Sydney city is world renowned for being one of the greatest cities in the world with a number of key landmarks pop up in the mind whenever the city is mentioned such as the Opera House, Harbour Bridge and Centrepoint Tower. But where does Sydney’s public open space come into this with so many notable ones such as Marin Place, Hyde Park, Circular Quay and certainly enough the future Barangaroo. It is often stated that public open space is the foundation of urban liveability. It is essential to the healthy functioning of the urban environment. A recent study of Sydney City’s public open spaces by world famous urban architect Jan Gehl has identified a number of key problems with the city’s design particularly Sydney’s public open spaces. With this the thesis aims to evaluate the deficiencies in Sydney cities key public open spaces and provide a fresh perspective on the topic. A strong focus on the idea of urban liveability will be the foundation for developing a set of principles for creating quality public open spaces that are iconic to Sydney. These will be applied to a number of key sites in Sydney city to provide a fresh perspective on Sydney’s Public Open Space.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In writing this thesis I would like to thank a number of people who have contributed their time and efforts to assist me in the preparation of this thesis. All there efforts are whole heartedly appreciated.

Thank you to Stephen McMahon for his assistance as my thesis advisor and special mention of thanks to Robert Freestone and Susan Thompson. Robert for his kind assistance in reviewing my work even though he was overseas and Susan for her understanding and kindness in granting an extension to submitting this thesis.

Thank you to both Laurence Johnson and Nicholas Fterniatus for taking time out of their busy schedules to assist and participate in this study. Their wealth of knowledge and experience in Sydney’s Public Open Spaces have contributed greatly to the perspective of the thesis and for that I am extremely thankful.

Thank you to my class mates for the last five years of fond memories. Special mention of thanks to Ashley Cheong and Wilfred Espinoza for their friendship and many timeless memories as we took on the role of struggling university students together.

Thank you to my fellow employees at Liverpool Council for being extremely supportive in the writing of this thesis, by allowing me take the necessary time off to complete this thesis. Special mention of thanks to Natalie Stewart for her assistance in taking on my some of my last minute workload while I completed this thesis.

And finally, thank you to my family for their support in this crucial part of their lives and mine. For them I will be eternally grateful.
LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND IMAGES

**TABLES**
Table 1.1  Key public open space theorists  2
Table 1.2  Key types of public open space  6
Table 4.1  Iconic public open space principle category explanation  46
Table 4.2  Principles in categories  47
Table 5.1  Iconic public open space principles evaluation  55
Table 6.1  Iconic public open space principles evaluation  65
Table 7.1  Iconic public open space principles evaluation  73

**Figures**
Figure 1.1  Formulation of iconic public open space principles  7
Figure 2.1  Public open space benefits  13
Figure 4.1  Image, Form and Text Overlap  47

**Images**
Image 3.1  Public open spaces in Sydney  17
Image 3.2  Sydney Districts  18
Image 3.3  Jan Gehl recommendations  20
Image 5.1  Martin Place overview  48
Image 5.2  Martin Place in 1925  49
Image 5.3  Pedestrians in Martin Place  50
Image 5.4  User distribution in Martin Place  51
Image 5.5  Martin Place Bar, channel seven building and amphitheatre space  52
Image 5.6  Uniform design in Martin Place and various landscaping  52
Image 5.7  Various public artworks in Martin Place  53
Image 5.8  Varying Architectural buildings bordering Martin place  53
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Various frontages along Martin place</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Hyde Park layout</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Fig trees, various landscaping chess set</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Hyde Park layout highlighting entrances</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Various hard and soft edges</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Attractive views of Hyde Park</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Districts in Hyde Park</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Various artworks at Hyde Park</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Beauty of Hyde Park</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Circular Quay’s amazing views</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Cahill Expressway and railway overpass</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Varying pavements</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Live entertainment and public artworks</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Sunlight and landscaping</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## ABSTRACT

i

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ii

## LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES & IMAGES

iii

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1

1.1 SETTING  
1.2 THEORETICAL PRECEPTS  
1.3 AIMS OF THIS THESIS  
1.4 FOCUS  
1.5 RESEARCH PROCESS  
1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW  
1.7 INTERVIEWS  
1.8 CASE STUDIES  
1.9 LIMITATIONS  
1.10 THESIS STRUCTURE  

## 2.0 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND URBAN DESIGN THEORY

12

2.1 OVERVIEW  
2.2 DEFINITION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE  
2.3 HISTORY OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE  
2.4 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PRINCIPLE DEVELOPMENT  
2.5 CONCLUSION

---

BTP Thesis 2008 “Sydney City’s Public Open Spaces” • Vi Cuong (Simon) Truong, 3131448
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 3.0 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN SYDNEY CITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>OVERVIEW</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>JAN GEHL’S ‘PUBLIC SPACES, PUBLIC LIFE STUDY – SYDNEY’</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>SUSTAINABLE SYDNEY 2030: CITY OF SYDNEY STRATEGIC PLAN</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>DRAFT SUBREGIONAL METRO STRATEGY: CITY OF SYDNEY</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 4.0 ICONIC PUBLIC OPEN SPACE PRINCIPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>OVERVIEW</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>FORMULATING THE PRINCIPLES</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>PRINCIPLES FOR ICONIC PUBLIC OPEN SPACES</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 1: ATTRACTIVE DISTINCT CHARACTER</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 2: SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC ART</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 3: GOOD LIGHTING</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 4: LINKING AND CONNECTING</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 5: LEGIBILITY</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 6: ACTIVATING EDGES</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 7: DESIGNING FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND DIVERSITY</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 8: MEMORABILIA &amp; EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 9: SUSTAINABLE OPEN SPACE (SYDNEY CONTEXT)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE 10: SENSE OF PLACE</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 5.0 CASE STUDY: MARTIN PLACE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>OVERVIEW</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>A BRIEF HISTORY</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>OBSERVATIONS</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>PRINCIPLE EVALUATION</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BTP Thesis 2008 “Sydney City’s Public Open Spaces” • Vi Cuong (Simon) Truong, 3131448
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 6.0 CASE STUDY: HYDE PARK

6.1 OVERVIEW 59
6.2 A BRIEF HISTORY 59
6.3 OBSERVATIONS 61
6.4 PRINCIPLE EVALUATION 65
6.5 CONCLUSION 67

## 7.0 5.0 CASE STUDY: CIRCULAR QUAY

7.1 OVERVIEW 69
7.2 A BRIEF HISTORY 69
7.3 OBSERVATIONS 70
7.4 PRINCIPLE EVALUATION 73
7.5 CONCLUSION 76

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 OVERVIEW 77

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

80
1.1 Setting

“Open space is not only for recreation and conservation of environmental and cultural values, it is the foundation of urban liveability. It underpins many social, ecological and economic benefits that are essential to healthy functioning of the urban environment.” (Stratcorp Consulting 2007, pp. 3)

Sydney city is world renowned for being one of the greatest cities in the world with great architecture and a general high quality of life. It is a major tourist capital with a number of world famous landmarks such as the Opera House, Harbour Bridge and Centrepoint Tower. But where do Sydney’s public open space come into the picture with so many notable ones such as Marin Place, Hyde Park, Circular Quay and certainly enough the future Barangaroo. Compared to New York, London or Rome our public open spaces are less remembered. It begs the questions of why this is the situation?

The recent study of Sydney City’s public open spaces by world famous urban architect Jan Gehl has identified a number of key problems with the city’s design particularly Sydney’s key public open spaces. The study sparked widespread media coverage and a renewed interest on public open space and its effects on Sydney City. Even more so with the recent release of the Sustainable Sydney 2030: City of Sydney Strategic Plan (SGS Economics and Planning 2008) and Draft Subregional Metro Strategy: City of Sydney (New South Wales Department of Planning 2008) both identifying key initiatives that are needed to make City of Sydney a greater city by improving its current network of public open spaces.
If Sydney city is to remain a great city, there is need to identify the key elements that make up quality landmark public open spaces and apply them to Sydney’s key public open spaces.

1.2 Theoretical Precepts

Public Open Space is a rich subject in urban design and the city. The evolving development of public open spaces creates new dimensions for urban theorists to study and improve upon. With this recognition of the effect of public open space on the social, economic and health of society, increased emphasis is being placed on the value of quality public open spaces. With such a vast topic, the following is an outline of the theorists and key texts that have underpinned the development of this thesis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theorists</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan Gehl</td>
<td>Life Between Buildings (1987), New City Spaces, &amp; Public Spaces (2003), Public Spaces, Public Life – Sydney (2008)</td>
<td>A Danish architect with multiple renowned books that study and delicately analyse the positive and negative aspects of public open space with a clear promotion towards pedestrian life. His study on Sydney Cities Public Open Space aims to transform the city into a similar framework to that of the European café seated culture with inspirations deriving from that of Copenhagen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christoph Lindner</td>
<td>Urban space and cityscapes: Perspectives from modern and contemporary culture (2006)</td>
<td>Christoph provides a social oriented theoretical perspective on urbanisms influence on open space. He examines the key notions of image, text and form providing an obscure yet fresh insight into the mechanics of open space. This reflects highly on how spaces are interpreted through subtext, history and imagery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title/Source</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nick Corbett</td>
<td>Transforming cities: Revival in the square (2004)</td>
<td>Corbett examines the philosophical entity of open spaces with a guided process on the development of key open spaces. An exploration of the complexities of public space development due to the large number of stakeholders involved with spaces is undertaken. A set of principles deriving from expanded conventional notions of space from Kevin Lynch is provided in evaluating open spaces largely looking at the urban design of spaces and how effective management of key spaces create spaces of urban liveability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Woolley</td>
<td>Urban open spaces (2003)</td>
<td>Woolley sees open space as a crucial asset in the development of sustainable cities. The many benefits derived from effective open space are explored to great detail including social, health, environmental and economic benefits. The influence of different types of space on the city produce inherent challenges in designing effective open spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Wise</td>
<td>Sydney’s Great Streets (2004)</td>
<td>Tim Wise provides a local and fresh insight into the possibilities of appropriate design criteria on the urban space of streets. A local examination of how well designed streets can play a vital role in the future expansion of spaces. His formulation of a set of precise design criteria, focused on urban design elements, in improving streets and achieving quality spaces creates a similar perspective for that of public open spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anastasia Loukaitou-sideris &amp; Tridib Banerjee</td>
<td>Urban design downtown: Poetics and politics of form (1998)</td>
<td>The American architects explore failing open spaces in downtown (CBD) Los Angeles through a detailed analysis of the poor design merits of open spaces as they create social divisions among different classes of people in the community and fail to attract users to spaces outside of conventional office hours. The overall lack of evolution and sustainability of spaces, to meet the growing needs of users, is attributed as the detriment of open spaces. Solutions to such spaces proposed revolve around the need to redesign physical aspects of the built form of spaces to reinvigorate life into spaces and remove social class divisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline Gallacher</td>
<td>Everyday Spaces: The potential of neighbourhood spaces (2005)</td>
<td>A UK landscape architect that examines neighbourhood open spaces and their connection to renewal of public life in public space. She places a high emphasis on effective management and design of spaces as crucial elements needed to refigure the culture of failing open spaces in the UK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Mossop</td>
<td>Public Space: Civilising The City (2001)</td>
<td>A local perspective of how the public realm is developed in Australian cities with a strong emphasis on design and urban liveability as a focus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All theorists provide a common connection in providing a set of criteria or principles required to make use of effective spaces either focusing on design elements, strategic reworking of spaces in cities, remanagement of spaces or social theory.
1.3 Aims of the Thesis

This thesis aims to examine and evaluate Sydney’s Cities key public open spaces and provide a fresh perspective on the problems and opportunities that prevent these spaces from building the iconic repertoire of other landmark spaces around the world. Developing a set of principles for creating quality public open spaces that are iconic to Sydney. These will be applied to a number of key sites in Sydney city to provide a fresh perspective on Sydney’s Public Open Space. The key objectives are:

- A brief overview on the development of public open space theory, particularly in the last quarter century;
- An overview of Sydney city’s public open spaces in the city;
- A review of all recent studies and strategies on Sydney cities public open spaces;
- Formulation of a set of key principles for developing iconic public open spaces and application of the principles in key open space of Sydney; and
- Provision of appropriate recommendations for improving the quality of Sydney cities key public open spaces to improve to overall quality of Sydney as global city.

1.4 Focus

The thesis will concentrate on key public open spaces that have the capability to become iconic to Sydney as a leading global city. Public open spaces that are iconic symbolise the high quality of a place and particularly its significance in a city. It is a desirable trait in the identification of a global city.

As public open spaces vary depending upon their intended role in the city and Sydney is enriched with a vast amount of public open space it is important to categorise spaces appropriately. For the purposes of this thesis public open spaces are placed in the following groups:
INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Open Space</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic Square/Town Centre</td>
<td>Civic Squares are conventionally the centre of a city where people gather for markets. They still hold a strong role revealing the history of the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Parks</td>
<td>These open spaces are natural spaces filled with green natural landscaping and used for recreation purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterfront Public Open Spaces</td>
<td>Open spaces that directly adjoin waterbeds whether natural or manmade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2 Key types of public open space

The “complex spectrum between unequivocally public space and private space” (Mossop 2001, pp 12) is not the focus of the thesis hence not discussed or investigated. The focus of the study will consist of open spaces within the city centre of Sydney City. Similar boundaries for the city centre to that of Jan Gehl’s “Public Spaces, Public Life Study: Sydney” (2007) are adopted being Central Station (to the south), Circular Quay (north), Darling Harbour (west) and the Domain (east). Jan Gehl’s rationale that this “area encompasses the most intensely used areas in the city,” (2007, pp. 10) is appropriate for the purposes of this thesis. Selected open spaces are chosen as case studies for this thesis and are discussed in greater detail in chapter 1.8.

1.5 Research Process

This thesis utilises an extensive assortment of primary and secondary sources in investigating the study topic. A qualitative approach was undertaken as public open spaces are ideally a subjective topic that is difficult to measure in quantitative methods. As Gallacher points out “the creation of meaningful space cannot, of course, be reduced to head counts, it is a qualitative issue” (2005, pp 57). The benefits and impact of public open spaces cannot be numerically measured, it requires a deeper understanding and reasoning of the overall outcome of public open spaces.
Three clear methods of research are undertaken consisting of a literature review, interviews and case studies. These are explained in greater detail under chapter 1.8. The information, ideas and observations derived from this research were integral in formulating a set of principles for developing iconic Public Open Spaces.

![Diagram showing the formulation of iconic public open space principles]

**Figure 1.1 Formulation of iconic public open space principles**

*Source: Adapted from Wise 2004 pp. 10*

### 1.6 Literature Review

The literature review forms a fundamental role in the development of the study as it examines the historical development of public open space theory and also in greater detail the context of Sydney Cities Public Open Space. Examining the historical development and debate of public open space theory and urban design theory by various theorists provides a strong background for developing appropriate and holistic principles for Public Open Space development.
A detailed review of recent studies and planning strategies of Sydney Cities Public Open Spaces gives a detailed summary of inherent issues facing Sydney spaces and propose future actions to improving the overall functionality of the spaces. Three key government publications for planning of Sydney Cities Public Open Spaces include:

- *Public Spaces, Public Life Study – Sydney* (Gehl 2007);
- *Sustainable Sydney 2030: City of Sydney Strategic Plan* (SGS Economics and Planning 2008); and
- *Draft Subregional Metro Strategy: City of Sydney* (New South Wales Department of Planning 2008).

The publications form an extensive overview of the current Public Open Spaces in Sydney to utilise in deriving key principles for open space development. All theorists examined culminate the common theme of Urban Liveability in one perspective or another creating the focus for the principles.

### 1.7 Interviewees

The second source of research involved interviewing two key personnel with substantial experience in the planning, management and architectural design of public open spaces in Sydney City, particularly those to be focused upon in case studies. These persons were:

- Nick Fterniatus – An urban planner currently at the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and previously at South Sydney Council, his rich involvement in notable Public Open Spaces around Sydney city through management and planning of the Rocks, Martin Place, Circular Quay, Darling Harbour and Barangaroo provides him with a rich insight on the culture of public open space in Sydney. Many of his viewpoints and ideals revolve around the practicality of public open space development and management while respecting the natural evolvement of Sydney as an emerging economic city with rich history and cultural diversity.
INTRODUCTION

- Laurence Johnson – A landscape architect at Sydney City Council for four years, his involvement with the highly regarded Public Life Public Spaces of Sydney City by Jan Gehl (2007) and recently released Sustainable Sydney 2030 (CoS 2008) gives him an overall view on the function of public open space life in city of Sydney. His ideals are strongly influenced by the Jan Gehl study and idealises the importance of changing the culture of public open space currently in Sydney to improve to new heights similar to those of Copenhagen.

Four other suitable candidates consisting of planners, architects and academics were targeted for interviews to gain a wider range of perspectives. However through many attempts of phone messages and emails, no response was received in relation to participating in the thesis study.

Approval for the interviews was sought from the “Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel” of the Faculty of Built Environment (FBE) and granted via Approval No. 85081. Key ideas and perspectives were also analysed through a summarised transcription of interviews.

1.8 Case studies

The third research process involved detailed field investigations of various key Public Open spaces for chosen case studies of this thesis. The spaces investigated were:

- Martin Place (Civic Square/Town Centre)
- Hyde Park (Traditional Park)
- Circular Quay (Waterfront Public Open Space)

These spaces are specifically chosen for investigation given their categorisation falling within the focus of the study. They are also key spaces that hold potential in defining Sydney’s Public Open Spaces at an international scale. As part of investigations extensive evaluation and critical analysis of the operation,
functionality, aesthetics and usage were undertaken. This involved attending key spaces both on week days and weekends during day and night and during key events, and formulation of a SWOT analysis to better understand these spaces.

1.9 Limitations

In writing this thesis every attempt is made to cover in detail such a vast topic of public open space and urban design but a number of limitations are apparent during writing of this thesis including the strictly imposed timeframe of approximately fifteen (15) weeks. However this was extended by approximately an extra two weeks due to illness. In addition all research and field investigations were conducted by myself alone. There is was a very limited budget available for the study. These are all factors which have required heavy refining of the scope of such a broad topic, hence leading the specific focus identified previously.

1.10 Thesis Structure

The thesis adopts a similar layout and structure to that of Wise’s “Sydney’s Great Streets” (2004) and is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 establishes the dilemma of the thesis. It provides a background, theoretical precepts, aims of the thesis, research process, specific focus, limitations and chosen case studies.

- Chapter 2 defines public open spaces and examines the theoretical history of public open space and development of public open space principles.

- Chapter 3 explores the setting of Sydney city’s public open spaces and various studies and strategies that will shape the future of public open space in Sydney city.
• Chapter 4 presents the formulated principles and their key qualities.

• Chapter 5, 6 & 7 examines three key case studies by providing an overview of the history of the open space and key observations in site investigations. The formulated principles are applied to examine the negatives of the space.

• Chapter 8 is a summary of key findings and provides recommendations in creating iconic public open spaces in Sydney city.
2.1 Overview

Public open space has become a central part of the public landscape of all communities. It plays “an important part in urban heritage, it makes a valuable contribution to environmental quality, health and social cohesion and receives public endorsement as major contribute to quality of life” (Gallacher 2005, pp. 41). The chapter will provide an insight into the public open space development examining its meaning in the public realm and historical development as a theoretical base including the notion of urban design principles in creating spaces.

2.2 Definition of Public Open Space

In defining public open space it is essential to break up the words that make the concept. Oxford dictionary provides the following definitions:

- Public: open to or shared by the people;
- Open: not closed or blocked up, allowing entrance or passage or access, public; and
- Space: interval between points or objects, area.

It can be gathered from the definitions that public open space is an area that is not closed or blocked up and provides access for people to share. It is space that is shared with strangers, a common place for enjoyment, gathering, politics, religion, commerce, sport. Its character expresses conditions of public life, civic culture and everyday discourse (Woolley 2003, pp. 3). Public open space is an essential part of a city with quality spaces having an immense impact on a city ranging in all areas including social, economic and environmental benefits. “Urban public space is of vital
importance because of the way it shapes people experience and understanding of the city and of the culture...These places are an expression of the public culture of a city comparable to public institutions. They demonstrate the relationship between the state and the citizens and express urban values.” (Mossop 2001, pp. 10). The figure below demonstrates the many benefits and values of open space on the public.

Figure 2.1 Public open space benefits

It is these benefits that theorists continually strive to improve the quality of public open spaces in the urban environment.

2.3 History of Public Open Space Theory

Public Open Spaces have existed within cities and towns as centres since early times. They were traditionally town centres where local markets would be found or central places of gathering for town meetings. The open spaces for each city or town would generally be a place of significance where key decisions were made among high ranking officials. A place where important festivities and ceremonies would take place. A place of great significance and gathering becoming landmarks and icons for cities and countries.
Over time the traditional role and meaning of these spaces have evolved with the evolutionary demands of society, continued advancement of the built form and recognition of the significance of urban design in the built form. This is especially during the 1960s and 1970s as urban renewal took form (Mozzop 2001, pp15). The change and development was somewhat a response to increased failures of cities with the modernists’ approach continually being challenged through the issues of urban quality and poor conditions of life in the city, pollution and the motor vehicles rapid encroachment of urban streets and public spaces (Gehl 2003. pp. 2). Public open space theory and development have been under constant development ever since with different notions of interest through the eras.

During the 1970s through to 1990s, public open space development was argued by Loukaitou-sideris (1998) to be undertaken very much in modernists approach, with the concern of public open space development largely focused on the aesthetics of space. Gehl (2003, pp. 2) argues that architectural treatment of public space has naturally been an important starting point. Aesthetically pleasing spaces naturally hold an attractive element to them that is luring but they do not provide a wholistic response to the many issues plaguing open spaces.

The gap in the modernists approach became evidently obvious overtime particularly towards the 1990s. This sparked what Loukaitou-sideris (1998) prescribes as being the postmodernists’ era which continues to date but has evolved significantly over the past decade. The postmodernists approach focuses on public open spaces in beyond the public realm as a “rich whole” (Loukaitou-sideris 1998, pp 41) focussing on issues of “life in the city and the interplay between urban life and public space” (Gehl 2003, pp. 2). The difference in approaches has led to what Woolley argues as being the single minded approach and open minded approach of modernists and postmodernists, respectively, for public spaces. (Woolley 2003, pp. 3)
It is these changes in approach that role and impact of public open spaces roles have evolved and diversified so significantly. The changing focus of public open spaces in the last decade include emphasis in the environment, cultural diversity, sustainability and more recently urban liveability. The emphasis of urban liveability is to address social issues through mediation of conflicts and contradictions of polarised cities in public open spaces. It is an emphasis on the role of public open spaces as a binding agent for the urban and rural relationship, helping to connect communities with landscapes, quality of life, economic vitality and viability (Sustainable Open Spaces Project website).

2.4 Public Open Space Principle Development

Theorists in the examination of public open space have all strived in defining universal principles or criteria for the development of public open spaces. This universal approach is often relevant to certain contexts of applications or for specific spaces. The development of principles by theorists is often a response to the lacking of public open spaces. However it is recognised that these principles often become outdated very quickly due to the constant evolution of a city and its people (Loukaitou-sideris 1998). “Much design practice today lags behind on the needs of people in public space. As a result, considerable problems and conflicts exist in urban public open space” (Francis 2003, pp. 2). This has led to constant refinement of public open space and urban design principles in an effort to resolve the negative issues of spaces. The refinement process by theorists is largely influenced by the theoretical approach at the time.

Many theorists recognise urban design as a core tool in activating the potential foundations of open spaces. “Urban design can be used as a tool for reclaiming public space” (Loukaitou-sideris 1998, pp. 162). However what many theorists fail to achieve are looking at the deeper meaning and effect of these tools on public open spaces. Loukaitou-sideris comments that “each design scheme (urban design principles) is guided by a poetics of form and place…but very little of these poetics
concerns the larger public realm or larger public good or includes any of the values of
the implicit in earlier design plans” (1998, pp. 295). In saying so theorists in the last
decade have begun applying and considering this including the theorists as outlined
in chapter 1.2. These theorists all concentrate or develop on certain focuses of
achieving either sustainability, memorabilia through theming of spaces or cultural
diversity. These goals all combined in what Mossop recognises as the achievement of
urban liveability (2001).

Achieving urban liveability is a varying definition depending on the context of the
open space. Ideally it is the creation of public open spaces that are a reflection on
the community and surrounding environment. It is spaces that encourage and better
the overall public realm, social value of a space. The application of this notion on
landmark public open spaces is a fresh perspective as part developments have often
focused on a small degree or section of urban liveability and often on certain types
of spaces. It has the potential to bring landmark public open spaces into a new realm
of success as a space.

2.5 Conclusion

The developments of public open space theory has evolved tremendously in the last
quarter century moving from simple notions of achieving quality aesthetically
attractive spaces, to improving quality of life by concentrating shaping spaces to
build a butterfly effect of positive outcomes in the community. As Loukaitou-sideris
states “ultimately the changing scope of design, the transformation from design
spaces to designing experiences, may define the scope of contemporary urban
3.1 Overview

Sydney city is one of the first cities in Australia and is well recognised as having one of the highest quality of liveability in the world (New South Wales Department of Planning 2008, pp. 18). This is reflected upon in Sydney’s public open spaces. The chapter will provide an overview of Sydney’s public open spaces and review various studies and strategies that will impact upon the future of Sydney’s public open spaces in particular creating iconic spaces in Sydney city.

Traditionally a port city, founded in 1788 by the first fleet, Sydney city slowly developed into the global city it is today. Global recognition came to Sydney for its immense quality of architecture with structures such as the Opera House, Harbour Bridge and Centre Point Tower. The city developed increasingly fast with much of the road layouts based on the typography of the land. Overtime it has become the city centre it is today with highrise buildings flowing throughout. In its development Sydney was naturally left with an abundance of open spaces scattered across the city. However nearly all these spaces are not purpose built spaces with many being formed as a result of the cities remnants “left over spaces” (Johnson, L. Interview on 29 September 2008). Image 3.1 highlights the many public open spaces throughout Sydney city.

Image 3.1 Public open spaces in Sydney

Source: Gehl 2007, pp. 26
However it is clear from Image 3.1 that many of the spaces are scattered throughout Sydney and lack any real hierarchy or connection between spaces. Due the city’s natural topography and lengthy north south orientation, many of the spaces are orientated in a similar way. The lack of east west links breaks the connection between spaces in Sydney. This is also the case with many of the larger spaces such as Hyde Park and Darling Harbour.

This and the general development of the city has further divided the city into several informal precincts. These are highlighted in image 3.2. They have naturally developed based on the history of the city but the divisions in space are to clear breaking up connection between open spaces and the users attracted to the spaces.

Sydney is also largely a motor vehicle orientated city that focuses little space in general streets for pedestrians. The reliant on bigger spaces to fill the void in pedestrian enjoyability in the city is one of the basis for a need of more iconic public open spaces in Sydney.

The future Barangaroo is a public open space that holds much potential in becoming an iconic space in Sydney. The development is still and evolving design concept that holds the potential to become a leader in open space development. Located on the north western harbour of Sydney it is disconnected from the rest of the city. A huge challenge still lays ahead in reconnecting the new space with the city.

These many issues with Sydney city naturally affect the potential of public open spaces. Studies and strategies have identified these with the following chapters exploring these issues in greater detail.
3.2 Jan Gehl ‘Public Spaces, Public Life Study – Sydney’

In 2006 City of Sydney Council commissioned world famous open space architect Jan Gehl to conduct a study on Sydney city’s public open spaces. In turn Jan Gehl produced the Public Spaces, Public Life Study – Sydney in 2007. The study identified a number of key issues with Sydney’s public open spaces and provided recommendations in addressing the issues. The study heavily influenced the future ‘Sustainable Sydney 2030: City of Sydney Strategic Plan’ and to a smaller degree the ‘Draft Subregional Metro Strategy: City of Sydney’. The findings of the study have also being the foundation for establishing the approach of this thesis. Johnson commented that “Jan Gehl’s study was revolutionary in understanding Sydney’s public open spaces” (Interview on 14 September 2008).

The study whilst acknowledging Sydney as “a world class city” (Gehl 2007, pp. 10), finds there are a number of core problems effecting Sydney’s public open spaces. These core problems are derived from the cities bi-focus of maintaining the original colonial setting whilst continually developing the city (Gehl 2007, pp. 10). This bifocus has led to a neglect of Sydney city’s public open spaces. The key problems identified by Jan Gehl include:

- **An introverted city** - A majority of infrastructure is focused in the city centre with key public open spaces divided from the infrastructure. This has resulted in a disconnected city from water.

- **A traffic dominated city** - The city’s network and infrastructure is concentrated on the road hierarchy due to the heavy traffic throughout. This has reduced usage of spaces by pedestrian and effectively divided the city into two being a western quarter and eastern quarter.

- **A mono-functional city** - The city is clearly divided into minor precincts with a lack of mixed use groups creating uniform patterns of activity in open spaces. This lack of diversity and mix in functions has left the city segregated and empty during different hours of the day and night.
- **A high city** - The city centre is dominated by buildings greater than 10 floors creating undesirable microclimates throughout the city. The poor microclimates create many undesirable traits to public spaces for pedestrians.

- **A lack of street hierarchy** - Streets generally serve a similar purpose throughout the city acting as transport corridors primarily for vehicular traffic. This has resulted in a general downgrade of transport modes with a lack of priority for pedestrian needs.

- **Scattered open spaces** - The abundance of minor open spaces throughout the city lack hierarchy and connection. This has led spaces becoming under utilised with many smaller spaces lacking a distinction in character and significance.

In addressing the issues plaguing Sydney city’s public open space, the study identified the need to address certain challenges. These are highlighted in Image 3.3.

![Image 3.3 Jan Gehl recommendations](image)

**Image 3.3 Jan Gehl recommendations**

*Source: Gehl 2007, pp. 54*
Some specific ones of relevance to the thesis include the need to create new significant landmarks, similar to the aims of this thesis in creating landmark public open spaces and the need to conduct more detailed investigative studies on individual public open spaces to understand the key problems plaguing individual spaces. This is also a key aim of the thesis.

Jan Gehl’s study provides a great response to some of the issues of Sydney city’s public open spaces. Many of his recommendations are well supportable to a degree, the study is considered to neglect the meaning and culture of Sydney as an emerging global city. His intentions and recommendations aim to create a café culture public open space similar to those seen in Europe and particularly Copenhagen. Fterniatus comments that the management practices of Europe and Sydney differ significantly with some of the solutions and recommendations of Gehl’s report not appropriate to the Sydney context (Interview on 9 October 2008). Some of the recommendations such as removal of certain infrastructure to widen pathways for pedestrians and reduction of height in buildings in certain areas is not a desirable outcome due to the city’s many heritage significant buildings, emerging economic identity and need to gain commercial floor area (Fterniatus, N. Interview on 9 October 2008). Overall the study is a fresh perspective on the issues that face Sydney City’s public open spaces. It has heavily redirected the future development of Sydney city as a global city and has impacted greatly on this thesis.

### 3.3 Sustainable Sydney 2030: City of Sydney Strategic Plan

Early this year the City of Sydney Council’s developed a strategic plan with a visionary approach on the future direction of development in City of Sydney into 2030. The plan places a strong emphasis on achieving a sustainable city through notions of a green, global, connected city. In identifying the strengths for achieving a sustainable city, the plan recognises the city’s world renowned reputation for being one of the world’s most liveable cities (SGS Economics and Planning 2008, pp. 18). This is a reflection on the aims of the thesis where quality public open space
development requires a strong focus on achieving urban liveability in keeping with the city’s high quality.

A key change identified as part of the plan is “a revitalised city centre at the heart of a Global Sydney” (SGS Economics and Planning 2008, pp. 9). This is a response to the public open space issues raised by the ‘Public Spaces, Public Life Study’ of Sydney by Jan Gehl. (2007) In revitalising the city centre, the plan recognises a number of key initiatives that generally focus on improving public open space as an actor in improving the economy, community and culture of Sydney. The most notable initiative of relevance to this thesis involves the establishment of a central spine made up of three major landmarks along George Street to provide a focus for public life in the city centre. The proposal involves the establishment of a north south link at railway square, current Woolworths building outside Town Hall and Circular Quay. The proposal is to better integrate public open space links in Sydney and create focal points (Johson L., Interview on 29 September 2008). The initiative is recognition of the importance of creating landmark open spaces in Sydney.

Fterniatus (Interview on 9 October 2008) comments that the plan is an ambitious one with a strong focus on public open space development which may not necessarily be appropriate for the economic development of Sydney whilst Johnson (Interview on 29 September 2008) regards the plan as the future of open space development in making Sydney a leader in public open space development. This can be achieved with the proposed initiatives and reshaping of the city to better cater for the future Barangaroo.

3.4 Draft Subregional Metro Strategy: City of Sydney

The Draft Subregional Metro Strategy for City of Sydney is a plan developed by the Department of Planning that identifies the key actions required to be undertaken by council’s and various stakeholders to achieve desired outcomes for the future development of Sydney as a whole. The strategy is currently still in draft form but
City of Sydney have adopted the actions identified, in ‘Sustainable Sydney 2030: City of Sydney Strategic Plan’ (SGS Economics and Planning 2008). The strategy recognises with the increase of residential and commercial development in the future and increase in tourists visiting the city, improving public open spaces is necessary to retain Sydney as a global city. The key actions identified in the public open space section of the strategy are:

- Promote key tourist and visitor destinations;
- Recognise and enhance Sydney’s cultural and tourism precincts;
- Continue to upgrade foreshore access and important parts of the public domain;
- Create a waterfront city park at Barangaroo;
- Protect and enhance the unique attributes of Sydney Harbour; and
- Complete the 14 kilometre foreshore walk from Anzac Bridge to Woolloomooloo.

In these actions, a clear acknowledgment of the need for creating iconic spaces to attract tourists and visitors is identified. The plan does not go into detail of how to specifically achieve this but does identify one specific action being “NSW Government and council to continue to upgrade the public domain at iconic places” (New South Wales Department of Planning 2008, pp. 132). The actions identified ultimately work together to achieve this.

### 3.5 Conclusion

There are clear issues with Sydney’s public open spaces with the main ones revolving are a lack of connection between spaces, a disconnected city from its waterfront and a lack of iconic public open spaces. Jan Gehl comments that

The recognition of the importance of improving Sydney City’s key public open spaces on the future of Sydney is clearly shared by the government and developers. The strategies do not directly address what type of exact improvements are needed for specific spaces. The thesis attempt to do so in the following case studies is a valid attempt in improving Sydney’s public open spaces.
4.1 Overview

The principles for creating iconic Public Open Space are presented in this chapter. How the principles are derived, formulated and their importance in creating iconic public open space development are conveyed. The argument for each principle together with measurable traits and attributes is then presented. The conclusion will discuss how the principles are categorised with their overall focus.

4.2 Formulating the principles

The principles formulated are essentially designed to be used to create key public open spaces in Sydney that have the potential to become iconic spaces in a global sense with a heavy focus on the overall concept of urban liveability. These principles are derived from detailed literature of key texts, particularly those of relevance to the Sydney context, interviews with key candidates as identified in chapter 1.7 and personal observations and experience of key spaces.
4.3 Principles for Creating Iconic Public Open Spaces

**Principle 1: Attractive Distinct Character**
Create an attractive distinct built character to become iconic.

**Principle 2: Significant Public Art**
Public art is able to connect with users, the space and the city.

**Principle 3: Good Lighting**
Enhancement and articulation of space through sunlight and artificial lighting.

**Principle 4: Linking and Connecting**
Space is well linked and connected to encourage access to space.

**Principle 5: Legibility**
Clear legible edges and entrances to create focal points in space.

**Principle 6: Activating Edges**
Design edges to attract users and sustain life in open spaces.

**Principle 7: Designing for Accessibility and Diversity**
Design for diverse and culturally rich spaces that are accessible to all.

**Principle 8: Memorabilia & Experience**
Creating positive memorable experiences that is imprinted in the minds of users.

**Principle 9: Sustainable Open Space (Sydney Context)**
Create public spaces that are sustainable environmentally, economically and socially.

**Principle 10: Sense of Place**
Achieving a sense of welcoming and belonging in open spaces.
4.4 Principle 1: Attractive Distinct Character

The principal aim of urban design for open spaces is to create innovative and distinguishing spaces that are able to attract users and stand out amongst a city. This is especially essential for spaces that aim to become landmarks where creating a distinctive built form character in public space, draws interests and assists in attracting users.

With this, creating open spaces that are visually stimulating and intriguing is important in creating character for space. The use of materials and landscaping that are able to standout in “context, visual juxtaposition and irony,” (Loukaitou-sideris 1998, pp. 203) are essential. The positioning of trees, seating, public art and access points should be appropriately positioned to highlight the different qualities a space holds such as views, microclimate, lighting, surrounding uses etc.

Public spaces should be able to stand out in their own right but also complement their surrounding environment appropriately so as not to be overbearing on users. This requires keeping spaces within a human context and scale. “If people are able to relate to spaces through the scale of their own bodies, they are likely to find the space easy to comprehend.” (Corbett 2004, pp. 101) Buildings and other defining features however need to relate to the scale of the square as a whole to result in a coherent composition (Corbett 2004, pp.101).

Achieving a distinct character for spaces produces a theme. Mitrasinovic (2006) states that theming for spaces is important as it builds qualities that achieve distinct character for spaces. In developing this character and theme for space, it should be a reflection on its users and the city. The theme of the space should be able to connect to its users so they are able to understand the purpose of that particular space. It should provide “commentary on the change, continuity, and contrast that characterise a corporate downtown (Sydney City)” (Loukaitou-sideris 1998, pp. 203)
Qualities of the Principle:

The following are the qualities and that achieve the principle:

- High quality use of materials that are intriguing and highlights key features

- Design of space is in a comfortable human scale and context

- Appropriate theme for a place is developed that fits within the meaning of the open space

- Common architectural style and theme that is unique through the space
4.5 Principle 2: Significant Public Art

The provision of public art in public spaces has existed since early times. The significance of public art is recognised in its ability to reinvigorate the urban landscape and provide an opportunity to connect with its users. It is an important tool in gaining meaning for open spaces.

The provision of a high quality public art culture, with artworks created distinctly for specific public spaces is necessary. Artwork need to hold meaning through visual symbolism and provide a reflection on the history of a city and its people. It allows users to understand and reflect upon the underlying objectives and aspirations of an open space and its city (Corbett 2004, pp. 119). This is especially important in key landmark open spaces where people find definition in a city through key public spaces. Public art is able to provide this definition to people but it is important that this definition is a reflection on the peoples taste and not for the purposes of artists seeking to invite controversy. (Corbett 2004, pp. 119)

Public art should be positioned to act as a focal point and punctuation mark for open spaces. (Gallacher 2005, pp. 59) They are essentially landmarks within a landmark. To create an appropriate focal point, the choice of public art must complement the open space both in scale and context. This is to ensure the artwork does not dominate a space or lack significance in a space so as to be engaging to users of a space. A balance must be found to ensure the choice of artwork is an appropriate focal point within an open space. Locating public art in places of high pedestrian activity and clear visual sightline is important in catching the attention of pedestrians. Catching the attention of pedestrians will invoke interest increasing the opportunities for attracting users to a space. The artwork should not take away key qualities of a space.
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that achieve the principle:

- Public art reflect the core values of the city and its people
- Artworks are meaningful and connect users with space
  - Artworks are engaging and at a suitable scale
  - Artworks naturally act as focal points in space
- Artworks do not detract from the key qualities of space
4.6 **Principle 3: Good Lighting**

The most successful public open spaces around the world utilise lighting as a major tool in creating attractive aesthetics that attract users. Gallacher states “The visual and amenity value of lighting needs to be recognised in the design of spaces, rather then operating as a separate and purely functional element” (2005, pp 47). In providing good lighting it is important to recognise the importance of both natural sunlight and artificial lighting.

Providing good sunlight for an open space is important both aesthetically and functionally as this has a great impact on the number of users attending a site. Good sunlight draws users to a space as people are more likely to use open spaces that hold positive microclimates with good natural sunlight (Corbett 2004, pp 107). Open spaces must consider this especially in the Sydney context, given Sydney generally has good warm weather (Gehl 2007, pp. 11). However appropriate shading is necessary also to provide cover for pedestrians and spaces to enjoy both sun and shade depending on the weather.

Artificial lighting in public open spaces is essential during hours of darkness as it serves to bring a sense of safety and security to open spaces and assists in the facilitation of the night economy (Corbett 2004, pp. 124). However lighting should not hold uniformity throughout a space as this can prevent creating moods in spaces and accentuation of key features. As Corbett points “illuminating special features within the city, different areas become visually distinct” (2004, pp. 125). This involves directing light at objects within a pedestrian’s field of vision, such as key buildings, landscaping and public art, as people are naturally drawn to light especially at night when it is dark.
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that make up the principle:

- Good sunlight is made available to a space
- Appropriate use of sunlight and shading to build character and provide comfort to pedestrians
- Artificial lighting is not uniform throughout with accentuated lighting on key features
- Artificial lighting creates distinctions in space and builds overall character of a space
4.7 Principle 4: Linking and Connecting

All spaces require available ease of access and appropriate linkages to its surroundings to attract users. This is derived from the human mentality whereby people are more likely to use space or places where they are easily accessible. “The degree of movement within any square is depended upon how well connected its site is to surrounding districts and to the city as a whole. This is crucial to a spaces success” (Corbett 2004, pp 50). This is especially true with Jan Gehl identifying this as one of the key problems in Sydney’s open spaces.

In doing so, spaces need to be aware of its surroundings and provide appropriate points of access to encourage thoroughfare in accordance with “pedestrian desirelines” (Gehl 2007, pp. 85). This in turn encourages pedestrian activity increasing the opportunities for use of the open space. The connecting streets should utilise areas that are high in pedestrian activity increasing the chances of users accessing the space. This includes making ease of access to public transport.

Providing appropriate connections to its surroundings also incorporates the need to make use of elements such as topography so that it directs pedestrians to open space. Corbett points out that “if a square is significantly higher or lower than its connecting streets, it runs the risk of appearing detached from street activity” (Corbett 2004, pp. 83). This can act as a barrier to the number of users likely to use a space.

Access points such as corridors or roads should also ensure there is a clear visual of key views and open space. “Squares that can be easily seen from the street by passers-by are clearly more likely to be used than those that are visually obscured” (Corbett 2004, pp. 82). Public Open Spaces should ultimately act as hub for movement in districts of a city hence the need to in form appropriate connections and links to its surroundings.
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that achieve the principle:

- Ease of access to space through high activity connecting streets

- Connected streets make use of typography to encourage pedestrian activity towards the space

- Clear visual between connecting streets and open space

- Ease of access to public transport
4.8 Principle 5: Legibility

Creating legibility in public open spaces is important to define the boundaries of a space with clear accented entrances and good focal points. Users need to be able to identify where a space begins and ends to evaluate their position in a space and city. “Creating legible centres within a main square strengthens the identity of a space” (Gehl 2007, pp. 53).

Entrances to spaces must be legible and pronounced as they are the first point of entry into a space. Pronounced entrances allow users to identify an open space and should be permeable to provide clear views into and out of a space. Clear legible and permeable entrances attract users to open spaces especially within high and dense cities such as Sydney city.

In providing legibility it is important to implement distinguishable hard and soft edges within a space (Johnson interview on 29 September 2008). Hard edges should be clear and distinct such as building frontages and entrance points so as to provide a clear indication to users of the boundaries of a space. Soft edges are passive in nature, allowing for activation of a space and connecting a space and the city. This includes pathways and routes within a space that create a visual linear direction or boundary to a space.

Legible points of focus are also necessary within a space. These focal points should be within clear view of pedestrian’s sightlines and be located in central locations of a space. These focal points become places of meeting and gathering within a space which are essential for a space to become remembered. These focal points also allow for an appreciation of the surrounding space because of a centre positioning within a space.
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that achieve the principle:

- Clear visually defining boundaries of open space
- Clear permeable and pronounced entrances
- Hard and soft edges that are appropriate to the space
- Accented and legible focal points for open space
4.9 Principle 6: Activating Edges

Creating strategies that promote active frontages which are both attractive and inviting are important in ensuring open spaces are able to uphold a steady flow of users. These active edges should provide an appropriate activation of open spaces. (Jan Gehl) The placement of mixed uses along these edges is a common frontage along landmark open spaces. As Gallacher points out “the most successful new public spaces are associated with ‘mixed use’ economics and settings” (2005, pp. 38)

In providing mixed used developments along street frontages, it is important to ensure uses “provide a positive response and edge to spaces” (Fterniatus, Interview on 9 October 2008). Ensuring uses along frontages fit within the character of the open space and meet the appropriate demands of users is important in ensuring there is harmony in uses. Gehl (2003) promotes active frontages as a source of renewed public life and a common attribute within the most successful spaces in the world.

Proposed uses should operate during hours that utilise spaces most proficiently. This includes normal hours of predominant activity in spaces and outside of these hours to bring new life to open spaces. Allowing for uses to operate in a way that activates open spaces through a sustainable flow of activity in space.

Frontages are to be attractive in such a way that complements the space and do not detract from the key qualities of that space. Open and inviting in form to provide a linkage with the space. Providing transparency along frontages forms a connection between the edge and space it occupies. It also provides casual surveillance on open spaces, allowing frontages to enjoy the visual qualities of open space and increase the security of users in a space.
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that achieve the principle:

- Mixed use developments that are complementary to a space
  - Attractive frontages that link the space with edges
  - Edges provide a positive response to a space
- Uses along edges operate under broad hours drawing sustainable flows of users to space
  - Transparent frontages that provide casual surveillance
4.10 Principle 7: Designing for Accessibility and Diversity

In today’s community, especially in Sydney where a diverse demographic of people reside, it is important that open spaces provide available access and cater to the inherent needs of different cultures. (Mossop, 2001) Sydney has always promoted itself as a culturally diverse city that promotes equality amongst its people. Promoting elements of this in open spaces, whether by the users of these spaces, or through public art is essential in defining the underlying values of a city.

Providing accessibility for users of all ages and physical attributes is important. Past open spaces in Sydney have often neglected to design for persons with a disability. Installation of uniform high quality pavements that are smooth in surface, accessible ramps, accessible car spaces within distance of key open spaces are all measures that can be implemented to allow for use of spaces for people with a disability.

Catering spaces to attract youth is equally as important. Whilst it can be argued that certain spaces cater for a different demographic to that of children it must be recognised that children play an important part in society. They are the next generation and promoting spaces that cater for their needs is important. (Gehl 2003, pp. 12)

A diverse array of users in an open space is a measure to some degree on the success of a public open space. “Successful public spaces are ones that are responsive to the needs of their user; are democratic in their accessibility; and are meaningful for the larger community and society” (Francis 2003, pp. 1) However, it is important for spaces to be non definitive in closing out future growth or expansions in diversity meaning. “Public spaces require a cultural argument, but one that is neither too explicit or literal, leaving space for this accrual of meaning.” (Gallacher, 2005, pp. 53).
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that achieve the principle:

- Design for cultural diversity;

- Providing for access and usage of spaces for persons with a disability;

- Designing spaces with all ages in mind;

- Spaces are meaningful and non definitive in meaning to allow for growth in the community.
4.11 Principle 8: Memorabilia & Experience

The best places that people visit are always the most memorable. They are memorable because of the distinct feeling and experiences they give to people. They bring about memories that excite the senses marking an imprinted impression in the mind of that place.

This is a common attribute in iconic open spaces around the world. New York Time Square evokes a buzz that characterises it as been the central hub of New York, defining its place through the open plaza surrounded by bright neon billboards, bustling traffic, hot dog stands, charges of people. Rome’s Spanish steps that bring about a defining presence of history as it is flocked with tourists, chattering of people, ancient European architecture. These all create photographic imprints in the mind signifying its representation in place and time. It produces a theme of the space. These iconic places are essentially a representation of the city. It is “more than a place in space. It is a drama in time” (Gallacher 2005, pp. 53)

Hence it is appropriate to create these positive experiences in spaces by placing actors in the senses. These can vary depending on the open space but these triggers become the identity of the place and ultimately identity of Sydney. Visual, acoustic and smell sensory are all keys in activating the memorabilia of a place.

Ultimately to achieve this memorabilia, there is need to create an atmosphere that is awing and overwhelming to its users. This is created through a collection of all the qualities a space represents whether it be the views, public art, its users, surrounding uses etc. Achieving memorabilia and experience is the key factor that iconic spaces hold that normal spaces do not.
Qualities of the Principles

- Builds an experience for its visitors through excitement of the different senses
  - Place makes use of surrounding views and vistas
  - Aweing atmosphere that captures the meaning of a space and its city
    - Unique qualities of space are highlighted to users
    - Theming of memorable experiences in space
4.12 Principle 9: Sustainable Open Space (Sydney Context)

Developing open spaces that are sustainable within a city’s development, community evolution and change in meaning is essential in the survival of a quality public realm. Public open spaces that consider the notion of sustainability in their design and management are the most successful ones. “The best public open spaces are those that can expand from their original intention, accommodating new uses and conditions, constantly enriching their stock of meanings and associations….a space should be full, but not ‘full up’” (Gallacher 2005, pp 53). This is especially true with the recognition of depleting resources and growing negative impacts of global warming around the world.

Appropriate implementation of green landscaping and microclimate aware designs can assist in open space development. Suitable landscaping choices that are self sustaining under the right microclimate can assist in the reduction of greenhouse gases and reduce the need for watering etc. It is important to also recognise the many positive attributes of landscaping in sustainability such as natural shading properties, aesthetically beautiful, symbolism etc.

Use of renewable energy sources in open spaces and environmentally friendly materials also achieve sustainability (Johnson L. Interview on 29 September 2008) In doing so, sustainable open spaces must ensure they are easy to maintain and manage. Loukaitou-sideris attributes the failures of open space often relating to unsustainable management practices in open space due to economic evolvement, costs in maintenance and political pressures (1998, pp. 253) Management of opens spaces must ensure that spaces are able to cope with changes in the environment, economy and community which can be very difficult in the development process with so many stakeholders. Clear strategies and directions need to be in place to ensure heritage conservation practices in public open spaces encourage sustainability and promote history of spaces.
Qualities of the Principles

- Allow for growth and adaptability of meanings in space
  - Sustainable microclimate designs
- Appropriate choices of landscaping that are sustainable
- Good management practices that allow for sustainable growth and development
  - Heritage conservation practices that achieve sustainability
4.13 Principle 10: Sense of Place

The creation of public open spaces is essentially to create useable and meaningful spaces for people. In achieving this there is need to create a sense of place. Having a sense of place holds different meanings for individuals but it is important to recognise common traits for having a sense of place. Sense of place for people can include qualities such as connection and meaning with place, position in place, personal role in place, safety in place, warmth in place etc. It is important that public open spaces especially key ones are able to achieve these common traits. This allows key spaces to act as places of identity and refuge for users.

Having a connection and meaning with place is important for people. When people are able to understand the significance of a place and their personal connection to that place, they become comfortable with a place. These factors build personal identity and security creating sense of place. It gives users a mental recognition of the position in a space both socially and physically. To know that you are at a significant place, users are able to feel the awe of a place. This is essential especially in landmark iconic open spaces.

Place promotion is a useful tool in promoting a sense of place. The most successful landmark open spaces become iconic because of effective place promotion which can involve hosting of key events or advertisement of the qualities of an open space. Events that involve the gathering of people in an open space create a sense of place as “coming together as one gives people a sense of membership, this generates a sense of place” (Gehl, 2007, pp. 64) Achieving a sense of place for all users is the ultimate aim in all spaces where by “people can actively participate in life within the public realm...this is especially important for developing ideas about citizenship. By simply standing in a lively public realm, where different age groups and different members of society are gathered together, there is a shared experience that evokes a positive sense of participation,” a sense of place (Gehl 1987, pp. 10).
Qualities of the Principles

The following are the qualities that achieve the principle:

- Space connects socially, physically and culturally with users
  - Space is welcoming and inviting
  - Space promotes a city
- Place promotion to host key events and encourage use of a space.
4.14 Conclusion

Corbett states “urban design principles are often cited as objectives in new development initiatives, the performance of the resulting public space often falls disappointingly short of expectations. Realising urban design objectives is difficult in practice due to the complexity of the development process” (2004, pp. 12). It is true that with the complexities of the development process, achieving the principles will be difficult but they aim to provide a holistic approach and create the key qualities that public open spaces ultimately need to succeed, in providing social, economic and environmental benefits to people. Applying these principles to key spaces as identified in chapter 1.9 will also provide the opportunity to recommend possible solutions that are able achieve the principles.

The principles developed generally fall into three categories being Image, Form and Text. These categories are similar to those developed by Christopher Lindner who identifies the core of public open space development revolving around these three notions. (Linder 2006) The three categories are defined as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Image</td>
<td>The visual elements and characterisation of a public open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>The physical elements that create the built form of public open space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text:</td>
<td>The meaning of a public open space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Iconic public open space principle Category Explanation

The categories are an evolution of public open space theory where by image was the initial aim of open space development until the recognition of form overtime. Today the importance of text of space is recognised as a key quality for achievement in creating iconic public open spaces. With this, It is important to understand that the principles developed rely upon one another to succeed and overlap to a degree. This highlights the importance of the principles to work in unification to achieve a quality landmark open space. This is modelled below in figure 4.1.
The principles are further broken down into their respective categories in table 4.2. Although the principles can be a reflection on all three categories, they are placed in the most appropriate category based on the principles qualities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractive Distinct Character</td>
<td>Linking and Connecting</td>
<td>Memorabilia and Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Public Art</td>
<td>Legibility</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Lighting</td>
<td>Designing Accessibility and Diversity</td>
<td>Sense of Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activating Edges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Principles in categories

The promotion of image, form and text is essential in creating iconic public open spaces. They are the key features that make up quality open spaces and achievement of these principles will produce spaces that are iconic to Sydney as a city.
Chapter 5 CASE STUDY: MARTIN PLACE

5.1 Overview

This chapter examines the first public open space case study, Martin Place. A brief history of Martin Place examining its change in function as a space and architecture overtime is provided. Observations from site investigations are conveyed followed by application of the developed principles as set out in chapter 4 on what makes Martin Place an iconic landmark public open space. Suggestions in improving Martin Place as an open space conclude the chapter. A similar format will be exercised in the following two case study chapters.

5.2 A Brief History

Martin Place is a pedestrian mall in the central business district of Sydney and “is one of the most iconic public open spaces in Sydney” (City of Sydney Website). It stretches east to west, from George Street through to Macquarie Street in Sydney’s centre and provides access to Martin Place railway station below street level. Several key streets cross through it including Pitt Street, Castlereagh Street, Elizabeth Street and Phillip Street.

![Image 5.1 Martin Place overview](Source: Whereis.com website)
**CASE STUDY: MARTIN PLACE**

Originally an open dirt traffic road, it was officially opened in 1891 and named after the then three time Premier of New South Wales and Chief Justice of Supreme Court of New South Wales, Sir James Martin (City of Sydney website). With its significance as the centre of Sydney’s business district being recognised, Martin Place was officially closed off to motor vehicle traffic in 1971.

[Image 5.2 Martin Place in 1925](Source: City of Sydney Council website)

Overtime its transformation into a pedestrian mall, with the continual architectural advancement of the city, has entwined Martin Place into becoming one of Sydney’s few key public open spaces outside of Circular Quay. Martin Place has played a significant part in Sydney’s growth and development pattern over the years.

Today heritage buildings border the edges showcasing Sydney’s architectural history with buildings dating back to the early 1900s such as the Commonwealth Building, being the first large scale steel framed skyscraper in Australia and Challis House, an art deco building bequeathed to the University of Sydney in 1880 with the University’s crest still adorned to the door until this day (City of Sydney website). A number of major financial institutions including the Reserve Bank of Australia, Commonwealth Bank, Sydney GPO still occupy these heritage buildings today, symbolising the importance of Martin Place as the centre of the major financial district of Sydney and Australia, similar to that of Wall Street in the United States.
5.3 Observations

Martin Place is one of Sydney’s most utilised and successful open spaces with Jan Gehl identifying it as an “iconic space with a strong identity” (Gehl pp 64). Nick Fterniatus describes it is a hard paved solemn civic space found in the heart of Sydney’s central business district catering mainly to the corporate financial world (Interview on 9 October 2008).

Martin Place serves predominantly as a thoroughfare for pedestrians throughout the day. This is largely attributed to the sites central location with high level of connectivity across multiple north, south links and the hosting of Martin Place railway station located directly beneath the square. The different connecting streets are generally quite narrow in width, being one way traffic flows with two lanes. Elizabeth Street is the only exception being a six lane road and breaks up Martin Place significantly for pedestrians. Several points of access to Martin Place station are made available throughout the square dividing pedestrian flows across the square. Many people naturally access the square in their day to day activities in the city because of its high level of connectivity. The high levels of pedestrian activity bring about a hustling and bustling atmosphere that reflects upon the direct and rushed culture of the corporate world in the central business district of Sydney.

Although the square acts as a thoroughfare for many pedestrians, it also attracts a high number of users to the space with peak usage generally from lunchtime onwards until late afternoon. (Gehl 2007, pp. 64) Many users utilise Martin Place as
CASE STUDY: MARTIN PLACE

A meeting place, a place for resting along benches, eating lunch and socialising. A small percentage of people use Martin Place for café and bar visits (Gehl 2007, pp. 64). Image 5.4 highlights the general areas users stay. These areas are either areas where seating is available or at bars and cafes.

Image 5.4 User distribution in Martin Place
Source: Gehl 2007, pp. 64

The demographic of users during weekdays generally consists of local workers in the CBD. The square usage drops significantly during nights and on weekends. Night users generally occupy bars that are located on the squares edges, rather then the space itself. This is largely attributed to the strong decline in number of people in the city at night and no fixed uses in the square to attract users. “People walk there because they have to, not because they want to” (Gehl 2003, pp. 15).

Martin Place hosts a number of uses that attract users to the space including open theatre space, high end retail stores along ground floor frontages of buildings, bars, cafes, restaurants and convenience stands. Channel Seven studios also broadcast daily news outside their offices in Martin Place attracting users to the space. These uses assist in activating the site. The amphitheatre space is well utilised throughout the day with many companies hiring the space to promote local events. These events attract users to the square but also clutter the visual link of the square with equipment.
A uniform design of street furniture, paving, lighting and landscaping is implemented throughout Martin Place creating a unique character to the square. The consistent shades of darker earthy colours reflects the traditional civic squares found in American cities such as Philadelphia and Chicago. The hard concrete nature of the space is lightened with soft landscaping, breaking up the concrete character with natural elements. The design is a visual commentary on the well structured corporate world, giving users a chance to connect with the space.

A small number of significant public artworks are placed in different sections and divisions of Martin Place. The artworks generally highlight the patriotic history of Australia such as the 1927 World War I ANZAC Cenotaph and memorial tablets. Other artworks include two water fountains both located at core focal points. The first water fountain faces Pitt Street and is strategically positioned and shaped to act as a visual screen for the steep topography of the square. The fountains design lacks depth and connection to the sites other artworks. The second water feature is a three piece water feature located at the eastern highest topography of the site. The
water feature is attractive and provides an engaging artwork for users of the space to enjoy but the downside being the lack of connection with the overall theme of the space.

Image 5.7 Various public artworks in Martin Place
Source: Author 2008

Martin Place architectural edges vary in form from early 1900 Romanesque sandstone buildings to modernist concrete skyscrapers to 1980s skyscraper gothic buildings (Wikipedia Martin Place website). The many variations in architecture highlight Sydney’s history with many deemed heritage buildings because of their historical significance as Sydney’s many major financial institutions original offices. The buildings have all been restored and contribute greatly to the overall unique character of Martin Places as a civic square. Many of the heritage buildings especially those to the eastern end of Martin Place are lined with Australian flags emphasising the patriotic connection of the square.

Image 5.8 Varying Architectural buildings bordering Martin place
Source: Author 2008

Ground floor frontages facing the square vary in form with some being well designed activating the square positively through open clear facades while others hide behind building lines closing off from the visual lines of the square. These frontages are
CASE STUDY: MARTIN PLACE

generally restricted to the original architecture of building frontages making it difficult to alter without negatively impacting upon the heritage significance of the building. A majority of the ground floor frontages are occupied by large sized, high end retail stores that fit well with the prestigious image of the square. Several bars, cafes and restaurants also are located on the ground floor frontages. These active uses are generally restricted to the western and middle parts of Martin Place with no active frontages along the eastern edges.

![Image 5.9 Various frontages along Martin place](Image)

Source: Author 2008

Martin Place generally suffers from negative microclimate conditions (Ferniatus, N. Interview on 9 October 2008) The high rise buildings that surround the square in a north south orientation along edges and sloping topography from east to west of the square create wind swept conditions through the square. Sunlight is generally well maintained throughout the day even though the square is surrounded by high rise buildings in comparison.

Martin Place offers its users a well furnished civic square that highlights the history of Sydney and connects users to the meaning of being an Australian. It breathes a sense of nostalgia on the Australian patriotism through its distinct character. A prestigious civic square that is in apt with the central business district it centres.
5.4 Principles Evaluation

Table 5.1 Icon public open space principles evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Principle Qualities</th>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractive</td>
<td>▪ High quality materials that are intriguing and highlights key features</td>
<td>Space is well spread out allowing for a great scale and context.</td>
<td>Materials used do not create distinction and interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct</td>
<td>▪ Comfortable human scale and context</td>
<td>Well structure square that fits well with the character of the city.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>▪ Theme fits within meaning of space</td>
<td>Uniform style and theme throughout.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Common architectural style and theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Public Art</td>
<td>▪ Public art reflects core values of city and its people</td>
<td>Certain artworks reflect highly on history of the city during World War I connecting with user’s historical values. Foun</td>
<td>Certain artworks such as the water fountain are poor in design and lack a connection with the city. Water fountain detracts from visual quality of the spaces typography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks are meaningful and connect users with space</td>
<td>Fountain and water features are engaging. Artworks are centred and act as focal points and meld in well with the space.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks are engaging and at a suitable scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks are focal points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks do not detract from key qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Lighting</td>
<td>▪ Good sunlight is available</td>
<td>Sunlight provides comfort to users and passive shading is available.</td>
<td>Sunlight is available but poor microclimate affects the site sunlight negatively for users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Sunlight and shading builds character and comfort</td>
<td>Artificial lighting builds character artworks highlighting their presence as focal points at night.</td>
<td>Artificial lighting is generally uniform and lacks in creating a well presented character at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artificial lighting is not uniform and accentuates key features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artificial lighting builds overall character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linking and Connecting</td>
<td>▪ Well connected to high activity streets</td>
<td>Well connected to key activity points Topography well used giving great sense of connection Excellent view connections Great access to buses and trains</td>
<td>Space is broken up into divides due to width of Elizabeth Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Connecting typography draws users</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Clear visual between streets and space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Ease of access to public transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Case Study: Martin Place

#### Legibility
- Clear defined boundaries
- Permeable and announced entrances
- Appropriate hard and soft edges
- Accented and legible focal points

Boundaries are clearly defined with buildings and clear changes in road material. Some focal points exist through public art. Entrances to Martin Place are generally unannounced from connecting streets with users stumbling upon the space. There is poor legibility in connecting areas such as the railway entrances etc.

#### Activating Edges
- Mixed use’s developments compliment space
- Attractive frontages linking space with edges
- Edges provide positive response to space
- Uses attract sustainable flow of users
- Frontages are transparent providing casual surveillance

High end retail stores, bars and classy restaurants compliment the space well. Some frontages are transparent, attractive and link well with Martin Place prestige. Some frontages are hidden from behind the space and do not actively provide a positive response. Uses at edges, other then bars, do not attract sustainable flows of users leaving Martin Place empty during nights.

#### Designing for Accessibility and Diversity
- Designs for cultural diversity
- Access and usage of spaces for person with a disability
- Spaces cater for all ages
- Spaces are meaningful and non definitive in meaning to allow growth

Martin Place designs for diversity with a common connecting foundation to Australian heritage. Access for persons with a disability is available with generally smooth and consistently high quality pavement. Space caters for the local corporate users and fails to cater for other demographics such as children.

#### Memorabilia & Experience
- Space creates positive experience
- Good use of surrounding views and vistas
- Aweing atmosphere that captures meaning of space
- Unique qualities of space are highlighted

Martin Place gives of a positive experience highlight the hustle and bustle of the space as a civic square for he local financial business world. The space makes use of views and vistas surrounding the square highlighting key architectural history. A poor experience of memorabilia is created at night due the lack of activity. Unique qualities are not well highlighted at night such as architectural buildings bordering the square etc.

#### Sustainable Open
- Sustainable microclimate
- A high number of key

BTP Thesis 2008 “Sydney City’s Public Open Spaces” • Vi Cuong (Simon) Truong, 3131448 - 56 -
| Space (Sydney Context) | designs | buildings are have been restored and maintained because of the heritage significance. Appropriate use of sustainable landscaping requiring little maintenance. sweep the square. Good management practices by Council ensuring spaces are well maintained and new uses complement the character of the square. |
| Sense of Place | Spaces connect socially, physically and culturally with users | Space is generally welcoming and inviting with no formal divisions in usage of the square. Martin place promotes the prestige and economic status of the city. Place promotion is great with a hosting of a number of major events at the square and daily live public art at the amphitheatre. | Majority of users attracted to the space are local white collar workers and can discredit the sense of place felt by not white collar users of the square due to their minority in the space. |
| | Welcoming and inviting | |
| | Space promotes a city | |
| | Place Promotion encourage use of space | |

5.5 Conclusion

Martin Place is generally a generally a well designed space with great usage and invokes a great sense of place and patriotism about the Australian way of life. However there are still many issues in the image, form and text of the space as identified in chapter 5.4.

The main issues generally revolving around a poor microclimate, lack of attractive sustaining uses for night times and some poor public art works. These are issues that can be addressed through greater consideration of design matters such as achieving a general better microclimate through a better strategic implementation of green landscaping to prevent wind tunnels for pedestrians and increase natural shading opportunities.
This will also allow for better differentiation between materials of the space creating an overall green character as envisioned for the city in “Sustainable Sydney 2030: City of Sydney Strategic Plan” and “Draft Subregional Metro Strategy: City of Sydney”. Subtle improvements such as these add to the positive memorabilia of a space and create a better landmark space in Sydney.
6.1 Overview

The chapter will examine the second case study of a traditional public open park space being Hyde Park. Hyde Park is located on the eastern outskirts of the Central Business District and holds an interesting evolution in space which will be briefly be investigated. Observations found in detail site investigations will be relayed to provide an insight on the park. The principles developed will then be applied to appropriately identify the positive and negative aspects of the space. Areas of improvement will be appropriately identified.

6.2 A Brief History

Hyde Park is the oldest designated public park in Australia and carries a remarkable significance to the city of Sydney. It is a space rich in history and heritage and is formally listed in the States Heritage Register (City of Sydney Website). Hyde Park was originally used as an open area for sports and recreation during the first colony. The space was given various names such as ‘The Common’, the ‘Exercising Ground’, the ‘Cricket Ground’ and the ‘Race Course’, until in 13 October 1810 when Governor Macquarie formally separated the area from the domain and named the space ‘Hyde Park’, after the infamous London Hyde Park (City of Sydney Website).

Image 6.1 Hyde Park layout
Source: HBTO + BMOT (2006) pp.1
The space was used for various sports in its early 1800s including cricket, rugby, horse racing, boxing and hurling. It became a central place of recreation for many locals. However the space was shared with the military and the rest of the public. The military used the park for practicing drill work while the rest of the public used Hyde Park as a path for stray dogs, cattle, goats, sheep’s and other animals. It eventually became the home of Sydney’s first sports centre and racecourse during the 19th century (City of Sydney website).

This was all virtually destroyed in the 1920s during construction of the underground rail networks for St James and Museum station at Hyde Park. The space was converted into a construction site during the 1920s for construction of the underground railway stations. This lasted for approximately twelve years with the park virtually destroyed during this period (City of Sydney website). However the first major development of Hyde Park into its current form took place in 1927 when a design competition was held for the redesign of Hyde Park. The competition was cast to provide a comprehensive layout and beautification scheme to create a traditional park space for passive enjoyment and relaxation of its users. The eventual design that was adopted was developed by architect and landscape architect Norman Weekes (City of Sydney website). The design sought to provide an aesthetically appealing public park space that complemented the newly constructed underground railway system and core development principles focused on the city beautiful movement seen in Chicago and North Sydney (Fterniatis, N. Interview on 9 October 2008).

The original design of the park was altered significantly over the next 60 years with the installation of a number of public artworks with many dedicated in remembrance to World War I veterans. A comprehensive plan of management was developed in 1989 to restore the park to its original design. Minimal changes have taken place to Hyde Park since then with ongoing management and plantation of new landscaping in various areas.
CASE STUDY: HYDE PARK

The growth of Hyde Park over the past 80 years has created the unique space seen today with over 600 trees including 122 fig trees along the main avenue of the park and an extensive array of flora and fauna species (City of Sydney website). The only remnants of the original Hyde Park is the huge chess set that features along the western side of the park. (City of Sydney website).

Image 6.2 Fig trees, various landscaping chess set
Source: Author 2008

6.3 Observations

Hyde Park is truly one of the most unique spaces found in Sydney city. It’s aesthetic beauty brings a truly distinct character that is memorable and stands out amongst Sydney Cities many open spaces (Johnson, L., Interview on 19 September 2008) Jan Gehl regards Hyde Park as the green lung of the city (Gehl 2007, pp 83). An oasis for quiet and tranquility along the eastern border of the city. Its function and role as a space is similar to that of Central Park in New York and Hyde Park of London. It is the landmark traditional park space found in all great cities.

Hyde Park is almost rectangular in form being squared at the southern end and rounded at the northern end. It is bisected through the middle by the east west running Park Street that connects the city with Kings Cross. Other streets that border the park include Elizabeth Street along the western boundary, College Street along the eastern boundary, St James Road along the northern boundary and Liverpool Street to the southern boundary.
The park consists of 24 entrances that are all clearly defined with strong legible definitions. These entry points provide a grand character that invites users into the luscious array of greenery. The sandstone walls that border the east, west and south boundaries provide a clear legibility of the where the park begins and ends further emphasising entrance points. Entrances correspond with various connecting streets and railway stations, increasing pedestrian opportunities for embarkation at the park with most streets harnessing clear views to the entrances creating good permeability.

A range of users are attracted to Hyde Park ranging from local residents and workers to international tourists. Many are attracted to Hyde Park because of its sheer beauty and tranquility in a busy city. Hyde Park acts regularly as a thoroughfare for
people for this reason with many people using the space to escape the noise and pollution of the city (PPS 2006). It is the same reason many people use the space as a place of relaxation, socialising, exercising, lunch eating etc. Hyde Park serves mainly as a passive space where users come to relax. Bench seating and passive seating opportunities exist throughout the park allowing users to sit enjoy the scenery and great views of Sydney’s skyline with users more than happy.

Hyde Park is a multi dimensional green space that creates a unique experience for its users in its layout and design. The park contains districts that allow users to enter into different green spaces with different themes such as the Sandringham Gardens and Nagoya Gardens. These range from large spans of open green space, to central focus points mounted with a clear artwork or building to heavily shaded areas with a range of landscaping. Image 6.6 shows some of these informal districts. With a number of paths throughout, it gives users a chance to explore the space to discover these informal districts and connect with it.
A distinguishing character of Hyde Park is the large number of public artworks. The artworks range from small memorial stones to big ornaments and large water features. The collective art works hold various meaning with a majority in remembrance of World War I, some on the history of Sydney. These artworks are not only visually stimulating, they act as focal points for users to recognize and interact with Hyde Park as a space and include the ANZAC War Memorial, Lake of Reflections, Egyptian furnished obelisk and Archibald fountain.

Hyde Park generally has great lighting throughout the day providing users many opportunities to soak in the sun or enjoy the natural shade from trees. The space creates a genuine sense of place for users in its peaceful serenity. Although there is a lack of passive surveillance from surrounding edges, the park does not bring issues of safety and security due to the high number of users throughout the day.

Hyde Park has a general great feel that is relaxing and soothing. Much of this is attributed to its screening from the city and great aesthetics. A true wonder within the city to escape and enjoy the natural beauty of the park.
## 6.4 Principle Evaluation

Table 6.1 Icon public open space principles evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Principle Qualities</th>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractive Distinct</td>
<td>▪ High quality materials that are intriguing and highlights key features</td>
<td>Great use of high quality pavement materials and generous use of mixture</td>
<td>aesethetically pleasing landscaping creating a distinct theme and character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>▪ Comfortable human scale and context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Theme fits within meaning of space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Common architectural style and theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good human scale creating a tranquil and relaxed theme throughout the park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Public</td>
<td>▪ Public art reflects core values of city and its people</td>
<td>A great number of public artworks including significant monuments reflecting the history of Sydney as a city and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>▪ Artworks are meaningful and connect users with space</td>
<td>Australia founding forefathers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks are engaging and at a suitable scale</td>
<td>Artworks are large in scale acting as great focal points throughout Hyde Park and increase the overall quality of the space.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks are focal points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artworks do not detract from key qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Lighting</td>
<td>▪ Good sunlight is available</td>
<td>Good sun light is available throughout most parts of the day and builds a great omniscient character. Artificial lighting can be improved through a change in lighting pattern to accentuate key elements and walkways.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Sunlight and shading builds character and comfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artificial lighting is not uniform and accentuates key features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Artificial lighting builds overall character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CASE STUDY: HYDE PARK**
**CASE STUDY: HYDE PARK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linking and Connecting</th>
<th>Well connected to high activity streets</th>
<th>Park has access to both key train stations and bus stops directly bordering the park.</th>
<th>Connecting streets are wide and distanced from park. Connecting typography is poor on the eastern side connecting from a slope.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting typography draws users</td>
<td>Entrances face connecting streets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clear visual between streets and space</td>
<td>Typography is generally good along north south and western borders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ease of access to public transport</td>
<td>Great visual between streets and the park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting streets are wide and distanced from park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Legibility             | Clear defined boundaries                | Boundaries are well defined with sandstone walls.                                |                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Permeable and announced entrances       | Clear hard and soft edges throughout separating spaces.                           |                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Appropriate hard and soft edges         | Well accented and legible focal points particularly at key parts of the park.     |                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Accented and legible focal points       |                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                  |

| Activating Edges       | Mixed use’s compliment space            | Two café’s are the only mixed uses but generally fit well with the character of the park providing a casual amenity for users to enjoy the park. | Mixed uses are limited and operate during day hours only. Edges do not hold uses that sustain the site with high activity uses well distanced from the park. Frontages are old in design and lack aesthetics. Upgrades are required. |
|                        | Attractive frontages linking space with edges |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Edges provide positive response to space | Cafe is open and attracts users to the park with casual surveillance.                 |                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Uses attract sustainable flow of users   |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Frontages are transparent providing casual surveillance |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                  |

| Designing for Accessibility and Diversity | Designs for cultural diversity | Access for person with a disability are available throughout the park and at many entrances. The park holds no fixed meaning but is used as a personal space for all individuals of all cultures and ages to enjoy. | Space does not specifically cater for children’s needs as in engaging public art of special spaces for play but the park holds natural qualities that all for use for children. |
|                                         | Access and usage of spaces for person with a disability |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                  |
|                                         | Spaces cater for all ages                  |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                  |
|                                         | Spaces are meaningful and non definitive in meaning to allow growth |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                  |
**Memorabilia & Experience**

- Space creates positive experience
- Good use of surrounding views and vistas
- Aweing atmosphere that captures meaning of space
- Unique qualities of space are highlighted

Hyde Park creates great memorabilia through outstanding aesthetics and quietness in the busy area of the city. Great use of surrounding view and aesthetics such as St Mary’s cathedral. Hyde Park truly is a place in the city to get away from the busyness. Experience changes significantly at night due to lack of use of the space and no great features to stand out significantly.

**Sustainable Open Space (Sydney Context)**

- Sustainable microclimate designs
- Landscaping is sustainable
- Good management practices allowing growth and development
- Heritage conservation of key features

Hyde Park is a great sustainable site filled with a large array of landscaping. Hyde Park itself is a heritage site with all heritage items are well maintained. Maintenance of the space requires heavy resources in landscaping such as heavy watering of plants and prevention of disease.

**Sense of Place**

- Spaces connect socially, physically and culturally with users
- Welcoming and inviting
- Space promotes a city
- Place Promotion encourage use of space

Hyde Park is a historical site that is open and inviting encouraging use during all hours of the day. It connects well with all users finding individual meaning from the park. Events are held at the park but are limited throughout the year. More place promotion can be used to enhance usage and recognition of the spaces many merits.

### 6.4 Conclusion

Hyde Park is a grand space that holds plenty of potential in becoming as Gehl (2007, pp. 83) says the green lung of the city. “Green space is a vital part of the public realm. Attractive, safe and accessible parks and green spaces contribute positive social, economic and environmental benefits, improving public health, well-being and quality of life” (CABE Space 2003, pp2).

Although Hyde Park generally attracts a consistent flow of users, it is not utilised to its potential. Based on aesthetics Hyde Park is agreeable to be a core icon as Sydney’s green space but the main issues of a lack of direct connection with the city...
due is the setback as a large population of city users to not access the park. The division created by its surrounding roads heavily impacts upon pedestrian usage. It is lacking in form but holds excellent image and text as a space.

Improving this aspect and reconnecting the park back with the city rather then bordering will enhance the opportunities for pedestrians to enter the space and utilise it to its full potential creating the iconic reputation for being a great quality space Hyde Park truly deserves.

Image 6.8 Beauty of Hyde Park
Source: PPS 2006, pp. 15
7.1 Overview

The chapter is the final case study and will examine the waterfront public open space of Circular Quay located on the edge of Sydney’s Central Business District. Circular Quay is home to the Australian landmark of the Opera House and is within grasps view of the Harbour Bridge. A brief history on the development of Circular Quay will be provided followed by a detailed look at the space. The developed principles will be applied to examine the flaws and opportunities in improving Circular Quay to become an iconic open space.

7.2 A Brief History

Circular Quay is a highlighting waterfront public open space located on the edge of Sydney City. The original place of embarkment by Captain Cook, it eventually became the area of the first settlement in 1788. Known formally as Sydney Cove, it was initially used a port for ships. It became the embarkation point for cargo and passenger ships, wool clippers, government and private boats (Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority website). Over time it was transformed into a transport, leisure and recreation area. It became the connecting ferry port between North Sydney and the rest of Sydney and still stands today.

With the recognition of its importance and core location within the forefront of Sydney’s coastline various improvements were made to the space in the 1920s. This also eventually led to the construction of the Opera House which became an international icon as the representation of Sydney, Australia. With this iconic repertoire Circular Quay also became known well wide but not as a space but as Sydney Harbour.
7.3 **Observations**

For many people and tourists worldwide, Circular Quay is a waterfront space that represents the core image of Sydney as a city. This is largely due to its hosting of the Australia icon of the Opera House and clear views of the national icon of the Harbour Bridge. The visual aesthetics of the waterfront have long enveloped the core visual impression of Circular Quay as a space.

Circular is semi-circular in shape and adjoins several key open spaces and precincts of Sydney city including the Rocks, First Fleet Park and Botanical Gardens. It is located at the end of main street George Street and acts as a transport hub hosting Sydney’s three main public transports being ferry service, trains and buses. The high connectivity generates mass numbers of pedestrian activity throughout the space during both day and night. However the space is also largely disconnected from the rest of the city because of the Cahill Expressway and railway overpass that blocks the most of the legible sightlines to the rest of the city. Gehl identifies this as the major problem with Circular Quay (2007, pp. 64).
CASE STUDY: CIRCULAR QUAY

The space generally attracts a high number of tourists because of its iconic views of the harbour. Many local workers also utilise the space for enjoying lunch, places of meeting and socialising. This is particularly at First Fleet Park and at available benches. Many people also enjoy runs along the space. Circular Quay is probably one of the more utilised spaces in the city and is consistent throughout the day.

The built character of the space is actually quite poor overall. This is particularly highlighted in the lack of consistency in pavement material and design. This visually divides the Quay into different sections with no real reasoning. This creates poor legibility and no real distinct character.

There is a general lack of public art throughout the Quay with the exception of several memorial tablets implaced into the pavement. However a range of live entertainment takes place attracting many users and building the overall atmosphere of the space creating a strong sense of memorabilia.
Circular Quay has great sunlight throughout the day highlighting the key qualities of the waterfront. This builds an amazing atmosphere for the place. Appropriate shading is also available through good use of appropriate landscaping. Artificial lighting at night is also great at night with light display shows at Opera House during different times of the year. The great waterfront views also makes for a stunning light show across the harbour.

Circular Quay creates a great sense of memorabilia and experience for its users. The many sensory attributes of the noise of the ferry mixed with the train line and stunning views of the harbour imprint postcard images of Sydney into user’s minds. The space works well in text but lacks in form and image to a lesser degree.
### 7.4 Principle Evaluation

Table 7.1 Iconic public open space principles evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Principle Qualities</th>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractive</td>
<td>• High quality materials that are intriguing and highlights key features</td>
<td>The open waterfront with generally low height buildings creates a comfortable human scale emphasising the harbour.</td>
<td>Quality of materials can be poor with a non uniform pavement and poor form of the railway station and Cahill Expressway overpass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct</td>
<td>• Comfortable human scale and context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>• Theme fits within meaning of space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Common architectural style and theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Public</td>
<td>• Public art reflects core values of city and its people</td>
<td>Live public art engage users with some reflecting on the history of the Quay.</td>
<td>There is limited public art throughout the Quay and the ones there are memorial tablets within the pavement with little opportunity to act as a focal point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>• Artworks are meaningful and connect users with space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Artworks are engaging and at a suitable scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Artworks are focal points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Artworks do not detract from key qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Lighting</td>
<td>• Good sunlight is available</td>
<td>Great sunlight is available throughout the day with landscaping trees used to provide incidental shading to users.</td>
<td>Artificial lighting is generally uniform throughout the Quay leaving little opportunity for accentuating of key views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sunlight and shading builds character and comfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Artificial lighting is not uniform and accentuates key features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Artificial lighting builds overall character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CASE STUDY: CIRCULAR QUAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linking and Connecting</th>
<th>Well connected to high activity streets</th>
<th>Sight is extremely well connected to the city with streets diverging into the Quay.</th>
<th>Poor visual between the space and adjoining streets due to the</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting typography draws users</td>
<td>Great access to all modes of public transport including ferry, bus and trains.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clear visual between streets and space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ease of access to public transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legibility</td>
<td>Clear defined boundaries</td>
<td>The space is well defined in terms of hard edge boundaries along the eastern side.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permeable and announced entrances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate hard and soft edges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accented and legible focal points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activating Edges</td>
<td>Mixed use’s compliment space</td>
<td>Mixed use’s vary from high end retail to classy restaurants fitting the rich mood of the Quay.</td>
<td>Poor edging and frontage along parts of the railway edge with poor derelict areas on the eastern end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attractive frontages linking space with edges</td>
<td>Edges vary in form with some spaces providing good response such as the toaster and overseas passenger terminal which are both transparent providing access to the great views of the waterfront.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edges provide positive response to space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses attract sustainable flow of users</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frontages are transparent providing casual surveillance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing for Accessibility and Diversity</td>
<td>Designs for cultural diversity</td>
<td>The space provides access to all attracting a mixture of ages including children. The space holds an iconic meaning representing Sydney city especially with the waterfront and Opera house.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access and usage of spaces for person with a disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spaces cater for all ages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spaces are meaningful and non definitive in meaning to allow growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Memorabilia & Experience**
- Space creates positive experience
- Good use of surrounding views and vistas
- Aweing atmosphere that captures meaning of space
- Unique qualities of space are highlighted

An amazing memorabilia is created with great exploitation of the harbour view and buzz of the Sydney feel with ferries, buses, trains and people. It is a great memory of what Sydney represents.

There are poor views of the city while in parts of the Quay with the elevated railway station and Cahill expressway blocking views.

**Sustainable Open Space (Sydney Context)**
- Sustainable microclimate designs
- Landscaping is sustainable
- Good management practices allowing growth and development
- Heritage conservation of key features

Great microclimate making use of solar access and landscaping. Generally well managed space. Good conservation of key features such as the Australian museum building, toaster building and opera house.

Lack of use of landscaping in certain parts of the Quay especially along the eastern side.

**Sense of Place**
- Spaces connect socially, physically and culturally with users
- Welcoming and inviting
- Space promotes a city
- Place Promotion encourage use of space

Space is an iconic representation of Sydney because of its key views to two major landmarks. Space is welcoming and inviting with great place promotion in tourism and also hosting of major events such as the annual fireworks and Australia Day celebrations.

Space holds limited features such as public artworks to connect with local users other than the iconic opera house.
7.5 Conclusion

Circular Quay is a space that has relied on the benefits of hosting landmark icons, visually stunning views and location as a central hub for far too long. There is need to see a vast improvement in the form of the space through use of consistent materials and legible sightlines with the rest of the city. Cluttered entrance points are the main distracter in the space. Improvements in these areas will highlight the space at a greater and easily develop it into an iconic quality public open space. With this Circular Quay holds a deep sense of place for all users as the forefront of the Sydney city.
8.1 Overview

Sydney is truly a global city with an abundance of public open spaces. However within these spaces few stand out in becoming truly iconic to Sydney. Although generally well designed there are issues plaguing these spaces generally in one aspect of image, form or text as a space. This is particularly the case with key public open spaces examined in this thesis.

The original aims of the thesis as set out in chapter 1.3 sought to:

“Provide a brief overview on the development of public open space theory, particularly in the last quarter century to examine its impact on public open space development;”

An overview of public open space theory in chapter 2 has found significant development in public open space theory in the last quarter century. The evolution from focusing on attractive aesthetics of open space to achieve positive outcomes in the community to utilising urban design tools and examining their effect on public open spaces going beyond the public realm into factors such as cultural diversity, sustainability and more recently urban liveability. This was translated into the notions of image, form and text. The development of urban liveability is the contemporary issue in public open space development particularly within the Sydney context.

“Provide an overview of Sydney city’s public open spaces in the city”

An examination of Sydney’s public open spaces have found an number of existent problems stemming from the general focus of the city being a traffic dominated city with poor connectivity between spaces and poor hierarchy of public open spaces.
These issues have an impact on the key public open spaces that have the potential to become iconic. This is noted in the next objective recount below.

“Review all recent studies and strategies on Sydney cities public open spaces;”

The review of recent studies and strategies on Sydney cities public open spaces in chapter 3 has identified the common issue of the need for public open spaces that are iconic to Sydney city. Improving the current form of open space through implementation of many of the recommendations as set by Jan Gehl in “Public Spaces, Public Life Study – Sydney” (2007) was the key initiatives and tasks in the strategies examined.

A number of initiatives in both local and state government strategies were also set to specifically create iconic public open spaces with the future Barangaroo identified as showing the greatest potential to become the newest landmark public open space in Sydney and opportunity to be the leader in waterfront development around the world. The focus on Barangaroo as a space is enormous due to its great potential in placing Sydney once again on the global map.

“Formulate a set of key principles for developing iconic public open spaces and application of the principles in key open space of Sydney; and”

A set of key principles were developed for creating iconic Public open spaces based on a literature review, interviews and site investigations. These were conveyed in chapter 4 with the principles revolving the core concepts of achieving great image, form and text for spaces. These were applied to three key sites being Martin Place, Hyde Park and Circular Quay in chapters 5, 6 and 7. Application of the principles found that the spaces were generally headed in the right direction of the principles.
“Provision of appropriate recommendations for improving the quality of Sydney Cities key Public Open Spaces to improve to overall quality of Sydney as global city.”

It is clear from the results that Sydney city holds the potential to create several iconic public open spaces. Government associations and other stakeholders have already developed key strategies in achieving an effort to achieve this. A greater conscious effort in approaching key spaces through application of the principles developed in this thesis will see vast improvements. Most importantly is the consideration of image, form and text through Sydney city to create a new leader for public open spaces on a global scale.

The aims of the thesis have all been satisfied to a good degree providing a substantial insight into Sydney city’s key public open spaces. There is still great potential within other spaces to achieve iconic notoriety such as Darling Harbour and the future proposed spaces Railway Square, Town Hall and the current Barangaroo. Ensuring these spaces apply the principles developed under the concepts of image, form and text will see these spaces reap the maximum benefit for great urban liveability in Sydney city.
Primary Sources:

INTERVIEWS
Laurence Johnson, *qualitative interview* undertaken at 4:00pm 29 September 2008 at Sydney City Council meeting room.

Nicholas Fterniatius, *qualitative interview* undertaken at 11:00am 9 October 2008 at Sydney Harbour Foreshore meeting room.

Secondary Sources:

BOOKS


**CONFERENCE PAPER**


**GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS**


JOURNALS


INTERNET WEBSITES

Barangaroo Sydney, Australia, accessed first on 15 August 2008 at:

City of Sydney Council, accessed first on 2 September 2008 at:

Darling Harbour, accessed first on 29 September 2008 at::
<www.darlingharbour.com/>.


NSW Department of Planning, accessed first on 12 August 2008 at:

Project for Public Spaces (PPS), accessed first on 15 September 2008 at:
<http://www.pps.org/>.

Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, accessed first on 21 August 2008 at:

Sustainable Open Spaces Project, accessed first on 12 August 2008 at:
<www.sos-project.org/>

The Rocks, accessed first on 29 September 2008 at:
Whereis.com, accessed first on 10 October 2008

Wikipedia: Martin Place, Sydney, accessed first on 2 September 2008 at:

**THESIS**
the Bachelor of Town Planning at University of New South Wales.

completed for the Bachelor of Town Planning at University of New South Wales.

Bachelor of Town Planning at University of New South Wales.