

St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney – St Vincent's Research Precinct **CONCEPT PLAN**

Application No. MP 09_0010

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
(For Public Exhibition)

June 2009

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Statement of Validity

Submission of Environment Assessment:

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In respect of	St Vincent's Research Precinct Concept Plan	

Certification:

We certify that we have prepared the contents of the Environmental Assessment and to the best of our knowledge the information contained in this report is neither false nor misleading.

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2/6/2009

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Executive Summary

St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney (SVMHS) has been working to further develop its world class medical research precinct in Darlinghurst. The Precinct is already a creative research hub, supporting world's best practice research and technological innovations. The work of the Precinct is driven by its close proximity to St Vincent's Hospital, one of Australia's leading teaching hospitals. This ensures clinical challenges directly drive laboratory research and enable research findings to be rapidly translated into improvements in patient treatment and care.

The Precinct is already home to Garvan Institute of Medical Research (GIMR) and the 'Lowy Packer' building which houses St Vincent's Centre for Applied Medical Research and Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute (VCCRI). For the purposes of this report, the 'Lowy Packer' building is hereafter referred to as VCCRI. To complete the Precinct two other facilities are proposed.

One will be home to the Garvan St Vincents Campus Cancer Centre (GSVCCC), which will align Garvan's internationally acclaimed cancer research with the best practice cancer care at St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney, with the aim of developing more effective approaches to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

The other will house an initiative of the University of New South Wales, a National Institute of Virology which will provide a new home for the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR), a world leader in HIV treatment and prevention.

The project has a capital investment value of approximately \$130 million and will create almost 600 full time jobs.

This Environmental Assessment accompanies a Concept Plan Application, prepared pursuant to Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. The project was declared a Major Project by the Minister for Planning on 20 January 2009, who at the same time authorised submission of a Concept Plan. The project is identified as application MP 09_0010.

The scope of the Concept Plan Application includes:

- Demolition
- Building envelopes
- Land uses
- Floor space
- Car parking numbers
- Vehicle access arrangement
- Street frontage activities
- Subdivision/consolidation of titles

The actual design of the proposed buildings will be subject to separate Project Applications, once the above key parameters have been resolved.

In addition to benefits in the field of health, the project will provide the following broader benefits to the city:

- Augmentation of the identified 'magnet infrastructure' function of the hospital, enhancing opportunities for growth and employment in associated industries.
- Enhance the role of Sydney and NSW as a globally competitive centre of excellence in the field of medical research and translational medicine.
- Create a co-ordinated medical research hub capable of attracting the best and brightest in the field.

With regard to potential environmental effects upon the immediate locality, this report concludes that the project will not have any unreasonable effects in terms of key potential impacts, including:

- Visual bulk and scale
- Heritage
- Streetscape
- Overshadowing
- Traffic and car parking.

This Environmental Assessment has been prepared in response to, and fully addresses the Environmental Assessment Requirements provided by the Director General - Department of Planning and subject to the implementation of the Commitments made in this application, no significant adverse environmental effects will occur as a result of the project.



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Glossory of Abbreviations

- SVRP - St Vincent’s Research Precinct*
- SVMHS - St Vincents and Mater Health Sydney*
- GIMR - Garvan Institute of Medical Research*
- GSVCCC - Garvan St Vincents Campus Cancer Centre*
- UNSWVC - University of New South Wales Virology Centre*
- NCHECR - National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research*
- VCCRI - Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute*

01 Introduction

The project involves the consolidation of an integrated medical research precinct already comprising GIMR and the ‘Lowy Packer’ building which houses St Vincent’s Centre for Applied Medical Research and VCCRI. For the purposes of this report, the ‘Lowy Packer’ building is hereafter referred to as VCCRI. Two additional facilities are proposed to be constructed to accommodate the Garvan St Vincents Campus Cancer Centre (GSVCCC) and the University of New South Wales Virology Centre (UNSWVC), which will provide a new home for the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR).

The St Vincent's Research Precinct (SVRP) comprises most of the street block to the north of the existing St Vincent's Hospital, across Burton Street.

This Environmental Assessment accompanies a Concept Plan Application under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act).

The scope of the Concept Plan includes:

- Demolition
- Building envelopes
- Land uses
- Floor space
- Car parking numbers
- Vehicle access arrangement
- Street frontage activities
- Subdivision/consolidation of titles

On 20 January 2009, the Minister declared the project to be a ‘Major Project’, to which Part 3A of the Act applies. On 13 February 2009, a Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) was submitted to the Director General in association with a request for the Director General’s (DG’s) Environmental Assessment Requirements (EARs) for the preparation of this Concept Plan application (see Appendix A).

On 11 March 2009, the DG issued EARs (see Section 7) which dictate the scope of this Environmental Assessment.

Collaboration requires a 'creative milieu':

a physical urban setting where people feel encouraged to engage, communicate and share

Through fortunate coincidences of circumstance where creative individuals, an open institutional setting and various power brokers are in good alignment, professionals are able to share and collaborate to mutual advantage and learn from the best of what others are doing.

Creative milieus consist of both

- Hard infrastructure: buildings, roads, resources and so on
- Soft infrastructure: attitudes and opportunities to engage

These environments are open, but they do have unspoken rules of engagement

They know where they are going and have a vision agreed by key players

The Art of City Making , Charles Landry (2006)

02 Background

2.1 Precinct Participants

The completed precinct is planned to accommodate the following medical research participants.

Existing

2.1.1 St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney (SVMHS)

SVMHS has been working to further develop its world class medical research precinct in Darlinghurst. The Precinct is a creative research hub, supporting world's best practice research and technological innovations. The work of the Precinct is driven by its close proximity to St Vincent's Hospital, one of Australia's leading teaching hospitals. This ensures clinical challenges directly drive laboratory research and enable research findings to be rapidly translated into improvements in patient treatment and care.



2.1.2 Garvan Institute for Medical Research (GIMR)

GIMR is one of Australia's largest autonomous medical research institutions with over 400 scientists, students and support staff. Internationally recognised as a leader in gene-based medical research, GIMR is committed to delivering new insights into major diseases and novel ways to prevent and treat these disorders. The critical mass of leading senior scientists at GIMR ensures that the quality of the research is amongst the best in the world.



2.1.3 Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute (VCCRI)

VCCRI is an independent research organisation committed to excellence in cardiovascular research and training, as well as in the rapid application of research discoveries to patient care. It's existing facility within the Precinct employs 130 full-time scientific staff who conduct research into the prevention of heart disease. Their discoveries and achievements over the past 13 years have led to significant improvements in patient treatment and care.



Proposed

2.1.4 The Garvan St Vincents Campus Cancer Centre (GSVCCC)

The proposed GSVCCC is an initiative of GIMR and SVMHS. It will combine GIMR's internationally acclaimed cancer research with the best practice cancer services and care at SVMHS. Housing 250 scientists, clinicians and support staff, the Centre will aim to:

"realise the promise of personalised medicine for cancer patients by creating a world-renowned facility where research findings move quickly into clinical care and clinical challenges drive laboratory research."

2.1.5 The University of New South Wales Virology Centre (UNSWVC)

The existing NCHECR is recognised internationally as a research leader in the field of HIV and AIDS. The Centre plans to move into a new home proposed within the Precinct to establish an Institute of Virology. The proposed new Institute would build on the high level work already underway and expand into other vitally important areas of public health such as the treatment of viral hepatitis and sexual transmitted infections.



2.1.6 Internal Stakeholder Objectives

A visioning workshop was held on 10 November 2008 with representatives of key stakeholders. Key themes that arose were:

- *The aim is to be a centre of excellence in our chosen areas of strength, preferably the best site for the integration of clinical excellence, applied, translational and basic research in Australia*
- *More than the "sum of the parts"*
- *A planned approach to connectivity between the buildings and spaces on the site*
- *Critical mass in terms of research, research infrastructure and clinical practice – with implications for lowering cost structures*
- *Access to each other's expertise*
- *Thinking and acting as "one precinct" while respecting each organisation's sovereignty*
- *Capacity for growth*
- *Joint approach to key clinician and researcher appointments*

2.2 The Proponent and the Consultant Team

The Proponent is St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney.

The consultant team assisting the Proponent with the Concept Plan comprises:

- Urbis – Statutory Planning and Heritage
- Daryl Jackson Robyn Dyke Architecture – Urban Design
- KJA – Community Consultation
- TEF Consulting – Traffic and Transport
- ARUP – Infrastructure, Drainage, Civil Works & Sustainability



2.3 Community Consultation

KJA Pty Ltd has been engaged by the proponent to manage a process of community consultation. As detailed in their report (see Appendix B), the following activities were undertaken to engage the local community and other stakeholders during the concept design phase:

2.3.1 Letterbox Drops

Each community event was advertised via letterbox drop to approximately 2,750 households. Letters were distributed to local residents inviting them to a community cocktail evening, a community Twilight Fair and a community information session.

2.3.2 Community Cocktail Evening

The CEO of St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney, Steven Rubic invited local residents to an informal cocktail evening. The event was held from 6-7pm on Monday 16 March 2009 in the Function Room on the ground floor of St Vincent's Clinic. Large information panels explaining SV&MHS's Concept Plan to expand the Research Precinct were on display during the evening.

Approximately thirty local residents attended the cocktail evening.

2.3.3 Twilight Fair

The CEO of St Vincents & Mater Health Sydney, Steven Rubic, wrote to local residents inviting them to a Local Community Twilight Fair to celebrate the Centenary of St Vincent's Private Hospital. The Fair was held behind the Hospital at Barcom Avenue Park from 4-7pm on Friday 27 March 2009. Along with health checks, a sausage sizzle, face painting, and live music, SV&MHS hosted a stall displaying large information panels explaining SV&MHS's proposed Concept Plan to develop the research precinct.

The stall was manned by three people - a representative of the planning firm Urbis, a representative of the architectural firm Daryl Jackson Robin Dyke and a representative from communication consultants KJA.

Approximately 20 to 25 people visited the stall, viewed the panels and discussed the proposed Concept Plan with the project's representatives.

2.3.4 Community Information Session

A dedicated community information session was offered to St Vincents neighbours on Tuesday 7 April 2009 between 5pm and 7pm in the St Vincent's Clinic Function Room. Local residents were advised they could drop by anytime between those hours to view a series of information panels which were on display.

A number of the Precinct partner's senior representatives were available during the evening to speak to local residents about the proposed plans and answer any questions.

Five people took the opportunity to attend the information session.

2.3.5 Community Group Briefings

There are two organisations that refer to themselves as 'Darlinghurst Residents Action Group' or DRAG. A briefing was provided to one of those groups on 17 April 2009. Two representatives of this DRAG group attended the briefing with SV&MHS's CEO Steven Rubic; St Vincents Public Health Services Executive Director Jonathon Anderson; SV&MHS's Public Affairs and Communications Manager David Faktor; and Urbis Director David Hoy.

A briefing for the second DRAG group was held on 1 May 2009. Four representatives of this group attended a briefing provided by SV&MHS's Major Capital Works Manager Owen Judge; SV&MHS's Public Affairs and Communications Manager David Faktor; and Urbis Director David Hoy.

2.3.6 Agency and Authority Consultation

Project representatives liaised with a number of agencies and authorities including the City of Sydney Council, NSW Ministry of Transport, NSW Roads and Traffic Authority and relevant utility providers. Issues raised were embodied in the DGRs and responses are included in the technical reports provided to support this application.

2.3.7 Matters Raised During Consultation

■ Scale of Proposed New Buildings

Comments related to the height and scale of the proposed new buildings. One person was concerned that the proposed buildings were significantly larger than described in an earlier Master Plan prepared for the Precinct.

■ Shadowing and Wind

The additional shadows and potential wind impacts that would be created by the proposed new buildings were raised.

■ Car Parking

The amount of car parking to be provided within the expanded Precinct was raised.

■ Traffic

Traffic generation is a topic regularly raised by the local community. Issues in particular included:

- 1) A preference for the Precinct to use Liverpool Street instead of West Street as the car park entry/exit. Some residents felt this should have been the solution when the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute building was being planned.
- 2) Delivery vehicles using West Avenue to access the loading dock and existing car park. There were also concerns about heavy vehicles reversing into the loading dock from West Street to make deliveries.

■ Landscaping of West Street

It was suggested improved landscaping along West Street should form part of the Precinct planning. It was thought the landscaping would soften the interface between the Precinct and adjoining residential neighbourhood.

■ Lighting

It was suggested future development should avoid additional lighting impacts.

■ Location of the Precinct

The location of the Precinct in the heart of Darlinghurst was queried. A number of people wanted to know why the Precinct needed to be located in the proposed location as opposed to another area of Sydney.

■ Planning Process and Consultation

The Part 3A planning process was noted by several people with at least two people questioning what likely impact their views would have on the final decision.

■ Work of the Precinct

Several members of the community welcomed the proposal to expand the work of the Research Precinct noting the benefits that will potentially flow to patients around Australia and internationally.

These issues have informed the Environmental Assessment and are addressed throughout this report.

03 Strategic Justification for the Project

The social and economic wellbeing of Sydney is underpinned by its universally recognised role as a global city. This role is in turn underpinned by Sydney being a home to centres of international excellence in business, culture, services, research and education. To maintain its global status it is critical that Sydney continues to be a 'creative city' that encourages and facilitates the growth and diversity of such centres of excellence.

St Vincent's Hospital and Research Precinct is a centre of excellence in medical research and clinical practice.

3.1 Sydney Metropolitan Strategy

The Sydney Metropolitan Strategy was adopted in 2005 and is the State Government's current policy for the development of the Sydney metropolitan area to 2030.

- The Strategy specifically recognises the cluster of health related infrastructure in Darlinghurst.
- The Strategy identifies St Vincent's as one of 10 'Major Hospitals' in the Sydney Metro Area
- The Strategy indicates the research precinct as a location for a CRC, or "Co-operative Research Centre", notwithstanding that the project has not been formally declared a CRC. A CRC is a multi-party research centre funded jointly by the Commonwealth Government and participants, for research into a specific applied area. Essential participants in a CRC are an Australian:
 - end-user (either from the private, public or community sector); and
 - higher education institution (or a research institute affiliated with a university).

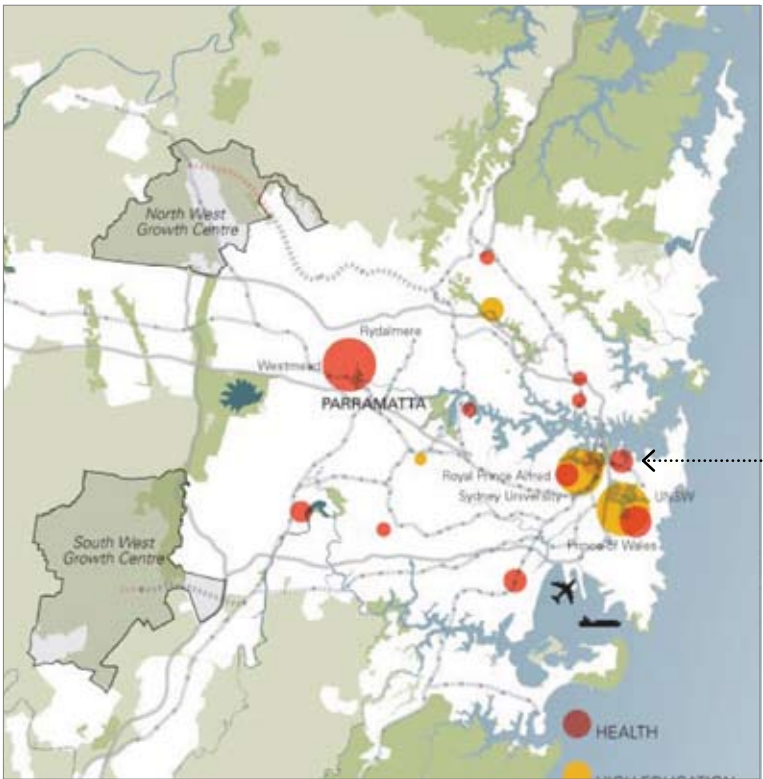


Figure 1 – Clusters of Health and Higher Education (Source: Sydney Metropolitan Strategy)



Figure 2 – Sydney's Knowledge Infrastructure (Source: Sydney Metropolitan Strategy)

3.2 Sustainable Sydney 2030 Strategic Plan

Part of the vision for the City of Sydney in the 2030 Strategic Plan is for it to remain Australia's most significant global city containing premium spaces for business activities and high quality jobs to nurture, attract and retain global talent. One of the key strategic directions identified in the Plan is for Sydney to remain a globally competitive and innovative city through investment in strategic economic infrastructure and amenities.

3.3 Draft Inner Sydney Subregional Strategy

Various subregional strategies have been prepared to provide greater detail to complement the Metro Strategy. In July 2008, the Draft Inner Sydney Subregional Strategy was exhibited.

The Draft Subregional Strategy recognises the St Vincent's Hospital, GIMR, VCCRI and the NCHECR as **"a world class health services cluster"**. The strategy contains the following actions that are relevant to this Precinct (emphasis added):

- A2.1.3 – "Within the subregion, **world class health, medical and biotechnology research activities are located in a cluster around the St Vincents Hospital in Darlinghurst...**".
- A2.2 – "For the Department of Health, Department of State and Regional Development and Department of Planning to **promote the City East and Sydney Education and Health precincts as centres of excellence in biomedical research and development**".
- A2.3 – "Magnet infrastructure is generally an asset in the built environment that attracts activities to co-locate with it to form an industry cluster".

The subregional strategy recognises the cluster of hospital related uses along Victoria Street as key features of "Economy and Employment" within the subregion.



Figure 3 – Existing Employment Zones (Source: Draft Inner City Subregional Strategy)

3.4 South Sydney Development Control Plan 1997

South Sydney Development Control Plan 1997 (DCP 1997) contains the key built form controls applicable in the area.

“highly visible sites, such as those located along the Kings Cross ridge, King Street and Riley Street are to be carefully designed to be in scale with the City’s setting, reinforcing skyline characteristics as shaped by buildings of uniform height, variable height, cluster groups, and tower forms”. (p.8)

Victoria Street / Darlinghurst Road follow the natural ridgeline from Darlinghurst to Potts Point – known as the ‘Kings Cross ridge’. As can be seen in Figures 4-6, existing tower forms are concentrated along the Kings Cross ridge (as well as along the William Street corridor).

A key objective of the project is to create iconic buildings that befit the prestige and international reputation of such a centre of cooperative research excellence, whilst being responsive to its context within a heritage precinct. Building envelopes are proposed to reinforce the skyline characteristics of the Kings Cross ridge, as envisaged in DCP 1997, by providing buildings of variable heights consistent with those buildings existing on the Kings Cross ridge (see Figure 4).

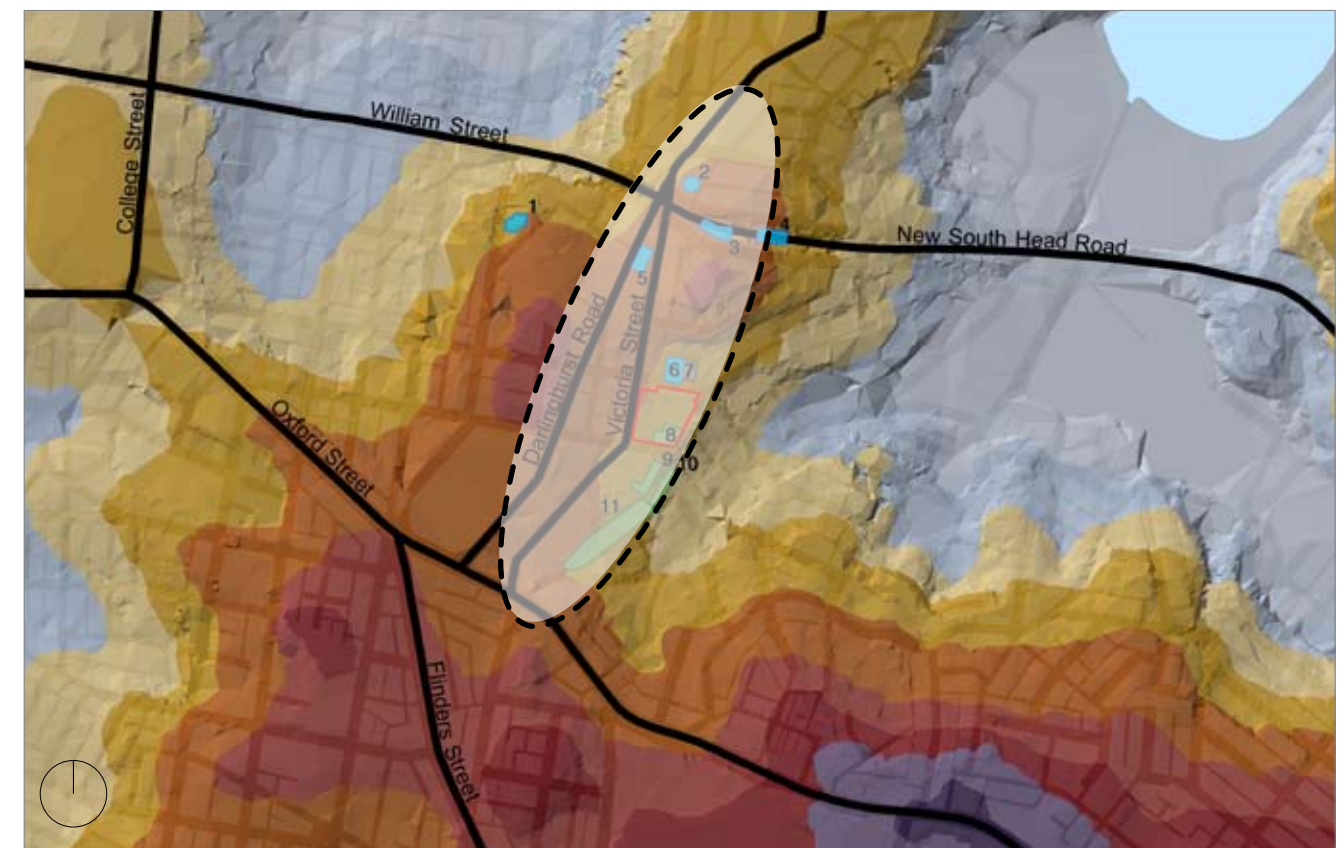


Figure 4 – Kings Cross Ridgeline

KEY: 1- Horizon Apartments 2- Millenium Apartments 3- Elan Apartments 4- Altair Apartments 5- Top of the Town Apartments
6- 320 Liverpool St (Approval) 7- Telstra Exchange 8- O'Brien Building 9- Cahill Building 10- St Vincent's Building



Figure 5 – View along Kings Cross ridge, looking north from VCCRI



Figure 6 – Building Heights along Kings Cross ridge (Source: Daryl Jackson Robyn Dyke Architecture)

04 The Site and Context

4.1 The Precinct

The SVRP has an area of 8,150m² and comprises most of the street block bounded by Victoria, Liverpool, West and Burton Streets, Darlinghurst, immediately north of the St Vincent's Hospital. The context of the Precinct is identified in Figure 7.

The Precinct currently accommodates GIMR, VCCRI, St Vincents Centre for Applied Medical Research and the University of NSW, via the NCHECR, which is currently housed in the nearby St Vincent's Hospital Medical Centre. In addition there are also a number of smaller buildings and some vacant land, including:

- 362-364 Victoria St (vacant land used as 'beer garden' to the Green Park Hotel).
- 366-368 Victoria St (terrace house group adapted to offices for St Vincent's Hospital)
- 370 Victoria St (altered late Victorian terrace house)
- 372 Victoria St (late Victorian terrace used as offices by St Vincent's – local heritage item)
- 374 Victoria St (altered late Victorian terrace house)
- 376-382 Victoria St (Medical Centre)
- 384-390 Victoria Street (GIMR)
- 405-427 Liverpool Street (VCCRI and St Vincent's Ancillary Services Building)
- 429 Liverpool Street (two storey Victorian terrace house attached to 431 Liverpool St)
- Chaplin Lane, a private service lane off Liverpool Street, serving the rear of properties to Victoria St.

The Precinct does not include the Green Park Hotel at 360 Liverpool Street (on the corner of Liverpool and Victoria Streets) or the two storey Victorian terrace house at 431 Liverpool Street (on the corner of Liverpool and West Streets). The extent of the Precinct is identified in Figures 8.

A physical survey plan of the Precinct has been prepared by Rygate Surveyors and is included at Appendix AA.

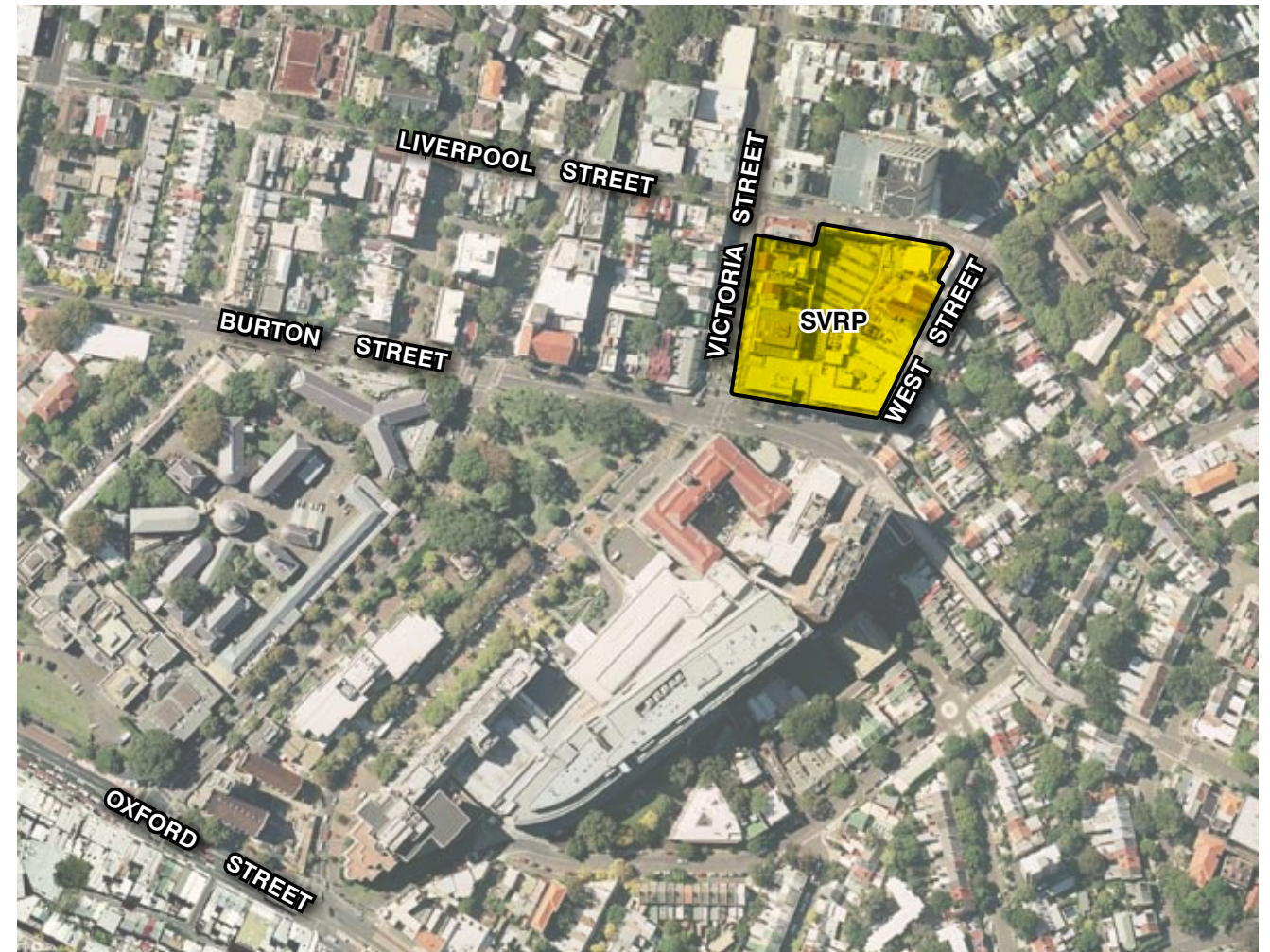


Figure 7 – Local Context

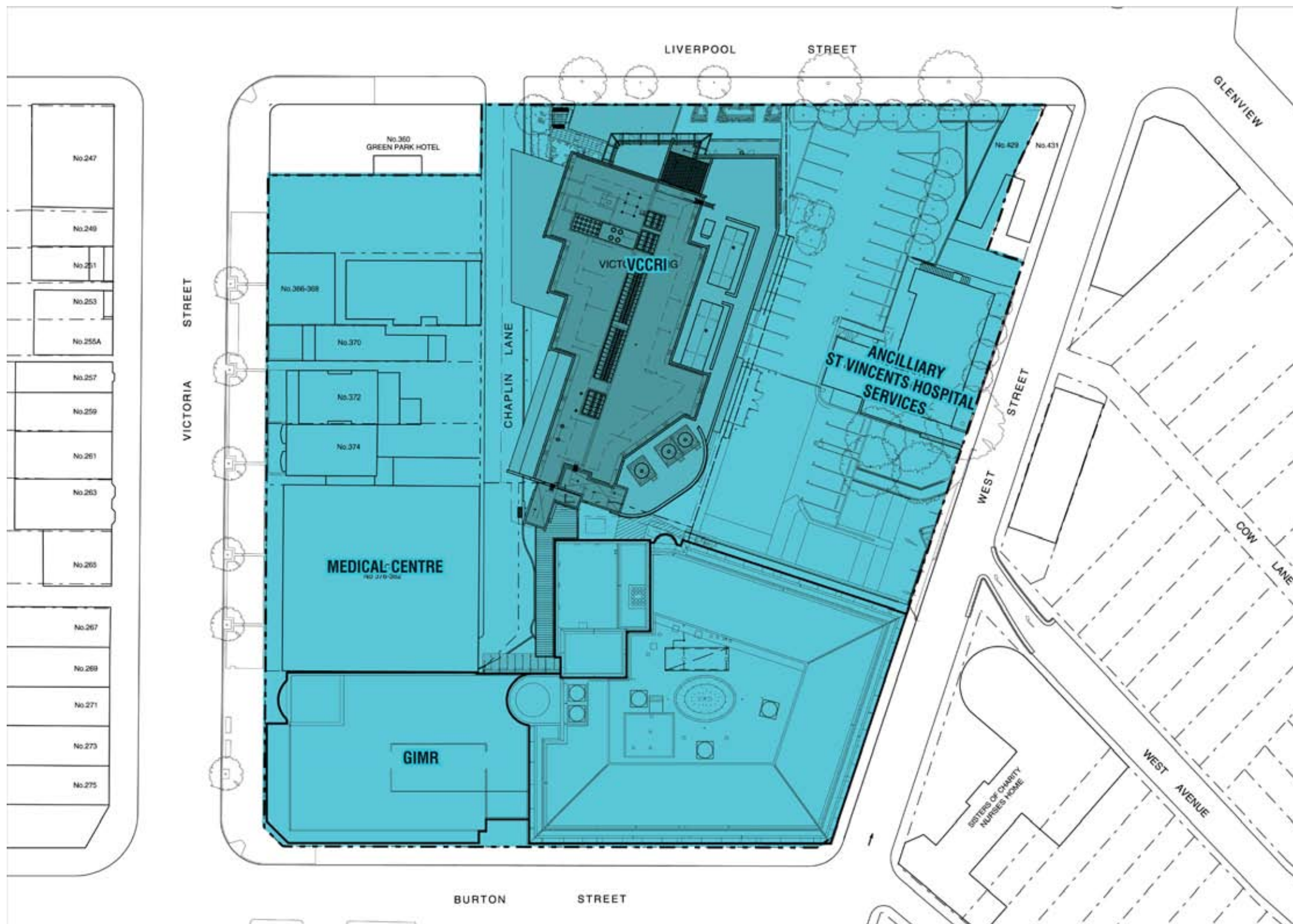


Figure 8 – Extent of St Vincent's Research Precinct

4.1.1 Legal Description

The entire Precinct is owned by the Trustees of St Vincent's and comprises the following parcels of land:

- Lot 22 DP 867249 – 362-364 Victoria Street
- Lot 24 DP 881417 – 366-368 Victoria Street
- Lot 25 DP 881417 – 370 Victoria Street
- Lot 26 DP 881417 – 372 Victoria Street
- Lot 27 DP 881417 – 374 Victoria Street
- Lot 28 DP 881417 – 376-382 Victoria Street
- Lot 10 DP 846558 – 384-392 Victoria Street
- Lot 29 DP 881417 – 405-429 Liverpool Street (including Chaplin Lane)

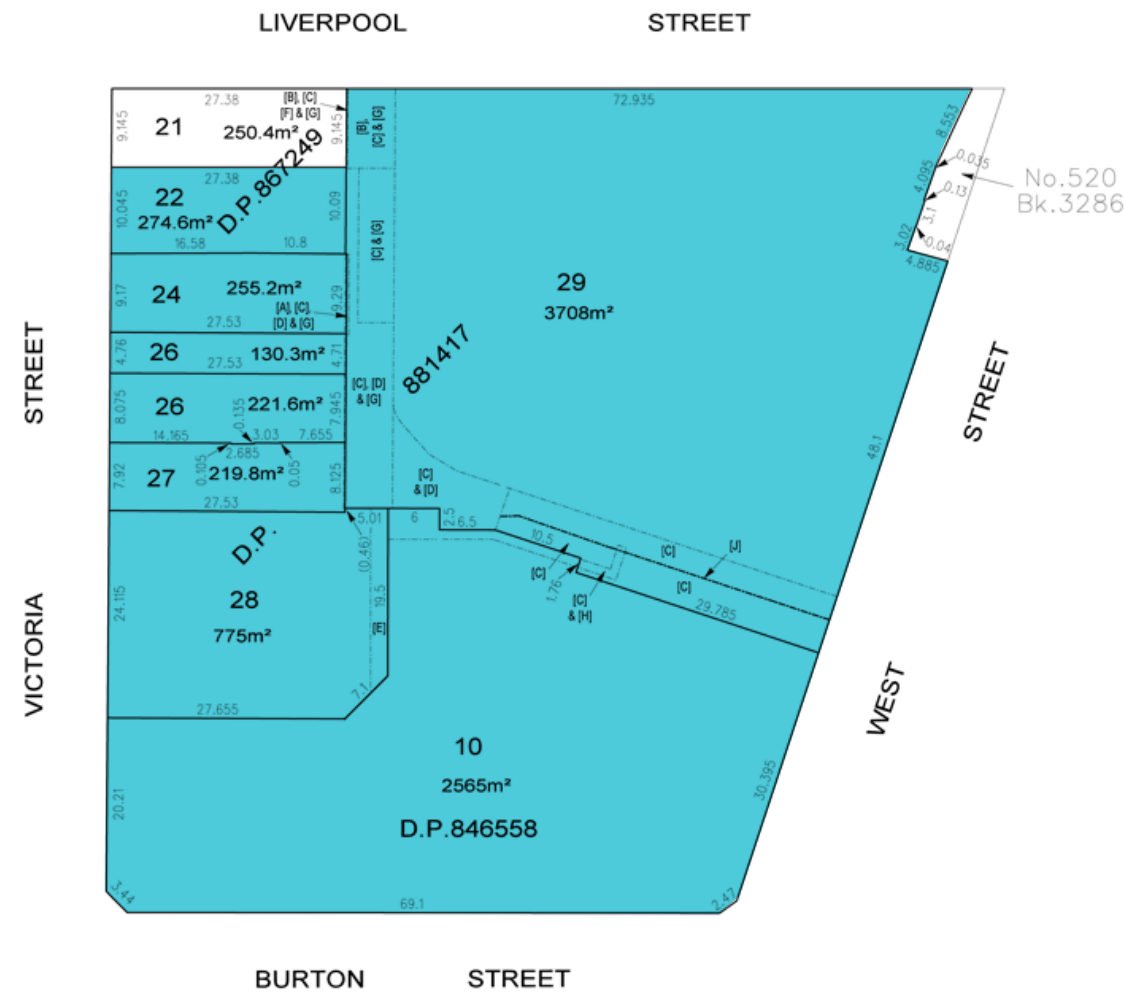


Figure 9 – Existing land titles within the SVRP (Source: Rygate Surveyors)



429 Liverpool Street (note 431 is not within the Precinct)



VCCRI car park, St Vincent's ancillary services building and GIMR in background



405-429 Liverpool Street (VCCRI)



362 Victoria Street (vacant land used as beer garden to Green Park Hotel and VCCRI in background)



366-368, 370 and 372 Victoria Street (VCCRI in background)



372 & 374 Victoria Street



376-382 Victoria Street (Medical Centre)



384-392 Victoria Street (GIMR)

Figure 10 – Existing development within the Precinct

4.2 Site Analysis

Key features of the site and its immediate surrounds are illustrated in Figure 11.



Figure 11 - Site Analysis (Source: Daryl Jackson Robyn Dyke Architecture)

4.3 District Context

The Precinct is located within the eastern side of the suburb of Darlinghurst, which is part of the mixed use area adjoining the eastern side of the Sydney CBD. This area is characterised by the juxtaposition of the remnants of original Victorian suburbs and more modern high-rise infill, particularly along the Kings Cross Ridge. To the immediate east of the Precinct is low rise, high density, predominantly residential Victorian suburb of Paddington. The eastern boundary of the Precinct forms a distinct edge between high rise development comprising the eastern edge of the CBD mixed use fringe, and residential suburbs beyond (see Figure 12).



Figure 12 - District Context



Figure 13 - View west to St Vincent's and GIMR from Paddington

The regional context of the site can therefore be described as CBD fringe, at the interface of the surrounding residential area. It sits on Victoria Street, a major collector road, which radially connects the two CBD arterial roads, William Street and Oxford Street.

4.4 Local Context

At the local level, the Precinct sits between two landmark arterial road junctures, namely Taylor Square and Kings Cross, to the south-west and north respectively. Both are significant evening entertainment and retail precincts, surrounded by high density housing and mixed uses.

Between Taylor Square and the Precinct is an historic institutional precinct characterised by Darlinghurst Courthouse, the former Darlinghurst Gaol (now TAFE) and St Vincent's Hospital. To the immediate west and north of the Precinct is characteristic Darlinghurst development comprising a diverse mix of building forms. To the immediate east is predominantly residential development in the form of Paddington terrace houses.

4.4.1 Development to the West

Development on the western side of Victoria Street comprises predominantly two storey terraces comprising restaurant uses on the ground floor and residential uses above.



Development to the immediate west, across Victoria Street – viewed from Liverpool Street



Development to the immediate west, across Victoria Street – viewed from Burton Street

Figure 14 - Photos of development to the west

4.4.2 Development to the North

Development immediately to the north of the Precinct comprises the Green Park Hotel (360 Liverpool Street, on the corner of Liverpool and Victoria Streets) and a two storey Victorian dwelling house at 431 Liverpool Street (on the corner of Liverpool and West Streets).

Development on the northern side of Liverpool Street comprises two high rise commercial buildings, the Telstra Exchange and, an approved multi-storey, mixed use development which is currently under construction at 320 Liverpool Street and a number of two storey mixed use terraces.



Green Park Hotel – 360 Liverpool Street



431 and 429 Liverpool Street (GIMR and VCCRI in background)



Development to the immediate north, across Liverpool Street – viewed Victoria Street



The eastern end of the street block to the north.

Figure 15 - Photos of development to the north

4.4.3 Development to the East

Development on the eastern side of West Street comprises predominantly low rise residential development as well as a some mixed use development and the Sisters of Charity convent.



38 West Street, corner of Liverpool



36 West Street, corner of West Avenue



Sisters of Charity convent (to left)



Corner of West and Burton Streets

Figure 16 - Photos of development to the east

4.4.4 Development to the South

Development on the southern side of Burton Street comprises the St Vincent's Hospital, with the high-rise Cahill Building (hospital use) being the most prominent building adjacent to the site. The multi-storey O'Brien building (hospital use) is currently under construction between these two buildings



The original (de Lacy) St Vincent's Hospital building (Cahill building in background and recently approved O'Brien building under construction)



View east along Burton Street – O'Brien building under construction on right

Figure 17 - Photos of development to the south

4.5 Transport and Access

A Traffic and Parking Report has been prepared by TEF Consulting (see Appendix C).

4.5.1 Road Network

The TEF report advises two major arterial routes are located close to the Precinct – Oxford Street (State Road 172) and William Street / Kings Cross Tunnel / Edgecliff Road (State Road 173). These streets provide the main east-west connections between the Sydney CBD and the Eastern Suburbs. Burton Street and Liverpool Street provide secondary east-west routes. Victoria Street and Darlinghurst Road, together with South Dowling Street and Boundary Street cross the above four routes from north to south, thus forming a comprehensive street grid which allows easy access to the area in all directions of travel. Traffic signals with pedestrian crossing facilities are provided at all intersections of the above streets, except the Burton Street / West Street intersection.

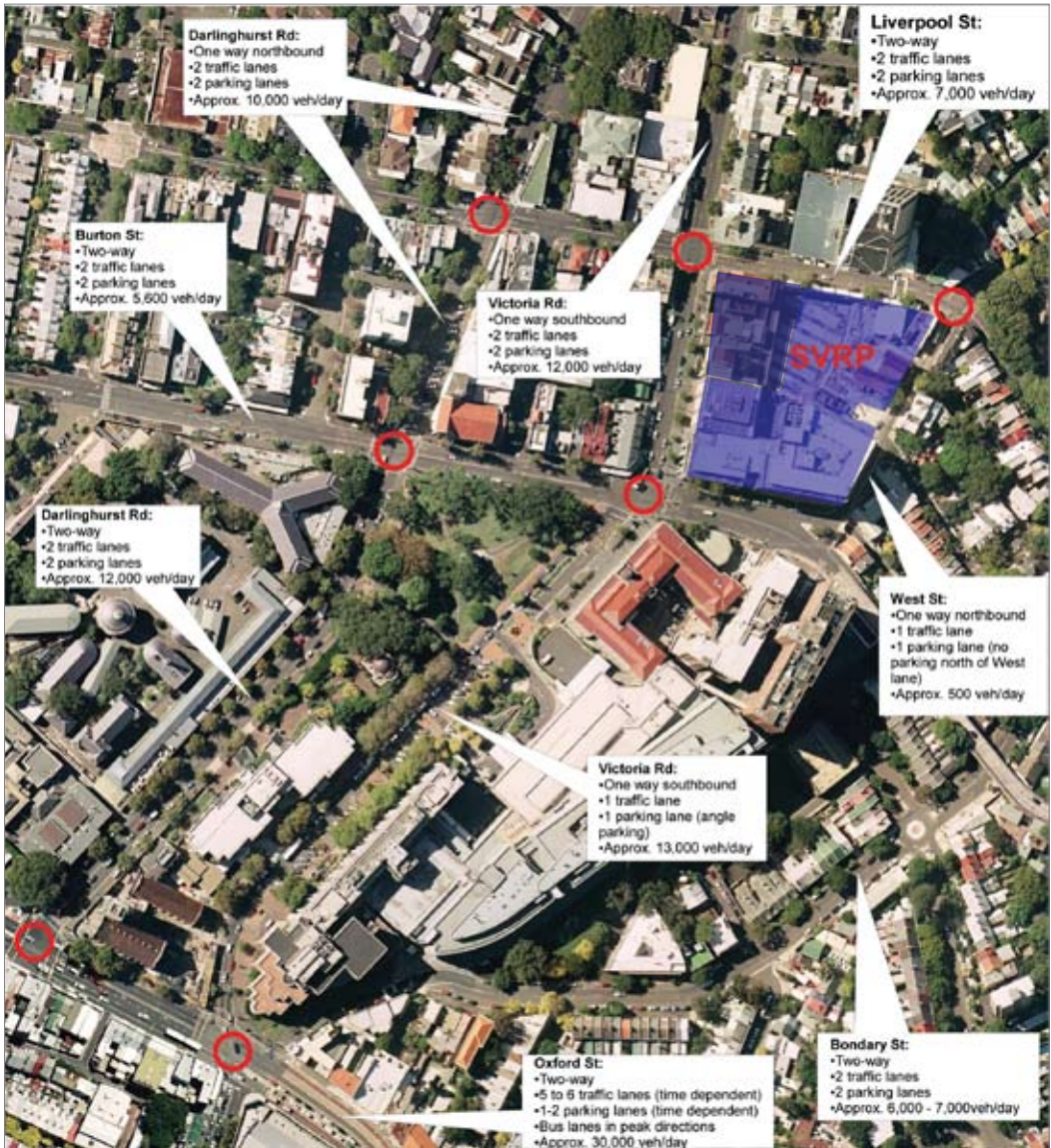


Figure 18 - Street characteristics and traffic controls (Source: TEF Consulting)

4.5.2 Intersection Performance

TEF conducted traffic counts at all key intersections in the vicinity of the Precinct. The commuter peak hours at the intersections occurred between 7:45 am and 8:45 am and from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Operation of the key intersections with the existing traffic volumes has been checked using SIDRA Intersection software, SCATES (for Oxford Street intersections) and Aimsun microsimulation model.

SIDRA analysis indicates that all intersections are performing at Level of Service (LOS) A or B (a good level of service) during both peak periods, with the exception of the intersections of Oxford Street with Darlinghurst Road and Victoria Street. The Darlinghurst Road intersection operates at LOS C (Satisfactory) in the PM peak and the Victoria Street intersection operates at LOS D (near capacity) during both peaks. Both the Aimsun and SCATES analysis provided similar results.

4.5.3 Public Transport

The Precinct is very well serviced by public transport. Kings Cross railway station is located some 500m from the Precinct (about 5 to 8 minutes walk). Train services run at approximately 5 minute intervals during the peak commuter periods.

There are a number of bus routes within convenient walking distance from the Precinct. Of these, routes 311 and 389 have bus stops near the site. These services run at 8 to 15 minute intervals during the peak commuter periods and at 15 to 20 minute intervals at other times during the day. Other bus routes along Oxford Street provide high frequency services.

Pedestrians are well provided for with all streets in the vicinity of the site having footpaths. The walking path from Kings Cross station to the Precinct is under shop awnings for most of its length.

4.5.4 Parking

At present, a total of 52 off-street car parking spaces are provided on the SVRP site. Of these, 26 spaces are located on the surface level, whilst the other 26 spaces are located in the VCCRI basement car park. Both car parking areas are accessed via West Street.

The existing parking supply within the broader hospital campus is limited, with some 300 cars associated with the Hospital parking in the surrounding area.

4.5.5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Linkages

The development will take advantage of the existing footpath and cycleway network presented in Figure 19. Existing linkages have the following characteristics, indicative of a good level of service:

- They are continuous throughout the area
- They have functional width and are in good repair
- Signalised and zebra crossings are provided
- Streets are mostly level, without steep sections
- Trees and awnings provide protection from sun and rain
- Vehicle speeds are low
- Main paths are generally safe due to good lighting, continuous pedestrian traffic demand and high police presence

Direct pedestrian access is currently provided from Victoria Street to GIMR and from Liverpool Street to VCCRI.

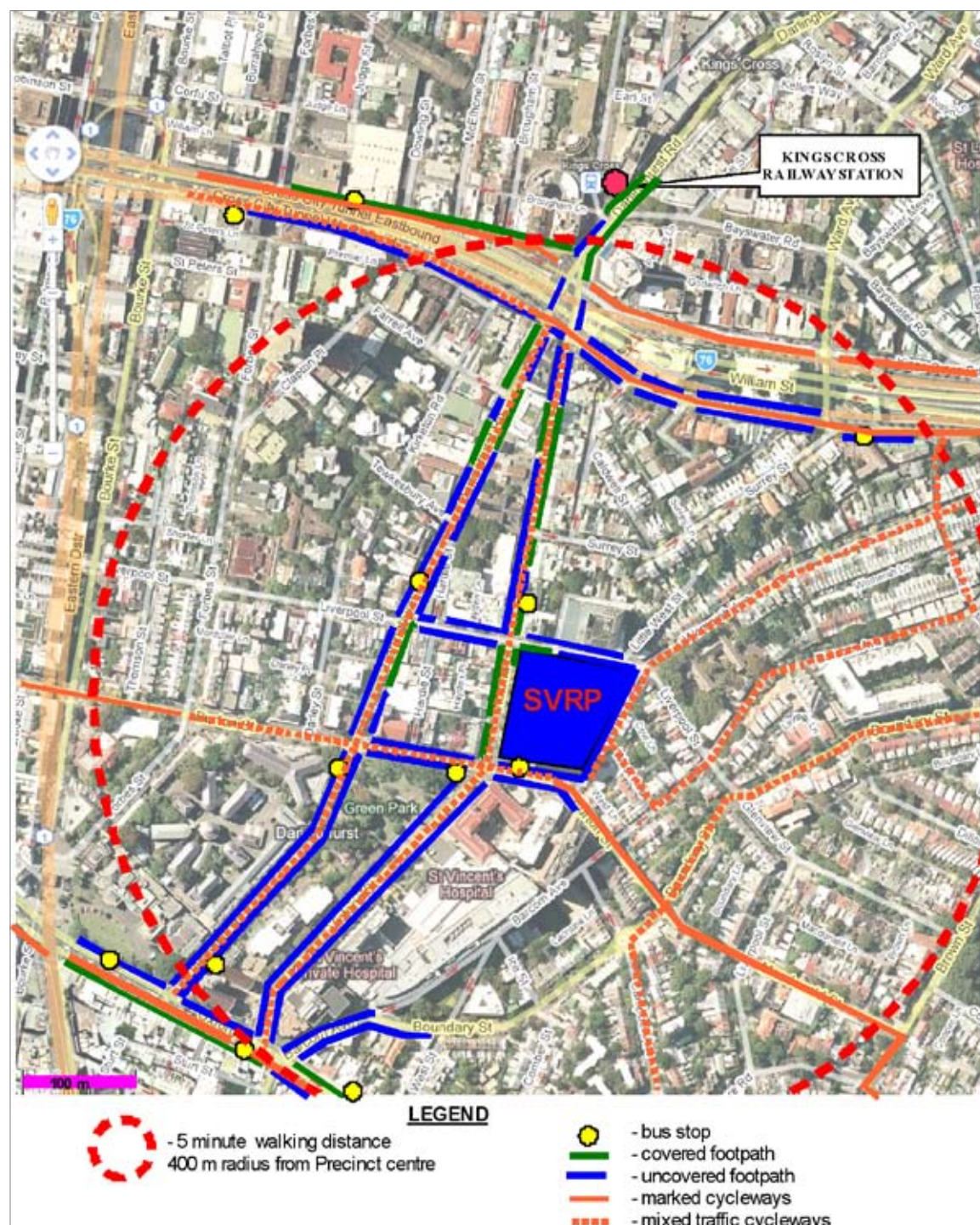


Figure 19 - Pedestrian/Cycle Network (Source: TEF Consulting)

05 Alternatives Considered

The project requires the creation of facilities that are purpose built to accommodate the floor space and operational requirements of two specific users.

The Concept Planning and Environmental Assessment process has therefore involved identification of the specific requirements of these users, followed by environmental testing to determine whether the precinct can accommodate them.

5.1 Local Contextual Analysis

Analysis of the local context reveals a juxtaposition of two distinct building types, namely:

- A predominantly two storey Victorian terrace house form; and
- A high rise built form (ranging between 8 to 12 storeys) aligned along the Kings Cross ridge, including the Cahill building, Telstra Building, GIMR etc.

Given the functional requirements of the proposed facilities, and the constrained size of the Precinct, a two storey form is clearly not capable of accommodating the required facilities. In 2004/5 a draft master plan was prepared on behalf of St Vincent's that proposed intermediary forms that stepped up from the surrounding two storey forms, to the multi storey forms already on the site (i.e. the VCCRI and GIMR). However, the resultant varying floor plates were not suitable for laboratory space, and provided insufficient floor space to accommodate the required facilities. We note that this master plan was never formally adopted.

In view of the above, the multi storey form of existing development within the Precinct is the only form capable of accommodating the GSVCCC and UNSWVC within the Precinct.

5.2 Alternative Locality

The Darlinghurst locality, and specifically a site with immediate proximity to St Vincent's Hospital, has been identified at all levels of strategic urban planning as the preferred locality for expanded medical research facilities. Relocation of the proposed facilities to a distant locality would be inconsistent with the Metropolitan and Subregional Strategies, and would severely undermine the translational medical outcomes that are a fundamental driver of collocating researchers and clinicians.

5.3 Other Nearby Sites

While additional land in the immediate locality could potentially allow the proposed facilities to be spread across more land, as can be seen in Figure 20 the fundamental constraints of surrounding land in all directions mean that any additional sites would be a considerable distance away, across major arterial roads.

This option would therefore also undermine the concept of collocating medical researchers and clinicians.

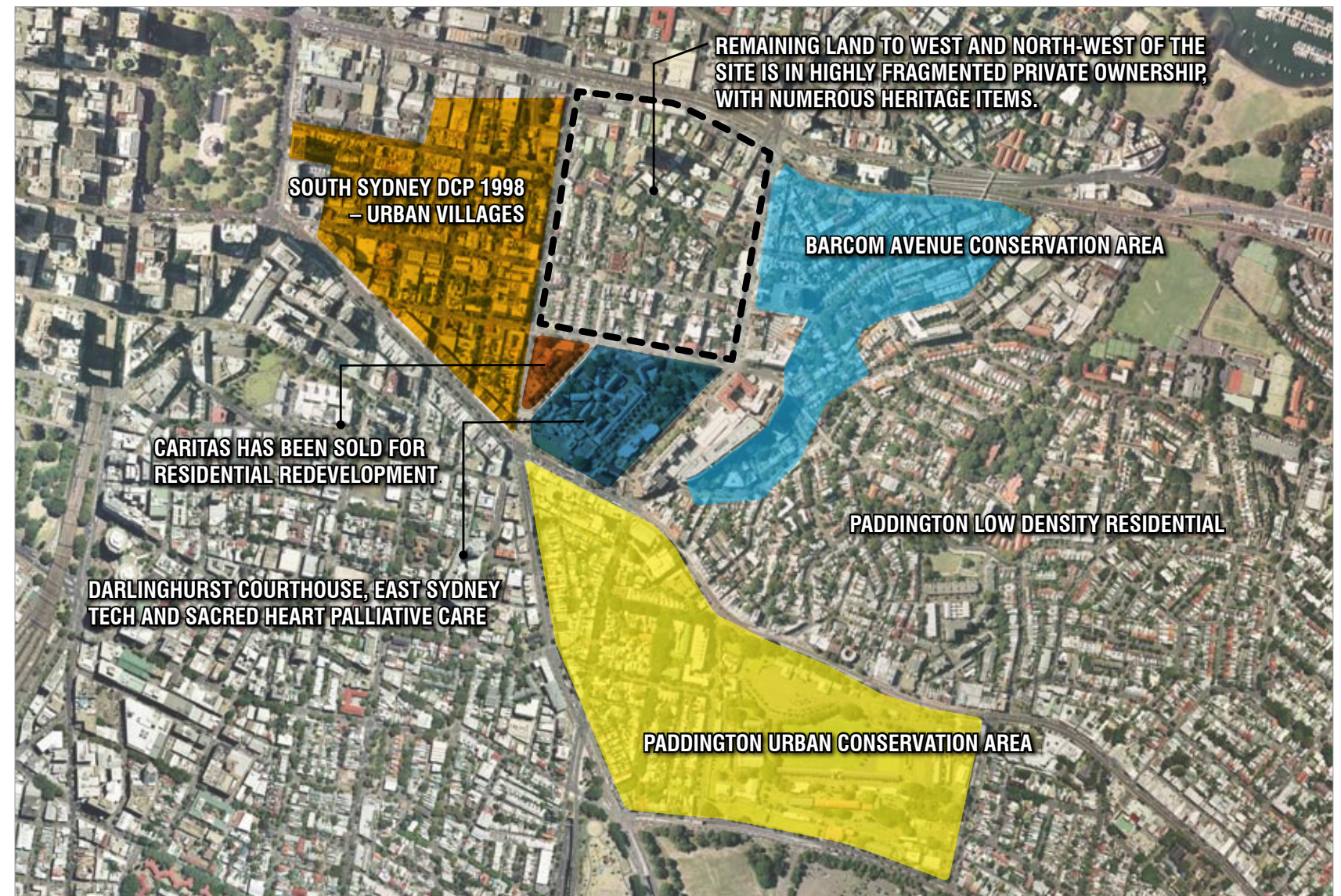


Figure 20 – Land Constraints Map

