



# Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

Property and Development NSW  
Department of Planning and Environment

March 2023



## Macquarie Street East Precinct is on Gadigal Land.

**We recognise that despite being changed with concrete, steel and bitumen, this Country is still cared for by the Gadigal and their Ancestors continue to walk this land. We express our gratitude to Elders and Knowledge Holders whose wisdom, activism and knowledges have kept culture alive in this place.**

**We recognise our responsibility as the current caretakers of the Macquarie Street East Precinct to respect both this Country and those who belong to this Country. We strive to create spaces in the Macquarie Street East Precinct that are welcoming and safe for all, especially First Nations peoples whose cultures are valued as being deeply integral to this place.**

## Foreword

Sydney is Australia's global city, renowned not only for its spectacular natural setting, but for its booming economy, innovative mindset and fast-evolving urban sensibility. The Macquarie Street East Precinct provides a significant opportunity to be a place of cultural standing that embodies the direction of the future city.

Situated on Gadigal Land, Macquarie Street features some of Australia's most significant public institutions housed in heritage buildings. Under a NSW Government vision, Sydney's historic Macquarie Street will be transformed into a vibrant, connected, people-friendly arts and culture destination.

This Master Plan articulates the precinct within the context of Sydney's re-emergence as a global destination, for arts, culture and seasonal events and activities. It sets out objectives and strategies to realise the 20-year vision of the precinct and will allow stakeholders to elevate their incredible public assets along Macquarie Street to their full potential, whilst protecting their historic integrity and original character.

Through its buildings, spaces and activities, the precinct will be a place of rich experience and meanings. It offers a chance to come together to celebrate diversity and embed sustainability. It is a space where the stories, sometimes difficult, can be told and heard. A space for genuine change. It requires us to rethink the state's history, and what it means to connect places that are simultaneously places of colonial authority and dispossession, and proud civic institutions with extraordinary records and collections, to explore fundamental truths around land, identity and place.

Renewal of the Macquarie Street East Precinct will be transformational for Sydney.


It will connect and stimulate other cultural initiatives across the city including the extension to the Art Gallery of NSW, The Australian Museum project, a proposal for a permanent Soundshell in The Domain, and restoration of the heritage Domain Gatehouse and former Depot on Art Gallery Road.

Steeped in history, Macquarie Street East will tell the cultural, civic and heritage story of Sydney to today's global audience. Established institutions in heritage-listed buildings alongside new cultural attractions will deliver experiences across places and spaces that entertain, educate and surprise, by day and night.

Open and accessible, the Macquarie Street East Precinct will embrace and enhance the city's arts and cultural offer.



The Hon. Anthony Roberts  
The Minister for Planning and  
Minister for Homes



The Hon. Ben Franklin  
The Minister for Arts and  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs



## A City-shaping Cultural Destination

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## Macquarie Street East Precinct

Where Sydney's rich First Nations and modern histories come to life and arts and culture thrive. *Be Educated. Be Entertained. Be Surprised.*

Macquarie Street East Precinct will:

- Encourage exploration
- Visibly connect with Country
- Bring the inside out
- Educate in delightful ways
- Stimulate the senses - look, touch, feel
- Be an artist's stage
- Open doors to institutions
- Provide places to meet and be entertained

## Signatories



Heather Harris  
Chief Operating Officer  
Australian Museum



Dr John Vallance FAHA  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
Museums of History NSW



Dr John Vallance FAHA  
State Librarian  
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Annette Pitman  
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Create NSW



Kelly McFayden  
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Department of Parliamentary Services  
Parliament of NSW



Caroline Butler-Bowdon  
Executive Director  
Cities Revitalisation and Place  
Cities and Active Transport  
Transport for NSW



Catherine D'Elia  
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Department of Communities  
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Leon Walker  
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Health Infrastructure NSW



Denise Ora  
Chief Executive  
Royal Botanic Gardens and  
Domain Trust

# Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

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# INTRODUCTION

**This Master Plan sets out the vision for transformation of the government sites along Macquarie Street collectively known as the Macquarie Street East Precinct (MSEP). It explores the potential of buildings, uses and spaces across these sites and establishes guidelines and principles for their integration into a world-leading cultural and creative destination for Sydney.**



Map of Sydney Cove [Identifying Macquarie Street and Hospital Road], 1816 (SLNSW)

The scope of this Master Plan is the MSEP, located on the eastern side of Macquarie Street and containing some of Sydney's most significant civic and cultural buildings, including the NSW Parliament, the State Library of NSW (SLNSW), Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital and the Hyde Park Barracks.

The precinct is one of the jewels in Sydney's glittering crown, the civic and cultural spine of the city. It is home to and surrounded by Sydney's major civic and cultural institutions, historic buildings and iconic open spaces.

The precinct represents an important intersection of First Nations, colonial and 20th century NSW political, social and cultural history.

The MSEP sites have been identified for investigation for a number of reasons:

- The potential to support the state government's focus on positioning Sydney as a world-leading cultural and creative city
- Leveraging government investment in the surrounding area, the new Martin Place Metro Station and the Art Gallery of NSW's new North Building
- Increasing visitation to the precinct through new cultural attractors and events
- To determine the potential of government-owned buildings and spaces, specifically the Registrar General's (RGB) and Chief Secretary's Buildings (CSB)

The first stages of transformation of these sites was announced in June 2021 by the state government, with \$119 million allocated in the 2021-22 NSW budget to "kick-start work on revitalising one of Sydney's historic precincts into a lively cultural hub".

The historic RGB, located at the southern end of this precinct, will be refurbished with a number of future uses (including a museum) to be explored. The heritage integrity of the original building will be revealed by "removing the more modern annex, built in the 1960s, and creating a new open public space that will form a gateway to The Domain".

The CSB on the corner of Macquarie and Bridge Streets and 50 Philip Street are currently subject to causal use by Government and are included as additional sites within this Master Plan.

The SLNSW has commenced planning and delivery of a number of transformative projects, including a rooftop bar (with capacity for 120 patrons), improved accessibility, new auditorium, photographic gallery and reading room restoration within the Mitchell Building and repurposing the ground floor of the Macquarie Building.

Located on the corner of William and College Streets, the Australian Museum is currently updating its Master Plan. The Australian Museum's plans are taken into consideration for the MSEP.

Surrounding streets and public spaces have also been considered for their potential to improve connectivity into the precinct, provide spaces for dwelling and dining, as well as a more comfortable pedestrian experience.





# Project Background

## The Potential of the Precinct

Despite its importance and location, the MSEP has been largely overlooked due to low connectivity within and through the precinct, as well as a lack of recognition of culture and heritage, effective placemaking and wayfinding, and a coordinated precinct vision and management.

The MSEP has the characteristics to be transformed into a vibrant and active visitor destination, a place to recognise and celebrate the state's diverse past, present and future.

There is an opportunity to revitalise the MSEP as a world-class cultural destination comparable to Exhibition Road in London or Museum Mile in New York City, a vibrant, connected and active precinct within Sydney's CBD that celebrates NSW's rich cultural heritage.

The precinct can leverage its rich heritage, First Nations living culture and cultural assets to enhance and support the 24-hour economy, encourage visitation to the CBD from tourists and locals alike, and improve the quality of the public realm, drawing on inspiration from international best practice.

The MSEP has been the subject of a number of strategies and plans, which have provided a strong foundation to develop an integrated precinct vision.

## 2016 Strategic Framework

Over the past decade, a number of institutions along the eastern side of Macquarie Street have developed individual business cases and proposals for projects, including the State Library of NSW Rooftop Venue, Museums of History NSW's Story of Sydney and the Registrar General's Building Adaptive Re-use and Public Plaza.

In 2016, PDNSW commissioned the preparation of a Strategic Framework for the precinct produced by the Government Architect NSW and supported by Hassell - to develop a more integrated approach to these projects, and to set in place key principles and strategies for the precinct's future.

The draft report was published by the NSW Government in 2016 and finalised in 2018.

## 2020 Precinct Review

Following the preparation of the Strategic Framework, the NSW Government commissioned an expert panel review of the MSEP by former Prime Minister the Hon. Paul Keating and former Greater Sydney Commissioner and Lord Mayor Lucy Turnbull AO.

In September 2020, the Expert Panel finalised their findings, recommendations and long-term vision to improve and enhance the MSEP.

The MSEP Review was published by the NSW Government in January 2021 and formally announced in February 2021.

## 2021 draft Master Plan

Based on the findings of the Strategic Framework and Precinct Review, a detailed Master Plan was prepared in August 2021 in order to inform future planning.

This 2021 draft plan formed the basis of this Master Plan.

## 2023 Master Plan (this document)

The MSEP Master Plan document is a refinement and consolidation of the strategic directions set out in the 2021 draft Master Plan. The 2023 Master Plan is more definitive in its direction, clear in its vision and objectives and establishes guidelines for implementation of future projects across the precinct. The updated Master Plan includes:

**Project Background:** a description of the Master Plan purpose and structure

**Place Potential:** a strategic view of the precinct and its context, through the lenses of Country, history and culture, and the future city - which inform overarching place objectives

**Vision and Objectives:** establishing a vision and describing the outcomes from the successful transformation of MSEP

**Place Analysis:** a strategic analysis of the precinct, its setting and opportunities to be delivered in the Master Plan

**Precinct Strategies:** the Master Plan strategies that provide a framework for change but also flexibility to accommodate a range of different outcomes

**Public Domain Guidelines:** setting out the high level principles and guidelines that will inform the future planning and design of buildings and spaces across the precinct



# Implementing the Master Plan

## Applying the Master Plan

The 2023 MSEP Master Plan is a live document that should be used as a reference by all key stakeholders.

The document is definitive in its direction, clear in its vision and objectives and establishes guidelines for the implementation of future projects across the precinct.

## Stakeholder Engagement

In documenting this Program, and establishing a joint approach across Government, PDNSW consulted with multiple government agencies and entities including, but not limited to:

- Aboriginal Affairs NSW
- Australian Museum NSW
- City of Sydney
- Create NSW
- Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)
- Department of Planning and Environment (DPE)
- Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW
- Health Infrastructure (HI)
- Health NSW
- Heritage NSW
- Investment NSW
- Museums of History NSW (MHNSW)
- NSW Treasury
- Parliament of NSW
- Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust (RBGDT)
- South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
- State Library of NSW (SLNSW)
- Transport for NSW (TfNSW)

## Governance

To deliver a successful, whole-of-precinct outcome for MSEP, a clear governance structure has been established that supports the coordinated and staged delivery of the precinct works and projects as well as the ongoing management and coordination for the precinct's whole of life cycle.

Governance for the precinct has been developed to respond to the highly complex stakeholder environment in and around the MSEP. The governance arrangements seek to streamline delivery outcomes whilst ensuring effective coordination and a strong focus on managing the Program, on time and on budget.

The MSEP Steering Committee includes executive representation from all MSEP key stakeholders and is chaired by PDNSW. The Steering Committee sets the overall strategic direction and has ultimate accountability for performance against the agreed long-term vision and investment decisions.

The Steering Committee is underpinned by a series of Project Control Groups and Working Groups. There is inter-agency representation across all levels of the governance structure and clear roles, responsibilities and delegations for each group.

Where appropriate, Project Control Groups are chaired by an independent industry expert to ensure that any potential competing priorities can be considered and resolved in a balanced way on a 'best for precinct basis'.

## Design Excellence

To support the delivery of the vision and objectives for the precinct, a Design Excellence Strategy will be prepared that will:

- Deliver transformation of the precinct through close collaboration with all stakeholders, supporting landowners to deliver projects individually and collectively, that enhance the precinct as a global cultural destination
- Incorporate First Nations peoples' perspectives in an ongoing manner, from the project vision and Master Plan to project brief preparation and through to ongoing co-design guidance to review concept and detailed design phases
- Ensure design briefs are framed by the project vision and objectives while reflecting the specific aspirations, needs and opportunities of respective stakeholders. Briefs will consider technical, planning and stakeholder inputs and encourage ambition for creative and transformative outcomes on project sites
- Ensure the procurement of a diversity of consultants across the project through a mixture of small, medium and established practices representing multiple disciplines and with First Nations representation, that respond to the unique characteristics and potential of this place and each project
- Draw on independent guidance and advice to ensure design excellence is championed and achieved



# PLACE POTENTIAL

This section provides descriptions of this place by Dr Daniele Hromek (A Reading of Country) and Sharon Veale (historic and cultural significance and opportunity), as well as an analysis of the surrounding urban context.

These important contextual references shape the Master Plan strategies embedded in this report.



# READING COUNTRY

Dr Danièle Hromek (Budawang/Yuin)

When the English arrived at the place that now holds Macquarie Street, it was part of an extraordinary cultural landscape—which still exists—but differently. The colonial tools of architecture and design have been used to effect drastic changes to the landscape of Macquarie Street over the last 234 years, and now, looking at the concrete and glass topography, one might ask, where is Country here, I can't see it? Yet Macquarie Street and its surrounds are rich with narratives that connect it both physically and imperceptibly to deep time and current cultural practice.

Country holds knowledges, Laws and lore like an eternal library. Thus, it is important to understand that Country does not only consist of that which is tangible or visible, Country is also intangible and unseeable.

Tangible elements of an environment may include the structures, buildings, geography, biodiversity, or resources, whereas intangible aspects of an environment are the traditions, stories, beliefs, ontologies, lifestyles, knowledges, ceremonies, beauty, or cultural memories that accompany a location.

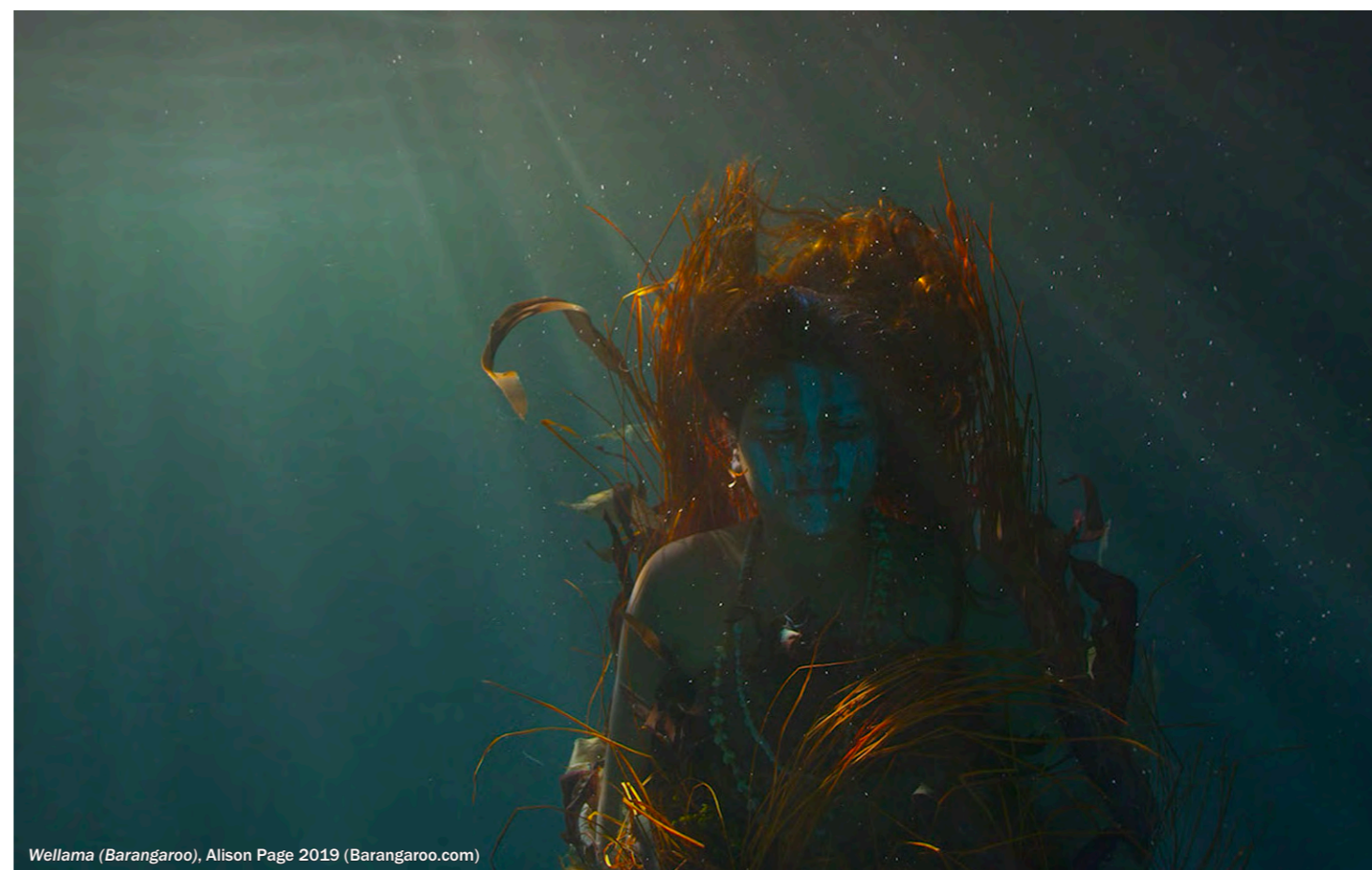
Both tangible and intangible aspects need to be considered in relation to the Macquarie Street East Precinct, particularly important for a place so heavily assaulted by colonial forces, recognising it as the first place to be impacted as such.

It is known that the first words heard by the Europeans were *wara wara!* meaning *go away spirits, go!* When they arrived, regrettably the British neglected to observe existing Laws of the land and set about clearing the site for their settlement.

Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins imagined that 'the stillness ... had then, for the first time since the creation, been interrupted by the rude sound of the labourer's axe, and the downfall of its ancient inhabitants.'

Governor Arthur Phillip indicates that clearing near Warrane (Sydney Cove) was arduous, writing about the trees, 'their magnitude was such as to render not only the felling, but the removal of them afterwards, a task of no small difficulty'.

The act of clearing trees was enough for Collins to declare that the British had taken 'possession of Nature ... in her simplest, purest garb,' however evidently they had no considerations of what they were affecting – they never stopped to ask. The trees the English were cutting down were part of a sacred site, the destruction of the trees was against the Law. In this instance it is not the imported laws so often referred to in the structures of Macquarie Street that were broken, it was the Laws of the land – the Laws, customs and protocols of the land set out in the Dreaming as a set of rules or guidelines for every entity to follow as a means of caring for Country.



Wellama (Barangaroo), Alison Page 2019 (Barangaroo.com)

Laws of the land are not changeable by humans.

Many First Nations' stories say they come from the land, the land is their Mother and that Country formed them and their ways of knowing, being and doing.

Uncle Dennis Foley describes the area of Macquarie Street as part of a large, complex ceremonial ground based on the seasons. It extends from the headland where now sits the Observatory, down through the valley called Warrane and up to where Government House is at the end of Macquarie Street.

The ceremonial grounds, an intricate series of sit down sites and ceremonial areas, went along the ridgeline to Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital and Hyde Park Barracks on Macquarie Street. As often is the case with religious institutions, the Catholic Cathedral is built on a bora ring, while Hyde Park south is on a contest ground, and there are two dance circles, one at the Observatory and the other near the Governor's house.

Uncle Max Dulumunmun Harrison says, 'Dancing is about making an indentation in the land, the sand going into the rocks, the song going into the trees, making a recording session without technology ... The land, the rocks, the trees, they all hold the indentation of song and movement ... You can feel the energy move under your feet and feel it go through your body'. It is no wonder, with the numerous bays, inlets, coves, and harbours providing options for a settlement on the east coast, that Phillip was attracted to the energy held within Warrane.

The place chosen for the settlement at the head of the cove was near the freshwater stream now concealed underground in concrete known as the Tank Stream, which 'stole silently along through a very thick wood'.

The Tank Stream rose in swampy ground on the western edge of Hyde Park and was fed by springs with groundwater trapped in the joints of the sandstone bedrock. A discernible stream first appeared just south of King Street between George and Pitt Streets, and drained most of the present-day CBD including the western side of Macquarie Street through a sandy beach into the harbour.

A creek that drained the eastern side of the precinct is also recorded running through the now-Domain and Botanical Gardens, flowing through the rocky valleys between the sandstone ridgelines into the mudflats of Woccanmagully (Farm Cove). Within this relatively small area we find saltwater, sweet or freshwater, and sour or bitterwater – swamplands, marshlands and wetlands where the salt and fresh waters meet. Yet this variety of waters is no longer detectable on Macquarie Street.



# Reading Country



A ceremony at Farm Cove [Waccanmagully] (Yoo-long erah-ba-diang) depicted by James Neagle in 1798 (NLA)

Macquarie Street runs along the ridgeline to the east of Warrane and is remarkable for being a transitional zone for two ecological communities, the Hawkesbury Sandstone Woodland (slopes of woodlands including scribbly gum—*Eucalyptus racemosa*, sweet scented wattle—*Acacia suaveolens*, hairpin banksia—*Banksia spinulosa*, flaky-barked tea-tree—*Leptospermum attenuatum* and cardwell tea-tree—*Leptospermum flavescens*) and Turpentine-Ironbark Forest (this was at the eastern limit of the Turpentine-Ironbark Forest, a woodland including blackbutt—*Eucalyptus pilularis*, Sydney red gum—*Angophora costata*, forest red gum—*Eucalyptus tereticornis*, red mahogany—*Eucalyptus resinifera* and grey ironbark—*Eucalyptus paniculate*).

The trees were up to 30 metres in height, and beneath their canopy was a grass cover with relatively minimal undercover of flowering shrubs ‘in blossoms of the most vivid and beautiful colours imaginable’ – undoubtedly kept sparse due to the cultural burning practices of the local First Nations, as observed in early colonial records.

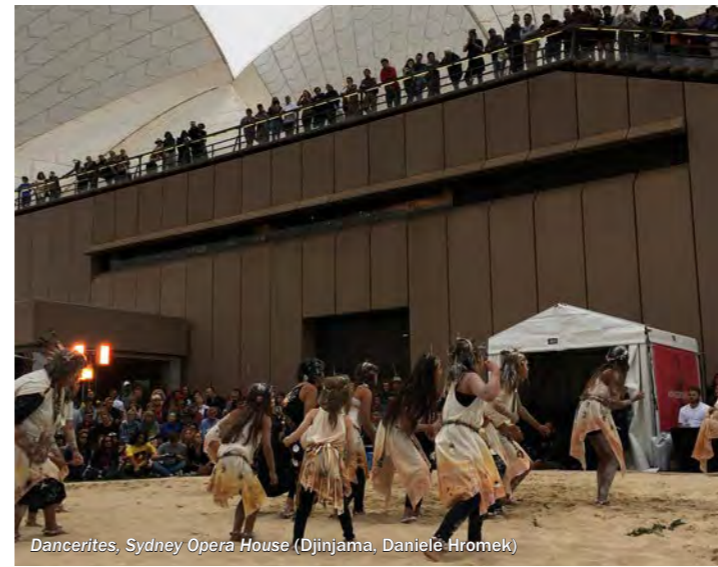


Fig tree, The Domain (Djinjama, Daniele Hromek)

Elders say trees hold memories of all that has happened in a place and are sentinals of place. Remnants and descendants of the original sacred trees are known to still live in the Macquarie Street region including old-growth forest red gums—*Eucalyptus tereticornis* on the sandstone heights above the Opera House forecourt, two blackbutt—*Eucalyptus pilularis* specimens on the eastern ridge of The Domain near Mrs Macquarie’s Road that are believed to pre-date European invasion, and swamp oak—*Casuarina Glauca* remnant trees in the Botanical Gardens.

It is imperative trees are appreciated as being part of complex communal family structures. Aunty Fran Bodkin says that plants communicate, and western science agrees. They communicate with each other through their underground fungal systems called mycorrhizal networks, sharing a collective intelligence system and maintaining interdependent relationships. They distribute sunlight, nutrients and water, send distress signals about drought and disease, and alter their behaviour when they receive these messages.

These symbiotic relationships between trees and fungi, elder trees and younger ones, act as a sort of economic exchange with sugars, nitrogen, phosphorus and other mineral nutrients as the exchange rate.



Dancerites, Sydney Opera House (Djinjama, Daniele Hromek)

Aunty Margret Campbell says under the Sydney Harbour Bridge is a grandmother tree, from whom comes the design for one of the locally constructed nawi (canoe). Grandparent trees are those with the broadest canopy that protect all underneath, and, like in human families, hold the most knowledge and story. Parent trees nurture both the young and aid the Elders while learning themselves the knowledges shared by their parents. The youth trees are the smallest, yet to understand their place and role, being nurtured by both parents and grandparents. When this family is interfered with the community becomes unbalanced.

For instance, if a grandparent is cut down the parents are left without complete understanding and protection and become unwell. Or if the youth are mowed away, the parents or grandparents have no offspring, no descendants, no future. Often grand old grandparent trees are left on their own as a feature in parklands, yet this creates lonely sick trees with no future.

**[This place] offers a unique opportunity for an honest reckoning and truth telling ... a chance to come together to celebrate diversity and embed sustainability. It is a space where the difficult stories can be told and stories can be told and heard. A space for genuine change. If not here, where?**

The Sydney Basin is geologically significant due to the almost-horizontal layers of Sydney sandstone visible along shorelines and in colonial constructions. When sandstone weathers it cracks both horizontally and vertically to form block-shaped subunits. This characteristic produces shallow sandy soils that are poor and infertile – but undeniably excellent building materials. Governor Phillip described the ‘necks of land that form the covers ... as mostly covered with timber, yet so rocky that it is not easy to comprehend how the trees could have sufficient nourishment to bring them to so considerable a magnitude’.

In addition to using the sandstone in their constructions, crushed shells from middens form the mortar lime for Sydney’s first stone buildings. The colonists collected the shells from middens in the holds of their ships which were taken back to the colony and cooked in kilns to create lime. This lime was mixed with more shell grit, creating mortar to bind together sandstone blocks. In this way modern Sydney obtained stone dwellings while First Nations shell middens were decimated.

Middens were found in just about every bay of Sydney Harbour, from Balmain to Watsons Bay, and were up to several hundred metres in length and many metres high.

A midden is a collection of shells, bones, stone tool remnants, clay and charcoal and ash from cooking fires, the remains of generations of feasting at favourite camping spots. Among other indicators, middens are markers of sustainable practice – by indicating what the last group consumed, subsequent groups could choose alternate sources of food.



# Reading Country



An Aboriginal family pauses on the road near the old St Mary's Cathedral. 1836 Austin, J.G. (SLNSW)

Clearly there have been decisions made in the Macquarie Street area that have negatively affected and continue to cause harm to First Nations. Decisions about their futures, their children, their security, their rights, their inclusiveness, their sovereignty have been made on and around Macquarie Street.

These decisions, often about rather than with First Nations peoples, are embedded into the fabric of the built environment, and cannot be disconsidered as part of any redesign process. Indeed, good design would recognise the need for spaces to object to such decisions.

Uncle Greg Simms says his great grandparents camped on the southern footprint of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. They were later moved out to La Perouse where a mission was established in 1885 after a young boy who was living in the Circular Quay Boatsheds drowned out the front of the boatsheds. George Thornton, then Protector of Aborigines, advocated for the removal of First Nations peoples from urban locations, thus using this drowning as a catalyst for establishing the NSW Aborigines Protection Board.

The Protection Board followed an isolationist and protectionist policy, meaning many Gadi people were relocated away from their traditional homelands in Warrane and surrounds to reserves and missions in the urban fringe.

While Gadi people may have been forcibly removed from Sydney's CBD, their descendants still hold cultural memories, knowledges and stories about the area.



Who wins the war, writes the history, Aretha Brown - Gumbaynggirr woman, 2020 (Aretha Brown)

First Nations peoples from across the continent now are drawn and relate to this area, specifically those from New South Wales whose lives are impacted by critical decisions being made in the Macquarie Street area.

Yet despite their removal and resultant invisibility, it is precisely the culture of the local First Peoples that can provide a differentiation between other cultural destinations and Sydney. It is their narratives, their identities, their memories, their self expressions, their ceremonies, their understandings of space that offer genuine diversity.

The Sydney Basin is one of the most diverse regions in the continent now named Australia. It has maintained its distinctive character due to the variety of topographic environments, ecologies, climates and geology.

Sydney was a managed landscape prior to non-First Nations peoples' appropriation of the land. Country holds memory for us to respond to, we need to listen and act according to the Laws of the land.

As the first place of colonial impact, and a place that continues to be severely affected, the Macquarie Street East Precinct offers a unique opportunity for an honest reckoning and truth telling.

It offers a chance to come together to celebrate diversity and embed sustainability. It is a space where the difficult stories can be told and stories can be told and heard. A space for genuine change.

If not here, where?

## Observations from Country

### Transition and Differentiation

- The site is split between two ecosystems, Hawkesbury Sandstone Woodland and Turpentine-Ironbark Forest. These have many similarities but are different. It is appropriate that each side of the site is different, remembering the similarities that unite as well
- This implies it is a good place to bring in transitions and change
- Nonetheless, it is important to settle in and do things properly. Understand the limitations of things and ensure all the learning has happened before moving on to the next stage

### Moulded by Water

- Water moulded the forms and shapes of the Sydney basin landscape in many ways, from the largest valley to the smallest crevice. Despite the land being severely changed this shaping by water is still evident
- Gadi people, particularly women, were experts in the marine environment, from using boats to sourcing foods, the water sustained them. It not only sustained them prior to colonisation, the waterways also protected them as they resisted colonial forces
- The site was bounded by a number of hydrological systems including alluvial creeks, marshes and the nearby harbour

### Seeing the Unseen

- Gadi people were re-dispossessed from Country in 1882 when colonisers used the excuse of the drowning of an Aboriginal boy who had been living in the Sydney Boatshed (now Opera House) as the catalyst for establishing the NSW Aborigines Protection Board
- Therefore those who have belonging to this area may not be seen, but still live nearby and hold knowledge about place
- The waters have been dramatically changed in this area, put underground, covered by concrete and asphalt, held back by walls, but it is a watery place nonetheless
- Be aware of male pride while creating space for unseen women to step forward

This descriptive text and the following observations come from reading Country and yarns with Elders. It is not meant to replace community consultation, rather as a means of engaging with Country and those who know Country to provide a starting point for planning and designing with Country. From these observations, recommendations, actions and design directions have been woven into the master planning for the Macquarie Street East Precinct.

### Remember the Law (of the Land)

- The site was part of a large complex ceremonial ground and sit down place based on the seasons. It extended from where the Observatory now is down through the valley that is now Circular Quay and the Tank Stream extending up to the Hospital and beyond to Hyde Park
- The Catholic Cathedral is on top of a bora ring. Hyde Park is on top of a contest ground
- When the whitefellas cut down the trees they were cutting down sacred trees, hence why they were being told to "go away" (*wharra wharra*). The destruction of those trees is against the Law of the land and First Nations law
- Be aware of continuing to break the Law – or risk conflict
- Don't let anything suffer

### Horizontal Layering

- The Sydney Basin is geologically significant due to the almost-horizontal layers of Sydney sandstone visible along shorelines and in colonial constructions
- Many parts come together to make up a complex whole; together they are stronger, but the smallest crack can allow parts to fragment off

### Adaptable Persistence

- Regardless of the poor quality soil of Sydney sandstone, ecological communities maintain their familial and community structures, including being beautiful and useful
- Despite experiencing the first impacts of colonisation, First Nations peoples in Sydney still care for Country and express culture
- The fauna in the Sydney central area is adaptable; it has habituated (and even resisted) the changes in the environment yet maintained their life patterns

### Sustainable Care

- In contrast to many other groups who needed to move substantial distances to ensure sufficient food sources, Gadi people are thought to have lived relatively sedentary lives as a result of the topography that provided abundant food sources from the ocean, harbour, rivers and bush. In order to live sustainably and ensure resources were not overused (i.e. middens), they only needed to move small distances
- A key question to ask is: "How can we live here forever?"



# HISTORY AND CULTURE

## Sharon Veale (GML Heritage)

### Contested Space

Space is complex, contested and contradictory by its very nature. The MSEP is no different. It is deeply connected to political and social relations; it is also supported by political and social relations that are producing and produced by them. Creating and adopting a unified vision, strengthening the significance of the precinct and establishing a new cultural destination requires a deep grounding, or honest reckoning, with the histories entangled in the place and the attendant memories, meanings and interpretations.

Without deep historical truths rooted in place, the precinct will lack the deep or compelling offer and authenticity that locals and visitors desire.

Within cities, urban spaces are associated with political power, decisions, and capital. These forces are regularly separated from people and their histories. What tends to erode or disappear in this is the meaning of places for people.

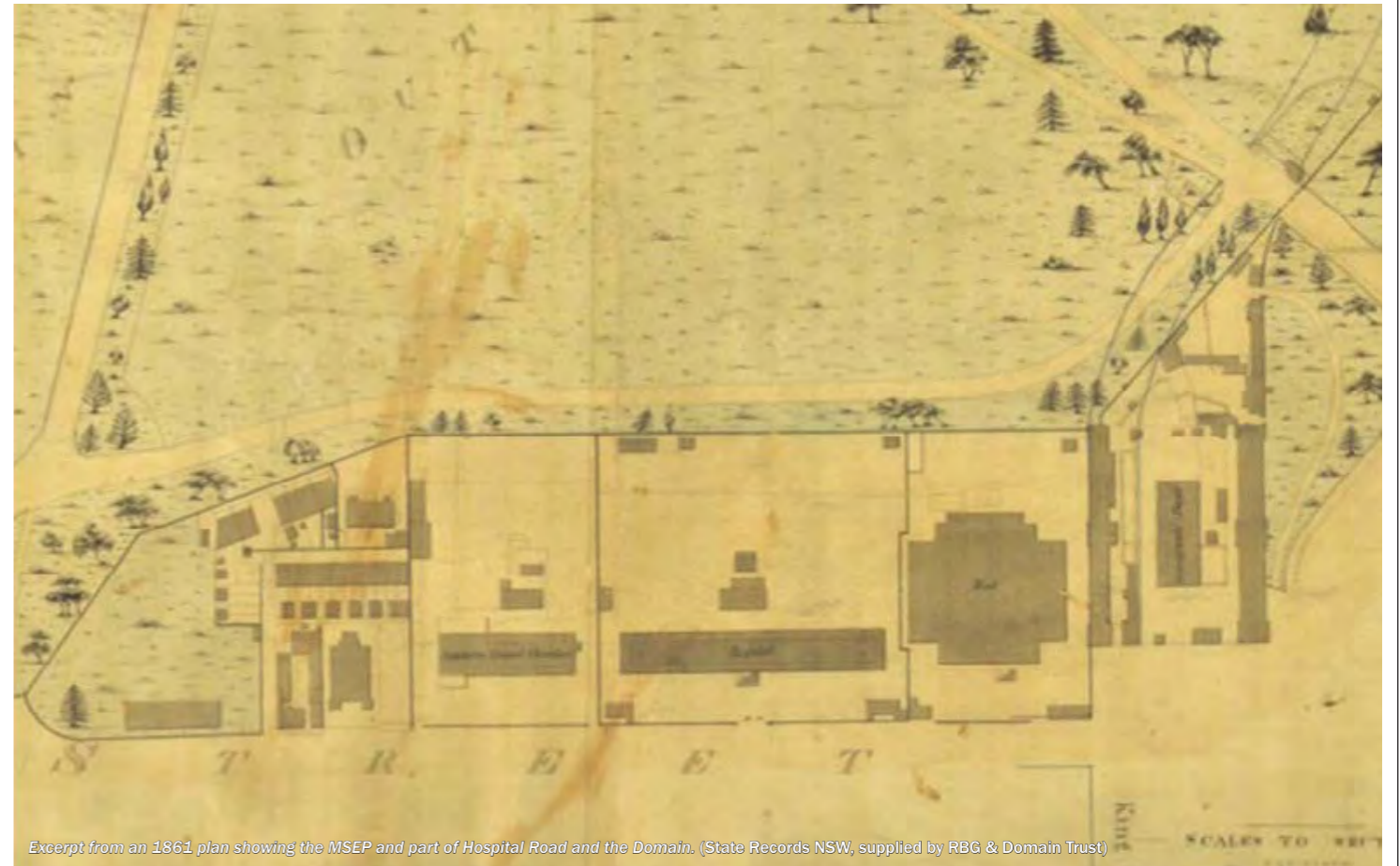
Yet embedded within this precinct there are complex forces and stories that have led to its present configuration. We could perhaps assert that the precinct and some of the issues relating to narrative, lack of recognition and permeability reflect political decisions that have shaped the place and its presentation and use through time.

### Stony Silences

Yet deeper histories based on race, gender and class are written into the spaces and places of the precinct. Such histories can be illuminating and help reclaim identities. Understanding these often difficult, silent and hidden histories offers public officials some basis for making informed political and spatial choices about the future. It also provides a setting for greater social responsibility for practitioners in the design fields.

Social and spatial design and storytelling cognisant of the contestation and controversies inherent in precincts such as Macquarie Street East are critical to the future of our city and our experience of it. For the MSEP to realise its potential we require a larger conceptual framework to support a more inclusive form of cultural citizenship and belonging. Public spaces such as the MSEP can help nurture this more profound, inclusive, and subtle sense of what it means to be Australian.

Even bitter or profoundly difficult remembering in places needs to be embedded into the flow of everyday life. A space such as the MSEP is a storehouse of collective memory. Its natural features, streets, buildings, and patterns of settlement have framed the lives of many.



Excerpt from an 1861 plan showing the MSEP and part of Hospital Road and the Domain. (State Records NSW, supplied by RBG & Domain Trust)

### Creative Imaginings

Creative strategies for reimagining the representation of our histories need to be writ large in this precinct. A different form of collaborative governance will be required, alongside a deeper commitment to scholarship and cultural identity, as this can contribute to a new form of urban art to create a heightened sense of place in the city. Social, historical and aesthetic imaginations need to be engaged to reveal and locate narratives in the historic urban landscape, which in turn can deliver enduring meanings for the city and its citizens and visitors alike.

Many of the state's cultural institutions sit within or near the MSEP. Collectively these institutions variously interpret and present the state's cultural history.

Yet these cultural institutions in NSW are not by nature collaborative. They compete for funding, donors, space and audiences. While the NSW Arts and Cultural Policy includes the aspiration for a 'whole of government' response from the cultural institutions, the fact remains that the institutions remain focused on their own collections, programs and audiences.

The state's history and heritage is often considered from the perspective of each agency's purpose, and the stories of its properties or collections. While this offers diversity and a range of perspectives on various places, subjects and collections, there is no one institution responsible for presenting the state's history. The City of Sydney employs a city historian supported by a small team that is responsible for presenting the city's history relative to the history of municipal government. Yet there is no equivalent role in the NSW public sector, e.g. a state historian, or an office of the state historian.

The various cultural institutions provide NSW residents and visitors with programs and exhibitions that do illustrate aspects of our state's history; however, there is no one agency that is responsible for 'curating' the state's overarching historical experience drawn from knowledge, resources, records and collections from across the agencies and institutions. This limits the state's presentation of history and could be an opportunity for the precinct to deliver strategically at a state or national level. In short, a new entity or governance model will be required to curate a unifying offer harnessing the individual and collective capability of the state's cultural institutions for a purpose beyond their individual offers.



# History and Culture



Macquarie Street, 1926 (Margaret Preston (AGNSW))



Sydney Museum forecourt view from Chief Secretary's Building (Hassell)



Macquarie Street, 1908 (SLNSW)



Hospital Road, before 1905 (Unknown)

## First Nations History

The ambition to interpret and present First Nations history and heritage in the precinct will also need thoughtful and respectful engagement with Aboriginal people.

There have long been calls in NSW for the establishment of a cultural institution focused on the presentation of First Nations history and heritage. Museums of History NSW recently announced that the site of First Government House and the Museum of Sydney will be reconceptualised as a First Nations cultural space. As part of that process there are many issues that will need to be worked through with the Aboriginal community given the cultural harm that has been perpetuated by government since colonisation.

Within the MSEP, the presentation of First Nations history and heritage will require an inclusive approach involving a diverse group of First Nations peoples. Given the symbolic significance of the precinct, First Nations community members will need to be involved in all aspects of planning, design and presentation. Planning and design development processes will require a culturally safe space that can explore and focus on truth-telling, respectful exchange, reconciliation, and restitution. Industry norms will need to be prised apart and challenged.

For the precinct to embody First Nations peoples' history and living culture, deeper structural change will be required to rethink the state's history and what it means to connect places that are simultaneously places of colonial authority and dispossession, as well as proud civic institutions with extraordinary records and collections. Fundamental truths around land, identity and place will need to be uncovered.

History and culture are a national concern. Gadigal Country was the location where the inchoate colonial nation and narrative was formed. Concepts of sovereignty will be challenged as will continuing the commemoration and celebration of Imperial sovereigns. Deep scholarship and expertise are required.

## The Narrative Experience

Too often history is conceived as outside of arts and culture. Despite collectively managing significant cultural heritage collections and providing services and programs, the public of NSW are not the beneficiaries of bold and exciting thinking that combines the value of the state's collections to present thematic programming that provides the long overdue bold vision and reckoning with our First Nations history and heritage and the hidden histories of race, gender and class.

The MSEP needs to be inspirational by example rather than by rhetoric. The narratives of the place for First Nations people and for all Australians need to illustrate our sense of creativity through time.

This place 'contains' a powerful urban social history that needs to nurture deeper forms of public memory and civic empathy. This precinct needs to create and shape a dramatic and 'bewildering' landscape that takes visitors through the cultural history of the nation to unravel the 'dreamwork of imperialism'.

For the precinct to realise the aspiration inherent in the statement of requirements it needs to speak truth to power. What if we told the truth about what happened – if we exposed the humanity and inhumanity written onto this place? What would happen? What would it look like?

The landform and landscape can tell a story. The geological formations and laying down of matter are profound processes. The plants and animals that the land and water support are unique. The extraordinary everyday lives, movements, beliefs and rituals that nourished Gadigal Country and their peoples' spirit and living cultural practice and values today is a powerful and compelling proposition. Respecting the rights and interests of First Nations peoples and creating places, spaces and experiences that are immersive and reflective of their knowledge, values, designs, stories, and cultural material with First Nations people as curators, guides, storytellers and visitors is essential.

Any telling or interpretation of First Nations history must be grounded in genuine engagement, and design and creation must be led by their knowledge and agency.

By its very nature, an undertaking of this kind will take time, be complex and challenging, and require the utmost dignity and respect.

Any non-First Nations peoples that may be involved in this process will need to be prepared to be instructed and take a 'back seat'. Living culture, contemporary art, story and performance can act to help us into new forms of understanding and 'seeing', offering a way to explore and interrogate the impacts and trauma of colonisation.



# History and Culture



Two men on Macquarie Street, 1908 (SLNSW)



John Webster (orator) speaking to the crowd [in The Domain], 1973 (CoS Archives)



Panoramic view taken from the steeple of St. James Church, 1871 (SLNSW)

MSEP needs perhaps to explore hybridity in the use of its places and spaces – part gallery, part community forum, part performance space, part venue and welcoming gathering space for First Nations programs.

Australia has a dark and difficult colonial history. First Nations people and culture were seen by the colonisers as objects of curiosity and collectability. Country was appropriated without treaty. Material culture was taken and is now dispersed across collecting institutions near and far. Cultural protocols were misread and misunderstood, encounters and exchange were sometimes cordial and amusing, but most often uncomfortable and too often violent.

The material, symbolic and representational activities and actions that find their foothold in the place will need to speak of the virtue of that investment to create a new 'aesthetic' of hope and healing.

We can no longer neglect or ignore the memory and history that lurks in places such as the MSEP. We need to situate these histories in place and enliven them, creating a safe space for conversations that escort locals and visitors alike to the edge of their understandings.

- What if nature was healed here?
- What if this was a place where we could have an honest reckoning – simultaneously eliciting reflection and projection for the future ahead?
- What if stony silences were unearthed?
- What if sovereignty and treaty was made here?
- What if this was a place of wonder and awe?
- What would it look like if visitors could wander into the labyrinth of our historical consciousness through the lens of the present?

## Referencing Historical and Cultural Context

The MSEP will be re-imagined as the foremost public cultural 'forum'. New understandings of Australia through dynamic, interactive and ever-changing research, knowledge, stories, collections and living cultural expressions will illuminate the past, enrich the present, and meet the challenges of the future with dynamism and creativity. This will be expressed and experienced through enlivened historic public cultural spaces wherein we are invited to interrogate and transform our collective historical consciousness.

The precinct is of outstanding heritage significance to the nation. The assemblage of spaces requires a subtlety of designed choreography where strangers can 'dance'. The precincts within the precinct need to be revealed as a series of choreographies. Together this 'dance' is one of story and emotion. It spans lifetimes, histories, generations, places made and remade, conversations, debates, celebrations, grief, hurt and wonder. It requires a delicate hand and eye with a response that eludes time but is absolutely from and of place.

The sense of discovery inherent in the connecting walkways and courtyards and within the precinct should be retained and enhanced. The intimate scale of the outdoor spaces should be preserved. Courtyards should be sheltering and inviting. Cars should be excluded from outdoor areas wherever possible and pedestrians should be prioritised.

## The Macquarie Street East Precinct will be re-imagined as Sydney's foremost public cultural 'forum'



After Dark at Hyde Park Barracks, 2022 (Hassell)



# THE FUTURE CITY

While this Master Plan is focused on sites along Macquarie Street, it is important to consider this in the broader urban context - the Sydney city centre, its parkland and harbour edges.

The city centre is undergoing tremendous renewal and revitalisation, with investment in new transport hubs and services, major cultural buildings, commercial and residential developments. The city's resident, worker and visitor population is growing - turning the centre from the 9-to-5 downtown of old into a place that is lively and engaging around the clock.

For this growing population, the streets and spaces of the city centre are being upgraded and enhanced, turning grey to green as priority is placed on pedestrians and cyclists, rather than cars. Small bars, restaurants, co-working hubs, community rooms are appearing throughout the city, signalling greater diversity, greater choice, greater enjoyment for people.

The city is also starting to reflect, to gain a greater understanding of its deep, layered and often difficult past. It is a place of lost ecologies, of disrupted social systems and cultural practices - but increasingly, these are finding their place in new plans and new developments.

The MSEP provides a significant opportunity to be a place of cultural standing that embodies the direction of the future city.

On the following pages, six aspects of the future city - those that most influence and catalyse change on Macquarie Street - are highlighted.



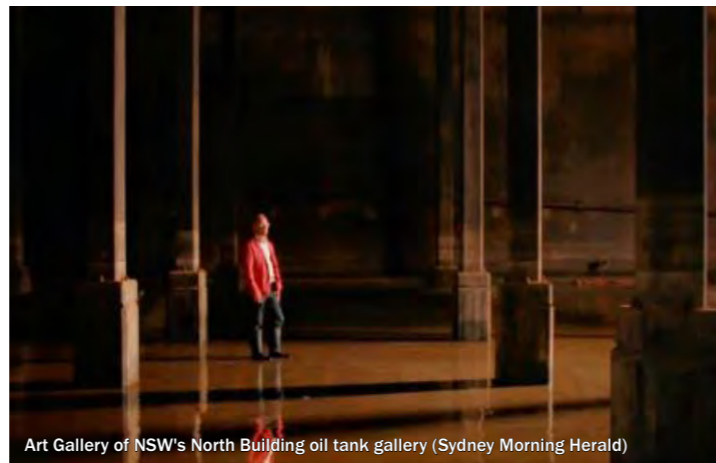
New Martin Place Metro and associated development (Metro Martin Place)



New George Street plaza (Adjaye Associates)



Public space activation (Hassell)



Art Gallery of NSW's North Building oil tank gallery (Sydney Morning Herald)



Bara, Waanyi artist Judy Watson, Bennelong Point (CoS)

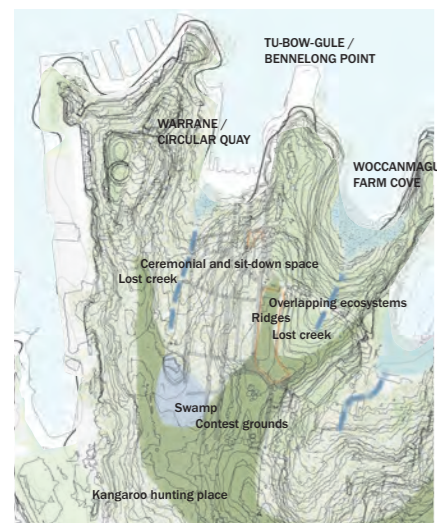


Proposed enhancement of Pitt Street (Hassell)

**Sydney is Australia's global city ... renowned not only for its spectacular natural setting, but for its booming economy, innovative mindset and fast-evolving urban sensibility.**



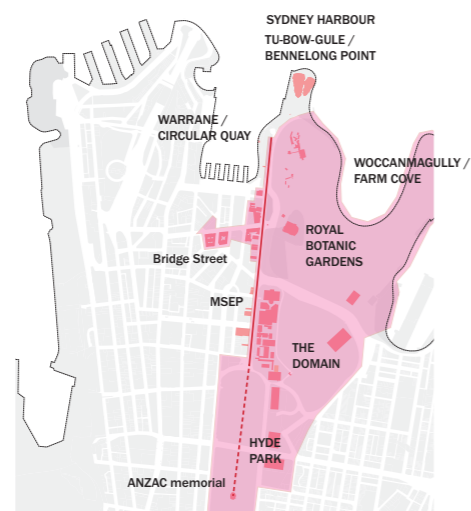
# The Future City



## Connecting with and Caring for Country

This place has been home to the Gadi people for countless generations - a place of sustenance, of movement and ritual. We know that the Traditional Owners of this place have an enduring connection with, and care for, Country that sustained life here for millennia.

Sydney is renowned for its powerful natural setting - its peninsula topography, vast harbour and lush landscape are part of its global identity. But the formation of the modern city has had immeasurable impact on this place's original systems of ecology, trade, community. This a clear challenge to the future of the city. How can it recognise, connect and care for Country? How can it support ecological and social resilience?



## The story of a complex history

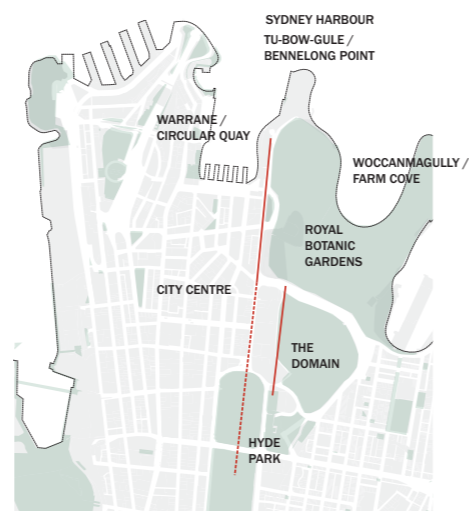
The eastern edge of the city centre contains some of Sydney's, and Australia's, most significant historic buildings, from colonial structures to the Sydney Opera House.

The recent National Heritage listing of the Governors' Domain and Civic Precinct describes this precinct as "one of Australia's premier historic city districts ... Its ensemble of buildings, parks and gardens demonstrate important events in the evolving pattern of modern Australia's history of democratic development..."<sup>1</sup>

It also recognises that this is a place with a challenging history and legacy, especially in its impact on First Nations communities. But, it is also the location of civil and political movements of the 1930s that led to a growing recognition of the discrimination and disadvantage suffered by First Nations people.

This complex and challenging history requires greater recognition and expression, and the MSEP is a vital opportunity for this.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021G00119>

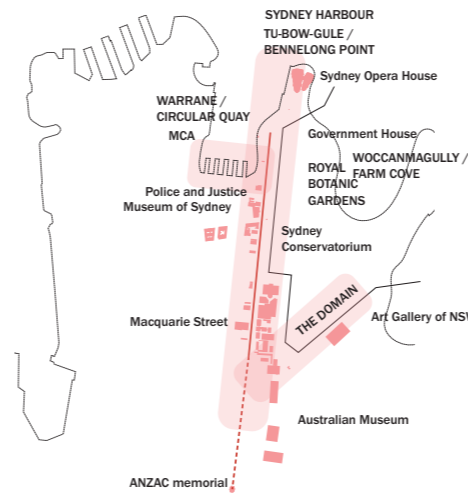


## A balance of urban and natural

As the Sydney city centre continues to grow - with new infrastructure, commercial and residential development - the city's open spaces become even more critical. The eastern parklands of the city are places of respite and relaxation for workers, residents and visitors to the city centre. They are home to bird and animal life, and cool the city on hot summer days.

From early colonial days, Macquarie Street has served as a threshold in the Sydney city centre. Captain Arthur Philip, upon finishing his role as the colony's first governor in 1792, sought to define the town limits of Sydney, with a line drawn (roughly along where Macquarie Street sits today) between the developing city and the "government's domain". This distinction of urban and natural remains, and in many cases, Macquarie Street is a disruption to east-west movement, visual connectivity and wayfinding.

Macquarie Street and its eastern precinct have the potential to integrate, rather than divide, city and park.

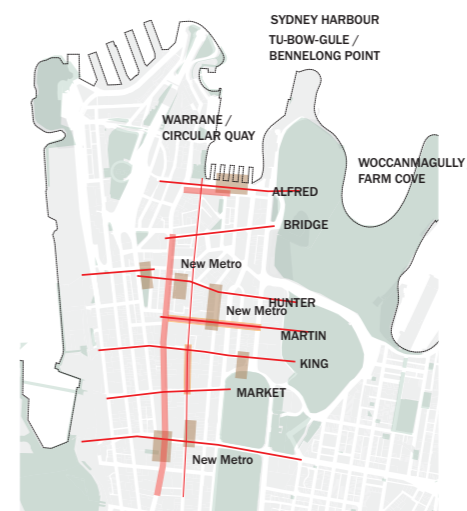


## A constellation of cultural places

Sydney's cultural reputation and appeal often rests on its lifestyle and landscape, but there is a recognition that arts and culture are intrinsic to transforming the city into a creative and cultural leader.

The Create in NSW: NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework is a 10 year strategic policy framework to make the state and city "known for its bold and exciting arts and culture that engage our community and reflect our rich diversity". Create NSW's Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+ articulates a plan to ensure all of NSW benefits from cultural infrastructure. These documents highlight the importance of innovation and leadership, accessibility and community participation, of networks, integrated planning and partnerships, as well as the role of First Nations arts, culture and Country.

Macquarie Street is home to a number of significant cultural buildings and spaces, and part of a broader constellation of cultural destinations including the Australian Museum, the Art Gallery of NSW, the Museum of Contemporary Art and Sydney Opera House.

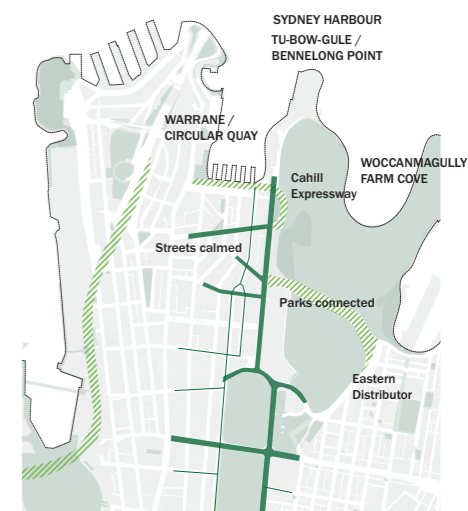


## A comprehensive connectivity network

Over the past decade, Sydney's city centre has seen significant investment in public transport, walking and cycle infrastructure - key to supporting economic and social activity in the city.

New Metro stations at Martin Place and Hunter Street will integrate with existing rail and bus services and provide rapid access across the city. Circular Quay will soon be subject to a major upgrade, improving transport accessibility and the quality and usability of the public domain. George Street has been transformed into a pedestrian boulevard, with light rail and streetscape enhancement delivered through the partnership of state and local governments.

East-west connectivity in the city is more difficult due to shorter block lengths, traffic priority at intersections, steeper topography and narrow footpaths. The enhancement of these streets - including Bridge, Hunter, King and Market - is key to connectivity between transport hubs, commercial and residential precincts, and the parkland edges of the city.



## Expanded parks, humanised streets

The accessibility, amenity and quality of public spaces has received renewed focus, as a response to the global pandemic and climatic, social and technological disruption.

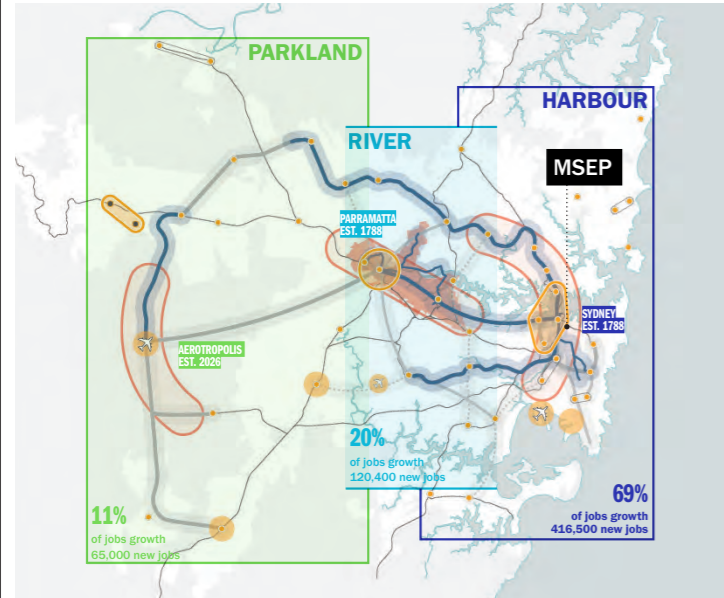
Within the city centre, new spaces are being planned and constructed as part of major renewal projects. Streets are undergoing enhancement with footpath widening, increased activation and tree planting. Major public spaces like the Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain are more valued than ever - by governments and communities alike.

Major motorways, built to bypass the city centre, impact pedestrian movement and comfort, especially at the edges of the city. There is opportunity over time to address these impacts through traffic calming, new pedestrian crossings and connections, and enhancement of parks and public spaces.

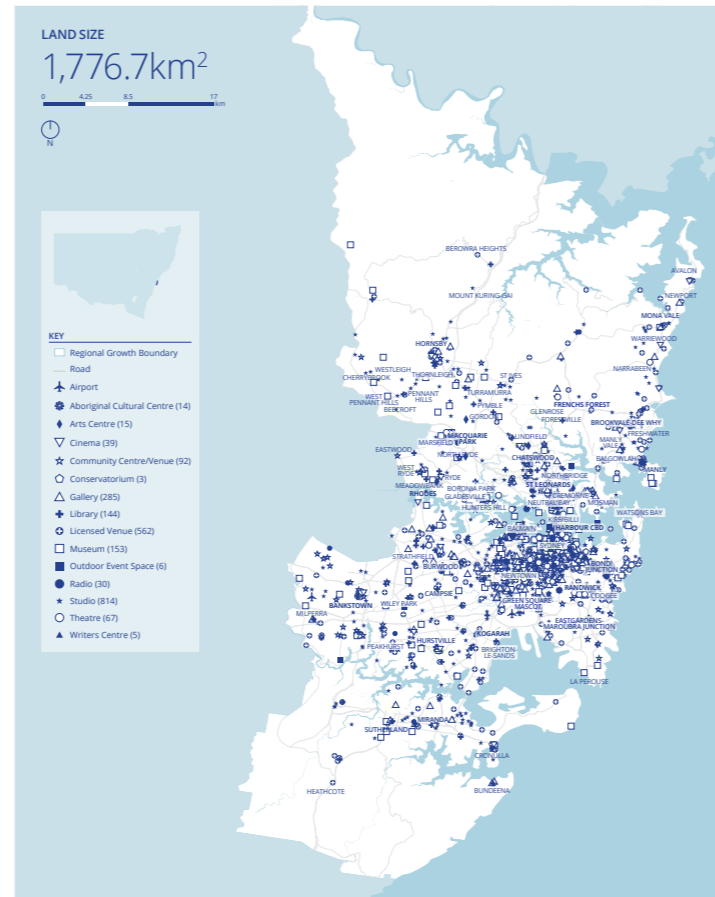
Better connectivity to and between the Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain would enhance both the accessibility and amenity of the MSEP.



# Strategic Setting



Greater Sydney Planning Context (Hassell)



Eastern Harbour City (CIP 2025+)

## A Metropolis of Three Cities

The Greater Sydney Region Plan 'A Metropolis of Three Cities' was finalised in 2018 and represents a step change in government coordination across land use, transport and infrastructure planning. It is built on a vision of three cities where most residents live within 30 minutes of their jobs, education, health facilities, services and great places by public and active transport.

MSEP is located within the "Eastern Harbour City" and the plan establishes key objectives under the themes of Infrastructure and Collaboration, Liveability, Productivity and Sustainability.

This strategy is currently being reviewed and updated to include Newcastle, the Central Coast and Wollongong as part of the Six Cities Region.

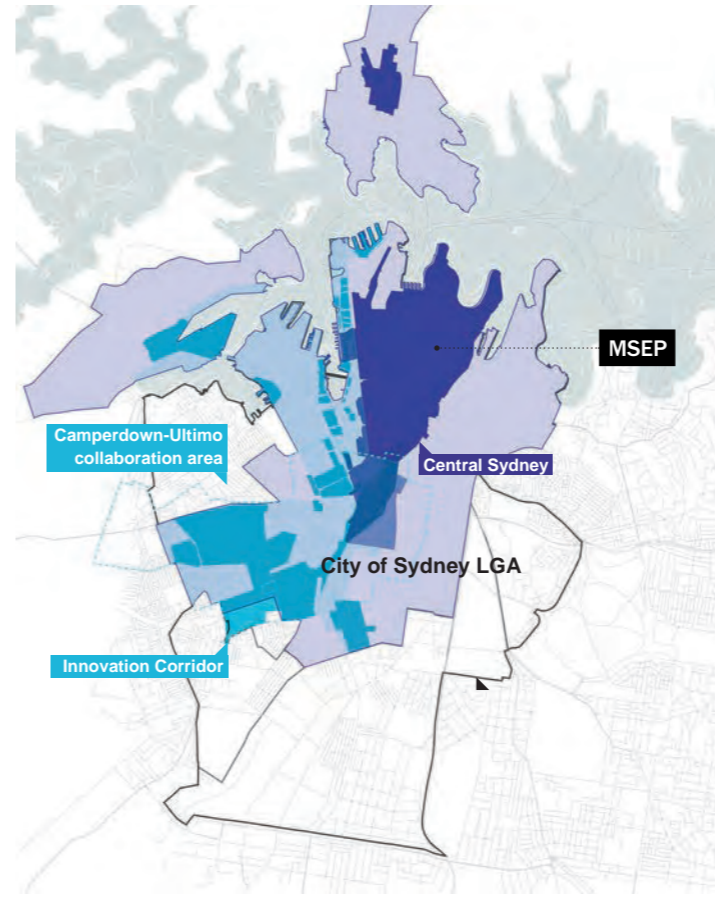
## The Eastern Harbour City

The Eastern Harbour City covers a number of inner urban local government areas.

It is a 20-year plan to manage growth in the economic, social and environmental matters to achieve the 40-year vision for Greater Sydney. It contains actions for implementing the Greater Sydney Regional Plan and is a bridge between regional and local planning.

While it doesn't identify the MSEP specifically, it describes directions for liveability that can be applied to the study area:

- Providing services and social infrastructure to meet people's changing needs
- Fostering healthy, creative, culturally rich and socially connected communities
- Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage
- Growing a stronger and more competitive Harbour CBD
- Protecting and improving the health and enjoyment of Sydney Harbour and the District's waterways
- Protecting and enhancing scenic and cultural landscapes
- Increasing urban tree canopy cover and delivering Green Grid connections
- Delivering high quality open space



Harbour City Planning Context (Hassell)

## Draft Connecting with Country

Connecting with Country is a draft framework for developing connections with Country to inform the planning, design, and delivery of built environment projects in NSW. It is intended to help project development teams – advocating ways they can respond to changes and new directions in planning policy relating to First Nations culture and heritage, as well as place-led design approaches.

MSEP is an unparalleled opportunity to acknowledge the political, legal, historical and cultural concerns of the First Nations communities. This is an opportunity of national importance, to better support a strong and vibrant First Nations culture in this significant built environment.

## Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+

The Cultural Infrastructure Plan 2025+ highlights that investment in cultural infrastructure is critical to NSW's future success by creating jobs, attracting visitors, and defining Sydney as a distinctive and appealing global city to live, work and invest.

The MSEP has significant cultural and civic institutions that can better support a culture of creativity for New South Wales. A home of a constellation of cultural attractors - a place where culture can be created, shared and enjoyed.



An amalgamated map of the past, present and future layers of Gadi Country (Hassell)

## Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 continuing the vision

Sustainable Sydney 2030 is the City's community strategic plan that sets the vision for a Green, Global and Connected City. It includes 10 strategic directions:

1. A globally competitive and innovative city
2. A leading environmental performer
3. Integrated transport for a connected city
4. A city for walking and cycling
5. A lively and engaging city centre
6. Resilient and inclusive local communities
7. A cultural and creative city
8. Housing for a diverse population
9. Sustainable development, renewal and design
10. Implementation through effective governance and partnerships

Other plans and strategies that relate to the study area include:

- Better Placed, Government Architect NSW (GANSW)
- Greener Places NSW Public Spaces Charter, GANSW
- Design Guide for Heritage, GANSW
- Aligning Movement and Place, GANSW
- Eora Journey Economic Development Plan, City of Sydney
- Barani Barrabugu/Yesterday Tomorrow, City of Sydney
- A City For All: Towards a socially just and resilient city, City of Sydney
- Sydney 24 Hour Economy Strategy, NSW Treasury
- The Sydney City Centre Access Strategy (to be superseded by Sydney City Centre Transport Strategy 2023)
- Capacity Study, City of Sydney





Place and Movement, Harbour CBD (Hassell)

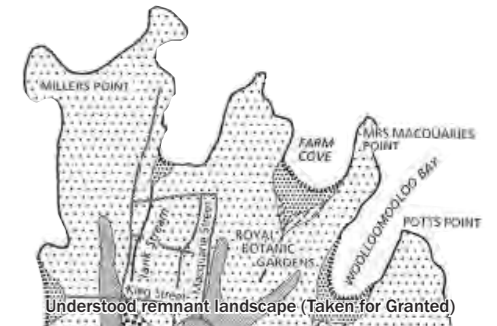
Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Place Setting

Sydney is a place defined by water - a source of sustenance for millennia, a focus for industries and transportation, the stunning setting of a global city. The contemporary city centre, with its grid of skewed streets is formed around ridges, valleys and creeklines - with Macquarie Street one of its few straight alignments.

This centre is the economic powerhouse of the city - a conglomeration of commercial, retail, entertainment and educational activity, with a growing resident population. As the city grows, so does the need to invest in better public transport (recently light rail and soon Metro), public spaces and more walkable streets.

While it is proximate to the city centre, MSEP does not have the same visitation and accessibility as other parts of the city. This is a key opportunity for the precinct - by making it easier to get to, more people will be able to use and appreciate this significant cultural asset, to understand the complex and layered story of Sydney, and of the entire nation.



The precinct sits at the overlap of two distinct vegetation ecologies.



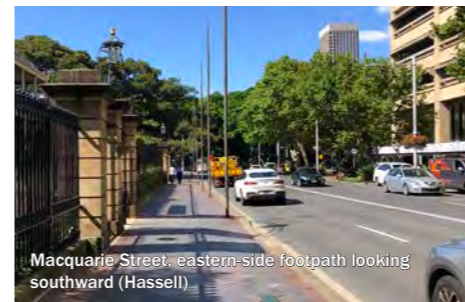
Macquarie Street is one of the city's oldest formed streets - an intentional differentiation of city and park.



The eastern parklands of the city connect people to the natural setting of the city.



Macquarie Street is one of Sydney's most important cultural, historic, heritage and civic streets.



While lined with significant heritage buildings and spaces, Macquarie Street itself lacks a distinct civic character.



The precinct has been the site of significant social protest and progress.



Running along the edge of The Domain, Hospital Road functions primarily as a service road.





Cultural Connectivity, Harbour CBD (Hassell)

Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Cultural Setting

The cultural network of the Sydney city centre is characterised by its harbour and waterfront, civic spaces and a diversity of cultural and creative destinations. Global attractors and large institutions sit alongside local performance and art spaces, neighbourhood parks and streets - unique, characterful parts of an international city.

On the eastern flank of the city centre, Macquarie Street East is at the heart of a cluster of significant cultural buildings and spaces, as well as the Royal Botanic Gardens, The Domain and Hyde Park. This place is the intersection of First Nations, colonial, 20th century and contemporary meaning; a place of immense political, social and civic value.

As Macquarie Street extends northwards, it meets the harbour at the threshold of the Sydney Opera House, the city's best recognised cultural icon - and here also, will join Yananurala, a nine-kilometre walk that highlights First Nations history and culture at places along the harbour foreshore.

## Cultural Venues/Institutions

1. Customs House
2. Police and Justice Museum
3. Museum of Sydney
4. The State Library of NSW
5. NSW Parliament
6. Nightingale Museum
7. The Mint
8. Hyde Park Barracks
9. Australian Museum
10. Art Gallery of NSW
11. Royal Botanic Gardens Centre
12. Calyx
13. Sydney Conservatorium of Music
14. Sydney Opera House
15. Museum of Contemporary Art
16. Argyle Square and Argyle Cut
17. Sydney Observatory
18. Barangaroo Cultural Space
19. Sydney Theatre Company
20. Walsh Bay Arts Precinct
21. Australian Design Centre
22. Sydney Aquarium and Wild Life World
23. Australian National Maritime Museum
24. Powerhouse Ultimo
25. Darling Harbour Live

## Cultural Spaces (Outdoor)

26. Royal Botanic Gardens
27. First Fleet Steps
28. The Domain
29. Barangaroo
30. Cockle Bay
31. Tumbalong Park



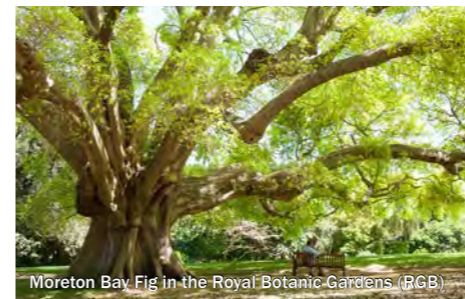
Queen's Square. c.1930 (SLNSW)

Historic public buildings and spaces provide cultural substance and bring to life the important stories and memories of this place.



Invasion Day Rally, 2016 (unknown)

Spaces of social substance nurture deeper forms of cultural and social value - essential cultural entities that offer local and civic gathering spaces.



Moreton Bay Fig in the Royal Botanic Gardens (RGB)

Open spaces are the common ground of the city - with natural character and urban identity informing the uniqueness of a place.



Sydney Festival, 2017 (Tourism NSW)

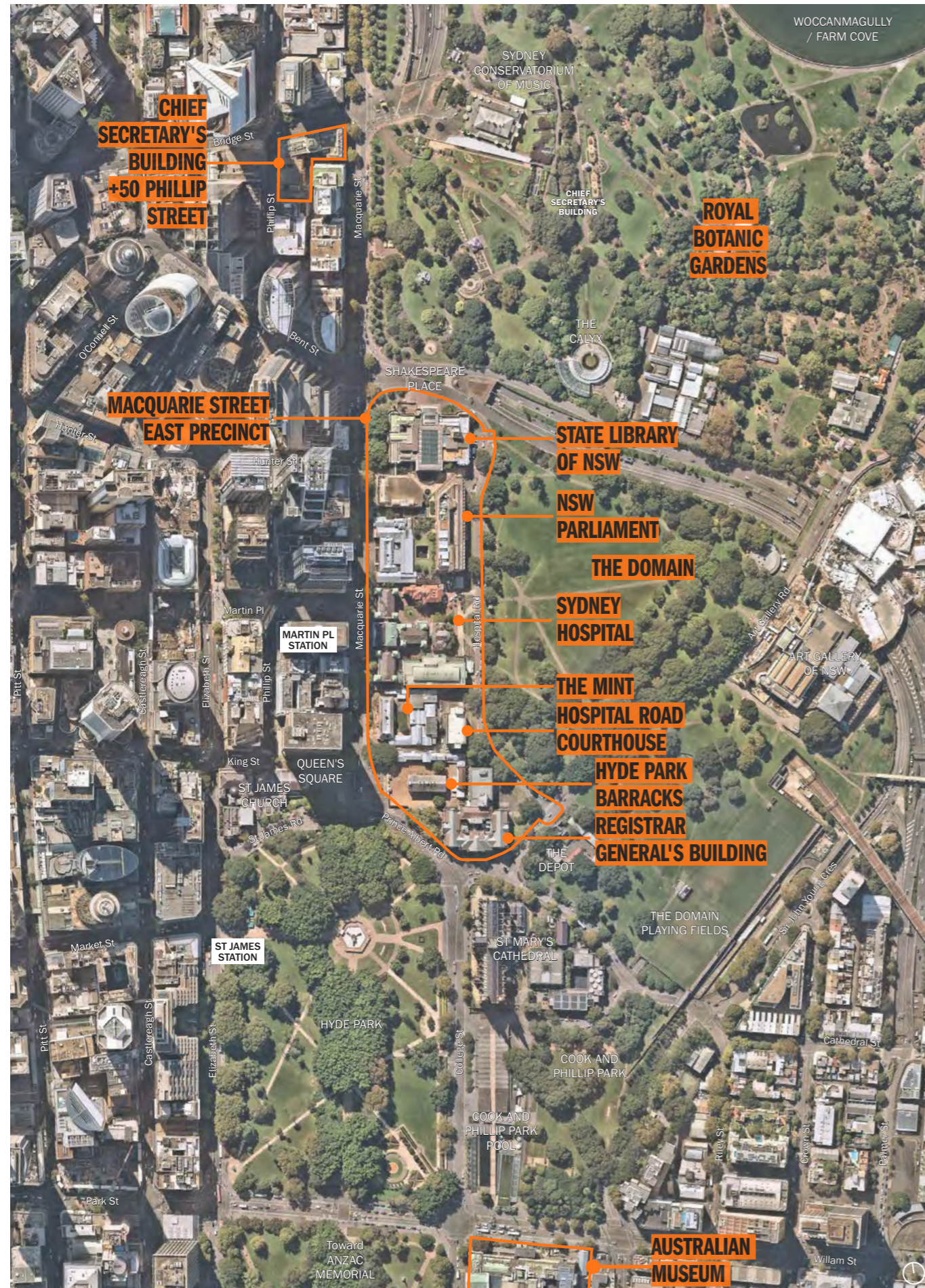
Cultural buildings, art galleries and theatres, educational spaces, festivals and events provide cultural substance and diversity to the public experience of places.



Who Goes here? Fiona Hall; Hyde Park Barracks 2021 (MHNSW)

Variety and character of local experiences are essential in retaining and enriching the dramatic and bewildering urban landscape of MSEP and the city.





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Precinct Setting

The Macquarie Street East Precinct is home to an incredible collection of historic public buildings and facilities. This built fabric offers an extraordinary living record of early colonial Australia, forming a civic spine along the eastern edge of the CBD with a unique mixture of building uses.

## State Library of NSW

The State Library of NSW is the oldest library in Australia with a history dating back to 1826. The Library receives just under a million visitors per year and holds more than six million items in its internationally significant collections which document the life and history of Australia, Oceania and the world beyond.

The State Library of NSW provides a wide variety of research, educational, informational and entertainment services to groups and individuals across the city, across the State and across the world. Extensive programmes of exhibitions, lectures, events and other public activities complement the central work of the Library and its reading rooms. In addition, venue hire and catering facilities are offered. The Library contains a rooftop bar which is accessible from the Hospital Road loading dock, and a café which opens onto Hunter Lane.

The Library comprises two main buildings. The Mitchell Building, constructed in 1907 and facing onto Shakespeare Place, and the Macquarie Street Building, constructed in 1988 and next to the Parliament. Current and recent master planning works have focused on turning previously inaccessible parts of the heritage building over to public use. The Library is currently completing the following projects:

- Accessibility improvements
- Extension of the observation deck at the Library Bar
- Construction of a 344 seat auditorium and Photographic Gallery - due to open in April 2023

## NSW Parliament

The Parliament of NSW is the first and oldest Parliament in Australia. The Parliament is a modern, dynamic working legislature open to the public, with a rich legacy of historic and democratic traditions. More than the sum of its physical infrastructure, the Parliament is a meeting place for the elected representatives of New South Wales who make decisions about the laws that govern the State; it provides a voice for citizens of all backgrounds and beliefs, and a window into the heart of democracy.

The Parliament is managed by the Presiding Officers and is a complex of buildings that house the Legislative Council, the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary administration. Parliament is accessible from both Macquarie Street and Hospital Road, and due to its use is subject to strict protective security requirements. 'The Peoples House' holds a significant artwork collection and provides exhibition spaces, events and functions, restaurants and café along with an expanding education and tours program.

The colony's Rum Hospital constructed in 1816 sits on the land of the Gadi peoples. From its early beginnings as the Principal Surgeon's quarters of the General Hospital, the building transformed into the home of the Parliament of New South Wales in 1829.

The building has adapted to changing times and expectations, enduring many challenges. The oldest public building in the city of Sydney and an enduring example of colonial Georgian architecture, New South Wales Parliament House 'The Peoples House' is notable for having continuously operated as a working parliament through the past two centuries, helping to shape the society we are today.

The 1980s rejuvenation including the addition of a modern 'tower block', finally put to bed the ongoing debate around whether the Parliament ought to be redevelped, rebuilt, or even relocated – instead choosing to focus on its preservation and adaptation. Nevertheless, the fact remains that these renovations, however extensive and meaningful, were conducted 40 years ago. Over the ensuing decades, New South Wales Parliament House has been subject to the wear and tear of age, weather and climate, all of which has impacted on its structure and fabric. The need has arisen for a major refresh, expansion of space and urgent heritage restoration.

The Parliament is currently delivering the following projects:

- Critical works and heritage restoration of the 'Rum Hospital' including the Macquarie Street façade in readiness for the Bicentenary in October 2024
- Developing a program of Bicentenary conservation projects, including restoration of the Macquarie Street façade and internal building works
- Diversion of a major water main under Macquarie Street
- An internal wayfinding and signage works



# Precinct Setting

## Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital

Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital is Australia's first hospital and dates from the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. Initially in Millers Point, the Hospital relocated to its present site on Macquarie Street in 1811.

Today, Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital offers quality health care to city residents, workers, visitors and tourists and its specialist services attract patients from all over NSW, inter-state and overseas. The Hospitals clinical services include Eyes, Hands and General Medicine as well as the Peri-Operative Suite and Emergency Department.

The Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital complex consists of six historic buildings of high heritage significance:

- The North, Administration, Centre and South Blocks (1879-92), presenting as a unified symmetrical composition to the street
- The Nightingale Wing (1869)
- The Worrall Building (or Chapel Wing) (c1892)

These older buildings form a public courtyard space, containing a memorial fountain, seating and landscape. This space opens out towards The Domain and connects to Macquarie Street via a narrow walkway between the North and Administration Blocks.

The Clinical Services Building (c.1983) is the seventh key building of the complex, located on the south-eastern corner of the site.

## The Mint & Hyde Park Barracks

Museums of History NSW (MHNSW) care for 12 of the most important historic houses, gardens and museums in NSW on behalf of the people of NSW. Two of these significant sites, the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Hyde Park Barracks and The Mint and its associated buildings are located within the MSEP.

Hyde Park Barracks - Originally built to house convicts in 1817, it has also served as an immigration depot, asylum, law courts and government offices. Today it is a cutting-edge museum set in walled grounds, featuring an immersive digital experience and is available for events hire.

The Mint – The building seen on Macquarie Street was originally the south wing of the 'Rum Hospital' for convicts, and subsequently for military and later general public. With the discovery of Gold in NSW in 1851 the site was re-established as the Sydney Royal Mint with new buildings at the rear for processing gold coins. Today, the site houses MHNSW's head office, event spaces and café, and is also home to the Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection.

## Hospital Road Courthouse

The Hospital Road Court Complex is an integral part of the NSW Supreme Court. The multi-storey building was originally designed in 1956 by Peddle Thorp and Walker architects and currently has six operational civil court rooms in continuous use and facilities for eight Supreme Court judges and support staff. Presently five judges are located in the building. Court locations require a strong security perimeter and controls.

## Registrar General's Building

The Registrar General's Building, also known as the Land Titles Office, is a heritage-listed building. The East, South and West Wings of the Registrar General's Building were constructed in 1913 with the north wing added in 1956 and the Records Annexe in 1963.

Since the early 20th century, the building has been a repository for public records, including records of births, deaths, marriages and land titles. Today, the building is partially occupied by government tenants, with an intention to vacate the building to allow for its adaptation and reuse.

As part of the early works projects for the MSEP, work has already commenced to explore changes to the Registrar General's Building and public domain. These works include demolition of the North Wing and Records Annexe to reveal the original form and fabric of the Registrar General's Building and the creation of a temporary public plaza.

## Chief Secretary's Building + 50 Phillip Street

Built in two stages (1873-1896), the Heritage listed Chief Secretary's Building is a five-storey public building designed by colonial Architect James Barnet and later Walter Liberty Vernon. Originally constructed for the NSW Government Chief Secretary offices and the Executive Council Chambers, the building has played a significant role in the formation of colonial and modern Australia. The office of Henry Parkes remains intact within the building.

The building later housed the Aborigines Welfare Board (1909-1969) which had a wide-ranging control over the lives of First Nations peoples, including the power to remove First Nations children from their families and place them into care under a policy of 'assimilation'.

Currently underutilised, the Chief Secretary's Building is an important opportunity to adapt a historically and culturally significant building, one that sits in a highly prominent location in the city centre. Continuation of its public occupation and access is considered important.

PDNSW will explore opportunities to integrate the adjoining 50 Phillip St building into the future adaptive reuse or rejuvenation of the Chief Secretary's Building.

## The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust

The Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain is 64 hectares of heritage listed open space in the heart of the city. It includes a botanical garden and offers space for city residents, workers and visitors to workout, rest and picnic. It is a popular event venue with an extensive summer events program and public recreation area.

The Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain hold events all year round and in various locations within the site. Peak season is from October 2022 to April 2023 where major events up to 28,000-person capacity are held on weekends. During peak season the performance stage is built in September and left in place until April.

## Australian Museum

Established in 1827 with the aim of procuring "rare and curious specimens of Natural History" the Australian Museum is Australia's first public museum. The Australian Museum opened its doors to the public in 1857 with just one exhibition gallery. Since then, the site has been modified many times to accommodate the growing needs of exhibitions, collections and staff. In 2007 a new wing to the east of the site was built to house scientific staff and collections.

Today the Australian Museum continues its dual roles in research and education. It houses an internationally recognised collection of over 22 million cultural and scientific objects. Through exhibitions and other public programs, the Australian Museum continues to inform and amaze generations of visitors about the unique fauna and cultures of Australia and the Pacific.

In 2020/21, the Australian Museum undertook 'Project Discover' a major internal renovation of the Australian Museum's public spaces which has received many heritage and interior architecture design awards. Over the next three years the Australian Museum will deliver a new Minerals Gallery and a new Pasifika Gallery.

The Australian Museum's updated Master Plan aims to build a new Eastern Wing to the Museum effectively doubling public floorspace.



# VISION AND OBJECTIVES

This section sets out the overarching vision and objectives for the Macquarie Street East Precinct.



Visualisation of Martin Place to Art Gallery of NSW link via Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital (Hassell)



# PRECINCT OPPORTUNITY

The potential of MSEP is to be a place of ecological, cultural and historical meaning. With a distinct identity within Sydney's city fabric it will become one of the world's most significant cultural and civic precincts.

Reflections demonstrate how the occupation, meaning and impact of places can change over time. The Reading of Country by Dr Danièle Hromek provides an insight into the original landforms and landscapes of the precinct, its pre-colonial history and post-colonial impacts. Much of this is hidden from our contemporary view of this place - and requires revelation, honest recognition and space for healing.

Sharon Veale recognises the powerful urban social history of this place, as the foundation of the contemporary city but one that "needs to nurture deeper forms of public memory and civic empathy", including a reckoning with the complex and sometimes brutal history of this place. Our appreciation of history evolves, as we understand more deeply the impacts - both positive and negative - of historic figures, events and actions.

So too, the city itself is a continually evolving system. MSEP sits in a unique position within the city centre: at the overlap of two ecosystems, at the threshold of urban and natural spaces, and at the centre of cultural, community and movement systems. It is witness to significant investment in the future of the city, from new Metro stations and cultural anchors to enhanced streetscapes and public spaces.

These projects will make Sydney a more liveable and enjoyable city for its community, while supporting the ambition of Sydney becoming a cultural and creative city of global prominence.

Within their 2020 Review of the Macquarie Street East Precinct, Paul Keating and Lucy Turnbull highlighted the opportunity of the year 2038 as a target for meaningful change:

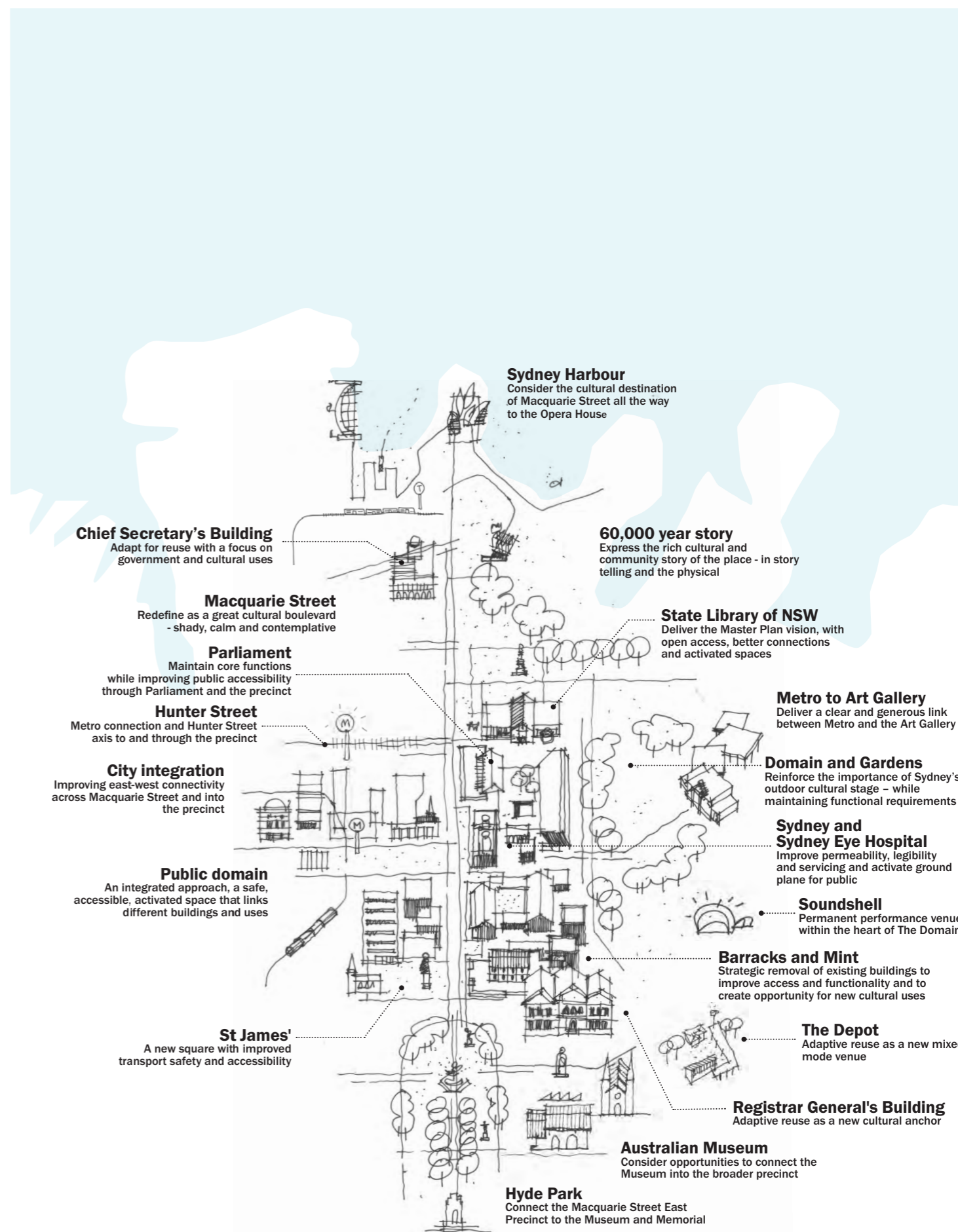
*Starting work now will also lay the groundwork for longer term projects to improve and enliven this area, in preparation for the 250th anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet on the 26th of January 1788. We acknowledge that the 26th of January is a contested date for many Australians. However, we are optimistic that by 2038, Australians will have agreed on a pathway to recognition of First Nations peoples in our Constitution, and that the celebration at MSEP of our shared history will be part of a genuine healing process.*

Recognising that a Master Plan of this scale and complexity will typically operate within a 15-20 year timeframe - a target date of 2038 will enable key projects to be planned, designed and delivered, including more ambitious cultural and civic building projects.

This timeframe will accommodate a comprehensive process of engagement, particularly with First Nations peoples, as part of the future narrative, spaces and governance of the precinct.

Considering how this place and its spatial and social contexts might be in 2038, the place opportunity for MSEP envisages:

- New cultural anchors within and around the precinct, elevating the cultural and creative presence of Sydney and driving increased visitation
- Better integration with the city centre, easier access into and through the precinct
- A more people-focused, pedestrian-priority city centre, with green streets, more open space and improved public transport
- Greater activation of city spaces and places, especially a growing and diversifying nighttime and weekend economy
- Retention and realisation of important civic and community functions in the precinct, while accommodating new layers of activity, new events and installations
- Building on the recent national heritage listing of the Governors' Domain and Civic Precinct, a celebration of the layered historic meaning of this place
- An honest reckoning with all aspects of this history, the impacts of decisions and actions
- Strong First Nations spatial presence within the precinct and broader city, with First Nations participation as central to the planning, design and governance of this significant place





# PRECINCT VISION

## A City-shaping Cultural Destination

Steeped in history, Macquarie Street East will tell the cultural, civic and heritage story of Sydney to today's global audience.

Established institutions in heritage-listed buildings alongside new cultural attractions will deliver experiences across places and spaces that entertain, educate and surprise, by day and night.

Open and accessible, MSEP will embrace and enhance the city's arts and cultural offer.

## Macquarie Street East Precinct

Where Sydney's rich First Nations and modern histories come to life and arts and culture thrive. Be Educated. Be Entertained. Be Surprised.

The Macquarie Street East Precinct will:

- Encourage exploration
- Visibly connect with Country
- Bring the inside out
- Educate in delightful ways
- Stimulate the senses - look, touch, feel
- Be an artist's stage
- Open doors to institutions
- Provide places to meet and be entertained





# PRECINCT OBJECTIVES



## Tell the deep histories of this place

Five objectives highlight the strategic opportunities of the precinct - and are used to inform the master planning and design process. These objectives are supported by a range of criteria, which outline more specific, desired outcomes within the precinct. The criteria are used to guide and test a variety of design studies for key buildings and spaces.

While this is a place of a richly layered and complex history, it is the colonial character and narrative that predominates. There are many other stories in this place - of lost landscapes and waterways, of social disruption and advancement, of community cohesion and conflict.

The precinct is an unparalleled opportunity to acknowledge the political, legal, historical and cultural concerns of the First Nations communities. This can be a place of truth telling and healing, within buildings and spaces of the precinct, in its design, operation and governance. This is an opportunity of national importance, one that requires thoughtful, un rushed decision making and engagement.



## Deliver a cultural destination of global standing

The precinct is part of the state government's vision for Sydney as a world-leading cultural and creative city. It is at the centre of a constellation of cultural attractors, from the Opera House to ANZAC Memorial, from the Museum of Contemporary Art to the Art Gallery of NSW.

The precinct has significant cultural and civic institutions, each undergoing its own program of revitalisation - and also has the capacity to accommodate new cultural and civic buildings, spaces and activities.

Like other global exemplars (Museum Mile and Exhibition Road), a successful cultural precinct needs a diversity of institutions, a rolling program of events and activations, and a public realm that creates a sense of cohesion and connectivity.



## Create a welcoming, inclusive place for all

A world-leading precinct is also one that engages with and creates a platform for its community. Big cultural anchors need to be complemented with smaller enterprises, fringe events, start-ups, creativity and youth. Macquarie Street is Sydney's heartland of democracy, of protest and participation. It houses important public buildings and functions.

The precinct needs to maintain an authentic sense of freedom, inclusiveness, welcome and diversity - a "publicness" that is for all people to experience and enjoy.

Safe, accessible and walkable, activated public spaces within the precinct are key to this objective. Equally, ease of access into and through the precinct is an important way to bring people to, and to activate, the precinct around the clock.

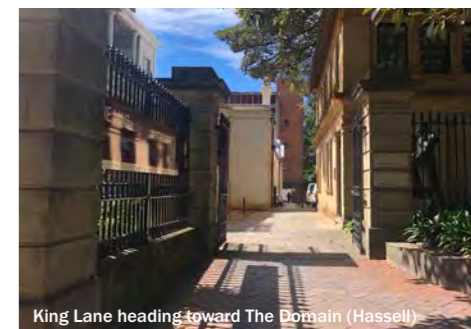


## Adapt and activate buildings and spaces

The precinct houses a range of functions, as well as a diversity of buildings - many of which have exceptional heritage significance. There is a history of buildings being adapted for different uses as well as well-established civic and cultural functions.

The precinct has a number of under-utilised buildings and spaces, notably the Registrar General's and Chief Secretary's Buildings. There is also a broader opportunity to explore how uses may change and buildings adapt over the next 20-30 years.

Adaptation and activation of buildings involves a range of considerations, from alignment with strategic objectives, to the detailed assessment of heritage impacts, servicing and logistical requirements, and the potential for activation of the precinct.



## Create an integrated and connected urban precinct

The Master Plan for the MSEP sets out a cohesive, coordinated framework with the opportunity to accommodate a world-leading cultural destination, one that is integrated with its surrounding urban and natural context. The interface with surrounding streets and parks, integration with the city's transport and movement networks are key considerations.

While a Master Plan illustrates a spatial outcome, it can also support strategic and operational solutions for the precinct - for instance, the ability of different institutions to share facilities, infrastructure and servicing areas.

A key opportunity is to develop a precinct-wide approach to planning, design and governance, including the meaningful participation of First Nations people during every step in these processes.



# PRECINCT EXPERIENCE

Through its buildings, spaces and activities, the precinct will be a place of rich experiences and meanings.



**Immersed in creativity and culture**



**The revelation of many stories**



**Cultural spaces that are accessible for all**



**Moments of surprise and discovery**



**The threshold of city and parkland**



**A calendar of events and activations**



**Institutions that are open and welcoming**



**Come any time, any day, any season**



**Spaces to dwell, reflect and wonder**



**Something new every time I visit**



**Connecting to Country, to Sydney, to Australia**



**Easy to access, reasons to stay**



# PRECINCT ANALYSIS

This section analyses the natural, spatial, functional, movement and operational aspects of the precinct - and identifies key opportunities to deliver on the precinct vision.

Visualisation of the transformation of Hospital Place (Arterra)







Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# PRECINCT ANALYSIS

The precinct is located between Macquarie Street (a ridge-line street at the eastern edge of the Sydney CBD) and Hospital Road, at the edge of The Domain, with the Royal Botanic Gardens to its north and Hyde Park to its south. It is a complex place of history and heritage, culture and nature, of learning, governance, and community participation and social agency - an important shared, and fundamentally public, place.

The MSEP is a key contributor to the fabric and life of the city of Sydney, and through its cultural and historic functions, the state and nation. However, consideration of various factors limiting the precinct's efficacy within the city and beyond is crucial to its future public significance and use.



Man on a white horse on Macquarie Street, c1850 by Joseph Fowles (SLNSW)



View showing women waiting by kerb at bus stop on Macquarie Street East, c1940 (CoS Archives)

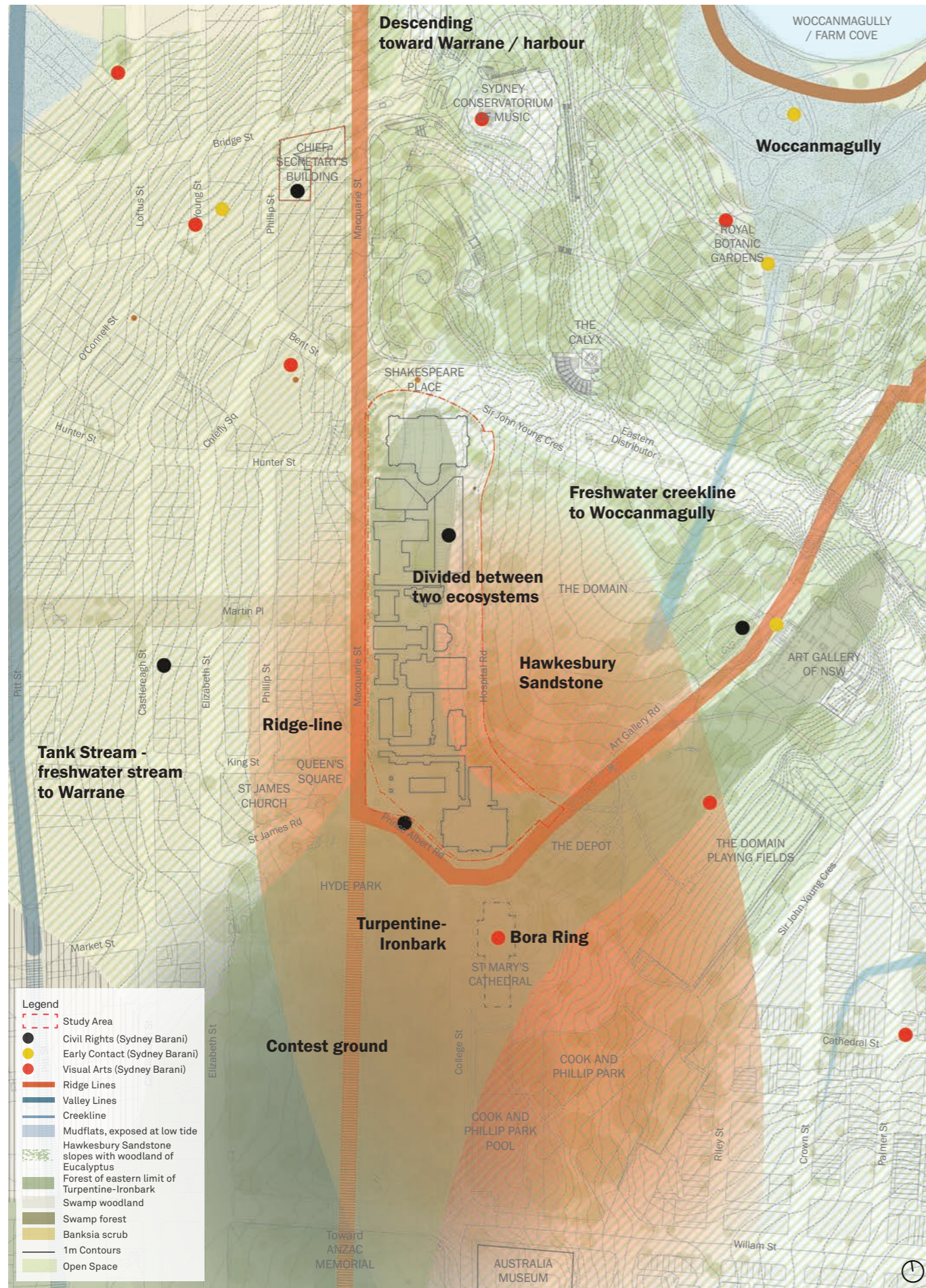


Crowds gather for a Climate Action protest, Sydney 2017 (Sydney Morning Herald)

## Key opportunities

- Acknowledge the shared histories of this place to lay the groundwork for a future spaces of co-authorship, governance, and repatriation
- Reinforce the precinct's key contribution to the cultural experience of the city
- Bring the character of the parkland and lost landscape back into the precinct
- Create more accessible east-west connections to and through the precinct
- Better engage the eastern frontage of the precinct and Hospital Road to The Domain
- Re-establish elements of the original ecological communities within the public realm
- Break down the precinct into blocks that align with the city grid to promote visual and physical connections
- Link the precinct with surrounding public transport and cultural anchors





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# A place at the overlap of two ecosystems

The precinct is located on Gadi country; a place that sustained and was cared for by the Gadigal/Gadigalieon people for millennia. The British establishment of a convict outpost in this place, including the occupation and appropriation of lands, has had far-reaching and devastating impacts on the Gadi people.

Through acknowledging the shared histories of this place, the MSEP has the opportunity to lay the groundwork for a future which embraces all Australians, a future based on reparation, mutual respect, and a shared responsibility for our land.

The precinct requires a cohesive and integral approach to heritage and culture and should be considered through a First Nations perspective as a place of deep cultural and historic meaning, one that requires new ways of planning, design and governance. This strategy could take many forms and have many outcomes - to be defined through comprehensive engagement with First Nations people.



Crowds gather in The Domain for the Invasion Day Rally, 2019 (Hassell)

The site was part of a large complex ceremonial ground, adjacent to a contest ground - and now, protests for other causes walk through.



De La Ville De Sydney, 1802 (SLNSW)



Sydney from Dawes Point, 1821, Richard Read (SLNSW)

The Sydney Basin is geologically significant due to the almost-horizontal layers of Sydney sandstone visible along shorelines and in the many colonial constructions within the precinct.

It is a place moulded by water, despite the land being severely changed this shaping by water is still evident.



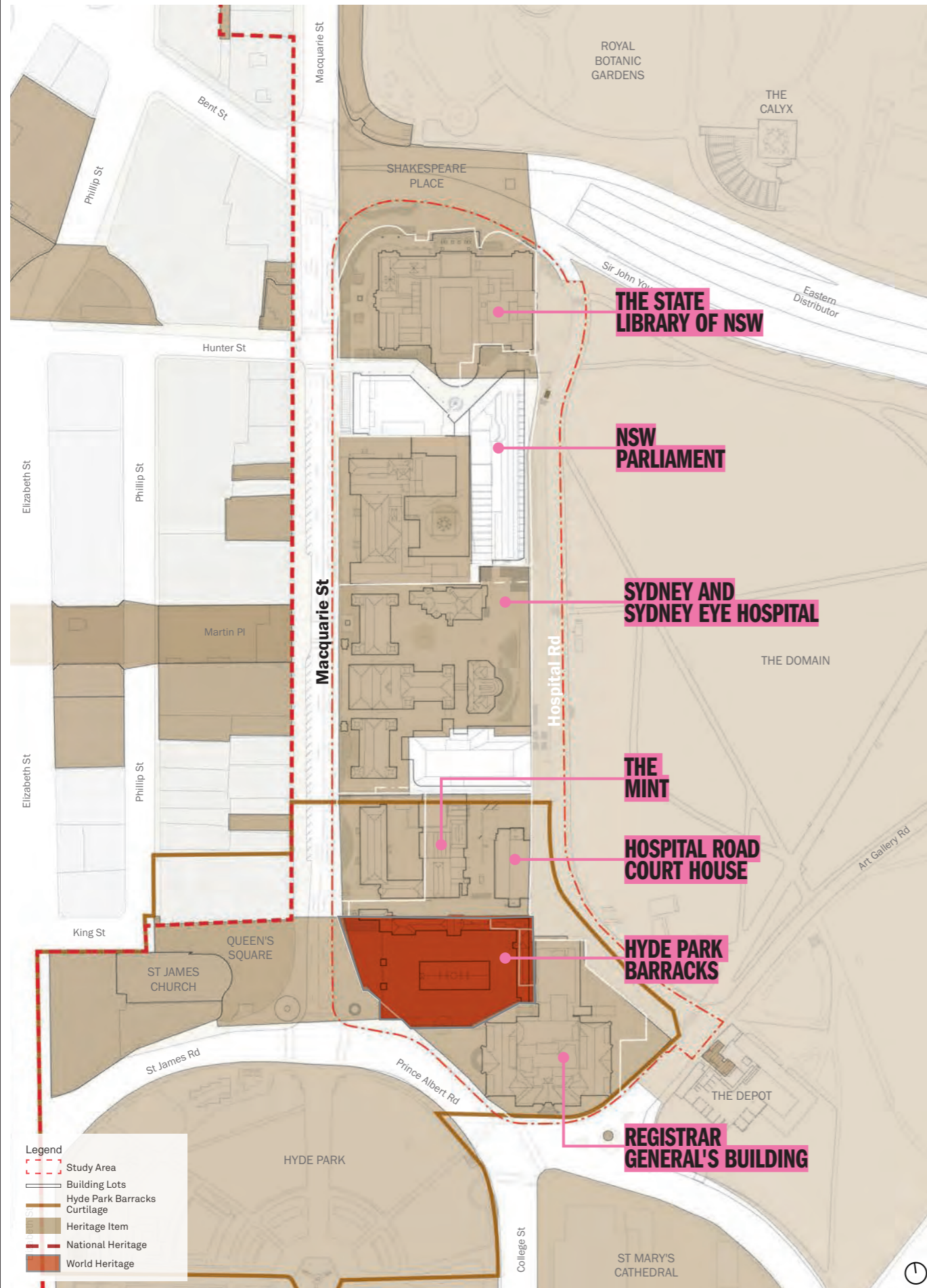
Toward Mrs Macquarie's Chair (Taken for Granted)

The site is split between two ecosystems: Hawkesbury Sandstone Woodland and Turpentine-Ironbark Forest; a divide still experienced today between city and landscape.

## Key opportunities

- An Indigenous Interpretation Strategy that covers the whole precinct and considers how to tell the longer and more difficult stories of place
- A Renaming Strategy that reflects place rather than people, not just for the overarching precinct but also individual places and projects in the precinct
- A rebalancing of the public art and statues to include minority faces and voices
- An Inclusion Strategy to consider ways of including minorities, those who are often unseen, and non-humans
- Design by First Nations architects and designers in NSW of a space for First Nations peoples using Designing with Country and Country-Centred Design Approaches
- A presentation of the deep geological and natural formation processes and marks that represent over 300 million years of forces, movements and change in the shaping of Sydney
- Ensure the significance of the precinct and its historical buildings and spaces are conserved and protected for current and future generations while energising the existing historical places and spaces with a renewed sense of exploration and discovery





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# A place of significant heritage

The MSEP is home to an incredible collection of historic public buildings and facilities. This built fabric offers an extraordinary living record of early colonial Australia, a valuable experience for visitors to the precinct. However, the historic formality of its buildings and spaces can also limit legibility and accessibility.



**CHIEF SECRETARY'S BUILDING**

- Built in two stages (1873-1896)
- Heritage listed 5-storey public building designed by colonial Architect James Barnet and Walter Liberty Vernon
- Previously housed the Aborigines Welfare Board (1909-1969)
- Currently subject to casual use by Government



**THE STATE LIBRARY OF NSW**

- Built 1906 - 1964 Mitchell and Dixon wings + 1988 Macquarie Building
- 2-storey, plus basements (Mitchell Building)
- 4-storey, plus basements (Macquarie Building)
- Public building, the largest library in Australia containing special collections and research libraries



**NSW PARLIAMENT**

- Built 1816 (occupied by Parliament in 1829)
- 3-6 storey complex
- Adaptation of the original Sydney Hospital (1815)
- Extensions made to Parliament House by government architect Andrew Andersons (1985)



**SYDNEY AND SYDNEY EYE HOSPITAL**

- Built 1815 - 1983
- 4-storey complex
- Built on the site of the central portion of the old Rum Hospital (demolished in 1879)
- The complex contains six historic buildings of high heritage significance and remains an operating hospital



**THE MINT**

- Built 1811 - 18
- 2-storey public building and extension
- Oldest public building in Sydney CBD
- Managed and curated by Museums of History NSW



**HOSPITAL ROAD COURTHOUSE**

- Built 1956
- 4-storey free standing building designed by winning Peddle Thorp and Walker design entry (1938)
- Supreme Court facilities incorporating six courtrooms and judges' chambers



**HYDE PARK BARRACKS**

- Built 1811-1819 with extensive restoration works 1975 and 2019
- 1-3 storey complex
- UNESCO World Heritage Site (2010) as an extraordinary living record of early colonial Australia
- Managed and curated by Museums of History NSW



**REGISTRAR GENERAL'S BUILDING**

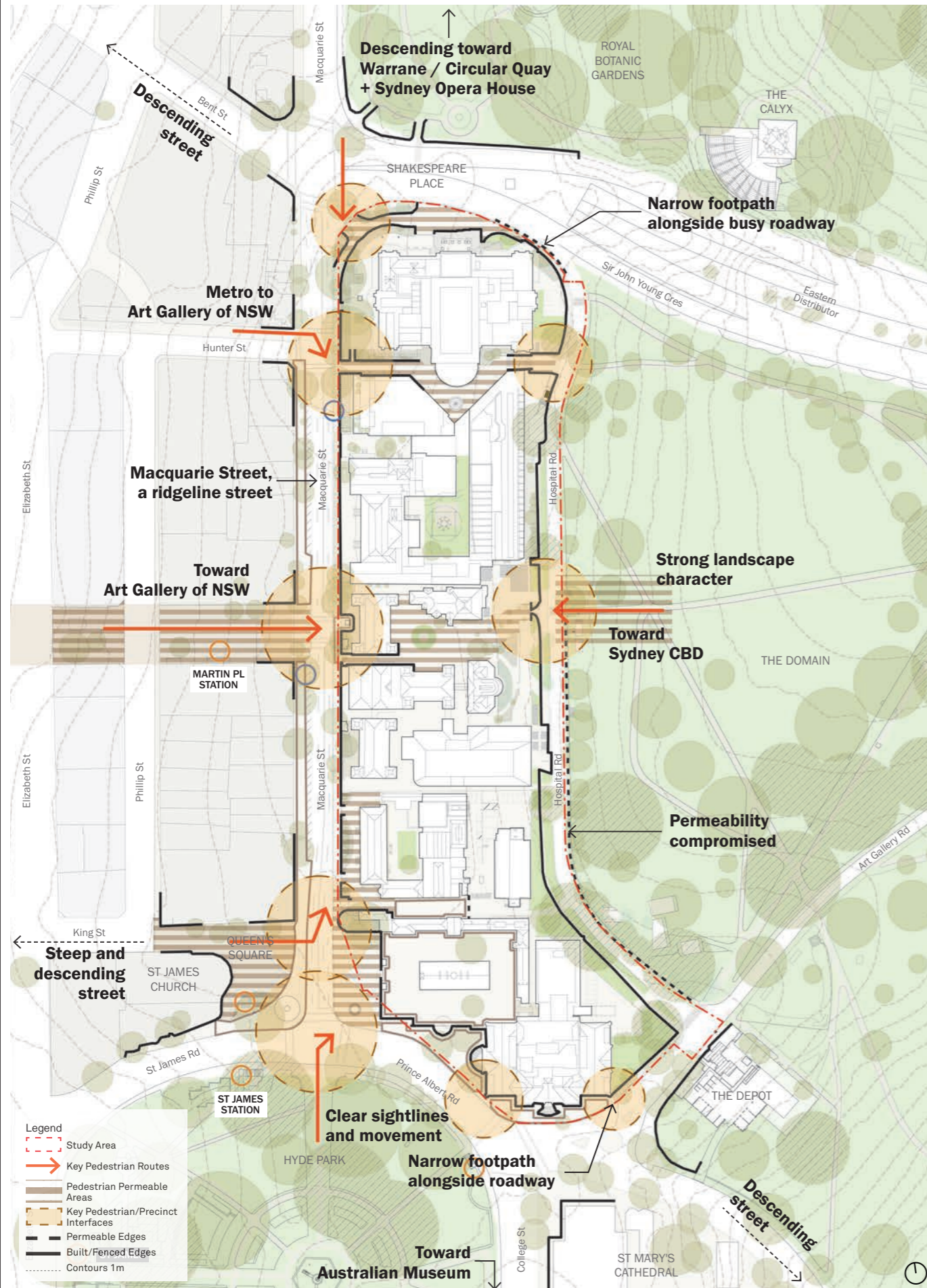
- Built 1913, north wing added in 1956; and Records Annexe in 1963
- 6-storey public building
- Following vacant possession plans underway for removal of Records Annexe in preparation for adaptive reuse



**AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM**

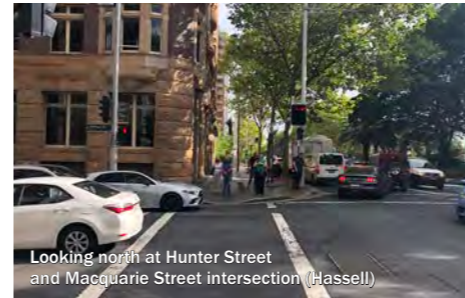
- Founded in 1827; first built 1847 with additions in 1868, 1890, 1963, 1977, 2008, and 2015
- The oldest museum in Australia, fifth oldest natural history museum in the world
- Containing special collections of cultural and natural history of Australia and the nearby pacific region; home of the Research Institute and Australian Centre for Wildlife Genomics





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Access to and arrival at the precinct



Looking north at Hunter Street and Macquarie Street intersection (Hassell)



Looking west at the Martin Place and Macquarie Street intersection (Hassell)



Looking east from Queen Square toward Hyde Park Barracks (Hassell)

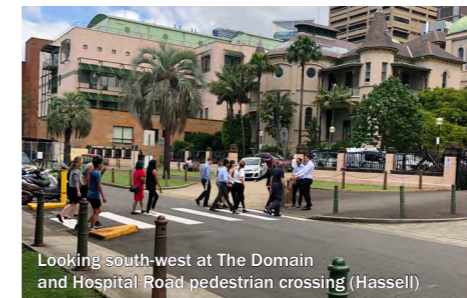
Hunter Street is steep, with relatively narrow footpaths and a single crossing at Macquarie Street. Entries to two new Metro stations are planned for this street.

Martin Place is a clearly defined and well used public connection. A new Metro station will improve access to the precinct, The Domain and the Sydney Metro network.

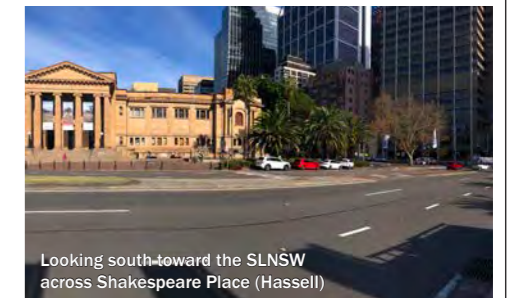
King Lane has relatively narrow footpaths and no direct crossing at Macquarie Street. The existing cycleway will be extended to the east.



Looking east through the precinct toward The Domain (Hassell)



Looking south-west at The Domain and Hospital Road pedestrian crossing (Hassell)



Looking south toward the SLNSW across Shakespeare Place (Hassell)

Arrival points into the precinct from the city centre are not well defined, with narrow and disconnected pathways.

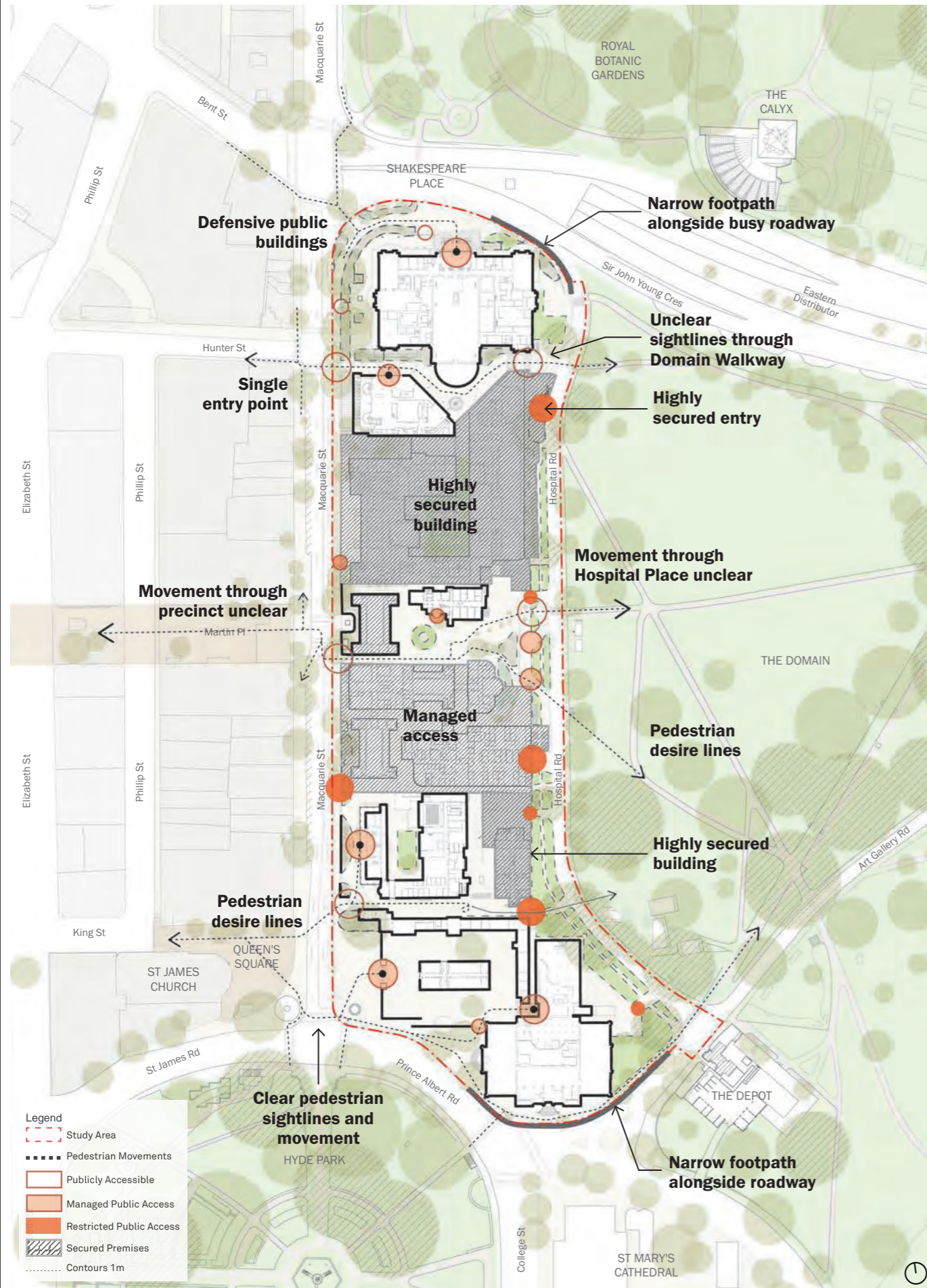
Access to the precinct from The Domain is defined primarily by clear paths. Hospital Road is a low traffic street but has limited pedestrian amenity.

Arrival from the north and south along Macquarie Street is compromised, entry into buildings is unclear, and spaces and traffic movements present safety issues.

# Key opportunities

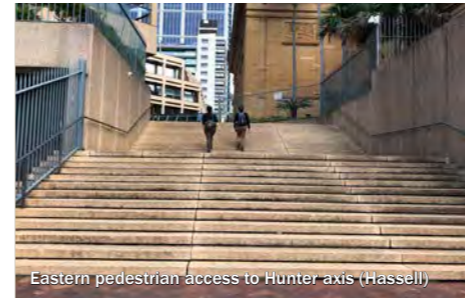
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings on Macquarie Street (especially aligned to city streets)
- Wider pedestrian pathways on Hospital Road and eastern side of Macquarie Street
- Improved legibility (including entry signage, lighting and art) at key arrival points
- Better connecting the precinct to other surrounding cultural buildings; linking the Australian Museum and Art Gallery of NSW through improved public domain works
- Improved pedestrian safety on Macquarie Street and Shakespeare Place
- Facilitate a calmer traffic environment on Macquarie Street and Hospital Road
- Streetscape enhancement to remove physical and visual impediments, better lighting, seating and landscape
- Public artwork to create a sense of arrival at the precinct as well throughout the public domain





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Moving around the precinct



Eastern pedestrian access to Hunter axis (Hassell)



Western pedestrian access through Hospital Place toward The Domain (Hassell)



Western pedestrian access to King axis (Hassell)

The Domain Walkway (between the Library and Parliament) is a convenient path through the precinct, but lacks accessibility, amenity and activation.

The Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital link is difficult to locate and navigate, but will form a critical connector between future Metro and the expanded AGNSW.

The public thoroughfare between The Mint and Barracks is unwelcoming due to its narrow entry points, parking of service vehicles and signage.



West side of Hospital Road and interface with Parliament (Hassell)



Looking south within Hospital Place (Hassell)



Hunter axis toward Macquarie Street from the SLNSW Macquarie Building entry (Hassell)

Strict security of the Parliament buildings results in a blockage to movement around the northern part of the precinct, including within streets.

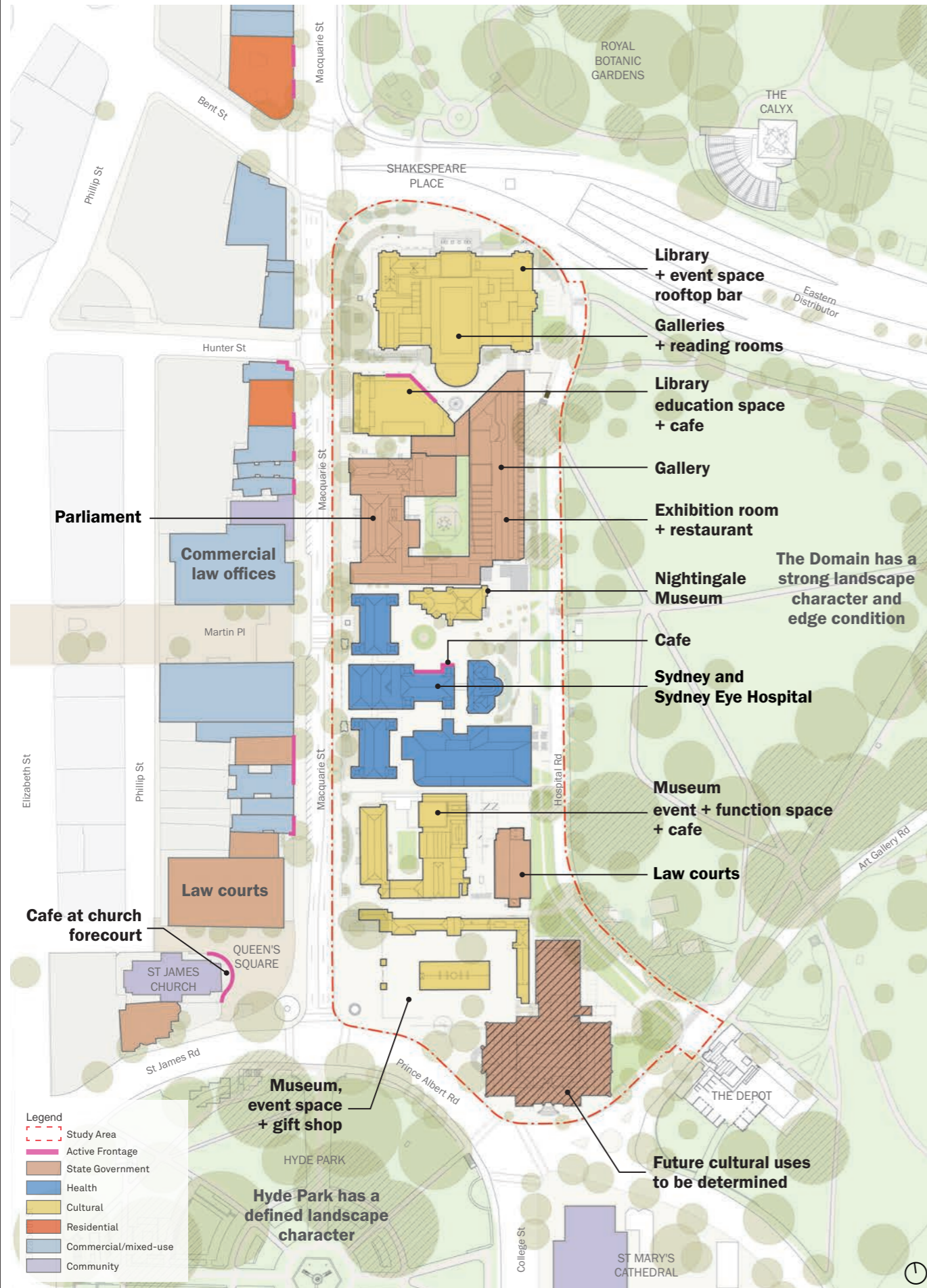
Due to their internal nature and sensitive usage, the hospital buildings are disengaged from the public domain.

Entries to some important public buildings, such as the Mitchell Wing of the Library, are not prominently located and therefore hard to access.

# Key opportunities

- Clear and legible movement to and through the precinct, especially along key east-west connections (at Hunter Street, Martin Place and King Street)
- Improved visual and physical connectivity between Macquarie Street and The Domain
- New wayfinding and lighting to invite movement through and within the precinct
- Improved legibility, accessibility and enjoyment of the precinct through precinct-wide strategies for public art, storytelling, events, signage etcetera





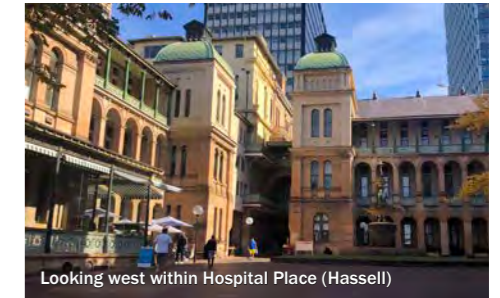
# Precinct uses and activities



Cornersmith Cooking School, Hyde Park Barracks 2022 (Cornersmith)



Eastern pedestrian pathway at SLNSW (Hassell)



Looking west within Hospital Place (Hassell)

A diversity of uses - museums, courts, hospital, parliament, library and supporting functions - has existed in the precinct for more than two centuries.

While civic and cultural buildings have a strong presence in the precinct, there is opportunity to improve their visitation and experience.

Many of the precinct's shared spaces and uses (cafés and galleries) are internalised and difficult to access by the general public.



After Dark, Hyde Park Barracks 2022 (Hassell)



Artists performing at After Dark, Hyde Park Barracks 2021 (MHNSW)



Western footpath of Macquarie Street (Hassell)

A number of heritage buildings (such as The Mint and Hyde Park Barracks) have undergone adaptation and re-activation over the history of the precinct.

The Barracks and Mint are successful examples of event programming, temporary installations and activations.

The western side of Macquarie Street contains an intensity and diversity of commercial, residential, retail and hospitality uses that activate and engage with the street.

# Key opportunities

- Bringing together the distinct uses of the place to create a cultural narrative - telling the story of each place, the precinct, and Sydney
- New and enhanced cultural anchors and clusters, especially along Hospital Road, where newer buildings and service areas provide potential for new activation and engagement
- Diversification of new and existing cultural uses to engage a wide range of people and to integrate within the city's cultural network, by day and night and throughout the week
- Externalising functions of existing facilities to activate the public domain and draw in new visitors
- Temporary and flexible programming of buildings and spaces with investment focused on public curatorial engagement
- Reinforcement of the civic functions of the precinct and ongoing operations to support these in the future
- Consolidation of operational requirements across the precinct
- Consider how the precinct can support the set-up and operation of events in The Domain as well as other programs and activities





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Building character and condition



Looking north at the Martin Place and Macquarie Street intersection (Hassell)



The western MSEP interface at the hospital from Macquarie Street (Hassell)



The eastern MSEP interface at the hospital from Hospital Road (Hassell)

The Macquarie Street edge of the precinct is lined with an assembly of some of the city's most precious civic and cultural buildings.

In some locations, appreciation of and access to these buildings is diminished by landscape, fences, walls and other barriers.

Heritage buildings along Hospital Road (such as the Worrall and Nightingale Buildings) are compromised by servicing and loading areas.



Archikidz at Hyde Park Barracks, 2019 (Hassell)



Western public space of the SLNSW (Hassell)



MSEP car park entry from Hospital Road (Hassell)

Queens Square is a clearly defined open space addressed by the historic frontage of the Hyde Park Barracks.

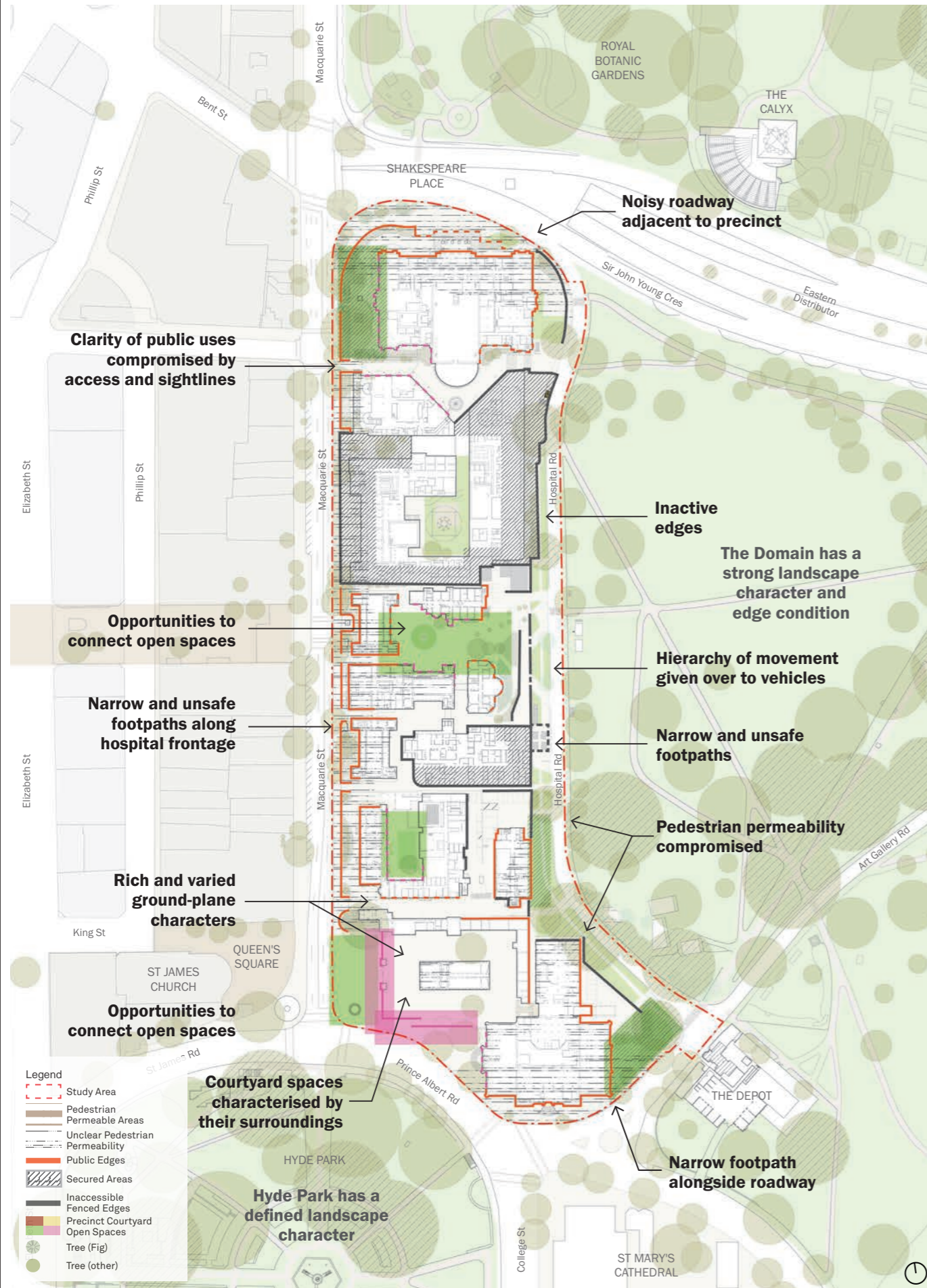
The library's western forecourt is a less successful space, edged by the side wall of the library, hard to access due to ground levels and landscape barriers.

Newer buildings along Hospital Road are defensive in nature, with blank walls and service zones reducing the amenity and safety of the street.

# Key opportunities

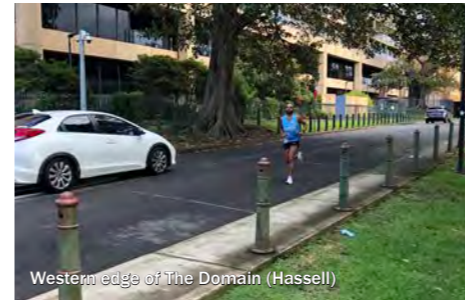
- Protection and enhancement of the distinct expression and character of the historic buildings and spaces, improving their address to streets and spaces, and legibility of entry and access
- Reflect the precinct's social, cultural and political impact through opportunities for interpretation and learning of existing and new buildings
- Investigate adaptive reuse of existing buildings with a focus on increasing public access, nighttime activation and diversity of uses
- Externalising functions of existing facilities to activate the public domain and draw in new visitors
- New building design elements, materials and colours to be used throughout the precinct to create a strong expression of the cultural and ecological character and meaning of this place





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Public experiences and spaces



Western edge of The Domain (Hassell)



Looking south on Macquarie Street (Hassell)

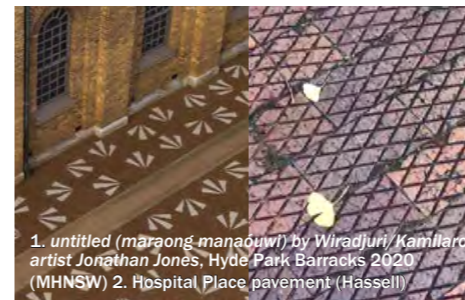


The Mint courtyard (Hassell)

While the precinct enjoys an unparalleled interface with The Domain, it does not successfully engage with or activate this space, often having to be navigated by users.

While Macquarie Street is one of the city's most significant places, it lacks the amenity and quality of other city streets.

The network of smaller public spaces in and around The Mint are well used for commercial uses, but are not seen to be public at other times.



1. untitled (maroong manaowwi) by Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi artist Jonathan Jones, Hyde Park Barracks 2020 (MHNSW) 2. Hospital Place pavement (Hassell)



Western pedestrian access to King axis (Hassell)



Western pedestrian pathway at SLNSW (Hassell)

The ground-plane of the precinct is made up of a diversity of materials and detailing, reflecting the distinct character of its different uses.

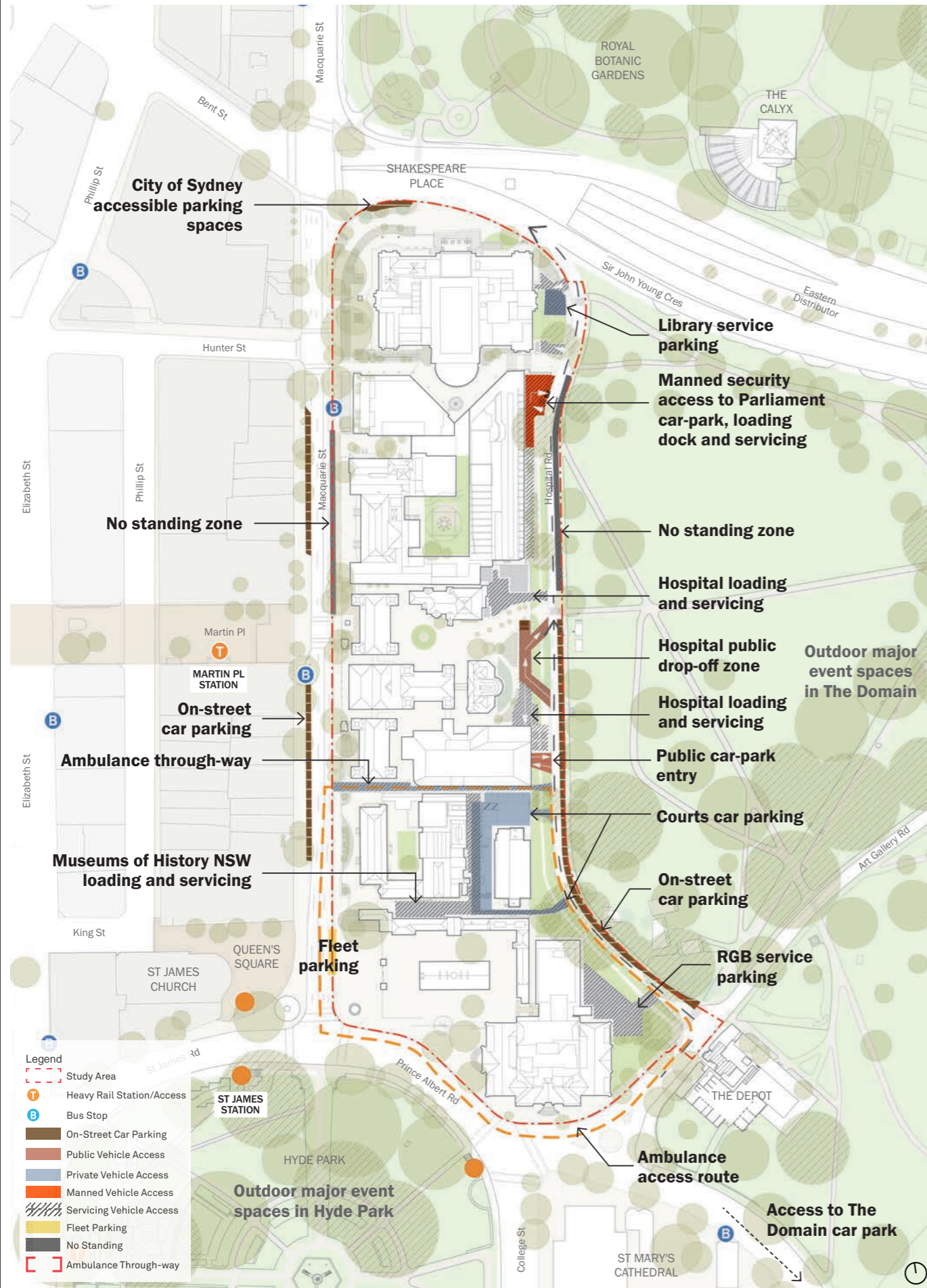
The precinct has a number of entry points, connections and spaces that are difficult to navigate.

Larger spaces at the edges of the precinct (such as Shakespeare Place and Queens Square) do not fulfil their potential due to heavy traffic impacts.

## Key opportunities

- Expanded and improved quality of the public domain - public spaces that reveal stories and regenerate Country through expression of the cultural and ecological character and meaning of this place
- New design elements, materials and colours to be used throughout the precinct - guided by the original flora, fauna and geology of the area
- A cohesive precinct expression that also recognises the distinct character and identity of individual institutions and spaces
- Enhanced visual connections through the precinct - creating a network of safe and engaging spaces and connections
- New wayfinding and lighting to invite movement through the precinct to discover the places within
- Activation of public spaces and connections through new ground-floor uses, events and activity - including more spaces to dwell with shade and seating
- Consider how the precinct can support the set-up and operation of events in The Domain as well as other programs and activities





Macquarie Street East Precinct Master Plan

# Precinct servicing and security



Eastern footpath of Macquarie Street (Hassell)

The eastern footpath of Macquarie Street is relatively narrow with accessibility impacted by tree roots, bus shelters and other urban elements.



Looking west through the King axis (Hassell)

The precinct contains a number of servicing and parking zones which are critical to the institution's ongoing operations but can inhibit pedestrian movement.



Manned entry from Hospital Road to Parliament (Hassell)

Some uses, such as the Parliament and courts, require strict security arrangements and affect pedestrian movement.



Eastern footpath of Hospital Road (Hassell)

Parking along Hospital Road impacts on pedestrian space and creates a barrier to movement between the precinct and The Domain.



Western footpath of Hospital Road (Hassell)

Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital has significant loading, servicing and security requirements, including drop off zones, along Hospital Road.



Sydney Festival in The Domain (Sydney Festival)

Major events impact the precinct, including space required for bump in/out along Hospital Road, amenities and security arrangements.

# Key opportunities

- Integration benefits through co-ordinated approach to precinct management, operations and activation
- Consolidation of operational, servicing and loading requirements areas (especially on Hospital Road) to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety, and to create opportunity for new cultural and public spaces
- Review vehicle access routes and parking locations within the precinct to allow better delineation of shared spaces
- A precinct-wide safety and security strategy for different modes of operation, from the everyday to major events within and adjacent to the precinct



# MASTER PLAN STRATEGIES

This section describes Master Plan strategies and outcomes for the precinct.



Visualisation of long term vision of new cultural building and public space (Arterra)



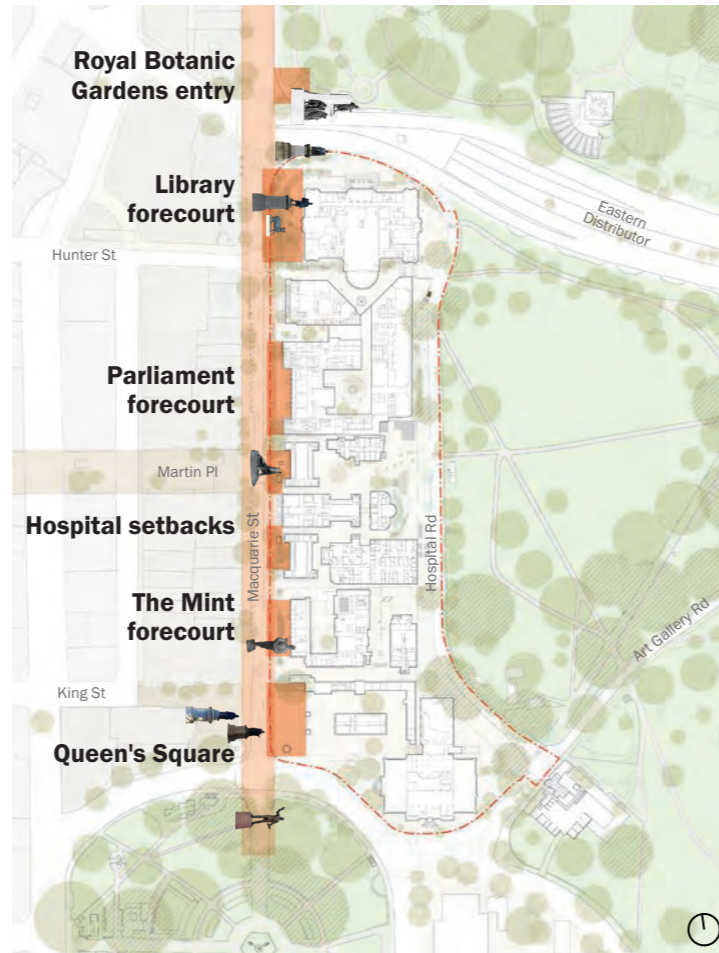
# MASTER PLAN STRATEGIES

## Interface and integration

Fundamental to the future activation and accessibility of the precinct will be its successful connection and integration with the adjacent surroundings.

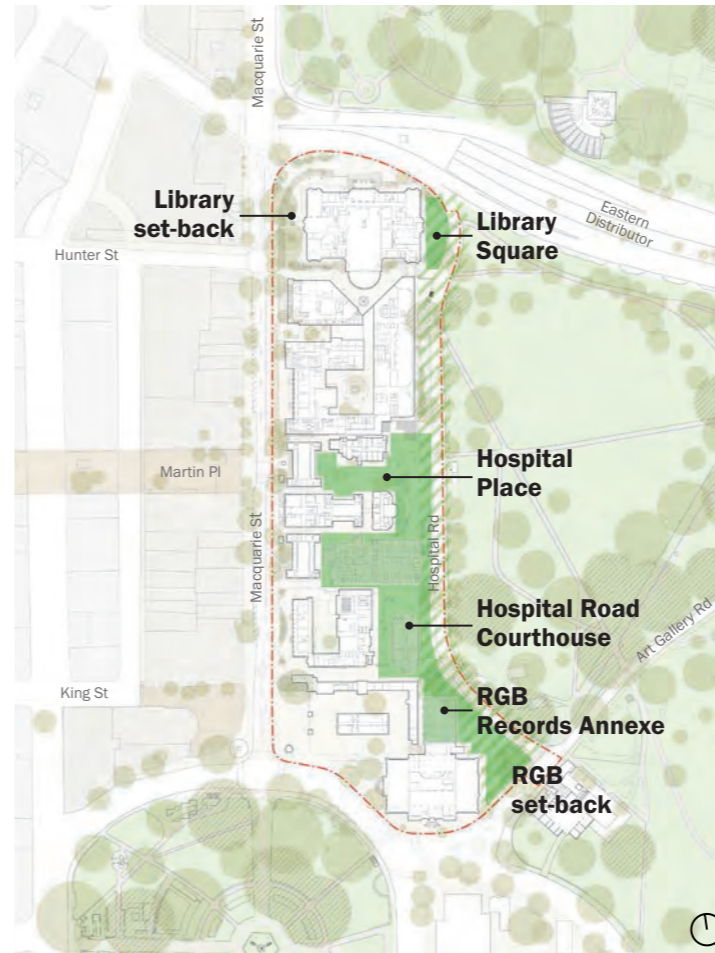
As its (current) naming suggests, the Macquarie Street frontage is its primary address - an orderly collection of grand civic buildings along one of the city's most historically significant streets. By comparison, its eastern edge (along Hospital Road) is a tangle of servicing and parking zones, back doors and leftover spaces. These two distinct sides of the precinct are acknowledged within the Reading of Country, with the precinct a place at the overlap of two ecosystems. There is an opportunity to re-imagine the frontages of the precinct, one that connects with its parkland setting and provides an address for new public buildings and spaces.

To the north and south, the precinct houses two important heritage buildings, the State Library of NSW and Registrar General's Building - both diminished by their setting against major roads.



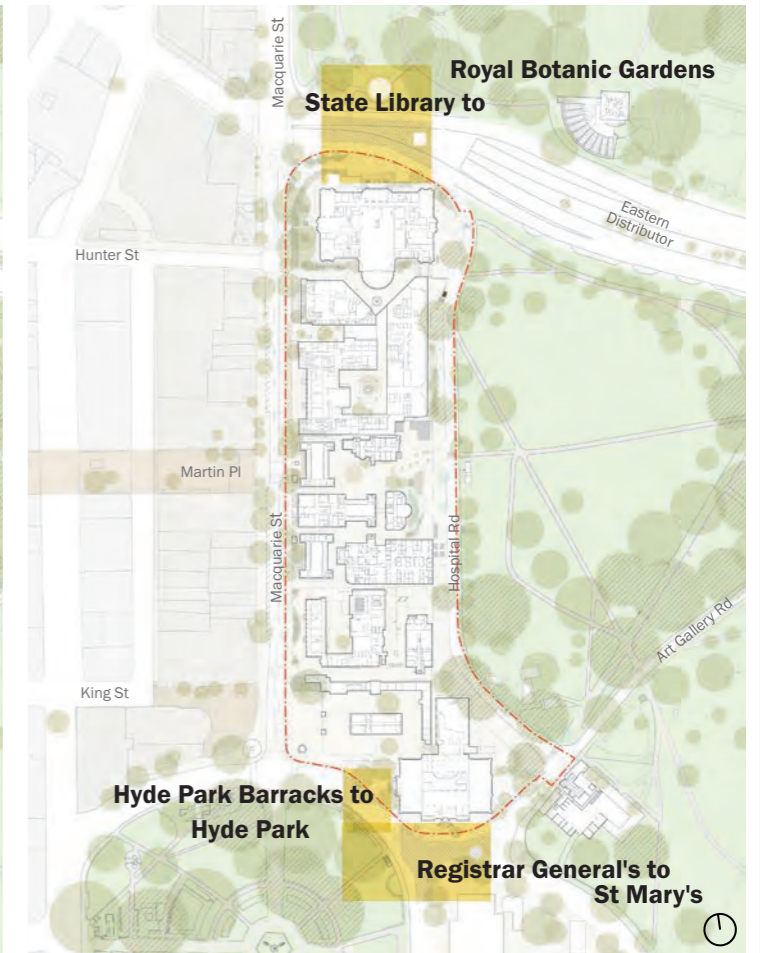
### City (Macquarie Street) frontage

Along this edge, many small moves can improve the consistency, accessibility and heritage presence of the Macquarie Street buildings and public spaces beyond. The address of, and access to, buildings can be improved through public domain upgrades, public art, lighting and signage. The enhancement of Macquarie Street enables easier movement into the precinct and to these important buildings.



### The Domain (Hospital Road) frontage

There is an opportunity to transform The Domain (Hospital Road) frontage through slower vehicle movements, enhanced pedestrian space, and the extension of parkland into the precinct. An integrated approach to planning along this frontage (including the potential renewal of newer buildings) creates better legibility, expanded public spaces, better east-west connections, and the potential for consolidated servicing for new and existing buildings.



### Gardens and cathedral frontages

Enhancement of the streetscape and public spaces at Shakespeare Place and Prince Albert Road improves the historic setting of the Library and Registrar General's Building and improves connectivity into the precinct. These streets will become greener, more walkable spaces - supported by strategic objectives of government to encourage walking and active transport, and to deliver expanded and enhanced public space in the city.

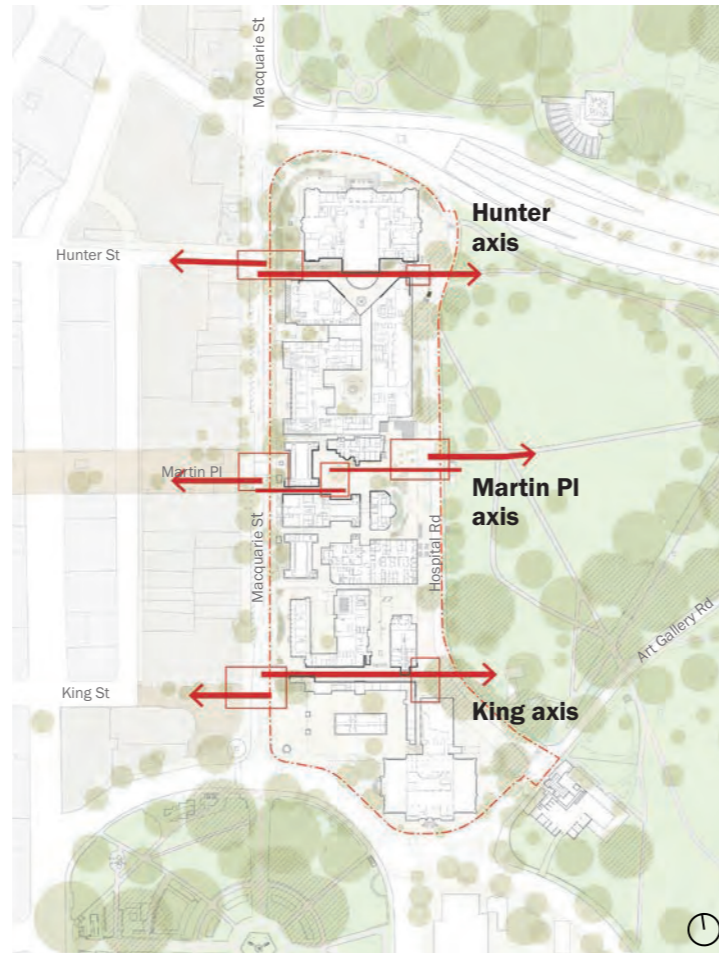


# Master Plan Strategies

## Connectivity - within, to and from site

Better connectivity into and throughout the precinct will drive greater visitation, activation and enjoyment of the precinct - supporting the cultural, social and economic life of the eastern edge of the city centre.

Connectivity is currently compromised by a lack of clear view-lines between the city and parklands, a lack of clarity around public and private space, security arrangements in some parts of the precinct and the formal (at times unwelcoming) nature of its historic buildings. This can be improved by the creation of clear and direct connections, as well as a multitude of smaller, exploratory and engaging spaces and laneways.



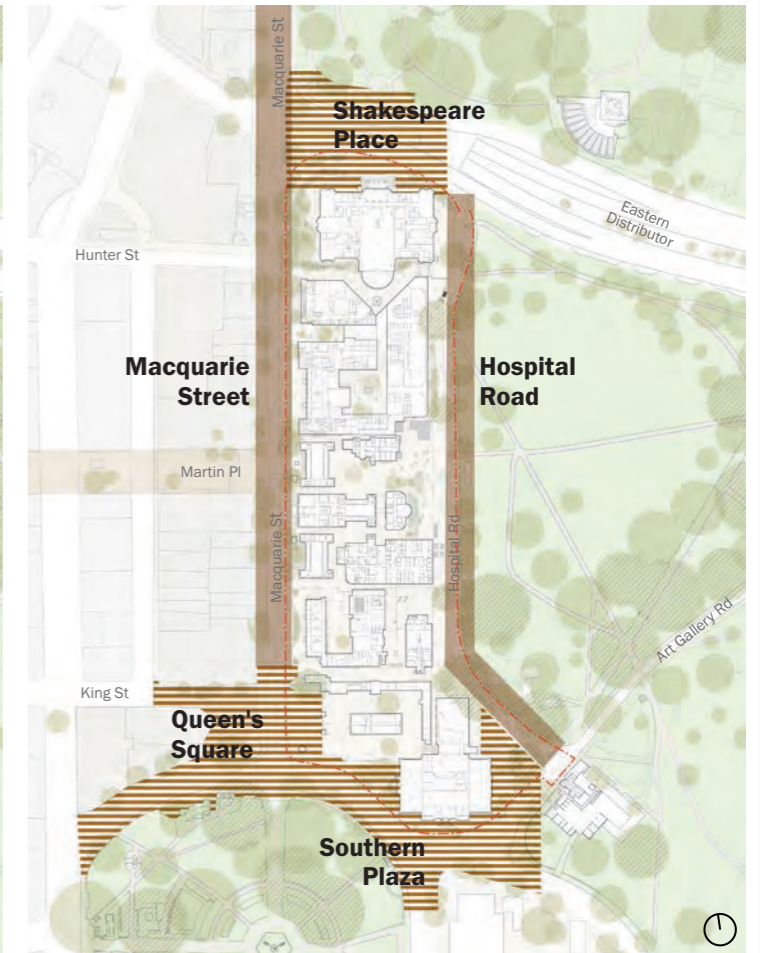
### City to parklands laneways

Three key public connections run east-west through the precinct - aligning with city streets - and breaking the precinct into smaller 'blocks'. Improved safety, accessibility, wayfinding and legibility ensures that people can move easily between the city and parklands, to major transport and cultural attractors.



### A network of small spaces and connections

There is opportunity to create a network of small spaces and connections that builds on the existing movement network and supports increased public access throughout the day and evening. These are spaces of discovery, of reflection and relaxation. Extended opening hours, building and space activation, lighting, art and events will encourage greater use and enjoyment of these spaces.



### Enhanced realm at the precinct edges

At the edges of the precinct, the prioritisation of pedestrians (over through-traffic) will facilitate access into and along the precinct, driving visitation and supporting cultural and commercial activity in and around it. The enhancement of Macquarie Street - de-cluttering of the streetscape, better lighting and signage, more trees and more space for walking, dwelling and dining - is critical to the success of the precinct.

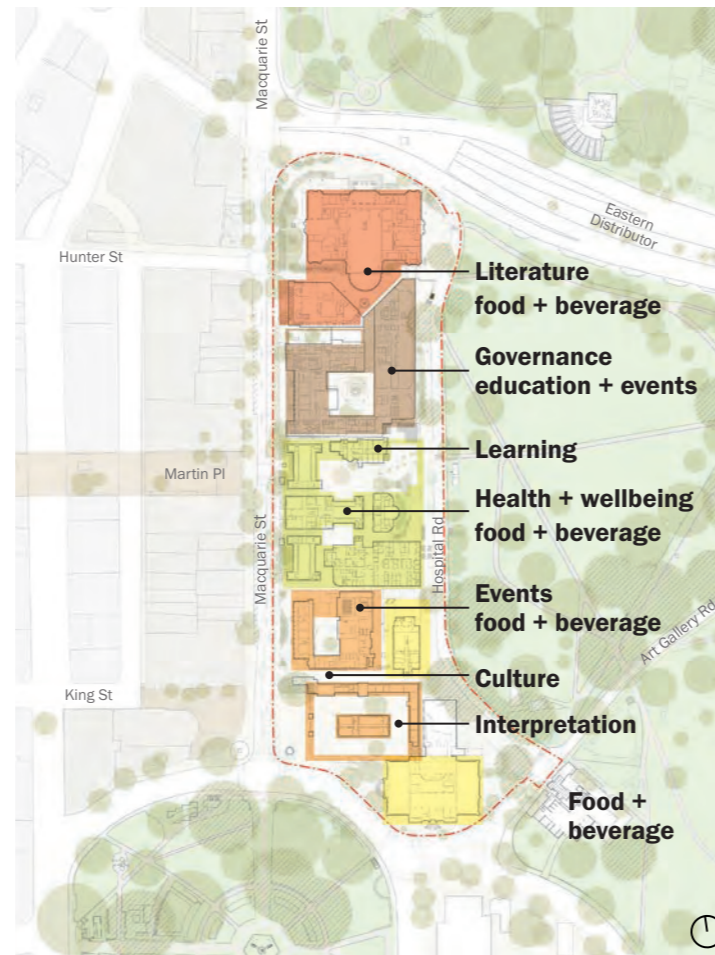


# Master Plan Strategies

## Precinct diversity and activation

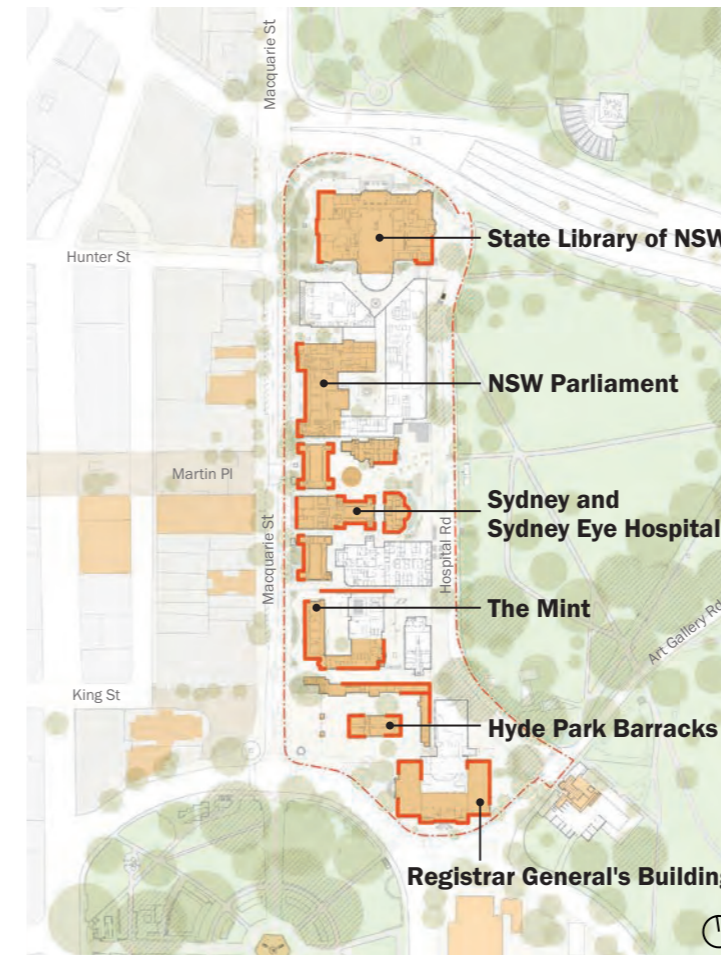
There are buildings in the precinct, such as the State Library of NSW and the Sydney and Sydney Eye Hospital, that have always housed the same use. These uses show an important connection to the early colonial origins of this place. Others have seen adaptation over time, as organisational and community needs change. The Mint for instance, originally a hospital building, is now a function space, workplace and cafe. The precinct will continue to see both consistency and change.

While the precinct houses significant cultural and civic buildings, it is also an important place for the everyday functioning of the city - with a range of justice, health, education and other uses. This diversity of uses also ensures that a diversity of people access and appreciate the precinct, using it for functional and operational reasons but also to dwell, meet and gather. These complementary characteristics can be supported and enhanced by future works.



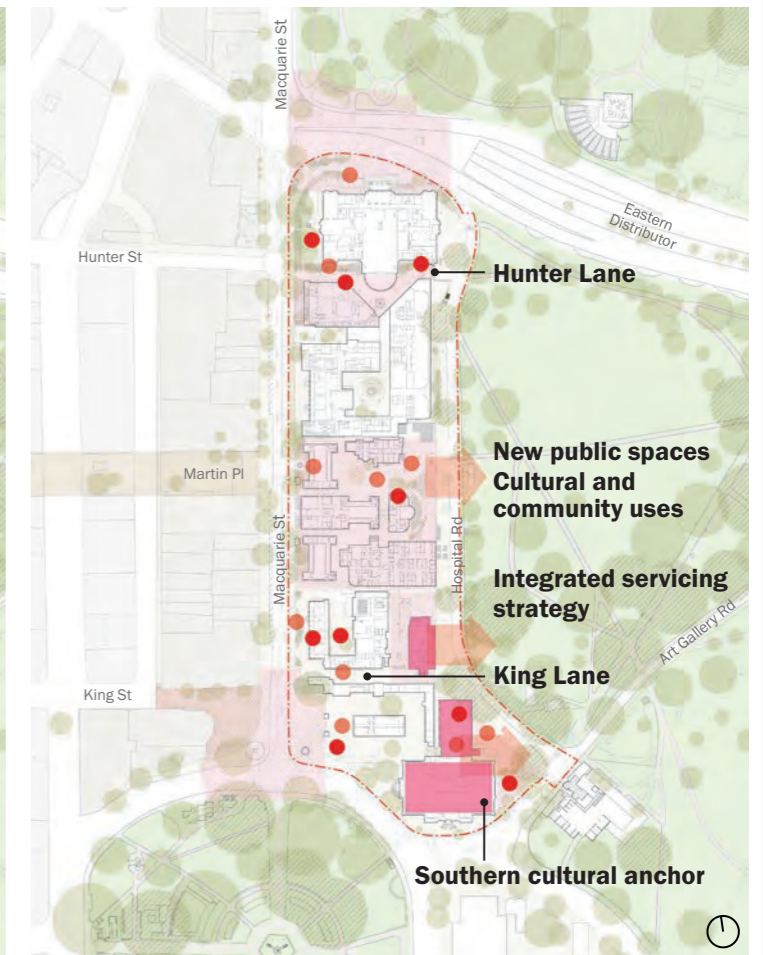
### Maintain a mix of functions

The mix of existing functions reflects the diverse needs of the community, as well as providing a tangible connection to the historic development and occupation of the precinct. The different functions in the precinct need to be considered in terms of how they can integrate better with each other, to share infrastructure and spaces.



### Reveal heritage at precinct edges

The potential redevelopment or modification of existing buildings along the southern end of Hospital Road (the Records Annexe, Courthouse and Clinical Services Building) provides the opportunity to open up views to heritage buildings and elements, improve public accessibility and connectivity through the precinct.



### Opportunities for adaptation and activation

There are a range of opportunities for adapting and activating buildings and spaces across the precinct. New buildings along Hospital Road could house new cultural and community spaces that address and engage with The Domain. Inactive ground floor spaces can be occupied by new cultural, retail, food and beverage uses. And the public domain is enlivened with pop-up kiosks, public art, installations and events.



# Master Plan Outcomes

The Master Plan strategies provide a spatial framework for the precinct over time - ensuring that individual projects are considered in an integrated way and collectively support the precinct's overarching vision and objectives.

Key projects in the precinct will include new and enhanced public spaces, the adaptation and activation of existing buildings, as well as new buildings. The timing of projects will depend on a range of factors, such as the evolving needs of different institutions, availability of funding or the need to respond to changes in the surrounding context (such as new developments and destinations).

The projects are to ensure that First Nations engagement occurs through ongoing cultural design consultation and the development and implementation of an Indigenous Interpretation Strategy.



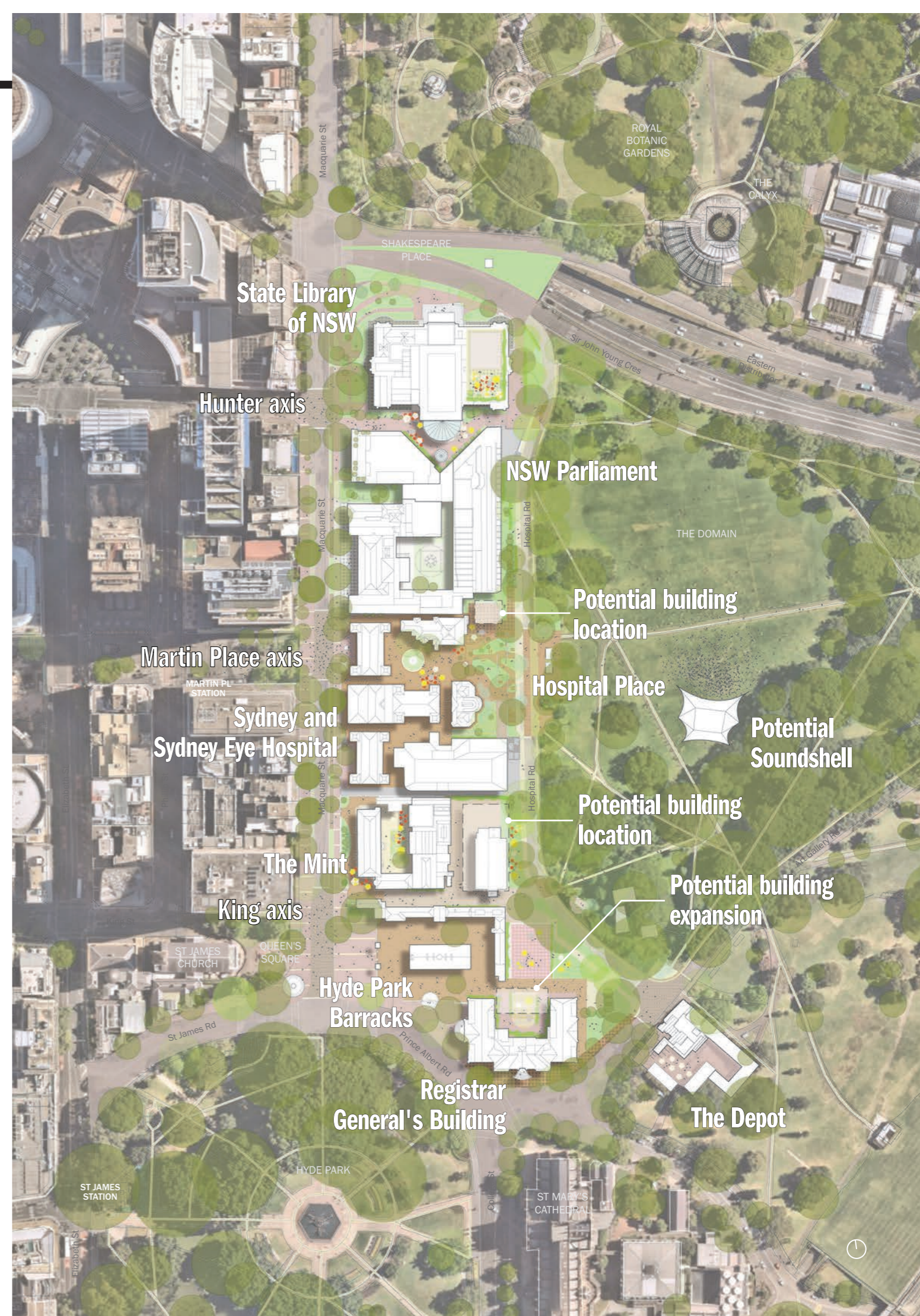
## Better connections, better public spaces

*New open spaces and the enhancement of existing spaces, streets and connections.*



## Diverse functions with a cultural focus

*Opportunities for expanded cultural offerings within the precinct.*





# PUBLIC DOMAIN GUIDELINES

The Public Domain Guidelines function as a set of recommendations on how to apply the design vision and objectives described with the MSEP Master Plan.

The MSEP Master Plan outlines the first stage of projects that will deliver enhanced permeability and use of the precinct. These guidelines are to ensure the design teams delivering the projects are enabled to support the vision and objectives described within the Master Plan and their influence on and within the public domain and elements.

Visualisation of Queen's Square, looking toward the precinct (Hassell)





# Public Domain Design Principles

## A City-shaping Cultural Destination

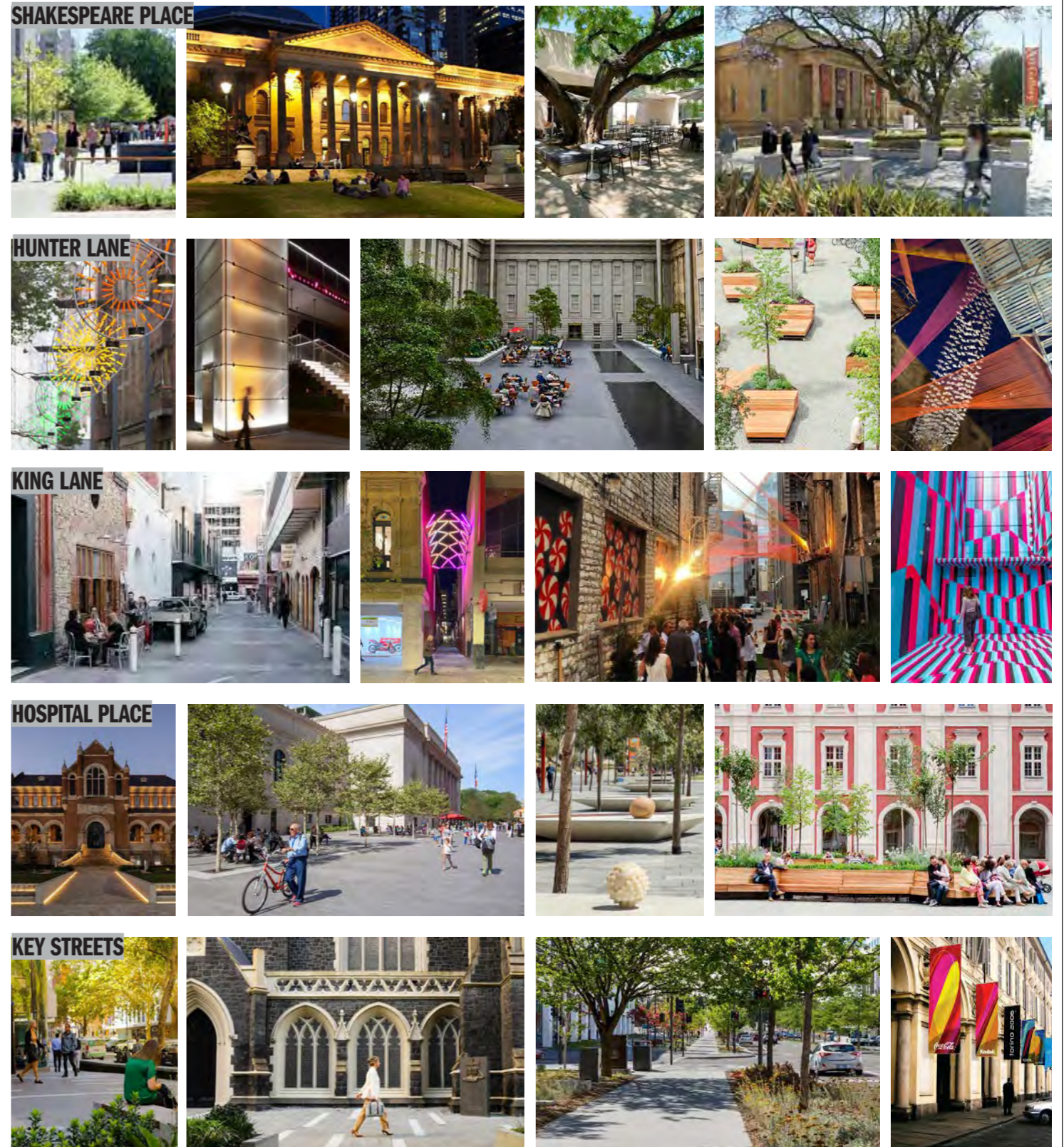
*Steeped in history, Macquarie Street East will tell the cultural, civic and heritage story of Sydney to today's global audience.*

*Established institutions in heritage-listed buildings alongside new cultural attractions will deliver experiences across places and spaces that entertain, educate and surprise, by day and night.*

*Open and accessible, MSEP will embrace and enhance the city's arts and cultural offer.*

The delivery of public domain projects is governed by a set of overarching design principles:

- Ensure an engaging quality public domain is delivered consistent with the ambition set out in the project vision to ensure visitors experience and connect with an accessible safe and welcoming place
- Align with the Connecting With Country (draft) framework to appreciate and embed First Nations cultural knowledge, expression, practice and engagement
- Give expression to the complex history of the precinct through the layering of existing and new public domain, vegetation, materials and elements
- Respect and respond to the significant civic and cultural character of the precinct, especially heritage buildings and spaces in a contemporary manner
- Reinforce and intensify the distinct character of the precinct while recognising the different functions and places within the precinct
- Ensure the public domain is welcoming and inclusive, promotes better connectivity in and around the precinct, invites public access and uses, is safe, legible, accessible and walkable
- Increase use of public spaces through opening up of under-utilised spaces, consolidation of loading and servicing zones and expansion of footpaths
- Create areas of new ecologically diverse planting of predominantly local native species to create habitats, enhance connections to nature, enhance connections to The Domain, provide seasonal variance and mitigate urban heat
- Prioritise cultural, environmental and social sustainability in the design of the new public domain areas
- Design public spaces to provide a platform for culture and creative expression
- Enable new and diverse uses of public areas that respond to cultural programs generated from buildings within the precinct
- Ensure loading, security and events management requirements are coordinated with pedestrian access and significant paths of pedestrian travel



Above: Character precedent imagery for Public Domain Works.



# Public Domain Design Strategy

Public domain design should capture and enhance the distinct character of different areas within the precinct.

The overall approach to the design of the public domain recognises that the MSEP is both:

- A distinct place with its own character, history and meaning; and
- A part of broader urban systems and interfaces, specifically that of the city centre and park edge.

The public domain of the precinct will have a palette of materials, vegetation, signage and furniture that relates to the City of Sydney's strategies and standards, the Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain's strategies and standards, as well as precinct-specific elements.

The design elements, materials and colours can be used throughout the precinct to create a strong expression of the cultural and ecological character and meaning of this place, responding to the Reading of Country and Country centred design.





These approaches are similar to that delivered in similar "special precincts" within the city centre, such as Barangaroo, Circular Quay, The Rocks and Darling Harbour.

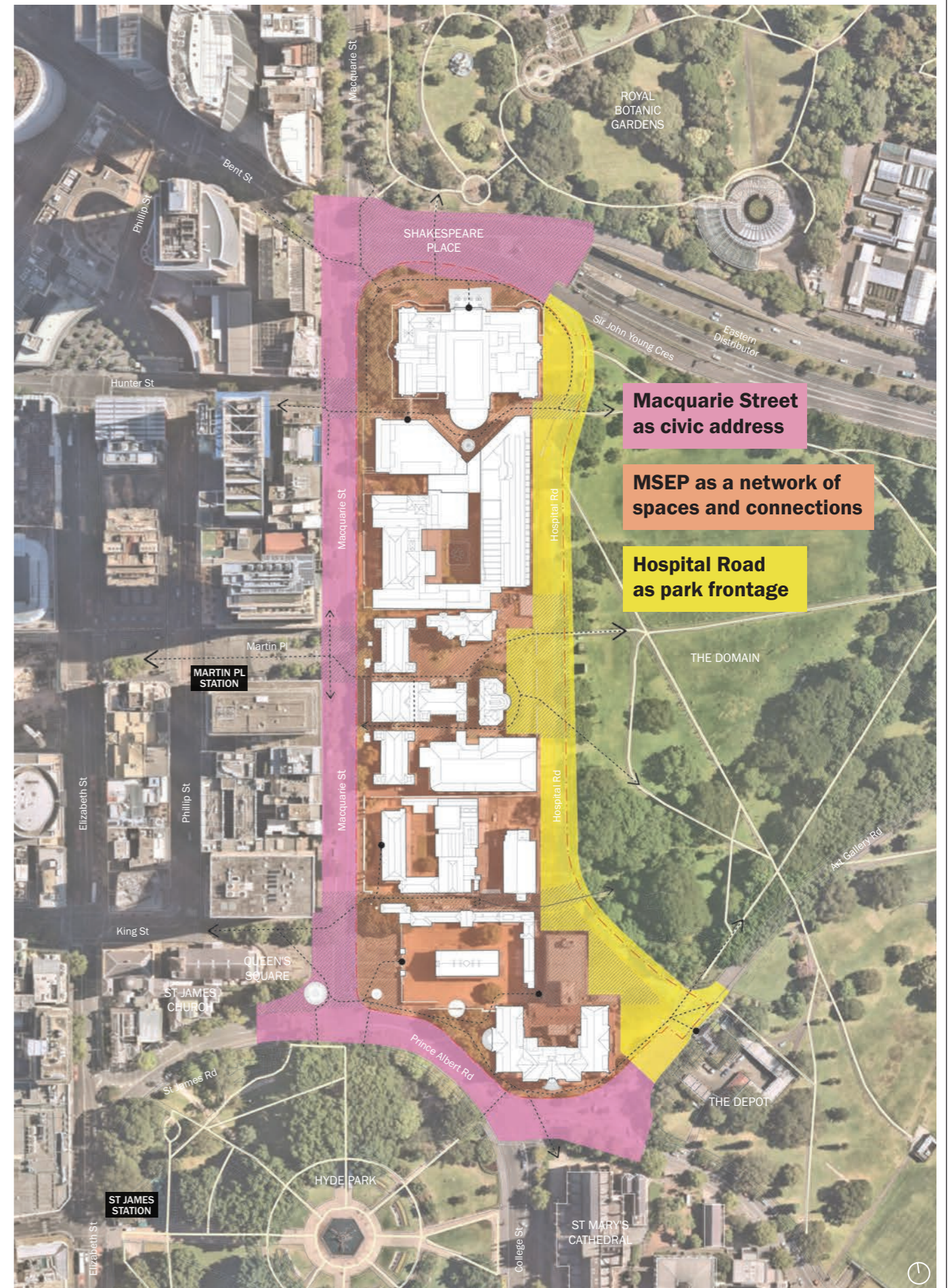
Within and around the precinct, 3 distinct areas are defined.

- The City Edge (Macquarie Street and its interfaces) where the City of Sydney's consistent public domain approach is more closely applied
- The Park Edge (Hospital Road) where qualities of The Domain are extended into the precinct
- The MSEP (a network of spaces and connections) where the public domain is guided by the existing character, materiality and elements of the precinct, as well as the definition of future enhancement and activation projects

These 3 distinct areas align with strategies of the Master Plan related to interfaces of and connectivity within the precinct.

## Public Domain Strategy

	Study Area
	MSEP
	City of Sydney
	The Domain



Public Domain Strategy



# Design with Country Recommendations

Cultural design & research undertaken by Djinjama Indigenous Corporation, Dr Danièle Hromek.

Consistent design elements, materials and colours can be used throughout the precinct to create a strong expression of the cultural and ecological character and meaning of this place. These are derived from the original flora, fauna and geology of the area and can be used to guide the design of buildings and spaces.

## Design Recommendations

- Many horizontal layers, rather than vertical - understanding that many parts create a whole
- Some carefully managed height in structures is appropriate
- Differentiation in forms from one side of the precinct to the other
- Water sustains life but has been made invisible by urbanisation; let it be seen
- Storytelling included in the site that recalls the long narratives of the relationships between peoples and site, even if they are not living there now
- Ensure that new buildings give a sense of the land being restored, reformed. For example, provide habitat to non-humans, follow the topography, allow water to flow, feeling and microclimates
- Sustainable practices are a must as part of reflecting on Country - avoid digging up Country and extracting materials; reuse, reduce, recycle; design with a light footprint
- Where is Country here? Design to bring understanding of Country and importantly, health and wellbeing back to Country

## Storytelling

- A place to come together and celebrate diversity and biodiversity
- A place to tell and listen to the difficult stories
- A place that enables change
- A place to embed sustainability in many ways including cultural sustainability
- A place that enables the exploration of the cultural seasons

## Material Recommendations

- Recycled sandstone (only) or rescued crushed sandstone
- Yellowy-golden sands, natural textured bricks or other natural materials of clay or sand
- Copper or bronze colours and metals
- Use natural materials that are reflective of place and sourced as locally as possible
- Sustainable Indigenous hardwood timber with colours ranging from a pale pink and pale reddish brown through to darker deep red to red-brown, quarter cut grain and coarse but even
- Permeable surfaces that allow waters to filter
- Water saving/protecting materials and plants
- Translucent materials
- Native planting that is relevant to the soil type and considers the changes in seasons
- Use natural materials that are reflective of place and sourced as locally as possible
- Materiality should seek inspiration from the earth and landscape, the processes that work to create the planet, and the processes that the earth supports
- Seek to reduce the burden on Country to absorb waste by use of recycled and salvaged resources, as well as mimic the soil by seeking materials that operate as a carbon sink and filtration of water and air

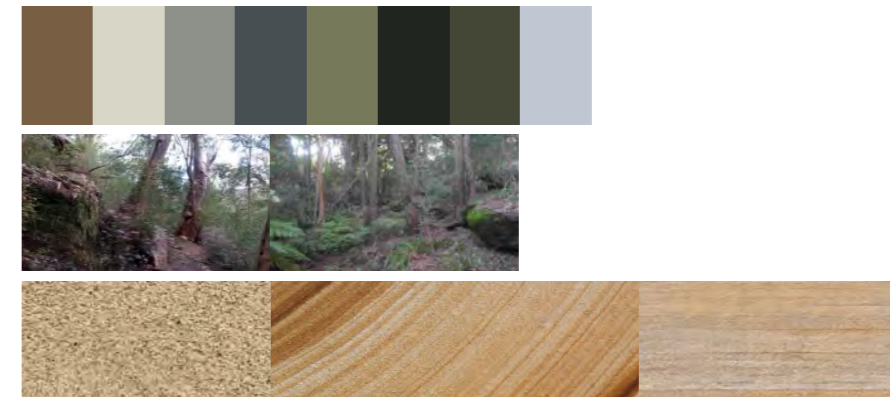
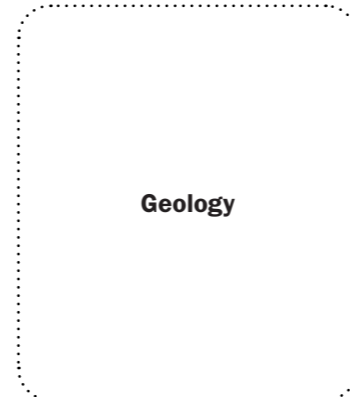
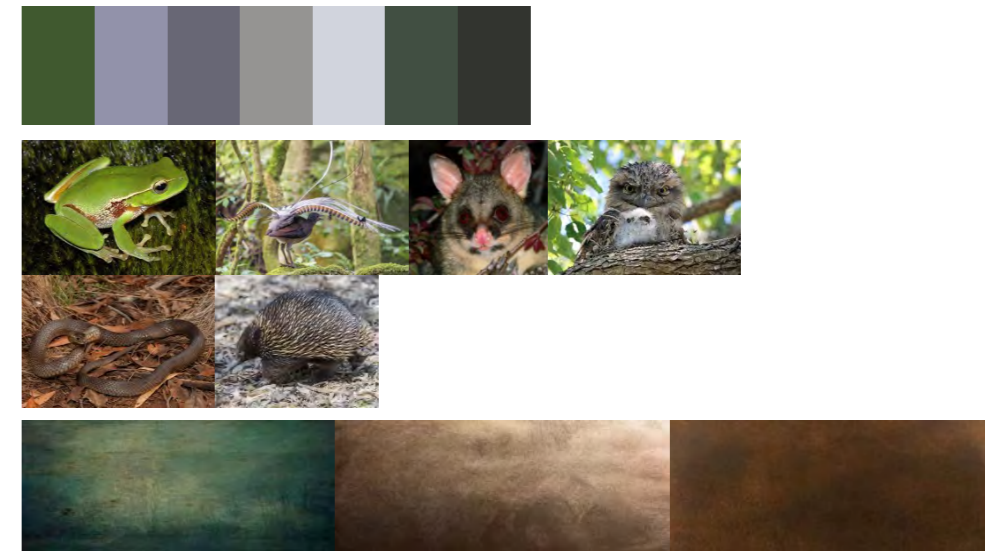
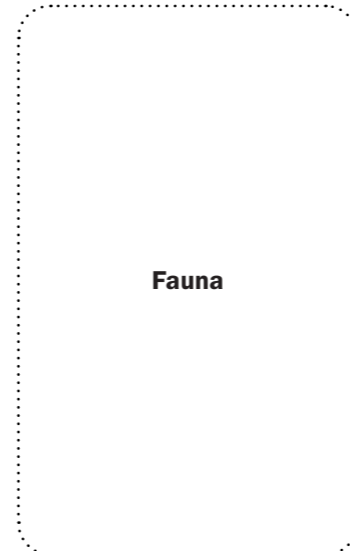
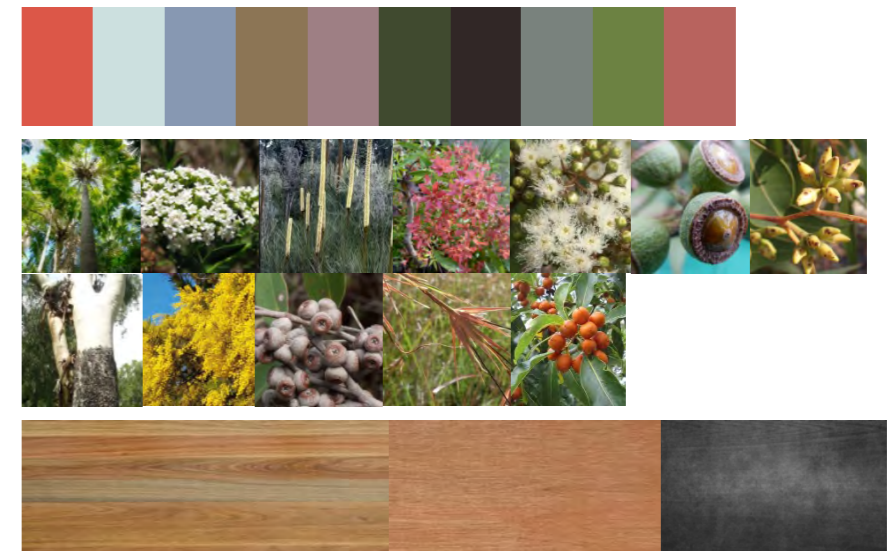
## Landscaping Recommendations

- Plant families of trees - let the grandparent trees flourish and have future ancestors grow nearby
- Durable ethical Indigenous hardwood timber with either dark pink to dark red colour and a coarse texture, or light brown or yellowish and straight grain
- Water saving/protecting materials and plants
- Native endemic planting that is relevant to the soil type - do not plant invasive (exotic) plant species here and remove all existing invasive species
- Design preventive forms of landscaping and bioswales rather than concrete

## Design with Country palette

These colours, materials and textures originate from the MSEP site.

## Material, colour and texture references





# Ground Plane Materiality

Careful selection of materials - particularly of the ground plane - supports the creation of safe and accessible spaces, and the expression of the complex and layered identity of this place.

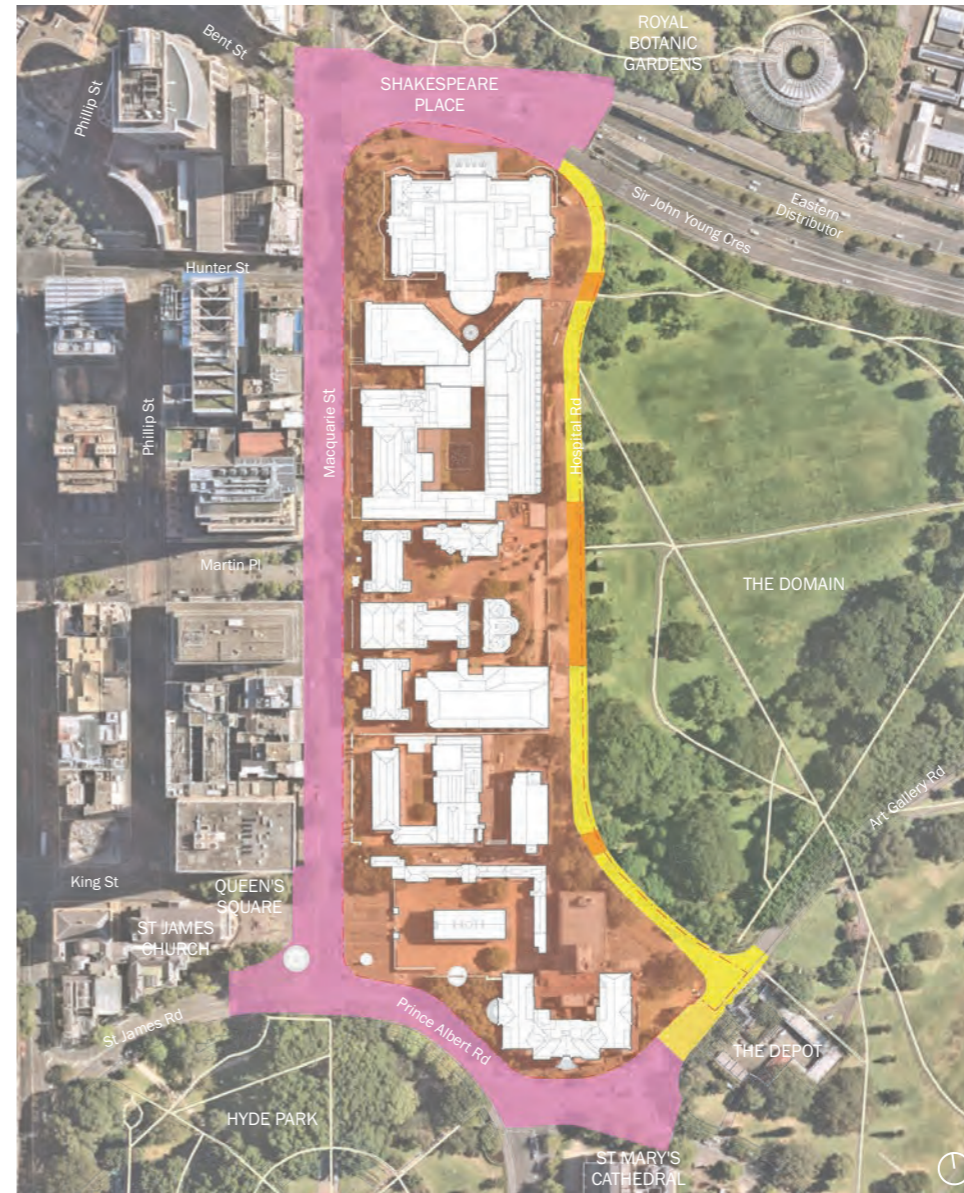
## Requirements

- Materials are fit for purpose, high quality, locally sourced (where possible), are easily maintainable and readily available
- All spaces and materials comply with relevant Australian standards and Disability Discrimination Act requirements
- Existing materials are re-used where practical
- Extent of permeable ground surfaces is maximised
- New materials sensitively integrate with existing spaces and levels, heritage buildings and other elements
- Through-movement paths, building approaches and entries are emphasised through variations in ground plane materiality and detailing
- Technical assessment (including drainage/flooding, archaeological and heritage impacts) undertaken for all projects
- Utilise appropriate flexible pavement at base of existing trees and consider future size of root zone

Material selection is in accordance with the Design with Country approach shown within the Design with Country Recommendations - material, colour and texture references.

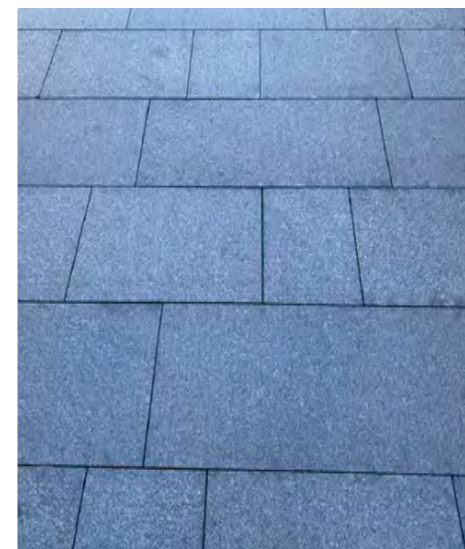
Material selection is in accordance with the ground plane materiality map and specific guidance on key areas:

- **City Edge (City of Sydney)**  
Along Macquarie Street and city-fronting public domain and footpaths, materiality reflects the city's standard palette and/or a bespoke design solution, developed in collaboration with the City of Sydney
- **Park Edge (The Domain)**  
Along Hospital Road, materiality reflects a simple and robust palette related to the character of the parklands
- **Precinct (MSEP)**  
A distinct mixture of existing and new with a focus on warmer materials of stone, brick and gravel
- **Key Interfaces and Junctions**  
At the Macquarie Street and Hospital Road crossings and at precinct edges, spaces are designed to integrate or transition different material palettes as well as responding to specific requirements of legibility, safety and heritage integration

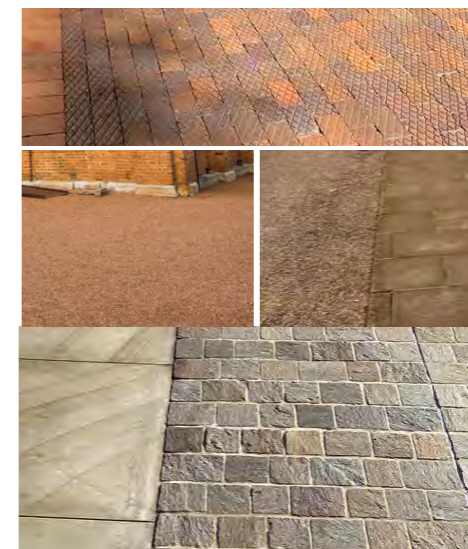


## Ground Plane Materiality

	Study Area
	MSEP
	City of Sydney
	The Domain



**City Edge**  
Standard City of Sydney materials such as Austral Black Granite and stone kerbs



**MSEP**  
A mixture of existing and new with a focus on warmer materials of stone, brick and gravel



**Park Edge**  
Robust and simple materials such as exposed concrete or mixed light coloured stone



# Vegetation

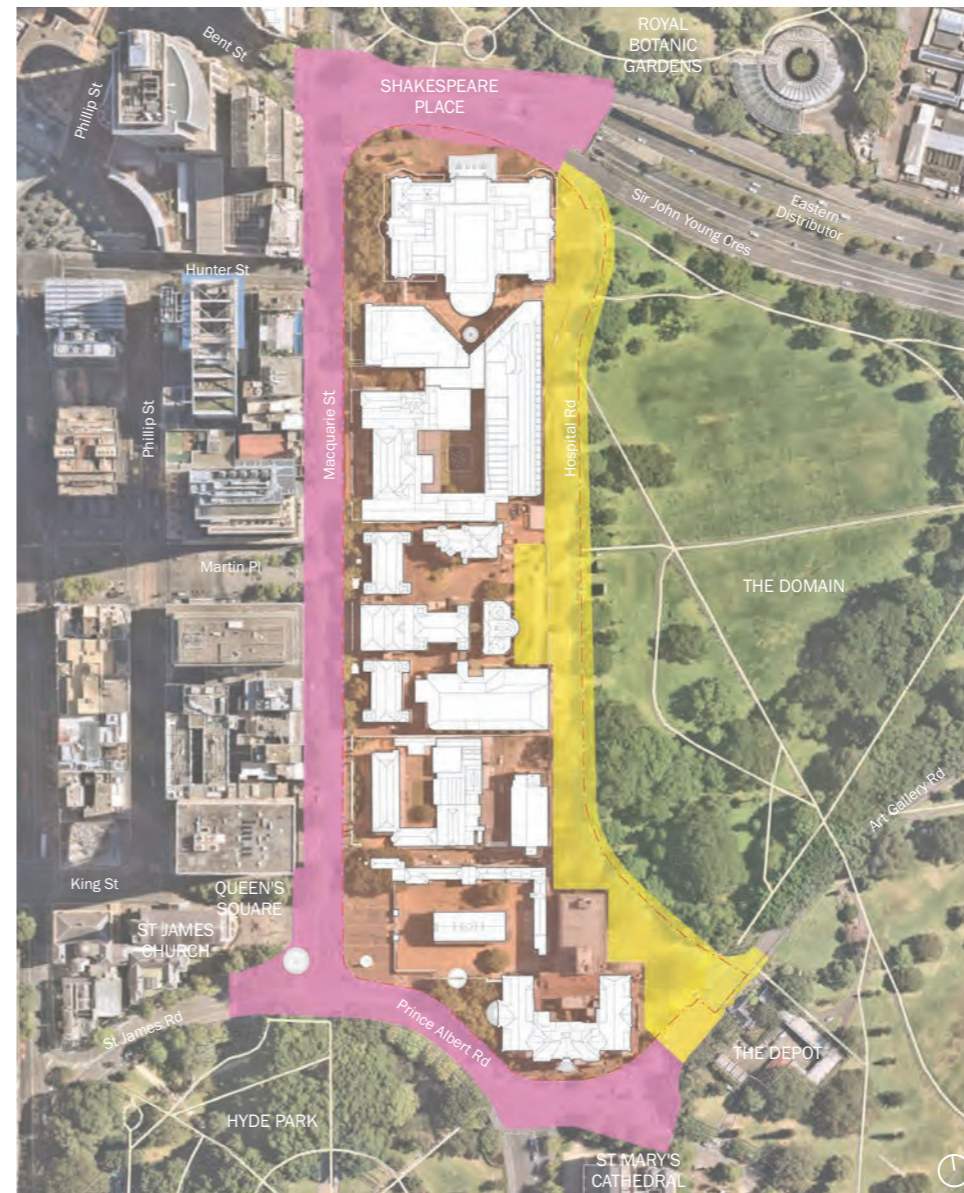
Vegetation within the precinct supports the identity of the place, provides amenity and comfort for users, and better environmental performance of buildings and spaces.

## Requirements





- Selection of new planting prioritises
  - Native and endemic vegetation, including re-establishment of original vegetation families
  - Increased biodiversity and habitat
  - Planting diversity and First Nations seasonal expression
- Canopy cover and landscape area is increased where it does not conflict with movement paths and operational requirements
- Vegetation selection and placement allows for
  - Weather protection and solar access to public spaces
  - Vehicle clearances, closed-circuit television and security elements
  - Maintaining or opening up sightlines and access to key buildings and spaces
  - Flexibility for different uses including event activity
- Planting conditions for new landscape ensures adequate soil volume and quality to support future tree growth, natural and automatic irrigation systems

New vegetation to be in accordance with the vegetation map and specific guidance on key areas:

- **City Edge (Macquarie Street and Prince Albert Road)**  
New planting responds to the more formal character of street trees and gardens along Macquarie Street, while allowing a transition over time to native vegetation, informal planting, increased canopy and landscape cover, and greater expression of Design with Country principles
- **Park Edge (Hospital Road)**  
New planting to align with strategies developed in collaboration with The Domain, with increased canopy and landscape cover, and expansion of park landscape into public spaces, especially Hospital Place, Shakespeare Place and at Art Gallery Road
- **Precinct (MSEP)**  
Precinct spaces integrate increased canopy and landscape cover while not compromising heritage buildings and spaces, movement paths, legibility and safety, and operational requirements



## Vegetation

	Study Area
	MSEP
	City of Sydney
	The Domain



# Street Furniture

Public domain furniture contributes to the character, functionality and amenity of public spaces, with a tailored palette for the precinct that aligns with the broader city centre.

## Requirements

- Seating, bubblers and bins are conveniently located within key public spaces and streets
- Furniture selection and placement do not conflict with movement into and through the public domain
- Furniture selection and placement to ensure public spaces can be used for a variety of uses, including flexible outdoor seating, dining, performance and exhibition
- Furniture selection and placement to consider safety and security requirement including hostile vehicle mitigation
- Standard City of Sydney furniture is used (to ensure quality, longevity and consistency with the broader city) - however, in some locations, a bespoke furniture solution may be agreed

Furniture to be in accordance with the street furniture map and specific guidance on key areas:

- **City Edge (City of Sydney)**  
Furniture and other public domain elements to be the standard City of Sydney palette
- **Precinct and Park Edge (MSEP)**  
To emphasise the public nature of the precinct, the City of Sydney palette extends into the precinct with some elements varied to reflect its distinct character

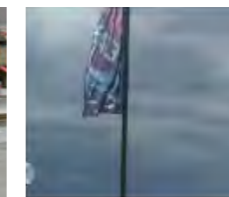


## Street Furniture

	Study Area
	MSEP
	City of Sydney



**City Edge**  
Standard City of Sydney selection of urban elements



**MSEP**  
A tailored variation on the City of Sydney selection of urban elements



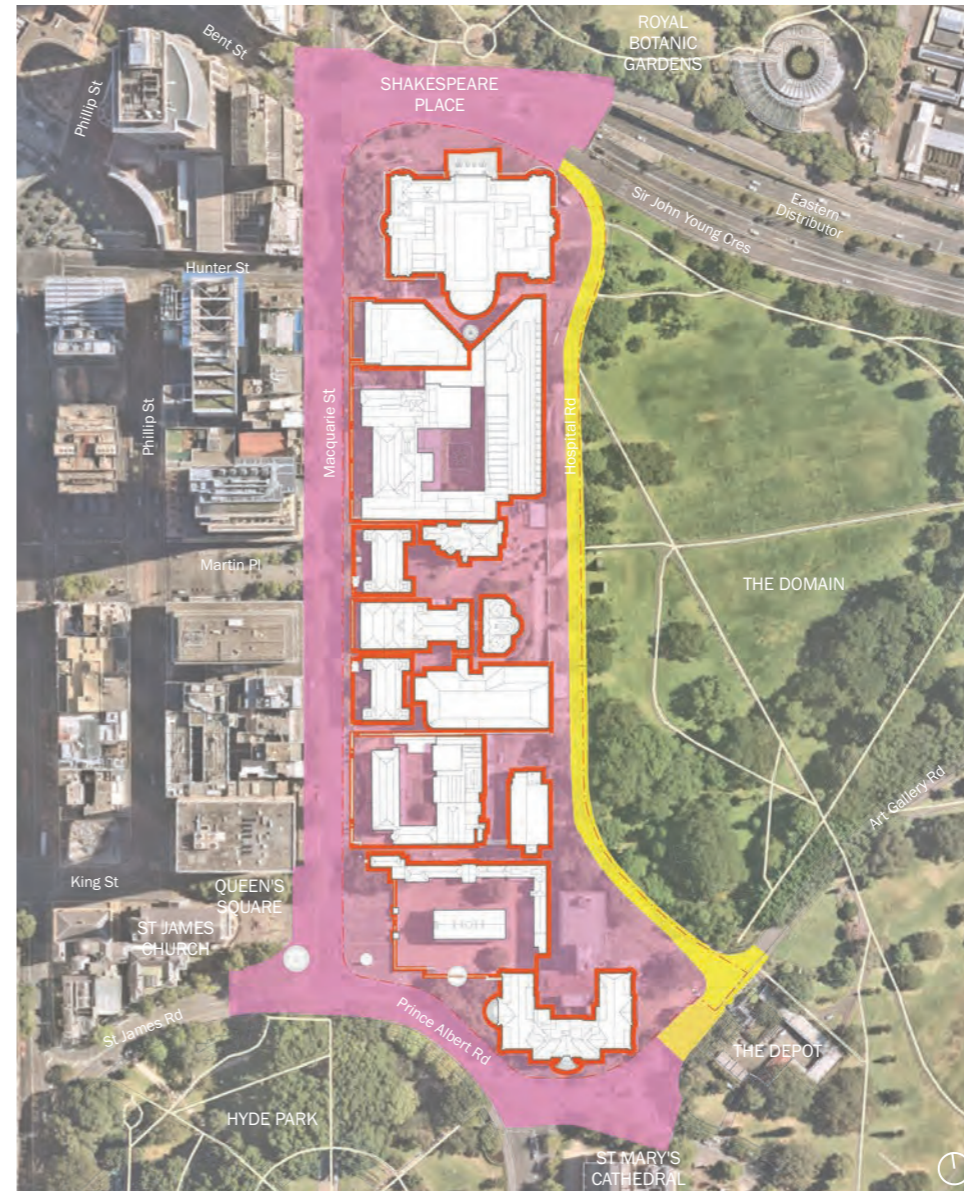
# Public Domain Wayfinding

A legible and cohesive wayfinding signage system assists with clear and legible movement within and through the precinct and will increase visitor engagement and repeat visitation. It heightens the visitor experience, improves functionality and helps to connect the precinct to the broader city context. Wayfinding is different to identity signage which is being addressed separately.

## Principles / Requirements

- Wayfinding signage to support precinct wide circulation and the visitor experience
- Wayfinding signage within the precinct public domain operates at a functional level and should use the 'Legible Sydney' signage system and be consistent with signage across the city centre
- Precinct signage to acknowledge Country and First Nations
- Wayfinding signage to be located at key circulation and decision points in the public domain and does not obscure site lines through the precinct, surrounding streets, parks and open spaces (limited public space in some instances requires a sensitive approach to location and scale of signage elements)
- Signage to minimise conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles around and within the precinct to ensure public safety and clearly define circulation routes

- Signage form and content to consider local and international visitors, diverse age groups, differing accessibility, reading and cognitive abilities to create an equitable environment
- A hierarchy of signage elements is required to respond to user requirements across identification, wayfinding (directional), statutory, operational signage and event specific changeable signage
- Signage to respond to day and nighttime conditions, be illuminated (internally (preferred) or externally), and activate the precinct through the whole of day
- Unique signage, branding and graphic identity of individual institutions is used at entry points and direct connections between relevant buildings to identify the destinations
- Signage to be robust, repairable and suit the public environment and acknowledge the materiality of the precinct



## Signage and Wayfinding

	Study Area
	Legible Sydney signage system
	The Domain signage system
	Individual signage systems

Signage and wayfinding is in accordance with the signage and wayfinding map and is to consider:

- Identification signage including 'welcome' messaging and 'precinct' identification at key entry points to the precinct, in particular
  - at either end of the precinct and street crossings at Prince Albert Road, Shakespeare Place and Martin Place
  - at east-west links between Macquarie Street and The Domain
- General wayfinding and directional signage within the precinct, especially at key circulation points, public spaces and buildings
- Statutory and operational signage
- Event and temporary signage



# Lighting

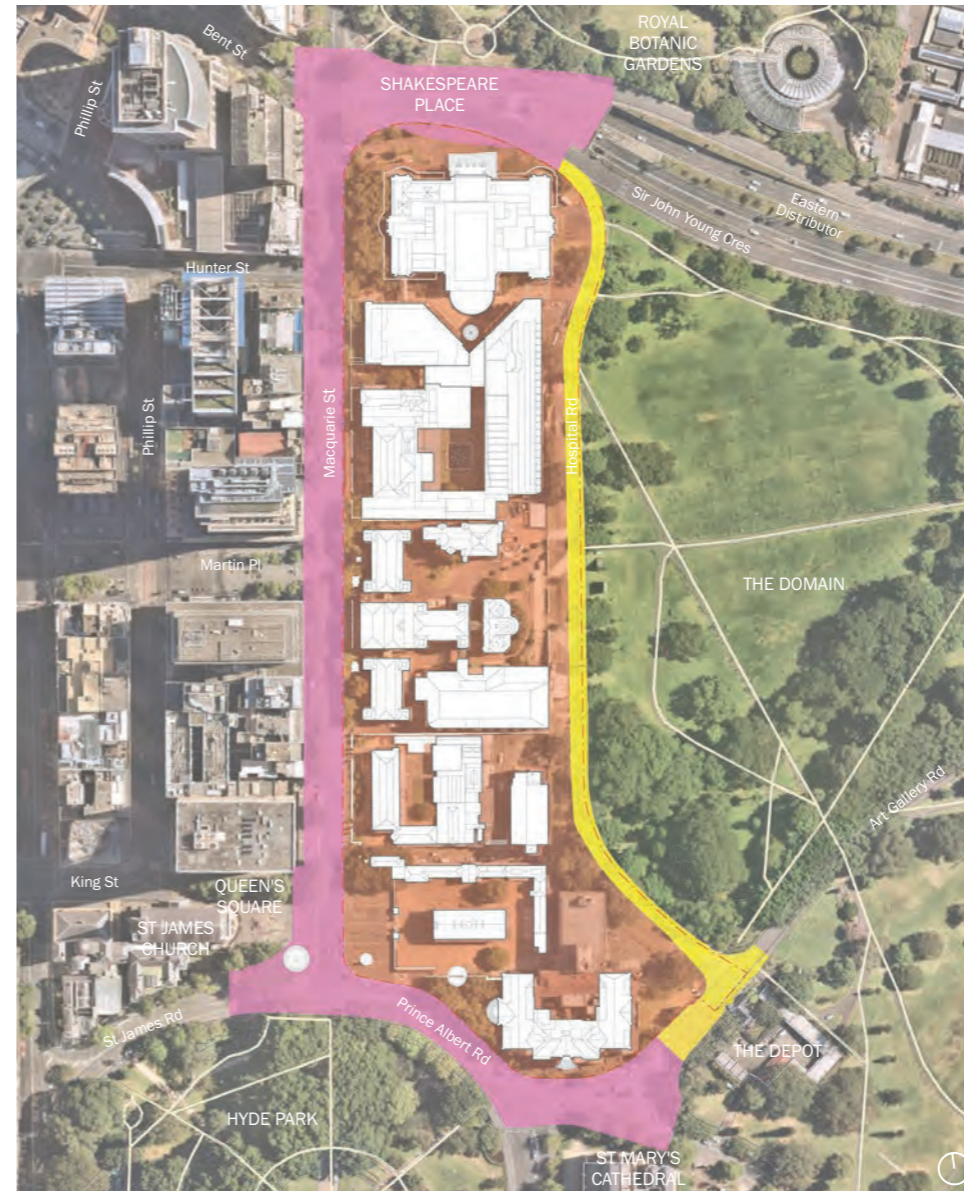
Lighting is a key consideration across the precinct, as a means of drawing people to the precinct, highlighting its architectural and landscape features, and creating a sense of safety and legibility.

## Requirements

- Lighting levels within public spaces, pedestrian connections and streets meet safety and accessibility standards
- Lighting design is integrated with cultural and historic expression, especially First Nations storytelling
- Lighting design is ensured to not impact on significant historic fabric
- Lighting design is integrated with public art, signage and wayfinding strategies
- Lighting systems minimise energy and material use, waste production and other environmental impacts
- Impacts of lighting on the Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain, especially more sensitive ecological and habitat areas, is minimised
- Programmable lighting for adaptability and curation during events is provided
- Specialist consultants engaged to develop lighting strategies and design
- Lighting along Hospital Road to be developed with the Royal Botanic Gardens and The Domain to accommodate heritage and fauna requirements

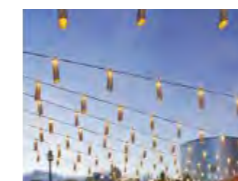
Lighting design to be in accordance with the lighting map and is to consider:

- Feature lighting of heritage buildings, especially along Macquarie Street and other street frontages
- Lighting at key entry points, way-finding and signage locations
- Light-based, interactive art installations and projections



## Lighting

	Study Area
	MSEP
	City of Sydney
	The Domain





# Security and Servicing

While the precinct has strict security and servicing requirements, these should be planned and designed to minimise their impact on the movement and experience of people using the precinct, heritage buildings and spaces.

## Requirements

- The specific security, safety and servicing requirements of each institution are met while considering broader place outcomes
- Where possible, these functions are accommodated within buildings and not within or adjacent to the public domain
- If located in the public domain, visual and acoustic screening is provided
- Security and loading spaces are consolidated to reduce their area requirements, the number and scale of vehicle entry points
- Visual impact of security devices (such as hostile vehicle mitigation) minimised by integration into public domain elements such as walls and seating
- Security and servicing arrangements during different modes of operation (including weekday vs weekend use, smaller gatherings and larger community events) are accommodated



