PARRAMATTA NORTH
HERITAGE CORE

PLACE IDENTITY

DECEMBER 2018

UrbanGrowth NSW
Development Corporation
UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation’s vision is to inspire and enable the creation of extraordinary places. In line with its vision, UrbanGrowth NSW is bringing together economic, social and environmental benefits to create extraordinary places for future generations within the Parramatta North Growth Centre.

The Growth Centre’s two key government-led projects are the Cumberland Health, Education and innovation precinct, and bringing the nationally listed publicly owned Heritage Core to life as a place of discovery, opportunity, reflection and experience.

**HERITAGE CORE**

**HISTORY & HERITAGE**

The Parramatta North precinct is situated on the traditional homelands of the Darug people. They have existed here since time immemorial and continue to have connection to the landscape associated with the area. This connection is a living culture and is evident in their ways of knowing, being and doing. Their cultural and historical stories, songs, dances, language and cultural protocol represent the past, present and future of the precinct.

Connection to land is central to the cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and provides the basis of their social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

The various historic sites within the Parramatta North Heritage Core, including its colonial and institutional past, tell us much about the evolution of Parramatta, New South Wales and Australia.

Changing community attitudes towards moral and social reform, welfare and the treatment of mental illness are all documented here. Around 40,000 Australians, some still living, have passed through the collective institutions since the 1820s.

**HEALTH, EDUCATION & INNOVATION PRECINCT**

The NSW Government has identified Cumberland Health, Education and Innovation Precinct to be anchored by the University of Sydney, which will become home to 25,000 students by 2050.

The area will be supported by significant investment in public transport, a vibrant University town, public open space, creative industries, cultural heritage and arts activities. The Parramatta Light Rail, Sydney Metro West, Western Sydney Stadium and Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences will bring wide-ranging benefits to the area.

As these changes take place and the Central River City takes shape, UrbanGrowth NSW, in consultation with the community and other key stakeholders, will prepare a new masterplan for the precinct to create an outstanding place in keeping with its rich social and heritage values.
**WHAT WE HEARD**

You are deeply interested in the Aboriginal story of this place, that you respect the land and people and would like to know more, as you want to learn and share with others.

You would like to pay respect and give back. That we should do something in the future that respects and honours the past experiences of the site.

You want to know more. That this is an extraordinary place and that we should find ways to tell its multiple stories relating to the different landscapes and the interconnectedness of each one.

Stories of the river, the land, the people, the buildings, and of change.

There is a critical need for places for people to come together and connect.

The green spaces are highly prized, and they are a place of refuge, healing and reflection. The rejuvenation of Parramatta River is central to this.

You think the artists and makers, the entrepreneurs and innovators, the cooks and the chefs, and the growers and the gardeners of our region should be here.

You are interested in enterprise and self-determination.

You want this place to be open and accessible to all.

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**WHAT WE LEARNED**

UrbanGrowth NSW is creating an aspirational place identity for Parramatta North’s publicly owned, nationally listed Heritage Core that is locally contextual, globally relevant and seeks to fill an unmet need in a rapidly developing urban landscape.

To inform this place’s identity and establish place principles, we sought the knowledge and perspectives of many community members and precinct partners to better understand their values, views and vision for the site.

These conversations are shaping an emerging vision for the future identity of this unique place, including appropriate future uses and benefits for the community.

Listening and learning about the many layers of history within the Heritage Core is helping UrbanGrowth NSW plan for an extraordinary place that will evolve with current and future generations. It will also ensure that any plans for activation respect the past and honour Parramatta North’s stories and memories.

Our stakeholder engagement consisted of workshops, focus groups and one-on-one stakeholder interviews. Engagement also involved special interest groups as well as current and future users of the precinct.

Round table discussions were held with Aboriginal peoples who have cultural knowledge and connection to Parramatta North. Their stories continue to be told.

Interviews were held with 17 stakeholder groups representing local and state governments, social enterprises, community groups, universities and peak bodies. The various interests of these groups include history and heritage, arts and culture, environment, health and well-being, women and children, small business, and events and tourism. These groups have a connection to the area, are located nearby or interested in locating to the heritage core in the future.

Six future user groups were identified and focus groups conducted. These participants had little to no prior knowledge or experience of the site but represent the types of users who may wish to visit or occupy the site in one, two, five or 10 years’ time.

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PARRAMATTA NORTH  - PLACE IDENTITY
Forever Country.

Parramatta North is a place of stories. A place where past lessons fuel future opportunities.

Culturally significant, community inspired and economically vibrant, Parramatta North will bring to life old buildings, new spaces and ideas, in a place of discovery, opportunity, reflection and experience.

**THE VISION**

**PLACE IDENTITY**

Following our precinct’s consultation, place principles were established and will guide the site’s evolution and tie together the future occupants and partners.

**FIRST PEOPLES FIRST**

First Peoples first is intrinsically related to the recognition and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by others involved in any activities that occur on the site. We recognise traditional custodianship and enable a process of inclusivity that guarantees Aboriginal voices, perspectives and insights are captured throughout and embedded in the future planning and use of the area.

**ACTIVE MEMORY**

Both living and past histories are respected, where as we move forward to heal and honour people’s stories and realities past and present. The lessons from the past are applied and acknowledged to prevent similar struggles from recurring and improve on the status quo.

**SUSTAINABLE**

A mix of activities and uses that can contribute to the place identity (both public and private) to enable the long-term success of the site. Innovative ways to sustain and evolve the site that push the boundaries of traditional government ownership and governance will be explored.

**EVERYBODY’S WELCOME**

This place is a safe place for all. There will be a multitude of uses for the community and will work to ensure the site remains an accessible place where everybody feels safe, secure and welcome, especially during this period of immense change.
The engagement process has identified four place outcomes which will help inform a shared vision for the Parramatta North Heritage Core:

**RESTORATION AND ENTERPRISE**
A vibrant and active place where memory is turned into action – acknowledging both the history of the site as well as its future in order to heal, support and strengthen.

**CONNECTION AND PRODUCTION**
A publicly accessible activity hub that celebrates the heritage buildings and their settings with spaces for the community as well as opportunities for discovery, inspiration, connection, gathering and making.

**INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION**
An economically viable, commercially competitive hub to accommodate a wide range of innovative businesses with a focus on cultural, tech and creative industries.

**REJUVENATION AND RECREATION**
The natural edge of the Heritage Core and spaces in between. A future riverside destination that provides a living link between the past, present and future.