

# Raising the Roof



If you would like to be involved in this life changing project or to hear more about it please contact  
CEO Rob White on **T 02 9479 7202** or  
Capital Campaign Manager Kate Van de Peer on **T 02 9479 7246 M 0413419244**

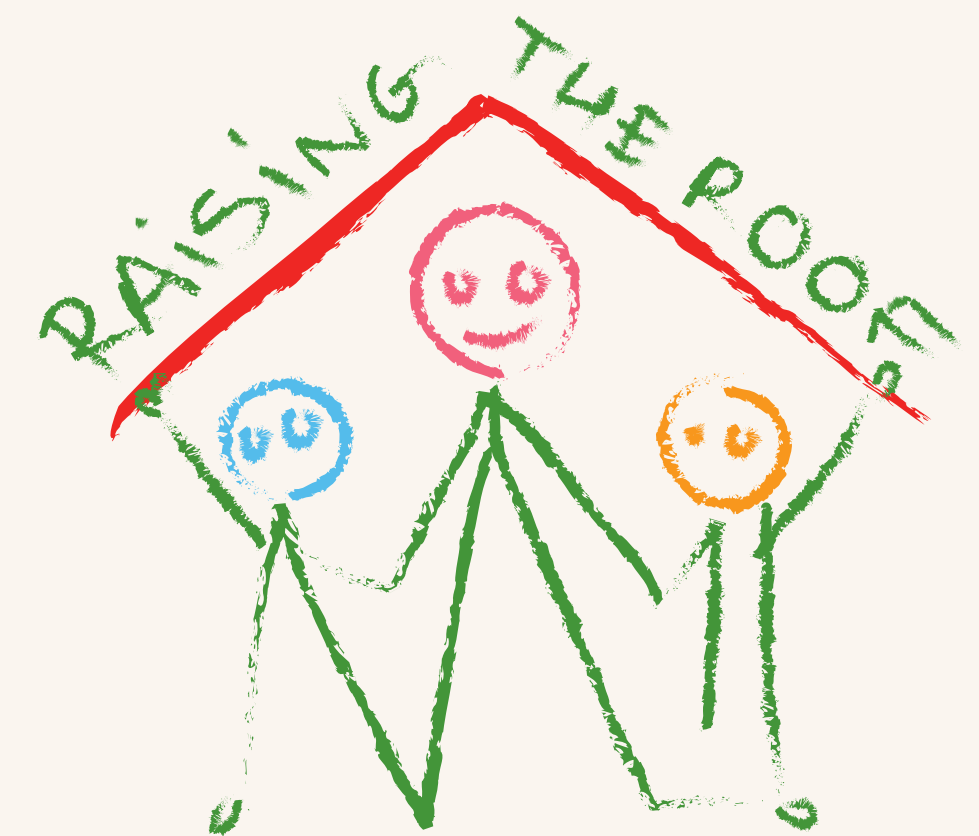


A new building at Allambie Heights,  
a new vision for our future.  
**PLEASE HELP US REBUILD**





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*"The fire rocked the foundation of our organisation"*  
- CEO Rob White

## The Fire

In 2007, a devastating fire destroyed our Allambie Heights site. This caused massive disruption to the provision of essential services for children and adults with cerebral palsy.







## URGENT MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In recent times a devastating fire caused 8 million dollars worth of damage to our Allambie Heights site. Our remaining building, built in 1957, may have escaped the fire but is in a poor state of repair.

After much consideration and discussion we have agreed that the way forward is to re-build on the site of the destructive fire. An insurance settlement from the fire has provided a good base towards funding the new centre. The insurance payout will cover the cost to house staff, crucial to the operations of The Spastic Centre.

However, we urgently need to raise a further \$7 million – which will go directly to providing essential facilities required by our clients and their families.

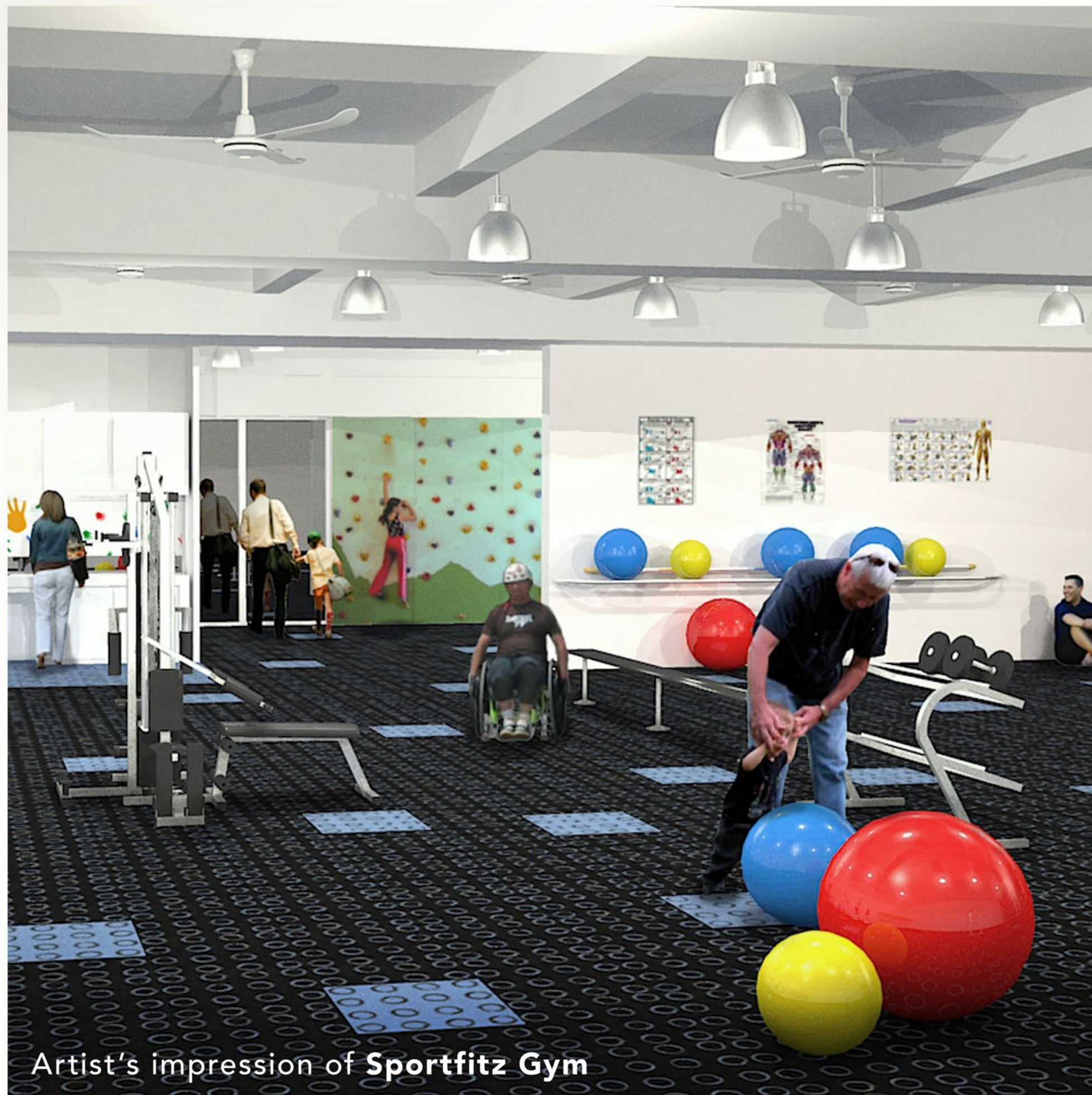
We cannot undertake such an enormous project without the help of supporters like you. This campaign is an opportunity to change the lives of thousands of children and adults with cerebral palsy, not just now but for many years to come.

Please take the time to look through this booklet and read about the details of this life changing re-build. I look forward to speaking with you about ways you may be able to assist.

Yours sincerely

Rob White  
Chief Executive Officer





Artist's impression of Sportfitz Gym

## Letter of Support



As a proud supporter of The Spastic Centre, Aristocrat is very excited about the vision to build a state-of-the-art client facility at Allambie Heights for people with cerebral palsy. The current centre is in desperate need of redevelopment after a devastating fire in 2007. We are confident this new centre will make a huge difference to the lives of people with cerebral palsy and their families.

Aristocrat is honoured to be the first to make a pledge of \$460,000 towards The Spastic Centre's capital campaign which endeavours to raise \$7 million for this world class centre. Our pledge will be directed towards the innovative SportFitz program which will be located at the new centre. The program features adapted gym equipment, specifically designed for use by people with a disability.

We would encourage companies large and small, as well as individuals with the capacity to do so, to support this campaign, and make a real difference to the lives of people with cerebral palsy.

Aristocrat were first inspired to become involved in this project by one of our valued employee's Nicholas Bennett. The Bennet family's recognition of the value of participation in sporting activity for young people with a disability, and the translation of this insight into a dynamic program has been truly inspiring.

In 2007 Aristocrat made our first donation to the SportFitz program. Temporary gym facilities were set up and the program was a resounding success with young people and their families rushing to sign up. The program provides a range of sport and recreational activities aimed at developing an individual's physical strength and life-skills such as team work and self-confidence. The new site will provide a permanent base for the program, ensuring increased success through state of the art facilities, and a capacity to help even more young people.

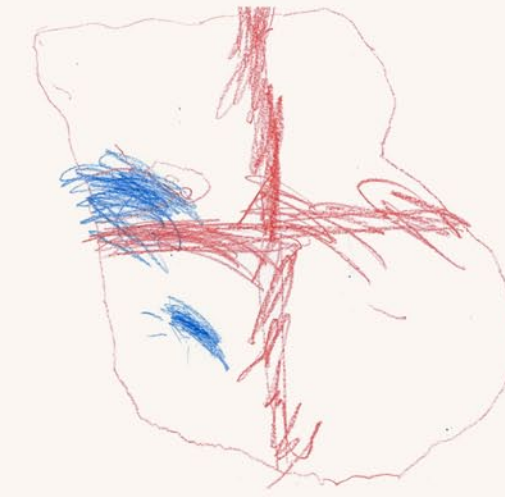
We would like to encourage companies and individuals to follow our lead, and make a significant donation to this campaign, which is guaranteed to change the lives of children and adults with cerebral palsy now, and for a long time into the future.

Jamie Odell

Chief Executive Office & Managing Director  
Aristocrat Leisure

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Due to the highly restrictive layout of McLeod House, children can go through their entire childhood without meeting another child with cerebral palsy.

## The Problem at Hand

If the fire wasn't a big enough challenge to deal with, there is the remaining site at Allambie Heights which can be described as sub-standard at best. While the services we offer are state-of-the-art, the actual building is far from it.

Critical problems are now impacting on client services. It is no longer practical to stay in a building where fundamental problems will only continue to increase and compromise our ability to effectively help our clients.

Serious problems at the remaining building include:

### Inaccessibility

Constructed in 1957, the building has massive accessibility issues for clients using modern wheelchairs and equipment. The bathrooms are also outdated and do not meet current accessibility standards.

### Structural issues

The list is long - wiring is outdated causing power outages; in parts of the building there is no hot water to clean and sanitise equipment; entire floors are closed off because they don't meet Occupational Health and Safety standards; and constant roof leakages prevent rooms from being utilised.

### Isolation

There is no separate area for parents of children with cerebral palsy to meet. With few opportunities to catch up and share experiences/seek advice from other parents, many mums and dads feel isolated. The playground is also out of bounds because it doesn't comply with Occupational Health and Safety standards.







# We Must Rebuild

After much consideration and careful planning we have decided to build a brand new centre at Allambie which will better meet the 21st century needs of children and adults with cerebral palsy.

The new building has been designed with accessibility in mind – so it will be easier for clients to move around independently. The size of rooms will enable programs to expand and more clients to be seen.

## What is needed under the roof?

For people who rely on our services, the building will be far more than just 'bricks and mortar'. To them, it's about the life changing therapy which occurs within the building. Below explains some of the rooms and areas required in the new building, and the difference they will make.

- **Physiotherapy rooms**

An open plan design is critical for activities such as teaching a child to walk. In these rooms, our physiotherapists will work with children to help them with their physical development. This starts from when they are babies, helping them move around, crawl, sit up and change from one position to another.

- **Occupational therapy rooms**

Inside an occupational therapy room, therapists focus on helping children with day-to-day activities, ensuring they develop the skills to do things like bathe, dress, eat a meal or get ready for school. They work on developing a child's physical skills so they can successfully use equipment such as toilet chairs, wheelchairs, computers, power chairs, or communicate via facial expressions or sounds such as tongue clicks.

- **Conductive Education classrooms**

A vibrant classroom environment is also required for Conductive Education which is an educational approach to problem solving. Children learn to achieve their own personal goals which lead to greater independence and choice. Improvements are seen, not only in physical independence, but also in social competence, self-esteem and for gaining a greater sense of personal achievement.

- **Technology room**

This area will contain several computers which are essentially used to provide children with socialising opportunities and skills to access education. Some of our clients will never be able to write so computers play a large part in accessing both education and employment, not to mention keeping in touch with the world.

- **Speech therapist room**

Smaller rooms are needed to conduct speech therapy which focuses on development of speech and other communication skills to help children communicate with their family, friends, teachers and the community. By working and strengthening the muscles to help improve communication skills our therapists can also help children and their parents to overcome physical difficulties with eating and drinking that can be caused by cerebral palsy.

- **Plaster room**

The plaster is often a high stress room for children due to the painful nature of splinting, which is done to restore or prevent muscle contractions. In the new building, this room will feature visual distractions to make it more welcoming and less frightening for children. The environment also needs to make them feel safe due to the noise of the saw removing casts.





## Family consultation room

Having a child with a cerebral palsy can create huge challenges for families when the child is first diagnosed, and as the child grows up. It's important to have a comfortable room to provide support and help build resilience within the family unit.

**In addition to therapy rooms other spaces within the building play an enormous role in helping children and adults reach their full potential.**



## • Dental Clinic

This clinic is very important for clients with cerebral palsy as in some cases they may not be able to attend a regular dentist due to accessibility issues and non-specialist dentist being unable to treat them. Dental treatment becomes even more important for people with cerebral palsy due to physical difficulties such as muscle spasms, swallowing difficulties and teeth grinding. Having a modern dental clinic custom built for our volunteer dentists will ensure our clients have access to a high level of dental care.

## • Parent lounge

Being able to develop meaningful connections with other parents facing similar challenges can be a vital source of strength and encouragement for families raising a child with cerebral palsy. A parent lounge that is welcoming and comfortable will enhance opportunities to form friendships and connections with other families.

## • Wheelchair fitting and assessment

A wheelchair provides independence and allows many of our clients to enjoy a more fulfilling life. The chairs need to be customised, as sitting in the right position is important for the health and wellbeing of someone with cerebral palsy. The fitting process can take up to two whole days, so having the right space to do it in is very important.

## • SportFitz gym with modified equipment

Exercise is crucial for a person living with cerebral palsy and research shows that physical activity plays a big role in maintaining independence, reducing hospital admissions and increasing a healthy lifespan. Our new gym will be fitted with the latest equipment that will cater for the specific needs of a child or adult with cerebral palsy.

## • Children's playground

Children will now have an area that promotes social and therapeutic play activities designed to enhance their gross motor, fine motor and communication skills - all of which are vital for full participation at school and in the community.

## • Outdoor court

Often children can be so busy learning to walk and doing everyday tasks, they fall behind when it comes to playing sport. The outdoor court will be used to teach sports skills like netball, soccer and basketball so they too can enjoy the social and physical benefits of team sports. This court will also be used to teach the new owners of motorised wheelchairs how to 'drive' them and assess their abilities which is very important for the safety of the user and the people around them.

## Make your mark on our new centre

There is an opportunity to have one of these rooms or areas named after you or the person or company of your choice. Please see the insert for the rooms available and the funds required to make them a reality.





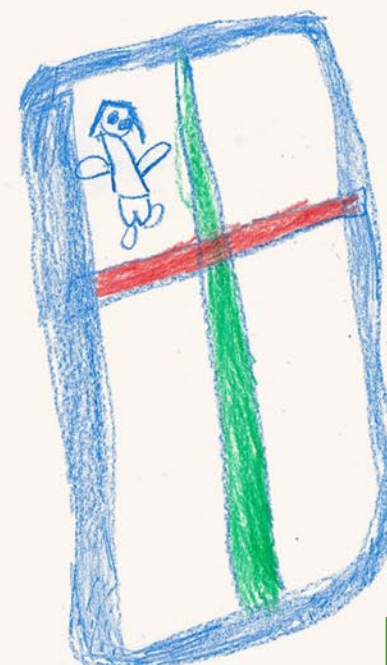
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# Raising the Funds

An insurance settlement from the 2007 fire has provided funding toward the new centre which will cover the cost to house staff, crucial to the operations of The Spastic Centre.

**With the help of generous supporters like you, we need to raise a further \$7 million – which will go directly to providing vital facilities needed by our clients and their families.**



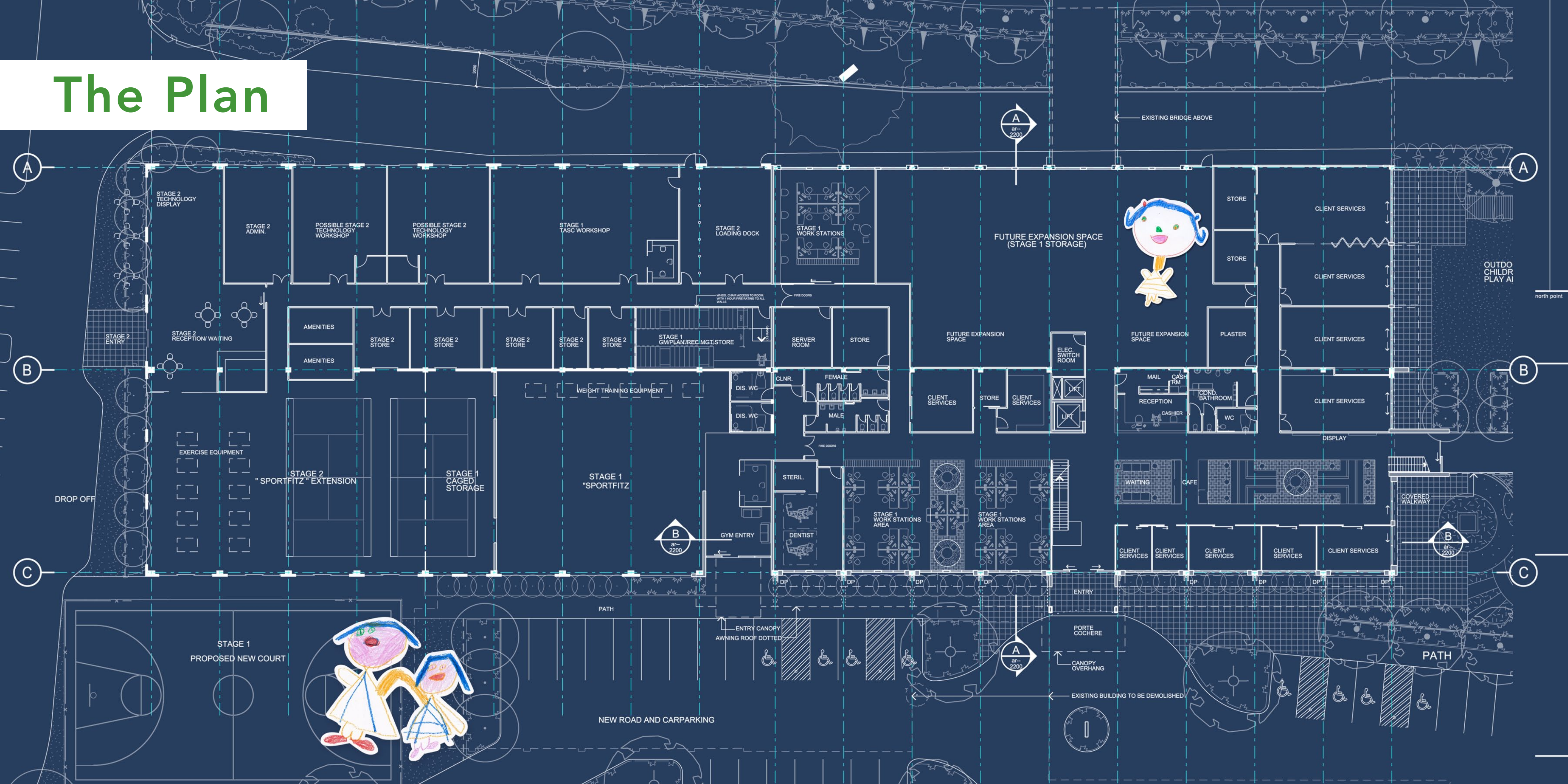
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# The Plan



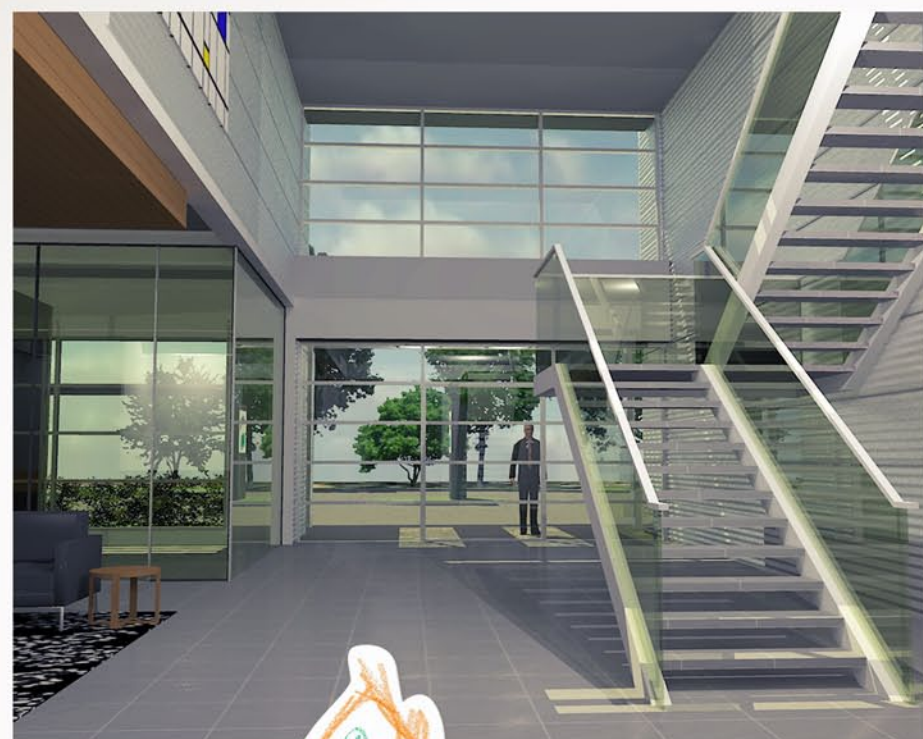


*'A donation to this building would be great to leave your mark. It would be unique and a wonderful way to show families that are affected by cerebral palsy 'that the world does care'. With no other comparable facility around, your support will touch so many lives across Sydney and beyond.'*

Suzie, mother of 7 year-old Nicholas who has cerebral palsy



# We need your help to 'Raise the Roof'



The plan for our new centre gives people with cerebral palsy an amazing vision for the future – but this vision will never be realised without the help of generous supporters like you!

We are currently seeking donations large and small from people like you, looking to make a real difference.

All donations over \$2.00 to The Spastic Centre's Capital Campaign are fully tax deductible. Contributions may be made in equal or varied amounts over three years to obtain maximum tax concessions.

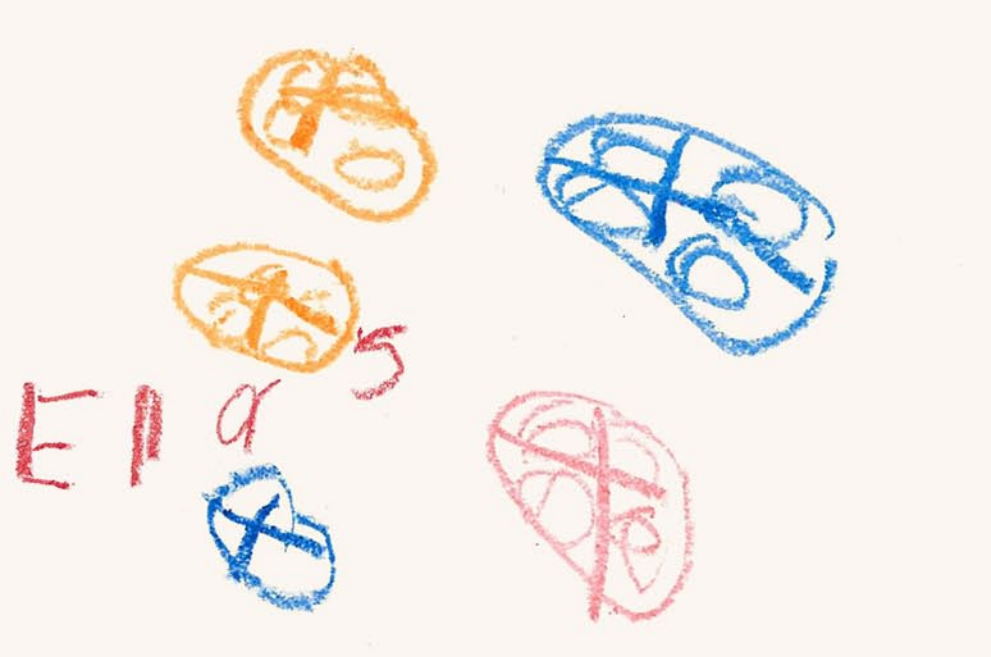
## How you can make your mark

The project also offers a number of opportunities for us to acknowledge your gift by associating the name of your choice with one of many areas of the building or the programs that run within it.

**Your gift will change the lives of children and adults living with cerebral palsy, now and for many years to come.**







# Building around Children's Needs

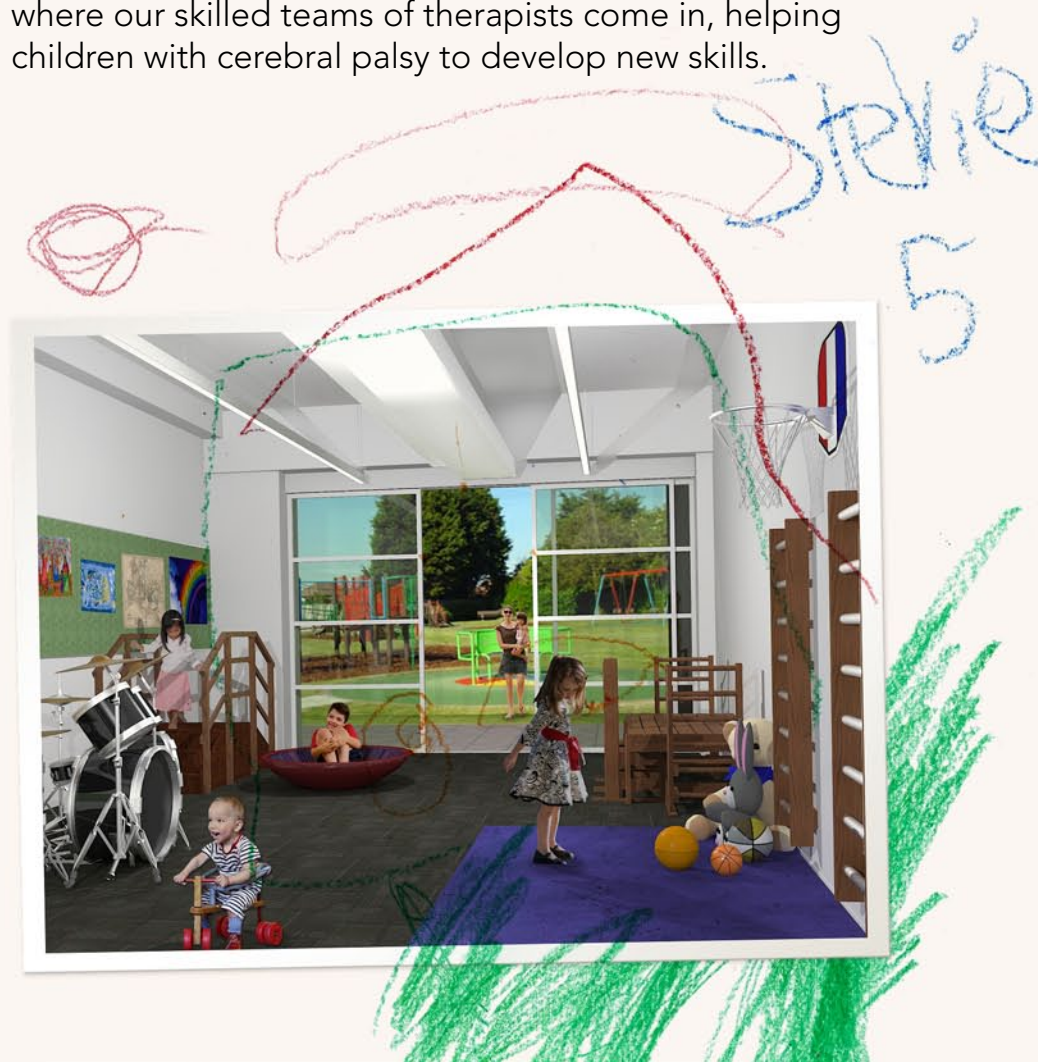
**Meet Rachel,** a beautiful little girl who is full of energy and motivation but limited control over her arms and legs. She has difficulties swallowing, regular epileptic fits and can't communicate verbally without assistance. Rachel's family had to modify their entire home. As you can imagine cerebral palsy puts an enormous financial and emotional strain on everyone in the family.

The new building is far more than just a 'facility' to someone like Rachel and her family -it's about the life-changing therapy and services that go on within its walls.

Simple movements most children take for granted



like crawling, walking, running or jumping can be very difficult or impossible for a child with cerebral palsy. Cerebral palsy can also affect other everyday actions like chewing, talking and sometimes even breathing. This is where our skilled teams of therapists come in, helping children with cerebral palsy to develop new skills.



*"I never thought that Rachel would be standing independently or ever be able to take a few steps, but thanks to The Spastic Centre team and the Hart walker she can now take steps with their assistance."*

Rene, Rachel's mum



## How will the new building make therapy easier?

With an open-plan design, the new layout will allow staff to work with clients in a more holistic way. The current building means clients like Rachel may have to attend many appointments with different therapists and specialists because the environment is too restrictive to have more than one therapist seeing a client at a time.

There is growing evidence demonstrating that health services work best when professionals work interdependently with active participation of families and children. This is particularly important when it comes to treating children. The child's team need to work holistically, to ensure all facets of the child's functioning (physical, social, emotional) are considered collectively. This approach to team work requires flexible spaces that can accommodate private planning and consultation.

In addition, larger group therapy rooms and a parent lounge will help foster a vibrant sense of community and bring people together. This environment will also help children form friendships, express creativity, and achieve physical and mental health - all of which will make The Spastic Centre an enjoyable place to visit.







# About Cerebral Palsy

Cerebral palsy is a permanent physical disability that affects movement. It results from damage to the developing brain, usually before birth.

The impact of cerebral palsy can range from minimal to profound, depending on the individual. Some people may only experience weakness in one hand, while others have an almost complete lack of voluntary movement. However for everyone diagnosed, cerebral palsy is a life-long disability.



## Top Line Facts

- Every 15 hours an Australian child is born is with cerebral palsy:
- Nearly 700 children are born in Australia every year with cerebral palsy
- 1 baby in every 400 is born with cerebral palsy.
- 33,000 Australians live with cerebral palsy.
- Australian kids are 3 times more likely to be diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy than cancer.

## There is no known cure

- **1 in 3** cannot walk
- **1 in 4** cannot talk
- **1 in 2** are in pain
- **1 in 4** have epilepsy
- **1 in 10** are blind
- **1 in 25** are deaf
- **9 in 10** have feeding difficulties
- **1 in 2** have an intellectual disability
- **1 in 3** have hip displacement
- **1 in 5** have a sleep disorder

This booklet was created with the help of the children who attend conductive education classes at The Spastic Centre. It highlights their vision for the new site.

