

Concord West Precinct Master Plan

Urban Design Study



Prepared for

Canada Bay Council

27 May 2014 ■ 14045



DRAFT

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Version No:	Date:	Version Details:	Approved By:	File name:
2	27 May 2014	Draft Master Plan Report	BG	Concord West Master Plan

Introduction

About this Study

This master plan has been prepared by JBA on behalf on Canada Bay Council (Council). It relates to land on the western side of the Northern Rail Line at Concord West. While the master plan only investigates the subject sites and considers these sites in the context of the study area, it is focused on land currently zoned IN1, General Industrial, which has been identified for redevelopment to residential uses by the City of Canada Bay Council. The Study Area is shown in Figure 1.

The aim of the study is to create new planning controls to guide the future development of sites zoned for industrial use within the study area. The objectives of the study are to:

- deliver high quality urban design and appropriate built form controls that are considerate of surrounding built form;
- mitigate impacts in relation to the use of private motor vehicles and promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling;
- identify opportunities for public domain improvements and connections;
- balance city-wide and regional goals with the existing community and its context;
- provide a coordinated planning approach to the redevelopment of the area;
- provide a sound methodology and a thorough, evidence based justification for planning, urban design and traffic recommendations provided; and
- undertake the study with Council, community and stakeholder engagement.

Study Area

The Study Area is bound by Liberty Grove to the north, Pomeroy Street to the south, the main Northern Railway Line to the east and Powell’s Creek Reserve to the west. The area is characterised by a variety of built form and uses, including a mix of dwelling houses, town houses, apartment buildings and industrial uses. A new primary school is currently being built at 64-66 Victoria Avenue. The Precinct is effectively self-contained, with George Street forming the only vehicular access point to the surrounding road network at the southern end of the study area.

East of the Northern Railway Line is the Concord West centre, which contains a small range of retail and commercial uses. To the south of the precinct is the Bakehouse Quarter, which is the main centre for the local area. West of the precinct are Powell’s Creek Reserve, Homebush Bay Drive and Bicentennial Park.

The Project Team

- **JBA:** Urban Design, Planning & Community Engagement
- **GTA Consultants:** Traffic & Transport



FIGURE 1 - Study Area Location Plan

Planning Context

Draft West Central Subregional Strategy

The former Metropolitan Plan for Sydney included the Study Area in the Inner West Subregion of Sydney. The Government prepared the draft Inner West Subregional Strategy to manage population growth in this subregion, and set a target of 30,000 additional dwellings to 2031. Of this, 10,000 are to be provided in Canada Bay LGA.

While these targets will be reviewed as part of the preparation of new Subregional Strategies informed by the draft Metropolitan Strategy, in the interim these figures provide a useful reference for planning. To accommodate this growth, the strategy sets the following key directions for housing:

- focus housing in and around existing strategic and local centres;
- improve housing affordability; and
- achieve a mix of zones and dwelling forms.



FIGURE 2 - Former Subregional Plan

Subject Sites

Industrial Sites

The focus of this study are the industrial sites identified in Figure 2. The sites are currently 2-3 storeys in height. Some sites are vacant or under utilised.

The sites are being considered by Council for rezoning from IN1 - General Industrial to R3 - Medium Density Residential with the exception of Site 4 (Westpac) to be rezoned to B7 - Business Park, recommendations based on the outcome of the Socio Economic Impact Study undertaken by Hill PDA in June 2013.

Site 5 176 - 184 George Street



Site 6 2 - 10 Rothwell Avenue



Site 7 25 George Street



FIGURE 3 - Industrial Sites Plan

Site 1 7 Concord Avenue



Site 2 202 - 210 George Street



Site 3 3 King Street



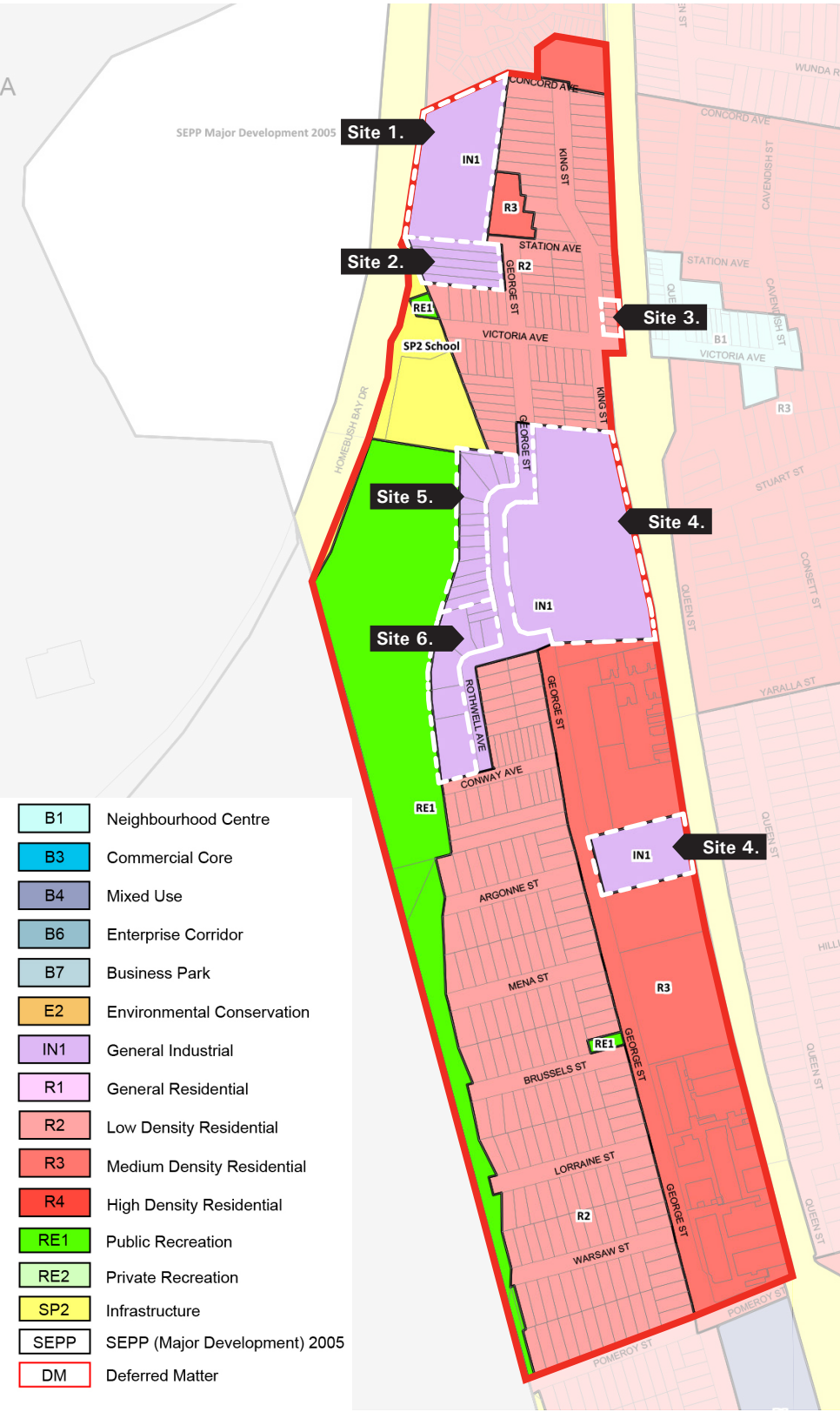
Site 4 1 King Street (Westpac)



LEP Planning Controls - existing

Zoning

The study sites are zoned IN1 (General Industrial) with the exception of Site 3 (5 King Street) which is zoned R2 (Low Density Residential).



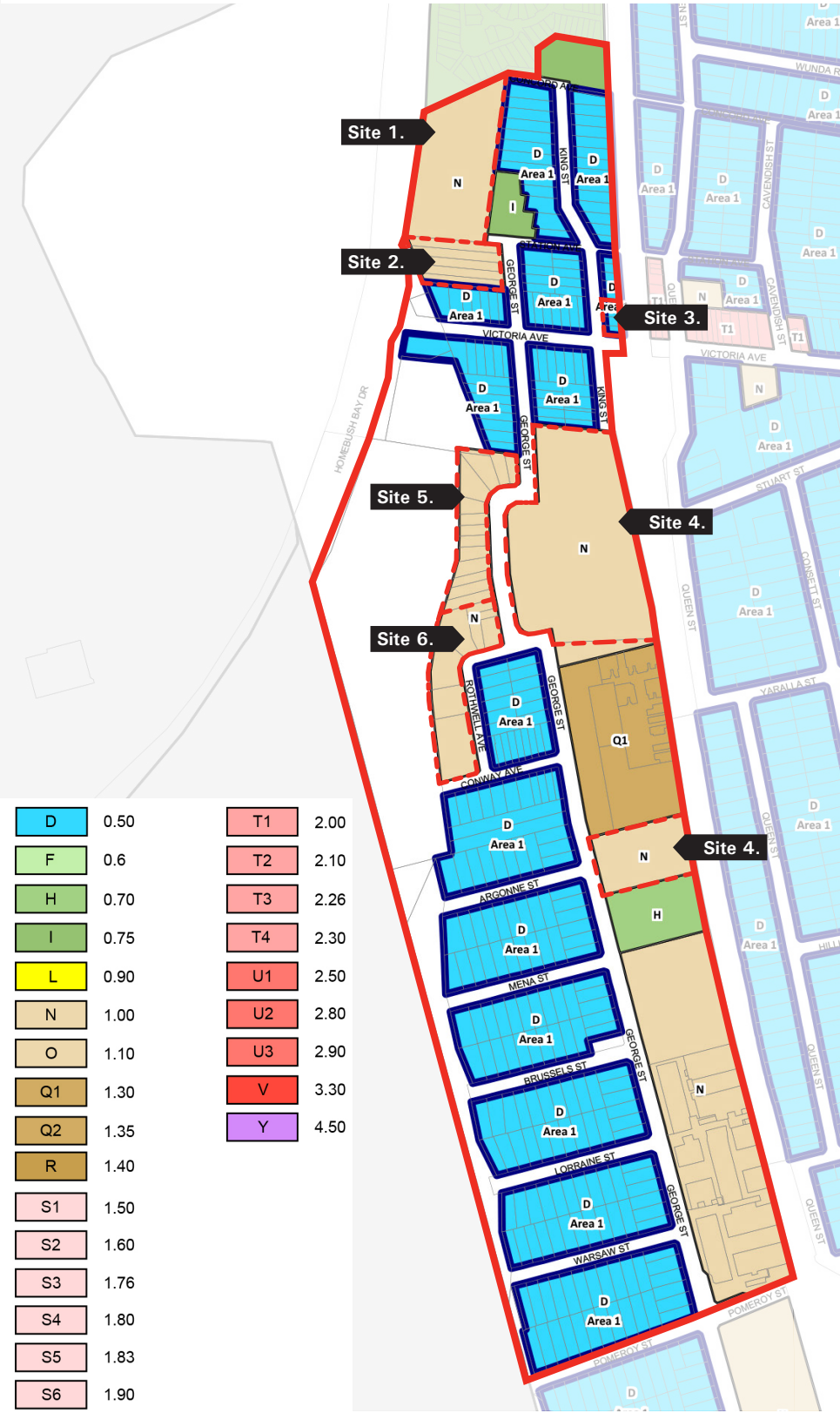
Height of Buildings

The study sites have a height control of 12m with the exception of Site 3 (5 King Street) which has a height control of 8.5m.



Floor Space Ratio (FSR)

The study sites have a 1:1 FSR with the exception of Site 3 (5 King Street) which has an FSR of 0.5:1.



Site Context

Key Observations:

- The land use split within the study area is approximately 25% medium density residential, 50% low density residential and 25% industrial
- The portion of the study area from Conway Avenue north seems more suitable for higher density due to smaller blocks of existing low scale residential, the mix of industrial sites and the proximity to the rail station
- The odd road geometry edging the Westpac Data Centre offer logical points for new street connections into the site if developed
- The physical area and geometry of the industrial sites pose challenges to the redevelopment of the sites

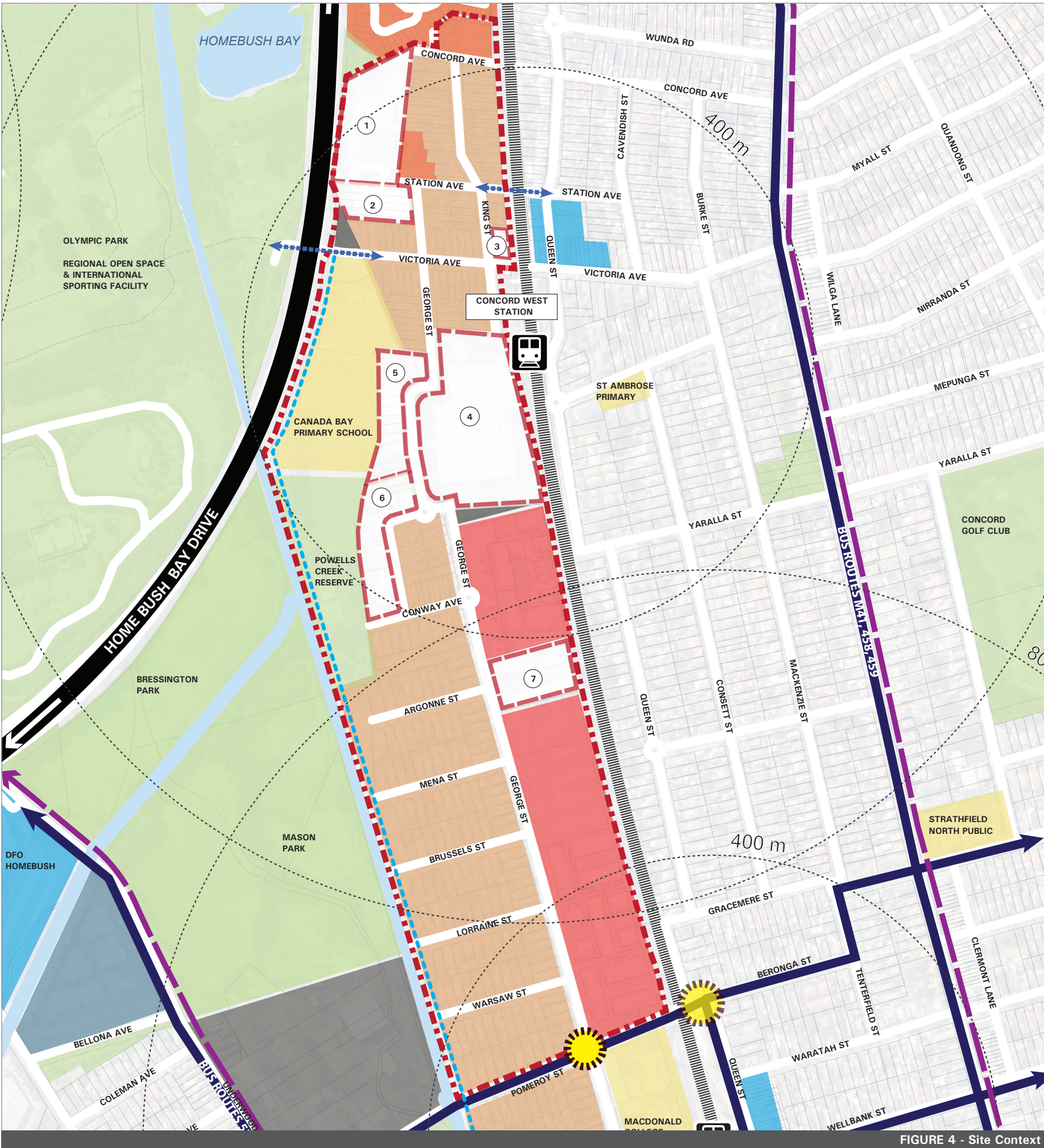
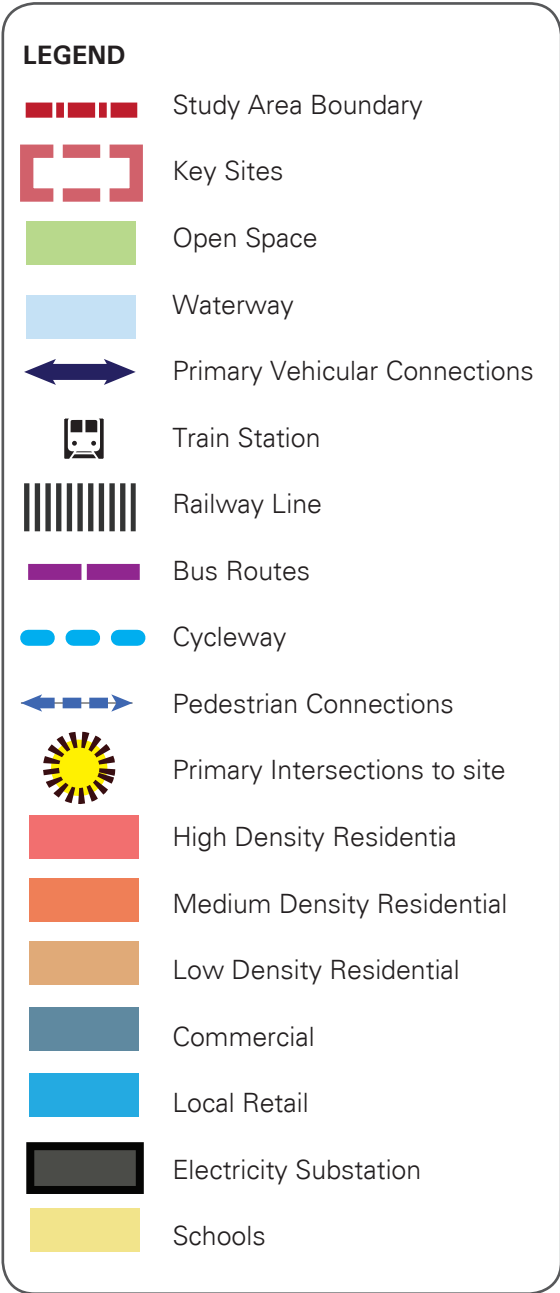
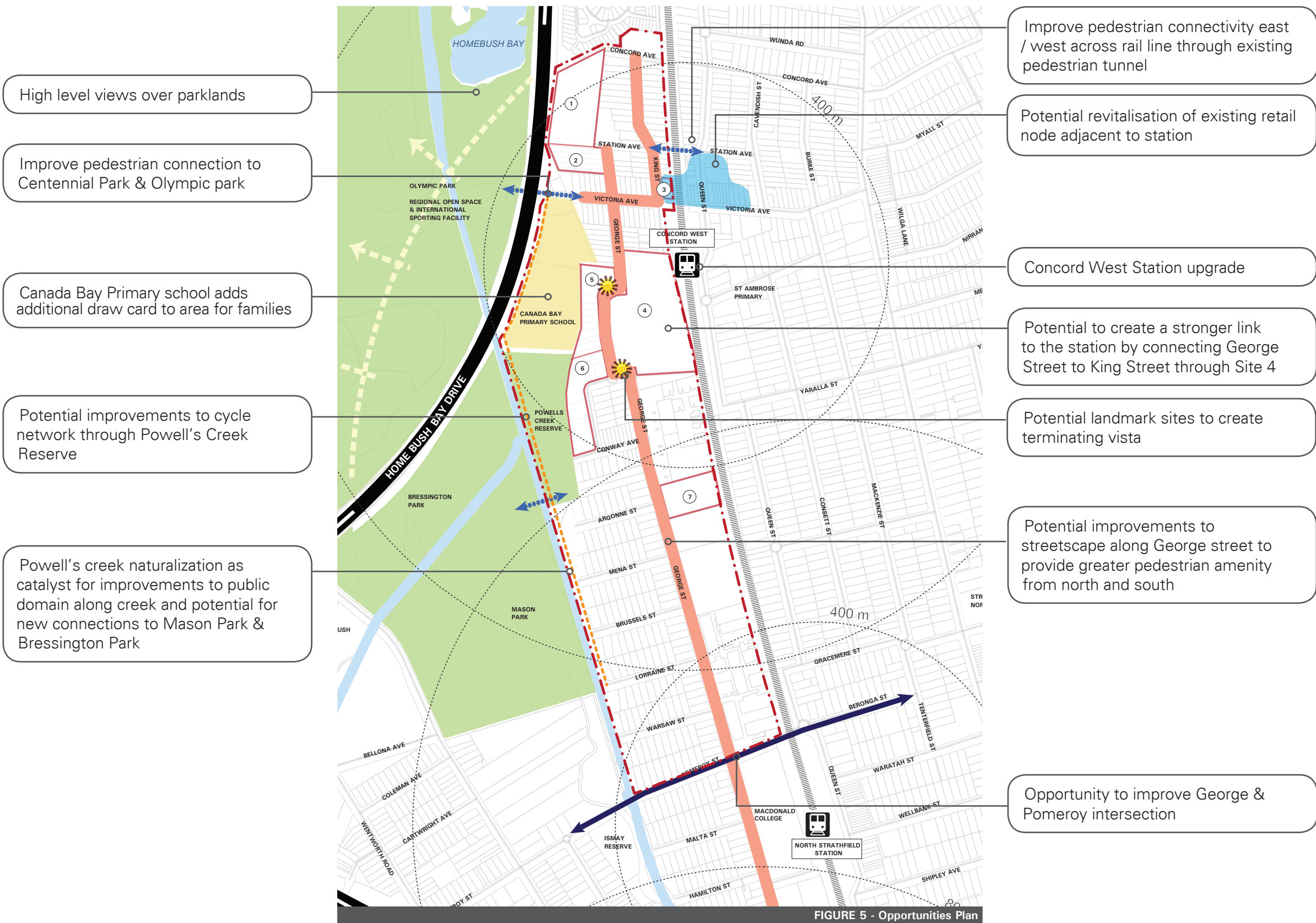


FIGURE 4 - Site Context

Opportunities

Key Opportunities:

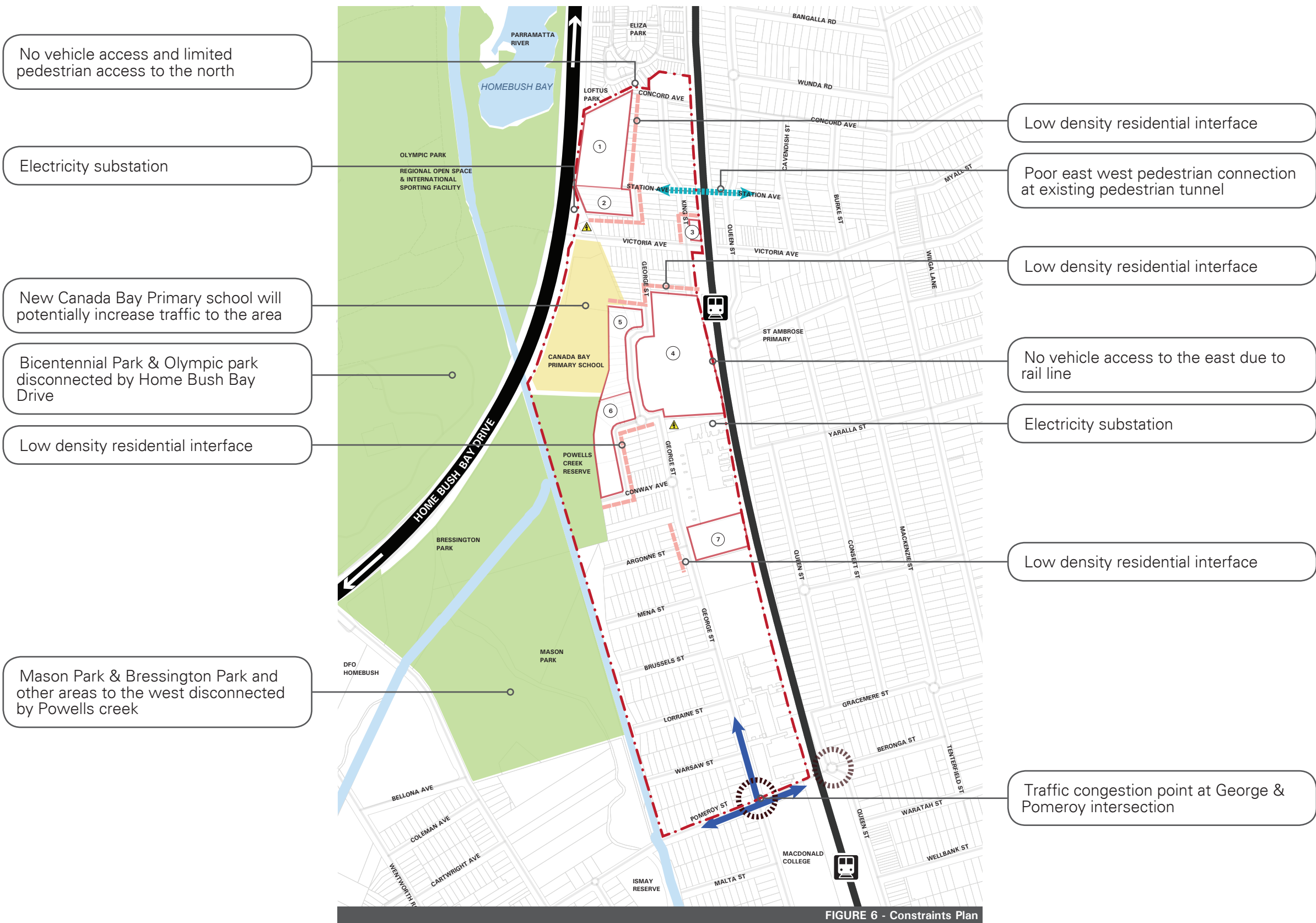
- **Proximity to Mass Transportation** – They study area is well serviced by the Concord West and North Strathfield train stations.
- **Recreation & Open Space** – The study area is adjacent to nationally significant parks, open space and recreational opportunities. Powell’s Creek Reserve within the study area offers both passive and active recreational opportunities including playing fields and tennis facilities.
- **Shopping & Entertainment** – The village of Concord West, shops on Concord Road, Rhodes shopping centre and the entertainment precinct of the Bakehouse Quarter offer a wide variety of shopping and entertainment opportunities.
- **Ownership** – The industrial sites are generally under single ownerships or partnerships. This will facilitate new development in a more efficient way.



Constraints

Key Constraints:

- **Disconnected Street Network** – The study area is disconnected from the surrounding street network funnelling all vehicular traffic through one intersection at George and Pomeroy Streets and reducing walkability.
- **No Change / Residential Interface** – The master plan is to assume the existing detached residential within the study area will not up zone in the future. The industrial sites are intermixed with existing 1-2 storey low scale residential dwellings creating difficult interface issues between low density and medium density building forms, especially in regards to solar access and privacy.
- **Poor connectivity & surveillance of existing open space** – The existing open space within the study area is not address by built form and have few pedestrian links which isolates Powell’s Creek Reserve from the neighbourhood and creates a safety issue.
- **Self Containment** – The study area lacks significant viable retail and commercial uses increasing car dependence and reducing walkability.
- **Flooding / Overland Flow Risk** – Areas of the study area are considered to be at risk of flooding and require investigation through the preparation of an area wide flood study.



Study Area Character

Land Use Types



Typical residential house



Strathview apartments on George street



Industrial uses mixed into the neighbourhood

Retail & Commercial



Ground floor convenience retail along George street



Concord West Village - Retail along Queen street



Bakehouse Quarter

Traffic & Transport



Concord West Station



Pomeroy & George Street intersection



George Street

Recreation & Public Open Space



Bicentennial & Olympic Park



Proposed playing fields at the Canada Bay Primary School



Powell's Creek Reserve tennis courts

Urban Design Study Methodology

The development of the master plan was conducted in an open and transparent way involving the local community, landowners and Council. The design process included inputs from the community and stakeholders as well as a detailed traffic analysis of the study area to develop sound development principles to manage the potential impacts on the local community and to determine the development capacity of each site.

The design process...

Site Analysis

Site by site investigation and analysis to determine the potential impacts to neighbouring properties & how each site could contribute in reconnecting the neighbourhood.



Engagement (Round 1)

Informed the local community and stakeholders of the project objectives and documented their issues and concerns to feed into the built form testing.



Built Form Testing

Development of the master plan principles, proposed new connections, tested 3D building envelopes and investigated solar access & privacy issues.



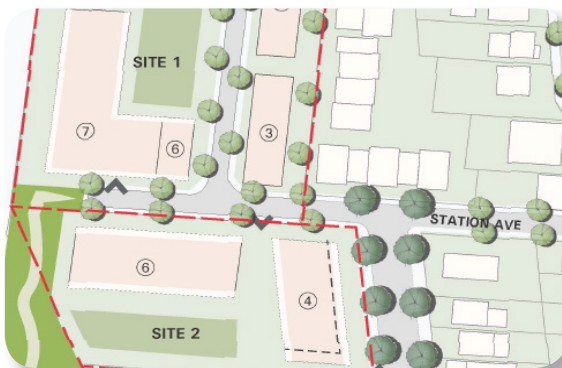
Engagement (Round 2)

Presented the draft master plan to the community and stakeholders. Feedback from both groups were used to refine the master plan and ensure concerns were addressed.



Master Plan

Revised the master plan based on the community and stakeholder feedback. The final plan, yield and controls were then developed to deliver the vision for the study area industrial sites.



Engagement Strategy

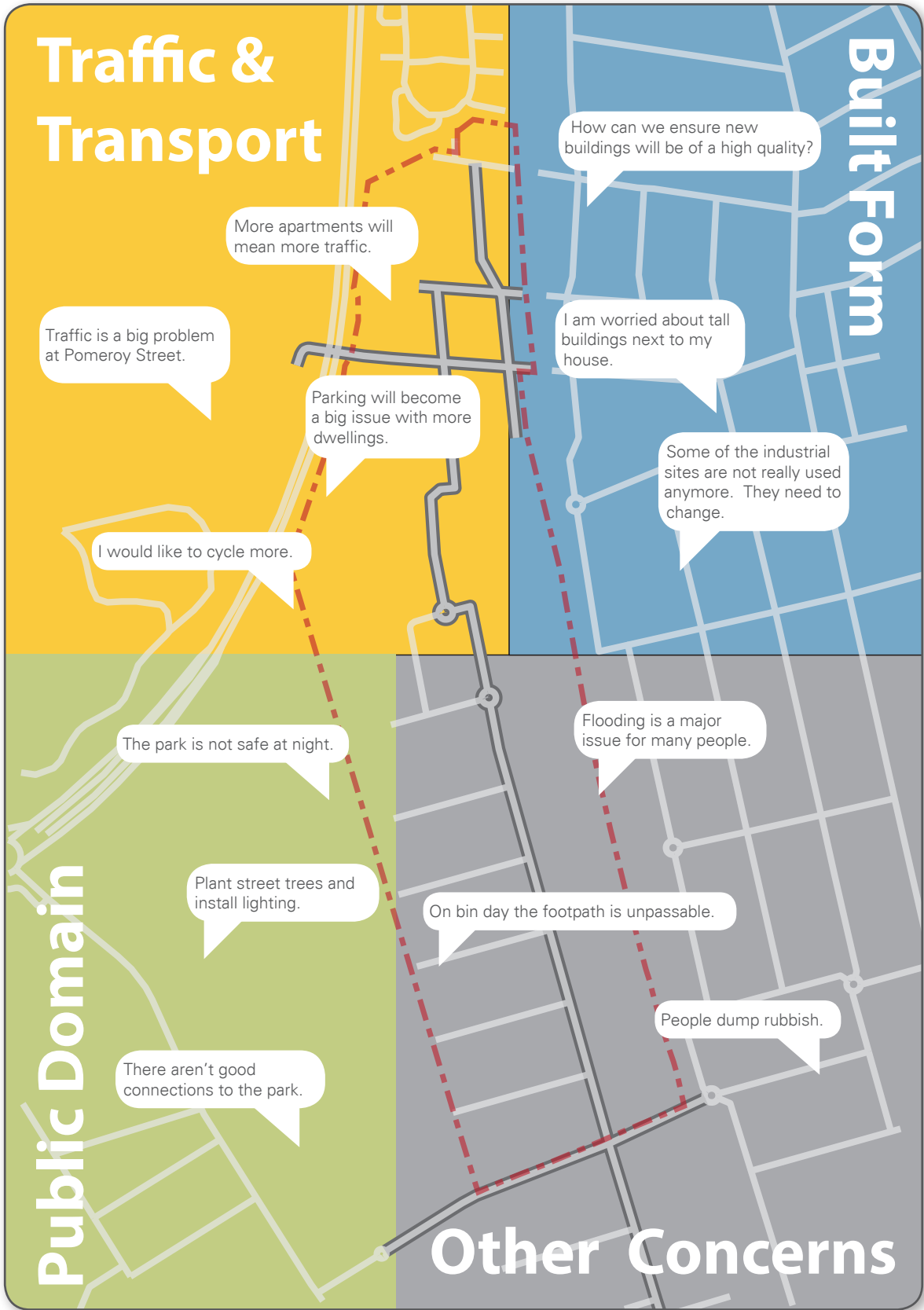
Throughout the master planning process local community and stakeholders' views, ideas and concerns about the future of the area have been woven into Concord West master plan and its outcomes. The engagement task set out to inform and consult with neighbours, stakeholders, local businesses, workers and other groups through workshops and online discussions as well as provide updates on the master plan as it evolved.

Methodology

The engagement strategy was designed with the following principles in mind:

- Ensure there is broad awareness of the project so that the community and stakeholders know that the Plan is being prepared and how to provide informed feedback.
- Motivate community and stakeholders engage.
- Use local and social media to achieve this and to keep the community informed of progress.
- Build broad community and stakeholder support for the project outcomes.
- Keep all information as concise and in plain English as possible without compromising integrity.
- Provide communication formats and channels suitable to the widest range of people.
- Make information available in a timely manner.
- Ensure feedback from stakeholders flows through to the master plan during development and future implementation.

Overall, we reached out to approximately 9860 community members and received 177 individual pieces of feedback



Identifying the Community

The following groups were targeted for involvement in the master planning process:

- Local residents within the study area including property owners and tenants, schools, local business owners and operators as well as the wider community.
- Landowners of the seven industrial sites in Concord West.
- City of Canada Bay Councillors.

Getting the Word Out

Work to reach out to the community started in November 2013 and continued until April 2014 as the plan developed. Messaging to spark and then continue conversations over the six month period included the following activities:

- Post card delivery to 1600 homes in the study area.
- Post card sharing with 400 passengers at Concord West railway station.
- Social media notices across Council's Facebook, Twitter and e-news channels.
- Two stakeholder workshops with landowners to gather feedback for the master plan.
- Two initial community workshops to gather feedback in three topic areas: built form, open space, traffic and transport.
- Follow up community workshop to present the final draft master plan for further feedback.
- Develop a microsite with information on the study area, team contact details, relevant web links, video of a community workshop and an online discussion space. The site received over 3500 views between Nov 2013 and April 2014.
- Articles within the Inner West Courier Mayoral column in Nov 2013, Jan 2014 and March 2014.

Concerns Addressed in the Master Plan

The master plan evolved with consideration of the concerns and ideas raised around four main categories being Built Form, Traffic and Transport, Public Domain and Other Concerns. As a result of the engagement work the master plan outlines the following possible solutions:

- Green connections through sites to open spaces and public transport.
- A mix of building heights stepped back from neighbouring homes.
- Controls to ensure future buildings respond to the local area context.
- Initiatives to promote walking, cycling and public transport use and discourage car use.
- Public domain initiatives and improvements including street trees, lighting and footpaths.
- Other concerns for Council to investigate further such as a resident parking scheme.



Traffic & Transport - Analysis

Background

From a transport perspective, the study area represents a relatively unique situation, with the neighbourhood area bordered by the railway line to the east, Homebush Bay Drive to the west and the Liberty Grove development to the north. As a result, all vehicle access to the study area is provided via George Street to the south. This “funnel” effect results in periods of congestion (including increased delays and queuing) at the George Street/ Pomeroy Street intersection.

The study area has good public transport accessibility with the Concord West Railway Station located within a short walking distance of the majority of the study area. The frequent rail services are complemented by bus services that operate along Concord Road to the east of the site. In addition the study area is well positioned in relation to the regional bicycle network.

Recently, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure approved the construction of a new primary school facility within the study area. The new school will generate additional traffic onto the surrounding road network and further increase congestion at the George Street/ Pomeroy Street intersection. In order to mitigate the impact of the additional traffic generated by the school, a new left turn slip lane is to be constructed at the George Street/ Pomeroy Street intersection. These works will increase the overall capacity at the intersection.

Assessment

A sensitivity assessment was undertaken by GTA Consultants using SIDRA INTERSECTION modelling software to determine the level of additional traffic from the study area that could be accommodated at the intersection without compromising its operation. The intersection capacity assessment was based on a number of traffic and road network assumptions agreed with the City of Canada Bay Council prior to the assessment and detailed within the GTA transport report.

Assumptions

In order to undertake this sensitivity assessment, residential traffic generation rates were sourced from relevant RMS guidance (i.e. 0.29 peak hour movements per dwelling). Application of this traffic generation rate indicated that the George Street/ Pomeroy Street intersection was capable of accommodating the additional traffic generated by some 785 dwellings within the rezoned lands. Should the Westpac Data Centre also be developed (noting that it does not form part of the study area for this site), the peak hour traffic associated with some 1,430 additional dwellings (i.e. 645 further dwellings) could be accommodated within the rezoned lands. Table E1 provides an overview of the anticipated future traffic volumes on George Street following the rezoning of the industrial lands.

Results

The table indicates that ultimate traffic volumes on George Street are anticipated to increase by approximately 630 and 280 vehicles during the AM and PM peak periods. During the AM peak hour the additional traffic generated by the rezoned lands represents 43% of the additional George Street traffic volumes, with the primary school accounting for 57% of the additional traffic. The primary school is not anticipated to generate any significant additional traffic during the road network PM peak hour.

The modelling indicates that, following full development, the intersection is anticipated to operate at a comparable level of service to its current operation, with typically manageable queues and delays on all approaches.

An overall development yield higher than indicated above would likely require additional mitigating works at the George Street/ Pomeroy Street intersection. Any such works would require land acquisition and significant associated property impacts. The provision of additional vehicle access points into and out of the study area was considered as part of the assessment, however, it was concluded that the cost associated with any potential future access points would be prohibitive.

Broader road network considerations are discussed further within the GTA report.

TABLE E1 - Future George Street Traffic Volumes (North of Pomeroy)		
Traffic Source	Vehicles Per Hour	
	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Existing Traffic Volumes	730	780
Primary School	+356	[1]
Rezoned Lands (ex Westpac Site)	+228	+228
Total	1314	1008

[1] The afternoon peak will occur outside the road network peak hour

