

Public Realm Plan

Prepared in conjunction with Williams Ross Architects for Wollondilly Shire Council

# **Quality Assurance**

Wollondilly Community, Cultural, & Civic Precinct Public Realm Plan

Prepared by Williams Ross Architects and Tract Consultants for Wollondilly Shire Council

Project Number [320-0230--U-01-RP05]

Revision (see below) [01a]

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Issued 28 October 2020

#### **Revisions**

Rev	Issued	Details	Prepared By	Reviewed By	Project Principal
00	16 September 2020	Public Realm Plan	CW	JO/JR	JR
Ola	28 October 2020	Public Realm Plan	CW	JO/JR	JR



# **Contents**

1	INTRODUCTION	04
2	EMERGING THEMES	06
3	PRECINCT ANALYSIS	12
4	THE PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS	14
5	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	15
6	DEFINING THE PUBLIC REALM	16
7	THE PUBLIC REALM MASTER PLAN	20
8	CIVIC FORECOURT	26
9	SHIRE HALL FORECOURT	28
10	DESTINATIONAL BAR	30
11	CIVIC LINK	32
12	VILLAGE GREEN	34
13	CHILDRENS PLAY ZONE	36
14	OUTDOOR STUDIO/MARKET/EVENTS SPACE	38
15	ARTS LANEWAY	40
16	BUILDING FORM & EXPRESSION	42
17	VILLAGE GREEN benchmarking	45

Tract 28 October 2020 03 / 52

#### INTRODUCTION

#### Introduction

The Wollondilly Community, Cultural and Civic Precinct site is situated in Picton area, Wollondilly Shire, New South Wales, around 80km south west of Sydney CBD. It is a visionary project by Wollondilly Shire Council.

The project will greatly enhance the local Picton community through the renewal of its cultural and civic heart - architecturally, economically and socially.

#### **Project Purpose**

The primary purpose of the Wollondilly Community, Cultural & Civic Precinct Public Realm Plan is to provide strategic direction and guidelines for the future design and development of the precinct public space.

This lays out the overall design principles and important design themes which emerged from site analysis and background research.

It also defines the key public open spaces within the precinct, including the Civic Forecourt, Shire Hall Forecourt, Destination Bar, Civic Link, Village Green, Children's Play Zone, Outdoor Studio/Market/Events Space and Arts Laneway.

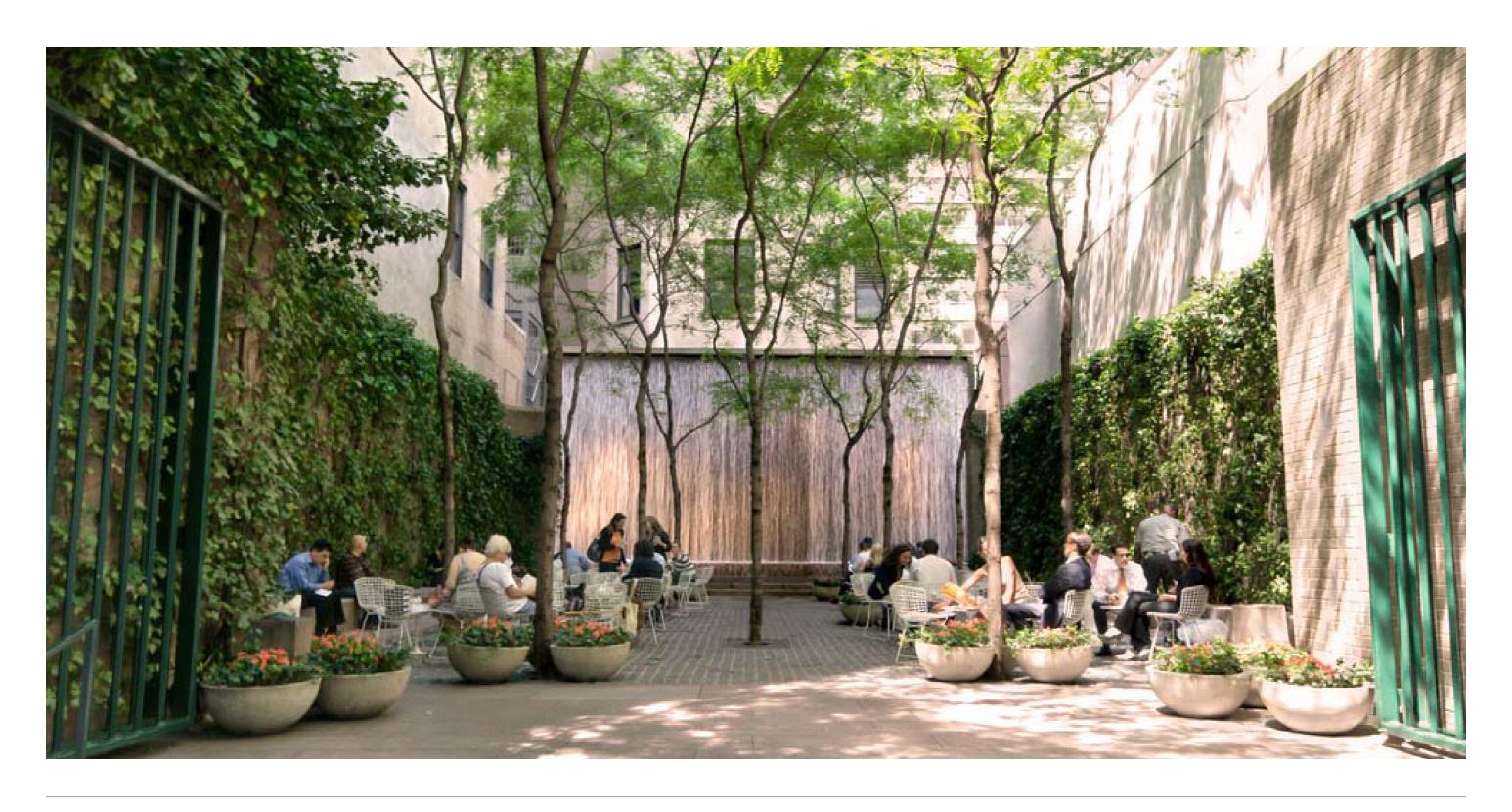
These spaces will cater to a wide array of community uses and civic activities, and have been expanded with key programming opportunities and design ideas, detailing the future direction of their unique functionalities and characters.

The overall public realm design and palette of recommendations also ties in with the functionality and design of the proposed built form, delivering a holistic precinct approach both spatially and visually.

A benchmarking study of village greens is also provided to allow for an understanding of the size and scale of the built form and open spaces, relative to other benchmark projects.



Tract 28 October 2020 04 / 52



Tract 28 October 2020 05 / 52

#### 2 EMERGING THEMES

#### **Placemaking**

Great public spaces are the backbone of strong communities. The precinct will be embedded in the community's everyday experiences, and will become the preferred backdrop for daily activities. Here's some of the everyday experiences that visitors to the precinct will enjoy;

- Casual exchange with a neighbour when walking through the precinct
- Meeting friends for lunch
- Hanging out after school
- Dropping into a gallery opening
- Safe space for small kids to play
- Stopping in for a coffee
- Walking the dog through the precinct
- Watching an outdoor performance
- Strolling through an artisan or arts market













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#### Indigenous History

Wollondilly Shire is the Country of the Dharawal, Gundungurra and Dharug People. Elements of the local stories are woven into the precinct to contribute to the local sense of place.

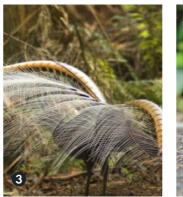
Interpretation Opportunities;

- Community & gathering place -Contemporary Yarning Circle
- Seasonal change Local Indigenous plantings & bush tucker inspired plants
- Texture/colour/pattern references to Totem animals - the water dragon (strong sense of community/connection to water) and Lyrebird
- Virtual story telling, public art & interpretative signage opportunities
- O Naming & identification of key public spaces















## **European History**

Local historical societies have rich archives that reveal the layers of Wollondilly's social and cultural heritage. There is opportunity to bring these stories out of the archives and into the public realm.

Interpretation Opportunities;

- Series of site specific public artworks - reference Wollondilly's migrant stories & rich mix of people/ community stories
- 'History window' display space embedded in the Library facade programmed by the Historical Societies
- **3** Contemporary interpretation of local materials
- Virtual story telling
- **3** Interpretative signage opportunities













# Wollondilly's Water Story

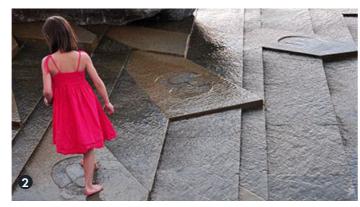
# Water is embedded in Wollondilly's cultural, social and landscape stories.

Interpretation Opportunities;

- Kinetic & ephemeral artworks
  that symbolise water flows and spiritual
  connections to the surrounding river and
  dam systems
- 2 Utilising site levels for interactive water play elements
- 3 Revealing water infrastructure such as water harvesting & WSUD interventions
- Virtual representations of water such as digital projections and lighting displays (targeted at youth programming)
- Water flows as a natural wayfinding device

















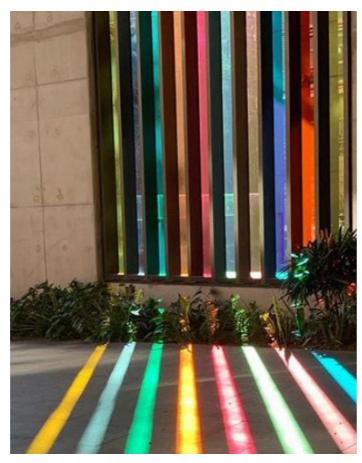


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#### Arts & Culture

The Precinct will become home to Wollondilly's vibrant arts and cultural scene. Support local talents and the breadth of artistic practice by providing engagement opportunities for emerging and established artists.

- **Embed artistic practice** in the public realm reimagine the past with a contemporary lens (words, textures, materials)
- Free outdoor performances & displays
- Wollondilly Un-Contained
   program of local guest curators holding temporary exhibitions to generate interest as the precinct evolves
- Put the arts and creative practice on display - hands on experiences/ opening up artists studios/making the Historical Society's visible
- **Top Arts** involve schools in the arts programming

















#### 3 PRECINCT ANALYSIS

The study area is know as the Wollondilly Shire Community, Cultural and Civic Precinct. The site for the future Cultural, Civic and Community Precinct is currently used for Council administrative and services, as well as retail, child care and car parking. The Stone Masons are currently located between the Picton Rural Fire Brigade Building and the Colden Street car park.

The Precinct (indicated by the red boundary in Figure 1 opposite) is located in the centre of Picton and is bounded by three streets:

- Menangle Street to the south,
- Colden Street to the east,
- Corbett Lane to the north

Argyle Street, the main street in Picton is located to the west of the Precinct. The key pedestrian access points are;

- Menangle Street, via the Arts Laneway or Civic Link,
- From the northern car parking areas, or
- From the east along Corbett Lane.

Picton's undulating landscape provides a picturesque backdrop to the Precinct. Picton slopes downward in a south westerly direction from Vault Hill in the north east. The Precinct is located to the east of the reactively flat Town Centre.

Across the precinct there is a gentle fall from east to west. This provides an opportunity to use the slope as an integrated landscape feature, particularly in the Village Green. The different site levels present a challenge for the various new buildings and their seamless interface with the surrounding public realm.

The new buildings in the Precinct have large footprints. The site coverage, height and massing of the new buildings influences the local microclimate within the Precinct.

The prevailing winds tend to come from the south. These winds, in conjunction with the southern aspect will keep the Shire Hall Forecourt area cool in summer. The Village Green will be more protected and will also benefit from a northern aspect. This will mean the outdoor space will experience sun throughout the day for most of the year.

The aim of the Public Realm Plan is to respond to these local conditions in a way that creates a comfortable and welcoming precinct. Site responsive design will create the conditions that encourage people to use the spaces throughout the day and in all seasons and weather conditions.

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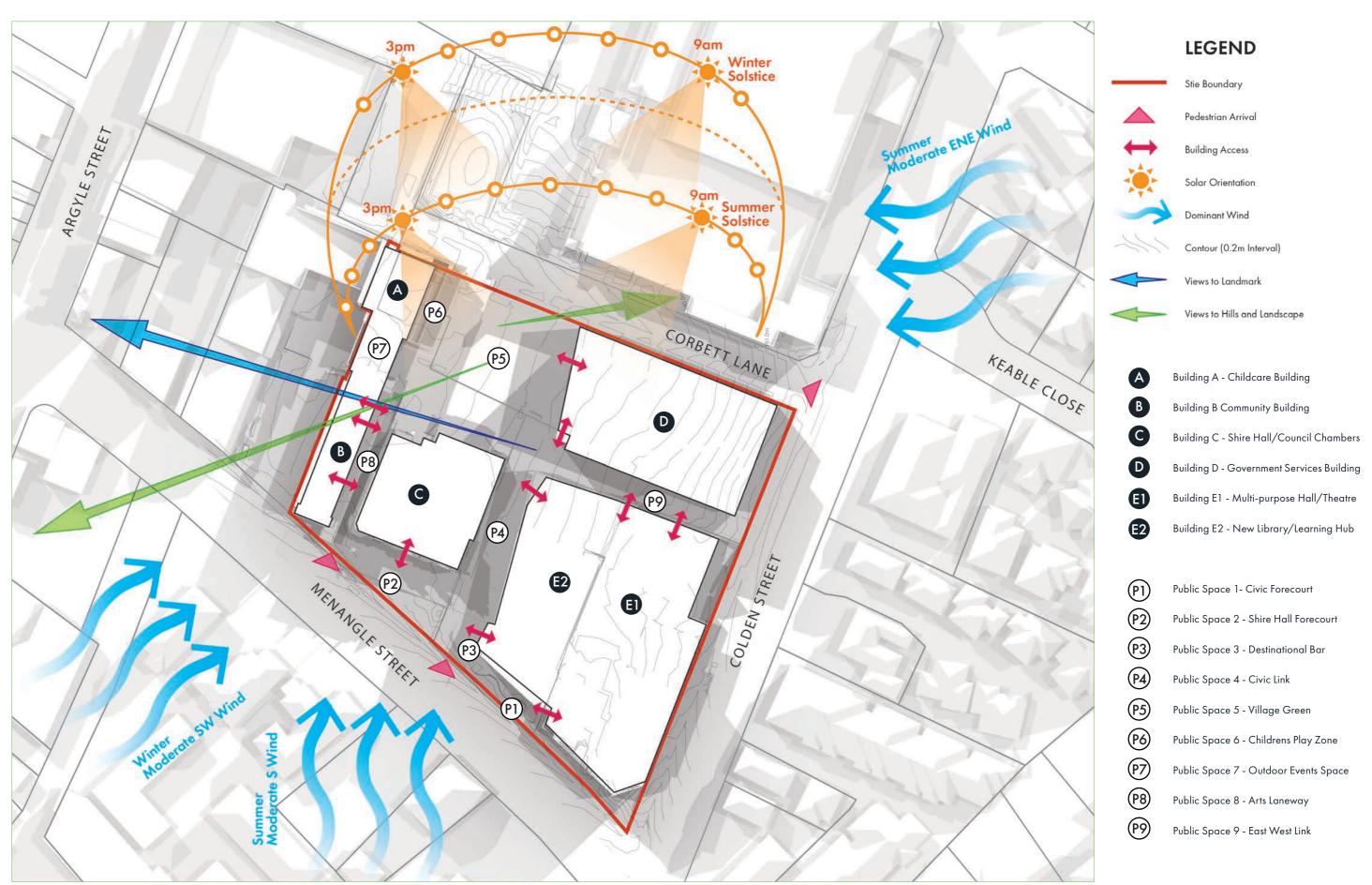


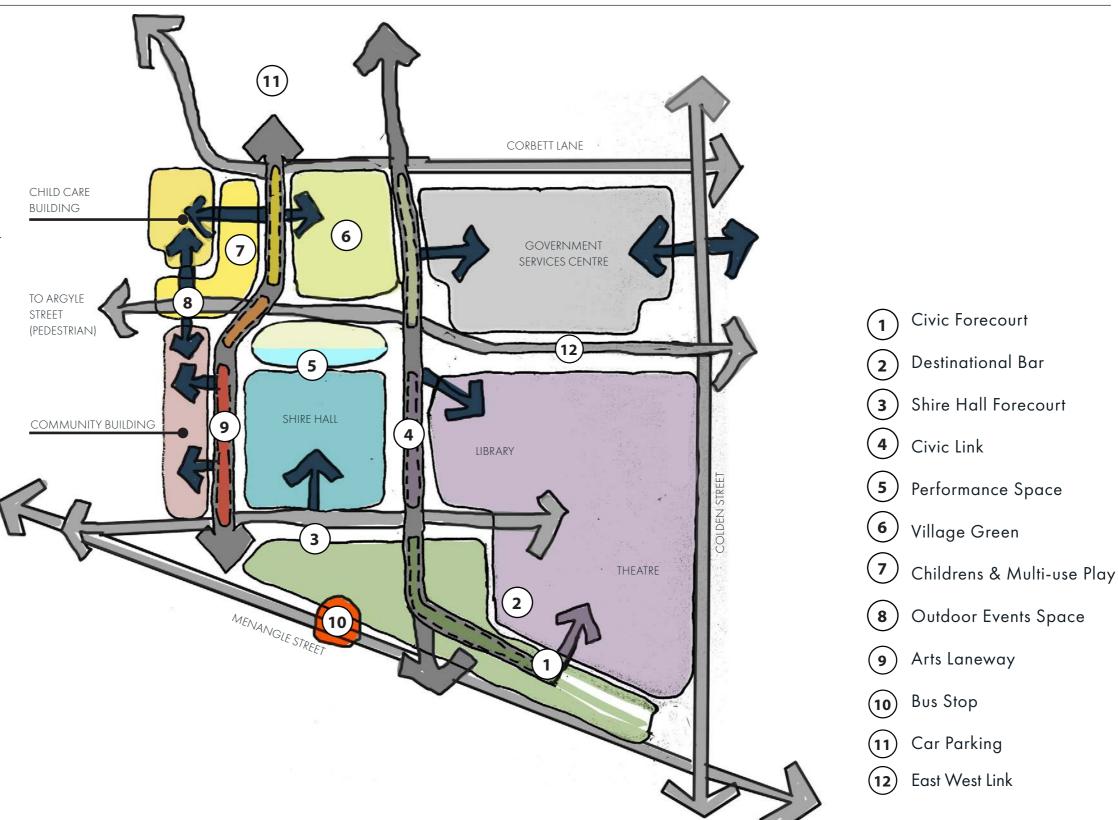
Figure 1. Precinct Analysis Plan

# 4 THE PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS

This diagram is not intended to propose a definitive layout structure but merely provide a simple summary of the priority relationships and broad urban design principles.

The diagram reveals;

- A balance between indoor and outdoor spaces,
- Key organisational adjacencies, and
- Pedestrian permeability.



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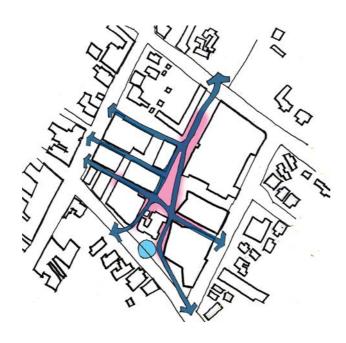
#### 5 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

#### Fine Grain Scale



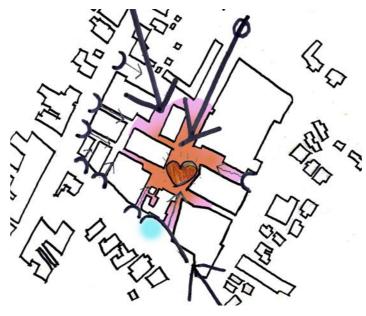
- Respond to 'Old' Picton's fine grained heritage buildings.
- Break up the large buildings blocks to create an urban structure that is more in keeping with the scale of the surrounding town centre.
- Reduce the building footprint size to create a finer grain urban structure within the precinct.
- Create a harmonious balance between internal functions and a series of meaningful outdoor public space areas.

#### **Movement Corridors**



- Align movement corridors with pedestrian desire lines provides the opportunity to create natural flows of people contributing to both activation of the precinct and the town centre street life.
- Create multi-functional movement corridors that provide direct access routes for those people moving through the precinct whilst creating interesting experiences for visitors to the precinct.
- Provide opportunities when moving through the precinct to get an understanding of the internal activities and functions.

#### Finding the Heart



A Network of Spaces



- Provide cues to direct people into the heart of the precinct (elements could include interesting building edges and street interfaces and public realm materials and detailing).
- Create a transition experience as visitors move from the external streetscape into the internal Village Green.
- Utilise a comprehensive and integrated signage and wayfinding strategy to provide the best user experience.

- Provide a range of outdoor spaces with different roles, functions and experiences.
- Support adjacent internal building activities and functions.
- Locate public space on movement corridors.

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#### 6 DEFINING THE PUBLIC REALM

### **Unifying Elements**

The unique look and feel of the Precinct will be created through the considered curation of landscaping elements and materials.

The selection of materials and plant palette, street furniture, lighting and signage will be based on the ability to procure elements that reference the many layers of the Wollondilly story.

#### Materials

- Materiality will compliment the architectural palette enabling a seamless integration between interior and exterior spaces
- Introduce permeable paving treatments where possible to reduce run-off and improve soil biology and tree health
- High quality and durable materials
- Material colours will reference local conditions
- Textures will provide a tactile experience



Precast concrete plank paver



Precast concrete plank paver - permeable application



Textured insitu concrete - retaining / seating edges



Crushed rock - infill and edging



Crushed rock - permeable pavement and tree surround



Corten weathering steel - feature / retaining walls

Tract 28 October 2020 16 / 52

#### **Street Furniture**

- Street furniture elements will share a design language and contribute visually to the precinct
- Seating opportunities will be integrated into building edges
- Informal and sculptural play elements
- Seating materials will be concrete or stone, delivering a clean and robust look



Seating furniture



Sculpture / incidental play



Sculpture / incidental play



Other Amenity. Cycle Hoops /



Artist seating design



Seating Material

Tract 28 October 2020 17 / 52

#### **Plant Palette**

- Species selection will create visual continuity
- Deciduous species will contribute a sense of the seasons and allow for winter sun
- Local indigenous species will be used in highlight areas
- Use planting to help define spaces and create intimate scale







Deciduous canopies



Native, more open canopies



Reed bed filter planting



Climbing plants to selected edges

#### Lighting

- Suspended catenary atmospheric event lighting
- Lighting integrated into the ground plane
- Feature neon lights & signs to walls and covered spaces
- Potential landscape lighting to existing large tree & new plantings
- Incorporate Smart Poles for their lighting and other digital capabilities such as Wi-Fi and touch panel.



Overhead catenary lighting



Lighting integrated into the ground plane



Feature signage & lighting



Smart Pole

# **Public Art Opportunities**

- Embed artistic practice in the public realm
- Outdoor performances & displays
- Pop ups and temporary exhibitions
- Precinct wide arts programming
- Potential locations include Civic Forecourt, Village Green and Arts Laneway



Site specific ephemeral artworks



Artwork embedded in the ground plane



Overhead art displays



Precinct as a site specific exhibition space



Building facade as canvas

Tract 28 October 2020 18 / 52

## Signage & Wayfinding

- Use the public realm and buildings as intuitive way-finding devices
- Embed arts 'vibe' in formal signage
- Incorporate interpretations, precinct markers, entrance identifications as suggested in the Wollondilly Cultural,

Community and Civic Precinct Masterplan Signage Strategy











## **Activation Opportunities**

- Different types of temporary furniture for events use
- Space for food trucks and events infrastructure
- Community programming











# Interactive Play Elements

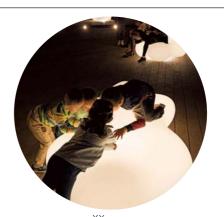
- Sculptural play elements
- Fun and safe landscape features
- Games for all ages











19 / 52

28 October 2020

#### 7 THE PUBLIC REALM MASTER PLAN

#### A single unifying sense of place

Public urban places facilitate the public life of towns and their communities. The public realm masterplan builds on Council's earlier co-design work with the local community to facilitate the creation of a single unifying sense of place at the heart of Picton. The master plan has emerged from this work and our understanding of the community, cultural and civic life of the Wollondilly region. The Wollondilly country side and landscape is also bought to life within the precinct using playful references such as the curvilinear forms and planting palette inspired by the Nepean River.

The masterplan is mindful of the way that people interact with public spaces and the buildings that frame those spaces.

It's based on an understanding that people enjoy watching people and in turn enjoy being part of the show (particularly children and teenagers). This is evident in the raised stepped edges around the village green and the concept of a 'front porch' for Picton.

The masterplan is bold, inspiring and contemporary.

Tract 28 October 2020 20 / 52



1800 (A3)

Tract 28 October 2020 21 / 52



Section A - Menangle Street



Section B - Village Green

Tract 28 October 2020 22 / 52





Section C - Shire Hall

Tract 28 October 2020 23 / 52





Section D - Civic Link

Tract 28 October 2020 24 / 52

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Tract 28 October 2020 25 / 52

#### 8 CIVIC FORECOURT

#### Future Role & Character

# 'The Precinct's Front Door and Meeting Spot'

We envisage the Civic Forecourt to be experienced as a sequence of cohesive spaces that create a welcoming arrival experience to the Precinct.

Subtle cues at eastern and western threshold points signify the transition from Menangle Street into the Precinct.

The Forecourt is the Precinct' front 'stage' - visitors are the audience watching scenes from everyday life.

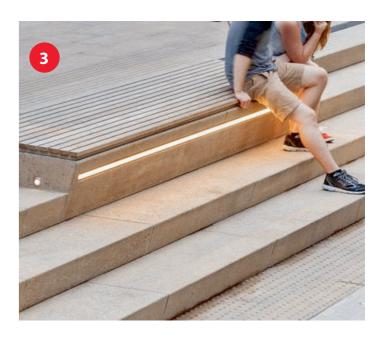
The Civic Forecourt will establish how the precinct successfully marries the old and the new.

Key programming opportunities include;

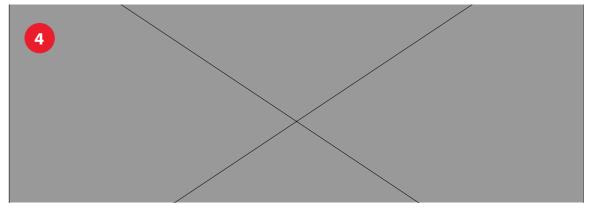
- Arts Building Mengangle Street Gallery front window exhibition space
- Shire Hall Whats On Events Signage that aligns with Wollondilly Cultural, Community and Civic Precinct Masterplan Signage Strategy
- Shire Hall Forecourt Garden site specific artwork opportunity
- Artist intervention marking junction point
- Library & PAC facades



















Tract WCCCP Public Realm Plan Rev 01a 28 October 2020 26 / 52

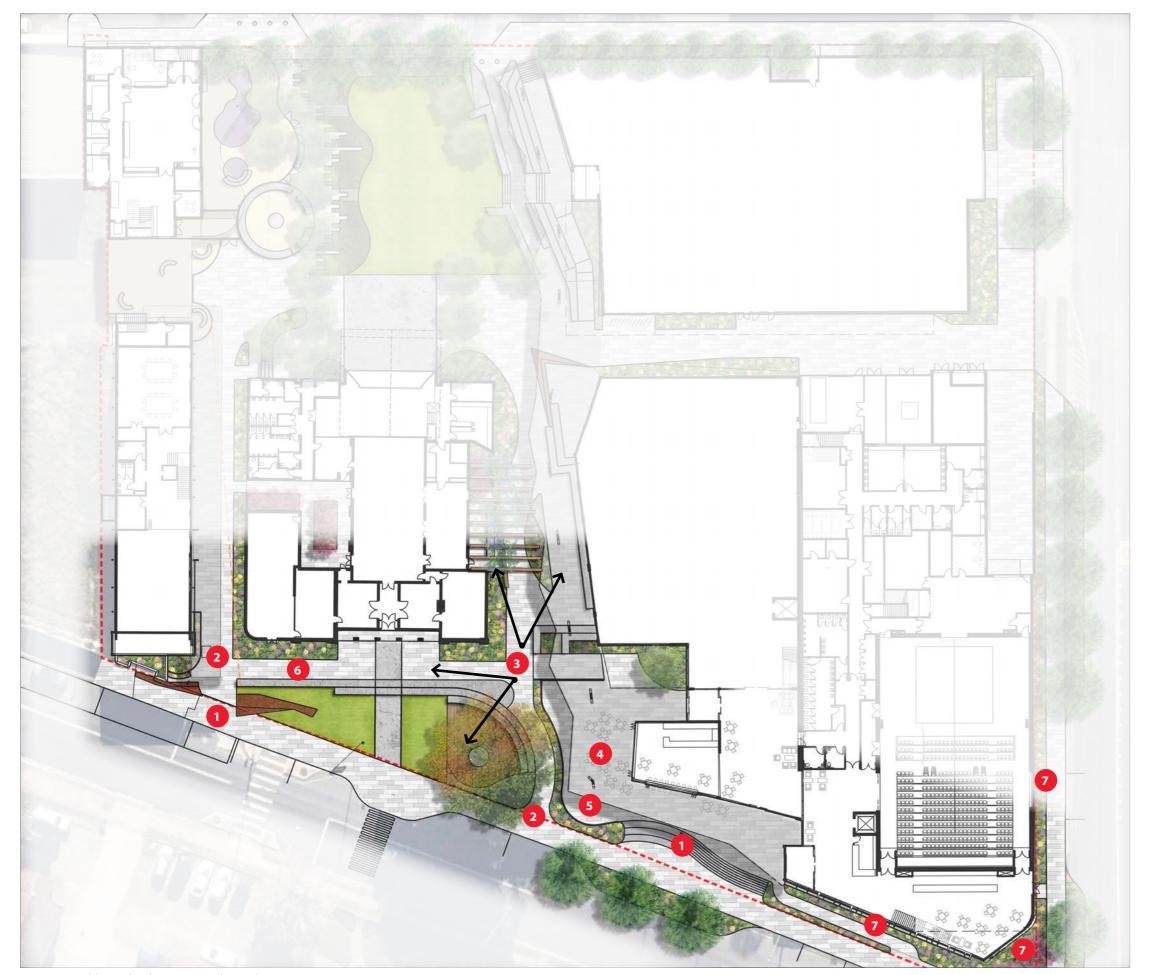


Figure 3. Public Realm Plan - Civic Link Detail

# Design Ideas

- Detailing provides arrival cues at the entrance threshold
- 2 Key paving treatment used to unite the ground plane throughout the precinct
- At the junction of the Forecourt and Civic Axis the framed views are wayfinding devices contributing to precinct legibility
- Key destinational space and precinct landmark that activates the Civic Forecourt (could be a commercial operation that functions as casual daytime cafe + evening bar)
- Elevated front porch overlooking landscape edge and activity along Menangle Street
- Welcoming entrance (disabled access integral part of the design) where arrival threshold cues relate to the architecture + human scale
- Soft landscape edge wrapping around the building and transitioning into streetscape

Tract WCCCP Public Realm Plan Rev 01a 28 October 2020 27 / 52

#### 9 SHIRE HALL FORECOURT

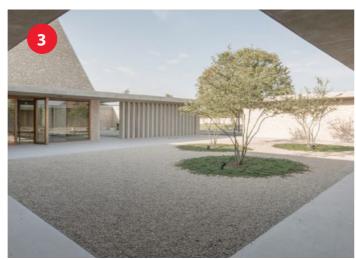
The Shire Hall Forecourt provides a visual frame for the Old Shire Hall building, while connecting the Arts Lane to the new Library via a ramped walkway which cuts across the Shire Hall frontage from East to West. The landscape treatment acts as a permeable green interface to Menangle Street, with opportunities for gathering beneath the landmark camphor laurel tree.

Key programming opportunities include;

- provision of separate entry forecourt for arrival and congregation at Shire Hall Frontage
- Stepped terraces beneath the existing camphor laurel to enable gathering and views to the street life
- Potential night-time illumination of tree for visual and sculptural effect













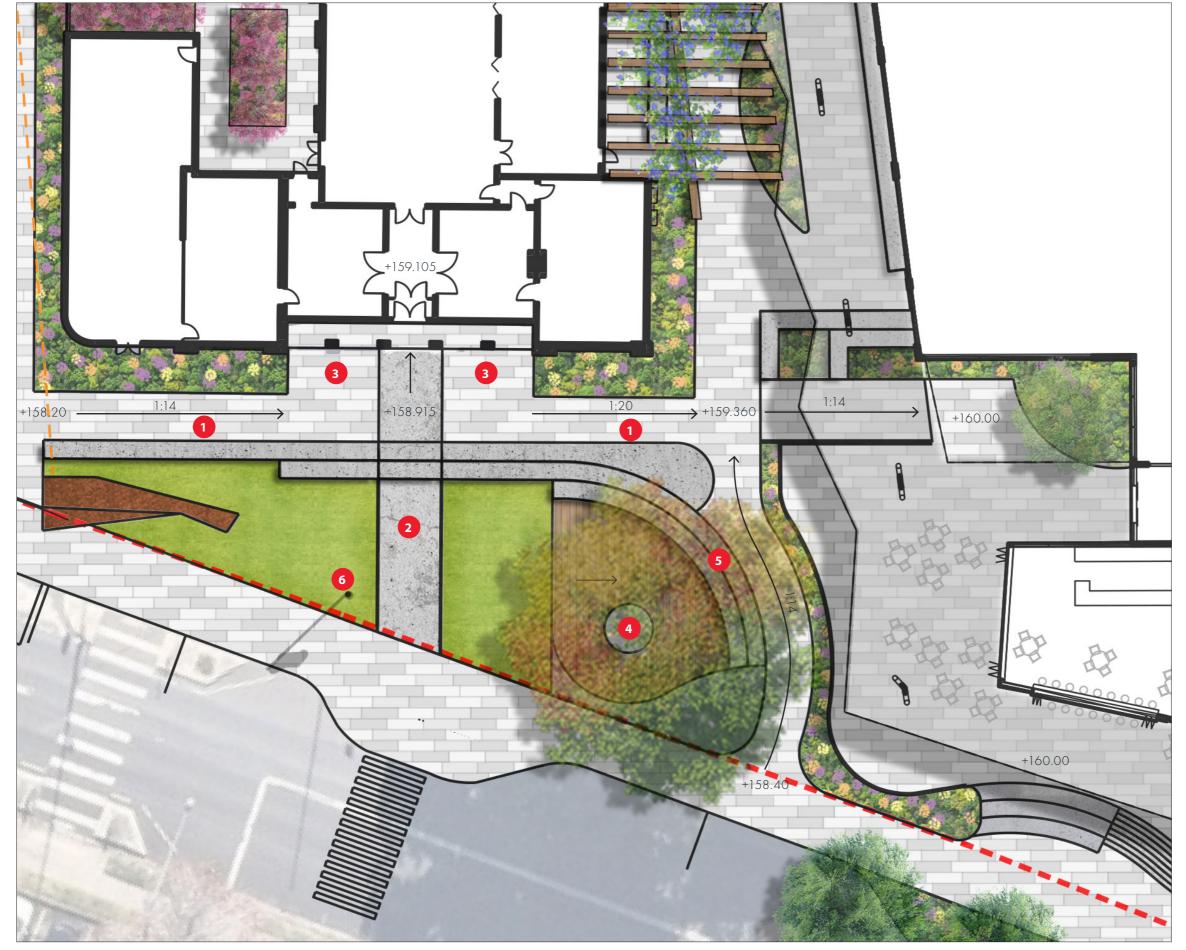


Figure 4. Public Realm Plan - Shire Hall Forecourt Detail

## Design Ideas

- Accessible ramp connection through landscape
- Formal landscape axis aligned to heritage Shire Hall
- 3 Entry/Congregational forecourt to Shire Hall set back from path of travel
- Existing large tree anchors the landscape frontage.
  It provides shelter and a reference point and is a great opportunity for atmospheric lighting
- 5 Embankment with terraced seating
- Retain the flag pole located at the front of the Shire Hall

Tract WCCCP Public Realm Plan Rev 01a 29 / 52

#### 10 DESTINATIONAL BAR

#### Future Role & Character

#### 'Lets meet at the Art Bar'.

We imagine the Art Bar as a key destinational spot for Picton. With the contemporary Library as the backdrop and sweeping views to the Town Centre, the Art Bar can be enjoyed throughout the day into the evening.

Key programming opportunities include;

- Night time illumination (translucent façades)
- Western edge as a place to sit overlooking the steps and tree observing street life activity (requires summer shade)
- Indoor seating arranged along front (southern edge) overlooking street and Civic Forecourt

'Look & Feel' Example Images











Tract 28 October 2020 30 / 5

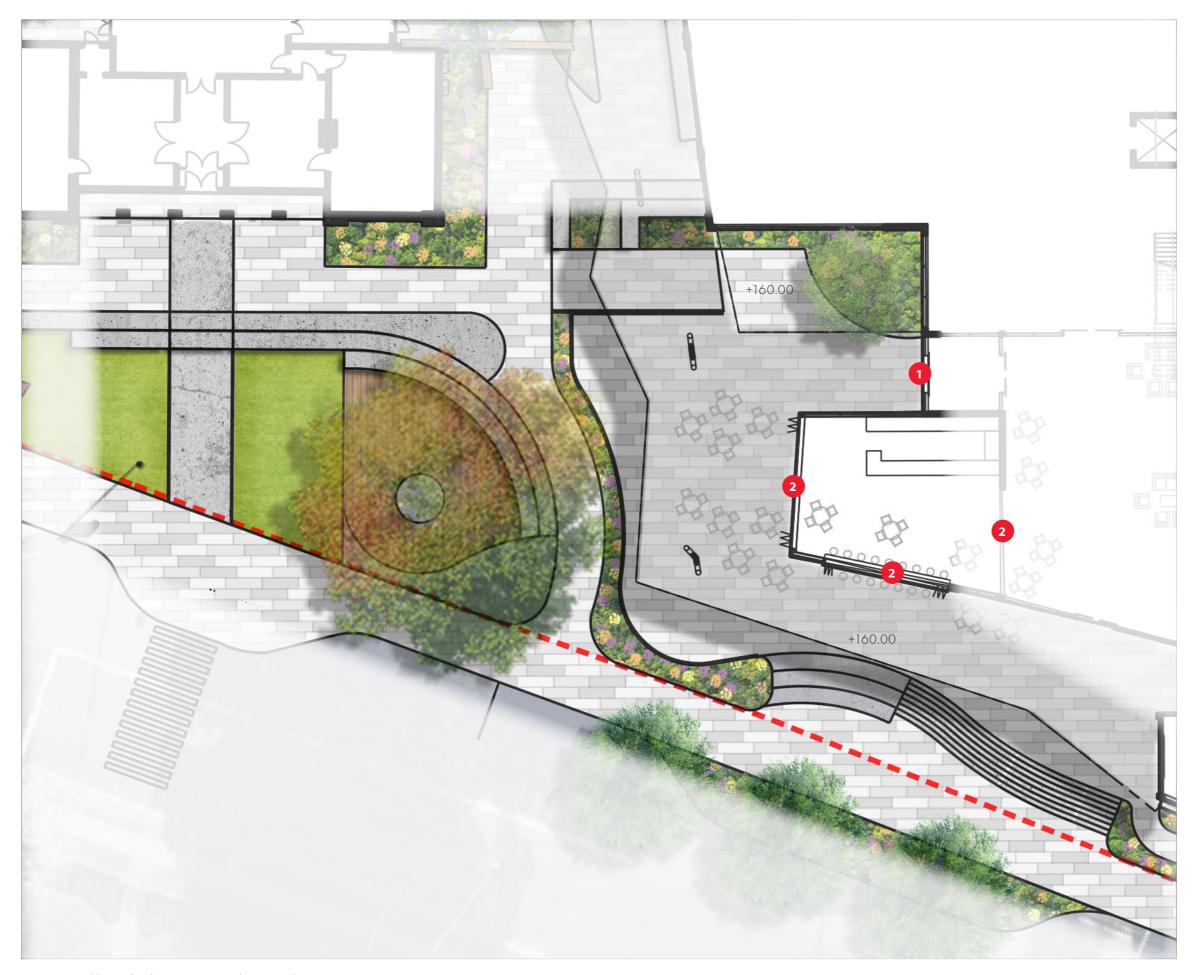


Figure 5. Public Realm Plan - Destinational Bar Detail

# Design Ideas

- 1 Main entrance
  - Large glass doors/windows that open the indoors to the elevated outdoor space creating one large alfresco dining area. Provides comfortable place to sit and overlook street activity. Visible on arrival from western stairs, particularity at night

Tract 28 October 2020 31 / 52

## 11 CIVIC LINK

#### Future Role & Character

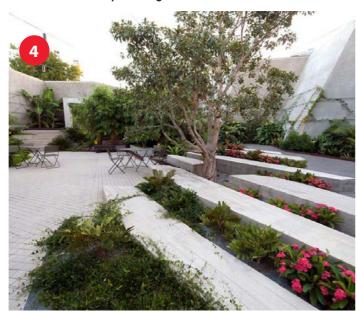
# 'The Precinct's key north south pedestrian link'.

The Civic Link connects the Civic Forecourt to the Village Green. Walking along the link visual interest and surprise is offered through glimpses into the Library's ground floor activities, building edge and paving details.

Key programming opportunities include;

- Ground plane illumination (lights embedded in the paving)
- Seating or pause points located in the library facade
- Artistic way finding devices
- Windows framing internal activities

'Look & Feel' Example Images









Tract WCCCP Public Realm Plan Rev 01a 28 October 2020 32 / 5

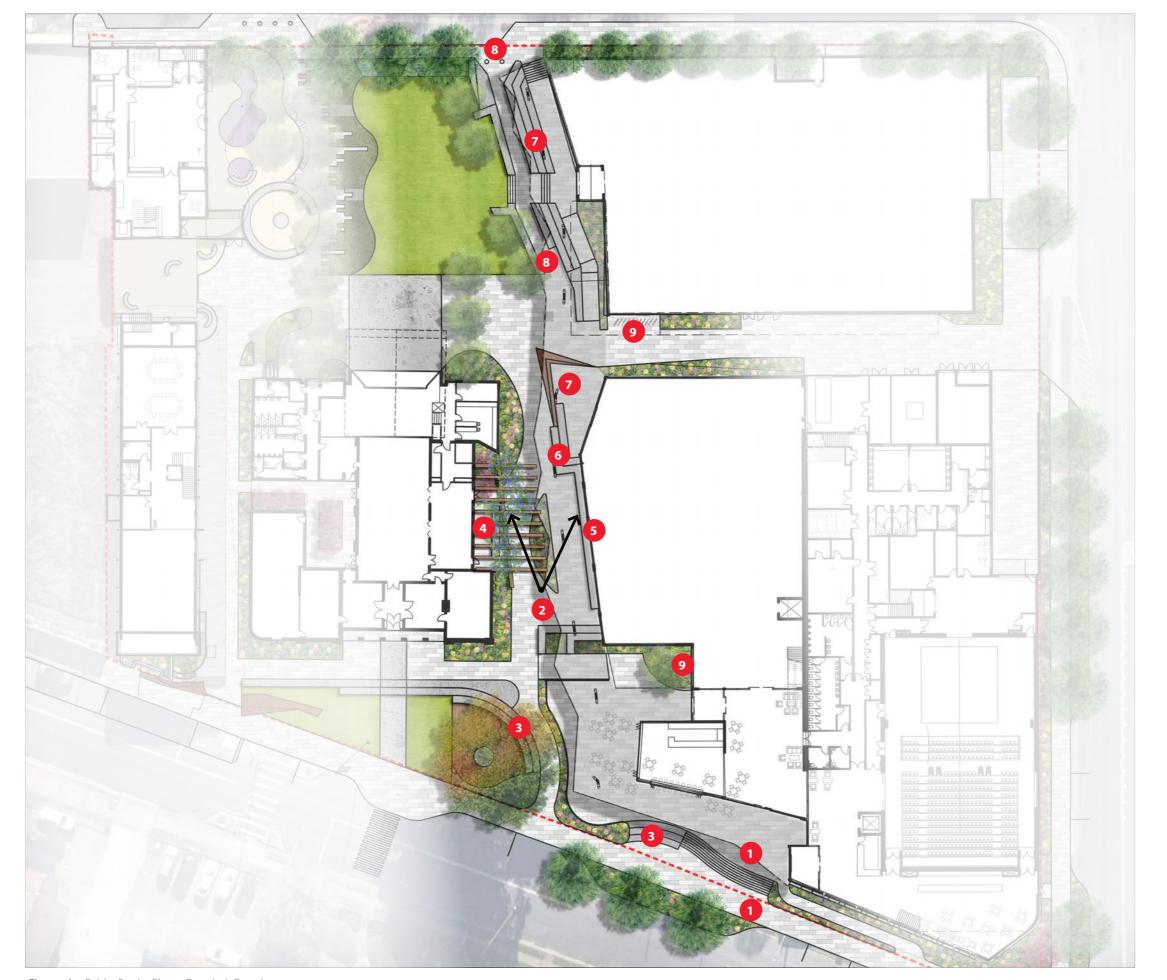


Figure 6. Public Realm Plan - Civic Link Detail

## Design Ideas

- Consistent paving detail which ties the entrance threshold and Civic Link together
- 2 Key precinct views north along the Civic Link to the Village Green
- Stopping and sitting on steps is encouraged observe the elevated views over the Shire Hall Forecourt and Menangle Street
- A Shire Hall Outdoor Room
- Transparent facade treatment frames selective views creating moments of reveal into the Library 'community living room' activities
- Landscaping uses levels and edges to create separate outdoor rooms
- 7 Key activity node
- Seamless pedestrian connection to the supermarket and northern car park areas
- 9 Integrated bike racks

Tract WCCCP Public Realm Plan Rev 01a 28 October 2020 33 / 52

## 12 VILLAGE GREEN

#### Future Role & Character

#### 'The Precinct's Social Heart'.

Situated on the northern side of the precinct between the pedestrian axis, the 'Green' will be a community focal point - a flexible outdoor space for community interactions and events.

Key programming opportunities include;

- Flexible seating on the green
- Areas for summer and winter comfort
- Integrated water story including visible and interactive WSUD elements
- Events activation such as markets and performances

'Look & Feel' Example Images























28 October 2020 34 / 52

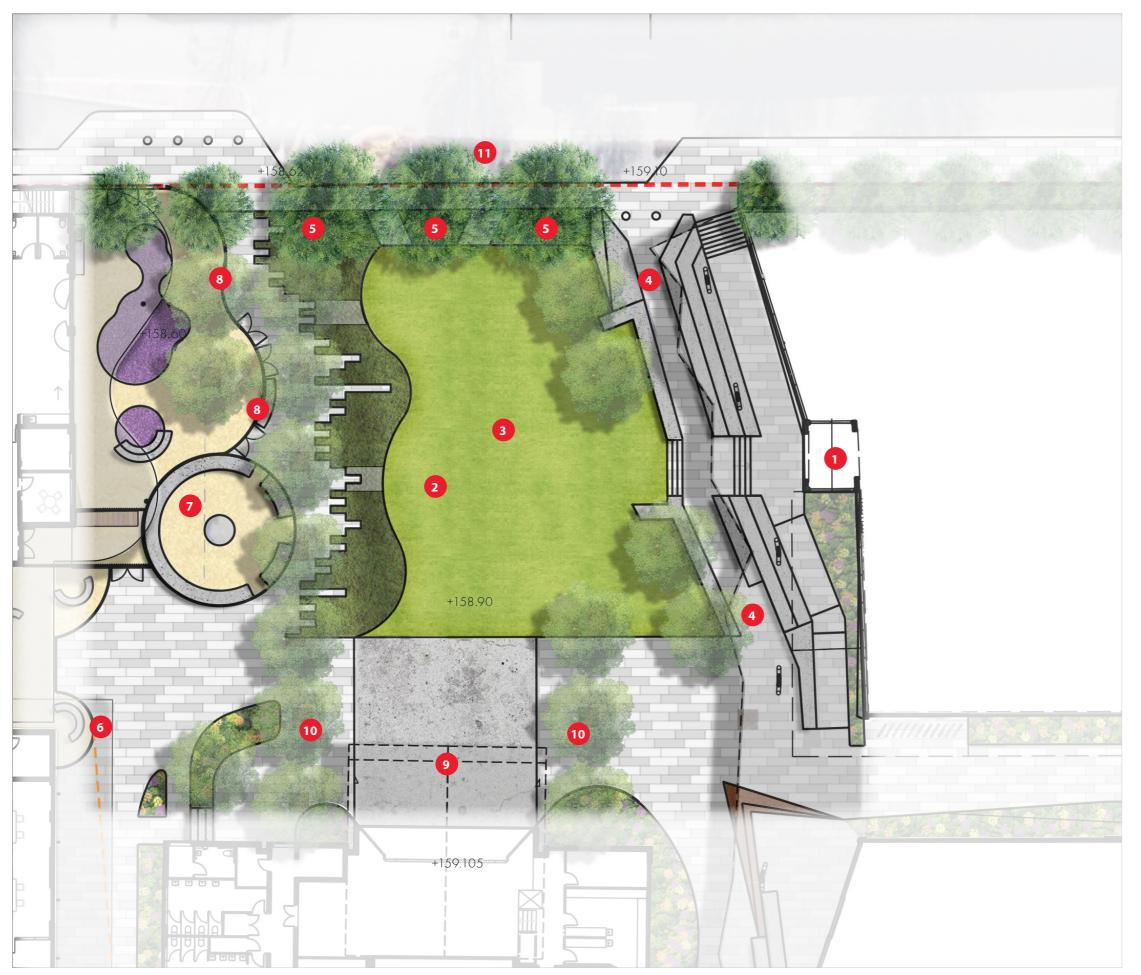


Figure 7. Public Realm Plan - Village Green Detail

#### Design Ideas

- New Government Services
  Centre building and Ground
  floor cafe/ co-working space
  spilling out onto Village Green
- Gentle slope across the Village
  Green will allow water the
  fall naturally to an integrated
  WSUD feature situated along
  the western edge of the Green
- Large lawn area for sitting and informal activities
- Continuation of the Civic Link connecting pedestrians to the northern car parks and supermarket
- Permeable green screening along the northern edge comprising Native Shade Trees
- Transition to Children's Play
  Zone/continuation of the Arts
  Laneway
- Contemporary interpretation of the Yarning Circle
- Large, openings / gates to connect the Children's Play & Village Green
- 9 Performance Space
- Deciduous Canopy Trees framing the Performance Space
  - 1 Mobility parking to Corbett Lane

Tract 28 October 2020 35 / 52

# 13 CHILDRENS PLAY ZONE / MULTI-USE

The Children's Play Space makes playful reference to the Lyre Bird and the Eastern Water Dragon - significant animals to the local indigenous community.

Two separate spaces will be spread across the ground floor and first floor balcony, providing age-appropriate play opportunities for early years and primary-school children.

The play spaces will allow for a variety of play experiences within a green, sheltered landscape which while secure, still feels an integral part of the Village Green.

The ground floor play space will physically connect to the Village Green after Children's services hours.















Tract 28 October 2020 36 / 52



# Design Elements

- Animal totems
- 2 Lyrebird nest cubby house
- 3 Stimulating play elements
- 4 Rainforest arbour
- 5 Water / mist play
- 6 Yarning circle
- 7 Flexible, multi-use Children's Play space
- Large, openings / gates to connect the Children's Play & Village Green

Figure 8. Public Realm Plan - Childrens Play Detail

Tract 28 October 2020 37 / 52

# 14 OUTDOOR STUDIO/MARKET/EVENTS SPACE

There is potential to create a covered outdoor space between the Childcare Building and the Arts Building on the western side of the precinct. This flexible outdoor covered area that can be programmed by both buildings.

Key programming opportunities include;

- Covered markets
- Workshops and events
- Temporary exhibitions& pop ups
- Break out space for internal activities



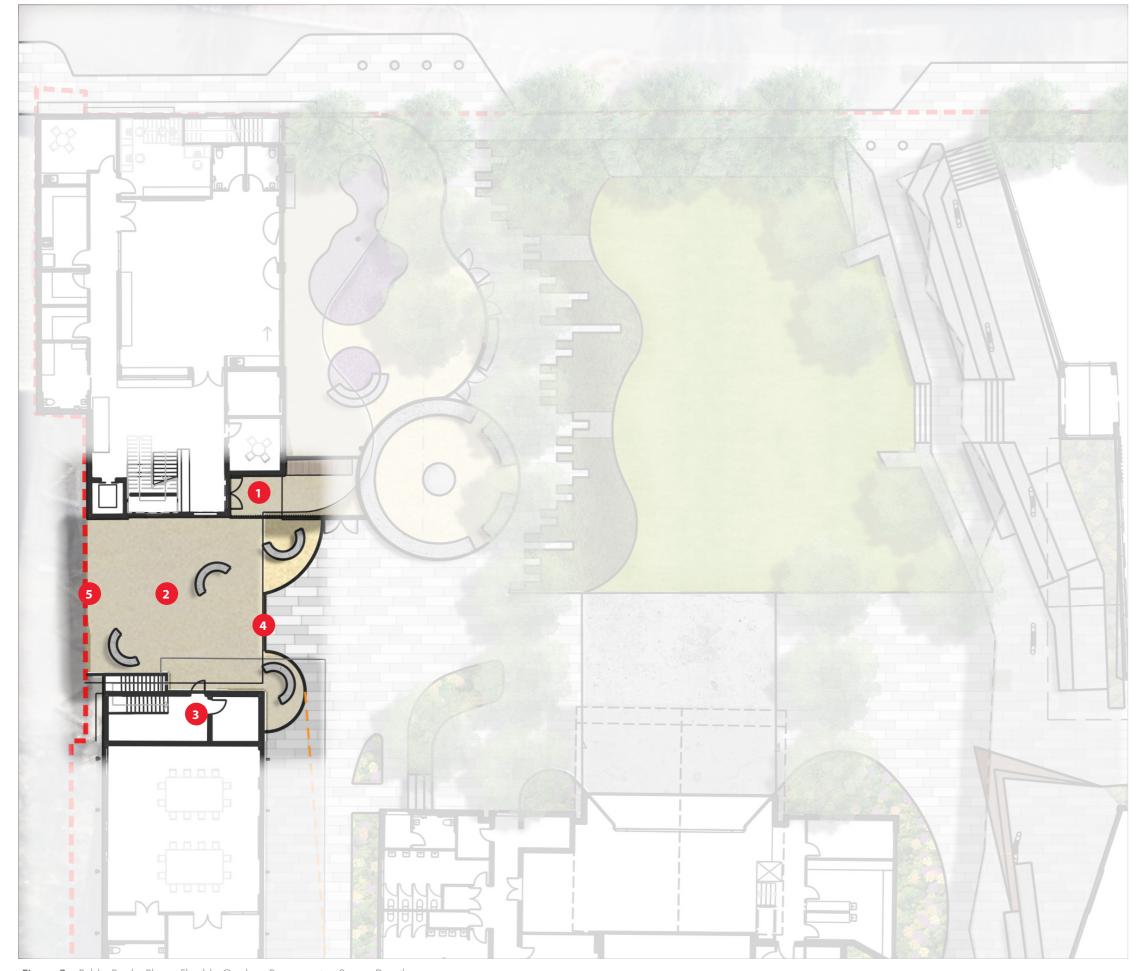








Tract 28 October 2020 38 / 52



# Design Ideas

- Childcare entrance
- 2 Outdoor programmable space
- Community Building entrance
- 4 Flexible fencing
- Future pedestrian link to Argyle Street

Figure 9. Public Realm Plan - Flexible Outdoor Programming Space Detail

Tract 28 October 2020 39 / 52

# 15 ARTS LANEWAY

More urban in character the
Arts Laneway will be activated
throughout the day and evenings
by activities in the gallery and
artist studio. Pedestrian flows will
add further vibrancy.

Key programming opportunities include;

- Artists open studios
- Gallery events
- Pop up events
- Potential for a cafe/hospitality business











Tract 28 October 2020 40 / 52

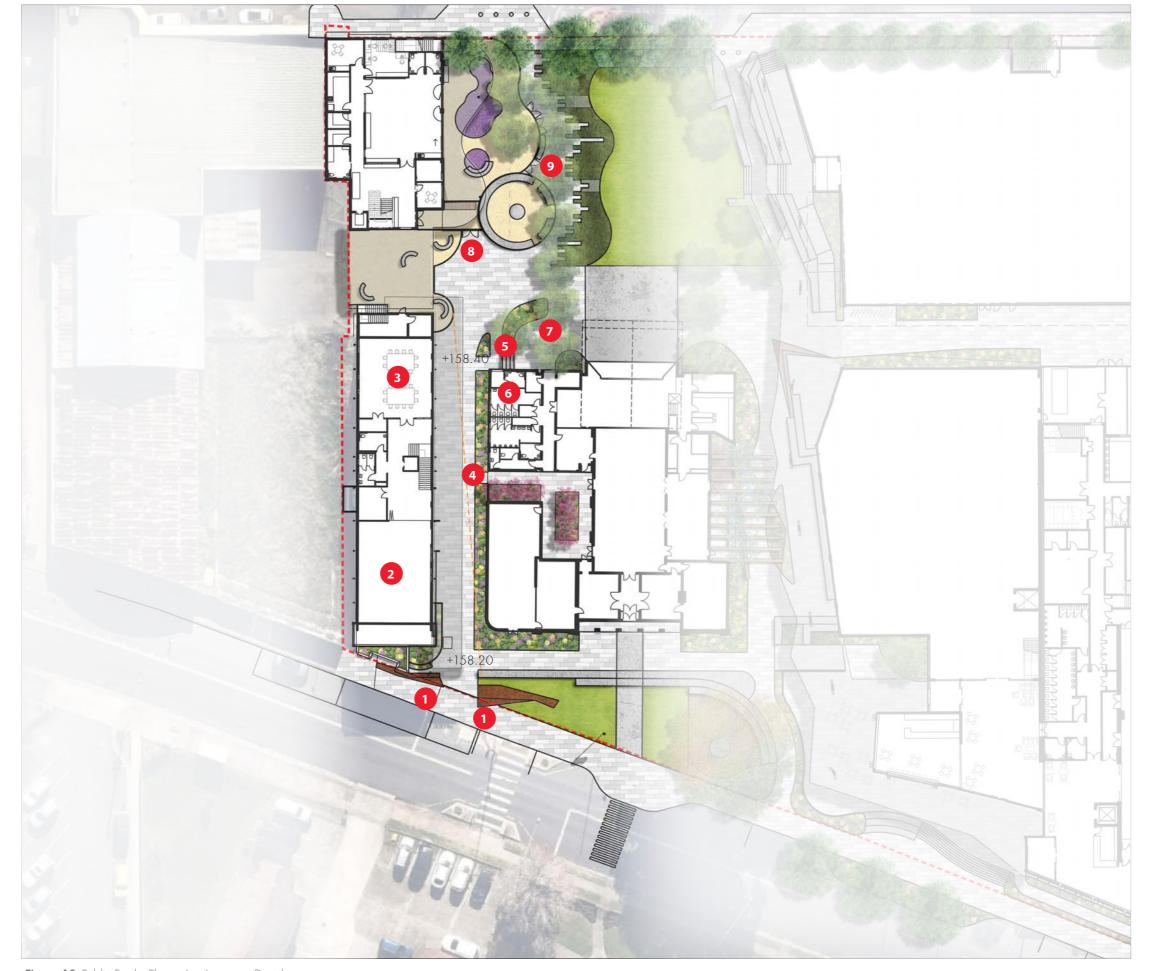


Figure 10. Public Realm Plan - Arts Laneway Detail

# Design Ideas

- Detailing at the threshold provides arrival cue to precinct visitors
- 2 Flexible community /
  Gallery exhibition space
- Gallery viewing area
- Shire Hall opening to Arts Laneway
- 5 Connection to Shire Hall
- 6 Shire Hall amenities
- 7 Transition to Performance Space
- 8 Entrance to Child Care Building
- Connection to northern car parks and supermarket

Tract 28 October 2020 41/52

# 16 BUILDING FORM & EXPRESSION

### Key themes:

- Focal point to corner or Menangle Street & Colden Street: announcing entry to precinct
- Day night activation through framing of views, use of lighting and placement of activities
- Articulated roof-scape with canopies to modulate scale of new buildings
- Use of canopies and facade treatments to create human scale experience with subtle texture



EXPRESSIVE PUBLIC FACADE, FRAMED VIEWS AND ACTIVITIES



SHINGLES ARTICULATED ROOF-SCAPE



LAYERED & TEXTURED BRICK / STONE





Cultural & Community Centre- Civic Forecourt & Street Presence

Tract 28 October 2020 42 / 52

### Key themes:

- Use of timber framed canopies to create rich texture and human scale experience
- Strong internal to external connectivity with use of courtyard spaces and feature windows
- Use of vertical framing elements with varying density to vary level of transparency and privacy and create moments of interest





TIMBER CANOPIES



EXPRESSED ELEMENTS TO FRAME VIEWS & MODULATE PRIVACY



Precedent Study: Cultural & Community Centre- Civic Link & Village Green

Tract 28 October 2020 43 / 52

## Key themes:

- Childcare play space to be green oasis at heart of precinct with ability to connect to the Village Green
- Use of screens with integrated activity and landscape- managed connection of child care and village green
- Intimate scale, warm material texture
- Expressive roof and balustrade edges



ARTICULATED ROOF EDGES



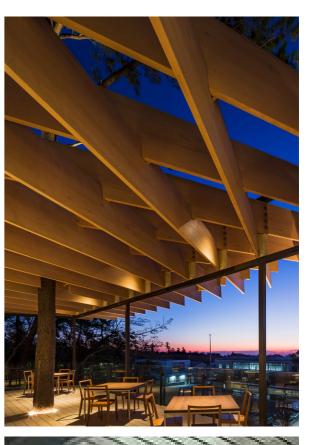
ARTICULATED TERRACE EDGES WITH PLANTING



SCREENS WITH INTEGRATED PLANTING & ACTIVITY











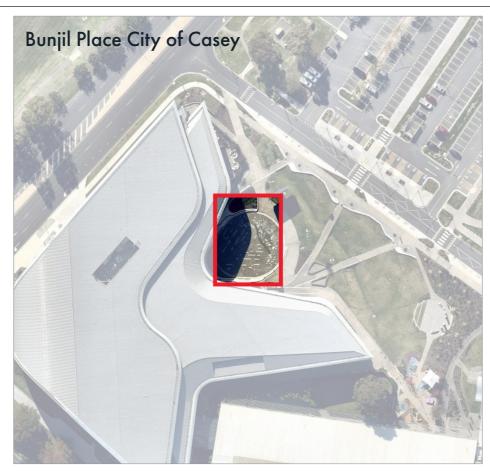


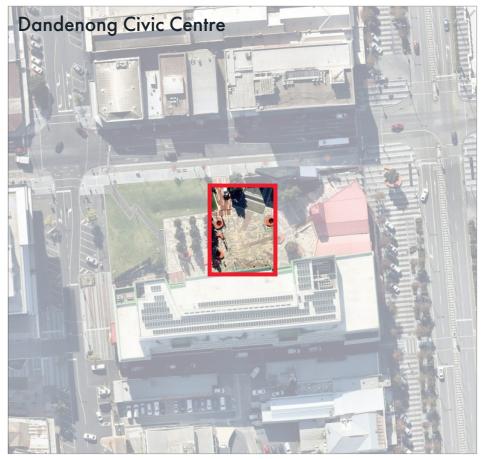


Tract 28 October 2020 44 / 52

# 17 VILLAGE GREEN BENCHMARKING

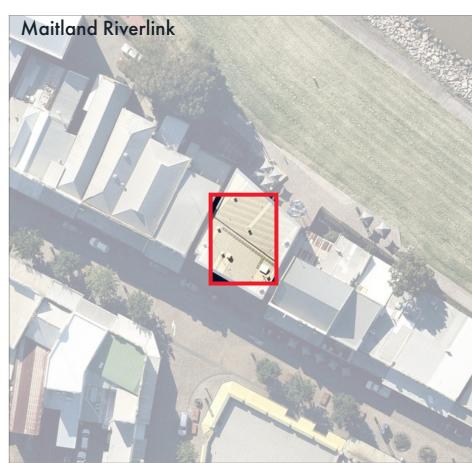








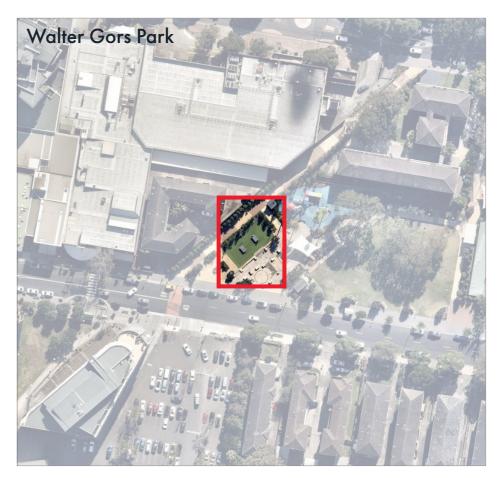




Tract 28 October 2020 45 / 52













Tract 28 October 2020 46 / 52















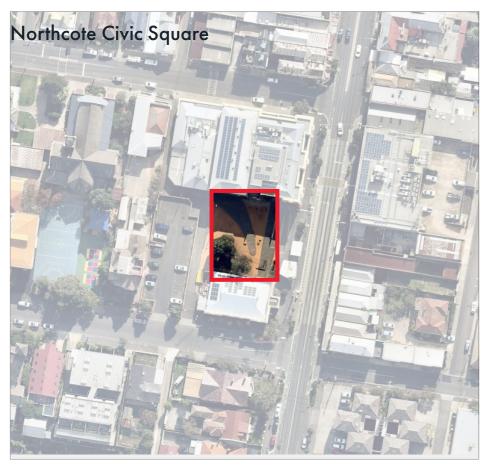


- Approximate Size: 1130m²
- Interface directly with council building
- Provides a front forecourt with water play and seating
- Areas of grass and greening
- Can be utilised for public events

## KEY DETAILS SUMMARY:

- Approximate Size: 3015m² Including open green space
- Interfaces with office precinct surrounds
- Provides large open spaces, greening and seating to facilitate use of the public realm
- Features both hardscaped and areas of permable green space
- Large hardsurfaced court allows use for public events and gathering

Fract 28 October 2020 47 / 52









- Approximate Size: 705m²
- Connects to historical buildings within Northcote and Northcote Town Hall
- Creates a sense of place through the use of shapes, forms and imagery within murals of local indigenous traditions and artefact
- Some areas of grass and green space and larger permable areas with minimal hard surfaces









### KEY DETAILS SUMMARY:

- Approximate Size: 1345m²
- Areas of greening and tree canopy cover throughout
- Exterior seating provide opportunity for gathering
- The public plaza connects Shellharbour City Council buildings to the surrounding street and parklands

Tract 28 October 2020 48 / 52











- Approximate Size: 520m²
- Revitalised the central business precinct through extending the public realm beyond the main street to the river
- Provides a pedestrian passage through the civic space interfacing with heritage and existing buildings
- Provides summer shading, seating restaurants and cafés which flank the passage









- Approximate Size: 3840m² front forecourt area
- Green spaces and adjoining pedestrian paths create 8570m<sup>2</sup> of public realm
- Large open green spaces and grasslands edged with trees and seating throughout
- Interfaces with heritage buildings and newer residential developments
- Water feature through the site

Tract 28 October 2020 49 / 52









- Approximate Size: Front Public Space 690m2 & 1200 m<sup>2</sup> Rear Public Realm
- Connects to civic library building in Marricksville providing public open space at both the front and the rear of the library with similar scales and sizes
- Elevated seating connects to space
- Greening and canopy cover in both public space areas
- Paved surfaces provide walkways and entraces to public buildings









### KEY DETAILS SUMMARY:

- Approximate Size: 1400m<sup>2</sup> Front Plaza. With a total of 4350m<sup>2</sup> including surrounding green space and playground
- Public realm interfaces with surrounding primary roads and residential areas
- Playground, table tennis and shaded seating creates activities within the space
- Paved surfaces with canopies and open green spaces both present

28 October 2020 50 / 52









- Approximate Size: 3480m²
- Connects to the Dock Public Library and the foreshore
- Activated through a series of public events, sporting activities and playground for children
- Large lawn area with with paved surfaces towards the front
- Flanked by trees and plantings to provide shading to seating and walkways









### KEY DETAILS SUMMARY:

- Approximate Size: 2370m²
- Cafes and eateries activate the space
- Interfaces with city streets and large scale buildings
- Large areas of permeable surfaces with effective tree canopy cover throughout

Tract 28 October 2020 51 / 52

# **Contact Tract**

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