



# **LEGACY HOUSE PROPOSAL 2025**

*Prepared by :*

**REBECCA MILLINER**

Executive Officer

Far North Queensland Legacy



### Tameka, Mila and Aurbree

*At a tender age, their father passed away due to service-related PTSD. "Single-handedly raising them has been a tremendous challenge, but with the invaluable support and services offered by Legacy, some of the mental and financial burdens have been lifted. Now, my children can still experience the joys of life like any other kids, thanks to the crucial assistance provided by Legacy." Meka, Atherton Tablelands*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Imagine a sanctuary where the families of our veterans—those who have sacrificed so much for our nation—find the support they need, when they need it most. Legacy House will be more than just a building; it will be a lifeline, a space for healing, rebuilding, and hope. Designed to meet the unique needs of deceased or incapacitated veterans' families, it will provide emergency accommodation, tailored programs, and essential services under one roof. This bold initiative will foster collaboration among service providers, strengthening connections and building a more resilient community.

The need for Legacy House has never been greater. The Royal Commission found, every week, **1.5 veterans are lost to suicide**, and families play a vital role in veterans' recovery and mental health. Yet, these families have been historically overlooked. The Royal Commission identified family-focused centres as a key recommendation, and Legacy House directly aligns with this vision. By addressing the gaps in care for families, we not only improve their wellbeing but reduce the strain on healthcare and social services.

Legacy House will also be an economic catalyst, creating jobs during construction and sustaining employment through its operations. Located on a council-owned parcel of land, with concept designs and cost estimates already completed, the project is ready to proceed. The total estimated cost is **\$5.1 million**, encompassing innovative design, sustainable features, and state-of-the-art facilities.

However, this vision cannot be realised without your support. FNQ Legacy has demonstrated resilience and dedication through challenges like the Global Financial Crisis, floods, and COVID-19, consistently delivering vital services veterans and their families in Far North Queensland. This year alone, we have supported more than 500 veterans' families, a testament to our unwavering commitment. Yet, while we have the financial resources to cover operational costs, we require funding for capital works to ensure the long-term sustainability of this transformative project.

# PROJECT NEED

The 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data highlights a stark reality: Queensland leads the nation in its concentration of veterans, and with over 11,000 residing in our region we service —excluding their families—North Queensland has the highest per capita veteran population in the country, and yet families of veterans, particularly those who are deceased or incapacitated, remain under-supported. While significant attention is often given to the veterans themselves, the families—who shoulder the emotional, financial, and social burden—are frequently overlooked.

The findings from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide further emphasize this need. The Commission revealed alarming gaps in support services for veterans' families, underscoring the direct impact that inadequate assistance has on mental health, financial stability, and overall wellbeing of the veteran and family member. Families of veterans are disproportionately affected by issues like housing instability, mental health challenges, and access to care, which are compounded when a veteran is incapacitated or passes away.

These families face unique struggles, including isolation, financial hardship, and the emotional toll of caring for incapacitated veterans or grieving the loss of a loved one. The Royal Commission's recommendations call for more veteran and family centres to be established.

Legacy House directly responds to these findings by providing a much-needed centralised location where families can access tailored programs, emergency accommodation, and crucial support services. This project aims to fill the gaps identified by both local research, surveys and the Royal Commission, ensuring that veterans' families are no longer left behind.

By offering a holistic approach, Legacy House will alleviate pressures on existing social services, and provide critical mental health and wellness programs. It will also serve as a model for collaboration among service providers, creating an integrated support network that addresses the Royal Commission's key recommendations for better family-focused care.

Legacy House is not just a solution; it is a necessity. The Royal Commission findings highlight a growing, urgent need for tailored services that truly address the challenges faced by veterans' families. Legacy House will answer that call, providing a sustainable and impactful solution that will change lives for generations to come.

## Kelly, Sarah and Kate

Kelly's girls, Sarah and Kate, were only eight and six when their dad was killed whilst deployed in Afghanistan by one of the Afghan soldiers he was helping to train.

**"It's a safe space when you're with other people from Legacy. I can't even imagine what it would be like to not have that social and emotional support. To meet and build friendships with other families who have lived through this... it's invaluable."** Kelly





*Gina, Tully - "Legacy House was a home away from home for us during a very difficult time"*



*Vicki and Isabella - "Legacy really understood what Isabella and I were going through."*

## SUSTAINABILITY

At FNQ Legacy, we understand that true impact requires longevity. Legacy House isn't just a short-term solution; it's a lasting commitment to the families of veterans, providing them with vital support and resources for generations to come. We are dedicated to building a sustainable future for Legacy House, ensuring it remains a place of hope and assistance well into the future.

Since our establishment in 1933, FNQ Legacy has successfully navigated changing times and economic landscapes while continuing to deliver vital services to our community. We've done this through a strategic, multi-faceted funding approach that guarantees stability and resilience. Our long-term sustainability plan for Legacy House is built on this strong foundation of responsible financial management.

One key focus of our strategy is a strategic investment fund that is carefully managed to generate sustainable returns. This fund provides a stable and reliable source of income, ensuring that Legacy House will not only be built but continue to operate, grow, and adapt to the evolving needs of veterans' families. This strategic financial approach allows us to stay focused on our mission, knowing that the future of Legacy House is secure.

Additionally, our diverse range of funding initiatives—from public and private partnerships to community-driven fundraising and grant opportunities—ensures that Legacy House will have a constant flow of resources. We are not reliant on a single source of income, which means we can weather financial challenges and remain committed to providing unwavering support.

Our long-standing reputation and history of success underscore our ability to deliver on this commitment. Legacy House will not just meet immediate needs; it will be an enduring symbol of support for the families who need it most. We are deeply committed to ensuring that Legacy House thrives for generations, continuing to fulfill its mission of providing essential services and helping veterans' families rebuild, recover, and thrive.

Together, we are building a sustainable legacy—one that will endure, grow, and continue to make a difference in the lives of veterans' families for many years to come.

# COSTINGS AND BUDGET

The total estimated cost of Legacy House is \$5,118,000 (excluding GST), based on a detailed Concept Design Estimate by Rider Levett Bucknall. This includes construction-related costs, contingencies, and essential development items such as commercial kitchen equipment, residential amenities, and security services. The design also incorporates sustainability measures, like solar panels, to reduce ongoing costs. Annual funding will cover maintenance, utilities, staffing, and programs, supported by FNQ Legacy's strategic financial planning and fundraising efforts. This carefully planned budget ensures Legacy House will meet the immediate and future needs of veterans' families, providing a high-value, impactful community resource.

Ref	Location	Total Cost \$
A	Site Preparation & Demolition	14,470
B	Building Works	2,878,135
C	External Works & Services	373,385
<b>ESTIMATED NET COST</b>		<b>3,265,990</b>
<b>MARGINS &amp; ADJUSTMENTS</b>		
	Design Contingency	327,010
	Builders Preliminaries & Margin	611,000
	Escalation to Commencement (Q2 2025)	127,000
<b>Estimated Contract Cost</b>		<b>4,331,000</b>
	Construction Contingency	217,000
<b>Estimated Construction Cost</b>		<b>4,548,000</b>
	Removal of Contaminated Materials incl. Disposal	Excl.
	Night Works or After Hours Works	Excl.
	Working Outside the Property Boundary	Excl.
	FF&E (Provisional Allowance)	150,000
	Consultant Fees (including Geotech and Survey) (As Advised)	10,000
	Design and Documentation Costs, Approval and Permit Fees, Headworks and Infrastructure (As Advised)	50,000
	AV Equipment (As Advised)	40,000
	Marketing Costs (As Advised)	15,000
	Sustainability and Environmental (Solar Panels etc.) (As Advised)	120,000
	Insurances and Risk Management (As Advised)	60,000
	Featured Artwork Installation (As Advised)	25,000
	Provision for Pad Mount Transformer (Provisional Allowance)	100,000
	Q-Leave	Excl.
	Legal Costs	Excl.
	Holding Costs	Excl.
	Project Reserve	Excl.
	Goods and Services Tax	Excl.
<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL COST</b>		<b>5,118,000</b>



Far North Queensland Legatees and Beneficiaries

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The design of Legacy House is thoughtfully crafted to provide a welcoming, functional, and supportive environment for the families of deceased or incapacitated veterans. Situated in the heart of Westcourt, Cairns, the building's layout prioritises accessibility and ease of use, ensuring that every family member, regardless of mobility or personal circumstances, can comfortably navigate the space. With wide entrances, ramps, and spacious common areas, Legacy House will be a sanctuary where families feel safe and supported.

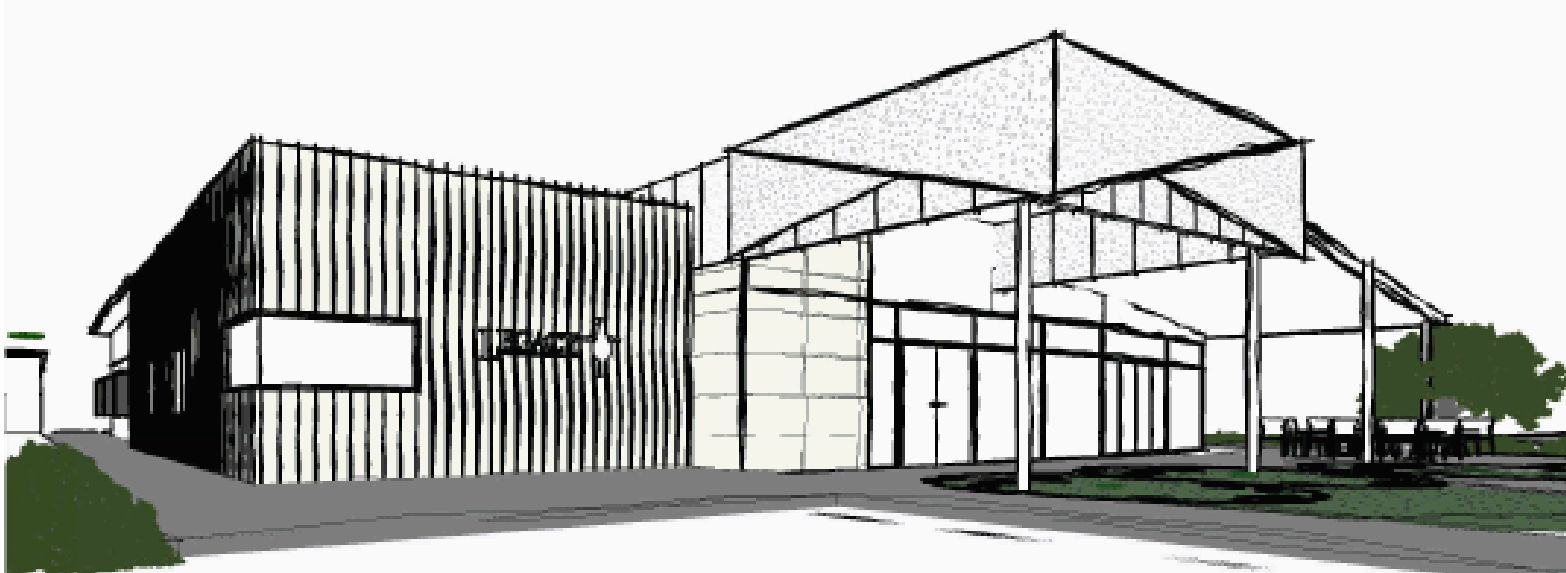
Central to the design is a strong focus on community. Legacy House includes multiple communal spaces where families can come together, share experiences, and participate in various activities. A large function space, quiet reflection areas, and an outdoor deck will provide flexible environments for both social gatherings and individual moments of contemplation. These spaces are complemented by dedicated areas for children, ensuring that young family members have a place to play, learn, and feel included in the community.

Legacy House also offers a range of tailored services for veterans' families, housed within purpose-built rooms designed to meet their unique needs. Wellness rooms, counseling offices, and emergency accommodation will provide essential support in a private and secure setting. These spaces have been designed to offer families the services they need in times of crisis while fostering an atmosphere of dignity and care.

To encourage collaboration among service providers and community organisations, the design includes a boardroom, offices, and meeting spaces. These areas are essential for fostering partnerships and facilitating the seamless delivery of integrated care and support programs. Legacy House will serve as both a physical and symbolic hub for community action and collaboration, uniting different stakeholders under one roof to better serve veterans' families.

In addition to its functional elements, Legacy House will feature modern amenities, such as a café and a kitchen, where visitors and staff can gather and enjoy meals in a warm, social atmosphere. These amenities contribute to the overall sense of community and provide a comfortable space for day-to-day interactions. The building's exterior and outdoor spaces are designed with sustainability in mind, using environmentally friendly materials and creating a natural connection to the surrounding environment.

Overall, the design of Legacy House reflects its mission to be more than just a service center—it is a home and a community for families who have sacrificed so much. By providing a thoughtful, inclusive, and supportive space, Legacy House will stand as a lasting symbol of care, resilience, and hope for veterans' families.



# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives of the Legacy House project are centered around providing support and assistance to the families of our veterans. The main objectives of the project are as follows:

## Provide a range of service and support

Legacy House will provide comprehensive range of services and support to the families of veterans, including financial assistance programs, educational and career development opportunities, and a range of recreational and social activities.

## Strengthen Communities

Legacy House will serve as a community hub, where families can come together to participate in a range of activities, build relationships and support each other through shared experiences. This will help to create a supportive environment where families can find comfort, camaraderie, and a sense of belonging.

## Honour and sacrifice

Legacy House will serve as a memorial to the sacrifices of deceased veterans and their families and will help ensure that their legacy is honoured and remembered.

## Increased Public Awareness

Legacy House will help to raise public awareness of the challenges faced by the families of deceased veterans and will encourage greater understanding and support for their needs.

## Promote sustainability

Legacy House will be designed with sustainability in mind, incorporating environmentally friendly features such as energy-efficient lighting, cooling systems, and rainwater harvesting. This will help to reduce the building's carbon footprint and promote sustainable practices in the community.

## Foster collaboration and integration

Legacy House will facilitate collaboration and integration between service providers, helping to improve the quality and effectiveness of services delivered.

By achieving these goals and objectives, Legacy House will make a real and lasting difference in the lives of our veterans' families, and will serve as a legacy to their service and sacrifice.

# TIMELINE & MILESTONES

The Legacy House project is a complex and multi-faceted initiative that requires a significant investment of time and resources. However, the potential impact of the project on the lives of deceased or incapacitated veterans' families and the community makes it a worthwhile and important initiative. The timeline and milestones outlined below provide a roadmap for the successful delivery of the Legacy House Project, ensuring it is sustainable and successful in the long-term.

- 1 Concept Development**  
**COMPLETED**

This phase will involve researching and developing the concept design and costings for the Legacy House project, including a detailed needs assessment and a feasibility study. (3-6 months).
- 2 Partnership Building**  
**COMPLETED**

This phase will focus on building partnerships with a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organisations, private sector partners, local communities, and educational institutions. (6-9 months)
- 3 Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation**  
**UNDERWAY**

This phase will involve securing the necessary funding and resources to support the Legacy House project, including government grants, philanthropic donations, and private sector investment. (9-12 months)
- 4 Design and Planning**

This phase will involve the development of detailed designs and plans for the Legacy House, including architectural plans, engineering drawings, and program designs. (12-15 months)
- 5 Construction**

This phase will involve the construction of the Legacy House, including site preparation, construction of the building, and installation of all necessary systems and equipment. (12-18 months)
- 5 Operations and Service Delivery**

This phase will involve the launch of the Legacy House and the delivery of services and programs to veterans' families. (24+ months)
- 5 Evaluation and Continuous Improvement**

This phase will involve ongoing evaluation of the Legacy House project, including monitoring and evaluation of program outcomes, and continuous improvement of the services and programs offered. (ongoing)



# THE SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT WE ANTICIPATE LEGACY HOUSE WILL PROVIDE:

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Have opportunities to support something meaningful and tangible within the community
- Provide services directly to a vulnerable cohort
- Sustain support for families and youth (long-term support)
- Job creation and economic growth through contraction and ongoing operation of the Legacy House
- Increased awareness and understanding of the needs of veterans' families, leading to more support and resources
- Improved mental health and well-being for families, reducing the burden on healthcare and other social services
- Legacy House serves as a symbol of appreciation and recognition for the sacrifices made by veterans and their families



### **The Brient Family**

**How do you tell your children – four precious children under the age of 11 – that their dad has died?**

Tragically while on deployment, Terry suffered a severe spinal and neck injury. *"He could walk – with difficulty – but was in constant pain. He couldn't even hug the kids because it hurt. It was just so demoralising for him.*

*Things he had witnessed on that last deployment – those memories triggered depression. I would say he was in torment."*

Angela's Legatee, Steve, was by the family's side: ensuring that Legacy helped to ease the burden wherever we could. Helping Angela claim her rightful entitlements. Offering constant family support. Helping the children on their road to healing through Legacy Children's Camps. *"I honestly don't know what I would have done without Legacy during that time."* Angela.

## VETERAN FAMILY BENEFITS

- Improved access to sustainable wellbeing services for veterans' families
- Increased efficiency of service delivery
- Achieving more from the use of limited resources
- Enhanced effectiveness, resulting in enhanced outcomes for veterans, their families and funders
- Increased participation in community
- Increased access to local support services
- Stronger, more connected communities for families to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness

# Partnership Approach

FNQ Legacy has built a strong network of partners, each bringing expertise, resources, and advocacy to the Legacy House project. This collaboration includes government representatives, military leaders, corporate sponsors, community organisations, and professionals, ensuring the project's success.

Key contributors include:

- General Sir Peter Cosgrove: A passionate advocate, Sir Peter has endorsed the project, assisted in raising funds, and enhanced its national visibility.
- Darren Halpin: A prominent developer providing strategic insights to ensure impactful delivery.
- Commander Alfonso Santos and Group Captain Catie Williams, AM (Rtd): Their Defence leadership strengthens governance, strategic direction, and alignment with veterans' needs.
- Government Representatives: Active support from The Hon. Warren Entsch MP, Senator Nita Green, Michael Healy MP, and Shane Knuth MP reinforces alignment with national priorities and funding advocacy.
- Corporate Sponsors and Community Organisations: Partners like BAE Australia, Cairns Taxis, and HMAS Cairns 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment contribute through fundraising, volunteering, and resource support.
- Professional Expertise: Damien Ingram (Informed Architects) and Brad Bell (Rider Levett Bucknall) provide architectural design and cost management, ensuring compliance and financial viability.

These partnerships are sustained through a dedicated Legacy House Subcommittee, which includes key stakeholders and veterans' families. This group ensures ongoing collaboration, risk management, and responsiveness to community needs throughout development and operations. Post-completion, partners will remain engaged through advocacy, fundraising, program delivery, and evaluation.

Legacy House exemplifies the power of collaboration, leveraging diverse expertise to deliver a sustainable and impactful resource for veterans, their families, and the broader community. Together, these partnerships ensure the project's success and a brighter future for Far North Queensland.

## FNQ Legacy Partners and Project Supporters



# Conclusion

Legacy House represents a transformative project designed to provide essential support, comfort, and community to the families of deceased or incapacitated veterans. Through its thoughtful design, comprehensive services, and collaborative approach, Legacy House will be more than just a building—it will be a sanctuary of healing, connection, and hope.

By addressing the unique needs of these families, it will reduce the burden on social services, create economic opportunities, and foster a strong, supportive community. This project is not only a testament to our commitment to honouring veterans' families but also a sustainable investment in the future of our community. Legacy House will stand as a lasting legacy to those who have given so much, offering a safe haven for generations to come.

## Mel's Journey with Legacy: A Lifelong Connection of Support and Resilience



My involvement with Legacy began during my childhood when I visited my grandparents on school holidays. Both of them were dedicated Legatees. During those visits, we would spend time with widows, listening to their stories and providing them with support. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined that at the age of 34 with three young children would I become one of these widows.

My own husband passed away in 2017 while serving in the Royal Australian Navy. At that difficult time, Legacy once again entered my life, offering support to myself and my children. Just two weeks after my husband's passing, Legacy reached out, established a connection of support and friendship. The unwavering support we have received from Legacy has been immeasurable.

Shared understanding can make a world of difference for a grieving family, like Melanie and her children. Many Legacy events allow families to build bonds through their shared experience.



*Beneficiary - Melanie, Freshwater*