

HOBSON'S
BAY CITY
COUNCIL

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY HALL

VISIONING PROCESS

PURPOSE

Hobsons Bay City Council is currently undertaking a process for the redevelopment of the Brooklyn Community Hall. Whilst some initial community consultation and preliminary concept design work has already been undertaken, Council has identified a desire to undertake a review and visioning process for the project to:

- Provide an opportunity for more in-depth consultation and input from key stakeholders and the community
- Explore new ideas and possibilities for the design and operation of the facility
- Establish a clearer vision for the project that provides greater understanding, certainty and ownership around the decision making process and project outcomes
- Provide an agreed set of principles that will act as a guiding framework for ongoing design and delivery phases

This is an initial visioning document intended to provide a summary of the key ideas, principles and outcomes from the visioning and workshop process. It is not a technical document and does not prescribe specific design outcomes - but rather has been generated to provide a guiding framework and brief for the ongoing design process.

The project visioning and workshop process was run with a Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) that incorporated members from the local community as well as representatives from Council and community service providers. Rather than following a typical 'broad-level' consultation model, the focus of the visioning and workshop process was to allow the SRG to have a more in-depth level of input and direct involvement in shaping an initial vision for the project, and for the outcomes of this process to then form a basis for community-wide consultation and ongoing design.

The visioning process gathered input from the SRG through a series of workshops that followed the 3 key phases of the Place Guide model that has been adopted by Council on some of its recent projects. The Place Guide process is intended to provide a logical step-by-step sequence that provides a clear link between the different phases of the process - from the initial gathering of input and ideas and shaping of a vision through to key decision making steps and final outcomes that end up on the ground.

Creating a shared vision that provides
a clear, practical and inspiring
direction for the project and can be
used to guide the ongoing design and
decision making process....

1

PLACE CHECK

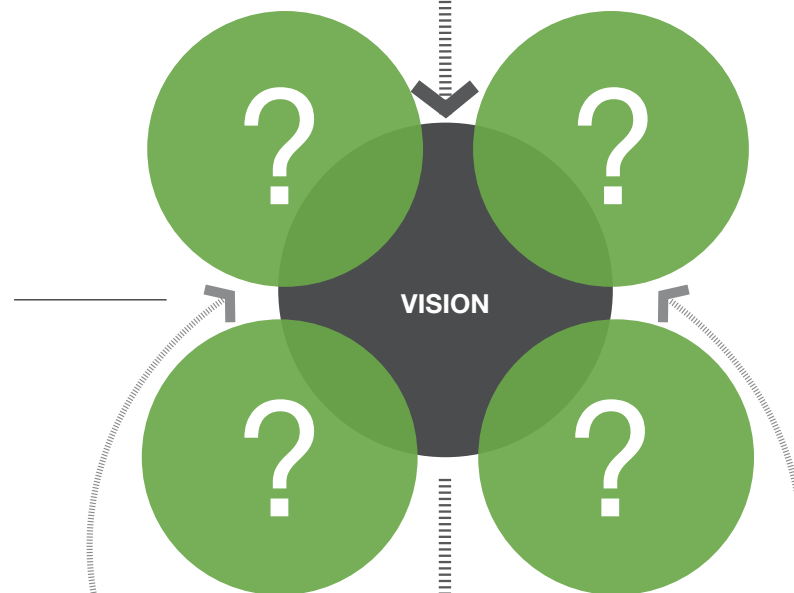
'ASK'
asking the right
questions



2

PLACE VISION

'SHAPE'
shaping the vision



3

PLACE DESIGN

'MAKE'
bringing the vision to life +
making it happen





PLACE CHECK - 'ASKING' THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

STUDY TOUR + WORKSHOP

ASK

STUDY TOUR

ideas + inspiration, exploring real-life examples, learning from experience

GATHERING IDEAS + INSPIRATION

To commence the visioning and workshop process the SRG was taken on a half-day study tour of some community centres within Melbourne as follows:

- For the workshop study tour the SRG visited 3 different facilities - The Saltwater Community Centre in Point Cook, The Laverton Community Hub and the Woods Street Arts Space in Laverton.
- The 3 facilities were chosen to show different types of uses, operation models, budgets and scales
- Rather than suggesting one specific or preferred approach, the process of selecting diverse facilities was intended to help stimulate creative thinking and discussion

ASK

STUDY TOUR

ideas + inspiration, exploring real-life examples, learning from experience

what's on



Community garden, outdoor performance space and play area
(Saltwater Community Centre, Point Cook)



Community kitchen and multi-function indoor space
(Saltwater Community Centre, Point Cook)



Indoor multi-purpose spaces catering for a range of recreation uses
(Laverton Community Hub, Laverton)



Unique ideas for activating and operating community spaces
(Woods Street Arts Space, Laverton)

ART

ASK

WORKSHOP + VISIONING PROCESS

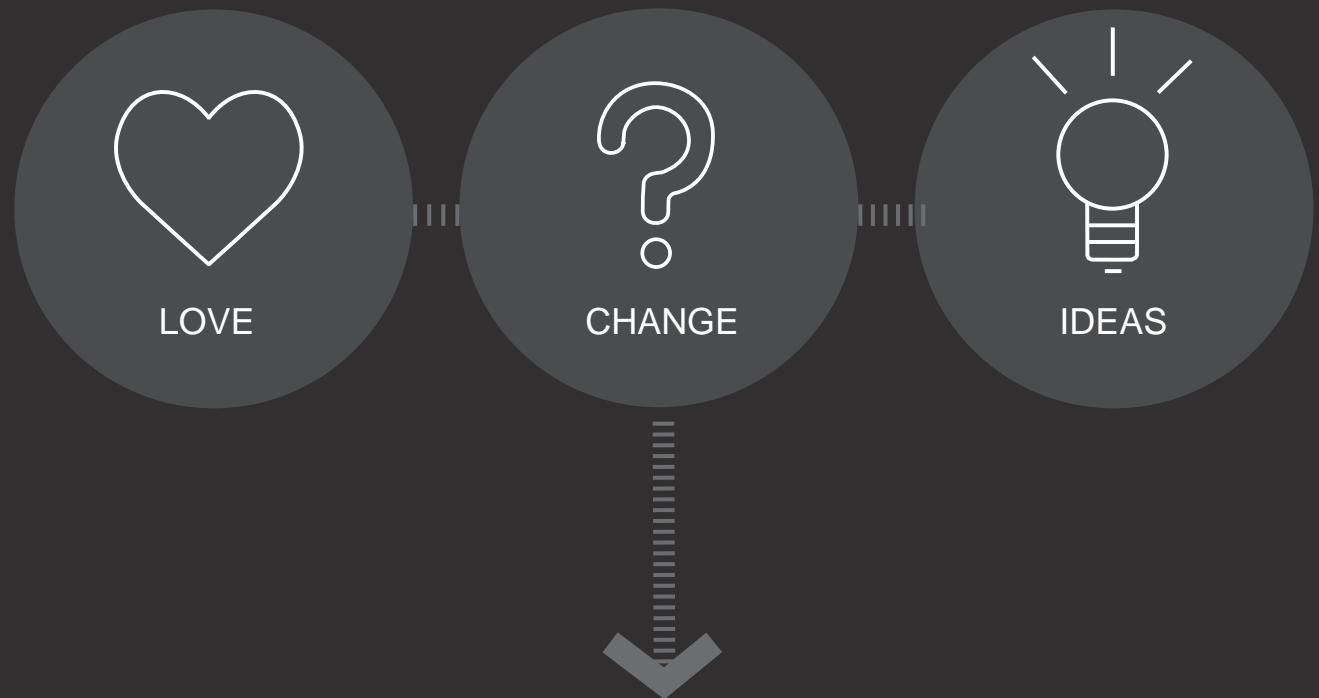
identifying key issues and opportunities, sharing ideas, and shaping a shared vision

Following the study tour, a 'Place Check' workshop was run with the SRG to provide them with an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas on the Brooklyn Hall in its current form, and how it could be changed to work better into the future. The workshop was run as an open and informal discussion, where participants were encouraged to engage in an open exchange of their ideas and views - what they LOVE most about the hall, what would you like to see CHANGE, and any big IDEAS they might have for future.

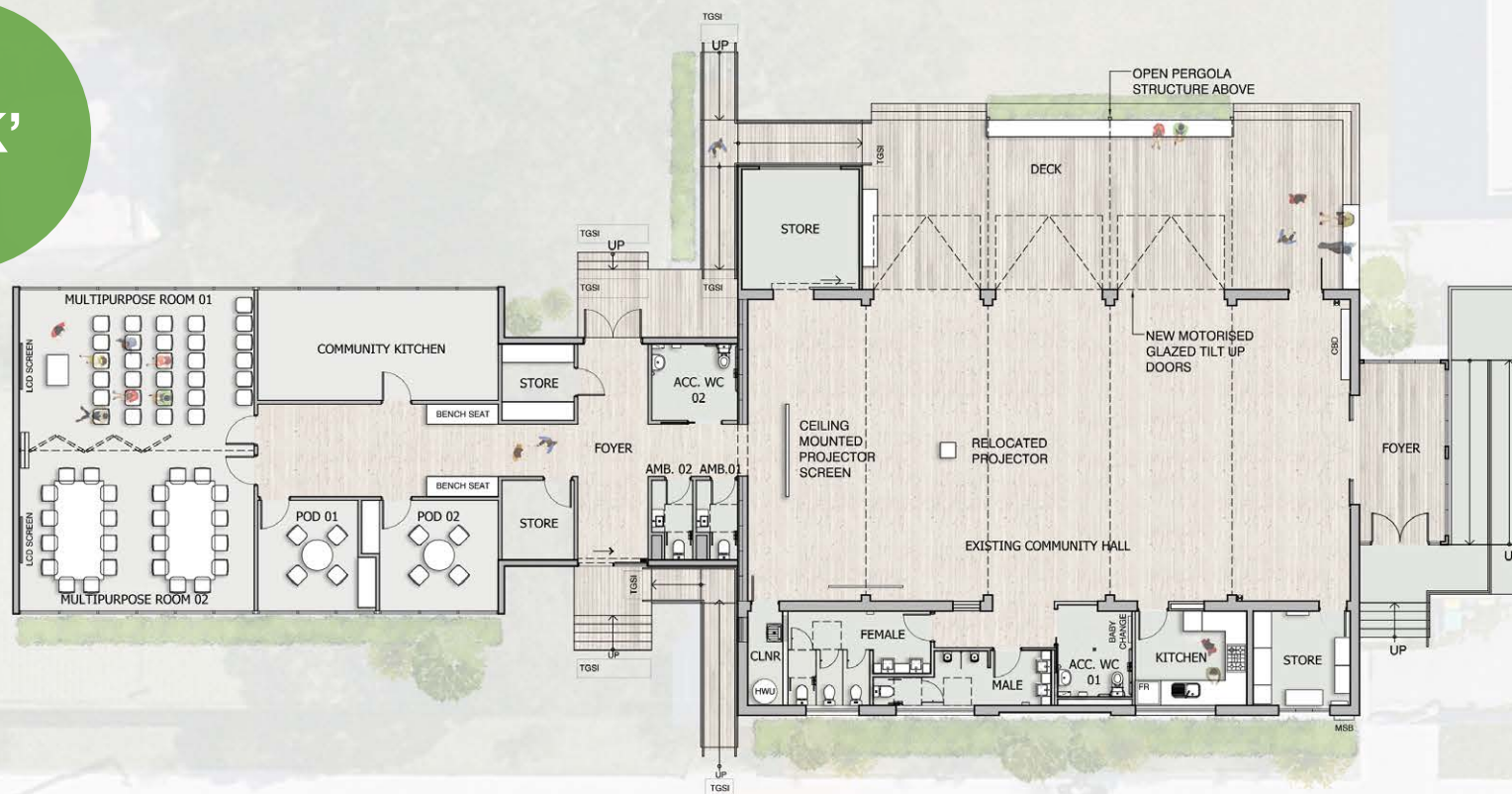
To help provide a structure to the workshop the discussions were organised based around 3 key topics:

- Use + Activation
- Connecting With The Community
- Operation and Management

It is important to note that these topics were not intended to limit ideas and input, but rather to help attendees to organise and share their thoughts. Towards the end of the workshop, a forth discussion of 'other ideas' was undertaken to capture any other thoughts and comments that were not already covered under the 3 key topics.



'ASK'



AN INITIAL CONCEPT TO HELP GENERATE IDEAS + FEEDBACK

As previous consultation and design work had already been undertaken for the Brooklyn Hall Redevelopment prior to the workshop, an initial concept plan was available and was presented at the workshop to help generate discussion, input and feedback from the SRG. The aim of this process was to gauge whether there was support for the general concepts and direction that had evolved through the previous consultation and design process, and to help the SRG to provide more detailed suggestions and feedback.

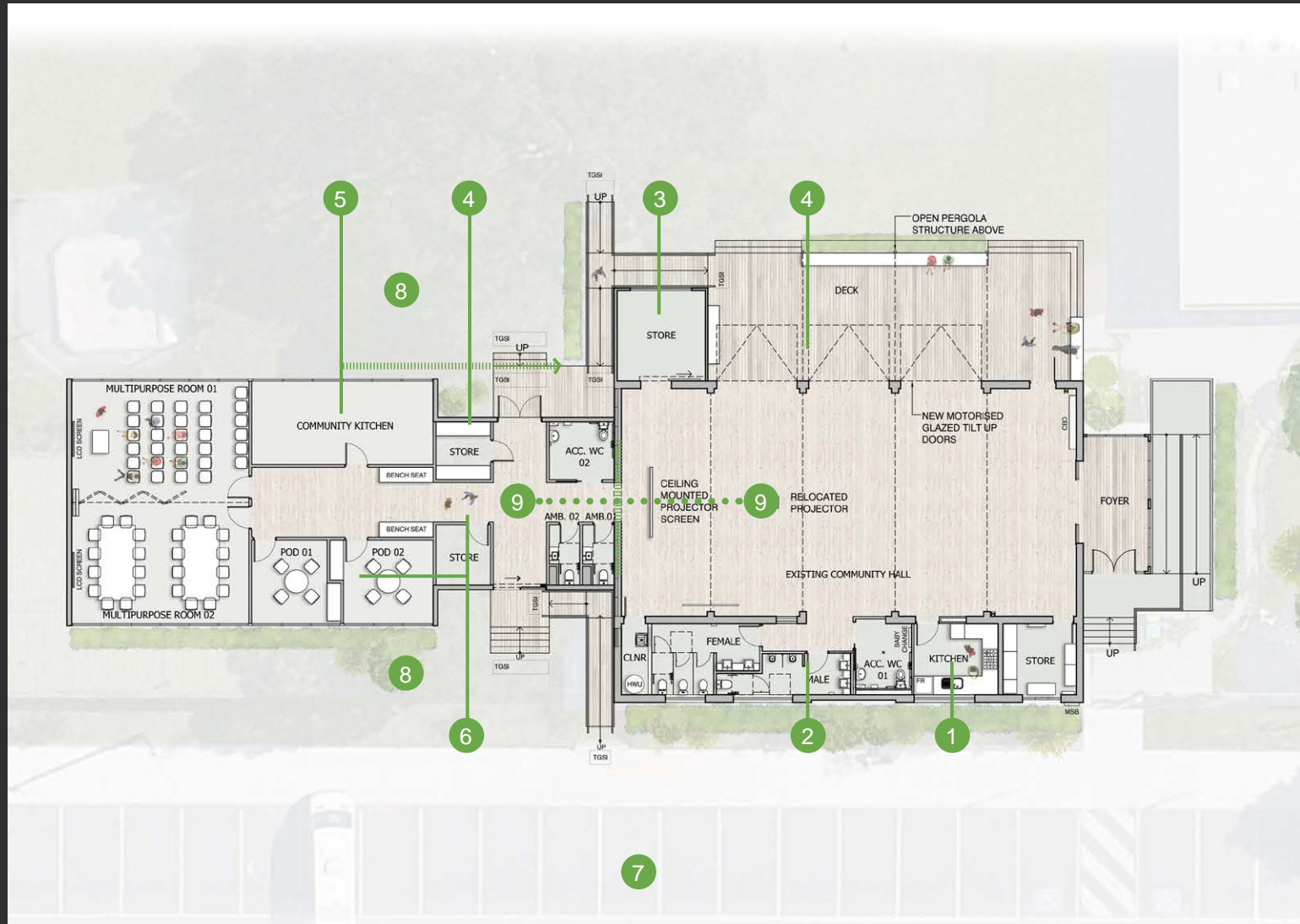
The following pages identify the key comments received in relation to the initial concept plan, as well list of the more general comments, suggested changes and key issues / items requiring further investigation as raised during the workshop. The key issues / items listed in this section were used to shape the project vision, as well as provide a checklist of elements to be further investigated and resolved as part of the ongoing design and consultation process.

ASK

FEEDBACK ON CONCEPT DESIGN

This plan provides a mark-up summary of the key comments and suggested changes noted for further investigation by the SRG that were specific to the concept plan discussion

- 1 Preference to maintain small kitchenette within the existing hall but potential to consider adjustments to size and location
- 2 Investigate options for reducing the size or layout of the toilets in order to provide a more efficient use of space
- 3 Investigate options for moving this storage area so that the space can be used for other uses (i.e. community kitchen or open foyer space)
- 4 Maximise the connection between the internal areas of the hall (in particular, the community kitchen, main hall and any informal seating / table areas) with the outdoor park / garden spaces
- 5 Explore options for relocating the community kitchen to be closer to the main hall to improve servicing for functions / events and relationship to outdoor areas
- 6 Investigate options that turn the small PODs / foyer into a more open and flexible space
- 7 Investigate alternative options for catering for increased parking demands that will limit the loss of green space
- 8 Ongoing design to explore options / feasibility involved in trying to maintain as many of the large existing trees as possible throughout the redevelopment
- 9 Overall building to be designed to function in 'zones' so that different parts can operate and be used independently



ASK

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK - GENERAL COMMENTS + ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The ideas, feedback and issues raised during the workshop and concept plan discussion have been summarised in this section.

This is intended to provide a concise list of the general comments, suggested changes and key issues / items requiring further investigation as part of the ongoing consultation and design process.

1. GENERAL CONCEPT

- **There was general support from the SRG for the overall size and types of facilities** as proposed under the concept plan - most of the comments received were in relation to investigating different locations and layout options for uses rather than wanting to change the size or type of any particular elements

2. EXISTING HALL

- General comment around whether there is an **option to reduce the size or layout of the toilets in the main hall**, or to change to unisex facilities, in order to provide a more efficient use of space?
- Question raised as to whether there is a way to **allow a temporary stage** to be accommodated within the existing hall for events and performances and to design the new extension to function as a 'back of house' for these performances - architects to consider options for how stage performances could be accommodated
- **Support for maintaining small kitchenette within the existing hall** to allow it to operate independently of the proposed extension - though open to considering adjustments to size and location
- **General support for the proposal to introduce doors to the northern side of the existing hall** and opening out to a deck area

3. OUTDOOR SPACES

- There is a desire to **maximise the connection between the internal areas of the hall with the outdoor park** / garden spaces - in particular, it was noted on several occasions that the proposed community kitchen, main hall and any informal seating / table areas should maximise visual and physical links to the outside
- Whilst it was noted that the current community garden was in need of refurbishment, there was **general support for the idea of providing an upgraded community garden** area as part of the new works that would link in with the community kitchen - suggestion to investigate opportunities for involvement from local schools and community groups

4. COMMUNITY KITCHEN

- Suggestion to investigate **relocating the community kitchen to be closer to the main hall** to improve servicing for functions / events and increase connection to community garden / outdoor spaces
- Desire to have a **flexible kitchen space that integrates with wider entry / foyer area** and outdoor spaces so that it has more flexibility (i.e. movable benches etc) for cooking classes and events
- Desire to have **close / direct connection between the community kitchen and community garden**

ASK

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK - GENERAL COMMENTS + ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION

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5. PODS / NEW FOYER AREA

- A lot of the general discussion in the workshop focused around the new central entry foyer area and smaller PODs. There is a desire to investigate options that **shift the PODs / foyer to be a more open and flexible space** that feels more like a 'living room' (rather than small separate rooms) and could be used for informal work, catch-ups and other passive uses.
- Desire to **maximise integration and flexibility between the entry foyer area, community kitchen and outdoor spaces** - Saltwater was seen as a good reference example but there is a desire to push for a more open, flexible and flowing space

6. MULTI-PURPOSE ROOMS

- The general **size and location of the multi-purpose rooms in the concept plan were generally supported.**
- At the Saltwater and Laverton Hub facilities, **issues were noted in regard to the function (noise issues between adjoining spaces) of the dividing operable walls.** Whilst the SRG generally supported the concept of having the operable wall / flexible spaces, it was noted that this issue needs to be investigated further as part of the ongoing design.

7. ACCESS / ZONING OF SPACES

- General agreement that it would be desirable for the overall building to be **designed to function in 'zones'** so that different parts can operate and be used independently (i.e. the community kitchen and new foyer can be booked and used separately from the main hall)

- Support for the idea of trying to **design the new foyer and kitchen as an open, flexible 'living room'** type space that local residents can access for more casual / informal activities - detail of how this could operate / be managed to be investigated as part of ongoing design

8. SECURITY

- The **question of security cameras was raised** to gauge initial responses - there were no specific concerns raised and there was a general level of support, particularly if it were to provide improved safety and open new methods / opportunities for local residents to access the facility
- It was noted that under the concept plan the **current chain link fencing around the facility is proposed to be removed.** From the study tour and workshop discussions it was noted that there may be a need to fence off some areas to control access (i.e. the community garden) but that it should be designed to be more attractive and integrated with the landscaping

9. STORAGE

- The current storage area on the north side of the existing hall was noted as being in a valuable and high amenity location overlooking the park - **it was questioned whether this storage could be moved to another location** so that the space could be used for other uses such as the community kitchen or open foyer space that would take better advantage of this location.

ASK

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK - GENERAL COMMENTS + ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The ideas, feedback and issues raised during the workshop and concept plan discussion have been summarised in this section.

This is intended to provide a concise list of the general comments, suggested changes and key issues / items requiring further investigation as part of the ongoing consultation and design process.

10. MANAGEMENT / OPERATION

- As part of the workshop there was a lot of discussion around how the facility could be **managed and operated to make it more accessible for local residents** and to better cater for a wider variety of uses. The idea of using the facility as a testing ground for Hobsons Bay to trial different approaches to booking and operating the facility was generally supported.
- The concept of **trying a new model like a swipe card system** that would allow local residents to use part of the hall (such as the open foyer, community kitchen and 'living room' area) at different times for informal / on-demand use was widely supported (though it was acknowledged that this would require systems to be put in place to manage safety, property damage and other issues).
- As part of the ongoing design and consultation process, it is recommended that **different models / real-life examples of alternative booking / operation / management be investigated** and trialled as part of the Brooklyn Hall Redevelopment

11. LARGER EVENTS / FUNCTIONS

- The **issue of whether the hall should be allowed to be used for larger private events or functions** (such as birthday parties, weddings etc) was discussed. Opinions were varied and concerns over potential issues such as noise and parking impacts for adjoining residents were raised.
- As part of the ongoing consultation and design process this matter should be put forward as a specific question for community feedback

12. CAR PARKING

- **Car parking was the most discussed and debated issue of the workshop.** Concerns were raised over the capacity of the current parking spaces and the increased traffic and parking demand that the expanded facility would place on the surrounding streets. From the alternative viewpoint, there were opinions expressed in opposition to any potential car parking increases leading to a reduction in 'green space' or an introduction of large areas of parking hardscape.
- **Council to undertake further investigations** to determine the likely increase in parking required for the expanded / redeveloped facility
- As part of the detailed design, **Council is to investigate alternative options for catering for increased parking demands** that will limit the loss of green space (i.e. buses for special events, streetscape reconfigurations, improved cyclist linkages etc)

13. OTHER

- General comments noted around a **desire to maintain as many trees as possible throughout the redevelopment** - whilst it was noted that several large existing trees stand in close proximity to the facility and may be impacted in the redevelopment process, there is a general desire to try to seek a design outcome that retains as many trees as practically possible
- General comments noted in relation to **determining the current usage and future plans of the tennis club** - and if / how these may influence or tie-in with the redevelopment



PLACE VISION - 'SHAPING' THE VISION

KEY PRINCIPLES



Shaping a shared vision for the future of the Brooklyn Hall



2

PLACE VISION

The next phase in the process - The Place Vision - involved the following key steps:

- **Establishing the vision** - Distilling the 'Place Check' findings into a clear vision and set of key themes
- **Inspiration Projects** - Finding project examples to communicate vision and set guiding standard / benchmark
- **Key Principles** - Establishing guiding principles and applying these to develop Principles Plan
- **Place Vision Workshop Process** - Run focus workshop to present project vision to key stakeholders and gather feedback

'SHAPE' THE VISION

PLACE VISION PROCESS

IDENTIFYING THE VISION + KEY THEMES

Creating a shared vision that provides a clear, practical and inspiring direction for the project and can be used to guide the ongoing design and decision making process....

2

PLACE VISION

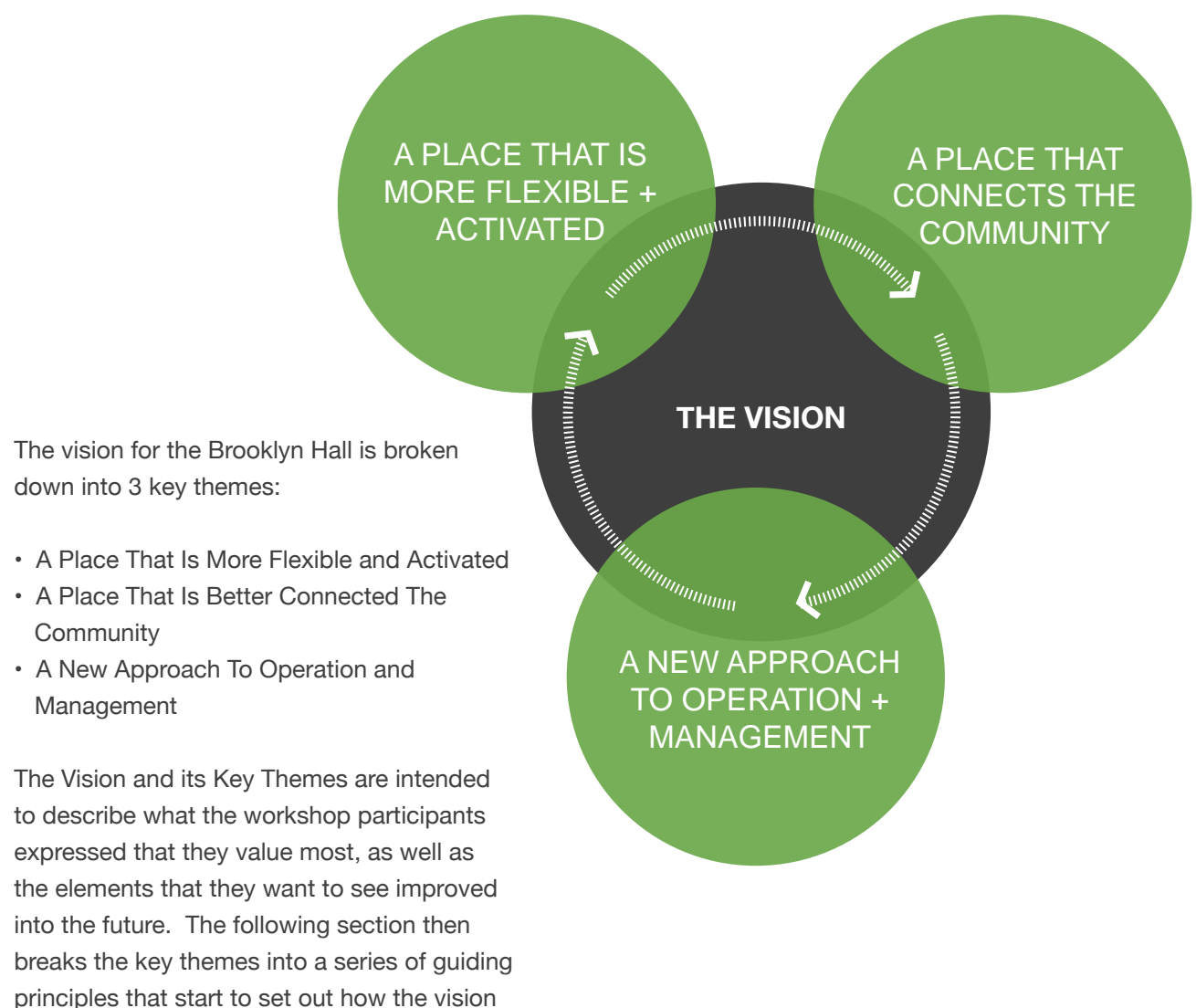
Vision Statement

The Brooklyn Community Hall will be the 'living room' and 'heart' of the local community into the future.

It will be a multi-use space that can cater for the diverse range of activities and uses that are needed by the community, but also a place that feels welcoming and relaxed and where local residents can 'drop-by', meet and catch-up. It will embrace and open-out onto its park setting, be a hub that promotes local connection and creativity, and place that is easily accessible to the local community by walking, cycling and active transport.

PLACE VISION PROCESS

IDENTIFYING THE VISION + KEY THEMES



A PLACE THAT IS
MORE FLEXIBLE +
ACTIVATED

What new uses and
activities do you think
could be incorporated into
the hall....

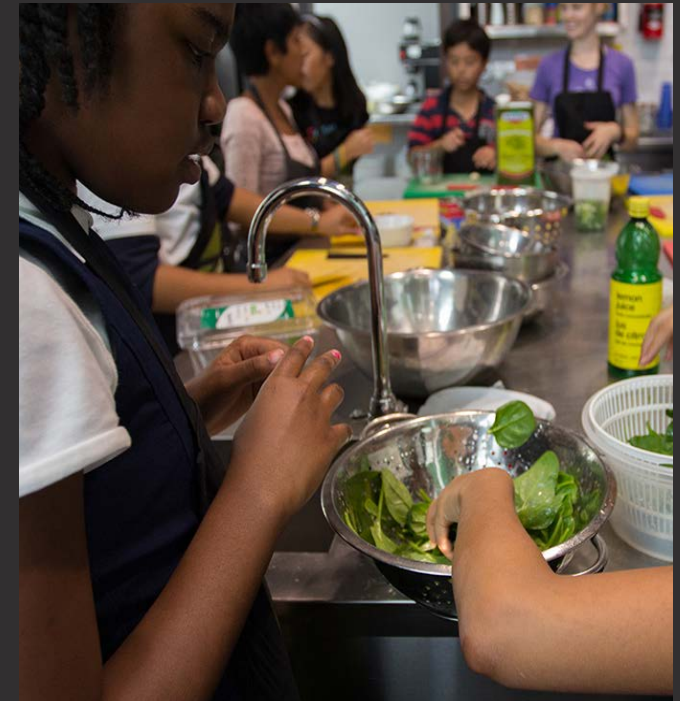
and how could it be best
designed to maximise its
usability and flexibility?

KEY THEMES + GUIDING PRINCIPLES



A PLACE THAT IS
MORE FLEXIBLE +
ACTIVATED

KEY THEMES + GUIDING PRINCIPLES



ADAPTING TO CHANGE

A space that can be reconfigured to accommodate different uses and activities and can continue to be adapted over time in response to changing community needs

BALANCE FLEXIBILITY + USEABILITY

Making sure that adaptability and flexibility is central to the design - but also need to ensure that this is not at the cost of usability or specific functions. There will always be a trade-off, but balance is the key.

MORE TO DO

More than just a hall - creating a more useable and flexible space that promotes a greater variety of uses and activities and encourages different people to use the space and interact (workshops, exhibitions, promoting local ideas and initiatives)

A PLACE THAT
CONNECTS THE
COMMUNITY

KEY THEMES + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

How could the hall could
best be designed to
improve its connection to
the outside.....

and to make it more
accessible, usable and
connected to the local
community?



A PLACE THAT
CONNECTS THE
COMMUNITY

KEY THEMES + GUIDING PRINCIPLES



ITS ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The design and space is only part of the experience - the way we attract local people and new activities is what will bring the Brooklyn Hall to life

MORE WELCOMING

Creating a space that is more human, relaxed and welcoming and is more comfortable for people to people stay and interact - and it can sometimes just be the simple things (greenery, comfortable seats, music and natural materials) and the way we connect inside and outdoors

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Understanding the fundamentals needed in terms of safety, access and privacy etc - but then removing fencing and unnecessary barriers and looking for new spaces and ways to make the facility feel more open and accessible to the community

A NEW APPROACH
TO OPERATION +
MANAGEMENT

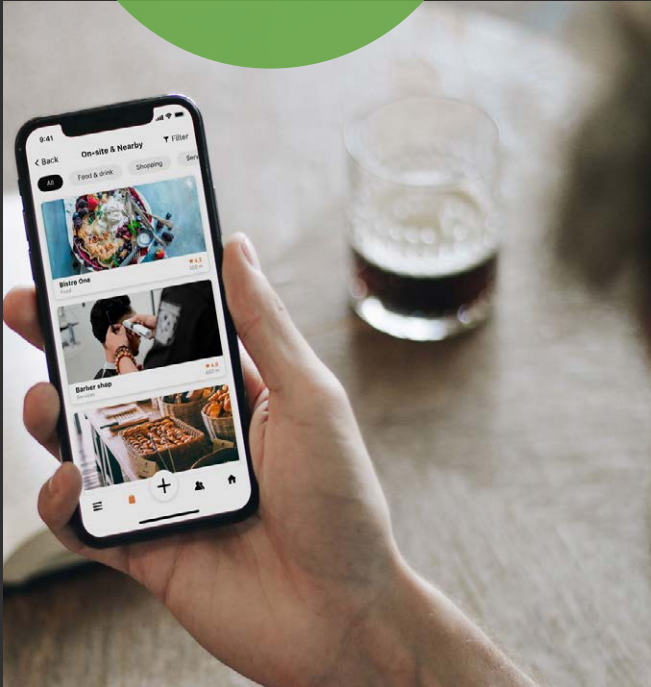
KEY THEMES + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

How could the hall
could be managed or
operated to improve its
accessibility, activation
and usability for the local
community?



3
THEME

A NEW APPROACH TO OPERATION + MANAGEMENT



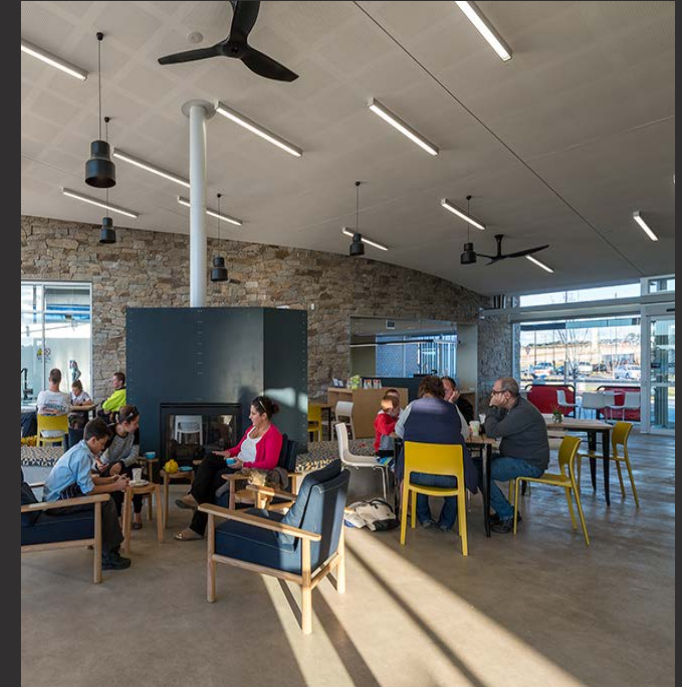
A NEW WAY OF DOING THINGS

Potential to move away from regular operation and management approaches - opportunity for Brooklyn Hall to be a pilot / test project where we look for new technologies and models that will allow the facility to be used in different ways



BREAKING IT DOWN

Looking for opportunities for the facility to be broken down or zoned off to allow different uses and access at different times of the day



THE LOCAL 'LIVING ROOM'

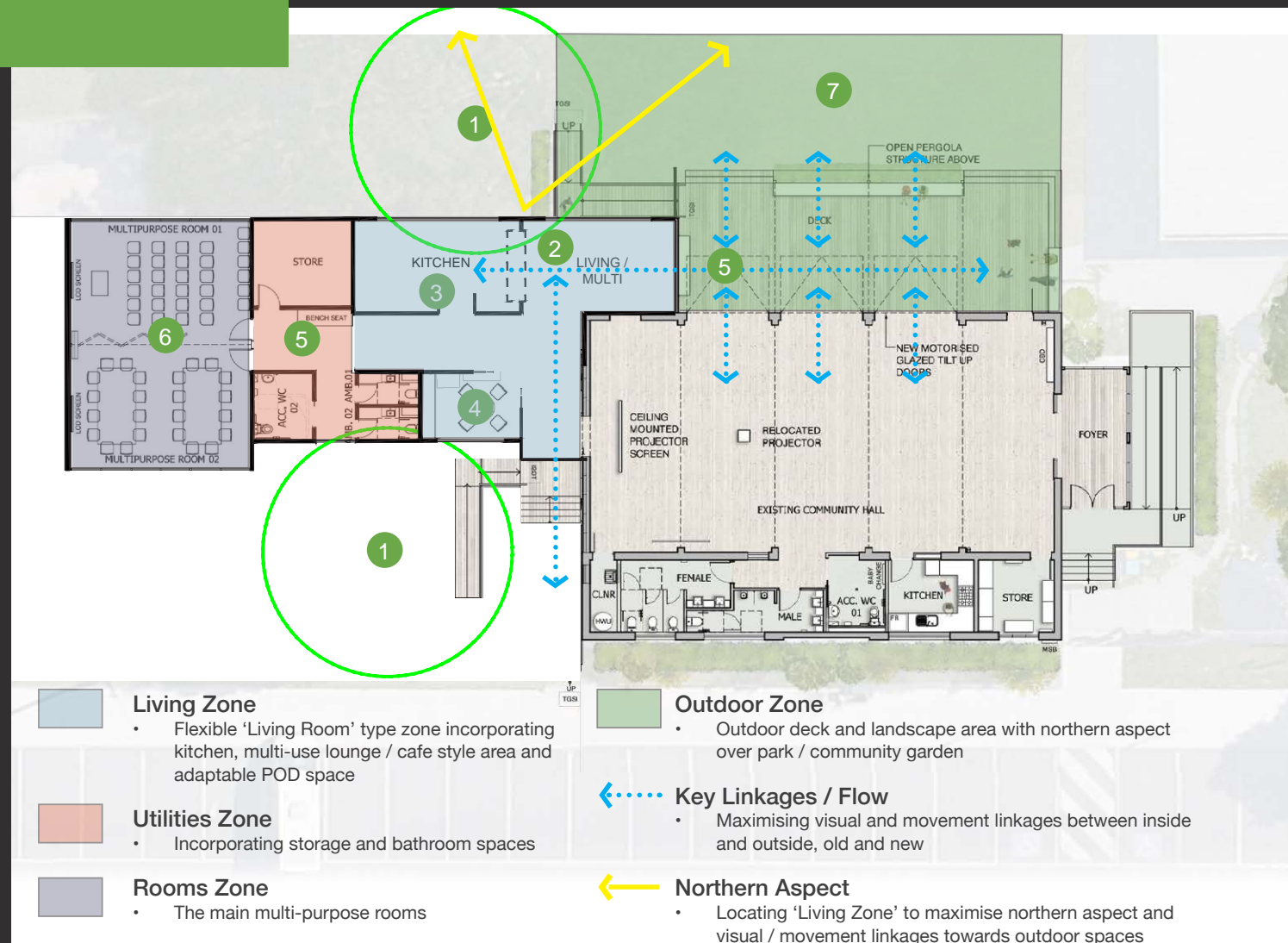
Is there a way that local residents could access parts of the facility at different times to use in more informal ways - to create the feel of it being a 'living room' or '3rd place' for the local neighbourhood

This Principle Plan was generated to show how some of the key elements could be re-arranged to reflect the key ideas and principles that emerged through the visioning process and to allow the SRG to provide feedback.

It is important to note that it is a principles plan only, that is intended to represent the spatial relationship of elements rather than providing a detailed design solution.

PRINCIPLES PLAN

- 1 Investigate feasibility of shifting new building extension slightly to the north to retain two large existing trees - subject to arborist assessment of trees and cost / design feasibility
- 2 Kitchen and living / multi-use space introduced as informal / flexible 'living room' and meeting place - positioned to provide northern aspect and direct link to deck / outdoor spaces
- 3 Kitchen positioned to have closer relationship to main hall - providing the potential for catering for functions. Operational requirements and use / interface to living / multi space to be refined as part of ongoing design
- 4 Smaller POD located as part of 'Living Zone' - but to have flexibility to open-out / close-off as required
- 5 Layout to maximise visual and movement linkages between inside and outside areas, and between the old and new parts of the hall
- 6 Location and sizing of main multi-purpose rooms generally supported - detailed design to focus on optimising balance between flexibility of use and functionality
- 7 Ongoing design to focus on integrating design of outdoor zone and kitchen garden with kitchen and living zone



PLACE VISIONING WORKSHOP - FEEDBACK + ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The Vision and Principles Plan was presented to the SRG at the Visioning Workshop held on the 14th July 2021.

The Vision, Key Principles and Principles Plan were generally supported by the SRG and should be viewed as representing the preferred direction and design framework for the project - to be refined as part of the ongoing consultation, detailed design and feasibility process.

The key issues / comments listed on this page are those that were identified as needing to be further investigated and addressed.

PRINCIPLES PLAN - KEY ISSUES + COMMENTS

Existing Trees

General support for trying to retain the 2 large trees on site as proposed by the Principles Plan - subject to design constraints, cost and feasibility

Kitchen and Living / Multi Space

Majority support for proposed location and arrangement of the kitchen and living / multi space but detailed design needs to investigate and address:

- Service / circulation / door arrangements to allow catering for functions in main hall
- Kitchen design to maximise flexibility for different uses / purposes

Multi-Purpose Rooms

Ongoing design to provide more details and explanation of room dimensions, sizes and functional options for different uses

Toilets

Further confirmation of toilet requirements and functionality to be provided - are all the toilets required, do we need a separate family room or a space to breastfeed etc.

Storage

More investigation / confirmation required regarding likely storage requirements and capacities to ensure functionality of hall

Maternal Child Health

Comments noted regarding need / desire to provide a space to accommodate Maternal Child Health Services - demand / requirements / options to be investigated further as part of ongoing design. Budget increase in cost of approx. 25% from what we have allocated. Very difficult to expand the footprint on the size of the building.

Car Parking

Car parking was again identified as a key issue - with comments made that the existing capacity is already under pressure and concern that the proposed extension will cause further issues and impact on surrounding residents. General agreement amongst the SRG that parking should not dictate the design of the facility - but rather that the preferred approach is that the facility be designed to best meet the needs and desires of the community and parking / traffic be managed.

Council noted that once the design is complete, a traffic impact assessment will be undertaken to see what we can do to mitigate the increased in parking - but noted this as a key issue to be addressed.



STEP 3 - 'MAKING' IT HAPPEN

NEXT STEPS + ONGOING CONSULTATION



NEXT STEPS

The vision and principles outlined in this document provide a preferred direction and guiding framework for the redesign of the Brooklyn Community Hall based upon the input provided by the Stakeholder Reference Group and the outcomes of the visioning and workshop process. But this is just a first step, and this document will now form the basis of an on-going community consultation and design process.

It is also important to note that the vision and principles established through this process are not intended to limit the potential for investigation of other ideas and opportunities that emerge as part of the ongoing consultation and design process.

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY HALL

This project is delivered by

HOBSON'S
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COUNCIL



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