PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE - DESIGN SUMMARY REPORT

Wollondilly Performing Arts Centre

Wollondilly Shire Council

17th December 2021

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Acknowledgment of country

WRA acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations as the traditional custodians of the land on which our Melbourne office stands, and the Dharawal and Gundungurra people as the traditional custodians of the land on which this project stands.

We acknowledge past and present injustices and seek reconciliation. We consider ourselves blessed to share this land with the oldest living human culture on this planet.

We honour Elders past, present and emerging for their wisdom and knowledge in caring for country and sustaining cultural practices. We are grateful and inspired by their leadership and guidance.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this report

Wollondilly Shire Council (WSC) are planning a visionary redevelopment to create the Wollondilly Community, Cultural and Civic Precinct (WCCCP) in Picton.

This report provides a summary guide of the processes, reviews and design responses that reflect the master plan vision and principles adopted by Council for the Precinct.

The summary focuses on the design development from the masterplan phase to the design of the Performing Arts Centre.

Project Timeline

In early 2019, Council commenced the master planning process. The following is a summary timeline of key developments since then:

2019

- WCCCP Community Consultation - undertaken for Council by Elton Consulting
- Masterplan - prepared by e8urban and SPA Architects; Adopted August 2019

2020

- Masterplan Review and Public Realm Plan - prepared by WRA and Tract Urban Design;
  Final Masterplan presented to Council May 2020
- Agreement between the Picton Masons Lodge and Council to relocate the Masons Lodge to a new facility elsewhere in Picton
- DA for the Shire Hall refurbishment and extension, by SPA and Tract Landscape Architects
- Concept Design completed for Building A, the Children's Centre, and Building E1, the Performing Arts Centre, by WRA and Tract Landscape Architects

2021

- DA for Building A, Children's Centre, obtained
- DA for Building E, Performing Arts Centre lodged
- Picton Place Plan completed by ArtScape; Adopted July, 2021

1.2 Masterplan Background

1.2.1 2019 Masterplan

The original Precinct Masterplan, pictured below and prepared by e8urban, was endorsed by Council in 2019.

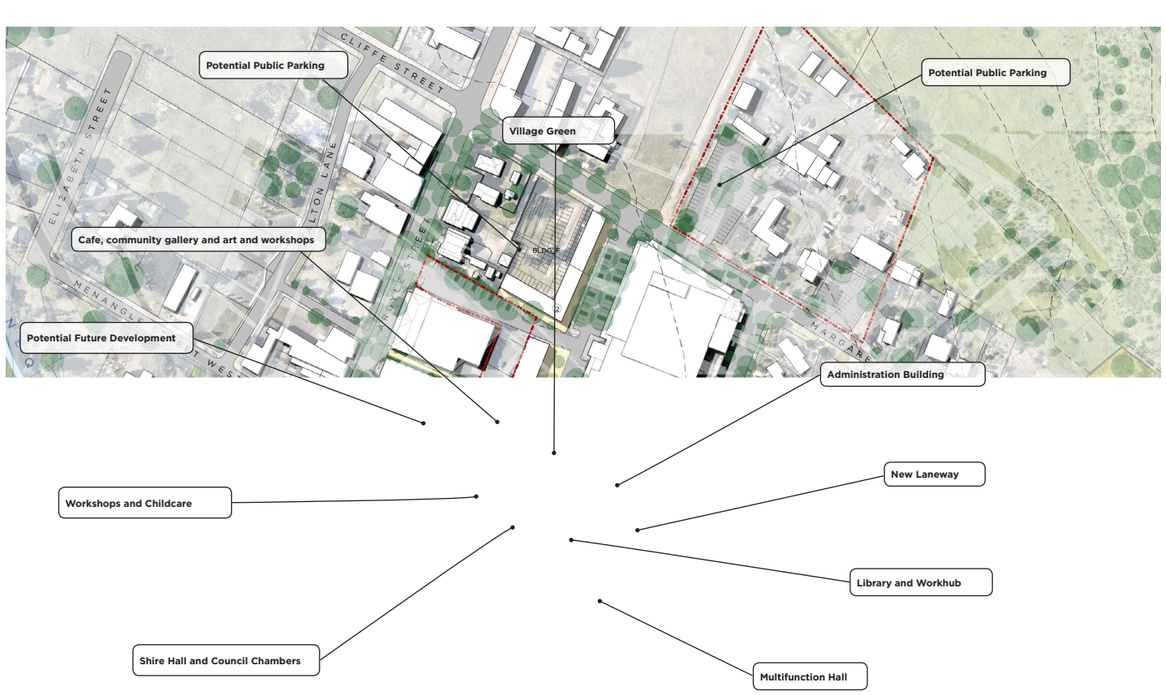
The masterplan was based on two stages of extensive community consultation undertaken in 2019 by Elton Consulting. From this consultation, eight principles for urban design and place-making were developed. They were:

- Connectivity and permeability
- Orientation
- Civic edges
- Great arrival experiences
- A civic heart
- Diversity of uses
- Green amenity, and
- A Shire feel

The masterplan considered opportunities for future connections and site development outside of the main WCCC Precinct.

The key projects in the WCCC Precinct itself include:

- Refurbishment and extension of the Shire Hall
- New Children's Services and Community building
- New 350 seat Multifunction Theatre facility
- New Government Services Centre
- New Library and Learning Hub
- Community, Arts, Exhibition and Workshop spaces
- Significant public open space and public domain works



Adopted 19 August 2019

1.2.2 Heritage Area

The plan on this page, prepared by e8urban in the original masterplan urban design report illustrates the European built heritage of the area.

Wollondilly Council's vision for the Precinct is for it to become the community, civic, cultural and economic heart of Wollondilly. In the Master plan endorsed by Council in 2019, the proposal requires demolition of four existing buildings in the Picton Heritage Conservation area (C2). These include the Children's Services cottage, the Masonic Hall, the 1970s Council administration building and the SES fire station on the corner of Menangle and Colden Streets, Picton. None of these buildings are heritage listed.

The existing building stock to be demolished are single and double storey buildings without consistent architecture or aesthetic not befitting a civic precinct.

Heritage and Archaeology

Legend

- The Precinct
- Wollondilly Shire Council land
- General Conservation Area
- General Heritage Item
- Building to be demolished

Heritage Area, prepared by e8urban

1.2.3 Masterplan Iterations

The 2019 masterplan considered many options for arrangement of facilities in the Precinct. These are illustrated below.

Through review and assessment, the 2019 masterplan arrangement (Scenario 1A) was endorsed by Council for further development.

The purpose of the subsequent 2020 masterplan review was to refine and resolve these building envelopes.

Masterplan Envelope Studies and Scenarios - Evaluation Against Principles, prepared by e8urban

Criteria	Scenario 1A	Scenario 1B	Scenario 2A	Scenario 2B	Scenario 3A	Scenario 3B
Can be developed independent of private landowners	○	○	○	○	○	○
Can be developed independent of Government landowners	○	○	○	○	○	○
A Civic Heart						
Creates a public open space heart	○	○	○	○	○	○
Provides solar good access to main public open space	○	○	○	○	○	○
Orientation and Setting						
Retains and re-purposes Admin buildings	○	○	○	○	○	○
Provides a suitable curtilage to the Shire Hall	○	○	○	○	○	○
Retains opportunities of a visual link to the Post Office Tower	○	○	○	○	○	○
Connectivity and Permeability						
Good north/south pedestrian connectivity	○	○	○	○	○	○
Good east/west pedestrian connectivity	○	○	○	○	○	○
Civic Edges						
Activates Menangle Street	○	○	○	○	○	○
Requires changes to the LEP planning controls	○	○	○	○	○	○
Accommodates all parking on Council land	○	○	○	○	○	○
Accommodates parking on Council and Government land	○	○	○	○	○	○
Great Arrival Experiences	○	○	○	○	○	○
Diversity of Uses	○	○	○	○	○	○
Green Amenity	○	○	○	○	○	○
A Shire Feel	○	○	○	○	○	○

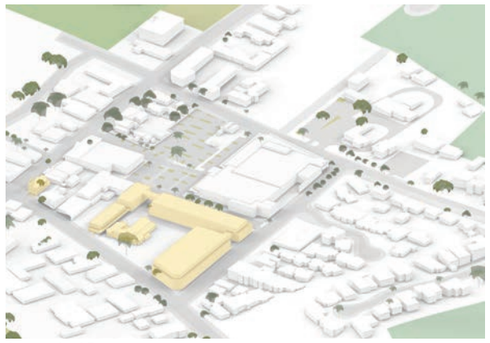
Evaluation Key

○ Yes / Positive

○ Could be achieved / Neutral

○ No / Negative

Scenario 1A

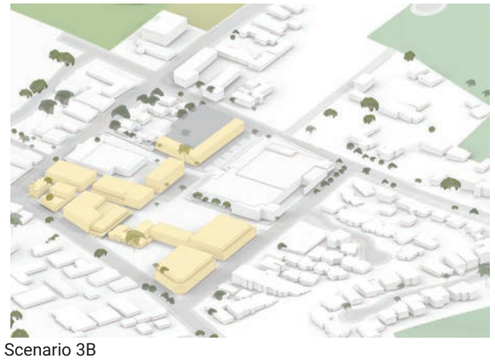


Scenario 2B

Scenario 1B

Scenario 3A

Scenario 2A



Scenario 3B

1.2.4 2020 Masterplan and Public Realm Plan

In 2020 WRA and Tract Urban Design were commissioned to undertake a review of the WCCC Precinct masterplan, further develop the detailed facility briefs and prepare the public realm plan.

Review of the 2019 master plan acknowledged the cohesive vision for the Precinct, with a good functional site arrangement and robust design principles to inform the subsequent stages of design.

Further stakeholder consultation, site analysis and brief development identified additional site opportunities and constraints which resulted in the following key design changes. These are discussed below, and illustrated in the diagrams opposite:

Improved Performing Arts Centre Functionality

In the previous master plan, the Picton Masonic Lodge was not included in the final Precinct boundary. Located on Colden Street, halfway along the Precinct boundary, it presents a key constraint on development of the site.

Successful Performing Arts Centres rely on key facility relationships that allow them to operate in an efficient and functional manner, as illustrated in the performing arts facility benchmarking document 'Oh You Beautiful Stage.'

Through development of the theatrical brief, analysis of the site constraints (which included the steep slope of Colden Street and the need to retain the existing Council offices as operational through construction) it was found that the retention of the Masons building would compromise the performing arts centre in terms of:

- Its functional and operational arrangement,
- Limit the extent of public facing façades presentation to the street - ie the foyers, as the 'black-box' of the theatre would dominate the frontages
- Very little space for a workable forecourt,
- Compromised connection to the future Library and Learning Hub
- Achieving safe truck access and loading would further reduces the potential building footprint.

In summary, the site was too small to deliver the 350 seat performing arts centre without the acquisition of some or all of the Masons site.

Development of the master plan considered many options, including re-building the Masons Lodge alongside the new performing arts building, with Council utilising the southern portion of the Masons' current site or relocating the Masons Lodge off-site and incorporating the site into the Precinct.

In consultation with the Masons, the latter option was agreed and endorsed by Council.

Incorporation of the Masons Lodge site into the Precinct provides improved community benefit, including:

- Improved function of the Performing Arts Centre layout, including loading.
- Ability to increase public realm generally on site and the forecourt space to the Theatre and Library along Menangle Street.
- Ability to create more open space between building forms to create views to the Village Green and the existing Shire Hall frontage.
- Potential to create a single loading and waste location for the site away from high-value public spaces

Larger Civic Forecourt on Menangle Street

The Precinct, and nature of the cultural and civic facilities, lends itself to the creation of public space with different characters and levels of formality, which also suit the functions of the buildings.

The performing arts centre would benefit greatly from a more defined entry forecourt as an extension of the facility foyer space, which was not possible in the original masterplan building alignment.

The forecourt would be a place to meet before and after an event, linger and enjoy the atmosphere of a vibrant precinct. A well-designed, sheltered forecourt means the internal foyer can be designed to its bearable minimum, giving the space over to the public realm.

Menangle Street is the main civic address of the Precinct - leading to Argyle Street and having the Shire Hall fronting the street. Colden Street is the Precinct's secondary street frontage with lower volumes of pedestrians and higher volumes of heavy vehicle traffic. Therefore the civic forecourt's address to Menangle Street is more appropriate with greater ability to create significant, more formal public space benefiting the precinct as a whole.

The creation of the civic forecourt required the Performing Arts Centre and Library to be further set-back from the Menangle Street frontage, and soften its impact on the Shire Hall.

The proposed civic forecourt could only be partially delivered with the performing arts centre. With the balance of the forecourt being completed with the Library building.

Improved Visibility to the Green

The Green is located on the north-side of the precinct, maximising solar orientation and aligning itself with the axis of the Shire Hall.

The disadvantage of this location is that it potentially becomes hidden from the street, tucked behind the existing and new major building frontages. With the inclusion of the Mason's site in the Precinct, there is the opportunity to open the pedestrian access ways through the site, creating view lines to the Village Green, enticing the public in and improving the safety, visibility and connection of the space.

Updated Urban Design Principles

The eight principles for urban design and place-making from the original master plan were developed and adapted through further consultation and analysis of the project to produce the following Emerging Themes for the public realm and Master Plan Design Principles:

- Place-making
- Opportunities to represent Indigenous History
- Opportunities to represent European History
- Wollondilly's Water Story
- Art & Culture
- Campus approach to facilities
- Environmental sustainable design

1.3 Picton Place Plan

On July 20, 2021 Council adopted the Picton Place Plan.

The Picton place Plan included a review of the WCCCP Masterplan. The review noted several opportunities to be considered in subsequent design stages, as illustrated opposite.

There were no additional opportunities or changes suggested for the Performing Arts Centre or the Menangle and Colden street frontages through this independent review.

The Picton Place Plan provided key principles for Picton:

- Better connections
- Living garden
- Resilience
- A web of things to do

The WCCCP masterplan responds to these key principles through:

- Better connections
  - Pedestrian priority through and within the Precinct
  - Cars to the periphery of the Precinct
  - All facilities accessible through on-grade access
  - Celebrating the past by enhancing the Shire Hall as the focal point for the Precinct
  - Creating landscape and public realm connections
- Living garden
  - The tree-lined Green as the heart of the Precinct
  - A range of arts and cultural activities in the public realm
  - The Performing Arts Centre as the corner marker for the Precinct and town centre
- Resilience
  - Delivering a masterplan with spaces that can grow and adapt with the community
  - Breaking-up large building masses with outdoor public connections
  - Maintaining views to the surrounding hills and natural environment
- A web of things to do
  - Providing and curating art and culture in the public domain
  - Create visually permeable spaces for safety

The performing arts centre itself addresses these principles as part of the masterplan. As an integral part of the WCCC Precinct it should not be viewed in isolation, but as part of the whole.

Transformation of Corbett Lane.

Continuous footpath connection to pedestrian through site links to Argyle Street.

Possible new through site links.

New carparks to support the Precinct and Town Centre. Include Child Care Drop off and Accessible Parking.

New development sites incorporating pedestrian through site links.

Expanded public amenities recommended.

Temporary Village Green

Temporary Activation for future Arts Lane

Drop off parking for precinct - no stopping. Can function as accessible parking until new parking land is acquired.

Activation of Corbett Lane facades.

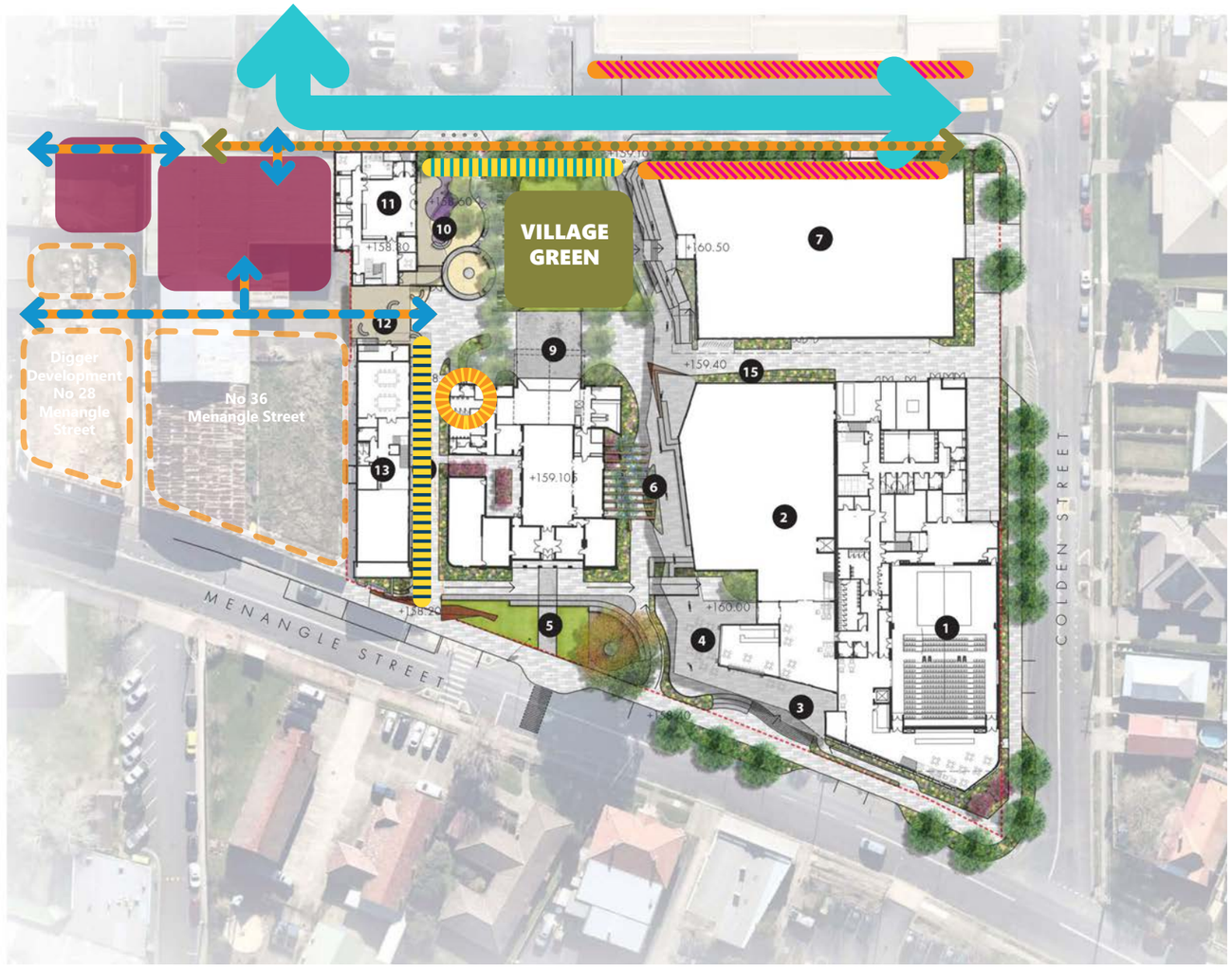


Figure 16: Plan of the Community, Cultural and Civic Precinct (The Precinct or CCCP) - overlaid with review (Williams Ross / ARTSCAPE)

Source: Picton Place Plan, part A, prepared by Artscape

1.4 Precinct Implementation

The WCCCP master plan will be delivered over several stages of construction. The following proposed staging takes into account the continued operation of existing uses on site, .

Stage 1 -

C Shire Hall - north-west extension and refurbishment - DA received, (under construction)

A Children's Services Centre, DA received (under construction)

E1 Performing Arts Centre, DA lodged

Stage 2

D Government Services Centre, design team appointed

Stage 3

C Shire Hall - north-east extension and refurbishment

Village Green, design team appointed

Stage 4

E2 Library and Learning Hub, design team appointed

B Flexible Community Arts, Exhibition and Workshop

Civic Forecourt and Link

Public Realm Works

Constructed in Stage 1, the Performing Arts Centre delivers a community cultural facility early in the life of the Precinct. However its main forecourt, connection to the Library and public realm works cannot be delivered until subsequent stages.

Masterplan Stages

2 PAC DESIGN RESPONSE

2.1 Design Principles

The key building form and design response for the Performing Arts Centre include:

- **Reflecting History and Place** – using of form, shape and material to link to the various histories of the Shire
- **Marking Entry** – creating a strong form and focal point on corner or Menangle & Colden Streets
- **Wollondilly's Stage** – activation of Menangle Street, day and night, through the large, glazed facade
- **Celebrating Wollondilly's Creative Life** – art activation opportunities on Colden Street and in the foyers

The following pages collate imagery to reflect how the Design Principles were applied through the facility design..

Reflecting History and Creating a Sense of Place

With strong façades to Menangle and Colden Streets - the new performing arts centre presents the opportunity for storey telling and interpretation. In doing this, they also mark the site with a sense of creative place-making.

Links to the local Indigenous totems and ideas of the Wollondilly Water Story that were explored in the master plan, have provided opportunities for interpretation of building form, shape and material as indicated below.

Like all good storey-telling the façades allow for various interpretations - One might see the shape and texture of the Lyre bird tail, or the texture of the water dragon's skin through the shingle cladding. The drape of the facade could be interpreted as curtains - or water falling.

Corner View

Corner View Night

Rendered Images of the Performing Arts Centre - Menangle and Colden Street corner showing the interim landscape and public realm scheme (as subject of this DA)

Design Principle

Marking Entry

The building form on the corner of Menagle and Colden Streets will present a strong form, echoing the Post Office at the opposite corner on Argyle Street.

WCCCP Precinct Master Plan

Old Post Office

Example cladding for the Performing Arts Centre

Design Principle

Celebrating Wollondilly's Creative Life

Colden Street Art Boxes

Along Colden Street, illuminated art boxes are proposed that could house a changing exhibition of art works to passing pedestrians and motorists.

Foyer Display

Two feature locations within the foyer shall be designed as gallery display - upstairs on the foyer wall facing Menangle Street, and in the ground floor foyer and future connection to the Library

Foyer Carpet design

Two feature carpets will be in-laid into the foyer flooring. As semi-permanent features int he foyer there is great opportunity to collaborate with a local artist to design these feature elements.

Example
Art Lightboxes

Wollondilly's Stage

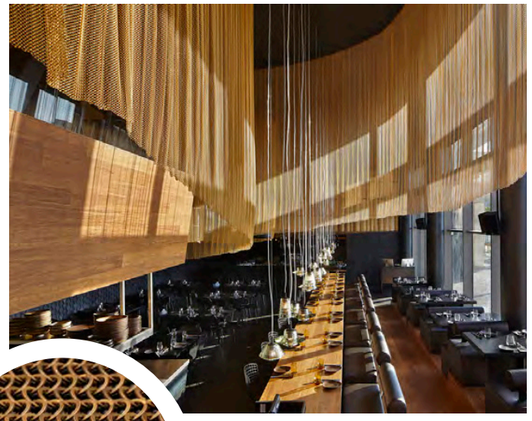
The new theatre will present a large, double height, glazed facade to Menangle Street.

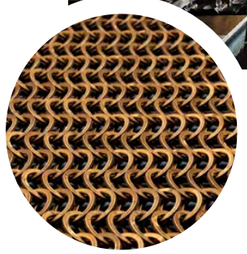
The activity of the foyer spaces and opportunity for art exhibition inside will present itself to the street.

Along Colden Street a glimpse into the theatre space itself is possible

As the day turns to night, the building facade will be illuminated - changing the experience of the building.

Example
View into performance space
Conservatory of Music, John Wardle Architects





Example
Prominnat glzed facade with rich internal material

Entry View Night

Side View

Rendered Images of the Performing Arts Centre - Entry (top) and Menangle Street frontage (bottom) showing the interim landscape and public realm (as the subject of this DA).

2.2 Materials and Eastern Façade

The building materials, illustrated on this and next page, provide a textured application of material - from the shingle cladding in matt and metallic finish, to the sand-blasted pre-cast concrete panels which reveal the warmth of the aggregate.

The theatre itself is located along the Colden Street facade. As a large stretch of facade, several techniques have been used to break-down the mass and provide interest:

- The feature vertical slot window on the corner of Menangle and Colden Streets provides views into the foyer - showcasing activity within the centre
- The feature window moves to low height glazing wrapping along Colden Street providing direct views into the foyer
- Along the eastern facade, where the theatre is located, a large, vertical window showcases activity inside when the theatre does not require a 'black-box' arrangement. The glazing sweeps down to hover just above the ground line. The facade at this point bends out towards the street with a deep, coloured reveal. This attempts to provide depth and break-up the eastern facade
- Further along the eastern facade, the sand-blasted precast concrete provides a textured backdrop to the art-box installation. The back-lit art boxes will be curated by Council, showcasing various artworks.

1. Powdercoated bronze window frames
2. Cement sheet cladding with render finish in pale grey (Dulux colour Paving Stone), expressed joint
3. Aluminium shingle cladding with two Colorbond finishes, Surfmist Matt and Galactic Metallic
4. Sandblasted concrete aggregate, warm-toned
5. Cement sheet cladding with render finish in dark grey (Dulux colour Organic), expressed joint

Render of Menangle Street and Colden Street corner showing the interim landscape (subject of this DA)

East Elevation (Final Master Plan)
1:200

Colden Street elevation showing the final configuration of the master plan - full precinct and public realm

1. Concrete precast in warm grey
2. Aluminium shingle cladding with two Colorbond finishes, Surfmist Matt and Galactic Metallic
3. Cement sheet cladding with render finish in pale grey (Dulux colour Paving Stone), expressed joint
4. Powdercoated bronze window frames
5. Folded steel plate seating
6. Precast concrete pavers
7. Steel plate edging

Wollondilly PAC Material Selection

3 LANDSCAPE & PUBLIC REALM

3.1 Overview

Council is committed to delivering the WCCC Precinct over a 10 year period. It has been designed to deliver in four significant stages in line with Council's financial plan, with Council adopting the overarching delivery program in May 2020.

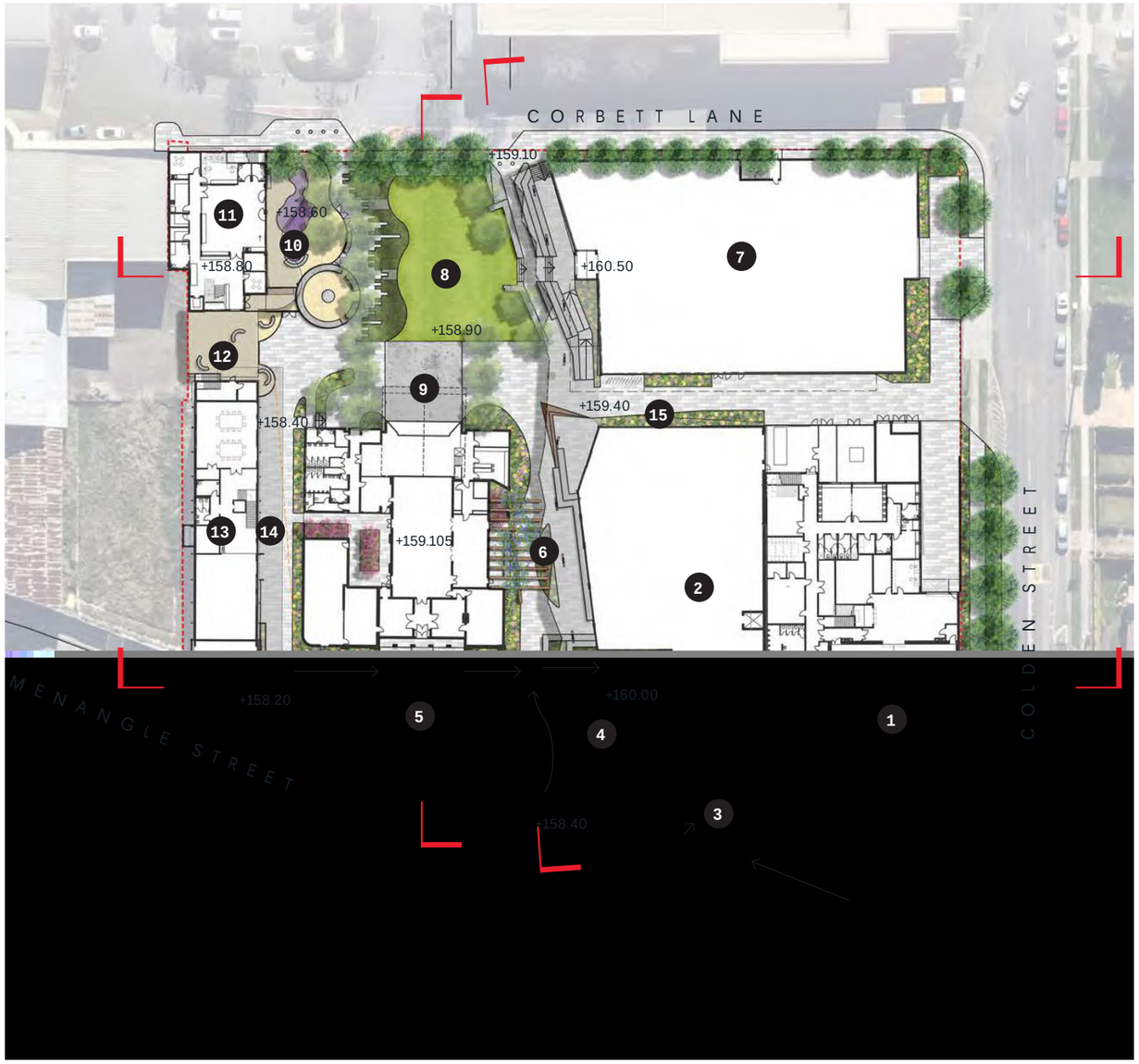
Tract Consultants developed the landscape masterplan in collaboration with WRAs review of the original masterplan.

The landscape masterplan (opposite) was developed as a series of spaces with different experiences creating a vibrant and cohesive precinct. The public domain themes developed through consultation and site analysis and inform the Public Realm Plan for the precinct.

Legend

1. PAC / Theatre
2. Library / Learning Hub
3. Civic Forecourt
4. Destinational Bar
5. Shire Hall Forecourt
6. Civic Link
7. Government Services Centre
8. Village Green
9. Performance Space
10. Children's Play / › ulti-use Play
11. Childcare Building
12. Outdoor Studio
13. Community Building
14. Arts Laneway
15. East-West Link

- Existing Camphor Laurel Tree
- New Native Shade Tree
- New Deciduous Tree
- New Small Feature Tree
- Grass Lawn
- Swale Planting
- Garden Bed Planting
- Concrete Pavement
- Feature Pavement
- Playspace surfacing
- Feature Entry Gateway
- Play Sculpture (indicative)
- Timber Decking
- Swale Bridge
- Steps / Seating Edges
- Cafe Seating (indicative)
- Planted pergola. To Architect's detail



Final configuration of the master plan - full precinct and public realm