



City of Monash

***Mulgrave Library
Feasibility Study***

April 2018



I & J Management Services



City of Monash

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The intent of this Feasibility Study was to provide the City of Monash and Monash Public Library Service (MPLS) with evidence on which to make an informed decision about the future development of public library services and spaces in Mulgrave. The output from the Study was to be a report with recommendations that observe the potential benefits of expanding library services in Mulgrave.

Through research and consultation with library users, Mulgrave residents, the Mackie Road Neighbourhood House, library managers and Council staff, the Feasibility Study has examined:

- the demand for provision of library services in Mulgrave
- the current supply of library services to Mulgrave residents
- whether there is any gap in service provision
- service options and recommendations.

Demand – Library service needs and aspirations

All communities, including residents of Mulgrave and the City of Monash, expect their library to deliver the five core services offered by a public library:

- physical and digital collections (including collection items in appropriate community languages)
- community-centred library and learning programs
- efficient access to computers and the internet
- information and reference services
- comfortable places to read and study.

Given the demographic characteristics of the Mulgrave population, the specific mix of library services expected in Mulgrave might vary from that across Monash in terms of wanting relatively larger children's collections and more Story Time programs, and larger LOTE collections and more programs in community languages. However, in general the community consultation indicated that people who live in Mulgrave want to be able to access the same library services that every other community expects to be able to access, in order that they might realise the same benefits in terms of literacy and lifelong learning, digital inclusion, social inclusion and a stronger more creative community. That is, they wanted a good local library.

Supply – Current library offerings and use

The Mulgrave Library was opened in November 2012 in the Mackie Road Neighbourhood House at the Wellington Reserve Community Centre in Mulgrave. The single-room 30m² library is by far the smallest, of MPLS' six library branches. It is currently open for 3 to 3½ hours each day from Tuesday to Saturday – a total of 17 hours per week. The library offers:

- a small onsite collection of around 3,000 items, with access to the entire MPLS collection through the library catalogue, reservations and stock rotation
- a weekly Story Time activity for toddlers, pre-schoolers and their families
- other occasional onsite programs
- free access to computers and the internet, and places where people can relax and read the newspaper (through the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House)
- a librarian who is well-loved by the people who use the library and provides personalised service to the local community.

Utilisation of the Mulgrave Library is a small part of the Monash library network.

- 0.3% of MPLS members list Mulgrave as their 'home' library branch
- 1% of active (borrowing) library members list Mulgrave as their 'home' library branch
- 15% of active library members who live in Mulgrave list Mulgrave as their 'home' branch (with most using Wheelers Hill and/or Glen Waverley – many having done so since before Mulgrave opened and retained the habit)
- Mulgrave Library averages:
 - 500 visits per month (0.6% of total visits to Monash libraries)
 - 6.8 visits per opening hour (vs 58 for all of MPLS)
 - 850 loans per month (0.6% of total loans in Monash libraries)
 - 1.8 loans per visits (higher than the MPLS average of 1.6 influenced by high borrowing of junior collection items)
 - 6 to 7 library programs offered per month
 - 90 program attendees per month (with around 25% of library visits driven by library programming, vs 7% across all Monash libraries).

With the absence of a full-service library in Mulgrave (and no local library prior to 2012), many Mulgrave residents have chosen to make other Monash library branches their 'home' branch. Some also choose to use libraries in neighbouring LGAs, there being 11 other libraries within a 15-minute drive of Mulgrave Library (five being Monash libraries) – and the two closest public libraries (by travel time) being in Springvale and Westall.

Data from other library services shows that more Mulgrave residents use libraries in Greater Dandenong (705 active members) and Eastern Regional Libraries (418) than use the Mulgrave Library (261).

User feedback indicates a moderate level of satisfaction with the services provided at the Mulgrave Library (7.4 out of 10), and appreciation for the difference it makes in their lives.

"It enriches my life through reading, listening and interacting. My child just loves to come to Mulgrave Library." (Working mother, 35-49 years)

"It's close to my place. Any time I'm lonely I come and enjoy sitting and reading." (Pensioner, 65 years+)

"Monash Council did quite well with the library. A library is a centre to link people in the community. It is the most important spirit food resource." (Married working man, 50-64 years)

However, an important finding from the community consultation was that part of the appeal for some users of Mulgrave Library is the fact that it is NOT a large full-service library. That is, for some people the library is 'a little gem' because it is intimate and personal. They value the fact that the librarian knows them by name, knows who they are, knows what they like to read and knows what makes them smile. For some people who experience social, emotional and/or psychological challenges in their everyday lives, the Mulgrave Library feels safe, welcoming and comfortable. They value the library because when they visit it is peaceful and undemanding – it is their sanctuary.

What this means is that while there are people who choose to use the larger Monash libraries because they offer the full range of contemporary library services and are vibrant community hubs, and while there are community members and survey respondents who would like to replicate that experience in Mulgrave, there are also people who deliberately choose to use the small Mulgrave Library because it is NOT like the larger libraries.

Service gaps

There are three distinct ways of viewing the question of whether there is a 'gap' in provision of library services in Mulgrave. Analysis of each of these gaps and the conclusions reached are summarised in the following table.

| Service gap | Conclusion |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Demand (expectations) vs supply</p> | <p>There are reasonable grounds to conclude that there is no significant service 'gap' between the demand for and supply of library services in Mulgrave. Through the MPLS network anyone who lives and works in the City of Monash has access to a full and appropriate range of public library services within a few kilometres or a short travel time.</p> <p>If there are deficiencies in the scope of the services offered at Mulgrave Library, these might be defined in terms of a need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ longer opening hours ▪ more community programs ▪ more access to onsite browseable collections ▪ more space for recreational reading, study and work. <p>However, the contrast between Mulgrave's 'Library Lounge' and the City's other full-service libraries does highlight an inequity in library service provision for residents in the south-eastern part of Monash.</p> |
| <p>2. Supply vs industry benchmark/standard</p> | <p>As residents of the City of Monash, people who live in Mulgrave have access to a high-performing library service (one of Victoria's leading libraries). At a macro level they do not experience a 'gap' in service quality, especially those who choose to use Monash libraries other than Mulgrave. The situation is clearly different for residents who (for whatever reason) choose to just use the small Mulgrave Library.</p> |
| <p>3. Current service vs future needs</p> | <p>Recognising what is already happening in public libraries in Australia and overseas it can be said with some confidence that in the foreseeable future MPLS and Mulgrave Library will need to adapt to allow for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increased outreach services and delivery of programs and collections in community settings by library staff, partner organisations and other Council Departments ▪ increased use of the library website, apps and digital technologies to facilitate wider access to library services ▪ increased demand for use of libraries as a welcoming and culturally inclusive space for people to read, relax, meet, connect, learn and work ▪ increased expectations of libraries as a provider of and partner in delivery of lifelong learning opportunities ▪ a shift in staff responsibilities from transactional roles undertaken from behind the library desk to information and user support roles and/or more transformative community development roles that take place on the library floor and in community locations. |

Options

With Mulgrave Library's current service and usage profile, and the demand for local library services identified through this study, the City of Monash has five basic options.

1. Close the Mulgrave Library
2. Do nothing and retain the Mulgrave Library in its current form
3. Consolidate and grow Mulgrave Library's service offering (as use of the Neighbourhood House increases)
4. Expand the Mulgrave Library (on the existing site)
5. Build a new full-service library in Mulgrave (at Mackie Rd or another location).

The rationale for each option, and the likely benefits and costs (including financial implications), are discussed in this report. In the framing of this Feasibility Study the City of Monash did not indicate that closure of the Mulgrave Library was an expected option. Option 1 is included for completeness only.

Recommendations

The Feasibility Study has found that the Mulgrave Library currently delivers a good quality but limited library service to the residents of Mulgrave. While the full range of services expected of a contemporary public library are accessible at Mulgrave (through the combined efforts of MPLS and the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House), the services are not provided at a level that can be expected to attract new and regular library users, other than those who value the personalised service that characterises such a small library.

There is an inequity in the provision of a small library in Mulgrave when the City of Monash's other libraries are full-service library branches. However, there is no indication that the Mulgrave community is urgently seeking redress of this situation, and it is clear that many Mulgrave residents choose to use other nearby libraries (in Monash or neighbouring municipalities) in preference to the Mulgrave Library.

The following recommendations incorporate two of the options examined in the Study.

Recommendation 1 That the City of Monash adopt Option 3 to progressively consolidate and grow the library service offering in Mulgrave.

That Option 3 be pursued at the earliest opportunity within Council's established budget process and timelines.

That Option 3 be implemented concurrently with the expected growth in community engagement with the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House. It should occur collaboratively with the management of the Neighbourhood House, especially through joint endeavours to promote local participation in and use of the services and facilities available at the Wellington Reserve Community Centre.

Recommendation 2 That the City of Monash, in approximately two years' time and in line with Council's budget processes and timelines, and subject to the outcomes from implementation of Recommendation 1, adopt Option 4 to expand the Mulgrave Library on its current site.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Monash Public Library Service

Contemporary public libraries provide access to information and ideas, support 21st century literacies and lifelong learning, facilitate creativity and intellectual growth, and provide community space and connectivity through leisure and recreation.

*Public libraries are the community's local source of communal information, content and literacies, and will continue to play a significant role within their communities into the future.*¹

Monash Public Library Service (MPLS) commenced operations in 1994 with the amalgamation of the former Cities of Oakleigh and Waverley. The library service has:

- six library branches at Clayton, Glen Waverley, Mount Waverley, Mulgrave, Oakleigh and Wheelers Hill
- a Home Library Service for people who cannot directly access the library's collections
- a website at www.monlib.vic.gov.au which provides around the clock access to the library's online catalogue and databases.

MPLS also supports two historical societies by providing facilities and staff assistance at the Monash Federation Centre and the Mount Waverley Library.

The library's vision, as described in its 2015-18 Library Service Strategy², is:

Inspiring strong, vibrant, connected communities

We seek to understand the current and future needs of the diverse Monash community and provide library services, facilities and programs that support lifelong learning and assist residents and visitors to live healthy and more fulfilling lives, as well as feel connected to the community.

Annual statistical data compiled by Public Libraries Victoria Network (PLVN) consistently shows Monash to be one of the leading public libraries in the state in terms of service provision, service utilization, service efficiency and customer satisfaction.

In 2016-17 MPLS:

- served a population of more than 190,000
- had six library branches open for a total of 337 hours per week
- had more than 280,000 collection items (both physical and digital)
- had the third largest collection of items in languages other than English (LOTE) in the state, with 40,000 items in 22 different languages
- had 35,000 active borrowing members, equal to 18% of the municipal population
- hosted 1.02 million customer visits to its branches (on average 58 visits per hour per branch)
- issued 1.59 million loans of physical items plus 56,000 downloads of digital items
- delivered around 2,000 library programs with total attendance of more than 73,000
- had 196 computers and internet-enabled devices available for public use
- hosted 91,000 computer bookings and 192,000 wifi sessions.

¹ *Victorian Public Libraries 2030: Strategic Framework*, State Library of Victoria, 2013.

² *Monash Public Library Service Strategy 2015-2018*, City of Monash.

1.2. Project brief

In September 2017 the City of Monash issued a request for quote to assess the feasibility and viability of a library branch for the Mulgrave community. The Feasibility Study was to comprise:

- demographic analysis of the Mulgrave area, including analysis of social indicators to assess the need for a fully-resourced branch library
- analysis of usage patterns of the current Mulgrave Library
- analysis of the use of other libraries in Monash and neighbouring municipalities by Mulgrave residents
- benchmarking with other relevant community hub or public library projects
- consultation with the Mulgrave community, including a Mulgrave resident user and non-user survey and no less than two focus group sessions
- analysis of industry trends and current benchmarks in provision of relevant public library services
- a summary cost-benefit analysis to assess the various community benefits of an expanded or new library facility against capital and recurrent costs.

The outcome of the Feasibility Study was to be a report identifying recommendations that observe the potential benefits of an expansion of library services in the Mulgrave community. Options to be explored include a stand-alone branch library, a branch library as part of a community hub, or a library lounge incorporated into a new or existing facility.

The intent of the Feasibility Study was to provide Council with evidence on which to make an informed decision about the future development of public library services and spaces in Mulgrave.

1.3. Feasibility Study

In response to the project brief and intended outcomes, the Mulgrave Library Feasibility Study examined the following questions.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| DEMAND | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Who are we? (a profile of the Mulgrave community)▪ What public library services do we need? (based on that profile)▪ What public library services do we want? (community aspirations)▪ How will these services strengthen individual and community outcomes? |
| SUPPLY | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What public library services are currently offered to Mulgrave residents? Or can be accessed in Mulgrave?▪ What public library services do we currently use? |
| SERVICE GAP | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What is the gap in service provision? (between demand and supply)▪ What is the gap between service provision and community and industry benchmarks/standards?▪ What is the gap between current provision and anticipated trends in library service provision? |
| OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What options exist to bridge any identified service gap(s)?▪ What are the costs and benefits of these options?▪ What recommendations would best address any service gap? |

The consultation undertaken within the Mulgrave community and Monash City Council, and analysis and recommendations presented in this report respond to these questions.

2. MULGRAVE COMMUNITY – LIBRARY SERVICE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS

Section 2 of the Feasibility Study addresses the demand for library services in Mulgrave.

That is:

- Who are we? (a profile of the Mulgrave community)
- What public library services do we need? (based on that profile)
- What public library services do we want? (community aspirations)
- How will these services strengthen individual and community outcomes?

2.1. A demographic profile of the Mulgrave community

The 2016 ABS census reported that 19,368 people lived in the suburb of Mulgrave. This is an increase of 1,721 people (+9.8%) in five years since the 2011 census.³

Appendix 1 describes (statistically) the demographic characteristics of the Mulgrave population, compared with both the suburb's population at the 2011 census, and with the broader population of the City of Monash and Greater Melbourne (GMelb) in 2016. The key features of the Mulgrave population which are likely to influence the potential and future use of public libraries are summarised in the following table.

| Population characteristic | Mulgrave (2016) |
|---|---|
| Total population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 19,368 people, up 9.8% since 2011 ▪ Growing faster than the rest of Monash but slower than GMelb ▪ 0.3% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander |
| Gender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50.3% female ... 49.7% male |
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High proportion of under 10s (12.2% vs Monash 10.0%) ▪ Very low proportion of 15-24 year olds (11.7% vs GMelb 13.4% and Monash 16.6%) ▪ High proportion of 30-44 year olds (22.0% vs Monash 20.0%) ▪ High proportion of 60-79 year olds (19.3% vs Monash 16.6% and GMelb 15.1%) ▪ Low proportion of people aged 80 years or more (4.8% vs Monash 5.4%) |
| Language spoken at home | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very high level of non-English language speakers ▪ 46.8% speak English only at home, compared with 45.4% in Monash and 62.0% in GMelb in 2016 ▪ Major shift since 2011, when 51.4% spoke only English at home ▪ Main community languages are Chinese (12.7%), Greek (7.6%) and Indo-Aryan (6.7%) ▪ Proportion of Chinese speakers (12.7%) well below Monash (20.5%) but well above GMelb (6.2%) |
| Household relationships Family composition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High proportion of married and de facto couples (49.1% vs 45.4% GMelb) ▪ Low proportion of single person households (6.0% vs 8.8% GMelb) ▪ 22.2% of households are a couple with some children under 15 years vs 18.7% GMelb |

³ General Community Profile – Mulgrave (Suburb), 2016 Census, Australian Bureau of Statistics, www.abs.gov.au.

| Population characteristic | Mulgrave (2016) |
|----------------------------|--|
| Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fewer people attending education, especially tertiary students ▪ 28.9% currently attending education vs 31.4% GMelb and 34.3% Monash ▪ Of these, high proportion of pre-schoolers and primary school students (32.4% vs 25.3% Monash) and low proportion attending tertiary education (26.1% vs 39.3% Monash) |
| Highest level of education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 63.5% attended Year 12 or above vs 70.5% Monash ▪ 28.4% have a Bachelor degree or higher vs 36.3% Monash |
| Employment and occupation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labour force participation rate of 58.7% above Monash 56.8% but below GMelb 61.9% ▪ Unemployment rate of 6.3% vs 6.8% GMelb and 8.0% Monash ▪ Lower proportion of employed persons are professionals and more are trades, clerical and sales workers ▪ 24.8% professional workers vs 30.4% Monash ▪ 12.3% technicians/trades workers vs 10.4% Monash ▪ 13.3% machinists/labourers vs 10.5% Monash |
| Household income | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More middle income earners and fewer low and high income households ▪ 11.8% earn less than \$500 per week vs 14.7% Monash ▪ 47.6% earn between \$1,000 and \$2,999 per week vs 43.0% Monash and 45.1% GMelb ▪ 14.7% earn \$3,000 or more per week vs 16.8% Monash |
| Internet connection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Average internet connectivity ▪ 86.0% of households have fixed or mobile internet access vs 86.5% Monash and 85.6% GMelb |
| Motor vehicles in dwelling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High level of access to motor vehicles ▪ 65.0% of dwellings have two or more vehicles vs 55.7% Monash and 53.4% GMelb ▪ 3.8% have no motor vehicle vs 7.5% Monash and 8.7% GMelb |

2.2. What public library services do we need?

The 21st century library is more than just a place to borrow books. It is a civic connector, where people of all ages and backgrounds come together to learn and pursue their individual or shared interests. The 2016 Australian public library guidelines describe five core services offered by a modern public library.⁴

- *Collections.* Libraries provide print materials and electronic resources for reading, listening to and viewing to support lifelong learning, reading for pleasure and the documentation and preservation of cultural memory.
- *Programs.* Libraries provide activities for people of all ages and interests at library branches and via outreach in community locations. Library programs may be related to a part of the library collection (e.g. the Home Library Service), a targeted population demographic (e.g. visits to kindergartens), a learning outcome (e.g. early years' literacy programs), development of particular skills (e.g. digital literacy for seniors) or social and cultural engagement (e.g. youth activities).
- *Access to technology.* Libraries have an important role in providing free (to the community) access to computers and the internet, especially for people who might otherwise not have access because of cost (of devices, data plans, printers and consumables), difficulty of use, or a

⁴ The classification of services here draws on the service profile described in *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries*, Australian Public Library Alliance and Australian Library and Information Association, 2016.

need to access specialist equipment (e.g. large format display and keyboards for people with vision impairment).

- *Information services.* Library professionals are trusted guides to the world of information – helping people to develop skills in navigating and accessing the information they need.
- *Places and spaces.* Libraries have spaces where people can sit and read the newspaper, do their homework or study (alone or in groups), meet and learn, work in quiet spaces, relax in the comfortable chairs on a sunny afternoon, search the internet, communicate with family overseas, stream movies or write a job application.

All communities, including residents of Mulgrave and the City of Monash, expect their library to deliver these core library services. Just like any other area, Mulgrave has a mix of old and young, employed and retired, literate and non-literate, connected and disconnected, readers and non-readers, socially and economically advantaged and disadvantaged who benefit from access to these services.

However, the population characteristics described in Section 2.1 suggest that (on average) the Mulgrave community is likely to have relatively higher (or lower) demand for the following types of library services.

| Population characteristic | Impact on demand for library services |
|--|--|
| Growing population | Larger collections (physical and digital) More general library programs More reading, study and meeting spaces |
| Young families with pre-school and primary age children | Larger children’s collections More Story Time programs More school holiday programs |
| Fewer tertiary students | Fewer study spaces during the day/evening |
| Non-English language speakers (especially Chinese, Greek) | Larger LOTE collections More programs in community languages English language programs |
| Fewer professionals More trades, clerical and sales workers | Different reading habits and preferences |
| More middle income earners Fewer low and high income households Average internet connections | More likely to be able to independently source and access own reading resources and technology |
| Fewer single person households | Less demand for social connectivity |
| Multiple vehicle households | Greater mobility, wider reach, reduced reliance on public transport to access library services |

2.3. What public library services do we want?

The community consultation undertaken for this Feasibility Study included surveys of Mulgrave Library users and people who live or work in Mulgrave and do not currently use the library (total 74 respondents), as well as community forums, small group and one-on-one conversations with people at the Mulgrave Library, the Mackie Road Neighbourhood House and the local playground. In total, around 150 local residents provided some input to and insights on their use (or non-use) of the Mulgrave Library.

Collectively, this feedback indicated that people who live in Mulgrave want to be able to access the same library services that every other community expects to be able to access. That is:

- good general library collections (i.e. fiction and non-fiction books, DVDs, magazines, ebooks) and good specialist collections (e.g. junior and youth collections, LOTE collections)

- community programs that promote and facilitate reading, digital literacy and cultural engagement (notably Story Time programs in English and Chinese)
- access to the internet and support for computer use among people with limited access to or experience of computers and digital technology
- safe, welcoming and comfortable places to read and study
- opportunities to connect and meet up with other people.

While some individuals identified specific things that they would like from the library (e.g. special collection items on demand to meet their personal interests – gardening, crafts, personal development, Chinese and Italian stories), the general content and tone of the feedback indicated that there was nothing that significantly distinguished the library demands of Mulgrave residents from those of any other community. That is, they wanted a good local library.

“I have been a library member for 73 years. Mulgrave Library is close and provides me with 98% of my reading.” (Survey respondent)

“When in a hurry, go to the local library.” (Survey respondent)

2.4. Strengthening individual and community outcomes

The benefits of a contemporary public library service are described in the 2016 Australian public library guidelines.⁵ They indicate that local libraries, like the Mulgrave Library, help residents to read, learn, discover, relax and connect with information, people and ideas. Effective library programs and services help people to increase their knowledge and skills, to change their attitudes and behaviours, to access information, and become more aware of what is happening in their community. Public libraries can also have a positive impact on community, economic and cultural outcomes.

The guidelines describe six key individual and community outcomes from the provision of public library services.

| Outcome | |
|---|--|
| <i>Literacy and lifelong learning</i> | Public libraries play a valuable role in helping children to learn to read through Story Time programs and children’s collections. Libraries also offer programs and resources to support adult literacy and digital literacy, as well as collections, programs and facilities that enable and encourage people of all ages and interests to pursue formal and informal study and lifelong learning. |
| <i>Stronger, more creative and culturally inclusive communities</i> | Public libraries strengthen communities and build social capital by providing an inclusive forum and support for expression of creativity and cultural identity. They preserve the past, celebrate the present and embrace the future by ensuring free and equitable access for all people, collecting and promoting local cultural content, and celebrating diversity and promoting tolerance. |
| <i>Informed and connected citizenship</i> | Many people come to their neighbourhood library to connect with one another and find out what is happening in their community. The library is becoming the new ‘town square’, a non-commercial place in a busy central location close to or integrated with other community facilities, education, recreation and cultural organisations. |

⁵ *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries*, Australian Public Library Alliance and Australian Library and Information Association, 2016.

| Outcome | |
|---|--|
| <i>Digital inclusion</i> | Access to the internet has become an essential tool for effective participation in society, as the only way to access some information, government and business services is through the internet. Yet 14% of Australian households ⁶ , and an estimated 14% of Mulgrave households ⁷ , do not have internet access. Libraries play an important role in supporting digital inclusion and providing a safety net across the digital divide. Libraries provide free access to computers and the internet, technical support to computer users, and training to people with low levels of digital literacy. |
| <i>Personal development and wellbeing</i> | Everyone is welcome to use the library as they choose. This might involve reading for pleasure, meeting friends and people with common interests, accessing everyday information, accessing information that supports health and wellness, managing personal finances or being somewhere safe where there are other people. |
| <i>Economic and workforce development</i> | Public libraries are increasingly supporting economic and workforce development by providing access to the internet to allow people to search and apply for jobs online and access to computers to allow people to write job applications. Libraries are increasingly providing spaces where start-ups and small businesses can work, research, communicate and collaborate with customers and business partners. |

The Mulgrave Library, as part of the wider network of public libraries in Monash, contributes to all of these individual and community outcomes to varying degrees.

“I am encouraged to read more and borrow more for my kids without having to drive to Wheelers Hill.” (Survey respondent)

“The Mackie Road Neighbourhood House provides me with the only support group I have to meet people in a similar situation to me. The support is very significant for me and having the library there adds to that.” (Survey respondent)

⁶ Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2014-15, ABS Cat. No. 8146.0.

⁷ 2016 Census General Community Profile – Mulgrave, ABS.

3. MULGRAVE LIBRARY – CURRENT USE

Section 3 of the Feasibility Study addresses the supply of library services in Mulgrave and to Mulgrave residents. That is:

- What public library services are currently offered to Mulgrave residents? Or can be accessed in Mulgrave?
- What public library services do we currently use?

3.1. Mulgrave Library

The Mulgrave Library was opened in November 2012 at the Wellington Reserve Community Centre in Mackie Rd Mulgrave. Located behind the Mackie Rd playground, the Community Centre is home to the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House (NH), the library, an e-cafe, community hall, community meeting rooms, creche (not currently operating) and a community garden.



The Mulgrave Library is the newest, and at 30m² by far the smallest, of MPLS' six library branches. It is currently open for 3 to 3½ hours each day from Tuesday to Saturday – a total of 17 hours per week.

A small community survey conducted in June 2015 identified a high level of satisfaction with the services offered through the library and a desire among respondents to expand the service – either through longer opening hours, provision of additional services (e.g. collections and programs), or development of a larger or stand-alone service comparable to the libraries in other suburbs in the City of Monash.

The 2018 survey conducted for this Feasibility Study reinforced the earlier findings with an average satisfaction score of 7.4 out of 10, and 48% of respondents rating the services at Mulgrave Library as 9 or 10 out of 10. By far the greatest attraction of the Mulgrave Library to local users was its convenience – location ... proximity ... 'close to home' ... 'in walking distance' ... 'around the corner'. The three main improvement opportunities noted in the survey (in direct response to a question about ways in which the library service could be improved) were to have:

- longer opening hours
- bigger collections
- more space (i.e. for collections, programs, casual reading, study, and for families and prams).

"Increase in size of the library would allow for a more extensive range of books and materials, longer opening hours, and provision of library programs." (Survey respondent)

"It needs to be bigger – not just an outpost, but a proper branch, fully funded with all the services of a normal branch." (Survey respondent)

Service offering

As noted in Section 2.2, the 2016 Australian public library guidelines describe five core services offered by a modern public library. MPLS provides all of these services (to varying degrees) at Mulgrave Library, with the overall service offering to library users enhanced by the association with the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House.

| Service offering | Mulgrave Library | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|-----|-----|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30m² ... single room at NH ... access from inside NH ▪ Parking available outside NH/playground | | | | | | | | | | |
| Opening hours | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Tue</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Wed</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Thu</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Fri</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Sat</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.30 to 5.00</td> <td>3.30 to 7.00</td> <td>1.30 to 5.00</td> <td>9.30 to 1.00</td> <td>9.00 to 12.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | 1.30 to 5.00 | 3.30 to 7.00 | 1.30 to 5.00 | 9.30 to 1.00 | 9.00 to 12.00 |
| Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | | | | | | | |
| 1.30 to 5.00 | 3.30 to 7.00 | 1.30 to 5.00 | 9.30 to 1.00 | 9.00 to 12.00 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Core library services</i> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Collections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General collection 3,000 items (approx.) ▪ Includes fiction, non-fiction, junior and youth collections ▪ Includes books, DVDs and magazines ▪ Includes full access to MPLS' general collections on request ▪ Includes access to MPLS' digital collections (ebooks, eresources) ▪ Includes collection items in community languages ▪ Loan periods, limits and processes consistent with all MPLS libraries (including \$1 per item charge for an online reservation – excluding junior, teen, adult literacy and English learning collection items) ▪ Returns trolley located in foyer of Neighbourhood House (accessible when NH is open) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Story Time for toddlers/pre-schoolers (Tuesday 2.00 in NH creche area) ▪ Other occasional programs, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tech Bar help trouble-shooting technology (first Tuesday 1.30 2018) – Lego Club for school age children (first Thursday 4.00 2017) – Container Gardening (November 2017) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Access to technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neighbourhood House provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – free wifi access – public access computers – photocopying, printing and scanning (fees apply) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Information services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Onsite librarian responds to inquiries and information requests, assists with selection and acquisition of collection items, provides general technology support and is the human face of the library. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Places and spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited seating available in library ▪ Neighbourhood House provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – public space with couches, work tables and kitchen facilities – small reading room (opened March 2018) – access to meeting rooms – public toilets. | | | | | | | | | | |

The Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House also offers a wide range of learning and community programs (most of which involve a small fee). These include (among others):

- social and support groups (e.g. playgroup, seniors social group, walking group, community morning tea)
- health and wellbeing programs (e.g. exercise, meditation, yoga)
- special interest courses (e.g. computing, photography, story writing)
- adult education (e.g. English for work and study, financial skills)
- children's programs (e.g. art classes, toddlers Zumba, musical theatre).

The Neighbourhood House also has meeting rooms and a large hall available for hire. These are used on a regular basis by local community groups for a variety of activities (e.g. ballet, ballroom dancing classes, craft groups, Chinese playgroup).

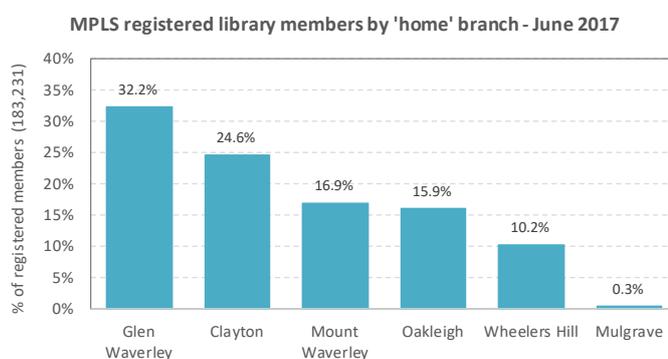
In Term 1 2018, the Neighbourhood House estimated that 450 people attended the centre each week to actively participate in its programs and those run by other community groups, businesses and not-for-profit providers. This is a 40% increase on the 320 attendees per week in Term 3 2017 when the Neighbourhood House's current management took over running the centre, and 15% greater than the Term 4 2017 figure of 392. The Neighbourhood House has plans to further boost participation numbers.

3.2. Library membership

Total membership

At 30 June 2017, MPLS had more than 183,000 registered library members. Not all of these live in the City of Monash, are current library users, or are 'active' library members (i.e. defined by the LGPRF as people having borrowed a collection item in 2016-17). They are simply the people who are currently recorded on the Library Management System (LMS) as being (or having been) a library member.

517 of these memberships (0.3%, or fewer than 1 in every 350 members) record Mulgrave Library as their 'home' library branch. While this figure is not a true representation of total membership (partly because of the inflated total and partly because the Mulgrave Library was not open when many of these people first registered to be library members), it does indicate the position of Mulgrave Library relative to the other five library branches.



Active membership

Approximately 34,000 MPLS members are recorded as having borrowed a collection item in 2016-17. This is a more accurate figure on library membership, although it does not recognise the many people who use the library but are not members – for example, people who participate in programs, use library computers or wifi, or use library spaces but do NOT borrow from the library collection. Of these 34,000 active library members, 1% nominated Mulgrave as their 'home' library branch.

| Suburb of member | Members | % |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Glen Waverley | 6,886 | 20% |
| Mount Waverley | 5,708 | 17% |
| Wheelers Hill | 2,897 | 9% |
| Clayton | 2,044 | 6% |
| Mulgrave | 1,725 | 5% |
| Oakleigh | 1,357 | 4% |
| Clayton South | 1,252 | 4% |
| Oakleigh South | 848 | 3% |
| Hughesdale | 739 | 2% |
| Oakleigh East | 685 | 2% |
| 482 other suburbs | 9,760 | 29% |
| Total | 33,901 | 100% |

| Active members who live in Mulgrave | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Branch used | Members | % |
| Wheelers Hill | 1,071 | 62% |
| Glen Waverley | 698 | 40% |
| Clayton | 339 | 20% |
| Mulgrave | 261 | 15% |
| Mount Waverley | 171 | 10% |
| Oakleigh | 147 | 9% |
| Internet renewal | 567 | 33% |
| Total | 1,725 | 100% |

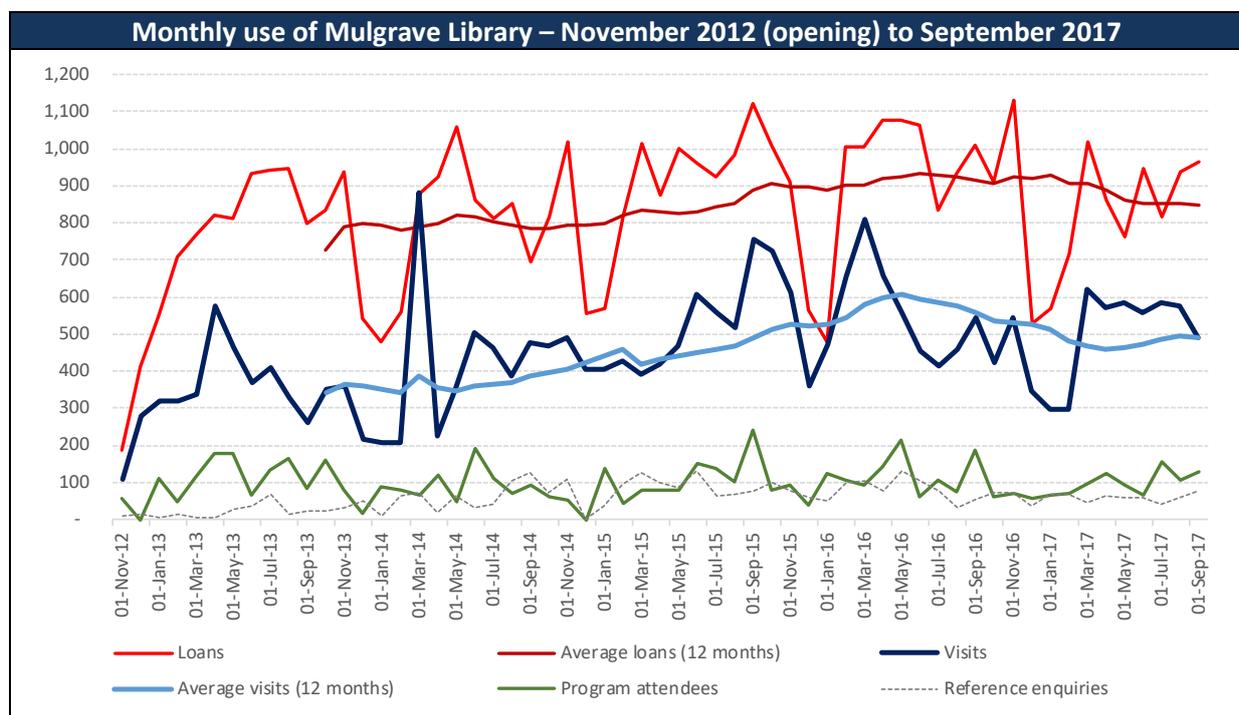
Among the active library members in 2016-17, more than 70% listed their registration address as being in one of ten main suburbs in the City of Monash. Among these, Mulgrave had the fifth most members with 1,725 Mulgrave residents being active library members (representing 5% of the total active membership).

However, of those 1,725 active members who live in Mulgrave, 261 (15%) borrowed items from the Mulgrave Library. Mulgrave residents were far more likely to borrow from the Wheelers Hill (62% use this library) or Glen Waverley (40%) Libraries. Once again, this outcome may be a result of historical practices where people who have lived in Mulgrave since before the Mulgrave Library opened in 2012 developed the habit of visiting the other Monash libraries and have not changed their behaviour since 2012. It may also indicate a preference among long-standing and newer Mulgrave residents for accessing a full-service library, in preference to the relatively limited collections, programs and spaces currently available at Mulgrave.

3.3. Library visitation

Since opening in November 2012, Mulgrave Library has averaged 456 visits and 832 loans per month. In addition, every month staff at the library receive an average of 59 reference enquiries and have 90 people participate in programs run by the library.

Removing seasonal variations and month to month fluctuations, the number of visits per month (averaged over 12 months) grew from around 350 in 2012-13 to reach 500 in September 2015. Average visitation peaked at 600 per month in May 2016 and has since dropped back to around 500 per month during 2017.

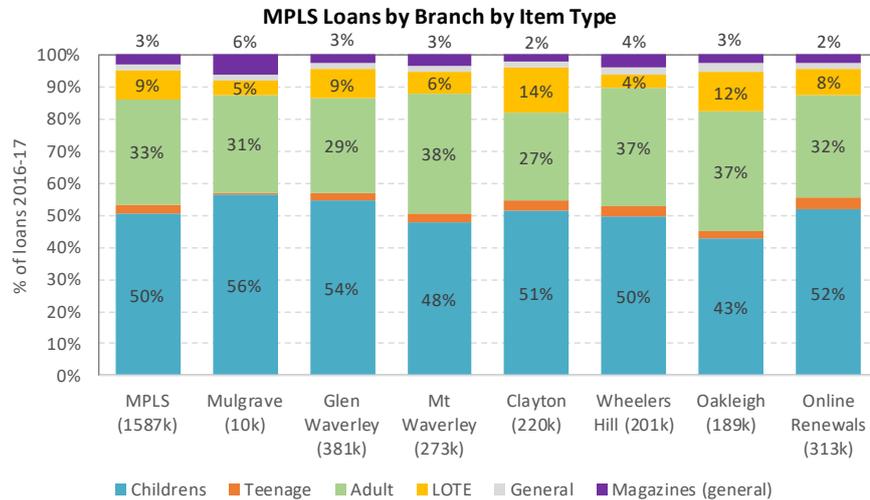


Total visits to Mulgrave Library represent around 0.6% of all visits to MPLS’s six libraries, and the hourly visitation rate (approx. 6.8 visits per opening hour) is one ninth of the MPLS average of 58 visits per opening hour.

3.4. Library loans

During 2016-17 there were 10,217 items loaned from the Mulgrave Library, at an average of 851 items per month, around 10% below the peak of 928 items per month average in the 12 months to January 2017. There are clear seasonal effects in library loans at Mulgrave with monthly loans typically down 40-50% during December-January each year.⁸

Just as visits to Mulgrave Library are 0.6% of total visits to Monash Libraries, total loans at Mulgrave Library represent around 0.6% of the total number of loans made by MPLS. The total number of loans per opening hour (11.6) is one eighth of the MPLS average (90.6).



However, the average number of loans per visit at Mulgrave is slightly above the MPLS average (1.8 vs 1.6). This is the result of above average proportions of loans from the children’s and junior collection (e.g. picture books, junior literacy, junior fiction, junior DVDs) and loans of magazines. Families with young children typically borrow multiple items at each library visit, and Mulgrave has a relatively high proportion of families with pre-school and primary age children (approx. 22% of households vs 19% in Greater Melbourne).

On average, active library members in Monash borrow 46 items per year, whereas Mulgrave residents who use the Mulgrave Library borrow on average 79 items per year. That is, they are relatively heavy borrowers, due in part to the relatively high numbers of loans from the junior collection. However, on average only 28 of these 79 loans made by Mulgrave residents who use the Mulgrave Library are actually made at the Mulgrave Library. The remaining 51 loans (65%) are made at other Monash libraries.

3.5. Program participation

During 2016-17 MPLS ran 79 library programs at the Mulgrave Library. More than half of these were the weekly Story Time programs for toddlers and pre-schoolers, with an average of two to three other programs run at the library each month. Analysis of program participation data shows that on average:

- there were 6 to 7 programs offered at Mulgrave Library per month
- there were 90 participants per month in these library programs
- there were 15 participants per program, below the number at other Monash libraries where Story Time activities (for example) regularly attract 50 to 80 children and adults
- around 25% of library visits were linked to program activity, compared with 7% across all Monash libraries.

The relatively high rate of visitation driven by library programming at Mulgrave illustrates the drawing power of programs in a small library. That is, on its own the small size of the collection and limited space are not enough to attract some people to the Mulgrave Library. They may source their own books or

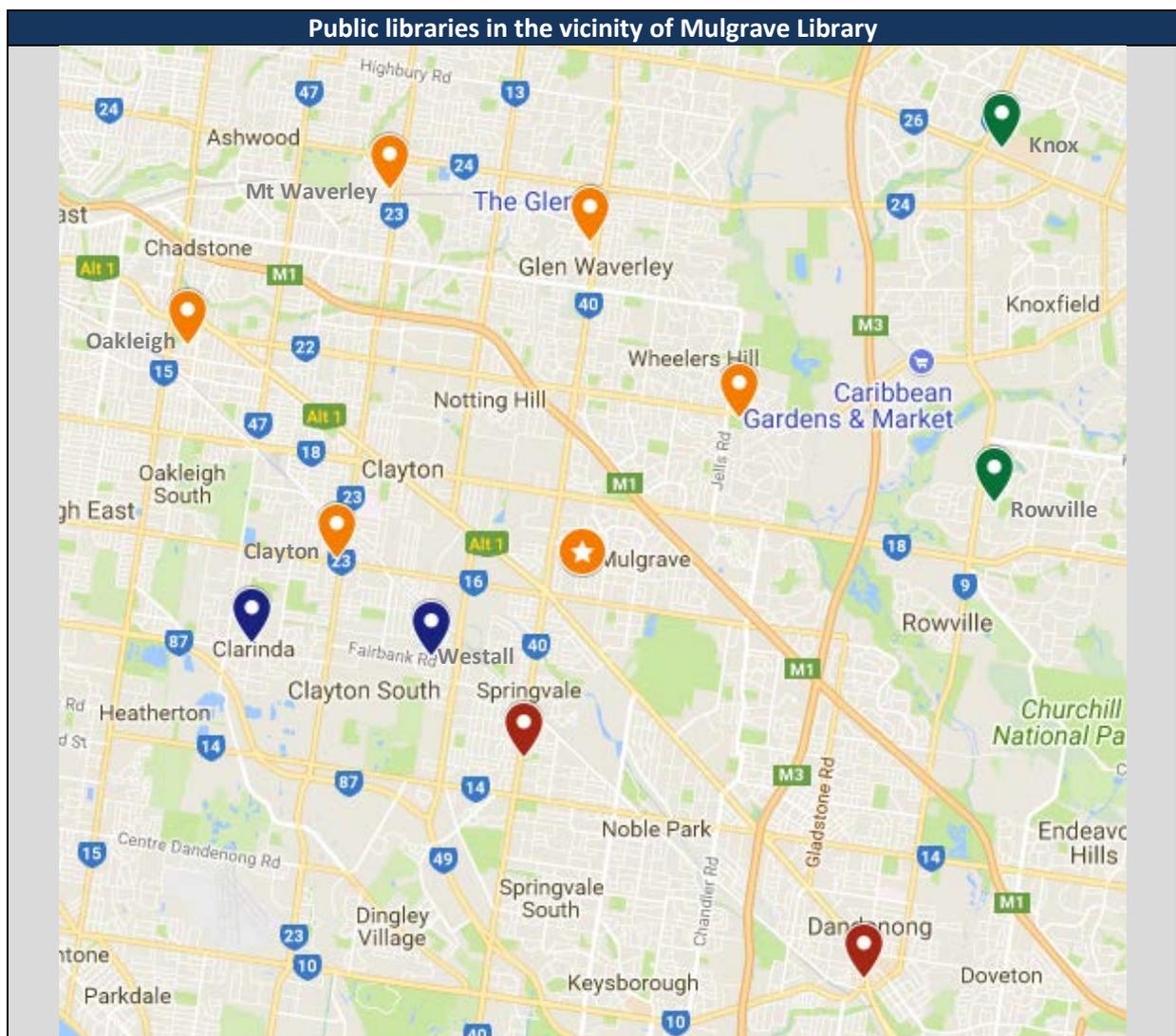
⁸ The Mackie Road Neighbourhood House is not open during the summer break.

have independent access to computers and the internet. However, library programs offer social and learning benefits to a targeted and local audience that are not readily available in the wider community – and can therefore act as a drawcard for a small library.

3.6. Out of area usage

As noted in Section 3.2, the absence of a full-service library in Mulgrave (and no local library prior to 2012), has meant that Mulgrave residents have chosen to make other Monash library branches their 'home' branch. Of the 1,725 Monash library members who live in Mulgrave, just 261 (15%) borrowed collection items from Mulgrave Library during 2016-17.

The absence of a full-service library in Mulgrave has compelled Mulgrave residents to seek out library services in neighbouring municipalities.⁹ Situated in the south-eastern corner of the Monash LGA, there are eleven other libraries within a 15-minute drive of Mulgrave Library, and only five of those are Monash libraries. In fact, the two closest public libraries to Mulgrave (in terms of travel time by car) are in Springvale (City of Greater Dandenong) and Westall (Clayton South, City of Kingston).



⁹ Reciprocal borrowing accords with the principle of free and universal access to public library services. It is a standard and accepted feature of the Victorian (and Australian) public library sector, and is implicit in the State Government's library funding agreements with Victorian Councils and Shires.

| Library | Library Service (LGA) | From Mulgrave Library | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| | | Distance (straight line) | Drive (fastest) |
| Mulgrave | Monash | - | - |
| Springvale | Greater Dandenong | 3.4 km | 7 min |
| Westall | Kingston | 2.9 km | 8 min |
| Wheelers Hill | Monash | 3.2 km | 9 min |
| Glen Waverley | Monash | 4.7 km | 10 min |
| Clayton | Monash | 3.8 km | 12 min |
| Clarinda | Kingston | 5.4 km | 13 min |
| Rowville | Eastern (Knox) | 6.4 km | 13 min |
| Mount Waverley | Monash | 6.4 km | 13 min |
| Oakleigh | Monash | 7.0 km | 13 min |
| Dandenong | Greater Dandenong | 8.2 km | 15 min |
| Knox | Eastern (Knox) | 9.2 km | 15 min |

Taking advantage of great proximity, Mulgrave residents' use of nearby full-service public libraries is by some measures greater than their use of the Mulgrave Library. As shown in the following table, in 2016-17 Mulgrave residents borrowed more than 90,000 items from Monash libraries, but also borrowed more than 23,000 items from Greater Dandenong Libraries and Eastern Regional Libraries (ERL). Furthermore:

- only 15% of Mulgrave residents who are active Monash Library members (261 out of 1,725) use the Mulgrave Library
- Mulgrave residents are more likely to be active members of Greater Dandenong Libraries (705 members) or ERL (418) than they are to use the Mulgrave Library (261).

That is, there are many Mulgrave residents who prefer the greater range of services at larger libraries at Wheelers Hill and Glen Waverley, Springvale and Rowville.

| Library loans by Mulgrave residents in 2016-17 | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Library service | Registered active library members | Loans |
| Monash – all branches | 1,725 | 90,241 |
| Greater Dandenong | 705 | 17,814 |
| Eastern | 418 | 5,612 |
| Monash – Mulgrave Library | 261 | 20,556 |

3.7. Unmeasured use

Public libraries can provide many benefits for individuals and communities (see Section 2.4). Some of these, like support for literacy and lifelong learning, occur through visits to the library, use of the collection and participation in library programs. Library metrics related to visits, loans and program attendance indicate that those benefits are being realised through use of the Mulgrave Library.

Some of the other benefits of providing public library services in a community setting are more intangible, especially those related to personal development and wellbeing, and stronger and more inclusive communities. Responses to the library user survey describe this impact.

“It enriches my life through reading, listening and interacting. My child just loves to come to Mulgrave Library.” (Working mother, 35-49 years)

“A wonderful opportunity for our children to connect and form friendships, and foster a love of reading and communication.” (Stay at home mother, 35-49 years)

“It’s close to my place. Any time I’m lonely I come and enjoy sitting and reading.” (Pensioner, 65 years+)

“Monash Council did quite well with the library. A library is a centre to link people in the community. It is the most important spirit food resource.” (Married working man, 50-64 years)

More than this, however, survey feedback, discussion with the librarian, and observation of people using the Mulgrave Library highlights the special place that this small library holds in the hearts and minds of some library users.

“It’s wonderful, as it’s NOT a large library.” (Library user)

That is, the Mulgrave Library is seen by some as being more than convenient, close to home, in walking distance and near the playground. It offers more than a friendly helpful librarian – as they can be found at most public libraries. For some people the Mulgrave Library is ‘a little gem’ because it is intimate and personal. They value the fact that the librarian knows them by name, knows who they are, knows what they like to read and knows what makes them smile. For some people who experience social, emotional and/or psychological challenges in their everyday lives, the Mulgrave Library feels safe, welcoming and comfortable. They value the library because when they visit it is peaceful and undemanding – it is their sanctuary.

What this means is that while there are clearly people who choose to use the larger Monash libraries because they offer the full range of contemporary library services and are vibrant community hubs, and while there are community members and survey respondents who would like to replicate that experience in Mulgrave, there are also people who choose to use the Mulgrave Library because it is NOT like the larger full-service libraries.

4. THE SERVICE GAP

Section 4 of the Feasibility Study addresses the gap between the demand for library services in Mulgrave and the current and potential level of use. That is:

- What is the gap in service provision? (between demand and supply)
- What is the gap between service provision and industry benchmarks and standards?
- What is the gap between current provision and anticipated trends in library service provision?

The idea of a ‘service gap’ in provision of public library services in the City of Monash (or any other place) can be considered in three different ways.

- i) First, there is the ‘gap’ between a community’s demand for library services and the supply of library services in that area. This gap is defined by the community’s expectations, and the expression of those expectations in demand for services. It is an assessment that is more subjective than objective.
- ii) Second, there is the ‘gap’ between the level and quality of library services provided and the standards expected of a contemporary library service. For the City of Monash, the appropriate industry benchmarks include comparison with other Victorian public libraries (as measured through PLVN’s Annual Statistical Survey) and other Australian public libraries (as documented in the national public library Guidelines). This is a more objective assessment than comparison of demand and supply.
- iii) Finally, there is the ‘gap’ between the services that are provided in Mulgrave and the City of Monash today and the services that will need to be provided to the community in 5 to 10 years’ time. This assessment requires an understanding of changes that are occurring in society at large, with the advance of technology, and in the local population.

4.1. The gap in provision of library services in Mulgrave

Is there a ‘gap’ between the library services expected or demanded by people who live and work in Mulgrave and the library services supplied by the City of Monash.

Mulgrave residents, like all residents of Monash, expect to be able to access good quality free public library services. In a contemporary public library setting this would entail:

- a large and diverse physical and digital collection (including collection items in appropriate community languages)
- community-centred library and learning programs
- efficient access to computers and the internet
- information and reference services
- comfortable places to read and study
- friendly customer service.

Mulgrave residents, as part of Monash’s population of 182,000 (ABS, 2016), do have access to good quality free public library services – delivered through a network of six library branches across the municipality and MPLS’ website and digital services. Even taking into account the specific characteristics of the Mulgrave community – that is, a relatively high proportion of young families, older people, people who speak languages other than English, and people with below average education and income levels – the types of library services that are likely to be of interest to these population cohorts are accessible in Monash.

Even if there were no local library, Mulgrave residents live within 4 km of four full-service public libraries (including Wheelers Hill and Clayton) and within 10 minutes' drive of four full-service public libraries (including Wheelers Hill and Glen Waverley). Compared with people who live in inner Melbourne suburbs the residents of Mulgrave do not live 'close' to a full-service library. However, the travel times and distances for Mulgrave residents are not out of the ordinary for people who live 15 to 20 km from the CBD and in Melbourne's outer urban areas. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Mulgrave residents who use these libraries have their expectations met.

A related question is whether the 19,000 residents of Mulgrave have access to the library services they expect in their immediate area? Mulgrave Library is open 3 to 3.5 hours a day for five days a week – a total of 17 hours per week. It is a very small library, with a small onsite collection, but complete access to the entire MPLS collection through the library catalogue, reservations and stock rotation. It offers a weekly Story Time activity for toddlers and pre-schoolers and their families, and occasionally other onsite programs. The local librarian is well-loved by the people who use the library, and provides personalised service to the local community. The library service is complemented by the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House's provision of free access to computers and the internet, and places where people can relax and read the newspaper (in addition to activities run by the Neighbourhood House).

In total, all of the elements of a contemporary public library service are available in some form at the Mulgrave Library and the Neighbourhood House. They might not be provided in the same volume or quality as at other libraries, but they are there.

Therefore, it might be argued that the library services supplied in Mulgrave meet expected demand. That is, there is no service 'gap' as community demand for library services is being met by other Monash libraries and/or the limited service available the Mulgrave Library.

However, this argument is compounded by three issues.

1. Demand for library services in the local area is hidden. In part, it is hidden by history, where the absence of a local library led to people using other Monash libraries (or those in Greater Dandenong or Kingston or ERL) and now choosing to use those libraries as their 'home' library. In part, demand is also hidden by the low level of provision at the Mulgrave Library, with local residents choosing to travel out of the area in order to access a full-service library.

"I only go to Mulgrave occasionally because of the poor selection of books. More rooms need to be opened up to make it into a real library." (Survey respondent)

2. Demand for library service provision in Mulgrave is masked by a lack of awareness that there is a library in Mulgrave. The Library and the Neighbourhood House are not well sign-posted on Mackie Rd or from major passing roads. There has (for various reasons) been little activity to promote these places to local residents. People who attended the recent Open Day at the Neighbourhood House in March 2018 expressed surprise at there being such a facility and services in their neighbourhood. Conversations, as part of this Feasibility Study, with parents in the nearby playground identified a complete lack of awareness of a public library being situated no more than 20m from where their children were playing. As the Neighbourhood House expands its reach into the community, and if the Library promotes itself better to the Mulgrave community, it is likely that the emergence of an untapped demand for library services will put pressure on the Mulgrave Library to supply a greater service offering.

"I didn't even know they had a library in Mulgrave. I always use Wheelers Hill or Glen Waverley Library." (Survey respondent)

3. Most importantly, even if there is no service ‘gap’ between demand and supply of library services in Mulgrave, there is unarguably an obvious inequity in Council’s provision of public library services to the residents of Mulgrave and the south-eastern parts of the municipality. Several respondents to the survey conducted for this Feasibility Study strongly made that point.

“Mulgrave needs to be a proper library, not just one room.”

“If you go to any other Monash library it is alive with families, kids, teenagers, reading, researching, enjoying the area. The Mulgrave library is just a dead zone – there are no times open for families to go. It is not welcoming, and it should be.”

“Unless it is given the same status as the other libraries (facilities, operating times, etc.) the Mulgrave Library will not provide the local residents with the library service they deserve.”

Conclusion

There are reasonable grounds to conclude that there is no significant service ‘gap’ between the demand for and supply of library services in Mulgrave. Through the MPLS network anyone who lives and works in Monash has access to a full and appropriate range of public library services within a few kilometres or a short travel time.

If there are deficiencies in the scope of the services offered at Mulgrave Library, these might be defined in terms of a need for:

- longer opening hours
- more community programs
- more access to onsite browseable collections
- more space for recreational reading, study and work.

However, the contrast between ‘library lite’ Mulgrave Library and the City’s other five full-service libraries shows an inequity in the provision of library services.

4.2. Library use vs industry benchmarks and standards

MPLS is, according to PLVN’s Annual Statistical Survey, one of Victoria’s leading public libraries. Its overall top two ranking in 2015-16 and 2016-17 is based on solid performance across a variety of library indicators related to membership, collections, programs, technology access and customer service.

| Top 10 library performance indicators ¹⁰ | Victoria 2016-17 | Monash 2016-17 | Monash (rank of 46) |
|---|------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Active library members (as % of population) | 16% | 18% | 15 |
| 2. Attendance at library programs per ‘000 capita | 325 | 385 | 15 |
| 3. Turnover rate – physical items | 5.2 | 5.9 | 10 |
| 4. Turnover rate – digital items | 3.7 | 4.7 | 13 |
| 5. Physical quality of library collection | 66% | 72% | 12 |
| 6. Cost of library service* per capita | \$40.95 | \$36.16 | 13 |
| 7. Cost of library service* per visit | \$6.50 | \$5.37 | 8 |
| 8. Staff EFT per ‘000 capita | 0.30 | 0.30 | 27 |
| 9. Number of public access devices per ‘000 capita | 0.71 | 1.03 | 12 |
| 10. Customer satisfaction rating | 8.44 | 7.6 | 31 |

¹⁰ Public Libraries Victoria Network, 2016-17 Annual Statistical Survey, <https://www.publiclibrariesvictoria.net.au/resources>.

MPLS does not stand out on any single indicator, but delivers consistent performance (ranked 8 to 15 out of 46 libraries against eight of PLVN’s Top 10 indicators) with average levels of staffing and per capita library funding 12% below the statewide average.

Therefore, at a macro level (where they have access to high quality library services in the City of Monash) the residents of Mulgrave do not experience a service ‘gap’ between the quality of services provided and the standards expected of a contemporary library service.

However, calculation of these library metrics just for Mulgrave residents and/or only in relation to use of the Mulgrave Library would highlight vastly different levels of service use and provision. For example:

- Library membership in Mulgrave is low (9% vs 18% for Monash).
- The turnover rate for physical items at Mulgrave of 3.4 loans per year is 40% below the MPLS average, although Mulgrave Library users still have access to the full good quality MPLS collection.
- The operating cost per library visit to Mulgrave is up to twice the MPLS average.
- Customer satisfaction at Mulgrave Library (based on the small survey conducted for the Feasibility Study) is 7.4 out of 10, in line with the MPLS score of 7.6, but influenced by one quarter of the respondents giving scores of 5 or below as they want a better local library service.

Comparisons with ALIA’s national standards for public libraries tell a similar story.¹¹ That is, MPLS delivers a high-performing library service with below average cost and staffing levels.

| National public library standard | | National 2015-16 | Monash 2016-17 | Difference | |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|------------|---|
| S1 | Library expenditure per capita per annum (excluding library materials) | \$40.36 | \$37.32 | -8% | ● |
| S2 | Number of staff FTE per 10,000 population | 3.3 | 3.0 | -9% | ● |
| S4 | Library materials expenditure per capita per annum | \$5.65 | \$7.08 | +16% | ● |
| S5 | Collection items per capita* | 1.7 | 1.4 | -17% | ● |
| S6 | Age of collection (% published in past 5 years) | 60% | 72% | +20% | ● |
| S7 | Internet computers per 10,000 population | 5.0 | 10.3 | +106% | ● |
| S9 | Visits per capita per annum | 4.8 | 5.4 | +12% | ● |
| S11 | Circulation (loans per capita per annum) | 7.3 | 8.3 | +14% | ● |
| S12 | Turnover of stock (loans per collection item) | 4.4 | 5.9 | +34% | ● |

* Compared with other states and territories Victoria has fewer more populous LGAs, whose libraries have floating collections that provide an equivalent standard of collection access with fewer total collection items per capita.

Finally, one further library industry indicator of note is the assessment of the total size of a library (floor area) needed to meet a population the size of Mulgrave. *People Places* by the State Library of NSW¹² is the accepted Australian benchmark for planning of library buildings. The 2012 benchmarks indicate that a stand-alone population of around 20,000 (Mulgrave had a population of 19,368 in 2016) would warrant a library branch of approximately 936m² – around 30 times the size of the current Mulgrave Library. This ignores, of course, the fact that Mulgrave is not a stand-alone population, and that other library services are located and accessible within a relatively short distance of Mulgrave. Overall, MPLS has floor space per capita ratios across its libraries that are slightly above the Victorian average and broadly consistent with the *People Places* guidelines.

¹¹ *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries*, Australian Public Library Alliance and Australian Library and Information Association, 2016.

¹² Library Council of New South Wales, *People places: A guide for public library buildings in NSW*, 3rd edition 2012.

Conclusion

As residents of the City of Monash, people who live in Mulgrave have access to a high-performing library service. At a macro level they do not experience a 'gap' in service quality, especially those who choose to use Monash libraries other than Mulgrave. The situation is clearly different for residents who (for whatever reason) choose to just use the small Mulgrave Library.

4.3. Trends in the future provision of library services

The third type of 'service gap' is that between the library services currently provided in Mulgrave and the City of Monash, and those that will be needed to respond to community needs in 5 to 10 years' time.

Libraries in the City of Monash, Australia and around the world have a history of evolving in response to changing community demands, social and environmental conditions, technological advancements and changes in the economy. In undertaking this Feasibility Study, I & J Management Services provided MPLS with a report on *Australian and International Trends in Provision of Contemporary Public Library Services* (March 2018). This literature review highlights key drivers of change which will (to varying degrees) influence the future provision of library services in Mulgrave and Monash.

- Demographic transformation, and notably:
 - An ageing population and baby boomers entering retirement with expectations of active involvement in learning and community life
 - Increased risk of social isolation due to increased housing density, smaller dwellings, increased life expectancy and increases in the number of single person households
 - Increased cultural diversity and more people speaking languages other than English.
- More accessible library services that include:
 - New outreach models and use of digital technologies that allow people to access library services where they live, work, shop and play¹³
 - Pop-up libraries that spark people's interest when they appear in contexts not usually associated with libraries (e.g. stations, shopping centres, conventions, cultural events)
 - Extended opening hours and trials of open libraries that combine staffed opening hours and self-service swipe-card access on evenings, weekends and public holidays
 - Increased and remote access to libraries' digital content, ebooks and digitised resources.
- Promoting literacy and lifelong learning through:
 - Extension of public libraries' important role in supporting early years' literacy and school readiness, with imaginative play programs complementing regular reading in the home
 - Family learning and intergenerational learning programs
 - Digital literacy and information literacy programs
 - Community-based adult literacy and English language programs to address low literacy
 - Collections and spaces that support people participating in structured and formal learning
 - Fostering a reading culture
 - Enhancing the role of libraries in collecting, preserving and sharing local stories.
- Libraries as a place where people can learn, connect, create and just be. This includes libraries:
 - As a local community place where people gather, meet and connect
 - As civic anchors for communities in times of natural or man-made crises¹⁴
 - Providing collaborative learning, creative and co-working spaces
 - Being designed, furnished and fitted to adapt to the changing demands of library users.

¹³ Nicholson, K., *Innovation in Public Libraries: Learning from International Library Practice*, City of Armadale Library Service, Perth, Western Australia, Chandos Information Professional Series, 2017.

¹⁴ Libraries Transform: An initiative of the American Library Association, <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/article/libraries-cultivate-community-resilience>

- Stronger and more creative communities, where libraries:
 - Engage new audiences through learning spaces and equipment (e.g. makerspaces, 3D printers) that raise awareness of new technologies, increase digital inclusion and provide opportunities for practical skills development that boost employability
 - Shift the perception of what a public library is from a content provider that encourages consumption to a content producer that fosters creation.¹⁵
- Building connections to deliver services that people want and need by engaging library users and communities in design and development of library collections, programs and spaces
- More efficient and more effective library services which harness the power of emerging technologies and the knowledge and skills of library staff.

Conclusion

Recognising what is already happening in public libraries in Australia and overseas it can be said with some confidence that in the foreseeable future MPLS and Mulgrave Library will need to adapt to allow for:

- increased outreach services and delivery of programs and collections in community settings by library staff, partner organisations and other Council Departments
- increased use of the library website, apps and digital technologies to facilitate wider access to library services
- increased demand for use of libraries as a welcoming and culturally inclusive space for people to read, relax, meet, connect, learn and work
- increased expectations of libraries as a provider of and partner in delivery of lifelong learning opportunities
- a shift in staff responsibilities from transactional roles undertaken from behind the library desk to information and user support roles and/or more transformative community development roles that take place on the library floor and in community locations.

¹⁵ Nicholson, 2017 op.cit.

5. OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Section 5 of the Feasibility Study examines options for addressing the service gaps identified in Section 4. That is:

- What options exist to bridge any identified service gap(s)?
- What are the costs and benefits of these options?
- What recommendations would best address any service gap?

The City of Monash has six public libraries. Five of these are sizeable and accessible facilities open 60 hours a week offering a full range of contemporary library services. The Mulgrave Library might be called a 'Village Library' or a 'Library lounge' – a compact 30m² room open 17 hours a week with a small rotating collection, weekly Story Time, occasional programs and a librarian who knows your name, complemented by free wifi and leisure spaces at the local Neighbourhood House. The main strength and weakness of the current library (as described by library users) can be summarised as:

- Strength: intimate feel that appeals to select library users
- Weakness: limited service offering.

5.1. Options, costs and benefits

With Mulgrave Library's current service and usage profile, and the demand for local library services identified through this study, the City of Monash has five basic options, each of which is discussed below.

6. **Close** the Mulgrave Library
7. **Do nothing** and retain the Mulgrave Library in its current form
8. **Consolidate and grow** Mulgrave Library's service offering (as use of the Neighbourhood House increases)
9. **Expand** the Mulgrave Library (on the existing site)
10. **Build** a new full-service library in Mulgrave (at Mackie Rd or another location).

1. Close the Mulgrave Library

In the framing of this Feasibility Study the City of Monash did not indicate that closure of the Mulgrave Library was an expected option. The option is included here for completeness only.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Description</i> | Monash Public Library Service could close the Mulgrave Library at the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House. |
| <i>Rationale</i> | Operational metrics indicate that the Mulgrave Library functions at a level far below that of other Monash libraries. For example, the number of library visits per hour (approx. 6) and loans per hour (approx. 12) are one eighth to one ninth the rates experienced at other libraries. This indicates utilisation of staffing resources and facilities well below industry standards in metropolitan libraries. |
| <i>Benefits</i> | Closing the Mulgrave Library provides no service benefits to the local community. MPLS may realise recurrent savings in salaries, utilities, couriers and operating costs which could total \$50,000 per annum. This assumes, however, a complete shutdown of library services to the Mulgrave community and termination of existing staff. If MPLS redeployed Mulgrave staffing resources into other operations and provided outreach services to the Mulgrave community, these cost savings would be diminished. |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>Costs</i> | Closing the library would mean that people who live and work in Mulgrave would lose local access to the (albeit limited) collections, programs and services currently available at the Mulgrave Library. To access library services they would have to travel north to Glen Waverley or Wheelers Hill, west to Clayton, or leave the City of Monash and become library members at Westall (Kingston), Springvale (Greater Dandenong) or Rowville (Eastern Regional Libraries). In addition, closing the Mulgrave Library would amplify the inequity in Council's service offering, with an obvious geographical gap in library coverage of the City of Monash. |
| <i>Conclusion</i> | This option was not anticipated in the framing of the Feasibility Study. It is not recommended. |

2. Do nothing and retain the Mulgrave Library in its current form

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Description</i> | Monash Public Library Service could retain the Mulgrave Library in its current form – that is, do nothing. |
| <i>Rationale</i> | The Feasibility Study received input from around 150 people through the library user and community surveys and onsite consultation and community forums. The feedback was thoughtful and considered, with suggestions for incremental improvement to the library service (i.e. more, bigger, better). A small number of people called for more significant changes (e.g. a new Mulgrave Library). None of the community feedback indicated that there was an urgent case for action of any sort. |
| <i>Benefits</i> | Retaining the status quo provides no incremental benefits. |
| <i>Costs</i> | Retaining the library in its current form represents an opportunity cost in not meeting local demand for better access to library collections, programs and services. It limits library users' opportunities to obtain the reading, learning, literacy, social and cultural benefits that come from using library services. In addition, doing nothing perpetuates the inequity in Council's provision of local library services across Monash. |
| <i>Conclusion</i> | This option is feasible in the absence of strong community demand for increased provision of public library services in Mulgrave. It is not recommended as it is thought that there are opportunities to enhance the service offering and user experience at Mulgrave Library at relatively low cost. |

3. Consolidate and grow the Mulgrave Library's service offering

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Description</i> | <p>MPLS could progressively consolidate and grow the library services offered through Mulgrave Library. The two main growth opportunities in the short- to medium-term would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) to increase opening hours from 17 to around 30 per week; and ii) to expand the range of community programs offered by the library. <p>User feedback suggests that the library might be open for longer hours on a weekend or in the evenings, increasing access for people who work during the day. With an increasing number of young families in the area, and a Chinese playgroup already meeting at the Neighbourhood House, expansion of the program offering at Mulgrave Library might include an additional Story Time activity (mornings are the preferred timeslot for children's activities). Programs could be delivered by non-Mulgrave Library staff via an outreach model.</p> |
|--------------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| | <p>MPLS might also work with the Neighbourhood House to explore options to utilise other spaces within the facility for ‘unstaffed’ delivery of enhanced library services (as any additional services would have to occur outside the existing library room and not within eyesight of the librarian). This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) housing a larger collection in another area; ii) providing dedicated spaces for people to read, study and work (noting that the Neighbourhood House has recently converted one little used room into a reading lounge); and iii) expanding the number of computers and wifi access. |
| <i>Rationale</i> | <p>Since it opened under new management in Term 3 2017 the Neighbourhood House has experienced steady growth in attendance at its community and learning programs and other activities offered by commercial and community groups. Following the success of its first Open Day in March 2018 the Neighbourhood House hopes to continue to expand its offering to the Mulgrave community, and is keen to work with the Library to achieve its aims. There are mutual benefits and efficiencies in the Neighbourhood House and the Library working together to simultaneously promote themselves to the local community and expand the number and types of programs available at the centre.</p> |
| <i>Benefits</i> | <p>This option aims to increase the scope of library services available from the Mulgrave Library in the simplest way possible. Longer opening hours directly increase accessibility, and community-focused library programming provides the greatest opportunity to have a material impact on the lives and wellbeing of people who use the library. None of this would detract from the unique feel and intimate experience that some current users of the library value highly.</p> |
| <i>Costs</i> | <p>Working in partnership with the Neighbourhood House and extracting greater value from the currently under-utilised facilities is seen as an efficient use of resources. The total annual recurrent cost impact of this option is estimated at around \$50k to cover additional staff time to open the library for longer hours and for delivery of programs onsite and/or in the Mulgrave community. This option lessens (to a small degree) the inequity in Council’s provision of local library services in Mulgrave.</p> |
| <i>Conclusion</i> | <p>This option represents a low-cost opportunity to progressively enhance the scope and quality of the services offered at the Mulgrave Library. It is recommended as the short- to medium-term option for the City of Monash.</p> |

4. Expand the Mulgrave Library

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Description</i> | <p>MPLS could consolidate and grow Mulgrave Library’s service offering (i.e. Option 3) by also expanding the size of the Mulgrave Library on the existing site. Any change would need to be made with the involvement of the management of the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House who are aware of the library’s desire to better meet the library needs of the local community. Any change would also require architectural assessment of the structural and siting implications of changes to the existing building.</p> |
|--------------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| | <p>The simplest expansion option would appear to be to double the size of the library from 30m² to around 60m² by pushing the current north-facing wall back toward the car park into the space currently occupied by the rainwater tank. This would allow the library to have its own external access point off the current courtyard and an external return chute. The bigger library space might include room for a larger physical collection (possibly double to 6,000 items), a small dedicated children’s area, a small 3-4 seat reading/newspaper/magazine lounge, a bank of 3-4 computers in the library, 3-4 desk spaces for work or study and a work area for the librarian.</p> |
| <i>Rationale</i> | <p>The current library space at Mulgrave is not large enough to attract most people to visit. It has a small collection but lacks the increasingly important ingredient in a contemporary library – space. This option does not significantly change that situation – a 60m² library would still retain a cosy feel. However, it would provide enough room for people to be in the library at the same time without feeling cramped. It would not suit the needs of people who want the experience and collections access of a large public library, but it would be large enough to be a credible neighbourhood or village library.</p> |
| <i>Benefits</i> | <p>It is assumed that this option would occur with or after adoption of Option 3, so that the benefits of longer opening hours, increased programming and broader use of facilities at the Neighbourhood House are already realised. Beyond that, Option 4 responds in a small way to the demand for libraries to be places where people can learn, connect and create. Where people have the chance to use a library in this way, whether alone or together, they are more likely to realise benefits related to social and digital inclusion, personal wellbeing and development, and stronger more creative communities.</p> |
| <i>Costs</i> | <p>It is estimated that the Mulgrave Library could be expanded and re-fitted for a capital cost of around \$0.5m. There would be some disruption to provision of library services while the build occurs, although this could be lessened if the library were to be temporarily re-located to other rooms at the Neighbourhood House. Most of the recurrent costs associated with this option are already included in Option 3, although there may be an additional \$10-20k per year to cover utilities, equipment, technology and other services. This option lessens the inequity in Council’s provision of local library services in Mulgrave.</p> |
| <i>Conclusion</i> | <p>This option presents a more credible and useful facility to meet the library needs of the local Mulgrave community. It is part of the recommended medium-term future for Mulgrave Library.</p> |

5. Build a new full-service library in Mulgrave

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Description</i> | <p>MPLS could build a new full-service library in Mulgrave. A mid-sized metropolitan library in a Council network might be in the order of 400 to 600 sq m. The City of Monash would need to identify an appropriate site for the library (at the current site or another location in Mulgrave). In keeping with current trends, the library would ideally be at an activity centre, co-located with other community facilities (e.g. community centre, shopping centre, learning centre, sporting centre) and easily accessed by public transport.</p> |
|--------------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| <i>Rationale</i> | The primary reason for building a new library in Mulgrave would be to redress the inequity in the current distribution of libraries across the City. The level of community engagement with this Feasibility Study has been modest (at best). There has been no indication of significant community concern at the current situation. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that (at this time) there is unmet user demand that would justify a new Mulgrave Library. While organic growth and increased promotion will increase library usage, it is likely that much of the use of any new library would be from cannibalisation of Mulgrave residents' current use of other Monash libraries. |
| <i>Benefits</i> | A new full-service library would give Mulgrave residents (and others) direct and equitable access to high-quality library services in their local area. A new library would also provide a focal point for promotion of library services in Monash and Mulgrave that could attract new library users, who would in turn begin to realise the individual and community benefits of using a public library. |
| <i>Costs</i> | Aside from the cost of acquiring and preparing an appropriate piece of land to build a new library, the capital cost of building a mid-sized library would be in the order of \$8-12m (based on the cost of similar builds in metropolitan Melbourne in the past five years). If the library were to be located at the current Mackie Rd site there might also be a potential disruption to current library services while the build occurs. Recurrent costs of staffing and operating a library of this size might be in the order of \$400-500k, increasing the annual and ongoing cost per capita of library service provision in Monash by \$2-3 (an increase of around 6-7%). While for most people the provision of a full-service library represents an enhanced service offering, some current library users would lose what is most appealing about the Mulgrave Library today – the comfort and intimacy of a small library experience. |
| <i>Conclusion</i> | This option cannot be justified on service or cost grounds. Aside from the capital cost of constructing a new library, the incremental costs in operating a mid-sized library in Mulgrave would outweigh the incremental usage that might occur. This option is not recommended. |

5.2. Summary of options

The five options discussed in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 are summarised in the table on the following page.

5.3. Recommendations

The Feasibility Study has found that the Mulgrave Library currently delivers a good quality but limited library service to the residents of Mulgrave. While the full range of services expected of a contemporary public library are accessible at Mulgrave (through the combined efforts of MPLS and the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House), the services are not provided at a level that can be expected to attract new and regular library users, other than those who value the personalised service that characterises such a small library.

There is an inequity in the provision of a small library in Mulgrave when the City of Monash's other libraries are full-service library branches. However, there is no indication that the Mulgrave community is urgently seeking redress of this situation, and it is clear that many Mulgrave residents choose to use other nearby libraries (in Monash or neighbouring municipalities) in preference to the Mulgrave Library.

| Option | Description | Service impact +ve | Service impact -ve | Financial impact |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Close | Close Mulgrave Library | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of local community library service Mulgrave Library users travel further to access library services Greater inequity in service offering with obvious geographical gap in library coverage of Monash LGA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential saving of \$60k (recurrent) salary and operating costs (unless these are absorbed into operating or outreach services to Mulgrave) |
| 2. Do nothing | Retain Mulgrave Library in its current form | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued unmet local demand for better access to library collections, programs and services Continued inequity in offering as Mulgrave residents do not have access to full-service library | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None |
| 3. Consolidate and grow | Progressively grow library service offering in Mulgrave concurrently with the expected growth in use of the Neighbourhood House (NH) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main opportunities are increasing opening hours and offering more library programs (at Mackie Rd or via outreach in Mulgrave) Work with NH to expand access to technology and access to quiet reading and study spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued (but lesser) inequity in service offering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to \$50k (recurrent) to deliver longer opening hours and additional library programming |
| 4. Expand | Expand (approx. double) the footprint of the current Mulgrave Library on the existing site, and consolidate and grow service offering (i.e. include Option 3) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased space allows for larger collection, small children's area, small magazine lounge, in-library PCs and some study space External access to library External return chute | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some disruption of library services while build occurs Continued (but lesser) inequity in service offering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to \$0.5m (capital) to expand and re-fit library on current site |
| 5. Build | Build a new full-service library in Mulgrave | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mulgrave residents (and others) get direct access to a full-service library in Mulgrave Equitable service offering across Monash LGA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of intimate library experience for some existing library users Potential disruption of library services while build occurs (depending on siting) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. \$8-12m (capital) to build mid-size library Acquisition of land |

Five options have been presented in this Study, two of which feature in the recommendations.

Recommendation 1 That the City of Monash adopt Option 3 to progressively consolidate and grow the library service offering in Mulgrave.

That Option 3 be pursued at the earliest opportunity within Council's established budget process and timelines.

That Option 3 be implemented concurrently with the expected growth in community engagement with the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House. It should occur collaboratively with the management of the Neighbourhood House, especially through joint endeavours to promote local participation in and use of the services and facilities available at the Wellington Reserve Community Centre.

Recommendation 2 That the City of Monash, in approximately two years' time and in line with Council's budget processes and timelines, and subject to the outcomes from implementation of Recommendation 1, adopt Option 4 to expand the Mulgrave Library on its current site.

APPENDIX 1. MULGRAVE DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2016 ABS census clearly outlines the key demographic characteristics of the people who live in Mulgrave. The following table shows the proportion of the population of Mulgrave compared with the suburb five years earlier at the 2011 census, and with the broader population of the City of Monash and the Greater Melbourne metropolitan area.

| Population characteristic* | Mulgrave 2011 | Mulgrave 2016 | City of Monash 2016 | Greater Melb. 2016 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Population | 17,647 | 19,368 | 182,618 | 4,485,211 |
| Growth in 5 years | - | + 9.8% | +7.9% | +12.1% |
| <i>Indigenous status</i> | | | | |
| ATSI | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.5% |
| <i>Gender</i> | | | | |
| Male | 49.4% | 49.7% | 49.1% | 49.0% |
| Female | 50.6% | 50.3% | 50.9% | 51.0% |
| <i>Age</i> | | | | |
| 0-4 years | 6.4% | 6.2% | 5.1% | 6.4% |
| 5-9 years | 5.2% | 6.0% | 5.4% | 6.2% |
| 10-14 years | 4.8% | 5.0% | 5.3% | 5.7% |
| 15-19 years | 5.8% | 5.2% | 6.8% | 6.0% |
| 20-24 years | 6.7% | 6.5% | 9.8% | 7.4% |
| 25-29 years | 7.3% | 7.1% | 7.8% | 8.1% |
| 30-34 years | 7.5% | 7.7% | 7.1% | 8.2% |
| 35-39 years | 7.6% | 7.2% | 6.3% | 7.3% |
| 40-44 years | 7.2% | 7.1% | 6.6% | 7.0% |
| 45-49 years | 6.2% | 6.7% | 6.7% | 6.9% |
| 50-54 years | 5.8% | 5.8% | 6.0% | 6.2% |
| 55-59 years | 6.5% | 5.4% | 5.3% | 5.7% |
| 60-64 years | 6.2% | 5.6% | 4.8% | 4.9% |
| 65-69 years | 5.7% | 5.3% | 4.5% | 4.4% |
| 70-74 years | 4.4% | 4.8% | 3.9% | 3.3% |
| 75-79 years | 3.0% | 3.6% | 3.4% | 2.5% |
| 80-84 years | 1.9% | 2.3% | 2.6% | 1.9% |
| 85 years and over | 2.1% | 2.5% | 2.8% | 2.0% |
| <i>Language spoken at home</i> | | | | |
| English only | 51.4% | 46.8% | 45.4% | 62.0% |
| Non-English language | 48.6% | 53.2% | 54.6% | 38.0% |
| Chinese languages | 10.3% | 12.7% | 20.5% | 6.2% |
| Greek | 8.9% | 7.6% | 5.7% | 2.4% |
| Indo-Aryan languages | 5.2% | 6.7% | 7.0% | 4.5% |
| Vietnamese | 3.2% | 3.3% | 1.6% | 2.3% |
| Italian | 3.7% | 3.2% | 2.1% | 2.3% |
| <i>Household relationship</i> | | | | |
| Married/De facto | 50.5% | 49.1% | 46.0% | 45.4% |
| Lone parent | 4.0% | 4.1% | 3.8% | 4.2% |
| Child under 15 yrs | 16.8% | 17.6% | 16.3% | 18.6% |
| Dependent student 15-24 yrs | 6.0% | 6.1% | 6.7% | 5.9% |
| Lone person | 6.3% | 6.0% | 7.3% | 8.8% |

| Population characteristic* | Mulgrave 2011 | Mulgrave 2016 | City of Monash 2016 | Greater Melb. 2016 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Family composition</i> | | | | |
| Couple, no children | 24.4% | 23.3% | 23.4% | 23.1% |
| Couple, some children >15 | 23.6% | 22.2% | 21.7% | 18.7% |
| Couple, all children <15 | 39.4% | 41.2% | 41.5% | 43.9% |
| One parent, children <15 | 11.2% | 12.0% | 11.6% | 13.0% |
| <i>Attending education</i> | | | | |
| Currently attending | 26.7% | 28.9% | 34.3% | 31.4% |
| Pre-school | 6.1% | 6.3% | 4.4% | 5.2% |
| Primary | 23.6% | 26.1% | 20.9% | 25.1% |
| Secondary | 21.3% | 19.5% | 17.9% | 19.5% |
| Tertiary/technical | 26.5% | 26.1% | 39.3% | 26.1% |
| Other/Not stated | 22.5% | 22.0% | 17.6% | 24.1% |
| <i>Highest level of education attained (15+, not at school)</i> | | | | |
| Year 12 or above | 58.2% | 63.5% | 70.5% | 61.7% |
| Bachelor degree or higher | 23.8% | 28.4% | 36.3% | 28.7% |
| Advanced diploma/Diploma | 9.7% | 9.8% | 9.8% | 9.9% |
| Certificate III or IV | 13.0% | 12.8% | 8.9% | 13.4% |
| <i>Employment (15+)</i> | | | | |
| Employed | 58.3% | 55.0% | 52.3% | 57.7% |
| Unemployed | 3.0% | 3.7% | 4.5% | 4.2% |
| Labour force participation | 61.3% | 58.7% | 56.8% | 61.9% |
| Unemployment rate | 4.9% | 6.3% | 8.0% | 6.8% |
| Not in labour force | 38.7% | 41.3% | 43.2% | 38.1% |
| <i>Occupation (15+, employed)</i> | | | | |
| Manager | 12.0% | 13.1% | 13.7% | 13.2% |
| Professional | 22.9% | 24.8% | 30.4% | 25.0% |
| Technician/trades | 13.8% | 12.3% | 10.4% | 12.6% |
| Community services | 7.6% | 8.1% | 9.0% | 10.2% |
| Clerical | 16.3% | 16.0% | 14.2% | 13.9% |
| Sales | 10.2% | 10.6% | 10.1% | 9.7% |
| Machinery/labourer | 14.8% | 13.3% | 10.5% | 13.7% |
| <i>Household income (weekly)</i> | | | | |
| Less than \$500 | 13.7% | 11.8% | 14.7% | 12.8% |
| \$500 to \$999 | 19.8% | 16.3% | 16.0% | 16.2% |
| \$1,000 to \$1,999 | 28.3% | 27.6% | 25.2% | 27.1% |
| \$2,000 to \$2,999 | 17.7% | 20.0% | 17.8% | 18.0% |
| \$3,000 or more | 9.9% | 14.7% | 16.8% | 16.1% |
| <i>Internet connected dwellings</i> | | | | |
| Have internet connection | 78.7% | 86.0% | 86.5% | 85.6% |
| <i>Motor vehicles in dwelling</i> | | | | |
| No motor vehicles | 4.5% | 3.8% | 7.5% | 8.7% |
| One motor vehicle | 28.4% | 28.5% | 34.1% | 34.7% |
| Two or more motor vehicles | 63.9% | 65.0% | 55.7% | 53.4% |

* Sub-totals may not add to 100% because: a) not all response options are shown in this table (e.g. other languages spoken at home); and/or b) 'Not stated' response %s are not shown in this table.

APPENDIX 2. CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

The Feasibility Study was informed by demographic analysis of the Mulgrave and Monash communities, analysis of service usage at Mulgrave and neighbouring libraries, and analysis of social and industry trends in provision of relevant public library services.

This analysis was supported by a series of stakeholder and community consultation activities which included:

- interviews with managers from Monash Public Library Service (November 15)
- interview/discussions with the Mulgrave Librarian (October 27, February 21, March 6)
- interviews with managers and coordinators from the City of Monash (February 16, February 21)
 - Information and Arts
 - Community Strengthening
 - Early Years and Family Services
 - Maternal and Child Health
 - Metro Access
- Interview/discussions with the Manager, Mackie Road Neighbourhood House (February 16, March 6)
- open invitation community workshop at Mulgrave Library/Mackie Road Neighbourhood House (1 participant, 15 March)
- informal discussions/conversations with people using the Mulgrave Library (approx. 10 people on October 27, March 6)
- informal discussions/conversations with people and organisations using the Mackie Road Neighbourhood House and Wellington Reserve Playground (approx. 40-50 people on March 5 and 6)
- online survey of library users and community members (74 responses, see Appendix 3), promoted through the Council and library websites and available for collection and completion at the Mulgrave Library and Mackie Road Neighbourhood House.

Additional written and verbal feedback provided by library users to the Mulgrave Librarian was forwarded to the consultants and included in the study.

APPENDIX 3. CONSULTATION SURVEY

The Feasibility Study was informed by responses to three concurrent surveys that sought feedback on library use and community value from three discrete audiences:

- Survey 1 People who use the Mulgrave Library
- Survey 2 People who live and/or work in Mulgrave and use libraries other than Mulgrave
- Survey 3 People who live and/or work in Mulgrave and don't use libraries.

The surveys could be completed online (via Survey Monkey) or in hard copy (and returned to the Mulgrave Library for data entry). Copies of the questions from each survey are presented below.

Preamble

Libraries are one of the most popular services Monash Council offers, regularly scoring highly in its annual Community Satisfaction Surveys. Council has engaged I & J Management Services to find out from the community about what it likes about Mulgrave Library and how the services could be enhanced. This feedback will help Council to improve the Mulgrave Library so it best meets the needs of the community.

The survey is open to people who currently use the Mulgrave Library, for people who live and work in Mulgrave, and those who might use the library in the future. Once the survey is complete a report will be produced identifying the potential benefits of expanding the library service. Options that will be explored include a stand-alone branch library, a branch library as part of a community hub, or a library lounge as part of a new or existing facility. The study is expected to be completed by the end of March.

There are three surveys to meet the needs of different people. Answer the following questions to work out which survey you should do.

A. Have you used the Mulgrave Library in the past two years?

- Yes ... please do Survey 1
- No ... go to Question B

B. Do you live or work in Mulgrave?

- I live in Mulgrave ... go to Question C
- I work in Mulgrave ... go to Question C
- I don't live or work in Mulgrave ... Sorry, but these surveys aren't for you

C. Do you use other public libraries?

- Yes ... please do Survey 2
- No ... please do Survey 3

The survey you choose will take you about 5-8 minutes to complete. Thank you for your time.

SURVEY 1

I currently use the Mulgrave Library

1. **Have you used the Mulgrave Library in the past two years?**

- Yes No ... please try Survey 2 or 3 instead of this one

2. **What services do you use at the Mulgrave Library?** Choose all that apply

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Story Time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Other library programs and activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Advice and assistance from the librarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital collections (ebooks) | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DVDs and CDs | |

3. **How satisfied are you with the services at Mulgrave Library?** Circle one number from 0 to 10

- Not at all satisfied Very satisfied
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. **What other services do you use at the Mackie Rd Neighbourhood House?** Choose all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None. I just use the library | <input type="checkbox"/> Spaces to read and relax |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> Programs run by the Neighbourhood House |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting rooms | ..... |

5. **Why do you choose to use the Mulgrave Library?**

.....

.....

6. **Do you use public libraries other than Mulgrave Library?**

- Yes No ... please go to Q10

7. **What other public libraries do you use?** These might be in the City of Monash or in other local government areas

.....

.....

8. **What services do you use at these other public libraries?** Choose all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Other library programs and activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Advice and assistance from the librarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Computers, printers, copiers and scanners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital collections (ebooks) | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading, study, work areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DVDs and CDs | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Story Time | ..... |

9. Why do you use public libraries other than Mulgrave Library? Choose all that apply

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closer to where I live | <input type="checkbox"/> Better computer/internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closer to where I work or study | <input type="checkbox"/> More programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Longer opening hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better collections | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More reading, study and work spaces | ..... |

10. How could the Mulgrave Library be improved to better provide services to you and the Mulgrave community?

.....
.....

11. What difference (if any) does the Mulgrave Library make to ... ?

Your life and your family's lives

.....
.....

The Mulgrave community

.....
.....

12. Do you ... ?

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Live in Mulgrave | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Work in Mulgrave | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

13. Do you have any other comments about the Mulgrave Library and improving library services to the Mulgrave community?

.....
.....

14. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

15. How old are you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 to 17 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 49 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 64 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 years and above |

16. Which of the following best describes you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single person | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of a couple with dependent children/ students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent student (up to 24 years) | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of a couple |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sole parent/carer with dependent children/students | |

17. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full time employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part time/casual employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Home duties or carer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self employed | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job seeker/unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability pension | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pensioner | ..... |

18. What is your postcode at home?

.....

SURVEY 2

*I live or work in Mulgrave,
but I use other public libraries*

1. Have you used the Mulgrave Library in the past two years?

- Yes ... please try Survey 1 instead of this one No

2. Do you ... ? Please tick both of the first two boxes if you live and work in Mulgrave

- Live in Mulgrave
 Work in Mulgrave
 Not live or work in Mulgrave ... Sorry, but this survey is not for you

3. Do you use public libraries other than Mulgrave Library?

- Yes No ... please try Survey 3 instead of this one

4. What other public libraries do you use? These might be in the City of Monash or in other local government areas

.....
.....

5. What services do you use at these other public libraries? Choose all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Other library programs and activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Advice and assistance from the librarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Computers, printers, copiers and scanners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General collections | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital collections (ebooks) | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading, study, work areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DVDs and CDs | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Story Time | ..... |

6. Why do you use public libraries other than Mulgrave Library? Choose all that apply

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closer to where I live | <input type="checkbox"/> Better computer/internet access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closer to where I work or study | <input type="checkbox"/> More programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Longer opening hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better collections | ..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More reading, study and work spaces | ..... |

7. What would have to change at Mulgrave Library to make you more likely to use that library?

.....
.....
.....

8. Do you think it is important that the Mulgrave community have a local library?

- Yes No

Please explain your answer

.....
.....

9. Do you have any other comments about the Mulgrave Library and improving library services to the Mulgrave community?

.....
.....

10. What is your gender?

- Male
 Female
 Other

11. How old are you?

- 12 to 17 years 35 to 49 years
 18 to 24 years 50 to 64 years
 25 to 34 years 65 years and above

12. Which of the following best describes you?

- Single person Member of a couple with dependent children/students
 Dependent student (up to 24 years) Member of a couple
 Sole parent/carer with dependent children/students

13. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- Full time employment Retired
 Part time/casual employment Home duties or carer
 Self employed Student
 Job seeker/unemployed Other (please specify)
 Disability pension
 Pensioner

14. What is your postcode at home?

.....

7. What would have to change to make you more likely to use the Mulgrave Library? You may choose more than one response

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knowing more about library services | <input type="checkbox"/> If there were a café |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More books and resources that I can borrow | <input type="checkbox"/> More events, exhibitions and workshops for people like me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If it were easier to get to the library | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendlier library staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If there was a library closer to me | <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing. I'm not likely to use a public library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved parking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Longer opening hours | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better library buildings | |
-

8. Do you think it is important that the Mulgrave community have a local library?

- Yes No

Please explain your answer

.....

.....

9. Do you have any other comments about the Mulgrave Library and improving library services to the Mulgrave community?

.....

.....

10. What is your gender?

- Male
 Female
 Other

11. How old are you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 to 17 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 49 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 64 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 years and above |

12. Which of the following best describes you?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single person | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of a couple with dependent children/students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent student (up to 24 years) | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of a couple |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sole parent/carer with dependent children/students | |

13. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full time employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part time/casual employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Home duties or carer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self employed | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job seeker/unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability pension | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pensioner | |
-

14. What is your postcode at home?

.....

APPENDIX 4. REFERENCES

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