



Pookeno Library and Community Hub

Youth Engagement 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.

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

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 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 the 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, Tuakau Youth Centre group - 26 February 2024

Workshop Two: Preferred Option discussion and closing the loop - March 2024 (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 Jay and Keegan from the Tuakau Youth Centre, Amanda, Sally and team at the Tuakau Library, and to the awesome kids, young people and whaanau from Tuakau Youth Centre for their ideas, enthusiasm and time.



Thank you to everyone for their time and willingness to share their ideas and enthusiasm

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

Tuakau Youth Centre group, Monday 26 February 2024

To ensure we hear from a younger demographic who are the library and community hub users of the future, we held a workshop with the Tuakau Youth Centre.

The Tuakau Youth Centre meet after school each Monday at the Tuakau Library between 3pm to 5pm. While the children and young people in the group live in/around Tuakau, they are potential future users of the Pookeno Library and Community Hub, and their interests and aspirations are likely to be similar to those of others their age in Pookeno or in fact, anywhere in the country.

There were around 12 children and rangatahi, ranging in age from primary school to secondary school age, along with three adults supporting the group.

The purpose of the workshop was to help 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 children and young people in the Pookeno/Tuakau community.

We followed a similar approach to the co-design workshop #1 but shortened it to focus on the things they like to do in the Tuakau Library (making it easier to draw on experiences they can relate to) and to also use their imagination as to what they would like to do in a new library and community hub.

The workshop was facilitated by Amanda Weatherley from Veros, with support from Michelle Brown from Waikato District Council.

Participants sat around a table, and as an icebreaker, introduced themselves, including age, school and given the discussion was about Pookeno, said what their favourite ice cream flavour was.



Favourite ice cream flavours ranged from the Kiwi-classic orange chocolate chip ice to peanut butter, mango sorbet and cookies and cream!

Experience and Service Mapping

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”.

We asked each of the participants what they liked doing in the Tuakau Library and what they would like to be able to do in a new Pookeno library and community hub. Here’s what they said (in no particular order):

What are the things you like to do in the Tuakau Library

Scavenger hunts (x5)	I like building houses with Lego and I like drawing.
Going on computers	Gaming day - on the computers
Using the computers	Playing outside
Computers (x2)	Reading (x2)
Lego	Board games (x3)
Shelter from the rain outside	Arts and Crafts (x3)
I like saying hello to people and I like playing video games	SKOOB*
Playing on the computers	

* SKOOB is for kids aged between 7 and 12-years-old who enjoy reading and hearing about the greatest new books, and love crafts, activities and games. Monthly from Huntly, Tuakau and Te Kauwhata libraries.



Using the computers, having scavenger hunts, playing board games and doing crafts were the favourite things the children and young people liked to do in the library

Next, they were asked to use their imagination as to what they would like to do in a new library and community hub. They did not disappoint! Here's what they would like:

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

Indoor slide	Comfortable resting space for the elderly
Deep ball pit	Tea and coffee facility
Using the computers	Quiet/calm sensory spaces
Computers	A big kid park
Some sort of individual seats and bean bags	I would like a cat
Kids room should have lots of bright colours. Just one or two would be boring and yuck.	Lots of natural light, with opportunity for disco lights/other lighting
Storage space	Home school space - come to library for social time
A second floor	Library
A little shop	Accessible space with a slide
Lots of light, big windows/window wall	Nap pods
Kitchenette in meeting rooms	Gaming room
Storage spaces for community	Community garden
Librarians	Two storey building
Fruit trees	Parents Room
Cabinets for storage	Dog area
Water fountain	Café (x2)
Parks (x2)	Space for Youth Centre
I want some computers	More computers
A petting zoo	Good books
We need a ball pit	Library café that's free
Sunshades and shelter	Soundproof reading room
Some swings outside	X-box
Fridge/kitchen for groups using the space	Covered shelter
Air conditioning	Covers at the doors
Pool	Cabinets for storage
Counters that kids can see over	



We asked the children and young people what they liked doing in the Tuakau Library and what they would like to be able to do in a new Pookeno library and community hub

Design the Library

Next, we asked them to get into small groups and design their dream library and community hub space.

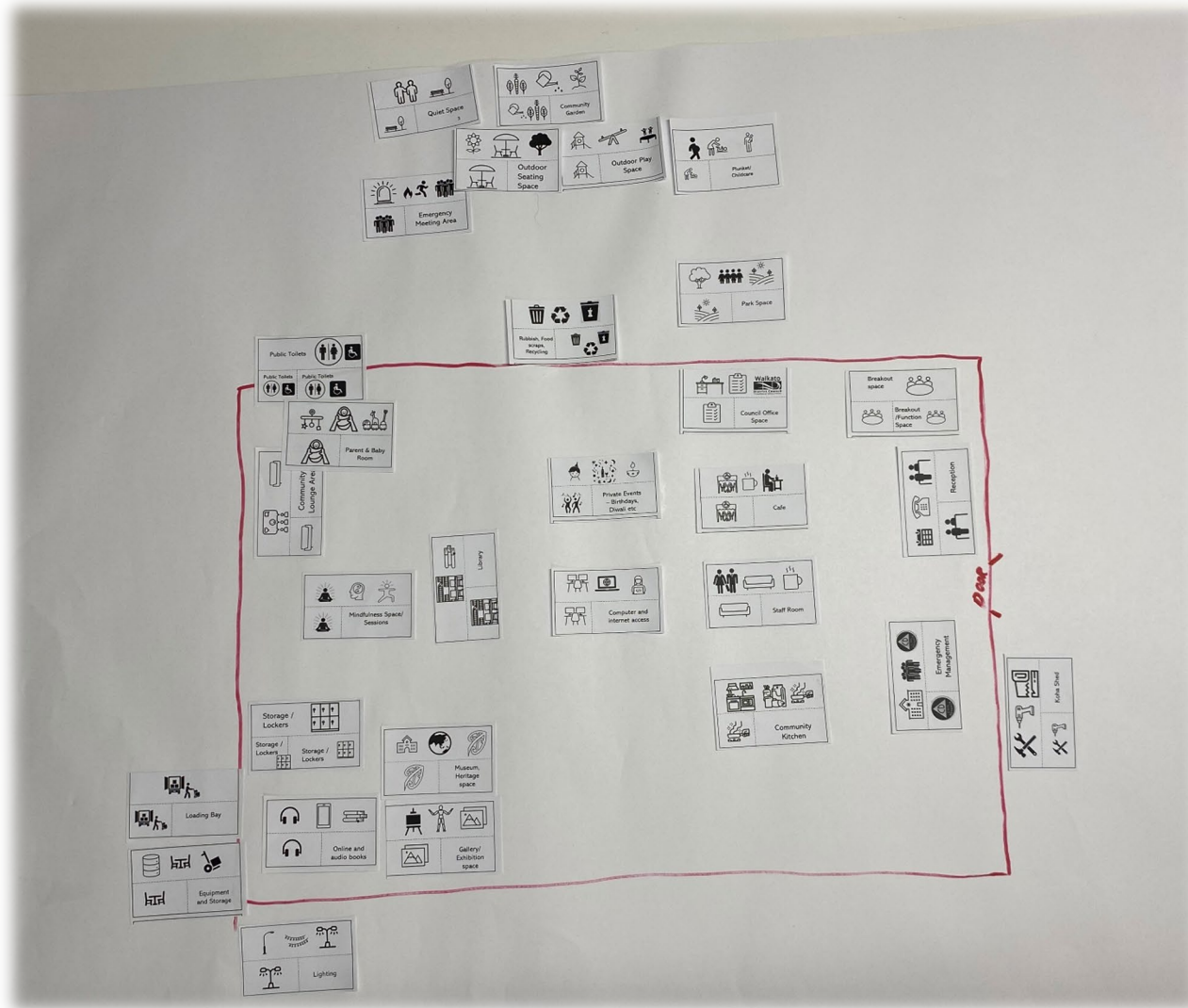
Each group was given large pieces of paper, coloured markers, packs of curated 'area cards' and a big box of Lego to create a design of what they wanted for the library and community hub. Some of the cards were blank, so that participants could add in any of their own ideas too.

They used the area cards that had been developed for the co-design workshop #1. They were also given the selection of images from various libraries and community hubs from around New Zealand as a source of inspiration and a visual prompt of how libraries and community hubs have evolved.

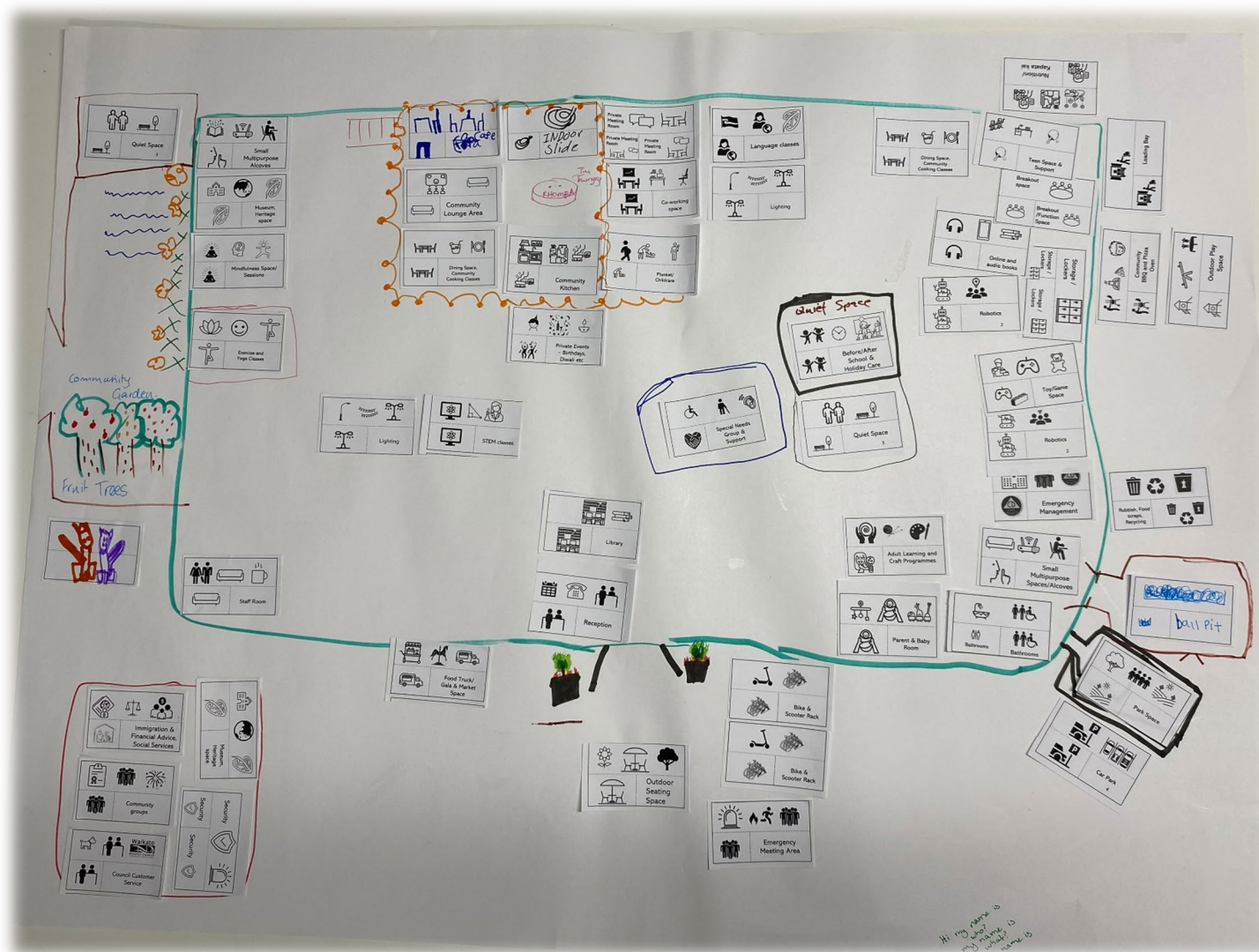


The kids used a combination paper, felt pens, 'area cards' and Lego to design what they wanted for the library and community hub.

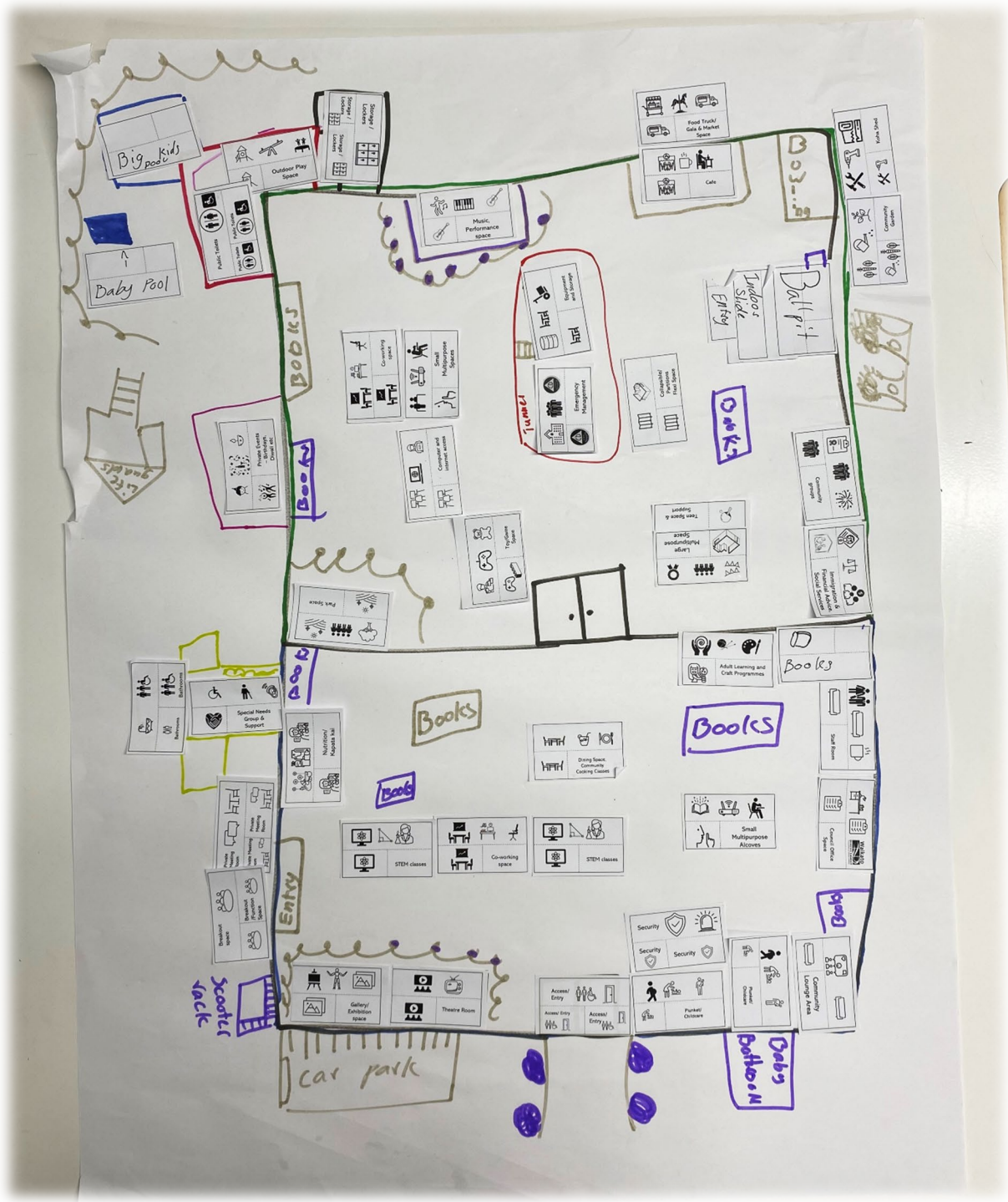
Design 1



Design 2



Design 3



Space	No. of mentions	Use	No. of mentions	Other considerations	No. of mentions
Library	**	Online and audio books	**	Rubbish, recycling	**
Quiet space (inside)	**	Language Classes	*	Loading bay	**
Equipment and Storage, Lockers	***	Computer and internet access	**	Security	**
Heritage/Museum space	**	Adult learning and craft programmes	**	Lighting	**
Outdoor space		STEM classes	**	Emergency meeting area	**
- Seating	**				
- Community garden	***				
- Park Space	***				
- Community BBQ and pizza oven	*				
- Play space	***				
- Outdoor theatre					
- Quiet space	*				
- Fruit trees	*				
Cafe	***	Plunket/childcare	****	Accessible	*
Parking	***	Council customer service	*	Collapsible/ partitions flexi-space	*
Private meeting room(s)	**	Emergency Management/Civil Defence	***		
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)	***	Teen Space and support	**		
Music, performance space	*	Mindfulness sessions	**		
Food truck and market space	**	Special needs group and support	**		
Kitchen, dining space	***	Before and after school care	*		
Gallery, exhibition space	**	Private events, birthdays, Diwali etc	***		
Bike and scooter rack	**	Community cooking classes	***		
Accessible bathrooms	**	Horses	*		
Toy and gaming space	**	Nutrition/Pataka Kai	**		
Theatre room	*	Books	***		
Breakout/Function Space	***	Bowling	*		
Indoor slide	**				
Co-working space	**				
Ball pit	**				
Pool - big kids and baby pool	*				

Next Steps

Participants in the youth engagement workshop provided valuable material for the feasibility study. This report will be shared with the Tuakau Youth Centre group and they will be kept updated throughout the project.

The next stages of the project 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 co-design 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.

Hamilton

25 Ward Street, Hamilton 3204

PO Box 112, Hamilton 3240

07 838 2887

Tauranga

78 Second Avenue, Tauranga 3110

PO Box 324, Tauranga 3144

07 579 9747

Rotorua

1072 Haupapa Street, Rotorua 3010

PO Box 1027, Rotorua 3040

veros.co.nz

info@veros.co.nz



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