

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

Draft Rhodes Place Strategy

August 2020

Acknowledgement of Country

NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wangal clan of the Eora Aboriginal people, and pays respect to all Elders past, present and future.

Find out more:

www.dpie.nsw.gov.au

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Photo
Rhodes East, looking south west.

Executive summary

The Rhodes Peninsula is changing from a working waterfront to a thriving strategic centre where people can live, work and play. People come from far and wide to enjoy and explore its exclusive setting on the foreshore of the Parramatta River, with access to the northern rail line and located just 12 km from the Sydney Central Business District and 8 km from Parramatta.

Given its diversity, Rhodes was identified as an important strategic centre in the Eastern City District Plan in 2018. The precinct has consistently been identified as an ideal location for urban renewal because of its access to public transport, opportunities to provide new jobs for the future, stunning harbour foreshore assets and the potential to deliver high-quality new homes supported by infrastructure.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department) has been collaborating with Canada Bay Council and other State agencies on a master plan to develop a comprehensive place based strategy for the Rhodes peninsula since 2015.

Building on community and stakeholder feedback from earlier exhibitions in 2017 and 2018–2019, the Department has established the following key objectives to guide the next chapter for Rhodes.

Objectives

- 1. Plan for a sustainable future** – Ensure Rhodes can meet the challenges of the future by building sustainability and longevity into planning, design and commercial capability.
- 2. Prioritise active transport** – Design integrated transport services and experiences that prioritise walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- 3. Public access to the waterfront** – Provide new public access to the Parramatta River foreshore.
- 4. Deliver affordable housing** – Provide affordable housing options, consistent with the definition of affordable housing in the Greater Sydney Region Plan.
- 5. Great public spaces** – Provide high-quality public spaces prioritised for pedestrians that are safe for gathering and socialising.
- 6. Create opportunities for new jobs** – Ensure commercial floorspace near the station is safeguarded for future employment.
- 7. Better east-west connections** – Improve accessibility around the train station and between east and west Rhodes.
- 8. Integrate infrastructure and land use** – Deliver the necessary infrastructure to support housing and jobs.
- 9. Density with a human-scale** – Deliver a range of built-forms, from terraces to apartment buildings, that promote activity on lower levels of buildings.

This place strategy has had regard to previous work and identifies changes to the precinct's existing statutory framework to facilitate the master plan's delivery. It provides the opportunity to reimagine Rhodes East and unite it with the west while providing the following infrastructure and public benefits:

- 22,950 m² of new public open space, including a new 4,000 m² plaza near Rhodes station, a new 7,500 m² foreshore park and a 15 m wide foreshore promenade
- a new primary school for up to 1,000 students
- upgrades to Rhodes train station including a second station bridge and extended platform and a pedestrian access to a new ferry wharf near Leeds Street
- a new pedestrian bridge extending over Concord Road to improve access to the foreshore and important public spaces, such as McIlwaine Park
- improved walking and cycling paths, through site links and access to existing public open space to improve permeability through the precinct to the public domain, waterfront, Rhodes Station and nearby employment areas such as Concord Hospital.

To deliver these benefits and the urban renewal of the precinct, planning control changes will be made to facilitate up to 4,260 new homes and 936 jobs in the precinct over the next twenty years. The Department has worked with council to ensure that new development is compatible with the surrounding area by requiring:

- a diversity of dwelling types, including terraces and high-density apartments
- up to 5% of all dwellings to be provided as affordable housing, with the potential to deliver around 213 affordable dwellings in the precinct and surrounding area
- design excellence criteria to ensure development in Rhodes delivers the highest standard of architectural and urban design
- mixed-use areas to provide commercial and retail uses to support residents and provide local jobs close to homes.

The Department's work with state agencies such as Transport for NSW and Schools Infrastructure NSW ensures that infrastructure is delivered in line with growth. The delivery of open space and access to transport will be prioritised and the cost of infrastructure will be shared through contributions for new development. Development in the precinct will be monitored and capped at 3,000 dwellings until essential public transport and road upgrades are on track for delivery.

The precinct has been divided into four character areas to ensure each part of the precinct has its own identity and role creating a sense of place. The plan provides dwelling choice and varies development scale to create neighbourhoods within Rhodes east and west areas.

The delivery of open space and access to transport will be prioritised and the cost of infrastructure will be shared through contributions for new development.



Photo
Leeds Street foreshore artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.



Photo
Rhodes East, looking south.

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Introduction

About Rhodes

The Rhodes Peninsula enjoys a significant Sydney Harbour location on the southern side of the Parramatta River between Brays Bay and Homebush Bay. The suburb provides popular recreational attractions including waterfront parks and foreshore walks enjoyed by the local community and visitors. Rhodes is well connected to other harbour localities, west by the Bennelong Bridge to Wentworth Point and Sydney Olympic Park, north to Meadowbank by the John Whitton Bridge, north east to Ryde by the Ryde Bridge, and south via the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway to Concord medical and health precinct. These connections allow easy access by cycling and walking while appreciating the foreshore views and vistas.

The Rhodes precinct's sense of place is largely characterised by the localities to the west and east of the railway line. Rhodes West continues to evolve and in recent years has transformed from a former heavy industrial area into a high-density residential, retail and business area that includes Rhodes Shopping Centre and Rhodes Corporate Park. This has been facilitated by convenient access to Rhodes Station and connections to the northern line servicing Sydney CBD, Epping, Hornsby and Parramatta via Strathfield.

The existing Rhodes East locality provides a contrasting lower scale of predominately single storey dwellings through the centre of the precinct, office development near the station and an industrial area on the Leeds Street foreshore to the northern end of the Peninsula. The varied character of the east is valued and a character area approach to the master planning provides for a tailored response to place. Cavell Avenue will be characterised by residential and community uses that give a choice of dwelling type and a new school while respecting existing heritage in the area. Renewed community connections to the foreshore, public transport and services will activate the river frontage.

Rhodes offers exceptional opportunities for urban renewal supported by upgrades and improvements to infrastructure, existing and new open space areas and the extension of the harbour foreshore link.

Rhodes is in a highly accessible location with good access to public transport, recreational facilities and opportunities to work close to home by further improving connections across the region. These provide key reasons for proceeding with a detailed master planning process to achieve the vision for the precinct.

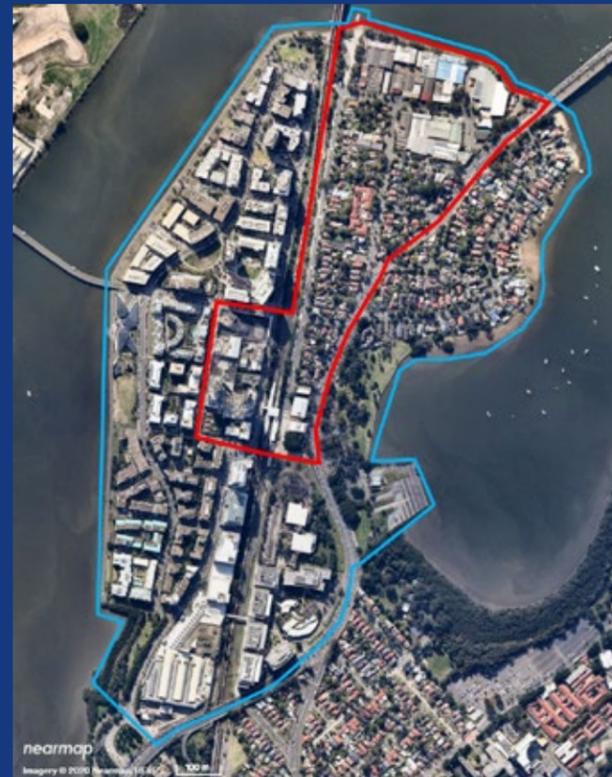


Figure 1
Rhodes suburb with precinct.

 Rhodes suburb  Rhodes precinct

Why Rhodes needs a plan

Rhodes is a strategic centre in the Eastern City District Plan and has been identified as a location for additional jobs and homes. The area has been undergoing renewal for some time. A cohesive plan for redevelopment and supporting infrastructure will ensure the best place outcomes.

The Department has been leading planning for the Rhodes Precinct since 2015. These investigations have been the subject of two previous exhibitions (in 2017 and 2018) culminating in the preparation of master plans for four character areas. The master plans provide a clear direction and an urban design response to ensuring amenity and high-quality outcomes for the precinct.

The master plans have also been translated into draft planning controls that are the subject of the current exhibition, along with this draft place strategy and supporting urban design report. Realisation of these master plans is dependent on securing funding for local and state infrastructure to support the precinct's growth.

The exhibition informs a subsequent rezoning of the precinct to enable its redevelopment supported by infrastructure. Submissions are invited on the draft place strategy and explanation of intended effect document (which describes the proposed rezoning) before 9 October 2020.

Context

What's happened previously

The Rhodes peninsula has a rich industrial, residential and commercial history with layers of functions, uses and activities that contribute to making it an authentic and attractive place.

Given its diversity, Rhodes was identified as an important strategic centre in the Eastern City District Plan in 2018. The precinct has consistently been identified as an ideal location for urban renewal because of its access to public transport, opportunities to provide new jobs for the future and the potential to deliver high-quality new homes supported by infrastructure.

The Department has been working with Canada Bay Council on a strategic plan to bring together planning for the Rhodes peninsula since 2015. In late 2017, a draft precinct plan was released for public comment.

Following exhibition, the Department considered the views of the community, landowners and government stakeholders. It was evident there was an opportunity to draw together the eastern and western sides of the station and plan for the station area in a holistic manner.

The Revised Draft Precinct Plan, publicly exhibited in late 2018 to early 2019 (Revised Draft Plan), expanded the precinct boundary to the west, to integrate key undeveloped land adjacent to Rhodes train station to enable comprehensive planning for the station area.

The 2018 Revised Draft Plan proposed a maximum 4,200 dwellings across the precinct. It detailed that the final yield and building envelopes would be determined through the preparation of proponent-led master plans informed by a place-led design process. This process was revised in March 2020 to a state-led process with landowner support, with the Department leading the master planning for Rhodes in collaboration with Canada Bay Council and State agencies.

Previous consultation

2017 exhibition

In September 2017, the Department exhibited a plan for the future of Rhodes. This plan outlined recommended future land use, built-form, landscape and infrastructure for the precinct. Exhibition engagement included three community drop-in sessions and presentations to stakeholder groups.

In response to the draft plan, there were 60 submissions made by members of the community, 17 submissions made by developers/landowners and 225 responses to an online survey. A wide range of issues were raised in relation to building height and form, access, infrastructure and quality of life in the greater Rhodes area.

2018 exhibition

In response to feedback from the 2017 exhibition, the Department exhibited a Revised Draft Plan from 9 December 2018 to 28 February 2019.

Consultation included two drop-in sessions, a consultation session with Rhodes Multicultural Community Association (in Mandarin), three print advertisements in newspapers, a social media campaign, and letters to all residents/businesses in the area.

Feedback from the 2018 exhibition included:

- concern regarding uncertain development outcomes in the absence of completed character area master plans
- concern about the impact of proposed development on infrastructure and amenity (including views and overshadowing)
- there was both concern about perceived negative impacts on property values as well as support for potentially positive impacts on property values
- differing views on the appropriate height of development

- concern about feasibility of development from landowners
- there were mixed views about the proposed affordable housing rate and mechanisms, as well as concern about the potential impacts of affordable housing on the appeal of the area
- there were also landowner submissions contesting the feasibility of the commercial core
- mixed views on proposed changes to industrial land
- concerns about equitable development potential
- support for proposed improvements for pedestrians and cyclists
- calls for more community facilities
- concerns about contamination, including in relation to a proposed river pool
- mixed views about the best way to support jobs growth in the precinct
- mixed views about the school location and format
- support for more open space, tree canopy and local infrastructure
- concerns about the process including the specifics of exhibition and the process for considering feedback from landowners.

Previously exhibited plans are available on the Department's [website](#).



Photo
Previous exhibition workshop.



Photo
Bray Bay Reserve.

Character area master plan approach

The current master planning process

The approach taken in this draft place strategy builds on the community and stakeholder feedback from the two prior exhibitions. The 2018 Revised Draft Plan identified four character areas and proposed master planning to provide further investigation of appropriate planning controls, including the incorporation of a design excellence process. Feedback on the 2018 exhibition called for greater certainty regarding built-form outcomes for the precinct. In response, the Department engaged Roberts Day place-led urban design consultants to prepare master plans for each character area in consultation with council and key agencies (Figure 2).

The aim of the master planning process is to:

- determine appropriate development capacity, while integrating quality public domain with public transport upgrades
- ensure any built-form outcome achieves design excellence.

The process has led to integrated urban design and built-form outcomes, including appropriate amenity, building height and density controls.

The design outputs align with the overall vision and planning principles established in the 2018 Revised Draft Plan, respond to locally relevant design principles, and seek to achieve benchmarks set out in Government Architect NSW policies, such as *Better Placed*.

The key steps of the master planning process were:

1. prepare design principles building on the objectives and requirements outlined in the 2018 Revised Draft Plan and feedback received during consultation
2. understand challenges and opportunities for the precinct
3. formulate design criteria through global best-practice benchmarking to inform built-form outcomes, building heights and densities
4. prepare draft master plan that addresses built-form, open space, and infrastructure.

Project working group

The project has been coordinated through a project working group comprising the Department, council, Transport for NSW and Roberts Day. Project alignment meetings have also been held with the Government Architect NSW, Greater Sydney Commission and School Infrastructure NSW.

The project working group has undertaken a rigorous place-led design process to determine the quantum and location of any additional dwellings that could be supported in the precinct, while achieving design excellence and contributing to amenity improvements.

Pre-exhibition consultation

In April and July 2020, the Department held a landowner briefing session for Station Gateway West and Rhodes East respectively. These workshops presented objectives and criteria for the precinct for information only.



Figure 2
2020 Character area map.



Photo
Leeds Street foreshore.

About this exhibition

Next steps

Anyone can make a submission on the current exhibition. We would like your feedback on:

- This *Draft Rhodes Place Strategy*, outlining the proposed planning framework.
- The *Rhodes Planned Precinct Urban Design Report*, August 2020, which describes the proposed built-form in the four character areas and was prepared on behalf of the Department by Roberts Day consultants.
- The explanation of intended effect document, which describes the proposed changes to planning controls informed by the draft place strategy and urban design report.

All submissions to the exhibition will be carefully considered and changes may be made to proposed planning controls in response to feedback provided.

All exhibition documents are available on the Department's website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/rhodes. There is also a link to the online submission portal and you can find out about and register for exhibition events.

Misrepresentations in submissions may be deemed an offence. The Department encourages anyone considering making a submission to read the false and misleading submissions section of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 before making a submission.



Figure 3
Exhibition documents: Explanation of Intended Effect, Urban Design Report and Draft Rhodes Place Strategy 2020.



Photo
Brays Bay looking south.

The precinct

The vision for Rhodes precinct

In 2036, Rhodes will be a sustainable, thriving, people-focused place that respects heritage and is supported by a forward-thinking transport strategy and meaningful connections to the water. The way buildings relate to the street and the rich amenity of Rhodes will encourage residents and visitors to walk further, stay longer, enjoy and take pride in the community identity of this place.

Rhodes is an area undergoing transformation from heavy industrial uses into a renewed and redeveloped residential area supported by retail and business services. Land to the west of the station has seen the most transformation in recent years, with Rhodes East remaining as a low-density community with industrial land along the Leeds Street foreshore.

Since 2015, the strategic vision for Rhodes has consistently sought to achieve density with a human-scale, a precinct modelled on sustainability that provides supporting infrastructure oriented around active and public transport networks with connections to the waterfront and high-quality public spaces.

The Vision for Rhodes to 2036 continues to focus on a character-area approach integrating the areas west and east of the Rhodes Station as a revitalised mixed-use station gateway.

Rhodes will provide an accessible location for new homes, jobs and community facilities. It will have public plazas and promote the integration of green landscaped features and tree canopies at ground level.

Transitioning to the north and east of the peninsula, and facilitated by a railway and land bridge providing a safe connection to Mcllwaine Park, low-rise residential areas within the Cavell Avenue character area will respect the character of Rhodes' heritage. New homes will be provided to meet the needs of a range of household types through diversity, choice and affordability, as well as a new local primary school. Improved pedestrian connections will link to vibrant waterfront areas and open spaces for the community to relax in and enjoy.

Achieving this vision will make Rhodes a great place to live, work, play and visit.



Photo
Rhodes East, looking south west.

Guiding principles

Urban design principles have been established to guide the future design and development outcomes across the entire Rhodes precinct and are prioritised to balance state government priorities, community aspirations and best planning practices for a sustainable future.

Table 1

Urban design principles

Hierarchy of principles	Guiding principle
	<p>1. Design open space for amenity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing and proposed open space should be designed for amenity rather than relying on interventions, improvements and/or retrofits that compromise the intent or quality of the space.
	<p>2. Pedestrian experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise the pedestrian experience above all other modes of transport.
	<p>3. Height strategy to minimise overshadowing of open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over and above the Apartment Design Guide (ADG) for solar compliance, implement an overall height strategy to minimise overshadowing of the following (in order of priority): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> existing open space future open space existing, recent and future residential.
	<p>4. Locate density near public transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate the highest concentration of new population nearest to public transport.
	<p>5. A balance of density and public benefit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver urbanity not just density, ensuring that development potential is matched by public benefit.

Table 1 (continued)

Hierarchy of principles	Guiding principle
	<p>6. Celebration of new open space on the Parramatta River</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New open space should celebrate the peninsula location and amenity of Parramatta River. This should be considered through internal and external views, proximity to the waterfront and support of the urbanity and open space criteria.
	<p>7. A varied and permeable skyline from public spaces and viewpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a varied and permeable skyline when viewed from the following locations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mcllwaine Park Rhodes West Park Brays Bay Bennelong Bridge Concord Road South Parramatta River.
	<p>8. A holistic approach to view sharing across the precinct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View sharing should: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> prioritise views of the water, destinations and wayfinding from the public realm acknowledge the historic and holistic redevelopment intent of Rhodes peninsula protect the privacy of schools, childcare and the private open space of low-density precincts likely to remain.
	<p>9. Human-scale on the streetscape and location near public transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pedestrian experience from the public realm and public transport start/end of trips should drive built-form decisions.
	<p>10. Character areas defined by built-form and public spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote fine-grained built-form and public-realm variances between character areas (sub precincts) while remaining consistent with the Rhodes vision.

How we are delivering the principles

The principles are delivered through the criteria set out in the urban design report, which has informed the development of the master plans for each character area.

The principles set a benchmark reflecting the importance of meeting the criteria and seek to implement these through planning controls to achieve the vision for Rhodes.

Reading each master plan

The Rhodes Planned Precinct Urban Design Report sets out precinct-wide criteria that apply to all character areas. These are illustrated in the built-form, landscape, solar access and building separation responses for each character area.

Specific design criteria also apply to each character area, and the character area master plans should be read with the appendices of the

Urban Design Report, where further information is available in regards to implementation.

The Urban Design report explains how the unique characteristics of each area will be enhanced through tailored responses that will realise the desired future character of each area.

Table 2

Relevant pages for each character area in Urban Design Report

Urban Design Report section	Further detail and character area criteria in appendices	
Precinct wide criteria	Page 20	Page 90
Station Gateway West	Page 34	Page 112
Station Gateway East	Page 50	Page 119
Leeds Street	Page 62	Page 127
Cavell Avenue	Page 78	Page 139

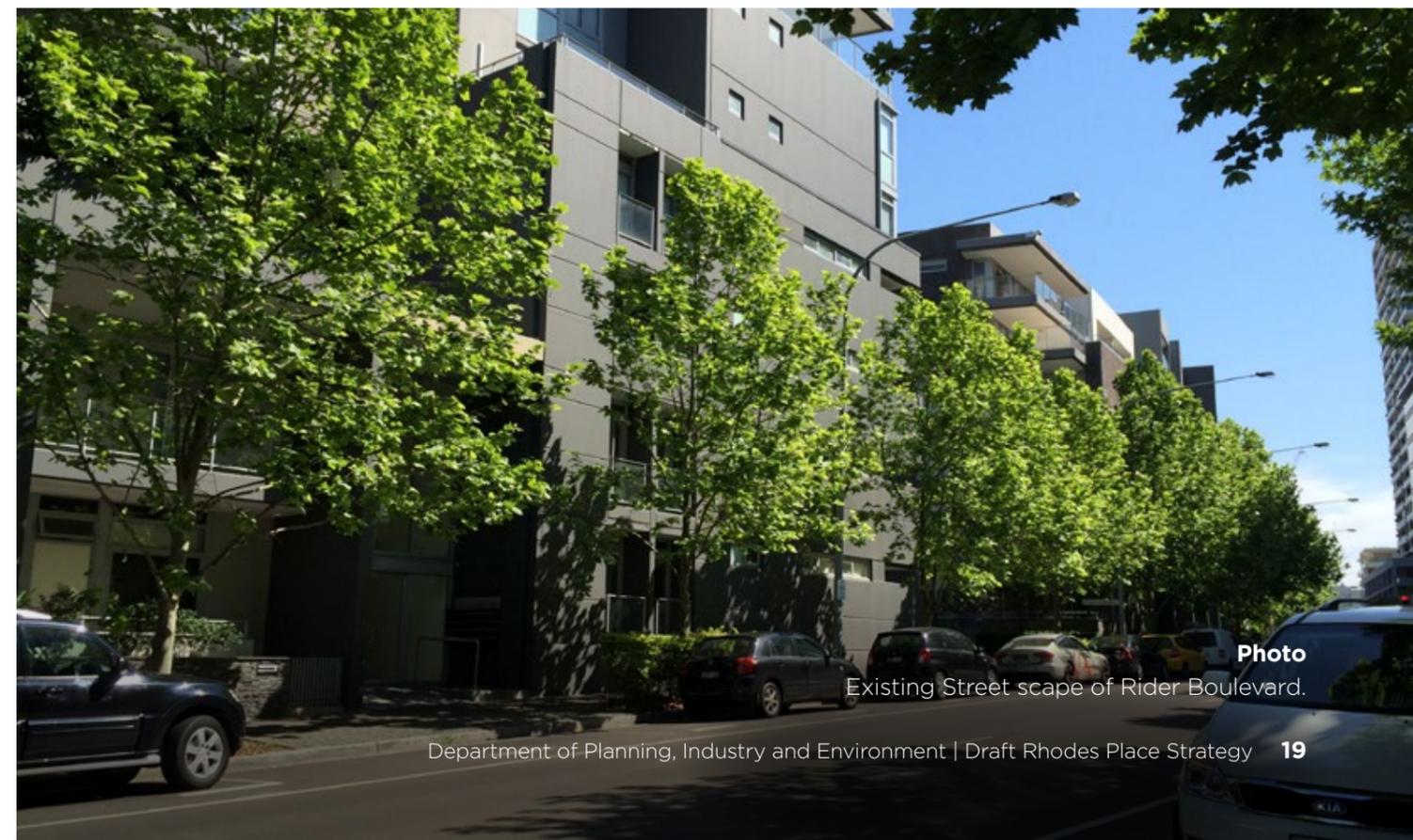


Photo Existing Street scape of Rider Boulevard.

Transforming the precinct

Rhodes will be a well-connected, safe community celebrating liveability. New pedestrian links will encourage walking and cycling between the station and new homes, jobs and community facilities. Leeds Street foreshore will be an accessible and activated waterfront destination and park for residents and visitors.

The redevelopment of Rhodes East provides for the opportunity to reclaim land used for industrial purposes along the foreshore for public use and enjoyment. The vision proposes new open space areas that includes a 7,500 m² headland park and foreshore promenade at Leeds Street linked to a new ferry wharf and pedestrian access ways. The promenade will also allow a continuous foreshore promenade extending around the headland.



Photo

View from McIlwaine Park looking East across Brays Bay.

5 Big moves for Rhodes

Transformational changes for the peninsula include:

1. A vibrant and revitalised mixed use precinct integrating west and east of Rhodes Station

- o new public open spaces including through-site connections and a new 4,000 m² public plaza near Rhodes station
- o upgrades to Rhodes train station including a new station bridge and platform extension
- o a new pedestrian bridge and plaza on the east that will extend over Concord Road to improve access and provide a safe connection to McIlwaine Park
- o 936 new jobs to be delivered in the precinct over the next 20 years and improved east-west connections to allow more opportunity to work close to home and access to Rhodes Corporate Park and the Concord Hospital and medical centre.

2. Unlocking foreshore areas and new open space

- o a new 7,500 m² foreshore park and a 15 m wide foreshore promenade linking active connections along the Parramatta River
- o pedestrian access to a new ferry wharf near Leeds Street
- o a new primary school for up to 1,000 students.

3. Active connections along Parramatta River and through the precinct

- o improved walking paths and cycleways to connect with existing networks and improve movement through the precinct and to nearby residential and employment areas such as the Riverside Shopping Centre, the Rhodes Corporate Park and Concord Hospital.

4. Providing new homes, affordable housing and diversity of dwellings

- o up to 4,260 new homes to be delivered in the precinct over the next 20 years
- o a diversity of dwelling types, including multi-dwelling housing and apartments closer to the station and ferry wharf
- o up to 5% of all dwellings to be provided as affordable housing.

5. A model for environmental and sustainable development

- o improved resilient building controls to promote energy and water savings in the precinct
- o design excellence controls to ensure development in Rhodes delivers the highest standard of architectural and urban design.

Station Gateway West

A place-led, connected urban destination



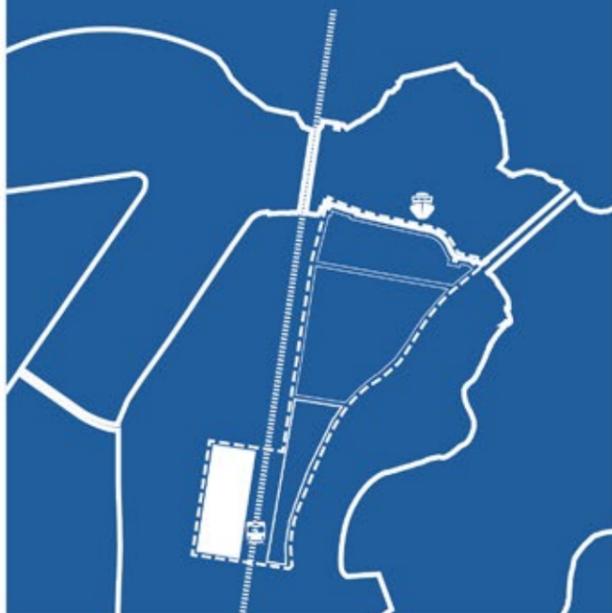
Photo
Station Gateway West, Marquet Street artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

About the character area

The Station Gateway West character area adjoins the western side of Rhodes Station. Established residential apartments are located to the south and west, including the recently completed Town Square, with newer residential apartments and Central Park to the north.

The area is a rectangular parcel of land approximately 3 hectares in area, oriented north-south. The site is bordered by Mary Street to the south, Walker Street to the east, Gauthorpe Street to the north and Marquet Street to the west. Connections further south and north are available along Rider Boulevard and Walker Street, and a pedestrian right-of-way, Annie Leggett Promenade, provides an additional mid-block pedestrian connection west to Rhodes Foreshore Park.

Renewal of the character area has already begun. The 2018 draft plan for Rhodes identified opportunities to provide additional dwellings supported by new open space and additional connections to and through the precinct that would add to the emerging vibrancy of the area.



Criteria

The current master planning process for Station Gateway West recommends:

- **new public open space** – minimum area of open space (4,000 m²), minimum laneway widths of 8 m (south) and 12 m (north) and protect solar access, providing new areas to meet, shop and relax
- **greenery** – a 25% canopy cover and 25% green view index meaning at least 25% of what is seen at street level will be green
- **tower design** – building separation requirements will apply a minimum 24 m separation for buildings 15–20 storeys, and a minimum 40 m separation for buildings above 20 storeys; floor plate restrictions for above podium levels (750 m²) and restrictions related to wind impacts on open space. These tower design controls will make sure future taller elements in the area will have a slender look and a permeable skyline and limit a sense of a continuous wall of development
- **podium design** – maximum height of 16 m or 20 m and 3 m setback at ground level and 4 m above podium setback. These podium setback requirements will contribute to an intimate feel at street level and reduce the visual impact of tower elements
- **unit mix** – minimum of 20% studio or 1-bedroom apartments and minimum of 20% 3-bedroom apartments. Providing for a mix of unit sizes will mean households will be more likely to be able to find a dwelling that suits their needs which will also add to the diversity of the area
- **active, fine grain frontages** – 60% active and 10–15 doorways per 100 metres. Fine-grained shop fronts will add to the visual interest and vibrancy of Station Gateway West and make the area an exciting place to visit
- **no increase in overshadowing** – including McIlwaine Park, Union Square, Peg Paterson Park Playground. Building heights in the master plan have been carefully assessed to make sure that future development will not result in any increase in overshadowing of existing open spaces such as Union Square. Sun access to existing open space areas will ensure these are welcoming places to sit, meet and relax in
- **sustainability** – dual water pipes and embedded electricity generation. Incorporating sustainability measures into future development will ensure Rhodes can meet challenges of the future by building sustainability and longevity into planning, design and commercial capability from the start.



Photo
Station Gateway West, artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

Place

Key infrastructure

The master plan identifies public domain opportunities and improved connections to and through the character area to make the area a well-connected and vibrant place to be or visit. The key infrastructure items that will add to connectivity and a sense of place include:

- 4,000 m² of open space at the Marquet Street plaza
- open-air right of way to Walker Street and new through-site links
- pedestrian connection south towards Rider Boulevard
- new over-rail bridge and platform extension
- signalised intersection at the corner of Gauthorpe Street and Walker Street
- extension of the existing cycleway along Walker Street.

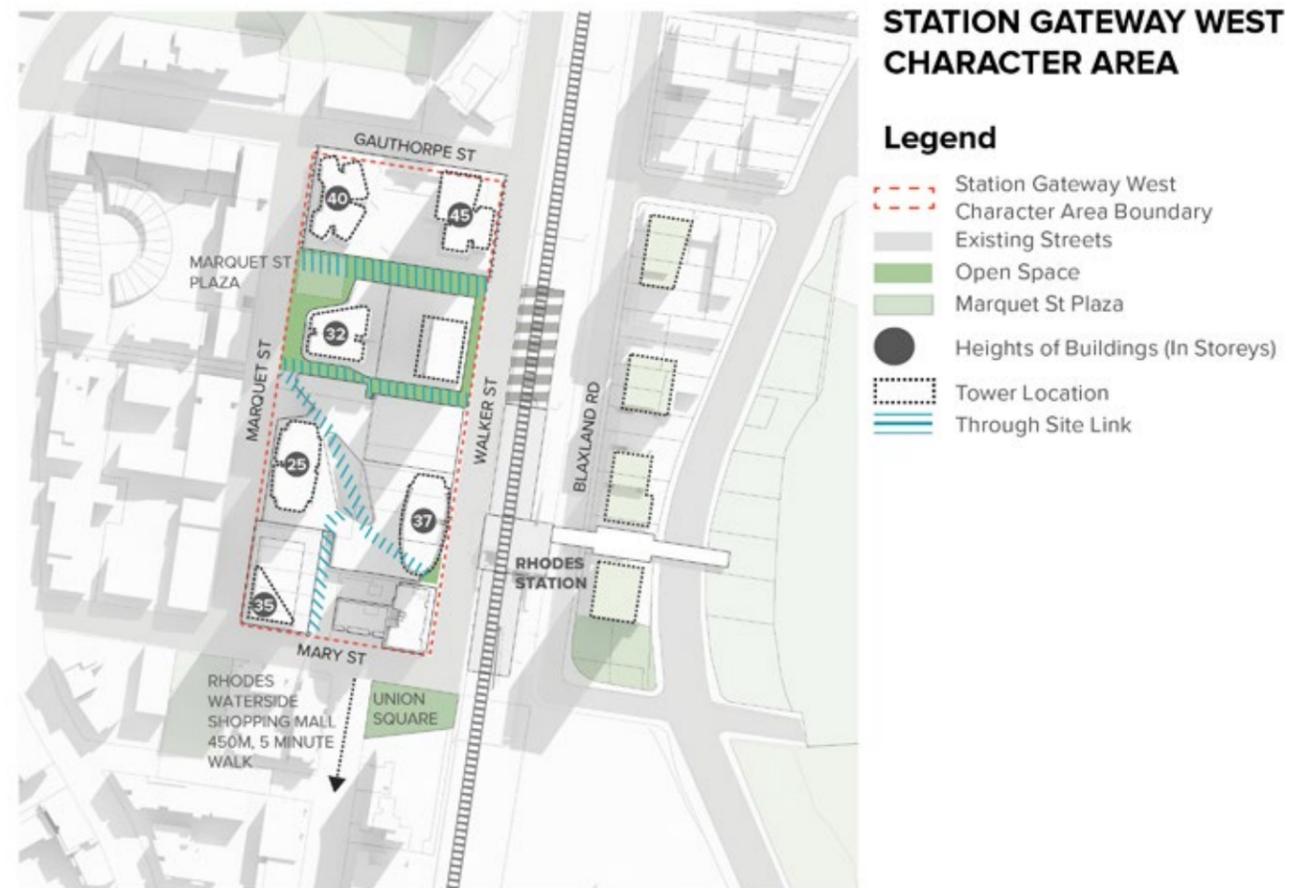


Figure 4
Station Gateway West character area place map.



Photo
Station Gateway West, Marquet Street forecourt artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

Station Gateway East

Built-forms which reflect its location next to the station and connectivity to open space



Photo

Station Gateway East, Blaxland Road artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

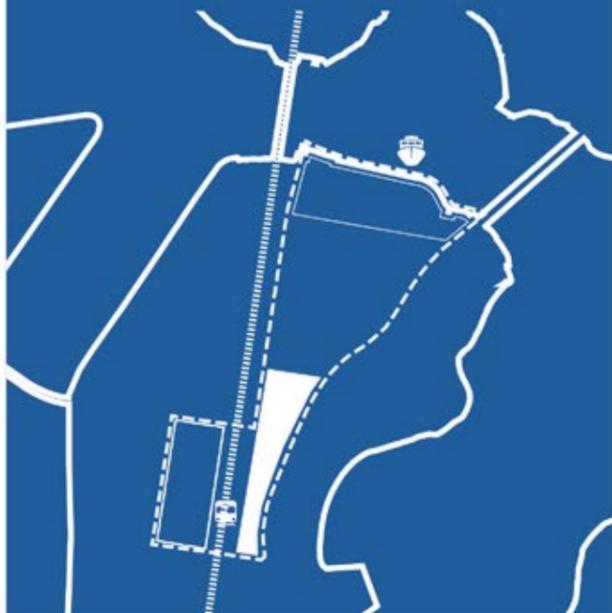
About the character area

The Station Gateway East character area is bound by Blaxland Avenue to the west and south, Concord Road to the east and a proposed new road to the north. Current uses include a park, retail development, business centre and low-rise dwellings.

The Station Gateway East character area serves as an important place for connections within the Rhodes strategic centre, including connections to the station, McIlwaine Park and Concord Hospital to the south east.

Considerations that have informed proposed controls include maintaining solar access to McIlwaine Park and ensuring separation and variation for towers both within the character area and in the adjacent Station Gateway West character area.

Feedback on the 2018 exhibition included that commercial development was not viable as it could not compete with the nearby business-zoned land because parking rates were too low and office uses demanded on-site parking.



Criteria

In addition to precinct-wide criteria and benchmarks, the following character-area-specific criteria apply:

- **new public open space** – deliver a 16-metre-wide ‘bridge’ linking east and west Rhodes including the station and McIlwaine Park, activating the bridge to create a plaza. The Station Bridge Plaza will provide critical enhanced connections to Rhodes West and will be a safer and more enjoyable pedestrian alternative to an at-grade access
- **greenery** – include the bridge, podiums and roof tops when meeting greening benchmarks
- **tower design** – avoid visual bulk, when viewed from the public domain. Not just at a site level, but when considering the buildings together including both the eastern and western station gateways. Tower design will allow for a permeable and interesting skyline
- **tower location** – the location of towers is controlled to manage the combined impact of development on the east and west site of the station including visual bulk, important views and wind
- **podium design** – ensure active frontages are prioritised to address the station, Blaxland Road, Lewellyn Street, Churchill Tucker Reserve and the Station Plaza Bridge edges
- **unit mix** – in addition to the precinct-wide benchmarks for unit mix, aged care in this character area can contribute to medical-related uses and services for locals and visitors
- **overshadowing** – solar access to existing public open space is a primary design objective, priority principle and important criteria. All solar testing is required without the benefit of artificial solar access or heliostat intervention. This means there will be no additional overshadowing of McIlwaine Park turfed areas, ensuring these are enjoyable and sunny spaces during key periods of the day.



Photo
View from Brays Bay Reserve looking North West, artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

Place

Key infrastructure

Public domain improvements will support the redevelopment of Station Gateway East. A proposed Station Bridge Plaza will provide a safe and convenient access between the station and McIlwaine Park. The Station Bridge Plaza is to be delivered as part of an integrated mixed-use development within Station Gateway East and will offer retail shops and cafes and a total area of 550 m². Separate cycle and pedestrian paths will improve connectivity north to the foreshore and retail areas.

Planning incentives

To achieve ultimate density for the character area, development will need to satisfy additional sustainability requirements (BASIX) as described in the statutory controls section of this strategy.

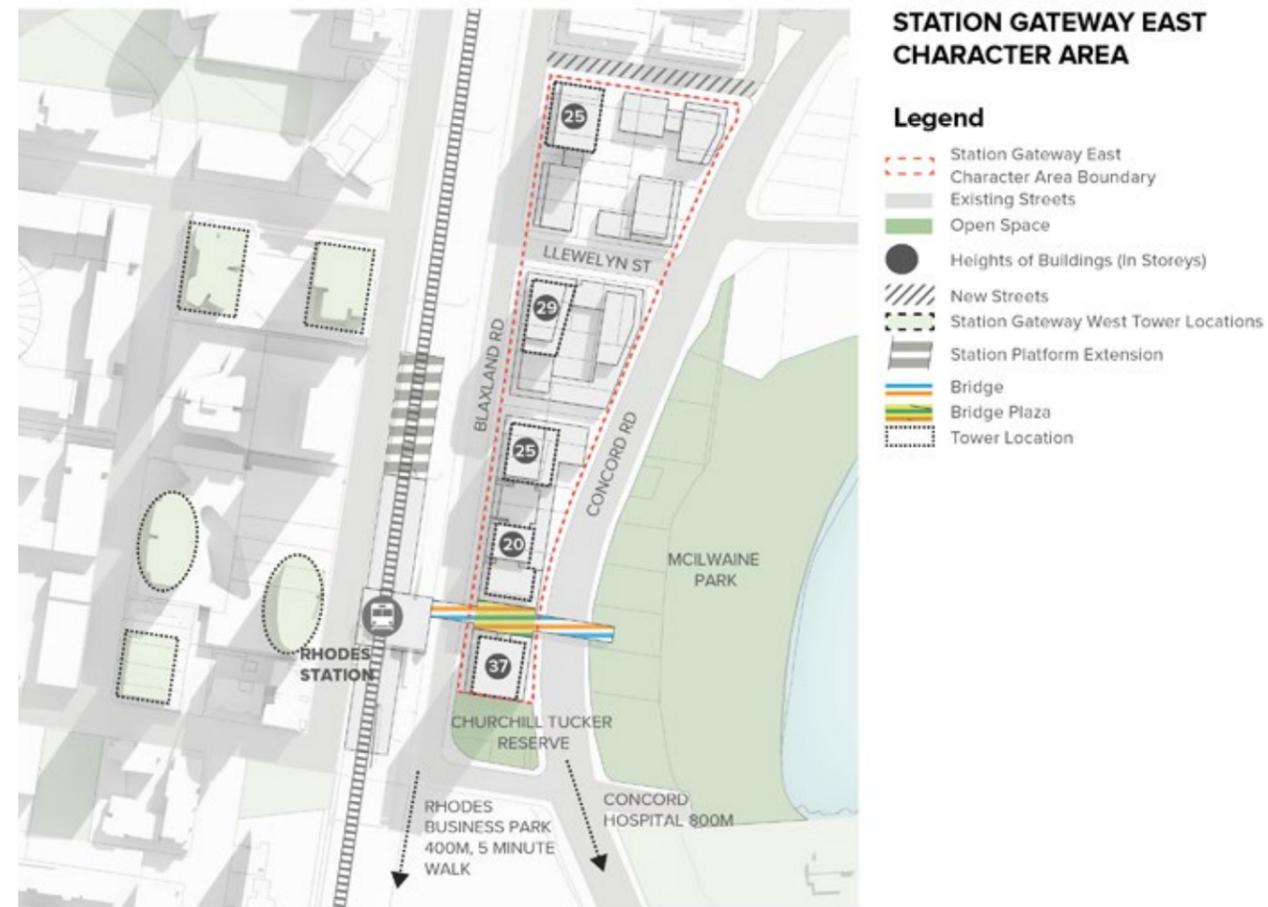


Figure 5
Station Gateway East character area place map.



Photo
Station Gateway East, Station Bridge Plaza artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

Cavell Avenue

A diversity of heights and human-scale built-form



Photo
Cavell Avenue artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

About the character area

The Cavell Avenue character area is bound by Blaxland Avenue to the west, Leeds Street to the north, Concord Road to the east and a new road to be created end of Cavell Avenue.

The Cavell Avenue area is currently a mixture of low-density dwellings, community uses such as a church and community centre, and industrial uses in the block bound by Cavell Avenue, Leeds Street, Concord Road and Averill Street. There are some heritage items in the character area. The proposed high-low development model provides tools for a sympathetic interface with these items.

The future of Cavell Avenue will largely consist of community and residential uses. The area will provide an opportunity for high-amenity, medium-density housing with good access to public transport, jobs and services offered in the broader Rhodes strategic centre.

The proposed future scale of the character area is medium density, offering a range of housing typologies including strata and Torrens title dwellings to promote housing diversity and a more human-scale from other areas in the precinct. New roads and pedestrian connections are proposed throughout the character area to create a permeable road network.

A new primary school will be provided in the Cavell Avenue character area for up to 1,000 students.



Criteria

In addition to precinct-wide criteria and benchmarks, character area specific criteria include a floorspace ratio that will facilitate varied heights and massing.

- **conventional FSR + height application** – proposed heights and FSRs have been developed to facilitate delivery of new roads and through-site links by allowing the transfer of floorspace ratio from the land used for these new connections. These new roads will encourage people to walk further instead of using private vehicles, which will add to a more vibrant sense of community
- **high-low model** – a few strategically located building elements can achieve the 9-storey upper limit but the proposed floorspace ratio (1.8:1) is intended to facilitate a predominantly low-rise built-form (which can include terraces). This model creates fine-grain human-scale streetscapes and high-quality private and public amenity by reducing overshadowing and long walls of buildings
- **podium design** – an 85% terrace street frontage will apply to primary streets (Cavell Avenue, Blaxland Road and Leeds Street) for all new developments
Elsewhere (to secondary streets) the frontage requirement will be 60%. Developments can range in height but a 4 m setback is required above terraces (for any taller adjoining buildings) to emphasise the high-low massing. These criteria will further emphasise the medium-density character of the area and more intimate feel of the place
- **subdivision** – the Cavell Avenue character area has a maximum lot size of 4,000 m² to achieve a genuine fine-grained, organic development pattern. An exemption is available whereby a single landholding in excess of 4,000 m² can still be developed, providing any additional dwellings are provided as Torrens title terraces. Providing Torrens title terraces in the Rhodes precinct will contribute to the supply of low-rise diverse housing types known as the ‘missing middle’.



Photo

Cavell Ave Precinct: St Mary & St Merkorious Coptic Orthodox Church, Rhodes.

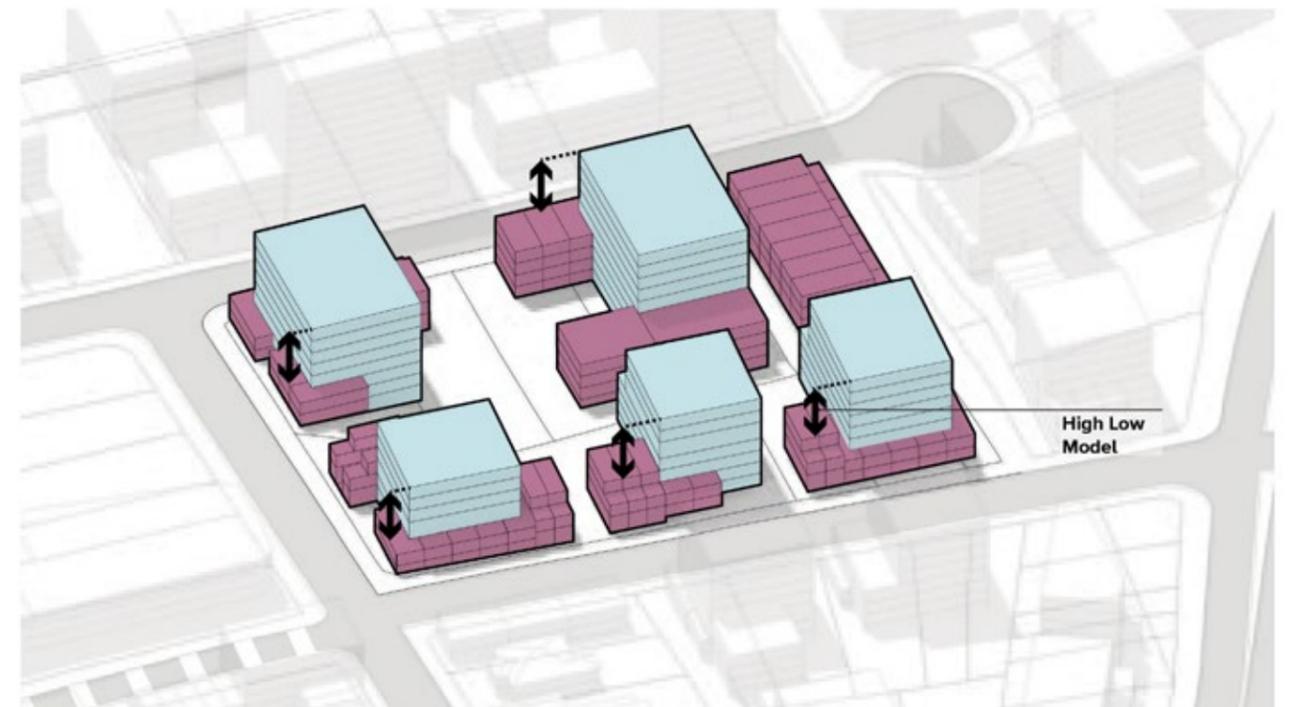


Figure 6

Low-rise building map.

Place

Key infrastructure

New connections are proposed throughout the character area. One of these is directly to the south of the school, a second is proposed just south of the intersection with Denham Street and a third at the southern edge of the character area adjoining Station Gateway East. A fourth new through-site link is proposed running north-south from Leeds Street to Averill Street between Cavell Street and Concord Road. These new connections provide a permeable road and pedestrian network that will manage both active and vehicular travel through the area, providing building separation and a human-scale.

A widening of the east-west connection under pass at Leeds Street is also proposed and would improve access to the new school. This is a longer-term infrastructure item that would be dependent on plans for the future duplication of

the rail line. Upgrades to the community facility were also identified in the 2018 draft plan.

Community corners will be provided throughout Cavell Avenue. These will be locations that provide interesting opportunities that incorporate the public domain with active street frontages and greenery.

Planning incentives

To achieve ultimate density for the character area, development will need to satisfy additional sustainability requirements (BASIX) to access a 5% floorspace ratio bonus.

Floorspace ratio transfers have been included to deliver new roads and thoroughfares.

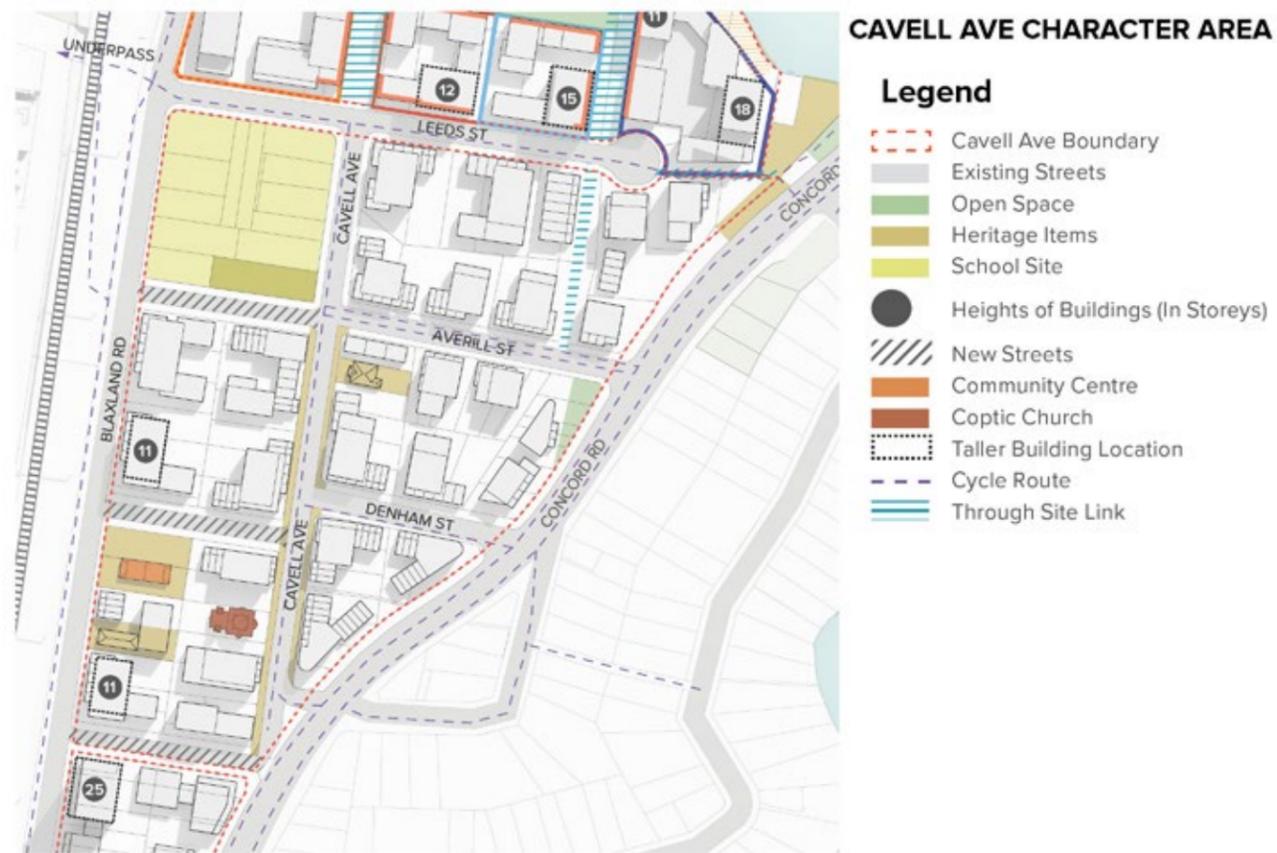


Figure 7
Cavell Avenue character area place map.



Photo
Example of foreshore play ground.

Leeds Street

Foreshore open space, pedestrian links, a new ferry wharf and destination retail



Photo

Leeds Street Park artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

About the character area

Leeds Street character area is bound by Blaxland Avenue to the west, the foreshore to the north, Concord Road to the east and Leeds Street to the south.

Leeds Street is currently zoned IN1 General Industrial. The renewal of Leeds Street will enable the delivery of a foreshore park and continuation of a foreshore pedestrian and cycle path. These new pedestrian and cycle paths will provide important local connections and also contribute to the Green Grid outlined in the Eastern City District Plan.

Other opportunities in Leeds Street include a new ferry wharf opposite the foreshore park and new pedestrian connections to the foreshore and ferry from Leeds Street.

New connections are proposed to be activated with ground floor destination retail and other active uses. Benchmark for fine grain will bring a human-scale to development in this location and its interface with the foreshore.

A new primary school is proposed to the south of the character area. Limiting overshadowing of the new school site has been a consideration in development of proposed controls.

Views to the precinct when arriving via the road and rail bridge have also informed the master plan.



Criteria

In addition to precinct-wide criteria and benchmarks, character-area-specific criteria include concealed parking and flexible unit mix. They also include:

- **greenery** – 25% green view index and canopy cover through canopy trees along the foreshore and in the foreshore park will mean at least 25% of what is seen at street level is green. It also includes landscaping on future development sites and green elements on buildings such as green roofs or walls
- **context-responsive tower design** – the placement of taller building elements has been carefully considered to balance the significance of the park and views to the foreshore, whilst providing a transition the south side of Leeds Street and minimising over shadowing. Taller building elements are located closest to the rail and road bridges, as well as a new road to the south, to minimise their impact
- **concealed on-site parking** – a single level of underground parking is proposed for the precinct to minimise above ground car parking and reduce excavation
- **active, fine-grained podiums** – fine-grain design including a benchmark of 10–15 doorways per 100 metres applies. Active uses including shops and cafes are required to the foreshore park, links and parts of Leeds Street
- **flexible unit mix** – a flexible unit mix is proposed for the Leeds Street character area to activate the park
- **limit overshadowing** – avoid overshadowing of existing open space and proposed new open space. Overshadowing to the new school site should also be minimised.



Photo
Existing Leeds Street foreshore.



Photo
Leeds Street foreshore artist impression. Render provided by Roberts Day.

Place

Key infrastructure

The Leeds Street foreshore park will be one of the most important public benefits afforded by the redevelopment of the Rhodes precinct. The foreshore park will be the focal point, sitting within a strong public-realm framework connecting people to public transport, destination retail, community uses and the Parramatta River. The Leeds Street foreshore park and associated public domain will have:

- a minimum area of 7,500 m² in the location and configuration documented within the *Rhodes Planned Precinct Urban Design Report*, August 2020 and predominately landscaped with deep soil and tree clusters. The foreshore park will offer a useable waterfront public green space with active edges and connections to the south
- a combination of retail, commercial, community and residential frontages to the public domain, applying the 10-15 doors per 100 metres criteria, which will contribute to diversity and a sense of place
- minimum 15 m foreshore promenade with a continuous row of mature trees that must enable eye-level water views but also provide a strong green outlook from the river and surrounds

- active, safe north-south connections aligning with Cavell Avenue and the ferry wharf with complementary programable spaces and characteristics contributing to precinct accessibility
- ferry wharf link with a minimum width of 18 m
- 24/7 public access
- 100% deep soil (made possible through a single level 'super-basement' car park)
- continuous foreshore tree planting
- potential foreshore public art trail including opportunities to celebrate indigenous and intercultural heritage
- pedestrian link extension from Averill Street that will provide an important visual connection to the foreshore.

Planning incentives

To achieve ultimate density for the character area, development will need to satisfy additional sustainability requirements (BASIX) related to a 5% floorspace ratio bonus.

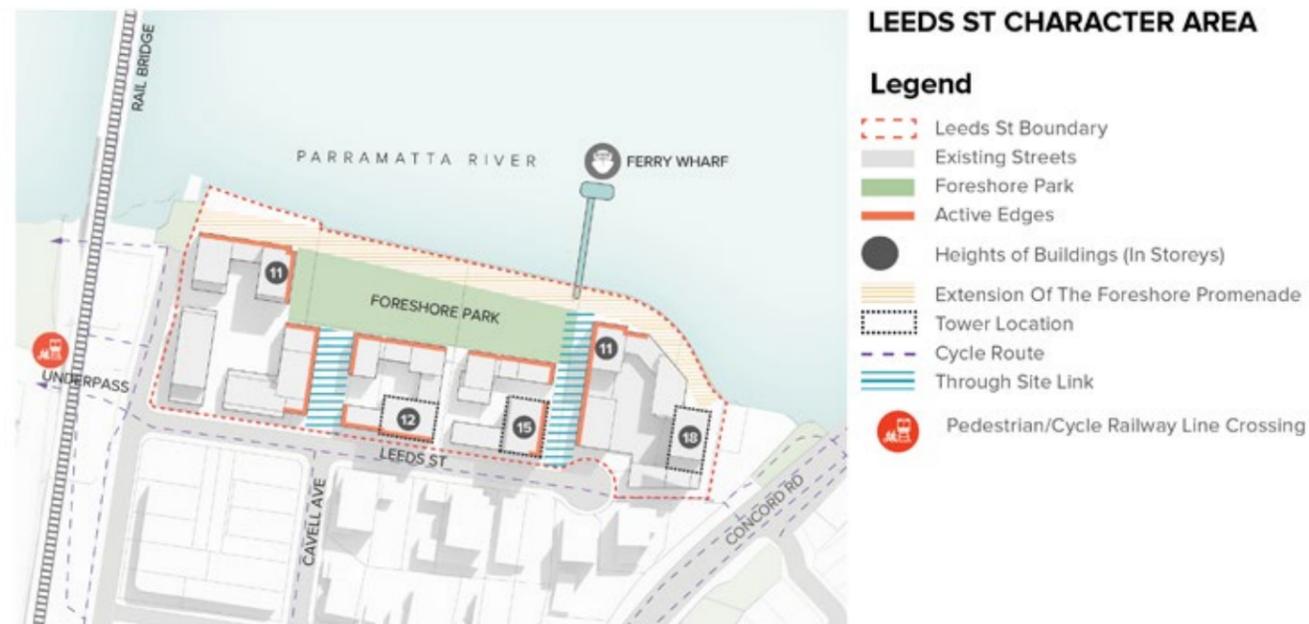


Figure 8
Leeds Street character area place map.



Photo
Rhodes Station looking north along Walker Street.

Delivering the plan

Statutory planning changes

The recommendations of the draft Master Plan and Urban Design Report have informed proposed changes to planning controls for the Rhodes precinct contained in *Canada Bay Local Environmental Plan 2013* (Canada Bay LEP).

The key controls are summarised below and outlined in the Explanation of Intended Effect, which provides a comprehensive list of proposed controls and their application. For a comprehensive list of proposed controls and how they are applied, refer to the accompanying explanation of intended effect document. Council will also prepare development control plans to support implementation of the proposed changes to planning controls and this will be exhibited in the coming months.

Land use zones

The draft master plan envisages that Rhodes will transition from a predominantly low-density residential and light industrial area to primarily residential with a mix of high-quality housing types and scales located near public transport, supported by retail and commercial uses, a primary school, community facilities and open space.

The proposed changes to land zoning for the precinct are illustrated in Figure 9.

Building, heights and floorspace ratios

Building heights across the precinct vary depending on the character area, with the tallest buildings located closest to the Rhodes Station, stepping down within the Cavell Avenue character area and increasing again towards the foreshore to provide a gateway location when viewed from Ryde Bridge and the proposed ferry wharf. The building height controls have been designed to protect the solar access of key areas of open space throughout the precinct and provide a varied and permeable skyline.

The proposed changes to the height of building map for the precinct are illustrated in Figure 10.

Floorspace ratio controls dictate the total floor area that can be built on a site. The proposed floorspace ratio controls are informed by the urban design criteria, particularly the minimum 24–40 metre building separation distances and maximum 750 m² floor plate criteria established for the precinct.

There is a deliberate mismatch in the maximum height and floorspace controls for the Cavell Avenue character area, which has been designed as a 'high-low' model to facilitate a predominantly low-rise built-form, with some taller elements. This model creates fine-grained, human-scale streetscapes promoting multi dwelling housing including terraces and high-quality private and public amenity.

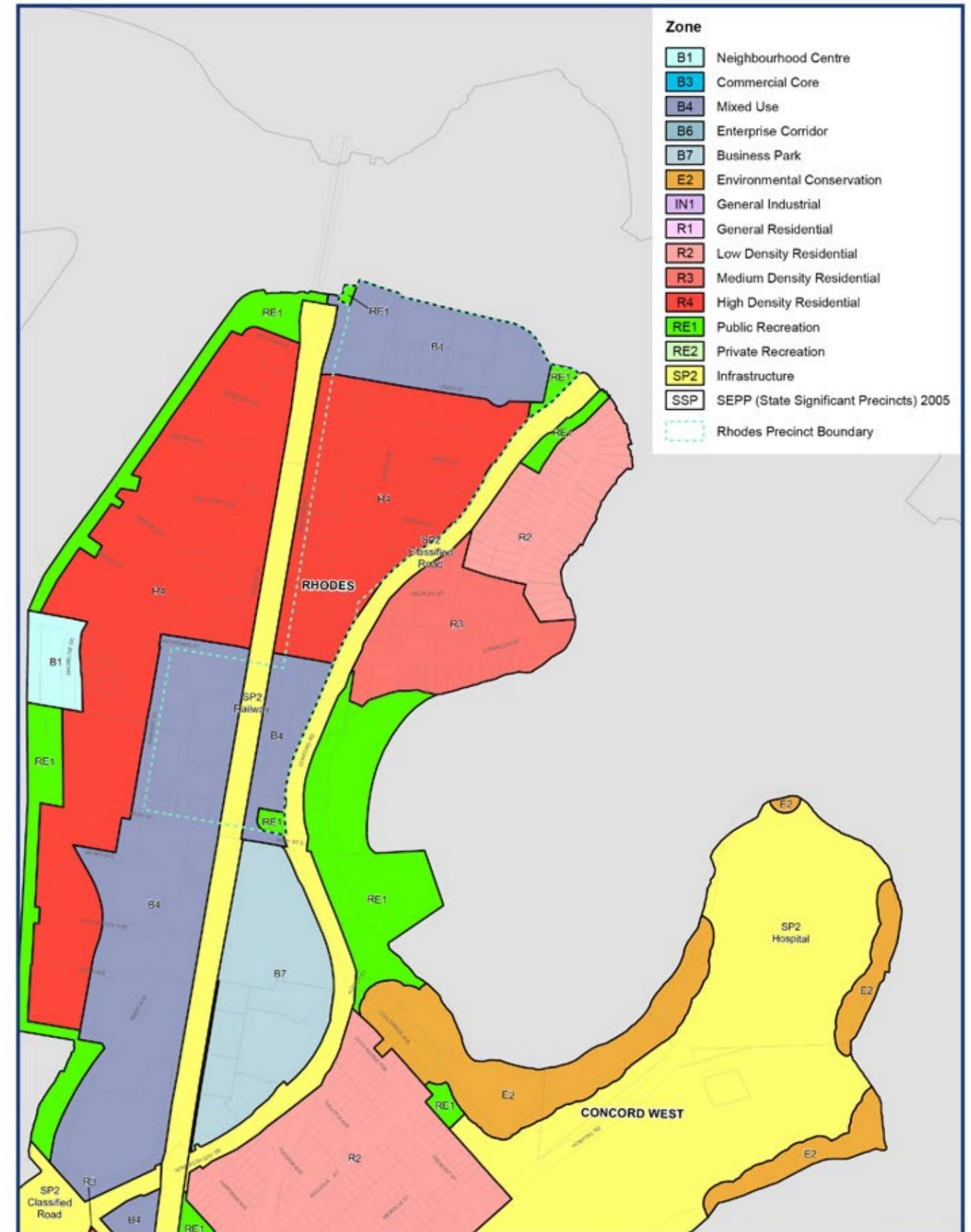


Figure 9
Rhodes precinct – draft land zoning map.

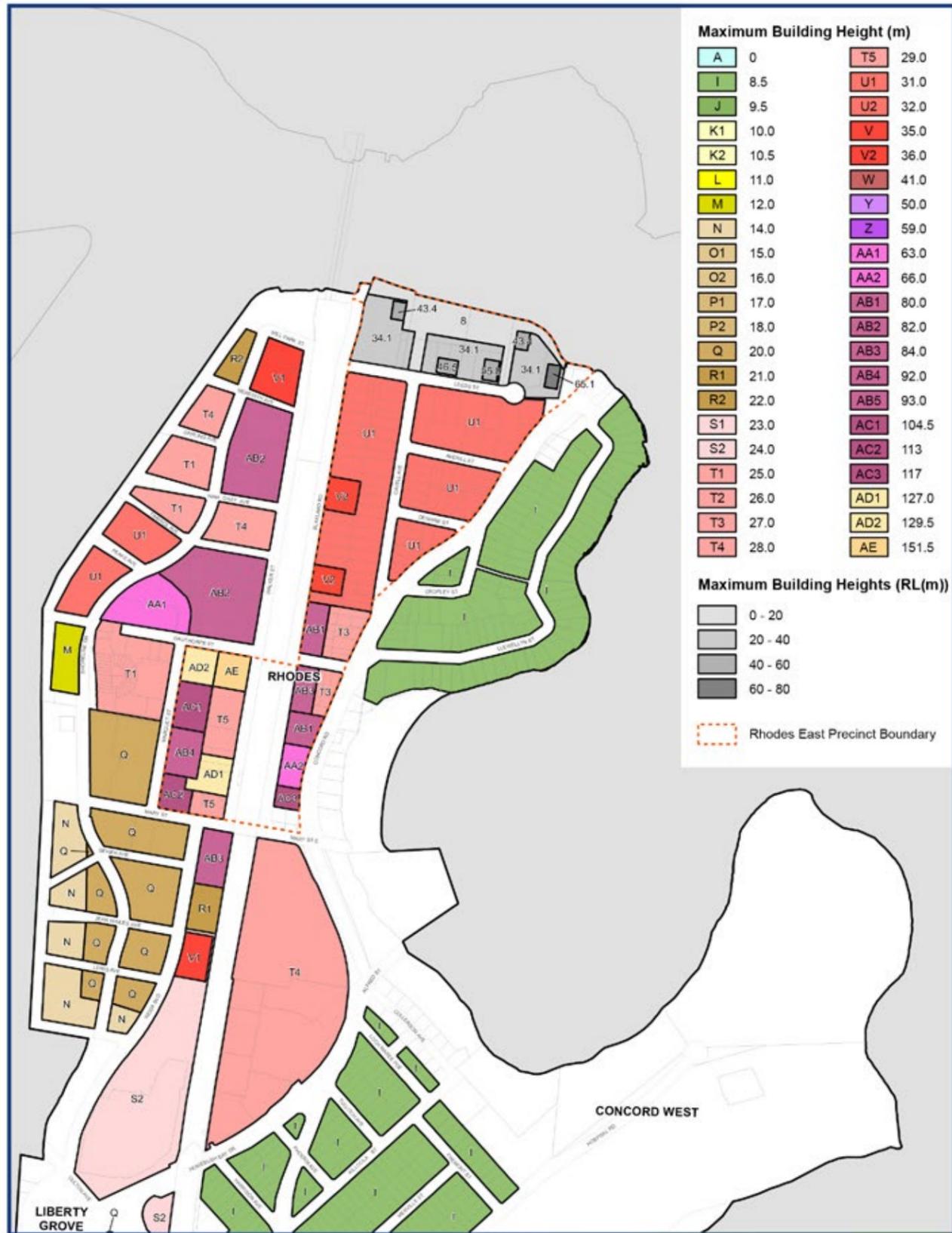


Figure 10
Rhodes precinct – draft height of buildings map.

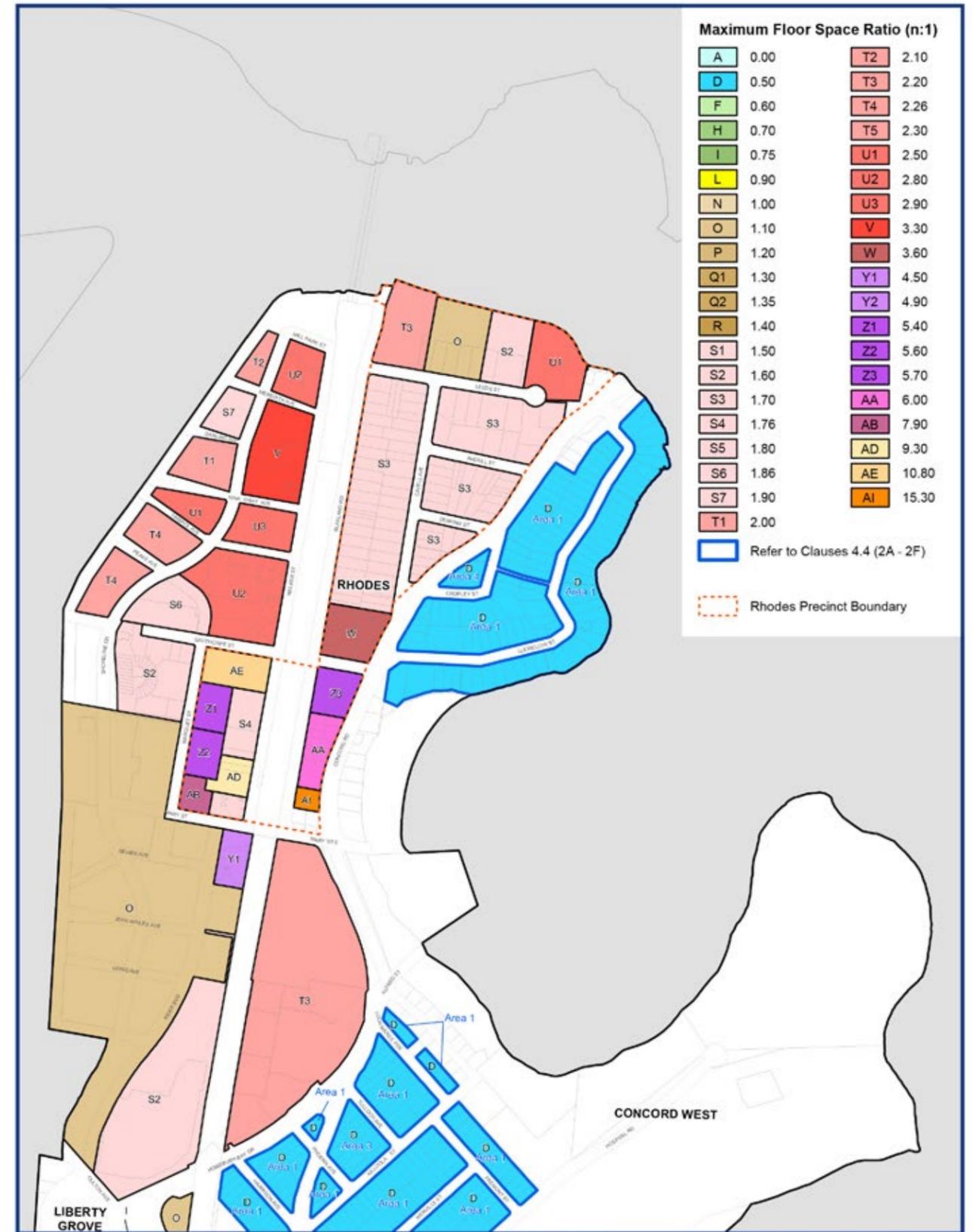


Figure 11
Rhodes precinct – draft floorspace ratio map.

Dedication of local roads

The draft master plan shows new roads in the preferred positions to create key walking and cycling connections. These roads provide additional connections to Blaxland Road, improving access to Rhodes West, the proposed ferry wharf, foreshore areas and the train station. It is proposed that the new streets will be delivered via an incentive to developers that will allow floorspace on certain land, in return for the delivery of the adjacent street.

BASIX targets and sustainability

The Greater Sydney Commission's Eastern City District Plan identifies Rhodes as a collaboration area, with a strong focus on sustainability. The draft master plan recommends incentives for developments that surpass current Building Sustainability Index (BASIX) targets.

BASIX targets are calculated as a percentage of savings against NSW average benchmarks (being the average-per-person water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions levels across the state). These percentage savings are then expressed as a target - for example: BASIX 20 represents a 20% saving against the benchmark. BASIX assesses a proposed dwelling based on these benchmarks, and taking into account regional variations such as soil type, climate, rainfall and evaporation rates.

A bonus floorspace ratio of 5% is proposed for the Station Gateway East, Cavell Avenue and Leeds Street character areas. The bonus has not been applied to development within the Station Gateway West character area given most of the sites are currently part way through construction. The 5% bonus will be available to developments that achieve the following BASIX targets:

- 40% for energy (increased from 25%)
- 60% for water (increased from 40%).

Across the precinct, separate reticulation for potable and non-potable water, and land and associated easements for embedded electricity generation and distribution will be required for all new developments.

Active street frontages

The draft master plan identifies active uses at street level for retail or commercial uses in the Rhodes precinct. To ensure that these uses are provided at street level, it is proposed that existing provisions in the LEP relating to active street frontages (clause 6.5) will apply to these parts of the precinct.

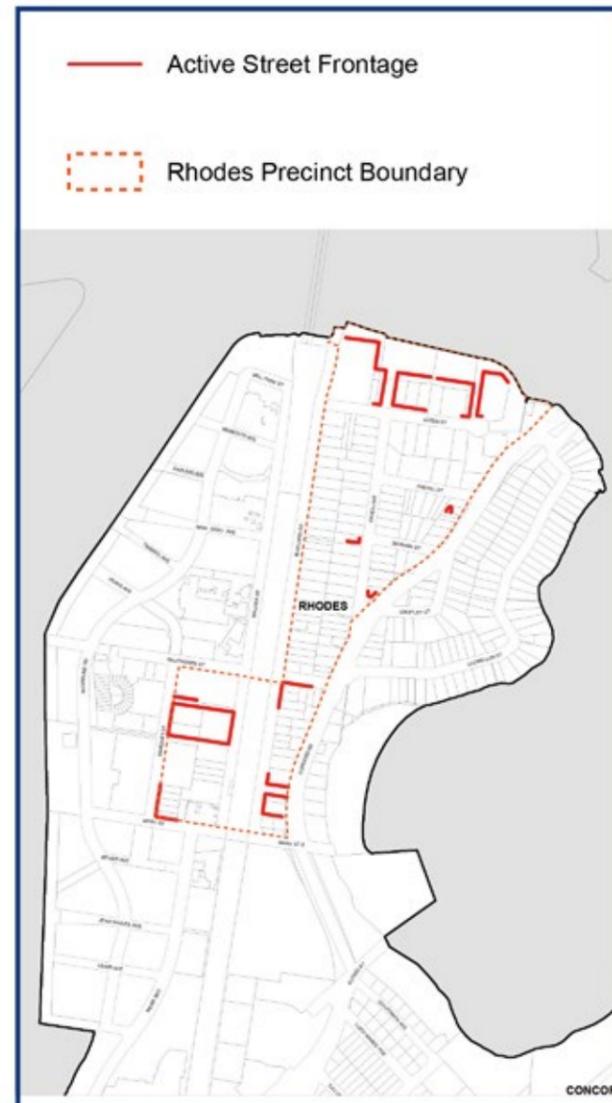


Figure 12
Rhodes precinct - draft active street frontage map.



Photo
Rhodes Train Station, courtesy of Salty Dingo 2018.

Minimum non-residential component and provision for aged care

A minimum non-residential component is proposed for sites within the Station Gateway West, Station Gateway East and Leeds Street character areas. This provision is designed to complement the proposed active street frontage controls and will also assist in achieving the employment targets provided by the Greater Sydney Commission in the Eastern City District Plan.

The Eastern City District Plan provides an employment target of 6,300 to 8,300 new jobs within the Rhodes strategic centre by 2036. This area is not limited to the Rhodes precinct and also encompasses Concord Hospital, Rhodes Corporate Park and the Rhodes Waterside Shopping Centre.

An allowance is provided for residential aged care facilities within the Station Gateway East character area. The draft master plan seeks to encourage aged care within this character area to:

- support the creation of a diverse community and provide more opportunities for individuals to age within their existing communities
- locate aged care close to public transport and daily convenience shopping and entertainment to create an attractive environment and support a healthy lifestyle for an active, aging population
- optimise proximity to health services including Concord Hospital and encourage supporting health and medical uses within the precinct
- assist in realising the vision of the precinct by expediting the relocation of the precinct's existing aged care facility, creating a strategic redevelopment site that could improve precinct connectivity, permeability and intersection density as well as flexibility for a future school site.

Design excellence

Design excellence provisions are proposed to support the delivery of the highest standard of architectural and urban design. Development is to exhibit design excellence and reflect the design principles and design criteria of the draft master plan.

A draft design excellence clause is proposed to be applied to development in the precinct that is three storeys or higher. The accompanying explanation of intended effect document sets out a range of matters that must be addressed to satisfy the design excellence provision, including consideration of the development control plan, open space provision, solar access protection, building separation, maximum floor plate and minimisation of wind impacts.

A competitive design process is proposed for development within the Station Gateway East, Cavell Avenue and Leeds Street character areas to promote design excellence and diversity in design. The process does not apply to Station Gateway East as most sites in the area are already part way through construction.

Affordable housing

A 5% affordable housing target is proposed for the Rhodes precinct, consistent with the 2018 draft plan. *The Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities* recommends affordable rental targets of 5% of new residential floorspace, which can be levied under *State Environmental Planning Policy No 70 - Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes)* (SEPP 70). The region plan describes affordable housing targets as a mechanism to deliver an additional supply of affordable housing for very-low- to low-income households.

The explanation of intended effect document proposes to introduce an affordable housing contribution rate of 5% of additional residential gross floor area across the precinct, except for the site at 4 Mary Street and 1-9 Marquet Street where a rate of 3.5% will apply based on viability testing.

The proposed clause will enable council to impose an affordable housing levy in accordance with its affordable housing contribution scheme when granting development consent.

Canada Bay will be one of the first councils to prepare a scheme since SEPP 70 was applied to all councils and the Department released the *Guideline for Developing an Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme* in February 2019.

Diversity of dwellings

The draft master plan aims to provide a mix of unit sizes to suit the needs of different demographics now and into the future and provide housing choice. The explanation of intended effect document proposes a minimum of:

- 20% studio or 1-bedroom apartments
- 20% 3-bedroom apartments.

Car parking

Reduced car parking rates is one of the traffic management strategies recommended to support sustainable travel across the precinct. Maximum parking rates reduce vehicular traffic generated in the precinct and encourage the use of alternative modes of transport. A maximum number of private parking spaces for new developments is given in the table below and proposed to be implemented across the precinct via the LEP.

Table 3
Precinct car parking rates

Uses	Car parking rates
Residential	Studio: 0.1 spaces
	1 bedroom: 0.3 spaces
	2 bedroom: 0.7 spaces
	3 bedroom: 1 space
	Visitor 1 space/20 dwellings
Commercial	1 space per 150 m ²
Retail	1 space per 100 m ²
Restaurant/cafe	1 space per 150 m ²

Terrace housing

A key aim of the draft master plan is to provide density with a human-scale by delivering a range of built-forms, from terraces to apartment buildings, that promote activity on lower levels of buildings.

A new clause is proposed to be included in the LEP that requires development in the Cavell Avenue character area to have at least:

- 85% of any primary street frontage
- 60% of any secondary street frontage of a development site to be terrace housing.

Infrastructure and collaboration

A range of infrastructure items to support the growth of the precinct have been identified, together with the relevant funding mechanism. The complete list of proposed infrastructure items is at **Appendix A** and has been refined through consultation with council, state agencies

and other stakeholders. The precinct will also be supported by the planned delivery of regional infrastructure such as Sydney Metro West, Concord Road upgrades and the future addition to the Northern railway line that will take the total number of tracks to four.



Photo
Example of foreshore play ground.

Infrastructure delivery and timing of renewal

Funding infrastructure in the Rhodes precinct

Contributions collected in the Rhodes precinct will be leveraged by the NSW Government and by Canada Bay Council. Collection can be achieved in several ways, with local infrastructure contributions proposed and voluntary planning agreements offered to support the Rhodes precinct.

Local infrastructure contributions are usually levied by council as a condition of development consent under a local development contributions plan and go towards the cost of providing local public infrastructure and facilities required because of development.

Voluntary agreements

Section 7.4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* allows a developer to enter into a voluntary planning agreement to provide state or local infrastructure associated with a change to planning controls or a development application. This is an available avenue to provide infrastructure in the Rhodes precinct and can be used by council in lieu of local contribution schemes.

Satisfactory arrangements

The planning investigations for Rhodes have identified various infrastructure items that are required to support growth. These items are described in the infrastructure schedule.

To ensure infrastructure delivery is tied to the rollout of development, a 'satisfactory arrangements' clause is proposed to apply to the precinct.

This clause would require developers to make satisfactory arrangements to contribute to the provision of state infrastructure prior to development occurring. Typically, this would either be in the form of a monetary contribution to government (who would then deliver the infrastructure) or via a 'works-in-kind' agreement, which is a legal undertaking that involves a developer building the infrastructure and transferring it to government.

Thresholds

Transport and traffic modelling has identified limitations in the additional development that can be supported without city-serving infrastructure upgrades (such as duplication of the trainline). Using reasonable assumptions about trip generation, 3,000 dwellings was the limit of additional dwellings that could be supported in the precinct without intervention.

On this basis, a draft provision is proposed to ensure that no more than 3,000 new homes can be delivered in the precinct. The Department will closely monitor the delivery of housing approvals and dwelling completions following rezoning, and in consultation with Transport for NSW and Canada Bay Council would support the lifting of this dwelling cap once further regional infrastructure commitments have been committed to or delivered to support the precinct such as rail, metro and road improvements.

Appendix A - Infrastructure schedule



Note: Indicative locations. Subject to further investigation, funding and confirmation by respective agencies. Items will be delivered through a combination of state funding, local funding and developer contribution.

Rhodes precinct infrastructure schedule

ID	Key infrastructure item	Delivery mechanism
R1	Concord Road upgrade (existing street)	State Government
R2	Concord Road Averill Street intersection upgrade	State Government
R3	Cavell Avenue upgrade (existing street)	Council
R4	Leeds Street upgrade (existing street)	Council
R5	Local streets upgrade (Precinct-wide no specific location)	Council
R6	New road Blaxland Road to Cavell Avenue (south)	Planning controls
R7	New road Blaxland Road to Cavell Avenue (central)	Planning controls
R8	New through link	State Government
R9	Cavell Avenue/Averill Street intersection upgrade	Council
R10	Cavell Avenue/Leeds Street intersection upgrade	Council
R11	Concord Road/Averill Street intersection upgrade	Council
P1	Blaxland Road upgrade including cycle path	State Government
P2	Widening of railway underpass (subject to further investigation)	State Government
P3	New railway access and overpass	State Government
P4	Pedestrian bridge construction and embellishment	State Government
P5	Leeds Street connections to foreshore embellishment	State Government
P6	Averill Street to Leeds Street link embellishment	State Government
P7	Cavell Street pedestrian link extension to foreshore	State Government
P8	Blaxland Road upgrade to road and pedestrian paths	Council
P9	Public domain upgrades	State Government
P10	Transit Plaza (long-term proposal)	State Government
P11	Through-site connections	State Government
OS1	Leeds Street foreshore park and promenade embellishment	State Government
OS2	Marquet Street forecourt	State Government
OS3	Uhrs Point Reserve upgrade	State Government
OS4	Community corner embellishment	Planning Controls
OS5	McIlwaine Park upgrade	State Government
OS6	River activation	State Government
OS7	Blaxland Road terminus (north end, to be confirmed)	State Government
OS8	Local infrastructure outside precinct	Council
E1	Dedication of land for new primary school	State Government
T1	Rhodes Train Station upgrades	State Government
T2	Rhodes Ferry Wharf	State Government



Photo
Rhodes foreshore.



dpie.nsw.gov.au