

2.3.4 SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Surrounding the precinct is a diverse mix of residential, commercial, retail and education based precincts, including:

- Darling Harbour
- Star City Casino
- Fish market
- Harris Street
- Pyrmont
- The Powerhouse Museum
- UTS/TAFE
- Ultimo
- Glebe/ Broadway
- The University of Sydney
- Frasers Broadway
- Railway Square
- Surry Hills
- Chinatown
- Town Hall
- CBD

The SICEEP precinct will:

- Strengthen the connection between existing precincts;
- Provide additional amenities to residents and visitors; and
- Integrate existing and proposed uses and communities into a network of high quality urban offers.

The Hotel as part of the wider SICEEP precinct aligns with these objectives.

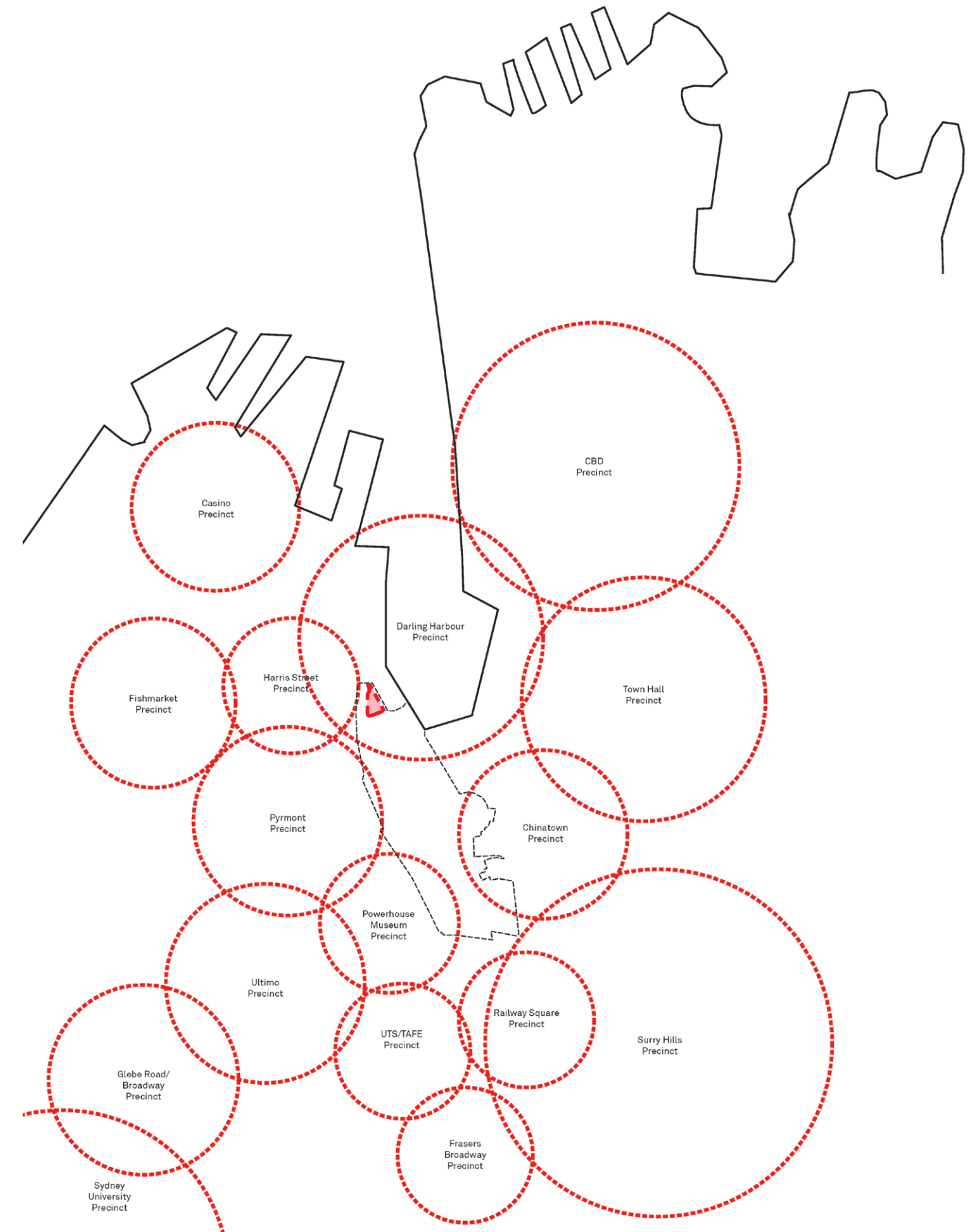


Figure 2.3.4 Surrounding precincts and communities

2.3.5 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Currently Darling Harbour is served by a range of public transport options.

Light Rail runs from Lilyfield to Central, with an extension underway to Dulwich Hill. Light rail will provide direct access to the SICEEP precinct from the west, and the existing 'Convention Centre' stop will provide direct access to the ICC Hotel.

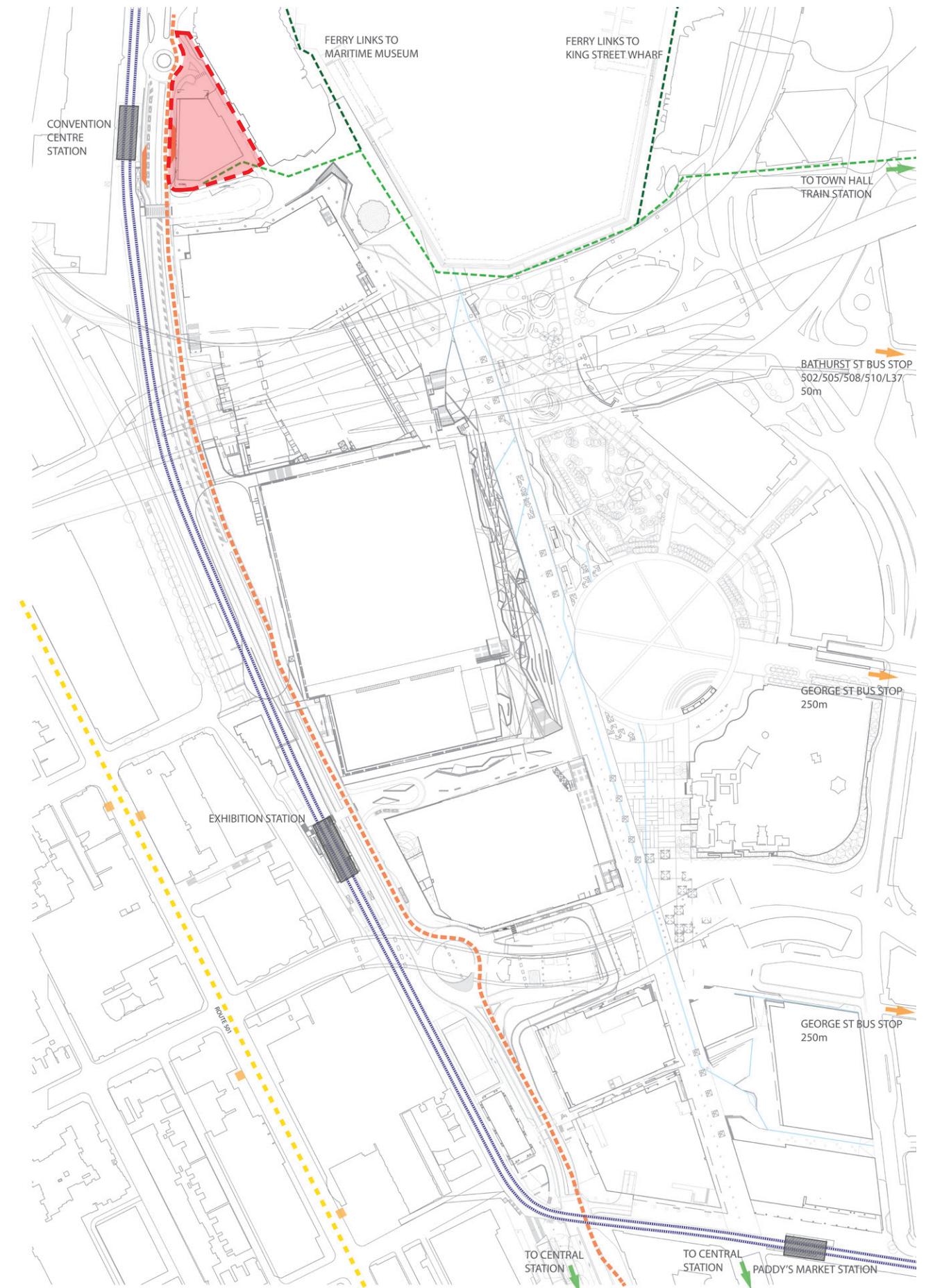
The site is also well connected in terms of ferry access from King Street Wharf and the Maritime Museum.

Town Hall is the closest train station to the ICC Hotel and will be reached easily via the pedestrian bridge to the east of Cockle Bay. Access from Central Station will be provided via the Goods Line or Quay Street and will continue along the Boulevard, through the site south to north.

An existing bus route runs along Harris Street and there are current discussions around a potential future bus route with a stop next to the ICC Hotel, linking the facilities conveniently to the rest of the city.

Legend

-  Light rail station
-  Light rail route
-  Existing bus route
-  Proposed bus route
-  Bus stop
-  Indicative route to train station
-  Indicative route to ferry stop



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3.0 SITE HISTORY

3.1 THE VALLEY FLOOR

The urban landscape of Darling Harbour is dramatically different to what it once was. Once a valley forming part of the Sydney Basin, it was a landscape of sandstone escarpments, swampy foreshore and tidal mud flats. Creeks flowed from the higher ground to the south and east of the site. The vegetation consisted of dry *Sclerophyll* or open woodland on the higher sections with an open Sydney Turpentine – Ironbark forest upon the slopes. The alluvial soils of the valley floor supported a River Flat Forest of *Eucalypts* and *Angophora*.

At the head of Cockle Bay (now the site of the Sydney Entertainment Centre [SEC]) and extending around the foreshore were swamp communities of *Allocasuarina* and *Eucalyptus robusta*.

The subsequent reclamation of the foreshore and harbour has long since filled over the alluvial soils of the valley but there are stories to be told about past ecologies, lost creeks, foreshore patterns and tidal influences.

Figure 3.1.1 is a composite image of four diagrams: these diagrams indicate the patterns of ecology, shorelines, green spaces and topography that have helped inform a design metaphor of the 'Valley'; the Boulevard, streets and lower pedestrian spaces make up the valley floor, the built form that contains those spaces are the escarpment, and the green parkland spaces proposed within the Darling Harbour precinct are a folded landscape that connects to the escarpment and enclosed gullies between the built forms. This metaphor will influence the landscape design and planting palette precinct wide.

The gullies of Harbourside Place and the Laneway link the perched escarpment edges of Pyrmont to the lower valley floor of Darling Harbour.

Source - Doug Benson & Jocelyn Howell 'Taken for Granted. The bushland of Sydney and its suburbs.'

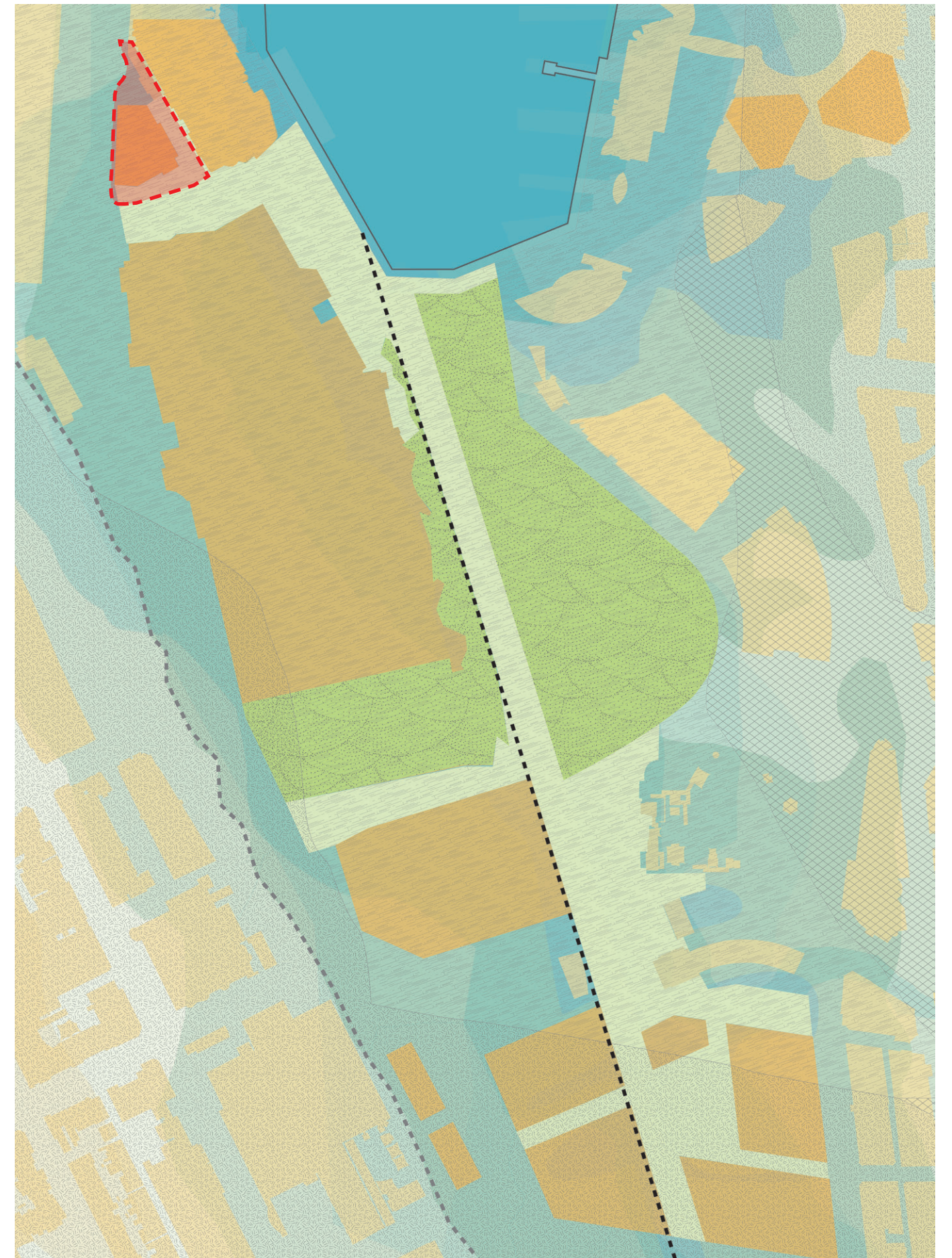


Figure 3.1.1 Composite valley floor diagram - refer to following page

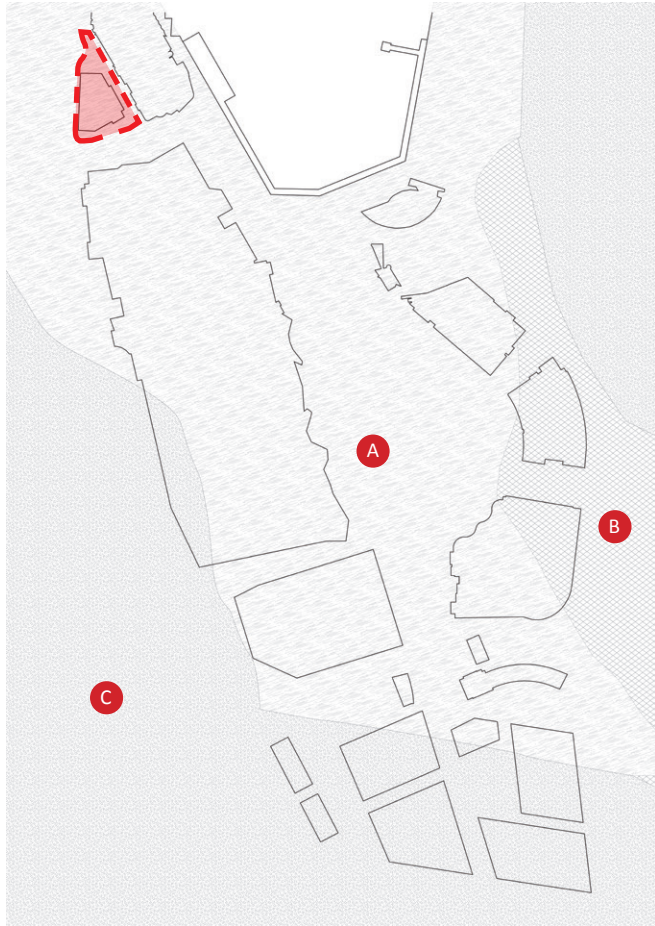


Figure 3.1.2 Past ecologies

- A** Mudflat and associated flora
- B** Ashfield Shale slopes with swamp forest of *Casuarina glauca* and *Eucalyptus robusta*
- C** Hawkesbury sandstone slopes
 - _ Lower slopes: *Eucalyptus racemosa* with understorey - *Acacia suaveolens* - *Banksia spinulosa* - *Leptospermum attenuatum* - *Leptospermum flavescens*
 - _ Upper Slopes: *Eucalyptus pilularis* - *Angophora costata* with understorey - *Ceratopetalum gummmiferum* - *Kunzea ambigua* - *Platysace lanceolata* - *Leptospermum attenuatum* - *Dianella caerulea* - *Themeda australis*
 - _ *Eucalyptus gummifera* - *Eucalyptus piperita*

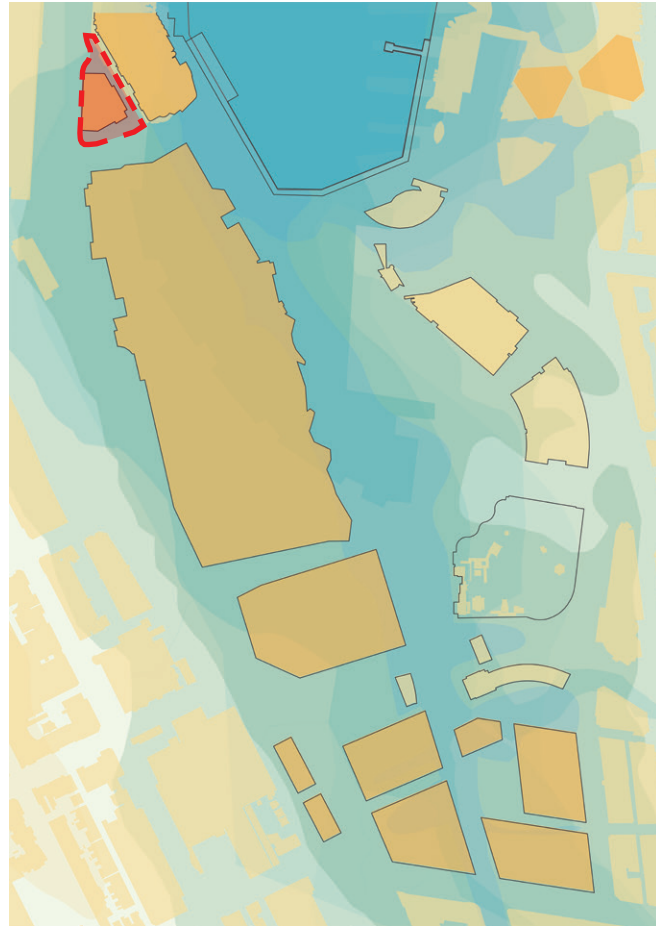


Figure 3.1.3 Topography

New and old topography- The historic sandstone escarpment (now the city suburbs of Ultimo and Pyrmont) metaphorically encroach into the valley floor in the form of the new Exhibition, Convention and Entertainment buildings, and The Haymarket. This metaphor has begun to define the 'folded landscape' that connects the valley floor (The Boulevard) to the escarpment within the Darling Harbour precinct. Equally this metaphor references the narrow linear laneway and plaza areas in between building volumes as gullies that connect plateau and valley floor.

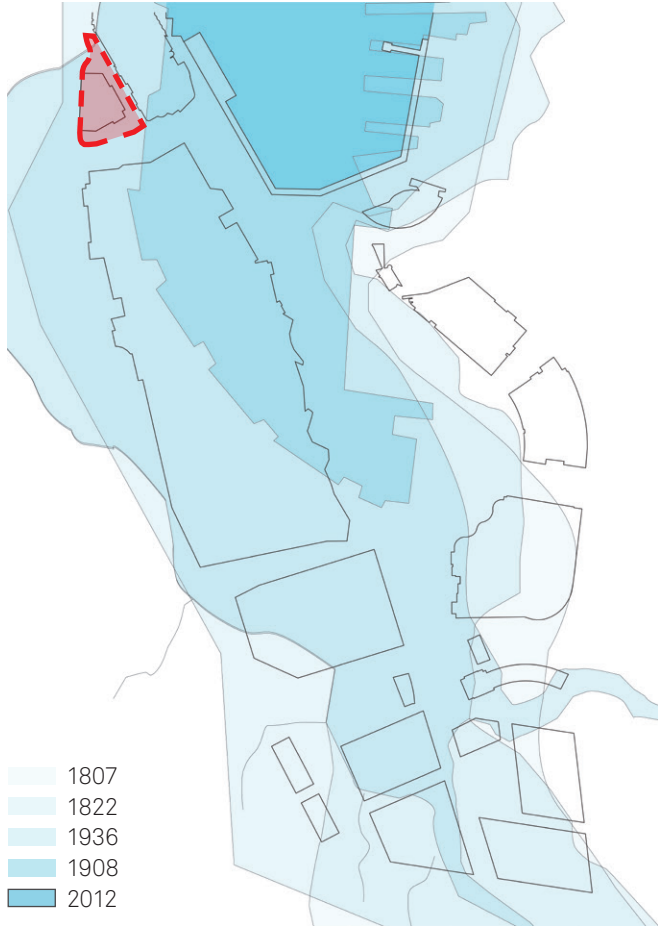


Figure 3.1.4 Shorelines

Shoreline histories - The patterns of natural shoreline, harbour and reclamation



Figure 3.1.5 Integrated landscape

Integrated landscape - the 'valley floor' and the parkland as 'folded landscape' connecting to the built form

3.2 HISTORY AND HERITAGE

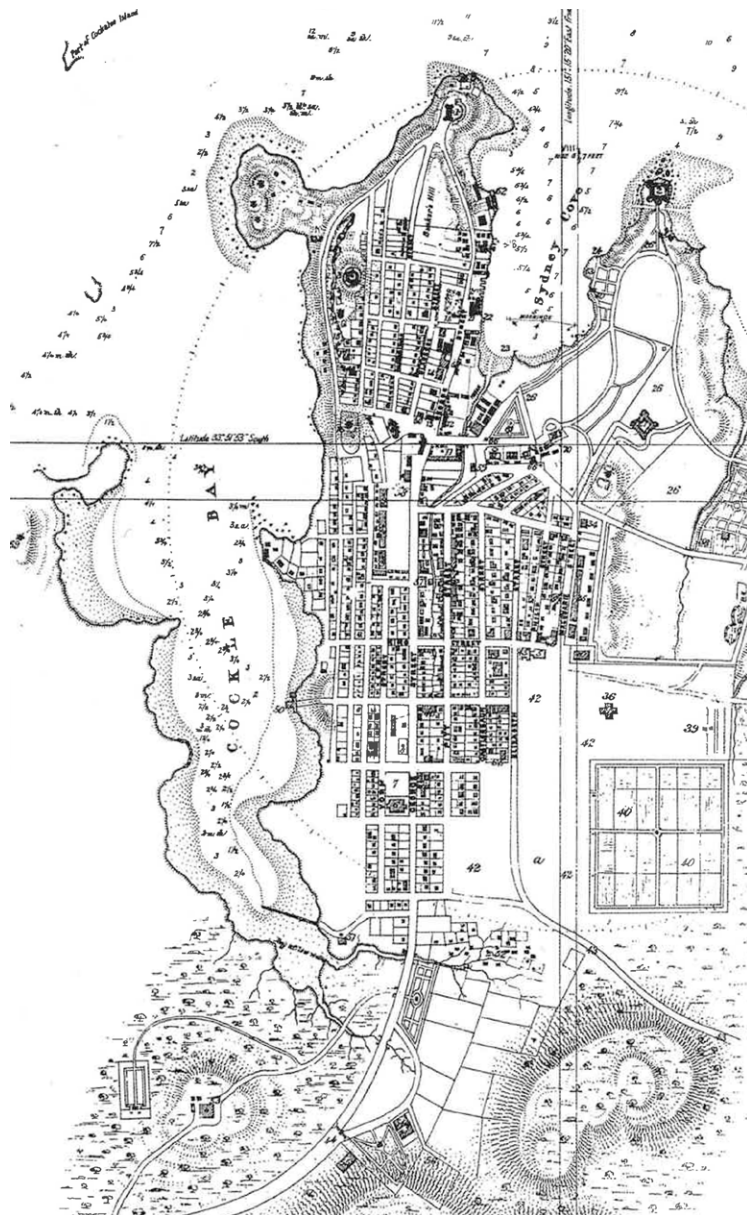


Figure 3.2.1 1822
The Thriving Industrial suburbs of Darling Harbour and Pyrmont with the valley floor at the mouth of the bay.
Source - Paul Ashton & Duncan Waterson 'Sydney takes Shape: A History in Maps.'

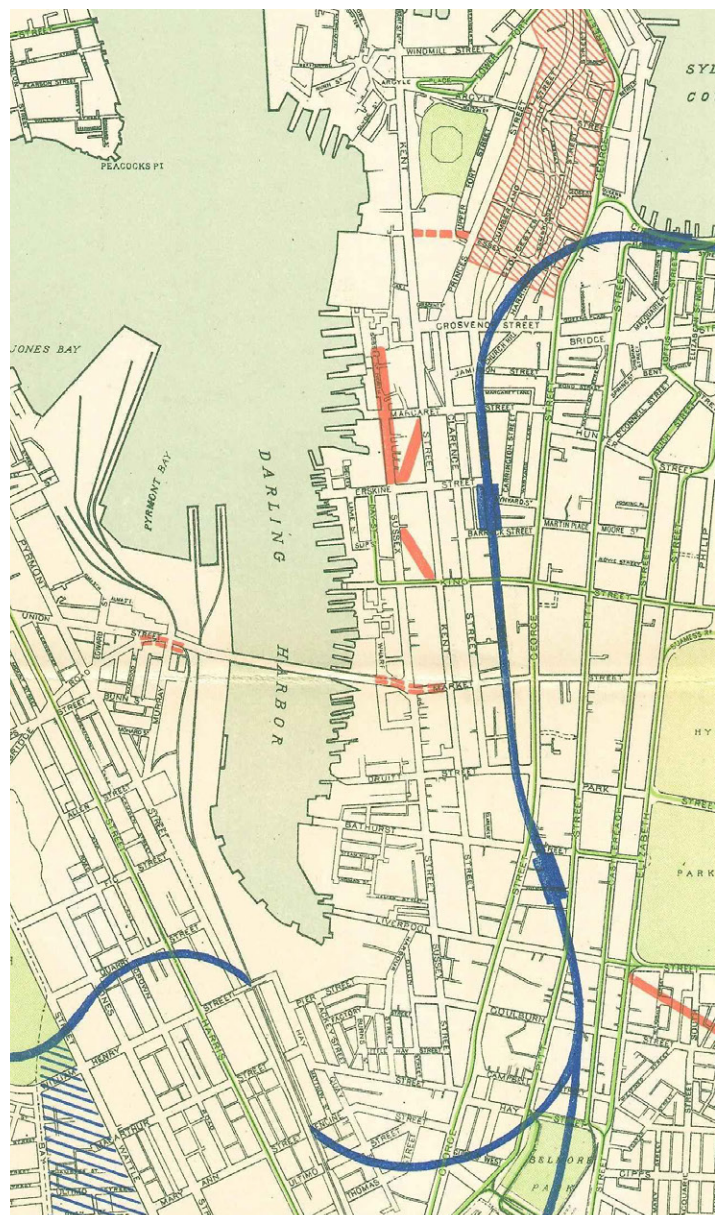


Figure 3.2.2 1880
Increased development along the harbour frontage with the construction of the Iron Wharf and rail line
Source - unknown

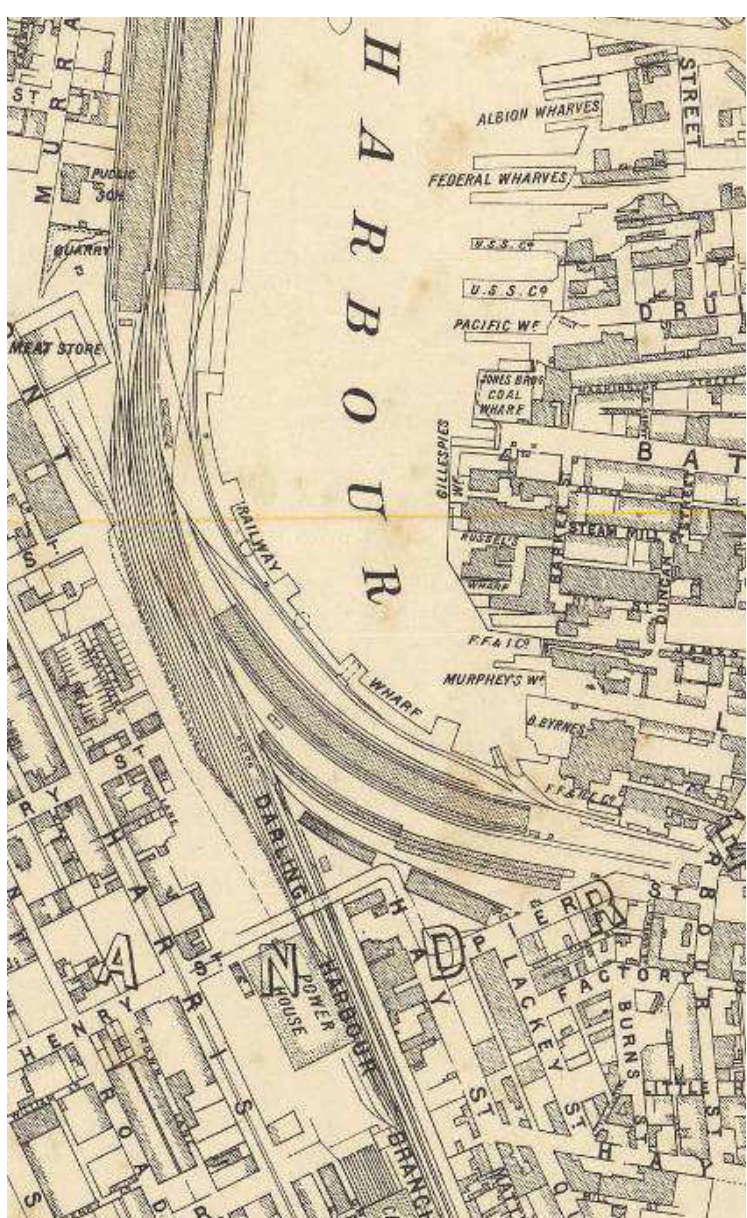


Figure 3.2.3 1903
Wharfage developments began in 1901, the railway and associated infrastructure expanded.
Source - City of Sydney Archives