara van den Broek had used spillage planting in many of her projects, in particular *Russelia equisetiformis*. Integrated planter boxes were prominent throughout the Cultural Centre and the principal species originally used were *Russelia equisetiformis* (externally) and *Cissus antarctica* (internally). This signature expression on this scale was innovative in Australian architecture.⁶

A challenge in the outdoor spaces, which were subject to intense sunlight in summer, was appropriate shade trees. Gibson was not just interested in trees that would provide shade, but a species with an appropriate form that was 'spreading in habit, and deciduous in the wintertime to promote longevity of lawn and other planted areas'.⁷ The initial suggestion for a tree species that would provide shade were varieties of *Ficus*. Gibson, however, desired a species with a more formal habit and sought the advice of Harry Oakman. Oakman, a noted Australian horticulturist, had been Superintendent of Parks for the Brisbane City Council and also worked for the National Capital Development Commission in Canberra. Oakman advised on the suitability of the *Tipuana tipu*, although it was not at the time a species commonly used in Brisbane.

An important element of the open spaces was the provision of outdoor furniture, including benches, water fountains and rubbish bins. These custom-built items were located throughout the site and were of white sandblasted concrete (similar to the finish in the main buildings), with hardwood timber battens on the benches.

The relationship of the Brisbane River to the Cultural Centre landscape was reinforced by prominent water elements within the Cultural Centre. The Water Mall extending through the Art Gallery not only served as an orientation device within the gallery, but also provided a physical connection to the exterior spaces. The Plaza Fountain (later known as the Cascade Fountain) was designed by Sydney architect Robert Woodward, who was widely regarded for his innovative fountain designs.⁸ The fountain not only contributed as an architectural element to the forecourt, but for Gibson, also served an aural function,

5 The Riverside Centre by Harry Seidler (1983–86) is often regarded as the first building in Brisbane to seriously address the Brisbane River, but the Cultural Centre clearly preceded it.

6 Allan Kirkwood, Landscape notes.

7 Ibid.

8 One of Woodward's more well-known fountains is the El Alamein Memorial Fountain, Kings Cross, Sydney.



31 Art Gallery Plaza (2016)



32 Museum Plaza (2016)



34 QPAC Green (2016)



33 Cascade Court and Fountain (2016)



35 Tipuana trees adjacent to Embankment (2016)



36 Cascade Fountain designed by Robert Woodward c. 1987 (David McCarthy)

in softening the traffic noise from Melbourne Street. The Cascade Fountain was later regarded as one of Woodward's finest and most accomplished works, along with the Cascade at the High Court of Australia and the water feature in the forecourt of Australian Parliament House.⁹

Alterations to the landscape

Although the original landscape intent has remained substantially intact and the major spaces have not been compromised with major alterations, changes have occurred to plant selection and elements introduced into the hard landscape.

The first changes occurred early in the project, even before Stage 1 was completed. Soon after the Jubilee Fountain commenced operation in March 1977, some of the new plants on the Embankment died as a result of salt water from the fountain in windy conditions. As a consequence, more salt-resistant plants were introduced.

Further changes to the plantings were made in the late 1990s following a major study and report commissioned by the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust. The report was undertaken by Denis Priest, a botanical, horticultural and landscape design consultant.¹⁰ Priest highlighted a range of issues associated with the planting regime—some species originally selected had not proved suitable, and later introductions appeared to be out of place. He was critical of the *Tipuana tipu* plantings, which he argued 'were becoming invasive or dominant and threaten to establish or impose a landscape authority over less vigorous species'.¹¹ Fortunately, no action was taken to remove these signature trees. Arguably one of the most significant impacts of Priest's report was the introduction of *Plumeria obtusa* (white frangipani) in the Art Galley Plaza. These 'ornamental' plantings were counter to the original intent of avoiding a 'showy' or a 'picturesque' approach to the landscape.

⁹ Gregory Harper, 'Robert Woodward: Architect and fountain designer', BArch thesis, University of New South Wales, 1993.

¹⁰ Denis Priest, *Queensland Cultural Centre landscape status report with recommendations as to landscape rehabilitation*, 2 vols and appendices, 1996.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.



37 Steel sculpture *Leviathan Play* by Ron Robertson-Swann, c. 1987 (Richard Stringer)



38 Aluminium sculpture *Offshoot* by Clement Meadmore, c. 1987 (Richard Stringer)



39 Sculpture *Approaching Equilibrium*, by Anthony Pryor (2016)

The extensive drought in south-east Queensland during the mid 2000s and the consequent severe water restrictions had a major impact on the Cultural Centre plantings. All the plantings in the external planter boxes on the Performing Arts Centre died due to a lack of water and have not been replaced. The drought also prompted the introduction of more drought-resistant and low maintenance plantings such as *Muraya paniculata*.¹²

Other changes to the major spaces have included a redesign of the Museum Plaza as part of the new entrance to the Queensland Museum in 2003. On the opposite side of Melbourne Street, changes to QPAC Green have included a new entrance from Grey Street, a covered walkway, lightweight timber fence facing Melbourne and Grey Streets, a temporary stage and artificial turf.

External artworks

Provision of artworks within the Queensland Cultural Centre site was recognised from the outset as an integral part of the building project and landscape intent. An allowance was included in the original approved budget for the Queensland Cultural Centre for 'Artworks and Special Landscaping'. In September 1982, an Advisory Arts Committee was formed to make recommendations on the acquisition of appropriate works of art in public spaces. The committee was chaired by Roman Pavlyshyn, Director, Division of Building, Department of Works. The committee comprised Robin Gibson; Raoul Mellish, Director, Queensland Art Gallery; and Russell Kerrison, Director, Queensland Cultural Centre Trust.

The committee's first task was to identify suitable locations for the display of artworks. These locations were in close proximity to the Art Gallery. Expressions of interest were sought from artists throughout Australia to undertake a commission for the Cultural Centre. Sixty-nine responded and five artists were selected as having work suitable for display in the grounds of the Art Gallery. The selected works were:

- A painted aluminium abstract piece, *Offshoot*, by expatriate Australian artist Clement Meadmore, which was acquired from the artist. The piece was transported from the artist's residence in New York (subsequently positioned on the plaza near its entry point from Victoria Bridge)
- Five cast bronze *Pelicans* by Queensland sculptors Leonard and Kathleen Shillam (subsequently positioned in the Water Mall on the eastern side of the Art Gallery)
- Two bronze nudes, *Sisters*, by Canberra artist Ante Dabro (subsequently located on the centre's Melbourne Street forecourt)
- An abstract painted steel sculpture, *Leviathan Play*, by New South Wales artist Ron Robertson-Swann (subsequently located on the Melbourne Street forecourt near the walkway over Melbourne Street)
- A large, painted steel, abstract work, *Approaching Equilibrium* (formerly known as *Point of Balance*), by Victorian artist Anthony Pryor (subsequently positioned on the upper plaza, adjacent to the Auditorium).¹³

The works were officially handed over to the Trust on 8 May 1985, and unquestionably enriched the spaces in which they were located, and it was one of the first occasions in 'the history of Australian Sculpture that five major works have been commissioned simultaneously' and co-located in such a prominent public space.¹⁴

¹² A limited number of *Muraya paniculata* were part of the original planting, but now it is featured extensively throughout the site.

¹³ Queensland Cultural Centre Trust Annual Report, 1985.

¹⁴ Appendix to Queensland Cultural Centre Arts Advisory Committee Final Report (unpublished). The Queensland Art Gallery also commented that 'It is without doubt a milestone for the arts and for sculpture in particular. These commissions show not only the coming of age but also the prime role of Australian sculptors in the field of art, both nationally and internationally.'



40 The site of the Cultural Forecourt in the 1980s—an undeveloped space fronting the river with the former fish wharf in the foreground (Richard Stringer)



41 The Cultural Forecourt in front of QPAC (2016)

Cultural Forecourt

The Cultural Forecourt is located on land owned by South Bank Corporation and managed by the Brisbane City Council through a licence and management agreement. When land was being acquired for the Cultural Centre in the 1970s, a priority was given to acquiring the land between the proposed Art Gallery and the Brisbane River, and bridging over Stanley Street to create an open space and connection to the river edge. Establishing a similar connection with the proposed Performing Arts Centre and the Brisbane River was much more difficult, as it would have required the closure of a section of Stanley Street which was still then a major thoroughfare in South Brisbane. As a consequence, no consideration was given to including the land bounded by Melbourne Street, Stanley Street, and the river as part of the Cultural Centre site.¹⁵ The Brisbane City Council already owned some of the land and gradually acquired all of the lots between Stanley Street

¹⁵ Various plans show clearly that no consideration was given to the acquisition of this area. See Appendix A Existing Development, QSA Item ID961913.

and the river from Melbourne Street to the South Brisbane dry dock to establish the Clem Jones Park.

The development of the south bank of the Brisbane River for Expo '88 resulted in changes to this area with the closure of Stanley Street from near the intersection with Russell Street. The bypass under Melbourne Street was rerouted to provide a two-way traffic flow. The site was not officially part of the Expo '88 site, although a helipad was located near the riverbank.

More significant changes occurred with the redevelopment of the Expo '88 site by the South Bank Corporation. The Corporation was formed to develop the site and to ensure that such development accorded with the highest possible standards and was 'in the interest of the people of the City of Brisbane and of Queensland'.¹⁶ Master planning of the site included the area which became known as the Cultural Forecourt. Major works were undertaken in 1992 including landscaping, road realignment and an underground car park. The car park was built for the Queensland Cultural Centre Trust (now owned by Arts Queensland) to provide additional parking for patrons using the Performing Arts Centre, in particular for the anticipated increase with the construction of a new 750-seat drama theatre (the Playhouse Theatre). Stanley Street was truncated and joined to the Cultural Centre tunnel.

A landscape plan was prepared by DBI Design (formerly Media Five) and the work undertaken in conjunction with the construction of the car park.

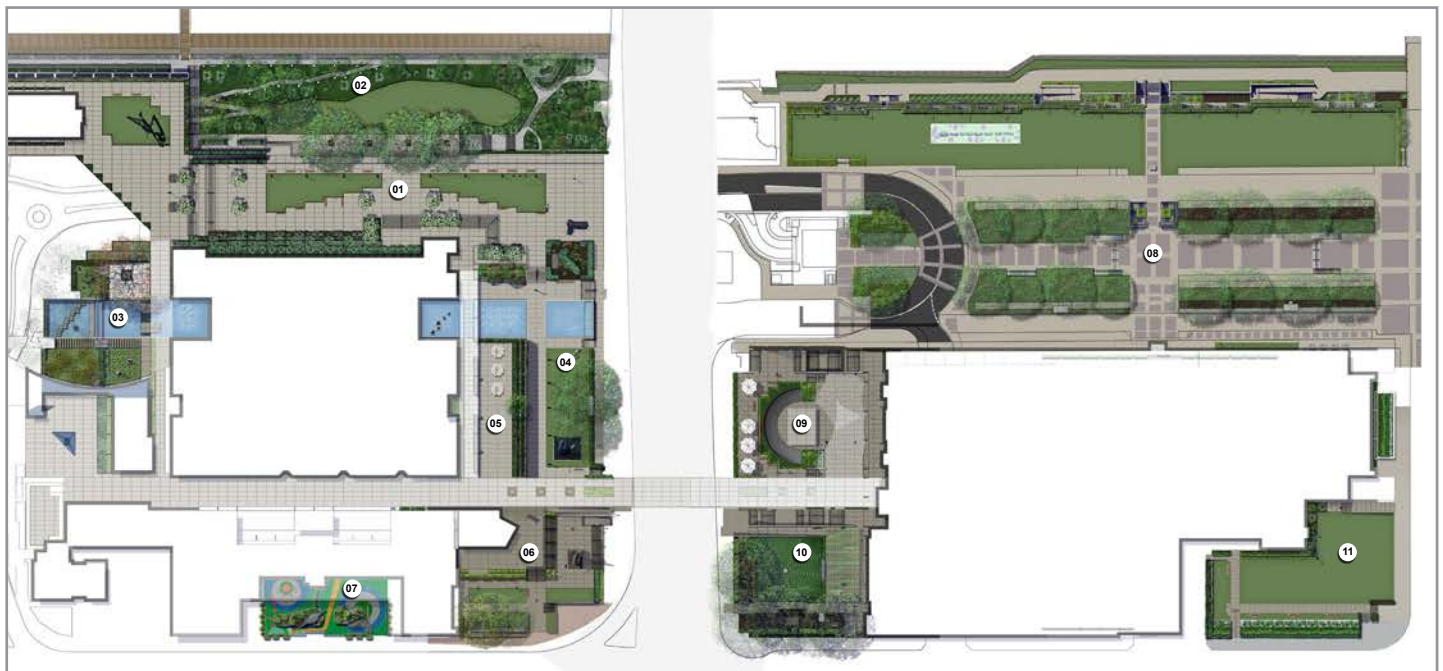
This plan drew on the design approach employed with the Cultural Centre landscape. The layout was a formal geometric plan with hard paving and plantings in formal rows. The plan also referenced the key plantings within the Cultural Centre precinct—*Tipuana tipu* as the principal tree species (two rows of nine on each side of the central north–south axis) and *Russelia equisetiformis* as the main 'spillage' species used in the planter boxes on the river side of the car park.

The Cultural Forecourt, as an open and flexible space, became one of the principal event spaces within South Bank. This use has continued with a range of festivals and events throughout the year.

Subsequent changes to the landscape of the Cultural Forecourt have been the removal of the water element and two rows of *Flindersia australis*.

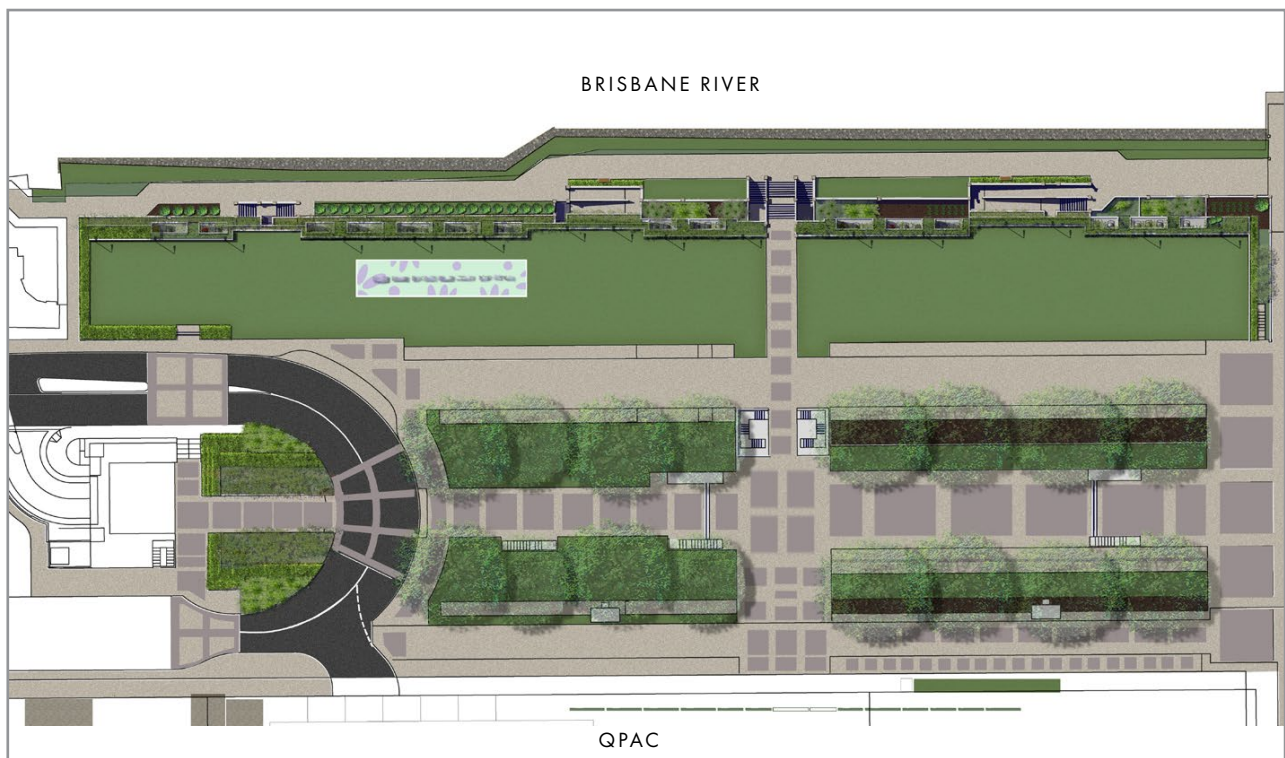
A recent addition to the Cultural Forecourt has been the artwork with the letters BRISBANE, which was installed for the G20 summit in 2014.

¹⁶ South Bank Corporation Area Approved Development Plan 1990, 1.1.



- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Art Gallery Plaza | 7 Museum Garden |
| 2 Embankment | 8 Cultural Forecourt |
| 3 Sculpture Courtyard | 9 Cascade Court |
| 4 Pelican Plaza | 10 QPAC Green |
| 5 Umbrella Plaza | 11 Playhouse Green |
| 6 Museum Plaza | |

42 Principal open spaces (2016)



43 Plan, Cultural Forecourt (2016)



45 Plan, Art Gallery and Embankment (2016)



44 Plan, Museum Plaza (2016)



46 Plan, Pelican Plaza and Umbrella Plaza (2016)



47 Plan, QPAC Green (2016)



48 Plan, Playhouse Green (2016)

5 Art Gallery

When the Queensland Art Gallery opened in a new building at South Brisbane in 1982, the contrast with the first art gallery established in Queensland could not have been more marked. The Queensland National Art Gallery was established in 1895, occupying a room on the first floor in the Brisbane Town Hall.¹ It was truly a modest space and the gallery's collection comprised a mere 'twenty-four pictures, one marble bust, seventy engravings, [and] twenty-seven pieces of Doulton ware'.²

This room quickly became cramped, and in 1905, the Queensland Government offered the Gallery a large room on the third floor in the recently completed Lands and Survey Offices (later Lands Administration Building) in George Street. Although it provided more space than the room in the Town Hall, it still had limitations as an art gallery. The room was not easily accessible by the public and soon became cramped as the collection expanded.

The Gallery moved again in 1930 when the Concert Hall in the Exhibition Building on Gregory Terrace was renovated for use as an art gallery. The *Brisbane Courier* noted that:

the new gallery is symmetrical in form, and adequate provision has been made for modern methods of lighting. There is a great amount of wall space, and, perhaps, for the first time, all the State's art treasures will simultaneously be open for public inspection.³

The *Brisbane Courier* also claimed, rather optimistically, that the Exhibition Building provided an 'almost ideal home' for the Gallery.⁴ It may have been suitable for a period, but the limitations and inadequacies soon became apparent. Within a decade the government decided to move the Art Gallery to the Supreme Court buildings when new courts were built. World War II intervened and planning was put on hold.

Criticism of the suitability of the Exhibition Building for an art gallery was continually expressed by art critics and connoisseurs.⁵ In 1947, art critic Clive Turnball complained 'the glaring light is wholly unsuitable for the display of pictures, and the drab walls induce an atmosphere of despair'. He despaired that 'obviously nothing can be done with this lamentable place'.⁶ The Queensland Government was aware of problems and throughout the 1950s and 1960s considered sites for a new gallery.⁷ Yet no firm decisions were forthcoming.

1 *Brisbane Courier*, 30 March 1895.

2 *Brisbane Courier*, 21 August 1896.

3 *Brisbane Courier*, 30 October 1930.

4 *Brisbane Courier*, 30 October 1930.

5 *The Sunday Mail*, 27 October, 1946.

6 Quoted in Peter Marquis-Kyle, *Old Museum Building conservation management plan*, 2000, p. 27

7 Cabinet Decision No 2145, 12 January 1960, QSA ID961664.



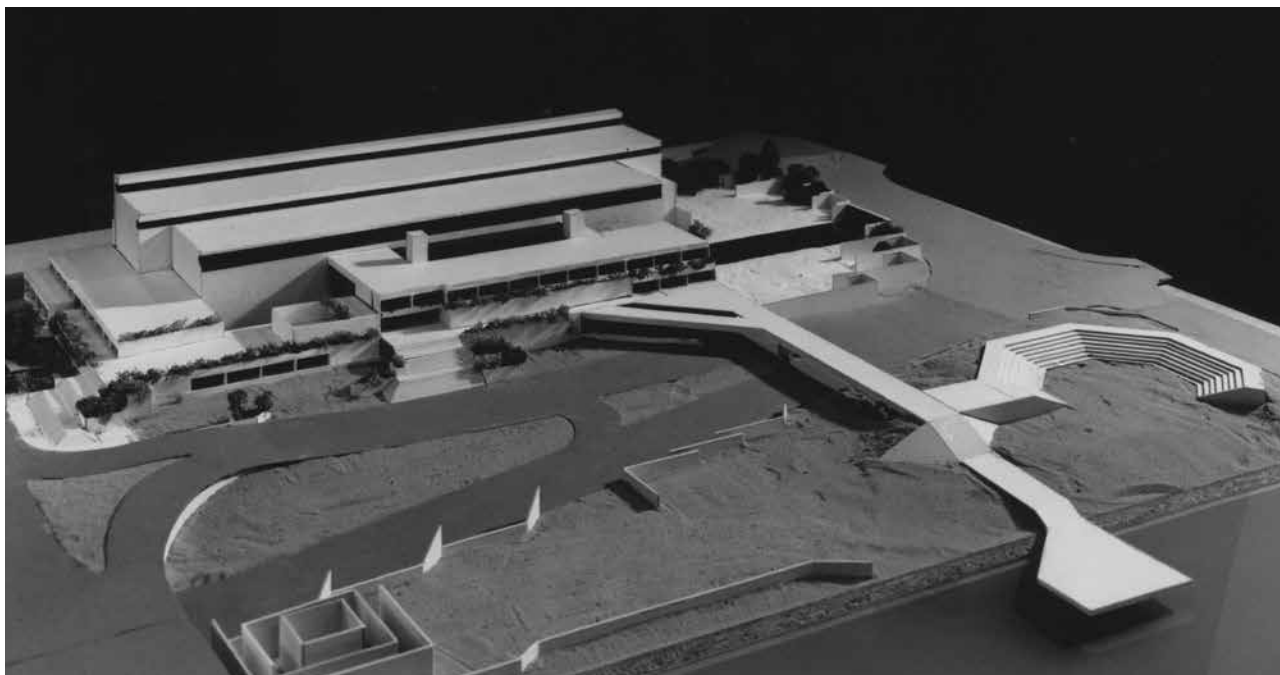
49 Brisbane Town Hall where the Art Gallery was located on the first floor (SLQ 135488)



50 National Art Gallery in Lands and Survey Office, c. 1916 (QAGOMA Archives)



51 Queensland Art Gallery in Exhibition Building, Gregory Terrace (Department of Works Annual Report, 1931)



52 Model, Art Gallery, 1973
(Richard Stringer, QPACA)

As discussed in Chapter 2, the government was finally galvanised into action when art critic and historian Professor Bernard Smith visited the Gallery and told *The Courier Mail* that 'one only has to be inside this gallery—even for 24 hours—to see that art in this institution is in a pretty sorry position'.⁸ These very public disparaging comments prompted an immediate response from the government. Within two days, the acting Premier, Gordon Chalk, announced an investigation into the future of the Queensland Art Gallery.⁹ In January 1969, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Queensland Art Gallery Site Committee.

A site at South Brisbane was selected, but acquisition of the land took more than three years to finalise. A planning brief was prepared by a committee appointed in July 1971, and was chaired by Roman Pavlyshyn, Assistant Under Secretary in the Department of Works.¹⁰ The report was comprehensive and included recommendations on space requirements, costs, method of planning and construction and a detailed planning brief. The committee concluded a building of 140 000 square feet (13 000 square metres) for an estimated cost of \$4.5 million was required.¹¹

A competition was held to select an architect for the design of the new gallery. The winner of the competition, Robin Gibson and Partners, was announced on 16 April 1973.¹²

Gibson began working on the detailed design for the art gallery, but the program was delayed when the Queensland Government announced in November 1974 that the project was to be significantly enlarged to a Cultural Centre incorporating, as well as the art gallery, a performing arts centre, museum and library. In the expanded scheme, the art gallery was still the first stage to be constructed. Stage 1 was divided into four components. Stage 1A comprised works to the riverbank, floating fountain and pontoon, a pump house,

⁸ *The Courier Mail*, 14 November 1968.

⁹ *The Courier Mail*, 16 November 1968.

¹⁰ The other committee members were: AE Guymer, Director-General of Education; Sir Leon Trout, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; AJ Stratigos, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees; James Weineke, Director of the Queensland Art Gallery; Professor GE Roberts, Professor of Architecture, University of Queensland; Peter Prystupa, Supervising Architect, Department of Works. (New Queensland Art Gallery Steering Committee, 'Queensland Art Gallery Report', March 1972, QSA Item ID961664. p. 2)

¹¹ Land acquisition, site works and the car park were estimated at \$2.5 million, *ibid*, p 6.

¹² *The Courier Mail*, 17 April 1977.

electrical substation and walkways. The works were undertaken by EA Watts Pty Ltd for a cost of \$1.56 million and completed by March 1977.¹³

The diversion of streets and services was undertaken in Stage 1B. This stage was delayed due to protracted negotiations on the traffic plan with the Brisbane City Council and the Department of Main Roads, and also complications with the finalisation of property adjustments.¹⁴ The contract for this stage was undertaken by Theiss Bros Pty Ltd for a cost of \$1.2 million. Piling works were undertaken in Stage 1C.¹⁵

The main works were undertaken in Stage 1D and included the art gallery, auditorium, restaurant and car park. Tenders were called in April 1978 and 10 firms submitted bids. The contract for Stage 1D was awarded to Graham Evans & Co, which had submitted a tender of \$19.1 million.¹⁶

Construction proceeded according to schedule and the Art Gallery took possession of the building in March 1982.

Design and planning

The design and planning of the Art Gallery followed closely the original principles enunciated in the planning brief of 1972.

The main entrance is located on the south-eastern corner and is readily identifiable from the main plaza and Victoria Bridge. From the main foyer, the most prominent and striking aspect of the interior is immediately apparent—the Water Mall. The Water Mall extends beyond the gallery space to the Pelican Plaza on the south-east and the Sculpture Courtyard on the north-west. The Water Mall is enhanced by fountains, sculpture and two waterfalls at each end. The waterfalls, comprising crafted granite tiles, were designed by Robert Woodward. Woodward was also responsible for the Dandelion fountains at the north western end.¹⁷

The Water Mall functions as the main orientation element both externally and internally, and assists in making the organisation of the gallery comprehensible to the visitor, as well as giving a special Queensland subtropical character to the building. The Water Mall also serves as a parallel reflection of the river. The main foyer also provides visual connectivity to the multi-level galleries.

The galleries are located on levels 3 and 4 and connect to one another through half-level floor changes by stairs and ramps. The galleries vary in height and size to accommodate the differing scale of the works to be exhibited'.¹⁸ A large temporary gallery for travelling exhibitions is located so that it can be isolated from the permanent galleries. The education centre and cafeteria were also located on level 3. The library and offices for the Art Gallery Society were located on level 4. Level 5 comprised the collection storage, offices and conservation laboratories.

The simplicity of overall design has its parallel in the strict control of construction elements, materials, and finishes. Sandblasted white in situ concrete was used for the structural and enclosing elements, externally and internally. In the gallery spaces, white-painted plasterboard over a special plywood backing was installed to facilitate the hanging and fixing of artworks. Solar bronze glazing was used for external windows and doors. In

A temporary home for the Art Gallery

While progress on the design and development of the art gallery continued, in the early 1970s, conditions in the space occupied by the art gallery in the Exhibition Building were rapidly deteriorating. In March 1974, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Leon Trout, wrote to the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities about major problems with water leaks during the floods in January 1974, and also fire hazards due to faulty wiring.¹

Following a report from the Department of Works, the government decided to act and close the gallery. Temporary premises were obtained on the fifth and sixth floors of the MIM building, Ann Street.

The Art Gallery remained there until the opening of the new gallery in 1982.

1 *The Courier Mail*, 2 April 1974

¹³ *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, 12 October 1978.

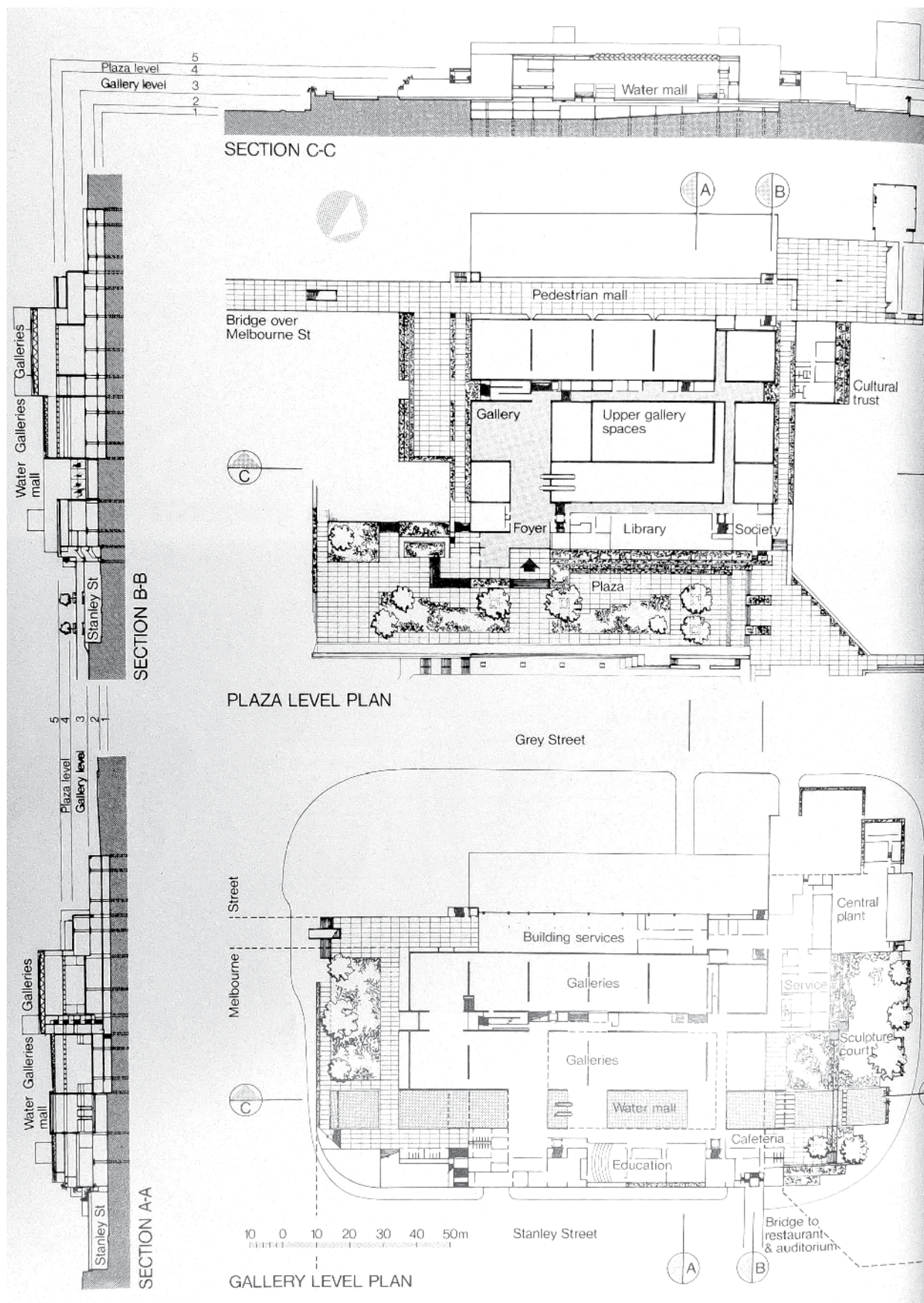
¹⁴ Progress report, 18 February 1977.

¹⁵ *Queensland Parliamentary Debates*, 12 October 1978.

¹⁶ *The Courier Mail*, 4 August 1978.

¹⁷ Woodward was also responsible for the Cascade Fountain outside the Performing Arts Centre. (See p. 39).

¹⁸ Kirkwood, *Memoirs*, p. 7.



53 Art Gallery—plans and sections
(Constructional Review, November 1982)



54 Gallery 11, Queensland Art Gallery, 1986 (Richard Stringer)



55 Water Mall, Queensland Art Gallery, 1986 (Richard Stringer)

the public spaces, ceilings are exposed pre-cast ribbed concrete beams with integrated ducting, lighting and services, and white-painted plasterboard.¹⁹

Differing floor finishes were used in response to the different functions and uses throughout the building. Substantial areas of floor in general traffic zones are finished with travertine, particularly in the Water Mall. Travertine was also run in relatively narrow bands alongside walls where paintings were to be hung, as a subtle deterrent against touching the paintings. In the galleries proper, timber parquetry was used extensively as well as carpet.²⁰

Architect Robin Gibson described the design intent for the Art Gallery

It is a place where the walls and barriers of the gallery are broken down, where there is a constant source of interchanges between the art world and the public—a living gallery—a place of subtle and changing light values where the ultimate experience of the confrontation between the viewer and the art work can be realised.

To create this, walls have been placed to promote the flow or change the course of the viewer's itinerary so that, as one traverses the gallery, spaces will reveal the subtle variations of the display.²¹

Opening

The Art Gallery was opened by the Premier of Queensland, the Hon. Joh Bjelke-Petersen, on 21 June 1982. As part of the opening function, the Deputy Premier, the Hon. Llew Edwards, unveiled an acquisition—*Portrait of a Young Girl* by Peter Paul Rubens—made possible through a gift by the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation. As part of the opening celebrations five international exhibitions were opened at the gallery, including works of Kandinsky and *Renaissance Bronzes from the Victoria and Albert Museum*.²² A work was designed and displayed for suspension from the Water Mall ceiling. The gallery attracted more than 50 000 visitors in the first 10 days.²³

The success of the Art Gallery was not only evident in the public reaction but in the acclaim by art critics. In 1982, the Art Gallery won the Sir Zelman Cowan Award for Public Buildings, the Royal Australian Institute of Architects' highest award for public buildings.

The Art Gallery in operation

The building unquestionably transformed the Queensland Art Gallery. It contained all the prerequisite facilities for a modern art gallery with proper storage facilities, offices and laboratories. Importantly, the building provided a significantly increased capacity to exhibit more of the permanent collection as well as temporary exhibitions, which was the catalyst for major changes in the gallery and its reputation as a state gallery. From the outset, the gallery began actively expanding its permanent collection, and also established a program of a wide range of temporary exhibitions. These exhibitions ranged from small exhibitions of the works of Queensland artists to major international exhibitions. The new building allowed the Queensland Art Gallery to enter into loans of highly important and valuable work, which brought pride and international cultural exemplars to Queensland.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

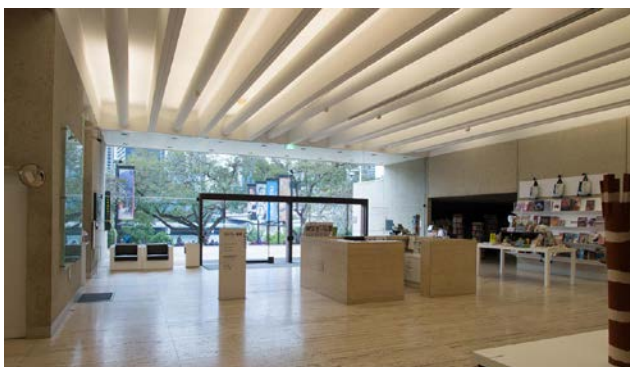
²¹ *The Courier Mail*, 21 June 1982.

²² QCCT Annual Report, 1982, p. 9.

²³ QAG Annual Report, 1981–82, p 7.



56 Melbourne Street entrance, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



57 Entrance from Melbourne Street, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



59 Gallery 2, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



58 Gallery 4, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



60 Gallery 6, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



61 Water Mall, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



62 Pelicans and fountains, Water Mall, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



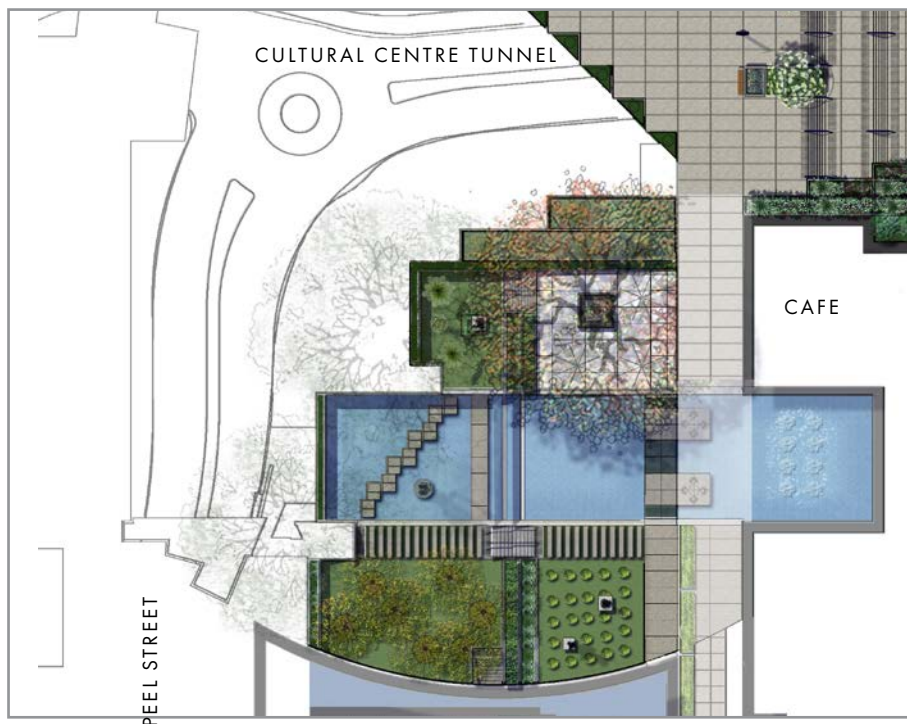
64 Dandelion fountains, Water Mall, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



63 Water Mall and dining, Sculpture Courtyard, Queensland Art Gallery (2016)



65 Waterfalls, Melbourne Street (2016)



66 Aerial plan, Art Gallery Sculpture Courtyard (2016)

Major recent international exhibitions presented by the Queensland Art Gallery include:

2009 American Impressionism and Realism: A Landmark Exhibition from the Met

This groundbreaking and world-exclusive exhibition included many of the Metropolitan's best examples of American impressionist and realist works, loaned on an unprecedented scale. The exhibition attracted more than 100 000 visitors.²⁴

2012 Portrait of Spain: Masterpieces from the Prado

The gallery was the first Australian art museum to host an exhibition from Madrid's esteemed Museo Nacional del Prado. This exhibition was the largest and most significant loan that the Prado had ever undertaken internationally, and the first exhibition from its collection to be shown in the southern hemisphere.²⁵

But the Queensland Art Gallery did not just present major exhibitions. It has continuously shown a wide range of exhibitions of works by emerging and established local and national artists.

As important as both the temporary exhibitions and development of the permanent collection have been, the highlight and groundbreaking project of the gallery has been the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT). The first exhibition, held in 1993, was a resounding success with more than 60 000 visitors. It proved to be a groundbreaking event linking contemporary art of Australasia, Asia and the Pacific with nearly 200 works of art including painting, sculpture, print-making, photography, performance and installation.²⁶ APT continues to expand, and is the only major recurring international exhibition series to focus exclusively on the contemporary art of Asia, the Pacific and

24 QAGOMA Annual Report, 2009–10 p. 21.

25 QAGOMA Annual Report, 2012–13, p. 55.

26 QAG Annual Report, 1993–94, p. 12.

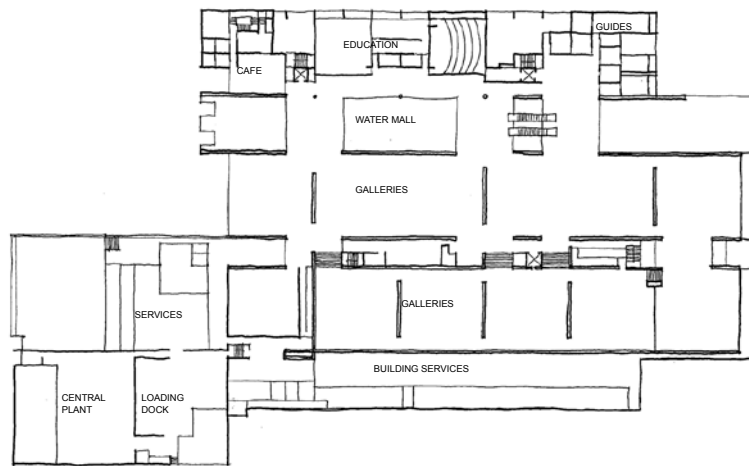
Australia. The success of APT was the catalyst for the major expansion of the Queensland Art Gallery with the construction of the Gallery of Modern Art in 2006.

Alterations

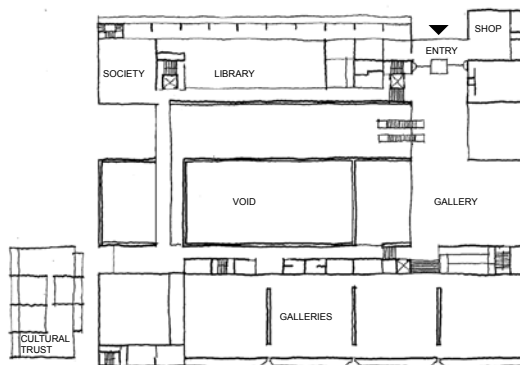
Minor changes and alterations were undertaken to the Art Gallery in the 1980s and 1990s. The 'Brown Room' on level 3 was originally designed as a viewing room for introductory presentations in film or video for visitors to the gallery. This space was converted in the mid 1980s to an office and storage. In the mid-1990s, the education area was converted into offices.

The most significant changes were undertaken in 2006 as part of the Millennium Arts project. The construction of the Gallery of Modern Art, the expansion of the State Library and the development of new public spaces immediately to the north-west of the gallery presented the opportunity to create a second entrance. The new entrance, including a bookshop, was designed by Robin Gibson and Partners. Internally, exhibition spaces were refurbished, including the Asian Gallery, Fairweather Room, and Queensland Heritage Gallery, and the Australian and international galleries were reconfigured. These alterations allowed for more comprehensive displays of the collection, but a loss of the upper level gallery.²⁷

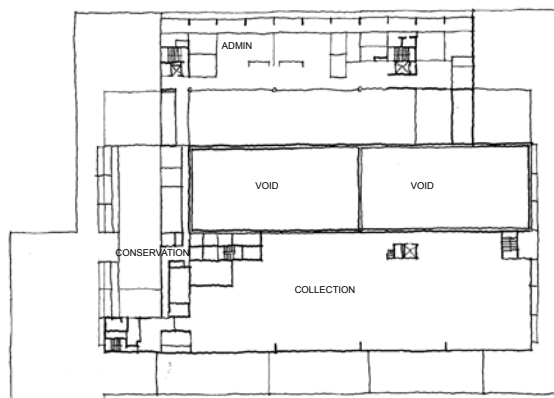
²⁷ QAG Annual Report, 2006–7, p. 6.



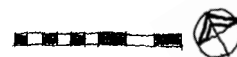
QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY - LEVEL 3
ORIGINAL PLAN



QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY - LEVEL 4
ORIGINAL PLAN



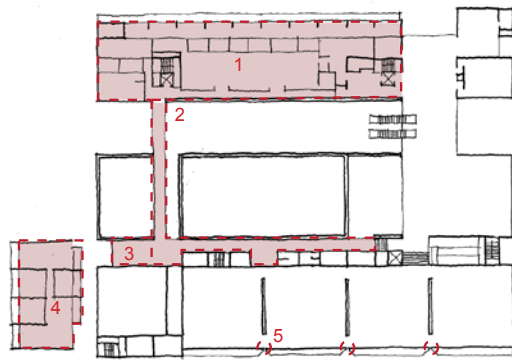
QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY - LEVEL 5
ORIGINAL PLAN





- 1 Entry introduced, 2006
- 2 Sculpture Court altered, 2013
- 3 Floor finish altered, 2012
- 4 Floor finish altered, 2009
- 5 Floor finish altered, 2009
- 6 Converted to offices
- 7 Theatre altered (new seats and carpet), 2015
- 8 Storage enclosure constructed in gallery
- 9 Cafe, new joinery and back of house altered

QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY - LEVEL 3
ALTERED PLAN



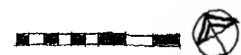
- 1 Library relocated to GOMA, offices altered, 2007
- 2 Walkway closed to public, 2009
- 3 Japanese studio altered
- 4 Converted to security and offices, 1999
- 5 Windows to Pedestrian Mall enclosed

QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY - LEVEL 4
ALTERED PLAN



- 1 Multiple alterations to internal fit-out, 2007
- 2 Mezzanine floor in collection store, 2016

QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY - LEVEL 5
ALTERED PLAN





69 The Edge with planter boxes and later glazing on river elevation (2016)

Auditorium (The Edge)

Although built as part of the Art Gallery contract, the Auditorium was designed as a shared facility for use by the arts bodies. As with the other buildings in the precinct, the design was characterised by its cubic form and a simple palette of materials. Concrete was the dominant material, with recessed glazing provided to the river and city elevation.

The Auditorium comprised a 450-seat multipurpose room and a restaurant. The Auditorium was intended for a variety of purposes including cultural, social and commercial activities. It was opened by the Deputy Premier, Hon. Llew Edwards, on 12 September 1982.²⁸

The restaurant was leased to a commercial operator and called the Fountain Room Restaurant. It became one of the more exclusive dining destinations in Brisbane in the 1980s, and was promoted as having a 'private dining room and banquet hall both of which have a unique panoramic view of the river fountain and city skyline'.²⁹ The Fountain Room Restaurant ceased to operate in early 1991.³⁰

Despite the closure of the restaurant, the Auditorium was in active use in the early 1990s. For example, it was used on 183 occasions in 1991, including 31 performances, 18 dinners and dinner concerts, 35 conferences and seminars and 42 days of arts exhibitions.³¹ In 1993, the Queensland Theatre Company occupied the former restaurant space and level 1, using it for administration and storage of costumes.³² The company also used the Auditorium room for rehearsals in the mid-1990s.³³

The Queensland Theatre Company moved out of the Auditorium in 2004 when new premises were built for its use in Montague Road. Subsequently the Auditorium was used in 2005–6 as temporary accommodation for the Queensland Art Gallery and the State Library of Queensland during the construction of GOMA and renovations to the State Library building.

²⁸ QCCT Annual Report, 1982, p. 5.

²⁹ Fountain Room brochure, QSA Item ID541023.

³⁰ QCCT Annual Report, 1991. Seven other well-known restaurants in Brisbane closed during 1991.

³¹ QCCT Annual Report, 1991, p. 7.

³² QCCT Minutes, December 1992.

³³ QCCT Annual Report, 1996.



70 The Auditorium, shortly after completion in 1982. The spillage planting is already well established and softening the building edges (Richard Stringer)



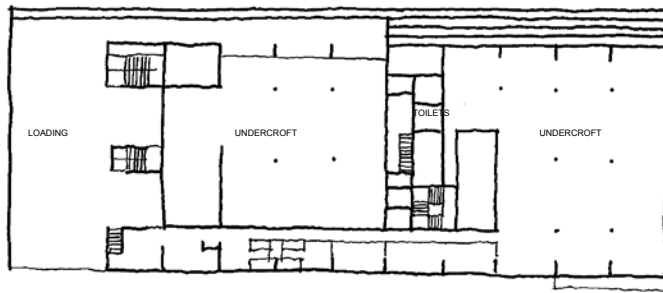
71 Main space in Auditorium c. 1985 (Richard Stringer)



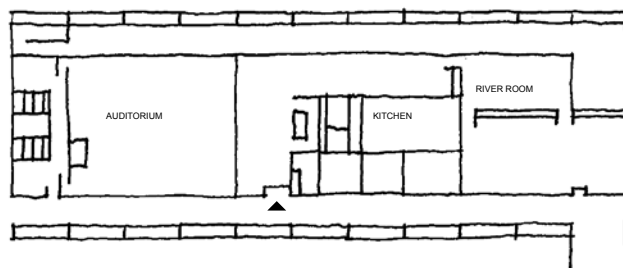
72 Fountain Room, Auditorium, c. 1985 (Richard Stringer)

In 2009, alterations were undertaken to the Auditorium and it was renamed The Edge. The architects for this project were M3 Architecture. The Edge was an initiative of the State Library of Queensland. It functions as a digital cultural centre, providing facilities and events for Queenslanders to explore creativity across art, science and technology.³⁴

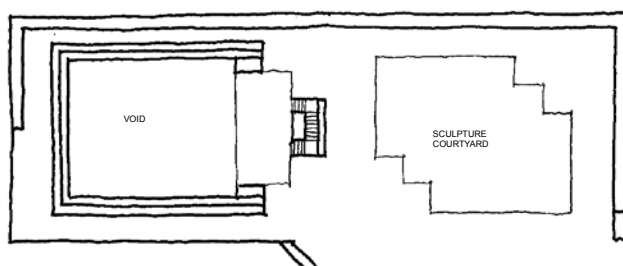
³⁴ The Edge was awarded the American Library Association Presidential Citation for Innovative Library Projects in 2014.



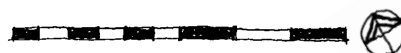
THE EDGE - LEVEL 0
ORIGINAL PLAN



THE EDGE - LEVEL 1
ORIGINAL PLAN



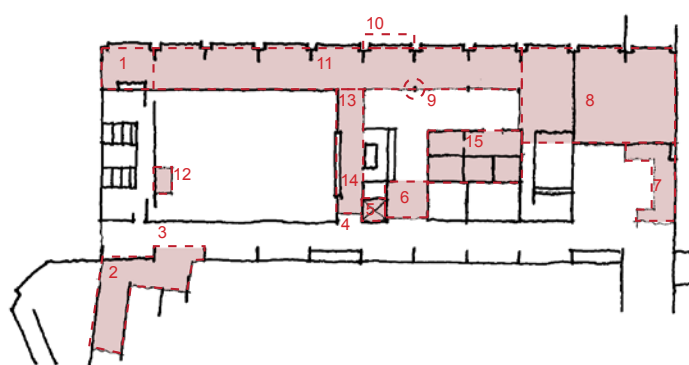
THE EDGE - LEVEL 2
ORIGINAL PLAN





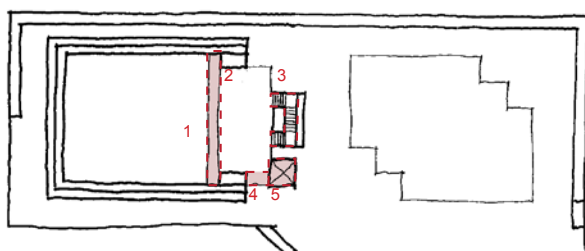
THE EDGE - LEVEL 0
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Vehicle access to original loading dock altered, 2008
- 2 Original undercroft space with dirt floor refurbished to usable floor area, 2008
- 3 Lift introduced
- 4 Stair in-filled
- 5 Loading dock added
- 6 Original undercroft space with dirt floor refurbished to usable floor area, 2008
- 7 Altered to unisex bathroom in lobby, 2008
- 8 Accessible external terrace introduced, 2008



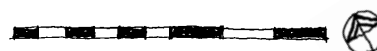
THE EDGE - LEVEL 1
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Exit stair demolished
- 2 Lift and stair access introduced for pedestrian movement to SLQ
- 3 Planter box demolished for lift and stair access
- 4 Recessed entry altered
- 5 Passenger lift introduced
- 6 Original stair in-filled, 2008
- 7 Restaurant bar demolished
- 8 Lower terrace level raised to match adjoining finished floor level
- 9 Evidence of original external wall visible
- 10 Window seats introduced along river elevation, window planter boxes demolished
- 11 Balcony enclosed, 2008
- 12 Original access for auditorium furniture movement from level 1 loading dock
- 13 Space originally part of Auditorium, now circulation
- 14 Box gutters introduced to ceiling coffer
- 15 Restaurant kitchen substantially altered to accommodate new offices and cafe



THE EDGE - LEVEL 2
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Introduced mechanical duct-work
- 2 Introduced glazed wall above balustrade
- 3 Balustrade upgrade in stairwell
- 4 External glazed wall re-aligned to life wall
- 5 Lift introduced, 2008



74 The Edge—altered plans

6 Performing Arts Centre

Until the 1860s, concerts, theatrical performances, ballet and opera in Brisbane were staged principally in the School of Arts building erected in 1851, and then the Town Hall (1863).¹ The first purpose-built venue was the Victoria Theatre on Elizabeth Street, opened in 1865.² The theatre was very successful and was entirely rebuilt in 1881 to increase the seating capacity to 1350 and renamed the Theatre Royal.³ In the same year the old School of Arts was remodelled as the Gaiety Hall. The most significant advancement came with the construction in 1888 of Her Imperial Majesty's Opera House (later known as Her Majesty's Theatre).⁴ Designed by Andrea Stombuco, the theatre was lit with electricity and seated 2700 people.⁵ It was described as the first in Brisbane 'to present an attractive facade as well as interior'.⁶ Her Majesty's Theatre became the principal venue for major performances in Brisbane for opera, musicals and ballet for almost a century. Other buildings erected or adapted for performance spaces in the late 19th century and early 20th century included Albert Hall (1881, 1901), Centennial Hall (1888), Princess Theatre (1888), Cremorne Theatre (1911), Empire Theatre (1911), Bohemia Theatre (1912) and Tivoli Theatre (1914).

Brisbane gained a substantial musical venue in 1891 when the Exhibition Building was erected on Gregory Terrace for the Queensland National Agricultural & Industrial Association. This substantial and imposing building was built primarily to hold exhibitions, but was also 'suitable for holding concerts, public meetings'.⁷ The concert hall accommodated 2800 people and had a gallery on three sides. It included a pipe organ built by Willis and Son of London. The building was taken over by the Queensland Government in 1897 and the concert hall continued to be used for its original purpose. For more than 30 years, it was one of the main concert venues in Brisbane and a setting for major civic functions.



75 Her Majesty's Theatre, c. 1898 (SLQ 17958)



76 Concert in Exhibition Concert Hall, 1901 (SLQ 165980)

1 Brisbane Theatre History, viewed 23 April 2016, <http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/staffhome/siryan/Academy/theatres/Bris_Hist_Intro.htm>.

2 Ibid. The theatre was variously known as Mason's Concert Hall, Mason's Theatre or the Victoria Theatre in 1865, the Royal Victoria Theatre in 1867, and the Queensland Theatre on 21 April 1874.

3 Philip Parsons and Victoria Chance, *Companion to theatre in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1995, p.583. The Theatre Royal was located in Elizabeth Street, continued in use until the 1980s when it was demolished for the Myer Centre. It was used for a period in the 1960s by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and the Queensland Theatre Company.

4 Brisbane Theatre History, viewed 23 April 2016.

5 *Brisbane Courier*, 3 April 1888.

6 Eric Irvin, *Dictionary of the Australian theatre, 1788–1914*, Hale & Iremonger, 1985, p. 55.

7 Peter Marquis-Kyle, *Old Museum Building conservation management plan*, Department of Works, Brisbane, 2000, p.177.

The construction of a new City Hall, completed in 1930, provided a new and more centrally located civic auditorium. The organ was relocated from the Exhibition Concert Hall, and the City Hall became the main concert venue in Brisbane.⁸

By the early 1970s, the standard of major facilities for the performing arts in Brisbane was lagging behind contemporary venues elsewhere.⁹ New theatres and concert halls in Europe and Australia built in the postwar era were raising the standards with new approaches to acoustics, sightlines, seating plans and theatre design. These new standards became more stringent with the advent of television and higher expectations of patrons. The National Theatre in London, designed in the late 1960s, became the flagship of British theatre. New benchmarks for opera theatres and concert halls were evident in buildings such as the Royal Festival Hall in London (1951), the Deutsche Oper in Berlin (1961) and the Berlin Philharmonie (1963). These trends were reflected in Australia with the construction of the Sydney Opera House, the Adelaide Festival Centre and the Perth Concert Hall, all completed in 1973.¹⁰ The need for a new major performing arts centre in Queensland became more urgent in 1973 with the sale of Her Majesty's Theatre. The new owners the AMP Society, intended to demolish the building and redevelop the site.¹¹

The imminent demise of Her Majesty's Theatre became a key consideration in the decision by the Queensland Government in November 1974 to announce the development of a Cultural Complex incorporating a Centre for the Performing Arts at South Brisbane. The Cabinet submission noted that, with 'Her Majesty's Theatre closing, Brisbane will be really deficient in this area' and that 'other capital cities are well served in this regard with Sydney, Adelaide and Perth having recently completed large centres'¹².

Planning the performing arts centre

Unlike the art gallery, museum and library, no established board or authority existed to provide immediate advice for a planning brief for the performing arts component of the Cultural Centre. The government moved quickly to establish a Performing Arts Authority comprising representatives from the Australian Opera, Australian Ballet, Queensland Theatre Company, Queensland Opera Company, Queensland Ballet Company, Queensland Light Opera Company, Conservatorium of Music and Queensland Symphony Orchestra.¹³

One of the first tasks of the Performing Arts Authority was to establish a Users Committee to assess the needs of the performing arts in Brisbane and recommend the extent and the scope of new facilities in the proposed performing arts complex—a challenging task.¹⁴ The committee wasted little time compiling its report. Three options were proposed, with Option A the preferred choice. This option was for a performing arts complex comprising:

- Opera and Ballet Theatre, seating 1800
- Major Concert Hall, seating 2000
- Drama complex including: a major drama theatre seating 600, and experimental theatre seating 300

8 Ibid., p. 20.

9 Brisbane did have a range of facilities for the performing arts including Mayne Hall (1973), SGIO Theatre, (1969), Schonell Theatre (1970), La Boite Theatre (1972), but none were large venues.

10 Kirkwood, *Memoirs*.

11 *The Courier Mail*, 28 June 1973. Her Majesty's Theatre was finally demolished in 1983 and the Hilton Hotel and Wintergarden Shopping Centre built on the site.

12 Cabinet Minute, decision 21481, 28 November 1974, QSA Item ID541022.

13 Cabinet Minute, decision 21716, 14 January 1975, QSA Item ID569765.

14 The committee comprised Professor Zelman Cowan, representing national companies; Alan Edwards, representing the Queensland Theatre Company; David Macfarlane, representing the Queensland Light Opera Company; and Roman Paylyshyn from the Department of Works. (Performing Arts Complex: Report by the Users' Committee, April 1975).

- Facilities for resident professional state companies.¹⁵

The foresight and advice of the committee was heeded and the first three components were all eventually part of the performing arts complex. However, the committee's recommendations were contrary to what Cabinet had approved in November 1974 on a key issue. Cabinet had approved a centre for the Performing Arts with a drama theatre and a combined opera and concert hall seating 2000 for a cost of \$4 million.¹⁶

Roman Pavlyshyn, the representative from the Department of Works, realised from the outset a combined opera and concert hall would be a poor choice. In his memoirs, he wrote:

I regarded this decision as dubious at best. Quite by coincidence, a well-known specialist in problems of acoustics was then visiting Melbourne, and a seminar on this topic was announced in the professional press. I went to Melbourne for the seminar and after the presentation had a long conversation with the speaker. He was of the opinion that the issue was especially complex, and that in dual-purpose halls measures to adjust the acoustics in line with the requirements of different kinds of performance had in the past proved to be simply ineffective.¹⁷

Pavlyshyn pursued this issue throughout the initial planning of the performing arts complex. He later remarked that the decision to have two halls was 'more than justified: it was simply fundamental for the success of the complex'.¹⁸ The subsequent history of the use of the building would prove this assessment was absolutely correct.

Defining what key spaces were required for the performing arts complex was critical to inform the master plan for the Queensland Cultural Centre which was finalised in October 1976. Following acceptance of the master plan, a planning brief for the performing arts complex was completed in 1978 under the direction of Roman Pavlyshyn, now the Director of Buildings, Department of Works.¹⁹ Two specialist consultants were engaged to assist with this task: Tom Brown, ballet dancer, actor and founding member of NIDA, who provided theatre advice; and acoustic consultant Peter Knowland. Brown was a highly experienced theatre designer with experience in the United Kingdom, who had advised on the recently completed Adelaide Festival Centre. Knowland, an acoustic engineer, gained invaluable experience as part of the team of acoustic specialists working on the Sydney Opera House, which included Vilhelm Jordan from Denmark, regarded internationally as one of the pioneers in acoustic design.²⁰ Robin Gibson and Partners obviously played a major role in the formulation of the brief.

The planning brief outlined the design approach to the key facilities as:

Lyric Theatre

The Lyric Theatre will be designed as a musical theatre for the presentation of opera, musical comedy and dance. Its staging facilities, orchestra pit size and backstage accommodation will enable the theatre to accept and efficiently present major musical theatre productions of either Australian or International origin. The stage dimensions, the installed technical production equipment and

¹⁵ Performing Arts Complex: Report by the Users' Committee, April 1975, p. 14.

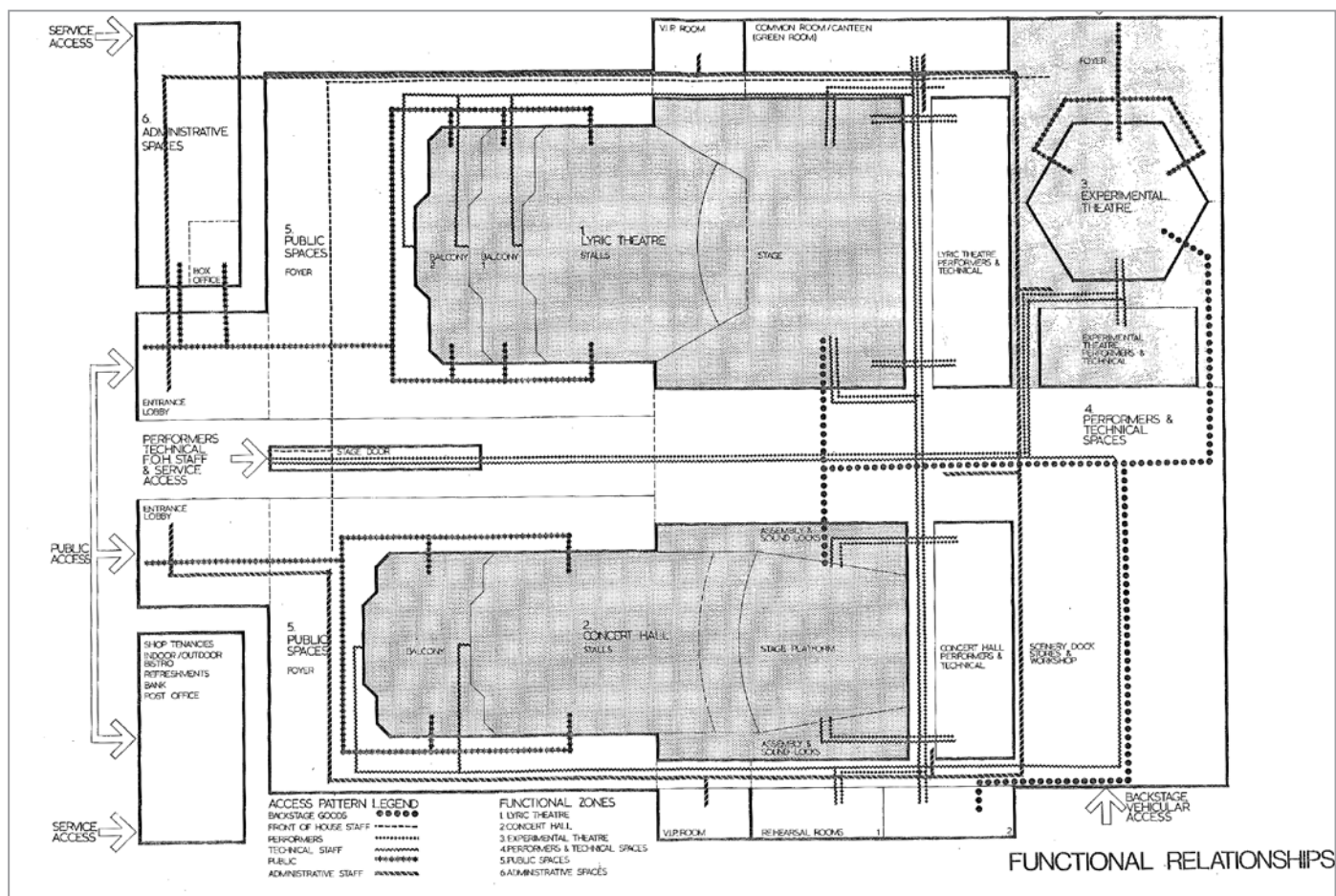
¹⁶ Cabinet Minute Decision no 21481, 18 November 1974, QSA Item ID541022.

¹⁷ Roman Pavlyshyn, *Memoirs*, p. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Building Authority Department of Works, *Queensland Cultural Centre, Performing Arts Complex, Planning Brief*, January 1978.

²⁰ Fergus Fricke, 'Architectural Acoustics in Australia', *Acoustics Australia*, vol. 28, p. 91; Peter Murray, *The saga of the Sydney Opera House: The dramatic story of the design and construction of the icon of modern Australia*, Spon Press, London, 2004, p. 21. Of course, the design of the Opera House presented major acoustic challenges which were never fully resolved, so Knowland was probably well aware of what not to do.



77 Functional relationships diagram
(QCC Performing Arts Complex
Planning Brief, January 1978, p. 9)

accommodation spaces will take into account other comparably sized theatres in Australia to allow for an efficient and economical transfer of productions between the States.

Concert Hall

The Concert Hall will be designed primarily as a hall for the performance of symphonic music. Its architectural style, its acoustics and its facilities for performers and the public will be planned to provide a hall of world standard for the performance of symphonic music. Emphasis will be placed on achieving quality of tone rather than clarity of sound. The sound that should be achieved is the classic romantic sound of the top European Concert Halls.

This is the prime purpose of the hall but it must be flexible enough to cater for a wide variety of different types of musical programmes. In the concert field, the hall will be used for performances by symphony orchestras, chamber music ensembles, solo instrumentalists, through the whole range of instruments including the organ, solo and group vocalists, folk singers, light entertainers both instrumental and vocal, pop groups with and without vocalists, 'big' bands, brass and military bands, electronic music amplification and new music in a variety of forms.

Rehearsal rooms

Three spaces—one of which is to be ...an Experimental theatre with seating capacities up to 200.²¹

²¹ Building Authority Department of Works, Queensland Cultural Centre, Performing Arts Complex, Planning Brief, January 1978.

The planning brief also stipulated necessary support facilities including offices for administrative staff, a comprehensive suite of dressing rooms, production spaces for artists and technical staff, and a restaurant with seating for 120.

The planning brief addressed in detail acoustic requirements, building services, parking, public spaces including foyers, and shops to be included in the complex. The specific requirements in the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall for seating, sightlines, stages and support facilities, audio equipment, lighting and performers' spaces were considered in detail.

With the completion of the planning brief, detailed design commenced. The project architect within Robin Gibson's office for the Performing Arts Centre was Allan Kirkwood. He brought to the project an extensive knowledge of the latest developments in theatre design. Before joining Robin Gibson's office in 1968, Kirkwood studied architecture at the Central Technical College and The University of Queensland. He travelled overseas and spent four years working in significant London architectural practices on projects that included various theatre types. During that time he fostered an interest in the performing arts, particularly classical music and live theatre, and, by his work experience and practical knowledge, understood the manner by which these could be translated into the design of large theatrical venues. Exposure to large-scale projects gave him the opportunity to develop methods whereby major buildings could be successfully designed, documented and constructed in an ever-changing contractual environment.²² This expertise, along with the close collaboration with the Department of Works and the Queensland Performing Arts Trust, resulted in what would be a highly successful design outcome.

Construction and design

Tenders for the construction of the performing arts complex were called in July 1979. Seven tenders were received from local contractors. The contract was awarded to Barclay Bros Pty Ltd, which had tendered a sum of \$24.5 million. At the time, it was the largest building contract let by the Queensland Government. The project was programmed to be completed by 1982 when the Commonwealth Games were to be held in Brisbane.²³

Construction did not proceed as anticipated. The QPAC was constructed under a complex building contract involving numerous nominated subcontracts, and separate contracts for fit-out, in order to fast-track its completion. The project had two completion dates—one for the building enclosure, and another for works associated with theatrical fit-out, office and tenancy fit-out, fixtures and furniture. Initial budgets were stated in currency values applicable at time of establishment. Once approved, budgets were updated regularly, based on consumer price and building price indices.

By November 1982, the estimated completion date was late 1984 and the cost had risen to \$35 million.²⁴ Further delays occurred and the building was finally handed over on 10 November 1984 with the final cost of \$66 million—a substantial increase on the estimated \$12 million in November 1974 when the government first approved the project.²⁵

The five-fold escalation in costs, however, did not seem to matter when the building was first opened to the media, politicians and the public. The media could not contain their enthusiasm. The *Daily Sun* described it as a 'Jewel to Crown a City' and that it was a 'performing arts centre to rival the world's best', while *The Sunday Mail* called it 'our Newest Star'.²⁶ The *Sunshine Coast Daily* reported that 'to say that Queensland is blessed

22 Kirkwood, *Memoirs*.

23 Hon. C Wharton, media release, 20 September 1979, QSA Item ID602525.

24 *The Courier Mail*, 9 November 1982.

25 *The Courier Mail*, 10 November 1984.

26 *Daily Sun*, 10 November 1984; *The Sunday Mail*, 14 October 1984.



78 Queensland Performing Arts Centre, c. 1986 (Richard Stringer)



79 Central foyer, QPAC, c. 1986 (Richard Stringer)



80 Pacific Nexus mural by Lawrence Daws, central foyer, c. 1986 (Richard Stringer)

now with a world-class performing arts facility is no exaggeration'.²⁷ Radio host Haydn Sargent declared that 'it really is just the most wonderful and most exciting thing for Brisbane'.²⁸

The *Daily Sun* highlighted some of the key elements of the Complex.

Simplicity is its most striking feature. Sweeping staircases and interlinking foyer areas, as clear to the eye in form and layout as they are pleasing in colour and texture, will make theatre-going thoroughly relaxing. An absence of gimmicks—no revolving stages or pretentious seating arrangements here—will unquestionably please performers and audience accustomed to tried-and-true traditional theatre layouts.

The clear access and sign-posting system of the central foyer area which serves the three theatres is excellent. Accessible and cleanly arranged backstage facilities are a touring group's dream.

Through a side entrance, two semi-trailers at a time can be driven in and unloaded on the same level as the stage, dressing room and storage areas. No steps, no winches, no goods elevators. Just roll up the trucks and roll out the equipment.

But while there are no frills in this complex, the effect is far from spartan. Nowhere is this more evident than inside the areas that really count—the three superb theatres.²⁹

The Lyric Theatre was designed for opera, musicals, ballet and dance, and large-scale dramatic performances. Two thousand patrons could be accommodated in the stalls and two balconies. The seating configuration was according to then newly defined standards, with a full-width group audience with only side aisles for access. The stage was fully equipped and comparable with other equivalent performances venues in Australia, with both a rear stage for large operatic performances and a generous side stage. The size of the orchestra pit could be varied to accommodate two orchestra sizes and could be raised to form a thrust stage. The ceiling was of two sections: the lower section was of aluminium slats—screening the banks of theatrical lighting—which changed colour from brass to bronze as it neared the stage; the upper ceiling was plasterboard, and in between were louvres which served as a variable acoustic device. The predominant colour was the rose-pink of the woollen upholstery, complemented by the Queensland walnut timber-panelled walls, colour-graduated from the back to the front, deepening in colour to encourage visual focus on the proscenium arch. The Lyric Theatre featured a fully equipped stage-house with an overhead grid, a single-purchase manual counterweight system, motorised house-curtain, fire-curtain and some point-winches, a full side-stage and rear-stage, and a stage-undercroft, all to latest theatrical and safety standards.³⁰

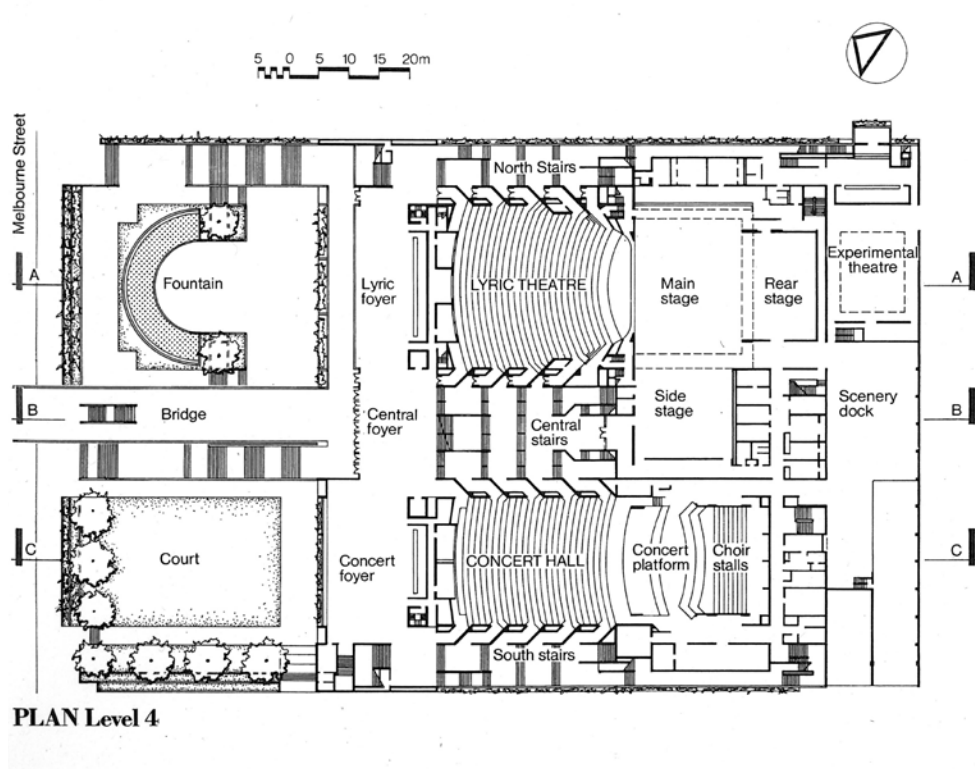
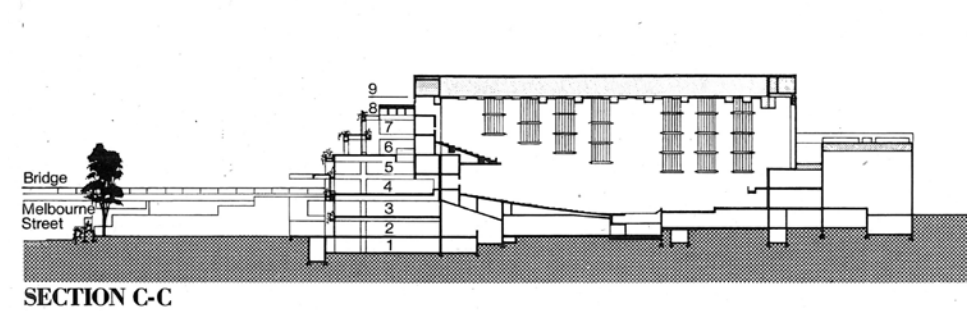
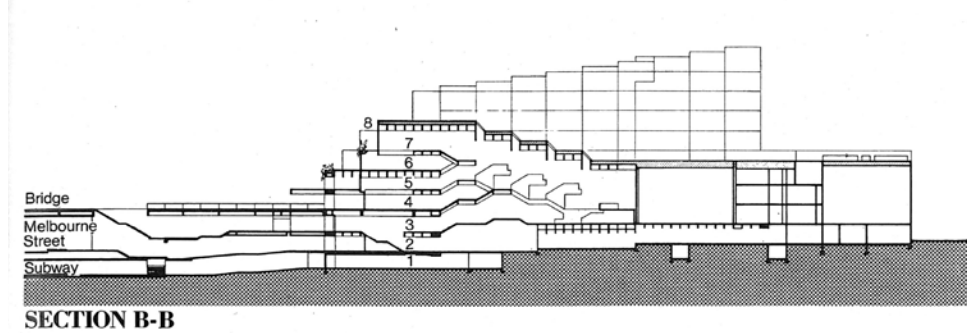
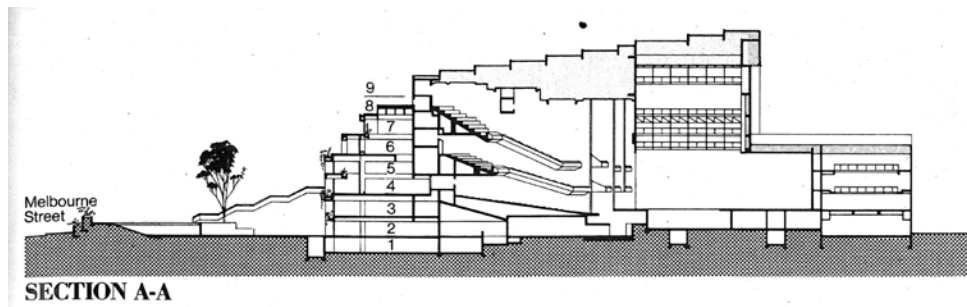
The Concert Hall was designed as the venue for orchestral concerts, choral performances, chamber music, recitals and ceremonial events. The space accommodated 1800 patrons in the stalls, balcony and side boxes, and choir stalls at the side and rear of the stage. As with the Lyric Theatre, the seating arrangement was the 'continental' form with only side aisles. The traditional long 'shoe-box' form was adopted for the quality of natural acoustics known to have worked in numerous concert halls throughout the world. The front section of the stalls was a versatile space which could either be lowered for an orchestra pit or raised as a thrust stage. The Concert Hall was designed for a long reverberation time, ideal for a full symphony orchestra. However, the hall could be varied acoustically for other modes of performance by rolling down acoustic blankets discreetly located

27 *Sunshine Coast Daily*, 15 November 1984.

28 Haydn Sargent, Talkback program, 9 November 1984, QSA ID602528.

29 Meredith Chaplin, *Daily Sun*, 10 November 1984.

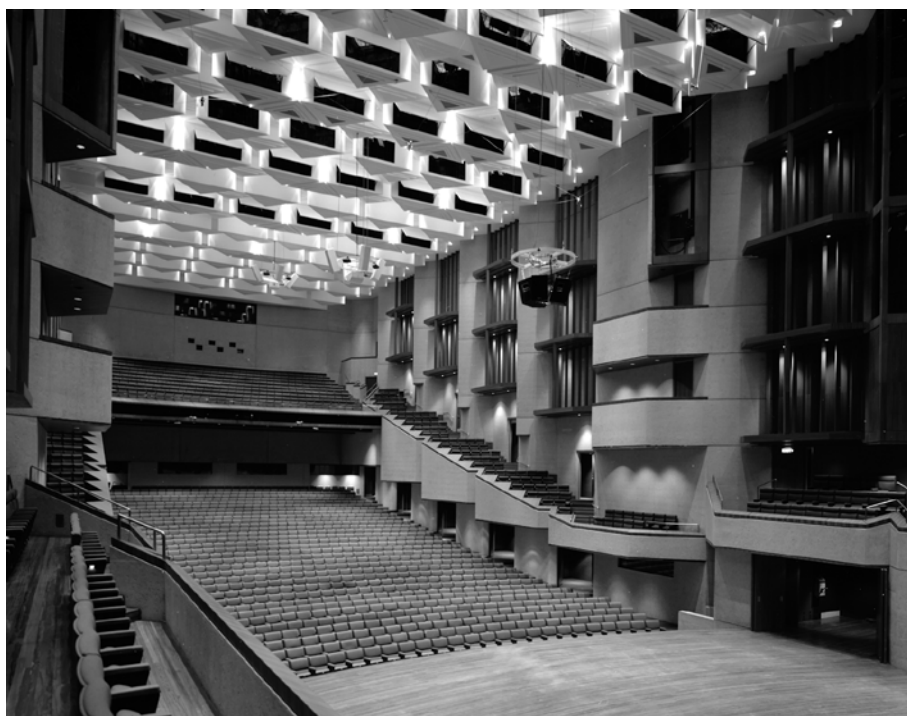
30 Kirkwood, *Memoirs*; QPAT *Annual Report*, 1985, p. 6.



81 Plans and sections, QPAC (Constructional Review, August 1985)



82 Interior of Concert Hall, view to stage and organ, c. 1987
(Richard Stringer)



83 Interior of Concert Hall, view to stalls and balcony, c. 1987
(Richard Stringer)

84 Concert Hall organ, built by Johannes Klais, Bonn, and installed in 1987 (Richard Stringer)



behind side-wall screens of the hall. The mulberry-coloured seating was complemented by light-toned Queensland walnut timber-panelled walls.

The interior finishes were designed to assist the acoustics and were principally hard surfaces. The floor was Johnstone River hardwood. The walls were sandblasted off-white concrete as deployed throughout the Cultural Centre. The ceiling, a prominent architectural element, was of glass-reinforced plaster, crystalline shapes with apertures for lighting and other equipment.

A centre-piece of the Concert Hall was a grand concert organ built by Johannes Klais, of Bonn, Germany. The firm of Johannes Klais was founded in 1882 and enjoyed an enviable reputation as one of the world's leading and most progressive organ builders.³¹ The firm was chosen after intensive research by widely respected local organist Robert Boughen. Boughen was the organist at St John's Cathedral and lecturer in organ at The University of Queensland. Boughen had firm views about selecting the appropriate organ builder. He wrote:

Unlike a piece of plain machinery, an organ is the product of the blending of centuries of craft and art. A great master organ builder needs much experience in constructional, mechanical, aerodynamic and electronic engineering. Added to this is skill in metallurgy, and finally the art of not only blending these skills to a musical result, but the additional speciality of selecting pipe scales and eventually the voicing of the pipes themselves.

One way not to choose a builder is for the consultant to compose a rigid specification, hawk it around the world, and for the building authority to choose the lowest tender.³²

A contract was signed with Klais by the Minister for Works and Housing on 6 April 1974 for a sum of 2 612 860 deutschmark (equivalent of just over \$1 million).³³ The organ was of a mechanical action design comprising four manuals, with 88 speaking stops. Robin Gibson was responsible for the design of the exterior pipe arrangement. Installation of the organ was completed in 1987.

31 Cabinet decision 38752, 18 October 1982, QSA Item ID569768.

32 *Performing Arts Complex: The Concert Hall Organ*, undated, p. 2.

33 QCCT Minutes, 13 April 1984.



85 Interior of Lyric Theatre, c. 1986
(Richard Stringer)



86 Interior of Lyric Theatre, balcony
seating, c. 1986 (Richard Stringer)

The Cremorne Theatre, by comparison with the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall, was a more modest and flexible space. It was originally known as the Studio Theatre, with seating for 300 and designed for dramatic performances in any one of six seating modes from the conventional to in-the-round. The theatre had a flat floor with flexibility built in with moveable tiered seating and modular stage elements. The theatre was designed without universal access. The lighting and audio equipment were openly part of the 'studio' character of the space. The interior finishes reflected the functional approach with a timber floor, plasterboard walls and ceilings, wool-fabric upholstered seating and dark acoustic curtains on the walls.³⁴ The theatre had a separate entrance from what was then Stanley Street (now part of the Cultural Forecourt).

Public access to the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall was from a series of interconnected main foyers grand staircases, lifts and side foyers. The external walls of most foyers had full-length glass providing views to the plazas or the Brisbane River and city. Some foyers opened out to balconies, providing patrons with the opportunity to experience the outdoors before performances and during interval. Large bars lined with Rosso Rubino marble were located in the main foyers on level 2.

Predominant colours in the main foyers were the rich deep mulberry of carpet, contrasted with the clean off-white of the concrete walls. The central foyer between the two theatres had recessed roof glazing, providing generous natural lighting during the day. The main feature of this space was a commanding mural by artist and architect Lawrence Daws, *Pacific Nexus*. This work, as explained by Daws, embraces mankind's struggle with good and evil, which is the essence of many classic and contemporary performing arts productions. Daws chose to reference this theme to Brisbane and Queensland's place in the 'Pacific Rim and Basin'.³⁵

A major challenge in the design of the complex was to acoustically isolate the auditoria from each other and the foyer spaces. It was this aspect of the building's design which made construction so difficult and time consuming. This outcome was achieved by the principle of 'cocooning', where floors, walls and ceilings were constructed to be independent of the surrounding and encompassing structure, giving double-layer sound protection of the space. At each point of entry to auditoria, double sets of doors provided a sound-lock.³⁶

Back of house facilities shared by the three theatres included the stage-door, green room with cafeteria, rehearsal and practice rooms, costume maintenance facility, dressing rooms, a loading dock that provided ready access to each theatre, and scenery handling and storage. The building was organised around this efficient loading dock arrangement and the planning remains a key element to the building's continued success.

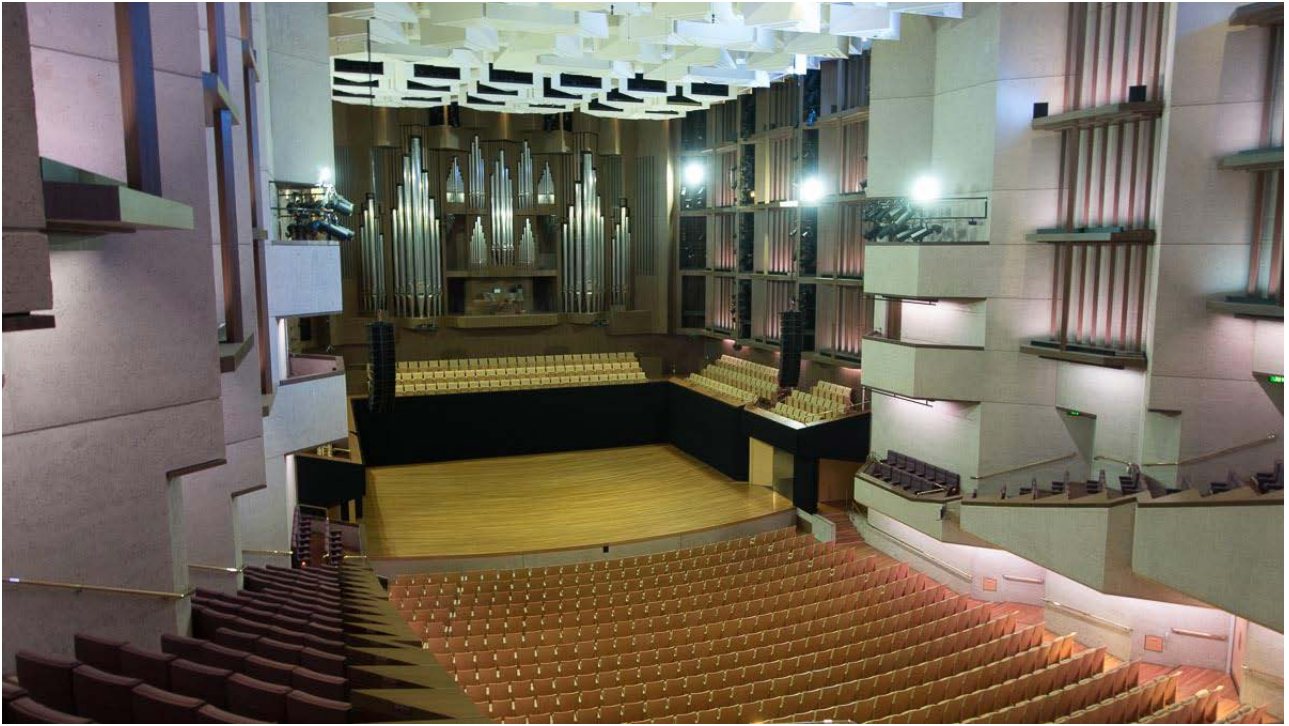
Opening

The Performing Arts complex was officially opened by His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent on 20 April 1985. The opening celebrations extended over 12 hours and included a fly-over by F111 aircraft, naval guns, balloons and pigeons, and a street parade that was a 'kaleidoscope of colour, music and people'. A three-week festival of the performing arts followed the opening day events. The festival included: a Royal Gala Concert with internationally renowned pianist Roger Woodward and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra; the Queensland Ballet Company performing *Scheherazade*, *Orpheus* and *Colourwash*; the Lyric Opera Company of Queensland performing *The Marriage of Figaro*; band concerts and a performance by the Grenadier Guards; performances of *Cheapside* by the Royal Theatre Company of Queensland; a concert by the Tokyo

34 Kirkwood, Memoirs.

35 John Stafford, 'Queensland Cultural Centre—Public Artworks Report', May 2016. .

36 Kirkwood, Memoirs.



87 Concert Hall, QPAC (2016)



88 Lyric Theatre, QPAC (2016)



89 Grey Street elevation, QPAC (2016)



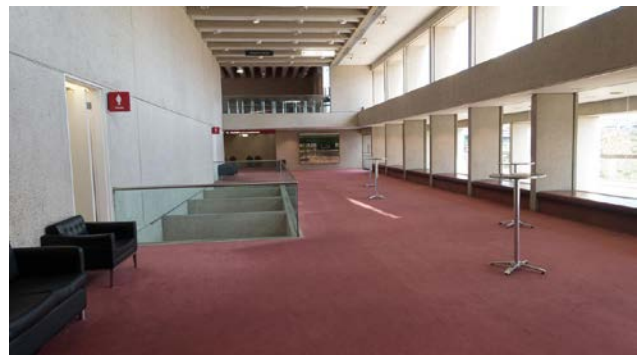
90 Cremorne Theatre (2016)



92 Lyric Theatre, main foyer (2016)



91 Alterations to central foyer with PWD toilet (2016)



93 Concert Hall, level 5 foyer (2016)



94 Opening celebrations for
Performing Arts Centre, 20
April 1985

Philharmonic Orchestra; a concert by singer-songwriter Eric Bogle; as well as other choral performances and orchestral concerts and children's events.³⁷

The festival was highly successful and exceeded the expectations of the Queensland Government and Queensland Performing Arts Trust. The festival demonstrated that the complex did not just 'look good', but worked extremely efficiently for both patrons and performers, and the venues were of an international standard. It proved the decision to build the performing arts complex was a worthwhile investment. By showcasing premier Queensland arts companies, the festival also demonstrated what an asset the complex would be for the development and growth of the performing arts in the state.

Alterations to QPAC

Alterations to the Performing Arts complex were undertaken in 2008–9 by Cox Rayner Architects to provide equitable access. The main catalyst for the QPAC refurbishment works was to provide greater access opportunities for people with disabilities to both the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall.³⁸ Arts Queensland, in collaboration with the Department of Public Works, ensured that all works to provide equitable access in the foyers, bars, counters, cloakroom and the box office were completed during the four-month closure period.

This work included reconfiguring the central stairs from ground level through to level 3 by reversing the stair flow 180 degrees. The reconfigured stairs were required to address egress issues, including the addition of new stairs through to the theatre mezzanine level. A new lift within the internal driveway spaces through the central stairs provided equitable access to the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall, and extended to level 5. A people with disability (PWD) toilet was added to the Minstrel Gallery.

The equity access required the establishment of a new cross-over to be established in both the Lyric Theatre and the Concert Hall. With the creation of the new cross-over, the theatre stalls seating had to be regraded in both auditoria. Work undertaken included new seating configuration, with new seats in the stalls to accommodate the cross-over, upgrading theatre interiors, technical equipment and backstage facilities, lighting, acoustics, back-of-house alterations and additional female and PWD toilets. A new

³⁷ *The Courier Mail*, 22 April 1985; QPAT Annual Report, 1985, pp. 9–12.

³⁸ QPAC and Arts Queensland had been aware that they were potentially liable to litigation under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*. In 1994, Kevin Cocks had successfully complained to the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal that the design of aspects of the Brisbane Convention Centre was discriminatory for persons with disabilities (*Cocks v State of Queensland* [1994] QADT 3, 2 September 1994, <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/qld/QADT/1994/3.html>).

timber floor of Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) was laid in the Concert Hall on both the stage and in the stalls. The carpets were replaced in the Lyric Theatre and in some of the foyer spaces. Construction of new bars was also undertaken.

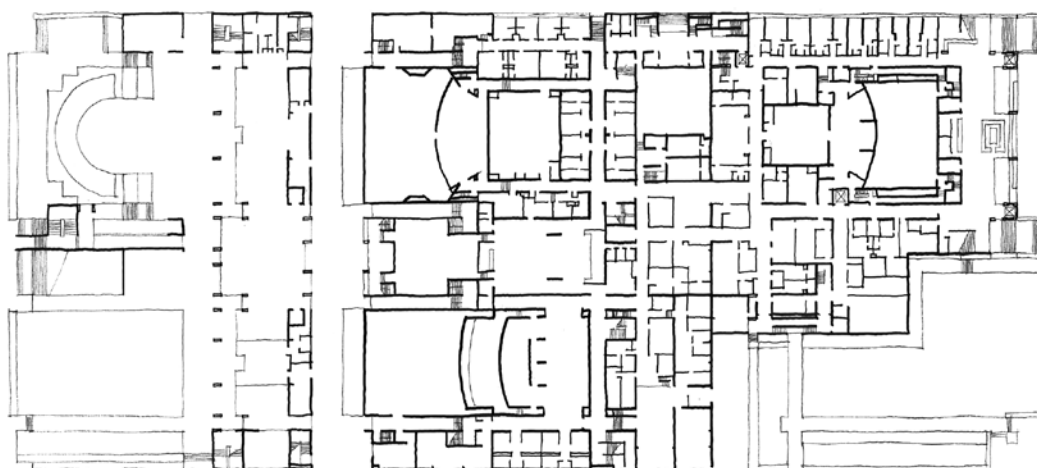
In addition, food and beverage facilities were upgraded in both the QPAC Green and Cascade Court. Alterations to the Russell Street Wine Bar in the Playhouse Theatre were also undertaken.

Performing Arts Centre in use

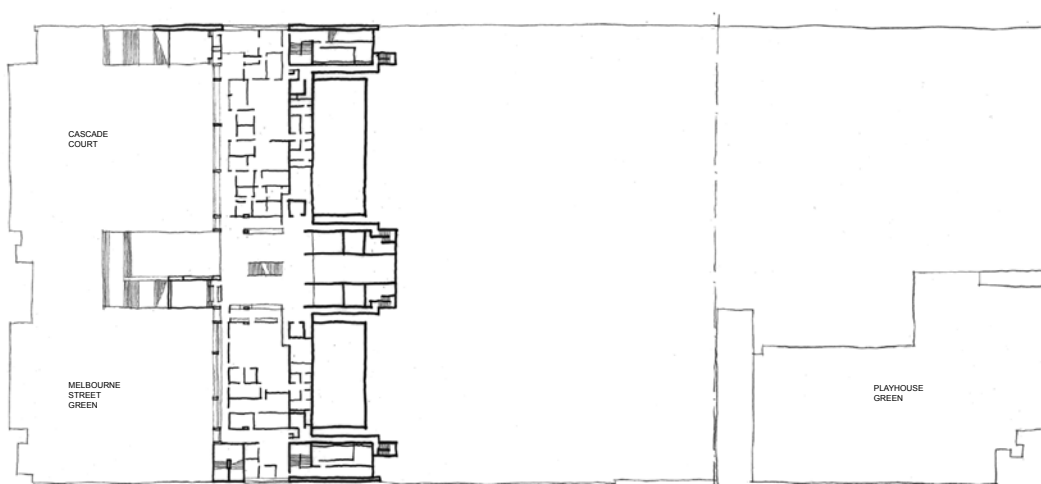
Since opening in 1985, QPAC has welcomed more than 20 million people through its doors, presented more than 26 000 performances and events, worked with the best local, national and international companies and artists, and curated festivals and events that create rich experiences for audiences and make Brisbane an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Some of the leading performers and groups who have performed at QPAC in the past 30 years include: Lauren Bacall, Steven Berkoff, Peter Ustinov, Maggie Smith, Geoffrey Rush, Cyndi Lauper, Bille Brown, Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, Paris Opera Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, National Theatre of Great Britain, KD Lang, Eddie Vedder, Shirley MacLaine, Dylan Moran, Debbie Reynolds, Dame Edna Everage, Ute Lemper, Rudolph Nureyev, Elvis Costello, Batsheva Dance Company, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Brian Wilson, Bill Bailey, Whoopi Goldberg, Renée Fleming, Angela Lansbury, Betty Buckley, American Ballet Theatre and Michael Feinstein. Many of the world's major musicals have been staged at QPAC, including *Cats*, *A Chorus Line*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Chicago*, *Mamma Mia!*, *The Boy From Oz*, *Dirty Dancing*, *We Will Rock You* and *Les Misérables*.

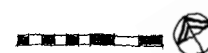
Most importantly, 57 per cent of QPAC's programming is local. As well as being the performance home to Queensland's state companies—Queensland Theatre Company, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Ballet and Opera Queensland—QPAC features regular seasons by Expressions Dance Company, Southern Cross Soloists, Shake & Stir Theatre Company, Camerata of St John's, Harvest Rain and the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts. QPAC also welcomes visiting performing arts companies from around the country, including the Australian Ballet, Sydney Dance Company, Brandenburg Orchestra, Opera Australia, Bell Shakespeare, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Australian Chamber Orchestra and more.



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ART CENTRE - LEVEL 0
ORIGINAL PLAN



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ART CENTRE - LEVEL 1
ORIGINAL PLAN



95 QPAC, original plan, levels 0 & 1



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ART CENTRE - LEVEL 0
ALTERED PLAN

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 New tea and coffee station introduced | 7 Bistro altered |
| 2 Green Room altered for DDA compliance and kitchen wall altered | 8 Lyrebird Restaurant refurbishment |
| 3 Bar introduced | 9 Band room altered |
| 4 Carpets and stair altered | 10 Ramp introduced |
| 5 Cafe introduced, including roofed outdoor dining | 11 Lift altered |
| 6 Outdoor stage introduced | 12 Wine bar introduced |
| | 13 Offices altered |

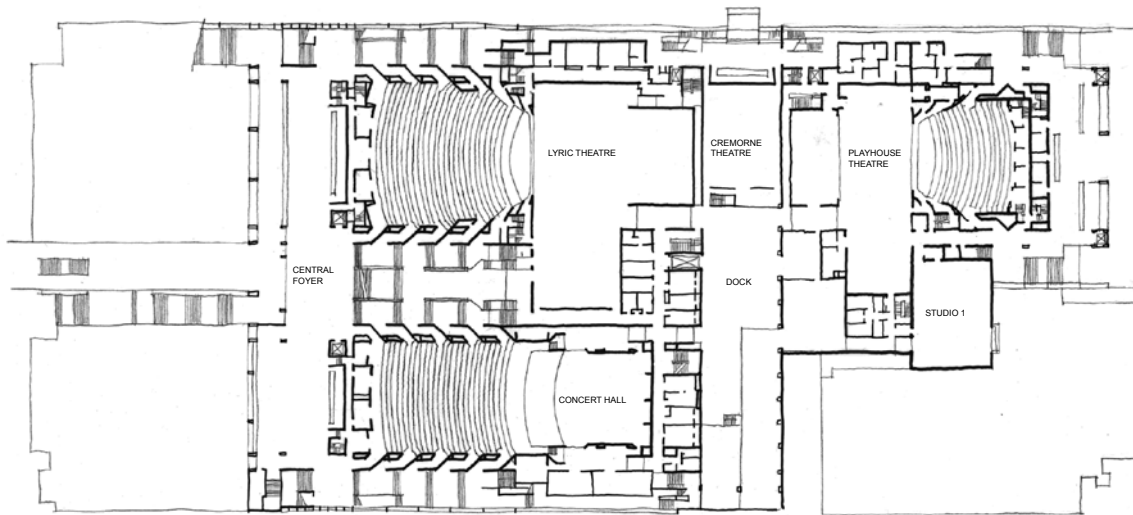


QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ART CENTRE - LEVEL 1
ALTERED PLAN

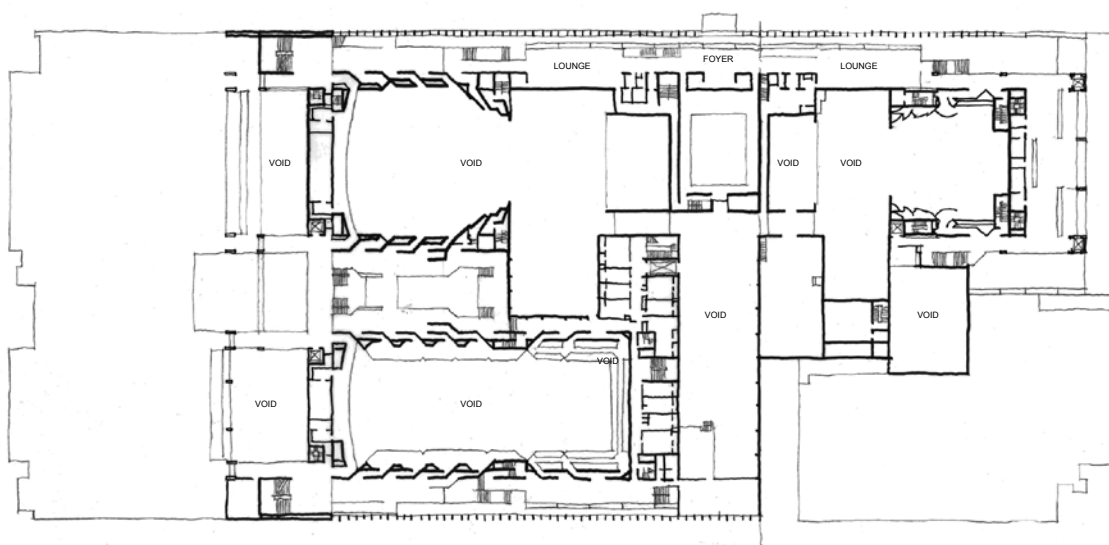
- | |
|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Toilets altered |
| 2 Stairs altered |
| 3 Toilets introduced |
| 4 Lift introduced and stairs altered |
| 5 Toilets introduced |
| 6 Carpets replaced |
| 7 Toilets altered |
| 8 Office altered |



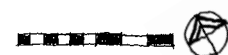
96 QPAC, altered plan, levels 0 & 1



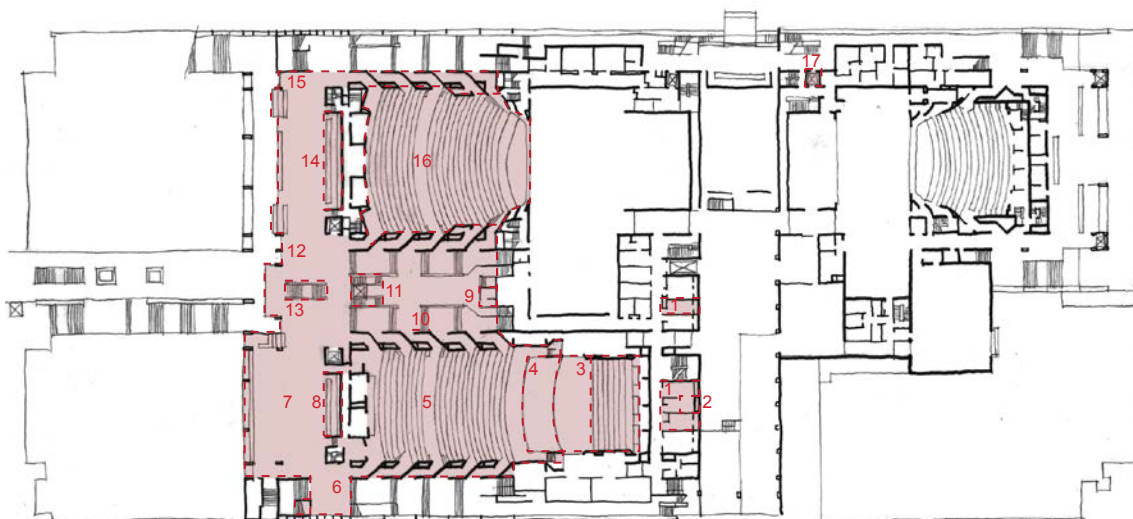
QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ART CENTRE - LEVEL 2
ORIGINAL PLAN



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - LEVEL 3
ORIGINAL PLAN

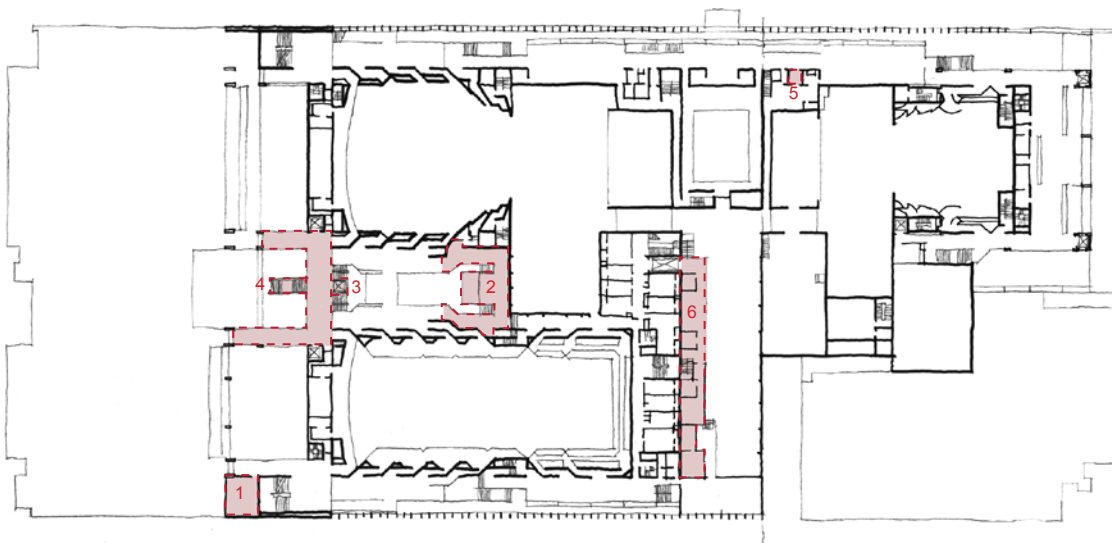


97 QPAC, original plan, levels 2 & 3



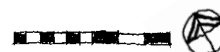
QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ART CENTRE - LEVEL 2
ALTERED PLAN

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Dressing room altered | 8 Concert Hall foyer bar altered |
| 2 PWD toilet introduced | 9 PWD toilet introduced to Minstrel Gallery |
| 3 Choir stall seating altered, retractable seating introduced | 10 New signage introduced |
| 4 Motorised orchestra pit altered | 11 New lift and stair altered |
| 5 Concert Hall seating altered for DDA access, flooring replaced, balcony soffits and lighting altered | 12 Central foyer carpets replaced |
| 6 Stair nosings and tactiles introduced | 13 Stair introduced |
| 7 Concert Hall foyer carpet replaced | 14 Lyric foyer bar altered |
| | 15 Pre-order bars introduced |
| | 16 Lyric Theatre seating altered for DDA access |
| | 17 Lift altered |

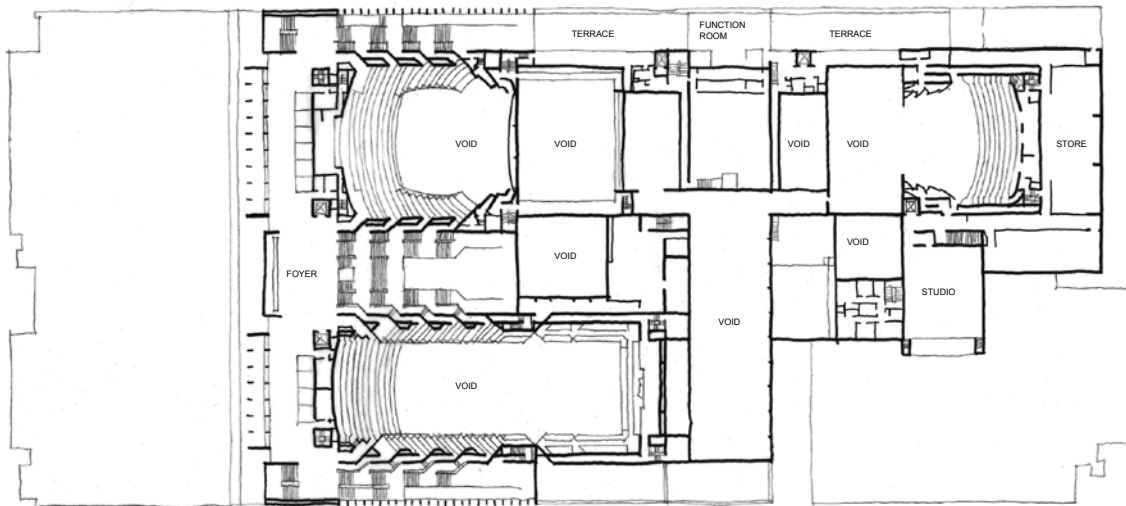


QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - LEVEL 3
ALTERED PLAN

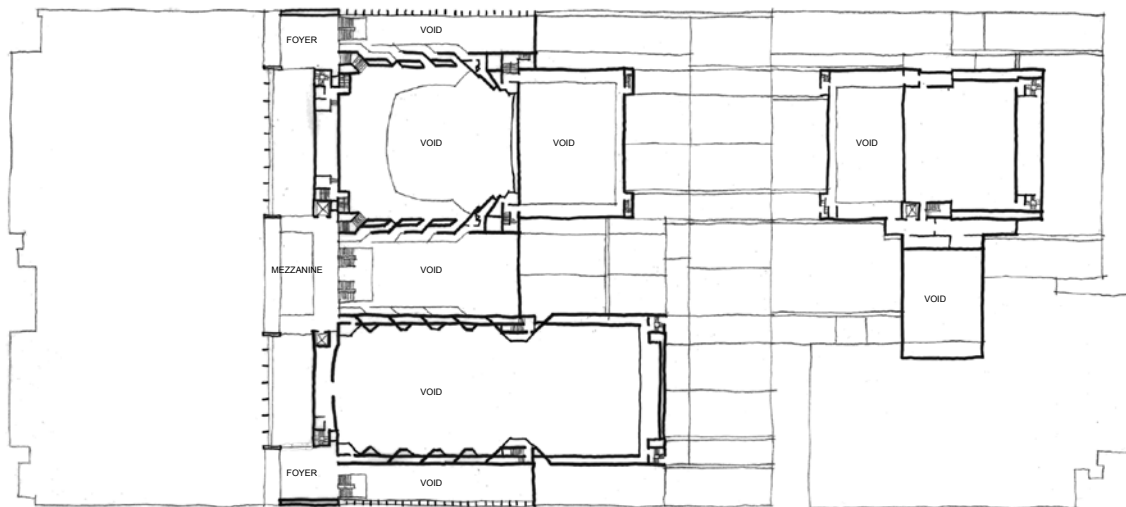
- | |
|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Office altered |
| 2 Gallery altered |
| 3 Lift introduced |
| 4 Stair introduced |
| 5 Lift altered |
| 6 Loading dock offices introduced |



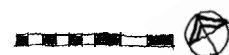
98 QPAC, altered plans, levels 2 & 3



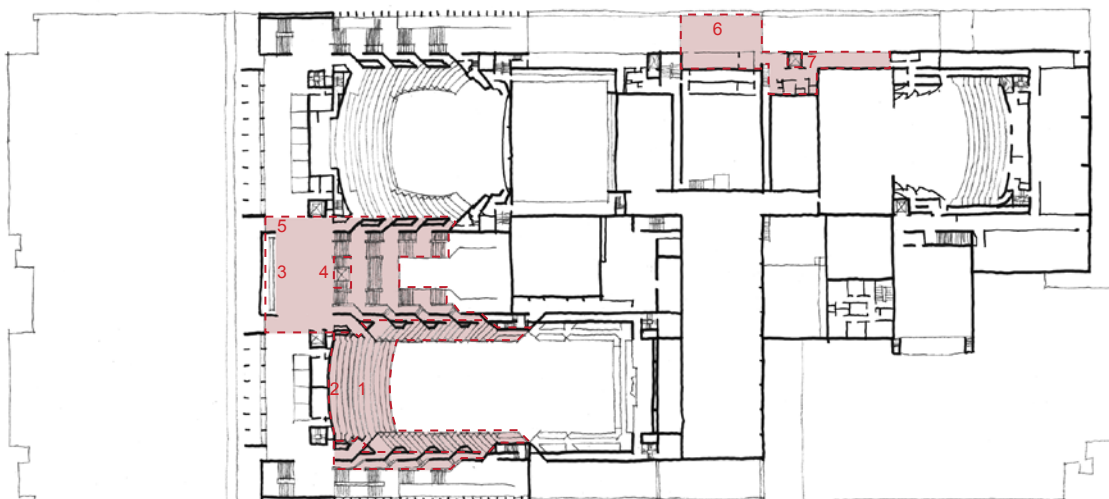
QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - LEVEL 4
ORIGINAL PLAN



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - LEVEL 5
ORIGINAL PLAN

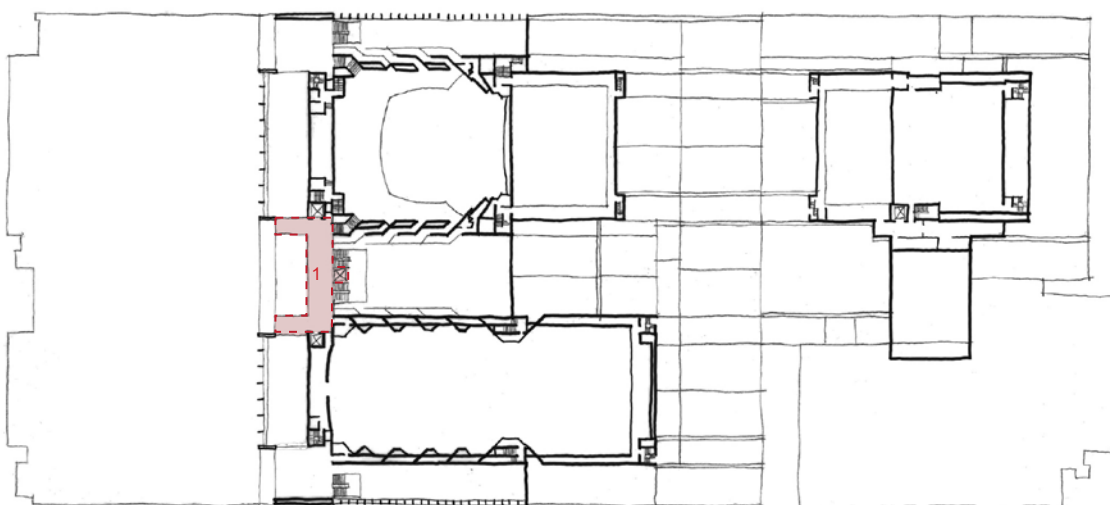


99 QPAC, original plans, levels 4 & 5



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - LEVEL 4
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Balcony seating altered
- 2 Acoustic wall panelling introduced
- 3 Bar altered for DDA compliance
- 4 Lift introduced and stair altered
- 5 Central balcony foyer carpet replaced
- 6 Function Room, Function Terrace, kitchen and lobby altered
- 7 Lift altered



QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - LEVEL 5
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Lift introduced



100 QPAC, altered plans, levels 4 & 5

7 Queensland Museum

The Queensland Museum was founded in 1862 as an activity of the Queensland Philosophical Society. The society was granted use of a room in the old windmill on Wickham Terrace where it stored and arranged 'specimens of natural history'.¹ The society hoped from this modest venture that a permanent museum would be developed where 'not only the natural history, but the resources of the colony would be represented'.² The society received some government assistance to operate the museum, and in 1871, the Queensland Government took full responsibility for funding and management. The collection grew rapidly, necessitating moving in 1868 to a room in Parliament House formerly occupied by the Parliamentary Library, and then again in 1873 to the old Post Office building in Queen Street. Still the collection continued to grow, and in 1877 the government agreed to erect a purpose-built museum in William Street.³

The continued growth in the museum collections was inspired in part by the fascination with the fauna, flora and geology of Queensland. Museum staff and amateur collectors were constantly adding to the collections. As a consequence, the William Street site became overcrowded within five years. Plans for another building were prepared but did not proceed. The demand for more space continued in the 1890s, and in 1899 the Museum was relocated to the Exhibition Building on Gregory Terrace. This grand and imposing structure with polychromatic brickwork, designed by GHM Addison, had been erected in 1891 by Queensland National Agricultural & Industrial Association. The association had borrowed heavily from the Queensland Government to finance the construction of the Exhibition Building, but by 1897 could no longer meet repayments. Acquiring the building provided the government with a solution to the problem of new facilities for the Queensland Museum. Plans were prepared to convert part of the Exhibition Building for use as a museum. The conversion was complete by the end of 1900 and the Queensland Museum opened to the public on 1 January 1901.⁴

Although the Exhibition Building afforded considerably more space for the museum, it nevertheless had deficiencies that became more and more apparent over time. Leaking roofs, white ants and overflowing drains were a constant problem, and the building was a fire hazard.

By the late 1960s, the Board of Trustees became more and more concerned about the threat of fire and water damage to its increasingly valuable collection. These concerns prompted the board to investigate construction of a new museum. In 1973, the architects Fulton, Collin, Boys, Gilmour, Trotter & Partners were commissioned by the board to



101 First Queensland Museum building, William Street, c. 1879 (QSA Item ID328109)



102 Queensland Museum located in Exhibition Building, c. 1910 (SLQ)



103 Bert Hinkler's biplane, Queensland Museum (SLQ 194151)

¹ *The Brisbane Courier*, 21 January 1862.

² *Ibid.*

³ Patrica Mather, *A time for a Museum*, 1986.

⁴ *The Brisbane Courier*, 25 December 1900.

undertake a feasibility study on the redevelopment of the Queensland Museum.⁵ The brief required an investigation of the most appropriate site, a study of accommodation and facilities, appropriate schematic plans and cost estimates.⁶ The study investigated a range of sites and recommended a site within Albert Park.⁷ Following extensive consultation with museum staff, the board, and associated consultants, the consultants recommended a building of 216 000 square feet (19 565 square metres) floor area was needed for current and future growth. The cost was estimated at \$8 833 000.⁸

As discussed in chapter 2, this study was undertaken at the same time as plans were progressing for the design of a new Art Gallery. In early 1974, the government initiated an investigation of a site for a performing arts complex, and in November 1974 Cabinet approved the development of a Cultural Centre at South Brisbane incorporating an Art Gallery, State Library, Museum and a Centre for the Performing Arts.⁹ While this decision would ensure the Museum would some time in the future have a new building, the eventual size would be much less than the board had argued. The briefing paper prepared noted that the Museum of Trustees argued for 230 000 square feet (21 300 square metres) but that 120 000 square feet (11 100 square metres) was realistic as the current space it occupied was only 41 000 square feet (3800 square metres).¹⁰ The briefing paper acknowledged that one of the disadvantages of the scheme was that the Museum Board of Trustees would not be pleased with the space allocation and would not be able develop a 'full scale Industrial Museum and a Maritime Museum in the future'.¹¹

The Board of Trustees did not easily concede that the space allocation would be adequate. It quickly produced a detailed report on the minimal requirements for the museum redevelopment.¹² In March 1975, the board wrote to the Planning and Establishment Committee, arguing that a minimum of 150 000 square feet was necessary for the next 20 years and was not an unrealistic amount compared with museums in other states.¹³ The pleas were to no avail, as site constraints meant that it was extremely difficult to enlarge the museum when the part of the site to the west of Melbourne Street was also to accommodate the art gallery, an auditorium/restaurant and a library. The board was keen for construction to start as soon as possible but it was to become Stage 3 of the Cultural Centre after the Art Gallery and Performing Arts Centre.

Conceptual design advanced in 1975 and a revised brief was submitted by the Museum Board in October 1978. The detailed design was completed by 1980. The contract for Stage 3 was awarded on 2 November 1982 to Prentice Pty Ltd, which had submitted a tender of \$18.3 million.¹⁴

The Museum was located above the Gallery car park and between the Art Gallery and Grey Street. The form of the Museum followed from the massing established with the design concept of the Cultural Centre as articulated in the Art Gallery and Performing Arts Centre.

5 Fulton, Collin, Boys, Gilmour, Trotter & Partners, *Feasibility survey re-development of Queensland Museum*, 1973, QSA Item ID 315623.

6 Ibid., p. A.3.

7 A total of 17 sites were considered and three short-listed: Albert Park, Woolloongabba Rail Yards and Toowong East (currently bushland between Old Mount Coot-tha Road and Birdwood Terrace)

8 Fulton, *Feasibility survey*, p. G.1., G 11.

9 Cabinet Minute 18 November 1974, Decision No 21481, QSA Item ID541022.

10 Ibid, p. 2.

11 Ibid, Appendix p. 3.

12 Queensland Museum Redevelopment, Minimal requirements, February 1975, QSA Item ID569765.

13 Alan Bartholomai to Secretary, Planning and Establishment Committee, 10 March 1975, QSA Item ID961913.

14 *The Courier Mail*, 10 November 1982.

As architect Robin Gibson explained:

This concept involved a stepped structure beginning at the river bank progressing up through the Gallery Administration and Library then higher into the Gallery Collection areas, protected well above flood level and culminating finally in the Museum Collection areas with their support Curatorial facilities looking down over the rest toward the river and city. Beneath these on Grey Street is the open volume space of the Geological garden related closely to the adjacent Exhibition and Education areas and which forms a major element in the design of the landscape and concept for the total complex.¹⁵

Similarly, the use of a simple palette of materials—notably sandblasted white concrete walls internally and externally—followed the approach adopted elsewhere in the Cultural Centre. The system of expressed rib-structure and integrated services duct-work used in the Art Gallery was repeated in the Museum.¹⁶

The Museum comprised six levels. Located on level 1 were preparation areas, workshops, loading docks and an education area. The main exhibition spaces were located on levels 2 and 3. A three-storey-high central orientation space was located at the entrance to the Museum from the pedestrian mall. The galleries were located in two wings on the each side of a central atrium space and connected by escalators, staircases and bridges. A lecture theatre was also located on level 2.

The collection storage areas, offices and laboratories were located on levels 4 and 5. The collections were purposely located on these levels, well above the highest known flood level.

Separating the Museum from the Art Gallery was a grand pedestrian mall, later known as the Whale Mall.

External openings were carefully positioned and limited for a very good reason. Natural light entering the building had to be rigorously controlled for the conservation of most objects, whether in storage areas or on display. The absence of openings is most noticeable on the upper sections of the southern and western facades, where the storage areas are located internally.

Geological Garden (Museum Garden)

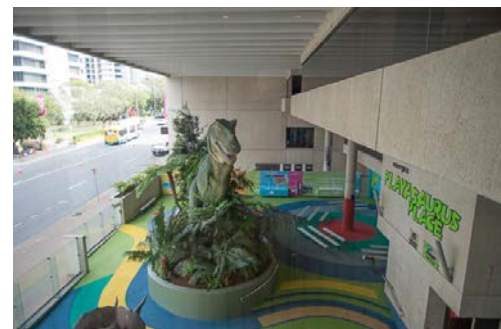
The Geological Garden (now known as the Museum Garden and Energex Playasaurus Place) was designed as an outdoor/indoor space where the geological history of Queensland could be displayed. The space for the garden was a dominant feature in the Grey Street elevation of the Museum building. Life-size models of a *Tyrannosaurus* and *Triceratops* were the principal objects, with a range of plantings including cycads, ferns, *Araucaria cunninghamii* (hoop pine) interspersed with bluestone rocks and gravel paths.

Due to a lack of natural light, and in particular minimal direct sun, the original plantings proved to be less than satisfactory. Major alterations, including new plantings, were undertaken to this space in 2008.

Opening

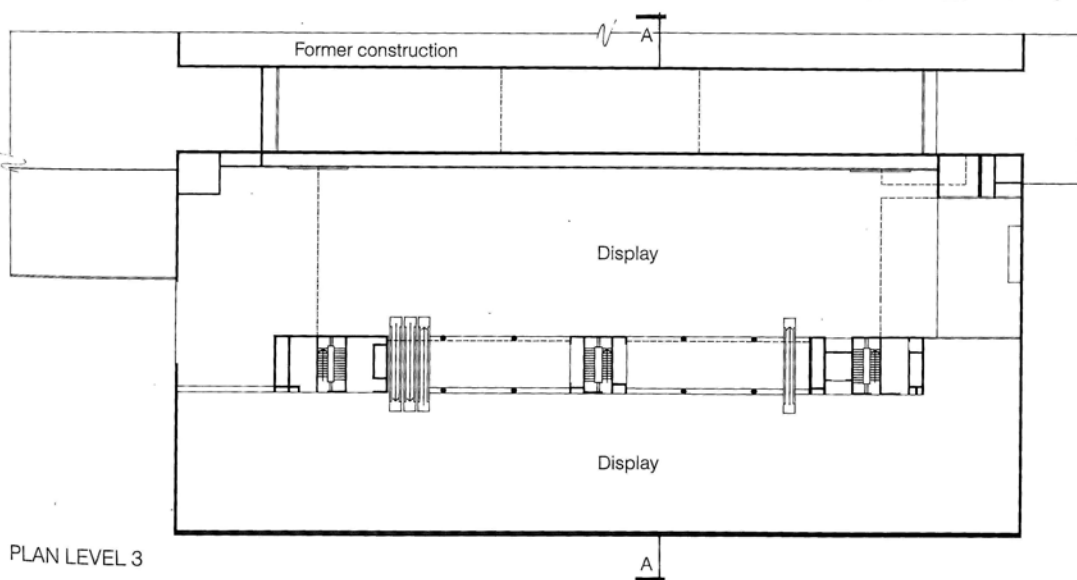
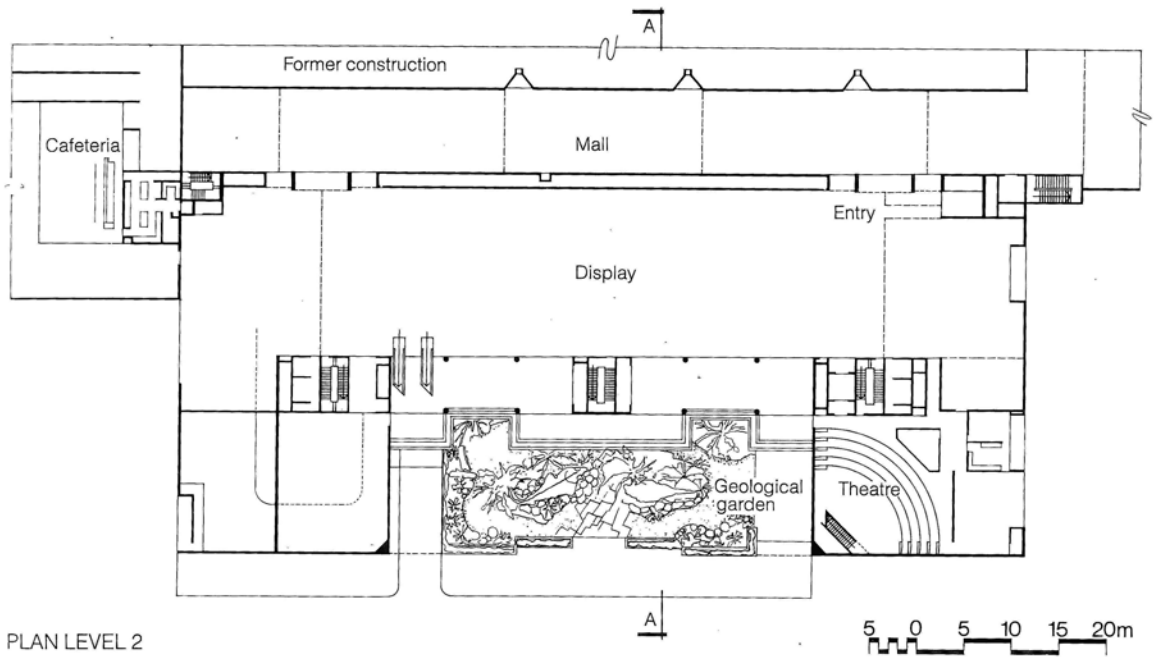
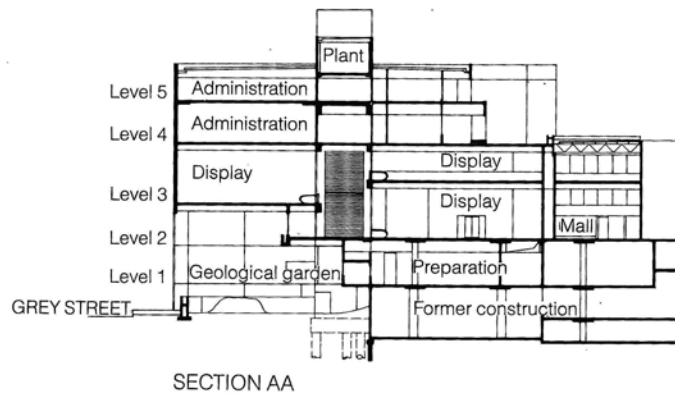
The Museum building was initially planned to be handed over in September 1983, but under-budgeting of building costs, in large part due to a highly inflationary economy, caused a hiatus in the planning process. The completion date was revised to September 1984 and then again to late 1985. The Museum was finally opened to the public in 1986.

104 Museum Garden, originally the Geological Garden (2016)



¹⁵ Robin Gibson to Director of Building, Department of Works, 18 June 1981, QSA Item ID600223.

¹⁶ Kirkwood, Memoirs.



Plans and sections, Queensland Museum
(Constructional Review, November 1987)



105 Queensland Museum, elevation to Melbourne Street, c. 1988 (Richard Stringer)



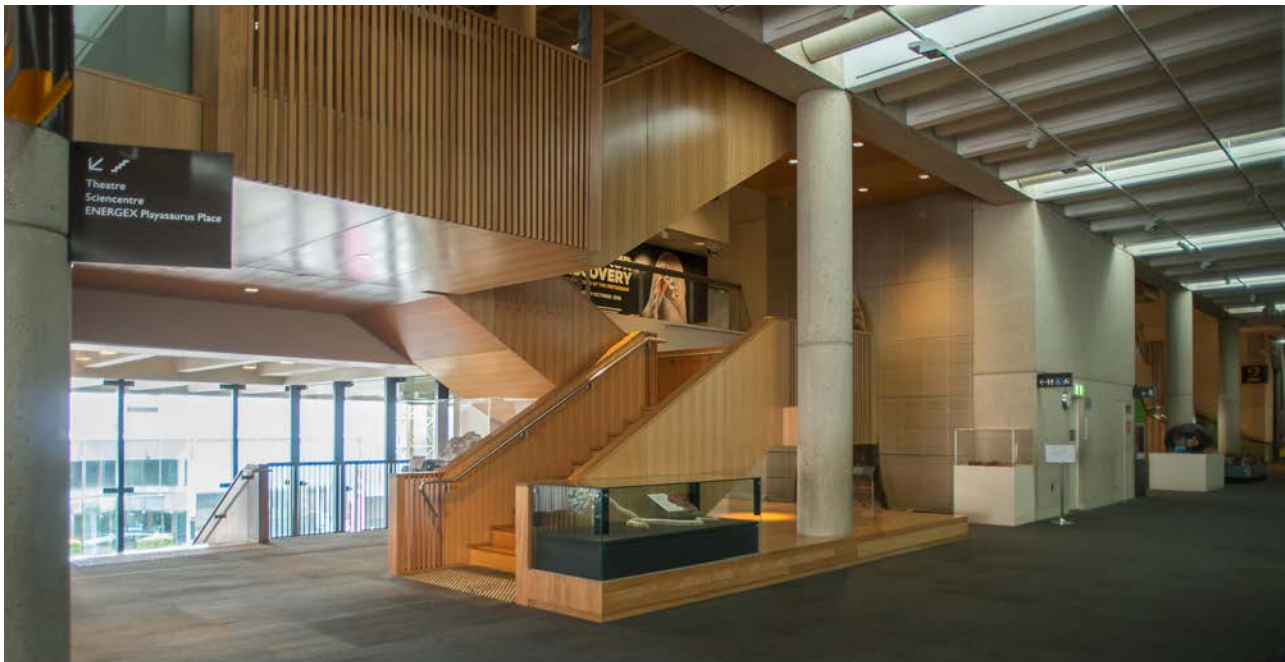
106 Queensland Museum, elevation to Grey Street, c. 1988 (Richard Stringer)



107 Interior of Queensland Museum, level 2, c. 1987 (Richard Stringer)



108 Interior of Queensland Museum, mezzanine level and level 3 on the left, c. 1987 (Richard Stringer)



109 *Queensland Museum, level 2 with later alterations and stairs to mezzanine level (2012)*

While the Museum Board would have been disappointed that the space requirements were not as it deemed necessary, in every other respect the facilities and exhibition spaces were a significant improvement on its previous accommodation in the Exhibition Building. The collection storage areas were climatically controlled, as was the whole of the building. The highest levels of fire safety protection were installed throughout. The new building provided laboratories and workshops for the variety of specialised tasks associated with the museum.

Undoubtedly, one of the main benefits of being part of the Cultural Centre was the proximity to the Brisbane CBD and South Bank, and accessibility by public transport.

Alterations

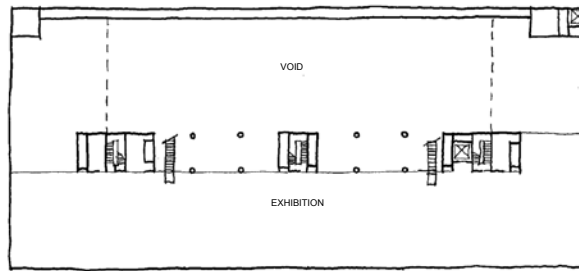
As part of the Millennium Arts project at the Queensland Cultural Centre, a new entry for the Museum was constructed in 2004. This glazed entrance lobby provided access from the Museum Plaza to level 2 via escalators. As part of this project, level 1 was converted to use as a Sciencentre. Robin Gibson and Partners were the architects for this work. The Sciencentre had been previously located in the former Government Printing Office in William Street.¹⁷

In December 2010, work began on a range of upgrades to the Queensland Museum and Sciencentre. The work included alterations to visitor circulation, and improvements to the museum's capacity to present international exhibitions.

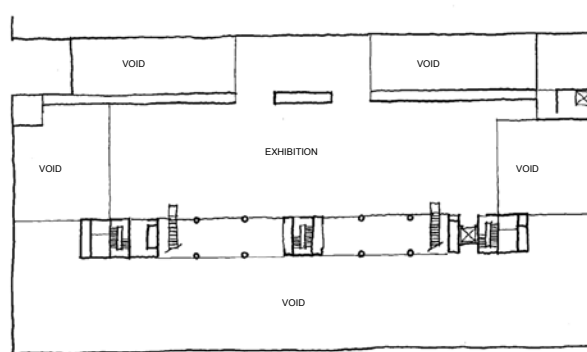
Capital works focused on the public gallery levels, and included installation of an additional lift, a new glass-box entry encasing internal stairs between levels 0 and 4 providing improved access from Grey Street, and replacement of escalators. Works also included exhibition lighting upgrades, modifications to the existing cafe, shop and loading dock, provision of additional public amenities, establishment of an international exhibition gallery on level 3, minor office accommodation improvements on levels 5 and 6, and internal way-finding signage to complement the facility improvements. The architects for this project were Cox Rayner Architects.

The first stage of works was completed for the Queensland Museum's 150th anniversary and it reopened on 20 January 2012. The remainder of the works were progressively completed by 28 March 2012. The final cost of the works was \$14.3 million.

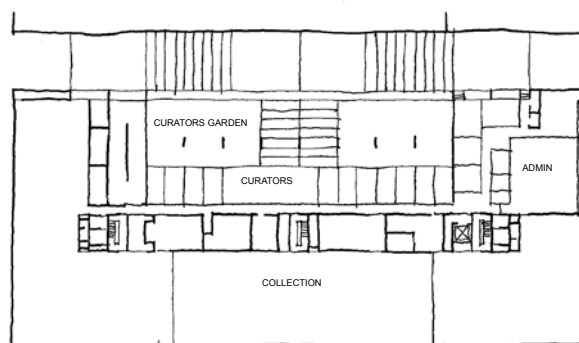
¹⁷ The Sciencentre opened in October 1989 in the former Printing office in William Street (QM Annual Report 1989–90, p. 6).



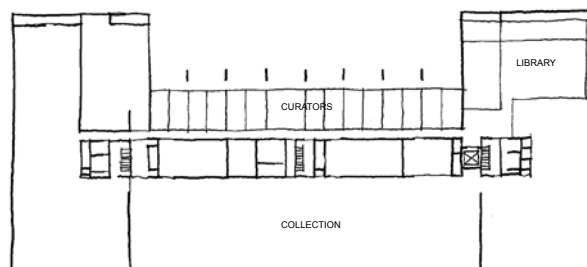
QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 3
ORIGINAL PLAN



QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 4
ORIGINAL PLAN



QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 5
ORIGINAL PLAN

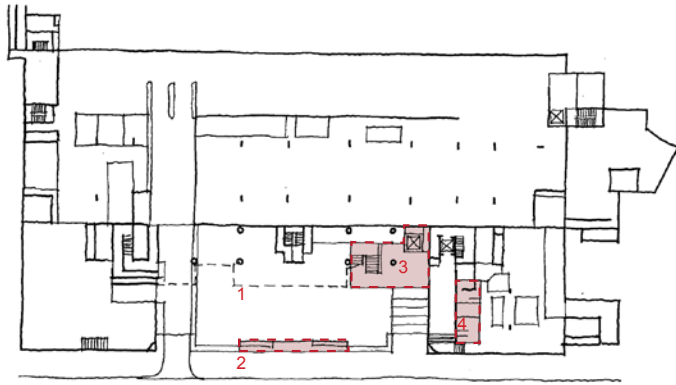


QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 6
ORIGINAL PLAN

110 *Queensland Museum, original floor plans*



- 1 Energex Playasaurus alterations including raised gardens beds, new planting, new display and floor finish, 2008
- 2 Courtyard wall altered to glass balustrade, 2008
- 3 New group entry, lift and stair, 2012
- 4 Public amenities, 2012



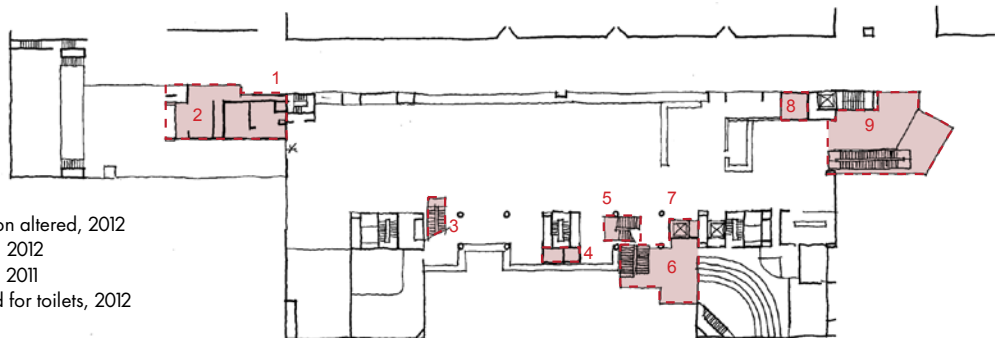
QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 0
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Alterations for Science Centre, 2004
- 2 Grey Street entry, 2004
- 3 New group entry, lift and stairs, 2012

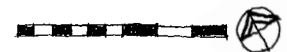


QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 1
ALTERED PLAN

- 1 Original circulation altered, 2012
- 2 Cafeteria altered, 2012
- 3 Escalator altered, 2011
- 4 Passage enclosed for toilets, 2012
- 5 New stairs, 2012
- 6 New podium with timber floor, 2012
- 7 Lift introduced, 2012
- 8 Cloakroom altered
- 9 New entrance



QUEENSLAND MUSEUM - LEVEL 2
ALTERED PLAN



III Queensland Museum, altered floor plans

8 State Library

The State Library of Queensland has its antecedents in the Public Library of Queensland, which was established in 1896 when the library of the late Mr Justice Harding was purchased by the Queensland government for £500.¹ From 1902 until 1988, the Public Library of Queensland—which later became known as the State Library of Queensland—occupied a building in William Street which had been constructed in 1878 for the Queensland Museum.

Throughout the 20th century, the Library steadily increased its patronage and holdings. In 1924, the John Oxley Library was established as a separate section devoted to collecting material on Queensland history. Additions and alterations were made to the building in 1959 and 1964–65 in response to the need for more space, not only for the collection, but also in the reading room.

By the early 1970s, the State Library was experiencing a chronic shortage of space and the Library Board made numerous requests to the government for additional accommodation. In 1974, the Library staff and collection were spread over four separate buildings.² The announcement in November 1974 that State Cabinet had agreed to the construction of a Cultural Centre incorporating a new State Library was welcome news for the Library Board. However, it had to wait another 14 years before it was finally opened in 1988.

The design and construction of the Library was similar to the other buildings which formed the Cultural Centre: a simple palette of materials, cubic form, grid system, and recessed glazing on the river frontage. The horizontality of the Cultural Centre was reinforced in the building being limited to five levels. The function of the building as a Library was reinforced in the design, with an indented facade on the river elevation, intended to 'encourage a contemplative atmosphere'.³

The building comprised five levels including car park, reference library on levels 2 and 3, and the John Oxley Library on level 4.

Despite anticipating changes in technology and the growth of the collection, the State Library was again in need of substantially more accommodation by the early 2000s. As part of the Millennium Arts project in 2006, a major extension was undertaken to the State Library, designed by Donovan Hill in association with Peddle Thorp.

¹ *Brisbane Courier*, 9 and 29 January 1896.

² Library Board of Queensland, *New State Library Building*, April 1975, QSA Item ID569765.

³ Kirkwood memoirs.



112 *State Library of Queensland, river elevation, 1988 (Richard Stringer)*



113 *State Library of Queensland, Stanley Street elevation, 1988 (Richard Stringer)*

9 Cultural Centre 1990–2015

The opening of the State Library of Queensland in May 1988 marked the culmination of the Queensland Cultural Centre project as originally envisaged in the 1975 master plan. Despite delays in construction and escalation in costs, the outcome was most satisfying, with widespread acclaim of how the facilities enriched the cultural life of Queensland.

Stage 5—Playhouse Theatre

The Performing Arts Centre provided excellent facilities for a range of performing arts including opera, ballet, experimental theatre, symphony orchestra and choral performance. What was missing, however, was a drama theatre. The Cremorne Theatre was a small space, intended for experimental theatre, but what was needed to ensure the existing complex had a reputation of international standing was a drama theatre.

Planning for a new stage was considerably foreshortened as land had already been acquired for additions to the Performing Arts Centre. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, property bounded by Grey, Russell and Stanley Streets had been acquired for possible further expansion of the Cultural Centre (see p. 27).

In 1989, the Department of Works, in conjunction with the Arts Division of the Premier's Department and the Queensland Performing Arts Trust, prepared a design brief for a drama theatre seating about 750–1000 people, a state film centre, a state writers centre, rehearsal space, and administrative accommodation for the four major performing arts companies. Robin Gibson and Partners was commissioned to design Stage 5. The firm produced preliminary designs that were costed at over \$65 million.¹

In December 1989, a state election was held and the Australian Labor Party won office with Wayne Goss as Premier.² Goss and his party came to government with a commitment to increase support for the arts. Goss showed his personal interest in the arts by taking on the Arts portfolio. A key initiative by the Goss government was the commissioning of a report *Queensland—State for the Arts*. This report was the work of the Arts Review Committee, which comprised members of the arts community, and its recommendations laid the foundation for the government's arts policy. Many of the initiatives recommended in the report continue to guide arts policy today.

While fully supportive of the Stage 5 project, Premier Goss was concerned about the cost, given the government was facing an economic downturn. An interdepartmental

¹ Queensland Parliament, Public Works Committee, *Report No 26: Queensland Cultural Centre Stage 5*, October, 1994 p 6.

² The Labor Party came to office after being in opposition for 32 years. Ironically, the ALP campaign launch was held on 19 November 1989 at the Performing Art Centre (Jamie Walker, *Wayne Goss, a political biography*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, p. 128).



committee was formed to review the facilities proposed. The committee reported in April 1990 and noted:

Of the four major performing arts facilities within Australia, the Queensland Cultural Centre is the only one without a drama theatre ...The Queensland Performing Arts Complex is currently visually and functionally incomplete. The provision of the drama theatre and associated facilities would finish the complex and provide arguably the finest centre for the arts in Australia.³

The committee recommended a 850-seat theatre, six rehearsal rooms, administrative space for the Royal Queensland Theatre Company, Lyric Opera of Queensland and Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra, and ancillary public facilities. The cost of the revised plan was \$56 million. Revisions were made in an attempt to reduce the cost even further, including a reduction in the gross floor area and less space for administration. A revised planning brief was prepared, necessitating the architect to prepare new plans.

Not all proposed users of the new theatre approved of the revised plans. The Queensland Theatre Company, Musica Viva, Lyric Opera Company and Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra all expressed reservations about the 850-seat theatre.⁴ Consequently, the Parliamentary Committee of Public Works established an inquiry to satisfy itself of the need for a theatre and consider community opinion on the proposal. After receiving public submissions and conducting a public hearing, the committee recommended:

That the project proceed on the basis of an 850 seat multi-purpose facility with principal use as a drama theatre.

That Stage Five be available to the performing arts community and that arrangements for preferential access by the Queensland Theatre Company not be such that it results in the effective exclusion of other groups.

That arrangements be implemented to allow for increased numbers of persons with mobility disabilities to be appropriately seated in the theatre.

That consideration be given to increasing the numbers and flexibility of female toilet allocation available at the Centre, based on the experience in the existing theatres, and to improving the signage throughout the Performing Arts Complex to direct patrons to other available facilities.

That covered access be provided at the front of the theatre to allow all sections of the community to access the facilities in a greater degree of comfort.⁵

³ Public Works Committee, *Report No 26: Queensland Cultural Centre Stage 5*, October, 1994, p. 8.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 10–11.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.28.

The committee presented its report to Parliament on 28 October 1994, enabling detailed design to proceed.⁶

The design and documentation stage was completed in September 1995 and the tender awarded to Graham Evans Pty Ltd in November 1995. Stage 5 was completed in July 1998 for a cost of \$61.6 million. The theatre opened with a production of the play *The Marriage of Figaro* by the Queensland Theatre Company.⁷

The Playhouse Theatre incorporated a proscenium arch, orchestra pit, and an auditorium with seating for 850 patrons in stalls and a balcony. This addition to the Performing Arts complex included associated back-stage areas, two well equipped rehearsal studios, foyers, circulation spaces, and food and beverage facilities.

The theatre more than fulfilled the expectations of patrons, users and the Queensland Performing Arts Trust. Donald Munro, a former Chairman of the Trust, stated that the theatre was 'absolutely state of the art', and Tony Gould, the Director of the Trust, enthused that it would 'be one of the greatest theatres in the world'.⁸

Stage 6—Millennium Arts project

The possibility of further expansion to the Cultural Centre was already being suggested during the planning of Stage 5. Just as the Performing Arts Centre had quickly demonstrated the need for expansion, by the mid 1990s the Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Museum and State Library were also advocating for additional facilities. The critical issue was, however, where could the Cultural Centre expand?

In the late 1980s, the state government had acquired a significant parcel of land adjacent to the Cultural Centre. This land was bounded by Grey, Peel, and Stanley Streets, and Montague Road. Most of the site was owned by the Postmaster General's Department. In acquiring the land, the government was considering a range of uses including new premises for the Queensland State Archives, a new building for the Conservatorium of Music, and the College of Art, and car parking.⁹ None of these proposals proceeded and the use of the land remained undecided. Following the state election in June 1995 and the return of the Labor Government, the member for Yeronga, Matt Foley was appointed Minister for the Arts.¹⁰ Like the Premier, Wayne Goss, Foley had a deep commitment to the arts and was keen to foster the arts throughout Queensland. In December 1995, he brought to Cabinet a proposal that the Crown land at South Brisbane adjacent to the Cultural Centre be re-gazetted as a reserve specifically for cultural purposes. Premier Goss was fully supportive of what was a difficult decision. This might have seemed a rather innocuous decision, but was highly significant in the later expansion of the Cultural Centre. By ensuring that the land was not used for other purposes—and there were plenty of very different uses suggested for land close to the CBD—it ensured that suitable land was available for expanding the Cultural Centre.

The Labor government lost office to the Liberal National Party coalition in February 1996. Joan Sheldon, the Deputy Premier and Minister for the Arts, also pursued plans for the expansion of the Cultural Centre. In December 1997, Sheldon announced Cabinet approval for a proposed project called QCC2000 adjoining the Cultural Centre. The two major components were to be a cultural heritage centre and a Gallery of Modern Art.¹¹

6 Queensland Parliamentary Debates, 28 October 1994, p. 10108.

7 Construction Industry Institute, *Optus Playhouse Stage 5, Queensland Cultural Centre, Brisbane: A case study*, http://www.ciia.qut.edu.au/docs/5_Playhouse.pdf.

8 Queensland Parliament, Public Works Committee, *Report No 48: Review of the Construction of the Queensland Cultural Centre Stage V*, 1998, p. 3.

9 QCCT Minutes, 11 December 1987.

10 Foley was also Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, and Minister for Industrial Relations.

11 J Sheldon, *Coalition builds Australia's Premier Cultural Precinct*, media release, 17 December 1997.



115 Master plan, Millennium Arts project, 2001

The scheme was announced, however, with no commitment in the budget or forward estimates for its construction.¹² The Labor Party regained government in June 1998, and Matt Foley was again appointed Minister for the Arts. Foley continued to oversee planning on Stage 6 of the Queensland Cultural Centre. Funds for the project were included in the 1999 budget, and Foley informed the Estimates Committee in 2000 that \$260 million had been budgeted for the project.

In May 2000, Premier Beattie and Arts Minister Foley announced an international design competition for a new Gallery of Modern Art.¹³ The impetus for a gallery of modern art was a result of the continued success of the Queensland Art Gallery in collecting and exhibiting contemporary artworks. In particular, the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, which was first held in 1993, had developed to be internationally recognised as a major event in the exhibition of Asia–Pacific art.

In June 2000, Arts Minister Foley announced a \$75 million Millennium Arts State Library redevelopment project, with a national architectural design competition to extend the State Library of Queensland.¹⁴

A master plan for the Millennium Arts project Cultural Centre site was prepared by Cox Rayner Architects in 2001, and included recommendations for the realignment of Stanley Street, a new Gallery of Modern Art located to the north of the precinct, expansion of the State Library around the northern and western interfaces, a new entrance to the Queensland Museum and a new entrance to the Art Gallery.¹⁵

An international design competition was held for the Gallery of Modern Art. More than 170 submissions from 24 countries were received. The competition was won by the Sydney-based firm Architectus, in association with Davenport Campbell and Partners.

The Queensland-based firm, Donovan Hill in association with Peddle Thorp, was commissioned to design the State Library redevelopment.¹⁶ Bovis Lend Lease was

¹² M Foley, Queensland Parliament Estimates B_2, August 2000, p. 98.

¹³ P Beattie & M Foley, 'Queensland to get World Class Gallery of Modern Art', Media release, 16 May 2000.

¹⁴ M Foley, State Library design competition, media release, 27 June 2000.

¹⁵ Cox Rayner Architects, Queensland Cultural Centre millennium art project, 2001.

¹⁶ P Beattie, Landmark Queensland designs to showcase arts to the world, media release, 8 April 2002.

appointed managing contractor for the new gallery and the State Library extension, and construction commenced in 2004.¹⁷

The State Library of Queensland additions were opened on 24 November 2006. The Gallery of Modern Art was opened on 1 December 2006 with the 5th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art as the opening exhibition.¹⁸

Other works associated with Millennium Arts project included a new entrance from Stanley Place to the 1982 Gallery, designed by Robin Gibson and Partners. The firm was also commissioned to design a new entrance to the Museum, not as proposed in the 2001 master plan from Peel Street, but instead facing Melbourne Street.

Cultural Centre Busway Station

When the Cultural Centre was being constructed in the 1980s, Melbourne Street was a major thoroughfare linking South Brisbane to the CBD via Victoria Bridge. It was not, however, a busy street, and while it bisected the Cultural Centre, it did not unduly divide the site. Views across Melbourne Street were not impeded and the volume of traffic was modest.

In 2000, as part of Stage 1 of the South East Transit Project, a bus station was built on Melbourne Street between Grey Street and Victoria Bridge. The bus station was intended primarily for tourists and locals visiting the Cultural Centre and South Bank.¹⁹

A major upgrade was undertaken to the Cultural Centre Busway Station in 2004–5. Due to the increasing number of buses using Melbourne Street with the construction of the South East busway, congestion and delays had become a major problem for buses at the Cultural Centre.²⁰ The works included the construction of lifts providing access from Melbourne Street to the Melbourne Street bridge, a shade structure over the Melbourne Street bridge and passenger shelters on both sides of Melbourne Street. While these works improved the efficiency and safety of the bus station, they had a detrimental impact on the visual and physical connectivity between the Performing Arts Centre on the south-eastern side of Melbourne Street and the Art Gallery and Museum on the north-west.

The Cultural Centre and South Brisbane

When the scheme for a Cultural Centre at South Brisbane costing \$45 million was announced in December 1974, the expectation was that it would be a significant enhancement to the visual and performing arts in Queensland and provide state-of-the-art museum and library facilities. The Cultural Centre did more than fulfill these expectations. What was not anticipated was the impact it would have more broadly on South Brisbane.

When South Brisbane was selected as the site for the new Queensland Art Gallery in 1969, the area was in decline as a commercial centre and residential area. It was no longer a retail destination or regarded as an attractive residential location.

Today, South Brisbane is a dynamic place as the epicentre for social and cultural activities in the city, and a highly sought after residential area.

The Cultural Centre has been an integral part of this transformation and a catalyst as the first stage in the renewal process.

The development and completion of the Cultural Centre dramatically transformed the built environment of South Brisbane and was a catalyst for the regeneration of the entire

¹⁷ M Foley, *Beattie Government appoints Millennium Arts Contractors*, media release, 22 November 2003.

¹⁸ P Beattie, *New Gallery puts Brisbane on International Arts and Culture Map*, media release, 1 December 2006. GOMA was awarded the 2007 Royal Australian Institute of Architects National Award for Public Architecture.

¹⁹ S Bredhauer, *South East Busway services to start Monday*, media release, 22 October 2000.

²⁰ *Queensland Transport Annual Report 2005*, p. 38.

116 View of busway station from Melbourne Street bridge (2016)



117 Aerial view of Expo '88 and the Cultural Centre, 1988 (QSA Digital Image ID1968)



area, most notably through the revitalisation of the adjacent Expo '88 site, subsequently redeveloped as South Bank.

While Expo '88 may well have happened without the construction of the Cultural Centre, it added to the redefining attitudes and perceptions about South Brisbane and the south bank in particular. Following Expo '88 the state government decided to redevelop the site as parkland, with residential and commercial components. In May 1989 the Queensland Government established the South Bank Corporation. The architectural practice Media Five won a competition to prepare a master plan for the precinct. The South Bank Parklands was opened in 1992. It complemented the open spaces developed on the riverbank in front of the Cultural Centre and elaborated on the original 'towpath' concept with an expansive boardwalk along the river edge.

Another major development at South Brisbane was the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. It was located on the site of the former World Expo Park—originally the site of the South Brisbane Interstate Railway Station. Designed by Cox Rayner, the Convention Centre was constructed in 1993–95 and extended in 2012.

Other projects that complemented the Cultural Centre were the construction of the Queensland Conservatorium (1996), and the ABC Studios including facilities for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (2013).

The Cultural Centre did much more than enliven and enhance the performing arts in Brisbane and Queensland. It was also instrumental in transforming South Brisbane.

10 Cultural heritage significance

Section 35 of the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992* states that a place may be entered on the Queensland Heritage Register if it satisfies one or more criteria.

- (a) the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history;*
- (b) the place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Queensland's cultural heritage;*
- (c) the place has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Queensland's history;*
- (d) the place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places;*
- (e) the place is important because of its aesthetic significance;*
- (f) the place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;*
- (g) the place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*
- (h) the place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in Queensland's history.*

The entry in the Queensland Heritage Register for the Queensland Cultural Centre provides a statement of its significance demonstrating how the place satisfies seven of these criteria.

The brief for this study required that, where appropriate, changes to the statement of significance should be recommended. The statement of significance in the Queensland Heritage Register is comprehensive. As a result of the historical research and a more detailed understanding of the design and construction of the Queensland Cultural Centre, some changes and additions are recommended. The suggested alterations are highlighted in italics.

Statement of cultural heritage significance

Criterion A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of Queensland's history.

The Queensland Cultural Centre is of outstanding importance in demonstrating the cultural and social development of Queensland in the late 20th century. Originally built

in stages from 1976 to 1988, the aggregation of one complex housing the state's principal cultural institutions was a key milestone in the evolution of Queensland's history. In its form, function and uses, the Cultural Centre demonstrates a major government undertaking in facilitating the development of the arts, on a scale and level of sophistication unparalleled in Queensland's history.

The Cultural Centre is important in demonstrating the evolution of architecture in Queensland. Designed by Robin Gibson AO (1930–2014), a prominent Australian architect of his time, it is an exceptional example of the late 20th century International Style. In its integration of building and landscape, the Cultural Centre demonstrates the evolution of landscape design in Queensland.

The Cultural Centre is important as a significant achievement in the history of building design and construction in Queensland. The quality of design, materials and finishes was the result of extensive collaboration of many dedicated people including Parliamentarians, public servants, architects, engineers, artists, artisans, craftspeople, tradespeople, building contractors and construction workers.

The Cultural Centre is an important Queensland example of a major urban renewal project of the late 20th century. The development and completion of the Cultural Centre dramatically transformed the built environment of South Brisbane and was a catalyst for the regeneration of the entire area, most notably through the revitalisation of the adjacent Expo 1988 site, subsequently redeveloped as South Bank; and major new buildings including the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (1993), Queensland Conservatorium (1996), Gallery of Modern Art (2006), and ABC Studios including facilities for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (2013). The investment in the Cultural Centre has benefited not only the arts, but the wider development of Brisbane and Queensland.

The Queensland Cultural Centre has played a vital role in the development of the performing and visual arts. By providing facilities of the highest standard for the conservation and exhibition of artworks, it has allowed the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art to become one of the leading galleries in Australia, most notably for the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art. The Performing Arts Centre, with its international-standard Lyric Theatre, Concert Hall and Playhouse Theatre, has fostered the growth and reputation of major local companies, including the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Ballet, Queensland Opera and Queensland Theatre Company.

The five external artworks are significant as an early example in the history of Australian sculpture of the commissioning of a series of major public works. The commissions were a milestone for the arts, for sculpture in particular, and the stimulus for more public art projects.

Criterion B

The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of Queensland's cultural heritage.

The Queensland Cultural Centre is unique as the first and only place purpose-built to house Queensland's cultural institutions in one complex.

Retaining a high degree of intactness and integrity, the Cultural Centre is an architecturally unique complex in Queensland, illustrated in its distinctive and pervasive design features, scale and size and intrinsic relationship to the Brisbane River.

Criterion D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places.

The purpose-built Queensland Cultural Centre is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a cultural complex. Easily accessible from the central business district, the

Cultural Centre is located on a prominent site adjacent to, and connected with, the river. The Centre combines an art gallery, museum, performing arts complex and associated ancillary facilities on the one site, interconnected by outdoor plazas and boulevards and is notable for its functionality, planning and finishes.

A landmark architectural statement, its civic prominence within the capital city illustrates the Cultural Centre's function as the state's principal cultural complex. The monumental scale and form of the Centre reinforces the importance of its cultural, educational and social role as a venue for high profile cultural events in Queensland.

The Cultural Centre is an exceptional, intact example of the work of Robin Gibson and is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of his work. Most notably: the integration of building and *landscape* setting; cohesive, simple low horizontal forms, clean lines and a limited palette of materials (high quality concrete, tinted glass, bronze metal work and *plantings*).

Criterion E

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance.

The Queensland Cultural Centre is of outstanding aesthetic significance to the state for its distinctive architectural qualities, monumental scale, prominent siting and its many public art installations. These attributes make it a popular tourist destination and inspiration for photographers and artists.

It is a large, cohesive complex of buildings and spaces unified by its cubic forms, structural detailing and fine quality finishes, fixtures and furnishings. The restrained and sustained use of off-white sandblasted concrete throughout the complex, internally and externally, is a conspicuous and unifying element and is of a scale unique in a Queensland context.

The juxtaposition of intimate spaces and large volumes, and its many contemplative and restful interior and exterior spaces, in particular the Water Mall extending through the Art Gallery, and harmonising of the constrained landscape design to the architectural design, make an important contribution to the Centre's aesthetic value.

The Cultural Centre is a landmark within the capital city, lowset against the backdrop of the Taylor Range that skirts outer Brisbane. The open space between the river and cultural facilities, the forecourt and plazas, contribute to the landmark quality of the complex, facilitating views to and from the river, Victoria Bridge, the central business district and the surrounding streets in South Brisbane.

Criterion F

The place is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.

An outstanding, distinctive and highly awarded display of architectural excellence in the International Style, the Queensland Cultural Centre demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement in the late 20th century. Ambitious in scale and sophisticated in design, the place is a successfully realised architectural vision to create a unified landmark complex for Queensland's principal cultural institutions. Unprecedented in Queensland and *innovative in Australia* was the integration of building and landscape, comprising vegetation and water elements, used both internally and externally to counter-balance and soften the rectilinear geometry of the buildings. *The Queensland Cultural Centre is an outstanding example of an innovative and sensitive translation of the modernist aesthetic into the landscape. The innovative approach to landscape design accentuates the architecture and interweaves internal spaces with the surrounding and the wider Brisbane landscape.*

The Cultural Centre retains a high degree of intactness and integrity.

Criterion G

The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

The Queensland Cultural Centre has outstanding social value to the Queensland community as the home and physical embodiment of its principal cultural institutions.

Built for the people of Queensland and visited by millions of people annually, the ongoing use as a Cultural Centre is a fundamental aspect of its significance. The strong connection between the Queensland community and the institutions of the Cultural Centre, both individually and collectively occurs through experiences of the place; its setting, interconnected buildings, internal and external spaces and venues, and the events, exhibitions, performances and activities offered at the complex. An important contributing element is the use of the Cultural Centre as a popular social space and meeting point, and the use of the outdoor spaces for public engagement.

As the state's premier arts complex and as a major site for events, exhibitions, performances, activities and collections, the Cultural Centre has a special association with the arts community in Queensland.

Criterion H

The place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in Queensland's history.

The Queensland Cultural Centre has a special association with the life and work of individuals who played key roles in the development of the Cultural Centre.

Architect Robin Gibson AO (1930–2014), made an outstanding and influential contribution to the development of Queensland's built environment in the late 20th century. Gibson's achievements have been acknowledged through many awards including: Queenslander of the Year (1982); Sir Zelman Cowen Award (for public buildings) for the Queensland Art Gallery (1982); Royal Australian Institute of Architecture (RAIA) Gold Medal for outstanding performance and contributions (1989), and the 25 year award for Enduring Architecture (2010). Recognised as Gibson's most important project, the Centre embodies the defining modernist architectural principles he developed and employed during his architectural career.

Sir Gordon Chalk KBE (1913–91), in his role as Treasurer and Deputy Premier, was a keen supporter of the arts and the key advocate in Cabinet for firstly the Art Gallery and then later the Cultural Centre scheme. He employed deft skills in achieving Cabinet approval for a visionary project that was focused on promoting and enhancing the arts in Queensland.

Roman Pavlyshyn OAM, Director of Building in the Department of Works, played a key role in the Cultural Centre project. He was the senior representative from the Department of Works, which were the building authority, and worked on the project from 1969 to 1985. Pavlyshyn chaired committees, wrote briefs, numerous reports and submissions to Cabinet, as well as provided key architectural advice on the project. He successfully saw that the project was adequately funded to ensure the highest standards of design and materials were maintained.

The Queensland Cultural Centre has a special association with the Queensland Museum, Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Performing Arts Centre and the State Library of Queensland, institutions which have made, and continue to make, important contributions to the cultural development of Queensland.

Schedule of significance

This schedule of significance focuses on the major elements or groups of elements within the Cultural Centre (see Policy 90).

Definition of levels of significance

S	Significant	Elements that contribute to the significance of the place
N	Not significant	Elements that do not contribute to the significance of the place
I	Intrusive	Elements or components that are intrusive and diminish the significance of the place

Cultural Centre generally

Views to Cultural Centre from north bank including Southeast Freeway, Melbourne Street and Grey Street. Unencumbered exposure to the Brisbane River, permitting views to the Cultural Centre from the City	S
Internal views from within original openings to external spaces and cityscape	S
Cubic qualities including interplay of solids and voids, integration of roof	S
Monolithic elements—specifically, the three-dimensional geometric grid system throughout	S
Elevated Pedestrian Mall as unifying circulation pathway As the major pedestrian linkage between QPAC, QM and QAG, this element is a key organisational device for the complex.	S
Separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic throughout the site	S
Original design approach that aspired to timelessness through precise, logical and durable design	S
Scale of the site and individual buildings	S
Horizontality	S
Location and function of openings (for framing views, transmission of natural light and wayfinding) including voids, glazing and skylights	S
Original material palette including: Concrete Glazing Bronze elements Stone (travertine, Mt Coot-tha bluestone) Timber Carpets	S



View of city from inside Performing Arts Centre



View of Cultural Centre and Cultural Forecourt from Victoria Bridge



Grey Street facade, Performing Arts Centre



Monumental lettering

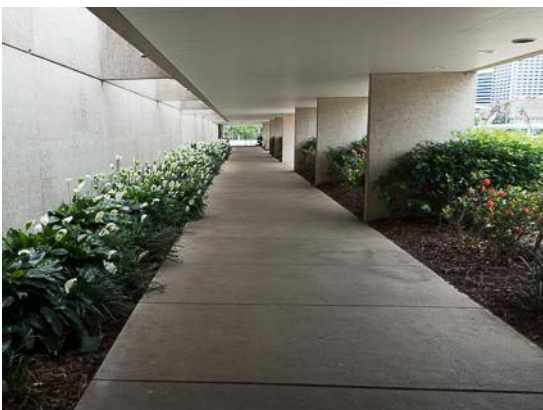
Utilitarian spaces Wet areas/bathrooms/kitchenettes/dressing rooms/back of house fixtures and furnishings	N
Principal external circulation routes including Pedestrian Mall (including Melbourne Street bridge), walkways adjacent to Art Gallery, tunnels, tunnel from towpath to Stanley Street adjacent to The Edge	S
Original monumental bronzed Gill Sans signage on buildings	S
Later signage	N
Setting—relationship with Brisbane River and Taylor Range	S
Expressed concrete ceiling structure—beams and exposed ducts	S
Original glass balustrading internal and external	S
Carparks	N
Metal parapet flashing to building roof edges	I
Cultural Centre Busway Station and lifts	I



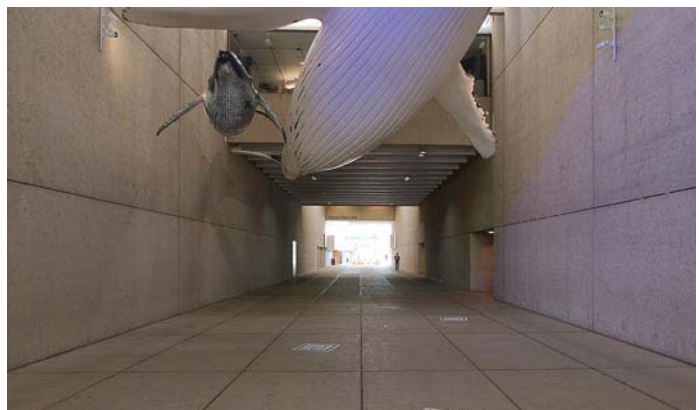
Melbourne Street bridge



Walkway adjacent to The Edge



Walkway on south-eastern side of Art Gallery



Pedestrian Mall

Queensland Art Gallery

External elevations, including openings and planters boxes	S
Main entrance (from Melbourne Street) including external and internal finishes	S
The galleries' spatial qualities, natural light, and relationships to each other and sequence of spaces	S
Water Mall—volume, finishes, openings, access to daylight and views to fountains and exterior	S
Boardroom and glazing—views to and from Water Mall	S
Cafeteria—floor and ceiling finishes	S
Cafeteria fit-out	N
Sculpture Courtyard—spatial qualities, Dandelion fountains, original hard-scape and mature original plantings	S
2006 extension—key connecting device to the expanded precinct	S
Timber floors later	N
Travertine floors around Water Mall, edging to gallery walls, and cafeteria	S
Parquetry floors	S
Original furniture	S
Views from offices on levels 4 and 5 across QAG Plaza to city	S
Reception counter—Melbourne Street entrance	N
Offices—fit-outs	N
Storeroom adjacent to Pelican Pool lounge built over travertine floor	N
Conservation workshops—partitions	N
Brown room adjacent to Melbourne Street entrance	N
Cloakroom fit-out	N
Melbourne Street shop fit-out	N
Melbourne Street shop—location and floor, wall and ceiling finishes	S
Cloakroom—floor, wall and ceiling finishes	S
Collection store	N



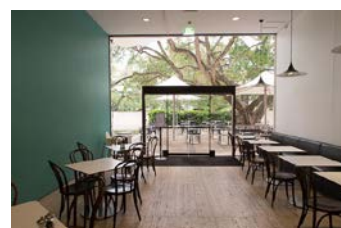
Art Gallery, gallery 6



Art Gallery, gallery 7



Art Gallery, entry 2



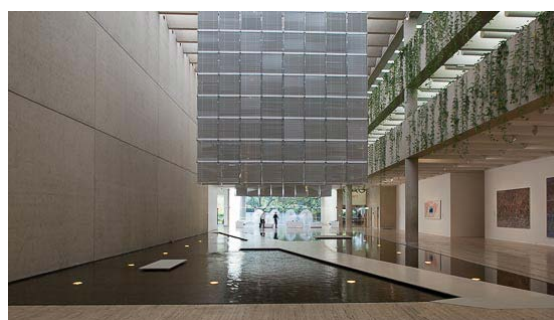
Art Gallery, cafeteria



Sculpture Courtyard



Entrance to Art Gallery from Melbourne Street



Water Mall



Lyric Theatre



Concert Hall

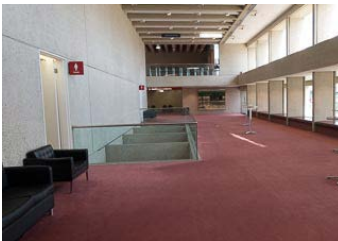
QPAC



Playhouse Theatre



Cremorne Theatre



Concert Hall foyer level 4



Lyric Theatre foyer

Lyric Theatre	S
Uninterrupted space and form of hall	
Ceiling	
Timber panelling with graduated stain	
Proscenium	
Orchestra pit	
Stages—main, rear and side	
Continental seating configuration—stalls and balconies	
Acoustic treatment	
Concert Hall	S
Uninterrupted space and form of hall	
Continental seating configuration	
Timber panelling	
Stage and thrust stage	
Ceiling	
Klais organ	
Acoustic treatment	
Cremorne Theatre	S
As space for 'experimental' theatre	
Acoustic treatment	
Cremorne Theatre—seating configuration, stage machinery, balcony	N
Tony Gould Gallery—formerly rehearsal space	N
Converted to Gallery when new rehearsal studios were built as part of Stage 5	
Playhouse Theatre	S
Uninterrupted space and form of hall	
Ceiling	
Stages—main, rear and side	
Continental seating configuration	
Public spaces (colour schemes, finishes and spatial characteristics)	S
Central foyer	
Concert Hall and Lyric Theatre foyers	
Cremorne foyer	
Playhouse foyer	
Side foyers	
Realigned central stairs and lift (2009)	N
Pacific Nexus mural in Central foyer	S

Acoustic separation Method of construction to achieve acoustic separation and isolation of theatres	S
2009 alterations of main stairs in foyer, lift	N
Central foyer—intervention in Minstrel Gallery The PWD toilet obscures views to the <i>Pacific Nexus</i> mural	I
Lyric Theatre Stage machinery, lighting and audio equipment	N
Back of house Spatial relationships of dressing rooms, workshops, loading dock, Green room, and rehearsal spaces The well planned back of house provides for very efficient operations of the four theatres.	S
Back of house Green Room, dressing room fit-outs, back of house equipment and fit-outs	N
Later bar fit-outs—main foyers level 4	N
Original bar fit-outs—Lyric Theatre balcony bar, Cremorne Theatre, Playhouse Theatre	S
Original custom-designed furniture (chairs)	S
Public spaces—ceilings with exposed concrete and skylights	S
Cascade Court shade sails	N
Cascade Court—temporary stage	N
Lightweight timber fencing bounding QPAC Green	I
Grey Street Entrance to QPAC Green	N
Cremorne Theatre entrance—temporary ramp	I
Roof structure ('Surfboard')—Melbourne Street pedestrian bridge	I
QPAC Green temporary stage	N
QPAC Green—entry structure from Grey Street and roof canopy	N
QPAC Green—cafe fit-out	N
Planter boxes—external and internal	S



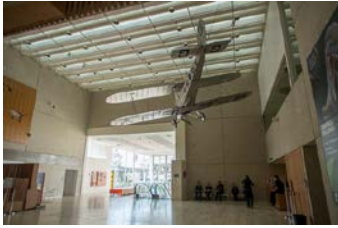
Lyric Theatre balcony



Concert Hall side foyer



Organ, Concert Hall



Museum, main entrance level 2



Museum, main entrance and shop



Museum, theatre



Museum Garden



The Edge, view from board walk



Auditorium, The Edge

Queensland Museum

External elevations, including openings and planters boxes	S
Views from the Atrium to outside across the Museum Garden	S
Exhibition areas—levels 2, 3, 4	S
Grey Street facade	S
Museum Garden—the full-height void	S
Views from offices on levels 5 and 6 to city	S
Theatre	N
2004 glazed entrance from Melbourne Street	N
2011 alterations to entrance foyer, timber cladding to walls, new stairs from Grey Street Garden, reconfiguration of escalators	N
2011 Cafeteria	N
Fit-outs—offices, library and boardroom, levels 5 and 6	N
Collection storage area levels 5 and 6	N
Loading dock and workshops	N
Track lighting	I
Outdoor areas level 4—director's courtyard and staff courtyard	S
Lightweight shade structure—staff courtyard, level 5	N
Central energy plant	N

The Edge

Building form and massing	S
Riverside elevation	S
Exposed concrete structure—ceiling walls and floor	S
Planter boxes	S
Exposed services duct-work within ceiling coffers	S
Lift room level 2—south-west corner	I
Auditorium space and mezzanine including sightlines between the spaces	S
Level 2 frameless glass facade	S
2009 alterations	N
Altered external glazing to the river elevation, level 1	I
Alterations to level 0	N

Landscape and external elements

Open spaces	S
Art Gallery Plaza	
Melbourne Street Plaza	
Museum Plaza	
QPAC Green	
Cascade Court	
Cultural Forecourt	
Open space—QAG Umbrella Plaza	S
Open space that provides views to Pelican Plaza and beyond to the CBD and South Brisbane	
Open space—Playhouse Green	N
Open space—Cultural Forecourt	S
The Cultural Forecourt is significant primarily as an open space providing views to and from QPAC and not for its landscape design.	
Embankment	S
External artworks	S
<i>Pelicans</i> (Leonard and Katherine Shillam)	
<i>Sisters</i> (Ante Dabro)	
<i>Leviathan Play</i> (Ron Robertson-Swann)	
<i>Approaching Equilibrium</i> (Anthony Pryor)	
<i>Offshoot</i> (Clement Meadmore)	
Cultural Centre Tunnel	S
Melbourne Street Tunnel	S
Cascade fountain	S
Towpath, constructed of concrete and Mt Coot-tha bluestone, in front of Embankment, The Edge and Library	S
Original outdoor furniture—timber and concrete seats, rubbish bins, drinking fountains, basalt and timber benches along towpath	S
Original plantings including <i>Tipuana tipu</i> and <i>Russelia equisetiformis</i>	S
Planter boxes	S
Original flagpoles	S
Original external freestanding lighting	S
Original light poles	S
Introduced stainless steel handrails and stair nosings to external circulation stairs	I
Ramp adjacent to Victoria Bridge	N



Cascade Fountain



Russelia equisetiformis spillage planting



Art Gallery Plaza



Sisters in Pelican Plaza



QPAC Green

II Conservation policy

The Queensland Cultural Centre is unquestionably a significant part of Queensland's cultural heritage. It is an exceptional example of the late 20th century International Style and is highly significant for its role in facilitating the development of the performing arts, visual arts, and museum and library services in Queensland.

Conserving the heritage values of the Cultural Centre is a challenging task. The site occupies approximately 7.6 hectares and is used for a wide range of purposes, with more than five million visitors per year. Responsibility for managing the place is shared between Arts Queensland, the resident statutory bodies and the Brisbane City Council (responsible for the Cultural Forecourt). This chapter provides policies and guidelines on how to ensure the cultural heritage values are maintained while undertaking maintenance, repairs, alterations and additions that may be required in response to new requirements and demands.

These policies are grouped as follows:

- Cultural Centre (1–16)
- Landscape and external spaces (17–38)
- Buildings and fabric (39–88)
- Management (89–101).

Cultural Centre

Burra Charter

The Burra Charter is the short name for a document entitled *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. This document was prepared by Australia ICOMOS to guide how places of cultural significance should be cared for. The charter spells out the processes and principles of conservation, rather than rigid rules. It emphasises the importance of a logical and disciplined approach to conservation.

The basic principles in the charter are:

- the place itself is important
- understand the significance of the place
- understand the fabric
- significance should guide decisions
- do as much as necessary, as little as possible
- keep records
- do everything in a logical order.

This Conservation Management Plan is part of the process and the above principles should form the basis for the ongoing management of the site. These principles indicate that good conservation practice is based on a thorough understanding of a place, respect for its significance and a cautious approach to adaptation.

Policy 1: Burra Charter

The principles of the Burra Charter, being an understanding of the history and significance of the place and the subsequent development of a policy framework to conserve that significance, should guide alterations and additions, repairs and maintenance to the Cultural Centre.

Design framework

The site is unified by an integrated composition of built and landscape elements, with a consistent design language and approach based on clearly identified design principles. These principles include the fusion of the built form with the landscape, the stepped cubic forms, the horizontal and monolithic character of the buildings, the regular grid defining all building components, and the simple palette of materials including exposed aggregate concrete, glass, stone, parquet, bronze and stainless steel. Any changes including alterations and additions must acknowledge and respect the design framework defined by these key principles.

Policy 2: Design framework

All alterations, additions, repairs and maintenance on the Cultural Centre should respect and acknowledge the framework of the original Gibson design:

- Simple palette of materials
- Geometry and structural grid
- Consistent colour
- Fusion of the landscape and architecture
- Horizontality and cubic form
- Hierarchy and visual relationship of spaces
- Use of natural light.

Purpose of Cultural Centre

The Cultural Centre was built specifically for four statutory bodies: Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Performing Arts Trust, Queensland Museum and State Library of Queensland.

The respective legislation includes principles to guide the bodies in achieving the objects of the Acts in the visual arts (QAGOMA); the performing arts (QPAT); in preservation, research and communication of Queensland's cultural and natural heritage (Queensland Museum); and in providing library and informational services (State Library of Queensland).¹

Policy 3: Purpose of the Cultural Centre

All future alterations and additions to the Cultural Centre should recognise and acknowledge the statutory obligations of the Queensland Art Gallery, the Queensland Performing Arts Trust, the Queensland Museum and the State Library of Queensland—specifically to:

- Provide leadership and excellence in their respective endeavours
- Affirm and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures

¹ Queensland Performing Arts Trust Act 1977; Queensland Museum Act 1970; Queensland Art Gallery Act 1987; Libraries Act 1988. The objects and guiding principles are contained in the Appendix (see p. 140).

- Support children and young people in their involvement in the arts, appreciation of Queensland's cultural and natural heritage, and understanding and use of library and information services
- Develop diverse audiences
- Develop opportunities for international collaboration, especially with the Asia–Pacific region
- Promote and present content relevant to Queensland.

The Queensland Performing Arts Trust Act 1977 includes an additional guiding principle that QPAC should be managed on a commercial basis.

Policy 4: Purpose of the Performing Arts Centre

Leadership and excellence should be demonstrated in the management, on a commercial basis, of venues used for the performing arts, for the benefit of performing artists.

Excellence

A hallmark of the design and construction of the Cultural Centre was the commitment to excellence in all facets of the project. The use and expansion of the Cultural Centre since the first stage was completed has shown a commitment to excellence whether it be in exhibitions, conservation practice or performance.

Policy 5: Standards of excellence

The practice of excellence that is evident in the design, construction and use of the Cultural Centre should continue. The planning, design and construction of repairs, maintenance, alterations and additions should be of the highest standard.

Long-term planning

The Cultural Centre was designed and built for longevity. It has demonstrated that it has fulfilled its role admirably. It is imperative that the same long-term perspective that guided the original design and construction informs decisions about future works.

Policy 6: Long-term planning

In considering any major alterations and additions to the Cultural Centre, give careful consideration to the long-term implications of change. Avoid solutions of inferior quality, that are ad hoc or that are of a limited life span.

Acknowledging traditional ownership

The Cultural Centre is located on the land once occupied by the Turrbal/Jagara peoples. It was for thousands of years the site not of gathering food resources from Maiwar (the Brisbane River), but also a place for song, dance and art. Currently there is no acknowledgement on the site of the traditional owners. While various plaques and panels throughout the site reveal something of the history of the Cultural Centre, the absence of any recognition of prior ownership is a critical issue that should be addressed.

Policy 7: Recognition of traditional ownership

The traditional ownership of the land on which the Cultural Centre is located should be appropriately recognised and acknowledged on the site.

Setting

Policy 8: Setting

Conserve the significant relationships, including both visual and physical, that the Cultural Centre has with its setting. These include:

- *The Brisbane River*
- *Melbourne Street*
- *Grey Street*
- *Mount Coot-tha and Taylor Range.*

Development in adjacent public spaces

Since the construction of the Cultural Centre in the 1980s, development in adjacent public spaces has impacted on the significant values. In particular, the major upgrade of the Cultural Centre Busway Station in 2004–5 has impacted on the significance of the Cultural Centre by impeding the visual and physical connectivity between QPAC and the Art Gallery and Museum. The lifts and roof structure installed on the Pedestrian Bridge are also intrusive.

Further works may be considered in the spaces in and around the Cultural Centre including the busway station, and Grey Street. Recent changes to the Queensland heritage place state code, which informs the assessment of development applications under the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*, now require that development on land adjoining a state heritage place 'does not have a detrimental impact on the cultural heritage significance of the place'.²

Policy 9: Development in adjacent public spaces

Proponents of any works planned in public spaces immediately adjoining the Cultural Centre should ensure that the development does not have a detrimental impact on the cultural heritage significance of the Cultural Centre in compliance with the Sustainable Planning Act 2009.

Elevations and roof form

Great care was taken in the centre's design of its overall composition, scale and form as viewed from the Brisbane River and elevated position from the city's north bank. Alterations and additions which impact on the roof form should be carefully assessed and evaluated against the significance of the building's roof form and curtilage.

This is especially important in relation to mechanical services, telecommunications, access, signage and other installations which are added to the building. Their location and installation must not be approached in a utilitarian or makeshift manner.

The original scheme presented itself to the river and Melbourne Street, and later stage 5 to Russell Street. These are the principal elevations of the Cultural Centre.

Policy 10: Cultural Centre—roof form

Respect the roof form as a designed element of the Cultural Centre.

Policy 11: Cultural Centre—elevations

Maintain the principal exterior elevations to the Cultural Centre with their recessed glazing, planter boxes and consistent use of materials.

² Queensland heritage place code, Table 9.1.3, State development assessment provisions, 5 December 2016.

Alterations and additions

The Cultural Centre was originally conceived and executed to very high standards of design and exacting workmanship. It has performed exceptionally well since the first stage was completed in 1982. However, alterations and additions have been undertaken in response to different requirements of the resident statutory bodies. It is acknowledged that, although major alterations to the building may need to occur in the future to enable ongoing use, those changes must be undertaken with caution so as not to adversely affect the building's significance.

Policy 12: Cultural Centre—major alterations

Major alterations to facilitate new requirements of the resident statutory bodies are acceptable where technical advance, expert advice, design quality and adequate resources can be employed to ensure that the cultural significance of the Cultural Centre is not diminished.

Master planning

Master planning is crucial for the Cultural Centre. The design and planning of the Cultural Centre commenced in the 1970s. Since then, the demands and expectations of the respective statutory bodies have changed in response to: the need for new approaches in the arts, museum and library services; visitor expectations; and the significant increase in patronage.

As well, the surrounding development of South Bank and South Brisbane has placed additional pressures on the Cultural Centre. Master planning is vital to ensure that it remains relevant and continues to provide the highest standards of facilities for the arts, sciences and culture, while conserving the cultural heritage significance of the place.

Policy 13: Master planning

Master planning of the Cultural Centre should be informed by, and recognise, its cultural heritage significance, the design framework and the conservation policies in this document.

Non-significant and intrusive elements and attributes

Not all parts of the Cultural Centre contribute to the significance of the place. The schedule of significance identifies these elements (see pp. 109–115).

Policy 14: Non-significant elements

Non-significant elements may be removed or altered without diminishing the cultural heritage significance of the place.

Policy 15: Intrusive elements

Consider the feasibility of removing intrusive elements when the opportunity arises in later works.

National Construction Code and access compliance

Since the completion of the main stages of the Cultural Centre in the 1980s, changes have occurred to building codes, and access requirements for disabled persons. These changes have resulted in a range of alterations and upgrades throughout the Cultural Centre. Some of these works have been undertaken with a minimal impact on the significant values, while other changes have been more intrusive.

Ensuring that the necessary compliance changes have a minimal impact on significant elements and spaces requires the utmost design skill and understanding of what is necessary for compliance.

Policy 16: National Construction Code and access compliance

Ensure that in undertaking changes necessary for National Construction Code or access compliance, every endeavour is made to ensure the original design principles are respected. Ensure that where changes are essential for compliance, alternatives are considered to ensure that the impact on cultural heritage values is minimised.

Landscape and external spaces

A fundamental principle of the design for the Cultural Centre is the fusion of landscape and architecture. The landscape was not considered an appendage to fulfill an ornamental role, but integral to the design.

After more than three decades, many parts of the present landscape continue to fulfill their original purpose, as they are being well maintained. Changes have occurred for a variety of reasons including drought, inappropriate species, and response to different uses and demands in open spaces.

The four courtyards fronting Melbourne Street are a strong urban planning design concept, providing formal pedestrian entry points to QPAC, QM and QAG. They also are an integral element of how the centre forms a 'gateway' to the Brisbane CBD when approached from Melbourne Street.

Policy 17: Landscape approach

Maintain the grade separation between vehicular and pedestrian circulation.

Ensure the key landscape principles are conserved in ongoing maintenance works and utilised in future works.

Conserve significant views and vistas associated with the landscape by appropriate management of plantings.

Conserve built elements such as paving, steps, lighting, wall and planter boxes in a consistent form, using materials that reflect the original design intent.

Plantings

The original approach to plantings throughout the Cultural Centre was similar to the approach with building materials: a simple and limited palette.

Policy 18: Plantings

Review the current plantings and assess whether later plantings are appropriate and in accord with the original landscape principles. Recommend replacement plantings if required.

New landscape elements

Policy 19: New landscape elements

Any new landscape development should not conflict with or diminish the overall significance of the landscape design, and its interrelated role with the architecture.

Playhouse Green

The Playhouse Green is an open space which contributes to the centre's landscape and architectural qualities. Original drawings indicate that this southern corner of the site was intended to be developed in Stage 5. Preliminary designs indicated that this part of the extension was to include a cinema and writers centre. This plan did not eventuate due to cost constraints.

Policy 20: Playhouse Green redevelopment

A new structure may be constructed on the Playhouse Green provided that:

- The original design framework and fabric are respected
- The height of any built form respects the height of the Lyric Theatre fly tower
- Any new development respects the building grid and the alignment to Russell and Grey Streets
- The use is appropriate as part of the Cultural Centre precinct.

QPAC Green

The QPAC Green was initially an open turfed space with Tipuana trees on edges fronting Grey and Melbourne Streets. It was intended as a shady haven with large trees and lawns for more leisurely activities.

It is a critical entry point to QPAC, being located on the corner of Melbourne and Grey Streets. As such it has become a highly activated space as pedestrian traffic in South Brisbane has increased. Furthermore, increasing demand for food and beverage outlets and informal performance spaces has also contributed to the activation of the space.

To respond to these changes, various alterations have been made to the QPAC Green, most as temporary or interim solutions. A more considered and long-term solution needs to be addressed.

Policy 21: QPAC Green

Retain as an open space.

The space could be developed with new facilities and amenities that allow its continued use as an informal performance space as well as food and beverage services provided that the original architectural and landscape design intent is respected.

Consider replacing the temporary stage, fencing and turf with a high quality, long-term solution.

Cascade Court

The Cascade Court was initially planned as a venue for outdoor entertainment, with provision for a demountable stage for twilight and evening concerts. While stage facilities have been erected in this space, the Cascade Court now principally functions as a well patronised outdoor dining area. The installation of sails was to provide shelter and a sound and lighting frame was erected for outdoor events.

Policy 22: Cascade Court

Retain as an open space.

The space could be developed with new facilities and amenities that allow its continued use as a dining area and for outdoor performances provided that the original architectural and landscape design intent is respected.

Consider replacing the lightweight shade structures, temporary stage and other temporary fittings with a high quality, long-term solution.

Cascade Fountain

The Cascade Fountain was a commissioned work undertaken by Robert Woodward, a leading Australian fountain designer. It was an integral part of the landscape, but has

not been operational since the mid 2000s. The fountain's appearance provides a formal setting and axial focal point to the courtyard, while its operation provides acoustic attenuation between the high volumes of vehicular traffic of Melbourne Street to diners inhabiting the space of the courtyard.

Policy 23: Cascade Fountain

Water should be reinstated to the Cascade Fountain.

Museum Plaza

The Museum Plaza was planned as an open space, that provided, with the pedestrian bridge over Melbourne Street, a symbolic gateway to the city centre.

Alterations were made to the plantings and hard landscape in this area when a new entrance to the Museum was constructed in 2003.

Policy 24: Museum Plaza

Retain the Museum Plaza as a civic scale external space.

Pyramid Plaza

The Pyramid Plaza is an open space above the Stanley Place entrance to the Art Gallery. It is adjacent to the Museum cafeteria. It was not part of the original design and consists of a concrete pavement with a glass pyramid-shaped skylight in the middle. Currently, the main use of the space is for access to and from the lift on the northern corner of the plaza.

Policy 25: Pyramid Plaza

Development within the Pyramid Plaza should not diminish the original design intent of the significant adjacent spaces including the Art Gallery Sculpture Courtyard and the Pedestrian Mall.

Pelican Plaza

The Pelican Plaza was designed as a contemplative space intended to accommodate artworks. It has remained substantially unaltered since 1985 when the two artworks were installed.

Policy 26: Pelican Plaza

Conserve the Pelican Plaza as an external contemplative space free of commercial activation.

Art Gallery Plaza

Policy 27: Art Gallery Plaza

Conserve the Art Gallery Plaza as an external reflective space and free of commercial activation.

The Embankment

Policy 28: The Embankment

Conserve the Embankment as a key open space linked to the river's edge.

Planter boxes

The planter boxes in front of most openings were a key aspect of the design and an expression of the core design principle of the fusion of landscape and architecture.

Policy 29: Planter boxes

Reinstate where feasible 'spillage' plantings in external and internal planter boxes.

External artworks

The five artworks commissioned in 1984–85 make an important contribution to the significance of the Cultural Centre. While Arts Queensland does possess its own small art collection, it is somewhat anomalous for Arts Queensland to own major outdoor public artworks located in close proximity to the grounds of the Queensland Art Gallery. Most visitors to the Gallery would usually assume that these significant works belong to the Art Gallery's collection.

QAGOMA is the appropriate institution to collect, conserve, manage, and interpret significant artworks of this kind in state government ownership. It makes reasonable sense therefore to transfer the ownership of these five artworks to QAGOMA as it is best placed for this responsibility.

Policy 30: External artworks

Conserve the five original 1985 commissioned artworks. Consider transfer of ownership to the QAGOMA.

Policy 31: Artworks—interpretation

Ensure that artworks are correctly identified and labelled, with a consistent approach across the site.

The original report on the commissioning and location of external artworks in 1985 noted that additional artworks could be located within the Cultural Centre. The report was clear that the five commissioned works were not necessarily the limit of what could be displayed.

Policy 32: New external artworks

New artworks could be located in external spaces throughout the Cultural Centre provided that they are of the highest quality and sited appropriately.

Banners, posters and digital displays

Banners and posters were an original design element integrated into the buildings and landscape, as were banner poles advertising upcoming events and exhibitions. They are now a prominent feature on different parts of the Cultural Centre, advertising forthcoming performances, exhibitions and events. The use of banners and posters has increased substantially from the 1980s. The banners and posters do serve an important function, not just in promoting what is happening at the Cultural Centre, but in denoting that it is an active, dynamic place in constant use.

With changes in technology, a greater use of digital technologies is likely to be considered.

Policy 33: Banners and posters

The size and detailing of banners, posters and digital technologies should be of the highest standard, be consistent with the design intent, and the location should not diminish or compromise the design qualities of the Cultural Centre.

External lighting and projected lighting**Policy 34: External lighting and projected lighting**

External and projected lighting should respect the design qualities of the Cultural Centre.

Bronze railings

The stepped and stepping levels of the Cultural Centre landscape are the result of an era when universal access was less dominant as a constraint on spatial design. Although some buildings and spaces have been well designed to offer accessibility, the dominant motif of broad steps and retaining edges is one that is becoming increasingly rare in public spaces. This is a key attribute of the Cultural Centre that should be respected, not eliminated in future designs. With sensitive design, it is possible to accommodate contemporary access requirements while respecting the original design language.

Simple bronze railings with concealed lighting on external steps were a signature element throughout the site. These railings are no longer code compliant and present a challenge as to how they can be made compliant while respecting the original design intent. Stainless steel railings have been added to some of the original railings to address the issue, but detract from the significance of the original design.

Policy 35: Bronze railings—code compliance

Ensure that changes to the bronze railings, both external and internal, for code compliance are as unintrusive as possible and have minimal impact on the significance of these important external elements.

Maintain the concealed lighting in the railings.

Cultural Forecourt

The Cultural Forecourt was constructed following Expo '88. The original QCC master plan envisaged this space as an external open space, although it was compromised by the reorientation of Stanley Street and as such was truncated by roadways.

The landscape design and plant selections made within the Cultural Forecourt took cues from the QCC design.

Its inclusion within the heritage boundary aligns with the perimeter of the sub-grade car park and enhances the curtilage and sightlines to QPAC from the river and city beyond.

Policy 36: Cultural Forecourt—open space

The Cultural Forecourt should be retained principally as an open space. The current use as an event space with temporary structures is appropriate.

Policy 37: Management of vegetation

Ensure that vegetation in the Cultural Forecourt is maintained to provide shade and pedestrian amenity.

Ensure existing trees within the Cultural Forecourt are managed to maintain tree health, and a balance between canopy coverage, pedestrian amenity and significant views.

Policy 38: Cultural Forecourt—new structures

New structures within the Cultural Forecourt should be consistent with a site-wide approach to new external works and should not substantially obscure existing sightlines to QPAC from the river and city beyond.

Buildings and fabric

Fabric

As primary material becomes damaged through use, time or alteration, it is intended that replacement fabric is procured which matches the original. High traffic floor finishes around the Water Mall have over time become damaged through the use of mechanical equipment for the installation of exhibitions and building maintenance. Replacement travertine that has to date been selected for use is not a true match to the original's colour or texture, which erodes the overall nature of a highly significant space.

In areas where alterations have occurred to the original sandblasted finish concrete material, a replacement synthetic product has been used which attempts to match the original colour and texture. The use of this product across the site should be discontinued.

Policy 39: Fabric

Retain the simple and clearly defined original material palette of primary fabric, finishes and plantings.

Minimise alterations to the primary fabric that were designed to be permanent. These materials include:

- Sandblasted in situ concrete
- Travertine
- Glass
- Parquetry
- Bronze
- Carpet of a consistent colour and weave in public areas.

Policy 40: Fabric samples and specifications

Maintain the collection of original fabric samples so that damaged or weathered fabric may be reproduced or sourced to a sample which matches the original.

Maintain and make accessible specifications of original materials.

Furniture

Custom designed furniture, originally for both indoor and outdoors uses, was an integral part of the Cultural Centre when it was completed. This furniture included indoor seating and tables, as well as benches, drinking fountains and bins in outdoor spaces.

Policy 41: Furniture

Retain original furniture where possible and in originally intended location. Only dispose of when its original function is no longer required or the item is not fit for contemporary use.

The integration of furniture in the design process should continue with the acquisition of new furniture. This process of maintaining excellence in design and appropriateness of material selection should be continued.

Policy 42: New furniture

Consider commissioning the design of new furniture when it is necessary to replace original custom-designed furniture.

New standard furniture should reflect the design framework of the Cultural Centre, and be consistent of the highest quality.

Concrete

Policy 43: Maintenance and repairs of concrete

The repair and replacement of concrete elements should be undertaken in accordance with the original specifications.

Policy 44: Cleaning concrete

Concrete should be cleaned in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Landscape Heritage Handbook.

Back of house spaces

Policy 45: Back of house spaces

Refurbishment of back of house and utilitarian spaces should follow the original design intent of a neutral and simple palette using high quality materials.

Public toilets

Public toilets throughout the Cultural Centre were finished with high quality, neutral, utilitarian fittings, fixtures and materials palette.

Policy 46: Public toilets

Refurbishment of public toilets should follow the original design intent of a neutral and simple palette using high quality materials.

Signage

Limited signage and wayfinding was incorporated into the original design and construction stages. In 1992 Minale, Tatterfield, Bryce and Partners was commissioned to develop building signage and wayfinding. The firm was responsible for the distinctive bronze building signage and other wayfinding. Subsequently signage has been added to the site for various purposes with contrasting graphic styles, resulting in a lack of consistency across the site.

Policy 47: Signage

The Cultural Centre signage and wayfinding should be of the highest standard and consistent throughout the site.

Policy 48: Monumental lettering

The bronze lettering with 'Gill Sans Caps' typeface identifying the main buildings, commissioned and installed in 1992, should be conserved.

Art Gallery

Water Mall

The elevated and open view across the Water Mall's expanse through to the principal external space of the Sculpture Courtyard is of great importance. This sequence of spaces serves to orientate visitors and provides a central wayfinding mechanism for the building's internal circulation.

Policy 49: Art Gallery—Water Mall

Maintain the Water Mall as the link between the galleries' circulation and the heart of the Art Gallery.

Maintain the Water Mall as a space for the exhibition of artworks as originally intended.

Maintain the openings which enable filtered daylight to enter the Water Mall.

Maintain the Water Mall as a water feature both within the Art Gallery and through its exterior extensions to the north and south.

Ensure water is not restricted to this highly significant element.

Maintain the internal spillage planting within the Water Mall. No artificial planting should be considered.

Artwork fixing locations

From inception, the Water Mall was intended as a space for the exhibition of artworks. Artworks have been intermittently hung from the ceiling above the main Water Mall space. Fixings have been inserted in the concrete beams on an as-needs basis.

Policy 50: Water Mall ceiling—fixings

Regularise the location of fixings in the Water Mall ceilings to avoid further ad hoc insertions.

New installations within the Water Mall requiring ceiling fixing points should be configured to utilise regularised fixing location points.

Original openings

Spatial permeability of the interior spaces and external circulation create important vistas and views, and are means of assisting site-wide wayfinding. The reinstatement and retention of original openings which enable these functions will be of benefit to preserving the site's significance.

Policy 51: Art Gallery—original openings

Reinstate the original openings connecting Galleries 11, 12 and 13, with the adjacent external Pedestrian Mall circulation.

Maintain external windows and internal openings throughout as they facilitate way-finding and visual relief.

The closure or obscuring of openings if required for a particular exhibition should only be temporary.

Sculpture Courtyard

As the primary exterior space of the Art Gallery's original design, the Sculpture Courtyard forms an integral element to the spatial qualities of the building and a contemplative space.

Policy 52: Art Gallery—Sculpture Courtyard

Maintain the function of the Sculpture Courtyard as a place for the installation of external artworks. Ensure the continued functionality of the Water Mall and fountains.

The courtyard's overall scale, form and significant plantings should be retained.

Art Gallery circulation

Policy 53: Art Gallery—primary circulation

Consider reinstating the original public circulation which enables visitors to circulate around the Water Mall at an elevated level.

Cafeteria

Part of the original design for the Art Gallery were facilities for visitors for rest and refreshments.

Policy 54: Art Gallery—cafeteria

Retain the cafeteria in its location and function as a place of food and beverage.

Refurbishment works to maintain the cafe's functionality should maintain a simple design palette, consistent with the original design intent.

QPAC

Lyric Theatre

The Lyric Theatre is a highly successful and functional performance space which has its own unique identity defined by its function and a composition of elements, including the colour scheme and material palette selection. Alterations to the Lyric Theatre have included improvements to the acoustic treatment, seating changes for PWD access, and in 2012 changes to the stage to increase flexibility.

Policy 55: Lyric Theatre—function

The function of the Lyric Theatre for opera, musicals, ballet, dance and large-scale drama should continue. New functions can be also accommodated provided they respect the original intended use of the space and do not permanently impact upon significant fabric.

Policy 56: Lyric Theatre—form

The form of the space should be conserved.

Policy 57: Lyric Theatre—primary elements

The primary elements and their relationships that define the identity of the Lyric Theatre should be conserved, including the stalls, balconies, proscenium, stage, orchestra pit, timber-wall panelling and ceiling.

Policy 58: Lyric Theatre—seating

The seating, including the upholstery, could be upgraded to meet the requirements and functions of a contemporary Lyric Theatre provided it respects the overall original design intent, the identity of the space, and have minimal impact on the significant fabric.

Policy 59: Lyric Theatre—acoustics and services

Acoustics and services could be upgraded to meet the requirements for contemporary Lyric Theatre function provided they respect the overall original design intent and identity of the space.

Policy 60: Lyric Theatre—future works

Future works to meet the requirements of a contemporary theatre should respect the original design intent and identity of the space, and have minimal impact on the significant fabric.

Concert Hall

The Concert Hall is a highly successful and functional performance space which has been more recently modified to facilitate a wider range of functions. Like the Lyric Theatre, its identity is defined by its function, as well as a composition of elements including the form of the space, seating arrangement, the colour scheme and materials. The Klais organ is an outstanding instrument and an integral design element, which strongly defines the identity and function of the Concert Hall. Changes to functional attributes of the space through changing performance needs may require future changes within the space.

The space has undergone some changes, and further changes may be necessary to upgrade equipment, seating and staging. Changes should only be made which retain the original design intent and acoustic properties to ensure its original intended use remains.

Policy 61: Concert Hall—function

The function of the Concert Hall for orchestral, chamber and choral works should continue. New performing arts uses can be also accommodated provided they respect the original intended function of the space.

Policy 62: Concert Hall—Klais organ

The Klais organ should be retained and the current approach to regular maintenance continued.

Policy 63: Concert Hall—form

The form of the space and primary elements that define the identity of the Concert Hall should be retained and conserved, including the Klais organ, the thrust stage, timber-wall panelling, ceiling and seating configuration.

Policy 64: Concert Hall—seating

The seating, including the upholstery could be upgraded in the future to meet the requirements and functions of a contemporary concert hall provided it respects the overall original design intent and identity of the space, and have minimal impact on the significant fabric.

The original continental configuration should be retained.

Policy 65: Concert Hall—acoustics and services

Acoustics and services could be upgraded to meet the requirements for a contemporary concert hall function provided they respect the overall original design intent and identity of the space, and have minimal impact on the significant fabric.

Policy 66: Concert Hall—future works

Future works to meet the requirements of a contemporary concert hall should respect the original design intent and identity of the space, and have minimal impact on the significant fabric.

Cremorne Theatre

The Cremorne Theatre was designed as a more informal, 'experimental' space. The seating, lighting and audio were intended to be flexible and to create a functional 'studio' character. This approach is reflected in the restrained palette of materials, colours and finishes.

Although the Cremorne Theatre was intended to be flexible, when completed the space had more constraints than anticipated. The clearance between the balcony and the lower level disrupted sightlines when a stage is installed. For various reasons, including

safety and compliance, the original retractable seating was replaced within months of opening. The theatre is 15 metres wide, and should really have been 6 metres wider to function effectively.

Policy 67: Cremorne Theatre—function

The original intended purpose of the Cremorne Theatre as a flexible space for smaller and more experimental theatre performances should guide any adaptive works. Other performing arts uses in this space could be considered.

Policy 68: Cremorne Theatre—form

The form of the space should be conserved.

Policy 69: Cremorne Theatre—future works

The stage, seating, balconies and services could be reconfigured to meet the requirements and function for a contemporary experimental theatre space.

Playhouse Theatre

The Playhouse Theatre was purpose-built as a full-scale drama theatre and performance space. Like the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall it has its own identity defined by its function, as well as a composition of elements including the form of the space, the relationship of the stalls and balconies to the stage for live theatre, the colour scheme and materials selection.

Changes to the Playhouse Theatre will likely be required to facilitate new technology in lighting and sound, seating and staging.

Policy 70: Playhouse Theatre—function

The function of the Playhouse Theatre for full-scale drama should continue. New functions can also be accommodated provided they respect the original function of the space and have minimal impact on the significant fabric.

Policy 71: Playhouse Theatre—form

The form of the space should be conserved.

Policy 72: Playhouse Theatre—seating

The seating, including the upholstery, could be upgraded to meet the requirements and function for a contemporary theatre provided it respects the original design intent, colour palette and identity of the space.

Policy 73: Playhouse Theatre—acoustics and services

Acoustics and services could be upgraded to meet the requirements for a contemporary theatre function provided they respect the original design intent and identity of the space.

Public foyers (other than central foyer)

The public foyers were designed as continuous open circulation and gathering spaces. These qualities were reinforced through the use of a consistent materials and restrained colour palette.

Recent refurbishments have changed the carpets and bar finishes to provide individual character and finishes palette for the Lyric Theatre and Concert Hall bar areas at level 4.

Policy 74: Public foyers—use

The use of the public foyers as arrival, circulation and gathering spaces to service the public for theatre functions should continue.

The public foyer spaces should remain open and connected.

Refurbishment of some of the public foyers and bar have been undertaken using a different colour palette.

Consistency of the finishes material palette is the key design feature which impacts upon the significance of the place. The actual colour is a design issue and may be altered during future refurbishment or alterations.

Policy 75: Public foyers—materials

The simple materials and colour palette that defines these spaces should be retained. Refurbishment could consider reversing later changes to these spaces to reinstate the original design intent, which included a consistent palette of finishes and colours.

Policy 76: Public foyers—new elements

Avoid the installation of new kiosks and temporary stands that might obstruct and impact on the open and connected nature of the public foyers.

Ensure that recently introduced elements do not impact on the significance and original design intent of the public foyer spaces.

Central foyer

The central foyer was designed to be the central circulation, gathering and performance space linking the Lyric Theatre to the Concert Hall. The naturally top-lit stepped space is focused on a Minstrel Gallery with the *Pacific Nexus* mural by Lawrence Dawes as the backdrop. The toilet addition has in-filled the former stage area and impacts on the viewing of the mural.

Policy 77: Central foyer—use

The use of the central foyer as circulation, gathering and performance space to service the public for theatre functions should continue. The central foyer space should remain open and connected.

Policy 78: Central foyer—materials

The simple materials and colour palette that define this space should be retained. Refurbishment should consider the reversal of later changes to this space to reinstate the original design intent, which included a consistent palette of finishes and colours.

Back of house spaces

The back of house spaces—circulation, dressing rooms, offices, green room, toilets and kitchens—were designed and planned as highly functional utilitarian spaces to support performers, technicians and staff to enable the theatres to function to the highest standards.

These spaces have been refurbished to accommodate the changing needs of the theatre back of house support function. The back of house spaces use functional materials and a simple colour palette.

Policy 79: Back of house spaces

The back of house spaces could be refurbished to accommodate the changing needs of theatre support. Refurbishment should respect the original design intent for the back of house spaces with utilitarian materials and a simple colour palette.

Policy 80: Back of house spaces—alternative uses

Back of house spaces could be adapted for alternative uses should their original function become obsolete or no longer required.

Loading dock, workshop and sound-locks

The centrally located loading dock was designed to facilitate fast and efficient movement of stage equipment in and out with access directly to the four theatres. This successful arrangement has contributed toward the building's reputation as an excellent performing arts facility.

Policy 81: Loading dock, workshops and sound-locks

The arrangement of loading dock, sound-locks and workshops should be retained. These areas are utilitarian and could be refurbished to enable changes in back of house support requirements.

Function room and terrace

The use of the function room and terrace has expanded to include the recent marquee to accommodate larger numbers.

Policy 82: Function terrace

A more permanent roof to the outdoor area of the function terrace could be considered provided that it is designed in a manner that acknowledges and respects the original design intent.

Queensland Museum

The Museum was opened in 1986 and comprised six levels. The principal exhibition spaces were located on levels 2, 3 and 4 with collection stores and office on levels 5 and 6. Since 1986, additions and alteration have been undertaken to the building in response to changing uses, visitor expectations and approaches to exhibitions. Some changes have not impacted on the significance of the building, while others have been intrusive or have not achieved their anticipated purpose.

Policy 83: Alterations and additions

The alterations and additions undertaken in 2004 and 2011–12 are not significant and could be reversed.

Policy 84: Exhibition spaces

Levels 2, 3 and 4 were intentionally designed to be flexible exhibition spaces. This practice should continue.

Level 1 has been adapted for use as the Science Centre and could be adapted for other uses.

Museum theatre

The Museum theatre on level 2 has served as a venue for lectures and presentations. It is a functional space and could be adapted for other uses.

Policy 85: Museum theatre

The Museum theatre could be adapted for other uses.

Museum Garden (formerly Geological Garden)

The Museum Garden was designed as an innovative external exhibition space. The original landscaping was to accommodate two large dinosaur models that would be visible to passing traffic and clearly identify the building as a Museum, and would provide a stimulating entrance for school groups that would be accessing the building from Grey Street. It was originally known as the Dinosaur Garden, but more recently it was redeveloped and became the Energex Playasaurus Place. The original concept of using this space as an innovative external exhibition space is clearly appropriate.

Policy 86: Museum Garden

The Museum Garden is a significant indoor/outdoor space and an important element of the Grey Street facade and should not be enclosed.

The space could be adapted for any large-scale exhibition material that provides impact and identity to the Grey Street facade.

The Edge

The function of The Edge has changed several times, and as such this space is the most altered in relation to original planning and detailing of those spaces within the heritage boundary. The original concept of a 'function' space adjacent to the Brisbane River is of significance and future alterations should retain public access and use of the building.

Alterations to The Edge in 2009 significantly altered the external appearance of the original design when viewed from the river elevation. The addition of an internal lift has compromised the eastern elevation and significantly alters the building's appearance when approached from the Art Gallery. The fit-out to the lower level, while impacting little to the building's architectural significance, is located below flood levels.

Policy 87: The Edge—additions

Additions to the exterior of The Edge must respect the original form, massing and horizontality, and its relationship to the Art Gallery and Museum building.

Policy 88: The Edge—internal alterations

Alterations to the existing interior spaces within The Edge are possible. Where possible, retain original fabric and utilise the spatial qualities defined within the building's structural grid, openings and volume.

Management

Expert advice

To ensure that the special qualities of the Cultural Centre, including design excellence, are appropriately conserved and respected, in particular the architecture and landscape, specialist advice is essential. Specialist advice is necessary to assist in decision-making, not only about the appropriateness of alterations and additions and how they adhere to the design principles, but also on other issues such as signage, banners and digital displays, security, BCA/access compliance, furniture and quality assurance.

Specialist advice is particularly crucial with major projects, and should have input into the development of the brief, development of conceptual design, the heritage impact statement, and throughout the construction phase of the project. Specialist advice is also crucial to inform Arts Queensland in responding to the impact of projects adjacent to the Precinct.

An expert panel should review proposed development or changes to the Cultural Centre and advise how this may advance the principles of the CMP in consideration of architectural, design and cultural heritage. Members of the panel should have extensive knowledge of, and experience in, one or more of disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, creative arts, cultural institutions and conservation management.

Policy 89: Expert advice

Specialist advice must be sought from an expert panel for all proposals for alterations or additions proposed to the Cultural Centre that would impact on the cultural heritage significance and the original design principles, specifically as they relate to the architectural and landscape attributes.

Fabric assessment

The schedule of significant elements on pp. 109–115 focuses on the major elements and groups of elements. Undertaking a detailed assessment of the significant fabric should be part of the ongoing management of the place.

Policy 90: Fabric assessment

Develop detailed assessment of fabric to assist in the management of the heritage values of the Cultural Centre. This assessment should include:

- *Fittings and fixtures*
- *Floor finishes*
- *Hard and soft landscape elements*
- *Doors and windows*
- *Lighting—loose and fixed*
- *Furniture*
- *Signage and wayfinding.*

Quality assurance

Given the diverse range of personnel and bodies responsible for undertaking maintenance, repairs and new works, maintaining the highest standard of work across the site is a challenge. While quality assurance is already established with contractors and tradespeople on the site, it is important that the current procedures are reviewed and updated if necessary.

Policy 91: Quality assurance

Establish procedures and protocols for monitoring:

- *Maintenance and repairs to ensure they are undertaken as scheduled and to the highest standard, and in accord with the Heritage Manual.*
- *The quality of new works or changes to the place.*

Work methods

The problem of inadvertent damage to fabric in everyday operations, such as the use of machinery and inappropriate cleaning methods, needs to be controlled and avoided.

Policy 92: Work methods

Ensure that any maintenance work or repairs within areas with significant fabric does not damage significant fabric and are in accordance with the Heritage Manual.

Keeping records

It is important to keep records of changes to the Cultural Centre. The history of different bodies responsible for the site has resulted in documents, specifications, images located in various repositories and offices.

Policy 93: Records

Keep and archive all relevant and important documents relating to the construction and maintenance of the Cultural Centre.

Implement systems for identifying and organising all records relevant to the conservation of the Cultural Centre.

Develop systems for making information about the Cultural Centre readily accessible for all users.

Oral history

Despite the extensive documentation about the design and construction of the Queensland Cultural Centre, some aspects have not been well documented. In particular, the knowledge of those who worked on the design and construction of the building or staff who have worked on maintaining the building since the 1980s.

Policy 94: Oral history project

Consider implementing an oral history program to record the stories and memories of key people involved in the design, construction and maintenance of the Cultural Centre.

Interpretation strategy

Interpretation should be a high priority in the management of the Cultural Centre, but frequently other more urgent needs take precedence.

There is a range of stories and themes that should be interpreted for staff and the public, including the history of the place and its heritage values.

Interpretation is invaluable in giving users an understanding of the significance of the Cultural Centre.

Policy 95: Interpretation strategy

Ensure that interpretation of the history and significance of the Cultural Centre is readily available for visitors and staff.

Specialist advice and skills

Policy 96: Practice

New work should be guided and designed by people with experience and a proven record of design excellence and understanding of the conservation of heritage places.

Policy 97: Appropriate skills and experience

Any documentation and repairs of significant fabric should be undertaken by people with relevant and appropriate experience and skills.

Awareness and coordination of heritage issues

Conservation management plans are not much use if they just sit on shelves and are unread. A crucial part of conserving the significant values of the place is to ensure that all personnel involved with the maintenance, repairs and changes are aware of what is important about the Cultural Centre.

It is also important that there is a clear understanding of what the responsibilities are for management and other staff.

Policy 98: Heritage training and awareness

A heritage component should be incorporated into the induction and training of senior staff and all involved in any repair, maintenance or changes to the building and its setting, and also those involved in events, marketing and presentation. This includes building workers, event workers, marketing and commercial partnerships, and tourist operators.

Policy 99: Responsibility for heritage

Responsibility for heritage matters rests with all those involved with the Cultural Centre, from senior management to tradespeople and maintenance staff, and contractors. This responsibility should be included in job descriptions for all positions.

Review of Conservation Management Plan

While conservation management plans are intended to provide guidance for both short- and long-term management of a heritage place, it is difficult to anticipate all future needs and issues. Depending on the place, a conservation management plan can remain as a usable document for an extended period. If extensive changes have occurred or major redevelopment is proposed, reviewing and updating the Conservation Management Plan should be undertaken.

Policy 100: Review of Conservation Management Plan

This Conservation Management Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years, or sooner if the policies do not adequately address changes to the place or provide sufficient guidance for development of the place.

Making the Conservation Management Plan accessible

This Conservation Management Plan is intended for use by a wide range of user groups and should be made as accessible as possible. An important part of the conservation process is to inform what is significant about a place.

Policy 101: Make the Conservation Management Plan accessible

Make this Conservation Management Plan available and accessible to all people who make decisions about the management of the Cultural Centre.

Appendix

Glossary—Heritage conservation terms

The Burra Charter (the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*) was first adopted in 1979 and included a set of terms and definitions that have become standard in heritage conservation practice throughout Australia. The following definitions from the *Burra Charter* (2013) have been used.

Adaptation means changing a place to suit the existing use or a proposed use.

Associations mean the connections that exist between people and a place.

Compatible use means a use which respects the cultural significance of a place. Such a use involves no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance.

Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

Fabric means all the physical material of the place including elements, fixtures, contents and objects.

Interpretation means all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place.

Maintenance means the continuous protective care of a place, and its setting. Maintenance is to be distinguished from repair which involves restoration or reconstruction.

Meanings denote what a place signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses to people.

Place means a geographically defined area. It may include elements, objects, spaces and views. Place may have tangible and intangible dimensions.

Preservation means maintaining a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

Restoration means returning a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing elements without the introduction of new material.

Setting means the immediate and extended environment of a place that is part of or contributes to its cultural significance and distinctive character.

Use means the functions of a place, including the activities and traditional and customary practices that may occur at the place or are dependent on the place.

Legislation—guiding principles for statutory bodies

The four statutory bodies that occupy the Queensland Cultural Centre are governed by legislation that include guiding principles for each body.

Queensland Performing Arts Trust Act 1977

1A Object of Act

The object of this Act is to contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders.

1B Guiding principles for achieving the object

The principles intended to guide the achievement of the object of the Act are the following—

- (a) leadership and excellence should be provided in the performing arts;
- (b) leadership and excellence should be demonstrated in the management, on a commercial basis, of venues used for the performing arts, for the benefit of performing artists;
- (c) there should be responsiveness to the needs of communities in regional and outer metropolitan areas;
- (d) respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures should be affirmed;
- (e) children and young people should be supported in their appreciation of, and involvement in, the performing arts;
- (f) diverse audiences should be developed;
- (g) capabilities for life-long learning about the performing arts should be developed;
- (h) opportunities should be developed for international collaboration and for cultural exports, especially to the Asia-Pacific region;
- (i) content relevant to Queensland should be promoted and presented.

Queensland Art Gallery Act 1987

1A Object of Act

The object of this Act is to contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders.

1B Guiding principles for achieving the object

The principles intended to guide the achievement of the object of the Act are the following—

- (a) leadership and excellence should be provided in the visual arts;
- (b) there should be responsiveness to the needs of communities in regional and outer metropolitan areas;
- (c) respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures should be affirmed;
- (d) children and young people should be supported in their appreciation of, and involvement in, the visual arts;
- (e) diverse audiences should be developed;
- (f) capabilities for life-long learning about the visual arts should be developed;
- (g) opportunities should be developed for international collaboration and for cultural exports, especially to the Asia-Pacific region;
- (h) content relevant to Queensland should be promoted and presented.

Queensland Museum Act 1970

1A Object of Act

The object of this Act is to contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders.

1B Guiding principles for achieving the object

The principles intended to guide the achievement of the object of the Act are the following—

- (a) leadership and excellence should be provided in the preservation, research and communication of Queensland's cultural and natural heritage;
- (b) there should be responsiveness to the needs of communities in regional and outer metropolitan areas;
- (c) respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures should be affirmed;
- (d) children and young people should be supported in their appreciation of Queensland's cultural and natural heritage;
- (e) diverse audiences should be developed;
- (f) capabilities for life-long learning about the Queensland's cultural and natural heritage should be developed;
- (g) opportunities should be developed for international collaboration and for cultural exports, especially to the Asia-Pacific region;
- (h) content relevant to Queensland should be promoted and presented.

Libraries Act 1988

1A Object of Act

The object of this Act is to contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders.

1B Guiding principles for achieving the object

The principles intended to guide the achievement of the object of the Act are the following—

- (a) leadership and excellence should be demonstrated in providing library and informational services;
- (b) there should be responsiveness to the needs of communities in regional and outer metropolitan areas;
- (c) respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures should be affirmed;
- (d) children and young people should be supported in their understanding and use of library and informational services;
- (e) diverse audiences should be developed;
- (f) capabilities for life-long learning about library and informational services should be developed;
- (g) opportunities should be developed for international collaboration and for cultural exports, especially to the Asia-Pacific region;
- (h) content relevant to Queensland should be collected, preserved, promoted and made accessible.

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