

A GUIDE FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDINGS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

PEOPLE PLACES



State Library
of New South Wales

SECOND EDITION

Prepared by consultants Heather Nesbitt Planning
in association with Bligh Voller Nield for the Library
Council Of New South Wales

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**HEATHER NESBITT PLANNING IN ASSOCIATION WITH
BLIGH VOLLER NIELD**

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LIBRARY COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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This document and supplementary material, including examples of recent library building projects in New South Wales, can be found on the State Library of New South Wales web pages at www.sl.nsw.gov.au

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Foreword

The vital contribution of public libraries to social capital and to the educational and economic development of communities is recognised across the developed world. Support for this role has underpinned the commitment of local and State governments in New South Wales to high quality public library services. Libraries can be fully effective for their communities only if they have the right combination of proficient staff, up-to-date information resources, reliable equipment and telecommunications, and well-planned buildings.

Library buildings represent a major investment by local authorities. In order to promote planning techniques and practical guidelines Heather Nesbitt and Bligh Voller Nield were commissioned to research and prepare what became the first edition of *People places* in 2000. Since then, the principles of *People places* have been applied to scores of library building projects across New South Wales. Other Australian States have found the publication useful and it has also attracted some international attention as a helpful planning guide. Special recognition was given to *People places* when it was awarded a Commendation by the Royal Australian Planning Institute, New South Wales, in the category 'Plan Making and Strategies by State or Federal Governments'.

Libraries operate in a dynamic technological, economic and social environment, and the Library Council therefore undertook to review *People places* from time to time. By 2005 many library buildings planned using *People places* as a guide had been open long enough for an assessment to be made of the relevance and effectiveness of the planning principles. There was also a need to address issues which had gained prominence in those five years or which were expected to have a major impact over the next ten to fifteen years. It was important for the review to be based on wide consultation within the New South Wales Public Library Network, as had been the case with the original publication.

Independent external consultants were therefore sought and, after a competitive selection process, Heather Nesbitt Planning and Bligh Voller Nield were appointed to carry out the review and revision. The consultation process has shown wide acceptance of *People places*. There has been unanimous appreciation of the soundness of its planning principles. The integrity of these principles remains, as do the floor space benchmarks, but there has been extensive revision of the text to clarify issues and to extend the information provided. The range of issues raised and the revisions made in this edition are set out fully in section 1.2.

The effectiveness of a sample of post-*People places* buildings was also assessed as part of this consultancy. Six library buildings were examined in detail and their case studies are on the State Library's website. These are just a few of the many successful public library buildings constructed in New South Wales in the past five years.

This new edition of *People places* was endorsed by the Library Council of New South Wales at its meeting on 24 October 2005. Like the previous edition, it shares a wealth of practical advice on the exciting but often challenging process of planning a new public library building to meet the needs of the community well into the new millennium.

Belinda Hutchinson
President,
Library Council of New South Wales

Dagmar Schmidmaier AM
State Librarian & Chief Executive,
State Library of New South Wales

October 2005

Acknowledgements

This second edition of *People places*, like its predecessor, was developed in close consultation with practitioners involved in the planning, building and management of public libraries in NSW. Their experience in applying the guidelines to public library building projects was invaluable.

Focus groups were a key part of the consultation process, and the cooperation of participants and of the organisations which hosted these meetings is gratefully acknowledged. Focus groups were held at the State Library of New South Wales, Singleton Public Library and Temora Public Library. Case studies on the application of the guidelines to recently built public library buildings were also undertaken at Lithgow, Narellan, Narooma, Strathfield, Singleton and Temora. A site visit was also made to the Riverina Regional Library Mobile Service at Lockhart.

In addition, all NSW Councils and public libraries were invited to participate through faxbacks, written submissions and feedback at workshops in Sydney, Singleton and Temora. Councils, library organisations and others who participated in the focus groups, responded to the discussion paper and draft revision, and/or provided valuable background information about their library projects were:

- Ashfield Municipal Council
- Auslib Library Consulting
- Baulkham Hills Shire Council
- Bankstown City Council
- Bega Valley Shire Council
- Bland Shire Council
- Bourke Shire Council
- Camden Council
- Campbelltown City Council
- City of Blue Mountains
- City of Canada Bay Council
- City of Lithgow Council
- City of Ryde Council
- City of Sydney Council
- Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Fairfield City Council
- Great Lakes Council
- Hornsby Shire Council
- Hurstville City Council
- Inverell Shire Council
- Kogarah Municipal Council
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Lane Cove Municipal Council
- Leeton Shire Council
- Leichhardt Municipal Council
- Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd
- Maitland City Council
- Marrickville Council
- Monaro Regional Library and Information Service
- Narrandera Shire Council
- Northern Regional Library and Information Service
- Randwick City Council
- Riverina Regional Library
- Rockdale City Council
- Singleton Shire Council
- Strathfield Municipal Council
- Sutherland Shire Council
- Tamworth Regional Council
- Temora Shire Council
- Tumbarumba Shire Council
- Upper Hunter Shire Council
- Wagga Wagga City Council
- Warringah Council
- Willoughby City Council
- Wollongong City Council

The consultants for the project were Heather Nesbitt, Heather Nesbitt Planning and Tim Brook, Bligh Voller Nield.

A Steering Committee met and communicated regularly with the consultants. This group included representation from country and city library services and from local government, together with State Library personnel. Its members were:

- Lynne Makin, CEO/Library Manager, Upper Murray Regional Library Service representing the Country Public Libraries Association (CPLA)
- Richard Morriss, Director Corporate Services, Jerilderie Shire Council
- Frances Sims, Library Services Manager, Willoughby City Library representing the Metropolitan Public Libraries Association, New South Wales (MPLA)
- Kathleen Bresnahan, Assistant State Librarian, Public Library Services, State Library
- Kerrie Burgess, Research Coordinator, State Library
- Dr David Jones, Manager, Building and Advisory Services, Public Library Services, State Library (Convenor)
- Cameron Morley, Manager, Funding and Advisory Services, Public Library Services, State Library

The support and assistance of all these individuals and organisations is gratefully acknowledged.

Introduction:

How to use *People places*

1.1 The Purpose of *People places*

Since 2000, *People places: A guide for public library buildings in New South Wales* has provided public libraries throughout NSW with an important planning tool to assist in the development of public library buildings. But with rapid changes occurring within our communities, it was resolved that the document be revisited, evaluated and revised within five years. This was considered to be an essential component of good planning and good library management.

This second edition is the result of this revision process. Its focus remains on being a practical resource tool for all stakeholders involved in the planning and construction of public library buildings. This not only includes public librarians but also local government officers, elected representatives, architects, library users and the general community.

To ensure that it provides the type of information which is relevant to this broad range of stakeholders, *People places* discusses not only issues involved in the actual design of a library but also the process required to achieve a successful library development project. It provides information based on a number of library projects throughout NSW and discussions with stakeholders involved first-hand in these projects. Both the pitfalls and the successes are highlighted, as a library development project, like any building project, can be long, complex and difficult. It is hoped that *People places* will help to improve and expedite the process for all stakeholders involved.

This revised edition provides information on:

- The importance of public libraries in our community
- Future trends which impact on library design
- How to determine the need and size for a new or extended library building
- What issues need to be considered in planning for a new or extended library building
- Establishing a process which will take the library development project from inception to completion
- Designing and building a public library which meets the community needs both now and in the future

People places focuses on new innovative models for library provision and the integration of modern technology into library functions and design. This deliberate approach is in response to the strong push from stakeholders to ensure that all new and extended library buildings grasp the many opportunities available to them to provide a facility and service which is relevant to future generations. Public libraries need to be planned and built not only to meet the needs of our community today but also for the future.

1.2 How *People places* was developed

We live in an ever-changing community in which new trends and challenges are constantly evident. For public libraries in NSW, this dynamic environment provides a range of opportunities for the development and enhancement of public library services and will ensure they are equipped and relevant in the new millennium. Already many communities are meeting the challenge and forging new models for both the physical design of public libraries and the delivery of public library services to the community.

In early 2000, the Library Council of New South Wales published *People places*. In 2005, it engaged consultant Heather Nesbitt in association with architects Bligh Voller Nield to evaluate and potentially revise these guidelines based on the outcomes of a consultation program with key stakeholders. The consultants also evaluated the application of the guidelines to six case study library buildings built since 2000.

The project was guided by a Steering Committee comprising representatives from the Metropolitan Public Libraries Association, NSW (MPLA); Country Public Libraries Association of NSW (CPLA); a Council representative; and the State Library of New South Wales. An issues paper and draft revision of *People places* were notified to all NSW Councils and made available on the State Library website for public comment.

People places is the outcome of this process and provides an updated approach to the planning and construction of public libraries. It is the product of the extensive involvement and commitment of local government and communities throughout the State and reflects their views and aspirations for the future of public libraries.

Additions to the guidelines are based on feedback from the key stakeholders and a focus on improvements to make the guidelines more user-friendly and applicable in the upcoming five to ten years. The table following summarises the revisions made. Importantly, no changes have been made to the methodologies used to determine the benchmark area sizes for public library buildings. The case study evaluations highlighted that the benchmark methodologies have been successful in providing public library buildings which meet the vision and needs of their communities. The consultation feedback focussed primarily on the need to make the benchmark methodologies simpler to understand and apply. This edition has sought to respond to this issue.



What's New in this Edition?

Issue	Section Reference	Revision
Need to update statistical data	<i>Section 2</i> and throughout text	Updated census data and current trends
Importance of public libraries as social capital	<i>Section 2.2.1</i> Public libraries as social capital	New section provided
Difficulty of applying and using population and service-based benchmarks	<i>Section 3.3.4</i> Benchmark-based need	<p>Shelving height reduced to 4 shelves rather than 5. Minor increase in items per shelf.</p> <p>Minor wording changes to service and population based benchmarks to improve understanding</p> <p>Co-location example provided.</p> <p>Increased number of optional service areas, e.g. archival storage, specialist genre collection</p>
Co-located and joint-use libraries will increase in popularity for Councils	<i>Section 4.4</i> Co-location and Joint Use	<p>Provides information on planning, management, operation, and marketing.</p> <p>Includes information on building implications, e.g. soundproofing, room dividers, etc</p>
Increasing influence of technology	<i>Section 4.5</i> Developing a local technology plan	<p>Standard for public access internet computer increased to 1 per 3000 persons which is slightly higher than the existing NSW provision. Allows for an expected increase in computer and Internet demand in the next 5 years.</p> <p>Reviewed local technology plan space and function requirements</p>



Issue	Section Reference	Revision
Importance of locational criteria	<i>Section 5.1</i> Choosing a site for a public library	Expanded recommended locational criteria
Increase in specialist/genre collections	<i>Section 5.4</i> Checklist of public library functional areas	Reviewed description of collections and their space requirements
Little information on managing the construction process	<i>Section 5.6</i> Selecting the Architect, Project Manager and Other Consultants	Added new sub-section on appointment of project manager
Environmentally sustainable buildings will become more important for local Councils	<i>Section 6.7</i> Ecological sustainability	Rewritten to provide information on BASIX and Green Star rating systems and implications for library building design.
Marketing is essential for libraries	<i>Section 6.6</i> Marketing <i>Section 6.13</i> Shelving	New section on marketing Expanded section on shelving with minor changes. Number of shelves high reduced from 5 to 4.
Importance of mobile libraries	<i>Section 6.16</i> Mobile Libraries	Expanded section and added reference/web link
No mention of occupational health and safety requirements	<i>Section 6.11</i> Occupational Health and Safety	New section on Occupational Health and Safety
Increasing role of libraries for archival storage and conservation	Throughout text	Included in functional and space requirements Provided link to State Records NSW
Concern over safety of staff and users	<i>Section 5.2</i> Safer by Design principles for sites and buildings <i>Section 6.12</i> Personal and Property Security	New section with information about "Safer by Design" guidelines New section about personal safety and crime prevention.

1.3 Structure of *People places*

People places is divided into seven sections. Each section relates to a specific part of the overall process involved in the planning and design of a new or extended public library building. The sections are numbered to enable quick reference to the information required. Each section can be used independently, collectively or in sequence depending on what is appropriate for the particular issues to be addressed.

People places is supplemented by information on the State Library of New South Wales website. This will include fact sheets on a number of recent library projects throughout the State built using *People places*.

1.4 How to Use *People places*

As a resource tool, *People places* should be used to assist you in any matter involving the planning and design of public library buildings.

If you are interested in specific issues, use the *Table of Contents* to find out which section has the appropriate information. For example, you may want to look at the range of approaches to financing public library buildings. *Section 4.2* provides information on a range of potential funding approaches, which can be explored.

People places can also be used as a step-by-step guide to the planning and eventual construction of a new library building. In this instance, your community may be growing rapidly and it is obvious that one or several new service points will be required in the next 20 years. By following each section as a step-by-step process, you can map out a work program or flow chart on what should be done to plan for this expansion of the library service. Reading the text like a story, *People places* will take you through an overall process with guidance on what needs to be considered and how this should be addressed.

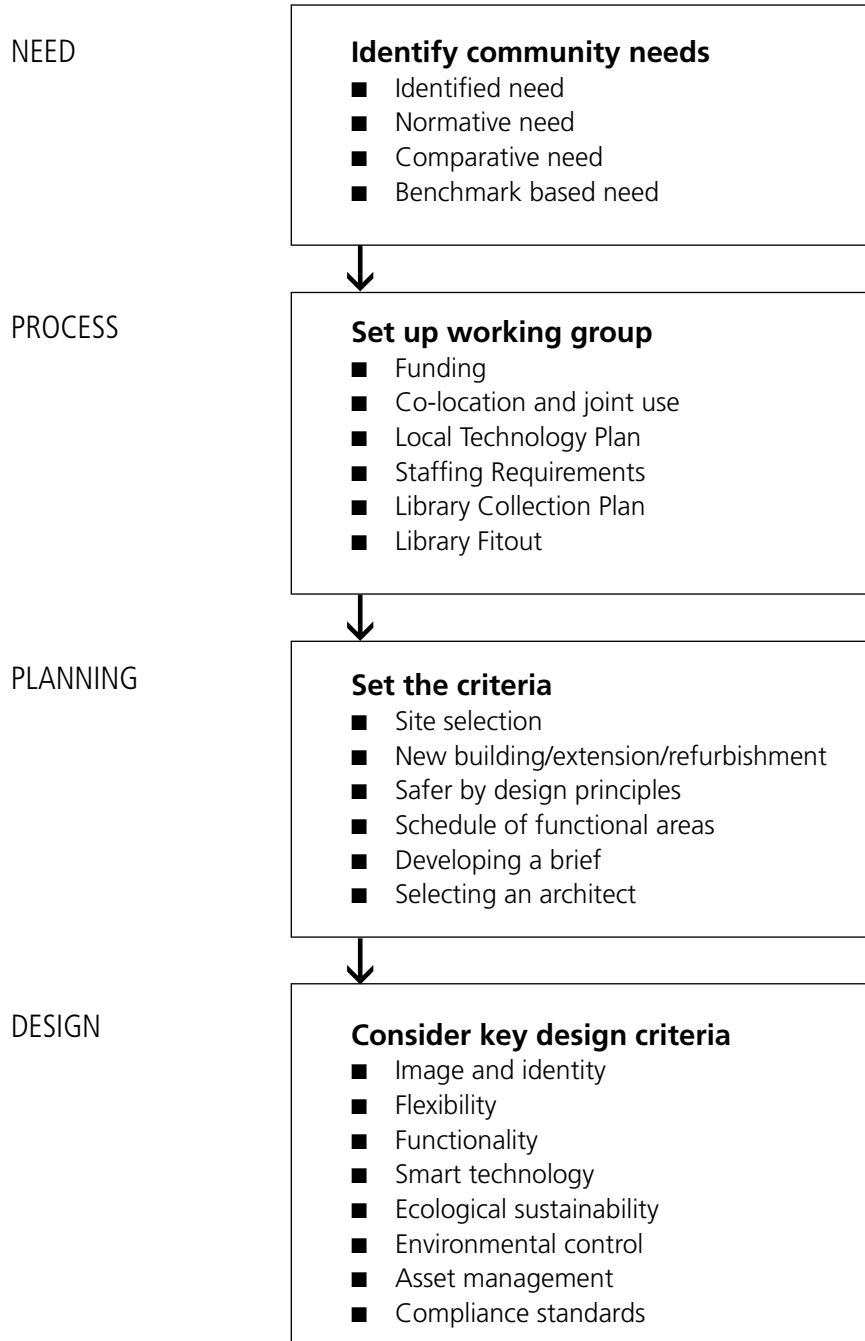
The examples of recent public library buildings on the State Library's web pages (www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls) are intended to illustrate the innovative approaches that have been used throughout NSW and how each community addresses its own particular needs. The consultations highlighted that very often, when planning a new library, stakeholders visit other recently built libraries. They want to find out how other areas have tackled similar issues that they are facing. The examples on the web pages provide this information in a readily accessible form. Personal visits to new libraries you are interested in should certainly still be undertaken, but the projects on the web pages will help to provide a broader overview of new approaches and innovations.

It is important to remember however that each library building and the service it provides is unique and should reflect the needs and aspirations of its community. The examples on the web pages will provide you with ideas on what other communities are doing and hopefully provide some direction on potential solutions. They are not intended to be replicated in communities throughout the State but rather to highlight the range of approaches that can be used.

A list of references, including web sites, and relevant contacts is provided in *Section 7* for further information and research. As with any guide, this listing will become dated over time and you should ensure that you check for any later editions of the works included, particularly codes and standards.

Planning and Construction of Public Library Buildings

A Collaborative Planning Process



Public Libraries: An Essential Resource for the Community

2.1 Public Libraries for the Future

Public libraries are one of the most well used educational, cultural and social facilities available within our community. The relevance of libraries to today's community is evident in their high levels of use and attraction to a broad range of users from all ages and backgrounds.

Almost half of the New South Wales population are registered library members with many more people visiting and using public libraries than are registered members. In 2003/04, 99.6 million visits were made in Australia and 29.9 million visits in NSW to a local government library. This equates to 4.5 visits to a local public library for every NSW resident during the year (ABS, 2005).

With changing demographic and social trends, ever-increasing financial constraints for government and rapidly changing information technology, the design and function of libraries must change to meet these and other new challenges.

By providing a public library building that is well designed and consistent with the trends identified in *People places*, the benefits will be significant. Our future public libraries must be buildings that:

- Provide a cultural hub and focal point for the community
- Are functional and multipurpose accommodating a range of activities and uses
- Enable access to the latest in technology in a user-friendly manner
- Attract a wide range of users providing areas for relaxation, research, leisure and learning
- Are effective and efficient in the delivery of services
- Develop from a co-operative approach between all stakeholders to ensure that the changing needs of the community are met

With good planning and the allocation of adequate resources, public libraries can and will provide *value for money* for the community. A sound initial investment will provide a library building that remains functional and viable for the future.

2.2 Trends Impacting on Public Libraries

In designing public infrastructure, it is important to consider the changing social and demographic trends evident within the community and how these may affect the provision and delivery of services to the community. A range of issues has been identified below which are likely to have an impact on the design and function of public libraries in the next 10 to 20 years. Some are issues that are affecting libraries worldwide, while others are trends that are particular to NSW. It is important to monitor and identify emerging social and demographic trends continually, as in our modern world many systems are interrelated and connected. To remain relevant in our ever-changing community, public libraries must have a holistic view and take full advantage of the many opportunities available.

Some of the emerging trends which are likely to impact on the design and function of public libraries are outlined below.

2.2.1 Public Libraries as Places of Social Capital

Public libraries bring people from a range of backgrounds together to meet, network and potentially develop relationships with other members of the community. This is called social capital and is one of the building blocks of a strong community. Research highlights that social networks have value and affect the productivity and health of individuals and groups (Putnam, 2000).

For more vulnerable groups such as youth, older people, people with a disability and people from multicultural backgrounds, social capital is particularly important as it helps to build bridges of support with other members of the community and promotes inclusiveness. For all users, public libraries provide a “safe haven” where people can feel a part of the broader community (Cox et al, 2000 and PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005)

Public libraries often provide a community focal point or cultural focus. They may store information about local Indigenous and European heritage; information about community groups, events and activities; display local artworks and community art projects; and promote information about Council and government services and programs.

Public libraries are often a resource for social and economic regeneration. They provide resources for skills development, training and lifelong learning and as such are a major tool for people to increase economic opportunities.

For many communities, the public library building is often the only civic building in the area which is publicly accessible to everyone and typically generates significant pride. It is strongly valued by the community and this is reflected in its high levels of visitation and usage.

This important role for public libraries is supported by data from some libraries where 50% of users are non borrowers. Libraries are no longer only the realm of people borrowing books but also a place where people come to sit, read the newspaper, listen to music, play computer games, search the Internet and/or take part in the many activities and events held.

Section 7 provides references on the social value of public libraries to our communities and in particular, their importance as community meeting places.

2.2.2 Ageing of the NSW Community

The ageing of populations in modern Western societies is a well-documented trend. With people living longer and fewer children being born, the proportion of older residents in our community is increasing. Currently in NSW, 13% of residents are aged over 65 years with significant variations across the State. It is estimated that by 2011, one in five people in NSW (20%) will be aged over 65 years. Growth along the coastal areas of NSW is expected to be high with 30% of residents in the Great Lakes Shire expected to be aged 65 years and over by 2019. The largest proportional increases are expected to occur in people aged over 85 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002).

So how will this trend impact on library design and function? Already older residents are major users of libraries and this trend is likely to grow as the number of older residents with significant leisure time increases. Access to specialist collections, adult education, activities targeting seniors, increasing computer usage and browsing areas for casual users are examples

of potential trends that may be experienced. Access for older residents in retirement villages and housebound services will also need to be considered.

Research indicates that as age increases so does the level of disability in our community. Access for people with a disability will become an increasingly important issue and legislation such as the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and NSW Disability Services Act 1993 are having a significant impact on how services are designed and provided. Many Councils have formed Access Committees and/or have a Disability Action Plan which recommend actions for improving access to services for people with a disability. The State Library of New South Wales has a Disability Access Service that provides specialist advice and referral for people with a disability.

For both older people and people with a disability, physical design issues are of major importance. This translates into demands for single level buildings (or multilevel buildings with easy to access lifts), ramped access and automatic opening doors, easy-to-read signage, accessible toilets, accessible shelving and a range of other building requirements which are likely to have increased importance in the future. For many buildings, these design features also provide increased access for the broader community.

Specific services for older residents and people with a disability may also need to be considered. These may include large print books, specialist resources for people with a disability and a range of technology for accessing print and electronic resources. Designing libraries to meet the needs of our growing older population will be a major challenge in the future (*see Section 6.4*)

2.2.3 Youth Culture

Young people are important to our community and comprise 16% of NSW residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). Youth is generally defined as those aged 13-24 years old with the older age group often still dependents engaged in further education. They are significant users of public libraries, major consumers of information technology, and hold social attitudes that are often different from other groups in our community. Education approaches have changed and the NSW Board of Studies now promotes co-operative learning, research and group interaction. Individual learning is not the sole approach used and youth are encouraged to interact, discuss and develop ideas together in a co-operative and team manner.

For libraries, this has had a marked effect with many libraries now filled each afternoon with young people undertaking research projects, working on joint projects with fellow students and discussing project approaches and outcomes. The provision of meeting rooms, noisy areas, student research areas and facilities are some of the physical outcomes of this trend. Importantly, youth are interested and efficient in using new technology and have been quick to utilise the technology resources of libraries. Overseas and in NSW, many libraries are meeting the information needs of youth through the provision of online school resources and web pages. Accessed at home or at the library, this approach is proving popular and effective. It is evident that many other services can be linked to the needs of our youth and by maintaining their interest, our library customers of tomorrow will be assured.

Some of the examples of library projects on the State Library web pages (www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls) highlight the efforts made by public libraries to meet the needs of youth in their new

library projects. The State Library of New South Wales can also be contacted regarding specific information on designing public libraries to meet the needs of youth.

2.2.4 New Information Technologies

The “Information Society”, the “Information Superhighway” and the “Information Rich versus the Information Poor” are all terms which are used to highlight the expanding role of information technology in our society. The fact that changing information technology will heavily impact on our lives is well documented although how it will change our lives is not so clear. There are many wide ranging views with digital televisions, “smart” buildings, increased remote use of services, electronic commerce and so forth. Who does know where it will take us or where the changes will ever end?

In 2003, it was estimated that 65% of NSW households had a computer at home and 54% of NSW households had Internet access (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003). Access varies between capital cities and rural communities, between affluent and poorer communities and between young people and older people. Access is increasing through work, school, libraries and other educational facilities however this may be restricted by workplace and educational facility policies.

The New South Wales Government, through NSW.net and the *connect.nsw* strategy has provided an electronic information network linking Councils and public libraries throughout NSW. This enables the community to access many Government electronic services free of charge regardless of their location. The network provides access to the Internet, selected databases and in some instances, email facilities.

However, as computer and Internet access at home has increased so too has the provision and usage of computers in NSW public libraries. The total number of public access computers in NSW local government public libraries rose from 711 in 1999/00 to 2083 in 2003/04 with 100% having Internet access. Total booking hours have increased threefold by 1.4 million hours over the same period (State Library of New South Wales, 2004).

Research together with feedback from library users highlights that, to date, computer technology is likely to be used primarily for reference and information rather than fictional works and “reading for pleasure”. As highlighted in one of the focus groups, “you can’t cuddle up to a computer to read a novel”. Important references that highlight the future role of technology in our community are provided in *Section 7.6*.

Similarly, the concerns of some commentators that the increasing use of technology for research and information will mean that public libraries should be getting smaller, is not supported by the evidence gathered for this study. As highlighted in some of the case studies on the State Library web pages (www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls) public libraries have been required to provide additional space for technology such as computer training rooms, large areas for public access catalogues, dedicated computerised work stations for staff and additional storage for audiovisuals and CD-ROMS. As one library manager commented “with around half of all library visits apparently not involving a loan transaction, the library’s space for technology and other uses is at least as important as the library’s collection”. Appropriate, functional and adequate space to accommodate new information technologies is now a major requirement for public libraries.

New technologies such as self-check loans, self-help desks, quick use computers, wireless technology, ports for laptops and wireless local area network access points together with specialist librarians to assist online users are all impacting on library design and layout.

In summary, what is important for library stakeholders, *is not what is going to happen with information technology but rather making sure that public libraries are ready and able to take full advantage of the opportunities that are presented by technology*. This requires a vision and commitment to providing dedicated infrastructure that will provide the technological services needed by the community, as they become available. *Sections 4.5 and 6.5* provide more detailed information on how to meet these technological challenges in your library project.

2.2.5 Our Multicultural Society

Almost one in five people in NSW were born in countries where English is not the first language. In some communities in Sydney, more than half of the residents were born in non English speaking countries. Currently 20% of NSW residents speak a language other than English at home. The main languages spoken in NSW other than English are Arabic, Cantonese, Italian and Greek with Asian languages the fastest growing group (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001).

Our multicultural community is having and will continue to have a marked effect on our libraries. The increased provision of multilingual collections, English language classes and multilingual signage are evident in many libraries in NSW. Research conducted as part of this project and for the Library Council of New South Wales indicates that many people from multicultural backgrounds like to use the library and particularly view it as a place for social contact with other residents from similar backgrounds (Cultural Perspectives, 2003).

In terms of the physical design of the library, the impact of multiculturalism is perhaps less evident. But certainly there is a need to ensure that there are prominent areas for browsing and reading multicultural resources; meeting room space for social contact with people of similar backgrounds and interests; and enquiry/information desks for those needing assistance. As libraries move towards improving access and services for our multicultural community, other design and service innovations will occur. The State Library of New South Wales Multicultural Consultant can advise on developing appropriate collections, services and library facilities for our multicultural community. Information is also available on appropriate promotional materials to encourage increased visitation and borrowing. A reference is provided in Section 7 to research undertaken for the Library Council of New South Wales on approaches to providing library services appropriate to culturally diverse communities (Cultural Perspectives, 2003).

2.2.6 Our Indigenous Community

Recognition and celebration of our indigenous community is an important component of Australian culture. In many communities, public libraries play an important role in the promotion of Aboriginal culture, with many housing specialist collections of books, audiovisual materials and periodicals about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Several public libraries located in communities with large indigenous populations are working to ensure that they are attractive, welcoming and relevant to all members of their community.

The incorporation of Aboriginal art and cultural activities into public libraries has also played a major role in encouraging indigenous users. This must continue in order to facilitate the increased use of public library resources by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As highlighted in *Section 3.3.1*, consultation with users is essential and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, this process must be culturally appropriate and meaningful. Seek assistance from the local Aboriginal Land Council and/or specialist Aboriginal Liaison Officers often employed by a range of Government departments or Councils. Ensuring that the new library meets the needs of indigenous residents is an important issue to be addressed.

Specialist advice and information is available through the Indigenous Services Librarians at the State Library of New South Wales. Protocols for libraries, archives and information services are published by the Australian Library and Information Association for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resource Network (ATSILIRN) (<http://www.ntu.edu.au/library/protocol.html>).

2.2.7 Competition and Marketing

Interviews with selected Councils undertaken as part of this study identified the growing competition from other sources of information, education and entertainment as a significant factor likely to impact on libraries in the future. Our world is rapidly changing and people are now able to access information through a range of media sources. Electronic forms of communication such as the Internet, CD-ROMs, email, videos, DVDs and television provide people with wide ranging information which is current, topical and easy to access. With access to these forms of information becoming easier in the home, will libraries be able to compete and attract the number and range of users they have in the past?

The delivery of education services is also changing with many institutions now providing students with options for distance and open learning, courses through the Internet and various adult education programs.

Entertainment comes in a wide variety of forms and in many communities there is a range of activities to attend, courses to do and social activities to participate in. How people spend their leisure time is changing and how this will impact on public libraries is worthy of consideration.

So should libraries be more proactive in terms of marketing and promotion of their services to ensure that they retain their “market niche”? Should they be looking to develop marketing plans and strategies to encourage customers to use the library resources more? Advertising, library promotions, changing and professional displays, customer loyalty plans – are these things that need to be considered in our libraries of the future? Many people consider that marketing strategies are important to our future libraries and already libraries provide promotional material, arrange book displays, hold events and use exhibitions to attract users.

In recent years, many public libraries have sought to improve their marketing through the adoption of various retail strategies. This has resulted in some changes to the physical design of public library buildings such as the provision of flexible floor space which can be used for a variety of activities; furniture and shelving which is moveable and changeable; and exhibition/display space which is appropriately lit, attractive and accessible. By looking at retail strategies,

new trends such as concept stores (where a range of linked products are sold); in-house cafes; themed shopping areas (consistent colours, fittings and fixtures); and product display (featured products are displayed prominently) may all have some relevance to the design of libraries (Hennah, 2005).

Section 6.6 provides further information on how marketing strategies affect library building design.

2.2.8 Cultural Development

In recent years, we have experienced some recognition of the importance of people's culture to our communities. Culture relates to the values, beliefs and customs of a community and the forms through which that culture is expressed. For many people, traditional media of art, dance, theatre, film and music are used to express our culture while our natural and built environment are further extensions of our cultural image. The celebration of "our culture" very often has taken the form of cultural works and particularly public and community art in our buildings and public spaces. Public libraries have very often been the beneficiary of this trend.

Several Councils have adopted cultural plans, public art policies or have in-house cultural planners who promote the celebration of local cultural identity and the provision of public events, cultural programs and public art in the community.

For some libraries, public art policies have ensured that a proportion of the capital construction of a building be spent on art works. Similarly, Councils also access grants from the Australia Council or the NSW Ministry for the Arts to employ community artists who involve the community in developing artworks or undertake "placemaking" projects in public libraries. Inclusion of artworks not just in public libraries but also in other public buildings, commercial developments and even the open spaces at Sydney Olympic Park highlight the importance of this trend to connecting a building with the community through culture.

Further information on cultural planning can be obtained from the NSW Ministry for the Arts and the Local Government and Shires Association with references provided in Section 7.6.

2.2.9 Changing Structure of NSW Coastal and Rural Communities

Our regional communities are changing. Coastal NSW is expected to grow at a faster rate than NSW to 2051 (NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, 2004). Increasing numbers of retirees are moving to these communities together with many young people, providing an unusual population mix. Many coastal communities are geographically dispersed with small communities dotted amongst the inlets and beaches of the coast. Public transport is often poor while major centres struggle to provide a range of accessible services for residents and tourists. Servicing the diverse needs of these communities is a major challenge for libraries in coastal communities.

Other areas in rural NSW are suffering from declining populations and a changing economic base which makes planning for library services difficult. In these communities many services, such as banks and government offices, have closed and have added further to the declining employment base and resident population. This has provided a challenge and an opportunity for many rural communities. They have sought to maintain and develop library services

with limited financial resources coupled together with plans for new sources of economic development.

Rural and coastal NSW has developed many innovative solutions to their changing communities and are seeking to ensure that libraries remain relevant to the needs of their residents. Information technology is seen as a major resource that can provide residents with resources and education to develop and staff new industries.

Information technology is also seen as the communication link that may free up various service sectors and enable them to locate outside the Sydney region. By linking technology to libraries, these communities will increase the technological resources of the area and provide opportunities for new growth industries.

2.2.10 Impacts of Urban Consolidation

The New South Wales Government has adopted a policy of compact cities, which seeks to reduce the spread of the Sydney region by making greater use of new and existing areas. It considers that the most effective way to utilise existing resources such as public transport, road infrastructure and public utilities is to increase housing densities in strategic locations throughout the Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Illawarra and Hunter regions. Urban consolidation has been the major housing thrust of the New South Wales Government in recent years with both established and fringe areas targeted for multi unit dwellings. It is also considered that multi unit housing, such as units and townhouses, is more consistent with trends towards smaller household sizes, particularly for our increasing numbers of older residents and singles.

Again, the impact of urban consolidation is currently being experienced in many libraries as the demand for study space and reading areas grows. Particularly in areas with concentrations of unit development, the availability of space for home study or leisure is limited and it appears that residents are opting to use the library instead. So will this trend increase as urban consolidation continues? It is expected that some 70% of new housing development will occur in established areas of Sydney in the next 25 years with 30% in new communities in Sydney's south west and north west. An estimated 23,000 new homes are required each year to house Sydney's expected population growth over the next 25-30 years with the majority expected to be multi unit housing (NSW Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, 2004).

Needs: Planning for your Community

3.1 Planning for Your Community

Every community is unique, and for local government the provision of any type of public building must relate closely to the local community—its needs, demands and aspirations. For public libraries, the greatest issue is the service provided and how it meets the needs of the surrounding community. The building is really **only one of several service models** through which a library service can be delivered. The library service, in many communities, is delivered through a diversity of service models including mobile libraries; specialised services for housebound, schools and TAFE students; joint developments with other activities and increasingly, library web sites and home access services.

The library service needs to fit into the **bigger picture** of what is happening in the community and how the many opportunities available can be harnessed to add value to the library service provided. For example, there may be an opportunity to provide a joint TAFE/public library service that would increase the resources, in terms of books, technology, staff and buildings, available to all in the community. In another area, Council may have identified, through its Social Plan, that the needs of young people, particularly those who are unemployed, should be addressed. The library service could meet this challenge by developing technology programs and services that link to local employment providers and skills training.

Finally, it is essential to recognise that the development of public libraries and in fact, the allocation of resources for any public facility and/or service, is an inherently **political** process. It involves a range of issues, for which tradeoffs and compromises may need to be made. It also involves many stakeholders with particular interests and ideas. You may try to avoid it, but politics plays a significant role in library development projects. However, as it is a political process, the need is even greater to have a sound planning approach and assessment tools in place to ensure that the process is well organised and informed.

So how do you determine what type of library service your community needs and how best these services can be delivered to the community? *People Places* recommends:

- A collaborative planning process that involves all stakeholders in determining how to prepare an overall development plan for library services
- A needs assessment planning method to determine why the community wants or needs a new/changed library service. Needs assessment is used extensively as a planning tool, particularly for community services and social planning. It has a strong basis in community consultation, socio-demographic indicators and comparison to other communities/service models.

Section 3 primarily focuses on how to undertake a needs assessment for your community. This will enable you to gather the right sort of information to show why changes are needed to library services and/or buildings. It will also help you to monitor the changing needs of the community and how this may affect the provision of library services. The Section also outlines the importance of collaborative planning and how it should be used to determine an overall plan for library services or a Library Development Plan for the community. The process is more fully explained in *Section 4 Process – Getting the Right Players Involved* and particularly *Section 4.1 Collaborative Planning is the Key to Public Library Development*.

3.2 Collaborative Planning

Planning is part of good management and occurs at a range of levels in all organisations, particularly local government. Public libraries already undertake planning functions as part of their responsibilities to Council. However, it is how these plans are developed and linked which is important in ensuring the right outcomes for the public library service.

Collaborative planning is based on involving a range of stakeholders in the planning process. It seeks out those who have a stake or interest in the potential outcomes and ensures that their ideas and issues are addressed in the planning process. In the consultation program used to develop *People Places*, “team approach”, “whole of Council” and “whole of community” were terms many librarians used to describe the planning process used for a new/expanded library building. In short, this is collaborative planning.

Collaborative planning should be used to develop a Library Development Plan for one and/or all of the libraries in the service area. It can be done for communities of varying sizes, including local areas, the whole local government area (LGA) or even on a regional basis. A collaborative plan should include:

- Identification of the various stakeholders to be involved
- Type of information to be gathered and/or issues to be addressed
- Consultation approaches to be used for gathering this information
- Integration of this information into a Library Development Plan

This approach will ensure that the Library Development Plan is linked to other plans that local government is responsible for such as:

- **Management Plan:** provides an overall direction for the Council over a 5 year cycle
- **Social Plan:** outlines the needs of the community and identifies actions Council will pursue to address these needs. The implementation of the Social Plan must be reported in Council’s Management Plan.
- **Cultural Plan:** identifies the culture of a community and recommends strategies for promoting and strengthening cultural identity and activities
- **Local Environmental Plan:** provides the legislative framework for the allocation of specific land uses throughout the community
- **Annual Budget:** allocates funds from Council finances to specific projects and works for the upcoming financial year
- **Section 94 Contributions Plan and Planning Agreements:** provides the legal basis on which contributions are sought from local development towards the cost of additional public infrastructure needed as a result of this development

It may also result in links to other plans developed by agencies such as the local economic development board, university or technical and further education college, tourism development committee and the Department of Health.

3.3 Needs Assessment

So why does this community **need** a new library building or changed library service? This question often becomes the basic issue for many librarians as they try to prepare a Library Development Plan. For many, the real distinction lies between **needs** and **wants** and the concern that provision is only based on the articulated wants of professional officers or a small

vocal minority in the community. There may be a high level of community debate involved in determining whether the community really *needs* and not just *wants* a new library building.

People Places provides a suite of four different tools for assessing **need**, given that it is generally accepted that need is both relative and socially defined. By using **all of these tools**, you will have a resource of valuable information that will enable more effective collaborative planning. You should assess the need for and size of library required using **all of the four tools** outlined below. Information collected by each tool will provide a more complete analysis of what type of services need to be provided which can then be translated into the actual design and functional floor areas required in a new/expanded library facility.

The four assessment tools are:

- **Identified Need:** expressed by stakeholders such as library staff, community groups and Council officers. It reflects what needs are expressed by service providers, practitioners and consumers. It is also often referred to as qualitative information. A range of consultation techniques may be used to gather this information and ensure that the extent and type of need is fully understood (see *Section 3.3.1*).
- **Normative Need:** based on socio-demographic information and recognised statistical indicators about library usage, provision per capita, etc. It is well known however, that statistical or quantitative data can be changed around to show a very different picture depending on what is used. Therefore, needs determined in this way should be checked against reality to ensure that they are consistent with the qualitative information gained in determining Identified Need (see *Section 3.3.2*).
- **Comparative Need:** based on comparing service provision with other communities with similar socio-demographic characteristics. Feedback from the consultation program used in developing *People Places* highlighted that many local Councils and librarians rely heavily on comparing themselves with other communities of similar size and characteristics. They often visit these library services and seek to provide service models similar to these communities. The advantage in using comparative need is that stakeholders can see the outcomes for themselves. They know that it works (see *Section 3.3.3*).
- **Benchmark-Based Need:** using specific tools related to the services provided by public libraries and the population served by a library, this tool provides two different approaches for determining the actual floor area of a public library. By using both methodologies, a target range floor area for a new library will be provided. This information should be used with the other needs assessment tools discussed in this Section. This will provide Council with some flexibility in determining the required size of a library and enable a more local assessment of what best meets community needs. If service provision through a mobile library is being considered, reference should be made to the International Federation of Library Associations *Mobile Library Guidelines* (Pestell, 1991) (see *Section 3.3.4*).

These tools are outlined in more detail below with specific information on how to use them and what resources are available. It is likely that other sections of Council and/or other local agencies may be collecting the same information or using processes through which you could gather useful information. Be sure to check this out first before establishing your work program.

3.3.1 Identified Need

This tool determines the need **expressed** by service providers, practitioners and consumers about library services and/or a new library building. There is a range of consultation techniques which can be used, and very often Council may have in place several consultation processes which you may be able to participate in. These include regular surveys of ratepayers, community meetings, precinct committees and social planning projects. However, before starting any consultation it is essential to ask yourself:

- **What is the aim of the consultation process, i.e. what information am I trying to get?**

It is essential to work out very clearly why you are using this tool and what type of information you want to get. To get informed comment, you need to provide participants with information. Don't ask initial vague questions like "What do you think about building a new library?" or "Do you want a new library?" without some opportunity to develop a discussion around the issue. Determine what are the physical problems with the current library; what other activities/services they would like in the library; and ideas users have on how to increase use.

- **What will the information be used for?**

Only collect information that you can use and don't be caught in the trap of collecting information just for the sake of it. Too much information can be as big a problem as too little.

- **Who is to be consulted?**

Think of which stakeholders need to be consulted and how this can best occur. Choose the most appropriate technique for each group. For example, if you want broad community views, do a phone survey, shopping centre survey or survey at a community event. If you want to get the views of young people, visit them at school or a local youth centre. It is important to remember that those consulted should reflect the range of different groups in the community. There are a range of consultation techniques which can be used such as:

- Discussion papers inviting comments
- Individual questionnaires and interviews
- Focus group meetings with specific groups, e.g. staff, young people, older residents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, etc
- Community meetings
- Phone-ins

- **What do participants get out of the process?**

As consultation occurs regularly in the community around a range of issues, it is important to remember that those involved need to gain something out of the process. At the very least, they should receive a written report about what came out of the process. You may provide a light lunch/refreshments, a thank you letter and invitation to a special Council event, or a free book reservation at the library. Young people might feel more rewarded by gift vouchers for the local bookshop. Or you might be able to organise a special presentation by a local sportsperson or celebrity as a thank you for their involvement. The important

issue however is to ensure that you really use this information which has been given to you. Always let participants know what the information is to be used for and how they might be able to further participate in the process.

There are lots of resources available outlining consultation techniques with some of these listed in *Section 7.6*.

3.3.2 Normative Need

This tool uses socio-demographic information and recognised statistical indicators to assist in determining the need for additional library facilities. All councils in NSW are now required to prepare a Social Plan to comply with the Local Government (General) Regulation 1999. This is typically undertaken by Council's Community Services section and includes a community profile and statistical data about the local government area (LGA). Other information may also be available through planning documents from Council's Environmental Planning section. You should use these documents to inform the library planning process and gather statistical information which identifies issues of importance to library planning such as:

- Size and distribution of population
- Future population growth
- Work, shopping and recreational patterns of the community
- Transport patterns and issues
- Location and size of particular target groups, e.g. older residents, residents with disability, children, young people, residents from multicultural backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, etc
- Size and distribution of important indicators such as household income, English language skills, employment, etc
- Location of other services, e.g. child care centres, seniors' centres, etc

Statistical indicators highlighting the use of library services in the LGA should also be collected to inform this data. This will help to identify the extent of need and issues relating to existing library service points. Some of this data may already be available as part of the regular statistics collected by the State Library of New South Wales and/or benchmarking data used to encourage best practice. It is important however, to choose the data which you think is the most useful to provide *realistic information* in order to identify service needs. The data may also be related to the community profile data collected above, enabling the development of an individual service point/library profile. Useful data to collect may include:

- Size, distribution and characteristics of library members
- Number and distribution of non resident members
- Gross floor area of each service point
- Distance between and transport availability for each service point
- Number of visits per service point
- Circulation per service point
- Size of collection/library materials per service point
- Opening hours per service point
- Existing and future plans for libraries in adjoining local government areas

Together, this statistical data should help to highlight the particular needs of different communities and how the existing library/service point meets those needs.

3.3.3 Comparative Need

To some extent, comparative need can be used to compare the levels of service provision which exist within the LGA. For example, it may be considered equitable to provide libraries of similar size when servicing communities with similar needs in the one LGA or region. However, in reality this does not often occur with communities rarely being **the same**.

However, comparative analysis does help to identify need based on trends outside the local area and to highlight what has worked in other communities. This tool is particularly useful for the broad range of stakeholders involved in library development projects. It illustrates the standards of provision considered reasonable in other communities and will enable stakeholders to compare their community needs with what others have provided.

For example, when considering the need for a new library, visits to other communities that have recently built new facilities will encourage informed discussion. The size of these new libraries, the communities they serve, the range of services provided and innovative approaches they may have used, can be used to compare with existing service provision in your community. You should collect this information and develop a picture of what other similar communities are providing.

This does not mean that all communities should replicate each other, but this tool provides an opportunity to use the models already adopted and working in other communities. This may be particularly useful for areas undergoing major population growth. In these cases, experience from other library services located in areas which have experienced major growth, the problems they addressed and the resultant services they have provided, will be invaluable information for developing communities. Equally, for remote communities, information from other areas on how new library buildings are providing for increased technology will be invaluable to local Councillors and community representatives.

The examples shown on the State Library of New South Wales web pages (www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls) provide information on the planning and building of a range of public libraries throughout NSW. Use these examples, together with other examples you know of, as one tool to comparatively evaluate the need for and size of library buildings required in your community.

3.3.4 Benchmark-Based Need

These benchmarks are considered by the Library Council of New South Wales to provide minimum area sizes for public library buildings in NSW. They have not been changed from those published in the first edition of *People Places* in 2000.

People Places provides two methodologies that should be used to set the parameters for determining the need for and resultant size of a new or expanded library building. They are the **service-based benchmark** and the **population-based benchmark** which are outlined below together with relevant examples to explain how they should be used in practice. These two methodologies should be used together to provide a range of sizes for a new/expanded library building.

Consideration should also be given to the minimum recommended size for a public library building of 139 sq m gross floor area (State Library of New South Wales, 1995 p. 24). It is important to note that a library of this size is only likely to accommodate a collection of

4,400 books, 20 periodicals, 200 audio visual items and two OPACs. The remaining half of this net area (i.e. 58 sq m) would need to be available for reading/study area, borrowing, resources and staff work area.

It is particularly important for rural areas with declining or small populations, to give greater weight to the service-based benchmark which focuses on providing a range of quality library services consistent with the needs of the community.

The model of one *central* library with several branch libraries is used as the traditional service structure for many public libraries throughout NSW. However, there are various other models used such as *area/district* libraries. The benchmarks can be applied to each of these service structures.

It is important to note that mobile libraries are not taken into account when assessing the catchment area of a public library building. For remote and/or isolated communities they may be an important service but typically the service points are temporary and access is often limited to a few hours per week per location. More detailed information on mobile libraries is available in the International Federation of Library Associations' *Mobile Library Guidelines* (Pestell, 1991) and at www.mobilelibraries.com.au.

Working examples of the service-based benchmark and population-based benchmark applied to four sample library building projects are provided at the end of each methodology. By comparing the outcomes of both methodologies it is evident that the calculated **gross floor areas** utilising the two methods vary. The discrepancy generated by the two methodologies is not an error and in reality provide some flexibility for the determination of the floor space required for a proposed library building.

A building benchmark spreadsheet which automatically calculates both the population-based benchmark and service-based benchmark based on the data you provide for your library building project is available at www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls/policies/build/docs/benchmarks.xls.

Service-Based Benchmark

This method is used to determine the required size of the library based on the future collection size of the library and the type and range of services and core functions that the proposed library building will incorporate. These requirements are then translated into a floor area for each functional area and used cumulatively to determine the size requirement of the proposed library. The process derives from a simple concept - that library space needs are based on a level of service provision requiring a range of materials and functional areas necessary to serve the community adequately. Each service has an identifiable spatial requirement and to a large extent all of the services are interrelated. The methodology defines six broad types of library space and allows a projection of future needs and provides a way to translate resulting service assumptions into spatial requirements. *Section 7.4* provides additional information on the methodology and space standards used for this benchmark. The six areas are as follows:

1. Collection area, (books, volumes, non print material, digital and virtual resources and the base for library building size)
2. Reading and study areas, (meeting areas, study carrels, tables and chairs)
3. Resource areas, (catalogues, photocopiers, scanners, fax machines, vending machines, etc)
4. Staff areas, (service desk, staff work room, offices, work areas, storage, etc)

5. Amenities and storage areas, (toilets, store rooms, maintenance areas, etc)
6. Additional service areas, (storytelling, family history, multipurpose rooms, etc)

The benchmark uses the overall size of the collection area as a base which is considered to have a direct impact on the areas required for the other library services. It is important that the **projected collection size (Target Collection Factor -TCF)** takes account of future population and likely service requirements. As with the projection of the library's service population, it is most effective to make these projections over a 10 year period based on an understanding of the community's library service patterns, priorities, and needs. Comparative statistics and published data can be used to suggest a minimum collection size, which can be modified according to the library's rate of acquisitions and discards.

The library's service emphases may also have an effect on collection size. Each library will also need to assess the impact of the growing availability of information by way of virtual and digital resources and the technology required to access them. For instance, some libraries anticipate that digital resources and the technology required to access these resources will slow the rate of growth in traditional collections or even reduce the quantities that will be needed in those traditional collections. Other libraries anticipate little effect. Still others anticipate that some parts of the collection (periodicals, reference holdings) will be affected substantially while other parts will be affected less dramatically. The key to this step is an understanding of local needs.

Equally, it is important to determine the proportion of the projected collection in the library at one time, while the remainder is on loan. Many libraries allow for only 65-75% of the projected collection to be on the shelf at one time and each library service should assess its own future needs.

The figures used in the tables below assume an aisle width between shelves of 1500 mm and that each shelf unit is 4 shelves high. The functional areas for each service are based on studies of existing libraries and architectural 'circulation' standards and assume a recommended minimum service provision plus optional additional service areas. For simplicity, the functional areas (2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 in the types of library spaces) are all based on a percentage of the projected collection size (**Target Collection Factor -TCF**) and together are called the **Relative Area Factor (RAF)**. The **Target Collection Factor (TCF)** and the **Relative Area Factor (RAF)** are multiplied together to produce the actual size, or gross floor area, of the library.

Service-Based Benchmark Calculations

Section 7.4 provides additional information on the methodology used to derive this benchmark. **A building benchmark spreadsheet which automatically calculates the service-based benchmark based on the data you provide for your library building project is available at www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls/policies/build/docs/benchmarks.xls.**

The **Gross Floor Area (GFA)** is the **Target Collection Factor (TCF)** multiplied by the **Relative Area Factor (RAF)**, expressed more simply as:

$$\text{GFA} = \text{TCF} \times \text{RAF}$$

In brief, the process outlined above involves the following steps.

Step 1

To determine the size of the collection to be accommodated in the library, calculate the space requirement for each part of the collection and add them together. Ensure that the collection size will accommodate future trends and changes in service requirements and that an allowance is made for material out on loan. In our examples we have assumed that between 30% and 35% of the collection is on loan at any given time, and that 65% to 70% will be on the shelves. Your assessment may vary, and you can use your own estimates. Refer to *Section 4.7* for guidance on projected collection size. Add these figures together to get the **Target Collection Factor (TCF)**.

Calculating the Target Collection Factor Area	No. of Items	Less % on Loan	Space Standard	Your Calculation
Books on shelves (number of volumes)			100 books per 1 sq m	
Periodicals (number of titles)			10 titles per 1 sq m	
Non-print material (tapes, CD's videos, CD-ROM's, DVD's etc)			100 recordings per 1 sq m	
Virtual and digital resources (number of public terminals)			1 terminal to 5 sq m	
Total			Target Collection Factor – TCF	

Step 2

Refer to the table below showing Functional Areas and delete the areas of services that are not to be provided in your library. The core minimum **Relative Area Factor (RAF)** for most libraries will be 200% (i.e. the total of the five associated functional areas are equal to the **Target Collection Factor** area). In an extended or co-located library facility some functions such as foyer, display, amenities or meeting rooms may also be accommodated elsewhere. There may also be additional services or functions provided in the library not in this list in which case a comparative assessment should be made. By adding these additional figures together you will get the **Total Relative Area Factor (RAF)**.

It should be noted that in the table below, the storage areas in **Optional Additional Service Areas** should be added to the areas allowed for these additional services as they are not factored into **Staff Areas** storage in part 4 of the table.

Functional Area	Quick Area Guide	Your Calculation
1. Collection Area Books and volumes on shelves Periodicals Non-print material Virtual and digital resources	Base Area 100%	
2. Reading and Study Areas Meeting Areas Study Areas Browsing, Display, Information	10% 15% 5%	
3. Resource Areas Catalogues, photocopiers, etc Vending machines, telephones	10% 5%	
4. Staff Areas Service Desk Staff Work Area Storage	15% 15% 5%	
5. Amenities Foyer, Lobby, corridors, etc Toilets, restrooms, storage, etc Plant equipment, maintenance	10% 5% 5%	
	Core Relative Area Factor 200%	
6. Optional Additional Service Areas Children's Storytelling Area Young Adult Area Specialist Genre Collection Area Specialist Room, Local and Family History Multipurpose, Training, AV Room Bookshop, Coffee Shop Toy library Community Services, Bank Services Storage Area for Archival Materials/ Conservation Mobile Library Services Area Central or Regional Work Area Central or Regional Community Offices Other (add your own assessment)	5-10% 5-10% 5-10% 10-15% 20-25% 10-15% 10-20% 5% 5% 5% 5% 5%	
Total Relative Area Factor (i.e Core RAF plus optional areas)	Total Relative Area Factor – RAF	

Step 3

Multiply the **Target Collection Factor (TCF)** by the **Total Relative Area Factor (RAF)**. The result is the total **Gross Floor Area** for the library.

The following examples apply the service-based benchmark methodology to four different library building projects.

Examples

1. Branch Library with a projected catchment of 15,500 people. Projected Collection: 34,000 books with 70% on shelf, 150 periodicals, 1,800 recordings and 5 public access computer terminals.

Gross Floor Area (GFA) = Target Collection Factor (TCF) X Relative Area Factor (RAF)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCF} &= (34,000/100 \times 0.7) + (150/10) + (1,800/100) + (5 \times 5) \\ &= 238 + 15 + 18 + 25 \\ &= 296 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{RAF} &= 240\% (\text{Collection } 100\% + \text{Reading/resource/staff/amenities } 100\% + \\ &\quad \text{Children's Area } 10\% + \text{Multipurpose Room } 25\% + \text{Mobile Service Area } 5\%) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GFA} &= 296 \times 240\% \\ &= 710 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore this benchmark allows for a branch library with a gross floor area of 710 sq m

2. Central library with 29,000 projected residents in its local catchment, a projected non resident workforce of 1000 people and a projected 50,000 residents in the entire LGA. Projected collection of 84,000 books with 65% on shelf, 250 periodicals, 5,500 recordings and 16 public access computer terminals.

Gross Floor Area (GFA) = Target Collection Factor (TCF) X Relative Area Factor (RAF)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCF} &= (84,000/100 \times 0.65) + (250/10) + (5,500/100) + (16 \times 5) \\ &= 546 + 25 + 55 + 80 \\ &= 706 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{RAF} &= 270\% (\text{Collection } 100\% + \text{Reading/resource/staff/amenities } 100\% + \\ &\quad \text{Children's Area } 10\% + \text{Youth Area } 10\% + \text{AV Area } 20\% + \text{Family History } 15\% + \\ &\quad \text{Mobile } 5\% + \text{Regional Areas } 10\%) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GFA} &= 706 \times 270\% \\ &= 1906 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore this benchmark allows for a central library with a gross floor area of 1906 sq m

3. Area/District library with 43,000 projected residents in its local catchment and 160,000 projected residents in the entire region. The central library functions are split equally between four area/district libraries. Projected collection of 105,000 books with 70% on shelf, 300 periodicals, 4,000 recordings and 30 public access computers for each Area/District library.

Gross Floor Area (GFA) = Target Collection Factor (TCF) X Relative Area Factor (RAF)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCF} &= (105,000/100 \times 0.7) + (300/10) + (4,000/100) + (30 \times 5) \\ &= 735 + 30 + 40 + 150 \\ &= 955 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{RAF} &= 235\% \text{ (Collection 100\% + Reading/resource/staff/amenities 100\% +} \\ &\text{Children's Area 5\% + Central Work Area 5\% + Central Offices 5\% +} \\ &\text{Multipurpose Room 20\%)} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GFA} &= 955 \times 235\% \\ &= 2244 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore this benchmark allows for an Area/District library with a gross floor area of 2244 sq m

4. Expansion of an existing Central Library to meet the needs of a future local population of 33,000 people and a regional population of 46,000. The existing Central Library has a GFA of 770 sq m. Projected collection of 96,000 books with 70% on shelf, 450 periodicals, 3,000 recordings and 15 public access computers.

Gross Floor Area (GFA) = Target Collection Factor (TCF) X Relative Area Factor (RAF)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCF} &= (96,000/100 \times 0.7) + (450/10) + (3,000/100) + (15 \times 5) \\ &= 672 + 45 + 30 + 75 \\ &= 822 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{RAF} &= 225\% \text{ (Collection 100\% + Reading/resource areas/staff area/ amenities} \\ &\text{100\% + Audiovisual Room 20 \% + Children's Area 5\%)} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GFA} &= 822 \times 225\% \\ &= 1850 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GFA of Extension} &= 1850 \text{ minus } 770 \text{ (existing floor area)} \\ &= 1080 \text{ sq m} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore the benchmark allows for a library extension with a gross floor area of 1080 sq m and total library gross floor area of 1850 sq m.

Population-based Benchmark

The population-based benchmark assumes that users primarily use their closest library and this defines the library catchment. This benchmark is based on the size of the future population who are likely to use/ or have access to a new/expanded library. *Section 7.5* provides detailed information on the methodology used to develop this benchmark.

To apply the benchmark, you need the current and future population data for your community. Information is also required on the distribution of the population and the number of people who are served by each library service point. Future population projections over a 10 year period are particularly important to ensure that the library building project meets the future needs of the community. These projections should be sourced through the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This includes accurate population statistics from the most recent Population and Housing Census, annual population estimates and future population projections at 5 yearly intervals.

Consideration should also be given to the future size and distribution of the non resident workforce and its projected use of library facilities. For example, a library located in a major city centre or commercial area is likely to be used by employees working in the area. Many of these employees may not be residents of the LGA and therefore not accounted for in the resident population data. This information may be available in Council's Social Plan, strategy documents available from Council's Environmental Planning unit and/or the NSW Department of Planning. Information may also be available from Journey to Work data held by the NSW Department of Transport's Transport Data Centre and the Australian Bureau of Statistics Working Population Profile. Both data sets are derived from information collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as part of the Population and Housing Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001).

Population-Based Benchmark Calculations

Section 7.5 provides additional information on the methodology used to derive this benchmark. **A building benchmark spreadsheet which automatically calculates the population-based benchmark based on the data you provide for your library building project is available at www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls/policies/build/docs/benchmarks.xls.**

To calculate the area of a library using this benchmark the calculation has to include an area component for the Local Area served and a component for its function as a Central library where applicable.

The **Gross Floor Area (GFA)** is calculated by adding the **Local Area Factor (LAF)** and the **Central Area Factor (CAF)**, and adding 20% for circulation and services space, expressed more simply as:

$$\text{GFA} = (\text{LAF} + \text{CAF}) \times 1.2$$

Where

GFA = Gross floor area

LAF = Local Area Factor which is the projected local resident and non resident workforce served, divided by 1000 and multiplied by the building area factor shown in the table overleaf

CAF = Central Area Factor is 15% of the product of the projected LGA or regional population, divided by 1000 and multiplied by the building area factor shown in the table below

1.2 = building circulation/services allowance of 20%

Building Area Factors

Projected Population Served	Net Building Area Factor per 1000 population
Less than 10,000*	42 sq m
10,001 – 20,000	42 sq m
20,001 – 35,000	39 sq m
35,001 – 65,000	35 sq m
65,001 – 100,000	31 sq m
More than 100,000	28 sq m
* In communities where the projected population is less than 2,750 persons, use the recommended minimum size for a public library of 139 sq m gross. In communities where the population is declining use the existing population served.	

A **central library**, which typically provides the main library service for an LGA or region, requires additional area for its large collection and range of specialist services. To calculate the gross floor area of a central library using the population-based benchmark, a **Local Area Factor (LAF)** and **Central Area Factor (CAF)** are determined as outlined below:

Step 1 Calculate the projected population (including the non resident workforce where it is considered to have a significant impact on library services) for the central library, that is its own local catchment.

Step 2 Based on the population above; multiply the relevant building area factor (as shown in the table above) by the population divided by 1000. This is the **Local Area Factor** for a central library or **LAF**.

Step 3 A central library also requires additional floorspace for central library functions (**Central Area Factor or CAF**). To determine this, calculate the projected total population for the central library's total catchment area, i.e. the LGA or regional population.

Step 4 Using this population figure; multiply the relevant building area factor (as shown in the table above) by the population divided by 1000. The **Central Area Factor or CAF** is 15% of this calculation.

Step 5 By adding together the **Local Area Factor (LAF)** and **Central Area Factor (CAF)**, a total net floor area for the central library is determined. To determine the **Gross Floor Area**

(GFA), calculate 20% of the net floor area as a building circulation allowance and add this to the net floor area. If determining the size of an extension only to an existing building, this building circulation allowance may be less than 20%. For example, if the existing library has toilets and amenities that will be retained to service the new extension, an allowance of only 10% may be allowed. Therefore, the calculation will be $GFA = (LAF + CAF) \times 1.1$. Seek specialist advice to determine the building circulation allowance where an extension is involved.

The method outlined above can also be used to determine the size of a *branch* or *area/district* library.

A **branch** library typically services a smaller population catchment than its central library and does not have the specialist services provided by the central library. Therefore, only the **Local Area Factor (LAF)** is required. Follow the same steps as outlined above excluding Steps 3, 4 and 5.

An **area/district** library is typically a combination of both central and branch library functions and may require all or a proportion of the **Central Area Factor (CAF)** to be added to the calculation. Therefore include Steps 1 through to 5 but in Step 4, determine how much of CAF is distributed to each library. For example, 4 area/district libraries will each require 25% of CAF.

Four examples of calculations for a central library, branch library, area/district library and library extension are provided below. Remember; use this benchmark as a guide only and in conjunction with other tools outlined in *Section 3*.

Examples

1. Branch Library with a projected catchment of 15,500 people

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Gross Floor Area} &= (\text{Local Area Factor or LAF} + \text{Central Area Factor or CAF}) \times 1.2 \\ \text{Gross Floor Area} &= [(15,500/1000 \times 42) + (\text{no central area factor})] \times 1.2 \\ &= (15.5 \times 42) \times 1.2 \\ &= 651 \times 1.2 \\ &= 781 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore the benchmark allows for a branch library with a gross floor area of 781 sq m

2. Central library with 29,000 projected residents in its local catchment, a projected non resident workforce of 1,000 people and 50,000 projected residents in the entire LGA i.e. its total service area

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Gross Floor Area} &= (\text{Local Area Factor or LAF} + \text{Central Area Factor or CAF}) \times 1.2 \\ \text{Gross Floor Area} &= [(30,000/1000 \times 39) + (50,000/1000 \times 35 \times 0.15)] \times 1.2 \\ &= [(30 \times 39) + (50 \times 35 \times 0.15)] \times 1.2 \\ &= (1170 + 263) \times 1.2 \\ &= 1433 \times 1.2 \\ &= 1720 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore the benchmark allows for a central library with a gross floor area of 1720 sq m

3. Area/District library with 43,000 projected residents in its local catchment and 160,000 projected residents in the entire region i.e. its total service area. The central library functions are split equally between four area libraries.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Gross Floor Area} &= (\text{Local Area Factor or LAF} + \text{Central Area Factor or CAF}) \times 1.2 \\ \text{Gross Floor Area} &= [(43,000/1000 \times 35) + (160,000/1000 \times 28 \times 0.15 \times 0.25)] \times 1.2 \\ &= [(43 \times 35) + (160 \times 28 \times 0.15 \times 0.25)] \times 1.2 \\ &= (1505 + 168) \times 1.2 \\ &= 1673 \times 1.2 \\ &= 2008 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore the benchmark allows for an area library with a gross floor area of 2008 sq m

4. Expansion of an existing Central Library to meet the needs of a future local population of 33,000 people and a projected regional population of 46,000. The existing Central Library has a GFA of 770 sq m. As the existing toilets, foyer and other amenities are well-located and will be maintained to service the new extension, the building circulation allowance has been reduced to 10%.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Gross Floor Area} &= [(\text{Local Area Factor or LAF} + \text{Central Area Factor or CAF}) \times 1.1] \\ &\text{– Existing Gross Floor Area} \\ \text{Gross Floor Area} &= [(33,000/1000 \times 39) + (46,000/1000 \times 35 \times 0.15) \times 1.1] - 770 \\ &= [(1287 + 242) \times 1.1] - 770 \\ &= 1682 - 770 \\ &= 912 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore the benchmark allows for a library extension with a gross floor area of 912 sq m and total library gross floor area of 1682 sq m.

Example of Determining the Size of a New Co-Located Library

With co-located libraries, shared areas, such as foyers, meeting spaces, plant rooms and toilets, will vary from one situation to another. To calculate the library's share, first work out the **total library floor area (the benchmarked area, including any potentially shared areas)** as a percentage of the **total floor area of the combined facility**. Then apply this percentage to the shared space – the resulting floor area can be counted as part of the library. The following example shows how this works.

Let's assume we are planning a library with a benchmarked gross floor area of 1906 sq m, including potentially shared areas. In the same building, co-located with the library, is a Council art gallery with a gross floor area of 750 sq m, also including potentially shared areas. In this example the proposed shared areas (foyer, toilets and plant) have a gross floor area of 168 sq m. How much of this 168 sq m will be part of the Library's benchmarked 1906 sq m?

Library floor area as a percentage of total floor area of proposed facility

$$\begin{aligned} &= 1906 / (1906 + 750) \times 100 \\ &= 1906 / 2656 \times 100 \\ &= 72\% \end{aligned}$$

Library portion of shared spaces

$$\begin{aligned} &= 0.72 \times 168 \\ &= 121 \text{ sq m} \end{aligned}$$

Library components

Benchmarked floor area for Library	1906 sq m
Library portion of shared spaces	121 sq m
Library excluding shared spaces	1785 sq m

4 Process: Getting the Right Players Involved

4.1 Collaborative Planning

As outlined in *Sections 3.1 and 3.2*, *People Places* recommends a *collaborative planning process* which involves all stakeholders in determining *how* to prepare an overall development plan for library services. Based on feedback from the consultation process used for *People Places*, involvement of all stakeholders in the planning process is essential. Planning in isolation without incorporating the views and opportunities identified by other stakeholders will not provide the more successful outcomes evident in collaboratively developed projects.

The following Sections provide information on the collaborative planning process and what issues should be addressed *prior* to determining the detailed design of any library building project. Getting the right stakeholders involved and addressing the issues that need to be considered will ensure the success of your project.

4.2 Setting up a Working Group

A working group is an established organisational framework used by local government to work collaboratively on specific issues. When considering the provision of library services or preparing a Library Development Plan (see *Section 3.2*), a working group should be formed to address the various issues involved and advise Council on actions to be taken. This working group should comprise stakeholders who can contribute constructively to the process and provide a range of specialist advice. Very often working groups may include Councillors, Council Directors, the Library Manager and key library staff, officers from Finance, Planning, Engineering, Information Technology and Community Services, and community representatives.

The formation of a working group also ensures that the Library Development Plan is incorporated into a range of Council's strategic and management plans, providing an integrated and co-ordinated approach. Opportunities for strategic alliances with other sections of Council, particularly related to technology and finance, may also be developed through this framework.

Initial work should focus on the role of the working group and the issues to be addressed. This will ensure appropriate and satisfying outcomes for all involved. The working group may need to change over the life of the project with different stakeholders involved as the process proceeds. In some cases initial working groups involved in the planning of a library project may become smaller project management groups when the library project is actually being built. A Project Manager may also be appointed to deal with the day to day issues and to liaise between the builder and architect.

4.3 Funding Opportunities

Like all public buildings, the cost and ability to fund the construction and operation of a new/extended public library is one of the main concerns of local government. Whether the service is to be located in a new, extended or refurbished building, financing of the development must be considered. Consideration should be given to the following cost components of a library development project (see also *Section 6*):

- Land
- Building costs whether construction or refurbishment, including professional fees

- Fitout including equipment, furniture, shelving, etc
- Removal of collection, furniture and equipment
- Temporary relocation of library service for extensions or rebuild on existing site
- Site costs including engineering works and utilities
- Car parking and landscaping
- Operational costs including short and long term maintenance
- Staffing

In practice, there are many sources available to fund a library development project with local government developing many interesting funding models. These include:

- **Section 94 Contributions and Planning Agreements:** Local government areas experiencing significant population change as a result of new development are able to require contributions from developers towards the cost of providing community facilities such as libraries. Contributions are reliant on adoption of a Section 94 Contributions Plan for the area experiencing growth and you need to work closely with the Environmental Planning section to ensure that library provision is considered in this plan. Recent changes to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 also enable funds to be collected for facilities to be shared between adjoining local government areas.
- **Co-located Libraries:** to provide flexibility and improved user access, many public libraries are co-locating with other Council services such as community centres, arts centres, youth facilities and one stop shop services. Very often buildings may be shared but with separate areas for each service. Other examples may share the site only or be located on adjacent sites, providing central access for users to a range of services. For any of these options it is important to ensure that the quality of service provided is not diminished or threatened and that there are benefits/improvements for the provider and user. The types of co-located libraries vary enormously and the opportunity exists for very innovative and successful projects. Section 4.4 outlines more fully the issues to be addressed in co-located projects.
- **Joint-use libraries:** this approach involves the development of a shared public library service between two or more distinct service providers with funding provided by both local government and the other service provider. For example, Technical and Further Education services may be interested in pooling funds with Council for a joint library service for TAFE students and the broader community. In both cases, funding is being sourced from different authorities and the development of detailed agreements on the joint use library service must be undertaken.
- **Grant Programs:** the Library Council of New South Wales annually administers the Library Development Grants program (see Section 7.1). Funds from this program have been used to assist in the development of many new/refurbished library buildings throughout New South Wales.

Many other State and Federal government agencies also operate grant schemes which provide funding for specific projects. The requirements for these programs often change and it is important to constantly review the funding sources available. Most require a contribution from Council as part of the project and typically focus on capital expenditure

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or short term consultancy/contract staff projects.

These funding programs may provide funding opportunities for multi function buildings; technology and specialist staff; community arts and cultural development; specialist equipment for people with a disability; services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and services in remote communities. Information on grant schemes is available from the web sites of individual government departments and the State Library of New South Wales.

- **Commercial Development Opportunities:** local government has the capacity to utilise its resources for community benefit. This may involve utilising existing resources more effectively or in a more commercial manner to achieve financial returns. Examples of this type of approach include land swaps for more appropriate property; refurbishing existing Council or non Council buildings; lease of redundant buildings; sale of Council operational assets to fund a new library; development of commercial spaces for lease as part of the library project, etc. These and many other funding approaches have been used to fund library development projects. When considering any of these approaches it is important to have specialist advice and the working group framework will facilitate the investigation of various funding options (see *Section 4.2*).

4.4 Co-location and Joint Use

Prior to determining the need for and size of a library development project, it is essential to consider the opportunities provided through new and innovative service models such as co-location and joint use. As outlined in *Section 4.3*, these models provide a new approach to the funding of public library developments while also facilitating opportunities to *add value* to any proposal.

These models typically provide a “community hub” or “community precinct” acting as a strong focal point for community activities and identity. The approach is extensively used in Australia and overseas and has recently been supported by the NSW Parliament Legislative Assembly (2004) *Inquiry into the Joint Use and Co-Location of Public Buildings*. In NSW, co-location and joint use developments with public libraries have included the following uses:

- Art galleries, community arts centres, theatres and exhibition areas
- Community centres
- Community Technology Centres (CTCs)
- Libraries for Technical and Further Education (TAFE)
- University access centres
- Police stations
- Community health centres
- Home and community care centres
- Rural fire service
- State emergency services
- Early childhood health centres
- Post offices
- Museums
- Recreation and leisure centres

- Shopping centres
- Public school libraries
- Council administration centres

The differences between these models are outlined below:

- **Co-located libraries** are defined as multiple buildings and/or services provided on one site or on separate adjacent sites. They may be located in one building, in separate buildings or a combination of both. The library service however is only funded by local government and operates as a separate service. Co-located libraries typically bring together other Council-related services such as the Council Chambers/offices, community centres, arts centres, youth facilities and/or one stop shop services. More recently, co-located libraries have been developed with other government services such as community health centres, home and community care centres, employment services or community technology centres. There are many examples in NSW of co-located libraries.
- **Joint-use libraries** are defined as libraries where two or more distinct library service providers serve their client group in the same building, the governance of which is co-operatively arranged between the separate authorities. For example, a joint use library may be developed between a local government authority and the NSW Department of Education and Training for a library serving both high school students and the broader community. The service is shared with **pooled funding** provided by both agencies to cover the capital and recurrent costs of the service. There are few examples of joint-use libraries in NSW.

Potential benefits of all models include:

- Sharing of resources such as staff, space and equipment
- Encouraging wider public use by providing access to a range of services at one facility, i.e. the one stop shop concept
- Improving the cost effectiveness of the service provided while also enhancing service quality
- Reducing duplication of resources
- Rationalisation of property portfolios
- Providing specialist facilities and services, e.g. specialist expertise in technology together with equipment
- Reducing worker isolation and encouraging more co-ordinated service delivery.

In considering any co-located or joint use library however, the potential disadvantages also need to be addressed. Strategies to overcome these disadvantages may be developed but, in some cases, these strategies may not be sufficient to support the project.

The following objectives have been developed to guide library development projects considering co-location and joint use. They are based on consultation with stakeholders involved in existing projects and also reflect the NSW Parliament Legislative Assembly (2004) *Inquiry into the Joint Use and Co-Location of Public Buildings* and a submission by the State Library of New South Wales to this inquiry.

The objective of any co-located or joint use library is to:

- **Provide an integrated and improved level of service**, both collectively and as individual services, than would occur through stand alone facilities;
- **Meet the individual performance standards** required by the governing bodies and

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authorities involved; and

- Where possible, provide a **more economic use of services and resources**.

Other factors to be considered are:

- **Motivation:** those involved in such a project must be willing partners committed to working in partnership, co-operation and sharing throughout the life of the project. Without this commitment, negotiations can be meaningless and time-consuming. All services should have, or be working towards, developing common goals and be willing to make financial and operational commitments to achieve these goals. The sharing of common goals is possibly one of the most critical factors in ensuring a successful project.
- **Service Compatibility:** the image, operating structure and users of the services involved need to be compatible. The project should not result in any users feeling that the new project is uncomfortable or undesirable. For example, joint school/community libraries have found it difficult to attract adult users. Equally, some facilities which involve older residents and youth sharing space have experienced problems.
- **Common Design and Management Goals:** it is important for all services to agree on the design and management options for the project. In practice, this is where many projects have failed, with problems in design and management rendering a project inoperable. Common goals, development of joint management arrangements and significant benefits evident to all services are essential components of a viable project. This may be time-consuming but it is **essential** to have written agreements to cover each aspect of the project. Each service needs to be fully aware of its management responsibilities and that the staff involved are committed to these agreements.
- **Financial Implications:** all services must fully understand their financial obligations towards the project. This should include both capital and recurrent costs where appropriate. It may become evident during the negotiations that the project may not deliver major financial savings when compared to a stand alone facility. However, the improved service outcomes may be of greater importance to all those involved. It is essential that co-location and joint-use libraries **are not** based on potential financial benefits only.

If the opportunity exists to develop a co-located or joint use library the following elements should be addressed:

- **Consultation with key stakeholders in the planning process** – it is essential that the key agencies involved in any co-located or joint use library are involved in the siting and design process for the project. Discussions on management arrangements should also be formally agreed to at this stage as this may impact on the site requirements and/or building design. For example, due to *NSW Childcare Regulations 2004*, a licensed child care centre cannot share space with other services. The entry to the centre, outdoor play area, kitchen and toilet amenities must be totally independent. Equally, when planning computer technology requirements for a co-located library, separate local area networks will be required to ensure that confidential data cannot be accessed through a shared system. This may impact on the facility design. Where a facility is to be shared with other users soundproofing and acoustics are very important. If the project involves leasing space to a commercial café, bookshop or other private use information from commercial retailers/leasing agents on viability and design implications should be sought.
- **Facility management** – an agreement must be prepared detailing the responsibilities of each service/organisation including building maintenance, car parking, cleaning and security. Protocols for implementing these responsibilities also need to be identified together with

processes for dispute resolution, e.g. who to ring for building maintenance, who is responsible for locking the building, etc. Council's Property officers typically are responsible for these arrangements and should be involved in the project planning. This agreement should also include the establishment of a board/committee of management comprising representatives from each user group. The board/committee should meet regularly to discuss the management and operation of the facility.

- **Construction agreement** – this will be required primarily where non Council services are involved in the project. Council's Property officers and/or an appointed project manager would typically be responsible for these arrangements and should be involved in the project planning. Equally, Council's Environmental Planning section should be consulted regarding potential statutory zoning issues and the development approval process.
- **Facility operation** – a joint mission statement is required to confirm agreement between services about the role and function of the facility and the services provided. In addition, a memorandum of understanding to confirm how the co-located or joint use facility and/or site will operate should be prepared including procedures and responsibilities for termination of any services. Issues such as hours of operation, staffing and programming need to be determined. The aim is to provide a coordinated service which may require new staff agreements and/or changed work programs.
- **Marketing** – importantly, these projects provide an opportunity for joint marketing and promotion. To the community, the facility/site should be viewed as a “one-stop shop” and can be marketed in this manner. Combined open days, information days, promotional material, signage, website and advertising can be delivered through a joint project.

When considering any co-located or joint use library service, you should discuss the potential benefits and disadvantages with other libraries that have developed similar projects. You may also contact the State Library of New South Wales for information about other projects.

4.5 Developing a Local Technology Plan

The pace of changing technology is being felt in public libraries in New South Wales. Changes in library design, function and management can be directly attributed to new technologies and this is likely to increase at an even more rapid rate in the future.

As outlined in *Section 2.2.4*, the issue for public library buildings is really not *what is going to change but how can these changes be accommodated* over the long term. To meet this challenge, it is important in the initial planning of a library building project to identify how technology is likely to be used. This can then be used as input into the design brief (see *Section 5.5 Developing a Brief*).

Developing a Technology Plan is recommended as an appropriate tool to ensure that the technological needs of our future libraries will be met at the local level. An overall Technology Plan should be prepared at an LGA or regional level as a strategy document for the integrated development of technology services in public libraries. This Plan would then link to an individual Local Technology Plan for each public library facility or service point.

In preparing either an overall or Local Technology Plan, it is important to include relevant stakeholders in the development process. Information technology is very important to local government, with many councils actively involved in improving the information available both

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in-house and to the public via computer technology and online services. The need to involve library staff and other Council staff, particularly officers responsible for Council's Information Technology, is imperative.

Analysis of the need for public access computers in the Local Technology Plan can be based on the needs assessment approach outlined in Section 3.3. Information on the use of computers at home and the Internet within the local area, the LGA and other comparative communities is available in the Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). Information on existing computer use in public libraries is also available from the Public Library Statistics, State Library of New South Wales. Councils may also have data on use of online materials, non loans visits and email requests for library assistance. Analysis of this data and the trends reflected can be used to inform the Local Technology Plan.

The following checklist provides direction for developing a Local Technology Plan but the needs and issues for each community will be different. Obviously, an overall Technology Plan deals with many broader issues and goals and will be more complex. A Local Technology Plan must be linked to the overall plan but looks at technology provision that relates to the actual design and function of a library building. A Technology Plan for a Central Library is likely to be more complex than that for a Branch or Area Library.

All plans should have short and long term goals and be linked to appropriate levels of capital and recurrent funding, i.e. acquisition of computers, staff to run computer courses and develop online services, etc. Opportunities exist to gain funding for technology through other government resourcing programs, partnerships with other agencies, etc. Some libraries have developed their technology services by using opportunities available outside the traditional library funding sources. For example, Community Technology Centres (CTCs) and universities have co-located additional computer resources with public libraries. To ensure that public libraries provide public and staff access to the most up-to-date technology, allowances should also be made for the constant upgrading of equipment.

The Local Technology Plan will have significant implications for library layout and design. Traditional customer flows in particular will change as a result of the introduction of more technology to public libraries. The provision of self-checking equipment will significantly reduce the amount of traffic at the circulation desk while dispersed OPACs may reduce the area traditionally required for information. Many libraries are also providing quick access Internet computers for people who want limited access online information. Often these are provided at standing-only work stations.

Online resources such as journals and newspapers may reduce the amount of space traditionally required to store these materials while staff may also be freed up from traditional activities behind the circulation desk to be out in the library addressing user needs and/or resourcing online requests. As a result, staff work space is likely to be reallocated to other areas and the potential for "hot-desking" (where different staff temporarily use the same work space) is already evident in the public areas of several libraries.

Checklist for a Local Technology Plan

- **Computerised and online library systems:** for circulation including scanners/printers and self-checking equipment for borrowing; acquisitions; and cataloguing including Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) terminals.
- **Computerised and online Community Information Systems:** for community information, Council meeting minutes and other Council public information
- **Terminal work stations for staff:** provision is often based on one dedicated work station per full-time staff member
- **Public access computers:** all public libraries should provide a minimum of one personal computer for public access to the Internet per 3,000 residents or part thereof. Many public libraries in NSW already achieve this level of provision with the existing provision rate for NSW at one per 4,000 residents. The recommended standard allows for the expected continuing growth in computer and Internet usage. Where the library serves less than 20,000 residents, at least three personal computers with Internet access are required. Additional public access computers should be provided with current software, linked printing facility, scanner and associated equipment. Consideration may be given to providing public access computers for computer games particularly in the children's and/or youth areas. Increases in provision should be incorporated into the Technology Plan based on this guideline, community needs and the range of services to be provided by the library, such as public Internet courses, services for a large student population and local business developments. Appropriate furniture and equipment to access all technology resources within the new library should be provided for all users, particularly for people with a disability.
- **Telephone system:** capacity to deal with a number of different lines, cordless and headset options and other new facilities.
- **Provision for personal laptops and wireless technology:** provision should be made for the public to use their own personal computers in the library. Ports for laptops should be provided throughout the library together with provision for wireless technology.
- **Security systems:** which interface with the library management system, e.g. radio frequency identification technology (RFID)
- **Fax machine and scanner:** for both staff and public use
- **Photocopier:** colour and black/white copiers
- **Audiovisual equipment:** CD player, DVD player, overhead projector and other resource equipment should be provided based on the needs of community and services to be provided

4.6 Staffing Requirements

When planning for a new/extended library building, provision should be made for staffing requirements based on the new library design. Research highlights the importance of well-trained staff in a library and the high value placed on this service component by users. In addition to qualified librarians, library technicians and assistants, specialist library staff may also be required to meet the service needs identified in *Section 3 Needs: Planning for Your Community*. The number of service points within a new library building has a direct impact on staffing requirements. This should be a major consideration when designing the internal layout of a new library building.

If a new library building is being planned, you should determine the required staff numbers and

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skills mix based on:

- Internal layout and function of the building
- Existing levels of provision in the community
- Potential of a joint venture project to increase non library staff within a building and thereby reduce worker isolation and increase personal safety
- Comparison with similar new library projects in other communities
- Guidelines provided in *Towards a quality service* (Australian Library and Information Association, 1990)

The consideration of staffing needs is essential and one of the criteria used to assess Library Development Grant applications.

4.7 Library Collection Plan

An equally important component of a library development project is the provision of an improved library collection. As outlined in *Section 3 Needs; Planning for Your Community*, the service provided by a public library is the most critical for users. This means the size and quality of the collection available and the provision of well-trained staff to ensure that these resources are accessible and useful. The library building is merely the service model through which service delivery occurs.

Therefore, it is essential that plans be made to upgrade the library collection as part of a new building project. The community will *expect* something new and different. In some cases, an expanded collection will be required if you are adding a new library to the existing number of service points in the community. Where a new project replaces an existing facility this may mean increasing the collection slightly. Statistical indicators such as the number of library resources per head of population may be used to determine how many new resources need to be added. Recent acquisition costs per item will translate this information into a budget item for your library development project.

Opportunities also exist to provide specific areas for special genre collections. For example, the new library may have a specific area for gardening with the book and audiovisual collection located in one area with comfortable chairs, tables and display cabinets. Equally, a community language collection may also be located around tables for group learning and information boards.

It is important to remember that the library collection not only includes books, but an on-site and off-site electronic collection, audiovisual materials, magazines, periodicals and other resources.

4.8 Library Fitout

Library fitout is equally important and will be a major component of any library budget. Experience suggests that library furniture and equipment should be attractive, comfortable, robust and durable with limited maintenance requirements. The following checklist outlines *some of the items* that may be costed in the fitout of a new/extended library:

- Shelving for different book collections
- Specialist shelving for audio visual materials, magazines and periodicals
- Study carrels, group tables and chairs
- Lounges and comfortable chairs for the browsing area
- Specific furniture for the children's and youth areas
- Specific furniture for specialist genre collections, e.g. study tables for business collection
- Specialist storage and conservation resources for archival material
- Craft and activity tables
- Computer hardware and software
- Workstations and office furniture
- Signage
- Circulation desk, including self-service checkouts
- Information and other service desks
- Public art
- Fire-resistant book return chute
- Audiovisual equipment
- Meeting room equipment, i.e. tables, chairs, whiteboard, kitchen equipment
- Staff amenities equipment
- Security system
- Photocopiers, fax machine and other resource equipment
- Carpet/floor covering
- Window treatment, i.e. blinds, curtains, etc
- Telephones
- Compact shelving and other storage facilities
- Change machine
- Noticeboards
- Display cabinets
- Trolleys
- Lockers

It is important for the architect's budget to include not only the total cost of the library building but also all built-in fittings and furniture. The Library's budget must therefore make provision for all these items, which could account for 10% of the total cost of the library project. However, it is normal practice for the librarian to prepare a full list of all these requirements at the building design stage so that the architect can be consulted on furniture design and an agreed list of items budgeted by the local authority.

Planning: Upfront Planning is the Key

5.1 Choosing a Site for a Public Library

That old real estate adage “location, location, location” applies equally to public libraries as with any activity that needs to be accessible to a broad range of users. The process of siting a new/extended public library needs to address key criteria which are essential to the successful location of a public library.

Christine Koontz’s *Library facility siting and location handbook* (1997) highlights that little has changed over the years with factors such as high visibility, location in a main shopping area and potential for expansion remaining as relevant today as they were in the late 1800’s. In many communities, local councils are now looking at the value of retaining major public infrastructure to attract shoppers and visitors in City Centres. Equally, private developers are often interested in accommodating a public library in a new shopping centre development as it attracts large volumes of visitors who may also shop after visiting the library.

As outlined in *Section 3 Needs – Planning for Your Community*, the general location of a new/extended library is very much based on the needs of the community. A needs assessment should be undertaken to determine where the new/extended library is required and what type of services will meet the community needs. A detailed methodology is presented in *Section 3* and should be read in conjunction with this Section. However, issues of resident and non resident characteristics; population growth projections; shopping and recreation patterns; location of schools and higher education facilities; transport patterns; and future developments are some of the factors that may be considered as part of this analysis.

Following this analysis, a broad area or suburb will be identified in which a new/expanded library is required. From this base, several sites may be chosen and assessed in terms of their suitability. *People Places* recommends that, as a minimum, all of the following 12 locational criteria be considered in determining the most appropriate site for a public library.

Site Criteria for a Public Library

- Main street or shopping area location
- Highly visible location particularly from the shopping area
- Street frontage with library on ground floor and not hidden from the road by trees or another building
- High level of personal and property safety as outlined in Safer by Design requirements (see *Section 5.2*)
- Fully accessible for people with limited mobility
- Close to and/or accessible from local schools and educational facilities
- Potential for an outdoor area to be attached to the library
- Priority pedestrian access which is safe and attractive, particularly for older residents, children and parents with prams
- Walking distance from public transport which is typically 400-500 metres with minimal gradient
- Access to convenient and safe car parking with priority for people with a disability, older residents, parents with prams, staff and night-time users.
- Accessible for community buses, mobile libraries, deliveries and other vehicles
- Site able to accommodate future expansion of the library if required

To determine which site is best from a locational viewpoint, a simple or weighted matrix can be used as an evaluation tool. Simply give one point to each site that meets the locational criteria provided above. You may add other locational criteria which are important to your specific community, e.g. not on flood prone land, within the City's cultural precinct, etc.

As shown in the following table, a more detailed approach could be used if you want to further distinguish between the sites and/or include the views of other stakeholders. Ask each stakeholder to give a score of between 1 and 3 for how well each site meets the criteria. You might even decide to weight the criteria yourself between 1 and 3 depending on their importance. For example, the stakeholders may consider that a location with adequate parking is more important than being located right in the shopping centre. As shown in the table below, parking is given a weighting of 3 points while shopping centre location has a weighting of 1 point. Site A, which has ample on-site parking would receive 9 points (i.e. 3 for its criteria weighting and 3 for the site score or $3 \times 3 = 9$). Site B, located right in the shopping centre, would receive 3 points (i.e. 1 for its criteria weighting and 3 for its site score or $3 \times 1 = 3$).

In the table overleaf, fictional site locations and a score has been developed as an example of how to use a locational matrix to assist in the site selection process. Using this methodology, the site with the highest total score is the most suitable for a public library. In this example;

- Site A is on a side street in a shopping centre
- Site B is located right on the main street
- Site C is behind the Council administration building.

This methodology may not be needed if the locational criteria can be easily applied to the sites available. Also, political processes and other issues may influence the preferred location of a public library, making the choice of the most appropriate site a difficult or contentious issue. It may be appropriate at this stage, to engage an independent consultant to undertake an assessment of potential sites, facilitate the process and prepare reports.

In all cases, it is essential, as a minimum, to address the locational criteria provided in this Guide. Poor locations for public libraries can result in public monies being wasted. Research strongly supports that location is a major factor for library users and a well-located library is essential to achieve increased utilisation.

Example of Locational Matrix for Identified Public Library Sites

Locational Criteria	Weighting (optional)	Site A	Site B	Site C
Main street or shopping centre location	1	2 (1x2)	3 (1x3)	1 (1x1)
Highly visible location	3	3 (3x1)	9 (3x3)	6 (3x2)
Ground floor and street frontage	3	6 (3x2)	9 (3x3)	9 (3x3)
High levels of personal and property safety	3	3 (3x1)	9 (3x3)	3 (3x1)
Fully accessible	3	6 (3x2)	9 (3x3)	9 (3x3)
Accessible from local schools	2	2 (2x1)	4 (2x2)	6 (2x3)
Potential for outdoor space	1	1 (1x1)	2 (1x2)	3 (1x3)
Priority pedestrian access	3	6 (3x2)	9 (3x3)	3 (3x1)
Walk to public transport	1	2 (1x2)	3 (1x3)	1 (1x1)
Convenient and safe parking	3	9 (3x3)	6 (3x2)	9 (3x3)
Accessible for all vehicles	3	3 (3x1)	3 (3x1)	9 (3x3)
Future expansion	2	4 (2x2)	2 (2x1)	6 (2x3)
OVERALL SCORE		47	68	65

5.2 Safer by Design Principles for Sites and Buildings

In many communities throughout Australia and indeed overseas, many people have strongly voiced their concerns regarding perceived and real lack of personal safety in the home, street and public places. In response to public concerns, the NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning prepared the guidelines Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to assess the appropriateness of proposed developments to provide a safe, crime free environment. Prepared in conjunction with the NSW Police, many Councils assess all development applications using these guidelines (NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, 2001).

The “Safer by Design” guidelines have adopted the following design principles:

- **Surveillance** – natural and technical surveillance are important and focus on ensuring that people can see what people are doing. Typically public areas need to be overviewed by others with clear sightlines from private to public areas, effective lighting of public places and landscaping which does not provide areas for people to hide or entrap victims. Private areas need to have well-defined, well-lit entries with safety provisions incorporated into windows/courtyards fronting public area.
- **Access control** – public places need to be clear in their definition of where people can and cannot go and to define private property boundaries. The use of physical barriers (eg fencing, locked doors) and symbolic barriers (eg landscaping) are important in access control. This is equally important for entries to individual apartments and communal resident areas, e.g. car park, garbage collection area, storage areas, etc.
- **Territorial reinforcement** – areas that are well-maintained, have a feeling of “ownership” and are well-used reduce opportunities for criminal activity. Public areas need to clearly define their intended use and encourage community activity. This equally needs to be applied to communal private areas as outlined earlier.
- **Space management** – areas need to be attractive and well-maintained with regular removal of waste, mowing, removal of graffiti, repair of vandalism and the refurbishment of old equipment/furniture. This applies to both public and communal private areas.

It is recommended that these design principles be applied as part of the planning process for the proposed library site (see *Section 5.1*) and library building (see *Section 5.3*). More information on the specific assessment criteria can be obtained from Council’s Environmental Planning section and at: [www.police.nsw.gov.au /community_issues/crime_prevention/safer_by_design](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/crime_prevention/safer_by_design).

5.3 New Building or Refurbishment

The choice of site may also be influenced by the possibility of reusing or adapting an existing building. The prospect of utilising a refurbished building rather than a new facility may at first appear to be a more cost-effective option. However, the suitability of the building as a library can have a substantial impact on the initial capital cost, the end costs and running costs, and can have a substantial impact on the future development of the library and future services to be provided. Issues to consider are:

- Provision for mechanical and electrical services in existing buildings particularly those with heritage significance.
- Flexibility, adaptability and expansion capability for future modifications

- Fire upgrades and compliance with the Building Code of Australia.
- Maintenance and running costs
- Cabling to accommodate local technology plan requirements
- Floor loading able to hold significant collection weights
- Access particularly for people with a disability or limited mobility

5.4 Schedule of Public Library Functional Areas

This schedule provides a guide to the type of functional areas that may be included in a public library. Each area, its size and possible location within the library will vary from building to building depending on the type of services the library provides and the needs of the local community. There may be other specific functional areas required in your library building project which have emerged from analysis of the community's needs and benchmark needs standards (see *Section 3 Needs – Planning for your Community*). The following functional areas should be considered when planning and designing a public library building:

Collection

- Reference collection
- Fiction collection
- Non fiction collection
- Specialist collections (Local Studies, Community Languages and Indigenous collections)
- Large print collection
- Children's collection
- Young adult collection
- Audiovisual collection
- Special genre collection, e.g. business, gardening

Activity Areas

- Children's activity area
- Computer games area
- Young adult area
- Family history service area
- Informal reading and browsing area
- Newspaper and periodical area
- Study areas including separate group rooms
- Theatre/lecture room/auditorium
- Outdoor area/courtyard
- Public art

Technology Areas

- OPACs
- Public access computers, scanners, photocopiers, fax machine and other equipment
- Audiovisual areas including listening posts, computer games, televisions for DVDs

Service Areas

- Reference/Information desk
- Children's desk
- Circulation desk/self checking area
- Community information/display
- Community services
- Entry foyer
- Exhibition and display area
- Refreshment area/coffee shop/vending machines
- Banking services

Ancillary Areas

- Kitchen facilities
- Public toilets including baby change and/or parents room
- Staff work room
- Librarians' offices
- Specialist work areas (including home library service, mobile library service, etc)
- Stack areas and other storage facilities
- Storage area for archival materials
- Staff room and staff toilets and showers
- Public lockers/storage
- Cleaners' storage
- Loading and delivery area
- Change machines and public telephone area

5.5 Developing a Brief

The process of writing a brief for the new/extended library will grow out of the needs analysis and will evolve through the planning process. At the outset it is important to focus on the bigger picture and set clear and achievable targets in the form of a mission statement. The brief is much more than just the allocation of space within the building. It should establish the desired philosophy, ideals and aspirations of all stakeholders involved with the library. This can be documented or established through focus groups and community meetings (see *Section 4*).

Once established, the working group should also closely assess the spatial requirements within the library and develop a finely tuned schedule of functions and services to be accommodated within the building. Key design issues should be discussed with priorities set and included within the briefing document (see *Section 6*). To facilitate this, it is imperative for library staff to be involved in all stages of the planning and brief development and direct liaison should be established between the planning and design teams and library staff.

There is no substitute for first hand experience of other libraries as working models. However, the examples of recent public library buildings on the State Library of New South Wales web site (www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls) and the experience of professionals in their particular fields can be valuable for the working group. Library buildings are becoming more and more technically complex with many issues to be considered. Now it is more important than ever to engage a range of specialists to optimise the design of a public library.

In writing a brief for the design team for a new/extended library the following issues should be clearly set out:

- Project background
- Project aims and objectives
- Project budget and timeframe
- Procurement methods
- Project organisation structure
- Proposed scope of services for the architect and consultants
- Form of consultancy contract
- Schedule of functional areas (see *Section 5.4*)

5.6 Selecting the Architect, Project Manager and other Consultants

The selection of an architect is obviously a key element in the planning and design of a library. There are a number of ways of entering into a selection process such as open or limited design competition, a tender process, calling for expressions of interest or choosing an architect outright based on experience and reputation. Each method can have advantages and pitfalls but in all cases it is imperative that the working group is confident they have engaged a professional with whom they can work collaboratively.

In almost all cases there will be a need to call for some form of tender for professional services. Local Councils will have a policy and procedure for calling of tenders and the appointment of consultants. Further advice can be sought from professional institutions such as the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) who publish a wide range of documentation such as competition procedure and qualification based assessment of architectural practices.

Selection criteria for assessment include:

- Recent relevant experience
- Professional skills of nominated staff
- Ability and willingness to communicate effectively
- Proven design capability
- Resource availability
- Technical capability
- An understanding of the project
- Management practices and methodologies
- Quality and completeness of information supplied with the submission
- Cost effectiveness and value for money
- Quality assurance
- Professional indemnity insurance

Also important to the process is the appointment of a project manager to manage the construction process. This is an equally critical component of a successful library building project, to ensure that the planned facility is completed on time, on budget and consistent with the overall vision and plan for the facility. The project manager may be from within Council, such as a Council engineer, or an external consultant/architect. The role of the project manager is to administer the building contract on site and provide the formal channel of communication and liaison between library staff and the building contractor/architect.

Councils must assess whether an in-house appointee has sufficient skills, experience and time to undertake the process, though this option obviously offers a cost saving. The alternative is an external appointee who will be a further consultant cost to the project. The latter option can provide benefits because it is possible to source a project manager who has specific previous experience and skills with public libraries, and in the administration of building contracts. Within the building industry, these types of skills are called “value adding” and in the long run utilising a professional project manager, which costs money, may be less costly than an in-house appointee who lacks the skills, and time to follow the job through thoroughly.

Project managers can also assist in the sourcing and costing of fitout which may be in addition to the works covered in the building contract.

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Design: Key Design Factors for Public Libraries

6.1 Image and Identity

Libraries are a focal point for the community - a place where groups and individuals will meet, discuss, listen and learn. The library building also serves an important civic function, both in terms of the service it provides and the impression it creates. A library should be expressive of its community. It must relate to the people it serves in an inviting, non institutional and welcoming way.

Importantly, creating an image and identity for your library does not need to be expensive. Primarily it is about developing an agreed vision for your library facility and then using this image to build a service and facility that the community knows and values.

6.2 Flexible and Multifunctional Buildings

Design, layout and service requirements change so rapidly that flexibility must be designed and built into a new building. In assessing the needs and service provision for a community (see *Section 3*), population growth and future service requirements may require additional space or provision for expansion that must be accommodated as part of the conceptual and building design. It is rarely possible to set aside space for all future uses but an approach to the design that allows flexibility and adaptability will enable future Library Managers to optimise the use of the space.

The following issues should be considered:

- Non load-bearing walls or demountable partitions can be removed or relocated within the building with minimal disruption to the building structure and services.
- The position and type of lighting has a direct impact on the potential for relocation of shelving systems. Flexibility is maximised when there is a high level of general lighting throughout the space (see *Section 6.8*).
- The reticulation of mechanical and electrical services should be planned to accommodate change. Gridded false ceilings will allow for various layouts of air- conditioning grilles, light fittings and power circuits. Skirting trunking with power and data cabling along all walls optimises the potential locations for computers and electronic equipment.
- When planning for future extensions it is important to identify specific locations as part of the design process. Allowance should be made for sufficient space on site for the construction of a later stage and if building upward the structure should be designed to accommodate the extra loading.
- Provision can be made for future subdivision or subletting of the space

6.3 Order, Orientation and Functionality

A simple plan is invariably a good plan. A simply laid out library where the relationship and access between spaces is clear and logical will be easier to use and therefore more frequented. Clear routes of travel assist in creating legibility and promote a sense of orientation. This makes things easier to find and prevents disruption between areas and functions. Unobstructed sightlines and visual markers, or perhaps colour coding or art works can also provide a means of orientation in larger buildings.

Equally the set out of the shelving should be clear and logical. This does not necessarily mean

the shelving should be regimented but it should allow a systematic sequencing and an ordered location of book types. It is not enough to rely on signage. Order comes through clarity and good design.

A library must work. It must function adequately. The spaces and objects designed must respond primarily to their function and to user requirements. The best way to ensure this is through detailed research with the library staff to gain an understanding of the function, the equipment and the tasks to be carried out.

6.4 Accessibility and Mobility

A library must be open and accessible to the whole community. This means designing a building that promotes equality for young and old, people with prams and people with a disability (see *Section 2.2.1*). The following issues all require attention:

- **Layout:** a single level library is desirable although a well-located lift does suffice in multi level buildings.
- **Access and approach:** the entry and all parts of the library should be barrier free, i.e. without steps or obstacles, and designed in accordance with building regulations and standards for ramps, door widths, door furniture, lift controls, toilets, etc.
- **Entry:** the front door, the first point of contact with the library, must be highly visible, easy to find and easy to open for all users. Electronic sliding doors are preferable and the provision of lobbies and air locks should be considered in terms of the internal climate and external wind conditions.
- **Car parking:** provide specially marked car parking spaces for people with a disability close to the entry.
- **Mobility:** aisle widths and corridors must accommodate wheelchairs, prams, motorised scooters, etc
- **Furniture and equipment:** should be comfortable and fully accessible. Counter height at service desks, readers' desks and carrels must cater for wheelchair users.
- **Floor coverings:** provide non slip surfaces.
- **Communication:** provide clear external and internal signage, tactile indicators and hearing loops.
- **Shelving:** provide shelving at the appropriate height and reach for all users.
- **Standards:** comply with the Building Code of Australia, Australian Standard 1428: General requirements for access, AS 1735: Lifts and Escalators, and other applicable codes and standards.

6.5 Smart Technology

Information technology has a major impact on the shape and form of public libraries and in the ways we are now using them. The way technology is integrated into the building should be developed as part of a Technology Plan which will determine the level of usage and the type of services to be provided (see *Section 4.5*). The debate on whether further technological advances will increase or decrease space requirements in public libraries will continue over the years, but it is evident already that the demand for access and training on computer, Internet and audiovisual facilities is creating a service requirement within libraries.

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One thing is certain – online information services through the Internet will increasingly be at the core of a library’s information and reference services and to cater adequately for future demand, a library needs appropriate space. The rapid changes and developments we have seen in the information technology industry will, no doubt, continue and the design of your library will need to be flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate the changes and to respond to the service demands. Some space related issues are outlined below:

- The rate of change with technology means that more people will require access to up-to-date technology. It cannot be assumed everyone will have the equipment at home or that they will be in a position to pay, or indeed that they have the time or expertise to locate and package the information in a meaningful way.
- Digital information is unlikely to replace hard copy entirely and in the foreseeable future there may well be dual systems requiring more, not less space.
- Libraries could well provide rooms suitable for IT training services.
- Information that is accessed digitally will often require reproduction in hard copy format. Libraries may well require document or multimedia production facilities such as printers, scanners, copiers, etc as well as audiovisual facilities. All these additional services require allocated space.
- More and more people are working from home and working in smaller business environments. Libraries can provide space for personal interaction, meetings and seminars.
- As the use of technology increases, particularly Internet access, the availability of information becomes more and more international and inherently broader based. The technology base in the library can provide valuable localised information specifically focused on the community, local culture and local heritage.

6.6 Marketing

To ensure that the community can use the resources of the library effectively, many libraries are using retail strategies to increase visits and borrowings. These strategies focus on ensuring that all the resources of the library can be more readily seen by users and that they are actively encouraged to use them. Strategies include:

- Signage
- Product placement
- Promotional displays
- Ambience
- Customer flow

For the physical design of the library these strategies may require:

- **Provision of separate quiet areas and noisy areas** with both attracting different types of users for different types of library activities. Quiet areas are typically used by students and older people for research and study. Particularly in urban areas, some people just want a quiet calm area – an oasis in the city. Noisy areas are more likely to be used for group activities and by children, youth and families. There may be audiovisual equipment, toys and group activities such as children’s story time or author talks. All are legitimate uses and activities in a library.
- **Consideration of internal and external colour schemes** to create ambience or themes. Case studies undertaken for this project included examples of;
 - vibrant colours on the outside of the building to ensure that the library is strongly

- identified within what may already be a visually busy retail shopping strip.
- warm internal colours to create a softer image rather than the more traditional image of a book warehouse. Many libraries are moving towards the creation of “living room” spaces to create a more welcoming and relaxed ambience.
 - internal colours reflecting a more natural environment for the facility, e.g. green furnishings and wood finishes.
 - contrasting internal colours to highlight particular areas, e.g. bright colours for the children’s and youth areas.
- **Creative design and use of shelving** to display new books, promote genre collections, or to link to a particular community issue/theme, e.g. legal information, health information, etc. Section 6.13 discusses shelving in more detail but it is evident that shelving should be not just to store books but importantly for promotion. As is evident in many retail book stores, the face-out displays, appropriate shelving for large format books and children’s picture books are important.
 - **Consideration of customer flows** to ensure that areas of heavy usage are well-located and large enough to minimise disruption of other activities, e.g. self-check areas and OPACs. Promotional displays and quick reference products should be placed in areas of high customer flows to ensure maximum exposure, e.g. new book displays and library events information.

Further information on marketing strategies which can be used in public libraries is available from your Public Library Services Consultant. Relevant publications are also referenced in *Section 7.6*.

6.7 Ecological Sustainability

Ecological sustainability, the “green agenda”, is a cultural shift which is becoming more prevalent in residential, public and commercial buildings.

Fundamentally, the ways that the community can minimise its environmental footprint upon the earth - what was five years ago a fringe phenomenon - has become a mainstream environmental movement which is now supported by legislation.

The legislation, which does not currently affect library buildings, is exemplified by BASIX and Green Star, which are two of the most relevant ratings tools. These are outlined below:

- **BASIX** – this is the legislative ratings tool that is now applied by building codes to residential buildings in NSW. The tool applies to both individual dwellings and multi dwelling developments and assesses energy use and efficiency. Residential buildings are required to meet energy use/efficiency targets which apply both to controlling solar heat gain in summer with the aim of reducing the automatic adoption of air-conditioning, and the reduction of heat loss through building elements, particularly windows, in winter. The latter aims to minimise heat loss because this will lead to a reduction in the heating input required and hence total energy use.
- **Green Star** – this is a non legislative commercial office design certification which identifies projects that have demonstrated a commitment to sustainability by designing a building which has the potential to achieve the highest environmental performance. Green Star is officially certified by the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA).

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To be eligible for a Green Star – Office Design Certification a project must:

- Achieve a minimum score of 45 points
- Achieve a minimum predicted rating of 4 stars using the Australian Building Greenhouse Rating (ABGR) for the base building design
- Not be built on land of high ecological value.

Green Star rates the following areas in commercial buildings:

- Management
- Indoor environmental quality
- Energy
- Transport
- Water
- Materials
- Land use and ecology
- Emissions

Neither BASIX nor Green Star directly apply to library buildings, but their agenda is something that library briefing and design teams should review and adopt where appropriate.

The following are key issues:

- **Natural Ventilation and Energy Use:** in most localities in New South Wales the range of external conditions will require public library buildings to be air conditioned for the comfort of users and for the conservation of library materials. However, it is quite likely that during spring and autumn there will be periods when areas of the library could be naturally ventilated. In air-conditioning terms the inclusion of “fresh air cycle” design is called mixed mode. Natural ventilation of parts of the library can be achieved by the provision of opening vents or windows. In this case the air-conditioning system would be turned off. Alternatively natural ventilation can be provided by mechanical means utilising the air-conditioning ducts to pump fresh temperate air from outside with the air-conditioning system either fully turned off, or in a low performance mode.

In the design of a mixed mode system that can operate in fresh air mode, the following must be considered at the briefing and design stage:

- a zoned air-conditioning system that can be turned off manually in specific areas
- opening windows, vents, and/or doors that can be opened, while maintaining security to provide fresh air ventilation
- an operating system that is either automated, or fully explained to the buildings users
 - the library staff.

In summary, the design should aim to minimise the use of energy from non renewable resources. Wherever possible it should consider local sources of renewable energy such as solar, geothermal and wind.

- **Natural Lighting:** A greater provision of natural light in the building is targeted in the green building agenda for the following reasons:
 - more natural light means less artificial lighting which results in lower energy use (and costs)
 - greater natural light leads generally to better comfort conditions within the building both for the staff, and public

- more natural light contributes to a feeling of well-being amongst staff and the public and makes a significant contribution to the prevention of the “sick building syndrome” which is found in old buildings with poor natural lighting and which are wholly air conditioned with poor mechanical systems.

The benefits of natural lighting are obvious, but natural lighting provision to libraries should be designed with care to avoid the following:

- the creation of glare, which will cause discomfort to users, and may affect the stock, and
- solar heat gain which will cause a rise in air-conditioning energy costs

Ultimately, the design should aim to work with the natural climate factors, and energy sources, in particular solar access and summer shade.

- **Minimal Use of Resources:** To reduce the ecological footprint the building makes on the earth, the selection of building and finishing materials should be undertaken to maximise the use of ecologically sound materials, and of renewable plantation timbers, rather than the use of non renewable rainforest timbers. The following are issues to consider:
 - PVC product use (wiring and vinyl) is being reduced. Linoleum (a natural product) is now often specified instead of vinyl
 - Carpet with green credentials. Low volatile organic compounds (VOC) backings, which can be 100% recycled at the end of their life
 - Low VOC paints to walls contribute to a healthy building because they don’t emit noxious fumes
 - Use plantation, renewable timbers
 - Utilise less medium density fibreboard (MDF) due to noxious formaldehyde glues utilized in production
 - Be aware of the embedded energy associated with the recommended materials
 - Insulation with “green” products are available, such as natural wool products, instead of fibreglass wool
- **Recycling of Materials:** Many offices and public buildings have joined the green agenda by the introduction of recycling systems. Recycling systems exist in both passive and non passive forms. Many commercial and public buildings have already embraced passive recycling systems. The procurement of a new library building is an opportunity to introduce non passive recycling systems. Consideration should be given to the following:
 - Passive recycling of paper and cardboard.
 - Passive recycling of glass bottles and plastics.
 - Reductions of non recyclable waste through purchasing regimes.
 - Rainwater reclamation can be used as “grey water” in toilet systems, and for landscape irrigation.
 - Roof mounted solar collectors – energy saving by the reclamation of the sun’s energy.
 - Energy efficient lighting, with areas zoned to enable them to be switched off when not in use.
 - Energy efficient mechanical systems, with areas zoned to facilitate areas not in use to be switched off.
- **A Holistic Approach:** Many of the areas discussed above are interrelated as sustainable

design principles and must be embodied in a holistic response of the building to its environment. Many local councils have policies and procedures relating to ecological sustainability and further design guidance is provided by the *Environment Design Guide* (Australian Council of Building Design Professionals) and various publications by the New South Wales Sustainable Energy Development Authority (www.seda.nsw.gov.au). Grants may also be available from government agencies for energy saving initiatives in a public building project.

6.8 Lighting

The lighting design in a library has a huge impact not only on the functionality of the space but also on the feel or ambience in the library. Lighting design is as much about the quality of light as it is about the appropriate level of light. The aim is to create a degree of control and flexibility between daylight and artificial lighting.

The benefits of natural lighting are referred to in *Section 6.7 Ecological Sustainability*, but may pose other problems such as glare, particularly relating to computer screens. It is not realistic to expect natural lighting to provide one hundred percent of the illumination in a public library. The purpose of windows and roof lights is therefore to supplement artificial lighting, to provide for views from the outside advertising the interior of the library, and to provide the building users with a “feel good” ambience by connecting the inside space to the outside. Windows of excessive size and number can create serious problems of heat gain and light control and in reducing the useable wall area for shelving stock. Problems of glare and direct sunlight can be reduced by the use of solar film and external sun shades. It is far more beneficial to protect windows from solar heat gain by the provision of external sun shades rather than the provision of tinted glass.

One of the greatest failures with lighting a public library is in having artificial lighting of insufficient intensity and uneven distribution. It is difficult to lay down general standards of lighting since it is to some degree a subjective issue and relates to the specific building design. However the following issues are important:

- Lighting should illuminate all shelf areas evenly, with no variations of light and dark areas
- Ceiling and wall surfaces should be light reflecting rather than light absorbing
- Ensure that lighting and shelving are carefully related so that readers are not standing in their own light
- Light fittings should be accessible (not too high, easily maintained and easily cleaned).
- Check that focal points in the library such as displays and service points, are highlighted using higher intensity lamps or spotlights.
- Coloured or feature lighting adds to the visual impact of the building after dark
- Many libraries also experience problems with reflected glare on computer screens from windows and other nearby light sources. Consideration must be given to the location of computer terminals and type of computer displays to be provided.

In some cases, additional localised task lighting may well be required at locations such as study desks and reading chairs. Recommended lighting standards for libraries are provided in Australian Standard 1680: Interior lighting.

Exterior lighting is required for advertising and security. A public library is used when its readers

find it convenient, which in many areas means evening and after-dark use. The library should be visually accessible and appealing from the street to promote use of the library and to ensure the safety and security of users. Exterior security lights on a time switch or on photovoltaic sensors will probably be necessary and will certainly discourage vandalism.

6.9 Acoustics

In recent years, the changes in the ways that people use libraries have meant a growing need for noisy as well as quiet areas. The ratio of these areas depends on the community and the type of services to be provided, but careful planning can ensure correct placement of compatible functions. In this way, study and reference areas can remain quiet while the vigour and activity associated with a contemporary library can continue without being disruptive. Where necessary, acoustic treatment of walls and ceilings can assist in attaining comfortable sound levels. For further information refer to the Building Code of Australia and Australian Standard 2107: Design sound levels for building interiors.

6.10 Heating and Ventilation

As discussed in *Section 6.7 Ecological Sustainability*, the control of the internal climate within libraries located in NSW to achieve comfort levels for staff and users and optimum temperature and humidity levels for the material collection, will generally require air-conditioning. There is also now a widespread expectation among users that public buildings will be air conditioned.

The capital costs of full air-conditioning may seem high, but should be compared with the cost of electrical equipment, which is required to produce a less efficient substitute such as fans, radiant heaters and evaporative coolers. Operating costs of air-conditioning and the equivalent number of heaters and fans are comparable but other factors such as environmental sustainability and full life cycle costs should be examined.

Rising energy costs, and a more prominent ecological sustainability agenda, plus a temperate climate during spring and autumn have led to the design of mixed mode systems that can be turned off at times, or supplemented with temperate external air, which is either pumped through the building or provided merely by opening windows and vents.

This can be assisted by the provision of separately controllable air-conditioning zones which can operate at different times, and at different levels, to allow the building to operate with a mixture of natural ventilation, or no air-conditioning at all. Reference should also be made to the Building Code of Australia and Australian Standard 1668: Air-conditioning and ventilation in buildings

6.11 Occupational Health and Safety

Libraries must be designed for an anticipated large scale use. Many people at the extremes of childhood and old age and with varying degrees of mobility will pass in and out of the building, and their safety must be considered in the planning and design of the building. The following issues require attention:

- Stairs should be designed so that there are no openings between the treads or at the sides of staircases through which a small child could fall. Stair treads should be of a good depth,

finished in a non slip material and with edges well-defined visually. Refer to the Building Code of Australia.

- Balcony railings must be of sufficient height to prevent a person from accidentally tipping over the top. Refer to the Building Code of Australia.
- Glazed areas such as glass doors and large glazed areas should be fitted with transom bars or other horizontal markings clearly visible at waist height. Refer to Australian Standard 1288: Glass in buildings.
- Floors with highly polished floor surfaces should be avoided because of the danger of slipping.
- Potential trip hazards, such as exposed cabling, inappropriate furniture and sharp edges, need to be avoided.

These issues similarly apply for staff areas with additional consideration given to:

- Appropriate work areas with desk heights and chairs suitable for minimising work-related injuries
- Trolleys for movement of books and equipment within the library. For multipurpose facilities, trolleys for chair and table storage have proven to be successful.

Reference to Council's risk assessment policy during the planning and construction stages of the library building project is recommended.

6.12 Personal and Property Security

An appropriate level of security is now required in all public libraries to ensure the safety of staff, users, the building and the collection. Electronic surveillance, although sometimes necessary, becomes intrusive and can affect the **friendliness** of the library. Good security can be designed into the library from the outset through clear sightlines, good positioning of the circulation desk and the avoidance of blind spots.

However, additional security measures such as surveillance cameras and distress alarms should be considered where:

- Library is used for customer service activities such as rates payments or other uses involving the handling of money
- A lone staff person operates a facility

Libraries may suffer some vandalism and abuse, although probably less than other unattended public buildings. The buildings, fittings and contents of libraries are very valuable, and senseless vandalism will cause considerable expensive damage. To counter the possibility of vandalism, some precautions can be taken:

- Design the building so that there are no concealed corners with windows (particularly louvres or sliding windows) which can be broken or forced
- Provide night security lighting on a time-switch
- Provide alarms connected to any windows or doors that can be forced
- Locate in an area where there is good passive surveillance from adjoining land uses (eg residents, business owners) and passing pedestrian and vehicular traffic
- Reduce the amount of blank walls which are attractive for graffiti and/or use building materials which are difficult to graffiti

Exits from the library must be limited and controlled to avoid illegal removal of library materials. Any necessary fire exits must be designed so that they cannot be used for other than the designated purpose. Similarly the exterior of the building should be designed with clear lines of sight around the building, appropriate light levels and designed to avoid blind spots. As outlined in *Section 5.2*, detailed Safer by Design guidelines are available through Council's Environmental Planning section and www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/crime_prevention/safer_by_design.

6.13 Shelving

The provision of appropriate and well-designed shelving is one of the most important components of a library building. It impacts directly on the collections and services of the library and for users, is one of the most important features of their library visit. Good shelving will result in higher levels of resources on loan.

In most contemporary public libraries, adjustable steel shelving is a standard item although there may be times when custom-built shelving is required. Standard steel library shelving must comply with Australian Standard 2273: Steel library shelving. The shelving can be colour coded, modular, and 'dressed' with end panels and canopies to enhance the appearance and to assist users in locating types of resources. There is an increasing trend towards shelving with no top canopy which increases the visual openness of the collection area.

The following issues need to be addressed when installing and design shelving:

- Shelving can be attached to the wall but is generally freestanding. The recommended height in the adult library is 1600mm. A lower height for freestanding shelving will facilitate sightlines, supervision and ease of access. In the children's area the recommended height is 1300 mm, although a maximum of 1550 mm is acceptable.
- 900 mm is the usual width for shelves, although manufacturers will also supply 600 mm and 1200 mm shelves as standard. Non standard sizes can be specially manufactured but at an additional cost and longer delivery times.
- It is preferable for the lowest shelf to be about 300 mm from the floor for ease of access, although this will reduce the number of shelves that can be accommodated. Alternatively, this dimension can be reduced to 100 mm if the bottom shelf is mounted at an angle so that the books are tilted back 10-20 degrees from the vertical. In this way the spines of the books will be better lit and easier to read. This could also be applied to all shelves below eye level.
- Shelving on metal casters can improve the flexibility of use of the collection space and enable collection areas to be easily expanded or contracted depending on use.
- Aisles between bays of shelves must be generous enough to suit all users, including those with disabilities, to pass comfortably behind people standing and browsing. The minimum aisle width between shelves is 1500 mm (i.e. the clear space between facing shelves).
- All library shelving manufacturers offer a range of accessories, which enable their basic shelf units to be adapted to store or display other library materials. These accessories include magazine display racks, audiovisual kit shelves, newspaper displays, poster rails, CD and CD-ROM storage, DVD storage, adjustable bookends and signage.
- In reference collections, slide-out reference shelves are useful although they can cause obstruction in the aisles, and must have rounded corners. The preferred alternative is a work

bench at the end of each reference aisle or centred within the reference section with some benches at a suitable height for wheelchair users.

Considerable change has occurred in the way that public libraries present themselves which includes the presentation of collections. The standard steel shelf can be dressed up in various ways to make the display more attractive. Changes worth considering are:

- More face-out shelving which is often judiciously located near the main entrance, main circulation areas, or at the entry to aisles
- Small shelving display units added to the ends of shelving aisles. In various guises these are able to display face-out books, and carry aisle signage, etc.
- Face-out display of magazine racks, CDs, DVDs, and talking books is very attractive.
- The use of permanently attached clear perspex A4 card holders on end panels to provide easily changeable displays, or signage relating to changing events.
- Display inserts which convert standard shelving into display shelving.

Shelves filled with books are exceptionally heavy, and the floor loading required to support them is considerably higher than normal office floor loadings. As the library's layout may change it is wise to construct all library floors with the same loading to promote flexibility.

Compact shelving is mounted on rails allowing the shelves to be moved to provide access. Space is saved due to the elimination of permanent access aisles. Compact shelving is not appropriate for general public access library collection shelving. It can however, successfully maximise the storage that can be provided, for instance, for the stack. Compact storage floor loading requirements vary from one installation to another, depending on the type of shelving system, its capacity and the nature of the materials stored, but is considerably higher than normal floor loadings. A structural engineer in consultation with the librarian must assess floor loadings. Reference should also be made to AS1170.

6.14 Furniture and Fittings

Above all, furniture and fittings should be robust, attractive, durable and comfortable, and should be selected with the characteristics of the library users in mind. The selection of furniture should fit with the overall philosophies governing flexibility, image, functionality and sustainability. It is normal practice for the architect's budget to include not only the total cost of the library building but also all built-in fittings, including the following:

- Shelving for stock, whether wall mounted or freestanding
- Bench fittings in workrooms
- Built-in cupboards for stationery, cleaners, etc
- Office furniture and work stations
- Tables and chairs
- Display units
- Signage

The design and selection of furniture and fittings is very important and some of the following issues require specific attention:

- Modular or systems furniture has some advantage over custom built items such as greater flexibility and reduced cost. The systems are generally designed to be reassembled in a number of configurations and often accommodate power and data cable management.
- The future availability of stock should be considered in terms of replacement and addition of items.
- The colour and texture of all furniture and fittings has an immediate impact on the overall design and should therefore be integrated into an overall concept.
- Floor surfaces should be hard wearing, comfortable and non slip.
- The cost and maintenance of all items should be considered particularly in reference to cleaning, painting and repairs.

The circulation or loans desk and the reference and service desks are some of the most important items of furniture in a library and invariably one of the more difficult items to get right. The library staff must have the greatest input into the design of these items, if a successful outcome is to be achieved. Some important points are listed below:

- Staff will invariably stand at the desk for extended periods of time and a carpeted, sprung timber flooring or anti-fatigue matting is more forgiving on the legs.
- A modular system can provide flexibility for later change or extension.
- Correct desk height and counter height are crucial and should cater for all users. Consider accessibility and comfort for wheelchair users, children and library staff.
- Provide general and task lighting on dimmer switches for control.
- Clear sightlines can optimise staff efficiency and assist in general security.

6.14.1 Signage

Library signage is often neglected and unplanned and it is necessary that sufficient funds be allocated within the cost estimates. Signage is important in libraries especially larger ones, because many people will not be used to library layouts and may be confused by a wide range of books and other materials on the library shelves. Signage falls into a number of categories:

- **Street signposting** – directional signs indicating the library location from neighbouring streets.
- **Exterior identification** – large lettering on the exterior walls near the entrance, out of reach of vandalism, sometimes illuminated.
- **Door and directional signage** – various permanent sign plates to offices or departments will be required. Illuminated emergency exit signs are a legal requirement in all buildings.
- **Changeable signs** – showing the layout of a large library, opening hours, “what’s on in the library”, etc.
- **Collection signage** – large signs visible from a distance allow library users to take in at a glance the various sections, collections and service desks.
- **Aisle signage** – bays of shelving in public areas will require flexible guiding to indicate the contents. Some commercial library signage systems are marketed for this purpose, especially for metal shelving units.
- **Shelf signage** – sliding shelf guide systems are also available from suppliers and these are designed to indicate the subject content of each shelf as distinct from each bay.

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All library guides and signs, including their wording and design, should be prepared by the architect and librarian in close consultation, and department stores and bookshops may be worth visiting for ideas in good professional signage.

6.14.2 Storage

Storage areas are essential within a public library with each activity and service likely to generate the demand for storage. As shown in the case studies undertaken for this project storage areas and specific types of storage equipment are often required for:

- **Children's and youth activities** – either located within the children's activity area or within close proximity to it, large cupboards are required to store craft supplies, resources, toys and display boards. A wet area with a sink, water and storage is also desirable.
- **Multipurpose rooms** – typically need adjoining store room for chairs, tables, audiovisual equipment and meeting room equipment. If the room is to be used regularly by community groups, individual lockable storage cupboards may be required for group equipment.
- **Archives and conservation** – provision for compact shelving may be necessary (see *Section 6.13*) together with storage for specialist council collections, e.g. heritage items, art collections, etc. Information on specialist archival storage is available from State Records New South Wales on www.records.nsw.gov.au.
- **Staff work areas** – storage cupboards and shelving in staff areas for stationery, resources, files and equipment
- **Storage of users bags** – coin operated lockers for library users to store excess bags
- **Cleaners room** – shelving and cupboards for cleaning materials and equipment

6.15 Asset Management

The ongoing running costs of a building are important considerations in the overall provision of a facility. Effective asset management requires the inclusion of these costs together with scheduled long term maintenance costs of a building. It is these recurrent costs which are often of major concern to Councils as they represent fixed costs which are usually not covered by other outside funding sources. The ongoing costs of a building may include:

- Regular building maintenance
- Scheduled maintenance
- Fire protection
- Cleaning
- Security
- Air-conditioning
- Graffiti removal/property maintenance due to vandalism
- Building insurance
- Utilities
- Updating of the fitout
- Technology and equipment replacement

It will be necessary to prepare long term and short term budget forecasts. To do this it is advisable to refer to council's property, maintenance and asset managers and to review the developing design, at key stages, in relation to the long term asset management policies and strategies developed by the building owners.

6.16 Mobile Libraries

In NSW mobile libraries play an important role in the delivery of library services to isolated and/or remote communities. In areas of low population density or to cater for specific users (such as rural schools, retirement villages, etc) a mobile library service may be considered. There are pros and cons for such a service as follows:

Advantages

- A mobile library provides a close-at-hand, convenient service, especially for the less mobile such as young children and older residents.
- It can effectively fill a gap between libraries and an isolated pocket of population for which a permanent building would be uneconomic.
- It can provide an effective interim service in developing areas where the population does not yet justify a permanent site or a permanent site cannot yet be identified because development plans are not far enough advanced.

Disadvantages

- A mobile library is not a cheap alternative to permanent buildings. The rate of depreciation is high, as are establishment and operating costs.
- It can at best offer a one day a week service at any one location.
- Stocks are typically small since the largest vehicle will only carry about 7,000 books.

For information on establishing a mobile library, reference should be made to:

- www.mobilelibraries.com.au which has been developed in conjunction with mobile library services throughout Australia. It provides valuable information on key contacts, setting up a mobile library service, online services for mobile libraries together with support information for occupational health and safety issues and examples of mobiles in other communities.
- International Federation of Library Associations' *Mobile Library Guidelines* (Pestell, 1991)

Further Information and Resources

7.1 Library Development Grants

Each year, the Library Council of New South Wales recommends to the Minister for the Arts the allocation of Library Development Grants to local government authorities for specific library projects. The aim of the grant scheme is to improve the quality of library services available throughout NSW and new, extended or refurbished buildings are one of the eligible categories.

Information on the Library Development Grants is available on the State Library of New South Wales web pages at www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls

7.2 State Library of New South Wales Contacts

The State Library of New South Wales provides a wealth of specialist resource information and support for all stakeholders involved in the planning and building of a public library. Visit the State Library Web site www.sl.nsw.gov.au/pls to find specific contact names and phone numbers. The State Library of New South Wales also publishes *Public Libraries in New South Wales: Directory* which is available at all NSW public libraries. This directory has a detailed list of the State Library services and specialist staff who can help you with specific information.

7.3 Specialist Planning, Building and Architectural Advice

The State Library of New South Wales has a consultancy service to advise on library building projects. The Building and Planning Advisory Service can be contacted at the State Library. The Service also maintains a current list of architectural firms that have worked on library development projects throughout NSW.

7.4 Methodology for Developing a Service-Based Benchmark

The service-based benchmark outlined in *Section 3.3.4* is derived from research carried out by the consultancy team into the relative areas within existing public libraries. It is based on the premise that the overall size of the library will be influenced by the total materials collection, electronic resources and access and further space allocated for additional services.

The space standards have been adjusted slightly in this edition to reflect the general lowering of shelving bays from 5 to 4 shelves which provides for greater accessibility to resources; improved supervision through better sight lines; and an increased sense of openness and legibility (see *Sections 6.3, 6.4 and 6.6*). Information contained in the following documents was also used to develop the benchmark:

- *People Places: A guide for public library buildings in New South Wales*, 1st edition (State Library of New South Wales, 2000)
- *The Planning and Design of Public Library Buildings*, revised edition (State Library of New South Wales, 1995)
- *Towards a Quality Service: Goals, Objectives and Standards for Public Libraries in Australia* (Australian Library and Information Association, 1990)
- *Public Library Statistics*, published by the State Library of New South Wales (annual)
- *Comparative Information on NSW Local Government Councils* (New South Wales Department of Local Government, annual)

The space allocation for the materials collection is based on:

- Shelving an average of 30 volumes per shelf with a standard shelf being 900 mm long
- Bays of shelving spaced at 1500 mm clear width between aisles
- Bays 4 shelves high and ranging to 6 shelves long, i.e. 5400 mm

This configuration gives a module of 14.49 sq m containing on average 1440 volumes which equates to approximately 100 volumes per square metre of floor area.

7.5 Methodology for Developing a Population-based Benchmark

The population-based benchmark outlined in Section 3.3.4 remains unchanged from *People Places 2000*. Originally, the benchmark was derived from the standards set out in *The Planning and Design of Public Library Buildings* (State Library of New South Wales, 1995). This standard provides a range of population sizes or catchments that in turn generate a recommended floorspace rate per 1000 residents. Different rates are provided for both a branch library and the local and central component of a central library. When determining the size of the central library two different population sizes are used – a local catchment and local government area/regional catchment. In fact, the floorspace rates used for determining a central library are basically the same as the branch library. The floorspace rates used for the local component of a central library is two thirds of the equivalent branch floorspace rate while the central component is one third the equivalent branch floorspace rate.

To simplify these tables and the calculations required to determine the benchmark size for a new/extended library, the consultants for *People Places* assessed the average variation in size of the central library using only the branch library building rates. Using several test scenarios and the mathematical relationship identified above, 15% of the branch floorspace rate for the central library component has been adopted as a reasonable factor to be used. By using the service-based benchmark and the population based benchmark there are two approaches to estimating the size required for a new/extended library. By using **both** measures a size range for the new/extended building can be determined.

It must be emphasised that the use of 15% has no exact mathematical relationship to the building rates used in the 1995 guidelines. Also, it should not be used as an exact measure of the floorspace required for central area functions of a central library. Rather it is purely a **mathematical factor** to be used in the formula derived for the population based benchmark and provides an allowance for central area functions as an addition to the usual size of a branch library.

An extra factor of 20% is used in the formulae for conversion of the net floor area to gross floor area. This allows for foyer, lobby, corridors, toilets, rest rooms, plant equipment and maintenance areas. This percentage is considered reasonable and is based on the efficiency rates and the average allocation of useable space within a public building of this type. This figure may be varied with more detailed examination of the specific circumstances, for example where foyers or other spaces are shared with other facilities, or where extensions to existing libraries are involved.

As outlined in *Section 3.3.4*, the population-based benchmark should be used in conjunction with the service-based benchmark to provide the range of sizes for a new/extended public library. This approach provides some flexibility for Councils and encourages an informed local response based on the range of information collected.

7.6 References and Further Reading

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