



PARRAMATTA RIVER CITY STRATEGY
DESIGN AND ACTIVATION PLAN

DETAILED REPORT

DRAFT

DRAFT ARTISTIC IMPRESSION

Image is indicative and is an artist impression only.

PARRAMATTA RIVER CITY STRATEGY DESIGN
AND ACTIVATION PLAN

Detailed Report

DRAFT



Sydney

21C Whistler Street
Manly NSW 2095
PO Box 1083 Manly NSW 1655
Ph +61 [0]2 9977 3853
Fax +61 [0]2 9976 5501
sydney@mcgregorcoxall.com

Melbourne

Level 3, 246 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
GPO Box 1634 Melbourne VIC 3000
Ph +61 [0]3 9999 1608
Fax +61 [0]3 8669 4414
melbourne@mcgregorcoxall.com

www.mcgregorcoxall.com
www.biocitystudio.com

ABN 17 082 334 290
© McGregor Coxall



.....
PARRAMATTA RIVER CITY STRATEGY DESIGN AND ACTIVATION PLAN

Prepared for Parramatta City Council by McGregor Coxall [Sydney]
with sub-consultant services provided by Royal Haskoning DHV, City Plan Heritage, Kayandel Archaeological Services, Steenson Varming, Morris Goding Accessibility Consultants, Alluvium Consulting

Proj No: 337SU **Report Contact:** Michael Cowdy

Status	Date	by	Checked
Initial Draft	19.02.14	NB	MC
Draft Report	23.06.14	NB	MC
Draft Report	28.07.14	NB	MC
Councillor Report	26.08.14	NB	MC
Consultation Report	01.10.14	NB	MC

Terminology

Abbreviation	Name
LEP	Local Environment Plan
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design

Figures

Figure 1.01 - Consultant Team	2
Figure 1.02 - Site Plan	3
Figure 2.01 - Sydney Context	6
Figure 2.02 - Western Sydney Context	7
Figure 2.03 - Arts and Cultural Uses	12
Figure 2.04 - Commercial Civic and Educational Uses	12
Figure 2.05 - Future Context	13
Figure 2.06 - Land Use	14
Figure 2.07 - Active and Dead Frontages	14
Figure 2.08 - Active Focal Points	15
Figure 2.09 - Recreation and Event Zones	15
Figure 2.10 - Figure Ground	16
Figure 2.11 - Existing Building Heights	16
Figure 2.12 - Gateway Arrival Points	17
Figure 2.13 - River Character	17
Figure 2.14 - Street Hierarchy	20
Figure 2.15 - Access and Parking	20
Figure 2.15 - Public Transport	21
Figure 2.16 - Pedestrian Links and Cycle Routes	21
Figure 2.17 - Heritage	22
Figure 2.18 - Aboriginal Cultural Significance	22
Figure 2.19 - Parramatta Terrace Sand	23
Figure 2.20 - Public Space	23
Figure 2.21 - Flooding	25
Figure 2.22 - LEP Land Use Zoning	26
Figure 2.24 - DCP Zoning - Street Frontage Heights	27
Figure 2.25 - Land Ownerships	27
Figure 3.01 - River City Strategy #1	31
Figure 3.02 - River City Strategy #2	31
Figure 3.03 - River City Strategy #3	32
Figure 3.04 - River City Strategy #4	32
Figure 3.05 - River City Strategy #5	33
Figure 3.06 - River City Strategy #6	33
Figure 3.07 - River City Strategy #7	34
Figure 3.09 - River City Strategy #9	35
Figure 3.10 - River City Strategy #10	35
Figure 4.01 - Parramatta River City plan	38
Figure 4.02 - Activation Plan	40
Figure 4.03 - Built Form & Structures Plan	42
Figure 4.04 - River Access and Egress Plan	44
Figure 4.05 - Level Plan	46
Figure 4.06 - Landscape Plan	48
Figure 4.07 - Environmental Initiatives Plan	50
Figure 4.08 - Lighting Plan	52
Figure 5.01 - River Quarter Plan	56
Figure 5.02 - Kings Quarter Plan	59
Figure 5.03 - Section AA Kings Quarter	60
Figure 5.04 - Section BB Kings Quarter	60
Figure 5.05 - Cultural Quarter	63
Figure 5.06 - Section CC Cultural Quarter	64
Figure 5.07 - Section DD Cultural Quarter	65
Figure 5.08 - City Quarter West	67
Figure 5.09 - Section EE City Quarter West	68
Figure 5.10 - Section FF City Quarter West	68
Figure 5.11 - City Quarter East	71
Figure 5.12 - Section GG City Quarter East	72
Figure 5.13 - Section HH City Quarter East	73
Figure 5.13 - Parramatta Quay	75
Figure 5.14 - Section II Parramatta Quay	76
Figure 5.15 - Section JJ Parramatta Quay	77

Contents

Executive Summary	vi
1.0 Introduction	2
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Site Location	2
1.3 Report Structure	2
1.4 Project Methodology	2
2.0 Analysing Parramatta River City	6
2.1 Sydney Context	6
2.2 Western Sydney Context	7
2.3 Planning Context	8
2.4 City Context	12
2.5 Future Context	13
2.6 Site Analysis	14
3.0 Project Principles & River City Strategies	30
3.1 Project Values	30
3.2 Ten Project Principles	30
3.3 Ten River City Strategies	30
4.0 Parramatta River City Plan	38
4.1 The Site Plan	38
4.2 Activation Plan	40
4.3 Built Form and Structures Plan	42
4.4 Access and Egress Plan	44
4.5 Level Plan	46
4.6 Landscape Plan	48
4.7 Environmental Initiatives Plan	50
4.8 Lighting Plan	52
5.0 River City Quarters	56
5.1 River Quarters	56
5.2 Kings Quarter	58
5.3 Cultural Quarter	62
5.4 City Quarter West	66
5.5 City Quarter East	70
5.6 Parramatta Quay	74
6.0 Recommendations	80
Recommendations	80
Appendix A - History of the River	84
Aboriginal History	84
European Settlement	84
Second CBD	84
Appendix B - Precinct Analysis	88
River Precincts	88
Appendix C - International Precedents	106
Introduction	106
HafenCity, Hamburg	106
River Lea, London	108
Berges Du Rhone, Lyon	109
Cheonggyecheon, Seoul	110
Activity Examples	111
Flood Mitigation Examples	111
Appendix D - Design Elements	114
River Square	114
Barry Wilde Bridge	116
City Beach	118
North Bank Terrace	120
Parramatta Quay	122
River Edge Detail	124

DRAFT

Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

The banks of Parramatta River have been inhabited for thousands of years, providing fresh water, food and transport for the Aboriginal clans that lived along its course. After Europeans arrived these activities continued, contributing to the growth of Parramatta City and development of Sydney.

The story of Parramatta City is interwoven with the river. It fed Australia's first successful agricultural development at Experiment Farm, helping to establish a bustling regional centre with a population greater than the settlement at Sydney Cove.

Like many other cities around the world, Parramatta has gradually turned its back on the river foreshore. Industrialisation and car-orientated town planning has led to Parramatta River's edges being engineered and disconnected from the surrounding urban structure.

The Parramatta River City Plan builds on regional and local planning instruments and studies previously undertaken by Council. It has been informed by a multi-disciplinary project team that comprises expertise in Flood Mitigation, European Heritage, Aboriginal Archaeology, Lighting, Water Sensitive Urban Design [WSUD] and Accessibility. It through this combination of disciplines that a thorough and well considered plan has been proposed.

Underpinning the River City Plan are a series of project principles and river city strategies [P30] that define the nature and parameters of the design response. These project principles and river strategies assist in achieving an integrated strategy and activation plan for the riverfront.

PARRAMATTA RIVER CITY PLAN

The River City Plan positions Parramatta River at the front and centre of Parramatta City Centre as redevelopment occurs. The plan proposes a world class public domain and a high quality collection of new buildings that are seamlessly knitted together by a dense network of accessible and active spaces.

A key unifying element within the river corridor is provided in the form of River Square which establishes a direct connection with Parramatta Square, the CBD's major public space. River Square is complemented by Parramatta Quay, the city's new improved ferry terminal. Linking these river spaces together are a series of active focal points that take the form of multi-functional terracing, event zones, a variety of land uses and new cultural landmarks.

This is all framed by a re-profiled river corridor that naturalises the river edge, improves accessibility to the river and responds to the river corridors flood characteristics. All these initiatives aim to encourage people to visit the waters edge and engage with Parramatta River.

The River City corridor is broken down into a series of distinctive river quarters that are bounded by Parramatta River's bridges. The River Quarters are;

- River Quarter 1: Kings Quarter
- River Quarter 2: Cultural Quarter
- River Quarter 3: City Quarter [West and East]
- River Quarter 4: Parramatta Quay

Key proposals within the River City Plan are annotated 1 to 14 on the adjacent plan.

1. Kings School

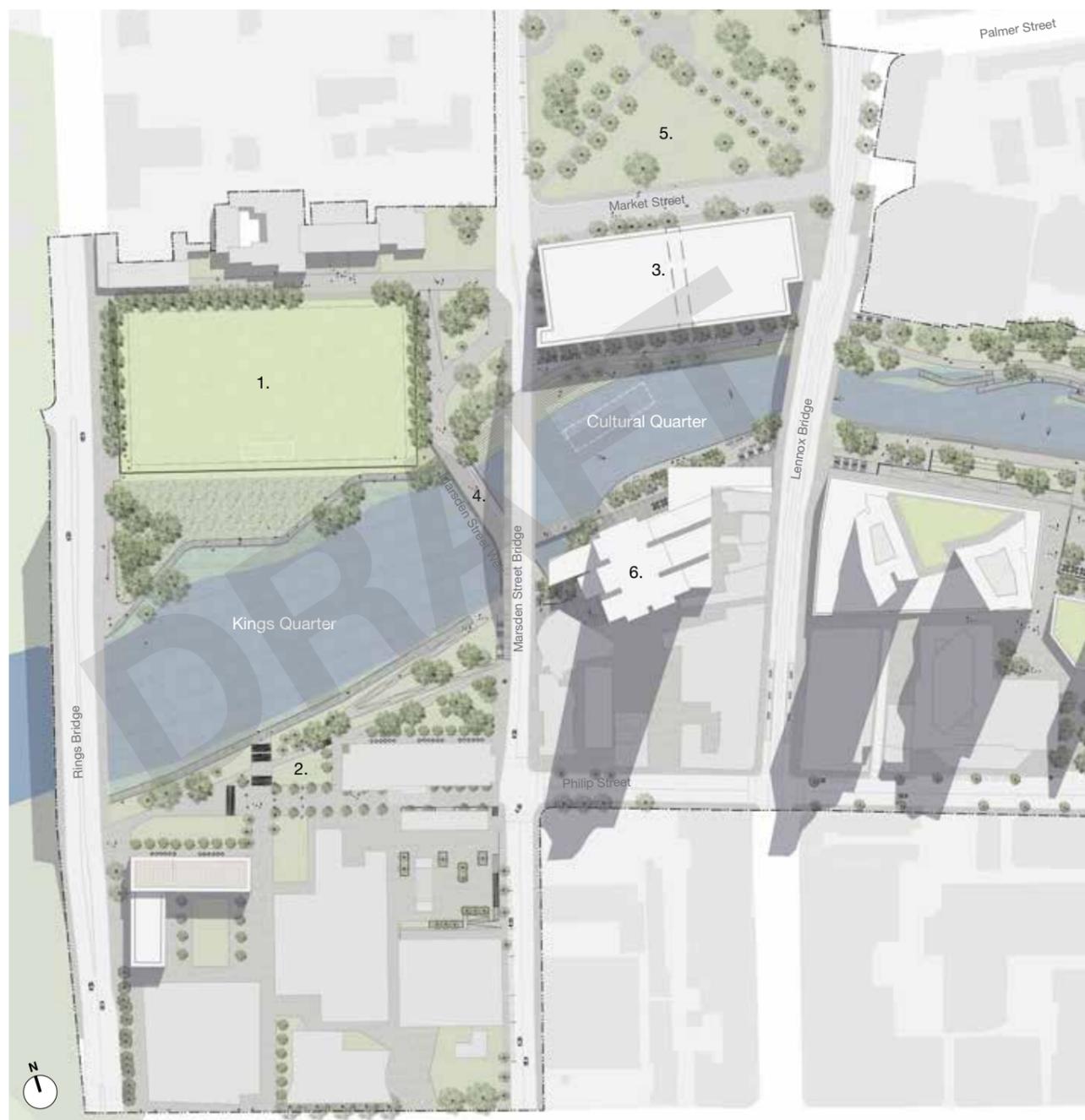
The Kings School precinct should be adaptively re-used to provide both a football training facility for the Parramatta Eels and public recreational space for the Parramatta community. Defining this new space would be multi-functional terraces, a primary wetland and an accessible network of footpaths that can link the precinct to the local stadium, Parramatta Park and river edge.

3. Riverside Theatre

A new Riverside Theatres would be proposed that fronts onto the river corridor providing a variety of active retail and cafe uses. A key initiative along the river corridor would be a Water Terrace that supports a range of outdoor cultural events.

5. Prince Alfred Park

Prince Alfred Park's current recreational function and historic character would be retained. A key initiative introduced to enhance the park's relationship with the Riverside Theatre would be the transformation of Market Street as a pedestrian plaza and shared space.



2. Justice Precinct

The Justice Precinct's riverside frontage would be re-addressed through active building edges and a network of footpaths that connect the Justice Precinct seamlessly to the river's edge, Parramatta Park and Riverside Tower.

4. Marsden Street Weir

Marsden Street Weir would retain its current function as a weir, however it could also provide a low level walkway that links the Kings School Precinct with the Justice Precinct and Riverside Tower. The weir would also be upgraded and enhanced through facade treatments establishing it as a feature in the riverside landscape.

6. Riverside Tower

The planned Riverside Tower will accommodate commercial, retail, a discovery centre and residential units. The adjacent public domain would be characterised by a retained riverside wall, a two tier deck and a variety of retail frontages.

7. Riverside Terrace

Riverside Terrace would be an accessible and usable public space along the north bank of the river catering for the day to day user and event goer. An upper level and lower level plaza along the northern and southern edge of the terraces should accommodate markets and other temporary initiatives.

9. Barry Wilde Bridge

An upper level and lower level bridge crossing would be designed to ensure easy pedestrian and cycle movement across Parramatta River, whilst accommodating boat movement under the bridges

11. North Bank Terrace

North Bank Terrace would be an accessible and usable public space along the north bank of the river adjacent to Charles Street Weir that caters for the day to day user and the event goer. A low level plaza located along the river edge can accommodate markets and other temporary initiatives.

13. Escarpment Boardwalk

The proposed Escarpment Boardwalk has the potential to unify the northbank of the river and ensure seamless continuation of the Parramatta Valley Cycleway through to Parramatta Park.



8. River Square

River Square would be the Parramatta's premier riverside public space linking directly to Parramatta Square and station through the Horwood Civic Link. It would be characterised by Australia's first Water Square a multi-functional space that can accommodate upto 10,000 people, a floating stage, various event functions, children's play and riverside swimming.

10. City Beach

City Beach would be Parramatta River City's beach-side destination providing a passive recreational space for the local people to relax, use and enjoy. Its positioning along the river corridor resonates with the river's aboriginal history, establishing an alternative riverside destination between River Square and Parramatta Quay.

12. Charles Street Weir

A newly constructed Charles Street Weir is recommended to allow seamless river access from the Escarpment Boardwalk to Parramatta Quay as well as retaining its function as a weir. Its circular design has the potential to form a symbolic relationship with Circular Quay, Sydney and establish the weir as a riverside landmark.

14. Parramatta Quay

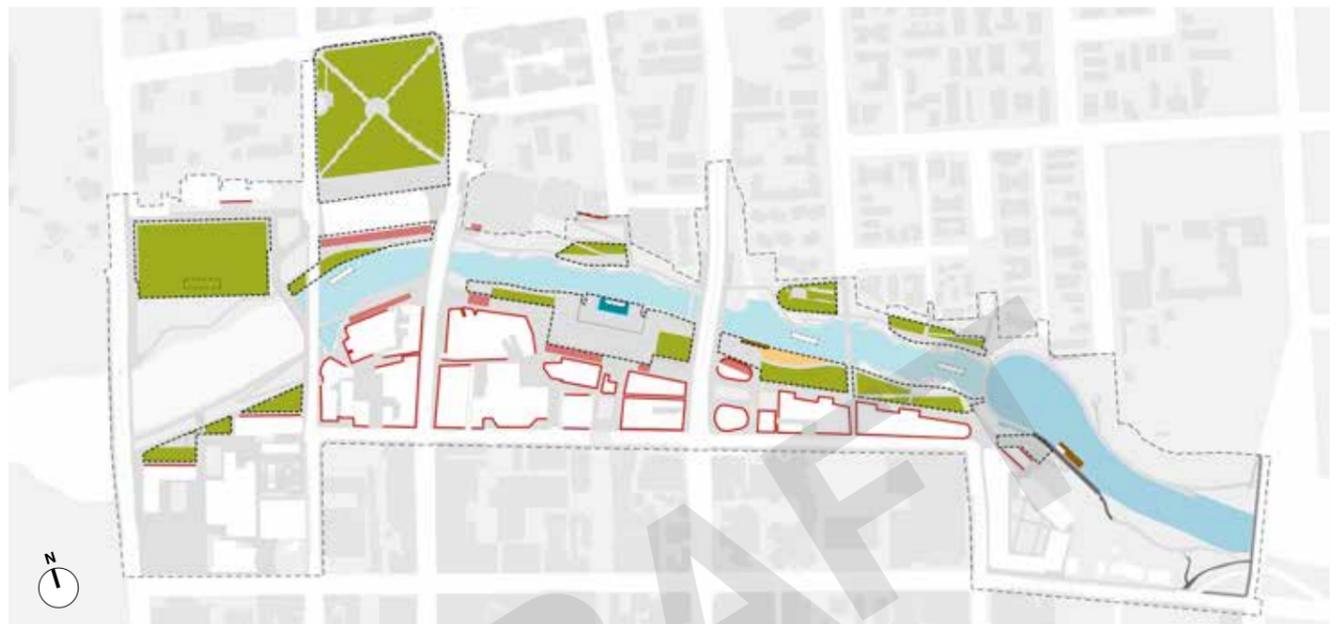
Parramatta Quay would be Parramatta City Centre's major ferry interchange connecting Sydney to Parramatta. Improved accessibility, cafe activation and a series of pedestrian plaza's ensure Parramatta Quay is identified as Parramatta City Centre's major river arrival point.

ACTIVATION PLAN

The Activation Plan provides a guiding framework to establish a strong active river corridor covering both the lower level foreshore through to the upper level city streets. The plan embeds four modes of activation along the Parramatta River: Building, Event, Water and Recreation to ensure an all year active river environment. These modes of activity are:

- **Building Activation** - All existing and future buildings along Parramatta River should activate the city and river at ground level;
- **Event Activation** - Event zones are designed to accommodate a diverse range of events through terraced seating and pedestrian plaza's;
- **Water Activation** - Water quality improvements should allow Parramatta River to be accessed and utilised by paddle boats, kayaks, outdoor cinema's and a multi-functional water square;
- **Recreational Activation** - Passive and recreational activities should be enhanced along the north and south bank through terraced spaces and open grass spaces;

- Legend
- Site Boundary
 - Focal Points
 - City Beach
 - Bunker Program (Flood Doors)
 - Water Activity - River
 - Water Activity - Harbour
 - Active Building Edge
 - Event Zone
 - Water Square



BUILT FORM AND STRUCTURES PLAN

The Built Form and Structures Plan suggests a number of principles to improve river address and guide future built form within the strategy area. It is noted that not all of the properties are currently in Council ownership, however the following are recommended for consideration as redevelopment of this area occurs. The four principles underpinning changes to built form are:

- **Cultural Landmark Buildings** - Changes to riverside theatre and a new aboriginal cultural centre are proposed to form cultural landmarks along the river,
 - **Arrival Landmark Buildings** - Landmark buildings are indicated in strategic locations to enhance sense of arrival;
 - **High Quality Building Frontages** - New and upgraded building frontages to address and activate the river corridor;
 - **Heritage Adaptive Re-use** - wherever possible heritage buildings should be enhanced and adaptively reused;
- Note:** Building form reflects future development potential and is indicative only.

- Legend
- Site Boundary
 - Cultural Landmark
 - Marker Building
 - Frontage
 - Heritage Adaptive Reuse
 - Retained Building
 - Proposed Building
 - Proposed Tower



ACCESS AND EGRESS PLAN

The Access and Egress Plan prioritises safe flood evacuation as well as a highly active and connected city river foreshore. The plan considers a well connected network of pedestrian and cycle routes that are supported by excellent service access and easy access to the various modes of public transport. The four main considerations are:

- **Shared/Cycle Movement** - A lower level riverside movement corridor ensures a seamless flow of pedestrian and cycle movement along Parramatta River;
- **Pedestrian Movement** - Pedestrian movement is maximised through an upper level walkway, laneway connections and Horwood Civic Link;
- **Access Points** - Universal access points are located at key points along the river corridor;
- **Public Transport** - A new bus interchange located on Charles Street should link directly with Parramatta Quay and a newly proposed light rail;

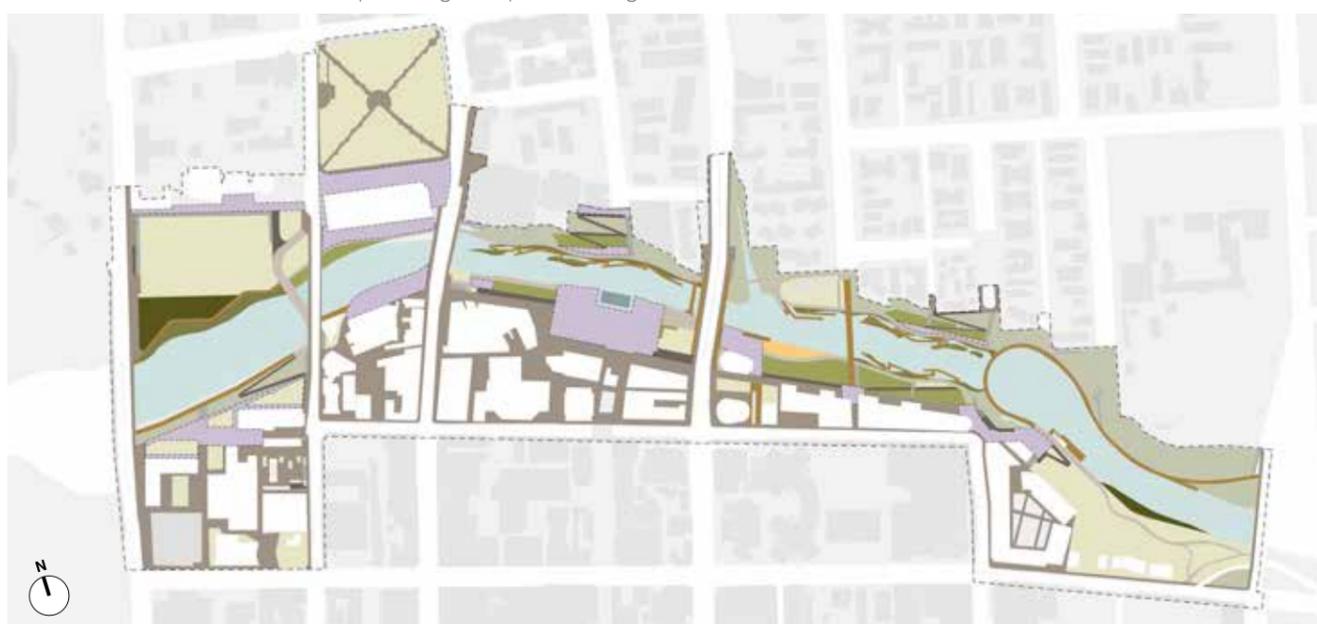


- Legend
- Site Boundary
 - Shared/Cycleway
 - Stair Movement
 - Ramp Movement
 - Vehicle Movement
 - Pedestrian
 - Service Access
 - Major Level Access Node
 - Vehicle Access Node

LANDSCAPE PLAN

The landscape plan aims to maximise space for events, activation and connectivity across the site. The plan is structured around a hierarchy of open spaces that deliver a varied and interesting public realm with the scale, structure and design of open spaces responding to their intended functions and to the land uses that border them. Key landscape components are:

- **Terraced Spaces** - Terraced spaces are located along the Parramatta River corridor providing adequate seating, passive and recreational spaces and event zones;
- **Pedestrian Plaza's** - High quality plaza spaces are located along the river corridor ensuring adequate public space for the local community, visitors and workers;
- **Riverside Public Domain** - The riverside public domain seamlessly connects the river quarters and adjacent context together;
- **Recreational Open Space** - Both existing and proposed open spaces are designed to support recreational and passive uses



- Legend
- Site Boundary
 - Softscape - Lawn
 - Natural Slope
 - River Terrace
 - Pedestrian Plaza
 - Hardscape - Upper Level
 - Hardscape - Lower Level
 - River Water Body
 - City Beach
 - Treated Water
 - Softscape - Wetland
 - Natural River Edge
 - Hardscape - Boardwalk or Bridge
 - Ramps
 - Stairs

ACCESS AND EGRESS PLAN
 TOP - Diagram
 LANDSCAPE PLAN
 BOTTOM - Diagram

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES PLAN

The Environment Initiatives Plan establishes a rejuvenated and cleansed river corridor that aims to improve Parramatta River’s water quality and natural environment. The plan considers primary wetlands, stormwater treatment systems, a multifunctional Water Square and a softening of the river corridor through riparian planting. Key considerations are;

- **Kings School Wetland** - A wetland located along the foreshore of King School is recommended to improve water quality downstream.
- **Stormwater Treatment System** - The Parramatta River City Plan embeds sustainable stormwater treatment systems at key strategic locations along Parramatta River corridor;
- **Water Square** - Potential to supply Water Square with treated flows from the River;
- **River Edge Riparian Planting** - Riparian planting is proposed at key locations along the river corridor to soften the river edge and provide habitat for native species.



Legend

- - - Site Boundary
- Kings School Wetland
- Stormwater Treatment System
- Water Square
- - - River Edge Riparian Planting

LIGHTING PLAN

The Lighting Plan provides a guide to the development of the City’s public domain lighting across the river-scape supporting the urban development, creating a unique night time identity and experience at a pedestrian level, and expressing the character of the revitalised City riverfront through lighting. Key principles are;

- **Key Destinations** - Establishment of a lighting hierarchy to differentiate major night time destinations;
- **Built Form and Structures** - Lighting to enhance built form, including facades, terraces, river infrastructure (weirs, bridges).
- **Flood Evacuation** - Lighting scheme to consider flooding and flood lines with robust lighting selection fit for purpose;
- **Movement Corridors** - Lighting to differentiate major night time corridors and connection zones;



Legend

- - - Site Boundary
- Key Destinations
- Built form and structures
- - - Flood Evacuation
- Movement Corridors

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the outcomes of the project process and look to assist Parramatta City Council in prioritising the future projects that can lead to the transformation of Parramatta River City. The proposed recommendations embody all the emerging outcomes of the project and ultimately aim to fulfil the project principles, river city strategies and river city plan proposed in this report document.

Design and Planning

The design approach to Parramatta River City Plan clearly demonstrates the design intent of the River City strategy. However, further work is required to deliver the strategies through to implementation. The following recommendations list the future work required to develop the design of the river city corridor.

- Review and update the LEP and DCP to ensure a realistic and developable outcome along the river corridor.
- All design concepts contained in the report should be further interrogated at the design development phase.
- Develop a governance and funding structure.

Infrastructure

Parramatta River City corridor is characterised by a number of bridges, weirs and streets. These major infrastructure elements form a key component into the revitalisation of the river and so further studies are required to test their capacity for both structural, aesthetic and functional changes. The following recommendations list the future work required to design develop the infrastructure along the river city corridor.

- A traffic, transport and parking study should be undertaken to test the future impact the strategy poses on the river corridor;
- The Barry Wilde Bridge and Marsden Street Bridge proposed pedestrian enhancements should be structurally assessed and further tested.

Community

Future projects that emerge from the Parramatta River Strategy and Activation Plan should involve regular engagement with stakeholders and the community. The following recommendations list the future work required to engage the community the river city corridor.

- Council to work with local landowners and business owners to support and promote the activation of both the public and private spaces.
- Council to work with the community to investigate the opportunities of temporarily activating the river corridor during implementation.
- Pilot activation projects should be identified that can encourage the regular use of the river corridor.

Accessibility

An accessibility review of Parramatta River City plan has been produced to analyse the provisions of disability design and recommend solutions with respect to the Disability Discrimination Act ['DDA'], Building Code of Australia [BCA] and AS1428 series. The following recommendations list the access considerations required in further design development of the river city corridor.

- Consideration to be given to providing handrails at the ramps located along the river corridor.
- Consideration to be given to providing rest seating at maximum intervals of 60 metres alongside the ramp between the Marsden Street Bridge and the southern bank of the Parramatta River to assist people with mobility impairment.
- Consideration to be given to providing ample wheelchair seating areas for resting, dining and viewing on the southern bank of the Parramatta River.
- Provision of passenger lift access from Philip/Charles Streets to the ferry wharf is strongly recommended.

Flooding

TEXT TO BE ADDED

Aboriginal Archaeology

TEXT TO BE ADDED

European Heritage

It is considered that the over-arching Parramatta River City Strategy responds adequately to the constraints and opportunities of the study area in particular those related to the heritage matters. There may be some minimal impacts but these should be considered and resolved during the detailed strategies for individual item sites or future opportunity sites identified in the McGregor Coxall Strategy. Key heritage recommendations are as follows;

- Existence of a large number of heritage items of both local and state significance along the riverside and in the immediate vicinity
- Riverside study area is within the visual curtilage of the Old Government House & Domain, a World Heritage Site, therefore any future developments will require consideration of visual impact to the item.
- Bridges and weirs are part of the archaeological zones and heritage listings and so future designs should consider each weirs significance.
- View corridors identified under Planisphere, 2012 study by the Council will also have to be considered.

DRAFT