

26 July 2023

Independent report finds new building cheapest option

Building a new Hervey Bay Library and Fraser Coast Regional Council Administration Centre will cost less than upgrading existing facilities, a report by independent economic experts has found.

The report's release comes as Council today officially gave the green light for the project to go ahead, awarding the contract to finalise the design and construct the new building to national construction company Hansen Yuncken.

Deputy Mayor Denis Chapman said Council had commissioned the AEC Group to examine the need for the new building and compare the costs, benefits and economic impacts with other options.

"AEC Group found that doing nothing was not an option," he said.

"The current library is less than half the size it should be to meet Queensland and Australian library building standards, while the Hervey Bay Council Administration Centre is at the end of its useful working life and cannot meet the organisation's operational needs.

"AEC Group found that bringing Council teams together would lead to better strategic planning, operational efficiencies and improved service delivery for the Fraser Coast community."

Cr David Lewis said AEC Group used Queensland Treasury long-term financial modelling and a 'net present value' analysis to compare the costs of building a new library and administration centre with the costs of upgrading existing facilities.

"Their analysis highlighted that building a new library and administration centre was between \$42.5 million and \$53.6 million cheaper than the alternative option," he said.

AEC Group found there was a "clear need for change" and a range of benefits of the new library and administration centre beyond just lower financial costs, including that it:

- Activates the Hervey Bay City Centre;
- Enhances the university's ability to provide education and training to local students;
- Maximises cultural, learning and recreational opportunities;
- Maximises energy efficiency outcomes; and
- Provides a central facility for disaster resilience agencies to come together to respond to disaster events in the region.

The Hervey Bay Library and Council Administration Centre (incorporating a Disaster Resilience Centre) is a commitment under the Hinkler Regional Deal.

More details about the project and a copy of the AEC Group's report is available on Council's Engagement Hub website at: <https://frasercoast.engagementhub.com.au/hervey-bay-library-administration-centre-inc-disaster-resilience-centre>

The report can be downloaded immediately here:

<https://frasercoast.engagementhub.com.au/projects/download/15547/ProjectDocument>

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