



BROKEN HILL CULTURAL FRAMEWORK AND SYNOPSIS REPORT

NEESON MURCUTT ARCHITECTS PTY LTD

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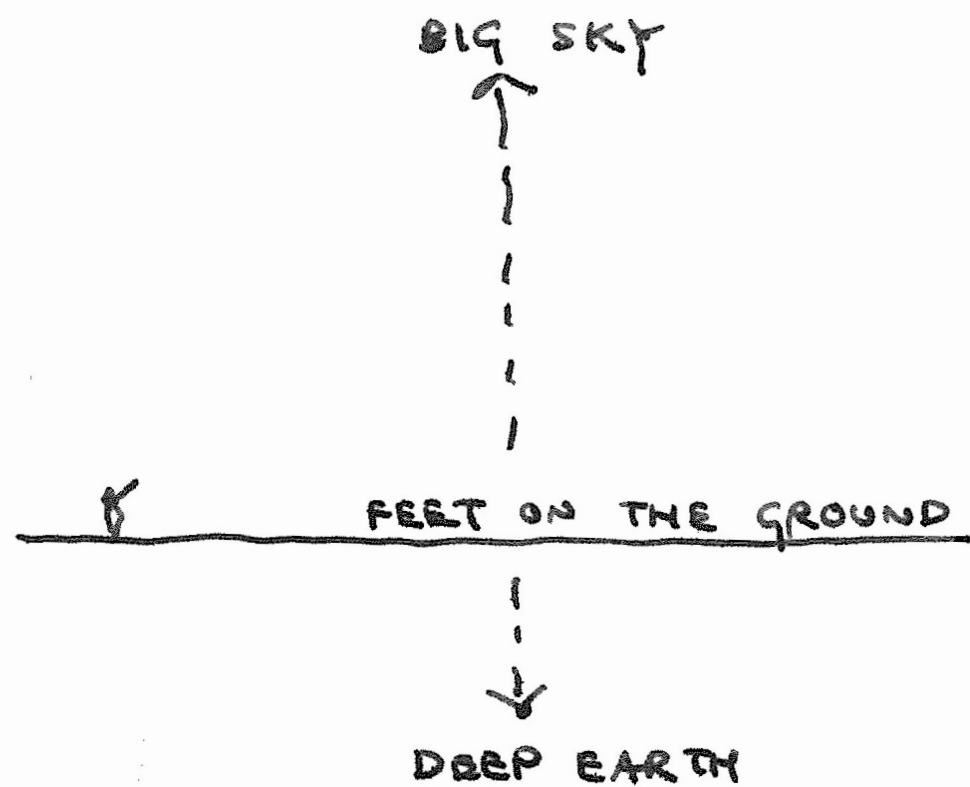
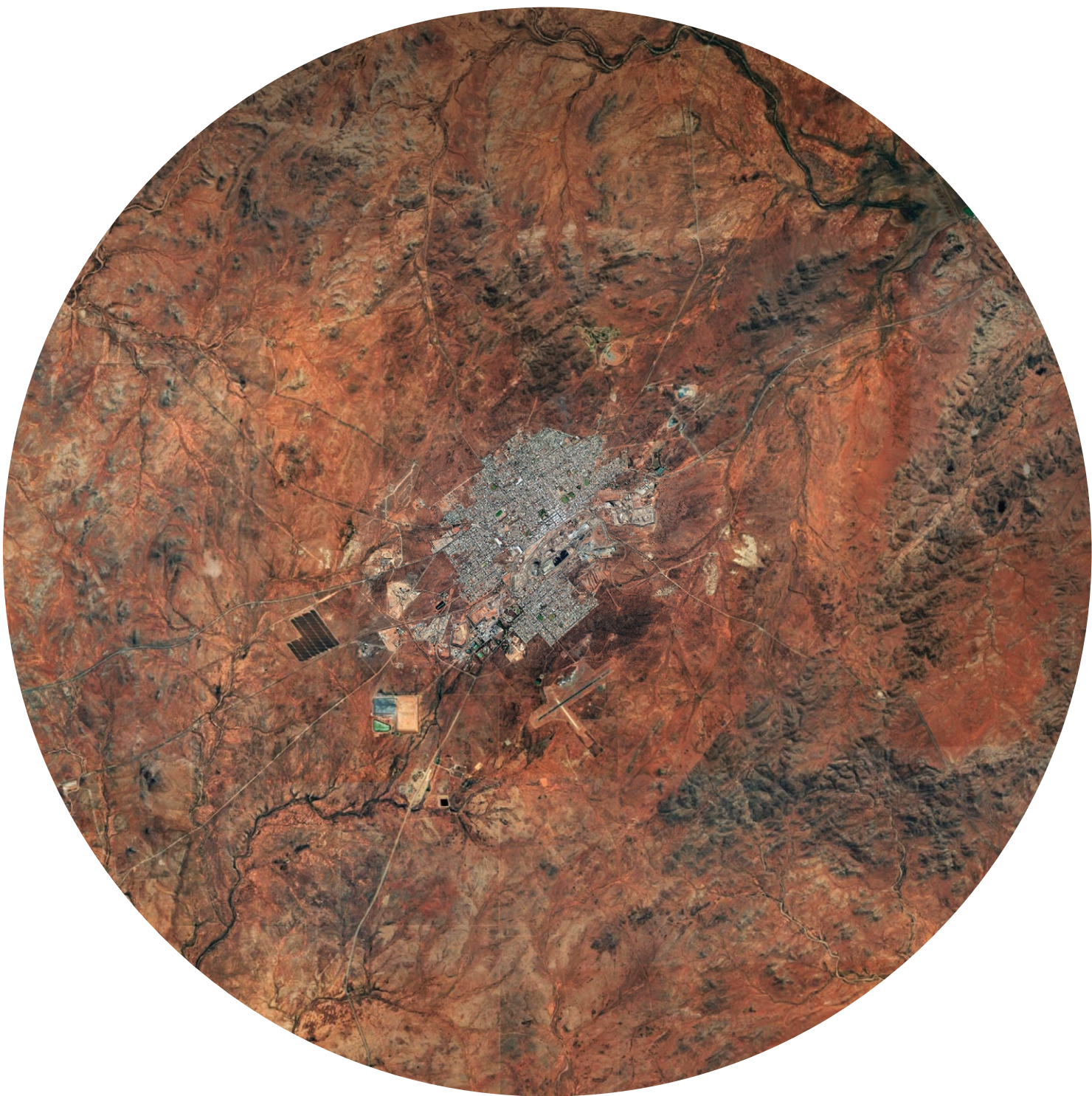


TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4	6.0 THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY		APPENDICES	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	5	6.1 The Role Of The Library In Creating A Cultural Mix For Broken Hill	37	APPENDIX A	Precedents
2.0 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT		7.0 KEY MOVES		APPENDIX B	Study diagrams
2.1 Summary of Engagement	8	7.1 Early directions for the library	40	APPENDIX C	Sue Barnsley Design Report
2.2 Key insights	9	7.2 Movement + Transport strategy	41	APPENDIX D	ARUP Movement Report
3.0 SUMMARY OF SITE INVESTIGATION		7.3 Spatial strategies	42	APPENDIX E	Stakeholder Engagement List
Urban observations		7.4 Climate + Sustainability	46	APPENDIX F	Engagement Discussion Guide
3.1 Climate/ Heritage City	14	7.5 Landscape	47		
3.2 Destinations	15	7.6 Public Art Strategies	50		
3.3 City Centre destinations	16	8.0 SPIN OFF STRATEGIES			
3.4 Potential connections	18	8.1 Overview	52		
3.5 Axis, Public Rooms + Spaces	19	8.2 Landscape	53		
3.6 Movement	20	9.0 NEXT STEPS Where to from here?	56		
3.7 Landscape	22				
3.8 Public Art	24				
3.9 Site-specific observations	25				
4.0 VISION - THE BIG PICTURE					
4.1 Vision - The Big Picture	27				
5.0 BROKEN HILL'S CULTURAL FRAMEWORK: IDENTIFYING CULTURAL PRIORITIES					
5.1 Towards a Cultural Plan + The rationale for cultural nvestment	29				
5.2 Cultural priorities	30				
5.3 Cultural Precinct Mix	31				
5.4 Personas	32				
5.5 Benchmarking	34				

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This report contains the findings from our team's extensive investigations and consultation to inform the Broken Hill Community Hub/Library Project.

Firstly, the report establishes the insights from the stakeholder engagement focusing on three key areas:

1. What is culture in Broken Hill?
2. What is the future of Argent Street and the Cultural Precinct?
3. What is your vision for the Community Hub/Library?

From the consultation, a number of insights and findings were established. These set up the parameters for how the design team understands the cultural landscape within which this project will insert itself as well as how this project will impact the Cultural Precinct and bolster the heritage character of the city. Finally, these insights shed light on the operational and programming imperatives for the Community Hub/Library, all of which are foundational to our approach to this project.

The insights can be summarised as:

- There is no one definition of culture in Broken Hill, different audience have different expectations;
- While culture is hard to define, cultural assets including the city's heritage assets protected by its national Heritage Listing, are visible and recognised;
- There is a sense of a Cultural and Civic Precinct on Argent Street but there is not a critical mass of activity there to establish it as the true city centre;
- The new library belongs behind the Town Hall façade, many layers of consultation have confirmed this;
- This must be a library model from Broken Hill, not from away;
- The library and the archive must be part of the same operation, they are two sides of one coin;
- We want to be ambitious but also realistic. This project is about being resourceful to achieve a great outcome.
- Co-location of services must not come at the expense of accessibility and quality of experience of the library and archive;
- The label 'library' may not fit the bill....
- There is a strong argument to target youth through the programming and design of the new library spaces.

Our site investigations have helped understand the spatial and operational parameters of the site and make urban-scale suggestions for how to best concentrate destinational uses in the city centre.

The team has also identified a number of spin off strategies for Council to consider that would continue to bolster the Cultural Precinct.

A Community Hub and Cultural Plan/Framework informing the future development of the City with the Library and Community Hub as part of a Cultural Precinct, is the number one priority project. This body of research will inform spatial decision-making around a co-located, integrated approach to multi-service delivery inclusive of parking, walking, cycling and public transport. It will include recommendations and actions to realise cultural priorities, Council-managed co-located spaces, and methods/ modeling of real transport options to better meet resident demand and preferences.

- Broken Hill Council, Request for Tender: Broken Hill Library, Community Hub and Cultural Project, May 2018.

This report has been developed as part of the Broken Hill Library, Community Hub and Cultural Project commissioned by Broken Hill City Council. Neeson Murcutt Architects (NMA) are leading a team of consultants who have been reviewing a variety of inputs including site conditions, past reports and feasibilities, stakeholder engagement to inform this report and to inform the Concept Design phase of this project. This synopsis report summarises and presents the key findings of the team's activities to date.

The consortium led by NMA includes: Arup (ESD and traffic) Barbara Flynn (art advisor), Left Bank Co (stakeholder engagement and cultural planning), Sue Barnsley Design (landscape architecture), MAAT (signage), and Funktion (accessibility).

As a starting point, it is important to revisit the brief for the project and ensure that we're aligned with the original ambition for the project. The brief issued by Council in May 2018 describes the purpose as two-fold. Firstly, it is about setting out the Cultural Priorities for Broken Hill and secondly, ensuring that any proposed changes to the Library and the Cultural Precinct on Argent Street are responding to a clear and well articulated framework.

Inherent in the brief is the ambition to use the Cultural Framework as the basis to justify and substantiate spatial and operational moves for the Library itself as well as for the Cultural Precinct located in Argent Street. It is therefore important that this report and its contents is endorsed by the Project Team and Council, as it will form the foundation to many design moves and suggestions from this point onwards in the project.

The team have adopted an evidence-based approach for all recommendations on this project, using either benchmarks, evidence from the consultation and site visits to underpin key decisions. This report includes the evidence we believe is required to progress this project on solid ground.

Culture can be defined as ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people, place or society. Therefore the culture of Broken Hill is a collection of ideas that guide and nurture this unique community.

2.0 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

2.1 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH	CULTURAL PRIORITIES AND ARTISTIC DIRECTION	KEY INSIGHTS
<p>Our approach to engagement for this project has been to recognise the variety of previous engagement processes that had taken place and to ensure that we're building on these past efforts rather than duplicating them. It is important to note that Community Engagement was excluded from our scope as such engagement for the library has already been undertaken by Council in recent months. This Cultural Framework and Synopsis Report will be on exhibition for the public to comment on.</p> <p>Based on the data shared by Council, we are aware of a few previous engagement efforts which we have reviewed and incorporated into our thinking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Cultural Infrastructure Program Management Office (CIPMO) Cultural Infrastructure Plan sector and community engagement (late 2017);2. Library community workshops conducted by Council throughout November 2017.3. The engagement undertaken to prepare the Community Strategic Plan 2033 which was released in 2017. <p>The stakeholder engagement related to this project has involved a number of community, business and cultural leaders. The interviews took place during the team's visit to Broken Hill November 5-7, 2018. A full list of people interviewed is available in Appendix E and the discussion guide used to frame the discussion is in Appendix F of this report.</p>	<p>Two engagement streams were established: one to ascertain the cultural priorities of Broken Hill, the other to discuss the role art can play in Broken Hill and various approaches to incorporating art into this project and the city more broadly. Whilst the two streams are inter-related, one is focused on the big picture and on building on existing cultural pillars of Broken Hill, the other on understanding the visual arts landscape and possible partnerships and relationships to bolster that.</p> <p>This report includes the findings from both streams to ensure that the thinking is integrated and complementary.</p>	<p>As a result of the stakeholder engagement undertaken in Broken Hill and through a handful of follow-up calls, we have been able to identify areas where there is general agreement amongst those interviews or what conclusion we can draw from the range of responses we have gathered.</p> <p>Establishing these insights allows us to build the cultural, spatial and operational hypothesis for the project that are explored in further detail in the later sections of this report.</p> <p>Broadly speaking, the interviews focused on 3 main lines of enquiry:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What does culture mean for Broken Hill?2. What is the future of Argent Street and the Cultural Precinct?3. What is your vision for the Community Hub and Library? <p>We know we haven't had time to speak to everyone and will continue to engage with people as they are available throughout the project.</p>

WHAT DOES CULTURE MEAN IN BROKEN HILL?

INSIGHT 01

There is a diverse understanding of Culture in Broken Hill.

Culture in Broken Hill means different things depending on whom you ask. Through our consultation, we have identified four distinct audience groups for culture in Broken Hill:

- the Broken Hill born and bred;
- the 'long-term residents' - people who weren't born in Broken Hill but have been there for a long time;
- the people from away (people who live here but only for a short while and then leave again);
- Tourists (people who never had the intention of staying, just here for the experience).

Each of these groups' understanding of culture and its value to the life of Broken Hill is quite distinct. For the people from Broken Hill and 'long timers', it's about community and inclusivity, places to be and connect with others, and can include a wide range of venues, some of which would not be considered cultural venues per se (Demo Club, RSL, various hotels, public spaces, etc.) There is also a recognition of the landscape, the earth and the sky as part of the place's culture.

But people from away have imported other ideas about culture and have created an audience and a market for what we more traditionally accept as cultural activities such as gallery openings, performances, music gigs, etc.

There is a sense that culture is being eroded over time and by the educational focus on certain pathways in vocational education and that it will not be passed on to future generations.

Tourists are intrigued and attracted to the distinctiveness of cultural products coming out of Broken Hill such as paintings depicting the vastness of the landscape and other desert and outback themes as well Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, screen culture, mining history and mineralogical collections.

INSIGHT 02

While 'culture' is hard to define, cultural assets including the city's built heritage assets protected by its national heritage listing, are visible and recognised.

Broken Hill is a proud community with many unique cultural assets appreciated by locals and visitors. In our consultation, a few of these assets were mentioned over and over. Whilst this list is not exhaustive, it helps us build a picture of the cultural distinctiveness of this place and how a cultural framework might reflect this distinctiveness.

Existing cultural assets of Broken Hill include:

- Community of artists (as opposed to artistic community) with a focus on visual arts
- Pride in history and origins (geological history, heritage status of the city, history of the mine, urban layout, architecture)
- Unique heritage status of covering the whole of Broken Hill
- Resilient and strong people (history of labour movement, strong women, trade unions, early multicultural community, etc.)
- The landscape and the desert (big sky, deep earth and feet on the ground)
- Film and screen culture (including the celebration of well-recognised characters and sub cultures that have emerged from film over time, locations, spin off festivals, etc.)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through the arts (as exemplified through the work of Aboriginal elder Badger Bates and other local artists, exhibited at West Darling Arts and Broken Hill Art Gallery).

What these insights tell us in terms of defining culture is that we're not going to be successful by trying to define a single cultural narrative for Broken Hill. The diversity of the population and the culture that influences all these diverse parts means that access and participation are key ingredients necessary to continue to reveal this culture and engage the community in cultural practice.

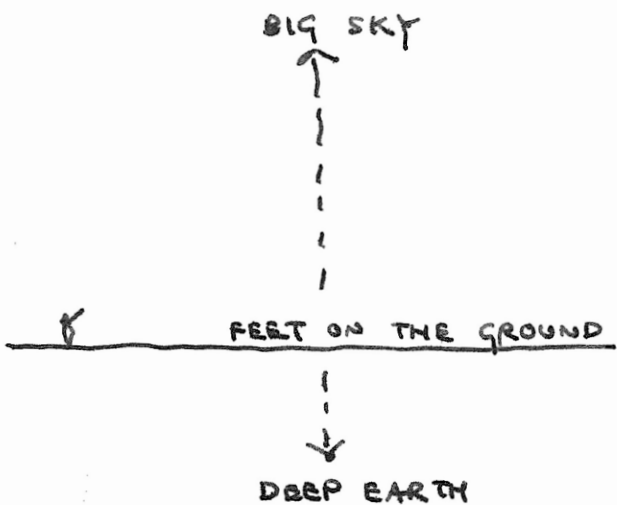
INSIGHT 03

There is a sense of a Cultural and Civic Precinct on Argent Street but currently there is not a critical mass of activity there to establish it as the true city centre.

There is appetite for the clustering of cultural activities in Cultural and Civic Precinct (surrounding our site) on Argent Street but there are three main concerns with this:

- The perception of increased traffic congestion and an associated reduction in accessibility to the precinct as a result of this;
- The belief that co-location is a good idea operationally but that Argent Street would suffer from having too much in one spot rather than creating destination points all along the street; and
- Should concentrating cultural uses in this part of city result in putting multiple uses (i.e more than the library and the archive) under one roof, what impact will this have on vacancies (which are already high) along Argent Street.

Generally people are supportive of the idea, especially of co-locating library and archive but have concerns over whether Broken Hill is a big enough city to take a 'concentrated' city centre approach. Moving forward, the team will consider the cultural mixes through two lenses - what is best for the Community Hub / Library and what is best for the city centre. The successful option will balance benefits at these two scales.



WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF ARGENT STREET AND THE CULTURAL PRECINCT?

2.2 KEY INSIGHTS

INSIGHT 04

The new library belongs behind the Town Hall façade.

There is a huge amount of support for placing the heart of this cultural precinct behind the Town Hall façade for a variety of reasons including the celebration of heritage and the re-establishment of the civic character of this part of Argent Street. This was suggested during our consultation and was already established through the library community engagement that the Council ran.

Anecdotal reports suggest that there is a fair amount of interest in the architecture and idiosyncratic features of the Town Hall facade (i.e. the gargoyles) but that few understand its past or current use as a one-room-deep building.

Our engagement therefore confirms that there is support for using this project as a an opportunity to strengthen the cultural and civic heart in this location, leveraging the architectural significance of the Town Hall façade.

INSIGHT 05

The library and the archive must be part of the same operation. They are two sides of one coin.

There is strong support and evidence to justify co-locating the archive and the library from an operational and staffing perspective. Despite previous explorations of various sites for the archive to be moved into a purpose-built facility, there is a strong operational and staffing argument for keeping the library and the archive co-located:

- archivists and librarians have a similar skill set;
- being in the same building (or complex) gives additional flexibility in terms of the use of that staff across a number of operations; and
- the archive needs to have a public face to in order include it.

INSIGHT 06

This must be a library model from here, not from away.

We need to create a library that reflects Broken Hill, its culture but also the diverse needs of its population and design a unique model around those requirements rather than importing a model from elsewhere. The desire to create something from Broken Hill is driven by:

- Using this opportunity to create a cultural asset that is culturally appropriate and reflects the uniqueness of this place;
- Using the evolution of what libraries are in the digital age to develop a set of spaces and programs that suit our needs and fit within our unique constraints;
- The requirement to reflect landscape, remoteness, history, heritage and other contextual cues through the architecture and approach to the planning of the building.

INSIGHT 07

We want to be ambitious but also realistic. This project is about being resourceful to achieve a great outcome.

Whilst the ambition for this new/revived facility is great and appropriate according to stakeholders and the community, the vision must be tempered by a deep understanding of Council's operational and budget constraints. In a community with such a small number of ratepayers, there is no scope to increase the operational impost of this critical cultural and community facility:

- The new library must be able to manage with the same staff ratios as the current library despite a possibly larger footprint and the introduction of new services; and
- The operational model must not come to overly rely on a willing cohort of volunteers who give their own time to make this facility a success.

WHAT IS
THE VISION
FOR THE
COMMUNITY
HUB AND
LIBRARY?

INSIGHT 08

Co-location of services must not come at the expense of accessibility and quality of experience of the library and archive.

Co-locating services in the same building above and beyond the library and the archive can and should be explored (including Council services, Service NSW, Visitor Centre, business hub, community meeting rooms) but the spatial and operational dimensions of this must be fully understood and documented before it is committed to (including parking but also legibility of space, staff knowledge, hours of operation, after hours access, etc.)

The priority must be on the library experience and its interface with the archive, not on additional services that could cloud the purpose of the building and confuse the public.

INSIGHT 10

Does the label 'library' fit the bill?

Because the type of Community Hub and Library we're going to be designing and building will be as unique as Broken Hill and reflect this unique identity through a constellation of uses, services, neighbours, the suggestion has been made to think about an alternative name that expands on what the library does well but also describes well what this facility will do above and beyond what the current facility offers.

In conclusion, the vision for the Community Hub and Library is emerging into a culturally responsive yet socially strengthening asset to the community. It will need to focus on youth.

INSIGHT 09

There is a strong argument to target youth through the programming and design of the new library spaces.

Whilst the library in its current form has its loyal and avid users, youth was mentioned many times in our consultation as a vulnerable population who stand to benefit tremendously from this type of facility including the recreational and educational outcomes they could get from it. A successful youth-oriented library would have to address:

- The common perception that the library is a place to study, not a place to have fun;
- The role libraries can play in content creation, engagement with other communities of interest online and developing digital skills at an early age;
- The use of library spaces to explore creativity and its social, cultural and educational benefits, especially for this cohort;
- Ticking off a variety of educational outcomes (literacy, numeracy, storytelling, etc.)

3.0 SUMMARY OF SITE INVESTIGATIONS

3.1 URBAN OBSERVATIONS



Image: Courtesy Mining and Minerals Museum Broken Hill

HERITAGE CITY

Broken Hill's unique status on the National Heritage List as the first heritage listed city is a reflection of its deep natural and cultural values. Cradled within the Barrier Ranges one tries to fathom 60,000 plus years of Willyakali in this place. Australia's 'mineral rainforest', Broken Hill is a true phenomenon. Its place in our national evolution, both economically and socially, is unique. It is both the city's 60 year mining boom, and its 60 year slowdown that has helped attain its heritage status. So much of the city's built fabric is remnant and intact, as a by-product of a depopulating city, from gracious civic buildings to the multitude of 'tinnies'.

The National Heritage Listing of Broken Hill will protect for the future. It is good for community spirit, good for place- image, good for tourism, and potentially be good for local investment and funding. The Broken Hill Cultural Precinct can tap this potential to help make the city a more lively place for residents and visitors, and sustain it is an important regional service centre.



Outline denotes National Heritage Listing for Broken Hill

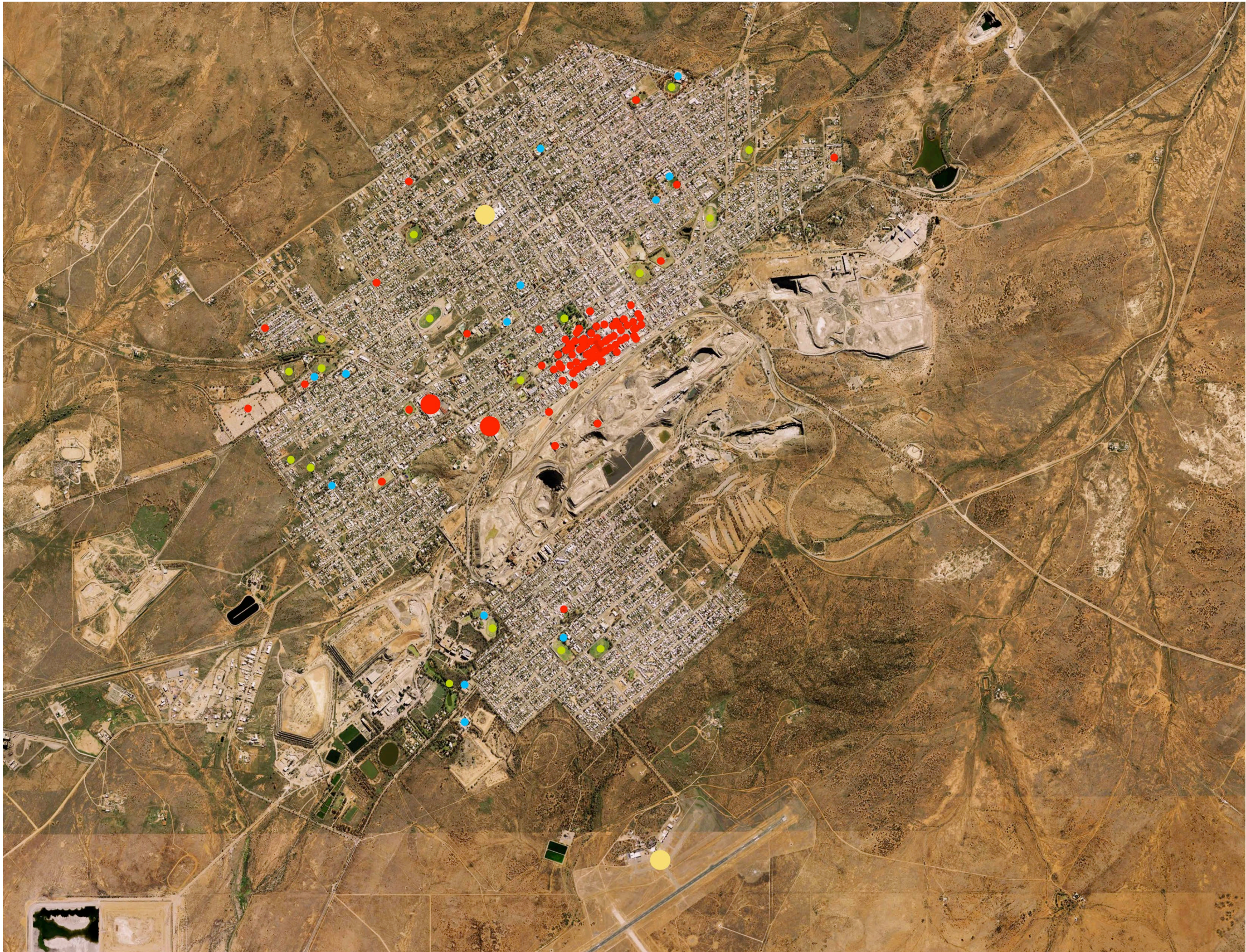
CLIMATE

Broken Hill lies within the NSW arid zone with a hot desert climate. It has a large diurnal temperature range with extremes of heat and cold, high impact rain events, and evaporation that generally outstrips precipitation. Added to this are frequent strong winds, dust storms and high lead levels, creating a need to filter and shelter the weather conditions.

Broken Hill has evolved over time to adapt to and mediate this climate, with built shadow spaces created by wide street verandahs, high kerbs to ensure dry footpaths in flash floods, and the impressive establishment of the regeneration area in the 1930s as a means of reducing the impact of dust storms at a whole-of-the city scale. Capitalising on the vast sun and wind supply, the city has more recently embraced renewable energy, no doubt the path of the future.

Harnessing this renewable energy, the challenge to the new Cultural Precinct is in combining climate intelligent planning and envelope design, passive and efficient active control systems, and the question of how to make useful comfortable outdoor spaces.

3.2 URBAN OBSERVATIONS



Aerial Source: Near Maps

DESTINATIONS

Broken Hill has a population of 17,814 (2016 census). Broken Hill has a predominantly ageing population for which a compact city with a close concentration of accessible facilities and services is well suited. The 2016 census showed that the population of 17,814 was down 4.2% from 2011, with a significant out-migration of youth (ages 12-18 and 18-24). This supports the consultation feedback that there is a need in the Cultural Precinct to focus on youth.

The urban footprint of Broken Hill is clearly visible within the desert landscape. Looking within this footprint we see that most of the activity is located north-west of the Line of Lode.

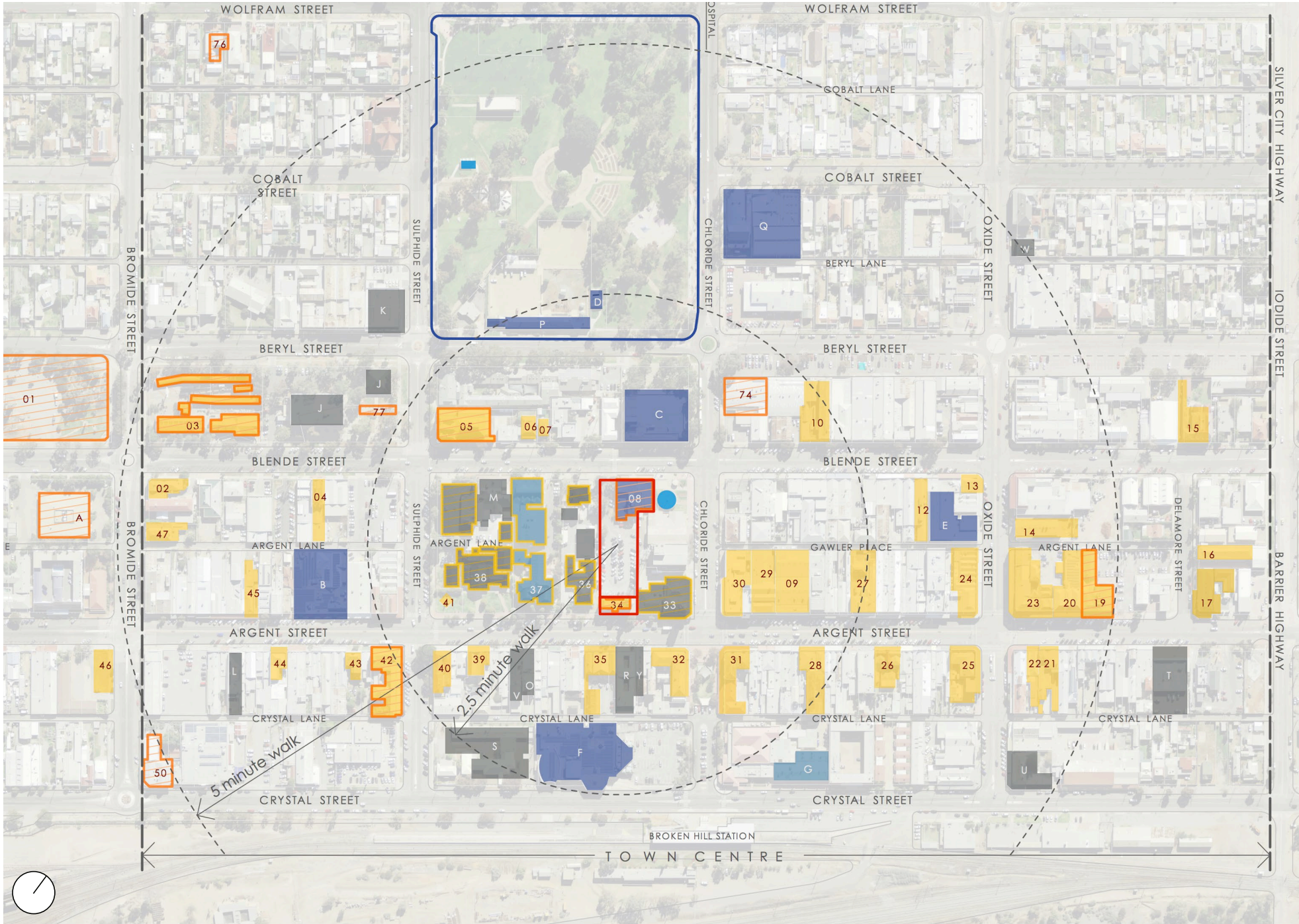
Key observations:

- The Argent Street precinct hosts a large number of the city's community and tourist destinations. It remains the heart of Broken Hill despite the significant draw of the newer supermarkets at Westside Plaza and Broken Hill Village Shopping Centre, that are supported by large shaded carparks.
- Airports are gateways, particularly for remote centres like Broken Hill.
- Broken Hill Hospital is a medium-scaled regional and teaching hospital. Located on axis with Sturt Park it is a significant city facility.
- Schools continue to be important community destinations, and are supported by local bus and cycle routes.
- Patton Village in South Broken Hill is a tiny commercial centre with few daily support services. South Broken Hill is challenged by its position south of the Line of Lode.

- DESTINATIONS
- GREEN SPACE
- SCHOOL
- HOSPITAL + AIRPORT
- SHOPPING CENTRE

3.3 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

CITY CENTRE DESTINATIONS



- site
- visitor attractions
 - A BROKEN HILL VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE
 - 01 KINTORE RESERVE/LION'S ROTARY PARK
 - 03 SULPHIDE ST RAILWAY STATION - 1905
 - 05 TRADES HALL - 1898/1904
 - 08 CHARLES RASP MEMORIAL LIBRARY
 - 19 BROKEN HILL REGIONAL ART GALLERY/ SULLY'S EMPORIUM - 1885/1898
 - 34 TOWN HALL FACADE - 1891
 - 42 PALACE HOTEL - 1889
 - 50 ALBERT KERSTEN MINING + MINERALS MUSEUM
 - 74 SILVER CITY ART CENTRE + MINT
 - 76 SYNAGOGUE OF THE OUTBACK MUSEUM
 - 77 SYNDICATE OF SEVEN BUSTS
- heritage walk attractions
 - 06 HOUSE - c.1890
 - 07 AMA BAND HALL - 1914
 - 09 FELLEW AND MOORE
 - 10 SABEY AND CO. - c.1910
 - 12 YWCA - c.1900
 - 13 SHOPS - c.1885
 - 14 MASONIC CLUB - 1903
 - 15 CENTENNIAL HOTEL - 1888
 - 16 WAREHOUSE - 1890
 - 17 SILVER KING HOTEL - c.1890
 - 18 SHOPS c.1890 (demolished?)
 - 20 SILVER CITY WORKINGMEN'S CLUB - 1901
 - 21 KIDMAN BUILDING - c.1888
 - 22 SHOPS - c.1885/ RSL OF AUSTRALIA
 - 23 WEST DARLING HOTEL - 1891
 - 24 MARTINS STORE - c.1905
 - 25 ASTRA HOTEL - 1891
 - 26 TATTERSALL HOUSE - 1892
 - 27 FORMER ROYAL HOTEL - 1889
 - 28 THEATRE ROYAL HOTEL - 1889
 - 29 EXCHANGE ARCADE - 1889
 - 30 ROYAL EXCHANGE HOTEL - 1941
 - 31 WENDTS BUILDING - 1889
 - 32 GRAND HOTEL - 1888
 - 33 POST OFFICE - 1892
 - 34 TOWN HALL FACADE - 1891
 - 35 PIRIE BUILDING - 1891
- local attractions
 - B THE DEMO CLUB + THYME
 - C BROKEN HILL CIVIC CENTRE
 - D BRIDGE CLUB ROOM
 - P BROKEN HILL COMMUNITY INC
 - E SILVER CITY CINEMA
 - F BROKEN HILL MUSICIAN'S CLUB
 - Q YMCA
- public amenities
 - 36 CENTRAL POLICE STATION - 1890
 - 37 TECHNICAL COLLEGE - 1900
 - 38 COURT HOUSE - 1889
 - 39 CARRINGTON HOUSE - 1888
 - 40 ARGENT HOUSE - 1888
 - 41 WAR MEMORIAL - 1925
 - 42 PALACE HOTEL - 1889
 - 43 COTTONS BUILDING - 1889
 - 44 FORMER PETERS HOTEL - c.1895
 - 45 SHOP - c.1895 **
 - 46 SILVER SPADE HOTEL - 1888/ ARGENT MOTEL
 - 47 ANT HILL GALLERY - 1900/ WILLYAMA VISUAL ARTS CO-OP CENTRE
- educational facilities
 - G COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE
 - H BROKEN HILL HIGH SCHOOL
 - I TAFE WESTERN - BROKEN HILL ANNEXE
 - 37 TAFE WESTERN - BROKEN HILL
- services
 - J BROKEN HILL CITY COUNCIL
 - K CENTRELINK + MEDICARE
 - L NATIONAL PARKS + WILDLIFE SERVICE
 - M HEADSPACE
 - N LIFELINE
 - O CATHOLIC CARE, CENTACARE + JOBLINK PLUS
 - R WESTPAC
 - S BROKEN HILL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
 - T MAARI MA PRIMARY HEALTH
 - U CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE
 - V NRMA
 - W BROKEN HILL LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL
 - X AUSTRALIAN HEARING
 - Y ABILITY LINKS

3.3 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

CITY CENTRE DESTINATIONS

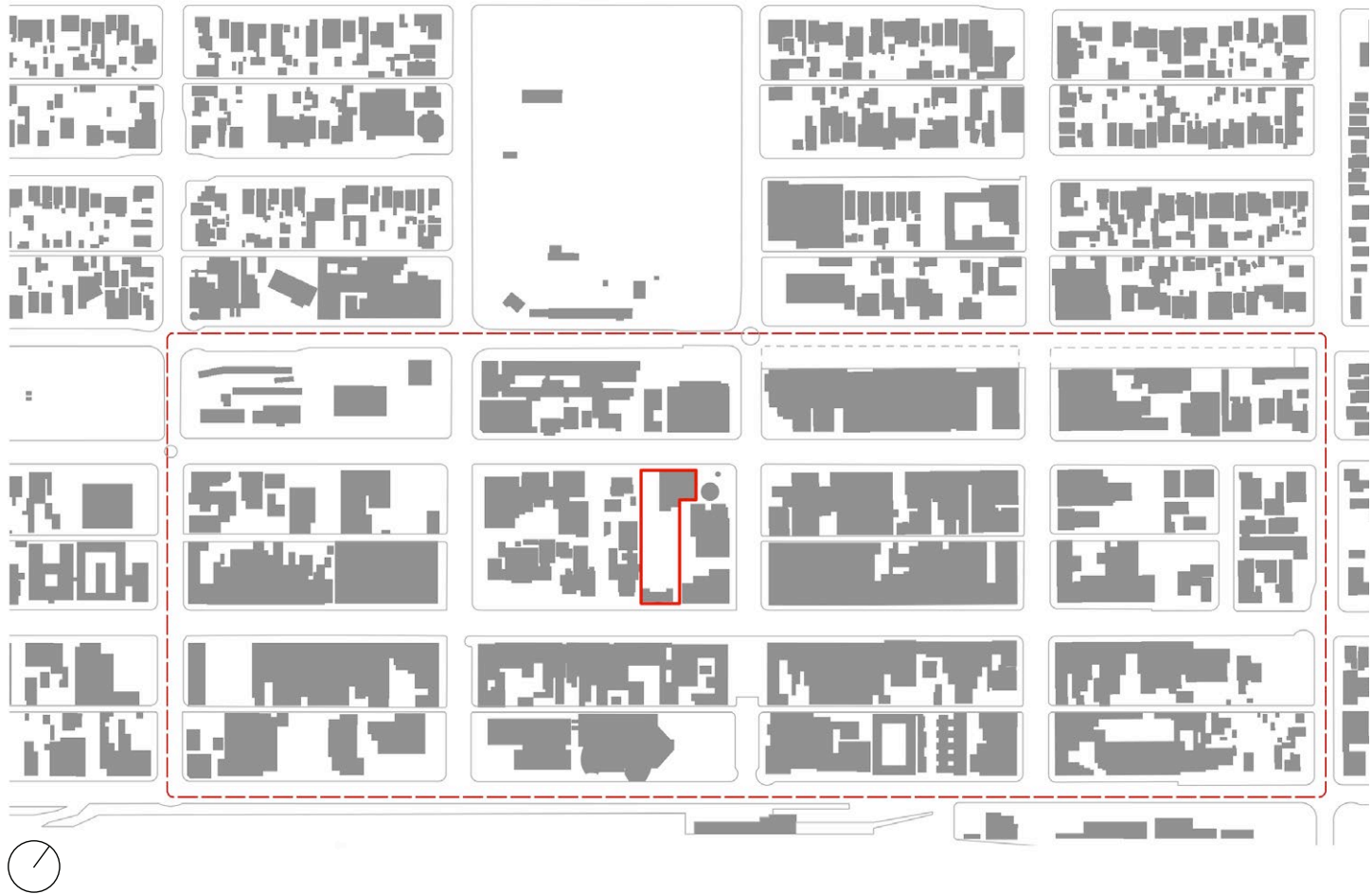
The area defined as the city centre extends between Bromide Street, Iodide Street, Beryl Street and the railway, with Argent Street its main artery. There is an impressive density of facilities and services here, with a majority located within a 2.5 and 5 minute walking distance of the library site, its geographic centre. This is particularly important in the context of local climate which is often not conducive to walking, and the significant portion of elderly population.

Key observations:

- Broken Hill's city centre is rich in built heritage. It is 'everywhere' with much of it visitable such the art gallery in the old Sully's Emporium.
- It is a civic place with many public institutions, a major park and town square.
- It is a social centre with several cafes and clubs, including the YMCA, The Barrier Social Democratic Club (The Demo Club) and Musicians Club.
- It is a visitor place with numerous visitor attractions and hotels. Interestingly the Visitor Information Centre lies just outside the 5 minute walking distance of the community hub and library site. It could have more impact on the city centre broadly if located closer to its geographic centre.
- It is a local service centre particularly for health services, with the recently opened Broken Hill Community Health Centre, Maari Ma Primary Health, and Headspace amongst others.
- There is a tertiary education presence through TAFE on Argent Street.
- **It is an important employment centre, underpinned by key government agencies.** Amongst the biggest employers are Broken Hill Police (roughly 65-100 people in the Argent Street station), Broken Hill Community Health Centre (roughly 200 people), Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation (roughly 50 people), TAFE (20 people), Broken Hill City Council (80 people between the main Council,

library, archives, art gallery, geological museum, and civic centre), NSW State Government Offices (50 people) and Courthouse/Public Trustee (10 people).

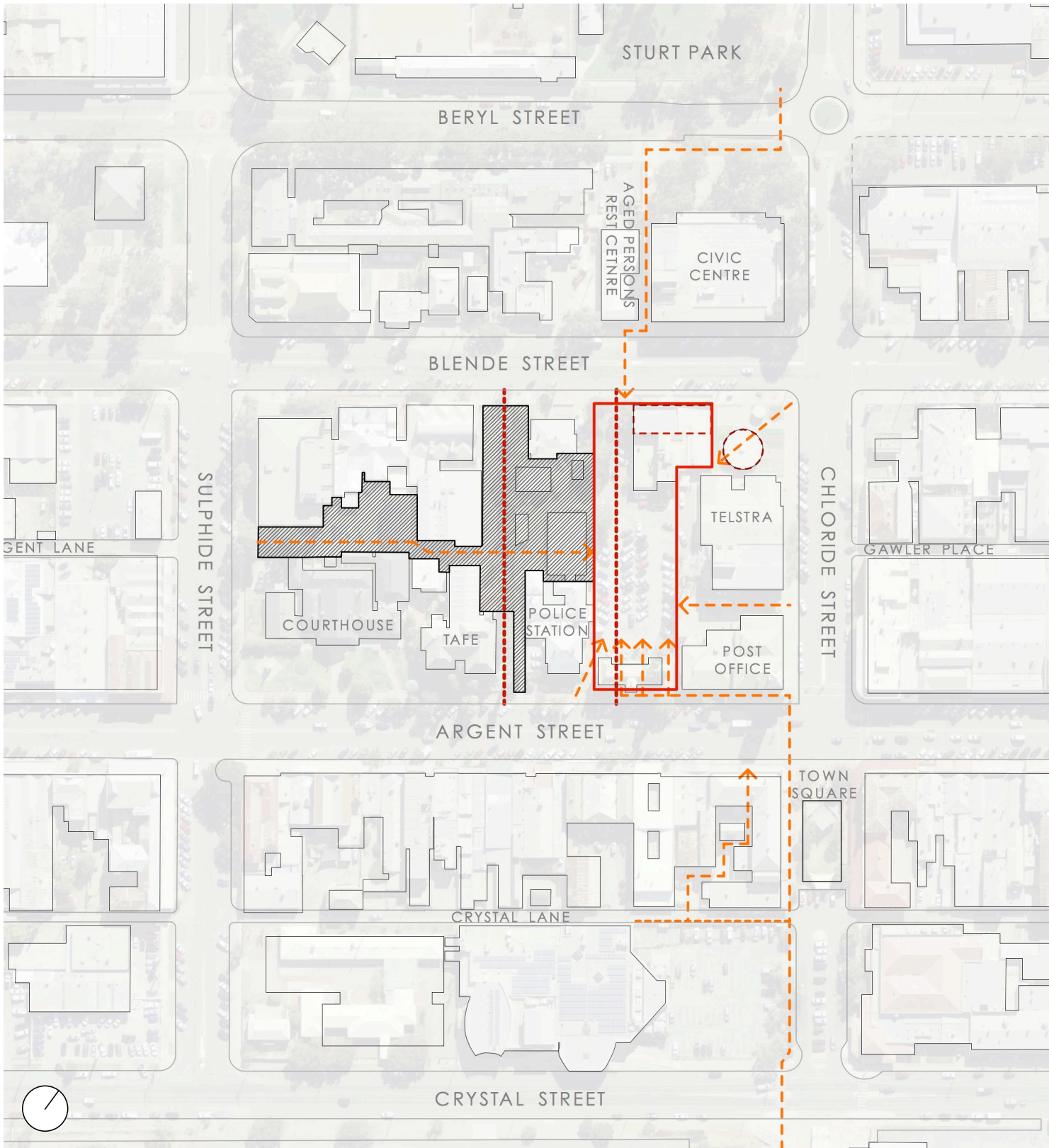
- The establishment of two competing retail centres at Westside Plaza and Broken Hill Village Shopping Centre with their big supermarkets and large shaded carparks, continues to have a significant impact on retail activity in the city centre.
- The cultural framework needs to build on the density of services and attractions already in the city centre. Concentrating activity on the community hub and library site, and making it easy to get to, gives the best chance for future vibrancy and support to local businesses. It is important that the city centre continue to attract government agencies as anchor employers. This includes Broken Hill Police, looking to move into a new facility elsewhere in Broken Hill in the near future.



Urban form

The 'pattern' of buildings in a place is called its urban form. The urban form of Broken Hill's city centre is distinct to its residential areas, with buildings built along or close to street edges, and a large number of impressive corner buildings. This is one of the city's strengths – part of its spatial quality, its heritage quality, its physical identity – and needs to be protected.

3.4 URBAN OBSERVATIONS



POTENTIAL CONNECTIONS

Broken Hill has a distinctive street grid and lane structure, with street names that signify the omnipresence of mining. If we look more closely we can see the patterns of Broken Hill as an evolving place in time. Argent Street is the centre of the 1890s grandeur – a market street with shopfronts and awnings supported by services lanes, and a distinctive civic block (without a laneway) in the same grid alignment as Sturt Park. Characterised by civic decorum, the Town Hall, Courthouse, Police Station and TAFE, are all stately freestanding buildings with garden setbacks, and decorative facades and porches.

It is important to consider the library site in the context of this civic block to understand potential relationships and linkages, particularly those that are easily achievable. This is key to issues of accessibility and the perception of potential congestion.

Key observations:

achievable

Connection through the site between Argent and Blende Streets is critical to maintain. The rectangular grid of Broken Hill produces long and short blocks. The ability to filter from Argent Street through the long blocks to services, and parking along Crystal, Blende and Beryl Streets, helps the continuing functioning of the city centre as a community and economic whole.

achievable

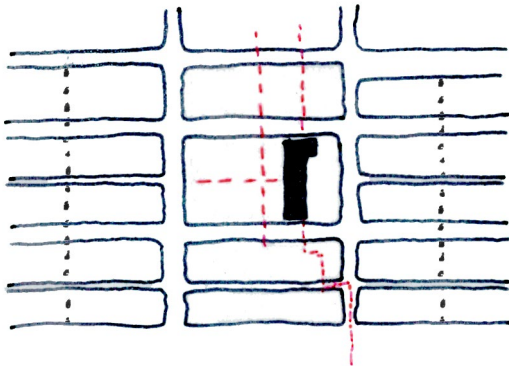
The Police have outgrown their historic premises and have received state government funding to establish a new facility elsewhere. This opens the possibility for Council to acquire use of the site. Whilst the heritage items – the old Police Station, and house on Blende Street – need to be retained, there is potential to clear the centre of the site for use as carparking for the community hub and library, with a shareway directly linking Argent and Blende Streets.

achievable

There is potential to open up the existing space behind the Courthouse and TAFE through the Police site to community hub and library, as mid-block pedestrian link to Sulphide Street.

more difficult to achieve

Mid-block connection to Chloride Street is made difficult by the insular nature of the telecommunications site and the busy functioning operation of the Post Office. The most obvious potential connection – the driveway between these sites – is used intensively for deliveries. Connection through to the corner to Blende Street would only be possible through demolition of the existing library.



Possible laneway links through from the town square to Sturt Park

- potential connections
- site outline
- potential space

3.5 URBAN OBSERVATIONS



AXIS, PUBLIC ROOMS + SPACES

Argent Street, the historic main street, remains the primary artery of the Broken Hill city centre. Whilst the civic block is central within the city centre, a strong synergy has developed around the Regional Art Gallery (in Sully's Emporium) at the north-eastern end of Argent within the city centre, with the Silly Goat café opposite, adjacent shops, and anticipated completion of West Darling Hotel restoration.

Chloride Street creates an important cross axis to Argent Street, connecting Broken Hill Station and Sturt Park via the Town Square, Post Office and Civic Centre, all within a 5 minute walk. It also provides address to the new YMCA facility opposite the park.

The intersection of Argent and Chloride Streets is a place of resonance and cultural attraction in the fabric of the city, where landscape views north to Sturt Park counterpoint views south to the Line of the Lode - the city's compass - both sides of Broken Hill's landscape identity.

There is an extraordinary collection of grand public rooms in the Broken Hill city centre – from the remarkable Trades Hall, the freshly restored Civic Centre, Sully's Emporium (art gallery), and the old TAFE library. These rooms are significant and memorable indoor gathering places, and all of them, except Sully's Emporium, are located within a 2.5 minute walk of the library site.

The new library can add to this inventory of memorable public gathering places as a new community living room, potentially connected to a climate appropriate outdoor gathering place. A reoccurring comment from meetings with the Broken Hill Regional Library, The West Darling Arts Group and the City Library was a need for spill out space to hold events, openings and talks, especially at night - to make a meeting place for visiting shows, artists in residence, visitors and locals.

The cultural framework will foreground the revitalisation of the city's key existing public spaces:

- Town Square which is tired, under-utilised and unwelcoming
- Argent Street which needs invigoration as a shaded street at the geographic and cultural heart of this Heritage City
- Sturt Park which awaits removal of unwanted built elements and landscape renewal with new facilities and programmed events



1. TAFE WESTERN LIBRARY



2. BROKEN HILL REGIONAL ART GALLERY



3. BROKEN HILL CIVIC CENTRE



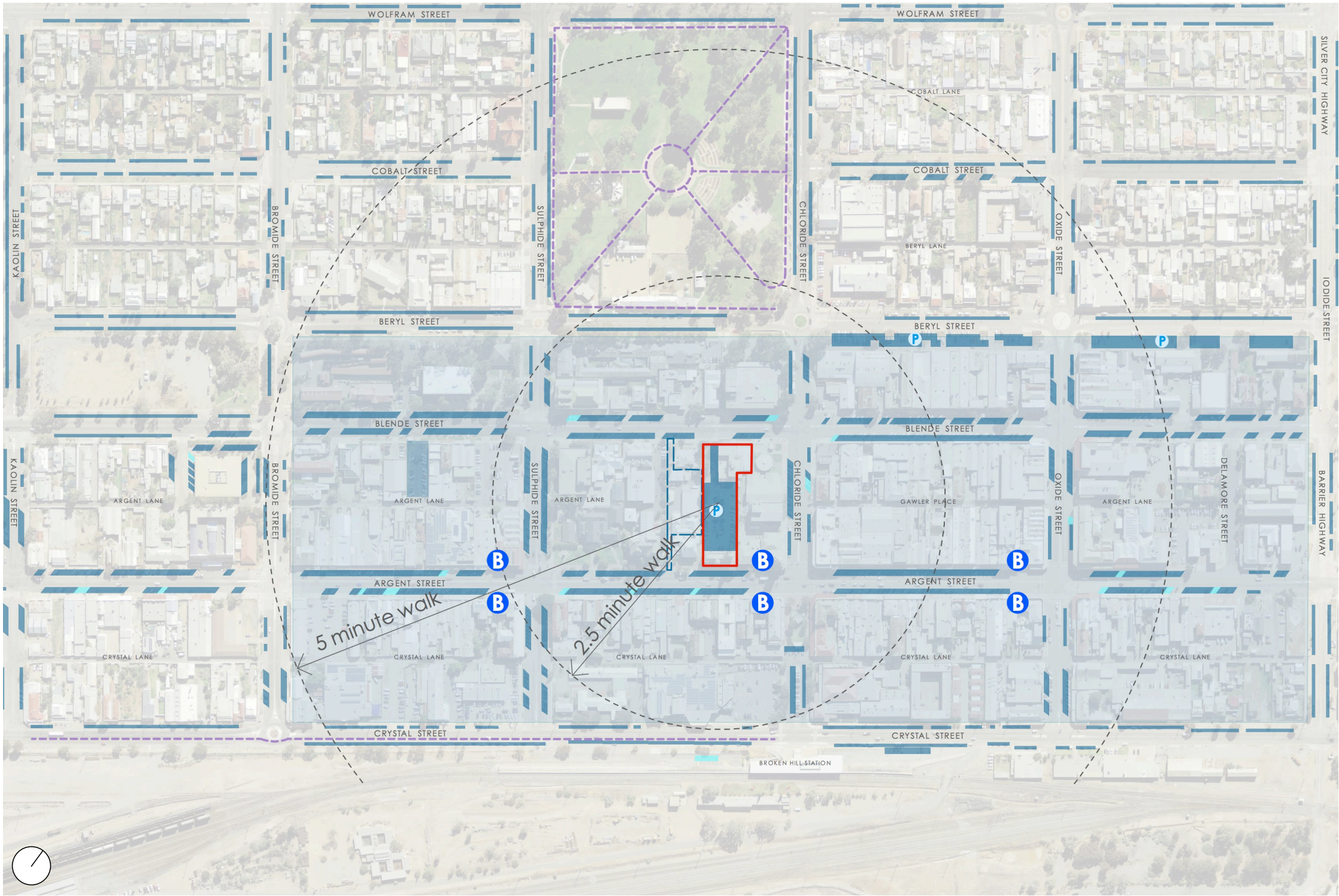
4. TRADES HALL

3.6 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

MOVEMENT

PARKING + WALKING + CYCLING + PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A 40km/ hour local traffic area has been designated within the 12 city blocks bounded by Crystal, Iodide, Beryl and Bromide Streets, with Argent the main east-west street. The grid pattern layout of streets provides good flexibility of route choice by drivers and allows interventions to redirect traffic away from streets where other functions should take priority. Large vehicles for example, are routed to the Silver City Highway - Crystal Street - along the edge of the Line of the Lode. Generally traffic lanes and verges are wide allowing for interventions to achieve traffic calming and to assist with urban design outcomes.



3.6 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

MOVEMENT



Top: Existing parking behind the Town Hall façade; Middle: Crossing at Argent St;
Bottom: Typical handrail for high kerb at traffic crossings within the city centre
Images: Neeson Murcutt Architects

PARKING

The Broken Hill community places a high importance on the ability to park in close proximity to their destination. This applies to visitors to retail and businesses as well as employees in the city centre. With private car mode providing for the majority of journeys, people visiting numerous destinations tend to move the car between car parking locations. This occurs due to the high temperatures and the perceived distance between destinations.

On weekends and on weekdays, site observations indicated that car parking both on-street and in off-street locations was busy but not fully utilised. This is confirmed by the parking strategy which has identified the ability to adjust timed parking limits to provide the best parking availability for the various user groups (short term shoppers/visitors versus all day employee parking). It was observed that the Town Hall Façade car park was not fully utilized.

WALKING

The Broken Hill city centre is very walkable due to the flat topography and grid pattern of streets generally with wide footpaths. There are a number of hazards for pedestrians, however, including the wide street crossings, poor conditions at priority intersections and a range of large vehicle types on key routes. A Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) was prepared by Accessible Public Domain consultants in 2013 with the aim to deliver safe, equitable and dignified paths of travel for pedestrians of all ages and abilities. The Access Audit Report that was prepared itemises existing pedestrian facilities and their compliance or noncompliance with Australian Standards, and recommends repairs, amendments or reconstruction.

CYCLING

The bike plan was prepared by Accessible Public Domain consultants in 2013 with the aim of assisting Council in developing strategies to improve access to the City's many facilities and areas of historical, cultural and ecological significance, and to assist in developing partnerships with the NSW State Government, developers, local businesses, community groups and other stakeholders.

A number of existing cycle ways were identified within the city centre, but they are generally unconnected and do not have sufficient pavement markings or signage. An audit of existing and potential routes was undertaken however the recommended actions to deliver improved cycling facilities are not well defined.

There are good opportunities to build a clear network for access to the city centre. Within the main city centre blocks it is more difficult to define routes, however the 40km/h Local Traffic Area assists with creating a safer cycling environment and urban design improvements need to be designed to recognize cyclists use.

BUSES

The bus system in Broken Hill is used almost exclusively by concession card holders and students with very few adult tickets sold. The bus routes run on a number of loops covering north and south precincts however frequency of service is low.

The Broken Hill Bus Terminus is located on Argent Street- near Chloride- and is the key city bus route.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Far West Home and Community Care Services Inc provides a community transport service focused on assisting eligible clients to have continued independence and confidence by transporting them to medical appointments, social and community activities and shopping centres. Buses operate weekdays, Monday to Thursday, 9am to 3pm and Friday 9am to 1pm. Alternative arrangements can be made for clients outside these times. This service operates on a nominal contribution from all passengers per trip to ensure the sustainability of this service to continue.

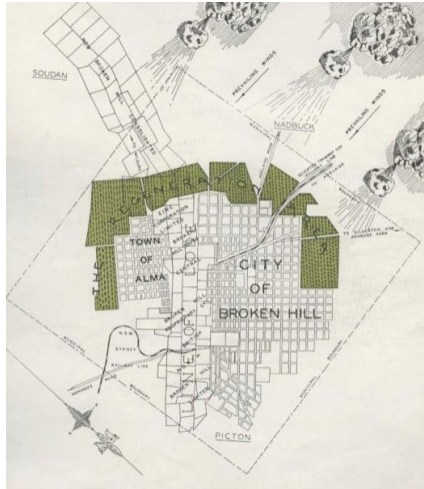
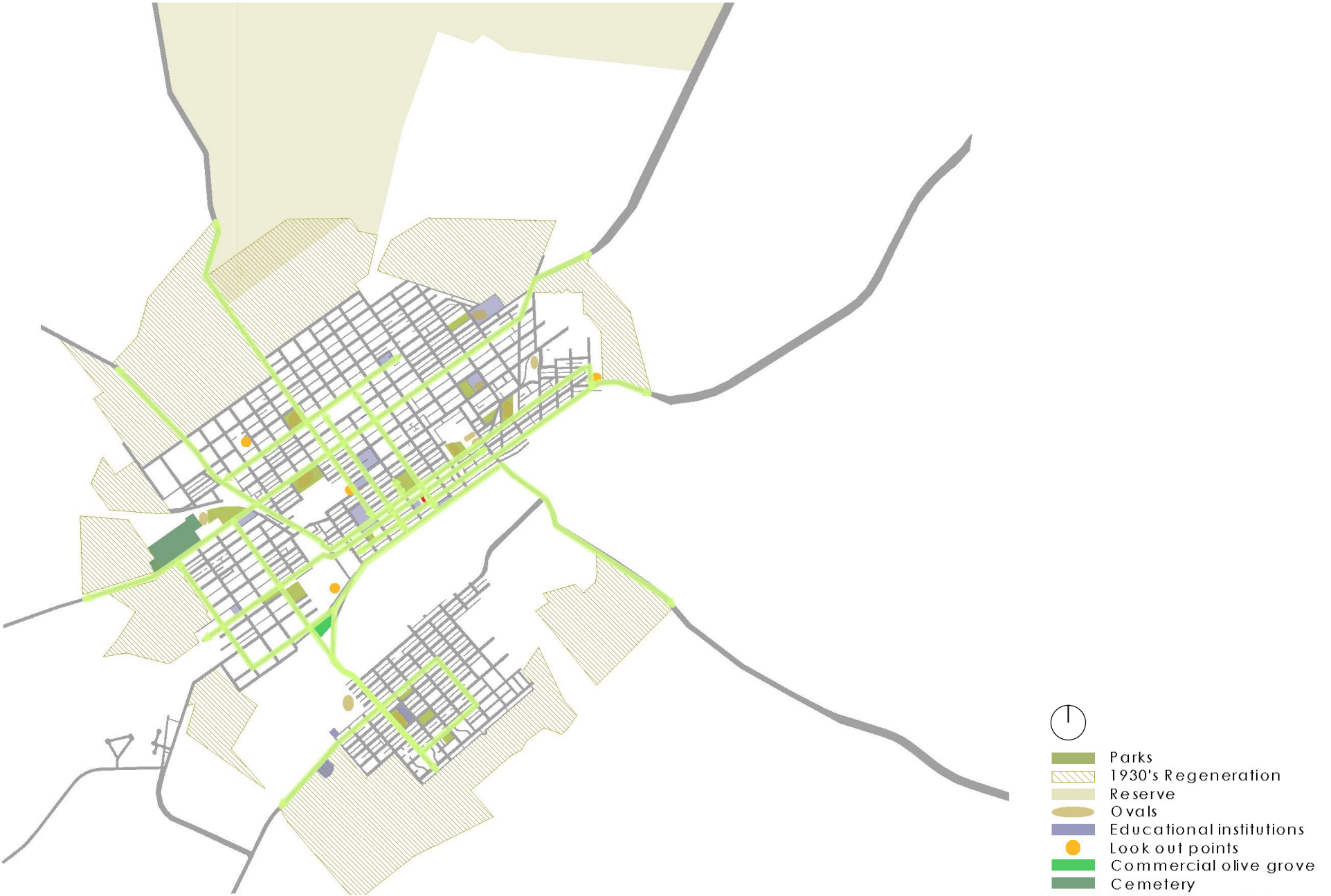
3.7 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

LANDSCAPE

Broken Hill has been shaped by processes of extraction and regeneration. As the Silver City transitions to a post mining economy it is time to reimagine the renewal of the city's landscape as a key part of this new future. To build on the legacy of Albert Morris and the Barrier Field Naturalist Club, who established regeneration reserves around the city in the late 1930's to safe guard Broken Hill from moving sands and toxic dust storms. Knowing that today these reserves are now National Trust Listed for their significance.

This new phase of regeneration will focus on the city itself. Looking to cool the city's streets and encourage movement along shaded footpaths, cycleways, bus routes and on street car parks. Linking homes to local destinations, schools and aged care residences to neighbourhood parks. Ensuring recreational opportunities for all- from sports, cycling, walking, play spaces, outdoor tness facilities, markets, picnic grounds and dog off leash parks.

Supporting wellness by mediating the temperature of streets and parklands to encourage walking, cycling, outdoor recreation and activity: across the seasons and across the day- from early morning into the night. The provision of trees and landscaped open space encouraging physical activity, moderating temperature, as well as mitigating urban dust and lead levels.



Images: Courtesy Outback Archives

3.7 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

LANDSCAPE

The urban form and architecture of Argent Street reflects its civic importance and commercial role as the main street of Broken Hill. Framed by grand buildings, Argent Street is wide and scaled to the long bullock drays which once serviced this street. The general absence of street trees possibly the consequence of the wide verandahs which colonnade much of the street and the tram line that operated in Argent Street from 1888-1926. The wide streets now enabling investment in a bold programme of street tree planting to transform Argent Street for future generations. Cooling pavements and roadways, filtering the air and beautifying this main city street.

Historic photographs of Mildura and Grafton depict tree lined main streets of regional NSW, with plantings of Canary Island Date Palms, Figs and Gum Trees. All trees which could be considered in Broken Hill.



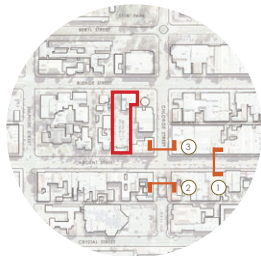
Images: Argent St Broken Hill, Courtesy Trove N.L.A.



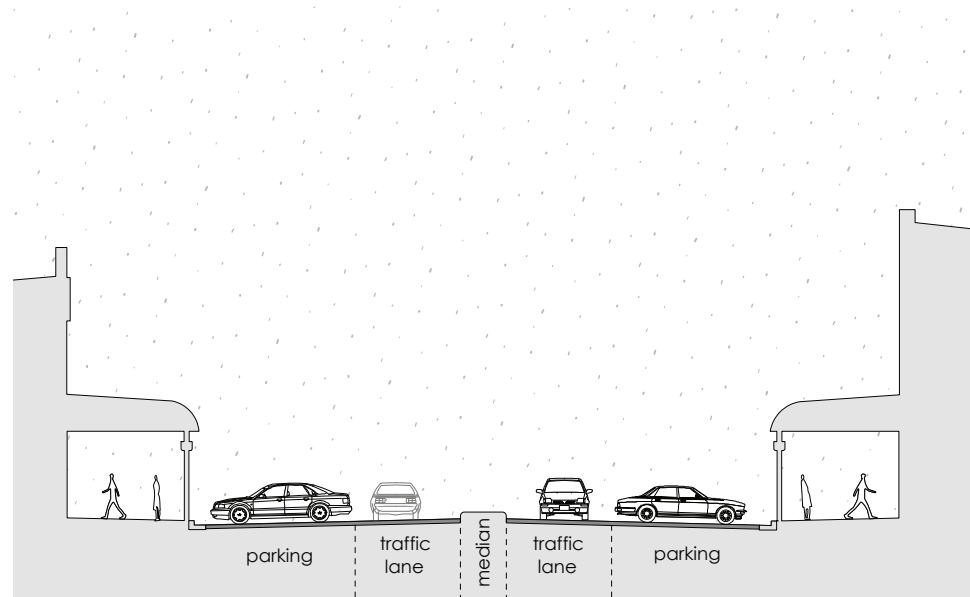
Grafton 1930's Images: Courtesy Trove N.L.A.



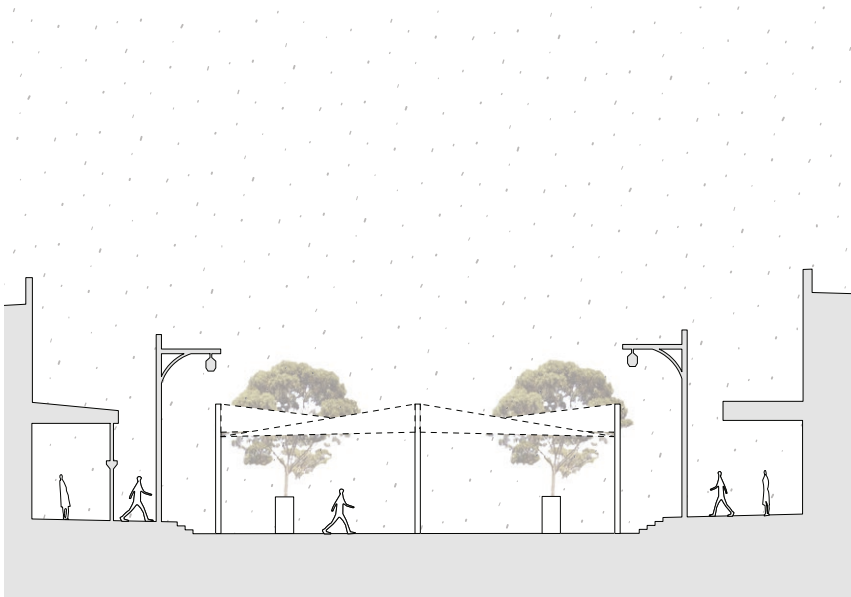
Deakon Avenue, Mildura Images: Courtesy Trove N.L.A.



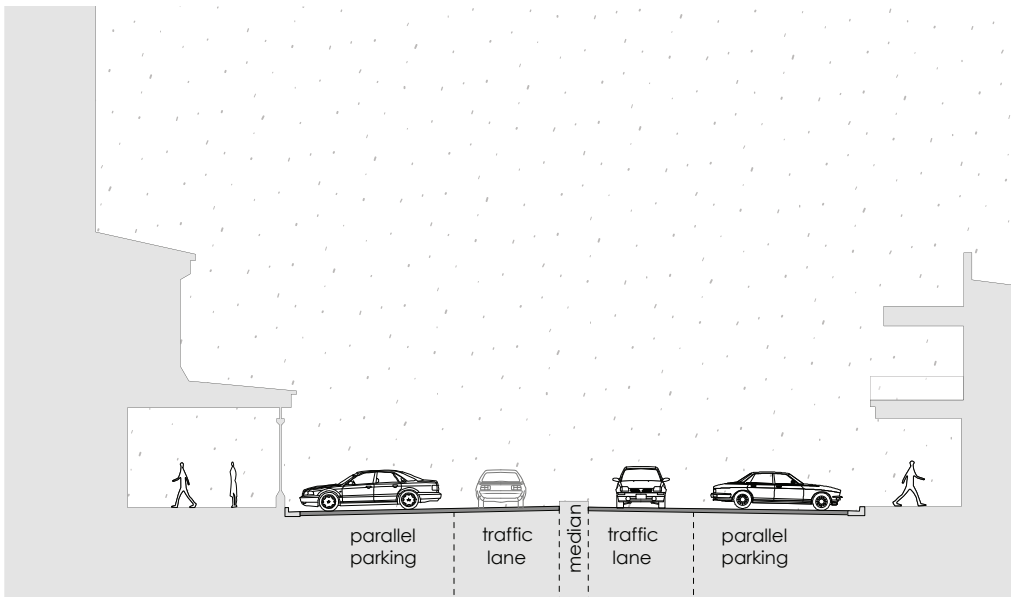
key plan



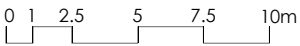
1 argent street existing



2 town square existing



3 chloride street existing



Source : sbd

3.8 URBAN OBSERVATIONS

PUBLIC ART



Mike Hewson, *Illawarra Placed Landscape*, 2018, quarried sandstone, structural steel, and cabbage tree palms. Permanent installation, Wollongong, NSW. Photo: Mark Pokorny

Art can bring Broken Hill's fascinating history to life while also making the city socially viable and connected in the present day. An important part of this will be reconnecting the mining city with its first inhabitants, the Wilyakali People of the Barkindji Nation. Working as a non-Aboriginal curator in Australia Barbara Flynn understands the importance of bringing all the people of a place together. It is the best starting point for an art project if it is to succeed.

The other main takeaway from visiting Broken Hill is the urgency of attracting young people to venture into the city centre and into the landscape, and away from their home computers and devices. An art initiative could achieve this by commissioning art that speaks to youth in a digital language they understand and bringing artists to the city who have achieved things in their lives and know how to talk with young people.

Also striking is the love for the city expressed by everyone we met over the age of 30. It is exciting to think how artists can articulate what it is that attracted these generations to Broken Hill and that keeps them here. There is so much about the archive and library that already works beautifully, and so many exciting design innovations Neeson Murcutt can introduce to make the complex even better, such as natural light, large windows and indoor-outdoor spaces.

3.9 SITE SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS



Top - Town Hall Facade
Bottom - Rear of Town Hall Facade
Images: Neeson Murcutt Architects



Top - Charles Rasp Memorial Library
Middle - Broken Hill Police Station
Bottom - Roundhouse toilets
Images: Neeson Murcutt Architects

THIS SITE HAS HOUSED A LIBRARY FOR WELL OVER 125 YEARS.

Town Hall façade

The Town Hall was opened in 1891 and contained the Free Public Library within it. In 1973 it was proposed to completely demolish the Town Hall to make way for a modern council facility. The community successfully argued to save and restore the front 10m depth of the building, protecting the historical streetscape of Argent Street. What remains now is a well-preserved, ornate 'thick' façade – an historically important and architecturally delightful remnant.

The Town Hall facade is a natural attractor, drawing people curious to see what might be within and behind it. As it currently stands it feels almost like a gatehouse to the carpark! There is potential for it to become a front door to the library, or a threshold to a library forecourt.

Charles Rasp Memorial Library

The purpose-built Charles Rasp Memorial Library, which opened in 1964, incorporates parts of the old city fire station – the spirit of resourcefulness has run deep in Broken Hill throughout its history. It is one of the many intact buildings in Broken Hill and characteristically mid-twentieth century in its style. Keeping in mind that it is the quantity of intact buildings that partly underpins the inaugural whole-of-city Heritage Listing, it is worth exploring whether there is value in retaining and repurposing the existing building rather than demolishing it.

Whilst considerably undersized and poorly configured as a contemporary library, large parts of the existing building are fundamentally well suited as an archive, if upgraded and integrated as a part of the new library.

Police Station

It is important to consider the community hub / library site in the context of its immediate neighbours, particularly the Police Station given its imminent vacancy. The Police Station was built in 1886 and predates the Town Hall. In finding new life for this important heritage building, we need to consider uses that:

- build synergy with the community hub and library
- help activate Argent Street
- are a good fit with the existing building spatially, minimising disturbance to existing fabric
- are ideally public in nature, building on the historically civic nature of the place

The future removal of fences between the police and community hub and library sites will give the sense of an open public place and allow new uses in the heritage buildings to contribute to the precinct.

Roundhouse Toilets

The public toilets at the corner of Blende and Chloride Streets were built in 1974. Quirky in character, they are locally known as the roundhouse toilets and are the only public amenities within the city centre. The corner location gives the toilets good visibility and they can easily be upgraded for equal access.

Views

We note that views across the site to the Line of Lode from the function spaces at the upper level of the renovated Civic Centre are important to maintain.

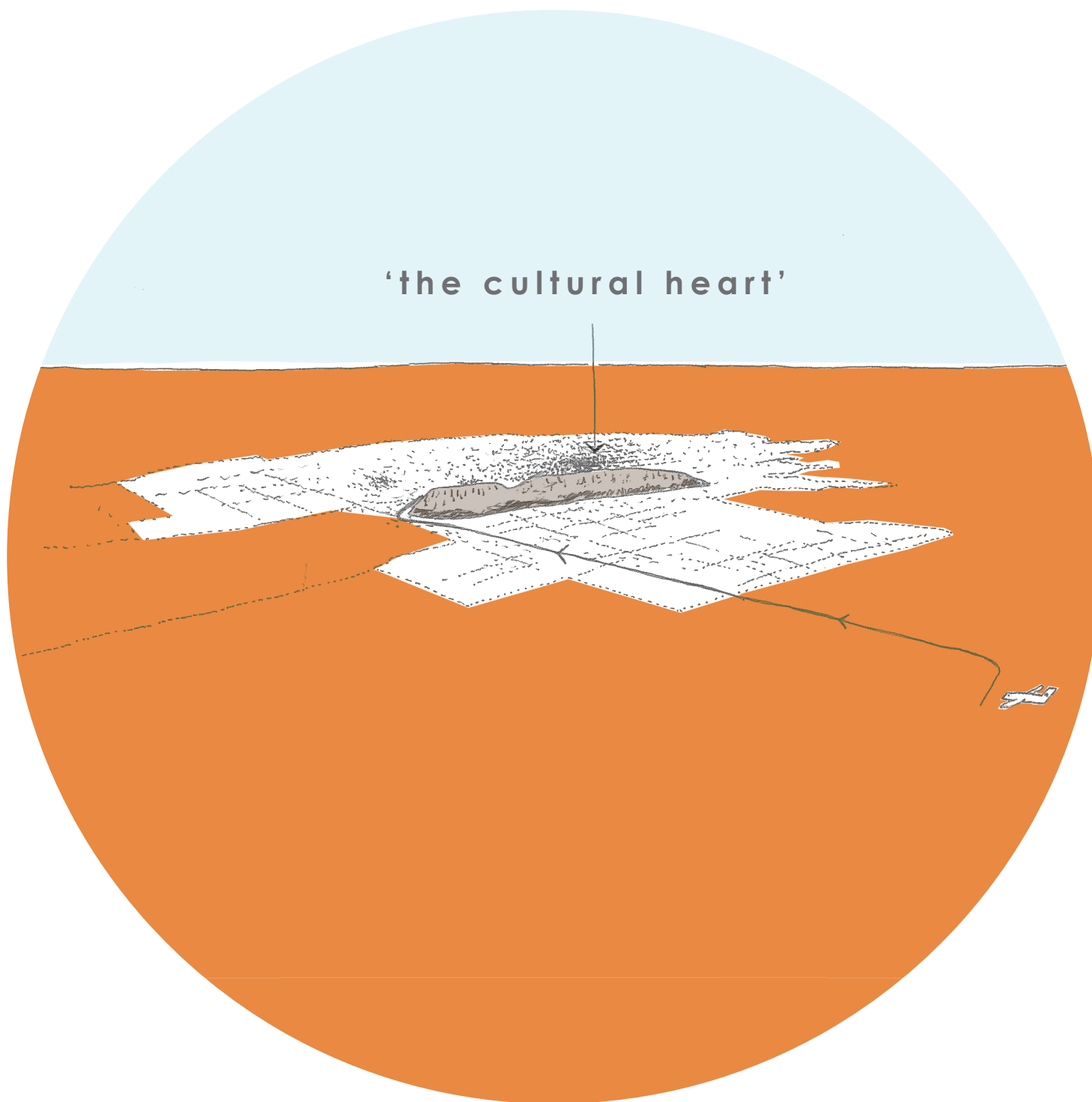
4.0 THE VISION - THE BIG PICTURE

4.1 THE VISION - THE BIG PICTURE

The Broken Hill community hub and library will be a place that celebrates and reflects the unique culture of this important and significant city for Australia.

It will continue to provide the safety and familiarity it does to its existing users by continuing to provide the essential services and spaces it does today but also expand this remit to become an engine room for cultural and social engagement through storytelling, content creation, and the export of Broken Hill's own brand of creativity.

The community hub and library will also re-energise Argent street by becoming the point where several paths intersect to create a centre of gravity for the city for all audiences: the locals and the tourists. This will be achieved through the careful and respectful co-location of complementary offers and the provision of high quality public space for all to enjoy.



5.0 BROKEN HILL'S CULTURAL FRAMEWORK: IDENTIFYING CULTURAL PRIORITIES

5.1 BROKEN HILL'S CULTURAL FRAMEWORK: IDENTIFYING CULTURAL PRIORITIES



Pilbara Arts Centre, Officer Woods Architects,
Image: Robert Firth

TOWARDS A CULTURAL PLAN

The Cultural Framework has been included as part of the brief for the Community Hub and Library to ensure alignment between Broken Hill's cultural priorities and the direction and focus of this important piece of cultural infrastructure.

It is important to note that this is not a cultural plan and this framework is informed by the consultation we were able to perform as part of this project and reviewing the outcomes of previous cultural projects such as the community consultation run by the Council for the library (Appendix G), the engagement performed as part of the Perfect Light project and a review of the priorities identified in the Community Strategic Plan 2033.

While this framework represents an informed point of view, we recommend that a cultural plan be developed at a later stage and include more in-depth consultation to test these priorities as well as define actions and cultural investments that will help Broken Hill continue to develop momentum as a cultural centre for the Far West region.

THE RATIONALE FOR CULTURAL INVESTMENT

In exploring Broken Hill and trying to define its cultural priorities, it's important to understand what the purpose of this new facility would be. A library, of course but are we trying to meet social, educational, cultural or economic objectives? Through our discussions with stakeholders, review of previous consultation and site investigations, it's become clear that the main purpose of the library and the investment into it is to create a social asset. This means that our approach to planning the spaces, programming and other aspects of its operations must be looked at through the lens of creating social value through:

- Increased participation;
- Increased socialisation of previously isolated groups;
- Increased engagement with knowledge and creativity with a view to opening horizons and developing curiosity;
- Social cohesion; and
- Revitalisation of a city centre location (more eyes on the street, foot traffic, serendipitous encounters, etc).

To be clear, an alternative narrative could have been that the main purpose of the library is to create a centre of excellence for archival research, or act as a hub for industry attraction, or create a centre of creative activity to export to the rest of the State or country.

By setting the purpose to one of social participation and community well being, we're making a whole raft of decisions about things that won't be priorities for the library, that we shouldn't consider.

As part of this analysis of the data we collected and reviewed, we considered the potential to extend this purpose into creating a facility with industry appeal in order to attract industry (mostly mining, film and space) to Broken Hill. But a library alone cannot achieve this stretch target. Industry attraction would require a number of additional infrastructure, ancillary programmes and additional funding. Even the best library can't create an economic transformation on its own.

5.2 CULTURAL PRIORITIES

ACCESSIBLE – easy to get to, integrated into people's lives, plugged into the urban fabric of Broken Hill, the Community Hub and Library is practical, accessible for all abilities and all modes of transport.

EXPOSURE – A window into Broken Hill and window to the world. The library is about connecting Broken Hill to the world through a good quality digital connection, social events that bring people together and a curatorial approach that prioritises discovery.

WELCOME – a culturally safe place, non-threatening, inclusive and open for the great range of cultures and peoples who will use it. This is a cultural home for all.

NEXT GENERATION – The Community Hub and Library must be about sustaining the next generation, looking at what's ahead rather than what's behind, engaging youth.

CELEBRATION – a celebration of Broken Hill's identity by the people of Broken Hill, not a place populated with ideas from away. It represents and interprets the features of this place (deep earth, desert, heritage, arts, stories and the big sky).

FEET ON THE GROUND – The Community Hub is about being ambitious but responsible and resourceful in this cultural investment. It reflects clever ways to achieve bang for buck, respond to needs, and create something that is authentic.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER – Ensuring job opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are included in the near and long term future plan of the cultural hub. Establishing appropriate protocols regarding culturally sensitive Wilyakali material in the archive.

5.3 CULTURAL PRECINCT MIX

**POLICE OUT + VIC REMAINS - 1C
CONCENTRATION OF ACTIVITY**

The broader principle of the cultural precinct mix is to achieve maximum colocation.

The city centre, focused around Argent Street, is an important employer and activity centre supported by key government agencies. Vibrant cities sustain a centre where people meet, feel safe and spend time.

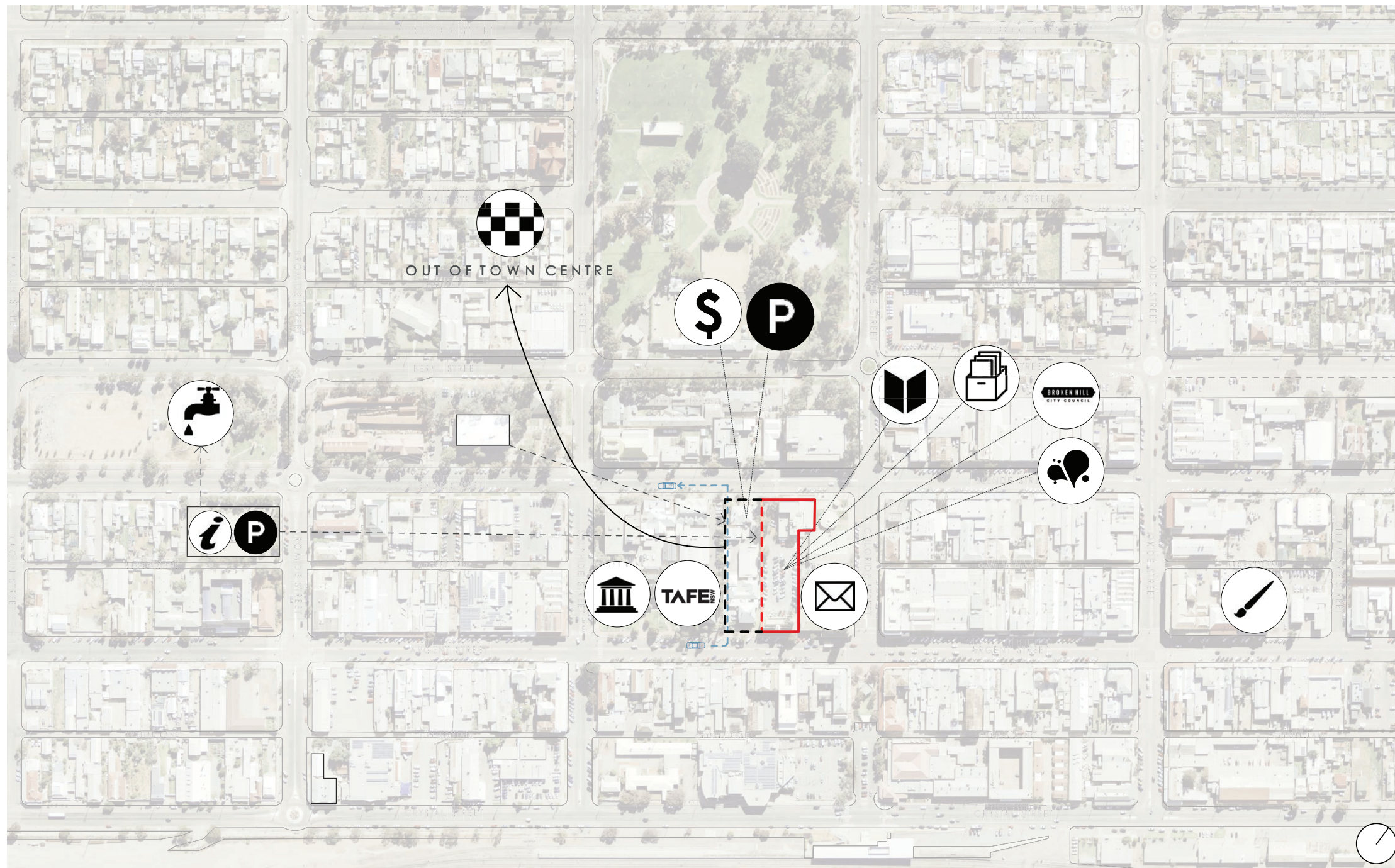
The cultural framework proposes a critical mass of activity needed to strengthen the Argent Street precinct as the heart of Broken Hill. The proposed cultural mix co-locates a number of Council services in order to cement and stimulate the city centre as a vibrant destination for locals and visitors alike.

The library site is considered together with the adjacent police site in anticipation of their imminent relocation.

The proposed mix achieves the following:

- library and archive together
- parking on the police site- council service desk
- council service desk
- potential for retention of west darling arts

The visitor information centre and minerals museum should all be considered in the future as possible inclusions on the site.



5.4 PERSONAS



ADVENTURE TOURIST

I love coming out here to experience desert landscapes, film in the perfect light of Broken Hill with a backdrop of intact heritage and the line of lode beyond, there's nothing quite like it - there are opportunities to collaborate with locals and edit our go-pro footage on the fly at the library recording studio.

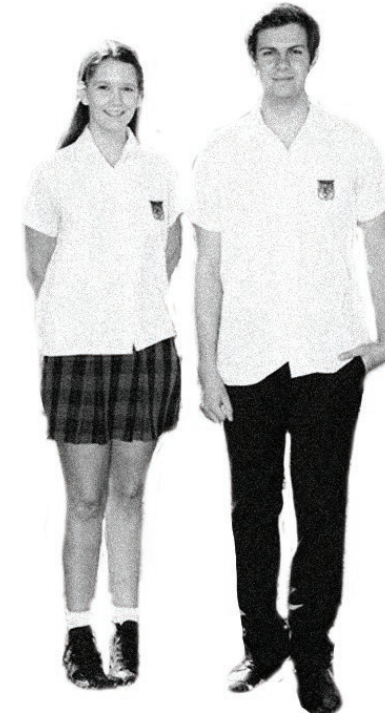
GREY NOMAD

We wandered in here when we first arrived in Broken Hill, not only did we get maps and general tourist info, the locals hanging out in the community courtyard gave us some tips on where to eat and what to see. The digital collection from the Geocentre is eye opening, I never knew there were so many different minerals and crystals.



MINER

I've been doing fly in fly out for a couple of years now and there's a lot more happening in the city centre with the new library. My weekends here are pretty filled when my kids come to visit. I often take them to the library and they go crazy over the toys there.



SCHOOL STUDENTS

There are good options for studying - either I can just put in my headphones and work at one of the desks in the main space or sometimes there's a group of us working on a project so we just book in a meeting room online, it's really easy - I've even taught some of the oldies how to do it!

MOTHERS' GROUP

I look forward to meeting the other mothers here each week, the space feels comfortable and relaxed. Often some of us will stay longer to hang out in the space and see what else is happening around the library hub, recently they had a new archive exhibition which was interesting.



ELDERLY

Having the council desk in the same precinct as the library is so convenient, I can park and pay my rates before I go in to borrow a book. I've been doing a computer course to learn how to send my grandkids updates by email.



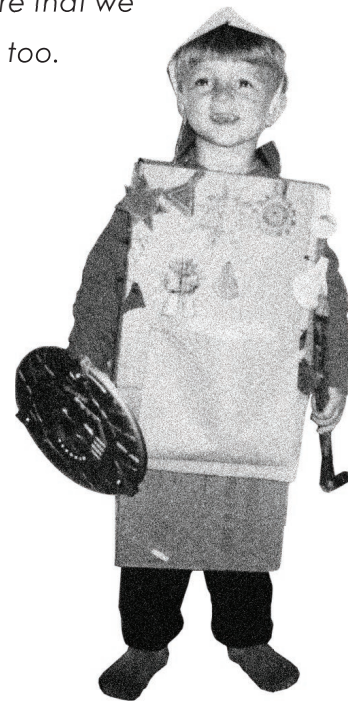
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY

The keeping place is important to the community and we like that this place feels welcoming and connected to landscape.



TODDLER

My favourite bit is the water splash, cos it's fun and I can cool down when I get too hot, my nanny takes me and sometimes before that we go inside to read a story too.



YOUTH

Finally somewhere I can hang with my friends that's a different experience to the shops or the park. Now that Broken Hill feels connected to the world I can think about my future here. I'm working on some ideas for a start up in the incubator and one of my mates is recording his first album in the next room!



COUNCIL WORKER

We are always booking the meeting rooms when we need to catch up with businesses in the city, it's so convenient to do online and it's easy to get to. I also go to a book club at the library once a week of an evening and it's such a great space to be in.



CULTURAL TOURIST

I've come for the weekend to see the exhibition space that had a write up in the paper last month for things to see in regional cities. What a vibrant place, might need to extend my stay as I've heard there's a deckchair cinema on tomorrow night in the Town Hall courtyard!

5.5 BENCHMARKING

BENCHMARKING SUMMARY

Whilst the way we bring all the elements of the program together, integrate heritage and new, repurpose existing spaces, interpret the culture of Broken Hill will be unique to this project, there are some lessons we can learn from other projects that have tried to address similar issues.

There is not one example that exactly replicates the emerging brief for the Community Hub and Library but a number of facilities do parts of this well and are worth looking at and considering.

Of importance to us are:

- The mission of the institution;
- The programmatic approach;
- The spatial approach; and
- Lessons learnt.

NINGALOO CENTRE:

All under one roof

Location: Exmouth, WA (1000 km north of Perth)
Population: 2,500
Architects: SITE Architecture
Year completed: 2017
Budget: \$AUD 34 million

"We set out to create a centre that brings community and visitors together under the one roof. We consciously designed the Ningaloo Centre to support tourism while meeting the needs of local residents."

- Paul Edwards, Director of SITE Architecture

The \$34 million centre is a 5,062sqm, multi-purpose building comprising a visitors' centre, café and gallery space, museum and exhibition areas, a library, and a function centre and play areas designed as independent and connected user pods. A fully equipped wet and dry laboratory, preparation area and aquaculture workshop provide the University of Western Australia and TAFE with a much-needed base for Ningaloo Reef research and training.

This facility gives us an example of small community deciding to invest in a cultural asset that had relevance for themselves and tourists to the area. The co-location of all these uses makes it the must-see destination when in Exmouth, a community of only 2,500. Some of the lessons learnt include the fact that the plans included an ill-fated aquarium, the operation of which was above the means of what Council could afford and therefore was never completed.



Ningaloo Centre Library. Image: John Gollings



Interactive displays. Image: John Gollings

FRANK BARTLETT LIBRARY AND MOE SERVICE CENTRE:

Library and Community together

Location: Moe, Victoria
Population: 16,734
Architects: FJMT Architects
Year completed: 2016
Budget: approximately \$AUD 15 million

"It is truly a place for everyone to feel welcome and included, a place that brings the community together and that marks the shared aspirations of the town. Moe has a new sense of place and a new way to appreciate its natural beauty."

-FJMT Architects

A new civic centre for the town of Moe that houses a number of community services including library, café, community health rooms, meeting rooms, community kitchen and council service desk. This one stop shop community building is part of a greater urban transformation of the site into a central gathering place for the community.

Community involvement throughout the design process and during construction has resulted in the locals embracing the building as a reflection of their sense of identity and pride in the town.



Lower level library and computer area. Images: John Gollings

GEELONG LIBRARY:

Library and archive together

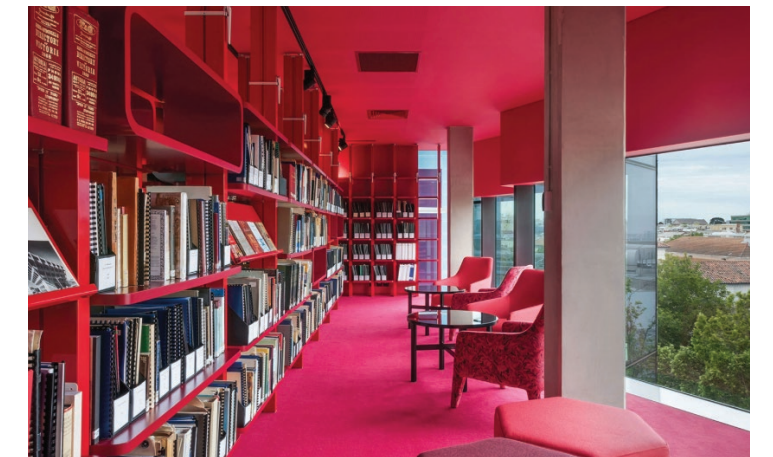
Location: Geelong, VIC (75k west of Melbourne)
Population: 184,000
Architects: ARM Architecture
Year completed: 2015
Budget: \$AUD 45 million

"It is creating a vibrant hub in the centre of Geelong, further enlivening the cultural precinct; acting as a significant tourist destination; and providing world-class library and heritage services to all visitors."

-Patti Manolis, CEO, Geelong Regional Library Corporation

This is a busy community gathering place for residents of one of Australia's fastest growing regional cities. Where traditionally libraries banned eating and talking, GLHC has elements of the community cyber café: The ground floor has an 80-seat café, a community gathering space and popular books and magazines.

Libraries are increasingly seen as a third place: they now invite people to meet, talk, play music, drink coffee, and use multi-media. There is a new exhibition space shared with the adjacent Geelong Art Gallery. The first floor is for children and young people and has a landscaped balcony at treetop level. Floor two is for adult collections, magazines, journals and e-resources and includes a reading lounge and study rooms. The third floor is the archive which lives in a vast compactus and the entire floor is compliant with the State Archives Place of Deposit storage specifications. Its supervised reading room has smart tables and digital microfilm readers.



Archive reading room. Images: Emma Cross

5.5 BENCHMARKING

THE EDGE AT THE STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND:

A centre for digital culture

Location: Brisbane, QLD
Population: 2.2 million
Architects: m3 Architecture with Deicke Richards Architects
Year completed: 2010
Budget: \$AUD 7.9 million

"I've always been fascinated by the concept of libraries acting as living laboratories; spaces where communities can learn by doing."

-Lea Giles-Peter, former Queensland State Librarian who oversaw the development of the project

The Edge is a Library, community makerspace and resource hub for all things youth, art, science, technology and enterprise. Imagined as a model for the library of the future, The Edge is a visionary space for creatives and innovators, providing the resources and platform to explore creativity.

Whilst The Edge definitely marks the transition to a new kind of library, a successful library that place digital culture at its core must engage with the finer details of delivering that experience including software licensing, IT support, maintenance and replacement of hardware.

PILBARA ARTS CENTRE:

A welcoming climate response and safe space

Location: Newman, WA
Population: 5,000 with 4,000 FIFO
Architects: Officer Woods Architects
Year completed: 2016
Budget: \$AUD 9.3 million

"More and more young people were coming to the centre and getting involved, sitting with elders as they paint, singing songs and just engaging with the space. And that was really the prime driver, the impetus, for the whole project."

-Jennie Officer, Officer Woods Architects

The East Pilbara Arts Centre, which houses the Martumili Gallery was funded by BHP, the Pilbara Development Commission through Royalties for Regions, Lotterywest and the Shire of East Pilbara. The design features a large span steel frame shed which works outside the commonly held notion that a building must be finished and not change. Like a tent, it covers, secures and shades a large area that can be contained, covered or completely open. It has fostered a deeper understanding and mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous communities and has also been a catalyst for growth for Martumili Artists, with 51 new artists recruited in just 12 months, and more than 1,180 artworks produced in that time.

What we can learn from this is that modesty of materials and consideration for how people can feel welcome, occupy space on their terms is a really important success factor for creating a culturally safe space.

GREEN SQUARE LIBRARY:

A true community hub

Location: Green Square, Sydney, NSW
Population: 61,000
Architects: Stewart Hollenstein in partnership with Stewart Architecture
Year completed: 2018
Budget: \$AUD 58.2 million

"There are few places as democratic as libraries. They provide places to sit in a beautiful setting, and that's so precious in the community. We feel like libraries are places where you can make noise and gather."

-Felicity Stewart, Stewart Hollenstein Architects

Sydney's newest library is barely a building at all, it is a series of underground and overground connected spaces that create a plaza and accommodates a contemporary array of library spaces. Alongside what one would expect to find in a contemporary library, Green Square Library also includes a service desk for the City of Sydney, meaning that library visitors can pay their rates or parking fines while at the library. The service desk is integrated into the space, sitting in alongside the library's counterless service station. Different staff man both of these service points but the integration is seamless from a visitor's perspective.



Collaborative window bays. Images: Jon Linkins



View from entry towards conditioned gallery and staff space
Images: Robert Firth



Staff info kiosk, Image: Neeson Murcutt Architects



Children's area. Image: City of Sydney

6.0 ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

6.1 THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY IN CREATING A CULTURAL MIX FOR BROKEN HILL

cultural priority	movement strategies	spatial strategies	operational strategies
ACCESSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong wayfinding that extends to other parts of the Cultural Precinct and Town Centre Multimodal transport access Accessible car parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide easy access to parking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal reliance on lifts through planning, eg spaces that the elderly would use would be mostly downstairs.
EXPOSURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making what's inside visible or perceptible from the outside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret materials and content, colours and landscape through architecture and landscaping Gallery space to show works of cultural, social and natural significance (paintings, rocks, etc.) from the Outback Archives collections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tangible and visible interpretation of the archives in the space. Good quality and reliable internet connection via WI-Fi with a reach beyond the footprint of the building, on even when the library is closed Integrates Visitor Centre
WELCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of formal, hierarchy of spaces, provide a range of spaces that can be occupied on the occupier's terms Microclimate to make all spaces welcoming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No front counter Intuitive movement through the building Place for meeting Define a single public entry point. Manage views Meaningful signs of Indigenous culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider opening hours, all or part of the site, what's visible and/or what can be experienced when not open
NEXT GENERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access by means other than car (eg public transport, bike) Opening hours that are suitable for school children and youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make digital culture and content creation legible in the space Make youth focused spaces the core of the experience, place them in important spaces Use of colour, fun furniture, ease of moving things around without breaking it, different configurations over time Place to be messy, experiment, give it a go 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the software and management implications of running a variety of digitally-based programs to ensure long term viability and relevance
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring job opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the near and long term future of the cultural hub. Establishing appropriate protocols regarding culturally sensitive Wilyakali material in the archive.
CELEBRATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlock the potential and celebrate this part of Argent Street as the centre of gravity of town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon reputation as Australia's first heritage listed town Embrace the Town Hall facade. Locate library and archive together. Manage views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colocate the visitor's centre and the library to encourage opportunities for events with locals and tourists. Include public art by local artists
FEET ON THE GROUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the assets we have and the strengths of the connections to the site through the existing network of streets and laneways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be resourceful: Reuse of existing fabric (current library, laneways that already exist) Create useful public space Reinforce activity on Argent St Give address to Blende St Maintain existing urban edges Economy of means, responsible choice of materials and construction method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff neutral Creation of meeting spaces that could work on an unmanned basis and create a modest revenue stream through business hire

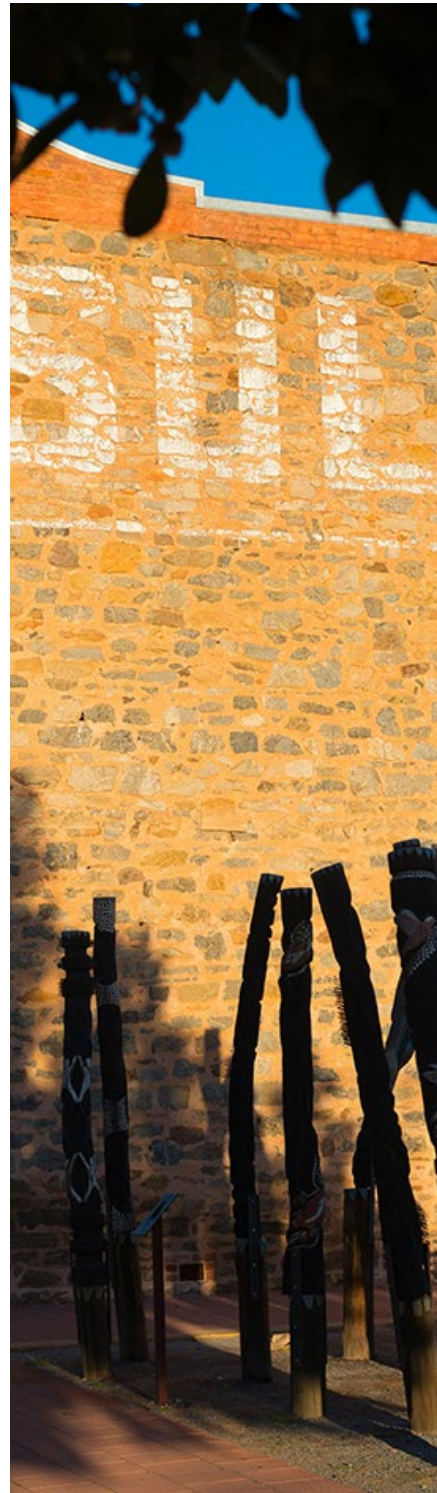
Building on the Cultural Priorities, we have proposed the cultural framework as action planning tool that helps us align cultural priorities with access strategies, spatial strategies and operational strategies. By linking these, we can ensure that the emerging brief for the library is directly responding to what Broken Hill says it needs and wants.

7.0 KEY MOVES

7.1 EARLY DIRECTIONS FOR THE LIBRARY



Image: Neeson Murcutt Architects



Broken Hill Art Gallery
Image: Travelin.com.au



Broken Hill Solar Plant
Image: AGL



The Palace Hotel
Image: Dossier 48



Image: Still from *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994)

The new Library and Community Hub will occupy the carpark site between the Old Town Hall Building on Argent Street and the City Library on Blende Street. A new entry on Argent Street through the historic Town Hall Building, either directly into the library or via a public space, will give greater energy, presence and connectivity to the civic precinct, which houses the Broken Hill Courts, the Western Region TAFE College, Broken Hill Police Station, the Old Town Hall and the Post Office. Early directions for the new library are underpinned by 5 strategies:

1. movement + transport

The movement and transport strategies recognize:

parking

- that the new library displaces existing parking which needs to be considered in the context of the block and beyond
- that should the visitor information centre co-locate then some camper van / caravan parking also needs to be found

public transport

- that many library patrons will travel by bus
- that should the visitor information centre co-locate then a coach stop also needs to be close by

cycling / scootering

- Council's Bike Plan, the potential of electric bicycles, and the healthy living option of safe cycling

walking + shade

- that shaded pathways (under awnings or trees) are needed to encourage walking
- a 200m or 2.5 minute walking distance from the new library to parking, to public transport, and to other places within the city centre, is a realistic expectation

2. spatial / massing

The spatial strategies are blocking and stacking exercises. Whilst they do not represent building options per se, they do imply potential site relationships and spatial organizations.

3. landscape

The landscape strategy focuses on the experience of public space in Broken Hill - shade, gathering, recreation and the potential of plants and water to moderate climate.

4. climate + sustainability

The approach is to identify strategic local solutions to the long-term sustainability of the library in Broken Hill.

5. public art

Here are outlined ten possible approaches to public art in the library and cultural precinct more broadly. It is anticipated that each would be targeted specifically to Broken Hill.

7.2 MOVEMENT + TRANSPORT STRATEGY

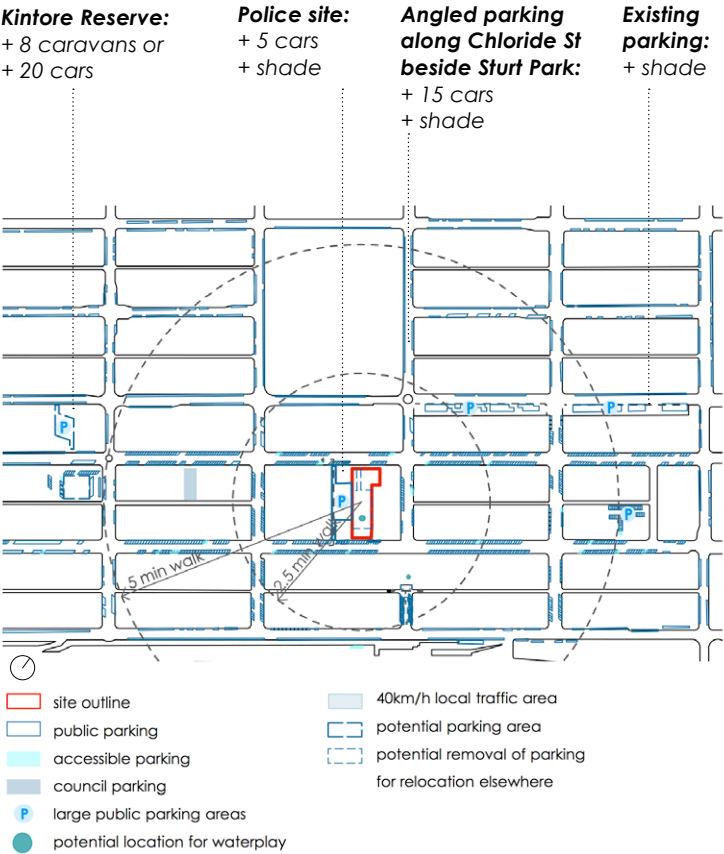
CAR PARKING

Increased public parking within a 2.5 minute and 5 minute walk of the community hub/library site.

The majority of car parking occurs on-street in Broken Hill and changes to time restrictions introduced as part of the car parking strategy aim to encourage turnover of car parking spaces adjacent to businesses and facilities. Off- street car parking provided should be prioritised for high turnover users, accessible parking needs and dedicated facility vehicles. The aim of city centre improvements which impact on car parking should be to maintain a parking neutral outcome, with public parking increased at the community hub.

For the new car park to be located on the Police site, we recommend that around 35 spaces be provided for short term public use which is +5 on the existing number of public parking spaces. This should be a mix of 5 x 15min and 25 x 2hr. 10-20 dedicated Council staff spaces could be provided off site. This then maintains functional car parking within the block for the new library development with adjacent on-street car parking available for all day car parking.

Additional public parking:



PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Lengthen Argent St bus stop at Post Office to include coaches.

Existing public bus services provide a good level of access to the site, all bus routes interchanging adjacent to the site on Argent Street. Increased bus frequencies and a rationalised route structure would assist with attracting higher utilisation but with low levels of revenue it is hard to justify significant improvements. Many library patrons will travel by bus.

Should the visitor information centre co-locate with the library then the coach stop servicing regional coaches should be relocated to be nearby.



SHADE

Provide shaded footpaths within a 2.5 and 5 minute walk of the cultural hub/ library site.

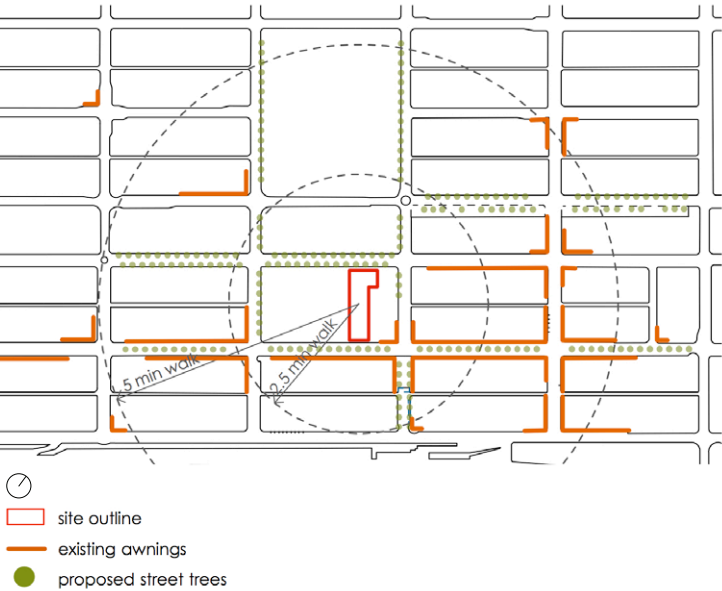
In the desert shade enables outdoor life. Walking, waiting at a bus stop, cycling, on street parking- all forms of movement are possible if temperatures are moderated.

Historic verandahs distinguish the city of Broken Hill, are a direct response to heat and the need for immediate shade. Drop down canvas blinds increase the thermal performance of buildings and footpaths.

Street trees have the added benefits of making legible the street hierarchy, open space and movement corridors. Linking tree planting to water management and recycling systems. Providing living shade that locally cools streets and filters air, while contributing to the identity of Broken Hill as a liveable regional city- a historic city with a forward-thinking community.

A street planting programme will:

- moderate the desert climate and the heat island effect of urbanization
- identify city entries, bus routes, bicycle paths, city centre parking bays
- link key open space connections between parks, drainage lines and flood prone land
- support health initiatives associated with obesity, isolation, lead abatement



WALKING/CYCLING/SCOOTING

Improve pedestrian pathways and the cycle network to meet the appetite for healthy movement.

There are footpaths on all streets in the city centre. A key area for improvement is at street and intersection crossing points. Due to the wide streets, kerb ramps at intersections and mid-block crossing points assist with reducing the crossing distance and allowing the introduction of formal pedestrian crossing markings where they meet the Roads and Maritime Services warrant.

Key pedestrian routes utilising existing footpaths and laneways should be identified to enable focused upgrades including:

- Pavement treatment including flush crossing
- Lighting
- Directional wayfinding signage
- Shade
- Crossing provisions at streets

A cycle network should be identified for the city centre to provide definition for cyclists in the form of on-street markings and signage. Ideally segregated two-way cycleways should be considered on a spine network to facilitate both bicycle and scooter use. Shared E-bikes and E-scooters are arriving in city centres and these would be suitable for moving around in hot weather conditions. Improving the cycling network and providing for a range of private shared bike use encourages a healthy living option of safe cycling.

The Bike Plan 2013 identified Beryl Street as an east west route along the northern border of the city centre 40km/h local traffic area. This should form a spine route which allows cyclists to filter into the city centre. The current cycleway serving Broken Hill is located on Crystal Street and is configured as permanent bicycle lanes shared with the car parking area. Given that this route is designated as the Silver City Highway serving as a bypass to the city centre for heavy vehicle movements, this route requires upgrading if it is to be retained.

7.3 SPATIAL STRATEGIES

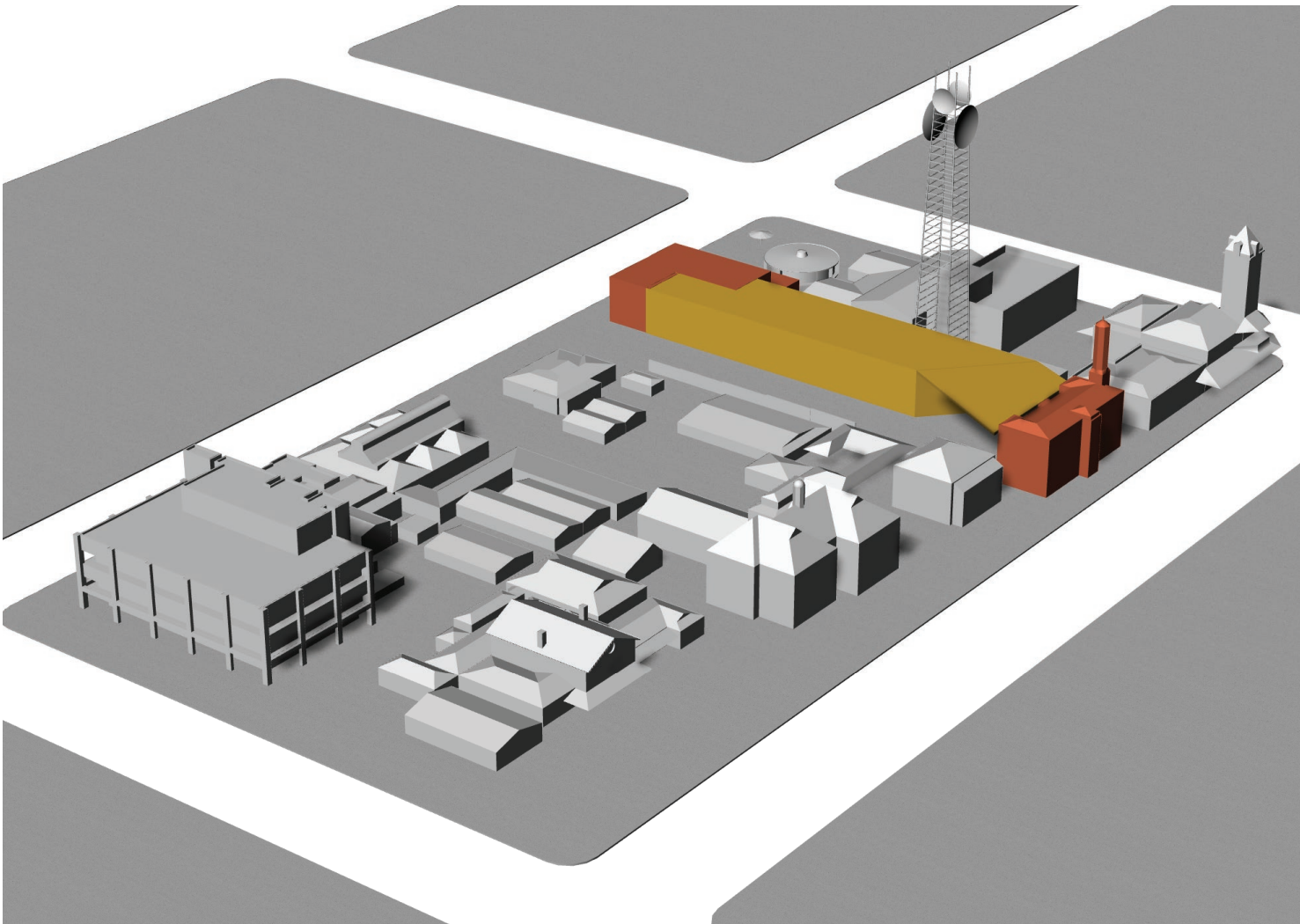
There are several approaches to massing on the site. Each option allows a library of 1500m2 as recommended by the State Library NSW brief, and assumes an archive of roughly 500m2.



- existing buildings
- library
- covered outdoor
- through site link
- future through site link
- parking
- library entry

Principles;

- ✓ - locate library and archive together
- ✓ - build upon reputation as Australia's first heritage listed city
- ✓ - be resourceful by reusing parts of the existing library building
- ✓ - provide easy access to parking
- ✓ - reinforce activity on Argent Street
- ✓ - strengthen address to Blende Street
- ✓ - define single public entry point
- ✓ - embrace and activate the Town Hall facade
- ✓ - create useful public space
- ✓ - retain strong urban edges
- ✓ - manage views
- ✓ - activate new public outdoor space with library entry



SPATIAL STRATEGY #1

Potential

Come through the Town Hall façade to a covered forecourt – a new meeting place for locals and tourists, young and old. The new library / community hub sits directly ahead, turning its back to the telecommunications site and instead looking out along a shady public walkway through to Blende Street. Parking is located directly adjacent on the old police site. The new facility connects into the old library that has been partly demolished. The retained portion is repurposed as an archive, with a great compactus store on the ground floor, the old fire station as the public archive space, and workspaces upstairs. The Blende Street façade is both restored and adapted, as entry to the archive is now via the new library. The roundhouse amenities are upgraded, complementing new public toilets within the library.

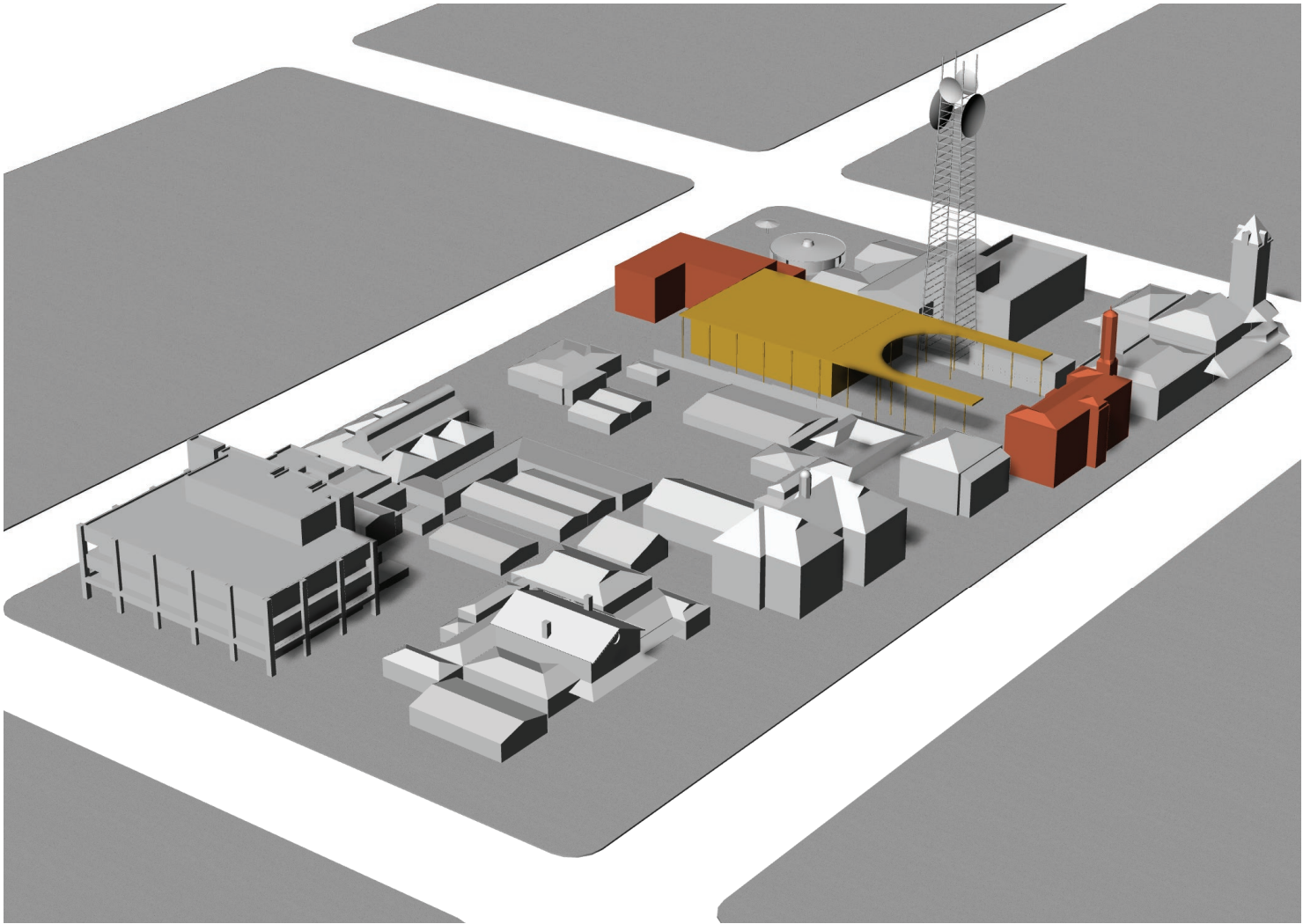
7.3 SPATIAL STRATEGIES



- existing buildings
- library
- covered outdoor
- through site link
- future through site link
- parking
- library entry

Principles;

- ✓ - locate library and archive together
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- ✓ - be resourceful by reusing parts of the existing library building
- ✓ - provide easy access to parking
- ✓ - reinforce activity on Argent Street
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- ✓ - define single public entry point
- ✓ - embrace and activate the Town Hall facade
- ✓ - create useful public space
- ✓ - retain strong urban edges
- ✓ - manage views
- ✓ - activate new public outdoor space with library entry



SPATIAL STRATEGY #2

Potential

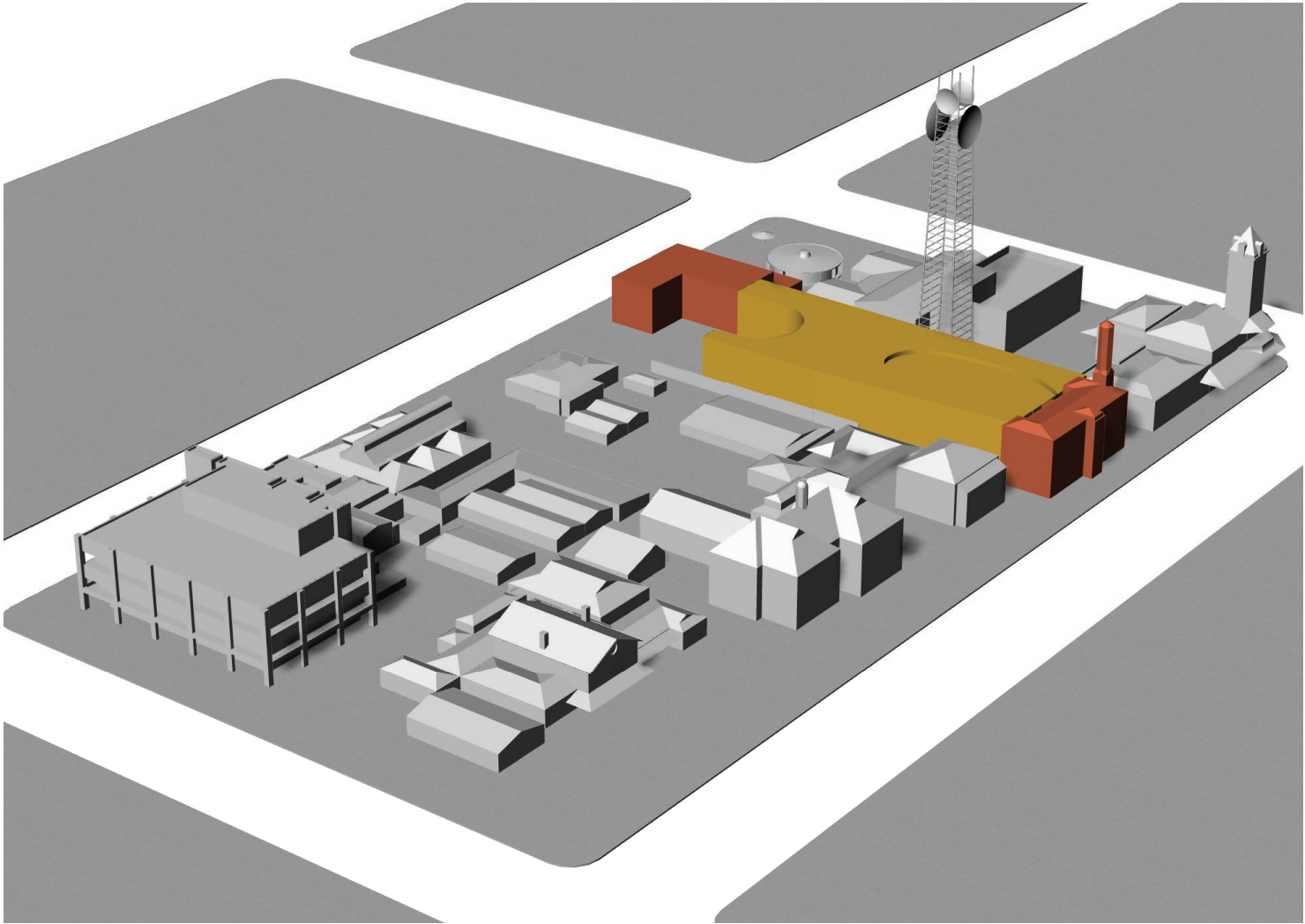
Come through the Town Hall façade to a great outdoor room – a climate appropriate outdoor gathering space for all ages – able to host events, film nights, openings, talks, as well as informal use. Built up against the telecommunications site, the new library / community hub faces into the outdoor room towards the rear of the Town Hall façade. It has shaded walkway edges that edit unwanted views and give covered access through to Blende Street and to adjacent parking directly on the old police site. The new facility connects into the old library that has been partly demolished making way for a leafy public garden. The retained portion is repurposed as an archive, with a great compactus store on the ground floor, the old fire station as the public archive space, and workspaces upstairs. The Blende Street façade is both restored and adapted, as entry to the archive is now via the new library. The roundhouse amenities are upgraded, complementing new public toilets within the library.



- existing buildings
- library
- covered outdoor
- through site link
- future through site link
- parking
- library entry

Principles;

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- ✓ - provide easy access to parking
- ✓ - reinforce activity on Argent Street
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- ✓ - define single public entry point
- ✓ - embrace and activate the Town Hall facade
- ✓ - create useful public space
- ✓ - retain strong urban edges
- ✓ - manage views
- ✗ - activate new public outdoor space with library entry



SPATIAL STRATEGY #3
Potential

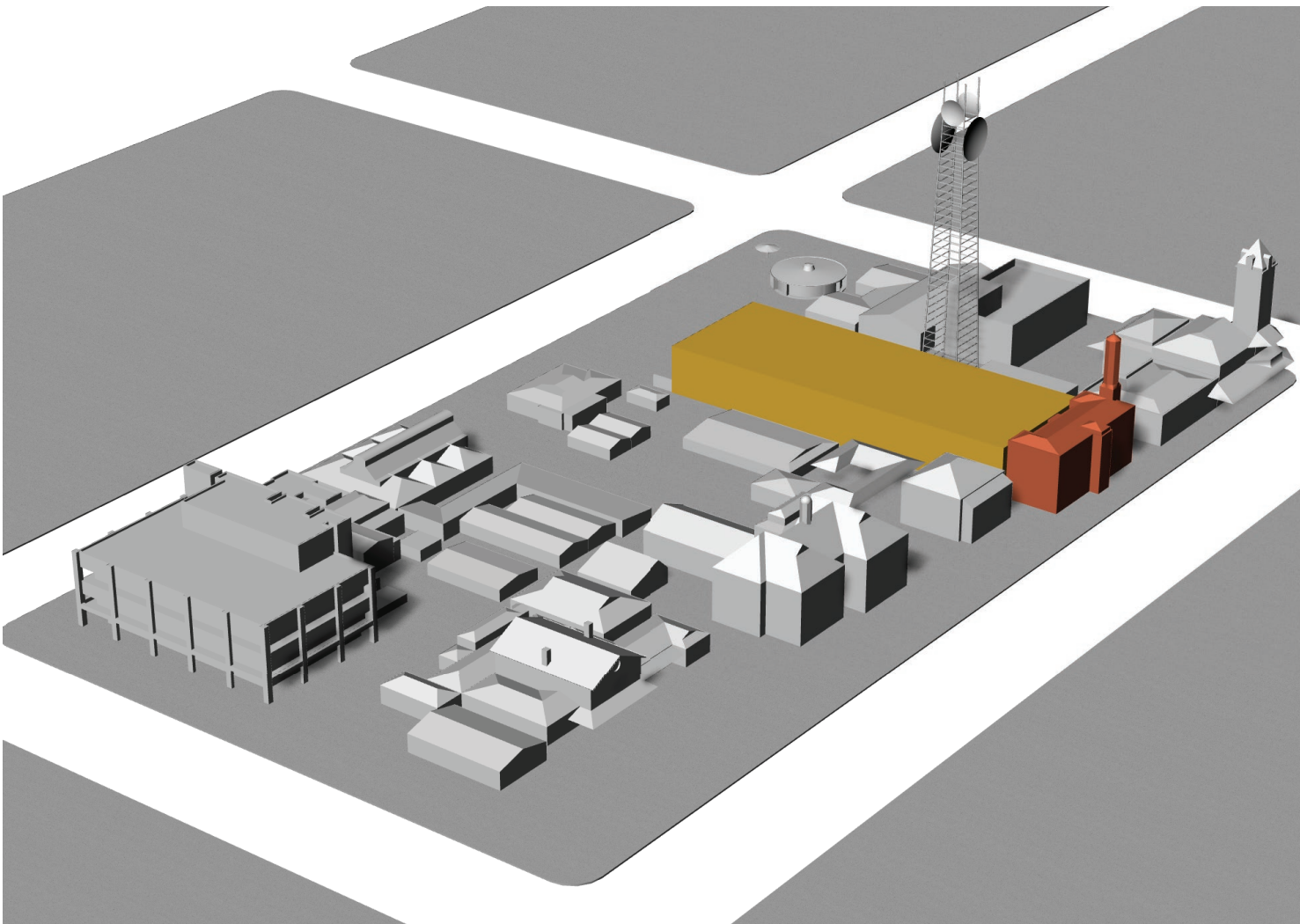
Come through the Town Hall façade directly into the new double height library / community hub living room. The new facility is built up to north-east boundary, allowing a through-site link to Blende Street along the south-west, with access to parking on the old police site. The rear of the library looks into a shaded public garden, capitalising on existing mature trees already in this part of the site. The new facility connects into the old library that has been partly demolished to create the public garden. The retained portion is repurposed as an archive, with a great compactus store on the ground floor, the old fire station as the public archive space, and workspaces upstairs. The Blende Street façade is both restored and adapted, as entry to the archive is now via the new library. The roundhouse amenities are upgraded, complementing new public toilets within the library.



- existing buildings
- library
- covered outdoor
- through site link
- future through site link
- parking
- library entry

Principles;

- ✓ - locate library and archive together
- ✗ - build upon reputation as Australia's first heritage listed city
- ✗ - be resourceful by reusing parts of the existing library building
- ✗ - provide easy access to parking
- ✓ - reinforce activity on Argent Street
- ✗ - strengthen address to Blende Street
- ✓ - define single public entry point
- ✓ - embrace and activate the Town Hall facade
- ✗ - create useful public space
- ✗ - retain strong urban edges
- ✓ - manage views
- ✗ - activate new public outdoor space with library entry



SPATIAL STRATEGY #4
Potential

Come through the Town Hall façade on Argent Street directly into the new facility – library, community hub and archive. The rear of the new facility looks across a landscaped parking edge where the old library building once stood, to the Civic Centre. The removal of the old library building erodes the urban edge to Blende Street and places the parking at some distance to the new front door on Argent.

7.4 CLIMATE + SUSTAINABILITY

Through innovation and collaborative design, we deliver strategic local solutions that create memorable and lasting places grounded in principles of flexibility and long-term sustainability, generating value for future generations.

We will use the UN Sustainable Development Goals to guide the design. Overall the development will seek to educate and enable local community to interact with sustainable strategies include:

Zero Energy strategies that address smart energy distribution, production and renewable technology in building systems that enable the education in sustainable and secure energy futures.

Regenerative water strategies, including impacts of site landscaping, space availability, collection, reduction, reuse and treatment.

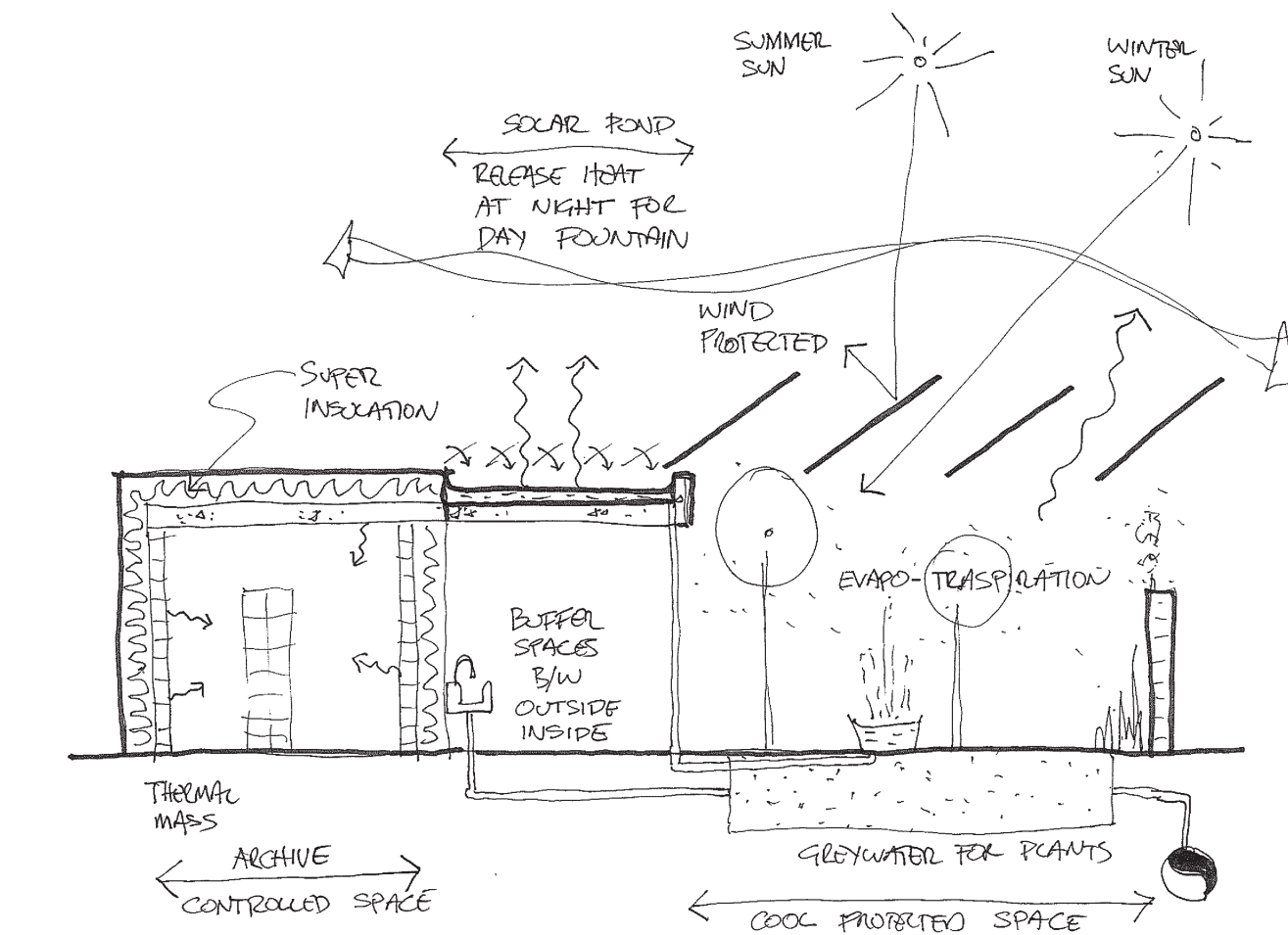
Circular Economy - site wide waste and reuse strategies including impacts of space allocation, storage, sorting and treatment. Considered approach to using only locally sourced and reused materials from inactive sites along with cradle to cradle material selection.

Healthy Environment - design of building elements, external microclimates and passive design solutions. Provide analysis and innovative design based on wind, sun, comfort, vegetation, water, humidity, noise, pollution, and lead remediation.

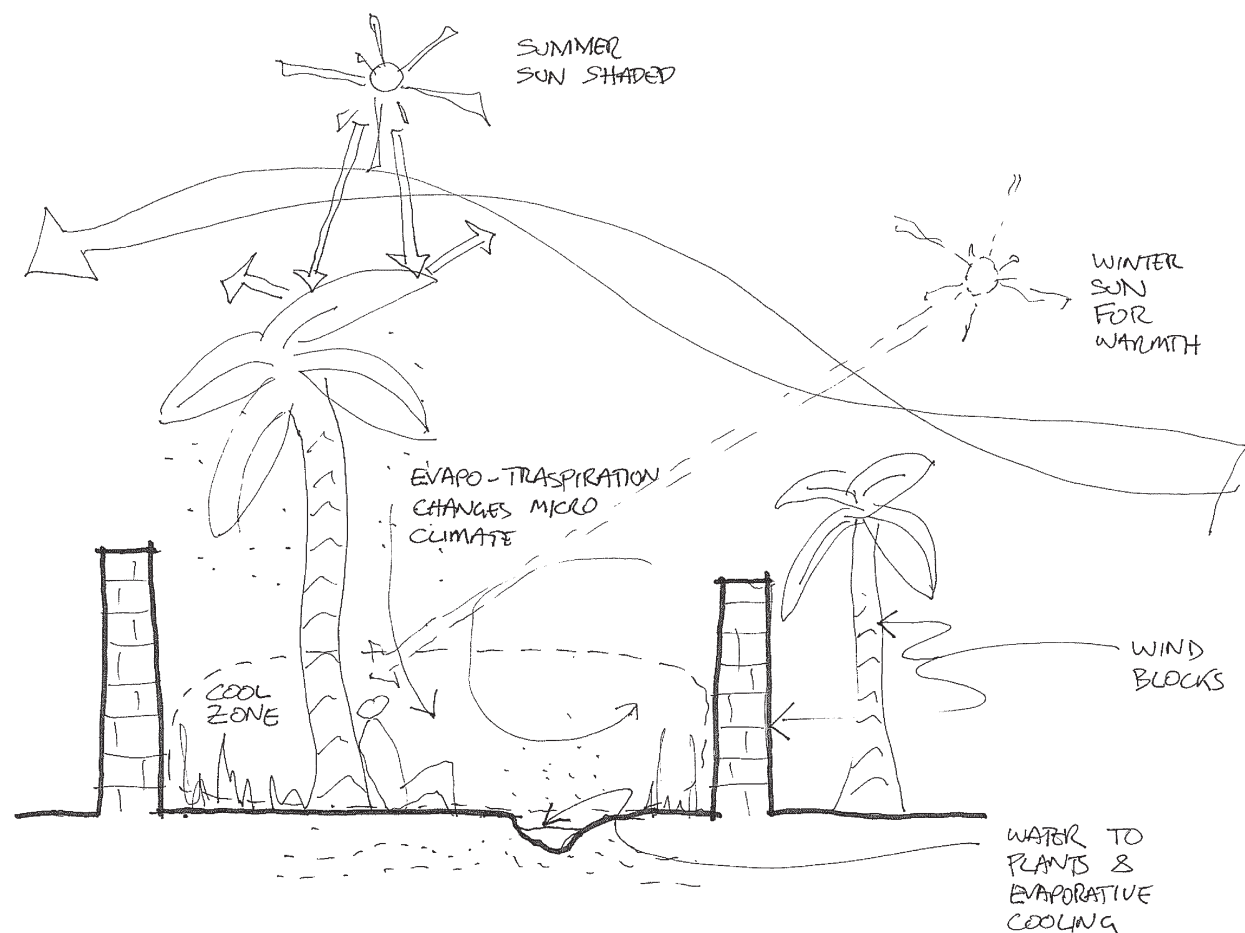
Better Landscapes - strategies that address community use and integration, providing real technical benefits in water treatment and improved microclimates.

Resilient Design - assessment of materials, products and structures for potential impacts across their life span. Resilience and reuse from construction to redevelopment and strategies for masterplanning under future climate scenarios,

Local Economy – Develop library program and tools to enable community access to knowledge and training for new skills development. May include fast internet access, flexible spaces for maker space use, digital access and touch down. The building procurement will seek to provide a skills training opportunity for youth and local community.



Microclimates within the facility are provided to match the function of each space. Providing controlled space where required, and more relaxed conditions where acceptable. Archives will have tighter control with super efficient systems and insulation. Buffer spaces provide a transition space for patrons to the adjacent outdoor space.



Passive design of outdoor spaces provide comfort for patrons without the use of energy intensive air conditioning systems. Provision of shading during warmer times water features will create an oasis like environment in the city landscape, and be an attractor for locals and tourists alike.

7.5 LANDSCAPE



grapevines & jasmine hanging screens,
streets of old damascus.
source: farahmahbub.com



volubilis visitor centre, meknes morocco, kilo
architectures
source: sbd



amangiri resort, utah usa, rick joy, marwan al-sayed,
& wendell burnette
source: nic lehoux photographer

A community gathering space, the Library will complement the nearby Town Square. Becoming a key part of a civic spine that extends along Chloride Street connecting the Railway Station, Welcome Walk, The Town Square, Old Town Hall, the new Library, Civic Centre, Sturt Park and at a city-scale north to Broken Hill Hospital.

Small scale initiatives increasing site permeability and open space connections include the extension of pedestrian links along Argent Lane into the proposed Library carpark on the Police Station site and a possible through site link giving a more direct passage to Sturt Park from Blende Street and the Library.

New laneways, courtyards and roof top terraces can transform the experience of the library. Part circulation, part viewing gardens, part break out spaces, these varying landscapes mark the transition between inside and out. Trees, arbors, ponds and water features temper the air and draw coolness into threshold spaces:

- Making places for lingering and meeting others.
- Places where eyes can relax from reading and take a long view.
- Places for stepping outside for conversation and refreshment.
- Places for talks and evening events.
- Places that can increase focus and support creativity and learning.

Like the wells and waterholes that sustained the Wiljakali in these desert lands for millennia, the library and community hub will be the new urban spring and meeting place in Broken Hill- for locals and visitors.

Initiatives - Argent Street Library:

- retain existing trees and integrate with new building where possible
- new garden courtyards and seating offer connection to nature and the outdoors even in summer
- a water body enables evaporative cooling of the building and internal courtyards
- roof terraces for use on winter days and summer evenings
- shaded carparks and garden laneways through the adjoining buildings to Sulphide Street
- bike parking

7.6 PUBLIC ART STRATEGIES

10 different possible approaches to public art in the cultural precinct.

ART WORKING HAND-IN-HAND WITH HERITAGE TO TELL LOCAL STORIES



Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller
The City of Forking Paths, 2014
Video/audio walk
66 mins
Commissioned by the 19th Biennale of Sydney as a City of Sydney legacy artwork as part of the City Art Collection
Image: City of Sydney

PLACING ART UP HIGH



Mike Hewson
Illawarra Placed Landscape, 2018
(palm tree view)
Sandstone, palm trees (*Livistona australis*), structural steel, irrigation systems, truck straps, swing, soft fall
230m (length of mall)
Permanent site-specific installation, Crown Street Mall, Wollongong

ART BILLBOARD



David Shrigley
How Are You Feeling?, 2012
High Line Art billboard commission, New York, 5 April – 7 May 2012
Image: Blake Gopnik

PROJECTIONS IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING



Nicole Foreshow
born in darkness before dawn, 2013
(still)
Pigi projection transparency
Approx. 13 mins
Projection on the façade of the Australian Museum, Sydney, 20 November 2013 – 20 February 2014
Image: Alt Media

NEW FORMS OF FIGURATION BY ARTISTS WORKING NOW



Francis Upritchard
Wetwang Slack, 2018 (installation view)
The Curve, Barbican Centre, London, 27 September 2018 – 6 January 2019
Image: Angul Mill

Artworks like *The City of Forking Paths*, a commission of City of Sydney and Biennale of Sydney, by Janet Cardiff (born 1955 Brussels, Canada, lives and works in Berlin, Germany, and Grindrod, Canada) and George Bures Miller (born 1960, Vegreville, Canada, lives and works in Berlin and Grindrod) are walks that artists use to bring heritage to life. *Forking* plays out in The Rocks, Dawes Point and Millers Point neighbourhoods of Sydney. People take the walk with the aid of their devices; artist Janet Cardiff directs the walk in the soundtrack. The scene in real time ahead of participants as they walk is the same scene they see on their devices, with one difference: neighbourhood habitués from a range of historical eras, who seem very real, come in and out of the screen to speak.

Art placed up high is inspiring. It encourages people to look up; in looking up, their mood is elevated. Art up high is visible and can act as a beacon to attract people. A crab tree palm found such a 'hi-vis' home atop a light pole in Wollongong's Crown Street Mall as part of a work by Mike Hewson (born 1976 Dunedin, New Zealand, lives and works in Melbourne). Locals now use the palm as an orientation marker and meeting place. Art like this is a new kind of flag that is proud, celebratory and of symbolic value.

A billboard in a fixed location will become known as a surface on which cool things happen; word spreads, and people start to follow it, watching with great interest for the next iteration. Billboard projects have their own recent art history, with projects undertaken by the City of Sydney, and by High Line Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

Commissions for a billboard can be awarded on a rotating basis to share the opportunity with a number of artists. It is a wonderful format, especially for younger artists who can experiment with new ideas and imagery without the pressure of making art that has to last and be viable for all time.

Nicole Foreshow (Wiradjuri, born 1982 Sydney, lives and works in regional New South Wales) makes film works that tell the stories of her country through the perspective of the women in her family. She was the first artist to be commissioned by curator Hetti Perkins for Eora Journey, the City of Sydney's important initiative to commission permanent works by Aboriginal artists for the Sydney public domain. For *born in darkness before dawn* (2013) Foreshow took images of the women she is close to and projected them onto the façade of the Australian Museum; the women were dressed in cloaks she had sewn together from plant materials she had gathered. In the work *Garrawarra* (2017) for Wynscreen at Wynyard Station, Sydney, she examined the relationship between women and cultural objects – such as string, shell and bone – from major museum collections, dating from pre-European contact to today. Foreshow's knowledge of minerals, developed through a 2014 NSW Aboriginal Arts Fellowship that paired her with scientists at the Australian Museum, could be drawn on to create an artwork for Broken Hill.

Figuration is an ancient art form being revised by artists working today. In the hands of female artists like Francis Upritchard (born 1976 New Plymouth, New Zealand, lives and works in London), figurative art is bold and colourful, surprising and irreverent. Irreverence quickly becomes constructively disruptive if one imagines figures by Upritchard interspersed amidst the bronze busts, all male, lining the walkway leading into the Broken Hill City Council chambers.

7.6 PUBLIC ART STRATEGIES

SMALL, PERSONALISED INTERVENTIONS - MAKER SPACES



Tracy Emin
The Distance of Your Heart, 2018
68 hand-made bronze birds placed on façades, in doorways, on railings and under park benches in Bridge and Grosvenor Streets and Macquarie Place park, Sydney. A commission for the Sydney city centre
Commissioner: City of Sydney
Project curator: Barbara Flynn,
Curatorial Advisor to the City of Sydney for the City Centre Photo: Katherine Griffiths

MAKING THE CASE FOR A FOCUS ON ABORIGINAL ART AND CULTURE



Jonathan Jones delivering a lunchtime lecture as part of *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)*, 2016
32nd Kaldor Public Art Project, Royal Botanic Garden Sydney,
17 September – 3 October 2016
Photo: Peter Grieg

ARTISTS WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES



Theaster Gates with colleagues at Dorchester Projects, Chicago, c. 2013
Photo: W Magazine

ARTISTS WORKING WITH LIBRARIES, TEXT AND BOOKS



Simryn Gill
A Suitable Boy, from the series *Pearls*, 1999
Glue, thread, pages of the book *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth
Photo: Ella Condon

LAND ART: MEANINGFUL WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS LANDSCAPE AND CITY



Michael Heizer
Levitated Mass, 2012
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles.
Image: Tom Vintez

Tracey Emin's (born 1963 Croyden, United Kingdom, lives and works in London) artwork *The Distance of Your Heart for Sydney (2018)*, comprised of 68 handmade bronze birds placed around Bridge and Grosvenor Streets in the northern part of the city, introduced the possibility of working in an anti-monumental way when making sculpture for a city. As Emin put it, 'Public sculpture can be about something really intimate and special. [Australia] is big but the birds [I have made] are tiny, delicate, fragile – just like we are as human beings.' The trace of an artist's hand in art leads to the realisation that someone made it and can add significantly to our experience of a work.

Maker spaces are popping up worldwide as part of a surge in interest in locally made objects and in making things by hand. One sees a lot of evidence of this in the current Asia Pacific Triennial in Brisbane (through 28 April 2019), and in other exhibitions and art world contexts. One can imagine populating Broken Hill's empty commercial building stock by offering residencies to makers whose art operates, like Emin's, on an intimate and personal scale.

Australia's Aboriginal people are uniquely placed to instruct us on the values of appreciating personal histories; respect for the land; and respect for elders, the family and one another. As beneficiaries of this culture, Aboriginal artists are practitioners of sensitivity and intelligence who make art embodying meanings that are worth conveying. Artists with connections to Broken Hill, such as Aboriginal elder Badger Bates and James Tylor, are well-placed to address Aboriginal culture and beliefs as they apply to the project.

Acting alongside the Broken Hill community, Jonathan Jones (Kamilaroi/Wiradjuri, born 1978 Sydney, lives and works in Sydney) could create a place for gathering and sharing, just as he did in the context of his seminal project *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)* of 2016, part of the Kaldor Public Art Projects series. For the duration of the project, daily talks at noon, held under a 200-year-old fig tree, connected a highly interested public with Aboriginal elders and other experts of both Aboriginal and European descent. The tree itself served as a metaphor for age and constancy, the traits of elders that one respects so greatly.

Some artists today work with communities as an art form. Theaster Gates (born 1973 Chicago, lives and works in Chicago) is one such individual whose iconoclastic and effective, grass-roots efforts to salvage the south side of Chicago have been recognised by the city's mayor, the University of Chicago and beyond. In 2006 Gates founded Dorchester Projects, which now comprises three vibrant locations – Archive House, Listening House and Black Cinema House. These once-abandoned buildings, located in a crime-ridden neighbourhood, were renovated by the artist using repurposed materials. The vision was to make the buildings viable again by giving them a purpose, and they now house collections important to the African-American community that were at risk of being lost, including 14,000 books from the Prairie Avenue Bookstore, and 8000 records from the legendary Dr Wax record store that closed down in 2010. Some people have asked if it is art or urban renewal. In communities in need, perhaps the designations do not matter.

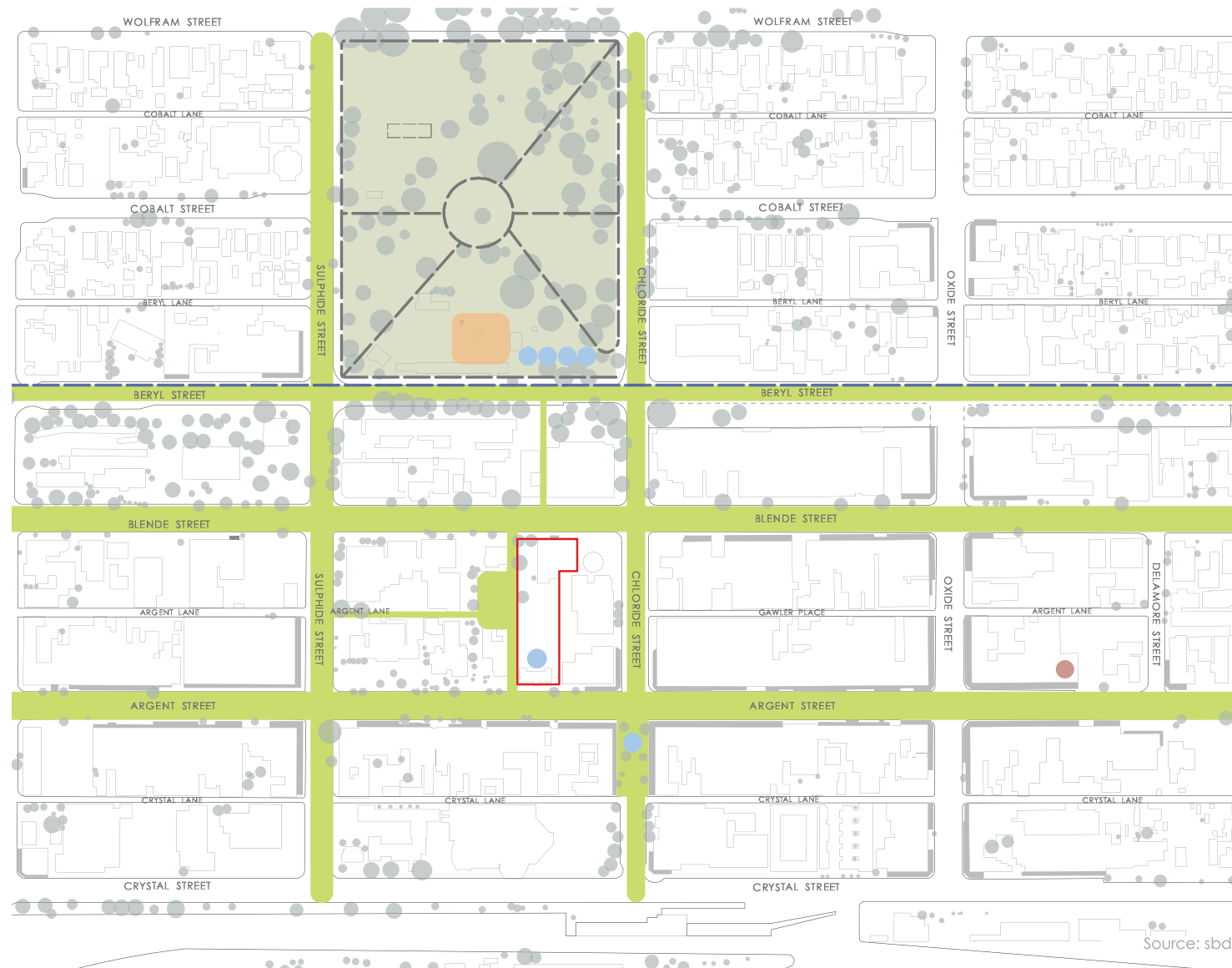
Simryn Gill (born 1959 Singapore, lives and works in Sydney and Port Dickson, Malaysia), through her *Pearls* series, has made works for specific individuals as an ongoing project throughout the years she has been practising as an artist. Gill will invite someone she likes or is interested in to nominate their favourite book, then she will 'cannibalise' it, cutting lines with a razor blade, kneading them with glue and threading them together into beads or pearls. The works were never marketed, only ever gifted and worn. The necklace shown was made in 1999 from the book *A Suitable Boy* written by Vikram Seth. A display by Gill in the new library would be an exciting initiative to help inaugurate the new facility.

Land art was a form of art developed from the 1960s onwards in the United Kingdom and the western United States that saw artists like Michael Heizer (born 1944 California, United States, lives and works in Nevada) working with industrial earthmoving equipment to move earth and place rock to make large-scale interventions in the landscape. It is an art form that would be a natural choice for Broken Hill, both in its landscape and its context as a former mining city. In 1977 Richard Long (born 1945 Bristol, United Kingdom, live and works in Bristol and London) visited Australia at the invitation of John Kaldor and set out from Sydney for Perth by train. The artist's main project at the time was making 100-mile walks alone that he would document in photography. The story goes that he had no particular stopping point in mind but simply got out when he saw a landscape that seemed suitable. That landscape was outside of Broken Hill. Long created the work *A Line in Australia* comprised of red stones set out in an unspecified location outside of the city and recorded as a colour photograph. There he took a succession of daily walks that added up to 100 miles.

8.0 SPINOFF STRATEGIES

8.1 SPINOFF STRATEGIES

OVERVIEW



OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT

Regeneration of vacant land within the city:

- improving green space networks and natural systems in a shrinking city
- using local vegetation for ecological resilience, dust suppression, climate mitigation
- adopting research projects to test soil remediation through street tree planting and urban agriculture programmes

Open space management:

- landscape is dependent on water recycling and reuse including black water reuse
- colocation of park facilities is required to focus resources across fewer but better maintained parklands with complementary programmes that enable day and night park usage
- an aging population will increase the demand for passive open space and informal recreation
- volunteer organisation are increasingly less able to contribute to park management.

REGIONAL ART GALLERY

The Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery is an important anchor on the North East part of the city centre, however the façades of the current gallery and workshop spaces are closed off to Argent St and disconnected from one another, separated by an external carpark. The entire street frontage requires reworking to elevate the presence of this public art gallery precinct and make visible its lively interior.

Additional signage would improve wayfinding to and around the gallery site as well as other to other destinations such as the Geocentre on the other side of town.

BEST FIT WITH EXISTING FABRIC

Looking at program options that best fit existing buildings to allow resourceful adaptive reuse and retention of building fabric throughout the city centre – the Old Bond Store (currently minerals museum) could easily suit artist workshops or a co-working space.

LOCAL WATER RECYCLING

Encouraging people recycle water on site – greywater collection for toilet flushing and gardens, co-locating Council nursery with the Wetland, collecting rainwater albeit infrequent, for gardens.

PUBLIC SPACES FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

Revitalising existing public spaces to make them open and accessible to everyone – Town Square, Sturt Park, etc.

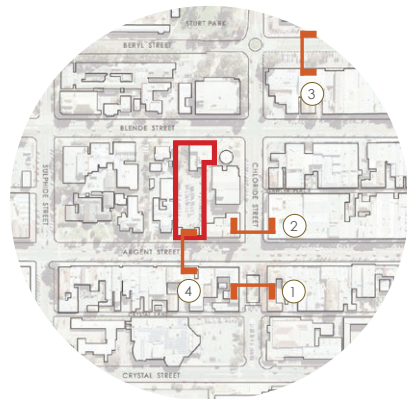
OPEN SHOPFRONTS

Activating streets in the city centre by enlivening shopfronts – shading to north-west façades via drop down blinds at the edge of street awnings and landscaping, would enable tinted glass to be clear double glazed, and infilled shopfronts to be opened.

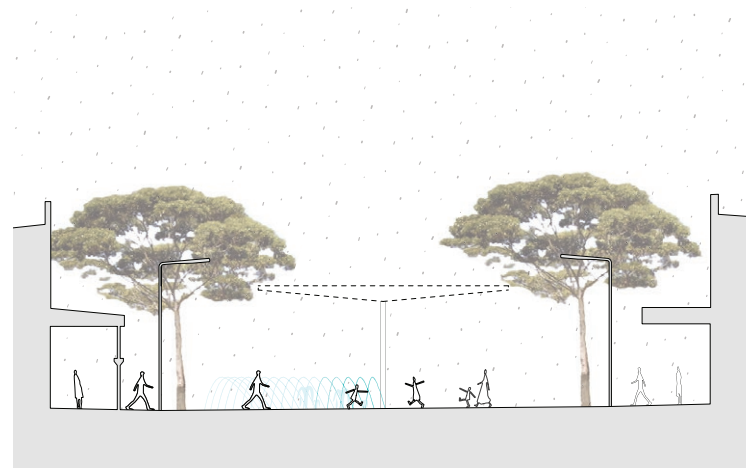


8.2 SPINOFF STRATEGIES

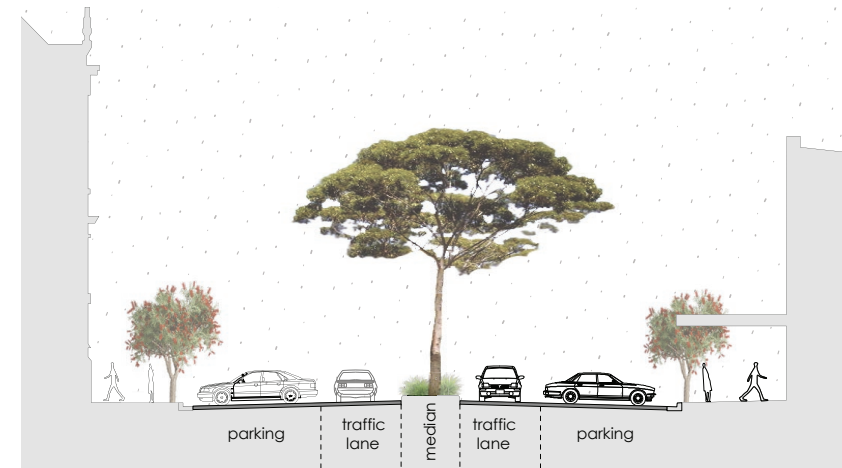
LANDSCAPE



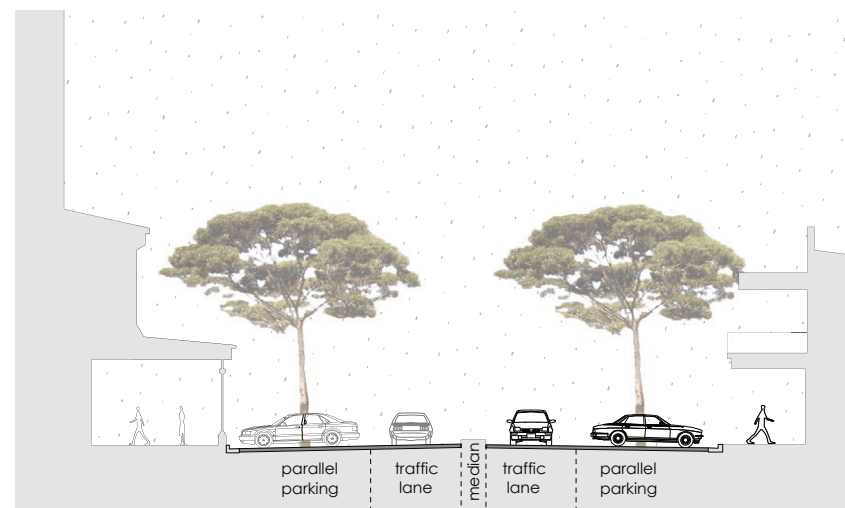
key plan



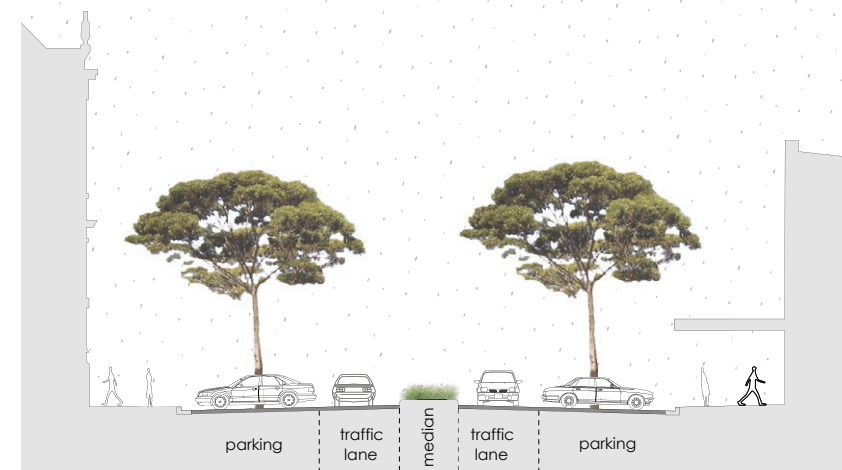
1 town square proposed



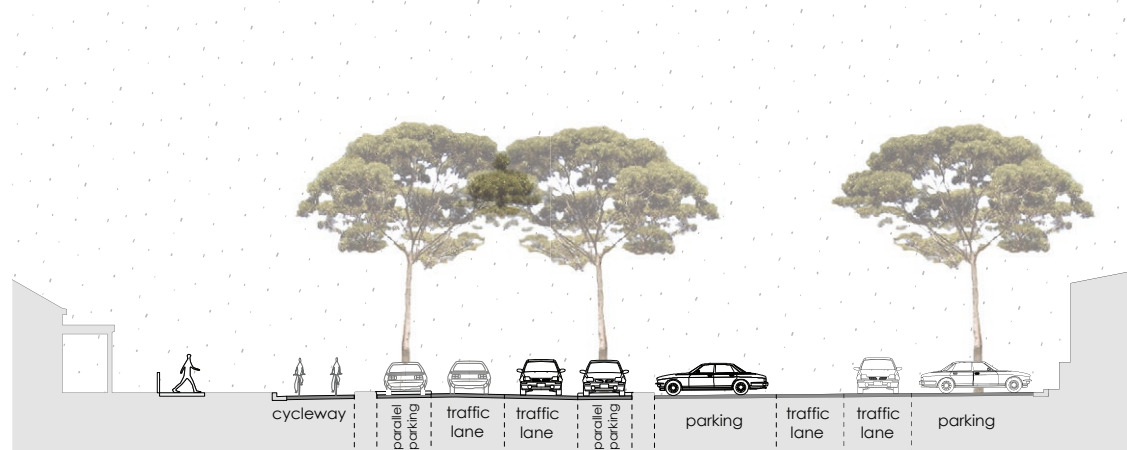
4 argent street option
- increased median with tree planting



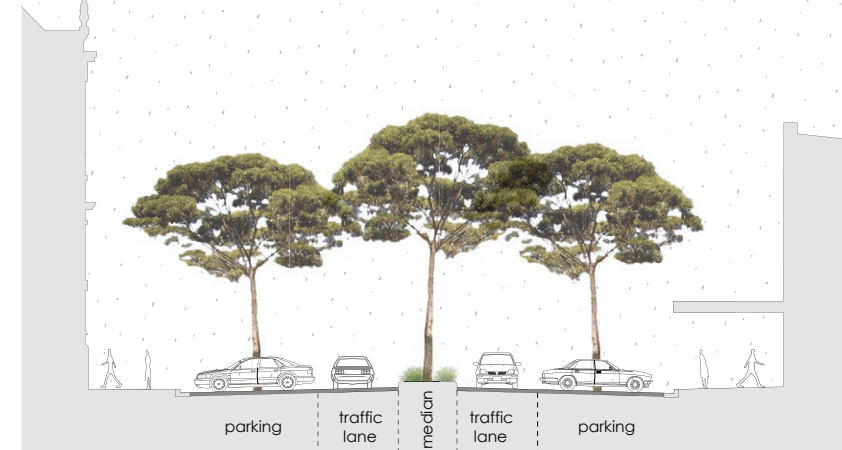
2 chloride street proposed
- tree planting in parking bays



4 argent street option
- tree planting in parking bays



3 beryl street proposed
- parking & separated cycleway



4 argent street option
- tree planting in increased median & parking bays

These sections explore the impact of street tree plantings on shade provision along key streets, and depict indicative conditions rather than specific species.

PUBLIC DOMAIN REVITALISATION

The new Library and Community Hub will occupy the carpark site between the Old Town Hall Building on Argent Street and the City Library on Blende Street. A new entry on Argent Street through the historic Town Hall Building giving greater energy, presence and connectivity to the civic precinct. Sparking connections across the city grid to the Town Square and to Sturt Park. The two key public spaces on the civic axis of Broken Hill.

Both spaces will in time be renewed and reinvigorated, making complementary public open spaces for community gathering and recreation. Key initiatives for these spaces could be:

Town Square + Welcome Walk:

- new verandah to the Hotel
- new perimeter shade trees and raingardens
- a central shade structure for immediate cover
- a continuous ground plane
- an ephemeral water feature for children's play
- new seating, bike parking, and lighting
- a shareway and angle parking along Chloride Street south of Crystal Lane

Sturt Park:

- removal of unwanted buildings and fences
- review of the Community Hall facilities and markets
- new community facilities in line with a recreational needs study, play spaces, fitness equipment, possible basketball courts, outdoor performance space
- new seating
- more shade trees
- a series of ephemeral pools and rain gardens that capture and treat stormwater runoff on Beryl Street within the park

A programme of street tree planting as part of these public domain renewals would strengthen the connections between public spaces and establish a network of cool streets on active transport routes across Broken Hill:

South-North Streets:

Chloride Street

- from The Railway Station on Crystal St to Cummins St

Bromide Street

- from the Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum on Crystal St to Cummins St

West-East Streets:

Argent Street

- along the main street from Gossan St to Iodide St

Blende Street

- from Galena St or Kaolin St to Iodide St to signify the original Railway Line to Adelaide
- now decommissioned

Beryl Street

- along the cycleway from Galena St to Iodide St while also structuring and shading carparking

8.2 SPINOFF STRATEGIES

STREET TREES



These trees reflect the preferred species list for planting on private land as outlined in the Broken Hill Development Control Plan [2016].

These selected trees and further species suitable for street tree planting should be explored, focusing on species suitable for an arid climate which provide a distinctive character to proposed street tree plantings.



8.2 SPINOFF STRATEGIES

STREET TREES



9.0 NEXT STEPS

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

This report synthesises all findings and early directions for the design of the Community Hub/Library. It is important that Council review and comment on this draft as this information and analysis will form the basis of future design work as it develops and is shared in the Concept Design phase of the project. It is worth noting that this Cultural Framework and Synopsis report will be shared with the community and discussed during the community day slated to take place on Feb 11, 2019. We anticipate a variety of views to come forward through this formal engagement with the community but we are confident that our approach to the design is based on strong insights from consultation and on our professional experience as a multi-disciplinary team. We can make adjustments where necessary then but this report is the foundation for the direction we embark on as part of the Concept Design.