

Chapter 3

Strategic context and need



3 Strategic context and need

3.1 Strategic planning and policy framework

The strategic context of, and need for, the project is described in Chapter 3 (Strategic context and need) of the EIS. The strategic context of the project (as part of Parramatta Light Rail) is influenced by strategic planning for land use, transport and infrastructure at the State, metropolitan, district and local levels. The project is consistent with the strategies described in section 3.1 of the EIS. For example:

- The project would ensure that people and places in Sydney's Central River City, as defined by the Greater Sydney Region Plan, *A Metropolis of Three Cities* (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018a), are connected by an effective, integrated transport network, which is fundamental to supporting growth. *A Metropolis of Three Cities* references both stages of Parramatta Light Rail, and states that Parramatta Light Rail (together with Sydney Metro West) will be a catalyst for realising the vision for the Central River City and the Greater Parramatta and the Olympic Peninsula corridor (GPOP).
- The *Greater Parramatta and the Olympic Peninsula* vision document (Greater Sydney Commission, 2016) notes that Parramatta Light Rail will form the spine of GPOP, anchored by the Parramatta CBD and Westmead at its western end, and Sydney Olympic Park at the eastern end. It notes that the light rail will connect the precincts within GPOP, reinforcing its role as the centre of Greater Sydney.
- The project is consistent with the priorities of the *Central City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018b) as it would increase the number of people living within 30 minutes of strategic centres by public transport. It would support the growth of GPOP, and enable the planning of identified growth areas to be integrated with the provision of necessary infrastructure.
- The project is recognised in the *Future Transport Strategy* (Transport for NSW, 2022a) as part of the future passenger rail network (light rail) in the Central River City, connecting the Parramatta CBD to Sydney Olympic Park.
- The project would support the growth and development of the Camellia-Rosehill precinct as described in the *Draft Camellia-Rosehill Place Strategy* (DPIE, 2021b). Subsequent to public exhibition of the EIS, the *Camellia-Rosehill Place Strategy* (DPE, 2022) has been finalised. The proposed Camellia foreshore to Rydalmere alignment and bridge amendment has been developed in the context of final strategy (see section 4.1 of this report).

Further information on these strategies and their relationship to the project is provided in section 3.1 and Appendix E (Strategic planning review) of the EIS.

The amended project remains consistent with strategic context for the project described in the EIS.

3.2 Project need summary

GPOP, at the centre of the Central River City, is one of the fastest growing areas in the city. Planned population and employment growth are currently being delivered without an effective transport network in the eastern areas of GPOP, affecting connectivity between the planned growth precincts, and contributing to worsening congestion on local and regional roads.

There is growing urgency to address the opportunities and challenges in GPOP, improve transport connectivity, and deliver a transport solution that will address the needs of the community.

Two vital strategies for Sydney, *A Metropolis of Three Cities* and *Future Transport 2056* (together with the updated *Future Transport Strategy*), recognise the importance of public transport to achieving the three cities vision for Greater Sydney. Without significant infrastructure investment, existing transport constraints and challenges will worsen. To fully realise the GPOP vision, a catalyst is needed. The project would make two key contributions to the Central River City – providing convenient public and active transport connections and creating successful places.

The project would ensure people and places in the Central River City are connected by an effective, integrated transport network, which is fundamental to supporting growth, providing access to jobs, housing, education, cultural attractions, recreation activities and business interactions. By aligning with the NSW Government’s vision for GPOP, the project also supports *Future Transport 2056*, which emphasises the importance of the 30-minute city for GPOP and the significance of transport investment in the corridor.

The project would provide improved public transport capacity to service existing land uses and proposed urban renewal and development areas, in line with the *Central City District Plan* (Greater Sydney Commission, 2018b), *City Plan 2036* (City of Parramatta, 2020), *Camellia-Rosehill Place Strategy* (DPE, 2022), *Melrose Park Northern Structure Plan* (City of Parramatta, 2016), *Melrose Park Southern Structure Plan* (City of Parramatta, 2019), and the *Carter Street Precinct Development Framework* (DPIE, 2020).

The project, together with Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1, would deliver new light rail and active transport facilities along and across the Parramatta River, creating new regionally and locally significant connections for GPOP and the Central River City. The project would also support urban renewal and placemaking, both in Camellia-Rosehill and in areas north of the river (such as Rydalmere, Ermington and Melrose Park).

The project would improve transport choice and accessibility, attracting people away from the use of cars and reducing congestion. The provision of about 9.5 kilometres of new active transport would connect stops and provide links to existing cycle routes and key destinations. The project would complement the existing transport network, and other proposed network and active transport improvements, to support growth and respond to the growing travel demands within and beyond GPOP.

Further information about the strategic need for the project is provided in Chapter 3 (Strategic context and need) of the EIS. The amended project remains consistent with strategic context and need described in the EIS and summarised above.

3.3 Project location and setting

As described in the EIS, the project is located between the Parramatta CBD and the Carter Street precinct in Lidcombe, adjacent to Sydney Olympic Park.

Most of the project is located in the City of Parramatta local government area (LGA). The proposed light rail infrastructure would be located in the suburbs of Parramatta, Camellia, Rydalmere, Ermington, Melrose Park, Wentworth Point, Sydney Olympic Park and Lidcombe. The project would operate along the infrastructure proposed as part of the project in these suburbs, in addition to Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 infrastructure in the suburbs of Parramatta, Rosehill and Camellia.

A small section of the proposed light rail alignment and associated road changes are located in the City of Ryde LGA in the suburb of Melrose Park, close to the northern bank of the Parramatta River.

This overall location has not changed for the amended project.

The term ‘project site’ is used in the EIS to refer to the area that would be directly disturbed by construction of the project (for example, because of ground disturbance and the construction of foundations for structures). It includes the location of construction activities, and the location of permanent operational infrastructure. A description of the project site for the exhibited project is provided in section 2.2 of the EIS and shown on Figures 2.2 to 2.7 of the EIS.

The proposed amendments involve changes to the project site in the following locations:

- between the Camellia foreshore and John Street, Rydalmere
- around Wharf Road, Melrose Park and between Melrose Park and Wentworth Point
- at the Hill Road bridge and intersection with the Holker Street Busway in Sydney Olympic Park.

An amended description of the project site is provided below.

3.3.1 Description of the project site as amended

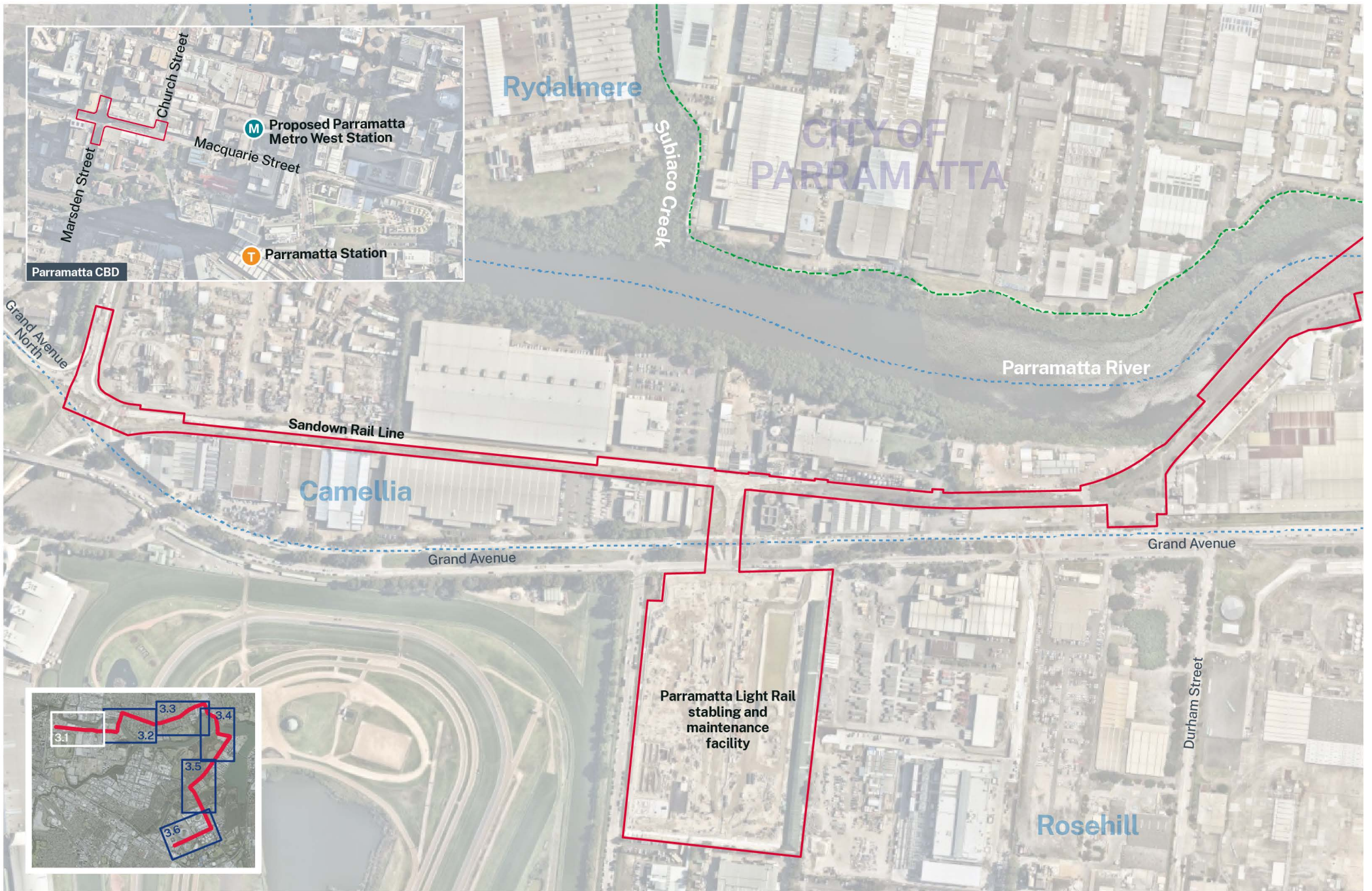
The project site, which is shown on Figure 3.1 to Figure 3.6, is located in three sections between the Parramatta CBD and Lidcombe. The main section of the project site extends for about 10 kilometres between the eastern end of the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 alignment in Camellia and the Carter Street precinct in Lidcombe (adjacent to Sydney Olympic Park). This section of project site starts in the former freight rail (Sandown Line) corridor to the north of Grand Avenue (see Figure 3.1). The western part of this section of the project site encompasses a section of Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 where an additional stop (the Sandown Boulevard stop) and a section of active transport link are proposed as part of the project.

The project site extends from just east of Grand Avenue North (see Figure 3.2) and continues east along the Sandown Line corridor and around the foreshore. It then extends north-east across the Parramatta River to the end of Park Road and through Eric Primrose Reserve in Rydalmere (see Figure 3.3). The project site continues north along John Street and then extends to the east along South Street in Rydalmere, and crosses Silverwater Road into Ermington. The project site continues to the east through Ken Newman Park in Ermington, and to the east/north-east along Boronia Street and Hope Street (see Figure 3.3) in Ermington and Melrose Park.

The project site then extends to the south along Waratah Street in Melrose Park. It passes through Archer Park and then crosses the Parramatta River to Wentworth Point, turning east along Wattlebird Road. It then extends along Hill Road to the south-west in Wentworth Point and Sydney Olympic Park (see Figure 3.4 and Figure 3.5). At the intersection with Holker Street, the project site extends to the south-east along the Holker Busway. The project site continues along Australia Avenue in Sydney Olympic Park to Dawn Fraser Avenue. The project site then extends south-west along Dawn Fraser Avenue, crossing Olympic Boulevard and Edwin Flack Avenue into Uhrig Road in Lidcombe, ending between Edwin Flack Avenue and Carter Street (see Figure 3.6).

Other sections of the project site are located as follows (see Figure 3.1):

- on Macquarie Street between Church Street and Marsden Street in the Parramatta CBD, to the west of the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 Parramatta Square stop
- at the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 stabling and maintenance facility site in Camellia.



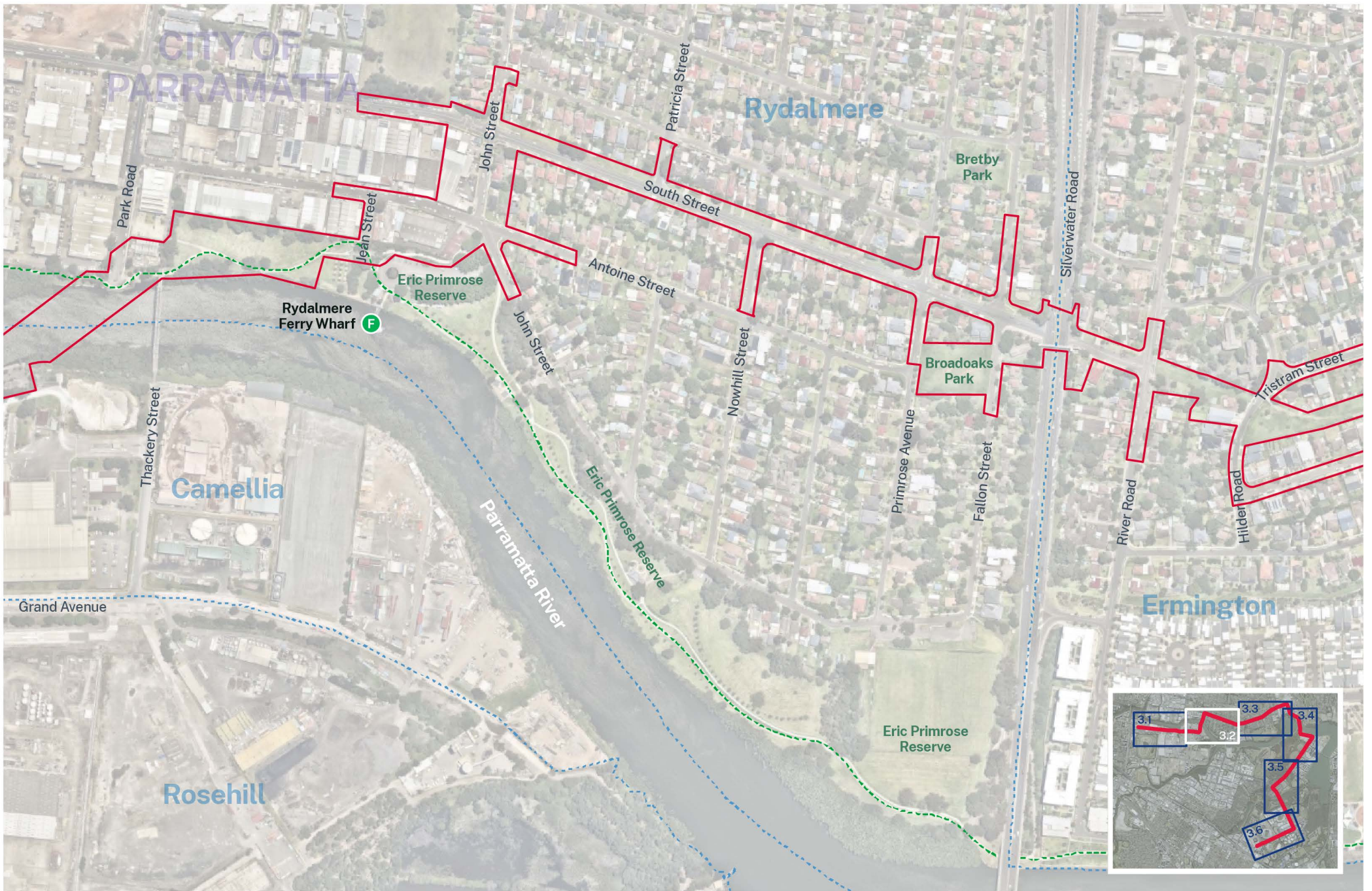
LEGEND

- Project site
- Parramatta Valley Cycleway
- Suburb boundary

Figure 3.1 Project site – map 1

0 200m





LEGEND

- Project site
- Parramatta Valley Cycleway
- Suburb boundary

Figure 3.2 Project site – map 2

0 200m





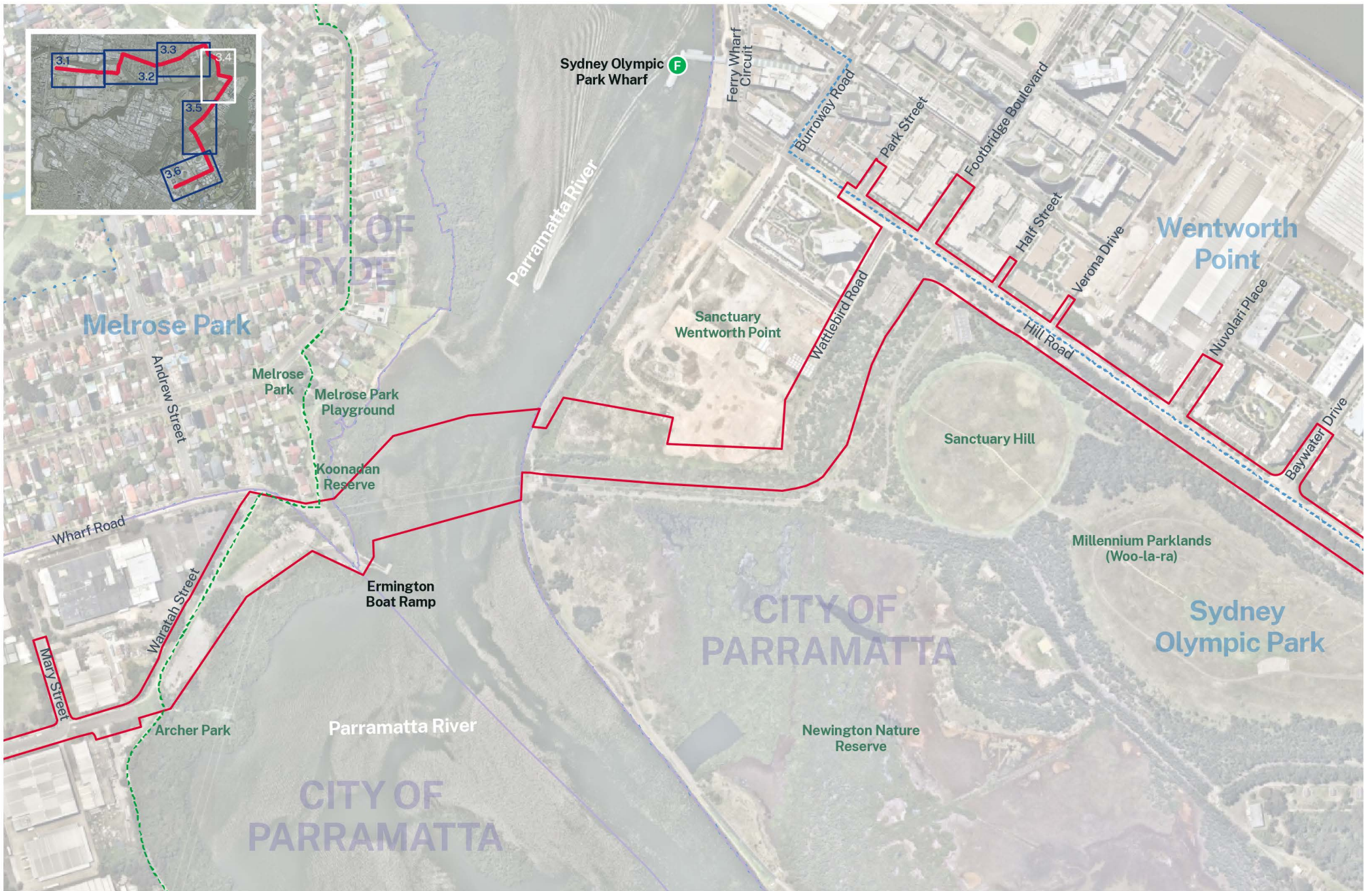
LEGEND

- Project site
- Parramatta Valley Cycleway
- Suburb boundary
- LGA boundary

Figure 3.3 Project site – map 3

0 200m





LEGEND

- Project site
- Parramatta Valley Cycleway
- Suburb boundary
- LGA boundary

Figure 3.4 Project site – map 4

0 200m





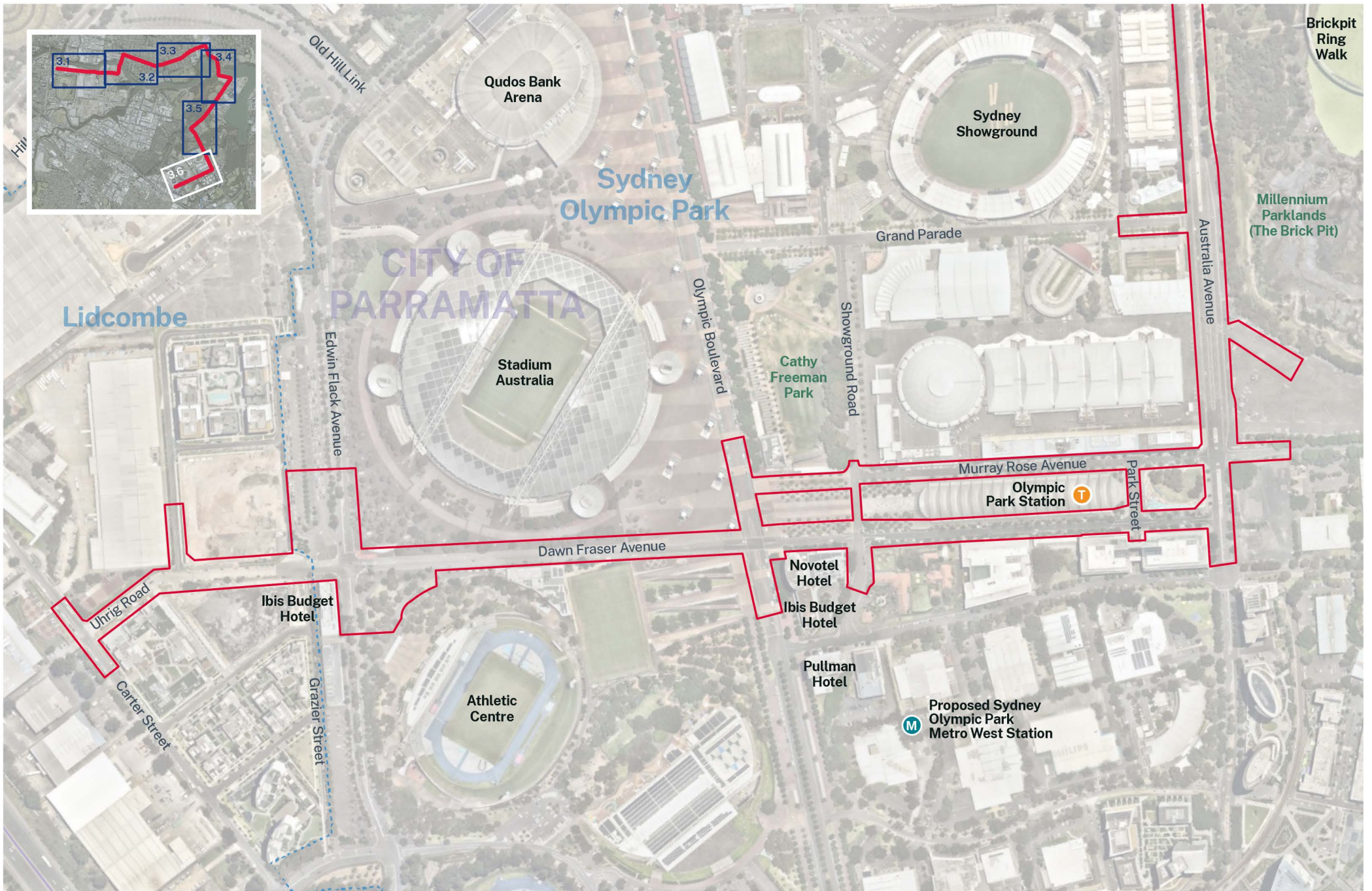
LEGEND

- Project site
- Suburb boundary

Figure 3.5 Project site – map 5

0 200m





LEGEND

- Project site
- Suburb boundary

Figure 3.6 Project site – map 6

0 200m



3.4 Project objectives

As described in section 1.3 of the EIS, the aim of Parramatta Light Rail as a whole is to deliver an integrated light rail service that supports the NSW Government's vision for GPOP, which is to become the geographic and demographic centre of Greater Sydney (Greater Sydney Commission, 2016). To achieve this aim, the objectives for Parramatta Light Rail (including the project) are defined according to four categories, as follows:

City shaping

- support the vision for Parramatta as a 21st century city – attract new investment and economic development
- a catalyst for shaping new growth – activate underutilised land and provide transport capacity needed to support sustainable population and employment growth

Transport connectivity

- connect people and places – support the diverse mix of customer journeys that link employment, cultural, educational, health and supporting precincts with existing and new communities

Transport choice

- provide attractive transport choices for customers – deliver a turn-up-and-go, safe, reliable, all-day light rail service that is integrated with roads, buses, trains and active transport

Place making

- contribute to the creation of local hubs – supporting the creation of attractive and memorable public spaces that are better utilised by communities.

These objectives remain applicable to the amended project.

3.5 Aboriginal culture and heritage

The *Aboriginal Cultural and Heritage Framework* (Transport for NSW, 2022b) consists of five culture and heritage commitments and Aboriginal co-design principles. In addition, the *Principles and Framework for Aboriginal Engagement* (Transport for NSW, 2021) provides guidance to facilitate appropriate Aboriginal engagement that will inform the continuous improvement of projects. Table 3.1 provides a summary of how the project aligns with these commitments.

Aboriginal engagement for the project has considered the *Principles and Framework for Aboriginal Engagement* and included the following:

- early engagement with the Metropolitan and Deerubbin local Aboriginal land councils, which included an archaeological survey
- engagement with registered Aboriginal parties in the preparation of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report, which included a site inspection, Aboriginal Focus Group meetings, Site Officers overseeing test excavations, and review of draft reports (see Appendix A of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report for full consultation log)
- cultural interviews with three Aboriginal cultural knowledge holders to inform the cultural values assessment appended to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report.

Table 3.1 How the project aligns to the commitments of the *Aboriginal Cultural and Heritage Framework*

Commitment	Description	How the project aligns
Responsibility	Transport for NSW staff will understand and meet the requirements of Commonwealth and NSW legislation that maintains and protects Aboriginal culture and heritage across NSW.	<p>Transport has produced a final Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR) based on findings from additional investigations in accordance with relevant guidelines and statutory requirements. Additional assessment of the impacts on Aboriginal culture from a social impact perspective has also been undertaken following completion of the cultural values assessment (see section 4.2 of the Response to Submissions).</p> <p>Mitigation measures have been developed to maintain and protect Aboriginal culture and heritage during the next phases of the project (see section 10 of the ACHAR).</p> <p>In addition, targets relating to procurement of Aboriginal services and job opportunities have been set for the project and are documented in Table 11.3 of Technical Paper 7 (Social Impact Assessment).</p>
Designing with Country	In Designing with Country, Transport staff will connect with Aboriginal knowledge, culture and the local environment to guide and inform the design process.	<p>The EIS and Technical Paper 1 (Design, Place and Movement) describe how the project is embedding the process of Designing with Country throughout design development, which is being led by First Nations design practice, Bangawarra.</p> <p>The project team, including ASPECT Studios, Arup and personnel from Transport’s senior management, environment and urban design teams, undertook a walk on Country and cultural induction led by Bangawarra in the Badu Mangroves of Sydney Olympic Park.</p> <p>The ACHAR and test excavation program was also developed in consultation with registered Aboriginal parties, and will be an input to the project’s Heritage Interpretation Strategy.</p>
Leadership	The management of Aboriginal culture and heritage should be led by Aboriginal people.	In addition to the approach described elsewhere in this table, mitigation measures have been committed to that will ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage is managed with the involvement of Aboriginal people (see Appendix B (Updated mitigation measures) of this report).
Community Knowledge	Aboriginal cultural knowledge and values should be recorded and communicated in ways that are accessible by the community where appropriate.	In line with both the ‘Community Knowledge’ and ‘Living Culture’ commitments, a cultural values assessment has been prepared informed by a site inspection and cultural interviews with three Aboriginal knowledge holders (see Appendix G of the ACHAR).
Living Culture	We acknowledge that Aboriginal culture is a living, breathing and dynamic collection of community inspired thought, beliefs, action and knowledge at the centre of Aboriginal identity.	The findings have been summarised in the ACHAR and will be used as part of the Designing with Country process, and developing the project’s Heritage Interpretation Strategy.

3.6 Placemaking and urban design principles and objectives

Chapter 5 (Design development, alternatives and options) of the EIS provides a summary of the urban design-led process that has been adopted for the project. This included development of urban design principles and a shared vision for the project, which guided the design team in the early design process (see Figure 5.26 of the EIS).

Technical Paper 1 (Design, Place and Movement) forms the basis for future development of the urban design requirements for the project that will be developed in consultation with stakeholders, the operator, and the rail regulator, and with advice from the Design Review Panel.

Design development has continued since the preparation of the EIS. A Supplementary Design, Place and Movement Report has been prepared to update relevant sections of Technical Paper 1 (Design, Place and Movement) to reflect the proposed amendments and refinements. In particular:

- the project overview included in Chapter 4 of Technical Paper 1 (Design, Place and Movement) has been updated to describe and illustrate the proposed amendments and refinements (see Chapter 2 of the Supplementary Report)
- the overview and design, and place and movement information for the Camellia, Rydalmere East, Melrose Park and Wentworth Point precincts have also been updated, together with some bridge information (see Chapter 3 of the Supplementary Report).

As a result of the proposed amendments:

- minor updates have been made to the bridge design requirements for the bridge between Camellia and Rydalmere and bridge between Melrose Park and Wentworth Point
- a new concept plan for open space improvements has been included for Eric Primrose Reserve
- revised concept plans have been provided for the Atkins Road stop open space and Archer Park.

There were no changes to the actions and next steps previously described in Technical Paper 1 (Design, Place and Movement), which will be progressed through the next stages of design development.