

CERES Cafe Update

6th November 2013



In July, the CERES Board announced a major reconstruction and began looking for a new partner to operate the CERES Organic Cafe. After an extensive selection process we are pleased to confirm that we have selected Hay Events Pty Ltd, a local business owned by Tom and Pip Hay, to be our partner.

We were not looking for just any partner to run Cafe, it needed to be a special one who would deliver on our values and provide excellent organic food.

Hay Events Pty Ltd has been carefully selected because we believe they can do that.

Tom and Pip have 8 years experience operating Cafes. Through their long-term association with the Collingwood Children's Farm, they have demonstrated their ability to understand and work within the context of a not-for-profit organisation.

The food and atmosphere they provide at The Farm Cafe will fit right in at CERES.

They have committed to invest in the fit out of the new CERES Cafe, purchase food from CERES Fair Food, operate in line with our environmental and social values, pay rent and support other enterprises through mutually beneficial projects. This model of shared investment in our infrastructure has been utilised successfully in the past at CERES.

This partnership will be formalised through a legal sublease agreement and all current Cafe staff will be invited to apply for employment with Hay Events Pty Ltd.

In order to select the new operator, the Board undertook an extensive process. In August, a Call for Expressions of Interest was developed and 20 suitable Cafe operators were invited to apply. Of these, three local, high-profile operators expressed interest, as did the current Cafe management team. In September, all four applicants were interviewed by a panel consisting of myself, our CEO, a senior Moreland City Council representative and an experienced independent hospitality expert. Following the first interviews at CERES, two operators were shortlisted and second interviews were conducted at their existing Cafes in October. Once Hay Events Pty Ltd were identified as the preferred operator, their four nominated referees were contacted.

Moreland City Council will now engage an architect to begin collaboratively designing the new Cafe building and surrounds. Concept designs will be made available for comment by the CERES community and all going well construction which will commence mid-2014.

The current Cafe will need to close around Easter next year to allow the Site Team to undertake demolition and salvage. Unfortunately this area of CERES will become a fenced construction zone for the remainder of 2014, until the opening of the new Cafe in late 2014. During that time organic food and coffee will still be available at CERES in the Merri Table, and from temporary food truck services on site.

We thank you for your patience while we renew one of most loved and special places in CERES.

We are confident that our new partnership will deliver a range of benefits to CERES and enable us to invest further in our sustainability education programs, onsite demonstrations and keep improving CERES for all our visitors.

While this is a major change, we believe that it is in CERES' best interests in the longer term. The new CERES Cafe will be a beautiful, sustainable facility that provides excellent local, seasonal, organic food in our unique, family friendly, park setting.

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