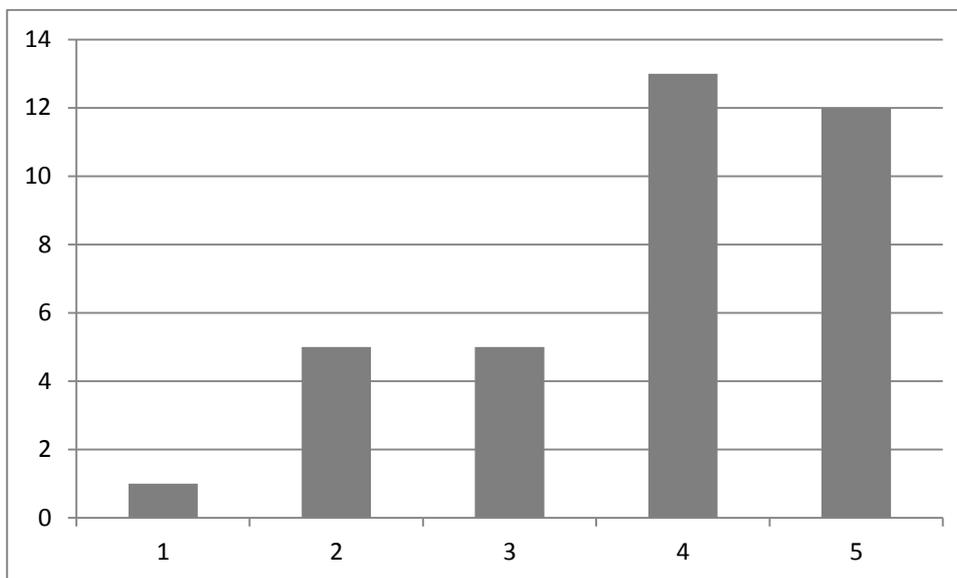


This report details feedback from community engagement on the New Johnsonville Library project. Information was gathered using several techniques in an effort to gather a wide range of views. Largely this was through a specific engagement website, which presented information regarding the project, and sought feedback via a survey link. Discussions were also held face to face, with parents of children attending a school holiday programme and parents who were participating in a parent and child activity, both at the current library site. Children at the school holiday programme were given a feedback form to complete to win a prize. All of this feedback has been incorporated into the summary.

To date, three separate rounds of engagement have been undertaken – pre-concept, concept and preliminary design. Engagement on the pre-concept design ran for 4 weeks throughout October and November 2015. 189 people took the opportunity to have their say. Engagement on the concept designs was open throughout December 2015. 125 people gave us their feedback during this phase. Engagement on the preliminary designs ran for 6 weeks throughout March and April 2016. An additional 46 people gave us their feedback during this phase.

## Preliminary Design

### How do you feel about the plans for the new library so far? (1-5 rating)



n=36 average rating = 3.83

### **‘Tell us why you feel this way about our plans’ and ‘how could we make the preliminary design better?’**

These two questions formed the free text part of the survey and this section is a segmented summary of feedback from these questions and face to face engagement.

Generally, the preliminary designs are supported, when asked “How do you feel about the plans for the new library so far?” there was an average rating of 3.83 (n=36). This is a

decrease in average ratings from the pre-concept design which was 3.89 (n=182) and concept design of 3.90 (n=118). The decline in average rating is paralleled by a decline in people engaged.

The comments generally reflect the design itself has been well received, with people commending the architecture as something new and fresh for Johnsonville. There was support for the spaciousness evident throughout the plan and the different allocations of 'spaces' were seen as providing for different user needs. The integration of the facilities into a 'hub' was seen as a dynamic community space, connected to other amenities around it and overall a positive asset to the area.

Feedback on the preliminary designs was mostly positive however some concerns came through as well. The main feedback themes were related to general design, parking, the kindergarten, the café, the collection, accessibility, digital access, children's space and library activities.

## **General Design**

The general feel and look of the library was liked and seen as forward thinking. There was appreciation for the open space, natural light and use of timber. The flexible spaces were praised as multi-purpose and for offering potential use for local events, exhibitions and meetings.

The Architectural Centre (AC) supports the new location for the library but recommends improvements in the engagement with the wider context (e.g. to the railway station, the Keith Spry Pool and the supermarket). AC also outlines the potential for the roof to positively contribute to sustainability and strongly encourages the council to require water collection and a green roof. Solar panels were also a suggestion that ties into sustainability. AC also noted the 'glass house' nature of the building and expressed concern at the possibility of overheating therefore requiring substantial cooling through air-conditioning and ventilation systems in summer and additional heating in winter. There was suggestion for the building structure to act as a screening device, requests for better regulation of passive heating and cooling as well as an energy-use audit to reduce operating costs.

Alongside a suggestion for some greenery inside the building, there was support for doing more with the exterior of the library; a green space including landscaping (native and bird friendly), large shade trees, a fountain, rubbish and recycling bins (like in central Wellington) and taking wind into consideration. It was also noted that with possible free public Wi-Fi there is potential for the library to extend beyond its physical boundaries and utilise outdoor space.

In regards to the interior spaces, it was mentioned that having the teen's area out of view of staff could cause difficulties. The glass walls in the reading room brought up privacy as an issue - it was seen as potentially uncomfortable as people could watch you reading from outside. This prompted the idea of having some of the wall as a solid material or some internal reading spaces with screens or similar for privacy. This would also help achieve the 'cosy' feel that some people felt was still a key part of a library. The 'dappled light' was appreciated and people found it reassuring that work has gone into ensuring that

quiet work/reading spaces aren't made less usable by over-bright sunlight coming through the glass.

There was suggestion that the library not be called simply 'Community Hub', but to have a meaningful name. Quality peer review was seen as a beneficial part of continuing to develop the designs.

## **Parking**

Parking is a large concern that has been voiced at all stages of the design. Users of the facilities that may become combined (e.g. pool, library, community centre and park) want to make clear that adequate parking is still needed for each facility. Parking is already seen as an issue at the separate facilities so many people thought that integration could amplify the congestion issue and they could have difficulty finding a park. It was also suggested that reduced parking availability could increase illegal parking practices and the risk of pedestrian related accidents.

There have been concerns at the perceived lack of quick and easy access to parking for several reasons (e.g. elderly patrons, parents with children and they need to drop things off, pool users getting to cars quickly in winter etc.). Questions arose around access to parking, particularly if hall users would have all day access to the library parks and whether people will be able to park across the road at the mall while using the library.

People recognised a need for more disabled parking as there are insufficient disability parks in the current facility and with increased usage within the hub there is going to be greater demand on such parks. It has been suggested that the entrance to the pool is moved to coincide with library entrance and that it might also be beneficial to move the "disabled carparks" currently on Frankmore Avenue closer to the new entrance. This would help members of the community who want to use the combined facility but have limited mobility. A suggestion of temporary 'disabled parks' at peak times of use was put forward as a way of increasing access.

While most felt there needed to be more carparks, some instead believed that other modes of transportation require more engagement with the space i.e. better integration with and promotion of public transport and provision of bicycle parking. Overall, people felt there was clarity needed around the number of car parks that would be provided.

## **Kindergarten**

Including the kindergarten in the preliminary design has generated a lot of feedback. Generally people liked the idea of including the kindergarten as part of the 'hub' concept, but the space allocated to the kindergarten has brought forward concerns.

The amount of outdoor space for children is the primary concern. People see value in having outdoor space available for 'big muscle activities', access to nature and open spaces to play and many don't see the current design reflecting this. Concern is evident in the rating of the kindergarten design; it the lowest ranked feature [of the preliminary design] (average of 2.93, n=30).

Among those concerned, several suggested that if outdoor space couldn't be provided it would be preferable to relocate the kindergarten elsewhere (e.g. Johnsonville school field), there was a suggestion that the children require a place better than the existing building anyway and therefore the space available to the new library should be maximised.

Another concern was the location on the first floor; there were suggestions that it would be more appropriate on ground level/where the café is/where the carpark is. In addition to this, some were worried at the idea that the kindergarten is being 'taken' for the new library. The perception that Council is 'taking' the kindergarten came from several people who were concerned that the Kindergarten Association might not have appropriate involvement in the engagement process. Concerns were also raised around funding for kindergarten and what will happen if funding doesn't get allocated for this option. Drawings for this possibility were requested and they wanted to know if additional engagement was going to happen if this change did occur.

Suggested solutions to the issues regarding the kindergarten are the relocation to another site or the opening up of the roof (potentially as a green roof) to library users and kindergarteners as outdoor space. Overall, comments generally supported the integration as long as the outdoor space issue is resolved.

## **Café**

Inclusion of a café was the most strongly supported element in the design; the average rating was 4.20 out of 5. Many 'loved' the idea of having a café included.

Despite the overall support, several issues were brought up about the way a café could affect the dynamics of the space. Concerns were raised about including a café in a civic facility; that people who cannot afford to use the café may feel unwelcome and that this opposes the function of the library as a welcoming, free public space. Being able to possibly see, smell and hear the café while using the free facility is seen as potentially excluding and stressful for some e.g. low income patrons, parents who have to refuse children food from the café.

In a similar thread, it was asked if areas like the courtyard - where the café space extends - were going to be exclusively for the use of cafe patrons or if the seats and tables would be available for non-café users to bring their own food and drink. There was also a suggestion to have a citizen's space with free tea. Others suggested that the café doesn't need to be in sight lines of library users, citing Clark's at central library as a good example of mixed use. The possibility of disturbance in the reading room due to noise coming from the café was also raised.

Overall there was definitely support for the café as a social space that can contribute positively to Johnsonville. Suggestions were to make the cafe environmentally conscious, design conscious, modern, and welcoming with good quality, reasonably priced food. There is also a need to be sympathetic to parents with buggies and young children and the elderly and disabled. There was support in having partial separation of the café and the library to remedy some of the identified issues that could come with having mixed use space and incorporating a business into a free civic facility.

---

## **Collection**

The physical collection was the highest ranked feature by children and the prioritisation of collection space is valuable to submitters overall. Preliminary design for book spaces had an average rating of 3.83 (n=29).

The size of the collection was a key point of comment. As the library is increasing in size, people felt that this increase should be reflected in the size of the book collection. Several felt that the preliminary designs did not show enough space allocated to books. While the need for modernity and the changing function of libraries today was recognized, some felt that not increasing collection space relative to the size of the library and increasing population was a turn away from the “fundamental purpose of a library”. While the other user spaces are appreciated, some wanted to reiterate the key function behind a library and make sure that the books remained the focus.

## **Accessibility**

The Disabled Persons Assembly NZ Inc (DPA) supports the upgrade of the library and is pleased to find that accessible toilets will be available on every level of the library. DPA wishes to ensure that access for people with disabilities is taken into consideration at every stage of the design process. DPA believes that the current building code and NZ4121:2001 is the minimum standard of access. DPA recommends that all designs and plans are put to the Wellington Accessibility Advisory Group at all stages of the project.

Accessibility to and within the complex is generally commended; however some issues have been identified. Access to the library from the shopping mall and train station has been identified as important. The survey found the shopping mall to be the most utilized of nearby facilities (88% of people indicated they would use it –n=34). The connection to the public transport hub was identified as an opportunity to bring more people into the complex and to allow facilitation of any increase in train users in the future. A recurring suggestion was the idea of an elevated weather proof walkway over Moorefield Road that would connect the different complexes, allowing for increased pedestrian safety and reducing the chance of traffic congestion. Pathways travelled by students from local schools and where those students might enter the buildings were raised as points of consideration.

A question was raised about what provision is being made to give vehicle access for moving heavy items into the community hall. It was seen as positive that the facilities were coming together, but some of the connections between the library and other sections were unclear (e.g. connection to the community centre). There was support for a connection to the pool and community centre from the internal street, rather than having to walk out of the library to the current location of these entrances. A new pool entrance closer to the library entrance was also mentioned in regards to those with limited mobility, this was seen as ultimately coinciding with additional disability parks mentioned earlier to allow for easy access to the pool.

Questions were posed around the internal street, whether it is to be enclosed and it was asked if this would be open 24 hours. The Architectural Centre’s support the development of this space as an open link, and its design development to ensure that it, as well as the entrance portico, is a safe space after hours. There was also a recommendation for longer opening hours for the facility and for community facilities e.g. meeting spaces to have the capacity to be accessed after hours. Roof access was also questioned as different images over the process have shown different levels of access.

## **Digital Access**

There was recognition of the need and appreciation of efforts to 'future proof' the library. Digital access was identified as important for many people, with patrons having access to knowledge and ideas electronically. It was said that the designs need to take into account digital options such as internet access, computer access, conferencing (face to face and video), virtual reality and a large screen for large scale viewing without disrupting other users.

Emphasis was put on the fact that libraries are historically a 'depository of knowledge', open to everyone. As knowledge is increasingly shared online, access to computers and the internet was seen as a key part of the libraries current and future function, so it is fit for purpose for many years and remains relevant.

## **Children's space**

The feedback for the children's space came from mixed sources; the online survey, conversations with parents and from children via feedback forms. Three key questions were asked alongside general discussion.

### *1. Describe the design/feel/look that you would like in the Children's area of the library?*

The Children's area would ideally be a visually eye-catching space; there was a lot of support for bright colours (Blue, green, yellow, red, pink, orange and patterns) to be used and for pictures to be displayed on the walls. There was a suggestion to put large 'tiles' around the top of the raised area and getting children from different schools to paint them so that they could show their friends their painting and involve the local schools at the same time.

The idea of tactile displays like a felt wall was supported and seen to enable children to 'touch and feel', bringing another sensory level to the area. In regards to furniture, cushions and bean bags were very popular. Hygiene was identified as an issue with these, they need to be a washable material that is kept clean (children spilling things/spreading of flu's, whooping cough etc.).

Children felt that having a space to lie and read was important. 'Little furniture' for toddlers (like at the Central Library) had strong support, as did having parent-friendly furniture that was accessible for taller adults while enabling seating at 'children's level' so both children and parents can look at books together (perhaps on the edge of the performance space).

The 'feel' of the space with the different performance areas, natural light and tiered seating was well supported. Sound proofing was seen as important with the performance area being on the same level as the reading room and the warmth of the area was also a key aspect. The raised stage was popular but brought up safety concerns; parents felt that cushions on the steps would allow for 'soft landings' and that a fence or child gate could be a valuable addition to help prevent falls. It was noted that the glass wall on the outside edge of the space could get dirty (with fingerprints etc.) and could be a hazard with young children who could run into it; an idea to remedy this was that there could be a lower strip that isn't clear glass.

2. *What arrangement would you like of the collections associated with the Children's area?*

There wasn't an identified need to separate young children and toddlers; the currently proposed joint space was seen as appropriate. Children number one rated feature was having lots of books available and several children made comments about having more space for books and special displays presenting children's books by themes (e.g. age appropriateness or mystery/comedy etc.) and a stand with 'suggested books'. There was support to keep the children's collections at a low level so that children can reach them themselves, but a suggestion was to have them in boxes so children can search through books easily without damaging them.

3. *What sort of facilities would make the library easily accessible and user friendly for you?*

a. *How do you find using the current library, what would make it easier for you that could be included in the new library?*

More space was a key factor, so keeping the space simple and clutter free was supported. Alongside this, easy access for buggies was a primary concern, and the idea of having buggies securely out of the space was suggested but had mixed responses. It was noted that there is less need to bring buggies inside if the parking is in close proximity to the facility, as you can just bring your child in from the car.

Children's electronic interaction was raised, and there was general support. Interactive wall screens were ranked 5.75 on average by children. It was seen as something for older children (e.g. computers for homework) but not as necessary for younger children, they are there for the books. For younger children there was support for more talking books, black boards and pin boards as well as activity tables for drawing, action figures, puzzles, stories, building spaces etc. The performance space was supported, and as was a play area for toys - Lego was a common suggestion. Changing and feeding facilities were very strongly supported, as was the existing idea of having them close to the Children's area.

Some other suggestions for the children's area were a fish tank/gecko enclosure, more comics, more easy read books, reading puppets, and to have a mascot – one that is static and could stay in the library for children to see and one that could move around (i.e. a person in a suit).

**From the children’s feedback forms:**

“Which of these would you like to see in the new library?  
Put them in order: 1 is your favourite, 10 you don’t like so much.”

Possible items for children's area	Average Rating
Lots of books	1
Beanbags and cushions	3.25
Couches and comfy chairs	4.25
Tables for activities	4.25
Interactive wall-screens	5.75
Chalkboards	6.5
Internet computers	6.5
Lots of DVD's	6.75
Chairs and tables	7.5
Computer games	9.25

n=4

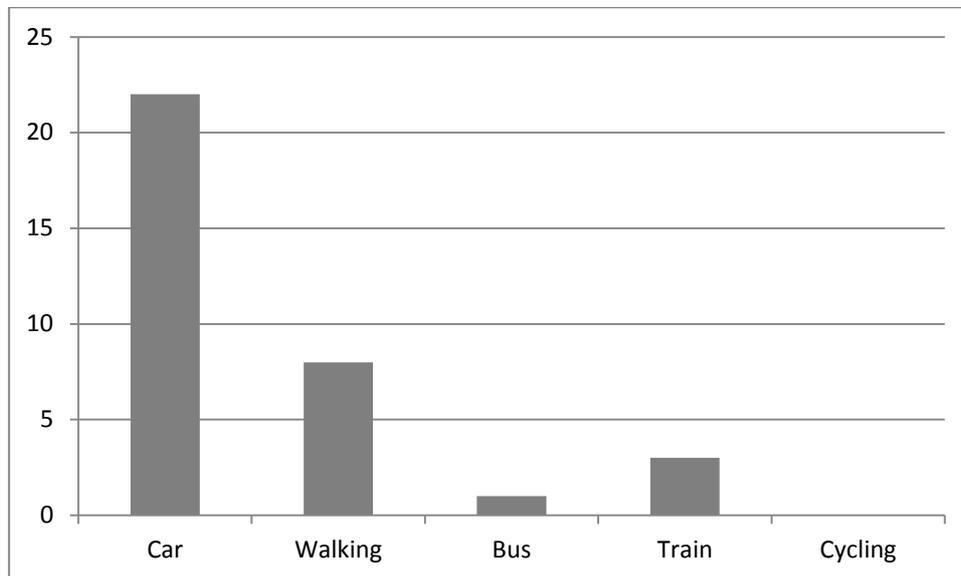
**Library activities**

Activities were well supported, particularly the current ones like baby rock and rhyme but also things like story time for older children, monthly book sales, treasure hunts, inviting in renown writers and having monthly competitions for children. It was also suggested that the library consider providing literacy services such as after school homework clubs, English lessons for speakers of other languages and basic computer literacy skills.

**Which feature do you most like about the preliminary design? (1-5 rating)**

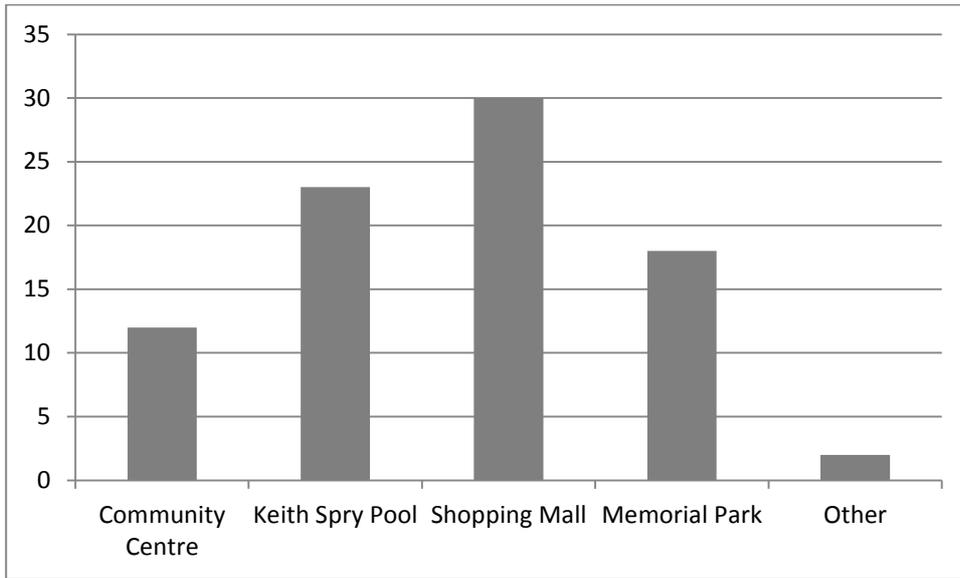
Item	Average rating out of 5
Café	4.20
Courtyard	4.06
Children's space	4.03
Internal street	3.97
Reading room	3.97
Meeting spaces	3.90
Book spaces	3.83
Teen space	3.77
Entry point	3.69
Makerspace	2.96
Kindergarten	2.93

**How would you *most often* travel to the new library?**



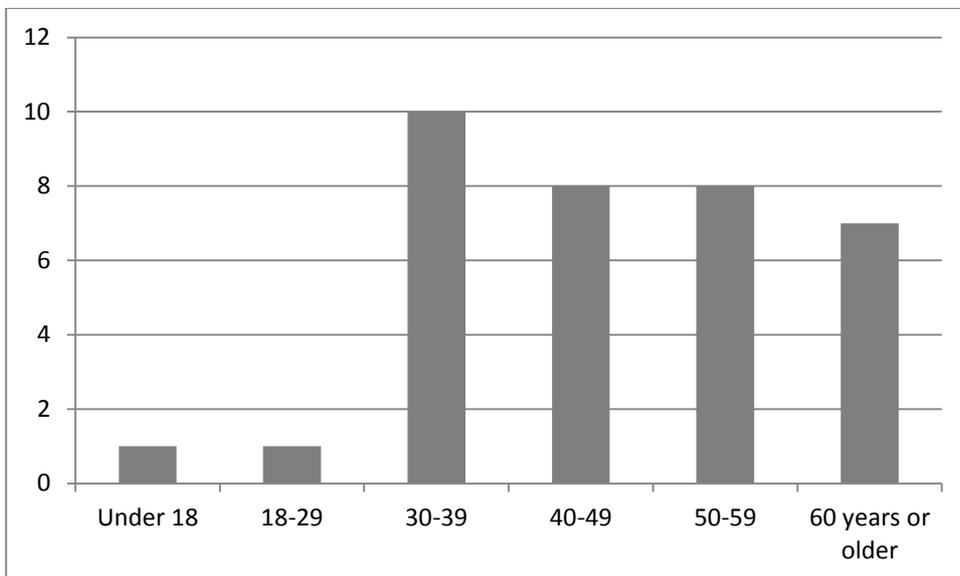
n=34

### Which of the following near-by facilities would you consider using while visiting the library?



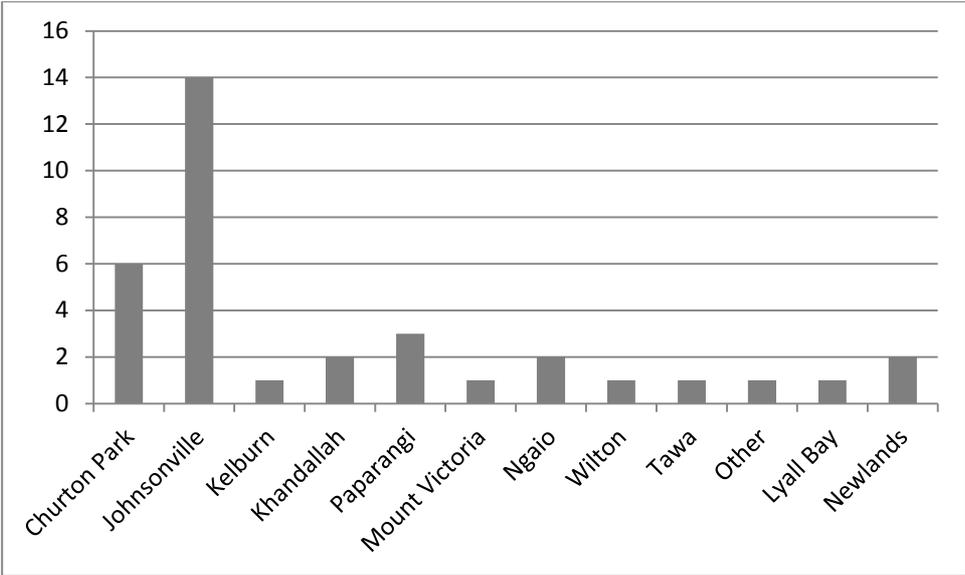
n=34, the 'other' category included the bus stop, kindergarten, and medical centre/pharmacy and people had the option of selecting more than one facility.

### About you – how old are you?



n=35, median age range = 40-49.

**About you – what suburb do you live in?**



n=35