





LOCAL CONTEXT

2.1 THE EXISTING CORRIDOR

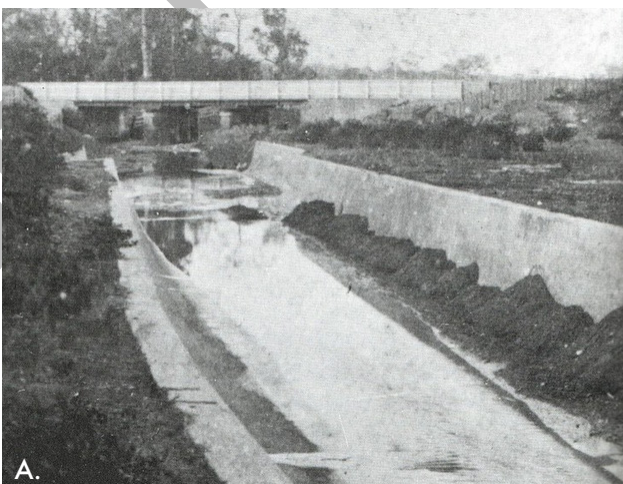
The existing Iron Cove Creek Corridor is highly varied along the length of the route. This variation reflects the construction of the channel in stages over a 40 year period from the 1890s to the 1930s

Work on the construction of the stormwater channel began in 1892 into 1894. Works were completed up to John Street, Ashfield. The channel was extended north to Iron Cove in the 1920s. The stormwater channel is identified as a local heritage item Sydney Water's heritage register.

Prior to the 1890s Iron Cove Creek was in its natural state. With urban development the creek became a receptacle of sewage from the populations which had settled in the expanding suburbs. In 1890, the Minister for Public Works, appalled at the extremely unhealthy conditions prevailing at the time, proposed a separate system of stormwater drains, including Iron Cove Creek be built to help alleviate the problem. The channel is a representative example of one of the first stormwater channels built in the 1890's to alleviate the city's severe public health problems. The different sections, built at various times, illustrate the various construction methods used over a period of 100 years.

The existing channel varies in character along its length:

- In the upper section of the creek in Croydon is no open space and the channel is directly bordered by fences of properties or an adjacent footpath. The channel also narrows in this upper section to a few metres wide
- In the middle section of the Creek corridor there is an area of currently inaccessible open space adjacent to the channel. The inaccessible open space is bordered by the fences of properties adjoining the channel and consists of grass and scattered trees. The open space is an easement owned partly by Sydney Water and partly by Inner West Council
- At the downstream end near the Bay Run, is open space and parklands adjacent to the existing channel. These parklands consist of paths, scattered trees, seating and open lawn. The open space adjacent to the Canal is publicly accessible and includes Inner West Council's parklands Reg Coady Reserve and William Jegorow Reserve adjacent to the channel.



A. Iron Cove Creek Canal at Ashfield with Church St Bridge



B. Iron Cove Creek Canal at Ashfield before canalisation

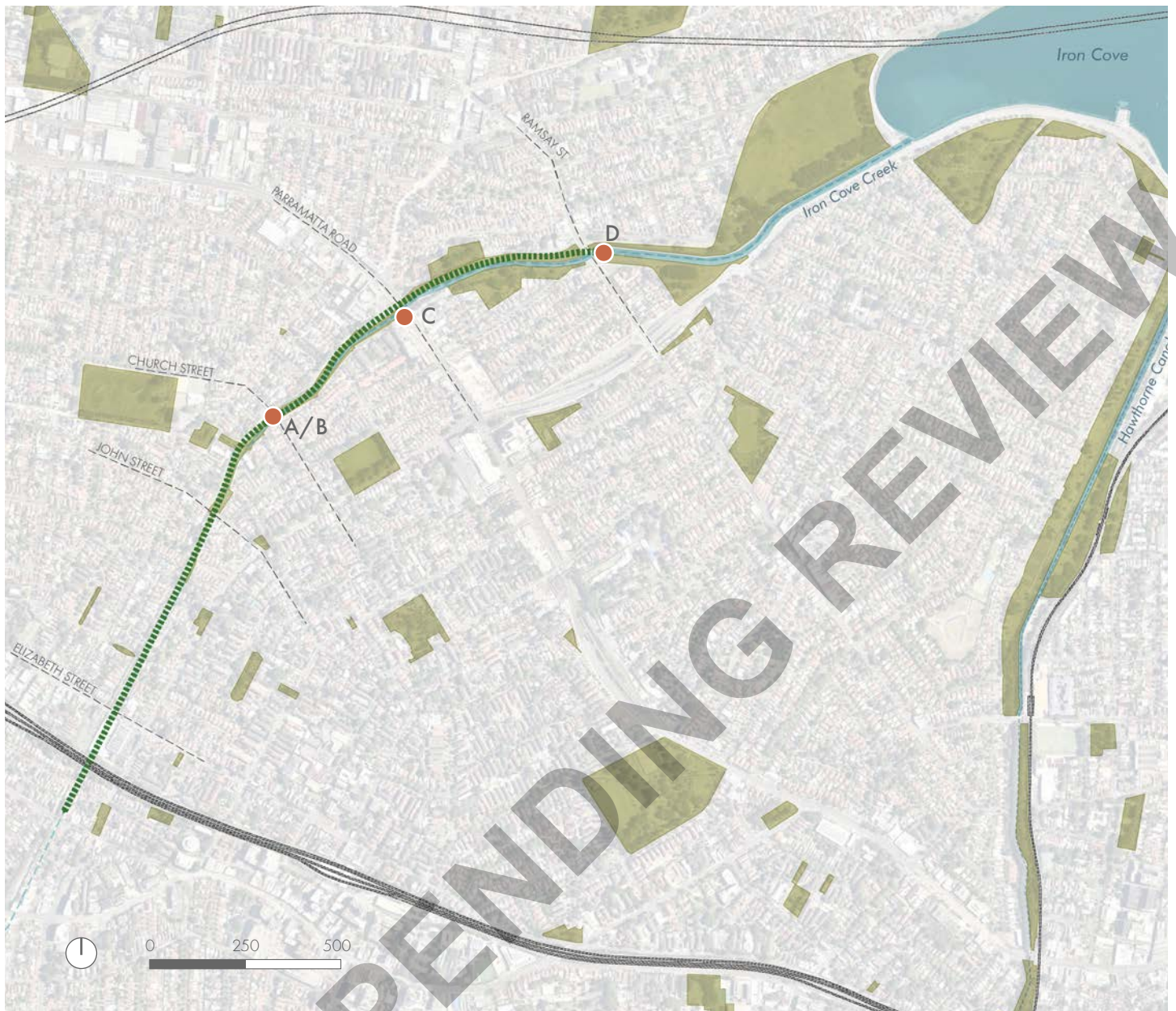


Figure 4: Iron Cove Creek corridor overview

- | | | |
|---------|--|-----------|
| Highway | Railway | Waterways |
| Parks | Locations of historical photos (below) | |

D.
Parramatta Rd crossing Iron Cove CreekC.
Iron Cove Creek Canal at Ramsay St

2.2 LOCAL DESTINATIONS

The Iron Cove Creek Corridor provides the opportunity to deliver an excellent example of the Sydney Green Grid by linking with the Bay Run and Iron Cove to Cooks River Greenway with local parks and recreational facilities.

The corridor travels through low and medium density housing around Ashfield, Croydon and Parramatta Road. Also on Parramatta Rd is a range of commercial activity known as 'Enterprise corridor' uses. The corridor is surrounded by local designations and adjacent to an area intended for growth on Parramatta Rd.

Local destinations

Local designations potentially served by an active transport corridor include schools and childcare centres, local centres, a range of recreational facilities and a future transport hub to be created by Metro West and the transformation of Parramatta Rd.

Croydon Public School and a large private school are located less than a kilometre from the corridor and number of childcare centres are located around Croydon Road. Centenary Park on Croydon Rd supports weekly team sports for children and the adjacent dog park in Bede Spillane Reserve is popular with local pet owners. Ashfield Aquatic Centre which adjoins the creek was reopened in 2020 following a significant renovation creating a popular regional facility with swimming pools, gym and other recreational facilities.

The Bay Run, a popular regional destination, provides a foreshore circuit on the Parramatta River for walkers, joggers, dog owners and bike riders. A path along the Iron Cove Creek corridor would link with the Bay Run through Timbrell Park in Canada Bay Council and connect popular parks with active and passive recreation.

Centres and future development

Ashfield centre, at the south-eastern end of the corridor is identified as a Local Centre in the Eastern City District Plan and a Major Centre in the Inner West Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The centre is served by the T2 Inner West rail line and is identified for increased in density. Ashfield is also a popular local destination for dining and shopping services and three schools are located within less than a kilometre of the corridor.

Croydon centre, on the rail line at the south-western end of the corridor, is envisaged in the LSPS to be an area of increasing density in the longer term due.

Five Dock centre in the Canada Bay Council area and Kings Bay on Parramatta Rd, are intended to accommodate increased housing and jobs over the longer term as the Metro West station at Five Dock is scheduled to be opened in 2030.

A walking and bike riding link along Iron Cove Creek would provide much needed active transport accessibility between



Figure 5: Context map of the Iron Cove Creek corridor

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| Shops | Parks | Schools |
| Highway | +++ Railway | Waterways |

2.3 THE WATERWAY

Iron Cove Creek discharges into Iron Cove. It drains stormwater from the suburbs of Haberfield, Leichhardt, Burwood, Croydon and Ashfield, a total of approximately 800 hectares.

Sydney Water owns the trunk drainage assets including the open channel sections of Iron Cove Creek. The existing stormwater channel varies significantly:

- At the downstream section of the creek, east of Parramatta Rd, the channel is more than 15m wide and is tidal. The entire base of the channel is inundated with water from Iron Cove at high tide. The banks of the channel are sloping at approximately 45 degrees
- In the middle section, between Parramatta Rd and John St, the channel is approximately 10m wide and is generally not influenced by the tide. There is a small low flow channel in the centre of the channel. The banks of the channel are generally vertical in this section
- In the upper section of the creek, west of John St, the channel is approximately 3m wide and is not influenced by the tide. The banks of the channel are generally vertical in this section of the creek and are higher than the banks in the downstream section

Sydney Water is proposing to naturalising a portion of Iron Creek Cove west of Ramsay Road at Timbrell Park and Reg Coady Reserve. The naturalisation plans include opportunities for a Sydney Water proposes to include pathways to the north and south side of the creek as part of the naturalisation works. This provides opportunity for a connection between Timbrell Park and Ramsay Street.

In 2014 the former Ashfield Council undertook a flood study for Iron Cove Creek (Dobroyd Canal) in 2014. The study provides results for flood behaviour in terms of design flood levels, depths, velocities, flows and flood extents along the creek and provides maps of hydraulic categories and provisional hazard categories. The design flood modelling indicates that significant flood depths may occur in a number of locations including in the vicinity of Heighway Avenue with the railway line restricting flows and exacerbating flooding.





Figure 6: Iron Cove Creek waterway with photos along the corridor

-  Railway
-  Waterways
-  Parks
-  Highway



2.4 WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

The walking environment around Iron Cove Creek is unpleasant and fragmented and there is a distinct lack of safe cycling infrastructure.

The streets surrounding the Iron Cove corridor especially Frederick St and Croydon Rd provide uninviting conditions for walking due to the speed and volume of traffic, limited road crossings and poor overall footpath amenity. Crossings of Frederick St are infrequent while crossings of Parramatta Rd impose long waiting times and a dreadful footpath environment for waiting.

Local streets around the Iron Cove channel do not provide safe cycling access and streets like Church St and John St are commonly used for 'rat running' by drivers moving between surrounding suburbs or avoiding traffic signals. Existing bike riders necessarily use routes that provide access across barriers, like Parramatta Rd, Iron Cove Creek and the rail line, resulting in dangerous, high-stress cycling conditions.

- Croydon Road between Elizabeth St and Parramatta Road is one of few direct north-south routes to cross Parramatta Rd however it experiences high volumes of through traffic as well as cross movements.
- Elizabeth St linking Ashfield and Croydon is an east-west route used by a high volume of predominantly through traffic traveling parallel to the rail line
- Church St is an east-west route that crosses the creek corridor and provides traffic signals to safely cross at Frederick St.

North of Parramatta Rd paths in Jegorow Reserve and Timbrell Park, provide access for walking and cycling however the crossing at Ramsay Rd requires a diversion and involves two additional road crossings to access the existing signalised crossing near Harrabrook Ave. in Timbrell Park a narrow bridge provides access over Iron Cove Creek to Waratah St Haberfield and a shared path on the eastern side of Wattle St.

“There is a lack of a separated bike path for north-south connections, in particular to Five Dock. As Parramatta Road undergoes redevelopment as per the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy, it would be ideal to strengthen active transport connections between the new precincts and existing centres, as well as creating linear parks for leisure.”

Community member

The NSW Household Travel Survey (2018-19) shows that 60 percent of car trips in the Inner West on an average weekday are less than 5km in distance – that's 175,000 short car journeys each day – and data collected by Inner West Council in 2022 shows 70 percent of car journeys to Ashfield centre, Ashfield station and recreational facilities on the Bay Run are less than 5km in length. Experiences in Sydney and other cities around the world has shown that without safe high-quality cycling infrastructure, riding a bike will remain a travel option only for people brave and fit enough to mix with motor vehicles. The absence of such cycling infrastructure is likely to be a limiting factor for local trips by bicycle.



Figure 7: Cycle routes in the vicinity of Iron Cove Creek

- On-road cycle routes. High traffic
- On-road cycle routes. Low-Medium traffic
- - - Off-road cycle routes.

2.5 WALKING AND CYCLING DATA

Parramatta Road provides a significant barrier for people walking and cycling around the local area. The data represents only people who currently walk or cycle and does not show active transport trips not taken because of the unpleasant and stressful street environment.

Data derived from Strava Metro shows walking and cycling routes taken around the corridor. While this data provides only information from people sharing data with the Strava platform it provides both recreational and commuting trips and indicates viable routes used by people walking and cycling.

In terms of cycling the data reflects the following:

- That Croydon Rd provides the preferred north-south connection between Elizabeth Street and Parramatta Road
- That Elizabeth St provides the only direct east-west connection between Croydon Station and Ashfield Station
- The moderate use Frederick St reflects the high stress environment and poor access for walking and cycling across Parramatta Road
- Inversely, the higher amount of cycling activity in and around the Bay Run, including Timbrell Park, reflects the safer more pleasant cycling conditions
- That Parramatta Road creates a significant barrier between the two cycling clusters in Croydon/Ashfield and the Bay Run.

For walking the Strava Metro data shows that:

- Croydon Rd is the most popular route with connectivity across Parramatta Rd
- Frederick Street is predominantly used only up to Parramatta Rd
- Elizabeth St provides one of few direct walking routes to the Croydon and Ashfield centres
- There is a large amount of movement in and around Croydon centre, to Ashfield Aquatic Centre and eastward along Elizabeth St.

Local parks are popular recreational destinations for walking, particularly Centenary Park and Hammond Park, with walking popularity declining as it approaches Parramatta Road.

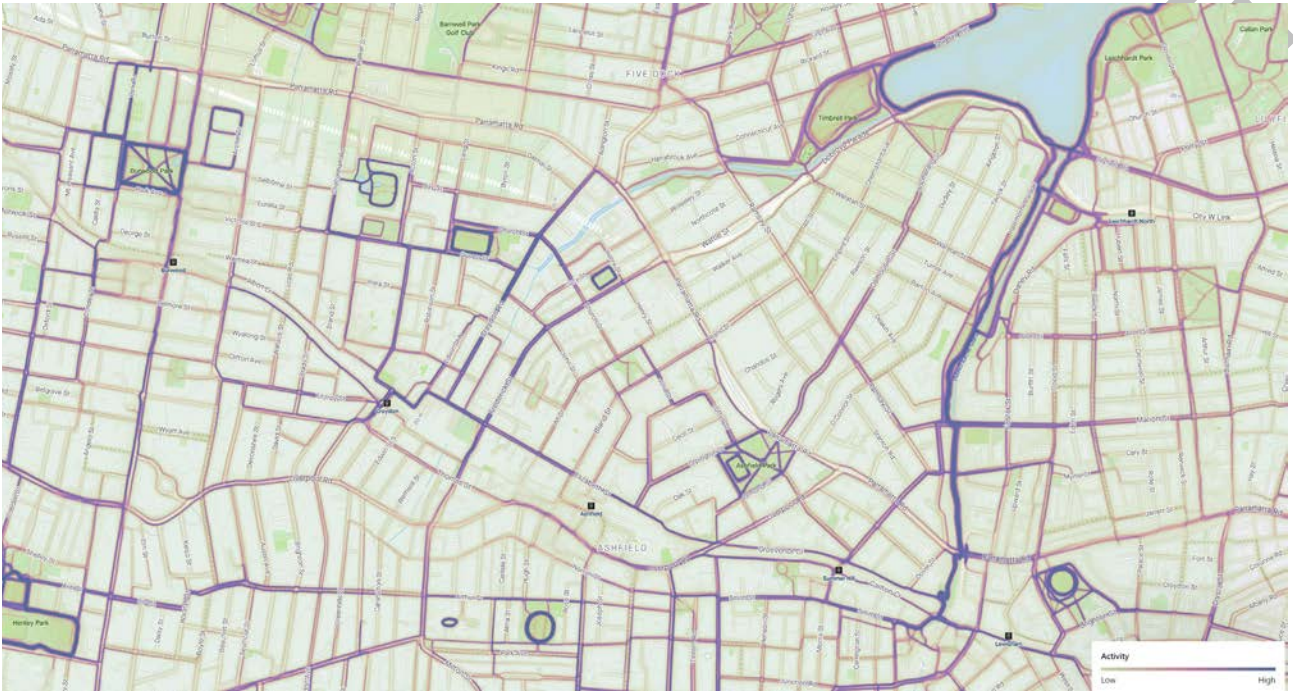


Figure 8: Strava data - walking

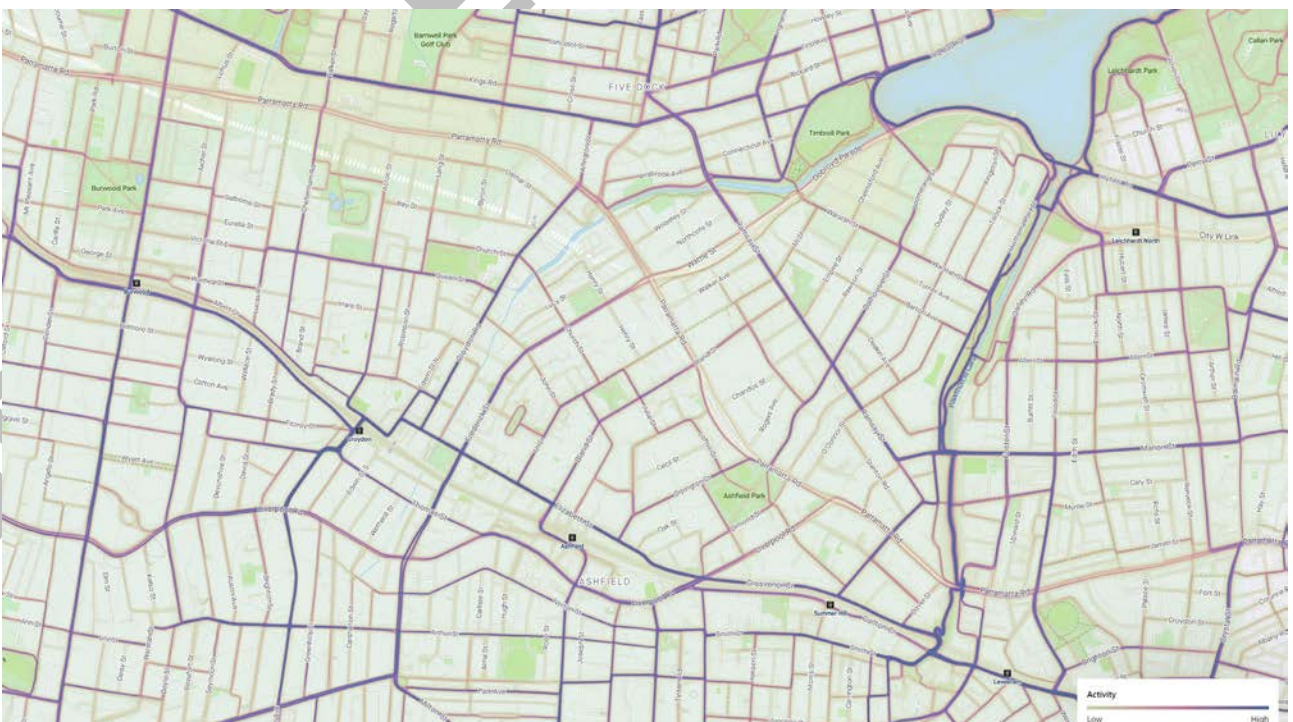


Figure 9: Strava data - cycling

2.6 TRAFFIC

The Iron Cove Corridor road network is significantly influenced by Parramatta Road which provides a barrier to movement and north-south traffic movement along Frederick St and its underpass of the main western rail line.

There are a number of high traffic roads that border the corridor including Parramatta Road, one of Sydney's main arterial routes, with more than 25,000 vehicles per day and with high use by heavy vehicles. Local streets with traffic volumes include:

- Frederick Street, a state classified road, between Parramatta Road and the M4, and the wider Inner West providing an underpass under the Western Rail line with more than 25,000 vehicles per day and providing north-south connectivity. Frederick St is also on a number of bus routes.
- Croydon Road between Croydon town centre and Parramatta Road and the M4 with between 5,000 and 25,000 vehicles per day and providing north-south connectivity. Croydon Road is on a local school bus route.
- Elizabeth St is the main street in the corridor providing east west connectivity and between 2000 and 5000 vehicles per day west of Frederick St and more than 5000 vehicles per day east of Frederick St
- Ramsay St Road with between 5,000 to 25,000 vehicles per day and providing north-south connectivity at the eastern end of the corridor
- Etonville Parade and Hunt St are low volume traffic streets with less than 500 vehicles per day while John St and Church have low to moderate traffic volumes between 2000 and 5000 vehicles per day.



Figure 10: Traffic volumes per day

Traffic Volumes (per day)

0 - 1000

1000 - 2500

2500 - 5000

5000 - 25000

25000 - 50000