

Draft Conservation Management Plan: Overview

Background

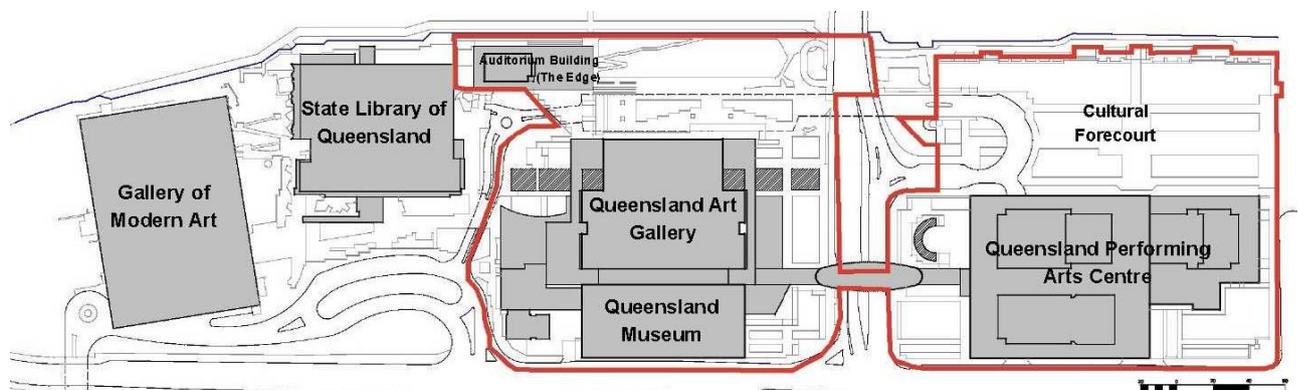
The Queensland Cultural Centre (the 'Cultural Centre') is located at South Brisbane and comprises the Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Queensland Museum and State Library of Queensland. Initially developed between 1977 and 1988 in four stages, it cost more than \$200 million at the time. A fifth stage, The Playhouse Theatre, was completed in 1998. This was followed by the redevelopment of the State Library and the opening of the Gallery of Modern Art in 2006.

Since the Queensland Art Gallery opened in 1982, the Cultural Centre has evolved into the arts and culture centrepiece of the state – a place to discover, preserve and share Queensland's natural and cultural heritage.

In 2015–16, the Cultural Centre recorded more than 5.5 million visits across the four cultural institutions with a significant number being interstate and international visitors.

The Cultural Centre is architecturally significant and demonstrates the evolution of architecture in Queensland. Designed by Robin Gibson AO (1930–2014), a prominent Australian architect of his time, it is an exceptional example of the late 20th century 'International Style'. The Cultural Centre also demonstrates the evolution of modern landscape architecture in Queensland and Australia and was a leading example of a major public project in Australia that integrated landscape design successfully with shared architectural and urban design principles.

In June 2015, part of the site, identified in red below, was entered on the Queensland Heritage Register clearly demonstrating its historic, rare, cultural, aesthetic, technical and social significance. The Cultural Centre's nomination for heritage listing received 1254 public submissions – an exceptional result for a single nomination in the history of the Queensland Heritage Act.



Arts Queensland commissioned a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) to provide a framework to understand and manage the Cultural Centre's cultural values, guide future planning and ensure it thrives and adapts into the future.

The draft CMP, developed by a team of specialist heritage consultants led by Brisbane-based architectural practice Conrad Gargett, establishes conservation policies and management mechanisms that are appropriate to enable the heritage significance of the place to be retained.

Methodology to develop draft CMP

This CMP uses the method of investigation and analysis established by the Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance, The Burra Charter, 2013 (Burra Charter). The Burra Charter is a nationally accepted standard for heritage conservation practice in Australia.

The Burra Charter emphasises the importance of a logical and systematic approach to undertaking a plan for conserving heritage places by outlining processes and principles for conservation, rather than rigid rules.

Based upon the Burra Charter methodology, the key elements of the draft CMP are:

- Understand the place—including the history of the site, its design and construction, use and changes and a description (Chapters 1–7).
- Cultural heritage significance—defines what makes the place special and the attributes that make it important to Queensland (Chapter 9).
- Policy—principles and guidelines to ensure management of the places conserves its cultural heritage values (Chapter 10).

Key themes of the draft CMP

The draft CMP provides a number of key themes, including:

- The practice of excellence evident in the original design and construction of the Cultural Centre should continue.
- The significant relationships, including both visual and physical, that the Cultural Centre has with its setting should be conserved.
- The original and simple material palette of primary fabric and finishes should be maintained.
- Future planning of the Cultural Centre should be undertaken with an understanding and respect of its significance and should recognise and acknowledge the statutory obligations of the Queensland Art Gallery, Queensland Performing Arts Trust, Queensland Museum, and State Library of Queensland.
- Expert advice should be sought when alterations or additions are proposed to the Cultural Centre that would impact on the original design principles, specifically as they relate to the architectural and landscape attributes.

Future adaptation supported by the draft CMP

The Cultural Centre's capacity to serve the arts and cultural interests of Queenslanders, both now and into the future, should be facilitated by the CMP while conserving its cultural heritage values. Future changes need to be considered with expert advice and maintain the original standards of excellence.

The ability of the Cultural Centre and broader precinct to accommodate medium to long-term future growth and expansion of the cultural institutions will need to consider the significance of the place as defined by the CMP.