

FREESTATE

Capability Statement

WE CREATE EXPERIENCES THAT ARE SOCIALLY USEFUL, COMMERCIALLY ASTUTE & CONTINUALLY RELEVANT

WHAT WE DO

For over 20 years, FreeState has informed the work of some of the world's greatest brand-builders, city-makers and place-activators. FreeState provides experience strategy, projects, and training for organisations seeking to optimise the relationships between their stakeholders, be they customers, employees, partners, or the communities they serve.

Our aim has always been to create experiences that are machines for belonging. This moves beyond the consumer facing brand expression to also include the operational and cultural back-of-house aspects

of service and design. This demands a unique approach, one that seeks to design for both space and time.

All these factors combine to create a strong identity and a dynamic experience of place. They're the socially-conscious drivers that inform the ongoing improvement of commercially-focused measures such as footfall, dwell time, and brand loyalty. Altogether, it's an approach that makes for an adaptable and resilient success story, and one that we all want to be part of!



SOCIALLY USEFUL

Designing for a higher purpose



Bringing people together

One of the most positive and heart-warming responses to Covid-19 has been the noticeable increase in sense of community. There is a newfound desire for people to connect with their family, friends, neighbours and colleagues, participate in community initiatives, and feel part of something bigger than themselves.

Servicing the wider community

Precincts can 'give back' and demonstrate their care beyond their immediate users by extending their services and amenities to the wider community. From initiatives such as community gardens and workshops, to supporting local creatives through pop-up markets or meanwhile uses - precincts can continually reinvent themselves to mean more, for more people.

Re-instating the town square

Precincts have the opportunity to extend beyond a place of transactions, but rather, become a go-to destination for the community. A place to meet, gather and build meaningful relationships amongst locals - free of charge and without any ulterior expectations.

Building relationships

People's expectations are evolving, whereby they are seeking greater alignment to an organisation's brand and purpose. Precincts can act as a host for these experiences through an array of programmes and partnerships that speak to their user's values, building meaningful relationships between the user, the organisation and the place.

OUT OF THE BOX THINKING:

"The art of being together"

In the [EG Property Podcast](#), our co-founder Adam Scott discusses how the pandemic has only emphasised our desire as people to 'be together' and the critical role that culture plays in placemaking to successfully facilitate this. [Listen here](#) →

COMMERCIALLY ASTUTE

Creating desirable, viable and feasible solutions



Multiple reasons to go

Recognising that attraction to and dwelling at a place is more than the act of fulfilling a single need, people require at least “three reasons to go”. Most obviously the primary engagement (be that to work, learn, dine, travel etc.) but also social, leisure, arts & culture and services.

Curated tenant mix

Understanding how a mix of commercial tenants within a precinct may impact the success of one another, and the broader place strategy. Identifying opportunities for ancillary activities that flow-on from a user’s primary activity, both enhancing the precinct experience and increasing commercial outcomes.

Adaptive re-use

Economic downturn post pandemic, aging populations and developments in technology are leaving a growing number of shopfronts, buildings and industrial spaces vacant. In response, we are seeing a creative re-purposing of these spaces for new commercial ventures or unique experiences that speak to past uses and characteristics of the site.

Maximising utilisation

Understanding how to attract people beyond typical occupancy periods is critical to maximising ROI. Operators must consider an array of ‘modes’ for the precinct - leveraging things like retail, sports events and renting of amenities to encourage evening and weekend activation. This will require greater blurring of public and private spaces within.

OUT OF THE BOX THINKING:

“This is not about property” - Ross Bailey

In episode 5 of our [FreeThinking](#) podcast, we speak with Ross Bailey from Appear Here, an online marketplace for retail space. Ross talks about how we will build back the delight-inducing, memory-making theatre of the high street, and how this is not about property, but rather entertainment and experience. [Listen here](#) →

CONTINUALLY RELEVANT

Designing for time and place



Knowing your [now + next] audience

The needs and objectives of people and their communities are constantly changing. Understanding new drivers, as well as anticipating evolving needs will be critical to operational success. Precincts must redefine their services and offerings to ensure they are speaking to emerging audience expectations.

Activation led

Precincts must look to key experiential assets that involve their audience beyond typical place interactions. To do so, these experiences all be small threads connected to a more powerful story - a unique, place based narrative that enhances user and visitor engagement to build place connection and encourage ongoing return.

Calendar of events

In order to remain continually relevant, we must co-create the experience with it's users to ensure activities are meaningful and respond to specific needs or issues at the time. Designing the experience through a programming lens will ensure activities and partnerships are always live and always a reflection of the current landscape.

Power to the people

Getting the audience involved in curating their own experience will increase it's meaning and maximise it's chance of success. Operators must handover the reigns to it's people - encouraging participation, nominating ownership and co-creating events and activations alongside the people they are intended for.

OUT OF THE BOX THINKING:

"Always meanwhile initiatives" - Kat Hana

In episode 16 of our [FreeThinking podcast](#), we speak with Kat Hanna, a Masterplan Strategist at Lendlease. Kat talks about how the right diverse questions propel more inclusive strategies, and how we might ensure those valuable cultural and social uses are not just 3D marketing, but baked into a perpetually relevant piece of city. [Listen here](#) →

Our method

“Our aim has always been to create experiences that are machines for belonging: these are the experience that make for socially useful, commercially astute and continually relevant organisations. They result in businesses that are the sum of their good relations.”

**- Adam Scott
Creative Director, FreeState**

Strategy

Acting as special counsel, FreeState works with senior leadership to develop experience-led approaches designed to break down operational silos and so better connect, align, and guide their organisations. Championing a sense of shared purpose, and centred on the primacy of the experience, it is a way of working that allows these organisations to implement lasting change.

Action

Working with teams and departments, FreeState initiates projects designed to help organisations become the masters of their own destinies. To do so, we advocate a ‘see-one do-one teach-one’ approach to designing and implementing clusters of interventions. We help set up and model the pilot project before training teams to take ownership of all that follows.

Training

Our training courses offer our clients the opportunity to embed a methodology of experience design in their organisations. An integrated approach, it is a methodology that provides a foundation for implementing immediate and lasting change, breaking down siloes, systemising a process of continual improvement, and allowing organisations to flourish.

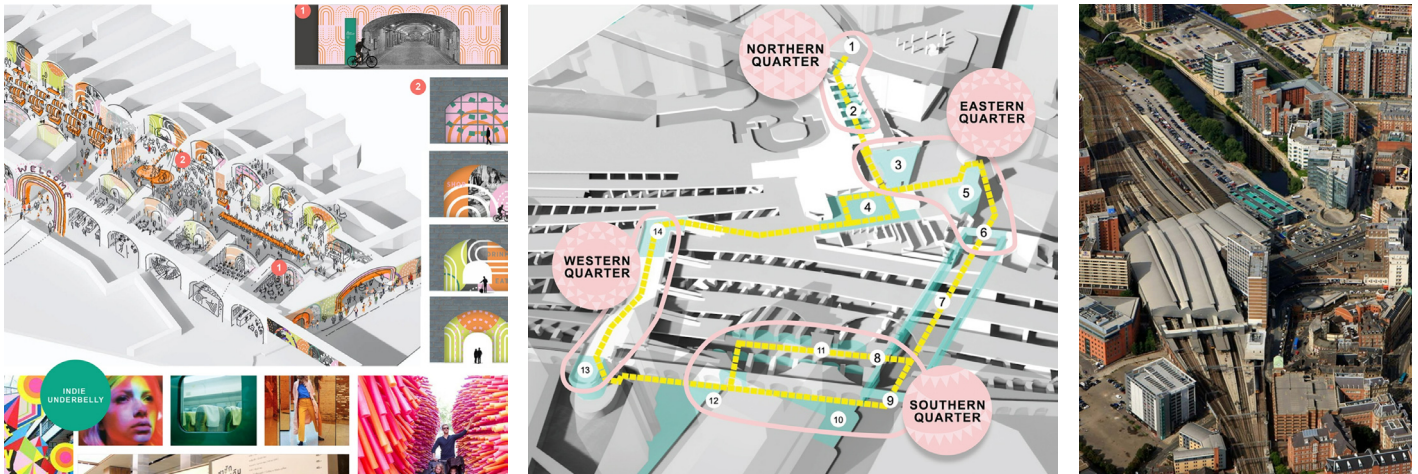


Together with their clients, FreeState designs experiences to inspire belonging

Recent experience - infrastructure

LEEDS STATION

Healing the north-south divide



“In introducing a ‘start now plan long term’ approach, FreeState showed the way to healing a century-long divide between the north and the south.”

REBECCA CUNNINGHAM, NETWORK RAIL

The City of Leeds has long intended to become the northern powerhouse that it once was. To this end, it awaits the advent of HS2 and is in the midst of a 10-year £3 billion regeneration project. Unfortunately, the project’s ambitions have been complicated by a large Victorian-era railway station and surrounding brownfield sites that have long served as a no-go barrier between the neglected south and the hitherto more affluent north. A historical challenge, it is infamous for being the graveyard of many a plan to right the wrong.

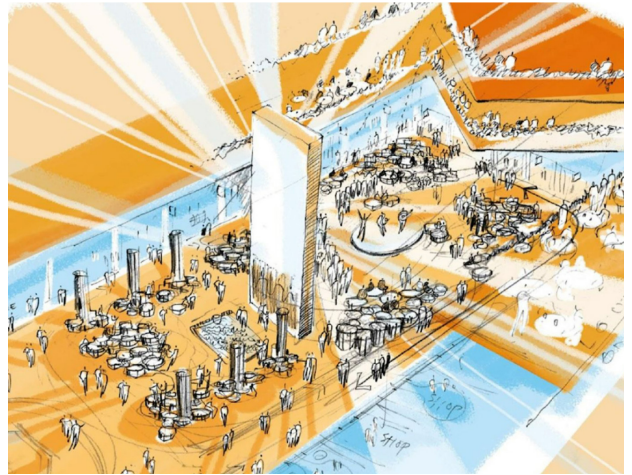
Undeterred, FreeState accepted a commission to create an experience masterplan for Network Rail and Leeds City Council’s ambition for a Destination Station capable of achieving three key objectives: one, create an attractive, relevant, and resilient destination in and of itself; two, become the magnetic force and therefore link between the

regenerating Southbank and the hitherto more affluent north; and three, be the catalyst for – rather than barrier against – an inclusive economy, one that in activating space to the south seeks to help rebalance the city, without negatively impacting on the success of the north.

Bringing stakeholders to the table, employing a mix of traditional and digital research techniques, and utilising an infrastructure-light start-now, plan-long term approach, we delivered a feasibility study, an investigation report, a Station Campus vision, and are currently in the developed-design stage of the intervention, including planning and licensing, detailed design and specification, and staffing and operations. With all stakeholders joined at the hip and supercharged by its importance for the south, the three-year activation plan launched in July 2022.

MELBOURNE AIRPORT

A big step forward



“Beyond efficient, beyond effective, the most generous of civic gifts, Stepping Beyond promises to break the mould, whereby Melbourne Airport becomes a destination in itself.”

LYELL STAMBI, CEO MELBOURNE AIRPORT

With 37 million people passing through its gates each year – and rising to 60 million in the next twenty years – Melbourne Airport has set about readying itself for becoming Australia’s largest and most prestigious airport.

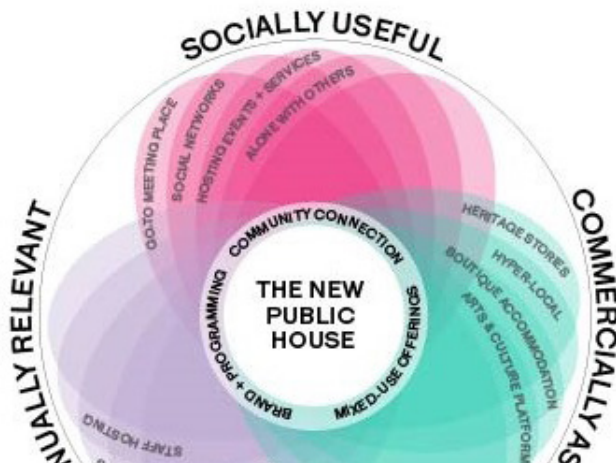
Our first task was a precinct-wide audit of the traveller experience, with a mandate to develop a vision that filled identified shortfalls and developed an experience that resonated with the airport’s employees, its suppliers, its clients and, most importantly, its travellers. Following on, our recommendations for creating a door-to-plane experience included working with and helping inform the AUS\$1 billion masterplan for the new international terminal, radically overhauling of the design of its domestic terminal, the development of over AUS\$100 million operating system, producing a staff and supplier traveller experience training

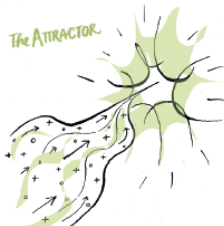

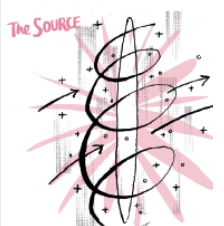
toolkit, and advising on the setting up of a traveller experience management department.

A physical and digital intervention, the ‘Stepping Forward’ experience masterplan has progressed to design concept and is now in various stages of delivery. Crucially, as well as working closely with key stakeholders, including the airport’s airline clients, the brief for the identity that sits at the centre of the intervention was such that it should not be overshadowed by the city’s own identity and yet, at the same time, be of the city.

AMP SYDNEY

Workplace experience



SHARE OUR STORY	ENERGISE OUR PEOPLE	CONNECT OUR COMMUNITY
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inputs and skills from facilitators who greet, coach, manage and curate the experience. A culture of help encouraging all AMP people to be greeters and coaches. A positive experience facilitated by knowledgeable helpers who express AMP generosity. A responsive programme that is broadcast and attracts diverse audiences. A live feed of information and happenings to invite in and guide AMP people. Joyful and personal experiences through digitally supported personalisation, choice + recommendations. Curated programme drives the variety and set of essential and optional experiences. 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating a transparent and cooperative culture within AMP by sharing knowledge and stories. Enriching current roles and services to provide a better platform of knowledge, skills and support. Hosting, coaching and motivating capabilities to support self-organising and self-service. Capture and amplify AMP stories across a range of media to increase idea-sharing and learning. Data and information technology to support the hosting/coaching capability. Wellbeing promotion, measuring and feedback through events, activities, services and technology. Sparks as platforms for exploration and discussion to drive AMP ideas. 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a curation programme to capture + express how AMP hear, feel and see themselves. A hosting team that listens, feeds and manages responsive experience and communication. Hosting that guides, informs and facilitates knowledge, interactions, collaboration. An AMP Live AI knowledge archive and digital networking tool that helps curate the experience. Analysing big data qualitatively to ensure information is responsive, relevant and useful. Ensuring device integration, connectivity and equity on and off site. An iconic, central, interactive and kinetic symbol of AMP workplace experience.

BETTER ATTRACTION

Targeted interventions to increase brand loyalty attraction of talent and partners.

BETTER INVOLVEMENT

Programmed experiences that increase face-to-face encounters to increase collaboration and productivity across diverse business sectors.

BETTER BELONGING

A responsive framework of programming and support increases experience innovation and customer service quality.

The brief from AMP asked Hassell and FreeState to re-imagine and challenge the relationship between the future of their business, people and their work, with technology and workplace. Quay Quarter Tower was marked to be a leading symbol of AMP's diverse spirit and brand. AMP Live is the live expression of all that is AMP. It is a promise to be active, responsive and strategic in the face of disruption, ensuring a destination for talent and service.

AMP Live is reflected throughout each and every space within the AMP tenancy. The five principles relate primarily to different themes/spaces in the building whilst being reflected in some way, in all parts: The finalisation of the typical floors including work setting mix and prototype design, enclosed and semi enclosed meeting spaces, collaboration, project, quiet room and social spaces; The

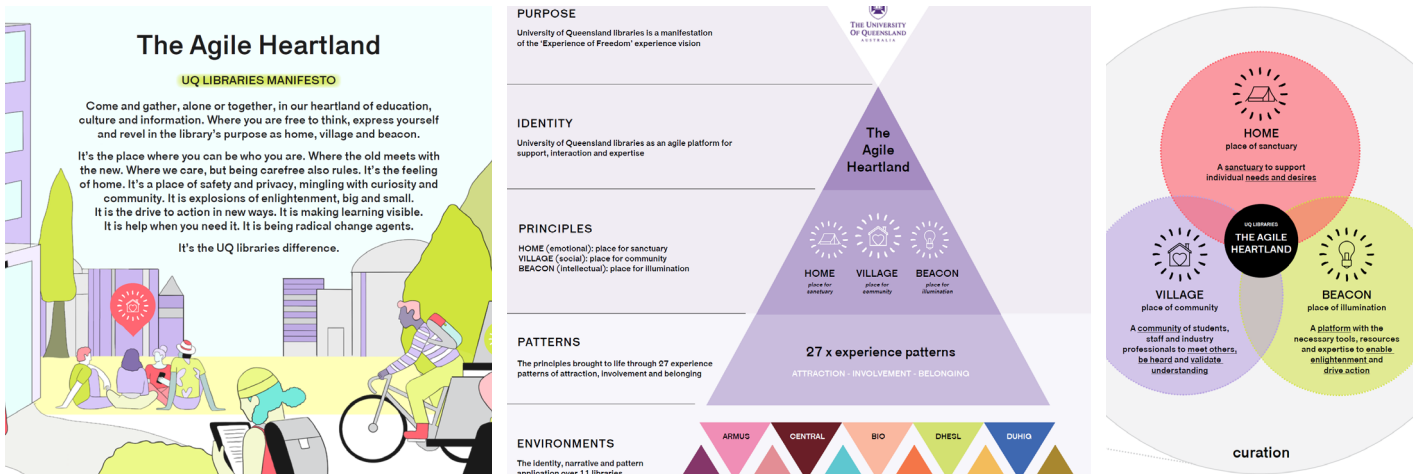
conceptual development of the project principles into a strategy for colour, materials and furniture direction as part of the look and feel concept.

By intentionally designing the experiences, AMP wanted to offer employees, guests and collaborators a workplace that went beyond simple aspiration. This Experience Masterplan approach enabled the vision to come to life, and significantly influenced the future direction of all 3 parallel project streams – people, place and technology.

A new approach to workplace design has been established that embeds experiential design into the heart of the workplace and will create a holistic, human-centered, highly flexible, functional and beautiful workplace that has retained its relevance in a post-pandemic era.

Recent experience - education

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND Libraries masterplan



“What a great foundation we have here - so many good insights, reflections and suggestions.”

DAVID SOLNET
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, SERVICE MANAGEMENT UQ

Even before the pandemic, the University of Queensland (UQ) was increasingly aware of the significance the overall university experience of the student plays when it comes to choosing and succeeding in one's university. Equally, UQ were aware that a positive student experience results in graduates championing their university - leading to ongoing financial support and advocacy. They also acknowledged the important role university experiences play in fostering independent, confident and creative graduates who will shape and lead the future of society. After the turbulent years of the pandemic, these considerations have been accentuated. UQ libraries play an intrinsic part in this story - contributing to the creation of student belonging and connection and furthermore, long-term success and engagement of UQ graduates.

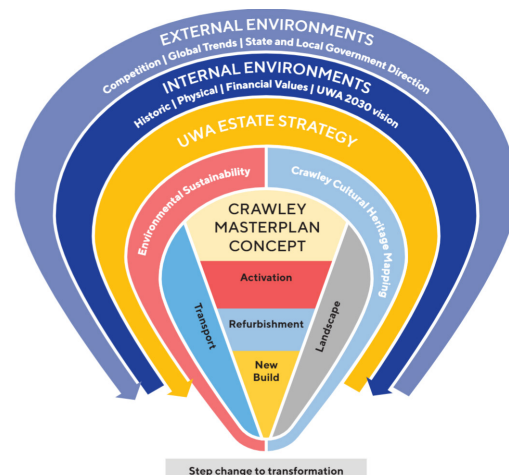
The UQ campus consists of 11 individual library buildings. FreeState was commissioned to interrogate the 11 libraries, strengthening their unique identity and proposition, whilst also

considering the broader ecosystem of the libraries' as a holistic service - how they connect, complement and support each other and their users.

The UQ libraries experience masterplan represents the universities' drive for an entirely new attitude to design and planning - placing the student front and centre to envision what could happen across the libraries' ecosystem to support their university experience. We cannot rely on spatial design alone to achieve this, but rather, they must be brought to life through programmes and activations that will continue to evolve and remain relevant over time. In turn, this will foster deeper connections with the university itself and encourage ongoing engagement and support, beyond the students' time on campus. In turn, this will foster deeper connections with the university itself and encourage ongoing engagement and support, beyond the students' time on campus.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A campus heart that grows



“A masterplan created by our community, for a progressive, resilient and sustainable future.”

PROFESSOR AMIT CHAKMA
VICE-CHANCELLOR, UWA

When FreeState was commissioned to design its experience masterplan, the University of Western Australia was in the middle of the delivery of the most significant of changes since its inception, one born of the fact that - despite its reputation, its results, and its beautiful campus - over a third of UWA's students reported feeling unengaged and unwelcome. The key, it recognised, to reversing this sense of disengagement, was to stitch together a student-focussed and university-enabled activity-led plan for overhauling the campus's programme, use of Estate, and identity.

In response, we created a vision for a vibrant and free-flowing campus. Recommending that the campus of the future is part agora part innovation cluster, the Marketplace of Ideas experience vision spearheaded an activation plan – which included a set of guidelines, fixed and intermittent activities, and an activation team - that was specifically designed to give national and international students, its staff, and industry partners everything

they needed and wanted: recognition, stimulation, and opportunity. In short, it returned the campus to its most important asset: its people, and in particular its students.

Critically, our advice was to turn the traditional narrative for a plan of works on its head, whereby the planned intervention did not begin with the masterplanned build, move on to the non-fixed components or refurbishment of the estate, and is then overlaid by plans for the user experience. Rather, in the case of UWA, each aspect or theme of the main campus masterplan is led by the experience masterplan, in which activities inform refurbishment and new build needs. Key pillars of the strategy include both the university's recognition of the cultural heritage of indigenous Kaatajin Boodja traditions and its adoption of a supporting environmental sustainability strategy.

Recent experience - retail

LINEN HALL A vision of the future



“What a great foundation we have here - so many good insights, reflections and suggestions.”

DAVID SOLNET
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, SERVICE MANAGEMENT UQ

FreeState's have been recently working on a number of giant adaptive reuse projects - such as those proposed for Croydon - with Linen Hall for TCE being fine example. Here we are pushing for 'experience-ready' versatility, with multiple concepts for multiple scenarios. Making places and spaces flex with the everchanging wants and needs of the tenants and their experience-hungry audiences. All together, it is the eternally flexible co-created campus. The mantra here would well suit the heritage approach in Croydon: 'Fall in love with the patina of adaptive reuse. Design generously, for now, next and after we're gone.'

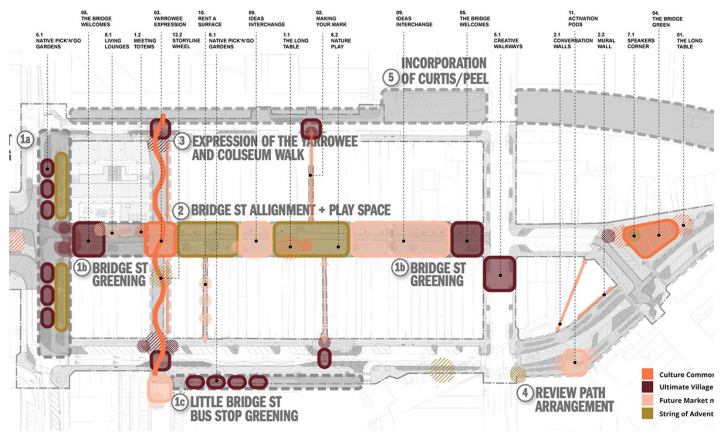
FreeState was engaged by The Crown Estate to dramatically re-imagine an Edwardian Department Store on Regent's Street, and in so doing, attract a legendary, international corporate occupier.

A 30,000 sqm property across 7 storeys, the task was to position Linen Hall as a new type of 'destination', attracting a new generation of experience-seekers. FreeState created the 'Journey of Discovery' Vision alongside Heatherwick Studio and designed the highly charged neighbourhoods which brought it to life.

Linen Hall is the most important development on Regent's Street for a generation and an exemplar of The Crown Estate's higher purpose - to create iconic destination experiences that are both socially useful and commercially astute.

BRIDGE MALL, BALLARAT

Regenerating a linear town square



“You helped provide us with the tools to push for innovation in our space development.”

TARA POOLE
COORDINATOR - CREATIVE CITY, CITY OF BALLARAT

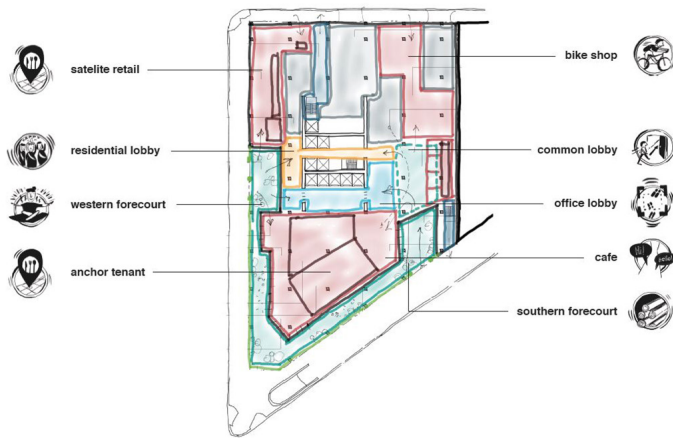
An UNESCO Creative City of Craft and Folk Art, Ballarat is a place steeped in history, storytelling, and transformation. With passionate residents and a robust tourism sector, population and annual visitor growth are key economic drivers for the city. The local government council saw an opportunity to reignite a neglected precinct in a strategic location: Bridge Street. A critical component for the revitalisation of the area, we were asked to create a distinctive place-based offering and experience strategy to transform Bridge Street into a key destination for Ballarat.

Our first task was to work together with the many different voices of the community to create the Bridge Street story. We interviewed user and stakeholder groups based on data from City of

Ballarat's consultations; layering location insights gathered using big data and spatial analysis to better understand experience drivers and gaps. From the stories that were shared, we heard a need to give the precinct back to the community and foster a sense of engagement for all of Ballarat's diverse people. We worked with the client to create a precinct vision and possible futures for Bridge Street, reinstating the precinct as a central meeting place that supports a thriving economy, engages diverse community groups, and tells the story of a distinct and unique place. With the vision in hand, we co-created with community members to make real the strategic positioning of the precinct.

Recent experience - mixed use

30 VAN NESS People powered tower



“An Integrated Vertical Precinct; a place for people in the heart of San Francisco; a building framework enriched with curated experiences... A confluence of People, Place & Performance.”

Housing problems are an increasing headache for city planners and in response, we're seeing an increase in living densities. Whilst this is proving to be effective in its own right, it still comes with its own set of challenges. In San Francisco, AMP's new commercial and residential tower on Van Ness Avenue experienced these challenges first hand.

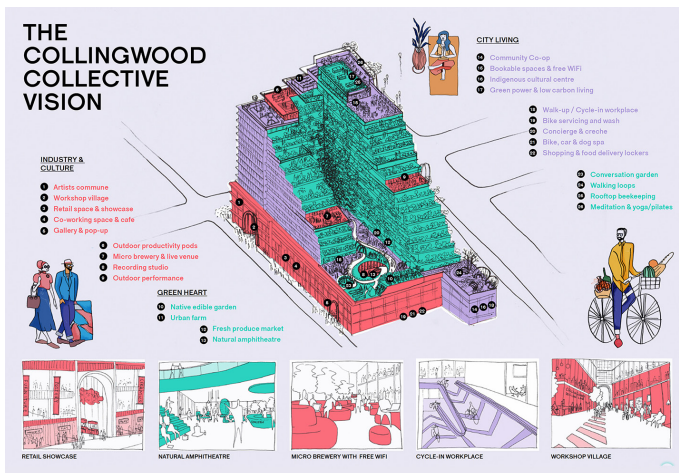
Consequently, FreeState were commissioned to help solve some of the complex social issues that come with the integration of new developments in established communities. Put simply, we believed the tower could be a community in its own right. A place locals could embrace, residents could call their own, and businesses could thrive in. From creating a unique identity for the building, to facilitating its management, we created an experience masterplan that informed everything from architectural design to interior activations –

bringing people together and taking an established neighbourhood in a new direction.

The 30 Van Ness project brings a transformational mix of public transport, quality retail environments, world class commercial space and more - resulting in a holistic commercial campus approach amongst a neighborhood subject to rapid transformation. We were committed to an approach that puts people first, creating an activated building framework that facilitates new forms of interaction between communities, encourages creative encounters and blurs the boundaries between 'live, work and play' and the fabric of the workplace and the urban fabric.

COLLINGWOOD COLLECTIVE

A co-visioned community



“This is such an impressive body of work, with pretty much all bases covered. Everyone really rose to the challenge when we needed it.”

JEREMY SCHLUTER
PROJECT LEAD, HASSELL

The Collingwood Collective site is a highly visible location with an outstanding and visionary developer. Now, there's an opportunity for UEM to not just deliver a building, but to orchestrate a real, living community.

COVID-19 has accelerated many trends in community- building, the share economy, purposeful living and consumerism, and has evoked an uptake of crafts, DIY making, entrepreneurship & innovation and respect for green spaces. The world is shifting at a radical pace and we will not return. A new approach is needed to ensure places are commercially astute as well as socially beneficial.

After initial desktop research, which gathered high level information around the history of the local, people and context within the located site, we were able to conduct personal interviews and surveys

with the residents. The survey was able to establish a rich source of baseline data towards the current satisfaction with their residence amenities and local community. Compiling that data into themes to access the current and desired experience of the local Collingwood residents to inform the design.

From our research and interviews, we identified six key personas who will one day live, play and work at Collingwood Collective. From the research, we distilled the insights into four persona profiles focusing on their psychographic needs and desires to better inform and align design outcomes.

“The designed experience changes the way we feel about a place. It helps us decide not only whether we’re coming back, but whether or not we want to work, travel or play there.”

**ADAM SCOTT
CO-FOUNDER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR
FREESTATE**

Adam Scott
Co-Founder & Creative
Director
+44 207 490 7669
adam@freestatestudio.com

Su Lim
Managing Director
+61 498 198 407
su@freestatestudio.com

London Studio
L1, 6-14 Underwood St
London N1 7JQ
United Kingdom

Melbourne Studio
61 Little Collins Street
Melbourne VIC
Australia 3000