

# PUBLIC REALM AND PLACEMAKING

## URBAN CONTEXT

The land which surround the Darling Harbour waterway is one of the most historically significant areas in Sydney. Today, it is also a major tourist destination and event precinct in the city, with over 26 million visitors between 2014-2015. In recent years, the activity and waterfront public realm experience that has defined this precinct at the base of the harbour has extended north.

Catalysed by the major redevelopment project of Barangaroo and followed shortly after by the ICC, Darling Square and Darling Quarter the whole area - extending from Barangaroo Headland to Pirrama Park - is now undergoing a significant change in terms of it character from the public realm to the relationship between buildings and the waterfront. The result is the creation of a new experience - that of the emerging 'global waterfront' precinct. There are a number of key characteristics that now define the character of the area. It is a precinct founded on sandstone, anchored by parkland and enjoyed through the immersive experience of the waterfront.

Sandstone is the overriding foundational material of Sydney and is visible in the precinct through exposed cuttings located on both sides of the waterfront edges of Pyrmont and Millers Point. Distinctive and robust, the use of sandstone in civic and cultural buildings ensure a memorable understanding of this global precinct as a part of Sydney.

The precinct is also anchored by generous green spaces at either extent and at its heart - by Pirrama Park on Pyrmont Peninsula, Tumbalong Park in the end of the bay and Barangaroo Reserve on the eastern shoreline. The western edges that include The Star are populated by smaller pockets of green spaces comprising Ballaarat Park, Pyrmont Bay Park and Darling Island Park. These spaces provides greater amenity for residents, visitors and workers in the area and a distinctively greener character.

At the heart of the precinct however is water. The harbour is the most significant feature of the precinct and rather than divide it, is today the element that brings it together, often through its role as centre stage in major city scale events. As a result, the scale of development and its response to the water's edge is once again embracing the waterfront. Opportunities for interactive water play are increasingly being incorporated into the foreshore and within green spaces including Barangaroo Headland, Pirrama Park and Tumbalong Park to bring an extra dimension to the experience of water.



FIGURE 48: Local context analysis: Public realm and placemaking

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## KEY DIRECTIONS:

### D.1 A WATERFRONT SITE IN THE EMERGING GLOBAL WATERFRONT PRECINCT:

Embrace opportunities to celebrate the waterfront setting on a global scale through capturing views, creating new skylines to be experienced from the harbour and providing opportunities for water based experiences.

### D.2 A PARKLAND SETTING:

The precinct is anchored by parks from point to point and is characterised by an ever-increasing use of green throughout outdoor spaces and places. Opportunities to bring this green setting into new outdoor spaces extend the experience.

### D.3 SANDSTONE AS A FOUNDATION:

Sandstone is a key characteristic of both the existing topography and the historical built form. Opportunities to incorporate sandstone into the base elements of buildings will enhance the character of the area and tie new buildings into their locality.

- The Star
- Key public open space
- Waterfront harbour deck
- Plaza
- Sandstone cliffs / cuttings
- 270 degree expansive water views
- Internal framed water views
- Opportunity for green heart
- Green anchor
- Interactive water experience
- Emerging 'global waterfront' precinct



## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

## A GLOBAL CITY RESPONSE TO AMENITY

As our cities grow and accommodate more and more people, they are charged with making efficient use of available land. One of the responses some of the world's leading global cities take to accommodating people in concentrated areas in to make the most of the amenity that surrounds them. Examples include:

- New York, USA both along the waterfront and around Central Park;
- Vancouver's global waterfront, Canada;
- Toronto's Central Waterfront, Canada;
- Gold Coast, Australia;
- Elizabeth Quay in Perth, Australia; and
- 'The Bund' in Shanghai, China.

In these examples, tall buildings front significant amenity offers being expansive parklands, waterfronts or beaches.



Gold Coast tall building skyline alongside beach front



New York tall building skyline response to Central Park



New York tall building skyline response to waterfront



Shanghai's tall building skyline response to waterfront



Elizabeth Quay, Perth Australia tall building skyline response to waterfront



Vancouver BC tall building skyline response to waterfront



Toronto tall building skyline response to waterfront

FIGURE 49: International tall building and amenity exemplars



## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

WATER'S EDGE CONDITION  
AND EXPERIENCE

The definition between what is land and what is water within Sydney's Harbour has changed significantly over the years. Over half the current site of The Star was located within before European settlement with the original foreshore edge running directly through the middle of the site. Beyond the site a significant amount of reclamation has occurred and created a series of artificial wharves and structures. The Star lies adjacent to a series of finger wharves, including Pyrmont Bay Wharf, Darling Island and Jones Bay Wharf. Pyrmont Bay extends between Pyrmont Bay Wharf and Darling Island to Pyrmont Park and almost to the front door of The Star. This waterfront setting of the site provides an opportunity to celebrate this location.

All around the emerging 'global waterfront' precinct, re-developments are seizing opportunities to embrace their waterfront location and seeking to find ways to introduce water-based interactive experiences along their edges, into the public realm and onto development sites. The public domain designs reinterpret the areas successive shorelines and rich maritime associations heightening the experience with the water. These elements include outboard walks, sunken platforms, sheltered bays, public art and vibrant children's play spaces that incorporate water in the design.

Recent examples include:

- Pirrama Park's harbour steps and water play children's playground;
- The renovated water feature in front of the ICC as well as a new one in front of the exhibition centre;
- Water playground features in Darling Quarter and Tumbalong Park; and
- Barangaroo Headlands natural rock steps and the proposed waterfront steps of Barangaroo South.

There is opportunity in the redevelopment of The Star to embrace opportunities to increase interaction with water.



Rock steps down to waterfront at Barangaroo Reserve Millers Point



FIGURE 50: Key plan - interactive water experiences



Vision of Barangaroo South Plaza steps into waterfront



Renovated water feature at ICC entry



New water area at ICC public domain



Darling Quarter children's playground



Stairs into water at Pirrama Park



Pirrama Park water play children's playground

FIGURE 51: Existing exemplars - interactive water experiences



## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

HARBOUR AND CITY VIEWS  
FROM THE SITE

Views from waterfront buildings to the harbour are some of the most celebrated experiences within the city. Capturing, framing and revealing these through the careful design of buildings can enhance this experience. Additionally, the creation of a variety of spaces at different levels, inside and outside, as well as for big public gatherings and for smaller, more intimate groups ensures these spaces are created for everyone.

The distinctive form and location of the eastern slopes of Pyrmont benefits it one of the most spectacular views. The long, thin form of the waterway affords the creation of an expansive elevation of the city centre skyline all the way through to the Harbour Bridge and North Sydney.

As the temporary 'stage' for many of the city's community events, including Vivid and New Years Eve, the harbour is a key attractor for both locals and visitors.

Buildings which adjoin the harbour's edge act as an urban amphitheater, providing opportunity to view events within the bay or harbour from a unique vantage point of elevated terraces, balconies and rooftops, as well as from the private domain.

The Star on the eastern frontage of the waterfront provides panoramic views back to the city centre skyline. A tower form reflecting over the podiums could provide 360 panoramic views of Sydney, Botany Bay and the Blue Mountains.



FIGURE 52: City centre and harbour view from The Star

## SITE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE:

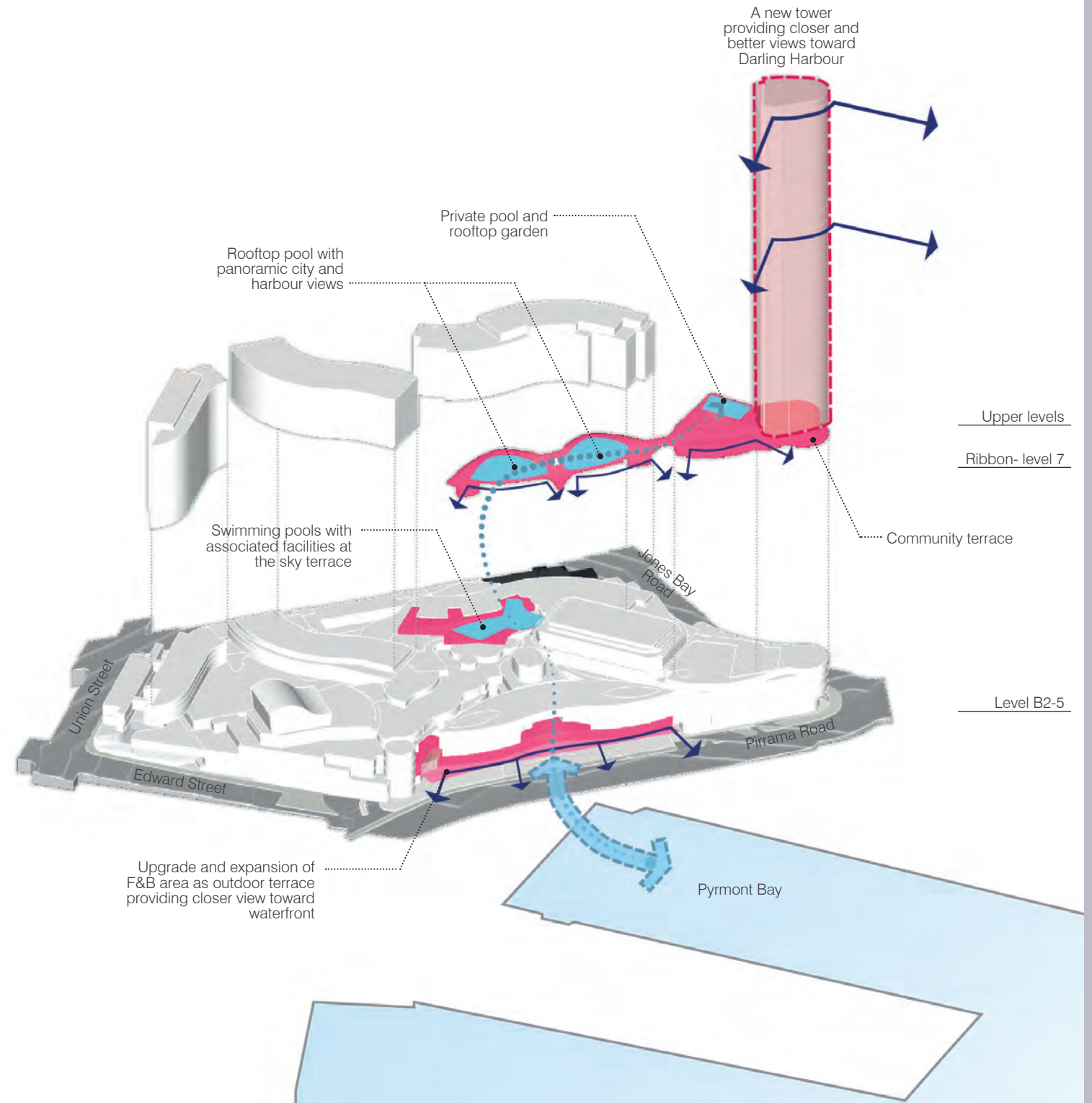
The detailed site investigations presented on the previous pages have identified the following:

**There is an opportunity to create spaces that engage with the waterfront and to capture panoramic views across the water to the city**

## SITE OUTCOMES:

- Investigate opportunities to deliver different types of water based experiences at the higher levels of the podium to heighten the engagement with water.
- Locate pools for residents and hotel users to engage with water views and bring water based experiences into the site.
- Design the tower to capture and maximise views to the Harbour and the City Centre skyline at a variety of different heights and contexts.

## SITE OUTCOME





## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

## GREEN SPACES AND PLACES

The emerging 'global waterfront' precinct, as it exists today, is framed by two city scale public green spaces, being Barangaroo Headland in the east and Pirrama Park in the west. At the base of the bay sits Tumbalong Park. While there are only a number of smaller green spaces along the water's edge within this precinct, these are mostly located on the western foreshore being Pyrmont Bay Park - located immediately in front of The Star - and Metcalf and Ballaarat parks which are located in proximity to the site on Darling Island.

Pyrmont Bay Park is a lush, green space, framed with dense tree planting and the location for many city scale events. It forms part of the 'front door' and arrival experience to The Star from the waterfront.

Within the wider character of the emerging 'global waterfront' precinct, recent development concepts have explored the opportunity to create publicly accessible spaces and terrace, both hard and green in character, at different levels. This response celebrates the waterfront setting and essentially blurs the interface between public and private spaces. Elevated platforms and terraces are also celebrated to capture views and events centred around the parks and waterfront as well as seizing on the opportunity to embrace panoramic views back to the iconic city centre skyline.

There is an opportunity for the Pirrama Road address of The Star to embrace this 'green' setting and integrate new outdoor spaces into the built form. This could include a variety of outdoor terraces at different levels and of different scale, some 'green' in character. Additionally, the opportunity for a central, larger outdoor space as a 'green heart' that is publicly accessible, could be explored as well.



FIGURE 53: Proposed stepped green spaces as part of new Harbourside Proposal



FIGURE 54: Pyrmont Park



FIGURE 55: Proposed green terrace at Cockle Bay Wharf



## SITE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE:

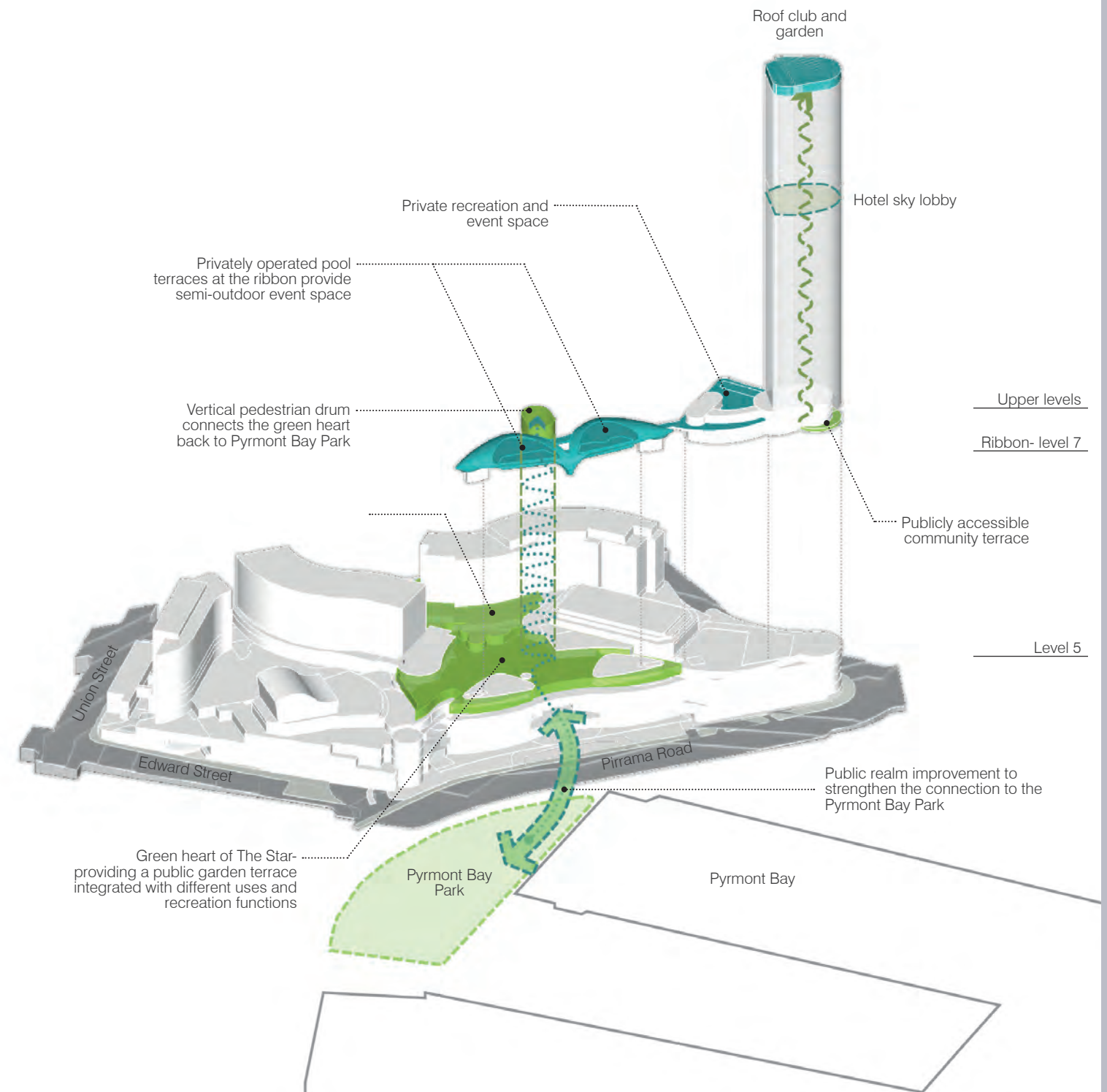
The detailed site investigations presented on the previous pages have identified the following:

**Extending the green character of Pyrmont Bay Park into the site.**

## SITE OUTCOMES:

- Investigate opportunities to create a publicly accessible 'outdoor garden' at the heart of the complex.
- Investigate opportunities to create a series of publicly accessible and private outdoor space terraces at different levels.
- Investigate opportunities to introduce vertical greenery into the new tower form.

## SITE OUTCOME



## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

A CITY DEFINED BY  
SANDSTONE

Sandstone is a material that is synonymous with Sydney. A 200m thick layer forms much of the bedrock for the Sydney Basin. It is the material that defines the headlands and peninsulas of our harbour. It is a building material in our streets and historic buildings. And many people also consider the city to be somewhat spatially defined by sandstone escarpments on three sides, being the Blue Mountains to the west and the Hornsby and Woronora plateaus to the north and south.

It was this sandstone that also eventually came to define Pyrmont and the name became a byword for some of the best sandstone in the world, creating a highly profitable quarrying business.

From the 1840s until the end of the nineteenth century, quarry men hewed down the isolated western half of the peninsula for sandstone. The quarries were known locally as 'Paradise', 'Purgatory' and 'Hellhole', in recognition of the difficulty of working the stone. Uncounted tons of Pyrmont 'yellowblock', as it was known, were carted into the city to build the great public buildings which remain the signature of Sydney's nineteenth-century built form. Some of Sydney's most reputable and well-known buildings were built using Pyrmont's yellow block sandstone, including Sydney Town Hall, the Art Gallery of NSW and the University of Sydney.

Today, sandstone still characterises the area. It is visible in the natural environment including in the escarpment to the north of the site, and in the built environment including in the art nouveau details comprised within heritage listed SELS Building and more recently in the Darling Hotel. The ongoing use of sandstone as a building material in the podium levels will continue the expression of this relationship to the bedrock of the city.



Heritage listed sandstone cliff located immediately to the north of The Star



Sandstone details of the SELS Building



Sandstone is used in the facade of the Darling Hotel which is aligned to the historic Union Street and adjacent to Union Square

FIGURE 56: Photographic audit - existing use of sandstone on the site and nearby



## SITE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE:

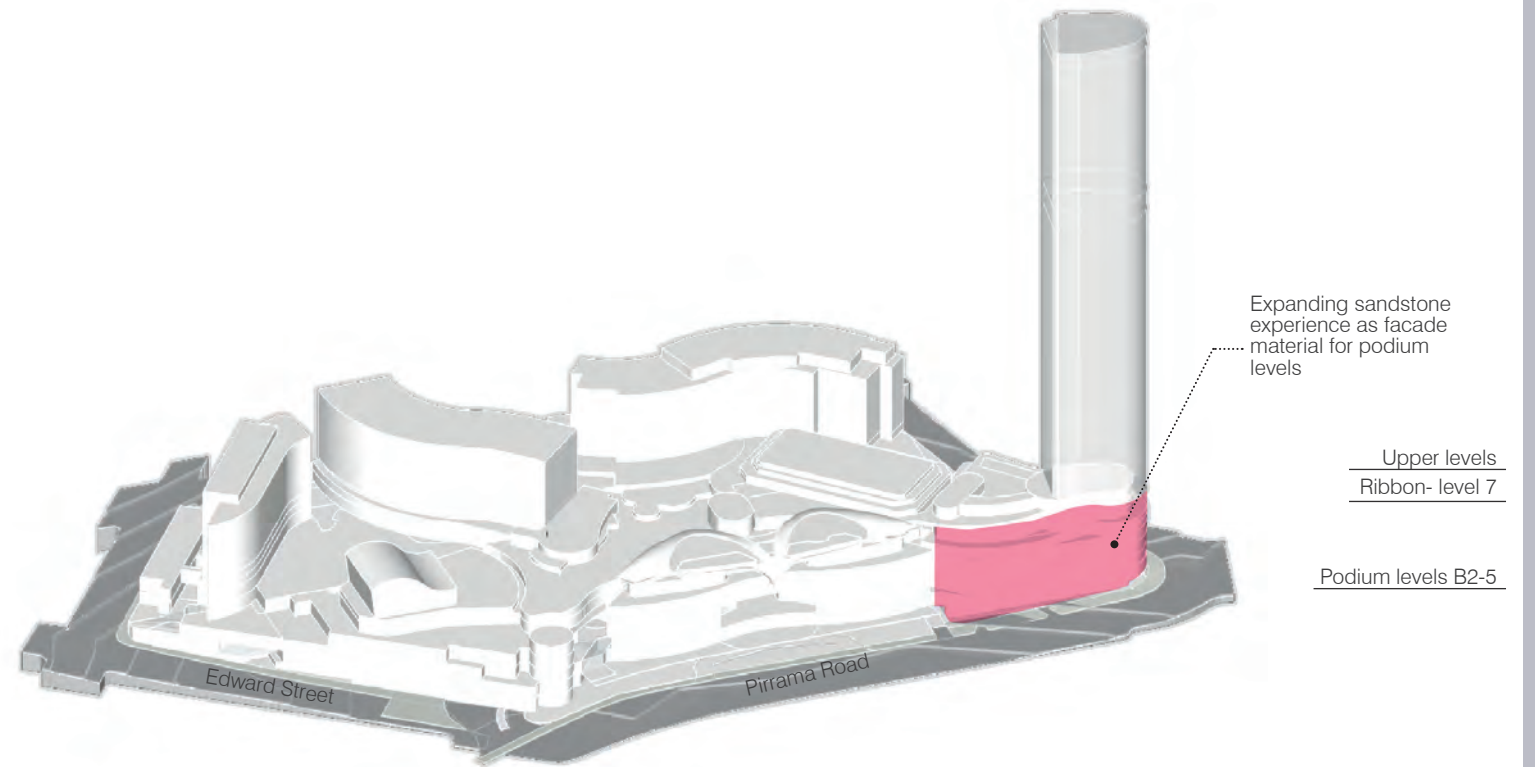
The detailed site investigations presented on the previous pages have identified the following:

**There is an opportunity to celebrate sandstone in the site through integrating the material as an element of the building.**

## SITE OUTCOMES:

- Investigate opportunities to utilise sandstone as a building material at the base / podium form of the building.

## SITE OUTCOME





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# E ACTIVATION & DESTINATION APPEAL

THE SITE AS A PARTICIPANT IN URBAN LIFE

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Sydney is Australia's Global City. An essential component in the success of global cities today is a vibrant and thriving cultural and entertainment scene. Those cities with the strongest reputations as lively and exciting cities in which to live, do business and visit are those which have consciously invested in cultural, entertainment and lifestyle destinations and the attractions that surround them. This emergence of the experience economy means that today, these facilities are key to attracting new talent to our cities. They are significant tourist attractions and act as hosts for the global marketplace of conferences, trade shows and events.

Over the past two decades, the tourism economy worldwide has seen significant growth and in Australia is now worth \$31 billion. And this growth is set to continue with Australian Government having set an ambitious target to double overnight domestic and international visitor expenditure by 2020.

Sydney is already home to a globally competitive concentration of cultural, entertainment and event offerings. At its heart is the Cultural Ribbon, a harbour-side cultural walking trail that connects Woolloomooloo to Darling Harbour, and in the future onto the Bays Precinct in the west.

At the heart of this cultural ribbon are the city's premier cultural and event spaces including the recently completed Darling Live Precinct and International Convention Centre. It also includes key city-scale event spaces hosted in the public spaces of the city. This includes the Opera House steps, Circular Quay, Darling Harbour public spaces and The Domain. City-wide events such as Chinese New Year, Sydney Festival, Biennale and Vivid all activate the streets and spaces of our city bringing our cultural energy and talent into our public spaces for all to experience.

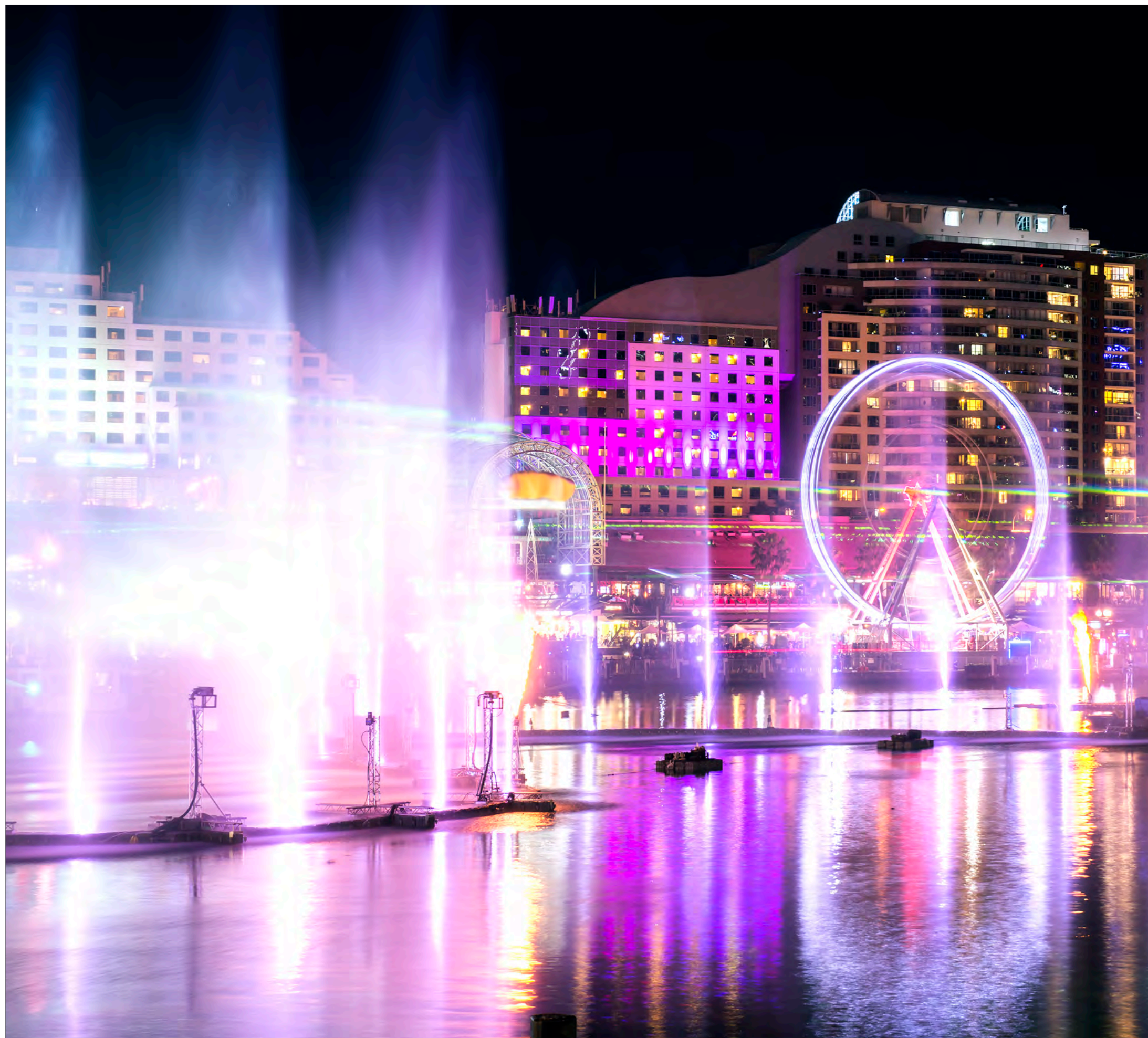






FIGURE 57: Strategic analysis: Activation and destination appeal



# ACTIVATION & DESTINATION APPEAL

## URBAN CONTEXT

The Darling Harbour waterway has always been a major contributor to economic activity in the city. From its industrial beginnings as the city's working waterfront to the 1988 bicentennial opening which saw Australia's largest urban renewal project at the time transform industrial wharves and derelict rail yards into the country's premier tourist and leisure destination.

Today this waterfront area of the city is going through another major transformation - and one that is seeing an expansion of activity. The redevelopment at Barangaroo has anchored the eastern extent of the waterway providing the missing link between the historic Darling Harbour precinct at the city. Following this was the complete redevelopment of the convention and exhibition centre to create the Darling Live Precinct including the International Convention Centre (ICC) increasing the capacity and intensifying the offer of entertainment and event facilities within the precinct. The Ribbon redevelopment of the IMAX theatre along with potential redevelopments of Cockle Bay Wharf and Harbourside will again contribute to the overall level of activity and offer within the precinct.

These recent proposals are transforming the waterfront of Darling Harbour from an international attraction for tourists and visitors to a place for Sydney-siders as well. Already it is the city's 24-hour waterfront and the premier location for events in the city. There emergence of new commercial office towers, residential apartments and dining and cultural destinations are reengaging the city with this global waterfront.

Additionally, the future redevelopment of the Bays Precinct, including the Fish Market at Pyrmont, to the west of Darling Harbour is following the wider migration of the city to towards Sydney Olympic Park and Parramatta. This has the potential to extending the already identified cultural, events and entertainment ribbon on the water's edge.

In this context, The Star is already a key contributor to the events and 24-hour character of the precinct. And in the future it will form an essential component in the integration of the Bays Precinct into the life and activity of the city. The Star will form a key anchor that is essential for the success of this link.



FIGURE 58: Local context analysis: Activation and destination appeal

### KEY DIRECTIONS:

- E.1

**PART OF AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT:**

The emergence of new world-class facilities in the precinct including the ICC - Australia's largest entertainment, event and conference facility means The Star must continue to invest to maintain their commercial obligation to operate a first class, international standard facility.
- E.2

**A LOCAL DESTINATION:**

The transformation from Darling Harbour which was primarily a tourist destination into the emerging 'global waterfront' precinct that is both a destination for locals as well as visitors means there is an opportunity for The Star to further embrace its local offer.

- The Star
- International Entertainment Precinct
- Commercial Precinct
- Tourism & Cultural Precinct
- Waterfront Dining & Retail Precinct
- Future Redevelopment Precinct
- Mixed-use Residential Precinct
- Harris Street Heritage Dining & Retail Precinct
- 1

SYDNEY FISH MARKETS (PART OF THE BAYS PRECINCT REDEVELOPMENT)
- 2

PYRMONT / UNION SQUARE
- 3

THE STAR
- 4

PYRMONT WHARVES
- 5

DARLING HARBOUR LIVE / ICC
- 6

DARLING QUARTER
- 7

TUMBALONG PARK
- 8

DARLING PARK
- 9

COCKLE BAY WHARF
- 10

KINGS WHARF
- 11

BARANGAROO SOUTH
- 12

BARANGAROO CENTRAL
- 13

BARANGAROO NORTH





## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

# INTEGRATED RESORTS BENCHMARKING STUDY

The Star Entertainment Group Limited (SEGL) is an operator of integrated resorts catering to both local and international visitors and is the operator of The Star.

Integrated resorts are developments of significant critical mass, providing a diversity of offerings from hotel and residential accommodation, to resort amenities, conference and event facilities, retail, entertainment and cultural activities, other attractions and gaming. As an international venue, The Star must look both locally and globally to benchmark its offer, remain competitive and position itself as world-class standard Integrated Resort.

The \$870 million 2009-2013 redevelopment program (Project Star) transformed The Star Casino into an Integrated Resort - a premium entertainment destination that would compete with comparable operations internationally. On completion of this transformation, The Star was named 'Australia's Leading Casino Resort' in the World Travel Awards and has been the recipient of a number of building and design awards as well as receiving culinary awards for excellence for its restaurants.

The transformation of The Star has driven increases to visitation and revenue. Consistent with their commercial obligation to the NSW government to operate the site at a first class international standard, SEGL is proposing a revitalisation of the existing complex.

SEGL is embarking on a five year redevelopment journey to create a landmark, exemplar integrated resort. This proposed redevelopment will occur through the lodgement of two s75W applications lodged with the Department of Planning and Environment (Department), being Modification 14 and Modification 13.

Under Modification 14, SEGL plans to invest approximately \$557 million of capital in the resort in a range of projects comprising a range of maintenance or infrastructure projects as well as growth projects that will drive an increasing number of visitors to the property. Under Modification 13, SEGL plans to invest approximately \$626 million of capital for the proposed The Ritz-Carlton Tower and associated works, to be undertaken between 2018-2023. This is proposed to meet the increasing demand of international leisure tourism.



## MARINA BAY SANDS, SINGAPORE

The Marina Bay Sands (MBS) is an integrated resort including 3 hotel towers, retail centre, convention centre, cultural facilities and casino. The resort designed by Moshe Safdie and built on reclaimed land has redefined the city and created an iconic architectural destination that has significantly improved international and domestic tourist numbers to Singapore.



## SOUTH BEACH SINGAPORE

The South Beach Singapore development is a newly completed mixed use precinct. The development includes commercial office towers, a hotel, retail, residences and function rooms located in restored heritage built form. The development was designed by Fosters and Partners with a key feature of the design being the large environmental canopy that covers the arrival plaza space and porte cochere. The canopy provides shelter and links all the buildings within the precinct. The hotel markets itself as a luxury and lifestyle hotel with a highly individualised experiences and places. The contemporary interiors are designed by Philippe Starck. The hotel is specifically targeting the design savvy European, Chinese/Asian business traveler in their 20s - 40s.



## GALAXY MACAU

The Galaxy Macau is a large integrated resort that opened in 2011 that includes a significant casino surrounded by retail shopping and 5 different hotel brands included in three main towers. Key features of the resort include a substantial shared recreation level that includes a wave pool and lazy river. Since 2011 opening, Phase 2 has expanded the retail and added JW Marriott and Ritz Carlton and opened in 2014. At present the Galaxy casino generates more gaming revenue than all of Las Vegas casinos combined per day. The resort was design by The Goddard Group will interiors and lighting design of the main casino gaming levels provided by Steelman Partners. Each of the five hotel brands are housed in towers that appear uniform from the exterior. Additional phases are planned.



## SITE INVESTIGATIONS:

## CENTRAL SYDNEY STRATEGY

In mid 2016, the City of Sydney released the Central Sydney Planning Strategy. The Strategy identified a need to build on past strategies and adapt to current needs as well as refocus the current development environment that currently favours residential use towards one that accommodates employment needs.

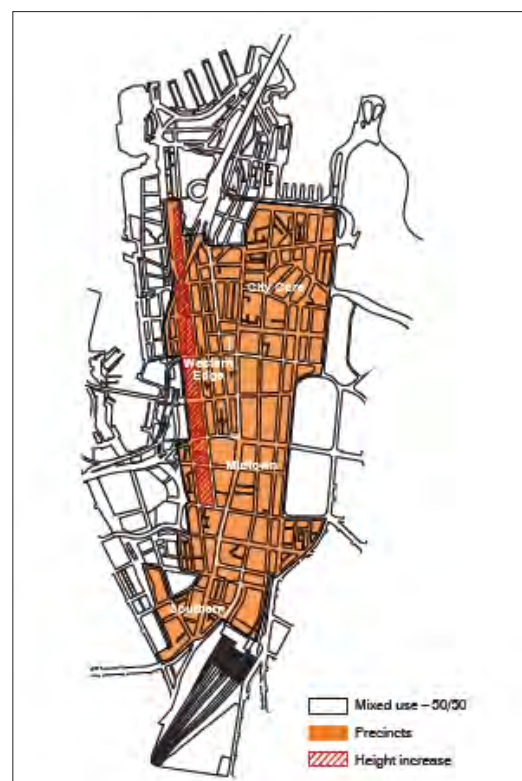
It also confirms long-term growth opportunities for other planned centres in proximity to the CBD. There are a number of outcomes of the 10 key moves that will influence the areas surrounding the Central Sydney area as outlined opposite.

The specific influence these changes will have on the areas immediately adjoining and in proximity to the Central Sydney are not certain at this early stage.

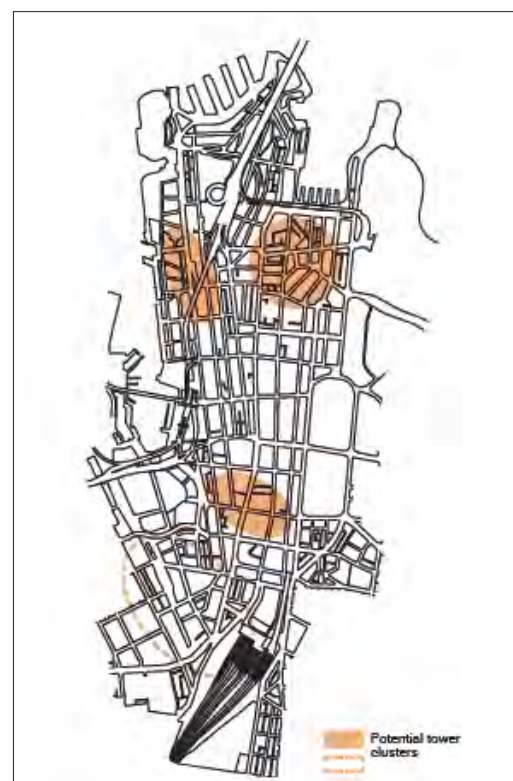
**1. Prioritise employment growth and increase employment capacity by implementing genuine mixed-use controls:** Over the last four years, 52 per cent of new floor space developed in Central Sydney was residential. However, in order for Central Sydney to retain its primacy as Australia's commercial core, space must be secured to accommodate future jobs growth. However, with residential demand remaining strong, this has the potential to increase demand on the fringe of the Central Sydney area to accommodate residential development no longer permitted in the city centre.

**2. Provide an immediate increase in height controls on the western edge to capitalise on changing form and character of the area and additional rail infrastructure commitment by the NSW Government:** This will result in taller building forms along the backdrop to the Darling Harbour waterfront reflective of the recent scale increase at Barangaroo.

**3. Provide for new employment growth in new tower clusters by permitting taller buildings with higher floor space ratios for income-earning uses in the right locations:** As with the previous move, this will change the skyline of Sydney, seeing its ongoing evolution and growth.



Western Edge



Potential tower clusters



Potential tower clusters

FIGURE 59: Draft Central Sydney Planning Strategy - Planning for Growth

NOTE: Source for all images on this page: Central Sydney Planning Strategy - Planning for Growth



