

COLUMBIA PRECINCT REGENERATION

2-20 PARRAMATTA ROAD & 11-13 COLUMBIA LANE HOMEBUSH

Landscape Design Report

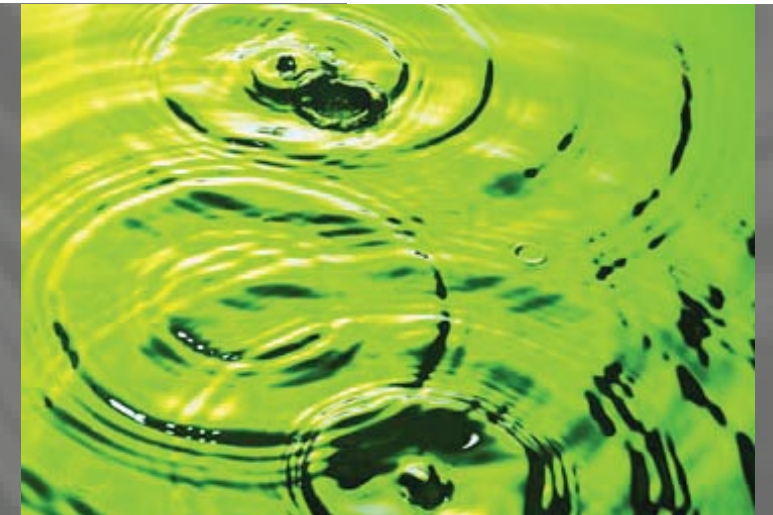


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SITE IMAGE
Landscape Architect

1.0 Introduction

This Landscape Design report has been prepared by Site Image Landscape Architects on behalf of the Columbia Precinct Consortium, in conjunction with Mayoh Architects and Colston Budd Hunt and Kafes Planners to describe the Landscape Design associated with the development proposals for the site at 2-20 Parramatta Road & 11-13 Columbia Lane, Homebush, NSW.

This report sets out landscape considerations and design proposals associated with the site development proposals through description of:

- the site context;
- existing site landscape;
- development controls and DGR's relating to landscape;
- development and landscape proposals;
- discussion of landscape design proposals for areas and components of the site;
- assessment of conformance with the authorities requirements and DGR's.

The landscape proposals are described by the Site Image design documents, including:

- Landscape Concept Plan, Issue A

This report is to be read in conjunction with related planning, architectural and consultant reports describing the allied aspects of the works. Those reports comprehensively describe the physical site, context, constraints, controls, and built form and associated proposals and assessed impacts and benefits. This report will focus on landscape aspects of the site and proposals, and aims to minimize duplication of information contained in accompanying reports.

Generally, this report describes the existing conditions, the development and landscape proposals, and sets out relevant authorities codes and requirements, and describes the design features that illustrate substantial conformance with these requirements.

2.0 Relevant Studies

In preparing design proposals for the site, and this report, reference has been made to a range of relevant studies and documentation to establish the design context and considerations. These include:

- Powells Creek Landscape Design Framework , (2003) Clouston Associates for Greater Homebush Living Centres
- Powells Creek Reserve Management Action Plan (2000) Oculus, for Concord Council
- Concord Bike Plan (1999) Connel Wagner for Concord Council;
- Strathfield Council Management Plan 2011 – 2014
- Mason Park Plan of Management (2008) Parkland Environmental Planners for Strathfield Council
- Bressington Park Plan of Management (1999) Strathfield Municipal Council



3.0 Landscape Context

The design process commenced with full examination of the local and regional context of the site. Site Image have worked on numerous large projects in the locality, and from these have experience in the regional context and issues relating to open space networks, vegetation, water quality, pedestrian and cycleway regional networks, transport, and major development nodes and major urban areas within the locality. Site Image have completed a number of major projects within Sydney Olympic Park, on the Rhodes Peninsula, Homebush Bay West, in the Bakehouse Quarter, and a number of other nearby sites.

The Columbia Precinct development is to provide a key linking development between the established Bakehouse Quarter, and Homebush Station and the Strathfield Town Centre precinct. The development will replace warehouses and commercial buildings with active commercial and retail premises and residential towers on landscaped podiums with extensive associated open space and streetscapes. The potential provision of an overhead pedestrian / cycleway bridge, as well as the continuation of George Street, and the connection to pathways towards the east will complete significant local transport and open space connectivity. This will facilitate the potential for connecting Strathfield CBD to the Powells Creek open space corridor, with its connectivity through to Bicentennial Park, Homebush Bay, Rhodes Peninsula and regional walkways and cycleway links beyond.

The Columbia Precinct development is to provide upgrading of the visual character of a significant portion of Parramatta Road, at this junction with the open space corridor leading down to Parramatta River. The upgrading of the streetscape, as well as the opening up of visual access into a landscaped open space corridor along the drainage channel leading to Powells Creek will provide an important local civic identity marker along Parramatta Road.

The creation of significant landscaped and civic open space in the Columbia Precinct will provide an important contribution to the open space and civic spaces of the locality, reinforcing and extending the already important and growing Bakehouse Quarter mixed use precinct.

The subject site will have extensive recreational amenity within reasonable walking and cycling distance, including parkland open space, tennis courts, sporting fields, and on towards the extensive and various recreational facilities in the Homebush Bay area.



Figure 1: Regional context, aerial photograph

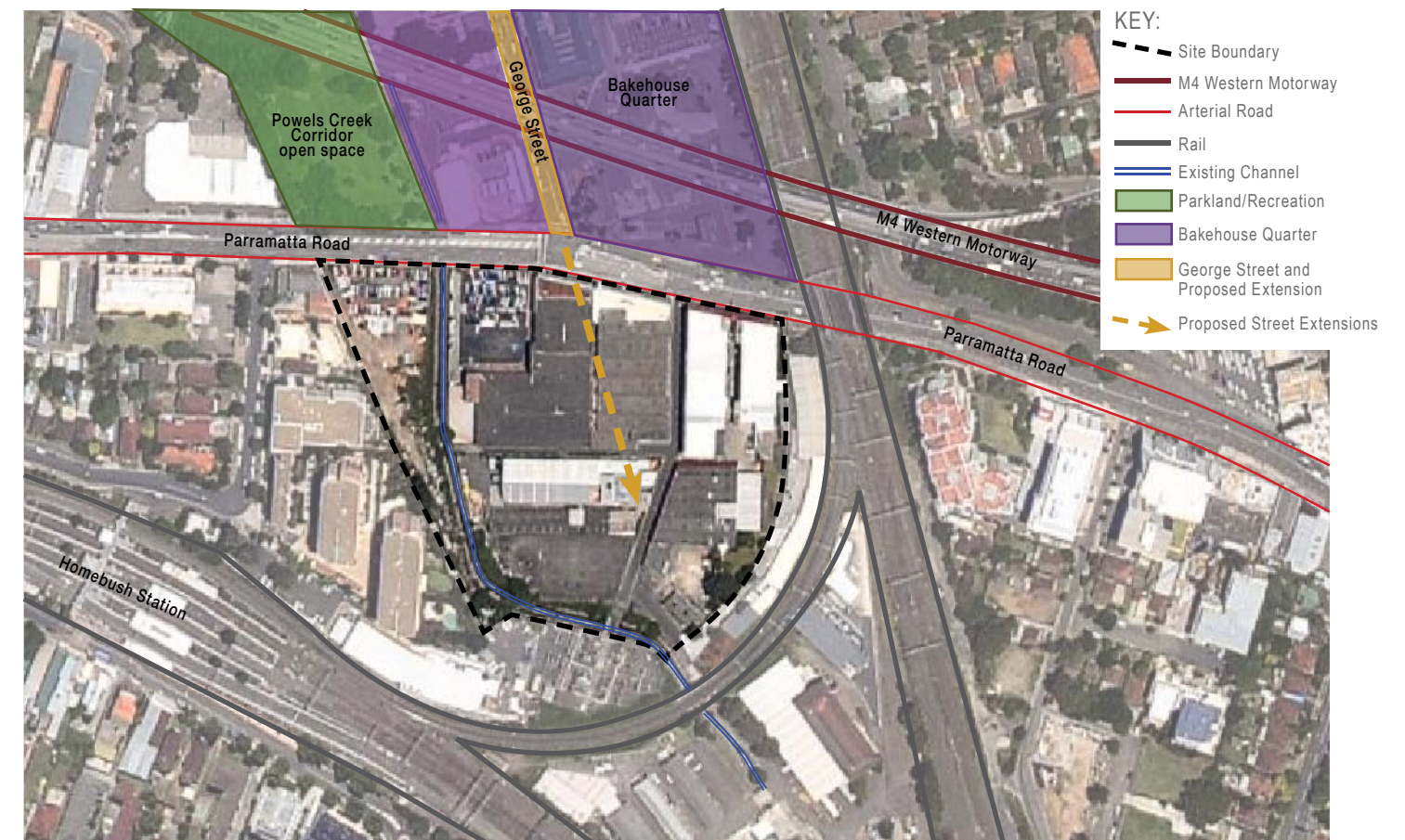


Figure 2: Local context, aerial photograph



4.0 Existing Site

As noted, to minimize duplication of information contained in accompanying reports, outline is provided only of information covered by allied consultant reports.

The subject site is roughly triangular in shape; is approximately 30,000m² in area; and incorporates 10 separate Lots of land held variously by 3 owners who have collectively lodged the subject concept plan application. The 310 metre frontage to Parramatta Road affords the principal public address and vehicle access (to the north), with remaining boundaries being to SRA lands (to east and south-east), electricity substation and stormwater channel (to the south-west), and rear of residential Lots (to the west). These latter boundaries form barriers to connectivity beyond the site to the west and south, with a pathway between residential lots midway along the western boundary providing access to Homebush Railway. The southern and eastern boundaries have infrastructure type character with the railways structures and service buildings. The Subject Site is located on Parramatta Road (nearly 300 metres to the Northern boundary), with remaining boundaries of existing railway buildings to the east, a brick railway archway/bridge & Substation to the South and residential towers, of various heights, to the west and east across the Northern rail line.

Generally much of the site in its current state is bleak and desolate, with blank building facades, empty laneways and large areas of underutilised space surrounding the existing Water Channel and Substation to the South of the Site. More detailed description of the site and its existing built form, services, roadways, easements and other features are provided in associated reports.

There are a number of existing elements running through the site, which heavily influence the project proposal, these include;

- Columbia Laneway (adjacent to the Kennards Self Storage building) and currently providing access to the Substation to the south of the site.
- An existing Stormwater Channel creates a physical barrier affecting the proposed development in both positive and negative ways, allowing a diverse range of spaces and various uses for these spaces.
- High level overhead electric cables with a large stanchion on the subject site, requiring maintenance access
- Existing use rights provide an access easement to a residential garage along the western boundary of the site.



Figure 4: Existing Site, aerial photograph

Figure 3: Existing Site Photographs



01 Parramatta Rd, site photo



02 George St intersection, site photo



03 George St intersection, site photo



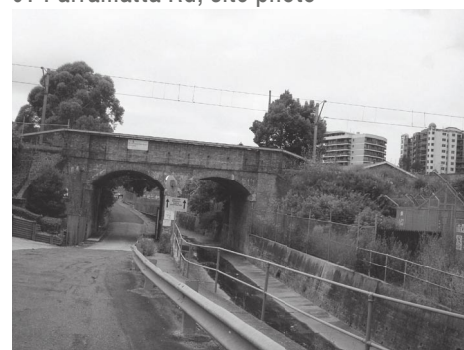
04 Motorway flyover, site photo



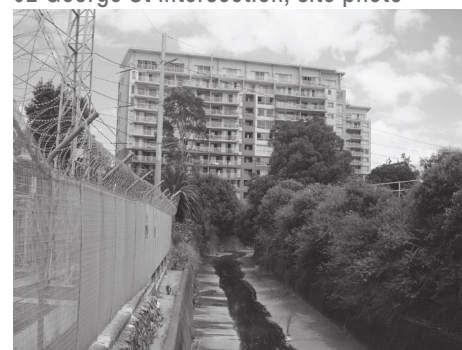
05 Columbia Lane, site photo



06 Columbia Lane, site photo



07 Rail bridge & Channel, site photo



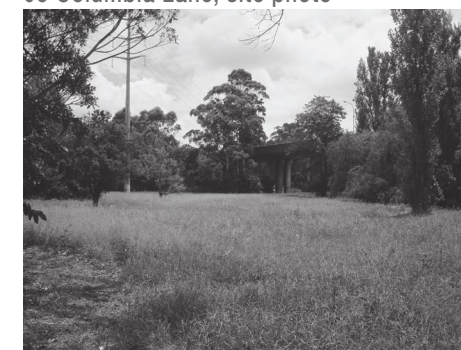
08 Water Channel, site photo



09 Water Channel, site photo



10 Parkland, site photo



11 Parkland, site photo



12 George St, site photo



SITE IMAGE
Landscape Architect

4.0 Existing Site

The project land is largely level, falling only some 3 metres from east to west and largely level from north to south. The site soils have been heavily disturbed, based on Wianamatta Shale substrate and weathered to clay soils and alluvium accumulated from the adjacent gently undulating topography.

Given the local topography, the majority of the northern part of the corridor was extensive tidal mangrove and saltmarsh flats. The landward side of these would have transitioned to swamp oak that gave way to swamp mahogany forests and then the turpentine/ ironbark forests of the area. The climate is typical of Inner-west Sydney, with prevailing winds are predominantly from the south or the west.

The site is wholly developed, mostly with buildings and otherwise with pavement. Some mature trees exist along the edge of the water channel along or just outside the south-west boundary of the site. These trees are likely to remain as they are unlikely to be affected by the development, but subject to detailed design development may be removed and replaced to assist protection of the channel structure, or to allow new landscape structures and treatments.

The Powells Creek channel bordering and crossing part of the subject site is a Sydney Water owned concrete open channel approximately 6 metres wide and 1.5-2 metres deep. The channel collects flow from upstream of the railway line and travels past the site and under Parramatta Road. Powells Creek joins Strathfield Creek and Salesyard Creek before draining to Homebush Bay. Overland water flows, with the site hydrology and drainage generally is addressed in related engineering documents.

Summary of the site history is contained is associated reports. No heritage items are believed to occur on the subject site. Items potentially of heritage significance close to the site include the Arnott's Rail bridge over Parramatta Road; the Rail Viaduct crossing over Powells Creek at the end of Columbia Lane; a workshop building within RIC land at end of Columbia Lane; and the electricity substation at Railway Lane off Parramatta Road.

Assessment of the site features included detailed inspection of all areas of the site, and use of detailed site survey information as the base data for preparation of landscape design concepts.

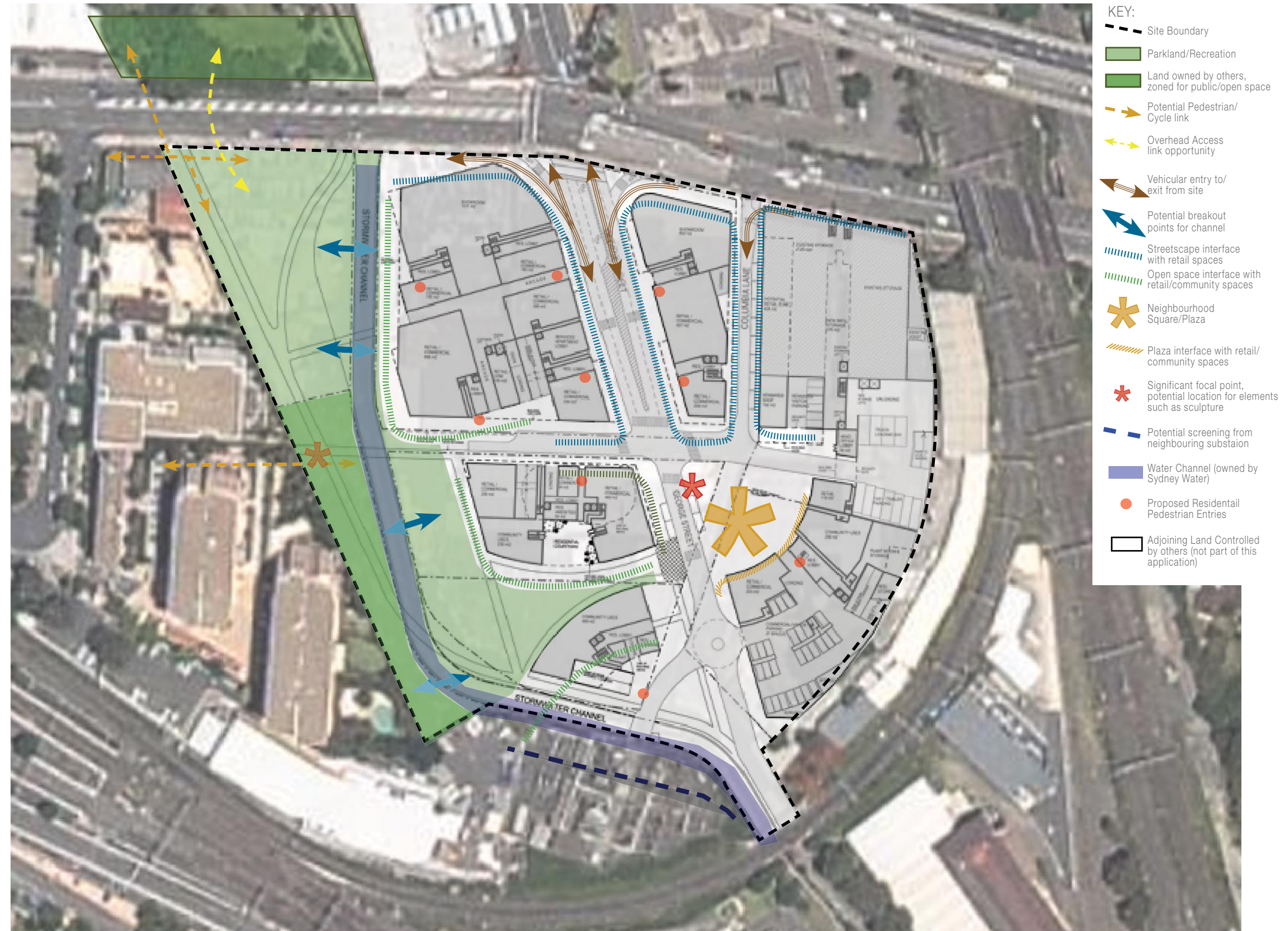


Figure 5: Landscape Design Structure Diagram

5.0 Relevant Controls Relating to Landscape

Summary of the relevant controls in contained is associated reports, with this summary provided to highlight key landscape related guidelines, codes and requirements. The landscape design documents have been prepared to address site specific design issues, and to meet the requirements of all relevant authorities and controls, including:

- Strathfield Planning Scheme Ordinance
- The Strathfield Development Control Plan No.20 – Parramatta Road Corridor Area.
- Strathfield Development Control Plan (DCP) 2005. The landscape code that relates in part to the subject site is Part C Multi-Unit Housing, section 2.7 Open Space and Landscaping. It is noted in Item 7, that: 'Exceptions to the above standards may be considered where it can be demonstrated that a slightly reduced amount of landscaped open space is adequately compensated by the amount, position and quality of the open space provided'. The extensive provision of open space as part of the development proposals was a key consideration in developing landscape proposals for future residents.
- Draft Part N 'Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)' Strathfield Consolidated Development Control Plan 2005 Council Codes and Guidelines
- A range of codes are potentially relevant for this site, including Tree Preservation Order, Recommended Street Trees, Outdoor Eating Areas Controls, and the like.
- SEPP 65 - Design Quality of Residential Flat Development & Residential Flat Design Code (Planning NSW) 2002
- Applies should the Water Channel be deemed a 'watercourse'.

6.0 Director General's Requirements (Relating to Landscape)

In response to the preliminary Part 3A Environmental Assessment submitted for consideration, the Director General's Requirements (DGR's) have been provided for the current Concept Plan Application / Environmental Assessment. These confirm the design and environmental aspects to be addressed by the proposals. Many of these refer directly or indirectly to aspects of the open space and public domain. The open space design development has responded to the DGR's, and specific commentary is provided in this report to highlight the level of conformance. The DGR's most relevant to the landscape design are provided below to highlight the guidance these provided to the landscape design development:

- Item 3. Urban Design
- Item 4. SEPP 65 - Design Quality of Residential Flat Development
- Item 5. Environmental and Residential Amenity
- Item 8. Landscaping
- Item 9. Public Domain
- Item 11. Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)
- Item 14. Drainage
- Specific to the landscape, the DGR's also set out in the section 'Plans and Documents to accompany the Application' the requirements for the Landscape Plan

7.0 Development Proposals

The Major Project application, as described in full in accompanying project consultant documents, proposes a mixed-use development comprising residential, retail, commercial uses and building envelopes of between 2 and 21 storeys, with allied basement carparking.

The publicly accessible open spaces include streetscapes and ground level interfaces with buildings; urban landscaping including plazas and forecourt spaces; a major civic 'square'; roadways and service access; and the provision of a major new public park area that flanks the existing stormwater channel.

Private and semi-private open space areas include common courtyard areas for residents; breakout areas to community activity tenancies; and private courtyards to individual apartments as well as some common-access terraces for some groups of apartments.

The building and engineering proposals are described in greater detail in respective supportive reports. The landscape aspects are described in detail in the accompanying plans and in following sections of this report.



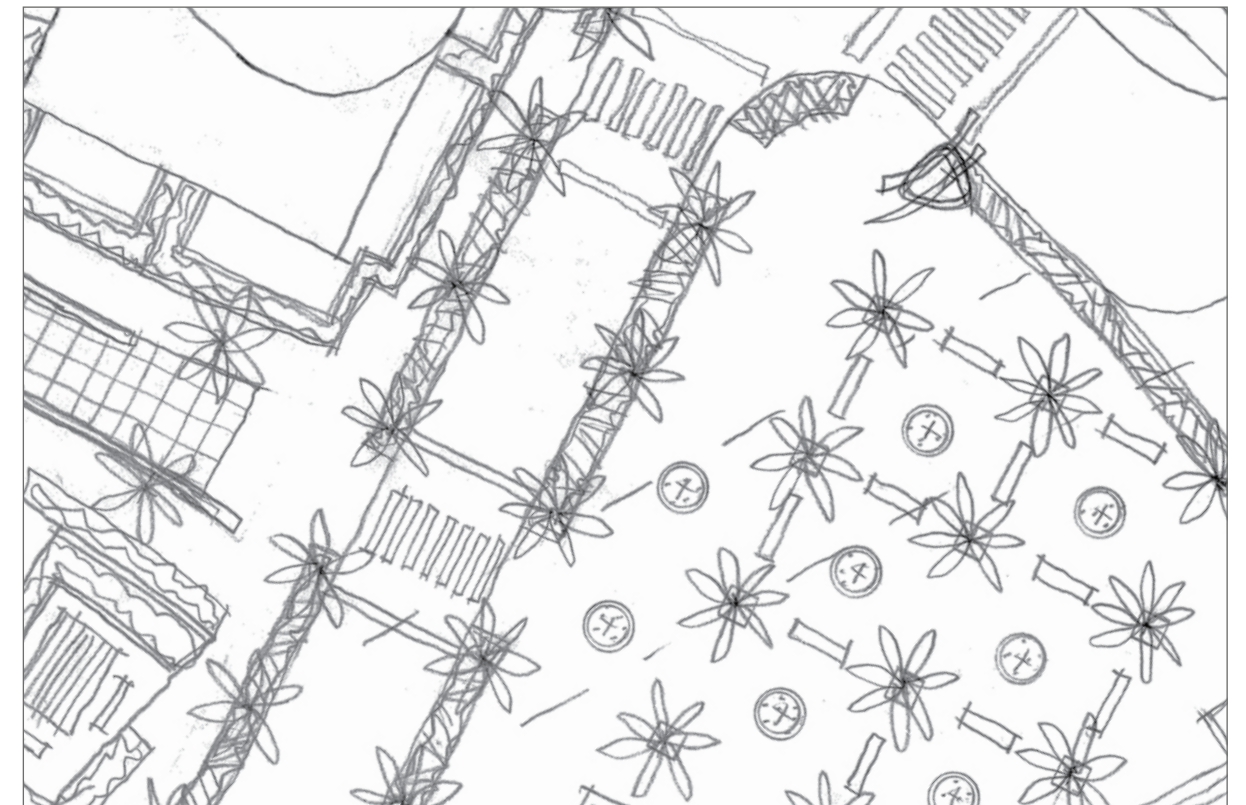
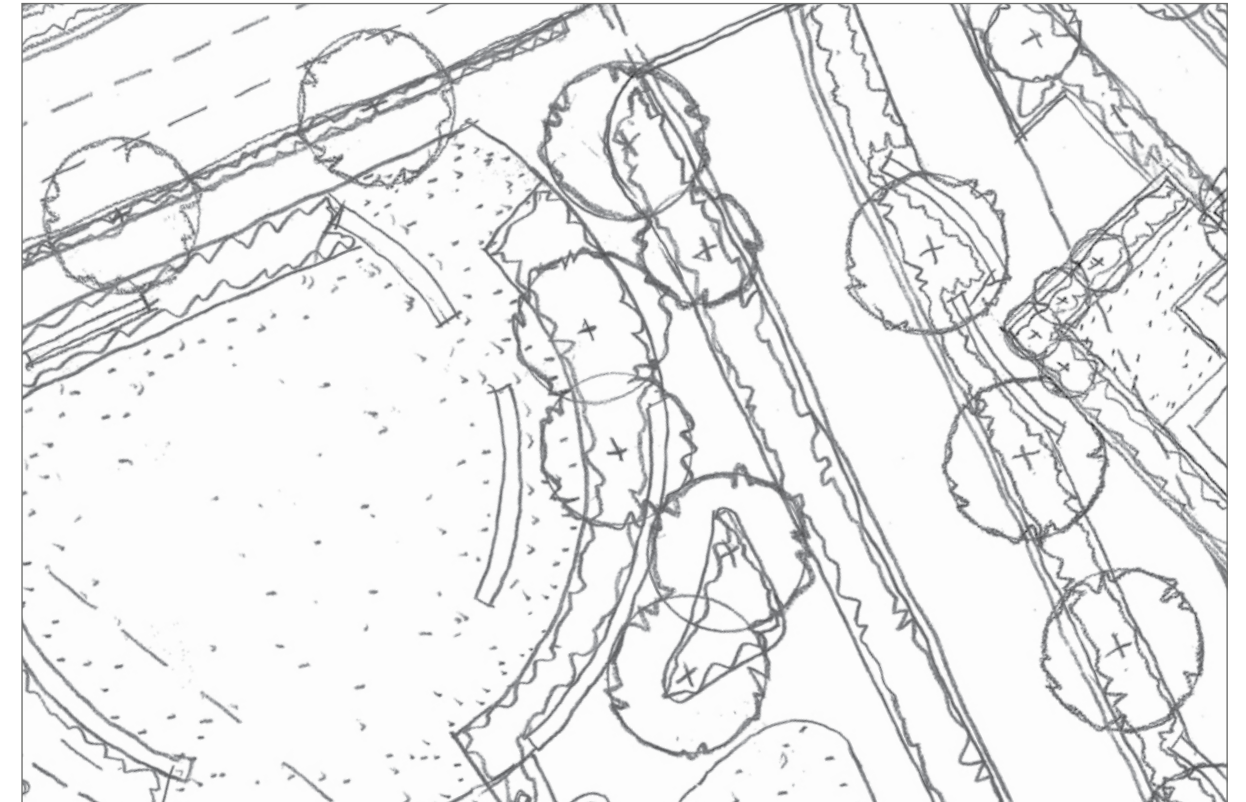
8.0 Landscape Design Objectives and Design Aims

The design rationale for the project relating to landscape, as developed with Mayoh Architects and Colston Budd Hunt & Kafes, is to:

- Create a new street through the site area, being an extension of George Street opposite the site across Parramatta Road;
- Create a new public 'Square' or plaza as a keynote civic space for the project and locality;
- Create a new park to provide open space adjacent the existing stormwater channel across the site, to extend the Powells Creek Open Space corridor;
- To provide linking open spaces / streets that visually and physically connect the new street and new square to the open space and to pedestrian linkage to Homebush Station;
- To create small streetside outdoor retail spaces along the new road, as a continuation of similar spaces and amenity along George Street to the north of the site;
- To create outdoor areas and courtyards and areas to expand the amenity of various community rooms in various ground floor locations of proposed buildings across the site;
- To provide rooftop terraces and courtyards as common open space areas for specific building residents;
- To provide private courtyards to individual residential apartments where configuration of the built form provides podium or rooftop terrace areas adjoining residences.

The masterplan and landscape concept formulation included consideration of a range of site planning options, giving consideration to the range of urban design, ecological, commercial, and public park, public domain and landscape design issues. On-going concept development & dialogue with the various project team members has considered the following design aims stemming from the above objectives:

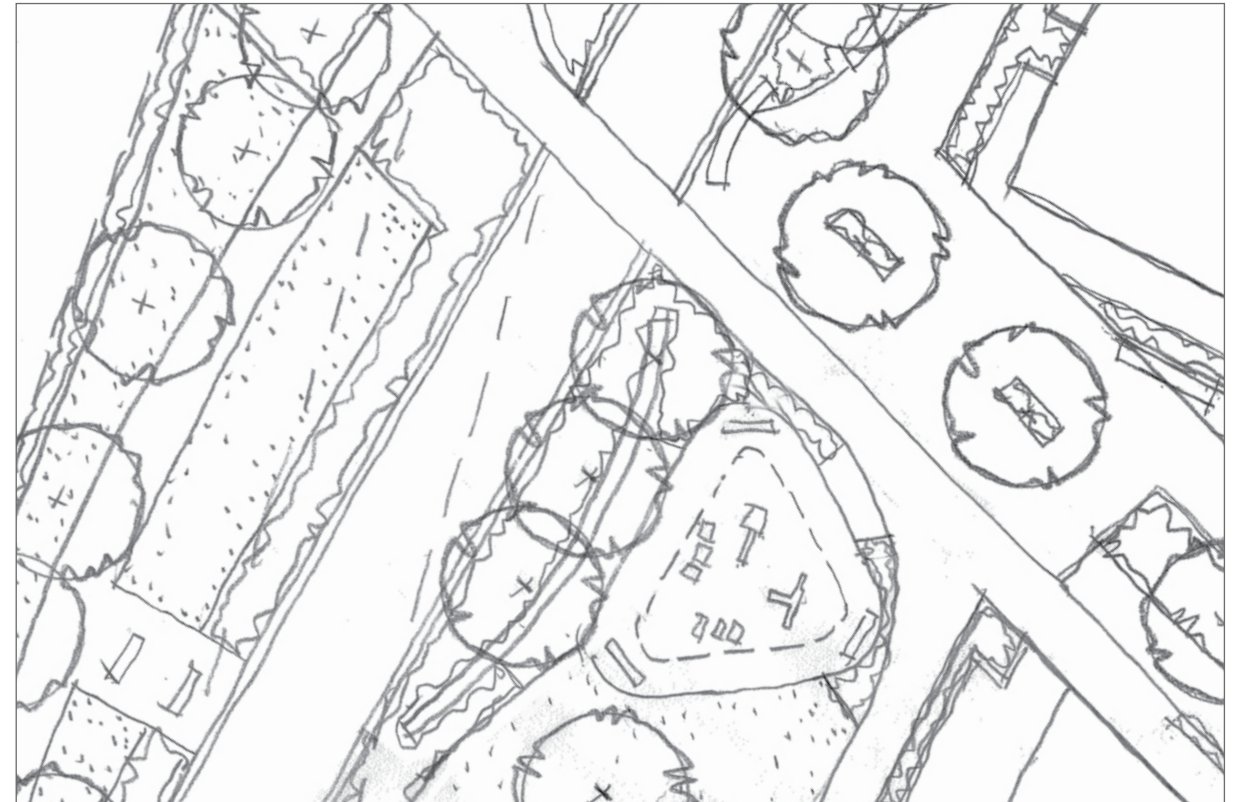
- To design for a pedestrian / cycleway overhead bridge to traverse Parramatta Road, allowing for an important regional connectivity link, with Parramatta Road a significant barrier to free movement along the corridor from Homebush Station to the Sydney Olympic Park and Rhodes precincts and waterfronts, and adjacent suburbs;
- To consider the streetscape, open space, built form, and dividing railway lands and structures to respond to the locality and site perimeter, and define specific movement corridors for cars and pedestrians. This included examining potential future landuse changes and identifying likely opportunities that would enhance linkages, and allow consolidation of sites into logical development parcels, open space areas, and the like;
- Identification and analysis of extensive services across the site, and the access requirements, easements, requirements and responsibilities to be observed and provided for in the design of the landuse, streetscape and open space;
- To consider the opportunities, and incorporate the design principles and initiatives for Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD), and water quality management within the development;
- To embody principles of Environmentally Sustainable Development in the proposals, which includes a broad spectrum of considerations including ecology and biodiversity; reducing embodied and on-going energy consumption; water sensitive design; to creating spaces that are beneficial to the health and well-being of users of the site;
- To respect the history of the site, including the landscape setting;
- To implement design principles for low water use plant material and associated guidelines in accordance with BASIX requirements in the landscape design to reduce the reliance on irrigation, including to harvest roof-water where possible for collection and re-use for irrigation;
- To achieve water detention and retention, and to provide for overland water flow for peak flow events. This is to include specific consideration for safety for potential users of adjacent areas, with hazard identification and hazard reduction to occur in consultation with authorities and Council to ensure safety requirements are met or addressed;



8.0 Landscape Design Objectives and Design Aims

- To achieve the core functional requirements of the various proposed users and stakeholders involved in precinct, that includes buildings, services, parking, security, management and maintenance, as well as open space amenity for various users;
- To provide an effective transport strategy, including significant provision and design for sustainable transport initiatives, and integration with current and future pedestrian and cycleway networks;
- To provide a suitable high level of open space and other amenity provisions for residents, commercial building staff, and visitors, from play facilities and exercise provision through to passive recreation and reflective garden areas that provide opportunity for relaxation and passive recreation;
- To provide suitable integration and acceptable impact on adjacent areas in terms of physical, environmental, social, transport and other as is appropriate;
- To maximise benefit and contribution to the local community, with the open space;
- To achieve a suitable visual quality to the open space, civic spaces and streetscapes that provides consistency of identity and cohesion to the project overall, and assists in unifying the many different areas of the site (planting, hardscape, furniture, fixtures, and services);
- To provide practical amenity and safety through suitable design and detailing of a hierarchy of lighting, signage, access routes and amenities, parking locations and the like that together contribute to the good functioning, safe and efficient operation of site activities;
- To provide engineering infrastructure and functional provisions to ensure ongoing safe, healthy and efficient functioning of external environments;
- To provide for the needs of the broad spectrum of users, including those with limited mobility, sensory and other impairments;
- To consider the different user groups and their needs, which vary considerably from the visiting public, commercial building users, and residents and their children;
- To achieve a feeling of security and safety across the site through consideration of CPTED principles from planning through to detailed design or external areas of the site;
- To develop a hierarchy of planting design, from street trees to open space landscape and private garden areas, to be consistent with local endemic plant species as well as respond to the local cultural landscape. The planting design is to create a range of suitable responses, from providing habitat and connectivity with nearby vegetation corridors, to ecology and riparian areas where appropriate, to functional parklands, through to streetscapes, urban landscapes, and private gardens;
- To consider the on-going maintenance and management requirements to ensure that cost-effective and sustainable designs are provided, and provision for maintenance access activities is suitably made;
- To consider interim outcomes resulting from staged completion of the project, and to ensure a suitable outcome is achieved during and after the completion of each stage.

We believe these design aims will be met by the landscape and external environment proposals. More detail of the design content and response to these objectives is provided in the following sections, and in due course will be enhanced by subsequent detailed design development in the development of detailed documentation for the project.



9.0 Landscape Concept Plan

The overall landscape concept plan has been developed to closely respond to the landscape design objectives and aims as set out above. The landscape plan complements the architectural masterplan and associated documents, providing further detail on landscape design proposals for streetscapes, open space and gardens. The Landscape Plan illustrates the structure and intent of the design, with indicative detail of the hardscape finishes and specific plant species, which are to be subject to further approval for the developed design documentation for subsequent applications.

The following sections describe the detailed intent of the landscape design for specific areas of the project, including highlighting the design considerations addressed. The supportive design example photographs provide a further indication of the desired intent and design response that will be provided by subsequent design development upon approval of the landscape concept proposals.

