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This report was prepared for Pine Rivers Shire Council by Kate Meyrick and Kerry Jeffs of the Hornery Institute in conjunction with Veronica Lunn, of Lunn Consulting.

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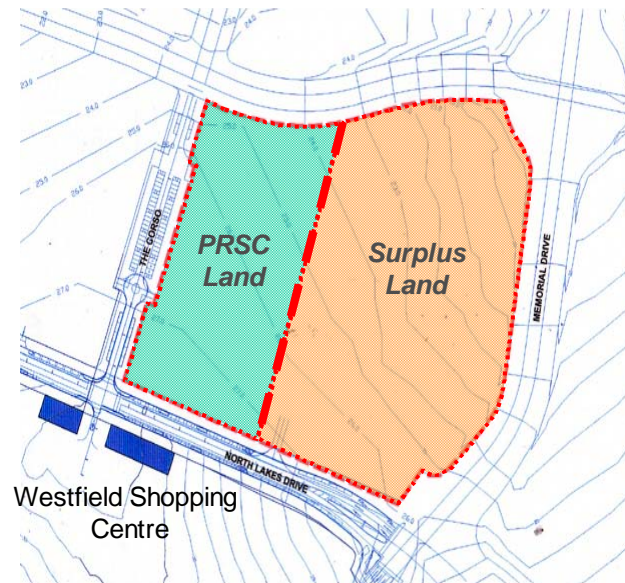
The Opportunity

At North Lakes there is the rare opportunity to create community infrastructure of distinction. To challenge the role and community perception of established social institutions and create places that are more relevant to and therefore better utilised by all community members.

North Lakes

- ❖ North Lakes is a master planned, mixed use development to the north of Pine Rivers Shire. It is strategically located at the junction of Anzac Avenue and the Bruce Highway within the Brisbane Northern Growth Corridor
- ❖ By the end of the year there will be 3,000 people living at North Lakes and when the residential development is completed the mature population will stabilise between 20-25,000.
- ❖ The development includes including 4 state and private schools, a retirement village, a subregional Westfield shopping centre, district playing fields, a championship golf course and an area zoned for mixed industrial and business uses.
- ❖ By 2016, it is estimated that North Lakes will contribute 13,000 jobs to the local employment base.

A Benchmark Community Facility



- ❖ Under the terms of the Infrastructure Agreement, a 2 hectare plot in the Town Centre frame was transferred to Pine Rivers Shire Council together with a capital sum.
- ❖ The land, which is impressed with a trust restricting its use, is intended for community leisure and learning infrastructure.
- ❖ The Hornery Institute has been working alongside Council and the Developer since June 2001, to develop the concept, design and management model for this facility.
- ❖ The project has been underpinned by a significant period of formal consultation to determine the needs and aspirations of the host community.
- ❖ The vision for the North Lakes Centre is:
'The creation of a community centre of excellence that meets the needs of the current and emerging communities and sets a new benchmark for community facilities across Australia'

The North Lakes Urban Learning Centre

It's time to decide what we want for our community....

- ❖ The vision and development brief for the North lakes Centre responded to four key themes
 1. Skills training and employment hub
 2. Personal wellbeing (recreation and health)
 3. Knowledge & Information services
 4. Creation of a community “third place” facilitating the creation of social networks.

- ❖ In August 2002, a broader opportunity was identified to explore with Education Queensland the potential to co-locate a State Senior Secondary School with the community facilities –to form an Urban Learning Centre.

- ❖ A conceptual master planning exercise involving all stakeholders was conducted and a designer is now being sought for stage 1 – to include the C21 Library.

- ❖ One of the significant areas of common ambition was the creation of a point of difference library responding to the themes of knowledge, information and networking.

Conceptual Master Plan

C21 Library



The Perspective

When you say libraries, people immediately think of books and borrowing; they make a valued judgement about the importance of this service to their own life. They rarely think about what libraries set out to achieve or how they may need to change to meet the emerging demands of the information age.

Evolution in Australia

- ❖ When the first convict ships were dispatched from the United Kingdom, reference books were given priority over sheep. The rationale was that a store of knowledge was critical to establishing and sustaining a new society, a sheep could feed and clothe only a limited amount of individuals.
- ❖ The first public library was established in 1809 with State Libraries emerging in the 1850s.
- ❖ The Mechanics Institute subscription model of libraries prevailed throughout much of the decade to the second world war and were particularly successful in country towns where they underpinned a broad range of cultural and intellectual activities.
- ❖ The growth in free public libraries and heavy investment in this service emerged in the 1950s and today there are over 1500 libraries across Australia, more outlets than McDonalds.
- ❖ Last year these libraries aggregated 90 million visitations, equating to five visits per Australian, at a cost per citizen of 6c per day.

The Role of the Public Library

“...Today libraries have an opportunity to be the new village green, the hub around which vibrant community life develops”

(Hugh Mackay)

- ❖ The public libraries movement was originally conceived as an important social weapon against information poverty - increasing access to learning resources and facilitate self improvement for the “working class”
- ❖ In 1994 they were defined in the UNESCO manifesto as *“... a living force of education, culture and information”* and they have become an accepted and expected part of the social and civic fabric of Australian life.
- ❖ Increasing bodies of research attempt to measure the value of (good) public libraries, citing their chief benefits as:
 1. Promoting community literacy from cradle to grave.
 2. Pivotal information source
 3. Provide opportunity for leisure and entertainment
 4. Neutral to social financial and educational barriers
 5. Building communities and foster connections
- ❖ Despite this validation, it is important to question whether in their current form, Libraries demonstrate relevance to the communities they serve.

Forces for Change

What is the role of the library – passive lending agency for a select band of loyal users or a force for change to engage with and information enable its whole community

- ❖ Globally, there has been a recognition that libraries are experiencing falling membership levels and a ground swell of user dissatisfaction. This is a worrying trend given the emerging knowledge economy and the increasing importance of information literacy.
- ❖ Part of this trend is driven by the increasing availability of information and the new/varied medium through which personal entertainment can be popularly accessed. Film, television, radio, video, dvd, cd roms, cds and cassettes have all challenge the supremacy of the written word.
- ❖ It is true that libraries remain appreciated by their users, however this is due as often to low expectations and lack of awareness of alternatives as it is to the quality of the product.
- ❖ Global trend to re-position libraries being championed significantly in Singapore Finland and the United Kingdom

Singapore

Borderless Library



- ❖ The repositioning of libraries has been a national initiative reflecting the strategic recognition of knowledge as the currency of the future and the need for Singapore's people to be its key resource, export and point of difference.
- ❖ The ambition for the library service was to create an enlightened community helping them engage confidently in all areas of life
- ❖ Through the repositioning they were aiming for an adaptive, borderless, co-ordinated, quality, responsive information arbitrage – rather than a book warehouse.
- ❖ A key principle was that information and resources from anywhere can be accessed at any time.

United Kingdom

Ideas Stores



- ❖ The initiative was driven by Chris Smith the Minister for Culture and the Arts in the Blair Government and was driven by the need to modernise and increase community participation with libraries – particularly those in inner urban areas.
- ❖ A central tenet was that the location of libraries should be no less favourable than the location of McDonalds
- ❖ The movement has been characterised as the creation of “Street Corner Universities”.
- ❖ The key philosophical shifts has been the desire to change the style and form from passive lending institution’ to interactive learning experience, with a recognition that one size cannot fit all.

United Kingdom

Espoo Library, Finland

- ❖ The renaissance of Libraries in Finland has been driven by the need to meet two objectives jointly expressed as;

Offering and mediating knowledge and experiences

- ❖ There was increasing recognition that Libraries often provide the only public space that can be freely used, with a low entry threshold and able to provide a populist focal point underpinning the identity of the community.
- ❖ It has become recognised that the library must provide chances for groups and individuals to concentrate, meditate, explore and debate.

The Journey

'It is courageous to start a journey without being sure of the eventual destination, it is self satisfied to sit by the fire and contemplate the glory that might have been'

Ask The Customers

A successful library building will only be created by a team of people with a common understanding of what is to be achieved and what is to be avoided.

- ❖ Within any community there will inevitably be a broad spectrum of views about the form and nature of the building and the range of services and activities. Although a daunting task, it is essential that all stakeholders are given the opportunity to inform the brief for a new library facility.
- ❖ Specifically, early and maintained input must be sought from:
 1. The Public Library Authorising Body
 2. The resident Library Team
 3. The community of users
 4. Those not currently using the library
- ❖ Considerable primary research has been undertaken in South East Queensland evaluating the role of libraries and testing the satisfaction of users.

Key findings

73% of library regulars plus 67% of non users rated the library service as very important to a community

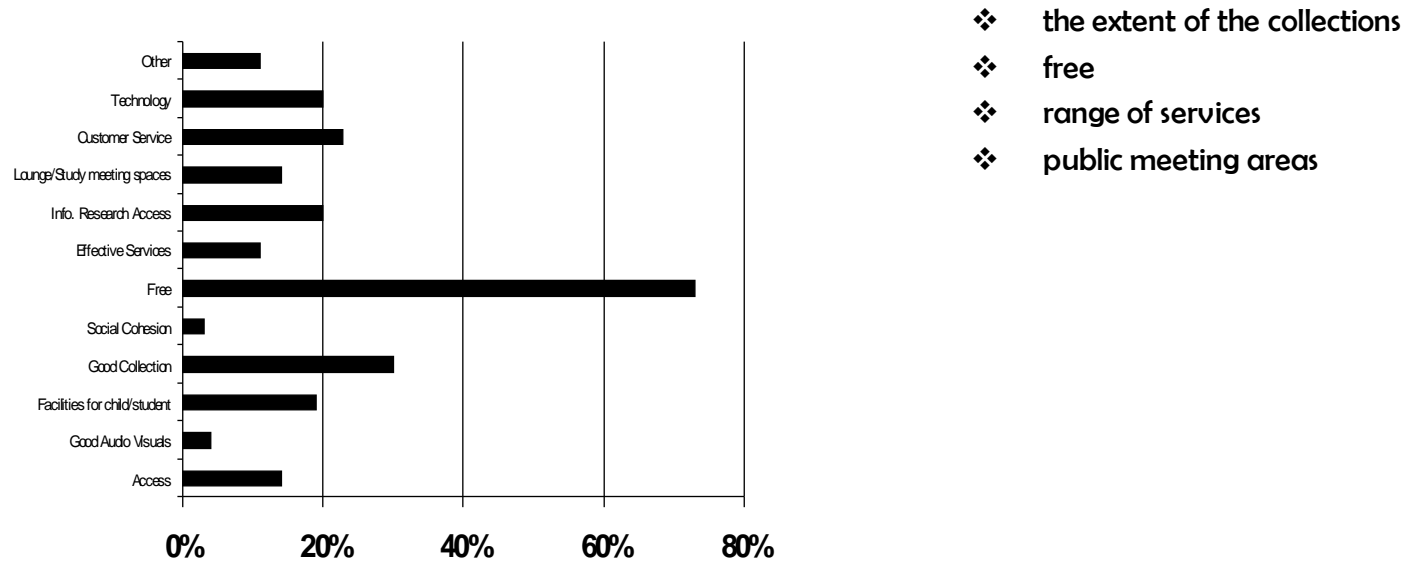
yet

More people in Queensland do not use the library than use them

- ❖ A bespoke research exercise was conducted in the Northern Corridor. It was undertaken by Lunn and Associates and the Hornery Institute and auspiced by the State Library.
- ❖ The work was conducted across a twelve month period and comprised the following stages:
 1. An initial series of **future visioning** workshops with target groups
 2. A second stage research project using cohorts of users and non users derived a rich source of **detailed qualitative data**
 3. Investigate current library provision and explore **Library Utopia**
 4. Testing and **cross validation** with global best practice and other SEQ data sets
- ❖ The responses are arranged as perceptions of current libraries and the vision for library utopia at North Lakes.

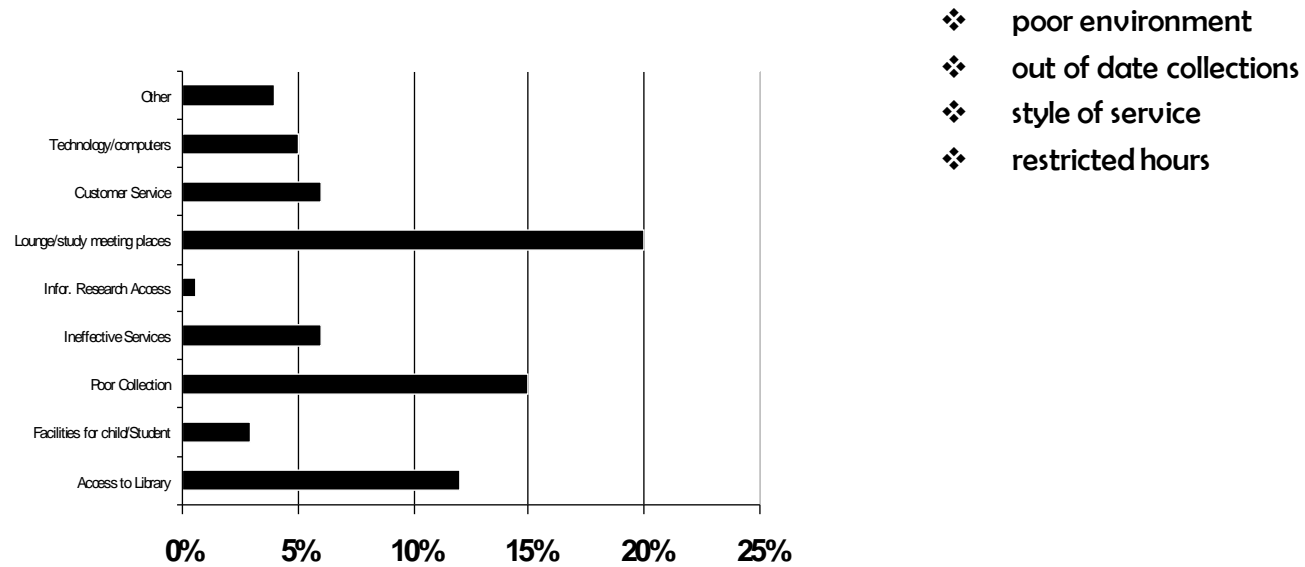
The Users Headlines

Most Valued



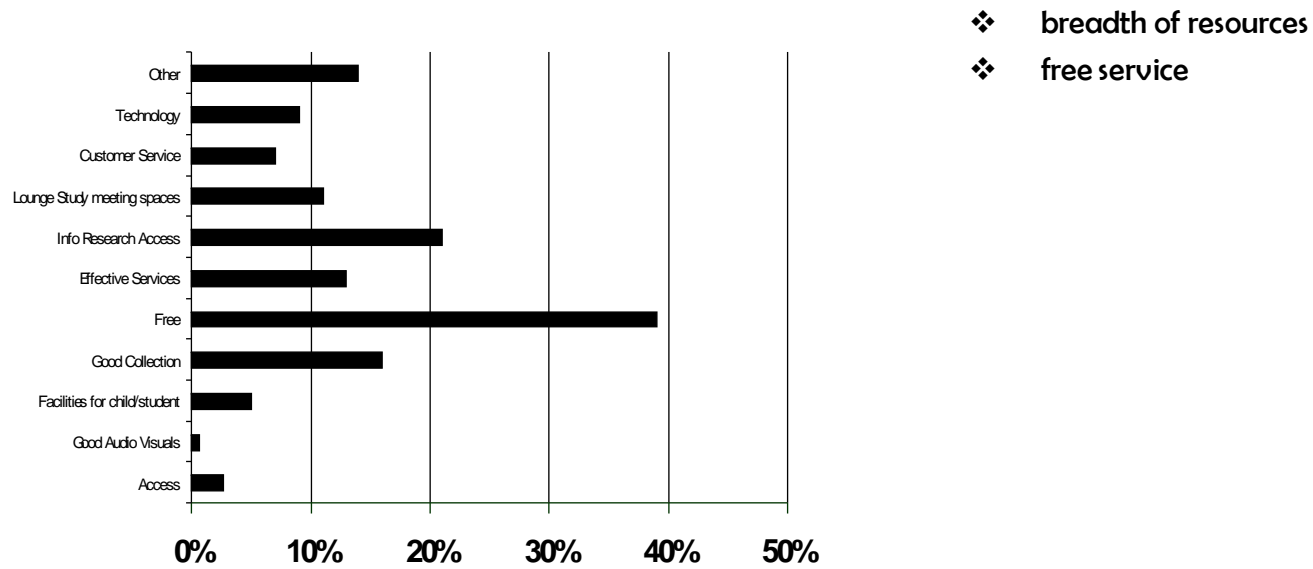
The Users Headlines

Least Liked



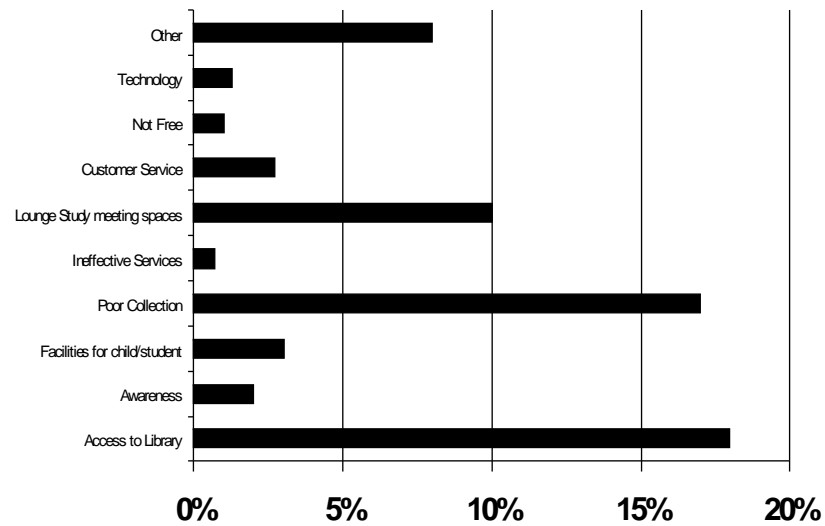
The Non-Users Headlines

Most Valued



The Non-Users Headlines

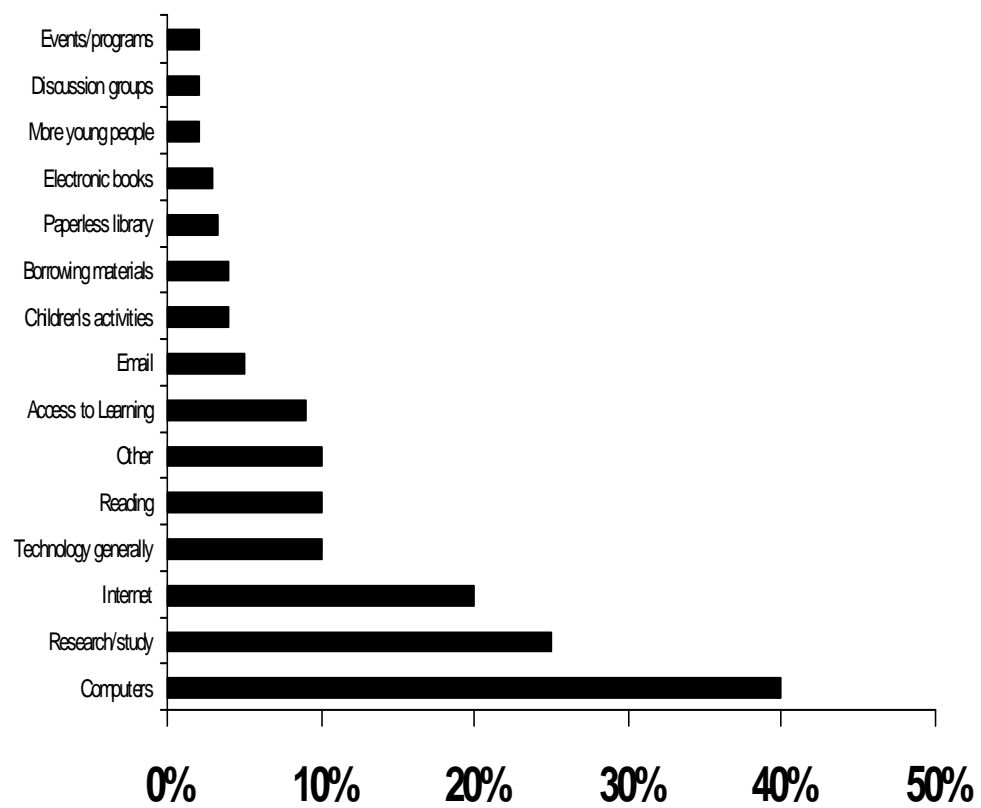
Least Liked



- ❖ unsuitable hours
- ❖ poor collections
- ❖ poor environment
- ❖ cited lack of time as the key reason for being a non user

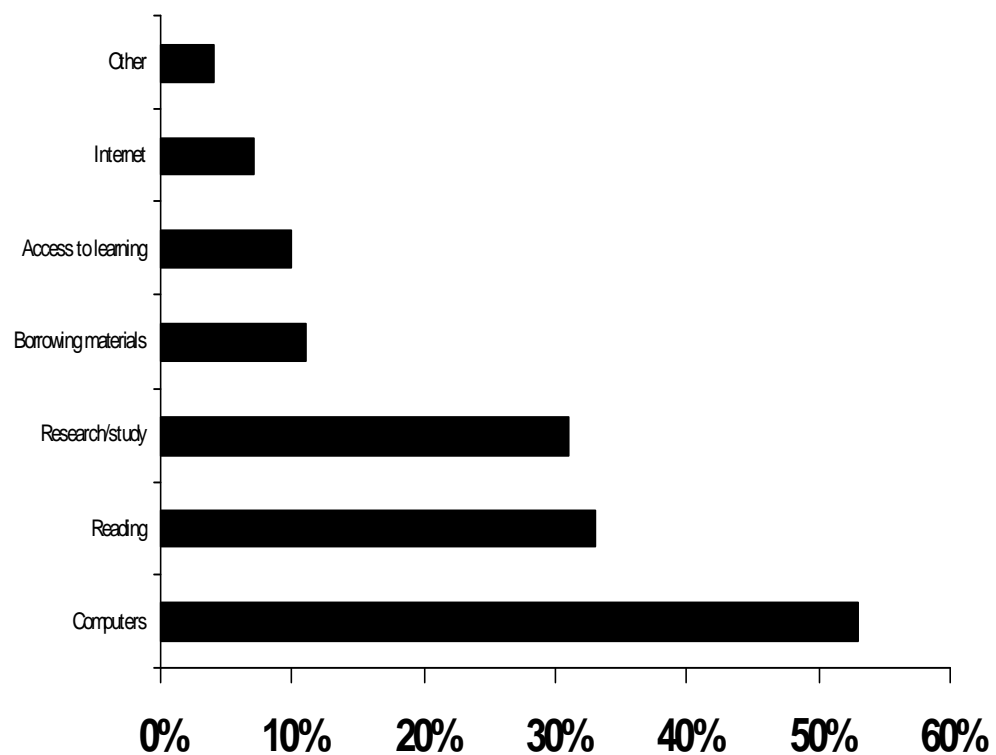
What Respondents Would Do In Library Utopia

(Users)



What Respondents Would Do In Library Utopia

(Non Users)



Their Vision

The North Lakes C21 Library shall be:

**“An experience that competes
successfully for leisure time and
contributes to the development
of individuals and their
community”**

❖ From the aggregated responses of users & non users, six themes emerged strongly:

- Design and Layout
- Décor and Furnishing
- Ambience and Staffing
- Access and Amenity
- Services and Resources
- Integration and Innovation

❖ To respond appropriately to these themes will require a shift in thinking about how libraries are designed and operated

- Institutional to Inclusive
- Functional to Fantastic
- Formal to Engaging
- Rigid to Responsive
- Complacent to Competitive



The Response

*Succeeding is more about daring to try than finding the
right answer.*

The Positioning

**a ‘different experience every time
I go there’**

- ❖ Six principles were established to inform the positioning of the proposed library at North Lakes:
 1. At the heart of the social network at North Lakes
 2. Competing effectively as a leisure offer
 3. A special place in my community – a place I belong
 4. First and best destination for information – equalizing the information divide
 5. Linking people with personal, professional and social opportunity
 6. Challenging and changing perceptions of libraries

- ❖ As a product, the consumer experience of the Library will hinge on the magic created by the inter play between

place + activity + delivery style

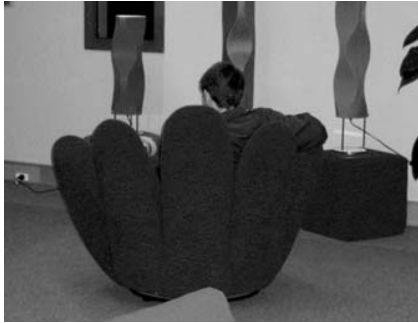
The Place



Design and Lay Out

- ❖ Responsive, inclusive architecture – somewhere special in my community
- ❖ Innovative lay out, dynamic and flexible space
- ❖ A better balance between books and break outs
- ❖ Respect the need for shared spaces and themed zones
- ❖ Themed areas may include:
 - Toy library and children's space
 - Listening posts
 - Shire State Library nexus
 - Viewing room
 - Heritage area
 - Display areas
 - Living room
 - Technology suites
 - Research stations
 - Youth space

The Place



Décor and Furnishing

- ❖ Personalised approach, unique and definite character
- ❖ Expressing community ownership
- ❖ A Blend of spaces to reflect and your mood and companions
- ❖ Connect with green space – garden rooms

The Place



Access and Amenity

- ❖ Extended access through virtual library services and personal menu
- ❖ Expressing community ownership
- ❖ Five star amenities to facilitate and enhance user experience:
 - Lockers
 - More and better toilets
 - Stroller parking
 - Creche or short term childcare
 - Bus service
- ❖ Fully integrated café offer – encourage time deepening

The Activity



- ❖ Ask us and involve us or lose us.
- ❖ Refresh, respond, evolve, change
- ❖ Multi faceted collection of information and entertainment resources
- ❖ More enlightened technology and more of it
 - Personal interface to increase user comfort zone
 - Refreshed and contemporary
 - Managed and 'safe to experiment'
- ❖ Ideas for scheduled activities:
 - Virtual ask a librarian point
 - Community, civic and visitor information
 - Volunteer co-ordination
 - Social leisure & learning activities
 - Kids activities - Homework surgery
 - Drive through pick up and returns
 - Small business support services
 - Story telling, drama and family literacy
 - Tax, benefit agency and politicians

The Delivery

The Ethos

- ❖ To succeed, the new genre of libraries must redefine the accepted normative values.

- ❖ The proposition becomes that of the library ...
 1. As a leisure opportunity and not a free service
 2. Promoting an information enabled community not lending books – (first, fastest and free-ist)
 3. Promoting a strong guest service philosophy, with clients, customers and guests not just users.

The Delivery



The Ambience

- ❖ The library should appeal to all sectors of the community regardless of their age, gender, affluence, social standing or intellect.
- ❖ The ambience must be promote all users to feel safe, relaxed, comfortable and accepted.
- ❖ The new library needs to appeal beyond traditional library audiences and on particular extend its invitation to:
 1. Mothers and young children
 2. Seniors
 3. Non english speaking patrons
- ❖ In particular the new generation libraries must recognise and encourage teenagers – giving them a space where they feel accepted

The Delivery


The Team




- ❖ The team is the essential ingredient of the library experience – interactive, warm and open image
- ❖ It is likely that this will necessitate new style librarians with a different skills set – information intermediaries!
- ❖ It will also be important for the customer to have a voice and be recognised as part of the team.



The Paradigm Shift

Service  **Experience**

Institution  **Product**

Sort of  **Sought After**



Designing the Library