



Image: Auckland Art Gallery, David St George

Developing a major arts and cultural quarter for Auckland.

> THE CONTEXT

Auckland Council recognised that cultural projects can drive change and development to achieve their vision for a vibrant civic centre. Overseas experience demonstrated that the co-location of arts facilities within a Quarter can act as a stimulus for this change. The Aotea Quarter was a natural choice – already being ‘home’ to a number of arts organisations, and the proposed site for a new 350-seat theatre.

> THE BRIEF

This project required an assessment of support for the concept for an arts cluster/precinct in the South Town Hall area amongst key stakeholders, the identification of potential precinct activity and requirements, the users and their needs, identification of potential partners in the precinct and its development, and the provision of examples of successful arts precincts operating elsewhere.

> OUR APPROACH

Positive Solutions conducted extensive consultation with arts and cultural groups as well as the key stakeholders in the Aotea Quarter, and scanned international research into the benefits of arts precinct development.

We reviewed the broader strategic context for this development and its contribution to Council’s vision for the CBD, undertook a SWOT and environment analysis of the precinct and surrounding area, and identified potential risk factors in the development.

> THE RESULTS

Consultation demonstrated considerable support for the idea of an arts precinct in this location, both from those engaged in arts and cultural development in the city, and stakeholders in the Aotea Quarter development. Positive Solutions submitted a report outlining the demand, including key recommendations for moving forward.

The Aotea Quarter is now considered the cultural heart of the Auckland City Centre and is home to iconic venues such as the Auckland Art Gallery, The Civic Theatre, Q Theatre and the Classic Comedy Club. Auckland Council has built on the early thinking and planning through adopting an Aotea quarter framework to guide the further evolution of the Quarter.

SEE ALSO:

- > [Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation Governance](#)
- > [West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong](#)
- > [City of Greater Bendigo Precinct Development](#)