

ATTACHMENT A

**THE CULTURAL RIBBON DRAFT
STRATEGY – SYDNEY HARBOUR'S
NATURE AND CULTURE WALK (WITH
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS)**



Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk*

The Cultural Ribbon Draft Strategy



The Cultural Ribbon will support the City's identity with a Sydney harbourside cultural walking trail. Sydney will continue to offer internationally recognised, unique cultural experiences.

Sustainable Sydney 2030

Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk*

The Cultural Ribbon Draft Strategy

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Text updates / amendments,
deletion in red and
underlined

01

Executive Summary

The Cultural Ribbon is Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk* (working title) along the harbour foreshore from Darling Harbour to Woolloomooloo. It is a 9km walk within the greater 17km harbour foreshore walk articulated in the Liveable Green Network from Rozelle Bay to Rushcutters Bay. It takes in a number of Sydney's cultural institutions and engages with five harbour bays, four harbour peninsulas, and five harbour-side parks.

It takes walkers through a series of different spatial and natural experiences, while engaging with some of the city's foremost cultural attractions. The project involves strengthening the harbourside foreshore walking and recreational cycling route through public domain improvements, as well as strategies to engage walkers with the cultural and natural assets they encounter along the walk.

Principles

The Cultural Ribbon Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk* is;

About the cultural destinations and landscapes as much as it is about the paths and spaces in between

Anchored by moments of storytelling and interpretation including Eora Journey and Sydney's maritime history

A layered experience made up of various components that tell a bigger picture story

It is accessible for all and a great experience every day and night

Supported by investment by the public and private sector that enhances the experience

Directions

01 Connections

Improve the physical amenity of the walk for pedestrians to make it more attractive, accessible and safer for people to explore on foot during the day and at night

Improve the legibility of the walk, including enhanced wayfinding

Improve conditions and amenities for recreational cycling along the route

Enhance the experience of nature along the foreshore

02 Imagination

Bring to the public domain a layer of story-telling and interpretation with contemporary interpretation tools, digital media and smart technology as an aid

Invigorate the paths and spaces 'in-between' – make creativity / innovation more visible

03 Identity

To build public recognition of the foreshore route as a destination in its own right

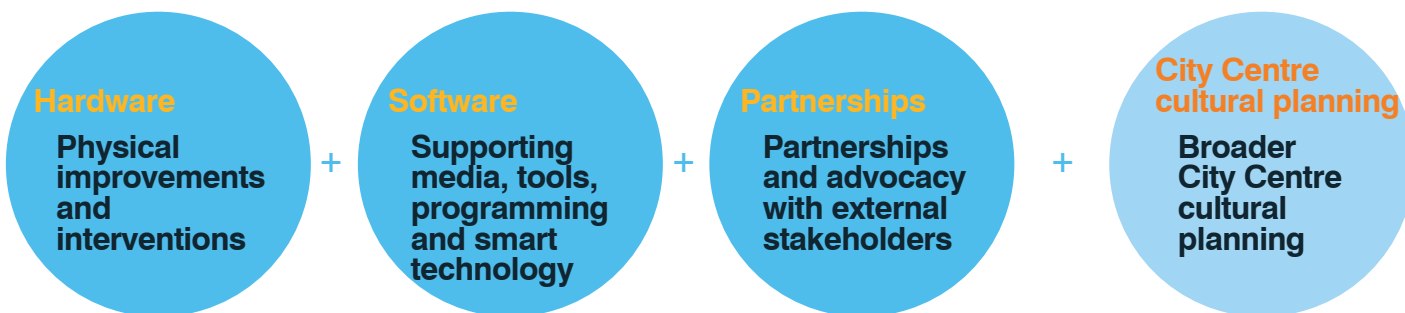
Recognise, retain and where appropriate reinforce the existing character and identity of each section of the walk

Key actions

The key actions proposed are multi-pronged and can be categorised under Hardware, Software and Partnerships. Many of the actions have the potential to help achieve more than one of the directions. Priority projects have been identified to deliver on these actions. (pg 40)

City Centre cultural planning

Apart from actions that are associated with implementing Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk*, a number of actions related to broader City Centre cultural planning have been identified following extensive stakeholder consultation.



#	Key Actions	Strategy Directions		
		Connectivity	Imagination	Identity
Hardware				
1	Improve wayfinding to and along the route	•		•
2	Improve pedestrian amenity and accessibility	•		•
3	Improve the experience of nature on the foreshore	•	•	•
4	Develop creative lighting masterplan for the foreshore and improve safety along the route	•		•
5	Improve cycling amenity along the route	•		
6	Develop interpretative infrastructure for the walk	•	•	•
Software				
7	Develop Sydney Harbour's <i>nature culture walk</i> (working title)		•	•
8	Develop contemporary interpretative tool , digital media / smart technology to support and promote the walk		•	•
Partnerships				
9	Establish memorandum of understanding(s) with key agencies for a unified vision for the walk	•	•	•
10	Investigate partnership opportunities to deliver public domain improvements	•		•
11	Investigate opportunities to better support business and cultural activation along the route		•	•
City Centre Cultural Precinct Planning				
12	Investigate the development of cultural walk(s) that link other cultural organisations in the city			
13	Investigate opportunities to work with cultural organisations to improve connectivity and joint programming as part of City Centre cultural precinct planning			

02

Introduction

The Cultural Ribbon was identified as one of ten project ideas in Sustainable Sydney 2030. It was described as a walking trail that linked a selection of cultural venues and destinations along the harbour's edge, also looping south into the city proper to include a number of additional institutions. While signage and historical information were proposed as the main tools to build the walk, the Cultural Ribbon was intended as more than an exercise in wayfinding and interpretation. It was also seen as an opportunity to "boost Sydney's image as a cultural city," a means of "building participation in Sydney cultural institutions" and to "encourage sustainable recreational activities." More ambitiously, the Cultural Ribbon was about "reinforcing equity, connectedness and social well-being."

As presented in Sustainable Sydney 2030, the Cultural Ribbon was a hybrid of ideas: a gesture to a long-standing campaign to ensure the foreshores of Sydney Harbour were available for the recreational enjoyment of all but also a project that was not limited to the harbour edge; a signposted path to facilitate visitation to major cultural destinations but equally a hope that the walk would become a destination in itself; a project to build greater awareness and participation in the creative life of the city.

This strategy teases apart the complex issues that the Cultural Ribbon was said to address, suggesting clearer domains of action. It aims to reconnect the city to the water and create an experience of the harbour that is varied, human in scale, exhilarating and educative. This project meets the original objectives of the Cultural Ribbon idea, but also reinforces other key 2030 projects such as Liveable Green Network and the Eora Journey.

International case-studies accompany the analysis in this study to suggest the different ways identified problems can be addressed. A number of specific actions and

interventions addressing the issues of connectivity, imagination and identity in the public domain for the harbour foreshore project with benefits to the broader cultural life in Sydney are proposed for implementation.

Objectives of this strategy

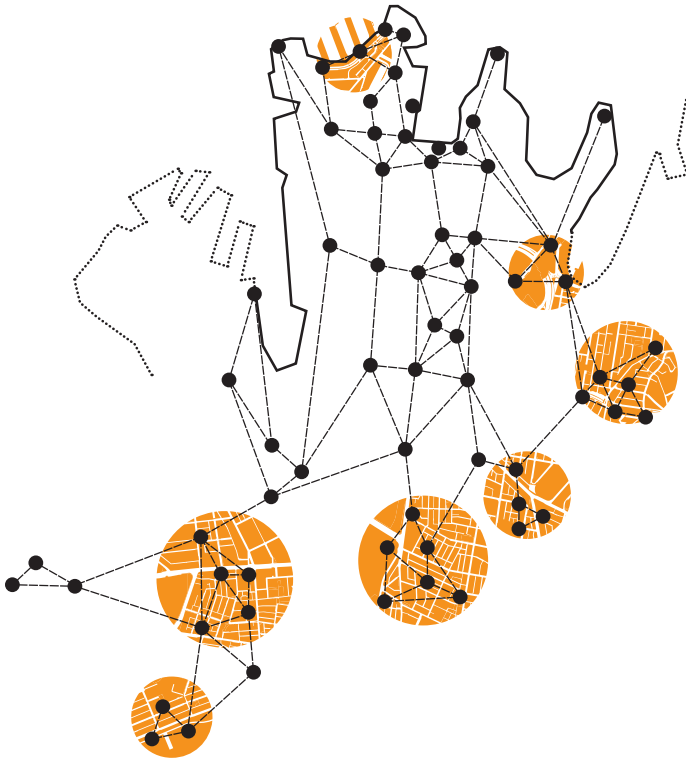
Analyse the Cultural Ribbon as it was sketched out as a project idea in Sustainable Sydney 2030

Examine the utility of the original concept in the light of recent policy work, input from internal and external stakeholders, as well as other development projects currently in train

Redefine the Cultural Ribbon idea and provide a strategy to advance the project

Illustrate aspects of the strategy through case studies from around the world

Identify a series of possible actions for the City of Sydney across the range of policy, programs and projects



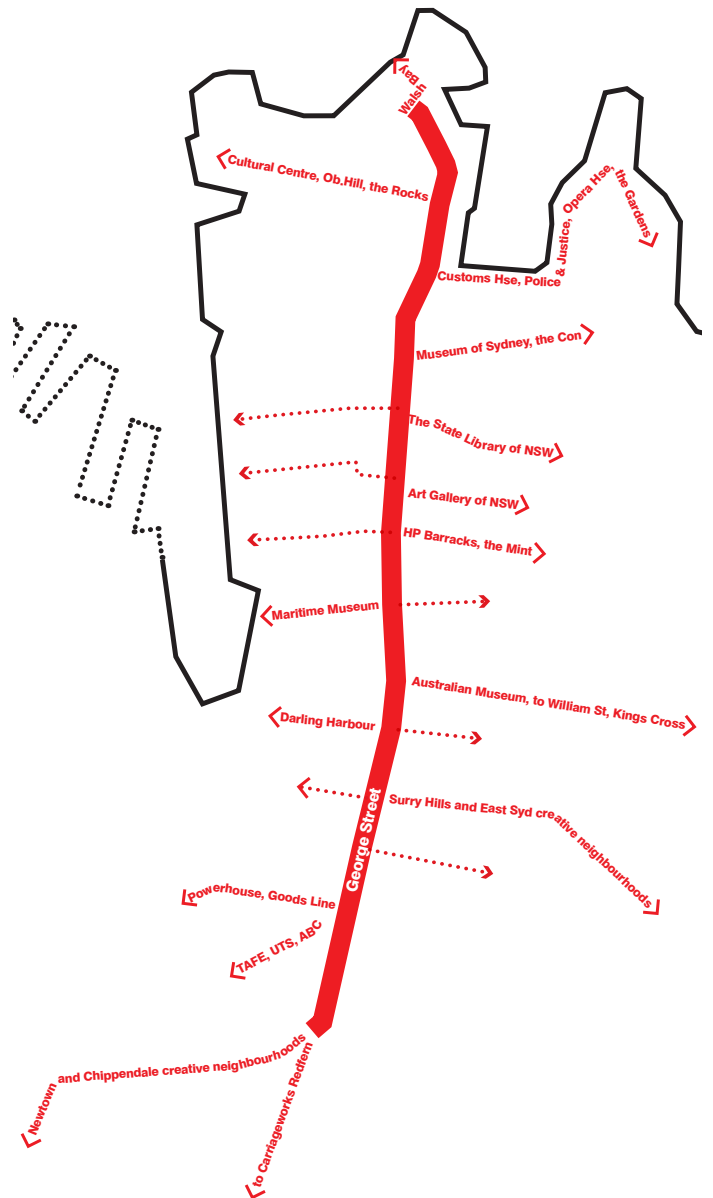
Greater cultural network

In its preliminary form, the Cultural Ribbon included a detour loop from the foreshore to include a short-list of cultural destinations in the city, many of which lay along Macquarie Street. In redefining the Cultural Ribbon as a foreshore walk, this gesture to rest of the city is not lost. Rather, cultural destinations that are both large and small, well-known and emerging, will be considered in a separate study that considers how the City can better support these organisations and make cultural activities more evident in the public domain.

The real picture of creativity in Sydney is one of a rich dispersal of cultural locations and the City itself is a "cultural precinct". The cultural "fine grain" of medium and small scale venues, of artist-run and commercial galleries, smaller theatres and playhouses, libraries, clubs and cultural centres cannot be captured in a single line. It is therefore important to identify and analyse this more expansive network of large, medium and small scale cultural venues to formulate projects and programs to strengthen the sense of a network of distinctive but connected creative neighbourhoods.

City Centre cultural planning

Further work is in progress on broader City Centre cultural precinct planning, this work is required to be undertaken with the NSW State government, Arts NSW, Infrastructure NSW and arts and cultural institutions. Discussions are underway with Infrastructure NSW to commence this dialogue as part of the State's forthcoming Cultural Infrastructure Plan. This dialogue will inform further actions that the City will take to support cultural activities throughout the city, outside of the geographical extent of the proposed *nature and culture walk*.



Finding culture

As major infrastructure and development projects in the city come to fruition, the status of George Street as the backbone of the city is strengthened. Just as the physical edge of the foreshore has inherent wayfinding advantages, George Street presents itself as a means of orientating people better to the rich dispersal of cultural locations in the City of Sydney.

George Street, the city's major transport and wayfinding spine and its honorific core, becomes a key element for navigating this network of creative and cultural destinations. Through improved wayfinding and cultural activation, George Street will become a means to discovering and exploring more fully the cultural landscape of the city. Special attention is being given to how George Street can function as a wayfinding spine for cultural destinations in the city. Similarly, the City is currently preparing for the realisation of major public artworks along George Street as part of the transformation of the street with light rail.

03

The Opportunity

The time is now ripe to imagine the harbour foreshore as a continuous experience—a destination in its own right, worthy of a unified plan.

The restoration of the western edge of the City Centre through the Barangaroo project will make the stretch of foreshore connecting Woolloomooloo to Darling Harbour accessible for the first time in living memory.

Through circumstance rather than design, but in no small part due to the transformation of Sydney in its post-maritime period, a collection of the city's most significant cultural institutions can be found in a sequence of spectacular locations along this route. From the [Australian Maritime Museum](#) to Woolloomooloo with the Circular Quay and Customs House marking a midpoint, this stretch of foreshore is home to Sydney's pre-eminent theatres of drama and dance and its most visited art galleries and museums.

The recently completed Cutaway at Barangaroo is a flexible venue with the potential to host cultural events from art exhibitions to music performances, other cultural uses are set to follow in the central section of the development. Further strengthening the status of Walsh Bay as creative hub, work is now underway for a detailed State Significant Development Application on the transformation of Pier 2/3 and Wharf 4/5 with construction anticipated to begin in 2017. In addition, the existing cultural institutions such as Art Gallery NSW ([The Sydney Modern Project](#)) and the Opera House have major plans for extensions and upgrades.

The experience of the Sydney harbour foreshore is equally shaped by the spectacular experience of the harbour. The foreshore route from [Australian Maritime Museum](#) to Woolloomooloo seeks to capitalise upon this confluence of natural and cultural assets.

~~The Cultural Ribbon project~~ *Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk* seeks to build public awareness of a topographically defined entity that is markedly different to the readily identifiable cultural precincts of other major international cities. The harbourside walk as a confluence of nature and culture and is an experience singular to Sydney.

With the vast majority of the foreshore walk already in

existence, or soon to be completed, opportunities for the City revolve around leadership, overview and facilitation. Working with other authorities, ~~the Cultural Ribbon~~ *the implementation of Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk* will involve a suite of interrelated projects that aim to strengthen the legibility of the route, identify and build upon the different experiential qualities of the walk, and promote it as a unique destination. There is opportunity to improve the public domain, to strengthen a sense of connection; reinforce the identity of the route as an experience unique to Sydney; introduce activation strategies that will bring imagination and creativity out of the buildings and into public spaces and places along the harbour.

An unprecedented level of public and private development is currently taking place along the route. The City of Sydney is uniquely placed to take an overarching view of these developments, as a first step using the consultation and planning processes to achieving the goals of the *Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk*. In addition, the City is able to independently instigate a number of more focused projects to build public awareness and bring activation to the foreshore. Although promotion of the foreshore walk forms part of this project, it is important that the promotion of ~~the Cultural Ribbon~~ *Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk* is more than a branding exercise. Strengthening the experiential aspects of the journey is what will make the

04 Background



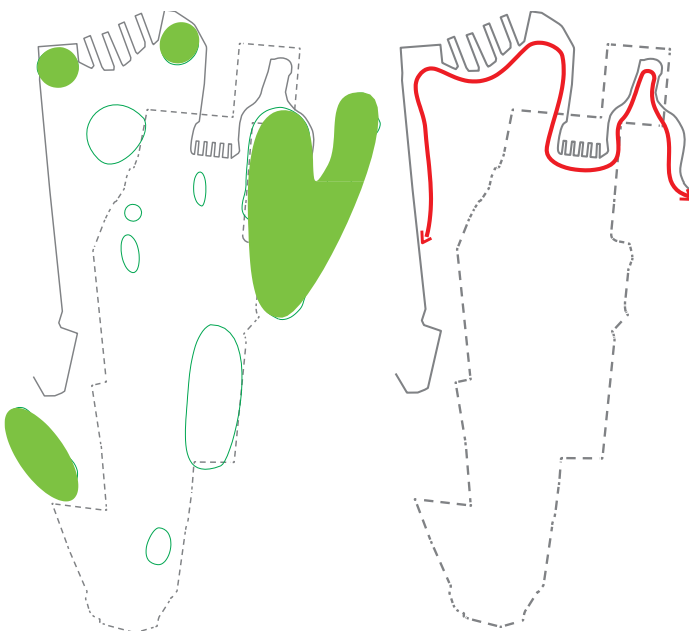
Sustainable Sydney 2030 The Vision (2008)

When asked during the consultation for Sustainable Sydney 2030 “What kind of city do you want Sydney to be in 2030?”, the community responded that they envisaged a walkable city, with ribbons of green between its parks and villages, and public access to the harbour edge. Aspirations for Sydney were not limited to the physical environment, but extended to calls for a city enlivened by creativity, where diverse traditions were celebrated—a city where the arts and artists were supported.

The term “Cultural Ribbon” was coined at one of the key 2030 consultation forums by the actor and former co-director of the Sydney Theatre Company Cate Blanchett. In an effort to address wayfinding issues, the Cultural Ribbon was proposed as a identified walking route between the theatres in Walsh Bay to the Museum of Contemporary Arts and Opera House. Importantly, the Cultural Ribbon was also discussed figuratively, as a physical representation of an alliance of organizations and institutions, and a means of bringing the city’s cultural community together to work on issues of common concern.

The Cultural Ribbon was subsequently identified as one of “ten key project ideas” in Sustainable Sydney 2030. As described in that document, the Cultural Ribbon had three-fold purpose, being:

- a walking trail linking Sydney’s leading cultural landmarks along the harbour’s edge;
- to provide better information and interpretation of Sydney’s rich history and culture for visitors and tourists;
- a means to strengthen and support the cultural life of the city and help boost Sydney as a cultural destination.



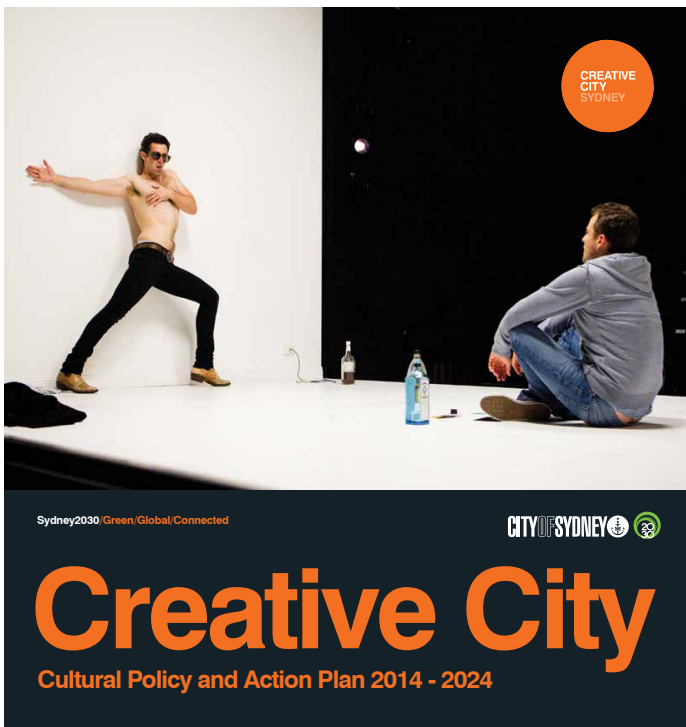
Public Spaces Public Life Study 2007
Gehl

Sydney - A unique waterfront city

The development of a harbour foreshore walk supporting a range of different experiences along its length was a key recommendation of the Sydney: Public Spaces, Public Life report, produced by Gehl Architects in 2007. As well as a means of reintegrating Darling Harbour and Barangaroo back into the fabric of the city, a foreshore walk would allow people to “celebrate Sydney as a unique waterfront city.”

The City’s Liveable Green Network (2011) also recognises the importance of access to the foreshore - TARGET 9: By 2030, every resident in the City of Sydney will be within a three minute walk (250m) of continuous green links that connect to the Harbour Foreshore, Harbour Parklands, Moore or Centennial or Sydney Parks.

Strategy context

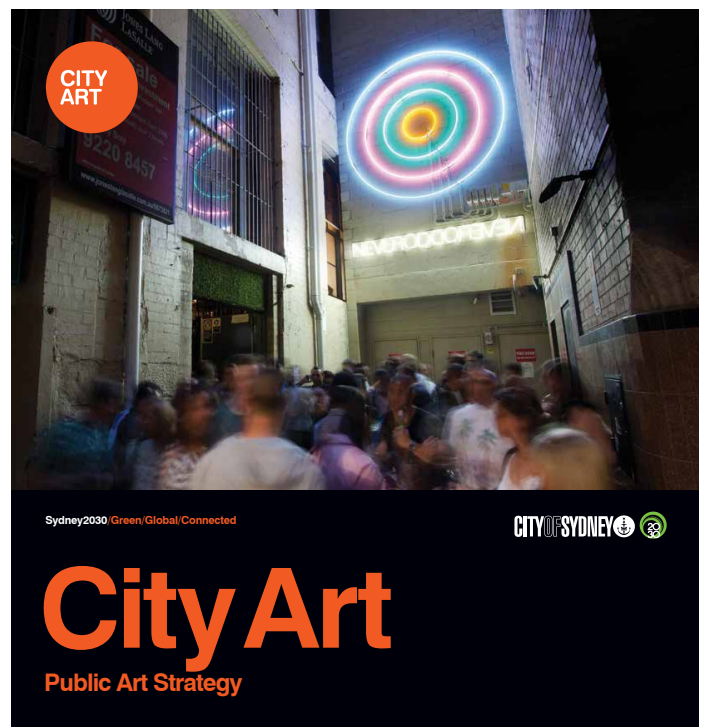


Creative City

The City's Creative City, Cultural Policy and Action Plan has been developed with the following vision statements;

1. Creativity in Sydney is visible
2. Innovation is central to Sydney's creative community
3. Sydney takes pride in its Aboriginal history, culture and its contemporary expression
4. Cultural experiences and creative opportunities are valued and accessible
5. Sydney's diversity is prized and promoted
6. Sydney welcomes bold ideas, new visions and unexpected connections
7. Curiosity is encouraged and opportunities for discovery are everywhere

Council endorsed the cultural policy in August 2014, it presents a 10-year action plan for boosting the cultural lives of our residents, workers and visitors. The Cultural Ribbon was identified as a key initiative that would help deliver on the strategic priority of developing precinct distinctiveness and creativity in the public domain.

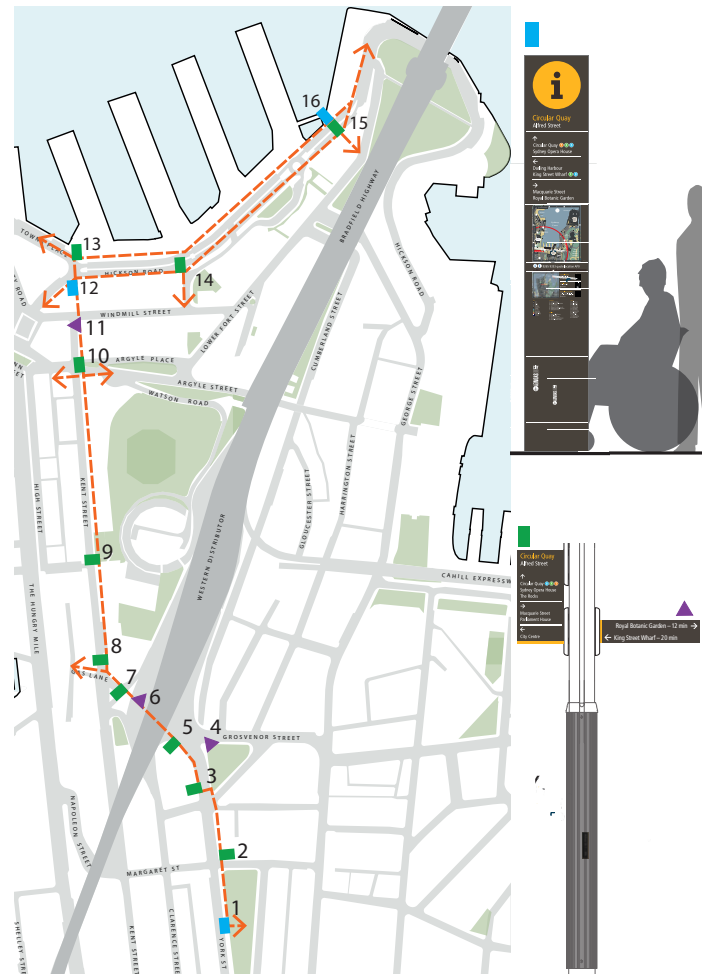


City Art

The Public Art Strategy aims to embed public art into the fabric of the city to reflect Sydney's unique history, its diverse communities, its creativity, its innovation and its energy. Providing opportunities for everyone to participate, including artists with a disability, it aims to create experiences that are universally accessible to all people. The Public Art Strategy recognises the City's reputation for delivering high quality public domain and architectural projects and intends to compliment the capital works program with high quality public art undergirded by 8 principles;

1. Align significant City Art projects with major Sustainable Sydney 2030 urban design projects
2. Recognise and celebrate Aboriginal stories and heritage in public spaces
3. Support local artists and activate places by using temporary art projects
4. Support vibrant places in village centres with community art and City Art projects
5. Promote high quality public art in new development

The Cultural Ribbon Strategy



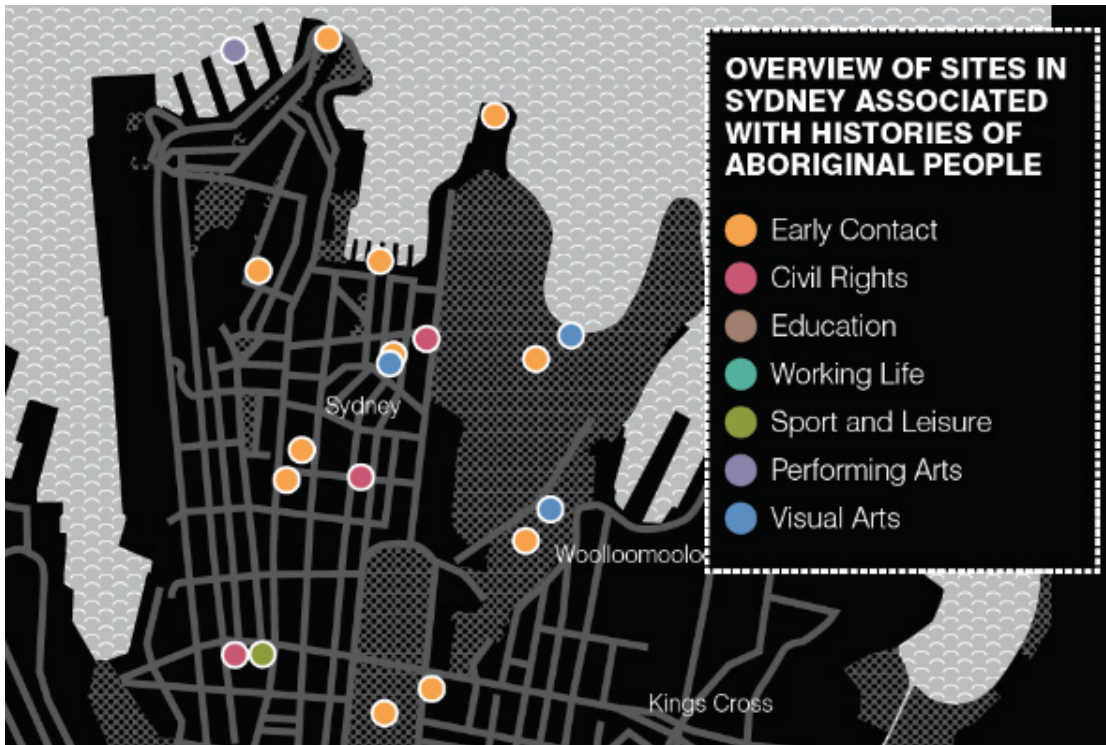
Legible Sydney

6. Support stakeholder and government partners to facilitate public art opportunities
7. Manage and maintain the City's collection of permanent artworks, monuments and memorials
8. Initiate and implement programs to communicate, educate and engage the public about City Art

The Cultural Ribbon was identified as a project that will deliver on a number of principles of the Plan with an emphasis on the partnership with arts and cultural institutions and other agencies.

The City has developed Legible Sydney - Pedestrian Wayfinding Strategy and Design manual to provide a clear and coordinated framework for pedestrian wayfinding signage. This forms the basis of the Signage Code which is one of the City's Public Domain Codes that set out objectives and guidelines that ensure the City's public domain is delivered in a coherent and coordinated way. The strategy and manual aim to ensure signage is consistent to help people get to their desired destination and improve city legibility.

Two pilot projects were installed in October 2014. Pilot route 1 (above): From Wynyard Park to Walsh Bay along York and Kent streets via the Kent Street underpass to test pylon, flag and finger sign elements. The City is now in the process of rolling out the new signage system, including Braille and tactile signage across the LGA. The City is also working with other agencies and proponents such as State Properties for Circular Quay and Darling Harbour, to adopt this new system to enable the delivery of clear and consistent wayfinding information to encourage people to walk more, and to ensure that visitors can confidently find their way around the city across different jurisdictions.



Except from Barani/ Barrabugu map

Eora Journey: Recognition in the Public Domain

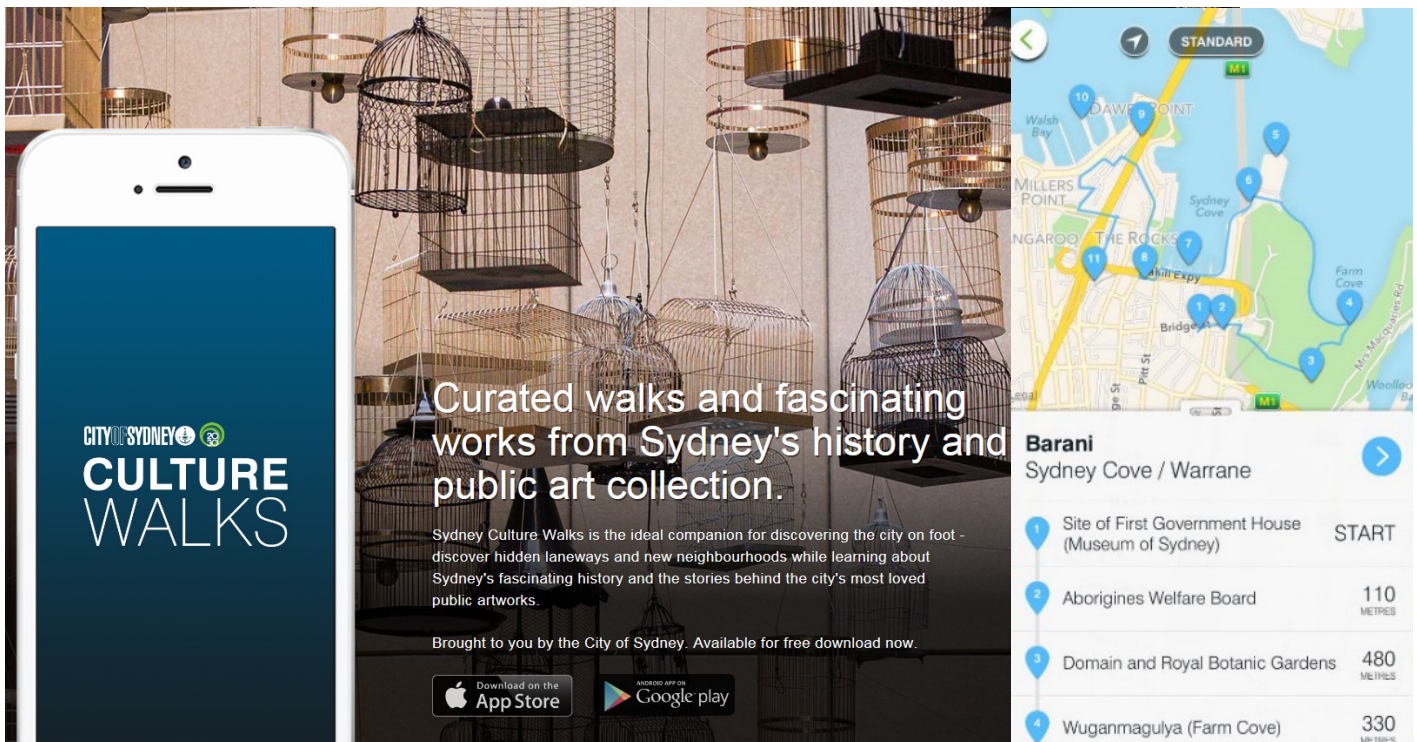
The Eora Journey is one of the key projects envisioned in Sustainable Sydney 2030 to recognise the ongoing significance and vitality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture to the City of Sydney. It was a response to the strong call from the Indigenous community and broader community to celebrate and share the story of the world's oldest living culture through our city's public spaces. It is our commitment to achieving better recognition for the First Peoples of Australia. It includes four elements: Recognition in the Public Domain; a significant event; an economic development plan; and a knowledge and cultural centre.

In 2012, Council endorsed seven project concepts recommended by the International Review of Contemporary Interpretation Practice (Hetti Perkins and Julie Cracknell for City of Sydney). Several of these projects could occur in the area of the Cultural Ribbon:

- **Monument for Eora** a major 'flagship' public artwork to honour the Eora Nation in the City/ Harbour environs. This project proposes to be an indelible expression of Aboriginal culture and would serve as symbol of the enduring importance and significance of Aboriginal heritage to all Sydney-siders for generations to come;

- **Harbour Walk (Audio Tour)** this innovative project idea would use fragments of existing audio sources and recreations to produce a narrated audio tour of the historical precinct of the harbour's edge, following the Cultural Ribbon, with reference to sites of Aboriginal significance. The work could be delivered through smart phones via the internet or by audio devices made available from venues along the Cultural Ribbon;
- **Eora Journey Walking Trail** (Harbour to Redfern) – this project is envisaged as a landscaped walking trail linking Sydney Harbour to the Australian Museum, then along Elizabeth Street from Hyde Park and on through Prince Alfred Park to Redfern, interpreting the Aboriginal history of Sydney from the site of first contact at Sydney Harbour to Redfern.

The Barani Barrabugu (Yesterday/Tomorrow) project, also part of the Eora Journey, has mapped sites in Sydney associated with histories of Aboriginal people. Several of these sites are located along ~~the Cultural Ribbon~~ **the harbourside** and should be considered in the development of ~~the Cultural Ribbon~~ **Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk**. ~~The Cultural Ribbon~~ **Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk** should contribute to Eora Journey: Recognition in the Public Domain.



Sydney Culture Walks

The Sydney Culture Walks is a free app developed by the City that contains curated walks to explore the city by foot, telling the history and story behind the place, significant artworks, monuments and buildings. It currently houses 10 historical and 4 public art curated walks with over 400 points of interest. One of the tours in the app titled Barani – Sydney Cove / Warrane, explores the sites of cultural significance and artistic expression as well as places where some of the earliest interactions occurred between Aboriginal People and the British. Much of this walk falls on [the Cultural Ribbon–Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk](#) and presents an opportunity to either expand (and build on) this walk or for a new walk to be developed.

Cultural Ribbon Foreshore Histories Project

The Cultural Ribbon Foreshore Histories Project is a collaboration between the Dictionary of Sydney and the City of Sydney. "The Dictionary of Sydney will provide historical stories, facts and information about Sydney as a community resource for the Cultural Ribbon." Sustainable Sydney 2030: The Vision pg 158. In 2014, the City commissioned 21 new entries and the curation of a thread in the Dictionary of Sydney containing historical information, stories and facts related to the harbour foreshore. This collection of stories seeks to link some of the city's cultural institutions, activities, places and landscapes located in and around the harbour foreshore. These stories can inform the interpretative component of [the Cultural Ribbon–Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk](#).

Related initiatives

The City has also adopted the following related policies that inform this strategy;

Sydney Lights: Public Domain Design Code 2013

Walking Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2030

Harbour Village North Public Domain Plan 2012

City North Public Domain Plan 2015

Tourism Action Plan 2013

OPEN Sydney Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2030

Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan 2014

Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2017

Inclusion Action Plan 2014-2017

Other City initiatives to strengthen and support cultural activities in the city include;

Live Music and Performance Action Plan

New Ideas for Old Buildings - Creative Spaces and the Built Environment 2016

Cultural and Creative grants (ongoing)

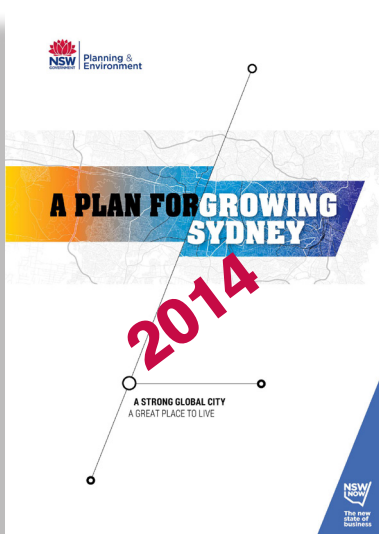
Festivals and events sponsorships (ongoing)

Adoption of the idea



Cultural Infrastructure Strategy - Direction 3:

Ensure NSW, through Sydney is a cultural leader in the Asia Pacific. Sydney investment will focus on renewing the State Cultural Institutions along Sydney's Cultural Ribbon. We will seek to maximise arts and cultural opportunities in major urban developments.



Deliver the Government's vision for Sydney Harbour, incorporating Sydney's cultural ribbon including the new and revitalised precincts of Barangaroo, Darling Harbour, Walsh Bay, the Bays Precinct and surrounding foreshore lands.

Since 2008

Since first enunciated at one of the key Sydney 2030 consultation forums, the notion of a Cultural Ribbon linking a selection of cultural institutions has gained some traction and has been widely adopted and referred to by the many cultural institutions located in the vicinity of Sydney Harbour. “The Cultural Ribbon” and variations of the term such as “Arts Ribbon” or “Arts and Cultural Ribbon” have been used in various NSW State policy and planning documents to refer to a range of different things. In the State government’s “A Plan for Growing Sydney” the Cultural Ribbon idea was used as a means of explaining a distribution of funding according to geographic location. The 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy prioritised revitalising and expanding “the State’s existing cluster of world-class institutions and attractions through the development of an ‘Arts and Cultural Ribbon’ around the Sydney Harbour and the CBD”. The follow up 2014 State Infrastructure Strategy Update further “recommends the establishment of a clearly defined Sydney CBD cultural precinct, with staged investment in the Sydney Opera House, the Walsh Bay Arts precinct, the Art Gallery of NSW and the State Library of NSW. In planning and design documents prepared by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority (Property NSW), the Cultural Ribbon refers to both a concentration of cultural activities along the water but also a walking route that loops into The Rocks.

The definition of the Cultural Ribbon provided in Sustainable Sydney 2030 was therefore sufficiently loose to have allowed the term to be co-opted rather freely. Its wide use is an indication of the strength of its appeal and a desire and appetite to imprint some geographical and conceptual coherence to culture in Sydney. The Cultural Ribbon project is emerging as one of coordination, facilitation and leadership by the City of Sydney.



The Cultural Ribbon, A Plan for Growing Sydney NSW Government

05

Developing the idea



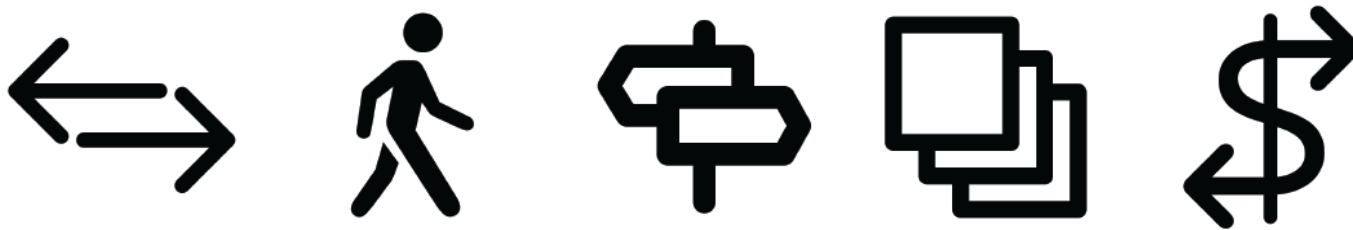
“I want to be regularly surprised in a city that is so familiar. Unique events in unlikely places... bands in train carriages, rooftop cinemas, nights where museums stay open until 2am, bars in underground tunnels, permanent table tennis tables in the parks, a former airport turned into a city park with community vegetable gardens (runway still intact), Sunday afternoon open mic karaoke sessions in front of an audience of thousands (if you dare)...”

Sydney Your Say Open Forum, Cultural Policy and Action Plan

Clarifying the idea

Informed by extensive community and key stakeholder engagement as part of Creative City Cultural Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024, this strategy has been developed with various internal stakeholders in the City and initial conversations with external stakeholders with a focus on materialising the Cultural Ribbon. The idea presented in Sustainable Sydney 2030 has been both refined and clarified through this work. The redefinition of the Cultural Ribbon as a Sydney Harbour's *nature culture walk* focused on the foreshore is the key recommendation of this strategy. A range of potential projects, across a number of divisions, have also been identified to promote and sustain the walk as a destination in its own right.

Insights



INSIGHT 1

The cultural ribbon is not only ours, it is a platform for others to tell stories as well

We own the concept and idea to create this platform as a public asset, but there are many more stories to tell/curate than strictly ours.

INSIGHT 2

The cultural ribbon needs to be simple and work as an everyday experience

The Ribbon is a layered experience with a simple and legible physical expression. The additional layers can consist of a variety of works, media and events in addition to this baseline experience.

INSIGHT 3

Wayfinding does not a walk make

Using wayfinding as a means to create the ribbon experience will not work. It needs to be a destination and a cultural construct first and then it can be signposted.

INSIGHT 4

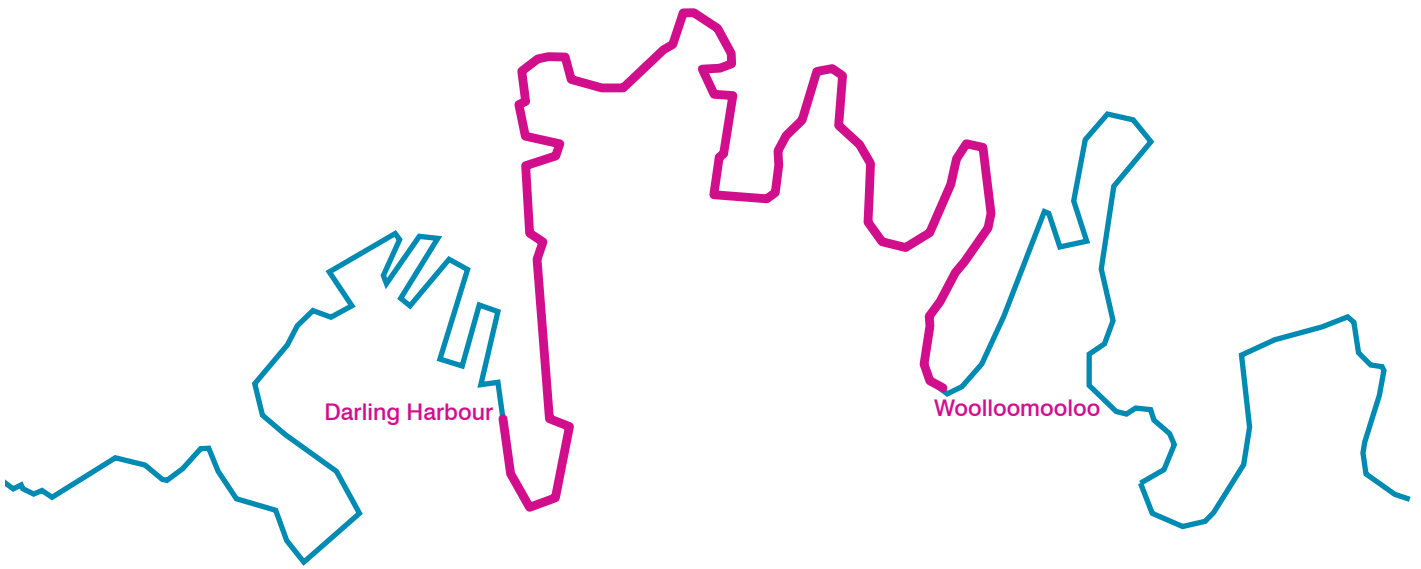
The cultural ribbon can become more than a walk, it can be an asset

The opportunity here is to think of this project as the creation of a strategic asset for the city, not an activity. With increased footfall, this asset will be appealing to broader audiences, but also will have more potential for partnerships and the co-delivery of events and programs.

INSIGHT 5

The capital budget is only the start, to be successful the ribbon will need on-going budget through existing programs.

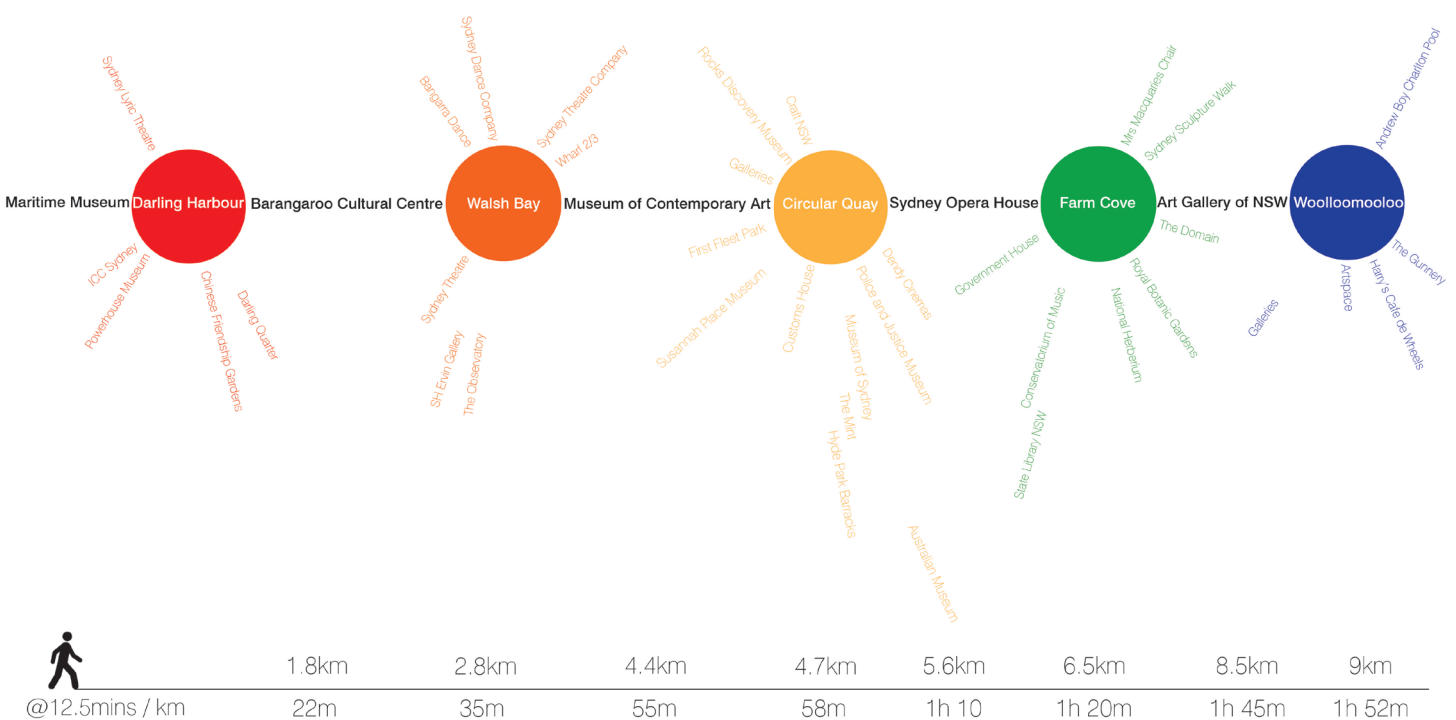
The ribbon itself will need on-going investment, partnerships, and production to remain relevant, front-of-mind and exciting.



Defining the extent

Much discussion has been had around the 'right' geographical extent of *the Cultural Ribbon Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk*. There is extensive foreshore infrastructure already in place but also there is a recognition amongst that ownership of the foreshore land is fragmented and the experience of the foreshore sometimes reflect that fragmentation.

The below diagram shows the suggested extent of *the Cultural Ribbon Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk*, including natural sub-segments that could be marketed as such to audiences. The overall length of the walk is approximately 9 km. There is potential for the walk to be extended in the future beyond this to include Bays Precinct to the west and further east towards Rushcutters Bay.



The redefined project idea

It is proposed that the walk be redefined as Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk* (*working title*) along the harbour foreshore from [Darling Harbour \(Australian Maritime Museum\)](#) to Woolloomooloo with a physical expression that is clear but discreet and simple with the following principles;

Is about the cultural destinations and landscapes as much as it is about the paths and spaces in between

Anchored by moments of storytelling and interpretation including Eora Journey and Sydney's maritime history

A layered experience made up of various components that tell a bigger picture story

It is accessible for all and a great experience every day and night

Supported by investment by the public and private sector that enhances the experience

Nature and culture

The Cultural Ribbon *Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk* should be re-conceived through the lens of a broader definition of culture, but also through its setting on the harbour foreshore.

Culture is an enormously difficult word to define. The definition of Culture contained in the original 2030 Cultural Ribbon idea primarily focused on the museums, theatres, libraries, galleries, scientific and educational institutions in the western tradition of formalised, "high" cultural activity. There could be a broader indexing of the word "culture", a more considered reading of the word "culture" will bring forth more considered and innovative outcomes for the project.

Nature is often set into a dualistic relationship with culture, and this may be a means to further refining the idea of culture for the purposes of interpretation. To the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culture and nature (the land and sea) are one and intrinsic to each other. The natural topography of the harbour has shaped the kind of cultural history that has played out in these protected coves and on these points from which we have looked out, and up.

While taking in numerous cultural institutions, it also engages with five harbour bays, four harbour peninsulas, and five harbour-side parks of differing function and landscape quality. Punctuating the route are both large iconic buildings housing the fine arts, opera and drama but also clusters of smaller sites for cultural engagement, including house museums, small craft galleries and specialist music venues. The foreshore experience could be improved and underpinned by the story of the city's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and of Sydney as a maritime city, but is also the site of stories of creativity, spectacle and invention. Together, these are the features of a walk that is unique to Sydney.

Directions

To deliver on the principles, it is important for the Strategy to address the fundamental issues of the physical condition of the public domain of the walk, the opportunities for storytelling and interpretation and the opportunities to elevate the walk as a destination / attraction in its own right. The Cultural Ribbon *Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk* is considered under the directions of;

Connections

Improve the physical amenity of the walk for pedestrians to make it more attractive, accessible and safer for people to explore on foot during the day and at night

Improve the legibility of the walk, including enhanced wayfinding

Improve conditions and amenities for recreational cycling along the route

Enhance the experience of nature along the foreshore

Imagination

Bring to the public domain a layer of storytelling and interpretation with contemporary interpretation tools, digital media and smart technology as an aid

Invigorate the paths and spaces 'in-between' – make creativity / innovation more visible

Identity

To build public recognition of the foreshore route as a destination in its own right

Recognise, retain and where appropriate reinforce the existing character and identity of each section of the walk

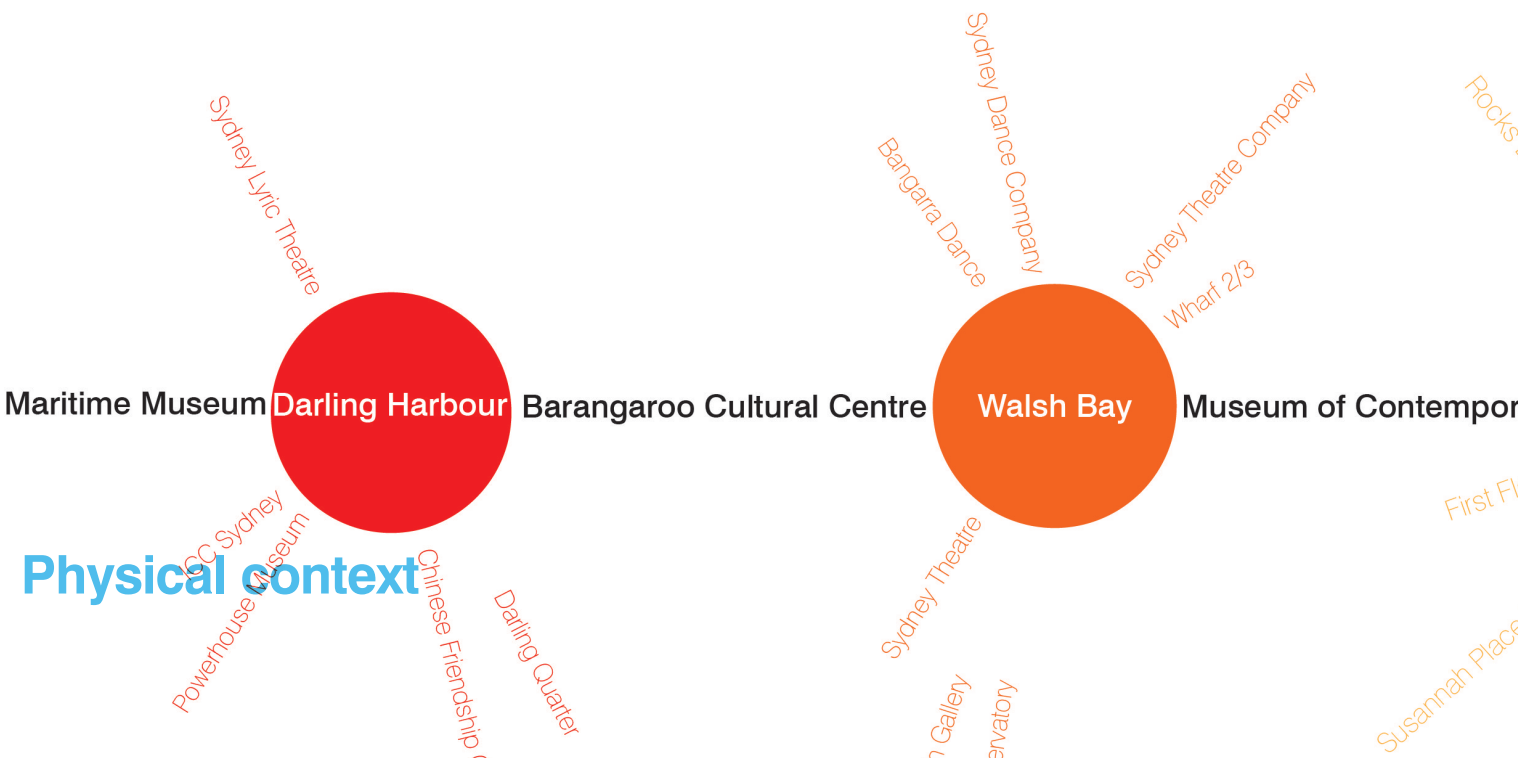
Measures of success

A critical aspect of this project is to define what success means to the collective. Early measures of success identified are:

Short-term benefits as well as long-term outcomes

Focused on impacts as well as the processes that create impacts

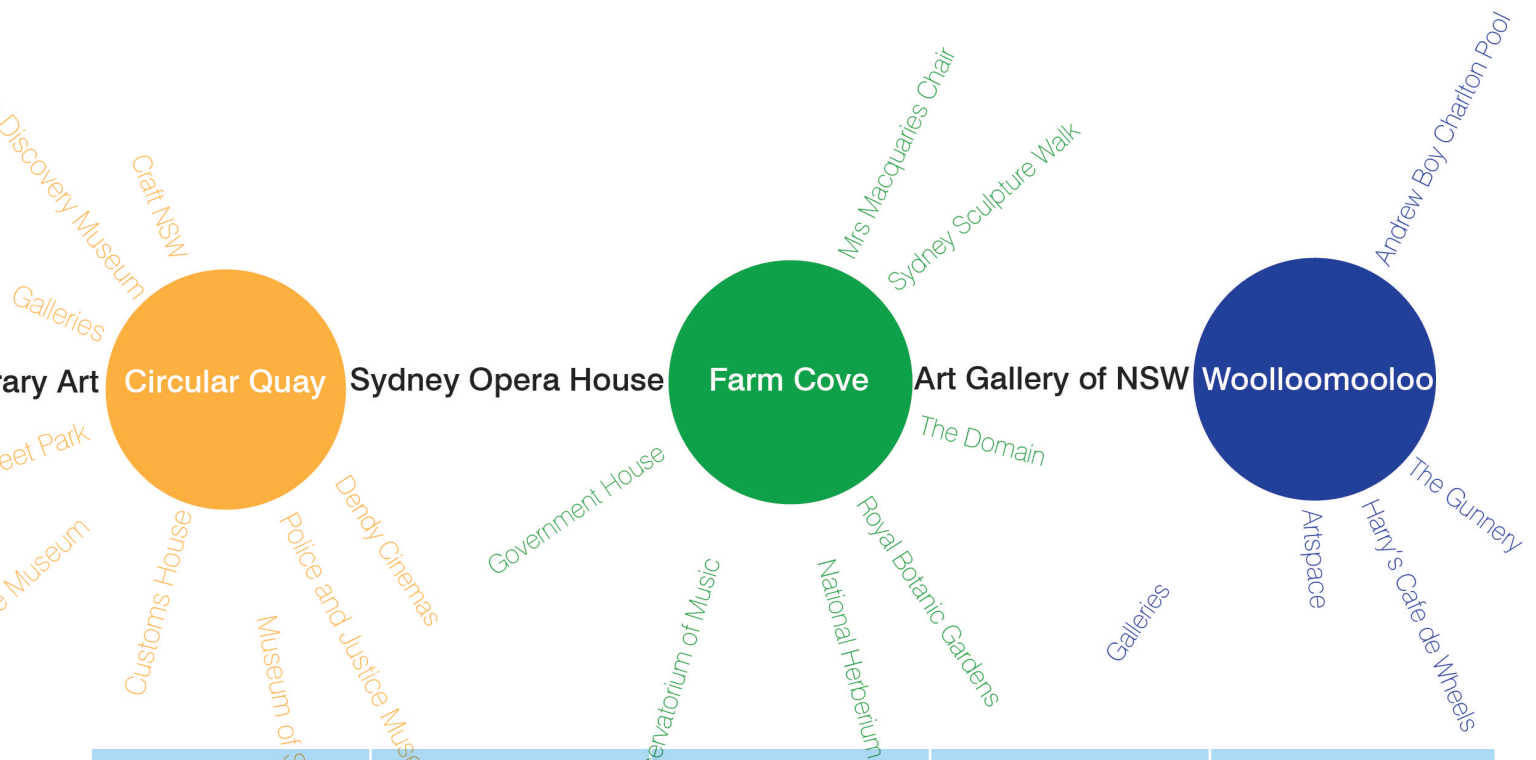
Impacts that are both objective (hard numbers and facts) as well as softer and more subjective (reception by the media or audiences, etc.)



Physical context

Area	Cockle Bay	Barangaroo Point	Walsh Bay	Dawes Point / Tar-ra
Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Busy and active High levels of pedestrian activity High levels of commercial activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shifting panoramas Open Quiet Massive scale Formal landscape experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arterial Quiet Contained Mouse-hole views Double sided activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost arterial—point hardly exists on the ground. Road and car park Should be a place to stop but has become a place to pass through quickly Overhead noise Sublime view
Cultural infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Maritime Museum International Convention Centre Sydney IMAX Cinema 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barangaroo Cultural Space - The Cutaway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sydney Theatre Wharf 4/5 Pier 2/3 Commercial galleries Millers Point historic suburb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Arts Exchange
5-10 minutes walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Powerhouse Museum Sydney Lyric Theatre Tumbelong Park Chinese Friendship Garden City of Sydney Library, Town Hall WEA Library Genesian Theatre Alliance Francaise Gaffa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SH Ervin Gallery The Sydney Observatory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Millers Point Historic suburb A number of commercial galleries 	

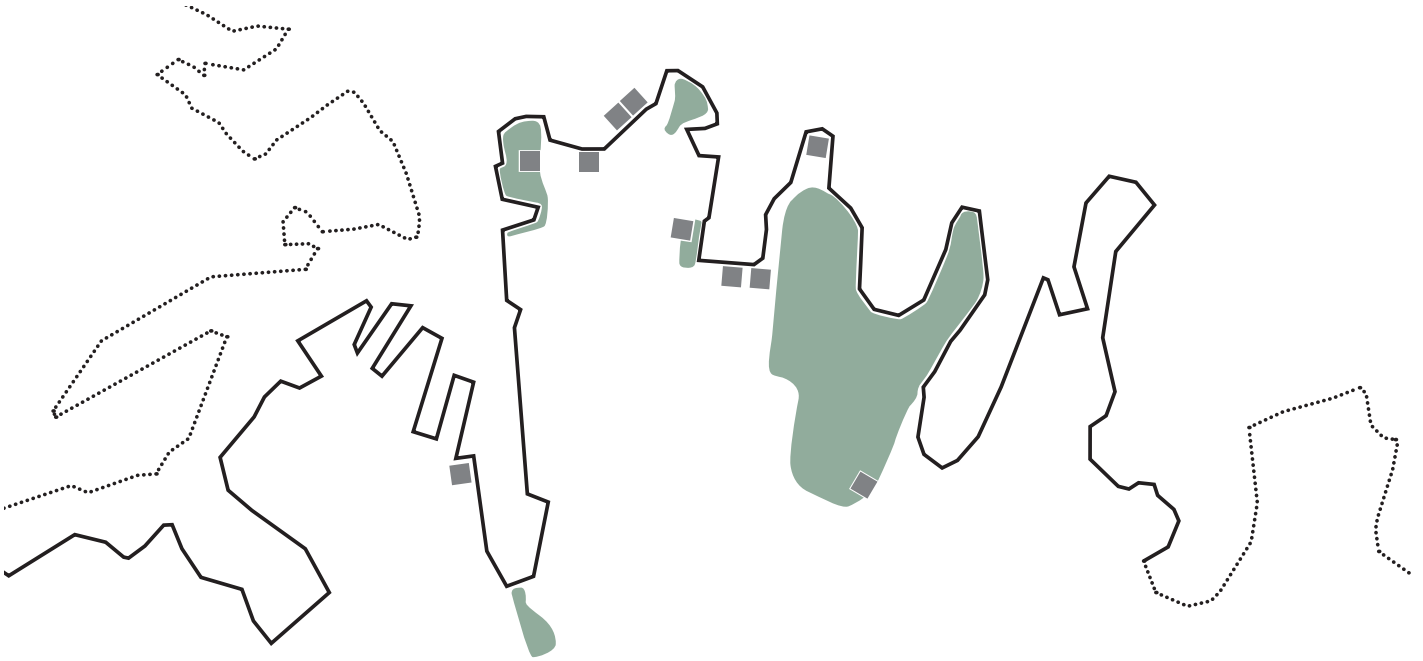
The Cultural Ribbon Strategy



Circular Quay	Bennelong Point	Farm Cove	Mrs Macquarie's Point	Woolloomooloo Bay
Porous to panoramic Crowds Busy and active High levels of pedestrian activity, some busking Transport Hub	Panoramic Exposed High levels of pedestrian activity High levels of commercial activity leading up to Opera House	Shifting panoramas Open Quiet Massive scale Formal landscape experience	Panoramic Open	Panoramic Human scale Remnant Sandstone and water Quiet
Museum of Contemporary Arts Cadmans Cottage	Sydney Opera House Dendy Cinema	The Royal Botanic Gardens	Mrs Macquarie's Chair Fleet Steps / Open air cinema	Andrew Boy Charlton Pool
Customs House Police and Justice Museum Museum of Sydney Conservatorium of Music The Rocks historical area Rocks Discovery Museum Craft NSW Julian Ashton A number of commercial galleries	Government House	National Herbarium	Maiden Theatre	The Art Gallery of NSW The Gurney Artspace Monstrosity Gallery

06

Analysis



Nature and culture

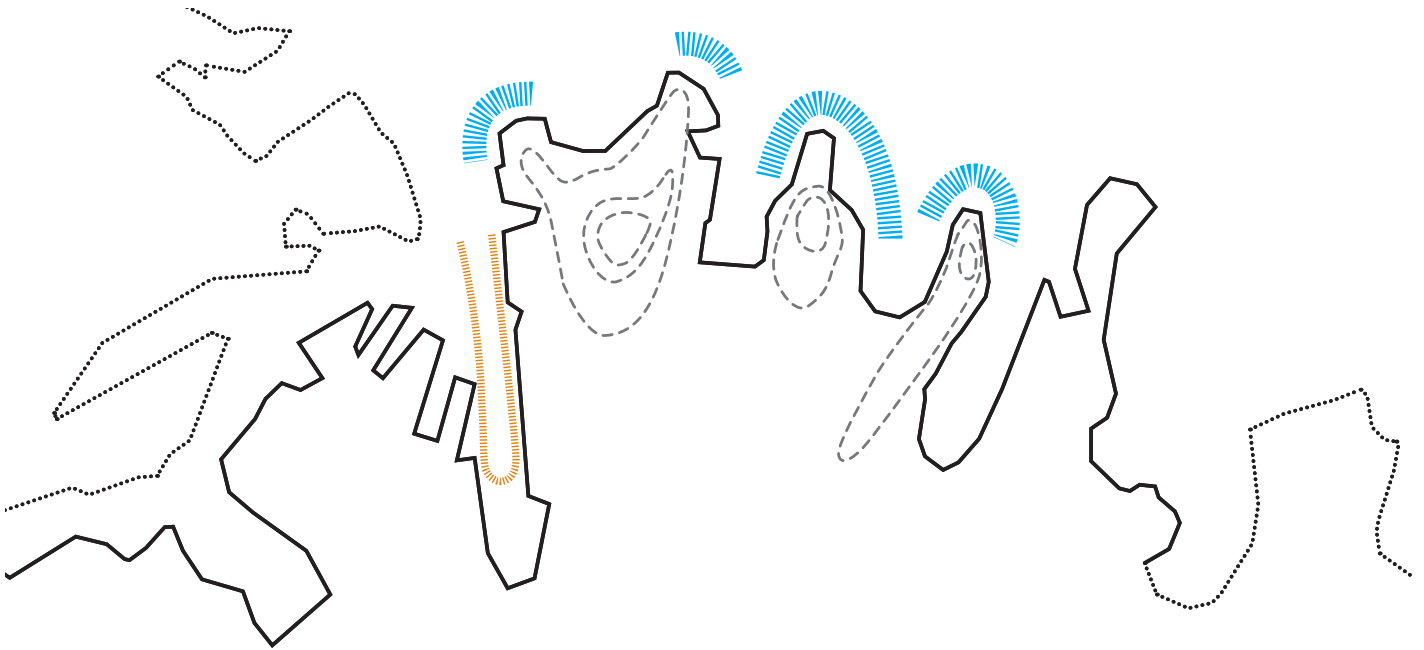
Sydney Harbour's *nature and culture walk* can be conceived as linking five harbour bays, each with a number of attractions clustered around them. Each of these harbour-defined episodes on the walk is effectively linked by a major cultural institution to include [The Australian Maritime Museum](#), Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Dance Company, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Museum of Contemporary Art, Customs House, Opera House and Art Gallery NSW. The foreshore walk is not only punctuated by a series of the city's most prominent theatres and museums but also takes walkers through a series of green spaces. The centrepiece of the walk is the Royal Botanic Gardens, a reflection of 18th and 19th century landscape sensibilities, originally a key outpost in a scientific network the spans the Kew Gardens to all corners of the British Empire. To this may be contrasted the remnant foreshore landscape of the eastern side of the Domain at Woolloomooloo Bay - perhaps the closest thing we have to the harbour foreshore in its indigenous state. A simulacrum of natural foreshore is found at Barangaroo Point, and in the shadows of the Harbour Bridge at Dawes Point, the kind of accidental park that so often accompanied large infrastructure projects in the 20th century. These landscapes are themselves artefacts that tell us much about our culture and its changing relationship to nature.

Opportunities

1. Scope opportunities to enhance the experience of nature along the foreshore
2. Scope opportunities to work in partnership with adjoining landowners to holistically enhance the natural experience of the foreshore.
3. Scope opportunities for the walk to include educational experiences
4. Work with cultural institutions to enhance the cultural experience of the walk

Priority Project: Development of **the Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk**

Development of **the Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk** in consultation with adjoining landowners and relevant agencies, to incorporate stories and information including Sydney's cultural and natural history. This project would include the development of supporting 'software' for **Cultural Ribbon** - the use of innovative digital media and smart technology to showcase **the Cultural Ribbon Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk**.



Visual experience and legibility

Vistas to and from the foreshore are many and varied.

The foreshore walk between Darling Harbour and Woolloomooloo is shaped by the experience of four panoramic views to the harbour in-dispersed with the more enclosed visual experience of five bays.

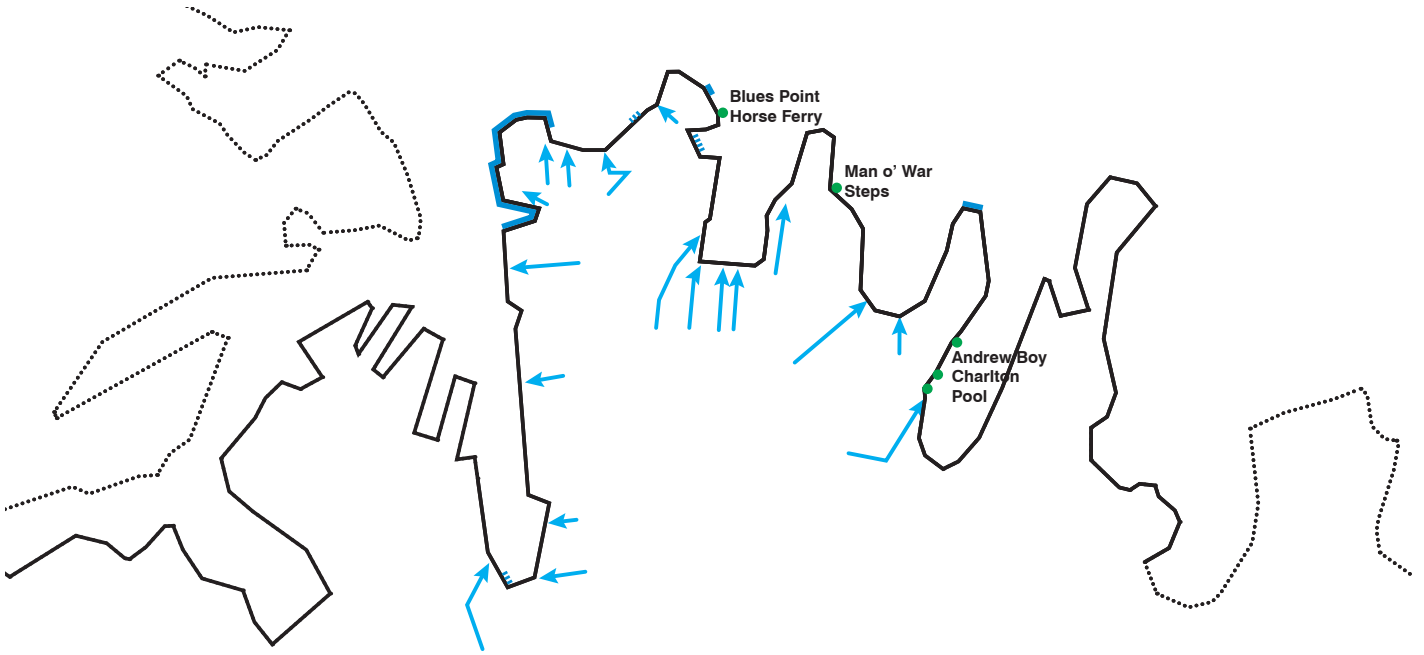
Long views to Circular Quay from Pitt, Loftus and Young Streets are obstructed by the Cahill Expressway.

Sydney Harbour is a vast network of inlets and promontories. This distinctive topography provides some amazing vistas but also provides challenges in the legibility. There are points along the route where legibility could be improved.

Priority Project: Wayfinding audit

Wayfinding and Signage Audit – review of current wayfinding messaging and signs in the public domain to better support and reinforce connections to the foreshore and *the Cultural Ribbon Sydney Harbour's nature and culture walk*.

The goal here is not to use signage as 'branding' but in keeping with the Legible Sydney Strategy identify gaps and improve wayfinding, providing clear and consistent messaging to get people to the foreshore from arrival points and key routes.



Contact with water

Despite a journey of more than approximately 9km from Darling Harbour to Woolloomooloo, there are few points where walkers can, in the words of Jan Gehl, “touch the water.”

The new sandstone shoreline constructed to edge Barangaroo Point will do much to allow a haptic experience of the waters edge. Draft plans for the activation of the space between Pier 2/3 and Wharf 4/5 at Walsh Bay also indicate a large area of amphitheatre-like seating that will step down into the water, and a similar arrangement of steps or terraces down into the water has been proposed at Campbell’s Cove.

Additional opportunities to allow people to have an intimate, incidental connection with water should be sought.

Pedestrian connections to the foreshore

The foreshore can be accessed on foot at multiple points, but the legibility of these connections are variable.

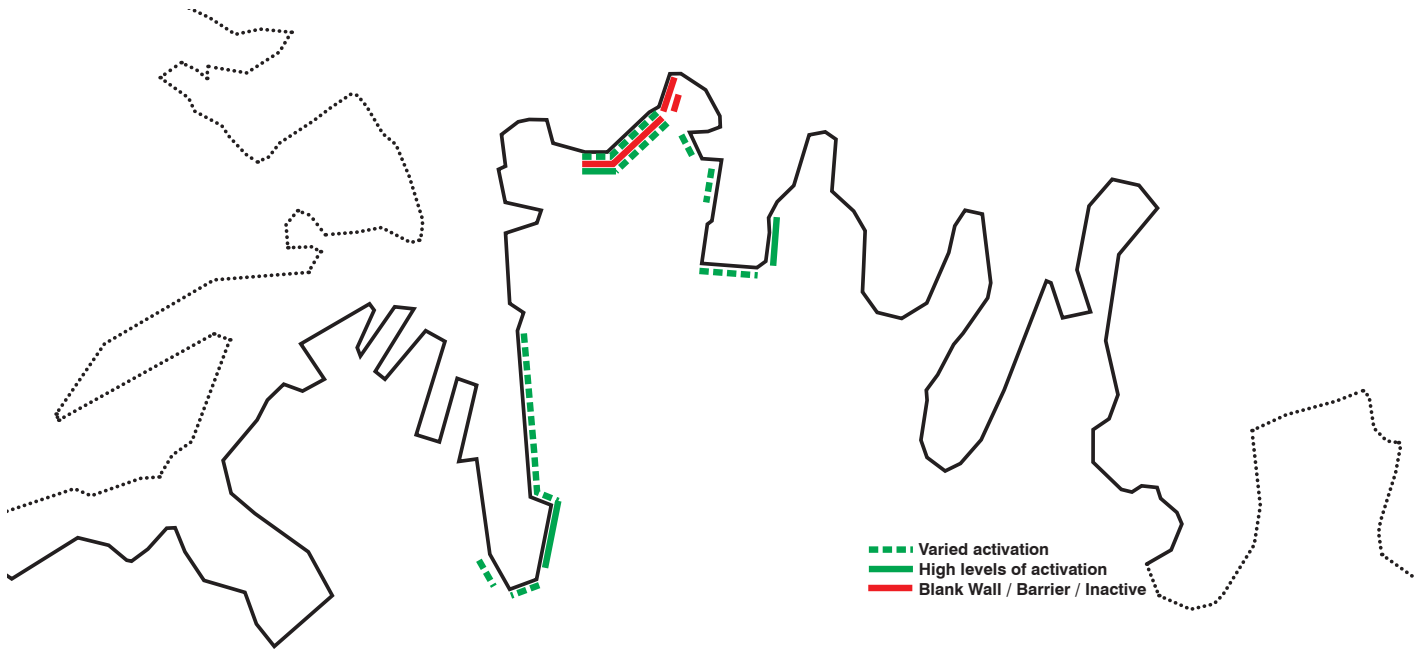
Where vistas to the water do exist, additional directional signage should not be required. Where wayfinding to the water is not clear, pedestrian signage with suitable messaging could be considered.

Opportunities

1. Scope opportunities for visitors to ‘touch the water’ along the foreshore including along the Woolloomooloo shoreline, which with minimum intervention would invite people to experience the water.

Opportunities

1. Through the roll-out of the City’s Legible Sydney wayfinding system, ensure that the foreshore walk is clearly signed at key points of decision in the city, but only when other wayfinding cues such as landmarks and views are lacking
2. To strengthen visibility of the water from the city, undertake a de-cluttering study along City of Sydney streets and pathways connecting to the foreshore to understand what could be removed. Careful management of trees and shrubs to open up views to the water could be considered as part of this process.



Ground floor frontages and activation

While the waterscape of the harbour is a constant along one side of the Cultural Ribbon route, to the alternate side the walker experiences open space or built frontages—a contrast that is an important characteristic of this experience. Where the route is edged by building, the nature of the ground floor frontage has a significant impact on the quality of public space. An active and engaging ground floor frontage is comprised of small units, with many doors and a high degree of transparency, a diversity of functions and architectural detail, imparting a sense of activity, interest, and safety. By contrast, an inactive frontage will have large units or a completely closed facade at ground level and a paucity of detail.

There is a mix of activation of the building frontages that exist on the foreshore route.

Opportunities

1. Whilst it is recognised that there are points of respite and quiet along the route that the community can come and enjoy without spending money, there are portions of the route that could be improved with further activation. Activation could come from businesses, the 'opening' up and spilling of cultural activities from cultural institutions.
2. The City could investigate opportunities for the activation, particularly at the ground level frontages and encourage institutions to be 'open' and engaged with the street.