

## **Tairua Information Centre - Relocation**

### **Business Case**

#### **The Journey so Far:**

Over the past two years I have been Chair of the Tairua Information and Community Services Committee. Over this time I have seen its services grow and expand not only for tourists but for our community also.

During this time, Pauanui, in our local board area, has created a wonderful community hub combining Library, Information Centre and Meeting room. A community hub for both visitors and locals alike. Having a similar configuration here in Tairua would be ideal.

Continually of concern to us has been:

1. The issue of public funding.
2. As elected members of both the Council and Community Boards change so does their perceived value of having Information Centres.

Our community has said loud and clear that it values our Information Centre and wants it to remain. The Information Centre realises that to do so, we need to find a permanent public space to be housed. The Information Centre also believes to remain as 'just an' Information Centre is not enough. It will need to develop into a destination giving people more reasons to come, find information, network, stay and play. Our destination message is "The smallest town with the longest history" – a reflection of our heritage.

In the year to February 2017, a total of 3,544,219 short-term visitors arrived in New Zealand. That includes people travelling for tourism, visiting family, business trips and other reasons. Nearly 500,000 people visited the Coromandel Region over the Xmas-New Year period. We had over 90,000 cars travel over our bridge over that time.

Over the year we have around 42,000 come through our door. The Info Centre is being used for a variety of services from information, shopping, activities, finding accommodation etc

#### **Where we are at now:**

The building currently leased by the Information Centre has been purchased by a local business owner and they have indicated that they may require the premises to operate their business from which will impact on the Information Centre.

The Information Centre has had its lease verbally extended until the end of November 2017.

#### **The request:**

As a temporary solution, the Information Centre would like to move its operations into the library meeting room. It would be the Information Centre's ultimate aim to build an Information/Heritage Centre on the corner, on the camping ground, closest to the library. This would achieve the aim of linking the library to the Information Centre/Heritage Centre and creating a community hub.

## Community Hub Concept

When people think of community hubs, they think of places where people come together to get services, meet one another and plan together. We believe that community hubs are gathering places that help communities live, build and grow together. They are also a place where visitors to a community like to go to share in the local vibe and knowledge. No community hub is like another, as each brings together a variety of different services, programmes and/or social and cultural activities to reflect local community needs. It is this diversity of activity that allows community hubs to play a critical role in building economic and social cohesion in the community.

This is not a new concept by any means. Puke Ariki in New Plymouth has already set up a hub that combines museum, library and information centre.

“Puke Ariki is an innovative museum, library and information centre that combines learning, knowledge, resources and heritage objects for a visitor experience that is like no other.”

There is a huge advantage for the library with the advent of Library Tourism. Yes, its an actual thing!

“It is not just in their eye-catching facades that modern libraries can satisfy the traveller -- their charm also lies in the way that their community that uses them.”

### The benefits:

We believe that an Information Centre/Library Community hubs offer a number of benefits to our community:

- **More efficient and sustainable services** – providing information all in the one place sees some economies of scale which can be achieved through shared back-office duties and volunteers. Funders also benefit from co-location of service providers, increasing service access and reducing duplication.
- **Improved access to services and better outcomes for people** – co-locating will ensure all of the communities services currently provided are in the one place. Through a community hub visitors and community will have access to a broader range of services through increased connectivity.
- **Improved visitor numbers for both library and Info Centre** – the Information Centre alone attracts around 42,000 people from both community and visitors through its doors
- **Greater exposure** – for both services
- **Fits the strategic framework for public libraries** - The strategic framework for Public Libraries 2012 – 2017 also states: Libraries are vibrant places of inspiration, debate and social interaction. They are public civic spaces. They will continue to collect, create and be the repositories of recorded knowledge and information about our cultural heritage. As a significant conduit for services and information provided by government agencies and civil organisations, public libraries play a major role in the development of socially cohesive, informed and inclusive communities. Partnering with other educational and cultural groups, they help to benefit and strengthen those communities. In providing free access to content for all, libraries strengthen the public good, are trusted and well regarded as an essential component of the economic and social infrastructure, and provide for the creative replenishment of the human spirit.  
[http://www.publiclibraries.org.nz/Portals/150/Resources/NZ\\_Public\\_Libraries\\_Strategic\\_Framework.pdf?ver=2015-11-20-202119-673](http://www.publiclibraries.org.nz/Portals/150/Resources/NZ_Public_Libraries_Strategic_Framework.pdf?ver=2015-11-20-202119-673)

**The features:**

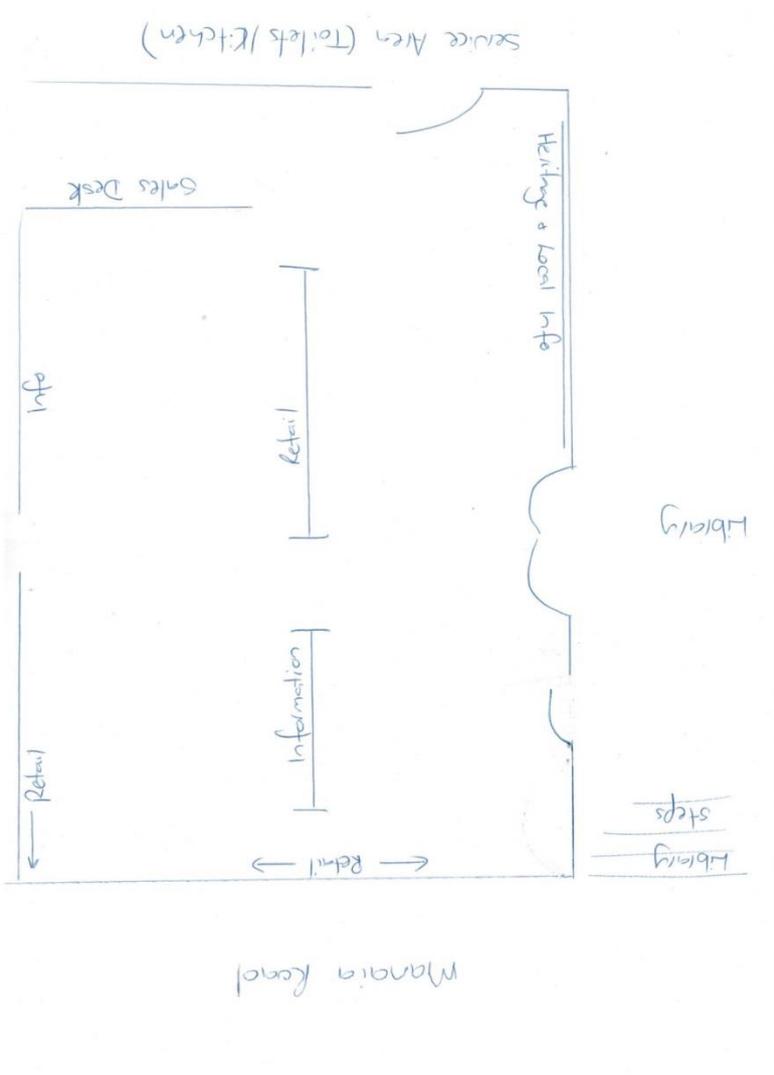
The Information Centre would undertake to ensure the space is left the way it found it when it moves into the permanent 'home'.

Local and regional information (brochures, posters etc) would be placed around the walls on purpose built racks.

Retail material would be placed on the walls and in the middle of the room.

A sales desk will be located at the back of the room near the current cupboards.

Please see the diagram below.



**Logistics:**

The Information Centre would need to complete the move before the summer season begins. That is, before labour weekend. If this is not possible, the Information Centre would leave the move until April 2018. This is completely reliant on the landlord being willing to extend our lease but up until now he is not prepared to provide any detailed information as to whether the Information Centre can stay or will have to move.

The Information Centre has the funds to make the move.

An office space would be needed and is to be discussed with library staff.

Securing the building: The Information Centre anticipates that the internal doors between the library and the meeting room would be locked when one or other of the services are not operational. For example, the Information Centre is open on a Sunday so the doors would be locked and the only access will be via the single external door.

Signage: New signage would be needed on the main road and outside the library. Advertising blade boards would need to be placed outside the Information Centre. Council help and permission to do this will be needed.

Community Meeting Room: A large office is at the back of the library. Could this be used as a community meeting room? If so, where could we put a shared office with library and info centre? The Information Centre will help the library transform an area if necessary.

**Conclusion:**

The Information Centre accepts that the Community Board supports the move, in principle. A move would have to be established sooner rather than later as the information centre could lose its accommodation before the summer.

It makes logistical sense to move to an area where there is an opportunity to create a hub in the future. It would mean changing marketing, signage etc only once.

The Information Centre committee sees the creation of a hub is seen as a win-win for both services. The Information Centre sees this move as a temporary solution. In the long term a purpose built building, near/next to, the library is desirable.

Donna Brooke

Chairperson

**Tairua Information and Community Services Committee**

7 September 2017