

Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub



Working to enhance Western Sydney as a competitive economic region.

Parramatta North

A habitat for creativity



Productivity

“The Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub will consolidate a regional cultural network that will drive the growth of creative industries at the local and regional level, providing more jobs, more education and more opportunities”

Innovation

“To be successful innovation districts need to develop a place and brand that attracts talent, fosters creativity and encourages exchange of ideas across multiple disciplines. Embedding arts and culture into innovation districts is integral to meeting this challenge”

Liveability

“The underlying approach will be to use ‘culture’ as a strategic resource to achieve the principles & objectives of the Parramatta North Precinct by building an active hub of arts/cultural organisations and creatives through the adaptive reuse of the heritage buildings & the imaginative use and ongoing activation of the public domain”

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Discussion Paper commissioned by:



Working to enhance Western Sydney as a competitive economic region.

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Commitment & Acknowledgement:

to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples



Aborigines hunting waterbirds, Joseph Lycett, 1817. Source: National Library Australia

We respectfully recognise the Traditional Owners of the land and waters of Parramatta, the Darug Peoples. Parramatta has always been an important meeting place for Aboriginal peoples, particularly our iconic Parramatta River. We are committed to working with Traditional Owners on matters of land, water, culture, language and cultural heritage.

For more than 20,000 years, the Aboriginal people who occupied the Parramatta North area were the Burramatta clan of the Darug.

The land around the Parramatta River provided the Burramatta clan with diverse plant and animal resources. The saltwater river and fresh water streams provided a rich environment where eels, fish, turtles, crayfish, shellfish and molluscs could be caught or collected.

Aboriginal people today continue to maintain strong links to Parramatta North and Parramatta Park. The cultural landscape provides significant cultural evidence of Aboriginal occupation and provides a direct link to their past. The landscape is important today as a significant educational resource.

**Parramatta North Urban
Transformation Program Heritage
Snapshot Overview (2016)**

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Foreword:

The core of North Parramatta Heritage Precinct is a special place with many layers of history and memories including some very traumatic experiences by people who have inhabited this site.

And for a long time, many of the heritage buildings have been closed to the public. There is a strong curiosity from the community about what this special place is all about. Many would love to see these buildings opened up and to remember and honour the past.

This discussion paper puts forward a concept to bring new life to this precinct through the development of a Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub.

We believe the continued use of these delicate heritage buildings for government offices is suboptimal and a variety of uses are needed to activate the precinct. These uses include the potential for museums, start-up businesses, cafes and restaurants.

There is potential for this remarkable precinct and we have explored just one idea. This proposal illuminates the concept for creative and cultural industries to be co-located in some of these buildings. This idea would see cultural entities and creative enterprises share space in one of Sydney's most historic sites.

It will support and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation, boost cultural and social development as well as employment at a regional level. The hub would be flexible and suitable for many types of activity such as meetings, networking, hack events, private working, group working, discussion-based events, training, mentoring, incubation and acceleration of projects or firms, collaborative making and research ideas.

We believe this will keep these buildings in public ownership and build a strong and cohesive creative economy.

While a number of anchor arts and cultural organisations have been identified in this proposal, the exact mix of tenants, uses and programming will be subject to further examination. The proposal does however indicate the depth and breadth of arts and cultural practice in the region and the opportunity to foster connectivity across broad creative domains.

Critical in this idea is the need to curate these collaborations and work with the sector to identify suitable partners. It should be acknowledged that some creative industries can pay their own way while others are supported by government. Some form of cross-subsidy may be required to improve the feasibility of the Hub.

Western Sydney has a severe shortage of community and arts space and this will assist in establishing a rich cultural environment that will drive creativity and innovation across our economy.

For many years, the NSW Government has played a role in accommodating creative and cultural producers, often in publicly-owned or leased buildings closer to the Sydney CBD. With the immense growth of Western Sydney it is time to identify the places that can host and support our region's creativity.



David Borger

Director
Western Sydney
Sydney Business Chamber



Message from UrbanGrowth NSW:

UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation congratulates Western Sydney Business Chamber on their advocacy for a cultural and creative industries hub in Western Sydney. We recognise and welcome the high calibre of cultural organisations, artists and individuals represented in this discussion paper.

The NSW Government has reaffirmed its commitment for the nationally-listed heritage core to remain in public ownership and this is a valuable contribution to the conversation on the adaptive reuse of this unique precinct. We are leading the activation, urban renewal and economic development of land within the Parramatta North Growth Centre, as part of our role to create extraordinary places for current and future generations.

I look forward to working closely with cultural and creative industries and the Western Sydney Business Chamber to better understand the opportunities of the region.

Together with our partners and community, we can develop a shared vision for the heritage core that is future focused and respects the indigenous, colonial and institutional stories of Parramatta North.



**UrbanGrowth NSW
Development Corporation**

Barry Mann
CEO
UrbanGrowth NSW



Executive Summary: a habitat for creativity

“Supporting a culture of creativity is essential for New South Wales to succeed, but for culture to truly flourish it needs a home - places where it can be created, shared and enjoyed by all”
NSW Government Cultural Infrastructure Action Plan 2018

The establishment of a Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub at the centre of the ‘Central City’ will provide that ‘home’ and will go further to cultivate a unique ‘habitat for creativity’ for one of NSW’s fastest growing sectors and significantly contribute to the placemaking of one of Sydney’s most historic sites.

This proposal very much takes advantage of recent policy decisions and directions of the NSW Government that will deliver generational opportunities for the people of Parramatta and Western Sydney. It also takes into account the Greater Sydney Commission’s Greater Sydney Region Plan in delivering resilient liveability outcomes.

The creation of a Western Sydney Hub very much supports the strategic approaches of the recent Arts 2025 Summit and the forthcoming NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan by means of:

- **Delivering a unique project that supports the growth & productivity of the NSW cultural sector, particularly in the rapid growing region of Western Sydney**
- **Establishing a rich cultural environment that will drive creativity & innovation across our economy**
- **Repurposing and revitalising Government assets & buildings for cultural use to support urban renewal and create distinctive local places & neighbourhoods**

In respect to Parramatta North, this proposal articulates complementary uses that are strongly aligned to the broader Precinct’s strategic vision and the respect of cultural and historical values through:

- **Adaptively re-using the nationally listed heritage core and in keeping with the desire for the buildings to remain in public ownership**
- **Building a strong and cohesive local community & visitor economy: by supplementing and supporting other identified cultural/social site uses: museums, cultural landscapes, site interpretation & public art**
- **Assisting the development & sustainability of UrbanGrowth and Health Infrastructure NSW’s desire to establish the nearby Westmead Health, Education and Innovation Precinct**



“A critical mass of creative individuals and organisations creates the dynamic environment and helps create a distinct micro-economy where the sector can flourish”



The following proposal provides a robust analysis & scope of the economic/social/cultural influences and examination of key relationships that will support the use and activation of the broader Parramatta North Precinct ecosystem into the future and how ‘arts & culture can be used as strategic focus and tool’ in the regeneration and ongoing sustainability of the site.

The model for a Cultural/Creative Hub developed for this proposal is embedded in the “conditions for success” gleaned from a comprehensive literature review, the findings of the recent Arts 2025 Summit and knowledge of needs of the growing arts/cultural sector across Western Sydney. The concept is firmly based on:

- **Place** – site uniqueness: adaptive re-use, geographic context, proximity to other uses
- **Critical Mass** – capability/scale: supporting a sizable self-sustaining cultural economy
- **Diversity of Uses** – adopting a model that offers both affordable & semi-commercial space
- **Platforms for Collaboration** – offering multiple flexible creative convergence spaces
- **Partnership** – identifying a diverse and growing circle of funders, partners and stakeholders



The governance model for the Cultural/Creative Hub model is designed to balance public interest, community engagement, risk and responsibility. Stewardship is built into all aspects of project governance. The above ingredients will ensure the sustainability of the Western Sydney arts/culture sector into the future. Through supporting the co-location of key tenant organisations (already funded by Create NSW) the project will provide opportunity for associated benefits of this co-location to be captured. These include: efficiency benefits (e.g. through sharing of resources, less rent- more to spend on projects/programs); benefits of co-located activities to audiences; and creative collaboration.

Whilst a number of anchor arts/cultural organisations have been identified in this proposal, the exact mix of tenants, uses and programming will be subject to further examination, however it does indicate the depth and breadth of arts/cultural practice in the region and the opportunity to foster connectivity across broad creative domains.

Furthermore, with the proposed addition of an appropriately scaled creative industries hub via co-working spaces will support entrepreneurship and innovation, helping to boost cultural/social development and employment at a regional level. Designed in this way, the hub would be flexible and suitable for many types of activity: meetings, networking, ‘hack’ events, private working, group working, discussion-based events, training, mentoring, incubation and acceleration of projects or firms, collaborative making and research ideas.



Introduction: a collective vision

This project to establish a unique Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub at Parramatta North precinct sets out to strengthen the regional creative industries ecology by providing a place to help accelerate the development of social innovation, entrepreneurial, cultural and creative businesses and arts organisations.

Essentially, a 'Cultural Hub' has become a ubiquitous idea signifying a dynamic bringing together diverse artistic talents, disciplines and skills to intensify innovation and creative activity. This proposal for a Western Sydney Cultural Hub is very much unique in its design & implementation and is underpinned by key research, planning and the needs of the arts/culture sector & communities across the region. The key components include:

1. **A 'Creative Hub': for established & emerging arts/cultural organisations**
2. **An innovative 'Test Site': for presentation of art, performance & design.**
3. **A home for a 'New Economy': a place for the creative industries**

The 'Cultural Hub' objectives are therefore to assist in fulfilling a number of integrated outcomes in supporting the region's future liveability and prosperity. Firstly, the 'Hub' will capitalise on Western Sydney's thriving arts/cultural sector and the community's shared values and strengths to establish a unique environment for cultural and creative development, production, presentation and participation.

Secondly, the 'Hub' will support place-based planning that will build on the Central City District's artistic, heritage, cultural, and creative strengths of which Parramatta North is a part of. Greater use of the public realm for temporary uses such as arts, events and creative uses will support activation of place and the precinct; which is rich in multiple layers of history and heritage significance.

Finally, it will also support one of NSW's fastest growing industries. Creative and cultural expression are a hallmark of innovation, and innovation underpins the productivity of a 21st century region. The Hub will be home to co-work spaces with an aim to support entrepreneurship and innovation, helping to boost cultural/social development and employment at a regional level.

"By design, our City incubates creativity, industry & new knowledge" Parramatta Arts & Cultural Plan 2017

Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub

THE ENABLERS'

Harness the skills/initiative & energies of regional arts/cultural organisations and creatives and their innovative ways to engage and to take creative work to audiences.



Hub



LOCAL STRENGTHS

Build on an extraordinary strength and uniqueness of regional/local creative resources & social/cultural networks

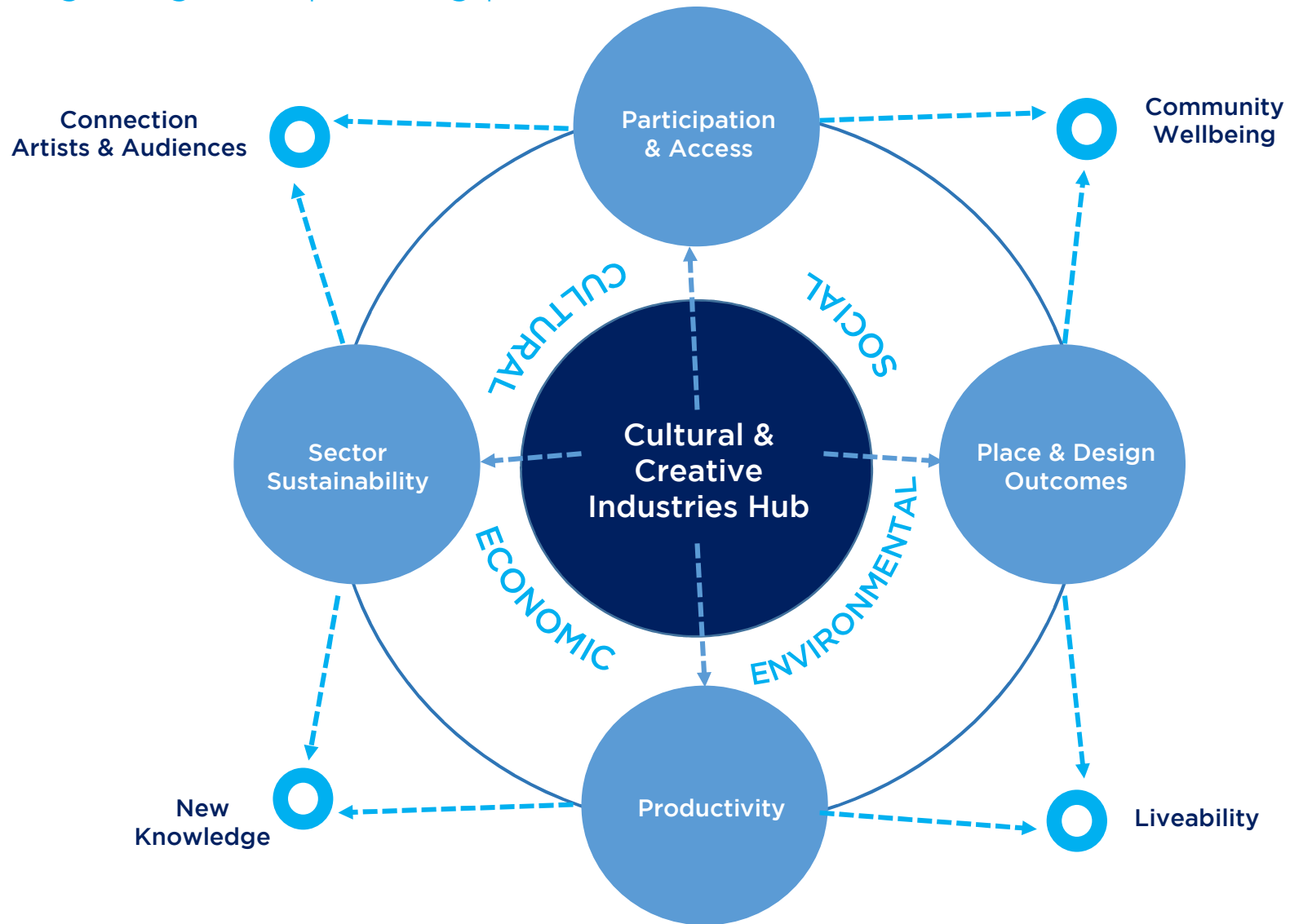


THE POWER OF PLACE

Strong historical and geographical characteristics; close proximity to academic, research, technology and cultural centres.

The Cultural & Creative Industries Hub Purpose:

achieving integrated planning priorities



The Cultural & Creative Industries Hub Goals: principles & values

The strategic goals of the Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub are to:

- Establish the Parramatta North heritage core as a creative hub for Western Sydney
- Lead the cultural animation of the Parramatta North Precinct
- Support and nurture Western Sydney's arts community by providing a home for high quality arts practice;
- Create a multi-arts tenant mix that works cooperatively and collaboratively;
- Create a place of community, co-creation and participation;
- Generate resources to invest back into the arts and creative community within the region;
- Design infrastructure that is flexible and can adapt to changing creative arts practice and community needs over time whilst respecting the heritage of the buildings & site.

“Activating a cultural hub at the heart of the Western Sydney community”

The underlying approach will be to use ‘culture’ as a strategic resource to achieve the principles and objectives of the Parramatta North Precinct by creating an active hub of arts/cultural organisations through the adaptive reuse of the heritage buildings and the creative use and ongoing activation of the public domain.

The Western Sydney Creative & Creative Industries Hub will be a place that inspires, supports and reflects a vibrant mix of cultural organisations and creative activity.

The Hub will be predominantly characterised by high internal and external networking and knowledge sharing capabilities that will also act as a meeting point for communities.

The impressive Parramatta North heritage-listed buildings which, whilst remaining architecturally preserved and protected, will be re-imagined for multi-arts, cultural and learning practitioners, professionals, participant's and audiences.

ACTIVATION

The WS Cultural & Creative Industries Hub will be a catalyst for cultural development, animated by creative and entrepreneurial people/organisations. It will be a place that encourages cultural engagement in a broad civic and social sense, as well as fostering excellence in contemporary arts practice & the creative industries.

PLACE

The WS Cultural & Creative Industries Hub will be a place that inspires, supports and reflects a vibrant mix of cultural, community and creative industries while conserving and enhancing the heritage assets of the Parramatta North heritage core and public domain; ensuring access and amenity for all participant's & visitors.

RELATIONSHIPS

The WS Cultural & Creative Industries Hub will nurture, renew and inspire partners, communities, visitors and audiences through a depth and breadth of multi arts participation and engagement opportunities.

EMPOWERMENT

The WS Cultural & Creative Industries Hub will support programs that embrace and reflect cultural, social and artistic diversity of Western Sydney; bringing their passions and expertise to the table, empowering them to reach their individual and collective potential.

The Cultural & Creative Industries Hub: the opportunity

The Vision

Parramatta North's heritage core will be a place where people come together to produce & engage with arts, culture and the creative industries, a place that 'makes visible' Australia's dynamic cultural and creative life.

The Hub will build creative networks and support the dispersed creative sector, producing tangible and bankable community cultural and economic benefits.

Creating a hub for our cultural economy is one of the main driving forces behind the proposal. It is about supporting, nurturing and strengthening what is already present, but it is also about being the location choice for associated anchor tenants in the media, research and business incubation; and the local, national and international artists & creatives.

A viable cultural & creative industries cluster that can bring coherence and contribute to the diversification and growth of the regional, state and national economy and complement the visitor/tourism sector.



Creating a world-class hub & precinct

This proposal has driven a remarkable and optimistic sense of a creative groundswell around this project.

The Hub will create a platform for aggregation and concentration of cultural content and production that will deliver a positive impact and reach well beyond its geographic location.

With the proper investment, the Parramatta North Cultural & Creative Industries Hub can be Australia's international platform for arts/cultural production.

The Hub has the ability to be driven through local, national and global connections. Fundamental to operational vitality and viability will be the partnerships that develop and invest in the Hub and broader precinct. There is an emerging appetite for new models for partnerships and business that bring cultural vitality that can stretch well beyond Australia.

The Hub will also function as a common ground for creative industries, artistic talent, creative businesses and arts/cultural organisations.

The Hub will drive renewed urban productivity and fuel the growth of some of Australia's leading arts and cultural organisations and contribute to the strong uptake of creative enterprise start-ups and small businesses that can continue to grow locally, throughout Australia and internationally.

Building positive social/cultural benefits of engagement is the focus of creating the hub of creative, innovative activity, open to entrepreneurial partnerships, new work and advanced artistic practices.

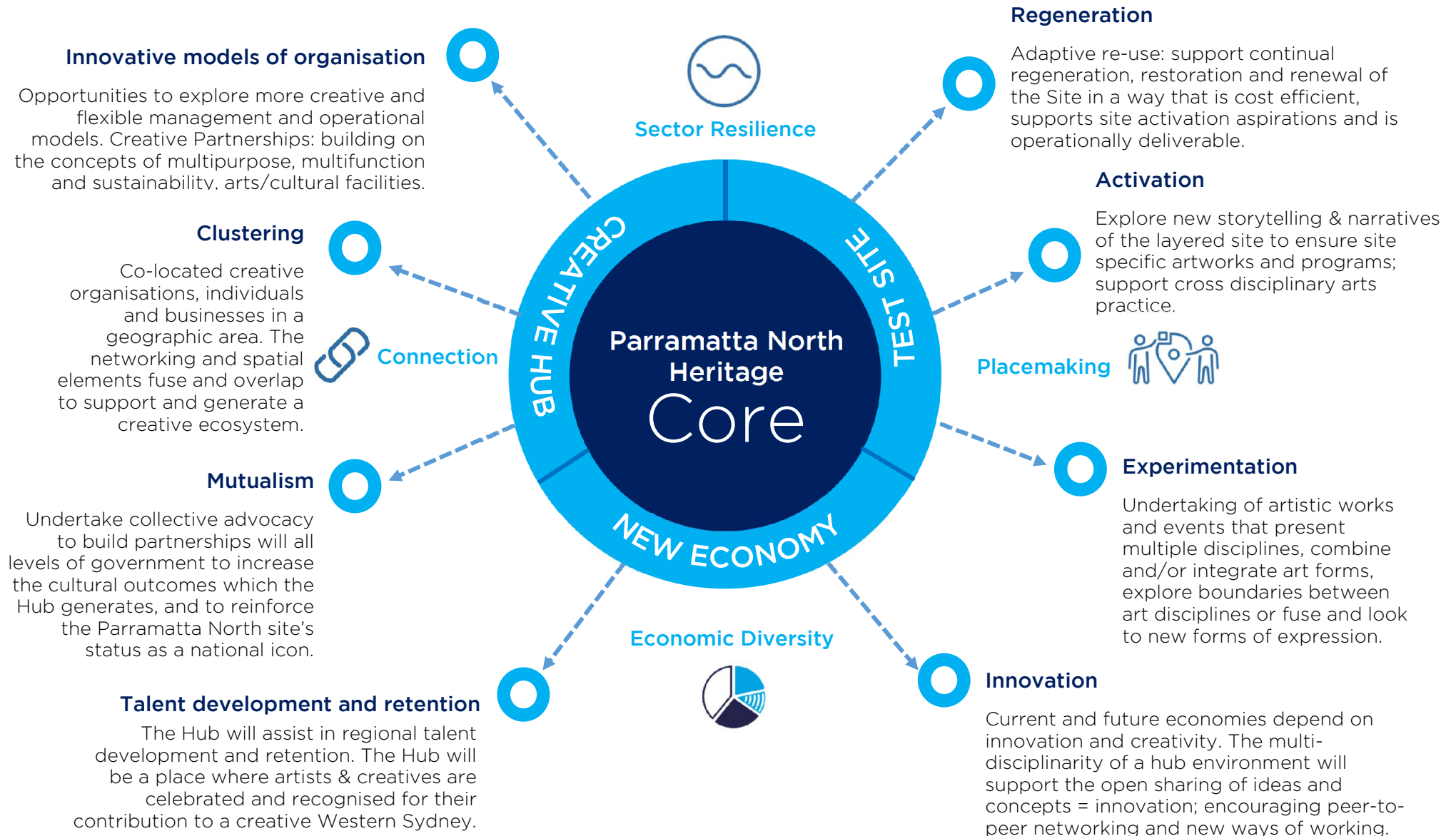


Key Objectives

Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub

Parramatta North

The Cultural & Creative Industries Hub: Key Objectives



Key Objective 1 jobs growth & economic diversity



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

Key Objective

1

Economic Diversity



Creating a Cultural Hub as powerful leverage of economic growth for Western Sydney

The growing arts and culture sector in Western Sydney generates both economic benefits as well as intangible benefits, such as contributing to identity, liveability, participation and the expanding regional visitor economy.

The accumulative impact is one of delivering positive economic, social and cultural outcomes. The sector also contributes to business activity across many industries, from manufacturing and construction to retailing and entertainment.

Cultural hubs have become the way of organising creative economy innovation and help drive sustainable development. Leading current practice for the establishment of cultural hubs favours the clustering of community buildings in centres to enhance accessibility and connectivity with related uses. Its' about recognising the energising effect arts can have on a centre or place; enriching community life, foster wellbeing and stimulating local economies.

“Creative hubs, cultural precincts and artists are the reed beds of developing new economies”.

Successful cultural precincts are not just ones that are built, but ones that, once built, thrive and, in thriving, animate the city or region that it serves. It is a holistic definition: success is not just getting an arts building or series of buildings up and running it is about ensuring that they are viable and play a central role in their communities.

This proposal to establish a Western Sydney Creative Hub is at the forefront of Government, sector & community thinking; enhancing the creative sector's cultural and social outcomes and the industry's economic contribution. The Hub will complement other recent major investments in cultural infrastructure and importantly culturally and economically future -proof Western Sydney.

Supporting Western Sydney jobs and economic diversity:

Cultural production and presentation is an essential part of the state's cultural life and economy. Growing cultural industries that can support and enhance the impact of the knowledge and education economy, encourage sustainable economic growth including the development of new industries will bring diverse employment and jobs growth opportunities to the West Central region.

Cultural facilities, cultural precincts and artists are the reed beds of developing new economies, providing the essential infrastructure that support the creative production cycle including ideas and content development, product fabrication, marketing and distribution etc.

The value of social/cultural enterprises can be seen beyond its economic contribution.

It embraces the principles of mutualism, participation and community ownership, and importantly place based employment opportunities.

Additionally, the nurturing of local arts and creative practice and its flow on multipliers through new suppliers, creativity and innovation, and tourism etc. is essential to diversifying the economy and leading to additional and alternative income and jobs growth at a local/regional level.

Economic Rationale for a Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub

Supporting independent and micro creative business:

Creative hubs are more than the sum of its parts. As well as supporting established and emerging arts/cultural organisations across Western Sydney the hub concept can also offer creative micro businesses the chance to aggregate with others in order to access crucial resources such as tools, specialist services, or inspiration to help develop projects and businesses.

The Cultural Hub could have a wide range of impacts including nurturing start-up ventures, jobs, new products and services, future investment (public and commercial), talent development, regional talent retention, informal education and engagement, training, encourage urban regeneration, research and development, new networks and supporting innovative models of organisation and resilience.



“Creative industries are core element of an innovative economy – have a growing role in the Central City District’s productivity, with creativity, entrepreneurship, technical ability and collaboration being essential skills for the future”

Greater Sydney Commission - Central City District Plan 2017

Research and feedback from the NSW Arts 2025 Summit suggests growth and productivity of the cultural sector is currently limited by a lack of access to affordable space and there is ongoing strong demand for more flexible space which supports a broad range of needs. (i.e. cultural infrastructure investment which targets increased cultural production and participation).

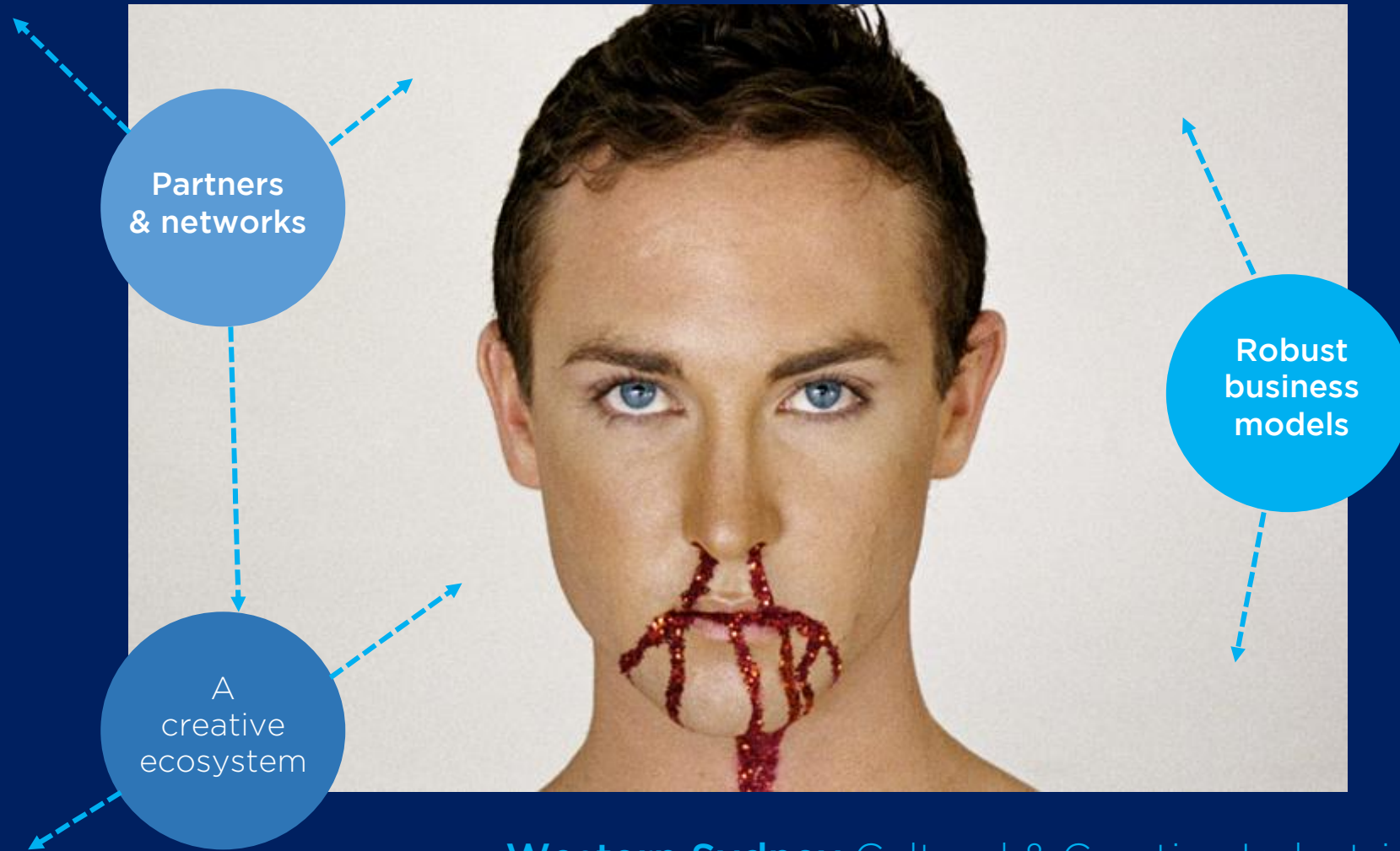
Furthermore, a recent research report from Western Sydney University titled: ‘Recalibrating Culture: production, consumption, policy’ (2017); that explored the work practices of artists and cultural practitioners who live and/or practice in Greater Western Sydney found the immediate need for more accessible and flexible spaces for cultural practice. The report highlighted in the absence of these spaces that current cultural practice in the region came from creatives and arts organisations having very much rely on their passion, adaptability and resilience to continue in their creative work. It also called for additional support for existing and emerging arts and cultural organisations for permanent arts/culture working spaces.

A vibrant sector of independent artists, thinkers, makers and arts/cultural organisations in conversation with local and global audiences is now critical to the future liveability of Parramatta and the Western Sydney region. The time has come to deliver an innovative approach to accommodating the infrastructure needs of cultural and creative industries in Western Sydney and sustainably supporting the creative leaders in the region.

Key Objective

2

Arts/cultural sector resilience



Sector Vitality & Strength

Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub

Parramatta North

Key Objective

2

Arts/Cultural Sector Resilience



“Planning arts and cultural infrastructure for Western Sydney will be aligned to, and integrated within, broader strategic planning for liveable communities, employment opportunity and urban development.”

NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework

The health and wellbeing of the arts & cultural sector.

Of great importance to the arts and cultural sector is the nurturing the talent and capacity of its practitioners and workers. Ensuring the strength and resilience of the arts/cultural sector within Western Sydney is currently critical.

Western Sydney has an innovative arts and cultural sector, which is attracting new audiences and providing significant growth opportunities for the region. As one of the fastest-growing sectors of the State’s economy, the broader creative industries can play a part in further developing the Western Sydney region.

The NSW Arts and Cultural Framework acknowledges “entrepreneurial thinking is required in being able to recognise opportunities and understand how to capitalise on them. It is central to the continued success of our State’s arts and culture over the next decade.”

Furthermore, recent consultation in preparation of new strategy (arts 2025, NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan) has highlighted the need to a renewed commitment to explore ways in which to sustain and nurture both established and emerging Western Sydney based artists and arts/cultural organisations. This is particularly essential for the small-to-medium established and emerging arts/cultural organisations.

This proposal supports these objectives of bringing stability and strength to the sector across the region. The Cultural hub will have the capability to create further sector capacity, business sustainability, creating new opportunities for stronger networks and partnerships. Importantly it will provide further opportunities for artists and cultural practitioners, and help future employment and urban renewal for the region.

The spin off benefits will also result in sharing resources, promoting leadership, business-skills development and leveraging new opportunities to engage with the arts.

Sector
Vitality &
Strength

NSW Arts & Cultural Policy Framework

Growing, empowering and
strengthening the arts &
culture sectors in NSW

CREATIVITY AND VIBRANCY

STABILITY AND STRENGTH

DIVERSITY, ACCESS AND
ENGAGEMENT

HEALTH

A resilient NSW arts and cultural sector.
We want to continue to build on the
expertise and creativity active in our arts
and cultural organisations.

So we will be working to increase their
resilience through the exploration of new
working methods and new income
streams. Building resilience will ensure
continuity, and through that continuity
we can be sure of maintaining the high
quality of NSW arts experiences and
cultural activities.

“Arts and cultural facilities and precincts are essential platforms for creation and presentation for artists and cultural workers”

The Western Sydney Arts/Cultural sector’s ongoing resilience relies on sustained investment of both physical & human assets into the future.

Major urban renewal is changing Parramatta and its sub region from a low-scale, suburban centre to Sydney’s Central City.

The opportunity to embed affordable and workable cultural infrastructure in Parramatta North will be a catalyst to Western Sydney arts/cultural sector’s development and growth.

The Greater Sydney Commission, established by the NSW Government to lead metropolitan planning for Greater Sydney has importantly acknowledged these needs in the recently revised Central City district plan 2017 that outlines:

- Critical to planning for a world-class Central River City is celebrating its rich cultural history, showcasing its diverse cultural and entertainment assets, and encouraging and incubating creativity, innovation and inspiration.
- Continued investment in the arts and cultural sector will boost economic opportunities by attracting a skilled workforce and encouraging innovation in other sectors such as commercial creative firms.



CITY OF
PARRAMATTA

Unmet Demand: Cultural Infrastructure

Challenges facing Social/Cultural Infrastructure in City of Parramatta

There is a significant shortfall of social infrastructure and community facilities in the Parramatta CBD, including libraries, community centres and subsidised office space. Existing gaps in community facility provision are likely to be further exacerbated by the City’s population growth.

Over the last 3 years, City of Parramatta has received in excess of 25 requests from cultural organisations for direct accommodation support and advocacy to relocate or establish a base in City of Parramatta.

These requests have come from a range of major cultural institutions, small to medium organisations, social enterprises, start-ups and artist run initiatives. Also during this timeframe, the waiting list for Parramatta Artists’ Studios resident tenancies has grown by 400%. To date, City of Parramatta has not been able to adequately meet any new accommodation requests.

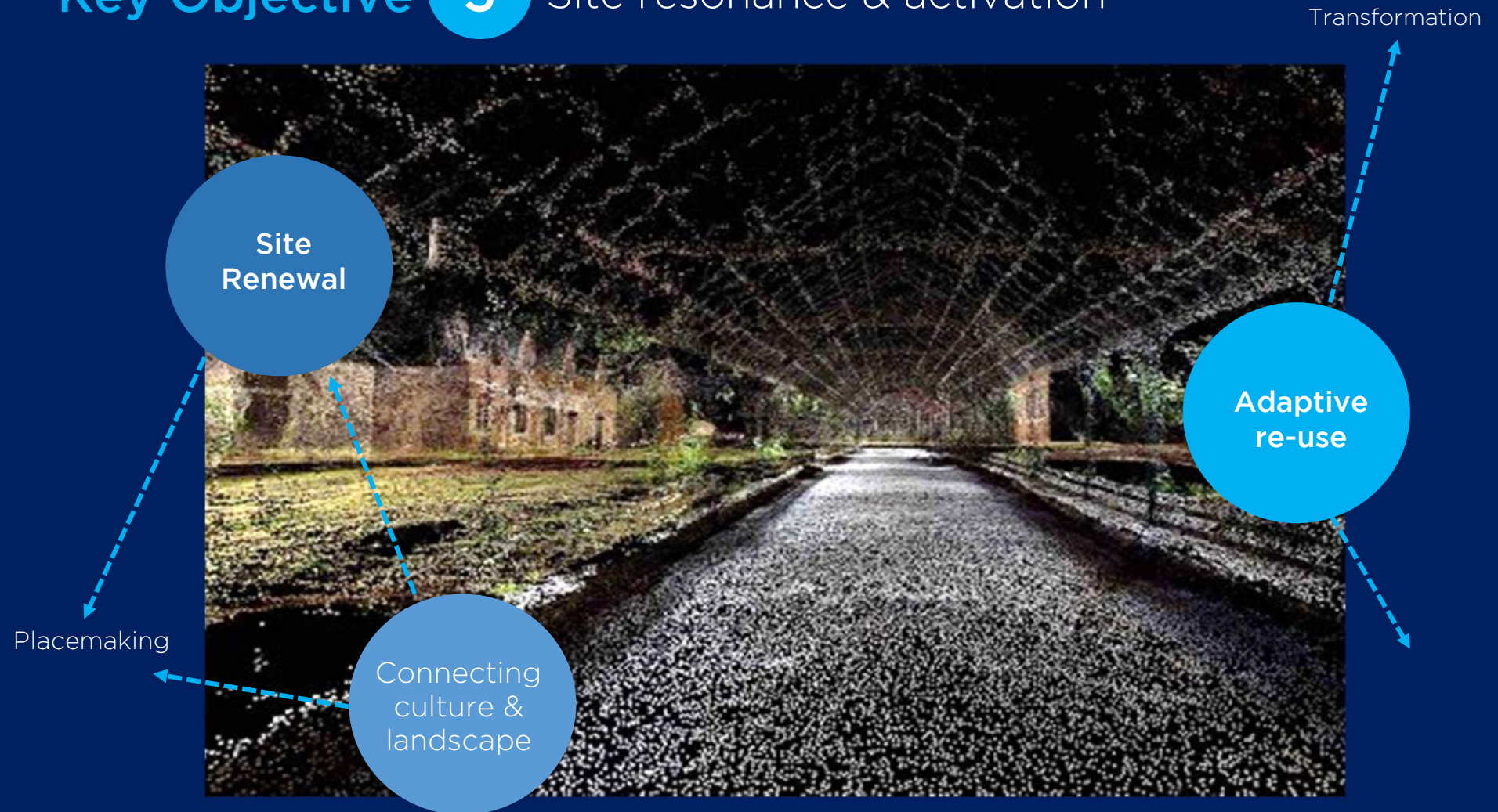
Priority Projects:

In March 2017, City of Parramatta exhibited a draft list of cultural infrastructure needs in the greater Parramatta CBD. In April 2018, the City of Parramatta amongst other cultural infrastructure needs requested the following project be included in the forthcoming NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan.

Creative Industries Cluster

- Creative Industries Incubator and collaborative spaces; Incorporating a media/digital centre, co-working spaces, rehearsal rooms, offices and meeting rooms. Designed to support an ecology of commercial start up and subsidised creative sector organisations. May incorporate cultural organisations such as the proposed Western Sydney Centre for Writing.

Key Objective 3 Site resonance & activation



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

Key Objective

3

Placemaking



UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation

The NSW Government through UrbanGrowth NSW is leading the current \$310m renewal of Parramatta North Precinct which will conserve, unlock and share this important heritage, while also recognising and respecting the significant social history of the site.

The vision is firmly one of “creating a vibrant, connected and inclusive urban place for people to live, work and enjoy”. UrbanGrowth NSW is committed to ensuring that the significant heritage buildings at Parramatta North are conserved and re-used for future generations. Not only will this respect the social and cultural history of the site, it will also enable new and innovative uses.

The consistent view from consultations and planning is that the site should be mixed-use; that encompasses spaces for community, businesses and arts. The plan considers place activation and exploring creative revenue opportunities in the short term while pursuing creative mixed-use place making strategies for the mid to long-term.

“Helping to create an iconic, vibrant neighbourhood, intimately connected to its culture & landscape, to Greater Parramatta and to its own rich and complex history”

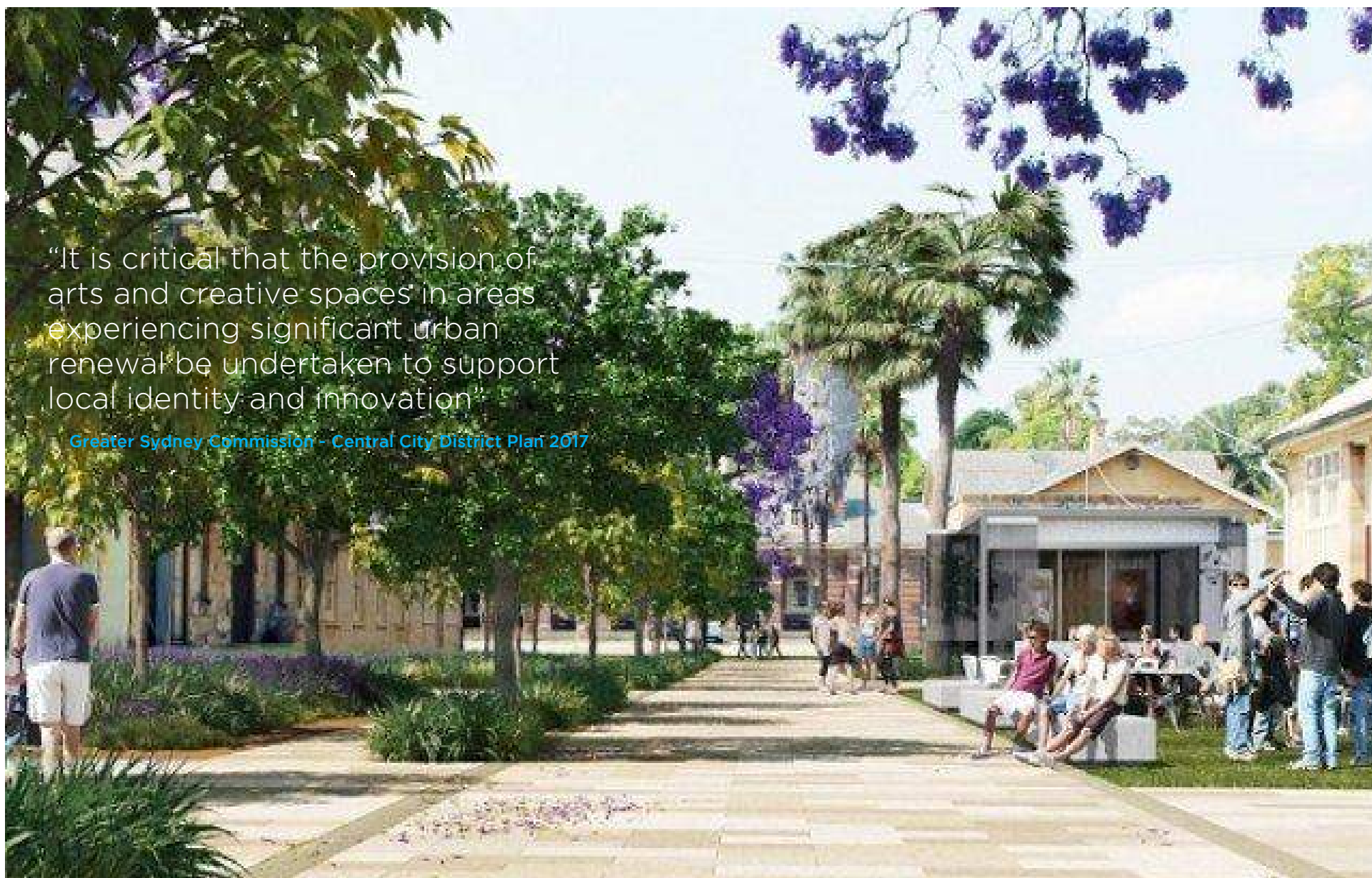
UrbanGrowth NSW; Parramatta North 2017



Parramatta North is home to a rich Aboriginal and European heritage. This dates back 20,000 years to the Darug people and about 200 years to colonial settlement. Important heritage buildings on site include the Cumberland Hospital which was once the Parramatta Female Factory. It also includes the Norma Parker Centre which was once the Roman Catholic Orphan School and later the Parramatta Industrial School for Girls.

The lands at Parramatta North were rezoned via a State Significant Sites process on 20 November 2015 by the Minister for Planning. The rezoning allows for the preservation and adaptation of heritage buildings, and approximately 7.1 hectares of new public open space including a new river foreshore park.





“It is critical that the provision of arts and creative spaces in areas experiencing significant urban renewal be undertaken to support local identity and innovation”

Greater Sydney Commission - Central City District Plan 2017

The development of the Parramatta North site for an integrated arts and cultural precinct is supported by policy directions at the State and local level.

Site: Why Parramatta North?

“Breathing new life into the area.”

This proposal for a Western Sydney Cultural Hub is very much site specific:

- The development of the site for an integrated arts and cultural precinct is supported by policy directions at the State & local level; helping to create robust local and visitor economies.
- Identifying appropriate new uses for the retained heritage buildings that will enhance their relationship with the public domain and help activate and define spaces within Parramatta North.
- Providing uses that will support the positive integration of activity within the surrounding urban fabric and landscape and offer active support to the interpretation of the history and heritage significance of the PNHS in accordance with the PNHS Heritage Interpretation Strategy. (Public domain activation – site specific artworks social/cultural engagement etc.)
- Delivering a sustainable management model that is consistent with best-practice heritage management and arts (adaptive re-use) in line with Parramatta North Historic Sites Consolidated Conservation Management Plan.
- Creating working synergies; a precinct for cultural production and creative development adjacent to the growing Health and Research Hub Westmead: i.e. Health and innovation: animation, digital/robotic medicine etc.; arts and wellbeing.



“Rediscovering and renewing this unique place”.



The Parramatta Light Rail will be the backbone of this growth area connecting the world-class medical, education and research hub of Westmead to Parramatta North and the growing Parramatta CBD.

Site: Enlivening the Heritage Core



“Let’s embrace the past and move towards a culturally vibrant, economically and socially activated site for the community, businesses and arts.” [Sprout Participant PNUTP November 2016](#)



Consistent with community ideas

Considerable community engagement has been undertaken on the future of the Heritage Core of the Parramatta North site including an UrbanGrowth NSW report (2017) that captures a range of ideas on the potential future uses of the heritage core at the Parramatta North urban transformation site.

Hundreds of ideas were generated during Sprout – Growing ideas for the Parramatta North heritage core, a two-day engagement forum held in November 2016 that heard from cultural groups, community members, university and high school students, heritage experts, Western Sydney business leaders, and state and local government representatives.

In proposing new uses for the buildings and spaces, participants were asked to reflect on the site’s rich history as well as looking ahead at more contemporary opportunities.

Consideration was given to public access, innovation, research, creative and cultural industries, employment, educational outcomes and ensuring financial sustainability. Ideas ranged across a number of cultural uses like artists’ studios, micro museums, and an outdoor cinema, to the development of an innovation hub, & education opportunities.

This proposal supports these key community driven ideas.



“The last thing that we should do is strive for a clean slate. Without any continuity in the community or urban fabric, places often lack the social capital and identity that builds creativity & innovation” [Sprout Participant PNUTP November 2016](#)





“Adaptive re-use that enriches & unlocks”



The Parramatta North site offers the critical physical elements for a successful Cultural Hub:

SCALE

The collection of buildings and the public domain has capacity to support a critical mass of arts/cultural organisations within the mixed use precinct.

SUITABILITY

The opportunity for spaces that can accommodate a broad variety of solitary and communal cultural production and expression; informal spaces that facilitate creative experimentation, innovation, knowledge exchange and informal learning, as well as formal spaces for presentation, broad social recognition and critique.

GEOGRAPHY

Has good public transport (forthcoming Parramatta Light Rail) and central location close to Sydney’s second CBD; work spaces located within an urban environment that creative workers live, work and visit.

OPPORTUNITY

Supports varying modes of participation; fulfilling the need for spaces for the consumption and sharing of cultural product, as well as space for its production and creative development.

CONNECTIVITY

Offers a variety of spaces that can facilitate the sharing and exchange of cultural expression; integration of creative work practices etc.

Site: Key ingredients for success

Not all Hubs are the same. They are often embedded in particular cultural contexts, they support specialised creative practices and develop their own value systems.

Although by no means offering a template for success, new creative hubs established over the past 5-8 years appear that success is very much based on cultural and other complementary activities that build on local strengths and are enhanced through good urban design principles.

Importantly these Creative Hubs engage with the geographical pattern of human activities (where people live, work and engage in leisure activities) and the various linkages between local communities. Successful creative hubs are also embedded in local cultural and economic ecosystems and are sustained by the respect of participants and audiences

The Parramatta North precinct offers these key ingredients for a dynamic ecosystem of creative organisations and communities to flourish.

As well as proximity to the Parramatta CBD, businesses, major entertainment venues and cultural institutions like Riverside Theatres and the new forthcoming MAAS museum, the Parramatta North Precinct can actively feed off the innovation of one of Australia's largest health, research and education precincts; Westmead.

A unique & dynamic ecosystem innovation - research - health & wellbeing - culture - history

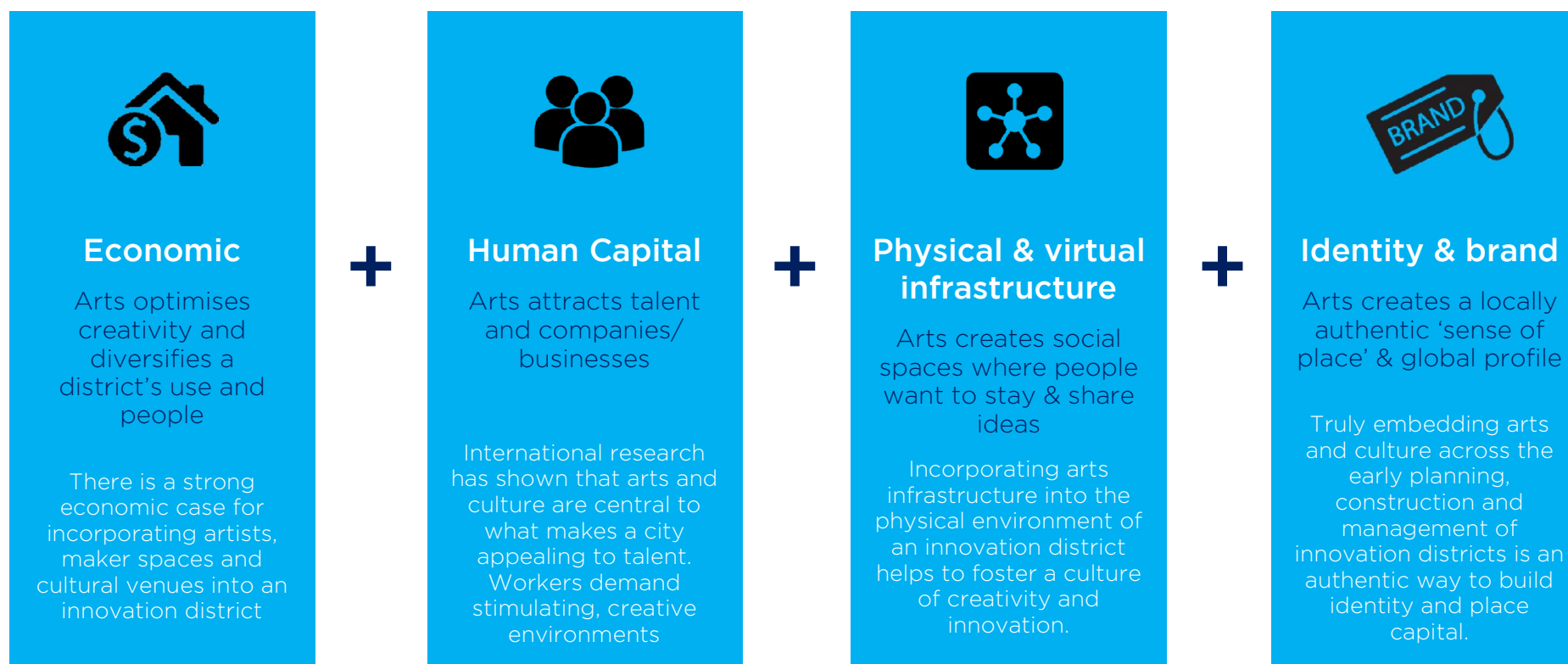


Moving beyond preservation: Leveraging arts & culture to deliver innovation

There is an imperative and desire to move “beyond just the preservation of the Parramatta North heritage core”. There is growing interest and direction to developing a research & innovation district within the broader precinct along with or a creative/innovation/start-up hubs to grow and nurture Western Sydney’s smart tech & knowledge jobs of tomorrow. Innovation districts globally are faced with the challenge of creating an authentic ‘sense of place’. To be successful these districts need to develop a place and brand that attracts global talent, fosters creativity and encourages exchange of ideas across multiple disciplines. Embedding arts and culture into innovation districts is integral to meeting this challenge.

“UrbanGrowth NSW identified core criteria for success. Understanding the role of arts & culture across four of the five criteria (economic, human capital, physical and virtual infrastructure and identity and brand)”.

Create NSW - Cultivating a Successful Innovation Districts Research Paper 2017





Key Components

Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

The Cultural & Creative Industries Hub: Key Components



Key Component

1

Creative hub for arts/cultural organisations

An active hub
is to anchor
the site

Mutuality

Co-location

Collaboration



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

Key Component:

1



Creative Hub for Western Sydney arts/cultural organisations

“Developing a culture of collaboration, knowledge sharing & collective social+creative learning”

The growing health and maturity of arts & cultural organisations and the sector within Western Sydney has been an important motivator for the concept of creating a unique Cultural Hub in the region. Tenure and more adaptive spaces to help plan for the future is required by a number of key and emerging arts organisations.

Essentially, it is the mutuality of the relationships that creates the hub ‘value proposition’. It is like the local successes of the Parramatta Artists’ Studios and ICE. The model here is one of a collectively owned brands supported by its productive alumni. The data and the stories of both organisation’s alumni have provided and continue to converse about, are actually the life blood of their future growth.

The ‘hidden work’ of successful creative hubs is in the curation and animation of activities. These can range from social and cultural events, to bringing in ideas and provocations, to traditional business skills and development and access to specialist services (technical and financial). It also relates to the indefinable creation of a networked artistic community within the Western Sydney region which does not exist at present.

The Western Sydney Cultural Hub will therefore focus on the unique capabilities in the exchange, transfer and facilitation of knowledge that identified arts/cultural organisations and other creatives can bring to the Hub.

With the recent establishment of the Cultural Infrastructure Planning Management Office (CIPMO) into Create NSW, the NSW Government priorities for arts and cultural infrastructure for Western Sydney will be aligned to, and integrated within, broader strategic planning for liveable communities, employment opportunity and urban development. This project for a Western Sydney Cultural Hub hits all of these outcomes.

This important component of the Cultural & Creative Industries Hub will provide critically needed permanent infrastructure for established and emerging arts/cultural organisations from the region. These organisations play an important role in developing contemporary artistic practice, knowledge and actively shape the texture and diversity of arts/cultural offerings across Western Sydney and beyond.

Central to creating an active hub is to anchor the site with cultural leaders/catalysts that can influence the artistic, urban economic and physical landscape. Therefore the approach to establishing this Hub will be to initially curate/invite a broad cross section of arts/cultural organisations to form the nucleus.

It is proposed that key organisations take the lead in the creation of the Hub. A number of these established and emerging arts/cultural organisations already call the Parramatta area home, and encompasses a broad range of arts practice and genres including dance, music, literature, and theatre and multi-media/cross art forms.

Clustering a richness & diversity of arts/cultural practice



Potential key tenants

Established and emerging arts & cultural organisations currently funded by Create NSW



Performance + Screen + Music + Storytelling + Dance + Events + Objects + Design + Visual Arts

Unique offering

“Western Sydney is currently home to some of Australia’s most innovative and ambitious arts/cultural organisations.”

Liz- Ann McGregor Director MCA 2018

The cultural life of the region is built on strong foundations. It is defined by community focused and driven art that is bold, imaginative and adventurous.

Place, stories, people and culture are the inspiration. Engagement is underpinned by integrity and the creative impact of artist-led processes make sure that it is socially engaged work, where artists propose new solutions; innovative collaborations and evoke the richness of the artistic and cultural activity of the region.

Many artists describe their deep commitment to their work and define an environment in Sydney’s West that they feel provides more freedom artistically, and supports both risk and diversity.

This potential tenant list is but a small overview of the range, value of and energy offered by artists and cultural organisations that thrive on the challenges and possibilities offered by their location in Western Sydney, home to some of the most diverse communities in Australia.

The climate is now ripe for these Western Sydney grown arts/cultural organisations to explore a plethora of future opportunity through co-location, mutualism and the further cross pollination of ideas to bring Western Sydney to the world.



Values and processes held in common by potential hub participants

- Inclusive process: building community capacity
- Experimentation and new ways of working including using alternative venues/public space activation
- Social change agents: participative contemporary arts practice
- Embedded cultural engagement: equity and inclusiveness; integrity and respect
- Authentic: resonance with communities of Western Sydney: produce works that feature unique voices and perspectives reflecting the region
- Major employers of artists and creatives across the region
- Creating professional development pathways: training & education
- Experience in developing private and public sector partnerships
- Artist led processes

Experience Capacity & Relevance



Established in 1984, ICE is a Western Sydney community arts and training organisation with a rich synergy of community engagement, cultural production, digital technology, training and artist development.



Established in 2005, CuriousWorks is a unique community arts and media organisation that identifies, nurtures and builds the next generation of storytellers, artists and media makers from Western Sydney.



Operating for over 30 years, Urban Theatre Projects re-imagines what theatre can be and who it can be for. UTP find new ways to tell contemporary Australian stories that show the uniquely personal within the universal.



Parramatta Female Factory Precinct Memory Project is a social history and contemporary art project established in 2013 to promote awareness about the history, heritage and legacy of institutionalisation of women and children in Australia and to activate the historic Parramatta Female Factory Precinct.



Established since 2016, the National Theatre of Parramatta aspires to create bold, popular, contemporary works that draw their inspiration from the rich diversity of Western Sydney & beyond.



FORM Dance Projects is a dynamic hub for Australian contemporary dance currently based in Parramatta. FORM supports Australian choreographers, develop artists' national profiles & provide artists with professional development opportunities



Sacred Currents Inc. is an emerging organisation operating since 2015 that produce arts and cultural projects that facilitate a shared experience that transcends difference; including the renowned Sydney Sacred Music Festival.



Parramatta Artists' Studios is at the fore of contemporary artistic production located in the Parramatta's CBD and Rydalmere. The Studios offer affordable non-residential/ residential studio and exhibition space to emerging and established contemporary artists.



Established since 2007, Cultural Arts Collective is a dynamic arts business that collaborates with artists and communities, across artforms and cultures, to create distinctive cultural events, new music and festivals



Westwords, is dedicated to celebrating and championing the stories of the people, places and cultures that comprise the heart of Western Sydney. They believe in the power of literature and literacy, self-expression and creativity.



Sydney Story Factory is a not-for-profit that runs an innovative arts-based literacy program via creative writing and storytelling workshops for marginalised young people.



Moogahlin creates and tells community-based stories, develops a comprehensive youth theatre and produces distinctive, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary performance works.



Parramatta based; Diversity Arts Australia is Australia's key organisation promoting cultural diversity in the arts. Forty-nine percent of Australians are first- or second-generation migrants and we want to build a creative sector that reflects this rich and inspiring diversity.

Creative Hub Case Study:



CAP

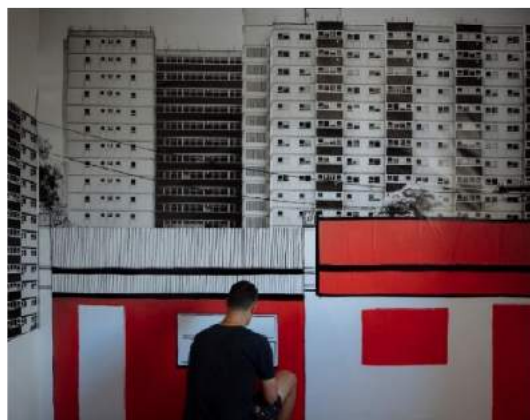
The Collingwood Arts Precinct is comprised of Circus Oz and the former buildings of the Collingwood Technical School and TAFE - the soon-to-be realised working arts precinct and cultural hub during 2018/19.

Contemporary Arts Precincts, a not-for-profit organisation tasked with delivering this project works alongside future tenants, neighbours, supporters, specialists and government to ensure the living legacy of the site continues to contribute to the lives of the creative and local community.



“The Collingwood Arts Precinct’s sprawling set of buildings and outdoor spaces will become a world-class destination for arts lovers, a meeting place for local community and a home for artists, arts organisations and creative industries.”





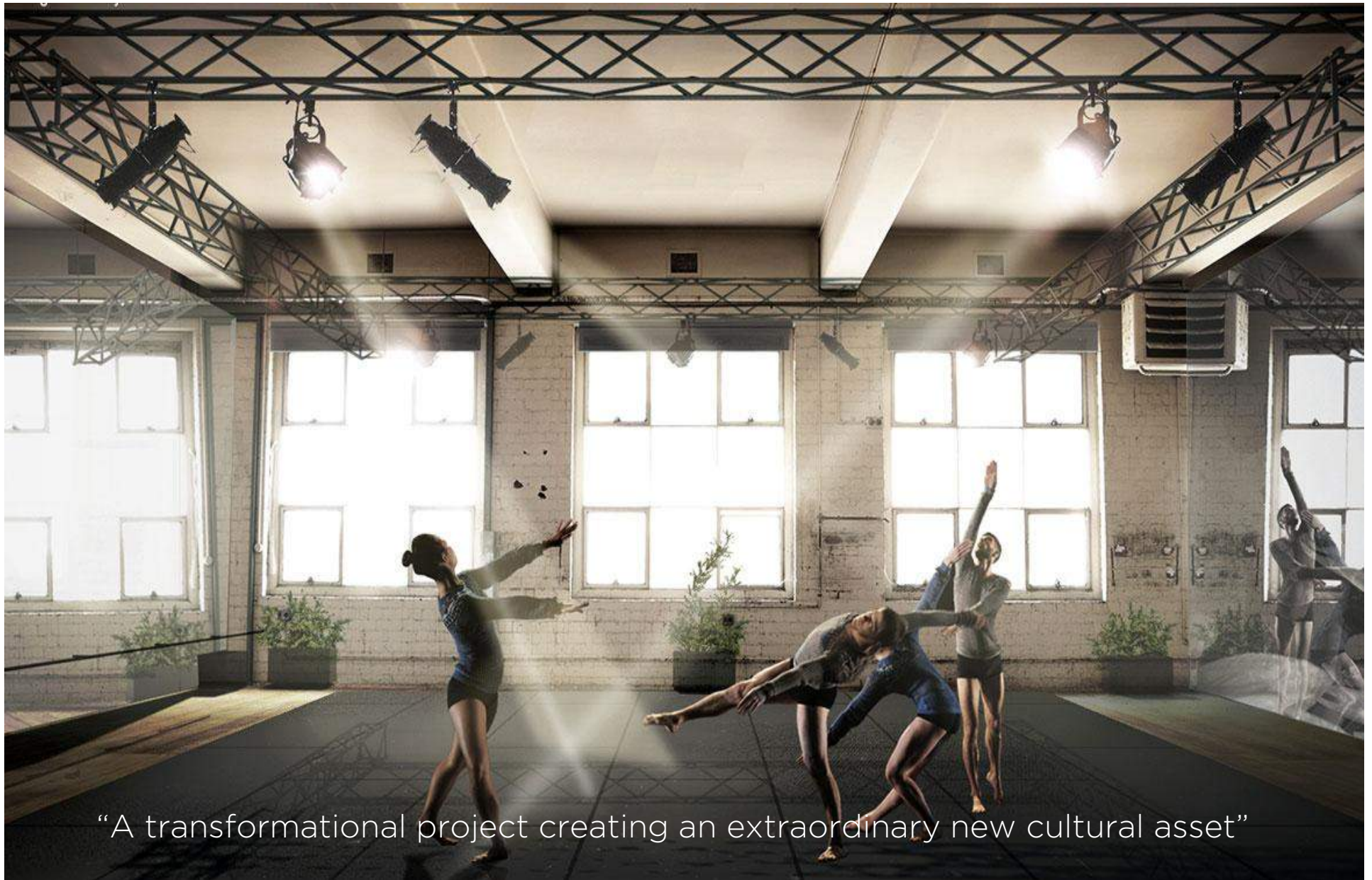
Adaptive re-use

After various investigations – from architectural feasibility studies to economic modelling – it was determined that the best future use for the unoccupied site would be as a contemporary creative precinct – one that could operate independently and provide a home for small and medium creative organisations as well as artists and complementary businesses.

Collingwood Arts Precinct will be the first of its kind in Australia – a charitable social enterprise managing a vibrant, cross-disciplinary cultural precinct that provides secure customised space for the creative industries.

The creative hub/precinct has been inspired by international organisations including Artscape (Toronto), Acme Studios (London) and Artspace (US).

The model is the bringing together of a diverse range of activities and to embrace the life cycle of creativity; so not just a place for established organisations, but a place where people can start things, come together on short term projects or long term projects, providing flexibility for creative projects.



Collingwood Arts Precinct will be the first of its kind in Australia – a charitable social enterprise managing a vibrant, cross-disciplinary cultural precinct that provides secure customised space for the creative industries.



Abbotsford Convent

Just four kilometres from Melbourne's CBD and spread over 16 acres, the Abbotsford Convent – with its 11 historic buildings and gardens – is Australia's largest multi-arts precinct. The former Convent of the Good Shepherd, this ex-monastic site is now owned by the Abbotsford Convent Foundation (ACF) – a not-for-profit organisation that operates the Abbotsford Convent on behalf of the public.

Now 13 years old, the Convent has steadily grown to be now home to over 100 studios, two galleries, cafes, a radio station, a school, and an abundance of green open space. Each year the Convent welcomes a diverse range of art projects, rehearsals, workshops, exhibitions, markets, events and festivals.



“We make our place the home of arts and cultural innovation, often at the engine room of independent practice, which we share with our clients, audiences and visitors through unique and distinctive programs”.



The ACF receives no recurrent government funding, and our custodianship of the precinct is dependent on running a self-sustaining organisation. Significant expenditure items such as repairs and maintenance, security, staff salaries, public programs, and insurance are funded from income generated by the ACF.

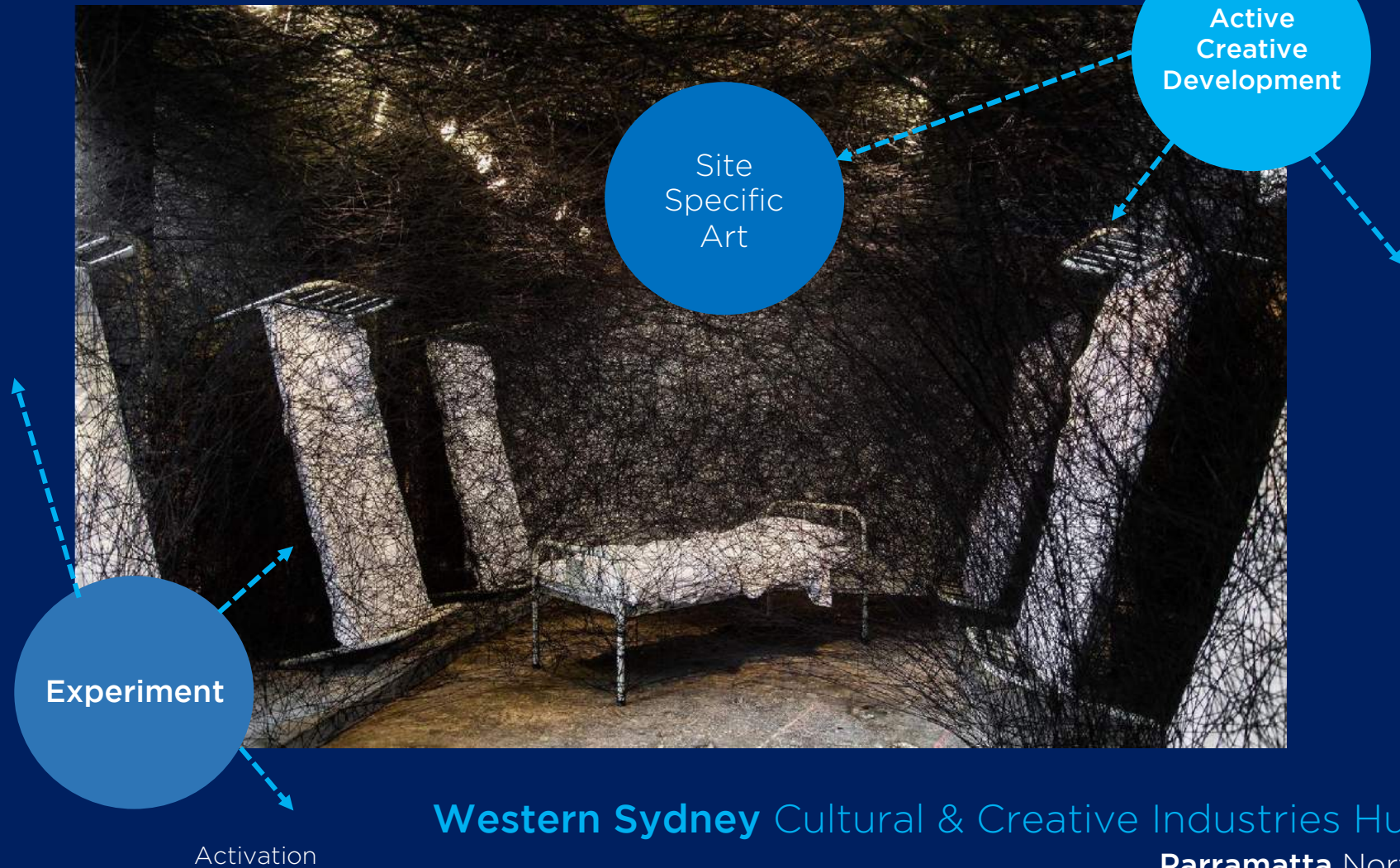


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Key Component

2

Test space incubator



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

Key Component: **2**

Test Space Incubator

“Public space acupuncture”

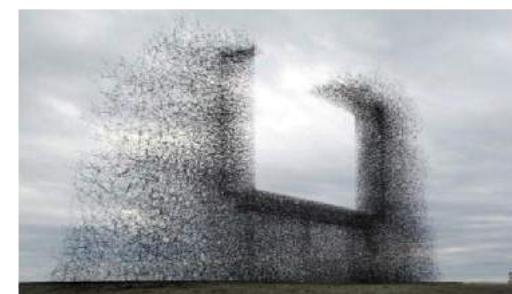
Another key component of this proposal for a Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub is to also invest in a temporary space for innovative practices that encompass the presentation of the creative development of art, performance and design.

There is a demonstrated need and appetite for an innovative creative development space among NSW's arts organisations and the independent creative industries sector, and embedding plans for a creative 'test space' into future of the Parramatta North precinct will ensure a supportive environment for emerging and independent creative practitioners to work, exhibit, and to develop their practice.

The Parramatta North precinct and expansive public domain offers the scope for such a facility. It is proposed that a creative program for the 'test site' will be designed to support a wide range of projects, including exhibitions, architecture and design projects, performances, interdisciplinary projects, residencies, 1:1 testing of public art, education and discursive projects; events and festivals.

The 'Test Site' will help build a stronger relationship between creative practitioners, the proposed creative hub, the precinct and audiences.

The 'Test Site' will also encourage cross programming; seeing what emerges when divergent groups come together on-site and work alongside and with each other as well as the assisting with a pooling of knowledge, information and resources for sharing.



Compelling Storytelling: Integrating art & landscape

Reshaping space - placemaking & site activation – site specific art: drawing on collective memories and narratives that connect people to place



“It is the accumulation of stories and experiences inscribed in built form that gives a place its distinct identity.... rich as it is, Parramatta’s story requires considerable rethinking and public conversation in order to bring it into a stronger relation with the present.”

Sarah Barns & Phillip Mar; Cultural and Social Research, Western Sydney University; the Conversation AU, July 2018

Creative development = innovation + site activation

Creative development in contemporary arts practice explores challenging new concepts in the creation and experience of arts and culture.

Artists and organisations take new approaches to seeding, creating and presenting art through innovative partnerships and collaborative creative processes.

These include art/science research collaborations, bio art, live art, socially engaged practices and new technologies. They often explore ecology, sustainability, urban renewal, and other cultural issues.

The “Testing Site” concept will take a new approach to nurturing, creating and presenting art within the Parramatta North Precinct. The opportunity exists for projects that explore challenging new concepts in the creation and experience of art and culture; activation of site & place.

The “Testing Site” aims to support:

- Research and development, experimentation; using arts/culture to investigate problems and asking questions without necessarily focusing on the answer. The process of exploration is more important than a fully resolved artistic product as a project outcome.
- Potential event development; artistic interventions into public spaces
- Innovative partnerships and collaborative/cross-disciplinary processes; social engagement, community participation urban renewal and site ecology projects
- Cross-over with broader social/cultural issues.





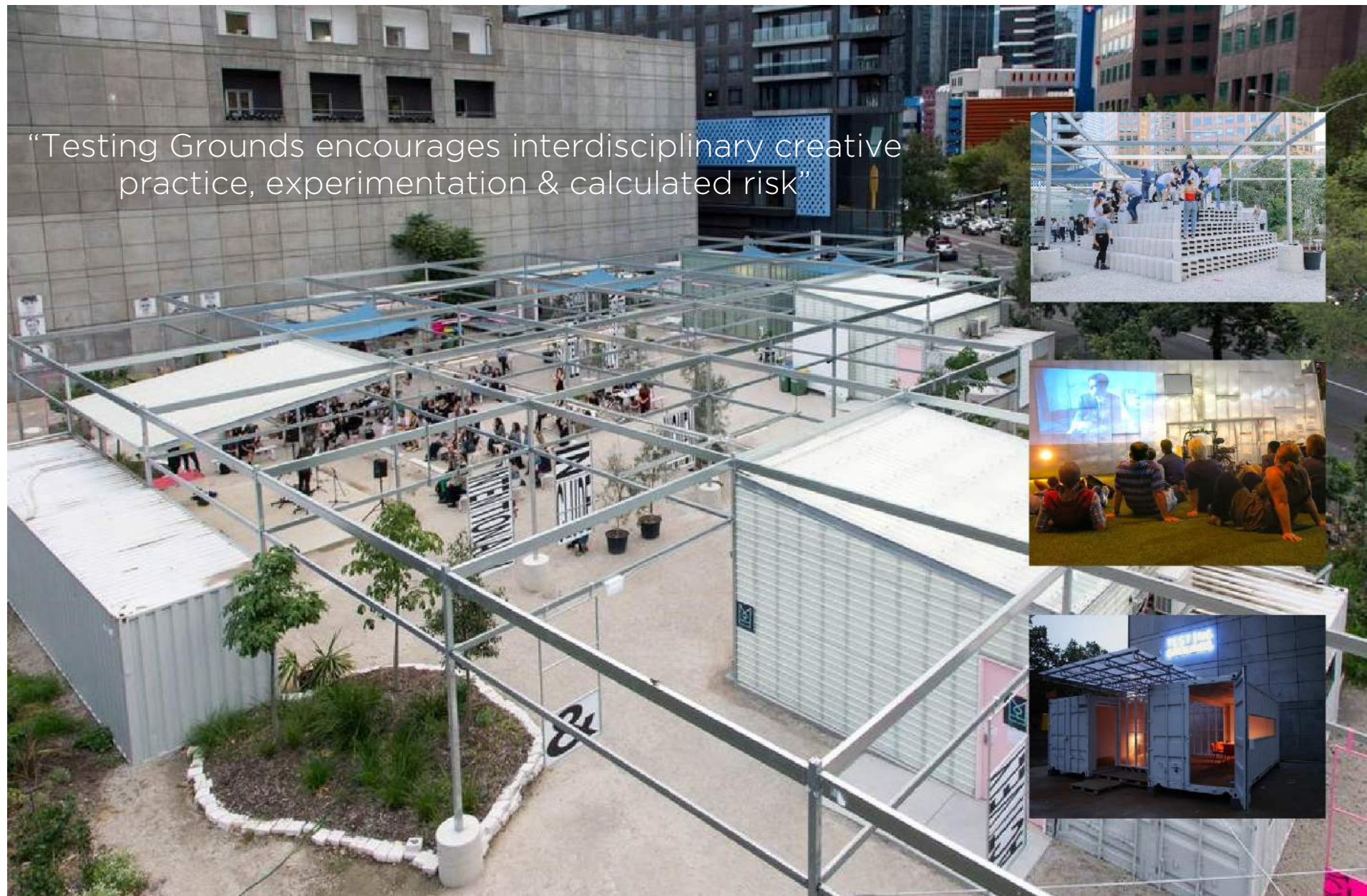
Testing Grounds

Temporary
infrastructure
for creative
practice

The idea for Testing Grounds, came from a public consultation around the Melbourne Arts Precinct - the area just south of the city centre that is home to a remarkable concentration of galleries, performance spaces and elite arts training institutions. When asked what was missing from the area, people consistently identified a need for more public spaces, more cheap places to eat and drink, and places for more informal and exploratory work.

Testing Grounds has effectively become a living research model with hundreds of projects and events being hosted on the site since its inception.





“Testing Grounds encourages interdisciplinary creative practice, experimentation & calculated risk”

Testing Grounds, Melbourne - programmed through an open application process, is a place where people at all levels can test, develop and share their work.

Melbourne City Test Sites

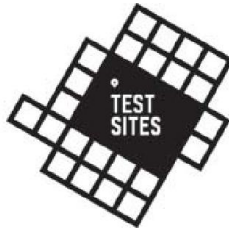


Temporary “Test Sites” is a program run in the central city of Melbourne to give artists, curators and organisations the opportunity to explore and experiment with creative ideas for the public realm, with seed funds, advice and mentoring from experienced artists, and practical support.

Inspired by Melbourne’s robust public domain, Test Sites is about encouraging artists to explore their creative visions and contribute to Melbourne’s thriving public art scene.

Test Sites is open to artists working across all art forms and at all experience levels, wanting to try out ideas in the public realm. The program also looks to support artists with a studio based practice in trialling their work in the public domain.

With a focus on the process of developing public art rather than just the presentation of finished work, successful artists are supported to work in situ within the public realm, taking inspiration from the city space in which they operate.



Artbox

Artsbox is a vibrant, intimate and creative space home to artists-in-residence throughout the year, located outside the Footscray Library.

The Artsbox has been in place for four years and it is a space for emerging, mid-career and professional artists to create new work, test and explore ideas, and develop their arts practice.

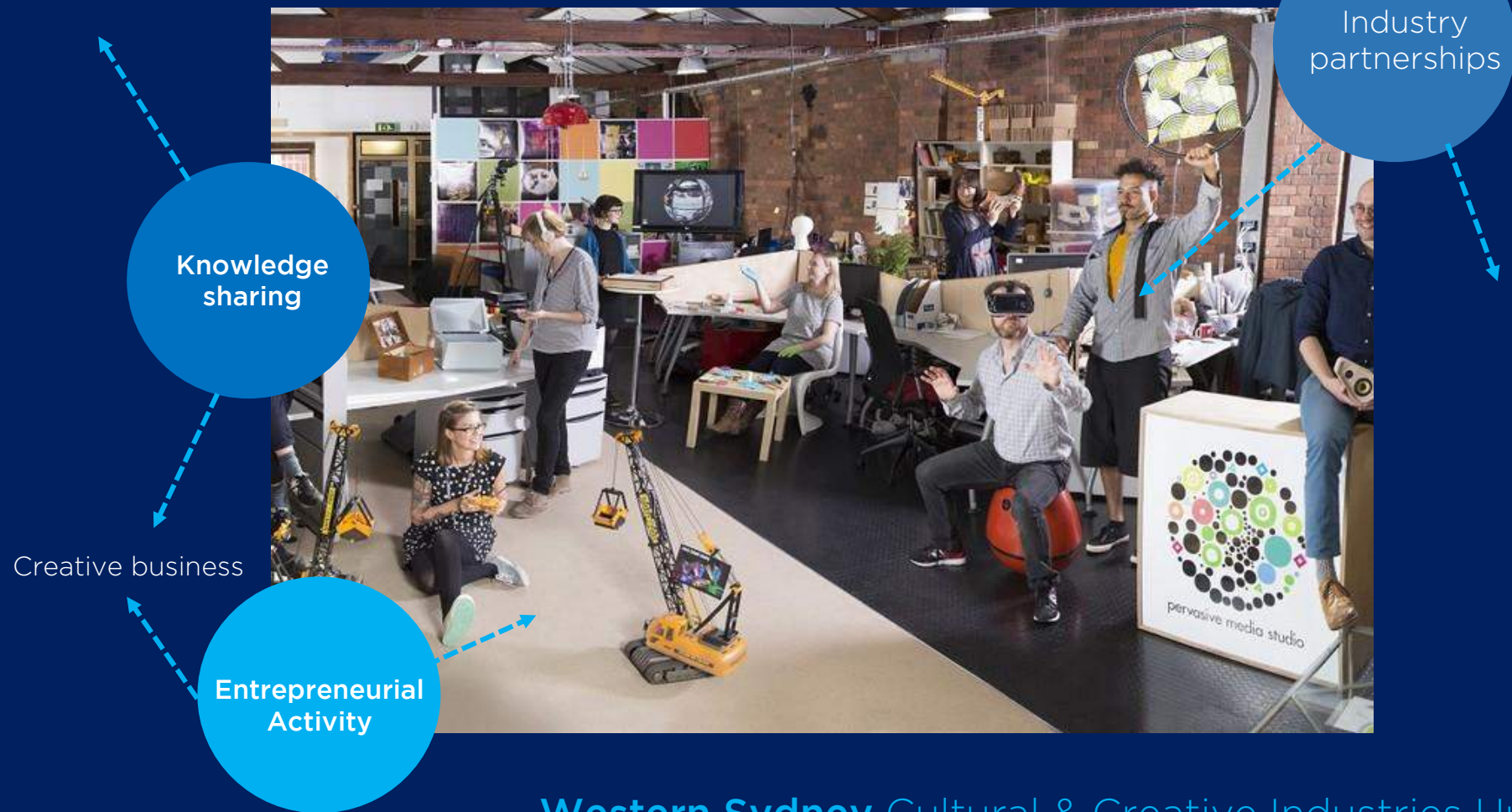
This innovative concept gives emerging artists the opportunity to develop their work in a free and well supported workable space. The short-term residencies are suited to the development of new work, testing and exploring ideas or the development of contemporary arts practice.



Key Component

3

Creative industries co-workspaces



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

Key Component: 3

Home for a new economy



The third key component of the Hub will be the creation of CoWorkSpaces for co-working desks for rent daily and monthly that will target professional services tenants (media, PR, architects, marketers, designers) to support the rental needs of the premises.

Other opportunities also lie in pursuing industry partnerships with the region's key education providers such as the Western Sydney University.

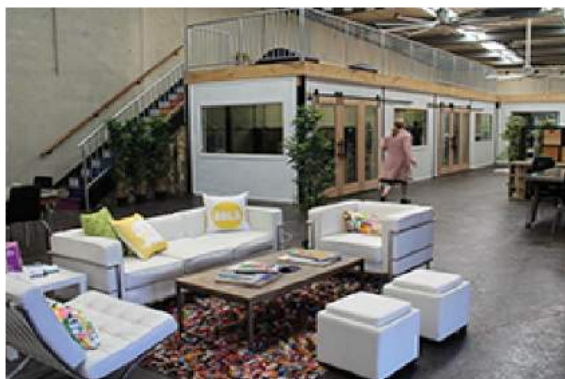
“It can be a hub that is very arts/cultural - based practice, but can also be in a commercial frame as well.”

39% of Australia's creative businesses choose NSW as their base. As of 2012, Western Sydney had a cultural and creative workforce of 82,792. The creative economy is now a vital and growing engine of growth and employment for Western Sydney. A vibrant community of growing start-ups, freelancers, and small businesses are coming to the surface.

Opportunity exists to use creativity to bring people and the communities of Parramatta and region together in the development of a creative industries hub and co-working spaces to encourage innovation, knowledge sharing, networking and creativity within the Parramatta North precinct.

This component of the Hub will aim to support entrepreneurship and innovation, helping to boost cultural/social development and employment at a regional level. Designed in this way, the hub would be flexible and suitable for many types of activity: meetings, networking, 'hack' events, private working, group working, discussion-based events, training, mentoring, incubation and acceleration of projects or firms, collaborative making and research ideas.

In the beginning, it will be necessary to create a solid foundation and structure for how this component of the hub will operate. Essentially, the facility will require a “hub” manager that has the responsibility to manage the day-to-day operations, tenancy mix, maximise revenue opportunities for the facility and build trust and connections with different types of influencers and supporters.



The Hub's CoWorkSpaces will support a range of creative industries including design professionals, digital creators and creative business start-ups

Broad and growing mix across the creative industries



Social/Cultural Enterprise

Social/creative enterprise is a strong growing business sector across the region. The City of Parramatta already has a focus on social enterprises as part of its business development approach. A social enterprise is a business that operates to achieve a social outcome and generate enough income to cover its running costs. These businesses provide products and services like any other business, the difference being their emphasis on serving the community as the priority.

The City supports social enterprises with a Social Enterprise grants program. This program supports new social enterprises to carry out planning as they grow their business model and offers successful social enterprises the chance to grow and thrive in Parramatta. It is important for arts and cultural practitioners and groups to consider the ways in which new business models can also contribute to the broader community.



Creative Industries & Services

The Western Sydney region is now home to a growing creative industries and services sector. Particularly, the creative services; (which deliver creative outputs to a mix of consumer and corporate clients, including internet and digital services, advertising services and design) has delivered a significant impact to the Western Sydney economy.

The convergence of creativity and information and communication technologies along with other growing sectors in design, music, film, animation, and new media is currently driving this growth of the creative industries across the Western Sydney region.

In part, this has been supported by positions such as the NSW Creative Industries Business Advisor, who commenced in September 2013, that provides tailored, face-to-face support with issues such as business planning, marketing, succession planning, legal, banking and finance issues across small to medium creative businesses.



Arts/Cultural Education

The Arts/Cultural Education sector across Western Sydney has recently bounced back with strong energy & focus. For example: Western Sydney University's recently offered Creative Industries degree (2017) is unique in NSW. It gives the opportunity to combine studies in Arts, Communication, Design and Music with courses in Business and Law. Majors include: Cultural and Social Analysis, Technology and digital practices, Media Arts Production, and Enterprise Innovation.

Other current opportunities include industry partnerships with providers such as Semi Permanent (a global design platform that connects leading creators and thought-leaders, with brands and audiences - across live events, content and special projects).

Through this partnership, Western Sydney University students are able to access, learn from and be inspired by global leaders in the creative and business worlds.

Potential key tenants

Creative industries: education – social & cultural enterprise – design – digital – screen





acmi X

Designed by award-winning architects Six Degrees, ACMI X is a 2,000 square metre state-of-the-art office space in the heart of Melbourne's arts precinct and a first for an Australian museum.

Operated by the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) the creative hub was established to provide a home for Melbourne's creative practitioners.

ACMI X is a new co-working space that assembles a vibrant mix of filmmakers, digital and visual artists, digital producers, web developers, screenwriters and designers. Reserved solely for individuals, collectives and businesses working with the moving image, we're fostering a creative culture that champions collaboration, innovation and sustainability.

By providing infrastructure and a community platform that enables discovery, learning and growth for individuals and businesses alike, creative fusions and cross-disciplinary partnerships emerge from the energy and collaboration between co-workers and ACMI's own creative employees at ACMI X. Some synergies could support a similar approach with MAAS inspired creative hub in the future.





Melbourne's cultural share economy has evolved with the launch in 2016 of ACMI X, a curated, co-working space that's part of the Australian Centre for the Moving Image

Creative Co-workspace Case Study:

BALTIC CREATIVE



Baltic Creative in Liverpool UK was established in the Baltic Triangle in 2009 to offer a new development model, investing in diverse spaces that catered to the city's booming creative and digital sector.

The site consists of shop front studios, multifunctional warehouses, workshops and managed workspaces, which are designed to support creativity, innovation and commercial success. The spaces are also flexible to meet the ever-changing needs of the sectors.

The management and ownership is through a Community Interest Company that ensures all profits are reinvested into buildings, tenants and the sector itself.

The model is already recognised as a best-practice approach for the sector as well as local regeneration.





Baltic Creative: A unique sector-owned project that's rewriting the economic rules for developing creative and digital commercial space.

Hub Development: governance options & staging



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

Hub: How can it operate?

“Moving forward we are committed to creating a more dynamic arts and cultural environment and encouraging creativity and innovation throughout the sector”

Arts Summit 2025 - Summary Paper May 2018

Currently there are numerous discussions around art and creativity in the context of building cultural and social capacity at one end of the spectrum and economic development through creative businesses and the impact of creative decision making and design on all business sectors at the other.

The model for this proposal will strike a balance in ensuring that there is affordable and sustainable arts/cultural critical mass for existing and emerging Western Sydney arts/cultural organisations along with the potential of other more commercial opportunities.

The activities for the proposed creative hub will accommodate a range across the for and not-for-profit, the formal and the informal, and production and consumption.

Creative hubs work in both an economic and cultural context. A creative hub is more than a set of buildings and more than a network. Success depends on collaboration and exchange between its members. Importantly hubs are defined by the emergent identities of each organisation and tenants by expressing their particular values and impacts that they produce to form a collective identity.

The management and operation of a hub will be primarily about the careful selection and compatibility of tenants and the ‘animation’ of the interaction between the tenants and activities based on a clear understanding of the values of the hub.

Some commercial income generating opportunities also exist similar to that of other precincts like Carriageworks; smaller tenancies could support micro business including architects, urban designers, graphic design and illustrators; also some compatible cultural retail mix including bookshop; café and art workshop space.

Existing NSW Government framework for Arts Infrastructure Support:

The current opportunity is to work across Government to make better use of vacant space held by government across NSW for arts, screen and cultural use, through extension of the Infrastructure Support Policy.

This proposal supports an extension to the current model of Create NSW’s Infrastructure Support Program Policy that was developed in August 2012. This policy objectives centre on the management of their property portfolio that provides infrastructure support to arts and cultural organisations, and allows them to be co-located with other appropriate organisations.

Most of the properties controlled by Create NSW are significant heritage buildings. Outcomes have seen the development and activation of properties at Walsh Bay, the Arts Exchange, The Gunner (Artspace) Woolloomooloo and Carriageworks in recent years. Over 30 arts organisations now are supported in subsidised accommodation, though none are in Western Sydney.

The aim of this proposal for a Western Sydney Creative Hub is consistent with the aims and objectives of this policy to support/facilitate co-location of tenant organisations at a single property or precinct, and provide opportunity for associated benefits of this colocation to be captured. These include: efficiency benefits (e.g. through sharing of resources); benefits of co-located activities to audiences; and creative collaboration as well as informal interaction between tenant organisations.

Other Models for organisation

There is also a range of other different ways to deliver the facility requirements of artists and creative businesses in partnership with gov't, developers and community organisations and in ways that can create different solutions for the Parramatta North precinct.

There is the ability to co-invest with other levels of Government in Western Sydney arts and culture initiatives where agendas align, along with other Key regional players like University of Western Sydney,

There is a strong framework that supports the case for art based social enterprise in the context of decreasing public funding for the arts. This has been an area of rapid growth locally and internationally over the last 5 years. This also reflects new demands for innovative responses to sustainability (social/cultural/environmental issues) as well as growing requirements for not for profit organisations to diversify their income sources.

The hub therefore is a hybrid form of co-operative or social enterprise. The broader model offers greater independence, critical freedom, creativity and economic equity for all those involved in the production, presentation and dissemination of artistic activity.

Another possibility would be to look at what the UK are doing in relation to the development of Community Interest Company's (CIC's) as model. Essentially this would involve the tenants to form a company and each would have a representative on the new company, bit of an extension to a social enterprise set-up. Constituted as a community benefit company, owned by its shareholder members all profits are put back into the business.

This model would also support Create NSW being an active partner, along with other industry supporters, and philanthropic organisations/donors.

Efficiency + Adaptability = Sustainability

“Building capacity in the creative sector is needed to help the sector become sustainable, including investigating diverse business models and diversifying income streams”

[Arts Summit 2025 - Summary Paper May 2018](#)

There is a range of different ways to deliver the facility requirements of artists and creative businesses in partnership with government, private sector and community organisations and in ways that can create different solutions for different communities.

There has been growing interest from governments, business, the not for profit sector and philanthropy in social enterprise in Australia over the past decade. There is a strong framework that supports the case for art based social enterprise in this context.

Alternatively, The Community Interest Company (or CIC) is a relatively new type of concept in the UK, introduced in 2010. CICs are designed specifically so that a group of individuals can set up a limited company in order to benefit the community. Both individuals and companies can also invest in a CIC. There are now over 11,000 CICs in the UK. Effectively CIC's could change the face of Australia's growing social enterprise sector and in this case worth pursuing further.



Development timeline

Overview: 2019 - 2023

It is planned that in time Parramatta North will become a vibrant place with new homes and jobs, and with heritage conservation at its heart.

Given the complexity of the heritage core it is likely to remain in government hands.

The current heritage repairs being undertaken will not result in full conservation or restoration of the buildings. This needs to be factored into the overall development timeline for this project.

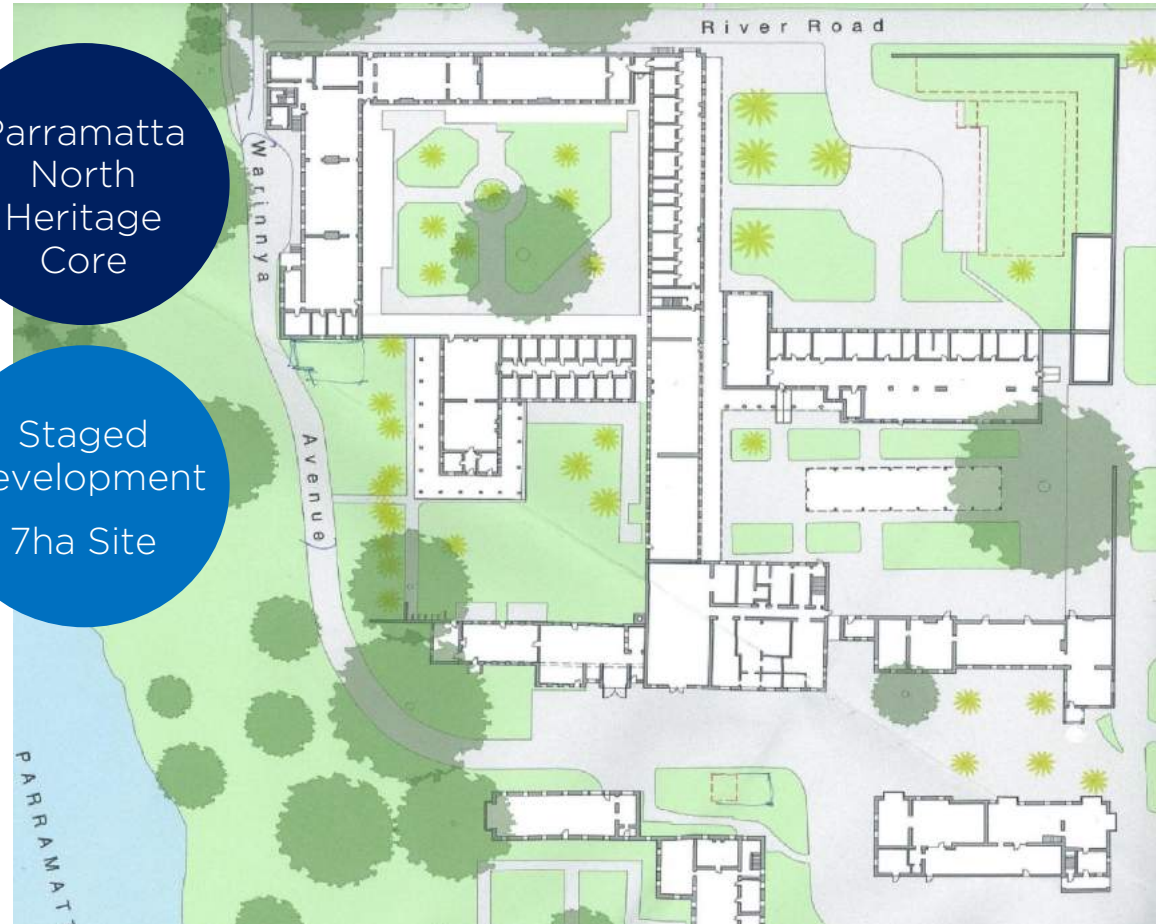
It is proposed that the adaptable re-use of the heritage core be a negotiated one; that takes into account existing tenants/leases in some buildings along with the ability to access and secure funds to support the design and purpose built fitout/conversion.

Initial planning activity could result in some broader cultural use masterplanning for the heritage core & immediate site activation projects with a view of securing buildings and space for key anchor tenants; i.e. arts/cultural organisations with 3-5 years.

Other designated areas could be identified for income generating opportunities including semi-commercial leases for established creative industries.

Parramatta
North
Heritage
Core

Staged
Development
7ha Site



"I like the idea of restoring and protecting the heritage in the area, but heritage is only worth protecting if people can actually engage with it and use it. So I would be encouraging you guys to find ways to make sure it is accessible and attractive to the community, rather than just heritage for heritage's sake."

John Byrnes - Website feedback: UrbanGrowth NSW Sprout Event 18/11/2016

Appendix: strategic alignment - community & sector needs



Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North

What the Sector is saying & asking for

“NSW is at an extraordinary moment of transformation and growth. Arts, screen and culture must play its fundamental role in this change”

Key Ideas from the NSW Premier; Arts Summit 2025 - Summary Paper May 2018

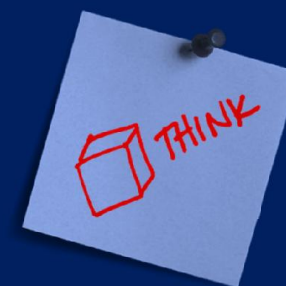


“We need to value risk-taking as part of the creative process”

“Arts need to be better integrated into other areas of Government planning”

“Create an ecosystem by balancing investments in hard and soft capital”

Arts Summit 2025 -
Summary Paper May 2018



“Building capacity in the creative sector is needed to help the sector become sustainable, including investigating diverse business models and diversifying income streams”

“Supporting arts, screen and culture organisations to become sustainable businesses”

Arts Summit 2025 -
Summary Paper May 2018

“It is important that we all continue to collaborate, to work together as a collective”

Key Ideas from the NSW Minister for the Arts; Arts Summit 2025 - Summary Paper May 2018

Strategic Alignment to Parramatta North Growth Centre

Hub Project Goal: Actively support the positive integration of activity within the surrounding urban fabric and landscape and offer dynamic provision to the interpretation of the history and heritage significance

The objectives to the renewal of this unique 30ha site is to create new homes and jobs to support the growth of Sydney's second largest CBD (Parramatta) and the Westmead health, education and research precinct.

The Parramatta North site will also help to meet the needs of the projected population growth. The Parramatta local government area population is projected to increase by 32.4% over the next 15 years – from 191,750 people in 2016 to 253,900 people in 2031. (Source: Department of Planning and Environment)

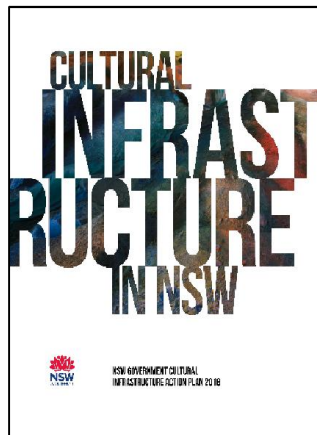
The renewal process will involve collaboration across government, community and the private sector to create an extraordinary place. This proposal supports the following planning objectives for Parramatta North:

- Opening up the site for public use
- Conserving the 7.2 hectare Nationally Listed Heritage Core and adaptably reusing these buildings & landscape
- Creating a dynamic mix of uses across the site including retail, residential, commercial and cultural/community - entrepreneurial start-ups
- Creating jobs and economic diversity
- Creative storytelling of the site by way of heritage interpretation, public art and wayfinding

Designated
Growth
Centre



Strategic Alignment to key NSW Government priorities



Supporting strategic priorities of the impending NSW Cultural Infrastructure Plan:

- Opportunity to embed cultural infrastructure planning and delivery within cross government land use planning, precinct planning, innovation precincts, urban renewal projects and growth centres development.
- Supporting good cultural infrastructure and precinct design that contributes to better places.
- Optimising existing infrastructure through adaptive reuse for cultural infrastructure.



Fulfilling the outcomes of Create in NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework:

- Expanding the Infrastructure Support Program; that supports key arts and cultural organisations with affordable spaces to support program delivery.
- Supporting a key priority area: Western Sydney initiatives including; assisting new opportunities for emerging artists and organisations across the Western Sydney through the Emerging Organisations Program 2018; Strategic Opportunities Fund; Western Sydney Making Spaces Program.

“Well-designed cultural infrastructure can have a catalytic effect on places. It can anchor urban renewal and regeneration processes and attract business and investment.”



Assisting in the development of business cases that promote investment by Government in areas critical to growing the Western Sydney visitor economy.

Leveraging existing and new major events and elevate local experience:

- Providing a future creative development & arts production hub for the proposed Western Sydney Cultural Festival 2019 onwards
- Creating a supporting venue other marque regional events such as Sydney Festival, Parramasala, TropFest, Heritage week, Live & Local Music Program (Live Music Office) etc.



Deliver on the NSW Innovation Strategy that promotes public investment in the culture of innovation and growing capacity for innovation-led growth:

- The Innovation and Productivity Council Framework for NSW Innovation Precincts suggests spaces for culture can contribute to amenity and liveability, as well as provide spaces to support collaboration, both identified as factors of success for innovation precincts.

Strategic Alignment

Liveability + Productivity

“It will require the integration of arts and cultural strategies, investment and actions into urban development by collaborating across the creative arts, business and communities so we can foster cultural development and expression”

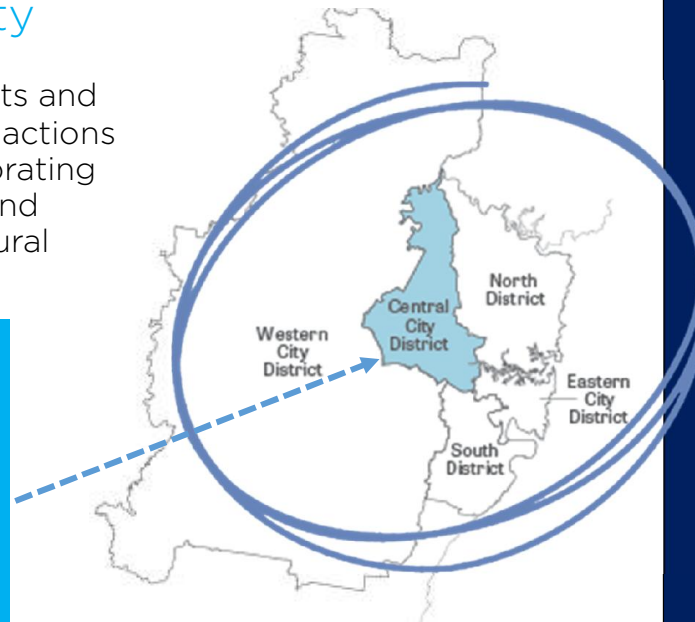
Key Objective 9

Greater Sydney celebrates the arts and supports creative industries and innovation

Cultural expression and creative expression promote understanding of people's experiences. Place-based planning will build on the District's artistic, heritage, cultural, volunteering and creative strengths.

Co-locating artistic and creative organisations will support creative enterprises and precincts. This requires planning for multi-functional and shared spaces with opportunities for artists and makers to live, work, exhibit, sell and learn locally.

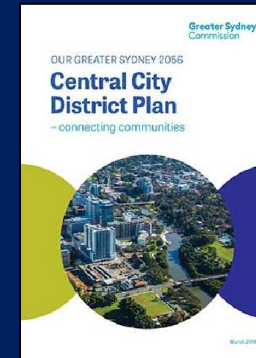
Greater Sydney Commission



“Support for a range of creative enterprises and opportunities for cultural expression will expand arts and cultural institutions, and encourage audience and artist participation.

Locations to consider for creative industries and cultural enterprises include underutilised mixed-use areas; in particular, providing better and more opportunities for creative industries to collaborate with health and education can facilitate local innovation.”

Greater Sydney Commission - Central City District Plan
Page 34

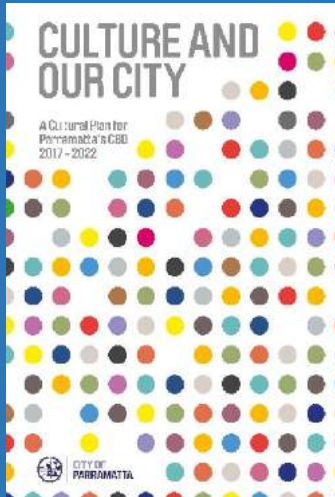


THE CENTRAL CITY DISTRICT PLAN

Create the conditions for the continued co-location of cultural, health and education facilities, and services to support the precinct:

- Enhancing the amenity and vibrancy of centres and precincts
- Supporting the development of places for artistic and cultural activities; events etc.
- Protecting heritage to enhance cultural tourism
- Supporting appropriate growth of the night-time economy
- Developing industry skills critical to growing the visitor economy.
- Implement place-based initiatives to attract more visitors, improve visitor experiences etc.

Strategic Alignment to Parramatta Cultural Plan



City of Parramatta is committed to becoming a global city, one that champions culture as key to a vibrant Central River City.

The City is dedicated to ensuring the place is liveable, has a strong sense of place, invites creativity, encourages prosperity and celebrates our diversity as a strong and growing community.

The community has strongly articulated their aspirations and expectations of the importance of social and cultural infrastructure in creating a liveable, productive city. The City of Parramatta community share an ambition that:

“Driven by culture, Parramatta will be a world class city known for its diversity, and energy, with people, ideas and creativity as it core.”

“Our City knows the great value in placing artists, organisations, creative industries and start-ups in the centre of our City.

We understand clustering this creative energy in our city, CBD neighbourhoods and Parramatta North can lead to inspiration and collaborations, and strengthen the personality & soul of a place.”



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**

Goal 4:

By design, our City incubates creativity, industry and new knowledge

We will:

- Support innovation, playfulness, experimentation and curiosity.
- Encourage creative leadership and learning.
- Make our City a magnet for economic success and partnerships. Creativity will be our agent of change, bringing people together and fostering new approaches to complex urban challenges.

Selected References:

Create in NSW: NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework - NSW Government (Create NSW) 2015
Social Sustainability Framework - City of Parramatta 2017
Cultural Plan - City of Parramatta 2017
The Central City District Plan - Greater Sydney Commission 2017
Innovation and Productivity Council Framework for NSW 2018
NSW Cultural Infrastructure Framework 2018
Arts Summit 2025 - Summary Paper 2018
Cultivating a Successful Innovation Districts Research Paper - Create NSW 2017
Sprout: UrbanGrowth NSW Consultation Report - Parramatta North Heritage Core 2017
Parramatta North Historic Sites Consolidated Conservation Management Plan 2015

Image Acknowledgements: Parramatta Female Factory Precinct Memory Project, State Library of NSW Collection, Ralph Hawkins Collection; UrbanGrowth NSW, NSW Arts & Cultural Framework; UTP, ICE, Sacred Currents, CuriousWorks, Westwords, Parramatta Artists' Studios, Sydney Sacred Music Festival, Cultural Arts Collective, National Theatre of Parramatta, Greater Sydney Commission, City of Parramatta, Western Sydney Visitor Economy Strategy, Abbotsford Convent, Create NSW, Baltic Creative UK, Collingwood Arts Precinct; ACMI X Melbourne, Testing Grounds, City of Melbourne, Arts Victoria.

This discussion paper is prepared solely for the purpose of assisting NSW Business Chamber to open a dialogue about and to advocate for the future investment of the arts and cultural industries in Western Sydney and the adaptive reuse of Parramatta North's Heritage Core. This report is not intended for any other purpose and should not be referred to, used or relied upon by anyone else without the consent of NSW Business Chamber. We accept no duty of care to any other person or entity for the use of this report.

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A habitat for creativity

“The provision of cultural infrastructure is essential to the creation of truly sustainable communities.

Spaces for culture and the arts play a vital role in social and economic regeneration ...culture and arts buildings and activities contribute to a ‘sense of place’, as well as inspiring learning, and supporting skills and personal development.”

Western Sydney Cultural & Creative Industries Hub
Parramatta North