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Hassell
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Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy

Volume I | Project Analysis

PART C

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4.3 Accessibility (Streets and Escarpments)

The underlying topography of Pyrmont Peninsula, whilst creating a unique experience, underpins the accessibility challenges of the peninsula for walking and cycling.

Steep streets are common throughout the peninsula with the steepest streets, the east-west streets, located on its western side. The streets connecting Wattle Street to Jones Street have challenging gradients and uneven street tree coverage:

→ Quarry Street – 1:7
→ William Henry – 1:8
→ Macarthur Street – 1:13
→ Mary Ann Street – 1:15
→ Thomas Street – 1:18

On the eastern edge of the peninsula gradients vary, between Harris Street and Pyrmont Street there are steep gradients:

→ Allen Street – 1:13
→ Quarry Street – 1:12
→ Macarthur Street – 1:12

64 / View looking east along Quarry Street from Wattle showing steepness of streets typical along the peninsula, Google Street View 2019

65 / View looking east along Pirrama Road showing the dramatic sandstone escarpments create through historical quarrying across the peninsula, Google Street View 2019

66 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula indicating areas of poor accessibility within the public realm as a result of topography (Hassell)

4.4 Accessibility (Infrastructure and Topographic Barriers)

As a city fringe location, the peninsula enables significant volumes of regional traffic movements in and out of the city which reinforce the accessibility barriers of steep streets and escarpments.

In the East, Darling Drive combined with the Inner West Light Rail corridor is a significant barrier to integrating the peninsula with Sydney CBD.

This, combined with the Western Distributor, creates unclear, often convoluted connections to public transport, in particular the light rail stops across the peninsula.

In the west, Wattle Street prioritises traffic to the Anzac Bridge and Western Distributor for traffic from the south. It has limited crossing points that make access to this significant open space difficult for local residents and workers.

Despite the negative impact of regional infrastructure, movement paths north/south along the contours are relatively flat and local street closures have created pockets of calm walkable neighbourhoods.

67 / View looking west across Darling Drive at Exhibition Light Rail station showing typical barrier contributing to east/west connectivity including, rail corridor and topography, Google Street View 2019

68 / View looking south towards Fish Markets Light Rail station generally poor visibility of existing public transport within the peninsula, Google Street View 2019

69 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula indicating areas of poor accessibility as a result of infrastructure corridor (Hassell)

4.5 Road network

Road infrastructure within Pyrmont Peninsula is one of the biggest barriers to achieving the place outcomes desired under the Greater Sydney Region Plan, Eastern District Plan and recommendations of the GSC review.

Pyrmont Peninsula has developed over time as a key junction between the Anzac Bridge and Harbour Bridge with the various supporting roads of William Henry Street, Pier Street, Fig Street, Pyrmont Bridge Road, Harris Street, Darling Drive and Pyrmont Street forming convenient short cuts for commuters travelling to and from the city to other destinations. This drives a clear segregation between areas north and south of Pyrmont Bridge Road with the street experience between Pyrmont Bridge Road and William Henry Street being particularly impacted as a result of the concentration of arterial and distributor roads.

Accidents at any point along these routes result in significant congestion occurring throughout the peninsula.

The high traffic volumes, minimal footpath widths and infrequent opportunities to cross limit the potential for walkability and connectivity more than any other factor on the peninsula.

The opportunity exists, through investment in Westconnex and the possibility of a metro station on the peninsula, to reduce through-traffic in line with the Greater Sydney Region Plan objectives and improve the place outcomes.

70 / View looking north along Harris Street at the Fig Street intersection showing the disconnected experience of Harris Street as a result of the Western Distributor, Google Street View 2019

71 / View looking west along Pyrmont Bridge Road at the Harris Street intersection showing the poor pedestrian environment as a result of the arterial road network, Google Street View 2019

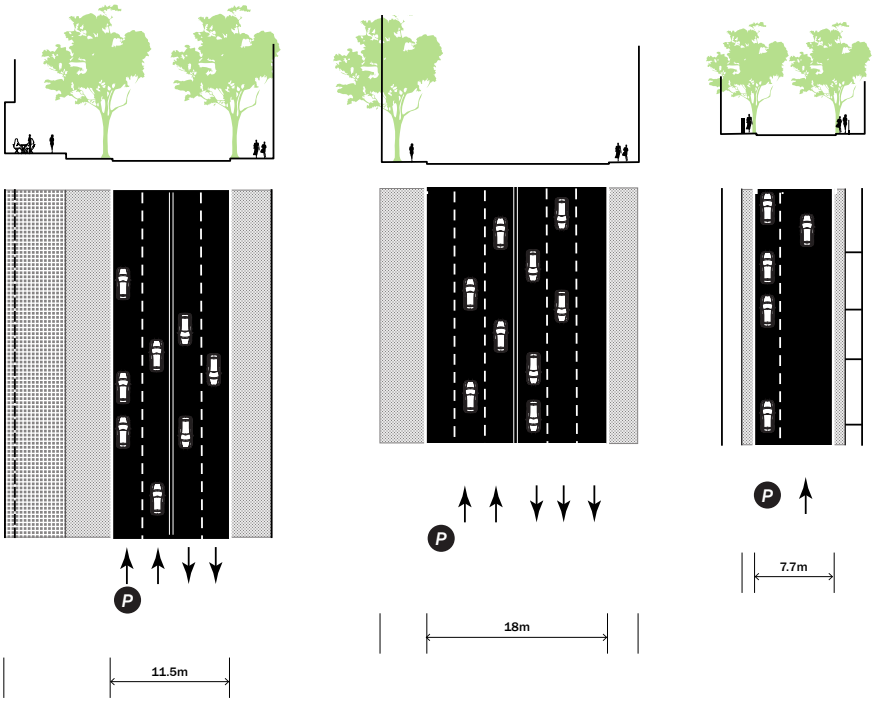
72 / View looking east along Pyrmont Bridge Road to Pyrmont Bridge at the Union Street intersection showing the poor pedestrian environment as a result of the arterial road network, Google Street View 2019

73 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula showing road classifications (City of Sydney)

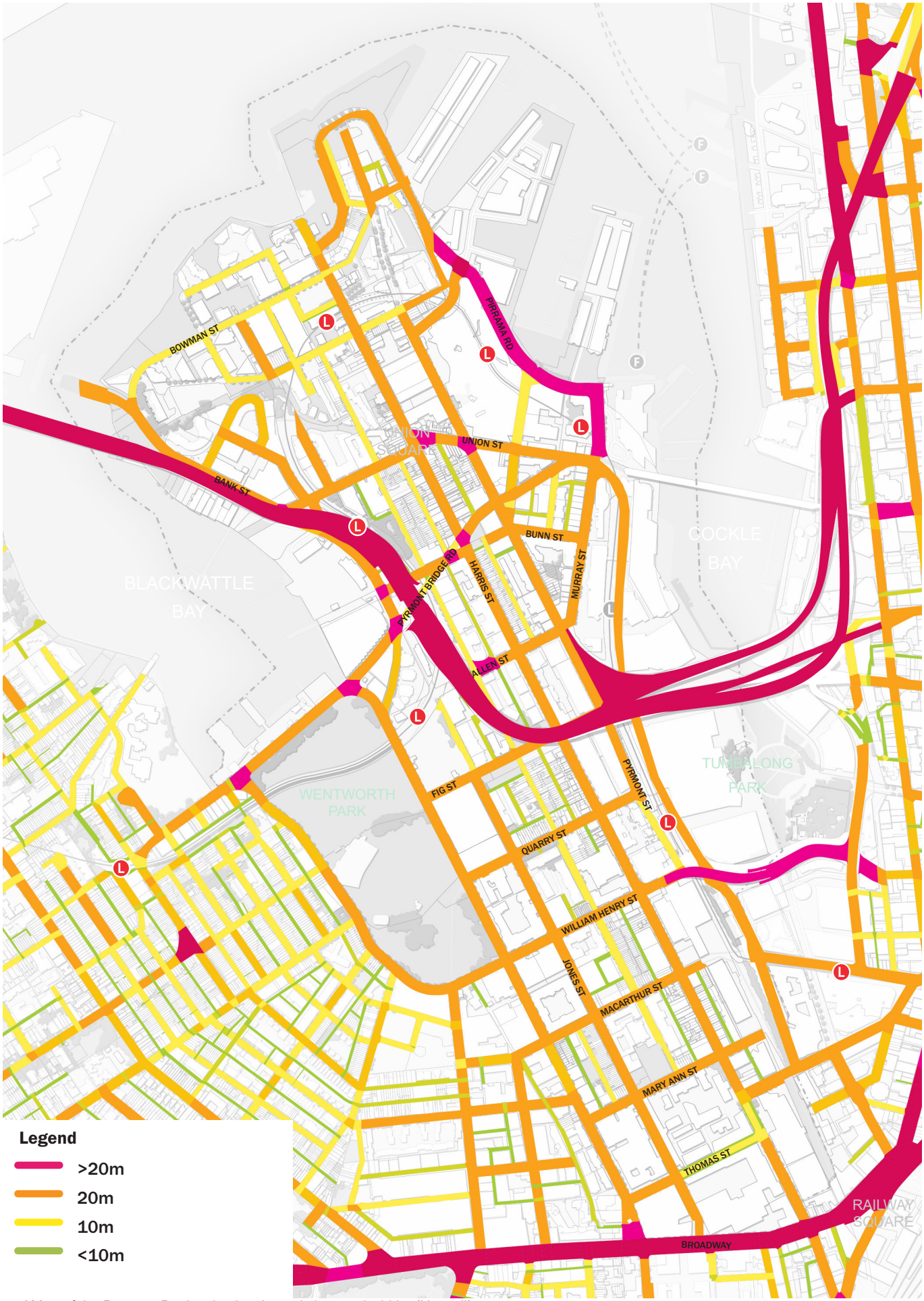
4.6 Street Widths

The streets of Pyrmont Peninsula were largely planned and designed during the late 1800's with a consistent generally consistent street width of 20m with more diversity and narrower streets within the established residential zones.

What is notable is the extent to which the amount of space allocated to cars vs pedestrians varies with arterial roads being dominated by traffic lanes that create a poor pedestrian environment in the relatively limited space which is allocated for pedestrians.



74 / Diagrammatic plan and section of the road configuration in plan and section of key streets within the peninsula.



75 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula showing existing road widths (Hassell)

4.7 Landscape

Pyrmont Peninsula is a distinct piece of the harbour's edge. The Gadigal people named the peninsula's northern point 'Pirrama', meaning 'rocking stone' and used its high ground as a vantage point over the foreshore.

The place has always and always will have:

- → A low lying shoreline (flat, low).
- → While sandstone ridges with imposing bluffs dominate the northern part of the peninsula (dramatic topography, steep).
- → Whilst the landscape of the southern end is more gently undulating (flat-ish).

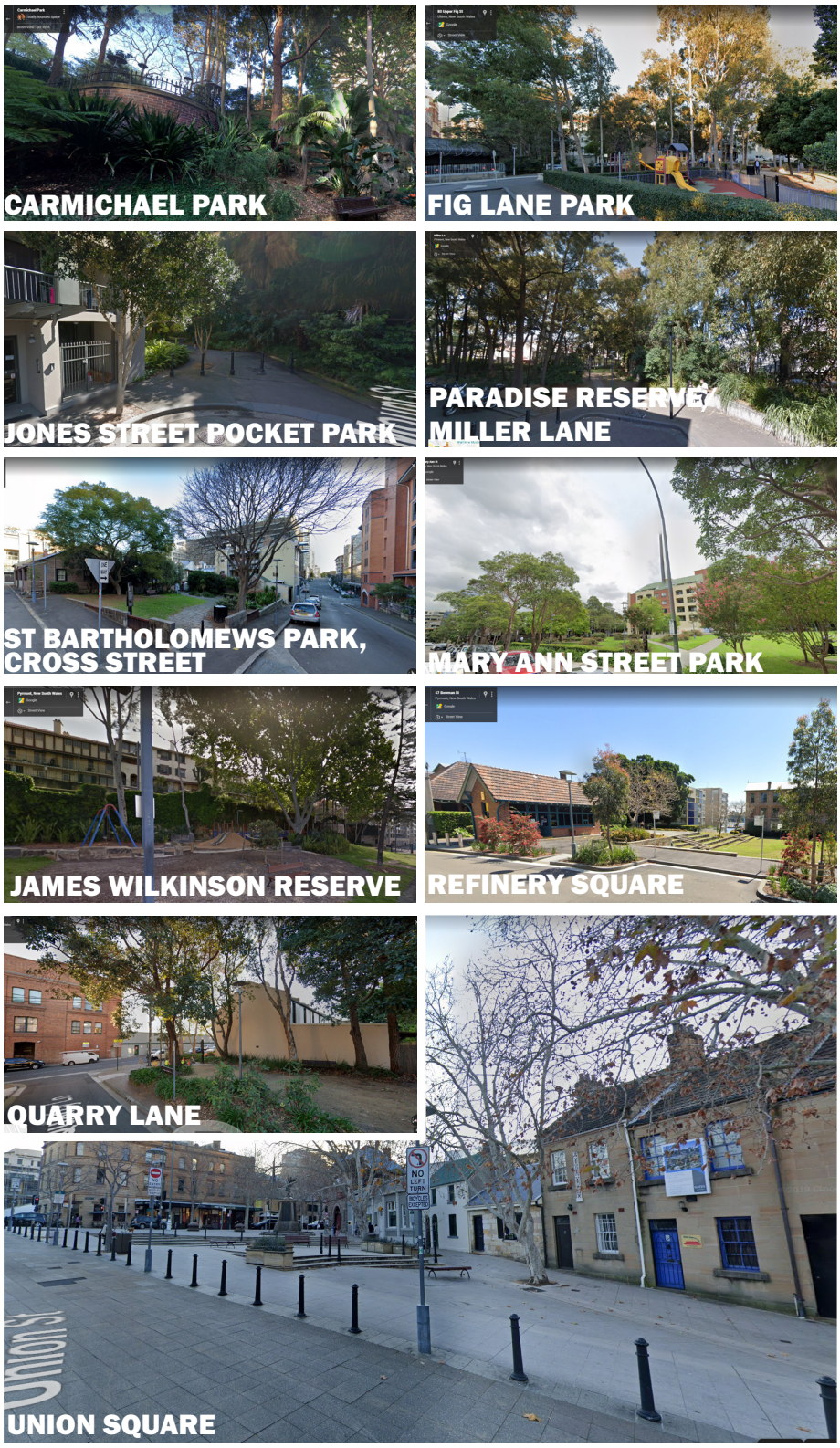
The underlying geology, soils, drainage and vegetation form an interconnected system which adds to the conflicts of flooding brought about by land reclamation in Darling Harbour and Blackwattle Swamp.

The peninsula's steep topography has been boldly cut with direct routes to service access to the city centre with Bridge Road and its extension to Union Street.

It's open space is characterised by big parks along the harbour's edge contrasted with many small community spaces along the ridge.

3.6km of the harbour frontage is accessible with planned additions through the Fish Market Precinct and Darling Island. Access through Darling Harbour is restricted through the Maritime Museum to hours of operation and generally crowded and constrained through Cockle Bay.

There is an ability to expand Sydney's harbour foreshore walk with a unique set of experiences related to the history and landscape of Pyrmont Peninsula.



76 / Images of existing local open space within the peninsula, Google Street View 2019

77 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula showing existing landscape and green grid project opportunities (City of Sydney)

4.8 Street tree cover

In order to create attractive walkable streets, managing urban heat through the provision of street tree planting is a key contributor.

The Greater Sydney Region Plan requires under Objective 30 that urban tree canopy cover is increased with a specific target of 40% required by the NSW Government within the public realm.

Pyrmont Peninsula's performance is patchy with better performing areas focused around the heritage conservation zones, The Star and the education precinct.

The presence of arterial roads is not considered a barrier to achieving these targets given that Harris Street and Pyrmont Bridge Road achieve the required 40% within specific sections.

Reviewing the precinct it appears the issue of achieving coverage is driven by the following factors:

- → Large spacings between trees.
- → Narrow footpaths.
- → Competition for space between pedestrian footpaths, street furniture, parking meters, street lights, street signage and awnings.

A review of road space allocations, footpath widths and potential to narrow lanes or introduce parking lanes with interspersed planting is critical to provide improvements in under-performing areas.

78 / View looking north along Harris Street near Union Street showing the street condition where 40% canopy cover is achieved in accordance with the Region Plan objective 30, Google Street View 2019

79 / View looking south along Harris Street near Quarry Street showing the street condition where less than 10% canopy cover is achieved contrary to the Region Plan objective 30, Google Street View 2019

80 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula showing percentage of existing canopy cover within the street corridor (City of Sydney)

4.9 Public transport

Public transport access within Pyrmont Peninsula is generally well provided in terms of distribution. However preliminary analysis by VIAE consulting indicates that its connectivity to the wider metro network, employment areas and residential areas is circuitous and as such results in a residential and worker population who:

- → Largely work within the Sydney CBD.
- → Heavily utilise active transport.
- → Do not heavily utilise public transport.

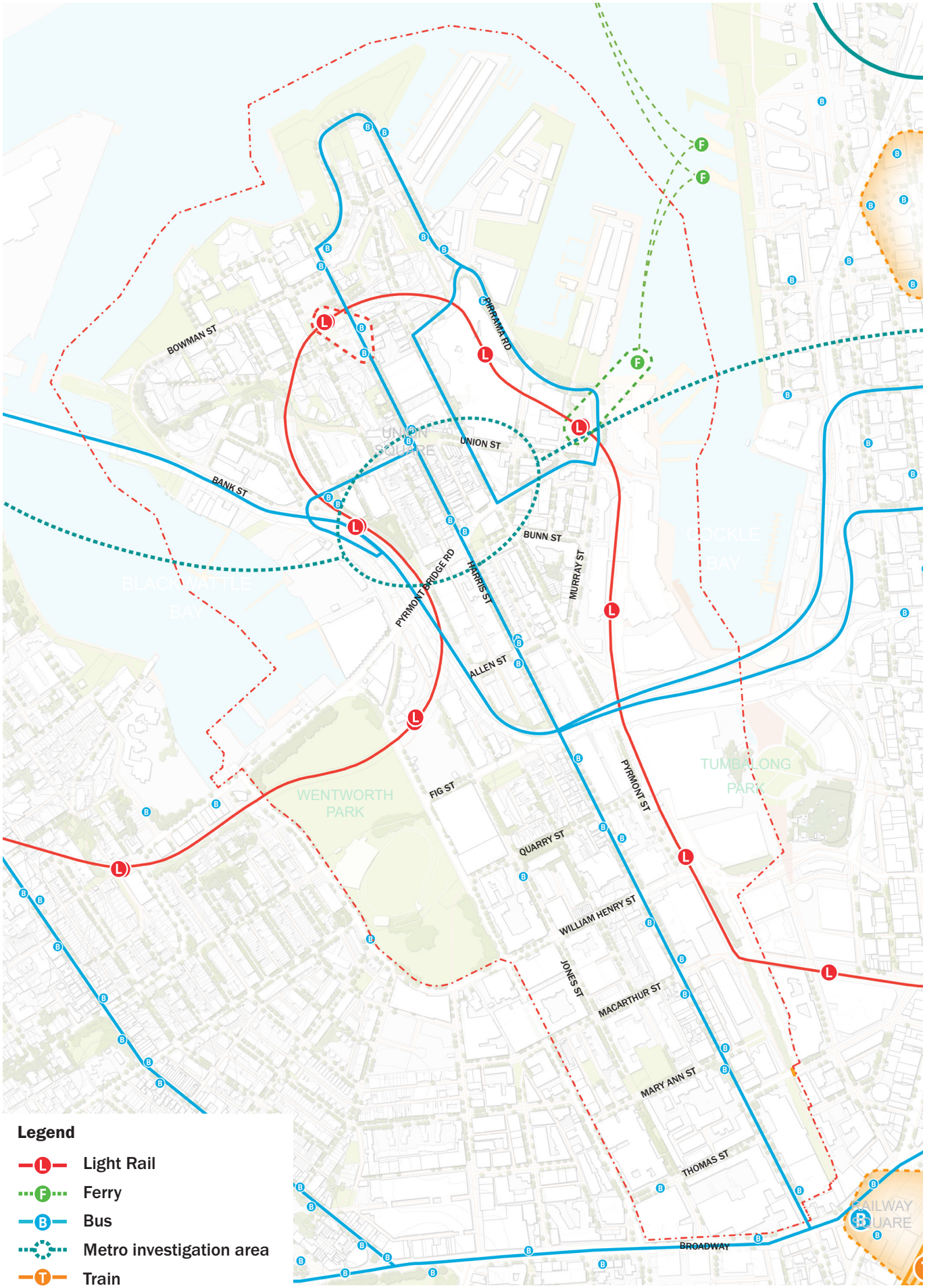
As the second densest populated statistial area 2 of Sydney, Pyrmont-Ultimo is also a significant contributor to employment at 7% of the City's jobs, the peninsula already meets the criteria for needing additional public transport investment with the existing light rail often being at capacity when passing through Pyrmont Peninsula. Its inaccessibility generally restricting the peninsula's ability to access a regional workforce.

Further growth scenarios which do not address greater regional transport access will potentially restrict a variety of opportunities for future residents and workers to access the full range of experiences in Sydney without private vehicles – exacerbating congestion in a street network that is already beyond capacity at peak times.

Outside of the potential inclusion of a metro station, opportunity exists to look at the Light Rail corridor which in its current form acts as a barrier to precinct walkability and connectivity east/west.

81 / View of light rail arriving at Fish Markets Station, Transport for NSW

82 / View of Exhibition Light Rail Station showing cumulative impact of Darling Drive, light rail corridor and topography which reinforce poor access within and across the peninsula. Transport for NSW



83 / Map of the Pyrmont Peninsula showing existing and planned public transport routes (NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment)

4.11 Active transport network

Active transport participation within the peninsula has been identified as well above Sydney averages, in part driven by indirect public transport, congested roads and the localised destination and origin of workers and residents.

Its east/west connections for access into the city centre are well utilised and with the exception of Pyrmont Bridge Road, generally pleasant.

However North/south links and east/west connections between Thomas Street and Union Street are fragmented and circuitous creating limited movement along the peninsula or across it between Pyrmont Bridge Road and Mary Ann Street.

The limitations on connectivity are driven by a combination of:

- → Sudden changes in topography
- → Continuity of road network. obstructed by built form or infrastructure.
- → Steep topography east/west.

Improvement of these routes will be important to achieve the desired precinct connectivity that contributes to unlocking the economic potential.

84 / View of pedestrian and cycle access ramp to Anzac Bridge on Quarry Master Drive