

## 3 Pedestrian Amenity

**Pedestrian Amenity incorporates all those elements of individual developments that directly affect the quality and character of the public domain. The Pedestrian Amenity provisions are intended to achieve a high quality of urban design and pedestrian comfort in the public spaces of Central Sydney. The pedestrian environment provides people with their primary experience of and interface with the city. This environment should be safe, functional and accessible to all. It should provide a wide variety of opportunities for social and cultural activities. The pedestrian environment should be characterised by excellence of design, high quality materials and a standard of finish appropriate to a world class city centre. The city's lanes and midblock connections should form an integrated pedestrian network providing choice of routes at ground level for pedestrians.**

### 3.1 Lanes

#### Strategy

Lanes are an integral part of the public space network in Central Sydney (see Figure 3.1). Lanes are uncovered external spaces that provide permanent pedestrian and/or vehicle connections through the city fabric at all hours. Lanes separate buildings, maintain Central Sydney's characteristic urban grain and permeability, provide vistas and views through city blocks, and add visual interest to the built environment.

Lanes contribute significantly to the variety of pedestrian experience in Central Sydney (see Figure 3.2). They can enrich the urban quality of the city as well as being interesting places for a variety of uses, such as restaurants, cafes and other activities that attract people and provide opportunities for social interaction.

Refer to Section 3.2 for midblock connections.

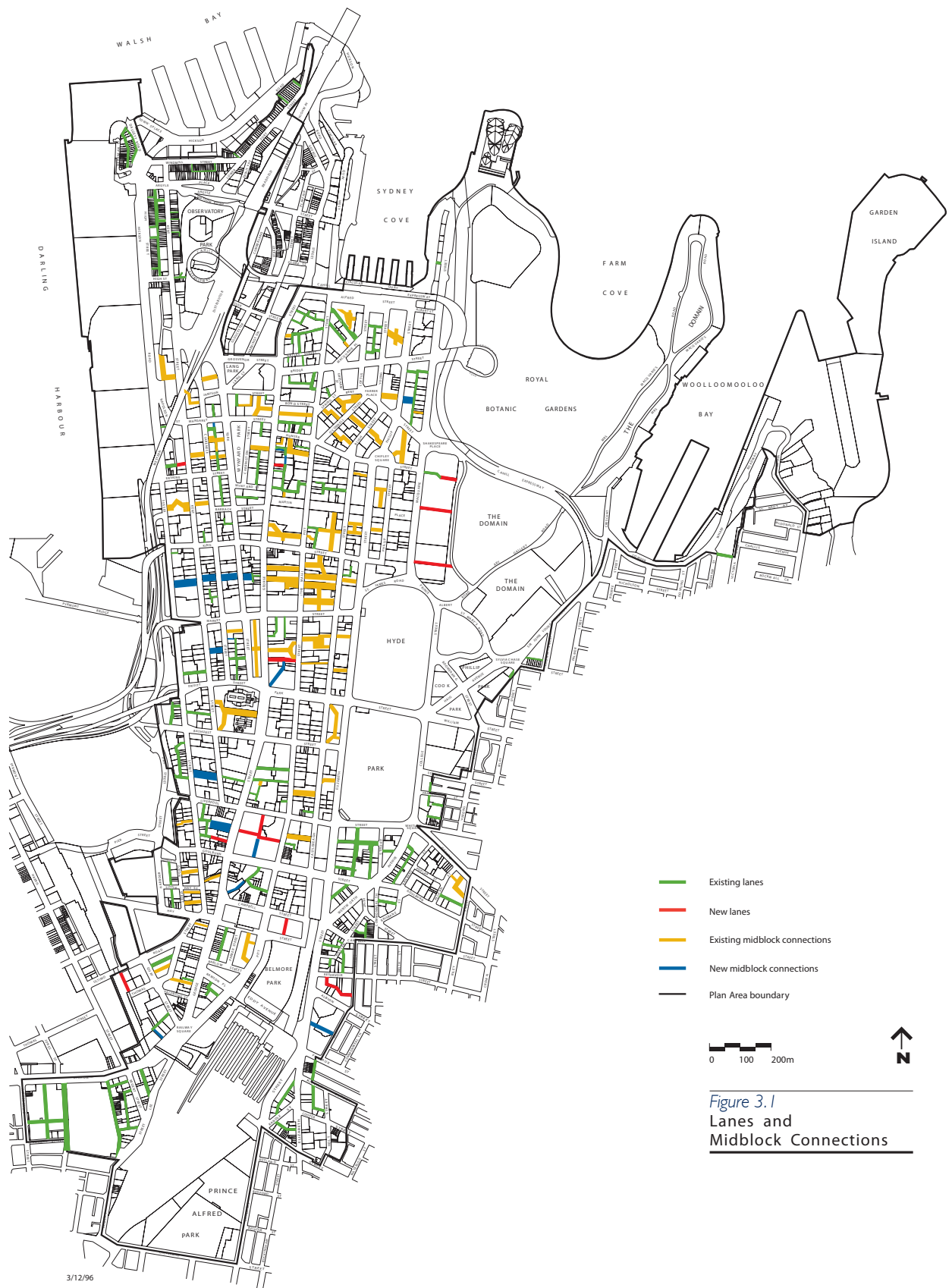
#### Objectives

- To retain and develop lanes as useful and interesting pedestrian connections as well as for service access.
- To maintain Central Sydney's fine urban grain.

#### Provisions

- 3.1.1 Existing publicly and privately owned lanes in Central Sydney are to be retained (see Figure 3.1).
- 3.1.2 In locations shown on Figure 3.1, new lanes with a minimum width of 6 metres are to be provided in future developments.
- 3.1.3 Where developments have frontages to a lane that is also a pedestrian route, the environment of the lane is to be improved by providing an active frontage or design details that create visual interest (see Section 2.5, Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3).
- 3.1.4 Lanes are not to be covered, but awnings may be permitted on buildings facing lanes up to a maximum of 30% of each frontage.
- 3.1.5 Any change to a heritage lane or any building fronting such a lane requires a Heritage Impact Statement or a Conservation Plan (see *Central Sydney LEP 1992 - Conservation of Heritage Items*).

Relevant LEP clauses: 12(f), 12(h), 12(m), 12(n), 18(j)





Central Sydney's lanes are an important part of the pedestrian network.

Figure 3.2



Figure 3.3

The pedestrian amenity of lanes can be enhanced by an active frontage.

## 3.2 Midblock connections

### Strategy

Midblock connections are enclosed or partly enclosed pedestrian routes within developments that have a public character, provide public right of way and are open and accessible at each end.

Long street blocks, which are characteristic of much of Central Sydney, often increase walking distances. Consequently, it is beneficial to have midblock pedestrian connections, and to make Central Sydney more lively and safer by lining those connections with activities.

Midblock connections should be provided:

- in the middle of the long sides of long street blocks to improve east-west links, especially where the distance between links is greater than 100 metres,
- to complete lane connections where they improve pedestrian safety and amenity,
- to link with existing and planned street level midblock pedestrian crossings and opposite other midblock connections.

### Objective

- To provide midblock connections lined with activities in nominated locations to enhance the pedestrian network of Central Sydney.

### Provisions

- 3.2.1 Existing midblock connections in Central Sydney are to be retained (see Figure 3.1).
- 3.2.2 Midblock connections are to be provided by future developments in nominated locations (see Figure 3.1).
- 3.2.3 Midblock connections are to:
- (i) have active uses,
  - (ii) be obvious and direct through-ways for pedestrians (see Figure 3.4),
  - (iii) provide public access from at least 6am to 10pm daily,
  - (iv) have a minimum width of 4.5 metres and where possible a width of at least 6 metres that is clear of all obstructions,
  - (v) where practicable, have access to natural light for part of their length and at openings at each end,
  - (vi) where air conditioned, have clear glazed entry doors comprising at least 50% of the entrance,
  - (vii) have signage at the street entries indicating public accessibility and the street to which the midblock connection links.

Relevant LEP clauses: 12(f), 12(h), 12(m), 12(n), 18(k)



Skygarden is one of Sydney's best known mid-block connections.

Figure 3.4

### 3.3 Vehicle Access and Footpath Crossings

#### Strategy

There are vehicle crossings over footpaths on many streets in Central Sydney. This disrupts pedestrian movement and threatens safety. The design of vehicle access to buildings also influences the quality of the public domain. Overly wide and high vehicle access points detract from the streetscape and the active use of street frontages.

The design and location of vehicle access to developments should minimise:

- conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles on footpaths, particularly along pedestrian priority places (see Figure 3.5),
- visual intrusion and disruption of streetscape continuity.

Council has a separate code *Waste Handling in Buildings* which includes provisions for service vehicle access. This code is available from the One Stop Shop.

Relevant LEP clauses: 12(i), 12(m).

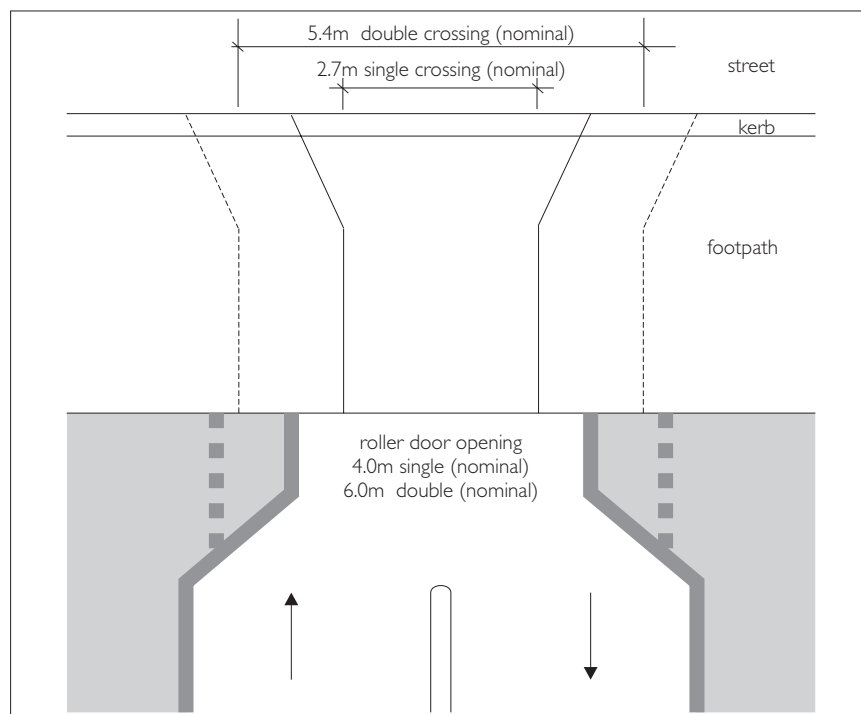
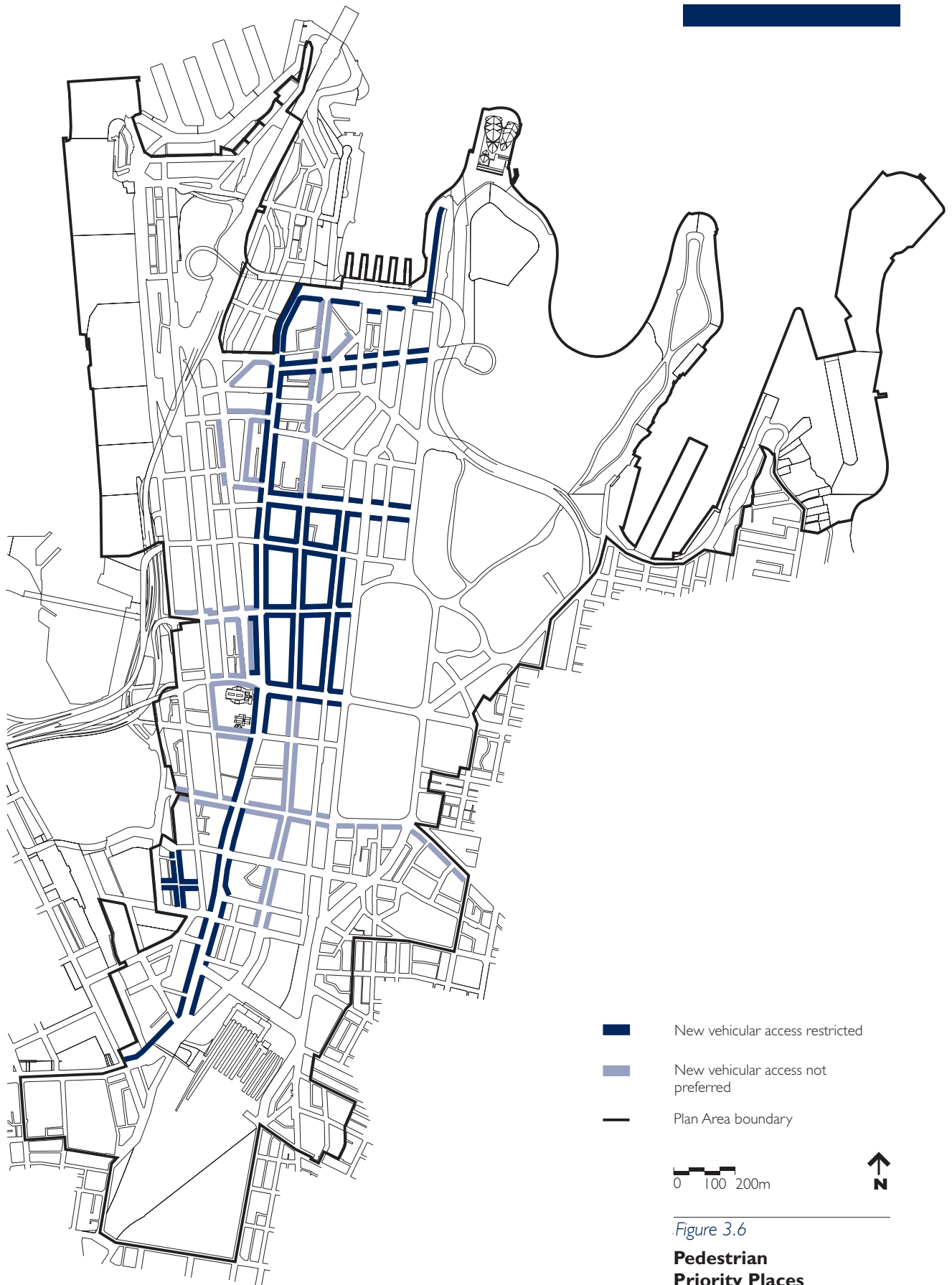


Figure 3.5

Vehicle access points are to be minimised in width and perpendicular to the street.



## Objective

- To make vehicle access to buildings more compatible with pedestrian movements and the public domain.

## Provisions

### Location of Vehicle Access

- 3.3.1 New vehicle access points are restricted in retail streets and are not favoured in pedestrian priority places (see Figure 3.5). Where practicable, vehicle access is to be from lanes and minor streets rather than major pedestrian streets.
- 3.3.2 Service vehicle access is to be combined with parking access and limited to a maximum of one access point per building.
- 3.3.3 Where practicable, adjoining buildings are to share or amalgamate vehicle access points. Internal on-site signal equipment is to be used to allow shared access. Where appropriate, new buildings should provide vehicle access points so that they are capable of shared access at a later date.
- 3.3.4 Vehicle access may not be required or may be denied to some heritage buildings, subject to a Conservation Plan.

### Design of Vehicle Access

- 3.3.5 Wherever practicable, vehicle access is to be a single crossing with a nominal width of 2.7 metres over the footpath, and perpendicular to the kerb alignment. In exceptional circumstances, a double crossing with a nominal width of 5.4 metres may be permitted for safety reasons (see Figure 3.6).
- 3.3.6 Vehicle access ramps parallel to the street frontage will not be permitted.
- 3.3.7 Doors to vehicle access points are to be roller shutters or tilting doors fitted as close as possible to the street alignment.
- 3.3.8 Active uses or items of visual interest above vehicle access points are required in the horizontal line of sight of pedestrians (see Figure 3.7).
- 3.3.9 Vehicle entries are to have high quality finishes to walls and ceilings as well as high standard detailing. No service ducts or pipes are to be visible from the street.

### Porte Cocheres

- 3.3.10 Porte cocheres are not favoured and may only be permitted for hotels subject to urban design, streetscape, heritage and pedestrian amenity considerations.
- 3.3.11 Where practicable, porte cocheres are to be internal to the building with one combined vehicle entry and exit point, or one entry and one exit point on two different frontages of the development.
- 3.3.12 In exceptional circumstances for buildings with one street frontage only, an indented porte cochere with separate entry and exit points across the footpath may be permitted, as long as it is constructed entirely at the footpath level and provides an active frontage at its perimeter.



Active uses or items of visual interest are appropriate above vehicle access points (ie, in the horizontal line of sight of a pedestrian).

Figure 3.7

## 3.4 Pedestrian overpasses and underpasses

### Strategy

Central Sydney's streets present the best potential amenity for pedestrians. They offer sky exposure, sunlight and air, a sense of orientation and direct access to the main frontages of buildings. Generally, pedestrians should be encouraged to use the street level to enhance and contribute to street life, to promote activity and interest, and to maximise safety and security of the public domain. Sydney's climate does not warrant pedestrian isolation from the street, and any conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles should be resolved at the street level.

Pedestrian overpasses are discouraged because they generally have a negative impact on the streetscape quality and on views and vistas along streets. New pedestrian underpasses will only be considered where they would directly connect to railway stations and substantially improve pedestrian safety.

### Objective

- To limit the number of overpasses and underpasses in order to encourage people to circulate at street level.

### Provisions

- 3.4.1 New overpasses over streets are discouraged. In exceptional circumstances, new overpasses over service lanes may be considered by the consent authority.
- 3.4.2 Underpasses may be considered by the consent authority for direct connection under adjacent streets to railway stations and where they would substantially improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- 3.4.3 Access to underpasses should be provided directly from a public footpath at the street alignment (rather than reducing the space of the footpath). This will ensure public access at all times and enhance the use and activities of the public domain.
- 3.4.4 All underpasses are to have a minimum width of 4.5 metres clear of all fixed obstructions.

Relevant LEP clauses: 12(m), 18(j)

## 3.5 Awnings and colonnades

### Strategy

Sydney is subject to downpours of rain throughout the year, particularly in summer. It is important to provide continuous weather protection on street footpaths (see Figure 3.5), particularly in pedestrian priority places.

Awnings are the preferred form of weather protection in Central Sydney. Appropriately designed awnings create attractive pedestrian environments with continuous weather protection (see Figure 3.8). Awnings ensure clear visibility on the footpath and therefore contribute to personal security.

Colonnades may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances for weather protection where they can extend through the entire street frontage of a block, or for pedestrian amenity where they provide a sunlit environment for active pedestrian use.

This section provides locational requirements for awnings and colonnades. Council has a separate policy titled *Policy and Guidelines for Awnings*, containing guidelines for the design of awnings in Central Sydney.

### Objective

- To increase pedestrian amenity by the provision of weather protection.

### Provisions

#### Awnings

- 3.5.1 Awnings are to be provided to the full extent of the street frontage of buildings in the locations nominated in Figure 3.9, except in cases where:
- there is no existing continuity of awnings on buildings within the same block on the same side of the street,
  - there would be a major adverse impact on a heritage streetscape.
- 3.5.2 Awnings may be considered on other streets subject to urban design and heritage considerations.
- 3.5.3 The provision of awnings on heritage buildings and in heritage streetscapes is to be examined in the context of a Conservation Plan or a Heritage Impact Statement, and may be restricted.
- 3.5.4 All awnings are to be designed and provided in accordance with the Council's *Policy and Guidelines for Awnings*.

#### Colonnades

- 3.5.5 Colonnades are to be retained and completed to the full extent of the street frontage in the locations nominated on Figure 3.9.
- 3.5.6 Colonnades are to be level with the adjoining footpath, fully interconnected to adjoining colonnades and be a constant depth of 4.8 metres.
- 3.5.7 Colonnades may be considered for retention in other streets where they face north and north west, form part of a continuous system, provide an opportunity for active use, or are integral parts of a heritage building, subject to pedestrian amenity and heritage considerations.

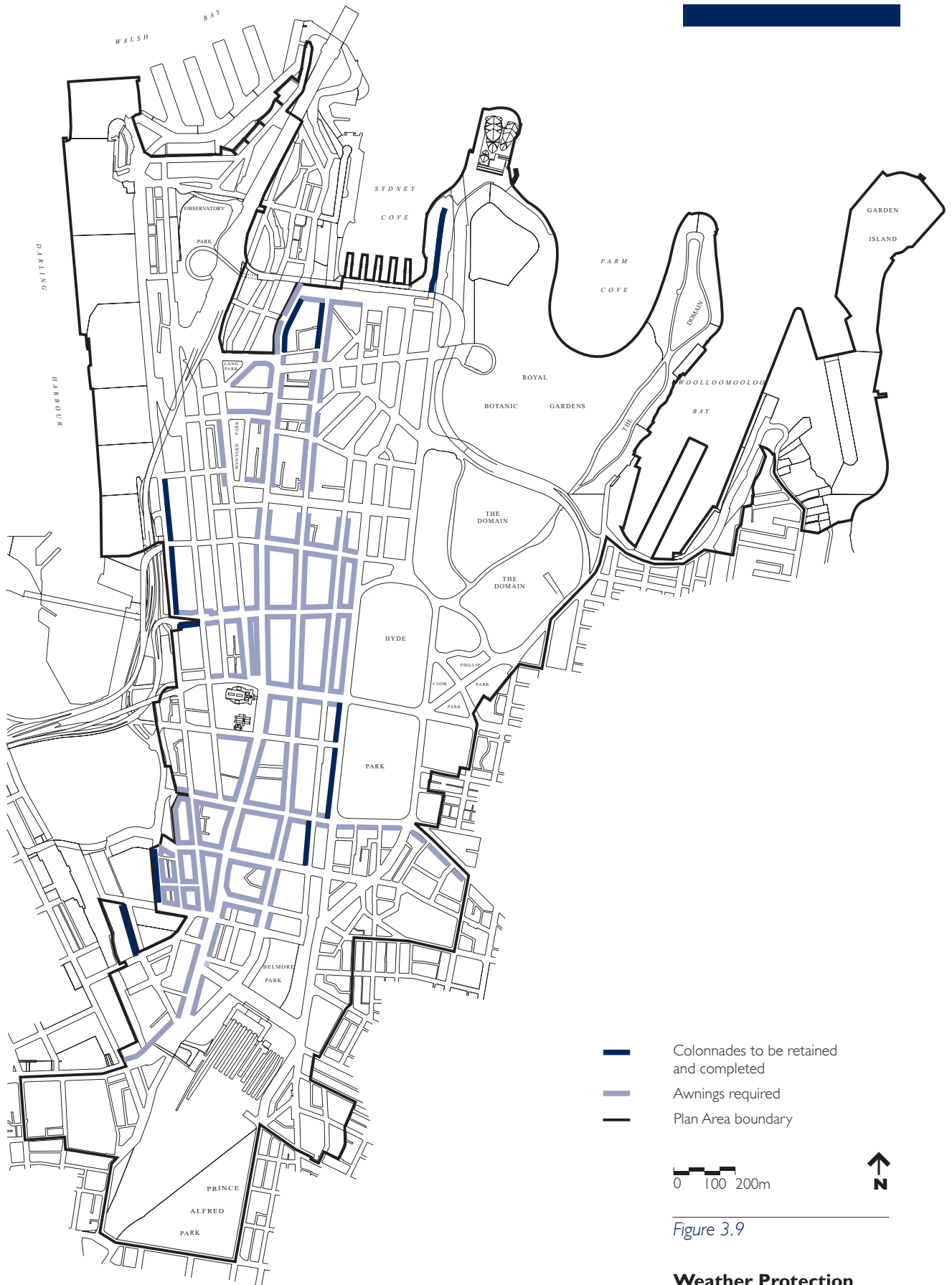
Relevant LEP clause: 12(m)

- 3.5.8 Existing colonnades which are not nominated for retention or completion are encouraged to be used for active uses, enclosed or built out to the street alignment.
- 3.5.9 Weather protection for pedestrians is to be provided on corner buildings at street intersections in the form of awnings, corner canopies, or corner colonnades.



The design of awnings should contribute to the attractiveness of the street.

Figure 3.8



## 3.6 Artworks

### Strategy

Central Sydney has a tradition of public art in both the public domain and privately owned buildings that enriches the city's cultural life and visual quality.

Council has a *Public Art Policy* available at the One Stop Shop.

### Objective

- To encourage high quality artworks in new development.

### Provision

3.6.1 High quality artworks in new development are to be provided in publicly accessible locations such as near main entrances, lobbies and street frontages (see Council's *Public Art Policy* and Figure 3.10).

Relevant LEP clauses: 12(a), 12(f), 12(i), 12(m)

## 3.7 Paving for footpaths and public spaces

### Strategy

Footpaths are a significant part of the public domain and their quality has a direct effect on the pedestrian experience of the city. They should be a unifying element in the streetscape where buildings, signs, objects, people and movement provide variation and change. They should give a clear expression of pedestrian priority and provide ease of movement for everyone, including people with different degrees of disability.

Footpath paving is to be provided in accordance with an overall paving system that takes into account pedestrian movement and the civic hierarchy of Central Sydney's streets. The highest degree of permanence and durability on the most significant street footpaths is required.

Relevant LEP clauses: 12(f), 12(g), 12(m), 18(i)

### Objective

- To provide paving in accordance with the nominated overall paving system.

### Provisions

3.7.1 Footpath paving is to be provided in accordance with Council's *Footpath Paving Design Policy* in the following paving types (see Figure 3.11):

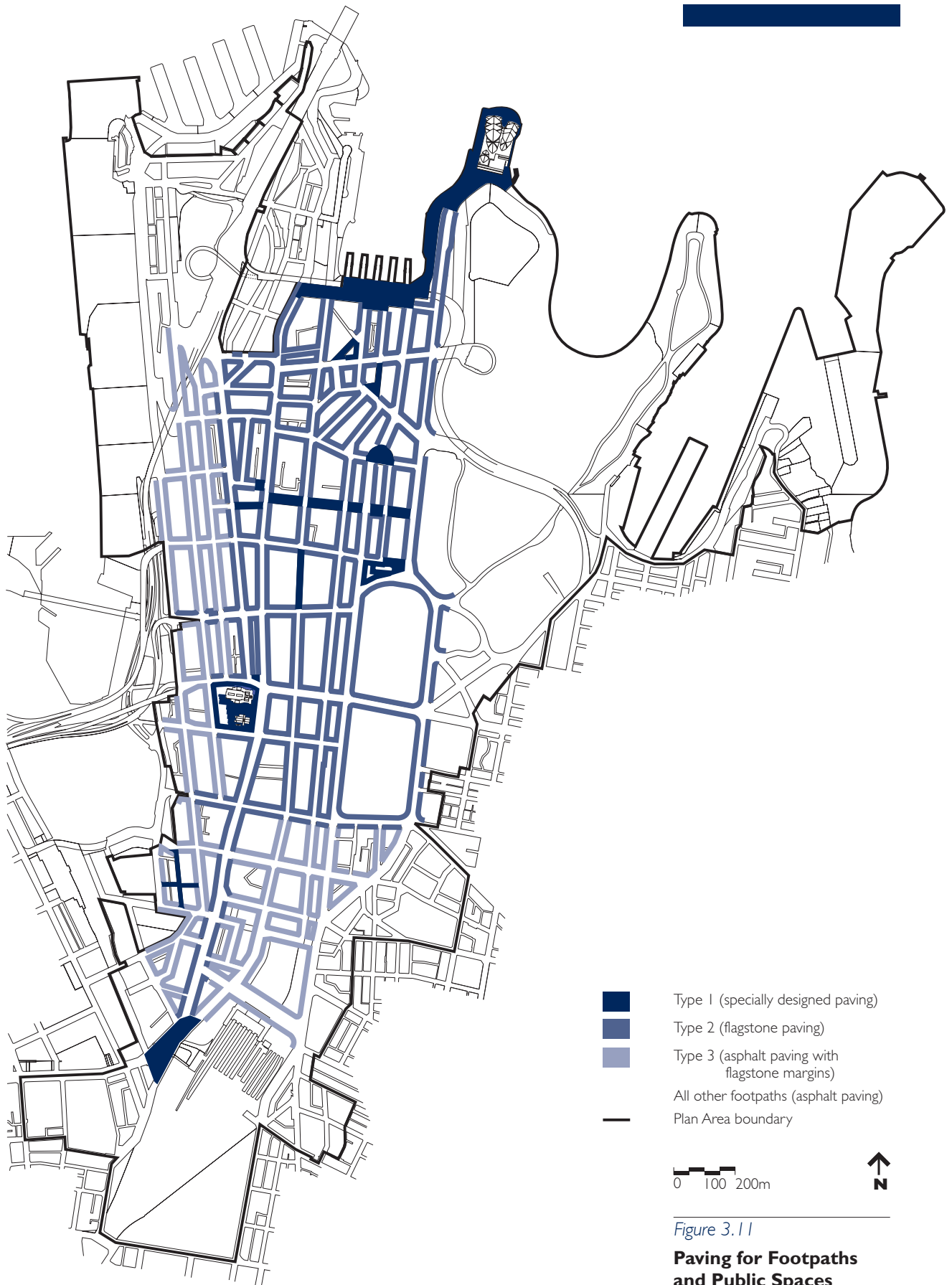
- Type 1* A special design by Council for each nominated street or public space,
- Type 2* Flagstone paving for Central Sydney's main streets and major pedestrian routes,
- Type 3* Asphalt paving with flagstone margins for the secondary streets surrounding the main streets and major pedestrian routes,
- Type 4* Asphalt paving for lanes, residential areas and peripheral streets surrounding the city centre.

3.7.2 All footpath paving is to be provided in accordance with Council's specifications and the *Footpath Paving Design Policy*.



Figure 3.10

Artworks should be integrated into the design of new buildings and be publicly accessible. This example is Edge of the Trees (by Janet Laurence and Fiona Foley) in the forecourt of the Museum of Sydney in Bridge Street.



## 3.8 Easy Access

### Strategy

Access to the facilities of Central Sydney should be made available for everyone. Most people experience some form of mobility impairment during their lives. Mobility impairments can vary in severity and may be caused by a variety of factors including ageing, injury or disease, childcare, pregnancy, or even just carrying parcels.

New development should offer all people, including those with mobility impairments, safe and comfortable access to employment, recreation and other opportunities offered by Central Sydney.

Council has an *Access Policy* available from the One Stop Shop.

### Objective

- To ensure easy access to publicly accessible areas for the whole community.

### Provisions

- 3.8.1 All buildings are to be designed in accordance with Council's *Access Policy*.
- 3.8.2 The main entry to new buildings for the general public is also to be the entry designed and identified for use by people with mobility impairments. For this reason main entries consisting only of revolving doors will be discouraged.
- 3.8.3 The main entry is to be level with the street footpath where practicable, and should be located in a continuous level path of travel to the lift core (see Figure 3.12).

Relevant LEP clauses: 11 (c), 11(d), 12(f), 12(i), 12(m).



Figure 3.12

The main entry to new buildings for the general public is to be designed for use by people with mobility impairments.