

3. Eastwood

3.1 Analysis of Existing Character

3.1.1 Introduction to the Eastwood Town Centre

Eastwood is located in the City Of Ryde local government area approximately 16 km west of Sydney. This public domain plan applies to the Eastwood town centre as shown in Figure 1. A new draft Master Plan for Eastwood is currently on hold but is expected to proceed in the future. The outcomes of this study may impact on the extent and content of the public domain manual. It is expected that the public domain manual will be updated following approval of the future master plan.

Eastwood's town centre is unaffected by the major roads and associated traffic that characterise other town centres in the City Of Ryde. However, the Northern railway line divides the town centre into two parts (east and west of the railway line). The main commercial/retail centre of Eastwood is to the west of the railway. East of the railway line there is a smaller commercial precinct surrounded by medium density residential buildings.

Rowe Street is the central retail spine in Eastwood, extending across both sides of the centre. The west side is retail in character, while the east side is more mixed and generally has less activity. The character of the public domain also varies on either side of the railway. The western side has a greater diversity of public spaces and facilities than the eastern side.

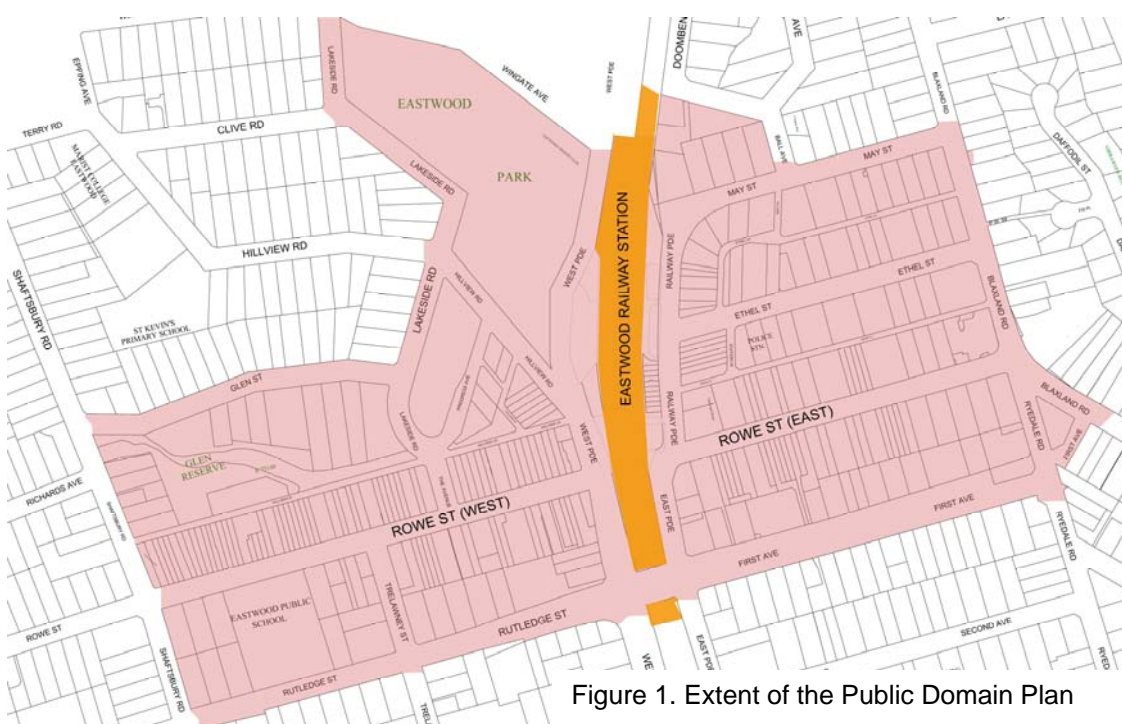


Figure 1. Extent of the Public Domain Plan

3.1.2 Historical Overview of the Eastwood Town Centre.

Originally the Eastwood area with its good rainfall and deep clay soils was occupied by Blue Gum High Forest (*Eucalyptus saligna*) from the ridgelines to the valley floors, and was home to the Wallumede Aboriginal People.

The origin of Eastwood as an identifiable locality dates from 1840 when 'Eastwood' House was built by William Rutledge. However, it was Edward Terry who purchased Eastwood House and adjacent properties in 1865 who had the largest impact on the future character of the area. Terry first dammed the creek running through his property creating a series of lakes which would later become Eastwood Lake. More importantly he used his influence to route the new Northern Railway line through his property which he then began to subdivide east of the railway.

The opening of the railway line in 1886 and the earlier construction of the Gladesville Bridge in 1881 improved rail and road links to Sydney and provided the impetus for the development of Eastwood as a township. Thus the settlement of Eastwood was established in the late 1880s centred on the Eastwood railway station.

Timber felling provided a valuable income for the early settlers of the area. They were followed by farmers who planted orchards and the Granny Smith apple, now known worldwide, originated in Eastwood. The railway line provided greater access to markets for the farmers and production increased. Progressively land was further cleared for this purpose. Over time, further subdivisions occurred and residential dwellings overtook the farming acreage of the area.

The Eastwood town centre developed east of the railway along Rowe Street, Rowe Street at this time being the main road connecting to Parramatta in the west and to Ryde in the east. However, further subdivision of the Terry estate west of the railway occurred in 1912 and 1914. The release of this land led to commercial development on Rowe Street, west of the railway line.

Within a relatively short period of time the town centre shifted west of the railway. This was driven by accessibility, availability of land and population drift westwards. For example up until 1929 both sides of Rowe Street were connected by a level railway crossing. Following the closure of this crossing the town centre was divided making access to the eastern side more difficult. Also beginning in 1929 the Eastwood Lake and much of the creek was filled in. This provided additional land for the town centre (because it was unsuitable for residential development).

The 1960's brought changes in shopping behaviour that favoured larger shopping centres and convenient parking over smaller standalone strip shopping. This led to the development of the Eastwood shopping centre and Glen Street carpark in the 1970's, further focusing retail activity west of the railway. However, in Eastwood much of the village scale, built fabric and atmosphere developed in the first half of the 20th century has been retained despite increased suburban development.

Timeline:

- Pre 1788: Aboriginal tribe of the area called EORA (meaning people). The Aboriginal name for the district is Wallumetta, and was occupied by the Wallumede people.
- 1788: First Settlement of NSW
- 1795: Private John Love of the NSW Corps receives land grant in 'Eastwood'
- 1840: Eastwood House built by William Rutledge
- 1865: Eastwood House purchased by Edward Terry who creates Eastwood Lake
- 1881: Gladesville Bridge is opened allowing direct road access to Sydney
- 1883: First Post Office agency in Eastwood
- 1884: Eastwood Public School opens
- 1886: Northern railway line opens
- 1886: Eastwood village develops east of the railway station
- 1890: 'Granny Smith' apple became a commonly cultivated variety in the Parramatta district
- 1912 & 1914: The Terry estate is subdivided west of the railway
- 1920: new Post Office opens in Rowe Street (East)
- 1929:
 - Start of Depression – Reclamation of Eastwood Lake begins as part of local employment scheme.
 - Railway level crossing on Rowe Street is discontinued,
 - Rutledge Street two-lane overbridge is opened
- 1958: station subway is opened
- 1965: new Police station opens in Ethel Street
- 1969: Post Office is transferred to Progress Avenue
- 1975: Construction of Eastwood Centre
- 1978: Rutledge Street six-lane concrete overbridge completed
- 1984: Major flooding to the town centre
- 1985: Rowe Street mall created

3.1.3 Existing Character

Built environment

Eastwood has a busy and attractive town centre. The streetscape is dominated by small retail shops which create an active but relaxed atmosphere for residents and visitors. Culturally there is a diversity of backgrounds, with a particularly strong Chinese and Korean influence which is reflected in the local streetscape.

The majority of buildings in the town centre date from the interwar period. They are typically brick, 2 stories high and are characterised by narrow allotments. This gives the retail precinct a consistent appearance particularly along the western side of Rowe Street. Here the properties have their shopfronts facing onto Rowe Street and there is little activity on rear laneways.

Similar building types continue along Hillview Road and to some extent Progress Avenue. In these streets there is a diversity of public spaces which creates visual interest and opportunities for social interaction.

Generally the historic street layout and building forms are intact; however there are a number of more modern buildings that have altered the streetscape. The most significant of these is the Eastwood Centre which is the largest building in Eastwood in both floor area and height. There is an approved DA for the re-development of this site.

The Glen Street car park has a major impact on Eastwood. Visually and functionally poor, it nevertheless has a vital role in providing convenient parking in the town centre. The car park is particularly important for the shops adjoining Progress Ave because they have no parking of their own. This includes the Franklins supermarket site. The supermarket and adjacent shops have large floor plates relative to the older buildings.

The supermarket site and the Eastwood Centre have service areas and portions of blank facade that affect the streetscape. However, the two retail buildings have maintained active shopfronts along Progress Avenue and Rowe Street respectively, which has helped integrate these developments with the remainder of the streetscape on these streets.

On the eastern side of Rowe Street the built form is similar to the west but includes some larger, wider blocks. Many of these larger properties were previously bulky goods or light industrial premises. More recently a number of these sites have been redeveloped for commercial and residential use.

Surrounding the commercial strip along Rowe Street there are a number of medium density residential buildings. These buildings are quite distinct in character from the historic town centre and date from the 1960's.



Eastwood Village, Progress Ave

Destinations, Topography and Views

The primary destination for visitors and residents in Eastwood are the retail facilities found in the town centre west of the railway line. These are popular for their diversity, convenience and value. Other important destinations include:

- The retail facilities on the eastern side of the railway line, particularly the restaurants.
- The local private and public schools.
- The railway station and associated transport facilities such as buses and taxis.
- Community services such as the local library, aged care support, child care, sports facilities and community nursing.

Geographically Eastwood is made up of several hills. The town centre is located in a valley surrounded by these hills. Much of the town centre is located over a former creek bed including Eastwood Park (which was once a lake) and Glen Reserve. The culvert in Glen Reserve follows the original creek line. The topography of the area is such that the town centre remains subject to flooding particularly on the western side of the railway line.

The topography combined with the built form restricts district views from within the town centre. However, there is a significant local vista looking east along Rowe Street culminating at Blaxland Rd. There is also potential to create better views into Eastwood Park and Glen Reserve although they are currently cut off from the town centre.

Open Spaces and Street Activation

Open spaces play an important role in creating a high quality public domain and providing opportunities for community interaction. Eastwood benefits from a variety of open spaces within the town centre. Street activation is often related to the success of the open space network and this is encouraged in Eastwood. There are a number of land uses in the town centre that encourage street activation including retail outlets, space for outdoor dining and community

facilities. There are also larger spaces that allow for specific events such as markets and festivals.

The existing open spaces in Eastwood include:

- **The Rowe Street Plaza.** This is an attractive and well-used space, with many seats and trees.
- **The western side of Progress Avenue** which has recently been upgraded to provide opportunities for outside dining and other activities.
- **The Progress Avenue/ Lakeside Road intersection** which has seating and sun shading.
- **Eastwood Park.** This is a pleasant and well-used park with both active and passive recreation areas. It also contains the Eastwood library. However, the visual and physical links to the town centre could be improved.
- **Glen Reserve.** This is a passive recreation area with seating and play equipment. This park is adjacent but isolated from the centre. The paths that connect it to the town centre could be important linkages, but end awkwardly at Hillview Lane (behind the Rowe Street shops) and at the back of the Glen Street car park. Neither is an obvious or welcoming entrance to the centre.

The urban spaces are currently well used and some areas are at capacity. There is demand for more of these spaces throughout the town centre.

Community access to the two parks could be improved if they were better integrated with the town centre.

There is little open space east of the railway line. This limits potential social and commercial interaction on this side of the town centre.



Rowe Street Plaza



Progress Ave/ Lakeside Road

Paving types

The quality of paving in Eastwood varies considerably. There are sections of good quality paving mixed with areas of poor quality paving. The key paving types are as follows:

- Brick paving predominates on the west side of the railway line with varying degrees of quality (eg Rowe Street, Rowe Street Plaza, and West Parade).
- Progress Ave in Eastwood Village has recently been repaved with clay pavers in a herringbone pattern and sets a new standard for the area.
- The eastern side of the railway has poor quality patched concrete pavement (eg Rowe Street (east)) and asphalt (Railway Parade). A section of Railway Parade has recently been paved with clay pavers in a herringbone pattern.

Visually the quality of the public domain is only as good as its weakest part. In Eastwood the lack of a unified paving makes the streetscape appear untidy and dated.

Street Tree Network and Street Furniture

Street trees play an important role in creating a high quality public domain. Tree lined streets are attractive and can visually soften hard urban spaces. Eastwood has the basis of an effective urban street tree network. For example:

- Rowe Street Plaza has a large canopy of wisteria dominating its centre. This shaded area appears well used by the community. The plaza also contains mature shade trees and seats that are well used.
- An upgrade of Progress Ave has included effective street tree planting.
- Eastwood Park and Glen Reserve have a number of large trees that contribute to the street tree network. However, there could be better connection to the town centre with long term planning and plantings.

In other areas of the town centre tree planting is limited by the historic footpath widths, overhead awnings and the location of services. These constraints derive from the historic development of the town centre. The same constraints do not apply to the residential areas east of the railway line. There is potential to upgrade the street tree network in this precinct.

Overall the street tree network is incomplete. There is no strong boundary planting to delineate the centre, or consistent tree planting along Rowe Street to link the two sides of the railway line.

The availability and appearance of street furniture is mixed. East of the railway line street furniture is absent from the residential precinct and limited in the commercial precinct. The western side of the railway is better serviced. In the Rowe Street Plaza, the western side of Progress Ave and the two parks the quality and availability of street furniture is good. However, this is not matched in the surrounding streets.



Glen Reserve

Pedestrian Network, Safety and Amenity

Eastwood has a strong and successful pedestrian network as shown in the diagram below. Pedestrian activity is focused on Rowe Street (west) and the surrounding streets. The pedestrian traffic is serviced by the public car parks in Glen Street and the Eastwood Centre. Eastwood railway station and the associated bus station on West Parade are also major sources of pedestrian traffic.

The east side of the railway line has fewer attractions and correspondingly less pedestrian activity but is a popular restaurant precinct.

In Eastwood the pedestrian activity has a number of positive effects:

- It improves interaction with open spaces (public and private).
- It helps create a vibrant shopping precinct.

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT IN EASTWOOD TOWN CENTRE



Above: Pedestrian Movement

KEY

	8-9am	Noon	5-6pm
①	200	930	476
②	178	913	666
③	126	477	369
④	441	308	386
⑤	42	316	279
⑥	67	138	82
⑦	264	129	157



Source: Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2009 (ARUP).

Traffic calming

The high numbers of pedestrians act as a traffic calming device especially around the Progress Avenue/ Lakeside Road intersection, reducing vehicle speeds in the surrounding streets.

Safety

High levels of pedestrian activity and associated street activity improve personal and property security, whilst calming vehicles is important in maintaining a safe environment for pedestrians.

However there are a number of instances where the safety and amenity of pedestrians could be improved:

- The railway station divides the centre into an east side and west side. The pedestrian connection between the two sides of the railway is poor, consisting of two tunnels.
- The bus station and railway entry create some pedestrian congestion in Eastwood Park near the library. The pedestrian pathways and links to the town centre and surrounding schools are not well defined in this area.
- There are potential pedestrian/traffic conflicts along West Parade and Hillview Lane.
- The smaller laneways generally do not have good amenity for pedestrians.
- Pedestrian links within Glen reserve are restricted due to a stormwater culvert.

Social and Cultural Resources

- Eastwood Town Centre provides a social hub for the local community. Community facilities include a public library, aged care facilities, child care facilities and meeting rooms.
- There is currently no public art in the Eastwood centre.

3.2 Urban Design Concepts

3.2.1 Vision and Structure Plan

This section presents design concepts and strategies for the improvement of the public domain. The secondary purpose of this section is to provide guidance to developers on how new developments should respond to public domain requirements.

Proposals

A summary of the key opportunities for improving the public domain in Eastwood are:

- 1. The upgrade and creation of the pedestrian connections to destinations around Eastwood.**
- 2. The creation of publicly accessible open space in the eastern part of the town centre.**
- 3. The improvement of the streetscape (landscaping, furniture, and artwork) in the town centre particularly on the secondary streets and laneways to encourage pedestrian access.**

3.2.2 Pedestrian Network, Safety and Amenity

There are a number of opportunities to extend the pedestrian network and improve the pedestrian amenity in the Eastwood town centre.

a) Create new pedestrian pathways and upgrade existing pathways

New and upgraded pedestrian pathways will give local pedestrians alternative access to shops and facilities. The pedestrian connections can take many forms depending on their purpose and whether they are publicly or privately owned. These include:

- Footpaths,
- Retail arcades,
- Covered walkways,
- Laneways,
- Parks and open spaces, and
- Right of ways.

Where opportunities present themselves to extend the pedestrian network these should be taken.

A long term objective is to provide an improved pedestrian link across the railway line. Providing better access across the railway line is an important step to improving visual and physical connections within the town centre.

The following upgrades to the existing pedestrian pathways are important:

- Redesigning Hillview Lane to reduce potential conflict between pedestrians and cars, including the provision of loading bays.
- Improving the existing links under the railway line to each side of the town centre and making the entries to the railway station more active public spaces.
- Upgrading the footpaths in the eastern side of the town centre including the commercial precinct and the residential precincts.
- Providing better facilities for pedestrians in the town centre (east). For example street furniture, street trees and links to publicly accessible open space.
- Improving links between the town centre and green spaces such as Eastwood Park and Glen Reserve. This includes improving visual links, signage, place marking and lighting to and from the green spaces.
- Increasing the number of pedestrian bridges across the storm water culvert in Glen Reserve (there is currently one).
- Widening of the footpath between Rowe Street (west) and Progress Avenue.

b) Safety

- All pathways, private or public, need sufficient width, lighting and finishes to meet public safety requirements. A minimum width of 3m is required for new pathways.
- Where appropriate pathways should be adjacent to active street fronts to improve amenity and safety.
- Public access should be available between at least 7am to 7pm.
- Where possible pathways should be located separately to vehicular traffic.

3.2.3 Destinations

The new pedestrian connections should link with specific destinations. A destination can include one or more of the following:

Open spaces

Future development in Eastwood should include new publicly accessible open spaces as appropriate on private and public property. This is particularly important for the eastern side of the town centre. On the western side opportunity exists to upgrade or extend the existing open spaces. Open spaces can take many forms including urban parks, communal squares, widened footpaths, atria, retail courtyards and arcades.

Active streets

Street activation occurs where land use and built forms combine to attract people to an area. As noted in Section 3.1 Eastwood is very successful in this regard. It is important for the community that this continues in the future with new developments. Building form can assist in street activation if the building is attractive and provides interest. At street level the shopfront should make pedestrians feel safe and welcome, and the public and private zones should be integrated. Buildings that have blank facades or conspicuous loading docks and service bays should be discouraged. Where these elements already exist public/private partnerships should be developed to mitigate the effects. For example, creation of a public art program to upgrade blank facades. Future development should retain the same façade/shop front modulation as the existing shops.

Views

The significant vistas through Rowe Street ending at Blaxland Road should be highlighted. The end points of the vista should be recognised with appropriate built forms. Views to Eastwood Park and Glen Reserve are encouraged. New developments should take advantage of these views. Public access in the form of lookouts, lobbies, balconies and active retail will be encouraged.

There is also a potential vista up Rutledge Street/ First Avenue towards Blaxland Road. This is currently a secondary pedestrian street when compared to Rowe Street but it is a major thoroughfare and an important public face to Eastwood.

Community facilities

These can be public institutions such as a school, library and community hall but equally these can be cafes, newsagents, medical practitioners, bakeries and so on that service the local community. Additional community facilities are encouraged, particularly on the eastern side of the town centre.

Landmark buildings

Landmark buildings are destination points. Landmark buildings include projects of architectural excellence, historic significance or nationally significant sustainable buildings. Refer to Section 3.2.4 for more information.

3.2.4 Semi-Public Elements

Built form

The built form has a significant impact on the public domain. The DCP provides detailed built form controls. New developments need to address issues such as street activation, access to daylight and articulation of the façades. Occasional 'laneways' between and through the buildings to provide visual and physical links through the sites will be encouraged to break up the blocks. Semi-public areas such as arcades, courtyards and lobbies that address and are consistent with the public domain are also supported.

The building form should be developed to complement and enhance the public domain.

Landmark Buildings

Landmark buildings are buildings of excellence, and as such will attract interest from the wider community. They may include examples of outstanding urban design, architectural design, heritage significance or sustainability. They can be the catalyst for commercial growth and tourism within a centre.

Landmark buildings improve the urban environment for the community. They should provide premium sought-after spaces internally and a good commercial return for the owner, which flows on to the local community. The development of landmark buildings will be supported.

Car parking

The location and accessibility of public car spaces are critical to the success of Eastwood. Currently parking is a major issue in the town centre. The present numbers of public car spaces should be retained in any new development and access to car parks should be from secondary streets away from the main pedestrian routes. Car parking is to be planned to provide easy access to open space, shops, community facilities, etc but should not be immediately adjacent to or visible from these areas.

3.2.5 Street trees, Paving and Street Furniture

Improving the streetscape quality has a direct and immediate benefit for the public domain. Some opportunities for improving the streetscape are noted in Section 3.1. All new developments are required to incorporate streetscape improvements under the current DCP.

The scope and general requirements for street trees, paving and street furniture are noted below. Refer to Council's Public Works Department for detailed specifications for these items. The detailed specifications should be considered when preparing development application documents. It is important these elements are coordinated between the public and semi-public domains.

Street trees

Refer to the Street Tree Master Plan (Figure 1) and Street Tree data sheets below for the species and location of street trees.

Paving

The entire town centre is to be paved with clay pavers in herringbone or stretcher bond pattern (as appropriate) with a double header course along both kerb line and building line. Refer to Council's Public Works Department for detailed specifications and see photos below:



Progress Avenue, Eastwood



Progress Avenue, Eastwood



Railway Parade, Eastwood (both photos)



Street furniture

The following street furniture shall be provided where appropriate to Council's satisfaction for all new developments.

- Seating (Seat 01 and Bench 02)
- Bins (Bin 01)
- Bus shelters

Additional street furniture that may be considered for specific sites includes:

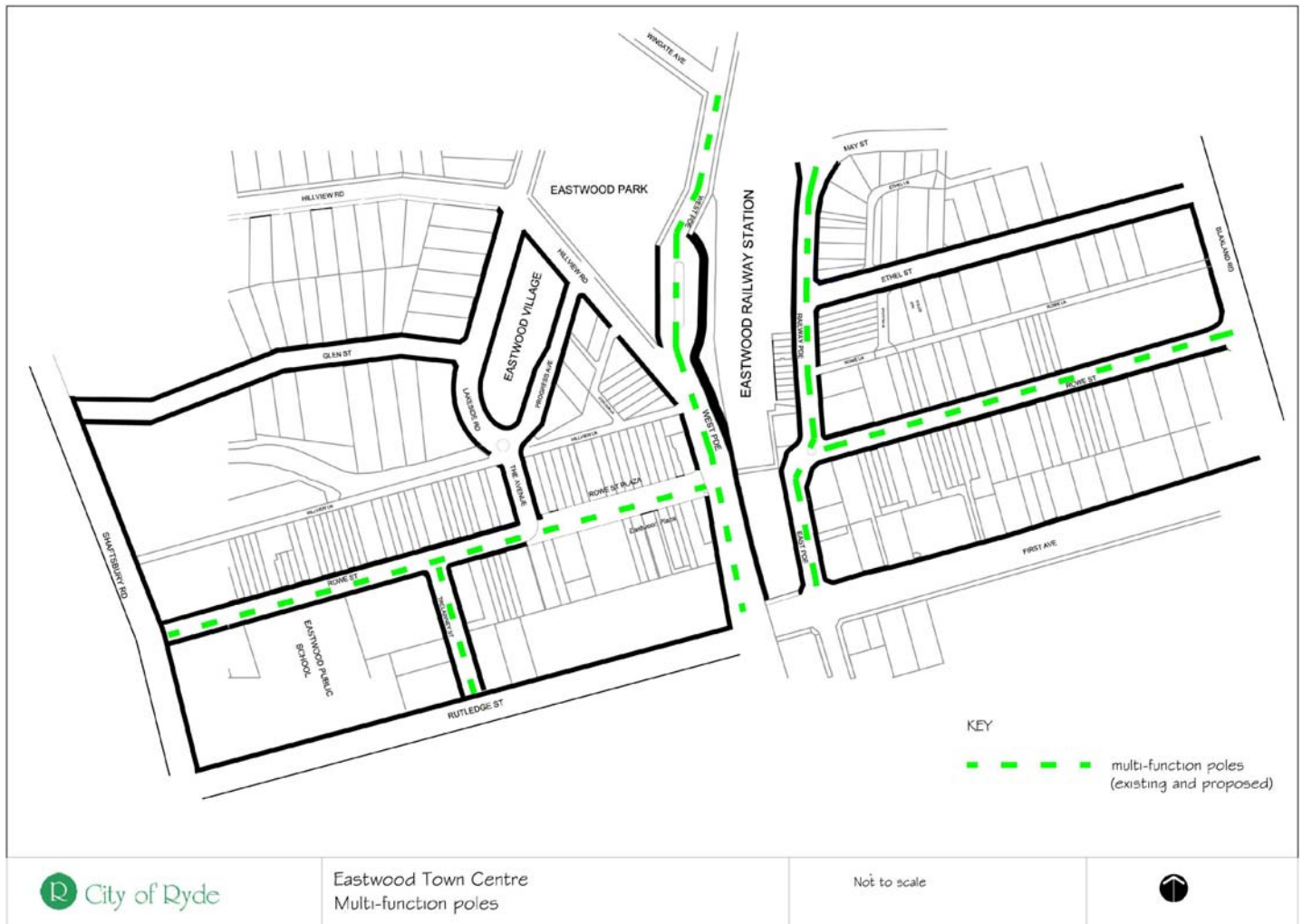
- Tables (Table and Stools 01)
- Bollards (Bollard 01)
- Tree guards and grates (Tree guard and grate 01)
- Bike parking (Bike Rack 02)
- Drinking fountains
- Café barriers
- Umbrellas (Umbrellas 01)
- Balustrading (Balustrade 01)
- Fencing (Fencing 01)

Lighting

Multifunction poles (MFPs) are to be installed in Rowe Street (both sides of the station), Railway Pde/East Pde (First Ave to May Street), West Pde (Rutledge Street to Wingate Ave) and Trelawney Street (Rutledge Street to Rowe Street). The MFPs will incorporate lighting, street signage and banners into one element. See plan below.

Some parts of Eastwood such as Eastwood Plaza and Eastwood Village (on Progress Ave) have pedestrian lighting. The model is *LPB6 'City'* by Town and Park Furniture.

Power lines and other services shall be re-located underground. Refer to Figure 2 for the general extent of under grounding required. Refer to Public Works for a more detailed extent.



Signage

Refer to Section 9.1 of the DCP for general signage.

Signage can enhance the prominence of the major entry points into the Eastwood town centre. The City of Ryde is implementing a program to provide 'gateway' signage in Eastwood. Precinct signage and local signage should be coordinated to improve the orientation and movement of pedestrians within the corridor. A Civic Signage Manual has been developed to create a consistently high standard of public signage in the Ryde Local Government area.

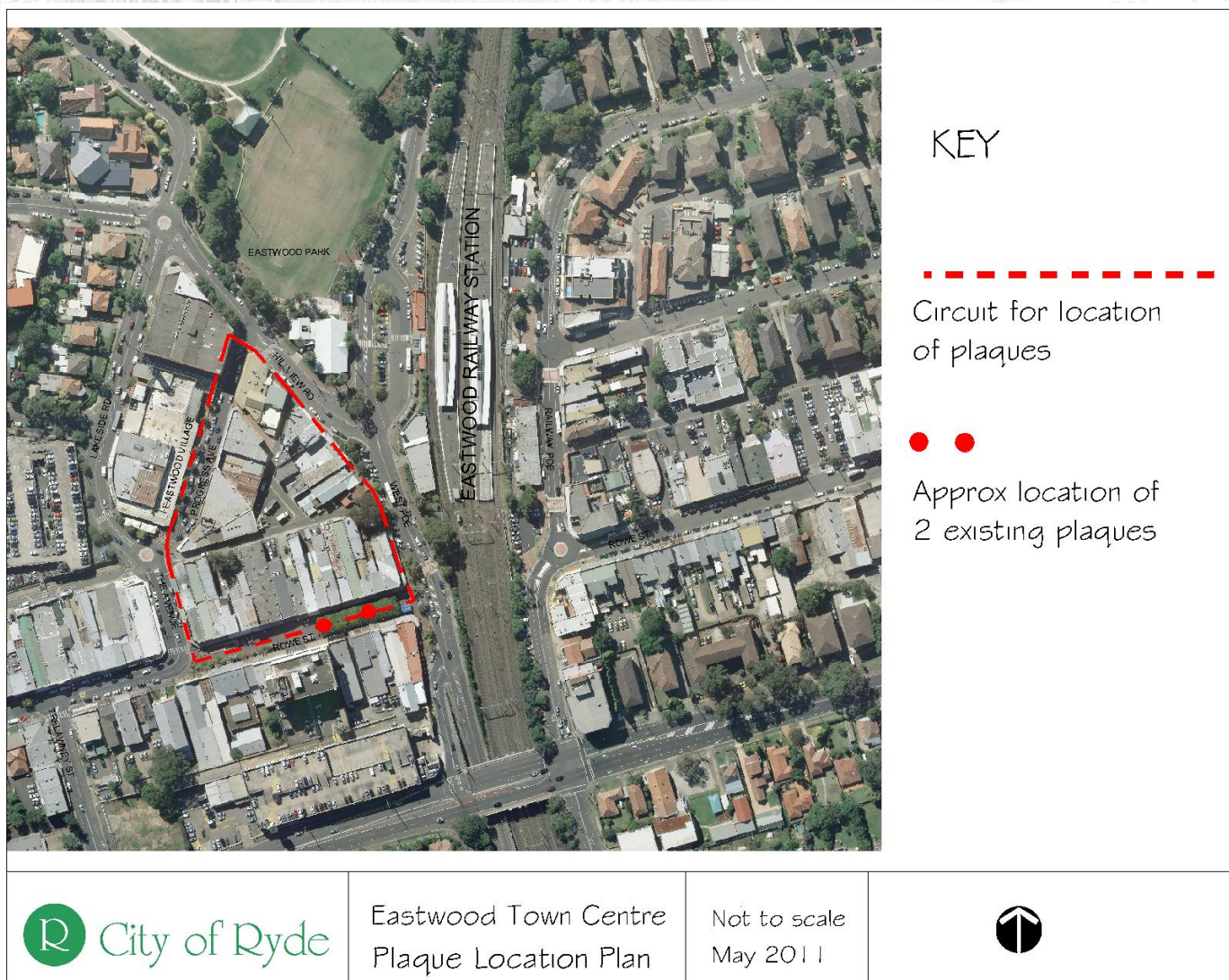
Smaller miscellaneous signage should be located on the multifunction poles where practical.

Plaques

There are two existing plaques in the pavement at Eastwood Town Centre, both in Rowe Street Plaza. These commemorate the historical figures Gregory Blaxland and Maria Ann Smith ('Granny Smith').

Future plaques are to match the style shown **in the photograph below** and be installed as directed by Council along the circuit shown in the Plaque Location Plan below. The distance between plaques is to be a minimum of 8 metres, and Council's Public Works Department is to be contacted regarding the method of installation. Council's Urban Planning section is to make the final decision regarding the exact wording and location of each plaque along the circuit.





Environmental performance

The environment performance can be enhanced by using the following when selecting and detailing materials:

- Recycled materials
- Functionally and aesthetically long lasting materials
- Materials that require minimal maintenance.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) should be incorporated into the public domain design.

3.2.6 Public Art

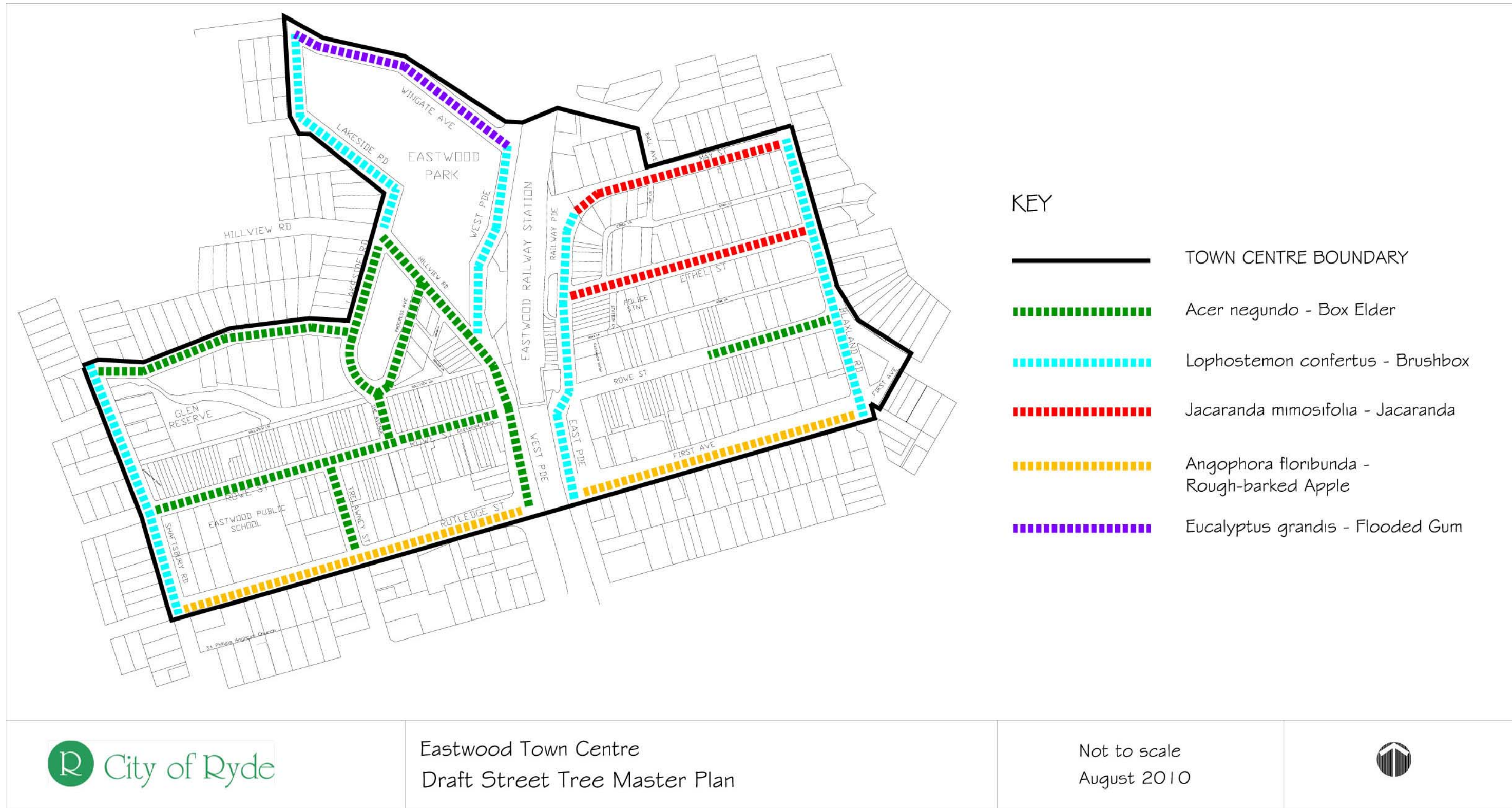
Public art can make an important contribution to the local community in a number of ways. These include:

- Providing visual enjoyment and interest to everyday activities and social gatherings.
- Highlighting and enhancing the local character of an area, and making it a memorable place to visit.
- Marking the identity of key sites:
 - Gateways into the Eastwood town centre (eg Rowe Street, Glen Reserve, Lakeside Road)
 - Historic precincts
 - Open spaces / recreation areas
 - Public facilities
 - Landmark buildings
- Creating a point of reference for the local community and visitors.

Proposed art works should be site specific and respond to the distinctive character of the local area. For example the association with the Granny Smith apple is important for the local community. Artworks can be integrated with buildings and landscaping elements or be stand-alone objects.

Opportunities exist to include custom made, artist designed furniture that will celebrate specific aspects of Eastwood's character. Semi-public art work associated with individual buildings is encouraged. This can be in the form of art walls, screens or other building elements which provide exposure for the particular building but also interest for the community. If an overall Arts Plan for Eastwood is prepared, then art works can be gradually installed in appropriate places to enhance the public domain.

Figure 1



EASTWOOD STREET TREES

Data sheets



Acer in Hillview Road (summer)



Acer in Rowe Street (winter)

***Acer negundo* – Box Elder**

- Principle street tree of centre for many years – well established
- Favoured by councillors
- Deciduous - good shade in summer, sun in winter
- Autumn colour
- Tolerates frost, full sun, air pollution and flooding



Brushbox in Eastwood Park



Close up of Brushbox foliage

***Lophostemon confertus* – Brushbox**

- Australian native, evergreen
- Excellent shade tree
- Quick growing, establishing in 3 to 5 years
- Attractive – dark leaves, cream flowers, interesting bark
- Well established at Eastwood



Jacaranda in flower



Jacarandas in May Street

***Jacaranda mimosifolia* – Jacaranda**

- Deciduous - good shade in summer, sun in winter
- Excellent shade tree
- Attractive purple flowers in Spring
- Already planted in May and Ethel Streets



Angophora floribunda



Close up of Angophora foliage

***Angophora floribunda* – Rough-barked Apple**

- Indigenous, evergreen
- Broad-branching, open canopied - excellent shade tree
- Attracts native birds, quick growing, establishing in 3 to 5 years
- Long lived



Figure 2. Extent of under grounding of overhead services