



FINAL REPORT

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 **PENRITH  
CITY COUNCIL**  
Prepared for Penrith Council



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Revision Letter	Date	Reason for Issue
A	26/11/2014	Draft Introduction, Contextual Analysis Chapters
B	09/01/2015	Draft Benchmarking Chapter
C	25/02/2015	Draft City Park Concepts and Testing
D	02/04/2015	Final Draft
E	23/04/15	Final

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01	INTRODUCTION	5
02	RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS	9
03	BENCHMARKING	25
04	URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES	35
05	FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM	45
06	CITY PARK CONCEPTS	49
07	PREFERRED CONCEPT AND WAY FORWARD	59



Penrith Progression

Penrith City Park Review  
April 2015





# INTRODUCTION

## 01

INTRODUCTION

# 01 Introduction

The Penrith City Park Review establishes a context for development of a new urban city space that will enhance the quality of life and public realm of the Penrith City Centre and complement its built environment. It supports the larger Penrith Progression strategy to confirm Penrith as a Regional City Centre within the Sydney metropolitan planning strategy.

Penrith is evolving as a Regional City Centre in accordance with the NSW Government's A Plan for Growing Sydney. As a Regional City Centre, it is anticipated that Penrith will need to accommodate an additional 10,000 new dwellings and 12,000 new jobs in its City Centre by 2031. This significant growth in residents and employees requires strategic consideration of the public open space network in order to achieve a liveable and vibrant urban core worthy of a Regional City Centre.

A civic destination has long been discussed as a proposition for Penrith City Centre. Penrith City Council has undertaken land acquisitions in the City Centre to assist in the future implementation of this place. This project will test the location, scale, shape, function, nature, types of recreation, entertainment, economic use, and the place's feasibility and capacity as a driver of change.

It is well known that high quality public open space has a significant impact on the economic life of urban centres. As cities increasingly compete with one another to attract investment, the presence of good civic spaces and public parks becomes a vital economic lever to first attract and then retain new businesses. The Penrith Business Alliance has experienced this first hand through developer interest in sites adjacent to the proposed location of the Penrith City Park that will inherently benefit from increased amenity. Attractive open space offers very clear benefits to the local economy in terms of stimulating increased commercial rents and residential prices since occupants are will to pay a premium to be near open space.

The practical intent of the Penrith City Park is to enhance the environmental, social and economic performance of Penrith. It offers an opportunity as a catalyst project for the Penrith Progression to transition Penrith as a Regional City Centre with a flexible civic space that meets the daily needs of workers, residents and visitors.





## FUTURE CITY PARK LOCATION

The Penrith City Park location has been identified by Council at the intersection of Henry Street and Station Street. The Investigation Site for the Penrith City Park is approximately 14,000sqm in size measuring 80m in depth and between 170m and 190m in length.

A City Park Precinct surrounding the park will guide uses and public realm improvements that contribute to the identity of the park itself.

## CITY PARK OBJECTIVES

The vision for the Penrith City Park is one grounded in the idea that Penrith needs a central civic gathering place that represents Penrith's greater identity. This place is envisaged as becoming the location of daily community events, weekly activities and annual festivals. Supporting this place is an existing network of parks and places already providing a range of urban environment experiences.

Outlined below are a series of objectives for the City Park as stated in the project brief:

- + To be a unique place with a strong identity that signifies Penrith as a Regional City Centre.
- + To provide a range of spaces as settings for activities throughout the year.
- + To incorporate flexibility into all spaces for a range of activities during the day and evening.
- + To be an economic growth catalyst across Penrith City Centre as well as the development of adjoining and adjacent sites.
- + To provide a safe, accessible, high quality public amenity for Penrith City Centre residents, workers and visitors.
- + To be a complementary environment to the surrounding urban environment.
- + To be activated by appropriate adjacent land uses.





# RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS 02

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

## 02 Research and Analysis

Great cities have great places. To match Penrith's new status as a Regional City Centre in metropolitan Sydney, the Penrith City Park aspires to be a great place, a civic gathering square that captures the identity and essence of who Penrith is in the 21st century. This section provides a research and analysis framework to describe the practical intent of the new Penrith City Park.

### EVOLUTION OF THE 21ST CENTURY CITY PARK TYPOLOGY

Open spaces of the 21st century don't take on the same characteristics as they did 200, or even 100 years ago. What once were seen as informal, large tracts of land on the outskirts of towns, city planners soon placed city parks within the urban context. These places were seen as respite from the urban city around them; their boundaries were rigidly defined that acted as a 'fence' to keep out urban activity. Today, city parks have once again evolved, with current exemplars featuring increasingly blurred boundaries where pieces of the urban environment are featured within the open space itself. Today, the best city parks are multi-use destinations and catalysts for community development.

As Penrith looks to develop the new Penrith City Park, 21st century precedents provide a foundation for the project. It is important to look to the past to understand the evolution of civic spaces in urban areas to learn from the past, understand the new demands of a city park in an urban context, and prepare a space for the future.





### 19TH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY: **SEPARATION MODEL**

- + Initially cemeteries acted as open space respite.
- + Set on the outskirts of the city, away from the hustle and bustle of daily life.
- + Large scale tracts of land were set aside and acted as nature sanctuaries.



### 20TH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY: **GATED MODEL**

- + Propelled by the City Beautiful movement, urban areas were cleared and green space created within cities.
- + Approach kept open spaces separate from the urban fabric.



### 21ST CENTURY PHILOSOPHY: **INTEGRATED MODEL**

- + Open space now seen as an integral part of urban fabric and includes mix of hard and softscapes.
- + Urban elements are placed within the park to provide activation and increase safety.
- + Park borders are activated with diverse uses to ensure park's vibrancy during the day and night.



## EVOLUTION OF THE CITY PARK CONCEPT IN PENRITH

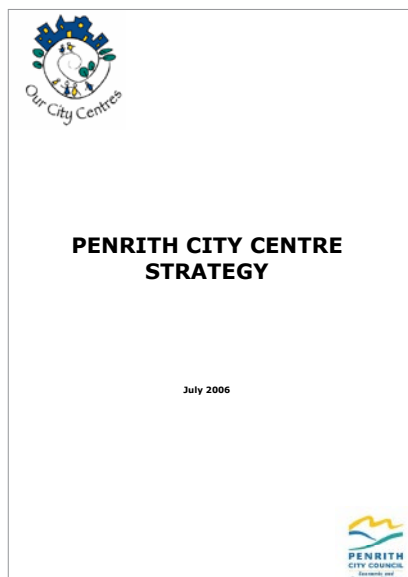
The Penrith City Park is intended to improve Penrith City Centre's identity and public realm. The idea for a new civic 'heart' has arisen from planning investigations which have found that Penrith did not have a central civic space. Since then, the idea for the new Penrith City Park has arisen at the corner of Henry Street and Station Street. City Council has since moved forward with property acquisition in preparation for its realisation.

Ideas on what type of open space the new Penrith City Park will become and how the city will use the land have evolved. The development of the Penrith City Park has been a central part of Penrith's public domain aspirations since it was first identified in the Penrith City Strategy in 2006.

This idea was then incorporated and expanded by the NSW Cities Taskforce in the Penrith City Centre Vision (2007) which found that "Penrith City Centre lacks a cohesive system of civic spaces, those spaces which are highly urban in character and cater for intensive use such as festivals and cultural celebrations."

The size and shape has changed over the years, more recently taking on a formal rectangular shape. This is reflected in zoning changes to the new Penrith City Park land in the Draft Local Environmental Plan and has been supported as a recommendation through the Penrith Progression process.

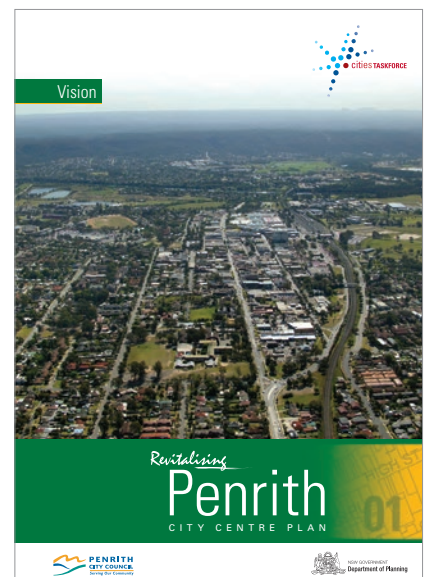
Outlined on the following pages are relevant vision and planning documents that tell the story of the evolution of the Penrith City Park concept from initial ideas to where we are today. These documents provide the foundation for the work undertaken in this report.



### PENRITH CITY CENTRE STRATEGY (2006)

The Strategy aims to guide future planning directions and to establish a set of principles for the development of revised planning controls for the Penrith City Centre. One of the demonstration projects recommended to improve the city's public domain is for the development of a Penrith City Park.

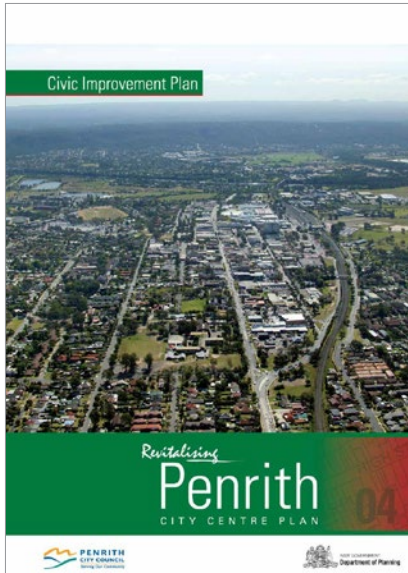
According to the Strategy, Council should "provide an accessible central City Park (possibly in Allen Place) around which a range of activities such as cafés, restaurants, shops, bars and the like can be located." This is the first mention and identification of the need for a central City Park focused on the Allen Place car park.



### PENRITH CITY CENTRE VISION (2007)

A Penrith City Park is a central part of the Penrith City Centre Vision and is included as the centrepiece of the city's civic and cultural precinct. The Vision was prepared by the NSW Cities Taskforce and was endorsed by Council. It supported the Penrith City Centre Strategy action for a City Park.

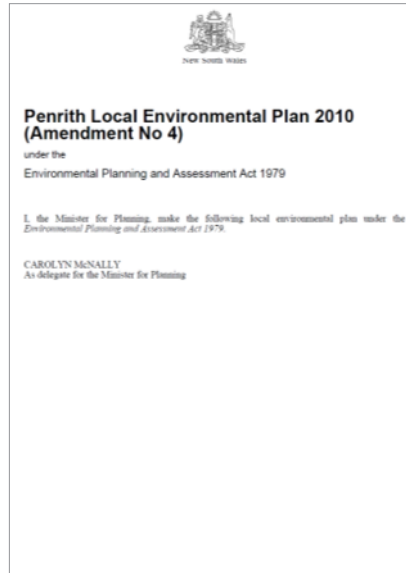
The location of a Penrith City Park is shown to be on the Allen Place car park surrounded by active building uses in the City Centre. This promises to contain green public spaces to enliven the precinct, making it attractive and vibrant after hours.



### PENRITH CIVIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN (2008)

The Penrith Civic Improvement Plan was prepared by the NSW Cities Taskforce and was endorsed by City Council. It is one of a suite of plans produced to implement the Penrith City Vision (2007).

A Penrith City Park is an integral part of the plan to improve these conditions, estimating its implementation cost to be \$15 million (estimate is a 2008 dollar value). The new park and square are proposed at Allen Place to provide improved amenity in the City Centre. Its boundaries are confined to the existing surface car park in the interior of the block bounded by Henry Street to the north, Station Street to the west, High Street to the south and Lawson Street to the east.



### PENRITH LEP 2010 AMENDMENT 4 (2010)

The Penrith Local Environment Plan 2010 Amendment 4 is relevant to the City Park because it provides a planning framework for Penrith to fulfil its role as a regional city. In 2008 the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) zoned the Allen Place Car Park RE1 Public Recreation but did not include any recreation zoning on land fronting High and Henry Streets.

After consulting with urban design experts on the size and scale of the City Park it was determined the park should exhibit a square form. The LEP amendment changed the zone at the corner of Henry and Station Streets to RE1 Recreation, and included an acquisition clause. The amendment also changed the zoning of the eastern end of the Allen Place Car Park from RE1 to B3 Mixed Use, to recognise future incorporation of Council's buildings along Henry Street into the park area. Other land along Henry Street is proposed to be rezoned to RE1 Recreation in the future to reflect the preference of a more compact and regular shaped park. The current B3 zoning, however, does not prevent development of this Council owned land as a park.



### PENRITH PROGRESSION (2014)

The Penrith Progression process has confirmed the desire from the community, including businesses, to enhance the City Centre through the development of a green and connected City Park. To implement this vision, a significant recommendation of the Penrith Progression is the implementation of place shaping projects, including the Penrith City Park.

The Penrith Progression identifies the location of existing regional and neighbourhood scaled parks, but notes the absence of a city scaled park in the open space hierarchy. As such, a Penrith City Park is identified as the first action for Council to implement in order to achieve the Progression vision. This document locates the Penrith City Park as the central civic place of Penrith linked to the city's new identity as a regional centre. In order for it to succeed, the Penrith City Park must be grounded by economic drivers in and around the park to ensure its long term success as a true place within the Penrith CBD.



## CONTEXTUAL SITE ANALYSIS

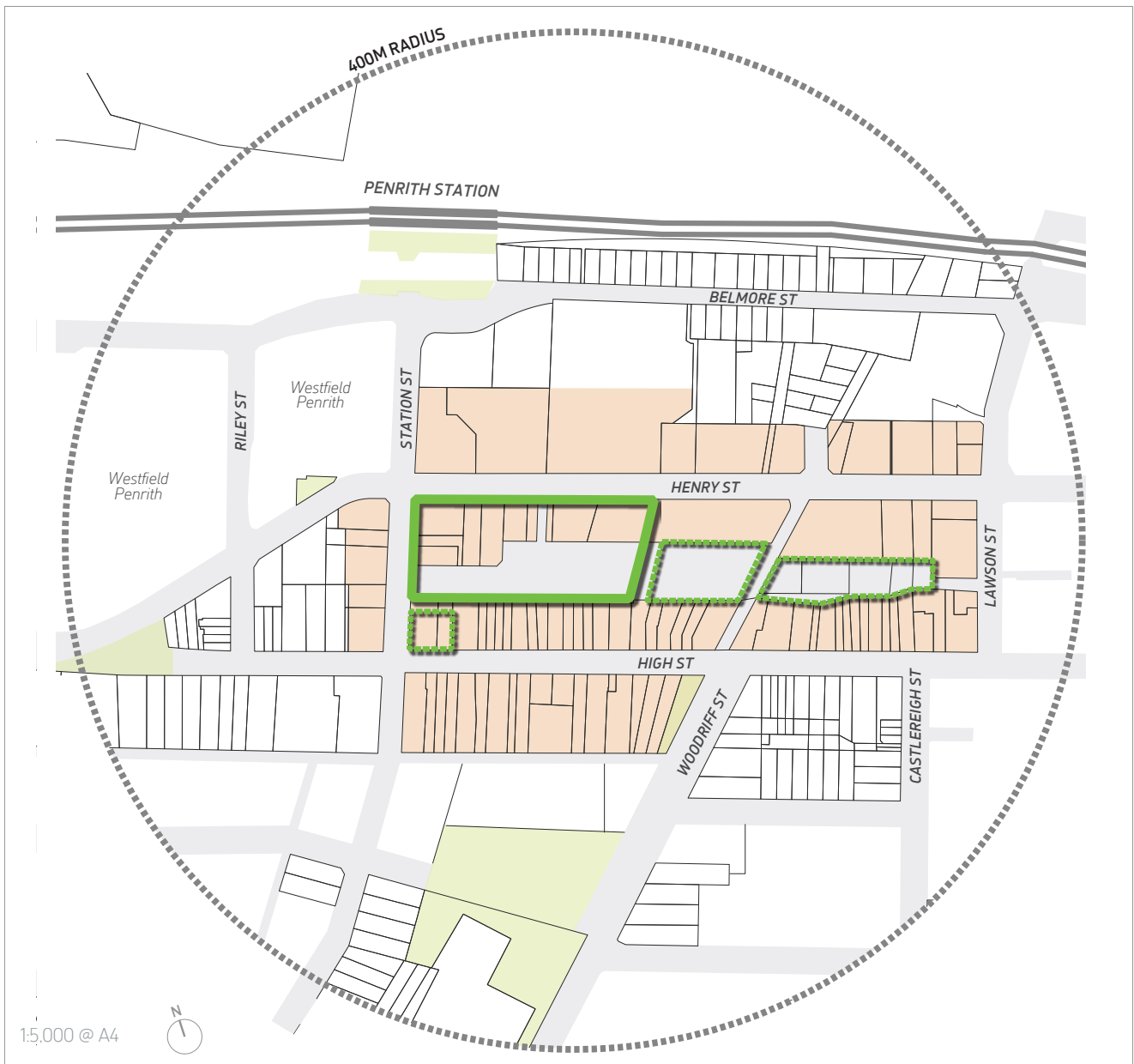
An understanding of the physical site characteristics is necessary to develop concepts for how the place might respond to its context.

The following section looks at existing nearby parks, public spaces, landmarks, environmental conditions, drainage and other utility challenges and easements that could affect the future functionality. Analysis is conducted both within the space's precinct and at a more specific site level. Findings enable future recommendations to respond at a corresponding precinct and site specific scale.

Key findings are summarised at the end of this section that outline potential opportunities from this phase of work and will be utilised in the development of concept scenarios for the site.

## ANALYSIS DIAGRAM OVERVIEW

- + **Base Map** - Defines the City Park site and precinct periphery.
- + **Existing Surrounding Park System** - Places the Penrith City Park within a hierarchy of open spaces in the Penrith City Centre.
- + **Ownership and Landmarks** - Identifies Council controlled land and major land use landmarks adjacent to the City Park site.
- + **Active Transport** - Studies movement of pedestrians around the Penrith City Park site and identifies planned corridors to improve streetscape and pedestrian attractors and facilities.
- + **Easements and Road Infrastructure** - Identifies right of way and drainage easements, planned laneway improvements and planned road upgrades that may affect the Penrith City Park site configuration.
- + **Services Infrastructure** - Outlines the locations for sewer and water pipes on and around the Penrith City Park site.
- + **Tree Study** - Specifies the size and location of existing trees on the site.
- + **Environment** - Summarises topographic, sun and wind conditions of the Penrith City Park site.



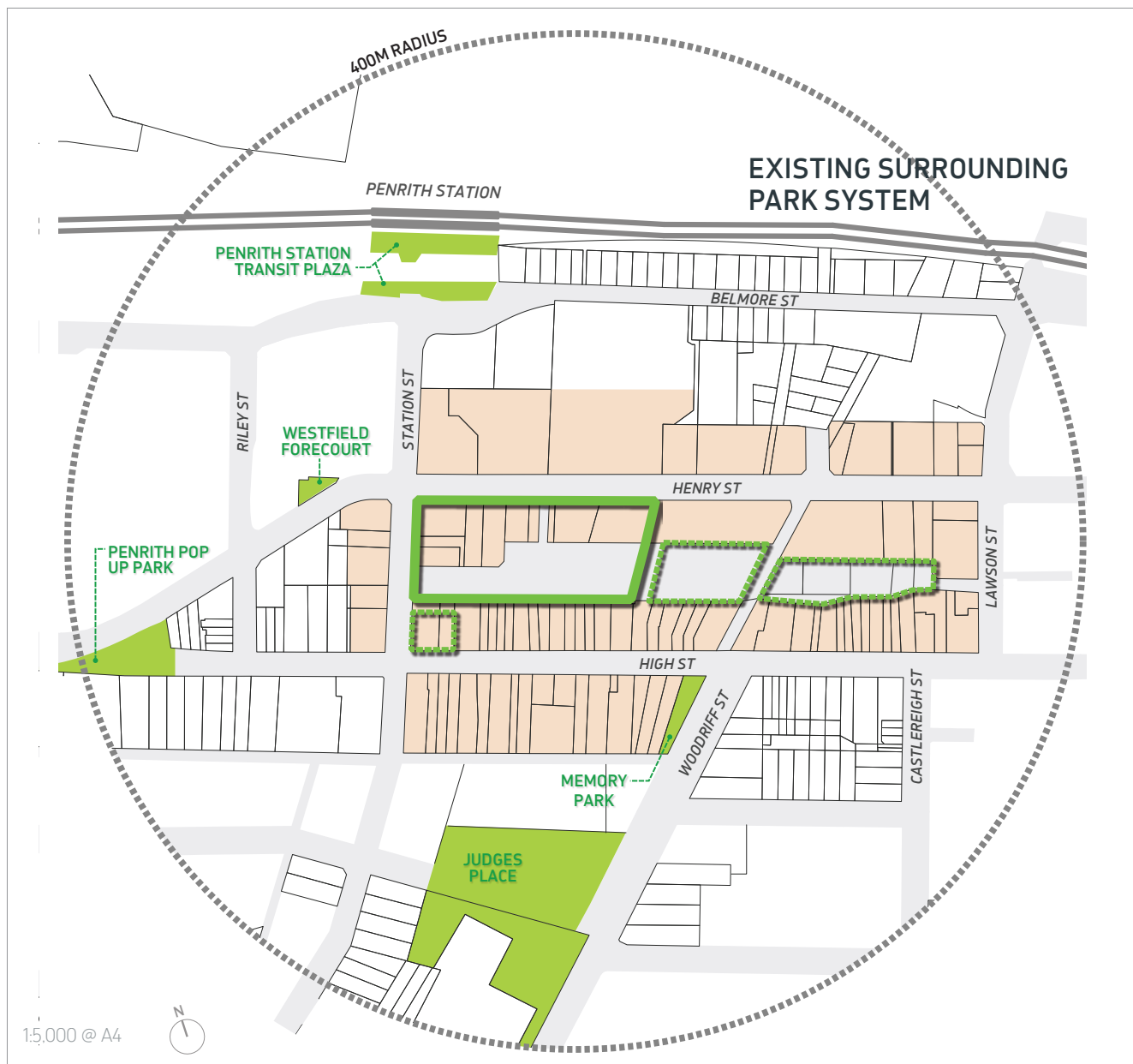
## FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + Area of City Park Investigation Site: **14,000sqm.**
- + Extension Investigation Sites Area: **9,200sqm.**
- + Extension Investigation Sites Definition: Short or long term considerations for either extending the civic space footprint or encouraging appropriate adjacent development.
- + The City Park periphery, including new development which will benefit from the City Park and in turn activate it, contributes identity for the streets and buildings surrounding the new civic space.
- + The Penrith City Park is within walking distance of Penrith Station and High Street and link the two destinations.

## KEY

- CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE
- EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES
- CITY PARK PERIPHERY
- EXISTING OPEN SPACE

## EXISTING SURROUNDING PARK SYSTEM



### FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + The Penrith City Park is planned to be the centrepiece of Penrith to enhance the public realm of the City Centre.
- + The Penrith Pop Up Park and Memory Park are used for small programmed events while the Penrith City Park is envisioned as being capable of hosting larger scale events.

### KEY

CITY PARK  
INVESTIGATION SITE

EXTENSION  
INVESTIGATION SITES

EXISTING OPEN SPACE

CITY PARK PRECINCT



## FACTS AND FINDINGS

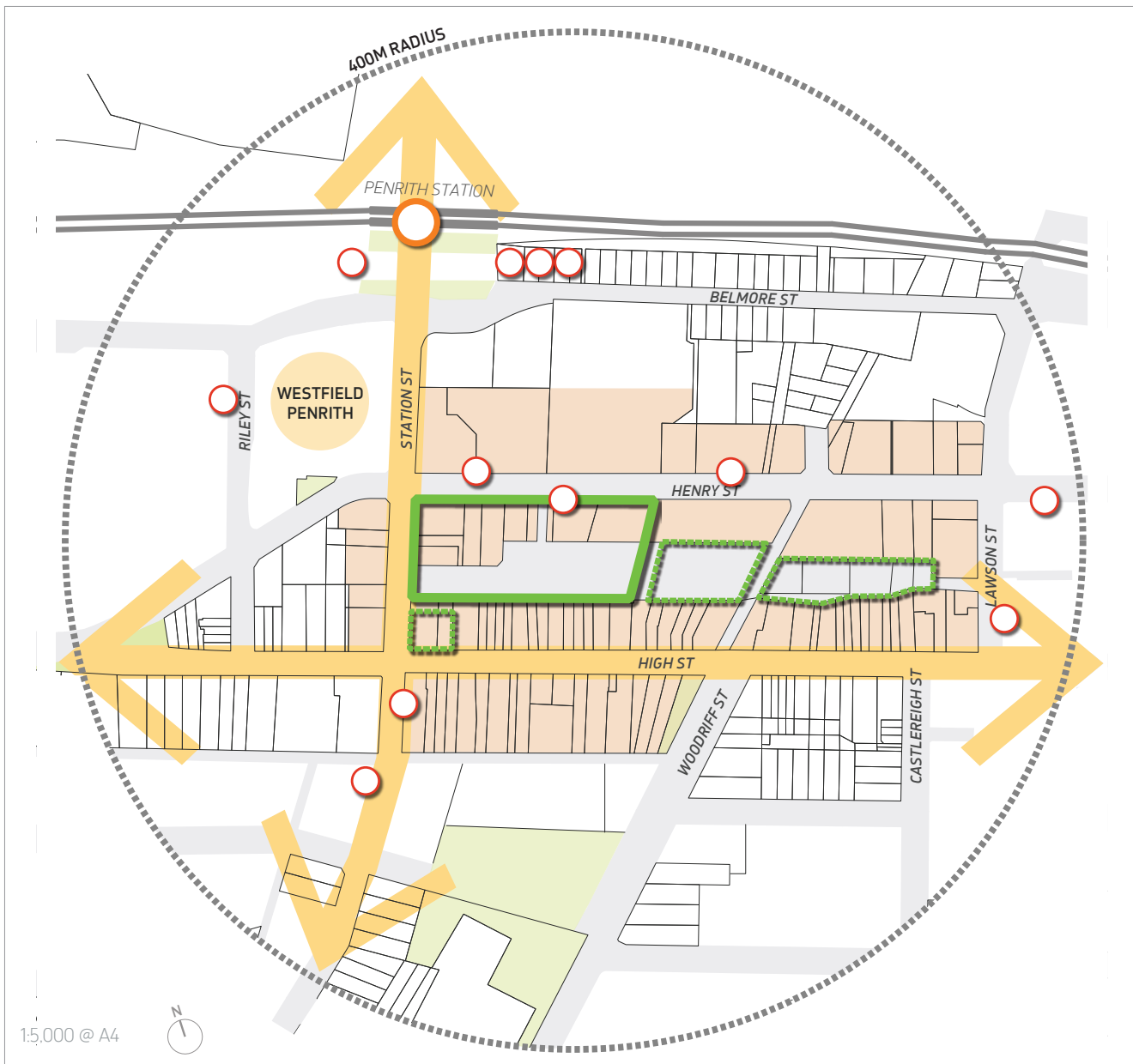
- + Council currently owns numerous parcels in the City Park precinct, including 8 of the 10 parcels on the City Park Investigation Site.
- + The Penrith City Park is located one block south of Penrith Station, one block north of High Street, and one block east of Westfield Penrith, with adjacent proximity to Nepean College.
- + The landmarks are destinations and sources of users for the Penrith City Park.

## KEY

- CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE
- EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES
- CITY COUNCIL OWNED LAND
- GOVERNMENT OWNED LAND
- EXISTING OPEN SPACE
- LANDMARK SITE
- POTENTIAL LAND TO BE ACQUIRED



## ACTIVE TRANSPORT

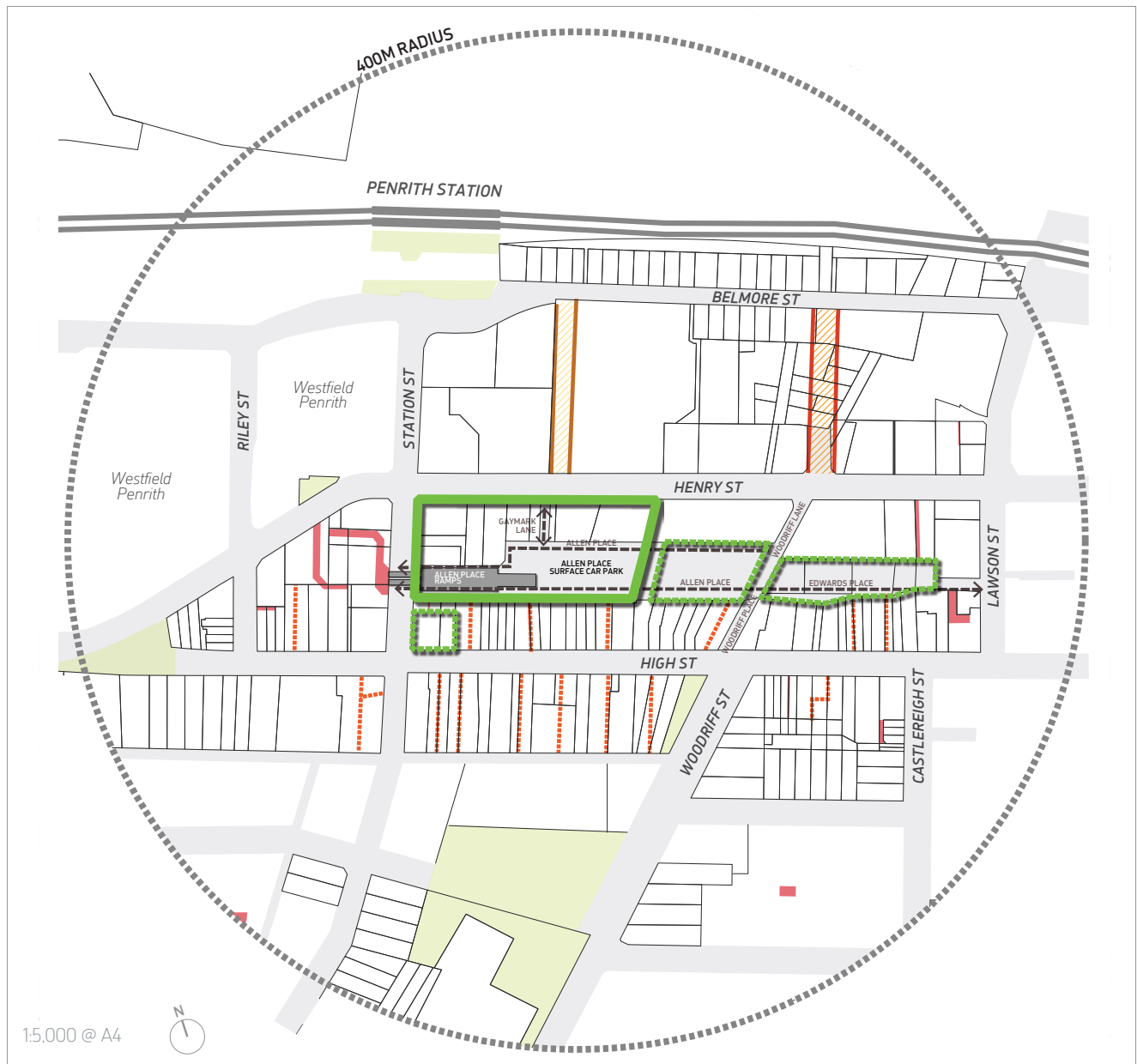


### FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + The majority of foot traffic in the Penrith City Centre occurs at Westfield Penrith and High Street.
- + The Penrith City Park will be highly visible to pedestrians, bus stops, and Penrith Station, and thus attract pedestrians who may want to utilise the park's amenity.
- + The Penrith Progression development framework recommends the development of a complete street (corridors designed for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders) crossroads in the Penrith City Centre, along Station Street and High Street. The complete street crossroads occurs directly south of the Penrith City Park site.

### KEY

- CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE
- EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES
- CITY PARK PERIPHERY
- EXISTING OPEN SPACE
- BUS STOPS
- TRAIN STATION
- PLANNED COMPLETE STREET

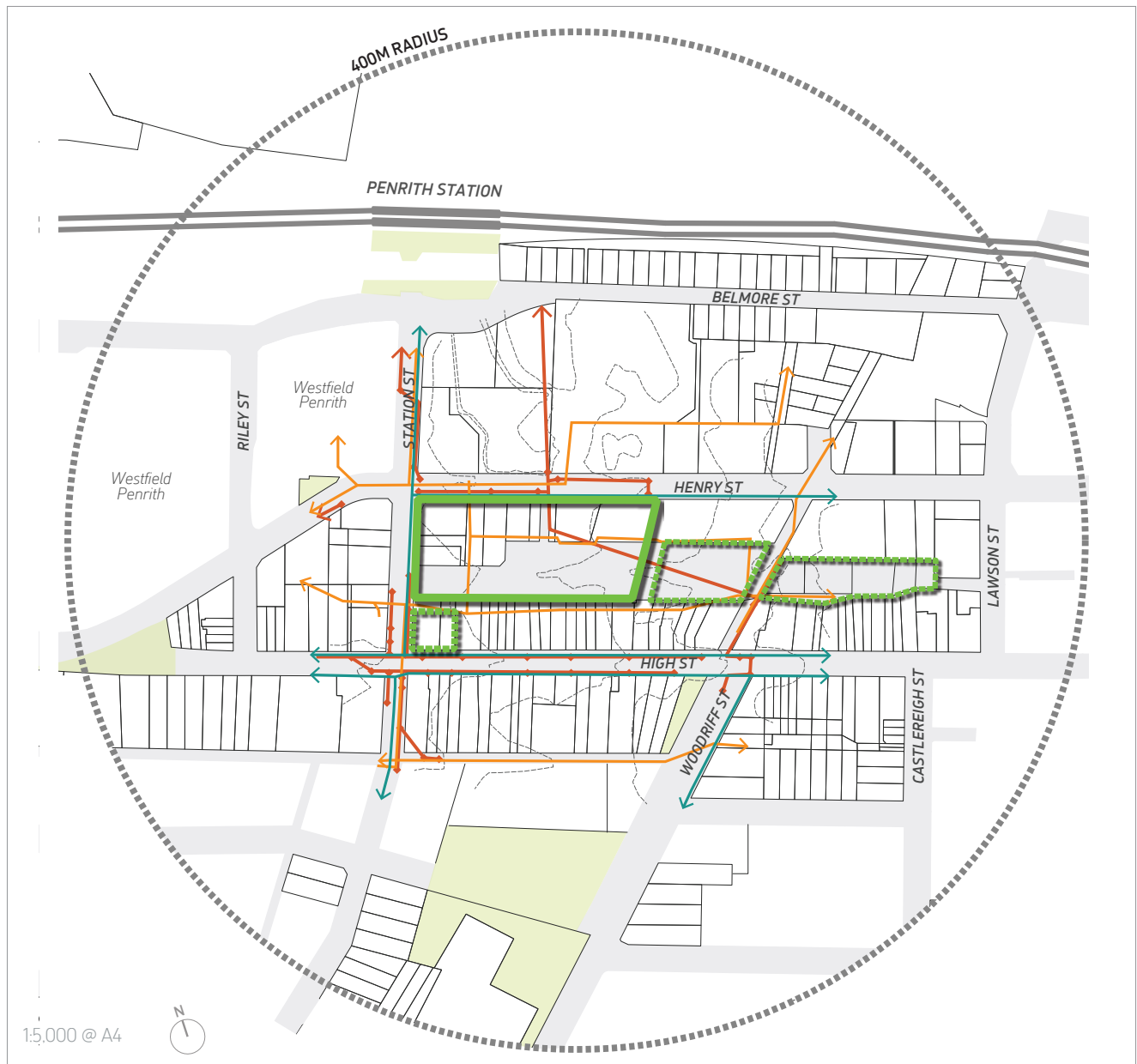


## FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + Pedestrian access exists to the south and west of the Penrith City Park site, providing opportunities to improve pedestrian connections to High Street and Westfield Penrith, two major destinations of the Penrith CBD.
- + A new laneway is proposed by Penrith City Council north of the Penrith City Park site across Henry Street, bringing an opportunity to increase accessibility to the park site.
- + The Allen Place ramps are located on site and are of limited structural integrity.

## KEY

- CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE
- EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES
- EXISTING OPEN SPACE
- PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENTS
- EXISTING ARCADES
- PLANNED NEW LANEWAY
- PLANNED NEW ROAD

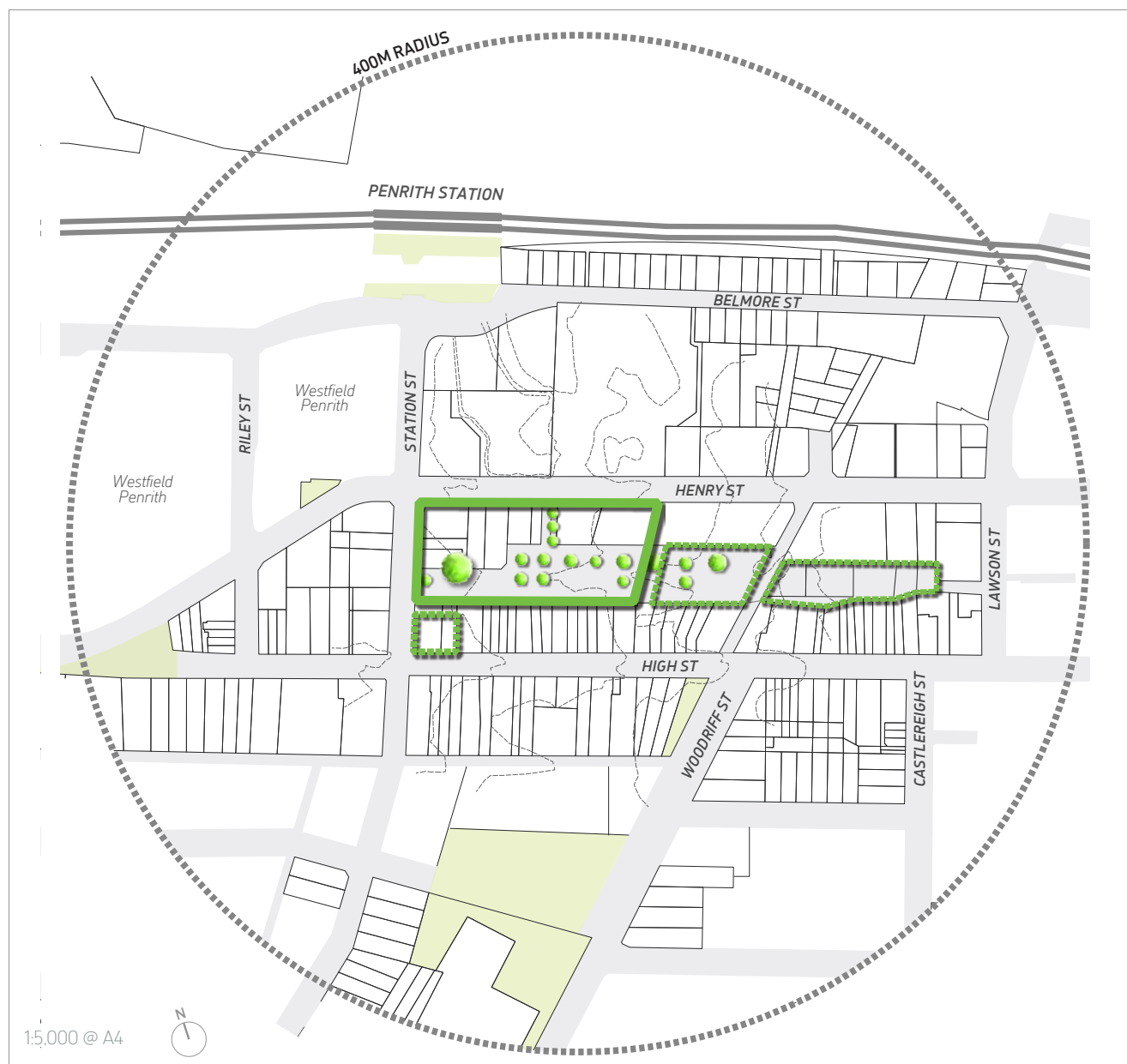


### FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + A number of sewers and drainage pipes bisect the planned City Park site, while more, including water mains, are located on the park's perimeter. Utilities are located along High Street south of the City Park site.
- + Rear shops address the City Park site and are traversed by a sewer line. Technical investigations would need to be conducted to see if this poses a challenge to the future redevelopment of these properties.

### KEY

- CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE
- EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES
- EXISTING OPEN SPACE
- .5M CONTOURS
- DRAINAGE PITS + PIPES
- SEWERS
- WATER MAINS



## FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + 17 trees of various maturities are currently on the City Park Investigation and Extension Sites.
- + The Penrith Progression development framework recommends the development of complete streets in the Penrith City Centre, along Station Street and High Street. In addition to improving mobility, this designation will create a green identity along these streets and draw people past the City Park. The park's trees and softscape attributes will compliment these streets.

## KEY

CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE

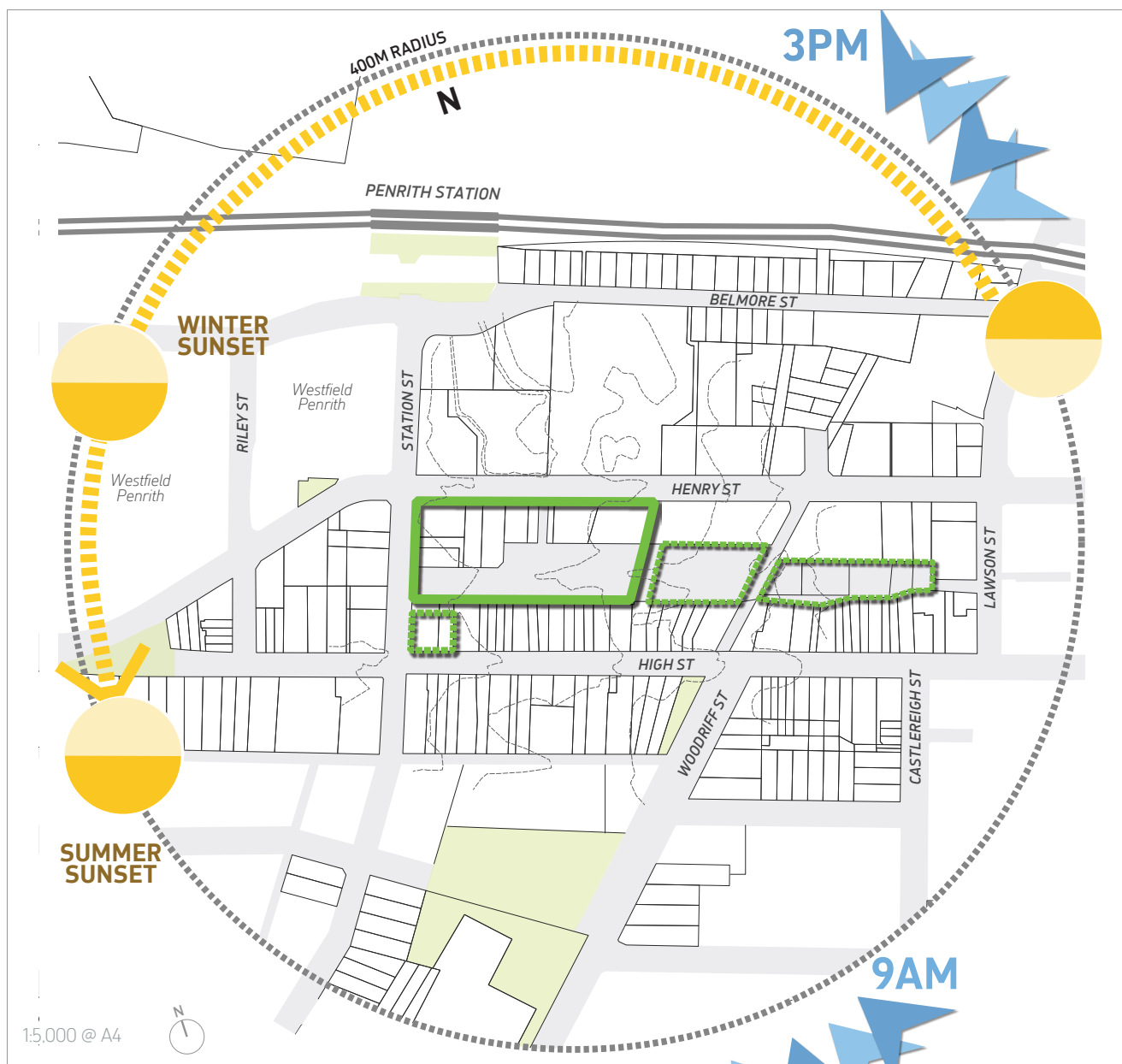
EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES

EXISTING OPEN SPACE

.5M CONTOURS

EXISTING TREES ON SITE





## FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + According to the Bureau of Meteorology, yearly averages of prevailing winds come from the south in the mornings and tend to come from the northeast in the afternoon during summer days. Park designs should consider prevailing winds during summer time to keep the space cool and comfortable.
- + Through the implementation of design guidelines for neighbouring new development, the City Park site could receive sunlight in the northern sky from dusk until dawn. A comprehensive shadow study in relation to proposed building heights surrounding the park would need to be conducted to further evaluate sun light effects on the City Park.
- + The Penrith City Park site is flat with little contour variation. A 1.5–2.0 metre elevation change occurs across the site running east to west (280m in length).

## KEY

- CITY PARK INVESTIGATION SITE
- EXTENSION INVESTIGATION SITES
- EXISTING OPEN SPACE
- SUN PATH IN NORTHERN SKY
- 5M CONTOURS
- PREVAILING WINDS



## KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PENRITH

- + The Penrith City Park will be a centrepiece to enhance the overall public realm in the Penrith City Centre. The opportunity exists to create a centralised public space of a scale to accommodate civic events, incorporate active uses, and improve pedestrian linkages within the urban core.
- + Penrith City Council owns a large portion of land in the Penrith City Centre, including numerous parcels around the Penrith City Park. In total, City Council owns 8 out of 10 parcels on the City Park Investigation Site, providing sufficient land to immediately develop a large portion of the site.
- + The Allen Place ramps are nearing the end of its design life, and presents an opportunity to develop an uncompromising and holistic City Park.
- + The park's adjacency to Westfield Penrith, Penrith Station and numerous bus stops presents opportunities to capture pedestrian foot traffic. Co-locating transit nodes with the Penrith City Park will ensure a constant flow of activity in and around the park. Also, the location of the park will attract users and provide increased users for surrounding retail and commercial businesses.
- + A new laneway is proposed by Penrith City Council north of the Penrith City Park Investigation Site. The laneway aligns with an arcade that connects the existing Allen Place car park to High Street. This brings an opportunity to extend the laneway into the park site via a mid-block connection and further south to the arcade to connect to existing lanes and improve pedestrian connectivity and active transport.
- + Sewer and drainage pipes, in particular, may present development constraints for future development. An opportunity exists to develop an initiative to reduce the impact of or incorporate service infrastructure on the site through a stormwater demonstration feature, rain garden amenities, etc.
- + There are opportunities to enhance the City Park's identity as an important green space along the complete street corridor of Station Street, an important artery for Penrith, and support the heart of the City Centre.
- + Council can retain existing mature trees on the site to establish a green identity for the place.
- + The Penrith City Park site is flat with little contour variation. A 1.5–2.0 metre elevation change occurs across the site running east to west (280m in length). This 'canvas' is ideal for a wide variety of park design responses, including water features and flexible space for programmed events.
- + An opportunity exists to introduce building height design guidelines along the northern edge of the City Park Investigation Site to maintain significant amounts of sun light to shine on the park throughout the year.



# BENCHMARKING

## 03

BENCHMARKING



## 03 Benchmarking

The Penrith City Park is benchmarked against national and international exemplars of urban civic squares following consultation and agreement of type with Penrith City Council. In this report, benchmark examples are analysed by their role as a catalyst for change and improved quality of life, size, scale, relationship to surrounding environment and key activation features.

The exemplars inform concept development for Penrith's City Park and assist to define principles for the look, feel, activation, and scale of the future civic space.

### 21ST CENTURY URBAN OPEN SPACE BENCHMARKS

The following six exemplar civic squares were chosen because of their unique attributes, widely viewed success as a civic square in an urban setting and applicability to Penrith from which lessons can be drawn for the Penrith City Park. Each public space has recently been redeveloped or built and exhibit characteristics common in 21st century parks. Principally, 21st century parks include urban elements within them and around them to ensure their activation throughout the day and evening hours. Below are the six exemplar projects, three of which are from Australia and three from international locales.

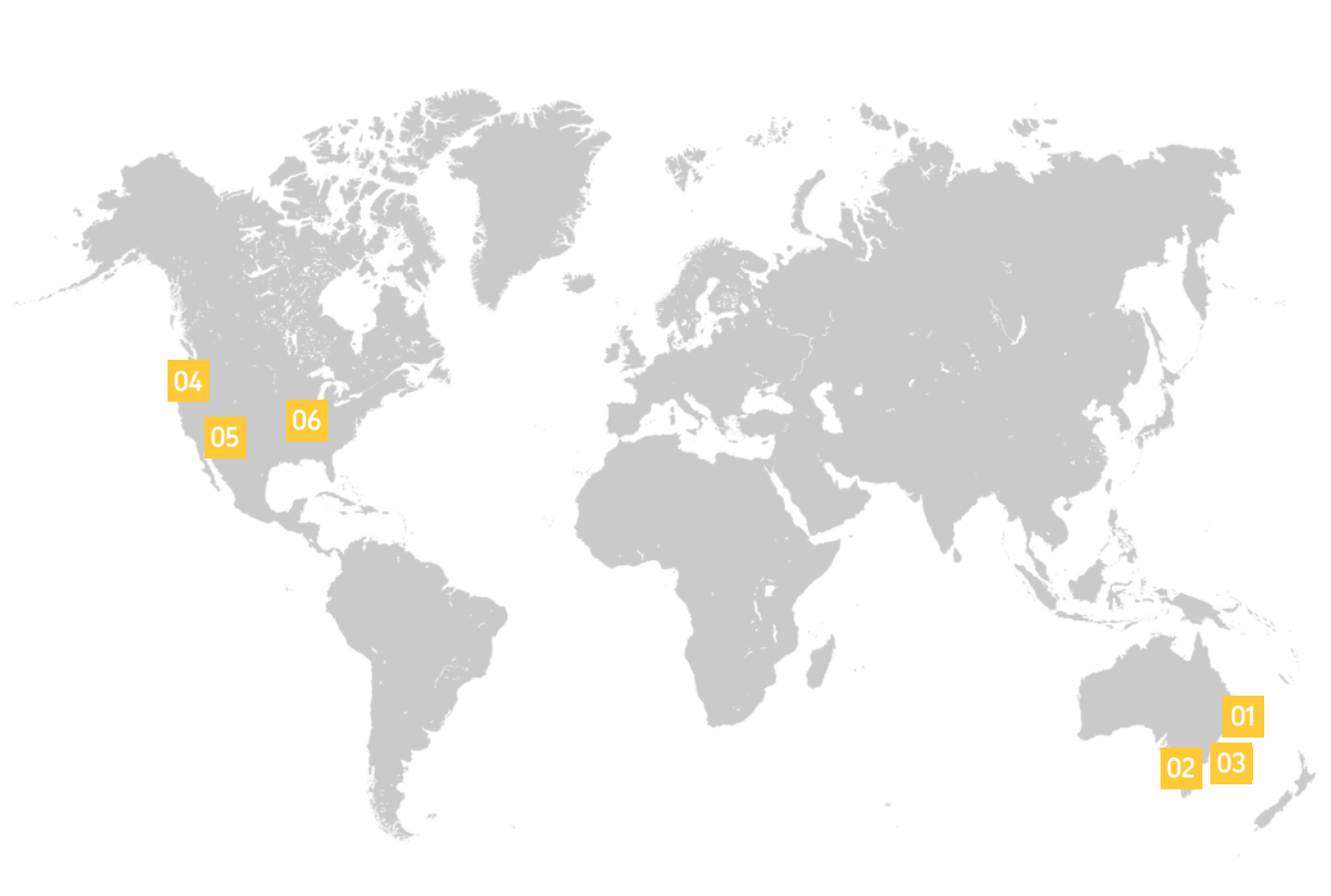


## AUSTRALIAN EXAMPLES

- 01** Rouse Hill Town Square  
Rouse Hill, NSW
- 02** City Square on Swanston Street  
Melbourne, VIC
- 03** Centenary Square  
Parramatta, NSW

## INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

- 04** Pioneer Courthouse Square  
Portland, USA
- 05** Civic Space Park  
Phoenix, USA
- 06** Citygarden  
St Louis, USA



## BENCHMARK 01 ROUSE HILL TOWN SQUARE ROUSE HILL, NSW



### DESCRIPTION

The Rouse Hill Town Centre is a new town centre made of up four distinct quarters which meet at the Town Square. The Town Square serves as the identity maker for Rouse Hill and includes capacity for civic events and celebrations.

### SIZE AND SHAPE

Traditional square  
900 sqm

### ELEMENTS

Hardscape, water features, various seating elements, shade structures, unique lighting fixtures

### CONTEXT

Surrounded by retail spilling onto the square, the adjacent streets are narrow to ensure surrounding connections are maintained. It is the location of primary entrances to the retail centre, library, and community rooms and provides address for the centre's first residential development.

- + The Town Square's scale reflects Rouse Hill's status as a town centre, not a regional centre. Penrith's civic space should be commensurate with a regional centre.
- + To provide flexibility for larger events the town centre closes down adjacent streets to be utilised for additional event space capacity, without compromising traffic and access to car parking and services.
- + The Town Square's small size (900sqm) demonstrates that a relatively small civic square can create an identifiable place for a much larger precinct.
- + The number of urban elements (seating types, water feature, shade structures, etc.) within the space limit its flexibility for events.

## BENCHMARK 02 CITY SQUARE ON SWANSTON STREET MELBOURNE, VIC



### DESCRIPTION

Bound by Swanston Street, Collins Street and Flinders Lane, the City Square plaza is activated by prominent landmarks, the civic address of Swanston Street and includes activation uses within the park including cafés and restaurants.

### SIZE AND SHAPE

Rectangular plaza  
3,000 sqm

### ELEMENTS

A mix of hard- and softscape, various seating options, cafés, large canopy trees, shade structures, public art

### CONTEXT

Adjacent to the transit and pedestrian thoroughfare Swanston Street, surrounded by urban retailing, store fronts and cafés spilling out onto the space. It is located within the commercial centre of Melbourne's CBD.

- + The city square is both a forecourt to the landmark Regent Theatre and Westin Hotel as well as a civic scaled plaza. For Penrith this demonstrates the opportunity to link public and private uses.
- + City Square is one of three main open spaces along Swanston Street, with nearby Federation Square providing events capacity and identity shaping for the CBD. For Penrith, locating the civic place within a hierarchy of open space is essential.
- + The plaza's on site cafés and restaurants adds additional activation to enhance the space's vibrancy, safety and general appeal. Moreover, the scale of adjacent development provides a population that ensures these facilities are sustainable.

### BENCHMARK 03 CENTENARY SQUARE PARRAMATTA, NSW



#### DESCRIPTION

Parramatta's most recognised public space, the space is a true transit oriented civic plaza located adjacent to Parramatta Station. The square was recently redesigned and upgraded to reflect Parramatta's status as Sydney's second city.

#### SIZE AND SHAPE

Traditional square with an elongation  
4,100 sqm

#### ELEMENTS

Hardscape, modern seating, illuminated fountain, alfresco dining, stage, shade structures, public art

#### CONTEXT

The former Church Street Mall has been transformed into a formalised square and links to Parramatta Station. Parramatta Town Hall and St. John's Church are landmarks that provide regular foot thoroughfare to retail, commercial and Church Street restaurant precinct.

- + The square's recent upgrade includes the installation of cafés within the park itself. These are supported and made sustainable by the significant adjacent landmarks and identity of the place as a regional destination.
- + The 40,000 people that travel through the square everyday due to its proximity to Parramatta Station provides a constant flow of pedestrians and source of vibrancy. These people are residents, workers, and tourists.
- + The park's relationship with nearby transit is critical to activating the space both for daytime and night time activity.

### BENCHMARK 04 PIONEER COURTHOUSE SQUARE PORTLAND, USA



#### DESCRIPTION

Located in downtown Portland, Pioneer Courthouse Square is an iconic open space utilised as the city's 'living room.' Bound on all sides by Portland's famous narrow streets, the space is highly accessible to its surroundings.

#### SIZE AND SHAPE

Traditional square  
5,700 sqm

#### ELEMENTS

Hardscape, large tree canopy, cafe, various seating options, unique signage, stage, water feature

#### CONTEXT

As the name suggests, the open space sits next to the landmark Pioneer Courthouse. A large shopping precinct borders the site to the west and light rail stops to the north and south.

- + 300 separate events each year are programmed and managed by a non-profit organisation to ensure daily and weekly activity and during different seasons. Similar event programming management is appropriate for Penrith.
- + Civic institutions and nearby shopping precincts activate the square throughout the day and into the evening. This is enabled by high quality pedestrian and transit connections.
- + The square's relatively large scale (an entire city block) is commensurate with the neighbouring building heights and appropriate to its role as "Portland's Living Room," a central civic space for the city.



## BENCHMARK 05 CIVIC SPACE PARK PHOENIX, USA



### DESCRIPTION

Opened in 2009, the park is Phoenix's premier civic park where "space becomes a place." The park has become the civic gathering space for downtown Phoenix and is a model of sustainable park design in the Sonoran Desert.

### SIZE AND SHAPE

Large traditional rectangle  
15,000 sqm

### ELEMENTS

Splash pad, events space, hard and softscapes, cafe, gallery, LED animations, shade structures

### CONTEXT

The park is located adjacent to the Arizona State University (ASU) in downtown Phoenix and connects directly to their campus. The park also has immediate access to light rail and bus stations.

- + Due to Phoenix's dry climate conditions, the park includes sustainable materials, porous concretes, and operational features to generate power and rain water capturing to keep the park cool and green. The civic space at Penrith can demonstrate environmental and other initiatives to reinforce the city's identity.
- + When mature, the park's trees will provide shade to 70% of the park's surface area.
- + The park features both a cafe and a gallery where ASU classes and gallery openings are held.
- + Adjacency to education institutions provides an exemplar for Penrith. The civic space in Penrith can leverage the adjacent TAFE site and potential accommodation initiatives.

## BENCHMARK 06 CITYGARDEN ST LOUIS, USA



### DESCRIPTION

Opened in 2010, Citygarden is a sculpture garden and events space. Located on the Gateway Mall of downtown St. Louis, the park is at the centre of the city's retail core.

### SIZE AND SHAPE

Traditional rectangle bisected by street  
16,000 sqm

### ELEMENTS

Sculpture garden, outdoor video wall, rain gardens, cafe, green roof, events space, art installations

### CONTEXT

The Citygarden lies adjacent to many of St. Louis's largest buildings, giving a grand frame to the park's grand scale. The park lies along the Gateway Mall connecting it to the iconic Gateway Arch.

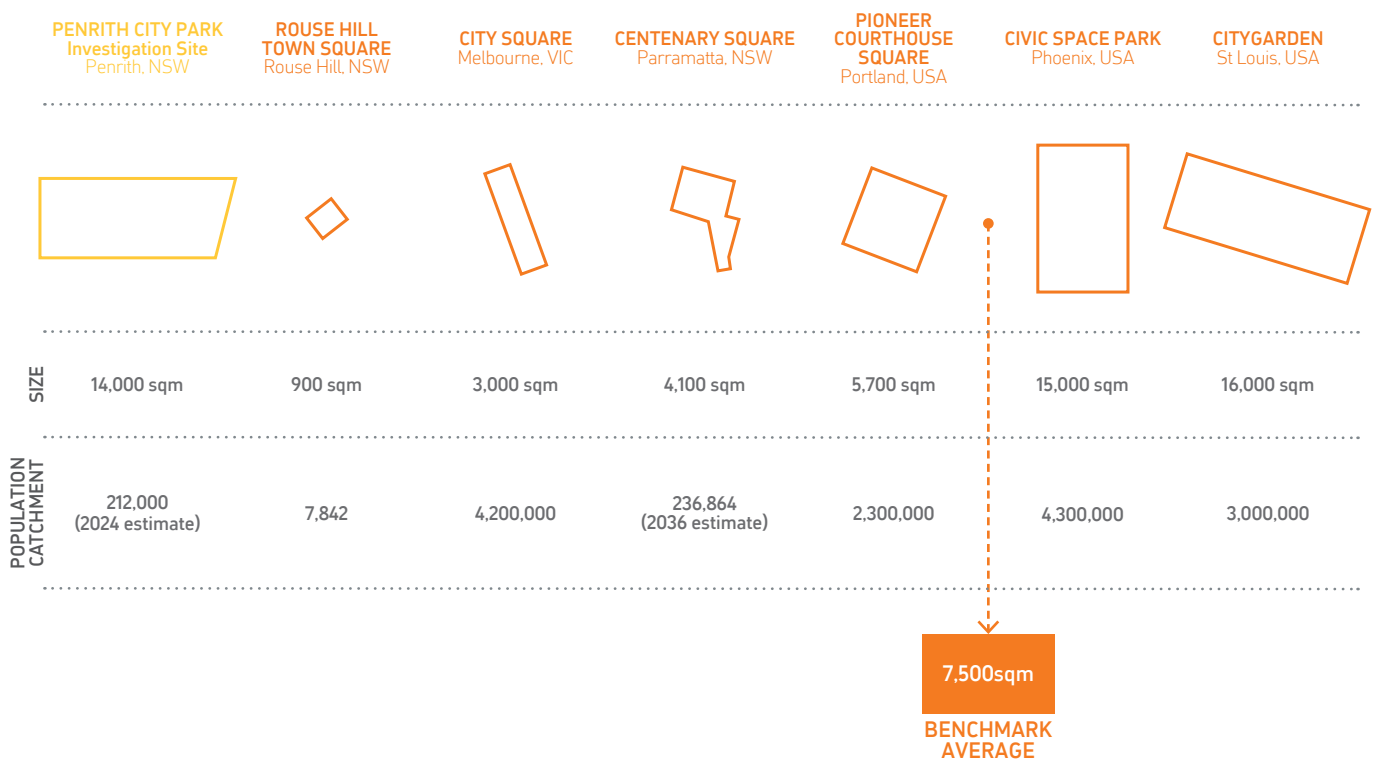
- + The park's grand scale is matched by its context both along the Gateway Mall and amongst St. Louis's tallest buildings. The height of surrounding buildings is in the order of >30 storeys. Planned building heights around Penrith's City Park range between 7 and 11 storeys.
- + The park features events space to allow flexibility for programming. Park elements fulfil a specialty service that is art oriented and active engagement driven. Penrith could identify a theme to be showcased at the civic place that reinforces the city's identity.
- + The park is a true reflection of a 21st Century park, going beyond a traditional rectangle with green space to include numerous activated uses to attract visitors and make them want to linger.



## SUMMARY OF SCALE COMPARISONS

### FACTS AND FINDINGS

- + If the whole Investigation Site was transitioned to open space, the Penrith City Park would be significantly larger than a majority of benchmarking examples, even open spaces in places like St. Louis and Phoenix which serves substantially larger population catchments.
- + The average size of the benchmarked civic space examples is 7,500sqm, five out of six of which are traditionally square or rectilinear shaped.
- + The key finding from the scale comparison exercise is that a 14,000sqm would be overscaled for Penrith's projected population as a Regional City Centre. Instead, a city park similar in scale to Centenary Square (4,100sqm) or Pioneer Courthouse Square (5,700sqm) would be more appropriate for Penrith.

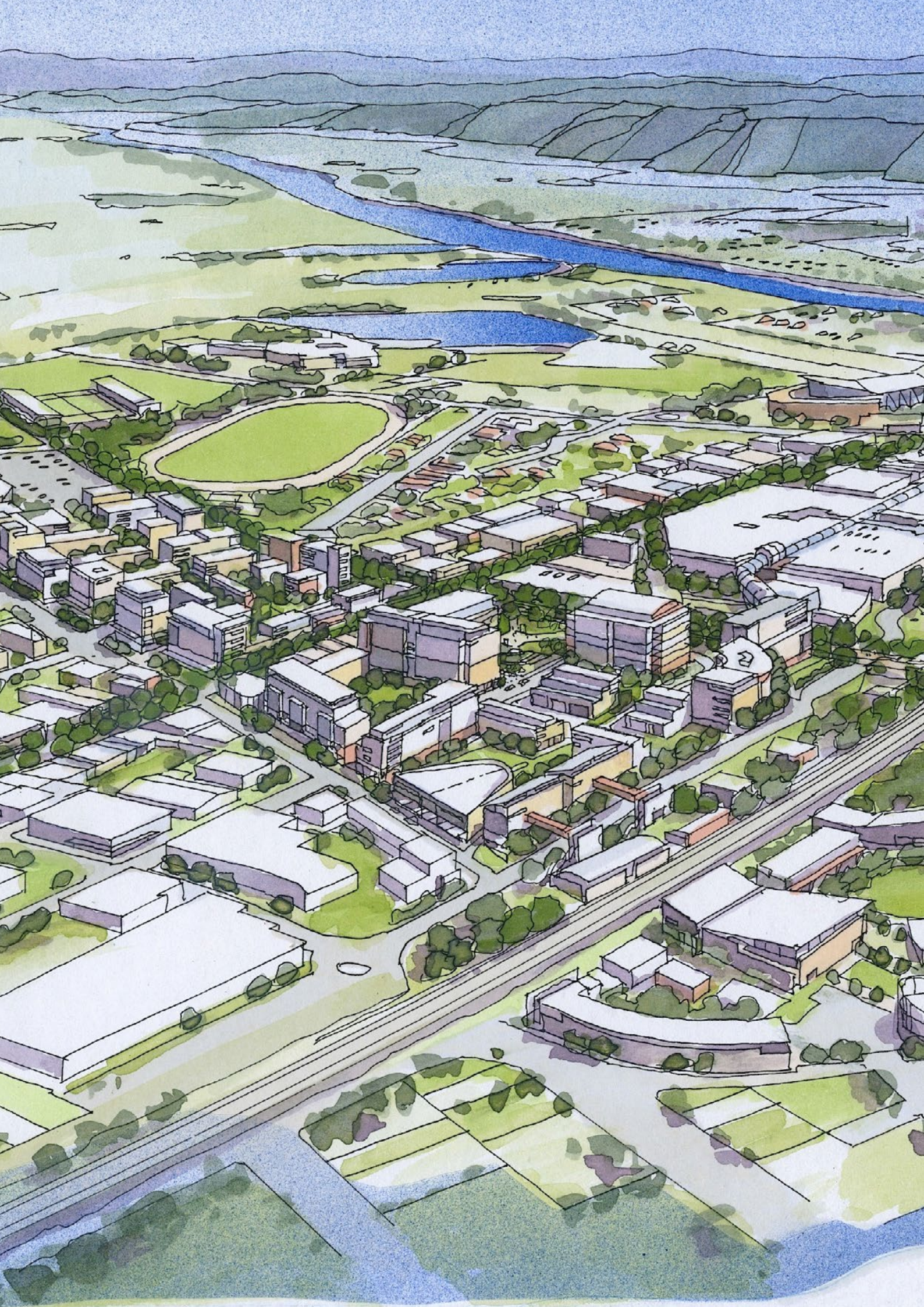


## KEY FINDINGS FOR PENRITH

The following summarises the key findings of the benchmarking process with regard to the Penrith City Park:

- + The City Park Investigation Site area being considered is larger than all benchmarked open spaces. At 14,000 sqm it is close in size to the largest benchmark (Citygarden) and over twice as large as the benchmark average (7,500sqm). Comparing each exemplar's population catchment reveals the Penrith City Park could be well suited to be 4,000sqm. The open space of the Penrith City Park could be developed between 4,000sqm to 5,000sqm to match a more aspirational population and development increases for Penrith.
- + For flexibility, the proportion of the Penrith City Park should be a regular square or rectangle.
- + For environmental and identity reasons, the Penrith City Park should address and be open to Station Street and Henry Street.
- + The benchmarked parks work with their surrounding environment for activation. Neighbouring landmark civic buildings such as Parramatta Town Hall on Centenary Square, or Pioneer Courthouse on Pioneer Courthouse Square attract people. Others are activated by transit nodes, perimeter shops, cafés and restaurants while others are connected along a larger open space corridor such as City Square on Melbourne's Swanston Street. The Penrith City Park must have adequate activation from adjacent and adjoining land uses.
- + The six benchmarks showcase many characteristics of 21st century parks, notably urban elements such as cafés, alfresco dining areas, galleries, art installations, programmed events and active recreation including water play. The urban elements don't, by themselves, activate the spaces; each benchmark is surrounded by activated adjacent uses that complement one another and the civic space to increase vibrancy.
- + Appropriate functions and events within the park may include weekly farmers markets, monthly music and film events, as well as annual civic receptions and regional festivals.
- + A mix of hard and softscapes is a common feature of exemplar open spaces. Hardscapes are flexible shared spaces utilised for events programming while softscapes are meant for leisure recreation. Care needs to be taken to ensure flexibility of space by uniting urban elements in designated areas.
- + Access to transport is key to the Penrith City Park's success. In Parramatta Centenary Square benefits from the busy Parramatta Station which feeds a large proportion of the 40,000 visitors to the square. Civic Space Park and Pioneer Courthouse Square are adjacent to major light rail lines and bus transport hubs.
- + Integration into the urban fabric is an important factor to the exemplar open space's success. The park attracts users who come to the park to enjoy amenity and respite as well as pedestrians who are on their way to another destination. The open space's pedestrian systems are strongly connected with surrounding footpaths and pedestrian amenities to ensure foot traffic in these areas compliment and contribute to the open space's pedestrian activity.
- + The benchmarked parks incorporate sustainability elements such as shading, water harvesting and conservation, reduced energy use and recycled materials. The Penrith City Park should utilise these ideas when determining quality of design.











# URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

## 04

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

## 04 Urban Design Principles

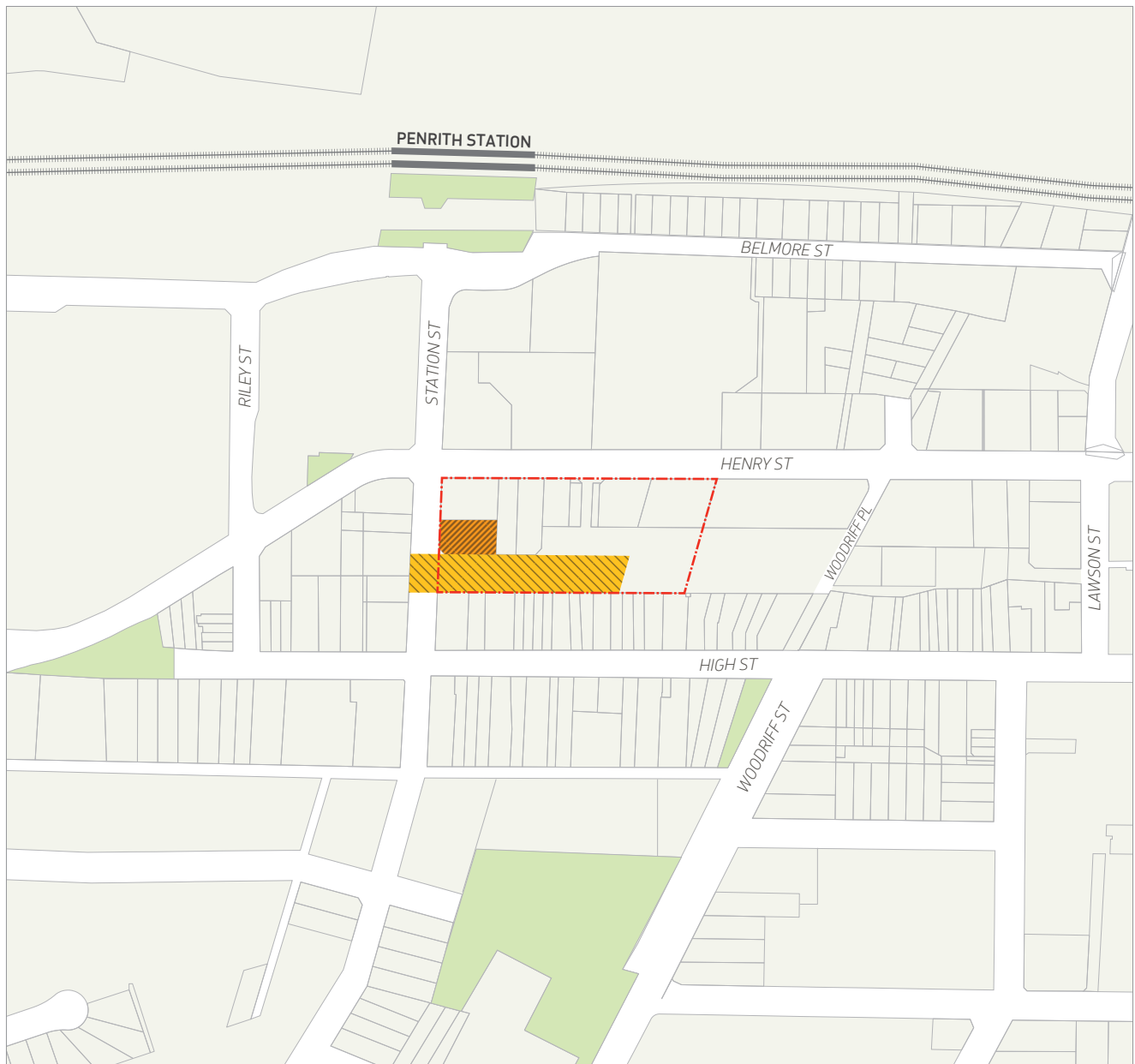
The following principles have been identified in order to transition the City Park Investigation Site to an iconic, civic destination for the Penrith City Centre. These principles are to underpin the process towards establishing a preferred concept for the City Park site and to enable the consideration of development catalyst projects for both within the Investigation Site and surrounding the new park.

The principles presented are intended to provide a flexible but robust approach to place shaping for the City Park. The principles establish a platform for change enabling multiple initiatives that will relate to time and market opportunities. They propose values and intentions that are considered essential to the future of the Penrith City Park.

The principles are informed by the literature review, site analysis, the benchmarking study, as well as the client brief and vision for the park's future. They are both aspirational in tone while grounded in an on the ground understanding of the site's existing conditions. Development of the principles are the next step in the process towards establishing a City Park Framework and future concept scenarios. Design concepts may be tested against the Development Framework over time.

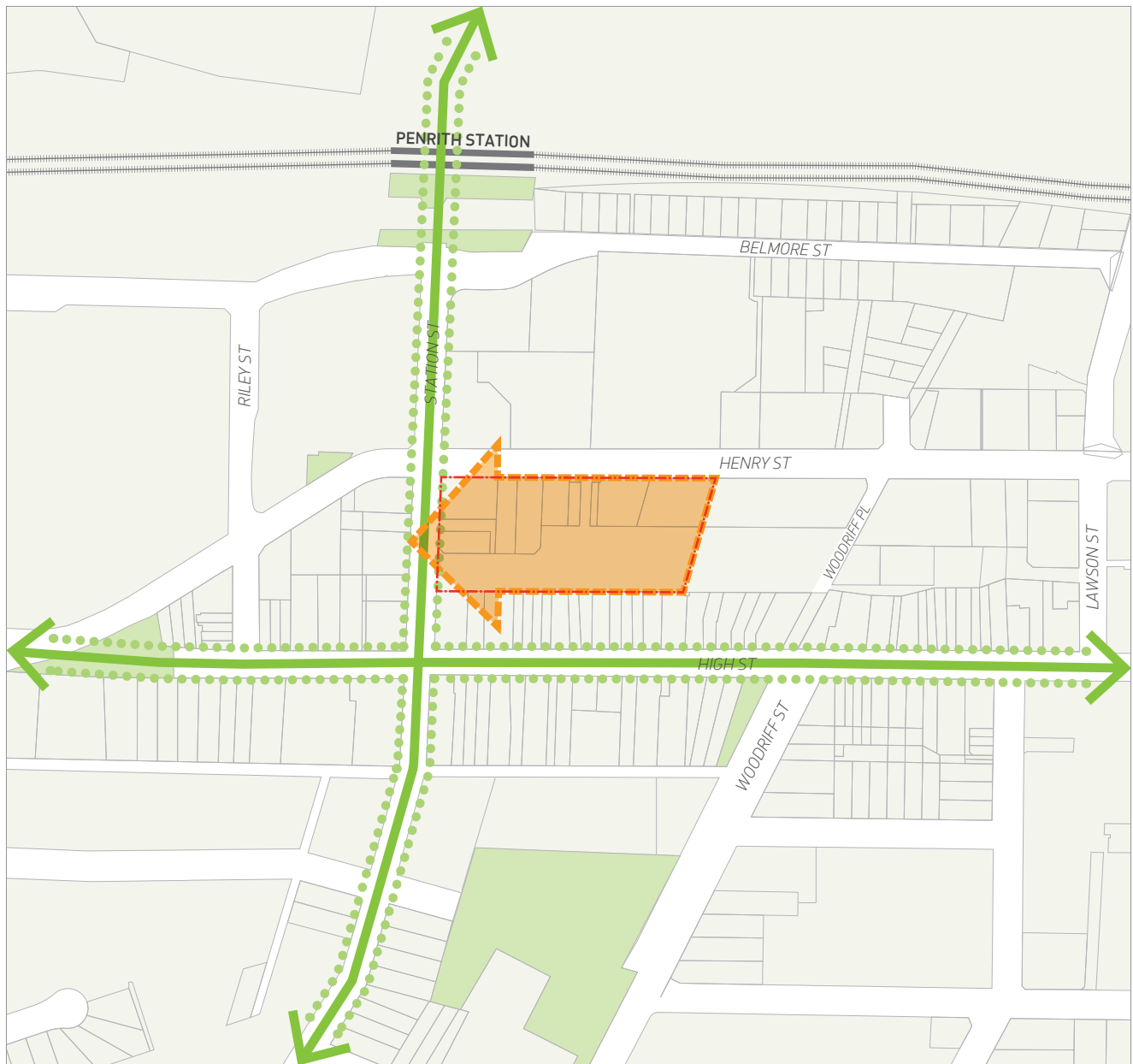
Following on from the outcomes of the benchmarking exercise, the urban design principles and subsequent City Park concepts assume 7,000sqm of land is appropriate for the City Park itself; 7,000sqm of land is therefore available within the investigation site for possible future development; and the Allen Place ramps are removed.

Not all principles must be delivered in order to commence the City Park project. Rather, a design for the Penrith City Park will likely embody a combination of the following principles.



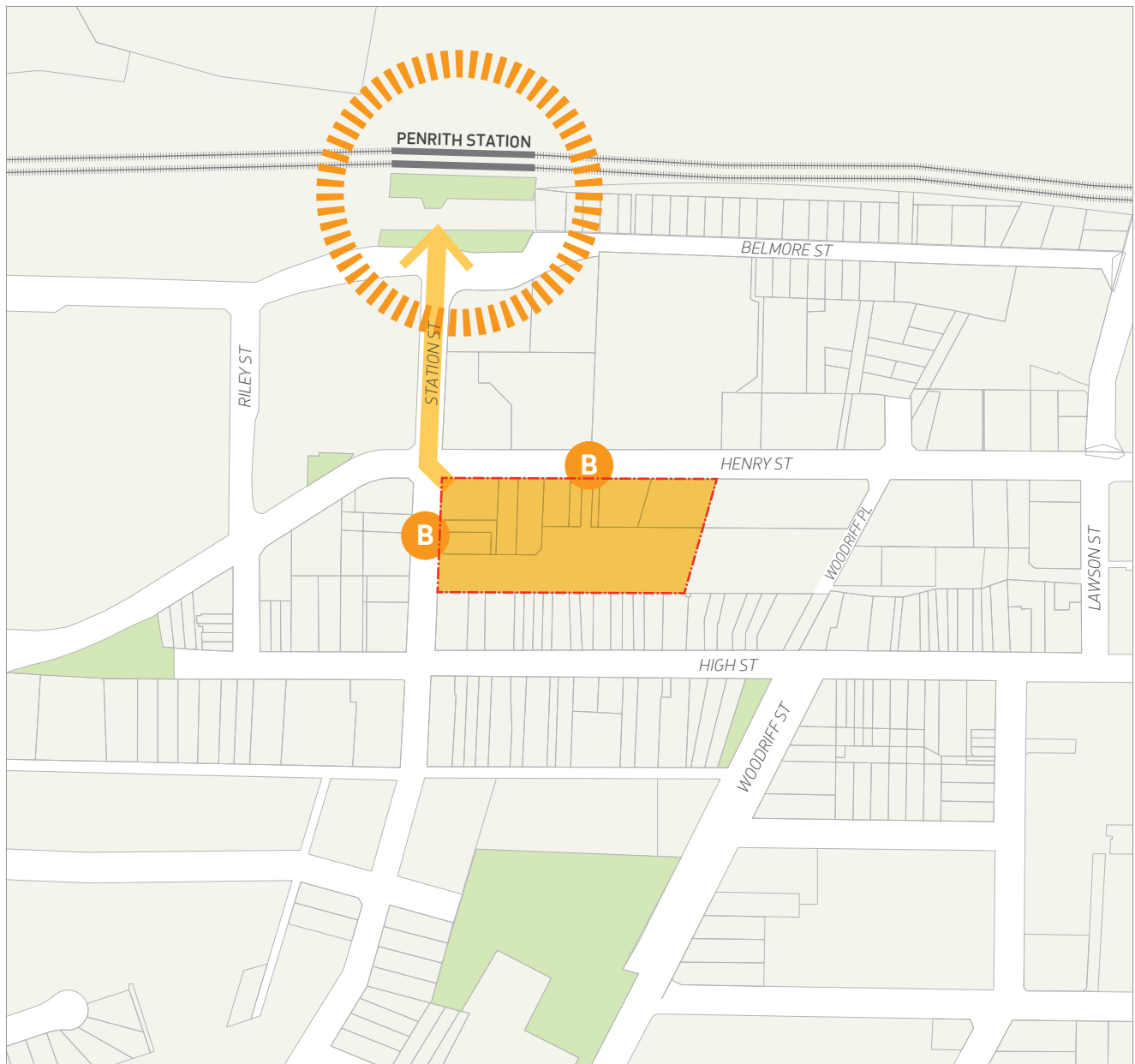
- + Acquire remaining land parcels.
- + Demolish the Allen Place ramps.

PRINCIPLE 02  
CONNECT TO STATION STREET



- + Reinforce the “complete streets” of the Penrith Progression.
- + Connect the City Park to High Street through an improved pedestrian realm along Station Street.

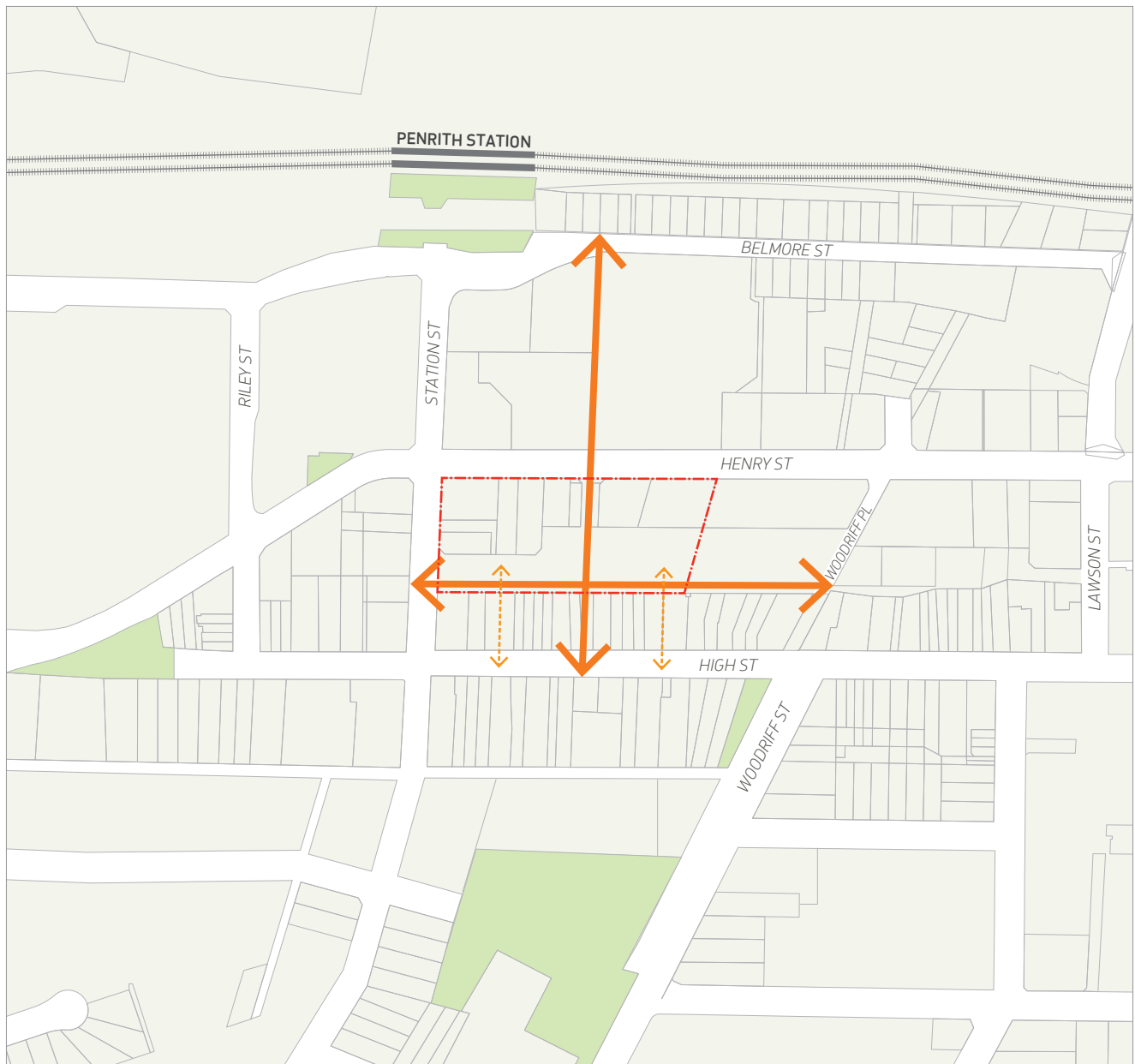
PRINCIPLE 03  
CONNECT TO THE TRANSPORT HUB AND NETWORK



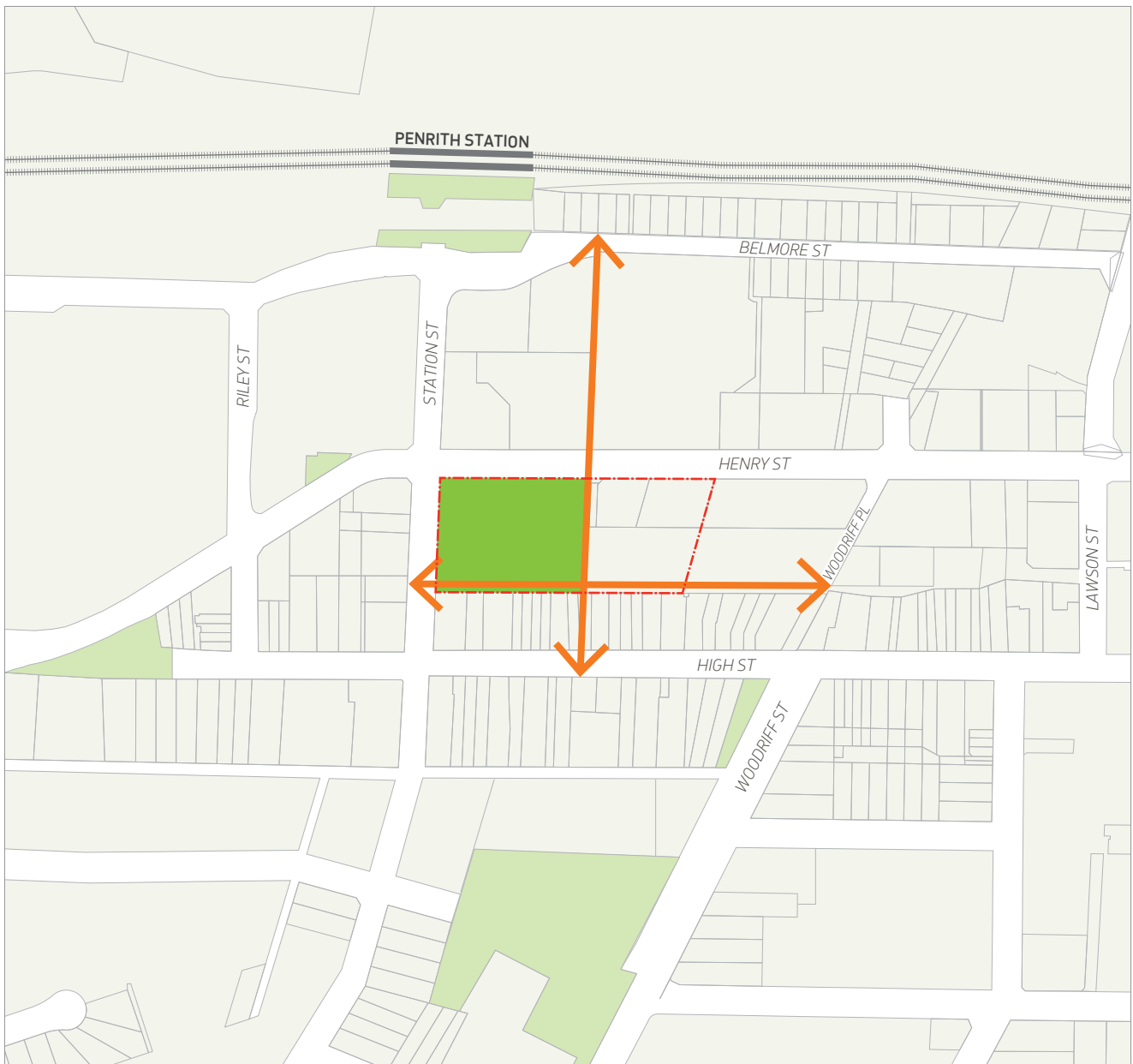
- + Connect to Penrith train and bus interchange.
- + Provide accessible bus stops on Station Street and Henry Street.
- + Reinforce Penrith's pedestrian core.



PRINCIPLE 04  
INTRODUCE NEW CONNECTIONS

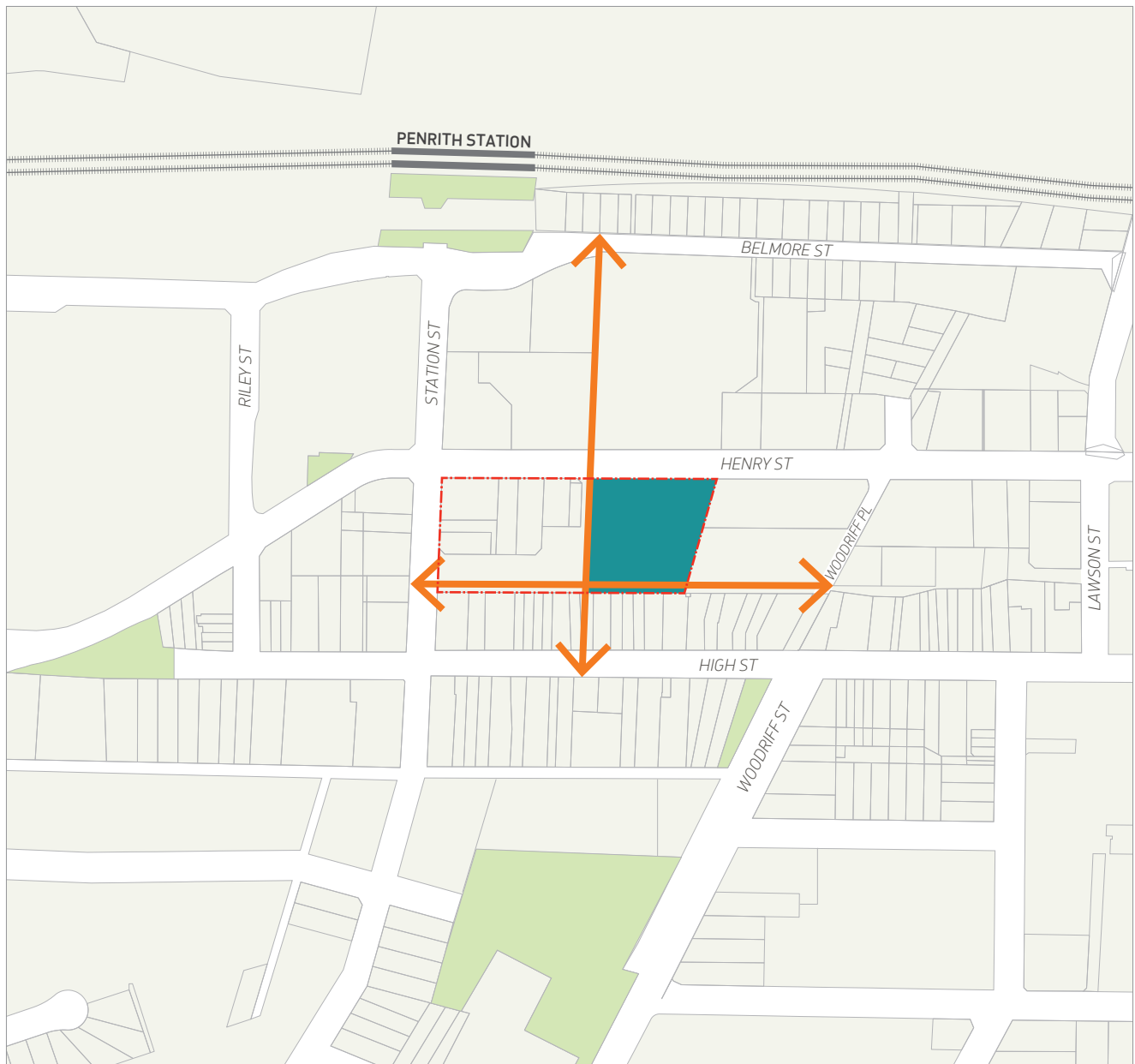


- + Introduce a new north-south connection.
- + Introduce a new east-west connection.
- + Link the City Park to High Street through the existing arcades.

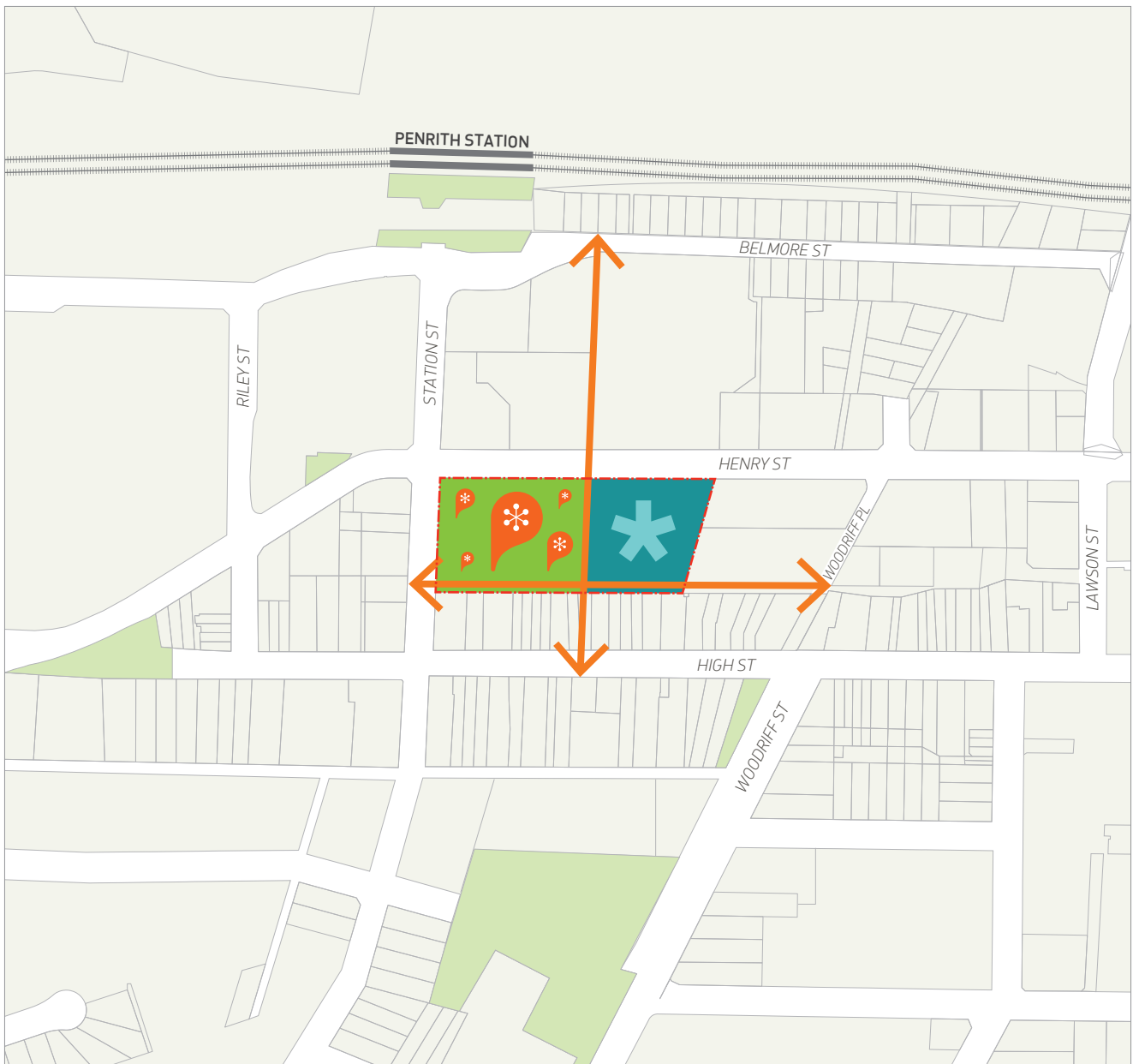


- + Use the new north-south and east-west connections to shape the City Park.
- + Locate the City Park at the intersection of Station Street and High Street to reinforce Principle 01.
- + Allow for events programming with flexible infrastructure.
- + Retain the existing mature trees on the site where possible.
- + Maximise solar access from the east through appropriate building heights.

PRINCIPLE 06  
INVESTIGATE THE DEVELOPMENT SITE



- + Define the right development catalyst to support the City Park.
- + Ensure design guidelines to activate the City Park.
- + Maximise solar access to the City Park.



- + Create a landmark open space with signature landscape architecture..
- + Accommodate a diversity of materials.
- + Provide active and passive recreation spaces.
- + Ensure an events overlay.
- + Ensure signature architecture surrounding the City Park.
- + Achieve best practice sustainability outcomes.





# FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM

## 05

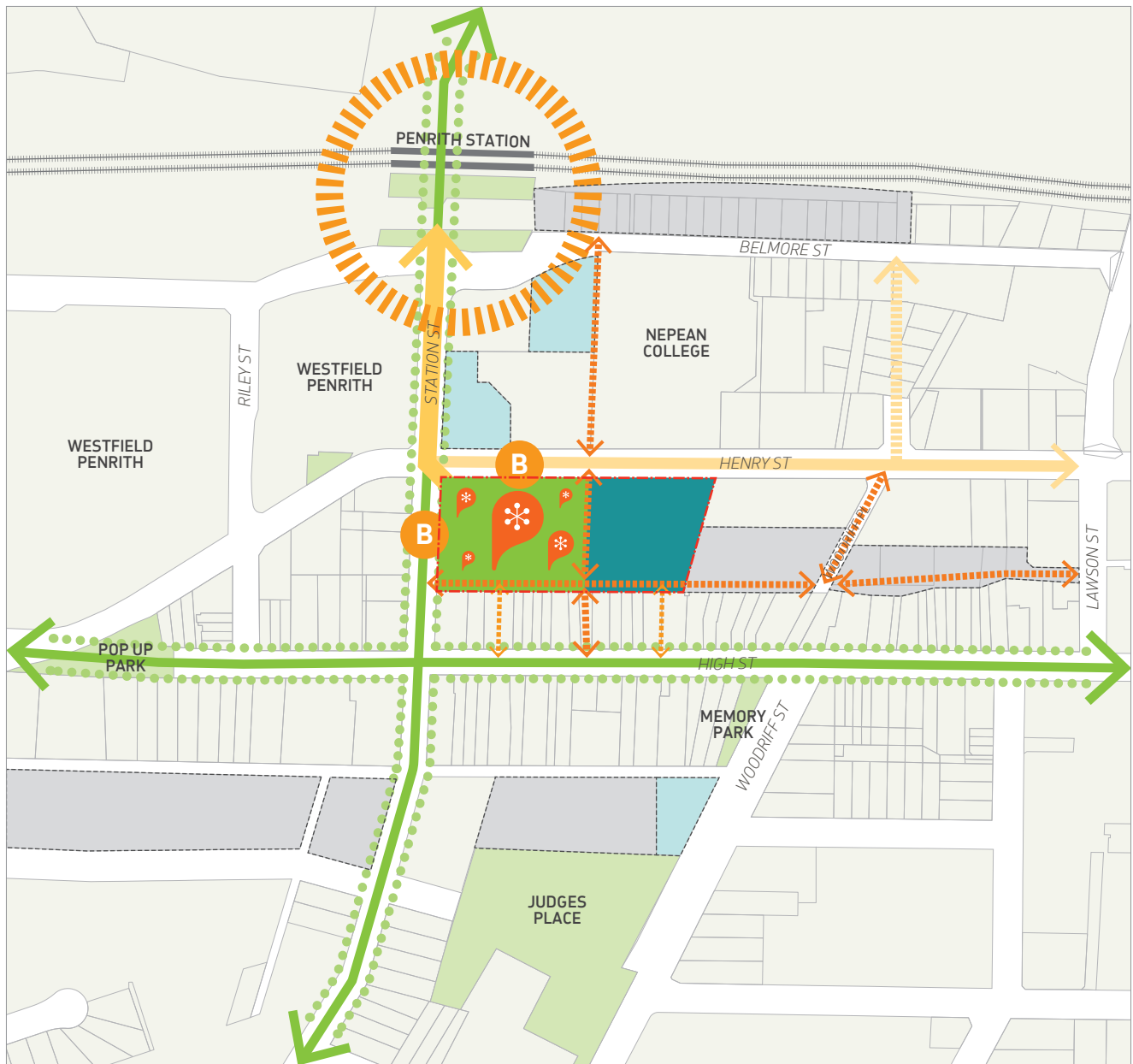
FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM

# 05 Framework Diagram

## FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM

The City Park Framework Diagram is underpinned by the Urban Design Principles for the City Park. It maps key development sites both within and adjacent to the City Park site. It also identifies the area to be preserved as an unencumbered public open space, other key public open spaces, important connections, park precinct gateways, and a clear hierarchy for streets around the Penrith City Park.

The Framework Diagram is not a design, but a diagram that underpins future concepts and associated testing across the delivery of the project. It provides development sites and connection opportunities within which detailed architectural typology and feasibility testing can occur as opportunities present themselves. The next evolution of the framework is the concept scenarios section that provides options for potential outcomes of the City Park site.



- |  |                                  |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|  | City Park Investigation Site     |  | Complete Street                  |
|  | City Park Open Space             |  | Transit Hub Connection           |
|  | Catalytic Development Site       |  | City Park Precinct Street        |
|  | Possible Future Development Site |  | New Street Connection            |
|  | Existing Open Space              |  | New Connection, Flexible Outcome |
|  | Railway Line                     |  | New Pedestrian Connection        |
|  | Transit Hub                      |  | Bus Stop                         |
|  | Car Park                         |  |                                  |



# CITY PARK CONCEPTS

## 06

CITY PARK CONCEPTS



## 06 City Park Concepts

The following section tests the Development Framework for the City Park with respect to capacity, land uses, densities, open space networks, movement patterns and connectivity aspirations for Penrith. This testing is underpinned by the site analysis and integrates best practice benchmarking initiatives. It also incorporates Councillor input in to the City Park process.

In particular, the following twelve needs have been identified by the councillors members of Penrith:

- + Enable a grower's market for regionally produced food.
- + Include a live screen for news, sport, information and cinema.
- + Ensure a space of scale to host civic and cultural events.
- + Include water as a feature.
- + Ensure safety, vibrancy, and attraction.
- + Activate and contribute to the night time economy.
- + Ensure civic landscaping initiatives.
- + Deliver compatible uses including commercial, retail and residential activation.
- + Consider staging the park delivery.
- + Be inclusive and diverse.
- + Achieve a long day, from early morning to late in the night.
- + Deliver a City Park, rather than a town square.

Each of the three concept designs in this section of the report responds to the Development Framework, Urban Design Principles and Councillor inputs, but each tests the Development Framework with respect to scale of development. The three concepts are:

### **Concept 1: Pedestrian Scaled**

This concept prioritises pedestrian and cycle networks, and creates an intimate park.

### **Concept 2: Shared Network**

This concept balances the priorities of the pedestrian core with the need for vehicular address to development, and creates a city scaled park.

### **Concept 3: Street Based**

This concept prioritises vehicular access.

The concepts are also tested with respect to the Urban Design Principles and each achieves a performance score. The performance score provides an understanding of how well each concept is achieving the aspirations for the project. The testing of the Development Framework in this way enables a platform for deciding the activation and development of the park. It also assists with meeting the objectives of the Penrith Progression and the Place Shaping Framework. Each of the scenarios was discussed with Penrith City Council in a workshop environment and a preferred concept identified. The preferred concept design is also included and described in this section of the report.



## CONCEPT ELEMENTS MATRIX

The following matrix summarises and provides a brief for each scale of development tested through the Concept Plans and Testing phase of work.

	CONCEPT 1 PEDESTRIAN SCALED	CONCEPT 2 SHARED NETWORK	CONCEPT 3 STREET BASED
<b>Movement</b>	Prioritises pedestrian movement	Enables shared pedestrian and vehicular outcomes	Prioritises vehicular access
<b>Transport</b>	Provides pedestrian and active transit linkages to train station, and locates bus stops to activate the City Park	Provides pedestrian and active transit linkages to train station, and locates bus stops to activate the City Park	Provides pedestrian and active transit linkages to train station, and locates bus stops to activate the City Park
<b>Land Use within the City Park Precinct, Supporting the City Park</b>	Retail, Commercial, Residential, Education, Civic and Community	Retail, Commercial, Residential, Education, Civic and Community	Retail, Commercial, Residential, Education, Civic and Community
<b>Building Height of Surrounding Development</b>	Low scale, 1-2 storeys, similar to existing	4-6 storeys, enabling walk up and lifted residential and commercial development	4-6 storeys, enabling walk up and lifted residential and commercial development
<b>Passive Space versus Event Space</b>	80% passive, 20% event, meaning the City Park is designed for intimacy with limited capacity to host events	50% passive, 50% event, meaning the City Park is flexible in design and able to accommodate both respite activities during the week, and event-mode when required	20% passive, 80% civic event, meaning the space is highly ceremonial and limited in its capacity to deliver respite
<b>Built Form Activating the City Park</b>	Small scale kiosks, coffee carts and a performance terrace	Medium scale civic functions with kiosks, coffee carts and a performance terrace	Large scale civic functions with kiosks, coffee carts and a performance terrace
<b>Events Overlay</b>	Small, regular and unprogrammed events supporting the daily needs of residents, workers and visitors	Balances small scaled events for resident, worker and visitor needs with weekly markets, monthly events, and annual festivals	Events are of a civic scale and occur monthly or annually
<b>Landscape Identity</b>	Designed as a regional city park with play equipment and intimate garden spaces, lawns, trees, public art and a water play feature	Designed as a regional city park with a flexible event space, garden spaces, lawns, trees, public art and a water play feature	Designed as a regional city park with hardscaping, paving, trees, public art and a water play feature

## CONCEPT 01 PEDESTRIAN SCALED












## ELEMENTS MATRIX

<b>Movement</b>	Prioritises pedestrian movement
<b>Transport</b>	Provides pedestrian and active transit linkages to train station, and locates bus stops to activate the City Park
<b>Land Use within the City Park Precinct, Supporting the City Park</b>	Retail, Commercial, Residential, Education, Civic and Community
<b>Building Height of Surrounding Development</b>	Low scale, 1-2 storeys, similar to existing
<b>Passive Space versus Event Space</b>	80% passive, 20% event, meaning the City Park is designed for intimacy with limited capacity to host events
<b>Built Form Activating the City Park</b>	Small scale kiosks, coffee carts and a performance terrace
<b>Events Overlay</b>	Small, regular and unprogrammed events supporting the daily needs of residents, workers and visitors
<b>Landscape Identity</b>	Designed as a regional city park with play equipment and intimate garden spaces, lawns, trees, public art and a water play feature

## RECOMMENDATION

While this concept supports the intention to achieve a pedestrian core at Penrith, and supports the daily needs of residents, workers and tourists, it does not adequately deliver a useable scale of park for civic uses commensurate with the needs of Penrith as a Regional City Centre for metropolitan Sydney.

## PRINCIPLES SCORECARD

-  **PRINCIPLE 01**  
RESPOND TO THE CONTEXT
-  **PRINCIPLE 02**  
CONNECT TO STATION STREET
-  **PRINCIPLE 03**  
CONNECT TO THE TRANSPORT HUB AND NETWORK
-  **PRINCIPLE 04**  
INTRODUCE NEW CONNECTIONS
-  **PRINCIPLE 05**  
CREATE THE CITY PARK
-  **PRINCIPLE 06**  
INVESTIGATE THE DEVELOPMENT SITE
-  **PRINCIPLE 07**  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE CIVIC IDENTITY

SCORE: 4.5 / 7

- + Concept 1 only scores half a point for introducing new connections as the new north-south and east-west connections prioritise pedestrians over vehicles, thus restricting the flexibility of the adjoining development.
- + Concept 1 only scores half a point for investigating the development site as it proposes low scale development which is not commensurate with the urban core of a Regional City Centre.
- + This concept also only scores half a point for contributing to the civic identity of Penrith.

## CONCEPT 02 SHARED NETWORK





## ELEMENTS MATRIX

<b>Movement</b>	Enables shared pedestrian and vehicular outcomes
<b>Transport</b>	Provides pedestrian and active transit linkages to train station, and locates bus stops to activate the City Park
<b>Land Use within the City Park Precinct, Supporting the City Park</b>	Retail, Commercial, Residential, Education, Civic and Community
<b>Building Height of Surrounding Development</b>	4-6 storeys, enabling walk up and lifted residential and commercial development
<b>Passive Space versus Event Space</b>	50% passive, 50% event, meaning the City Park is flexible in design and able to accommodate both respite activities during the week, and event-mode when required
<b>Built Form Activating the City Park</b>	Medium scale civic functions with kiosks, coffee carts and a performance terrace
<b>Events Overlay</b>	Balances small scaled events for resident, worker and visitor needs with weekly markets, monthly events, and annual festivals
<b>Landscape Identity</b>	Designed as a regional city park with a flexible event space, garden spaces, lawns, trees, public art and a water play feature

## RECOMMENDATION

This concept provides a flexible civic space that meets the daily needs of workers, residents and visitors, as well as enabling event mode weekly, monthly or annually as required. It is recommended that this concept provide the foundation for the preferred City Park Concept Design.

## PRINCIPLES SCORECARD

- **PRINCIPLE 01**  
RESPOND TO THE CONTEXT
- **PRINCIPLE 02**  
CONNECT TO STATION STREET
- **PRINCIPLE 03**  
CONNECT TO THE TRANSPORT HUB AND NETWORK
- **PRINCIPLE 04**  
INTRODUCE NEW CONNECTIONS
- **PRINCIPLE 05**  
CREATE THE CITY PARK
- **PRINCIPLE 06**  
INVESTIGATE THE DEVELOPMENT SITE
- **PRINCIPLE 07**  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE CIVIC IDENTITY

SCORE: 7 / 7

- + Concept 2 meets all the requirements of the Urban Design Principles. In doing so, it provides a well connected City Park that provides flexibility for programming while also balancing activation with civic functionality.



## CONCEPT 03 STREET BASED












## ELEMENTS MATRIX

<b>Movement</b>	Prioritises vehicular access
<b>Transport</b>	Provides pedestrian and active transit linkages to train station, and locates bus stops to activate the City Park
<b>Land Use within the City Park Precinct, Supporting the City Park</b>	Retail, Commercial, Residential, Education, Civic and Community
<b>Building Height of Surrounding Development</b>	4-6 storeys, enabling walk up and lifted residential and commercial development
<b>Passive Space versus Event Space</b>	20% passive, 80% civic event, meaning the space is highly ceremonial and limited in its capacity to deliver respite
<b>Built Form Activating the City Park</b>	Large scale civic functions with kiosks, coffee carts and a performance terrace
<b>Events Overlay</b>	Events are of a civic scale and occur monthly or annually
<b>Landscape Identity</b>	Designed as a regional city park with hardscaping, paving, trees, public art and a water play feature

## RECOMMENDATION

While this concept supports the intention to deliver a ceremonial place for Penrith, enabling civic events and a formal identity for the city. The smaller green space reduces its ability to meet the needs of the park to contribute to the daily life of the city.

## PRINCIPLES SCORECARD

-  **PRINCIPLE 01**  
RESPOND TO THE CONTEXT
-  **PRINCIPLE 02**  
CONNECT TO STATION STREET
-  **PRINCIPLE 03**  
CONNECT TO THE TRANSPORT HUB AND NETWORK
-  **PRINCIPLE 04**  
INTRODUCE NEW CONNECTIONS
-  **PRINCIPLE 05**  
CREATE THE CITY PARK
-  **PRINCIPLE 06**  
INVESTIGATE THE DEVELOPMENT SITE
-  **PRINCIPLE 07**  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE CIVIC IDENTITY

SCORE: 6 / 7

- + Concept 3 only scores half a point for introducing new connections as the new north-south and east-west connections prioritise vehicle over pedestrians and cyclist, thus restricting the flexibility of the investigation area.
- + This concept also only scores half a point for contributing to the civic identity of Penrith.



# PREFERRED CONCEPT AND WAY FORWARD

07

PREFERRED CONCEPT AND WAY FORWARD

## 07 Preferred Concept and Way Forward

A concept evaluation process led to the selection of Concept 2 Shared Network as the Preferred Concept for Penrith City Park. This concept provides a flexible civic space that meets the daily needs of workers, residents and visitors, as well as enabling an events mode weekly, monthly or annually as required. The Preferred Concept delivers approximately 7,000sqm of civic space which is commensurate with Penrith as a Regional City Centre.

The Preferred Concept for the Penrith City Park meets the requirements of the Penrith Progression in providing a contemporary public space surrounded by a potential mix of housing and specialist retail opportunities.

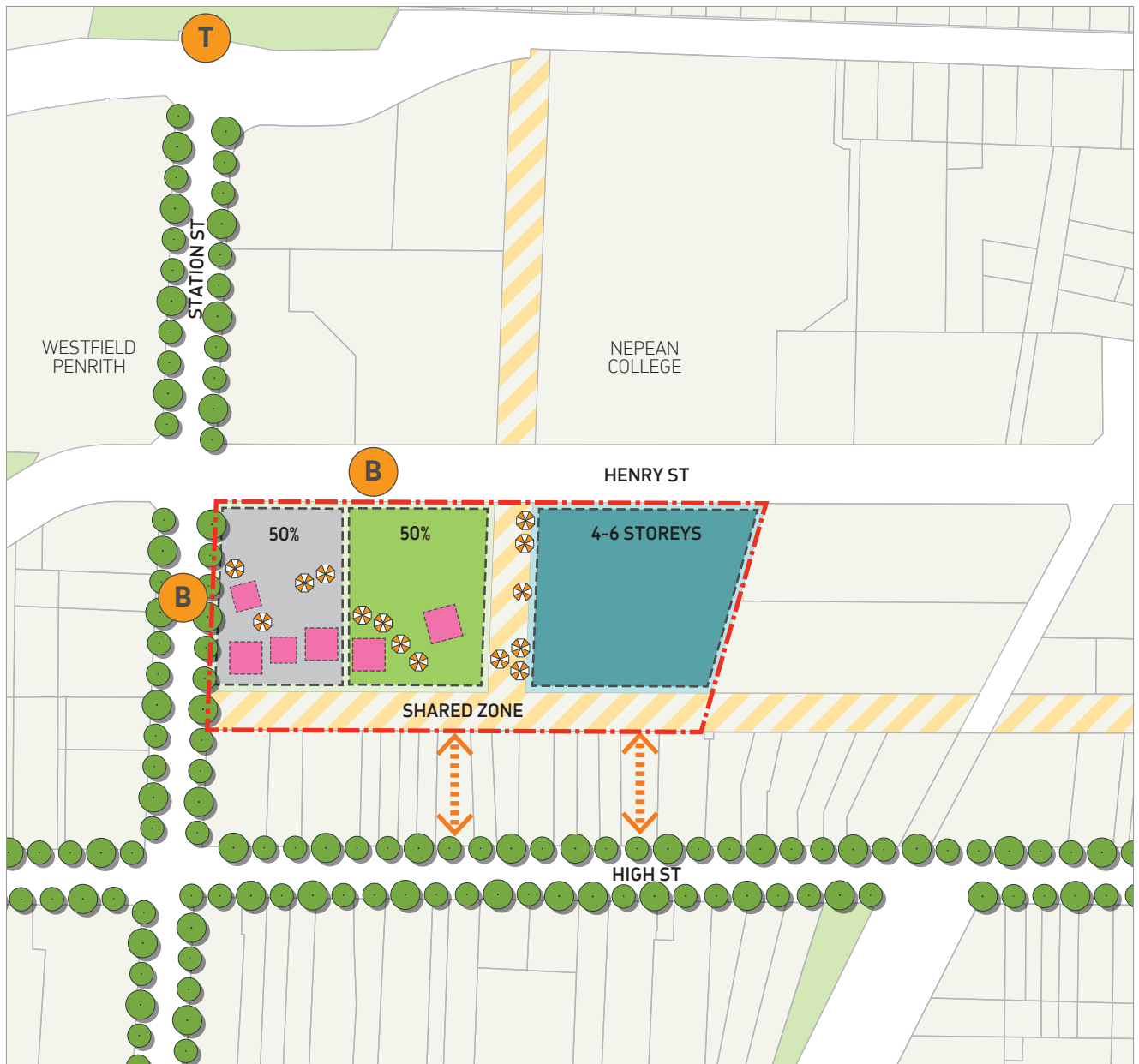
The balance between hard and softscaping will ensure it serves as a cool refuge in hot summers while providing a vibrant drawcard for community and cultural events.

Links from Penrith City Park through to High Street will revitalise the boutique shops and encourage the redevelopment of many High Street arcades into Penrith's laneways. The park will encourage property and business owners in High Street to redevelop their premises with dual frontages to both the City Park and High Street.

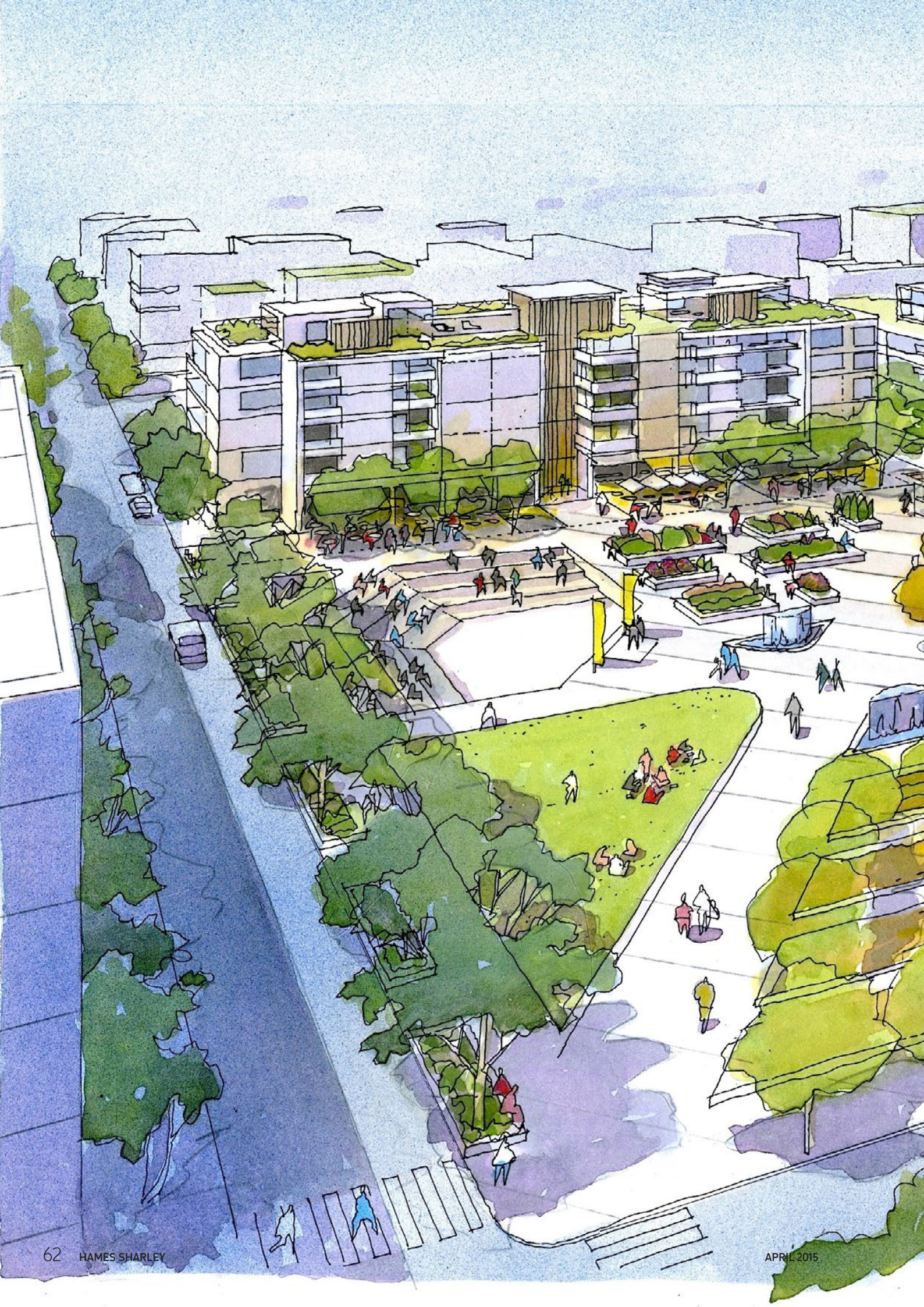
The next steps for Penrith City Council include the following actions:

- + Acquire the remaining parcels required to deliver Penrith City Park.
- + Design and deliver Penrith City Park as an exemplar of signature urban design and landscape architecture based on the recommended concept.
- + Prepare a finance plan to fund the construction of the City Park.
- + Prepare, fund and implement a maintenance and activation plan for Penrith City Park.
- + Encourage mixed use development to deliver housing density within the City Park Precinct to further activate Penrith City Park.
- + Examine the appropriateness of surrounding land use zones.
- + Investigate the development of a Cross Cultural Community Centre in the City Park Precinct adjacent to Penrith City Park.















# Hames SHARLEY



ARCHITECTURE  
INTERIORS  
URBAN DESIGN  
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