
The Sovereign Hill Museums
Association Limited

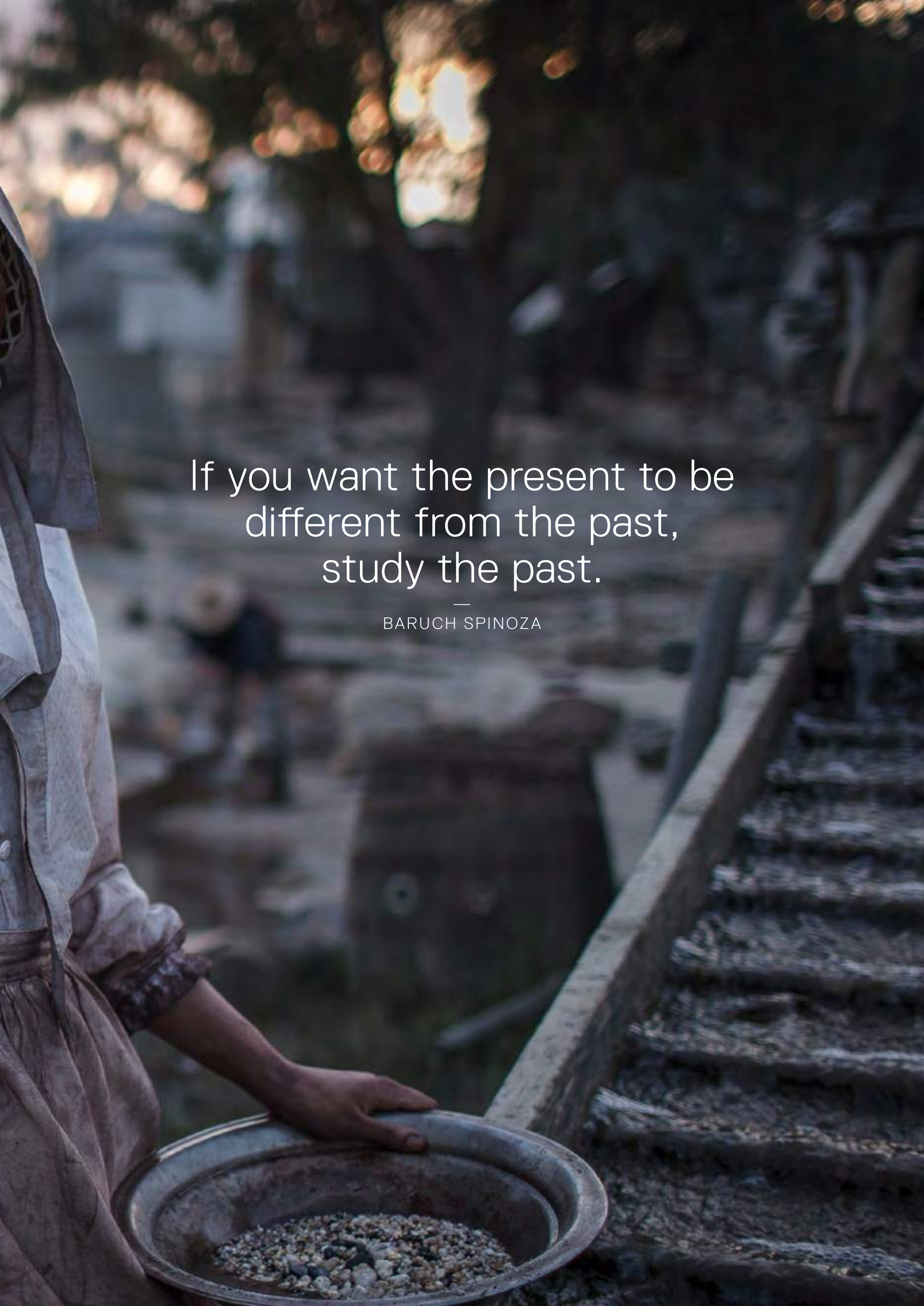
Master Plan
2020-2040

Master Plan: Phase 1

Grimshaw, Thylacine, TRC, VAP, ASPECT,
Slattery, ACHM, Urbis, and dCC

November 2020



A person wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved traditional garment is shown from the side, holding a large, shallow metal tray filled with small, light-colored stones. The person is standing next to a narrow water channel or irrigation ditch. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and foliage, suggesting a rural or agricultural environment. The lighting is soft, possibly during the golden hour.

If you want the present to be
different from the past,
study the past.

—
BARUCH SPINOZA



Australian Government

The Sovereign Hill Museum Enhancement Master Plan project has been made possible by funding provided by the Australian Government through the National Tourism Icons Program

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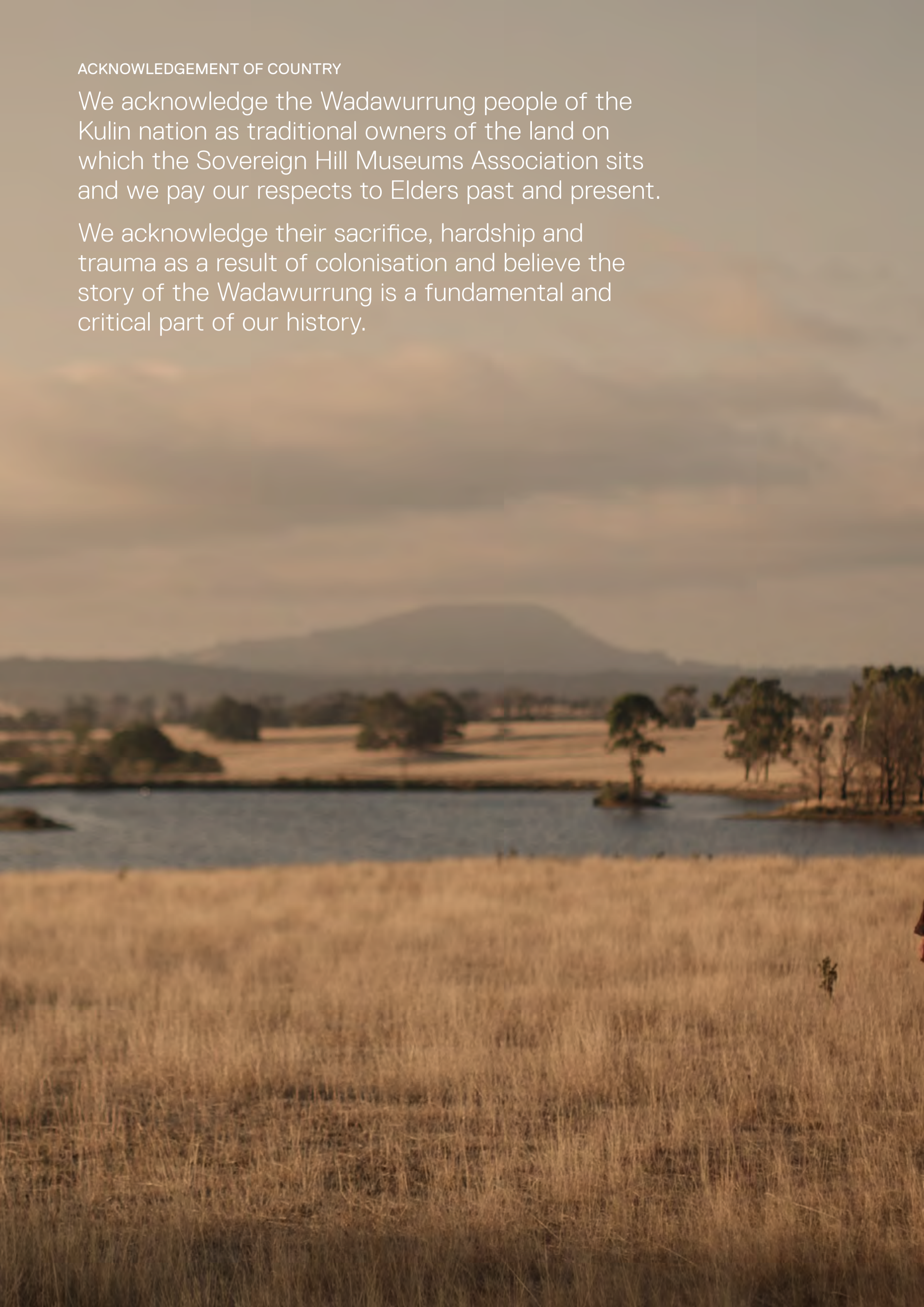
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin nation as traditional owners of the land on which the Sovereign Hill Museums Association sits and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge their sacrifice, hardship and trauma as a result of colonisation and believe the story of the Wadawurrung is a fundamental and critical part of our history.





Foreword

We are delighted to be able to share this Master Plan with you, on our 50th anniversary.

This Master Plan will shape the next 50 years of Sovereign Hill Museums Association and ensure we thrive for generations to come. It is already shaping who we are – more accessible and inclusive, embedded in our community, and committed to a sustainable future.

This bold, robust Master Plan combines capital projects to be delivered progressively over the years, considers the nature and needs of our Golden Point site and our Narmbool site, and is predicated on our heartfelt ambition to deliver upon our mission.

While the crises of 2020 have had an enormous impact on all of us, they have also reinforced and revealed the strength and resilience of our people. Through this time, the love many feel for Sovereign Hill rang strong. It is a privilege to be able to share this 20-year vision for an organisation held so dear by so many.

An immense amount of work has been undertaken by a range of people. We would like to thank the Board, the Project Steering Committee, Working Group and individual contributors who have all been advocates for a rigorous Plan. We also thank the consultants, who have delivered above their brief in support of a not-for-profit organisation.

There has never been a more crucial time than now for reinvestment in Sovereign Hill. We are grateful for the funding to develop the Plan and the first stages of delivery from the Australian Government's National Tourism Icons Program and grateful for the support of so many to achieve our vision.

We also thank all of our supporters and invite them to continue to share in our dream as we continue this journey.



**DAMIEN BUTLER,
PRESIDENT**



**SARA QUON,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER**

A new mission and purpose, a robust strategic plan, and a bold Master Plan will strengthen Sovereign Hill for the next 50 years, so it can share the stories of humanity for generations and continue as the cornerstone of the region's tourism industry and a partner in its cultural richness.



Our Foundation Story

We were born in 1970 with a rebellious spirit and an innovative vision. We have a sharp eye for history and want to ensure that Ballarat’s vibrant gold rush heritage, and the story of its impact on our nation, can inspire future generations.

Founded by locals as a not-for-profit organisation, we are connected to our community and dedicated to the growth and success of the people and businesses in our part of the world.

We are passionate believers and advocates for adaptation and change and bring the people of the goldfields to life through stories of resilience, opportunity, curiosity, change, connection and conflict.

It has taken many cultures, many people and more than 60,000 years to build a country like Australia, and while the story of our nation is still being written, we tell an important part of it like no one else can.

Sovereign Hill is the story of us.



The Master Plan has been informed by key insight reports, including market research, an environmental road map, community engagement and staff surveys together with the global expertise from a consortium of consultants. It sets a strong course for the future.

Through this Master Plan, we are:

- Investing in Makers – providing places for people to learn rare trade skills, supporting practitioners to meet, teach and collaborate, and celebrating our intangible heritage.
- Introducing vibrant seasonal programming, creating food and heritage experiences to entice new audiences and invite existing audiences to return.
- Creating new Centres for deep learning: the Australian Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades and the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections.
- Making the experience more accessible. The plan enables a price re-set for the Living Museum which will enable more people to visit.
- Making the museum more diverse. We will reveal untold stories, so all Australians can see themselves in our shared story.

We're taking a new direction to be relevant for the next 50 years. This Master Plan is timely. This year, we celebrate a remarkable 50 years. Ballarat is embarking on a strategy centred around its designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Craft and Folk Art and the fast-growing western corridor of Melbourne has a rich and diverse future ahead.



Sovereign Hill is recognised as a nationally significant museum and highly respected education provider which is unique in its storytelling and heritage. Sovereign Hill is situated in a competitive domestic tourism market which has seen growth in recent years and where a number of regional attractions have made significant architectural investments. Sovereign Hill plays a major role for the regional tourism economy and supports significant social outcomes for Ballarat and western Victoria, including being a major employer and a place of trade for regional produce. A key benefit is that it is a significant place of volunteering which has had a substantial impact on wellbeing in the Ballarat community.



On November 29th, 2020, Sovereign Hill reached a major milestone of 50 years of operation.

The Master Plan is supported by a number of technical reports and supporting studies (market research, architectural studies, benchmarking, landscape and environmental sustainability assessments, planning assessment, detailed financial and economic assessments and cost planning) which underpin and inform the design proposals. Development of the Master Plan has involved active community and stakeholder engagement and has been subject to rigorous client and consultancy peer review at key milestones and regular intervals.

The Sovereign Hill Museum Master Plan project has been made possible by funding provided by the Australian Government through the National Tourism Icons Program (\$10.1 million), which in addition to preparing the Master Plan, will provide for the delivery of initiatives at the outdoor museum at the Golden Point site (current outdoor museum) forming Stage 1 (a) by 2022.

There is an expectation that through the Master Plan Sovereign Hill will increase its accessibility to the community and the region and allow for improved mobility onsite, that it will be a catalyst for consolidating and developing new community and business links and partnerships, that it will meet contemporary visitor expectations (e.g. food & beverage provision and use of technology) while maintaining an authentic and immersive experience. These expectations would be met over the course of the delivery of the Master Plan.

The full delivery of the Master Plan over coming decades is an opportunity to create a sustainable, world class and leading cultural institution at Sovereign Hill to drive continued visitation to the region, creating more jobs and driving up the economic contribution to the Ballarat, regional and state economies. As Victoria moves towards a post-COVID crisis future, this initiative will make a major contribution to building resilience for both Ballarat's tourism industry, businesses and community as well as the Victorian visitor economy more broadly.

A financial analysis has been undertaken and reviewed by the SHMA Board to ensure that the cost and revenue projections resulting from the delivery of initiatives are robust and achievable.

Master Plan Objectives

In line with the Sovereign Hill Museum Association's purpose of connecting people through history to adapt for a better future, the Master Plan will build on its reputation as a living museum of significance which is entertaining but thought-provoking, bold but accurate and further articulate a critical role for all sites within the Association's portfolio. The Plan will unify the sites in their ability to contribute toward this purpose.

The Master Plan strategy is data-driven and founded upon a deep understanding of the purpose and current offering. It articulates a design and new visitor products that reinforce the visitor experience whether it be an immersive and interactive day, weekend or multi-day experience.

It will deliver bold interventions which will further cement its place as an iconic Australian historical landmark, an award-winning tourism destination and economic contributor to the regional economy of Ballarat and Victoria.

In alignment with the Association's Strategic Plan, the Master Plan seeks to deliver:



GLOBAL REACH & RELEVANCY

Inspire new audiences to connect, share the story and strengthen the social impact.

Inspire creativity, champion rare and lost trades and advance the care of heritage objects.



ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Transform operations from a consumer to a net producer (energy, water, waste, ecology) to demonstrate, inspire and inform others – a positive force for change.



TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Create moments to share meaning from bold narratives and exposing hidden stories.

Create fully immersive experiences for visitors to connect, discover and curate their own journeys.

Generate opportunities that allow for more visitors to engage with our cultural legacy – tangible and intangible.



COMMUNITY PROSPERITY

Work with community and local businesses to ensure Sovereign Hill maximises the role it can play in assisting the shaping of a resilient future for Ballarat and the Western Victorian region - with links to food and fibre.

Celebrate a global story through supporting its local ambassadors - through training and educational programming which continues to sustain knowledge and skills.



DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE

Embrace diversity and leverage the potential of story-telling by making inclusivity and accessibility a priority.



EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

Support the transition to a resilient business model which considers operational efficiency – streamlining where possible and delivering new fit-for-purpose assets that are flexible in use.

Leverage the existing human capital of the organisation to design and deliver new programs, infrastructure and assets.

Key Themes

These key themes underpin the experiences delivered in the Master Plan and build upon the experiential moments which make Sovereign Hill what it is, the Australian home of the Gold Rush story.



Trace the stories of gold discovery through progressive eras – alluvial mining, deep lead and quartz mining – showcasing real finds from the site and linking the above and below ground networks through a series of universally accessible touch points, shafts, pathways and entry portals.



Encourage wonder, exploration and intrinsic connection to the living museum by enhancing wayfinding, legibility and providing further connections to tangible and intangible heritage. Expand the stories told and their provocation of visitors to act.



**VIBRANT
PROGRAMMING**

Invite memories of past landscapes through the creation of new temporary, seasonal and immersive experiences embedded in landscape, which are intimate yet social, and can act as extensions of experiences from the living museum.



MAKERS

Safeguard rare and lost trades for future generations by providing places for people to learn these skills, for creators to meet, teach and collaborate thereby placing contemporary practice in dialogue with rare craftsmanship.



INGENUITY

Celebrate the spirit of innovation of local creators which tell stories of engineering and innovation – focusing on local innovators, such as Ballarat-born Henry Sutton – placing creation and craftsmanship at the heart of the experience.



**A BETTER
FUTURE**

Be a participatory and demonstrative place for environmental practices which showcase a pathway to a future where resources and ecologies are cherished, leading community transition into net zero and regenerative practice.



Sovereign Hill belongs
to our local community
and represents regional
Victoria.

Master Plan Social and Economic Impact

The Sovereign Hill Museums Association Master Plan will enable the organisation to invest in its future and continue to deliver social and economic value.

Sovereign Hill's economic contribution to Victoria was previously assessed (2015/16) as providing 1,665 jobs and delivering \$260M in annual economic output. Increased visitor numbers and spend from the Master Plan will further grow the Ballarat region and Victorian economy and assist in creating additional jobs.

MASTER PLAN ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

This Master Plan will generate a number of additional direct and indirect economic benefits over and above these jobs and economic impact.



DIRECT AND
INDIRECT JOBS



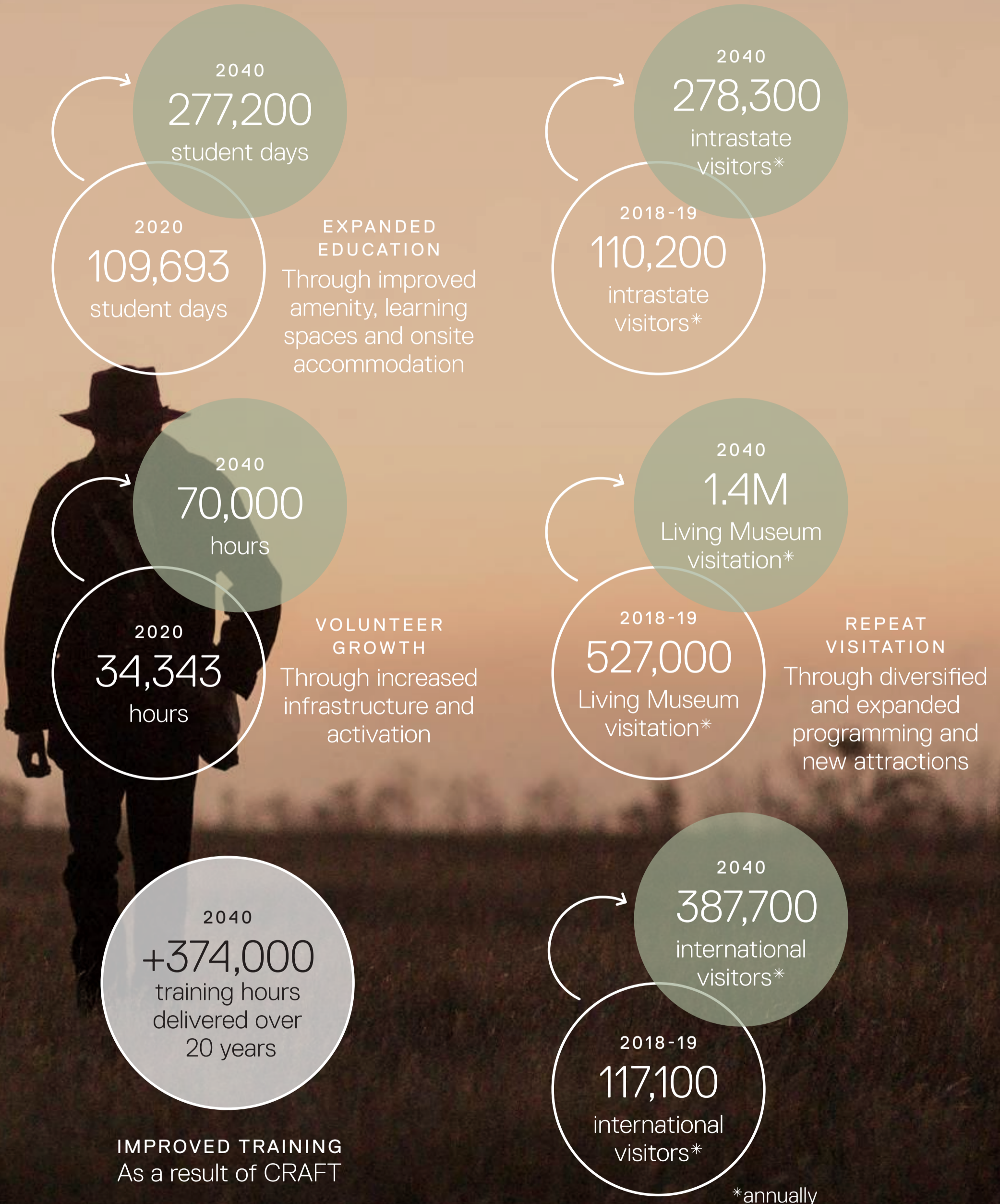
ESTIMATED
ECONOMIC OUTPUT



ESTIMATED
ECONOMIC OUTPUT



MASTER PLAN SOCIAL IMPACT



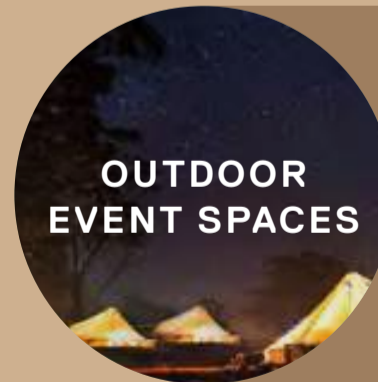
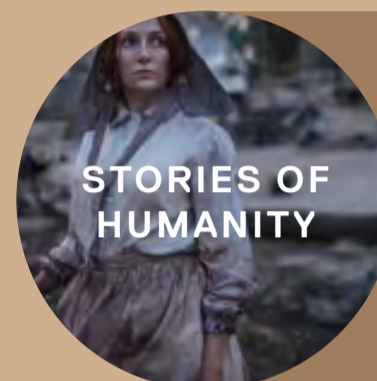
STAGE 1A

2022

Master Plan Staging and Delivery

The staging approach for the Master Plan is to deliver signature projects alongside enabling and supporting infrastructure and assets. The projects have been carefully selected to catalyse and support ongoing visitation whilst ensuring preservation of historic collections and delivering social impact. More detail on phases 2 and 3 will be released closer to their delivery.

The Master Plan will deliver significant benefit far reaching beyond its role as a living museum, which will result in community, education and social outcomes, continuing to play a key role in Ballarat and the broader region's economic future.



STAGE 1B
2023

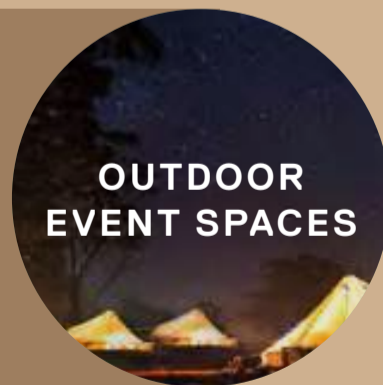


STAGE 2
2026

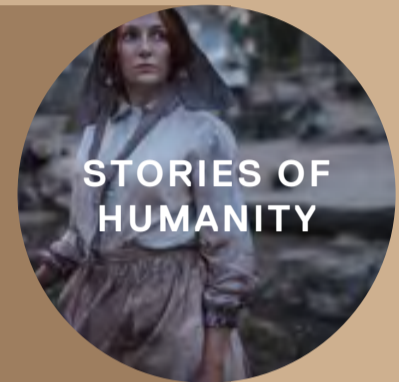
STAGED DELIVERY



ENHANCED EDUCATION ACCOMMODATION



STAGE 3
2030



EDUCATION CLASSROOMS

STAGED DELIVERY



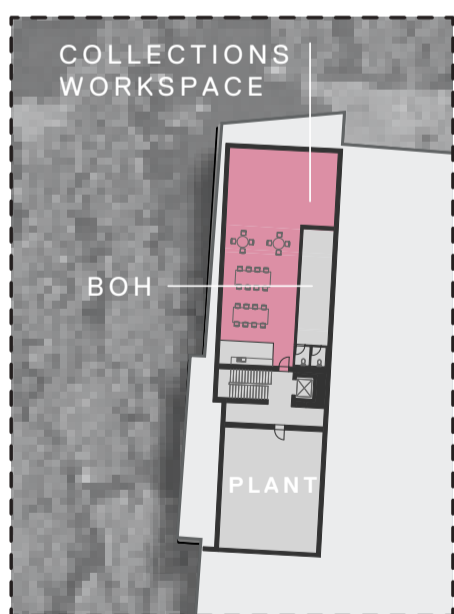
Australian Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades (CRAFT)

CRAFT will draw on the Living Museum’s showcase of rare trades and shine a light on contemporary practices that derive from historic, or artisan trades. The intent is for CRAFT to become a nationally significant facility to teach, learn and experience working with the tools and practices.

CRAFT will invite people to build their skill and create a viable practice in artisan crafts, through workshops and residencies. Working with world-leading practitioners and with partnership as key, CRAFT will protect and pass on Australia’s rare trades.

Located within the former Gold Museum, this distinctive, brutalist building invites visitors to further explore the world of rare and artisan trades through an active program of workshops.

CRAFT draws on the Outdoor Museum’s practice of intangible heritage, showcasing contemporary practices that derive from rare, historic, or artisan trades. CRAFT aims to be a nationally significant facility to teach, learn and experience working with the tools and practices deriving from rare trades.



Level 01

Ground Level





AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR RARE ARTS AND FORGOTTEN TRADES

Clean workshops (woodworking, ceramics, paper, leather, textiles) and dirty workshops (glass, metal, stone) and flexible workshops will accommodate changing trades, such as:

- Heritage ironwork
- Jewellery-making
- Joinery
- Carving
- Furniture-making
- Paper making
- Printmaking
- Typography
- Fabric printing
- Leather

The space will also incorporate:

MAKER RESIDENCIES

Artist / makers in residence studios for external practitioners accommodate a vibrant program of artists-in-residence, practicing across a diverse range of fields.

RETAIL OUTLET

Offering for sale works by featured makers or artists-in-residence, as well as tools and materials connected to the workshops (This area will have the potential to be reconfigured as part of the Event Restaurant Space).

WORKSHOP AND PRACTICE SPACES

Rare trades spaces and workshop gives visitors an opportunity to meet with artisans and engage with learning their practice. Hands on learning workshops will be from 30 minutes to 5 days.

Workshops will take place across a wide variety of practices to become National leaders in:

- Leather
- Wood
- Textile
- Metal
- Paper
- Heritage building trades



Image credit: Grimshaw





It is our heritage that
gives us the credibility
to build a powerful
position in the future

Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections

The Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections will enable the public to have access to the large and significant collection with great cultural value to the local, regional and national community.

Expanding upon the existing storage of collection material housed at the transformed Gold Museum and maintaining high security and environmental standards, Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections will provide facilities to enable the public to have access to a large and significant collection of great cultural value to the local, regional and national community.

The proximity to CRAFT will provide an opportunity to connect contemporary practice with the richness of the entire museum collection.

Due to operational necessity, both parts of the building will have separate and distinct entry spaces, however, a series of zones within the building will visually connect the two spaces. This novel approach will curate framed views from the maker spaces to the collection display and storage area.

Significant public programming will be enabled through the new open collection store and meeting zone. Access to research collection items will also be enhanced.

Sovereign Hill Museums Association hold a large and significant collection of great cultural value, locally and nationally. This includes, amongst many treasures, one of Australia's most significant collections of Gold Licences and Miners Rights, one of the oldest extant Chinese temple assemblages in Australia and a Chinese Processional assemblage that includes the oldest known fighting lion and third oldest Imperial Dragon in the world.

The Master Plan seeks to ensure visibility and storage capacity for collections items through the provision of new expansion areas for storage, space for housing collection items currently in storage into new state-of-the-art museum environments and the ability for robust, appropriate collection to be incorporated as part of the new experiences.

The ongoing growth of the collection is being factored in with expansion area incorporated. The core practice of museology – research, collecting and archival collections care – will be made visible to visiting scholars and researchers by integrating workspaces within the Australian Centre for Gold Rush Collections.



AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR GOLD RUSH COLLECTIONS

- More public access space to our 150,000 collection items
- Meeting spaces, public programs
- See a real nugget right up close and one of the world's oldest ceremonial Chinese dragons

COLLECTIONS ELEVATED AND RE-CENTRED

- Almost double the collection display space (+1434m²)
- 60% more collection storage space (+895m²)
- Collection nodes, new galleries and collection-rich arrival experience

Gold Pavilion

A transformative orientation experience is critical to maximising engagement. It will enhance the understanding of the significance of the site, its stories, time periods, and inform the visitor in how to explore and engage with them on site. This is envisaged as a combined object-centred Stories of Humanity orientation experience, supported by multi-media orientation that all visitors encounter.

The Gold Pavilion will include 880m² of collection display space and introduce visitors to the key themes of the Living Museum, the significance of the goldrush and its stories - the Diggings, Chinese Village, Mining technologies, key people - time periods and how to recognise them, and how to explore, participate and engage.

The Gold Pavilion will house three distinct exhibition spaces. It will also contain an immersive retail experience showcasing products being made on site and regionally, with robust and appropriate collections integrated into the entry and orientation spaces to deliver a fully immersive experience.

GALLERY ONE

- A changing exhibition reflecting on Ballarat and the region, linking the visitor to an understanding of the town that is grounded in place, and how Ballarat connects to the stories told and explored in the Living Museum and Narmbool.

GALLERY TWO

- Exploring the ongoing allure of, and fascination with, gold. A secondary function of this exhibit is to contextualise the Living Museum, making explicit the myriad ways that gold, the collection, and the extensive scholarship that surrounds it, informs the historical recreations of the Living Museum.

TEMPORARY GALLERY

- A regularly changing exhibition program will maintain connection with the Ballarat community and encourage repeat visitation.

DIGITAL TICKETING

- The new entry will support digital ticket entry scanning, with kiosks to support onsite purchasing, to make the entry and orientation experience as seamless as possible.

IMMERSIVE RETAIL

- A modern retail gift shop will be integrated into the space.



Image credit: SHMA

SOVEREIGN HILL'S NEW GOLD PAVILION BY DAY



Image credit: SHMA

SOVEREIGN HILL'S NEW GOLD PAVILION BY NIGHT

A Vision for Golden Point, Ballarat 2040: Phase 1

WELCOME
PRECINCT

GOLD PAVILION

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE
FOR RARE ARTS AND
FORGOTTEN TRADES

TO BALLARAT

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE
FOR GOLD RUSH
COLLECTIONS

Image credit: Grimshaw

← TO NARMBOOL

LIVING MUSEUM

Location of the Master Plan design is indicative only. Specific site location and positions of building elements are to be resolved during design development.

Key Master Plan components are adaptable to other site options.

Image represents a Master Plan concept only, further engagement required to finalise design.




sovereignhill[™]

GRIMSHAW