

# Wangaratta Creative Precinct

**Business Case and Concept Design Summary** 



# Wangaratta **Creative Precinct**

**Business Case and Concept Design Summary** 

# **Acknowledgement to Country**

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands, on which we meet.

We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and celebrate and respect their continuing cultures.

This Summary Report provides an overview and key highlights of the research and work undertaken in the Wangaratta Creative Precinct (WCP) Business Case and Concept Design completed in 2022.

This key document will accompany the WCP Business Case to enable easy access, guidance and references for the Wangaratta community, stakeholder groups and future funding support.

This important research is the outcome of an identified need and vision for the creative services in the Wangaratta CBD that service the Rural City of Wangaratta and the surrounding region.

Now that the Business Case is complete, the final step of broader community consultation will begin. A number of community consultation sessions will be delivered and access to the full report will be available via Council's website and satellite sites including, the Wangaratta Performing Arts and Conventions Centre, and Wangaratta Art Gallery.

Hard copies of the Business Case and Concept Designs will also be available on request for pick up at the Council Offices.

Find the report online here:

wangaratta.vic.gov.au/Development/Our-projects/ **Creative-Precinct** 

Requests for hard copies can be emailed to: info.creativeprecinct@wangaratta.vic.gov.au

We encourage all support, feedback and questions.

Public submissions are open from Monday 31 October to Monday 28 November 2022







Contents	Page
1. Introduction	4
2. Background and Scope	5
3. What will the project achieve?	6
4. Benefits of the precinct development	8
5. How we approached the brief	10
6. What we found out: The outcome of the report	12
7. How we engaged with the community and what they told us	13
8. What are some of the considerations?	15
9. Site Analysis and Concept Designs	16
10. Development Options	18
11. Activity Level and Attendance Numbers	19
12. How the Wangaratta Creative Precinct fits into our broader strategic context	22
13. Why Invest in Creative industries?	25
14. Cultural Tourism	26
15. Return on investment from arts and cultural venues	27
16. Economic Impacts – Jobs	28
17. How will the Creative Precinct be Funded?	29
18. Concept Designs	30
19. Have Your Say	36





The Wangaratta Creative Precinct is a vision that sees the co-development of the Wangaratta Art Gallery with the Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre, with the inclusion of a contemporary Visitor Information Hub, creating a holistic and vibrant creative precinct.

The current site holds two successful, yet independent cultural services offering diverse and inspiring programming to its community and visitors to the region. The two venues both face major barriers of accessibility, synergy and activation for local visitors and tourists.



### **Barriers and Constraints**

- Accessibility, synergy and activation for visitors
- Lack of space for expansion of programming and major exhibitions

The recently completed Wangaratta Creative Precinct Business Case and Concept Design project, plans for the future growth of Wangaratta's Creative and Cultural economies, it plans for the continued activation of the CBD precinct area of Wangaratta and directly links the existing cultural infrastructure to the successful Railway Precinct Project completed in May 2021. Connecting the Creative Precinct to the Railway Precinct through Docker and Norton Streets and investing in our Cultural services will bring many opportunities to expand and enhance our creative offerings in Wangaratta. It will also incorporate a modernised Visitor Information Centre, promoting a contemporary visitor and tourist experience to our dynamic regional city.





# Background & Scope

Wangaratta's creative precinct is located along Ford Street and Ovens Street and includes notable landmarks such as the towering Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral (built between 1908 and 1909), St Patricks Church (construction commenced in 1865), the Wangaratta Art Gallery (former Presbyterian church which was built between 1898 and 1899), and the modern Wangaratta Performing Arts & Convention Centre opened in 2009.

Wangaratta Council has completed the Wangaratta Art Gallery Feasibility Redevelopment Study and the WPACC Business Development Study in the last 12-18 months. During the research and development of these two documents there were several common issues raised as well as some synergies identified for co-development. The findings and outcomes of these two studies support the model of remaining on site and enhancing and extending the current creative services within the current precinct.





Service the needs of the immediate community



Enhance existing facilities



Expand diversity and creative educational opportunities for all ages



Amplify local economies



Improve the wellbeing and output of a regional community

> What will the project achieve?

Arts and culture are already a strength within Wangaratta and play a vital role in the success of the sense of place. Adding to and enhancing existing cultural facilities and filling current gaps would be a game changer in repositioning the city as a...



# major creative centre.

Enhancing and unlocking important offerings of cultural economies will attract new residents and improve the region's growth. It will be a tourism driver to the city and will tap into the cultural tourism growth market of the current desire for arts and cultural experiences, day trips and overnight stays.

# Benefits of the precinct development:



Position Wangaratta as an arts and culture destination of state-wide significance



Set apart the creative precinct as a regional arts destination with a unique setting, program, collection and landmark buildings.



Cater for regional tours of arts festivals such as, Opera Australia, Melbourne International Film Festival, Melbourne International Comedy Festival and the Archibald Prize



Convey cultural identity by re-telling stories, responding to local history and the local environment



Support and bring opportunities to the local arts community



Bring life to the streets



The re-imagined Creative
Precinct will enable new
public art programs and
artworks, permanent
indoor and outdoor
galleries and enable new
ways to experience music,
art and film and interactive
artworks with sound, light
and technology utilising
both high tech and low-tech
treatments and include
a high component of
educational activities.

# How we approached the brief

The Rural City of Wangaratta sought a qualified Consultant / Architecture team to:

- Recommend a business / operation model with defined scope
- Outline strategic, financial non-financial and community benefits and engagement
- Be in keeping with Council strategies and master plans.

What we wanted to know / find out / explore:

- Identify risks, opportunities, and reference findings from previous studies.
- Make recommendations for business planning, economic development outcomes, and operational impacts,
- Approve an option that matched with a building concept design.

The outcome was an exploration of three options, that were analysed and developed, giving us a clear picture on a way forward

The three options explored were to redevelop the services:

- All at once
- Following a staged delivery approach
- Or; leave as is and "do nothing", maintain the services as they are with no future planning of enhancement

# What we found out: The outcome of the report

The following summaries feature key findings drawn directly from the final report.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

We now have a Business Case and Concept Design report which will become a master plan for the development of the Wangaratta Creative Precinct. It builds from the strategic planning projects that have come before and recommended development of a Creative Precinct as a central city activator and attractor for locals and visitors alike and something that local people wanted.

The core purpose of the report is to inform and guide the next stages of the Precinct's development, Council's

budget development and positioning for external funding opportunities and to provide service development and operational structure direction.

It is a big vision for a beautiful local place but it's also modest, practical and achievable.

This report provides Council with a

comprehensive research and consultation evidence base that identifies a broad range of social, cultural and economic benefits that justify and recommend timely and cost-effective investment into the







The report provides Council with a comprehensive research and consultation evidence base that identifies a broad range of social, cultural and economic benefits that justify and recommend timely and cost-effective investment into the development of the Wangaratta Creative Precinct. Commitment to the Creative Precinct's development means:

- Transition of the two arts and cultural services (WAG and WPACC) situated on the Ford and Ovens Streets corner site, as well as the Visitor Information service (relocated from its current Murphy Street location) into an integrated, dynamic and engaging service and programming approach.
- Redevelopment and upgrade of the WAG and WPACC facilities and outdoor area to become both a beloved and vibrant local community arts and activity 'hot-spot' and a striking regional visitor drawcard that is a 'distinctly Wangaratta' state-of-the-art Creative Precinct.

The Creative Precinct would be a place for Rural City of Wangaratta people to be proud of. This report recommends the development of the Wangaratta Creative Precinct ideally all at once and as soon as possible, or as a staged development as funding can be allocated and/or becomes available

The report performed rigorous service reviews of both Wangaratta Art Gallery (WAG) and Wangaratta Performing Arts and Conventions Centre (WPACC) and the Visitor Information Service. This was to ensure both services were deeply understood and their potential with expanded schedule of accommodations could be estimated.

# How we engaged with the community and... what they told us

The draft vision, purpose and objections were created as a direct reflection of community and stakeholder consultation feedback, and developed specifically for the Wangaratta Creative Precinct.

# **Draft Vision**

The Creative Precinct is a place we're drawn to because there's always something to see, do or experience.

It's a place we're proud of and are known for. A place we can meet, create, display or perform, share, interact and learn, be challenged, intrigued and inspired.

Welcoming, accessible and vibrant –

it's a distinctly 'Wangaratta' place

where conversations are started,

where we can connect to our past

and envision a dynamic future.

# **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

The vision and purpose was established through the engagement of a number of consultation sessions that involved representatives from the following:

- Rural City of Wangaratta Arts Culture and Events Advisory Committee Members
- Kyamba Foundation Board (Brown Family)
- Into Our Hands Foundation staff and Board
- Public Galleries Association of Victoria
- Victorian Association of Preforming Arts Centres
- Regional Arts Victoria
- Creative Victoria
- Wangaratta Art Gallery Staff
- Wangaratta Performing Arts and Convention Centre Staff, contractors and user groups
- Visitor Information Centre Staff

- Rural City of Wangaratta Public Art Panel
- Wangaratta Art Gallery Acquisitions Committee
- Wangaratta Art Gallery Friends Committee
- Wangaratta Festival of Jazz Board members
- Goulburn and North-East Arts Alliance
- Wangaratta Arts Council
- Business Wangaratta
- Wangaratta Textile Arts Association
- Wangaratta Historical Society





# What are some of the considerations?

### SITE PLANNING REVIEW

### **Preliminary planning assessment:**

A preliminary planning assessment review found no planning impediments to the development of the Creative Precinct.

### **Heritage Impacts and Advice:**

A Heritage Impacts assessment including review of any Heritage Victoria impacts or requirements was undertaken and concluded:



"...The proposed works are a fine example of a balanced approach to change to a heritage site. It will conserve the old fabric in a responsive and sensitive way, managing change to its current use whilst respecting the historic form and associated landscaping. The works are consistent with the intent of the heritage overlay, which is to conserve and enhance heritage places and to ensure that new works do not adversely affect them. It is on this basis, that I believe that the proposed works to the Wangaratta Creative Precinct are supportable from a heritage perspective."

### - Heritage Victoria







# Safety in design risk assessment

Typically, a safety in design risk assessment is prepared during the detailed design/construction documentation phase of projects however, an early concept design stage version of this was prepared and included at this concept design phase: Casual surveillance / supervision; Storage spaces, loading bay floor height and finished levels; External open areas are maintained; and Effective zoning of back of-house activities and public spaces.



# Car parking

Car parking is a significant issue for local people and visitors. Rural City of Wangaratta's car parking plan (February 2019) and car parking study October 2019 found that there is significant additional and currently un-tapped capacity in the CBD's available car parks and that better signage and promotion of parking options is a key strategy that needs to be implemented prior to building more car parking.

For the proposed Creative Precinct, the implication is that while development of new facilities would remove approximately 43 car parks these are likely to be within the count of off-street car parks for which usage is low.

It is considered that the peak demand times for CBD parking in or around the Creative Precinct are likely not usually peak activity times in the Creative Precinct and/or programming could be arranged to minimise impact of car parking during these peak times.

Development of a Creative Precinct car parking strategy is recommended to look at options and solutions around improved signage relating to parking availability, types of parking and location to minimise any need for additional or replacement car parking.



# Site Analysis and Concept Designs

McCabe Architects has undertaken a comprehensive site analysis prepared concept designs for the proposed Creative Precinct on the site on the corner of Ford and Ovens Streets, Wangaratta – the current WPACC and WAG site.

## The concept design developed in response to site review and stakeholder consultation includes:

- Development of a new, dynamic precinct entry on Ovens Street
- Refurbishment and re-purposing of the existing heritage gallery facilities
- Development of new state-of-the-art gallery and back of house facilities
- Renewed theatre back of house facilities
- Remodeled café area and increased foyer space

- A Tourist Information hub
- Refurbishment and improvements to the Memorial Hall spaces
- Development of a new commercial kitchen and bar facility
- Outdoor (decked) event and gathering area and loading docks, as follows:







# Concept Site/ Floor Plan Wangaratta Creative Precinct

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# **Development Options**

The Creative Precinct concept design provides a masterplan to achieve development of a Wangaratta Creative Precinct on the current WAG and WPACC site.

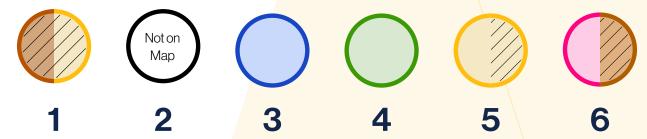
Three Creative Precinct options have been prepared. The options and the estimated cost for each are outlined below. The cost estimates for the 'all at once' and 'staged' are development options based on cost plan A, reports prepared by Turner and Townsend Quantity Surveyors in response to the concept designs developed by McCabe Architects.

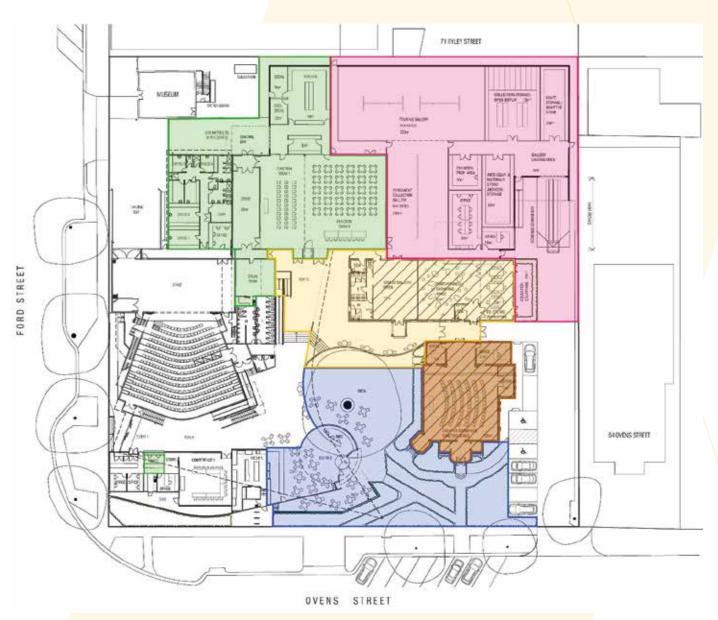
# 1: ALL AT ONCE DEVELOPMENT OPTION - \$18,495,802

# 2: STAGED DEVELOPMENT OPTION - \$19,999,393.

Stage 1 Existing gallery facilities renewal	\$1,528,332
Stage 2  Detailed design development and approvals	\$916,420
Stage 3 Precinct entry, visitor Information relocation and external landscaping	\$2,175,806
Stage 4 Function room upgrade and PACC refresh	\$3,761,901
Stage 5 Curved wall and Sunday School/ Church Hall repurpose/upgrade	\$3,379,927
Stage 6 New Gallery	\$8,237,008

# **Stage**





For a more detailed view of proposed works and priorities, as gathered from feedback and workshops, please see page 56 of the full Wangaratta Creative Precinct Business Case and Concept Design – *Table 16: Required creative facilities works and priority of works.* 



# Activity Level and Attendance Numbers

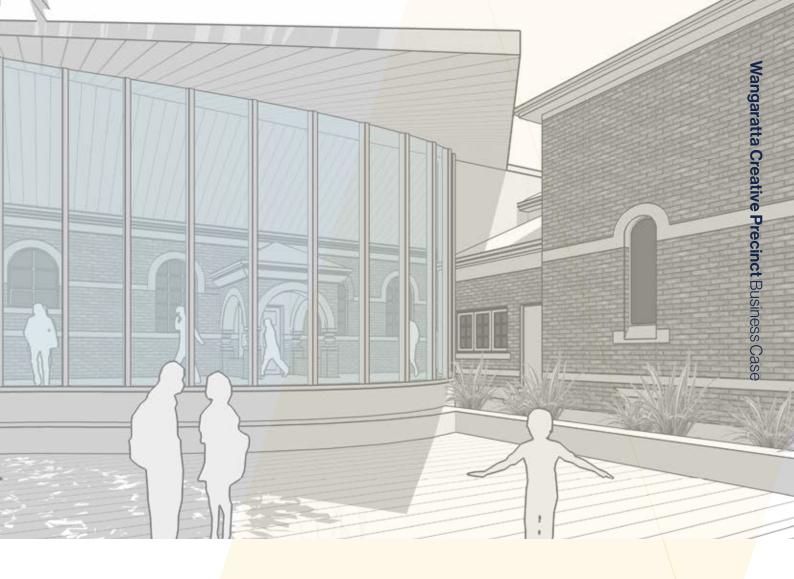
The activity and attendance projections for build 'all at once' model show that the three services - WAG, WPACC and VIC - could attract 149,549 in Year 1 growing to 164,015 visitations by Year 5.

The staged model would achieve slightly lower numbers with 120,239 Stage 1 to 160,885 Stage 6. It is likely that the numbers would increase to the 'all at once' levels once the precinct is completed.

Attendance Projections Build all at once	<b>2018/19</b> Comparison	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	-
Total Attendance - Build all at once		149,549	153,023	156,590	160,253	164,015	_
Attendance Projections Staged Development	113,497*	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
Total Attendance - Staged Development		120,239	122,644	146,112	149,320	153,666	160,885

NOTE: These numbers differ from the projections in table 40 (pg. 25) because they include the Visitor Information Centre visitor numbers. Whereas the numbers in Table 40 focus on the creative services and activity only.





# ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT BENEFITS SNAPSHOT

The following table provides a snapshot of the Economic Impact Assessment benefit findings.

Spend	Benefit (By year 10)	
<b>\$18,495,80</b> Build all at once	<ul> <li>189,512 annual visitors</li> <li>\$32.925M annual cultural visitor spend</li> <li>149.9 FTE jobs in the region</li> </ul>	\$11.949M total annual regional income
<b>\$19,999,393</b> Build over 6 stages	<ul> <li>162,478 annual visitors</li> <li>\$28.227M annual cultural visitor spend</li> <li>132.2 FTE jobs in the region</li> </ul>	\$10.556M total annual regional income
\$2,298,332 (min) Basic maintenance over 10 years (Do Nothing)	<ul> <li>&lt;113,497 visitors by year 10</li> <li>\$15.785M annual cultural visitor spend</li> <li>76.9 FTE jobs in the region</li> </ul>	\$6.052M total annual regional income

# How the Wangaratta Creative Precinct fits into our broader strategic context

The Creative Precinct should and can play a role in delivering outcomes for many of Council's key strategies such as the Council Plan, the Health and Wellbeing Plan, Economic Plan and so on. As a regional attractor, it also has a role to play and is a contributor in the broader regional, state and even national context.

We are an inclusive, courageous and compassionate community, that has built our future on a respectful balance between the **urban and the rural**. We are known for our **natural beauty**, access to opportunities and innovation, our resilience, and our community strength. We have a mature and healthy landscape that supports our wellbeing and forms a **strong** part of our identity. We are the place where everyone has the ability to **engage**, **to prosper**, to be supported, and to grow.

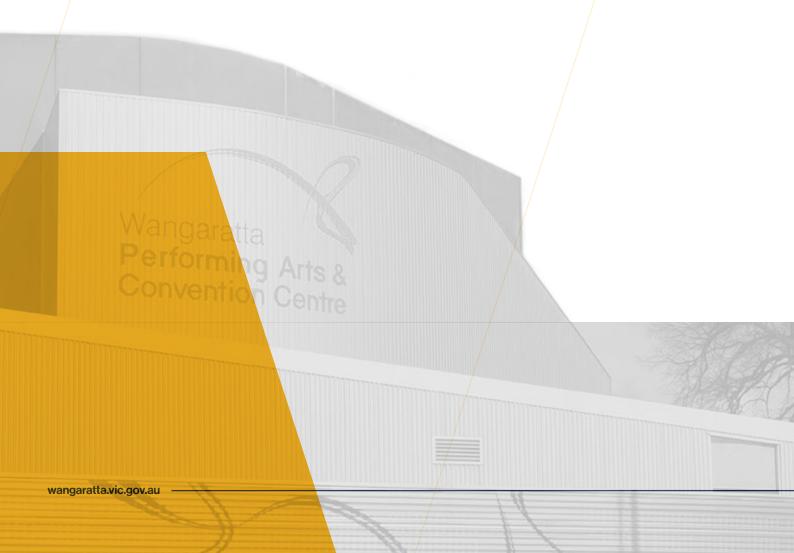
A creative precinct provides the opportunity to respond to the vision by providing the space and programs for the community to 'engage, to prosper, to be supported and to grow' Creative Venues and by extension, Creative Precincts have the proven capacity to contribute to:



# The list of strategic documents and reports identified as relevant to, being contributed to or impacted by the Wangaratta Creative Precinct includes:

- Rural City of Wangaratta Council Plan 2021-2025 (including Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- The Wangaratta Central Activity Area Urban Design Framework 2019 Tract Consultants
- RCOW Community Access & Inclusion Plan 2018 2022
- RCOW Economic Development Strategy 2018 2023
- RCOW Events & Attraction Strategy 2018 2023
- Rural City of Wangaratta Visitor Services Strategy 2021
- Wangaratta Car Parking Plan. RCOW. 2019
- RCOW Asset Management Strategy 2017 2021

- Visitor Information Centres Report. 2019.
   State Govt of Victoria
- Wangaratta Performing Arts Development Plan 2021
- Wangaratta PAC Economic Impact October. 2013. Essential Economics Pty. Ltd.
- Victoria's High Country Destination Management Plan 2013–2023
- Tourism North East Three Year Strategy 2019/20 2021/22
- Creative State 2020-2025. Placing Creativity at the Heart of Victoria's Recovery and Prosperity
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications corporate plan 2019-20
- Tourism North East Cultural Tourism Segmentation June 2018. Quantum Market Research





# Why Invest in Creative industries?

In recent years considerable research has been undertaken to understand how much Australians value Arts and Culture and what availability of Arts and Cultural facilities, services, programs and events add to local and broader society.



Australian and international research provides evidence that

arts and creative initiatives can and do contribute significantly to the economic, environmental, social and cultural development and wellbeing of communities. The level of arts and cultural activity within a community is now commonly recognised as an indicator of the quality of community life.

The availability of arts and cultural activity is increasingly an expectation of modern, thriving places where people want to live and visit and while not everyone will be involved in all or any arts and cultural activities, people still expect and want these options to be available.



# Cultural Tourism

Arts and culture are recognised as an increasingly significant aspect of Australia's tourism strategies as well as being important as part of a vibrant, creative landscape for the broader visitor economy and society.

This will be particularly relevant for the development of a Creative Precinct in Wangaratta.

### DOMESTIC TOURISM



More domestic tourists attend the arts than organised sport, amusement parks or wineries



Museums and art galleries are the most popular arts activities on domestic trips



Regional Australia destinations are where tourists are especially likely to engage with the arts



Arts day trips to regional areas have increased at a higher rate than arts day trips to metropolitan areas



There were 5.9 million arts day trips taken to regional areas in 2018

Source: Australia Council for the Arts 2020, Domestic Arts Tourism: Connecting the Country, Australia Council for the Arts



# Return on investment from arts and cultural venues

One of the key benefits derived from investment into local and regional cultural institutions is significant economic benefit that they can deliver.

### **VISITORS AND SPENDING**

The following diagram shows estimates of visitors to the Creative Precinct over a 10-year period. There is also major growth is in tourist visits (regional day visitors and overnight visitors from further afield). This would be expected as this segment is a fast-growing sector of tourism markets. The combination of the redeveloped facilities and innovative program will allow Wangaratta to tap this market.

Table 40: Visitors to Creative Precinct – Option 1 (annual no.)

Option 1 - All at Once	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Cultural Precinct - Visitors										
Locals	33,552	34,452	35,375	36,324	37,298	38,790	40,342	45,379	47,194	49,082
Tourists										
Day Visitors	51,771	53,159	54,585	56,048	57,552	59,854	62,248	70,021	72,822	75,734
Overnight Visitors	44,227	45,413	46,631	47,881	49,166	51,132	53,178	59,818	62,210	64,699
Total Tourists	95,998	98,572	101,216	103,930	106,718	110,987	115,426	129,839	135,032	140,433
Total Visitors	129,550	133,024	136,591	140,254	144,016	149,777	155,768	175,218	182,227	189,516

Spending in the region increases from \$22.507 million in year 1 to \$32.925 million in year 10.41

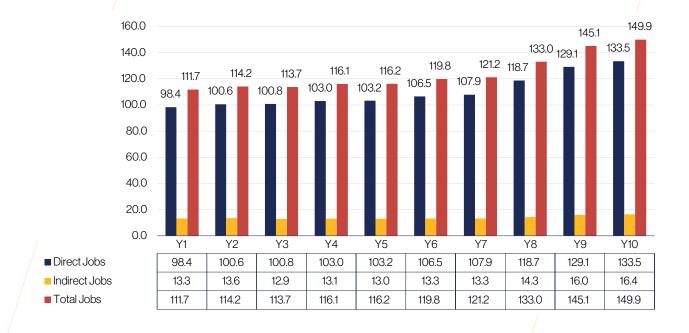
Table 41: Spending in Region by Precinct Visitors - Option 1 (annual \$million 2021 prices)

Option 1  – All at Once	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Cultural Precinct  - Visitors Spending (\$m 2021 prices)										
Locals	\$2.516	\$2.584	\$2.653	\$2.724	\$2.797	\$2.909	\$3.026	\$3.403	\$3.540	\$3.681
Tourists										
Day Visitors	\$6.523	\$6.698	\$6.878	\$7.062	\$7.252	\$7.542	\$7.843	\$8.823	\$9.176	\$9.543
Overnight Visitors	\$13.467	\$13.828	\$14.199	\$14.580	\$14.971	\$15.570	\$16.193	\$18.215	\$18.943	\$19.701
Total Tourists	\$19.990	\$20.526	\$21.077	\$21.642	\$22.223	\$23.111	\$24.036	\$27.037	\$28.119	\$29.243
Total Visitors	\$22.507	\$23.110	\$23.730	\$24.366	\$25.020	\$26.021	\$27.062	\$30.441	\$31.658	\$32.925



# Economic Impacts – Jobs

The table and charts show the estimated full time equivalent jobs generated by activity and visitors to the Creative Precinct. This is a combination of direct jobs in the facilities and the jobs generated in Wangaratta and the region by visitors' spending and indirect/induced jobs.





# How will the Creative Precinct be Funded?

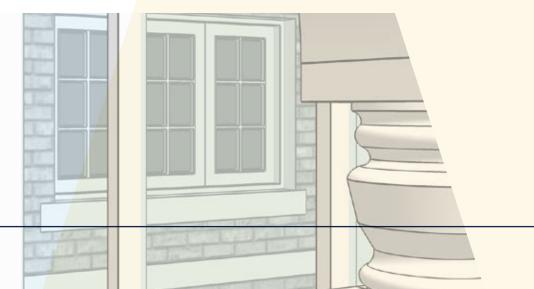
### **CAPITAL FUNDING MODEL**

Although development of the Creative Precinct will require funding from Council's capital program, a combination of State, Federal and Philanthropic funding support will be required and actively sought.

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON CAPITAL FUNDING FROM THE REPORT

### It is recommended that:

- 1. The estimated cost of construction of the Creative Precinct as an 'all at once' development at \$18,495,802 or as a staged development at 19,999,393 over six stages based on the cost plan as prepared by Turner and Townsend Quantity Surveyors, be noted.
- 2. Council includes \$20M into its capital development program as per the possible capital funding model (refer section 14.1) to enable the staged development of the Creative Precinct to begin by 2025.
- 3. The State and Australian Grant program opportunities are noted and where appropriate, pursued and that ongoing liaison be undertaken with State and Australian local representative to gain their support for the Creative Precinct and for State/Australian Government funding.





McCabe Architects has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Wangaratta Creative Precinct site (corner Ford and Ovens Street) in consultation with Rural City of Wangaratta officers. The site plans that follow show the existing conditions and analysis of the site's potential to accommodate the Creative Precinct components described in the component schedule.

(Detailed high-res copies of the concept designs are available on request.)





# **INDICATIVE SITE IMAGES**

The following collection of images has been prepared by McCabe Architects to give an indication of the types of finishes and vistas could be possible at part of the Creative Precinct design and development.

























## CONCEPT SITE / FLOOR PLAN

The facility components specified reflect the draft vision, purpose and goals identified for the Wangaratta Creative Precinct.

The following concept designs prepared by McCabe Architects, provide a site masterplan and show the scale, range and location for the facilities components recommended for the Creative Precinct.



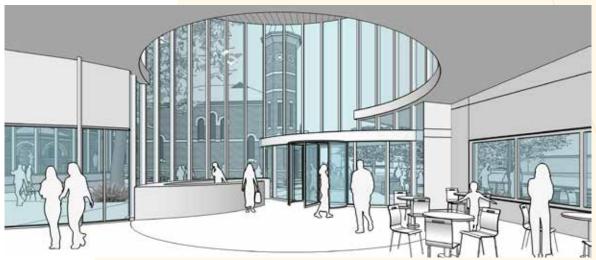


Concept Site/ Floor Plan Wangaratta Creative Precinct

# **3D IMAGES**

A few 3D images have been prepared to give an indication of what the Creative Precinct concepts could look like.



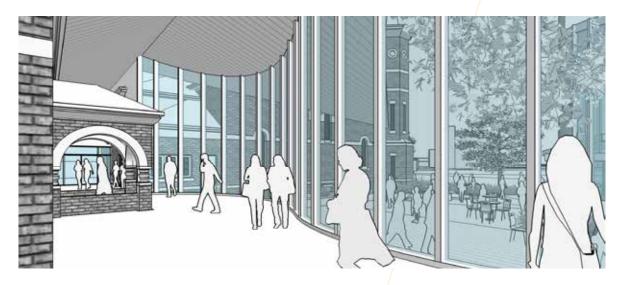




# 3D IMAGES (CONT.)







# **ARTIST IMPRESSION (RENDER)**

The following image is an artist's render produced from McCabe Architects studio. It provides an artist impression of how open, vibrant and exciting the Wangaratta Creative Precinct could be.







We are grateful to the many stakeholder representatives and community members who helped us create this vision so far. We now want to hear from you, the broader community members. We value community engagement and want to ensure we capture your views. You can take part in a number of ways:

### Community consultation sessions:

### Session #1

Wangaratta Library Community Room Thursday 17 November 10am - 12pm

### Session #2

Wangaratta Performing Arts and Conventions Centre Wednesday 23 November 5-7pm

**Or online (details below)** Wangaratta Creative Precinct Business Case and Concept Design was completed 2022 by the Consultant team Outside the Square Creative.

To access the detailed report please click on the below link or visit:

www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au/Home

To submit your views and feedback, visit: www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Public-notices

For more information, please contact

E: info@creativeprecinct.wangaratta.vic.gov.au P: 03 5722 0888



Notes	





