

Site Overview

3.1 Site Overview

Located within the iconic Rocks precinct, the site is nestled in between Gloucester and Harrington Streets. The Cahill Expressway borders the southern edge of the site, with Cambridge Street terminating at the northern boundary intersecting with the historic Cumberland Steps. Sloping steeply from Gloucester Street to Harrington St, the site rises by 3 storeys from East to West.

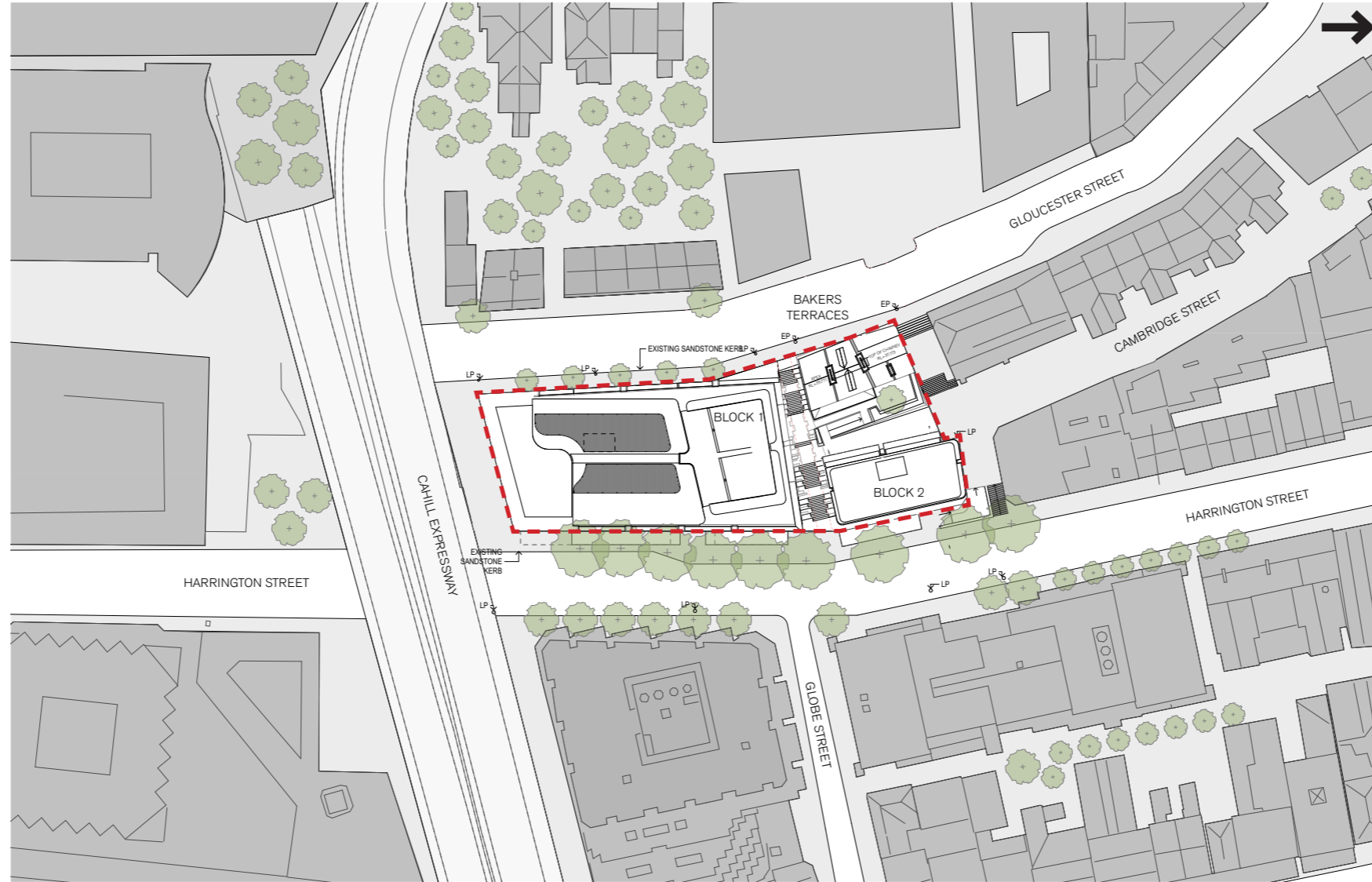
The surrounding development is reflective of the Rocks character, with a range of historic terrace housing types fronting the streetscape of Gloucester and Harrington Streets, as well as other historic buildings of larger scale on the northern end of Harrington Street. To the south and east, Harrington Street has been more significantly altered by a number of taller commercial buildings including the current building on the site.

The existing built form consists of a 6 storey commercial building with underground car parking.

The Bakers Terraces, built in 1875 and state heritage listed, lie within the site to the NW and are currently used for offices.

Cumberland Steps run along the northern edge of the Harrington Street site and have existed since the late 1800s. The public thoroughfare provides an east west link through the area, connecting Harrington and Gloucester Streets via the Cambridge Street.

The site acts as a gateway to the Rocks from Harrington Street and has opportunity to draw visitors into the precinct by improved built form and active uses. Similarly, a more appealing through site link (currently covered and of uncertain use) which reinforces the 'ant track' up the hill from Circular Quay could improve visitation and visitor amenity when exploring the Rocks.



3.1.1 Site Plan



Heritage

3.2 Heritage

The Harrington Street site lies in one of Australia's most important heritage precincts. It is surrounded by a range of listed buildings as well as destinations of interest, such as The Big Dig.

Waves of change and overlay characterise The Rocks. Prior to western colonisation, the Cadigal people used this site for gathering and food preparation. In close proximity to the Tank Stream and safe, calm harbour, the Rocks became the first home for convicts and merchants, sailors and immigrants. The scale of buildings varies dramatically with small workers cottages abutting merchant's mansions, warehouses, pubs and shops.

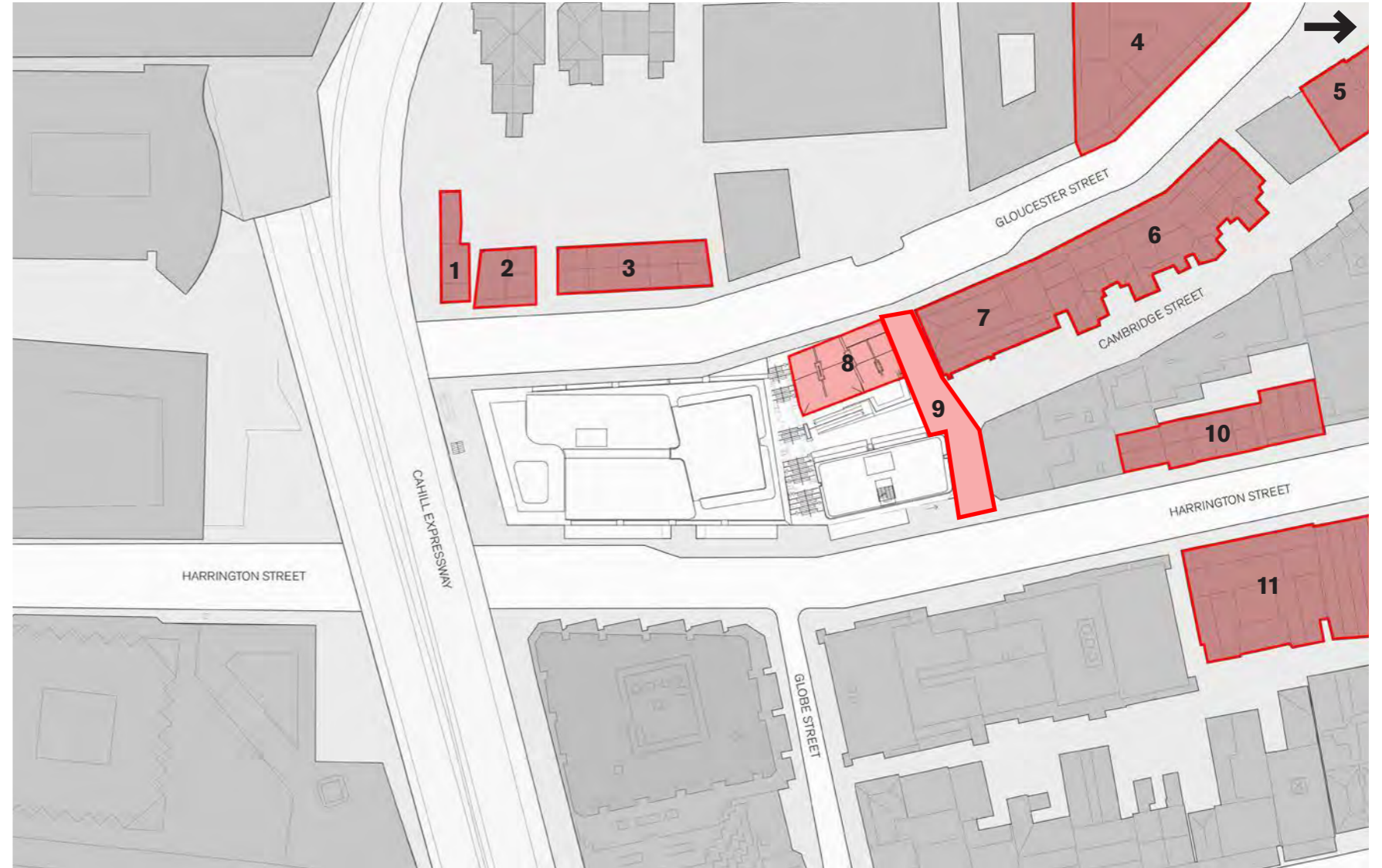
A number of buildings in close proximity are listed on the State Heritage Register and/or the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority's Section 170 Register. The proposal has developed a rigorous response to its heritage context including:

- Reinstating a strong east-west trail and through site link which offers a sense of the original pathways such as the Cumberland Steps, stone cuttings and topography as well as improved wayfinding
- Reinstating an extension of Cambridge Street which is accessible and on grade from current Cambridge Street levels
- Adapting the heritage listed Baker's Terrace into residential occupancy and ground floor retail facing into a newly created public domain and reinstating the original floor level of the lowest floor of Bakers Terraces
- Respecting the sandstone Cumberland Steps along the Northern edge of the site by retention of adjacent original stone wall and sandstone coursing and matching of levels to landings within the existing stair.
- Reflecting the fine grain articulation of the heritage listed terrace housing by dividing the building's mass into similar width modules and including human scale window treatment in the new development's facade.
- Creating a new public space that connects with the Cambridge Street (laneway), a focal point and relief to the constrained nature of the existing urban fabric.

- Reinstating a broader unbuilt area around the Bakers Terraces to emphasise views towards them
- Ensuring that good sun access is maintained to the terraces / tenements on western side of Gloucester Street
- Materials for the new development have been selected to respond to the heritage context; there has been an emphasis on the selection of materials which complement the existing brick, sandstone, timber and cast iron, such as terracotta and sandstone and bronze.
- Providing additional interpretive elements within the new stairs and open space which will provide a greater level of meaning and understanding to the who visit The Rocks.

State Heritage Register (Listed Items)

1. Tenements
2. Terraces
3. Jobbin's Terrace
4. Australian Hotel
5. View Terrace N & W Facades
6. Terraces
7. Susannah Place
8. Baker's Terrace
9. Cumberland Steps
10. Terraces (Rendezvous Hotel)
11. Terraces (Harbour Rocks Hotel)



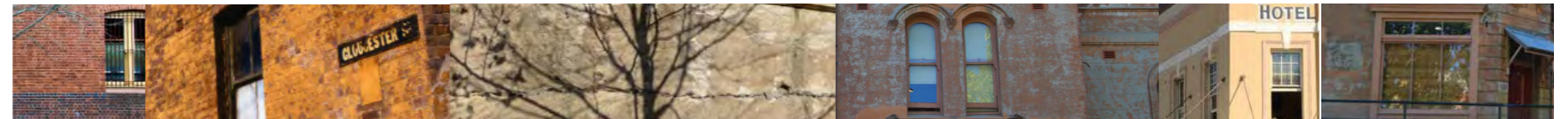
3.2.1 Heritage Items



Heritage Materiality

3.3 Heritage Materiality

Originally the buildings of the Rocks were shelters the convicts and sailors built for themselves out of mud and timber. Over time sandstone was quarried from the site to build structures of greater significance. Bricks of all generations are evident as are rendered masonry and timber framed openings, outhouses and fences, corrugated metal and wrought iron, terracotta chimney pots and roofs.



Varied Scale & Corner Sites

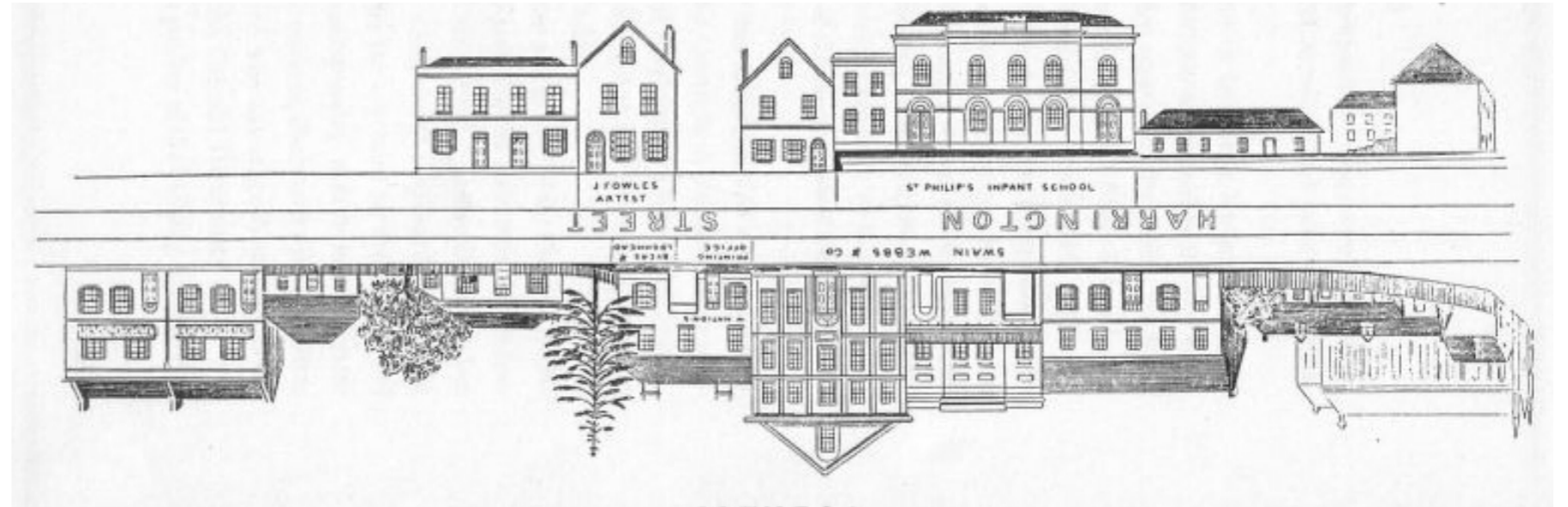
3.4 Varied Scale

The Rocks is a rich accumulation of successive changes that have occurred that underlie the place that we experience today. These interventions are highly site specific, responding to and rationalising the natural topography - the steep sandstone rise from the water.

Placed on top of each-other through agglomeration and juxtaposition, they have produced a rich urban form. Large and small buildings about with little regard for a common height datum or unified composition.

3.5 Corner Sites and Creation of Space

With little true public gathering space, focal points for the community emerged from remnant areas and corner sites. The chamfered intersections, created relief from the constrained streets and identity to blocks. The space created by the corner became natural locators and eddies in circulation. It is intended that the new open spaces pay homage to these 'eddies' creating gathering points at pedestrian intersections.



Traffic Access and Transport

3.6 Pedestrian Network

Reinforcing strong pedestrian trails and networks is critical to delivering a successful, vibrant public domain. East West pedestrian movement from Circular Quay through the Rocks to the Cahill Expressway and Barangaroo is facilitated by extending and enhancing the existing pedestrian connections along Globe Street and the Cumberland Steps. From Globe Street, a wide new stair offers a visual link from George Street up to Gloucester, offering relief to the small and worn Cumberland Steps. Amenity is provided by a range of places to stop and rest including places on the new stairs and within the new Cumberland Open Space.

Pedestrian amenity along Cambridge Street is significantly improved by lowering the level of the current semi-private courtyard at the end of Cambridge Street to match the current street levels. The extended street then extends seamlessly into the new Cumberland Stairs.

To further enhance the amenity for all visitors to The Rocks, the proposal offers a publicly accessible lift which connects Harrington Street, the New Cumberland Place and Gloucester Streets. This will be accessible 24 hours a day and is highly visible from the public domain.

3.7 Public Transport

The Harrington Street site benefits from a number of public transport options on offer. Currently, there are bus, rail and ferry services within walking distance of the site, connecting users to the greater metropolitan area.

In addition, the state government has commenced construction of a light rail service that will connect the CBD with the Eastern suburbs. The light rail will depart from a newly constructed stop at Circular Quay, this is intended to be in operation within the next 5-6 years.

3.7.1 Rail

Circular Quay train station is located underneath the Cahill Expressway and adjacent to the Circular Quay Ferry wharves. This is within walking distance of the site (300m). This station offers the T2 and T3 services that run frequently around the City Circle, T2 via Sydney airport and the T3 Bankstown line.

Wynyard station is also within walking distance of the site (600m South).

3.7.2 Bus

There are a number of key bus corridors within close proximity of the site. All within walking distance the services connect to the broader Sydney metropolitan area.

The nearest bus stops are:

- 300m North West of the site is the 311 Bus service running from Argyle Place.
- 400m East of the site the Alfred Street interchange offers a range of bus services that connect to the greater metropolitan area.
- 400m South of the site at Lang Park, York Street is a bus stop that offers services into the CBD, Botany, Marrickville and Bondi Junction.

3.7.3 Ferry

Circular Quay, is the main ferry terminal of Sydney and is a short walk from the site. The wharves provide both public and private charters to a series of locations along the northern shores, Parramatta and bays within Sydney Harbour. Ferry services run frequently 7 days a week.

The five wharves provide services to:

- Darling Harbour
- Manly

- Parramatta
- Neutral Bay
- Mosman Bay
- Watsons Bay
- Taronga Zoo

3.8 Vehicular

The current building has two crossings which limit the amenity of the footpath and restrict active frontage. The proposed scheme offers one integrated vehicular entry point to the site that acts both as a car park entry and service vehicle access.

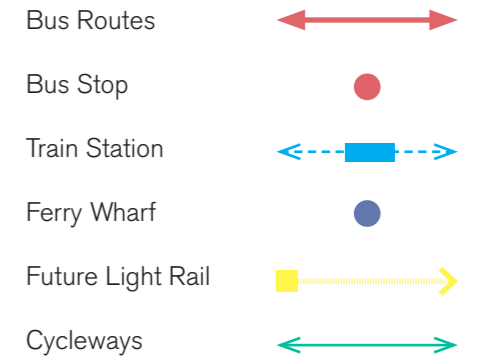
This entry point is provided from Harrington Street. The design and positioning of this entry has considered the safe manoeuvring of vehicles entering and exiting the building as well as the public domain implications of this entry point. The entry point is moved into the centre of the frontage so that the street can be activated closer to the Cahill Expressway as well as the through site link.

3.9 Bicycle

The City of Sydney cycle network defines a number of nearby streets as being 'bicycle friendly roads'. These include Hickson Road to the north, Pitt and George Street to the south and Kent Street, Watson Road and Argyle Place to the East.

There are dedicated cycleways along the Cahill Expressway and Bradfield Highway, with the foreshore along the Rocks at Circular Quay providing separate dedicated cycleways.

TRANSPORT



PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

1. Barangaroo Reserve
2. Observatory Hill Park
3. Hickson Road Reserve
4. The King George V Memorial Park
5. Barney & Bligh Reserve
6. First Fleet Park
7. Lang Park
8. Wynyard Park
9. Jessie Street Gardens
10. Macquarie Place Park
11. Royal Botanic Gardens