Rowe Street
Public Domain Plan

Prepared by Gallagher Ridenour and McGregor Westlake Architects for City of Ryde
24th May 2013
In November 2012, Gallagher Ridenour and McGregor Westlake were engaged to prepare a public domain plan for Rowe Street, the primary retail street in Eastwood. The project scope included the eastern and western extent of Rowe Street from Blaxland Road to Shaftsbury Road and the existing pedestrian tunnel under the rail line and mall.

The core objectives of the project were to:

• Reinforce Rowe Street and the Mall as the pedestrian core of Eastwood and promote its use during all times of the day and week
• Acknowledge the importance of Eastwood to a diverse range of cultural groups including the Chinese and Korean communities
• Enhance Rowe Street as a regional destination for multi-cultural cuisine
• Improve the amenity of the mall
• Accentuate the visual continuity of Rowe Street through public domain elements and public art
• Improve pedestrian connectivity and safety between east and west Rowe Street through more direct access and clear sight lines at the pedestrian tunnel
• Reinforce festival spaces within Eastwood with appropriate public domain design
• Promote environmental sustainability through water and flood management
Ryde Council developed this project in order to develop a holistic public domain improvement plan of the entire length of Rowe Street that would inform immediate upgrade works as well as future town centre improvements. Rowe Street Public Domain Plan draws together two existing projects, the Eastwood Town Centre Master Plan which defines a long term vision for Eastwood and the Rowe Street East upgrade which proposes immediate streetscape improvements.

The public domain plan has been informed by community feedback provided during the development of the Town Centre Master Plan and Rowe Street East upgrade project.
What The Community Told Us Previously

From the Eastwood Town Centre Master Plan project, the community provided a range of comments on Rowe Street. These points are summarised below.

**General**
- A modern and tidy town centre that supported locally owned business,
- Provide better and more comfortable seating and more shade
- Provide more places to gather and socialise, for markets and community activities
- Improve the connection between the east and west side of the town centre
- Reflect the history of Eastwood

**The Mall**
- Improve seating, lighting paving and colour
- Engage a place manager/community group to program space
- Incorporate facilities that allow for the Mall to attract people at night (eg. dancing and night time cinema).
- Upgrade the fountain to make it safe but also more interactive

**Rail Crossing**
- Install new stairs at pedestrian tunnel entries was strongly supported; encourage people to stop using their cars.
- Recognise that the quality of the rail crossing has been an issue for a long time and desperately needs addressing.

**Rowe Street East & West**
- Install more street tree planting
- Support more space for outdoor dining and trees.
- Support ideas for streetscape elements that link east to west.
- Some supportive of idea of seating along edge of school
Experience Of The Street

Rowe Street changes dramatically from the east to west. From Blaxland Road, the three to four storey buildings are visually prominent. These buildings frontages have limited activation and are dominated by ramps, steps and blank walls. There is no tree planting in this location. Moving west, the steep slope flattens and a vibrant mix of shop fronts dominate as one approaches the rail line.

The pedestrian tunnel across the rail line is dark and uninviting. Arriving at the mall, the space is filled with shoppers and visitors gathering and enjoying shade provided by the ‘cathedral’ like wisteria canopy. Moving further west, the retail shops extend to Shaftesbury Road. The established trees along the Eastwood Public School frontage provides a green edge to the street.
The topography is dramatic ranging 20 metres in height from ridge to valley and the steepest sections are on the eastern end of Rowe Street.

The spectacular topography provides district views to surrounding residential areas.
The dramatic topography on Rowe Street amplifies views of the existing power lines.

High voltage power cables on 18m high poles are located on the northern side of the street. On the southern side of the street, there are standard power poles with multiple overhead power cables connecting to shop fronts on both sides of the street.
Rowe Street is a highly successful retail street with many shops, restaurants and cafes located along its length. On steep sections of the street close to Blaxland Road less active frontages are evident. The mall is a well used and a meeting and gathering place for the community. Locations where goods are displayed on the street adds to ‘market’ feel of the mall.

Tai Chi in the Mall
Retail frontage on Rowe Street East
Shop owners display their wares on Rowe Street Mall
Conditions + Principles

Principle # 1: Unify the street

From this analysis five key principles have been developed for the street.

Existing Conditions

Existing strong alignment that is enhanced by the topography

Key Move

Create street treatment that unifies the street and works with the topography
Conditions + Principles

Principle #2: Incorporate Street trees

Existing Conditions
The street built form varies in setback and character and existing street elements such as power poles create a cluttered space.

Key Move:
Incorporate street trees as the dominant visual element and use this structure to organise secondary elements such as street furniture.

Example of tree spacing to create a green streetscape.
Conditions + Principles

Principle # 3: Activate footpaths and spaces

Existing Conditions
A existing strong, vibrant community uses and occupies the street and the mall

Key Move:
Increase opportunities for gathering, activity and informal interaction along the length of the street by providing space and seating zones.
The mall is well used and successful, but some components are dated and tired.

Conditions + Principles
Principle #4: Renew existing elements

Key Move
Amplify and refresh existing elements such as the canopy and improve facilities such as furniture and the water feature.

Existing Conditions

Wisteria canopy in the mall

Poor quality paving and street clutter detracts from the mall
Conditions + Principles

Principle #5: Connect east to west

Existing Conditions
The existing street condition is disconnected due to the rail corridor

Key Move:
Improve physical and visual access and amenity of the rail tunnel.

The existing pedestrian tunnel.
Example of improved lighting in Railway Square, Sydney
The Design

A series of design ‘steps’ have been developed that illustrate how these principles, they have been incorporated into Rowe Street Public Domain Plan.
Step #1: Expand footpath space and retain existing on street parking

The existing carriageway is very wide with narrow footpaths. An opportunity exists to widen the footpath on sunny side of the street by reducing width of carriageway to 11m with no loss of parking.

Example of widened footpath in Fredericksberg.
Step #1: Expand footpath space and retain existing on street parking.

Rowe Street West
- Retain existing parking numbers.
- Subject to future investigation.

Rowe Street East
- 73 existing
- 74 proposed
Step #2: Shade trees as visual link + to mark topographic change

- Street trees provide the visual link connecting the east to the west.
- Tightly spaces columnar trees on southern side of the Rowe Street, where reduced impact from awnings and power lines.
- 10m centres paired at 5m centres of planting to enhance “green” impact.
- Evergreen on steep topography and outer edges with gradual shift to deciduous species as approach the town centre.
- Grove at key locations.

Historic image showing Eucalyptus on the ridge line at upper Rowe Street (1912)
Example of Chinese Poplar Populus simonii - Glebe Point Road, Sydney
Step #2: Shade trees as visual link + to mark topographic change

View 1: Illustrating proposed transition between deciduous Chinese Poplar tree and Gum tree planting at the mid point of Rowe Street east.

View 2: Illustrating proposed Gum tree planting at upper end of Rowe Street east.

Deciduous Tree: Chinese Poplar *Populus simonii*
Ridge trees: Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata* or similar.
Existing Trees
Proposed Locations for Street Trees

Stage 1:

Stage 2: Following Removal Of Above Ground Powerline

Key:
- New Tree Planting
- Existing Tree Planting
- Power lines

- Extending the tree groupings using the same species along the length of Rowe Street visually unifies the street.
- Expanding the footpath on Rowe Street East allows for continuous tree planting along the southern side of street.
- Rowe Street West has limited tree planting capacity in stage one due to overhead power lines, awnings and parking on street. Stage two street tree planting requires future under grounding or bundling of power lines.
Step 3 # Incorporate rain gardens that amplify ‘green’ street

- Consolidated rain gardens zones under street trees
- Graduate to smaller garden beds closer to centre to the town centre. Garden beds demarcate and create attractive seating and dining zones
- Culminating in above ground “water trough” in the Mall
- Expand palette of WSUD planting to include colour and textured planting

Example of rain gardens in the redevelopment of the “trapeze” - former Renault site, Boulogne Billancourt, 2010
Concept - rain gardens and planting

- Kerb inlets allow storm water run off from gutter to collect in Street Tree ‘rain gardens’ on southern side of street.
- Furniture module incorporates small bridges which provide pedestrian access.
- Larger rain gardens in the steeper sections of Rowe Street east allow for greater detention capacity. Integrated platforms/bridges have been designed for pedestrian access across the larger rain gardens.
Step 4 # incorporate a distinctive suite of furniture along the length of the street that increases amenity and amplifies ‘green’

- Seating that responds to WSUD are located under tree planting.
- Seating is designed with and without backrests, for gathering, informal seating and dining along the length of the street.
- Distinctive ‘granny smith’ green apple colour, first propagated in Eastwood by Maria Ann Smith in 1868. Distinctive colour becomes visual link along Rowe Street.

Design reference: ‘Granny Smith’ green

Example of street furniture incorporating colour - Southbank Institute of Technology - 2007
Indicative Plan - Rowe Street East

- Detailed street layout for Rowe Street east showing zones for outdoor dining as well as public seating.
- Pedestrian path of travel is kept clear.

Refer to Appendix for material and finishes codes.
Concept - Furniture

Benches grouped for individuals and groups
“Granny Smith Green”

- Seating is located under the tree planting and clear of pedestrian path of travel.
- Seating extends along the length of the street for informal gathering, dining and rest for pedestrians.
Furniture Details
Folded Steel

- More generous benches are located where possible.
- Outdoor dining for adjoining restaurants and cafes is accommodated
Furniture Details
Steel with bluestone base

- The design allows capacity for public seating, incorporated with cafe and outdoor dining zones.
On steep sections of the street where there is limited ground level retail frontages, longer rain gardens are incorporated. Seating is located at the ends looking down the streets.

These rain gardens have “bridges” to allow pedestrian access.
Potential Zone For Expanded Cafe Expansion Subject To Approval

• The Eastwood public school entry could be improved with new seating, fencing and planting.
• The existing bus shelter can be upgraded in line with these furniture elements.
• New paving works can incorporate a colourful paving material at the school gate.
• Proposals subject to the approval of Eastwood Public School and Department of Education.
Furniture Details
Eastwood Public School - School Entry

- The existing retaining wall along the edge of the school could be redesigned to accommodate a bench for parents and grandparents.
- New custom fencing could be designed that provides a secure boundary whilst also incorporating colour and low planting to provide improved street frontage.
Rowe Street and Blaxland Road
Gateway planting and signage

- A grid of gum trees echoes the historic trees that would have occurred on the ridge and are planted. A sculptural steel wall weaves and curves its way through tree trunks.
- The wall draws inspiration from a ‘Granny Smith’ apple peel.
- Opportunity to create a rain garden to assist with storm water runoff from Ryedale Street.
- A raised walkway allows pedestrian access over rain garden.
Rowe Street and Blaxland Road
Gateway planting and signage

- Currently the corner is dominated by nondescript buildings and appears bland without any discernable character.
- The idea for the corner is to create an enduring and memorable image that signifies the renewed transformed character of Rowe Street.
- The green ribbon is designed to work with the proposed landscape planting as a memorable and identifying image for the Rowe Street corner.
- Lighting will be incorporated into the scheme.
Rowe Street and Blaxland Road

Gateway planting and signage

- The ribbon is laid out to reflect the intersecting street geometries of the corner and will visually unfold as the cars pass by creating a strong sculptural effect.

- The trees recall the historic plantings of the area and give the ribbon an enduring and appropriately scaled setting. The plantings add to the sculptural interest, hide the supports and thus give the ribbon its floating quality.

- In detail the ribbon could be made of dual layers of a perforated mesh that includes signage. The layering and perforation of the dual ribbon will further add to the visual interest and sculptural effect.
Step #5 use paving materials to respond to context and to amplify key spaces

- Prioritise high quality kerb as a key visual element
- Modify paving to increase quality and ‘amplify’ key retail zones
- Use stones with more colour variation to create visual interest
- Use white stone to demarcate outdoor dining zones.
- Paving treatment or paving “rug” under the wisteria canopy

Rowe Street West

Rowe Street East
The paving treatment can vary to highlight entry into the heart of Eastwood. This may be reflected in material size and colour. Smaller paving modules or insitu paving is recommended for steep sections of the street to minimise slip and provide quality appearance on steeply sloping pavements.
Step #6 Refreshing and enhancing the mall

- Fill in and consolidate the existing row of trees to create a canopy that mirrors the wisteria canopy
- Amplify night time experience under the canopy by installing custom catenary lighting; this may be based on form of the wisteria flower
- Above ground water feature
- New seating under grove trees and under the canopy

Floriade - Amsterdam
Illustrative Plan - The Mall

Retain open space under wisteria canopy with seating overlooking from edges, between canopy columns for activities such as: 1. Tai chi, 2. Open air market space, 3. Temporary Library, 4. Night festivals, 5. Special events such as dancing classes or performance. Incorporate surfacing that is flush and slip resistant, 3 phase power in bench bases and storage space for temporary elements such as seating.
Concept - The Mall
The Grove and water feature

- Fill in and consolidate the existing row of trees to create a canopy that mirrors the wisteria canopy.
- Relocate the water feature to sunny side of mall.
- Water feature design steps down to lower level at gateway and has higher sprays and incorporate above ground and ground level water play.
- Table and stool seating under grove of new trees. Modules of seating and garden beds are repeated under existing trees to match seating arrangement on the rest of the street.
- Circulation zones along edges and through centre.

REFER TO APPENDIX FOR MATERIAL AND FINISHES CODES

Rowe Street Public Domain Plan: Report
24th May 2013
Custom table/stool modules are placed under the tree grove and alongside raised water feature.

- Raised water feature allows children to easy and playful engagement with the water feature. This design will also reduce safety concerns associated with pools of water at ground level.

- Custom furniture incorporating seating and tables allows for gathering without impacting on pedestrian movement.

- Flexible seating that users can move seats should be investigated. Storage could be provided with the mall redevelopment.
Concept - The Mall
The Wisteria Canopy & Paving ‘Rug’

- New double sided seating under the edge of the wisteria canopy allows for users to look over the space whilst maintaining capacity for a gathering for events and markets.
Concept - The Mall

Lighting

- Amplify night time experience under the canopy by installing custom catenary lighting; this may be incorporated in light weight steel net that is fitted below the wisteria branches.
The Mall: “The Rug”
Paving detail

- Inspiration for paving treatment under the Wisteria canopy
- Leaf motif in paving detail.

Terrazzo Finish
- Module size: max 2.5 x 3.5m panels
- Every second panel rotated.
- Expansion joints at each panel junction
- Terrazzo topping layer over membrane and concrete slab
- $600-800 per sqm - topping layer only/ not including base slab
Pattern exploration

Paving pattern

Pattern 1

Pattern 2

Pattern 3

Pattern 4
Step# 7  Stitching the rail corridor

- Improve access and safety to and from the existing underground pedestrian tunnel.
- Elevate the status of the tunnel crossing
- Use markers to frame the entrance to the pedestrian tunnel
- Create an artwork that responds to and broadcasts the movement of people through the space
- This proposal is subject to approval of Railcorp
The new stairs are aligned and setout to create a safer and more direct access at either end of the tunnel, giving the passerby increased confidence to enter.

The new stair layout is to be reinforced with a series of lights and graphic treatments to the tunnel, the stairs and the new entry points.

These will further broadcast and amplify the presence and improved entry points of the tunnel to the pedestrian life of Rowe Street.
Tunnel: above ground elevation

Lighting treatment

- Each entry point of the tunnel is to be signified and amplified with a light sign portal, so as it can read approaching the crossing from Rowe Street.

- The light sign can be quite easily programmed to react to a motion sensor installed at each of these entry points. Once triggered the light sign will morph through a colour spectrum that signifies the presence of pedestrians walking through the tunnel. In so doing the life of the place is visually broadcast up and down Rowe Street, thus giving the tunnel an improved visual presence that reinforces the safer more direct access proved by the new stairs.

Schematic view showing tunnel entry from the eastern side of Rowe Street, with the wisteria canopy in the distance.

Above: Schematic views showing potential lighting colour change with pedestrian movement.
Proposed Footpath Modifications and Swept Path Analysis

Lighting

- The new access stairs requires modification to existing footpath.
- New footpath design has been developed in accordance with swept path analysis by Traffix. Refer to appendix 1 for further detail. The plan above shows the swept path for 12.5m rigid truck/bus.
Project delivery
Recommended Staging Plan

Rowe Street East
1
The Rail Corridor & Stairs
2
Rowe Street East
3
Blaxland Road Treatment
4
Eastwood Public School
5
Rowe Street West
6

In accordance with shopping centre approval
Appendix
Landscape Material and Finishes

MATERIAL CODES:

CP1  PAVING TYPE 1
     Paving type to be confirmed.

CP2  PAVING TYPE 2 - STONE
     Granite paving on concrete slab

CP3  DECORATIVE PAVING
     Custom paving to mall.

MATERIALS + FINISHES - KERBS AND EDGES

KG1  HIGH QUALITY KERB

KG2  HIGH QUALITY GARDEN EDGE

KG3  HIGH QUALITY KERB INLETS
     Edge to rain gardens

KG4  HIGH QUALITY KERB RAMP
     Driveway Entrance

MATERIALS + FINISHES - TREE PIT TYPES

TP1  RAIN GARDEN TREE PIT 1
     Small rain garden

TP2  RAIN GARDEN TREE PIT 2
     Extended rain garden

TP3  RAIN GARDEN TREE PIT 3
     Large rain garden

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B1   BENCH TYPE 1
     Custom - bench with compact fluorescent lighting
     underneath for rain garden 1 and garden bed
     in paving.

B2   BENCH TYPE 2
     Custom - bench with platform for rain garden 1

B3   BENCH TYPE 3
     Custom - bench for extended rain garden 3

B4   BENCH TYPE 4
     Custom - bench seat at crossing.

B5   BENCH TYPE 5
     Custom - double sided bench for mall

B6   BENCH TYPE 6
     Custom - Table and stool for mall

B7   BENCH TYPE 7
     Custom - bench for school wall

BS1  BUS SHELTER
     Custom - canopy of bus shelter

TP4  TREE PIT IN PAVING
     Tree pit in garden bed

TP5  TREE PIT IN CARRIAGEWAY

EC1  ENTRANCE COLOURED
     Custom - ground plane surface treatment to
     school entry

EC2  ENTRANCE COLOURED
     Custom - ground plane surface treatment to
     school entry

EC3  ENTRANCE COLOURED
     Custom - ground plane surface treatment to
     school entry

EC4  ENTRANCE COLOURED
     Custom - ground plane surface treatment to
     school entry

MATERIALS + FINISHES - TREE TYPES

T1   TREE TYPE 1
     Spotted Gum Corymbia maculata or similar.

T2   TREE TYPE 2
     Chinese Poplar Populus simonii
     or Callery Pear Pyrus calleryana

T3   TREE TYPE 3
     Chinese Pistachio Pitacia chinensis

TP5  TREE PIT IN CARRIAGEWAY

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CP2  PAVING TYPE 2 - STONE
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Rowe Street Public Domain Plan: Report
24th May 2013
Community Consultation
Cred + Gallagher Ridenour

ROWE STREET PUBLIC DOMAIN PLAN
ENGAGEMENT NOTES

ATTENDEES: Hugh Lee, Sam Tassone, Kenny Lee, Geoffrey Lee, Cherry Kho
FORMAT: Group discussed plans with Libby, viewed presentation, and asked questions

NOTES:
• The mall needs to have more lighting, so that after dinner people can stay and talk with each other, dance or do other activities. It is now very busy at dinnertime and people want to stay and enjoy.
• The idea of changeable lights was suggested to reflect the different community events and seasons.
• Supported recommended changes to footpaths and parking implications.
• It would be good to have some opportunity for people to exercise near the town centre (this could be addressed through the Master plan process).
• The group agreed with the tunnel going straight through East to West.
• Questioned having a permanent canopy but understood this does not meet all needs.
• Would like to have places to sit near the fountain, for parents with children, partners waiting for shoppers, and for meeting people.
• Questioned how the Plan would be funded. Concern that only east side is funded.
• Generally were supportive of the recommendations of the Rowe Street Public Domain Plan.

FEEDBACK FORMS
• The feedback forms showed support for all recommended steps. Comments included
  o Love the tree shade
  o Good to have some colour to elaborate our granny smith significance
  o Fantastic to have furniture to encourage community integration
  o The rail corridor is a real improvement
  o Parking a good idea
  o I am pleased that the idea of interaction and community have been incorporated into the plan. Overall the whole plan is impressive and the staff did an excellent job to present and explain the details.
  o Ping pong table would be good in Rowe Street also (2 comments).