



# Expression of Interest – About the Opportunity

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Flinders Discovery Centre Cafe

Contract No.: 102.2024.4

## Expression of Interest

### About Hughenden and the Flinders Shire

Hughenden has a population of approximately 1100 people. We are a friendly community with down to earth attitudes. In Hughenden, you won't need to worry about traffic jams and you will never have to stop at a traffic light!

Although it is small, this is definitely not a sleepy little town. Our annual calendar is jam-packed with local events including picnic races, camp drafts, sports carnivals, festivals and travelling shows. We have a big backyard with plenty of spots to camp and take in the vast landscapes and big skies.

If sport is your thing we have a golf club, 24 hour gym, football club, swimming pool, tennis, netball, horse sports and bowls to name a few. Our fabulous new recreational lake is just minutes from the main street and a popular spot for water sports, boating, fishing and swimming. It has a 2.5km walk around the perimeter which is popular with walkers and joggers.

Country living is great for young families and Hughenden is a place where kids can be bare foot and fancy free. We have two schools and a childcare centre. With wide streets with plenty of parking, Hughenden is a place where you can afford to buy your first home. The median price for a three bedroom home is \$160,000 and you even get a yard with that!

### Flinders Discovery Centre

Hughenden and the surrounding area offers a diverse range of attractions appealing to visitors. Tourists come to discover our prehistoric past, adventure through four national parks, admire artworks and murals trails, and experience the real outback.

The Flinders Discovery Centre is the regions museum and accredited Visitor Information Centre. The Flinders Discovery Centre prides itself on being a top-rated visitor attraction in the Flinders Shire, recently being awarded the 2022 Trip Advisor Travellers Choice Award. Visitors are greeted by friendly locals at the Centre which operates 7 days from April – October. Operating hours are reduced to 5.5 days from November – March.

The Centre has recently undergone a \$4.1million upgrade to double its capacity to meet visitor demand. The newly refurbished centre officially opened in December 2023.

The majority of our tourism visitors are aged between 55 and 75 and are traveling with vans; however, we are seeing an increase in visits from families and a growing weekend traveller cohort.

Two-thirds of visitors are intrastate with the majority from the South-East. Research indicates that food and wine are rated as highly desirable as part of their requirements for a travelling experience and travellers are willing to pay for quality product and service. These visitors are looking for the variety of dining options available to them in urban areas.

As well as tourists, the kiosk will service a variety of clientele with varying needs and expectations. Some of these include:

- travellers driving through the region
- contract workers and visiting business representatives in the region
- local community members

### Flinders Discovery Centre Cafe Opportunity

Now is the time to start a business in Hughenden! Hughenden is an outback town with a big future - with a range of large-scale infrastructure projects on the horizon including renewable energy, horticulture, and of course our refurbished Flinders Discovery Centre.

The cafe is located in a premium position with main-street frontage, and options for patron access from within the Flinders Discovery Centre and via an external service window. Total square meterage of the café is 53m<sup>2</sup>

As well as a busy outback tourism hub, Hughenden is also strategically located at the intersection of five major roads linking Townsville, Mt Isa, Winton, Longreach and Cairns. This provides the opportunity to service road trippers who stop to eat and refuel. The tourism season runs from April until early October, and in 2023 the Flinders Discovery Centre welcomed over 22,000 guests through its doors.

Council's objective in building a cafe is to ensure that visitor demand for food and refreshments can be met seven days a week during the tourist season. In addition to this, there is also demand for additional hospitality services in the town operating late afternoons and on weekends. Further opportunities for the operator lie in providing catering services to Council and the local community.

The following equipment will be included within the lease:

- Double fridge
- Benchtops including Sink
- Glassware Dishwasher
- Cold display
- Hot display
- Automatic Coffee machine
- Deep fryer
- Stove
- Oven

An indicative layout of the Flinders Discovery Centre and Café location is in Appendix 1.

## **Standard of Service**

Council's objective for this service is to ensure the utilisation of the Flinders Discovery Centre Cafe for the Flinders community, serving a range of meals, meeting market demands.

It is intended that the successful operation of the Flinders Discovery Centre Cafe will:

- Provide the community and visitors with a quality dining experience, specifically including the service of hot and cold meals, snacks, refreshments and beverages in a well-managed venue meeting the community and visitor expectations;
- Be open and accountable to the public and Council in respect to the cafe and restaurant's operation;
- Provide opportunities for the Council and the operator to work together to provide the best possible outcome for the community;
- At all times maintain high standards of hygiene and general cleanliness in the preparation, handling and serving of food and beverages and in the use and maintenance of fittings, utensils and equipment and ensure compliance with all statutory requirements;
- Provide a venue and food-business that may be engaged for private functions held within the Flinders Discovery Centre;
- Support a hospitality training environment; and
- Comply in all respects of a formal agreement between the operator and Council.

## **Procurement process:**

- A completed expression of interest form is to be submitted to Director of Community Services and Wellbeing ([dcsw@flinders.qld.gov.au](mailto:dcsw@flinders.qld.gov.au)) by Sunday 18 August 2024.
- Expressions of interest will be reviewed and suitable applicants will be invited to complete additional tender information, including submitting business proposal, copies of insurances, and other due diligence requirements.
- For more information about this opportunity or to request a site visit, contact Barbra Smith, Director of Community Services and Wellbeing on 07 4741 2900 or [dcsw@flinders.qld.gov.au](mailto:dcsw@flinders.qld.gov.au)

# Appendix 1 – Flinders Discover Centre & Café Layout

