

# The Faraday Centre

## Challenges and opportunities

The Faraday Centre (the Centre) is Napier's specialised technology museum and home to the Fullagar engine, which used to provide electricity for Napier and the national grid until it was decommissioned in 1970. The Centre opened in 1993 in the old power house.

The Centre provides exhibits of technology artifacts that showcase the use of energy in its different forms, particularly those that are part of the history of the development and use of electricity.

From the outset, visiting the Centre was designed to be a fun and interactive experience, rather than a place where visitors just look at static exhibits. Visitors can pull levers, strike bells, pedal and treadle, or put a penny in a slot and listen to tunes from the past.

Despite being one of Napier's fantastic attractions, there are a range of problems with the Faraday Centre.

In early 2020, representatives from Napier City Council, the Faraday Centre and the Hawke's Bay Museums Trust got together to draw out and agree on the key challenges for the Centre. The group identified the following core challenges:

- 1 The building the Faraday Centre is housed in has significant seismic and health and safety issues that pose a risk to the safety of both staff and visitors and deter some people from visiting.
- 2 The Faraday Centre is tired and run-down, and lacks the appropriate functionality necessary to become an attractive and compelling destination in Napier for locals and visitors.
- 3 The Faraday Centre's operating model is not sustainable or fit-for-purpose.

New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) owns the Faraday Centre building and the land it sits on. NZDF purchased the property from Unison Networks in 2003. The property comprises 2 and 2B Faraday Street. 2 Faraday street is occupied by NZDF and 2B was leased to the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust for a non-renewable peppercorn rent. The two sites are shown in the picture at bottom right.

The lease agreement was for 20 years and it expired on June 30 2013. However, the sale and purchase agreement contained a section stating that NZDF would "give favourable consideration to the continued occupancy of the Museums site by the Trust on terms and conditions substantially similar to the terms and conditions of the lease."

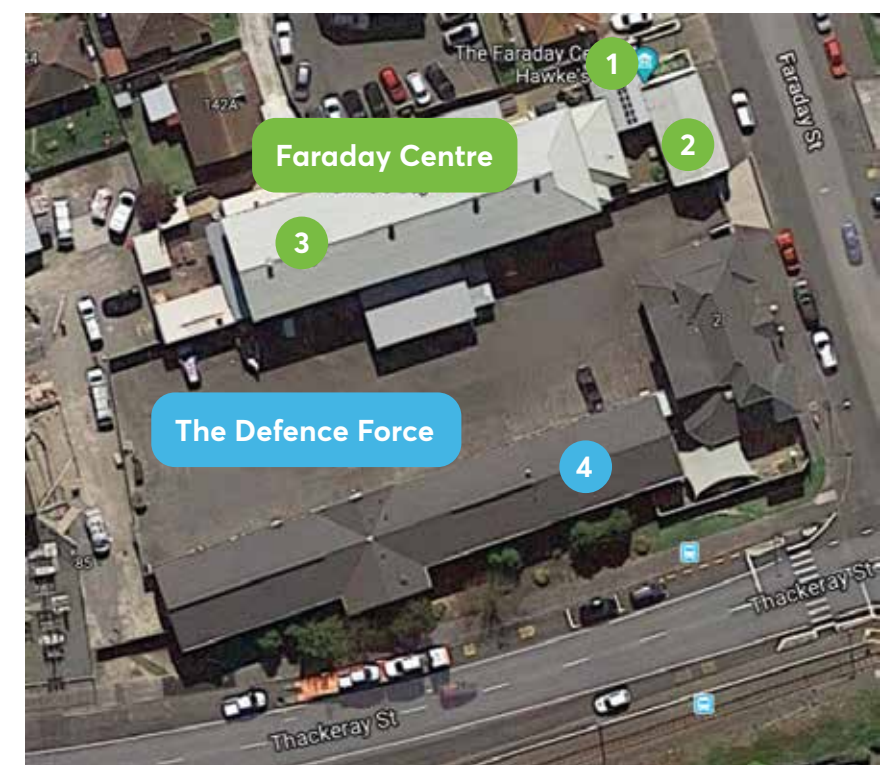
The Centre is made up of three connected buildings on 2B Faraday Street:

- The entry building (building 1 of approximately 58m<sup>2</sup>)
- The education room (building 2 of approximately 72m<sup>2</sup>)
- The museum (building 3 of approximately 405m<sup>2</sup>).

Building 4 is used exclusively by NZDF, as is the car parking. The layout of the buildings is shown at right.

This arrangement has worked up until now. However, if investment in the Faraday Centre is required to remedy the seismic issues and renovate the building, the ownership/lease of the land and building needs to be resolved first.

Accordingly, negotiations are underway with NZDF about the potential long-term lease or purchase of the land and buildings for the Faraday Centre. As discussions are still ongoing, information about the negotiations is commercially sensitive and not able to be disclosed at this stage.



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## The proposed way forward

Redevelopment will occur in two phases.

The business case considered a full range of options for the Faraday Centre, ranging from closing the Museum through to a relocation of the facility to entirely new premises. After a robust analysis a two-phase redevelopment is proposed. The stages are:

- **Phase 1: Seismic and building remediation** – the Faraday Centre building will be strengthened to a minimum of 67% of NBS and outstanding remediation issues such as roof maintenance addressed. This work is likely to take 9-12 months including design, engineering, consent and works, and require between \$900,00 and \$1.2 million in investment. The Faraday Centre will need to temporarily close while the engineering work is undertaken.
- **Phase 2: Building reorganisation** – the Faraday Centre buildings will be redeveloped to make them more fit-for-purpose, by rearranging the entry and education room areas, improving the road frontage, creating additional storage spaces, and optimising and improving the exhibition areas. This is a significant project likely to take 12-24 months with a possible investment range of \$2.6 million to \$3.2 million in 2021 dollars.

No design work has yet been undertaken for the Phase 2 work, so the precise requirements, costs and timelines still need to be developed.

A range of sources may be available to fund the capital costs of seismic strengthening and upgrades to the Faraday Centre. These sources include:

- Napier City Council
- Grants / lotteries
- Endowments / bequests
- Commercial sponsorship
- Central government
- Users and private donors.

The intention is to develop a plan for raising funding for the facility as the seismic strengthening process gets underway, and assess the possible external sources of funding before commencing any Phase 2 work.

### Phase 1: Seismic and building remediation

**9-12 months**  
duration

**\$0.9 million - \$1.2 million**  
capital investment

### Phase 2: Building reorganisation

**12-24 months**  
duration

**\$2.6 million - \$3.2 million**  
capital investment

