Attachment A

Draft Central Sydney Planning Strategy

Central Sydney Planning Strategy

2016–2036 DRAFT

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Foreword

Clover Moore

Lord Mayor, Sydney

If you ask what makes Sydney an amazing city to work and live in, visit and enjoy, 'planning' may not be the first thing that comes to mind. But planning and development that is sensible and strategic is the basis for what makes our city world-renowned for beauty and liveability.

Central Sydney plays a key role in metropolitan Sydney, New South Wales, and the nation. In a world that is quickly changing, the Central Sydney Planning Strategy will help ensure Sydney's continued dynamism for business and economic growth, while accompanied by social infrastructure, arts and recreation, and environmental stewardship.

With a unique setting, form, history and infrastructure, we welcome the challenge of building on our achievements and attributes while at the same time balancing economic, social and environmental needs. Space for future workers is crucial for our economy. Transport will be a major issue. Maintaining our memorable parks and green spaces is paramount. We will encourage beautiful buildings, and taking care of our residents.

The Strategy will help us plan for growth and change, facilitate a lively and engaging city centre and create a sustainable and resilient city, one that is globally competitive and serves its residents, workers and visitors well.

We will plan for jobs growth with an approach that is people-focused and place-led, and work together with business owners, landowners, residents and the New South Wales and federal governments, hand in hand, in the interests of our city.

Graham Jahn AM LFRAIA Hon. FPIA Hon. AIA

Director City Planning, Development and Transport

Australia has one of the highest population growth rates of any OECD country in the context of falling global growth rates. In this there lies an intrinsic demand for higher value employment as well as a drive to carve out productive capability in an increasingly global market place.

Central Sydney and surrounds has become a magnet for attracting higher value businesses across their full lifecycle – in their fledgling embryonic phase, through their growth phase to their mature phase across sectors such as professional and financial services, education and tourism and hospitality. Sydney also has the prospect of becoming a significant centre for many digital-based industries, which dissolves the tyranny of distance. A consequence of this mixed-use environment is the need to ensure future workplace and business capacity at different price points in locations where the benefits of agglomeration are their most effective.

The Central Sydney Planning Strategy identifies and translates into spatial controls the setting for the heart of modern Sydney to grow in stature and importance. It builds on the success of a truly mixed use centre and the transformational investment that different sectors can bring to the city within the right framework and settings.

The Strategy builds on what has worked, strengthens what we value and identifies what can change while managing negative side effects. The Strategy retains those unique spatial controls that have influenced the vitality and amenity and will underpin the success of Sydney going forward. The Strategy adjusts where they apply, makes the case for enlarging the boundaries of Central Sydney and provides innovation in how a mixed-use centre can accommodate essential productive capacity for Sydney's ongoing success.

Overview

The Central Sydney Planning Strategy is the result of a detailed review of the planning controls that apply to Australia's most productive and strategically important employment centre.

The Strategy uses existing successful planning controls to ensure that Central Sydney can continue to grow in the service of its workers, residents and visitors. It ensures that Central Sydney is well positioned to contribute to metropolitan Sydney being a globally competitive and innovative city that is recognised internationally for its social and cultural life, liveability and natural environment. The Strategy presents key moves and planning control amendments with the aim of providing certainty, consistency and continuity for planning.

The Strategy is divided into five main sections that provide an overview of the Strategy; introduce the Strategy in more detail; provide context for the Strategy; describe the why, what and how of growth; and articulate the detailed provisions and actions of the Strategy.

An evolution of planning strategy

Planning strategies for Central Sydney have determined the shape and form of the city, and have evolved to become more complex and comprehensive. The Strategy builds on planning precedents to address the current climate and challenges. It is closely aligned with the City of Sydney's Sustainable Sydney 2030 program and the NSW Government's A Plan for Growing Sydney. Its governance will require a whole-of-government approach with meaningful collaboration and relationships between the State and metropolitan-level bodies including the newly formed Greater Sydney Commission.

Place-led and people-focused

Central Sydney is a unique place: an outdoors city with a stunningly beautiful setting and a temperate climate. Its geography has implications for how the city can grow, how people move around, how people enjoy public spaces and conduct their daily lives. It is rich with beautiful heritage buildings, special places and attractive parks. Its orientation, architecture and the shape of its street grid and precincts all add up to create an experience that sets it apart from other global cities.

These factors of place, structure and form are the considerations that create the first principles for the environmental controls that will be used for Central Sydney's future: preserving and maintaining what is positive and unique, while reshaping attributes to meet the needs of tomorrow. Infrastructure, and in particular transportation, will play a key role. The growth of heavy and metro rail will be needed to accommodate Sydney's worker population and residents. Management of vehicle use is required, as well as the promotion of cycling and walking, and creating transport links between Central Sydney's open spaces. Other infrastructure issues are the need for social and cultural infrastructure, affordable rental housing and reducing energy consumption.

Planning for growth

Planning strategies have very successfully expanded residential floor space since the early 1990s. With residential growth has come a growth in supporting services and an injection in vitality that continues to benefit visitors, tourists and businesses.

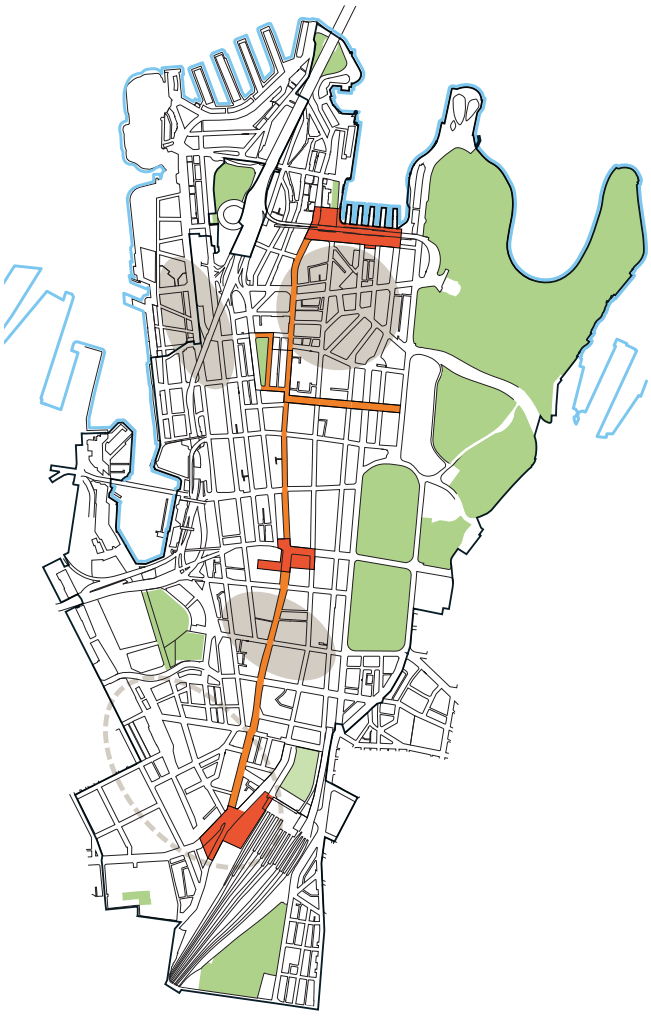
Central Sydney now needs to relocate these incentives and protect and grow employment floor space to maintain its economic vitality and resilience, and to respond to the changing needs of markets.

Central Sydney has a limited capacity to grow and adapt because of its natural containment, heritage and the growth of residential development. Planning for growth therefore requires clear policies and careful management where the opportunity to grow employment floor space is protected from high residential demand and the effects of strata subdivision of prime land.

While recognising environmental controls, the Strategy has potential to unlock up to 2.9 million square metres of new floor space, and protect it for future income. Essential public infrastructure will be needed to accommodate increased workers and residents. Metropolitan Sydney's other employment centres, particularly planned centres like Central to Eveleigh and the Bays, will need to provide for medium to long-term employment growth.

A refocus

The Central Sydney Planning Strategy recognises Central Sydney's role in metropolitan Sydney, New South Wales and Australia, and the need to maintain and grow its status as a global city with a dynamic economy and high quality of life. It celebrates and promotes Central Sydney's many famous, loved and valued attributes. The Strategy builds on past strategies to adapt to current needs and has a clear plan for action and implementation. It refocuses the current development environment that favours residential use of land towards accommodating employment needs while keeping a balance with social infrastructure and amenity.



About this strategy

The Central Sydney Planning Strategy is a 20-year growth strategy that revises previous planning controls and delivers on the City of Sydney's Sustainable Sydney 2030 program for a green, global and connected city.

Planning for development in Central Sydney means planning for Sydney's ongoing competiveness, appeal and resilience. As the economic heart of Australia's most global city, the area plays a critical role in the continued growth and economic success of wider Sydney and the national economy.

Through 10 key moves, the strategy balances opportunities for development to meet the demands of growing numbers of workers, residents and visitors and their changing needs. It includes provisions for affordable housing, community facilities, open space and the essential services that will help these populations thrive.

It includes opportunities for additional height and density in the right locations, balanced with environmental sustainability initiatives, and sets criteria for excellence in urban design.

The strategy presents these opportunities in stages – short-term, medium-term and ongoing – and aligns these with planned developments in infrastructure and technology for an economically, environmentally and socially successful city.

The economic, social and cultural heart of the nation

Central Sydney plays a significant role in the life of the nation. It helps generate over $108 billion of economic activity annually – nearly 8 per cent of the total national economy. It has the highest concentration of top 500 companies and mainstream artistic and cultural institutions in Australia, and is its largest retail centre.

Much more than a business district, Central Sydney is home to 25,000 residents and 12,000 businesses. It accommodates close to 300,000 workers and a large proportion of the City's 610,000 domestic and international visitors every day.

Millennia of Aboriginal history, more recent colonial settlement and decades of urban renewal and reinvention have shaped Central Sydney. The character of its streets and spaces and its connections, look and feel are shaped by the desires, needs and movements of those who live, work and visit the area.

The Strategy will build on these attributes that make Central Sydney unique and attractive using a place-led and people-focused approach to draw people, talent, investment and innovation, while providing the opportunity for the city to grow to accommodate demand for jobs and housing.

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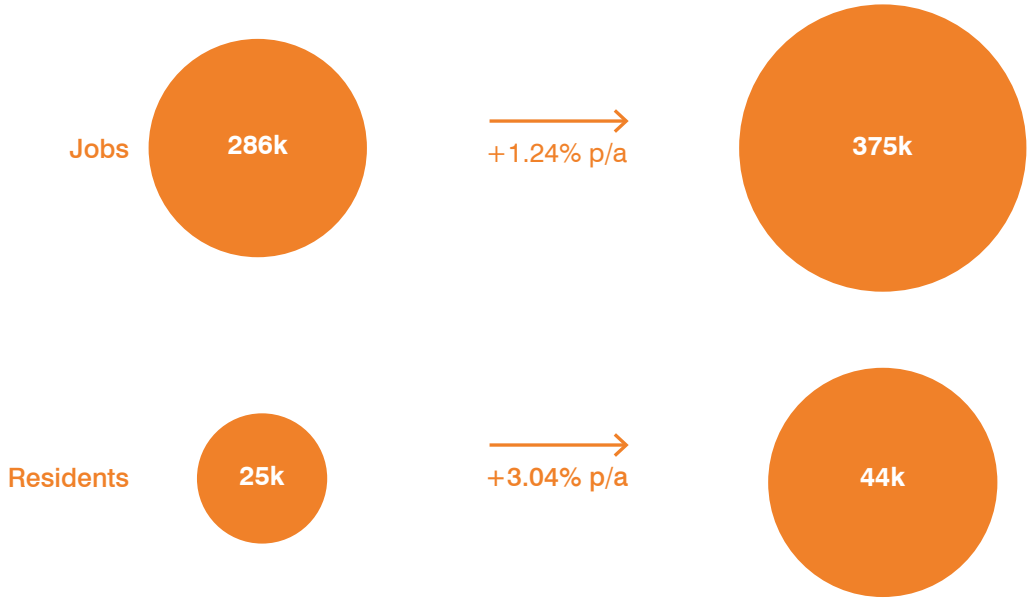
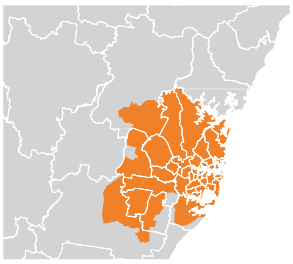
Worker and resident population growth – a comparison

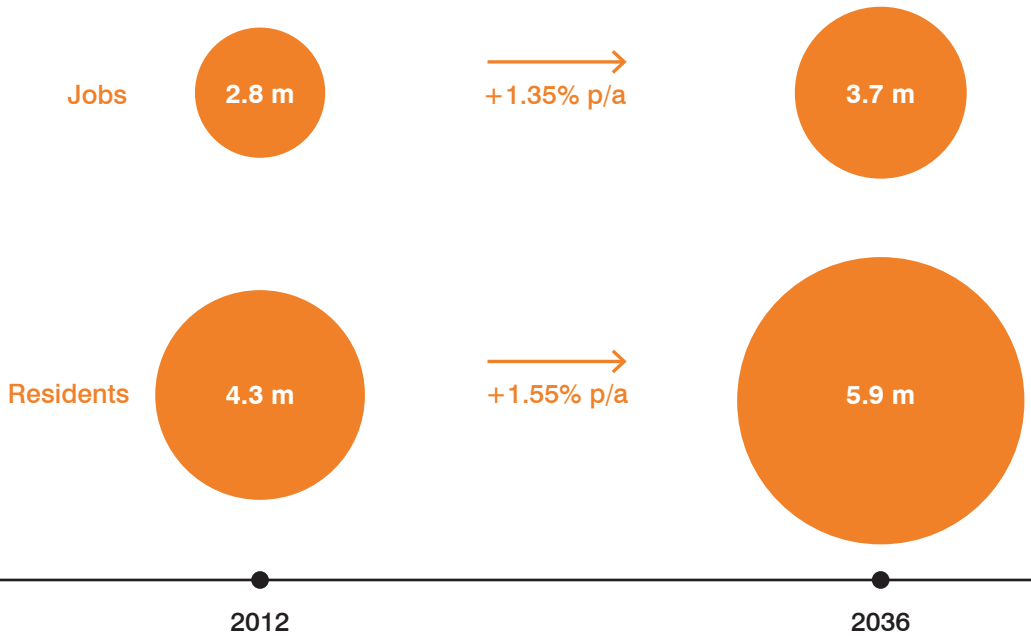
Central Sydney and Metropolitan Sydney

Central Sydney



Metro Sydney





An evolution in planning strategy

Today's Central Sydney – its density, shape, skyline and structure – was imagined in 1971 under the City of Sydney's first comprehensive planning strategy. Since then, growth has been further influenced by new local, metropolitan and state planning strategies.

This strategy updates successful urban planning strategies and introduces new approaches to manage today's environmental, social and economic challenges – the challenges of being a 'global city'.

Competition for space fuelled by projected commercial demand, an awakening of the benefits of inner-city living, and escalating population growth: all of this means major cities of the world need to be more deliberate in planning how and where they should grow.

It is even more critical to tailor and manage growth in Central Sydney, a small and compact urban centre surrounded by the harbour and parklands.

Our vision and aims

Central Sydney is part of a green, global and connected city – a centre that is beautiful and vibrant, which supports a strong and growing economy, a sustainable environment and diverse communities. But we must continue to create and maintain Sydney's prominent profile as a great place to live, work, study and visit.

This strategy recognises the role of Central Sydney in the economic, cultural and social identity of the nation. The strategy:

- Promotes sustainable buildings with great design and architecture
- Creates opportunities for beautiful parks and places
- Enables the protection and adaption of our heritage
- Ensures a resilient and diverse economy
- Promotes efficient and effective transportation
- Makes efficient use of land
- Supports great streets
- Delivers a city for people
- Ensures strong community and service infrastructure accompanies growth.

0_2

The challenge for a 'global city'

Balancing economic, social and environmental outcomes

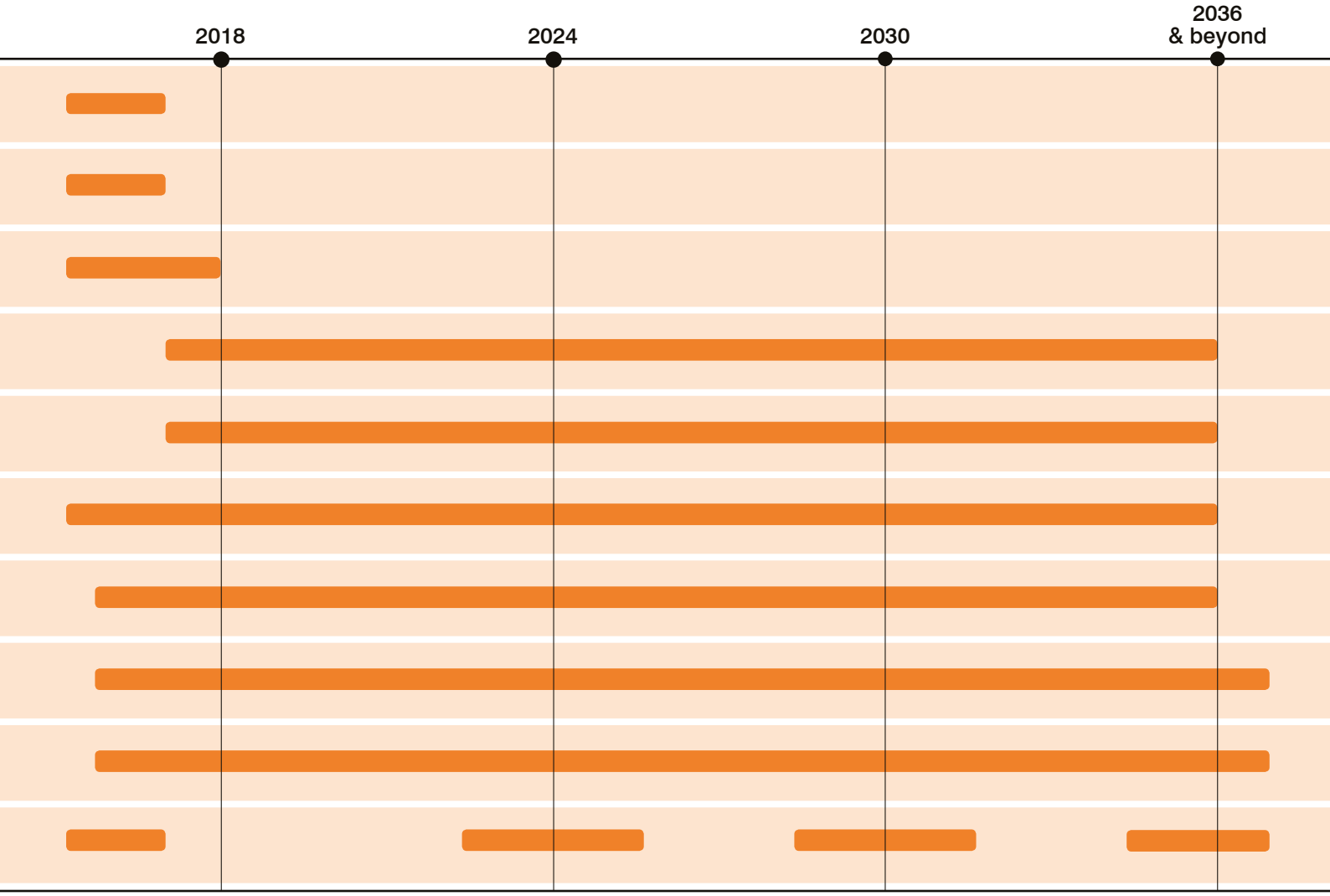
	A Plan for Growing Sydney	Sustainable Sydney 2030
Economic	Grow CBD office space Expand the CBDs footprint Support priority industries	Plan for growth and change Plan for long-term development opportunities Strengthen globally competitive clusters
Social	Provide social infrastructure to support growing communities Grow the CBD as a cultural destination Deliver opportunities for affordable housing	A lively, engaging city centre A cultural and creative city Housing for a diverse population including affordable housing
Environmental	Plan for a sustainable and resilient city Improve access, safety, amenity and capacity for walking and cycling Build Sydney's resilience to natural hazards	A leading environmental performer A city for pedestrians and cyclists Sustainable development renewal and design

Planning for growth with 10 key moves

The Strategy will facilitate projected growth in Central Sydney to 2036 and beyond with 10 key moves. These moves will be implemented in three stages: immediate and short-term (in 1 to 2 years), medium-term (2017 to 2036), and ongoing. Each stage will include review and monitoring processes.

10 key moves

1	Prioritise employment growth and increase capacity
2	Ensure development responds to context
3	Consolidate and simplify planning controls
4	Provide for employment growth in new tower clusters
5	Ensure infrastructure keeps pace with growth
6	Move towards a more sustainable city
7	Protect, enhance and expand Central Sydney's heritage, public places and spaces
8	Move people more easily
9	Reaffirm commitment to design excellence
10	Monitor outcomes and respond



Timeline for delivery

1

Prioritise employment growth and increase employment capacity by implementing genuine mixed-use controls and lifting height limits along the Western Edge

New development controls will limit residential and serviced apartment floor space in large developments to a maximum of 50 per cent. This will provide for a genuine mixed-use outcome, stem the loss of employment floor space and ensure that as the city grows, new employment floor space is provided to accommodate projected jobs growth.

Providing an immediate increase in height controls on the Western Edge will capitalise on the changing form and character of the area and the additional rail infrastructure commitment by the NSW Government.

Within the podiums of towers, the city will see more retail, affordable offices, and cultural and creative uses that provide services at street level, allowing for an exchange between the life of the street and life in buildings – and contributing to the public life of the city. In the towers above, residential use will still occur with a buffer between these private habitats and the hustle and bustle of street life below. Controls for tower separation and height will drive the creation of slimmer towers that have better access to outlook, sunlight and air.

This short-term move will ensure the development of a genuine mixed-use centre and provide a solid foundation for the growth of employment floor space.

Actions

- Introduce a maximum 50 per cent residential and serviced apartment land use mix requirement for developments above 55 metres in height
- Increase heights along the Western Edge from 80 metres to 110 metres

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Approved floor space, City of Sydney developments

2012–2015

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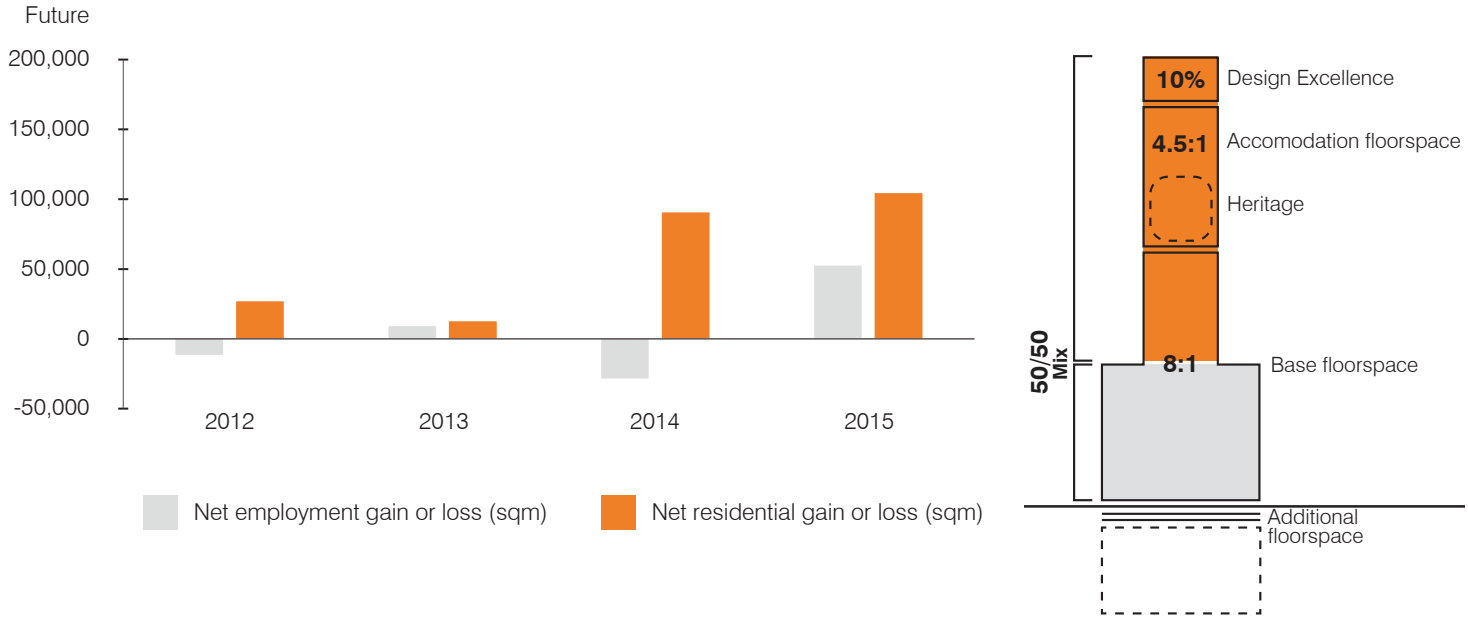
Floor space growth for the same projects if 50/50 mix applied

2012–2015



2

Ensure development responds to context by providing minimum setbacks for outlook, daylight and wind

Flexible planning controls for tall buildings mean buildings will better respond to their context. Site specific considerations, such as adequate building setbacks and outlook, heritage curtilage, wind impacts, sunlight and air movement will determine where a new tower can appropriately be accommodated.

These changes will be implemented in the short term, in anticipation of new tower developments.

Actions

- Ensure tall buildings demonstrate appropriate setbacks and separation
- Increase the minimum size of tower sites to 1,000 square metres
- Strengthen and clarify Special Character Area setback controls

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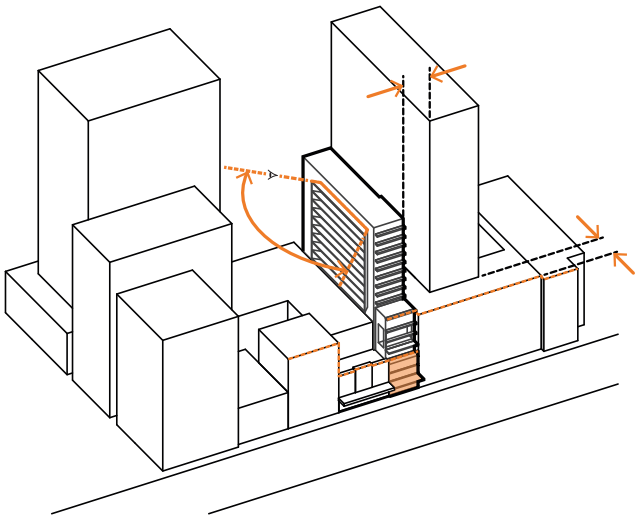
478 George Street, site analysis



Hilton

3

Consolidate and simplify planning controls by integrating disconnected precincts back into the city, unifying planning functions and streamlining administrative processes

Expanding the geographic boundaries of Central Sydney to include the Rocks, Darling Harbour, areas around Ultimo, the University of Technology Sydney and Central Railway will maximise growth opportunities.

A single consent authority and planning framework for Central Sydney allows for the efficient and streamlined administration of planning functions. It allows the identity of Central Sydney and its precincts to be reflected as a single entity and projects this image globally. It allows Central Sydney to have a single unified strategic plan that responds to the planning and land use philosophies of the City's Sustainable Sydney 2030 program and the NSW Government's A Plan for Growing Sydney.

Consolidation and simplification of the planning controls will occur in the short term. Actions requiring state government partnerships will take place in the medium-term, with expanding boundaries opening up opportunities for a larger heritage floor space scheme, improved design excellence, unified data collection and a consistent approach to public domain and open space.

Actions

- Increase public confidence in local planning decisions by working with the NSW Government to revise state-significant cost thresholds and to transfer land back to the City of Sydney

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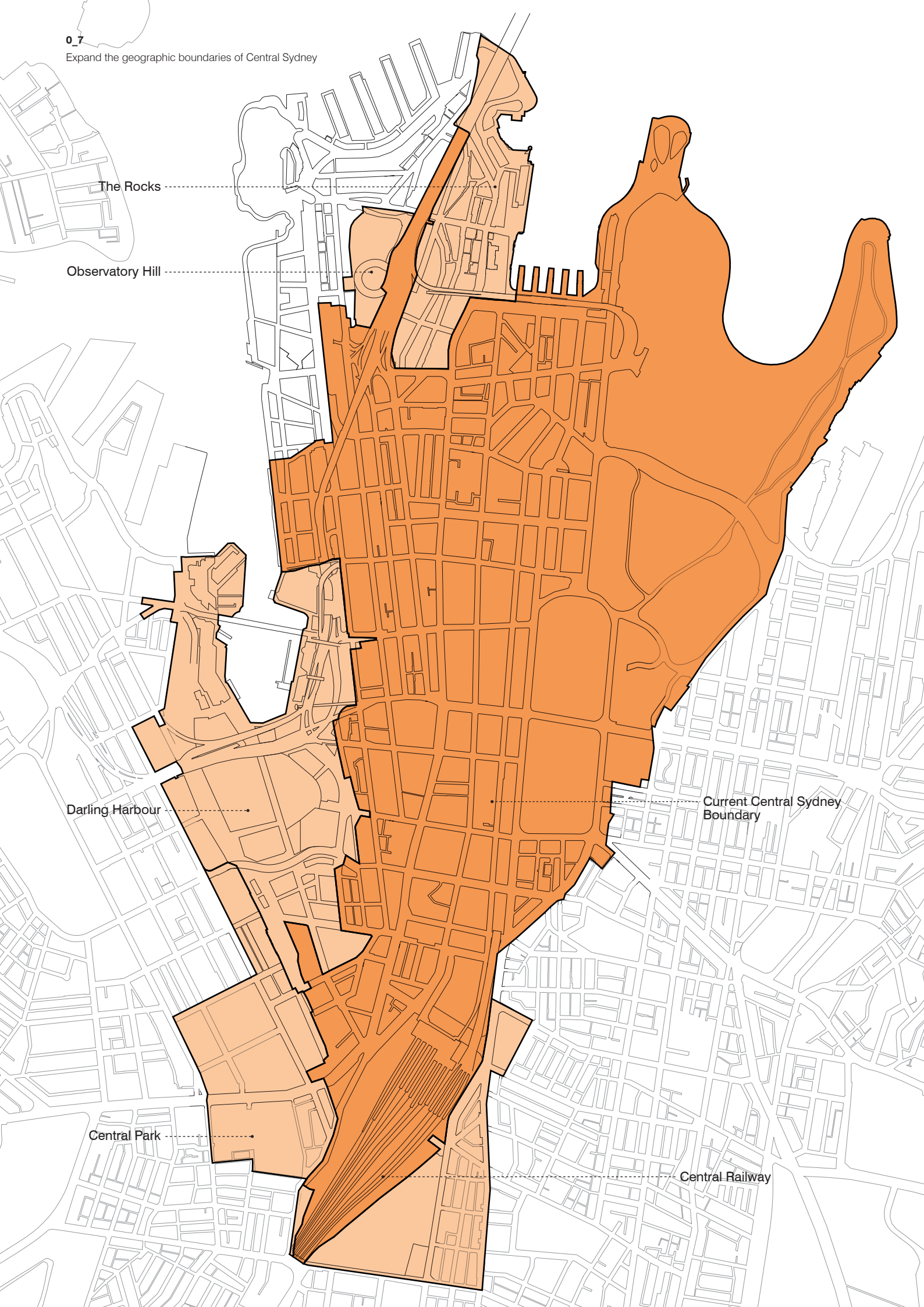
Expand the geographic boundaries of Central Sydney



4

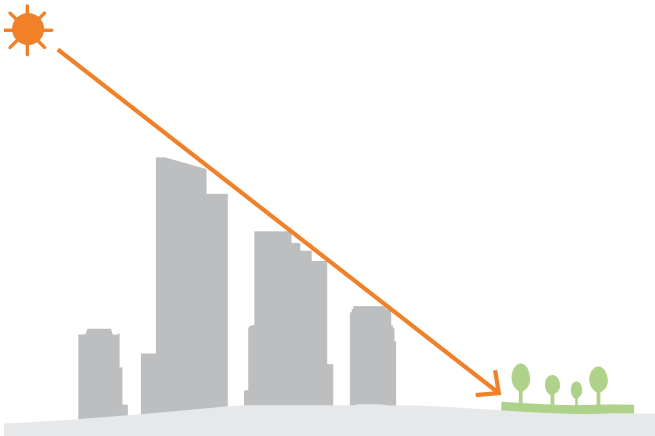
Provide for employment growth in new tower clusters

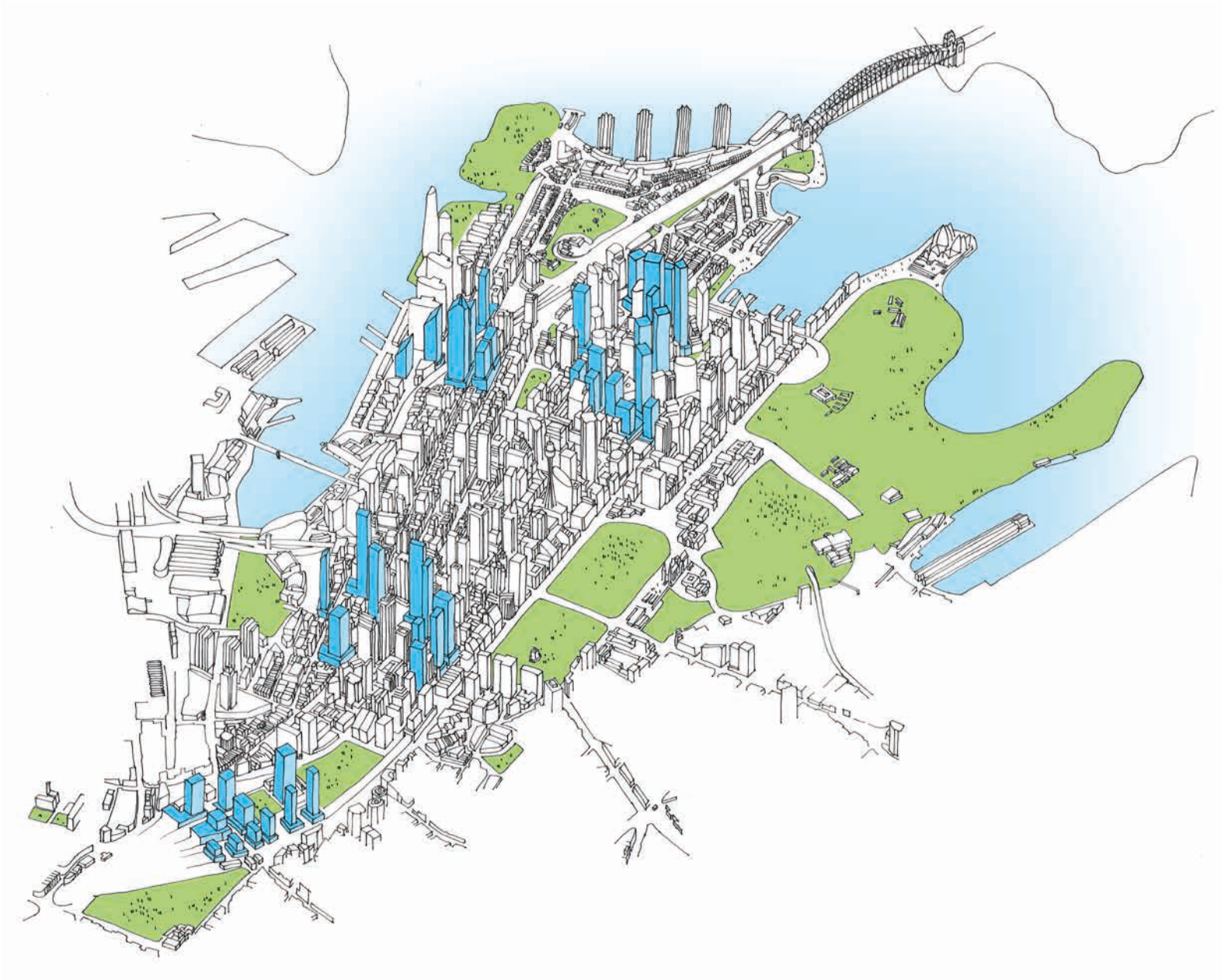
Introducing a new planning pathway for heights and densities above the established maximums limits will increase growth opportunities for employment floor space, promote the efficient use of land, and encourage innovative design. It will also unlock opportunities for the delivery of cultural, social and essential infrastructure and improved public spaces commensurate with growth.

These opportunities are focused in those areas of Central Sydney less constrained by sun access planes. As opportunities are taken up over the next 20 years, new tower clusters will form in Central Sydney to 2036 and beyond.

Actions

- Permit taller buildings with higher floor space ratios for income-earning uses in the right locations
- Outline first principle environmental controls to shape growth sites
- Create a streamlined planning proposal process through published guidelines





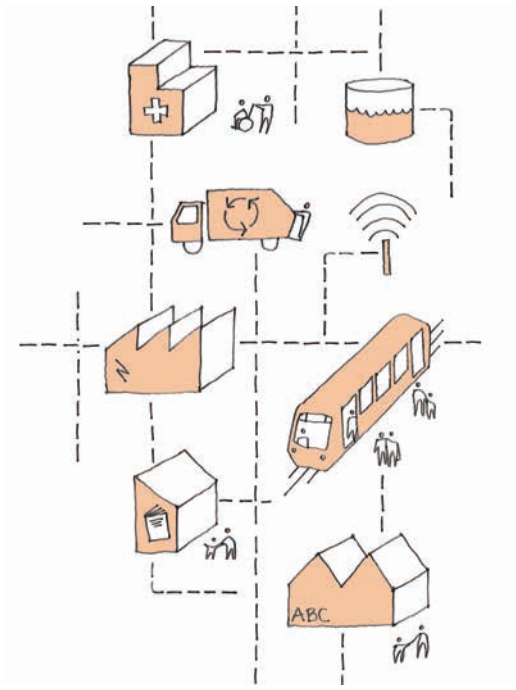
5

Ensure infrastructure keeps pace with growth to sustain a resilient city with a strong community, economy and high standard of living

With affordable housing provided for in the short term and additional infrastructure addressed on an ongoing basis, the Strategy will balance growth with essential social and physical infrastructure.

The greatest challenge for any global city is the supply, funding and delivery of infrastructure. Doing this well creates and sustains a resilient city with high standards of living.

The Strategy requires the development of an infrastructure plan that identifies current and planned infrastructure and any opportunities to strengthen and prioritise infrastructure provision across both the City of Sydney Council and the NSW Government. This plan will assist in optimising the community benefits of growth, assigning responsibilities to different levels of government to ensure they are best placed to respond to emerging challenges and demands. It will aid in forging private and public agency partnerships to ensure the delivery of infrastructure is provided in an efficient, integrated and timely way across a variety of infrastructure classes including open space, waste, fibre optics, water and water recycling, education, health, and public transport.

Actions

- Ensure all development contributes to the provision of new affordable housing
- Develop a comprehensive infrastructure plan
- Develop a clear infrastructure contributions policy for growth sites