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Background

Brisbane City Council is planning for Brisbane's future and transforming access to the river, to give everyone new ways to explore Brisbane and connect with the places that make our city great.

The City Reach Waterfront is one of Brisbane's iconic riverside locations – bookended by the City Botanic Gardens and Howard Smith Wharves. The area is a popular leisure destination and is one of the city's key economic precincts, known for its concentration of high-value professional services and picturesque riverside dining.

The City Reach Waterfront Master Plan (the master plan) is an action from the Brisbane City Centre Master Plan 2014 that establishes an ambitious vision for the waterfront. Achieving the vision of the master plan will take time and will require a collaborative approach between stakeholders, including Council, the Queensland Government and landholders. Council welcomes the opportunity to work with precinct stakeholders to deliver on the master plan's vision.

Community consultation

The master plan is based on extensive technical investigations and community consultation. The draft master plan was released for public consultation in late 2019 and Council received more than 400 submissions. Community feedback indicated that the master plan needed to better address the issues (listed below) of connectivity, comfort and delivery.

- Connectivity: access to the waterfront, and the design and function of promenade space.
- Comfort: more shade and greenery needed along the waterfront.
- Delivery: initiatives and actions to enable the private sector to contribute to the master plan's delivery.

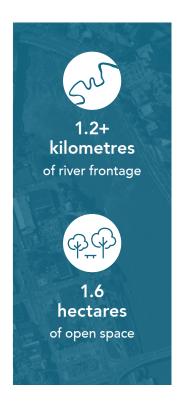
The master plan has been updated to respond to this feedback where possible. Some aspects (including the shared promenade space and private investment potential) require additional investigations by Council.

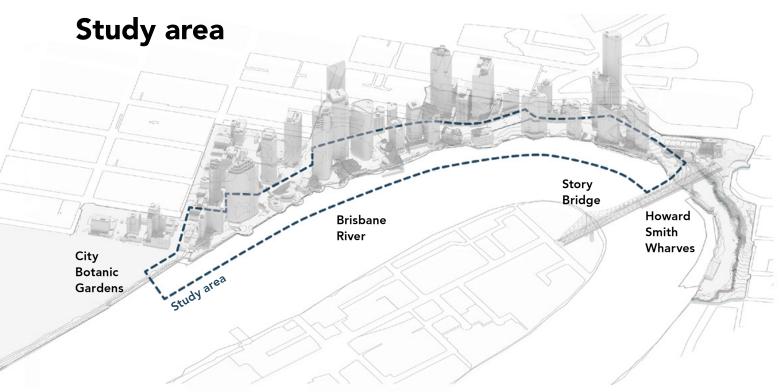
Introduction to the City Reach Waterfront

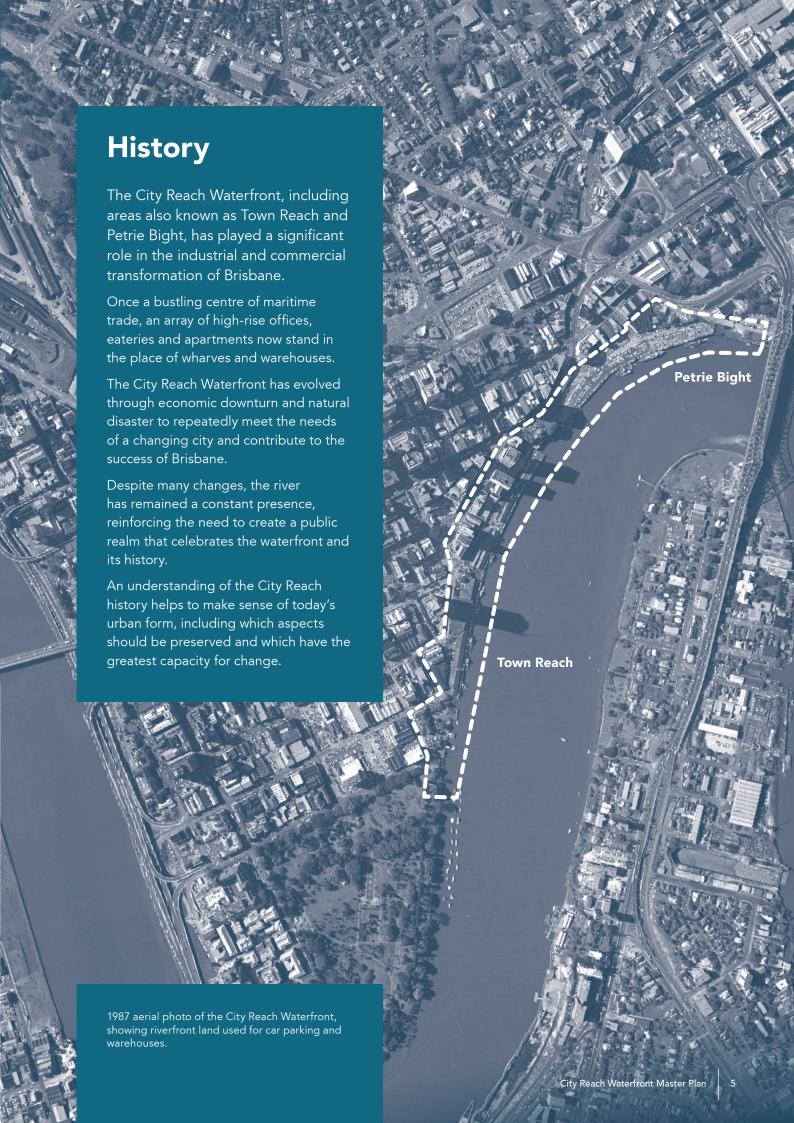
"The City Reach is our city's front door to the world. Unique attractions and distinctive architecture will blend with authentic experiences of our river city – waterfront parks and restaurants, our outdoor lifestyle and year-round comfortable climate. Our city centre will be an irresistible destination,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

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

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







Timeline

Pre-1800s

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

1800s



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

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

1859 Brisbane becomes the capital of the colony of Queensland.

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

1893 Three floods hit Brisbane within a fortnight resulting in record flood levels.

1900s



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

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

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

1976 The Riverside Expressway is completed.

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

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

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

2000s



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

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

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

2012 111 Eagle Street is completed.

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

2018 Howard Smith Wharves opens.

2019 City Botanic Gardens Riverwalk and River Hub opens.

Inner-city context

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

The study area features:



30+ dining destinations



10,000+ workers in key industry growth sectors

\$700+ million

land value

Strategic considerations and infrastructure projects informing the master plan include:

- Land use: The waterfront contains a range of commercial, residential and lifestyle uses and is a core part of the 'Golden Triangle' (the location of key commercial office towers in the city centre).
- Bookends: The City Botanic Gardens and Howard Smith Wharves bookend the study area and are important gateways to and from the waterfront.
- **River aspect:** The waterfront is the only location in the city centre where the city grid has direct access to the river.
- Open space and Riverwalk: The waterfront Riverwalk provides a continuous pedestrian and cyclist connection to City Reach.
- Major development: The role of the waterfront as an integral part of Brisbane's inner-city will intensify as a result of new major projects, including Queen's Wharf Brisbane and the Waterfront Brisbane development.

- Future bridge crossings: The proposed pedestrian and cyclist bridge connecting the city centre to Kangaroo Point peninsula will create opportunities to explore Brisbane and will improve access to Kangaroo Point's lifestyle and leisure amenities, including its natural beaches.
- Public transport: The Brisbane Metro and Cross River Rail projects will improve access to the City Reach Waterfront.
- Active transport and river access: The City Botanic Gardens Riverwalk extension and River Access Hub directs pedestrian and cyclist traffic to the waterfront and provides opportunities to access the river for water-based activities.
- City centre street hierarchy: The combination of new active and public transport infrastructure and major development projects will reshape the city centre street hierarchy, placing greater emphasis on pedestrian amenity and connectivity between destinations and transport services.



The view from Riverside Centre looking north towards the Story Bridge

Destinations and major projects (shown on map)

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

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

Legend

City Reach Waterfront study area

Key riverside destinations

Riverfront parklands

Brisbane River

River routes

Queen Street

Albert Street

Mary Street

Mary Street

Edward Street

Adelaide Street

Bridge

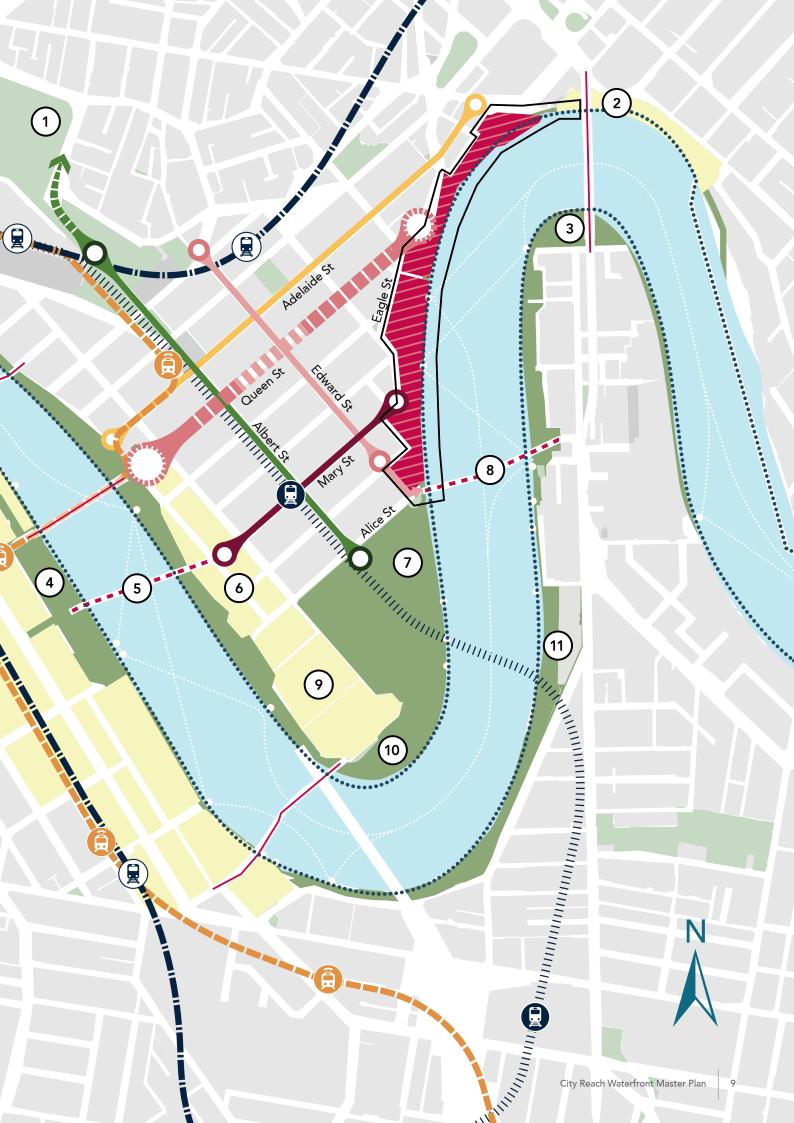
Planned bridge

 Continuous riverside pedestrian and cyclist connection (existing and proposed)

Rail line and stations (existing)

Cross River Rail line and stations (planned)

Brisbane Metro line and stations (planned)



Evolving active transport network

The draft master plan received more than 400 submissions, and one consistent question raised, 'how do we safely share the promenade between people walking and on bicycles?'.

While the design of the promenade is subject to ongoing consideration, the need for the promenade to act both as a movement corridor and as a great place and destination of its own remains a primary consideration. This is reinforced by the fact that City Reach, unlike other locations along the river, accommodates a high volume of parallel (following the river) and perpendicular (from the river to the city grid) movement. A promenade design that focuses on travel, at the expense of placemaking opportunities, would not be a desirable outcome for City Reach as it would result in an unwelcoming public space for visitors and people wanting to linger and enjoy the space.

Council is currently reviewing the pedestrian and cyclist networks across the inner-city with a view to supporting greater numbers of active transport users in the future. As part of these investigations, options are being explored for dedicated bicycle connections along streets within the city centre. These new networks will provide cyclists with a greater choice of safe and convenient travel options when planning their journeys. The new networks will also reduce pressure on the City Reach Waterfront and other locations like Howard Smith Wharves as they will no longer be the only viable routes.

You can find more information on current projects and future announcements by visiting brisbane.qld.gov.au and searching "roads, infrastructure and bikeways".

The City Reach Waterfront destination

For many people, the history of change experienced along the City Reach Waterfront is emblematic of Brisbane's transformation from a large country town to Australia's sustainable, liveable, subtropical city.

Progressive renewal of the waterfront has created one of the city's premier dining and lifestyle precincts drawing visitors from across Queensland, Australia and the world. The juxtaposition of city towers against the river and the expansive open views to the Story Bridge and Kangaroo Point are iconic features of the waterfront and form a core part of Brisbane's identity.

However, the lack of an overall vision for the waterfront in the past has led to several issues experienced at the waterfront today, including a narrow river promenade that struggles to manage its dual role as a movement corridor and extension of the waterfront public realm. Looking to the future, Council is committed to supporting the waterfront's ongoing growth as one of the city's priority commercial and lifestyle precincts. New transport infrastructure, including the Kangaroo Point green bridge, and significant private sector investment will strengthen the destination qualities of the City Reach making it an even more compelling place to visit and experience.

The waterfront is more than a pleasant backdrop for commuters and the City Reach Waterfront Master Plan will ensure that the interests of active transport commuters and the destination qualities (existing and potential) of the waterfront itself are balanced.





What makes a great waterfront?

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



City Reach Waterfront



City Reach Waterfront case studies



Other benchmark waterfronts



Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast, Australia Darling Harbour, Sydney, Australia Barangaroo, Sydney, Australia Southbank, Melbourne, Australia Elizabeth Quay, Perth, Australia Viaduct, Auckland, New Zealand Old Port, Montreal, Canada Harbourfront, Toronto, Canada

Riverwalk, San Antonio, USA

Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, USA

Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago, USA Inner Harbour, Baltimore, USA Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, UK Paris Plage, Paris, France Rhine Promenade, Düsseldorf, Germany Nyhavn, Copenhagen, Denmark Aker Brygge Harbourfront, Oslo, Norway West Lake, Hangzhou, China Clarke Quay, Singapore Marina Bay, Singapore Kamo River, Kyoto, Japan

Six qualities of great waterfronts

Across the benchmark waterfronts, six qualities feature consistently.





Generous

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



Adaptable

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



Connected

- Visually and physically connected to the city
- Connected to the river's edge
- Accessible to people of all ages and abilities



Consistent

- Complementary use of materials and landscaping
- Unified design approach to the promenade



Engaging

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



Comfortable

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

The City Reach Waterfront today



Analysis of the City Reach Waterfront

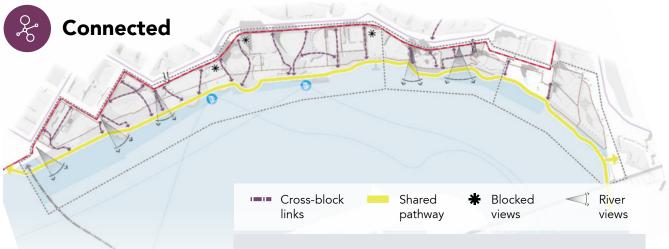


The City Reach Waterfront has an average promenade width of 4.3 metres, making it one of the least generous waterfronts of the 22 benchmarked.

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

Master plan opportunities

- Create a wide, continuous and unimpeded promenade that accommodates all users in a low speed environment
- Improve the promenade's functionality and safety by simplifying its alignment to resolve conflict points and improve visibility
- Identify public-to-active transport interchanges and parking locations for bicycles and other rideables



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

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

Master plan opportunities

- Open view corridors on key streets
- Enhance existing pathway links to increase access
- Promote cycling and walking in a low speed environment
- Establish new active transport connections to the Kangaroo Point green bridge
- Support all-abilities access to the waterfront



The City Reach Waterfront has a number of activity areas, but access to the water is limited in some locations.

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

Master plan opportunities

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



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

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

Master plan opportunities

- Allow for a variety of waterfront design responses that are adaptable and responsive to tidal changes and flooding
- Promote flexible use of the waterfront public realm to respond to changes in activity demand
- Support temporary uses, including restaurants and bars, on the river



The City Reach Waterfront incorporates several design styles that present an inconsistent look and feel.

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

Master plan opportunities

- Create a consistent, but not monotonous, aesthetic to the waterfront through material selection, landscaping and lighting
- Create a promenade with a consistent width, look and feel to unify the waterfront
- Incorporate materials and landscaping that are unique to Brisbane



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

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

Master plan opportunities

- Create more space in the public realm so users can comfortably dwell and sit along the waterfront
- Provide more shade through landscaping and shade structures
- Celebrate existing significant trees and increase planting

City Reach Waterfront opportunities

The opportunities for the City Reach Waterfront are summarised below, and the accompanying concept map shows where these could be implemented within the City Reach area. The map is illustrative only and Council welcomes any innovative design solutions that further the vision and objectives of the master plan.

While the opportunities below provide guidance that is specific to the City Reach Waterfront, Council's *Design-led City: A design strategy for Brisbane* remains relevant as an overarching design strategy for the whole of Brisbane, in addition to principles set out in the City Centre neighbourhood plan.

1 Promenade shared space

Based on the benchmarking analysis, and an assessment of Brisbane's current Riverwalk infrastructure, a shared promenade is proposed along the full length of the City Reach Waterfront, including a wide unobstructed area for movement.

In locations like the City Reach, where there is a need to balance both movement and placemaking activities, a wide low speed promenade will allow everyone to experience the waterfront in comfort and safety.

Council's Transport Plan for Brisbane – Strategic Directions and A City for Everyone: Inclusive Brisbane Plan 2019-2029 are guiding documents for this opportunity.

2 Engaging public space

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

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

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

3 River access

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

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

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

4 Materials and landscaping

Selecting materials and landscaping that are unique to Brisbane and complement its subtropical character will give the City Reach Waterfront a distinct identity and sense of place and will avoid the creation of a characterless public realm.

Appropriate use of landscaping will create a visually appealing and shaded urban environment, improving comfort levels along the waterfront.

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



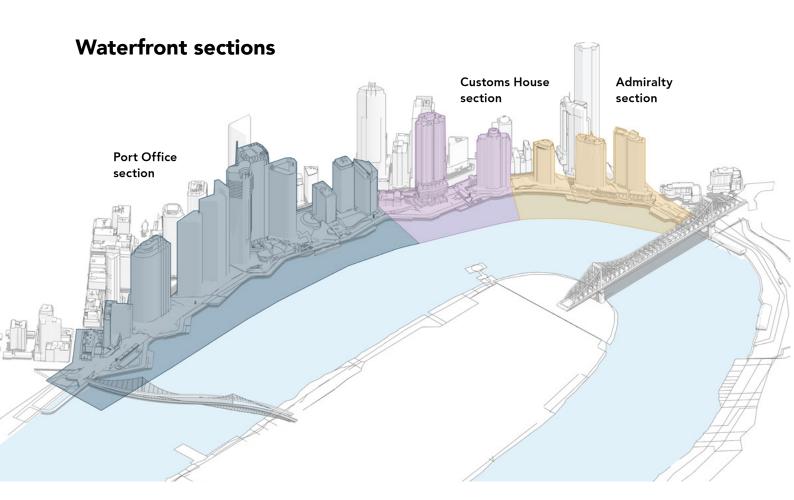
City Reach Waterfront Master Plan

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

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

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

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





Port Office section

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

Section objectives

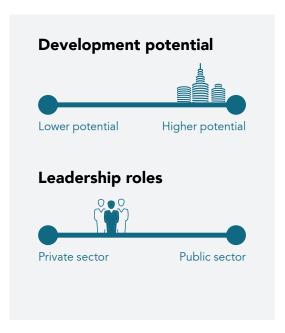
Increase the quantity of publicly accessible open space.

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

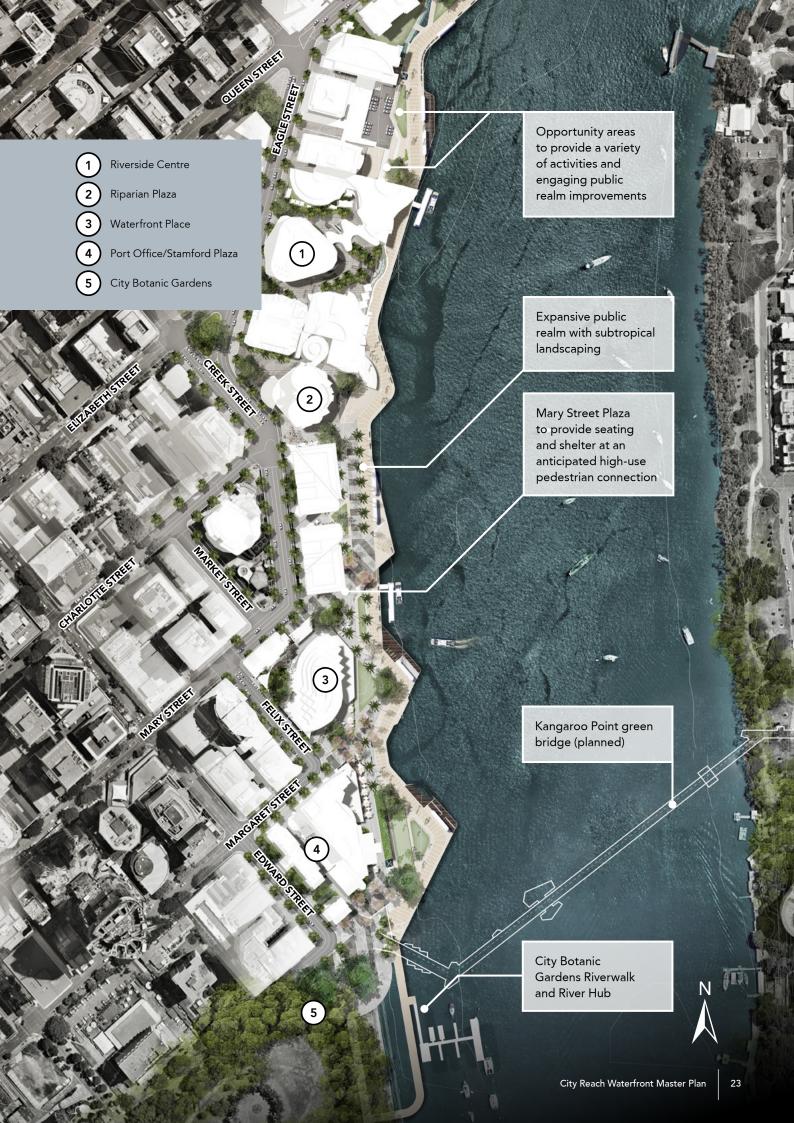
Strengthen the section's lifestyle and leisure qualities by providing a range of activities that create more reasons to visit, day and night.

Improve access to the waterfront via consolidated CityCat and ferry terminals and improved pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.

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







Customs House section

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

Section objectives

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

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

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

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

Preserve the iconic fig tree next to Customs House and introduce complementary landscaping.

Create a substantial riverside public space outside 443 Queen Street that integrates with the promenade.

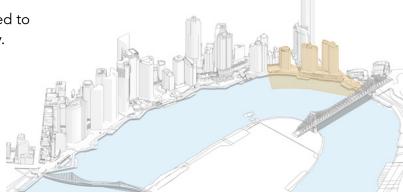
Development potential Lower potential Higher potential Leadership roles Private sector Public sector





Admiralty section

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



Section objectives

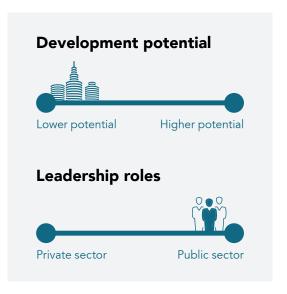
Provide clear and direct connections to Howard Smith Wharves.

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

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

Improve pedestrian access to Howard Street and Arch Lane.

Maintain the amenity enjoyed by existing residents, particularly in respect of noise.







Next steps

The following initiatives will support the master plan's journey from concept to reality.

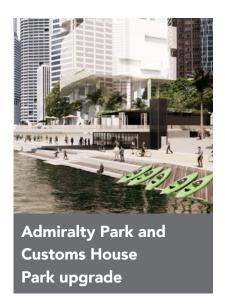


The green bridge will dramatically alter movement patterns along the waterfront and fundamentally re-shape the City Reach's presentation and profile. Connecting to the City Botanic Gardens, the bridge will contribute to Brisbane's aspirations of being one of the world's best cities for walking and cycling.

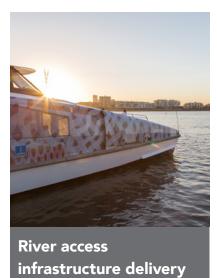


Redevelopment of the Eagle Street Pier has the potential to revitalise one of Brisbane's premier business and lifestyle destinations, while also making a significant contribution to the city centre's public realm.

Responsibility Responsibility Joint Public sector Joint Public sector Private sector Private sector **Timing Timing** Short-term Medium-term Strategic Short-term Medium-term Strategic



Guided by the City Reach past, park improvements will shine a light on Customs House and the Petrie Bight retaining wall, while providing opportunities to enjoy an elevated view of the Brisbane River.



Consolidating existing ferry and CityCat services along the waterfront will significantly improve arrival and departure experiences and will address issues with overcrowding at existing locations.



Council will investigate a suite of actions to support the master plan's delivery, including statutory amendments to the City Plan, to give landholders the confidence they need to invest in the City Reach Waterfront.



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