

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee**Agenda item 6.2****North Melbourne Community Centre (NMCC) Redevelopment – Draft concept design and community engagement (Major Initiative 42)****10 September 2024****Presenter:** Anthony Neal, Director Recreation and Waterways**Author:** D'Arcy Butler, Project Lead, North Melbourne Community Centre Redevelopment**Purpose and background**

1. To seek Council endorsement of the draft concept design (refer Attachment 2) for the North Melbourne Community Hub (the Community Hub) to proceed to community engagement.
2. The North Melbourne Community Centre (NMCC) redevelopment is included in the Council Plan as Major Initiative 42. On 27 June 2023, Council selected 91-115 Melrose Street, with frontage to Sutton Street, as the site for the community hub. Council resolved on 30 April 2024 to use half of the site for the community hub, retaining the remainder for another future Council use.
3. The new Community Hub will be located within the Macaulay urban renewal area. The Macaulay Structure Plan 2021 (MSP) recognised that a community centre of 3000 m² would be required to support current use and significant population growth and form part of a broader community infrastructure network identified in the planning of the Arden and Macaulay urban renewal precincts.
4. This site is occupied by Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre (JMNC) and the out-of-service Hotham Hub Children's Centre. The site is situated approximately 200m from the current NMCC at Buncle Reserve. These existing centres are heavily utilised and are in declining condition or no longer fit for purpose. The new Community Hub will combine the existing services footprint (currently 1500 m²) including Ageing and Inclusion, Youth and Family Services in a new 3000 m² building. Recreation services at NMCC will remain at Buncle Reserve, both during and after construction of the new community hub.
5. Community engagement was conducted in October 2023 to understand what mix of community services, spaces and features the community would like to see at the new community centre in North Melbourne. The top three priorities from this engagement were:
 - 5.1. Parks, outdoor open and green spaces
 - 5.2. Building design responds to community needs, sustainability, and cultural safety.
 - 5.3. Community hubs with multiple services that bring community together.

Key issues

6. Informed by community priorities, a growing population and site opportunities, the draft concept design for the Community Hub (refer Attachment 2) is a five-storey building that seeks to improve community connection by providing intergenerational services (Family Services, Youth Services and Ageing and Inclusion Services) in a single location.
7. The proposed 3000 m² Community Hub includes: co-located intergenerational services; green open space; non-programmed drop-in spaces; accessible toilets with considerations for different abilities; gender and culturally specific features; a rooftop terrace and garden; prayer and reflection rooms; and a commercial kitchen.
8. Situated on the north-west corner of the site, the design of the building will promote movement through the site and provide better connections between Melrose Street and Buncle Reserve. In total, approximately 50 percent of the site is proposed to be utilised, with the southern half of the site to be retained for future council development. The proposed draft design allows for the interim retention of the popular and well-used JMNC main hall with minor modifications for a new public entry from the south, while the new hub is being constructed.

9. The Community Engagement Plan (refer Attachment 2) seeks to facilitate broad community and stakeholder input into the draft concept design, to ensure final design decisions reflect community and stakeholder needs and preferences. There will be a specific focus on engaging sections of the community who have not been strongly represented in previous rounds of engagement on this topic.
10. A community reference group has been established and will continue operating throughout the design and construction of the Community Hub. The group will help to maintain effective two-way communication between the project team and the community, to amplify community awareness and buy-in.
11. To manage community expectations on the design outcomes and construction timelines, engagement materials will specify that the draft concept design is a draft-only, intended to provide a base for public consideration and discussion of what is possible on the site. Engagement materials will emphasise that the final detailed designs will be developed after this round of engagement, in response to community input and collaboration.
12. While the recreation offering on Buncle Reserve is not included in the scope for the Community Hub, a discussion paper on the future of Buncle Street Reserve and local infrastructure needs will be prepared, in acknowledgment of the strong degree of community interest in seeing improvements to the recreation offering.

Recommendation from management

13. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 13.1. Approves the North Melbourne Community Hub draft concept design proceeding to community engagement from Monday 28 October 2024.
 - 13.2. Authorises the General Manager Community and City Services to make any further minor editorial changes to the community engagement materials prior to publication.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (page 3 of 24)
2. North Melbourne Community Hub (page 4 of 24)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. There are no known legal implications for the recommendation in this report.

Finance

2. Approximately \$31 million was allocated as a provisional budget in the Council Plan 2021–2025. This allocation was intended to provide funding to progress the project, with further funding to be allocated in future years as required for completion.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. In developing this proposal, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified.

Stakeholder consultation

5. Community engagement was conducted in October 2023 to understand what mix of community services, spaces and features the community would like to see at the new community centre in North Melbourne.
6. The Community Engagement Plan for consultation on the draft concept design is included at Attachment 2.

Relation to Council policy

7. The recommendations in this report are consistent with the Macaulay Structure Plan 2021.

Environmental sustainability

8. In developing this proposal, environmental sustainability issues and opportunities have been considered as a fundamental part of the draft concept design work completed. These considerations will continue to be integral to the ongoing work of the project and considered vital to the overall success of the new community hub.

North Melbourne Community Hub (NMCH)



1. Background and strategic context

Major Initiative 42: Commence construction on a replacement NMCC precinct for the Melrose community and growing Macaulay population

- Sept 2024 FMC – present draft concept design and seek approval to commence community engagement
- Nov 2024 Briefing Paper – present insights from community on draft concept design
- Mar 2025 Forum – present draft concept design and cost plan
- April/May FMC - present draft concept design and cost plan to progress to detailed design
- Jun 2025 – Present a discussion paper on the future of Buncle Street Reserve and local infrastructure needs.

Macaulay Structure Plan 2021 recommendations

- A new community hub of 3,000 sqm to address population growth and ageing and oversubscribed community assets.
- An intergenerational hub bringing together service teams relevant to different age groups.
- 3,000 sqm would not be immediately required and other uses could be included in the interim

Project scope

- A shared home for Youth, Ageing & Inclusion and Family Services with connections to nearby Buncle Street Reserve.
- Provide 3,000 sqm as the necessary space to meet expected future needs of the Macaulay population.
- 50 per cent of Melrose site to be used for the community hub build with 50 per cent reserved for future use.
- Excludes sports and recreation facilities that will continue to be provided at Buncle Street Reserve

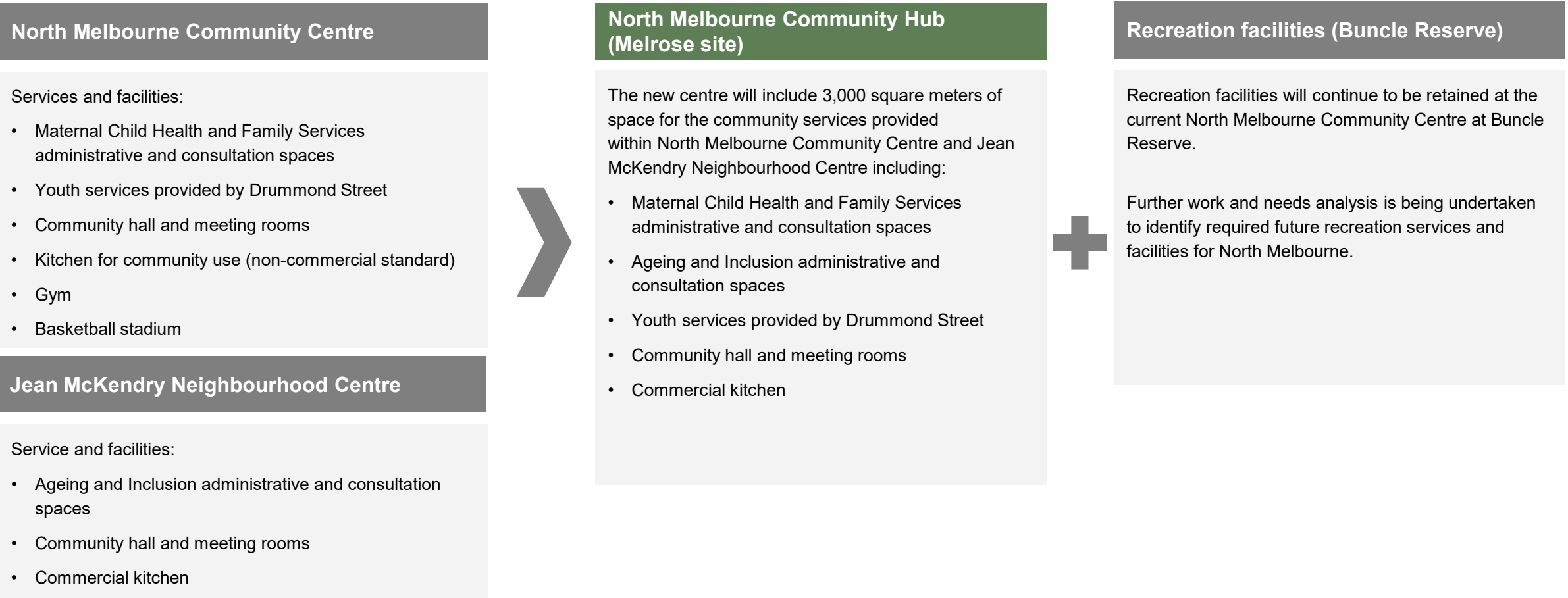


Current and future community service and recreation provision

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Current community services and recreation facilities at NMCC and JMNC.

Future planned NMCH services included in the scope of the NMCC redevelopment and facilities alongside the future provisional recreation needs.



Previous engagement - 2023 community engagement approach

The primary objective of this engagement was to understand what mix of community services, spaces and features the community would like to see at the new community centre in North Melbourne.

Engagement activities included:

- **2,504** Participate Melbourne webpage views and **327** survey completions
- **Three** community workshops
- **30** local pop-ups reaching **826** community members, including those unlikely to participate in online engagement opportunities

Of those engaged, the following demographic groups were strongly represented:

- Residents of North Melbourne (**72%**)
- Females (**64%**)
- People who speak a language other than English (**44%**)

The **top three priorities** selected by community were:

1 – Green open space

- Outdoor areas that can be used for relaxation, leisure, cultural gatherings and festivals, particularly for residents living in apartments
- Green open space to encourage a feeling of openness, relaxation and wellness
- Spaces for people to spend time casually indoors and outdoors (potentially including a community garden, BBQ for community use)

"Open green space and gardens is important because North Melbourne is a built-up area and we need every precious garden and green space we can get. They are very well used."

2 – Design responsive to community needs, sustainability and cultural safety

- A place where anybody is welcome, regardless of their ethnicity, social background or any other characteristic
- An inclusive and welcoming atmosphere where people come together to learn, grow and connect with each other
- Culturally safe spaces
- Facilities and services designed for people who do not play sport

"The North Melbourne community has many different cultural backgrounds. The need for affordable meeting rooms and places to learn are of vital importance. It's also important that these people have places to pray and feel safe."

3 – Multiple services that bring community together

- Space to host events that celebrate diversity and bring the community together
- Women and children focussed activity and service provision (e.g. secure child play/programmed areas, school holiday activities and a toy library)
- Features such as a cafe, commercial and community use kitchen
- Friendly staff with local connections and weekend and evening activities

"[North Melbourne is currently] lacking spaces to relax or meet friends and to feel safe and welcome"

2. Draft concept design

A draft project vision has been developed by the service teams who will work at the NMCH. The vision will be reshaped and strengthened by the community reference group and through community engagement.

NMCH will be a welcoming place for community to celebrate culture and foster connection.

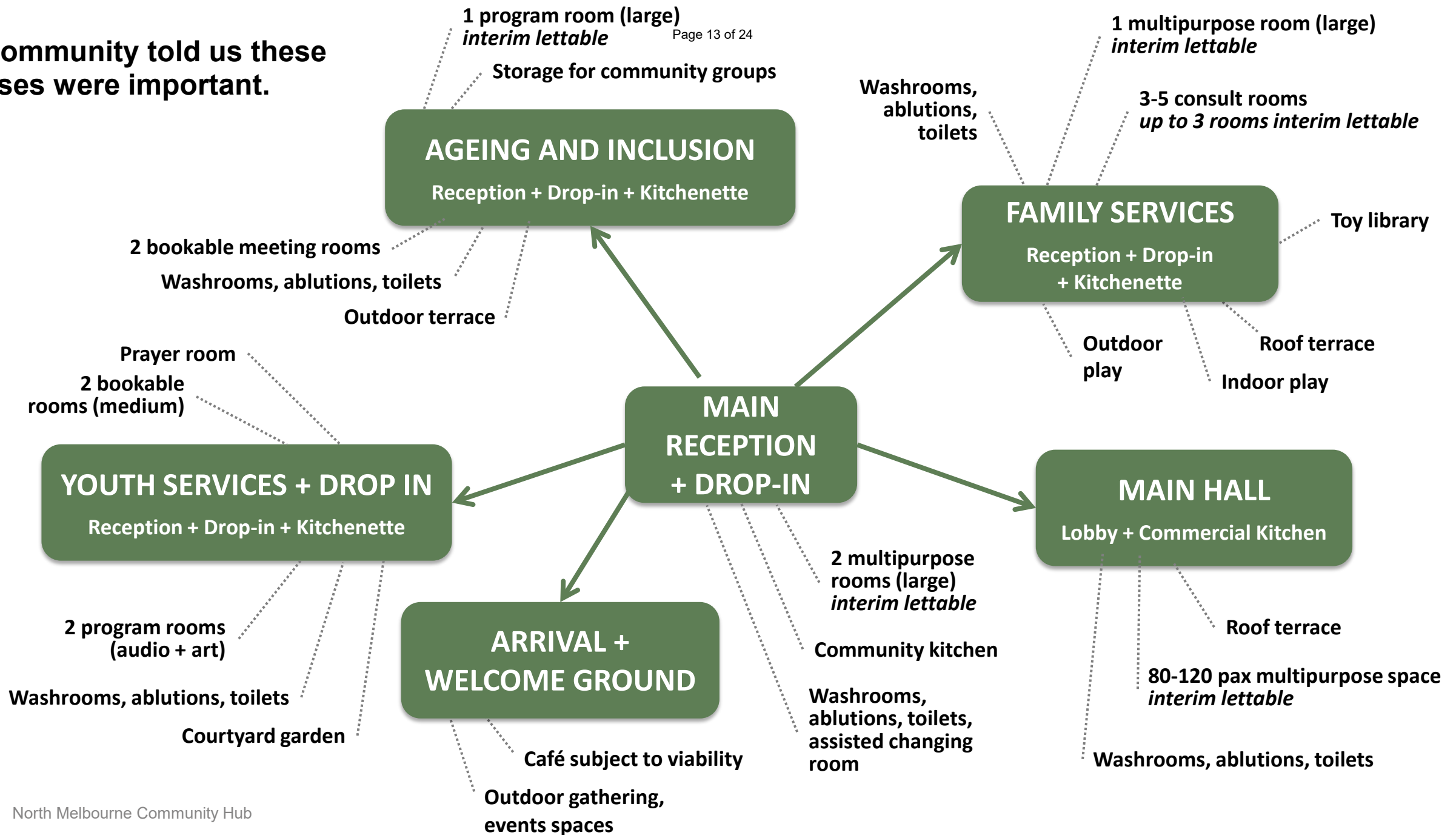


NMCH is a welcoming, inclusive and bustling place, fostering connections between old and young and celebrating the diverse histories, cultures, and voices that make this community so special.

Through collaboration and partnerships, it is a safe place for early intervention, service delivery and social connection, where people of all ages can come together to hang out, learn and participate in activities, which foster strength and wellbeing.

The facility is alive with energy through a busy calendar of integrated programs and events, and diverse spaces are accessible day and night.

Community told us these uses were important.



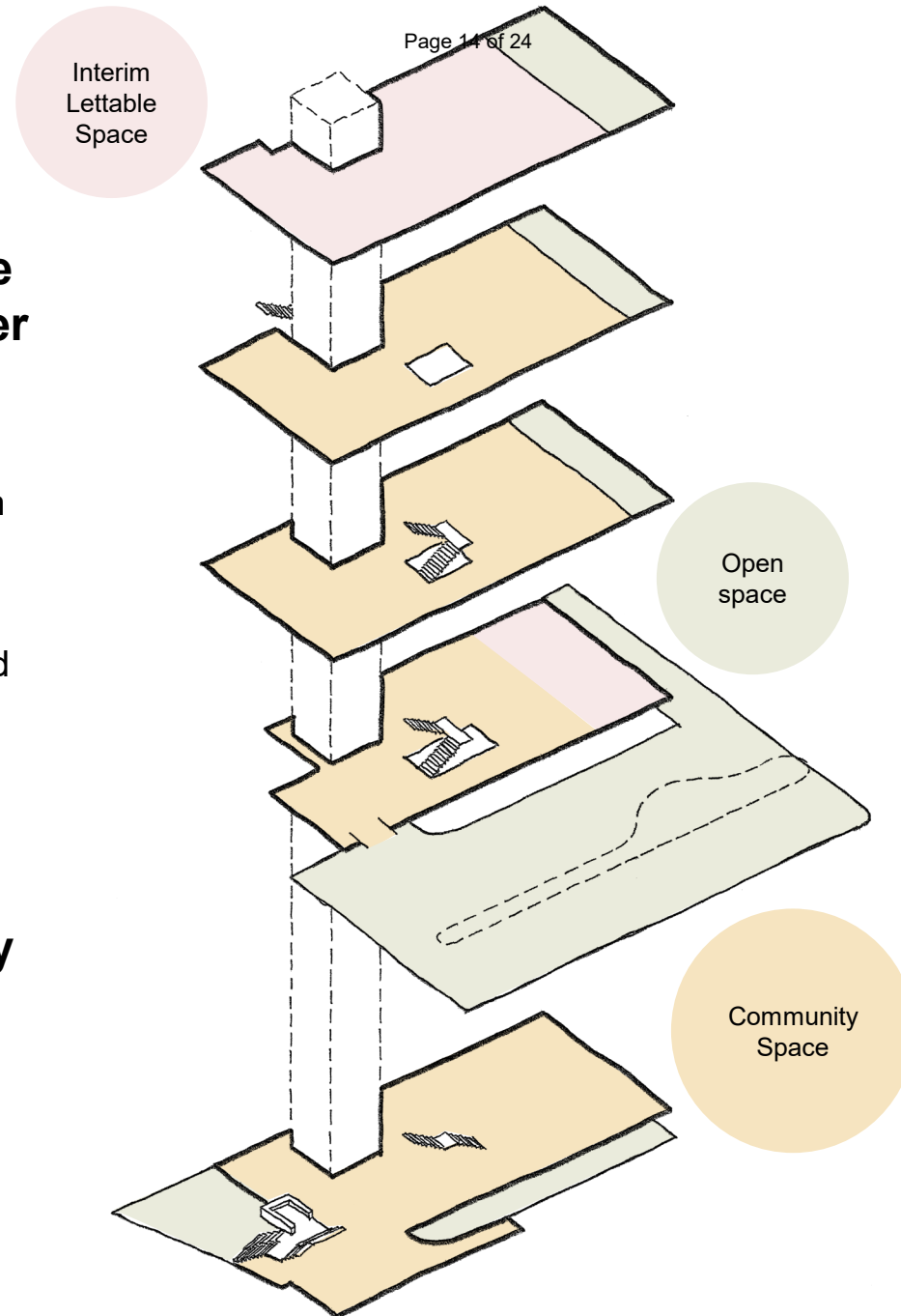
Community told us that integrated multigenerational services are important. We're proposing three services over five levels...

An open stair and connects lower ground floor Youth Services and Drop In to the ground floor Reception and Welcome Ground.

Ageing & Inclusion, Family Services and a Main Hall front north-facing terraces.

Interim Lettable Community Areas comprise approx. 50 per cent of GFA

Can you see your community supported in these spaces?



3rd Floor - Main Hall

2nd Floor - Family Services

1st Floor - Ageing & Inclusion

Ground Floor – Reception, Welcome Ground
access from Melrose and Sutton Streets

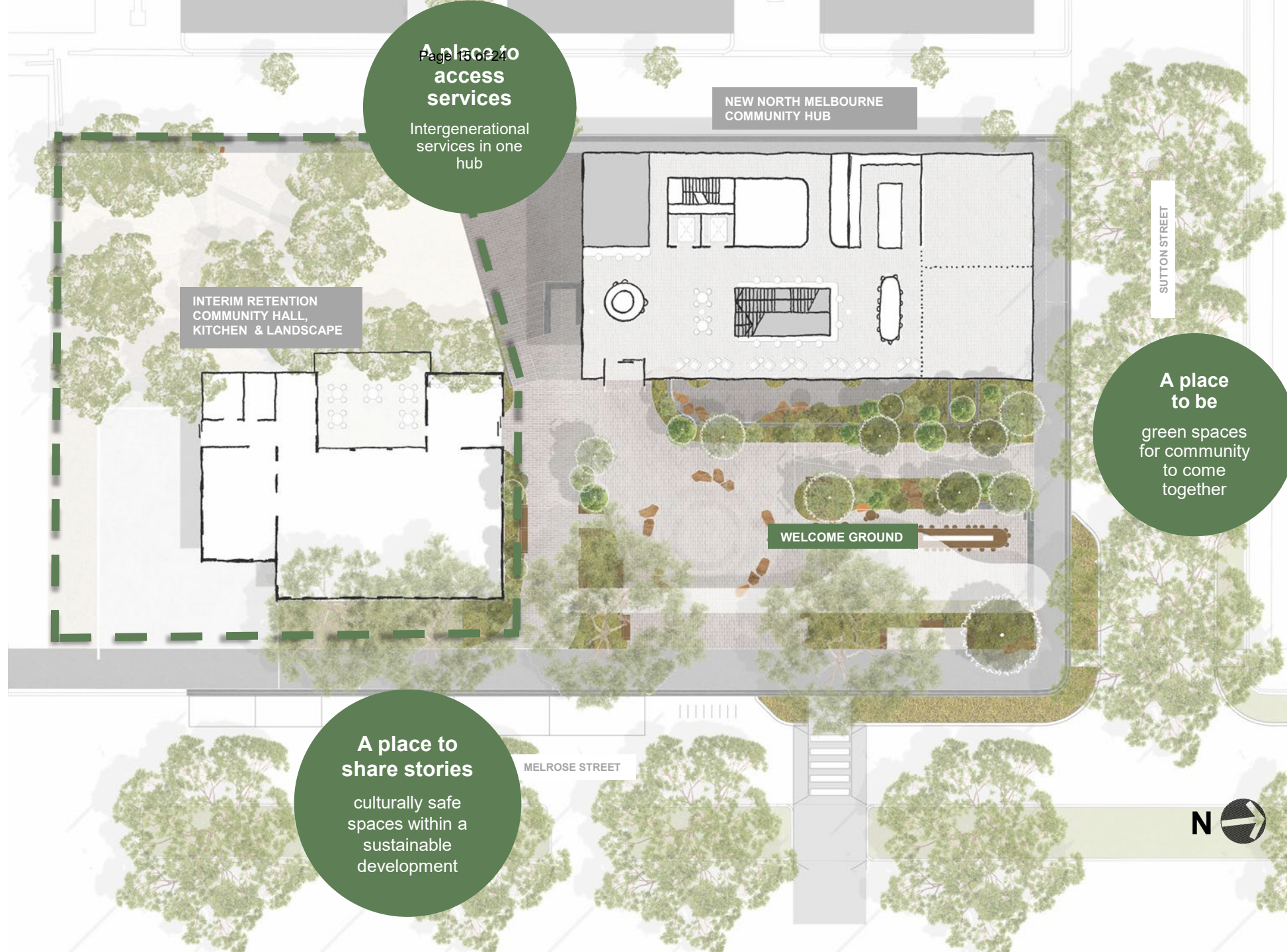
Lower Ground - Youth Services
enter from Pearl Street and via Ground Floor

A welcome ground is proposed to complement the 'Buncle Backyard' and complete the proposal for NMCH, aligned to community priorities.

Welcome Ground: open-air living, a landscape that invites, shelters and engages community.

- meeting places
- long table
- seating walls
- all weather canopy

Interim retention Jean McKendry hall and kitchen. Refresh existing for temporary use until future use confirmed.





Melrose Street Arrival

Sketch Floor Plans

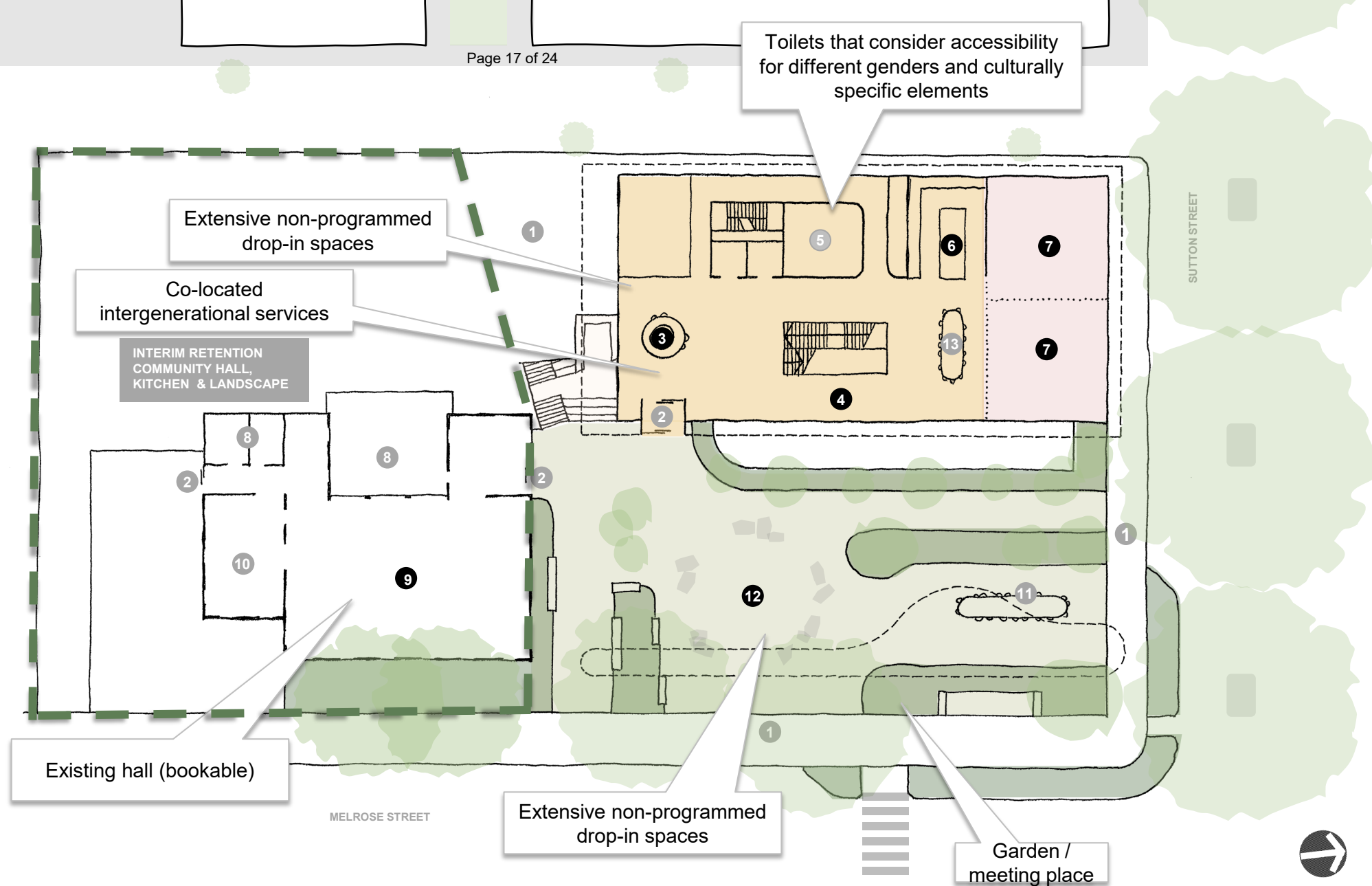
Ground Floor

Welcome Ground and Reception Space

1. Arrival
2. Building Entry
3. Reception
4. Public Drop-in
5. Amenities, Changing Places, First Aid
6. Kitchen
7. Flex room
8. Terrace
9. JMNC Hall
10. Commercial Kitchen
11. Communal Table
12. Welcome Ground

Interim Lettable Community Area

- Flex room ~150 sqm
- JMNC ~350 sqm



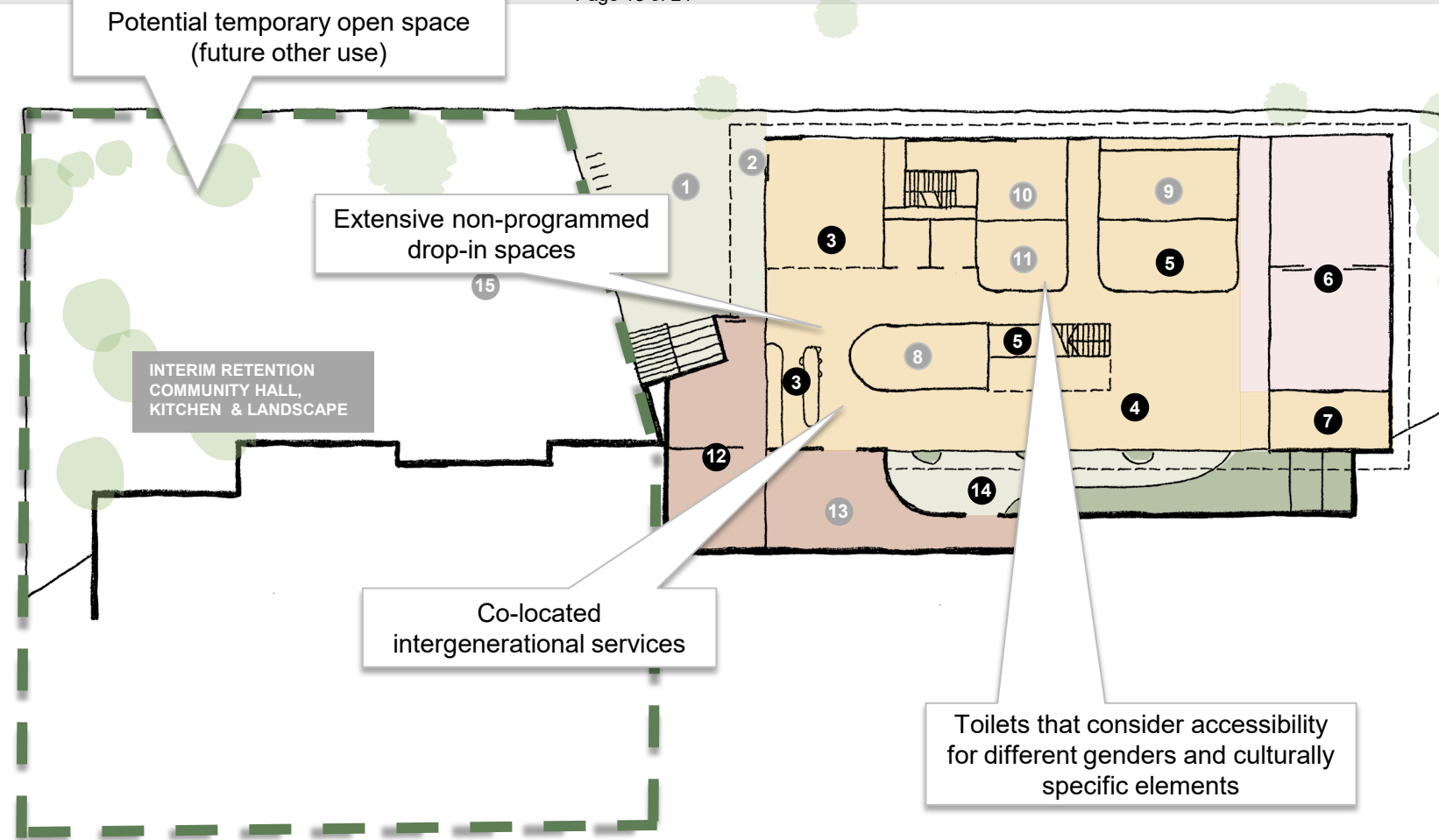
Sketch Floor Plans

Lower Ground

Public Drop in + Youth Services (YS)

1. Arrival
2. Building Entry
3. YS Drop-in & kitchenette
4. Public Drop-in
5. Program room (audio & art)
6. Flex room
7. Reflection / Prayer Room
8. YS Staff Office
9. Shared Staff Room
10. Building Services e.g. waste
11. Amenities
12. End of Trip (EOT)
13. General Storage
14. Garden / Break Out Space
15. Welcome Yard

- Interim Lettable Community Area
- Flex room ~125 sqm



Sketch Floor Plans

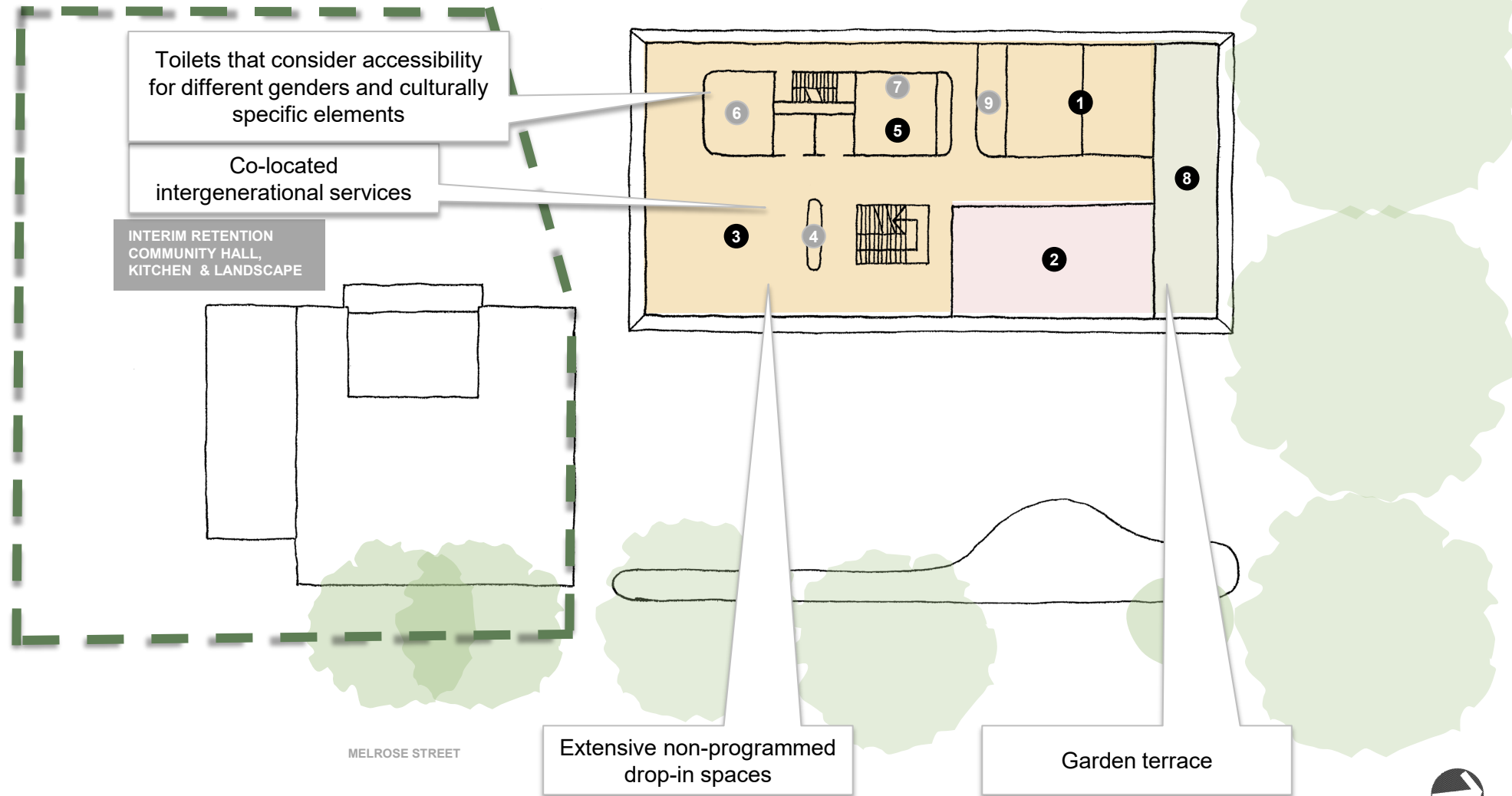
First Floor

Public Drop-in + Aging and Inclusion (AI) Services

1. Bookable Meeting Rooms
(combine to use as a single Program room)
2. Flex room
3. Drop-in / waiting
4. Kitchenette
5. Reception
6. AI Staff Offices
7. Amenities
8. Outdoor Terrace
9. Storage for community groups

Interim Lettable Community Area

- Flex room ~100 sqm



Sketch Floor Plans

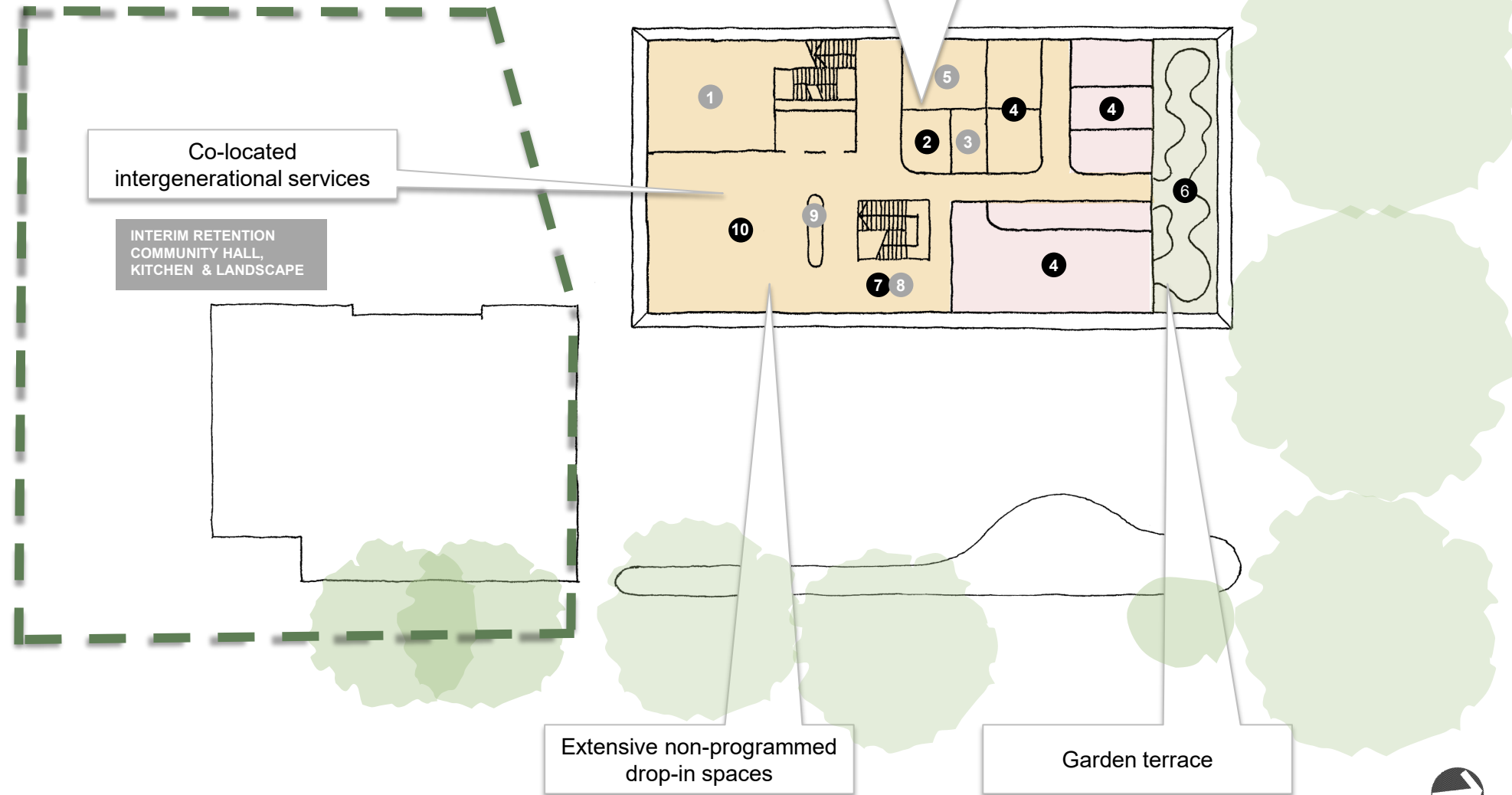
Second Floor

Family Services (FS) + Toy Library

1. FS Staff Offices
2. FS Reception
3. Immunisation Storage / Admin Room
4. Health Consult Room
5. Amenities inc. Parent Room
6. Outdoor Play
7. Indoor Play
8. Toy Library
9. Kitchenette
10. Drop-in / waiting

Interim Lettable Community Area

- Flex rooms NW ~60 sqm
- Flex room NE ~100 sqm

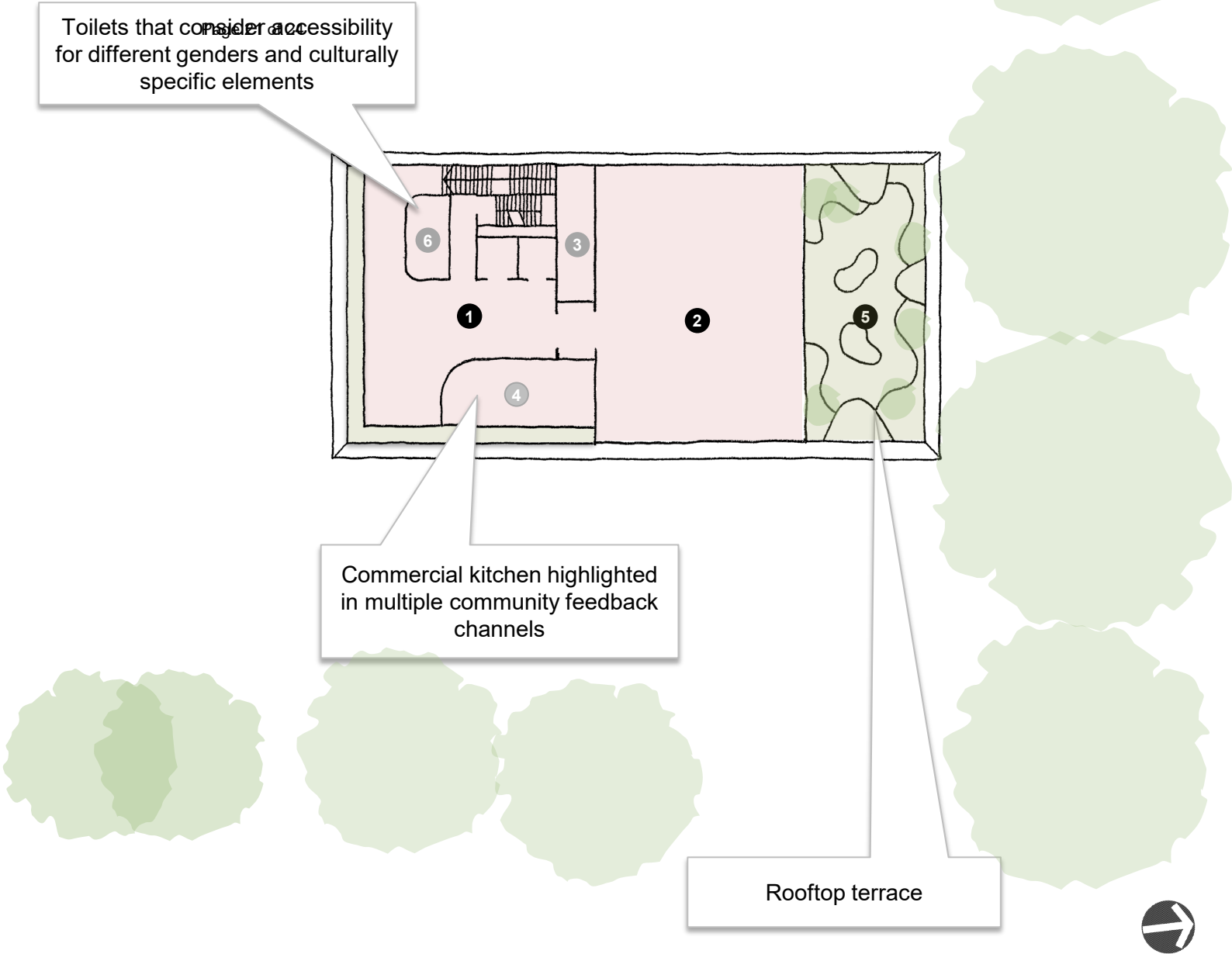


Sketch Floor Plans

Third Floor
Main Hall

- 1. Lobby
- 2. Main Hall
- 3. Furniture Store
- 4. Commercial Kitchen
- 5. Roof Terrace
- 6. Amenities

Interim Lettable Community Area
Main Hall, lobby and terrace ~600 sqm



4. Community engagement plan

- Purpose, stakeholder list, Activities, Schedule
- Community Reference Group with timeline
- Community engagement materials

Community Engagement Plan – approach and timeline

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Purpose of engagement	Stakeholder engagement list	Planned engagement activities
Purpose: To facilitate broad community and stakeholder input into the draft concept design through various engagement methods and active collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders. Aims of the engagement activities: • To demonstrate how community insights and priorities from previous engagement have influenced the draft concept design; • To share clear and timely information about upcoming improvements at NMCC, Buncle Reserve, and other facilities; • To test and refine key elements of the draft concept design, ensuring it meets community expectations and needs; and • To ensure final design decisions reflect community and stakeholder needs and preferences by incorporating feedback and active involvement throughout the design process.	• Community users of NMCC and JMNC • Local residents – non users of NMCC and JMNC • CoM facility partners (YMCA, The Drum, etc.) • Community Reference Group • Youth Advisory Committee • North Melbourne Language and Learning • The Huddle • The Centre • North Melbourne Public Housing and Residents Association • North + West Melbourne Association • Australian Muslim Social Services Agency • Paving the Way Forward Residents Action Group • Moonee Valley City Council • DFFH and Homes Victoria, Victorian Government • Service staff at NMCC and JMNC	The engagement methods and activities have been designed to capture a wide section of the North Melbourne community and will include: • Community Reference Group (collaborative engagement) • Participate Melbourne page and survey • Pop-up sessions on-site • Print media and website postings • Translation options on Participate Melbourne page and surveys • Flyers and posters with QR codes • Stakeholder and community workshops (online and in person)



