

CITY OF PERTH
City of Light

Forgotten Spaces

REVITALISING PERTH'S LANEWAYS

EPISODE 2 • 2023 - 2033



Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Perth acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land that we are situated on, the Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nation and Aboriginal people from other lands. We celebrate the continuing traditions, living culture, and the spiritual connection to Boorloo and the Derbarl Yerrigan. We offer our respects to Elders past and present.

Cover Image: *The Wolf*
Joshua Webb, Wolf Lane, Central Perth



The Waargyl
Led by Lance Chadd & Trish Robinson
Moolap-Kanana Lane, Central Perth

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Executive Summary

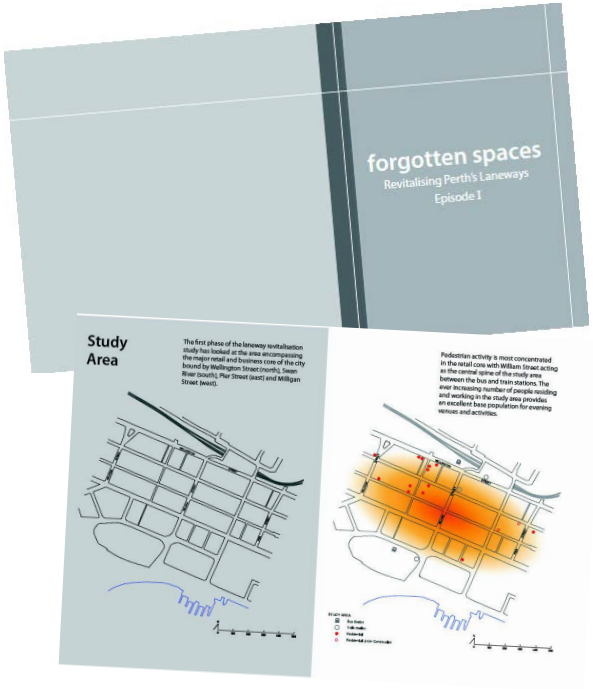
The City of Perth is committed to creating a liveable, sustainable, and prosperous city that provides a high quality of life for its residents, visitors, and businesses. Its public realm helps shape the city's character and experience. Laneways are a valued and vital part of the city's urban form, and their unique, human scaled dimensions have the potential to be much loved spaces full of quirky charm.

Inspired by the success of laneway revitalisation in other cities, Council adopted Forgotten Spaces: Revitalising Perth's Laneways – Episode 1 in 2008, along with a program of business grants and public realm upgrades.

A review was undertaken in 2022 to ensure the strategy addresses current and emerging trends, but is also responsive and opportunistic into the future. This review has identified the need for the following:

- Continued investment in the public realm in City-owned laneways.
- Recognition of the primary function of laneways for servicing and access.
- Recognition of the historic significance of laneways.

To maximise investment, activity should be encouraged within a select few laneways and the City should capitalise on interest from adjoining businesses and property owners.



Forgotten Spaces: Revitalising Perth's Laneways - Episode 1

For the purposes of this document **laneways are defined as** *access ways which are secondary to main streets within the city. They may also be known as right of ways. They are primarily open to the sky with buildings on both sides. Ownership may be public, private, or a combination of both.*



Wolf Lane, Central Perth


J. WALTER THOMPSON
PERTH
EXIT
THIS BIN IS RESERVED
THIS BIN IS RESERVED

Introduction

Laneways are often forgotten spaces in the city. In these small gaps between buildings, the gritty, unglamorous activities of the city take place. Many laneways are in prime locations close to busy streets, shopping, and entertainment precincts.

Like other cities, Perth has recognised the potential to transform these spaces. A great example is Wolf Lane which is now a thriving destination in the city with a variety of activities and public art that draws visitors and walking tours.

Forgotten Spaces: Revitalising Perth's Laneways - Episode 2 has involved a comprehensive analysis of all the laneways in Central Perth and Northbridge. Each laneway was assessed for its suitability to change. Priority laneways have been identified and while efforts will be concentrated on these laneways first, it is recognised that this may change over time.

While the study area has initially focused on Central Perth and Northbridge, this document will form the strategy for all laneways throughout the City of Perth. Detailed analysis of laneways in other areas, such as West Perth, will be undertaken as separate, related projects.

"Think big but always remember to make the places where people are to be, small."

- Jan Gehl

Objective

To improve the contribution that laneways make to the city's economy and vitality while sustaining and protecting their traditional physical form and functions.

Aims

This strategy aims to promote a city that has:

- Some key distinct and thriving laneways.
- Safe and legible pedestrian linkages.
- Laneway access for servicing.
- Business diversity that offers a point of difference.
- Creative and inspiring spaces which provide a canvas for public art.
- Unique spaces that could provide an alternative venue for small scaled events.



Howard Lane, Central Perth

Context

Study Area

The study area encompasses Northbridge and Central Perth. Pedestrian activity is most concentrated in the retail core with William Street acting as the central spine between the bus and train stations.

The ever increasing number of people residing, visiting, studying and working in the study area provides an excellent base population for evening venues and activities.

Of the **67** laneways in the study area, only **19** are owned (or part owned) by the City of Perth, with many of them located in heritage areas.





History

City Grid & Built Form

Perth's laneways are integral to its urban fabric and provide an insight into the city's built form history. Like many other cities in Australia, narrow laneways were located behind old terrace houses and businesses, originally designed as access points for the 'night soil' collector. The typical laneway width of approximately 3 metres was built to accommodate access via horse and cart.

Perth's city blocks were shallow rectangles laid out in 1829 – 1830 and remain much the same today as when they were first subdivided. The original allotments ran through from street to street in a north south direction so that premises had two frontages. The large department stores and honeycomb of arcades that run between the two malls are a legacy of this pattern, as is the lack of service lanes compared to Melbourne's Hoddle Grid.

What many of Perth's laneways have in common is their intimate scale, often edged by the original building stock. Their scale offers a vastly different experience to the wider main streets of the city.



Perth 1833



Perth 2023



Heritage buildings, Wolf Lane, Central Perth

Why are Laneways Important?

Laneways are integral to the way the whole city operates each day. Bins can be stored and collected, vehicles parked, and shops can be serviced via these tiny spaces without compromising the functions of the adjacent main streets.

Regardless of their historic and current functions, laneways share many of the following features:

- Narrow spaces that open to the sky – pedestrians remain in touch with the changes in environment and activities in the city.
- Fine grain – their scale offering an intensity not experienced in city streets.
- Undeniably gritty – offering a glimpse of the city's industrial and commercial past.
- Good connectivity and permeability – laneways offer convenient short cuts through the city grid.
- Quirky areas which, being unfamiliar, offer an element of surprise and discovery.

These unique features make them ideal spaces to bring creativity, fun and much needed activation in key areas of Central Perth and Northbridge.

Fundamental principles for all laneways



Accessible

- Servicing & bin storage
- Deliveries & carparking
- Access needs space



Connected

- Alternative routes
- Unique scale & intimacy
- Low volumes of traffic



Safe

- Safe for all users
- Good lighting
- Clear lines of sight

Aspirational principles for key city laneways



Creative

- Walls as a canvas
- Feature lighting
- Niche businesses



Fun

- 'Pop-up' events
- Annual festivals
- Ephemeral art



Activated

- Mix of activities
- Active frontages
- Outdoor dining

The Potential

New Uses for Old Spaces

Small Bars and Cafés

Small bars and cafés are ideal uses for the city's laneways. They attract people to explore the city and allow the reclamation of underutilised areas. They also help to improve safety in the city by providing much needed activity and eyes-on-the-street.

The economic benefit has been demonstrated in Perth and other Australian capital cities where small bars prove to be vibrant, low impact venues. These intimate bars are ideal for hidden spaces and the joy of finding them is part of their charm.

Creative Industries

Creative Industries (CIs) – software developers, design studios, film makers, and writers – turn innovative ideas into commercial outcomes. Over the years most of these businesses have left the city as spaces became more expensive. These industries are an essential part of a thriving economy – nurturing talent from local art and design schools and providing substantial benefits to other sectors of the community.

The rise of CIs in the study area may lead to cultural changes in the way workers interact with the city, for example, entrepreneurs, designers and artists often conduct business in public spaces and after hours in local cafés and bars.

Realising the potential of laneways to foster these industries could help to promote Perth as an internationally attractive city with cultural diversity and exciting places to explore.

Small is Beautiful

Public Realm

An upgrade (or minor refresh) of the existing public realm will support businesses that have already established themselves in city laneways and encourage others.

As laneways are often quirky half-hidden spaces, they lend themselves to be treated differently to the main streets of Perth. The physical form of a laneway should enhance and celebrate its distinctive environment by reflecting the precinct or neighbourhood character. Sometimes only small changes may be needed to give a laneway character and to make the space feel safe. Some could be transformed by feature lighting alone, for others an engaging artwork may be all that is needed. Others have the existing granite setts sitting under a layer of asphalt waiting to be revealed.

Although most of the city's laneways will need to continue to function as access ways for services, small changes to the way bins are stored and traffic managed could help towards allowing a variety of activities to co-exist in these spaces. Ongoing maintenance and public art programs will ensure these spaces evolve over time and remain engaging.

Regardless of the scale of the physical intervention, the integration of materials for lighting, paving and artwork should work with the context – an acknowledgement that an element of the 'grit' should be retained is necessary.

Built Form Design

There is opportunity for existing laneways to be enhanced through adjacent development.

Design policies will ensure that new developments contribute to and protect existing character qualities, such as the micro climate and scale, as well as any cultural heritage values. Buildings should be designed to reflect the utilitarian nature of the laneway.

Buildings should also be designed to provide passive surveillance. Where laneways are dead ends there may be opportunities to create future links to increase the permeability of the city.

The City's local planning scheme allows for a wide range of uses in the area, providing opportunities for activation for select laneways.



Guildford Lane, Melbourne

Priority Laneways

Overall Priority Laneways

Each laneway was assessed and classified with a rating to help identify priorities. Class A laneways are typically owned by the City, currently in good condition and would benefit from further investment.

CENTRAL LANEWAYS

CBD 1	ROW Little Milligan St
CBD 2	ROW 410 Murray St
CBD 3	Shafto Lane North
CBD 4	Prince Lane
CBD 5	ROW 64-68 King St
CBD 6	Grand Lane
CBD 7	ROW 140 Murray St
CBD 8	McLean Lane
CBD 9	ROW 46 Milligan St
CBD 10	ROW 419 Murray St
CBD 11	ROW 401 Murray St
CBD 12	Shafto Lane South
CBD 13	ROW 381 Murray St
CBD 14	Munster Lane
CBD 15	Wolf Lane
CBD 16	Moolap-Kanana Lane
CBD 17	ROW 237 Murray St Mall
CBD 18	ROW 227 Murray St Mall
CBD 19	ROW 197-199 Murray St Mall
CBD 20	ROW 183 Murray St Mall
CBD 21	ROW 69-99 Barrack St
CBD 22	ROW 36-58 Pier St
CBD 23	ROW 672 Hay St Mall
CBD 24	ROW 564-570 Hay St
CBD 25	ROW 895-897 Hay St
CBD 26	ROW 847 Hay St
CBD 27	ROW 825 Hay Street
CBD 28	ROW 56 William St
CBD 29	ROW 663 Hay St Mall
CBD 30	ROW 647 Hay St Mall
CBD 31	ROW 108 St Georges Tce
CBD 32	ROW 42 St Georges Tce
CBD 33	Mercantile Lane
CBD 34	Howard Lane
CBD 35	78-80 Barrack St
CBD 36	ROW 98 Pier St
CBD 37	ROW 464 Murray St
CBD 38	ROW 469-471 Murray St
CBD 39	ROW 1002 Hay St
CBD 40	Church Row
CBD 41	ROW 993-995 Hay St
CBD 42	ROW 125-129 Murray St
CBD 43	982-996 Hay St
CBD 44	ROW 37 Pier St
CBD 45	ROW 10-14 Pier St

NORTHBRIDGE LANEWAYS

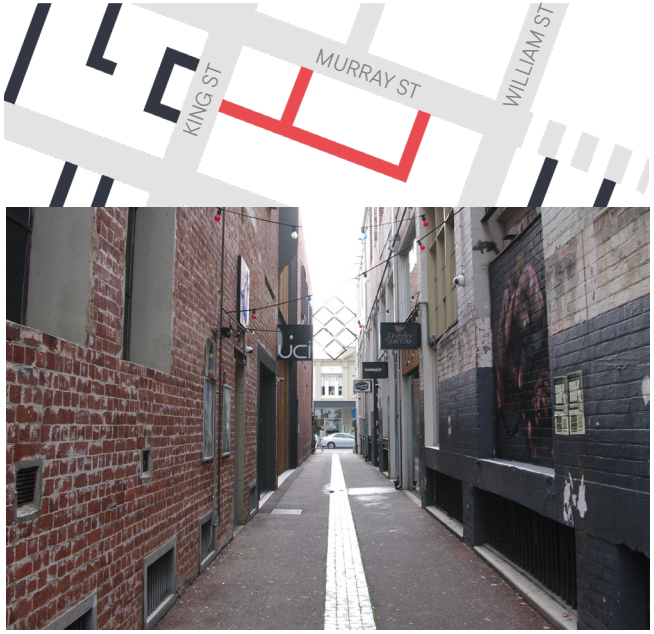
NB 1	Churchview Alley
NB 2	ROW 70 Fitzgerald St
NB 3	ROW 29-49 Shenton St
NB 4	ROW 150 Roe St
NB 5	PAW 99 Lake St
NB 6	ROW 71 Lake St
NB 7	Mountain Tce
NB 8	ROW 66-72 Lake St
NB 9	Lion Walk
NB 10	ROW 80 Francis St
NB 11	Nicks Lane
NB 12	Via Torre Lane
NB 13	ROW 74-80 James St
NB 14	Bury St
NB 15	ROW 31 Francis St
NB 16	ROW 31 Francis St
NB 17	ROW 111-121 Newcastle St
NB 18	ROW 75-85 Stirling St
NB 19	ROW 13 Aberdeen St
NB 20	ROW 7 Aberdeen St
NB 21	100-104 Stirling St
NB 22	130-132 James St



LEGEND

- Class A - High priority for investment over the next 10 years by City of Perth
- Class A - High priority for investment facilitated by private sector
- Class B - Medium priority for investment
- Class C - Low priority for investment
- Potential Future Linkages

Priority Laneways: Public Realm



1. Wolf Lane

One of the most vibrant and successful laneways in the city, home to a variety of businesses and public art.

Key opportunities include:

- additional artwork as part of citywide trail
- pop-up events
- addition of site specific seating
- additional greening
- signposting as a shared space.



2. Grand Lane

Located off busy Murray Street Mall this laneway is currently a grungy space which needs some love.

Key opportunities include:

- regulating access off Barrack Street
- additional artwork as part of citywide trail
- additional feature lighting
- placemaking signage off Murray Street Mall
- pop-up events
- signposting as a shared space.



3. Mountain Terrace

Located off James Street, currently underutilised and unloved.

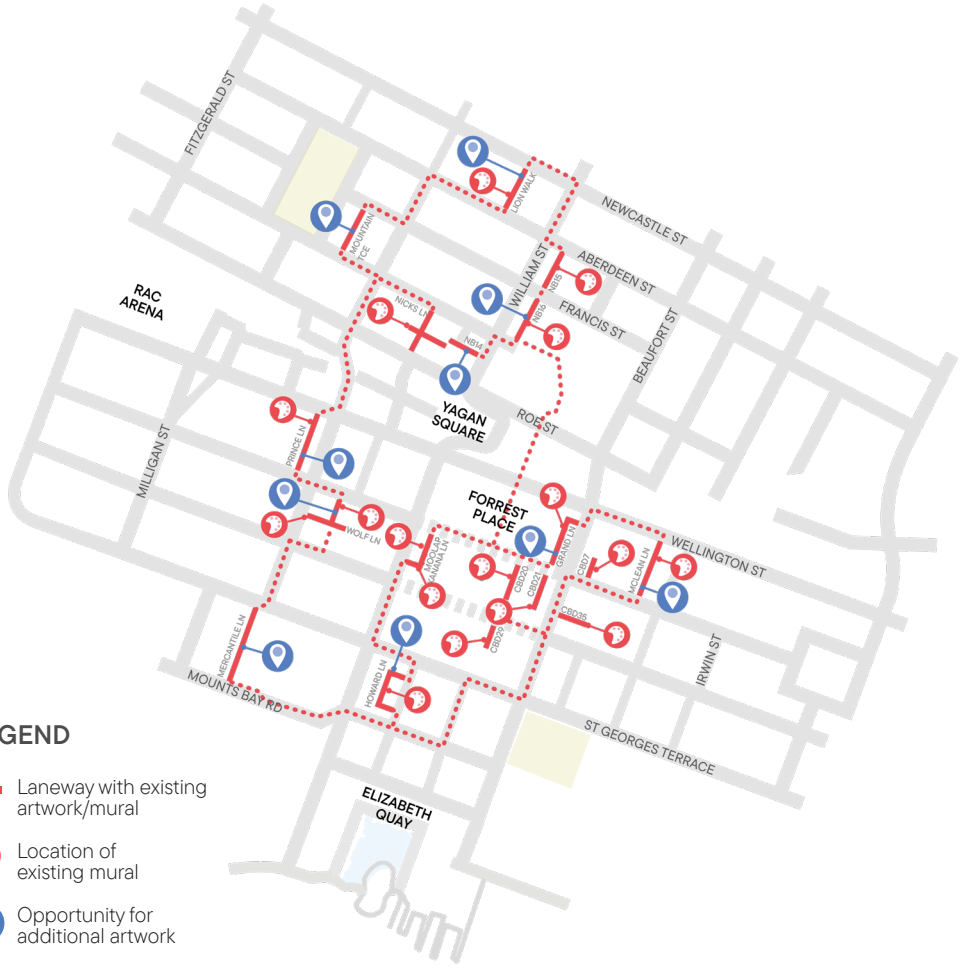
Key opportunities include:

- additional greening
- spill over event space for festivals
- upgrading public realm including new paving and lighting
- artwork as part of citywide trail
- signposting as a shared space.

Priority Laneways: Creative Spaces

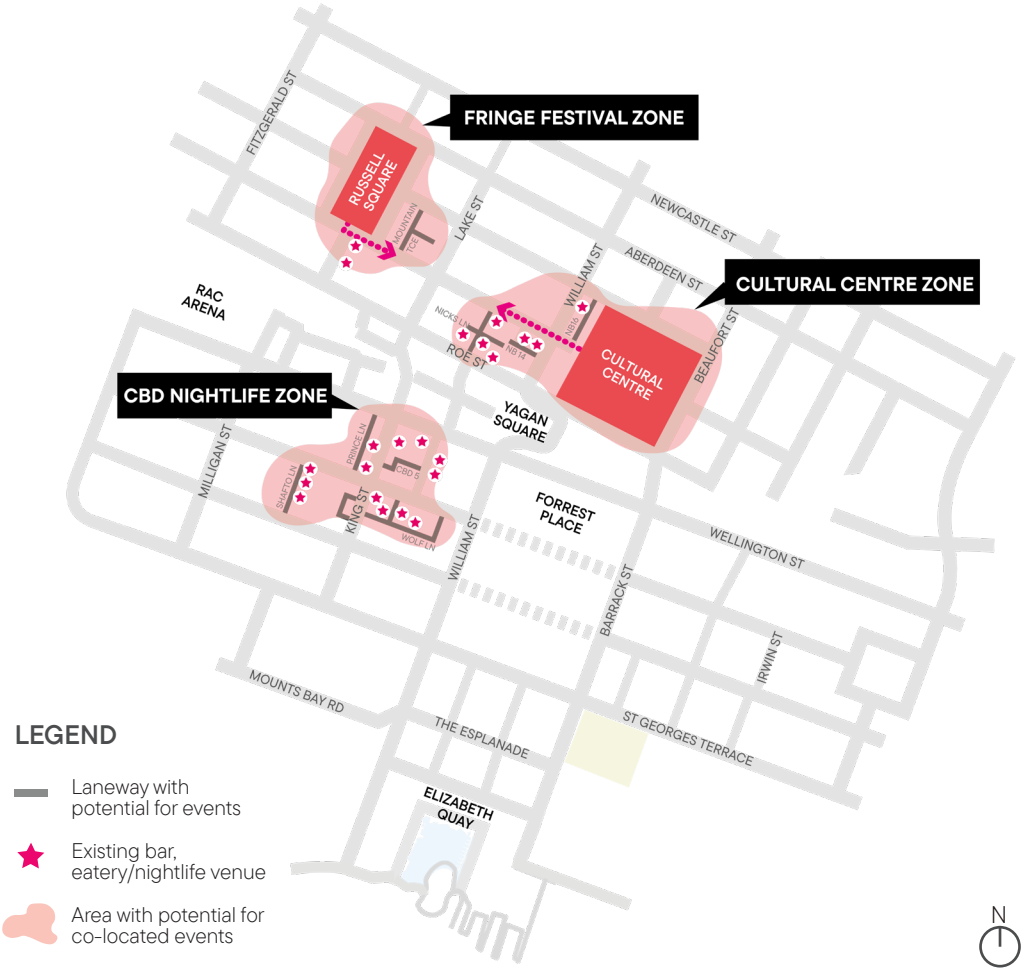
Laneway Art Trail

Opportunity to create a city wide public art trail with a program of additional commissions including lighting to celebrate the 'City of Light'.



Pop Up Events

Opportunity to use laneways for small scale events to support existing seasonal festivals and activities in the city.



Capturing the Potential

Recommendations

The vision for continuing to revitalise key laneways will be realised by:

- Enhancing safety in privately owned laneways by encouraging the installation of lighting.
- Continuing to upgrade (or refresh) the public realm in City owned laneways.
- Ensuring new developments in laneways positively contribute to the space.
- Supporting small scaled events and business through grants and sponsorship.
- Commissioning additional public art as part of a wider art trail.
- Protecting the existing physical form and function.
- Developing a Public Art Framework to guide our future public art programs including temporary works.
- Enhancing wayfinding by giving laneways official names.
- Using laneways to showcase the 'City of Light'.
- Signposting them as slow speed shared spaces that everyone can enjoy.
- Investigating the feasibility of permit walls to allow local artists to express themselves for free.

Canvas for Public Art



Support Small Business



Create Shared Spaces



Give them Names



Alternative Event Spaces



Enhance Public Realm





Wolf Lane, Central Perth

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.

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