



TOGA Central

Heritage Interpretation Strategy

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FRD

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COVER

Parcels Post Office and Central Railway Station,
George Street Sydney, 1930s
City of Sydney Archives

Freeman Ryan Design acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the land on which TOGA Central will be situated. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and connection to these lands.

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Introduction

Aerial view of Central Railway Station, Sydney 1947
NSW State Archives and Records

Executive Summary

Freeman Ryan Design Pty Ltd (FRD) has been engaged by TOGA Central Developments LTD to prepare a Heritage Interpretation Strategy for the former Parcels Post Office building on Railway Square, Block C, including the Adina Apartment Hotel and Henry Deane Plaza, of Central Precinct's Western Gateway Sub-Precinct.

The Heritage Interpretation Strategy aims to reflect the cultural and historical significance of the site generally as well as the Parcels Post Office building which has stood on the site for over a century. It responds to the development proposal for the site and the needs of the visitors and end users.

The development of the interpretation will be guided by research into the site's history and a review of the key documents and reports that have been specified in a subsequent section of this document.

Within this Heritage Interpretation Strategy, a suite of themes has been identified, which encompass the stories associated with the site and organises them into a thematic framework. This Heritage Interpretation Strategy complements and is continuous with the interpretation proposals that are presently being developed for Block A and Block B in the Western Gateway sub-precinct within the Central Station precinct. The framework offers both site specific themes, as well as themes that are associated with the wider Central Precinct.

The proposed thematic structure of the interpretation proposes the following four themes:

The Lie of the Land

This theme focuses on the characteristics of the landscape prior to European colonisation, its meaning to First Nations people, and following colonisation, the uses of the land prior to the development of Central Station. This theme will be applied to multiple blocks within the precinct.

A Very Fine Building

This theme describes the architectural values, design characteristics and historical significance of the Parcels Post Office building. It explains how the building operated and its evolving function over time. This theme is specific to Block C and is not applied to other parts of the precinct.

Lines of Communication

This theme examines the building's role within the postal and railway systems and its contribution to the economic development of the city and the nation. The name - an allusion to railway lines - invites comparison to other 'lines' of communication such as Aboriginal walking tracks and roads, telegraphs and telephone connections. This theme will be applied to multiple blocks within the precinct.

Connecting Country

This theme gives voice to Aboriginal perspectives on the landscape. The name of this theme also alludes to the important role the site has played as a place of human connection, exchange and movement throughout the landscape. This theme seeks to embed an understanding of and respect for country into the overall heritage interpretation. Along with the landscape design proposal and public artwork strategy, this theme will promote the reconnection of the built environment with country. This theme will be applied to multiple blocks within the precinct.

This Heritage Interpretation Strategy is the starting point for the development of the interpretation project. It does not propose specific interpretation solutions. These will be put forward in a subsequent Heritage Interpretation Plan, which will be prepared following consultation with the client, architects, consent authorities and other significant stakeholders.

Introduction

The former Parcels Post building is the key feature of the TOGA Central site. It will be the visual anchor of the Western Gateway sub-precinct, and offer the city a vibrant destination that draws on the character and significant heritage of the area.

TOGA Central, located as part of the Western Gateway sub-precinct, will offer a vibrant mixed use development including highly flexible workspace, a premium hotel, spa and conferencing facilities, innovative co-working spaces and a diverse and vibrant retail offer including individual retail tenancies, a supermarket and a rooftop bar. TOGA central will cater to visitors and workers of the new technology precinct as well as tourists visiting Sydney, and become a welcoming destination for the wider community, attracting residents, workers, and visitors.

The site is identified as a place of historical and cultural significance. Multiple heritage listings highlight the values and attributes of the building, and guide how the site may be managed in the future. The site is also significant in its relation to Aboriginal Country which underpin the narrative presented throughout the interpretation.

The HI Strategy aims to:

- Provide a high-level thematic structure that allows for the detailed development of a range of engaging stories to be developed in the subsequent detailed planning stages.
- Provide a Curatorial Vision to guide the conceptual framework for any future Interpretation works
- Allow for potential synergies with neighbouring sites within the Western Gateway Precinct
- Conceptualise a suite of appropriate design opportunities aligning with the building architecture, landscape and public realm design vision for the development
- Recommend a variety of different physical expressions of interpretation appropriate to the site and built spatial opportunities
- Communicate in a range of ways to best embrace the broad ranging audience anticipated, inclusive of all within TOGA Central and those that pass through the site.

- Provide engaging experiences for people that will encourage curiosity and further heritage investigation
- Embed the Designing with Country Framework seamlessly into the Interpretation
- Be reflective of the collaboration made with the client and consultant team to firmly establish the Interpretation as an integral component to the scheme, for which there is a confirmed commitment to maintain.

Heritage Interpretation may encompass a variety of physical, and digital, expressions. As well as being embedded in the building architecture and interiors, the landscape and planting, the interpretation may be woven subtly through the fabric of the public realm.

FRD are part of the team of Key Consultants contributing to the TOGA Central Site. Other Key Consultants FRD are collaborating with include:

- Client – TOGA Group
- Architect – Bates Smart
- Town Planner – Urbis
- Connecting with Country – Cox Inall Ridgeway
- Landscape Architect – Arcadia
- Conservation Plan and Heritage Impact Statement – Urbis
- Public Art – Tilt Industrial Design
- Cultural Values – Waters Consultancy

Statement of Significance

The Parcels Post Office building is significant as a major institutional building and a fine example of the Federation Academic Classical style of architecture. It is also significant due to its association with the Government Architect's Office and notable figures such as Gorrie McLeish Blair and Walter Liberty Vernon.

Its prominent location at Railway Square, at the junction of a number of major roads and a major rail terminus has meant that the building has become a landmark in that part of the city since its completion in 1913.

It reflects the major importance of railways and the postal system, the integration of the two, and their contribution to the economic development of Sydney and New South Wales. Its proximity to the major department stores that were once concentrated in the area is one example of this.

The proportions, quality and grandeur of the building illustrate the prosperity and economic growth that characterised the period in which it was constructed.

As one of the first public buildings executed on this scale by the Commonwealth Government, it also illustrates the rising role of the federal government.

It is also an example of significant innovation in architectural and engineering practices, as an early example of the use of a concrete and steel frame construction – a technique which maximised the internal floor space available within the building.

The building was the principal main parcels sorting office in Sydney from its opening in 1913 until the 1960s, when these operations were transferred to Redfern.

The building maintains its heritage significance notwithstanding the removal of the majority of its original internal fabric.



View of Parcels Post Office and Railway Square
OCP Architects, Heritage Report – Atlassian YHA, Railway Square (2017)

References

This Heritage Interpretation Strategy has been informed by a review of the following key documents:



ARCHITECTURE AND PRECINCT PLANNING
<i>TOGA Cultural Values Report</i> , Waters Consultancy, December 2021
<i>TOGA Central: Western gateway sub-precinct development Block C: Connecting with Country Framework</i> , Cox Inall Ridgway, May 2022
<i>Adina Central, Former Parcels Post Office, 2 Lee Street, Haymarket Mixed-Use Redevelopment</i> , Urbis, June 2022
<i>TOGA Central Draft Public Art Strategy</i> , Tilt, May 2022
<i>TOGA Central, Draft Public Art Plan Rev 2</i> , Tilt, June 2022
<i>TOGA Central_Draft SSDA Report</i> , Bates Smart, July 2022 Draft A
<i>TOGA Central_SSDA Draft Landscape Report</i> , Arcadia July 2022
<i>Design Guide - Western Gateway Sub-precinct</i> , Transport for New South Wales, September 2021
<i>Design Guide for Heritage</i> , Heritage Council of NSW, Government Architect New South Wales, 2019
<i>Draft Connecting with Country</i> , Government Architect New South Wales, 2020

HERITAGE PLANNING
<i>Former Parcels Post Office, Railway Square Heritage Interpretation Strategy</i> , Godden Mackay Logan, September 1999
<i>Central Precinct Heritage Framework</i> , Tonkin, Zulaikha, Greer, June 2021
<i>Central Precinct Renewal Conservation Management Plan for Transport for NSW</i> , Artefact, May 2022
<i>Conservation Management Plan, Adina Hotel (Former Parcels Post), 2 Lee Street, Haymarket</i> , Urbis, July 2022

HISTORICAL CONTEXT
<i>Benevolent Society and Asylum</i> , Dictionary of Sydney, 2008, http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/benevolent_society_and_asylum
<i>A Century of Central: Sydney's Central Railway Station 1906 to 2006</i> , Robert F. McKillop, D. Ellsmore, J. Oakes, Australian Railway Historical Society, 2009
<i>Thematic History of the NSW Railways</i> , Robert F. McKillop, Office of Rail Heritage, 2009
'Central Railway Station', <i>Dictionary of Sydney</i> , Mark Dunn, 2008, http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/central_railway_station
'Devonshire Street Cemetery', <i>Dictionary of Sydney</i> , Lisa Murray, 2019, http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/devonshire_street_cemetery ,
<i>Sydney's Central</i> , J. Oakes, Australian Railway Historical Society, 2007
<i>125 Years of the Sydney to Parramatta Railway</i> , R. G. Preston, NSW Rail Transport Museum, 1980

HERITAGE LISTINGS
<i>Sydney Terminal and Central Railway Station Group</i> , New South Wales State Heritage Register, Item Number 01255
<i>Central Railway Station and Sydney Terminal Group</i> , Transport for New South Wales Section 170 Register, Item Number SHI#4801296
<i>Central Railway Station group</i> , City of Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012, Item no. 1824
<i>The Former Parcels Post Office including retaining wall, early lamp post and building interior</i> , City of Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2012, Item no. 855
<i>Medina Executive Apartments Former Parcels Post Office</i> , Australian Institute of Architects, Item No. 4700668
<i>Central Station and the Sydney Terminal Group</i> National Trust of Australia

Consent Requirements

To meet consent requirements, this HIS seeks to address and identify opportunities for the presentation of the history of the site and surrounds and consider the other sites within the Western Gateway.

This also includes addressing aboriginal and non-aboriginal themes, interpretive opportunities and presenting the likely archaeological significance of the site and immediate surrounds. This strategy will outline our approach in developing site specific stories and also developing common thematic content across the 3 development blocks in the Western Gateway precinct.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the following guides:

- Western Gateway Sub-Precinct Design Guide
- Interpreting Heritage Places Items Guidelines

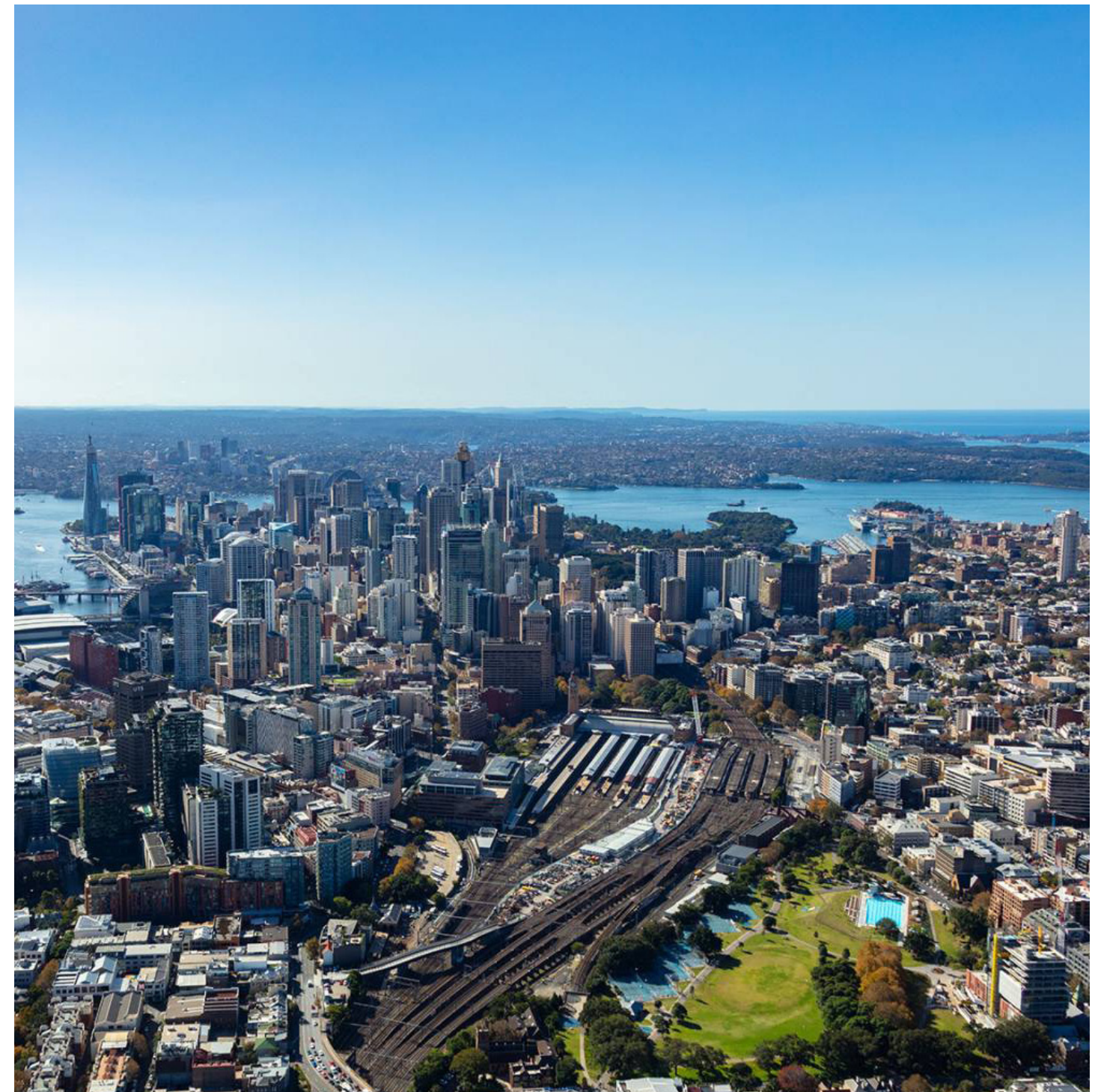
Please see below, the relevant extract Point (3) from the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct Design Guide pg 22 requesting Heritage Interpretation Strategy for the Precinct:

Design guidance

- (1) *A Statement of Heritage Impact is to accompany any future DA for new buildings within the sub-precinct and is to be prepared in accordance with the NSW Heritage Manual 'Statement of Hertiage Impact.' It should demonstrate an understanding of the heritage and cultral values of the place and include consideration of the Western Gateway sub-precinct as a whole, and the wider Central Precinct.*

- (2) *A Conservation Management Plan is to accompany any future DA for new development located on Block A and is to be prepared in accodrance with the NSW Heritage Manual 'COnservation Management Documents'.*
- (3) *Any future DA for new buildings within the sub-precinct is to be accompanied by a Heritage Interpretation Strategy that identifies opportunities for the presentation of the history of the site and surrounds and consideres other HIPs prepared for sites within the Western Gateway. It is recommended that a program of Aboriginal ceremony by deveoped to re-awaken the landscape as part of the proposal. This is to include Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal themes such as living cultural practices, stories (including Stolen generation stories), social values, interpretive opportunities, measures and locations and present the findings of any desktop analysis of the likely archaeollogical significance of the site and the immediate surrounds, All documentation is to be prepared in accordance with Interpreting Heritage Places and Items Guidelines.*

It is noted that the HIS is one of the many reports required as part of the SSDA for TOGA Central.



Central Precinct
Architectus



See list 50/7 - 8 January 1850
10 January 1850

Elizabeth St
Castlereagh St
Campbell Street
Hay Street
Pitt St
Sussex Street

Cattle
Market
Hay and Corn Market

Albion Street
Elizabeth Street
Devonshire Street
Cleveland Street

Church of England
BURIAL GROUNDS
Trinitarian
Roman Catholic
Presbyterian
Methodist
Anglican

Cleveland Paddocks not to be alienated vide C.S.B.C. 1849-50
By Act of the 18th of April 1850 - the Cleveland Paddocks cannot be made a Reserve for Public Use but the portion of land to be alienated without full previous sanction of the Governor is to be reserved for public use

Centre line of Railway
Signal Station
St Paul's Church

George Street
Harris Street
Paranatta Street

SYDNEY RAILWAY
Plan
of the Grounds in the
City of Sydney
Railway Station and Works

Scale.
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Chains

Mr Terry Hughes
Cleveland House
Carters Barracks
Benevolent Asylum
Christ's Church

George Street
Sussex Street
DARLING HARBOUR

REFERENCE
Grounds proposed to be appropriated for the Railway, colored Green
Grounds remaining in possession of the Crown, colored Yellow

Site History

Sydney Railway plan of the grounds in the City of Sydney proposed to be appropriated for Railway Station and Works, 1841
NSW State Archives and Records

Contents of the portion of Land required for Railway

	A	X	P
In the portion No 1	4	1	25
2	0	2	5
3	2	0	22

Timeline

Prior to colonisation	The site acts as an important place for gathering, exchange and travel across country for a number of Aboriginal peoples.
1789	Construction begins on Parramatta Road.
1819	The Carters Barracks building is constructed.
1820	The Benevolent Society Asylum building is constructed.
1820	The Devonshire Street Cemetery is consecrated.
1821	A toll gate for Parramatta Road is built at the junction of George and Pitt Streets.
1835	A debtors prison is opened at the Carters Barracks building.
1848	The Sydney Female Refuge opens in a building north of the Benevolent Society Asylum.
26 September 1855	Trains begin operating from the first Central Station, with a frontage on Devonshire Street.
September 1855	The Darling Harbour to Sydney Yards line begins operation, conveying goods between the waterfront and the Sydney to Parramatta Railway line.
October 1855	The first mail and parcels are carried by rail in New South Wales.
29 June 1869	The Mortuary station is opened.
December 1870	The first ‘travelling post offices’ are introduced to New South Wales railways.
1874	The second Central Station is completed, on the site of the first.
1901	The Benevolent Society Asylum is demolished to make way for the new Central Station.
1901	The exhumation of bodies begins at the Devonshire Street Cemetery in preparation for the construction of the new Central Station building.
30 April 1902	Construction begins on the third (current) Central Station, on the site of the Devonshire Street cemetery.
August 1906	Central Station is completed and begins operations.

July 1908	The Postmaster-General and Chief Railway Commissioner for New South Wales agree to a portion of land at Central Station being leased to allow the development of the Parcels Post Office
June 1910	Plans are prepared for the first stage of the Parcels Post Office
31 May 1911	Construction on the Parcels Post Office begins
29 November 1913	The Parcels Post Office is officially opened
6 December 1913	The Parcels Post Office begins operations.
1 November 1933	A post office service commences at the building. In addition to its existing parcels handling function, the office provides money order and postal notes; registration of letters; sale of postage stamps and acceptance of telegrams
1938	The Mortuary Station ceases its function as the departure point for funeral trains.
Mid 1940s	A training school for postal clerks and telegraphists is established in the building
1962	Platforms 1, 2 and 3 are lengthened to accommodate longer interstate trains, notably the Southern Aurora.
1965	Parcels handling functions are progressively transferred away from the Parcels Post Office building to the mail exchange in Redfern.
25 November 1988	The New South Wales railways cease parcel transport operations.
1993	Australia Post ceases its activities at Railway Square.
1996	The Darling Harbour freight line ceases operation.
1999	<p>A program of conservation works is undertaken on the building, specifically the restoration of stonework (including sandstone and trachyte), brickwork, steel windows, rainwater goods and other metalwork.</p> <p>The building’s interior is almost completely remodelled with its fit out as an apartment hotel. A two storey mansard roof is added to the building to increase the floor space available.</p>
2000	The adaptive reuse of the Parcels Post Office building begins its function as a hotel
2022	Proposal of Technology Precinct and Western Gateway

Historical Summary

The history of the site may be separated into four distinct phases of use, which will each be outlined in turn.



Historical Summary

Indigenous occupation

The Aboriginal people of the area were highly mobile, taking advantage of different natural resources throughout the region according to their needs and to seasonal variations in the natural offerings available. The lands surrounding Sydney Harbour provided an abundance of foods, such as shellfish and fish as well as figs, berries and game. The observance of significant ceremonies and cultural rites was another reason for the mobility of Aboriginal populations in the region. Aboriginal occupation of the site may have included camping and the construction of temporary shelters and other structures. Archaeological investigations have revealed a number of examples of stone tools used by the Gadigal.

There were around 30 clan groups living within what is today known as the Sydney metropolitan area. Collectively, they were known as the Eora. The group associated with the area now occupied by Central Station were the Gadigal. It is believed that between 2,000 and 3,000 people occupied the Sydney region prior to colonisation. They occupied an area bounded by present day South Head, Darling Harbour, Botany Bay and the southern coastline of Sydney harbour. Archaeological evidence has established the presence of Aboriginal people in the Sydney region for at least 10,000 years prior to European settlement.

The site of the building is at the meeting point of a number of Aboriginal tracks throughout the Sydney region. These were important channels for the movement of people, ideas and resources for Aboriginal people. The site is at a point of overlap for a number of different Aboriginal groups

from the Sydney region, namely the Wangal, Gadigal and Kameygal clans. Therefore, it was an important place of communication between clans. A camp site used by Aboriginal people also existed in an area to the south west of the site.

Following the beginning of the colonisation effort in 1788, there were many attempts at intercultural understanding and trade between colonists and the Aboriginal inhabitants of the Sydney region. However overall, colonisation resulted in a fundamental disruption to Aboriginal peoples' way of life.

The Gadigal suffered an extraordinary toll in the early stages of colonisation. It is estimated that an epidemic of smallpox in 1789 resulted in the death of between 50 and 70 per cent of Aboriginal people in the Sydney region. Of the 60 members of the Gadigal clan, just three survived the epidemic.

Notwithstanding the disruption to the lives of Aboriginal people in the area, many practices endured. Writing in 1793, David Collins recorded:

“The natives who lived about Sydney appeared to place the utmost confidence in us, choosing a clear spot between the town and the brickfield for the performance of any of their rites and ceremonies; and for three evenings the town had been amused with one of their spectacles.”

The use of the site as a place of ceremony and shelter continued until the early 19th century. According to Collins, it served as “a place whence they derived so many comforts and so much shelter in bad weather”. The Cleveland Paddocks was one of a number of camp sites for Aboriginal

people. This site on the periphery of the town would later become the site of Central Station.

The expansion of the colony made it increasingly difficult for the Aboriginal people of the Sydney region to continue their traditional, hunting, food gathering fishing and cultural practices. Competition for natural resources resulted in violent conflict in the Sydney region between Aboriginal people and colonists – especially in the first four decades of colonisation.

With the expansion of the colony and the dispossession of Aboriginal people throughout New South Wales, an urban community of Aboriginal people began to develop. Notwithstanding the traumatic disruption to traditional ways of life wrought by colonisation, a strong Aboriginal community continues in the Sydney region today. Close to the Central Station precinct, the Redfern-Eveleigh area in particular has long been a focal point for this community.

Historical Summary

Early colonial period

The site was on the outskirts of Sydney town in the early years of settlement. The area was characterised by scrub covered sand dunes and wetlands, rendering it unsuitable for farming activities.

A number of early attempts were made by European settlers to document the language spoken by Aboriginal people in the Sydney region. The most notable was that of William Dawes in collaboration with cultural informant and Eora woman, Patyegarang.

The first major development of the area by Europeans was associated with the construction of Parramatta Road. This construction involved widespread land clearing by convict labourers between 1789 and 1791. The road quickly became the most important means of connection between Sydney and Parramatta – the two largest settlements in the colony. A toll gate was built at the junction of Pitt Street and George Street, to collect tolls to provide for the ongoing maintenance of the road. Parramatta Road, George Street and Oxford Street are among the roads in this area that are believed to have originally been tracks created by Aboriginal people. The area represented the official 'town limits' of Sydney and the principal gateway for land transport between Sydney, Parramatta and the interior of the colony.

Another significant development of the area in the early colonial period was the production of bricks and pottery in an area known as Brickfields or Brickfield Hill. The brickmaking operation at Brickfield Hill provided most of the bricks required for the development of Sydney until the middle of

the 19th century. By the 1840s, the brickmaking there became an obstacle to the growth of the city and brickmaking facilities emerged in other parts of the city. The clearing of native vegetation such as blackbutts, bloodwoods, angophoras and banksias in the area destabilised sand dunes, which began to encroach on the city, engulfing houses, roads and fences. The sandy winds that originated from the area were known as 'brickfielders'. Early maps of the area by French naturalist Charles Alexandre Lesueur indicate that hanging gallows were located in the Brickfields area.

In 1819-20 a building known as the Carters' Barracks was constructed on the corner of what is known today as Eddy Avenue and Pitt Street, adjacent to the Benevolent Society Asylum. The building was intended to serve primarily as accommodation for 200 male convicts working as carters at the brickfields. It also contained a dormitory for 100 convict boys until 1835. In 1823, a treadwheel was installed at the barracks, and was used as a mill for grinding flour. Between 1835 and 1843 the building saw use as a debtors' prison. The cessation of this function is attributed to the overcrowding of debt prisons and the ultimate abolition of imprisonment as a punishment for debt. By around 1854, the building had been converted to use as a police barracks. By 1887, the Barracks included headquarters for the mounted police, bedrooms for police, dining facilities and a sitting room and library for their use. The complex also included training facilities and an armoury where guns, swords and bayonets were stored.

By 1820, the city's first burial ground (on a site now occupied by Sydney Town Hall) had surpassed its capacity and had reached a state of considerable disrepair. In 1818, Governor Macquarie had set aside a block of land on the edge of the town close to the Brickfields to become the new burial ground. It was consecrated in 1820. Originally known as the Sandhills Cemetery, it later became known as the Devonshire Street cemetery. By 1845, six religious denominations had separate allotted grounds within the cemetery. By 1865, the cemetery had reached its capacity and no new burials were made there. Notable figures interred in the cemetery included Cora Gooseberry, Murrore-dial woman and cultural knowledge keeper; John Dunn the bushranger; Mary Reibey the merchant, ship owner and trader; Michael Dwyer, Irish convict and leader of the Irish Rebellion of 1798 and John Hume the architect.

In 1820, the Benevolent Society Asylum was constructed on the site now partly occupied by the Parcels Post Office. The charity was supported largely through private donations and provided shelter, food and medical assistance to those in need – particularly married women, pregnant women, older men and families. The building opened on 12 October 1821 and accommodated around 50 people at that time. The Asylum operated in a 'workhouse' model, whereby those accommodated there would provide labour to nearby industries as a means of supporting themselves. The facility soon became overcrowded and subsequent extensions and additional buildings allowed the accommodation of between 500 and 1,000 people by the 1840s. Improvements and extensions made to the building in 1831,

1839, 1849, 1855 and 1874. The transfer of male inmates to Liverpool Hospital in 1851 eased the overcrowding and allowed the institution to focus its resources on women and children. By the 1890s, the premises were in a poor state and the society was relocated its operations to Glebe and Paddington in 1901 to make way for the construction of Central Station.

In 1848, the Sydney Female Refuge began operating from a building to the north of the Asylum. The society aimed to rehabilitate prostitutes under a strict Evangelical moral code and encouraged a minimum stay of 18 months, over which the women would be taught needlework and laundering.

Historical Summary

Railway use

In the 1840s, the first proposals for a railway within the colony of New South Wales emerged in response to the rapid proliferation of railways throughout Britain and the economic benefits it yielded. The development of railways would accelerate the economic development of the inland regions of the colony. In 1848, the Sydney Railway Company was formed and in 1849 it applied to the government for four blocks of land between Hay and Cleveland streets to construct a Sydney Railway terminal. Instead, the Company was granted land between Devonshire and Cleveland Streets in an area known as the 'Cleveland Paddocks' which had hitherto been used to rest horses and bullocks that were used to transport goods into an out of Sydney.

In 1855, the first Sydney Station opened as the terminus of a railway between Sydney and Parramatta. The station was a simple and temporary structure – a corrugated iron shed providing shelter over a single timber platform. A branch line extended from the railway through a cutting known as the 'Darling Dive', towards the waterfront at Darling Harbour. This would serve as a vital piece of economic infrastructure for over a century. The Darling Dive remains the oldest railway tunnel in Australia.

As railway operations intensified and the network expended, so did the station – an engine shed, carriage shed and goods shed were completed in 1856. A sandstone engine house was built in 1866. The development of the station stimulated the growth of this part of Sydney. The flow of commuters through the area prompted the constructions of shops and departments stores.

The opening of the Mortuary Station on Regent Street in June 1869 created a link between metropolis and the Rookwood Necropolis. Trains carrying mourners and coffins departed the station and collected passengers on the way to the cemetery. The Mortuary Station was therefore an important place in the lives of many Sydneysiders, as the point of departure from the city and from life itself. This ornately decorated gothic building was constructed from sandstone and topped by a bell turret. The building served this funerary function until 1938, after which the station was used for the loading of horses and dogs onto rail cars.

The first, temporary station was replaced in 1874 by a more substantial building of brick and sandstone, designed in a neo-classical style with a frontage on Devonshire Street. Further growth of the railway system throughout New South Wales and the development of a suburban railway network within Sydney in the 1880s and 1890s necessitated the station complex undergoing almost constant expansion and evolution from the time of its completion.

Various operational issues made the station inefficient and by 1891 a Royal Commission was established to investigate the replacement of the station and the extension of the railway network across Sydney Harbour. An economic downturn stalled any progress on the project for several years, until 1897. The approved proposal brought the railway closer to the city, across Devonshire Street and required the demolition of the Benevolent Society Asylum, Devonshire Street Cemetery, Police Barracks and Christ

Church Parsonage. In 1901, work began to exhume graves from the cemetery. Representatives of the deceased were allowed two months to arrange for the exhumation and relocation of bodies from the cemetery, at government expense.

The construction of the present (third) Central Railway station began in 1902 to a design prepared by Government Architect Walter Liberty Vernon. The first stage of the station (consisting of the Grand Concourse, booking hall, waiting rooms, dining rooms, refreshment rooms and parcels shed) was completed and operations began from the new station began on 4 August, 1906. A defining feature of the design of the new building was the separation of functions - the flow of passengers and the flow of goods and technical services was to be kept separated to the greatest extent possible.

In 1910, design work began on the Parcels Post Office, which was completed in 1913. A more detailed account of the building's individual history is provided below.

The second stage of construction at Central Station was undertaken between 1915 and 1921, and included the completion of the station's iconic clocktower.

The rail yards at Central Station were rationalised in the 1950s and 1960s with the withdrawal of steam locomotives in preference for diesel locomotives, which reduced shunting requirements. The containerisation of freight was another form of technological change that shaped the site. With containerisation in the 1970s, the importance of Darling Harbour as a

freight handling facility declined in preference to Port Botany. The Darling Harbour freight yards closed in 1984. This in turn, led to the eventual decommissioning of the Darling Harbour freight line by 1996.

The western portion of Central Station was associated with regional and interstate trains. Platform 1 was the point of departure for the *Southern Aurora* express between Sydney and Melbourne. The same platform continues to be used for interstate XPT services, the Indian Pacific and heritage trains.

The last major addition to Central Station was the construction of underground platforms to serve the new Eastern Suburbs line in 1979. Several modernisation and improvement projects were undertaking throughout the station in the 1980s.

Historical Summary

Parcels Post Office

From 1901, the Commonwealth assumed responsibility for postal services throughout Australia. In 1904, a parcels post office was installed in the basement General Post Office in Martin Place. The premises quickly became overcrowded and inefficient and became a source of constant public complaint. In 1908, the Chief Commissioner for Railways and Tramways agreed to lease a portion of land in the Central Station precinct to the Postmaster-General's Department for a period of ninety-nine years. The initial annual rent was set at £600.

The Parcels Post Office building (presently the Adina Hotel) was designed in 1910 by Gorrie McLeish Blair, who also prepared plans for the second stage of development of the station. Blair's work was overseen by the New South Wales Government Architect, Walter Liberty Vernon, although the client was the Commonwealth Government. The building was designed in what is now termed the Federation Academic Classical architectural style. The principal materials employed were red brick, with sandstone detailing. There are also examples of polished trachyte detailing on the most publicly visible parts of the building at ground level. In this, the building was consistent with most of the other major public buildings in Sydney at the time. One of its distinctive features was the steel-framed oeil-de bouef windows with sandstone edging along the third floor.

Originally intended to be a four-storey building, designed were revised in 1912 to include an additional two storeys. This change to the original plans required the excavation of deeper

foundations, contributing to delays in the construction process. These additional stories were also designed by Gorrie McLeish Blair, under the supervision of Government Architect George McRae. A gale in October 1911 caused the collapse of scaffolding at the site. The building was one of the earliest examples of concrete and steel frame construction – a technique which maximised the internal floor space available. This was possibly its first use in Sydney.

The Sun on 18 August 1913 reported that:

“the new Parcels Post Office is practically fireproof. The whole of the interior, with the exception of the fittings, is of reinforced concrete. The floors are of concrete 7 Inches thick, reinforced with blue metal and steel. The weight of each floor can be gathered from the fact that over 600 tons of blue metal reinforcement was used in the construction. The massive stanchions and girders are of steel surrounded by reinforced concrete.”

The Parcels Post Office building, together with the Marcus Clark department store and Central Station itself framed Railway Square. Its prominent position at the confluence of major roads such as Broadway, George Street, Pitt Street and Lee Street as well as many tram routes made it a major and widely recognised landmark within the city.

From the time it began operations on 6 December 1913 it became an important element in the movement of goods and parcels throughout the Central Station precinct. The Parcels Post Office operated across a number of floors within the

building. The basement was used to sort mail and was linked to the tunnel system beneath Central Station. A spiral staircase connected the basement to the supervisor's room above. The ground floor, with its entrance on Lee Street was the only part of the building open to the public at the time of its opening. Visitors to the building were served from long timber counters. The ground floor also housed a strong room, vehicle dock and toilets. *The Sun* on 18 August 1913 described “a huge strong-room, the walls of which are of concrete reinforced with 3 in by 3/4 spiral steel bars, to a width of 14 in.”

The building enjoyed broad acclaim at the time of its completion. The Sydney Morning Herald declared it ‘a very fine building’ at the time of its completion. The Sunday Times in August 1914 wrote that the building represented “a type of the useful, yet attractive in architecture”.

Primary mail activities occurred on the first, second and fifth stores. The construction technique used allowed these functions to take place in an open plan designed space. Security was an ongoing concern throughout the use of building as a postal facility so provision was made for the surveillance of staff - detective galleries were located on the first and second floors, from which staff were under surveillance. The building contained male toilets only. The building was originally planned to accommodate around six hundred postal workers.

Chutes, lifts, trolleys and conveyers were used to distribute the vast quantities of parcels and mail throughout the building. Its busiest periods were typically around Christmas. In one five day

period in December 1913, the Parcels Post Office handled 57,943 parcels.

The 1910s had seen a marked increase in the retail trade in the precinct around the new station. The Parcels Post Office building served as a conduit between suppliers, retailers and the many department stores clustered around Central Station and their rural customers who had placed orders from catalogues. The completion of the building allowed it to assume a number of functions previously performed by the General Post Office in Martin Place, which had become inadequate for the tasks demanded of it.

Whilst the building was primarily designed for the processing of parcels traffic, provision was made for the accommodation of offices for government departments. This did not eventuate, due to the need to commit all the available working space to mail operations. Different floors and spaces throughout the building were allocated to different functions – such as overseas mail, newspaper mail, registered mail, parcels mail.

By 1915, large external lifts had been added to the rear of the building, attracting much criticism for their negative aesthetic impact on the otherwise highly regarded building. *Building* decried this “architectural disfigurement” of the building as a “glaring example of the inconsistency of Government methods. A public building, having a fine stone façade, costing thousands of pounds, is turned into an eyesore by the addition of shoddy external lift construction”.

The volume of mail and parcels post increased steadily between the 1910s and 1960s. The

Historical Summary

congestion, inefficiency and poor service standards of postal operations throughout the Central Station precinct was a matter of consistent public complaint throughout much of its history. Newspaper reports of mail theft indicate that security was an ongoing concern throughout the 1920s and 1930s. As the volume of mail traffic increased over time, these problems were exacerbated. Poor ventilation was also reported as a significant problem for those working in the building in its first decades.

The interior layout of the Parcels Post office building was reconfigured many times during the course of its occupation by the postal services. This reflected the evolution of technologies and shifting demands from the community. From 1933, A post office was established within the building, which would offer a broad range of services to the public, in addition to its existing parcels handling function. These services included telegrams, money orders, postal notes, sale of stamps, registration of letters and other articles, parcels post, insured and registered parcels and Commonwealth Savings Bank services.

In the mid 1940s, a training school for postal clerks and telegraphists was established in the building. This school provided training in clerical duties, morse telegraphy and mail handling.

By 1965, a remedy for the ongoing congestion and inefficiency problems had been found, and mail handling operations were progressively relocated to the new mail exchange building in Redfern. From this time, it was proposed that the building was used predominantly as an ordinary post office, a base for telegraphy operations and for materials testing. Archival records documenting the actual activities there are limited in their

accessibility, making it difficult to ascertain how each part of the building was used from this time.

In May 1993, Australia Post ceased operations in the Parcels Post Office building, leaving the building unoccupied for a number of years. In 1994, the NSW Department of Public Works commenced planning for the redevelopment of the building and the precinct surrounding it. The building was to be restored as part of an adaptive reuse project. This project saw the removal of almost the entirety of the building's interior fabric and the addition of two storeys, housed within a mansard roof. The redevelopment project was completed in mid 2000, in time to meet the significant demand for accommodation associated with the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. The redevelopment project undertaken by TOGA also involved the demolition of the neighbouring Western Carriage Shed and the construction of government offices in its place.

Archaeology

Aboriginal archaeology

Urbis Archaeology prepared an Aboriginal Objects Due Diligence Assessment, which concluded that:

- There are no registered Aboriginal objects and/or places located within or in close proximity of the subject area.
- The Subject Area is generally highly disturbed, with the removal of the upper part of natural soils for the subsurface structures relating to both the Devonshire Street Tunnel and the Adina Apartment Hotel (formerly the Parcels Post Office). However, deeper, less disturbed soil deposits can still have potential for Aboriginal archaeological resources.
- The deeper, undisturbed soils under existing structures and below existing disturbance associated with historical land use has low-moderate archaeological potential regarding Aboriginal heritage objects.

Non-Aboriginal archaeology

With regard to the non-Aboriginal archaeology associated with the site, Urbis put forward the following assessments of archaeological potential.

Regarding the first phase of occupation - the Sydney Benevolent Asylum (1821 – 1902), it concluded that “the structures associated with the asylum were demolished and it is unlikely that any remnants of these structure remain in the present day”.

Regarding the second phase of occupation – Central Railway Station (1902 – 1909), it concluded that:

“after the demolition of the Benevolent Asylum, the majority subject area became a vacant lot, with the Devonshire Street Subway entrance in the southern portion. The rest of the subject area was used as greenspace and storage to support the railyards... Although the use of this space for storage would indicate the potential for archaeological deposits to occur, the excavation of the soil profile for the construction of the 2m deep Parcel Post building basement makes archaeological materials highly unlikely

Regarding the third phase of occupation, the Parcels Post Office (1911 – 1993), Urbis concluded that “although the use of this space for storage would indicate the potential for archaeological deposits to occur, the excavation of the soil profile for the construction of the 2m deep Parcel Post building basement makes archaeological materials highly unlikely”.

In Urbis’ estimation, the archaeological potential of the site was ‘low to moderate’ in relation to all three major phases of historical occupation.

Urbis summarised that:

“the excavation of soils down at least 2 m across the whole of the subject area for the basement of the Parcels Post building, the Devonshire Street Tunnel and the Henry Deane Plaza has greatly reduced the likelihood for archaeological materials associated with earlier phases of occupation to occur within those areas. As a result, the archaeological potential for those parts of the subject area is considered to be low. However, areas with less disturbance and outside of major underground structures have retained potential for the survival of archaeological resources.”

Previous Heritage Interpretation

The existing interpretation consists of framed photographs dating between the 1910s and 1930s. These images, likely facsimiles, were sourced from the State Library of New South Wales. There is limited interpretative provided, in the form of captions for the photographs.

Images of this nature will be included in the heritage interpretation to come, possibly including photographs within this series. However, it is not recommended that this series be reproduced in its entirety in the next heritage interpretation of the building. A more diverse selection of photographs that illustrate the site's history more comprehensively and evocatively will be made. Images in the forthcoming interpretation will be presented to audiences with more detailed historical information and context.

It is recommended that the photographs be examined by a conservator to definitively confirm their status as reproduction photographs. It is also recommended that they are digitised to allow for future incorporation into either a digital or onsite interpretation.

The other item on display is an invitation to the opening of the building gifted to Toga Group by the City of Sydney. It is recommended that the item be examined by a conservator to determine its status as either an original artefact or a facsimile. Should the item be confirmed as an original artefact, it may not be suited to onsite interpretation due to its fragility and light sensitivity, in which case storage in appropriate archival conditions may be required. Whether the item is an original artefact or a facsimile, it is recommended that it be digitised for display in either the onsite or digital interpretation of the site.





TOGA Central

Redfern Railway Station and Central Railway Station, Sydney, c.1920
State Library of New South Wales

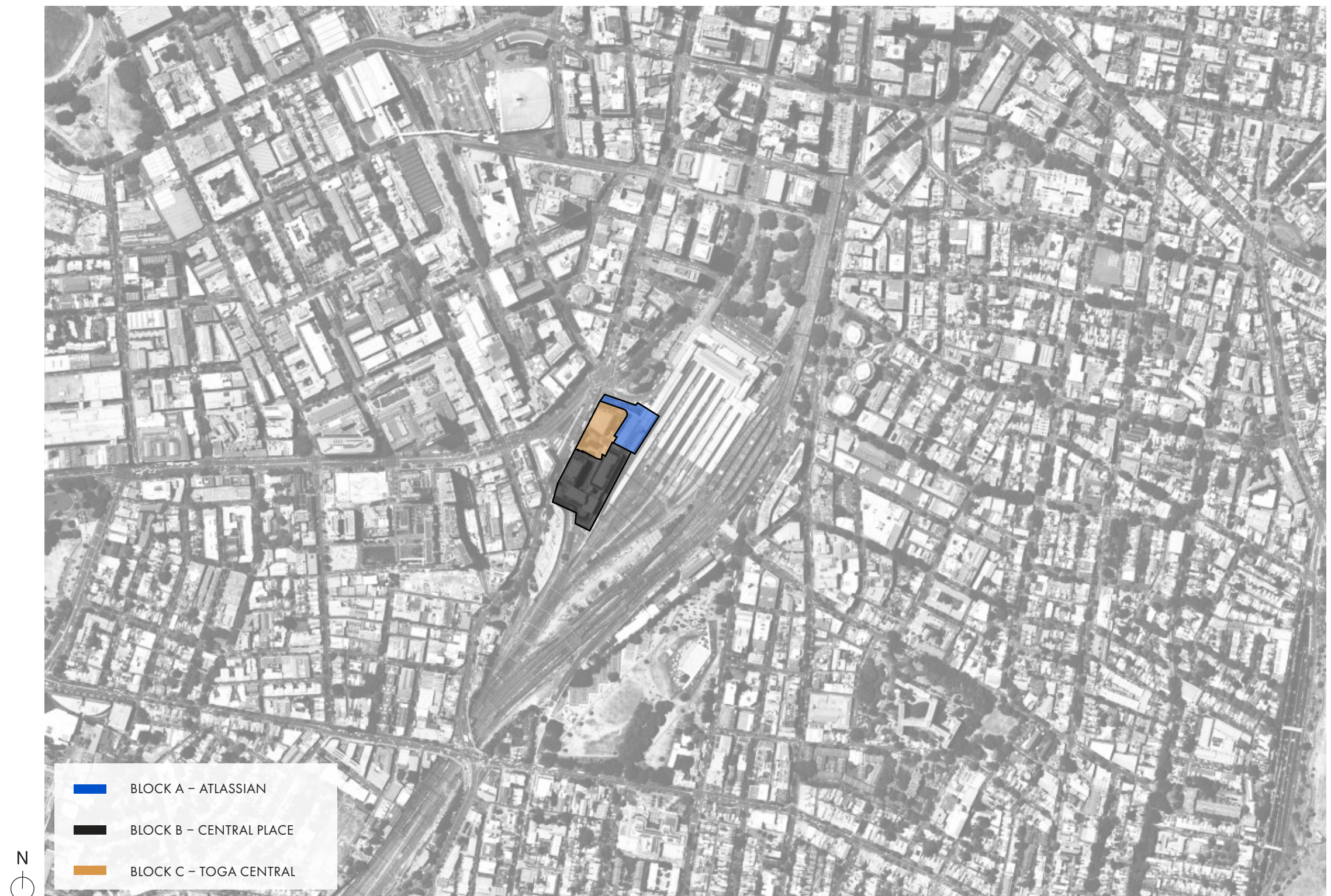
Urban Context

TOGA Central is one of three development blocks within the Western Gateway sub-precinct at Central Station. The site is located at the intersection of George, Pitt and Lee streets. It will become a new hub for innovative industries, visitors and transport customers within the city with 24 hr activity and publicly accessible urban and landscaped spaces.

‘TOGA Central will be an iconic gateway for Sydney’s most productive and energetic neighbourhood, combining the beauty of the former Parcels Post building with inspiring new architecture and public realm.

The proposed development comprises of the retention and rejuvenation of the former Parcel Post building, a six-storey existing building with a reinterpreted glass roof enclosure, roof top bar and basement areas. A new 42 storey development sits partly above the existing building with a sidecore adjacent to minimise interventions to the existing building. It is located in the north-western part of the NSW proposed Western Gateway Sub-Precinct, prominently fronting this masterplan towards Lee Street and the City.

Adjacent developments include the Atlassian Central tower to the north and the Central Place development to the south.’



Architectural Proposal

FROM BATES SMART

'The Parcels Post Office is an integral part of the historic Central Precinct. Designed in Georgian style the original four storey design had an addition of two levels. The important fabric of the Parcels Post Office is retained, while the interior is stripped back to its original structural frame. The original roof form is reinterpreted as a curved glazed volume providing a dramatic top floor and roof terrace. The light well is reinstated, dramatically connecting the various floors & functions. A series of inter-connected atriums around the Parcels Post Office create multiple lobbies that exploit the tension between the heritage and new building.

Inspired by the curved corners of the Parcels Post Office the Architects have created a cluster of 'pill' shaped forms. The curved ends create slender vertical proportions, while reducing visual bulk. The cluster of forms respond to the functions & recall the shape of indigenous message sticks. Referencing the craft and materiality of the Parcels Post Office we created a contemporary interpretation in terracotta. Paired concave terracotta fins create a human scale grid uniting the various tower functions, while providing passive shading and insulation.

Hotel suites incorporate operable facade openings for natural ventilation. Using passive high performance facades, natural ventilation, low carbon materials, & structural efficiency we are creating a sustainable design capable of being carbon neutral. The side-core arrangement creates a large contiguous floorplate with maximum flexibility.



TOGA Central site render
Bates Smart

Audience Typology

Understanding the nature and demographic of visitors to the site assists in determining the language, tone, story selection and design typology of the interpretation. The anticipated duration and frequency of visits will also have an impact on the Heritage Interpretation.

The audience for TOGA Central will be made up of a broad community of residents, workers, and visitors to the precinct. The audience may also include people staying in the hotel for business or travel and visitors interested in Contemporary Art and Architecture and History.

The new public plaza and tower are intended to become a welcoming destination for people to work, shop and socialise. It will also be a new food and beverage precinct that will anchor TOGA Central as a destination and connect Surry Hills, Redfern and Central Station. The plaza in front of the tower will enhance pedestrian connections from Central Station through to Railway Square and UTS.









TOGA Central site render
Bates Smart

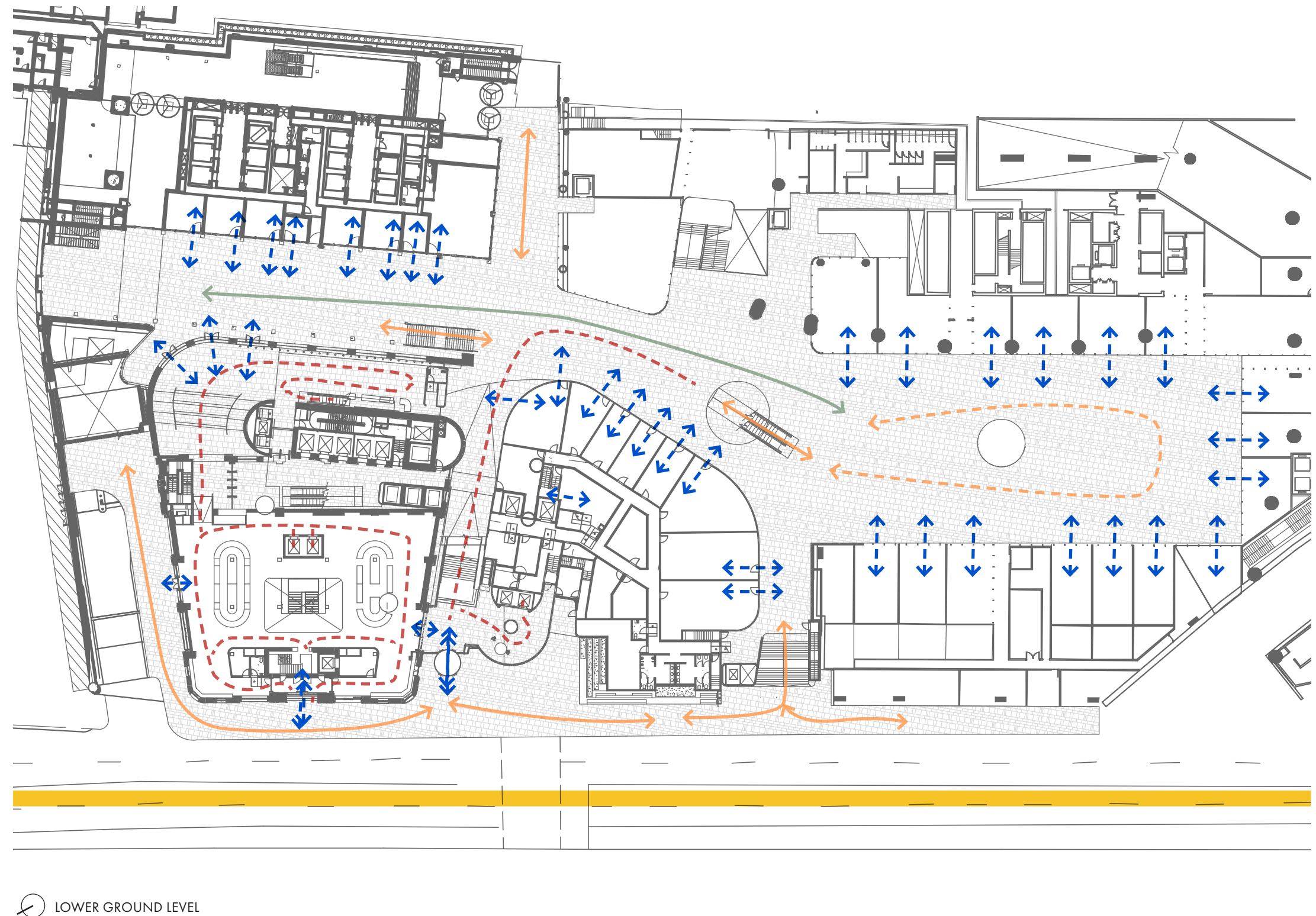
Public Realm Lower Ground Level

Access and Circulation

The Public realm should provide consistency across all three development blocks.

Pedestrians coming from Central Station can access Lower ground level of the Parcel Post Building to enter the Lower Commercial Lobby and restaurant/ café. Visitors can also access the building via the escalators from the upper level lobby or through a newly created portal in the courtyard brick wall from the pedestrian link in the Atlassian development, through Henry Dean Plaza or directly off the Lee Street tunnel.

-  ACCESS INTO BUILDINGS ACROSS THE SITE
-  PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT WITHIN THE BUILDING
-  PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT ACROSS SITE
-  SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT ACROSS SITE
-  NORTH SOUTH LINK
-  VEHICLE MOVEMENT



Public Realm Ground Level

Access and Circulation

A key feature of the TOGA Central concept is the flexible and functional large open Plaza. This will be a new space to gather and move people across all three sites.

The design for the Upper link RL21 includes a new landscaped stair with bleachers provides opportunities for places to dwell along Lee Street and plaza edge with a new Central Oculus that allows for natural light down to RL 16 and provides an escalator connection.





Heritage Interpretation

Skittish Boozilers student float, Lee Street Haymarket, 1936
City of Sydney Archives

Interpretation Aims

The broad aim of interpretation and storytelling is to bring the stories, histories, creative responses, knowledge and significance of a particular landscape or place to view and to life for audiences today; it is about creating meaningful connections between people and place, past and present, by encouraging audiences to understand and appreciate the special cultural and/or natural significance and values of the places they visit and explore. It is also about agency, with people's actions informed by what they understand, feel and value. Interpretation is understood to be a powerful element of placemaking and essential to contemporary conservation processes and practices. As stated in the Burra Charter, a guiding framework for heritage conservation and management, first published by Australia's national committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (Australia ICOMOS) in 1979:

The cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent and should be explained by interpretation. Interpretation should enhance understanding and engagement, and be culturally appropriate (Article 25)

The charter defines interpretation as the 'full range of potential activities to heighten public awareness and enhance understanding of cultural heritage sites' – for example, signage, publications, exhibitions and displays, programs, website and social media, the physical form, and built structures of the site, the landscape hardworks and planting design, graphic design, artwork inspired by the heritage, and landscape and hard-works design – and emphasises that interpretation should engage and stimulate not just 'instruct'.

Good interpretation stimulates response and encourages understanding; it should provide more than instruction or signage explaining the history of a place. This can be achieved through skilled communication, active engagement with the place and its stories, and an open-ended approach that enables the visitor to bring their own questions and form their own understanding of the place (Burra Charter, Interpretation Practice Note, 2013, p8).

The objectives of the interpretation on this Parcels Post Office site also will be:

- To give voice to Aboriginal perspectives on place and the associations Aboriginal people have with this specific site. The notion of caring for Country should be embedded in the interpretation.
- To explain the significance of the site within the social and economic history of Sydney and New South Wales, with specific reference to the role of railways, and the post that relied upon it.
- To complement the interpretation of other significant heritage sites within Central Precinct and create a sense of consistency between them or extend upon narratives introduced elsewhere within the precinct.
- To create some themes that will be entirely and exclusively specific to this site.

Strategy

The Heritage Interpretation Strategy establishes the high level approach to heritage interpretation, sets out the aims, design principles and thematic structure. It reviews suitable interpretation responses to the heritage values, the site, the architecture, and landscape design. It responds to key documents including the Western Gateway Sub-Precinct Design Guide, the Heritage Impact Statement, Conservation Management Plan, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment report, Connecting with Country Framework Report, Aboriginal Cultural Values Scoping report.

A draft Heritage Interpretation Strategy will be completed to accompany the DA Submission. Following this, the final Heritage Interpretation Strategy will include locations and interpretation typologies.

A Heritage Interpretation Plan will be prepared in a later stage that refines the content, provides texts, images, and design development drawings of each typology, including briefing documents for artist collaborations, digital and other media interpretation.



George Street, Railway Square
City of Sydney Archives

Thematic Structure

Theme 1: 'A Very Fine Building'

The significant architectural qualities of the building, its stature within its urban context and its value as an example of the NSW Government Architect will be acknowledged in this theme. Its evolving operational functions, its decline following the end of its postal use as well as its restoration as a hotel will also be described here.

The building was designed by Gorrie McLeish Blair under the supervision of Walter Liberty Vernon, whose work defined the character of so many of Sydney's major civic buildings of the time, such as the Art Gallery of New South Wales, State Library of New South Wales, the Registrar-General's Building and Central Station itself. The Parcels Post Office was one of the first public buildings on this scale constructed by the Commonwealth Government following Federation. The building received almost universal praise at the time of its completion as a dignified contribution to Sydney's urban fabric within which it soon became a significant landmark. The Sydney Morning Herald declared it 'a very fine building' at the time of its completion. The design values that the building embodies as well as the standard of its materials will be described to audiences. It is also significant in its embodiment of innovation in architectural and engineering practices. It is an early example of the use of a concrete and steel frame construction – a technique which maximised the internal floor space available within the building.

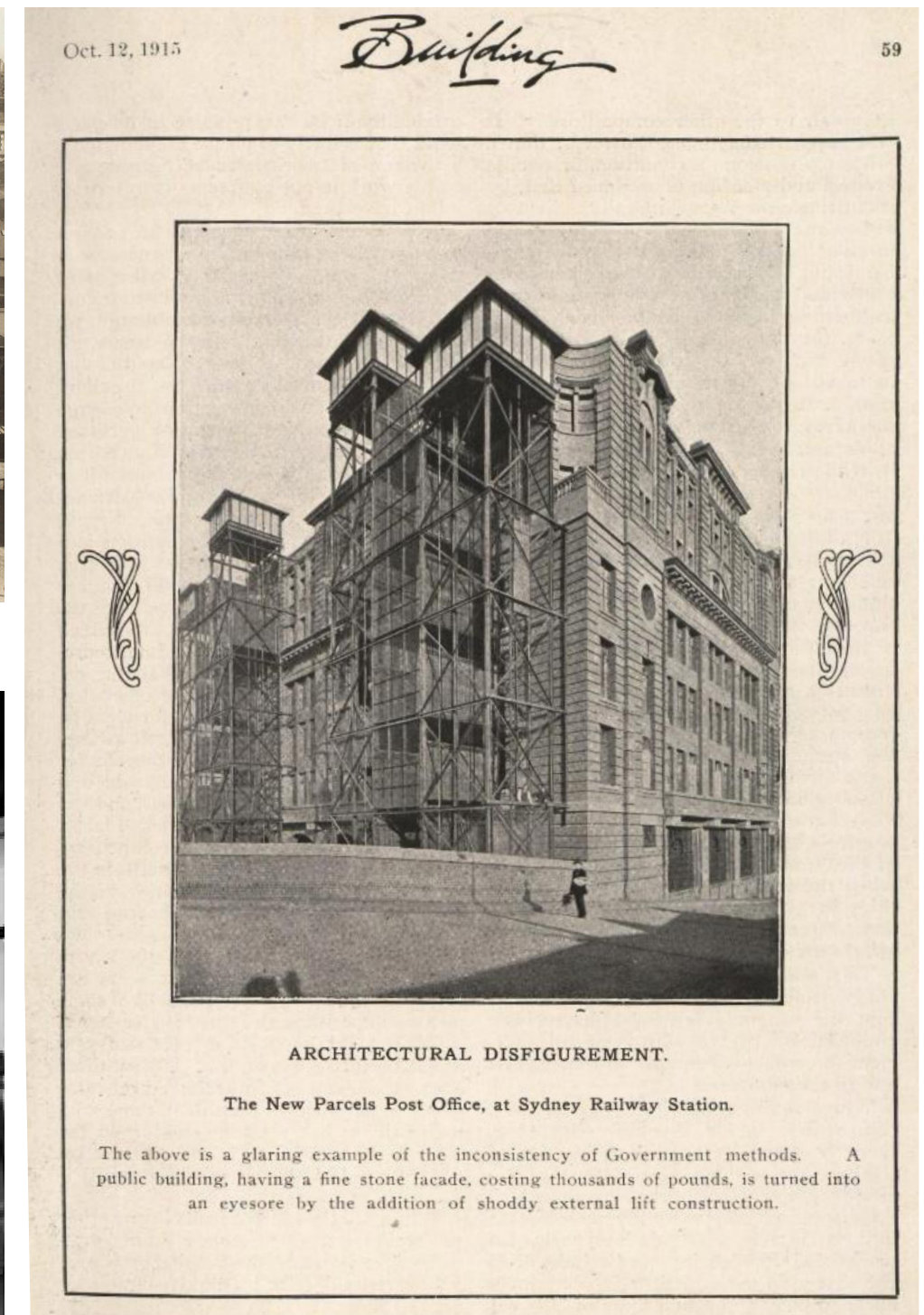
This theme is expressed only on the Parcels Post Office site.



Old Devonshire Street Cemetery
State Library of New South Wales



Railway Square Post Office
National Archives Australia



'Architectural disfigurement - the new parcels post office at Sydney Railway Station'
National Library Australia

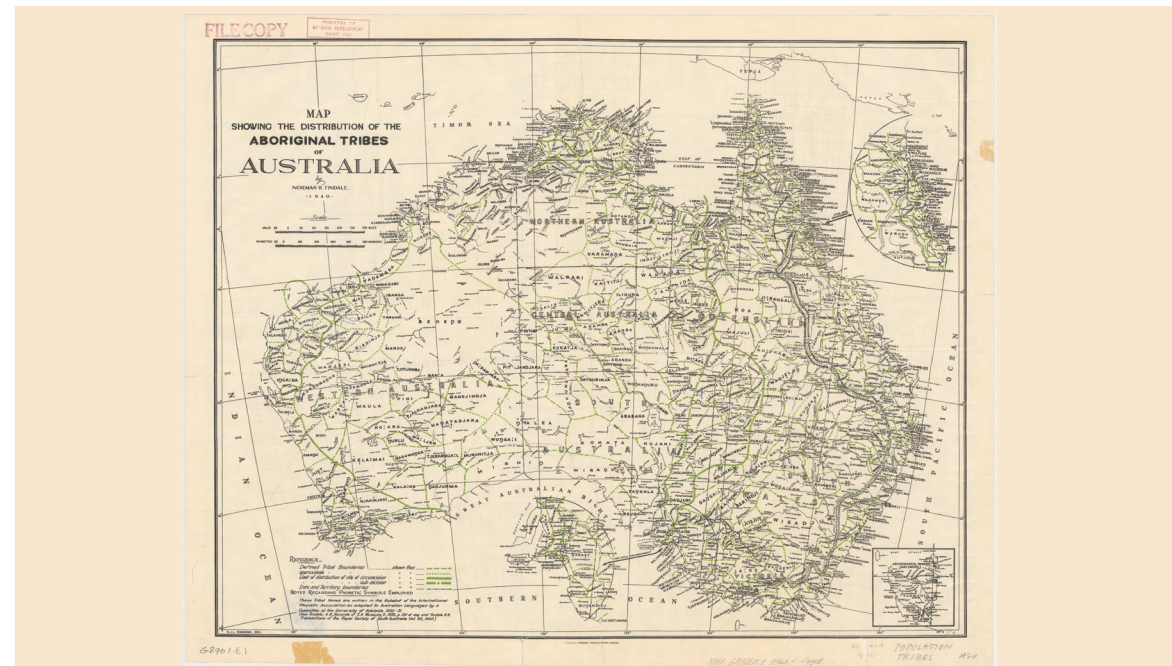
Thematic Structure

Theme 2: Connecting Country

This theme gives voice to Aboriginal perspectives on the landscape. The name of this theme also alludes to the important role the site has played as a place of human connection, exchange and movement throughout the landscape. This theme seeks to embed an understanding of and respect for country into the overall heritage interpretation. Along with the landscape design proposal and public artwork strategy, this theme will promote the reconnection of the built environment with country.

This theme connects with the theme 'The Substance of Place', introduced on the neighbouring Atlassian site. That theme seeks to reintroduce and interpret distinctive elements of the natural landscape that defined the site in the pre-colonisation period and describe their significance to Aboriginal people. This will be expressed as a combination of landscape design and heritage interpretation.

The stories in this theme are also expressed in the heritage interpretation for the neighbouring Central Place and Atlassian sites.



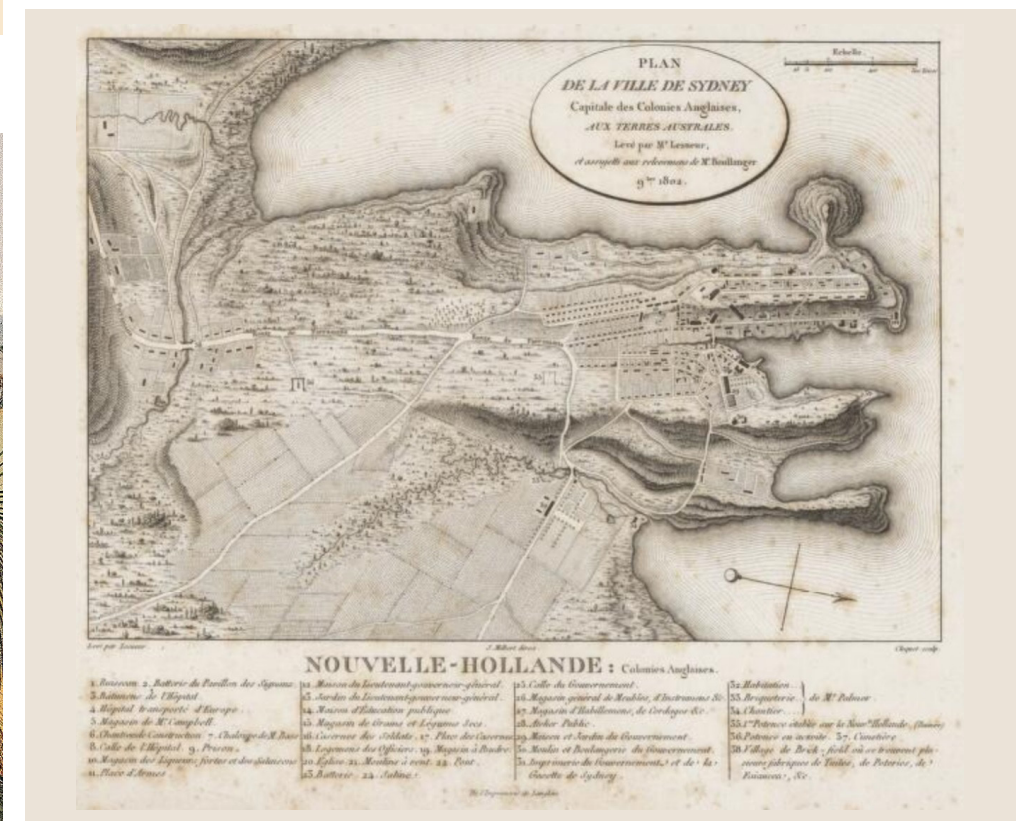
Map showing the distribution of the Aboriginal tribes of Australia
Norman B. Tindale / National Library of Australia



Grass trees at Yankalilla with the red kangaroo, South Australia, 1847
George French Angas; J.W. Giles / National Library of Australia



'Dwellings' from 'Voyage of Discovery to the Southern Lands', illustrated by Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, 1824 Grass trees at Yankalilla with the red kangaroo, South Australia, 1847
National Gallery Victoria



Plan de la ville de Sydney : Capitale des colonies Anglaises, aux terres Australes, 1802
Norman B. Tindale / National Library of Australia

Thematic Structure

Theme 3: Lines of Communication

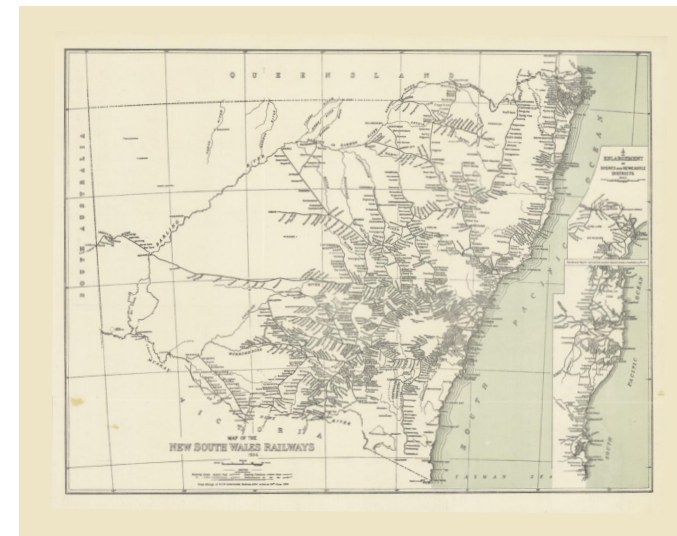
This theme will explain the significance of the Parcels Post Office site as part of a network of communication from the pre-colonial period as well as the periods both before and after the construction of Central Station. The name - an allusion to railway lines - invites comparison to other 'lines' of communication such as Aboriginal walking tracks and roads, telegraphs and telephone connections.

The site of the building is at the meeting point of a number of Aboriginal tracks throughout the Sydney region. These were important channels for the movement of people, ideas and resources for Aboriginal people. The site is at a point of overlap for a number of different Aboriginal groups from the Sydney region, namely the Wangal, Gadigal and Kameygal clans. A camp site used by Aboriginal people also existed in an area to the south west of the site.

After colonisation, many of these tracks were transformed into roads with which contemporary Sydneysiders would be familiar, such as Parramatta Road, George Street, Botany Road and Oxford Street. These early roads formed the structure of the city we know today and they continue to define the journeys that Sydneysiders undertake each day. With the introduction of railways within New South Wales and the construction of Central Station in its three iterations, the area became the main hub for a new form of communication and transport. The Parcels Post Office was an essential part of the functioning of the Central Station, which was one of the largest and busiest nodes in a network that bound Sydney together as a metropolis and connected it to the state of which it was capital, as well as to the rest of Australia.

This theme will highlight the role of railways in distributing post and parcels throughout the country. This network created connectivity between state capitals and also between the city and the country. This parcels system was an important channel for interpersonal communication within families and between friends. It afforded rural Australians access to the comforts, luxuries and conveniences of metropolitan life. Many major department stores based their warehouses close to Central Station to allow rapid dispatching of products ordered by mail from their catalogues. Just as the railways conveyed passengers, freight and parcels, Central Station itself was designed to simultaneously manage the flow of people as well as mail and parcels. Commuters were funnelled through channels such as the Devonshire Street tunnel, but almost completely hidden from public view was an extensive parallel network of subterranean passages built to convey mail and parcels.

This theme is also expressed in the heritage interpretation for the neighbouring Atlassian site.



Map of the New South Wales Railways, 1934
National Library of Australia



The Cessnock Express passing the Hawkesbury River
NSW State Archives and Records



Plan of the town and suburbs of Sydney, August, 1822
National Library of Australia



Chief parcels office, Central Square, 1960
National Archives Australia

Thematic Structure

Theme 4: Lie of the Land

This theme will acknowledge the full span of the site's history, not simply the immediately previous use. It will also suggest that there are multiple perspectives with which we may view the site and its connection to the region and nation to which it belongs. The interpretation will tell the broader story of the area preceding the construction of the Parcels Post Office. This will include Aboriginal life before European settlement. The site was at the point of overlap for a number of between the boundaries of several Aboriginal clan groups in the pre-colonial era, and it served as a significant camp site. Other uses to be described will include the brickmaking at 'Brickfields', gallows, the convict-built Parramatta Road and the associated toll gatehouse, the Devonshire Street Cemetery, the Sydney Female Refuge, the Benevolent Society Asylum, Carters' Barracks for convict boys working at the brickfields, the Belmore Police Barracks and the first and second Sydney stations.

The stories in this theme are also expressed in the heritage interpretation for the neighbouring Atlassian site.



Central Square, Sydney before building of railway with Benevolent Hospital in background, c. 1901
National Archives Australia



The George Street Toll-bar in 1829
State Library of New South Wales



Toll Gate and Benevolent Asylum, George Street south, Sydney, 1836 Robert Russell
National Library of Australia



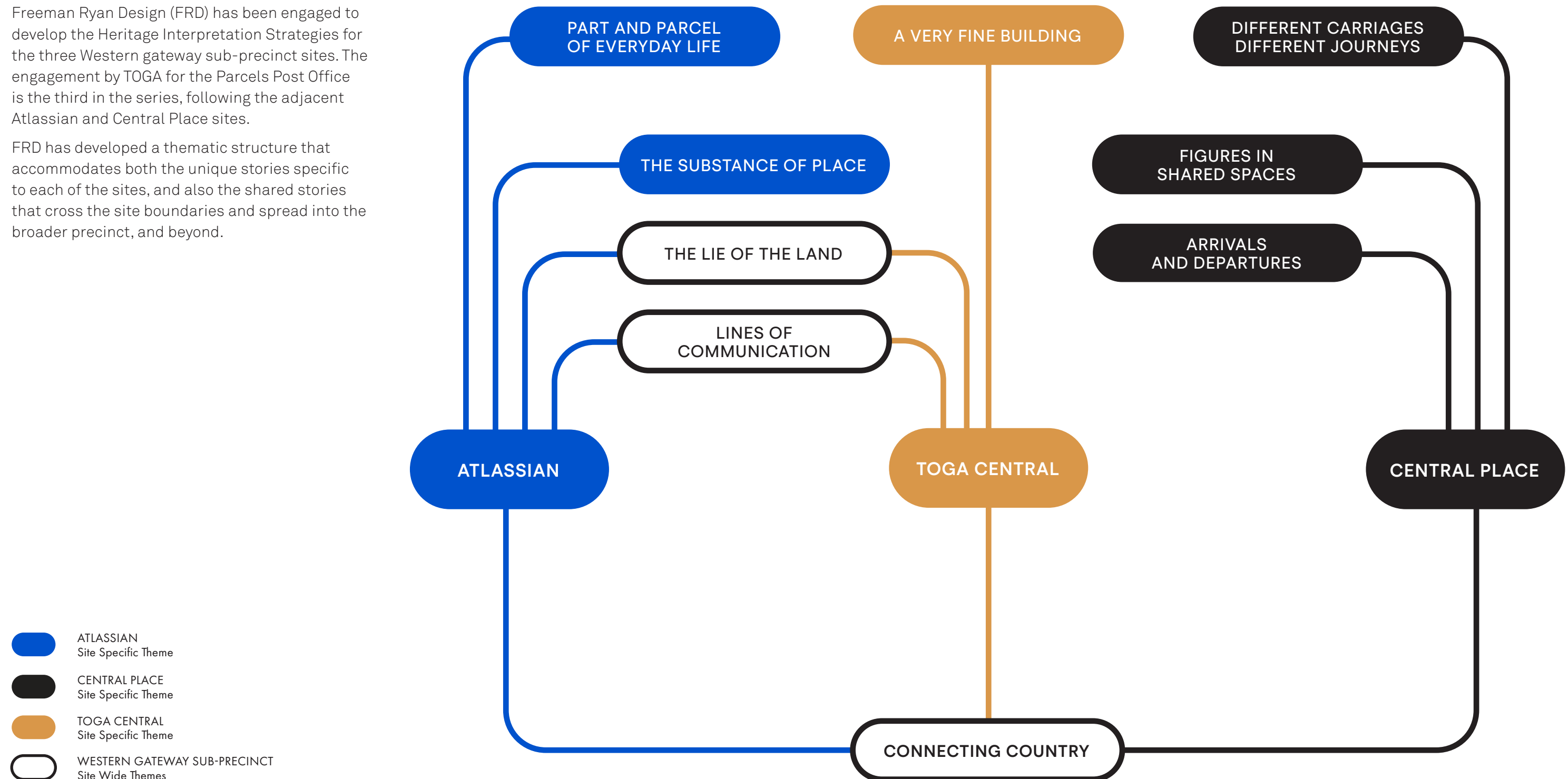
Old Devonshire Street Cemetery, 1871
State Library of New South Wales

Thematic Structure Matrix

Western Gateway Sub-precinct

Freeman Ryan Design (FRD) has been engaged to develop the Heritage Interpretation Strategies for the three Western gateway sub-precinct sites. The engagement by TOGA for the Parcels Post Office is the third in the series, following the adjacent Atlassian and Central Place sites.

FRD has developed a thematic structure that accommodates both the unique stories specific to each of the sites, and also the shared stories that cross the site boundaries and spread into the broader precinct, and beyond.



Design Principles

The purpose of the design principles is to provide a set of design standards that will inform the design concept and subsequent stages through to the built and digital outcomes. The Heritage Interpretation Plan that will follow this Strategy will review and update the principles as the proposal develops.

1. **Clarity:** the design of the more permanent heritage interpretation will be subtle, lean and sit quietly in the precinct which will allow for clarity of journey for the pedestrians moving through. This will allow for more exuberant temporal installations of art, performance, tours and digital works.
2. **Place and identity:** the physical expression of interpretation needs to create a cohesive whole-of-site identity while being responsive to the qualities, opportunities, function and histories of each space and location. Design cohesion is dependent on compatibility with the language of the building architecture, the landscaping and hardworks, the signage and wayfinding.
3. **Equity of access:** the goal of interpretation is to connect with the widest possible audience – both intellectually and physically. The design must be mindful of all physical attributes and abilities, accommodate for people standing or sitting, of different heights and acuity, and be effective from different distances of viewing. The interpretation should be located at intervals that allow for pause, reflection and engagement between the installations. The graphics and texts should use substrates that avoid glare and reflection, and use colour with sufficient contrast between foreground and background as the level of contrast will increase legibility. Where possible and applicable, graphics and signage should allow for the inclusion of braille and tactile signs. All graphics and signage will comply with the Australian Standards for Design for Access and Mobility (AS 1428.4.2-2018) or relevant updated Australian Standards.
4. **Tone:** interpretive experiences will vary in tone and mood across the particular site – for example, from highly active and participatory installations through to quiet and reflective moments. The interpretation outcome needs to be considered in the context of the whole journey visitors are potentially taking through the gardens – so there is an orchestrated whole experience for visitors.
5. **Materials:** a key aim is to establish a materials palette and suite of forms that complement the surrounding architecture, landscape, and site. The materials of the landscaping hardscapes will form the basis of the material palette at ground level in the horizontal plane, and the language of the contemporary building architecture will be used to integrate into the building.
6. **Sustainability:** materials should be ethically sourced, durable and low-maintenance, and able to be recycled or repurposed where possible. Production and building processes (including freight from point of origin) need to be sustainable, so that whole of life cycle costs are minimized, and net zero emissions can be achieved.
7. **Context:** Interpretation in and surrounding the heritage landscapes, buildings and features must be respectful of and contribute to the heritage values of the place, sitting in company with the heritage elements, and not creating opposition.
8. **Form:** The forms developed need to sit seamlessly in the landscape and partner, not mimic, the existing building forms. An Interpretation Plan will be developed to follow this Strategy and will convey a more detailed development of a set of design guidelines, design concepts, and inform final forms, materials, and style guidance for graphics and locations. The approach will allow sufficient flexibility to differentiate between more permanent installations and temporary ones.

Interpretation Opportunities

The interpretation opportunities are guided by the themes and the stories bound within them which may offer particular assets for interpretation (photographic, built form, archaeology, texts and images etc). The opportunities are also shaped by the building architecture and urban landscape, and the circulating in and around them. Locations for the interpretation is also established where visitors and the 'audience' are moving or navigating their way through the site. They include hotel patrons, office workers, a broad spectrum of commuters and tourists.

The lower link on the boundary between the TOGA Central Site and the Atlassian Site would be an ideal opportunity to provide Heritage Interpretation that is specific to the Parcels Post Office (TOGA) and it's historical connection to the Inward Parcels Shed. (Atlassian).

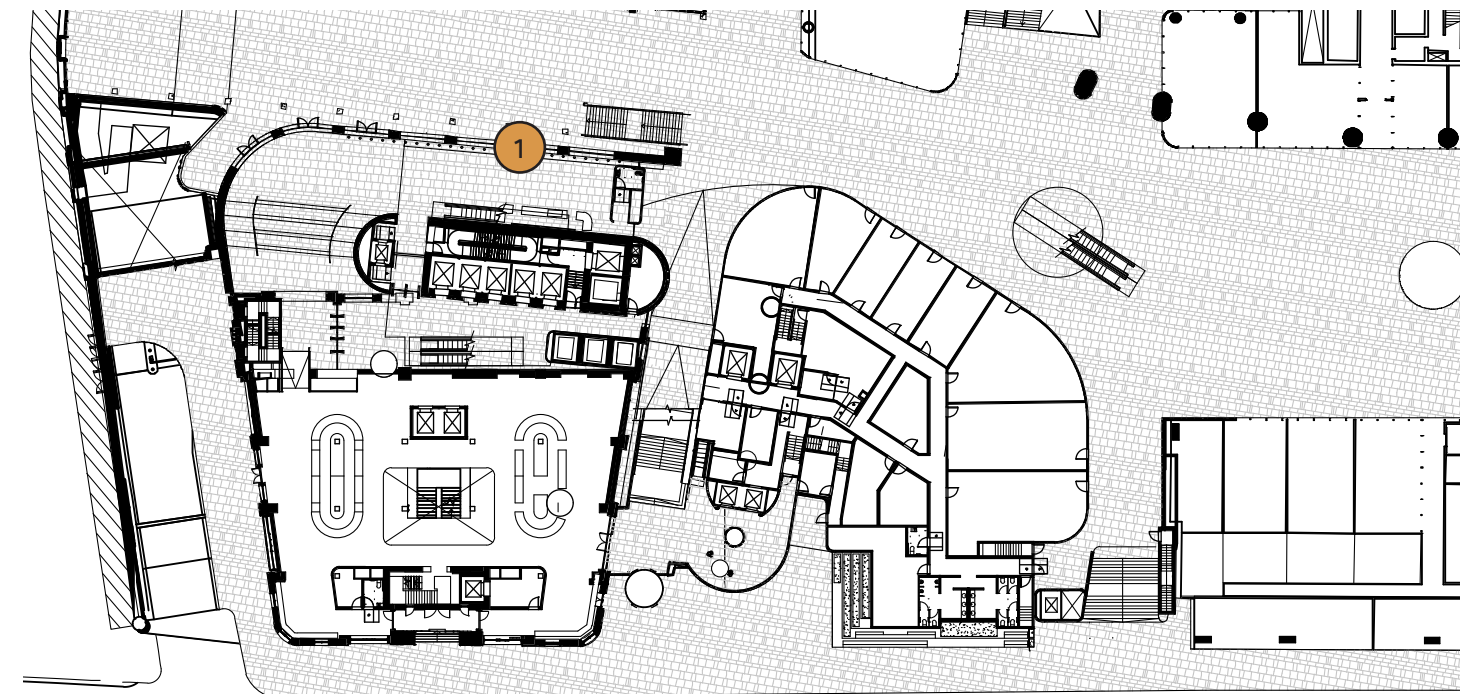
There are many opportunities in the public domain to address the common stories and themes that run through the TOGA Central, Atlassian and Central Place Precinct. This may be in the form of interpretation in the ground plane, landscape and seating areas.

There is also an opportunity in the Oculus link between the Lower and Upper Ground levels.

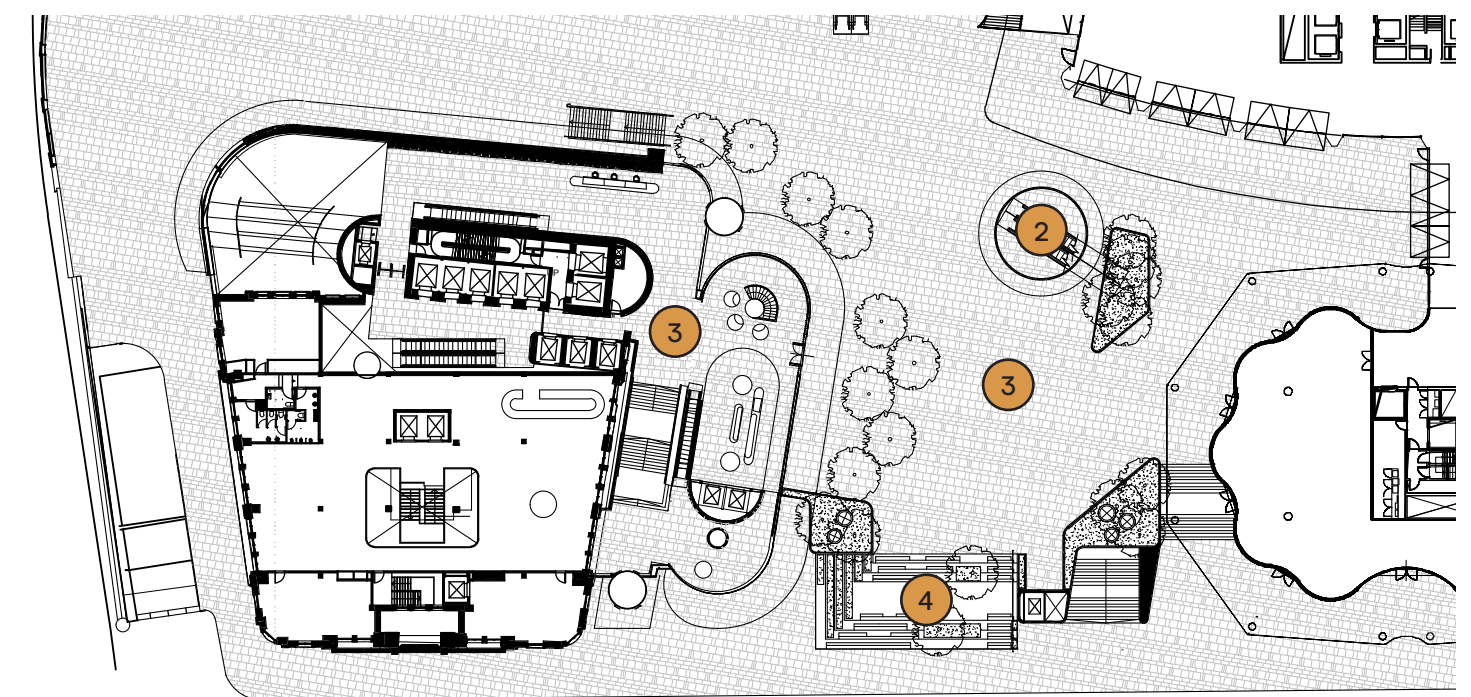
Interpretation can be expressed through various methods. These include designed responses using built form, texts and graphics, landscaping, lighting, public programs, multimedia, soundscapes and other digital realms. Interpretation can involve collaboration with artists to bring other voices to the narrative and different forms of expression to the built outcome. The responses may also allow for both permanent installations as well more temporary ones through programming, site tours and events.

The digital realm, through website and micro-site satellites, self-guided tours and more precinct-wide walks are all opportunities for Heritage Interpretation. These formats allow visitors a deep-dive into multiple curated stories and use of time based media which are both updatable and available to visitors on and off the site at their leisure.

- 1 WINDOW BAYS
- 2 GLAZED ROOF OF OCULUS
- 3 GROUND PLANE PAVING
- 4 LANDSCAPED STAIR



LOWER GROUND LEVEL

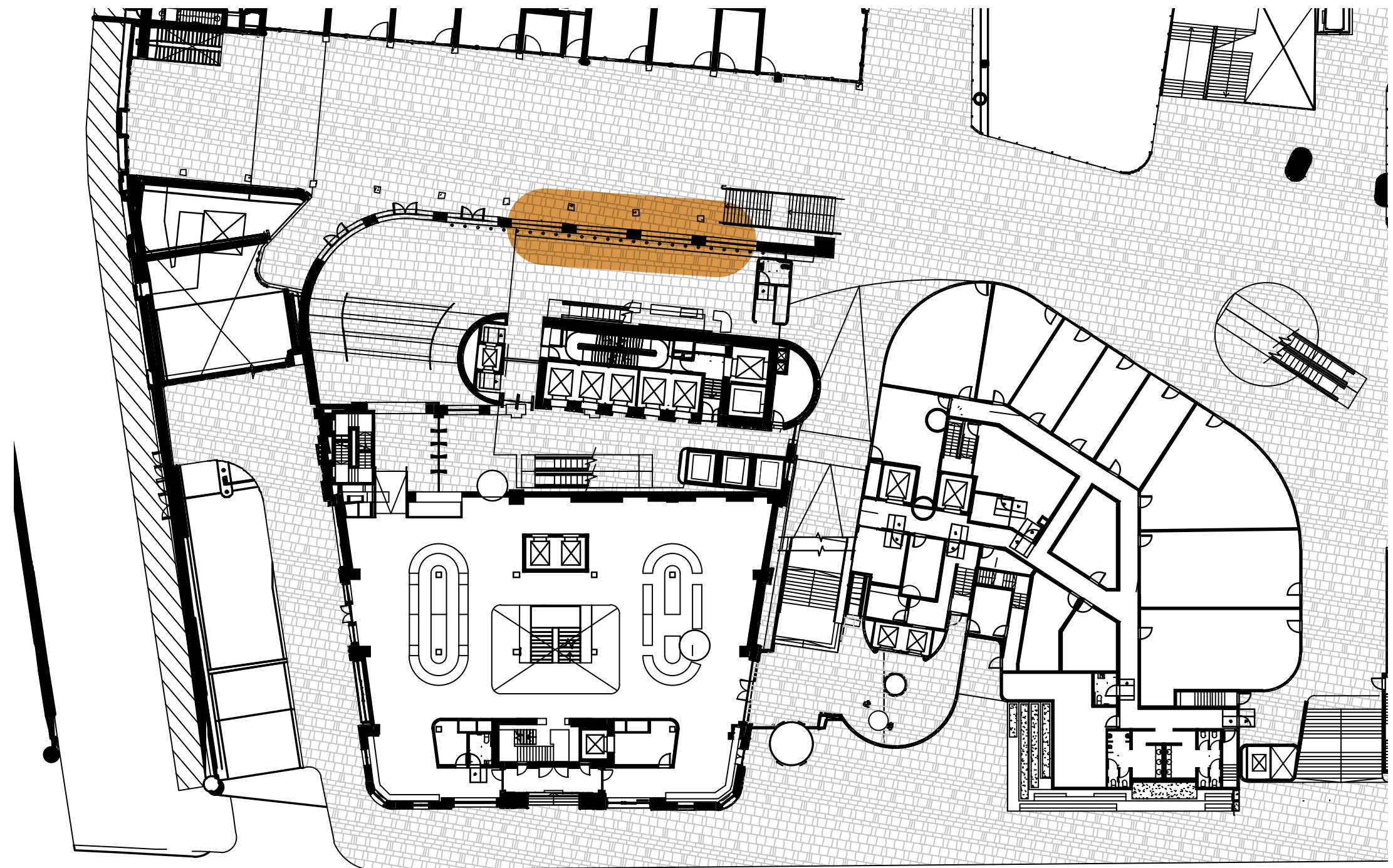


GROUND LEVEL

Interpretation Opportunities

Window bays

Thematic content for this area to be site specific to Parcel Post Office building and its relationship to the Parcels Shed, with a minimum of 3 bays required. Potential for a combination of double sided graphics and small scale showcases. Interpretation would be visible from the Atlassian site as well.

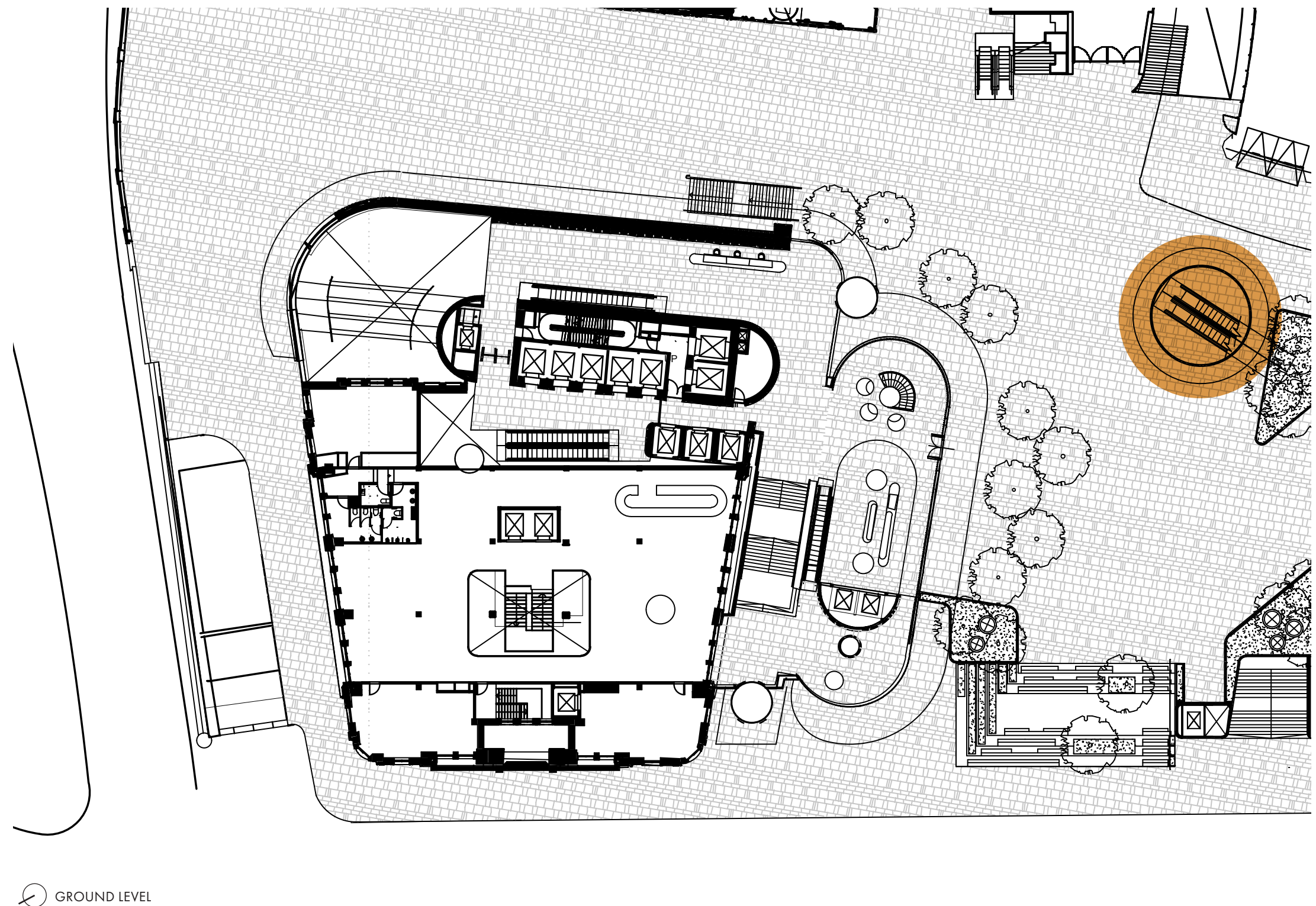


⌚ LOWER GROUND LEVEL

Interpretation Opportunities

Central Oculus

The connecting circular stair structure between the Lower Ground (RL 16) and the Ground Level (RL 21) offers a potential location for interpretation. The glazed roof or the upper walls might host texts, quotes or designs that create shadows beneath, which would shift and provide a responsive and dynamic installation throughout the day.

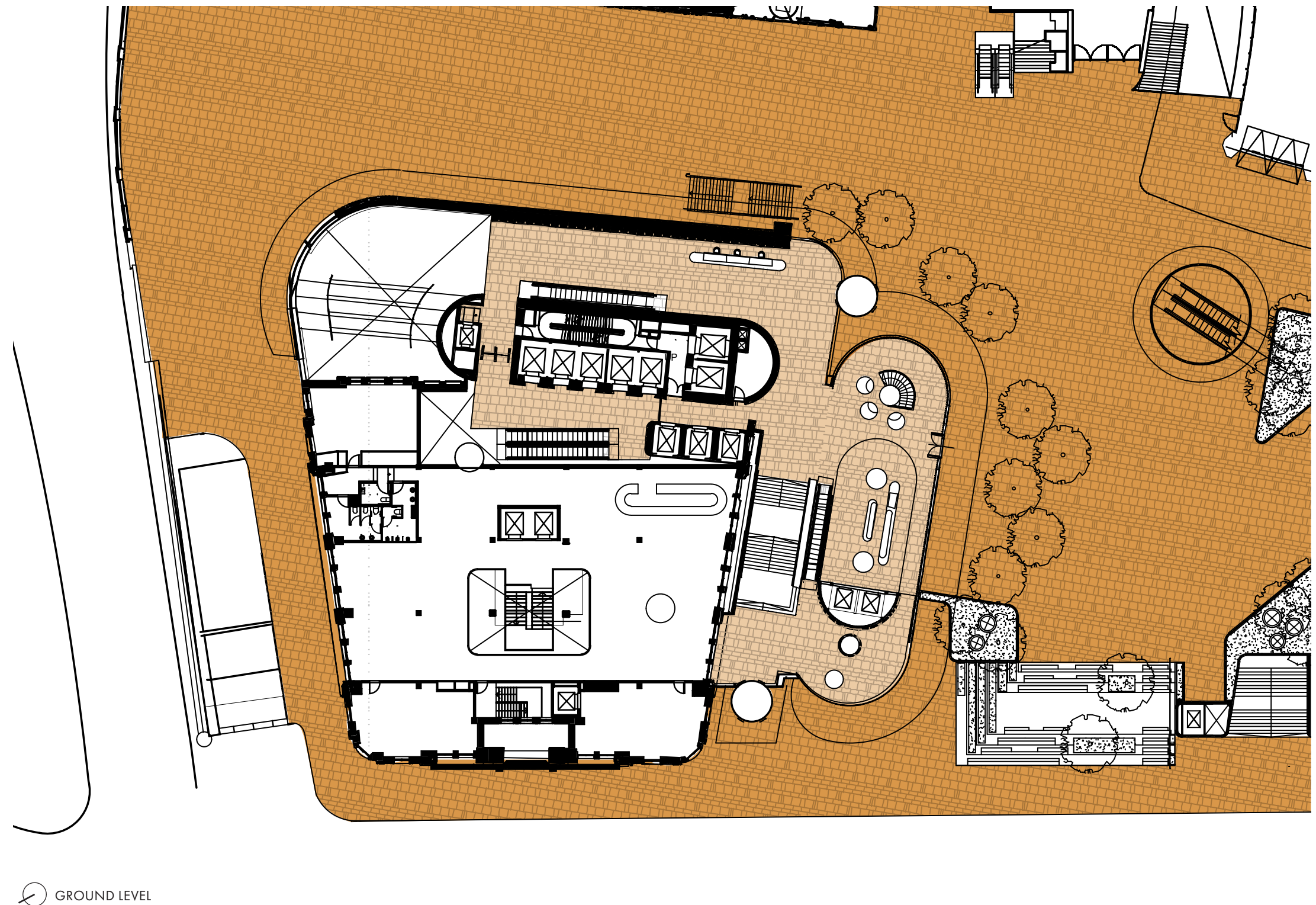


Interpretation Opportunities

Ground plane paving

Opportunity for site wide themes to be told here. The interpretation is to be subtle, lean and allow for clarity of journey for the pedestrians moving through.

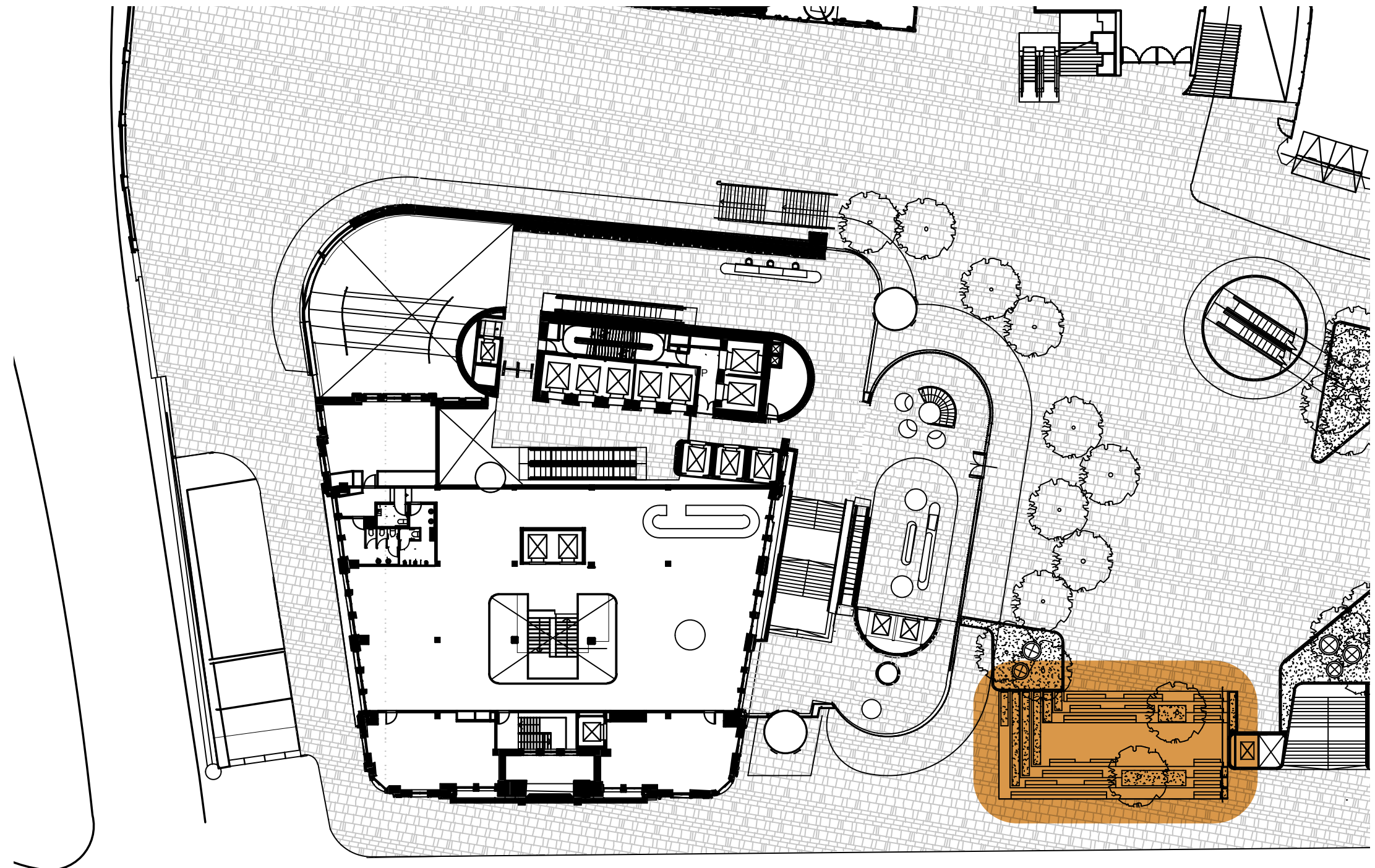
The external paving continues into the public spaces of the TOGA foyers. This may provide opportunity for a subtle set of interventions into the interior of the building.



Interpretation Opportunities

Landscaped stair

Opportunity for site wide themes to be told here and for interpretation to be located near dwell spaces.



GROUND LEVEL

Interconnectedness of Heritage Interpretation

Public Art

Heritage interpretation will inform the public art strategy and vice versa.

The Public art strategy is focused on delivering a public art outcome that positions TOGA as innovating in this space however the key guiding principles for TOGA Central are generally (in no particular order):

- First Nations
- Place Creation and Integration
- Innovation
- Quality and Originality
- Heritage
- Sustainability

Connecting with Country

Connecting with Country informs Heritage Interpretation, the Public Art Strategy and the Landscape Design.

The project acknowledges Central Precinct as a site of gathering and connection.

There is opportunity for these themes to recur in the Heritage Interpretation, Public Art and Landscape design and provide an opportunity to use native flora and reconnect with country.

Engagement also revealed three key Themes to underpin the project's design inspiration:

- Gadigal Country
- Gathering
- Movement

Landscape

The Landscape and Urban Design informs the Heritage Interpretation and the Public Art Strategy.

There is a real opportunity to create a generous upper plaza space with a strong urban canopy of native trees. A place where people don't just pass through but sit and reflect as well and where people connect to place and Country.

The key design principles are:

- **Plaza Edges + Active Steps**
 - Henry Deane Plaza as a Forecourt and Environment
 - Magnificent Public Buildings
- **The Opportunity for Light, Movement & People**
 - Expose people where possible to Biophilia to and Environment
- **Public, Transistional & Cohesive**
 - Create a space that is welcoming with equitable access and has a cohesive composition of elements.
- **Activated by Movement**
 - Celebrating Movement
- **Legibility & Ease of Access**
 - Create intuitive movement at both RL 16 and Henry Deane Plaza's RL 21
- **Micro-climate**
 - Wind, Sun, Shade all need to be considered

Next Steps

The next steps to develop the heritage interpretation is to prepare a Heritage Interpretation Plan, which responds to the Development Application conditions and includes outcomes and develops Interpretation propositions following consultation with:

- Local Aboriginal Community groups
- Public Art consultant
- Wayfinding consultant
- Architecture and Landscape design team
- Archaeological consultant

The Heritage Interpretation Plan to further develop the HI Strategy will be undertaken during the design development phase of the building and public spaces.

FRD