

Guiding Directions

3. Respect and celebrate heritage, conserve and restore Observatory Hill

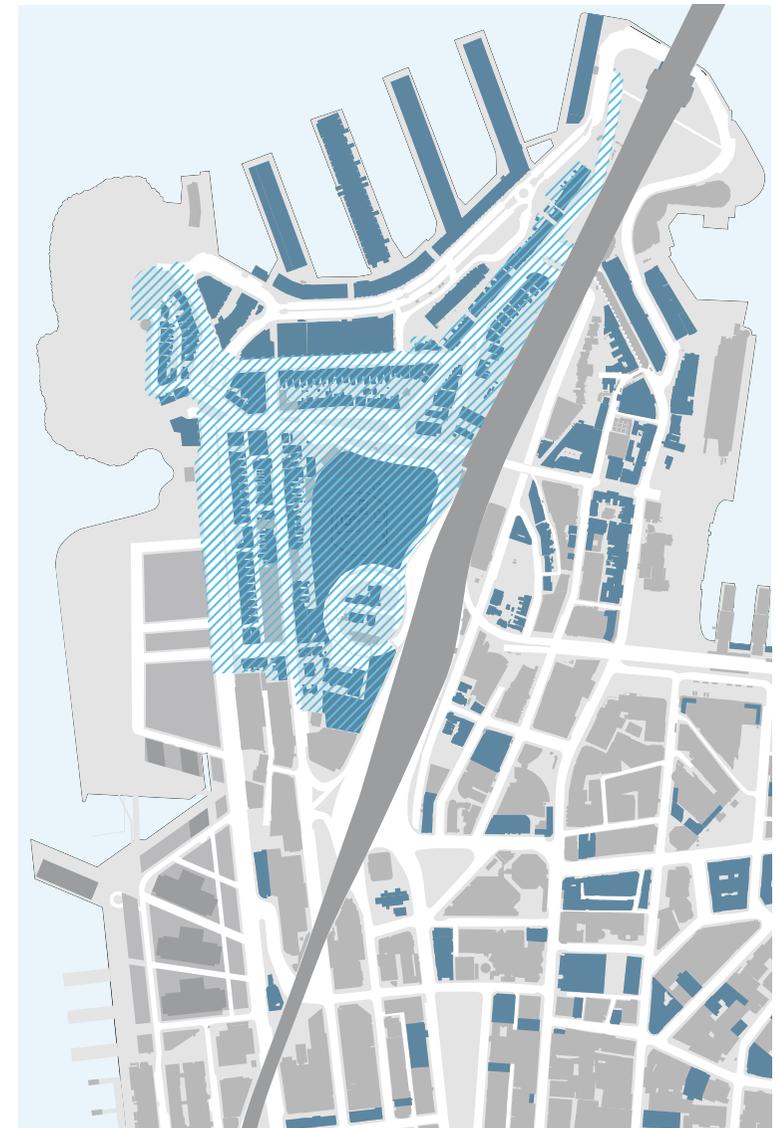
The significant heritage fabric of the area is a defining part of its character. The social, cultural and physical heritage of the area is highly valued by the City as well as recognised at a state and national level.

Consistent rows of terrace houses, corner hotels and warehouses typify the heritage fabric of the area, with elements such as retaining walls, stairs and the landform of Observatory Hill itself also contributing to the experience of the place.

Opportunities to celebrate and interpret the heritage of the area should be incorporated in public domain and streetscape upgrade works, including the retention of elements such as stone kerbs.

At Observatory Hill, opportunities to restore the park space after numerous infrastructure encroachments, and improve the setting and interpretation of heritage elements can be explored.

- buildings (existing and approved)
- CoS heritage listed buildings (Draft City Plan LEP 2011)
- ▨ CoS conservation area (Draft City Plan LEP 2011)



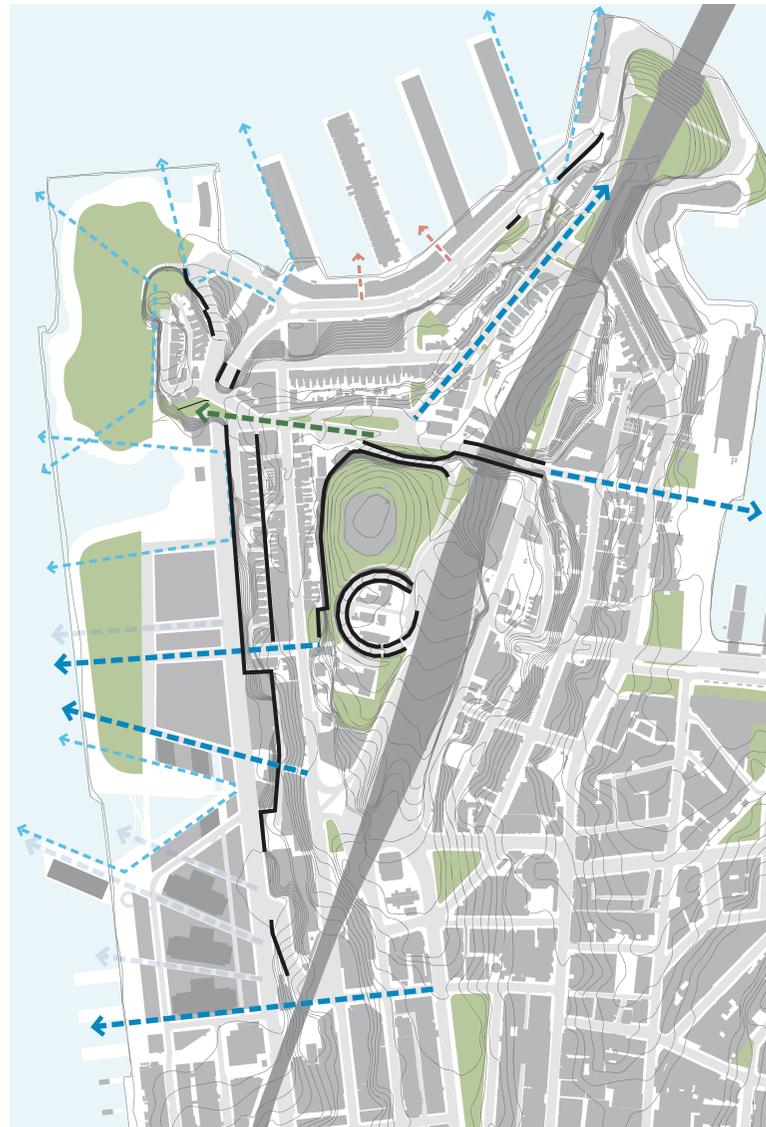
4. Celebrate landform and harbour views

The experience of landform and harbour views is one of the defining characteristics of the area. Public domain works should respect and reinforce existing Harbour view corridors along streets and between buildings, and should highlight the experience of topography with pedestrian bridges and well designed stairs and lifts where appropriate. Existing sandstone walls along The Hungry Mile, stairs and bridges, are unique to this precinct and should be celebrated.

Significant and historic panoramic views from Observatory Hill to Sydney Harbour are important and must be protected.

The retention of wide harbour views from existing streets and public domain areas should be maximised with the development of Barangaroo, and framed with carefully considered landscape and built form elements.

-  Existing harbour view corridors along streets
-  Future harbour view corridors along streets
-  Existing view corridors - green views
-  Wide harbour views from the public domain
-  Framed views between buildings
-  Cliffs and walls
-  1m contours



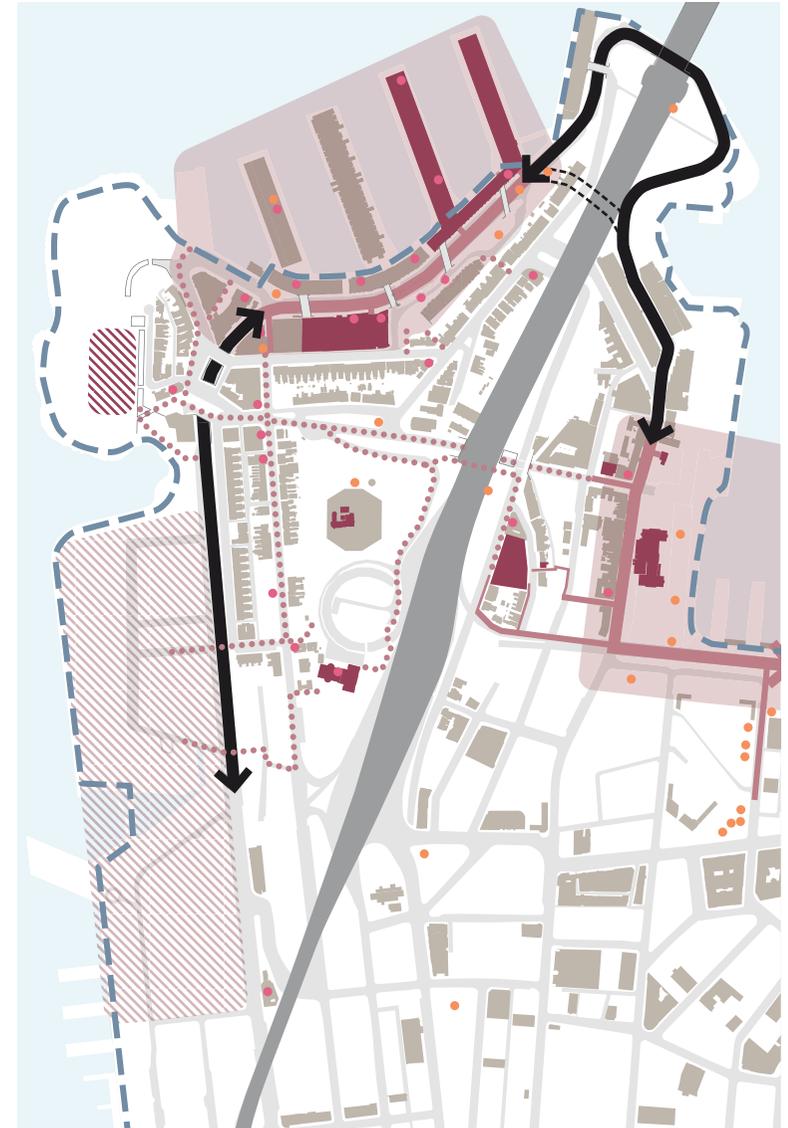
Guiding Directions

5. Support Walsh Bay cultural precinct and enhance cultural ribbon connections

The Walsh Bay precinct is home to many diverse cultural organisations and venues. More bars, cafes and restaurants are also emerging to support the precinct. Improving connections between The Rocks, Walsh Bay and Barangaroo by providing wayfinding for pedestrians, as well as improved public transport, is critical to supporting cultural life in Harbour North.

Improving east-west connections and pedestrian links from George Street and Hickson Road to SH Ervin Gallery and Sydney Observatory will further enhance the cultural ribbon experience within the precinct.

- Existing cultural facilities
- Proposed cultural facilities
- Existing public art
- Bars/cafes/restaurants
- Existing and emerging cultural precincts
- Potential future cultural destinations
- Strengthen pedestrian, cycle & transport connections between precincts
- Explore potential tunnel link to shorten route by 600m
- Reinforce existing links within and around cultural precincts
- Provide easily identified links between new precincts/venues & strengthen existing links where required
- Heritage buildings
- Foreshore walk - wayfinding to support cultural uses



6. Strengthen local communities and support local economies

Harbour Village North has a strong residential community consisting of public tenants, private owners and leaseholders in a range of building types. This mixed community is greatly valued, with Council’s community facility at its heart. Retaining and improving the community facility strengthens this important focal point for the area. The unique local economies of Millers Point, Dawes Point, Walsh Bay and The Rocks should also be built upon.

Observatory Hill Park and King George V Centre provide popular recreation destinations for workers and residents, with the KGV recreation centre currently at capacity. New parkland at Barangaroo Central will cater for increasing passive recreation demand and should be supported by a new public recreation centre.

-  Reinforce village centre
-  Residential buildings
-  Community facilities
-  Opportunity for future integrated community facility
-  Local activity centres with different characters
-  Existing King George V Recreation Centre
-  Opportunity for new recreation centre
-  Open space - active recreation
-  Strengthen links between recreation and open space
-  Foreshore walk - active recreation
-  Parks - passive recreation
-  Strengthen links between city parks



Public Domain Projects

The study proposes two types of projects to deliver on the Guiding Directions.

- **Precinct wide 'overlay' projects** that address particular issues throughout the entire study area; and
- **Place-specific upgrade projects** that aim to make physical improvements to particular parts of the precinct. Place-specific projects are identified as either **priority projects**, or **longer term project ideas** - reflecting priorities and issues out of the exhibition and consultation process.

A project plan has been reported to Council, accompanying this study. Recommendations for the prioritisation and timing of priority projects have been informed by community consultation, project costing, land ownership and governance constraints including the need to further develop and consult on the long term plan for Observatory Hill. A summary of the implementation recommendations is provided below:

	PROJECT	PRIORITY
1	Observatory Hill short-term improvements	HIGH
2	Dalgety Road upgrade and Towns Place cycleway	
3	Argyle Street upgrade to Munn Reserve	
4	Dedicated cycle path off Harbour Bridge	
5	Kent Street Underpass upgrade	MEDIUM
6	Gas Lane upgrade	
7	New Park toilets - Observatory Hill eastern edge	
8	Community playground upgrade - Argyle Street	
9	Covering the Cahill Expressway cutting and long term Observatory Hill masterplan improvements	LOW
10	Kent Street connection to Observatory Hill	

Public Domain Projects

Consistency with the Guiding Directions

PRIORITY PROJECTS	GUIDING DIRECTIONS					
	Improve access, connectivity and wayfinding	Create a network of linked parks, and upgrade existing open spaces	Respect and celebrate heritage, conserve and restore Observatory Hill	Celebrate landform and harbour views	Support Walsh Bay cultural precinct and improve Cultural Ribbon connections	Strengthen local communities and support local economies
Observatory Hill short-term improvements	•	•	•	•		
Dalgety Road upgrade and Towns Place cycleway	•	•	•		•	•
Argyle Street upgrade to Munn Reserve	•	•	•			•
Dedicated cycle path off Harbour Bridge	•		•	•		
Kent Street Underpass upgrade	•	•				•
Gas Lane upgrade	•	•				•
New park toilets – Observatory Hill eastern edge		•	•	•		
Community playground upgrade – Argyle Street		•	•			•
Covering the Cahill Expressway cutting and long term Observatory Hill masterplan improvements	•	•	•	•	•	•
Kent Street connection to Observatory Hill	•	•	•	•	•	

The following pages contain concepts for public domain and urban design improvements. The concepts identify ways that the guiding directions can be realised by the City, in partnership with the NSW State Government and local stakeholders.

Precinct-wide 'Overlay' projects

Consultation with the community and stakeholders, as well as submissions received on the Draft Public Domain Study, have highlighted several areas where a precinct-wide overlay could enhance the public domain in Harbour Village North:

- **Improvements to wayfinding and signage**, potentially integrated with
- **Heritage interpretation**, providing information about the physical and social history of the area, and
- **Access to cultural experiences**, both in the public domain and via the many cultural venues within the precinct.

These issues should be addressed in an integrated way, to avoid cluttering or confusion of signage or other elements.

This study recommends that to ensure a coordinated approach, these aspects are progressed through the following Council studies that are currently underway:

Wayfinding Strategy (refer to page 15)

Eora Journey (refer to page 17)

Cultural Ribbon (refer to page 18)

It is recommended that the Harbour Village North area be considered as a case study for the above projects, in order to facilitate a timely implementation of overlay projects .



An example of signage clutter (photo courtesy of Millers Point RAG submission)



Wayfinding opportunities - Agar Steps Millers Point

Place-specific upgrade projects

Place-specific upgrade projects focus on discrete areas within the precinct, and can be implemented independently of other projects. Based on community and stakeholder consultation, the projects are divided into two sub-groups:

Priority projects

These projects address current issues such as safety, park wear and tear, and traffic management, and allow Council to provide timely input to State Government urban renewal projects in the area. These projects have been developed to a higher level of detail by through consultant studies.

Some projects can be progressed and delivered in a short to medium timeframe, while others require new governance structures to be developed to allow the projects to progress.

Council has engaged consultants to test and develop these priority projects, in consultation with government, stakeholders and the community. Priority projects include:

- Gas Lane shared way
- Kent Street Underpass
- Argyle Street to Munn Reserve
- Dalgety Road and Towns Place
- Margaret Street and Napoleon Street*

Spackman Mossop Michaels have developed these projects in their '*Key Streets Study*'. This can be found at [Appendix A](#) to this report.

** Whilst not City projects, input provided to the State Government on Margaret and Napoleon Street is also documented in this section.*

- Observatory Hill short-term improvements
- Dedicated cycle path off Harbour Bridge
- New park toilets - Observatory Hill eastern edge
- Community Playground upgrade (Argyle Street)
- Link to Kent Street from Observatory Hill south
- Covering the Cahill Expressway cutting

Turf Design + Environmental Partnership have developed the '*Observatory Hill Masterplan*', providing detail these projects. This can be found at [Appendix B](#) to this report.

Longer term project ideas

Issues and ideas have been identified by Council and the community, for longer term investigation. These ideas can be further developed with detail added over time and with community input. Longer term project ideas are provided for High Street, Dawes Point, Walsh Bay and The Hungry Mile.



Priority Projects: Gas Lane

Currently

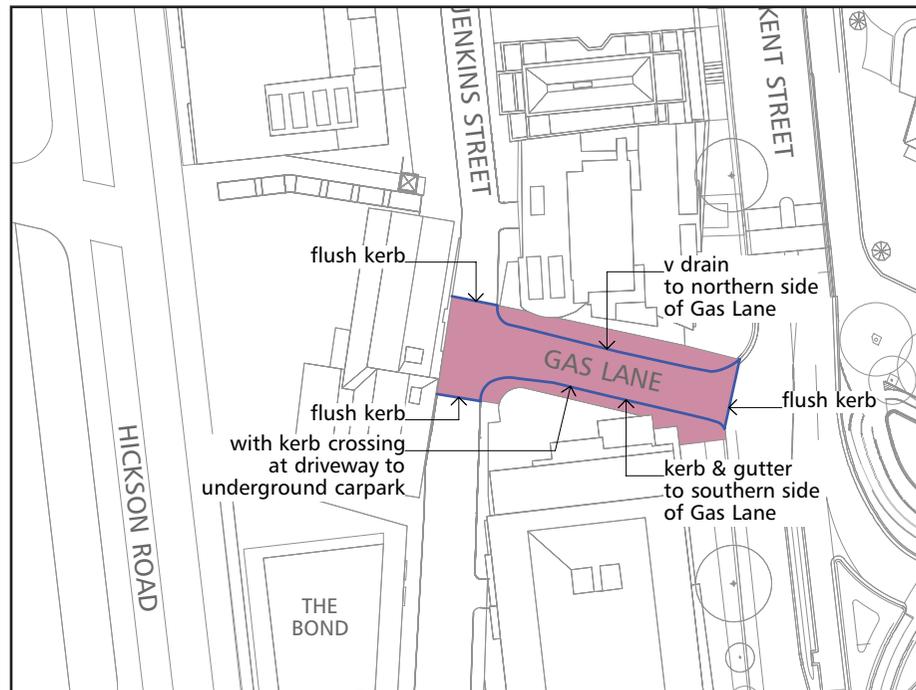
Gas Lane provides an important pedestrian connection from Kent Street (and Grosvenor Street via the underpass) to Hickson Road and the harbour. An existing shared way, it also provides vehicular access to parking garages for Kent Street buildings. The lane is very steep and has the visual appearance of a road rather than a shared way.

Issues

- 1 Conflicts between cars and pedestrians in Gas Lane are contributed to by the lack of legibility of the 'shared way'. As the number of pedestrians travelling to Barangaroo increases, this issue is likely to intensify. There is a need for better management to improve safety for all users.
- 2 There is an opportunity to improve the existing physical appearance of the lane.



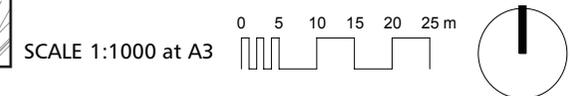
BEFORE Gas Lane



Plan: Gas Lane shared way concept proposal (Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study', see Appendix A)

LEGEND

- New granite paving to shared zone
- New stone kerb, gutter and v drain as noted.





Illustrative montage: Gas Lane shared way concept proposal
(Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study'; see Appendix A)

- A New paving to footpath, with slip resistant treatment
- B Stone kerbs, gutters and drains
- C New paving to shared zone, with slip resistant treatment
- D View to harbour is retained
- E Indicative development at Barangaroo South.
(source: Barangaroo South Concept Plan Mod 4)

Proposals

- Resurface the existing bitumen lane using granite sets, to increase visibility and awareness of the shared zone.
- Upgrade paving with a slip-resistant treatment to improve safety and address the steepness of the lane.
- Review lighting and upgrade if required.

Priority Projects: Kent Street underpass

Currently

Kent Street Underpass is the pedestrian and cycle link between Grosvenor Street and Kent Street. A network of underground and surface pedestrian and cycle paths provides access beneath the Bradford Highway and access roads. Cycleways are provided however pedestrian routes particularly from Lang Park are poor. The underpass is functional but lacks identity and design quality.

Issues

- 1 Lack of a safe pedestrian route between Lang Park and the underpass. The majority of pedestrians walk along the road following the movable median marker between York Street and the entry to the underpass due to the lack of a pedestrian crossing over the Kent Street slip-lane.
- 2 Entries to the underpass lack visibility and legibility.
- 3 The area lacks identity due to the multiple levels and large road infrastructure elements, lack of landscaping and low quality of open spaces.
- 4 Cycleways are functional but dominate pedestrian movement and limit access to some areas.

Existing: York Street movable median



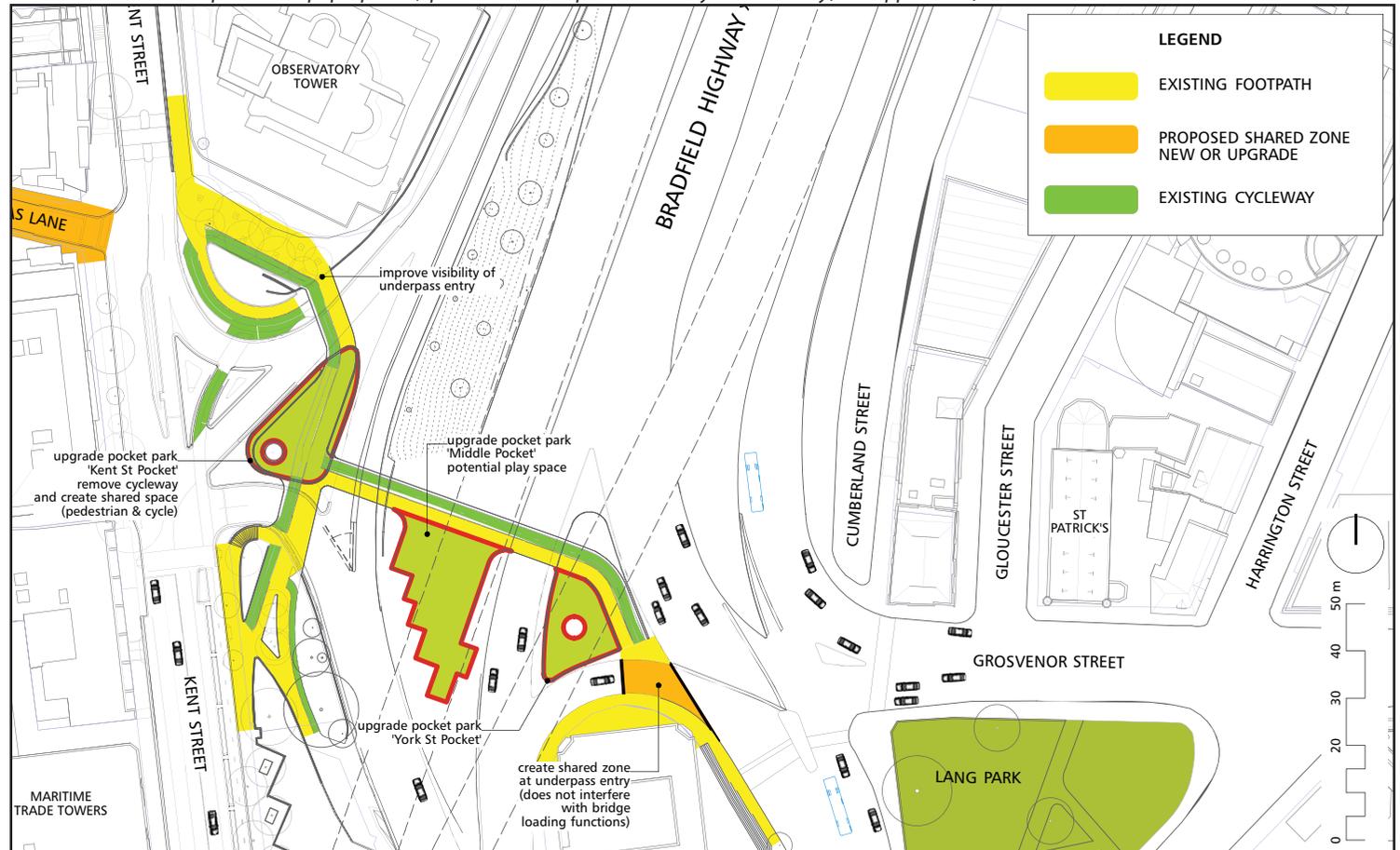
Existing: Underpass entry on Kent Street



Existing: Aerial photo



Plan: Kent Street underpass concept proposal (Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study'; see Appendix A)





Proposals

- Improve amenity with new landscape planting and seating.
- Create a shared pedestrian/cycle area to improve access to open spaces.

BEFORE Underpass: Kent Street 'Pocket'



- Review lighting and investigate public art opportunities.
- Provide play space for children to take advantage of the large space available in the 'middle pocket'.

BEFORE Underpass: Middle 'Pocket'



Illustrative montages: Kent Street underpass concept proposal (Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study'; see Appendix A)

Priority Projects: Kent Street underpass

Proposals

- 'Green' underpass spaces and introduce feature trees visible from above the underpass, to assist with wayfinding.

BEFORE Underpass: York Street 'Pocket'



- Upgrade paving, seating and finishes.
- Provide treatments (eg. artwork) to entry walls to improve the visibility of underpass entries.

BEFORE Underpass: Kent Street Entry



UNDERPASS: YORK STREET 'POCKET'
AFTER





Illustrative montages: Kent Street underpass concept proposal (Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study', see Appendix A)

Proposals

- Collaborate with RMS to provide a shared zone across the Kent Street slip-lane, improving pedestrian and cycle access to the underpass.

BEFORE Underpass: York Street Entry



Priority Projects: Argyle Street to Munn Reserve

Currently

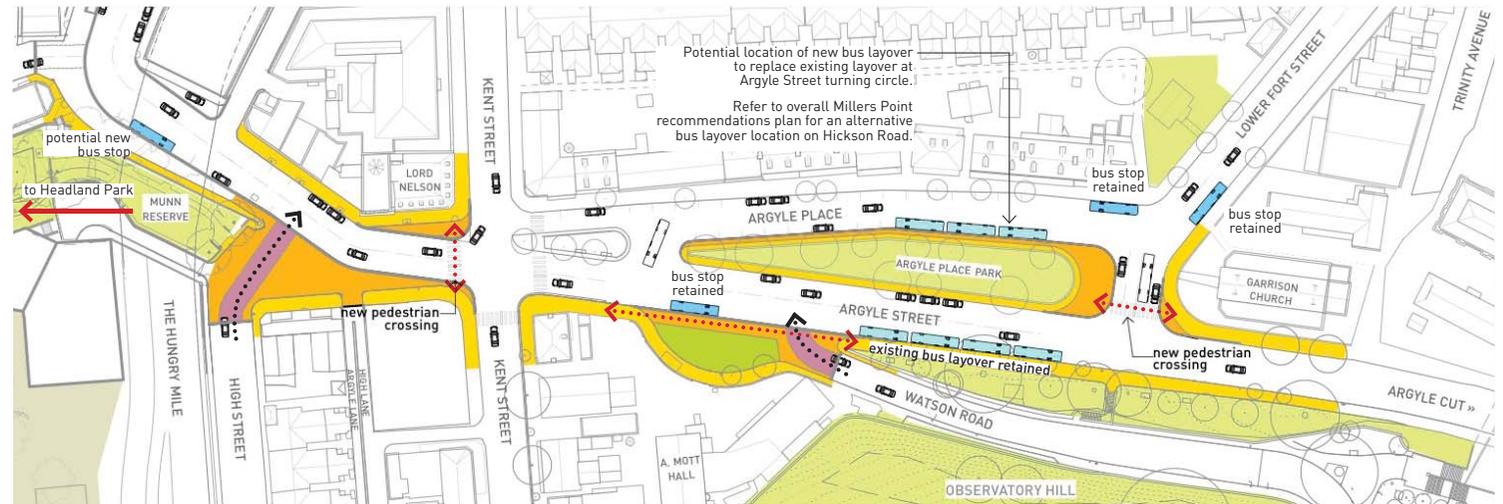
A quiet neighbourhood centre with local shops. The streetscape includes elements of heritage significance. A significant increase in pedestrian traffic is likely as Argyle Street and Munn Reserve will form a main pedestrian access point to Headland Park.

Issues

- 1 Access through Munn Reserve to the future Headland Park entry is indirect. Levels, landscape design, lighting and signage need to be rationalised.
- 2 Very wide roads and disproportionately large areas of bitumen detract from the public domain.
- 3 Lack of a direct, legible pedestrian path along Argyle Street south due to the bus layover area.
- 4 Existing road geometry results in sharp corner turns, in some cases causing damage to the awnings of existing heritage buildings.
- 5 Some shops have closed or are used for alternative (eg office) uses. Limited opportunities for outdoor dining due to footpath widths.



Argyle Street - Village Centre and access to new Headland Park



PROPOSED PUBLIC DOMAIN IMPROVEMENTS AT ARGYLE STREET

SPACE FOR PEDESTRIANS & CYCLISTS:
Footpaths, shared zones and new park

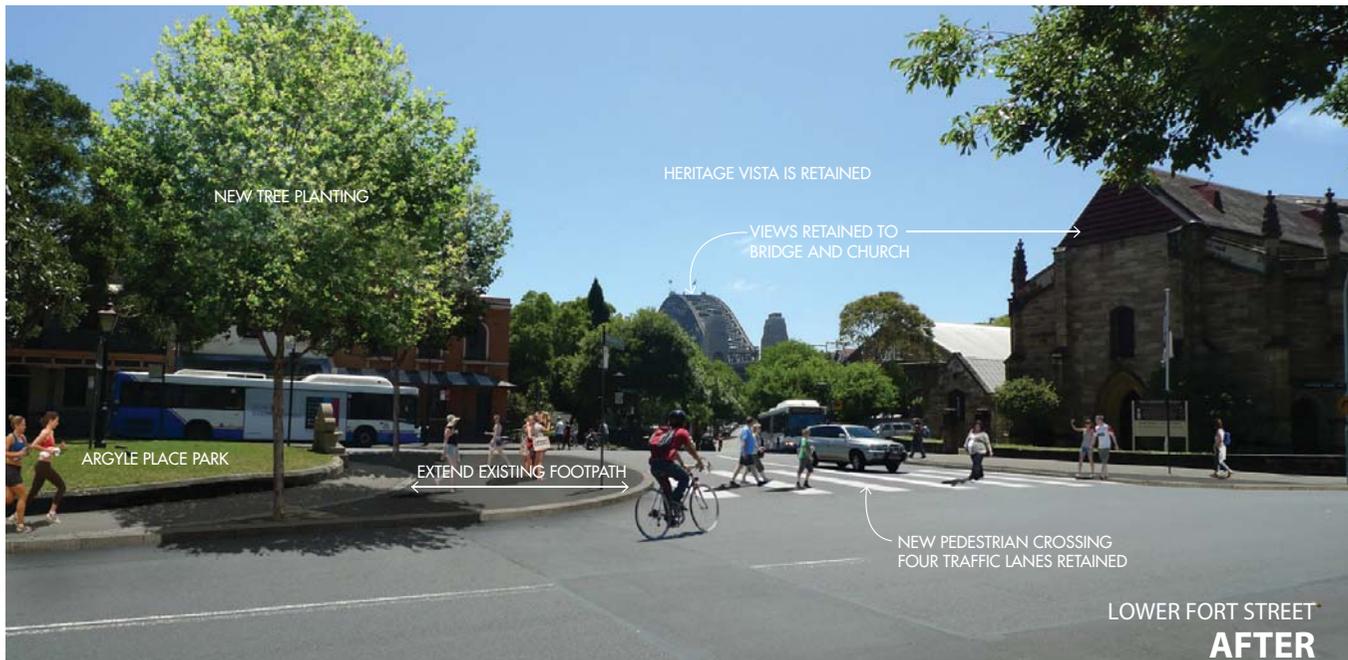


80% GAIN

LEGEND

- Existing asphalt footpath
- Proposed asphalt footpath
- New stone kerb
- Proposed shared zone (granite cobbles)
- Existing park
- Proposed local park (potential for expansion of community facilities in this space)
- Bus stop
- Bus layover

Plan - Argyle Street concept proposal
(Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study', see Appendix A)



Illustrative montages: Argyle Street concept proposal (Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study'; see Appendix A)



BEFORE Argyle Street

Proposals

- In consultation with Transport NSW, reclaim bus layover area and provide an extended pedestrian path along Argyle Street south. Retain bus stop but relocate layover areas (subject to bus operational needs - refer to Key Street Study (Appendix A) for detailed options).
- Introduce a shared zone at the intersection of Watson Road and Argyle Street
- Introduce new street trees where possible without detracting from significant views.
- Extend footpath and introduce a pedestrian crossing (in consultation with RMS) to improve the pedestrian route along the north side of Argyle

BEFORE Lower Fort Street



Priority Projects: Argyle Street to Munn Reserve

Proposals

- Improve road geometry and widen footpaths in front of Argyle Street shops to limit traffic speeds and increase pedestrian safety and amenity.
- Allow for future bus stops to service the Headland Park.
- Introduce a shared zone at the intersection of High and Argyle Streets.

BEFORE Munn Reserve Entry



*Illustrative montages: Argyle Street concept proposal
(Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study'; see Appendix A)*

Priority Projects: Dalgety Road and Towns Place

Currently

Very wide streets characterised by large areas of bitumen. A lack of street trees and limited footpaths result in low pedestrian amenity. Currently vehicle dominated, these streets will form the primary northern access to Headland Park, completing the forshore walk between Walsh Bay and Barangaroo

Issues

- 1 Low pedestrian amenity due to lack of street tree canopy, and narrow/no footpath (western edge of Dalgety Road).
- 2 Lack of streetscape continuity from Walsh Bay (Hickson Road) to the Headland Park entry along Towns Place.
- 3 Safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists due to low visibility, high vehicle speeds, and the steep gradient of the street - with no safe crossing opportunities.
- 4 Moores Wharf site presents barriers to the public foreshore access.



Existing view along Towns Place and Dalgety Road from entry to Barangaroo



Existing view west along Towns Place, looking towards Moores Wharf and Barangaroo

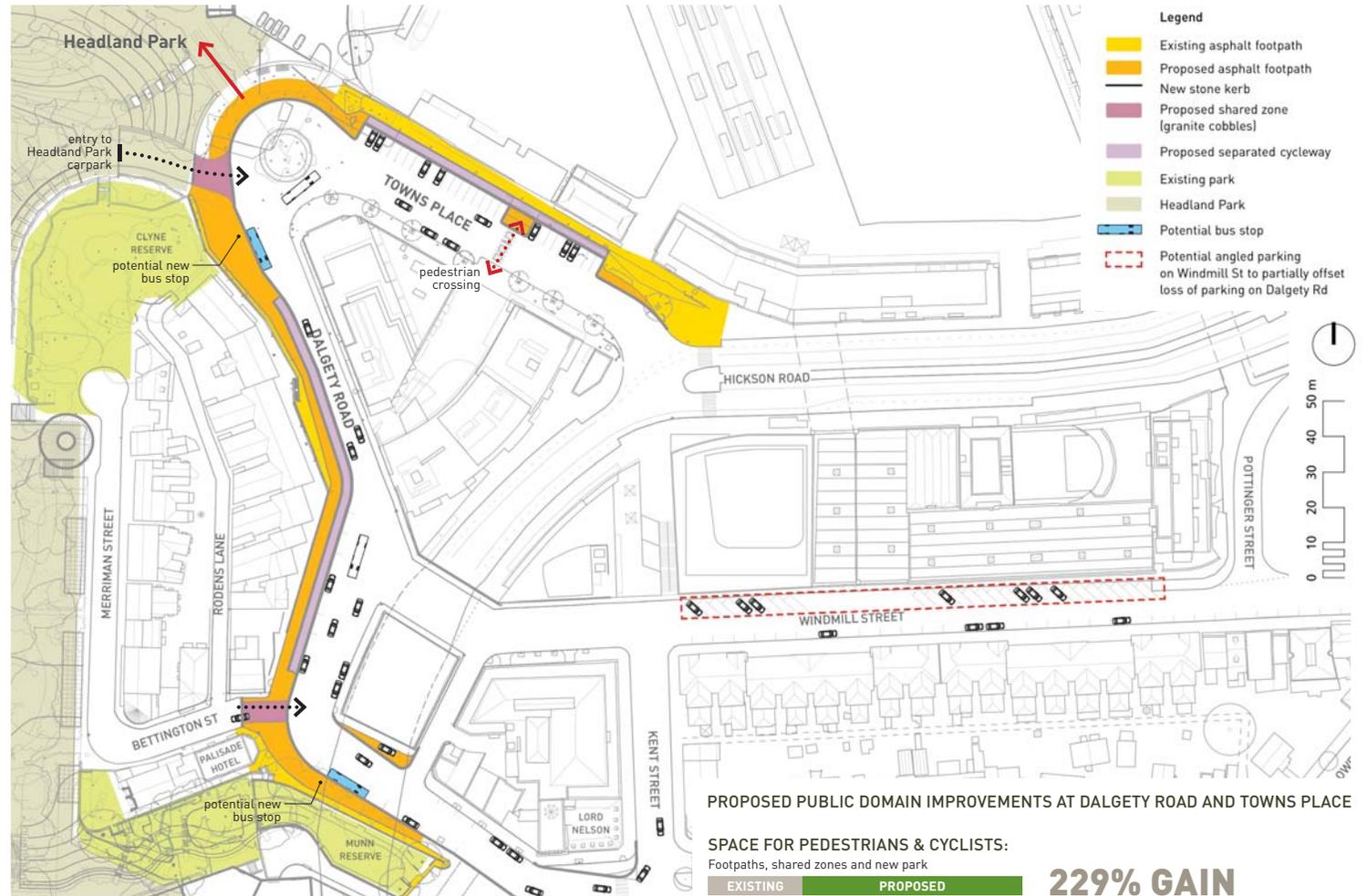


Existing view south up Dalgety Road - retaining walls and no footpath

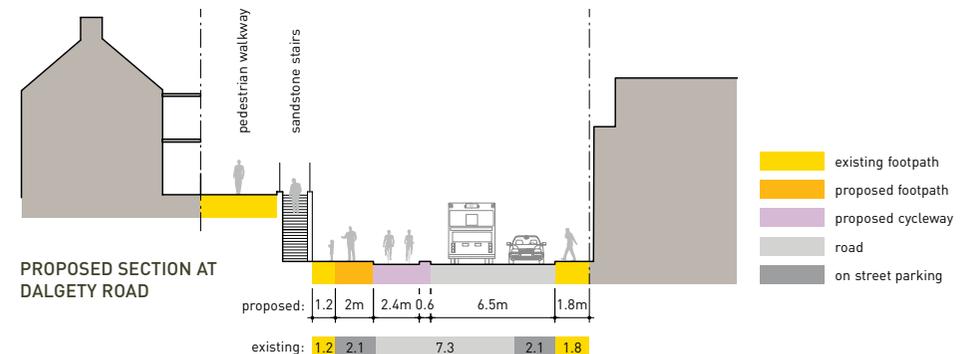
Priority Projects: Dalgety Road and Towns Place

Proposals

- Provide a new pedestrian footpath along the western side of Dalgety Road, together with a separated bi-directional cycleway, reducing the road carriageway to one lane of travel each way.
- Allow for future bus stops servicing the Headland Park entries.
- Provide a separated bi-directional cycleway along the northern side of Towns Place, connecting to the future foreshore cycleway and path around Headland Park.



Plan and Section - Dalgety Road and Towns Place concept proposal (Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study', see Appendix A)



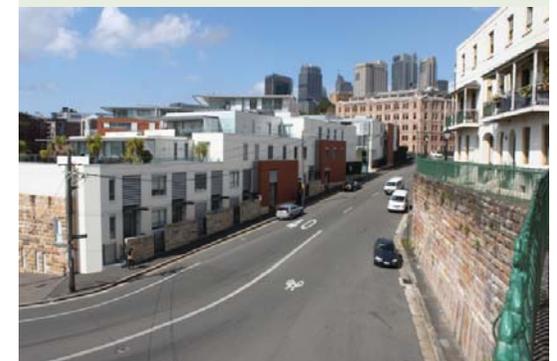


*Illustrative montage: Dalgety Road concept proposal
(Spackman Mossop Michaels 'Key Streets Study'; see Appendix A)*

Proposals

- Retain existing significant heritage fabric such as stone kerbs.
- Introduce lighting and street tree planting to improve amenity for pedestrians and cyclists.

BEFORE Dalgety Road



Priority Projects: Observatory Hill short-term improvements

Currently

A historic park attracting active and passive visitors, but limited in connectivity with surrounding area due to topography and the Bradfield Highway. Educational and cultural buildings are separated from parkland.

Issues

- 1 Conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and high volumes of cyclists along western park edge, compromising pedestrian and cycle safety.
- 2 Wear & tear due to fitness uses & pedestrians treading paths across lawn.
- 3 Damage to lawn around the rotunda from large groups and gatherings.
- 4 At times park space is dominated by fitness training and wedding groups, making it less useable for local residents.



- Improve curtilage to rotunda
- provide path access to rotunda
- extend palisade fence to Lower Fort Street frontage
- Short term cycle ramp safety improvements (realignment / signage)
- Fitness/ Event Management
- Cycle transit discussions

Plan - Short term masterplan overview
(TDEP 'Observatory Hill Masterplan', see Appendix B)





Detail plan - short term masterplan proposed works
(TDEP 'Observatory Hill Masterplan', see Appendix B)



Short-term works area (shown in red)
(TDEP 'Observatory Hill Masterplan', see Appendix B)

Proposals

- Improve curtilage to rotunda.
- Provide path access from Watson Road to the rotunda.
- Extend the palisade fence along the Upper Fort Street frontage.
- Realign the cycle ramp exiting from the Harbour Bridge, and provide improved line markings and signage to delineate shared and on road areas.
- Develop management strategies for fitness and wedding use of the park to mitigate usage impacts and balance use by local residents.

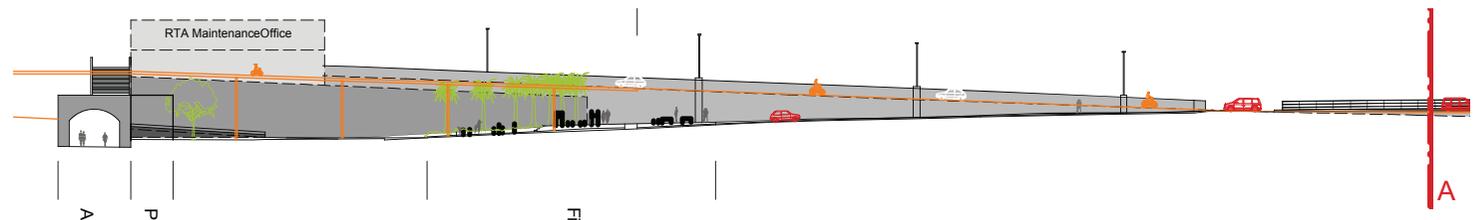
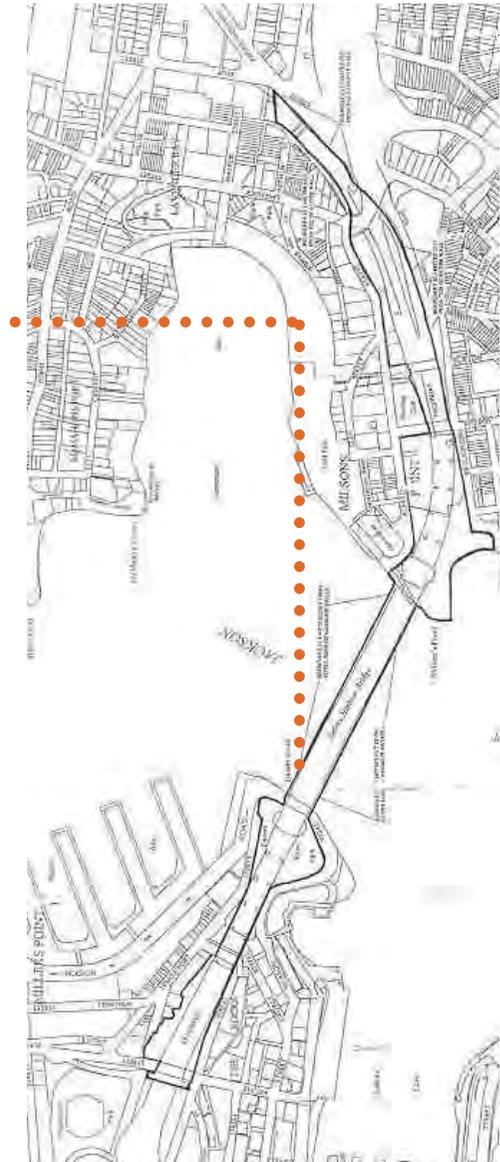
Priority Projects: Dedicated cycle path off Harbour Bridge

Currently

Harbour Bridge cyclists enter/exit Observatory Hill Park in the north-east corner and share Upper Fort Street with vehicles and pedestrians. Limited visibility and pinch-points create dangerous conditions at the entry point to Upper Fort Street, as well as in front of Fort Street School and at the bridge over the Cahill Expressway.

Issues

- 1 Conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians and high volumes of cyclists along western park edge, compromising pedestrian and cycle safety.
- 2 Pinch points in the existing road occur in front of the school, creating safety issues for school children, staff and cyclists.
- 3 The narrow, angled bridge creates a blind spot along a shared bike/pedestrian path, causing safety issues.
- 4 Noise and traffic along the Bradfield Highway impacts on the quality of Park and school outdoor areas.



Section: Separated cycleway
(TDEP 'Observatory Hill Masterplan' see Appendix B)



AFTER Bradfield Highway park edge (showing separated cycleway)

Illustrative montage

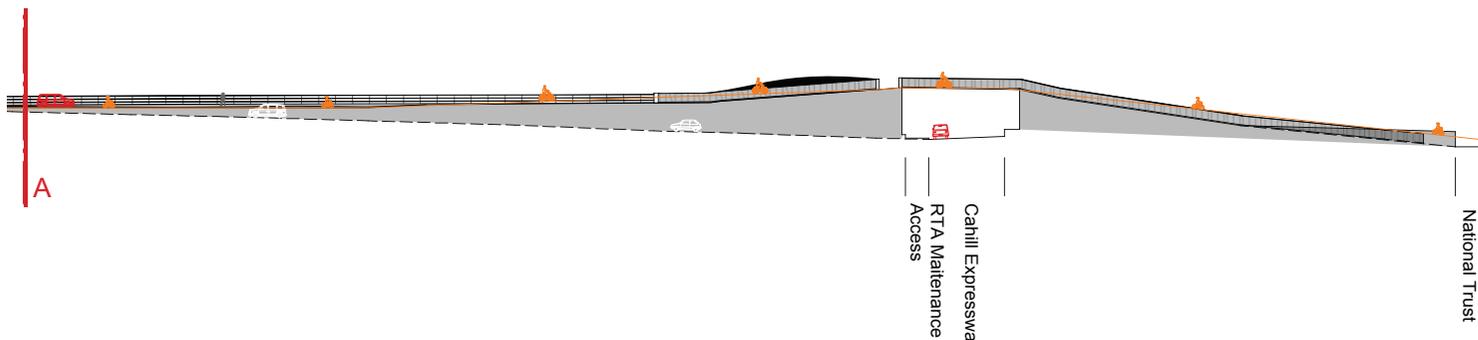
(source: TDEP 'Observatory Hill Masterplan', see Appendix B)



BEFORE Bradfield Highway park edge

Proposals

- Improve curtilage to rotunda.
- Provide path access from Watson Road to the rotunda.
- Extend the palisade fence along the Upper Fort Street frontage.
- Realign the cycle ramp exiting from the Harbour Bridge, and provide improved line markings and signage to delineate shared and on road areas.
- Develop management strategies for fitness and wedding use of the park to mitigate usage impacts and balance use by local residents.



Priority Projects: New park toilets - Observatory Hill east

Currently

Toilet facilities are not available in the Park. Park users currently access the Sydney Observatory facilities during opening hours.

Issues

- 1 Lack of toilet facilities limits the usage of the park by families and children, and can limit the length of stay in the park.
- 2 A new structure for toilet facilities needs to be sensitively designed and located within the heritage constraints of the park, and be located for minimal visual impact and intrusion into the park.

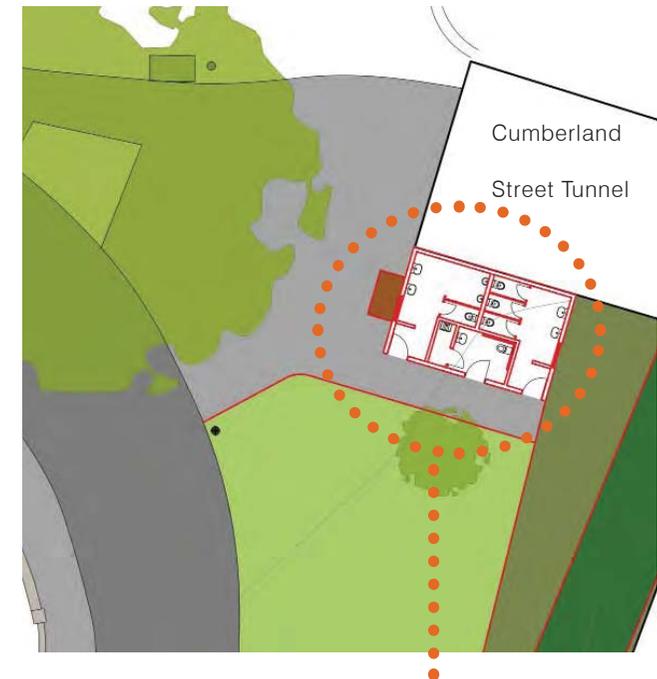
Proposals

- Locate new park toilets in north-east park corner to minimise visual impact.
- Develop design to integrate with park and heritage setting.



Existing

Site Images source: TDEP



*Masterplan Toilets detail Plan
(Source: TDEP)*



*Precedent images: Toilet structure concept
(TDEP 'Observatory Hill Masterplan' see Appendix B)*