



TABLELANDS REGIONAL COUNCIL

Kuranda Community Precinct

Community Engagement Report

September 2011

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Prepared by: Michelle Feenan and Pat Metzlar
Engagement Plus
P: 07 3221 7443
A: PO Box 438, Red Hill Q 4059

Date: September 2011

Document name: Tablelands Regional Council Kuranda Community Precinct - Community Engagement Report

Version: Final_2

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kuranda Community Precinct, otherwise known as the old Kuranda Primary School site was purchased by the former Mareeba Shire Council just prior to amalgamation with a view to developing a community centre for the Kuranda District. The project since that time has had a long and often difficult history with many views expressed about how and what should be carried out at the site.

In October 2010 this culminated in a public outcry for more extensive consultation to occur around the future of the Kuranda Community Precinct in light of the expressed view that the community viewed the site as belonging to the community and that their input should be considered in an effective and meaningful way.

The community engagement activities and other research were designed to:

- Be comprehensive enabling as many people in the Kuranda region to become informed about the consultation processes and be encouraged to have their say;
- Create a number of opportunities and fair time frames for people to contribute to the engagement processes;
- Seek balanced input including input from those that had a vested interest or strong view on the project as well as those that have been in the background or not participating in an overt way;
- Determine a series of recommendations for the future directions of the Kuranda Community Precinct based on an understanding of current provision of facilities and services, other examples of good practice, consideration of a range of governance models and the exploration of possible funding opportunities, as well as community views;
- Be inclusive of Councillors, as the decision makers in understanding their expectations of the project, the considerations for making a decision and their own views about the preferred future of the Kuranda Community Precinct.

The community engagement activities have resulted in over 300 different people and key stakeholders being involved in sharing their views about the future of the Kuranda Community Precinct.

The following report provides a detailed overview of the research methodology undertaken, the results, analysis and discussion as a result of the research that have given rise to the recommended directions described in the final section.

Thank you to the many committed traditional owners, residents, business people, volunteers, community organisation representatives, Council staff and Councillors who have contributed to this project.

Michelle Feenan
Director
Engagement Plus

PROJECT AIMS AND INTRODUCTION

The Tablelands Regional Council commissioned Engagement Plus to undertake a comprehensive community engagement process surrounding the future use of the Kuranda Community Precinct, otherwise known as the old Kuranda Primary School site. The site was purchased by the former Mareeba Shire Council just prior to amalgamation with a view to developing a community centre for the Kuranda District. The project since that time has had a long and often difficult history with many views expressed about how and what should be carried out at the site.

An overriding aim for this project was for the Tablelands Regional Council to:

- Understand if the community is open to the selling of portions of the land to fund a larger project;
- Understand if the community is open to the removal of the buildings known as Blocks A and B; (Please refer to map)
- Understand that if Blocks A and B (buildings) were to be removed, what the community would like to see the "vacant" area used for;
- Understand what the community would prefer to see Blocks 3 & 4 (land) used for in the future; (Please refer to map)
- Understand who in the community would be interested in using Block C and in what format;
- Understand how the site can become self sustaining.

It is intended that the consultation process will identify and draw together the different viewpoints held by the Kuranda community and provide Council with a clear view of the community's vision and preferences for the site in addition to what is economically feasible and sustainable. The outcomes from the research and engagement activities are to assist Council in its development of a Master Plan for the Precinct.

To ensure that a comprehensive and balanced view of the community's vision for the future of the site was obtained, Engagement Plus embarked on a broad range of engagement activities providing the Kuranda Community with multiple opportunities for participation.

BACKGROUND OF THE KURANDA COMMUNITY PRECINCT PROJECT

Kuranda District Profile

The Kuranda District is part of the wider Tablelands Regional Council area and includes not only the Kuranda village, but also the localities of Koah, Myola, Speewah, Mantaka, Korowa and Mona Mona.

The village is approximately 28 km from Cairns City centre and 36km from Mareeba.

The 2006 Census data shows the population of the Kuranda District being 3919 with that number being almost evenly split between males and females. Kuranda also has a large indigenous population with the indigenous community comprising 10.1% of the overall population of the District.

Almost a quarter of the population (23.2%) is under the age of 18 and 11.1% over the age of 65.

The majority of people (66.6%) noted that they either “owned” or were in the process of purchasing their own home and 22.2% said that they were renting.

The 2006 Census data also revealed that 89.4% of people were employed either full time (52.2%) or part time (37.2%) with industries in which people are primarily employed including retail trade (12.7%), Health Care and Social Assistance (10%), education and training (9.2%) and accommodation and food services (8.3%).

Kuranda Community Precinct

The **old Kuranda Primary School site was purchased** by the old Mareeba Shire Council from the State Government in **early 2008** for \$750,000.00 (exclusive of GST) with a view to having the site used for:

- Toilet access to Bartley Park;
- Future expansion of the Kuranda Sewerage Treatment Plant; and
- Community Use.

At the time, the Mayor of the Mareeba Shire Council called for public expressions of interest in the site and more than 20 submissions were received from people and organisations within the Kuranda community. For a list of the people and organisations that provided submissions in relation to the site please refer to Appendix 1. Please note, however, that the list is not exhaustive and is based on information obtained from the Tablelands Regional Council and members of the community throughout the consultation process.

The Mareeba Shire Council, however, did not provide the public with any parameters for possible uses of the site such as the compatibility and suitability of the site for proposed uses, the costs associated with using and developing the site, possible governance models and the site’s financial feasibility.

An Advisory Committee made up of both Councillors and interested members of the public was set up to assist Mareeba Shire Council in assessing the submissions received and providing recommendations for the use of the site.

On **4 March 2008** the Mareeba Shire Council passed a resolution adopting a number of recommendations made by the Advisory Committee which included transferring the Division 8 Councillor's office and the library to C Block, leasing out B Block to the Arts Training Group, hiring out the demountables to the homework centre, establishing a living history museum/heritage centre and leasing the Preschool building to the Ngoonbi Co-Operative Society Ltd.

Following the **amalgamation of the Mareeba Shire Council into the Tablelands Regional Council** on **15 March 2008** it was decided that it was necessary to take a "**few steps back**" before taking any further action in relation to any development of the old Kuranda Primary School site in order to:

1. Understand the costs for repair, future maintenance, replacement and upgrades to make the site suit its new use etc;
2. Identify what the funds needed to achieve the above can alternatively be used for;
3. identify if community groups interested in using the facility are prepared to pay full or partial costs of use; and
4. Understand that if the community groups don't pay the full cost, are the ratepayers prepared to pay this cost across the TRC or would this cost be apportioned to only the Kuranda community.

A building report commissioned by the Tablelands Regional Council in May 2008 identified that the buildings were in a run down and dirty condition and would require **extensive** and **expensive work** to make them suitable for community use. Further, immediate action was also necessary to protect the property from further natural deterioration and vandalism and so caretakers were employed in July 2008 with their duties including general site maintenance and protection of the site from vandals.

A new Old Kuranda Primary School Advisory Committee was established in **December 2008** with their main purpose being to provide advice and recommendations to Council about the site.

2009

In January 2009 Council applied for and received funding from the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (RLCIP), \$200,000.00 of which was allocated for expenditure on the development of the old Kuranda Primary School site.

The Advisory Committee recommended to Council that the money be spent on:

- Upgrading the old pre-school facility
- Upgrading the toilets located next to Bartley Park by providing disabled toilets and installing showers;
- Upgrading the storage shed; and
- Providing an undercover area near the boundary of Bartley Park.

The rationale behind the Committee's decision to spend the RLCIP funding in this manner was that no further funding or clear direction for the development of the site had yet been identified, and it was felt that until such time that a decision was made about the site, the money should be spent for the long term benefit of the community.

Despite the Advisory Committee's recommendations, on **25 March 2009** Council instead resolved to spend the money on the refurbishment of C Block to provide for the relocation of the Kuranda Library and Councillor Jensen's office as well as upgrading the old Pre-School site in order for the facility to be rented out on a commercial basis.

As a result of this resolution, concerns were raised both by members of the Advisory Committee and members of the wider community in relation to large sums of public money being spent where there was no clear plan for the development of the site. Given the costs identified as being necessary to develop and maintain the site into the future it was felt that some clear direction was needed and a future funding strategy identified. Furthermore, it was felt that Council's decision had all but made the Advisory Committee, and its role in ensuring community participation at all levels of the consultation process, redundant.

In response to these concerns Council held an internal workshop in **July 2009** at which time Council formed the view that they needed to reconsider the way in which to move forward with the development of the Old Kuranda Primary School site and **on 15 July 2009 rescinded their earlier resolution.**

It was then decided that the \$200,000.00 was to be spent in the carrying out the following works:

1. Upgrade the toilets located next to Bartley Park by providing disabled toilets and installing showers;
2. Upgrade the storage shed in order that the facility be used to store sporting equipment and the like;
3. Provide an undercover area near the boundary of Bartley Park;
4. Provide a safe pedestrian and disabled access to access facilities from Carroona Street; and
5. To use the remainder of the funds to refurbish and upgrade C Block for future use as a community centre.

2010

As part of the process of developing a Master Plan for the site, Council obtained a full building report in May 2010 which outlined what upgrades would be necessary before the buildings complied with the Queensland Building Codes and could be used for community purposes.

Given the high costs identified in the building report associated with the development and maintenance of the site, and the limited Council funds available, Council saw funding as being a key challenge in any future development of the site and passed a resolution in **June 2010** in which it was stated that the land was to be subdivided into separate lots (see diagram below) and parcels of the land sold off to fund:

1. An upgrade of C Block to bring it into compliance with the Queensland Building Codes; and
2. A new purpose built facility.

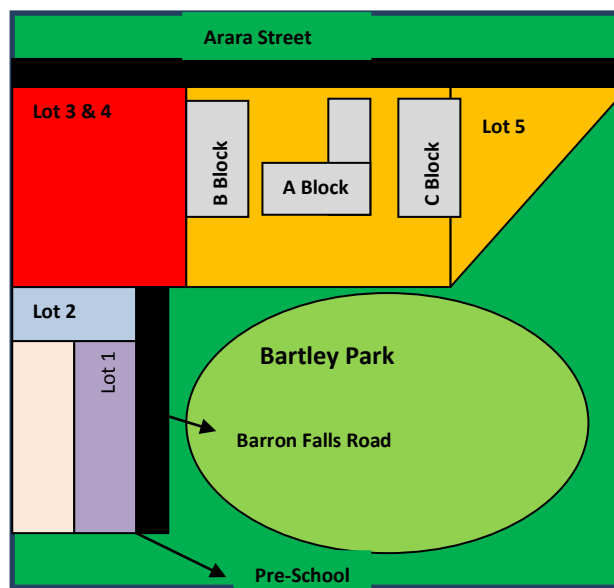


Figure 1 - Kuranda Community Precinct site

Lot	Existing Structures	Council Resolution
Lot 1	Old Pre-School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell together with lot 2 to finance the construction of a new purpose-built community facility on the remaining land.
Lot 2	Vacant Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sell together with lot 1 to finance the construction of a new purpose-built community facility on the remaining land.
Lot 3	Vacant Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used/sold at a later date
Lot 4	Vacant Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used/sold at a later date
Lot 5	A Block B Block C Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove blocks A & B and then build a new purpose-built facility in that area. Upgrade C Block

The resolution passed by Council to sell off parts of the land resulted in a public outcry and a public meeting was held on **20 October 2010** to provide the community with information about Council's decision. This gave the community the opportunity to express their views and concerns.

Concerns and views which became apparent throughout the course of the meeting included:

- The land is a windfall and it is important to the community that it is treated as such. Council owns very little public land in Kuranda as it is almost impossible to find suitable land. The land should be retained until a clear plan for its use is developed in the longer term;
- There was a strong desire for more community consultation about the site. People felt there had been a lack of a structured community consultation process in the period since the site had been purchased and many groups within the community had not yet been given the

opportunity to provide any input. This was identified as being essential if the community was to have ownership over any decision going forward.

- There was a need for further clarification about the community's expectations for the site. Many different aspirations for the site have been identified and not all people within the community can agree on one desired outcome. Further consultation is required in the wider community to reach a general consensus.

As a result of the meeting in October 2010, it was decided by Council to halt any further development of the site until a comprehensive community consultation process had been undertaken. **Engagement Plus was appointed for this purpose in February 2011.**

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the community engagement and related research included a number of engagement activities aimed at raising awareness about the Kuranda Community Precinct consultation process as well as gathering information about the community's aspirations for the future of the precinct.

The data from these engagement activities and research has been recorded, collated and analysed before being used to develop a preferred direction for Council to consider in its development of a Master Plan for the precinct.

The engagement and research activities were undertaken in three phases and included:

- **Phase 1 – Visions and Parameters**
 - Promotion of Community Engagement Activities
 - Interviews with Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee, key stakeholders and interested community members
 - Meeting with Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee
 - Community Survey #1
 - Kuranda Family Fun Day
 - Kuranda District College Student Council Meeting
 - Modified surveys for the youth of Kuranda and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
 - Research Activities:
 - Case Studies
 - Funding Options
 - Governance Models
 - Current Facilities, Services & Programs

- **Phase 2 - Options**
 - Deliberative Forum #1
 - Community Survey #2
 - Council Workshop

- **Phase 3 – Future Directions**
 - Deliberative Forum #2
 - Report Preparation

A summary description of each of the engagement activities is outlined below with the analysis of the results in the section that follows.

Phase 1 – Vision and Parameters

a) Promotion of Community Engagement Activities

Council made available a dedicated webpage (refer Appendix 2) for the Kuranda community to stay informed about the project. Information contained on the webpage included:

- the purpose of the project;
- what opportunities the public has to contribute to the process;
- feedback on engagement activities;
- details about next steps of the project; and
- project update newsletters.

The webpage also hosted the online versions of the two community surveys distributed throughout the Kuranda district.

The webpage was viewed 204 times by 72 different people with each person spending an average of 3 minutes and 10 seconds on the site.

Information and feedback about the various community engagement activities undertaken were also promoted throughout the Kuranda district via:

- A mailbox drop in March 2011 of over 2000 community newsletters about the Kuranda Community Precinct throughout the Kuranda district;
- Posters on Kuranda community noticeboards;
- An article in the May edition of the Kuranda Paper;
- An article in the June edition of the Kuranda Paper; and
- An Article in the September edition of the Kuranda Paper.

To view these documents, refer to Appendices 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

b) Interviews

Telephone and face to face interviews were held with the following groups:

- the Tableland Regional Council Mayor and Councillors;
- State and Federal Members of Parliament for the Kuranda District;
- members of the Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee;
- key stakeholders representing various community organisations and groups in the Kuranda District; and
- interested community members.

Key stakeholders were identified through the research surrounding the history of the project and engagement activities, in addition to asking each interview participant who in their opinion it was important to include in the consultation process.

To ensure that balanced and comprehensive input was obtained from a broad range of people within the community, an invitation to participate in a telephone interview was also sent out to forty three (43) households randomly selected from Council's ratepayer database.

All interviewees were given the opportunity to discuss their views surrounding the history of the Kuranda Community Precinct and Council's engagement processes before being asked questions about:

- a. their vision for the Kuranda Community Precinct include strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the site;
- b. Important consideration in the development of the site
- c. The criteria for a good decision.

For a list of people interviewed, please refer to Appendix 8.

c) Meeting with Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee

Pat Metzlar and Michelle Feenan from Engagement Plus met with Jax Bergensen, Tim Hoogwerfs, Eve Stafford, Councillor Jenny Jensen and Dean Davidson from the Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee on Friday, 8 April 2011 at the Kuranda Community Precinct. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the Committee with feedback about the consultation process and seek the Committee's views on the best way to promote community participation in the consultation process and things to consider for the consultation process going forward.

d) Community Survey #1

The first community survey was aimed at identifying the community's visions for, and expectations of, any future development of the Kuranda Community Precinct (refer Appendix 9). The survey asked respondents questions about:

- their usage of the Kuranda Village and its facilities and services;
- their ultimate vision for the Kuranda Community Precinct;
- Options for use;
- How to ensure that the preferred direction for the Kuranda Community Precinct is achievable and affordable; and
- Models of governance;

The six (6) page survey together with Background Summary document which outlined the history of the project (refer Appendix 10) were initially distributed by mail out in early April 2011 to approximately 2133 residences in the Kuranda, Speewah, Koah and Myola areas. The survey was also made available:

- electronically via the project webpage;
- at key locations around Kuranda including the Kuranda Neighbourhood Centre, Kuranda Library, Kuranda CWA Hall, Kuranda Post Office and Ngoonbi Cooperative Society;
- via email to key stakeholders and networks identified throughout the consultation process;
- via a weblink on Councillor Jenny Jensen's Facebook page.

The survey was initially set to close on Thursday, 28 April 2011; however, this deadline was later extended to Thursday, 5 May 2011 to account for the 5 day Easter long weekend.

e) Kuranda Family Fun Day

Engagement Plus arranged to attend a Kuranda Family Fun Day coordinated by the Kuranda Interagency Network on Wednesday on Wednesday 20 April 2011. The intention was to set up a stall providing members of the community with an opportunity to discuss their aspirations for the site in addition to promoting the completion of the first community survey.

The event, however, was cancelled on the day out of respect for the local indigenous community who were mourning the death of an elder.

f) Modified Surveys for the youth of Kuranda and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

An evaluation of the first Community Survey results showed that there was very little input from the youth of Kuranda and from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It was therefore decided to undertake some more targeted engagement activities aimed at achieving a higher level of input from these groups.

The targeted engagement activities included:

- Creation of a survey designed specifically for the Youth of Kuranda. This Survey was forwarded to the Kuranda Recreation Centre, Kuranda Aquatic Centre and Kuranda District College for distribution.
- Creation of a survey designed specifically for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Engagement Plus partnered with Ngoonbi Cooperative Society for distribution of this Survey. It should be noted, however, that this activity did not result in any survey returns.

g) Kuranda District College Student Council Meeting

In an attempt to achieve a higher level input from the youth of Kuranda, Engagement Plus arranged to meet with the Kuranda District College Primary and Secondary School student councils on Wednesday 18 May 2011.

The meeting was held during the school's lunch break and was attended by more than 15 students.

Students were provided with a brief introduction about the purpose of the meeting and then asked to identify and discuss their vision and preferences for the future use of the Kuranda Community Precinct.

h) Other Research Activities

A number of research activities were conducted concurrently with engagement activities and included:

- Consideration of what other community facilities, services and programs exist for the Kuranda District;
- Determination of possible funding strategies for the capital and operating costs;
- Determination of possible governance models;
- Research looking at data surrounding the sale of commercial properties in Kuranda for the last five (5) years;
- Consideration of relevant information to come out of the community planning process; and
- Identification of other Community Precinct projects for benchmarking purposes.

Phase 2 - Options

i) Deliberative Forum #1

A Deliberative Forum was held on Wednesday 18 May 2011 at the Kuranda Recreation Centre from 6:30pm until 9:00pm.

Invitees to the Deliberative Forum were selected on the basis of their previous interest and involvement in the project as well as a group that were randomly selected from Council's rates database. The Deliberative Forum attendance list, is attached as Appendix 11.

The purpose of the Deliberative Forum was to:

- consider the outcomes of the first community survey distributed to residents and ratepayers in the Kuranda District; and
- critique the future options for the site that had been developed as a result of the survey responses and other research activities carried out.

Invitations to the Deliberative Forum were sent via a combination of mail and email to 36 key stakeholders identified throughout the consultation process.

Participants were also emailed a copy of an Issues paper (refer Appendix 12) which was developed to help participants prepare for the Forum by providing them with:

- a) information about the context of research and engagement activities undertaken;
- b) an overview of the preliminary results; and
- c) an overview of the options developed as a result of the research and engagement activities.

Details of the results of research and engagement activities was provided to Forum participants in a Power Point presentation before participants were asked to consider the three options developed for the site and comment on:

- what they liked about the option;
- what they didn't like about the option; and
- what they felt it would take to make the option successful.

Following discussions about the three options developed for the future of the site, forum participants were asked to consider the governance requirements of any facility developed from an ownership, strategic and operational perspective

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation developed for the Deliberative Forum is attached as Appendix 13.

j) Community Survey #2

A second community survey was developed by the consultant team aimed at obtaining community feedback about the options created for the future development of the site (refer Appendix 14).

The four (4) page survey was sent out together with a Community Consultation Update paper (refer Appendix 15) which provided readers with some general information about outcomes from the first survey and interviews. The survey was distributed via letterbox drop in early June to more than 2200 residences in the Kuranda, Speewah, Koah and Myola areas. The survey was also made available:

- electronically via the project webpage;
- at key locations around Kuranda including the Kuranda Neighbourhood Centre, Kuranda Library, Kuranda Post Office and Ngoonbi Cooperative Society; and
- via email to key stakeholders and networks identified throughout the consultation process.

The survey closed on 11 July 2011.

k) Council Workshop

A workshop was held with Councillors and key Council staff on Thursday 7 July 2011. Council Staff were provided with some feedback about consultation activities carried out so far and presented with an overview of the options currently being considered by the Kuranda Community.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached as Appendix 16.

Discussion following the presentation focused on constraints, opportunities and factors to be considered in the implementation of each option from a Council perspective.

Phase 3 – Future Directions

l) Deliberative Forum #2

A second Deliberative Forum was held on Monday 8 August 2011 at the Kuranda Community Precinct from 6:30pm until 8:30pm.

Invitations to the second Deliberative Forum were sent via mail to the 36 key stakeholders invited to the first Deliberative Forum (refer to Appendix 17 for the Attendance List).

The purpose of the second Deliberative Forum was to present:

- the outcomes of the second survey recently distributed to residents and ratepayers in the Kuranda District; and
- the preferred direction developed for the future of the Kuranda Community Precinct as a result of all engagement and research activities undertaken to date.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation developed for the Deliberative Forum is attached as Appendix 18.

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

PHASE 1 – Vision and Parameters

Community Survey #1

Respondents

The Community Survey was completed by 226 people of whom 56.8% were female. As shown below, age groups of respondents varied although the older age groups dominate with 108 respondents (48.4%) aged between 45 and 60 and 69 respondents (30.9%) aged over 60.

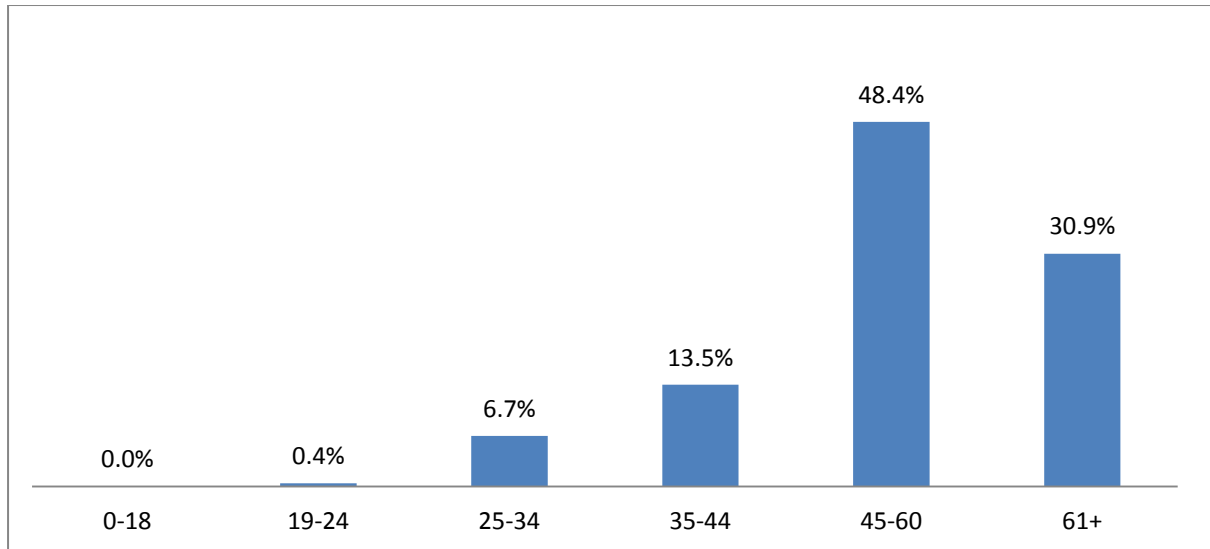


Figure 2 – Age of Community Survey #1 respondents

Diversity

Almost 80% of respondents identified themselves either as multicultural (39.5%) or “other” (47.9%). Those who identified themselves as “other” primarily indicated that they were either Australian, a resident, retiree or worker.

Youth and people who identified themselves as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander were poorly represented in the survey results, only making up a combined total of 5.2% of all responses. Further engagement activities were undertaken to ensure these two groups were given further opportunities to contribute to the consultation process.

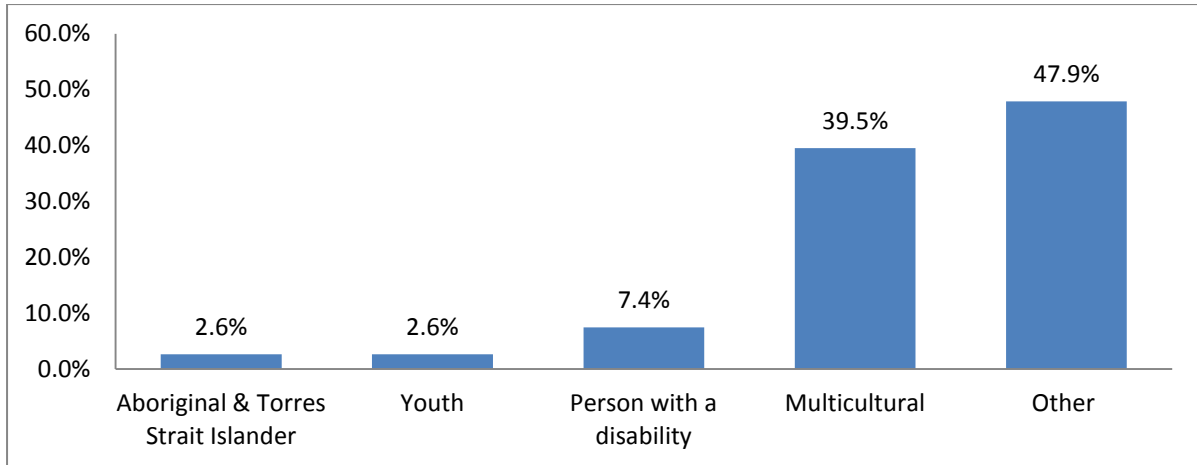


Figure 3 – Diversity of Community Survey #1 respondents

Household Description

When asked to describe their households, just over a third (38%) of survey respondents indicated that they were married or in a de-facto relationship, 28% were families with children, 25% were single and the remainder indicated that they lived in a share house. Those that identified as “other” included single parents, foster parents, renters, a mother and daughter and a widow.

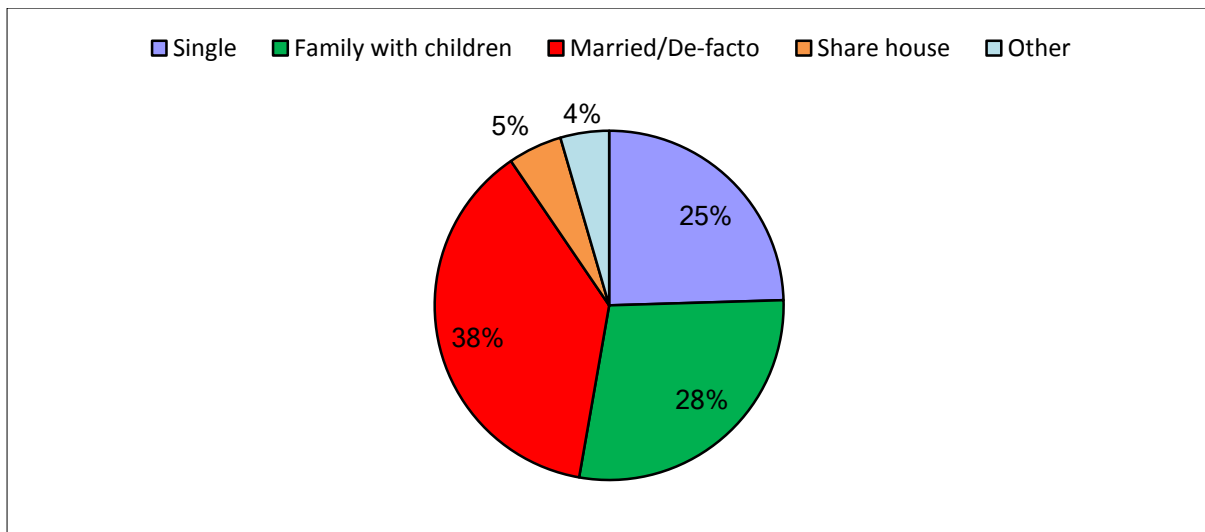


Figure 4 – Households of Community Survey #1 respondents

How long have respondents lived, owned or had an investment in the Kuranda District?

The majority (69.7%) of survey respondents indicated that they had a strong connection with the Kuranda District having lived owned or invested there from more than 10 years. Only 3.1% of respondents said that they had lived, owned or invested in the Kuranda District for less than 1 year and 12.9% for between 1 to 5 years.

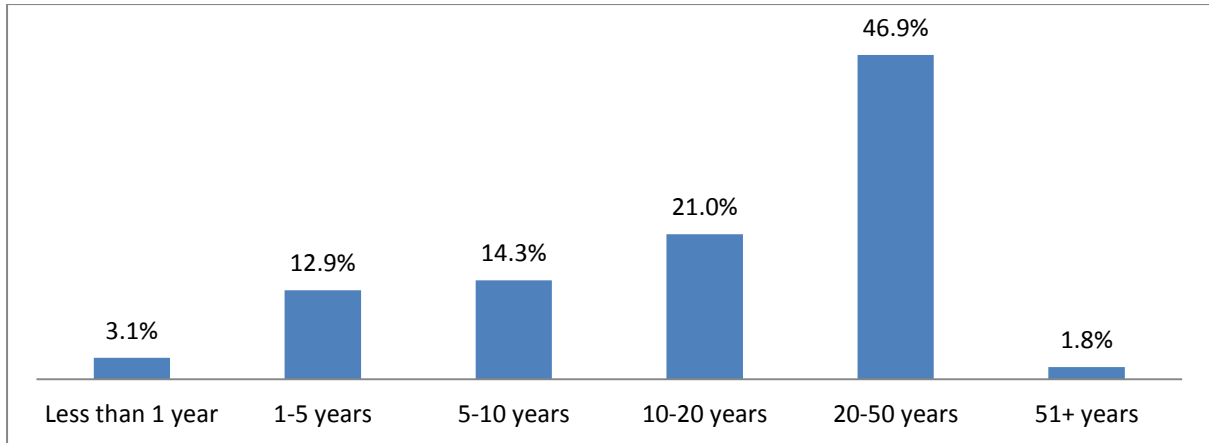


Figure 5 – Length of time respondents have lived, owned or invested in the Kuranda District

Where in the Kuranda District do survey respondents live, own or invest?

Kuranda residents were well represented in the survey responses with well over half (58.8%) of the respondents identifying that they live, own or invest in Kuranda. The remaining respondents said that they lived, owned or invested in Speewah (16.7%), Myola (14.5%) Koah (9.5%) and to a lesser degree, outside the Tablelands (0.5%).

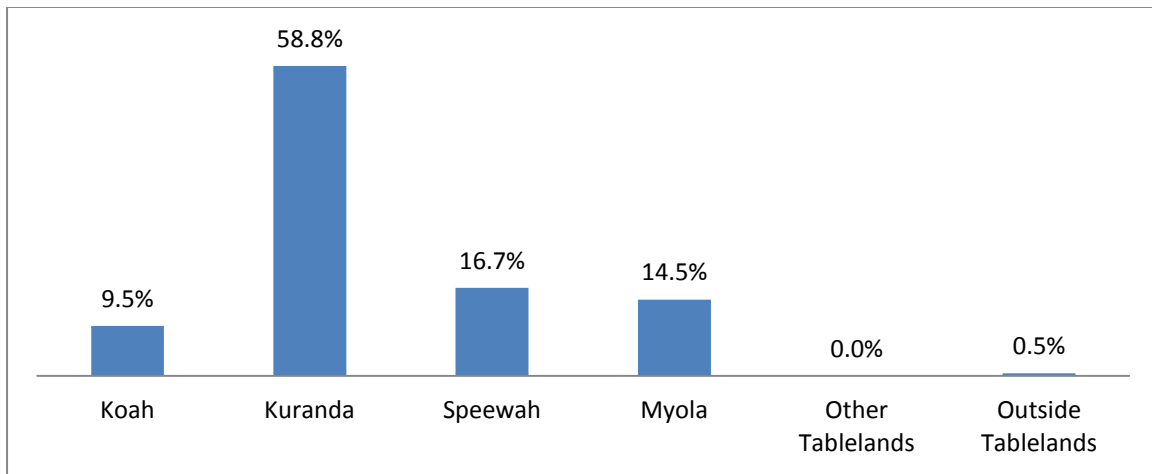


Figure 6 – Where respondents live in the Kuranda District

How often do survey respondents visit the Kuranda Village

The majority survey respondents indicated that they visited the Kuranda Village on a regular basis with 51.3% visiting on a daily basis and 34.4% on a weekly basis. Of the remainder, 4.9% of respondents identified that they visited on a monthly basis, 2.2% every 2 to 6 months, 4.5% every 6 to 12 months and 2.7% visited less than once a year.

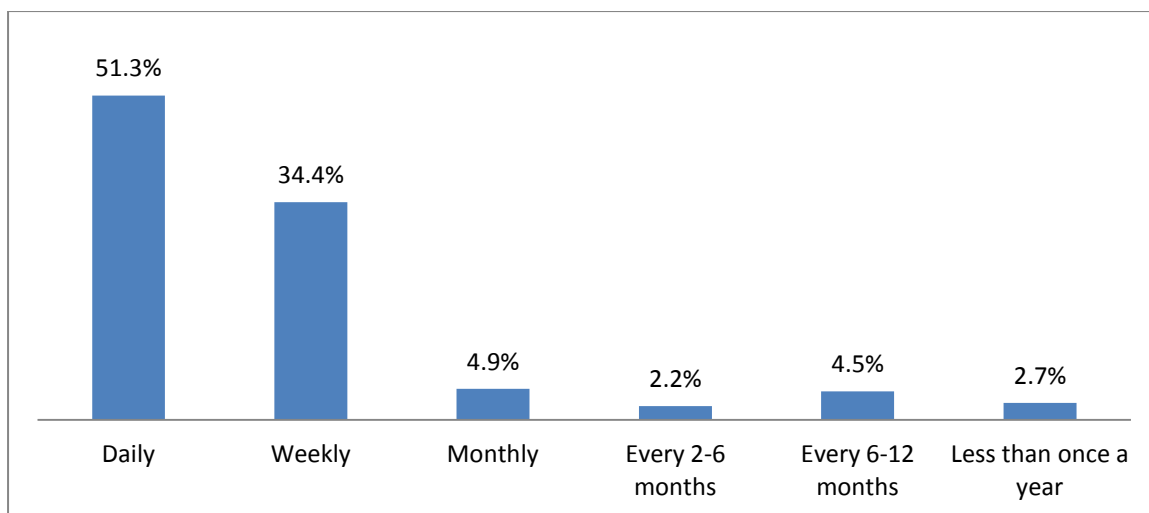


Figure 7 – How often respondents visit the Kuranda Village

Which facilities do respondents currently use or access in the Kuranda Village

When asked to identify all facilities they currently access or use in the Kuranda Village, the majority of respondents indicated that they use the Post Office (91.4%) and Foodworks (88.3%). 41.4% of respondents said they attended the amphitheatre and almost a quarter of respondents indicated that they also accessed the CWA Hall (23.4%), Neighbourhood Centre (25.7%) and Recreation Centre (23.4%).

Respondents who said they accessed “other” facilities in the Kuranda Village indicated that they used the:

- Library (22 comments)
- Restaurants and Cafes (18 comments)
- Newsagency (13 comments)
- Bank (10 comments)
- Medical Centre (9 comments)
- Chemist/Pharmacy (6 comments)

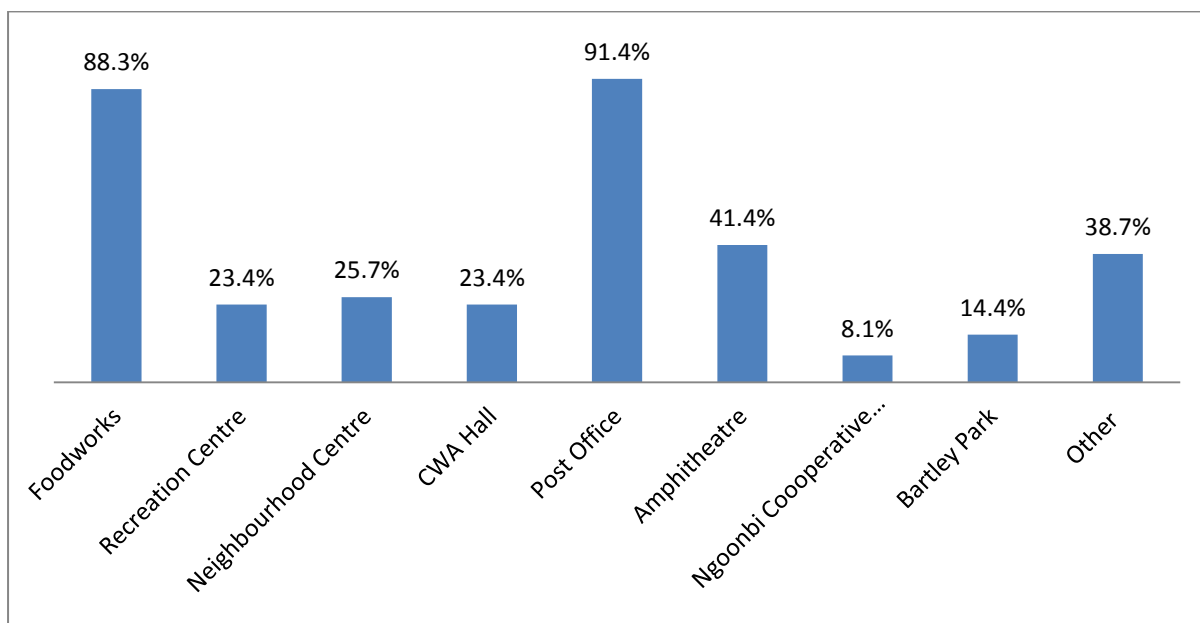


Figure 8 – Facilities respondents use in the Kuranda village

Ultimate Vision for the Kuranda Community Precinct

The majority of responses to this question indicate that the community's aspiration for the Precinct is that it be developed to act as a community hub providing Kuranda residents with a place to access a wide range of community services and activities that enhance social connection and cohesion. It was noted that the Precinct should serve as a multi-purpose space that provides and supports recreational, sporting, cultural, educational and ecological experiences for the entire Kuranda community while preserving the significant environmental and historical aspects of the site. Many comments recommended consolidating existing community services and facilities into the one location, with the relocation and expansion of the library featuring prominently in commentary. Other suggestions provided by respondents included relocating and providing space for the Neighbourhood Centre, Kuranda Media Association, Council offices and local RSL.

Respondents had differing opinions on what the focus of activities supported at the Precinct were to include with the most featured responses including the development of:

- A facility that recognises, supports and provides opportunities for Kuranda's **artistic community** through the provision of artist studios, workshops, community art classes and an art gallery.
- An **indoor sports and recreation facility** in which also supports existing sporting groups that use Bartley Park (e.g. club house for rugby league).
- An **aged care facility** or residential units for Kuranda's aging population. Respondents saw the site's proximity to the centre of the village and associated facilities and services as being ideal.
- An **education/training facility** that supports a wide range of learning opportunities and needs including adult literacy programs, TAFE courses, art workshops, youth homework centre, computer classes and cooking classes.
- A **youth** facility that provides multiple educational and recreational activities for the youth of Kuranda.
- A facility that incorporates and recognises the many **cultural and historical** aspects of the Kuranda community through the development of a local history museum or interactive display.

Many people also commented on the need to integrate the Precinct with other surrounding facilities and services and to provide passive recreational spaces such as bikeways, pathways, botanical gardens, a children's playground and picnic facilities.

The Precinct is also seen by some as an opportunity to address some of the wider social needs apparent in Kuranda. Suggestions included the establishment of a men's shed, day care facility, youth centre, women's shelter and community housing.

While there were some respondents who would like to see the site developed for commercial purposes (e.g. shopping centre, resort, caravan park, tourist attraction) the majority of respondents indicated that they would like the site developed primarily for the community's benefit, with very little, if any, commercial development (apart from a cafe).

It was also noted that many of the options identified above were not necessarily seen as being mutually exclusive and that any Master Plan developed should incorporate as many compatible elements as possible.

What is most important in considering the future of the site?

It was important for the decision making framework about the preferred direction for the Kuranda Community Precinct, that the community's views on the important considerations were understood. This was also asked of the Councillors in the interviews in determining the decision making criteria.

The respondents identified the following key points:-

- The long term financial and social viability of the site and its structures.
- Ensuring that the cost of developing and maintaining the precinct does not become a burden to ratepayers.
- There needs to be community ownership and acceptance over any proposed development of the site.
- Any facilities developed should complement, and not compete with existing facilities such as the CWA Hall, Neighbourhood Centre, Recreation Centre and Amphitheatre.
- Any development of the site should plan for the future long term needs of the Kuranda community.
- Aesthetically, any development of the site should be consistent with the existing character of the town and its buildings. It should also preserve the significant historical and environmental aspects of the site.
- The precinct should not be developed in such a way that becomes a white elephant, underutilised by the Kuranda community.
- The precinct and facilities it contains should be inclusive of, and accessible to all aspects of the Kuranda community.
- The development of the precinct should be used as an opportunity to revitalise and reinvigorate the Kuranda community. It should be a vehicle for community involvement, communication and community building.
- The site should be retained as a public asset for the benefit of the Kuranda community now and into the future and not be developed for tourism purposes.
- Where possible, the structures are to be renovated rather than demolished.

Most important uses for the Kuranda Community Precinct

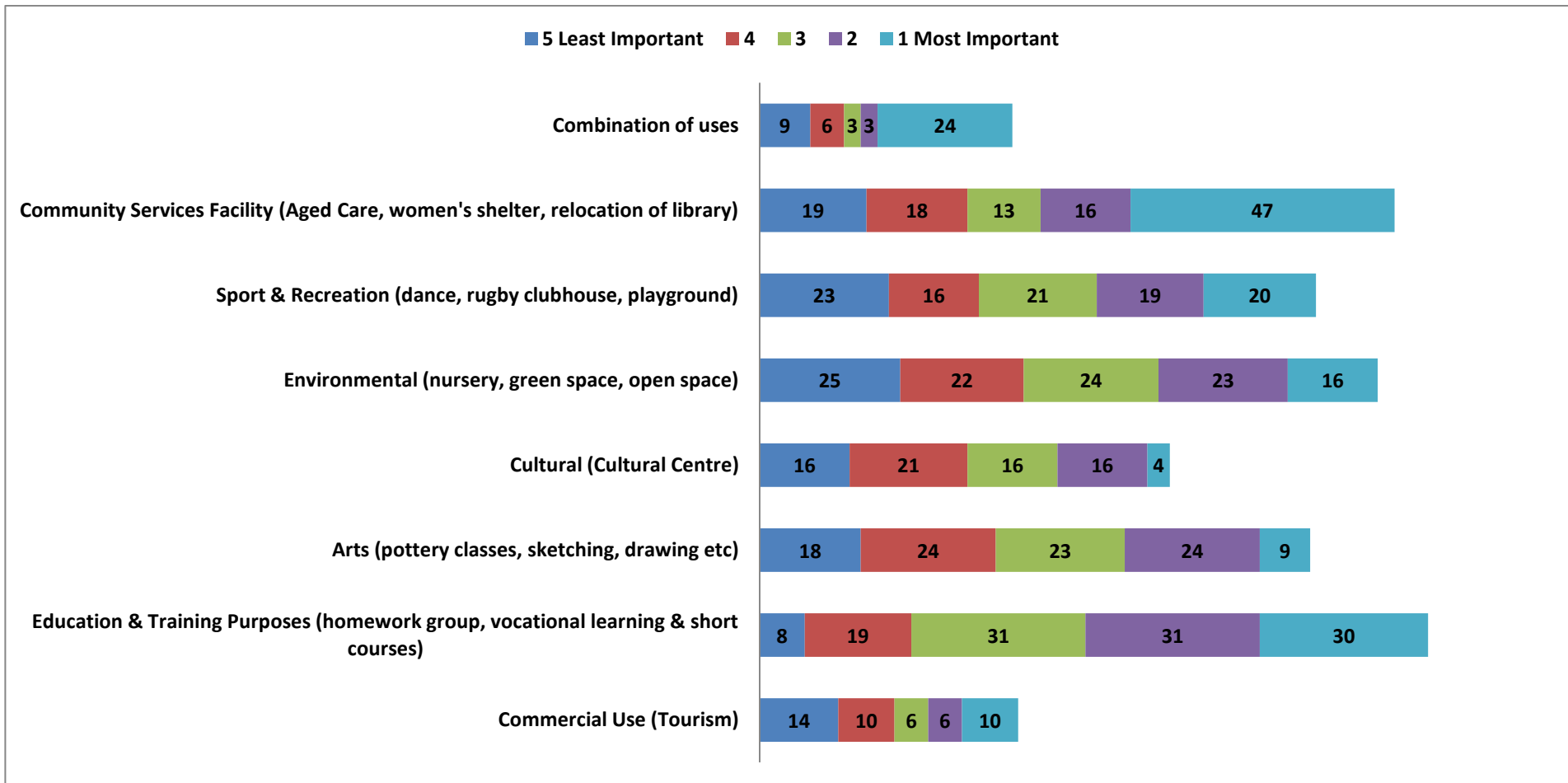


Figure 9 – Most important uses for the Kuranda Community Precinct

The graph above demonstrates that in developing a Master Plan for the Kuranda Community Precinct the community desires that emphasis should be placed primarily on creating a facility that provides opportunities for community services, education and training. Both options received the highest number of ‘most important’ votes and featured prominently in the additional comments provided. Suggestions of facilities to be incorporated into the Precinct included:

- a men’s shed;
- meeting rooms/club houses for the various community organisations;
- a Youth Centre;
- expanded medical centre including rooms for visiting medical specialists (e.g. mental health);
- Aged care facility;
- Government Offices (e.g. Centrelink and Department of Transport); and
- A town hall.

Of note, many respondents in the additional comments also positively commented on the idea of relocating and expanding the library.

The creation of spaces within the precinct which support environmental activities, sport and recreation both received a high number of overall votes; however, these votes were split almost evenly between those respondents who think the creation of such spaces are important and those who do not. Additional comments provided suggest that many people would advocate for the inclusion of sport and recreation and environmental activities into the precinct, but only in conjunction with the other uses, not as the sole focus.

Use of the precinct for arts purposes received a high number of overall votes (98 votes) although approximately 60% of respondents, not including those who gave a ranking of three (3), indicated it as being of low importance. Interestingly, additional commentary provided by respondents suggested that incorporation of art in an education and training context would be supported. Additionally inclusion of Arts uses in combination with other activities was also positively commented upon.

Of lesser concern to the community, as demonstrated by the low number of overall votes and comparatively high number of ‘least important’ votes is the development of the site for cultural or commercial uses. Comments provided indicated that respondents felt there could be room for some limited commercial use of the site to help financially support the community facilities, however, not the entire site can be developed for commercial purposes, particularly not for tourism.

The high number of “most important” votes received by “combination of uses” in addition to the comments provided demonstrates respondents preference that the Kuranda Community Precinct serve as a multi-use community hub that supports a range of cultural, environmental, educational and recreational activities for the entire Kuranda community.

Funding Strategies for the development, operation and maintenance of the Kuranda Community Precinct

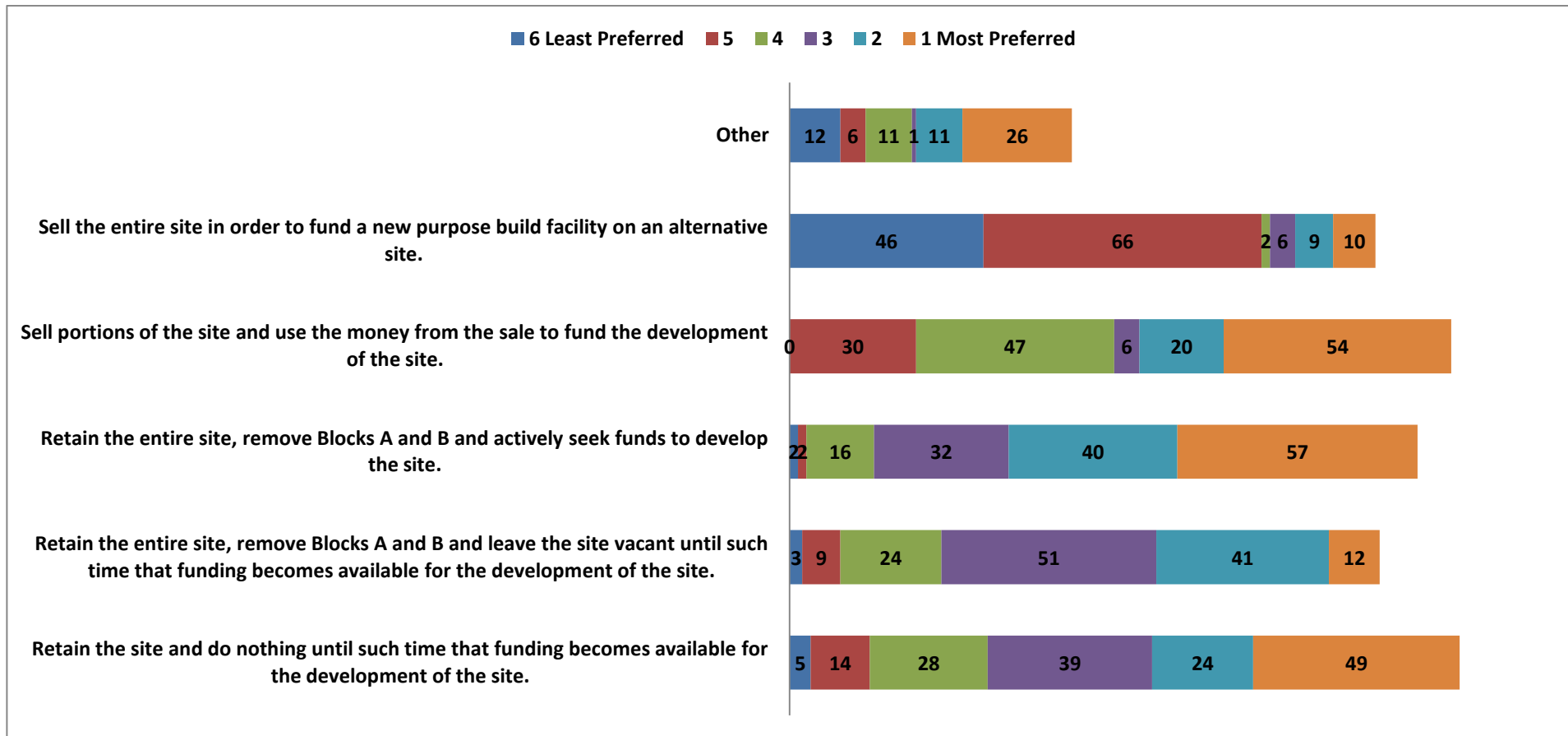


Figure 10 – Respondents preferred funding strategies for the development of the Kuranda Community Precinct

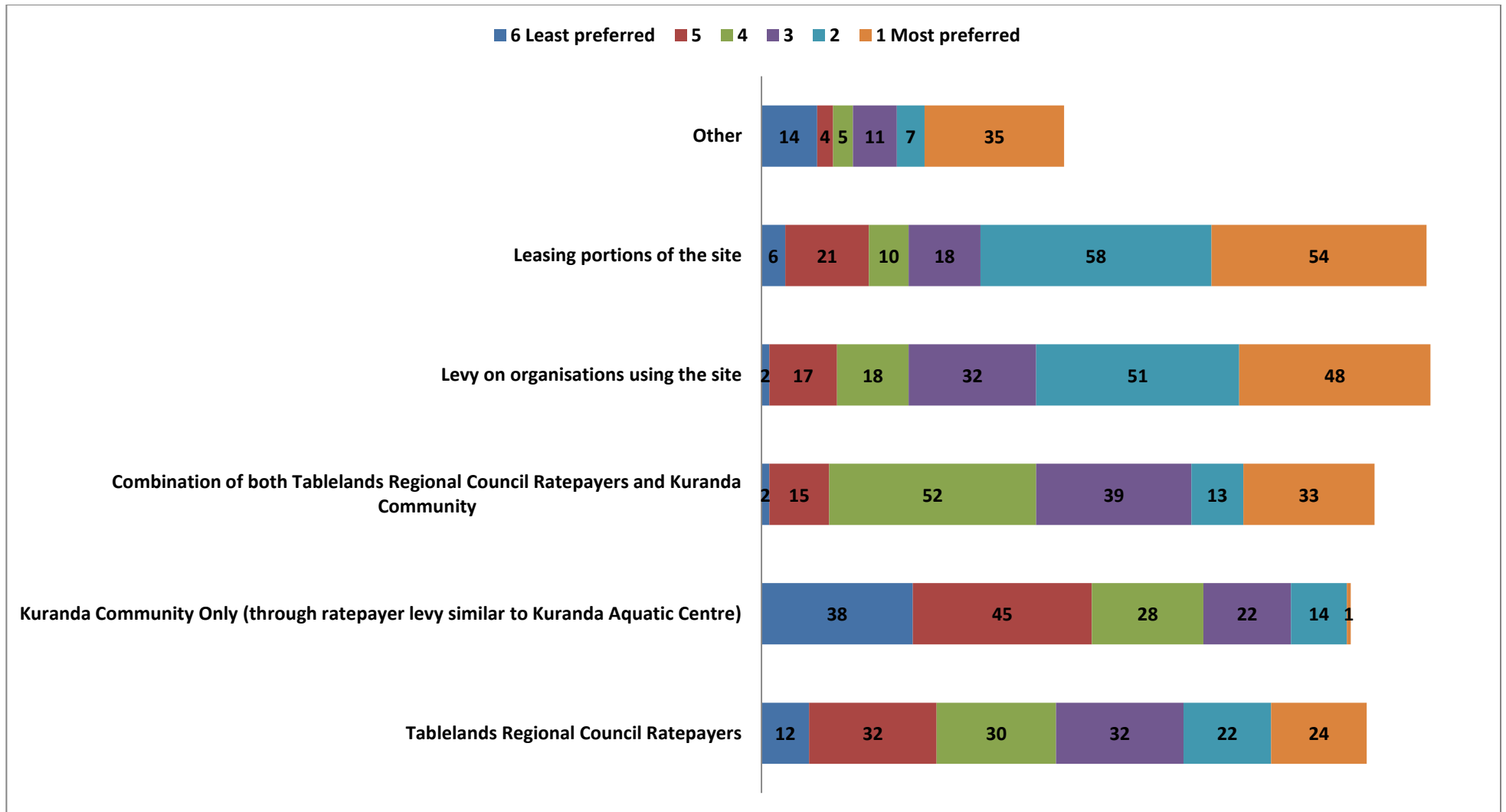


Figure 11 – Respondents preferred funding strategies for the operation and maintenance of the Kuranda Community Precinct

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicated their preference for the site to be retained and funds to develop the Precinct being actively sought via a combination of government, philanthropic and corporate grants. Further funding for the development and maintenance of the site was seen as something that should be funded primarily through levies on organisations using the site, leases over portions of the site and some funding from the Tablelands Regional Council ratepayers.

There was strong opposition to the imposition of another special levy on the Kuranda ratepayers similar to that currently in place for the Aquatic Centre. Suggestions provided by some respondents included, leasing a portion of the site to a commercial developer or developer of an aged care/senior residential living facility and using that income to prop up a community facility on a different portion of the site.

The sale of the site was seen as being the least desirable option with the sub-division and sale of small portions of the site only being considered an option where alternative funding sources have been exhausted, if at all. Many respondents indicated their preference for the site to be retained until such time that funding becomes available for development. Likewise many respondents indicate the preference to remove blocks A & B.

There was a strong sense that Kuranda, through Tourism, provided a lot of income for the District, and that as such, some of that money should be used for the benefit of the wider community.

Governance Models

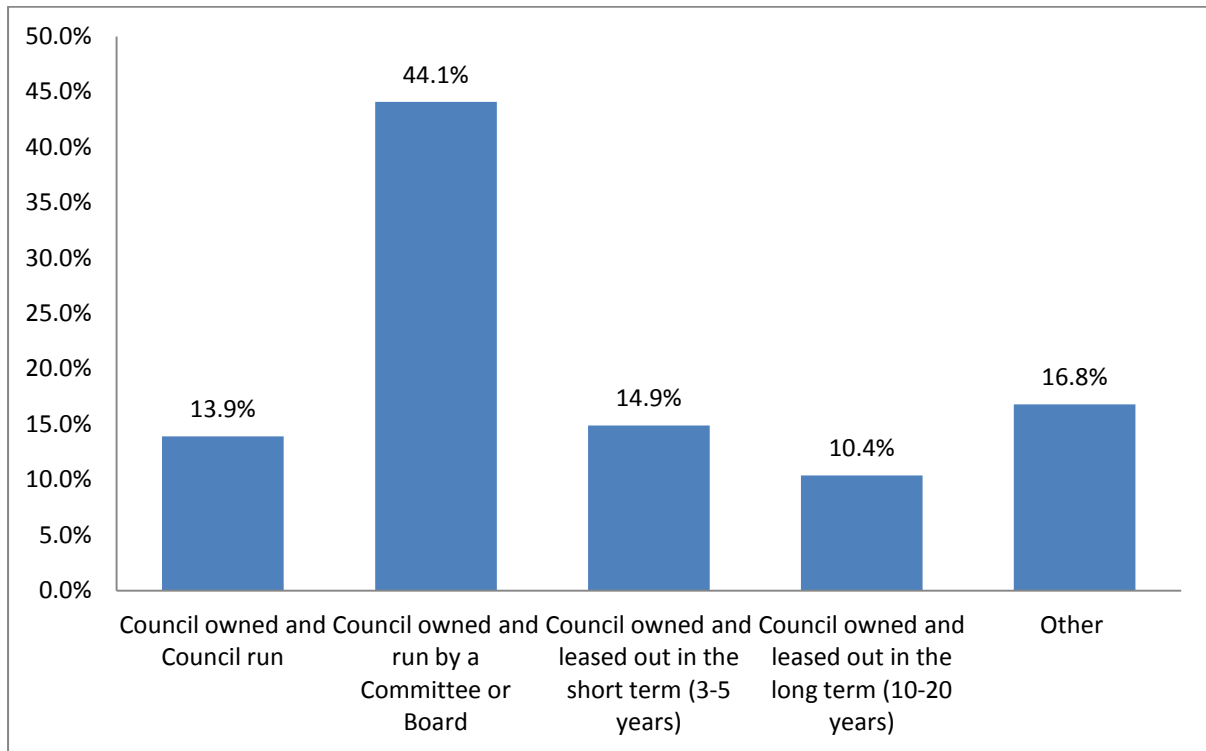


Figure 12 – Respondents preferred governance model

When asked what model of governance respondents would most like to see implemented for the Kuranda Community Precinct, the majority (44.1%) indicated their preference for a model where the site was owned by Council but run by a Committee or Board with the main aim being the long term strategic development of the project (including the search for funding).

Many respondents preferred the project to be community driven, although, one respondent did express his/her view that the Board should include some regional members from outside of Kuranda who had specialised skills that would benefit the project.

Weighting to be given to various criteria

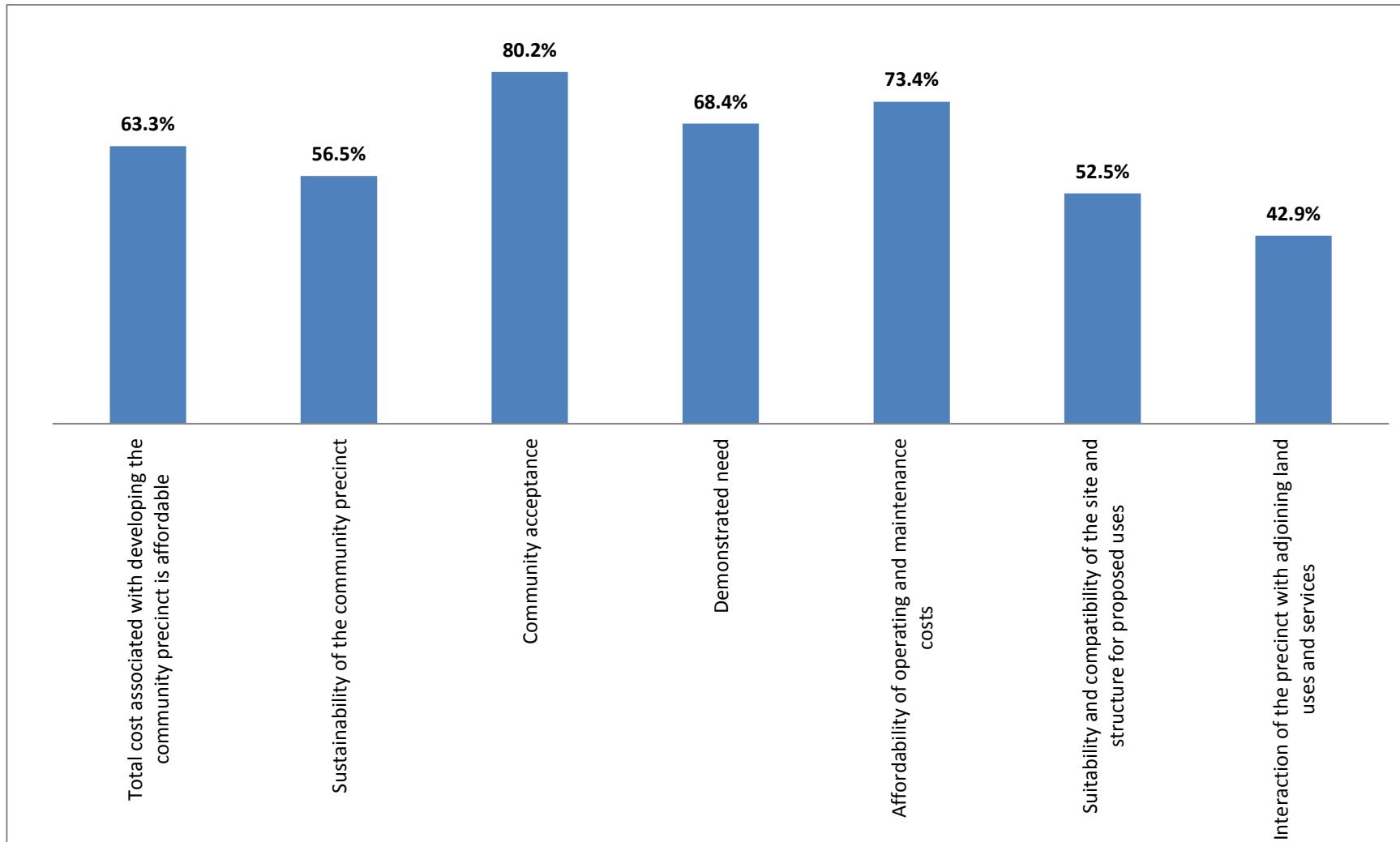


Figure 13 – Weighting given by respondents to various criteria relating to the development of the Kuranda Community Precinct

The results presented above demonstrate that survey respondents believe that primary considerations for Council in making a decision about the future of the site should be:

- community acceptance of the preferred direction;
- ensuring that the costs associated with developing, operating and maintaining the site are affordable;
- demonstrated need.

Of only slighter lesser importance to respondents is ensuring that the developed community precinct is sustainable with the site and structure being suitable and compatible with the proposed uses.

Of least importance to the survey respondents is the interaction of the precinct with adjoining land uses and services.

Interview Results

As part of the community engagement process, telephone or face to face interviews were held with 38 people including:

- the Tableland Regional Council Mayor and Councillors;
- State and Federal Members of Parliament for the Kuranda District;
- members of the Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee;
- key stakeholders representing various community organisations and groups in the Kuranda District; and
- interested community members.

What quickly became apparent throughout the interviews is that people in Kuranda are passionate about their community and environment. It is a very diverse region with many different community and business interest groups. It was obvious from the public comment that any future development of the site will therefore need to consider a broad range of community aspirations while remaining economically feasible and sustainable.

Visions for the site

Common themes for the future use of the site that emerged from discussions included that provision be made for:

- **Multi-Purpose Community Hub**

A large number of interviewees expressed their preference for the precinct to be developed into an integrated multi-purpose community hub which provides Kuranda residents with a place where they can “meet, create and collaborate”. It was identified that the hub should be inclusive of, and accessible to all aspects of the Kuranda community, providing them with opportunities to engage in a range of social, recreational, sporting, cultural, educational and ecological experiences.

Development of the site in this manner was seen by many interview participants as an opportunity to diversify what Kuranda currently has the ability to offer and to assist in the creation of a community identity, something which interviewees felt was currently lacking due to the tourism focus of the Kuranda village. Interview participants believed that if appropriately developed, a

multi-purpose community hub could increase Kuranda's social capital and foster community cohesion and connection.

Recommendations for uses to be accommodated in the precinct varied depending on the interviewee's personal interests. However, many participants indicated that many of the options identified should not necessarily be seen as mutually exclusive with any Master Plan developed incorporating as many compatible elements as possible.

- **Community Services**

Several participants expressed a desire for the precinct to act as community service hub and recommended consolidating existing community services and facilities such as the library, Neighbourhood Centre and Ngoonbi Co-operative Society into the one location.

Provision could also be made within the complex for community meeting rooms and offices for visiting professionals and government departments such as the Department of Transport and Centrelink. People thought providing these spaces could assist with the attraction of much needed additional funding and services to the region.

It was also noted by some interviewees that in considering the construction or reconstruction of any building at the site, consideration should be given to ensuring that it can serve as a Category 5 Cyclone shelter and a polling venue for the Australian Electoral Commission that complies with government standards.

- **Arts and cultural spaces and programs**

Several interviewees identified that Kuranda has the highest concentration of creative producers of any Far North Queensland community. As a reflection of this it was felt that the incorporation of spaces and programs which support this creative element of the community is an important addition to any developed community precinct. Suggestions included allowing space for artist studios and workshops where a range of art classes and activities can be carried out.

It was also identified that Kuranda has an interesting local history and a unique cultural identity which could be incorporated into the precinct through the development of a cultural centre and /or Kuranda history museum. This was seen as being something that would benefit the wider community in addition to providing more opportunities for tourists beyond the main shopping strip.

- **Learning facilities and programs**

There was strong support amongst interview participants for the inclusion of learning facilities and programs in the Kuranda Community Precinct. Numerous people commented that there is a lack of training and education opportunities available within the Kuranda district, particularly for young people following compulsory schooling.

Suggestions for learning facilities and programs to be incorporated included:

- Homework centre;
- Computer room;
- Adult literacy & numeracy programs;
- TAFE courses;

- University Courses;
- Community day-care/kindergarten; and
- Indigenous training college.

Participants recommended forming partnerships with learning providers such as Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE, James Cook University and other training providers for the delivery of courses to the Kuranda community.

- **Environmental and Passive Recreational spaces and programs**

Several interviewees commented on the need to include environmental and passive recreational spaces in the precinct which could assist in promoting community use of the facility while allowing for better interaction of the precinct with adjoining land uses (Jum Rum Creek walking track, Bartley Park, Basketball Courts, Kindergarten and Amphitheatre).

Interviewees were of the opinion that emphasis should be placed on the enhancement of the site's natural environment and beauty through the creation of a botanical or community garden with a variety of passive recreational opportunities such as walking tracks, bikeways, playgrounds and picnic facilities available throughout the space.

One of the interviewees suggested that the site could be landscaped by local environmental groups with local artists and indigenous community members providing a range of artistic and cultural features which would add to the aesthetic appeal.

- **Sport and recreation facilities and programs**

Two interview participants advocated for the inclusion of a multi-purpose indoor sports and recreation facility at the Kuranda Community Precinct. However, other interviewees in discussing the site's opportunities identified that sport and recreation facilities already in existence in the Kuranda district are underutilised and struggling to remain financially viable. The reason cited for this is that the majority of Kuranda residents travel either to Cairns or Mareeba to engage in their sport and recreational activities.

A number of interviewees suggested an opportunity for the site was the enhancement of Bartley Park through the provision of facilities that support the sporting groups already using the fields.

- **Youth spaces and programs**

A number of people noted that there are very few activities for the youth of Kuranda to participate in. It was therefore felt that any development of the precinct should include provision of spaces and programs specifically designed to engage the youth of Kuranda. Suggestions included the creation of a playground and a Youth Drop in Centre which offers a variety of social, recreational, educational and creative activities (e.g. Police Youth Citizens Club).

- **Social programs and services**

Kuranda was identified by a number of the interviewees as being a community with a range of social needs which require a variety of responses and social support services. Issues which were discussed included the high instances of homelessness, overcrowding, substance misuse, unemployment,

domestic violence and mental health issues. The development of the precinct was seen as an opportunity to address some of these issues with suggestions including provision for:

- Affordable Housing;
- Social Housing;
- A respite Centre;
- Emergency Housing;
- Men's Shed; and/or
- Men's/Women's Shelter.

Interview participants acknowledged that not all these uses were necessarily compatible or could be accommodated at the precinct at the same time. It was suggested, however that were the site to be developed for the benefit of social programs and services, a comprehensive community social needs analysis would need to be done to ascertain priorities and build the evidence required to apply for funding to develop, operate and maintain the site.

- **Conference and function centre facilities**

A couple of interviewees expressed the view that the establishment of a multi-purpose conference /function centre that is accessible to community groups, business and commercial operators would be a good opportunity for the site. It was felt this would satisfy the community's desire for a community centre while helping to ensure the facilities' financial viability by leasing out spaces for commercial use. It was thought the centre could be used to hold exhibitions and expos in addition to attracting interstate and international conferences to the Kuranda District. It was thought hosting these kinds of events will in turn create opportunities and employment for the wider Kuranda community.

- **Community kitchen spaces and programs**

Two interview participants expressed an interest in the precinct being used for the establishment of a community kitchen which can be leased out to a range of individuals and groups for both community and commercial purposes.

Barlow Park in the Cairns Regional Council area is a comparative model with Meals on Wheels using the kitchen space at Barlow Park as a base for their operations.

- **Commercial and Tourism Space**

A small number of interviewees questioning the financial viability of a community precinct suggested the site be sold to a commercial or tourism developer with money from the sale of the land then used to support existing community groups in Kuranda. It should be noted, however, that this view was strongly opposed by the remainder of interviewees.

- **Aged Residential or Retirement living**

It should be noted from the outset that many of the interviewees who discussed the precinct's potential as an aged residential or retirement living facility referred to the option as an "aged care" facility. Upon further probing, it became evident that rather than a high support care and living

facility such as the one being considered for Welcome Pocket, what interviewees meant was retirement living facility.

Quite a number of the interviewees supported the idea of building high/medium density accommodation on the site for Kuranda's aging population. People saw the site's proximity to the centre of the village and associated facilities and services as being ideal and an opportunity to reactivate and increase usage of the village centre outside the tourism hours.

It was noted that there are currently very few accommodation options available for those seniors wanting to "downsize" which has resulted in many senior residents moving to Cairns or Mareeba. It was felt that this loss of wealth, knowledge and experience has proven to be detrimental to the Kuranda community given that Kuranda's senior citizens make up a sizeable part of Kuranda's volunteers who are the driving force behind many of the community's clubs, groups and organisations.

It was also noted by several respondents' that development of the precinct for aged care was thought to be one of the more financially viable options given the site, or a portion of the site could be given to a commercial developer with money from the sale being used to support community groups and organisations in Kuranda.

One interviewee suggested holding a housing design competition for developers, builders and architects where each is provided with a long term lease over a portion of the land with the aim of designing innovative and environmentally friendly housing.

It was also suggested that the aged care could be accommodated on a portion of the site with the remainder being used for a community facility.

Key considerations for the decision making process

Interview participants identified the precinct as a valuable public asset which they would like to see retained for the benefit of the Kuranda community now and into the future. It was noted that there is very little public land available in the Kuranda village and the site presents an opportunity to plan for the long term needs of the community. There were mixed views amongst interviewees about whether selling a portion of the site to help raise funds to develop the remainder would be an acceptable option.

In reflecting on what the important criteria are that need to be considered in making a decision about the future direction of the site, the majority of interview participants identified four key criteria which they believed needed to be met prior to any development of the site:

1. The costs associated with developing, operating and maintaining the precinct need to be affordable.
2. There needs to be community ownership and acceptance over any proposed development;
3. The precinct and its facilities should complement and not compete with existing facilities such as the CWA Hall, Neighbourhood Centre, Recreation Centre and Amphitheatre.

4. A long term strategic plan that will guide the phased development of the precinct should be developed.

There was some concern amongst a few of the interviewees regarding the financial viability of some of the proposed uses for the community precinct, given that many of the organisations identified as having an interest in the site are community based and not-for-profit and therefore unable to pay more than a small contribution towards upkeep and maintenance costs. They felt the site would be more appropriately sold on to commercial developers with money from the sale being used to fund a range of community activities elsewhere in the Kuranda district.

The majority of interviewees, however, were of the belief that a precinct which accommodates a range of uses will help ensure the site is financially self-sufficient in the long term. It was noted that fees charged for utilising the facilities should assist in the maintenance and upkeep.

A few interviewees recommended including some limited commercial use to assist with the upkeep and maintenance costs. One participant indicated that if Kuranda businesses were to receive some benefit from the programs and facilities at the precinct, then there would be some justification for utilising some of the funds from the Kuranda Tourist Levy to develop the site.

Other considerations raised by the interview participants included that it was important:

- where possible to preserve the significant environmental and historical aspects of the site which include the Kauri Pines and ceramic tiles created by students;
- aesthetically, for any development of the site to be consistent with the existing character of the town and its buildings; and
- For the site and its structures to be compatible with the proposed uses.

The majority of community members spoken to also emphasised the importance of transparency in Council's decision making processes regarding the precinct. Regular updates and ongoing consultation with the community throughout the various phases of development of the precinct were seen as being crucial to ensuring community acceptance of the final product.

Youth Survey

Respondents

The Youth Survey was completed by five (5) people of which three (3) were male and two (2) were female. Four (4) of the respondents were aged between eleven (11) and fourteen (14) and one (1) respondent was aged between fifteen (15) and eighteen (18)..

Vision

When asked what they would most like to see the Kuranda Community Precinct used for, four (4) of the respondents identified that they would like to see a new and improved skate park similar to that in Cairns incorporated into the precinct. Respondents commented that the existing skate park near the Amphitheatre was inadequate and poorly maintained.

Respondents also advocated for the inclusion of a movie theatre, family centre, recreation centre and canteen.

Preferred Use

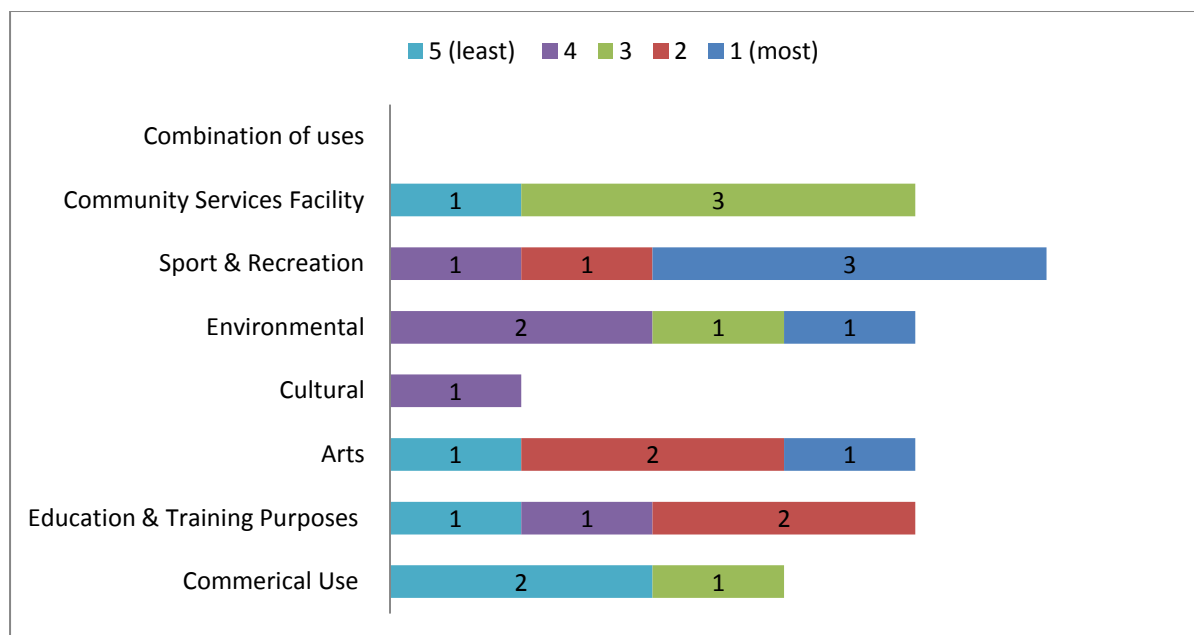


Figure 14 – Youth Survey respondents preferred use for the Kuranda Community Precinct

When asked to identify what they would most like to see the Kuranda Community Precinct used for the majority of respondents indicated Sport and Recreation and Arts programs and spaces.

Utilisation of the precinct for education, training and environmental purposes received mixed responses with only half the respondents indicating that they liked or were neutral to the options.

Use of the precinct for a community services facility received a high number of neutral (3) votes while development of the precinct for commercial use received the highest number of “least liked” votes.

Important considerations for the future of the site

Four (4) of the respondents commented on the importance of keeping and maintaining the forest and open spaces currently on the precinct. It was felt these spaces were good for outside activities and the forest was identified as being special to Kuranda.

One (1) respondent expressed a concern that if parts of the site are sold, this would mean the site would not be accessible to the wider community.

Another respondent identified that it was important for the site to be refurbished and put to use.

Kuranda District College Student Council Meeting

A meeting was held with the Kuranda District College Primary and Secondary School Student Councils on Wednesday 18 May 2011.

Student Council members were provided with a brief overview of the project and were then asked to identify what they would like to see the Kuranda Community Precinct used for.

Many of the students were of the view that any development of the precinct should include a variety of sports, recreation, arts and cultural facilities and programs.

There was strong support amongst the group for the relocation and expansion of the skate park currently located at the Amphitheatre. The current skate park was identified as being inadequate, poorly maintained and often unusable given the smashed glass bottles that are often left there.

Other suggested uses for incorporation into the precinct included:

- Police Youth Citizen Club;
- movie theatre;
- Arts classes and workshops;
- Youth Centre;
- Club house for the sporting groups that use Bartley Park;
- Indoor basketball court.

It should be noted, that the majority of students identified that many of the sport and recreational activities they currently engaged in were located in Mareeba or Cairns. Reasons for this were cited as being more competition and better facilities.

Other Research Activities

Service Mapping

Part of our research for this project included identifying the community services and facilities currently available in Kuranda. These are identified in the table below.

Organisation	Services
Neighbourhood Centre	Kuranda Family Support Program, Alcoholics Anonymous , Crisis Intervention & Support, Information & Referral, Community Development Activities, Community Education Sessions, Conflict Resolution, Mediation & Advocacy, Family Support Program, Photocopying, Fax & Computer Facilities, No Interest Loan Scheme, Broadband for Seniors Scheme, Book Exchange, Venue for Hire, Drop in Centre.

<p>Ngoonbi Cooperative Society Limited</p>	<p>Community Housing Home & Community Care (Domestic Assistance, Transport) Sport & Recreation Program (Youth activities, touch football, Elders & hydrotherapy) Administration Community Support Service (Legal Services, Financial Management, Early Childhood, Education & Training, Employment, Health) Centrelink Closing the gap programs and services</p>
<p>CWA Hall</p>	<p>Facilities include: kitchen & hall space for hire. The hall fits approximately 80 people.</p> <p>Groups currently using the site include: Council, Ngoonbi, Karate, Taikwondo, CWA craft group, Zumba, Tai Chi and Yoga.</p>
<p>Koah Community Hall</p>	<p>Small Hall that is sometimes used for local meetings. The hall fits approximately 50 people.</p>
<p>Kuranda Amphitheatre</p>	<p>Multi-purpose community arts venue. There is the raised covered mainstage for concerts and an understage has been developed as a smaller venue, catering for events attracting up to 200 patrons. This space is used for theatrical performances and workshops, a base for Focus Theatre, live music, national seminars, meetings, school discos and also dressing rooms for main stage performances.</p> <p>Close to the entrance the Top Pavilion houses kitchen and bar facilities, a small undercover stage suitable for smaller performances and its very own grassy terrace.</p>
<p>Bartley Park</p>	<p>Sports oval used by Rugby League, Touch Football and Soccer.</p>
<p>Kuranda Arts Co-Operative</p>	<p>Artist-run gallery and support organisation</p>
<p>Recreation Centre</p>	<p>Facilities include: Hunter Park, two tennis courts, Lawn Bowls Green, Kitchen, Bar, 3 Pool Tables, David Hunter Memorial Hall.</p> <p>The Hall is available for hire and can fit 60 people sitting down.</p> <p>Sports available at the centre include: junior soccer, lawn bowls, volleyball, tai chi, tennis, netball</p>
<p>Kuranda Social Justice Group</p>	<p>Kuranda Social Justice Group seeks to promote preventative intervention and supportive resolution processes to reduce incarceration, minimize unlawful behaviour, curb misuse of drugs and alcohol and promote lifelong education and improvements to the quality of life of individuals, families and the community as a whole</p>

Kuranda Aquatic Centre	8 lane 25 metre swimming pool. Children's free form pool with mushroom fountain Offers Aqua Fitness classes and Heartbeat Swim School.
Kuranda Community Kindergarten Association	Full day kindergarten program (3 - 5 yr olds) After school and vacation care (3 - 8 yr olds)
Kuranda District State College	Pre-School - Grade 12
Kuranda Library	PC & Internet Access, Photocopying & Printing, Book loan, Community information display space
Anglican Parish of Kuranda	Church Services, spiritual guidance, Welcome Pocket Community Care, Hospital & home visits, Possum Corner Op Shop
Kuranda Medical Centre	Medical practice with four GP's offering general medical services to whole population of Kuranda. Special interest in mole scanning, skin cancer, remote health and nutrition.
Horse and Pony Club	Meetings, horse sports.
Koah Sports & Social Club	2 Tennis Courts, 1 Basketball Court.
Speewah Tennis Courts	2 Tennis Courts
Kuranda Visitor Information Centre	Centre where you can obtain information about what is happening around Kuranda.

Funding Opportunities

Funding has been identified as a key challenge in any future development of the site for community use. Public sector funding for projects such as this have traditionally come from a mixture of Federal, State and Local Government funding programs. The type and amount of funding is generally dependent on the government's recognised areas of priority and need at any given time. Given the current economic climate and recent natural disasters, much of the State and Federal funding is currently being directed to development in disaster affected areas. As such, there are limited funds available for capital works such as the Kuranda Community Precinct. Two funding opportunities that are currently available include:

- **Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government - Regional Australia Development Fund (Commonwealth)**

The Regional Australia Development Fund has funding of between \$500,000.00 and \$25 million per project available to support community infrastructure projects that enhance economic and community development across Australia's regions. The Kuranda Community Precinct project will need to be aligned with one of the six priority areas for action highlighted in the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Regional Road Map to be eligible for funding. The six pillars of the Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Island Road Map are:

1. Economic Vitality
2. Sustainable Resource Management
3. Visionary Infrastructure
4. Inclusive Services and Planning
5. Empowered People through Knowledge and Skills
6. Reconstructing Regionalism

Partner funding will be expected from sources other than the Australian Government for all project grants and the projects must be "investment ready", that is ready to proceed within six months of signing the Funding Agreement.

- **Department of Local Government and Planning - Local Government Grants and Subsidy Program (Queensland)**

The Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program (LGGSP) is currently offering \$45million in funding to local governments with limited capacity to fund necessary community infrastructure. Priority is being given to projects that demonstrate an alignment with the Queensland Government's Towards Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland ambition for a stronger, greener, smarter, healthier and fairer community.

To be eligible for funding the:

- local government must demonstrate that it has a limited capacity to self-fund community infrastructure projects, as evidenced by a financial sustainability evaluation to be undertaken by the department;
- local government must deliver a project that is aligned with identified community priorities and needs, supports the ongoing sustainability of the community and enhances and protects the social, economic and environmental health of the community;
- local government must ensure funding applications demonstrate greenhouse gas reduction and climate change adaptation considerations have or will be incorporated into the construction and operational stages of proposed projects".

All Applications for funding must be received by the Department of Local Government and Planning by 5:00pm on **Friday 30 September 2011**.

Many community infrastructure programs are currently being funded through a combination of public and private sector investment. When planning and developing community facilities some councils:

- Build mixed use facilities in partnership with commercial enterprise. This can involve council entering in to an Infrastructure Agreement or contractual arrangement whereby the commercial developer agrees to build or provide funds to build community infrastructure (e.g. co-location of facilities in shopping centres, retail and commercial spaces and joint funding partnerships).
- Retain the land and lease out portions of the site to developers or interested stakeholder groups with revenue from the lease being used to fund the community facilities on the remainder of the site.
- Enter into contractual arrangements with developers where the sale of any land is attached to conditions such as housing affordability targets for residential developments or the provision of specific community services/facilities.
- Identify a mix of corporate and philanthropic sponsorship opportunities that may be available to assist with the development of community infrastructure.

Once a clear direction for the site has been developed and the types of groups and programs intending on using the site identified, further grant, corporate and philanthropic opportunities can be pursued. Opportunities which groups using the site could potentially pursue for funding include:

- Reef Hotel Casino Community Benefit Fund which provides funding for a variety of different community programs run by not-for-profit community groups.
- Regional Arts Development Fund provides grants which support professional artists, arts practitioners living in regional Queensland.
- Australia Council for the Arts offers a wide range of funding programs for Australian artists and arts organisations in all major areas of arts practice (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, community partnerships, dance, inter-arts, literature, music, theatre and visual arts).
- Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund which supports initiatives and programmes aimed at supporting Aboriginal Health, Education, Youth and Leadership, Social Justice and cultural celebration.
- Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal which provides grants of up to \$5,000.00 to not-for-profit organisation whose projects and activities offer a clear public benefit for communities living in rural and remote locations in Australia.
- Aussie Farmers Foundation offers grants of between \$15,000 to \$50,000 to not-for-profit groups whose programs and initiatives will make a difference to the health and wellbeing of Australian rural and regional communities.

Case Studies

As part of the consultation process other community precinct projects were identified for benchmarking purposes.

Maleny Community Precinct

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has recently finalised the Master Plan for the Maleny Community Precinct. The project is expected to take 30 years to complete and will cost \$73 million. The Master Plan includes provision for:

- the conservation of the heritage listed Pattermore House
- an 18-hole community golf course with a putting practice area and future shared club house / function centre
- three to four full size sports fields and a multi-purpose sports amenity building
- the protection of significant environmental areas
- a widespread network of pedestrian and cycle trail.
- an aquatic centre with 25-metre, hydrotherapy, learn to swim and toddler pools, a 250sqm gym and other amenities
- community facility land
- a large ecological style parkland incorporating rehabilitated wetlands, viewing areas, sculpture trail, children's play area, picnic facilities and walking trails
- three residential area

There are seven different stakeholder groups with an interest in operating on the site and Council has offered to lease out portions of the site to those groups upon them presenting a viable business case to Council. Each group is responsible for the development and maintenance costs on their portion of the site.

Sections of the site being developed by Council will be funded through the sale of some of the site as residential lots. Further funding may be sought from State and Federal grants.

In terms of governance models, the Maleny Community Precinct is run by Council, but advised by an Advisory Committee made up of representatives from the seven stakeholder groups and two independent representatives. Given Council owns the land, the Committee's role is advisory only.

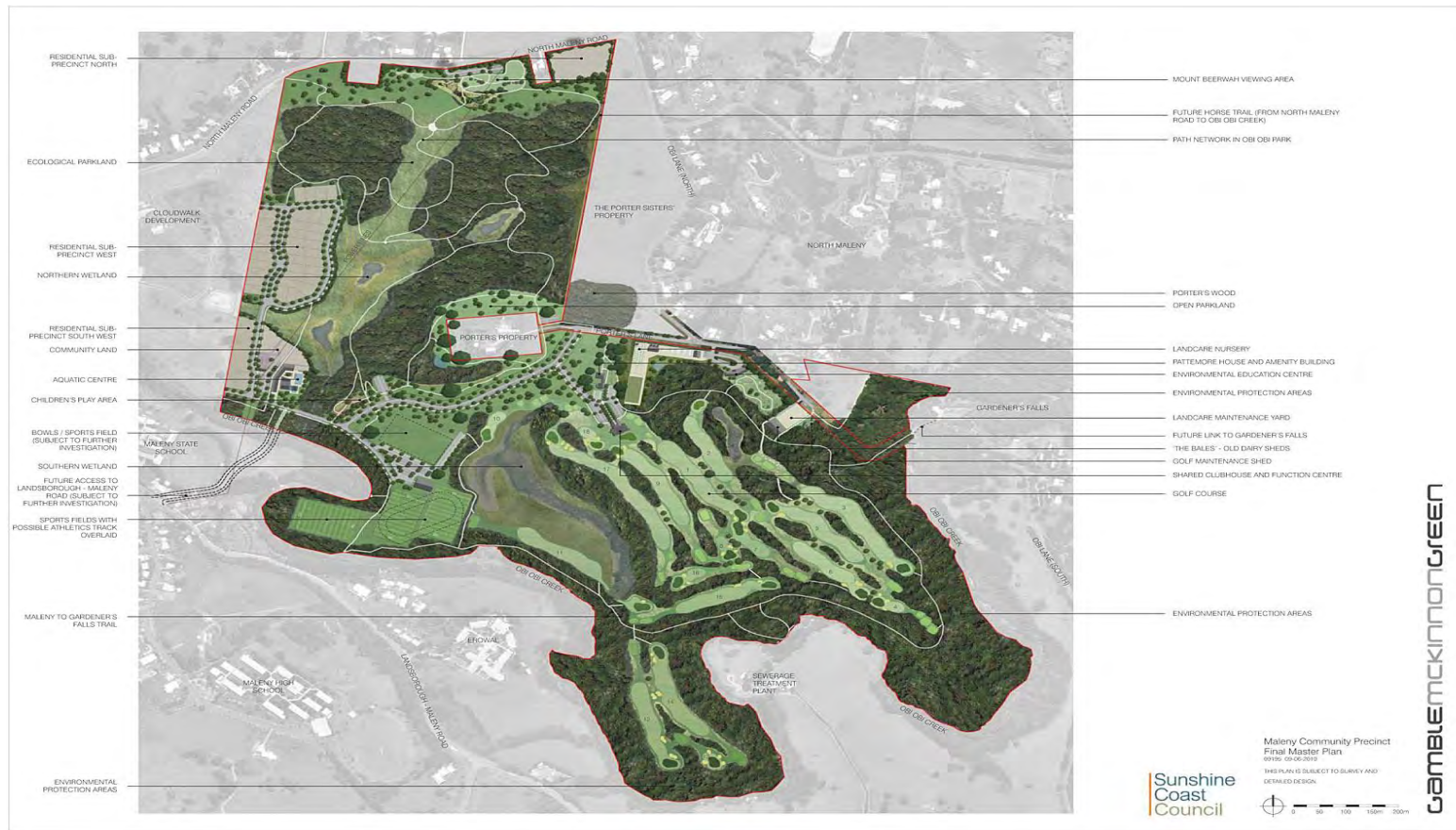


Figure 15 – Maleny Community Precinct

Waubra Community Hub

The Pyrenees Shire Council in Victoria has developed the Waubra Community Hub which is an integrated multi-purpose facility. The Hub was developed alongside the town's recreation reserve so that it could provide supporting facilities to the clubs and groups who utilised the fields (cricket, rugby and netball) in addition to providing the community with a space where they could engage in a range of activities. Facilities incorporated into the Hub include change rooms, toilets, a community kitchen, bar, art area, storage sheds, two community spaces, a Pre-School and a playground.

The Waubra Community Hub was identified during community consultations for the Waubra Community Action Plan as being a priority development for the Waubra area. The community noted that the existing community facilities, an old mechanics hall constructed in the early 1900's, a recreation reserve building constructed in 1988 and the community kindergarten were inadequate and required significant work to bring them up to an operational standard and meet community needs. Of particular concern to the community and existing user groups was the inadequacy of existing toilet facilities and change rooms, lack of disability access, the absence of disabled toilets and the inadequacy of the existing community kitchen and meeting rooms.

During the community consultation process undertaken in the development of the Hub, Council consulted with existing users of the Waubra recreation reserve and community facilities to identify levels of usage and the specific development requirements each of the groups had for the new facilities. Potential users of the new community facility were also identified and consulted with to identify their specific needs.

The Hub was funded through a mixture of Federal, State and Local Government funding which was supplemented by corporate donations and fundraising activities of the community, groups and organisation intending to use the site. There were also groups within the community who volunteered their time and resources in the development of the site. Voluntary contributions included the landscaping, playground equipment, netball courts, rainwater tanks and road works.

The Pyrenees Shire Council also sold the existing town hall which was no longer fit for community use and used the money from the sale to apply for a further matched funding from the State Government.

Funding was received from the following groups:

- Regional Development Victoria (\$300,000.00)
- Victorian Community Support Fund was used to fund the kitchen, meeting rooms and toilets (\$250,000.00)
- Federal Government Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program funding (\$169,000.00)
- Sport and Recreation Victoria funding was used to build the change and first aid room (\$60,000.00)
- Country Football and Netball Program funding was used to redevelop the netball court (\$60,000.00)

- Children Capital Fund (\$100,000.00)
- Pyrenees Shire Council (including the sale of the hall) - (\$260,000.00)
- Community Wind Farm Fund (\$107,000.00)
- Bendigo Bank (\$5000.00)

The Community Hub is governed by a committee made up of representatives from all the user groups.



Figure 16 – Waubra Community Hub

Upper Coomera Community Hub

The Gold Coast City Council is currently in the process of planning and developing the Upper Coomera Community Hub. The community hub will be an integrated facility that will include the library, multi-purpose community centre, aquatic facility, public plaza areas, walking and cycling tracks and passive recreational spaces.

The entire project is expected to cost approximately \$20 million.

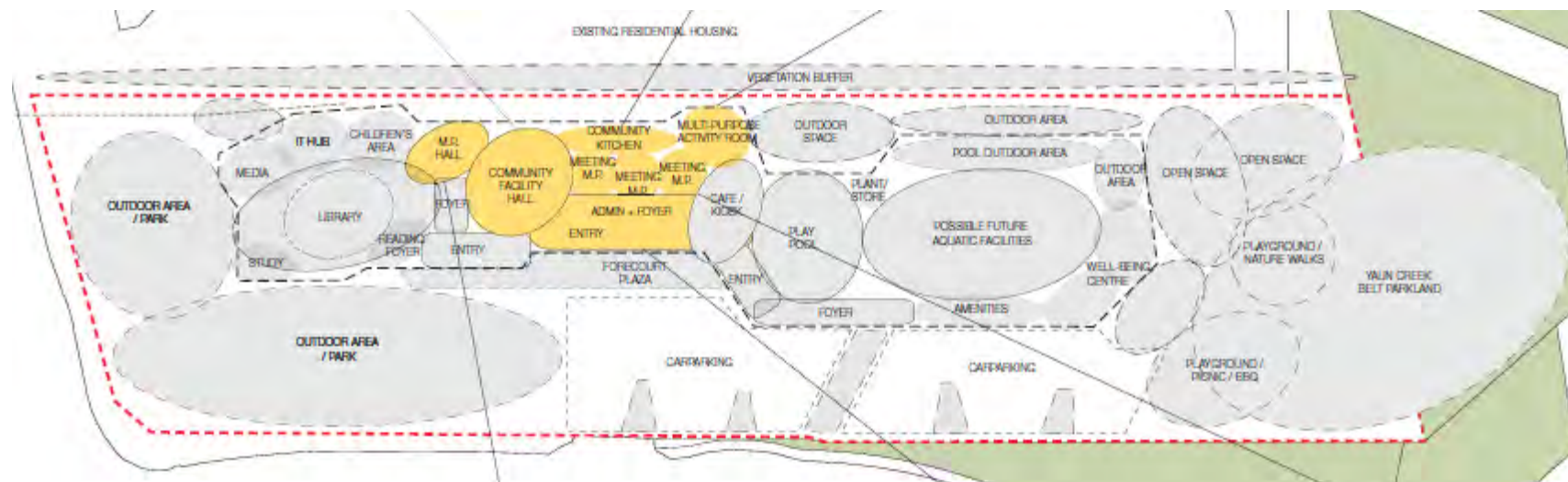


Figure 17 – Upper Coomera Community Hub

Churchill and District Hub



Figure 18 – Churchill and District Hub

The Latrobe City Council in Victoria has recently finalised the construction of the Churchill and District Hub. Key elements of the Hub include:

- The redevelopment of the old Town Hall building
- A Neighbourhood Centre
- A men’s shed
- A Child Care Centre
- Pre-School
- A public library
- Community internet access and information services
- Multipurpose community spaces
- A community kitchen
- A service centre for Government agencies
- Open community space

The Hub is a \$4.75 million development; with Latrobe City Council contributing \$1.96 million; the Victorian Government's Department of Planning and Community Development \$1.05 million, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development \$500,000, and the Department of Human Services \$310,000; the Australian Government \$800,000; and Monash University \$135,000.

The Community Hub governance model is two tiered. There is a Board of Management which provides overall strategic direction for the Hub. It is made up of five community members and the local councillor. The second tier is the Operational Committee which oversees the day to day operation and coordination of the Hub. This Committee is comprised of regular users and tenants of the site who work in partnership to take collective responsibility for Hub's operations.

Redlands IndigiScapes Centre

The Redlands Indigiscapes Centre was developed by Redlands City Council to act as an environmental education centre. The centre includes 14 demonstration gardens which only feature plants native to the Redlands area. The centre also features nature walking tracks, passive recreational spaces such as picnic and BBQ facilities, an environmental information centre, a tea garden café and conference facilities which can seat 100 people theatre style. Visitors to Indigiscapes can also participate in a number of guided tours which include bird watching, Bush Tucker and general information tours. Displays, workshops and events are also regularly held at the centre.

Sale of Commercial Properties in Kuranda

Research surrounding the number of commercial property sales in Kuranda district for the last five (5) years reveals that there has been very little movement in the commercial real estate market with only seven (7) commercial properties having been sold in the Kuranda village. Further analysis of the data reveals that since the purchase of the old Kuranda Primary School in December 2007 only two (2) commercial properties have sold in the Kuranda village with the last being a 554m² shop on Thongon Street which was sold for \$350,000.00 in April 2009.

This suggests that Council's idea of selling portions of the precinct to fund the remainder of the development on the site is problematic and unlikely to result in the sale of the land for a fair and realistic price in a short timeframe.

Relevant Community Planning Research

The Tablelands Regional Council has been engaging with the Kuranda community as part of its community planning process. Some of the results that have come out the community planning engagement activities support the priorities and proposed uses identified throughout the Kuranda Community Precinct consultation process.

Planning for the Kuranda Community Precinct was identified as a priority in a number of the engagement activities undertaken by Council and when considering the results as a whole, it appears that the Kuranda Community Precinct is considered to be a community asset which can be used to address a number of the top priorities and issues identified within the community.

A Kuranda Community Planning workshop identified Kuranda's top (5) priority issues as being:

1. More appropriate housing infrastructure & support services - More aged accommodation & support services, Indigenous Housing, Emergency accommodation;
2. Improved transport infrastructure & services. Public Transport, improved roads, improved access to Cairns on Kuranda Range;
3. More employment & training opportunities required;
4. Greater support of local Arts & Culture; and
5. More youth venues, events & healthy activities.

An indigenous community survey which was completed by 240 people identified the following as top priorities:

1. more employment and training opportunities, greater support of local arts and culture, more affordable and appropriate;
2. Greater support of local arts and culture;
3. More affordable and appropriate housing;
4. Emergency and crisis accommodation; and
5. More youth venues, events and health activities required.

Kuranda District Voting Stalls held in April and May 2011 were attended by 280 people who identified the following as being top priorities for the Kuranda District:

1. More aged care accommodation & support services for seniors (83 votes);
2. More youth facilities, events and healthy activities required including a revamped skate park (70 votes);
3. More affordable and appropriate housing (63 votes); and
4. More employment and training opportunities required (45 votes).

Additional Submissions

A number of additional submissions were received throughout the consultation process from members within the community. In some cases, these submissions were followed up with a telephone interview and the ideas and comments made in both the interview and the submissions have been incorporated into the relevant results section for each question. A brief summary of each submission is provided below.

- The submission from Mark Freeman outlined his concerns surrounding the history of the Kuranda Community Precinct development process and made a number of recommendations for consideration within the project.
- The submission from Fred Nooravi which recommends:
 - Using C Block for the Council officer, library and community activity centre;
 - Redeveloping C Block into a conference centre;
 - Demolishing A block and combining it with the areas of Lot 1,2,3 and 4 into a botanical garden. The botanical garden should include cultural and artistic features which have been created by local artists and the indigenous community.
- The submission from Elizabeth Horsburgh which suggests the inclusion of a commercial kitchen for use by community groups and small businesses in addition to artist workshop and workroom spaces.
- Submission from Tracy Rusch Centre which recommended looking at the Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies in Melbourne as a possibility for the site.

Full details of the submissions can be viewed in Appendix 19.

PHASE 2 - Options

Deliberative Forum #1

The Deliberative Forum was held on Wednesday 18 May 2011 and was attended by twenty-one (21) people in addition to the project and consultant team.

Forum participants were initially asked to write down on separate pieces of paper their hopes and fears for consultation process surrounding the Kuranda Community Precinct. The pieces of paper were then collected and redistributed amongst participants for discussion.

The hopes identified by the group revolved around their desire for the consultation process to result in a financially viable future direction for the site which is based on community consensus.

The three main fears identified by participants included concerns:

- that Council's final decision has been pre-determined irrespective of the outcomes of the consultation process;
- that there are too many diverse groups with an interest in the project who may not be able to co-operate and can potentially derail any progress; and

- about lack of funding to develop the site.

Following on from this activity, forum participants were presented with the results and feedback from the earlier engagement activities. Based on those results and their own knowledge and experience, participants were then asked to consider three possible options for the future of the site and to identify:

- what they liked about the option;
- what they didn't like about the option; and
- what they felt it would take to make the option successful.

The three options that were being critiqued included:

1. **Single Sector Use** which was described as a development of the site which benefits a single sector or issue in the community. This could include facilities, programs and services solely for use by the youth, indigenous or aged sectors of the community or alternatively for art and cultural, environmental or possibly tourism purposes;
2. **Accommodation Use** which was described as a redevelopment of the site to create accommodation options such as an aged care facility, social and/or affordable housing and a backpackers hostel; and
3. **Multi Use & Shared Use** which was described as a redevelopment of the precinct for use by compatible groups to benefit a number of people across the community and to achieve social, environmental, cultural and recreational outcomes.

Details of the participant's views regarding the three options are outlined below.

Single Sector Use

What participants like about this option

Forum participants highlighted that this option could be a real windfall for a deserving sector and would simplify the processes involved in developing and operating the facility. There would be no resource conflicts between the various groups using the site and this would allow for the focused and targeted delivery of services and activities. Further, a single sector focus was also seen as being easier to market and profile which was seen as being beneficial in attracting funding and sponsorship.

What participants don't like about this option

Participants expressed concerns that a single sector focus is not the best possible use of the site given its proximity to the centre of the town and the opportunities this presents for the wider community. The development of the site for a single sector would also not be truly reflective of the community's aspirations for the site as identified by the research. Further, the exclusion of certain sectors would likely result in further fragmentation and conflict in the Kuranda community.

Participants also identified that it would be difficult to develop a set of criteria acceptable to the wider community to decide which sector should benefit from the opportunity to develop the site.

Another issue raised is that the development of the site for a single sector would mean that an alternative facility would need to be sourced to provide for the other community organisations and services currently looking for a space from which to run their activities.

Several participants also commented that they had difficulty seeing a single sector use being financially viable and sustainable unless the site was developed for commercial or business purposes, something which many participants indicated would “trash” the community’s aspirations for the site.

What participants feel it would take to make this option successful?

Participants noted that the single sector use option is likely to be most vulnerable to community dissatisfaction and anger given the community’s aspirations for the site. Therefore, in order to make any development of the site for a single sector successful, it will be necessary to foster community support for the project by:

- communicating and making transparent the reasons for deciding on one sector over another;
- providing the sectors who miss out with an alternative facility from which to run their activities and services;
- ensuring that any money received in developing the site is used for the benefit of the Kuranda community.

Several people in the group commented that in order to make a single sector use successful, the benefited sector would need to have a sustainable funding stream and be properly managed. It would also require good leadership and big injection of government or developer funding.

Accommodation Use

What participants like about this option

Forum participants saw the development of the Kuranda Community Precinct for accommodation purposes as an opportunity to address an identified social need in the Kuranda District as well as a chance to reactivate the town centre. Many participants commented that a lack of suitable housing across all sectors of the community is a growing problem and that use of the site for aged care housing, social housing, affordable residential units or an indigenous training college all presented good opportunities.

Using the site for accommodation purposes was also seen as being one of the most financially viable and sustainable options with participants noting that funding to develop the site could be obtained either from government or private developers depending on the focus. Participants did, however, specify that if the site was sold to private developers; money obtained from the sale would have to be used to support community organisations and activities in the Kuranda region.

Of further benefit, it was noted that the development of the site for accommodation purposes would release the community from further involvement in, and responsibility for the project.

Some participants commented that developing the site for accommodation purposes did not necessarily have to exclude other uses and suggested supporting accommodation on a portion of the site and a community facility on the remainder. An aged care facility or residential training college were seen as being particularly conducive to this form of arrangement.

Other benefits of this option commented on included that it:

- is a better utilisation of the site given it will operate 24 hours a day; and
- is an opportunity to grow the population of Kuranda.

What participants don't like about this option

Participants' primary concern with developing the Kuranda Community Precinct for accommodation purposes is that it denies use of the site by the wider community, something which many participants believe the community desires. Further, several participants noted that an increase in the population of the town will put pressure on existing community services, many of which are already struggling to keep pace with existing demand. Another site close to the centre of town would need to be sourced to provide space for some the uses currently being considered for the precinct.

Concerns were also raised that the site is not big enough to support accommodation and that land for accommodation can be more appropriately found elsewhere and doesn't have to take up "prime" land in the centre of town. Another question participants had was how accommodation use could integrate with sporting groups that currently use Bartley Park.

Participants particularly did not like the idea of using the site for the development of a resort or backpackers hostel, indicating that it would be a duplication of facilities already available in the Kuranda region and would create competition for other commercial operators who are already struggling. Further, it would just reaffirm community's sentiment that Kuranda is a "tourist town" and has little provision for the community.

What participants feel it would take to make this option successful

Participants expressed the view, that like with the single sector use, the success of this option would depend on the Tablelands Regional Council properly communicating to the wider community their reasons for developing the site for accommodation use, rather than for the benefit for the entire community as previously indicated.

Further, participants, noted that depending of the focus of the accommodation use, external funding would need to be sourced either from Federal or State Government or from a commercial developer.

Concerns were raised by several participants that the buildings in their present state would not meet building codes and regulations necessary for accommodation use and therefore, would need to be demolished and the site completely redeveloped.

Multi-Use & Shared Use

What participants like about this option

Forum participants felt developing the Kuranda Community Precinct using a multiple and shared use approach would meet the largest number of community expectations surrounding usage of the site. A wide range of community wants and needs could be accommodated while still allowing for growth as the community's expectations and priorities change and funding becomes available for various projects.

Further, participants expressed the view that developing the site to benefit multiple sectors would assist in creating a community hub for Kuranda residents where they could access and participate in a wide range of cultural, social, environmental and economic activities. It is also seen as an opportunity to enhance social connection and cohesion within the Kuranda community which some participants felt was lacking given the tourism rather than community focus many feel the centre of Kuranda has.

The relocation of the library to the precinct was seen as being an anchor project that can be used to activate the entire precinct.

Positive comments were also made regarding the diverse funding opportunities which a multi-use facility could generate from across all levels of government, business, private and commercial groups.

The precinct and the spaces and programs it will contain were also seen as an opportunity to activate the Kuranda village and generate employment for the Kuranda residents.

Other preferences for the kinds of facilities which could be accommodated on the site include:

- Youth facility
- Conference and training centre

What participants don't like about this option

Participants cited the competing priorities and agendas of the various sectors and groups interested in using the redeveloped Kuranda Community Precinct as the biggest challenge to the success of a mixed use community hub. It was felt that the diverse range of groups, if not properly managed, could complicate the governance and operation of the precinct in addition to the co-ordination of any funding. It was also noted that not all groups interested in using the site are likely to be accommodated within the precinct and this could lead to further conflict within the community.

A few participants identified that the organisations and community groups likely to be interested in using the precinct are likely to be not-for-profit and therefore unable to pay market rent for use of spaces. This could in turn impact the precinct's financial viability, something which a few participants viewed as being the primary consideration for any development of the site.

Another concern raised is that developing the precinct into a mixed use community hub increases the potential for duplication of, and competition for, existing services and facilities in the Kuranda District such as the Kuranda Recreation Centre and the Amphitheatre.

What participants feel it would take to make this option successful

A long term strategic plan, good governance model, effective management and community ownership over the precinct were all seen by participants as being crucial to the success of a mixed use community hub. Participants noted that in order to ensure community ownership over the developed facility it is important for the Tablelands Regional Council to continue to consult with the community throughout the various phases of development.

Co-operation between the diverse groups and organisations using the site was also cited as being necessary.

One participant identified that it would be beneficial to conduct a community needs study for the Kuranda District, the results of which could be used to advocate for funding to address any issues identified.

Anchor projects such as the relocation of the library and neighbourhood centre were seen as being good opportunities to activate the site, attracting both users of the facility and additional programs and services.

To avoid conflict in the community, it was also felt that a clear set of criteria will need to be developed to determine which groups can be accommodated at the site. These criteria will need developed in consultation with representatives from the community and be made transparent to the wider community.

Governance

Following discussions about the three options developed for the future of the site, forum participants were asked to consider the governance requirements of any facility developed from an ownership, strategic and operational perspective.

The majority of participants indicated their preference for any facility developed to be owned by Council with strategic governance to be provided by a Committee or Board which is run subject to a constitution. It was suggested that the Board or Committee be made up of council representatives, elected community members representing the various sectors within the Kuranda community (e.g. youth, cultural, sports, environmental and arts) and two (2) indigenous representatives. There was also some suggestion that the Board or Committee should include a position for a paid specialist to assist in the provision of advice about strategic direction.

Participant's specified that in addition to providing strategic direction, the Board or Committee's role includes the identification and co-ordination of funding surrounding the development and maintenance of the precinct.

In discussing who should be responsible for the day to day operations of the precinct, participants expressed their preference that the precinct be run either by Council or a paid manager/administrator located on the site.

It was also suggested that a management committee made up of representatives from Council and organisations leasing space within the precinct assist in the operational governance of the precinct.

Community Survey #2

Interview and survey results from Phase 1 of the consultation process demonstrated strong and diverse views surrounding the kinds of uses to be incorporated into the precinct, with some respondents advocating for a single sector use, while others preferred a multi or shared use approach. It was therefore necessary in the second community survey to separate out the community’s views on a single sector use and multi-use before then looking at preferences surrounding the different types of uses.

Respondents

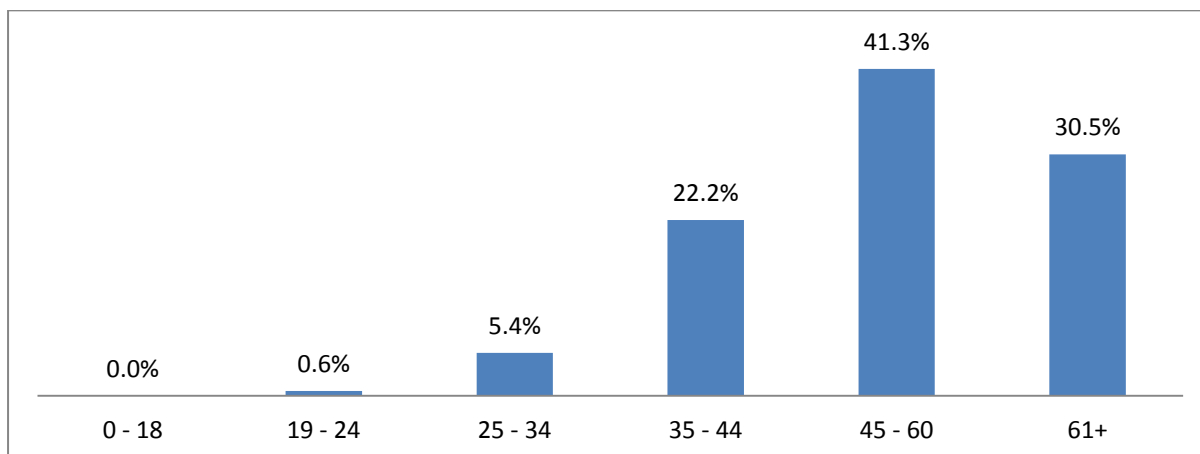


Figure 19 – Age of Community Survey #2 respondents

The second community survey distributed throughout the Kuranda District was completed by 172 people of whom almost sixty-six percent (66%) were female. As shown below, the overwhelming majority of respondents (71.8%) identified themselves as being 45 or older. The younger generation of Kuranda residents had very little representation with 9 respondents (5.4%) aged between 25 and 34, 1 respondent (0.6%) aged between 19 and 24 and no respondents aged between 0 and 18.

Diversity

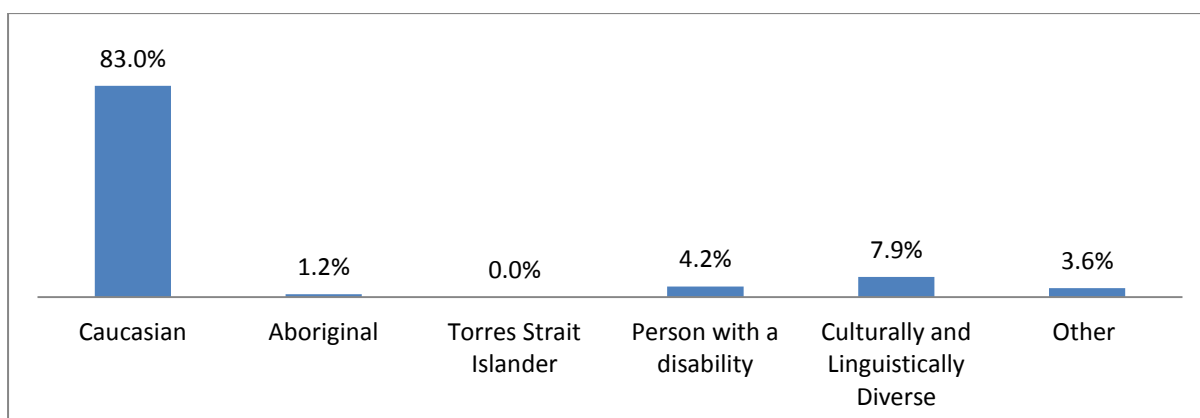


Figure 20 – Diversity of Community Survey #2 respondents

The majority (83%) of respondents indicated that they are Caucasian. The remainder identified themselves as Aboriginal (1.2%), Person with a disability (4.2%), culturally and linguistically diverse (7.9%) and other (3.6%)

Household Status

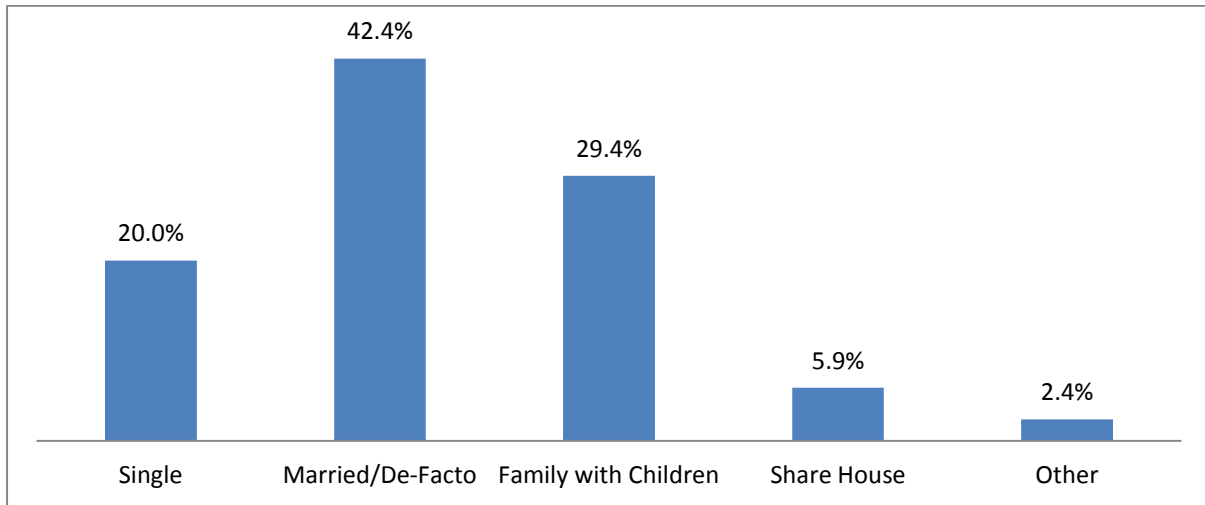


Figure 21 – Households of Community Survey #2 respondents

Almost half (42.4%) of survey respondents were married or in a de-facto relationship, 29.4% were families with children, 20% were single and 5.9% lived in a shared house.

Overall Preference of Survey Respondents

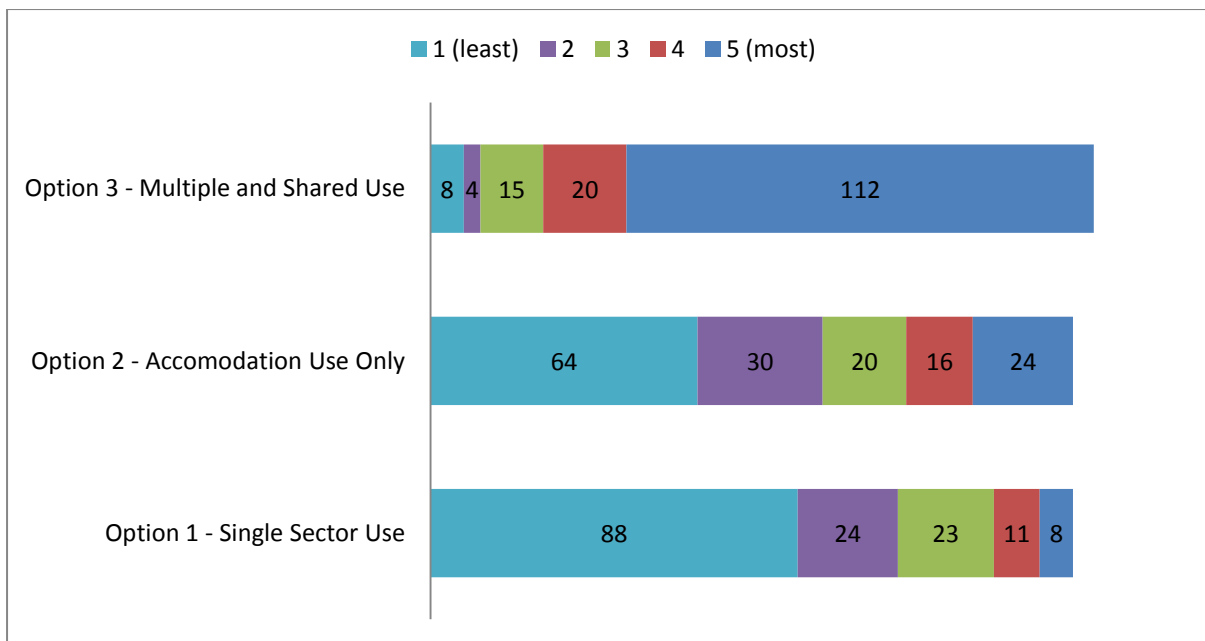


Figure 22 – Respondents overall preference of the type of use to be accommodated at the Kuranda Community Precinct

The table above overwhelmingly demonstrates that in developing a Master Plan for the Kuranda Community Precinct, it is the community’s preference that the site be developed to act as a mixed use community hub which provides spaces and facilities for use by compatible groups to benefit a number of people across the community and to achieve social, environmental, cultural and

recreational outcomes. Approximately 83% of respondents indicated that this was their preferred option.

Respondents' least liked option, as indicated by 72% of respondents, is the development of the site for programs and services that benefit a single sector or issue in the community. Similarly, development of the precinct primarily for residential use was also not popular with 61% of respondents voting it as their least liked option.

Feedback on Option 1 – Single Sector Use

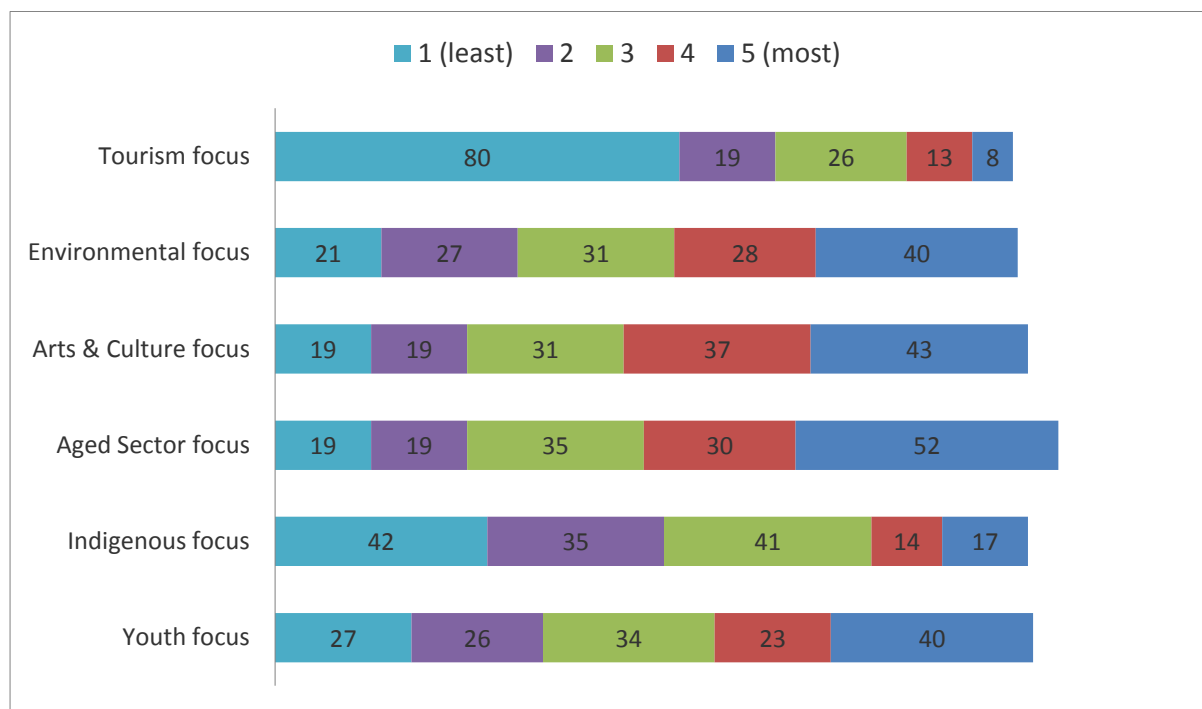


Figure 23 – Respondents preferences for the focus of a single sector use

When asked to rate possible focuses for a single sector use of the Kuranda Community Precinct, an aged care focus and arts and culture focus proved to be most popular with respondents, followed closely by an environmental focus and youth focus. Of least concern to the community as evidenced by the high number 'least liked' votes each option received is the development of the Kuranda Community Precinct to solely benefit Tourism or the indigenous community.

Other single sector uses advocated for by respondents in the additional comments included:

- Sport and Recreation Focus;
- Education Focus;
- Commercial Focus; and
- Medical Focus (e.g. respite centre, disability support centre, hospital, expanded Medical Centre).

Feedback on Option 2 – Accommodation Use

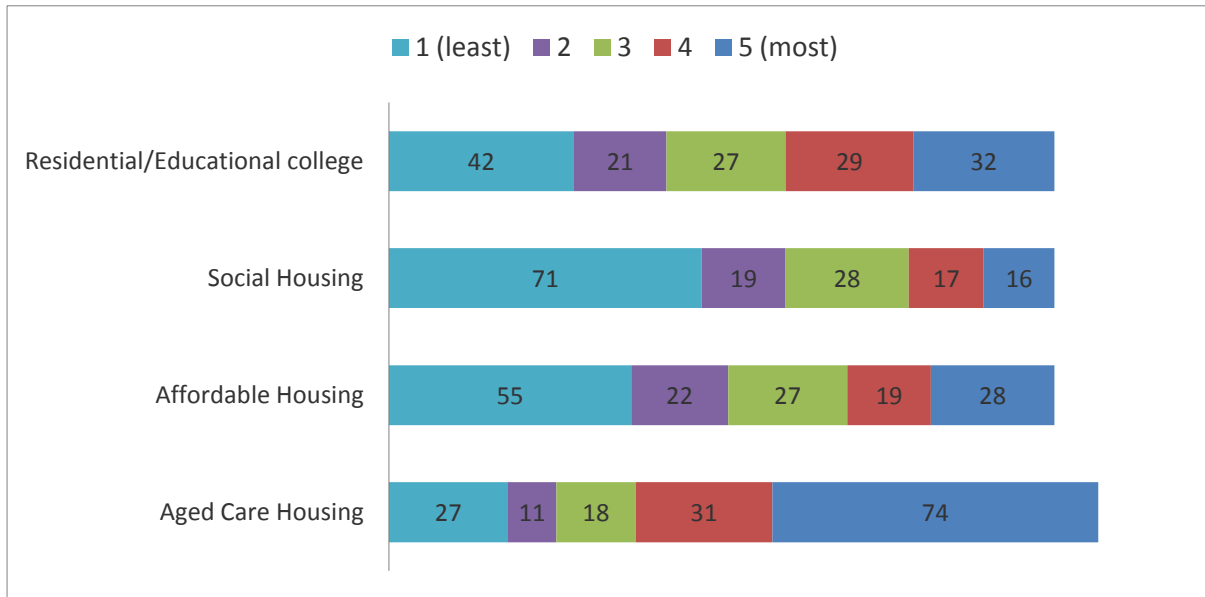


Figure 24 – Respondents preferences for the focus of an accommodation use

The table above demonstrates that there is strong support within the community for the provision of aged care housing at the Kuranda Community Precinct. Approximately 65% of respondents indicated that were the site to be developed for accommodation purposes, aged care housing would be their preferred focus.

Following aged care housing, the next most popular option for the redevelopment of the site into accommodation use is provision of a residential/educational college with 61 respondents indicating that they like this option.

Affordable and social housing were the least preferred options with more than 50% of respondents who answered the question indicating their dislike of the options and approximately 18% of respondents indicating that they didn't like, or dislike the options.

Feedback on Option 3 – Multiple and Shared Use

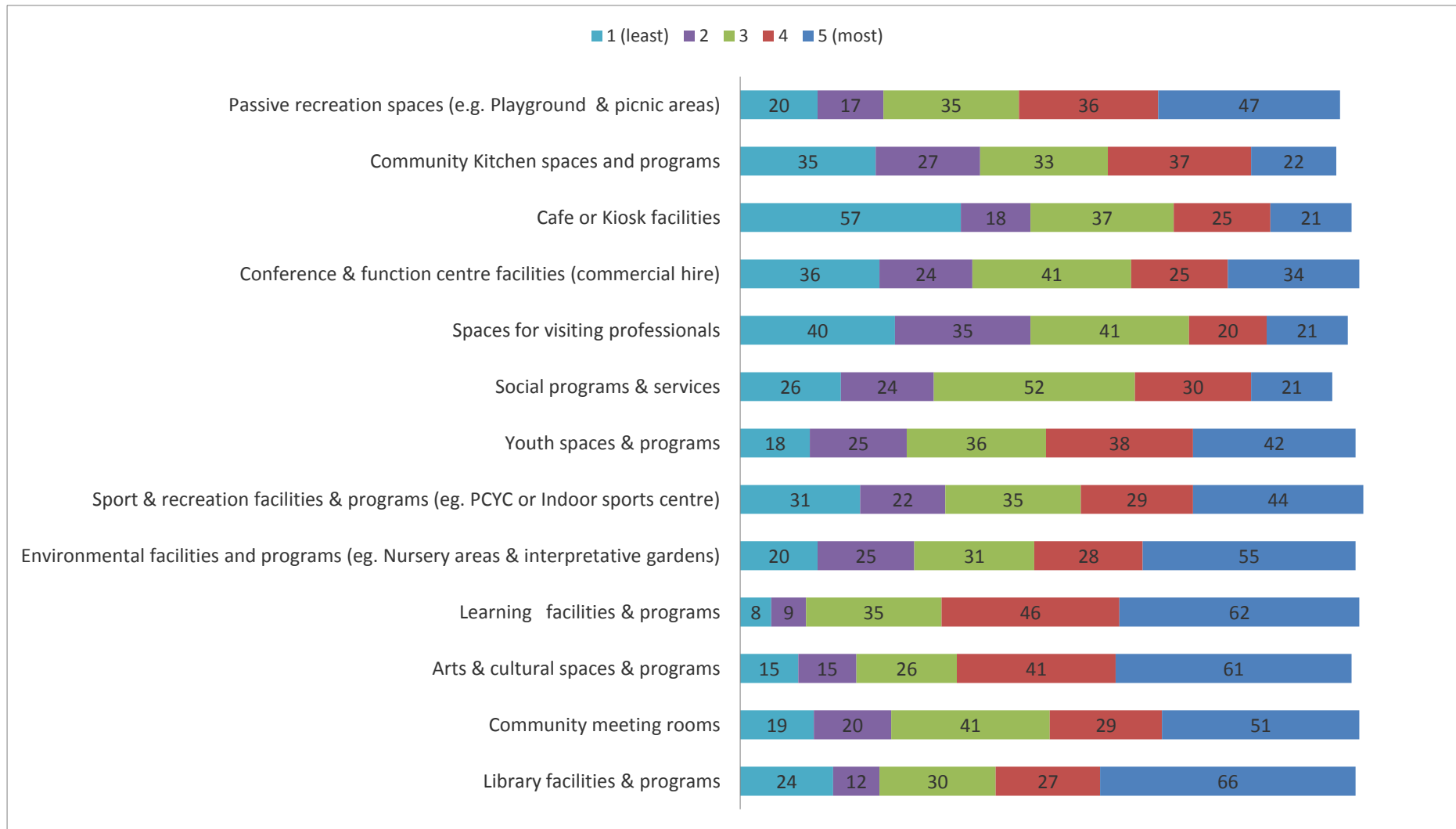


Figure 25 – Respondents preferences for the focus of a multiple and shared use facility

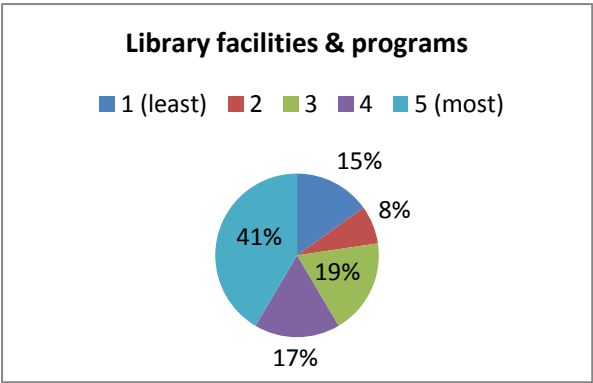


Figure 32 – Library Facilities & Programs

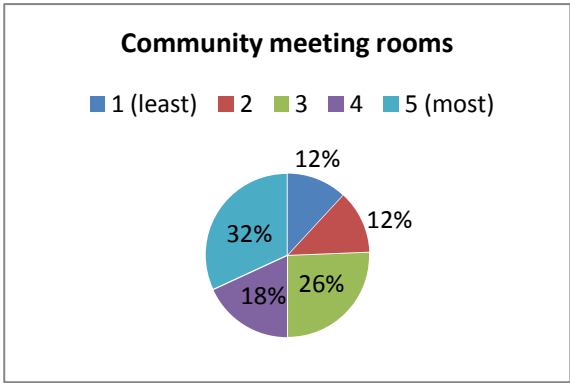


Figure 33 – Community meeting rooms

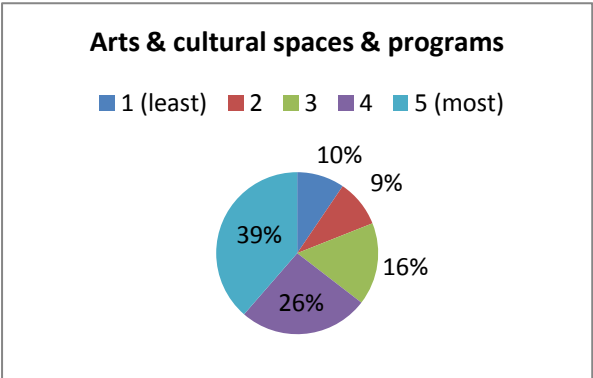


Figure 31 – Arts & cultural spaces & programs

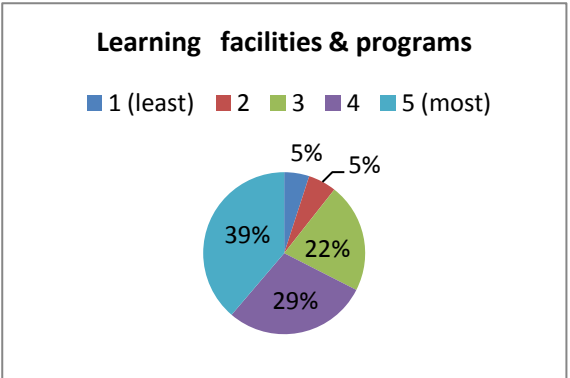


Figure 30 – Learning facilities & programs

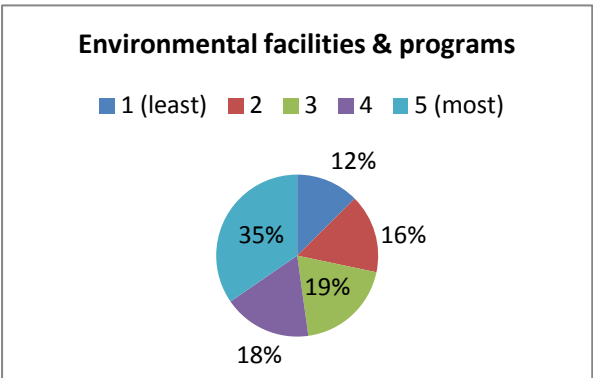


Figure 29 – Environmental facilities & programs

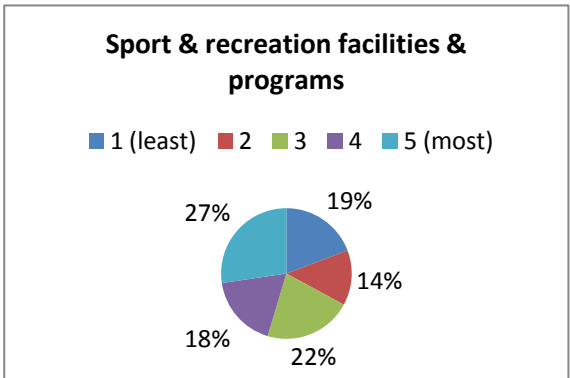


Figure 28 – Sport & recreation facilities & programs

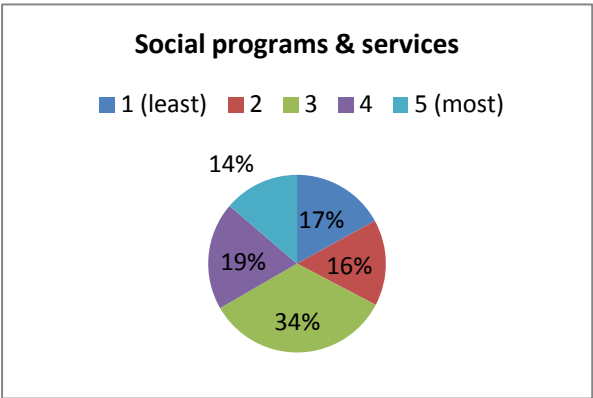


Figure 27 – Social programs & services

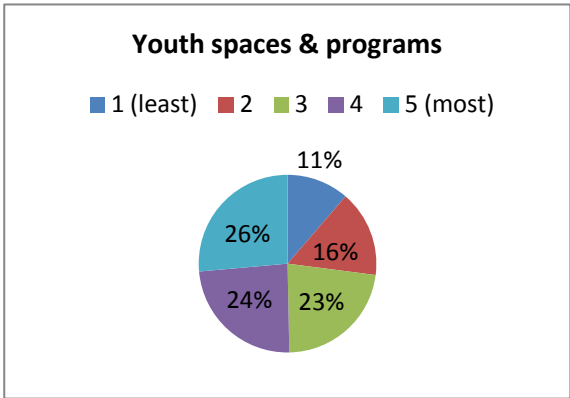


Figure 26 – Youth spaces & programs

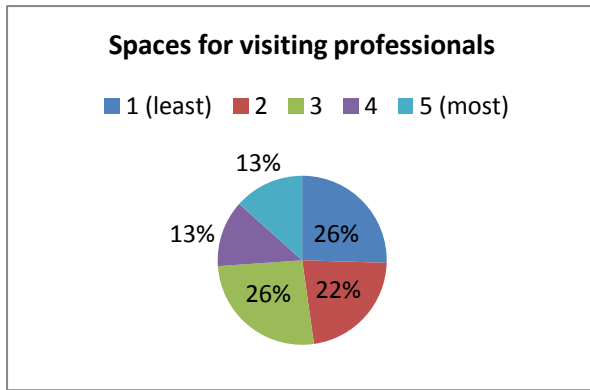


Figure 37 – Spaces for visiting professionals

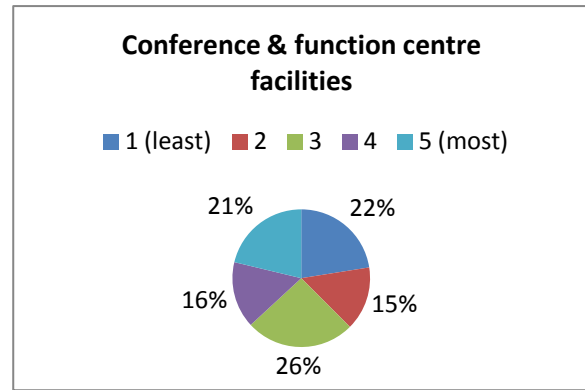


Figure 36 – Conference & function centre facilities

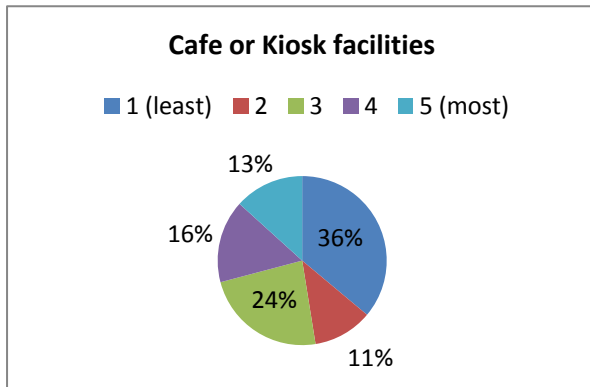


Figure 35 – Café or Kiosk facilities

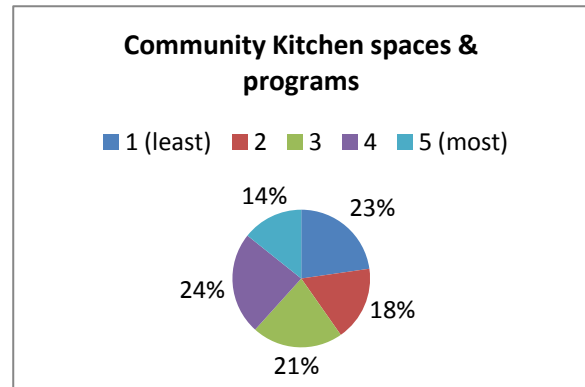


Figure 34 – community kitchen spaces & programs

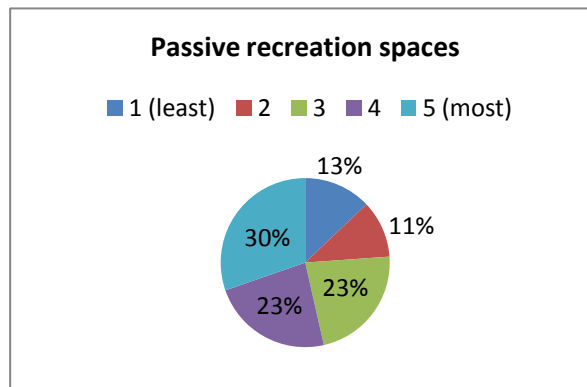


Figure 38 – Passive recreation spaces

There is strong support for the incorporation of arts and cultural spaces and programs, learning facilities and programs and library facilities and programs into any shared use facility developed. Library facilities and programs had the highest number of ‘most liked’ votes (41%) while learning, arts and cultural facilities and programs had more than 60% of respondents indicating they preferred these as options for use.

Similarly, provision for community meeting spaces, passive recreation spaces, environmental programs and facilities and youth programs and facilities all also rated quite highly with approximately 50% of respondents indicating that they liked the uses.

Receiving mixed support from respondents is use of the precinct to support:

- sports and recreations programs and facilities;

- community kitchen spaces and programs;
- conference and function facilities; and
- social programs and services.

All the above options uses had a high number of neutral votes with the remaining votes split almost evenly between those that liked the uses and those that didn't'.

The uses respondent's least liked included café and kiosk facilities and spaces for visiting professionals. Both options had a high number of neutral votes and approximately 47% of respondents indicating they did not support the use.

Additional comments provided recommended:

- provision of space for TAFE;
- upgrading the existing sporting field (Bartley Park) and amenities;
- inclusion of an Cultural and Historical museum
- provision for a visiting Council Service Centre
- integration of the site with surroundings through passive recreational activities including walking tracks.

Council Workshop

A workshop was held with Tableland Regional Councillors on Thursday 7th July 2011 in order to present some of the outcomes from the community engagement activities and other research conducted in Phase 1 of the project. The three (3) options for possible uses of the site were also presented and discussed by the Councillors.

The discussion highlighted the following points:

- General support for the concept of Multiple and shared use;
- General support for relocation of the library to the Kuranda Community Precinct;
- Continued interest in removal of Blocks A & B;
- Continued interest in possible sale of parts of the block but concern expressed for very poor turnover of sale of commercial property in Kuranda;
- Interest in commercial elements would only be for very small scale so as not to create competition for existing businesses in Kuranda;
- Recognition that it is important to not duplicate existing services and facilities in Kuranda e.g. Recreation Centre and CWA;
- General support for a governance model that involved joint management between Council and community representatives.

Councillors expressed their keen interest to see the final results of the community engagement activities and other research.

PHASE 3 – Future Direction

Deliberative Forum #2

The second Deliberative Forum was held on Monday 8 August 2011 and was attended by twelve (12) people in addition to the project and consultant team.

The results of the second survey and the preferred direction were presented to forum participants in a power point presentation. Forum participants were able to make comments and ask for clarification throughout the presentation.

Overall, there was strong acceptance of the preferred direction by the majority of forum participants who commented that that the top seven (7) priorities for a multi-use space as evidenced by the second survey results were all compatible uses which could be accommodated in the precinct.

There was some concern by a few participants that the arts and cultural spaces in the preferred direction would create competition for the Amphitheatre. It was, however, explained that the intention was for performing arts to continue to be supported at the Amphitheatre while the space at the Precinct was intended more for workshop spaces to facilitate the creative and visual arts. There was strong support for this with participants seeing the use of the Precinct in this manner as an opportunity to activate the surrounding spaces such as the Amphitheatre and Bartley Park.

There was also some commentary surrounding the provision for a commercial kitchen in the preferred direction with participants concerned about the difficulties likely to be associated with the management of groups using the space, licensing requirements and health and safety requirements.

There was one couple who expressed their dissatisfaction with both the survey results and preferred direction. The couple questioned the financial viability of the preferred direction and felt that a survey with only 176 responses cannot be truly representative of the Kuranda community.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The results of the comprehensive community engagement activities and other research have been integral to addressing the requirements of the brief to determine a future direction for the Kuranda Community Precinct. Outlined below is the summary of the findings in relation to:

- Decision considerations
- Overall vision for the Kuranda Community Precinct
- Compatible Usage
- Redevelopment of the site and specifically
 - The community's views towards selling portions of the land in order to fund some redevelopment
 - The community's views towards the removal of the buildings known as Blocks A and B (refer to map)
 - Possible uses for Block C
 - How the site can become self-sustaining
- Funding strategies
- Governance
- Future Engagement

Decision Considerations

During the consultation phases both community members and Councillors were asked their opinion about what factors should be considered in making a decision about the future use of the Kuranda Community Precinct. The following represents a combination of what was expressed by both the community and the Councillors:

- The long term financial and social viability of the site and its structures, ensuring that the cost of developing and maintaining the precinct does not become an excessive burden to ratepayers;
- There needs to be community ownership and acceptance over any proposed development of the site;
- Any facilities developed should complement, and not compete with existing facilities such as the CWA Hall, Neighbourhood Centre, Recreation Centre and Amphitheatre;
- Any development of the site should plan for the future long term needs of the Kuranda community and not just the current context;
- Aesthetically, any development of the site should be consistent with the existing character of the town and its buildings. It should also preserve the significant historical and environmental aspects of the site;
- The precinct should be developed in such a way that is responsive to need and is inclusive of, and accessible to all aspects of the Kuranda community;
- The development of the precinct should be used as an opportunity to revitalise and reinvigorate the Kuranda community. It should be a vehicle for community involvement, communication and community building;
- The site should be retained as a public asset for the benefit of the Kuranda community now and into the future and not be developed for tourism purposes;
- Where possible and financially viable, the structures are to be renovated rather than demolished.

Vision

The future vision for the Kuranda Community Precinct as expressed by the community members and Councillors included:

- A Precinct that becomes a **community hub** providing the Kuranda region's residents with a place to access community services and engages activities that enhance social connection. There was a strong view that the redevelopment of the site would help to activate the Village again and inject life into a township so that it is more of a Village than a tourism destination;
- A Precinct that is a **multiple and shared use** space that provides and supports recreational, sporting, cultural, educational and ecological experiences while preserving the significant and historical aspects of the site. There was a strong view that the Precinct be a series of spaces for all ages and cultures;
- A Precinct that is **integrated with other surrounding facilities** and services including Bartley park, Amphitheatre, JumRum walking track, the basketball court and kindergarten;
- A Precinct that involves the **relocation of the existing library** and development of a number of learning spaces for community and commercial use.

Multiple and Compatible Usage

The results of the survey and discussions with key stakeholders in the first Deliberative Forum overwhelmingly supported the concept of a multiple and shared use facility that supported a number of sectors and needs across the community. This was in comparison to a single sector approach and a residential only approach despite there being strong opinion for an aged care facility (residential) and social housing.

A multiple and shared use approach requires both careful consideration of compatible uses and an appropriate governance structure. Outlined here are some of the preferences expressed for types of use as well as considerations for compatibility.

The results of the surveys identified strong preferences for a large number of potential uses of the spaces both within the buildings and the outdoor areas. However these results were also considered in the context of existing facilities and services in the Kuranda region and adjusted to conclude on some recommended uses that were not going to be in competition with existing providers. It is also anticipated that there would be a mixture of permanent and casual users and so the recommended uses include:

1. Relocated library & customer service centre as the main “anchor” user group. This move may enable the staff of the library to also fulfill the role of site manager creating the coordination role for the other potential users both permanent and casual;
2. As extension of the existing library services the development of learning spaces incorporating computer rooms and mini-conference facilities. The conference facilities proposed include the capacity to provide technological support that would separate it from the kinds of uses currently experienced at both the CWA and Recreation Centre. It is also envisaged that the mini-conference facilities could be suitable for corporate groups seeking a nearby space for a “retreat” in an environmental setting;
3. Art workshop spaces that compliment the amphitheatre performance and rehearsal spaces. It is envisaged that these spaces be “wet floor” enabling activities that including the visual arts activities¹;
4. Youth friendly spaces that encompasses both indoor and outdoor areas such as gazebos, graffiti wall and web/tech kiosk spaces ;
5. Community administration hub as an extension of the library spaces that provides for community groups to fulfill some of the administrative activities including word processing and secure storage of file material. This hub could operate on a paid membership basis;
6. Community kitchen area developed in the old tuck shop space enabling community groups to use it for food preparation, training courses, lifeskills development and some small commercial use (there is interest from a cake making business). There will need to be arrangements in place to manage shared use however these are not insurmountable with an appropriate governance structure in place;

¹ *The Amphitheatre group announced recently that they had been approved to receive significant and long term operational funding which will provide greater capacity for their activities.*

7. Outdoor recreation areas including interpretative gardens and trails linking the site with the nearby Bartley Park, Jum Rum walking trail, Amphitheatre, Sky Rail and the Village centre. Depending on the decisions made about Blocks A and B, at the very least the student made tiles under Block A be preserved as a commemorative space that could form up as part of some community gardens if the Block A were to be demolished.

Compatibility of uses would need to consider:

- Hours of activities both time of day and duration;
- Impacts of activities in terms of scale and noise;
- Supporting infrastructure requirements such as car parking, lighting, power (Phase three power) and information technology requirements;
- Capacity to work collaboratively with other users;
- Preparedness to enter into a Shared Use arrangement.

Once Council has determined a resolution for the future development of the Kuranda Community Precinct an Expressions of Interest process can be initiated that determines:

- Interest in the use of the Precinct;
- Full details of the intended use including types of use, times and duration of use and intended audience;
- Full description of how their intended use is compatible with the overall vision for the Precinct and complies with the Multiple and Shared Use Agreement (to be developed);
- Financial viability of the user group and their capacity to contribute to the Schedule of Fees as determined by Council;
- Full details of their governance and relevant insurances.

Those groups that have already expressed interest in the Precinct should be advised directly of the future directions for the Precinct, terms of possible use and an invitation to use the Precinct provided they can demonstrate alignment with the vision and intended use as described above.

Redevelopment of the Site

The aim of the project had some very specific objectives in relation to determining the community's views about removal of some of the existing building and potential sale of some of the blocks within the entire site. The results of the first survey highlighted some mixed views on both of these issues. To support the survey results and the specific aims of the study some additional research was undertaken in relation to previous sale history of commercial properties in the Kuranda area (refer p. 50).

The results of the survey showed strong opposition towards selling the entire site (refer Figure 10). Commentary on this issue also highlighted that there is very little "community" land available for development and future provision. When considering the other options and combining the scores for most preferred and the next two (ie, ratings of 1, 2 and 3 combined) the results showed more interest and a greater preference for Retaining the entire site, removing blocks A and B and actively seeking funds to develop the site (86.5% of respondents). However it should be noted that there were a significant proportion of respondents who favoured retaining the site and doing nothing until such time that funding becomes available for development of the site.

The down side of this option is that it would leave the site looking unattractive and in some ways inaccessible when encouragement of the remainder of the site was being pursued. Perhaps a middle ground is to retain blocks A and B for a brief period (up to 12 months) to explore possibilities of redevelopment funding from identified sources and if not remove the blocks and keep clear as passive recreation space until options of further development come to light.

Therefore it is our recommendation that:

1. Council retain all of the site as Council owned;
2. Retain blocks A & B and seek funding to redevelop for community hub purposes for a period of up to 12months, and
3. If there is little opportunity for external funding in the short term, remove blocks A and B while retaining the tiled wall and pillars for commemorative purposes;
4. Seek expressions of interest for leasing out of the Pre-school building and if no interest as previously, then consider this building being used for arts spaces due to its alignment with the Amphitheatre further along the road;
5. Promote integration of the site with Bartley Park and Amphitheatre through pathways and some interpretative signage and or public art.

Funding Strategies

If the above recommendations are supported then funding options to support the Kuranda Community Precinct could include a combination of federal and state levels of funding for the capital development specifically:

- Regional Development Australia funding under the themes:
 - Economic Vitality (learning communities concept)
 - Inclusive Services and Planning (multiple and shared use concept)
- Dept Local Government & planning (subsidies) particularly for the relocation and upgrade of library services

Other sources of funding for operational aspects of the Kuranda Community Precinct could include:

- Council allocations for existing services and associated maintenance (library);
- Council allocations for some additional services specifically coordination role for management of the site;
- User pay contributions on the basis of organisations either leasing parts of the spaces or using them on a schedule of fees and charges as ratified by Council;
- Possibility of funding from external sources by any organisations intending to occupy part of the spaces available.

It should be noted that research into other case studies confirmed that facilities such as Kuranda Community Precinct are completely self sustaining and will require some level of subsidy from Council sources.

Governance

Both the engagement activities and other research identified a strong preference for the facility to be governed by a combination of Council and community under a two (2) tiered approach:

- Council owning the Precinct with an Advisory Committee established to provide strategic advice on the staged development of Kuranda Community Precinct; and
- Operations of site to be managed by on-site Council staff (library) and input through a “tenant’s group” that oversees the day to day operations and coordination of activities at the Precinct.

Future Engagement

The community engagement and other research activities generated a significant level of interest in the project with feedback in the first Community Survey indicating that the consultation activities were appreciated. Respondents expressed their appreciation for being provided with comprehensive information about the background of the project and an opportunity to have their say on the future direction of the site. This is in direct contrast to the situation where in October 2010 parts of the community expressed strong discontent with not having had a fair opportunity for input.

There has also been an expressed wish that ongoing communication with the community about the developments of the Kuranda Community Precinct be continued. It is therefore recommended that:

- The Kuranda Community Precinct Advisory Committee continue to meet and give input to Council on aspects of the proposed developments and that this commence in a short period (within 2 months) following Council’s resolution of this Project Report and its recommendations;
- The Kuranda Community Precinct Community Newsletter continue to be provided on a 2 monthly basis;
- Contributions to the Kuranda Paper continue through the Councillor’s Column or a dedicated story wherever possible;
- Wherever possible Open House Displays or Display Stands depicting significant development milestones for the Kuranda Community Precinct be used to keep the community informed about the progress of the site.