

Planning *for*
Brisbane's future

City Reach Waterfront Master Plan

DRAFT FOR
CONSULTATION



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

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Background

Brisbane City Council is planning for Brisbane's future and transforming access to the river, to give everyone new ways to explore Brisbane and connect with the places that make our city great. The *City Reach Waterfront Master Plan* is an action from the *Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014*, and establishes a vision that will inform future development and public works in the waterfront area.

The City Reach Waterfront is one of Brisbane's iconic riverside locations – bookended by the City Botanic Gardens and Howard Smith Wharves. The area is a popular leisure destination and one of the city's key economic precincts.

The draft master plan is based on feedback received from residents, property owners, businesses, commuters and visitors who completed the master plan survey in late 2018, as well as responses to the Move Safe Brisbane consultation. In addition, research into international waterfront examples has provided a set of key qualities to ensure future development will transform the City Reach Waterfront into a New World City riverside destination.

The master plan will be a non-statutory document that complements Brisbane's planning scheme (*Brisbane City Plan 2014*). Achieving the vision and objectives of the master plan will take time, and will require a shared approach between stakeholders, including Council, the Queensland Government and landholders.

Have your say on the *City Reach Waterfront Draft Master Plan* by visiting brisbane.qld.gov.au/yoursay or calling 3403 8888.

Introduction to the City Reach Waterfront

"The City Reach is our city's front door to the world. Unique attractions and distinctive architecture will blend with authentic experiences of our river city – waterfront parks and restaurants, our outdoor lifestyle and year-round comfortable climate. Our city centre will be an irresistible destination, a place full of memories." *City Centre Master Plan 2014*

The City Reach Waterfront is one of Brisbane's best-loved places, with its appealing waterfront location, restaurants and bars, contemporary architecture, and captivating history.

The study area for the master plan covers the full extent of the City Reach Waterfront, extending from the City Botanic Gardens to Howard Smith Wharves, and includes properties with direct river frontage between these two destinations, as shown below.

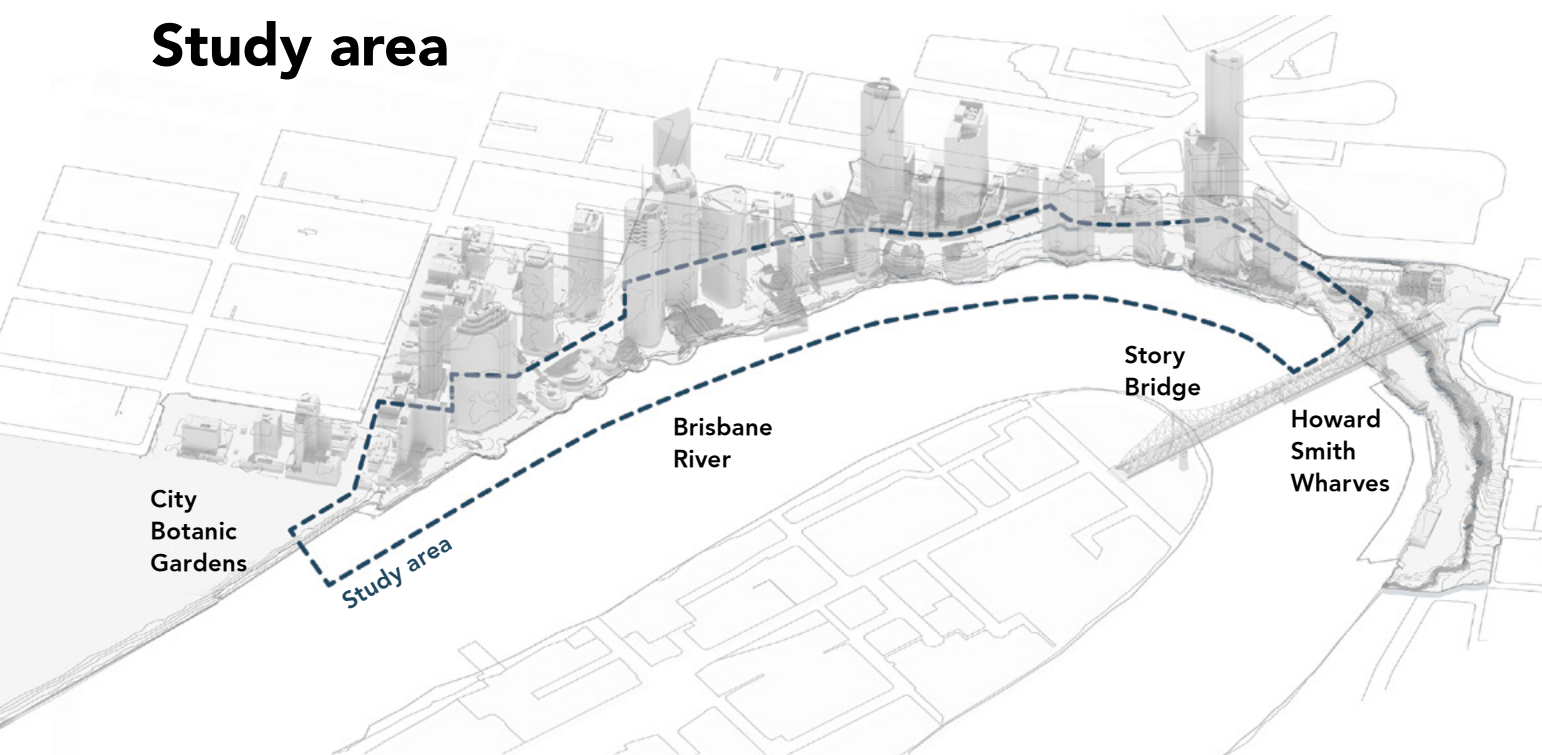


1.2+
kilometres
of river frontage



1.6
hectares
of open space

Study area



History

The City Reach Waterfront, including areas also known as Town Reach and Petrie Bight, has played a significant role in the industrial and commercial transformation of Brisbane.

Once a bustling centre of maritime trade, an array of high-rise offices, eateries and apartments now stand in the place of wharves and warehouses.

The City Reach Waterfront has evolved through economic downturn and natural disaster to repeatedly meet the needs of a changing city and contribute to the success of Brisbane.

In this context of change, the river has remained a constant presence, reinforcing the need to create a public realm that celebrates the waterfront and its history.

Crucial to creating a vision for the City Reach Waterfront's next evolution is an understanding of this background of incremental change and reinvention. In particular, it helps to make sense of today's urban form, including which aspects to preserve and which have the greatest capacity for change.

1987 aerial photo of the City Reach Waterfront, showing riverfront land used for car parking and warehouses.

Petrie Bight

Town Reach

Timeline

Pre-1800s

Aboriginal people lived close to the Brisbane River for thousands of years before European settlement.

1800s



1823 Establishment of Moreton Bay penal settlement at the location of the current city centre.

1841 Major flooding of the Brisbane River reaches record flood levels.

1842 Moreton Bay opens to free immigrants and the town of Brisbane emerges.

1840s Ferry service from Customs House to Kangaroo Point begins operating.

1859 Brisbane becomes the capital of the colony of Queensland.

1880s The temporary buildings of convict times are replaced by permanent stone buildings such as The Port Office, Naldham House and Customs House, due to growing prosperity from the maritime trade.

1893 Three floods hit Brisbane within a fortnight, with two reaching levels that are the highest in recorded history, above eight metres at the city gauge.

1900s



1901 The Naval Offices become the headquarters of the Queensland Marine Defence Force.

1930s Construction of the Story Bridge and Brisbane Central Wharves alleviates unemployment during the Great Depression and permanently reshapes the character of City Reach.

1950s Brisbane's naval port starts to be relocated downstream as industry is progressively moved out of the city centre.

1965 Wilbur Smith and Associates' Brisbane Transportation Study is released, promoting an expressway (never completed) along the City Reach Waterfront.

1974 Disastrous flooding of the Brisbane River reaches the highest level of the 20th Century at 6.6 metres on the city gauge.

1976 The Riverside Expressway is completed.

1986 Riverside Centre, designed by Harry Seidler, is completed and includes a riverside plaza that steps down to the waterfront.

1996 Brisbane City Council's fleet of CityCats begins operating along the Brisbane River.

Late 1990s Residential apartment towers are completed at the northern end of City Reach and Admiralty Park is established.

2000s



2005 Riparian Plaza, designed by Harry Seidler, is completed.

2006 *City Centre Master Plan 2006* identifies Town Reach and Howard Smith Wharves as demonstration projects.

2011 Major flooding of the Brisbane River reaches a recorded flood level of 4.45 metres at City Reach.

2012 111 Eagle Street is completed.

2014 *City Centre Master Plan 2014* identifies the development of a master plan for the City Reach Waterfront as a priority project.

2018 Howard Smith Wharves opens.

Inner-city context

The City Reach Waterfront is part of a wider strategic network of inner-city lifestyle and leisure precincts in Brisbane that are connected by major active, public and river transport infrastructure.

The study area features:



30+ dining
destinations



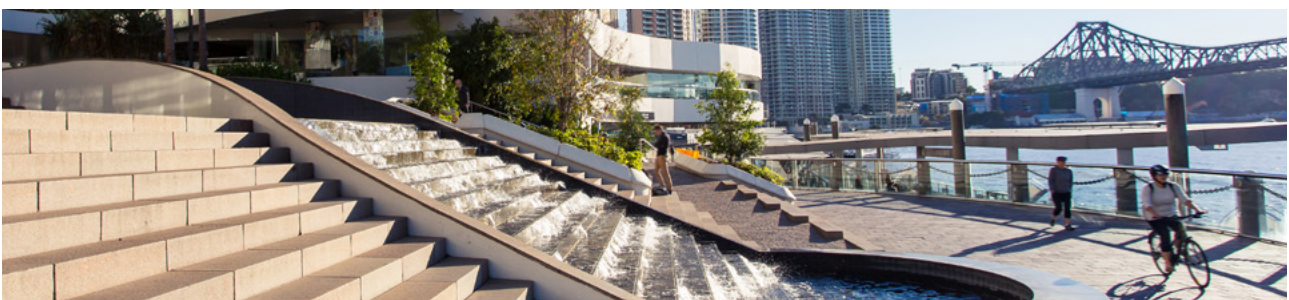
10,000+ workers
in key industry growth sectors



\$700+ million
land value

Strategic considerations and infrastructure projects informing the master plan include:

- **Land use:** The waterfront contains a range of commercial, residential and lifestyle uses and is a core part of the 'Golden Triangle' (the location of key commercial office towers in the city centre).
- **Bookends:** The City Botanic Gardens and Howard Smith Wharves bookend the study area and are important gateways to and from the waterfront, as well as destinations in their own right.
- **River aspect:** The waterfront is the only location in the city centre where the city grid has direct access to the river.
- **Open space and Riverwalk:** The waterfront Riverwalk provides a continuous pedestrian and cyclist connection to other inner-city destinations.
- **Major development:** The role of the waterfront as an integral part of Brisbane's inner-city will intensify as a result of new major projects, including the Queen's Wharf Brisbane development and Eagle Street Pier redevelopment.
- **Future bridge crossings:** The proposed pedestrian and cyclist bridge connecting the city centre to Kangaroo Point peninsula will open up new opportunities to explore Brisbane, and will improve accessibility to Kangaroo Point's lifestyle and leisure amenities, including its natural beaches.
- **Public transport:** The Brisbane Metro and Cross River Rail projects will improve access to the City Reach Waterfront.
- **Active transport and river access:** The proposed City Botanic Gardens Riverwalk extension and River Access Hub will direct pedestrian and cyclist traffic to the waterfront and will open up new opportunities to access the river for water-based activities.
- **City centre street hierarchy:** The combination of new active and public transport infrastructure and major development projects will reshape the city centre street hierarchy, placing greater emphasis on pedestrian amenity and connectivity between destinations.



















The view from Riverside Centre looking north towards the Story Bridge

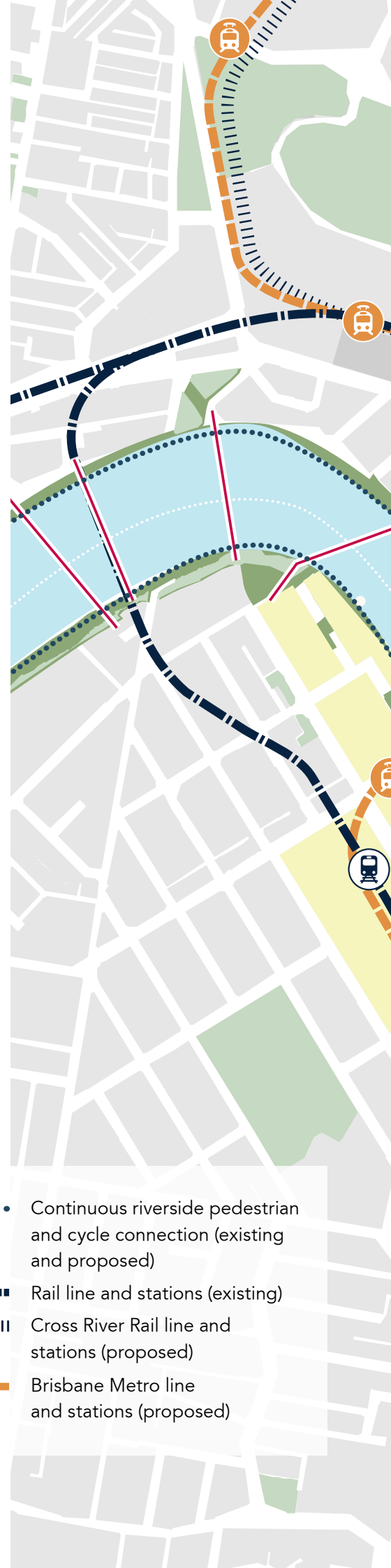
Destinations and major projects (shown on map)

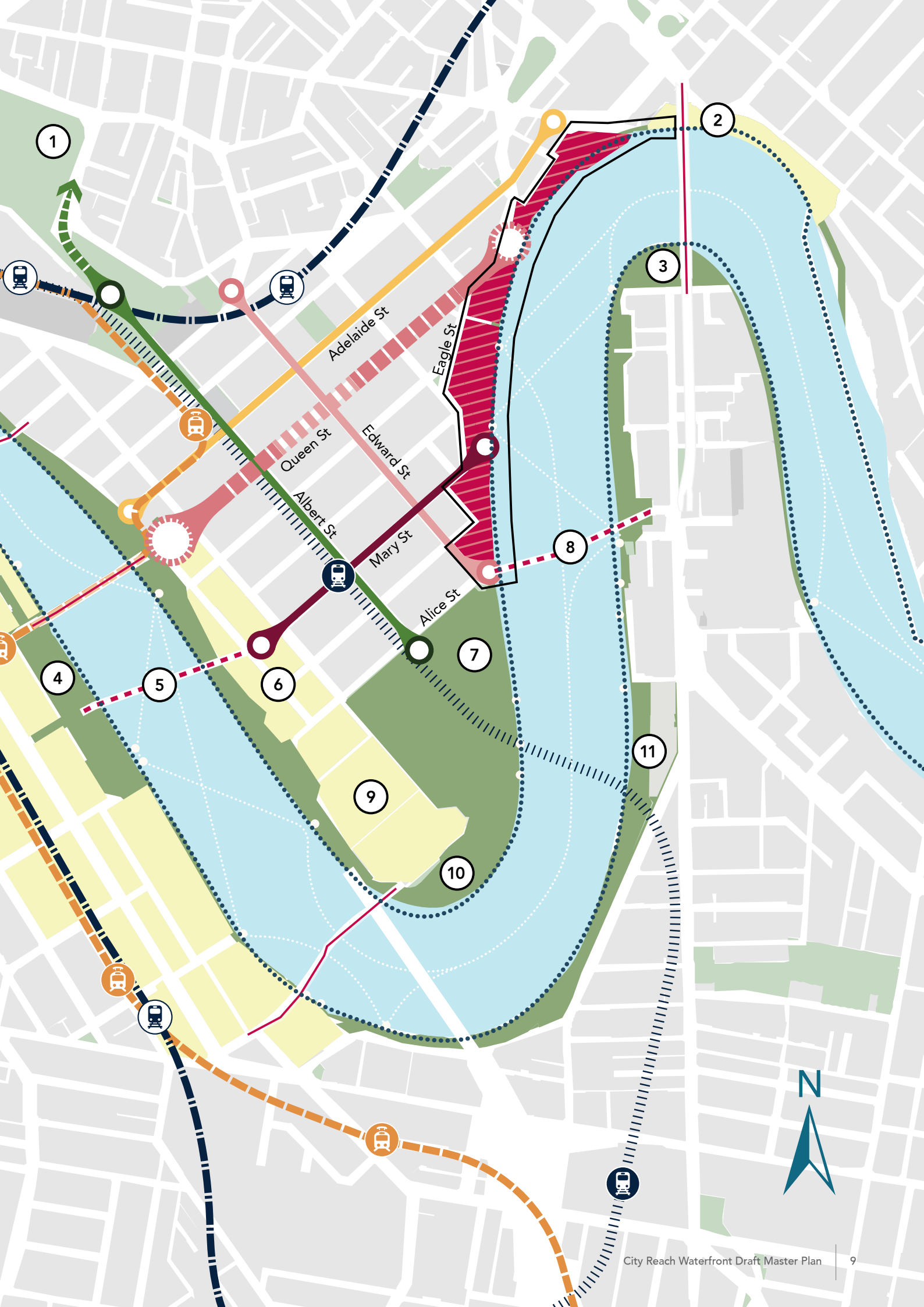
- 1 Roma Street Parkland
- 2 Howard Smith Wharves
- 3 Captain Burke Park
- 4 South Bank Cultural Forecourt and South Bank Parklands
- 5 Neville Bonner Bridge (proposed)
- 6 Queen's Wharf Brisbane
- 7 City Botanic Gardens
- 8 Kangaroo Point Pedestrian Bridge (proposed)
- 9 Queensland University of Technology (Gardens Point campus)
- 10 Riverstage
- 11 Kangaroo Point cliffs

"The river and its edges are the threads that pull together a diverse network of urban centres and open spaces. People are drawn to the river by the high-quality public space, ease of travel and links to areas where people live and work."
River's Edge Strategy 2013

Legend

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------|--|--|
|  | City Reach Waterfront study area |  | Albert Street |  | Continuous riverside pedestrian and cycle connection (existing and proposed) |
|  | Key riverside destinations |  | Mary Street |  | Rail line and stations (existing) |
|  | Riverfront parklands |  | Edward Street |  | Cross River Rail line and stations (proposed) |
|  | Brisbane River |  | Adelaide Street |  | Brisbane Metro line and stations (proposed) |
|  | River routes |  | Bridge | | |
|  | Queen Street |  | Proposed bridge | | |





1

2

3

4

5

6

7

9

10

11

Adelaide St

Queen St

Edward St

Eagle St

Albert St

Mary St

Alice St



What makes a great waterfront?

A review of 22 benchmark waterfronts has been undertaken to draw out the qualities and features that have contributed to their success as destinations and iconic places.



Benchmark waterfronts

- | | |
|--|--|
| ① City Reach Waterfront, Brisbane, Australia | ⑫ Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago, USA |
| ② Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast, Australia | ⑬ Inner Harbour, Baltimore, USA |
| ③ Darling Harbour, Sydney, Australia | ⑭ Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, UK |
| ④ Barangaroo, Sydney, Australia | ⑮ Paris Plage, Paris, France |
| ⑤ Southbank, Melbourne, Australia | ⑯ Rhine Promenade, Düsseldorf, Germany |
| ⑥ Elizabeth Quay, Perth, Australia | ⑰ Nyhavn, Copenhagen, Denmark |
| ⑦ Viaduct, Auckland, New Zealand | ⑱ Aker Brygge Harbourfront, Oslo, Norway |
| ⑧ Old Port, Montreal, Canada | ⑲ West Lake, Hangzhou, China |
| ⑨ Harbourfront, Toronto, Canada | ⑳ Clarke Quay, Singapore |
| ⑩ Riverwalk, San Antonio, USA | ㉑ Marina Bay, Singapore |
| ⑪ Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, USA | ㉒ Kamo River, Kyoto, Japan |

Six qualities of great waterfronts

Across the benchmark waterfronts, six qualities feature consistently.



River Quay Green



Generous

- Spacious enough to enable pedestrians and cyclists to move safely in a low-speed, shared environment
- Ample room to dwell and gather



Connected

- Visually and physically connected to the city
- Connected to the river's edge



Engaging

- Activated during the day and at night
- Responsive to the history and culture of the place



Adaptable

- Resilient to inclement weather and a changing climate
- Flexible spaces that can be used in diverse ways, in every season



Consistent

- Consistent use of materials and landscaping
- Unified approach to the promenade



Comfortable

- Regular planting and landscaping
- Ample opportunities to sit and relax in spaces designed for the local climate

The City Reach Waterfront today

The City Reach Waterfront today is a wonderful resource for Brisbane, but its potential as one of the world's great waterfronts has not yet been realised. Assessing and analysing the City Reach Waterfront against the six qualities that define great waterfronts provides insights into the opportunities for change and improvement.

The following section analyses the City Reach Waterfront against each quality and culminates in a series of identified opportunities that set the direction for the master plan.

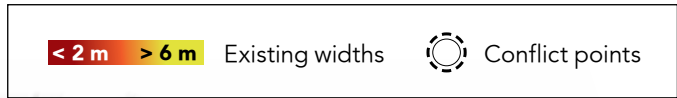
An aerial photograph of the Brisbane City Reach Waterfront. A white, irregular outline highlights the 'Study area' along the riverbank. The area includes various buildings, green spaces, and waterfront structures. The river is visible on the right side of the image, and the city grid is visible on the left.

Study area

Analysis of the City Reach Waterfront



Generous



The City Reach Waterfront has an average promenade width of 4.3 metres, making it one of the least generous waterfronts of the 22 benchmarked.

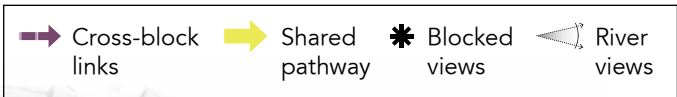
The width is also inconsistent and varies considerably, making the promenade difficult to navigate with a number of conflict points.

Master plan opportunities

- Create a wide, continuous and unimpeded promenade that gives sufficient room for all users in a low-speed environment
- Improve the promenade's functionality and safety by simplifying its alignment to resolve conflict points and improve visibility



Connected



The City Reach Waterfront is located where city grid streets meet the river.

The level changes between the city edge and the promenade are significant, with transition areas often including complicated ramps or steep stairs.

Master plan opportunities

- Open up view corridors on key streets
- Enhance existing pathway links to increase access
- Promote cycling and walking in a low-speed shared environment
- Establish new active transport connections to the proposed Kangaroo Point Pedestrian Bridge



Engaging



Key activity areas



Heritage places



Admiralty Park



The City Reach Waterfront has a number of activity nodes, but the ability to interact with the water is limited in some locations.

Public art and heritage interpretation information is mostly absent from the waterfront, reducing public engagement and sense of place.

Master plan opportunities

- Encourage a diverse range of activities to enhance day and night activation
- Provide opportunities for people to interact with the water
- Incorporate public art into the public realm
- Provide opportunities to celebrate heritage places
- Create a sense of celebration and arrival at the waterfront



Adaptable



Build out over water



Flood areas 2011



The City Reach Waterfront is susceptible to storm tide and flood inundation and a number of existing structures extend over the river itself.

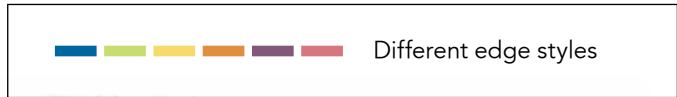
With the exception of major events like Riverfire, there is limited temporary activation along the waterfront and existing spaces lack a variety of uses.

Master plan opportunities

- Allow for a variety of waterfront design responses that are adaptable and responsive to tidal changes and flooding
- Cater for flexible use, whereby the design can respond to changes in activity demand, as well as flooding and other weather conditions



Consistent



The City Reach Waterfront incorporates a number of design styles, presenting an inconsistent look and feel.

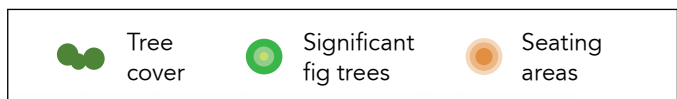
The lack of a consistent waterfront aesthetic affects wayfinding and makes the waterfront less appealing as a public place and city destination.

Master plan opportunities

- Create a consistent aesthetic to the waterfront, including through materials, landscaping and lighting
- Create a promenade with a consistent width, look and feel to unify the waterfront
- Incorporate materials and landscaping that are authentically Brisbane



Comfortable



The City Reach Waterfront has few shaded areas, making many seating locations hot and uncomfortable.

Tree cover is limited to pockets of significant fig trees, and public facilities, such as bins and bathrooms, are in short supply.

Master plan opportunities

- Create more space so users can comfortably dwell and sit along the waterfront
- Provide more shade through landscaping and built form treatments
- Celebrate existing significant trees and increase planting

City Reach Waterfront opportunities

The opportunities for the City Reach Waterfront have been summarised into four elements. The elements are outlined below, and the accompanying map shows where these elements are to be implemented within the City Reach area.

1 Promenade shared space

Based on the benchmarking analysis, and an assessment of Brisbane's current Riverwalk infrastructure, an eight-metre-wide unobstructed promenade is proposed along the full length of the City Reach Waterfront.

In an area where there is a need to balance both movement and placemaking activities, a wide shared space promenade will allow different users to interact safely and functionally.

Council's *Transport Plan for Brisbane — Strategic Directions* is a guiding document for this unifying element.

Qualities addressed:



2 Engaging public space

Integrating public art and lighting along the City Reach Waterfront will improve wayfinding and provide a rich user experience, layered with different sensory elements.

Creative lighting and public art installations should be used to celebrate the waterfront's heritage and provide a connection to the past, while lighting the way to new destinations such as Howard Smith Wharves.

Council's *River Art Framework 2018* and the *City of Lights Strategy 2017* are guiding documents for this unifying element.

Qualities addressed:



3 River access

Connecting people to the river will strengthen Brisbane's credentials as a river city and will support new lifestyle and leisure activities along the waterfront.

Opportunities for river access are to be promoted along the City Reach Waterfront at every opportunity to encourage recreational and tourism-related activity.

Council's *River Access Network 2017* and *River's Edge Strategy 2013* are guiding documents for this unifying element.

Qualities addressed:



4 Materials and landscaping

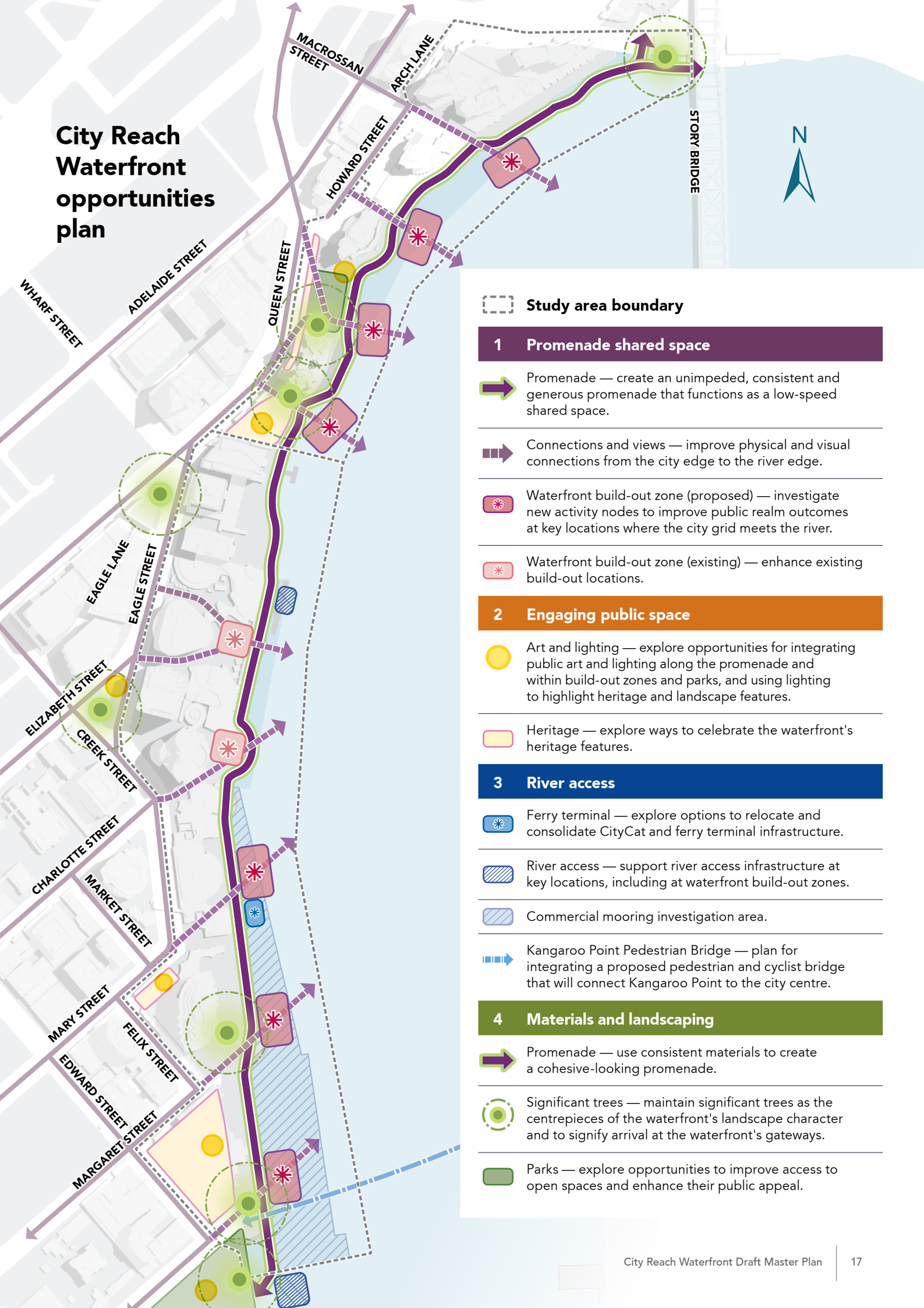
A consistent use of materials and landscaping will pave the way for the City Reach Waterfront to achieve its full potential. This can be done by reinforcing the waterfront's unified nature and creating hardscape and softscape landscaped areas that respond to Brisbane's subtropical climate.

Council's *Brisbane. Clean, Green, Sustainable 2017-2031* is a guiding document for this unifying element.

Qualities addressed:



City Reach Waterfront opportunities plan



Study area boundary

1 Promenade shared space

- Promenade — create an unimpeded, consistent and generous promenade that functions as a low-speed shared space.
- Connections and views — improve physical and visual connections from the city edge to the river edge.
- Waterfront build-out zone (proposed) — investigate new activity nodes to improve public realm outcomes at key locations where the city grid meets the river.
- Waterfront build-out zone (existing) — enhance existing build-out locations.

2 Engaging public space

- Art and lighting — explore opportunities for integrating public art and lighting along the promenade and within build-out zones and parks, and using lighting to highlight heritage and landscape features.
- Heritage — explore ways to celebrate the waterfront's heritage features.

3 River access

- Ferry terminal — explore options to relocate and consolidate CityCat and ferry terminal infrastructure.
- River access — support river access infrastructure at key locations, including at waterfront build-out zones.
- Commercial mooring investigation area.
- Kangaroo Point Pedestrian Bridge — plan for integrating a proposed pedestrian and cyclist bridge that will connect Kangaroo Point to the city centre.

4 Materials and landscaping

- Promenade — use consistent materials to create a cohesive-looking promenade.
- Significant trees — maintain significant trees as the centrepieces of the waterfront's landscape character and to signify arrival at the waterfront's gateways.
- Parks — explore opportunities to improve access to open spaces and enhance their public appeal.

City Reach Waterfront Master Plan

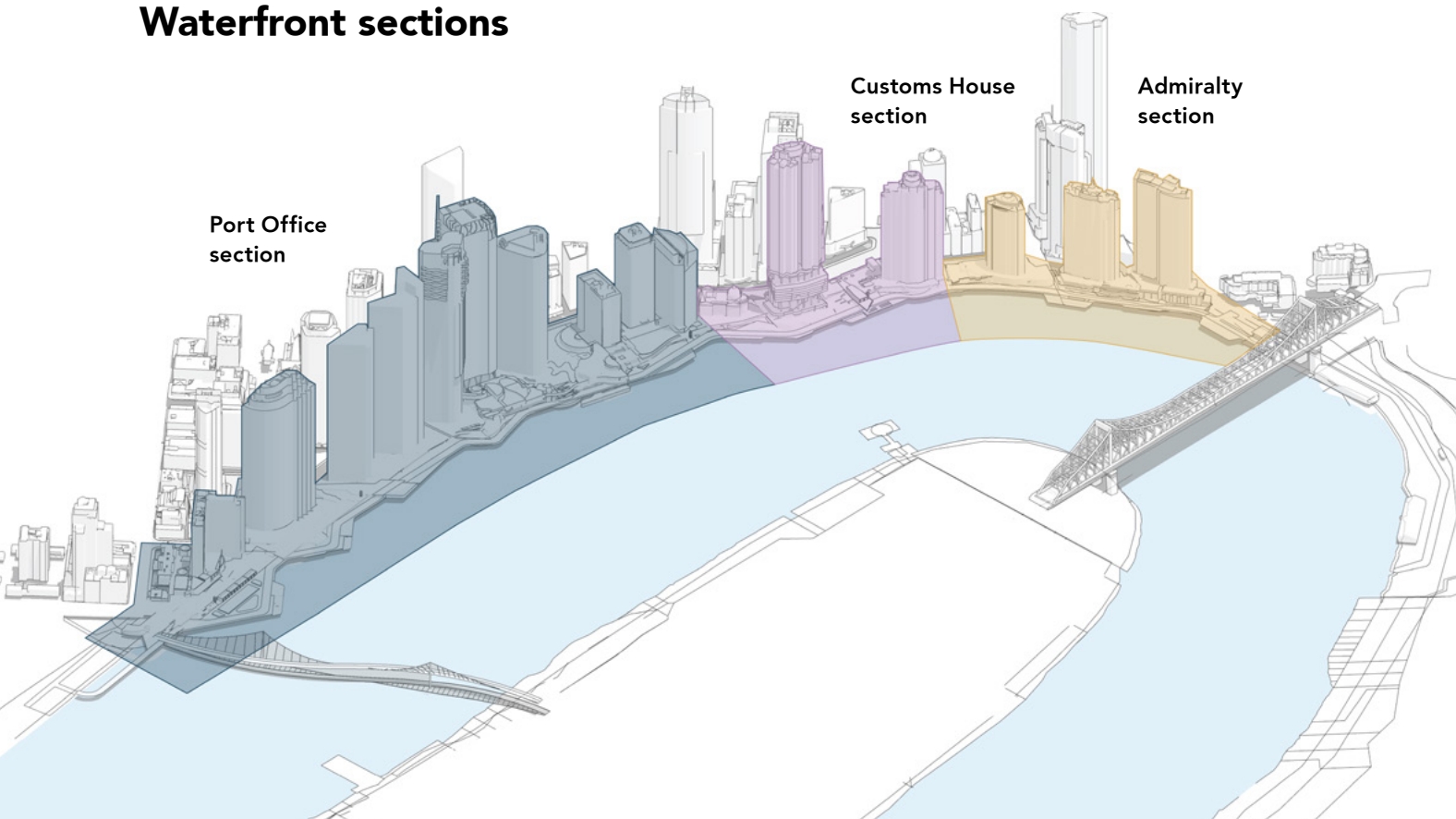
The *City Reach Waterfront Master Plan* aims to create a memorable waterfront that celebrates Brisbane's outdoor lifestyle and identity as a river city.

The following concepts present one potential future for the waterfront. The intent of the plan is not to prescribe an outcome, but to demonstrate how the opportunities and vision outlined in this master plan can work together to create a world-class waterfront experience at City Reach.

To better plan for the waterfront's future, three distinct sections have been identified within the study area. The sections have been shaped by the existing land use and built form composition along the waterfront, and the potential for change within each section.

Specific guidance for each waterfront section describes both the development potential within each section and the stakeholders best placed to take a leading role in realising that potential. Change along the waterfront will require a shared and collaborative approach between stakeholders.

Waterfront sections





**Admiralty
section**

**Customs
House
section**

**Port
Office
section**

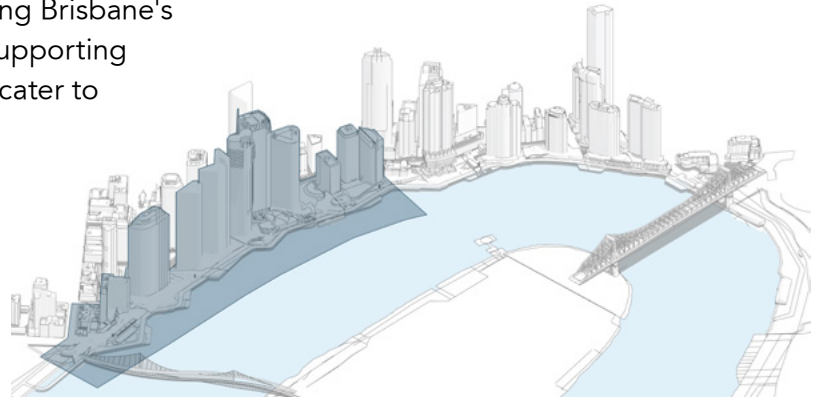
Vision

City Reach is Brisbane's showcase waterfront: generous in width; seamlessly connected to its surroundings; adaptive to its environment; defined by a variety of activities and opportunities to engage with the river; shaded and comfortable and unified by a consistent approach to design.



Port Office section

The Port Office section is the commercial focus of the waterfront, showcasing Brisbane's tower-in-plaza architecture and supporting a range of lifestyle activities that cater to workers and visitors.



Section objectives

Increase the quantity of publicly accessible open space.

Support the commercial role of the section by providing a high-quality public realm that delivers an economic benefit to landholders and their tenants.

Strengthen the section's lifestyle and leisure qualities by providing a range of activities that create more reasons to visit, day and night.

Accommodate relocated CityCat and ferry terminals, as well as improved pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.

Celebrate the setting of existing heritage buildings, retain significant trees and investigate opportunities to plant more trees.

Development potential



Leadership roles



Artist impression

- 1 Riverside Centre
- 2 Riparian Plaza
- 3 Waterfront Place
- 4 Port Office/Stamford Plaza
- 5 City Botanic Gardens

Opportunity areas to provide a variety of activities and engaging public realm improvements

Consistent promenade width and materials

Proposed Mary Street Plaza that will provide seating and shelter at an anticipated high-use pedestrian connection

Potential CityCat and ferry terminal relocation

Proposed public space and riverside lap pool

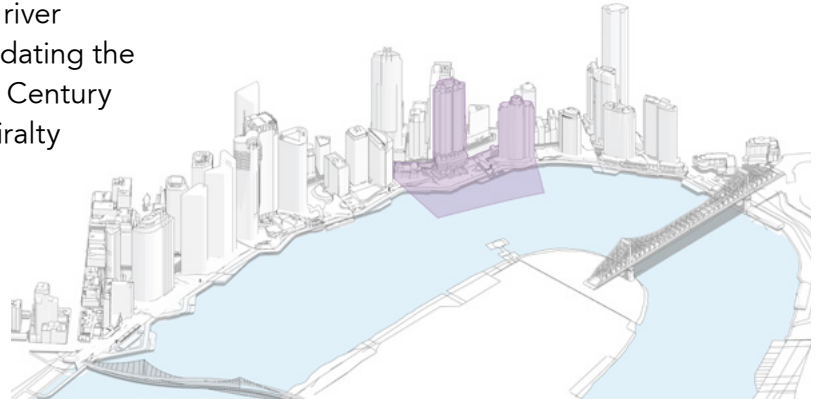
Proposed Kangaroo Point Pedestrian Bridge

Botanic Gardens Riverwalk and River Hub



Customs House section

The Customs House section is the civic heart of the waterfront and the historic river gateway to City Reach, accommodating the waterfront's most significant 19th Century heritage features, as well as Admiralty Park and Customs House Park.



Section objectives

Celebrate the heritage setting and views of Customs House, including by improving access to and around the building.

Improve pedestrian access to Howard Lane to enhance public engagement with the Petrie Bight retaining wall.

Upgrade Admiralty Park so that it reaches its potential as one of the city centre's riverfront parks.

Maximise views and provide stronger visual and physical connections between the city centre and the waterfront at Admiralty Park.

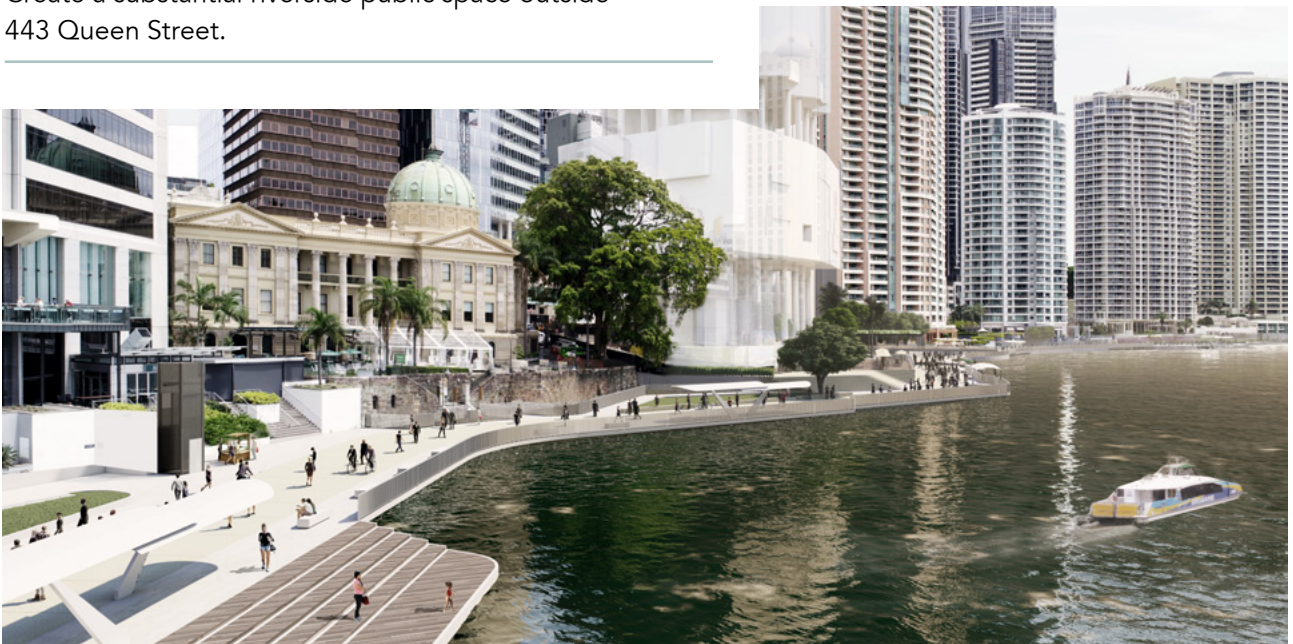
Preserve the iconic fig tree next to Customs House and introduce new landscaping that complements it.

Create a substantial riverside public space outside 443 Queen Street.

Development potential



Leadership roles



Artist impression

- 1 Petrie Bight retaining wall and Howard Lane
- 2 Admiralty Park
- 3 443 Queen Street development
- 4 Customs House

Activate Howard Lane to improve engagement with the Petrie Bight retaining wall

Upgrade Admiralty Park as a key riverfront park

Enhance river interaction through terraced seating

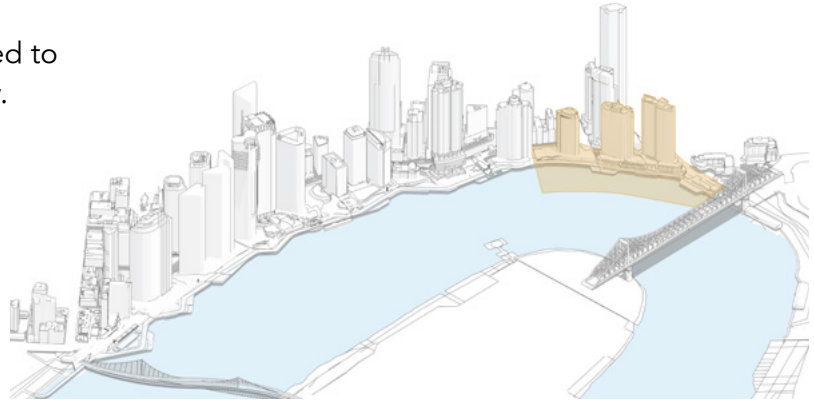
443 Queen Street — opportunity for improved riverside public space

Customs House Park — opportunity to celebrate the setting of Customs House and significant fig tree



Admiralty section

The Admiralty section is the residential section of the waterfront where non-residential activity is managed to limit impacts on resident amenity.



Section objectives

Provide clear and direct connections to Howard Smith Wharves.

Improve the interface of pathways between private residential towers and the waterfront by enhancing landscaping and wayfinding.

Incorporate landscaping along the waterfront to improve overall levels of comfort and weather protection.

Improve pedestrian access to Howard Street and Arch Lane.

Create opportunities to interact with the water.

Development potential



Leadership roles



Artist impression

- 1 Howard Smith Wharves
- 2 Riverplace Apartments
- 3 Admiralty Quay
- 4 Admiralty Towers One

Arrival gateway transitioning to Howard Smith Wharves

Riverside seating along promenade

Over water build-out containing riverside seating

Landscaped pedestrian connection



Next steps

The following projects are examples for how the master plan can be brought from concept stage to reality. Each project focuses on a different aspect of the waterfront and over time, their delivery has the potential to contribute to the City Reach Waterfront's transformation.



Kangaroo Point Pedestrian Bridge delivery

The proposed green bridge, connecting City Reach to the Kangaroo Point peninsula, will dramatically alter movement patterns to and along the waterfront and fundamentally re-shape City Reach's presentation and profile. Connecting to the City Botanic Gardens Riverwalk and River Access Hub, the bridge will contribute to Brisbane's aspirations of being one of the world's best cities for walking and cycling.



Eagle Street Pier redevelopment

Redevelopment at Eagle Street Pier has the potential to revitalise one of Brisbane's premier business and lifestyle destinations, while also making a significant contribution to the city centre's public realm. This includes building on existing strengths in business services and hospitality, while opening up new opportunities for the public to experience and engage with the waterfront.



River access infrastructure delivery

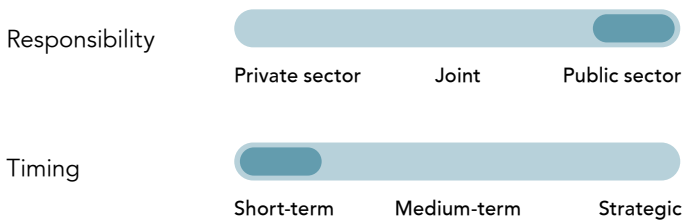
Relocating existing ferry and CityCat services along the waterfront will significantly improve arrival and departure experiences. A new ferry terminal at the Howard Smith Wharves end of the waterfront provides greater access to this emerging destination. A new River Hub at the Botanic Gardens end of the waterfront facilitates use of tour boats, water taxis and private recreational vessels.



Admiralty Park and Customs House Park upgrade

Admiralty Park and Customs House Park are important public assets that are not used to their full potential. Addressing how people access these parks, as well as the quality of the parks themselves, will give the community more reasons to visit the waterfront. Guided by City Reach's historic past, park improvements begin to shine a light on Customs House and the Petrie Bight retaining wall.

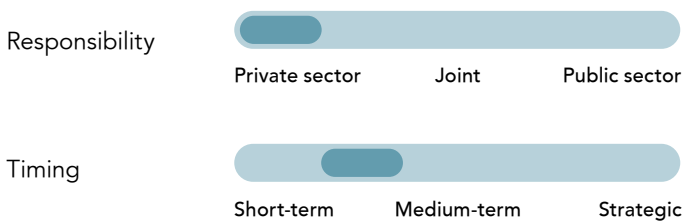
Responsibility and timing



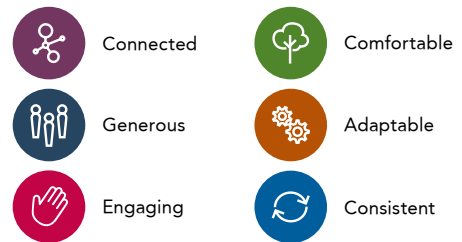
Qualities addressed



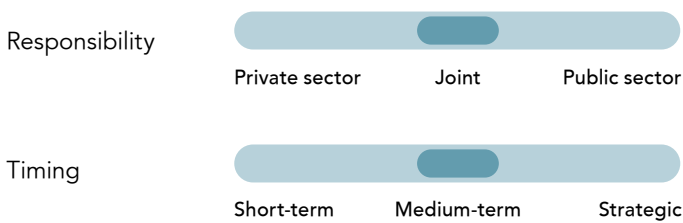
Responsibility and timing



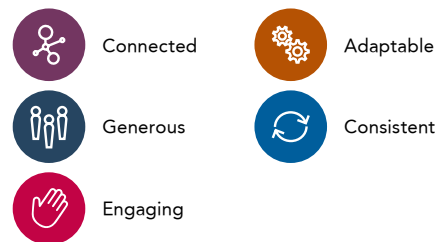
Qualities addressed



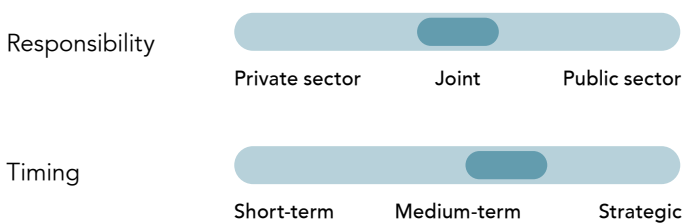
Responsibility and timing



Qualities addressed



Responsibility and timing



Qualities addressed



Have **yoursay**

Are we on the right track?



Visit brisbane.qld.gov.au and search 'City Reach Waterfront'.



Send an email to:
cityreachwaterfront@brisbane.qld.gov.au



Call 3403 8888.



Write to:
Neighbourhood Planning and Urban Renewal
(City Reach Waterfront)
Brisbane City Council
GPO Box 1434
Brisbane Qld 4001

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GPO Box 1434
Brisbane Qld 4001

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