



## FOUNDATION EXPO '88

*'Progressing the World Expo 88 Vision'*

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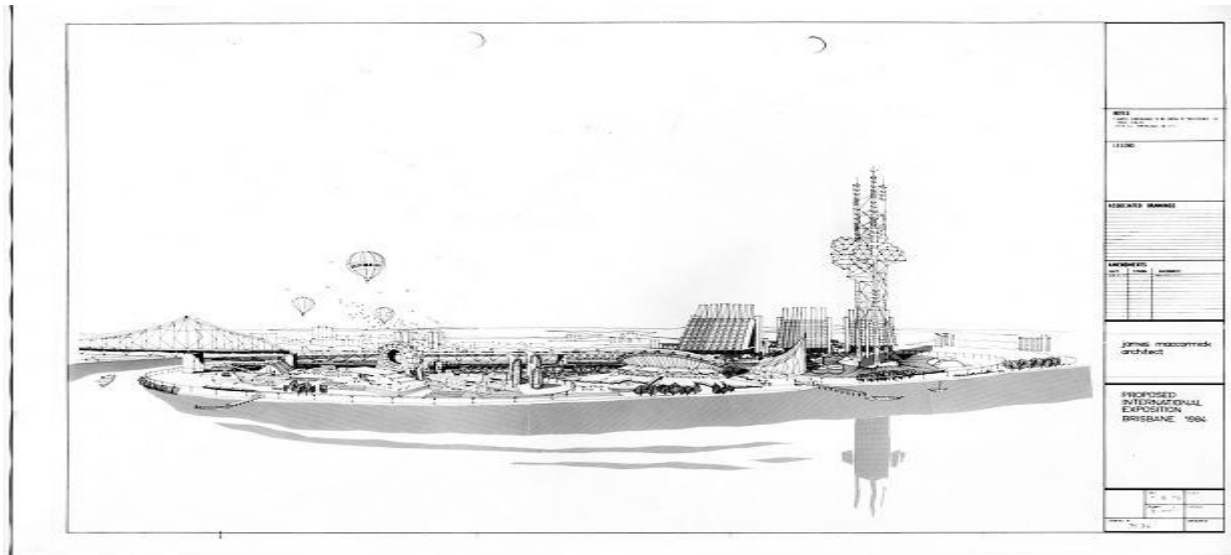
### **Interview with James Maccormick MBE Joint Chief Architect - World Expo 88**

Foundation Expo 88, Brisbane : Friday 8 October 2004

Today Foundation Expo 88 has had the distinct pleasure of interviewing Mr James Maccormick, MBE, one of Australia's leading figures of the International Expositions system, and chief proponent of Brisbane's World Expo '88.

Architect of some of the largest and most outstanding representations by Australia at a world exposition including the Universal Expositions of Montreal '67 and Osaka '70, Mr Maccormick was later invited also to design Australia's participation at Spokane in 1974 – an experience which was instrumental in inspiring him to draw up a draft plan for a Brisbane World Exposition in the 1980s.

“Spokane was a city of only 200, 000 people and seemed to pull it off – so I wondered, why can't we do the same for Brisbane?” mused Maccormick.

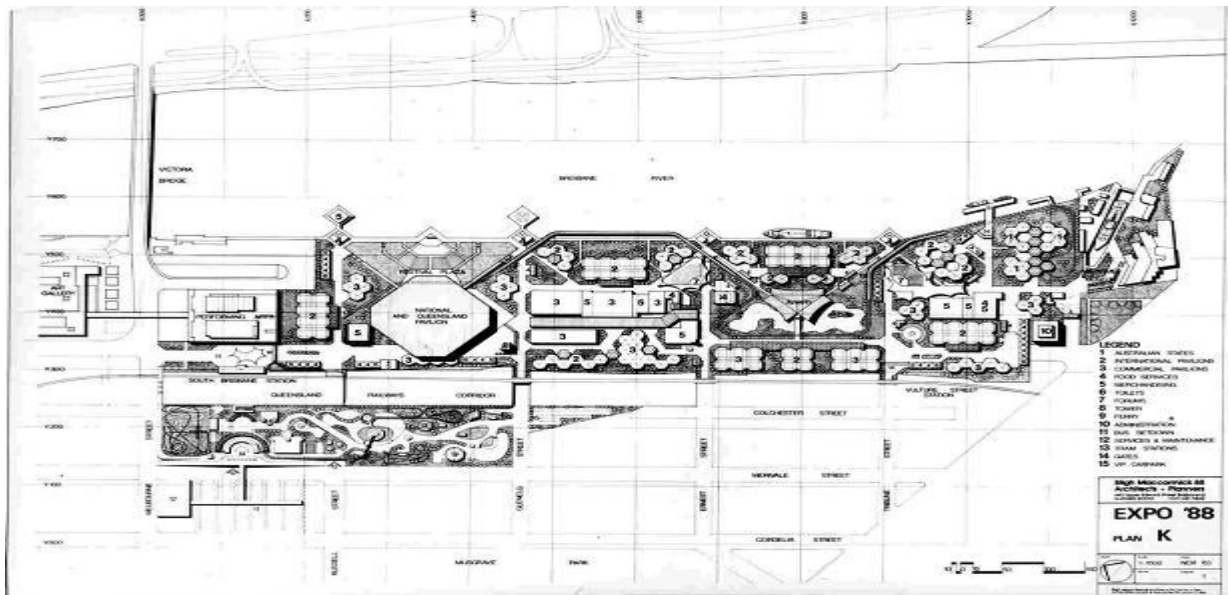


Draft sketch of the Brisbane World Exposition proposal – located at the Story Bridge end of Kangaroo Point  
Image Courtesy and Copyright James Maccormick

Soon after, in 1976, Maccormick was promoting his idea for a 1980s Brisbane World Exposition to prominent Queensland Government and business representatives. This later proved to be the impetus for an Australian Bicentennial Authority-led agenda of an Australian 1988 Universal Exposition held in the bi-centennial year, possibly located in Sydney or Melbourne. However, political pressures over funding a universal exposition in either of these cities forced the agenda onto the backburner – and once again, Maccormick was placed in the position of carrying the ball for a Brisbane Exposition.

Quick footwork by Maccormick amongst the upper echelon of Queensland politics then confirmed Brisbane's bid for the 1988 event, leading to its successful endorsement by the Bureau of International Expositions,

Paris, in December 1983. Queensland Travel & Tourism Corporation head Sir Frank Moore then deftly drew on the core of the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games Secretariat to provide the nucleus of a 1988 World Exposition Authority. Maccormick and other Brisbane architect Graham Bligh soon joined forces as Bligh Maccormick 88 – and became consultant architects for the Exposition, which by now had moved it's site from the original Kangaroo Point proposal to another reach of the Brisbane River – at South Brisbane.



Draft Plan for World Expo 88 at the South Brisbane site  
Image Courtesy and Copyright James Maccormick

Thiess Watkins were appointed as project managers for the exposition, and very shortly, the iconic sun-sails of the 1988 World Exposition were taking their place in the sunny skies above the expo site - after 14 years of lobbying – World Expo 88 had become a reality.

The Australia Pavilion Montreal '67 and Osaka '70 – Architect James Maccormick – Images Courtesy & Copyright James Maccormick





James Maccormick, MBE, and John McGregor, Foundation Director shake hands  
Another Exposition for Australia? Perhaps!  
Image Courtesy of Foundation Expo 88