Wider South Bank Precinct

Brisbane's Economic and Cultural Engine

July 2026
Prepared for
Business South Bank

Acknowledgement of Country

Urbis acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands we operate on.

We recognise that First Nations sovereignty was never ceded and respect First Nations peoples continuing connection to these lands, waterways and ecosystems for over 60,000 years.

We pay our respects to First Nations Elders, past and present.

The river is the symbol of the Dreaming and the journey of life. The circles and lines represent people meeting and connections across time and space. When we are working in different places, we can still be connected and work towards the same goal.

Urbis is committed to incorporating our respect for First Nations cultures, peoples and storytelling in our work across the Country. We are proud to have partnered with Darug Nation artist, **Hayley Pigram**, and to profile her artwork - **Sacred River Dreaming.**

Who is Business South Bank?

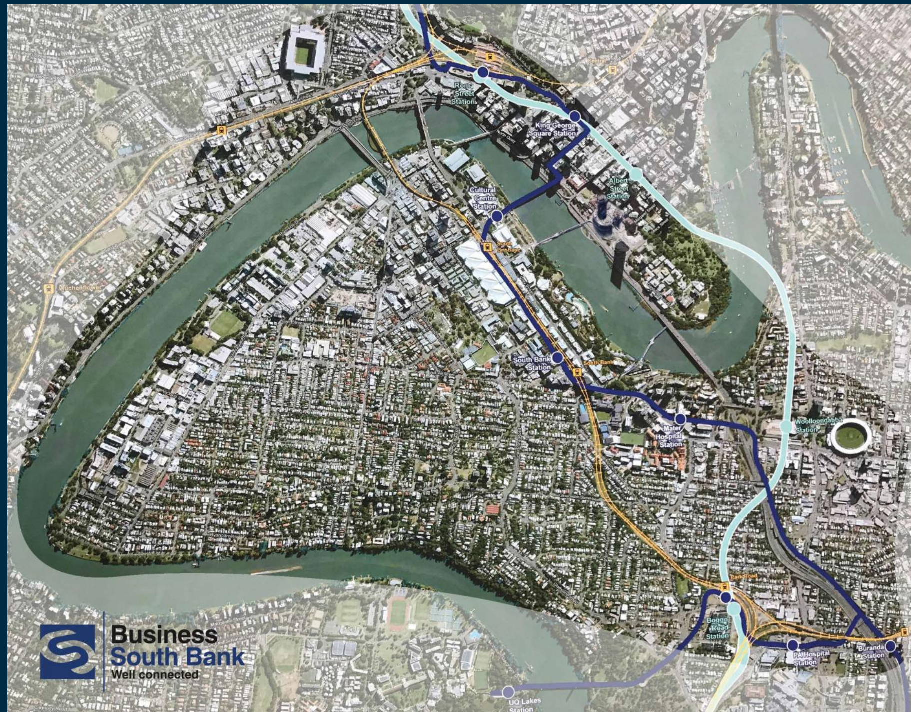
The independent voice of the Wider South Bank Precinct business community

Business South Bank (BSB) is the peak business association for the Wider South Bank Precinct. Established in 1999 by local business leaders, it is an independent, profit-for-purpose organisation that acts as the united voice of the precinct.

Its membership spans more than 180 organisations and a represented workforce of around 15,000 – from major cultural and knowledge institutions such as QAGOMA, QPAC, BCEC, Griffith University and the State Library of Queensland, through to hospitals, hotels, retailers, charities and emerging local businesses.

BSB supports its members through advocacy, networking and communications, working alongside industry and government to grow the precinct. Its remit spans the Wider South Bank Precinct – reaching from the Mater Hospital and QAGOMA across to West End and Musgrave Park, and through to Woolloongabba and the southern edge of the CBD.

The Wider South Bank Precinct



Business South Bank at a glance[1]

1999 Established by precinct business leaders	**180+** Corporate members across the precinct	**~15,000** Workforce represented by members	**25+ yrs** Championing the Wider South Bank Precinct

Source: Business South Bank, Annual Report 2024/25; businesssouthbank.com.au

The Precinct

A precinct of scale, influence and ongoing economic importance

The Wider South Bank Precinct is one of Brisbane's most productive and visited precincts, a place where employment, tourism and urban life converge at scale. Its contribution to Brisbane's economy is established, measurable and growing.

The precinct has the conditions to evolve and grow its current role: a destination for major cultural events and international visitation; a living urban neighbourhood with world-class public amenity; and an emerging hub for knowledge industries close to culture, connectivity and talent.

The Wider South Bank Precinct is ready for its next phase of growth, with continued investment from government and industry able to build on its role for Brisbane.

South Bank is a high performing precinct ready to contribute even more when the timing is right.

CURRENT

$11.3B Gross Value Added (GVA) contribution in 2025[1]

GVA is an estimate of the total value that industries within the Wider South Bank Precinct add to the state economy incorporating wages, profits, and taxes.

70,000 Jobs across the precinct[2]	**16.6M** Visitors per annum to South Bank Parklands[4]
33,000+ Students living and studying[3]	**700+** Annual events in the South Bank Parklands[5]

FUTURE

$15B+
Private investment committed in the precinct[6]

92,000 Residents forecast to live within the precinct by 2041[7]	**+16,000** New jobs forecast in the precinct between 2021-41[8]

The Wider South Bank Precinct's case is built on 70,000 jobs, $11.3 billion in economic value added and three decades of sustained growth – a precinct with the scale and track record to do even more

Refer to endnotes on pages 16 and 17 for sourcing of all datapoints throughout this document

The Precinct's Interconnected Economy

Five precincts, one integrated economic system, ready for its next phase of growth

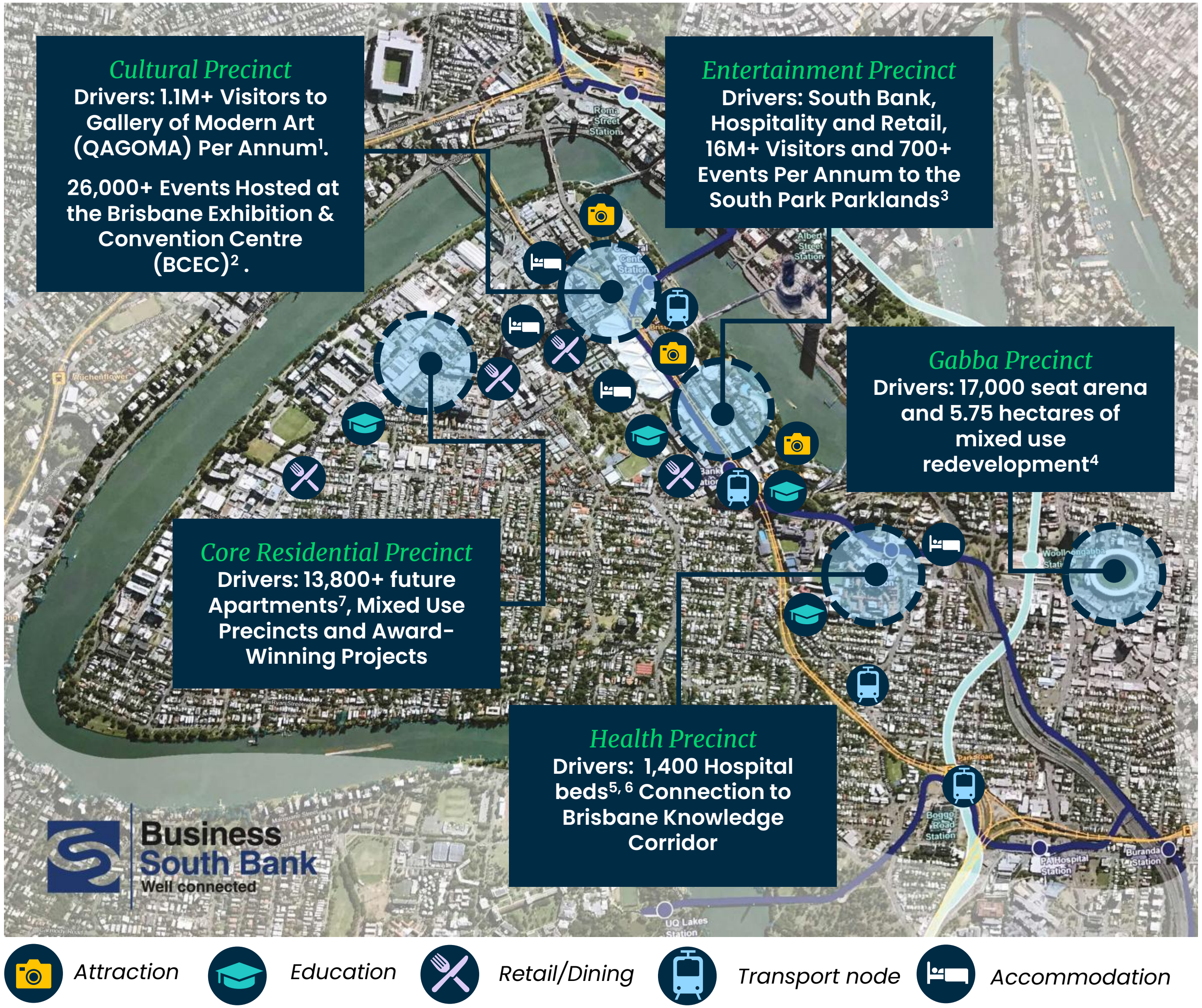
Brisbane is approaching a decade of significant public and private investment. The decisions made in this period will shape the city's economic role, and the Wider South Bank Precinct is positioned to play a leading part in it.

The Wider South Bank Precinct plays a central role in the life and economy of Brisbane as one of the city's most established economic precincts, with deep and ongoing value across culture, knowledge, residential and entertainment activity. This role reflects three decades of consistent investment and growth, and it is built to extend well beyond any single event or growth catalyst.

The Wider South Bank Precinct functions as a global destination with a local role as one of Brisbane's key integrated economic clusters, anchored by connection, sustainability and inclusivity. This generates consistent and growing economic output. Aligning investment pipelines and policy focus across government and industry would ensure funding, development and planning continue to reflect the full economic weight of the precinct as it scales.

Recognising the Wider South Bank Precinct as a core economic precinct can provide a strong framework for long-term planning, investment coordination and policy integration – helping accelerate growth, unlock more jobs, higher productivity and increased visitor spending across the precinct.

A Series of Interconnected Precincts



What Makes The Precinct Unique

A rare concentration of culture, knowledge, lifestyle and economic activity

Culture and Visitor Economy

The Wider South Bank Precinct anchors Brisbane's cultural heart. It is home to Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC), Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC).

Together, they create a rare cultural spine that drives year-round visitation. Over the past 30 years alone, **BCEC has hosted more than 26,000 events, welcomed 21.6 million visitors and generated $6.26 billion in economic benefit for Queensland**[1] cementing the Wider South Bank Precinct's role as one of Australia's leading cultural and events destinations.

Health and Knowledge

Major health and education institutions, position the Wider South Bank Precinct within Brisbane's leading knowledge and innovation corridor. **Together with more than 33,000 students living and studying in the precinct**[2], these institutions generate a constant flow of activity that underpins local employment and supports surrounding retail, hospitality and services.

Riverfront and Public Realm

The Wider South Bank Precinct's riverfront parklands are among Brisbane's most active public spaces, supporting recreation, events and cultural programming from day to night. As the precinct's population grows and density increases, this public open space becomes critical infrastructure, the trade-off that allows high-density living to work, reinforcing the precinct's role as a major civic and social hub **activating 700+ activities and events within a single year at the South Park Parklands**[3].

Retail, Lifestyle and Events

The Wider South Bank Precinct has evolved from a visitor destination into one of inner Brisbane's most desirable places to live. It is now home to 55,000 residents, who together represent a resident retail spend base of $1.2 billion annually[9]. Its retail, dining, entertainment and major events sustain year-round activity, while continued investment in mixed use precincts reinforces its position as one of Brisbane's premier lifestyle precincts, reflected in its **34% share of Inner Brisbane's future apartment pipeline**[4], **equating to an estimated $8.7 billion in private investment**[5].

Cultural & Visitor Economy

4,900

jobs supported[6]

Anchors: QPAC · QAGOMA · Queensland Museum · BCEC · State Library of Queensland

Health & Knowledge

$3.2B

GVA per annum[7]

Anchors: Boggo Road Precinct · Mater · Queensland Children's Hospital · Griffith University

Public Realm

16.6M

Visitors per year to the South Bank Parklands supported by 14.6ha of Parkland on the river[8]

Anchors: South Bank Parkland

Resident Retail Spend

$21,423

per capita by Wider South Bank Precinct residents[9]

▲ **17% higher than the average Greater Brisbane resident**

Anchors: Affluent resident base and access to retail amenity

55,000
Residents in 2025[10]

92,000
Residents by 2041[11]

+37,000 new residents expected to call South Brisbane home by 2041.

The precinct's value is created through the interaction of these elements, not through any single asset.

Scale and Economic Contribution

A high-intensity economic precinct

The Wider South Bank Precinct plays a critical role in Brisbane's economic and social fabric as a high-performing mixed-use precinct integrating employment, tourism, culture and lifestyle. Its mix of uses, connectivity and vibrancy make it a city-wide destination.

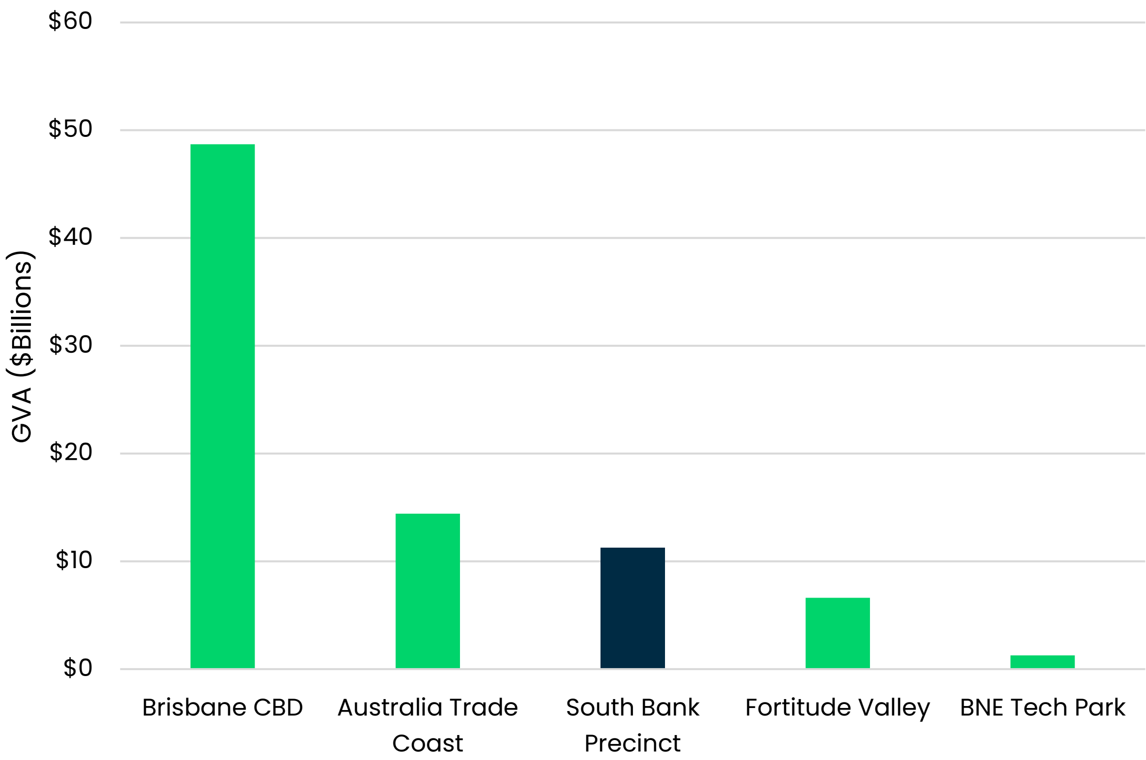
The Wider South Bank Precinct supports **approximately 70,000 jobs[1],** with a diverse employment base, supported by a range of key assets, employers and sectors, strengthens Brisbane's capacity to absorb economic shocks, attract investment and support long-term workforce growth.

This employment diversity generates **approximately $11.3 billion in GVA, equivalent to 6% of Brisbane's total GVA ($176.21 billion)[2]**, reinforcing Wider South Bank Precinct's role as a key city-shaping engine of productivity that amplifies economic benefits across Brisbane and the broader region.

Comparatively, this sits as one of the most important economically significant precincts in Brisbane.

Value Added by Economic Precinct ($B 2025)

Brisbane's network of high intensity economic precincts - combining economic and employment activity



Source: Brisbane LGA Economy Profile REMPLAN 2025

A System of Interconnected Economic Engines

How activity across the precinct creates value

The Wider South Bank Precinct functions as integrated economic system. The precinct is a place where visitors, workers, students, patients and residents move through the same streets, spend in the same businesses and sustain the precincts economic role.

It is the interaction between its five economic engines that makes the Wider South Bank Precinct structurally different from anywhere else in Queensland. **Together, these five engines generate the consistent, diversified economic base that underpins the precinct's sustained economic productivity and contribution.**

Key economic engines

Visitor Economy	Health & Knowledge	Professional & Business Services	Sport & Events	Retail & Lifestyle
Drives and leads tourism and cultural events.	Year-round anchor via hospitals, education and research and supports 33,000 students.	Anchors the daytime economy; long-term stability	Activates precinct through major events and large gatherings	Connects all sectors; supports daily activity and experience
EMPLOYMENT[1]	EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT
4,900	**32,700**	**13,500**	**2,700**	**2,300**
GVA P.A.[2]	GVA P.A.	GVA P.A.	GVA P.A.	GVA P.A.
$300M	**$3.2B**	**$3.3B**	**$201M**	**$189M**

Source: REMPLAN 2025. Note: figures reflect five major identified economic engines; remaining precinct activity across other industries accounts for the balance of total precinct GVA and employment.

The Precinct's Role in a Strong Capital City

Supporting Brisbane's economic performance, identity and liveability

The Wider South Bank Precinct is central to Brisbane's role as a globally competitive and liveable city. The precinct **accounts for approximately 7% of Brisbane's total employment across diverse sectors[1], reinforcing the city's economic diversity and resilience.**

The Wider South Bank Precinct also shapes how the Capital City is experienced. For domestic and international visitors, it is often the city's front door, with its riverfront setting, cultural institutions and major events driving an **average of 214,000 international overnight visitors per annum[2] and generating $581 million in annual visitor spend, reinforcing Brisbane's global profile[3].**

Beyond its economic and visitor roles, the Wider South Bank Precinct is integral to Brisbane's knowledge and health ecosystems. **Its proximity to major hospitals, universities and research institutions supports a concentration of activity, with health, education and research accounting for approximately 47% of the precinct's employment base[4].**

Its high-quality public realm, cultural offering and lifestyle amenities also support talent attraction and retention, providing the urban experience expected of leading global cities.

Together, this **combination of economic weight and liveability** is what Brisbane needs to keep investing in to remain competitive for talent and global standing.

The Precinct Is:

A Premier Destination of State Significant: A vibrant mixed-use precinct integrating parklands, cultural institutions and entertainment destinations, reinforcing Brisbane's identity while supporting tourism, lifestyle and a thriving day and night economy.

A Connected Destination for Professionals and Visitors: A concentration of high value employment and an expanding visitor economy, supported by connections to Wider South Bank Precinct's established network of lifestyle, cultural and recreational assets.

CBD Adjacent Node in Brisbane's Growing Ecosystem: Wider South Bank Precinct's strategic location on the edge of the Brisbane CBD enables it to extend the inner city's economic and cultural functions, reinforcing its role as a key destination for employment, tourism, entertainment and cultural experiences.

A Local, Regional and International Gateway to Brisbane: A highly accessible gateway precinct that connects local, regional and international visitors to Brisbane's cultural, sporting, entertainment and lifestyle destinations

The Precinct in Context

How South Bank compares against leading riverfront precincts

The **Wider South Bank Precinct** in context to major waterfront precincts such as **Waterfront, Sydney** and **South Bank London**, highlights five key similarities:

1. **Cultural anchor plus diversified employment:** All three combine a substantial cultural or civic anchor — museums, galleries, performing arts, convention infrastructure with a genuinely diversified employment base spanning education and health (Wider South Bank Precinct), media/tech, professional and financial services (London), and tourism, hospitality and business events (Sydney). None of the three is a single-industry precinct.
2. **Business events as an economic driver, not just tourism:** Each functions as a business events and conference destination in its own right — BCEC, ICC Sydney and the South Bank London technology, media and professional services cluster all draw delegates, corporates and international visitors who spend well beyond the venue gate.
3. **High and sustained visitation as the economic engine:** Each precinct now runs into the millions of annual visits and functions as a genuine trip-generator, which is the basis on which retail, dining and short stay demand cases for all three are built.
4. **Free public realm and waterfront activation as the daily draw:** Free, high-quality public open space and waterfront frontage — South Bank Parklands and Streets Beach, Tumbalong Park and the Cockle Bay promenade, Jubilee Gardens and the Queen's Walk — does the daily work of drawing locals, not just tourists, and anchors an events calendar of festivals, markets and free programming that keeps each precinct active outside peak visitor periods.
5. **Ongoing intensification into genuine mixed-use precincts:** All three have added meaningful residential and/or premium commercial floorspace over the past two decades, shifting from single-purpose event legacy sites into precincts people live in, work in and return to — not just visit once.

	Wider South Bank Precinct	Waterfront, Sydney	South Bank, London
Cultural Anchors	QPAC, the Queensland Museum, QAGOMA, the State Library of Queensland, and QLD Theatre	SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium, WILD LIFE Sydney Zoo, the Australian National Maritime Museum and Madame Tussauds	Southbank Centre (Royal Festival Hall, Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall), the National Theatre, BFI Southbank, Tate Modern, Shakespeare's Globe
Business Events & Conference Desitation	BCEC	ICC Sydney, TikTok Entertainment Centre	Southbank Centre
Major Events & Visitation	Brisbane Festival	VIVID Sydney	BFI London Film Festival
Public Realm	South Bank Parklands, Fish Lane, West Village	Tumbalong Park, Darling Quarter, Chinese Garden of Friendship Waterfront Promenades	Jubilee Gardens, Archbishop's Park, Bernie Spain Gardens, Ernie's Beach
Mixed-Use Precincts	A strong resident and worker population base, with continued investment into mixed use precincts – Visy Site, Parmalat Site	A strong worker and hotel market.	NEO Bankside, Southbank Place, Bankside Yards — a growing residential and premium office base.

What Growth, Investment and Change mean in real terms

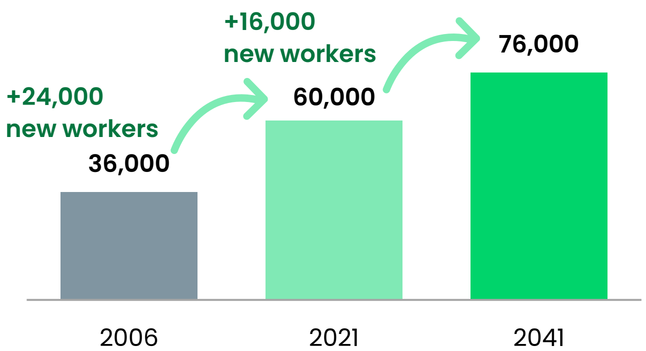
Understanding Change: The Economic Impact

The Wider South Bank Precinct's 40-year track record shows what investment delivers. Change in the Wider South Bank Precinct is driving jobs, productivity and economic growth. Already one of Australia's most economically active precincts, its development pipeline will increase density and diversify land uses to deliver greater long-term value from a strategically located urban centre.

The 1988 World Expo site's transformation shows the power of economic development. Within its original footprint, the precinct now supports 70,000[1] jobs and generates approximately $11.3 billion GVA[2]. **The next phase of investment can build on this success, with the potential to unlock a further 16,000 new jobs and economic output without expanding the precinct footprint.**

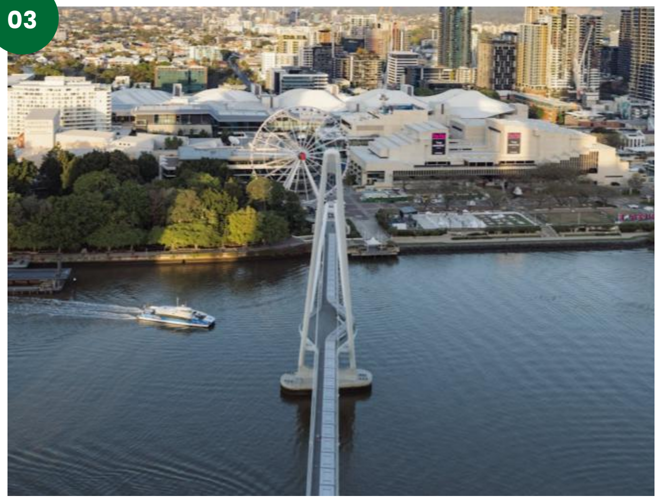
Diversifying beyond hospitality and tourism into commercial office, education, health, residential and creative industries reduces economic risk, broadens the workforce and supports year-round activity, strengthening long-term investor and government confidence.

South Brisbane Precinct's Historic and Official Forecast Employment[3]



South Bank 1980's

South Bank 2020's



1 - Brisbane City Council, South Bank — Brisbane Recollect
2 - Brisbane City Council, South Brisbane Heritage Trail
3 - Josh Withers, Aerial View of a City with a Ferris Wheel
4 - Siggy Nowak, Beach, City, Southbank, Swimmers

Development Pipeline and City-Shaping Initiatives

Sustained investment shaping the future of the precinct

Private capital is already signalling confidence in the evolution of the Wider South Bank Precinct, with a substantial pipeline of residential, commercial, cultural and mixed-use projects in planning or delivery. However, this investment alone will not realise the precinct's full potential.

To translate private sector momentum into lasting economic, employment and visitor outcomes, it must be matched by coordinated government investment in enabling infrastructure, public realm, connectivity and policy alignment.

The precinct's current pipeline demonstrates both the scale of opportunity and the need for coordinated action.

Of the approximately 70 projects in planning or delivery, more than $15 billion is precinct-specific development led predominantly by the private sector, alongside major city-shaping infrastructure such as Cross River Rail. The task now is to ensure these investments work together — not as isolated projects, but as part of an integrated precinct strategy that supports growth, improves access, strengthens public spaces and maximises the return to Brisbane and Queensland.

Targeted government co-investment can help ensure this growth is not fragmented, but translated into lasting precinct-wide outcomes: improved access, stronger public spaces, higher productivity, more jobs, increased visitation and a more connected inner-city economy.

City Wide Infrastructure

1. Cross River Rail: $19 billion by State and Federal Government[2]

South Brisbane Precincts

2. Melbourne Street Master Plan: $1.5 billion by Aria[3]

3. West Village: $1.1 billion by Sekisui House[4]

4. Visy redevelopment precinct: 7.1 hectare site set to deliver 4,000 new homes[5]

5. The Gabba precinct: 17,000 seat arena and 5.75 hectares of mixed use redevelopment ($2.5 billion)[6]

6. Stockwell Parmalat: 12 residential towers, 400 room hotel, 200 dining and entertainment venues.

1

2

3

4

6

5

1 – Cross River Rail, Boggo Road
2 – Aria, Melbourne Street Development Render
3 – Sekisui House, West Village Public Realm
4 – The Urban Developer, Lendlease Site Redevelopment Render
5 – Queensland State Government, Gabba Redevelopment Render
6 – The Urban Developer, Stockwell Parmalat Render

What aligned planning, investment and policy could unlock

The Opportunity of Coordinated Investment

Within the Wider South Bank Precinct , the foundations for sustained economic growth are well established: strong visitation, a diverse activity base and a strategic inner-city location. With coordinated alignment across planning, investment and policy settings, this potential can be fully realised. A more unified approach will ensure these existing strengths translate into long-term economic outcomes for both the precinct and Brisbane more broadly.

The opportunity is clear... faster growth and greater economic impact delivers for the City and State

Wider South Bank Precinct

01 OPPORTUNITY

Aligned Decision Making

- Consistent planning signals can attract private capital
- Coordinated priorities can maximise investment outcomes
- Streamlined governance can accelerate delivery of key projects

UNTAPPED POTENTIAL 02

World-Class Assets Ready to Scale

- Strong visitation provides a platform to convert into greater economic value
- World-class cultural and civic assets such as QPAC, BCEC, hospitals, Griffith University and South Bank Parklands provide an unrivalled anchor for further investment
- Inner-city location offers untapped advantage for future growth

03 GROWTH POTENTIAL

Accelerated Growth and Impact

- Precinct has capacity to exceed its current economic output
- Brisbane can strengthen its competitive position against peer cities
- Long-term GVA and employment gains are achievable with coordinated investment

STRATEGIC RESPONSE 04

Unified Alignment and Advocacy

- Coordinated planning across key stakeholders
- Targeted advocacy for infrastructure and policy support
- Clear narrative linking alignment to economic outcomes

The Precinct at a Glance

Key numbers behind Brisbane's economic and cultural engine — Wider South Bank Precinct

$11.3B
Gross Value Added Contribution (2025)

70,000
Jobs supported across the precinct (2025)

55,000
Residents living in the precinct (2025)

16.6M
Visitors per annum to South Bank Parklands

33,000+
Students living and studying in the precinct

6%
Share of Brisbane's total Gross Value Added

GVA is an estimate of the total value that industries within the Wider South Bank Precinct add to the state economy incorporating wages, profits, and taxes.

All figures are drawn from across this report.

Gross Value Added by Economic Engine

Annual GVA contribution

Note: figures reflect five major identified economic engines; remaining precinct activity across other industries accounts for the balance of total precinct GVA.

The Precinct’s Growth Trajectory

What growth, investment and change mean for the precinct through to 2041

2

RESIDENT POPULATION

55,000 to 92,000

Residents forecast
for the precinct by 2041

+37,000 new residents by 2041
)

+16,000

New jobs forecast in the precinct between 2021-41

$15B+

Private investment committed in the precinct

34%

Of Inner Brisbane's future apartment pipeline

Precinct Investment Pipeline Underway

- The Gabba Redevelopment — **$2.5B**
- Melbourne St Master Plan — **$1.5B**
- West Village — **$1.1B**
- Lendlease Visy **– 4,000 new homes**
- Stockwell Parmalat **– apartments, hotel and public realm**

30 YEARS

A 30-Year Track Record: *BCEC alone has hosted 26,000+ events, welcomed 21.6 million visitors and generated $6.26 billion in economic benefit for Queensland — clear evidence of what sustained investment in the Wider South Bank Precinct delivers.*

All figures are drawn from across this report.

Endnotes

Page 3 – Who is Business South Bank

1. *1. Business South Bank, 2025 Annual Report https://businesssouthbank.com.au/*

Page 4 – The Precinct

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Endnotes continue overleaf.

Endnotes

Page 8 – A System of Interconnected Economic Engines

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Page 9 – The Precinct's Role in a Capital City

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Page 11 – What Growth, Investment and Change Mean in real terms

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Page 12 – Development Pipeline and City-Shaping Initiatives

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