

Barlow Park Stadium community engagement outcomes

Artist impression. Early design concept only.

From July to September 2026, the Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority (GIICA) heard from the Cairns and broader Queensland community about priorities for the Barlow Park Stadium upgrade.

What the community told us

More than **250 interactions** were recorded, with feedback showing strong support for the upgrade and a shared vision for a venue that is accessible, comfortable, welcoming and capable of supporting both community use and major events.

- **Approximately 90%** of survey respondents **support or strongly support the upgrade**.
- **More than 85% of respondents were Cairns locals**, with the same percentage identifying as **regular or repeat users of the venue**.
- **Feedback received from a mix of groups** including sporting clubs, parents and carers, people with disability, First Nations community, seniors and casual venue users.

How your feedback is shaping the project

What we heard	How we're responding
Shade, weather protection and cooling are important for year-round comfort.	The design includes additional trees, landscaping and shaded areas. Shading studies have also been completed, with the grandstand currently designed to provide weather protection for around 70% of permanent seating. Accessible drinking water stations have been identified as a priority.
People want a venue that is **easy to access and enjoy, regardless of age, ability or mobility needs.**	Accessibility embedded throughout the design, via targeted engagement with disability, accessibility and para-sport representatives. Engagement informs proposed improvements to accessible amenities, spectator viewing areas, parking, pathways and wayfinding.
Barlow Park should continue to **support local sport** while also **attracting major events**.	Designed to support local sporting clubs, schools, athletics, community groups and major events. A legacy capacity of up to 5,000 spectators, with temporary seating available for larger events. Valued features, including the athletics track and grassy embankments, will be retained.
People want **improved seating, sightlines, amenities and food and beverage options**.	Seating bowl has been redesigned to bring spectators closer to the field of play and improve viewing angles. The design also includes weather protection, accessible viewing areas, contemporary amenities and improved food and beverage facilities.

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What we heard	How we're responding
Parking, drop-off areas, pedestrian safety and wayfinding are important.	Car park improvements to provide safe and more efficient movement for vehicles and pedestrians, including improved pick-up and drop-off arrangements, parking, wayfinding and connections to venue entrances. Wider transport considerations are also being explored through Cairns Regional Council's Major Events Precinct Master Plan
The community want the stadium to celebrate the **identity of Tropical North Queensland**.	GIICA is working to ensure the upgraded stadium is quintessentially Cairns, identifying opportunities to reflect local culture, landscape and identity through further design development, landscaping and public spaces.

Keeping venue users informed

Sporting clubs, schools and athletics users emphasised the importance of receiving clear information about construction impacts, access arrangements and project timing. GIICA will continue to engage with venue users as planning progresses. This will include advance notice of works, clear access information and a focus on minimising community disruption where practicable.

What's happening next

Community feedback is informing the ongoing design of Barlow Park Stadium and will continue to shape project planning as design development progresses into 2027.

GIICA will continue to engage with stakeholders and the broader Cairns community and provide updates as the project moves towards construction. Early works, including demolition of the existing stadium grandstand, are expected to begin from late 2026. Information will be shared with the community prior to works commencing.

Stay informed or get in touch

GIICA is committed to keeping the community informed at every stage of the project.

Scan the QR code to sign up for project updates at **giica.au/contact**.

Speak to a member of the project team on **1800 21 023** or email **info@giica.au**.

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