



Report to General Manager

Attachments:

1. Draft Library and Historical Services in North Sydney Strategic Plan 2016-21

SUBJECT: Draft *Library and Historical Services in North Sydney Strategic Plan 2016-21*

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ENDORSED BY: Martin Ellis, Director Community and Library Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Strategic Plan for the Library and Historical Services in North Sydney has been completed and is provided here for adoption. Service levels have been adjusted to align with current resources and community expectations. The Plan responds to the community's continuing as well as changing use of the library, including 600,000 loans per annum, increasing in particular of the collections and services by children, significantly increased visitor numbers, greater use of non-book material, the demand for flexible use of public spaces in the library, digital services, proposed branch libraries in step with development of the Metro, and the recently adopted Stanton Library Masterplan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The strategies are funded in the current Delivery Plan and the Long Term Financial Plan.

Comment by Responsible Accounting Officer:

Funding for the project is appropriate.

Local Government Act 1993: Section 23A Guidelines - Council Decision Making During Merger Proposal Period

The Guidelines have been considered in the preparation of this report and are not applicable

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the Draft Library and Historical Services in North Sydney Strategic Plan 2016-21 be placed on public exhibition for 28 days.
 2. **THAT** should Council receive submissions, a further report be prepared for Council's consideration. Should Council receive no submissions, Council consider the Disability Inclusion Action Plan as adopted at the end of the closing period for submissions.
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LINK TO DELIVERY PROGRAM

The relationship with the Delivery Program is as follows:

Direction: 4. Our Social Vitality

Outcome: 4.4 North Sydney's history is preserved and recognised
4.6 Library services meet information, learning and leisure needs

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 14 June 2016, Council resolved that the cost estimates for the Library master plan be included in Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The sustainability implications were considered and reported on during the initiation phase of this project.

DETAIL

The Stanton Library Master plan 2015-2020 has been assessed by a quantity surveyor with construction at a total of \$3.049 million. This amount includes all work to the existing building and structural work to allow for an increase of 500 sq meters. Calculations include demolition, hydraulic, mechanical, electrical, furniture and fittings; and are based on sequential work, allowing for a large part of the library operations to continue during construction. This work has now been included in the overall Strategic Plan for library and historical services in North Sydney.



Library and Historical Services Strategic Plan: 2016-21

North Sydney Council

Updated March 2016



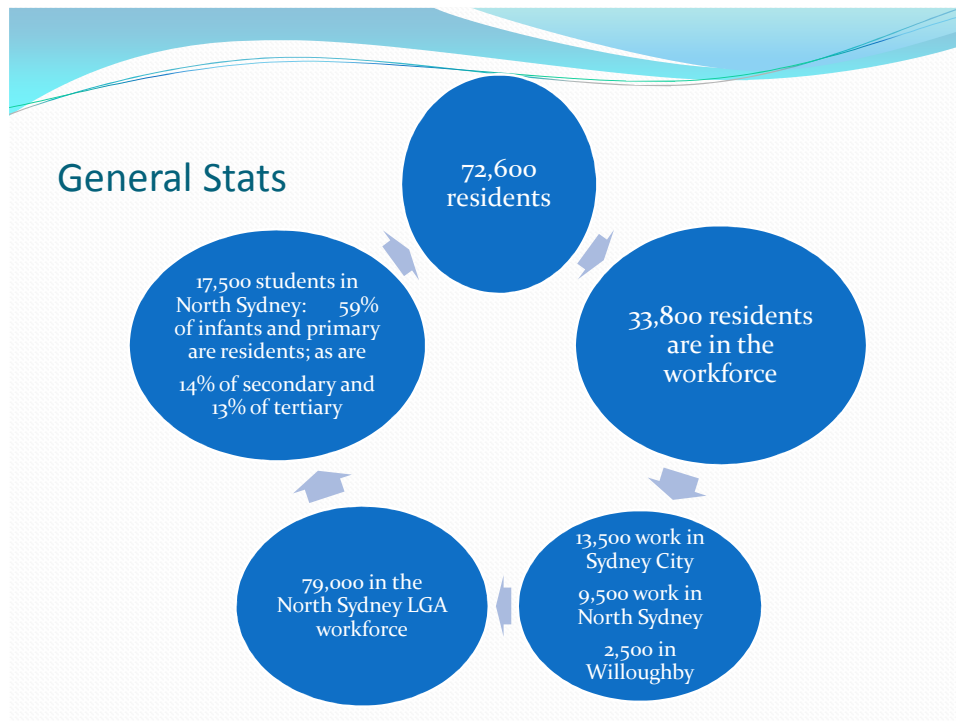
1.1 Overview

The purpose of this Plan is to set out the strategies with which Council will deliver library and historical services over the next five years to the North Sydney community. Council will do this through the Stanton Library, the North Sydney Heritage Centre (located within the Library), Don Bank Museum, St Thomas' Rest Park (including the Sexton's Cottage), and related services and programs. While the community will also continue to benefit from Council's ownership and financial support for Nutcote, this former home of May Gibbs is managed by a Trust; those interested in Nutcote's strategic direction are therefore referred to Council's Joint Plan of Management with Nutcote (2014-17).

The Library and Historical Services Strategic Plan supports North Sydney Council's 2013/14-16/17 Delivery Plan, which, under the overall direction of Social Vitality, aims for the following outcomes:

- *North Sydney's History is preserved and recognised*
- *Lifelong learning and volunteering is encouraged*
- *Library services meet information, learning and leisure needs*

General Statistics





Consultation

- Library User Survey 2013
- Customer satisfaction survey (business and residents) 2014, 2016
- Stanton Library masterplan: Public exhibition: 2016

Stanton Library Statistics

- Built 1965; expanded 1976, 1987, 2005
- 25,000 very active members of which
- 57.9% are residents
- 42.1% are non residents
- 52% of these non-residents work in the LGA; the remainder are
- 40% students and 8% visitors to the LGA
- Local private schools junior and secondary have very good libraries
- Local public junior schools are heavy users of the library
- The workforce generally have only small, specialised libraries
- Opening hours: the library is open 7 days and in the early evenings Monday to Friday, so the hours are suitable for both residents and workforce.

Stanton Library Trends

2005

- Books: 174,000 held (479,000 loaned)
- Audio: 23,000 held (184,000 loaned)
- E-books : 0
- Visits: 361,000
- Database searches : 42,000
- Children's loans per annum: 126,500

2015

- Books: 130,000 held (414,000 loaned)
- Audio: 40,000 held (184,000 loaned)



- Ebooks: 2,327 held (3,162 loaned)
- Visits: 483,325
- Database searches: 114,000 (36.9% increase)
- Children's loans per annum: 170,000 (25.6% increase)

Population Trends

- Resident population forecast to grow by 14.6% to 83,212 by 2036.
- Greatest resident increase will be in Crows Nest/St Leonards (+6,000) and North Sydney (+ 4,300).
- Workforce population forecast to grow by 18.75% to 93,935 by 2036.
- Workforce and resident populations are centred along the transport corridors, with by far the greatest density in the North Sydney CBD.

Benchmarking: Lower North Shore Libraries

	<i>Loans: 2014/15.</i>	<i>Libraries</i>	<i>Res pop</i>	<i>Local jobs</i>
➤ <i>Lane Cove</i>	600,968	2	33,996	15,586
➤ <i>Manly</i>	363,384	1	44,232	14,059
➤ <i>Mosman</i>	289,976	1	29,983	10,072
➤ <i>North Sydney</i>	593,649	1	69,248	79,000
➤ <i>Willoughby</i>	1,099,501	5	73,155	62,740



Benchmarking: State Library of NSW

Key Result area	Stanton Library (2013/14)	State Library benchmarks
Registered library members as a % of population	35.2%	Baseline 41.5% Enhanced 49% Exemplary 55%
Visits per capita	5.7	Baseline 4.5 Enhanced 5.0 Exemplary 5.4
Expenditure on Library material per capita	\$5.7	Baseline \$4.53 Enhanced \$4.83 Exemplary \$5.57
Expenditure per capita	\$61.71	Baseline \$49.7 Enhanced \$56.35 Exemplary \$64.01
Items per capita	2.39	Baseline 2.38 Enhanced 2.58 Exemplary 3.34
Acquisitions per capita	0.23	Baseline 0.24 Enhanced 0.27 Exemplary 0.33
% collection under 5 years old	48.42%	Baseline 49.4% Enhanced 53.39% Exemplary 56.69%
% collection under 10 years old	93.32%	Baseline 79% Enhanced 83% Exemplary 85.89%
Turnover of stock	3.95	Baseline 3.06 Enhanced 4.21 Exemplary 4.99
Circulation per capita	8.0	Baseline 5.51 Enhanced 6.54 Exemplary 7.71
Public Internet Workstations	22	1PC per 3,000 residents (North Sydney: 24 PCs)
Staffing	29.9 (EFT)	Per 3,000 residents Baseline 1 (NS: 24) Enhanced 1.1 (NS: 26.4) Exemplary 1.3 (NS: 31.2)



1.1.1 Service levels for Library Services

Opening hours	69 hours a week; 7 days a week; only closed public holidays.
Strong customer service focus	<p>A customer service desk available during opening hours to answer a broad range of customer queries. A Readers Advisory service is available to help customers find their next read.</p> <p>An online catalogue can be accessed on different devices both inside and outside the library.</p>
Extensive and relevant collections	<p>Collections constantly added to and updated.</p> <p>Responsiveness to customer requests for new items.</p> <p>Stanton library is a member of the Shorelink library network which allows library customers to borrow items from all Shorelink libraries.</p>
Online resources	An expanding collection of online resources including: eBooks, eAudio, eMagazines, databases, images and podcasts.
Library programs and events for all ages	Including: Five public Storytime sessions a week, regular Author talks, book and philosophy groups, technology test drive classes and craft sessions.



1.1.2 Service levels for Historical Services

Heritage Centre Opening hours.	<i>69 hours a week; 7 days a week; closed public holidays. Staffed 6 days a week.</i>
Exhibitions	<i>Interpreting historical and heritage collections with regular changeovers.</i>
Local History Research and information	<i>"We aim to satisfy 80% of complex local history queries in 14 days"</i>
Don Bank	<i>Permanent exhibition interpreting Don Bank cottage and the history of the White family and the local area.</i> <i>Open to general public 3 hours during week and 2 hours on weekend.</i> <i>Open for community group hire.</i> <i>Interpreted garden open to the public 7 days a week.</i>
Sextons Cottage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Extending opening hours to 2 days a week (2-3 hours per day).</i> • <i>Exhibition and genealogical information.</i>
St Thomas Rest Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Open every day as an interpreted landscape.</i> • <i>Headstones searchable online.</i>
Online Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Collection databases: Objects and images</i> • <i>'At Home in North Sydney' architectural database</i>
Public programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regular walking tours around the local area</i> • <i>Guided ferry tours</i> • <i>Festival and event talks</i>



1.2 Current Programs

Building Services

Stanton Library is a four-storey building situated within a major cultural precinct (live theatre, community centre, historic churches, significant school building complexes, council chambers and the North Sydney Oval). On the edge of the CBD, Stanton is well served by buses, with reasonable parking, and rail transport within walking distance. The building is fully accessible and a major upgrade in 2005 brought building services up to current BCA standards.

Major outcomes of the work in 2005 included construction of an exhibition space, a public meeting room, a floor dedicated to children and young people, and an interior refurbishment that echoes major elements of the two storey original building. Stanton has been fortunate not only in its architects (Browne, Bouman, Wong) but in its interior designers as well, with the 1964 interior being a creation of Marion Hall Best, and the 2005 Heritage Centre and refurbishment conceived by Five paces Design. In 2015 a Masterplan for the Library was developed by CK Design. A Friends of Stanton Library was established by local residents in 2016. In 2016, in response to State Government plans to build metro station at Crows Nest and North Sydney Council resolved to explore opportunities to establish **Branch Libraries** in the St Leonards/Crows and North Sydney CBDs.

The North Sydney Heritage Centre was designed as a research and exhibition space that is uniquely co-located within Stanton Library itself. It contains books and monographs on open access and therefore available for use during Library hours as well as closed reserve material accessibility only during supervised afternoons six days a week. A museum quality exhibition space wraps around the research area offering interpreted access to the Council's varied and valuable historical and heritage collections which include artworks, objects, maps and photographs. These collections are housed within the Centre's own climate-controlled compactus area and at the purpose-built facility at Council's Ernest Street Depot.

Don Bank Museum is a 19th century vernacular timber slab cottage and the only one of its type open to the public in the inner city. While its opening hours (Wednesday and Sunday afternoons) are made possible only by the support of volunteers, community groups with a cultural purpose make extensive use of the Museum during the week and evenings for meetings, rehearsals and other activities.

St Thomas' Rest Park, the earliest European cemetery on the North Shore, is now deconsecrated ground and managed by Council as an historic site, with important headstones and funereal monuments, as well as a preserved laying out room, known as the Sexton's Cottage. Signage supporting a self-guided walking tour is in place, presenting the Park to the public as an outdoor museum. The laying out room is open to the public according to the availability of volunteers



Nutcote is the most historically significant built structure in Council's ownership. Designed by B J Waterhouse and home to the acclaimed children's author May Gibbs for 44 years, Nutcote was purchased by Council in 1989 after a community led campaign. It is managed for Council by the Nutcote Trust, with the generous help of Friends of Nutcote and Nutcote Volunteers. It aims to be open to the public from Wednesdays to Sundays.

Collection Development

The Stanton Library has a collection of nearly 165,000 items, with loans of 600,000 per annum. The number of non-fiction items borrowed is slightly less than for fiction, and together they form 70 % of total loans, with audio-visual items making up the remainder. Adult borrowers are responsible for two thirds of the loans, with children's items contributing most of the remaining third. While young adults contribute only 3% to borrowings they are major users of the library's reading and study spaces throughout the year. The Library Manager allocates collection development funds (approximately \$400,000 per annum) by tracking borrowing trends and adjusting the budgeted amounts annually.

Collection development duties are largely by profile buying. A not insignificant amount however is allocated to staff across a range of media, to facilitate development of expertise in content and pricing. Up to nine staff have purchasing responsibilities and the input of library users is actively sought. Strategies to involve the public include published "service levels" related to number of copies, a stock suggestion scheme (both in paper form and on-line), user surveys and the inter-library loans service.

The Heritage Centre collection includes over 4,300 books, 1,800 vertical files (containing tens of thousands of individual items), 10,000 photographs, 1,300 large pictures, 900 maps, 300 oral histories, 1,169 costumes, 277 posters, and special collections including original artwork relating to Luna Park. 148 metres of community archives, and 142 metres of Council archives contribute substantially to the research collections. Database records (47,000) created in-house form an increasingly important research tool for exploring North Sydney's public art, the history of place names, historic plaques, newspaper articles, and other collections. While a great many of the items in the Heritage Centre are unique, some are reproductions from other public and private collections, selected for their relevance to the history of North Sydney; this collection policy reflects the twin objectives of the Heritage Centre: preservation and research.

Digital Services

The heart of the library's digital services is the Shorelink Library Network. A consortium of five North Shore Council libraries, Shorelink provides an integrated library management system and hardware that allows for:

- Patron driven services (self check and auto return)
- Bulk purchase of catalogue records from the National Library of Australia's database (Kinetica)
- Shared cataloguing of items not available on Kinetica



- Shared membership database delivering all the convenience of borrowing to members as well as administration savings and security over stock to the member councils
- Union catalogue of library materials for loan and reference numbering five times the stock provided by Stanton alone
- Wireless Services
- A sharing of IT expertise focused in a small staff component

Cataloguing of the Heritage Centre Collections is shared between the library software and standalone image databases.

Both Stanton Library and the Heritage Centre aim to provide an increasing amount of their content and indexing services to the public available over the Internet. The preferred interface for users of this service is North Sydney Council's own homepage.

Reader Services

Stanton Library provides a full range of services to users to assist them in their independent use of the collections, as well as facilitating public access to collections outside the physical environment of the library building via the Internet.

The **General Information Desk** is staffed throughout library opening hours, with the **Children's Library** staffed at key points throughout the year (after school, in term time).

TechTestDrive training sessions teach customers how to access and navigate the Internet, the library online catalogue, online resources and introduce them to useful online sites and platforms. The library also provides themed sessions aimed at either school or college groups or marking occasions such as Seniors Week, Health Week, Law Week.

The print based **Reference Collection** has been reduced by 75% over the past decade and replaced by a strong suite of online databases. 56,000 searches were carried out by patrons in 2014/15. Access to databses are improved by Stanton's membership of the Public Libraries Network, supported by the State Library of NSW.

A **Children's Services Program** is provided with both innovative and traditional services such as story time provided twice weekly, as well as a Holiday program, reading challenges, cultural celebrations and author visits. Children's services are making an larger contribution to the Library outputs than previously with loans for example now representing a third of the total compared with a quarter five years ago.

A major focus is on writing and incorporates **Writers at Stanton**: a program of visiting authors, local, interstate and international (65 writers visited in 2014/15, enjoyed by over 4,000 library users); the **Young Writers Award**, now in its 27th year, rewards literary creativity in young people; and day and evening **Book Clubs** meet regularly in Council premises.

Historical Services

Providing access to the collections described above, **The Heritage Centre** is staffed 20 hours a week, including weekends, when assistance in research is offered. Behind the scenes work occupies a great deal of staff time and includes exhibition research and preparation, a conservation and preservation program, production of guides for



independent research such as for “house searches”, a specialised cataloguing/indexing program (including photographs, maps, postcards, large pictures and archives) designed to produce on-line databases for the public, completing written public enquiries, and carrying out the resolutions of Council. A publishing program is also maintained, spanning historical leaflets, through pamphlets to books. **Heritage and History Weeks** are marked with walking tours, talks and workshops. Historical services staff work with other Council officers on general publications and interpretative signage in parks and plazas. They also manage volunteers at **Don Bank Museum**, and at the **Sextons Cottage**, and provide oversight of the monuments in **St Thomas Rest Park**. Close links with the **North Shore Historical Society** are maintained, including provision of space for their archives and research facilities within the Heritage Centre.

Benchmarks

Of the State Library of NSW benchmarks Stanton Library falls significantly short in one area only: number of registered members as % of the population, where the result is 35.2% compared with a baseline of 41.5%. A number of factors have been identified as contributing to this, including Stanton’s policy of no limits on number of items borrowed (meaning a family can utilise one card only); there being no branch libraries, and Stanton being located away from any shopping precinct (uniquely in the case of Lower North Shore Libraries at least).

Business continuity

The Library is integral to Council’s Crisis Management Plan, and Shorelink’s Business Continuity Plan was adopted in 2015 and approved Council’s Internal Audit Committee.

Workforce Planning

In 206/17 Council will adopt its Disability Inclusion Action Plan as required under legislation. The Library actively supports staff, including at the recruitment stage to reach their full potential. This can include job redesign, task allocation and work station adjustment.

Work Health and Safety

Annual Work Health and safety Scorecard shows satisfactory results for:

- Workplace inductions
- Organisational inductions
- Incidents and Claims
- Near miss reporting
- Risk Register maintenance
- Work Method Statements (and other controls) annual review and implementation
- Emergency Planning and Evacuation records
- Contractor management



1.3 Library Services & Strategies to be Maintained or Developed

1.3.1 Intent: Create a 5-10 year Library master plan to guide development of library services.

Strategies:

- Engage a specialist library design company to create a library master plan.
- 3D presentation to Directors, Council and Friends of Stanton Library.

1.3.2 Intent: Enhance customer experience by opening up the entrance of the library and providing comfortable seating spaces.

Strategies:

- RFID Returns Units
- New custom made Help Desk
- Lobby and reading area inside the entrance of the library

1.3.3 Intent: To provide relevant services to the workforce and growing residential population.

Strategies:

- Work with Strategic Planning staff to include Branch Libraries at St Leonards and North Sydney, as part of proposed State government Sydney Metro development.
- Customer survey for library users and non-users.

1.3.4 Intent: Accessibility issues addressed and actions implemented.

Strategies:

- Work with the Council Disability Inclusion group on a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to review and report accessibility issues at Stanton library.
- Provide a second entrance for customers from the Ridge Street car park (library master plan).



1.3.5 Intent: Customers are able to access online resources and to successfully use the library online catalogue.

Strategies:

- Marketing strategies to increase customer awareness of online resources.
- Group and individual training sessions for customers on how to find and navigate online resources and library online catalogue.

1.3.6 Intent: An easy to use print and management system for customers to book public computers and to print.

Strategies:

- Investigate and implement a new print and management systems.

1.3.7 Intent: Staff comfortable users of library information technology and able to confidently help customers.

Strategies:

- Implement a staff information technology program to develop staff skills.
- Prioritise professional development for all staff.

1.3.8 Intent: Stanton Library is known for providing excellent customer service

Strategies:

- 'Excellence in Customer Service' program run annually as well as in-house training.
- Proactive responses and effective procedures to deal with staff performance issues.

1.3.9 Intent: Stanton Library is known for the high quality of its collections across all areas.

Strategies:

- Work closely with library suppliers to ensure acquisitions matches the needs of library users.
- Ongoing weeding program. Checks and balances in place to ensure the integrity of the collection is maintained

1.3.10 Intent: Shorelink Library Network is strong, sustainable and welcomes new members.

**Strategies:**

- Proactively expand Shorelink by meeting with interested Councils to discuss joining Shorelink.

1.3.11 Intent: A healthy, resilient, supportive and proactive workplace culture.**Strategies:**

- Continue to implement activities and provide resources that build individual resilience and a positive workplace environment.
- Proactively look out for professional development opportunities for staff.
- Improving methods of communicating information to staff.

1.4 Historical Services Strategies to be Maintained or Developed**1.4.1 Intent:** Maintain sector benchmark conservation conditions for Historical and Heritage Collections**Strategies:**

- Continue to monitor existing storage facilities at Stanton Library and Ernest St Depot.
- Assess objects on an ongoing basis and arrange conservation as needed and where budgets permit.
- Implement disaster procedures where necessary.

1.4.2 Intent: Sound management of Historical, Heritage and research collections**Strategies:**

- Maintain and update collection databases – particularly Objects, Picturing North Sydney and Face of North Sydney.
- Continue to catalogue research material.

1.4.3 Intent: Redesign of Heritage Centre

**Strategies:**

- Redesign entry of Heritage Centre to better orientate visitors with regards exhibition and help desk.
- Redesign help desk so that staff can supervise use of research material at map and work tables.

1.4.4 Intent: Preserve and promote St Thomas Rest Park**Strategies:**

- Implement recommendations of 2015 CMP
- Continue to conserve and interpret monuments on a needs be basis

1.4.5 Intent: Preserve and promote Don Bank Museum**Strategies:**

- Finalise garden interpretation
- Explore further use of improved Museum for workshops and community groups.

1.4.6 Intent: Make a 6th documentary film**Strategies:**

- Commission and complete documentary exploring community gardens (including Wendy's Garden, Cremorne gardens and recent community gardens) in North Sydney to coincide with the 50th anniversary of creation of Gladys Carey Reserve Continue to conserve and interpret monuments on a needs be basis.

1.4.7 Intent: Maintain and improve public Programs**Strategies:**

- Conduct walking tours during Heritage Festival and History
- Explore the transfer of walking tours to mobile apps
- Conduct Ferry tours on a once a year basis from 2018