

**Embargoed Media Release for Friday 2 July 2010, 12.00pm**

## HAWKE'S BAY MUSEUM & ART GALLERY RECEIVES \$6 MILLION GOVERNMENT GRANT



Mayor of Napier Barbara Arnott is thrilled with the government's announcement that it will provide the Council with \$6 million to redevelop the Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery.

"It's just wonderful. We've worked so hard on this project for many years and now we have turned the corner for the home straight. This Museum redevelopment is on the verge of getting underway" said Mayor Arnott.

"The new redevelopment will achieve many things, but most importantly it will allow the collection to breathe. So much of the collection remains unseen, and we have an excellent team at the HB MAG led by Douglas Lloyd Jenkins who are putting together forward thinking and engaging exhibitions. The future for the HB MAG is so bright now".

The government's grant of \$6 million is one of the largest people of Hawke's Bay have ever received, and it will contribute to developing a premium cultural facility for Hawke's Bay and visitors to the region.

"The government have demonstrated their recognition of the value of museums and art galleries to New Zealanders and to the many tourists that visit these facilities each year".

Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery Director, Douglas Lloyd Jenkins sees the successful government grant as further evidence of the significance of this collection.

"This collection is one of the strongest in the country. Our exhibitions are innovative and extremely well-received because of that. This redevelopment project aims to repackage the outside to match the wealth and excellence of what we do on the inside," says Lloyd Jenkins.

The \$6 million grant is one third of the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery's redevelopment project budget of \$18 million, and a perfect example of a 3-way partnership between central government, local government and the community.



The Napier City Council is also allocating \$6 million to the project, and the region has given its support with the neighbouring Hastings District Council providing \$1 million and the Hawke's Bay Regional Council \$2.5 million.

"By making a firm, long-term commitment to the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery we are ensuring an iconic site in Napier is held in public ownership for as many generations as we can practically plan for," said Mayor Arnott.

The Napier City Council and Museum are also grateful to the WT Dobson Trust who have allocated \$500,000, Eastern & Central Community Trust who have granted \$250,000, and the Wolstencroft Trust who allocated \$100,000. Private donations of \$250,000 have also been received, bringing the fundraising total to \$16.5 million to date.

"The money means more space and the opportunity to unify a collection of important buildings in the city's cultural precinct" says Mayor Arnott.

While the redevelopment is most definitely about adding space to the Museum and Art Gallery, the project will also see the sympathetic restoration of many outstanding original building features which in themselves document a wonderful Hawke's Bay history.

Architecturally-designed and sympathetic to the original building, the restoration will fit within the Napier city-scape.

In particular, the original Louis Hay entrance will be restored and the Guy Natusch designed Century Theatre will be retained as excellent examples of period architecture. Work will be undertaken to restore and integrate features of the currently sandwiched together buildings.

The new wing, designed by locally based Opus Architect Richard Daniels, is dramatic yet elegant. It creates a significant visual anchor to the Marine Parade waterfront location, and will be a striking focal and entry point for visitors.

"Richard has done an excellent job of designing a modern art gallery that makes sense in terms of Napier's Art Deco lineage. Existing buildings will be merged with the new build to create one engaging and highly credible space says HB MAG Director Lloyd Jenkins.

The new building will continue a somewhat unique theme to the existing Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery, which is the use of small intimate spaces for showing the collection.

"Our collection is made up of small things – artworks and objects of a domestic scale and nature, therefore it is necessary to show them in settings that work to the scale of the collection" says Lloyd Jenkins.



Aesthetics aside, the building will provide much needed storage space at international standards for museum/ art gallery conservation. It will also provide work spaces for staff to restore artworks and objects, as well as put together the award winning exhibitions the HB MAG has quickly become renowned for.

The redevelopment will certainly aid that with the provision of seven galleries, as well as other smaller exhibitions spaces, and an overall increase in space of 540 square metres.

"The HB MAG will become a destination in itself, as well as providing people with more access to the stories and exhibitions that the HB MAG offers" explains Mayor Arnott. "I can't wait for building to begin and I am so grateful to each sponsor and funder that has contributed to this project; and of course to the government for their significant contribution".

"We have had so much support from the region's councils, our local MP's and the community who have supported our efforts. And I can't thank enough all the people who have supported the project, especially the HB MAG staff who have been so professional and patient. Now they have been rewarded with this funding, and we are on the last leg with our corporate and community fundraising".

The Museum will officially close on Sunday 25 July and staff will begin relocation of the collection to off-site storage prior to building works beginning. The redevelopment should take around 2 years, although the Century Theatre will remain operational for some of that time and the Museum will run education programmes from other venues.

For more information please see our website [www.forus.org.nz](http://www.forus.org.nz)

A photo opportunity can be organised at the Museum with the Mayor and Museum Director, please contact Heidi McLeod on 06 878 5052 to co-ordinate.

**For additional comment please contact:**

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