

Kim Small and Caroline McLeod

## 4 Patyegarang Place with a New Library and Pavilion Revitalizing a Hospital for Sydney's Inner West Community

**Abstract:** A new library and pavilion have been built for Sydney's Inner West community from an abandoned hospital building. Following on from an invited design excellence competition, the public was invited to vote for their favourite designs. The Inner West Council selected the design proposal by architects BVN for its originality and approach to blending the heritage-listed buildings with a contemporary structure. Situated on the old Marrickville Hospital, the development established opportunities for urban revitalisation by retaining and embracing the previously abandoned hospital building, adding to it a new building which transforms the site into a new community hub. The heritage-listed Marrickville Hospital building has been carefully refurbished internally and externally, forming the administration areas, small meeting rooms, collection and study areas with outdoor reading areas along newly reinstated verandas. Connected to the old hospital building is a new structure which provides open areas to meet, work, learn and socialise, including a foyer, café, function space, learning rooms, technology area and dedicated junior and youth areas.

**Keywords:** Public libraries – Australia; Library buildings – Design and construction; Hospital buildings – Remodelling for other use

### Introduction

A new library and community hub has opened to the Inner West community in Marrickville, Sydney, Australia (Figure 1). Situated on the site of the old Marrickville Hospital, the development sought to maximise opportunities for urban revitalisation through the reuse of a building to create a new library. Not only was an older, disused building used to revitalise the area, but the design also referenced the site history. The previously abandoned hospital campus and ward block were reorganised and transformed into a new community hub, known as Patyegarang Place. Not only did the project involve the urban revitalisation of an old building, but it also re-examined library typology. Contemporary libraries have evolved to be about more than just books and silence. Libraries of today are places for communities to meet, work, learn and play. This chapter examines the transformation through providing an understanding of the local area, the history of the site, the



**Fig. 1:** Marrickville Library, Marrickville Road. © Tom Roe.

### **Facts and Figures**

*Name:* Marrickville Library at Patyegarang Place

*Address:* 313 Marrickville Rd, Marrickville, Sydney NSW 2204, Australia

*Website:* <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/explore/libraries/new-marrickville-library>

*Opening:* August 2019

*Builder:* CD Commercial Projects for Mirvac

*Architect:* BVN Architecture <http://www.bvn.com.au/>

*Gross floor area:* 3,500 m<sup>2</sup>

*Main floor space:* 2,800 m<sup>2</sup>

*Collection size:* 80,000

*Staff:* 30

*Workstations:* 27

*Building costs:* AU\$23,000,000

urban contextual approach taken, the architectural response, sustainability and the public art strategy. Reflections on current library operations in relation to the transformation are also presented. Opened to critical acclaim in September 2019, over 50,000 people visited the library in its opening month. The visitation rates and the community's response to the facility confirm that the urban revitalisation of the site has successfully transformed not only the old hospital building but

also its surroundings into an innovative new library and civic hub for the community of Marrickville (Figure 1).

## The Local Area – Sydney’s Inner West

Marrickville is located within the Inner West Council, a local government area on the western edge of Sydney’s central business district (<https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/>). With a population of 192,000 people, Marrickville is a place of culturally diverse, progressive inner-city communities and neighbourhoods. The Inner West has a unique character and heritage reflecting waves of migrants with 34.4% of the population born overseas. The average household size is 2.35 people with a population density of 54.5 persons per hectare. An educated and creative community resides in the area, with 41.6% tertiary-educated and 8.8% of the workforce in the creative or performing arts industries (Inner West Council 2016).

Future challenges facing the Inner West community include a projected population growth of 20% over the next 20 years. Forecast population increases, combined with the previous population growth of 21,000 additional residents over the last ten years, are putting pressure on the number and size of dwellings in the local government area. A disproportionate number of residents are facing housing stress with households paying more than 30% of weekly income on housing. There are significant numbers of young people, elderly, people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, migrants and low-income workers who are experiencing problems. At the same time, a section of the community is becoming gentrified and affluent with a high proportion of people living alone, 30% compared to 23% in greater Sydney. Meeting multiple needs is difficult. Environmental challenges include demand for open green spaces, energy demands during heatwaves and high water use (Inner West Council 2016).

Public infrastructure including library and community facilities with areas for work, study, gathering and play are in critical demand. Spaces for children, families, individuals, students, the elderly and entrepreneurs are required to support the ever-growing community. The urban revitalisation and development of the former hospital site into a library, green space and housing were initiated to address some of the challenges facing the Inner West community by providing a civic hub to support the community and its needs.

## History of the Site

The site selected for the new Marrickville Library was the intersection of Marrickville Road, Livingstone Road and Lilydale Street, marking the start of the civic town centre of Marrickville. The site has a rich history and has served many different purposes over the centuries.

### Pre-1788

For over 60,000 years the area on and around the new library site was home to the traditional Indigenous Australian custodians of the land, the Gadigal and Wangal clans of the Eora Nation (Irish 2017). The site name Patyegarang Place refers to Patyegarang, a woman from the Gadigal people, who taught the language of her people to the early colonist, astronomer William Dawes, who was responsible for documenting an Indigenous Australian language for the first time in the late 1780s (Keneally 2009).

### 1788-1897

Following the arrival of the First Fleet from Great Britain in 1788 and early colonial settlement, the land was used for agriculture with settlers growing vegetables and keeping poultry and cattle. Marrickville became an important area for market gardens, orchards and dairies up until the late 1900s. In the late 1800s, Marrickville was ideally located for industrial expansion, with local quarries, brickworks, flour mills, wool and fabric industries (Cashman, Meader, and Carolan 1994). The area was labelled Kangaroo Grounds due to its large population of kangaroos.

### 1897-1991

Opened in 1897, the Marrickville Cottage Hospital was established to respond to the rising number of injuries that occurred at local factories and industrial sites. In 1922 the site became the Marrickville District Hospital (Figure 2), and by 1935, the hospital had 91 beds and treated up to 7,237 patients each year. The hospital



**Fig. 2:** Marrickville Hospital, Lilydale Street, 1936. © Inner West Council.

played an important role in the local community, supporting community health, prosperity, economies and growth of the area. Along with local wool and fabric industries, the hospital was pivotal in the transition of women from domestic duties to paid and volunteer work. By the 1970s, a series of funding cuts saw a declining use of the site and the hospital was closed in 1991 (Cashman, Meader, and Carolan 1994).

## 1991–2015

The hospital site was acquired by Marrickville Council in 1995 and used by a variety of community groups, private individuals and organisations for mainly non-commercial purposes. In 2011–2012, Inner West Council asked the community to contribute to the vision for a new library and community hub. Over 4,000 people participated, marking the largest community response for a Marrickville project. The community was clear; they wanted a diverse and accessible community space that demonstrated leadership in technology and sustainability through its design, programmes and services. Following almost 30 years of abandonment, the site became the focus for urban revitalisation for a new library and civic hub. The site's rich history has been embraced in the design of the library. References to the various historical aspects of the site are evident in the layout, programmatic features, materials used, conservation of the old hospital ward block, art selection and the final naming of the precinct.

## The Urban Context

Positioned on the corner of two of Marrickville's busiest roads, Marrickville and Livingstone roads, Patyegarang Place, the site for the new library, has a significant street presence. Its prominent location meant that the urban revitalisation of the site needed to provide a place that contributed to the public realm and amenity to the community. The site masterplan needed to consider the reuse of the existing hospital building and use of the heritage structure in the context of a new library. The scheme was developed with sensitivity to the integration of the past and celebration of the new with the creation of a green space and restoration of Hospital Lane.

## A Green Gateway to Marrickville Town Centre

Marrickville Road is the main street and civic heart of Marrickville. The bustling street is lined with shops, amenities, schools and prominent civic buildings such as the Town Hall. Given the significant civic nature of the site, its revitalisation needed to be sensitive to its surroundings while responsive to its urban context. The site of the new library not only brings new life to the area but also forms a new gateway to Marrickville's town centre.

Central to the design is the creation of green space for the public to enjoy. The garden mirrors the grassed forecourt of St. Brigid's primary school on the opposite side of Marrickville Road, creating a green gateway to Marrickville. The garden sits below the road level, with steps and ramps running through zones landscaped with native plants to a lawn area which offers respite from the surrounding busy streets. It has been designed as a central gathering space and provides an active area for families and community groups while creating space for the library to utilise for public programmes. A café which is accessible from both inside the library and externally at street level sits above the lawn. The lawn area is also able to support local markets, an outdoor theatre and a range of community activities such as tai chi.

The landscape design references the historical context of wellness from the former hospital, provides green space in a bustling urban area and is considered restorative and imperative to wellbeing (Figure 3).



**Fig. 3:** Garden and gathering space of Patyegarang Place.  
© Brett Boardman.

## Hospital Lane

The site masterplan is respectful of the heritage architecture and the historic fabric of the site. Adjacent to the old hospital building was a pathway referred to by past inhabitants as Hospital Lane. Hospital Lane was the well-worn path that led health practitioners to their quarters and provided a range of through-site links and access points. The pathway is of heritage significance as evidence of an earlier street network (Cashman, Meader, and Carolan 1994). The reconstructed Hospital Lane (Figure 4) establishes an organising spine through the site, leading the public from Marrickville Road to the library, pavilion complex, additional green space and on to the apartments beyond. Hospital Lane provides an important connection between Marrickville Road and the library to increase accessibility for visitors.

The area between Hospital Lane and the old hospital building now hosts the newly built section of the library. A roof canopy extends from the old hospital building, bringing together the old building with contemporary spaces and covering a section of Hospital Lane for added shelter and wayfinding for visitors. The re-establishment and extension of Hospital Lane demonstrates the use of an historic reference point as an opportunity for urban renewal in the design.



**Fig. 4:** Reinstated Hospital Lane.  
© Brett Boardman.

## The Architectural Response

Marrickville Library is a building created for the community by the community. The Council and architects approached the development of the new precinct as both a new library and a civic hub, a destination that would be embraced and loved by its community. The Inner West Council and architects BVN (<http://www.bvn.com.au/projects/marrickville-library/>) sought to create an architectural design, building form and outdoor space that incorporated the community's aspirations and integrated new build with the heritage structures.

Following extensive community consultation, the community determined that the new library should incorporate:

- books
- electronic media with free Wi-Fi inside and outside the library and be a place for:
- meeting and greeting
- listening and learning

- children to play
- historical research
- family time
- study and work
- events
- storytelling
- fun
- community groups
- being kind to the planet.

The project offered opportunities for urban revitalisation through building reuse and the addition of new spaces that honoured the heritage significance of the site. The design of the new Marrickville Library emphasised the importance of key heritage structures, adapting them to their new purpose as a library while successfully integrating a new architectural expression.

## Treatment of the Old

The site of the Marrickville Hospital was listed as an item of local heritage significance, not only for the built form of the hospital structures but for the role the site played in the social history of the Marrickville area. Several buildings, including the old nurses' home constructed in 1909, the 1913 main entry building and the main hospital wards building from the 1920s were located on the site. The new library project had to work with the existing structures. Demolition was not an option given the importance of the site. All stakeholders were supportive of the retention and adaptation of the structures. The flexible reuse of the old hospital building ensures its cultural rehabilitation and represents a responsible and sustainable response to the environmental cost of new construction.

A two-storey brick building on the corner of Marrickville Road and Lilydale Street was previously the Marrickville Hospital Ward Building and originally housed four Nightingale wards and their associated support space and verandas. A Nightingale ward traditionally would have contained one large room housing 24 to 34 beds typically arranged along the sides of the ward, all observed from a central staff station (Figure 5) (David 2011, 11).



**Fig. 5:** Marrickville Hospital, women's ward, 1936. © Inner West Council.



**Fig. 6:** Quiet study room within the repurposed nightingale ward. © Tom Roe.

The spatial arrangement of the new library, particularly the roof and atrium, is intended to showcase the old hospital building, allowing it to resume a significant role in the life of Marrickville.

The new library has given the original ward spaces new life (Figure 6), transforming them into collection spaces, public work/study areas and workspaces for library staff. The original structure of the hospital is celebrated in the new spaces, with ceiling beams, windows and French doors either restored or with new elements kept true to the original features. The smaller support spaces, once bathrooms in the old hospital building, have been repurposed as places for group study, quiet reading rooms and offices. The external façades of the hospital building have been refurbished to reinstate the ward's old verandas. Enclosed for a period, the verandas have been restored both internally and externally, providing protected outdoor study spaces.

BVN worked with consultants GML Heritage (<https://www.gml.com.au/>) to ensure that the redesign of the spaces had minimal impact on the former hospital. The existing fabric was retained wherever possible and incorporated into the fit-out design. New finishes, joinery and furniture are contemporary in character and complement the heritage character. The design of the new spaces is sensitive to the old and has enabled the original 1920s architecture to remain visible. Careful restoration and adaptive reuse externally and internally were undertaken to remove all post-1920s alterations and additions, further restoring the heritage structure to its true form (Forbes 2016, 11).

The existing hospital building can still be seen externally from Lilydale Street, where the original façade remains, while internally its original western façade creates a backdrop to the new spaces within the library. The arrangement and scale of new buildings and spaces are intended to connect the old and new elements of the library and showcase the old hospital, ensuring the building can be appreciated in the round.



**Fig. 7:** Atrium and foyer space.  
© Tom Roe.

## The New Build

The design of the new library and community spaces creates a civic precinct with multiple spaces that extend beyond the traditional role of the library, providing first and foremost an inclusive and welcoming place for the community with a range of spaces and programmes to engage the diverse community of Marrickville. To create a welcoming place contextually appropriate to both its historical setting and its surroundings, the concept of a floating roof was adopted (Figure 1). It folds out from the pitched roof of the heritage building towards the lawn, bridging the gap between the old hospital building and Hospital Lane and marking a clear point of entry from Marrickville Road. Taking visual cues from the former hospital building, the floating roof also responds to the broader context of the built form of Marrickville's peaked roofs. Along Marrickville Road, the roof form creates a distinctive and memorable visual identity for the library and community. The exterior of the building provides an exclamation point to the eastern end of Marrickville Road's commercial and cultural strip, forming a memorable landmark for the suburb (Figure 8).

While the newly-built extension is prominent from Marrickville Road, the Lilyfield Street elevation is respectful of the old building, with some sections constructed using reclaimed brick from the original site. The new section of the building derives its size, scale, form and alignment from the existing ward building but adds modern touches such as oversized glass windows bridging the gap between the old hospital building and the new building additions.

Visibility from inside and outside of people using the library was important to the design to showcase the library's activities. Passers-by on Marrickville Road can see into the café and the main platform level of the library all the way



**Fig. 8:** Northern view from Hospital Lane. © Tom Roe.

through to the library forecourt, via floor to ceiling glass along the street edge. Clear sliding doors between the public lawn and pavilion building also provide views in and out for visitors. Transparency throughout the spaces creates a safe and dynamic environment. The new library design shapes several people pockets by orienting the library entrance and auditorium to the forecourt, creating a monitored presence to the outdoor zone.

The roof provides shelter and sanctuary from rain and sun while allowing the spaces beneath to remain light-filled and cool. Internally, the peaked roof and stretched fabric sections of the ceiling create draped scallops that scoop reflected sunlight into the library beneath. The building foyer is an open, triple-height atrium with views across all floors of the building (Figure 7). The foyer is framed by the old hospital building and wrapped by a series of verandas over three levels. The design is derived from the traditional Nightingale wards, places for healing, which were characterised by large internal spaces featuring tall windows and French doors leading out to open-air verandas for continued airflow throughout interior spaces. Light filters through the canopy roof of the new building to create bright and airy spaces that foster wellbeing. The new building encourages the circulation of fresh air, as cooling breezes are drawn through the louvred walls within the façade.

Timber-finished stairs, joinery, acoustic panels and furnishing details provide a warm and calming background to the buzz of activity in the library. Places for activity and retreat are woven throughout the building, complementing those housed within the ward building. They provide areas for reading, relaxing, information zones, borrowing and return points, library collections, public work and study areas, exhibition areas, children, youth, magazine and newspaper reading, a garden, a mezzanine for the art collection, a café, printing facilities, public computers, meetings and a conference centre.

All internal areas are visually linked to the old hospital building. Its brick façade, timber-framed windows and slate-covered slanting roof form the backdrop to the new spaces. Its character and presence give the community building a unique and quirky feel. The combination of the old and new create an environment that is tactile and special.

The regeneration of the site creates a public space that complements and enhances Marrickville's vision of the library and community hub of the future. It broadens the library vision to include the outdoors, nature and a children's garden. It upgrades public amenity by improving the surrounding streets of Marrickville, Livingstone Roads and Lilydale Street while continuing to utilise sustainable practices to create a world-class public amenity.

## Sustainability

In response to today's concerns around climate change and the wellbeing of the planet, Marrickville Library is uncompromising with regards to sustainability, with recycled elements heavily integrated into the project and design features that result in a 25% reduction in energy use. The building is a true example of sustainable construction and ongoing operation, with an abundance of natural light, incorporation of natural and mixed-mode ventilation as well as the use of sustainable timber and recycled bricks. The library is a place of learning and the building itself also teaches. The large roof collects rainwater and the playful water collection tanks in the children's garden (Figure 9) are used to harvest rainwater for the surrounding landscaping.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) initiatives include:

- Controlled solar gain through roof overhangs augmented by external sun shading
- Natural ventilation and mixed-mode air-conditioning system
- Rainwater collection via the library roof with storage in above-ground rain tanks

- Raised floors in the elevated new levels allowing ducting of cool/warm air and power, delivering energy savings and future flexibility
- Refurbishment and adaptive reuse of existing heritage hospital buildings
- Renewable and recyclable materials, specifically recycled bricks and reclaimed sustainable timber
- Sculpted roof apertures allowing natural light into the library while minimising direct sunlight and glare.



**Fig. 9:** Children's garden, water tanks. © Brett Boardman.

The selection of building materials sought to maximise reuse, renewable and low embodied energy materials. The bricks of demolished inhabitable buildings on the site were recycled in the retaining walls and paving of the forecourt, providing a beautiful patina and history of site use. The use of brick also references the historical context of Marrickville and its brickworks. The primary structure and majority of façade glazing, and sun shading are all constructed using reclaimed timber, a natural and renewable building material. The use of timber also references the history of the site, as its first use following colonial settlement was to provide timber for the construction industry.

Sydney typically enjoys a mild climate. For a significant proportion of the year, the new library can operate in full natural ventilation mode, enabling significant energy savings. The multi-level atrium and lobby space of the library (Figure 7) is intended to be a non-conditioned air space, with localised cooling and heating provided in the warmer and colder months to the library floors and specific areas. Cool air, filtered by the lawns and trees of the sunken garden, enters the building at a low level through the main entry doorways and façade louvres on the ground and first floors. Large apertures in the roof are fitted with operable louvres that enable a stack effect, whereby warm air rises, generating airflow and drawing more of the cooler low-level air into the building. Clear openings to the west and

opening windows to the east of the original hospital building ensure that the cool garden air is drawn through both levels of the spaces.

In cooler and warmer weather, a mixed-mode system can be implemented. Raised floors in the elevated new levels allow for the ducting of cool or warm air within the floor void. While underfloor cool air systems are more costly to install than traditional ceiling-mounted systems, they are more energy- and cost-efficient to run and will provide the added benefit of future flexibility. Concrete slab and column construction on the raised floor areas allows for pre-cooling and heat absorption overnight. In cool weather, ventilation can be reduced by closing both low- and high-level doors, louvres and windows. Warmth is generated by in-floor ducted warm air running within the raised floor areas and via ceiling ducts in the old hospital building.

In the pavilion, similar measures are used on a smaller scale. Heat gain is minimised using primarily south-facing glazing, with north and west walls remaining largely solid. In open mode, low-level operable louvres draw cool and filtered air from the garden into the glazed south-facing atrium, or via the large sliding doors into the auditorium. Operable doors and windows encourage cross ventilation through the meeting rooms, multipurpose rooms and auditorium where ambient noise is not an issue. Where acoustic privacy or separation is required, rooms can be closed off and the cool and warm air supply systems used.

Solar gain or the increase in heat in a space due to direct sunlight is controlled via roof overhangs to the west and north, augmented as necessary by external sun shading. The roof apertures are sculpted to allow soft southern light and reflected northern sunlight into the library but minimise direct sunlight. Solar gain is not an issue in the orientation to the south and clear glass ensures excellent visibility into and out from the library onto Marrickville Road, engaging passers-by in the life and activity of the space.

The library roof provides a sheltered environment that is flooded with natural light. The sculpted forms of the internal ceiling in lightweight stretched fabric are designed to scoop reflected northern light and soft southern light into the space and along the ceiling surfaces. There is 10 km of timber used in the new library, all either recycled or The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) certified (<https://au.fsc.org/en-au/for-business/fsc-certification>). Timber is significantly lighter than steel, and combined with its embodied energy rating, around half that of steel, gives a CO<sub>2</sub> emission saving. Timber window framing was used for the façade rather than aluminium. With CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 8.24 kg/tonne compared to 0.72 kilos/tonne for softwood, the argument for the consideration of timber windows is strong, notwithstanding the increase in maintenance. Over 27,000 bricks from the old hospital grounds were cleaned and reused in the new

building. Low maintenance planting in the green areas includes Jacaranda trees, Xanthorrhoea and Australian natives.

## Public Art Strategy

To enhance community spirit and provide opportunities for public engagement, three specially commissioned artworks are on public display at the new library. The commissions not only support local artists within the community, but are integral to the design, historical context and urban revitalisation of the site, paying homage to the history of the site. The first art piece entitled *Navigating Culture*, represents the story of Patyegarang (Figure 10). The site-specific outdoor installation by Belinda Smith was a collaboration with Indigenous community members and spans the building edge on the corner of Marrickville Road and Lilydale Street. Constructed of softly polished laser cut stainless steel, the work references star maps and the terms used by the Eora people to describe the night sky, bringing together the shared knowledge systems of astronomy and language.



**Fig. 10:** *Navigating Culture* by Belinda Smith. © Tom Roe.

*The Brickyards Night School* by Ralf Kempken (Figure 11) takes its inspiration from the hospital's original purpose of servicing workers from the brickyards of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the 1870s, children as young as six were removed from schools by their families to work as pugger-ups at Marrickville Brickyards. Historical records show that Mr Richard Guille, headmaster of a school in the neighbouring suburb of St Peters, became concerned that children working at the brickyards were not getting an education. He started a night school so that the children could learn to read and write and have a chance to move beyond the brickyards in their adult lives. Prominently located on the main landscaped wall

within the courtyard, the work reconnects visitors and passers-by to the history of the brickyards while looking ahead to the opportunities of tomorrow through education. The artwork made from steel stencil also pays homage to the street artwork commonly seen in Sydney's Inner West.



**Fig. 11:** *The Brickyards Night School* by Ralf Kempken. © Tom Roe.

The final art piece is the *Kangaroo* by Joanna Rhodes (Figure 9). The iconic, bright yellow, 3 m long, 1.7 m wide and 1 m high contemporary sculpture is of a lounging kangaroo. It is centrally positioned as the focal point inside the Children's Garden and used as a climbing apparatus for young people visiting the library. The much-loved artwork can be seen from many points within the library and pays tribute to the history of the site once known as the Kangaroo Grounds.

## Library Operations

In the first three months of the library's operation, over 150,000 community members visited the library. The public's response to the library and its design has been extremely positive. Social media comments include:

The new Marrickville Library is absolutely fantastic! Everything a true public building should be. Generous, open, welcoming, uplifting and civic. In full use from day one! So impressive.

Great to visit Marrickville's new Library. Such a wonderful adaptive reuse of the former Marrickville hospital. Busy, busy with every spot taken.

Some particularly interesting feedback was received from a user who had completed her nurse's training at Marrickville District Hospital in the 1960s.

I was a trainee nurse at Marrickville District Hospital between 1962 and 1966. I reconnected with the hospital site through the building of the new library. The library that has been

created on the old hospital site is incredible. All care has been taken to preserve parts of the old hospital and butt it against the new structure.

When I entered the old part of the building and walked on the original floorboards it took me back to many memories of these boards being polished daily and the four years I walked on these boards. I was pleased to see the old windows, doors and rooms restored and utilised, the old mixture room, bathrooms, pan room that have now become offices, quiet rooms, and storerooms. The front entrance hall, the façade, terrazzo tiles a few of the front stairs and part of the wooden banister, a few of the original slate tiles these are all parts of the old that have been persevered.

The lane that we as nurses walked up and down each day has been utilised and named Hospital Lane.

The new library is an amazing structure which has been created for the community of today and the future with its natural light, ventilation, water storage, children's outdoor activities area which is built on the old children's ward suite. Obviously, a great deal of thought, consultation planning and consideration have been involved in building this magnificent library.

The new library is not just a library where people go to find a book. It is a place for the community to meet. A place for students to study and access computers, for children and families to enjoy the activities presented for them. It has many quiet nooks to find a peaceful place to read or just reflect.

The community is extremely fortunate to have this amazing building that has been constructed with great incite [sic!] for the up and coming generations of Marrickville and surrounding areas.

The library has opened to full capacity, and additional seating has been purchased to accommodate demand.

From an operational perspective, the library was designed to be welcoming and encourage the community to own the space. Its success is demonstrated in the occupancy statistics, with a 100% increase in the number of people visiting. There has been a change in the demographics of library customers and how the spaces are used. Examples include an increase in the number of customers aged between 16 and 30. Visitors in this age group are coming to the library to work or study and staying for longer periods of time. There has also been an increase in the number of community groups such as mothers' groups who are using the library and garden area as a meeting place.

Many groups transferred from the old library, including Mahjong, film club, art groups and children's rhyme and storytimes. They have found a new home within the new facility with their numbers growing as word of mouth spreads. Regular activities, public programmes and exhibitions have been delivered, or are planned, to highlight social and historical events of the library site, celebrate the community and encourage lifelong learning. Examples include free daily guided tours of the library, architectural talks, author talks, children's programming and Indigenous language presentations. All programmes and events have

been well attended, demonstrating the public's further interest and engagement with the facility. The library and pavilion will continue to introduce new amenities and activities to support community needs and respond to user demand. Future activities planned include the Australia Day citizenship ceremony and Mardi Gras celebrations.

From this early statistical analysis, the reuse of the Marrickville hospital building as a new library demonstrates successful urban revitalisation by its transformation into a lively community hub loved by the community of the Inner West.

## Conclusion

The design for the site and the library extends beyond the traditional perception of a public library and caters to the varying needs of Marrickville's diverse community. The Library's success has been recognised in various awards including in 2020 two Australian Institute of Architects' National Architecture Awards: the prestigious David Oppenheim Award for Sustainable Architecture and joint winner of the Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Public Architecture, following winning of the prestigious NSW Premier's Prize at the 2020 New South Wales Architecture Awards and the Milo Dunphy Award for Sustainable Architecture. The Library also won the Australian Library and Information Association's Australian Library Design Awards for public libraries in 2021 and the Timber Design Award for 2020. The building has been designed to create a new civic heart, a place for all, combining the old with the new, adding depth and character to the precinct, celebrating the contribution of the hospital to the people of Marrickville and at the same time creating a modern space that acknowledges how libraries will forge their way into the future. Patyegarang Place provides places to learn, work, play and socialise both inside and out while contributing to the urban revitalisation of a key part of the Marrickville town centre. The library constitutes a dynamic contemporary landmark and a new entrance and western gateway to the commercial centre of Marrickville.

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