Warrina Lakes Building

Planning for the Future

Cassowary Coast REGIONAL COUNCIL



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Introduction:

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and sea across the Cassowary Coast, the Mamu, Djiru, Girramay, Gulngay, Warrgamay, Jirrbal and Bandjin Peoples. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

The Warrina Lakes Building has formed part of the local landscape for more than 50 years and has operated as a community facility for more than 35 years. Cassowary Coast Regional Council is now considering how the facility can continue to meet community needs into the future.
A “do nothing” approach has been ruled out due to identified risks.

This document has been prepared by JMc Architects on behalf of Cassowary Coast Regional Council to compare refurbishment and rebuild options. It considers community values, building condition, compliance, long-term asset performance project risk, funding opportunities and costs to support Council’s decision-making.

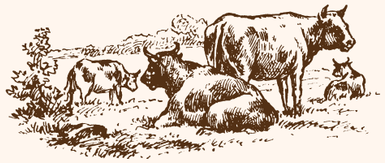
1947



Original Site Use

The site formed part of the Warrina Lakes cattle property.

1971



Relocated to Warrina Lakes

The former sawmill building was relocated to its current location and subsequently used as cattle sheds.

1989



Transformation Commenced

Council commenced its conversion through a World Heritage compensation package, employing retrenched timber workers.

1991



Community Facility Completed

Works associated with establishing the Warrina Lakes community facility were completed.

2026
PRESENT





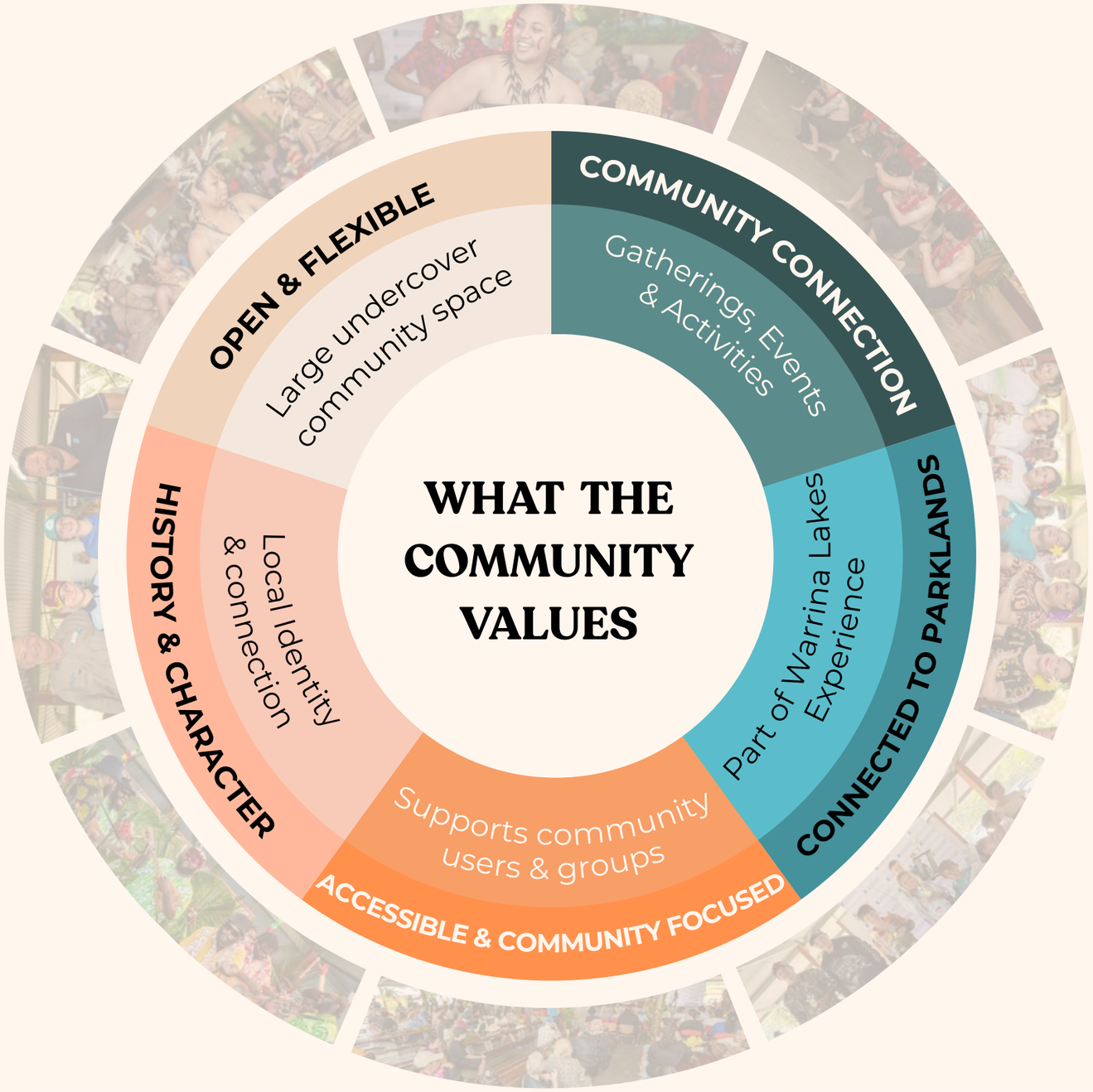
Building at a Glance

- Approximately 550 m² of covered floor area.
- Large, flexible undercover community space
- Predominantly original timber-framed construction
- Connected to parking, pedestrian paths, nature play and pump track.
- Used for social gatherings, recreation, events and community activities.
- Operating as a community facility for more than 35 years.

What We Heard Through Consultations.

Reinforced the importance of Warrina Lakes Building as a community space.

10 WEEKS	12,100 +	1,059	230	1,660
Community Engagement	People reached through Social Media	Links Clicked to Consultation	Survey Responses	Petition Signed



Looking to the future:

Community feedback highlighted the existing building qualities and features valued, whilst identifying opportunities to improve amenities, accessibility and functionality for future community use.

Why are we looking at the Building now?

Risks associated with ongoing community use, deteriorating building conditions, underperforming building services and structural assets.

Structural Condition

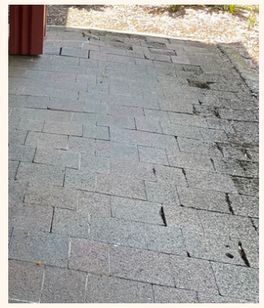
- 90% of the original timber columns and the fin plates have serious defects.
- Steel roof beams and steel columns are suffering from deteriorated paint systems with resulting corrosion.
- Limitations in some structural connections.
- Vertical loadbearing structure of the original shed is severely compromised.
- The lack of bracing to this facility is of particular concern.

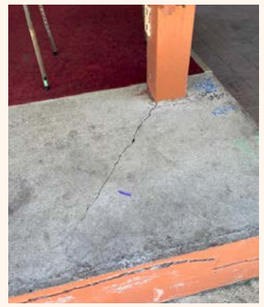





Paving and External Areas

- Settlement and cracking.
- Uneven paving creates trip hazards.
- Building does not meet current accessibility and inclusion requirements.
- Maintenance required every 3 to 5 years due to vulnerable settlement.






Water Damage

- Increasing intensity of tropical weather events and exposure to moisture.
- Moisture-related deterioration to timber elements.
- Deterioration to gutters and wall cladding.
- Localised corrosion to steel components.






Roof Elements and Roof Drainage

- All eaves gutters are in poor condition and need replacing.
- Box gutters and drainage elements are under-sized for rainfall intensity.
- Missing roof soffits in some areas.





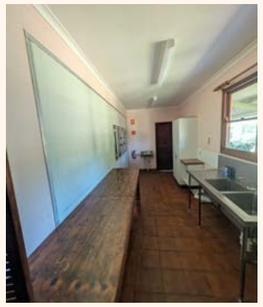

Why are we looking at the Building now?

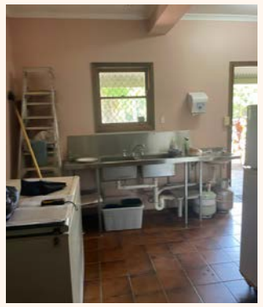
A community facility should meet today's and future needs:

Expectations and requirements for community spaces have evolved. Recent investigations have identified areas where accessibility, amenities, building services, and functionality should be improved.

Aged Utilities and Services

- Aged and underperforming building services, including:
  - Plumbing pipes
  - Electrical wiring
  - Ventilation services
- Aged kitchen, kiosk, and toilets.
- Worn internal materials and finishes.
- Increasing maintenance will be required to manage ageing assets that are currently under-capacity, non-compliant and in poor condition.



Accessibility and Inclusive Use

- Most areas do not meet current accessibility requirements.
- Limited accessibility and circulation
- Existing toilets require major upgrades to ensure compliance.
- Current layout limits flexibility and adaptability for future use.
- Improvements are needed to better accommodate people of all ages and abilities.
- Poor natural lighting and ventilation require mechanical ventilation and continuous use of artificial lighting.






What needs to be addressed?

Accessibility
- Provide equitable access throughout, including access for people with impaired mobility.

Amenities
- Provide accessible public toilets.
- Provide a parents' room.

Functionality
- Improve the usability and flexibility of the covered community spaces and supporting areas.
  - Toilets, Kiosk/Servery and back of house spaces.

Building Services
- Provide compliant utilities and services.
- Upgrade mechanical, electrical, hydraulic and solar services.

Temperature:	Roofing insulation, natural air flow, effective mechanical fans.
Ventilation:	Maximise airflow.
Lighting:	Efficient light fittings, emergency lighting and natural lighting to reduce ongoing costs.
Hydraulics:	Upgrades to the grease arrestor, sanitary drainage and potable water services.
Electrical:	Outlets, 3-phase power, RCD and safety switches



Why this matters?

Investigations revealed the issues affecting the Warrina Lakes Building extend beyond maintenance defects. Its structural condition, aging building fabric and services, accessibility, functionality, and ability to meet contemporary community needs must be considered in the planning for its future.





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Comparing the Two Approaches.

	REFURBISHMENT	REBUILD (ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY)
		
What happens to existing building	**Retained and renew what is existing**	**Demolished and new build on existing footprint**
Design Features	• Retain existing open undercover area. • Replace deteriorated structural elements. • Renew toilets to standard toilets. • Renew kitchen/servery. • Improve accessibility as feasible. • Renew building services & finishes.	• Maintain size of undercover area. • Open, naturally ventilated and lit • New kiosk/ servery. • New parents' Room. • Upgraded compliant toilets. • Improved accessibility
Indicative capital cost	**$2.545M***	**$3.873M***
Expected service life	**20 Years**	**50 Years**
Major Renewals	• Year 10 – Roof sheeting renewal • Year 20 – Major works likely to be required	**NO major renewals in first 20 years**
Total 20-Year Indicative Cost	**~ $5.76M***	**~ $6.42M***
Comments/ Risks	• 20 Years usable life • Higher risk for reactive maintenance • Unforeseen issues may require future works • Ongoing maintenance costs continue	• 50 Years usable life • Lower risk for reactive maintenance, up to 20 years • Standard new-build known risks • Predictable maintenance & compliance pathway

* *Disclaimer: The 20-year whole-of-life cost figures presented are indicative, based on current QS estimates and Council-provided operating cost data. These figures are indicative only and subject to confirmation and validation.*

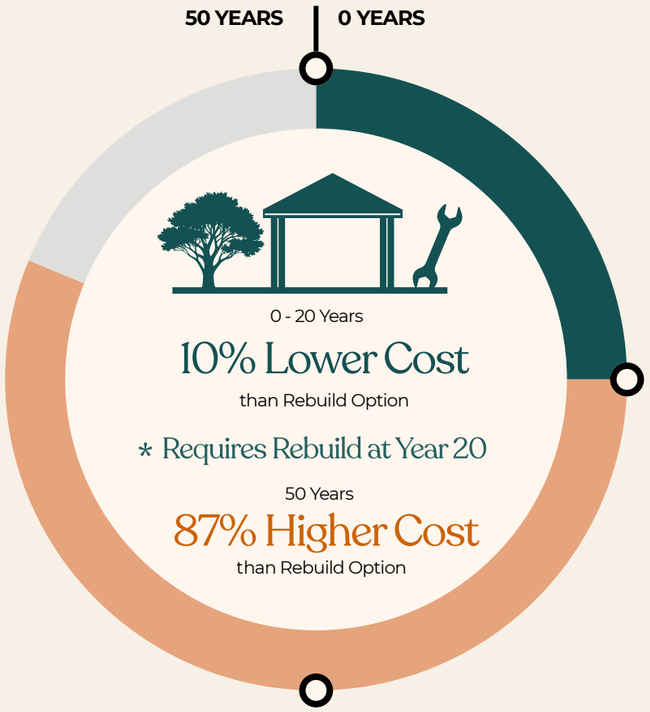
RISK MITIGATION ACTIVITY

Council is progressing short-term structural rectification works.
A do nothing approach is unacceptable due to building risks and Council's duty of care.

50 - Year Cost And Grant Assessment Comparison

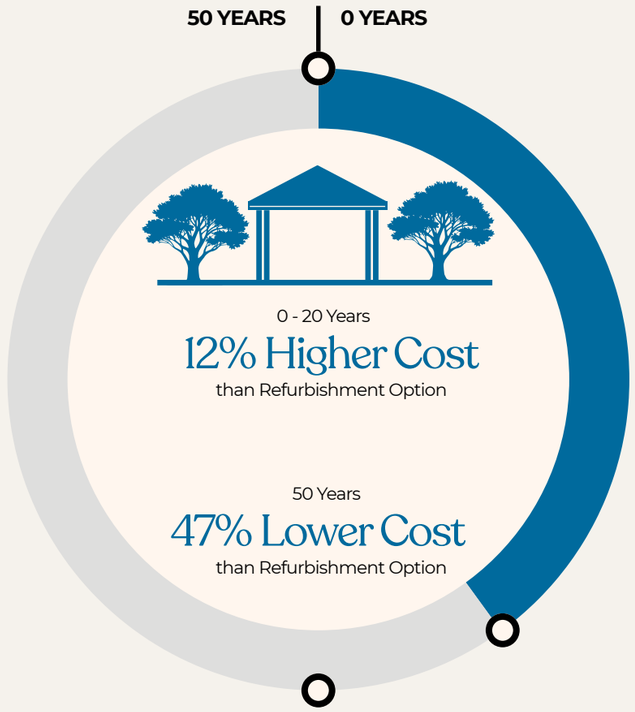
REFURBISHMENT

Lower Initially, higher over full 50 years



REBUILD

Higher Initially, Lower over full 50 years



FUNDING CRITERION		
Project Alignment	**Supports continued community use**	**Stronger alignment with community, liveability, events and regional development outcomes**
Scale	**More likely to require multiple smaller funding sources**	**Greater potential for a larger single funding allocation, reducing the need to manage multiple smaller contributions**
Competitiveness	**Harder to demonstrate a major community investment**	**Stronger case in a competitive funding environment**
Project Readiness	**Potentially quicker to develop and deliver**	**Requires detailed design, cost planning and business case**
Funding Opportunities	**More likely to rely on smaller grant contributions. Smaller to moderate opportunities**	**Broader opportunity to seek larger government funding. Stronger opportunities.**





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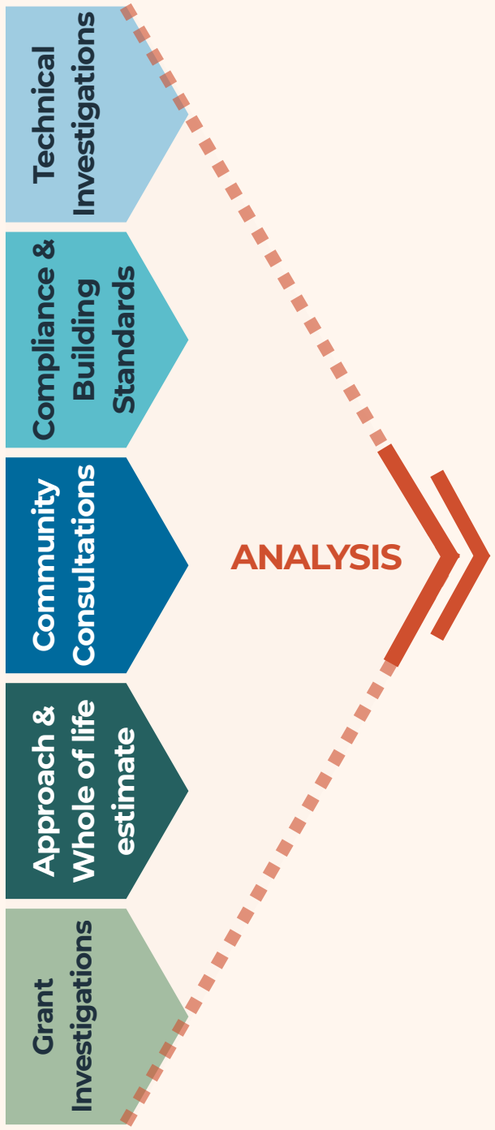
Considering the Whole Picture.

Assessing the two approaches for the future of Warrina Lakes.



	REFURBISHMENT	REBUILD
Community Values	✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Strategic Asset & Building Performance	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
External Funding Strength/Likelihood	✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Return on investment/ Best Value	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓







