

Strategic Planning Context

Parramatta 2038 Strategic Plan, 2013

The Parramatta 2038 Strategic plan recognises the Parramatta River Foreshore as a key cultural precinct. It identifies the river as a physical element that binds together the precincts strong in history, arts, entertainment and recreation, building a sense of community and broad shared experiences around a natural link to the region. Key points to note are as follows;

- Activating the CBD river foreshore and bringing back swimming to the Parramatta River is a priority;
- Create a “green ring” around the City, improve the canopy cover and plan for potential walking and cycling routes;
- The renewal of the heritage area along the Parramatta River that includes Old Kings School, Cumberland Hospital and Parramatta Gaol – if given priority and adequately funded – could provide access to cultural, entertainment and employment options;
- Develop regional facilities like the Riverside Theatres and an art gallery, activate the Parramatta River;

Parramatta Street Tree Master Plan, 2011

The Parramatta Street Tree Master Plan identifies the River Foreshore precinct as area of the CBD that must incorporate a tree planting strategy in response to both the natural and urban environments. Key Points noted in the report are as follows;

- The existing native trees on the northern foreshore should be augmented with locally indigenous tree species in irregular spacing and groupings to reflect the informal character of the park setting;
- The existing native trees on the southern foreshore should be augmented with locally indigenous tree species between O’Connell Street and the Ferry Terminal [Charles Street] to enhance the connection of the river with the city centre and reflect the southern foreshores urban character;

Riverbank Urban Design Strategy, 2009

Council recognised the importance of the riverfront block between Church Street and Smith Street and the Urban Design Team developed specific urban design controls that were adopted by Council in April 2009.

The specific controls the Riverbank Urban Design Strategy define include:

- A twenty five metre setback on the Foreshore elevation of new development
- The definition of future pedestrian links within the Riverbank Site area
- Identification of a 6.4m RL for riverfront development corresponding to the 1:100 year flood level with a 400mm freeboard.
- Location of activate frontages with the percentage of elevation for active uses defined
- Building lines, setbacks and maximum development heights
- Vehicular access points
- Precedents for waterfront activation and public spaces.

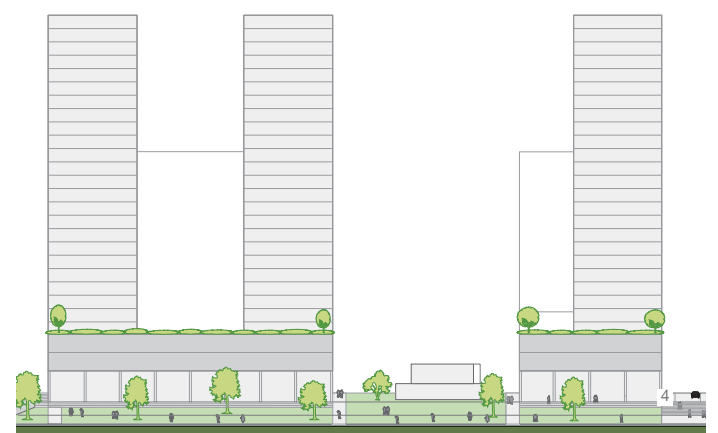
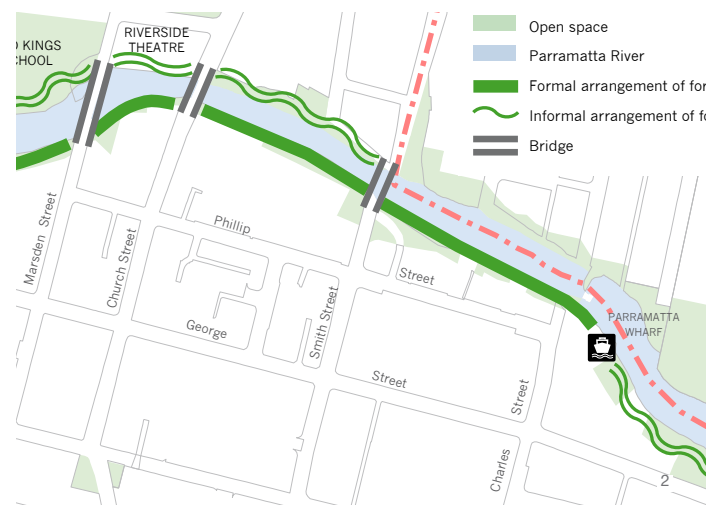
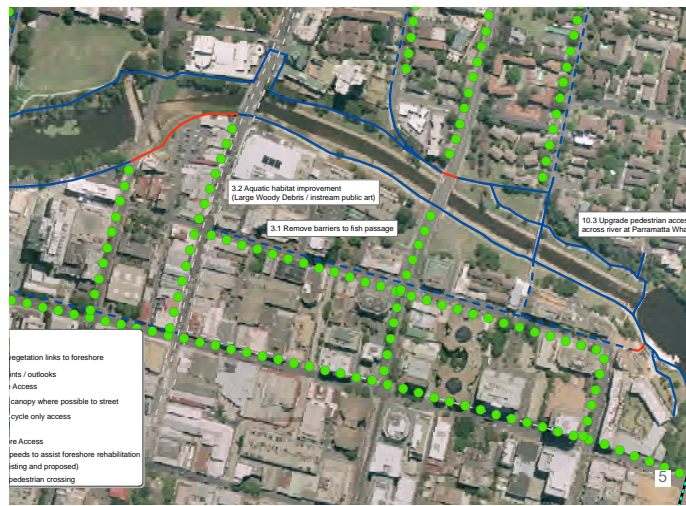


IMAGE 1. Parramatta 2038 Strategic Plan, 2013
 IMAGE 2. Parramatta Street Tree Master Plan, 2011
 IMAGE 3. Riverbank Urban Design Strategy, 2009 - Plan
 IMAGE 4. Riverbank Urban Design Strategy, 2009 - Section

Parramatta River Foreshore Plan 2009-2016

The Parramatta River Foreshore Plan incorporates all visionary work produced by Parramatta City Council. The document expresses a desire that *“The Parramatta River foreshores shall be celebrated and activated as a unique and significant living corridor of healthy and dynamic natural systems, rich history, and recreational opportunity.”* The Plan breaks down the River into nine precincts, with Precinct 4: Parramatta City Centre specifically relating to this project. Key points to note are as follows;

- The city centre will celebrate the river as a local and regionally significant asset within the metropolitan region. The river’s edge will be activated through strategic mixed use development, interpreting Parramatta’s unique history and creating further pedestrian connections from key sites such as Civic Place, Horwood and Erby Place.



Parramatta City River Urban Design Strategy, 2011

An urban design strategy was produced due to council’s recognition the river’s role plays in contributing to the ongoing economic cultural and environmentally sustainable regeneration of the city centre area.

The urban design strategy reorientates the city to the river and re-imagines the foreshore as four vibrant mixed use River Quarters. It proposes a new vision for the brand of Parramatta ‘Where The Waters Meet’ is proposed. Central to this brand is a new arrival point for an improved Parramatta Rivercat ferry service at Parramatta Quay. This move changes the point at which the salt water meets fresh water bringing the River into the heart of the city, creating an arrival experience of international quality.



Public Domain Guidelines, 2011

The Parramatta Guidelines, 2011 define the design principles and provide a standard palette of materials and elements. The key objectives that can be drawn from the study were to;

- Establish a clear and consistent public domain image for Parramatta;
- Provide clarity in design requirements and construction standards for the public domain;
- Provide equitable access;
- Reinforce the streetscape hierarchy;
- Promote pedestrian priority,



Design Parramatta 2012

The Design Parramatta project aims to improve city amenity and character by creating quality visions for key streets, parks and public spaces and combining these visions into a city wide Public Domain Framework Plan. Based on type, scale and program, four main groups of projects development;

- Main Streets
- Public Spaces and Parks
- Lanes
- Art and Experimental

A number of these project groups intersect with the Parramatta River site and are further explained in section 2.5 Future Context.

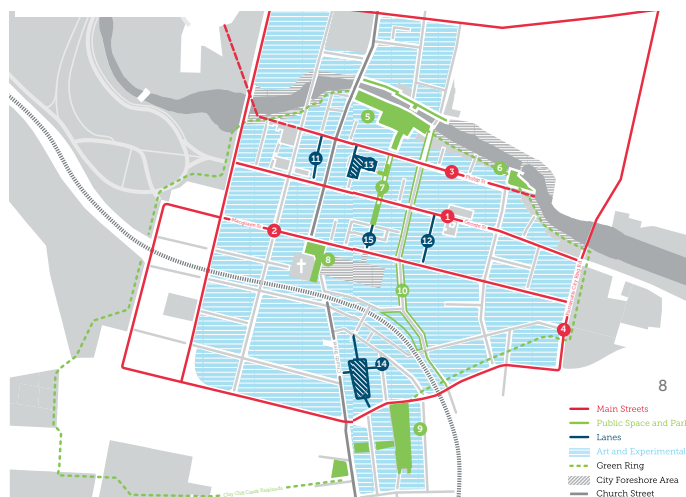


IMAGE 5. Parramatta River Foreshore Plan 2009-2016
 IMAGE 6. Parramatta City River Urban Design Strategy, 2011
 IMAGE 7. Public Domain Guidelines, 2011
 IMAGE 8. Design Parramatta 2013

2.4 CITY CONTEXT

In 2012 Parramatta City Council underwent a comprehensive exercise in producing a series of contextual analysis diagrams of Parramatta City Centre. This analysis has informed our understanding of Parramatta CBD and the river's role within the city centre. Key findings are summarised below.

Topography and Structure

Parramatta City lies in a riverine valley defined by ridges to the north and south. The main city centre sits between the river and the railway line. This was the part of the city to be first settled and surveyed. The raised railway line and sunken river create breaks in the north south views. The most continuous views are those along the flat ground and straight streets in the east west streets, George Street, Macquarie Street, Phillip Street and Hunter Street.

Public Space, Parks and Landscape

Parramatta City has important large scale parklands to the east and the west as well as the river foreshore parkland within the cultural precinct. There is currently very little public space in the central precinct, with Church Street Mall providing the major existing space.

Arts and Cultural Uses

The arts and cultural uses currently are clustered along the north south spine of Church Street. The riverfront is currently under-utilised as a cultural and recreational resource. Some dining establishments are extending along Phillip Street to capitalise on views to the river and there is potential to extend the night time uses in this east west direction. Parramatta Park is currently under-utilised as a great recreational/cultural resource in close proximity to the city centre. Improved access and address could assist this.

Commercial, Civic and Educational Uses

The commercial, civic, government and educational uses are concentrated to the north of the station and away from Church Street, including the specialised Justice Precinct to the north-west of the city. A smaller government office hub is developing south of the station, which could be further enlarged by the Auto Alley area, currently used mainly for car sales. The city houses several schools.

Street Hierarchy

Long east-west streets run through the heart of the city and are generally flat with expansive views. North-south streets run across the contours, under the railway overpass and across the river, have truncated views and can be less comfortable for pedestrians. Due to the large areas of parkland to east and west of the city centre, the north-south streets currently provide greater accessibility out of the city. There is also a fine grain pedestrian network of lanes, arcades and through site links that improves pedestrian permeability.

Transport and Parking

Parramatta Station is the 4th busiest in the City Rail network on weekdays. The main vehicular access routes are along Church Street from the north, along Victoria Road from the northeast and along the M4 and Parramatta Road from Sydney City and to Penrith. There are a large number of at grade car parks in the very heart of the city. The long-term plan is to relocate these to the city edge and to free up these major city sites for commercial and development activities.

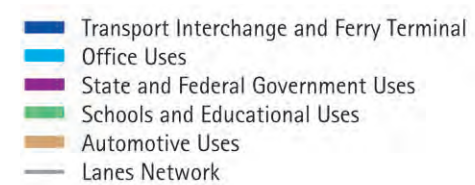
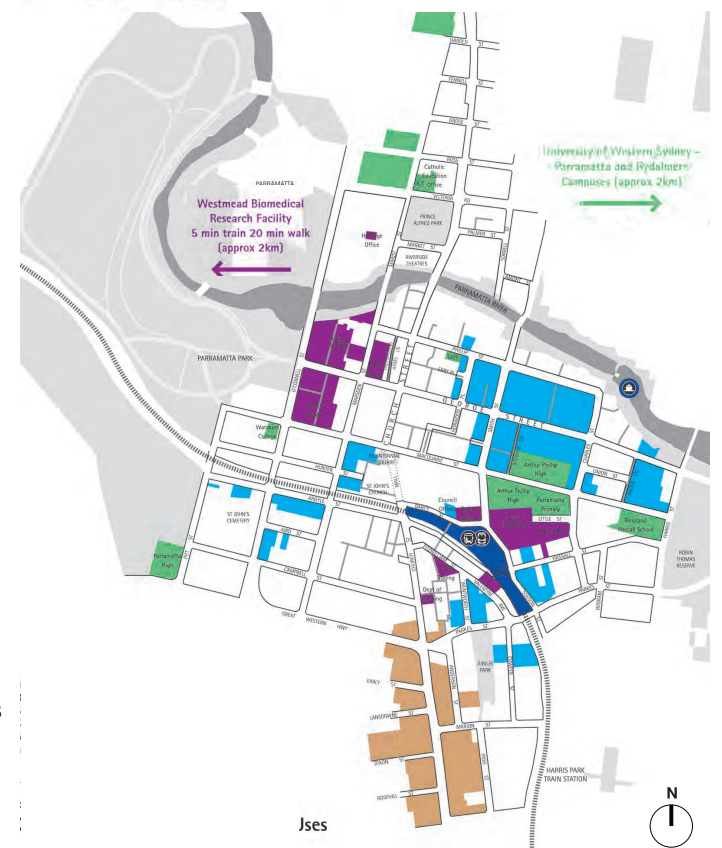


FIGURE 2.03 - ARTS AND CULTURAL USES
 TOP MIDDLE - Diagram
 FIGURE 2.04 - COMMERCIAL CIVIC AND EDUCATIONAL USES
 BOTTOM MIDDLE - Diagram

2.5 FUTURE CONTEXT

When analysing the Parramatta CBD and River it is important to identify specific projects and strategies that have a direct influence on the outcome of this project. The intention of this section is to establish a comprehensive understanding of each project and development, documenting their design intention. Key projects that intersect and have a direct influence on this project are summarised in this section.

Current Projects in Development

1. **330 Church Street** - The proposal for the site is for a retail / commercial podium building with two residential towers, with the east tower at 27 storeys and west tower at 50 storeys.
2. **Riverside Tower [Lennox Bridge Car Park]** - This site will be transformed into a first-class precinct known as 'Riverside Parramatta'. A range of uses will be accommodated including cafés / bars / restaurants and Council's new Discovery Centre.
3. **Civic Precinct and Parramatta Square** - Parramatta Square is a 3 hectare precinct development that will provide the city with a new civic heart. It will include public space, corporate facilities, residential apartments, retail and dining, new Council headquarters, and connections to the transport interchange.
4. **The Lennox Bridge Portals** - The Lennox Bridge Portals will unlock a significant opportunity for linear movement along the river.
5. **The Escarpment Boardwalk** - This project aims to create a shared pedestrian and cycle pathway connecting Rangahui Reserve [east of Gasworks bridge] to the River Foreshore and across Charles Street Weir.

Design Parramatta Public Domain Improvements

6. **Phillip Street** - Phillip Street is proposed as a night time activated street and as a key connector of many important city centre thresholds.
7. **George Street** - George Street is proposed as the civic spine of Parramatta CBD through harnessing its heritage value.
8. **Macquarie Street** - Macquarie Street is proposed as an important corridor, potentially with light rail, linking to Parramatta's Transport Interchange.

Public Spaces and Parks

9. **River Square** - River Square is proposed as a new public space located on the existing council car park. It is anticipated that the square should have an urban character that has the capacity for everyday uses as well as major events.
10. **Charles Street Square** - Charles Street Square is proposed to build on the city centre grid by projecting street corridors north and south of the river to define a greater square.
11. **Horwood Civic Link** - Horwood Civic Link is a planned extension of Horwood Place that would eventually connect Parramatta's two major public spaces, the River Square and Civic Place.



FIGURE 2.05 - FUTURE CONTEXT
BOTTOM - Context Diagram

2.6 SITE ANALYSIS

The site analysis section focuses on the existing site conditions that characterise Parramatta City River today.

Economic Vibrancy

A key priority for this strategy is to understand the existing economic vibrancy that activates the public domain. The below headings offer an understanding to what economic vibrancy exists along Parramatta City River today.

Land Use

Land use within the site boundary is characterised by;

- A concentrated retail & dining corridor along Church Street
- High Density Residential & Cultural uses along the northern edge of Parramatta River
- Government, Cultural and Sporting uses west of Marsden street.
- A mix of Commercial, Hotel & Serviced Apartment and Retail & dining land use along Phillip Street



Active and Dead Frontages

The Parramatta River corridor is characterised by isolated pockets of active edges with large spans of non-active frontage dominating the riverside corridor. Key points to note are as follows:

- River foreshore is dominated by inactive and blank frontages resulting in large amounts of non-active space.
- Church Street's activity fails to continue within the river corridor reinforcing the poor relationship between the city

centre and river.

- Active frontage along Phillip Street is fractured and inconsistent.
- Active spaces within the Justice Precinct turn their back to the river foreshore.
- Some active frontage around the ferry wharf and terminal.
- Additional active space generated by Parramatta Riverside playground.

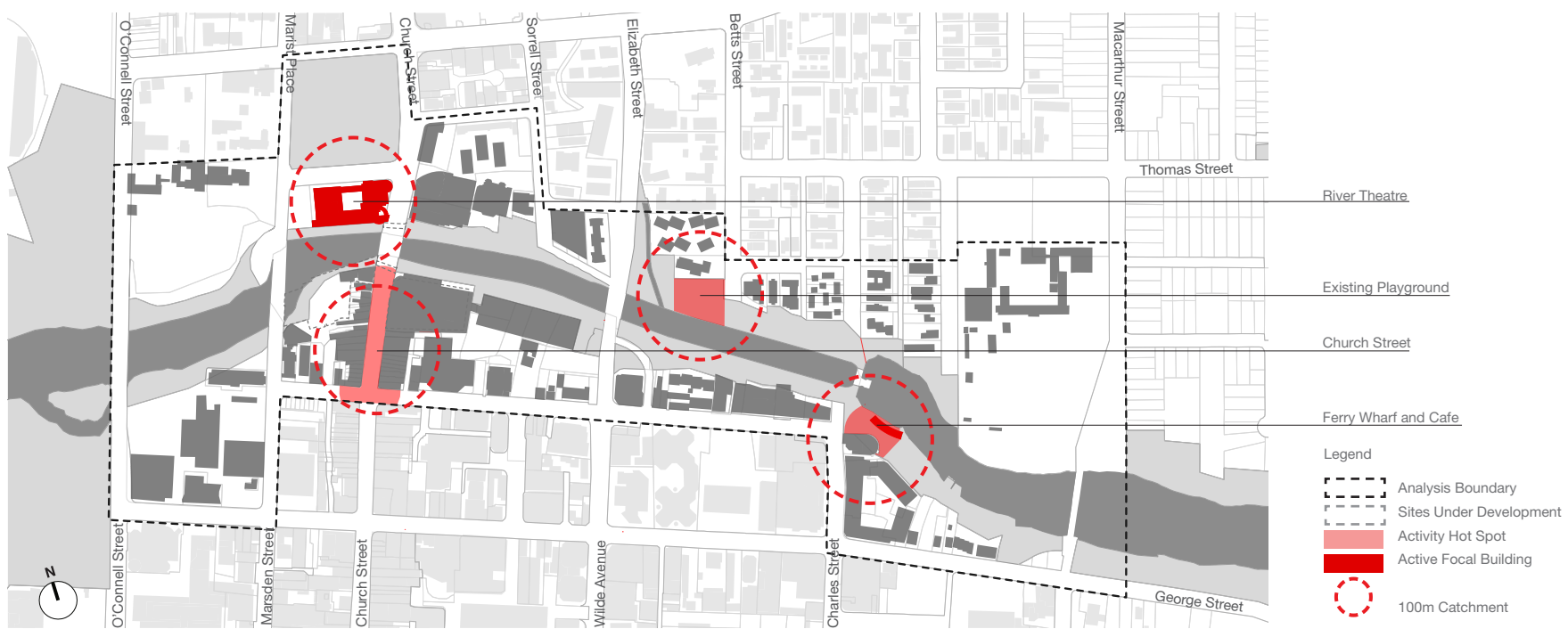


FIGURE 2.06 - LAND USE
TOP LEFT - Site Analysis Diagram
FIGURE 2.07 - ACTIVE AND DEAD FRONTAGES
BOTTOM LEFT - Site Analysis Diagram

Active Focal Points

Key focal points along the river offer a variety of uses comprising retail, cafes, childrens play and theatre. However, these focal points are highly disconnected from each other reinforcing a sense of separation and a lack of riverside destinations along the river corridor. These key spaces are;

- The Church Street retail and dining spine.
- The River Theatre and Adjacent Cafes.
- Riverside Park Play space.
- Parramatta Ferry Terminal and adjacent cafes.



Recreation and Event Zones

Parramatta City River is regularly used for a variety of events that ensure utilise the river's urban setting. Key events located along the river corridor are as follows;

- New Years Eve accommodates 45,000 people along the north and south bank of the river, with fireworks being positioned on the large multi- storey car park;
- Loy Krathong is a Thai festival celebrated annually accommodating 14,000 people along the river corridor. The event is located primarily along the north and south bank east of the multi-storey car park.
- NAIDOC is a week long event located that celebrates the Aboriginal Heritage of the region. The event is located in Prince Alfred Square accommodating up to 2,000 people.

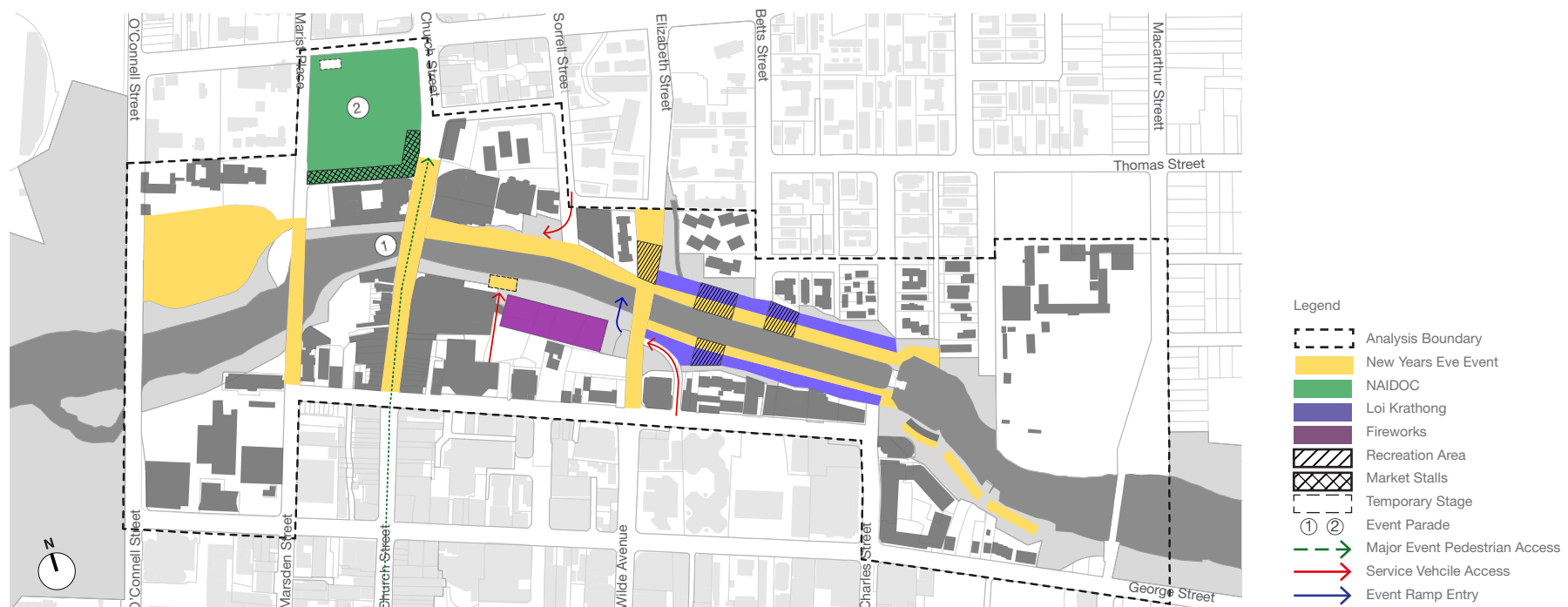


FIGURE 2.08 - ACTIVE FOCAL POINTS
 TOP RIGHT - Site Analysis Diagram
 FIGURE 2.09 - RECREATION AND EVENT ZONES
 BOTTOM RIGHT - Site Analysis Diagram

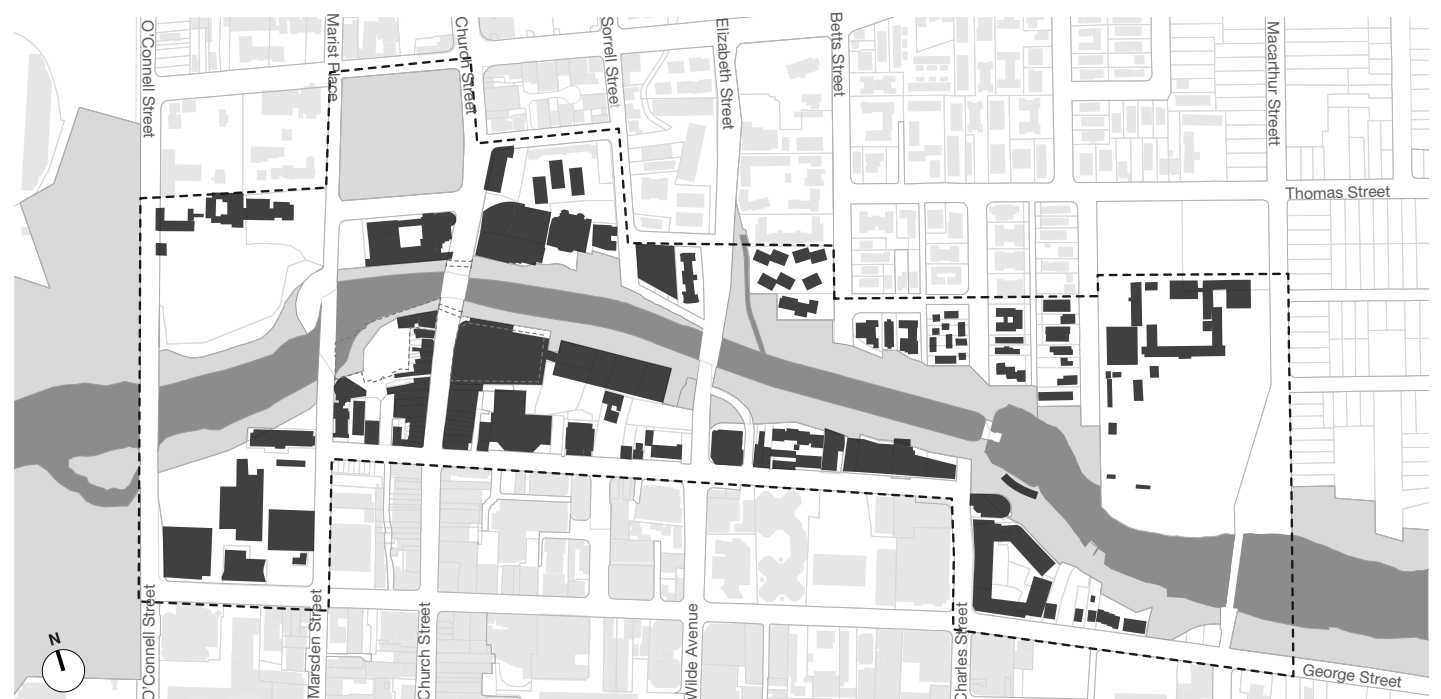
Urban Composition

A key priority for the strategy is to understand the existing scale and massing that establish. The below headings offer an understanding to what the urban composition of Parramatta City River is today.

- The Parramatta River corridor experiences a varied spatial arrangement of buildings due to different land uses and an increased emphasis for buildings to face away from the river;
- The varied arrangement of buildings is dictated by the changing topography and flooding experienced along the river corridor.;

Urban Grain

The urban grain forms the historical finger print of the site and allows us to compare the function and form of the different blocks that characterise the river corridor. Key characteristics are as follows;

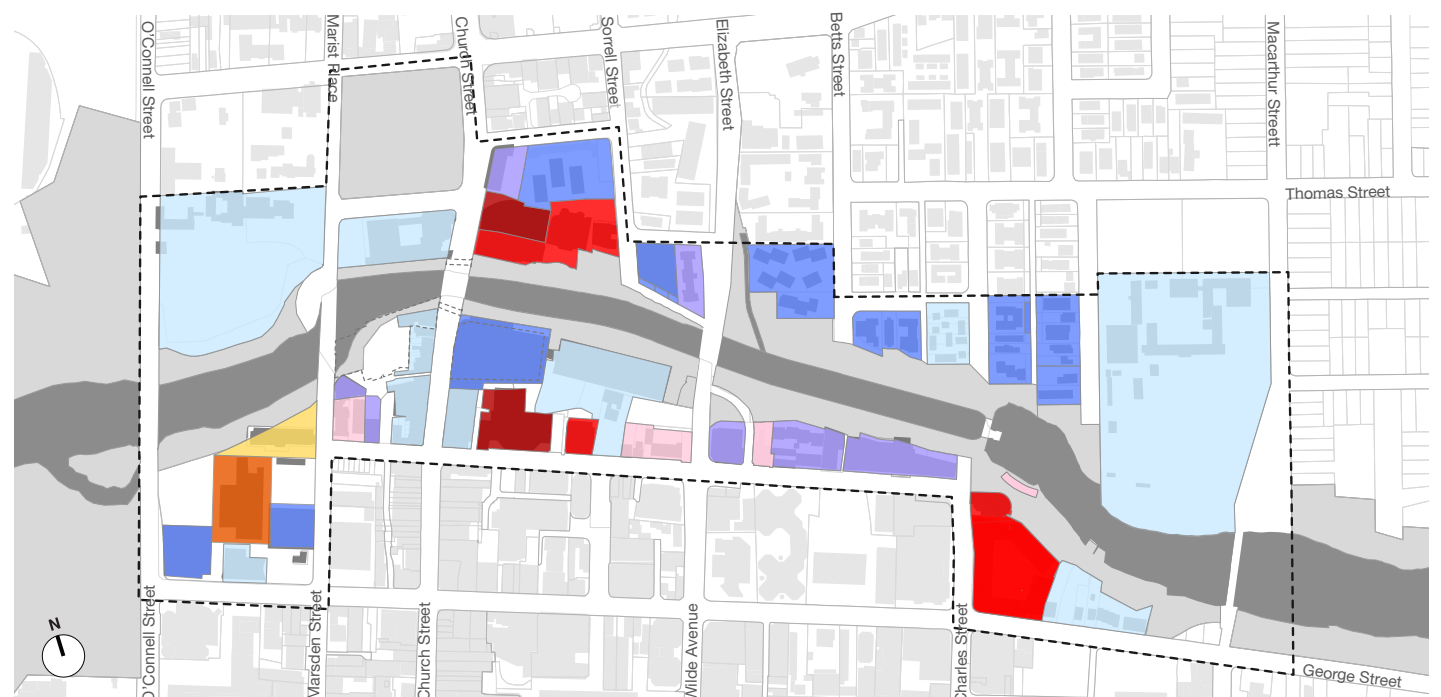


Legend
 - - - Analysis Boundary
 - - - Sites Under Development
 ■ Building Footprint

Existing Building Heights

Existing building heights within the analysis are highly varied. Key building height characteristics experienced along the river corridor are as follows;

- The northern residential edge heights are relatively consistent at 3-4 Storeys;
- The south bank of Parramatta Rive is highly inconsistent ranging between 1 - 18 Storeys. This is most evident along Phillip Street.
- Larger 10-14 Storey developments are located between Church Street, Smith Street and to the south of the ferry terminal;
- The Justice Precinct located west of Marsden Street contains medium scale buildings ranging between 8 to 10 storeys



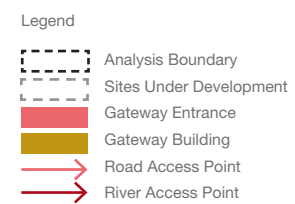
Legend
 - - - Analysis Boundary
 - - - Sites Under Development
 ■ 15 - 18 Storey
 ■ 10-14 Storey
 ■ 8-10 Storey
 ■ 6-7 Storey
 ■ 5-6 Storey
 ■ 3-4 Storey
 ■ 2-3 Storey
 ■ 1-2 Storey

FIGURE 2.10 - FIGURE GROUND
 TOP LEFT - Site Analysis Diagram
 FIGURE 2.11 - EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS
 BOTTOM LEFT - Site Analysis Diagram

Gateway Arrival Points

The Parramatta River corridor is characterised by five bridge crossings and a ferry terminal that form a major arrival points into the city. Key points to note are;

- The primary vehicular arrival points to the Parramatta City River foreshore are land marked by 5 river crossings; O'Connell, Marsden, Church, Macarthur Streets and Wilde Avenue.
- There is a lack of significant built form located at the bridge points, detracting the sense of arrival into the CBD.
- Future development at 330 Church Street and Riverside Tower site will increase this sense of arrival along Marsden Street Bridge and Lennox Bridge;
- A distinct lack of quality built form along the Barry Wilde Bridge diminishes the sense of arriving into the CBD;
- The low quality ferry terminal and convoluted public domain offer little sense of arrival when entering the CBD by ferry;



River Character

The overall site is divided into 4 distinct precincts. The precincts divide the site into quarters based on bridges/crossings as well as their distinctive characteristics. For further information please refer to Appendix B. The river precincts are as follows:

- Precinct 1 between O'Connell Street & Marsden Street
- Precinct 2 between Marsden Street & Church Street
- Precinct 3 between Church Street & Charles street
- Precinct 4 East of Charles street.

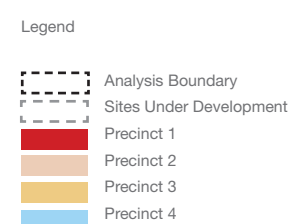


FIGURE 2.12 - GATEWAY ARRIVAL POINTS
 TOP RIGHT - Site Analysis Diagram
 FIGURE 2.13 - RIVER CHARACTER
 BOTTOM RIGHT - Site Analysis Diagram