

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES FOR THE TRAIL

### 2.1 PROVIDING FOR A RANGE OF USERS

One of the main aims of the River Walk as a regional recreation trail is encourage a wide range of recreation users in terms of age, fitness and physical ability. This is to be achieved through establishing flexible and diverse recreation provisions. There are however, some inherent conflicts between some user groups such as commuter cyclists, high speed recreation cycling / walking / jogging, and slow speed walking. User groups have different expectations and ways of using the trail infrastructure in terms of speed, connections and compatibility.

#### Commuter and Long Distance Recreation Use

Considerations for commuter cyclists include:

- ability to travel at relatively fast and consistent speeds 30 km/hr +,
- routes to be well lit, to enable night use,
- connection to transport hubs for access to work,
- connection to urban facilities such as shops,
- prefer less interaction and conflict with slow speed walkers and gathering areas,
- are tolerant and confident of travelling on road conditions, providing that provisions for on-road cycling are adequate.

#### High Speed Recreation Use

Considerations for major recreational paths:

- preference for consistent cycling speeds of up to 20 km/hr as well as jogging,
- heavy and concurrent use provides some congestion between users and therefore reduced speed,
- routes to be well lit, to enable night use,
- connection to transport hubs for regional access,
- connection to urban facilities such as shops,
- rest stops with water and toilets.

#### Low Speed Recreation Use

Considerations for recreational paths:

- allowance for a variety of walking speeds, ages and recreation abilities,
- regular rest spots with seating, shelter and facilities,
- path widths to allow groups walking together,
- potential for greater variety in path experience with topography, layout of path, and materials

The River Walk will provide for a variety of recreation users and this will be achieved through a variety of recreation pathways in different areas. The pathway condition will not be the same all the way along the route. At times the recreation users will be combined into a wide shared path system, and at times will be separated into different paths for different types of users. These different typologies will be informed by landscape setting, topography and expected use rates, with the overarching emphasis on highlighting the River experience.

### 2.2 INTEGRATING THE TRAIL INTO THE PLACE

#### Linking the Existing Park Network

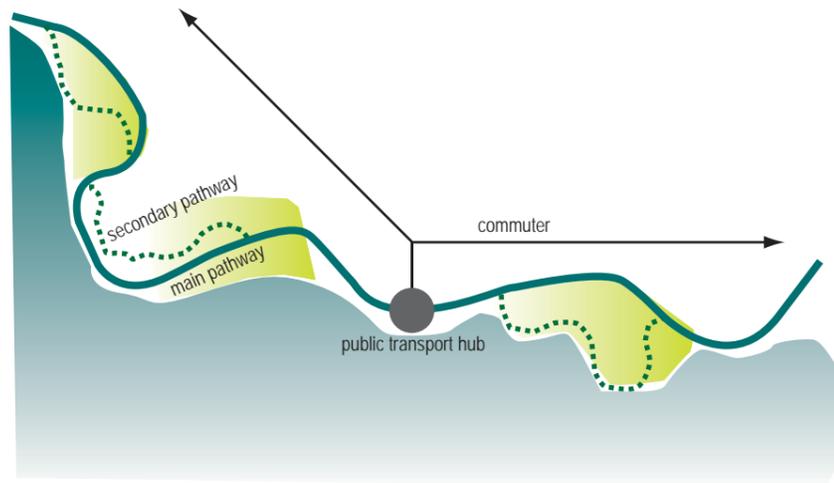
The River Walk will provide enhanced connections between the existing network of parks along the foreshore in Ryde. These parks have existing recreation uses including a variety of sports fields and internal path systems. The River Walk route links into these existing pathway systems, provides enhanced entries into parks, and raises opportunities for improvements to the internal loop paths for recreation purposes.

The park systems are not contiguous along the foreshore, which requires the River Walk to negotiate between park, street and footpath conditions. The route selection develops off-road paths as much as possible, whether this be through parks, or on footpaths. On road connections are considered appropriate where streets are of a quiet, slow speed condition. Footpaths are to be of adequate width for increased pedestrian use in these areas.

#### Revealing the Landscape Character / Sensitive Integration

In recognition of the River Walk passing through a variety of types of parks, the detailed planning of the route aims to sensitively integrate the paths into the park settings. The integration into the parks will influence:

- how wide the paths should be, and whether the paths should be separated to disperse users,



#### Indicative Diagram of the River Walk trail system

The main pathway links parks, transport hubs and commuter routes.

Minor paths run concurrently to provide a diverse walking experience and access to sensitive areas.



Existing shared path past mangroves in Meadowbank Park



Kissing Point Bay



Banjo Paterson Park



Helene Park, Meadowbank



View to Ryde Bridge



Putney Park

- whether a variety of paths would be appropriate for providing cycle recreation, walking and jogging options,
- the use of a variety of materials, and selection of materials that are responsive to the immediate context,
- where 'slow speed' pathways should be developed,
- where moments of quietness and reflection are possible such as bushland and waterfront areas.

#### Variety of Experiences

The River Walk value the variety of experiences along the route created by

- parks with different scale and character,
- streets with architectural and historic interest,
- identifying areas of cultural importance,
- variety of land and water interfaces,
- topography providing different recreation challenges,
- views to water that change according to topography.

### 2.3 PUBLIC ART

In parallel to the objectives of access and recreation for the River Walk, this study establishes a strategy for public art along the route. The content of the public art has a strong focus on both:

- the social history of the area due to the significance of the Parramatta River for the indigenous people and in the development of the settlement of Sydney, as well as
- the natural environment due to the ecological significance of the river, mangroves and changes in the estuarine landscape in the past, present and future.

The opportunities for public art along the Walk are to increase appreciation, awareness, understanding, challenge and reveal qualities of the local environment through responsiveness to landscape, environment, people and histories. Potential for art include:

- gateway and iconic - contributes to the identity of the place and operates at the scale of River
- historic interpretation - reflective and responsive to the layers and stories of the local area
- site responsive - integrated into the landscape, revealing understanding of the place
- ecological - increases awareness and understanding of the relationships of flora, fauna and habitat
- event based and temporary - cultural festivals and events

Refer to Section for the Art Strategy.

### 2.4 INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of the local area histories is most relevant when undertaken in the appropriate context. The River Walk provides the opportunity to interpret the story of the Parramatta River through a variety of themes. A further heritage and interpretation study should be undertaken for whole of the foreshore area. This research may also inform the content of relevant Public Art works, with potential collaboration between heritage interpretation and public art consultancies to develop engaging and informative installations.

Heritage Interpretation methods along the River Walk may include:

- Signage and wayfinding: Interpretation can occur along the route with signage, information panels.
- Information Packages: Information can be made available to visitors interested to undertake self-guided walks. Information can be made available through Council offices, libraries and through relevant internet sites.