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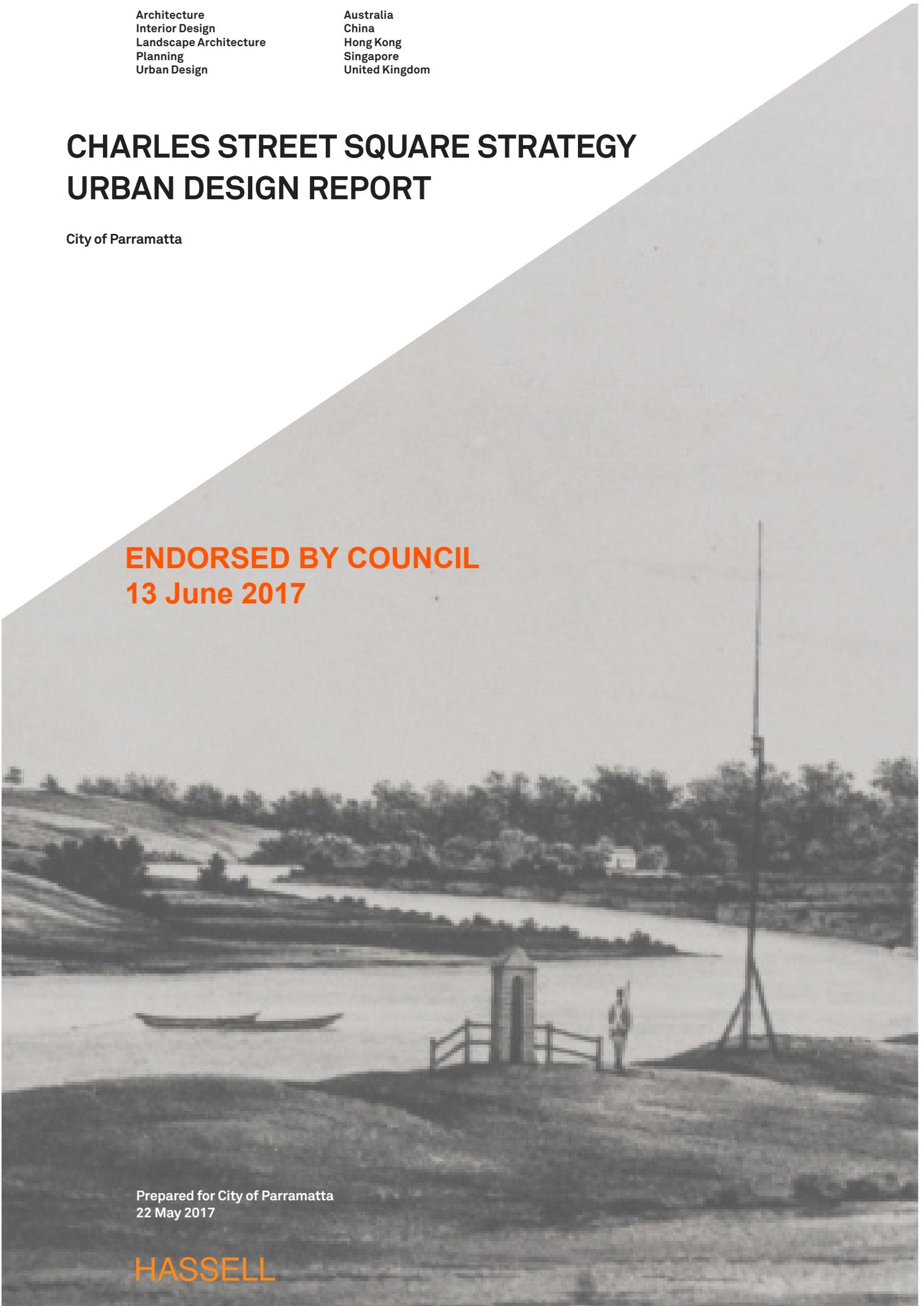
# CHARLES STREET SQUARE STRATEGY URBAN DESIGN REPORT

City of Parramatta

**ENDORSED BY COUNCIL**  
**13 June 2017**

Prepared for City of Parramatta  
22 May 2017

**HASSELL**



Front cover image: Landing Place,  
Parramatta 1809. Source: Parramatta  
Heritage Centre

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**Document control**

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01	20 September 2016	David Tickle	Initial draft for review
02	22 December 2016	David Tickle	Draft for review
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# 01

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## Project background and context

An analysis of the historic, current and future context of the site, to understand its significance in the Parramatta context. Existing site conditions are observed, which inform an opportunities and constraints analysis to shape the transformation of Charles Street Square.  
**Page 10**

# 02

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## Aspiration and principles

The design approach for this strategy has been aspiration led, and explores three main concepts for the site; arrival, meeting and dispersal. These are supported by a number of design principles that create a unified public domain and built form approach for the site.  
**Page 26**

# 03

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## Design Approaches

Establishes a series of design approaches that respond to the context and challenges for the site. These approaches are then assessed against the design principles and a preferred option is selected for more detailed concept design.  
**Page 34**

# 04

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## Concept master plan

The strategy then focuses on a preferred option, which best responds to the design principles for the site.  
**Page 44**

# 05

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## Exhibition

A summary of key issues raised following exhibition.  
**Page 52**

# 06

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## Next steps and recommendations

Identifies key recommendations and next steps to be considered and implemented at the conclusion of this strategic study.  
**Page 52**



**Legend**

-  Parramatta CBD
-  Parramatta City River Strategy
-  Parramatta Quay
-  Charles Street Square

### The Charles Street Square Strategy sets out an aspiration to create an identifiable public place adjacent to the CBD, improve transport connections, and explore how the precinct as a whole will function in the future.

The Charles Street Square Strategy will play an important role in realising the vision for Central City of Sydney. Charles Street Square will support liveability by guiding revitalisation of the Parramatta Quay precinct, delivering accessible and direct connections between the Ferry and the CBD. The Charles Street Strategy will support sustainability by promoting public and active transport and creating a vibrant precinct which has a strong connection to the natural environment. The Charles Street Square Strategy will support productivity by guiding integrated development of the Parramatta Quay precinct to create a distinct visitor arrival experience which celebrates the historic river gateway to Parramatta.

Charles Street Square (The Square) is an important node located on the Parramatta River. It provides an access point for pedestrians and cyclists from the river foreshore to the City. The Square is part of a broader vision to revitalise the Parramatta River, and will become a major gateway to transport services and a ferry arrival experience befitting Sydney's Central City.

#### Project Background

The Parramatta City River Strategy included a new aspiration for Charles Street Square as part of a revitalised precinct known as Parramatta Quay. The upgrade of Charles Street Square and the ferry terminus surrounds was identified in the recently exhibited *Draft Parramatta CBD Infrastructure Needs Analysis*. The Charles Street Square Strategy addresses the need for a new terminal for the Parramatta River Ferry Service that improves visitor arrival and public amenity and celebrates the historic and contemporary importance of the City's river gateway.

This site however, has complicated property boundary and usage issues, and these need to be resolved before the vision of the site can fully be realised.

Council's project objectives for this strategy are to:

1. Address current property issues constraining the redesign of public domain on Charles Street Square;
2. Open a discussion with Council and stakeholders as to the opportunities and constraints in realising an improved public square and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists;
3. Canvas a number of options with Council and Stakeholders to draw out different perspectives and test the viability of implementing different measures; and
4. Assess each of the options proposed and reach agreement on a preferred way forward to inform design development of Charles Street Square and the broader Parramatta Quay precinct.

HASSELL were engaged by City of Parramatta to formulate an integrated design solution which engages with the existing urban structure, transport connections and amenity at both city and river foreshore level. The strategy recognises the opportunity which could be realised by redevelopment of surrounding properties. This would greatly improve amenity and public space surrounding the Parramatta Ferry Wharf, assisting to realise the Parramatta City River Strategy.

#### Key Challenges

A number of challenges were identified by the project team during the design process. The Square currently has numerous property boundary and compliance issues that need to be resolved in order to optimise transport connectivity and prioritise pedestrian movements; including:

##### Property boundary issues

The Square is partly defined by the Charles Street road reserve, which also provides vehicular access to 94 Phillip Street. A 3m right of carriageway across the southern portion of the site provides street access to 36 Charles Street. Fire egress from 34 Charles Street is constrained by 36 Charles Street.

##### Limited visual and physical connectivity

Disconnects the City and the River at an important transportation gateway. The Square is currently characterised by a series of paths and ramps to the ferry wharf which do not comply with current standards.

##### Lack of delineation between public and private space

The Square lacks definition and makes access to and from the ferry wharf difficult. The accessible path is obscured by outdoor dining.

##### Lengthy and inaccessible paths

Make it difficult for both cyclists and pedestrians to navigate to and around the Square without conflict.

##### Vehicular access and waste collection on the Square

Access and waste collection limits potential activation of existing properties.

##### Public art and general clutter

The public artwork interrupts a key axis set up by the alignment of Phillip Street, an historic and important street in Parramatta.

##### Flooding

The river foreshore generally is prone to frequent flooding including high hazard. A continuous public connection above the 1:100 flood (at RL 7.6) and increased permeability to surrounding streets is desired for flood evacuation.

# 00 Executive Summary

## An aspiration and principles led design approach

Charles Street Square is located at an important node on the Parramatta River, a key recreational and archaeological asset for the City.

The design approach for Charles Street Square was aspiration and principles led and based on three distinct concepts for the space; arrival, dispersal and meeting. To support these concepts, a firm set of design principles were developed that assisted in creating an integrated and site responsive design approach.

They also emphasise the opportunity to express its distinct historic character and usage and potential to celebrate the process of arrival at this important place.

Charles Street Square is an important point of interchange in the CBD. The design principles support the overall strategy to create a place where:

1. People can make connections
2. People can move freely between different modes
3. The Square can become a destination in its own right.

## Design Approaches

Three design approaches were developed, to test the design principles and open a discussion with Council and stakeholders as to the opportunities and constraints related to both public domain and built form. These included:

### Charles Street Steps

This design approach creates a single landscaped stair that opens up the view corridor and transition between the City and the River. It provides a tall tree canopy to view the river underneath and provide shade and shelter.

### Phillip Street Extension

This approach reinforces the axis of the historic Phillip Street and sets up a direct path of travel along the alignment with the new ferry wharf. All connectivity runs in an east-west direction to create clear paths of movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

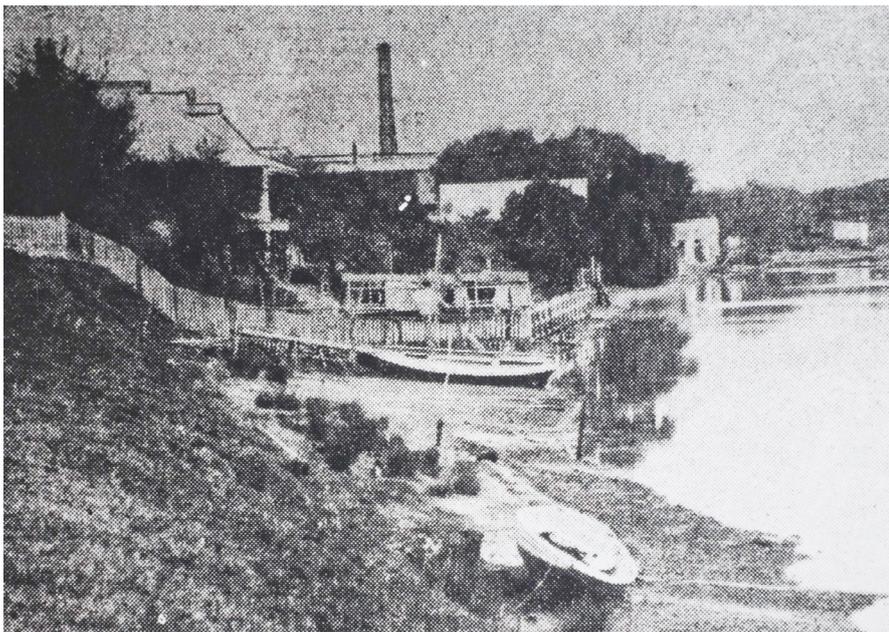
### Terraced Bank

A terraced bank uses extensive planting to soften the transition to the river along a series of ramps. This option returns the foreshore to a more natural condition and mediates the transition using a ramp rather than a lift.

## Concept Master Plan

Stakeholder consultation and design development led to a preferred approach for built form and public domain. Significant changes are required to resolve the complex set of issues currently effecting the functionality of the Square. The concept master plan proposes changes to property, built form and the public domain surrounding the Square.

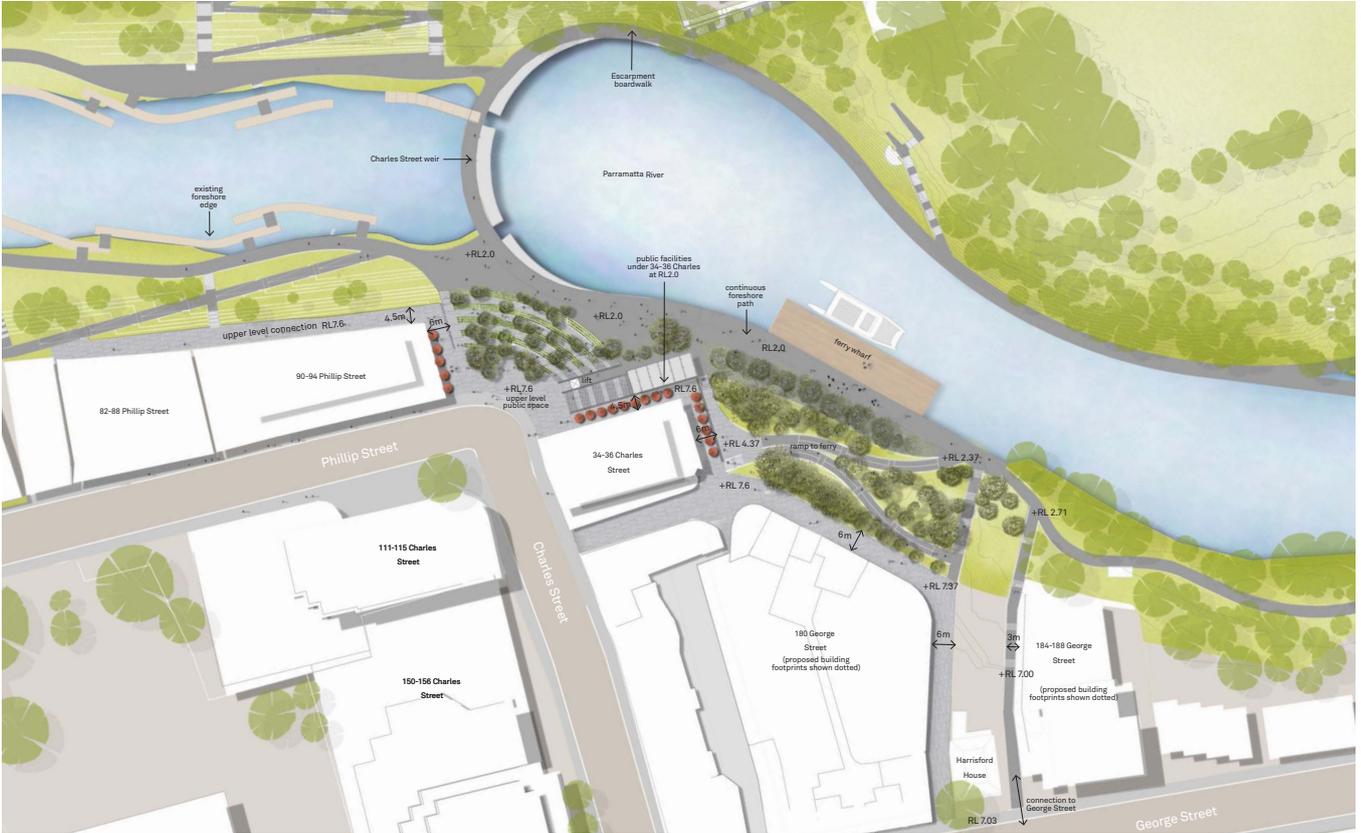
The scenario that best addresses these issues requires the amalgamation of 34-36 Charles Street and 90-94 Phillip Street. For these proposed parcels, built form testing was undertaken. Design controls were proposed to inform a positive built form and public domain outcome for Parramatta Quay.



Bird's eye view of Charles Street Square and Parramatta Quay. Source: NearMap.



# 00 Executive Summary



The Charles Street Steps approach was selected as the preferred concept master plan as it best aligned with the objectives and principles for the Strategy. Benefits of the preferred approach include:

### Addressed geometry

The transitions between the city and the foreshore levels is addressed in a simple gesture which reconciles the orthogonal street grid and organic form of the weir.

### Complements the street grid

Creates a strong, legible sense of direction for pedestrians.

### Suitable for events and gathering

Reconfiguring Charles Street Steps creates a usable space for people to gather, sit during an event, eat their lunch or wait for a ferry.

### Creates a distinct local place

This aligns with the broader Parramatta City River Strategy and concept for Parramatta Quay, and reinforces a sense of arrival at an important gateway to Parramatta.

## Next Steps and Recommendations

In order to assist City of Parramatta in prioritising future work at Charles Street Steps to lead to a successful transformation of the precinct, the following should be taken into account to properly embed the outcomes of this study:

### Recommendations

- \_ The future amalgamation of 34-36 Charles Street and 90-94 Phillip Streets in order to create a distinct edge to Charles Street Square, remove vehicular access and facilitate a clear transition between the City and the River
- \_ Co-ordinate with the landowners of 180 George Street to ensure a continued upper level connection consistent with the Parramatta City River Strategy
- \_ The closure of Charles Street (beyond Phillip Street) and rationalisation of other residual land parcels
- \_ A passenger lift is required to address the Disability Discrimination Act and provide direct access to the ferry wharf
- \_ Further design development of the Square to address staging impacts on public domain and adjacent properties

### Next Steps

- \_ Resolve design and procurement strategy of the public domain, Parramatta Ferry Wharf and Parramatta Quay
- \_ Review built form testing and floor space ratio for 34, 36 and 36a Charles Street
- \_ Consider initiating a road closure to terminate Charles Street at Phillip Street
- \_ Investigate whether rationalisation of other land parcels within and surrounding the precinct is desirable
- \_ Consider opportunities to reinforce Harrisford House's status as a local landmark and point of orientation within the precinct
- \_ Undertake ongoing coordination with surrounding private developments to open views, realise public connections, and improve activation of Parramatta Quay
- \_ Work together with TfNSW and RMS to resolve the design, funding and delivery program for Parramatta Quay including alternate transport services during construction

# Project background and context



01 Map of Parramatta Town, 1844. Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre

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Flour Mill

26

I P T S T R E E T

S T R E E T

22

S T R E E T

R C

E

Baptist Chapel

M I T H

17

A R L E S S

01

# 01 Project Background Introduction

# Charles Street Square is the central arrival point for ferry users entering the Parramatta CBD.

The Charles Street Square Strategy will play an important role in realising the vision for Sydney's Central City. Charles Street Square will support liveability by guiding revitalisation of the Parramatta Quay precinct, delivering accessible and direct connections between the Ferry and the CBD. The Charles Street Strategy will support sustainability by promoting public and active transport and creating a vibrant precinct which has a strong connection to the natural environment. The Charles Street Square Strategy will support productivity by guiding integrated development of the Parramatta Quay precinct to create a distinct visitor arrival experience which celebrates the historic river gateway to Parramatta.

Charles Street Square provides an important access point for pedestrians and cyclists to the river foreshore from the City, and has the potential to provide a ferry arrival experience befitting Sydney's Central City.

The Charles Street Square Strategy sets out an aspiration to create an identifiable public place adjacent to the CBD, improve transport connections, and explore how the precinct as a whole will function in the future.

### Project Background

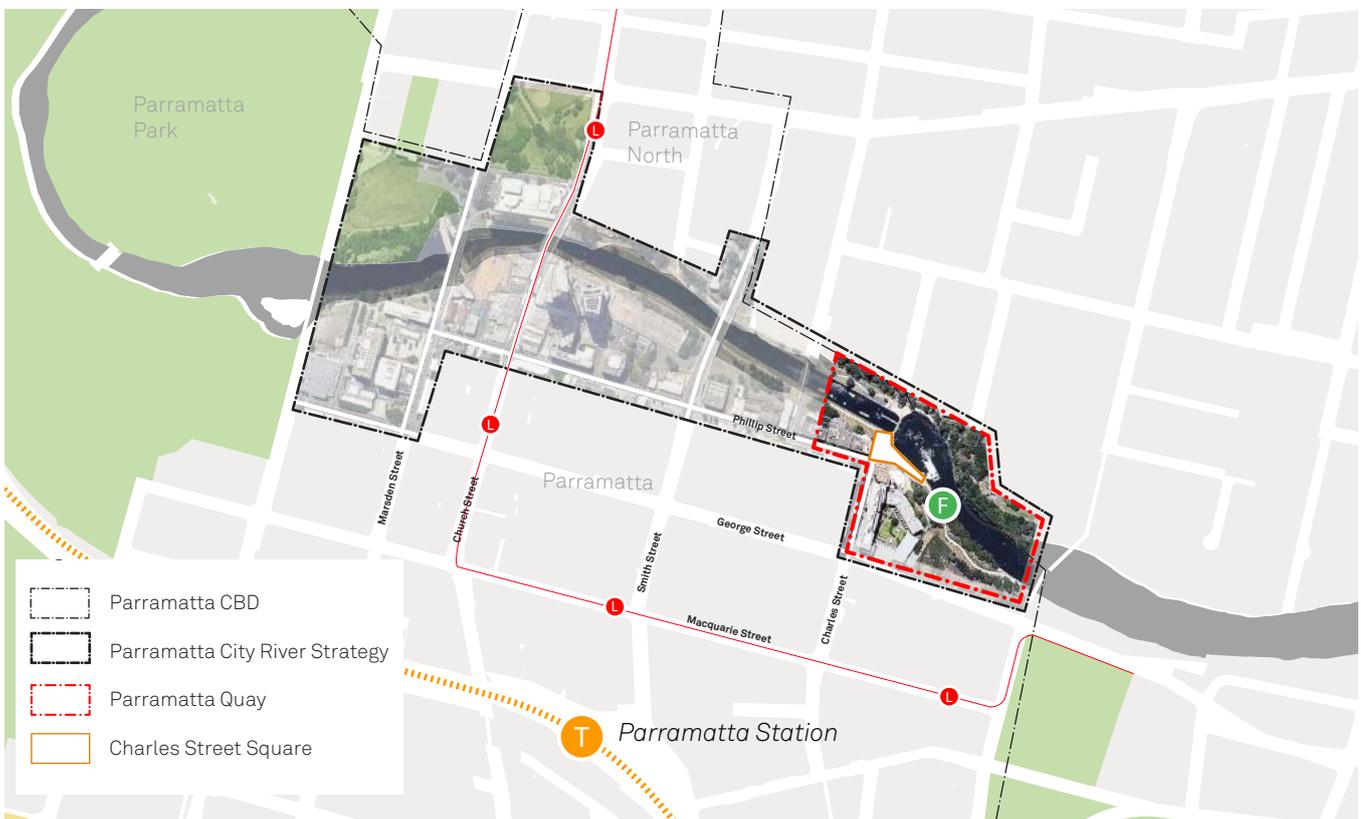
The Parramatta City River Strategy (endorsed by Council in May 2015) included a new aspiration for Charles Street Square as part of a revitalised precinct known as Parramatta Quay. Design development for the Parramatta Quay is intended to follow in 2017/2018. Before this can proceed however, numerous property boundary and compliance issues need to be resolved. Council's objectives for this strategy are to:

1. Unlock current property issues constraining the redesign of public domain on Charles Street Square
2. Open a discussion with stakeholders as to the opportunities and constraints in realising an improved public square and improving

connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists

3. Canvas a number of options with Council and Stakeholders to draw out different perspectives and test the viability of implementing different measures
4. Assess each of the options proposed and reach agreement on a preferred way forward to inform design development of Charles Street Square and the broader Parramatta Quay precinct.

HASSELL were engaged by City of Parramatta to formulate an integrated design solution for the area to re-engage the existing urban structure, and improve transport connectivity and amenity at both city and river foreshore level. The strategy also proactively considers the increased development demand through a number of built form studies to explore the potential of adjacent properties and their integration with the Parramatta City River Strategy design principles.



# 01 Project Background

## Introduction

### Study Area

The focus of the strategy is Charles Street Square (the Square). The majority of the Square is currently on Council owned land (Lot 2, DP 869816), however the allotment is physically defined by the Charles Street Road Reserve and a Right of Carriageway (to DP 869820). Ramped access to the Square is also on Council owned land (Lot 2, DP 869820).

The immediate study area also includes privately owned allotments with direct frontage onto the site. This includes 180 George Street, 34,36 Charles Street and 90, 94 Phillip Street.

### Key Challenges

There are a number of property and access issues that need to be resolved in order to optimise transport connections and prioritise pedestrian movement at Charles Street Square.

### Property issues

The Square is partly defined by the Charles Street road reserve, which provides vehicular access to 94 Phillip Street.

Street. A 3m right of carriageway provides street access to 36 Charles Street. Fire egress from 34 Charles Street is via a narrow corridor at the back of 36 Charles Street.

### Limited visual and physical connectivity

A lack of physical and visual connectivity disconnects the city and the river at an important transport gateway. The Square is currently characterised by a series of inequitable paths to the ferry wharf. Potential views between the two levels are limited and this detracts from the amenity of the site.

### Lack of delineation between public and private space

An accessible path of travel is currently adjacent to the outdoor dining area of 36 Charles Street. Both areas lack definition and make access to and from the ferry wharf confusing.

### Lengthy and inaccessible paths

Make it difficult for both cyclists and pedestrians to navigate between the

street, the Square and Ferry Wharf in an equitable, safe and convenient way.

### Vehicular access and waste collection

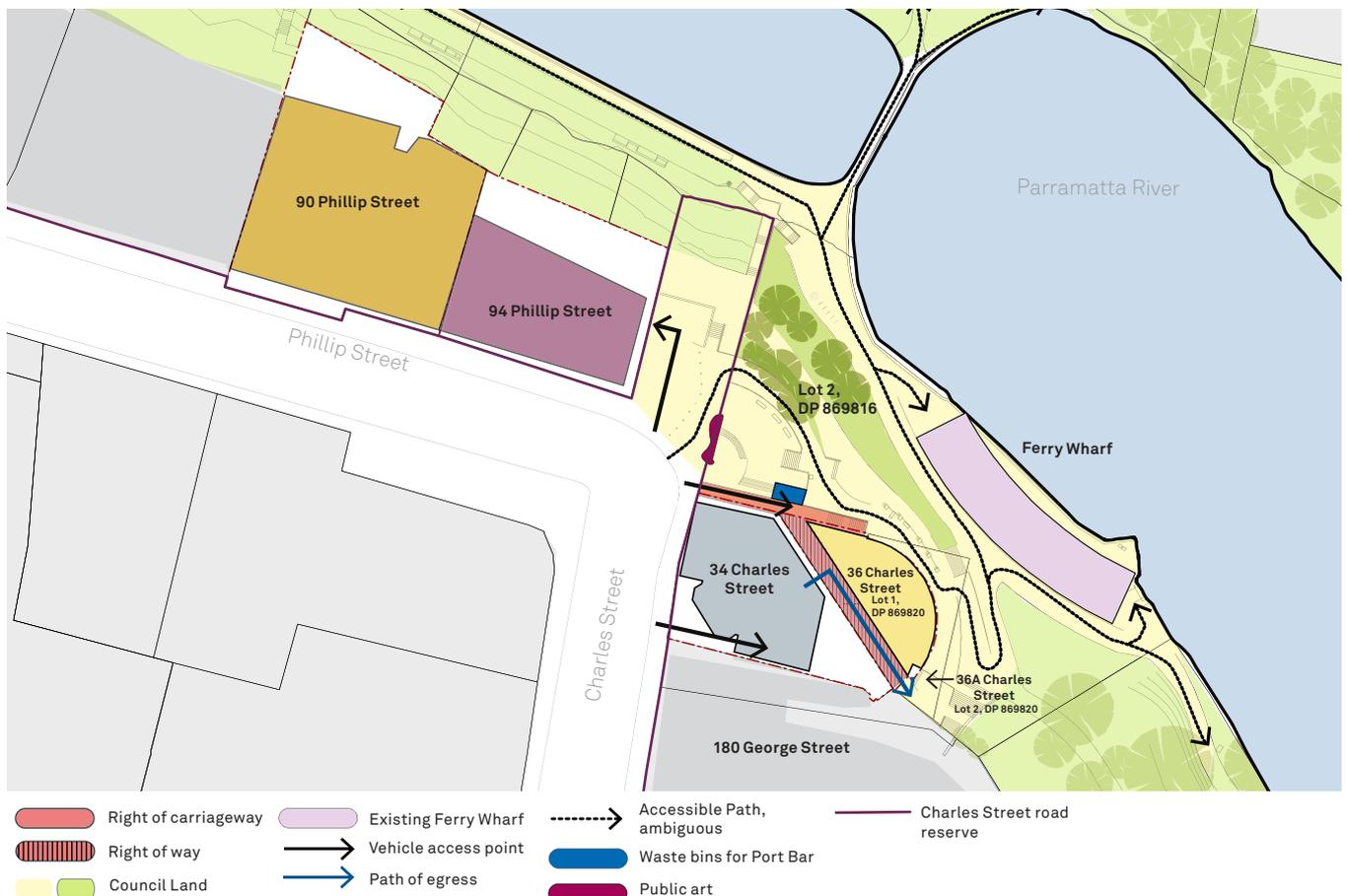
This is closely related to the property issues associated with the site. Complex arrangements result in cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians crossing paths. Access to properties and waste collection also limits ground floor activity on the edge of the Square.

### Public art and general clutter

The public artwork interrupts a key axis set up by the alignment of Phillip Street, a historic and important street in Parramatta. There is also an opportunity to consider a more consistent placement and design of other public domain elements.

### Flooding

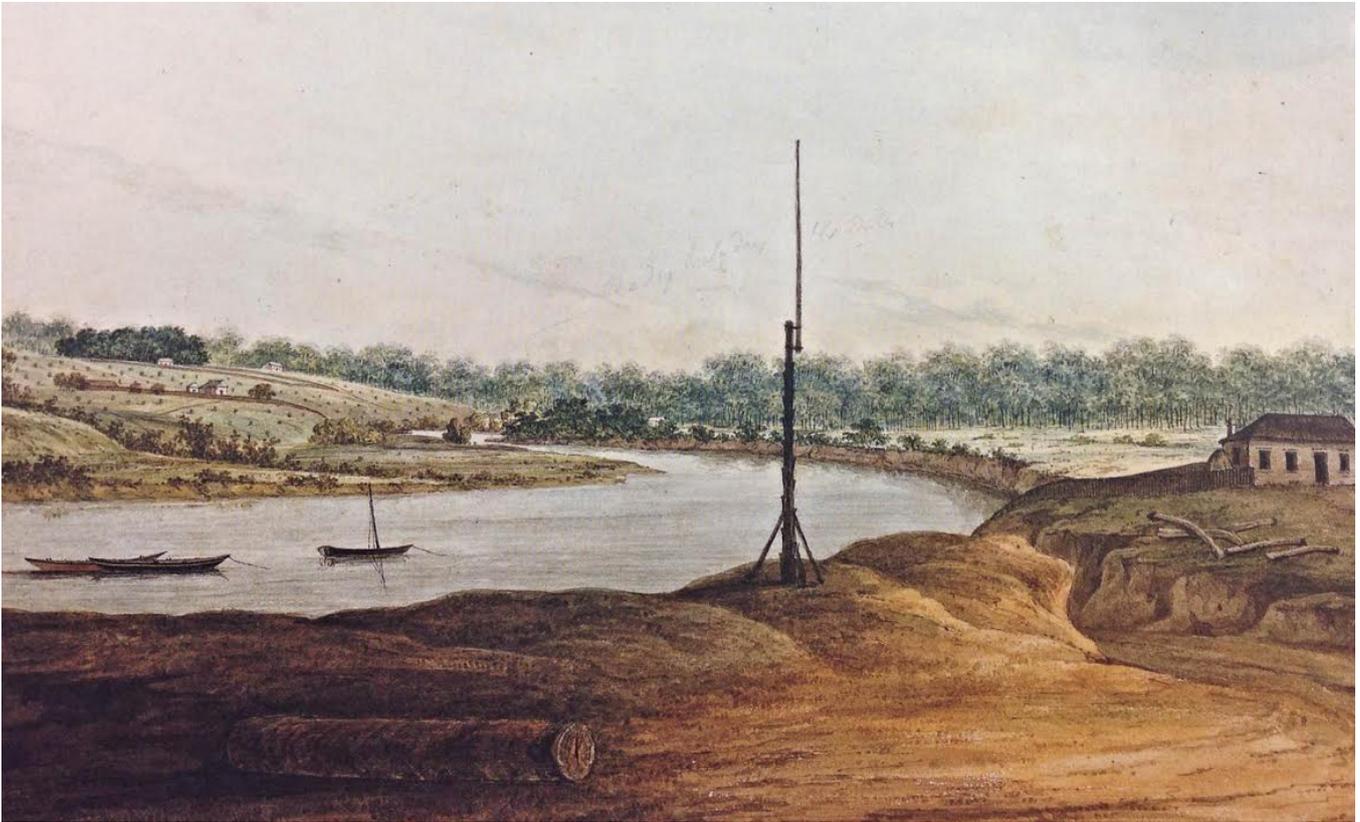
The river foreshore generally is prone to frequent flooding including high hazard. A continuous public connection above the 1:100 flood (at RL 7.6) and increased permeability to surrounding streets is desired for flood evacuation.



## 01 Project Background

### Historic context

The Parramatta River foreshore is important as a meeting place for generations of Darug people, as the place where salt water from Sydney Harbour and the fresh water of Parramatta River mix.



Local Darug people used, occupied, managed and exploited Country for thousands of generations through indigenous farming techniques such as mosaic fire regimes and eel traps. Land and water sustainability is central to the Aboriginal estate; it's founded on the Dreamtime and associated knowledge systems such as totems, songlines, rituals and ceremony. Darug people continue this deep connection to Country.

There are many clans of Darug custodians responsible for Country around modern Parramatta. The Burramatta or Baramada Clan lived along the upper reaches of the Parramatta River. The, Burramatta, whose name comes from the Darug word, burra for 'eel', is thought to mean 'place where the eels lie down'. Many Darug clans have a close relationship with the river, from which they caught fish, eels, and collected other resources for a healthy life. Their stable bark canoes often carried a small fire in the middle – built on a mound of soil to allow them to cook their catch fresh.

The foreshore and the Parramatta River itself were of immense significance to the local Darug People as it was the meeting place of the salt water from Sydney Harbour and the fresh water from the Parramatta River. The tides and extremes in climate meant that this section of river could range from being virtually empty of water to a raging torrent<sup>1</sup>.

Thousands of years of management of the Aboriginal Estate made the land around Parramatta fertile ground, much more suited to agriculture than the land at Sydney Cove. There were tragic consequences for Darug individuals and families when Governor Phillip's exploration party arrived in 1788 with instructions to find fertile land and develop a farming settlement to feed the new English colony. Thousands of people were displaced or alienated from Country they had managed and nurtured for many generations.

<sup>1</sup> <http://arc.parracity.nsw.gov.au/the-river-foreshore-parramatta/>

01 The landing place at Parramatta, 1809  
Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre

# 01 Project Background

## Historic context



The first colonists under Governor Arthur Phillip arrived at the foreshore of Parramatta further east of the existing wharf near Duck Creek on 23 April 1788. After making their way on foot to the site, Phillip recognised the agricultural potential of the land and access to fresh water and returned to Sydney with a desire to set up Australia's second colony in Parramatta. Colonists returned on 2 November 1788, at the site just east of the current Gasworks Bridge. As the river was too shallow for boats, they landed their goods and carried them overland to the site now known as Parramatta Park. The introduction of farming and agriculture led to the immediate displacement of the Burramattagal people from the land they had lived off for hundreds of thousands of years.



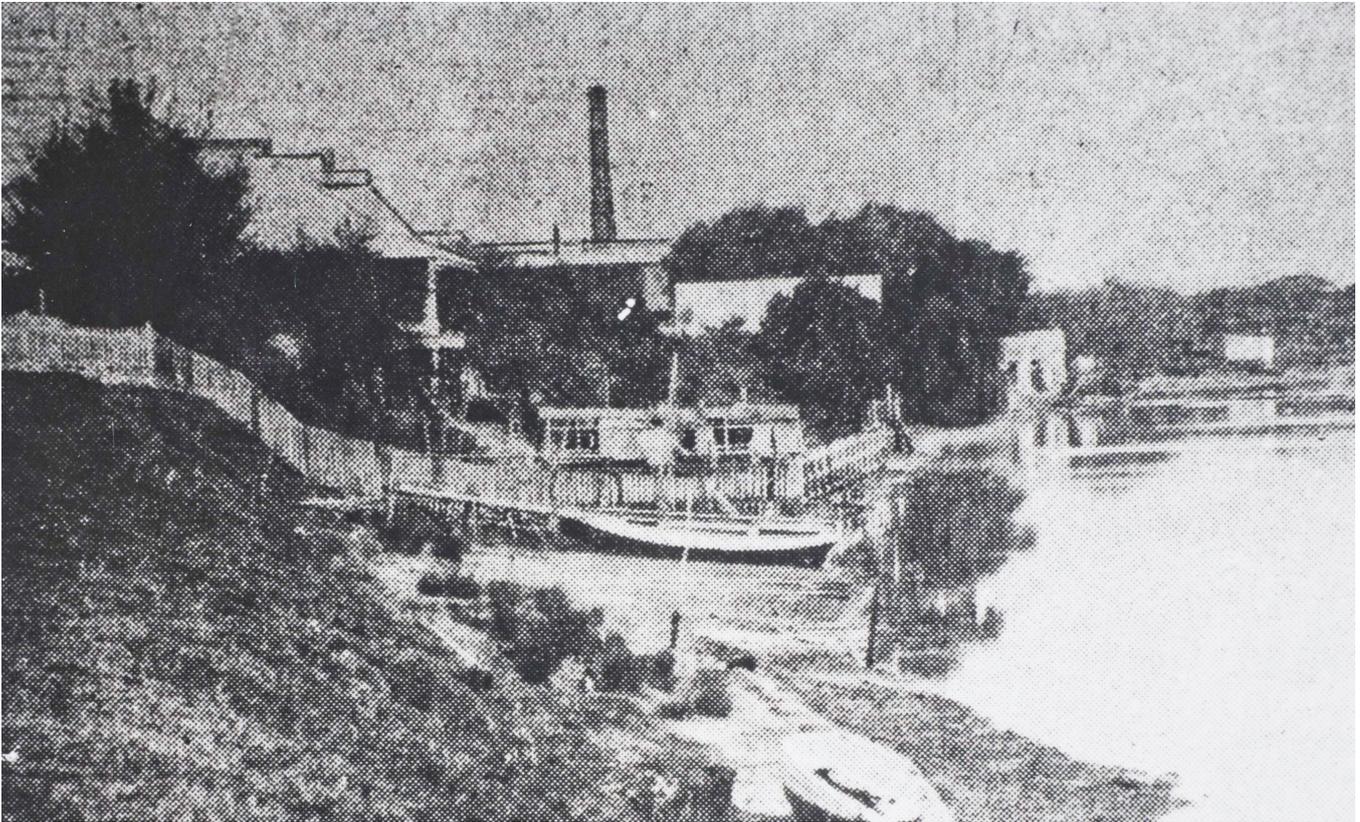
01 Government Farm at Rosehill, 1791. Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre

02 Government Farm at Rosehill, 1791. Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre

## 01 Project Background

### Historic context

Parramatta's original log wharf, King's Wharf, later proved unable to accommodate the growth of river traffic and so a new wharf to the east was built. This wharf was named Queen's Wharf.



## The landing place of Australia's second European colony

One of the priorities for early settlers was to build a wharf to connect Parramatta to Sydney Cove. The first wharf was known as the 'Landing Place', then 'The King's Wharf'. The Kings Wharf was a rudimentary structure made by laying logs along the river's edge to allow for loading and unloading. Its high sandy bank was later cut away to allow stores to be carried along a westerly track to the fortification and store at Rose Hill (The Crescent). This track was later to be laid out as High Street, now known as George Street. With the growth of the river traffic a new wharf slightly east was built, known as 'Queen's Wharf'.

### Harrisford House

The site was subject to Governor Macquarie's realignment programme, where two lots were purchased by Reverend William Walker in September 1829. The Riverside lot was purchased for £15 and the George Street lot for £60. He built a school on the site and leased both lots to the King's School.

Completed in 1832, Harrisford House is one of the oldest remaining houses in the Parramatta area. Originally built as the first site of The King's School, Australia's oldest independent schools. The school moved from the premises in 1836 to a new and larger site. The house was used for a number of other schools until 1865, when following a roof collapse the classrooms were left uninhabitable. Afterwards the house took on a succession of owners, including Mr. Harris, of Harris Park, hence its name today.



01 Queens Wharf, 1900.  
Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre

02 Harrisford House, c.1960's - 1970's.  
Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre

## 01 Project Background

### Historic context



By 1895, with the construction of a heavy rail line, industrialisation arrived in Parramatta, changing the development nature and focus of the city. The alignment of the historic street grid of George and Market Street (now Phillip Street) saw much development turn away from the River due to flooding and subsequent water ingress. The natural river beds were channelled in 1950, and in 1951, the NSW State Government took over the Sydney Ferries Ltd.

Between 1969 and 1973 an attempt to revive ferry transport between Circular Quay and Meadowbank was made, however the service was both slow and unprofitable. Financial viability of a ferry service depended on speed, comfort and patronage, and in 1988, the State Government financed a program to dredge the silted river between the Charles Street Weir and Silverwater to allow fast ferry mooring and close access to the CBD. More than 20,000 cubic metres of the river bed was dredged between Rydalmere and Silverwater and a channel excavated for the remaining 4.6 kilometres to Parramatta. This wharf and ferry service is still in use today.

01 Flooded Weir,  
Marsden St, c 1880.  
Source: Parramatta  
Heritage Centre

## 01 Project Background

### Strategic context

## A number of strategic plans exist which outline aspirations and key moves for the future of Parramatta as Australia's next great city

### A centre of metropolitan significance

#### A Plan for Growing Sydney (2014)

A Plan for Growing Sydney sets out the NSW Government vision for Sydney as a strong global city and a great place to live. It seeks to guide the land use planning decisions for the next 20 years that will determine where people will live, work and move around the city. It provides a framework for strengthening the global competitiveness and delivering strong investment and economic growth in Western Sydney.

A Plan for Growing Sydney recognises Greater Parramatta as Sydney's western CBD. Located close to the demographic heart of the Sydney Metropolitan Area, its scale and mix of commercial, health and education facilities make it a centre of metropolitan significance.

A Plan for Growing Sydney identifies the need for connecting and integrating Parramatta's precincts; its jobs, goods and services through improved public transport connections. Greater Parramatta will continue to grow in significance to Sydney, which will require a critical mass of investment and greater diversity of activities. As Greater Parramatta attracts more jobs there will be further incentive for other firms to move to the area, integrating the precincts within and connecting the centre to the wider community and other centres through public transport.

### Increasing the capacity for growth and development

#### Parramatta CBD Planning Strategy (2015)

The Parramatta CBD Planning Strategy sets the aspiration for the growth of the Parramatta CBD. In order to help facilitate growth, Council commenced its own strategic review of the planning framework to determine opportunities for investment, jobs, better built form outcomes and design excellence.

It establishes principles and actions to guide a new planning framework for the Parramatta CBD, to provide a clear implementation plan for the delivery of a new planning framework.

The CBD Planning Strategy included a number of recommendations for changes to Council's planning framework. These recommendations generally aimed to increase capacity for new residential and commercial development and to improve the design quality of development in the CBD.

#### Draft Planning Proposal for the Parramatta CBD (2017)

To facilitate the expected growth and manage the changes in the CBD, Council has prepared a Planning Proposal to amend the planning controls for the Parramatta CBD contained in Parramatta Local Environmental Plan 2011 (PLEP 2011).

The purpose of the Planning Proposal is to:

- \_ Provide for an expanded and more intense commercial core to strengthen and facilitate the role of Parramatta as a dual CBD;
- \_ Support the CBD as a vibrant centre by surrounding the core with higher density mixed use; and
- \_ Provide capacity for an additional 48,763 jobs and 20,297 dwellings.

A number of technical studies were undertaken to support the development of the Draft Planning Proposal for the Parramatta CBD, to establish a vision for growth, principles and actions that would guide the new planning framework and an implementation plan for its delivery.

Draft LEP Provisions in the planning proposal have implications for landowners abutting Charles Street Square.

# 01 Project Background

## Strategic context

### Parramatta Quay - an important river gateway

The Parramatta City River Strategy identifies the establishment of Parramatta Quay as a distinctive place, an important (historic and contemporary) river gateway to the Parramatta CBD. It includes the Parramatta Ferry terminal, Charles Street Square, the Charles Street Weir and the Escarpment Boardwalk project, and establishes key outcomes for the precinct.

The River Strategy recognises the significance of the ferry terminus and the importance of this area to the renewal of the City's foreshore. Parramatta Quay is proposed as the major ferry arrival point connecting Circular Quay to Parramatta Quay. Utilising Parramatta CBD's positioning along the river, ferry travel would be encouraged through a more regular ferry service and river arrival experience that is befitting of Sydney's second CBD.

A concept design was produced for the site area that sets a basic framework for the redevelopment of the public domain and begins to establish a series of broad principles, relative levels (for continuity throughout the site area) and a framework for design development.

The River Strategy deals with the complex level changes between the riverside edge and the city. To respond to these, it adopts key approaches to levels in order to establish improved river access. It proposes a series of levels that include an upper, mid, lower and river edge level with access ramps and stairs connecting the levels. These are considered throughout the design process for Charles Street Square.

The Charles Street Strategy builds upon the design principles set out in the River Strategy. It recognises that the unprecedented growth of east Parramatta has brought with it new challenges for Parramatta Quay. It assists Council to create a new vision for the area and to realise its ambition to reclaim the river and its foreshore as a vibrant public space for the City.



Parramatta City River Strategy Concept Plan, Source: McGregor Coxall

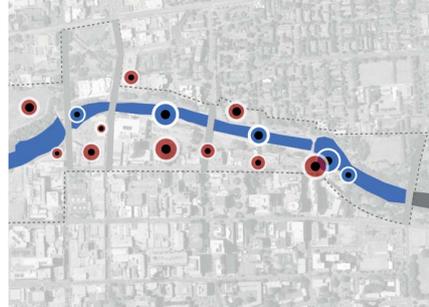


Parramatta Quay, Source: McGregor Coxall

## 01 Project Background

### Strategic context

## Five principles identified in the Parramatta City River Strategy have informed the development of the Charles Street Square Strategy



### Establish Parramatta Quay

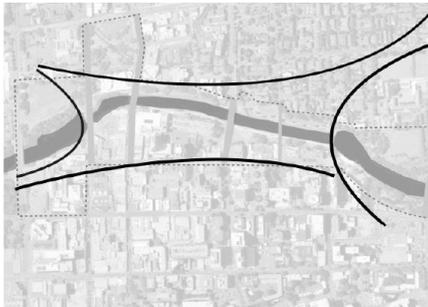
- \_ Improve the connection between Phillip Street and the Ferry Wharf
- \_ Promote pedestrian movement by activating key building frontages to Charles Street Square
- \_ Establish a defined public space at the intersection of Charles and Phillip Streets
- \_ Emphasise the connection to the river by ensuring the view corridor along the foreshore is clear and unobstructed

### Activate Parramatta River

- \_ Enhance existing destinations through ground floor retail and cafes
- \_ Define a network of public spaces and active lane ways throughout Charles Street Square
- \_ Establish destinations for engagement and recreation
- \_ Consider new public space as an opportunity for pop up stalls, temporary interventions, and events

### Connect the River to the City

- \_ Facilitate an interchange between future light rail to the existing ferry terminal
- \_ Improve visual and physical connection between the city and rivers foreshore by introducing terraced landscaped areas



### Strengthen Parramatta River's Character

- \_ Strengthen and develop a landscape and built character for Charles Street which strengthens its distinct local identity as an important node within the future precinct

### Strengthen River Movement

- \_ Locate major access nodes between the bridges and the riverside corridor
- \_ Consider access and egress for accessibility
- \_ Strengthen connections between Phillip Street and the Ferry Terminal
- \_ Recognise and respond to riverside pedestrian and cycle routes along the river foreshore

# 01 Project Background

## Strategic context

### Future Public Space and Development Context

The following is a summary of key projects, developments, transport and future public spaces. These will contribute to the transformation of the Parramatta River by improving connectivity, creating new attractors and enhancing the visitor experience to this part of the CBD.

#### Development - CBD East

##### 180 George Street

A mixed use, predominantly residential development with two towers of approximately 45 storeys each, with a 6 storey podium. This site will connect the upper level walkway from Charles Street Square to George Street.

##### 142 Macquarie Street (Cumberland Precinct)

Currently at planning proposal stage, a mixed use residential development including a large public space connecting George and Macquarie Streets with towers ranging from 15 to 60 storeys.

##### 184-186 George Street

A residential development adjacent to Harrisford House, currently at planning proposal phase. Provides a minimum 3m link from George Street to the Foreshore, adjacent Harrisford House.

#### Public Spaces

##### Horwood Place Civic Link (Civic Link)

The Civic Link will be a key connector in the Parramatta CBD, linking Parramatta Square to the river front through a series of public spaces.

##### The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) and River Square

MAAS (The Powerhouse) will be relocated from the Sydney CBD to the river foreshore with 40% more exhibits. This will be framed by River Square, a 10,000 person multi-use public space located at the termination of the Civic Link at the edge of Parramatta River.

##### Robin Thomas and James Ruse Reserves

A historic park consisting of Crown and community land, located on George Street. The site consists of 4.4 hectares of sports ground and active recreation space. A master plan for this site was adopted by Council in 2014.

#### Transport

##### Parramatta Light Rail

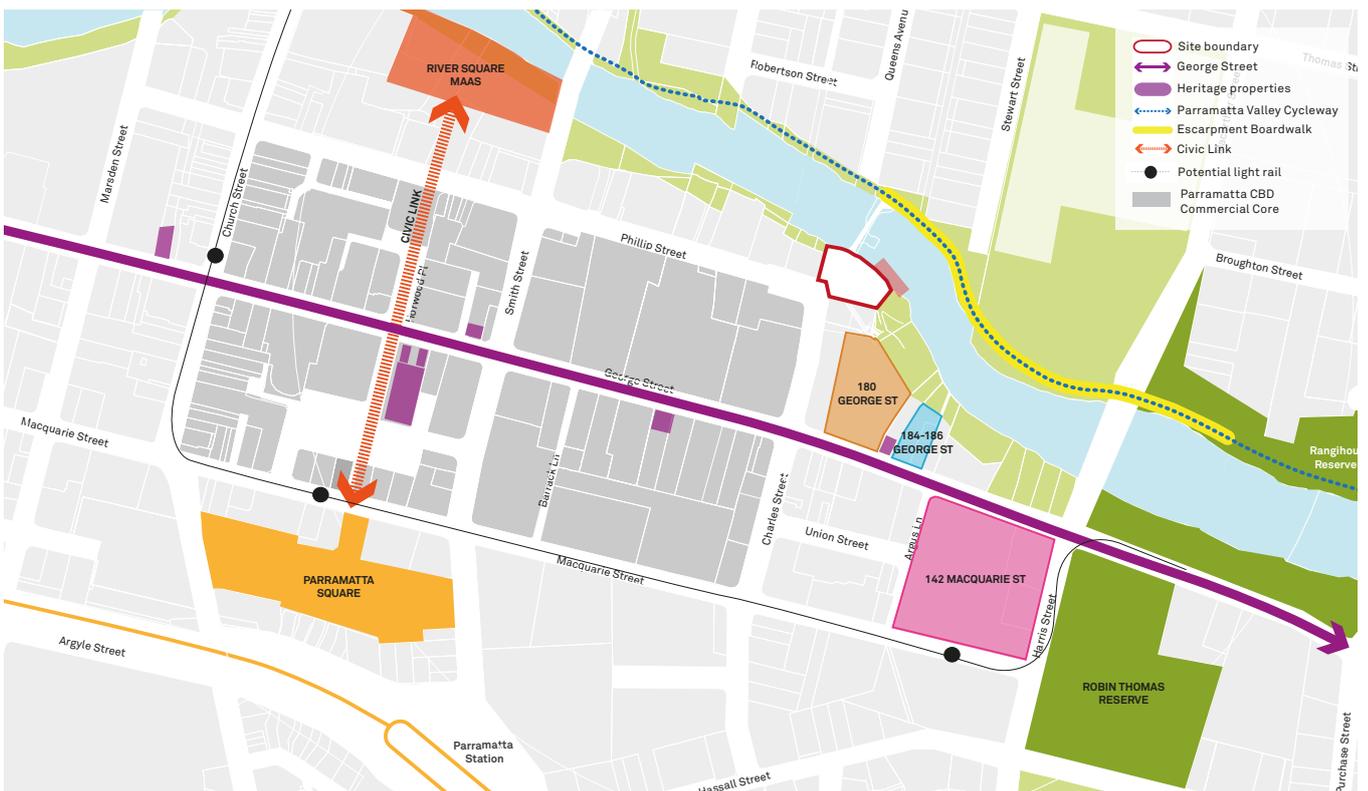
A proposed 20km long corridor connecting Greater Parramatta to Carlingford. A stop within close proximity to Parramatta Quay is desirable.

##### Parramatta Valley Cycleway

The Parramatta Valley Cycleway starts at Morrison Bay Park in Ryde and heads west along dedicated bike paths, quiet streets and the river foreshore. It also includes the Escarpment Boardwalk which is a new connection along the River's northern bank which unlocks a missing link on the Parramatta Valley Cycleway from Rangihou Reserve to Charles Street Weir.

##### Parramatta Ferry Wharf

A new terminal for the Parramatta River Ferry service which improves visitor arrival, and celebrates the historic and contemporary importance of the City River Gateway.



# 01 Project Background

## Site analysis

Site analysis was undertaken to ensure that the design approach is responsive, informed and meaningful

### Visual and physical connectivity

Charles Street Square is characterised by a significant level change (5.5 metres) from the city to the river foreshore, which makes visual connectivity limited in the current configuration.

The presence of public art at the junction of Phillip and Charles Street does not enable a direct view to the ferry terminal, and conceals the start of the shared accessible path to the foreshore.

At city level, activation to the edges of 90 Phillip Street and 34 Charles Street is difficult to achieve due to the presence of vehicles on the square, which also limit sight lines to the ferry wharf and to the north across the weir.

Transition between levels of the existing shared path and stairs consist of inactive, blank walls which limit visual connectivity back to the city. These are demonstrated in Figure 1.

#### Considerations

- \_ Create clear sight lines and interchange between transport modes
- \_ Increase legibility and permeability to and from the wharf
- \_ Rationalise easements to adjacent land owners
- \_ Provide a higher level viewing platform at Charles Street Square which enables people to retreat in flood conditions with sight lines to view the foreshore safely



01 Looking north on Charles Street to the foreshore  
Photography by HASSELL

02 Looking west toward Phillip Street  
Photography by HASSELL

# 01 Project Background

## Site analysis

### Accessibility and amenity

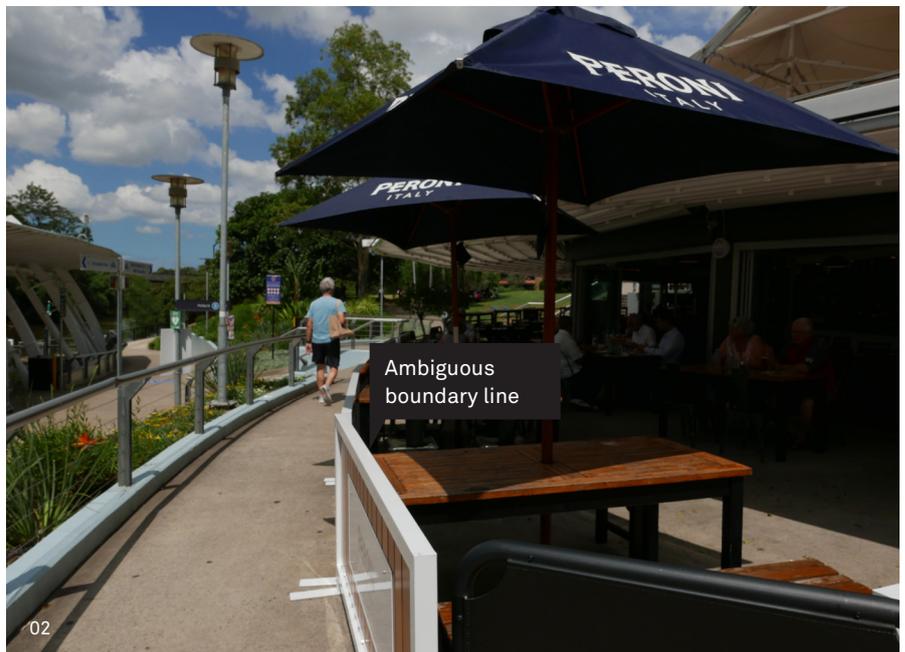
The current experience of Charles Street Square is dominated by shared paths. Due to the level change between the city and the river, these are lengthy and do not provide direct access from the street to the ferry wharf, making navigation difficult.

The presence of vehicles at street level detracts from the amenity of the site and there is general conflict between vehicles, pedestrian and cycle use. Vehicles also make way-finding from the city to the river difficult for users.

There is no clear delineation between public and private land in the Square. This is particularly evident along the transition to the foreshore at the boundary of 36 Charles Street, which is adjacent to an accessible path as per Figure 2.

#### Considerations

- \_ Create a direct equitable and accessible path of travel
- \_ Remove vehicular access to promote activation along the edges
- \_ Create clear delineation and legibility between shared and accessible paths
- \_ Clearly delineate outdoor dining areas from public space
- \_ Provide a passenger lift to avoid lengthy ramps
- \_ Improve public amenity on lower level foreshore
- \_ Review and rationalise property easements and rights of way to existing land owners to improve building frontages, vehicular access and presentation to public space



01 Accessible shared paths looking east to Ferry Wharf  
Photography by HASSELL

02 Active frontage of 36 Charles Street looking east  
Photography by HASSELL

# 01 Project Background

## Site analysis

### Site legibility

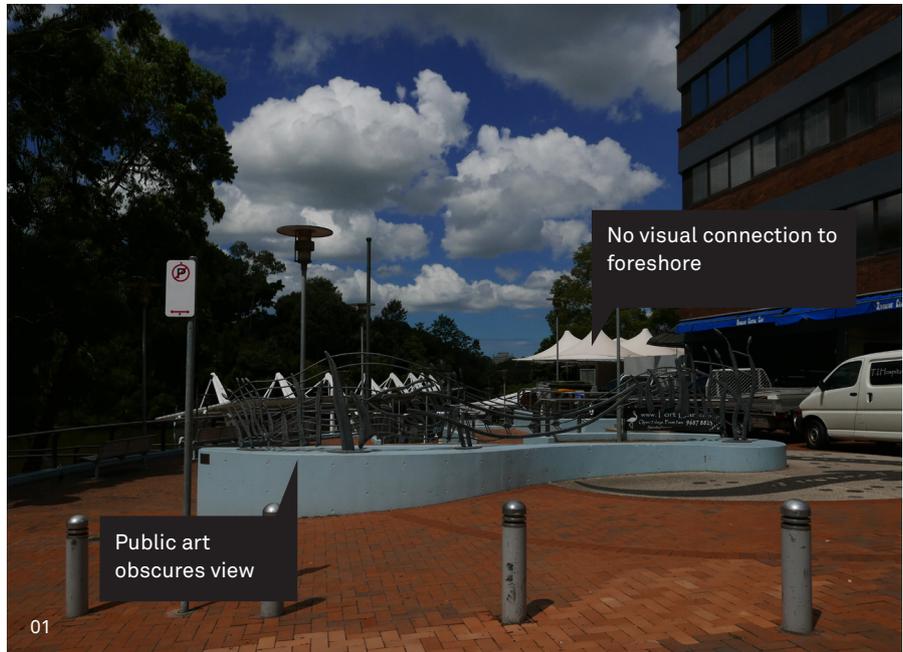
Though Charles Street Square is located at the axis of Charles and Phillip Streets, connections to the immediate context are poor. There is limited activation and way finding along both Charles and Phillip Streets to direct pedestrians and cyclists.

Access to Charles Street Square is via a narrow retail arcade under 180 George Street, which has no direct sight lines to the existing ferry wharf. The path of travel from the arcade is only via a set of stairs adjacent to 36 Charles Street. Improved permeability from the foreshore to George Street is desirable, as currently the only access is via Charles Street.

At the foreshore level, the existing paths offer good visual connectivity, uncluttered and generous in nature with unobstructed sight lines to the ferry wharf in both directions.

#### Considerations

- \_ Create a stronger relationship between Phillip and Charles Street and River Foreshore
- \_ Improve permeability by facilitating a direct connection to George Street
- \_ Integrate the future design of Charles Street Square to extend the upper level pedestrian link from the Parramatta City River Strategy
- \_ Respond to the foreshore park, Charles Street Weir and the Escarpment Boardwalk
- \_ Design paths to increase legibility and improve connectivity to multiple transport modes
- \_ Facilitate a light rail connection to improve legibility from the ferry wharf to the CBD generally
- \_ Recognise visitor links between this precinct and historic homes to the south east of the site



01 Looking north along Charles Street  
Photography by HASSELL

02 Looking west along foreshore path  
Photography by HASSELL

# 01 Project Background

## Opportunities and constraints

### Opportunities and constraints

Following site analysis, a number of opportunities and constraints were identified which informed the formulation of design principles for the project. These are as follows:

#### 1. Deliver a revitalised public space

That realises the potential of this important transport gateway and facilitates connections between the Parramatta River and the foreshore.

#### 2. Strengthen the transport interchange

Improve light rail, ferry and bus interchange opportunities to improve visitor experience and amenity between the Parramatta River foreshore and the CBD. Optimise connectivity and prioritise pedestrian amenity to the ferry wharf.

#### 3. Improve connectivity

Strengthen connections and utilise setbacks that link the foreshore to George Street. Extend the upper level connection established in the Parramatta City River Strategy to improve permeability across the Parramatta Quay precinct.

#### 4. Recognise Harrisford House

Establish connections between George Street and the foreshore by including Harrisford House, one of Parramatta's oldest buildings, as part of the historic houses walking tour. Consider opportunities for future public access or use.

#### 5. Create public benefit from redevelopment

A number of planning proposals have been submitted for large land holdings surrounding Charles Street Square. There is an opportunity to leverage change in the area to assist City of Parramatta to realise the Parramatta City River Strategy and improve the Ferry Wharf and foreshore connections and public domain generally.

#### 6. Rationalise property boundaries

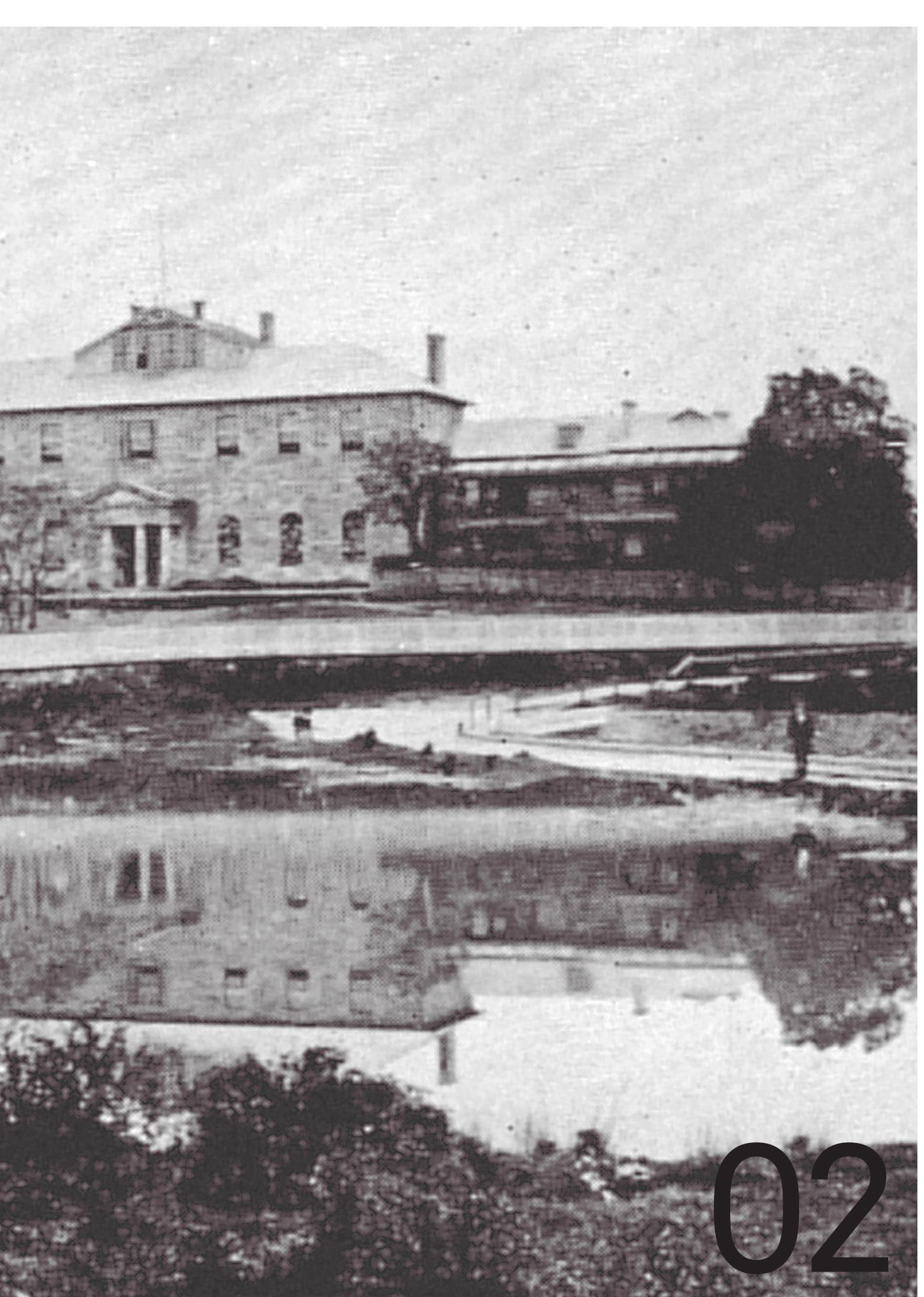
Consider rationalisation of property boundaries and easements in order to improve the function of the public space and remove pedestrian and vehicular conflict issues.



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## Aspiration and principles





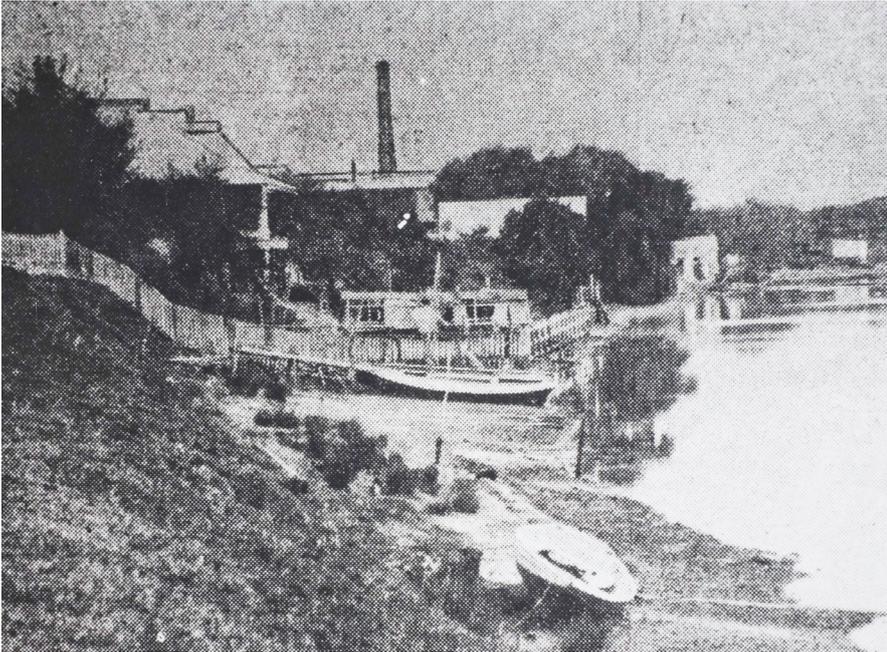
02

## 02 Aspiration and Principles

### Design Concepts

The aspiration for Charles Street Square is based on the three distinct roles for this space: arrival, dispersal and meeting.

# 1



01 Queens Wharf 1900. Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre  
03 Site photograph by HASSELL

02 Parramatta Ferry Source: The Daily Telegraph

## Arrival

Charles Street Square is located at a focal point in Parramatta River - at the transition between saltwater and freshwater, a place of meeting and river arrival by people over many millennia. It is close to where Captain Arthur Philip first stepped ashore, establishing what would become a significant agricultural, administrative and commercial centre for Sydney. For many years, Parramatta could only be accessed by the river; however, the advent of other transport systems (rail and road) shifted the focus of the city centre away from this watercourse.

As the city now refocuses towards the Parramatta River - a key recreational and ecological asset - Charles Street Square will reclaim its importance as a gateway into the city. There is an opportunity to express this distinct historic usage; to celebrate the arrival into the River City at this important place.

# 2



## Dispersal

Charles Street Square is located at the cross-roads of key walking and cycling paths (including the river corridor) and is close to a number of transport modes, including bus, ferry and future light rail. Charles Street Square facilitates movement between these different modes, as well as between visitors, residential, commercial and retail areas of the City Centre. Accessibility, legibility and safety needs to be improved for people moving through the space.

Charles Street Square will become an important node in an integrated transport strategy for the city centre - not as a direct point of interchange, but as a place where people can move freely between different modes, connections and destinations.

## 02 Aspiration and Principles

### Design Concepts

# 3



# Meeting

Charles Street Square is located in the north-east of Parramatta CBD - at the transition between the commercial core and higher density residential development, connected via the river edge to major sporting, cultural and community destinations (both existing and planned).

As Parramatta continues to develop, a network of high-quality public spaces becomes even more important to the livability, amenity and prosperity of the City Centre. Charles Street Square will be a 'meeting place' - a starting point for a historic walking tour, a place to grab a coffee with a friend, somewhere river side to sit and eat lunch, and an active part of the foreshore in event mode. It will be a space where journeys begin, end and intersect - for residents, workers and visitors alike.

04 Let's Go Greek  
Source: Discover  
Parramatta

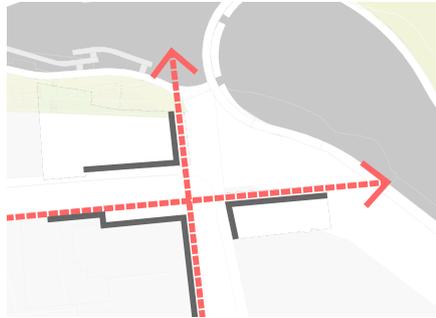
05 Granary Square,  
London.  
Designer: Townshend  
Landscape Architects

06 Source: Forbes

## 02 Aspiration and Principles

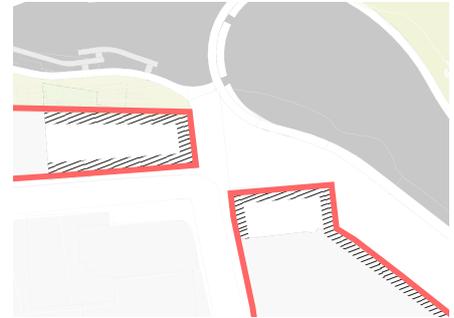
### Design Principles

A firm set of principles will help shape the future transformation of Charles Street Square and assist in creating a integrated and site responsive approach



#### Principle 1: Align building setbacks with Charles and Phillip Streets

- \_ Align building setbacks with Charles and Phillip Streets to create strong view corridors and maximise views between the city and the river
- \_ Aligning building setbacks along Phillip Street will strengthen the connection to the Ferry Terminal, reinforcing a principle established in the Parramatta City River Strategy



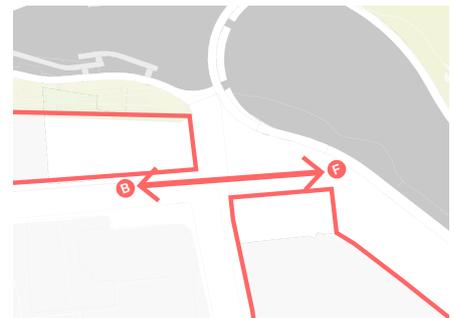
#### Principle 2: Activate edges at street and river levels

- \_ Provide an active edge at the street and foreshore level, recognising the limitations due to the existing flood plain
- \_ Extend the principles set up by the Parramatta City River Strategy, to create a network of land and water based activation points along the foreshore
- \_ Create additional destinations for engagement and recreation



#### Principle 6: Establish clearly defined public space

- \_ Improve the shape of the public for clear definition
- \_ Maintain the 25m foreshore zone along the river for public access
- \_ Consider different landscape treatments for the upper level, foreshore and transition spaces to articulate public and private land
- \_ Address local needs and riverside location for event use and programming of the foreshore, to extend principles set up by the Parramatta City River Strategy



#### Principle 7: Create an equitable interchange

- \_ Create a direct path of movement from the street to the river foreshore, that provides accessibility to all users
- \_ Where possible, paths of travel should arrive at the same destination to promote Universal Design best practice

## 02 Aspiration and Principles

### Design Principles



#### Principle 3: Establish a clear and continuous foreshore path

- \_ Extend the foreshore path to enhance lower level movement along the river edge
- \_ Ensure the lower level path is unobstructed to facilitate views along the foreshore
- \_ Address the potential for cycle and pedestrian conflict at key areas of the strategy



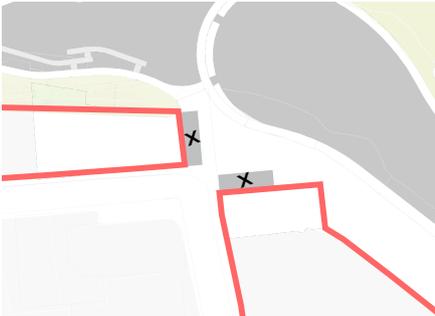
#### Principle 4: Integrate upper level walkways and establish continuous setbacks

- \_ Extend the upper level connection at RL7.6 set up by the Parramatta City River Strategy, through Charles Street Square and along adjacent properties
- \_ Address the potential to activate parts of this new connection with outdoor dining, to increase amenity at the new Charles Street Square
- \_ Utilise the upper level connection as a safe place for people to retreat in a flood



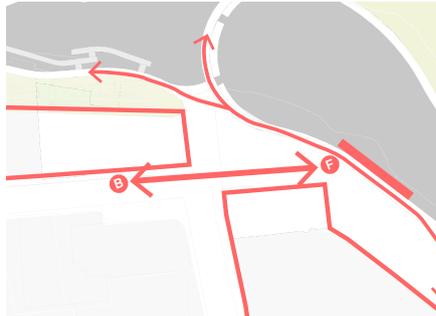
#### Principle 5: Provide a clear delineation between public and private

- \_ Establish clearly defined boundaries between private outdoor dining/activation areas and public space to ensure clear paths of movement



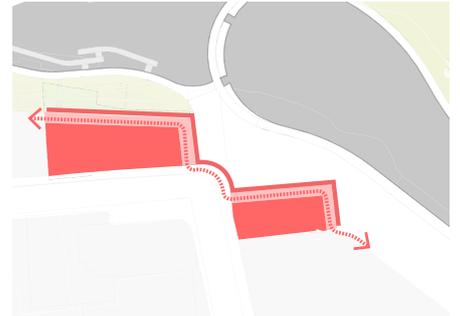
#### Principle 8: Remove vehicular access

- \_ Remove vehicular access to minimise conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles
- \_ Address the potential for vehicular entries to be relocated when the adjacent land parcels are redeveloped



#### Principle 9: Optimise ferry wharf location

- \_ Utilise the Parramatta Ferry Wharf project to optimise the location of the ferry wharf for improved connections to bus and light rail
- \_ Locate the ferry wharf to achieve optimum visual and physical connections to the streets
- \_ Ensure the ferry wharf location is accessible and travel distance from streets are not excessive



#### Principle 10: Consistent built form to address foreshore

- \_ Create consistent built form to address the foreshore and river through podiums and setbacks

# 02 Design Principles

## Built Form

### Existing Built Form

A key objective of the Charles Street Square Strategy is to unlock the property and vehicular access constraints limiting the redesign of the public domain at Charles Street Square. Options testing opened a discussion with stakeholders as part of the process. It highlighted opportunities and constraints related to property boundaries and their importance in realising an improved public domain and transport interchange.

There were three main areas of focus in looking to resolve current property issues:

#### 1. Public domain

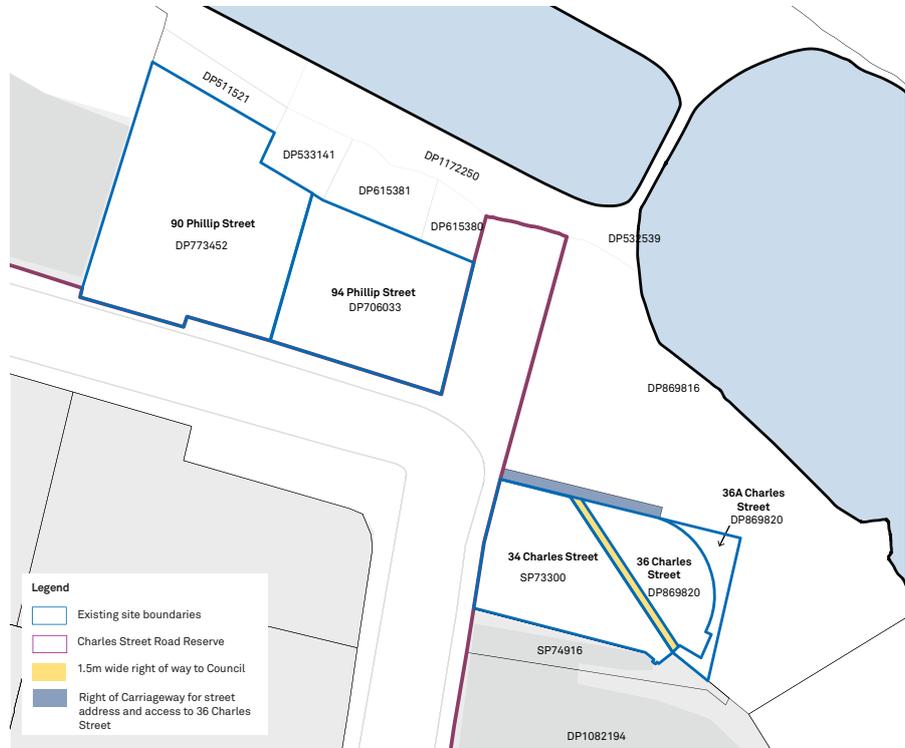
Currently the square is constrained by ambiguity between public and private space, vehicular access and the presence of waste collection on the site. Different built form options were tested in order to resolve these issues, optimise transport connectivity and prioritise pedestrian movement.

#### 2. Redevelopment opportunities

A number of density scenarios were tested to look at different options for adjacent land parcels. Based on this testing, recommendations were made regarding redevelopment opportunities and the appropriate level of density.

#### 3. Land Ownership

There are currently a number of overlapping property issues that need to be resolved in order to renew the public domain. Current access to 36 Charles Street is a significant constraint for the public space and can only be resolved via redevelopment. The study looked at various solutions to this issue.



01 Existing property boundaries

# 02 Design Principles

## Built Form

### Redevelopment options and testing

Throughout the design process, numerous scenarios were tested that compared the outcomes of individual properties redeveloping on their own or with their neighbours (amalgamated). Key findings with respect to 90-94 Phillip Street and 34-36 Charles Street were as follows:

#### 34-36 Charles Street

##### Development of individual lots

- \_ Vehicular access to 36 Charles Street was not able to be resolved, therefore constraining the future public domain
- \_ Limited site areas (647sqm and 362sqm) resulted in highly constrained building footprints, therefore reducing feasibility of redevelopment
- \_ Separation between individual towers (required under SEPP65) is not likely to be able to be achieved

##### Amalgamation of lots

- \_ Amalgamation of sites allows for greater flexibility of form, larger building footprints and therefore a more feasible development outcome
- \_ Consolidation of vehicular access removes vehicle movements from the public domain

##### Recommendation

Amalgamation of sites to improve public domain outcome. Built form testing on this site indicated that a floor space ratio of 10:1 (assuming design excellence) may be achievable on this site. Preparation of site-specific DCP controls may facilitate preferred design outcomes.

#### 90-94 Phillip Street

##### Development of individual lots

- \_ Vehicular access to 94 Phillip Street not able to be resolved, therefore constraining the future public domain
- \_ Separation between individual towers (required under SEPP65) is not likely to be able to be achieved



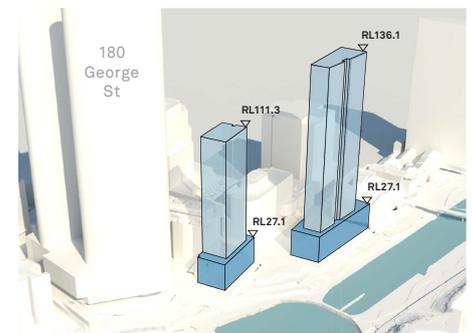
01 Proposed property boundaries

##### Amalgamation of lots

- \_ Amalgamation of sites allows for greater flexibility of form, larger building footprints and therefore a more feasible development outcome
- \_ Consolidation of vehicular access removes vehicle movements from public domain

##### Recommendation

Amalgamation of sites to improve public domain outcome. Built form testing on this site indicated that LEP controls may be optimistic in achieving a floor space ratio of more than 10:1 assuming design excellence. Preparation of site-specific DCP controls may facilitate preferred design outcomes.



02 Proposed building envelopes

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## Design approaches





# 1 Charles Street Steps

This design approach creates a single landscaped stair that opens up the view corridor and provides a clear transition between the city and the river. The square contains planting, through a tall tree canopy that is located close to the streets to reinforce a sense of arrival and provide shade to pedestrians. It utilises the proposed building setbacks along Charles and Phillip Street to open views, improve legibility and provide better connections to the ferry interchange.

The stair connects two levels - an upper street level and a lower river foreshore level. At the upper level it is proposed to extend the connection established in the Parramatta City River Strategy along the edge of the Square. Redevelopment of 90-94 Phillip Street and 34-36 Charles Street would allow ground floor retail and outdoor dining to edge the Square.

Two direct paths of moment have been set up to navigate between the upper street level and to the River foreshore. Both stairs and a lift are provided, both within public land. To the east of the Square, a

series of terraced banks connect to 180 George Street and Harrisford House and transition to the less urban landscape of the foreshore.

At the river foreshore level there is opportunity to provide public toilets, bike hire and visitor information services. These would be located on the river level ground floor of 34-36 Charles Street after redevelopment and subject to suitable flood protection measures. Ferry wait facilities will be provided on the pontoon, with additional shade on the foreshore provided by a tree canopy.

### Stakeholders highlighted the following aspects of this approach:

- \_ Large steps open up the river area creating good usable space for people to gather and sit. The stairs act as an amphitheatre, which work in everyday and event modes;
- \_ Overall the approach creates a strong, legible space which is clear for recreation and ferry uses;
- \_ Lift provides clear and direct access to the foreshore, is equitable, and is publicly accessible 24/7;

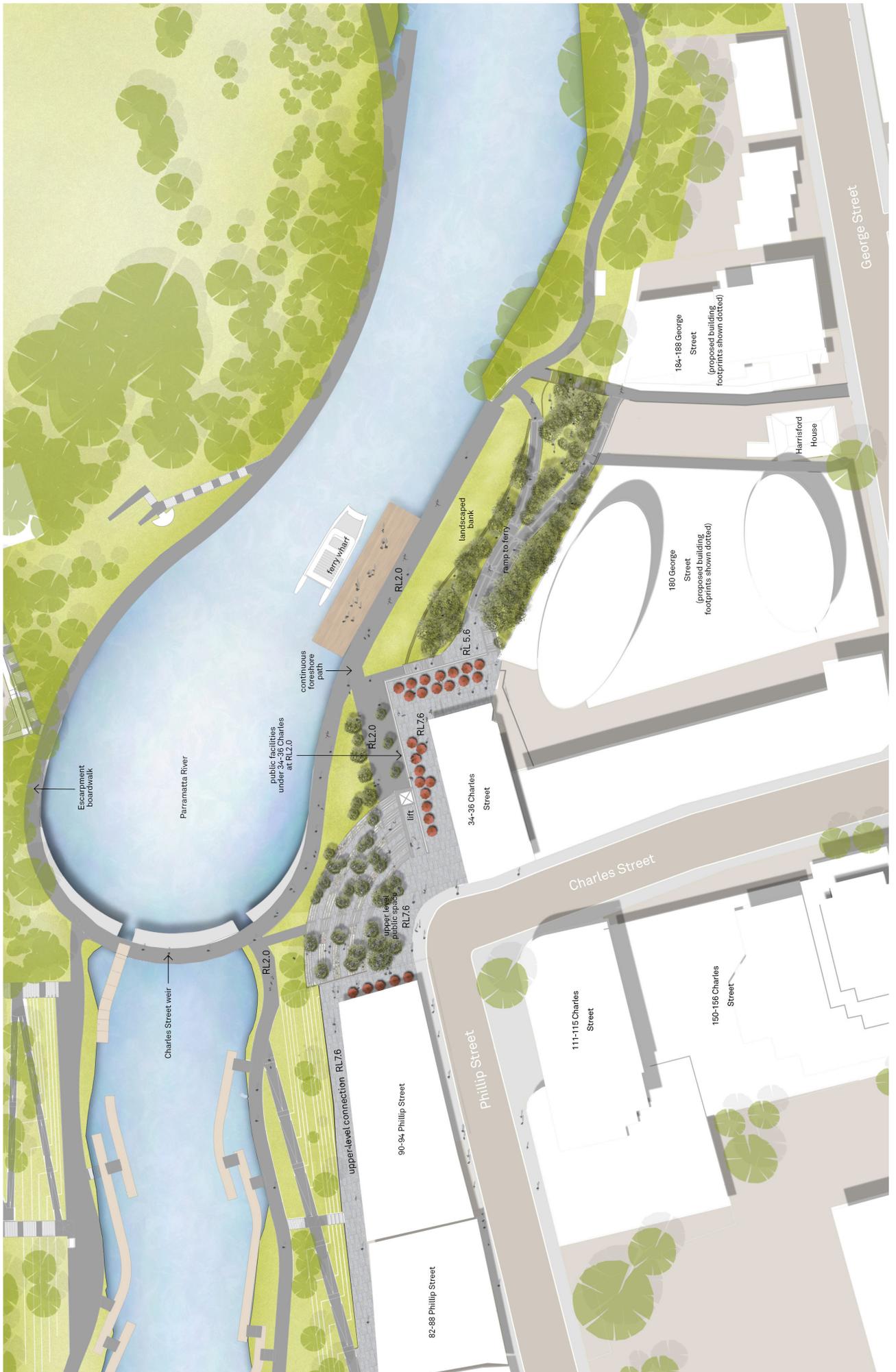
- \_ The ramp from George Street improves permeability but would not be the main entry to the wharf due to distance;
- \_ Concern regarding conflict with pedestrians, cyclists and ferry users sharing a continuous foreshore path;
- \_ Upper level public space will appear to be a pause point, rather than a thoroughfare as it is currently used;
- \_ Access along the eastern side of 90-94 Phillip Street and outdoor dining appears insufficient; and
- \_ 180 George Street and Harrisford House cut off from the foreshore by ramping



01 Pioneer Courthouse Square.  
Designer: Willard Martin

03 Tangshan Geopark Museum,  
Nanjing. Designer: HASSELL

02 Scott Outdoor Amphitheatre,  
Swathmore.  
Designer: Thomas W Sears



# 2 Phillip Street Extension

The Phillip Street extension reinforces the axis of historic Phillip Street and sets up a direct path of travel along its alignment to the new ferry wharf. All connectivity runs in an east-west or north-south direction creating clear and direct paths of movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

At foreshore level, this geometry is reinforced with a cantilevered awning that provides shade and weather protection for adjacent public facilities, located underneath 34,36 Charles Street.

At street level, active edges are created by opportunities for outdoor dining, which connect and extend the upper level connection set up by the Parramatta City River Strategy.

The transition from the city to the river has been considered as a series of planted terraces which soften views across the varied topography. To the west, planted terraces are characterised by low planting to maximise views and continue the geometry proposed by the Parramatta

City River Strategy. To the east of the site, beyond the ferry wharf, a series of terraced banks run in an east-west direction to soften the landscape and provide access to George Street and Harrisford House.

**Stakeholders highlighted the following aspects of this approach:**

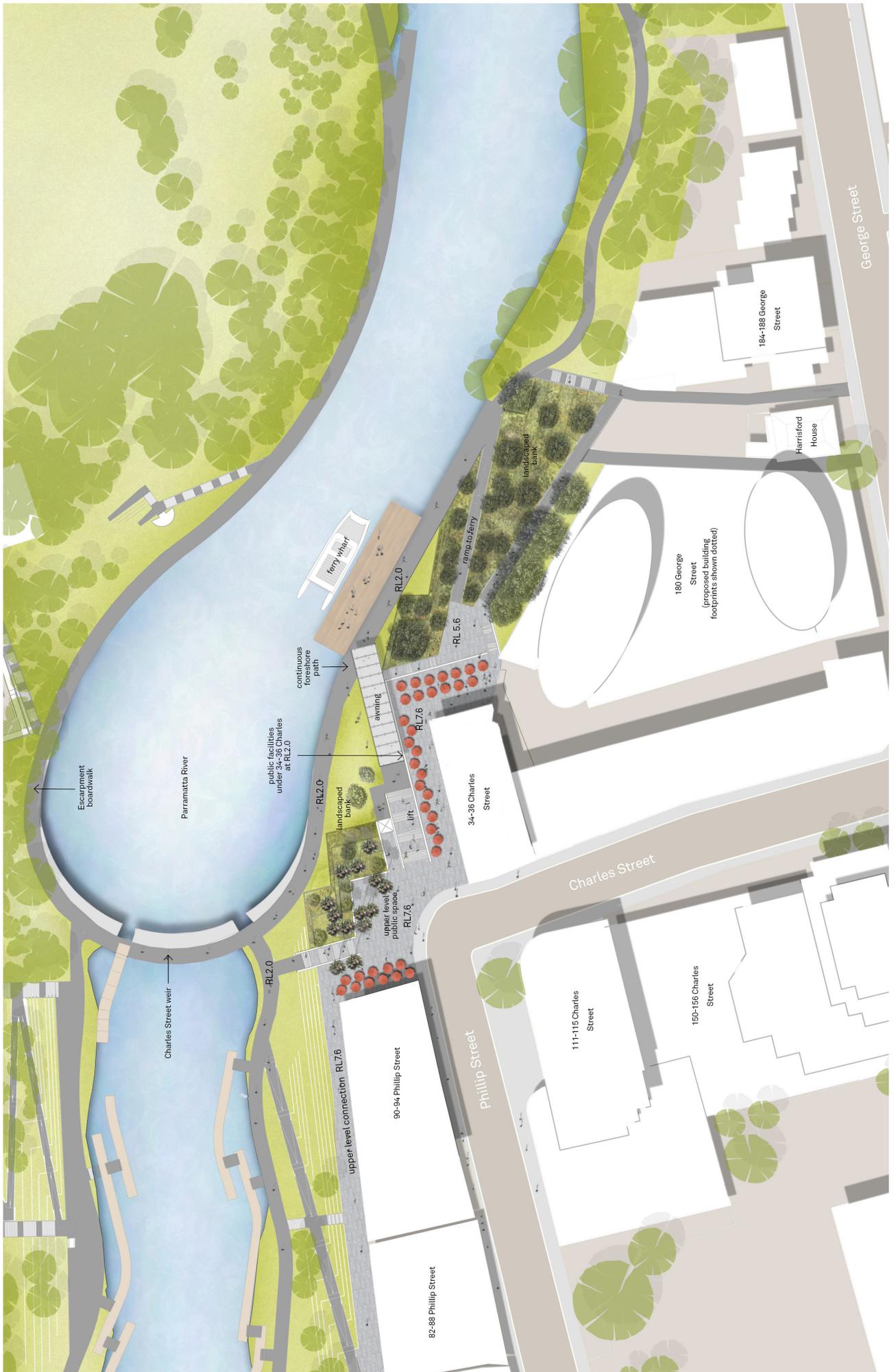
- The awning to 34,36 Charles Street should finish short of the foreshore path in order to limit the desirability to wait in a through area;
- The mid level at RL5.6 does not have a clear purpose or function;
- New trees proposed to the east of 90-94 Phillip Street adjacent to the upper level connection block the path and should be removed;
- There is a potential need for an awning on the upper level to provide extended shade and coverage to the outdoor dining; and
- Overall geometry of the stair and terracing is too geometric and does not transition well to the more natural landscape to the east of Parramatta Quay.



01 Getty Villa, Los Angeles.  
Designer: Paul Getty &  
Norman Neuerburg

02 Paddington Reservoir  
Gardens, Sydney.  
Designer: JMD Design

03 Le Ban St Martin Town  
Centre, France.  
Designer: Agence  
Babylone



# 3 Terraced Bank

The terraced bank approach uses planting to soften the river profile and foreshore edge returning Parramatta River to a more natural condition.

Access from the street to the river is via a single accessible ramp that is adjacent to 34,36 Charles Street. The terraced bank creates an experience of moving down through levels of canopies that provide shade and maintain a visual link to the river and the city. As users transition through the site, they experience different types of trees and shrubbery that mimic the softer shapes of the river.

Facilities at the lower level are provided within small structures which are proposed to contain visitor information services, bike hire and public toilets. Adjacent to this is the ferry pontoon, which provides waiting facilities.

**Stakeholders highlighted the following aspects of this approach:**

- \_ Concern that 100m is too long for an access ramp and relying on this removes accessibility to the ferry wharf from its current city entry point, which could disadvantage some users;
- \_ Approach does not comply with AS1428.1 and BCA Class 9b, which requires public buildings to provide a lift when the vertical rise of a ramp is greater than 3.6m;
- \_ Direction of travel for passengers alighting the ferry is unclear. The most direct street connection is via stairs up to George Street, which does not address the mobility needs of all users;
- \_ Outdoor dining adjacent 34-36 Charles Street is disconnected and does not add life to the public space;
- \_ Outdoor dining adjacent 90-94 Phillip Street is located along a clear north-south connection, with trees well located to 'contain' the outdoor dining and maintain the path of travel;
- \_ The mid level terrace at RL5.6 does not have a clear function;

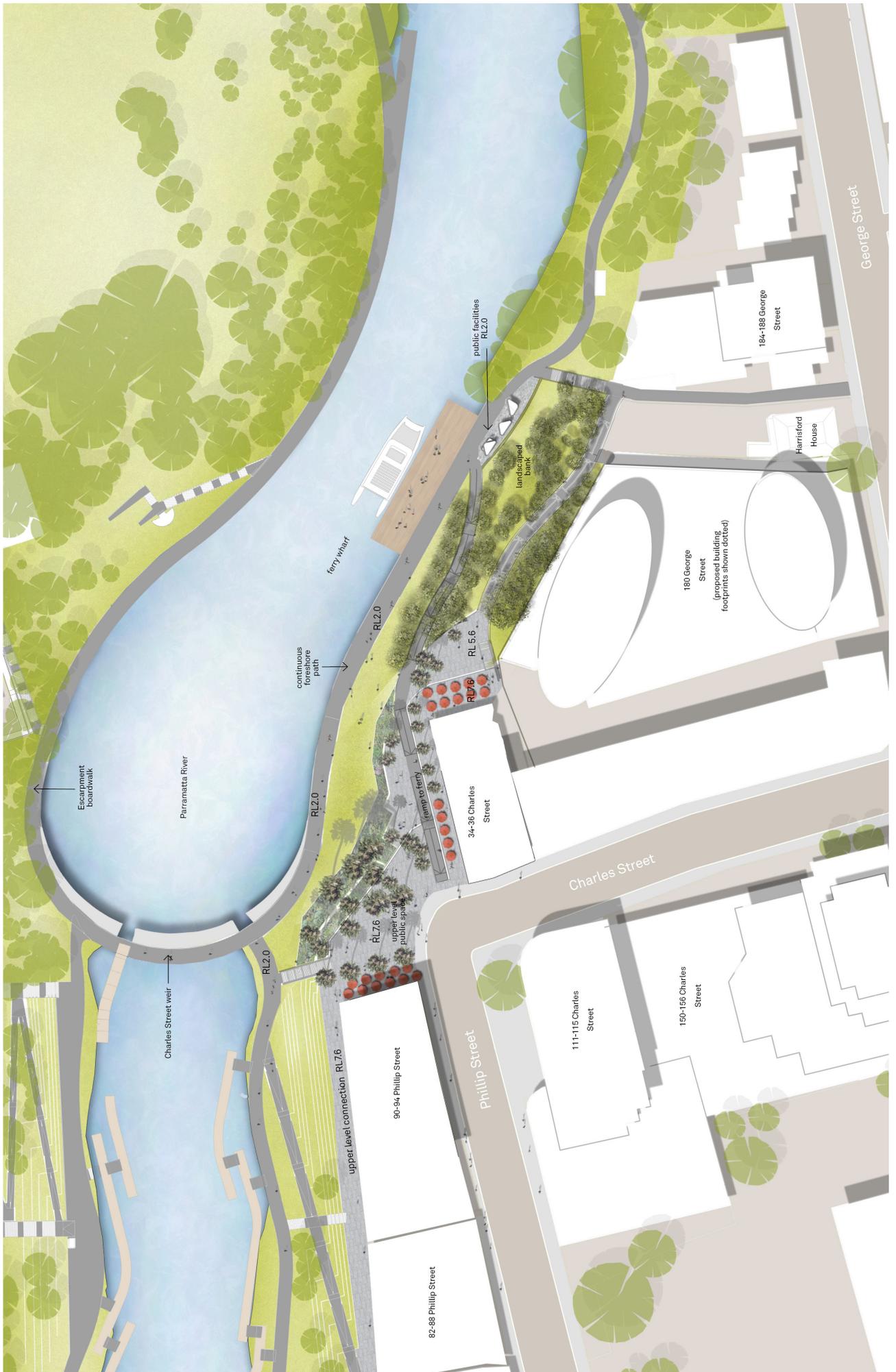
- \_ Public facilities located in small kiosk buildings need to be moved further away from the foreshore to reduce pedestrian, cycle and ferry user conflict and maintain a clear path;
- \_ The extensive ramping could lead to several retaining wall structures and would need to be open on one site to mitigate visual impacts;
- \_ Location of the ferry wharf provides equal access to Phillip and George Streets;
- \_ Concern that a pinch point may be created between users of lower level facilities and those accessing the ferry pontoon; and
- \_ Due to the length of the ramp, the entry and exit points are not located in close proximity.



01 Poppy Plaza Calgary.  
Designers: Marc Boutin  
Architectural Collaborative

03 Dune City, Copenhagen.  
Designers: SLA

02 Bushwick Inlet Park,  
Brooklyn. Designers: Kiss +  
Cathcart



## 03 Design Approaches Public Domain

A decision making matrix was used to determine which design approach best addresses the key challenges and design principles for the project

Criteria	Option 1 Charles Street Steps	Option 2 Phillip Street Extension	Option 3 Terraced Bank
Proximity between ferry and street	✓	✓	✓
Legibility between transport nodes (bus, ferry as minimum)	✓	✓	○
Clear differentiation between public and private space	✓	✓	✓
Clarity in addressing primary use as a meeting, arrival and orientation space	✓	✓	✓
Flood resilience	✓	✓	✓
Clarity/removal of pedestrian and vehicular, cycle conflict	✓	✓	✓
Integrates with the broader strategy	✓	✓	✓
Feasibility to stage	✓	✓	✓
Recognises riverside location and supports associated activities	✓	✓	○
Aligns building setbacks to strengthen views	✓	✓	✓
Creates a vibrant and activated edge at street and river levels	✓	✓	✓
Capacity and flexibility for large crowds and events	✓	○	○
Creates a distinct gateway and visitor arrival point to Parramatta	✓	○	○
Direct paths and connections	✓	✓	○
Equitable access	✓	✓	○

## Preferred approach

Charles Street Steps is the preferred approach as it addresses a number of key objectives for the project. It realises the design principles and vision and addresses feedback received throughout the project.

### Creates a distinct place

Charles Street Steps creates a distinct local place in keeping with the broader Parramatta City River Strategy and the concept for Parramatta Quay. The approach improves visitor arrival and public amenity and celebrates the historic and contemporary importance of the City's river gateway.

### Direct paths and connections

The Charles Street Steps create a strong, legible sense of direction for pedestrians. Paths of travel are direct from the CBD to the River foreshore, which assists with way-finding and visitor arrival. Both the stairs and the passenger lift provide safe, direct paths of movement to the CBD and are located within public land for 24/7 accessibility.

### Opens views to the River

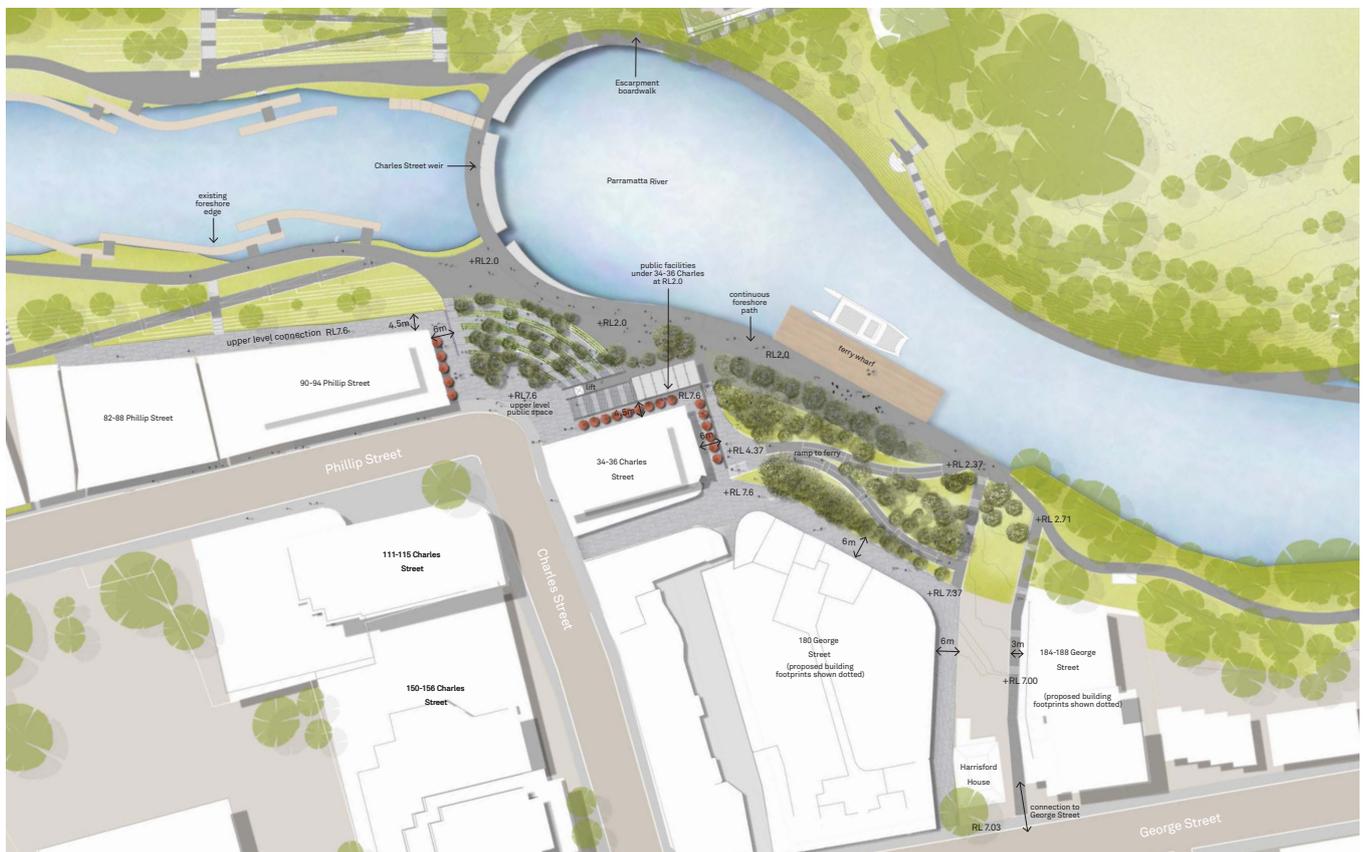
Proposed building setbacks are utilised to create a single gesture that provides better visual connections between the foreshore and CBD. Outdoor dining activates the edges of the Steps and provides a lively place to sit or gather.

### Potential for events and gathering

The Charles Street Steps provide an adaptable space that can be used for different purposes - lunchtime, meeting place, gathering space and as a destination along the River foreshore. The steps have the potential to work as a seating area in both transport and event modes, providing an amphitheatre - style public place with views over the River.

### Accessibility Compliance

Achieves compliance with AS1428.1 (2009) and BCA Class 9b by offering a lift as an equitable alternative to a ramp which has a rise of more than 3.6m.



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# Concept Master Plan



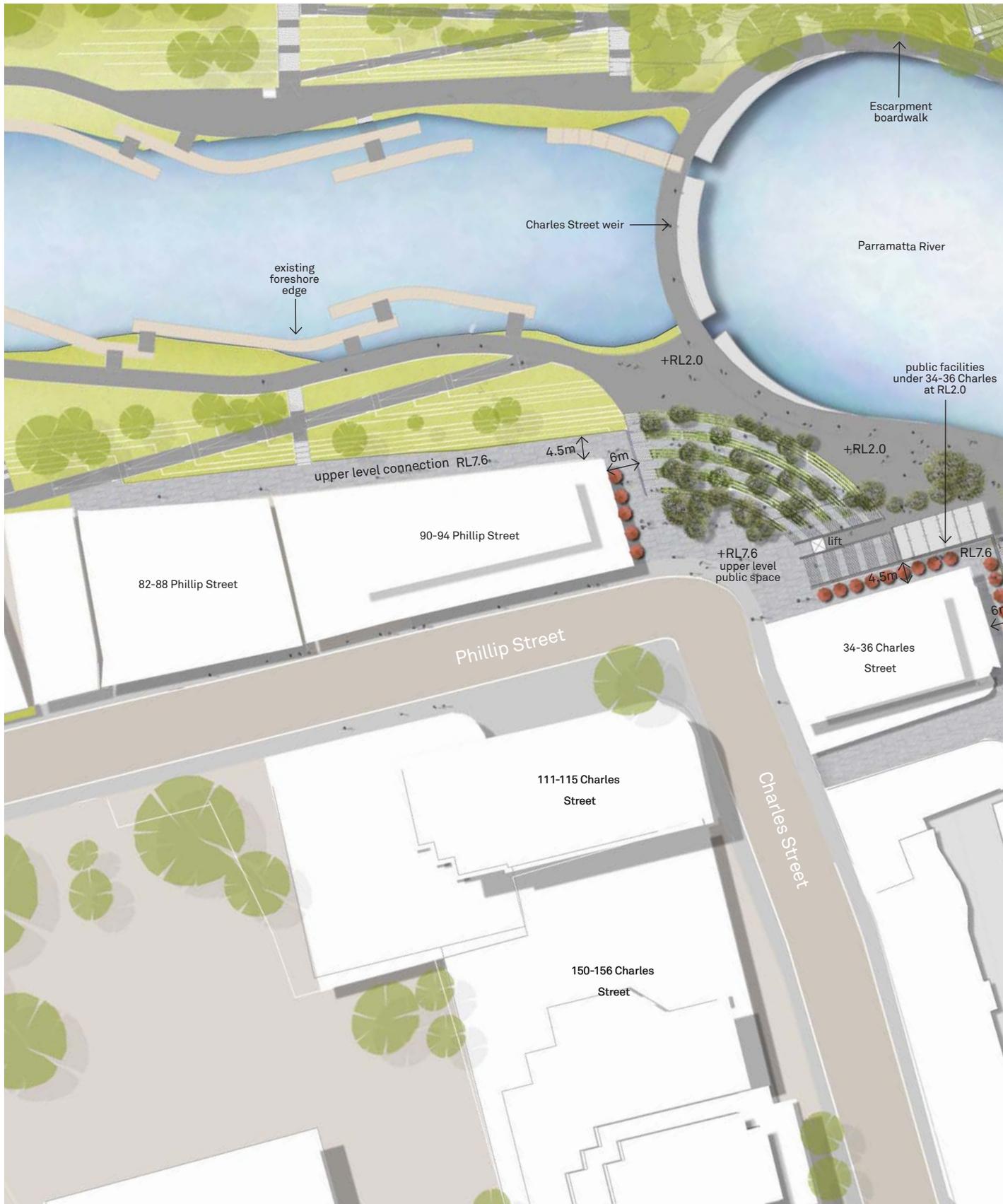
01 View of Parramatta, 1838.  
Source: State Library of  
NSW



04

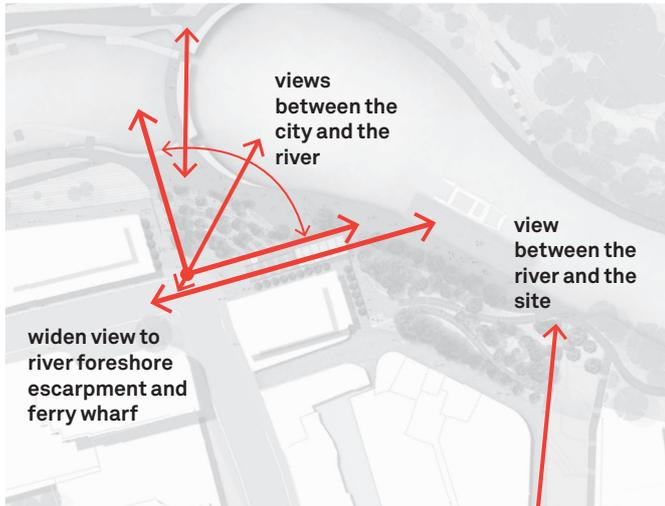
**04 Concept Master Plan**  
Preferred Option

The preferred option for Charles Street Square creates a single landscaped stair that opens up the City to the River and provides a clear and legible transition between the street and the river foreshore

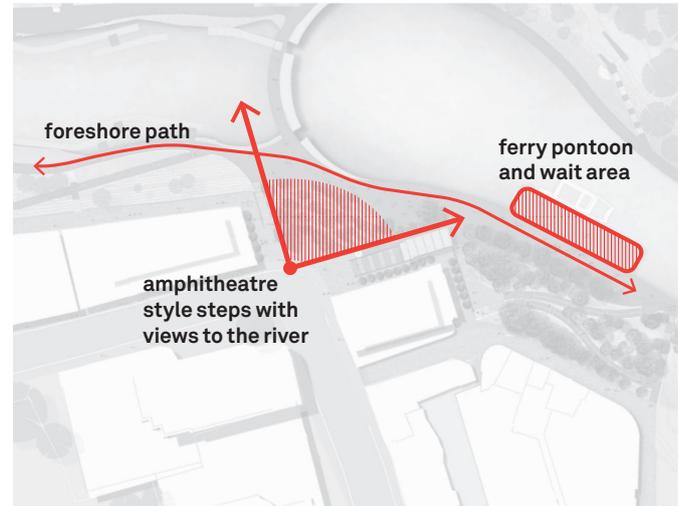




## Orientation



## Arrival and departure



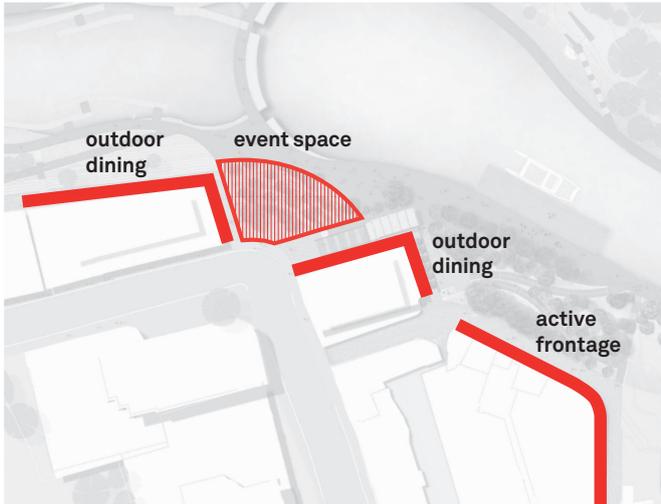
The Charles Street Steps create a strong, legible sense of direction between the City and the Parramatta River for inbound and outbound ferry passengers and other uses. Paths of travel are aligned with Charles and Phillip Streets to improve legibility and provide more direct connections with the wharf. Building setbacks at the upper level align with these streets and connect the precinct at a common level (RL7.6), which provides continuity and allows uninterrupted views to the foreshore. Harrisford House acts as an orientation point along George Street and facilitates direct access to the foreshore.

Charles Street Steps celebrates the process of arrival and dispersal through the creation of usable spaces for people to sit and gather in different modes, be they everyday lunch, waiting areas for the ferry or as part of a major event. An amphitheatre style structure is created that has views directly to the river and has the potential to engage with future public artwork on the foreshore. At both street and foreshore level, the waiting areas incorporate soft landscaping, with tall canopies to provide shade for passengers. Weather protection will be offered on the pontoon and potentially at the base of 34-36 Charles Street.

01 Poppy Plaza, Calgary.  
Designers: Marc Boutin  
Architectural Collaborative

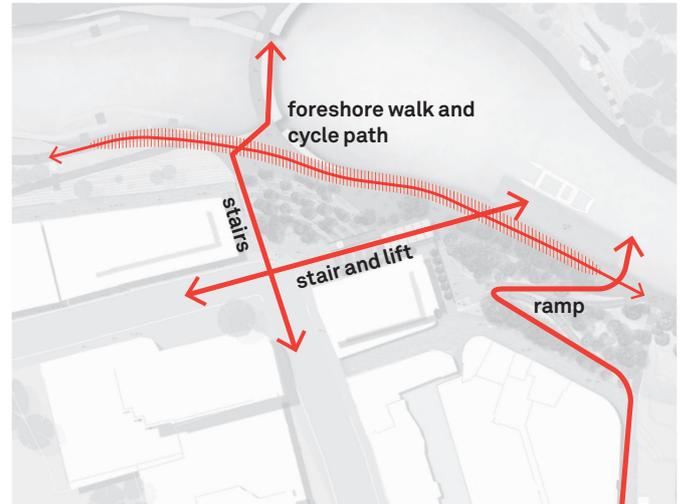
02 Yokohama Port Terminal,  
Yokohama. Designers:  
Foreign Office Architects  
(FOA)

## Meeting and event space



The future development of Parramatta will require a network of high quality public spaces that contribute to the amenity, prosperity and liveability of the City Centre. The Charles Street Steps will be both a meeting place, and an event space along the river foreshore, a starting point for walking tours or a place to socialise at one of the outdoor dining venues. The Steps will be a place where journeys begin and end for residents, ferry passengers and visitors to the City.

## Movement and transition



The structure of the Charles Street Steps creates an opportunity through a single gesture to facilitate a direct visual and physical connection to the foreshore. It efficiently brings together the existing orthogonal city street network with the natural and winding nature of the foreshore to promote permeability, movement and transition through the site. A lift and stairs are aligned on the axis of Charles and Phillip Streets to allow for a direct transition from the city to the river. The foreshore path and accessible ramp in contrast allow for a more natural condition with landscaping that softens the profile of the built elements.

# 04 Concept Master Plan

## Design Principles and Controls

### Connectivity and transport

Transport interchange and connectivity were a key priority for Charles Street Square. This has been addressed in the preferred option in the following ways:

#### Direct path of access from the street to the river

- \_ Provide direct stairs running in a north-south and east-west direction
- \_ Provide a lift to ensure an equivalent level of access to a public building (Building Code of Australia Class 9b) which requires an accessible ramp to have a maximum rise of 3.6m
- \_ Provide clear and legible paths at street and foreshore level

#### Design of the Square

- \_ Connect pedestrians to direct paths at the upper and lower level
- \_ Provide a clear lines of site to the ferry wharf and the foreshore path
- \_ Locate stairs in close proximity to the existing bus stop on Phillip Street to promote interchange
- \_ Provide a continuous upper level foreshore connection in order to facilitate safe access and egress during potential flooding
- \_ Ensure a clear and legible shape to become a distinct meeting place

#### Resolves multi modal access

- \_ Give precedent to pedestrians over other modes of transport throughout the square
- \_ Remove vehicular traffic to the Square, no longer requiring having a shared path of travel
- \_ Comply with AS1428.1(2009). Deemed to achieve a reasonable compliance with the objectives of the DDA and more up to date than Disability Standards for Access to Transport (2007)

#### Connectivity with the broader context

- \_ Provide east-west ramping and terraced banks for accessible connection to George Street, adjacent Harrisford House
- \_ Integrate an upper level foreshore connection into the 180 George Street design, allowing direct connection from the Square along towards Harrisford House
- \_ Provide direct connections to the western side of the precinct via upper and lower level foreshore paths
- \_ Improves legibility between the ferry wharf and other City Centre precincts

### Built Form

The following recommendations are provided to guide the redevelopment of properties surrounding Charles Street Square.

#### **1. Amalgamation of properties**

Amalgamation of adjacent properties is the preferred built form approach. This solution realises an improved public domain and transport interchange in the following ways:

- \_ Resolves ambiguity between public and private space currently constraining the Square
- \_ Amalgamation of sites allows for greater flexibility of form, larger building footprints and therefore a more feasible development outcome
- \_ Amalgamated sites are better able to integrate the upper level connection established in the Parramatta City River Strategy
- \_ Consolidation of vehicular access removes vehicle movements from the public domain

#### **2. Proposed design controls**

##### 34,36 Charles Street

The draft LEP conditions for an amalgamated site area were reviewed (FSR 8.73:1 for this site), however design testing found that FSR 10:1 could be considered for this site, assuming design excellence is achieved

##### 90,94 Phillip Street

The draft LEP conditions for an amalgamated site area were reviewed (FSR 15:1 for an 'opportunity site') and found to be optimistic (with FSR 10:1 preferred), however it is assumed that further testing and design will be undertaken and reviewed as part of the design excellence process.

In addition to the above recommendations for density, the below controls are recommended for both amalgamated sites;

- \_ Provide a setback to the north and east frontages of both properties to extend the upper level connection, in line with the Parramatta City River Strategy
- \_ Provide a 6m setback at ground level to allow for outdoor dining to activate the future public domain. It is recommended that this occurs on the eastern boundary of both properties
- \_ Provide a 3-6m setback (or reduced for design excellence) as per the Parramatta DCP to Charles and Phillip Street
- \_ Provide a minimum 3m setback to the River as shown in Section 02:Built Form
- \_ Other tower setbacks to adjacent properties are to be determined by Apartment Design Guideline separation distances
- \_ Provide a consistent 6 storey podium to both properties

## 04 Concept Master Plan Staging

The transformation of Charles Street Square can be implemented in the following way, ensuring that amenity for pedestrians, cyclists and land owners is maintained throughout

### Draft Implementation Plan

The following diagram illustrates a possible implementation scenario, based on the current understanding of servicing and access arrangements and future development.

#### Charles Street Square and Ferry Pontoon

1. Road closure of part of Charles Street and creation of temporary right of way for 94 Phillip Street.
2. Public domain works including Charles Street Steps, foreshore plaza, and retention of vehicular access to adjoining properties.
3. Ferry wharf upgrade by RMS including new lift.

#### 90 and 94 Phillip St Redevelopment

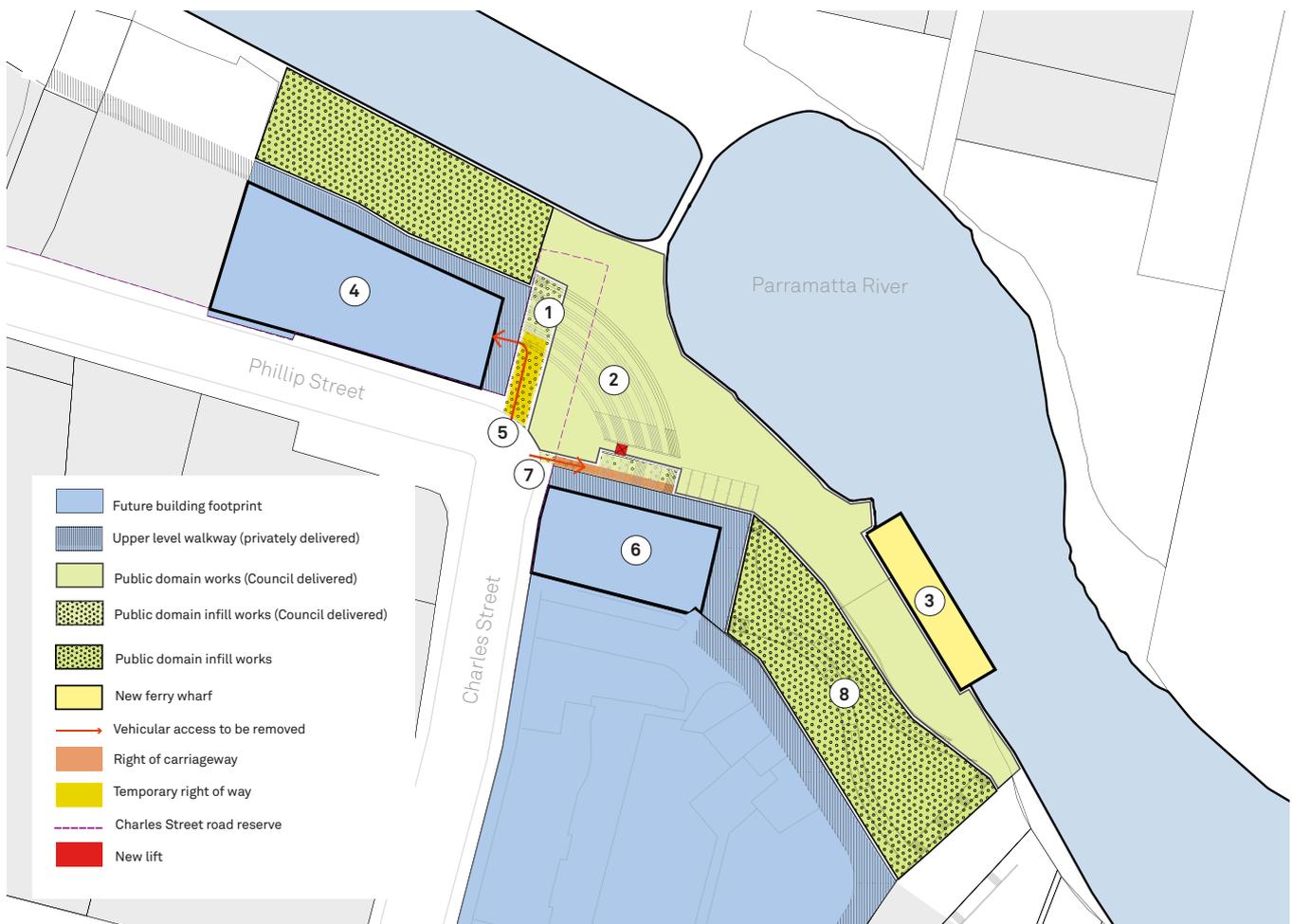
4. Redevelopment of 90 and 94 Phillip Street including delivery of upper level walkway along north and eastern boundaries, public domain works for river foreshore and infill works to integrate with Charles Street Steps.
5. Extinguish temporary right of way for 94 Phillip Street.

#### 34, 36 and 36a Charles St Redevelopment

6. Redevelopment of 34, 36 and 36a Charles Street including upper level walkway along the north and eastern boundaries and infill public domain works to integrate property with Charles Street Steps.
7. Extinguish right of carriageway for 36 Charles Street

#### 180 George Street Redevelopment and Foreshore Terrace

8. Redevelopment of 180 George Street including upper level walkway along north and eastern boundaries and public domain works for foreshore terrace including DDA accessible ramp connecting ferry wharf to upper level walkway at 180 George Street.



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# Exhibition



01 Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta  
c.1800. Source: State Library of  
NSW



05

## 05 Exhibition

### Community Feedback

**The Charles Street Square Strategy was co-exhibited with seven other plans over a four week period, with over 500 people attending and engaging with the material.**

The exhibition period was 10th April to 8th May at Parramatta Town Hall, with drop in sessions on 21st, 22nd and 29th of April.

The exhibition was notified in local papers, targeted promotion on social and digital media and was part of a staged media strategy that focussed on a different plan each week. This generated significant interest and a strong level of engagement with the community. The Charles Street Square Strategy, in addition to the other plans were available on the City of Parramatta website and in all local libraries.

**Engagement specific to the Charles Street Square Strategy involved the following feedback:**

- \_ A desire to see the strategy further developed and delivered
- \_ The importance of ongoing stakeholder engagement with Transport for New South Wales and the need to further consider the frequency of ferry services between the Sydney CBD and Parramatta.
- \_ The need to recognise and address the potential impacts of noise, particularly with regards to outdoor dining and events. Future considerations may involve business operating hours and appropriate glazing on adjacent buildings.



01 Public Exhibition  
Photography by City of Parramatta

02 Public Exhibition  
Photography by City of Parramatta

## 05 Exhibition

### Community Feedback

- \_ Consider renaming Charles Street Square to make a more direct reference to its role as a ferry terminal and the terraced landscape along the river edge. Suggestions include; Parramatta Wharf Terraces, River Terraces, Parramatta Quay Terraces.
- \_ The need to consider parking solutions in the immediate area for ferry commuters. Suggested use of adjacent buildings on weekends to assist with large crowds.
- \_ The importance of accessible ramps for pedestrians and cyclists from the river foreshore to the street.
- \_ Support for a bike hire scheme, to encourage people to cycle. Consider also cycle tool stands at strategic locations along the foreshore.
- \_ The need for increased legibility and way finding to direct people between the ferry and other modes of transport, including clear and direct connections to the train and future light rail stops.
- \_ The importance of considering natural flora and fauna in the river and ensuring that future interventions preserve the natural environment.
- \_ Consider more pervious surfaces along the river foreshore, to respond to and preserve the riparian zone.
- \_ The need for the strategy to address flooding generally, particularly with regards to engineering solutions for the future weir and the foreshore path.
- \_ The importance of levels and terracing to the river foreshore to support movement corridors and enhance legibility.
- \_ A desire for the future Charles Street Square to become the gateway to Parramatta, declutter and open up the site and make an attractive public arrival space.



01 Public Exhibition  
Photography by City of Parramatta

02 Public Exhibition  
Photography by City of Parramatta

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## Next steps and recommendations



01 Noller Bridge on Parramatta River, 1907. Source: Parramatta Heritage Centre



Parramatta Parr. NSW

06

# 05 Recommendations

## Next Steps

### Charles Street Square is part of a broader vision to revitalise the Parramatta Quay precinct. Delivering this significant public space, which is a major gateway to transport services, the Parramatta CBD, and the river foreshore, is a complex task that requires coordination.

The Charles Street Square Strategy articulates the project vision and unlocks opportunities which could be realised through an integrated design and planning approach. The following recommendations and next steps are provided to guide the successful transformation of Charles Street Square, in order to realise an integrated vision for Parramatta Quay.

#### Recommendations

##### Property and Land Ownership

This study has opened a discussion with stakeholders as to the opportunities and constraints associated with existing property boundaries, easements and land ownership surrounding Charles Street Square.

- \_ The future amalgamation of 34 and 36 Charles Streets is an important outcome in order to create a distinct edge to Charles Street Square, remove vehicular access and facilitate a clear transition between the city and the river that is integrated with the new ferry location and public amenities. Council owned land at 36a Charles Street can assist to resolve the awkward shape of the current boundary and encourage amalgamation of the two parcels.
- \_ The future amalgamation of 90 and 94 Phillip Street is also recommended to optimise built form, create an

appropriate setback and activated edge to Charles Street Square, minimise vehicular entries and realise a continuous upper level foreshore connection along the river foreshore to the north.

- \_ The design of the 180 George Street development will require the coordination with Council to facilitate a continued upper level connection along the foreshore, and ensure that the proximity of a tower form on this site does not limit the feasibility of a building at 34-36 Charles Street.
- \_ The closure of Charles Street (beyond Phillip Street) and rationalisation of other residual land parcels is recommended in order to clarify public open space and remove vehicular access. Temporary measures will need to be put in place to provide vehicular access to 94 Phillip Street until the property redevelops and relocation of vehicular access can be provided.

##### Accessibility

- \_ A passenger lift is recommended to address the Disability Discrimination Act and provide direct access to the ferry wharf.
- \_ A passenger lift is recommended to address Building Code of Australia 2016 (BCA) requirements for vertical distances over 3.6m and provide direct, equitable access to the ferry wharf which complies with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA).

##### Coordination

- \_ A coordinated approach to the design, procurement and delivery of Parramatta Quay is required to achieve an integrated outcome for the precinct.
- \_ An integrated, site specific design for the land and water based elements of Parramatta Ferry Wharf is essential to strengthen wayfinding, legibility and the identity of the ferry wharf and transport interchange elements which are dispersed across the City and river foreshore levels.

##### Design

Further design development is to address the following:

- \_ Impacts of staged public domain delivery on function and interface with existing properties
- \_ Potential to retain existing trees
- \_ Potential archaeological impacts
- \_ Integration of passenger lift to service ferry wharf access from the street. Design development to address potential flood impacts, needs of various user groups, ongoing management, operation and maintenance, and opportunity to create distinct orientation and way-finding element at Parramatta Quay
- \_ Sequence of paths and public spaces to allow for marshalling, education talks, emergency egress, event crowds, meeting places, location of temporary kiosks and event use.
- \_ Way-finding (digitally integrated and multi-lingual) that considers role of the space as part of the City River Foreshore precinct, addressing visitor experience, Darug welcome and acknowledgement of country, transport customer service and interchange, and user conflicts
- \_ Public domain fixtures plan to incorporate all existing elements to be removed or retained (including art and interpretation pieces) and proposed new elements including interpretation elements and public artworks commissioned by City of Parramatta Council.
- \_ Potential use of flood resilient doors to protect lower level public facilities proposed at 34-36 Charles Street from flood inundation
- \_ Detail planning of public and visitor amenities including bike hire, parent room, public toilets, and visitor information
- \_ Coordinated materials palette for Parramatta Quay considering river foreshore existing and proposed materials
- \_ Integration of water sensitive urban design
- \_ Recognition and reinforcement of historic Harrisford House (and adjacent linkages) as a point of orientation in the river foreshore public domain design
- \_ Alternative naming of Charles Street Square

## **Next steps**

### Design and Construction

- \_ Resolve design and procurement strategy to enable coordinated design and delivery of Charles Street Square public domain, Parramatta Ferry Wharf and other components of Parramatta Quay
- \_ Undertake detailed design of the precinct to enable staged construction which meets program requirements of adjacent land owners, state and local government authorities
- \_ Confirm size, scope and nature of public facilities to be provided within future redevelopment proposals for 34-36 Charles Street

### Planning

- \_ Review built form testing and floor space ratio for 34, 36 and 36a on the basis that the sites may be redeveloped as one amalgamated lot including public facilities.
- \_ Consider change of zoning of 36a Charles Street from RE1 to B4 land to enable future amalgamation and redevelopment of 34, 36, 36a properties
- \_ Prepare site specific development controls which resolve setbacks, alignments and requirements for redevelopment of properties adjoining Charles Street Square
- \_ Encourage activated public links to improve way-finding and legibility of the precinct, especially from the ferry terminal to George Street

### Property and Land Ownership

- \_ Consider initiating a road closure to terminate Charles Street at Phillip Street including a temporary 'right of way' in favour of 94 Charles St to enable vehicular access until the property redevelops
- \_ Investigate options for 34, 36 and 36a Charles St properties to amalgamate in order to rationalise existing land parcels, extinguish existing rights of way, remove vehicular access from Charles Street Square and realise public facilities to service the river foreshore within a future redevelopment
- \_ Investigate whether rationalisation of other land parcels within and surrounding the precinct is desirable

### Visitor Services

- \_ Consider opportunities to reinforce Harrisford House's status as a local landmark and point of orientation within the precinct
- \_ Consider complementary visitor services (heritage, walking, cycle tours etc) to enhance existing uses and connect to broader historic houses precinct

### Stakeholder Engagement

- \_ Undertake ongoing coordination with surrounding private developments to open views, realise public connections, and improve activation of Parramatta Quay
- \_ Work together with TfNSW and RMS to resolve the design, funding and delivery program for Parramatta Quay including alternate transport services during construction.
- \_ Work together with TfNSW to increase the frequency of weekend ferry services, particularly during peak periods, to reduce number of ferry patrons waiting at Parramatta Wharf and to increase service quality.
- \_ Collaborate with local landowners and business owners to support and promote the transformation of Charles Street Square

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