

28 April 2016

New Johnsonville Library
Freepost
Wellington City Council
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Re: WCC New Johnsonville Library

This submission is from the Architectural Centre, an incorporated society dating from 1946, which represents both professionals and non-professionals interested in the promotion of good design.

The Architectural Centre has the following comments to make regarding the proposal for the New Johnsonville Library.

1. We support the new location for the library and see it potentially better able to contribute to the community life of Johnsonville. Despite this, the design does not appear to engage well with, and respond to, the wider context (e.g. to the railway station, the Keith Spry Pool and the supermarket). The “Link” needs to actively engage with the pool complex, and we suggest that the design of this side of the pool complex is brought into the project and dealt with properly. A traffic design is also needed to ensure a pedestrian-friendly link across Moorefield Rd and better integration of the library with the urban centre and railway station.
2. The building does not appear to have significantly advanced from the earlier massing diagrams in earlier consultations. It is potentially a mundane building, which does not appear meet any obligations of a public building with respect to design.
3. The building is sited amid a confluence of public transport routes and destinations (both train and bus), yet there is no attempt in the design to engage with public transport, or encourage public transport use by library patrons. There is no explicit provision for cycling (e.g. cycle parks), yet there is a substantive commitment to providing car parks. Carparks should be limited to the basement area only – there is ample parking in the shopping centre across the road if a good link is formed between the library and this area. Removing parking from the ground level will give better opportunities for a sunny open outdoor space, potentially related to the café.



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Sou Fujimoto "Musashino Art University Library" Tokyo

4. The exterior spaces seem poor and undernourished. In this era of free public wifi there is significant potential for the library to meaningfully and imaginatively extend beyond its physical boundaries. The pedestrian through route appears to be enclosed. Is this to be open 24 hours? We support the development of this space as an open link, and its design development to ensure that it remains a safe space after hours. This need, to provide safe after hours space, is equally true of the entrance portico.



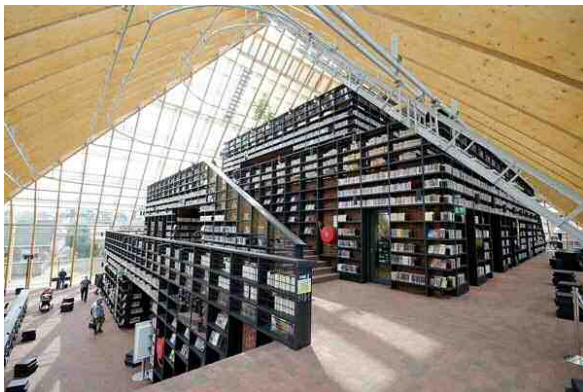
Clare Design "Library at The Docklands" Melbourne

5. The potential for the roof to positively contribute to sustainability is a completely missed opportunity. This is not a design which will lead the way regarding how a public building can positively show leadership regarding climate change mitigation. We strongly encourage the council to require water collection and a green roof, including a roof garden accessible to both library users and the kindergarden. Currently it is unclear who has access to this space and different images contradict regarding the extent of roof access.



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6. There is potential for a local library to be a creative hub connecting in with community art and other resources. We recommend community facilities (e.g. meeting room and exhibition space) be explicitly included in the design, including an ability for these to be accessed after hours. The performance spaces would appear to be good candidates for this, and could also partially be accommodated in the design of exterior spaces.



MDRDV "Book Mountain"

7. The building appears to be a glass house. This means it is likely to overheat requiring substantial cooling through active air-conditioning and ventilation systems in summer and additional heating in winter. This is not sustainable. More astute design will enable strategically placed transparency and better regulation of passive heating and cooling. We strongly suggest that the council request an energy-use audit, as the ratepayer could be left with high operating costs. This needs to be considered against a well-activated street and pedestrian route zone. We encourage better placement and use of glazing, and note the potential for the building structure to act as a screening device.

8. It is possible that funding will not be available for the kindergarten. Where are the drawings for this possibility? Will there be additional consultation if this significant change occurs?

9. There appears to be lack of study space in, for example, the Teens space. The CBD Wellington public library shows that many teenagers use the library as a study space, and there appears to be insufficient accommodation for study in this Johnsonville Library proposal.

10. The ramps on the lower ground to the Maker Space and on the upper ground adjacent to the Teens area appear to duplicate a flight of stairs. We suggest the stairs are removed and a wider, more generous ramp is built.

11. The lack of information (e.g. section drawings, exterior elevations) make it difficult to understand the detail of the design. In addition, in some parts of the axonometric plans, the design become hidden, making the plans difficult to read. We encourage the council to provide a better set of drawings for future consultation of this sort.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the New Johnsonville Library proposal. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



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