



# Pookeno Library and Community Hub

Workshop #1 Report - February 2024



# Introduction

The new Pookeno library and community hub with Council customer services is a priority identified in the Waikato District Council’s Long Term Plan.

Pookeno has experienced rapid growth over the past several years, and with more people choosing to live there, Waikato District Council need to invest in a town centre that brings people together to work, shop, learn, have fun, simply gather, and do business.

As part of this, Waikato District Council want to create a vibrant, people-focused library and community hub in the heart of town.

# Feasibility Study Process

The feasibility study will determine what services and activities a new library and community hub would need to offer to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of our community; the location options; and what a new facility might look like.

Veros is using a co-design approach, with two workshops, to develop options to respond to need and ultimately identify a preferred option. This process allows us to consider a range of options and to test how those options will respond to the community needs and aspirations now and for the future. The workshop feedback also guides our wider research.

Mana whenua partners, stakeholders, and Council staff will help define what the library and community hub needs to offer, through co-design workshops. We’ll also be seeking feedback from the Pookeno community on the preferred option when we get to that stage of the project.

The co-design process will be developed over a series of workshops and engagement sessions, as follows:

Workshop One: Problems and Benefits, local area mapping, needs identification and option development.

Tuesday 13 February 2025

Youth Engagement Session

26 February 2024 (TBC)

Workshop Two: Preferred Option discussion and closing the loop

March 2024 (date TBC)





# Acknowledgements

A successful co-design approach relies on participants openly sharing the knowledge and experience and ideas they have. We acknowledge the individuals and organisations that are participating in this process and thank them for their time and their willingness to share their knowledge. And to those who will be part of the process moving forward.

Special thanks to the residents, mana whenua, community representatives, representatives from Pokeno Community Committee, Te Haukainga Mana Whenua o Pokeno Charitable Trust, Pokeno Hall Committee, Waikato District Council Mayor, Elected Members and staff who have been part of the process to date.



*Thank you to everyone for their time and willingness to share their knowledge*

# Turning a plan into reality - a library and community hub for Pookeno

## Workshop #1, Tuesday 13 February 2024

The first co-design workshop was held in the Pookeno Community Hall on Tuesday 13 February from 4.30pm to 6.30pm. There was around 25 people throughout the session, working in small groups.

The purpose of this workshop was:

- To explore what services and facilities there are already in Pookeno
- To understand potential users - who would benefit most from the library and community hub?
- To understand current, potential and future services - what would you like to be able to do in the library and community hub?
- To understand how people want to feel in the library and community hub
- To identify problem and benefit statements
- To identify options for the library and community hub that responds to problems and benefits and meets needs

The workshop was facilitated by Adele Hadfield and Amanda Weatherley from Veros, with support from Phillip Kempster from Chow Hill Architects.



*Around 25 people participated in the co-design workshop on 13 February*



# Experience and Service Mapping

## Exploring what you already have

The first exercise involved participants sharing their knowledge of other services, places and facilities that are available or are planned in Pookeno. We asked participants to expand on the map provided below:



The following places were identified:

- Marae
- Kowhai Waterfall
- Queen's Reboubt
- Reserve in McIntosh Drive
- Park behind cenotaph
- Whangarata Hall
- Reserve in Razorback Road
- Totara Park toilets
- Telegraph Hill Ridge Line

## Who would use it and benefit most

Next, participants were asked to think about who would use the library and community hub. The following were identified:

Youth	Justice of the Peace (JP)
Elderly/aged	Dance groups
Couples	Fitness groups
Singles	Pookeno Community Committee
New arrivals/residents	Businesses
Diverse population - cultural, Indian	Community groups
Job Seekers	Blood Service
Adult Education	Lions
Visitors	Soup Kitchen
Pookeno School kids	Community Patrol
Health professionals	Mainly Music
Mums and babies	Schools
ECE and Kohanga	At home business owners
Families	Companies
Local artists to showcase work	Local community Police
Council staff	Government departments e.g., MSD, DIA
Students	Meet n Greet
Heritage groups	Social services e.g., WINZ, financial services, legal advice



*Workshop participants worked together in small groups*

## Experience ID

Libraries and community hubs play an important role and function in bringing people together, delivering services and supporting lifelong learning and are often at the heart of the community. In essence, modern libraries and community hubs have become “living rooms for the community”.

A new library needs to deliver on the Waikato District Council Library Strategy vision of inspiring curiosity, enriching lives and connecting communities. We also want to ensure that it meets the needs of the community not just for today but for the future.

We asked participants what they would like to be able to do in the library and community hub. Here’s what they said (in no particular order):

### What would you like to be able to do in the library and community hub

Parking	Food, catering
Computers in library	Tech facilities, equipment, courses
Free WIFI	Access social services, Council and government departments
Creche/childcare facilities	Office space
Co-working hot desk facilities	Boardroom - halfway meeting space
Admin centre	Workshops space for arts, teaching
Research librarian service	Kitchen, for cooking lessons
Meeting spaces, video conferencing	Core services - rubbish tickets, bus tickets
Function rooms	Budgeting, JPs, Citizens Advice Bureau
Food pantry	Plunket
Before school drop off/pick up	School holiday programmes
Cultural activities	Resources for learning, art
Permanent office space and meeting room (Council)	Digital literacy classes
Tea and coffee facilities	Cafe
Fruit shop	Mens'/Ladies Shed
Access to railway	Shops - boutiques, hardware
Health centre - doctor, physio, laboratory, pharmacy	Hui, meetings
No fast food!	Accessibility - little people, aged using a walker
Autistic spaces	Parking space for bikes (two and three wheelers), prams
Proper information centre, not necessarily manned but tourism info for visitors	Signage in three official New Zealand languages - Māori, English and Sign Language (all around town)
Connected pathways east to west	Aged health learning
Outdoor seating space to have a rest	

How will the library and community hub feel?

People were then asked how they wanted to feel when using the library and community hub. They want to feel welcome, connected and knowledgeable, in a clean, warm and friendly space.



*Workshop participants told us they want a warm, friendly and welcoming space where people feel connected and knowledgeable*



# Benefits and Problems

## Problem Statements

The new Pookeno library and community hub with Council customer services is a priority identified in the Council's Long Term Plan and was also identified as a priority in the Pookeno Public Realm Concept Plan 2022.

The following problem statements were identified from the kōrero and discussions throughout the workshop:

1. There is a lack of flexible, modern gathering spaces in Pookeno that meet the needs of our growing and diverse community.
2. There is no secure space for Council staff to operate from and provide services to the community in the northern part of the Waikato District.
3. Pookeno does not have a library, learning, working space that can support lifelong learning and access to information to support a connected, successful community.

## Project Principles

The following principles were identified from the kōrero and discussions throughout the session. The titles in brackets are the corresponding principles from the Pookeno Public Realm Concept Plan.

- 1. Welcoming (Community)**
  - The hub will welcome all people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and cultures (including language).
  - Everyone will be able to access the hub, and its services, with ease and dignity. (Universal access).
  - Autistic, deaf, new residents are just some of the different users that need to be considered.
- 2. Whaanau and community friendly**
  - The hub will be a place for whaanau and friends to gather connect and build lifelong memories.
  - A gathering space, a place that people say: "Let's grab an ice cream and meet at the hub."
  - Spaces and activities that connect the indoors with the outdoors.
- 3. Proudly Pookeno (Identity)**
  - The hub will celebrate Mana Whenua and the diverse identities within the local community and wider rural catchment, strengthening a sense of place and sharing local stories, histories and connecting.
- 4. Alive (Community)**
  - The hub will be a high-quality facility and space that encourages diverse and inclusive activities.

- The hub will be well connected to the rest of the town centre and the town.

### 5. Future proofed (Growth)

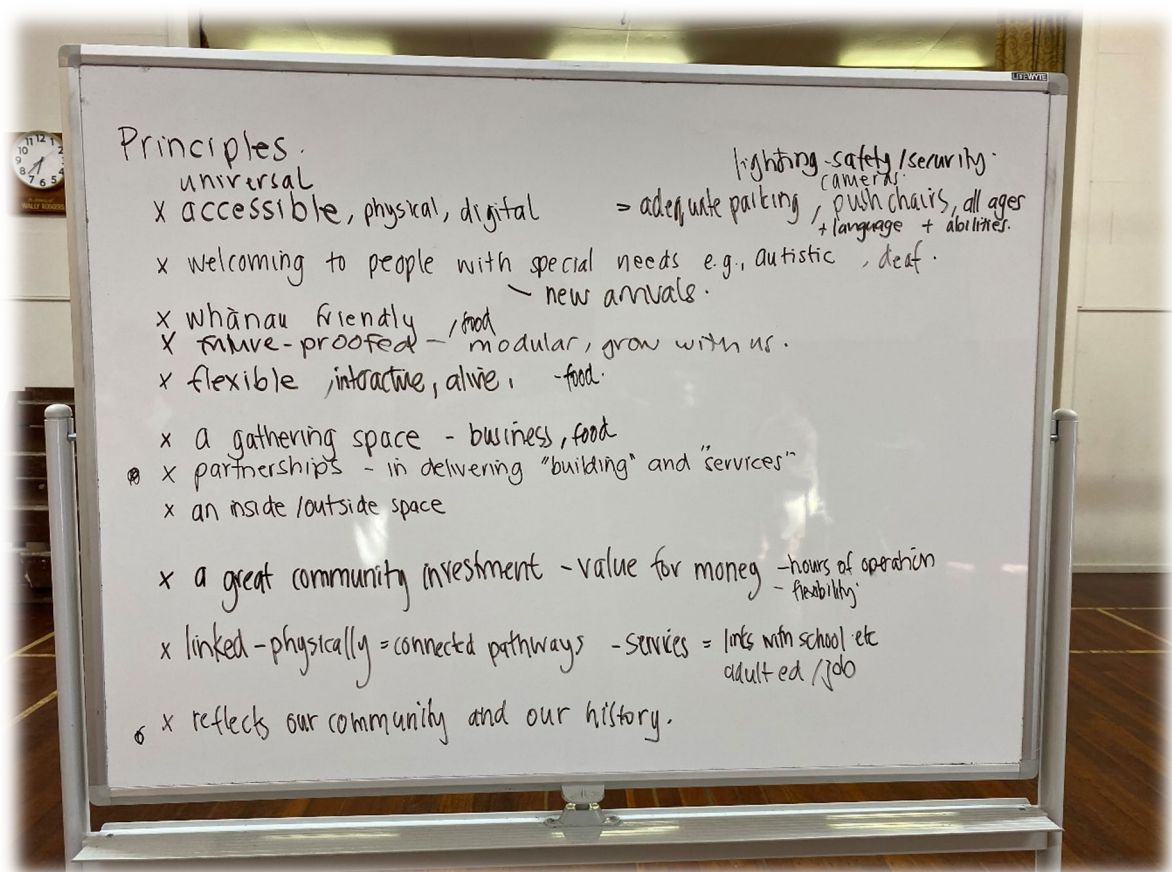
- The hub will serve the community now and be future proofed for future generations.
- It should be modular, able to grow with us.

### 6. Partnerships

- We will explore and be open to working in partnership with others to deliver the hub and to ensure the services in the hub meet the needs of the community.

### 7. A great community investment

- It will be flexible in design and operation to maximise use.
- Meet the needs of many e.g., school, elderly, workers (co-working spaces).



Project principles were identified from the kōrero and discussions

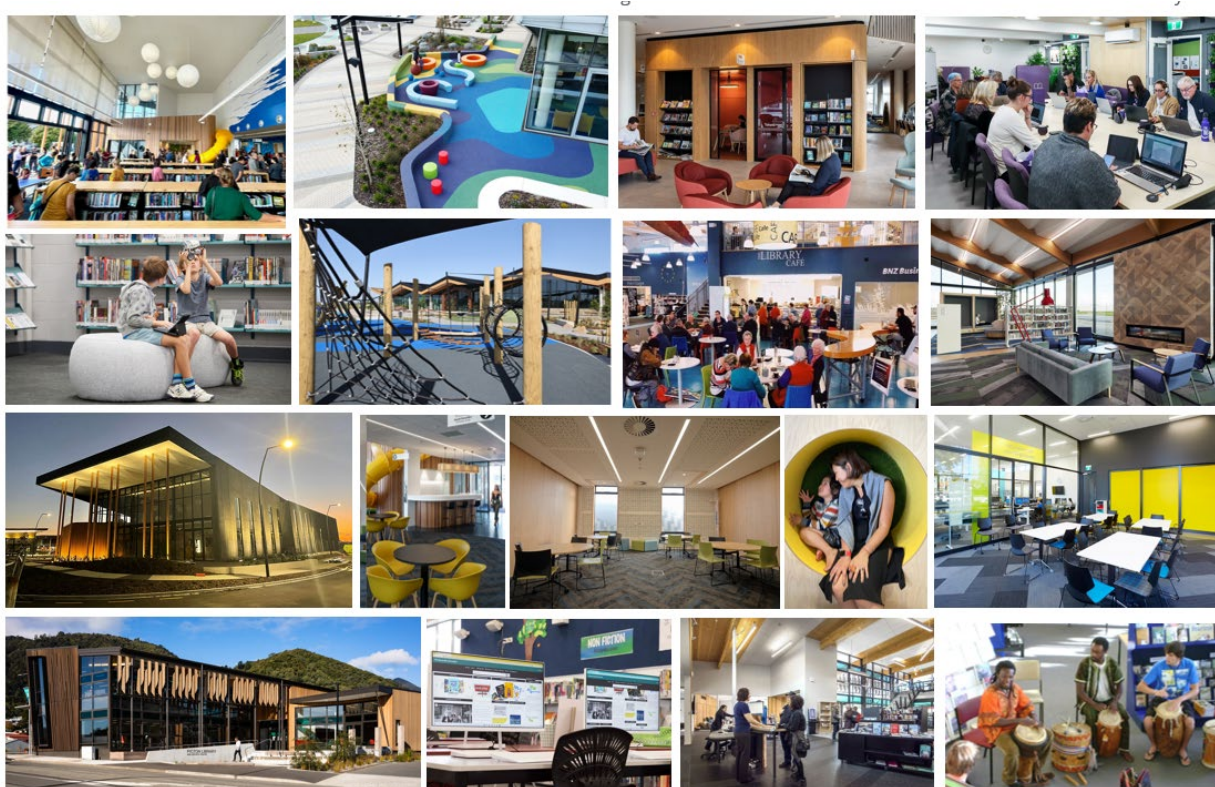
## Design the Library

The workshop groups were each provided with large pieces of paper, coloured markers and packs of curated 'area cards' to create a design of what they wanted for the library and community hub. The instruction was to design a library and community centre, considering a \$6.5million investment, focusing on which elements and spaces would achieve their vision for the library and community hub.

After about half an hour of working on these plans, one person from each group gave a short presentation of their design or concept plan, from which their ideas emerged alongside some consistent themes.

The 'area cards' were designed especially for this workshop activity and were based on data collected from our knowledge of modern libraries and community hubs and what elements might be needed/important for the Pookeno community. Some of the cards were blank, so that participants could add in any of their own ideas too.

A selection of images from various libraries and community hubs from around New Zealand were shared as a source of inspiration and a visual prompt of how libraries and community hubs have evolved.



*Libraries and community hubs play an important role and function in bringing people together and are often at the heart of the community*



Space	No. of mentions	Use	No. of mentions	Other considerations	No. of mentions
Library	****	Online and audio books	****	Rubbish, recycling	****
Quiet space	*	Language Classes	****	Loading bay	***
Equipment and Storage, Lockers	***	Computer and internet access	****	Security	****
Heritage/Museum space	**	Adult learning and craft programmes	****	Lighting	***
Outdoor space - Seating - Community garden - Park Space - Community BBQ and pizza oven - Play space - Outdoor theatre - Quiet space	**** *** *** *** *** * *	STEM classes	*	Emergency meeting area	***
Cafe	***	Plunket/childcare	***	Accessible	****
Parking	***	Council customer service	***	Collapsible/ partitions flexi-space	***
Private meeting room(s)	***	Emergency Management/Civil Defence	****	Accessibility lift	*
Staff room	****	Financial and Immigration services	****		
Parent and baby room	****	Exercise and yoga classes	**		
Public Toilets	****	Reception	***		
Community Lounge area	****	Community groups	***		

Council office space	****	Robotics	*		
Large multi-purpose space	****	Koha Shed	*		
Small multi-purpose space(s)	****	Information centre/kiosk	*		
Music, performance space	****	Teen Space and support	***		
Food truck and market space	**	Mindfulness sessions	*		
Kitchen, dining space	****	Space to meet with Elected Members	*		
Gallery, exhibition space	****	Special needs group and support	****		
Bike and scooter rack	***	Before and after school care	*		
Accessible bathrooms	***	Private events, birthdays, Diwali etc	*		
Toy and gaming space	**	Community cooking classes	***		
Theatre room	***	Māori unit, hui/meetings	*		
Breakout/Function Space	*				
Rental space to make money from	*				
Co-working spaces	*				
Space for pōwhiri, mihi whakatau	*				





Table 2

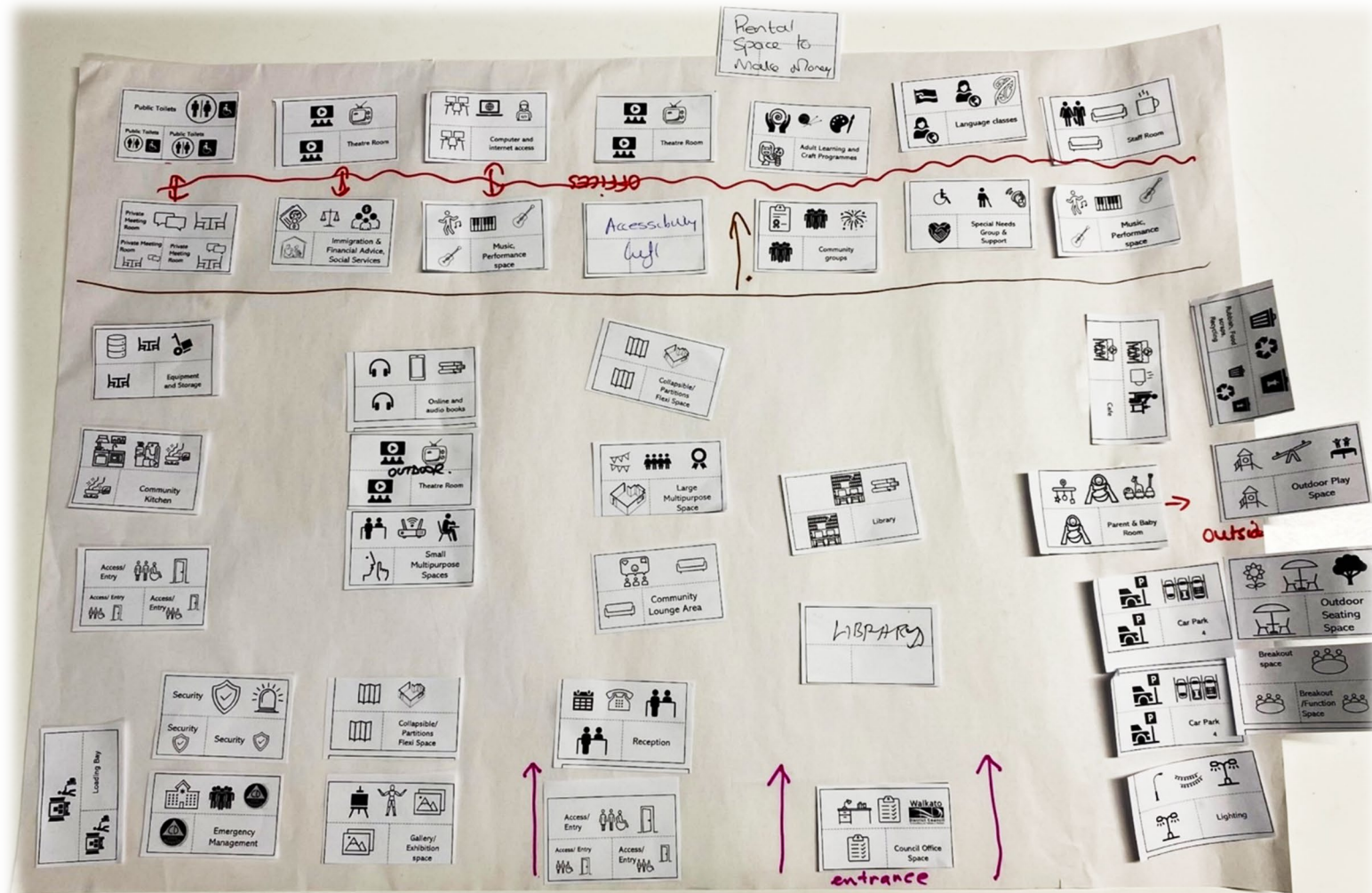


Table 3

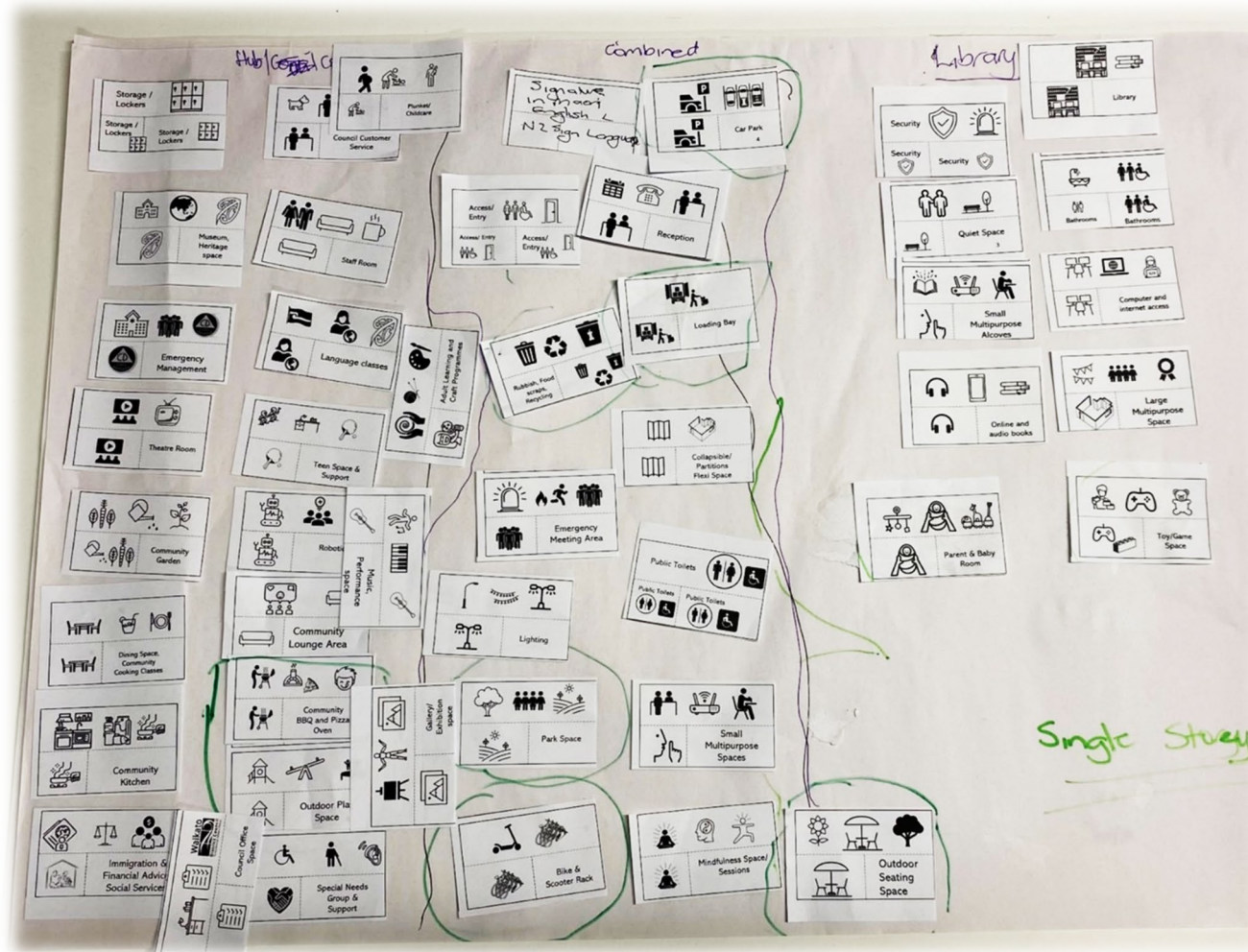
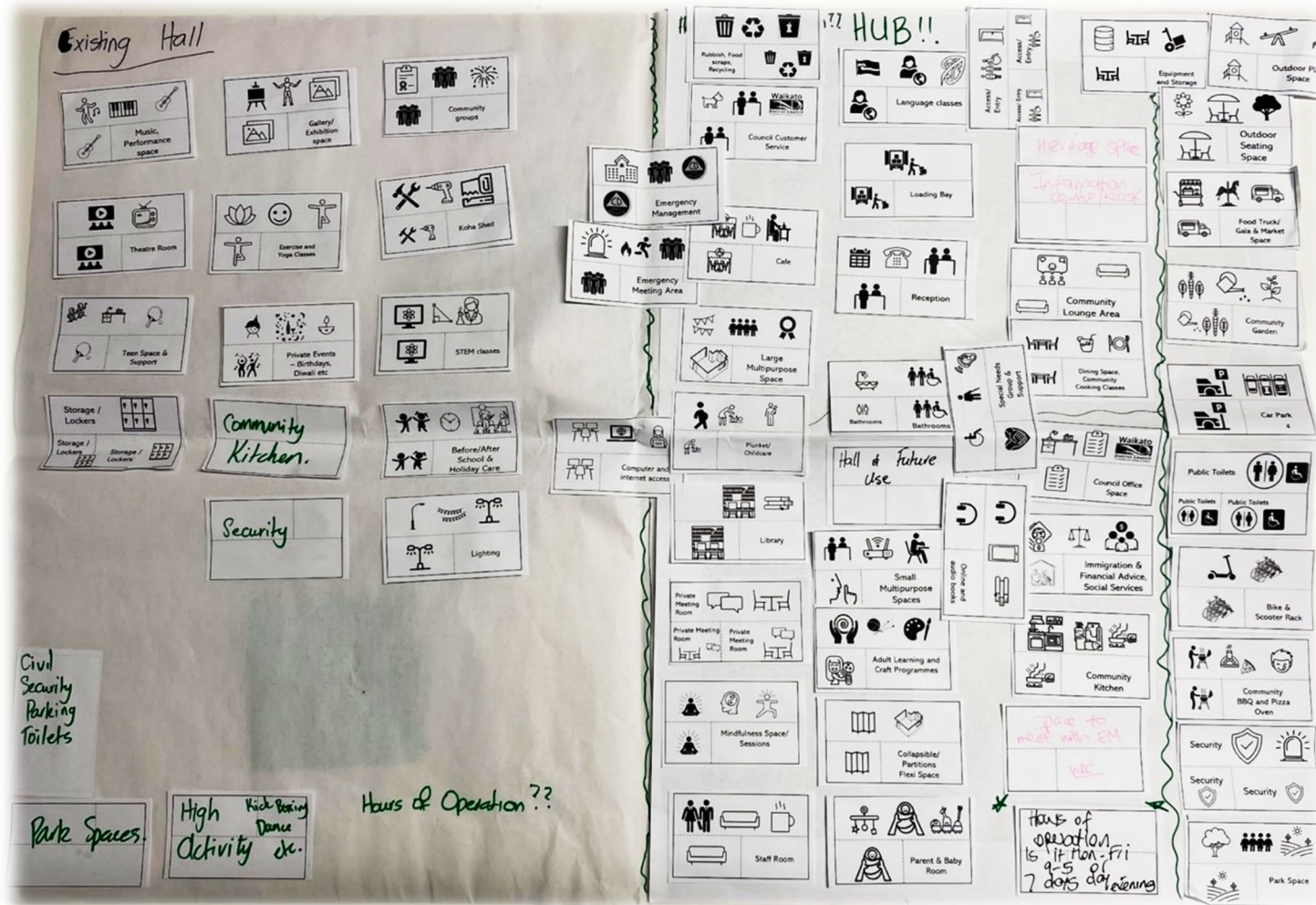




Table 4





## Next Steps

Participants in the co-design workshop #1 provided valuable material for the feasibility study. The next stages are to:

- Test the problem statements by gathering and analysing demographic, economic, social, and other data for the Pookeno area to 'proof' the problems
- Consolidate feedback from stakeholder meetings and co-design workshops and scope, location and focus of service to develop options (including costings)
- Test the outcomes of these processes in workshop #2 with participants to identify a preferred option and approach to delivery
- Seek feedback from the community on the preferred option
- Finalise the feasibility study to support investment, concept design and development.

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