



North Bank Masterplan

Vision + Directions Report

by OCULUS | Cumulus-Studio
for Launceston City Council | September 2013

OCULUS
landscape architecture
urban design

CUMULUS
STUDIO
architecture & design





Artists impression of one of the proposed River Rooms

Report Contents

About the project..... 5

The site location.....5

Precinct planning framework.....6

The design and master planning process..... 7

Precinct redevelopment objectives..... 8

Research: site scale comparisons.....16

Site ground-up analysis.....18

Site and context ground-up analysis.....28

The draft North Bank Masterplan.....30

 The draft Masterplan: west.....32

 The draft Masterplan: east.....38

 The draft Masterplan: staging.....44

Estimated development costs.....48

Where to next.....50





About the project

In late 2012 Launceston City Council engaged a design team comprising Tasmania and mainland-based design studios Cumulus and OCULUS to help establish a masterplan 'vision' and design for North Bank focussed on design excellence. This report outlines that vision, the design process and the draft masterplan.

Launceston is the principal city and gateway to Northern Tasmania, providing a number of important services to neighbouring communities, underpinning the productivity of the region. The amenity and liveability of the urban area of Launceston is a vital component in ensuring the city remains a vibrant and attractive place to live, work and recreate.

The North Bank masterplan project seeks to 'break new ground' in urban riverside development. By leveraging the site's unique landscape qualities and providing a vibrant mix of land uses, quality built form and recreational opportunities, the precinct will exceed existing standards for foreshore developments in Tasmania and overseas.

The redevelopment of the North Bank area will create an exciting new precinct on the northern edge of the city, both expanding the already well-established open space network along the riverfront, and improving the connectivity and cohesive experience for the users of these spaces, places and activity centres.

The site location

Located in the inner city suburb of Invermay, the North Bank site area encompasses the riverfront parcels of land at the confluence of the North Esk and Tamar Rivers to the south of Lindsay Street, and the former light industrial and mixed use parcels to the north.

1. The river edge parcels of land adjacent the established Old Launceston Seaport development, and between the Charles Street and Victoria (Tamar Street) Bridges.
2. The former Gunns Ltd. Light industrial site to the north of Lindsay Street.
3. The mixed use parcel of land between the East Tamar Highway and Invermay Road.

The southern river edge frontage to the North Esk and Tamar Rivers is characterised by a high level of user amenity and high quality built form along the Royal Park and Old Seaport areas. In direct contrast to this aesthetically pleasing and active precinct, the northern river frontage is currently characterised by undesirable aesthetic qualities, low amenity river edge and intertidal zone, unmanaged natural environment, and poor quality built form. Given the existing level of both public and private investment to the south, the potential of an enlarged high quality precinct to the north and the beneficial impacts on the established public open space network are a primary driver for the redevelopment of the North Bank site area.

The site and its immediate context



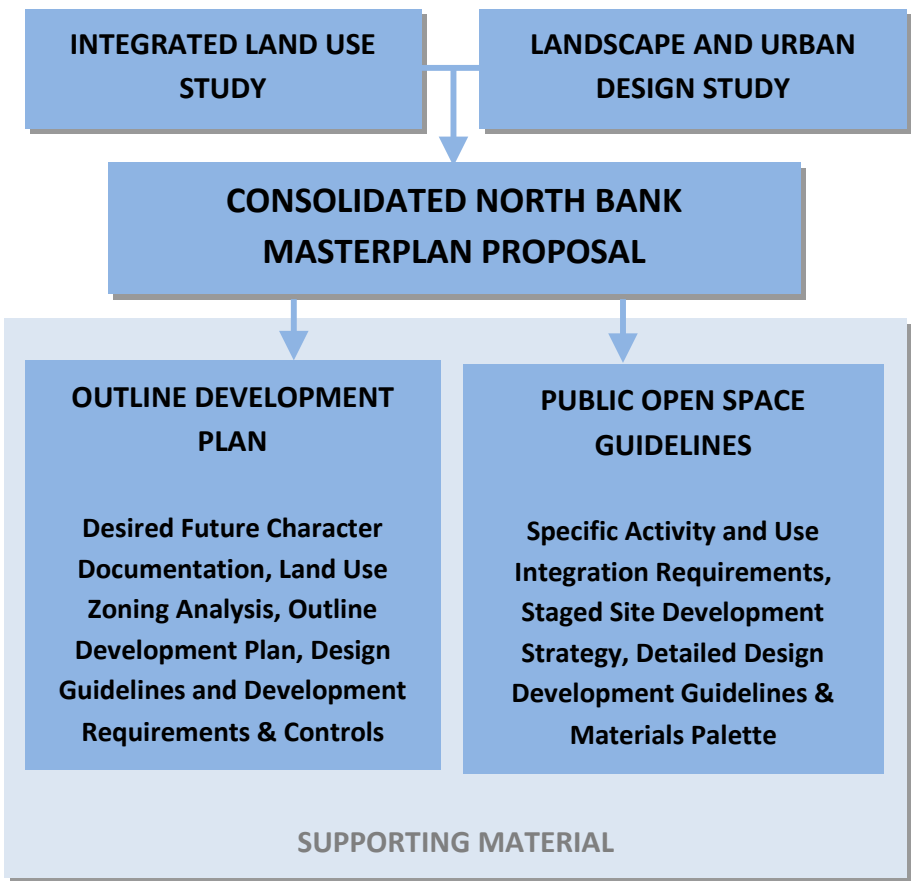
Precinct planning framework

The approach adopted by Council in formulating the precinct redevelopment strategy consist of two integrated streams of analysis and visioning – structured to deliver a coherent and specific future vision for the site.

An Integrated Land Use Study will undertake analysis and research to identify key planning considerations, site opportunities and constraints, and desired future character outcomes. Critically, this process is tasked with identifying a specific suite of suitable use and development opportunities that complement the overall site area – maximising the synergies between public and private investment opportunities.

A landscape and urban design study will deliver the consolidated North Bank Masterplan proposal providing a unifying vision, and giving form to the adopted strategic land use principles. The Masterplan will identify specific activity and use areas and document a staged development strategy to deliver the overall redevelopment process in an achievable and sustainable manner, which reflects the values and aspirations of the community.

The diagram below provides an overview of the adopted structure discussed above, including high level tasks and outputs.



Draft planning framework and model of existing site



The design and master planning process

Great design takes time, passion and patience. A series of steps must be taken in order to create a master plan outcome that is viable, authentic and meets the community’s needs. When time or a thorough process is sacrificed, the end result suffers. Great places are not created easily or quickly; they take time, collaborative effort and great leadership.

The diagram below illustrates the broad steps involved in master planning the North Bank site. Each step is crucial. The entire process - from project to initiation to construction - will take several years but the development outcome will make the effort and time worthwhile. Ultimately, the public and economy of Launceston will benefit.



Precinct redevelopment objectives

The Launceston City Council has identified a number of redevelopment objectives for the precinct to guide the analysis and development of the consolidated Masterplan proposal. The four primary objective areas are described below, including supporting actions and opportunities:

Redevelopment Objective 1:

Facilitate Enhanced Access to the River Edge, and Improve the Natural Values and Visual Amenity of the Area.

- + Rehabilitation and regeneration of the currently degraded river edge and intertidal zones, including removal of invasive weed species and re-planting of native flora.
- + Expansion and development of a Rowing Club Precinct, supported by the consolidation of existing facilities and expansion via the relocation of established user groups to the North Bank precinct.
- + Development of new boardwalk, pontoon, and on-water access facilities to support both the organised club based activities located within the precinct, and access for passive on-water activities for the general public.

Outcomes from Redevelopment Objective 1:

- Enhanced natural values and improved water quality via the re-introduction endemic flora to the currently degraded intertidal zone.
- Improved location and facilities for existing club and school based on-water sporting activities (Rowing, Kayaking), and enhanced opportunities for recreational activities for the general public.
- Improved visual amenity and outlook from the existing Seaport Precinct.

What sort of place could North Bank be?



North Bank Masterplan Vision + Directions Report
August 2013

Redevelopment Objective 1: Facilitate Enhanced Access to the River Edge, and Improve the Natural Values and Visual Amenity of the Area.



Precinct redevelopment objectives

Redevelopment Objective 2:

Deliver an Expansion of the Established Riverside Walking & Cycling Trails, and Facilitate Enhanced Connectivity Along the Public Open Space Network.

- + Modification of existing river edge infrastructure (former levee constructions) to create an expanded river edge trail around the precinct linking with the Kings Wharf area
- + Address current impediments to pedestrian and user group access to and from existing activity areas by implementing enhanced connectivity from the Seaport area to North Bank, and along Lindsay Street to the Inveresk Precinct.
- + Investment in multi-user trails that accommodate the varied requirements of a wide range of activities such as walking, cycling, group fitness and mobility impaired users. The Integration of activity and observation points along the trails to facilitate the installation of contemporary open public space infrastructure such as seating, public exercise equipment, and information and thematic interpretation material.

Outcomes from Redevelopment Objective 2:

- Expanded opportunities for interaction with the river edge environment.
- Increased opportunities for passive and active recreational pursuits.
- Improved connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists from the CBD to the North bank precinct.
- Completion of the 'missing link' between established activity areas across the city.

What sort of place could North Bank be?



North Bank Masterplan Vision + Directions Report
August 2013

Redevelopment Objective 2: Deliver an Expansion of the Established Riverside Walking & Cycling Trails, and Facilitate Enhanced Connectivity Along the Public Open Space Network.



Precinct redevelopment objectives

Redevelopment Objective 3:

Invest in Infrastructure to Support Community Based Events & Passive Recreational Activities.

- + Construction of a high quality Regional Playground facility. The new facility will include multi-age and multi-ability play equipment, as well as thematic links to the broader precinct and natural environment via inclusion of nature-based play design philosophies.
- + The creation of multi-use active parkland areas that serve as both public open space for passive and informal recreational pursuits as well as a venue capable of accommodating medium to large scale community events, such as concerts and festivals.
- + Integration of contemporary public amenities and infrastructure such as picnic and bbq facilities, shade and shelter structures, and scalable facilities such as performance areas or a soundshell and event/festival staging areas.

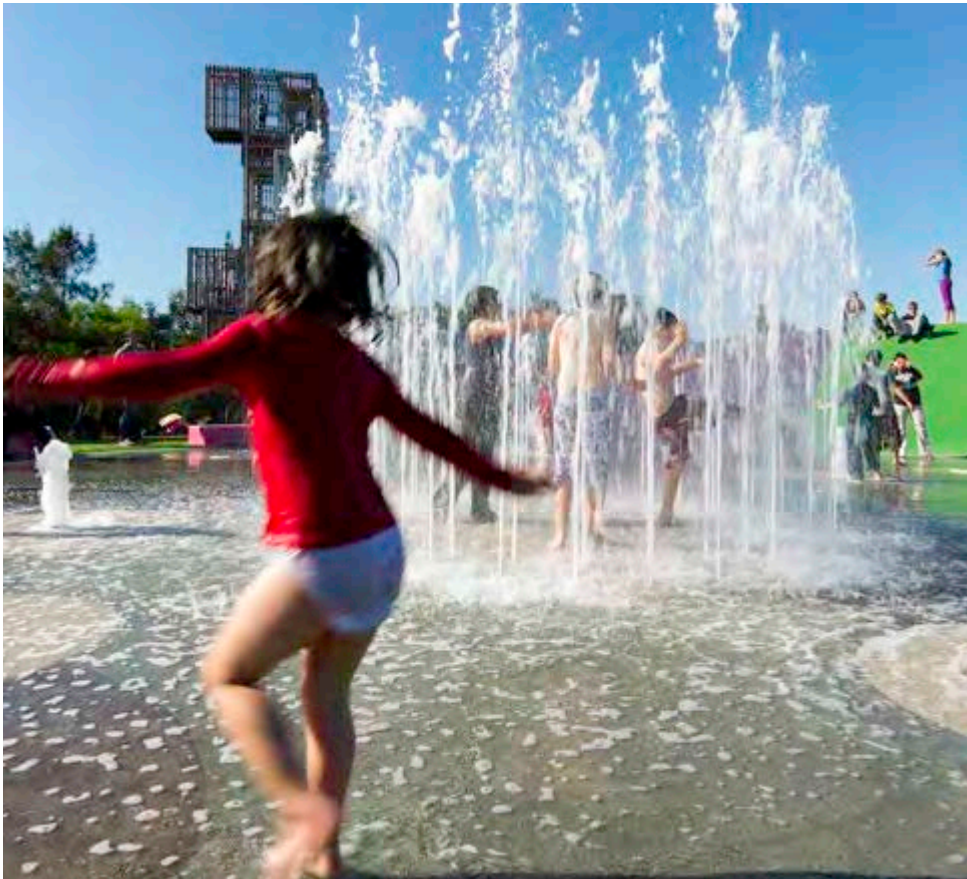
Outcomes from Redevelopment Objective 3:

- Creation of a new attractor and activity generator for the City, via the establishment of a major new Regional Playground Facility.
- Service provision for a wide sector of user groups via the inclusion of multi-age/multi-ability playground equipment, and nature based play opportunities.
- Creation of a vibrant new community events precinct, capable of hosting multiple event types and reducing the burden on existing facilities such as City Park.
- Improved opportunities for small group events, family bbq's and picnics, in close proximity to the CBD.

What sort of place could North Bank be?



Redevelopment Objective 3: Invest in Infrastructure to Support Community Based Events & Passive Recreational Activities.



Precinct redevelopment objectives

Redevelopment Objective 4:

Provide a Framework to Identify and Inform Specific Opportunities for both Public and Private Sector Investment, and to Maximise the Synergies Between these Development Opportunities.

- + Identification of appropriate uses and activities to be accommodated within the precinct, including documentation of the desired interaction and synergies, and development guidelines and principles required to deliver these outcomes.
- + Identification of specific opportunities for commercial activities within the precinct, that complement the overall desired future character and activity types – such as opportunities for Tourism related activities, recreational equipment hire, and on-water experience such as guided canoe tours of the estuary and Cataract Gorge.
- + Investigation of appropriate adaptive Re-use opportunities for the remaining structures and industrial infrastructure located within the site area.
- + Formulation of an Outline Development Plan to provide the appropriate controls, guidance and certainty around the identified development opportunities for areas such as the former Gunn's site.

Outcomes from Redevelopment Objective 4:

- The establishment of a major new accommodation & tourism development via private sector investment and rehabilitation of the existing Silo's structure.
- Opportunities for the establishment of new service related business activities.
- Catalyst for investment and regeneration of the neighbouring precincts to the north of the primary site are.

What sort of place could North Bank be?



North Bank Masterplan Vision + Directions Report

August 2013

Redevelopment Objective 4: Provide a Framework to Identify and Inform Specific Opportunities for both Public and Private Sector Investment, and to Maximise the Synergies Between these Development Opportunities.



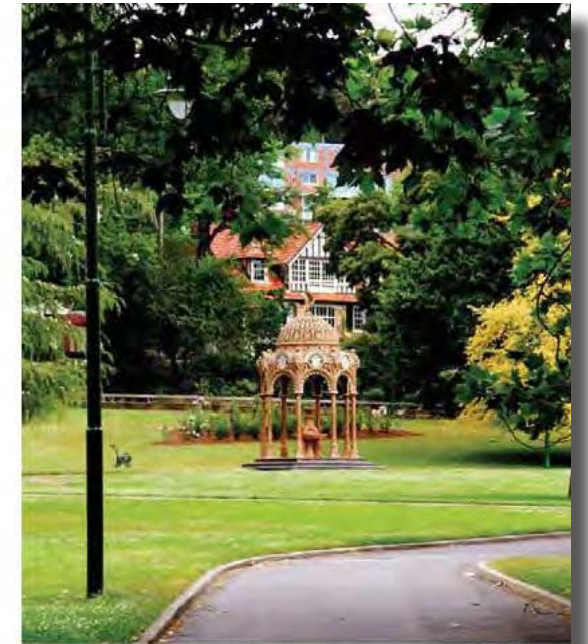
Research: site scale comparisons

Several site scale comparisons were undertaken in order to better understand the size of the site relative to other recognisable urban, recreational spaces in Tasmania and the Australian mainland. These urban spaces included:

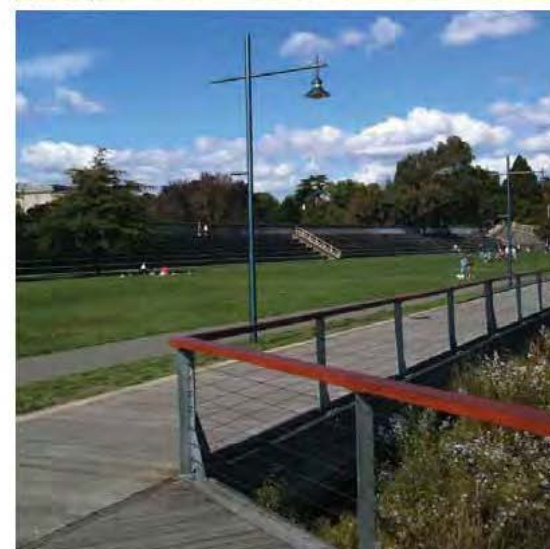
- + Royal Park, Launceston
- + City Park, Launceston
- + Punchbowl Reserve, Launceston
- + Parliament Square and Salamanca Place, Hobart

This research helped to inform the placement and structuring of programs on the North Bank site. The spaces chosen also provided the team with potential ideas for the design of North Bank.

Part A: Site Scale Comparisons City Park, Launceston

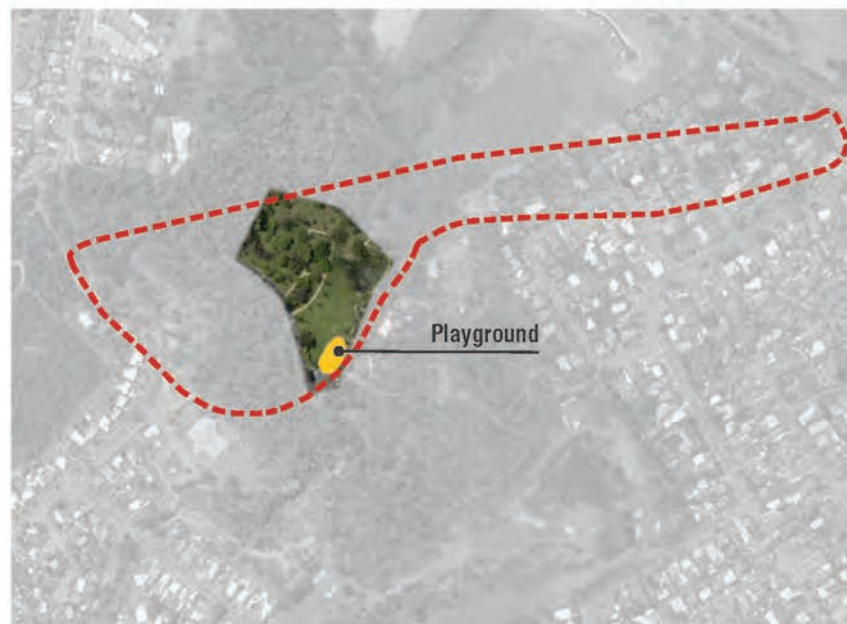


Part A: Site Scale Comparisons Royal Park, Launceston



Research: site scale comparisons

Part A: Site Scale Comparisons Punchbowl Reserve, Launceston



Part A: Site Scale Comparisons Parliament Square & Salamanca Place, Hobart waterfront



Part A: Site Scale Comparisons Blaxland Riverside Park, Sydney



Part A: Site Scale Comparisons Eveleigh Markets, Sydney



Site ground-up analysis

To comprehensively understand the North Bank site, the design team explored the site and its context on foot and by vehicle. The team also sketched the site, conducted external research and built a site model in order to expose the site’s influential physical features and its role as a city park.

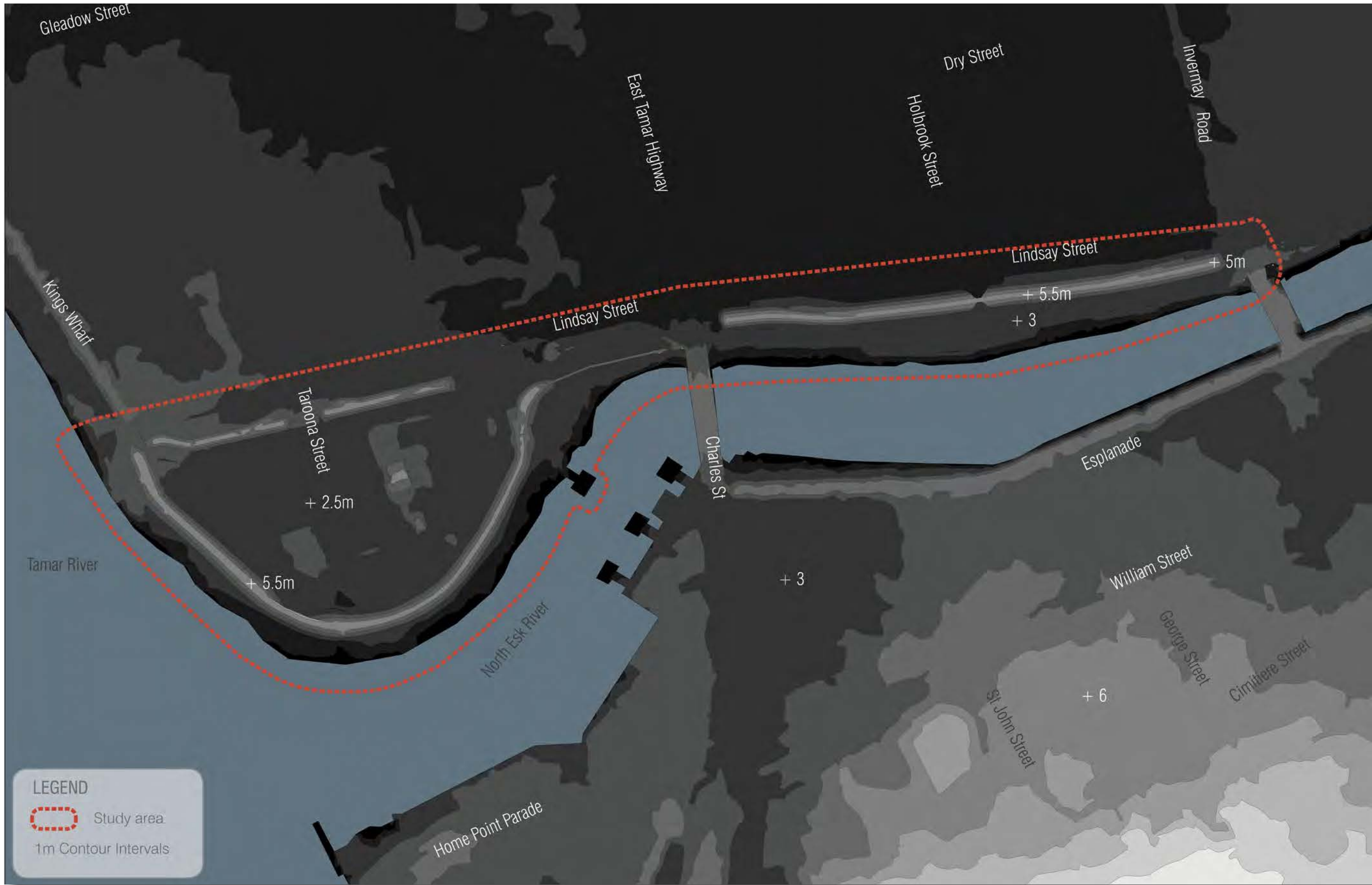
This in-depth examination enabled the design team to appreciate the qualities of the site and the spatial relationships between the site and surrounding developments (existing and proposed).

Views, topography, vegetation, drainage patterns, levee formations and existing building forms were some of the features analysed to help inform the master plan opportunities and constraints, as well as the most suitable development structure for the site.

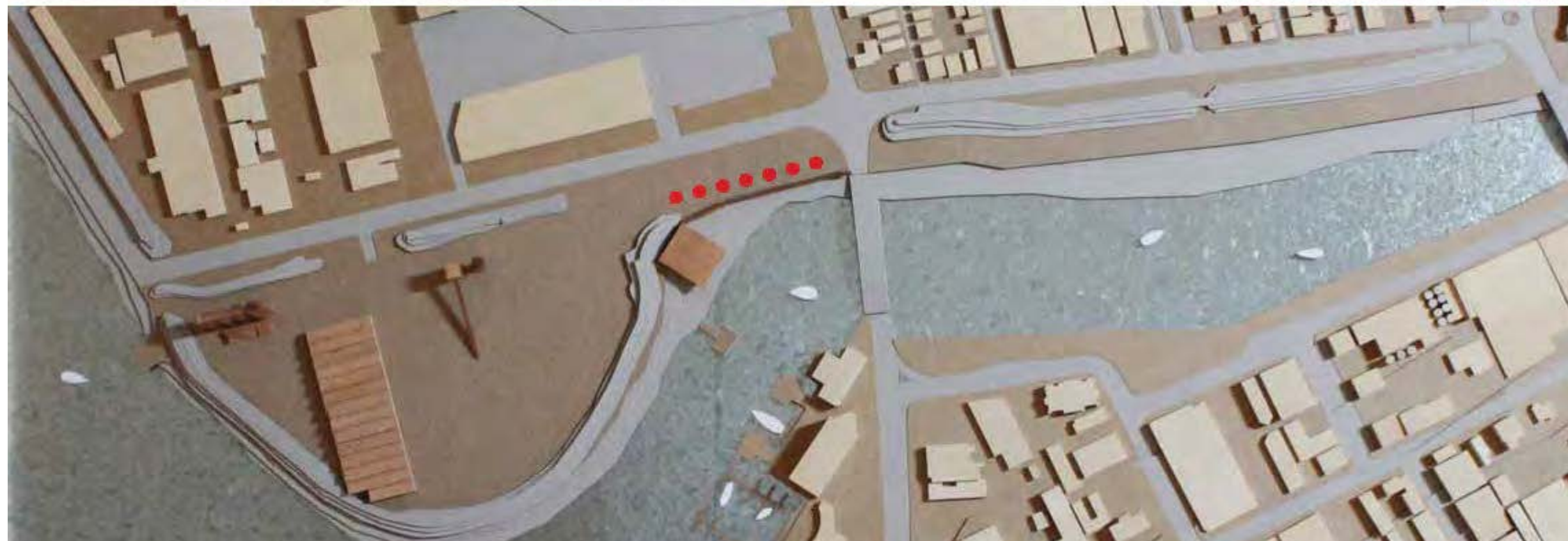
The following pages reveal the key findings from the ground-up analysis. The work communicates what the design team perceives as the key, defining characteristics of the site and the qualities that make it unique and special.



Site ground-up analysis: landform study



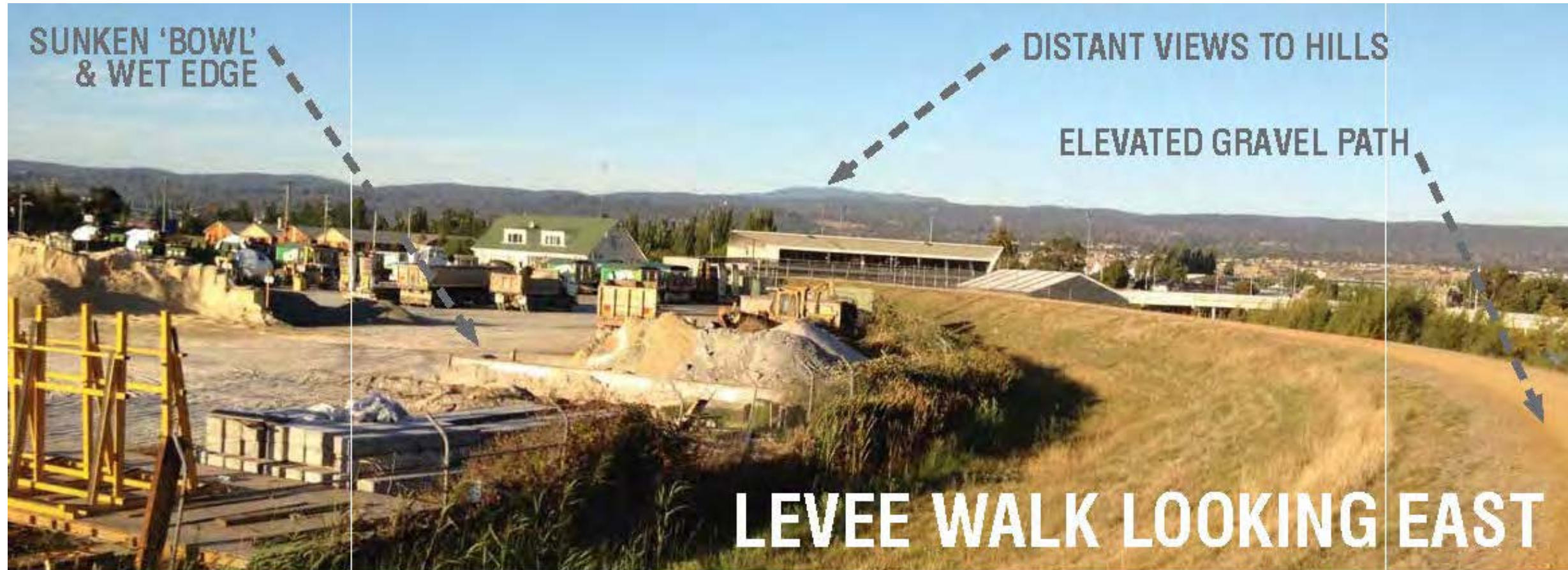
Site ground-up analysis



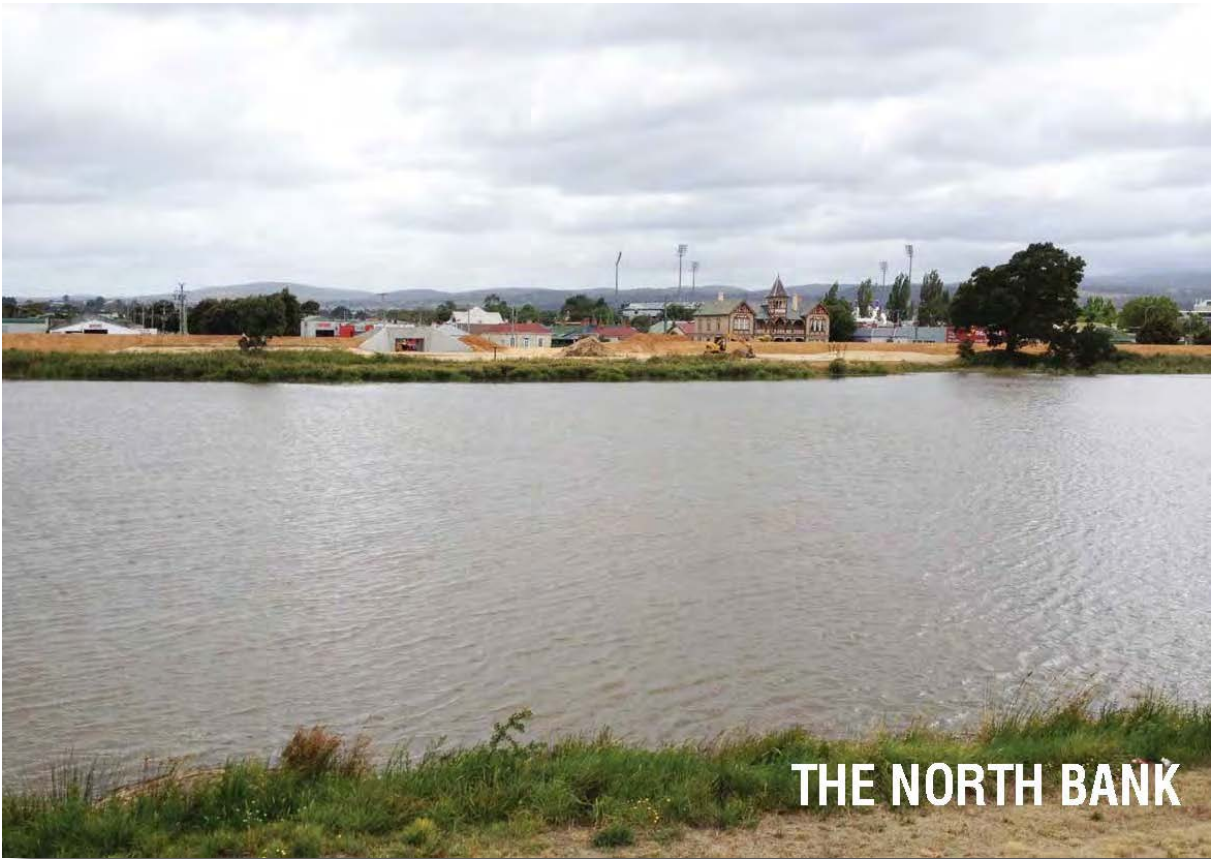
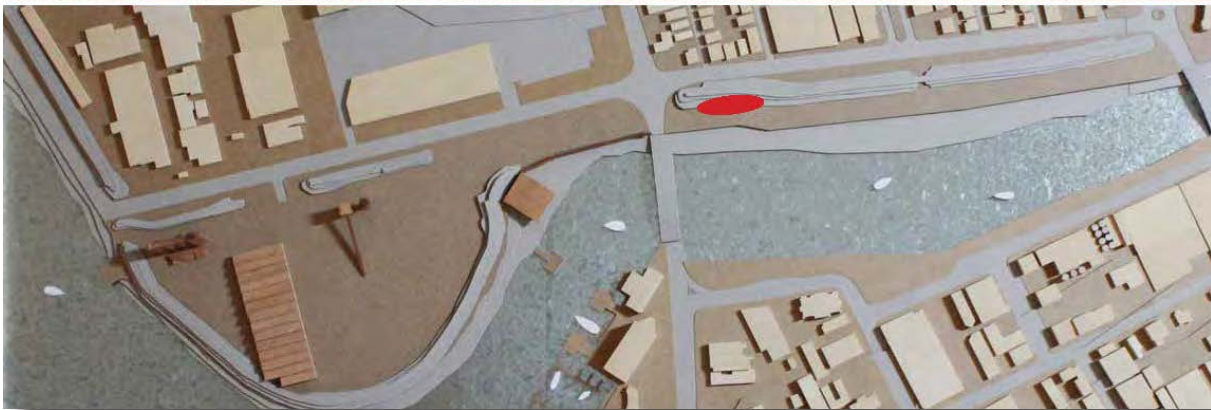
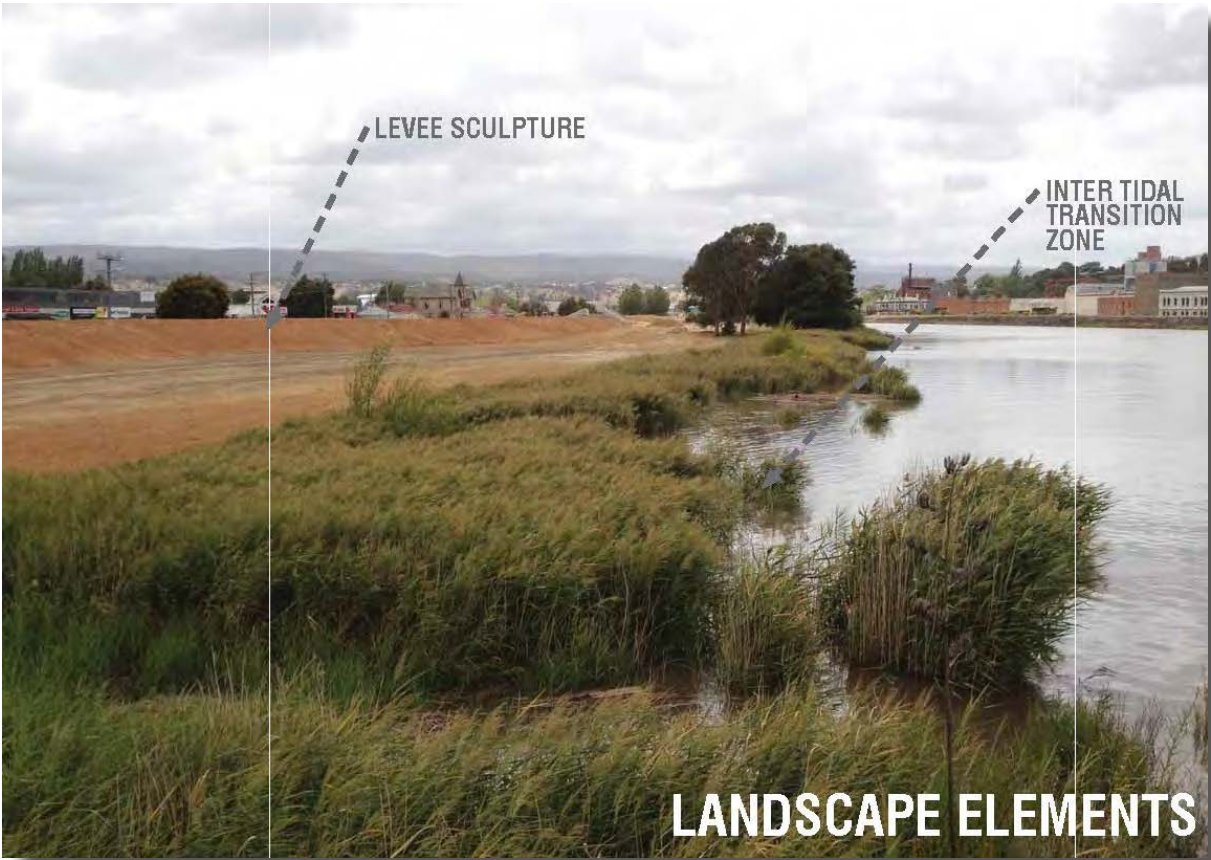
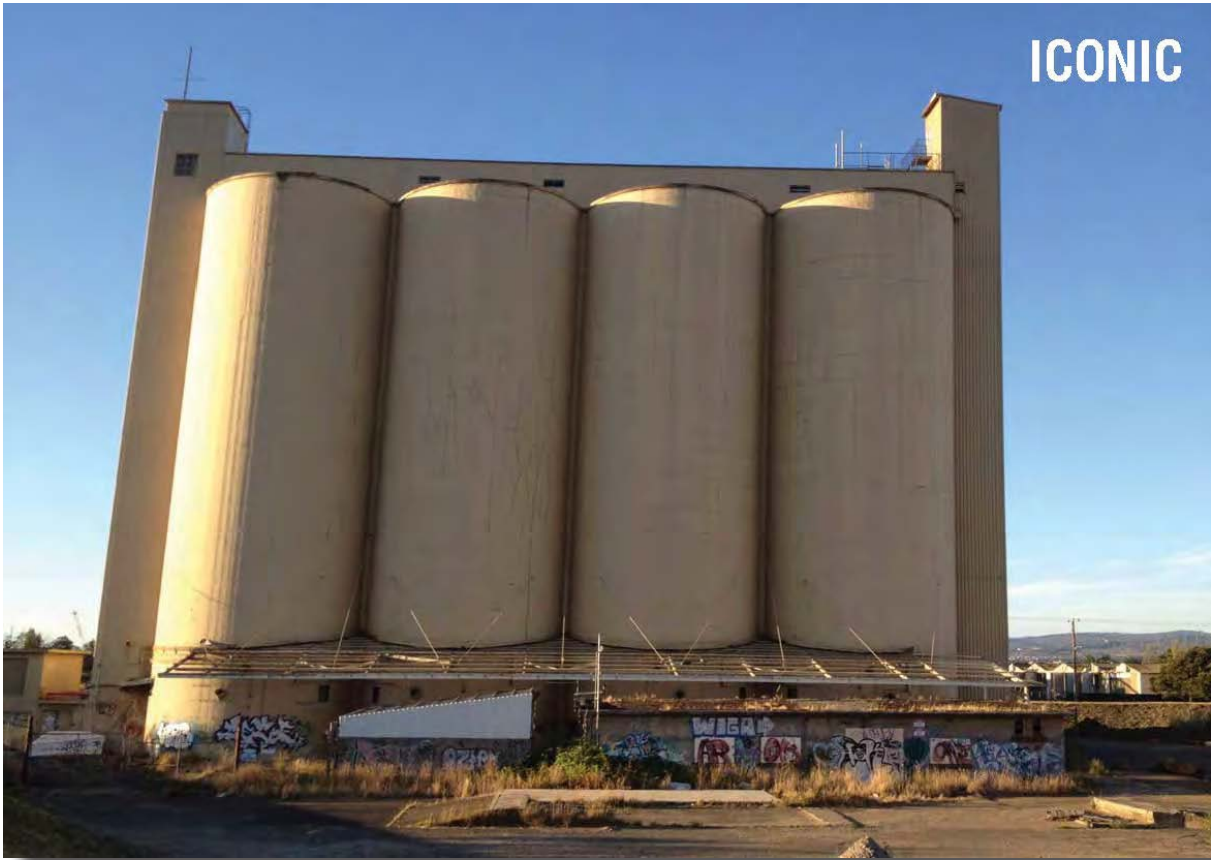
Site ground-up analysis



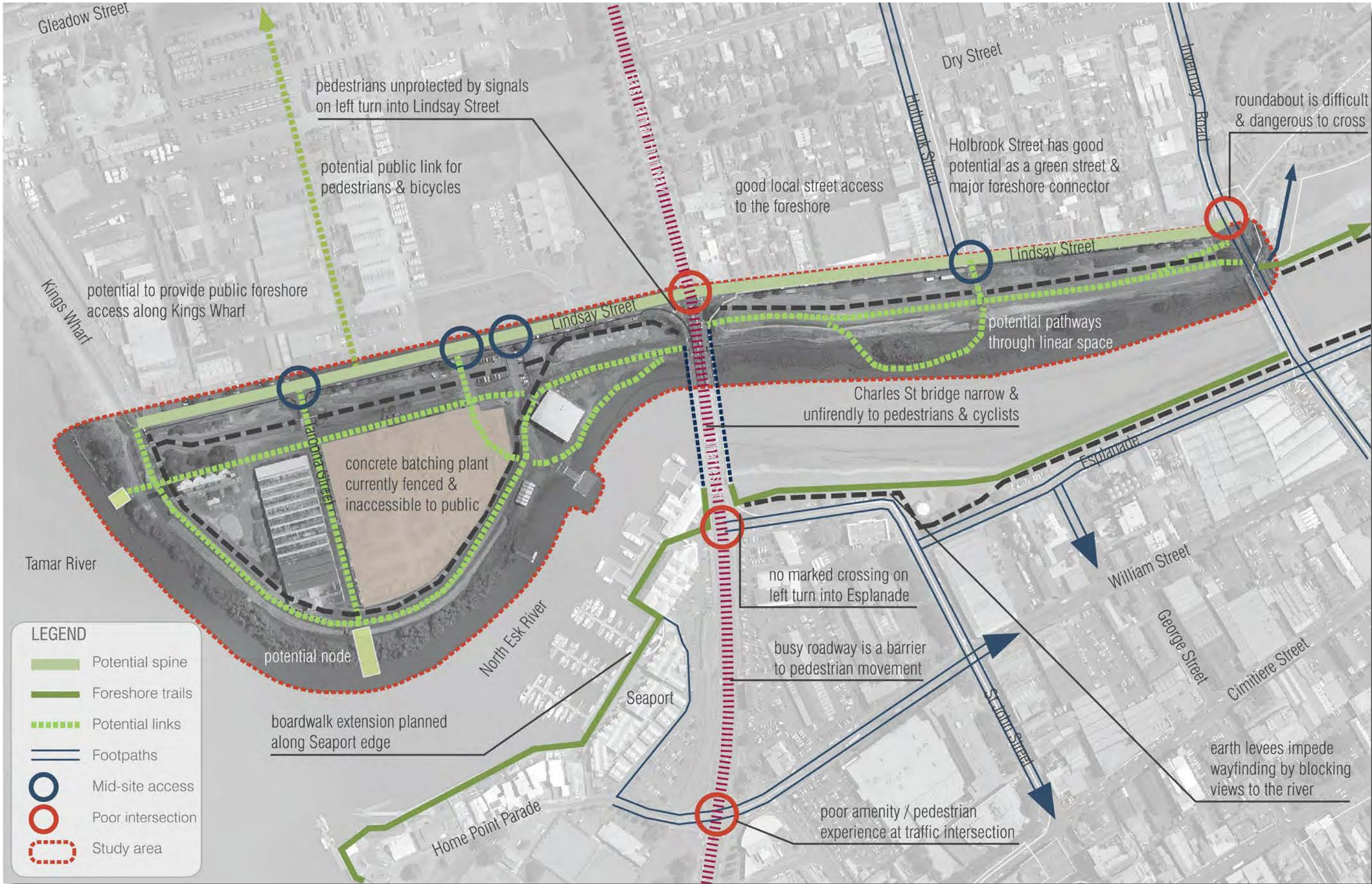
Site ground-up analysis



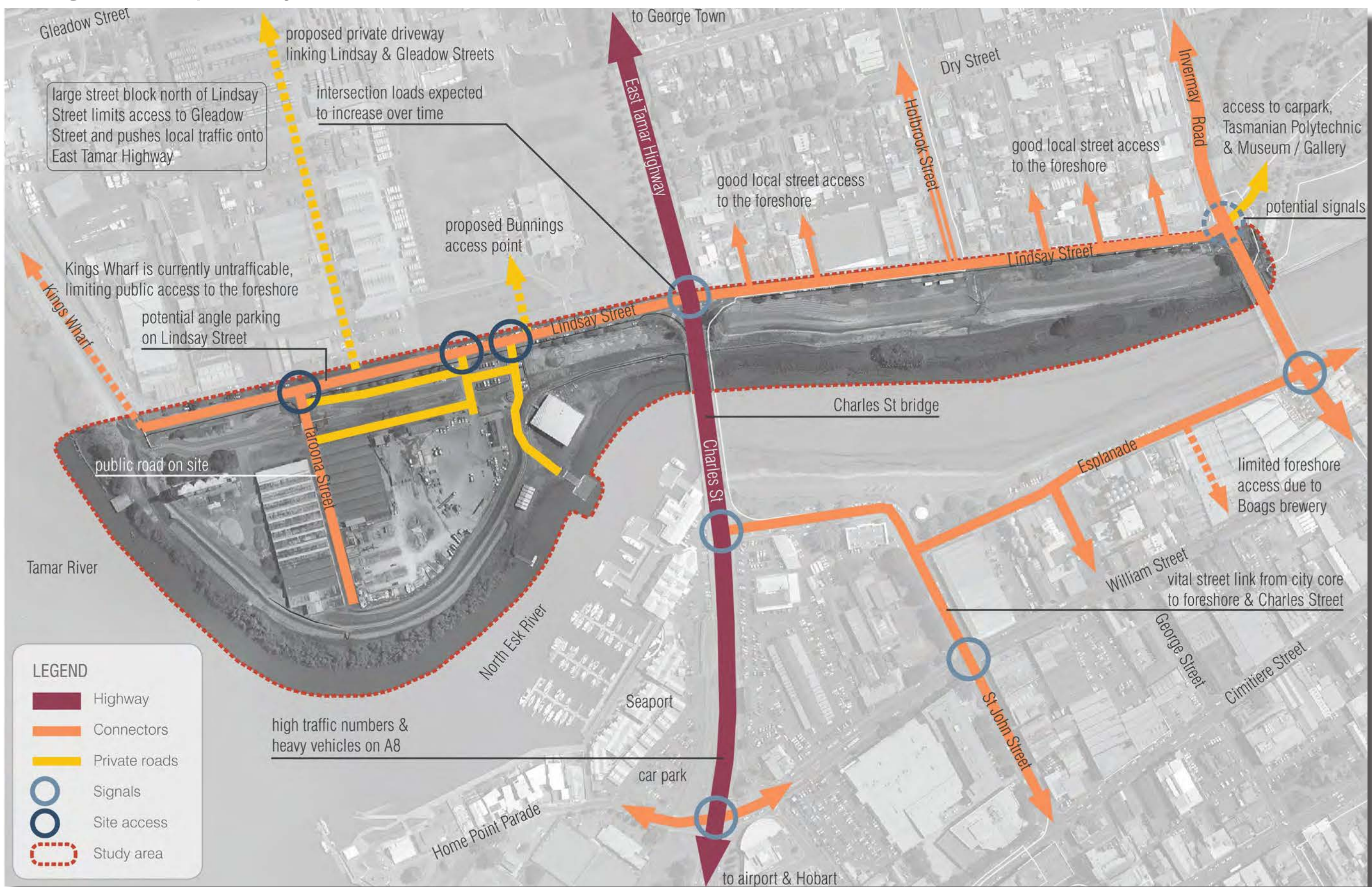
Site ground-up analysis



Site ground-up analysis: pedestrian and bicycle access and movement



Site ground-up analysis: vehicular access and movement



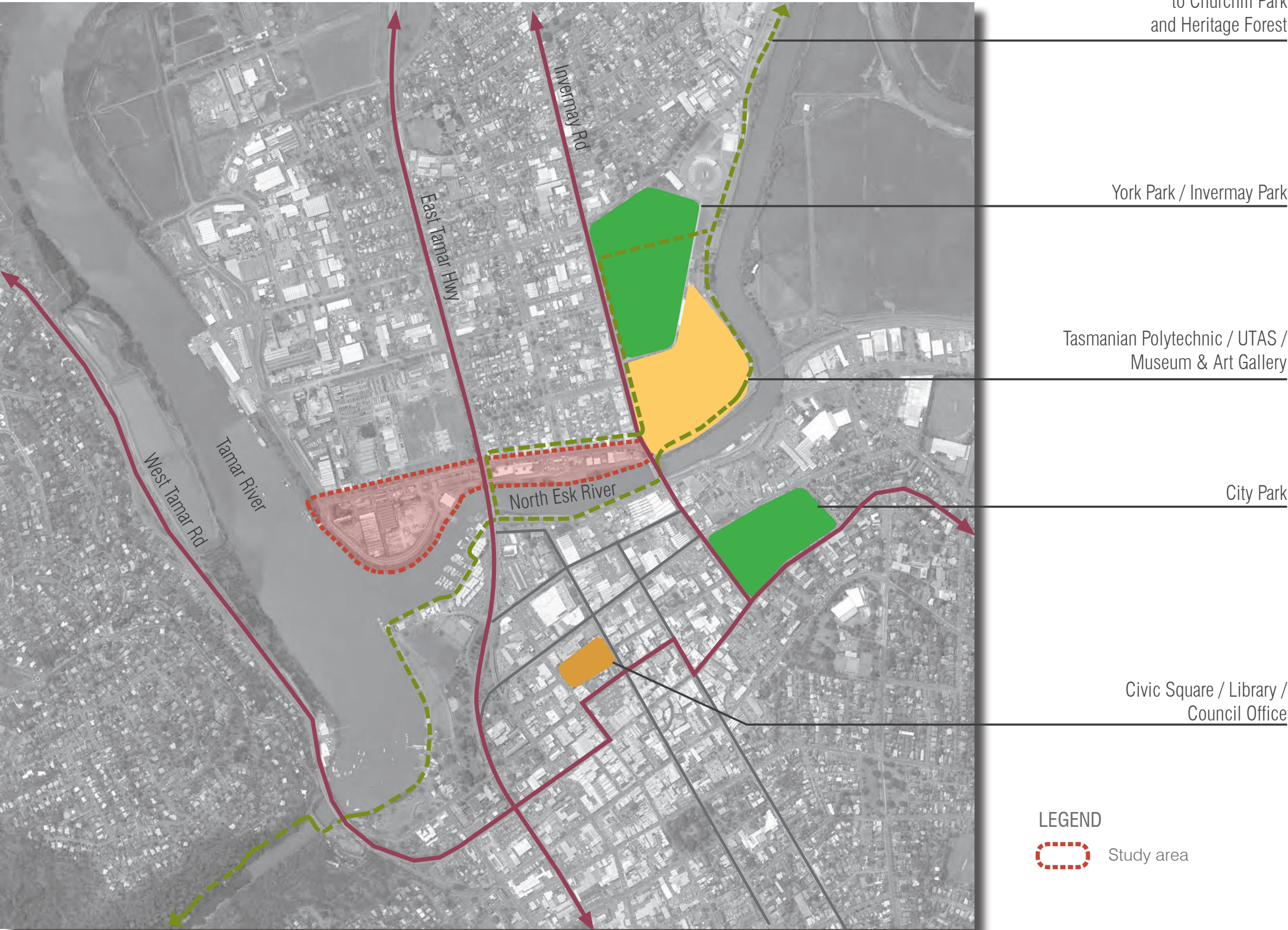
Site ground-up analysis: vegetation



Site ground-up analysis: significant elements, built and landscape



Site and context ground-up analysis: open space network



Site and context ground-up analysis: city connections

