Library Service Delivery Model
Draft Report to Council
June 2011
Executive summary and recommendations

Executive summary

This draft report addresses the process of researching and specifying a sustainable service delivery model for Lake Macquarie City Council’s Library by focusing on those areas where it is possible to improve customer convenience and choice, enhance management reporting, and contain operational costs. Extensive consultation with library and other Council staff, with the residents of Lake Macquarie, and the customers of the library service, resulted in the development of this Report and the associated Recommendations.

Recommendations cover branch locations, staffing, service focus, redevelopment and accompanying financial opportunities, community partnerships and timeframes. In addition, a methodology has been developed which supports fine-tuning service delivery as opportunities arise, and a new approach to budgeting, which places priority on securing essential resources such as books, magazines, digital and online material. This will assist in lifting membership and participation.

The basic principles underlying the review process are detailed below:

1. Community Participation

The most important operational issues that need to be addressed are low community participation in the library service, and a cost structure which inhibits a level of expenditure on library materials likely to attract new customers. By lifting membership rates the benefits of Council’s considerable investment are shared more widely. Recent studies into the socio-economic value of public libraries, highlight a return to the community of between $3 and $4 for each dollar invested and numerous community benefits. These include facilitated social interaction, a sense of place and enhanced local amenity, contribution to improved education, career development and health outcomes and assistance with technology access and interpretation. Savings to public library customers by avoiding expenditure on a wide range of contemporary library materials – with books and DVDs at the top of the list, are estimated at $419 per year in a Victorian study just released.¹

2. Sustainable Labour Strategy

At the heart of any sustainable service delivery model is a sustainable labour cost strategy. Currently, 58% of Lake Macquarie’s total expenditure is directly attributed to labour costs and 68% of labour costs are incurred at the branch level. It is therefore most productive to focus analysis on branches – especially since they are the customer interface.

3. Staffing Structure & Culture

The staffing structure needs to consolidate and support a results-based culture across the library organisation. Non-branch staff in Administration and Technical Services areas of the

Library, will undertake significant changes to current tasks and responsibilities, as they form
the pool of positions from which personnel can be drawn to implement the
recommendations.

The Library Service currently operates 10 branches, one mobile library, and an increasingly
interactive website. Over the course of the planning period, the Library Service will need to change
to meet emerging community requirements. Library use is increasingly screen-based rather than
print-based. The National Broadband Network, the accompanying convergence of TV and the
Internet, and astounding take-up rates for portable, and especially, tablet computing are quietly
introducing another revolution in the way people find and use information and entertainment. This
is just as profound as the introduction of the personal computer in the mid 1980’s and the World
Wide Web some ten years later. Australia’s library users, in common with the population as a
whole, are growing older and leaving the workforce to find themselves, perhaps for the first time in
their lives, in control of how they allocate their time. With an expectation that after a life of work
there comes an opportunity for leisure and recreation, public libraries have the opportunity to
increase engagement and participation with this demographic.

These increases, however, will not be more of the same, and the differences will lie in an
accelerating acceptance of the benefits of information technology and a readiness to use all the
physical and digital service delivery channels provided. Libraries will still be important places for
people to visit, to browse collections and to meet with each other, but within the 10-year plan
period virtual visits across the Internet will come to outnumber personal visits. Libraries will still
need to organise and house books, magazines and digital media, but increasingly preferences will be
expressed for digital over physical. Libraries will still provide programs, such as story time and
Internet for seniors, but many of these programs will combine elements of social networking with
local attendance. Libraries will have much more frequent contact and interaction with their patrons,
most likely using emerging operating system based mobile phone technology to ‘push’ services to
targeted user groups rather than wait for people to discover the library.

Library location is a major factor in usage. People usually combine a trip to the library with other
activities. This may include a visit to the doctor, a shopping expedition, having a coffee, going to
lunch, paying a bill or visiting a post office or bank. The closer the library is to the heart of the retail
precinct, the more opportunities for customer visits. For more than 30 years in Australia, it has been
customary to find libraries sited within retail precincts and shopping malls. Wherever the
opportunity presents, we have recommended that libraries should be located within shopping
centres or hubbed with other community facilities.

A comprehensive User Survey (3,326 responses) found a predominantly female clientele with 43%
age 65 and over and 24% aged between 55 and 64. A subsequent Non-user Survey (450 telephone
interviews) confirmed that residents have low expectations of the value of library services. The
consultation process reinforced the view that vigorous promotion of the library’s print and

---

2 For large public libraries in the US, the ratio of those with a Facebook presence jumped from 11% in 2008 to
electronic services was needed to improve Council’s return on investment, and would be welcomed by customers with an imperfect understanding of what the library actually provides.

In terms of financial sustainability the report recommends changes to the current service delivery model of libraries, for the most part, scattered around the Lake. If implemented, these changes will result in the development of new facilities prior to closure of existing facilities, along with stabilisation of labour costs. The report also suggests a methodology for refining future service delivery models based on different library types ranging from staffed service points, to fully automated self-service.

In terms of operational sustainability and value for money, the report identifies the current low 26% membership rate as the single most important issue facing the service. This is not simply a resourcing issue. Many library services with per capita expenditure comparable to Lake Macquarie have membership rates closer to 50% of the catchment population. Proactive rather than reactive service delivery models with engaged and enthusiastic staff, are major components of a re-engineered service, managed to performance targets that begin with individuals and are aggregated at branch and whole service levels.

**Technology adoption**

The Library Service has recently carried out a comprehensive update to its Website, increasing its ability to interact with its customers. It now has a credible Web presence by comparison with other public libraries, offers online account access – but not online joining, has a simple search box for information discovery, provides a monthly electronic newsletter, supports RSS feeds (short news items sent directly to subscribers’ email in-boxes), and offers an email reference service.

Figure 1 below shows the latest estimate of the take-up rate for Web 2.0 technologies in public libraries in the U.S.

Given that early adopters of library technology tend to out-perform later adopters on such measures as loans and visits per capita, it is reasonable to expect that a leading-edge technology strategy will be a major factor in addressing the membership issue. Since such technology is hardly core business for Council, access to it, and confidence in its use, is most likely to come through membership of a library consortia formed for exactly these purposes.
**Draft report structure and acknowledgements**

The report makes 12 general and 4 specific recommendations. Many other suggestions for service improvements appear in context in the relevant sections.

Libraries Alive! acknowledges the ready access to staff and Council officials provided by library management, as well as the professional way in which Jo Smith, Library Section Manager, and Narelle Reichert, Manager Library, Leisure & Cultural Services, promptly and comprehensively responded to what must have seemed a never-ending stream of requests for information.

Lake Macquarie City Council commissioned and funded this review and holds the copyright in the report. Ian McCallum and Sherrey Quinn assert their moral rights to be recognised as the report’s authors.

---

Figure 1. Estimated percentage of US libraries using various Web 2.0 technologies in 2010

---

Lietzau & Helgren, p. 18
Recommendations

General

1. Develop a strategic marketing plan for lifting membership by 5 percentage points per annum to the Enhanced Level, NSW standards (51%) by 2016.

2. Modify the staffing structure to create a whole-of-service approach rather than a branch perspective.

3. From the current Administration and Technical Services ‘pool’ of positions appoint a Change Management team (2–3 people) with responsibility for considering this Review’s suggestions and developing processes to implement its recommendations.

4. Wherever appropriate, purchase shelf-ready materials and set-up selection profiles to free current Technical Services staff for other duties related to achieving targets for membership, loans, visits and activities.

5. Focus on developing an aged persons’ strategy and a youth services strategy and allocate adequate resources including staff to work with community groups to deliver desired outcomes.

6. Continue with current activities and programs; promote them more widely and involve Branch staff in the development of activities appropriate for their local communities. Retain the current Promotions and Marketing team to assist with this process.

7. Adopt membership, customer satisfaction, attendance at programs & activities, loans, visits and website visits as the key performance measures for the overall library service and set individual branch targets for these KPIs (suggestion is 5 percentage points growth per annum in each KPI)

8. Conduct a survey of current staff to determine current skill sets, contribution, and professional development requirements. Document skill shortages and produce a training and retention plan.

9. Develop a succession plan for priority positions affected by anticipated retirements within the Strategic Plan timeframe.

10. Conduct an extensive review of the physical collection, including the stack collection, discarding infrequently used material, then implement RFID (Radio-frequency identification system for tagging and scanning library items) at all branches. Float the collection (items are accepted into the collection at the branch to which they are returned, refreshing the collection in accordance with customer preferences, and promoting wider choice). Co-operate with other organisations to safeguard significant local history material.

11. Discontinue charging for items requested from other branches and implement fines for the late return of borrowed items. It is expected that these measures will be at worst revenue neutral and most likely, depending on the fines policy adopted, revenue positive.
12. Investigate the costs and benefits of joining relevant purchasing and service delivery consortia, beginning with the SWIFT Consortium (SWIFT is a co-operative group of Victorian and New South Wales libraries sharing the same library technology, purchasing arrangements and management information). Ramp up the adoption of Web 2.0 technologies for interacting with customers.

**Specific**

13. Restructure the Library organisational unit to support implementation of these recommendations. Suggested start date: 2012

14. Adopt the planning framework based on the different library types (full service, lifestyle, shopfront or neighbourhood, electronic self-service, community-managed, and Web branch or Virtual Library) described in Section 2. Suggested start date: 2012.

15. Implement a priority budgeting approach in which the first 15% of annual expenditure is allocated to library materials, and the remaining 85% allocated across the three operating divisions. Suggested start date: 2012.

16. Implement the Recommended Service Delivery Model specified in Table 2, including the recommendations for individual branches described in Section 3. Many branch-specific suggestions are made in this section, but the major changes with a significant impact on financial sustainability are:

   a) Build a new Northern District library in the Glendale Centre. Suggested date: 2016.


   e) Move the Belmont library to a shopfront location within the retail area. Sell current site. Suggested date: 2013.

   f) Replace the Speers Point library with a shopfront style service point in 2013; review when Glendale opens in 2016.

   g) Devolve the Home and Mobile Services to branches; investigate the use of volunteers to assist with service delivery. Suggested start date: 2012.

   h) Purchase two smaller, more manoeuvrable mobile library vehicles and sell the current articulated vehicle at the end of the lease period. Suggested start date 2012.

   i) Develop Wangi Wangi library into a community-operated facility supported by the Library Service but operated by a specific-purpose community group elected from a local Friends’ group. Suggested date: 2012.
j) Implement a fee-based home delivery service – order library materials online for subsequent home delivery. Suggested start date: FY 2012.
Table of Contents

Executive summary and recommendations ................................................................. 3
Executive summary ........................................................................................................... 3
Technology adoption ......................................................................................................... 5
Draft report structure and acknowledgements .............................................................. 6
Recommendations ............................................................................................................... 7
General .............................................................................................................................. 7
Specific ............................................................................................................................. 8
INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................... 12
Structure of this document ............................................................................................... 12
SECTION 1: THE BRIEF AND THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ................................................. 12
Performance against plan: early emergence of the membership issue ....................... 13
Early information gathering confirms membership issue .............................................. 13
Effectiveness of outlays ................................................................................................... 14
Customers and non-customers ....................................................................................... 16
Non-user expectations ..................................................................................................... 16
Public consultation and public interest ........................................................................... 17
Progress report ................................................................................................................ 17
SECTION 2: DEVELOPING THE 2020 SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL .............................. 17
Methodology ..................................................................................................................... 17
Branch contributions ....................................................................................................... 18
Population ......................................................................................................................... 19
Physical and demographic characteristics ..................................................................... 19
Addressing sustainability ................................................................................................ 21
Components of the library network ............................................................................... 23
Library types .................................................................................................................... 23
Type 1: Full service library .............................................................................................. 23
Type 2: Lifestyle library .................................................................................................. 24
Type 3: Shopfront or Neighbourhood library ................................................................. 24
Type 4: Electronic self-service library ......................................................................... 25
Type 5: Community-managed library .......................................................................... 25
Type 6: ‘Web branch’ library ......................................................................................... 26
Explanation .......................................................................................................................................27

SECTION 3: BRANCH PROFILES .............................................................................................................29

Financial implications: ..........................................................................................................................30

• Positive: disposal value of current site and building .......................................................................36

Financial implications: ..........................................................................................................................38

Financial implications: ..........................................................................................................................40

• Positive: long-term opportunity to relocate to Glendale ..................................................................40

• Indicative timing for status change to community operated library: 2012 .................................46

Indicative timing for the new library Type 3 library: 2014 .................................................................54

Indicative timing for a new Type 1 library at Glendale: 2016 ..............................................................54

Further comments ................................................................................................................................54

SECTION 4: LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS .........................................................................................56

Recommendations ..................................................................................................................................56

General ..................................................................................................................................................56

Specific ..................................................................................................................................................57

SOURCES CONSULTED .........................................................................................................................59

GLOSSARY ............................................................................................................................................61

Appendix 1. ...........................................................................................................................................62

Appendix 2. ...........................................................................................................................................66

Appendix 3. ...........................................................................................................................................70

Appendix 4. ...........................................................................................................................................79

Maps: status quo 2011, and projections 2014, 2016, and 2020 .............................................................79

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Estimated percentage of US libraries using various Web 2.0 technologies in 2010 ..........5

Figure 2. Comparison of per capita expenditure with membership 2009–10 and 2010–11 ..........13

Figure 3. Comparison of per capita visits, loans and items 2009–10 ................................................13

Figure 4. Age composition of the Lake Macquarie population ..........................................................18

Figure 5. Projection for outlays on branch labour costs ....................................................................27

Table 1. Branch by branch costs and outputs ..................................................................................17

Table 2. Recommended Service Delivery Model ..............................................................................25
INTRODUCTION

Structure of this document
This document has four sections and four appendices, with supporting material in the glossary and list of references. The first section sets out the objectives of the Brief and identifies the knowledge base for the project, along with some early and obvious issues. The second section adds more information and describes the methodology used to develop the branch by branch recommendations which are presented in the third section. The fourth section is the List of Recommendations.

The appendices cover space projections for a proposed new library at Morisset, include the background information distributed at staff forums and public meetings and the detailed report on the public consultation phase, plus maps which show the library service’s footprint in 2011, and in the major projected change years of 2014, 2016 and 2020.

SECTION 1: THE BRIEF AND THE KNOWLEDGE BASE
In May 2010 Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd responded to a Project Brief for a Library Review issued by the Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC). In July, a contract to conduct the Review was signed by both parties.

The Brief called for a new Library Service Delivery Model (LSDM) with an emphasis on improved service delivery and financial sustainability. Current service levels were to be examined and improvements and efficiencies proposed.

The policy framework for the LSDM includes the City of Lake Macquarie Community Plan 2008–2018 and the 4 Year Delivery Program 2009-2013. Within the focus area of Sport, Recreation and Culture, the Community Plan sets out the objective: ‘To provide a balanced range of well-maintained and accessible recreational, community, educational, sporting, arts, and cultural facilities across the city’. ‘Adapting library services to meet community demands’ is the specified action. The Plan lists four strategic directions for the library service:

1. Develop a Library Service Delivery Model
2. Develop a Library Technology Strategy to improve access to online information and resources
3. Increase community engagement in library programs and activities, and
4. Develop library services specifically for an ageing population.

The Delivery Program outlines how Council will implement the Community Plan. The strategy is to ‘Provide a library service that meets information, learning and recreational needs’. The Operational Plan Actions include completing the review (this review) of library services, and developing and implementing targeted marketing and promotional development plans for adults, youth, and children. There are five performance targets:

1. Maintain community satisfaction with library services at a minimum level of 4.1
2. Reach 85% capacity attendance at each library program
3. Lend at least 1.5 million items per annum
4. Achieve at least 850,000 library visits per annum, and
5. Have at least 56,000 registered library members.

Performance against plan: early emergence of the membership issue

Performance against the last three targets for 2009/10 was 1,505,370 loans, 865,922 visits, and 52,296 members. Compared with the previous year, numbers declined on all three measures. Of particular interest are the reasons for the number of registered library members being so low. The Australian Bureau of Statistics puts the estimated resident population at 199,277 at 30 June 2010. 52,296 members represent just 26.24% of the total LGA population. The average library membership for the whole of New South Wales is 45% of the eligible population, with many libraries performing at the enhanced level of 51%, and up to the exemplary level of 60%. Why should so few Lake Macquarie residents register (and so many not register) to use their library service? In the adjacent Newcastle LGA 47.4% of the population are registered library customers; however, in Wyong, the percentage of 29.64% is comparable to Lake Macquarie.

Early information gathering confirms membership issue

Work began with a familiarisation visit by the consultants, Sherrey Quinn and Ian McCallum. Early in August Sherrey and Ian visited all ten libraries, plus the mobile and special needs services, attended a meeting of the Project Core Group to review methodology, met with Library Service staff, and conducted a Staff Forum at Swansea for all available staff to explain how the project would be conducted and to seek comment on services and customer characteristics. An ‘Initial impressions’ document produced for management reported on low levels of patronage – less than 30% of the eligible population compared with nearly 50% nationally – emerging as the major finding. Low patronage is usually associated with low funding levels, but in Lake Macquarie’s case, library

---

6City of Lake Macquarie. 4 Year Delivery Program 2009–2013. p. 3.
7Ibid, Priority 3.6 Provide adaptive library services to meet community needs. p. 45.
8Figures from Library Service annual statistical return to the State Library of NSW, 2010.
Expenditure per capita per annum at $50.75 compares favourably with the NSW median of $44.84 and ranks Lake Macquarie at 37 out of 98 NSW library services.\textsuperscript{12}

**Effectiveness of outlays**

In the charts, which follow, we have used the latest NSW State Library Public Library Statistics (2009/10) to compare Lake Macquarie’s performance with its immediate neighbours Newcastle and Wyong, and with Wollongong as a demographically similar LGA, and with the NSW Average.

![Figure 2. Comparison of per capita expenditure with membership 2009/10 and 2010/11](image)

The chart shows that in terms of membership Newcastle and Wollongong get better value for their outlay than Lake Macquarie or Wyong, that both Lake Macquarie and Wyong lag behind the NSW average membership, and that Lake Macquarie is spending more than Wyong to achieve a similar membership result: 26% compared with 27%. Even at this early stage in data analysis the quantum of expenditure appears not to be an issue; the issue seems rather to be the return for that expenditure.

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid, p. 60.
Given that Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Wollongong all have per capita outlays at or above the NSW average (Figure 1.), Newcastle stands out as highest on all three measures, Lake Macquarie and Wollongong are very similar, with Wyong slightly behind on loans and items.

What conclusions can we draw from this data?

1. In terms of membership, other comparable libraries get a better return for their outlays.

2. Lake Macquarie’s per capita expenditure is above the state average. Low outlays are not the reason for low membership.

3. There appears to be a correlation between visits, loans and items, i.e. visits and loans are at least related to (if not a function of) the number of items per capita (breadth of customer choice).

4. Compared with other libraries Lake Macquarie has a low ratio of expenditure on library materials to expenditure on salaries. If most of the budget is being applied to labour costs, then scope for purchasing new print and digital materials is constrained. Without a steady flow of new material customers’ choices are restricted and, as a consequence, membership is depressed.
5. The total number of staff employed is not necessarily connected to membership. Membership is more likely to be a function of items available – and the attractiveness of the available items.

6. Given a sustainable financial model with little or no growth to total outlays, if membership is to increase then the proportion of expenditure on materials needs to increase, and since salary expenditure is the major component of total expenditure (58%), this can only happen if the proportion of expenditure on staff salaries decreases.

7. This is not the whole story. There are obviously other factors at play in the low membership numbers. These include the attractiveness of the collection in terms of age, types of material and breadth of choice; staff training, attitudes, skill levels and behaviour; community awareness of the library’s services; location of and accessibility to physical premises; the effectiveness of advertising and promotion efforts; opening hours; and no doubt many other factors as well.

Customers and non-customers

Further background research and benchmarking was indicated. Libraries Alive! compiled tables showing key performance indicators such as expenditure per capita, loans, and visits and compared them both between branches and with other comparable library services. To gauge community needs a user survey, in both online and print forms, was conducted in October–November 2010. Encouraged by staff to complete surveys almost 3,300 people (67% female, 33% male) took part. To complement the user survey the Hunter Valley Research Foundation (HVRF) ran a parallel non-user survey involving 439 telephone interviews (47% female, 53% male). Given the low membership numbers we were particularly interested in responses to the non-user survey. The main reasons given for not using the service were ‘Don’t have enough time, too busy’ – 29% of respondents; ‘Buy my own books, magazines, CDs, DVDs’ – 22%; ‘Prefer to browse the Internet, read online’ – 22%; and ‘Not interested in reading’ – 18%. These are responses common to most non-user surveys; after all, almost half the population is not interested in using libraries, just as not everyone’s a keen angler.

Non-user expectations

The most disturbing finding from the HVRF survey was in response to the question: ‘Are you interested in learning more about the library’s services?’ 66% responded with ‘No’. In other words, two thirds of respondents did not expect to find value for themselves in a service costing the LMCC more than $8m a year. We knew from the user survey that 90% of library users were either very satisfied or satisfied with the service, with many commenting on the value of the service and the need to maintain current service levels, so why the disparity in views? Could it be that those who took the trouble to find out what the library provided were pleased with what they found, and for those less curious, low expectations were confirmed? Even at this early stage of the assignment there were indications of an historically passive rather than a pro-active service orientation: ‘Wait for the customer to come to us because our services are good in themselves’ rather than actively promote the benefits of using the library service.
Public consultation and public interest

Findings from the background research phase, plus the results from the two surveys became the basis of an information paper (attached as Appendix 2) which was distributed to all participants in the next phase: public meetings in every library location. These were held in late November and, as promised to the 305 attendees, advice and comments received were comprehensively reported (attached as Appendix 3) on the Library’s website in December.

Progress report

Five months into the assignment sufficient information had been gathered to report in relation to the Community Plan’s four strategic directions for the library service:

1. Developing a sustainable service delivery model would require a focus on four key factors: labour costs, branch locations, community participation in library activities, and maintaining an attractive collection

2. Improving access to online information and resources would require a re-think of the way information technology (IT) services were secured, developed and delivered to customers. The anomalous situation of partial implementation of radio frequency identification (RFID) of library collection items – which makes it difficult for all branches to share the collection in an efficient way – needs to be addressed within the next year.

3. Increasing community engagement in programs and activities would involve a more receptive approach to listening to requirements and creating more hospitable mechanisms for accepting community offers of assistance in service delivery, i.e. establishing a two-way dialogue between customer and library

4. The cornerstone of developing services for an ageing population would be starting from the customer and not from the library, i.e. being able to take the library’s services to the customer, rather than always expecting the customer to come to the library.

Staff skills also emerged as an early key issue. In developing a strategic plan reaching across two decades it was clear that around 65% of all staff would reach retirement age in this timeframe and this will present difficulties in staff training and skill development especially in information technology, an area that characterises contemporary library services in an age of social networking and with the National Broadband Network rollout already under way.

SECTION 2: DEVELOPING THE 2020 SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

Methodology

With such a large number of variables in play: 10 static libraries, plus mobile and home library services; different and changing population densities across the LGA; rapid developments in information technology (especially wireless and other mobile devices); changing lifestyle preferences; overall ageing of the population resulting in increasing numbers of people with time and motivation to contribute to the library’s objectives, as well as time to consume the library’s services; new housing and retail developments; changes in working patterns and income levels – and
all of the other influences on societal change in 21st century Australia, it was decided to proceed from the known to the possible, using a methodology hospitable to opportunities as they arose.

It was also decided to focus on those issues which would make the most difference to the sustainability of the library: labour costs; number and location of branches; and opportunities for refining current service delivery. So we adopted a flexible approach which considered services provided from individual branches within a timeframe some ten years hence, and within the context of overall affordability. In other words, we worked from the library’s current operational profile to a service specification likely to be required in a decade’s time. Naturally, we looked at branch performance first.

**Branch contributions**

The table below shows the relative proportions of labour cost and collection inputs to produce loans and visits outputs, branch by branch. Figures are the latest available. In terms of contribution to the service as a whole, it would be reasonable to expect that, say, 10% of salary costs and 10% of items would produce 10% of loans and 10% of visits – such performance, where outputs were approximately the same as inputs, could be regarded as ‘at the benchmark’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BRANCH</th>
<th>Salary %</th>
<th>Loans %</th>
<th>Items %</th>
<th>Visits %</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BELMONT</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Above benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARDIFF</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Close to benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARLESTOWN</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Well above benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDGEWORTH</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Close to benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME LIB SERVICE &amp; MOBILE</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Below benchmark, but special circumstances apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORISSET</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>Close to benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEERS POINT &amp; INFORMATION SERVICES</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Well below benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWANSEA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Above benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TORONTO</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>Close to benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINDALE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Below benchmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANGI WANGI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Close to benchmark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: % figures are % of branch salaries, loans, items and visits respectively

The table shows the service demand ‘load’ spread fairly evenly across branches. Speers Point salary percentage is high because Information Services staff (4 EFT) are included, and the home library service is necessarily labour intensive because staff assume responsibility for item selection and delivery. Charlestown is clearly the best ‘performer’ with loans and visits well above the salary percentage, but otherwise, branches are performing at predictable levels given their salary cost inputs. In other words, there are no major miss-matches between inputs and outputs – except for the service-wide low participation rate we have already highlighted. Note that the four busiest
libraries, Charlestown, Toronto, Swansea and Belmont already with RFID installed, account for 55% of total loans and together hold 47% of total collection items. If all libraries were RFID-capable, the loans process would be more cost-effective and if inter-branch charges were dropped customers could have easier access to 100% of the collection. This would also give Council a better return on its substantial collection investment.

Lifting our gaze to the bigger picture, what do we know about the environment in which the branches operate?

**Population**

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Lake Macquarie’s estimated resident population is just under 200,000\(^{13}\), and in the year to June 2009, grew by 0.9% or 2900 people. While this gave Lake Macquarie the largest growth of any coastal LGA, this annual growth rate is less than half Sydney’s 1.9%. For the period under consideration we have assumed that Lake Macquarie’s growth will continue at approximately the current rate of 3,000 people per annum and in the population clusters already identified by Council planners. This is steady rather than explosive growth and therefore relatively easy to plan for.

**Physical and demographic characteristics**

The physical location and number of libraries largely reflects the historical scattering of settlements around the Lake. Only in the northern part of the LGA, closer to Newcastle, are libraries situated inland from the Lake. As Sydney continues its inexorable march north (and west and south) real estate in the Lake Macquarie LGA is becoming increasingly attractive and affordable for people seeking an alternative to apartment living. These new settlers are most likely to be couples looking for affordable housing within commute time to Sydney, or retirees keen to enjoy the amenity afforded by the mild climate and by the natural attractions of the Lake and its surrounds. Predictably, growth tends to follow the Sydney–Newcastle Freeway, the Main Northern Railway, and to a lesser extent, the Pacific Highway.

To compound the issue (and in common with the rest of the country) the population is slowly ageing. 43% of respondents to the User Survey (Appendix 2) were aged 65 and over. Figure 3 draws on ABS data to compare age groups in the Lake Macquarie LGA over the period 2005–2009. Note that whilst the trend towards aging is evident, the process is gradual, even for the over 55s.\(^{14}\)

---


\(^{14}\) ABS. *National Regional Profile: Lake Macquarie, Summary. Population/People*, November 2010.
And age brings decreasing mobility and increasing reliance on transport provided by family, friends, Council, community organisations, and occasionally, buses.

Away from the main arterials public transport is patchy and problematic. With the population of less than 200,000 mostly spread along the shores of a Lake which occupies around one third of the total area of the LGA, settlement densities and sizes make it difficult for bus companies to develop profitable routes. Problems with public transport were raised by residents of Cardiff, Edgeworth, Speers Point and Wangi Wangi. For the LGA as a whole, motor vehicle ownership rates, expressed as the number of cars per household, are amongst the highest in Australia. Parking problems were mentioned in connection with Belmont, Charlestown, Cardiff, Edgeworth and Morisset libraries.

The public meetings held in November 2010 confirmed that the current library ‘footprint’ – the chain of libraries around and to the north and north-east of the Lake suited most customers. Libraries are usually within a 10–15 minute drive, and often located close to retail precincts. But the current service delivery model – ‘my library right here in my village/town’ – is not financially sustainable. With just over 50% of the budget spent on salary costs, the proportion of total expenditure directed to the purchase of library materials (7.6%) and the delivery of technology-based services is under increasing pressure.

If Council expenditure on the library service is pegged at current levels, and staff numbers stay the same, opening hours and material purchases will need to be reduced to operate within budget.
Addressing sustainability

What then are the characteristics of a sustainable service delivery model, relevant to the requirements and aspirations of Lake Macquarie’s current and future population mix, and consistent with Council’s imperative to live within its means?

- Operating costs, including staff costs, need to stay within current budget outlays with annual increases within CPI movements.
- Reducing processing costs for new materials by establishing selection profiles and wherever possible purchasing shelf-ready materials.\(^{15}\)
- Productivity gains need to be secured through the adoption of performance targets for individual staff, branches and the whole service. Essential expenditure on new materials needs to be quarantined so the attractiveness of the collection is not compromised.
- Greater staff flexibility through focus on whole-of-service rather than branch service delivery. Management emphasis on ‘one service, many faces and places’ plus regular staff rotation will help.
- Focus on delivering the service to the customer rather than always requiring the customer to ‘collect’ the service. Home delivery for items ordered from the website, transport for those with mobility issues are both part of a pro-active service.
- Increasing emphasis on digital service delivery where incremental delivery costs are negligible, for example, the cost of an e-book service for 1000 people is much less than 10 times the cost of providing the same service for 100 people.
- New capital outlays subject to business case/cost-benefit analysis, e.g. complete the rollout of RFID\(^ {16}\), increase customer choice by floating collections between branches. Encourage membership by abolishing inter-branch delivery charges.
- Materials purchases at least 15% of budget outlays – shelf-ready, profiling and consortium purchases where possible.
- Strategic partnerships with neighbouring library services for co-operative service delivery.
- Consortium participation (e.g. SWIFT) for reduced cost, improved management information and greater flexibility in accessing library management system functionality.
- Leverage staff capabilities through the use of volunteers, especially in programs and events and through the establishment of Friends of the Library groups.\(^ {17}\)

\(^{15}\) A 2010 study conducted by the State Library of NSW found that whilst there were significant cost benefits in outsourcing acquisitions, cataloguing and processing, the major benefit came from re-allocating cost savings from reduced back of house tasks to activities, new space, collection quality and customer focus. ‘This redistribution of resources was found to generate a range of benefit multipliers, namely productivity/cost effectiveness gains, social/user benefits and floorspace productivity benefits.’ p.1.


\(^{16}\)Volunteers could be used to place tags in library materials
• Investigate and develop Council-supported, Community-managed libraries.

• Change the library service’s footprint: more channels for service delivery; more pick-up and delivery outlets, including home delivery for a fee; automated kiosks and collection lockers; provide transport from home to library and return for designated groups of users.

• Change the service mix to encourage new customers and boost both membership and stock turnover. Promote the full range of services from print-based to digital to services appropriate for different age groups. For example: picture books and story times for early readers; electronic games for kids and teens; parenting and study-related materials for adults; audio books for seniors, family History, electronic resources like MP3 players.

• Develop the library’s website into a customer preferred first contact point for access to services; encourage online ordering with subsequent pickup and delivery to individual homes.

• Formalise partnerships with community groups, schools, businesses, licensed clubs; step up promotion, programming and participation. Task the Promotions group with lifting the media profile.

• Leverage staff professional expertise by involving them in training programs for volunteers and moving them between branches and between print-based and electronic services.

• Develop revenue sources which do not jeopardise entitlements to State Library subsidies and grant funding. These could include fines for overdues, charges for home and office deliveries, retail concessions such as in-library coffee shops, modest program and tuition fees, book club membership fees, review charges for the use of meeting rooms.

17 In 2001 the Australian Library and Information Association adopted a policy on voluntary work in library and information services. This policy was amended in 2009 and now reads: ‘Use of volunteers in library and information services for specific purposes is acceptable but must never compromise the quality of service provision, nor replace paid employment in any way.’ Nevertheless, the policy acknowledges that ‘Library services can be enhanced by well supported volunteers, and providing volunteers with meaningful community roles is a legitimate function of a public library service.’

In arguing for increased use of volunteers, we make the following points:

• Considering the issue from a demographic perspective, many recent retirees and seniors have relevant skills, spare time, and a willingness to contribute to their communities. This was evident from the public consultations – especially at Morisset and Wangi Wangi.

• To ensure appropriate service levels, volunteers would be selected, trained and supervised by professional library staff.

• Friends’ groups are a logical source for volunteers.

• The rationale for using volunteers is that they would undertake tasks which are simply not affordable under the current salary budget; they therefore make a valuable contribution to financial sustainability.
The most appropriate parameters for a sustainable footprint could be based on an expanded Morisset library in the south west, taking in new development in North Cooranbong and Wyee, a new library in the north incorporated in a new Glendale Centre and serving a catchment from Cardiff through Edgeworth to Cameron Park, a refurbished library in the Charlestown area taking in new development at Mt Hutton, plus Swansea taking in new development at Wallarah. Toronto and Belmont libraries would stay, but possibly not in their current form. Speers Point, Edgeworth and Cardiff would be closed or relocated as part of the Glendale project, Windale library would be re-developed in partnership with schools and community agencies, and Wangi Wangi retained with a hands-on community-based character.

Administration and technical services, asset management and Web services, plus the home library service and the base for the mobile could move to Glendale when premises became available.

Even with a different library footprint, distances between them remain comparable to the distances between major shopping centres. Starting in the south west, Morisset to Toronto is around 15km, Toronto to a new Glendale development a similar distance, north west to Charlestown is also around 15km, then less than 10km to Belmont, with Swansea less than 8km further on.

**Components of the library network**

Here we consider the likely composition of the library service over the 2011 to 2020 timeframe. For labour costing purposes we have had to assume that certain events – like library closings and openings - will take place at certain times, and we recognise that there is no certainty about those times. Opportunities for new libraries will no doubt be driven by the pace and scope of real estate development and these are not always predictable. Nevertheless, based on the information to hand at the time of writing, we think the timing in Table 2 below represents a workable set of assumptions.

Over the ten year plan period we envisage opening new libraries at Glendale, Cameron Park and Morisset, closing libraries at Cardiff and Edgeworth, and changing staffing and services at the other libraries. The methodology for the changed service footprint involves a concept of different library types and recommendations that are dependent on one another i.e. no libraries close until a new one opens.

**Library types**

Recommendations for a sustainable service delivery model delivery are based on different types of libraries offering different levels of service ranging from fully staffed to fully automated.

**Type 1: Full service library**

- Whole of City focus and maintains the City’s historical record
- Opening hours span around 60 hours per week, including some evening and weekend opening, for example: Monday to Friday 9-5, plus open later on 3 nights, Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon.
- Staffing: two librarians, two library officers, three library assistants
- Large physical footprint (around 1000 square metres floor space)
- Broad coverage physical collection (35–55,000 items); high transaction volume (at least 200,000 loans per annum)
- Catalogue and Internet access
- Self-checkers
- Full reference and reader’s advisory services
- Meeting rooms and activity areas
- IT training focus; adaptive technology for disabled access
- Secure return chutes
- Access to a comprehensive range of Council services
- Activity program reflecting community requirements

**Type 2: Lifestyle library**

- Medium-sized physical footprint (200–750 square metres floor space)
- Medium-sized physical collection (20–35,000 items), narrower author and topic coverage than Type 1 library; medium transaction volume (100,000 – 200,000 loans per annum)
- Ideally, housed in or adjacent to retail precinct
- Opening hours span around 50 hours per week with some evening and weekend opening.
- Catalogue and Internet access
- Self-checkers
- Meeting room
- Catalogue & Internet access
- 5 staff EFT: one librarian; one library officer; three library assistants
- Secure return chute
- Access to limited range of Council services
- Activity program reflecting local community requirements

**Type 3: Shopfront or Neighbourhood library**

- Opening hours span about 40 hours per week with local requirements determining the makeup of weekday, evening and weekend opening
• Two staff: both library assistants

• Small physical footprint (100–200 square metres floor space)

• Small, selective physical collection (up to 20,000 items); low transaction volume (50,000 – 100,000 loans per annum). Mainly recreational reading with limited non-fiction.

• Housed in or adjacent to retail precinct

• Catalogue & Internet access

• Self-checker

• Secure return chute

**Type 4: Electronic self-service library**

• Internet based, automated – see: 
  
  [http://www.prweb.com/releases/LEIDProducts/LibraryExpress/prweb8257295.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/LEIDProducts/LibraryExpress/prweb8257295.htm)
  and


• Catalogue and Internet access 24/7

• Electronic collection lockers; secure return chute

• No staff on site permanently. Operated by library staff who clear chute and stock lockers on a daily basis

• Located in conjunction with community and Council outlets, for example in licensed clubs, senior citizens’ facilities, Council premises

  - also supplements libraries that are open limited hours; when these libraries are not open access is still available to secure lockers and return chute.

  - represents an additional service delivery channels for residents

**Type 5: Community-managed library**

• This is a library which is guided but not staffed by the Library Service. It is operated by volunteers derived from local community groups, approved by Council. Council does not pay volunteers for their time.

• The community-managed library augments the Council service and has secure lockers onsite for delivery of Council library material.

• Opening hours and activities are determined by the local communities.

• Council maintains the physical asset of the building and meets the costs of such overheads as power and insurance.
**Type 6: ‘Web branch’ library**

- This library has a virtual rather than a physical presence. It has staff who maintain and develop it, but whilst the staff work more or less normal hours and are located at head office, the library is located on the Internet and open all the time to all who wish to use it.

- Typical services provided – some are already in place, include Web presence; online customer account access; online library card sign-up; blog; RSS feeds; catalogue search box; electronic newsletter; online content sharing; email; chat and SMS reference services; presence on Facebook; Flickr; Twitter; MySpace; YouTube; audio and video files; services direct to mobile phones.

- Some customers are Lake Macquarie residents and they have privileged access through passwords to the full features of the library (See Figure 1.), but anyone interested in what the website has to offer, e.g. local history researchers, may view and download content, and interact with other users.

- This library will be highly self-aware, closely monitoring individual service usage using such software as Google Analytics, in order to keep up a dialogue on topics of interest to users.

- There will be different sub-sections of the website for different demographic groups. For example, for young people there will be links to multi-player game sites and for seniors online Internet tutorials. For all the library’s services, print through to digital, there will be descriptions and where appropriate, say for e-books, guidance in how to use them.

- In time, it is expected that the Web branch will receive more Internet visits than the branch libraries receive people through the doors.
Applying this library categorisation to the current footprint we have arrived at the following branch by branch configuration, covering the period 2011 to 2020. In Appendix 4 we present maps of the current year and the critical change years of 2014, 2016 and 2020.

Table 2. Recommended Service Delivery Model: library types and branches 2011–2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BELMONT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARDIFF</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARLESTOWN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDGERTHREY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORISET</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEERS POINT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWANSEA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TORONTO</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANGI WANGI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CMTY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINDALE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMERON PARK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLENDALE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERVICE POINTS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRANCH EFT</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOB &amp; HLS EFT</td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EFT</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation

Table 2 shows library type by branch, along with indicative timings for changes in status. Note that Wangi becomes community operated in 2012 (CMTY); Cameron Park opens in 2014 and Edgeworth closes; Glendale opens in 2016 and Cardiff closes. We understand that timings for openings and closings will most likely vary from those projected in the table, but if and when that happens, the table can be easily updated.

The first 12 rows show branch library type by (estimated) year. Row 13 is a tally of physical service points. Row 14 shows current staff establishment, and row 15 includes mobile and home library service staff for a total number of staff presented in row 16. Across the strategic plan period the branch establishment is reduced from 45.3 to 43 to yield a modest labour cost saving. Most significantly, the table demonstrates the effectiveness of the proposed sustainable service delivery model based on library types in containing the largest single component of operating expenses: branch labour costs.

The Library service prepares its 2010–2011 Budget in three parts:

1. Library Administration (Cost code 6620). Total expenditure is $1,949,761, with labour costs comprising 40% of the total

2. Library Technology and Technical Services (Cost code 6640). Total expenditure $2,121,650, with labour costs comprising 36.5% of the total
3. Library Branches (Cost code 6690). Total expenditure: $4,098,122, with labour costs comprising 77.4% of the total.

Our analysis concentrates on where it can make the most difference – on branch labour costs. We have assumed that the 18.2 EFT positions in library management and technical services will be involved in the implementation of our recommendations, and that the content of some positions will change to reflect re-engineered services. Other assumptions and considerations are:

1. Total expenditure, for 2010/11, on salaries ($4,708,000 or 57.63%) is almost 60% of total expenditure ($8,169,533).

2. There are currently 45.3 EFT branch staff including mobile and special needs.

3. Type 1 libraries typically have 7 staff EFT, at least 1000 sq m floor space, 35–55,000 collection items, 200,000+ loans per annum.

4. Type 2 libraries typically have 5 staff EFT, 200-750 sq m, 20–35,000 items, 100–200,000 loans per annum.

5. Type 3 libraries typically have 2 staff EFT, 100–200 sq m, less than 20,000 items, 50–100,000 loans per annum.

6. Type 4 libraries have no direct staff, but presumably would be operated by staff in Tech Services excluded from these calculations. We estimate a capital cost of $65,000 per installation, and an annual maintenance cost of $5,000 per installation.

7. From 2012 forward there are 9 static service points directly funded by Council, and one library, Wangi Wangi, operated by the local community. In 2014 Cameron Park comes on stream and Edgeworth closes, and in 2016 Glendale comes on stream and Cardiff closes.

The net effect of implementing the changes shown in Table 2 is a modest saving until new libraries come on stream, followed by a higher labour cost plateau reflecting the changed library footprint. But perhaps more significant than the size of the saving is the introduction of a financially sustainable model with the potential for containing future costs, and with sufficient flexibility to respond to service and outlet opportunities as they arise. It should also be noted that in terms of service continuity nothing is taken away before something new is provided.

As noted above, our analysis has concentrated on branch labour (operating) costs. This is not to say that there are no significant capital costs. On the expenditure side of the ledger they will include costs associated with completing the RFID rollout, securing retail premises in Cardiff and Cameron Park, and building new libraries in Glendale and Morisset. Offsets against these costs will include Section 94 developer contributions, plus the revenue generated by selling Cardiff, Belmont and Edgeworth.
SECTION 3: BRANCH PROFILES

Belmont

Source: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd
Location: 19 Ernest Street, Belmont, NSW, 2280

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>800 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Spacious, but variable lighting. Shelves less crowded than some other branches. Plenty of places to sit. Ample parking underneath. Access not ideal despite ramp. Meeting room. Branch with third-highest percentage of loans and equal third-highest percentage of visits (Table 1). Council-owned building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 2 library; retain service, but given the proximity of Charlestown (Type 1) and Swansea (Type 2) move to Type 3 (shopfront) status in new location in 2013. Offset new (commercial) lease costs by disposal value of current building.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

| Performance targets: | • 5% growth per annum in loans and visits, starting from a base of 180,000 loans and 108,000 visits |
| Immediate Improvements 2011-2012: | • Improve internal lighting and freshen-up interior  
• Address slow take-up rate for automated checkout  
• Promote use of meeting room |
| Further Suggestions: | • Consider Type 4 library for Belmont Hospital |
| Financial implications: | • Positive: disposal value of current site and building  
• Negative: fitout and lease costs of new premises |
**Cardiff**

Source of image: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

**Location:** 262 Main Road Cardiff, NSW, 2285

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1951, refurbished 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>167 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Purpose-built with financial assistance from the Joint Coal Board in 1951. Sited on the edge of the town centre on a hill, parking only for staff, otherwise in the street. Small and crowded interior. Some shelves six high. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 3 library. Relocate to shopfront in main retail precinct in 2013 and review status when Type 1 library opens at Glendale in 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

Performance targets:
- 5% growth per annum in loans and visits starting from a base of 86,000 loans and 46,000 visits

Immediate Improvements 2011-12:
- Implement RFID as soon as possible

Other suggestions:
- Following closure in 2016, consider Type 4 library for Seniors’ Centre or Licensed Club

Financial implications:
- **Positive**: disposal value of current site and building
- **Negative**: fitout and lease costs of new premises
### Charlestown

**Location:** Corner Smith and Ridley Street Charlestown, NSW, 2290

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1980, refurbished 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>1,100 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Open, with plenty of space, but no ‘wow’ factor. Exposed air conditioning. Blue &amp; yellow shelves which have been replaced in some other branches. Located on the wrong side of a four lane highway, with limited parking underneath. Currently the branch with the highest percentage of loans and visits (Table 1). Shopping centre development nearby may provide opportunity to move to the other side of the highway, avoid being marginalised, and pick up human shopping traffic. Meeting room. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 1 library; retain as Type 1 library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance targets:</th>
<th>Immediate Recommendations 2011-13:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 5% growth per annum in loans and visits starting from a base of 310,000 loans and 210,000 visits</td>
<td>• Re-locate Local History and Family History collections and services to Charlestown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Redesign and refresh interior, bearing in mind that meeting and activity rooms are now available in the Charlestown Square development at The Place community centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In this, the busiest library, offer the broadest range of services, and the widest spread of opening hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Edgeworth

Source of image: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

Location: Minmi Road Edgeworth, NSW, 2285

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1966, refurbished 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>124 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Opened in 1966 with Joint Coal Board financial assistance. Light, but small and a little crowded. Blue &amp; yellow shelving which has been replaced in some other branches. Sited at a busy intersection, next to a school. Inadequate parking. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 3 library. Location is sub-optimal, space insufficient, parking limited and about to be negatively impacted by new traffic arrangements in the immediate area. Retain as Type 3 and relocate to shopfront premises in Cameron Park shopping centre development in 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

**Performance targets:**
- 5% growth per annum in loans and visits starting from a base of 61,000 loans and 32,000 visits

**Immediate Recommendations:**
- Implement RFID as soon as possible

**Financial implications:**
- **Positive:** disposal value of current site and building
- **Negative:** fitout and lease costs of new premises
## Morisset

Source of image: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

Location: 39 Yambo Street, Morisset, NSW, 2264

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1953, refurbished 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>219 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 2 library: retain as Type 2 but move to larger premises (space calculations are included as Appendix 1.) as soon as warranted by population growth (suggested date 2018), planning is completed and a suitable site becomes available; development offsets may be applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performance targets: 5% increase in loans and visits per annum starting from a base of 125,000 loans and 67,000 visits

Immediate Recommendations 2011-12:
- Capture enthusiasm and extend involvement of local community with registration and training of volunteers and identification of volunteer tutors
- Extend opening hours, especially at weekends and at least one night for commuters and promote this at station/ bus stops
- Implement RFID as soon as possible
- Co-operate with local health and community care agencies
- Seek external funding for print and digital literacy programs

Financial implications:
- **Positive**: sale of current site
- **Negative**: fitout and lease costs (if applicable) of new premises
Speers Point

Location: 139 Main Road Speers Point, NSW, 2284

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1962, refurbished 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>845 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Red brick, blue &amp; yellow interior. Located across road from Council offices. Small car park adjacent. Public and staff areas crowded and variably lit. Exposed air conditioning indicates age of building. Information services area has benefited from refurbishment, but is still not prominent. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 2 library; change to Type 3 shopfront style library in 2016; review status when Glendale opens. Locate all administration services at Speers Point until Glendale opens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance targets:</th>
<th>• 5% growth per annum in loans and visits starting from a base of 160,000 loans and 77,000 visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Immediate Recommendations 2011-12 | • Implement RFID as soon as possible  
• Re-locate local history and family studies material to Charlestown |
| Further suggestions: | • Possible site for Type 4 library for after hours pick-up and drop-off |
| Financial implications: | • **Positive**: long-term opportunity to relocate to Glendale  
• **Negative**: expenses associated with moving collections to Charlestown and staff to Glendale |
Swansea

Location: 228 Pacific Highway Swansea NSW 2281

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>725 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Built 2006. Has ‘wow’ factor. Cutting edge modern, spacious, co-located with other community facilities; Library located on first floor. Light-filled, low shelves, plenty of computers, plenty of comfortable places to sit. Carefully zoned for different uses. Four meeting rooms. Access to centre car park. Currently has equal fourth-highest percentage of loans and equal third-highest percentage of visits among the branches. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 2 library; retain as a Type 2 library.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

Performance targets:

- 5% increase per annum in loans and visits starting from a base of 160,000 loans and 110,000 visits

Immediate Recommendations:

- Re-locate marketing and promotions group to Speers Point
- Provide space for Eastlakes local history group
- Promote services in new housing developments in the Wallarah/Murray’s Beach area
- Given the age of the local community\(^\text{18}\), Swansea is the logical centre for developing LGA-wide services for seniors.

---

\(^{18}\) See ABS demographic breakdown on page 1 of the public consultation handout, November 2010. This is attached as Appendix 2.
Toronto

Source of image: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

Location: Corner Brighton Avenue and Pemell Street, Toronto, NSW, 2283

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Opened 1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>1,000 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Location and outlook provide ‘wow’ factor. Blue &amp; yellow shelving; but large space has allowed tasteful decoration with tables and chairs. Separate meeting and computer training rooms. Plenty of parking in shopping centre car park immediately adjacent. Exposed air conditioning. Collection more accessible and presented more attractively because shelf fill rate is lower than in some other branches. Two meeting rooms. Currently the branch with the second-highest percentage of loans and visits. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 1 library by floor space measurement; retain as Type 2 library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

Performance targets:
• 5% per annum increase in loans and visits starting from a base of 205,000 loans and 136,000 visits

Immediate Recommendations 2011-12:
• Change to Type 2 Lifestyle library with smaller footprint; this could release space for other community agencies such as the Westlakes local history group and/or coffee shop
• Promote availability of the meeting/training room
• Brighten internal lighting and improve external signposting
• Possible alternative to Swansea as ‘home base’ for new Aged Services Team.
## Wangi Wangi

**Location:** 295 Watkins Road Wangi Wangi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Built 1978, refurbished 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>112 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Superb central location backing on to the water. Street parking only. Small, but light. Little space for program delivery. Promotional information highly visible. Council-owned building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 3 library. Implement community-run business model. Redevelop as a facility operated by a specific-purpose community group; establish a committee that takes over the management of the building, establishing opening times for the library and renting out the facility to other groups as a community space. Provide guidance in relation to professional services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance targets</td>
<td>• To be set by community managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Immediate Recommendations | • Implement RFID as soon as possible.  
| | • Retain in present location and with current character as a shopfront library; building maintained by Council; catalogue and Internet access; annual cash donation towards library materials |
| Further Suggestions: | • No staff on site, operated by volunteers drawn from local Friends’ group  
| | • Provide toilet facilities  
| | • Encourage incoming committee to investigate commercial opportunities for themed (Dobell?) coffee shop, book shop [local history books?], gift shop, venue for community meetings, classes, etc.  
| | • Review weekend opening, possibly with swipe card access and volunteer assistance.  
| | • Indicative timing for status change to community operated library: 2012 |
## Windale

Source of image: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

Location: 20 Lake Street Windale, NSW, 2306

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Built 1976, refurbished 2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>163 sq m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’</td>
<td>Modest cream brick veneer;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Currently a Type 3 library; retain as Type 3 library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acknowledged shortage of community infrastructure in the area, but several community agencies involved in program delivery. Many opportunities for closer integration with these service providers, and especially with local schools, for example</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acknowledged shortage of community infrastructure in the area, but several community agencies involved in program delivery. Many opportunities for closer integration with these service providers, and especially with local schools, for example.
### Anticipated growth in loans and visits

**Performance targets:** 5% increase in loans and visits per annum starting from a base of 55,000 loans and 43,000 visits.

**Immediate Recommendations 2011-12:**
- Implement RFID as soon as possible
- Install more computers
- Establish a youth advisory committee (like a young persons’ Friends group) to make suggestions on materials and services
- Offer a range of appropriately classified computer games to attract young people.

**Future Recommendations:**
- Healthy eating programs for children who ‘miss’ breakfast
- Organised Friday evening activities for young people – multi-player Internet gaming would certainly be popular and help with literacy and social exclusion issues
- Specifically, refurbish or at least brighten up current spaces
- Install public toilet facilities
- Investigate opportunities for external funding from either (or both) State Library and Department of Education for the development and delivery of young adult literacy and digital literacy, reading and other education-related programs.
## Mobile Library Service

Source of image: Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

Location of headquarters: Unit 8, 311 Hillsborough Road, Warners Bay NSW 2282

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Lease on office expires in December 2011; vehicle lease expires 2012/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Large articulated vehicle. Too big to be easily manoeuvrable; size limits access to new suburban developments and prevents stops at, for example, nursing homes and aged care facilities; more suitable for sparsely populated region with large distances between towns. Too big to be a delivery vehicle. Brisk trade in DVDs and adult fiction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Replace articulated vehicle with at least two vans: one capable of transporting up to 12 people to and from libraries, and the other a ‘micro mobile’ for deliveries and pick-ups, for example to nursing homes and retirement villages and carrying a small RFID-tagged collection of recent returns, large print, audio books, new items and DVDs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated growth in loans and visits

Performance target: 5% increase in loans per annum starting from a base of 80,000 loans.

Immediate Recommendations:
New vehicles to be based at Council depot at Speers Point

Future Recommendations:
Decide on the basis of a business case whether to retain the current courier vehicle or outsource to a transport company
Determine the extent of current Council transport services with a view to co-operation.
Sale value of prime mover and trailer to offset new vehicles’ acquisition costs.
Do not renew lease on current commercial premises.
Relocate affected staff to Speers Point Administration and then to Glendale.

Indicated timing: at the end of the mobile library lease period
### Home Library Service

**Source of image:** Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd

**Location of headquarters:** Unit 8, 311 Hillsborough Road, Warners Bay NSW 2282

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Staff and stock co-located with mobile library base; lease expires December 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Consultants’ observations:**

Located in a warehouse at the rear of an industrial estate. Well-organised with committed and knowledgeable staff. If HLS is to be a growth area, this facility will soon be too small to carry the necessary range of stock and tubs. Mobile parked under cover in adjacent warehouse.

**Future:**

- **Performance targets yet to be set.**
- Anticipate increasing demand with ageing population.
- Extend service by ensuring that eligibility criteria are widely understood in the community.
- Decentralise service delivery – augment service by establishing selection process for home library customers at branches.
Virtual Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Established 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultants’ observations:</td>
<td>Hosted on Council website. Good range of information about locations, services and events. Catalogue searchable on site. Some interactive functions are available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Performance targets yet to be set, and will depend on the selection of a measurement tool such as Google Analytics.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring together staff involved with administration, programs and promotions, IT and related services at Speers Point and then relocate to Glendale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase focus on the development, promotion and delivery of Web-based services, including a full range of transactions (such as joining the Library, patron management of own account [password, email and notification preferences], reserves, loan renewals, purchase suggestions, alerts and profiles, payment of fines).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Types of services to focus on should include social networking – especially Facebook where the library should have a substantial presence, YouTube, Twitter, multi-player games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish a ‘New Generation’ young people’s advisory group comprised of young people with a Library Service representative as co-ordinator.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cameron Park

Council should pursue opportunities to provide a library service outlet in a proposed new shopping centre in the Cameron Park – West Wallsend area. Not only will it serve as much needed community infrastructure in a new residential development, it will also be an ideal area in which to relocate the current Edgeworth library.

Performance targets could be ‘inherited’ from Edgeworth, i.e. 5% growth per annum in loans and visits starting from a base of 61,000 loans and 32,000 visits.

Indicative timing for the new library Type 3 library: 2014

Glendale

Planning progress with the new Glendale Centre lends a strong possibility to the incorporation of a new Type 1 Northern Districts Library as part of the overall project. This is a most welcome development since it will provide for service continuity following the change in status of Speers Point, the closure of Cardiff and the relocation of Edgeworth. However, if the project fails to proceed, the Type 3 library at Cardiff should be retained and a Type 4 library installed in the Glendale shopping centre. Rather than assuming Speers Point’s performance targets, new targets should be determined when the nature of the facility is known.

Indicative timing for a new Type 1 library at Glendale: 2016

Other locations

Depending on traffic patterns and local area population growth, Type 4 libraries could be considered for installation at licensed clubs, community centres, swimming centres, Belmont hospital, and at the Warners Bay shopping centre.

Further comments

Some issues and suggestions arose during the course of the project which are not explicitly covered above. These include:

1. Consider Sunday opening, but for Type 1 libraries only.
2. Devolve Home Library Service to branch libraries; enlist and train volunteers to manage delivery and assist with defining customer preferences.
3. If the recommendations for library types and services are accepted, Branch staff have been allocated and a Change Management team appointed, there remains considerable flexibility in terms of roles and responsibilities for current Administration and Technical Services personnel. Re-assignments could cover managing relationships with suppliers and strategic partners (such as community agencies, neighbouring library services, purchasing consortia, a potential contract with SWIFT), co-ordinating the activities of volunteers – especially at Wangi and Morisset where we found considerable enthusiasm for working more closely with the library service, and taking a more systematic approach to services for an ageing clientele.

4. The mobile library makes 13 stops in Week 1 and delivers 19 open hours. In Week 2 there are 10 stops for 18.5 open hours (mobile library timetable on the library website 10.3.11). In other words, because of the travel, set-up and take-down requirements, it takes two weeks for the mobile library to deliver one week of open hours. Most stops are within 5 kilometres of a branch library and some, for example Arcadia Vale and Blacksmiths, are within 2 kilometres of Wangi Wangi and Swansea branch libraries, respectively. Replacing the current articulated vehicle with one or more non-articulated, long wheelbase high ceiling ‘white vans’ would increase the proportion of service to down time, and allow visits to community and aged care facilities where parking is too tight for a prime mover/trailer combination.

5. Sponsored by the Municipal Association of Victoria the SWIFT Consortium for shared access to collections and library management systems reaches more than half of all Victorian public libraries and has recently expanded its services into New South Wales. Savings of up to 30% on IT costs, access to collections at least ten times the size of Lake Macquarie’s, plus constantly updated comparative information on library performance are among the major benefits of joining. LMCC should invite Kevin Rusbridge, SWIFT’s CEO, to deliver a presentation on the costs and benefits of membership.

http://www.swiftproject.org.au/
SECTION 4: LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

General

1. Develop a strategic marketing plan for lifting membership by 5 percentage points per annum to the Enhanced Level, NSW standards (51%) by 2016.

2. Modify the staffing structure to create a whole-of-service approach rather than a branch perspective.

3. From the current Administration and Technical Services ‘pool’ of positions appoint a Change Management team (2–3 people) with responsibility for considering this Review’s suggestions and developing processes to implement its recommendations.

4. Wherever appropriate, purchase shelf-ready materials and set-up selection profiles to free current Technical Services staff for other duties related to achieving targets for membership, loans, visits and activities.

5. Focus on developing an aged persons’ strategy and a youth services strategy and allocate adequate resources including staff to work with community groups to deliver desired outcomes.

6. Continue with current activities and programs; promote them more widely and involve Branch staff in the development of activities appropriate for their local communities. Retain the current Promotions and Marketing team to assist with this process.

7. Adopt membership, customer satisfaction, attendance at programs & activities, loans, visits and website visits as the key performance measures for the library service and set individual branch targets for these KPIs (suggestion is 5 percentage points growth per annum in each KPI)

8. Conduct a survey of current staff to determine current skill sets, contribution, and professional development requirements. Document skill shortages and produce a training and retention plan.

9. Develop a succession plan for priority positions affected by anticipated retirements within the Strategic Plan timeframe.

10. Conduct an extensive review of the physical collection, including the stack collection, discarding infrequently used material, then implement RFID at all branches. Float the collection (items are accepted into the collection at the branch to which they are returned, refreshing the collection in accordance with customer preferences, and promoting wider choice). Co-operate with other organisations to safeguard significant local history material.
11. Discontinue charging for items requested from other branches and implement fines for the late return of borrowed items. It is expected that these measures will be at worst revenue neutral and most likely, depending on the fines policy adopted, revenue positive.

12. Investigate the costs and benefits of joining relevant purchasing and service delivery consortia, beginning with the SWIFT Consortium (SWIFT is a co-operative group of Victorian and New South Wales libraries sharing the same library technology, purchasing arrangements and management information). Ramp up the adoption of Web 2.0 technologies for interacting with customers.

Specific

13. Restructure the Library organisational unit to support implementation of these recommendations, including appointing an Operations Manager (or equivalent title) to coordinate Branch activity and report to the Library Manager. Suggested start date: 2011/2012 Financial Year.

14. Adopt the planning framework based on the different library types (full service, lifestyle, shopfront or neighbourhood, electronic self-service, community-managed, and Web branch or Virtual Library) described in Section 2. Suggested start date: FY 2011/12.

15. Implement a priority budgeting approach in which the first 15% of annual expenditure is allocated to library materials, and the remaining 85% allocated across the three operating divisions. Suggested start date: FY 2011/12.

16. Implement the Recommended Service Delivery Model specified in Table 2, including the recommendations for individual branches described in Section 3. Many branch-specific suggestions are made in this section, but the major changes with a significant impact on financial sustainability are:

a) Build a new Northern District library in the Glendale Civic Centre. Suggested date: 2016.

b) Relocate Cardiff to a shopfront location and review when Glendale opens; sell current Cardiff site. Suggested date: 2016.

c) Relocate Edgeworth as a new shopfront library in the Cameron Park Pambulong Shopping Centre; sell current Edgeworth site. Suggested date: 2014.

d) Build a new library at Morisset; sell current library site. Suggested date: 2018.

e) Move the Belmont library to the retail strip and change to shopfront status; sell current site. Suggested date: 2013.

f) Replace the Speers Point library with a shopfront style service point; review when Glendale opens. Suggested date: 2016.

g) Devolve the Home and Mobile Services to branches; investigate the use of volunteers to assist with service delivery. Suggested start date: FY 2011/12.
h) Purchase two smaller, more manoeuvrable mobile library vehicles and sell current articulated vehicle at the end of the lease period.

i) Develop Wangi Wangi library into a community-operated facility supported by the Library Service but operated by a specific-purpose community group elected from a local Friends’ group. Suggested date: 2012.

j) Implement a fee-based home delivery service – order library materials online for subsequent home delivery. Suggested start date: FY 2011/12.
SOURCES CONSULTED


Australian Bureau of Statistics. *National Regional Profile: Lake Macquarie*. November 2010

— *Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2008–09* (cat. no. 3218.0) March 2010


— *Public Library Statistics, 2008/09*: published by the State Library of NSW:

Lake Macquarie City Council

— *LMCC 4 Year Delivery Program 2009–2013*


— *LMCC Building a better library service. 2008/2009 Annual Report*

— *Lake Macquarie Community Plan 2008–2018: Aspirations of the people of Lake Macquarie*

— *Lake Macquarie Cultural Plan 2007–2013: Participate, Celebrate and Generate*

— *LMCC Lifestyle 2020 Strategy*


LEID Products. Remote Internet Library System. ‘LEID products Library Express’:
http://www.leidproducts.com/remote-internet-library-system.html

— ‘Pilot Program Success Leads to Expansion of Self-Service Library Express System Developed by LEID Products, LLC’: http://www.prweb.com/releases/LEIDProducts/LibraryExpress/prweb8257295.htm


**GLOSSARY**

**ABS**  
Australian Bureau of Statistics

**EFT**  
equivalent full time (staff)

**floating the collection**  
Managing collection items so that items are accepted into the collection at the Branch to which they are returned (instead of each item having a ‘home’ branch to which it must be transferred).

**inter-library loan**  
Loans made between library services (not between branches of the same library service)

**IT**  
information technology

**RFID**  
Radio frequency identification is system for tagging and scanning library items. It facilitates automated and self-service check-in/check-out of collection items, theft prevention, stocktaking and other collection management processes.

**SWIFT**  
A consortium for library technology and services, including members in Victoria and NSW.

**technical services**  
Library operations which encompass ordering, acquiring, cataloguing, processing and maintaining library collection items, as well as selecting, implementing and managing information technology.

**virtual library**  
Library services delivered electronically via the Library website and the Internet

**Web 2.0 technologies**  
Web 2.0 is the term used to describe web sites and online applications that allow anyone to create and share material they have created. The technology is easy to use and allows people to create, share, collaborate and communicate.

Web 2.0 applications include wikis, blogs, social networking, podcasting and content sharing services. These technologies allow the sharing of text, images, sound and video.

Wikis are collaborative websites in which information can be contributed or edited by anyone within the community of users. Wikipedia is an example.

Blogs (contraction of ‘web logs’) are usually maintained by a single editor, or a small group of editors. They provide information, commentary and opinion, and visitors can comment on the entries.

‘Social networking’ sites allow an individual to create a profile for himself/herself on the site, to add information, pictures, music, videos and to share these with other individuals with similar interests, thus creating a ‘social network’. Facebook and MySpace are examples.

Podcasts are audio or video files made available on the internet for listening to or viewing on a PC, or downloading to a portable device(such as an mp3 player, iPod or mobile phone) for listening/viewing.

Content sharing sites allow users to upload and share content that they have created. YouTube and Flickr are examples.
Appendix 1.

FLOOR SPACE CALCULATIONS FOR PROPOSED NEW MORISSET LIBRARY

1. INTRODUCTION

Council’s Developer Contributions Co-ordinator LMCC advised 23 September that ‘officers endorsed the medium scenario’ developed by Don Fox Planning. This envisages a total population of 38,608 persons in the Morisset catchment to 2025. 2006 population was 20,520. Relevant factors influencing growth and the type of growth are mentioned in the following excerpts from the Don Fox Planning report.

The introduction of new housing stock into the Contributions Catchment, especially into release areas such as North Cooranbong, will result in the population increasing more rapidly than has occurred over the past decade. It is likely that this ‘new’ population will be somewhat different from the current and previous populations, characterised by higher occupancy rates and a family composition representing a younger population.

This is because it might reasonably be expected that the population of release areas such as North Cooranbong will more closely resemble other ‘new’ areas in LakeMacquarie, Maitland and Wyong and will comprise more ‘traditional’ family households (i.e. couples with children) and as a consequence, increased occupancy rates.

. . . most residents within the Morisset Contributions Catchment preferred to work as close as possible to their place of residence. The relatively small proportion of those residents working elsewhere in the LGA suggests there may be limited job opportunities in those parts of the LGA and/or jobs in these areas are filled by residents in these areas. The anticipated increase in population in the Morisset Contributions Catchment suggests there will be increased demand for local employment opportunities in the area.

The need for adequate services to improve learning outcomes for children is essential to the development of the City.

Page 28 of the Don Fox Planning report indicates that the Morisset Branch Library will be ‘rebuilt with an expanded library; community meeting rooms; long day and outside school hours child care; sports amenity facilities; and district playground.’

---

21 Ibid, p.16
22 Ibid, p.17
23 Ibid, p.18
24 Ibid, p.21
25 Ibid, p.27
2. FLOOR SPACE CALCULATION 1 – POPULATION BASED BENCHMARK

Note: *People Places*, second edition, used for all space calculations.

Assumptions:

1. That the projected population to be served is approximately 36,000
2. That the Morisset Library, whether or not it is co-located with other Council services, will **not** be the central library for the whole Lake Macquarie Library Service

Variables & acronyms:

1. GFA – Gross Floor Area
2. LAF – Local Area Factor: 35 sq m per 1000 population
3. CAF – Central Area Factor: not applicable – not the central library
4. Circulation and services allowance of 20% (1.2)

The calculation

\[ \text{GFA} = (36 \times 35) \times 1.2 = 1512 \text{ sq m}. \]

*The population benchmark allows for a branch library with a gross floor area of 1512 square metres*

Sensitivity

If the population, currently at approximately 21,000 does not grow at the projected rate, and grows instead by 50% of the projected rate, from 21,000 to 28,500 by 2025, then the calculation will be:

\[ \text{GFA} = (28.5 \times 39) \times 1.2 = 1334 \text{ sq m}. \]

*Subject to sensitivity on population growth, the population benchmark allows for a branch library with a gross floor area of 1334 square metres*

3. FLOOR SPACE CALCULATION 2 – SERVICE BASED BENCHMARK

Assumptions:

1. That the projected population to be served is approximately 36,000
2. 3 items per capita (NSW 2008/09 Standards)
3. 1 Internet PC per 3,000 residents (NSW Standards), plus 6 public PCs for catalogue, database and related uses
4. One third of the collection on loan (two thirds on shelves)

Variables & acronyms:

1. GFA – Gross Floor Area
2. TCF – Target Collection Factor
3. RAF – Relative Area Factor
Target Collection Factor calculation

3 items x 36,000 people = 108,000 items less one third = 71,000 items
100 items per sq m = 710 sq m
18 PCs each requiring 5 sq m = 90 sq m

Target Collection Factor: 800 sq m
Relative Area Factor: 800 sq m

Additional Service Areas
- Children’s Storytelling Area 10%
- Toy Library 10%
- Multipurpose Meeting, Training Room 20%
- Bookshop, Coffee Shop 10%

Total: 50%

Summary

TCF: 800 sq m
RAF: 800 sq m
Additional: 400 sq m

Total: 2000 sq m

The service based benchmark allows for a branch library with a gross floor area of 2000 square metres

Sensitivity

Applying the same assumptions as above, but with population growth to 28,500 rather than 36,000.

TCF: (3 x 28,500) = 85,500 items less one third = 56,500 items
100 items per sq m = 565 sq m
14 PCs each requiring 5 sq m = 70 sq m

TCF: 635 sq m
RAF: 635 sq m (100% of TCF)
Additional: 315 sq m (service areas as above)

Total: 1585 sq m

Subject to sensitivity on population growth, the service based benchmark allows for a branch library with a gross floor area of 1585 square metres
4. SUMMARY OF CALCULATIONS

We have now derived four numbers:

- 1512 sq m for a population of 36,000 by 2025 (population benchmark)
- 1334 sq m for a population of 28,500 by 2025 (population benchmark)
- 2000 sq m for a population of 36,000 by 2025 (services benchmark)
- 1585 sq m for a population of 28,500 by 2025 (services benchmark)

What size should a new Morisset library be?

At this stage of the project, and with the information available to date, it would be prudent to place the required gross floor area between the upper and lower calculated figures. That is, no smaller than 1300 sq m and no larger than 2000 sq m.

Ian McCallum
Libraries Alive!
29 September 2010
Appendix 2.

LAKE MACQUARIE LIBRARY SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN: PUBLIC CONSULTATION
What did we find from background research & benchmarking?

Population % of total by age group, ABS 2006

Generally speaking, Lake Macquarie population is lower than NSW and Australian averages until age 45, and higher above age 45.

At right: Demographic breakdown of population by locality, indicating locality with highest and lowest proportion for each age group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Highest</th>
<th>Lowest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>Windale</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>Winmale</td>
<td>Wangi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>Windale</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
<td>Wangi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>Edgeworth/Charlestown</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Wangi</td>
<td>Merisset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>Wangi</td>
<td>Speers Point/Windale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>Wangi</td>
<td>Charlestown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Wangi/Swansea</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Edgeworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>Toronto/Merisset</td>
<td>Edgeworth/Charlestown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95-99</td>
<td>Toronto/Cardiff</td>
<td>others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;100</td>
<td>Only Cardiff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library members as % of eligible population

Library visits per capita 2008–09

Key: Natl Base = National Standards for Public Libraries base level target
      NatlEnh = National Standards for Public Libraries enhanced level target

Library per capita expenditure by category 2008–09
What did we find in the recent surveys?

A. The User Survey: 3,326 responses: 67% female, 33% male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most frequently visited library</th>
<th>Frequency of visit</th>
<th>Age groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Weekly 44%</td>
<td>0-14 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHA</td>
<td>Fortnightly 30%</td>
<td>15-24 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL</td>
<td>Monthly 17%</td>
<td>25-54 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPE</td>
<td>Daily 6%</td>
<td>55-64 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOR</td>
<td></td>
<td>65+ 43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWA</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAN</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDG</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOB</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLS</td>
<td></td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main uses (top 15, most frequently mentioned first)

1. Borrow books for recreational reading
2. Borrow CDs, DVDs
3. Borrow books for study or research
4. Read newspapers and magazines
5. Use the Internet
6. As a meeting place, just to spend some time
7. Attend general programs, children’s programs, book chats, computer lessons
8. Borrow or consult materials for school homework
9. Use the library’s computers
10. Use local history material
11. Attend seniors’ programs
12. Use family history material
13. Attend events, e.g. book launches
14. Use the library’s databases
15. Housebound Library Service

Opening hours

Strong preference for Saturday and Sunday mornings
Mornings preferred to afternoons
Afternoons preferred to evenings

Internet and website

71% have Internet at home
55% use Library’s website. 49% use Library’s website from home; 21% use it from the library; 6% use it from work

Main uses of library’s website (top 10, most frequently mentioned first)

1. Look up items in the catalogue
2. Renew loans online
3. Request items online
4. Find out what’s going on (programs & events)
5. Search databases
6. Find branch addresses and opening hours
7. Look up book reviews
8. Use family history information
9. Use local history information
10. Suggest items for purchase
Satisfaction ratings

**Library provides what I want:** 90% satisfied or very satisfied; 7% very unsatisfied

**Customer service:** 92% satisfied or very satisfied; 7% very unsatisfied

2,616 additional comments – mostly about the value of the service and the need to maintain current service levels

B. The Non-user Survey – 450 interviews: 53% male, 47% female

**Main reasons for NOT using the library service**

- Don’t have enough time, too busy: 29%
- By my own books, magazines, CDs, DVDs: 22%
- Prefer to browse the Internet, read online: 22%
- Not interested in reading: 18%
- Unaware of locations: 5%
- Borrow from school library: 5%
- Not interested in what the library has to offer: 4%
- Use libraries from other council areas: 3%
- Exchange books with family & friends: 3%
- Borrow from university library: 3%
- Library hours not convenient: 2%
- Limited range of items available: 2%

**Interested in learning more about the library’s services?**

- No: 66%
- Yes: 33%

Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd
November 2010
Appendix 3.

LAKEMACQUARIE CITY LIBRARY REVIEW 2010

REPORT ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION PHASE 23–27 NOVEMBER 2010

1. BACKGROUND

Between Tuesday 23 November and Saturday 27 November Libraries Alive! Pty Ltd, assisted by senior staff from the Lake Macquarie City Library Service conducted 10 public forums, one in each library location. A total of 305 people attended the 10 meetings.

Each meeting followed the same format and timing, covered the same content, and concluded with a summary of outcomes agreed by participants. Up to 90 minutes was allowed for each meeting. Ian McCallum and Sherrey Quinn from Libraries Alive! were introduced by Narelle Reichert, Joanne Smith or other Library Service staff member, and the meeting was passed over to Ian to chair. Ian welcomed attendees and explained the purpose of the meeting in terms of the consultancy brief which called for a new, cost-contained, sustainable service delivery model which needed to be expressed in the context of the Lake Macquarie Community Plan 2008-2018, and the 4 Year Delivery Program 2009-2013.

Right from the outset it was emphasised that no decisions had been taken in relation to the implementation of a 20-year strategic plan, and that Libraries Alive! had no instructions, secret or otherwise, to close libraries, cut staff numbers or reduce service levels. It was however explained that in meeting the need for library services over the next two decades Lake Macquarie, in common with many other Councils with reduced asset values in the wake of the global financial crisis, would be making changes to its library service to make it more cost-effective – that it was inevitable that the existing service delivery pattern would change and such changes would include modifications to existing libraries, building new libraries and closing some library buildings no longer fit for purpose in a future characterised by an aging population, new arrivals to the LGA, and a technology-savvy society. Approximately 10 minutes was allowed to introduce the brief and answer any questions arising.

Ian next explained the printed information handed to all participants (Included as attachment 1. below). This covered a statistical summary derived from background research, and summary results from the recent (November) user and non-user surveys. Ian further explained that in writing the strategic plan, information derived from background research (statistical profile of Lake Macquarie library activity, demographic profile and population projections for Lake Macquarie, and best-practice in libraries elsewhere) would be linked with comments gathered in public meetings to form the evidence-base for subsequent recommendations. Attendees were reassured that their comments and suggestions would be recorded and a written record (this document) of meeting outcomes from all 10 meetings made publicly available through the Library’s website – thereby allowing participants to validate their comments. Ian invited questions about the information presented in the printed sheets; this part of the meeting usually lasted 30-40 minutes.

Next, attendees were asked what was important to them in planning their library service over the short-term (5 years), medium term (10 years) and long-term (20 years) and encouraged to make their views known.
All suggestions were recorded and subsequently read back to the group to ensure that the meeting record was accurate. Depending on the location, this session took from 30-45 minutes. At the end of the allotted time there was an agreed record and Ian called for any final comments, thanked people for their attendance, urged them to follow the progress of the project on the Library’s website, and left contact details for any further comments. What follows is a summary of outcomes from each meeting.

2. BELMONT

Held on Tuesday 23 November at 6pm in the Library meeting room; 19 people attended

Recent press coverage in the Newcastle Herald about reductions in library funding may have been a factor in encouraging attendance to register a protest about potential cutbacks. Once the brief and the context of the review had been explained, participants made the following comments and suggestions:

- Current usage levels warranted further investment in the Library, not reduced funding.
- Parking was inadequate – both at Belmont and at Charlestown.
- The events program could be further developed. Suggestions included using the Library as a venue for volunteers to help seniors with their taxation returns, running superannuation seminars, providing advice on a drawing up wills, joining with Meals on Wheels and other volunteer groups for home delivery of library materials, using knowledge within the community for themed talks – the example given was a talk on fishing which recently took place at Swansea.
- It is difficult for the elderly to reach the books on the bottom shelves; they are too low to reach comfortably.
- The Library should do more to advertise its services and events program, for example, by screen displays and advertising on printed loan receipts. Grandparents could be encouraged to bring their grandchildren to the Library.
- The Library should install vandal-proof after hours return chutes, most likely activated by swiping membership cards.
- In relation to services for school students, closer liaison with local teachers and teacher librarians was urged.
- The Library needs more new books, especially on computers, travel and science where most items appear to be 7-8 years old.
- Favourable comments were received on staff helpfulness and politeness, and on the ability to reserve new items.

3. CARDIFF

Held on Wednesday 24 November at 9:30am in the John Young Community Hall; 25 people attended.

The Cardiff meeting was preceded that day with an article in the Newcastle Herald headed ‘Lake anger over libraries’ and written by Damon Cronshaw – who followed the subsequent progress of the public consultation process. The article carried a photo of ‘concerned residents and business’ and was written in the vein ‘hands off the city’s 11 libraries’. Possible closure was a widely shared concern.
Fortunately Cr Barry Johnston was present and he was able to re-assure those present that Council had not decided which, if any, libraries would close, and made the point that cost-effectiveness in service delivery was the object of the review, that Council needed to be confident that the library service was returning the best possible value for money and improve services rather than reduce them.

There seemed to be general agreement that the Cardiff Library site was no longer suitable, and that the building had reached its use-by date. Steep terrain made access difficult, parking was almost impossible, and the building, a joint project of the Lake Macquarie Shire Council and the Joint Coal Board, opened in November 1957, was showing its age.

Comments and suggestions covered the following topics:

- The lack of toilet facilities was a major concern, commented on by many present.
- There was a suggestion that lack of parking was artificially constraining use.
- Library opening hours (10-6 Mon-Wed, 9-5 Thurs-Fri, 9-12 Sat) were considered too short and unsuitable for working people.
- Library needs to be re-located closer to public transport and extended to provide meeting and activity space, for example, for children’s and teenager’s programs, for after school programs, and to house additional updated Internet computers.
- Library’s free services need to be promoted more widely, in the local newspaper and on the radio.
- Favourable comments were received on the helpfulness of the staff, and the value of the mobile service to the elderly. Staff at Windale Library were also complimented.
- Comments were received on the range of choice supported by the collection, specifically, numbers of children’s books, and more accessible housing for the current collection.
- People suggested coffee and bookshop franchises, room rental, charging for deliveries (perhaps made by volunteers) and overdues as means of supplementing the Library’s budget.

4. EDGEWORTH

**Held on Wednesday 24 November at 2pm in the Edgeworth Community Hall; 36 people attended.**

Like Cardiff Library, the small Edgeworth Library was built by the Lake Macquarie Shire Council and the Joint Coal Board, and completed in 1966. Since then it has benefited from successive refurbishments. It is located between a primary school and a community hall with some parking at the hall. The Stockland Shopping Centre at Glendale is the nearest major retail precinct.

Concerns about possible closure seemed to be the main motivating factor for those attending, and there was spirited discussion about the printed information provided, usually centred on reasons for Edgeworth’s usage being low by comparison with other branches. Despite reassurances from Cr Johnston, most people considered the Library ‘at risk’ and were at pains to point out the value of the service within the local community, especially in relation to its proximity to the school. Eventually the focus turned to services in the future, and the following suggestions and comments were made:

- The Library is physically too small to accommodate community requirements for study and meeting facilities, a homework area for students, and too crowded when school gets out.
• Unreliable Internet access in the area puts pressure on the Library’s facilities, and more computers were needed to meet demand.
• There are no public toilets.
• The Library is difficult to reach by public transport, usually involving two or more bus trips.
• Notwithstanding the car park at the hall next door, parking is a major issue.
• Opening hours should be extended. Only on Tuesday is the Library open beyond 5pm.
• A greater proportion of the budget should be spent on books for young children, especially those on the Premier’s Reading Challenge list.
• Opinions differed on the mobile library. Some thought that expenditure on the service would be better spent on improving branches; others were of the view that with the general lack of community facilities in the area the mobile service was essential.
• There was little support for a centralised library at Glendale.

5. MORISSET

Held on Wednesday 4 November at 6pm at the Morisset Country Club; 68 people attended.

Like Wangi Wangi (below), the Morisset meeting filled the venue, with many people unable to find a seat and standing at the back of the room. This meeting was subsequently covered on 2 December by the Lakes Mail under the heading ‘Books not closed on library cuts. Big turn out for public library forum’. Attendees may have come with the view that their Library was under threat, but once we had been through the brief, fielded questions on the information sheets, and acknowledged up front that the current library was too small for the projected population, the meeting was keen to focus on the future provision of library services. There were some excellent suggestions, often involving greater usage of community skills on a voluntary basis to assist in program delivery.

• People at the meeting expressed the strong view that the Library should be the focal point of community activity – the social, cultural and learning hub – and a tourist attraction as well. It was pointed out that the social dimension of the Morisset Library was particularly important, at least partly because of the seniors’ programs developed by the branch manager. As the Lakes Mail reported: ‘One resident who had to leave before the end of the meeting appeared to summarise the mood of the town. “I love my library. I hope nothing happens to it.”’
• There were complaints about the 90 cents charge for items delivered from other Lake Macquarie libraries, and a request to rotate stock to refresh collections.
• Parking facilities, especially disabled parking, were considered inadequate, and the lack of public toilets was raised as an urgent item.
• The Morisset meeting was particularly interested in supporting the library through a friends’ group, but much more interested in forming a ‘Friends of the Morisset Library’ organisation, than a less-focused ‘Friends of Lake Macquarie Libraries’ affiliation.
• There was much discussion on facilities which could be provided from a physically larger library, ideally located close to public transport and on level ground. Meeting rooms for community activities such as U3A, better Internet facilities, special services for those with vision and hearing disabilities, new outreach services staffed by supervised volunteers, co-location with other agencies, and partnerships with local schools were all mentioned.
• On the services side, people suggested extended opening hours, for example to 8pm, could cater for commuters and tourists, and additional stops for the mobile library, for example at Avondale Airport.
• Library staff present were urged to promote library services more energetically, although opinions differed on how this might best be done. It was suggested that new residents could be targeted to receive an invitation to join the Library.

6. WANGI WANGI

Held on Thursday 25 November at 9:30am at the Wangi Wangi RSL Club; 81 people attended.

This was easily the largest of the 10 meetings. Residents were out in numbers to support the role of the library in the local community, to argue against closure, and to lobby for an extension of the current building on the current site. Some people were afraid that Council saw only the high value of the site and the funds that could be raised by selling.

In reporting back to the meeting comments and suggestions were summarised as follows:

• Library is important as a community hub. Socialisation across age groups is very important in bringing communities together.
• The current range of services could be updated and extended. Opening hours should be extended. Staff assistance is appreciated.
• It was claimed that 20 year population growth projections for Wangi Wangi, Arcadia Vale, Rathmines and Fishing Point indicated the need for a larger facility.
• Need to have a local facility because public transport is poor. No bus service to Morisset; difficult to get up the hill to Toronto Library.
• Library extensions should include meeting rooms, program space and space for school homework programs, and for seniors to share their expertise in such projects as, for example, building the local history collection, and running writers’ seminars.
• The collection of books and other items needs to be updated and provide wider and more current choices for all age ranges.
• The Library could generate some of its own funding by leasing a library café to a commercial operator, and by opening a combined local history information outlet with gift/tourist shop – possibly in partnership with tourism agencies. The Library could promote local B &Bs and the caravan park.
• Volunteers could be used to contain staff salary costs. The Library could encourage wider community use of their skills. Many people expressed interest in the formation of a Friends Group as a way of demonstrating support and supplementing the Library’s budget.
• The point was made that local small business people use the Library for finding out about the community, and also use the Internet and photocopying facilities (even if the latter are reportedly unreliable and demanding of staff time).
• There were no received objections to the 90 cent fee for transfer of items from other branches.
• Toilet facilities were required.

7. TORONTO

Held at Toronto Library Meeting Room at 2pm on Thursday 25 November; 26 people attended.

The Library at Toronto is modern and spacious, recently-built and well-sited next to a car park and shopping centre. Attendees appreciated the service and placed a high value on the Library’s role in
the community. Participants felt comfortable talking about their service preferences in the context of a 5-10 year strategic plan, and many useful suggestions and comments ensued:

- In relation to building new libraries, they should be co-located with retail precincts, not stand alone in a separate location.
- Need to promote services, especially to those not currently using them. In particular, the home library service needs to be promoted. Community notice boards and the local paper were suggested.
- Opening hours need to support use by working people.
- Explore partnerships with schools.
- Use cash cards rather than cash for charges.
- Bottom shelves too difficult to reach; more books should be arranged face out so people can see what items are in the collection.
- Introducing fines for overdues as a way of raising revenue and encouraging people to return their library items and thereby make them available to others – but the money raised, unlike the proceeds of the annual book sale, should stay with the library service. The current position is that the first $10,000 goes to consolidated revenue, with the library service retaining funds above this figure. Last year a new microfiche reader for genealogy services was purchased from the sale of discards.
- More could be done to develop book clubs, including payment for participation, and establishing an organisational model (akin to a franchise?) to accelerate their spread.
- Volunteers could read and record their own talking books which became part of the collection.
- Voluntary library tutors, including literacy tutors, could operate out of local libraries.
- Licensed clubs have a very similar demographic to libraries. Clubs could have a library presence as well as assisting with promotion.
- Public transport is worse on the western side of the Lake compared with services on the eastern side. For example, the Library HQ at Boolaroo is impossible to visit without private transport.

8. SPEERS POINT

Held in the Council Committee Room on Thursday 25 November at 6pm; 3 people attended.

While the number of attendees might have been well down on other venues, with Cr Johnston, a teacher from Windale High, and three Library staff present, a lively discussion ensued on how library service and schools could support each other’s objectives. In relation to Windale, the point was made that with little community infrastructure in the area, school sponsorship of students’ Library membership, and Library provision of additional computers might prove attractive to young people looking for something to do outside school hours. It was also suggested that Library staff could speak at teachers’ meetings and vice versa so both parties improved their understanding of each other’s initiatives and constraints, and it was agreed that Library sessions on determining authoritative sources of information could benefit both students and teachers.

Cr Johnston made the point that library services were location-dependent, for example, seniors’ services at Cardiff, children’s services at Edgeworth and young people’s services at Windale. He also expressed interest in enlisting volunteers to extend the Library’s events program in a time of staff constraints, for example, seniors assisting with reading programs for students, and supported in principle the establishment of Friends’ groups.
In closing, Library staff mentioned the depth and usefulness of the family history and genealogy collection, and suggested it could be more widely promoted.

9. WINDALE

Held in the Community Hall on Friday 26 November at 10:30am; 17 people attended.

Initially, the meeting expressed concern about press reports of library closures, and came along to express support for the Library and appreciation for its services. Cr Johnston pointed out that it was not the elected Council’s position to try to close libraries, but instead to ensure that every dollar spent was spent cost-effectively.

Residents of Windale made the following comments and suggestions:

- The Library is an important facility in an area with little community infrastructure; withdrawing any type of service would be detrimental to the whole area. More could be done to reach out in different ways to people in the area, to make the service relevant to everyone.
- Young people, as well as the elderly, need a place to meet with those with similar interests.
- Partnerships with schools in the area could further consolidate the Library in the community.
- The Library functions as a modest community centre, visited also by people from Tingira Heights, Valentine, Gateshead and Redhead.
- For the elderly, who choose to walk rather than drive to the Library, the location adjacent to the shops is convenient. It was reported that elderly people are moving into units being built in the area, and they want a local library they can access easily.
- Staff were perceived as knowing their customers, with a welcoming attitude and a helpful and courteous demeanor.
- Critical to keep younger people coming to the Library, and especially important to support digital literacy programs for them.
- Current building is too small. More computers and separate areas are needed for young people; separate areas are needed for the elderly. Perhaps additional space could be found in the adjacent building.
- Good, if small collection range.
- Public toilets urgently needed.
- Longer weekend opening hours would be appreciated, especially Sunday opening (and coffee!) in the colder winter months.

10. SWANSEA

Held in the Swansea Library Meeting Room on Friday 26 November at 2:30pm; 16 people attended.

Swansea is the newest of Lake Macquarie’s libraries, so the modest turn-up was hardly surprising given that closure was not on the agenda, and the meeting became an opportunity for information sharing, beginning with questions on the printed handouts, and speculation on the possible reasons for low patronage.

Suggestions and comments included:
More could be done to promote the benefits of library membership to the community as a whole especially with events and programming: for example, collaboration with schools to display children’s work, talks and photo displays from local speakers and interest groups, using library venues. Topical displays could be used to promote membership. Library information could be distributed with Council mail outs, for example, with rates notices. Signage could be more visible.

Young children visit their (usually retired) grandparents, so it would be helpful to have children’s services for grandparents to visit with their grandchildren.

Within the context of population dispersed around the Lake, ordering online for home delivery was perceived as a valuable future service, and Australia Post mentioned as a possible delivery partner.

Eastlake Historical Society is interested in exhibition space within the Library.

Library staff could visit schools to explain to students the benefits of membership.

Pre-assembled book club kits with, say, 10 books in a kit, would be helpful to book club organisers.

Tourists and holiday makers should be targeted and encouraged to join and use the Library’s services.

Downloadable e-books were discussed in the context of improving the availability of materials and contributing to sustainability (one digital copy can be accessed many times). It was reported that the Library is currently investigating this area.

The literacy collection should be reinstated. It should be possible for early readers to order appropriate material for collection at the Library or for home delivery.

The Library’s website could host a Frequently Asked Questions section with answers to the most commonly asked questions about the library service.

11. CHARLESTOWN

Held in the Charlestown Library Meeting Room on Saturday 27 November at 10:30am, 14 people attended.

At this meeting there was considerable interest in whether the Library was likely to shift across the highway to Charlestown Square. Cr Johnston expressed support for the move, and spoke of the benefits of co-location with the planned youth and community centre, but some attendees felt that parking at the Square was very difficult. Narelle Reichert reported that while preliminary negotiations for leased space had taken place with the Square owners, GPT, no agreement had been reached on costs – and might not be. Narelle went on to report that the State Government was currently looking at the Library, as one of several potential sites, for a transport hub, and the Library might have to find alternative premises, even if a move to the Square proved too expensive.

Many people expressed appreciation for current service levels. Comments included:

- Charlestown is a great library, open most days. Sunday opening would be even better.
- The location of the Library is perfect – close to parking with convenient access for seniors.
- Many apartments were being built in the area, and the current Library might become too small to meet future demands occasioned by population growth. Although the current site has served its patrons well over many years, the building does require maintenance (the Library is currently closed for ceiling repairs), and its location may not be ideal in the years to come.
• The Library should investigate opportunities for raising revenue – short of jeopardising State Government subsidies and grants. Suggestions included fines for overdues, a coffee shop, sponsorship for special projects, and encouraging donations of books and money.

• The mobile library was mentioned as a valuable meeting place for people unable to get to the library.

• It was acknowledged that the mobile library was too big to take into some subdivisions and premises, and there was general support for smaller ‘activity vans’ able to make frequent stops for delivery and collection of library materials. New school halls built under the ‘Education Revolution’ could be used for library promotion and service delivery.

• The Library’s services need to be promoted more widely, with email and visits to schools possible channels.

• New technology such as e-book readers, tablets and other portable devices should be evaluated, and may be part of strategy to attract teenagers.
Appendix 4.

Maps: status quo 2011, and projections 2014, 2016, and 2020

The four maps which make up this Appendix show, first of all the current year, then the three key change years of 2014, 2016 and 2020. In 2012 Wangi is operated by the local community and Toronto moves from a Type 1 to a Type 2 library. In 2013 Belmont moves to a central CBD location and changes from a Type 2 to a Type 3 library. In 2014 Edgeworth closes and Cameron Park opens. In 2016 Glendale opens and Cardiff closes. In summary, over the plan period two libraries open, two libraries close and one library changes its basis of operation from fully Council-supported to community run and partially Council-supported.

Major arterials are emphasized because these are the population growth corridors. From west to east they are the Sydney–Newcastle Freeway, the Sydney–Newcastle railway line, the main road around the Lake, and the Pacific Highway.