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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **HCC SETS TARGET TO RE-OPEN MYER SITE FOR CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

The Hobart City Council has been working strenuously to overcome the impact of the disastrous Myer fire of two years ago, when the city lost its largest department store.

General Manager Nick Heath said the Council understood the community's feelings about the loss of the historic store and the access it provided to the heart of the CBD through the Cat and Fiddle Arcade.

"The loss of the shopping experience, the historic store, damaged streetscape and amenity has been profound and of great concern to both the Council and the wider community. We want it on the record that the Hobart City Council has been working extremely hard to have the site redeveloped, consistent with large retail developments on the mainland."

"Now with support of the site's owners, the Retirement Benefits Fund (RBF) the Council is working on providing a substantial walkway through the site to once again allow access into the Cat and Fiddle Arcade and to open up the area as a people place."

"Old habits die hard and we're well aware of the need to open up the area to give ease of access to or from Liverpool Street as it cuts off half the block. Works currently underway involve providing access including disabled access, concreting and paving a large area, an off-ground undercover walkway, as well as general seating to make it a comfortable recreation area in the heart of the city."

"It is only when one walks into the space of the former Myer store, that you get a sense of the size of the area, together with a feeling of the profound loss of the city's largest store."

"The Council has set a target date of November 21 to ensure the site is finished in time for the Hobart Christmas Pageant. This is a very important date as the Pageant provides the catalyst for the annual shopping spree in lead-up to Christmas," said Mr Heath.

"While aware of the temporary nature of the current works on the development site, the Council believes public amenity is best served by providing further open space. This is best achieved by opening it further as a people place."

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