

MEDIA RELEASE

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Construction phase begins for Cultural Precinct

The construction phase has commenced on the \$37 million Stage 1 of the Gold Coast Cultural Precinct at Evandale.

Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate today (24/02) closed the doors on the empty Surfers Paradise Administration Building and oversaw initial construction works to make way for the future cultural precinct.

He was joined by City of Gold Coast Chief Executive Officer Dale Dickson and Stage 1 managing contractor ADCO Constructions Pty Ltd Gold Coast Manager Colin Kitto.

The day also marked one of the final official engagements for long-term divisional Councillor and former Mayor Lex Bell.

Mayor Tate said the first construction works were around external roofing adjacent to the decommissioned administration centre.

“By July this year, the site will be cleared and earthworks will follow in preparation for construction to commence in October on the focal point of Stage 1 – the city’s new outdoor amphitheatre with sweeping concert lawn, along with artscape works,” he said.

Managing contractor, ADCO Constructions, will also start refurbishing the Riverside Hub in July for an expanded AA rated gallery for local, national and international visual art exhibitions.

Mayor Tate said this was the first step in a major city-building project with Evandale to be transformed into the city’s heart for civic, cultural and artistic celebration.

“Development of the precinct will bring many long term benefits to the city, increasing visitor numbers, boosting jobs, and creating a stronger arts and cultural sector,” he said.

“A Local Industry Participation Plan will be implemented to maximise benefits to local businesses and job seekers. Of the 120 jobs during construction, the plan will ensure a minimum of 80 per cent of jobs will be delivered to local businesses and employees, either directly or, where necessary, in partnership with external experts.

“When finished, Stage 1 is expected to attract almost 300,000 visitors annually from 2018, generating \$11.4 million in direct tourism expenditure.”

Chief Executive Officer Mr Dale Dickson said early works such as geotechnical and site surveys, relocation of the City’s maintenance compound and ICT hub have been completed.

“All staff have been decanted and the last team to leave the building was Customer Service, which is now located across the road in Karp Court, Bundall,” he said.

“We will now undertake exploratory investigation works, the reconfiguration of services on site and salvage of steel, copper wiring and wood for recycling.”

Mr Dickson said the City had approached the salvage, reuse and recycling of items and materials from the building in line with best sustainable demolition practice.

“Now stripped back to its bare bones, the Surfers Paradise Administration building is a cavernous space filled only with the distant memories of typing pools, workplace meetings and tea trolley chatter,” he said.

“These administration buildings were only ever designed as temporary structures and the years have not treated them well. With staff now decanted to refurbished premises, this is a timely step for Evandale.

“Items of historic value – the timecapsule, opening plaques, honour boards and the blue leather door to the former Mayoral office – have been salvaged and gifted to the Local Studies Library.

“About 1500 items of office furniture have been rehomed to Council offices across the city, with the Upper Coomera and Albert Waterways community centres fitted out with furnishings.

“Community groups, including the Gold Coast Historical Society and Surf Life Saving Australia have also received items, with some key sculptures finding a new home at the city’s Botanic Gardens.”