

Goondiwindi Customs House Museum

masterplan



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Executive Summary

Goondiwindi Regional Council and Goondiwindi and District Historical Society have a collaborative relationship pertaining to the management and maintenance of the Customs House Museum, located at 1 McLean St, Goondiwindi. The two organisations have worked together to review the facilities and services provided by the community asset and provide a guiding masterplan for future work.

This masterplan report is part of a wider scope of planning documents for Council owned assets that are managed by local incorporated organisations.

A vision and set of guiding principles has been generated from consultation with the Goondiwindi and District Historical Society management committee, site and context analysis and the close study of the building and museum collection. In response to these principles, the masterplan proposes solutions to access and improves functionality for volunteers and facility users, better utilising the available space and integrates the landscape and external exhibition spaces into the visitor experience. The focus is making the history of Goondiwindi and its surrounds visible, from its indigenous history through to the legacy of pastoralists and the sacrifice service men and women during war times.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to support and guide necessary work for the accessibility and functionality of the Customs House Museum and to look for opportunities to improve visitation and profile of this important community asset.

Customs House Museum was listed on the Queensland Heritage Register on 21 October 1992 having satisfied the following criteria:

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

The Customs House Museum illustrates the role of Goondiwindi as one of 14 border posts established before Federation to maintain tariff walls between the colonies. Customs duty was an important source of revenue and the need to establish such posts reflects the increase in the movement of goods along inland routes as pastoral development occurred in the west of Queensland. Goondiwindi was a major border crossing and the establishment of a customs service in this town reflects the way in which Customs were collected and the requirements of Government were carried out in remote areas.

The place is important because of its aesthetic significance.

The Customs House Museum is important as an early building in Goondiwindi whose form, scale and materials make a substantial contribution to the built character of the town.



Background of the masterplan

The Goondiwindi Customs House Museum is a significant place in the town of Goondiwindi and has had a long and varied life. Although long known as the former Customs House, there is no documentary evidence that supports its use for collection inter-state customs. Despite this, the building is still significant as one of the oldest structures still remaining in Goondiwindi.

Goondiwindi Regional Council's Community and Economic Development team have been tasked to develop a strategic and holistic plan for the site in consultation with the Goondiwindi and District Historical Society.

Scope of the masterplan

The aim of this masterplan is to outline a comprehensive strategy for essential infrastructure maintenance, renewal, and replacement projects at the Customs House site. The primary goal is to identify and communicate a clear plan for the present and future development of the asset and its surrounding outdoor spaces. This includes creating a proposed schedule for repair and maintenance works, prioritising necessary remedial actions, and conserving the heritage fabric of the building.

The document's purpose is to provide a detailed description of the required work to ensure the building remains in good condition both presently and in the years ahead. By doing so, the masterplan aims to safeguard the historical significance and integrity of the site for future generations.

History of the site

The Customs House Museum is a significant place in the town of Goondiwindi. The building has been long known as Customs House although no documentary evidence supports its use for collecting customs.

Although Queensland became a separate colony in 1859, little effort was made initially to collect duties on goods imported overland from New South Wales. Legislation was enacted in 1870 to enable the collection of customs duties on goods coming into the colony. William Parry Okeden was appointed to report on suitable locations for customs offices along the border. He recommended eleven locations including Goondiwindi on a major route between the two colonies. The first customs collector was Richard Marshall who fulfilled a multitude of government posts including police magistrate, clerk of petty session, land agent and commissioner for crown lands.

With the construction of a bridge across the Macintyre River, the amount of intercolonial trade increased significantly at Goondiwindi, necessitating the appointment of a second customs officer. While no documentary evidence indicates that the building in McLean Street and adjacent to the river was used as a customs office, oral tradition suggests it was used for this purpose. It is possible during the peak of customs activity in the 1880s and 1890s, it may have used as a de facto office due to its proximity to the border.

Regardless, the building is one of the earliest structures in Goondiwindi. The form, materials and method of construction suggest that the original core of the house was erected possibly in the 1860s with subsequent additions in 1880s and possibly 1890s.

The former Customs House is significant as one of the earliest extant buildings in Goondiwindi. The building is significant for its association with the customs service in Goondiwindi during the 19th century. There is no formal record of this building being a Customs House and it remained in private hands throughout the period when duties were collected. However, local tradition that it was connected with the Customs service is strong and customs officers may have unofficially used it.

Matthew Maher, a mail contractor first purchased the land on which Customs House Museum now stands in 1863. In March of 1872, Samuel Droughton purchased the property from Maher, and it remained in his ownership and then that of his widow, until 1901 when it was sold to the editor of the local newspaper, Edward Drake.

After Federation of Australia in 1901, customs were no longer charged on goods between the states. The bridge over the Macintyre River was replaced by the current structure in 1914.

Around 1900, the shingled roof was replaced by corrugated iron, possibly after it changed hands in 1901. The building has undergone some alterations and extensions over the years of its use as a residence and, in its later years, as an antique shop. The Goondiwindi Town Council acquired it in 1975 and it was renovated by the Goondiwindi Historical Society and opened as a museum in October 1975.

The site also includes a number of external buildings including the Pioneer Shed which houses the history of the growth of wool and agriculture in the area and includes a

display of early tools, a blacksmith's workshop and the story of the Chinese community in Goondiwindi. The site also includes Martha's kitchen, Burke's cottage and a machinery display shed.



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Looking forward

Goondiwindi township is the largest town of the Goondiwindi Region that covers 19,258 square kilometres on the Queensland – New South Wales Border and is home to approximately 11,000 people.


Residents are relatively evenly spread across age demographics; however the dominant age group are the 'Parents and Homebuilders' (35 to 49). In 2021, 6.3% of people in the Goondiwindi Regional Council area were born overseas.

A large portion of residents are employed by the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry, which accounts for 27.4% of the workforce. In addition to this, 9.9% of the workforce work in the health care and social assistance industry, and 8.7% in retail trade. The region has an employment rate of 96.5%, while 63.1% of these are employed on a full time basis.

Tourism is a growing industry for the Goondiwindi Region. In 2021/22, the total tourism sales in the Goondiwindi LGA was \$39.2m, the total value added was \$18.5million.

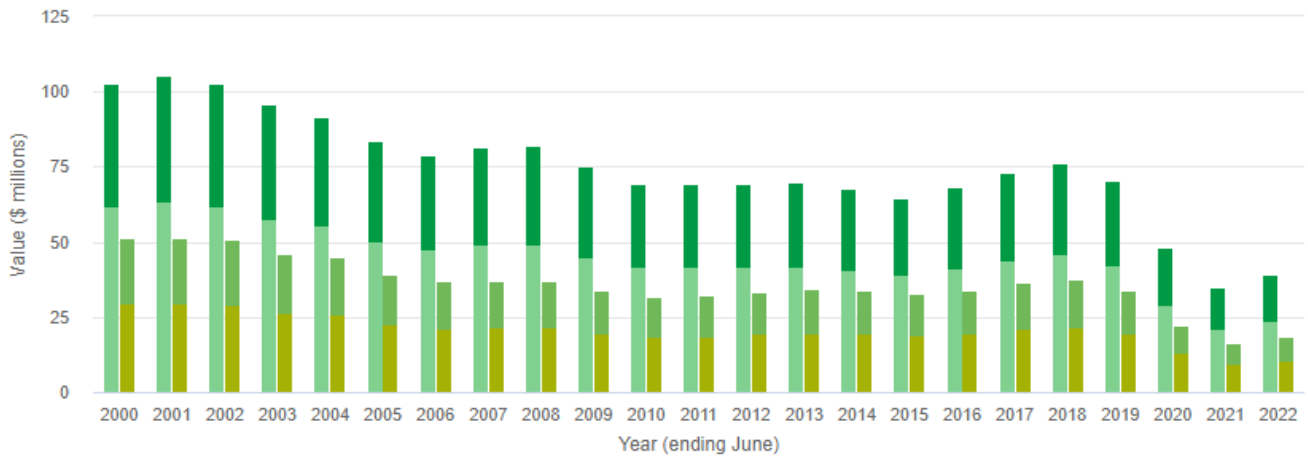


Value of tourism

export 

Goondiwindi Regional Council

■ Output/Sales - Direct
 ■ Value added - Direct
 ■ Output/Sales - Indirect
 ■ Value added - Indirect



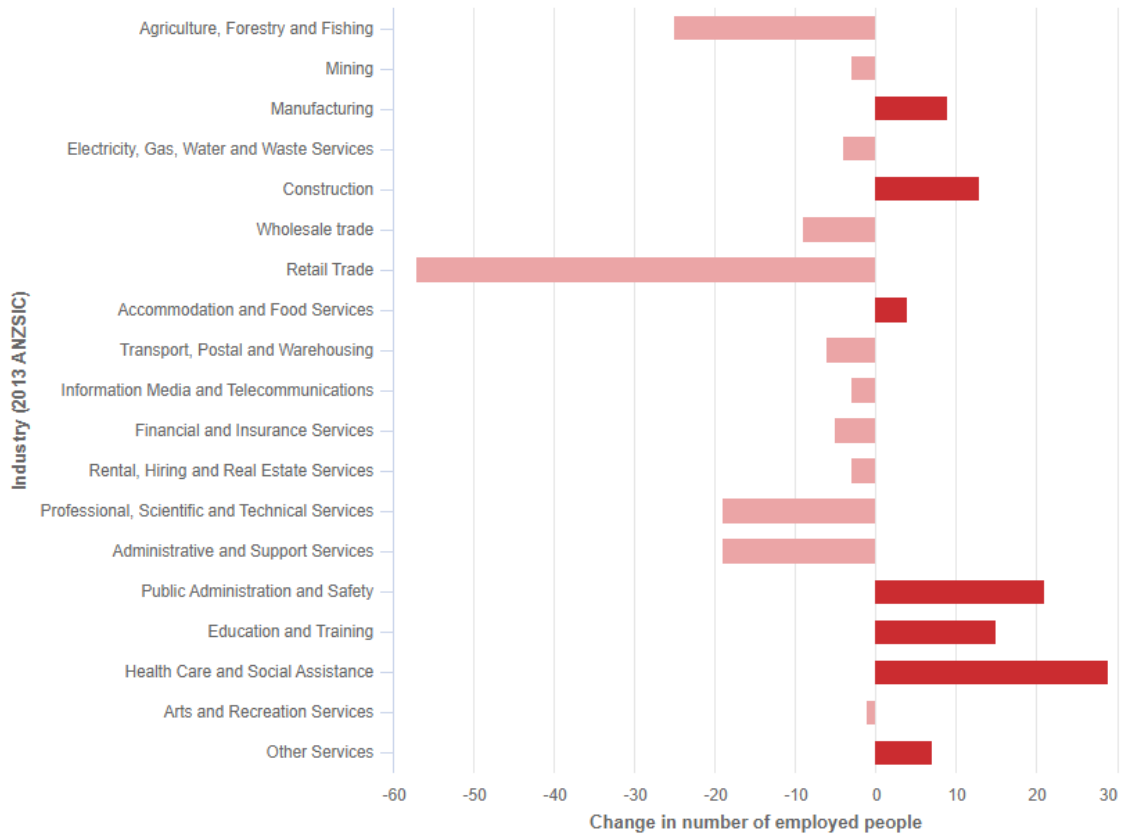
Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) ©2022. ©2021. Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id (informed decisions).

Change in industry sector of employment, 2016 to 2021

export 

Goondiwindi Regional Council area - Total employed persons

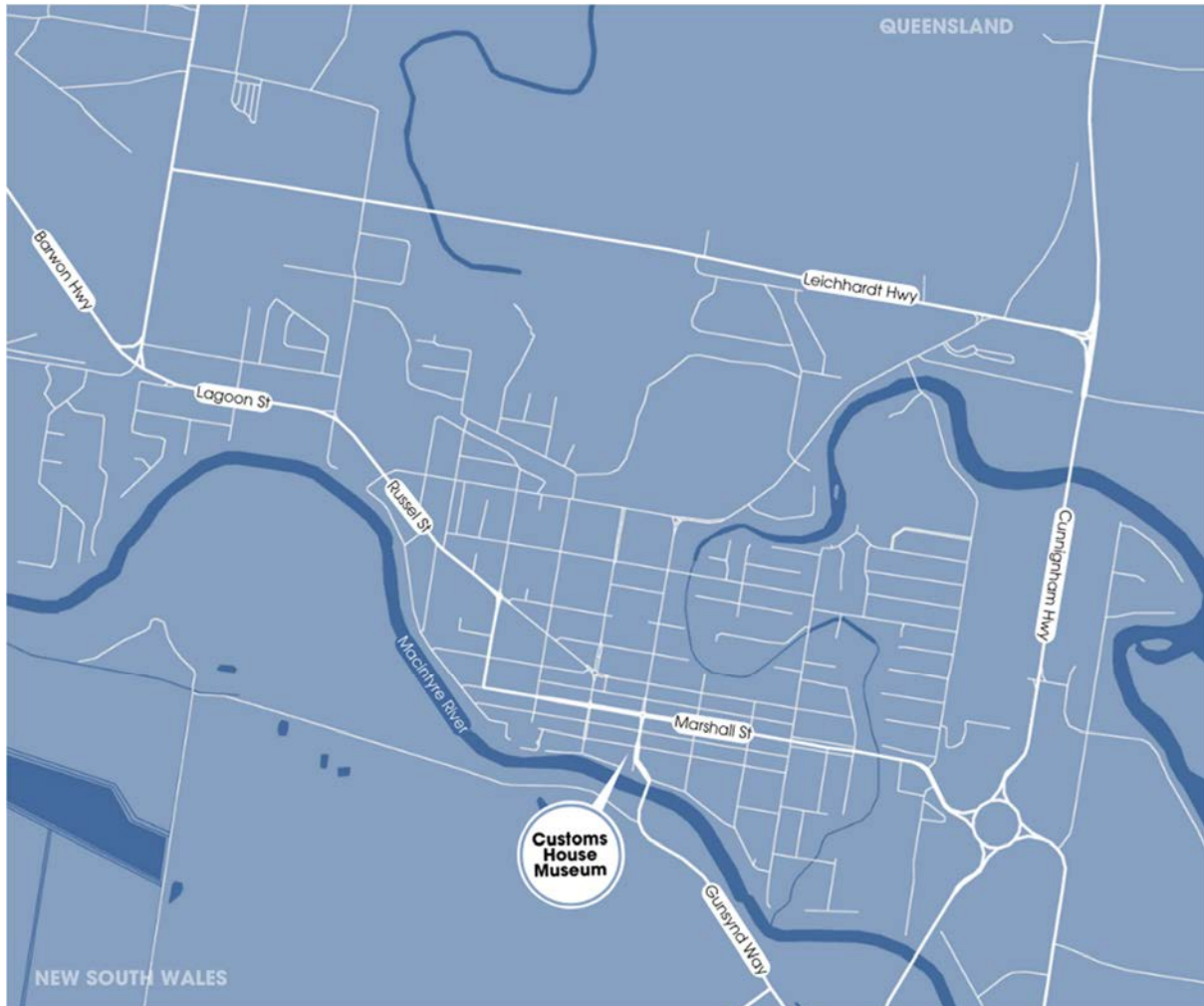
Number
Percentage



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2016 and 2021 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

Analysis of the town

Customs House is a State Heritage listed building located on McLean Street, located immediately upon entering the Goondiwindi township via the “Old Border Bridge” from New South Wales. It is within short walking distance to the Marshall Street CBD and situated adjacent to the Macintyre River Walk, and local landmarks the Tree of Knowledge and Gunsynd Statue. It is a State Heritage listed building located on McLean Street.



Analysis of the site and existing buildings

- Car parking is readily available at and close to the site that is well located and allows for easy access to the complex and intuitively leads pedestrians to the main entry.
- The formal gardens on the site are well established and attractive. It is complemented with uninterrupted views of the Macintyre River from the grounds. Good amenity is provided by existing trees within and surrounding the complex boundaries.
- All existing infrastructure is currently being used for museum displays at the complex, consisting of the main building, the former caretaker cottage, kitchen, main display shed, Martha's kitchen and other display structures.
- There is currently no provision for equal access to the former caretaker's residence, and upgrades are required for safe equal access in the main Customs House building.
- The front of the building faces east onto McLean Street and is somewhat protected from the harsh western sun by the existing trees and buildings.
- Heating and cooling is currently provided by one air conditioner located within the main Customs House building.
- The Customs House complex supports community and private events (such as weddings) within the complex grounds.



Statutory context

The Goondiwindi Customs House is currently governed by the following Council Policies/Procedures:

- GRC 0067 Asset Management Policy
- Goondiwindi Regional Council Heritage Survey
- Goondiwindi Regional Council Visitor Strategy
- A Blueprint for Prosperity: Goondiwindi Regional Council Economic Development Strategy

Land Owner Goondiwindi Regional Council

Lot Plan 2RP2496

Queensland Heritage Register 600530 (Protected under the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*.) Internal refurbishment of caretakers cottage have already been found to meet the requirements for the general exemption certificate. The additional shed has been granted a Section 74 Exemption Certificate by the Department of Environment and Heritage by application number 202307-19347 EC.

Goondiwindi Customs House Masterplan Works Principles

The following considerations will be factored into any decision making pertaining to sourcing funding and actioning projects within this masterplan:

1. Locals and visitors – supporting residents and tourism
2. Diverse, inclusive and flexible:
 - a. ensure the facility provides usability for a series of users
 - b. the needs of a variety of community groups are represented
 - c. ensure clear and equitable access to the building and surrounds
3. Tell the story of this place:
 - a. Celebrate its history
 - b. Protect and enhance local character and identity
 - c. Use the curated collections to tell the story of Goondiwindi Region
4. Celebrate the building – celebrate cultural heritage with careful and sensitive restoration
5. Regenerative and sustainable
 - a. Reduce energy consumption
 - b. Continue working towards the facility being a self-sufficient and sustainable enterprise in its own right
6. Connections – the Customs House facility should be connected with other local sites and tourism attractions

Current Site Plan



Benchmark Projects

A national and international benchmarking strategy has been undertaken to examine the opportunities and constraints of the Goondiwindi Customs House. These exemplar projects have been selected because of their similarities to the principles and objectives of the Customs House complex:

- Alice Springs Telegraph Station - <https://alicespringstelegraphstation.com.au/>
 - A heritage precinct which has public space and some building areas for different functions
 - It offers complementary activities such as a café, event space, guided walks and guided mountain bike tours
 - The precinct is connected to other assets within the town via bicycle paths, and is part of a larger long-term project of regeneration
 - This precinct also accommodates community or private events and partnering with businesses (such as bicycle rental companies)



- Australian Age Of Dinosaurs - <https://www.australianageofdinosaurs.com/>
 - The Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum of Natural History is a working dinosaur fossil preparation laboratory. It holds the world's largest collection of Australian dinosaur fossils.
 - Accessibility to a wide group of users is a feature:
 - Accessible parking spaces for visitors with mobility impairment
 - Wheelchairs are welcome or some are available to borrow at the centre. Displays and buildings are level and accessible wherever possible.

- Unisex accessible toilets, baby change tables and ambulant toilets available
- Guides and maps available in Braille and large print. There is an audio guide available as well.
- Sensory bags with visual cards can be borrowed from the centre or downloaded in advance.



- Mon Repos Turtle Centre <https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/parks/mon-repos/attractions/mon-repos-turtle-centre>
 - A centre dedicated to marine turtle research, protection and education. The Turtle Tales Immersive Experience is a self guided tour that explains about turtles through interactive experiences such as video and soundscapes
 - Includes interactive displays, theatre room, outdoor trails, gift shop, cafe, art gallery and direct access to the beach

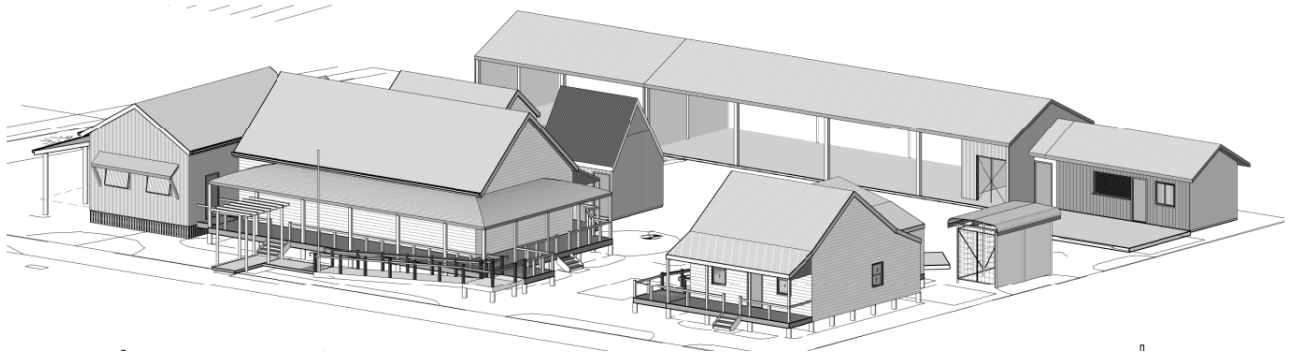


- ANZAC Legacy exhibit, Queensland Museum <https://anzac100.initiatives.qld.gov.au/legacy-projects/qld-museum/index.aspx>
 - A permanent exhibition with the Queensland Museum which explores the First World War and its legacy on Queensland. It also provides a permanent home for Mephisto, the only surviving example of a German A7V Sturmpanzerwagen tank in the world.
 - The exhibition is broken up into three themes: Queensland at War, The Story of Mephisto and Queensland Remembers – these themes are used as focal points to move between spaces and link content and stories.
 - Features interactive digital media to enhance visitor engagement and experience which include:
 - Listening stations and digital visualisations with immersive and directional sound and stories which provide a voice to Digger's past

- A digital memorial poppy wall encouraging visitors to leave a message of remembrance for service men and women.



Celebrating Heritage Fabric



The Goondiwindi Customs House is a unique and culturally significant building in its own right and protected under the provisions on the Queensland State Heritage Register. It is important to celebrate the heritage fabric of the building through considered restoration. All works should be completed with appropriate permission and under the guidelines of the Queensland State Heritage Register.

The following is a detailed analysis of priority items for remedial works for the Centre, prepared by DB Building Inspection Services.

- Update to security system to include the former caretaker cottage with the main building security alarm system
- Installation of disability ramp at the rear of the caretaker's cottage to accommodate wheelchair access
- Repairs to step treads and stringers on exit steps
- Safety audit of Customs House building verandah rails as there are three noted sections where the top rail is detached
- Restumping to outside stumps around Customs House building, and/or restump remainder of stumps under the building
- Relevelling and strength audit for wheelchair access points and on joists, bearers and flooring
- Flooring check to identify damaged boards throughout the buildings
- Installation of wheelchair appropriate access paths throughout the centre

Refer to Appendix A: Building Inspection report for further details.

The Concept

The proposed Masterplan for the Goondiwindi Customs House complex capitalises on the unique heritage fabric of the original building, celebrating the extraordinary collection of artefacts, photographs and machinery and collaborates with the beauty of the surrounding natural environment. This masterplan integrates indoor as well as outdoor displays as part of the holistic museum experience and makes places for people to visit and revisit. An increase in visitation will be a marker of success for these projects, but more importantly it is hoped to generate a sense of ownership and pride in the community which would be demonstrated by increased visitation by locals.

The primary actions in achieving these outcomes are:

- Redevelopment of the ex-caretaker's cottage into a commemorative war display consisting of artefacts from the Woods collection
- Installation of wheelchair access ramp from back of caretaker's cottage
- Installation of a 10x4m shed at the rear of the caretaker's cottage for an interactive war display
- Replacement of the swagman exhibit with the 'lighthouse' display
- Fill in and line two bays of the main display shed
- Installation of another display shed adjacent to the levee bank
- Address the items for remedial works

Proposed Site Plan



Project Staging

It is recommended that the overall scope of works be broken down into stages that can be carried if and when funding becomes available. The following is the suggested stages of work:

Stage A: Accessibility, Urgent Repairs and Maintenance

This stage includes the following works:

- Safety audit and associated actions pertaining to the verandah rails on the main building
- Construction of wheelchair access ramp and paths
- Repairs to step treads and stringers on exit steps
- Restumping to outside stumps around Customs House building, and/or restump remainder of stumps under the building
- Relevelling and strength audit for wheelchair access points and on joists, bearers and flooring
- Flooring check to identify damaged boards throughout the buildings
- Installation of wheelchair appropriate access paths throughout the centre

Stage B: Development of War Display with Woods Collection

This stage includes the following works:

- Redevelopment of caretakers cottage into commemorative war display, including demolition of existing kitchen and bathroom to make way for exhibition space, as well as installation of display cabinetry
- Construction of a 10x4m lined shed
- Redevelopment of the swagman display to a light horse display
- Fill in and line two bays of the main display shed for interactive tank display
- Digital storytelling of significance of war memorabilia, and war stories in collaboration with Goondiwindi RSL
- Expansion of the security system from the main building to the new war display in the caretakers cottage

Stage C: Construction of New Display Shed

This stage includes the construction of a new lined shed adjacent to the levee banks in the Customs House Grounds to house extra collections and displays (not associated with the Woods War collection).

Stage D: Procurement of Additional Land and Buildings

This stage includes the procurement of additional land or buildings (dependant on availability and funding) to expand the offerings of the Customs House complex.

Action Plan (Approximate Costs)

Stage A	
Expansion of the security system from the main building to the new war display in the caretakers cottage	\$5,000
Safety audit and associated actions pertaining to the veranda rails on the main building	\$1,000
Repairs to step treads and stringers on exit steps	\$1,000
Restumping to outside stumps around Customs House building, and/or restump remainder of stumps under the building	\$20,000
Relevelling and strength audit for wheelchair access points and on joists, bearers and flooring	\$5,000
Construction of wheelchair access ramp	\$20,000
Installation of wheelchair appropriate access paths throughout the centre	\$25,000
Flooring check to identify damaged boards throughout the buildings	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$57,000
Stage B	
Redevelopment of caretakers cottage into commemorative war display, including demolition of existing kitchen and bathroom to make way for exhibition space, as well as installation of display cabinetry	\$30,000
Construction of a 10x4m lined shed – war display	\$62,000
Redevelopment of the swagman display to a light horse display	\$20,000
Fill in and line two bays of the main display shed for interactive tank display	\$20,000
Digital storytelling of significance of war memorabilia, and war stories in collaboration with Goondiwindi RSL	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$137,000
Stage C	
Construction of new additional display shed adjacent to levee bank	\$40,000
TOTAL	\$40,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$234,000

Stage A will need to be carried out using existing available funds and external funding.

Stage B and C will require external funding from external sources.

Stage C will be approved in principle upon further discussion and presentation of concept design with Goondiwindi Regional Council.

Further to the actions listed above, there is appetite from the Goondiwindi and District Historical Society to explore opportunities for the procurement of additional buildings or land to expand the facility. This is to be discussed further with Council as and when required.

Grants and Programs

- Growing Future Tourism
<https://www.dtis.qld.gov.au/tourism/funds/growing-future-tourism>

Provides financial support to eligible Queensland tourism operators, not-for-profit organisations and local governments to deliver new and enhanced tourism infrastructure or experiences.

Priority areas include:

- Coastal and marine tourism
- Heritage and cultural tourism
- Ecotourism and sustainability.

Under GFT, the first \$8 million funding round of between \$1 million and \$4 million (ex GST) on a matched contribution basis for eligible project costs is available for eligible recipients and projects.

- Volunteer Grants
<https://www.grants.gov.au/Fo/Show?FoUuid=7b57b89b-ac76-4fc9-ac36-0cfa6523f0c3>

Supports the work of local community organisations by enabling the inclusion of vulnerable people and promoting awareness to increase participation in volunteering.

Funding can be used to:

- Purchase eligible small equipment items for use by volunteers
- Contribute to volunteers' fuel costs, during the course of their volunteer work
- Contribute to transport costs for volunteers with disability who are unable to drive
- Assist with the cost of training courses for volunteers
- Undertake background screening checks for volunteers
- Conduct activities to promote awareness of, and increase participation in, volunteering opportunities
- Adapt practises to support volunteers' safety.

- Strengthening Rural Communities – Rebuilding Rural Communities (up to \$50,000)
<https://frrr.org.au/funding/place/src-rebuilding-regional-communities/>

Gives small remote, rural and regional communities across Australia the opportunity to access funds for a broad range of initiatives that directly and clearly benefit local communities.

Recognising the impacts of COVID-19 on communities, the Australian Government has partnered with FRRR to distribute \$5 million from 2022 to 2024 to support community-led initiatives that:

- Enhance the process of recovery from the COVID pandemic for remote, rural and regional communities

- Reduce social isolation and foster stronger, more resilient remote, rural and regional communities
- Sustain local, regional, rural and remote organisations and their work.

- RACQ Foundation Community Grant Program (up to \$50,000)
<https://www.racq.com.au/about-us/community/racq-foundation>

Gives community groups, charities and sporting clubs the opportunity to rebuild after cyclones, severe storms, bushfires and drought.

- Queensland Remembers – Major Capital Works Grants Program (\$50,000 - \$250,000), Minor Capital Works Grants Program (\$1000 - \$50,000) and Community Grants Program (\$1000 - \$50,000).
<https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/veterans/grants-and-commemoration/queensland-remembers-grants-program>

Supports the delivery of capital works programs, such as internal building refurbishments or upgrades, improving access for people with a disability, or upgrading communal meeting areas, that improve facilities used by veterans or organisations that provide support to veterans.

- Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grants Program – Major Grants (\$10,001 - \$150,000) and Community Grants (up to \$10,000)
<https://www.grants.gov.au/Go/Show?GoUuid=9093660b-c6f3-4c87-b179-81493fb54ed8>

Funds projects that promote appreciation and understanding of the experiences of service and the roles that those who served have played, and to preserve, add to the sum knowledge on, or provide access to information about Australia's wartime heritage.

- Graincorp Community Fund – Grants (up to \$20,000)
<https://www.graincorp.com.au/community-fund/>

Provides financial support to organisations and projects that contribute to the development and promotion of communities within a GrainCorp operational region. Community Foundation Pillars:

- Infrastructure & Capability: Initiatives that provide long-lasting benefits for community members, such as local infrastructure projects, sports facility upgrades and volunteering opportunities
- Community Connectedness: Programs that drive community participation and achieve connectedness, development and growth, such as tourism initiatives, sport and recreation group participation and community events
- Peace of Mind: Projects that contribute to the health and safety of communities and promote a sense of care and security, such as mental health and wellbeing programs, education and development opportunities and sustainability.

- Community Heritage Grants (\$20,000)

<https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/community-heritage-grants#>

The Community Heritage Grants (CHG) program supports community organisations to look after Australian cultural heritage collections. The annual round offers cash grants of up to \$20,000. The first two stages support organisations to work with heritage practitioners to:

- Explain the meaning and value of their collections (a significance assessment)
- Outline the condition of their collections and create a plan to manage it (a preservation needs assessment)

In the third and final stage, organisations can apply for funding to:

- Undertake conservation and collection management activities as recommended in the preservation needs assessment

Funding is also available for:

- Collection management training projects

- National Cultural Heritage Account

<https://www.arts.gov.au/funding-and-support/national-cultural-heritage-account>

The National Cultural Heritage Account is a grant program that assists Australian cultural organisations to acquire significant cultural heritage objects that they could not otherwise afford.

Risk Management

Effective risk management underpins successful project delivery. Key operational, financial and reputational risks include those relating to staffing and costs.

Mitigating actions often include effective monitoring, business and financial planning and partnerships to ensure success.

The risk analysis below identifies the key risks, assessment of their impact and likely occurrence as well as suggested mitigating actions.

Risk Type	Risk Likelihood	Risk Severity	Mitigations
Scope Creep Risk Uncontrolled and unauthorised changes to the initial project scope, leading to additional elements to the project.	High	Medium	Comprehensive project planning, implement change control processes, develop a project scope statement and continuous review.
Cost Risk A shortage or mismanagement of project funds resulting from an inflated budget or other constraints	Medium	High	Detailed budgets with accurate cost estimates, include a contingency budget in costings, resource allocation processes, regular cost monitoring, adhere to Council's procurement policy
Operational Risk Poor implementation of critical operations and core processes resulting in direct or indirect losses. They can arise from a range of factors, such as resource constraints, process inefficiencies, and unforeseen disruptions.	Medium	Medium	Comprehensive project planning, effectively allocating resources based on project requirements, implement robust project monitoring and control mechanisms, contingency planning, and risk assessments, ensuring managerial support for project officer
Performance Risk When a project is unlikely to achieve the results as intended.	Medium	Medium	Develop clear project goals and objectives, recruiting appropriately skilled project officer, regular performance reviews, implementing quality assurance controls
Time Risk Capability to deliver project within times and susceptibility to construction delays.	High	Medium	Contract to include project timeframes with room for contingency. Project manager reporting on a monthly basis will ensure early identification of issues.
Weather Risk Adverse weather delays progress of construction	High	Medium	Adequate work schedule will allow for contingencies due to weather delays.

Appendix A: Customs House Building Inspection Report



DB Building Inspection Services



03/08/23

To Whom It May Concern

Allan Rae and I inspected items at the Customs House that are considered priority items for future improvements.

1. Security system needs to be updated to include the cottage security with the main Customs House security alarm system. At present it only sets off an alarm in the building but is not linked to the main security to alarm the Security Firm.
2. Disabled ramp access to the rear of the building to accommodate wheelchair access.
3. Repair step treads and stringers on three exit steps.
4. Verandah rails require a safety audit as there are three sections where the top rail is detached. (Priority).
5. Restumping to outside stumps around Customs House and/or restump the remainder of stumps under the building (approx. 25). Releveling and a strength audit would be necessary for wheelchair access points and a strength audit should be carried out on joists, bearers and flooring.
6. Flooring check to identify damaged boards throughout (see photo of damaged floorboard in Martha's Kitchen)(Approx cost of stumping would be \$800 per stump.)
7. Wheelchair access paths needed in grounds.

Regards,

David Bell







