

# Our region's heritage on show on Barnard Street



*Help us create something incredible  
inside a new Museum for our region*



South Canterbury Museum Development Trust

# ***Our Museum is on the move***

The Timaru District Council is going to build a new public museum for the Timaru District, located behind the historic Theatre Royal. This is part of a wider redevelopment which will create a new civic laneway space connecting the Theatre and Museum, a place for performance, heritage, education, public events and more. It is planned to open in mid-2027.



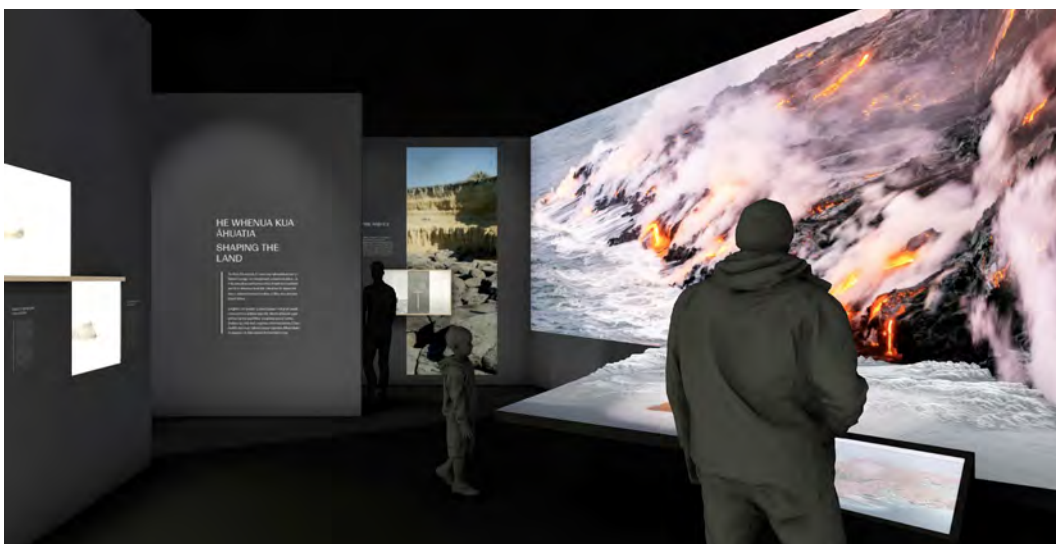
**Above:** an architectural impression of how the new museum might look, with a bird's eye view of the site at right showing the Theatre Royal on the left and new Museum on the right. Some features may change as further design work is completed.

## ***We now have a unique opportunity***

The South Canterbury Museum will move its exhibitions, education area and public programmes to this new space, retaining the old museum for archives, collection storage and workspaces.

This is an opportunity to create something incredible - an unique high impact local heritage exhibition area that will wow locals and visitors alike. It will become a must-see experience that will put Timaru and our region on the map, presenting our region's natural and cultural heritage in a whole new way.

The **South Canterbury Museum Development Trust** is going to make this happen. We have funded an initial preliminary concept development plan. We know just how wide the benefits of this project will be for our community and region. We also know how much a major project like this will cost, and we are now planning to raise the funding needed to create something **extraordinary**.



***This will be a unique visitor experience that will inform, educate, impact, entertain and inspire visitors of all ages***

## ***Imagine*** experiencing exhibitions that captivate, excite curiosity, inspire learning and attract visitors

We have a unique opportunity to create something special inside this exciting new facility. The South Canterbury Museum Team is working alongside award-winning national exhibit designers to plan incredible exhibitions that tell our region's story - those of our landscape, its life and our people.

## ***Imagine*** a place so compelling that locals and visitors return to it time and time again

South Canterbury Museum has rich collections of specimens from nature, Māori taoka, and thousands of artefacts, images and archives from the last 150 years. We are planning to create exhibitions that have impact, helping everyone understand more about where we are and who we are as a region.

The new Museum will have a dedicated 586m<sup>2</sup> area for long-term exhibitions that explore our region's heritage, as well as a 200m<sup>2</sup> space for changing temporary exhibitions.



## ***Imagine*** learning the hidden stories of our landscape

South Canterbury has some of the most diverse and dramatic landscapes in the country. From high alps to flood plains that stretch to the sea, our landscape tells stories of a turbulent past stretching back millions of years. Exhibitions will use high-end digital projection and modelling alongside actual geological specimens to unlock our landscape history, providing fascinating insights into our geological heritage.

## ***Imagine*** exploring stories of life past and present

From ancient fossil seafloor creatures to giant moa and other extinct birds, we can see a narrative of how life has grown and changed through the millennia. This narrative carries on to the present day with specimens showing what has lived here, the ecosystems that developed, and how things have changed with waves of human settlement.

The new exhibitions will feature specimens, images, digital media and sound to engage visitors to explore how life has thrived and changed in our region over time.



## ***Imagine*** sharing the stories of our people

Our region's history begins with settlers from eastern Polynesia exploring and discovering food resources and places to live. Over the centuries, tribal migrations and then the arrival of European settlers brought changes and new faces, and developed the stories that tell us who we are, right up to the present day.

The Museum will draw upon thousands of taoka, artefacts, images, archives and other resources to create exhibits that take viewers into the narratives, tragedies and triumphs of everyday life that help us understand the people who have called this region home.

## ***Imagine*** the educational potential

Learners of all ages grow their knowledge and understanding through formal and informal learning opportunities at our Museum. The current Museum's education programmes have become an essential part of the local learning landscape.

This project will create exhibitions that provide unique and high-impact experiences, creating lasting memories and life-long learners. This experience will provide incredible moments for all who visit: school students of all ages, adult groups receiving guided tours, families exploring together, tourists and others.

## **Heritage collections: a fantastic resource**

This project will draw upon the more than 100,000 items held in the South Canterbury Museum's collections: natural history specimens, taoka Māori, social history artefacts, photographs, documents and more.

These collections are the raw material for the Museum's programmes. They are an invaluable and irreplaceable resource for understanding our region's nature, history and culture.

The planned exhibitions will provide access for our visitors to this rich array of heritage items, presented in new and engaging ways.



# *Creating something fantastic*

We need your help. The **South Canterbury Museum Development Trust** has funded the \$38,500 cost of a preliminary concept development plan, and is now raising additional funds to support the Museum's budget for new exhibitions.

We now have a chance to make sure that the exhibitions developed for this new facility are **world-class**.

## **How much will this cost?**

Figures from comparable projects elsewhere indicate that high-quality exhibitions can range between \$3,000 to \$5,000+ per square metre. We're looking to develop and install these exhibitions in a 586m<sup>2</sup> space. Through the Preliminary Concept Development process we have developed a budget plan that indicates a total cost of **\$2 million** to achieve the final result: an outstanding world-class exhibition experience.

## **How will we make this happen?**

Through donations and local grants we can build up our funds to put us in the position to make a major Lotteries Environment and Heritage Fund application in February 2026.

## **How much do we need?**

The Timaru District Council currently holds bequest funding of **\$846,000** available for this project, and our Trust has raised **\$500,000** so far. We will raise the remaining funds needed to carry out the major steps required to work through the planning, construction and installation process that will deliver the final exhibition experience.



***Help us make this happen:  
donate to the South Canterbury Museum  
Development Trust***

The Museum Development Trust is a **registered charity**, and all donation receipts may be used for tax purposes. See the back page to find out how you can help us by making a contribution.

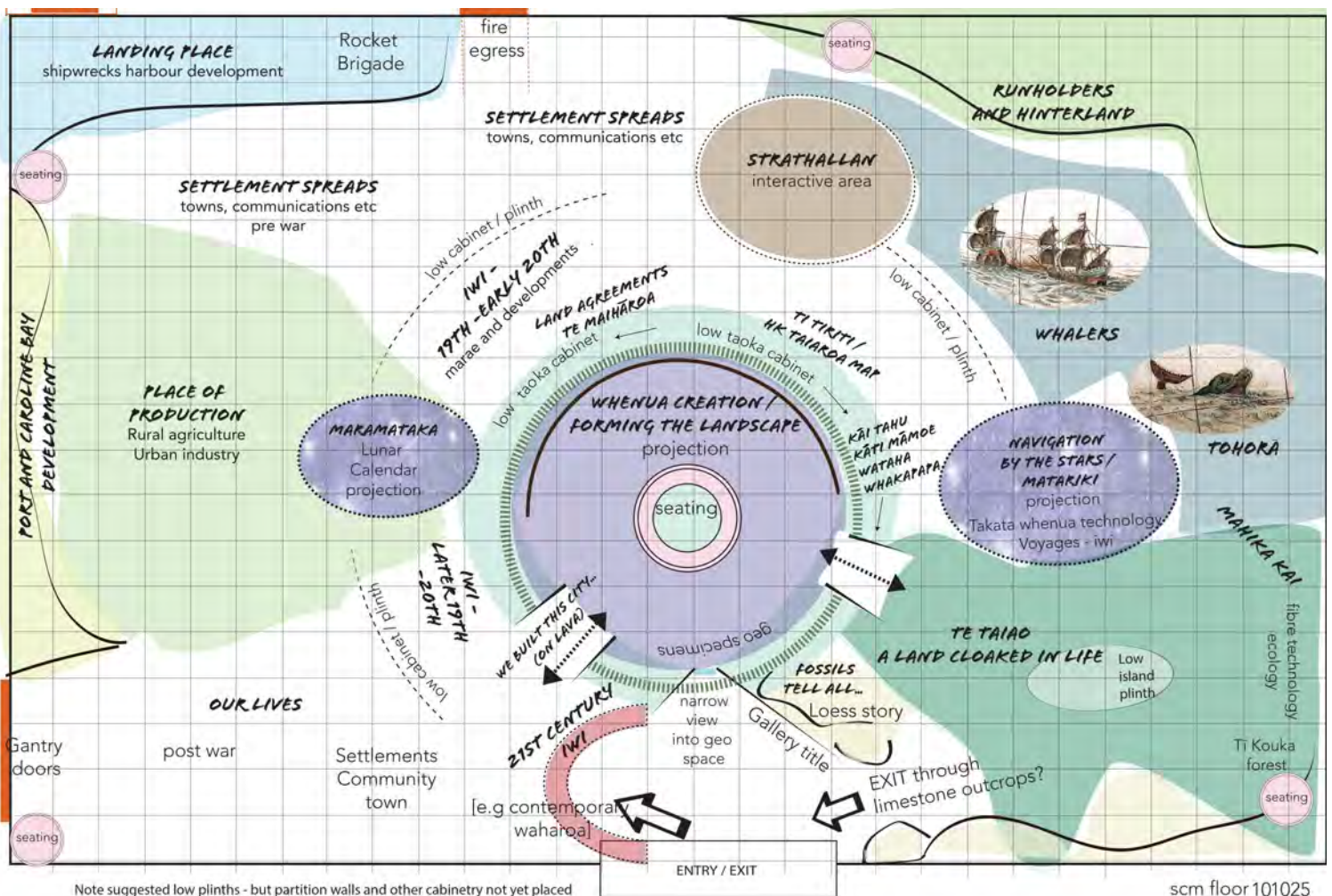
# How will this project develop?

The South Canterbury Museum team has developed an overall concept plan as part of the work for an earlier museum project in 2023-24. This work is now being reformatted for the new Museum that is planned to open in 2027.

**Developed Design and Documentation phase (October 2025 - June 26),** This will complete fine details for everything from display case specifications to exact label text. It includes the design of immersive audio-visual experiences, lighting design and everything required to create the components needed for this project.

**Production and Installation phase (July 2026 - March 2027)** Leading to the opening of the finished experience with the building's opening in mid 2027. It is projected that around half of the \$2 million of work needed for this phase will be spent with local businesses and contractors, with the rest being spent with specialist suppliers elsewhere.

**Below:** An initial concept plan layout of the 586m<sup>2</sup> exhibition space outlining the proposed layout of topic areas, visitor flow, and digital interactives and audio-visual spaces. This will be revised as the architectural plan develops and finalises. The Museum team are currently working with Sally Papps of Exhibition Design Build Consultancy Ltd to progress this design. Sally has worked with a number of South Island museums to deliver recognised high quality displays over the last 20 years.



# Creating an exhibition road map

The Concept Design plan developed will create sample layouts for the proposed areas. These will enable the Museum team to review how each area might look, anticipate visitor flows, identify opportunities for enhancing educational experiences, and refine the design to optimise the exhibition experience and

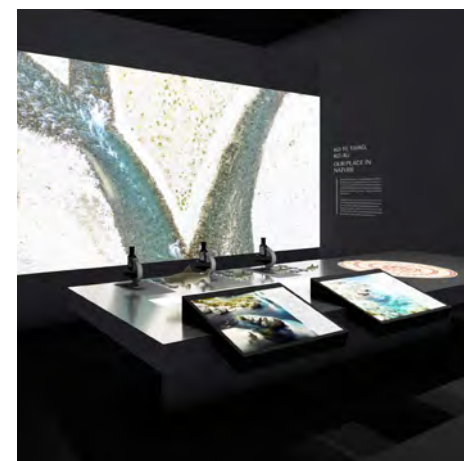
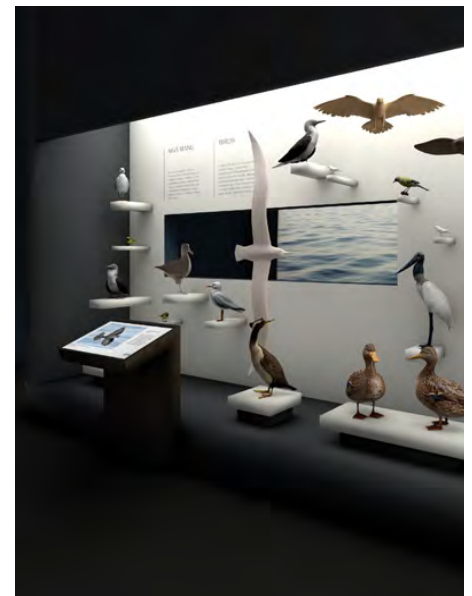
ensure visitors can deeply engage with heritage.

Further work can then identify how objects, images and interactive elements can be combined to meet the clear aims of each area, and develop a consistent approach throughout.

**Left:** an example of a draft floorplan layout proposal for a local nature display area, with design elements and wall layouts.



**Below:** Draft images giving visual impressions of how different local nature and history displays could look. This initial work is the basis for further planning and design to create high-impact immersive and informative displays.



# *Ready to help? Here's how*

You can make a direct donation to our bank account, and send an email to us with contact details so that we can send you a receipt that may be used for tax purposes

Account: **02-0888-0367322-000**

Your ref: (surname and initial)

Email your contact details to [philip.howe@timdc.govt.nz](mailto:philip.howe@timdc.govt.nz)

## *Want to find out more?*

Call Philip Howe at the Museum (03) 687 7212, or email [museum@timdc.govt.nz](mailto:museum@timdc.govt.nz)

## **About the South Canterbury Museum Development Trust**

The Trust was established in 1997 to act as a charitable trust raising funds to assist with major projects at the South Canterbury Museum. It was able to provide \$400,000 towards a major building extension in 1999, fully fund the development of a theatre and education space at the Museum in 2006, and fund several smaller projects such as the purchase of equipment and commissioning of short films on local educational topics. Funds are raised through donations, grants from other organisations, and sale of selected souvenir items and recently published local heritage books.

Current trustees are:

John Simpson (chair)

Rosie Carruthers

John Oliver

Christopher Templeton

Liz Shea

Philip Howe

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