ORANGE REGIONAL MUSEUM

CONCEPT REPORT

DESIGN & CONTENT
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A museum has been a long-standing goal for Orange. Over the last 12 years the city has had a ‘museum without walls’, presenting a program of workshops, exhibitions and collection projects in collaboration with other cultural institutions and the regional community. Now, the museum will have its own space. The Orange Regional Museum, a new building in Orange’s vibrant cultural and civic precinct, will be a contemporary museum and cultural centre where the rich history and heritage of the city and region will be celebrated through engaging exhibitions and regional programs.

More than just a building, the museum will interpret the stories, cultures and places of the region, displaying artefacts that trigger memories, engage audiences and inspire new ways of thinking about history and cultures.

The museum will include spaces for both temporary and permanent exhibitions. It will also accommodate a visitor information centre and a cafe.

Orange City Council has contracted Freeman Ryan Design to deliver the design and curatorial concepts for the Orange Regional Museum. The design and planning undertaken through this contract, in consultation with Council and community stakeholders, will underpin the next stages for the museum’s exhibition design and development, and the internal designs, functions and fitout of museum and visitor information centre spaces.

**MUSEUM AIMS**

The aims of the Orange Regional Museum are to:

1. Orient visitors and the community to the history, heritage, people and cultures shaping the development of Orange and the region.
2. Present high quality exhibitions to engage the community and visitors, including temporary and travelling exhibitions.
3. Enrich visitors’ experience of Orange and the district, and encourage exploration and appreciation of heritage places, museums and villages.
4. Foster a sense of place and community engagement, discovery and conversations.
5. Develop collaborative programs with Council’s cultural facilities and enterprises.
6. Develop collaborative programs with the community and other museums to document, interpret and promote appreciation of objects and collections.
7. Document, research, collect, conserve and interpret significant objects and collections.
8. Provide education opportunities for people of all ages.
9. Provide online access to collections, places, stories and museums.
10. Work in partnership with community museums in the region to develop sustainable museums that are well-supported in their communities.
INTRODUCTION
The project brief laid out the following deliverable outcomes for this stage of the project.

1. Production of a 2–4 page visual concept and museum vision/snapshot, to be used for community promotion and fundraising, including artist impressions and 3D views of the exhibition and interiors.

2. Designs and floor plans showing the exhibition’s thematic structure and the spatial organisation of permanent and temporary exhibition areas, indicative interpretive media, a flexible education/public program space, and back of house spaces including the loading dock.

3. A well thought-out design for the museum foyer and visitor information centre, considering functional requirements for the museum and VIC, visitor circulation patterns, a shop, cloaking, museum installations and public art, signage and sponsors acknowledgement.

4. Advice on, and a schedule for, the next stages of interior design and exhibition design, content development and production to the opening of the museum.

5. A detailed budget for the design, production and content development of the core exhibitions in the museum, including multimedia, interactives, graphics, showcases, security, exhibition content development and text.

6. Advice, designs and a budget for the design and fitout of public and back of house museum spaces not covered in the construction tender.

This document delivers each of these outcomes with the following modifications agreed with the council:

5. Budget estimates for the exhibition construction and production are provided to the OCC separately from this document. The exhibition production budget will be reviewed at each stage of the design development.

6. Back of house areas are undergoing architectural redesign by Crone, were not yet available at the time of the issuing of this report.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles have guided the development of these museum design and interpretive concepts.

Response to brief: The concept and interpretive plan respond to and build creatively on the vision and aims of the Orange Regional Museum, as well as the objectives and outcomes articulated in the project brief.

Visitor experience: These concepts are focused on delivering an engaging visitor experience, with a variety of intriguing content and media to interest a broad cross-section of prospective visitors.

Architecture: Our design concepts respond carefully and creatively to the interior and external environments defined by the building architecture and by the broader site, ensuring the design elements of the foyer and exhibition spaces sit comfortably in their environment.

Content-driven design: These concepts began with comprehensive research into the stories, objects and media from which the exhibition content will be selected. On this basis a conceptual framework was developed, which takes into account the exhibition vision established in the brief and through further consultation. This framework will form the basis for the development of both content and design.

Integrated interpretation and design: The content and design have been developed in parallel so they fit seamlessly. The dimensions and form of the exhibition spaces place limits on the exhibition content, while the proposed thematic structure helps determine visitor circulation patterns and the scale and arrangement of the three dimensional and graphic design of the exhibition components. In this way, all elements of the design play a role in the communicative process, conveying and reinforcing the messages conveyed through the interpretation.

Methodology

Quality: FRD pursues the highest quality in its projects. Innovative, creative and inspiring design, quality materials, depth of research, and attention to detail ensure effectiveness in engaging visitors and communicating key messages, and also affect how visitors will value and respect the site.

Feasibility and longevity: FRD ensures that its products are compatible with the needs and resources of those responsible for the implementation, ongoing management and maintenance of the site.

Accessibility / standards: FRD’s design concepts have been developed in accordance with Australian Standards to ensure all relevant requirements are met.

Inclusive communication style: The exhibition will be designed to engage the museum’s diverse target audiences with a variety of communication styles, levels of complexity and detail, and delivery media.

PROCESS TO DATE

These final concepts are the result of a process of collaboration that has balanced client objectives with design and museological considerations and architectural constraints. During this process numerous conceptual options and layouts were considered and discussed with council staff and advisors. Presentations of preliminary concepts were also made to council’s Museum Development Working Party and other stakeholders including the visitor’s information centre.
FOYER & BACK OF HOUSE

Project Brief

The museum entry will be a multi-purpose shared space which will function as the visitor information centre and museum foyer, with access to the café and toilets. The design of the entry space should consider or provide for the following practical or design elements:

1. The foyer should read as an integral part of the museum, with contiguous design, materials, finishes and branding, reflecting a sense of place and identity linked to the mission of the museum and the landscape and colours of the environment.

2. A counter for staff to assist visitors with information, advice and accommodation bookings, as well as possible ticketing, cloaking for visitors to store coats, large bags and umbrellas.

3. A small museum shop combined with a visitor’s centre shop.

4. Optional space for groups and schools, and secure storage to hold and store school bags. It is envisaged that school groups visiting the precinct may first decant to the Library or Gallery.

5. Spatial use and circulation patterns for visitors of varying ages using the space for different purposes: information gathering, museum orientation, cloaking, access to the café and toilets, shopping, meeting friends, talks and briefings by staff or volunteers.

6. The space may also be used for groups to gather ahead of guided tours of museum exhibitions.

7. From time to time the space will also be used for exhibition launches or other public events.

8. An acknowledgement panel or design proposal to recognise the museum’s sponsors and major funding partners, capable of being updated with the names of new sponsors or supporters.

9. Opportunities for the safe display of large objects, collections or temporary installations.

10. Opportunities for an art, light or photographic installation on the Byng St frontage, visible at night from Byng St so that the building expresses its function as a museum.

11. Other installation/public art opportunities may be identified through the content design and development process, including potentially an exterior public art work marking the continuous Aboriginal history and culture of the region, a faces of Orange multi-media, community photo wall and/or an installation commemorating migration journeys and settlement in Orange, with families contributing photos or details of their family’s migration and settlement in Orange.

12. The entry space will need careful acoustic design to reduce noise, facilitate information sharing and conversations.
Design response

The design concept for the new foyer responds to the competing demands of its dual functions as both the entry to the museum and the visitor centre. We have positioned visitor services in the centre of the space, and the service desk and appropriate signage will make this immediately apparent to visitors upon entry. The perimeter of the room, on the other hand, will house museum-related design and signage elements and can be clearly recognised as the museum.

DESIGN AND PLANNING

The foyer has been designed to complement the building architecture. The design is contemporary and uncluttered and the central furniture components are located along the axis of the fold in the ceiling.

A high level of flexibility is built into the design and planning. The visitor seating and tables along the north wall can be moved or removed for events. Space has been allowed for temporary or rotating placement of display objects along the Byng Street façade at the museum end and there is sufficient space allowed both at the building and museum entries for groups to gather.

INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL ORIENTATION

The foyer allows visitors to orient themselves both physically (Where to next? Where do I find...?) and intellectually (What will I see here? What is it about?). For this to occur successfully, there needs to be both clarity of design and space for visitors to ‘decompress’ and gain their bearings immediately after arrival. For this reason the empty spaces in the foyer are critical.

MUSEUM IDENTITY AND ENTRY

The museum entry will be the focus point of the views along the length of the foyer from the building entrance, front desk and the visitor circulation pathways.

Prominent titling and visual identity will highlight the entry, reinforcing the effect of the interior architecture.

There will also be views through the museum doors to museum highlights such as large-scale imagery of Canobolas landscapes and key objects, and further in through the long visual axes inside the museum.

Continuity with the museum exhibition spaces will also be achieved through the placement of museum content inside the foyer, such as a multimedia installation on the north wall and display of rotating key objects in the south east corner.

VISITOR CENTRE AND MERCHANDISING

On entry the three-sided desk allows for immediate welcome and service to visitors, with quick inquiries to the left/north, while a space for independent reading of maps, etc., to the right/south also allows for more in-depth service. Easy rear access enables staff to move around the foyer to welcome and approach visitors. The desk provides adequate space for three staff.

To the east of the desk are free-standing units for merchandise display. Sales will be made at the desk. There is a clear view from the desk to the merchandise, and for security the desk is between the merchandise and the front doors.
A Place for All Seasons

On the north wall is a multimedia installation with museum content. This is designed to be visually spectacular, visible from outside through the Byng St façade, and to provide intellectual continuity between the museum and the foyer. The proposed media content is a ‘City of Colour’ photoimagery/video display of local landscapes changing through the cycle of the seasons. This provides an introduction to the museum, in particular to the core concepts of land and place, and the core themes of Heartland and Ghaanabula. It also provides continuity between the museum and the foyer, bringing the museum out into the foyer space and allowing the museum content to act as a natural visual drawcard for visitors both inside and outside the building.

Promotional signage

Three electronic signage boards adjacent to the Byng Street façade near the building entrance will provide opportunity for programmed promotional displays. These are two-sided and allow for content to be displayed along the south facing facade to the street. This is a key element that allows for night-time and after-hours projection of the museum’s identity. A sponsors and donors board with electronic capacity will be located near the exhibition entry point.
BACK OF HOUSE

OFFICE SPACE
Total area 52m²
- Visitor centre requirements
  - 1 office space
- Museum requirements
  - Workroom: table, shelving and storage
  - Desk space for 4 volunteers/staff
  - 1 office space

LOADING DOCK
Total area 56m².
The requirements listed below for the loading dock cannot all be permanently included within the available space. Hence, we recommend that the area not be divided into discrete functions but instead be kept undivided and used in a multifunctional way.
- **Secure dock for staff (excluding cafe staff) only:** refer to the indicative walls and doors on the plan (RED), these are proposed variations to secure the loading dock from visitors and cafe staff.
- **Crate storage:** crates could be stored in the open secure loading dock temporarily, but there is no room allocated to permanent storage. Permanent storage for crates, exhibition components, objects, equipment, etc., needs to be secured offsite.
- **Work table:** as needs arise a work bench could be set up and taken away.
- **Sink:** the location and plumbing of a sink needs to be looked at by the architects.
EXHIBITION SPACES

Project Brief

The following guidelines for the exhibition design concept are specified in the brief:

1. Crone Partners’ museum design provides for 550sqm of exhibition space, not including a loading dock and some office accommodation.

2. The museum exhibition will require a robust ‘permanent’ exhibition framework interpreting the priority themes identified above. It is anticipated this framework will have a minimum 10–15 year life span, while allowing the changeover and updating of parts of the exhibition content.

3. In addition the exhibition space will include a flexible temporary exhibition area adjacent to the loading dock for changing exhibitions that may either be small scale travelling exhibitions, or changing displays generated in-house, amplifying the ‘permanent’ exhibition and interpreting themes from the conceptual framework above.

4. The exhibition area will also include a community showcase adjacent and contiguous to the temporary exhibition area. This showcase will accommodate a diverse range of community generated changing displays that may interpret significant community events or special days... At times this ‘showcase’ space may also be used as part of the temporary exhibition area.

5. The museum concept design will identify options for an education/public program space to deliver the mission of the regional museum as an education destination.

Objective 4 from page 10 of the brief adds the following point:

Consider multimedia and digital storytelling opportunities either in a dedicated AV space or integrated into the displays.
EXHIBITION SPACES

Design Response

The exhibition content, the potential visitor experience and the building architecture are key to the evolving exhibition design concept.

In addition, the need to accommodate permanent, temporary and rotating exhibits as well as a group activity space places high demands on the limited space.

The design solution divides the exhibition space into three galleries that can be separated or connected as required. The first gallery accommodates the permanent exhibition, while the other two accommodate rotating and temporary exhibitions. The internal wall connecting the latter two spaces is designed to be moveable, allowing the spaces to be combined, with forward planning, into one large space for temporary exhibitions or other uses.

When the temporary galleries are separated, the smaller triangular space adjacent to the loading dock and back of house is designed as a multifunction space that can be used for small temporary exhibitions, a learning/activity space or group functions such as food and wine tastings.

The exhibition furniture is also designed to allow for flexibility. The floor elements are composed of moveable and interchangeable components such as multimedia touch tables, graphic lecterns, lectern-style showcases and object plinths.

Responding to the interpretive plan, the exhibition design seeks to create a memorable museum experience that will appeal to a wide range of visitors, with a balance of display objects, multimedia, graphics and text displays.
The interpretive plan gives structure to the exhibition content, allowing a wide range of material to be brought together and displayed in a way that is engaging and meaningful for visitors.

A number of elements and processes inform the interpretive framework. As can be seen in the diagram below, the basis of the framework is the exhibition content itself. Extensive research into the content is the beginning of concept development.

Goals for communicating the content are then developed which take into account the intended audience and the museum vision.

The communication goals are then applied back onto the content to help determine and articulate the thematic structure of the exhibitions.

Constraints of space and exhibition duration must be taken into account to ensure that the content is a good fit for the exhibition space.
Content research

DOCUMENTS
This design concept has relied mainly on the heritage reports, commissioned studies, and other resources provided by the Orange Regional Museum. A list of received documents is appended. The development phase of the project will require extensive and detailed research of these and additional materials. Personal stories will be sourced from a range of community members and other people of interest. During this process, extensive consultation will be required with the Orange Regional Museum and with community stakeholders.

OBJECTS
The Orange Regional Museum plans to draw objects from Orange City Council’s collection, from loans negotiated with museums and heritage collections, from local families and collectors, and via strategic acquisitions. The full collections of the Orange & District Historical Society and the Orange City Council have been made available to the museum. For the temporary exhibitions previously shown by the museum, objects were obtained on loan from local collections and from institutions further afield. The regional historical societies and council collections contain over 18,000 items covering a wide range of historical themes. However, documentation is scarce and the significance of the many of the objects has not been established. The availability of these materials for permanent display is also uncertain.

The lack of a substantial, catalogued object collection will necessitate extensive research and consultation during the design development stage of the project to ensure that there is an adequate foundation of objects to support the interpretive elements of the museum exhibitions.

MEDIA
There is a wide range of historical images of excellent quality available. Other potential visual media include printed and digitised maps, artworks, and film media. For the development of this concept, image research was conducted at various image repositories including the State Library of NSW and Orange Library. Other images will need to be sourced from these and other institutions and directly from the community during the development phase of the project.
Much interpretive work has already been undertaken by the Orange Regional Museum in the lead up to the development of the museum itself. Thematic studies of the history and heritage of the area have been commissioned and community consultations have also been undertaken. On this basis Orange Regional Museum has identified the following priority themes for inclusion in the museum exhibitions.

**Our Place – the region**
- Evolution of the environment and landscape, geology, soils, stone and water
- Aboriginal history and culture past and present
- Gold mining from the 1850s to the present, Ophir, Wentworth / Lucknow, Cadia
- Exploration and settlement, surveying and mapping the land, villages of the region
- Agriculture, wool, orchards, produce, food, wine and culinary history

**Our Town – Orange**
- Development of the city and its environment, mapping and subdivisions, public buildings, homes and gardens
- Industry, manufacturing, local businesses, shops and stores
- Council’s works and services, including parks, gardens and water
- Transport and communications

**Provisional Themes**

- Health, hospitals and medical services
- Made in Orange, heritage objects, crafts, cultural artefacts

**Our People**
- Notable people, social, community and cultural organisations
- Cultures, journeys and migration heritage objects and stories
- War service at home and abroad
- Orange Sporting Hall of Fame - clubs, places and notable individuals

**RESPONSE**

As acknowledged in the brief, space limitations mean that these provisional themes cannot all be included in the permanent displays. Designing temporary exhibition areas along with flexible exhibition structures into the museum will enable those themes not included in the permanent displays to be rotated. These rotating themes can form the core of the museum’s temporary exhibition program.

Given the need to restrict the number of themes on permanent display, a selection of permanent themes must be made. As noted in the brief, the final themes may not correspond exactly with the potential themes listed above. Broader themes encompassing or cutting across several of the potential themes may provide a stronger foundation for the museum content and a better fit for the constraints of the museum space.
Exhibition vision

The exhibition vision derives from the aims of the museum and the nature of the target audience. These considerations are crucial in determining the interpretive framework and thematic structure of the exhibitions, and also inform the design and the media used to communicate the exhibition content.

AUDIENCE
The brief articulates how the exhibitions should engage the diverse target audiences for the Orange Regional Museum:

- Residents of Orange and the region will recognise familiar stories and discover new perspectives.
- Visitors to Orange will discover the history and contemporary identity of the region, and from there explore the city, villages, heritage places and landscapes.
- The museum will have a particular focus on gold history linked to the curriculum. Other strands may include programs for young children and tertiary students studying in areas such as geology and museum studies.
- Aboriginal people will see their history, culture, people and contemporary life represented.
- More particular audience segments will be engaged through changing exhibitions and public programs.

MUSEOLOGICAL AIMS
Museological aims of the Orange Regional Museum of particular relevance for establishing the interpretive framework are:

- To interpret contemporary issues, themes and stories that are not well represented in community museums in the region – e.g. migration, cultures, the landscape and environment.
- To reinterpret traditional museum collections through contemporary audience-centred topics – e.g. water, food and produce.
- To represent contemporary people and perspectives based around interviews and stories from a wide range of people in the Orange community.
- The inclusion of Aboriginal culture, history, people and places in the region.
- Encouraging visitors to the exhibitions to add their stories to the museum exhibitions, and other strategies and activities to foster participation.
- A community-centred, democratic and inclusive approach to what is considered worthy of representation in a museum.

RESPONSE
The museum’s stated aims tie in well with the target audiences, looking to interpret heritage objects and regional history with contemporary audiences and museology in mind. Important links are made to the local community as well as to visitors, with personal stories to be used to illustrate a multiplicity of perspectives on the region’s history and culture.

Taking a participatory and interactive approach through the content, design and event programs will engage a broad audience. It is important, however, that this approach complements rather than replaces a strong object collection and loan scheme.

A focus on uncovering less well-represented stories and contemporary perspectives on the prominent regional themes means that the museum will connect thematically with the many small district museums without unnecessarily duplicating their content.
From the full list of themes in the brief, Orange Regional Museum has suggested a selection of priority themes and a thematic structure organised under three driving concepts as seen in the diagram below.

FRD also recommends a thematic rather than chronological approach to the exhibition structure as it will allow exhibits to be changed over more easily without disrupting this structure.

However, the proposed thematic structure creates a number of challenges.

1. As can be seen in the diagram, the thematic structure is loaded towards the Our Place concept, making spatial distribution of the themes in the exhibitions problematic.

2. The themes of rural industry and food culture—central to the story of the region in the commissioned thematic histories—are missing.

3. On the conceptual level, there is the possibility that the suggested division of themes under the concepts of people, place and town might encourage an arbitrary separation of stories of people from those of place.

For these reasons we suggest reconceiving of the conceptual framework as a non-hierarchical structure, detailed on the following page.
Consultation with the Orange Regional Museum during concept development identified the thematic centrality of the land and landscape. It was suggested that Mt Canobolas, in particular, could be seen as the wellspring of the region's abundant natural resources: its fecund soil, its rich mineral deposits, its abundant watercourses and the natural variety of its flora and fauna.

We have thus proposed this concept as the foundation of the interpretive framework. Stories of people and place are founded on stories of the land.

However, we also suggest a structure of mutual influence and transformation, rather than hierarchy. Thus, as people have come to the region to take advantage of the riches of the land— from millennia of Wiradjuri seasonal migration through squatters, settlers, waves of Chinese miners, and European workers to tree changers and refugees—they have in turn changed the landscape, and come to form the place as it is now, with its many villages and thriving town, cultivated landscapes of orchards, crop fields and paddocks, dammed and channelled watercourses, abandoned mineshafts and working open cuts.

The conceptual framework can thus be summarised in the following idea:

As people have come to the region to take advantage of the land’s abundant resources, they have in turn changed the land, and formed the place as it is now.
The conceptual framework articulated on the previous page allows the inclusion, with some modification, of the core themes suggested in the brief. The permanent exhibition lays the conceptual foundation for the museum as a whole, while the rotating exhibits build on this foundation. Hence it is important that the themes selected for the permanent exhibition provide a coherent foundation.

**PERMANENT EXHIBITION THEMES**

We suggest four themes be developed as permanent exhibits:

1. Ghaanubula
2. Heartland
3. Wiradjuri
4. Mining

These four themes all strongly embody the three concepts of the interpretive framework, Land, People, Place.

Ghaanubula—the Wiradjuri word from which the name of Mt Canobolas derives—is the conceptual as well as geographic centre of the region. From its volcanic past come the riches of the region’s land.

For the Wiradjuri people, Mt Canobolas has for millennia been a place of spiritual and practical significance: a location for male initiation ceremonies and a source of abundant food. In the exhibition, the story of the Wiradjuri thus connects with the story of the mountain.

The area’s rich soil and open landscapes also attracted the Europeans. After initial exploration and settlement it became a favoured location for grazing and farming, and grew into the very heartland of the colony. Villages soon sprang up to service it, and a regional community began to thrive. Today, the region’s identity is still strongly tied to this history.

Finally, the area’s rich mineral deposits also exist thanks to Mt Canobolas’s ancient volcanic past. It is these deposits that drew miners to the area and led to the explosion of population and prosperity in the region and to the rapid development of Orange into the regional centre.

These four permanent themes are similar to the four themes under the Our Place concept in the brief, although Heartland, Wiradjuri and Mining are proposed as broader themes, with Heartland taking on elements of land and landscape, while Ghaanubula is conceived as a more-focused theme that is symbolic or representative of the overall conceptual framework.

**PERMANENT / ROTATING EXHIBITION THEMES**

We propose additionally that two themes be developed as combined permanent/rotating exhibits:

5. The Making of Orange
6. Our Place

The permanent elements of the exhibits will focus on historical stories and will provide a foundation for the rotating elements with strong conceptual links to the four permanent themes.

The rotating elements of the Making of Orange will provide the opportunity to develop more detailed exhibits on focus stories of community history, life, and culture, such as many of those listed in the temporary exhibition brief.
LAND – PEOPLE – PLACE

People have come to the region to take advantage of the land’s abundant resources. They have in turn changed the land, and thus formed the place as it is now.

**CENTRAL IDEAS**
- Mt Canobolas as geographic, historical & spiritual centre of Orange region.
- The riches of the land draw people to the Orange region. Over time, this has transformed the land into a cultured and settled landscape.
- The Wiradjuri are the traditional owners of the Orange region. They maintain a living culture tied to the land.
- The Orange region is the site of the earliest payable gold discovery in Australia and the oldest continuously mined area in the country.
- As people arrived in the Orange region, a community formed and flourished. It was built on the products of the land, but soon became much more.
- Everyone has come to Orange from somewhere. They all have unique stories.

**STORYLINES**
- A volcanic past
- Two shoulders
- Stories of the mountain
- A landscape transformed
- Blackman’s swamp
- Journeys to the interior
- Villages
- Marking the land
- Land of abundance
- Gold Fever
- Life of the miner
- Mining technology
- Permanent exhibits
- Grown from the land
- Orange prospers
- Rotating exhibits
- Journeys to Orange, historical
- Orange and district illustrated:
  - graphic or digital
- Changing face of Summer St:
  - digital slideshow or interactive
- Image/graphic mosaic for current resident stories.

**POSSIBLE OBJECTS**
- Rock and soil samples
- Marked tree
- Selection of representative and significant objects to be sourced
- Historical artefacts, contemporary crafts, personal objects
- Mining equipment including Hargraves/Tom gold cradle, miner’s paraphernalia.
- Selection of representative and significant objects to be sourced. Rotating exhibits will source many loan objects.
- Personal items and heritage objects from residents and local collections.

**PROPOSED MEDIA**
- Projection of Canobolas landscapes through seasons.
- Historical documents (graphic/digital)
- Mt Canobolas stories (graphic/audio)
- Villages wall graphic
- Landscape images
- Marking the land: Multi-touch table(s)
- Multimedia: oral histories and personal stories.
- Large-format projection of historical images.
- Tall tales from the pub, audio and printed media.
- Orange and district illustrated:
  - graphic or digital
- Video or audio for oral histories.

Note that these are provisional or place-holder theme titles.
This theme uses Mt Canobolas to represent the importance of land and landscape to the Orange region, the geographic, historical & spiritual centre of the Orange region.

STORYLINES & MEDIA OPTIONS

A volcanic past
Mount Canobolas was an active and aggressive volcano responsible for creating the landscape around Orange between 11 and 13 million years ago, when Australia was sitting over a hotspot in the earth’s crust.
The rich, volcanic soils have created fertile ground for natural flora and fauna, and for cultivation.

Two shoulders
The name Canobolas comes from the Wiradjuri word Ghaanabula, meaning ‘two shoulders’, referring to the twin peaks, Old Man Canobolas and Young Man Canobolas.
The area has a rich Aboriginal history and was an important place for male initiation ceremonies and stone tool making, as well as being a rich source of food and medicines.

Stories of the mountain
Canobolas is a significant landmark for residents and explorers across the ages. Here visitors can read or listen to some personal stories of the mountain.
The focus of this theme will be the relationship between people and the land.

STORYLINES & MEDIA OPTIONS

A landscape transformed
Much of the Central West was originally covered with open wooded country. Even this was not its natural state: the Wiradjuri fostered the extension of grasslands to encourage food crops and kangaroo grazing. Likewise, colonial settlers saw the open woodlands as ideal for grazing.

After European settlement, the region became a cultivated, ‘denatured’ landscape, with only remnants of original vegetation. It has been mined, marked and scarred, cleared and burnt, but also cultivated and nurtured, producing great agricultural abundance and mineral wealth.

Blackman’s Swamp
The original European name for Orange is Blackman’s Swamp. Although there is no major river through the town or its surrounds, water and its management have always been a feature of life in the region, as a map of the streams issuing from Mt Canobolas shows.

Journeys to the Interior
The Orange Region was one of the first areas to be explored after the crossing of the Blue Mountains. Soon after, the area was settled by squatters and graziers, with the limits of location extending to nearby Wellington.

Personal accounts of Mitchell and other early explorers and settlers will bring colour to this storyline.

EXHIBITION SPACES

Heartland

Villages graphic wall
Large-format, semi-abstract wall graphic showing location of villages (including ghost villages) with historical details, images and vignettes.

Marking the land
This interactive map will incorporate aspects of many of the storylines in the permanent exhibition including from other themes. It focuses on the land and its transformation by people, and could include geological maps, Wiradjuri significant sites and place names, European place names, explorer routes, watercourses, mining sites, etc.

Land of abundance
The rich land of the region provides abundant food. The Wiradjuri would come to harvest many plants and animals from the hillslopes, wetlands and woods. European and Asian settlers planted orchards, wheatfields, vineyards, and market gardens. Even today, the region is one of the heartlands of food production, and Orange a centre of culinary culture.
Wiradjuri

This theme will tell the story of the Wiradjuri, traditional owners of the land around Orange and the greater Central West. The Wiradjuri maintain a living, continuous culture.

STORYLINES & MEDIA OPTIONS

Note that these storylines are provisional on consultation with Wiradjuri representatives. Ideally, personal testimony will form the basis of all the storylines, using a range of recorded media including audio and video as well as text.

A connection with the land

The Wiradjuri culture is a living culture that has been tied to this land for thousands of years. The land around Orange holds many sites of significance for their spiritual beliefs and daily life.

This storyline may include some local dreaming stories, and will also focus on Wiradjuri knowledge of the local land, fauna & flora.

A living culture

This storyline will focus on personal and community stories, historical and current, showing cultural continuity and change, as well as material culture including arts and crafts.

Contact history

The Wiradjuri and the British colonialists first crossed paths when Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson traversed the Blue Mountains. As exploration increased, many Wiradjuri worked as guides for the British, including Yuranigh who guided Maj. Mitchell, and whose burial place is nearby, marked with carved trees, a practice unique to the Wiradjuri.

As the white population increased the Wiradjuri began to lose their traditional lands and way of life, and conflicts occurred. Wiradjuri resistance was organised under the leadership of Windradyne and martial law was declared. Many were killed. However, no records were kept of the many Wiradjuri men, women and children killed in attacks and by poisoning.

The influx of miners during the goldrush increased displacement of the traditional owners. Later, the Protectorate of Aborigines was established and displacement was enforced.

Other aspects of Wiradjuri and broader Aboriginal history will be distributed through the other themes, e.g. in Heartland / villages (e.g. the Springs) and Making of Orange.

Rights history

Wiradjuri people have played a prominent role in the fight for Aboriginal rights. This storyline will look at historical and contemporary figures in the campaign for rights and recognition.

Apart from Windradyne in the early years, Yangar, a Wiradjuri man known both as King Billy and Jimmy Clements, protested at Parliament House when it opened in 1927, accompanied by Marvellous aka John Noble.
The Orange region was home to Australia’s first payable gold find by Lister and Tom at the nearby village of Ophir. Other metals and minerals were also mined, especially copper. Mining continues to the present day – indeed this is the only place in Australia with a continuous mining history.

We propose a large-format media display of rotating images on the end wall to showcase the many high-quality photographs from the goldrush.

**STORYLINES & MEDIA OPTIONS**

**Gold fever**
Once gold was struck, there was a massive influx of people, and the place was transformed, with the landscape irrevocably altered. Prospectors rushed from far-flung lands, most significantly the Chinese and Cornish, and settlements grew from nowhere. Support industries developed rapidly and many social and cultural transformations also occurred. Infamous bushrangers operated in the area.

**Life of the miner**
Early miners led a life of hardship until they hit paydirt. Makeshift huts were built from bark (the Wiradjuri showed many how to strip the bark from trees), with more-permanent dwellings of wattle and daub. Injuries and deaths were frequent once alluvial gold became scarce and shafts were dug down to the rich seams of gold and copper. A selection of miners’ personal items would provide focus for this storyline.

**Tall tales from the pub**
This display will focus on the wilder side of mining: licensing woes and stock swindles, prospectors’ tales from the past and the present. Possible media could include recordings of old tales from the pub as recounted in newspapers of the time alongside recordings of current prospectors telling their tales, and newspaper clippings.

**Mining technology**
The nature of mining technology quickly changed as miners had to go deeper to find payable gold. Eventually mining became the industrialised process it is today. This section would offer some technical explanations of mining with diagrams and a selection of mining equipment and paraphernalia.
STORYLINES & MEDIA OPTIONS
This theme explores the development of the town and community of Orange and associated villages.

PERMANENT DISPLAYS

Grown from the land
Orange grew to supply land-based industries including agriculture, grazing and mining. Other industries and businesses naturally grew to supply the burgeoning population.
Gold was crucial in the establishment of Orange as the regional centre, rapidly increasing infrastructure and services to supply the industry, including transport, banks, hotels and shops.
Historical artefacts, photographs and documents will form the basis of this display.

Orange prospers
Orange became very prosperous, causing new industries to move in such as manufacturing. Grand estates were established. Orange was even mooted as the seat of federal government.
Many industries required new workers, supplied from immigration and domestic migration e.g. of returned soldiers. Many precincts of Orange have their origins in accommodation built to house these workers.
Historical artefacts, photographs and documents will form the basis of this display.

Summer St
A sliding or interactive photo display would show development of Summer St over time. Short vignettes tied to the buildings and their occupants will bring the story to life.

Town life
The flavour of town life in the early 20th century will be conveyed through a selection of historical documents such as newspaper stories and advertisements, posters, photographs, illustrations, footage and stories. Sources may include Orange & District Illustrated from 1928, a promotional film from 1927, and W. Folster’s articles.

ROTATING DISPLAYS
Rotating displays will cover storylines to do with development of Orange and region, focusing on industry, work and the built environment, with personal stories and objects the anchorpoints.
Example storylines include:
- Cultural life and leisure in Orange and District
- Sporting history, Gnoo Blas
- Rural culture: field days, wool industry work
- Pasture to Plate
- Parks and Gardens
- Wool industry
PERMANENT DISPLAYS
The permanent displays will tell the personal stories of several representative Orange residents from the past, focusing on their journeys to the Orange region—what brought them here, where they came from, what they left behind, what they brought with them, how they made their life on arrival, and their memories of the community and region. If possible the stories will be told by their descendants.
Media will include personal objects and graphic displays of photographs and documents.

ROTATING DISPLAYS
The main proposed rotating element is a large graphic wall display of portraits of local people and families, perhaps photographed in front of their houses or businesses in an echo of the A&A/Holtermann photographs from the gold-rush era. These would be accompanied by short quotes from the portrait subjects on what Orange or their village means to them. These portraits could be rotated in and out regularly as part of an ongoing community engagement program. Tying in visitor portraits or social media interactivity is also a possibility to be considered.
The rotating displays could also include more-detailed ‘Journey to Orange’ stories of some current residents similar to the permanent showcase displays in this theme. These could be rotated quarterly, for example.
A separate temporary exhibition brief was issued in May 2015.

The advantage of including rotating elements in the Making of Orange and Our Place displays is that these can accommodate temporary exhibition themes that will supplement and amplify the core themes, as suggested in the brief.

The history of different local industries and institutions, for example manufacturing or hospitals, can thus be explored in detail, illustrated with a larger selection of objects obtained on loan.

In other cases, temporary exhibitions may be mounted that do not directly connect with the museum’s core themes. The flexibility of FRD’s proposed design will ensure that the museum is able to accommodate these exhibitions.
EXHIBITION SPACES

Permanent Exhibition, view north

Rotating Exhibition, view east
FLEXIBLE LAYOUT OPTIONS
PUBLIC ART OPTIONS

COMMISSIONING
• The museum should undertake a program to commission public artworks to connect the museum with the external public spaces in the precinct and create public interest. This is an opportunity for the public art to respond to museum content as opposed to art gallery programs.
• The commissioning of public art should be programmed into the museum management plan. It should be considered whether the museum will have the staff to facilitate or whether this should be approached as a precinct-wide or council project. Planning for this program should begin as soon as possible.
• This program may also require a specific grant or fund to ensure it eventuates.

LOCATIONS
• Suggested locations for public artworks include:
  – near the entry for suspended works.
  – the electronic signage board near the entry can be commandeered from time to time for digital or graphic works.
  – the building roofscape.
  – the forecourt.
• Potential locations for public artwork should be considered during design development.
PLANNING FOR NEXT STAGE

RECOMMENDATIONS

The brief requests that Freeman Ryan Design supply advice on key issues and needs arising from the brief and concept plans, to ensure the successful delivery of an effective, functional and contemporary museum, and guide Council’s future development of its integrated cultural facilities, including consideration of security, circulation patterns, accessibility, acoustic insulation, seating, flexible lighting and museum-grade environmental specifications. Our recommendations follow.

1. MUSEUM MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

1.1 The museum management and operational plan should be updated as soon as possible to ensure appropriate planning can be undertaken in advance of opening.

2. FOYER

2.1 Lighting track should be installed in the foyer to allow for control and focus of lighting for flexible display of temporary exhibits.

2.2 The operational plan should include procedures for managing the content of the electronic museum signage on the Byng St façade, on both street-facing and foyer-facing sides. It is important that this is managed by the museum so the sign content is coordinated, presents a consistent image, and has maximum impact.

2.3 At opening, the signage should display coordinated museum information such as opening hours, exhibition information, and event information. It should also incorporate museum branding.

2.4 Alternative uses of the signage such as for fundraising, promotions, public artwork, non-museum events, etc. should be approved and managed by the museum.

2.5 If cloaking for large groups will be off site in the library building, this needs to be integrated into the operational plan, and may require an upgrade of facilities in the library.

3. BACK OF HOUSE

3.1 Back of house functions as currently planned require further discussion and formalisation in the museum and precinct management plans.

These functions include:

3.2 Off-site storage space for objects and exhibition components.

3.3 Secure object store on site.

3.4 Workshop/area for assembly of exhibitions and object preparation (clean, secure, both wet and dry).

3.5 Loading dock access – delivery of food and cafe supplies to be separated from exhibition/object/collections delivery.

3.6 Need for museum BOH to be secure and accessible only for museum staff.

3.7 Spatial requirements for both visitor centre staff and museum staff need to be coordinated and refined.

3.8 Location of visitor centre call centre. Staffing and facilities also need to be confirmed.
PLANNING FOR NEXT STAGE

3.9 Location of area for volunteers – personal item storage, break area, coordination information.

3.10 Visitor centre storage requirements.

4. SECURITY
The following security issues need to be considered by the architects:

4.1 The fire exit from the exhibition space into the loading dock.

4.2 Passage from the loading dock into the office spaces.

4.3 Access from visitor amenities to BOH areas.

Other elements of security also need to be discussed further and established in the management plan:

4.4 The service desk in the foyer should always be attended during museum opening hours.

4.5 Security of merchandise needs to be further discussed.

4.6 Volunteers could be utilised not only for museum visitor services such as guides and local information, but as a security presence within the museum.

4.7 Museum security in and out of operational hours is a concern especially if object loans are to be obtained from large lending institutions. Given the low staffing level other security measures such as camera monitoring may be necessary. A volunteer invigilation program could also be established to increase security.

5. LIGHTING AND ELECTRICAL

5.1 Museum power and lighting requirements need to be integrated into the electrical services drawings.

5.2 Lighting fixtures in the exhibition spaces need to be appropriate for exhibition. The display areas require 3-phase track, the light fittings need to be museum grade, have individual dimmers, and the ability to be focused and shuttered. These fittings are separate from any building or cleaning light requirements.

5.3 To make the display areas flexible and adaptable to new configurations, light fittings need to be incorporated into a building control system such as a DALI system. A museum lighting design consultant should be engaged to obtain professional advice.

5.4 The power for multimedia elements needs to be on a separate circuit to lighting, and also incorporated into the building control system, which will allow multimedia circuits to stay on 24hr, and present fewer maintenance issues with power surges as lights come on and off.

6. PRECINCT-WIDE SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT

6.1 Shared staffing and management operations should be considered further, given the museum’s limited resources and proximity to established institutions in the precinct.

6.2 Consideration needs to be given to the sharing of service spaces across the precinct, e.g.:
   - exhibition storage
   - furniture storage
PLANNING FOR NEXT STAGE

6.3 Sharing of equipment between the precinct institutions should also be considered, including:
- lifting gear for accessing lighting and upper level services.
- spare components for lighting hardware, including maintenance and storage.
- multimedia hardware, including maintenance and storage.
- temporary exhibition items like showcases.
- exhibition installation equipment, (tool trolleys, cleaning equipment, etc.).

7. CORPORATE IDENTITY

7.1 The museum needs to commence development on the museum branding as soon as possible. This will bring consistency and professionalism to the museum’s promotional material and create an easily recognisable identity for visitors, sponsors and stakeholders.

7.2 The identity should resonate with the community.

7.3 The identity may tie the museum to the cultural precinct but should also identify it as a discrete entity.

8. CONTENT DEVELOPMENT FOR PERMANENT EXHIBITION

8.1 Content development will require significant logistical and management support from the museum or council in order to coordinate:
- Stakeholder meetings and community consultations.
- Community call outs for objects, documents and personal histories.
- Interviews for multimedia content.
- Content review (e.g. via museum working party).
- Access to research materials and subject-area experts.
- Access to content such as images and objects.

8.2 Objects for display in the permanent exhibitions will be selected during design development. The acquisition of these objects—whether permanently or on loan—must be managed by the museum under its collections policy.

9. COLLECTIONS POLICY

9.1 The museum should ensure that its collection policy is implemented as soon as possible to ensure the permanent exhibition includes a sufficient selection of significant or representative objects.

9.2 As a regional museum, and not simply a visitor centre, it is vital that the exhibitions are founded on a collection of significant and representative objects and artefacts.

10. TEMPORARY EXHIBITION PROGRAM

10.1 Processes for managing a temporary exhibition program should be included in the operational management plan.
10.2 These processes should include:
   - timetabling / lead time for exhibition development.
   - content development and curatorial.
   - object acquisition.

10.3 A temporary exhibition program for the first two to five years of operation should be developed well in advance of opening.

10.4 The temporary exhibition program should be built on expansion of the museum’s core themes and current research programs, supplemented by travelling exhibitions and community programs.

10.5 The program could benefit from coordination with other regional events.

10.6 The coordination of these exhibitions needs to be aligned with the education programs offered by the museum.

11. EDUCATION PROGRAMS

11.1 Education programs should be developed in accordance with the brief issued by the museum advisor.

11.2 Education programs need extensive coordination with other museum activities and functions and should be accounted for on the operational level in the museum operational management plan.

11.3 Education offerings need to look at the variety of spaces within the museum for in-situ discussions, content-appropriate locating of talks, both casual and formal settings for educational opportunities.

11.4 Education offerings also need to work within the precinct, to maximise opportunities for diversity and access.

12. PUBLIC PROGRAMS

12.1 Public programs are a key element of contemporary museum management and provide strong promotional and fundraising potential. The museum should incorporate a public programs development policy into the management plan.

12.2 Public programs should provide strong links between permanent exhibition themes, and link with current temporary exhibition themes and regional events.

12.3 Public programs should be coordinated across the cultural precinct and with other regional organisations.