BUILDING AUDIT OF VICTORIAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Briefing by

BBC Consulting Planners

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Aims and Research Objectives

An audit of Victorian public library buildings to:

- Identify the current state of Victorian public library buildings.

- Provide a tool for library service managers to assess their building suitability to meet community needs.

- Provide a basis from which to work for improvements to Victorian public library buildings in terms of floorspace, capacity, safety regulations and service provision for the future.

Outcomes

- A Statewide report.

- Individual reports based on each Local Government Authority (LGA) in Victoria.

Study Approach

- Initial consultation workshop and literature review;

  - *People places: A Guide for Public Library Buildings in New South Wales* (2005).

- Development of draft survey themes.

- Pilot survey (five library services) – 4 to 11 May 2007.

- Final online survey - 28 May to 26 June 2007. Further extended to 1 August 2007.

- Data input (via Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS) and analysis.

- Reporting.

The Audit Tool

- A separate survey was completed for each LGA and for each library branch premises.

- **A final response rate of 94.9% of LGAs and 96.5% of branch libraries was achieved.**

- End-of-financial year impact on the survey - timing.

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Local Government Authority Survey

- The LGA survey was divided into four parts:

  - Part A. Assessment of Population Based Benchmark of Library Provision.
  - Part B. Assessment of Service Based Benchmark of Library Provision.
  - Part C. Audit of Administration Buildings.
  - Part D. Planning and Development.

- Some of the LGA level information was available from other sources, and was, therefore, not sought again.

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SURVEY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDINGS IN VICTORIA

State Library of Victoria — VICLINK Victorian public library and information network

Name of Library Service			
Name of Local Government Authority			
Name of Library Branch			

	Question	**Response**	**Explanatory Notes**
I.	Local Government Authority Information		Section I. of the survey is to be completed at the LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL (not at the Branch level). Survey responses will then be aggregated (if necessary) in order to provide data at the Library Service level.
A.	Assessment of Population Based Benchmark of Library Provision		This section is to be completed once per Local Government Authority
1	How many people live in the Local Government Authority?	Data provided from DVC Annual Survey	The population is the total number of people living within the Local Government Area. The source is the DVC Annual Survey latest Estimate Resident Population (ERP).
2a	What is the total library membership in the Local Government Authority?		
2b	How many of these members live in the Local Government Authority?		The number of library service members whose residential address is not within a Local Government Area covered by the Library Service.
3	If the number of 'non-resident members' is significant, please briefly state any reasons for this -	☐ Not considered significant	For example, proximity to shops, employment nodes, etc.
B.	Assessment of Service Based Benchmark of Library Provision		This section is to be completed once per Local Government Authority
4	Please give the total numbers for each of the following in your Library Service (over all branches) -		
a	Number of books on shelves	Data provided from Collections audit	
b	Number of periodicals (titles)	Data provided from Collections audit	This is the number of titles only.
c	Number of non-print items	Data provided from Collections audit	This includes for example tapes, CD's, CD-Roms, DVD's etc
d	Number of public computer terminals	Data provided from Collections audit	
e	Other (please specify _____)	Data provided from Collections audit	
5a	Please estimate the percentage (%) of books on loan at any one time	Data provided from Collections audit	
5b	Please estimate the percentage (%) of non-print materials on loan at any one time non-print materials	Data provided from Collections audit	

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Branch Library Survey

- The branch survey was divided into five parts:

  - Part A. Floor Space and Function.
  - Part B. Design of the Building.
  - Part C. Location of the Building.
  - Part D. Building Management and Maintenance.
  - Part E. Planning and Development.

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Data Analysis

- SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).
- Frequency, Mean, Median, Cross Tabulation, Correlation.

Q10*Q11		Gross Floor Area (sq m)						
Visits each week		<150	150 - 249	250 - 499	500 - 999	1,000 - 1,499	1,500 - 1,999	2,000+
Branches not completing question	Freq.	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
1 - 500	Freq.	29	18	8	0	0	0	0
	%	85.3%	40.9%	14.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
500 - 999	Freq.	4	15	13	1	0	0	0
	%	11.8%	34.1%	24.1%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Study Limitations

- Non-compulsory responses.

- Varying response rates for each question.

- Data entry errors.

- Limited specialist knowledge.

- Qualitative opinions.

Are Victorian libraries equipped to meet the challenges they face?

Research driven by these challenges, including:
- Social Trends such as:
  - Population and demographic mix changing more rapidly than ever before.
  - Information and Communications Technology (ICT) reconfiguring the nature of physical space, communications and movement.
  - Education moving out of the institutions to affect the whole of society.
  - Leisure, recreation and personal development increasingly fuse in a more individualistic culture.
- User needs have changed dramatically over the past decade, whereby local and larger public libraries are no longer a facility to solely borrow books or study.
- In response, libraries need to change physically, as well as changing the manner in which they operate.
- **Audit assesses if 'Fit for Purpose'.**

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The Fundamental Contribution of Public Libraries to our Communities

- Value of library buildings:
  - $522 million - approximately $104 per person.
  - The median value of library buildings is $1.5 million, with values spanning a wide range - two-thirds are worth over $1 million and 10% are valued at less than $250,000.

- Funding of Library Services:
  - $144,932,834 per annum, or $29 per capita.

- Capital expenditure:
  - $14,437,881 on 89 branches libraries in 2006/07.
  - Therefore up to $40 million per year.
  - The median value per branch was $10,500, and the average was $162,223.

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The Fundamental Contribution of Public Libraries to our Communities

- 24.5 million visits to public libraries in Victoria each year.

- 2.5 million registered borrowers (51.5% of the State).

- Nearly 50 million items lent each year (or approximately 19 per member).

- Over 2.5 million enquiries.

- On average, every day every Victorian public library will lend about 500 items, receive nearly 270 visits and respond to nearly 30 reference enquiries.

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The Fundamental Contribution of Public Libraries to our Communities

- Some libraries are 'working harder' than others. The number of people visiting libraries in Victoria ranged from 0.67 to 196.7 people per hour. The number of visitors per square metre of floor space ranged from 0.44 to 24.39.

- The number of visitors per week on average correlates strongly with the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of public libraries.

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The Fundamental Contribution of Public Libraries to our Communities

- Approx. 145,000 sq m of library floorspace in Victoria, in 247 branch buildings.

- The average size of a library is 595 sq m (median size of 400 sq m).

- Libraries are generally sized between 250 and 1,000 sq m (44%).

- Thirty-three branches (13.8%) are less than the 139 sq m GFA minimum size for a public library building recommended by *People places*. All but one of these branches is in rural or regional LGAs. This is related to the very high numbers of smaller libraries still serving rural areas.

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Functional Floorspace

- Audit confirms that the number of functions performed by the modern library, and consequently the number of spaces within it, is increasing.

- Most frequently this included:
    - Children's storytelling area (93.9% of branches).
    - Computer labs/Internet areas (78.6%).
    - Area for young adults (70.8%).
    - Office space (77.8%).
    - No other type of specialist space was provided by more than half of library branches.

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Functional Floorspace Areas

- Six broad types of core <u>functional areas</u> - collection areas, reading and study areas, resource areas, staff areas, amenities and storage areas, and additional service areas.
- Vast variation in the proportional space allocation of these functional areas, even in newer libraries.
- Median values

	Collection Areas	Reading and Study Areas	Resource Areas	Staff Areas	Amenities Areas
Median sq m	170	50	35	44	50
Distribution of GFA Mean	42.0%	18.2%	9.9%	14.7%	15.2%

- Some of the older (and particularly smaller) libraries have virtually all of their proportional functional floorspace dedicated to collection areas. Many older libraries have low proportions of floor space for staff areas compared to the Victorian average, and some have none.
- Newer libraries are better planned in terms of functional areas.

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Physical Condition of Library Buildings

- The majority of Victorian building stock is old, with just 12.7% constructed after the year 2000.
- The largest proportion was built in the period 1960-1979 (33.3%).
- 39.3% of Victorian library branches have not been refurbished since being built.
- 58.6% of all branches have undergone major refurbishment. Approximately two-thirds (63.9%) of these refurbishments took place in the past seven years.

Major works is defined as change to internal partitions, changing room shapes and sizes, changes to entry and exits. Major works <u>does not</u> include only undertaking painting or replacement of carpet.

If the building has received several minor works over the last 5 years, which if built together would constitute major works, please treat all works as the one refurbishment. Please indicate in the 'year' response column the number of years over which the works were undertaken.
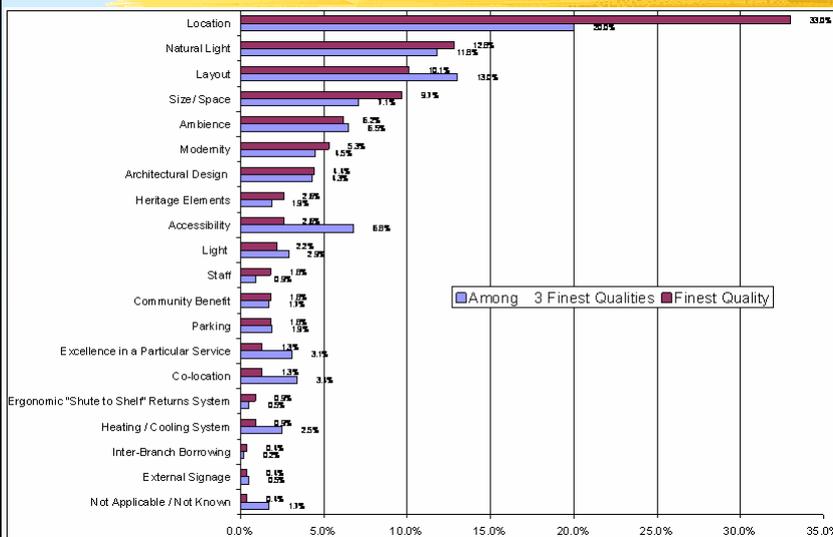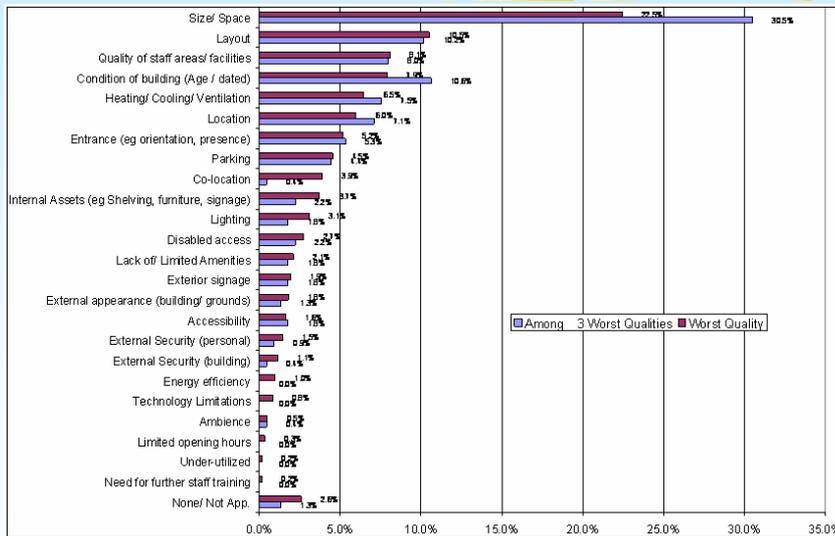
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Qualitative Perceptions
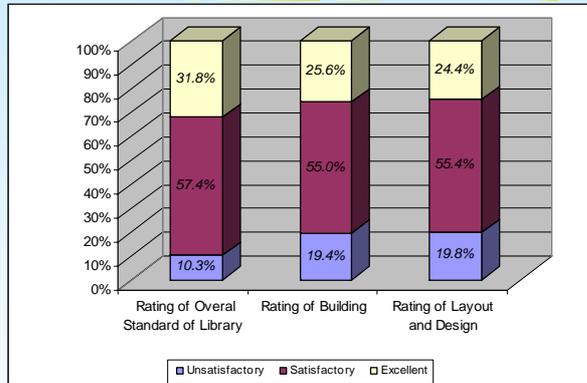
- A respondents' perception of the quality of the library building is a key factor in their perception of the overall standard of their library branch.

Important Features of a Library Building

- Location
- Natural light
- Internal layout
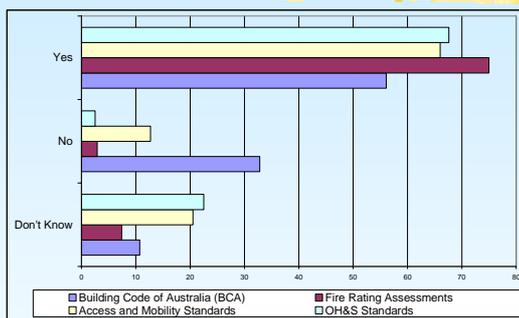- Adequate size/space
- Accessibility

Negative Features of a Library Building

- Inadequate size/space
- Poor internal layout
- Aged/poor building condition
- Quality of facilities

Compliance with Codes and Regulation

- There are quite a large number of libraries where compliance with fire rating, disability and OH&S is not known or not achieved.
- The purpose of the BCA audit does not always appear to be understood.
- Disabled accessibility in all respects is generally the exception rather than the rule.
- Older libraries, particularly those built pre-1940, are least likely to comply with codes and regulations; and newest libraries are most likely to comply with codes and regulations.
- Compliance with codes and regulations is generally higher among those LGAs with relatively high maintenance expenditure.

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Social Role of Library Buildings in their Communities

- Development of community hubs and learning centres concept in Victoria:
  - Joint use libraries are as uncommon in Victoria as they are in Australia generally (just 9.8% of branches).
  - Collocated libraries are much more common, comprising a significant proportion of libraries (52.3%).

- However, many collocated libraries could not be described as 'hubs'.

- Collocation of newer libraries is very common, and this trend is appearing in new library buildings.

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Where are Libraries Located?

- Libraries in traditional main street locations often have inadequate parking, and good accessibility to community foci and facilities could be considered a trade off against this. Approximately one-quarter (27.9%) indicated that the current provision of car parking available near the library was inadequate.

- The proportion of libraries located within close proximity to public transport (61.1% within 400m), while still significant, was notably less than those libraries accessible by car. Libraries are significantly more likely to be located near a bus stop than a train station.

- Libraries are generally located on the ground floor with street frontage (94.3%).

- Newer libraries are better planned in terms of accessibility of location.

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Where are Libraries Located?

- The connection between local government and public libraries clearly translates into locational choice.

- Surprisingly, Audit returns do not clearly support the growing trend identified in literature of public libraries in both Australia and overseas locating in shopping centres.

- Accessibility to schools is lower than expected, with just less than half being located within walking distance (400 metres) of a school.

- Libraries collocating with schools appear to be less accessible to traditional foci such as main streets and shopping precincts.

- Almost all libraries (95%) are located within walking distance of car parking (86.5% being adjacent). This car parking was provided free of charge at almost all libraries (96.3%).

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Asset Management

- With rare exception, there is substantial ongoing effort and expenditure being put into maintenance and upgrading of the standard and provision of libraries to communities.

- At least $5.7 million is spent each year (on average) on maintaining public library buildings in Victoria.

- On average, approximately $27,232 is spent on the maintenance of each public library branch. On average, $43.50 is spent on maintenance per sq m of library floor space. Some older libraries (even those built in the 1980s) are incurring high maintenance costs.

- Approximately half (55.7%) of libraries have some form of asset management plan for their building.

- Building condition surveys are undertaken for almost four-fifths (79.1%) of branches.

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Asset Management

- Vast variation in the cost of utilities.

- On average, libraries spend about $4,600 on electricity, $1,100 on gas, and $500 on water (approximately $5,500 per quarter in total).

- Utilities expenditure is correlated with floor space, and on average $8 per sq m on utilities.

- Most libraries (75%) have not completed or do not know if an energy audit has occurred – potential for savings.

Planning and Development

- Local government across Australia is endeavouring to replace and rebuild libraries to respond to their new role

- Victoria reflects this global trend:
  - 19 new branch libraries are planned.
  - 25 existing libraries are to be completely replaced (either at the same site or a new site).
  - 27 branch libraries are to be refurbished.

- *Living Libraries* funding is encouraging and supporting this development.

Planning and Development

- The ongoing development of public libraries in Victoria is constrained by available funding, infrastructure backlogs, and competition between public libraries and a plethora of other local services which require funding.
- Planned expenditure on capital building of nearly $46 million over the next five years; and expenditure on internal assets of approximately $5.7million.
- The average capital building budget approximately $1.53 million; and the internal works $249,000 – ranged from $7.5 million to $15,000 in the case of capital building works and $1.75 million to $10,000 in the case of internal assets.

- The average cost of library refurbishment was approximately $520,000. However, this average is skewed by a number of large refurbishments. More than half (55.5%) of library branches whose buildings had been refurbished indicated that the total cost of refurbishments was <u>less</u> than $500,000.

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Are there 'enough' Public Libraries in Victoria?

- Comparison to *People places* and other benchmarks as basis of assessment

- Accuracy of *People places* benchmarks broadly confirmed by Audit

- *People places* provides two methodologies used to set the parameters for determining the need for and resultant size of a library building.

    1. Service-based benchmark

    2. Population-based benchmark

- Used together to provide a range of sizes

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Service-based Benchmark

- Indicates the required size of the library based on the future collection size of the library and the type and range of services and core functions that the proposed library building will incorporate.

- Formula:
  GFA = Target Collection Factor (TCF) x Relative Area Factor (RAF)

Service-based Benchmark – Relative Area Factor

- The relative area dedicated to each of the core functional areas (i.e. collection, reading, etc.) is integral to determining the required size of a library based on the service-based benchmark approach.

- *People places* provides a functional area comparison table which can act as a size guide for public libraries to determine the relative allocation of floor space between the core functional areas. This is referred to in *People places* as the Relative Area Factor (RAF).

Service-based Benchmark – Relative Area Factor

Functional Area	*People places* Guide (%)	Average floor space by functional area, Victorian public libraries (sq m)	Current proportional distribution, Victorian public libraries (%)
Collection Areas	Base Area 100%	239	100%
Reading and Study Areas	30%	103	43%
Resource Areas	15%	56	23%
Staff Areas	35%	84	35%
Amenities	20%	86	36%
Total (Core Relative Area Factor)	**200%**	**568**	**237%**

- The most significant observation arising from the table is that other functional areas are over represented relative to the area of collection areas (or conversely, it could be said that collection areas are under represented relative to other types of functional areas).

Service-based Benchmark – Target Collection Factor

	Space Standard	Number of Items in Victoria	% on Loan	Items on Shelf	Size (sq m) indicated by standard
Books on shelves (number of volumes)	100 books per 1 sq m	7,451,709	24.25	5,644,670	56,447
'Other' Items (eg. Local History, Reference Books)	100 books per 1 sq m	428,769	24.25	324,793	3,248
Periodicals (number of titles) *	10 titles per 1 sq m	122,225	0	122,225	12,223
Non-print material (tapes, CD's videos, CD-ROM's, DVD's etc)	100 recordings per 1 sq m	675,134	46.36	362,142	3,621
Virtual and digital resources (number of public terminals)	1 terminal to 5 sq m	2,694	0	2,694	13,470
Total Target Collection Factor (TCF)					89,009

- The size of collection areas in Victoria is substantially smaller (72.3%) than what is provided for by the space standard for collections in *People places*.

Population-based Benchmark

- Indicates the required size of the library based on the size of population who use/ access a library.

- Formula:
  GFA = (Local Area Factor + Central Area Factor) x 1.2

Population-based Benchmark

- **Building Area Factor** standard the basis of population benchmark.

Projected Population Served	Floorspace per 1,000 population
Less than 10,000	42 sq m
10,001–20,000	42 sq m
20,001–35,000	39 sq m
35,001–65,000	35 sq m
65,001–100,000	31 sq m
More than 100,000	28 sq m

Population-based Benchmark - Building Area Factor

Size of LGA	Average Provision
Less than 20,000 people	✓
20,001–35,000 people	✓
35,001–65,000 people	✗
65,001–100,000 people	✓
100,000 + people	✗

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Are there 'enough' Public Libraries in Victoria?

- The current level of floorspace provision in Victoria is less than adequate.

- Nearly half of library services do not meet the *People places* suggested minimum standard of provision of floorspace.

- Overall, the current provision of floorspace in Victoria is 28 sq m per 1,000 people.

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Recommendations

- *People places* be adopted for use in Victoria, namely:

    - Less than 20,000, provide 42 sq m per 1,000 population.
    - Between 20,001–35,000, provide 39 sq m per 1,000 population.
    - Between 35,001–65,000, provide 35 sq m per 1,000 population.
    - Between 65,001–100,000, provide 31 sq m per 1,000 population.
    - More than 100,000, provide 28 sq m per 1,000 population.

- These standards should form the starting point for determining what need might be present in a community. They must be informed by other factors about local need.
- A State benchmark of 30 sq m per 1,000 population be adopted as a target.
- A rural and a metropolitan benchmark may also prove appropriate.

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Recommendations

- This will involve the provision of an additional 19,039 sq m to 24,184 sq m of gross floorspace across Victoria.

- Planned new buildings and extensions (as recorded by the survey) will achieve this standard across Victoria.

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Individual LGA Reports

- To provide library service and branch level data as well as benchmarking.

- To allow public libraries to compare their buildings.

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Whitehorse City Council

	Victoria	Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation	Whitehorse City Council
Overview			
Total population (of LGA's participating) [1] (Mean = 67,224 people)	5,041,839	266,935	151,233
Membership as a proportion of total population (%) [2]	53.0%	45.51%	48.20%
Non resident membership (%)	26.99	18.4	21.7
Reasons the Number of Non-resident members is considered significant		Proximity to Shopping[COMMA] business and TAFE	Proximity to Shopping[COMMA] business and TAFE
Visitors (total number per week) (Average per branch = 2,211)	532,841	28,511	15,486
Visits per capita	0.11	0.11	0.10
No. of Libraries per 10,000 people	0.48	0.30	0.30
Area (km²) [Av. for State = 2,868km2]	230,545.9	177.0	64.0
m² of Library Floorspace per 1,000 Population	28,216	22.451	27.725
Planning			
Number of new buildings planned over the next 4 Years [2]	22	1	0
Proposed additional Floorspace	29,971	600	0
Proposed budget (total $)	$118,085,099	$4,300,000	$0

[1] The population of participating LGA's has been utilised to accurately reflect the results of ratio calculations. The actual ERP of Victoria was 5,128,310.
[2] This does not include any planned rebuilding of existing branches

	Victoria	Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation	Whitehorse City Council	Blackburn	Box Hill	Nunawading	Vermont South
Capital Expenditure							
Total Library capital expenditure FY 2006/07 ($) [1]	14,437,881	$566,000	$205,000		$35,000	$30,000	$140,000
Library capital expenditure as % of Total LGA-wide budget 2006/07 [2] (Average = $162,223)		2.56%	0.7885%		0.1346%	0.1154%	0.5365%
Total Library capital expenditure FY 2007/08 ($) [1] (Average = $213,094)	23,792,150	$70,000	$70,000		$60,000		$10,000
Library capital expenditure as % of Total LGA-wide budget 2007/08 [2]		0.14%	0.2692%		0.2308%		0.0385%
Expenditure on Library's per 1,000 people 2006/07 ($) [2]		$2,495	$1,356				
Planned LGA Expenditure over next 3 years ($) 2007/08 - 2009/10 [1] (Average = $13,973,755)	1,732,745,625	$153,000,000	$68,000,000				
Planned LGA Expenditure 2007/08 - 2009/10 per 1,000 people ($) [2]		$573,173	$449,637				

[1] Not all Libraries provided data (eg 36.8% responded to Question 40).
[2] Reliable data is unavailable at the State level as not all LGA's provided data, and those that did may not have provided branch expenditure with which to allow comparisons to be drawn.

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	Victoria	Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation	Whitehorse City Council	Blackburn	Box Hill	Nunawading	Vermont South
Value							
Total Value of buildings ($)	416,929,078	$16,413,000	$15,780,000	$1,250,000	$7,210,000	$4,390,000	$2,930,000
Number of branches providing data:	169 of 242	5 of 8	4 of 4				
Average value of buildings ($)	$2,467,036	$3,282,600	$3,945,000				
Total Value per 1,000 people [1]	$82,694	$61,487	$104,342				
Floor Area							
Total (m2)	142,259	5,993	4,193	430	1,503	1,400	860
Average (m2)	597.73	749.13	1,048.25				
No. visitors per m2	3.75	4.76	3.69				
Functional Areas[4]							
Collection areas (% total GFA)	37.96%	33.92%	28.4%	60.2%	17.2%	28.3%	23.8%
Reading and Study areas (% total GFA)	16.21%	18.82%	21.7%	1.6%	37.7%	8.6%	25.2%
Resource areas (% total GFA)	8.88%	8.66%	9.0%	9.3%	12.8%	5.4%	8.3%
Staff areas (% total GFA)	12.91%	15.17%	17.6%	24.0%	12.8%	17.1%	23.4%
Amenities areas (% total GFA)	12.84%	18.19%	20.5%	4.9%	14.9%	29.4%	23.4%
Other areas (% total GFA)	6.28%	8.3%	11.9%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Total [2]	95.08%	103.10%	109.06%	100.0%	128.6%	88.9%	104.1%
Condition of Buildings							
Age of Building [3]				1960-1979	1960-1979	1960-1979	1990-2000
Year of last refurbishment				1,998	2,002	1,990	No Refurbishment
Are major refurbishments required:	60 of 242	3 of 8	3 of 4	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Branches with refurbishment planned	51 of 242	3 of 8	2 of 4	Refurbishment of Existing Branch	No	Refurbishment of Existing Branch	No

[1.] Based on entire population. Accordingly, data ommissions effect this value.

[2.] Total GFA does not equal 100% due to ommissions/ errors in data entry by some branch libraries

[3.] Age of building does not reflect the length of time a building has operated as a library

[4.] Data may be subject to error

How are the Branch Library Buildings rated?

Rating of Overal Standard of Library
* NB: This information reflects the subjective opinion of the respondent

Rating of Building
* NB: This information reflects the subjective opinion of the respondent

Rating:	Blackburn	Box Hill	Nunawading	Vermont South
Overall	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Building	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Excellent
Layout and Design	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory

* NB: This information reflects the subjective opinion of the respondent

How does the Library Service Compare (Benchmarking)?

	Whitehorse City Council	Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation	Comparative Data:	Victorian Median for - LGA's	Library Services
Current Level of Provision	4,193	5,993			
Service-based Benchmark Target	n/a	1,923		n/a	3,094
Population-based Benchmark Target	6,375	11,091		2,752	4,641
M^2 per 1,000 people	28	22		28	

NB: The data on which this is based was collected at the Library Service level and sourced from the Strategic Asset Audit report (2006). Some data has been updated as part of the 2007 Building Audit. Some data is not available at the LGA level.