Blackburn Library
Feasibility & Concept Design Report

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This concept design report provides a summary of the pre-design analysis undertaken of the existing Blackburn Library, and proposes several upgrade options, giving due consideration to current building, access and safety codes, architectural, services and operational issues, and customer needs and requirements. The report has been developed to enable the City of Whitehorse to consider the following as a basis for making an informed decision to progress an upgrade to the existing building:

- The architectural implications of the current building and forecourt (dating from 1966), comprising original building, minor additions and landscape works
- The operational issues associated with running contemporary library programmes and facilities in the current building, including consideration of space allocation, adjacencies, sightlines, circulation paths, work patterns and IT considerations
- The condition of existing plant, services, and materials with consideration and recommendation of ESD constraints and opportunities, and maintenance
- Conformance of fire services to current standards
- Accessibility to the facility, with consideration and recommendation of DDA compliance

The outcome of this pre-design analysis is presented as three concept design options, each proposing a different scope of works.

**Option One**
Proposes a restricted refurbishment, generally retaining the building in its current form, and rearranging internal spatial adjacencies in an effort to improve operational constraints and address basic code compliance issues. Option 1 is limited and does not resolve all operational constraints, all access issues and cannot fully meet customer needs and requirements.

**Option Two**
Proposes a more significant scope of works, and focuses on solving both life cycle issues and operational issues through partial demolition, interior reconfiguration and extension of the existing building footprint on the site to accommodate a reduced version of the operational brief in a cost effective way. Option 2 has the capacity to re-image the building in its context, fully resolve operational constraints, access issues and meet customer needs and requirements.

**Option Three**
Prompts consideration of an abstract project brief beyond its origins as a library, indicating a ‘blue sky’ project, not specifically located on the current site, and proposing potential synergies with other community facilities in a vision for a ‘learning hub’ hybrid building model.

The opportunities and shortfalls of each option are briefly described, together with an opinion of probable cost.
2.0 Site, Building & Heritage Significance

2.1 The Site
Blackburn Library is located at the corner of Blackburn and Central Roads, Blackburn. The site is bounded by Blackburn Road to the west, Central Road to the south, and a metropolitan train line serviced by Lilydale Line and Belgrave Line trains to the north. The principal entry is from Blackburn Road, with vehicular site access available from Central Road.

The building sits at the northern corner of Morton Park, a large community and recreation precinct owned by the City of Whitehorse which is also occupied by the following:
- Blackburn Tennis Club pavilion and seven tennis courts
- Blackburn Children’s Services Centre
- Blackburn Elderly Citizens Club
- Blackburn Football / Cricket Club Pavilion and two ovals
- War memorial
- Children’s playground
- Bicycle and walking tracks

The library is located at the closest point of Morton Park to Blackburn Station and Blackburn Village, with South Parade terminating at the intersection with Blackburn Road directly in front of the library building. The library has been positioned to face towards this active precinct with sight lines to the train station.

Also located nearby is the commercial precinct on Railway Road, on the northern side of the rail line, and Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, to the south east.

2.2 The Existing Library
Originally built in 1966, Blackburn Library is now lacking in amenity and flexibility, and despite upgrades in 1999 and 2000 (Kenneth Emery and the City of Whitehorse) is unable to meet current and emerging library sector trends and initiatives. Existing spaces are inadequate for the running of contemporary library service and programmes.

The forecourt area in front of Blackburn Road requires improvements to function as an inviting entry space leading to the library. It has been identified as a key area for development by council in the ‘City of Whitehorse MEGA mile [west] and Blackburn Activity Centres: Urban Design Framework’ (July 2010):

‘Continue to develop the library forecourt as a key focal point for the local community. In doing so, enhance the function and awareness of Morton Park and Blackburn Lake Sanctuary.’

The current internal layout requires additional floor space and changes in adjacencies, enhanced sightlines, resolution of conflicting circulation paths, and improved staff working patterns.

Upgrades to library buildings throughout the City of Whitehorse is a key priority identified in the ‘Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation Annual Report 2009/10’ endorsed by the City of Whitehorse (2010):

‘Library service is currently inhibited by the existing physical library infrastructure which lacks sufficient spaces for reading, study and programs.’

The report proposes that a preliminary scoping project be undertaken for the redevelopment of Blackburn Library, to investigate the changes required to improve services, spaces and access to technology to satisfactorily meet community expectations and needs.
2.3 The Existing Library – Architectural Issues

The original design of the Blackburn Library by Drayton and Colman Architects (1966) remains largely intact. The building is set back from Blackburn Road with a characteristically flat and symmetrical brick façade, tiled blade wall projecting above the roof to enclose and emphasise the entry, and a white capping of neat horizontal lines to denote the roof. The composition is a modest example of late 1960s architecture with clean minimal lines and subtle material contrasts.

The forecourt to the library is enclosed by a number of brick planter boxes which were not included in the original design, except for a single planter box adjacent to the ramped entry to the building. The site plan by Drayton and Colman indicates there was originally a ceremonial entry path leading up to the building from Blackburn Road, with the second ramped entry path in its current location. The planter boxes provide a physical and visual barrier to Blackburn Road, diminishing the municipal presence of the building and confusing circulation paths.

Major external additions to the library (1968) filled in the north east corner of the L-shaped plan with an extension consisting of brick, window frames and roof capping matching the original building.

Internal additions to the library by Kenneth Emery (1999) and the City of Whitehorse (2000) saw refurbishment of the toilets and a reconfiguration of internal walls to add more floor space to the library, where the children’s collection is now housed.

These additions had minimal impact on the architectural integrity of the original building design.

2.4 Heritage and Planning Overlays

The site is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone PPR2 in the City of Whitehorse Planning Scheme.

The building has the following local heritage and planning significance:

- The site is not subjected to any planning overlays
- The building is not listed on or recommended for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register, the Register of the National Estate, or classification by the National Trust Victoria
- The building has not been identified in any major architectural study as significant.
- The building is listed on ‘Healthy Body Healthy Minds’ a digital archive of modern community sites in Australia 1920-1970 which ‘signify a community’s public spirit and impact strongly on an area’s liveability and amenity’ (available at http://www.abp.unimelb.edu.au/healthy-bodies/resources.html)
- The building has local historical value for being the first major library constructed in the municipality after the library service was first established in 1964 (Blackburn: A Picturesque History by Robin Da Costa).
3.2 Blackburn Library & The Avenue Neighbourhood House Precinct

This feasibility study was commissioned by the City of Whitehorse and was prepared by property consultancy and project management company Burns Bridge Australia Pty Ltd.

The aims of the study were to research the feasibility of and provide recommendations of any future development of the Blackburn Library and the precinct at Central Road including concept plans and indicative costings. The key findings of the report were as follows:

- The study concurrently examined the limitations of the existing Blackburn Library, Blackburn Senior Citizens Centre and the Avenue Neighbourhood House (located nearby at 87 Eley Road);
- The study examined the feasibility of relocating the Avenue Neighbourhood House to the precinct at Central Road;
- The study included an extensive community consultation process, refer section 3.2.1;
- The study identified that, in general, limitations of the existing Blackburn Library include restricted space for programs and low technology capability;
- The report did not examine a specific brief for library refurbishment or investigate possible internal configurations;
- The proposed options assumed an allowance for expansion of the library floor area from 390m² to 550m²;
- The report did not provide detailed urban design analysis of the surrounding area.


This urban design framework was commissioned by the City of Whitehorse in conjunction with the Department of Planning and Community Development’s Expert Assistance Program and was prepared by strategic planning consultancy Planisphere.

The purpose of the urban design framework is to guide change and development in the study area over the next 15 years, by establishing strategic directions and design guidelines for both the MEGAmile (west) and Blackburn Activity Centres. The key objectives, strategies and actions identified by the urban design framework for the Blackburn Station Village precinct are as follows:

- To strengthen the role of the Blackburn Station Village as a neighbourhood centre including locating core retail uses (banks, post office, newsagency, pharmacy, supermarket etc) in the Blackburn Village Shopping Centre, and retaining core community facilities (library) in close proximity to the village;
- Encourage shop top offices and housing in the Blackburn Village precinct;
- Discourage bulky goods retailing from operating within the Blackburn Village precinct with zoning amendments to the Whitehorse Planning Scheme;
- Encourage outdoor seating and dining areas throughout the precinct as well as encourage after hours activities to enliven the village at night;
- Maintain the valued ‘village’ character and localised sense of place of the Blackburn Village precinct including enhancing existing heritage qualities of the village;
- Continue to develop the library forecourt as a key focal point for the local community.
- Enhance function and awareness of Morton Park and Blackburn Lake Sanctuary;
- Improve key pedestrian linkages between Morton Park and South Parade, along Blackburn Road to Railway Road, and through the station underpass from Station Street to South Parade;
- Ensure all pedestrian footpaths and laneways are DDA compliant;
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist navigability, amenity and safety throughout the Blackburn Village precinct including developing a signage / way finding strategy;
- Improve streetscape treatment and landscaping areas throughout the precinct;
- Increase tree planting along key pedestrian routes of Blackburn Road, South Parade and Railway Road, with consideration of existing sightlines between key locations – including train station to library;
- Support the proposed Eastern Rail Trail bicycle path along South Parade and through Morton Park;
- Provide high quality cyclist facilities such as lockers and change facilities at key locations such as the Blackburn Railway Station and the library.
3.2.1 Community Consultation with Blackburn Library Stakeholder Groups – Burns Bridge Australia Pty Ltd

The feasibility study by Burns Bridge Australia Pty Ltd included a community consultation process with various stakeholder groups, held over a period from September to November 2006. Methods used were semi-structured individual and group interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, individual submissions and a survey for local youth. In summary, the findings of the community consultation were as follows:

Blackburn Library Staff & Community
- Expressed the desire for the library to remain a traditional library;
- Placed high values on the presence, resources, staff, programs and atmosphere of the library;
- Believe that current programs geared to the local community are limited by the size of the building;
- Expressed the need and desire for additional space to build on the strengths and character of the library to better serve the community in line with changing functions of libraries;
- Suggested that more space is required for the following:
  - Children’s programs;
  - Larger meeting spaces for learning events;
  - More technology space;
  - Larger dedicated reading areas;
  - Expanded study area for students;
  - Generous display space;
  - Space for outreach services;
  - Outdoor reading space (orientated to the north and east).
- Expressed the desire for a large open plan space which can be configured flexibly to accommodate ‘story time’ for up to 30 children with parents seated on low couches;
- Expressed the desire for a large meeting space for up to 50 people attending learning programs, community events, wired for multi media and providing storage areas for chairs and tables;
- Identified that current building has several maintenance and environmental issues summarised as follows:
  - Recurrent leaking roof;
  - Poor disability access;
  - Poorly used outdoor spaces;
  - Noise from traffic and trains;
  - Orientation towards Blackburn Road;
  - Poor visibility and minimal signage;
  - Restricted car parking.

Library CEO Geoff Rockow
- Interested in creating a ‘bookshop’ style library with books organised in themed sections, study space, technology areas and space for browsing over coffee;
- Supportive of co-location with other community groups and shared facilities;
- Estimated future total floor area required for the library to be established with reference to other community groups (potential sharing) and could be spread over two level building;
- Local census information confirms that Blackburn has a population of older residents and single person households higher than the Melbourne average, and this trend is likely to continue – the library must cater for this demographic.
- Local census information confirms that Blackburn has a significantly multicultural population - the library must cater for this demographic.

Friends of Nunawading Library
- Believe the library is well located to meet the needs of the community but is overdue for upgrading;
- Supported library co-location with other community groups emphasising the importance of linkages with the community;
- Suggested that visibility, parking and orientation of the current library could all be improved;
- Identified the need for more space for all activities;
- Suggested that outdoor spaces are currently not well used.

The General Community
- Suggested longer opening hours and the availability of refreshments;
- Suggested reorientation of the library to the east with a better and more visible profile;
- Placed importance on an improved landscape with indigenous planting and improved external seating areas;
- Placed importance on maintaining the strong history of planning in Blackburn associated with the notion of a model township with parks, crescents, low level buildings and preserved views;
- Expressed strong concerns about the limited car parking, proximity and time limits;
- Some community members expressed appreciation of the mural, others were open to alternative positions. Others suggested that it was time for a new mural;
- Many people felt that crossing Blackburn Road and Central Road to get to the Central Road precinct was unsafe. Improved access and safety was considered important.

Youth Survey
- Expressed the desire for a wider range of technology/software books, CD’s and magazines;
- Suggested improved lighting of external spaces;
- Suggested improved toilets.

The Chamber of Commerce
- Identified the need to develop the library as a focal point for the community;
- Expressed that the library requires refurbishment as it is tired, drab and uninviting and has poor visibility and accessibility.
- Suggested that the library needs an inviting outdoor area with better frontage.
- Suggested that the mural should be removed or relocated.
- Identified that car parking should be improved with greater provision for people with a disability.
- Suggested that the railway crossing needs enhancement;
- Expressed the desire to strengthen the link between the community precinct and Blackburn Station village.

City of Whitehorse Council Staff
- Identified that traffic management improvements are required;
- Identified that car parking, road safety and maintaining the existing urban character are high priorities;
- Identified that flooding and irrigation issues require further investigation and resolution;
- Identified the need to maintain open space, indigenous planting, views and connections with the local area.
Summary of New Consultations

4.0

Council, Library and Community Consultation was undertaken during this study in April and May 2011, to complement feedback that was received during the previous two studies. The consultation program included:

- The engagement of councillors during a facilitated workshop session;
- A meeting with council’s executive team;
- Engagement with Library staff including senior officers and the CEO;
- A workshop with council officers from 14 different service areas;
- Two community consultation sessions that were advertised to the broader community.

The following reports record stakeholder and community discussions that have taken place to confirm or otherwise the information gained from previous consultations as outlined in Section 3.0

4.1 City of Whitehorse – Councillors

- Support for potential synergies with other community facilities;
- Potential grade separation for Blackburn Road is acknowledged and that long term vision for library may not be on current site;
- Current dilapidated state of the library is acknowledged;
- Problems with meeting current codes including access and building codes are acknowledged;
- Size of the facility is acknowledged as limited;
- Suggest the ‘blue sky’ learning hub vision is positive but remains hypothetical.

4.2 City of Whitehorse – Executive

- Potential grade separation for Blackburn Road is acknowledged and that long term vision for library may not be on current site;
- Current dilapidated state of the library is acknowledged;
- Problems with meeting current codes including access and building codes are acknowledged;
- Size of the facility is acknowledged as limited.

4.3 Library staff

- Detailed input captured in Library Return Brief.

4.4 City of Whitehorse – Cross Council

- Support for potential synergies with other community facilities;
- Ensure local urban design vision is captured and integrated in any upgrade proposal;
- Ensure understanding of local landscape parameters;
- Potential future grade separation for Blackburn Road is acknowledged and that long term vision for library may not be on current site;
- Limited capacity for use of the forecourt for community arts programs due to design and traffic problems;
- Support for improved directional signage in the vicinity of the library to guide motorists to off street car parking;
- Suggest parking restrictions along Central Road are reviewed;
- Potential to reduce speed limits along Central Road or install physical traffic treatments to slow traffic;
- Council masterplans and urban design framework should be considered in the analysis of traffic, pedestrian and cycling needs for the local area

4.5 Community

- Support for potential synergies with other community facilities;
- Concern for non impact on tennis club, and potential to use views for interest in outlook;
- Concern for impact on war memorial;
- Acknowledgment that outlook and inlook from the landscaped site could be improved;
- Interest in a protected outdoor reading space;
- Concern that impact on site of potential grade separation for Blackburn Road means no work should be undertaken on current site;
- Current dilapidated state of the library is acknowledged;
- Problems with meeting current codes including access and building codes are acknowledged;
- Size and flexibility of the facility is acknowledged as limited;
- Size of children’s area for story time is acknowledged as inadequate;
- Support for improvement in bicycle facilities including bike racks, toilets and drinking taps;
- Limited car parking close to the library during busy times is acknowledged;
- Support for community notice boards inside the library.
A review of the existing conditions including Building Code of Australia (BCA) compliance, regulatory issues, the condition of services, structure, review of landscape and traffic conditions surrounding the site has been carried out by a series of specialist consultants. The following provides an outline of consultant findings. For more detailed information, refer to Part 2 Consultant Reports.

In summary, the main issues identified by consultants as requiring significant modification include:

- The forecourt requires safety upgrade including handrails, slip resistance, tactile indicators, and the removal of a single step;
- An accessible entry path from Blackburn Road was identified as a priority;
- The fire hydrant in the front entrance is not required under the BCA and is non-compliant - upgrade to comply or make redundant;
- Upgrades to portable fire extinguishers are required;
- A major upgrade to fire systems will be required if extensions to the building result in an increase of floor area to over 500m² (currently 400 m²);
- Entry doors and general doorways throughout the building do not comply with universal access codes and require modification / replacement;
- Toilets do not meet universal access requirements, and upgrade of fixtures, signage, and circulation clearances are required;
- The circulation desk requires modification / replacement to include a counter at universally accessible bench height;
- The after hours returns chute does not meet universal access codes and requires upgrade to comply including recommended relocation to be more visible from Blackburn Road;
- Lighting throughout does not meet BCA energy requirements and additional emergency lighting is required;
- An upgrade to the water meter may be required.

The main issues identified by consultants as being acceptable include:

- The existing structure and air conditioning are in good condition;
- There were four trees identified as significant and should be retained;
- Car parking to the area is generally sufficient, however additional parking closer to the library could be considered.

5.1 BCA Compliance Review

The BCA general compliance review, undertaken by Philip Chun, provides a summary of the main issues to be addressed to ensure all areas of the Blackburn Library satisfy the BCA.

- The corridor outside the kitchen is non compliant due to storage units which restrict the clear width to less than 1000mm, these should be relocated;
- The existing external stairs and ramps to the forecourt require upgrades to handrails;
- The report advises that the front automatic sliding doors must be configured to open in an emergency, if there is a power failure or upon fire alarm;
- The sliding door near the toilets is fitted with a panic bolt, which should be removed;
- The space outside the disabled toilet does not comply and must be increased in clear length;
- Regulatory signage to WC’s is non compliant and requires tactile information;
- The existing external stairs and ramps to the forecourt require tactile ground surface indicators;
- Energy efficiency provisions were not part of the audit.

5.1.1 Fire Safety Review

A fire safety review, undertaken by Philip Chun provides a summary of the main issues to be addressed to ensure all areas of the Blackburn Library achieve a degree of fire protection and allow for early warning and evacuation:

- In general, the existing building is compliant with BCA Part C – Fire Compartmentation & Fire Resistance;
- The report advises that a fire hydrant system is not required under the BCA, but there is an internal fire hydrant located adjacent to the front entrance which currently has several non compliances. The report recommends that the fire hydrant should be either blocked off / made redundant or reconfigured for compliance;
- The report advises that a fire hose reel is not required under the BCA;
- Portable fire extinguishers do not fully comply and should be relocated so that they are accessible under BCA requirements;
- The report advises that a smoke detection is not required under the BCA, but there is currently a smoke detection system throughout the building which should be maintained;
- Note: major upgrades to fire systems will be required if extensions to the building result in an increase of floor area to over 500m² (currently 400 m²).
5.1.2 Universal Access Review

The access review, undertaken by Architecture & Access, provides a summary of the main issues to be addressed to ensure all areas of the Blackburn Library are accessible to public and staff, providing safe, equitable and independent travel:

- The main entry paths to the library from Blackburn Road are not accessible for people who use wheeled mobility equipment. One path from Central Road is considered accessible but the location of this path is not apparent from the North and West. The report recommends that an accessible entry path from Blackburn Road be considered a priority;
- The existing entry paths can be slippery and are not clearly defined for persons with vision impairment. The report recommends upgrades to the paving to achieve suitable slip resistance and provide clear lines of travel;
- The steps to the forecourt require tactile indicators and an upgrade to handrails and nosings. The report recommends removal of the single step in the forecourt;
- The main entry ramp is compliant but requires tactile indicators and an upgrade to handrails. The small entry ramp to the North has a non compliant gradient and requires modification;
- The forecourt requires a variety of public seating and an upgraded drinking fountain which is not currently accessible;
- The automatic entry door and the swing entry door are non compliant and require replacement;
- The report advises that existing internal doors have inadequate clear openings and that doors with minimum clear openings of 850mm are recommended;
- The circulation spaces to the toilets and surrounding passages are not compliant and require modification;
- The unisex toilet is non compliant and requires modification to the bench, fixtures and fittings;
- The layout of the library generally has sufficient clear circulation, with the exception of a few circulation spaces in staff areas which require modification. The report recommends a minimum width of 1000mm is provided in all passages;
- Light switches in staff areas should be relocated to 900-1100mm above FFL;
- Regulatory signage to WC’s is not compliant and requires tactile information;
- The existing comms cabling comprises Cat 5 data cabling and the data cabling originates from a data cabinet in the work room;
- The existing security system comprises a Concept Inner Range access control system and passive infra red motion detectors;
- There are wall mounted exhaust fans in the kitchen and toilets;
- There were no recommendation on ventilation to the rest of the building.

5.2 Structure and Services Infrastructure Review

Review of structure and services has been carried out by Irwinconsult. The following provides a summary of their report:

5.2.1 Structural Review

Structure Generally
A visual inspection of the existing structure was conducted and it was concluded that the general the structure is performing as expected with no obvious indications that structural elements require immediate repairs.

Structural System
- Concrete slab on ground;
- Solid masonry external walls;
- Long span roof beams and purlins supported by steel columns;
- Lightweight sheet roof.

Cracking
- Cracks were observed in the masonry walls to the North and West;
- The report concluded that the cracks were most likely to have been caused by footing movements as a result of variations in moisture content and soil volumes over time. It was recommended that the cracks were measured and monitored over time, but that no immediate repairs are required.

5.2.2 Mechanical Services Review

Air Conditioning
- Five individual wall mounted split AC units service the library space. These allow users to control temperature independently to other rooms and appear to be in good condition;
- The external condenser units are located on the roof of the library, which was five individual wall mounted split AC units service the library space. These allow users to control temperature independently to other rooms and appear to be in good condition;
- The report advises that the quantity of exit and emergency lighting may not comply and should be upgraded to meet the requirements of AS 2293 and the BCA.

Ventilation
- There are wall mounted exhaust fans in the kitchen and toilets;
- There was no recommendation on ventilation to the rest of the building.

5.2.3 Electrical Services Review

Electrical Supply Generally
- The existing electrical supply is from the authority overhead reticulation in Blackburn Road;
- The electrical meter is located on a wall near the main switchboard in a separate enclosure;
- The switchboard is located in the entry foyer. The switchboard has no identification label and will require further investigation and modification to achieve compliance with the relevant Australian Standards and the BCA.
- The switchboard is rated at 3 phase 160A and appears new and in good condition.

Lighting
- The lighting varies in type, age and condition;
- Generally, fluorescent lamps are used, some appear to be old and may contain hazardous materials;
- In general, the lighting scheme is inefficient and would be non compliant with the BCA energy requirements;
- In general, the illumination levels are compliant with AS1680;
- There is no energy management system installed.

Power
- The power outlets vary in type, age and condition;
- Coverage to some areas is inadequate as extension leads and power boards are currently used, upgrades to these areas are required;
- The power outlets are currently in reasonable condition with the exception of some cracked outlets;
- All power outlets appear to be protected by combination earth leakage circuit breakers at the switchboard.

Exit and Emergency Lighting
- Self contained exit and emergency luminaries are located in some areas of the building and appear to be in reasonable condition;
- No emergency lights are installed in the toilet areas;
- The report advises that the quantity of exit and emergency lighting may not comply and should be upgraded to meet the requirements of AS 2293 and the BCA.

Communications
- The existing comms cabling comprises Cat 5 data cabling and the data cabling originates from a data cabinet in the work room;
- Wireless network receivers are located in the existing library area.

Security
- The existing security system comprises a Concept Inner Range access control system and passive infra red motion detectors;
- There are no CCTV cameras on the site;
- A numeric keypad is installed at the south side entry of the building for arming / disarming the intruder detection system.
5.2.4 Fire Services Review

**Fire Detection**
- Combination smoke and heat detectors have been installed throughout the building, the location of the detectors has not been examined against code compliance;
- There is a Fire indicator Panel located in the main entry foyer;
- There FIP is connected to 4 zones, an alarm bell system within the library and the Fire Authority;
- The Fire Detection system is being maintained regularly;
- The report recommends the FIP is tested and assessed for its capacity to accommodate any building extensions;
- The report recommends the installation of a strobe light outside the building to enable the Fire Authority to locate the FIP.

**Portable Fire Extinguishers & Fire Blankets**
- Portable fire extinguishers and fire blankets have been installed throughout the building. The locations have not been examined against code compliance.
- Some extinguishers need to be relocated or upgraded to comply.

5.2.5 Hydraulic Services Review

**Sewer**
- The site is served via an 100mm sewer drain that connects into the 225mm Yarra Valley Water sewer main running along Central Road;
- The report recommends that a drainage system for any additional amenities would be connected into the existing sewer drain, but that this should be assessed for its capacity to take the additional load.

**Water**
- The site is serviced from the existing 150mm Yarra Valley Water main running along Blackburn Road;
- The water meter is located within the raised garden beds adjacent to Blackburn Road and was inaccessible during the consultant site visit;
- The report advised that it is likely the current water meters are non compliant. The report recommends that they should be assessed by Yarra Valley Water and that an upgrade may be required;
- The hot water service consists of a 25L electrical storage hot water unit located under the kitchen bench. The hot water is reticulated to the amenities in the building;
- The report advises that there are no thermostatic or tempering valves in the hot water service;

5.3 Landscape Review

The landscape review, undertaken by Urban Initiatives, provides a summary of significant landscape features, and advises two clear alternative strategies for developing the landscape.

- The landscape setting is well developed in a 1970’s style with brick planter boxes, pavers and native plants;
- Some significant trees have been noted but most planting is contributory to strong landscape character;
- The single step in the forecourt should be removed;
- The forecourt has been designed to separate the library forecourt from the community park;
- The public footpath on Blackburn Road is narrow and exposed;
- Strategy 1: treat the landscape as a heritage landscape and make minor adjustments to what is existing to ensure compliance, renew the existing planting;
- Strategy 2: retain significant trees and develop a new strategy for renewal of the forecourt with the design intention of integrating the building and entrance into the streetscape using contemporary urban design, lighting, signage, landscape and public art.

5.4 Arborist Report

The Arborist assessment, undertaken by Homewood Consulting Pty Ltd, provides a detailed assessment of existing trees surrounding the library including classification, size, health, landscape contribution, and an assessment of the retention value of each individual tree.

- Five trees were assessed ‘retain’. These trees are in good health and are significant in the landscape. The report recommends that any proposed construction should be designed around these trees;
- Nine trees were assessed ‘if possible, retain’. These trees are in good to fair condition and are expected to live 10 years of more. The report recommends that if designing around these trees is not feasible or practical, removal and replacement would be an acceptable compromise;
- Five trees were assessed ‘not worth retaining’. These trees are small and insignificant in the landscape;
- One tree is located on adjoining property (close to the rail line) and was assessed ‘third party ownership’. The report recommends that this species is a weed in Victoria and could be removed with consultation with the owner;
- The report also provided specifications and guidelines for establishing Tree Protection Zones during construction.

5.5 Traffic Review

The traffic review, undertaken by O’Brien Traffic, provides a summary of the locations and utilisation of car parking in the vicinity of Blackburn Library.

- Overall there is a significant amount of parking provided to the West of Blackburn Road at the rear of the shops facing South Parade, and parking occupancy was low at the time of the survey;
- There is less parking available on Central Road, closer to the library, and this parking was fully utilised at the time of the survey;
- There were two cars in the library staff car park at the time of the survey;
- Library users would use the 1 hour or 3 hour restricted spaces in the area, this time restriction was deemed adequate for library users;

5.6 Asbestos Report

An asbestos audit was undertaken by Council and summary information indicates the following:

- Asbestos is present in wall mounted electrical cabinets and switchboards;
- Asbestos is present in walls and ceilings in several zones including roller shutter door lobby, plant room space, saves and entry porch;
- There is potentially asbestos behind ceramic wall tiles to staff kitchen area;
6.1 Existing Building – General Issues

In addition to compliance issues as outlined in section 5.0, the library requires the following remedial work to meet current general access, occupational health and safety benchmarks, and to function successfully in delivering a successful contemporary library program:

- redress ohs issues with regard to staff work patterns, delivery, lifting and movement of heavy goods;
- redress staff and community access requirements;
- redress safety issues associated with conflicting circulation paths;
- improve internal sightlines;
- breakdown the barrier between internal and external sightlines, providing passive surveillance of the associated public realm;
- additional flexible floor area is required to allow for the delivery of more community and library programs;
- additional space, and changes in adjacencies will improve ambience.

6.2 Existing Building – Architectural Issues

Relationship with the Public Domain / The Closed Facade

The current building does not have a strong presence in the streetscape. The setback position of the building and the barrier created by the brick planter boxes isolate the building to the extent that it is not recognisable as a community facility. There are inadequate sight lines to the library from the train station and from surrounding streets approaching the library.

The flat and uninspiring façade is largely closed off with minimal outlook to the surroundings, and the building does not engage with its site or with the surrounding facilities. The library largely relies on signage to communicate its function, which presents an uninviting image to the public who are unable to see into the library building.

The building turns takes no advantage of its location within its larger site, which includes potential green and recreational outlooks of interest to the north (landscaped train line and bike/walking path), and east (sporting activities, landscape, war memorial and child care centre).

In line with comments presented in the landscape audit, an architectural strategy for renewal of the forecourt to elevate the building status and entrance in the streetscape is essential, combining a new façade with contemporary urban design, lighting, signage, landscape and public art.

The rear (east) façade and access route through the site is hostile and possibly unsafe.
6.3 The Functional Brief

A separate Return Brief document has been prepared in liaison with library stakeholders, which includes a completed space data sheet for each space in a ‘revised’ contemporary library. An extract of the general needs of several particular spaces are summarised below.

In summary, based on spatial analysis of the brief, the current footprint of the building (nominally 400 square metres) is insufficient to support the desired functional requirements. Internal reconfiguration is required, and the existing footprint requires extension.

6.3.1 Entry and Public Zones

Air Lock (A-1)
Weather barrier
Fire indicator panel
Adjacent to after hours returns chutes

Foyer / Entry (A-2)
Informal area for social interaction
Community / library service information displayed
Council information point including agendas and reports for public comment
Local displays and exhibitions

After Hours Book Return Chute (A-3)
Chute for return of library items when library is closed and open
Small retrieval room
Located near service desk
Collection bin and trolleys
Direct access from street and car parking
Weather protection and lighting externally

Meeting Room (A-4)
Available for library and community use
Accessed when library is closed / separate zoning
AV facility including projector and screen
Stackable chairs and meeting tables

Kitchenette (A-5)
Tea and coffee point
Adjacent to meeting room

6.3.2 Circulation / Information Services

Circulation / Information Desk (B-1)
Supervision of library, internet zone & entry
Loans service point - scanning items, handling payments, phone enquiries
Information service point - help desk & registration of new members
3-4 staff members at one time
Cash register
Computer terminals, transaction printers
Queue management required
Adjacent to workroom
Pamphlet display
Reserved items on shelving
Returning of books
Trolleys and transit tubs
Adjacent to service desk

Self Check Facilities (B-2)
Self checkout computer terminals
Standing and wheelchair accessible

6.3.3 Common Spaces

General Reading Area (D-1)
Areas for quiet, relaxed reading located throughout library
Adjacent to magazines & newspapers
Library reference materials
Study tables and chairs
Catalogues (D-3)
Public access to database of Library collection
Located throughout library
Internet Lounge (D-4)
Public access to internet – 8 no PC’s
Small group study on individual computers
Large group training sessions on computers
Visible from information desk
Adjacent to photocopier / printer

Display Space (D-5)
Display for library news, community groups
Free standing and wall mounted display cabinets

Photocopying Facilities (D-6)
Public access to photocopying and printing facilities
Coin box
Adjacent to internet lounge
Sorting table

Story Time Area (D-7)
Space for reading to young children
Space for children to use library materials
Integrated into Junior collection
Low tables and chairs for activities
Lounge seating for parents
Space to accommodate prams

6.3.4 Staff Spaces

Team Leader Office (E-1)
Office accommodation for team leader including workstation, shelving etc
Small meeting table for 2-3 people
Acoustic privacy

Staff Work Room (E-2)
Open plan office for general library operations - 4 people
Adjacent to service desk, delivery area, Team Leader office
Workstations, cupboards, shelving, layout space

Home Lending Service (E-3)
Incorporated with workroom
Workstation, bench, area for trolleys
Adjacent to delivery area

Loading Dock (E-4)
Receipt and dispatch of books and library foods for library operations
Tub storage
6.4 Return brief and development options

Table 1 provides an overview of space allocation for the existing library, and for Design Options 1, 2 and 3. The summary cost estimate / $ for each option is to be read with reference to Quantity Surveyor cost reports.

Table 2 details space and amenity data as defined in the Return Brief, derived from analysis of existing and future library needs, community and stakeholder information. Refer to separate Return Brief document for full copies of space data sheets.

### Table 1 - area and cost overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Existing m²</th>
<th>Option 1 m² within existing building footprint</th>
<th>Option 2 m² within existing building footprint &amp; extend building footprint</th>
<th>Option 3 m² long term vision for learning hub hybrid building</th>
<th>Cost estimate / $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIBRARY / m²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>B CIRCULATION/INFO SERVICES</td>
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<td>30.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>C COLLECTION</td>
<td></td>
<td>na</td>
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<td>164.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>D COMMON SPACES</td>
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<td>345.7</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.16M</td>
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<tr>
<td>F AMENITIES</td>
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<td>43.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.16M</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL / m²</td>
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<td>402.6</td>
<td>565.2</td>
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### Table 2 - space and amenity data

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<th>Option 2 m² within existing building footprint &amp; extend building footprint</th>
<th>Option 3 m² long term vision for learning hub hybrid building</th>
<th>Cost estimate / $</th>
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<td>6.4 Return brief and development options</td>
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<td>A-1 Air lock</td>
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<td>A-2 Foyer / Entry</td>
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<td>A-3 After Hours Return Chute</td>
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<td>A-4 Meeting Room</td>
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<td>A-5 Kitchenette</td>
<td></td>
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<td>C-2 Non Fiction</td>
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<td>38 @ 1600</td>
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<td>C-3 Reference</td>
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<td>2 @ 1600</td>
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<td>C-4 Large Print</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-5 Adult Talking Books</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 @ 1600</td>
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<td>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-6 Paperbacks</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 spinners</td>
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<td>C-7 Music CDs</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 @ 1600</td>
<td>)</td>
<td>)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-8 Adult DVDs</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 @ 1600</td>
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<td>)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-9 CD ROMs</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 @ 1600</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-10 Magazines</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>18 @ 1600</td>
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<td>C-14 Early Readers</td>
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<td>C-15 Junior Talking Books</td>
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<td>)</td>
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<td>C-16 Junior Music CDs</td>
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</tr>
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<td>C-17 Junior DVDs</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 @ 1600</td>
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<td>C-18 Teen Fiction</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5 @ 1600</td>
<td>8.3</td>
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<td>C-21 Teenage Magazines</td>
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<td>C-22 Chinese Collection</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>C-23 Chinese Music CDs</td>
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<td>2 @ 1600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Option 2 collection floor area requirement assumes overlap in circulation allowances and use of walls for collection shelving – represented as nominally 15% less than Option 3.

GARNER DAVIS ARCHITECTS Revision A / 17
7.1 Scope of Works – Option 1

Option 1 proposes a minimal refurbishment, generally retaining the building in its current form and rearranging internal spatial adjacencies in an effort to improve operational constraints.

No extension to the existing footprint is proposed; however, major internal refurbishment is required to redress access, Building Code of Australia (BCA), occupational health and safety, site safety, and sustainability issues. Significant rectification works to the existing building are also required externally to address issues including water ingress, vermin, and general building maintenance.

Access and Address
- Design upgrade to existing façade to improve street presence and visual connections;
- Minor works to improve entry sequence, amend entry to one door;
- Generally retain existing landscape and pathways;
- Demolish existing, rebuild new amenities to meet universal access code.

Circulation
- Demolish interior non-structural partitions to redefine internal planning;
- Relocate service desk to improve internal circulation and visual connections;
- Redefine delivery routes, staff zones, and staff work patterns.

Structure
- Non-structural internal wall modifications;
- Works to roof to redress ongoing water ingress and box gutter problems;
- No new structural works.

Mechanical Services
- Retain existing services.

Sustainability options
- Install new energy-efficient lighting;
- Upgrade insulation to meet BCA requirements;
- Install water-efficient fixtures and fittings to new amenity zones;
- Install new north windows and sunshading.

Electrical Services
- New lighting throughout (likely new ceiling throughout required);
- Upgrade quantity of power outlets;
- Retain existing wireless IT system.

Hydraulic Services
- New energy-efficient HWS;
- Fire hydrant upgrade;
- Fixtures and fittings to be replaced.

Fire Services
- Fire detection system upgrade.

7.2 Opinion of Probable Cost – Option 1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Building works &amp; Furniture, Fitout &amp; Equipment</td>
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<td>Paving, ramps etc</td>
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<td>Demolition &amp; site preparation</td>
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<td>External services</td>
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<td>Design and other fees</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL (Excluding GST)</strong></td>
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Recommendation
Option 1 is not recommended as it does not represent value for money due to the extensive works required to upgrade the building to meet current code requirements, and the extent of general maintenance required on materials and finishes that have reached the end of their life.

Option 1 is limited and does not resolve all operational constraints, all access issues, and cannot fully meet customer needs and requirements.

Option 1 does not include works to the public realm and hence makes no change to the current poor image of the library as a community place.
8.1 Scope of Works – Option 2

Option 2 proposes a more significant scope of works, and focuses on solving both life cycle issues and operational issues through a combination of interior reconfiguration and extension of the existing building footprint on the site to accommodate a reduced extent of the operational brief in a cost effective way.

Selective demolition of the existing footprint is proposed, including complete demolition of toilet / amenity zone, entry airlock, fixtures, fittings, wall and ceiling linings, power, data, comms and joinery.

Demolition and redesign of external hard landscape including planter boxes, seats, garden beds, ramps, handrails is proposed. Selective tree removal and redesign of landscape to and around retained trees will reimage the site.

Access and Address
• Entry path and sequence redesigned;
• Entry landscape modified;
• Northern courtyard added;
• Façade & street presence redesigned.

Circulation
• Circulation patterns redefined and clarified;
• Demolish interior non structural partitions to redefine internal planning, visual connections and way finding;
• Relocate service desk to improve internal circulation and visual connections;
• Redefine delivery routes, staff zones and staff work patterns.

Structure
• Wall modifications to areas retained;
• Demolition of non compliant, water or vermin affected areas;
• New structural works to accommodate extended floor plan.

Mechanical Services
• New energy efficient mechanical services throughout.

Sustainability options
• Install new energy efficient lighting;
• All insulation to meet BCA requirements;
• Water efficient fixtures and fittings to new amenities zones;
• New windows and sunshading to lift natural light levels;

Electrical Services
• New lighting throughout;
• Upgrade power and comms throughout;
• Upgrade security.

Hydraulic Services
• New energy efficient HWS;
• New fixtures and fittings throughout.

Fire Services
• New fire detection system.

8.2 Opinion of Probable Cost – Option 2

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<td>Cost / time escalation</td>
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<td>Streetscape upgrade – library forecourt</td>
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<td>Building as sign</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL (excluding GST)</strong></td>
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Recommendation
Option 2 is recommended as an exciting solution to pressing library needs as it represents excellent value for money. Building on the adequate structure of the existing library, and exploiting the attractive landscaped nature of the site, the building footprint is extended and reconfigured. The outcome provides the community with a larger, more flexible place, full of light and sun, and capturing landscape views. New windows break down internal / external barriers and the library is given a new image on the street as an inviting civic and community asset.

Option 2 resolves all operational constraints, all access issues and meets customer needs and requirements.

Option 2 includes forecourt and landscape works to the public realm, and re-vision the image of the library into a vibrant contemporary community place.

The recommendation to progress Option 2 proposes that the project be staged. Stage one ($150,000) encompasses the design of the library to take place in 2012 / 2013 financial year with the remaining staged process to be determined as part of the capital works process.
9.1 Scope of Works – Option 3

Option 3 takes into consideration the potential grade separation for Blackburn Road, and acknowledges that a long term vision for the Blackburn Library may not be on the current site.

Therefore Option 3 extends an abstract project brief beyond its origins as a library, indicating a ‘blue sky’ project, not bound by the constraints of the current site, and proposing potential synergies with other community facilities in a vision for a ‘learning hub’ hybrid building model.

Option 3 combines community facilities considered to have long term project synergies. In this preliminary overview, facilities nominated emerged from stakeholder discussion and the Blackburn Library & The Avenue Neighbourhood House Precinct Feasibility Study Report – Burns Bridge Australia Pty Ltd (2007). Project components and the $ cost indicated is extracted from the 2007 report, with escalation costs added, and excludes land acquisition costs.

Project exemplars for the hybrid multi purpose building include:

Surrey Hills Library and Community Centre, Sydney (FJMT architects)
Hume Global Learning Village, Craigieburn (image from council report)

9.2 Opinion of Probable Cost – Option 3

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<td>Community hub</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior citizens centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community facility</td>
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<td>Maternal and child health centre</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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*Excludes land acquisition costs & GST

Recommendation

Over and above the recommendation to progress Option 2 as described in Section 8.0, it is recommended that the City of Whitehorse consider the long term urban design and community benefits that would emerge from a consolidated project that makes a significant contribution to the urban form of the city of Blackburn.
10.1 Urban Design - Library Precinct Vision

Section 3.1 provides a summary overview of the key objectives, strategies and actions identified by the city’s Urban Design Framework for the Blackburn Station Village precinct, which includes the library. The framework establishes strategic directions and design guidelines to guide change and development over the next 15 years.

The connections and urban design strategies recommended to be implemented with the library upgrade (as outlined in Option 2 recommendation, Section 8.2) are intended to propose a design lever that can be built upon to further enhance a pedestrian friendly retail village. Although dependent upon the final design of the grade separation for Blackburn Road and the railway line, it is possible that the proposed urban design initiatives could remain largely unaffected by the future road and rail works.

With reference to the principles outlined for the precinct, several strategies are proposed to be implemented in this feasibility report for immediate benefit to the library redevelopment. The strategies proposed form part of the larger urban vision that will unfold over time. The following considerations and opportunities are elaborated visually in this section:

- Building as sign;
- A linear connection to the station;
- Slowing traffic;
- Laneways and pedestrian links;
- Re-thinking car parking as landscape;
- The information trail;
- Contained events;
- Signage;
- Urban objects.

10.2 Opinion of Probable Cost – Library & Urban Design Initiatives

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Library &amp; Urban Design Initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library – concept option 2</td>
<td>2,534,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes streetscape upgrade – library forecourt. Building as sign and traffic slow, pedestrian &amp; bike crossings to Blackburn Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible future Urban Design Initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laneway upgrade – pedestrian link</td>
<td>77,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetscape upgrade – South Parade</td>
<td>106,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetscape upgrade – Blackburn Road</td>
<td>42,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetscape upgrade – West laneway</td>
<td>54,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library trail</td>
<td>39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>136,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (excluding GST)</td>
<td><strong>2,988,072</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Future Urban Design Initiatives

Scope and extent subject to future Council consideration and possible alternative funding arrangements

- Linear shelters
- Laneway upgrades (extended)
- Urban objects
- WSUD carpark upgrades

Recommendation

Over and above the recommendation to progress Option 2 as described in Section 8.0, it is recommended that the City of Whitehorse consider the long term urban design and community benefits that would emerge from extending the project vision to undertake selected urban and streetscape works that better integrate the library into the Blackburn Station Village precinct as outlined in the City’s Urban Design Framework.

Benefits include:

- Outdoor seating and urban objects throughout the precinct will enliven the streetscape, give rise to street occupation, have positive impact on retail zones, and reinforce the village atmosphere;
- The library forecourt is re-visioned as a community focal point;
- Key pedestrian linkages are enhanced;
- Footpaths, accessible laneways and gathering spaces are made DDA compliant;
- Pedestrian and cyclist navigability, amenity and safety is improved through the precinct including developing a signage / way finding strategy;
- Streetscape treatment and landscaping throughout the precinct is upgraded;
- Tree planting along key pedestrian routes is improved, with consideration of existing sightlines between key locations – including train station to library.
1 **Building as sign**

The new façade needs to re-image the library to the street. Design considerations and opportunities include:

- Highlighting entry;
- Breaking down visual barriers and exposing internal activity;
- Telling a story via the façade.

2 **A linear connection to the station**

The library needs to be highlighted as a destination from the station precinct. Design considerations and opportunities include:

- The impact of linear directional landscape;
- A sense of design continuity;
- The capacity of linear design to connect distant items;
- Way finding associations with pathways;
- Flexibility of use for linear shelter including market, transport shelter, shade;
- Potential use as secure bike storage.

3 **Slowing traffic**

The hostile nature of Blackburn Road requires redress. Design considerations for both Blackburn Road and local feeder streets might include:

- Introduction of 40km hour ‘slow zone’ to library road environment;
- Adding trees to the street environment;
- Providing more visual stimulation;
- Changing texture for roads, pedestrian paths.
4. Laneways and pedestrian links
Pedestrian paths require visibility and access improvements to stimulate intentional and incidental use, and to promote safe access through linked sites. Considerations for the re-positioning of the library include:

- Promoting the urban design strategy of active edges to internal car parks;
- Signifying pathways with planting corridors, pavement treatment, signs;
- Illumination / lighting strategy to ensure safety.

5. Rethinking car parking as landscape
Existing car parking requires re-visioning to ensure use is optimised. Considerations include:

- A water sustainable urban designed car park strategy;
- Planting for water runoff, shade and outlook from internal active spaces;
- Illumination / lighting strategy to ensure safety.

6. The information trail
Many cities include permanent visitor and community education to showcase and celebrate local historic detail or successful community members. Considerations and opportunities for linking the retail precinct to the library include:

- A permanent literary trail celebrating local writers inset to pavement;
- Temporary or permanent community arts trail or installations.
7 Contained events
The library courtyard might be a venue to host events. Considerations and opportunities associated with the library include:

- Open air / moonlight cinema in library courtyard;
- Children’s performance;
- Arts launches, poetry readings;
- Wireless internet for wi-fi use throughout library & courtyard.

8 Signage
The development of a stronger signage strategy with the objective of establishing links between key precinct components is important. Considerations and opportunities include:

- Ease of circulation and navigation throughout the site including train station, library, retail, parking, Morton Park;
- Clear communication of public information with a consistent, recognisable visual language in a hierarchy of primary, secondary & tertiary status signs;
- Well-designed signage enhances a sense of place;
- Provide signage for circulation, mapping, place identification, public facility information and street names;
- Include signage for pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular routes, including clear links to parking;
- Locate signage at key intersections of circulation routes.

9 Urban objects
Distant sites can be tied together by a common language of urban objects. Considerations and opportunities for the library include:

- The library forecourt must play host to a language of urban objects that provide a continuing story over the station precinct;
- Objects include bicycle racks, seating elements;
- Consider a commissioned or community sculpture trail.