

Railway Serviceway

Places to Love Case Study:
Liverpool City Council

Transforming a vehicle serviceway
into a place for people





Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Government acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past and present.

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society.

Aboriginal peoples take a holistic view of land, water and culture and see them as one, not in isolation to each other. This Places to Love Case Study is based on the premise upheld by Aboriginal peoples that if we care for Country, it will care for us.

Contents

Project at a glance	4
Project description	6
Community and stakeholder engagement	10
Evaluation	11
Timeline	12
Cost breakdown	12
Outcomes and lessons learnt	13
Photo diary	14

Artist Sophi Odling painting Railway Serviceway mural.
Image courtesy: Transport for NSW





Project at a glance

Liverpool City Council worked with the NSW Government to test public space interventions in a transport hub precinct in Railway Serviceway and to better connect pedestrian routes between Liverpool Station and the Central Business District (CBD). The project transformed the Railway Serviceway from a vehicle-dominated, back-of-house serviceway into a safe, pedestrian-friendly public space by reallocating road carriageway for seating and large-scale artworks that brighten the street, reflect local identity and create a sense of place.

Project vision

To create a safe and vibrant shared-use serviceway through temporary and semi-permanent change, improve pedestrian walkability in Liverpool's city centre laneways, express cultural diversity in the community and offer opportunities for social connection.

Places to Love

Places to Love is a collaborative program between NSW Government and councils to trial demonstration projects that improve walkable access to, and the quality of, local public spaces, particularly in streets and transport hub precincts.

In 2020-2021, six councils partnered with the program, including Liverpool City Council to transform a service vehicle laneway into a place for people.

These demonstration projects are a way to quickly test how to make public spaces more vibrant and active using pop-ups and semi-permanent changes to trial ideas and build the case for longer-term change.

Places to Love is a rolling program with opportunities for other councils to be involved.

School student and parent walking through Regal Lane. Artwork by Sophi Odling and Christina Huynh. Image courtesy: Transport for NSW

What was implemented?

1,200 m² of activated public space

8 local businesses engaged for activation **14** shade trees

85 seating opportunities **9** brightly-coloured shaded rest areas

100 m² of public art mural

170 m of rainbow-coloured street paint

43 planter boxes with 200+ plants

100 m² reallocated roadway for seating and pedestrian movement

60 m² synthetic turf

Key outcomes

The Places to Love demonstration project has provided a case study for change and supports the vision for the development of public spaces proposed in the Liverpool City Centre Public Domain Master Plan. The proposed master plan will help ensure new development and design outcomes encourage a greener, more vibrant and activated city centre.

Project findings from Places to Love also informed the Railway Street Demonstration Project: additional activations on adjacent Railway Street in Liverpool's city centre, including parklets, outdoor dining areas, footpath widening, planter boxes, and outdoor furniture. The Railway Street Demonstration Project was funded by the NSW Government Streets as Shared Spaces Program and Council have plans for more permanent investment in this area.

21 community surveys conducted

15 Evaluation Tool surveys

Over 48% increase in pedestrian traffic

School student walking through Regal Lane. Artwork by Sophi Odling and Christina Huynh. Image courtesy: Transport for NSW



Project description

Aims and objectives

The project aimed to trial a reconfiguration of the serviceway and test ideas to inform future placemaking activations, and temporary and permanent design upgrades within Liverpool's city centre.

Critical objectives included creating more space and amenities for people in the serviceway, supporting walkability and activating the space through vibrant artwork. The project also intended to gather feedback from adjoining business owners and site users to inform future activations and street infrastructure upgrades.

Using temporary and small budget interventions, the demonstration project transformed Railway Serviceway and the adjacent Regal Lane with colourful amenities and vibrant art that express the area's cultural diversity and increase visual appeal.

Rainbow street paint, planter boxes (donated from a separate Transport for NSW project) with trees and flowers, seating and colourful umbrellas for shade transformed the street into a place for the community to enjoy, encouraging community to walk through, stay and connect in the space.

Local resident walking a dog down the Railway Serviceway, including the street print and planter boxes. Artwork by Sophi Odling and Christina Huynh. Image courtesy: Transport for NSW



“ From an alleyway, Liverpool City Council is proud to deliver a demonstration project in Railway Serviceway in partnership with NSW Government’s Places to Love program. Located close to Liverpool Station in the Liverpool City Centre, the serviceway is a popular pedestrian shortcut that was previously under-utilised, and is now a revitalised space for the community.

Anchored by the colourful street paint and attractive new mural, this serviceway adds to Liverpool’s collection of exciting street art. It has been wonderful to see the space come alive and be appreciated by the community.

This demonstration project is a great catalyst for more long-term permanent changes within Liverpool CBD’s extensive network of laneways and

serviceways. This space will also support Liverpool’s nightlife and functions as a canvas for markets and other activations and events.

Projects like this are part of a continual process of urban renewal within Liverpool, supporting local businesses and the community, and aiding South West Sydney’s economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Mayor Ned Mannoun
Liverpool City Council



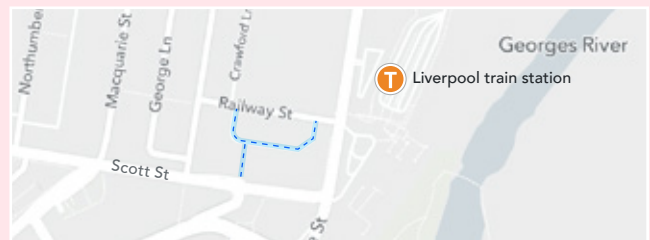
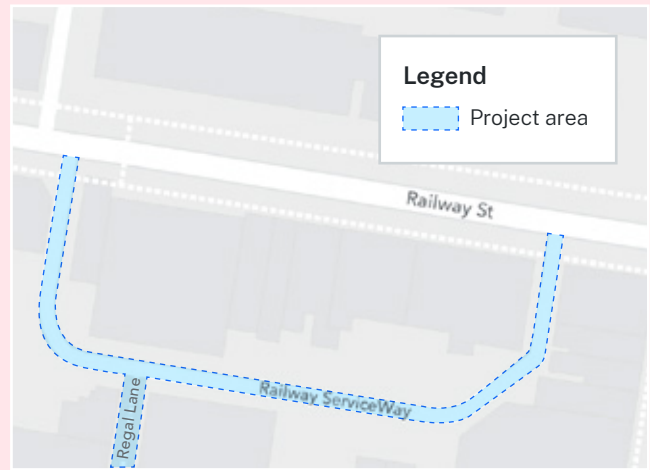
Mother and children looking at the mural in Regal Lane.
Image courtesy: Transport for NSW

Project location

Liverpool's city centre, situated 32 km southwest of Sydney's CBD, is rapidly emerging as Sydney's third CBD and gateway city to the future Western Sydney Nancy Bird Walton International Airport and Aerotropolis. The city centre is undergoing significant urban development, highlighting the growing importance of high-quality public spaces.

Railway Serviceway is located in the east of the Liverpool city centre, adjacent to Liverpool Station and Railway Street. It forms part of a broader network of laneways and serviceways throughout the precinct, connecting the station to the city centre.

With various commercial, educational, retail, health and mixed-use buildings, Liverpool's city centre caters to the needs of residents, commuters, students, shoppers and visitors alike. The heritage-listed street grid running north-south and east-west also contributes to the overall character of the area.



Map of project area

Strategic alignment

NSW Government plans and strategies identify Liverpool as a metropolitan cluster and collaboration area within the Western Parkland City. The Liverpool Collaboration Area Place Strategy's vision is that by 2036 Liverpool will be a rejuvenated river city offering diverse residential and employment opportunities and have a rich mix of public spaces, shops and workplaces.

The demonstration project aligns with Council's strategic objectives in the Liverpool City Centre Public Domain Master Plan, City Activation Strategy and Local Strategic Planning Statement, to activate

and colour the city's network of laneways, with Railway Serviceway identified in the Master Plan as a site for revitalisation.

The NSW Government contributions allowed for additional place infrastructure and embellishments, greater community engagement and activation to test concepts that improve walkability and create a welcoming environment for the diverse community.



Concept design: Railway Serviceway mural funded by Places to Love project, completed by Sophi Odling
Image courtesy: Liverpool City Council

Design and delivery

The design concept included reallocating 100 m² of roadway for pedestrian movement and seating. Traffic calming infrastructure and over 81 seating opportunities were installed, alongside 14 street trees and 9 shade umbrellas. Artificial turf marked the gathering spaces, and street furniture was custom designed in-house at Council, with timber and concrete details. Over 40 planter boxes were installed with shade trees and more than 200 plants, helping to make the space greener and cooler.

A 170 metre section of the road carriageway was painted with rainbow colours to brighten the space, along with a 100 m² art mural. This public art increases the visual appeal of the space, and also represents local identity and denotes slow-speed zones for vehicles.

The artist's impression below shows Council's concept design for the site. The Places to Love temporary interventions helped test and trial some concept ideas proposed for future permanent change.

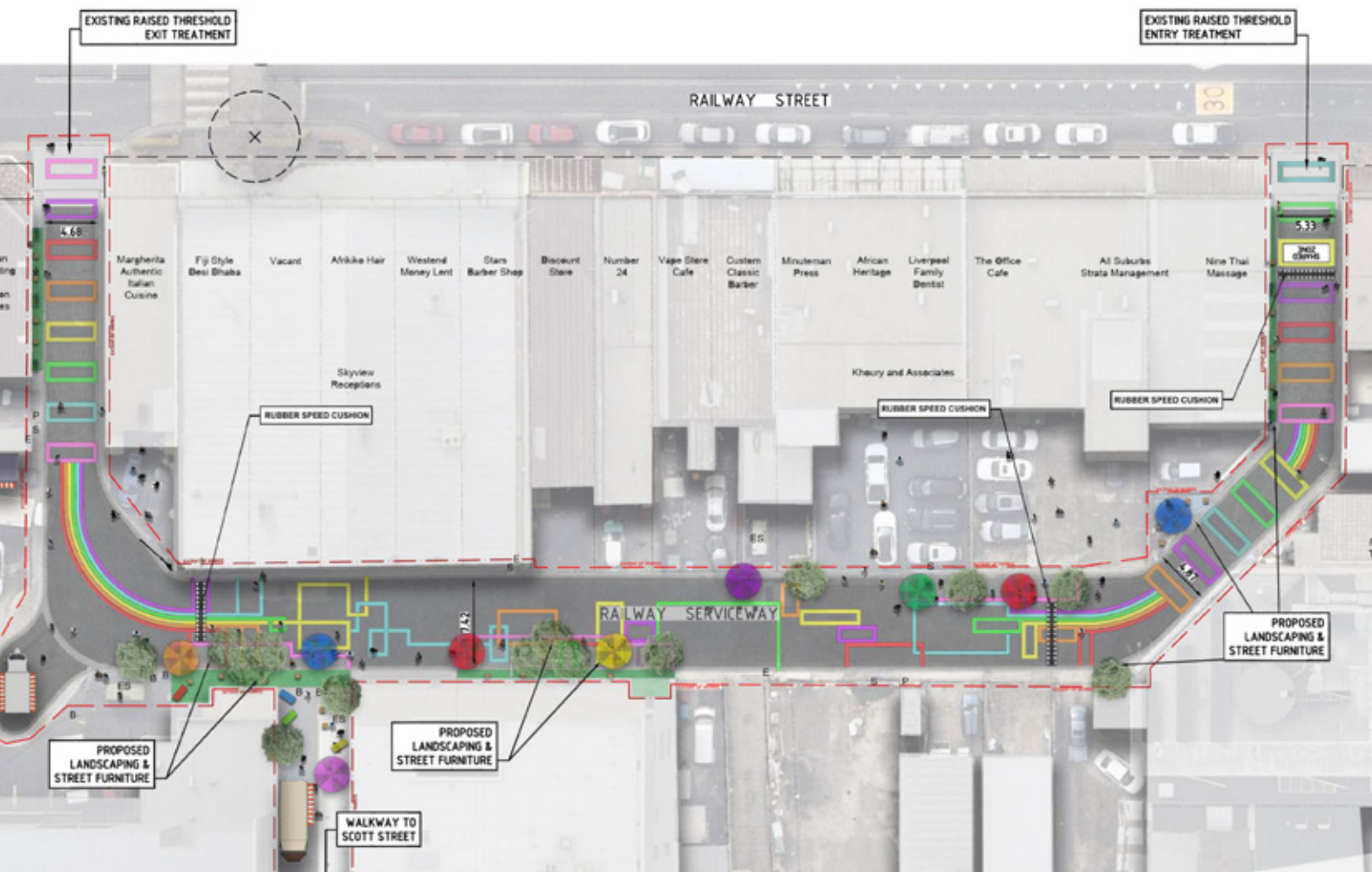
Project governance

The planning and design phase of the project was led by Council's City Design and Public Domain team, and the installation phase was led by Council's Civil Construction and City Works units.

These teams partnered with other Council teams to deliver community engagement activities, traffic analysis, and legal agreements.



Railway Serviceway being painted.
Image courtesy: Liverpool City Council.



Concept design of the street upgrade. Image courtesy: Liverpool City Council

Community and stakeholder engagement

Community and stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback and collaborate throughout the project.

An engagement plan was developed in the project's initial stages, ensuring a consistent methodology for the collection, assessment and utilisation of community and stakeholder feedback.

The wall murals sought to highlight the local character and identity of the area, by spotlighting the different local cultures that reside in the area. The murals integrated the use of lights, candles and flora that are used in various cultural festivals.



Rainbow Street artwork
Image courtesy: Liverpool City Council

The following activities took place to inform and engage with community and stakeholders:

- Meetings with key external stakeholders
- Online survey through Council's Liverpool Listens
- Door-to-door discussions with local business owners and/or tenants
- Notification letters for upcoming works
- Information and concept plan distribution
- Meetings with internal stakeholders to seek endorsement, including Council's Local Traffic Committee and CBD and Tourism Committee.

Community and stakeholders provided the following recommendations, which informed the final design and Railway Serviceway upgrades:

- Add lighting, street art, seating and shade to make the serviceway area feel safer
- Collaborate with local businesses and community groups in delivering the project.

Council worked with eight local businesses for the Railway Serviceway opening event. This involved extending trading hours, creating special menu items, providing jiu-jitsu workshops and live music performances at the event. Unfortunately, the event needed to be cancelled due to extreme weather conditions.

Other business participation throughout the project included outdoor dining and a food truck at the back of local businesses, making use of the temporary measures under the COVID-19 Response Alfresco Restart Package in place at the time.



Left: Before image of Railway Serviceway. Image courtesy: Transport for NSW



Right: Artist impression of long-term vision for Railway Serviceway upgrade. Image courtesy: Liverpool City Council

Evaluation

Data collection for this project utilised the NSW Government's Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life (Evaluation Tool). The Evaluation Tool can be used by anyone who wants to better understand the strengths and areas for improvement of a public space, and the survey was used throughout the project to document trends in pedestrian activity before and after project implementation.

21 surveys conducted

100% of respondents rated the quality of the public spaces as **medium** to **high** after activation

Evaluation surveys completed prior to the intervention highlight how the serviceway was considered a "good thoroughfare" however was under-utilised as it was unappealing and perceived as an unsafe space.

Following the intervention, there has been a significant improvement in site usage. Evaluation surveys indicate a 48% increase in people using the serviceway as a pedestrian thoroughfare.

Business owners and tenants also report that the serviceway is now appealing, useable and feels safer and more welcoming. The serviceway is now being used for various purposes, including resting, eating and recreation activities.

The average count of people walking through the space.



Council and the NSW Government assessed the project area before, during and after, using the Evaluation Tool.
Image courtesy: Transport for NSW.



Timeline

Project

2020

July

Places to Love partnership established

August

Community engagement
Online posts and survey

September

Engagement with local businesses

2021

April

Road safety audit completed

June

Detailed design completed

August

COVID-19 public health order restrictions heighten and Liverpool LGA is classified as an area of concern limiting construction work and movement of residents and workers

2022

January

Site establishment and traffic control

February

Installation of carriageway paint, traffic calming devices, planter boxes, bench seating, trees and plantings

March

Planned community activation is cancelled due to adverse weather and flooding

April

Skyview mural artwork installation

May

Installation of shaded seating.
Railway Serviceway soft launch combined with Starry Sari event

Post project

Streets as Shared Spaces grant confirmed for adjacent Railway Street, building on lessons learnt from this project

Cost breakdown

Liverpool City Council used a lighter, quicker cheaper approach with the \$105,000 of funding provided by the NSW Government for the Places to Love project.

Description of Activities	Cost
Detailed design	\$10,000
Road safety audit	
Review of environmental factors	
Installation of landscape works	\$40,000
Site establishment and traffic control	
Planter boxes and bench seating	
Traffic calming devices	
Umbrellas	
Trees and plantings	
Artificial turf	
Artworks	
Carriageway painting	\$40,000
Skyview mural artwork	\$15,000
Approximate total	\$105,000



Seating area with planter boxes in Railway Serviceway. Image courtesy of Transport for NSW.

Outcomes and lessons learnt

Railway Serviceway and the adjacent Regal Lane have been transformed into a vibrant, welcoming space with murals, seating, and greenery, demonstrating how small-scale interventions can enhance pedestrian experience and public space utilisation.

This demonstration project tested the feasibility for long-term upgrades to the serviceway, while also helping to bring community together and support local artists and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The temporary and semi-permanent upgrades to the serviceway have informed upcoming works to enhance walkability and amenity on adjacent Railway Street. Similar installations and projects will continue to be tested in the city centre to gain a better understanding of approaches that best suit diverse stakeholders before implementing permanent upgrades.

This demonstration project was successfully delivered despite challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

These included public health orders restricting workers' mobility, impacted global supply chains and materials shortages, and worker resource shortages causing project delays. Council utilised in-house resources to deliver the project and adapted engagement methods to overcome these challenges

Key learnings that Council can build on in future public space projects:

- Serviceways and laneways have potential beyond their traditional roles, especially as inviting pedestrian thoroughfares and for local businesses seeking to utilise rear areas for additional dining space.
- Use evidence-based analysis, such as testing durability and usage patterns in the public domain, to revitalise and repurpose under-utilised areas throughout the city centre.
- Conduct early and ongoing engagement with local businesses and stakeholders to ensure support and mitigate potential issues.
- Ensure future engagement includes co-designing with local businesses, schools, and community members to encourage community pride and stewardship over public space interventions.
- Include site 'walkshop' engagements and scale mock-ups of designs to help communicate the design concepts to residents and businesses.
- Factor in appropriate lead times for business owner approvals to use their property walls and share land use.
- Maximise internal expertise where possible to improve cost-effectiveness.

Local resident walking past the wall mural in Railway Serviceway. Artwork by Sophi Odling and Christina Huynh. Image Courtesy: Transport for NSW



Photo diary

The photography on this page documents the transformation of the Railway Serviceway and Regal Lane from an under-utilised thoroughfare to an activated and vibrant link in the Liverpool city centre.

Before

After



1. **Before** – Pedestrian thoroughfare, Regal Lane, connecting Scott Street and Railway Serviceway.
2. **After** – Railway Lane with new colourful bench seating, planter box with shaded seating, and view of murals.
3. **Before** – Vehicle-dominated Railway Serviceway.
4. **After** – Seating areas in Railway Serviceway.

5. **Before** – Entrance of Railway Serviceway.
6. **After** – Rainbow street paint at entrance complimenting murals of Railway Serviceway.
7. **Before** – View of Railway Serviceway and Railway Lane.
8. **After** – Tactical interventions to create a welcoming place for people.

Photos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8. Images courtesy of Transport for NSW.
 Photos 6, 7. Images courtesy of Liverpool City Council.



“

With this piece, I have integrated a lot of the different local cultures of the area. As there's so many different types of cultures that I've tried to unify through their festivals that they do by integrating use of their lights and candles, and some flora as well.

”

Sophie Odling - Muralist and visual artist

Artist Sophi Odling painting a mural onto the rear wall of an adjacent business. Image courtesy: Transport for NSW

NSW Government

Published by NSW Government

Title: Railway Serviceway: Transforming a service vehicle laneway into a place for people

First published: February 2024

© Crown Copyright 2024 NSW Government

You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Government as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (February 2024) and may not be accurate, current or complete.

This publication recognises the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and makes reference to project outcomes during the 2020-21 period. The State of New South Wales, the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.

Image on front cover: Pedestrians walking through Railway Serviceway.

Image courtesy: Elena De Bruijne, Transport for NSW

Artwork by Sophi Odling

Resources



For more information, please visit [Liverpool City Council](#)



Visit our website to learn more about the [Great Places Toolkit](#) or email PublicSpace@planning.nsw.gov.au