

The first phase of the new Crago Mill Precinct is to develop a masterplan that outlines the big picture strategy to guide the project. In developing a masterplan you need to understand what facilities are required and undertake an analysis of the existing site.

The Project Brief

Through a series of meetings with Council stakeholders a Project Functional Brief has been designed to capture the operational needs of each component of the proposed Precinct.

The following table summaries the project components to be included.

Mill Community Hub

Placed in the centre of the proposed precinct is the heritage Crago Mill. The Mill building was at the core of Yass's early development in the late nineteenth century. It is an expression of Yass as a vibrant rural commercial and community hub.

The Crago Mill is in the need of both renovation and a new purpose. After reviewing options it has been considered that a loose fit approach would best allow the building to evolve into a twenty first centre community hub.

A refurbished Crago Mill has potential to house a range of community programs and activities. These

may include exhibition, performance, music, community meetings, community social events, rural innovation or produce events, an artist in residence program.

Integrated or placed adjacent to Crago Mill Hub it is proposed to include a Cafe to serve all components of the precinct.

Yass Valley Library

The Council currently operates a library service from an existing facility located to the rear of the Soldiers Memorial Hall.

A modern library is not a place to store books, it is a vibrant interactive place for the community. A modern library includes places for learning, recreation, to meet and interact. It should be a place where all ages can enjoy the facilities, undertake programs and feel they are part of their community.

Through careful curation of their collection the library is using their spaces very efficiently. However the size of existing spaces does not allow room to provide the facilities that allow users to linger and enjoy relaxing in the library, or to stay and quietly study, or to work as a group on a school assignment, or to run programs which will extend patronage. Without these the library is unable to become the community "lounge room".

The new facilities are planned to include spaces for recreational reading areas, a peaceful lounge, an enhanced children's area with interactive reading areas that are design to engage with young minds, a study centre for all ages to learn individually or in groups, all supported by three program areas including an assembly space, maker space and digital technology space.

The attached images indicate the type of spaces required to create a library which will become "community Lounge".

Civic Administration Centre

The council administration centre is currently located in a number of buildings along Comur Street. The core building was constructed in the 1970s. This building is made up of small inflexible spaces that no longer support the operational needs of a modern organisation.

The core building has been joined to adjacent retail buildings, that have been procured over time, to provide additional space required for growth. The resulting work place is very disjointed, and has inherent fire safety and WHS issues which are extremely hard and costly to resolve. The current facilities also have insufficient meeting and team spaces required to create a collaborative workplace.

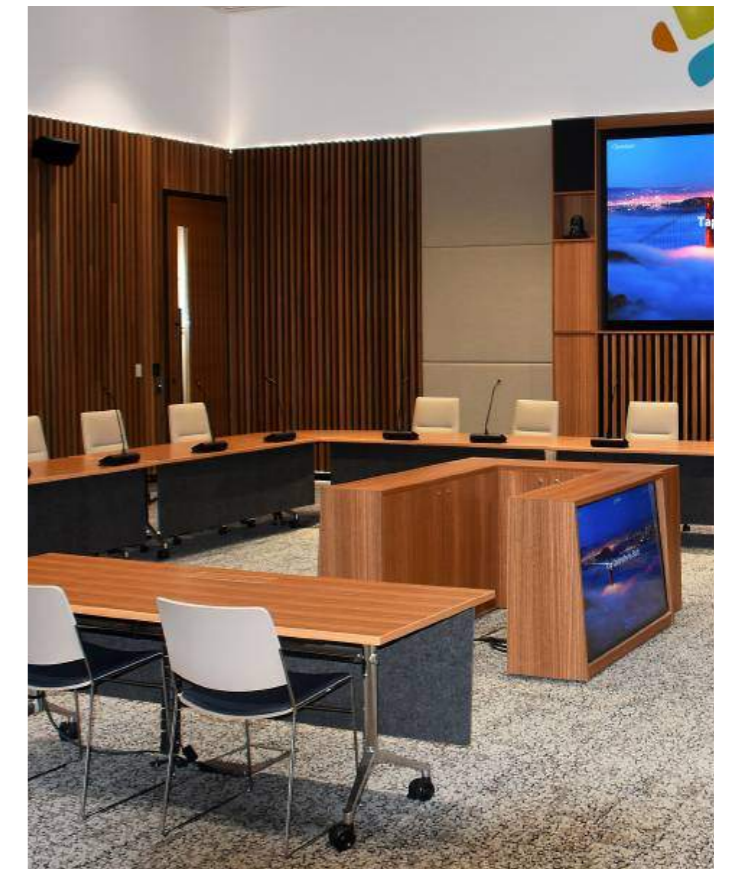
Through a series of stakeholder workshops the operational requirements for the proposed Civic Administration Centre have been developed.

Careful consideration of the types of work settings and collaborative spaces will maximise efficiency and flexibility of the proposed workspace. This analysis has included how the operational divisions of the Council integrate and has made allowance for them to evolve over time.

The Civic Administration Centre is made up of both the workspaces of Council officers and the public facing facilities, including customer service, council chamber, meeting and consultation rooms. These are the spaces where the community will interact with council officers and councillors. An assessment of the types and nature of required public facilities has been undertaken to create spaces that will support operational and community needs but at the same time are flexible and can maximise use. For example the council chamber and public gallery are planned to allow flexible division that can transform them from a single use space into two multi purpose spaces.

The attached image provide a feel of possible ambience of the public facing spaces.

Civic Administration	1967 sqm
Library	978 sqm
Crago Mill Community Space	120 sqm
Car Park	approx. 70 car spaces
Core Components of project	
Coworking offices	240sqm
Commercial Offices	300 sqm
Appartments (2 two bedroom)	288 sqm



Commercial

Council has requested consideration of a number of facilities of a more commercial nature. These include, a co-working space, a commercial tenancy and a small number of apartments.

The vision for the co-working space is to provide flexible workspace for short term and periodic use of both start ups and small local businesses. Council has identified a need support emerging businesses to provide opportunity for them to be establish a presence in the Yass town centre. This support will allow small or emerging enterprises to remain in town and help ensure there is a dynamic commercial community into the future.

The inclusion of a commercial tenancy, strategically placed to address Comur Street would allow both a diversity of use in the precinct and a first step of creating more active and reinvigorating the eastern end of the town centre.

A shortage of residential rental properties sees new appointments to Council or specialist workers coming in for a duration of a few months, not being able to find a place to live. This results in many instances these workers finding accomodation in Canberra and commuting to Yass. Council has identified a need to provide a small amount of accomodation to address this issue. This would

include provision of two apartments within the development.

Site Analysis

Council resolved to develop a site they owned at the corner of Comur and Polding streets and running through from Comur to Adele Street and along Comur street from the corner of Polding to the Aldi Development.

The attached aerial photo indicates the site location and relationship to town centre and adjacent developments.

Located in the centre of the development site is the heritage Crago Mill and a number of buildings originally used by Winchcombe and Carson Store. Both buildings are in varying states of dilapidation.

An initial heritage analysis has identified the core brick structure to Crago Mill as high heritage value and that surrounding metal clad structures around core mill building should be demolished. It is proposed to renovate the core brickwork structure, rail platform and covering skillion roof as a core element of the new precinct.

The shape of the site and how future development addresses the street or other features is important to creating a cohesive urban precinct. Analysis of

the site has identified the following elements that should be considered in developing a masterplan strategy:

- The requirement to step the built elements across the site to address the site topography.
- Creating built forms that address both Crago Street and a new public spaces to be included in the development.
- Creating a built element that allows the precinct to become an eastern gateway to the town centre.
- The location of the Crago Mill set well back from Comur Street needs to be considered to ensure an appropriate setting for this important heritage structure. The Mill building should be connected to Comur Street.
- Consideration of the alignment of proposed buildings so they address both the Main street (Comur Street) and the Crago Mill that is set diagonally to street alignment.
- The alignment of the heritage railway line running into Crago Mill and how new buildings can reinforce this alignment and the presence of the Crago Mill within the Public Domain.
- Creating multiple addresses to precinct, including from Comur Street, from car parking most lily to be located off Adele street and from Crago Street through driveway adjacent Aldi carpark.

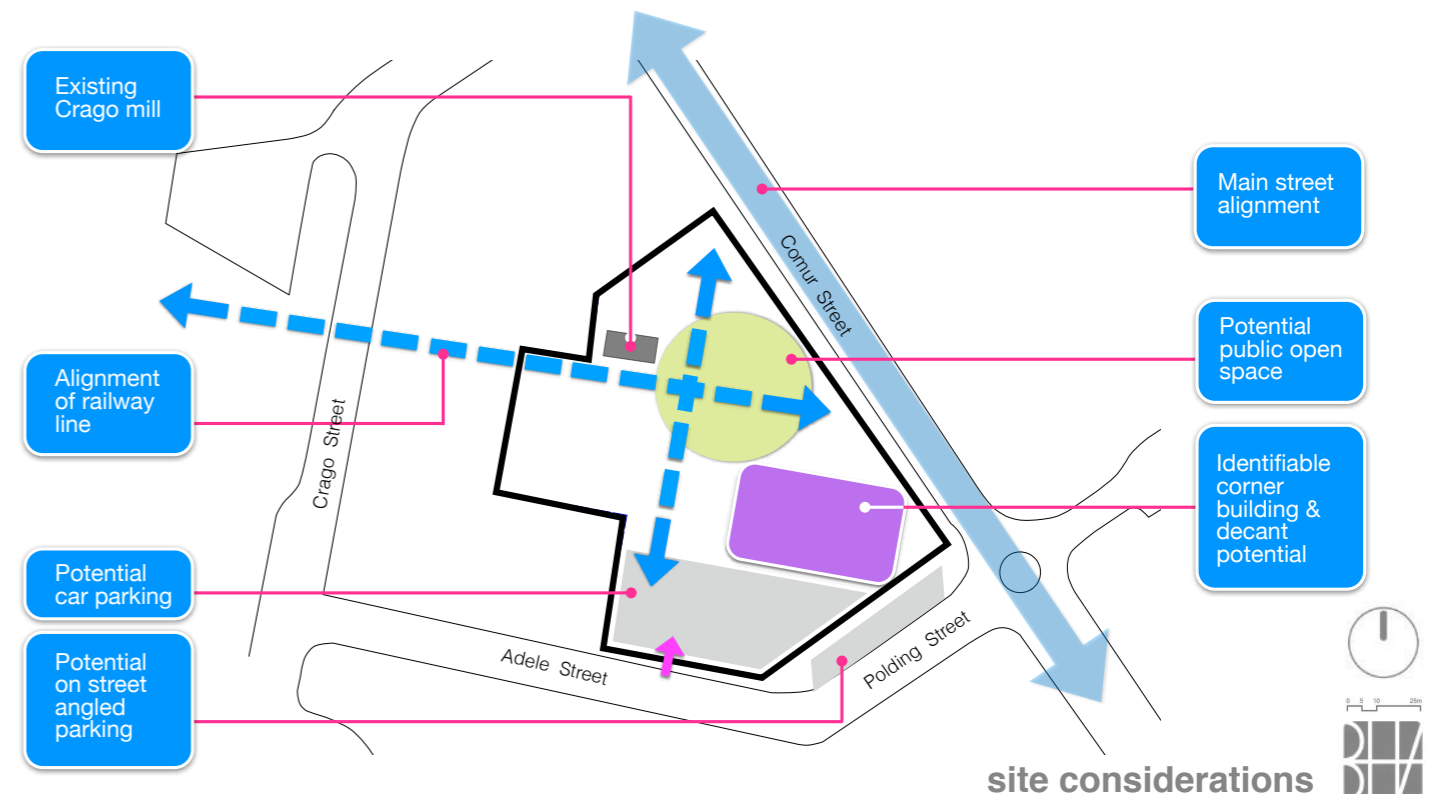
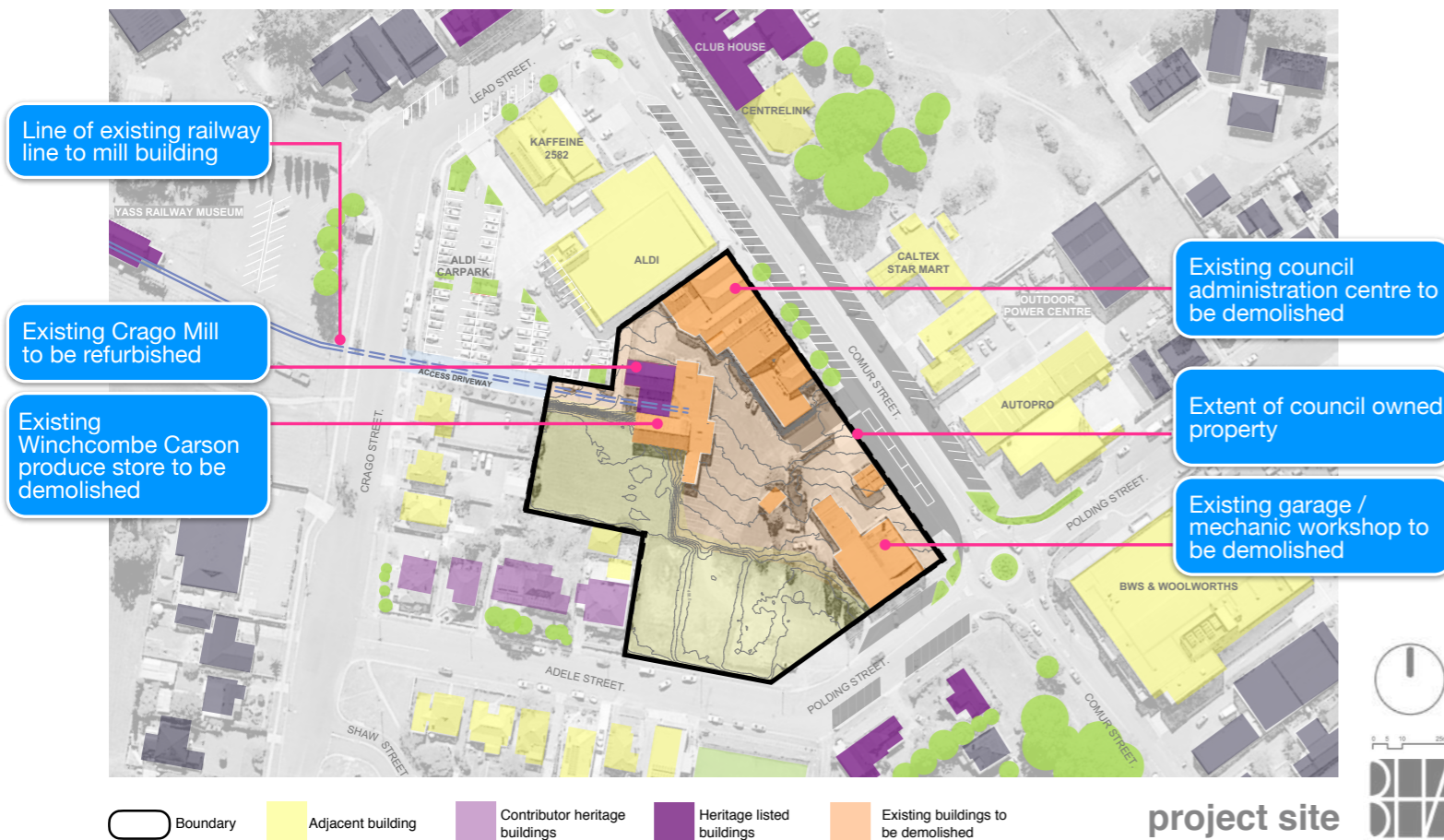
Attached are two diagrams that indicate these elements.

Development of Masterplan

Upon completion of preparing the Project Functional Brief and undertaking the site analysis the design team has explored options for developing the site to create the Crago Mill Precinct.

Ten options were considered and these can be summarised in to the following option groups:

- Options placing a public space addressing Comur Street and creating a setting for the Crago heritage Mill. These options used new one storey built forms to frame the public space.
- Options for creating a single two storey council building on the site while maintaining a public space addressing Comur Street that creates a setting for Crago Mill.
- Options that were set along Comur street to reinforce the street alignment, with a public space and Crago Mill building set behind the built elements.
- An option that built council offices over carpark to maximise size of public outdoor spaces.
- Options that staged the development to deliver the core elements in a first stage followed by future supporting elements.



site considerations

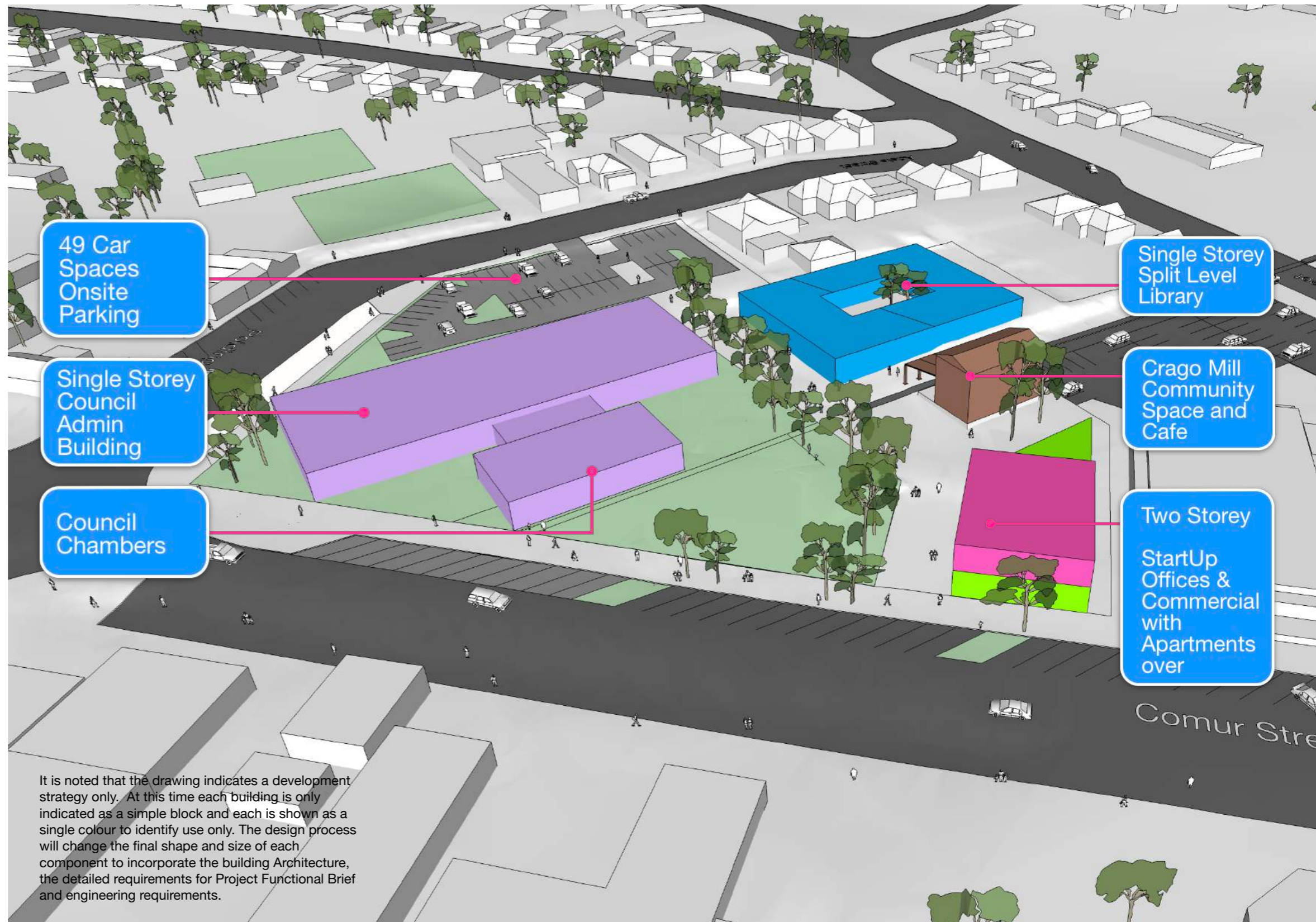
The Preferred Masterplan

Following a workshop with Councillors and formal resolution of Council a preferred masterplanning strategy has been adopted for the proposed Crago Mill Precinct Redevelopment.

The drawing to right outlines the key components of the preferred strategy and how these would be located on the site.

The key aspects of this strategy are:

- A new triangular public space is created by placement of new built forms.
- The new public space is visible from Comur Street, linking the new precinct strongly to town centre, activating the eastern end of town centre, where two supermarkets turn their backs to the street.
- The public space is of a size that a series of open flexible “public rooms” can be used to run community activities. These activities will activate the new precinct and add generally to the town centre.
- The shape of the public space with the Crago Mill at its apex creates a setting that connects the heritage Crago Mill to the main street rather than hiding it behind buildings.
- The public space has potential to be connected to a heritage walkway following the rail line to the river.
- The Library and Civic Administration Centre are located along one edge of the public space which is positioned on the axis formed by the heritage rail line to Crago Mill.
- The Library is located adjacent to Crago Mill to allow community facilities to be colocated with Crago Mill. This reinforces the public nature of the Crago Mill.
- The Council civic centre is located at corner of Comur and Polding Streets to form gateway to eastern arrival point to town centre.
- Off street car parking to serve the development is located off Adele Street. The parking is connected via new walkway through the public space to Comur Street. This allows pedestrian access through site to all project components.
- The commercial elements are grouped to opposite edge of public space. This location allows them to address both the Crago Mill Precinct and Comur Street and have a distinct identity.
- On the ground floor a commercial tenancy will face Comur Street, with the Co-working facility addressing Crago Mill. The two apartments are located on upper level of this building.
- The project could be staged to deliver the core components as a first stage and the commercial elements as a second stage.



Masterplan for Crago Mill Precinct

yass valley council
the country the people

