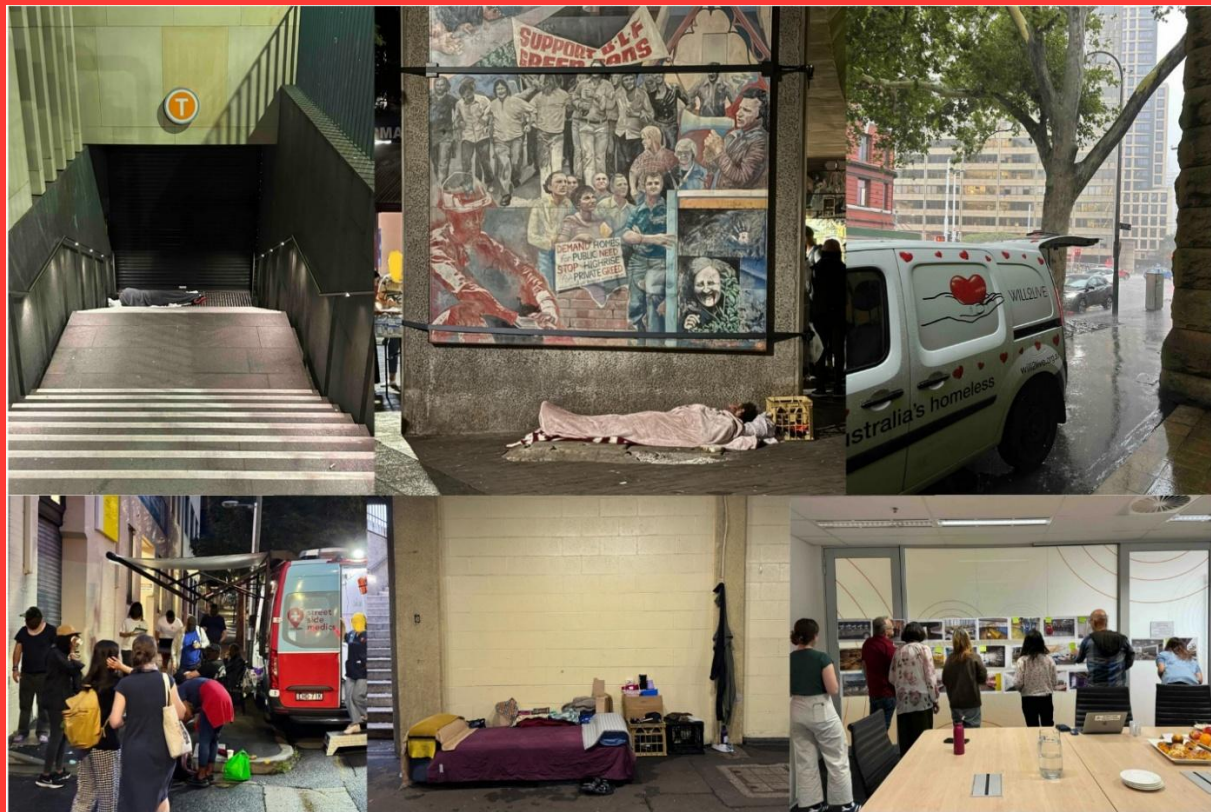


Care in Transit:

Designing for Passengers, Transport Operations and Homelessness Support



Project 6-041

Final Report

July 2026

Supported by:



Inclusive Design
Creating places where people thrive.



Acknowledgement

The Research Project team would like to acknowledge the amazing opportunity provided by TfNSW and the iMOVE CRC to work on such a pressing issue through this project. This initiative is a testament to the Department's values, culture, and commitment of care for the public good and the public interest. It also is a profound statement about TfNSW's international leadership and innovation.

We thank all the people, organisations and groups who assisted us with this work by entrusting us with their stories, hopes, concerns and ever thoughtful and considered feedback.

TfNSW Service Design Team, TfNSW Research Team, TfNSW Project Group
iMOVE CRC
La Trobe University research and administrative support teams
Street Care
Justice and Equity Centre
City of Sydney

Our list can only ever be partial, but the imprints of all who participated are still present within these pages.

Our greatest hope is for 'Care in Transit' to motivate change that improves the lives of people living precarious, who are unhoused and rough sleeping, and bridging their worlds with those of the broader public transport community.

Dr H. Menih, Project Lead

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Citation

Menih, H.; Szypielewicz, M.; Rudner, J.; Donovan, J.*; Cooper, K.; Woodcock, I.^; Xie, J. (2026). *Care in Transit: Designing for Passengers, Transport Operations, and Homelessness Support – Final Report*. La Trobe University.

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This research is funded by iMOVE CRC and supported by the Cooperative Research Centres program, an Australian Government initiative.



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

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GLOSSARY

APO – Australian Public Service Academy

BART – Bay Area Rapid Transit

CALD – Culturally and linguistically diverse

CCTV – Closed Circuit Television

CPTED - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

DCJ – Department of Communities and Justice

HART – Homelessness Assertive Response Team

HOPE – Home Options and Pathways to Employment

HOST – Homelessness Outreach Support Team

JEC – Justice and Equity Centre

LA – Los Angeles

LAPD – Los Angeles Police Department

M-DOT - Multidisciplinary Outreach Team

MVS – Mobile Voluntary Service

NGO – Non-government organisation

NSW – New South Wales

NZZ – Neue Zürcher Zeitung

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

ONLUS - Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale

PATH – People Assisting the Homeless

PLP – People living precariously and/or sleeping rough

RFI – Rete Ferroviaria Italiana

SCOPE - Safety, Cleaning, Ownership, Partnership, and Engagement

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

SECL – SouthEast Community Links

SEPTA – Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

SHS – Specialist Homelessness Services

TAM – Transport Asset Management

TfNSW – Transport for New South Wales

TTC – Toronto Transit Commission

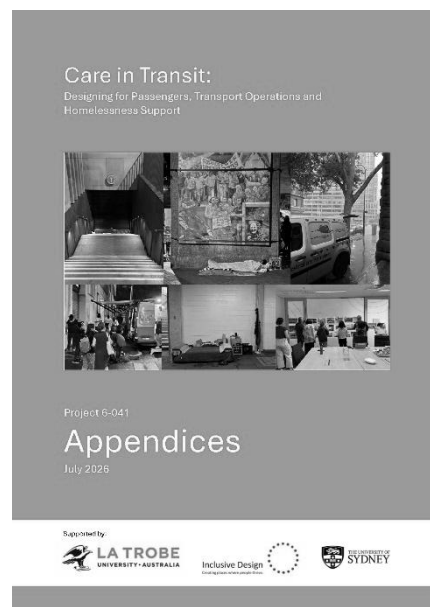
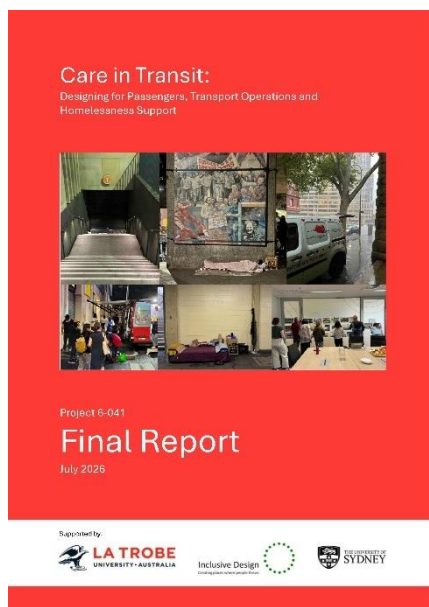
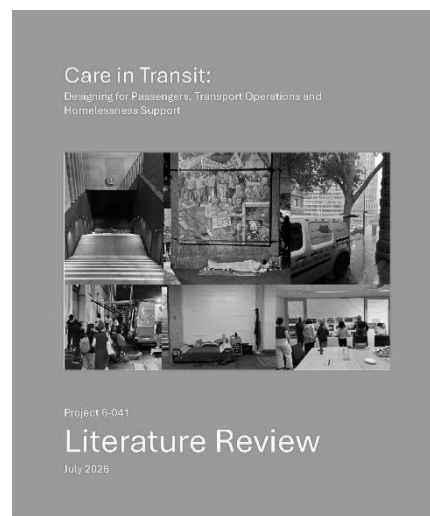
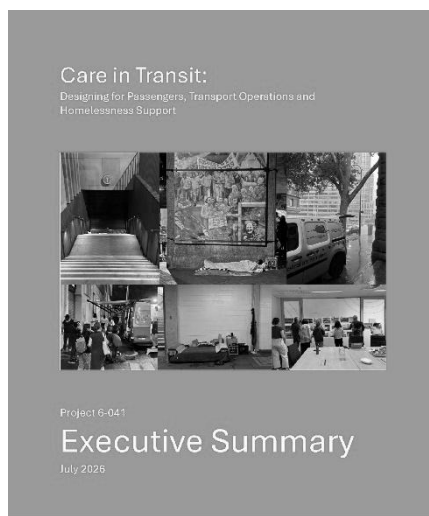
UITP – Union Internationale des Transports Publics

UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme

US – United States

WMATA – Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

This Final Report is one of four research deliverables from this work. The other documents are: *Executive Summary, Literature Review and Appendices*.



Executive Summary

Introduction by Transport for New South Wales

Care in Transit provides a visionary approach on how stations provide services to its customers whilst also responding respectfully to people experiencing homelessness. Transport precincts around the world are places of mobility that also provide places of refuge for people who are homeless or sleeping rough. These public spaces provide access to basic amenities such as toilets and water, create a sense of safety and community, become a place to pass time and to escape poor weather conditions, plus provide transport to other locations for social services or employment.

Similarly, people living precariously (PLP) and organisations supporting people who are unhoused or sleeping rough, utilise the assets owned and managed by Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW). TfNSW has a responsibility of care for all station users. Moving the services outside the geographic bounds of TfNSW's jurisdiction does not lead to better outcomes for their customers, as it will simply shift their concerns to another part of their journey as they go to and from other precincts. Moreover, many PLP are also customers.

Whilst TfNSW is not a social service provider, it has responsibility for the settings within which care can be provided to PLP, while ensuring actions don't impact its core function of transporting customers safely and comfortably to and from stations. The Department thus has a duty of care to manage and control social service delivery that occurs within the confines of its properties such as:

- Providing spaces.
- Facilitating access to amenities.
- Coordinating services and outreach activities.
- Supporting initiatives that help people exit homelessness through transit.
- Collaborating with social services, universities, government agencies and community organisations.
- Building supportive working relationships across agencies.
- Upholding respectful, trauma-informed engagement with PLP, in line with the Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places 2022 (The Protocol) and commitments under the NSW Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2025-27), including through care and respect in staff interactions with PLP.

The Department is a critical stakeholder in the NSW Government Homelessness Strategy which has a vision to make NSW a place where homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurrent, with everyone having a safe home and the support they need to keep it. The Strategy is based on a Whole of Government consultation, that responds to multiple stakeholders who help shape practical and inclusive solutions.

Therefore, TfNSW created an opportunity to balance the needs and well-being of Transport customers and staff, the people who are homeless and sleeping rough, the service providers and

the local communities. To better understand TfNSW’s role in the NSW Government Homeless Strategy, TfNSW developed the Care in Transit research collaboration together with iMOVE, and La Trobe University. TfNSW recognised the need for an external transdisciplinary team to lead the research and convened an internal research working group made up of stakeholders from various sections of TfNSW who had direct influence in the subject.

TfNSW policy, strategy and project teams, along with frontline staff, who are impacted by or responsible for taking forward the research findings and evidence, were engaged throughout the process. The outcomes of the research reframe transport hubs as part of an infrastructure of care, aligning with national, state and local planning priorities. It demonstrates how stations and precincts can support PLP without diminishing customer experience or service delivery.

A Literature and Best Practices Review, Design Principles, and Stakeholder Framework (Figure A) were developed to create the foundation for policy direction. Together, this will inform how infrastructure will be designed with the consideration of homelessness service provision, provide the tools for how staff and operators manage their interactions with PLP and shape TfNSW’s role alongside other Government departments and with non-government organisations. This project exemplifies how planning and design can address challenges in mobility to deliver environments that are safe, inclusive and socially responsive.

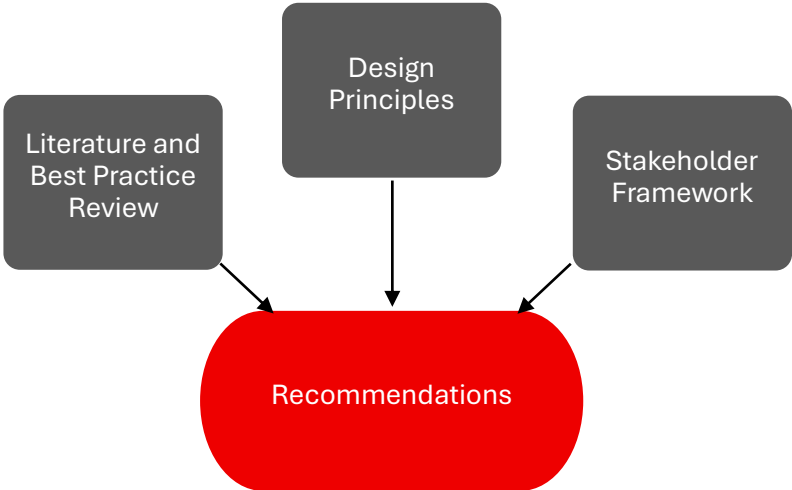


Figure A: Research elements of the report

Need for Research



Rising Homelessness Around Stations

- **24% increase in rough sleepers** in Sydney, especially near Central Station and Wentworth Park. (Sydney Local Health District, 2025)
- Highlights the urgency and complexity of addressing homelessness in transport precincts.



Fragmented Stakeholder Landscape

- **Numerous stakeholders** involved: federal/state agencies, councils, grassroots organisations.
- Lack of a **shared framework** and **clear engagement pathways** complicates coordinated action.



Strategic and Operational Gaps

- Existing protocols support respectful engagement, but there's **a need for broader strategic frameworks**.
- Stations must evolve from passive spaces to **active hubs of care and support**.



Infrastructure and Design Limitations

- Inclusive design is a core value, but **implementation is still emerging**.
- Need for infrastructure that supports **care delivery and safe environments** for vulnerable populations.



Coordination and Leadership

- TfNSW is well-positioned to lead but must **strengthen cross-agency collaboration**.
- Requires **institutional clarity** on TfNSW's role within the broader care ecosystem.



Evidence-Based Action

- Research and stakeholder workshops revealed the importance of **lived experience input**.
- Findings emphasise the need for **inclusive, connected, and safe station precincts**.

Project Overview

Homelessness in and around train stations is a complex challenge requiring coordinated action across all tiers of government, alongside non-government and community-based organisations. As of February 2025, the City of Sydney recorded 346 people sleeping rough in the inner city, representing a 24% increase from the previous year's count of 280 individuals (Mercy Foundation, 2025). Notably, Central Station and Wentworth Park have been identified as key locations where individuals are sleeping rough (Sydney Local Health District, 2025).

TfNSW is one of twelve state government signatories to the Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places (herein The Protocol) and Homeless People in Public Places Implementation Guidelines released by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) in 2022 and April 2024 respectively. The Guidelines provide guidance for departmental and agency staff so they can engage more respectfully with PLP or lacking housing (2024, p. 4). While the document guides direct relationships with unhoused people, more strategic and operational guidance is required - especially since train stations can play a significant role for PLP, who might become rough sleepers or who might connect with social services leading to opportunities to enter more stable housing situations.

TfNSW is already taking steps to address these challenges through internal pilots and cross-agency initiatives, such as Transport Asset Management's (TAM) Affordable Housing Pilot Project (2024). The Department has also committed to collaborative research focused on care in transit, including this project. These initiatives reflect a growing institutional willingness to respond, but a more consistent and system-wide approach is needed.

TfNSW faces challenges in defining a stakeholder approach for care in transit due to the wide range of potential partners – from government bodies to informal support groups, especially concentrated in Sydney's central business district and inner suburbs. This complexity highlights the need for consistent engagement pathways and a shared framework. As a state agency, TfNSW is well positioned to lead care practices around transport hubs, guided by its commitment to inclusive design across its infrastructure program to improve the quality, reach and experience of its transport facilities, services and operational management.

Specifically, the project aimed to:

1. Identify stakeholders, their services and needs, and work with them through co-design to provide a framework on how to manage and engage with them.
2. Seek clarity on the services that are provided at a broad range of TfNSW precincts, how they are coordinated and communicated to those in need.
3. Understand best practice in creating infrastructure that accommodates for the delivery of homeless services whilst not being detrimental to the experience of other customers and the delivery of TfNSW services.

The Protocol and the Guidelines provide further guidance on how people's circumstances can be considered when enforcing laws and regulations (2024, p. 4). The document presents a person-centred care ethic for workers and offers guidance on engaging with PLP in ways that respect their personal agency.

The Guidelines primarily address incidental social interactions, which tend to occur at the interface between train station staff and PLP. Yet, the decision by TfNSW to consider more inclusive design in its future train station developments will support deeper integration of the Protocol into TfNSW organisational commitments, practices and culture.

Inclusive design practices will prompt the organisation to engage more explicitly with what it means to care institutionally, and how the boundaries of inclusivity will be delineated. The outcomes of these considerations will influence policy, management, station design and operations. The articulated parameters for caregiving by TfNSW as a government agency, and by workers representing the organisation, will flow to customer and service relationships via shifts in trust, solidarity, and reciprocity as expressed through social and spatial interactions.

A caring politics situates empathy at the center of decision-making (Care Collective, 2020) for physical, social and organisational infrastructures. It also ...engenders new concepts of belonging, citizenship and rights..." through which states (as well as communities and individuals) are called upon to contribute toward ...a sense of solidarity, toward all its inhabitants" (Care Collective, 2020, p. 68).

Care is... "an active relation co-constituted by care giver and receiver. It describes a caring relationship shaped through relations of trust, solidarity, and reciprocity, a relation in which care givers work with (rather than simply care for) care receivers in the performance of care" (E. R. Power, 2019, p. 765)

Research Approach

The project focused on creating inclusive environments that enable the delivery and receipt of care, particularly for PLP. Commencing in August 2024, this research employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate how PLP interact with and experience the public transport environment in Sydney, NSW. The study, which received Human Research Ethics Approval, integrated quantitative analyses of incident and usage data with qualitative research techniques including site observations, social service mapping, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and stakeholder workshops (Figure B). This comprehensive approach enabled the research team to explore spatial patterns, service coordination, and the broader care ecosystem within the TfNSW network.

Our findings are anchored in two overarching priorities:



Design and manage train stations as inclusive care hubs – prioritising vulnerable users while ensuring balanced, supportive experience for all customers.



Strengthen collaboration with care providers at stations to support vulnerable users, while enhancing the station experience for all and deepening community connection.

Literature Review

The first stage of the project involved a review of scholarly and grey literature addressing policy, care, design, research methods, collective impact, effective partnerships, and useful national and international case studies by evaluating for the inclusion or exclusion of people experiencing homelessness. Findings from the literature review informed analyses.

The literature review has been published as a stand-alone report.

Quantitative Analysis

Incident data from 2022–2024 and entry/exit data from 2022–2023 were analysed to explore correlations between passenger volumes and types of incidents. Significant associations were found between higher passenger volumes and incidents such as harassment, graffiti, and bodily harm, particularly on the City Circle line. However, no strong spatial correlations were identified between station design and incident types.

Site Observations

Fieldwork was conducted across nine train stations over three observation periods of three days each from ~7:00am-1:00am on average in October 2024, December 2024 and May 2025. Stations were observed within the city centre to gain an understanding of how TfNSW assets were being used. Stations included Central Station, Town Hall, Wynyard, Circular Quay, Martin Place, St James, Museum, Kings Cross, with Parramatta included as a non-CBD site.

Observations focused on architectural features, urban furniture, and socio-spatial dynamics. Techniques included walking interviews and casual conversations with station staff, service providers, and PLP. These interactions provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of PLP and informal service provision. Safety protocols were followed, including trauma-informed research training, geo-location tracking and security support from TfNSW.

Social Service Mapping

The team reviewed existing social service provider directories, with 10 of 32 organisations responding to calls to verify offerings and mapped the location of the services. This mapping was refined through site visits, interviews, focus groups with service group networks and input from PLP to better understand service coordination and outreach logistics. These activities extended participation to 19 services in total. Discussions highlighted a complex pattern of located and mobile services, diversity of services—ranging from food and showers to medical care and education—and the challenges of coordinating care across agencies.

Focus Group Engagement

A focus group with StreetCare, a lived-experience advisory committee supported by the Justice and Equity Centre, offered qualitative insights into the use of public transport facilities by people experiencing homelessness. Discussions addressed safety, station design, interactions with staff, and the use of transport assets for shelter. The feedback informed inclusive design principles aimed at improving accessibility and dignity in transit environments.

Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews were conducted with PLP, service providers - including local government, as well as researchers, and transport agency staff across Australia, North America, and Europe. These conversations explored trauma-informed practices, service coordination, and strategies for inclusive transit spaces. Interviews were documented and analysed thematically to identify challenges and opportunities for improving care within the transport network.

Workshops

Four stakeholder workshops were held to validate findings and refine design and governance frameworks. Participants included TfNSW staff, service providers, and advocacy groups. Workshops focused on inclusive design, operational barriers, and cross-agency collaboration. Feedback informed the development of practical, sustainable recommendations for improving public transport environments for PLP.

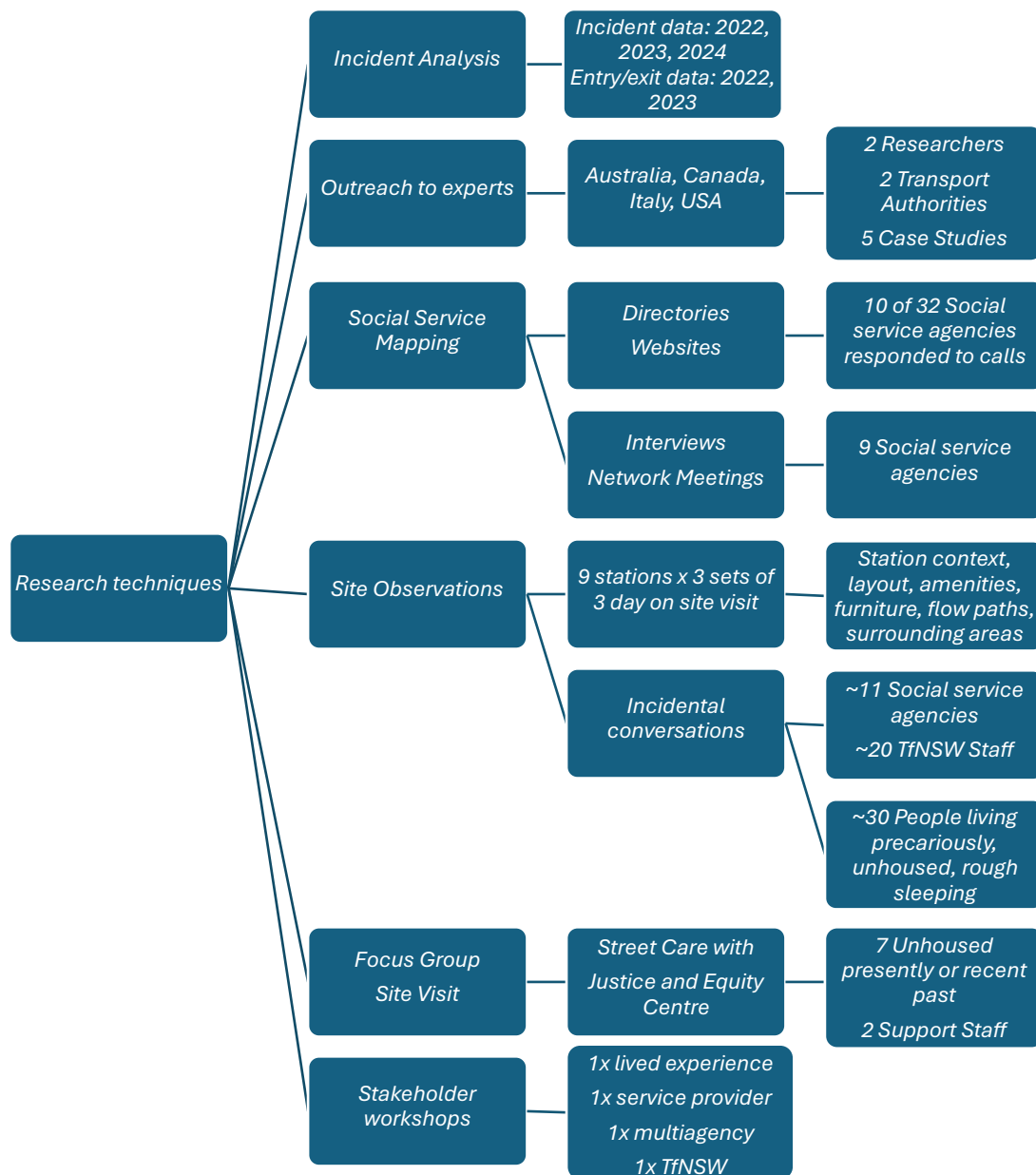


Figure B: Summary of methods and participants

Fieldwork Insights

The literature revealed that there is a lack of research focused specifically on homelessness in Australian transport environments. To address this gap, fieldwork was conducted across Sydney stations and surrounding public spaces.

Preliminary observations confirmed both the visibility of homelessness in Sydney's transport environments and the vital role stations already play in informal and formal networks of care. Observations highlighted the diversity of people who use stations as places of safety or shelter, the complexity of their needs, extensive delivery of social services in or adjacent to stations, and the gaps in coordinated social service provision.

Stations are equally diverse as they are shaped by their design and amenities, connection, or lack of, to ownership of adjacent properties and their uses, as well as their surrounding urban context.

Central station was identified as one of the most well-used stations in the CBD and across the network by PLP due to its size, location, and availability of vacant spaces. Central Station offers the most supportive environment for service provision aimed at PLP given its long history of working with care organisations.

Fieldwork confirmed that stations are not only points of transit but also critical places where PLP meet every day needs and negotiate their place in public space.

“It’s not just about physical needs. It’s about having a sense of community and feeling included and how you feel about space.”

Design, purpose of mobility, social expectations and economic capabilities influence how various cohorts of people move, gather and rest, while amenities such as toilets, water, electricity, seating and storage shape daily routines and perceptions of safety. These environments communicate social messages – whether stations feel welcoming, stigmatising or exclusionary depends on how design principles are applied and how staff enact their roles.

“If you sleep somewhere public, it’s safer because someone might see if something happens.”

Key insights:

1. There is a care economy/shadow care economy that TfNSW is contributing to through its provision of space, facilities, amenities, and care from staff.
2. Staff are not often equipped for their unofficial role in care.
3. There is a high diversity of people using stations to meet their basic needs e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, formal citizenship status, health, time and reason for being in station, and therefore require different approaches or engagement.
4. Stations are the safest place to be for many people for reasons such as security, hygiene, comfort, electricity, protection away from violence or drugs in homes or public housing, as well as purpose (make money, socialise), self-efficacy/determination.
5. Property and organisational boundaries challenge provision of care, expectation and ‘rules’ e.g. public, semi-public and private space, and management of those spaces such as local government or state government obligations compared to those of private or community interests - so communicative partnerships are essential for success.
6. The personal, social and organisational rewards/costs of care e.g. ethical, moral, political, financial needs to be recognised.

Design Principles: Infrastructures of Care

Rail travel must compete with other modes of transport if it is to fulfil its economic, social and ecological potential. It is imperative that the train network and its facilities are relatively more appealing than alternate modes while meeting customer requirements for safety, comfort, convenience and amenity. Furthermore, train stations are also workplaces, where health and wellbeing of staff is paramount. Therefore, the importance of accommodating and reconciling the diverse demands and expectations of transport environments held by their stakeholders cannot be underestimated.

The design principles presented here guide TfNSW decision-making when developing or re-designing train stations. These Principles augment other guidance documents that help the organisation create more inclusive environments¹.

Train Stations as Ecosystems of Care

Railway stations often function as the centre of a complex ecosystem of care within which PLP and others engage in a mix of formal and informal care through tangible and intangible measures. Social service providers range from registered agencies who exist in a structure of organised, institutional care to ‘organic’ care offered and received informally from staff, unregistered individuals or groups delivering social services, passengers and other PLP. As such, the ecosystem of care is made possible by physical, social and financial measures underpinned by the professional and/or personal investment of staff, passengers and other PLP. These domains of care are interdependent, so they are bound by complex feedback loops.

They’ll have doctors, they’ll have social workers, they will have vans with dry cleaning facilities ... it’s been going on here for years and years ... every day, seven days a week.

The care ecosystem can also be understood as inter-related domains of influence and impact:

- Hardware: physical places we create that frame who can go where and how the level of appeal for places.
- Software: emotional and behavioural elements of hopes, fears, expectations and values that people bring to places and their interactions.
- Orgware: priorities, policies and perspectives of the organisations and agencies that wield power over spaces and relationships.

¹ Beyond A to B: Urban Design for Public Transport and Precincts (2024); Better Placed (2017); Safer Cities Program – Great Places Toolkit (2024); TfNSW Principles and Framework for Aboriginal Engagement (2022); NSW Guide to Gender-Inclusive Placemaking (2024); Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2018–2022

Action in any of these dimensions will affect the other two. Interactions are likely to be particularly strong in the relatively closed environments of railway stations.

Challenges of Reconciling Needs for Care

Balancing competing interests with ecosystems of care can be challenging when managing spaces used for purposes other than efficient mobility. Staff, passengers and station users contribute to each other's perceptions of public safety² and insecurity. Common activities such as waiting, resting or hanging out at train stations can lead to:

- hazards e.g. people and possessions creating fire and trip hazards, management liabilities.
- experiences of distress and discomfort (emotional, mental, social and physical) such as fear of unpredictable, anti-social or confrontational behaviours.
- potential and actual abuse.
- public expression of unresolved traumas.
- ethical failure/reputational damage of staff and organisation.

Challenges are exacerbated when train stations are used to augment or replace other forms of domestic need such as accommodation. While communities can form within station environments and along the network, leading to high levels of respect and empathy for PLP, emotional discomfort can also be present. Feelings of fear, pity, shame, confusion and/or anger can be triggered by adverse perceptions and experiences leading to reduced patronage – whether warranted or not.

Objectives of Care

Any actions that support PLP and the social services helping them, passengers and other network users, are tasked with reconciling diverse needs. To achieve care in transit, design interventions should be developed to achieve an outcome which balances needs rather than significantly prioritising one group over another. An auxiliary objective centres on enabling PLP to access better alternatives than railway stations to live their lives, rather than viewing success as a matter of simply encouraging them to leave railway stations.

Values

This research identified the following six essential values for directing design processes:

- Elevate dignity – services and opportunities can be accessed without diminishment of esteem or at a cost of attracting stigma.

² List is not exhaustive.

- Efficiency of care – services and opportunities achieve their optimal impact through considered and effective delivery without unnecessary call on resources, which could be denied, so they can -be used elsewhere.
- Support care – offering and receiving care, in all its forms is no more difficult than it needs to be.
- Reconcile agendas- care should not be a zero-sum game. Supporting the wellbeing of one group is not achieved by diminishing the experience of another group.
- Recognise the interplay between the built, social and regulatory environment, and ensure they complement each other.
- Value passive care - the mere presence of other people who may look out for PLP offers some reassurance and emotional comfort to many PLP.

Care Priorities in Decision-Making

Care in All Decisions

Designing for care in transit ensures that interventions made to meet the needs of one group of people will not result in, or will limit, a corresponding denial of opportunity for others. All elements that serve the needs of PLP need to be legible, perceived as welcoming and inclusive to diminish unintentional barriers for self-care or accessing other services and opportunities.

Designing for care means considering the most effective and efficient place for care to be delivered which may be delivered in a station or not. Services need to be situated with appropriate visibility and accessibility so opportunities can be accessed, with supportive privacy and confidentiality and free from unnecessary social judgement or perceived stigma.

Minimising Conflict for Space

The organic provision of many forms of care is facilitated when those who share stations and provide that care feel safe and do not feel their own ability to meet their needs is diminished. Providing ample opportunities to sit, access electricity outlets, water and other amenities will reduce the potential for conflict because people will be able to find a comfortable space/place and reduce concern about the broader use of facilities by PLP.

Recognising Needs

Needs can be divided into foundational needs of safety, shelter, food and water and subsidiary needs (such as the need for affection, connection, expression, satisfaction, etc.).

To enable PLP to change their housing trajectory towards more stable housing both foundational and subsidiary needs should be met.

Recognising Embedded Messages in Design

Physical and social surroundings communicate meanings of how their elements can or should be used, when, why whom, and for length of time, which can signal levels of care within environments for different cohorts of people. Our surroundings can promote inclusion when they enable people, regardless of housing status, to:

- Occupy places that reflect positively on their self-esteem such as places embodying a high standard of design and management.
- Avoid places that reflect negatively on their sense of self-esteem, such as places that look and feel 'left over' or are poorly maintained.
- Share places with other people on equal terms, where that occupation is by right and not conditional or less than other users.

Places that are well designed, well-maintained and are comfortable suggest institutional and public care while inferring higher status on the people occupying that place.

Care in Contextualised Design

A place-based approach is essential for informing design of services and physical design interventions such as mix of issues and user expectations, legacy of past perceptions, behaviours and experiences, plus management techniques. Considerations include:

- Type of intervention
- Scale of intervention
- Sustainability of intervention
- Displacement due to intervention

Adaptability

Needs change as the nature of homelessness changes. Any interventions will need to be subject to periodical review and adaptable to ensure spaces and activities can respond to changing needs and priorities as well as amendments to the regulatory context.

Recognising and Addressing Plurality of Needs

Decisions must be made with some understanding of the multiple perspectives that will inform how different groups of people perceive their environment, possible issues and potential solutions. It is important that perceived enhancements for one group are not achieved at the cost of significant disadvantages for others.

Meet Multiple Needs Wherever Possible

Interventions need to be designed so they are perceived and experienced by different people, with different perspectives as relevant to their needs without diminishing the ability of that intervention to meet the needs of others.

Design Principles

The values, priorities and contextualisation of design leads to a people-centric focus that seeks to offer the greatest level of accessibility within dynamic environments that support dignity and discretion, while reducing interpersonal stress and conflict (Table A).

Table A: Design principles and expression of principles

Principles	Built form expression of that principle
1. Polyvalence Different people can experience the same place and see it as relevant to their ability to meet their (different) needs	Each element can serve multiple purposes; formally and informally with minimal conflict
2. Incidentally Each person has the opportunity to meet multiple needs at the same time	Elements are arranged to enable them to be accessed with minimal unnecessary cognitive or physical effort
3. Legibility Each person can understand the options open to them	All available opportunities can be easily understood (but balanced with a need for discretion where appropriate)
4. Appropriately discreet Use of any particular service or opportunity brings minimal risk of attracting stigma	Available options, opportunities and experiences are as visible as they need to be for the intended audience and no more
5. Welcoming Being in and around a station makes the user feel welcome and they have a right to be there	Accessing choices and opportunities does not impose emotional or physical discomfort
6. Conciliatory Stations are designed and managed to minimise conflicts and the tension associated with the anticipation of conflict	Potential flashpoints or points of conflict are minimised
7. Dignifying The experience of a station offers the user the conscious or subconscious comfort and reassurance their needs have been considered and determined to be important	All (reasonable) human needs accommodated. Being there reflects well on the person in that space
8. Salutogenic Being in a station does not add to the allostatic load (burden of stress) on the users	Physical environment supports healthy lifestyles, does not provoke feelings of stress, anxiousness, or are depressing
9. Evolving so it can respond to changing needs/priorities and learn the lessons of previous services	Spaces that can easily be adapted to different uses
10. Stations better for all When PLP, staff and passengers are less stressed the chances of conflicts arising are diminished	Qualities that diminish the perceived time people are waiting for their trains and ensure they are not stressed by discomfort or fear

Stakeholder Framework

The Stakeholder Framework identifies that TfNSW has largely operated at the margins of the homelessness support system. While TfNSW is an invested stakeholder and potential partner for social service providers who support people living precariously, engagement with social service providers has typically been limited to crisis or enforcement-driven interactions, such as contacting police or health services in emergency situations. This has positioned TfNSW as a reactive outsider rather than an active contributor to care, limiting both the effectiveness of responses for PLP and TfNSW's ability to draw on the expertise of the homelessness sector.

“I’m not a trauma psychologist; I’m not trained to do this – I don’t have the skills.”

By increasing its visibility, clarity of role and consistency of participation in homelessness and public space governance, TfNSW can directly improve outcomes for PLP who use stations as places of refuge, access, and connection. Early engagement, shared planning, and clearer pathways between transport operations and support services enable care to be provided more safely and effectively, rather than only at points of crisis.

The stakeholder map (Figure C) positions TfNSW as an active partner within the broader care ecosystem. This signals a shift from managing homelessness as an external issue to recognising stations as critical sites within place-based responses to rough sleeping. By participating more deliberately in these networks, TfNSW can help homelessness more effectively.

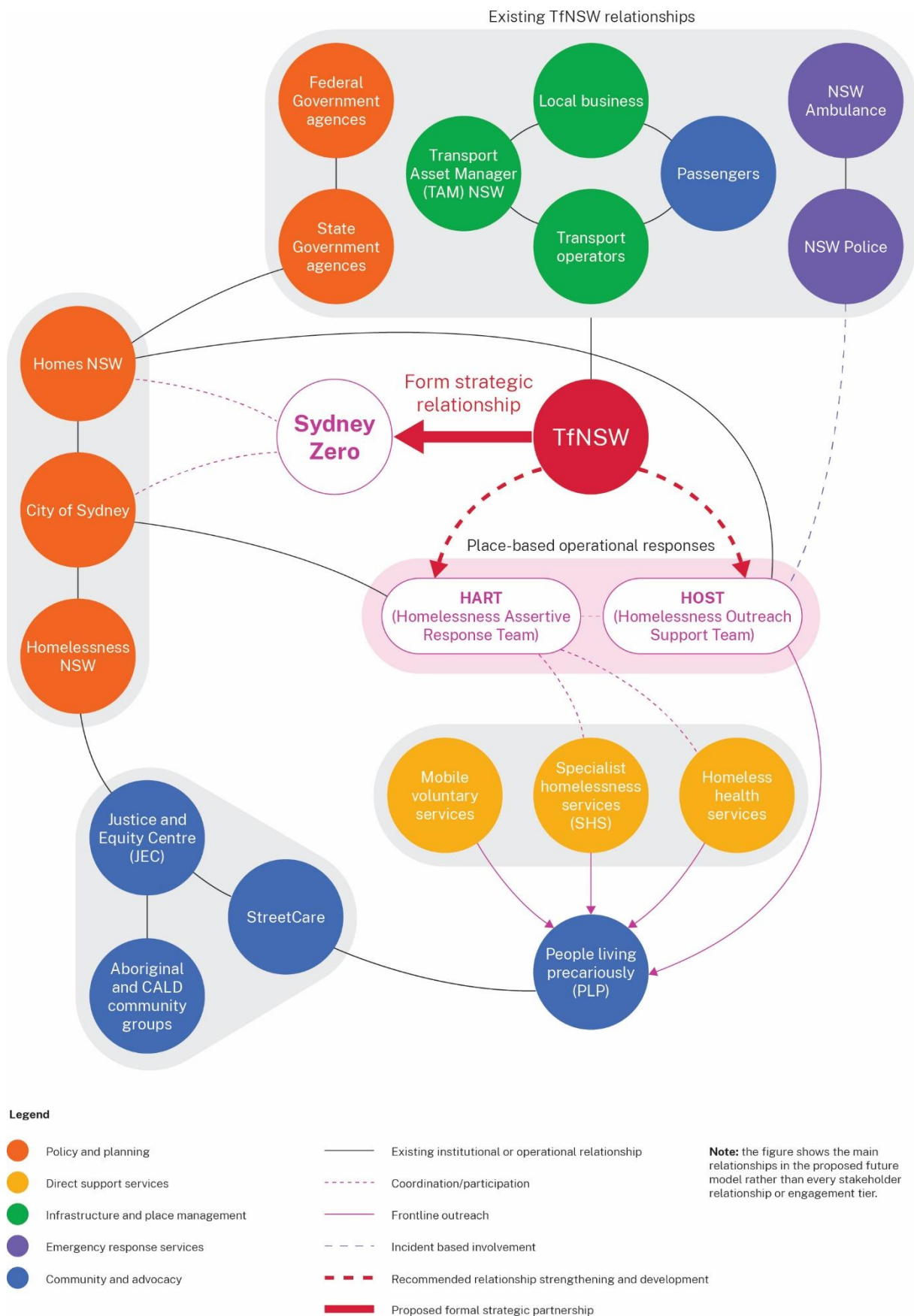


Figure C: Proposed insertion of TfNSW into stakeholder networks that address homelessness

Development of a stakeholder framework underscores the benefits of increasing TfNSW profile and presence in social service support discussions. The framework classifies stakeholders by their core functions and level of influence on outcomes. By considering these relationships and categorising their strategic and operational purpose, more effective partnerships can be developed.

Formal partner engagement → Less ad hoc action → Better care

Engagement through a formalised stakeholder framework is critical because international case studies consistently demonstrate that transport authorities cannot effectively address homelessness within their premises in isolation. Where positive outcomes have been achieved, transport agencies have worked as active partners within broader interagency systems of care, rather than responding in ad hoc or crisis-driven ways.

For TfNSW, participation at a strategic level, particularly through alignment with Sydney Zero, enables the organisation to contribute to place-based, coordinated responses aimed at making rough sleeping rare and non-recurrent.

Sydney Zero aims to make rough sleeping rare, brief and non-recurrent, and is highly relevant in inner-city Sydney, where services, governance structures and rough sleeping are already organised at a metropolitan scale. The research recognises that other parts of NSW will require locally appropriate, place-based coordination models that reflect different service ecosystems, geographies and needs.

By engaging in this way, TfNSW shifts from reactive incident management to intentional planning, clearer role definition and shared accountability, improving care pathways for PLP while supporting safer, more predictable station operations.

Stakeholders' feedback affirmed the framework's overall direction and functions while also identifying areas that would benefit from further development. Improvements primarily addressed role clarity, practical implementation, and contextual adaptability.

Key functions include:

- policy and planning: stakeholders who shape strategy, develop policy, allocate funding, or guide systemic responses to homelessness and public space management.
- infrastructure and space management: stakeholders responsible for managing, maintaining, or delivering transport services and infrastructure.
- direct support services: organisations that provide housing, health care, case management, and outreach to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- emergency response services: stakeholders who respond to incidents and crises in transport environments, including health emergencies and public order concerns.
- community and advocacy: individuals and groups who bring lived experience, represent affected communities, or shape public perception and policy discourse.

Organisations serving these functions exert different levels of influence as decision-makers, delivery partners, hubs and influencers. When working toward solutions for PLP in train stations, engagement with partners can take the form of collaboration with an emphasis on close relations and leadership, coordination which focuses more on regular communications for operational matters, cooperation that is characterised by irregular, reactive or project-based relationships, and co-existence with entities with few ties and interactions.

Recommendations

This research highlights that homelessness around transport hubs reflects deeper systemic gaps in care, but also presents a unique opportunity for coordinated, cross-sector solutions. TfNSW is well-positioned to lead this transformation by reimagining stations not just as transit points, but as vital spaces of refuge and connection for vulnerable individuals.

By embracing care as a strategic commitment, TfNSW can influence and support a broader ecosystem of inclusion and dignity through its infrastructure. With strong governance and collaborative partnerships, care becomes an embedded feature of transport environments, guided by clear design principles and stakeholder frameworks. Table 2 provide a practical set of actions based on domain and priority for TfNSW to strengthen its leadership in supporting people living precariously. Implementing the recommendations will ensure that care is a purposeful and transformative element of the transport experience.

Table B: Domains and priorities for action

Domain of Action	Priority 1 – Foundational	Priority 2 – Enhancing
Governance	1.1 Partner with Sydney Zero 1.2 Establish station-specific governance frameworks 1.3 Advocate for housing mix in TfNSW precincts	1.4 Support City of Sydney logistics work 1.5 Co-fund JEC & StreetCare guide
Inclusive Station Design & Infrastructure	2.1 Integrate built + programmatic design 2.2 Deliver inclusive amenities (toilets, charging, lockers) 2.3 Ensure high-quality, adaptable design when facilities are allocated for social service provision 2.4 Deliver inclusive seating design	2.5 Promote inclusive engagement & culture of care (art, greening, boards, libraries) 2.6 Provide larger receptacles & item removal policies
Access to Services & Mobility	3.1 Provide discreet, high-quality signage for PLP 3.2 Offer free transport when engaging with services	3.3 Allocate spaces for mobile service provision
Staff Capability & Support	4.1 Deliver trauma-informed training 4.2 Define and communicate referral and enforcement protocols 4.3 Equip and support staff to maintain passenger safety	4.4 Provide cross-agency briefings 4.5 Expand training modules
Lived Experience & Advisory Engagement	5.1 Establish advisory group with paid lived experience reps (incl. Aboriginal and CALD voices)	5.2 Support alternative advisory models (e.g. StreetCare)
Research & Evaluation	6.1 Maintain/expand research partnerships 6.2 Monitor impact across all recommendations	6.3 Develop shared data platforms
Pilot Initiatives	7.1 Trial safe rest and wellbeing spaces at high-need hubs 7.2 Trial liaison roles to coordinate with service organisations 7.3 Trial peer navigator/greeter roles in stations	7.4 Trial reduced or rent-free leases for service hubs 7.5 Test accreditation for volunteer-run services 7.6 Explore modular accommodation trials

Report Outline

The Care in Transit project redefines inclusive design in train stations by integrating care for PLP into infrastructure planning, without compromising customer experience. It challenges traditional neoliberal approaches by positioning empathy and solidarity at the heart of decision-making, supported by a comprehensive literature review and interdisciplinary research. The stakeholder framework developed through this initiative aims to foster inter-organisational collaboration, improve service coordination, and support TfNSW's operational goals while addressing homelessness in public spaces. Design principles were created to help reconcile the needs of vulnerable individuals with those of the broader public, ensuring stations remain welcoming and functional for all. Ultimately, the project positions TfNSW as a leader in socially responsive transport infrastructure, advancing a model of collective impact and care-based innovation. The report is structured as follows:



1 Project: Methodological Approach

This research project employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate how PLP interact with and experience the public transport environment in Sydney, NSW. The study integrated quantitative analyses of incident and usage data with qualitative methodologies including site observations, semi-structured interviews, social service mapping, and stakeholder focus groups. This comprehensive approach enabled the research team to explore spatial patterns, service coordination, and the broader care ecosystem within the TfNSW network.

Quantitative Analysis

Incident data from 2022–2024 and entry/exit data from 2022–2023 were analysed to identify correlations between passenger volumes and types of incidents. Significant associations were found between higher passenger volumes and incidents such as harassment, graffiti, and bodily harm, particularly on the City Circle line. However, no strong spatial correlations were identified between station design and incident types. These findings informed the selection of observation sites and contextualised qualitative insights.

Site Observations

Fieldwork was conducted across nine train stations over three periods between October 2024 and May 2025. Observations focused on architectural features, urban furniture, and socio-spatial dynamics. Researchers engaged in immersive techniques including walking interviews and casual conversations with station staff, service providers, and PLP. These interactions provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of PLP and informal service provision. Safety protocols were followed, including geo-location tracking and security support from TfNSW.

Social Service Mapping

The team reviewed existing directories and contacted 32 social services to verify offerings. This mapping was refined through site visits and input from PLP. Meetings with Services Australia and the City of Sydney provided further understanding of service coordination and outreach logistics. The mapping highlighted the diversity of services - ranging from food and showers to medical care and education - and the challenges of coordinating care across agencies.

Focus Group Engagement

A focus group with StreetCare, a lived-experience advisory committee supported by the Justice and Equity Centre, offered qualitative insights into the use of public transport by people experiencing homelessness. Discussions addressed safety, station design, interactions with staff, and the use of transport as shelter. The feedback informed inclusive design principles aimed at improving accessibility and dignity in transit environments.

Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews were conducted with PLP, service providers, researchers, and transport agency staff across Australia, North America, and Europe. These conversations explored trauma-informed practices, service coordination, and strategies for inclusive transit spaces. Interviews were documented and analysed thematically to identify challenges and opportunities for improving care within the transport network.

Workshops

Four stakeholder workshops were held to validate findings and refine design and governance frameworks. Participants included TfNSW staff, service providers, and advocacy groups. Workshops focused on inclusive design, operational barriers, and cross-agency collaboration. Feedback informed the development of practical, sustainable recommendations for improving public transport environments for PLP.

Key Opportunities

Integrated Stakeholder Framework

The workshops and interviews informed the development of a stakeholder framework that outlines governance, training, and partnership models. This framework offers a foundation for more coordinated and responsive service delivery across agencies.

Inclusive Design Principles

Insights from StreetCare and other lived-experience participants contributed to design principles that promote dignity, safety, and accessibility. These guidelines can inform future station upgrades and precinct planning to better accommodate PLP.

Cross-Sector Collaboration

Engagements with international and domestic transport and service organisations (e.g., TTC, SEPTA, SECL) provided models for collaborative approaches. These examples offer transferable strategies for TfNSW and local partners to enhance care within transit environments.

Enhanced Data-Informed Planning

Despite limitations, the correlation between passenger volumes and specific incident types provides a basis for targeted interventions. This data can support predictive planning and resource allocation in high-volume areas like the City Circle line.

Embedding Lived Experience

The inclusion of PLP voices through focus groups and informal interviews ensures that future planning is grounded in real-world needs. This participatory approach strengthens the legitimacy and relevance of proposed solutions.

2 Fieldwork Insights: Case for Change

This chapter builds directly on the insights from the literature review (published separately). While the review highlighted international examples and key insights into governance and design, it also revealed a lack of research focused specifically on homelessness in Australian transport environments. To address this gap, the project expands on those findings with fieldwork conducted across Sydney stations and surrounding public spaces. Together, these perspectives provide a stronger evidence base for understanding the lived realities of people in transit environments and identifying why change is needed.

The literature review and case studies demonstrated that transit environments function not only as sites of mobility but also as places of refuge, connection and care. Across examples from Europe, North America and Australia, three consistent themes emerged:

- 1) Integrating design and care: infrastructure can be reimagined as part of an ‘infrastructure of care’. Inclusive amenities, flexible layouts and visible service points support dignity for people living precariously while improving usability for all passengers.
- 2) Coordinating roles and responsibilities: effective responses depend on strong partnerships. Clear governance structures and shared accountability across transport agencies, housing, health and NGOs are essential to sustained support.
- 3) Moving from reactive to proactive models: outreach and integrated service provision are more effective than enforcement-led responses. Early, voluntary engagement builds trust and reduces conflict, benefiting both service users and the wider community.

These findings set the stage for our own fieldwork. Preliminary observations confirm both the visibility of homelessness in Sydney’s transport environments and the vital role stations already play in informal and formal networks of care. They also highlight the diversity of people who use stations as places of safety or shelter, the complexity of needs encountered, and the gaps in coordinated provision.

The case for change has two main elements. First, research on homelessness in Australian transit environments remains limited, leaving gaps in policy and practice. Second, field observations show that stations already function as informal spaces of care, though often inconsistently and without the coordination needed. Strengthening the role of stations as places of care through design, governance and service integration is critical if transport hubs are to support inclusion, safety and dignity for all users.

2.1 Visibility of Homelessness in Sydney

The research team conducted walking observations in the Sydney CBD, inner suburbs and nearby train stations, as well as in regional stations such as Wollongong. Public spaces in these areas, as well as in centres such as Parramatta, were being used for shelter and to meet basic needs. The extent of this visibility highlights that TfNSW is only one part of a wider network of assets, facilities and potential care for people in need.

The visibility and expression of homelessness in the city reflects the different pathways by which people arrive on the streets, the length of time they spend in public space, and their ability to negotiate public sentiment in order to maintain access to particular places. The photographs included below illustrate both the material needs of people living precariously and the range of strategies they employ to navigate public space.

Rough sleeping in and around transport hubs is not evenly distributed but fluctuates by season, time of day, and the presence of food or medical services. Central Station, for instance, is more heavily occupied at night when individuals board or disembark long-distance trains used for shelter, while Martin Place and Belmore Park attract larger numbers during the day due to established meal and outreach programs. Smaller but consistent groups are also found at Wynyard, St James, Circular Quay and Parramatta stations, with estimates ranging from 5 to 20 people per site on a typical night. In addition, intercity services themselves act as temporary accommodation, with 10–20 people commonly using the South Coast line and smaller groups on the Newcastle and Blue Mountains routes. This pattern highlights that transport infrastructure is not only a site of transit but also functions as informal shelter and service access points, reinforcing the need for coordinated responses tailored to both station precincts and the train lines that connect them.



Figure 1: Requesting help – without belongings, vulnerabilities are evident



Figure 2: Seeking help, compassion and respect; willing to 'earn' help



Figure 3: Quality shelter in tents and protected from weather at the law courts



Figure 4: Potentially new to street – clean cases remained over many days

2.2 Stations Recognised for Providing Care

During preliminary scoping, the research team observed the presence and traces of rough sleeping within train stations and noted features that support or undermine use of these spaces.

Their observations indicated that the context of the site was more important than specific design elements within sites to achieve the overall aims of the research project. Newly designed station passageways characterised by corporate look and experience indicated evidence of rough sleeping as well as older sites, suggesting that design elements might not be as influential as site location and context.

All social service providers that spoke with researchers identified Central Station as the most well-used station by rough sleepers, due to its size, location, and availability of vacant spaces. Wynyard, St James, Martin Place and Circular Quay were also highlighted. Other city-centric stations such as Bondi Junction, Redfern and Paramatta were notable locations. By contrast, stations outside central hubs, and with limited access to nearby services, were less likely to be used in this way.

Several factors contribute to the popularity of these stations, such as shelter from the elements, access to services, and foot traffic allowing rough sleepers to seek community contributions. Rough sleeping extends beyond the stations to the trains themselves, especially on routes from Central Station to outer regions, particularly on routes from Central to Kiama, Newcastle, and the Blue Mountains. In response staff from HOST (HOMES NSW) support this group by riding trains monthly to offer services.

Several specific areas within and around train stations were noted as rough sleeping hotspots. Central Station emerges as the main hotspot, particularly around the Eddy Avenue and Belmore Park surrounding areas, the Grand Concourse, platforms 1-15, the undercover area surrounding the Grand Concourse building, and the tunnel leading outside the South Concourse toward exit

7 (Central Station), and tunnels and pedestrian accessways (St James station), and the Woolloomooloo area.

Central Station offers the most supportive environment for service provision aimed at PLP given its long history of working with care organisations. For example, a noteworthy initiative at Central Station involves a fortnightly HUB program, operated by The Salvation Army with NSW Health and NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), offering outreach services directly to rough sleepers, with tables, chairs, and other facilities provided by the station itself.

The value of Central Station for rough sleepers was confirmed in a focus group and site visit to the station with StreetCare/Justice and Equity Centre. Members of StreetCare identified lighting, CCTV, presence of staff and police for security, as well as access to water, toilets and features that restricted sightlines enough for people to sleep in close proximity to help.



Figure 5: Learning from StreetCare/JEC



Figure 6: Discussing design features with StreetCare/JEC

2.3 Diversity of People Living Precariously Who Use TfNSW Network

Observations confirmed that there is a high level of diversity of people who are unhoused, rough sleeping and living precariously (Figure 7). Observations revealed that any effort directed at supporting PLP, regardless of their sleeping arrangements, required an ability to service all genders, ages, ethno-cultural backgrounds, citizenship status and family groupings.

Observations on demographics:

- Gender: there appeared to be more women staying at Central Station compared to other stations (Figure 8).
- Cultural background: PLP's represented diverse national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds for both those born in Australia or who migrated here e.g. Aboriginality, South Asia and Central Asian appearance, shorter and longer-term migrants from North America and Asia Pacific.
- Age: observed ages of people living at stations or in their surrounds ranged from 20-80 years (based on observation and statements e.g. one woman was a 76-year-old migrant who did not qualify for public housing).
- Health and wellbeing: mental health was a strong factor affecting the wellbeing of PLP according to station staff and service providers; people living at the station, mental health

matters occurred along the spectrum from hidden to obvious, including the expression of unpredictable behaviours.

- Alcohol and substance abuse: while substance use was observed among people living at stations, many people appeared unaffected, underlining the heterogeneity of circumstances among this group.

These observations demonstrate that homelessness in transit environments is not confined to a single demographic, but characterised by diversity across gender, culture, age and health status.



Figure 7: Older women, some possibly with dementia

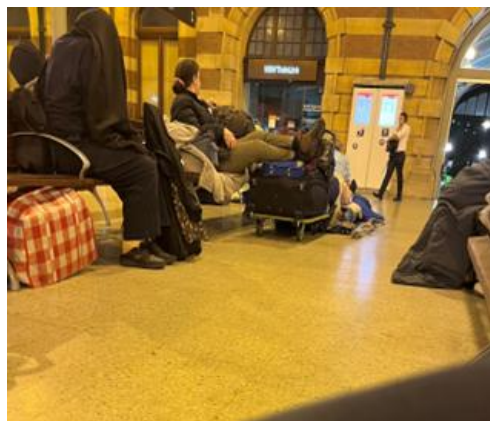


Figure 8: Women sharing seats back-to-back

Assumptions about why people live on the street or use train stations for shelter and services need to be suspended, so the aspirations and needs of PLP can be heard, respected and appropriately addressed.

For example, some participants indicated they had accommodation but could not afford food. Others are working toward greater housing stability, but their willingness to engage with faith-based services varies. There are no secular housing services, except public housing, which excludes non-citizens.

Cultural Diversity in Service Use/Provision and Social Life

Fieldwork highlighted that cultural diversity is evident not only among people living precariously but also in how services are delivered and how people interact in station spaces. This diversity influences the ways support is accessed, provided and shared in everyday social interactions.



Figure 9: Socialising Martin Place



Figure 10: Library service Martin Place

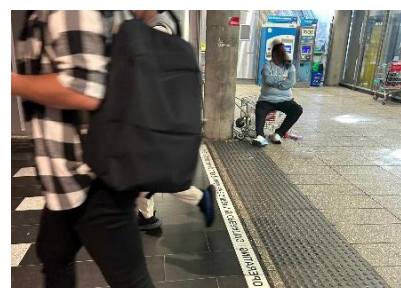


Figure 11: Seeking economic support Paramatta Station

Singles and Family Groups Helping, Working, Receiving

Observations and staff input highlighted the different ways individuals and families use station spaces. Station staff noted that some families, including parents with children, were sleeping out together. Rough sleepers also described choosing streets or stations over available housing, since many accommodation options are separated by gender and therefore unsuitable for couples or families.

At the same time, some family groups were observed socialising together in station precincts (Figure 12), showing that family life continues in public even in precarious circumstances. Some people were also seen using stations as places of work while supporting family responsibilities (Figure 13), reflecting how economic pressures extend beyond those directly experiencing homelessness. More broadly, stations serve as shared environments where individuals and families negotiate space in informal ways (Figure 14).



Figure 12: Family groups socialising in station precincts



Figure 13: Worker using station space while supporting family obligations



Figure 14: Informal use of shared station areas by individuals and families

Property Boundaries and Station Environments

The diversity of people living precariously across the TfNSW network is matched by the diversity of station environments themselves. Each station is shaped not only by its design and amenities but also by its ownership boundaries and surrounding urban context. These boundaries mark where different agencies exert control, and they influence how spaces are managed, accessed and experienced by both passengers and PLP. Examining these boundaries highlights how questions of governance, design and care intersect in the everyday operation of stations.

The following three stations offer differing examples of the boundary issues:

- At Wynyard, property boundaries were demarcated by subtle cues such as a change in tiling. TfNSW owned multiple levels of the property, but it adjoined commercial property owners that leased spaces to commercial retail and food services.
- St James property boundaries were easily identifiable, as it is a heritage station that has not experienced significant site re-development, although the station has received upgrades. The station is located at the edge of a large park, within the CBD, acting as boundary to arts, sports and gardens areas.
- Parramatta property boundaries were demarcated by subtle cues such as the mounted tracks for rolling doors at times of closure. TfNSW owned multiple levels of the property

and adjoining bus interchange, while Westfield and a high-density high rise corporate complex, inclusive of University of Western Sydney, as well as public parks and spaces are also located in the vicinity.

Other major stations such as Central and Martin Place also reflect complex and evolving relationships between ownership, access, and the meaning of public space.

At Central Station, significant redevelopment is underway as part of the Central Precinct Renewal Program. This large-scale transformation seeks to integrate the station into a high-growth, mixed-use precinct spanning commercial, educational and residential uses. The Strategic Framework (2022) outlines long-term goals of activating public space and enhancing multimodal access. However, the ongoing construction and multiple overlapping land uses introduce layers of operational responsibility that require strong cross-agency coordination.

Despite this, Central Station continues to serve as a critical site of informal care and social interaction. Some PLP return regularly to access food services and connect with familiar faces. These practices reflect a sense of community and care that continues despite changes in the station environment.

By contrast, Martin Place Station reflects a different kind of complexity. Known as the “civic heart of Sydney” (Deslandes & Humphry, 2017), Martin Place sits at the intersection of dense commercial and governmental activity. There are two different operators in ‘the one’ station and different styles of operation between Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro. It is integrated into dual commercial towers via the Sydney Metro, blurring public and private boundaries. The space was once a highly visible site of homelessness, most notably in 2017 during the “tent city” protest encampment, which drew media and political attention before being cleared by authorities (ABC News, 2017). While the encampment was removed, Martin Place remains a symbolic and practical site where some PLP continue to gather and attend community dinners. However, the area's corporate formality and tightly managed urban design shape how presence is negotiated. It produces an environment that is physically open yet socially regulated, limiting how PLP occupy and interact with the space.

The physical boundaries and design influence not only movement through stations but also access to care and the expression of social presence. The spatial organisation of each station shapes how access to public space is negotiated, particularly for PLP. As stations evolve through redevelopment or commercial integration, it raises the challenge of designing environments that function as transport hubs while also supporting spaces that are safe and inclusive for all. This leads to a broader discussion on the role of inclusive design in shaping welcoming transport environments.

2.4 Stations as Places of Care and Inclusion

Fieldwork confirmed that stations are not only points of transit but also critical places where PLP meet everyday needs and negotiate their place in public space. Boundaries of ownership and design influence how people move, gather and rest, while amenities such as toilets, water, electricity, seating and storage shape daily routines and perceptions of safety. These environments also communicate social messages – whether stations feel welcoming,

stigmatising or exclusionary depends on how design principles are applied and how staff enact their roles. Taken together, these factors highlight that stations are not neutral infrastructures: they are lived spaces where access, care and inclusion are constantly in play.

Welcoming Environments and Inclusive Design

Inclusive design in transport aims to ensure that all users, regardless of age, ability or circumstance, can access and navigate spaces safely and with dignity. As outlined in the accompanying literature review report, this includes not only physical accessibility but also emotional comfort and a sense of inclusion. Key principles such as accessibility, legibility, permeability and wayfinding are outlined by Transport for London (2021). Inclusive design also extends to management, signage and staff interaction, and must consider both visible and invisible barriers (UITP, 2023). This is especially important for people with psychosocial disability or those experiencing homelessness, for whom emotional safety and public inclusion are as important as physical access.

These principles were reflected in community feedback gathered during StreetCare workshops, where participants highlighted how design affects not only access but also emotional safety and a sense of belonging.

For StreetCare workshop participants there was a desire for the physical appearance and ‘feel’ of any spaces designed in train stations to go beyond the practical utility of the space. They suggested that the materials, colours, and designs should help spaces to feel welcoming, warm and safe, rather than institutional or clinical:

If it looks too good, you’re not welcome.³

Participants criticised overly ‘clean’ or high-end station designs that are hostile to people experiencing homelessness. Design choices that prioritise aesthetics over function can send the message that certain people don’t belong.

They also emphasised that safety is not only about surveillance or security infrastructure, but about whether a space conveys warmth and acceptance:

It’s not just about physical needs. It’s about having a sense of community and feeling included and how you feel about space.

PLP participants proposed the idea of a wellness or rest rooms within station environments. A quiet, safe space where someone in distress can decompress is especially relevant for people experiencing mental health crises, trauma, or stress:

There should be a wellness room or something, somewhere to calm down.

This is also about the visibility of care that social environments provide – basic CPTED design principles, which in this instance should be considered with particular attention of PLP. The StreetCare group noted that public visibility, even in bright or busy areas, can provide a form of

³ Please note, all statements in this report, regardless of participant background, are based on researchers’ notes so we could focus on listening, ensure trust, and respond to the moment of interaction.

passive protection as it increases the chance that others will intervene or call for help in an emergency:

If you sleep somewhere public, it's safer because someone might see if something happens.

There is a sense of vulnerability at night, with a participant (female) expressing concern about personal safety and the potential for violence while trying to sleep:

You don't know who are the people going around... if somebody going to hit me or punch me.

Wayfinding could also be an issue on multiple fronts. PLP focus group participants discussed how poorly designed signage can alienate people who are unfamiliar with transport systems, not fluent in English, or living with cognitive or psychological challenges. It can also be difficult to find toilets in stations. Poor signage and limited access make it hard for people to meet basic needs, leading to distress and discomfort. Clear signage is essential for inclusive access.:

Signs don't make sense to everyone. You feel stupid for not knowing.

You need to have [signs for facilities] big, because most people don't know where to go.

StreetCare workshop participants explained that low key wayfinding signage for social services could increase stigma. They wanted support services to be as clearly labelled as everything else in a station so signage did not contribute to sentiments that such services should be kept hidden.

These design choices reflect broader tensions around visibility, care and inclusion. A welcoming transport environment requires more than physical access. It must also signal that support services and diverse groups of people belong within the space.

Access to Essential Amenities

Building on these concerns, fieldwork also confirmed that inclusive design is inseparable from the provision of basic amenities. Toilets, water, electricity, seating and storage are not simply functional services. They shape how PLP move through stations, how long they can remain, and whether they experience the environment as safe and supportive. In this sense, infrastructure is as much a part of emotional safety and belonging as architectural design or signage.

Water and Basic Amenities

Access to clean water is uneven. Some stations have functioning fountains or taps, while in others, water sources are absent or difficult to locate (Figure 15). People often rely on nearby public parks or community services to meet their needs for drinking water and washing, which creates additional challenges for those spending long periods in stations.



Figure 15: Restricted access to water at Central

Toilets

Toilets were one of the most frequently cited needs. PLP rely on station facilities for hygiene and dignity, yet access varies significantly. At some stations, toilets are locked at night or located within paid areas, limiting availability. The size, location, accessibility, visibility and type of facilities all influence how they are used.

Washing is particularly difficult, and toilet areas sometimes became messy as a result. Station staff noted that this was not always about neglect but could reflect misunderstandings about responsibility for cleaning. One staff member explained that a rough sleeper became much less messy once they realised that the staff they saw every day, and with whom they had developed a kind of care relationship, were the ones cleaning the facilities. Participants expressed the need for more facilities that integrate showers for health and hygiene:

They should put an additional [toilet] and also a shower because... for health conditions.

Observational notes linked to figures. High-visibility wayfinding helped users locate facilities from a distance, although approaches could lack passive surveillance (Figure 16). Space inside some cubicles was limited, with few places to hang or place belongings. By contrast, a parents' room or accessible toilet provided more space to manage belongings (Figure 17). Some facilities already signalled inclusivity through their signage and design (Figure 18).

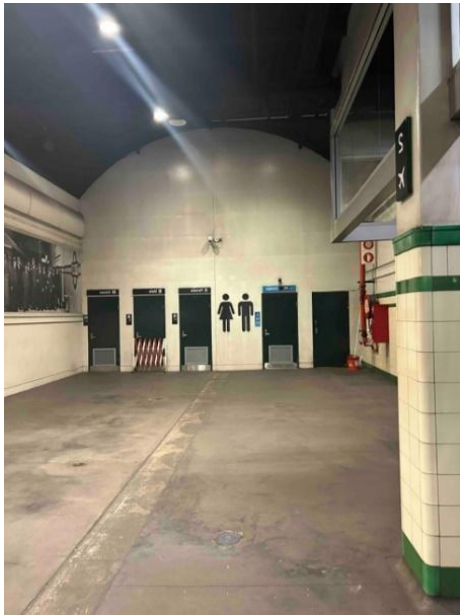


Figure 16: High visibility for wayfinding from a distance, but low surveillance

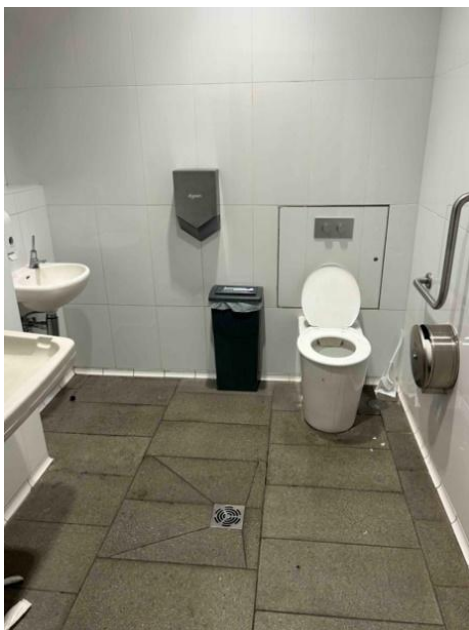


Figure 17: Parent's room or disabled toilets provide greater space for keeping belongings



Figure 18: Inclusivity is already indicated

Hygiene

Maintaining cleanliness was raised as a matter of self-respect and routine. One participant described how they made every effort to stay clean despite the lack of laundry or washing facilities:

“Because you know I am always clean. Even the clothes... I don’t want to use clothes without washing.”

Security: Informal Service Provision and Non-Interfering Surveillance

At Martin Place, the spatial layout with broad, level surfaces close to train access is well suited for service delivery. The station and its surrounds also function as a place for reading, eating and socialising, highlighting its role as both a transit point and a gathering space. Police were present and observant but did not appear to intervene, providing a form of non-interfering surveillance that allowed activities to continue without disruption.



Figure 19: Martin Place



Figure 20: Martin Place

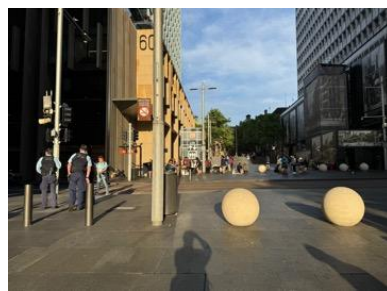


Figure 21: Martin Place

Charging and Power Access

Electricity for charging phones and other devices is essential for maintaining contact with services, family and community networks. While some charging points exist, they are limited and not always designed for inclusive use. People were also observed using informal access points, such as unused sockets.

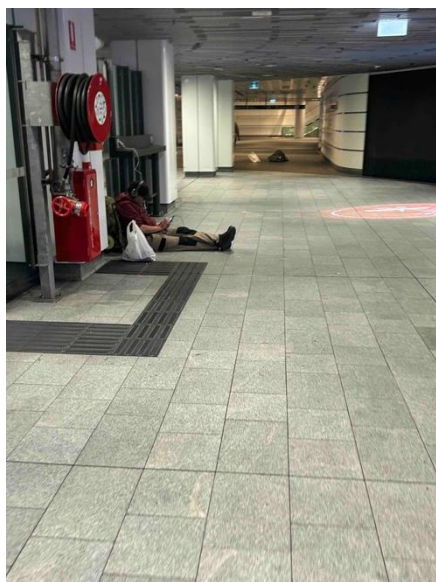


Figure 22: Need for electricity

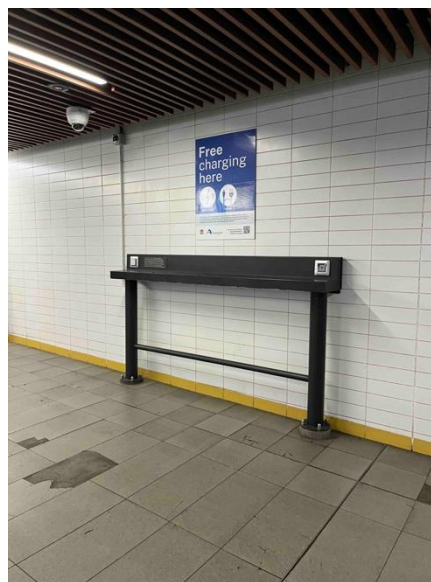


Figure 23: Electricity access point at Town Hall

Seating and Rest Areas

Seating is highly valued, both for rest and for maintaining a sense of dignity as part of the general passenger environment. Various design features are introduced to reduce sleeping, such as

armrests or sloped benches, but these limit usability for people needing longer rest periods. Some features, such as armrests, also have benefits by helping older people to stand. However, none of the restrictions consider other needs, such as supports for breastfeeding in public space. In contrast, stations with more inclusive seating create safer and more welcoming conditions.



Figure 24: Seating only, Central Station



Figure 25: Hostile to sleeping in corridor

Sleeping

Stations provide a range of opportunities for PLP to rest or sleep, often by adapting existing infrastructure to create safer or more private arrangements. For example, bike racks can double as storage and, when covered with a tarp, form a semi-private place to sleep. At Central Station, the arches provide protection from the weather as well as privacy within a broader, surveilled environment that many PLP regard as safer.

Other elements of station design, including alcoves, sheltered tram areas and partially hidden corners, also offer cover from view while keeping PLP close to lighting, CCTV and activity. These adaptations reflect the ways PLP actively negotiate safety, visibility and comfort within transit environments. They also highlight a gap in design practice: while stations inadvertently provide places for rest, they are not intentionally designed to accommodate sleeping, despite being used in this way on a daily basis.



Figure 26: Value of street furniture for sleeping

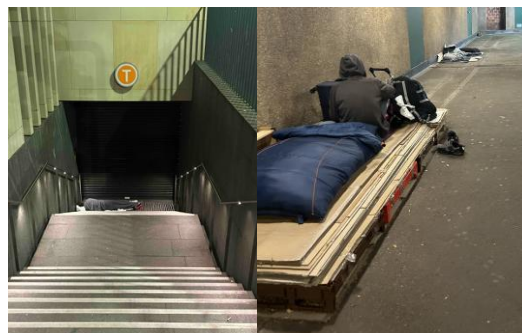


Figure 27: Protection from elements at Martin Place and St James where it can flood



Figure 28: Privacy under a bike rack at Circular Quay



Figure 29: Around the edges at Circular Quay

Unwritten Codes of Behaviour

Fieldwork shows that both staff and PLP operate within unspoken rules that shape how station spaces are used. Station staff are most comfortable with PLP who are quiet, non-disruptive and neat in their presentation. Similarly, PLP recognise that being unobtrusive and maintaining order around their belongings helps protect their continued access to shelter and facilities.

These unspoken rules act as a form of negotiation between PLP and staff, influencing who is tolerated within stations and under what conditions. It is not yet clear how PLP form groups or select companions in these settings, but maintaining a low profile appears to be an important strategy for sustaining access to station spaces.



Figure 30: Minimal impact at Wynyard Station



Figure 31: Neat, organised and trusting at St James



Figure 32: Tidy at Circular Quay

These unspoken rules often centre on how belongings are managed, since keeping possessions neat and unobtrusive is closely tied to whether PLP are tolerated in station spaces. This connection highlights the importance of storage as a practical and social issue within transport environments.

Storage

Managing belongings is a major challenge for PLP who rely on stations and surrounding areas. Without secure storage, people are forced to carry their possessions constantly, which is

exhausting and unsafe. Participants identified lockers as a critical gap, describing how they would help reduce the strain of mobility and lower risks of theft or loss:

You know what they should do here? They should put lockers. The storage. Because some of the homeless they leave their things, they can't carry everywhere.

You know some people they need locker for their bag, you know. Because they walk all the time.

Fieldwork also showed a wide variety of strategies, from informal stowing of possessions in sheltered corners and pockets of space (Figures 33 and 34) to the use of bike racks, which provide both storage and a degree of privacy for sleeping when covered with a tarp (Figure 28).



Figure 33: Stowed belongings in Parramatta



Figure 34: Stowed belongings near State Library

Some formal storage options also exist. For example, the City of Sydney provides lockers with keyed access. These are reportedly emptied and cleaned every few days, but their availability is limited. By contrast, people with greater means can access commercial storage services, highlighting inequities in how storage needs are met.

The lack of consistent, accessible storage across station precincts undermines both safety and dignity. Belongings left unattended create tension with staff and the wider public, while the absence of reliable options forces PLP to improvise, often in ways that expose their possessions to theft, damage or weather. Addressing storage needs improves the everyday experience of PLP while also reducing conflict over space in and around stations.

Mobility and Access

Mobility is central to how PLP use and navigate transport environments. Many rely on equipment such as bags, trolleys and carts to carry possessions. These items not only support movement but can also shape how PLP are perceived by others. For example, buggies or carts can help present the appearance of a traveller, which may reduce stigma and allow greater acceptance in public spaces.

Mobility in transport environments also depends on the availability of safe amenities. Easy-access rubbish disposals for sharps reduce risks for both PLP and other station users, allowing people to move through spaces more safely.

Access to services also depends on the availability of suitable spaces within and around stations. Fieldwork demonstrated the importance of safe areas for parking possessions, places to socialise while receiving services, and storage options that are secure, weather-proof and easy to clean. Examples include the use of open space at Belmont Park near Central Station and service delivery points at Martin Place (Figures 35 - 37).



Figure 35: Needing space to park – Belmont Park near Central



Figure 36: Receiving medical care



Figure 37: Streetside medical care

These observations highlight how mobility and access are shaped by design features such as seating and amenities, but also by the location, timing and accessibility of services provided in and around station precincts.

Service delivery itself is often constrained by the lack of accessible sites for parking vans and distributing resources. Providers described difficulties in finding safe, well-designed spaces for this purpose, particularly when service demand rises, with between 50 and 200 individuals sometimes arriving at a single service. These challenges highlight the need for station precincts and adjacent areas to be planned with both mobility and service delivery in mind.



Figure 38: Bill Crews

Many PLP travel across the TfNSW network to reach located services such as counselling, food provision and, at times, shelter. However, demand frequently exceeds supply, and many providers are religiously affiliated (see figure 38), which may deter some PLP from accessing care. These observations confirm that accessibility is not only about physical mobility but also about

ensuring that services are distributed fairly, appropriately and in ways that respect diverse needs and beliefs.

Worst Case Scenario

Matters that required action to care for staff, passengers and the public were also observed. Evaluation of risk and safety within the context of care was informed by behaviour and experience, which were affected by the local area context.

The first two photos (Figures 39 and 40) were taken in the Wynyard Station area. The café site was used by people who hoarded, with rubbish, rodents and belongings stacking up against the windows and affecting nearby users, including hotel staff and patrons across the road. Following complaints, the area was closed off, placed under surveillance and later cleaned. Another Sydney site with evidence of similar use is presented in Figure 41.

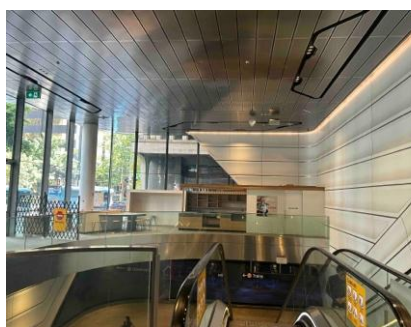


Figure 39: Area cleaned after complaints



Figure 40: Sign closing off area

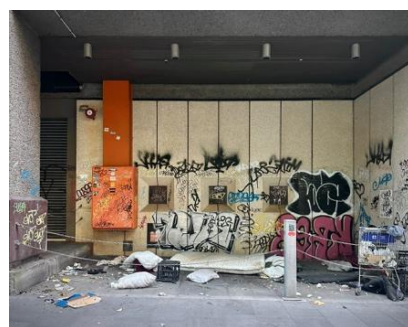


Figure 41: Site in Sydney

Regional, rural stations and some suburban stations were often distant from high activity areas. At sites where facilities such as car parks were located, different opportunities for rough sleepers were presented. However, these spaces could also create more risks. For example, a multi-storey car park in Wollongong was used by an individual who was heavily affected by illicit substances. This created an unsafe environment across four stories of a stairwell, where syringes and evidence of squalid living conditions were observed. Signs of movement to a cleaner stairwell were later evident (Figures 42 to 44).



Figure 42: External carpark stairwell at Wollongong



Figure 44: Syringes at base of stairwell



Figure 43: Evidence of substance abuse and squalid living conditions

Examples of conflicts that occurred more regularly, though not at the level of worst-case scenarios, included:

- ticketing and sleeping,
- use of lifts and sleeping,
- tensions between rough sleeping, station oversight, occupational health and safety, and economic activities.

2.5 Everyday Experience of Care

Care in stations is not only about the presence of infrastructure but also about the skills and relationships that allow people to use these spaces with dignity. Social relations of power define who is regarded as a “legitimate” user of space, and design choices reinforce these relations by setting expectations and boundaries. Facilities within ticketed areas, for example, generate stronger feelings of ownership and pressure for both PLP and staff, since access is more tightly controlled.

Fieldwork showed that much of the care extended to PLP rests in the hands of individual staff members. Acts of kindness and empathy often make the difference between PLP being tolerated or excluded. Yet reliance on discretion means that experiences vary: some staff respond with empathy, while others enforce rules more strictly. Staff themselves described this tension, noting the challenges of managing disruption while lacking specialist training:

I’m not a trauma psychologist; I’m not trained to do this – I don’t have the skills.

At the same time, participants noted that negative assumptions sometimes shaped their encounters with staff and security:

They think if you’re homeless, you’re going to cause trouble.

These dynamics highlight that care is not only about providing amenities but also about the skills needed to de-escalate conflict, negotiate access, and build trust over time. Strengthening these skills, and recognising the role of discretion, is essential to balancing safety with dignity.

Care is also distributed across agencies. Local councils manage adjacent public spaces, while health providers and community organisations deliver services around stations. Police and security contractors become involved when risks escalate. These overlapping responsibilities show that sustaining both safety and dignity depends on coordination, not only on the actions of transport staff.

Despite these challenges, TfNSW staff are often attentive to PLP, noticing when people are missing, providing informal assistance, and building relationships over time. This everyday attentiveness was recognised and valued in the StreetCare workshops, where participants expressed appreciation for staff who treated them with respect.

Stations as Places for Refuge

Some TfNSW station staff described the ways they care for people at the station. Their actions included looking out for particular people using the station e.g. older women or people with dementia or recognising when regular station users were absent for a period of time. These everyday practices reflect how care is expressed through attention and familiarity.

For many PLP, public spaces like Central Station are experienced as safer and more welcoming than housing environments. The street becomes not only a necessity but also a community and refuge. These experiences challenge the assumption that having housing always guarantees safety. As one participant explained:

It's not safe for me to go home. The only place for me to be safe is right where I am (Central Station).

Another participant described how government housing did not resolve their sense of insecurity:

It's not safe for me at my place at the moment... I'm in government housing in Parramatta, but the neighbours... police know the situation and they can't do nothing about it.

These reflections highlight the difficulties of feeling safe in housing where neighbours are affected by drug and alcohol use, which can undermine the efforts of those trying to remain clean. In addition, housing insecurity can persist despite being formally housed.

Accommodation services are also often unsuitable for families. Hostels may not support couples or parents with child arrangements, and some are gender-specific, which excludes heterosexual couples. Some families remain together in public spaces due to a lack of appropriate accommodation options. Station staff also noted that family groups sometimes sleep at stations, such as a parent with a child, and that some people working in stations continue to support families while sleeping rough.

Decisions to remain in public space are also shaped by identity and a sense of belonging. As one participant explained:

Once it's in your blood, you can't get it out.

Others described the ongoing connection to street life, noting that even after being housed, the routine and familiarity of the station environment remained a strong pull:

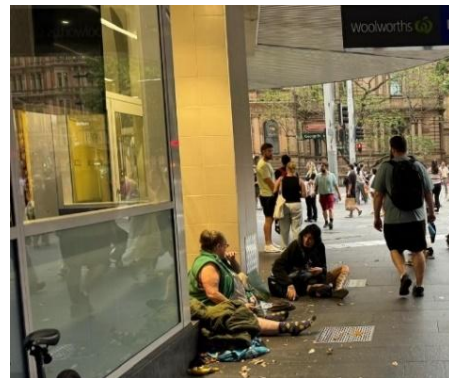
You see the people every day. They know me.

This sense of being cared for was also expressed towards on-street service providers who delivered food and other resources. A sense of belonging is built through daily interactions with staff, food volunteers and others experiencing homelessness. Familiarity with these groups supports informal connections and a feeling of recognition and community.

Being unhoused and ensuring personal safety is also a mobility issue. Movement itself becomes a survival tactic, as does staying close to stations and inner-urban areas where public space is well lit and populated. Constant mobility provides safety by reducing prolonged exposure to threats in any one location, whether in homes, shelters or hostile public settings.

As one participant explained:

It's more safe to be on the move than to be at one place.



For this person, movement itself provided protection. By not remaining in one location for too long, they reduced the risk of harm and maintained a sense of control. Another participant contrasted feeling secure inside the station concourse with feeling unsafe outside it:

I feel safe here. When I go up, I feel scared.

Here, “going up” referred to leaving the station and moving outside, where the participant felt more exposed and vulnerable. The station itself was described as the safer and more familiar environment.

These accounts show that for many PLP, the experience of safety, care and belonging is bound to stations and the mobility that surrounds them. Stations become not only transit hubs but also spaces where community and care are actively negotiated in daily life.

2.6 Social Service Networks and Facilitation of Care

Social service mapping comprised a review of existing directories and websites that identified formal social service provision within the Sydney metropolitan area. Thirty-two (32) social services were contacted to verify their services and cohorts for delivery of which ten (10) staff from services responded. In addition to providing a spatial understanding of service delivery, this

work served to update the list of services identified by consultants working the Central Precinct Redevelopment. During site observations, this list was further amended based on documentation identified by PLP. The research team obtained a copy of the information from a local service provider in addition to complementary documents provided by the City of Sydney. Two meetings with representatives of the City of Sydney expanded the team's understanding of this complex space by providing an overview of the role and function of Council's homeless outreach team, as well as the coordination/logistics of managing service providers across the city. Additional meetings were held with Homes NSW and non-government service providers.

Initial observations pertaining to the diversity of services, their geographical coverage and the variety of organisations delivering care and working with PLP were also conducted during site visits, during which the research team engaged with an additional nine services that addressed different care needs such as: food, showers, clothing, medical care, haircuts, books, IT, and education.

The use of public spaces and transport environments for service delivery is highly dynamic, reflecting both need and the mobility of organisations. Together, providers and users are engaged in what City of Sydney staff describe as a 'shadow economy of care'. This economy is characterised by relationships of demand and supply, which are supported by extensive supplier networks. The array of donated goods and services are delivered through a mix of fixed and mobile services which are fuelled by need, desire to help, and the labour of volunteer and paid workers.

Nearly 70+ Mobile Voluntary Services (MVS) operate across the City of Sydney LGA, providing 196 weekly services with an average of 50-200 patrons per service. Approximately 23 services near Central Station (including Belmore Park and Prince Alfred Park) deliver 32 weekly services, while 16 services near Martin Place Station offer 37 weekly services (Howard, 2024; City of Sydney, 2023).

During stakeholder workshops, social service representatives acknowledged the many mobile services that are already being delivered in or near transport precincts. Interagency stakeholder workshop participants acknowledged that inter-organisational education is needed as the existing and potential role that TfNSW has to play as a partner to address the needs of rough sleepers and PLP is invisible or poorly understood.

Conversations conducted with interlocutors from TfNSW staff, City of Sydney, and service providers, indicate there is a significantly resourced shadow economy.

One station staff member explained:

They'll have doctors, they'll have social workers, they will have vans with dry cleaning facilities ... it's been going on here for years and years ... every day, seven days a week.

Another noted that demand is not only from rough sleepers but also from people travelling into the city from elsewhere:

50-60 per day ... families, kids ... people from the outer suburbs coming in who maybe don't have the means to do weekly shopping.

At another station, staff described close working relationships with council, local health services and family support agencies to help find accommodation alternatives for PLP. They also noted that while community donations of food and money are well intentioned, they can create unintended challenges:

Council apparently put on meals and they have like, the vans that come along and and out food and other items ... but we have a lot of people passing through wanting to do the right thing and give them money or food, and it ends up being thrown around or left ... and all the food does is attract more [rats], unfortunately.

Staff also pointed to the challenges of coordination, given the number of different organisations involved:

It's sort of awkward because it's not really consolidated at the moment ... guidelines come from the state government ... but local councils or services like Mission B also get involved. So we try to maintain something harmonious.

These flows mirror urban processes observed internationally, where domestic, market and bureaucratic responsibilities for care increasingly blur. Managing these relationships to avoid oversupply in some areas (such as food) while ensuring equity of service delivery across time and space requires financial, material and logistical resources. In Sydney, this work is led by the City of Sydney, supported by a suite of policies, guides, information sheets and partnership arrangements.

Despite this coordination, issues persist in service delivery that compromise safety, hygiene and health. These include:

- use of physical spaces which can create hazards such as the use of building entry ways, or need to park over curbs, pathways or in parks for patron safety;
- wildly differing numbers of PLP who seek care e.g. between 50 and 200 can arrive for food deliveries;
- safety of products e.g. food storage, handling and hygiene (free food is not regulated);
- access to medicine, ability to pay and so forth.

The legal liability of care for government agencies – including TfNSW, not-for profit organisations, independent groups and corporate/private donors e.g. leftover food supplies, is unclear. This complexity is also evident in the ways PLP engage with these networks of support.

2.6.1 PLP's Engagement with Shadow Economies of Care

Mapping and stakeholder discussions highlight the scale of service provision, but field observations and conversations with PLP show how these networks are experienced in daily life. Observations confirmed by City of Sydney staff show that PLP who use social outreach services represent diverse cohorts in terms of age, gender, ability, mental health, cultural and linguistic background, and housing status (rough sleeping, hostels, supported housing, rental housing).

Incidental conversations indicated that most were motivated by a desire to meet basic needs, particularly safety, shelter, toileting and food.

Service providers outlined several pressing concerns for rough sleepers near train stations:

- safety and security, especially for women;
- access to services and basic amenities;
- storage for personal belongings;
- changes in seasonal needs such as shelters for warmth during colder seasons and cool spaces during warmer seasons;
- potential for being displaced or "moved on".

While some PLP require 'hyper-local' service provision, many PLP demonstrated high mobility across the city and stations by travelling significant distances to access services. In addition, representatives indicated that individuals move between stations depending on weather conditions or the presence of police/security. Some PLP needed to relocate other places due to areas being blockaded, such as Circular Quay during the City of Sydney's large public events e.g. *Vivid* and New Year's Eve festivities. With respect to accessing shelter and care elsewhere, Central Sydney was viewed as safer than suburban options for PLP, as were facilities such as train stations compared to parks. Yet, alcohol and other drugs (AODs), along with the hoarding of goods by PLPs, are other concerns associated with these areas.

Some PLP identified trains as a practical option for sleep and safety, particularly for those avoiding shelters or public housing environments due to negative experiences such as concerns about personal safety or exposure to substance use. Trains offered an enclosed, relatively safe space for longer periods of rest.

You get a few hours straight sleep [on the train] unless you need to get up and go to the toilet... it's safer.

However, trains can also be extremely unsafe. One StreetCare focus group participant expressed concern about safety while in transit, particularly on trains where long distances between stops and physical barriers make it difficult to escape or get help. This highlights how transport design can increase risk for people in vulnerable situations, especially women.

You're trapped. Once you're on the train, you're stuck till the next stop and if something happens, the driver can't hear you.

There seemed to be a pattern of use within train stations reflective of need, availability and capability. Many PLP, who are rough sleeping, tended to use/return to the same location within a site. Some with 'established' territories within train station property boundaries could be identified by their sophisticated use of materials to construct and delineate their space and bed/sitting areas. There were also anecdotes of PLP who used the station location as their home address and marked territory by their attachment through identity and or time of station use e.g. six years. Some station staff referred to PLPs as tenants, which signified relationships of rights and responsibilities.

These observations highlight PLP's reliance on transit infrastructure as temporary shelter. Representatives emphasised that stations offering privacy, shelter from weather, lighting, CCTV,

and access to amenities like toilets which are located outside of paying areas, are preferred by rough sleepers. These stations allow for both visibility, which can be upgraded for community support, and seclusion, which provides a sense of safety and privacy for those experiencing homelessness.

2.6.2 Distribution of Social Service Outreach

Social service outreach requires continual monitoring, updating and dissemination of information. The City of Sydney provides PLP with detailed schedules that list the date, time and location of activities. These schedules highlight both the extent of care available and the unevenness of its provision (Figures 45 and 46). For example, Central and Martin Place precincts show a high concentration of services, while gaps appear at other sites across the city.

Central Precinct - Community Food & Other Supports Schedule

Last updated 4.8.2024 - Astra Howard, City of Sydney, AHoward@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au *Note: services are weekly unless otherwise stated.
Disclaimer: services listed in this schedule are not endorsed by or affiliated with City of Sydney. As timetables change frequently, contact services directly to confirm information.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Living Hope Missions Hamper Items 2.30pm - 3pm		Central Station Will2Live Breakfast 9am - 11am *monthly	Will2Live Breakfast 9am - 11am *monthly	Astha Meal 7pm - 8pm *fortnightly	Q45 Meal 2.30pm - 3.30pm
The Salvation Army Meal 6.15pm	The Salvation Army Meal 6.15pm	St Michael's Meals Meal 7pm - 7.30pm			Christ's Heart Church Meal *fortnightly 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Rick Swag Ministry Meal 7.30pm - 8pm
Will2Live BBQ 6.45pm - 7.30pm	Will2Live BBQ 6.45pm - 7.30pm	Will2Live BBQ 6.45pm - 7.30pm	Will2Live BBQ 6.45pm - 7.30pm	Will2Live BBQ 6.45pm - 7.30pm		
KRC & Wayside Housing/Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	Wesley Mission Coffee/Sandwich 8pm - 9.30pm	KRC & Wayside Housing/Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC & Wayside Housing/Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	
St Vincent's, KRC, SLHD Vinnies Vans Central Health Hub 12pm - 2pm	Living Hope Missions Hamper Items 2.30pm - 3pm	Vinnies Vans Meal & Casework Referral Support 8pm - 9pm	Belmore Park Jesus Cares Ministry Breakfast 8.30am - 10am	Hands & Feet Meal packs 8.40pm - 9.10pm	Jesus Cares Ministry Meal 9pm - 10pm	Orange Sky Laundry/Shower 9.30am - 12pm
The Salvation Army Meal 7pm	The Salvation Army Meal 7pm			Jesus Cares Ministry Sandwiches 9pm - 11pm	Vinnies Vans Meal 8pm - 9pm	
						Vinnies Vans BBQ Breakfast 9am - 11am
						St Vincent's Mobile Clinic 8.30am - 10.30am
						Orange Sky Laundry/Shower 4pm - 6pm
						4 Voices Digital/Social Connection 4pm - 6pm
						Plates4Mates Meal 4.30pm - 5.30pm Community Hair Project *monthly

Figure 45: Central Precinct social services schedule

Martin Place Precinct - Community Food & Other Supports Schedule

Last updated 13.2.2024 - Astra Howard, City of Sydney, ahoward@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au *Note: services are weekly unless otherwise stated.
Disclaimer: services listed in this schedule are not endorsed by or affiliated with City of Sydney. As timetables change frequently, contact services directly to confirm information.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Minna Church Meal 7pm - 7.30pm	The Alfresco Community Kitchen Meal 5pm - 6.30pm	ATOK Meal 6pm - 7pm	The Footpath Library Books, tea/coffee 6.30pm - 7.30pm	Singh Family Meal 6pm - 6.30pm	Feeding Hearts Meal 4pm - 6pm *fortnightly	Sunday Connection Meal 12pm - 2pm
St Eless Food Initiative Meal 7pm - 7.30pm	Pass it on Clothing Clothing 7.30pm - 8pm	St Michael's Meals Meal 6.30pm - 7pm	Maroonies on Mission Meal 7.40pm - 8.10pm	Hands & Feet Meal packs 7pm - 7.30pm *Hyde Park Entry	GNFK Sydney Meal, clothes 8.30pm - 9.30pm *1st Saturday of month	*last Sunday of month Chopping Circle Meal 12pm - 2pm
Shining Light Foundation Clothing & BBQ *monthly 7pm - 8pm	Corinthians Meal 8pm - 9pm	KRC Primary Health Care 8pm - 9.30pm			Home2Street Clothing, toiletries 4.45pm - 6.15pm	*2nd Sunday of month Children Community Meal 1pm - 2pm
Singh Family Meal 6pm - 6.30pm		St Pauls Mission Meal 8.30pm - 9.30pm			TACK BBQ 5pm - 6.30pm *fortnightly	*2nd Sunday of month CULD Meal, books 3pm - 7.30pm
Rotary Club Meal 7pm					Our Lady of the Rosary Meal 5pm	ClothesLine Inc. Clothes 4pm - 5pm
*3rd Monday of month St Sophia Meal, tea/coffee 8pm - 8.30pm					2nd Saturday of month	*3rd Sunday of month Rick Sang Ministry Meal 3pm - 4pm
St Raphael's Mission Meal 8.15pm - 9.45pm					Brothers in Need Meal 7pm - 8pm Jesus Cares Meal 7.45pm - 8.45pm	
Mobile & Outreach Health Services at Martin Place						
KRC & Waywide Housing/Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC Bus Outreach Primary Health Care 6.15pm - 8pm	KRC & Waywide Housing/Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC & Waywide Housing/Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	KRC Health Outreach Between 6pm - 9pm	
Other nearby MVS & location-based services						
Early Bird Café Breakfast 6.30am - 8.30am	Early Bird Café Breakfast 6.30am - 8.30am Thread Together 6.30am - 8.30am *varies	Early Bird Café Breakfast 6.30am - 8.30am	Early Bird Café Breakfast 6.30am - 8.30am St Vincent's Mobile Clinic 6.30am - 8am	Early Bird Café Breakfast 6.30am - 8.30am The Salvation Army Coffee/chat @St James 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Early Bird Café Breakfast 7.30am - 8.30am	St James Church Meal 1.30pm

Figure 46: Martin Place social services schedule

Appendix F contains a detailed overview of metropolitan-wide social service delivery and how located services are concentrated within the Sydney CBD.

Overall, Chapter 2 has shown that the experience of care in transit is shaped by both design and service provision. Stations provide shelter, familiarity and community, yet they are also places where mobility, safety and service access are constantly negotiated. Understanding these dynamics is essential for planning station environments and partnerships that can support safety, dignity and care for PLP. These insights provide the foundation for the design principles outlined in Chapter 3, which translate lived experience and fieldwork observations into practical guidance for infrastructure and service planning.

3 Design Principles: Infrastructures of Care

It became evident during initial site visits to train stations, that several aspects of safer and inclusive design were already incorporated into existing infrastructures such as bright lighting, clear walled lifts and CCTV cameras. However, some stations were notably better than others in facilitating a sense of security, easy wayfinding, and distribution of amenities. This is influenced and convoluted by each station's context and surrounds.

3.1 The Role of TfNSW

The Protocol identifies the responsibilities that organisations like TfNSW have for the safety and wellbeing of unhoused people. For example, if someone is sheltering in a location that poses a safety risk (e.g. near train tracks or a site that becomes dangerous in extreme weather) TfNSW may intervene to connect them with appropriate services. TfNSW also enlists other agencies like NSW Health, Housing, and community organisations for coordinated support when needed.

The Protocol also requires enhanced training and awareness of the needs, perspectives and vulnerabilities of people experiencing homelessness. Staff are encouraged to understand the Protocol and their own organisation's policies to ensure appropriate and compassionate responses. Whilst TfNSW is not a service provider, it has responsibility for the settings within which care can be provided to PLP through:

- Providing spaces
- Facilitating access to amenities
- Coordinating services and outreach activities
- Supporting initiatives that help people exit homelessness through transit
- Collaborating with social services, universities, government agencies and community organisations
- Building supportive working relationships across agencies
- Upholding respectful, trauma-informed engagement with people living precariously, in line with the Protocol (2022), including care and respect in staff interactions with PLP.

Currently, TfNSW allows access to train stations where local councils and homelessness outreach services regularly operate. For example, assertive outreach teams are active at Central Station, engaging with people sleeping rough. While these arrangements are not formalised partnerships, they are supported by the intent of the Protocol and its 2024 Implementation Guidelines, which encourage respectful coordinated engagement in public spaces.

This work is further supported by Transport Asset Management (TAM), the asset owner for much of the network, who has developed a Framework (2023) to guide coordinated responses in and around transport property. TAM has also launched an affordable housing pilot project to explore new models of social use for underutilised land (TAM, 2024).

TfNSW is also contributing to this space through research on homelessness in transport environments through its Research Hub, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to care, inclusion and evidence-based policy in transit settings.

3.2 Homelessness and TfNSW

Stations are where PLP can find a degree of:

- Safety
- Comfort (warming, cooling)
- Hygiene (washing, toileting)
- Protection (of person and of property)
- Opportunity to keep busy and to potentially satisfy future needs and maintain a sense of purpose (begging, selling)
- More scope to achieve a self-determined level of interaction
- More scope to achieve a self-determined level of stimulation
- Better access to services/ better visibility for outreach services.

PLP, whether they are sleeping rough or not, share stations with many others who, for a host of reasons, chose to spend at least part of their time in places connected to the transport network, as well as in public spaces more broadly (Figure 47).

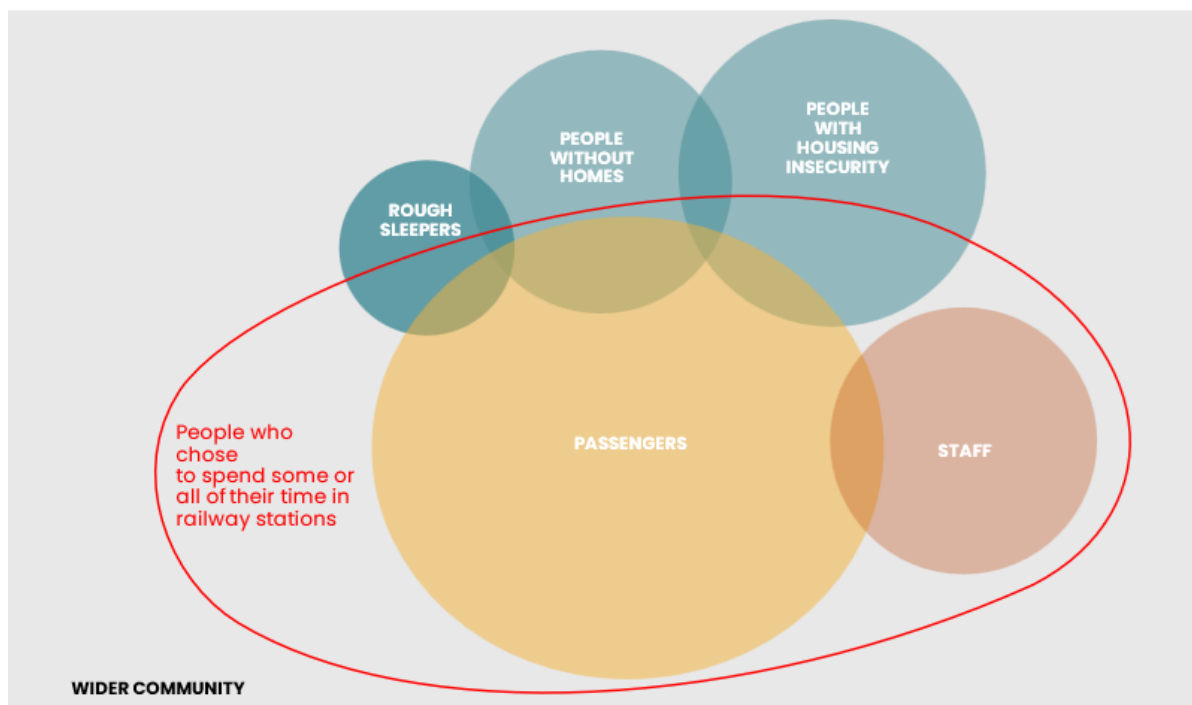


Figure 47: Stations and the people who share them

What happens after this point will be influenced by their experience of spending part of their lives in stations and on the network. Providing PLP and unhoused people with access to social services for support and a pathway to more secure housing will enable them to move on and make room for other PLP that will almost inevitably arrive (Figure 48).

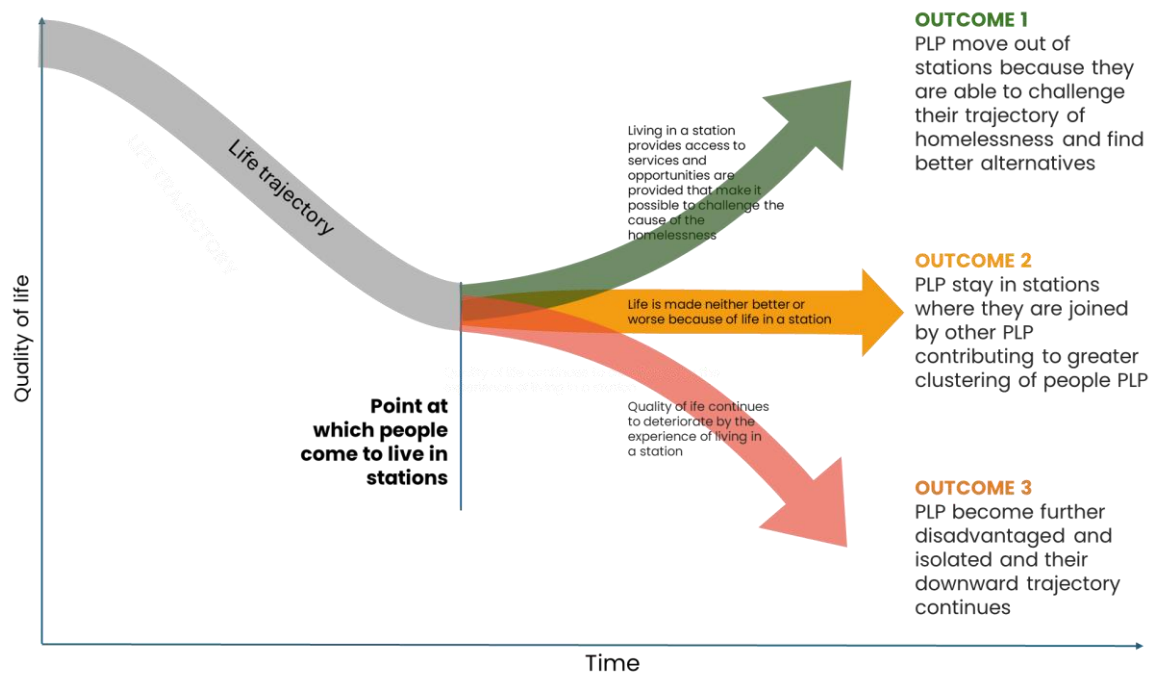


Figure 48: Conceptualised life trajectory of PLP using stations for shelter and other needs

The concept of housing trajectories (Brackertz et al., 2020) observes that people's life outcomes and their housing influence each other. The transitions that people make between different housing types as they move through life are informed by the circumstances of their lives. Poorer physical and emotional health or a change in personal circumstances such as unemployment or estrangement often results in a move to less secure or inappropriate housing that can worsen underlying health issues; this in turn diminishes access to opportunities, leading to a further diminishment of housing circumstances and for some, ultimately leads them to choose living in railway stations.

For example, cold, uncomfortable, harshly lit, poorly maintained places communicate a low level of care and/or low expectations of the people occupying that place by those who make the design and management decisions. However, places that are well designed, well-maintained and are comfortable suggest emotional commitment and consideration by designers and administrators, suggesting a higher status of the people occupying that place.

From this perspective, success can be seen as enabling PLP to access better alternatives than railway stations to live their lives, rather than viewing success as a matter of simply encouraging them to leave railway stations. Another tenet of our philosophy is that our physical and social surroundings communicate messages that make those surroundings welcoming or unwelcoming, and tint or taint the activity or opportunity provided in a place. These messages can be internalised and influence people's sense of self-worth (Cusack 2013), acting to entrench disadvantage or alleviate it by what these messages say about the people in that place.

3.3 Train Stations as Ecosystems of Care

Railway stations often function as the centre of a complex ecosystem of care within which PLP and others receive a mix of formal and informal care through tangible and intangible measures.

Providers range from registered agencies who exist in a structure of organised, institutional care to the ‘organic’ care offered and received informally from staff, from passengers and other PLP. As such, the ecosystem of care is made possible by physical and financial measures underpinned by the social/emotional investment of the staff, passengers and other PLP (Figure 49). These domains of care are interdependent, so they are bound by complex feedback loops.

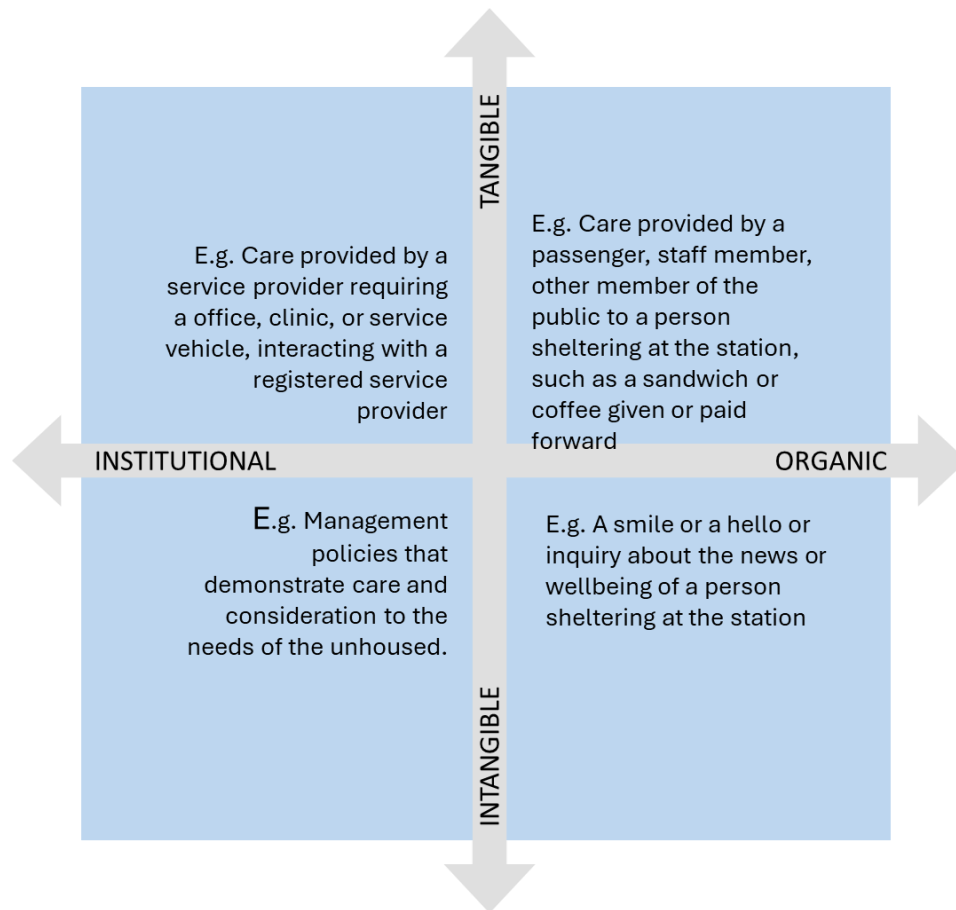


Figure 49: The ecosystem of care at railway stations

3.4 Challenges of Care

Stations are shared by people who make diverse demands of their surroundings informed by their varying priorities to meet needs and perceptions of their physical and social surroundings that can result in competition for space. Failure to accommodate and reconcile these needs can result in a wide range of challenges relating to⁴:

- Inadequately addressed hazards e.g. People and possessions creating fire and trip hazards, management liabilities
- Conflicting fears/sensitivities of PLP/passengers/staff
- Experiences of distress and discomfort (emotional, mental, social and physical) such as fear of unpredictable, anti-social or confrontational behaviours
- Potential and actual abuse

⁴ List is not exhaustive.

- Legacies of unresolved traumas
- Ethical failure/reputational damage.

The challenge of designing stations that reconcile use by PLP and rough sleeping with those of other users, including staff (Figure 50).

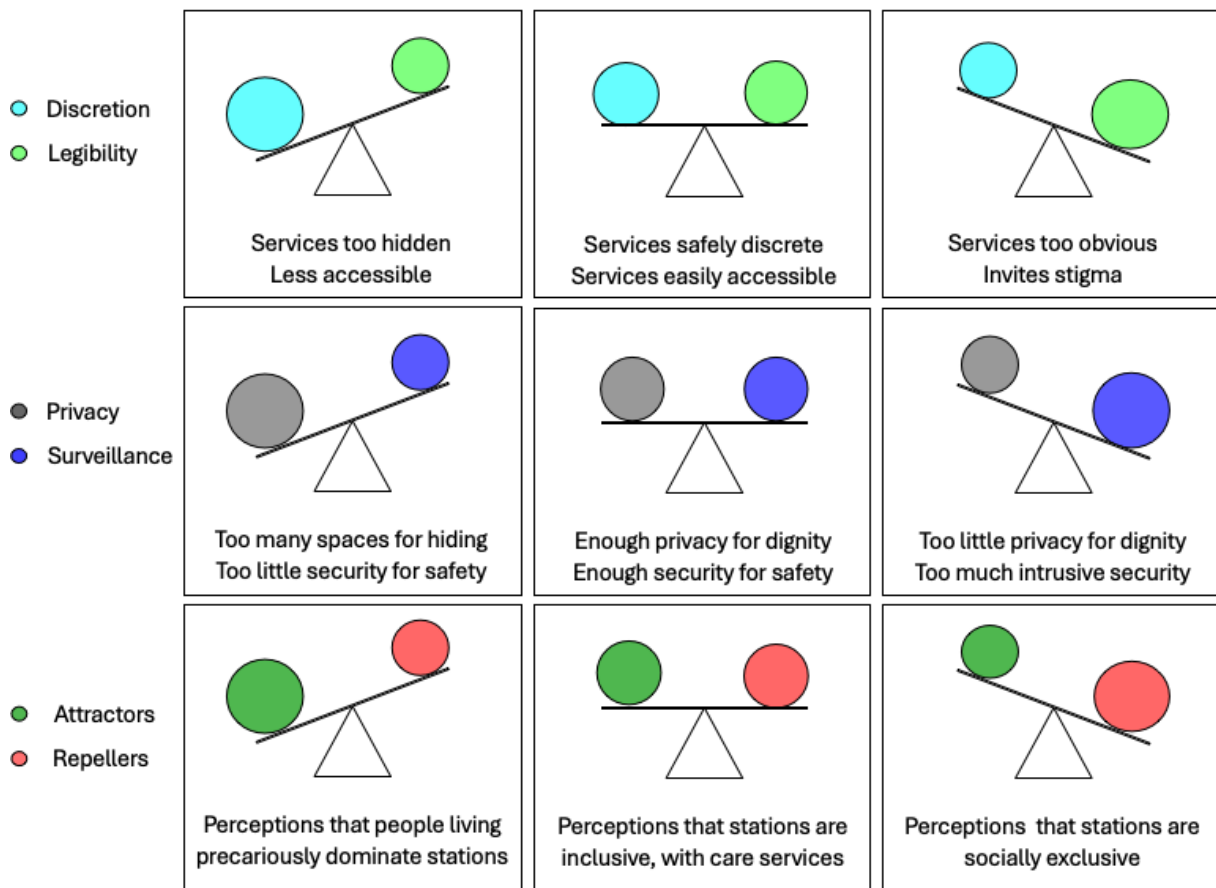


Figure 50: Balancing priorities in the Goldilocks Zone

3.5 Objectives of Care

Furthermore, rail travel must compete with other modes of transport if it is to fulfil its economic, social and ecological potential. In a liberal or social democracy where there is an assumption of choice, this requires the train network and its facilities to be relatively more appealing than alternate modes and meet customer requirements for safety, comfort, convenience, amenity.

Just as the experience of homelessness varies between different people so too, does the way unhoused people experience and are perceived by others:

- Staff
- Passengers
- Service providers
- Others in the wider civil society.

Although a recurring feature of investigations for these principles is the high level of respect and empathy for PLP, including rough sleepers, their presence can trigger emotional discomfort for members of the community that can create conflict and challenges for TfNSW. Such emotional responses have the potential to reduce patronage at particular stations or by particular passenger cohorts, if a sense of insecurity influences decision-making – whether warranted or not, such as:

- Fear
 - Confusion
 - Pity
 - Shame
- Powerlessness
 - Distress
 - Anger

Any actions that support PLP, including rough sleepers, the needs of passengers and other network users are tasked with reconciling these diverse needs (Figure 51).

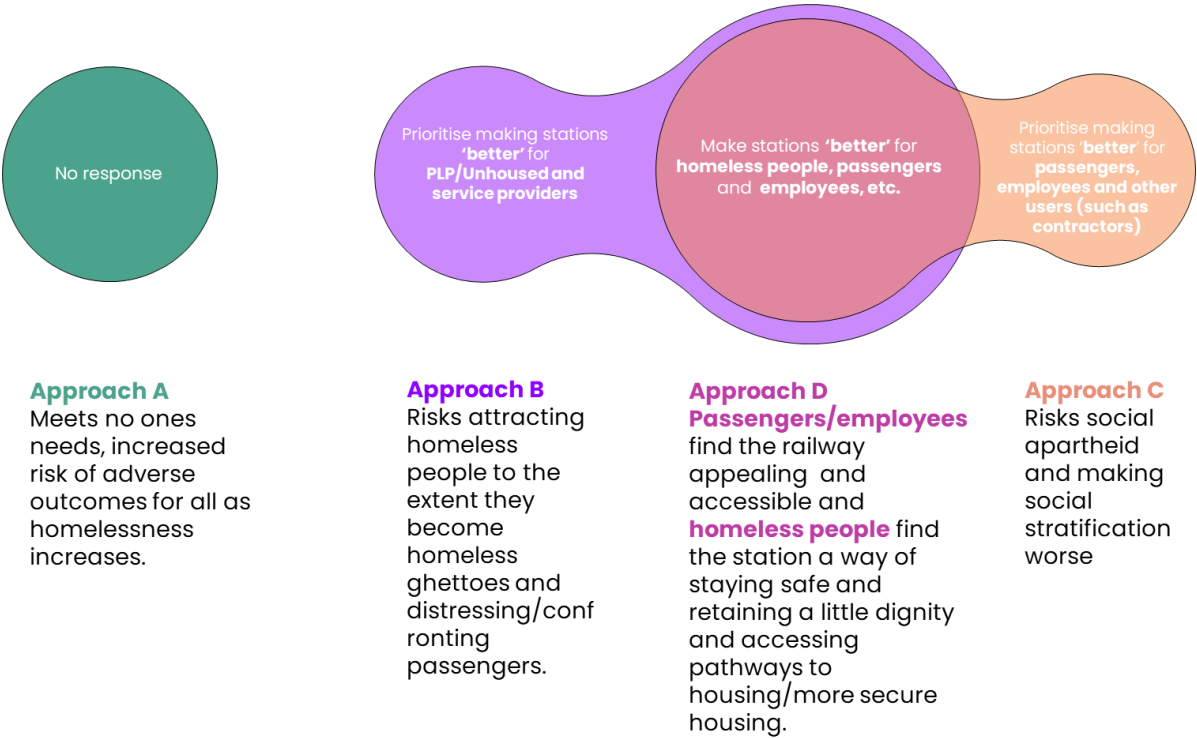


Figure 51: Four potential approaches to designing and managing stations and their outcomes

The optimum outcome for care in transit is ‘D’. It is intrinsically less likely to catalyse conflict and subjectively more appealing and safer and convenient due to its inclusivity. Designing and managing space to hit this relatively small target will require great care.

3.6 Philosophy

Design principles seek to ensure the experience of being in a station or on station land contributes to the quality of life of all existing and potential users of the railway, or at least produces minimal adverse impacts on their ability to meet their needs.

Everyone has an inherent dignity based on our shared humanity, and, surroundings play a critical role in meeting people’s needs by providing shelter, safety, food, opportunities to connect and make a living. This reflects the UN definition of human security. In *General Assembly resolution*

66/290, human security calls for “people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people”. This resolution further states “The application of human security advances comprehensive responses that address the multidimensional causes and consequences of complex challenges” (UN n.d.).

A commitment to inherent dignity means there is a responsibility to consider the vulnerabilities, needs and perspectives of others, including those whose circumstances can make it more difficult, and perhaps prohibitively difficult for them to meet their needs.

Foundation needs of safety, shelter, food and water must be met, to support satisfaction of needs for affection, expression, satisfaction, spiritual engagement etc. The chances of meeting needs beyond survival is affected by the affordances of a place - the opportunities it makes possible, as well as constraints (Figure 52).



Figure 52: Interpretation of affordances and our personal cognitive reality

Affordances comprise the physical and social characteristics of a place, as well as the conceptions of how these characteristics can and should be used, when and by whom. Experience, ability and cultural expectations influence how features within places are perceived and used, as well as expectations of how others will use them. Through engagement with the environment, people also create impact on their surroundings and each other (Figure 53).

- People impact each other through their engagement with physical places (the hardware).
- People impact each other psycho-socially by their hopes, fears, expectations and values brought into a place (the software) and

- People impact each other through the priorities, policies and perspectives of the organisations and agencies that create regulation to wield power over spaces (the orgware).

Action in any of these dimensions will likely have consequences in the other two. This interaction is likely to be particularly strong in the relatively closed environments of railway stations.

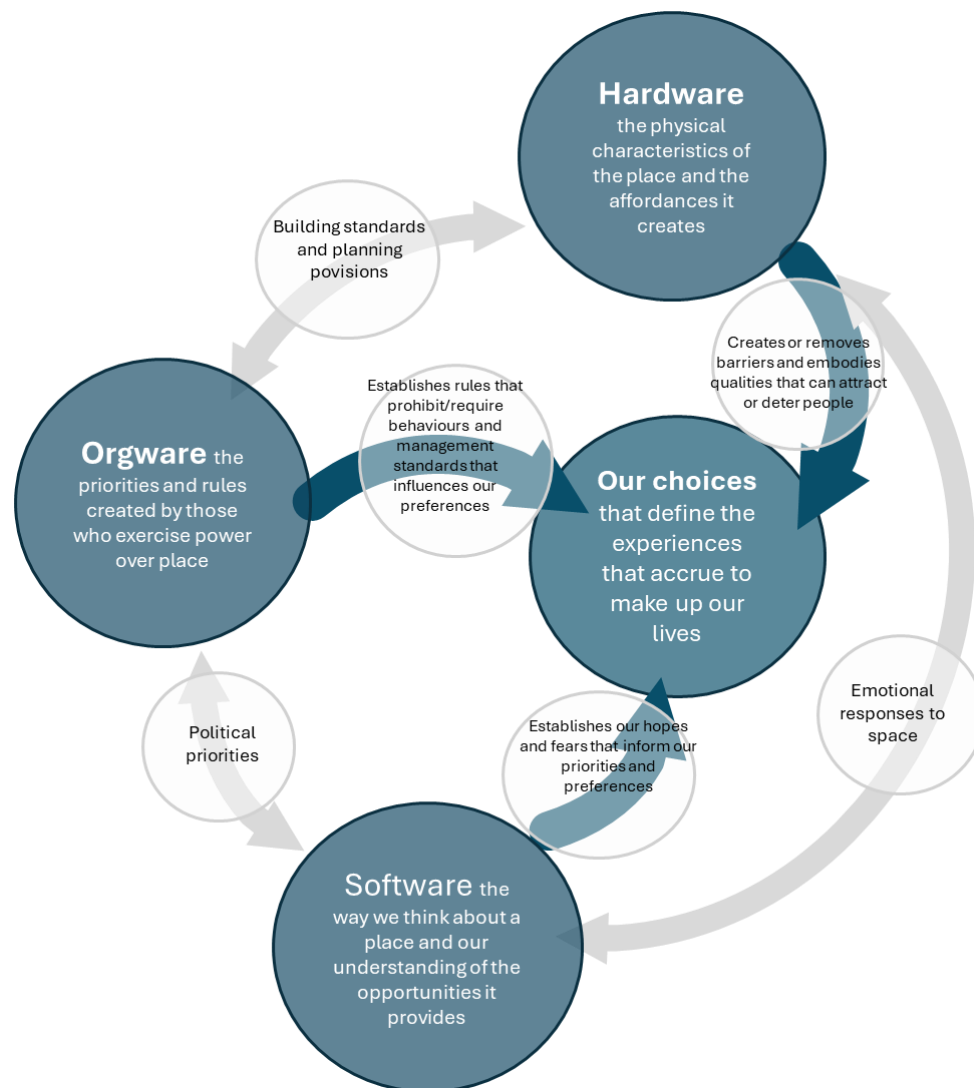


Figure 53: Relationship between hardware, software and orgware

Homelessness is not just the absence of somewhere to sleep, it also denies reliable, secure access to a whole range of services, opportunities and experiences to meet needs and retain a sense of dignity and self-determination. Addressing the issue of homelessness means in part increasing/improving access to these affordances that allow people to live lives of dignity.

3.7. Values

Purposeful care needs to be integrated into the design and management of stations. Care or neglect will speak through the affordances of a place, and the unconscious assumptions they

provoke. By recognising the messages embodied in design decisions which create the affordances of place and how they are interpreted by the people who experience them, provides options for developing supportive environments.

This research identified the following six essential values for directing design processes:

- Elevate Dignity – services and opportunities can be accessed without diminishment of esteem or at a cost of attracting stigma.
- Efficiency of care – services and opportunities achieve their optimal impact through considered and effective delivery without unnecessary call on resources, which could be denied, so they can be used elsewhere.
- Support care – offering and receiving care, in all its forms is no more difficult than it needs to be.
- Reconcile agendas- Care should not be a zero-sum game. Supporting the wellbeing of one group is not achieved by diminishing the experience of another group.
- Recognise the interplay between the built, social and regulatory environment, and ensure they complement each other.
- Value passive care. The mere presence of other people who may look out for PLP offers some reassurance and emotional comfort to many PLP.

3.8 Care Priorities in Decision-Making

Care in All Decisions

Designing for care in transit ensures that interventions made to meet the needs of one group of people will not result in a corresponding denial of opportunity for others. All elements that serve the needs of PLP need to be legible, perceived as welcoming and inclusive, to reduce barriers for self-care or accessing other services and opportunities.

Designing for care means considering the most effective and efficient place for care to be delivered. Services need to be situated with appropriate visibility and accessibility so opportunities can be accessed, with supportive privacy and confidentiality and free from unnecessary social judgement or perceived stigma.

Minimising Conflict for Space

The organic provision of many forms of care is facilitated when those who share stations and provide that care feel safe and do not feel their own ability to meet their needs is diminished. Providing ample opportunities to sit, access electricity outlets, water and other amenities will reduce the potential for conflict because people will be able to find a comfortable space/place and reduce concern about the broader use of facilities by PLP.

Recognising Needs

Needs can be divided into foundational needs of safety, shelter, food and water and subsidiary needs (such as the need for affection, connection, expression, satisfaction, etc.).

To enable PLP to change their housing trajectory towards more stable housing, both foundational and subsidiary needs should be met.

Recognising Embedded Messages in Design

Physical and social surroundings communicate meanings of how their elements can or should be used, when, why whom, and for what length of time, which can signal levels of care within environments for different cohorts of people. Our surroundings can promote inclusion when they enable people, regardless of housing status, to:

- Occupy places that reflect positively on their self-esteem such as places embodying a high standard of design and management.
- Avoid places that reflect negatively on their sense of self-esteem, such as places that look and feel 'left over' or are poorly maintained.
- Share places with other people on equal terms, where that occupation is by right and not conditional or less than other users.

Places that are well designed, well-maintained and are comfortable, suggest institutional and public care, while inferring higher status on the people occupying that place.

3.9 Care in Contextualised Design

A place-based approach is essential for informing design of services and physical design interventions such as mix of issues and user expectations, legacy of past perceptions, behaviours and experiences, plus management techniques. Considerations include:

- Type of intervention
- Scale of intervention
- Sustainability of intervention
- Displacement due to intervention

Adaptability

Needs change as the nature of homelessness changes. Any interventions will need to be subject to periodical review and adaptable to ensure spaces and activities can respond to changing needs and priorities as well as amendments to the regulatory context.

Recognising and Addressing Plurality of Needs

Decisions must be made with some understanding of the multiple perspectives that will inform how different groups of people perceive their environment, possible issues and potential solutions. It is important that perceived enhancements for one group are not achieved at the cost of significant disadvantages for others.

Meet Multiple Needs Wherever Possible

Interventions need to be designed so they are perceived and experienced by different people, with different perspectives as relevant to their needs without diminishing the ability of that intervention to meet the needs of others.

3.10 Design Principles

The values, priorities and contextualisation of design leads to a people-centric focus that seeks to offer the greatest level of accessibility within dynamic environments that support dignity and discretion, while reducing interpersonal stress and conflict (Table 4).

Table 1: Design principles and built form expression

Principles	Built form expression of that principle
1. Polyvalence Different people can experience the same place and see it as relevant to their ability to meet their (different) needs.	Each element can serve multiple purposes; formally and informally with minimal conflict.
2. Incidentally Each person has the opportunity to meet multiple needs at the same time.	Elements are arranged to enable them to be accessed with minimal unnecessary cognitive or physical effort.
3. Legibility Each person can understand the options open to them.	All available opportunities can be easily understood (but balanced with a need for discretion where appropriate).
4. Appropriately discreet Use of any particular service or opportunity brings minimal risk of attracting stigma.	Available options, opportunities and experiences are as visible as they need to be for the intended audience and no more.
5. Welcoming Being in and around a station makes the user feel welcome and they have a right to be there.	Accessing choices and opportunities does not impose emotional or physical discomfort.
6. Conciliatory Stations are designed and managed to minimise conflicts and the tension associated with the anticipation of conflict.	Potential flashpoints or points of conflict are minimised.
7. Dignifying The experience of a station offers the user the conscious or subconscious comfort and reassurance their needs have been considered and determined to be important.	All (reasonable) human needs accommodated. Being there reflects well on the person in that space.
8. Salutogenic Being in a station does not add to the allostatic load (burden of stress) on the users.	Physical environment supports healthy lifestyles, does not provoke feelings of stress, anxiousness, or are depressing.
9. Evolving Design responds to changing needs/priorities and learn the lessons of previous services.	Spaces that can easily be adapted to different uses.
10. Stations better for all When PLP, staff and passengers are less stressed the chances of conflicts arising are diminished.	Qualities that diminish the perceived time people are waiting for their trains and ensure they are not stressed by discomfort or fear.

3.11 Illustrating Care in Design

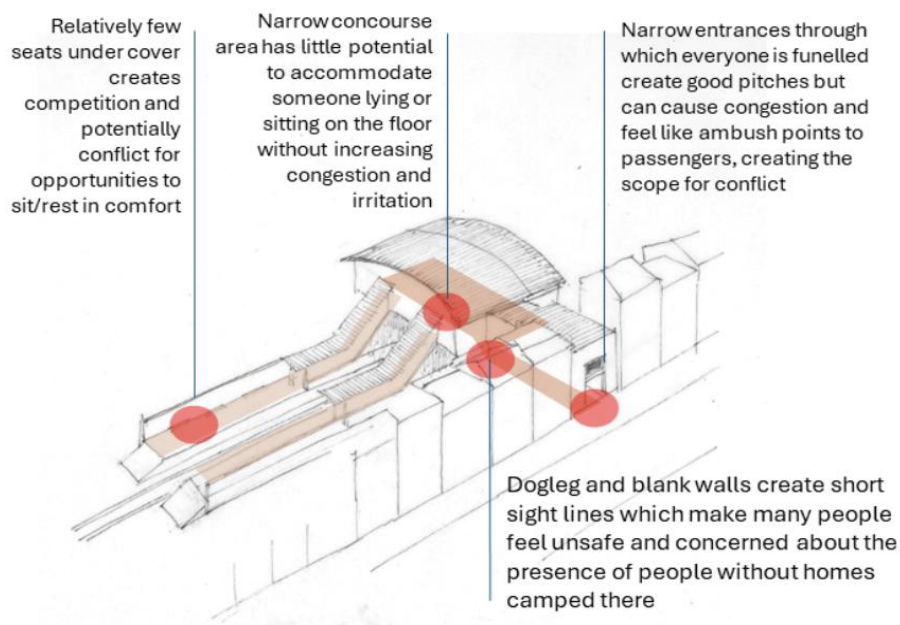
Care in Transit commences when people make the decision to travel, work or rest in train stations. This includes reputation, communications about services, as well as the assets and services. This section illustrates how care in design might be expressed in station environments.

Station Approach

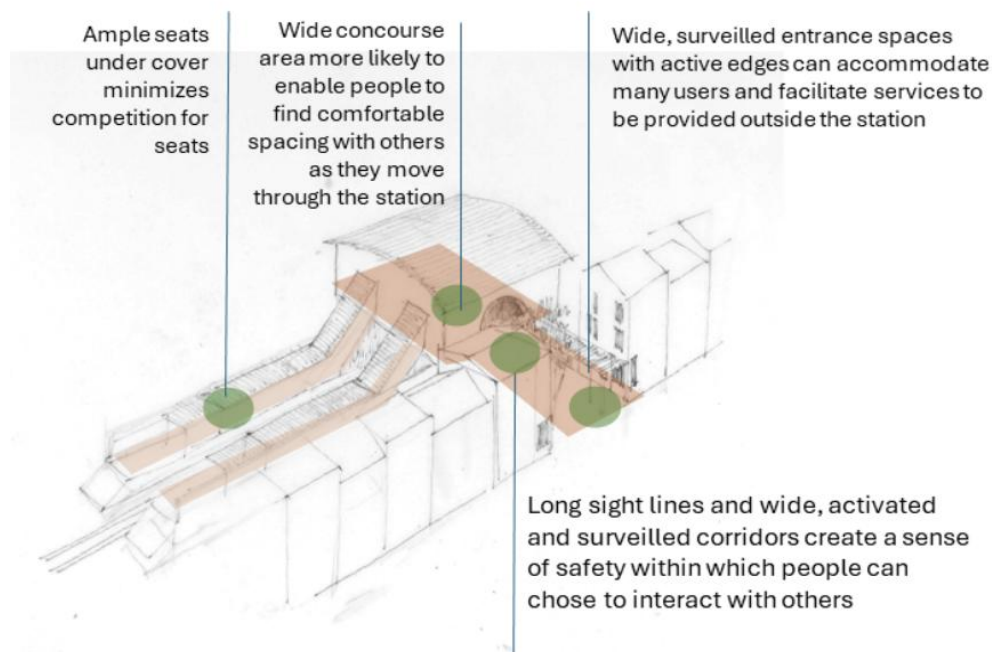
- Many customers, staff and other station users engage in anticipatory navigation as they approach station facilities or move between transport modes. Routes may be selected based on their needs or perceptions of efficiency, safety, weather, people and so forth. Important elements include: Clear access zones for different modes of transport.
- Clear signage and other wayfinding techniques leading to the train station as well as other services on the site e.g. located social services, cafes, parking area for mobile social services.
- Vegetation that enhances the landscape while maintaining visibility.
- Seating that provides arm rests for mobility, and space for stretching out.
- A water station that is easily accessible for drinking directly or filling water bottles.
- Roof overhang that can protect from weather.
- Lighting at night that facilitates visibility rather than pools of light and dark near pathways and semi-light near seats close to the station for those who need to rest safely.

Concourse and Platforms

Figure 54 provides examples of design that seeks to reduce conflict between diverse train station users by providing adequate seating, wide corridors and lockers for the commuting public, including those who are unhoused.



(A) Design decisions that exacerbate potential conflicts



(B) Design decisions that ameliorate potential conflicts.

Figure 54: Examples of potential tensions exacerbated (A) or mitigated (B) by design

Accessing Social Services

Figure 55 emphasises how design and signage can communicate respect, support dignity while providing social service provision within a station. Ideally, entry ways would be accessible from the street rather to help delineate boundaries between transport and other services.

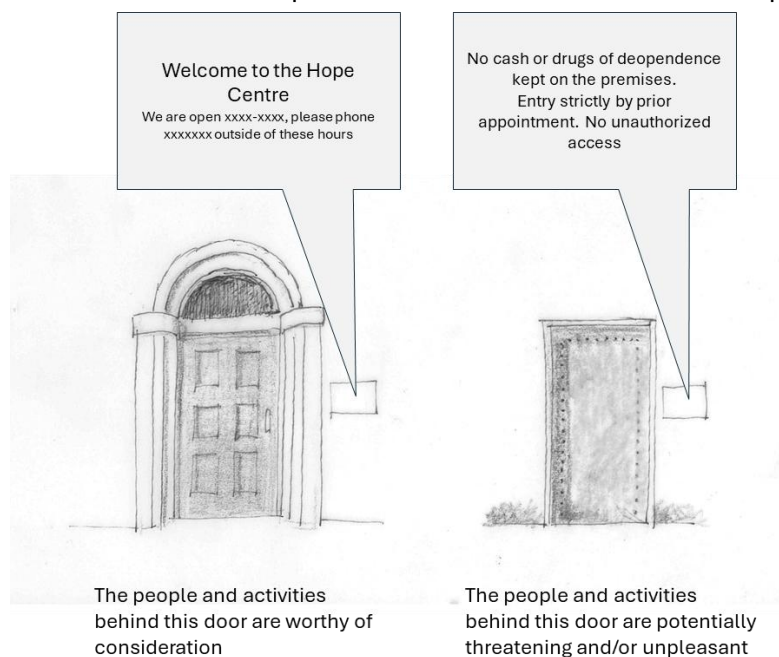
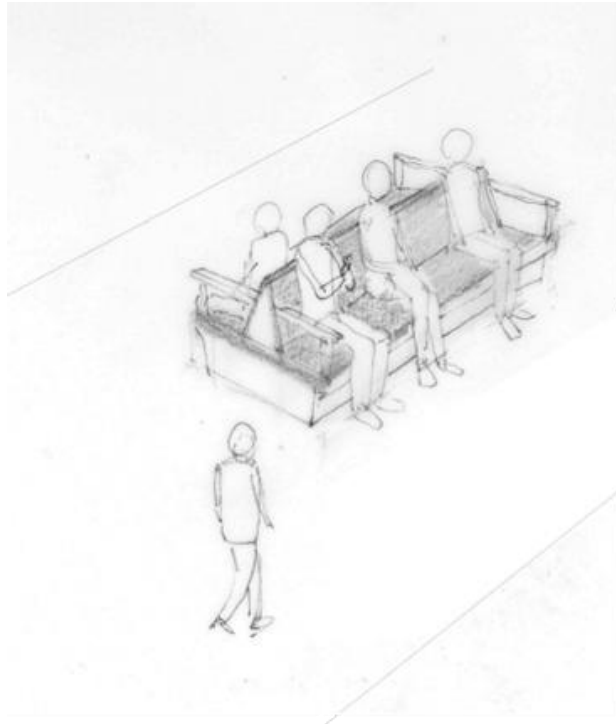


Figure 55: Embodied messages communicated by design that humanise/dehumanise the people



Bi-directional seating allows the seat to be shared by different people and allowing them to maintain a degree of privacy

Supporting Social Environments

Interventions need to be designed so they are perceived and experienced by different people, with different perspectives as relevant to their needs without diminishing the ability of that intervention to meet the needs of others. Figure 56 illustrates how spaces in or around train stations can support social inclusion. In each of the images, station users can sit, observe, seek social connection directly or passively.

In the first image of Figure 56, multiple people can sit within a landscaped area, using perches or sitting against the walls. The foliage offers therapeutic benefits at the same time as a reduced visibility that still provides surveillance. In the second image, greater inclusion can be created by advertising social services, exhibiting art works or photographs – some of which from or featuring PLP. The café in the third image requires greater economic ability, however it can facilitate ‘pay it forward’ as well as allowing people to rest nearby and benefit from proximity to other people, lighting and security.



Figure 56: Design characteristics that resonate with different people for different reasons

Specific Design Features

Examples of specific design features that assist people sleeping rough as well as other users of the train station space are provided below. Design lifts that are flush or bulge outward from walls to reduce conflicts between station users or assist with feelings of safety. This design supports high visibility and prevents situations in which people using lifts and people sleeping in lift alcoves are sharing limited space (Figures 57 and 58).

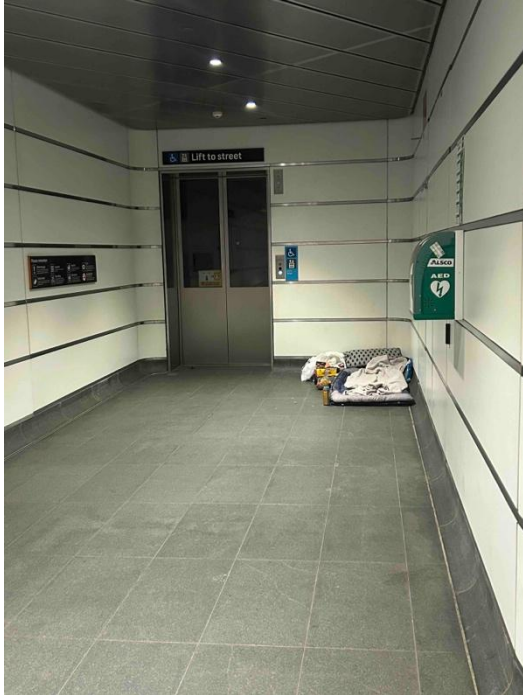


Figure 57: Lift in alcove reduces interactive space

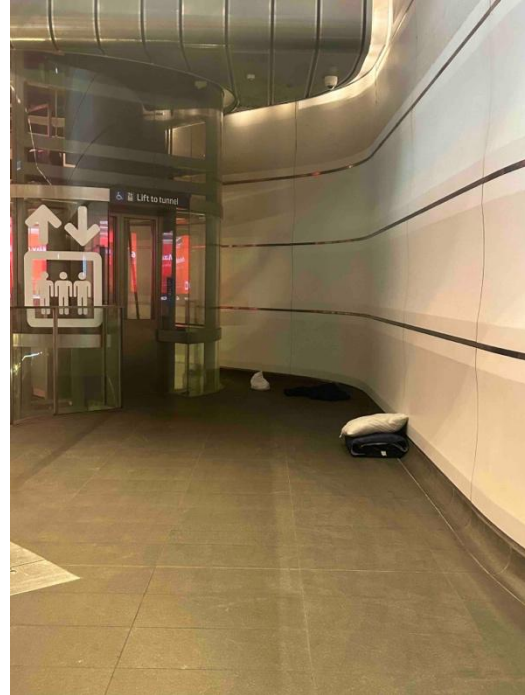


Figure 58: Lift extending to create more space

Provide electricity outlets through seating which provides customers, including PLP, with an opportunity to charge their phones, rest longer, improve their safety by keeping phones connected, and improve others' safety by reducing tripping hazards (Figure 59).

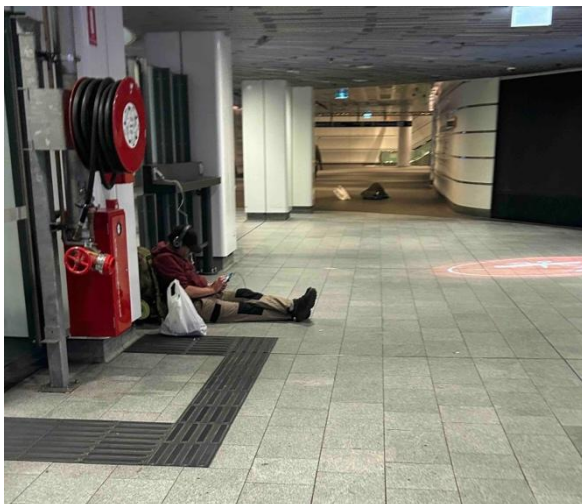


Figure 59: Limited access electricity

Provide lockers and/or lockers on wheels that can be secured, for PLP who use train stations for work e.g. selling the big issue or need to store belongings but cannot afford fees. These lockers support the ability of PLP to go to the toilet, maintain their hygiene, etc. without fear of losing or having their belongings stolen.

Provide a diversity of toileting facilities, while ensuring enough space for belongings within the cubicle space.

Provide access to more comprehensive toilet and shower facilities at larger stations or stations in areas with high levels of recreational activities or tourism.

People living precariously can be allocated time periods where they can access the facilities with minimal conflict e.g. low peak work hours.

Design-in roof overhangs, interior placement of station roller doors or vertical posts, buttresses and other features that can provide rough sleepers with protection from weather and low-level visibility that still offers safety to staff, passengers and PLP (Figures 60 and 61).

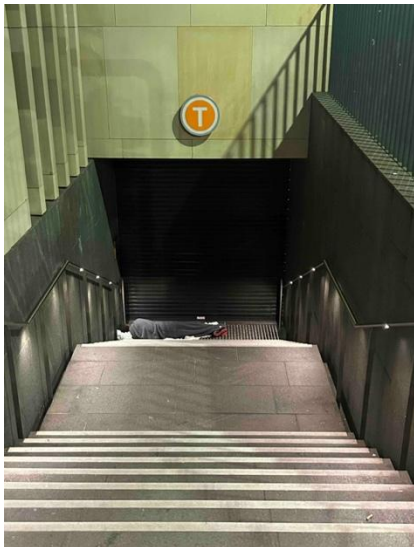


Figure 60: Overhang offering weather protection



Figure 61: Beam offering some visual protection

3.12 Embedded Messaging

Elements (non-exhaustive), the messages they can embody, plus the variables that inform those messages and the way they are likely to be received are outlined in Table 2.

Table 1: Elements of a station that incorporate messages that can support or diminish the ecosystem of care

Element	Variables that inform the messages broadcast by that element	Message broadcast/received by the users of that space
Signage	Design/size/clarity	High standard of design/size/clarity = this place is of high importance and can be communicated without shame or stigma
		Low standard of design/size/clarity = this place is of low importance and implies shame or stigma
Toilets/ablution areas	Presence v absence and standard of maintenance	Presence and care = thoughtfulness and a consideration of all
		Absence (or closure) = thoughtlessness

Element	Variables that inform the messages broadcast by that element	Message broadcast/received by the users of that space
		Poor level of maintenance = you are using the toilet only because you have nowhere better to go
Seating	Scarcity v abundance, level of comfort provided	Abundance of appropriate comfortable seating = thoughtfulness and no competition Scarcity of appropriate comfortable seating = thoughtlessness and competition with other users
Lighting	Coverage, quality	Even coverage = possible to reassure oneself about the risk posed in that place. Good quality = comfort, thoughtfulness of managing authority Uneven coverage = some places less safe than others, may harbour danger. Low quality (harsh, too low, etc.) = discomfort, thoughtlessness of managing authority
Welfare room	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority to those that need care Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority to those that need care
Lockers	Presence v absence, Standard of design	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority to those that need care, good design, sturdy, secure, contribute to overall amenity of station Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority to those that need care, poor design offers little reassurance and/or diminish amenity for all
Element	Variables that inform the messages broadcast by that element	Message broadcast/received by the users of that space
Drinking taps/fountains	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority to those that need care Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority to those that need care
Proximate laundry facilities	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority to those that need care Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority to those that need care
Sight lines	Generally long sight lines v short site lines	Long sight lines = few areas tainted by potential risk/ more welcoming Short sight lines = many areas tainted by potential risk/unwelcoming
Circulation spaces	Meanness/generosity	Generosity of spaces = thoughtfulness about the potential for conflict and congestion Minimal spaces = thoughtlessness about the potential for conflict and congestion

Table 2 (continued): Elements of a station that incorporate messages that can support or diminish the ecosystem of care

Element	Variables that inform the messages broadcast by that element	Message broadcast/received by the users of that space
Circulation spaces	Meanness/generosity	Generosity of spaces = thoughtfulness about the potential for conflict and congestion Minimal spaces = thoughtlessness about the potential for conflict and congestion
WIFI/internet connectivity	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority towards all users Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority towards all users
Litter bins	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority towards all users Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority towards all users
Power points	Presence v absence, location	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority towards all users, located adjacent to seats = consideration of where they will be needed Absence = thoughtlessness of managing authority towards all users
Drainage infrastructure	Location of 'wetter' areas	Absence of wetter areas on platform = thoughtfulness by making entire public area equally occupiable Wetter areas at rear of platform = thoughtlessness towards PLP and others who gather there
Landscape/planting	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority towards all users, efforts made to make all feel welcome Absence n/a
Little free library book exchange	Presence v absence	Presence = thoughtfulness of managing authority towards all users, efforts made to make all feel welcome Absence n/a
Notice board	Presence v absence	Presence and use = thoughtfulness of managing authority towards all users, efforts made to make sure people are informed Absence n/a
Art wall	Presence v absence	Presence and opportunities extended to PLP = Opportunities for creative expression and recognition of abilities Absence n/a.

3.13 In summary - Design Principles

The summary in Table 3 draws on synergies and conflicts emerging from existing design guidelines and approaches e.g. Healthy by Design, Safer by Design, Child Friendly, Aged Friendly and existing TfNSW guidelines.

Table 2: Design principles with Built Form and Programmatic Examples

Design Principles with Built Form and Programmatic Examples				
Principles	Built form expression of that principle	Built form examples	Programmatic expression of that principle	Programmatic examples
1 Polyvalence Different people can experience the same place and see it as relevant to their ability to meet their (different) needs	Each element can serve multiple purposes; formally and informally with minimal conflict	- Sittable edges throughout - Café that meets refreshment needs, provides activation and surveillance and potentially opportunities for homeless people	Assumption of tolerance and encouragement of Informal and secondary uses where appropriate and safe	Design feature that PLP see as meeting one need, other users see as meeting another (e.g. an interesting, well-designed doorway provides access to a service for PLP and a point of legibility/orientation for others Café providing opportunities for PLP
2 Incidentally Each person has the opportunity to meet multiple needs at the same time	Elements are arranged to enable them to be accessed with minimal unnecessary cognitive or physical effort	Settings where services are offered or opportunities/experiences found aligned along key movement corridors	Co-ordination of services that facilitate 'One stop shop' that allows secondary needs to be met at the same time as a primary need	Co-location of services meeting foundational needs with opportunities to meet subsidiary needs
3 Legibility Each person can understand the options open to them	All available opportunities can be easily understood (but balanced with a need for discretion where appropriate)	- Clear signage visible along movement corridors and decision points - Looks like a station, entry is celebrated and framed by high quality open space that accommodates activation by users	Provides clear understanding of the services and opportunities available	Multiple sources of information, online, informed staff, hard copy, etc.

Design Principles with Built Form and Programmatic Examples

Principles	Built form expression of that principle	Built form examples	Programmatic expression of that principle	Programmatic examples
4 Appropriately discreet Use of any particular service or opportunity brings minimal risk of attracting stigma	Available options, opportunities and experiences are as visible as they need to be for the intended audience and no more	Signage and visibility of entrances to places where access is easily identifiable but do not read like 'places of charity' through commitment to a high standard of design	Information is readily available, and services are easily accessible from sources that affirm the dignity of PLP	station staff briefed on what services opportunities are available and can communicate these to PLP sensitively
5 Welcoming Being in and around a station makes the user feel welcome and they have a right to be there	Accessing choices and opportunities does not impose emotional or physical discomfort	• Good lighting in all publicly accessible areas • Good sight lines • Signage provides explicit welcoming message • Entries like thresholds not gateways that offer unconditional invitation • Minimal hidden corners	Respect from staff and passengers for other users	Staff connect respectfully with frequently seen PLP
6 Conciliatory Stations are designed and managed to minimise conflicts and the tension associated with the anticipation of conflict	Potential flashpoints or points of conflict are minimised	• Wide corridors • Bottlenecks minimised and alternative routes available between platforms and exits • Minimal hidden corners	Potential points and sources of conflict identified and addressed	Staff trained in conflict resolution Public education program

Design Principles with Built Form and Programmatic Examples

Principles	Built form expression of that principle	Built form examples	Programmatic expression of that principle	Programmatic examples
7 Dignifying The experience of a station offers the user the conscious or subconscious comfort and reassurance their needs have been considered and determined to be important	All (reasonable) human needs accommodated. Being there reflects well on the person in that space	Signage is respectful in design and tone Toilets and showers included/accessible where possible Effort is made to enthrall/capture the attention of the station user e.g. landscape and temporary exhibitions, artwork, etc. Easy to clean, robust materials are used	Management choices reflect a consideration of all users	High standards of management throughout Toilets open throughout the night Night and day lighting to ensure safety but not induce stress from too much lighting Space is programmed to make it more interesting/appealing to be there, e.g. WIFI
8 Salutogenic so being in a station does not add to the allostatic load (burden of stress) on the users	Physical environment supports healthy lifestyles, does not provoke feelings of stress, anxiousness, or are depressing	Adequately lit but not over-lit, particularly at night. Well ventilated. Acoustics considered to facilitate conversations with those nearby but not intrude on others. Wide range of seats/sitting opportunities. Temperature controlled Access to emergency services Nature visible where possible (daylighting, planting, water) Colours considered for stress response	High maintenance standards	Good security/surveillance Sense that the staff are looking out for people. Positive reputation for care

Design Principles with Built Form and Programmatic Examples

Principles	Built form expression of that principle	Built form examples	Programmatic expression of that principle	Programmatic examples
9 Evolving Design responds to changing needs/priorities and learn the lessons of previous services	Spaces that can easily be adapted to different uses	Secondary spaces easily modified where possible Design approach that does not rely on consistency so variations that are necessarily of a different character do not adversely affect overall character.	Seeking to learn the lessons of past and ongoing attempts to reconcile the needs of all users.	Provision for periodic assessment/review
10 Stations better for all When PLP, staff and passengers are less stressed the chances of conflicts arising are diminished	Qualities that diminish the perceived time people are waiting for their trains and ensure they are not stressed by discomfort or fear	Community art, WIFI, book exchange, seats, curated message board, shelter and safety and other distractions that will diminish perceived waiting time and stress for passengers	Paying attention to changing needs and uses and users' perceptions	Provision for periodic assessment/review High standards of maintenance Sensitive security presence

3.14 Embedding Care in Place

Some key designable, physical ‘hardware’ elements and complementary management ‘software’ requirements conducive for care are outlined in Table 4 below. The extent to which these facilitate desired outcomes will depend on investment of effort and resources by TfNSW (Orgware).

Table 3: Designable, physical ‘hardware’ elements and complementary management ‘software’ requirements

Element	Design requirements of embedding care in place		Management
	Characteristic	Distribution/locational requirements	
Shelter/shade	Ample areas where PLP and other station users can escape climatic extremes	Opportunities to sit in shade or in the sun as is appropriate for comfort	Well managed, clean
Signage	Clear, informative, signage which is informative for PLP, e.g. provides recognisable name of place, but not obvious to all passengers. Signage for PLP with an equal degree of design intent and prominence to other signage intended for wider community of station users	As required	Updated as necessary
Toilets/ablution areas	Entrance lit and surveilled to provide a degree of security. Access route to the toilet does not expose the potential user to discomfort or fear Showers and toilets (where provided) to allow for bags inside cubicles when in use	Toilets distributed to ensure easy access from different parts of the station	Well managed, clean, open in the hours they will be needed. Facilitating privacy for all users.
Seating	Opportunities to sit provided by seats and sittable edges either from walls at seat height (3-500mm) or perched seating wall	As widely as possible throughout public areas	Well managed, clean.
Lighting	Covers all public areas, at a level that ensures PLP and others who may spend a great deal of time are not subject to harsh lighting that can contribute to the allostatic load of stress on the human body Where possible natural lighting made visible from the public realm	To standard with particular care taken to ensure leaves no dark corners	All lights working

Element	Design requirements of embedding care in place		Management
	Characteristic	Distribution/locational requirements	
Multi-purpose room	Offering opportunity to provide a range of services, a standard of design that suggests the occupants are considered worthy of care above the merely functional through visibility and design of entrance, choice of furnishings, furniture, lighting, etc.	TBD, with access from outside road network to assist moving bespoke equipment in and out	Well managed, cleaned, care taken to ensure it does not become a default storage room.
Lockers	Sturdy design that is integrated into the design of the wider station	In a well-lit and overlooked location but away from the intensely occupied areas within the stations	Managed and kept in good repair
Drinking taps/fountains	Connected to drainage to ensure minimal risk of slipping on wet floor	In a well-lit, visible location	Managed and kept in good repair
Laundry facilities	TBD	Outside station but close to it.	Managed and kept in good repair, free or subsidised for PLP
Sight lines	All areas easily surveilled by station staff and/or staff	No completely hidden corners however stations should allow for a degree of variation to the level of surveillance to ensure semi-private activities can be undertaken discretely e.g. personal/private conversations or breastfeeding	Lighting well managed
Circulation spaces	Wide enough to provide ample space for circulation and buffer spaces that can be occupied by PLP to minimise potential for conflict	All public spaces, with a particular generosity of space where multiple desire lines overlap such as concourses	Cleaning managed to occur in a way that does not distress PLP
WIFI/internet connectivity	Provided	Throughout all public areas	Reliable

Element	Design requirements of embedding care in place		Management
	Characteristic	Distribution/locational requirements	
Litter bins	Provided to meet standard Identifiable location with large bins to dispose of abandoned belongings or for larger items? Comment on if TfNSW wants to provide bins like council for belongings or space for council bins	Per standard – approx. 30-50m apart subject to bins should be visible from key decision points. clustered bins near seating, vending machines, or exits and located to allow for easy emptying without disrupting pedestrian flow	Regularly emptied
Power points	Provided, USB and plug	At seats at a distance apart TBC	Consistent
Drainage infrastructure	Care taken to ensure dirty water/dampness doesn't gather in areas where PLP tend to congregate	Rear edges of platforms/concourses	Consistent management
Landscape/planting	Significant, visually prominent planting beds with landmark planting of low maintenance plants and seasonal change with irrigation	At key points, where will be enjoyed by many people where possible	Seasonally responsive management
Little free library book exchange	Visually interesting composition containing shelves behind an opening door and an external panel for a notice board	In high profile, well trafficked location	Will require frequent care to ensure it doesn't become a dumping ground, attract vandalism
Message board	Large AO message board for communicating service updates or cultivating a culture of care	In high profile, well trafficked location	Kept up to date
Exhibition/display wall or panel	Large display box exhibiting artwork by staff, artists, passengers, PLP	In high profile, well trafficked location	Curated at regular intervals
Ventilation	Adequate to keep air healthy	All areas	Well maintained

Embedding care in place depends not only on designable ‘hardware’ and management ‘software’, but also on the organisational capacity to resource, coordinate and maintain these interventions over time. Design principles establish the conditions for safety, dignity and inclusion, but their effectiveness relies on how they are enacted through daily management and long-term stewardship. Achieving this requires collaboration across agencies and recognition that TfNSW is part of a wider system of care, where responsibilities are shared and negotiated. The following chapter turns to this broader framework, outlining the role of TfNSW as a key actor in inter-organisational coordination and collective impact.

4 Stakeholder Framework: TfNSW in the System of Care

As a state transport agency, TfNSW holds a distinctive role in the broader infrastructure of care. While it is not a direct provider of homelessness services, TfNSW manages public environments such as train stations, interchanges and transport precincts where competing priorities such as public and staff safety, service provision and homeless support frequently intersect. These spaces often serve as key points of contact between PLP and the institutions that support them. For the full engagement process and methods that underpin this chapter, see Appendix C: Engagement Process and Methods.

In fulfilling its legislative and strategic functions, TfNSW undertakes integrated transport planning, infrastructure delivery, safety regulation and public engagement. It also contributes to policy development and plays a key role in ensuring transport systems respond to broader social, economic and environmental priorities. At the same time, TfNSW is responsible for contributing to sustainability and social outcomes across planning, operations and service design — including commitments to equity, accessibility and interagency knowledge sharing (Transport for NSW, 2021; 2024; Transport Administration Act 1988). These dual roles position TfNSW to not only support but also shape and enable place-based care systems, particularly in transport precincts where people experiencing homelessness often interact with government services.

The aim of this chapter is to explore how to improve inter-organisational engagement and coordination to achieve better outcomes for TfNSW, its operations, staff and passengers, as well as PLP and the services that assist them.

Its key objectives are to identify, structure and nurture ongoing dialogues with stakeholders to ensure strong communication, information sharing and skills development so TfNSW can implement the Protocol, continue to support the use of train networks and stations for service delivery, and ensure high operational standards, staff wellbeing, and positive passenger experience. In essence, it provides a pathway for developing successful inter-organisational relations within social purpose systems to achieve collective impact.

...collective impact is best conceptualised as a method for network-based collaboration rather than a distinct methodology or philosophy and emphasise the importance of the relational aspects of interorganizational collaboration (Salignac et al., 2017: 91).

4.1 Scope and Objectives

This Framework has been designed to help TfNSW and its stakeholders address the opportunities and challenges that arise from:

1. Current use of the train network and stations by:
 - a) PLP for shelter and other needs
 - b) social services that provide support for people living precariously
 - c) policing and other services that support TfNSW to manage difficult situations on their properties.
2. Monitoring trends in use of the train network and stations, and strategically preparing for anticipated future uses by PLP, social and other services.
3. Engaging with development/re-development projects that have an influence on future use of the train network and stations by PLP, social and other services.

The main objectives are to:

- Support governance by clarifying roles and responsibilities across the stakeholders.
- Initiate and improve inter-organisational collaboration to address service gaps and overlaps.
- Strengthen stakeholder engagement and decision-making through shared understanding and clearer participation pathways.
- Facilitate better information, skill, and resource sharing between government agencies, non-government services, and community organisations.
- Address inter-organisational challenges related to aligning policies and navigating a complex service system.
- Encourage evidence-informed service improvement through monitoring and evaluation.

Detailing planning phases, methods and tools referenced in this Framework are set out in Appendix C: Engagement Process and Methods.

Specifically, this Stakeholder Framework seeks to:

- Identify effective engagement models to respond to the problems and challenges encountered by different stakeholders.
- Map information sharing, skills and resources to better address the care landscape regarding the needs of PLP, and the capability of servicing organisations.
- Initiate and nurture collaborative partnerships that enable more consistent and coordinated support.
- Create conditions for collaborative innovation, including pilot projects that test new approaches to supporting PLP.
- Identify and respond to organisational training needs related to inclusive, place-based, and trauma-informed practice.

4.2 Guiding Principles for Engagement

The principles set the tone for how TfNSW engages with stakeholders and reflect the organisation's commitment to care. They provide a clear and transparent process for stakeholder engagement and support teams in building strong and trusting relationships. The principles are informed by the strategic and policy foundations as well as the *TfNSW Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy (2023)* (Figure 62). They reinforce the values that underpin TfNSW's approach to public space management and help guide interagency coordination.

Engagement is purposeful and designed to build new relationships and strengthen existing ones by ensuring that diverse voices are heard and valued. It is collaborative and informed by the right expertise, including insights from people with relevant knowledge and lived experience, to support better outcomes for passengers, transport staff, and PLP.



Figure 62: Principles of Engagement

By applying an evidence-based approach and communicating relevant information clearly, stakeholders are empowered to participate meaningfully. Engagement is people-oriented and prioritises the safety and dignity of all involved. Together, these principles support consistent and transparent decision making, contribute to risk-aware planning, and **enable the development** of safe and inclusive public spaces that strengthen the resilience of the transport system.

4.3 Standards of Engagement

The principles outlined above (Figure 62) reflect the values that shape how TfNSW approaches engagement. To translate these values into practice, a set of engagement standards (Figure 63) and levels is used to guide collaboration with stakeholders across different contexts. Adapted from the *Australian Public Service Framework for Engagement and Participation (2020)*, the standards clarify expectations and complement the principles by identifying key considerations when designing and implementing engagement activities.



Figure 63: Standards of Engagement

4.3 Levels of Engagement

Effective implementation of this Framework depends on collaboration with a broad range of stakeholders. The appropriate level of engagement (Table 8) will vary depending on the stakeholders' roles, the project context, and the potential impact of decisions. While the standards (Figure 63) outline how engagement should be conducted, the **levels of engagement** reflect increasing degrees of stakeholder involvement in shaping outcomes. They define how

stakeholders are included in planning and decision-making processes and support TfNSW's commitment to valuing diverse perspectives.

Table 4: APS-aligned Engagement Level Spectrum

Engagement Level	Description	What it means for stakeholders
Share	One-way communication used to provide stakeholders with relevant information.	Stakeholders will be provided with information to help them understand the context, issues, or decisions, but their input is not sought.
Consult	Gathers stakeholder feedback to inform decision-making.	Stakeholders will be asked to share their views, experiences, or concerns, but final decisions remain with the TfNSW.
Deliberate	Structured dialogue to explore values, trade-offs, and complex issues.	Stakeholders take part in facilitated discussions to weigh up options or priorities, especially where multiple viewpoints need to be balanced.
Collaborate	Joint development of solutions through shared planning, design, or decision-making processes.	Stakeholders actively partner with TfNSW across stages of the process. Their input is integrated into outcomes as far as possible, often through co-design or formal advisory roles.

In the context of care in transit, applying engagement standards and levels must be both intentional and sensitive. Stakeholders such as people with lived experience, outreach services, and frontline transport staff operate in fast-paced, emotionally charged, and sometimes contested public spaces. This means engagement strategies must reflect the complexity and diversity of the stakeholder environment (Figure 64).

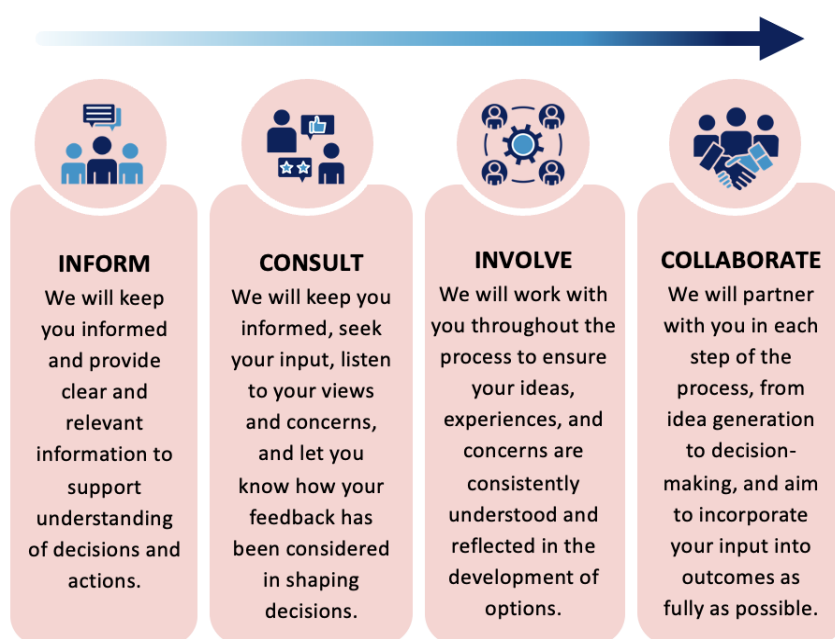


Figure 64: Spectrum of Participation

For example, outreach providers and community organisations may be best supported through involvement- or collaboration-level engagement to shape service delivery, while government agencies may require more strategic or consultative approaches. Aligning methods to stakeholder roles and capacities ensures that TfNSW's engagement remains inclusive and informed. This approach (Table 5 and Figure 64) is consistent with the APS Framework's emphasis on meaningful participation in public decision-making.

4.4 Key Stakeholders and Engagement Levels

The stakeholder environment encompasses various groups, including government agencies, non-government organisations, transport staff, and community groups. This section identifies key stakeholders, groups them according to their roles and responsibilities, and considers their functional contribution, level of influence and recommended relationship with TfNSW. These distinctions support more targeted engagement strategies and stronger coordination across the system. A more detailed theoretical discussion of these relationships, including references to the IAD Framework and the Collective Impact model, is provided in the literature review published elsewhere.

4.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholders involved in care in transit operate across different levels and geographies, with their roles and relevance shaped by location, jurisdiction and purpose. Each TfNSW precinct may engage with a similar structural pattern of stakeholders; however, the specific composition varies depending on local context and the intended purpose of engagement. This includes local councils, state agencies that operate regionally such as NSW Health Local Health Districts, and place-based NGOs, information networks and individuals. This mapping groups stakeholders involved in care in transit into five clusters based on their main areas of involvement:

- **Policy and planning:** Stakeholders who shape strategy, develop policy, allocate funding or guide systemic responses to homelessness and public space management. This includes all levels of government and peak bodies such as Homes NSW, City of Sydney and Homelessness NSW.
- **Infrastructure and place management:** Stakeholders responsible for managing, maintaining or delivering transport services and infrastructure. This includes Transport Asset Manager (TAM) NSW, public transport operators and local businesses operating within station precincts.
- **Direct support services:** Organisations that provide housing, health care, case management and outreach to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These include funded specialist services, mobile volunteer groups and dedicated health teams.
- **Emergency response services:** Stakeholders who respond to incidents and crises in transport environments, including health emergencies and public order concerns. This category includes police and ambulance services.
- **Community and advocacy:** Individuals and groups who bring lived experience, represent affected communities or shape public perception and policy discourse. This includes PLP, cultural and community groups, legal advocates and passengers as everyday users of public transport.

This structure focuses on what each stakeholder does within the system, making interdependence visible. For example, policy decisions shape frontline operations, and service delivery in turn impacts lived experience. By centring stakeholders' responsibilities and relationships rather than their formal organisational categories, this approach supports systems thinking, which is essential for addressing complex social issues like homelessness in public space. It reflects principles of the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework (Ostrom, 2005), which considers both static elements such as institutional roles and dynamic elements including stakeholder relationships, providing insight into how structure and process shape outcomes.

The clusters (Table 6) are organised by stakeholders' broader roles and responsibilities rather than their formal sector or organisation type. This helps to highlight the relationships and interdependencies between different stakeholder groups.

Table 5: Stakeholder Clusters

Stakeholder	Responsibilities	Role
POLICY AND PLANNING		
Federal Government Agencies (Dept of the Treasury)	Provide funding, policy direction, and national frameworks to address homelessness, including through agreements with state and territory governments. Supports national coordination and reform across housing and homelessness systems.	Funding and Policy
State Government Agencies (e.g. NSW Health, DCJ, Dept of Planning)	Oversee and deliver health, justice, housing, and planning services. Develop and implement policies to support outreach, social inclusion, and equitable access to services.	Service Delivery and Policy
Homes NSW	Leads the strategic delivery of housing and homelessness services in NSW under DCJ. Oversees planning, investment, and reform to improve housing outcomes, and supports frontline responses through outreach programs such as HOST.	Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Policy
Local Government, e.g. City of Sydney, Parramatta	Manages public space in the inner city, including around transport precincts, and coordinates and support local outreach services (e.g. mobile support or HART program). Develops and implements local policies to address homelessness.	Service Coordination and Local Policy
Homelessness NSW	Non-government state peak body for homelessness services; advocates for reform, sector development, and improved service integration. Participates in policy design processes.	Advocacy and Policy
INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLACE MANAGEMENT		
Transport Asset Manager (TAM) NSW	Owns and manages railway network assets across NSW, including tracks, stations, trains, and surrounding land. Ensures assets are maintained and inclusive for all users.	Asset Management
Transport Operators	Provide public transport services that are accessible and safe for all users, including people experiencing homelessness.	Service Delivery and Operations
Local Businesses	While not responsible for infrastructure, it plays a key role in shaping the experience and functionality of shared transport spaces;	Commercial Operations

	interact with passengers and rough sleepers. Have a stake in how public spaces are managed and may raise operational or safety concerns.	
DIRECT SUPPORT SERVICES		
Specialist Homelessness Services (Funded NGOs)	Deliver outreach, casework, accommodation and referral services to people experiencing homelessness. Funded by state and/or federal programs.	Housing and Support Services
Mobile Voluntary Services (Unfunded NGOs)	Provide food, clothing, and informal outreach services to rough sleepers around transport and public spaces.	Volunteer Outreach Services
Homeless Health Services (e.g. St Vincent's Hospital, Inner City Health District)	Deliver clinical and outreach healthcare services tailored to people experiencing homelessness, including mental and physical health care.	Health Outreach Services
EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES		
NSW Ambulance	Respond to health-related incidents in public space and transport environments. Provide urgent care to individuals, including those experiencing homelessness or mental health crises.	Emergency Health Response
NSW Police	Respond to incidents, enforce laws, and conduct welfare checks in transport precincts. Interact regularly with rough sleepers and the public in contested or high-visibility spaces.	Enforcement and First Response
COMMUNITY AND ADVOCACY		
People Living Precariously	Individuals in unstable housing (e.g. couch surfing, cars, unsafe dwellings). Their experiences are shaped by policies, services, and environments — and must inform them.	Public Space Co-Users
The Justice and Equity Centre (JEC)	Legal advocacy centre supporting people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage, especially regarding policing, fines, and rights.	Legal Advocacy and Policy Voice
StreetCare (within JEC)	Provides lived-experience insights to inform policy, service design, and public discourse. Engages in advisory and advocacy roles.	Lived-Experience Advisory
Aboriginal and CALD Community Groups	Represent and advocate for the needs and rights of diverse cultural communities experiencing homelessness or disadvantage. Provide place-based, culturally informed knowledge and support.	Cultural and Community Voice
Passengers	General public using the transport network. Their needs, safety concerns, and perceptions shape public and political responses to homelessness in transport spaces.	Public Space Co-Users

4.4.2 Influence and Function

Stakeholders have been categorised according to the functional role they play within the collaborative system supporting care in transit, and according to the relationship tier proposed for their engagement with TfNSW. This analysis draws on the Collective Impact (CI) framework and established approaches to institutional and collaborative mapping (adapted from Kania & Kramer, 2011; EMPHN, 2018; Salignac et al., 2017). The CI approach emphasises the importance of shared objectives, coordinated activities, ongoing communication and dedicated support for cross-sector collaboration.

The functional roles outlined below are distinct but interdependent and describe the part each stakeholder plays, or could play, within this collaborative system. Some stakeholders may perform more than one function, depending on the context and nature of their involvement:

1. **Decision-makers:** Provide strategic leadership, governance, and oversight. They shape system-wide direction through policy development, resource allocation, and funding decisions, and play a critical role in influencing priorities and establishing enabling conditions for action.
2. **Delivery partners:** Are responsible for the implementation of services and programs. They operate at the frontline, working directly with affected communities to deliver transport, care, and related supports, and to translate strategic objectives into practice.
3. **Backbone (or hub) organisations:** Facilitate coordination, integration, and system coherence. These actors provide connective infrastructure, leveraging local knowledge and networks to align stakeholders, support collaboration, and maintain momentum across the initiative.
4. **Influencers:** Hold strategic sway through expertise, legitimacy, or advocacy capacity. While not always directly responsible for delivery or governance, they shape decision-making, public discourse, and stakeholder engagement through their capacity to inform, advocate, and mobilise.

Alongside these functional distinctions, stakeholders have also been assigned a relationship tier based on their level of interest in the initiative and their potential strategic and operational contribution. The tiers indicate the priority TfNSW should place on managing each relationship and the form of engagement most appropriate to it.

- **Tier 1: Manage closely**
Stakeholders in this tier are highly engaged and strategically critical to system performance. Relationships are characterised by collaboration, including high levels of trust, frequent interaction, shared decision-making, and resource exchange. These actors play a central role in shaping outcomes and require sustained, active partnership.
- **Tier 2: Keep satisfied**
Stakeholders in this tier demonstrate moderate to high levels of interest and operational contribution. Engagement is best characterised by coordination, with regular communication, clearly defined roles, and alignment around shared objectives. While not central to all decisions, these stakeholders are integral to effective service delivery and forward planning.
- **Tier 3: Keep informed**
Stakeholders in this tier contribute specialised knowledge or influence, but are less consistently engaged. Relationships are typically based on cooperation, involving periodic or project-specific interaction. Their input is valuable when mobilised, particularly in response to emerging issues or targeted initiatives.
- **Tier 4: Monitor**
Stakeholders in this tier have limited direct involvement or alignment with the initiative. Engagement is characterised by co-existence, with minimal formal interaction beyond general communication. Nonetheless, these actors may influence broader system dynamics, including public perception, local context, or situational responses.

The table below combines these two dimensions by identifying each stakeholder's principal functional role and recommended relationship tier.

Table 6: Stakeholder Functional Role and Relationship Tier for Station Environments

Organisation	Stakeholder Function	Tier
POLICY AND PLANNING		
TfNSW	Decision-maker for station precincts (asset management, safety, permissions, redevelopment)	Lead
Department of Communities & Justice / Homes NSW¹	Decision-maker and delivery partner for housing, homelessness strategy, funding and coordinated outreach	1
NSW Health (incl. Relevant Health Districts)	Decision-maker for health policy, service planning and coordination relevant to homelessness	2
NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure²	Decision-maker for land-use, zoning and redevelopment affecting station precincts	3
City of Sydney³	Backbone organisation and delivery partner for local coordination, adjacent public spaces and outreach	1
Homelessness NSW	Influencer providing sector expertise, advocacy and policy input	2
INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLACE MANAGEMENT		
TAM NSW	Decision-maker and delivery partner for station, rail assets and infrastructure	1
TfNSW Operators Area Managers	Delivery partners responsible for station operations and frontline implementation	1
Local Businesses	Influencers providing local knowledge and raising operational or safety concerns	3
DIRECT SUPPORT SERVICES		
Homeless Health Services (Funded NGOs)	Delivery partners providing outreach, casework, accommodation pathways and referrals	2
Mobile Voluntary Services (Unfunded NGOs)⁴	Delivery partners providing food, clothing, and informal outreach	3
Homeless Health Services	Delivery partners providing health outreach and clinical support	2
EMERGENCY RESPONSE SERVICES		
NSW Ambulance⁵	Delivery partner for emergency health response in stations	3
NSW Police	Delivery partner providing welfare checks, enforcement and crisis response	2
COMMUNITY AND ADVOCACY		
Justice and Equity Centre (JEC) & StreetCare representing people with lived experience⁶	Influencer providing legal, policy and lived-experience expertise	2
Aboriginal and CALD Community Groups⁷	Influencers providing cultural and community knowledge	3
Broader Public / Civil Society	Influencers shaping public perceptions and expectations concerning transport spaces	4

1. Relevant Local Health Districts or health teams may warrant Tier 1 where they are regularly involved in station-based outreach or coordinated responses.
2. Tier 2 may apply during active major precinct planning or redevelopment.
3. City of Sydney reflects the inner-city focus and its established coordination role. Elsewhere, the relevant local council would fill this role, with the tier adjusted to local responsibilities and involvement.
4. These services vary in structure and often operate independently. Information sharing and location-specific cooperation are generally more appropriate than sustained coordination with every provider.
5. Engagement is usually incident-based. Clear protocols and periodic cooperation are more appropriate than sustained collaboration in most contexts.
6. Tier 1 may apply where they are formally embedded in ongoing advisory processes.
7. Tier 2 may apply where an organisation provides ongoing services or holds a formal advisory role.

This dual classification clarifies both how responsibilities are distributed across policy, planning, operations, direct service delivery, emergency response and community engagement, and the level of relationship TfNSW should seek to maintain with different stakeholders. The following section explains the strategic and operational value associated with these relationship modes.

4.4.3 Strategic and Operational Value

The relationship tiers outlined above correspond to four modes of inter-organisational relationship: collaboration, coordination, cooperation and co-existence. These modes describe the degree of strategic and operational connection TfNSW should seek to establish with institutional stakeholders, ranging from limited parallel activity to sustained joint action. They provide a guide for inter-organisational outreach and relationship management.

Mode: Collaboration

Stakeholders have a high level of interest, commitment or need for working with TfNSW, sharing information and resources, and providing significant strategic and operational value to care in transit. These relationships are characterised by greater leadership, frequent contact via strong formal and informal ties that are interactive, inclusive and facilitate change from influence, resulting in higher impact outcomes.

Mode: Coordination

Stakeholders have a medium-high level of interest, commitment or need for working with TfNSW, sharing information and providing relevant strategic value and operational value to care in transit. These relationships are characterised by regular contact, predominantly via formal ties that are proactive, anticipate future scenarios and medium high impact outcomes.

Mode: Cooperation

Stakeholders have a medium-low level of interest, commitment or need for working with TfNSW, but providing contributions to be considered by TfNSW in their strategic and operational activities to care in transit when requested. These relationships are characterised by irregular or project-based consultation processes that elicit information; impact might not be required. These relationships can also exhibit reactive engagement if there is a crisis, and stakeholders are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations.

Mode: Co-existence

Stakeholders have a low level of interest and commitment to working with TfNSW, and they provide little or no strategic or operational value to care in transit. These relationships are characterised by general communications, few or no formal/informal ties, no noticeable impact.

While the APS-aligned engagement levels described in Section 4.3 indicate how stakeholders participate in planning and decision-making processes, the relationship modes presented in this section identify the nature and intensity of the strategic and operational relationships TfNSW should seek to establish and maintain with institutional stakeholders. The two approaches are complementary. For example, an organisation may have an ongoing coordination relationship with TfNSW while participating at the consult or collaborate level in relation to a particular project or decision. Together, they support more nuanced and intentional engagement across a diverse stakeholder landscape.

4.5 Current Stakeholder Engagement Model

The current engagement model between TfNSW and the diverse stakeholders supporting PLP in and around train stations involves varying levels of formality, clarity of purpose, and coordination. Relationships range from well-defined partnerships to more fragmented or ad hoc interactions, highlighting both established and emerging practices of care. Mapping these dynamics helps illustrate how relationships are structured and enacted, while consideration of the material and cultural environment shows how spatial affordances and institutional responses shape current engagement. Together, these insights offer a foundation for future design and more intentional engagement practices that TfNSW could adopt moving forward.

4.5.1 Mapping Current Relationships

Currently, the nature of TfNSW relationship with other organisations that service PLP can primarily be defined by cooperation or co-existence (Table 8). Service organisations deliver services on or adjacent to TfNSW assets with minimal engagement with the department, or relationships are triggered by staff in relation at specific train stations. The latter often occurs on an ‘as-needs’ basis - often in situations of crises. These interactions are informal, short and situational.

Implementing a much more collaborative approach facilitates a more appropriate level of reciprocity, shared ideas, information and funding for addressing social problems like homelessness, and the role that TfNSW plays in shadow economies of care.

Table 7: Nature of Relationship

Relationship	Organisational Objectives	Formality	Time Frame	Resources	Example
Collaboration	Shared mission Strategically inter-dependent actions	Formal with strong informal	Longer	Reciprocity, shared ideas, information and funding, frequent contact	Social problems
Coordination	Independent	Semi-Formal	Medium	Shared funding and information	Projects
Cooperation	Independent	Informal	Shorter	Minimal funding, information sharing, contact	Situational
Co-existence	Independent	Informal	Parallel	No funding, information sharing, contact	Informal activities

(Table based on Salignac et al., 2017: 94; co-existence added by Framework authors)

This analysis draws on fieldwork focused in the inner-city. As such, the stakeholder map (Figure 65) reflects current engagement patterns within the City of Sydney, where key backbone organisations are active. While the map is specific to this context, similar mapping could be adapted for other local government areas across NSW. However, the specific mix of services, stakeholders, and engagement dynamics will vary depending on local conditions and institutional arrangements.

The map in Figure 65 shows existing services and their inter-organisational relationships in the City of Sydney. It visualises the degree of coordination among government and non-government actors supporting PLP, highlighting the limited formal connections with TfNSW.

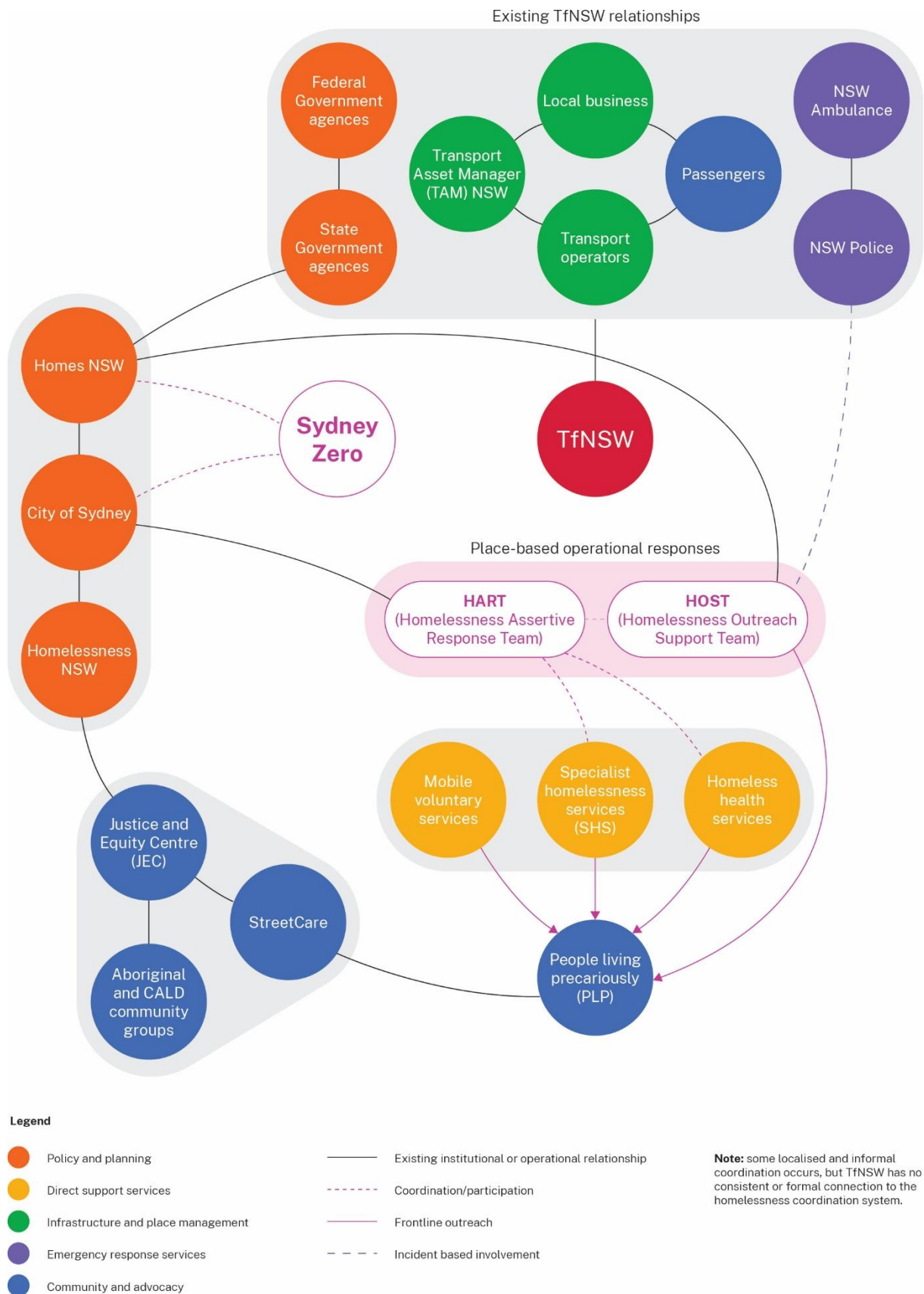


Figure 65: Current stakeholder map. Current gap: no formal or structured pathway into the homelessness response system.

The map shows that TfNSW is largely unconnected, in any formal or structured way, to the network of government and non-government organisations that support PLP and people sleeping rough. The relationships shown around TfNSW primarily reflect its routine transport, institutional and incident-response functions rather than formal participation in the homelessness response system. At Central Station, some operational interaction with homelessness services does occur, but it relies largely on informal working arrangements and the initiative of frontline staff. A more strategic approach to stakeholder engagement and communication is therefore needed to strengthen the care infrastructure across the transport environment.

The current engagement landscape includes two place-based structures operating at Central Station: the Homelessness Outreach Support Team (HOST) and the Homelessness Assertive Response Team (HART). While these models are described in detail in the literature review case studies, they are included here to illustrate how existing outreach and coordination structures support PLP within the transport setting.

HOST, operated by Homes NSW, provides direct assertive outreach and facilitates housing access. HART, a multi-agency collaboration, enables coordinated service delivery and promotes shared engagement practices. Though not formal transport partners, both operate at Central Station and demonstrate place-based collaboration with relevance to TfNSW's stakeholder environment.

Their core roles, governance arrangements, and relevance to current inter-agency coordination are summarised below (see Table 9).

Table 8: Summary of HOST and HART outreach models

Model	HOST	HART
Type	Government-led, direct outreach program	Multi-agency coordination model
Governance	Operated by the HOST team within Homes NSW (under DCJ)	Coordinated by a coalition of services including City of Sydney and DCJ
Key Role	Provides direct assertive outreach to rough sleepers, including access to temporary accommodation and support toward housing	Coordinates multi-service outreach activities to improve communication, consistency, and access to services
Established By	NSW Government (in response to the 2017 Martin Place rough sleeping crisis)	Formed by City of Sydney and key service providers in 2015 in response to concentrations of rough sleeping in the inner city
Funding Source	Funded through Homes NSW (DCJ)	No dedicated funding; supported by member organisations with contributions from City of Sydney and DCJ
Key Partners	HOMES NSW staff (inner-city specialist team)	City of Sydney, DCJ, HOST, local health districts, SHS providers (including unfunded services)
Police Involvement	Not a core partner – police attend only in high-risk incidents. Transport-linked patrols (e.g. Central Station) are non-police and led by HOST and health staff	Not a structured partner – police may attend incidentally but are not embedded in HART outreach

While these models are largely operational in focus, they offer important insights into how cross-sector outreach can function within transport environments. They demonstrate the value of backbone coordination at the service delivery level, particularly in busy interchanges like Central Station. Longer term and more strategic coordination, including potential alignment with whole of system initiatives such as Sydney Zero, is discussed later.

4.5.2 Practices and Infrastructures of Care

Building on the stakeholder map, it is important to consider how the physical, cultural, and institutional design of TfNSW environments affords — or constrains — practices of care. These practices (could be e.g. organised, incidental, organic/emergent, material or governed) interact within a shared infrastructure that includes people, policies, spaces and social norms that shape what kinds of care are possible and for whom.

While the Framework focuses on stakeholder relationships, its ultimate purpose is to support pro-social behaviours, activities and relationships in train stations and across the network and mitigate conflicts, hazards and negative experiences. The environment of train stations and other TfNSW assets provide opportunities or ‘affordances’ for particular actions or uses, such as flat areas for sitting or sleeping or facilities for toileting and washing (Gibson, 1986, Heft, 2001, Kyttä, 2004). Social and cultural expectations of environmental affordances (Costal, 1995, Heft, 2001, Kyttä, 2004) indicate how these spaces, structures and amenities should be used, however there are numerous other options available, depending on the need, imagination and ability of the user.

These affordances form part of the urban infrastructure of care: the interdependent material and social conditions that shape caregiving across public space. This infrastructure, including spatial layout, safety, accessibility and the distribution of formal services, mediates who can give and receive care and at what cost. Where that infrastructure is weak or uneven, the burden of ‘infrastructural labour’ shifts onto individuals, compounding social and economic inequality (Angotti et al., 2023).

This is an important point because this Framework, in conjunction with the Design Principles, have been developed to assist TfNSW and its stakeholders to more consciously engage with current practices, desired practices and the effects of decision-making on people who rely on train stations for shelter, protection, hygiene and socialising – in essence: care.

Adapted from Kyttä (2004), Figure 66 illustrates the current relationship between regulated and non-regulated service delivery with PLP and rough sleepers with TfNSW stations and broader network.

The orange band that is wide at the ends but narrow in the middle, represents regulated organisations such as registered social services and TfNSW. The wider ends represent explicit and implicit codified operating environments that influence institutional provision of care such as legislation, policy, position responsibilities and cultural norms that govern behaviour in space and in relation to passengers or clients; it also represents staff and volunteers. The narrow middle represents professional discretion and spontaneous acts of care by staff that are ungoverned, and potentially ungovernable.

The blue band represents unregulated individuals and groups providing ad hoc services to provide care, as well as people living precariously and unhoused people. People needing support might or might not be registered with social services; their use of train stations and networks tends toward unregulated use - although they can also have multiple identities and link with formal care e.g. passengers and/or clients.

There is a much bigger field of constrained action (red oval), than there are fields of promoted action (green oval) - both of which provide formal boundaries of care in relation to support for PLP, including rough sleepers in stations or on the network. TfNSW staff and social services often

provide support in a narrow band of free action (blue oval) - care that is informal, spontaneous, personal and unregulated. Practices that are repeated over time can represent emergent actions if they transition from organic expression to more institutionalised projects or programs.

Figure 67 illustrates a desirable future condition in which the TfNSW operating environment, staff and registered service providers are collaborating in larger fields of formally promoted care actions to support people living precariously/rough sleepers. The degree of free/informal action is narrowed, and formal constraints limiting support have lessened. Within the future fields of action, the conditions still allow for informal engagement, uncoded practices and emergent possibilities for care.

The blue band for unregulated services offering support is reduced, but PLP/rough sleepers have a greater range of promoted actions, thus requiring a smaller field of free action as meeting their needs becomes easier.

Extending the culture of care and the care ecosystem across stations and networks can only be developed over time as practices are repeated, leading to the establishment of 'coordinating conventions'. These are codified implicit and explicit expectations and practices. This is how strangers can peacefully co-exist and share space through common understandings and responsiveness to environmental, social and other cues e.g. facilities, signage, observation of social interactions, TfNSW communications.

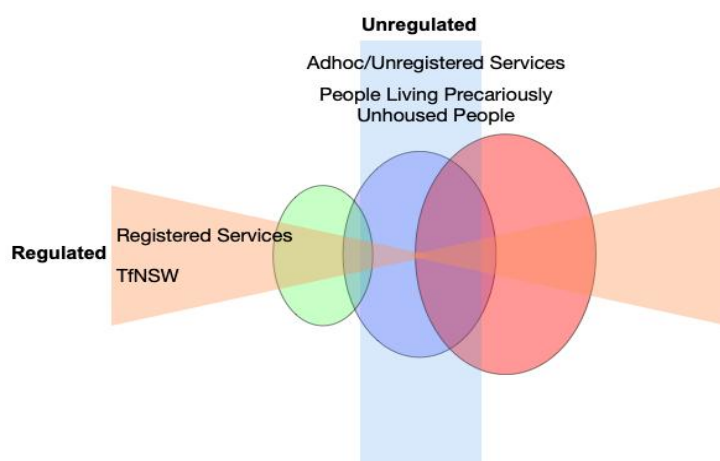


Figure 66: Current fields of action

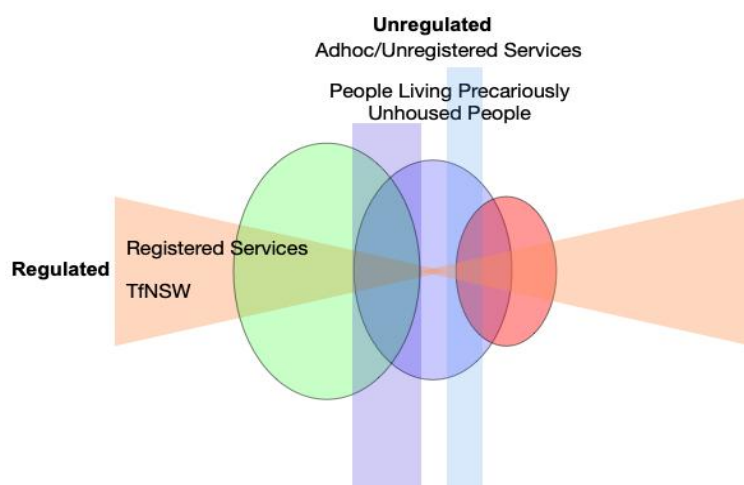


Figure 67: Future fields of action

The following reflections, grounded in stakeholder perspectives and collaborative design processes, explore how more coordinated and effective responses might be supported across operations, planning, and engagement.

4.6 Stakeholder Insights and Pathways for Collaborative Action

Phase 2 of the project centred on structured engagement to test key ideas, explore stakeholder perspectives, and refine the Framework and Design Guidelines. Building on the process detailed in *Appendix C: Engagement Process and Methods*, a series of targeted workshops were held with individuals and organisations involved in supporting PLP in and around train stations. These sessions provided critical input on design priorities, operational barriers, and opportunities for better coordination, helping to ground proposed directions in practical knowledge and lived experience. Several key themes emerged within and across the sessions:

1. **Lived Experience (StreetCare)**

Participants highlighted the importance of dignity, safety, and non-stigmatising design. Suggestions included warm, non-institutional materials, clearly labelled support spaces, and place-based consultation rather than generic guidelines. While appreciative of the engagement, some felt current policies can unintentionally reproduce exclusion or invisibility. There was strong support for visible, inclusive design and services that respect users' agency and presence.

Participants valued the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to shaping the framework. Their involvement reinforced the importance of centring lived experience in the design and delivery of care in transit spaces. They highlighted the need for design elements and operational policies that reflect the realities of those sleeping rough, including welcoming environments, clear and non-stigmatising signage, and consultation that responds to local context rather than relying on generic approaches.

2. **Cross-Agency (Tier 1)**

Councils, Police and housing representatives acknowledged regional variation in needs and resources. While there was broad support for a more active role by TfNSW, the agency's remit and responsibilities were not always well understood. Participants called for inter-agency education and stronger alignment between transport and homelessness systems. There was concern that current responses remain reactive and fragmented, and a desire for more consistent pathways to care across jurisdictions.

Representatives from local and regional government, Homes NSW, and Police supported the framework's objectives but pointed to the need for adaptability across diverse geographies. They noted gaps in cross-sector understanding and the need for clearer articulation of roles. The framework was seen as a valuable platform for building alignment, provided it supports ongoing engagement beyond metropolitan area.

3. **Frontline Services (Tier 2)**

Service providers emphasised the value of existing informal coordination around stations and expressed a desire for stronger collaboration with TfNSW. They noted practical barriers such as inconsistent infrastructure access, limited transport options, and unclear liaison

roles. Proposals included free travel passes for service access and more formalised support for mobile outreach. Overall, feedback pointed to the need for clearer operational protocols without losing flexibility. While the workshop provided valuable insights from service providers, it was noted that many were constrained by time and capacity pressures, limiting their ability to fully participate. As such, this format may not have been the most effective method of engagement for this group. In future consultations, a survey format may offer a more accessible and flexible way to gather feedback from busy frontline services. Additionally, it would be beneficial to complement this with a broader public-facing survey to capture the perspectives of the general public and transport users.

Participants welcomed the direction of the framework but called for greater operational clarity. They highlighted challenges with infrastructure access, communication with transport staff, and coordination across services. While informal collaboration is already occurring, participants felt the framework could help formalise and support this work, especially through designated liaison mechanisms.

4. Internal TfNSW Staff

Staff engaged with the Framework and Design Guidelines, noting alignment with existing TfNSW priorities, but cautioned that care in these contexts often depends on discretionary, informal actions by frontline teams. There was concern that rigid formalisation might limit responsiveness. The need for clearer internal roles, feasible implementation strategies, and more regionally representative data was also raised. Some staff suggested that broader systems change, beyond the transport portfolio, was required to create sustainable solutions.

Internal staff affirmed that the framework reflects core values already embedded in some areas of the organisation. However, they cautioned that formalising care roles must not limit staff flexibility or responsiveness. Feedback highlighted that responsibilities remain unclear across internal units, with some potentially key partners such as TAM NSW have had limited visibility in current discussions and work in this space. Clarifying roles and improving alignment across teams were seen as essential for meaningful implementation.

Shared Insights and Tensions:

- **Desire for coordination, not control:** across all groups, there was support for stronger collaboration – but with sensitivity to local context, service flexibility, and staff discretion.
- **Tension between formalisation and informality:** while clearer structures are needed, care often happens through human discretion. Systems must support, not constrain, this responsiveness.
- **Visibility and stigma:** whether in signage or presence, the question of visibility was complex, and participants wanted inclusion without marginalisation or ‘othering’.
- **Limits of the transport system alone:** while TfNSW can play a convening and facilitating role, sustainable care requires coordinated investment in housing, health, and social services.

Those key points emphasise the need for collective responsibility, intentional design, and practical delivery grounded in the insights and efforts of those already working on the front line.

Stakeholders responded positively to the draft framework, recognising its aim to support care, coordination, and inclusion across station environments. Feedback highlighted both alignment and areas requiring further refinement, particularly around roles, implementation, and contextual relevance. Each stakeholder group contributed distinct perspectives. The accompanying updated stakeholder map (see Figure 68) illustrates the range of actors involved and the relationships the framework seeks to support.

Sydney Zero is a local systemic-change collaboration involving government and non-government organisations across the homelessness, housing and health sectors, with the aim of reducing and ultimately ending rough sleeping in the City of Sydney (End Street Sleeping Collaboration, n.d.). In the proposed future model, Sydney Zero would provide TfNSW with a strategic entry point into the coordinated homelessness response system. Partnering through Sydney Zero would enable TfNSW to contribute to cross-agency planning and coordination while retaining its role as a transport agency, rather than taking responsibility for place-based responses such as HOST or HART, or for frontline service delivery. Elsewhere in Greater Sydney and across NSW, the same principle would apply through the relevant local or regional homelessness coordination mechanism.

4.7 Concluding Insights

The Stakeholder Framework has shown that care in transit environments cannot be delivered by TfNSW alone. Stations are sites where multiple agencies, services and communities intersect, and where both formal and informal practices of care play out daily. Strengthening coordination, clarifying roles and creating consistent pathways are essential to ensure that PLP can access safety, dignity and support while TfNSW maintains its core responsibilities for transport operations.

At its heart, the framework positions TfNSW as a system enabler, an organisation that can convene, connect and support partners while embedding care into the management of its spaces. By recognising the relational as well as the infrastructural dimensions of care, TfNSW can contribute to a more coherent and resilient system of support.

These foundations set the stage for the project's final chapter, which brings together insights from design, fieldwork and stakeholder engagement into a structured set of key learnings and recommendations.

5 Key Learnings and Recommendations

This research underscores a critical insight: homelessness in and around transport hubs is not only a reflection of systemic gaps in the care landscape, but also a powerful catalyst for coordinated, cross-sector solutions. TfNSW is uniquely positioned to lead and enable these efforts, leveraging its extensive infrastructure and strategic access to drive meaningful change. By reimagining transport hubs as integral components of an infrastructure of care, TfNSW challenges conventional views of station as mere transit points. Instead, it is highlighting their emerging role as informal refuges and vital spaces of human connection for those experiencing vulnerability. For TfNSW, embracing care as a deliberate and actionable commitment means stepping confidently into its role as a system enabler. While not a direct service provider, TfNSW holds the capacity to influence, convene, and support a broader care ecosystem of care – transforming transport spaces into platforms for dignity, inclusion, and social impact.

Care infrastructure, whether physical or organisational, delivers real impact when supported by strong, collaborative governance. With the right foundations in place, care is no longer incidental; it becomes a deliberate, embedded feature of transport environments, shaping experiences and outcomes across the network. The Design Principles provide a clear blueprint for what effective care infrastructure entails. Complementing this, the Stakeholder Framework offers a practical roadmap for implementation, demonstrating how governance and partnerships can activate and sustain care across systems. Together, these tools empower stakeholders to move from intention to action, ensuring that care is not just supported, but strategically integrated into the future of transport.

The following recommendations consolidate foundational insights into a clear, strategic pathway for embedding care across transport environments. Organised by key domains of action and ranked by priority, they are designed to strengthen TfNSW's leadership in supporting PLP and advancing its role within the broader care ecosystem. While each recommendation stands as a discrete action, their impact is significantly amplified when implemented in coordination across domains, reflecting the complex, interdependent nature of care within transport systems.

Within each theme, recommendations are grouped by priority to reflect their impact in strengthening TfNSW's role in supporting PLP. To guide practical implementation, recommendations within each theme are presented in two tiers:

- Priority 1: Foundational actions that are critical to ensuring immediate impact and establishing the conditions for success.
- Priority 2: Enhancing actions that build on these foundations to expand reach and deepen effectiveness over time.

This structure reflects the principle that working across domains, not in a fixed order, drives effectiveness. Meaningful change for PLP and TfNSW will come from treating all recommendations as mutually reinforcing.

To support practical application, detailed design examples and supplementary guidance are provided in Appendix D. Successful implementation will require proactive engagement with

operators and staff representatives, aligned with TfNSW governance processes and industrial frameworks. With the right collaboration, these recommendations offer a powerful opportunity to make care a visible, consistent, and transformative feature of the transport experience.

1. Strategic Partnerships & Governance

Delivering effective responses to homelessness in transport environments requires coordinated, cross-sector action. TfNSW is well positioned to lead as a system enabler by formalising governance structures, embedding care into operational practices, and establishing reliable pathways for service providers to operate in and around stations. This section outlines targeted actions to strengthen TfNSW's enabling role through formal agreements, strategic advocacy, and robust partnership mechanisms. These initiatives are designed to complement, not duplicate existing service delivery, ensuring TfNSW drives impact through collaboration, leadership, and system-wide alignment.

Priority 1

1.1 Partner with Sydney Zero⁵ to ensure TfNSW is represented in cross-agency coordination and decision-making. This engagement is at a strategic level, supporting system-wide integration while not involving direct service delivery or disrupting existing relationships and practices.

1.2 Develop and make visible station-specific governance frameworks. These should clarify roles, referral pathways, and accountability, building on existing governance arrangements. For PLP and frontline staff, this should mean clear, accessible information on who does what, how referrals are handled, and what support is available, rather than creating new or duplicative structures.

1.3 Advocate for a mix of social, community and affordable housing in TfNSW-led precinct redevelopments.

Priority 2

1.4 Support City of Sydney's work to manage social service logistics and join the coordination networks for homelessness services in each region of Sydney.

1.5 Co-development of a guide produced by JEC and StreetCare about rights and conduct in station environments and how to access help.

2. Inclusive Station Design & Infrastructure

Stations serve as vital lived spaces for people seeking shelter and support. When designed inclusively and equipped with fit-for-purpose amenities (toilets, storage, seating, rest areas, safety features) they establish a strong physical foundation for care. These elements not only enhance dignity for PLP but also elevate safety and comfort for all customers. This section outlines the essential amenities, design strategies, and facility standards that enable stations to function as safe, inclusive, and dignified environments. It positions the physical station

⁵ Sydney Zero is the relevant coordination mechanism in the project context. The principle of forming interagency partnerships and participating in the existing ecosystem of care is applicable in other contexts through whichever local structures are in place.

environment as a key enabler of care, reinforcing TfNSW's commitment to accessibility, wellbeing, and social impact.

Priority 1

2.1 Ensure new developments and redevelopments emphasise the affordances of the environments they create, consider the built and programmatic domains simultaneously in the design process.

2.2 Deliver inclusive amenities:

- a) Design toileting and other facilities based on key use of station e.g. high tourist/activity use (sports, etc.) such as Central Station, Circular Quay and stations at ends of train lines - i.e. stations like Kiama, Blue Mountains, Newcastle, are larger with more comprehensive services outside of paid areas, with smaller/less comprehensive services at commuter stations.
- b) Provide electricity outlets/charging via seating, so it is dispersed and accessible.
- c) Provide lockers based on key use of station e.g. high tourist/activity use such as Central and Circular Quay, commuter stations i.e. for bike storage, and work with Councils to support their storage options.

2.3 When facilities are allocated to social service provision, then these should:

- a) Focus on supporting women and their children in the first instance.
- b) Be adaptable to respond to changing needs and practices of care.
- c) Embody high standards of design to ensure they offer dignified surroundings to the users and staff.
- d) Include provision of other services at other sites along the network (e.g. when facilities are allocated for Central), particularly key outer stations such as the Blue Mountains and Newcastle.
- e) Facilitate privacy and confidentiality of access.
- f) Provide larger multi-function spaces that limit entry by function, so they are inclusive and offer some confidentiality (e.g. a larger room that leads to services such as medical/dental/government outposts such as Centrelink, or counselling).
- g) Include practical enablers such as vehicle access, drinking fountains, power supply, and weather-protected areas where appropriate, to ensure services can operate effectively on site (see also 3.3 on mobile service provision).

2.4 Deliver inclusive seating design:

- a) Install a wide range of seating that includes a component incorporating armrests for people who need assistance standing as well as seating without armrests to accommodate stretching out. Arrange the seating in multiple alignments that enhances people's chances of being able to exercise greater control of personal space.
- b) Install extensive areas of sittable edges under cover to minimise competition for scarce seating.

Priority 2

2.5 Support inclusive engagement and a culture of care:

- a) Expand Train Station Community Art Program with support extended to PLP to participate.
- b) Launch staff and community gardening/greening competition and suite of resources to facilitate the introduction of greenery in key locations, with protocols to encourage participation of PLP.
- c) Install and utilise message boards to entertain and cultivate a culture of care and remind the wider community of everyone's humanity.
- d) Install little free library/book exchange.

2.6 Provide areas with limited larger receptacles for rubbish and disposal of items long unattended and policies for removal of these items.

3. Access to Services & Mobility

Mobility is a powerful enabler of care. Through subsidised transport, dedicated service spaces and registration hubs, PLP gain direct access to housing, health, and social support systems. This section builds on existing governance and infrastructure foundations to establish long-term solutions that actively reduce mobility barriers. By making essential services more accessible and integrated within the transport network, TfNSW strengthens its role in delivering inclusive practical, and sustained support across the system.

Priority 1

3.1 Signage, advertising or wayfinding specifically targeted to PLP should embody an equal standard of care and attention as the prevailing standard of signage etc. in the station. However, wording may reflect a priority for discretion.

3.2 Provide free transport to PLP if they engage with a recognised liaison or service provider to assist mobility and enable them to attend social services/meal services provided at stations and to facilitate use of services.

Priority 2

3.3 Spaces allocated to mobile service provision should be in quieter, yet accessible areas (for both vehicles and service uses), with or without overarching sheltering structures.

4. Staff Capability & Support

Station staff are essential frontline contributors to the care ecosystem within transit environments. With the right support trauma-informed training, clear operational protocols, and sustained professional development, they are empowered to engage respectfully with PLP, reduce conflict, and foster safe, more inclusive station spaces for all. This section outlines actionable strategies for TfNSW to strengthen staff capability and establish the structural supports necessary for success in this role. By investing in staff as key enabler of care, TfNSW reinforces its commitment to a transport system that prioritises dignity, safety, and social responsibility.

Priority 1

4.1 Deliver regular trauma-informed training for front-of-house staff to better recognise and respond to various needs and situations e.g. dementia, mental health, stress, aggression, as well as self-defence/de-escalation techniques.

4.2 Introduce clear referral and enforcement protocols aligned with the Protocol, so staff understand their role, limits, and pathways for assistance.

4.3 Ensure passenger safety between stations by maintaining CCTV, help points and escalation pathways, with responses coordinated through Police Transport Command. Staff should be trained and supported to recognise incidents (e.g. harassment or abuse of women and vulnerable passengers) and activate the appropriate response quickly and safely.

Priority 2

4.4 Provide regular cross-agency briefings so staff are updated on available services, protocols, and safety coordination.

4.5 Expand training modules over time to cover emerging issues and specialist needs (e.g. cultural safety, new service models).

5. Lived Experience & Advisory Engagement

Integrating lived experience into decision-making is essential to ensure TfNSW's responses are authentic, effective, and aligned with real-world needs. By establishing structured advisory roles and peer navigator positions, TfNSW can harness practical insight, build trust across communities, and move decisively beyond symbolic inclusion. This section outlines how TfNSW can embed lived experience meaningfully, both within formal governance structures and in everyday engagement roles, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive leadership and informed, people-centred policy.

Priority 1

5.1 Set up a formal advisory group of people with lived/living experience of living precariously, being unhoused and rough sleeping who are paid to provide advice regarding services in stations, station re-design, provision of services within stations etc.

- a) Ensure the group includes Aboriginal people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, reflecting the communities most affected.

Priority 2

5.2 Support alternative advisory models where a formal group is not feasible. In these cases, StreetCare-style advisory roles can provide structured input from people with lived experience, ensuring that their voices continue to shape policy and practice.

6. Research & Evaluation

TfNSW is deeply committed to delivering high-impact, community-focused initiatives. Through rigorous research and comprehensive evaluation, we generate actionable insights that strengthen transparency, foster accountability, and drive continuous improvement across all programs.

This evidence-based approach ensures that every initiative is not only strategically aligned with government priorities, but also directly responsive to the evolving needs of the communities we serve. By embedding evaluation into the core of our decision-making, TfNSW confidently delivers solutions that are informed, effective, and future-ready.

Priority 1

6.1 Continue research partnerships with universities, extending to suburban and regional contexts.

6.2 Monitor the impact across all recommendations to assess effectiveness.

Priority 2

6.3 Develop shared data platforms with service partners to improve coordination, transparency, and reporting.

7. Pilot Initiatives

TfNSW is uniquely positioned to lead system-wide transformation by proactively piloting and evaluating innovative approaches ahead of full-scale implementation. By embracing a test-and-learn mindset, TfNSW not only mitigates risk but also unlocks valuable, real-world insights that shape smarter, more effective strategies.

Pilots serve as a powerful mechanism for generating practical evidence of what works, identifying opportunities for refinement, and building confidence among stakeholders. This disciplined approach ensures that future initiatives are grounded in proven outcomes, aligned with strategic objectives, and responsive to the dynamic needs of the transport ecosystem.

Through targeted experimentation and robust evaluation, TfNSW reinforces its role as a forward-thinking system enabler, driving continuous improvement, fostering innovation, and delivering better outcomes for communities across NSW.

Priority 1

7.1 Pilot safe rest and wellbeing spaces at high-need hubs to evaluate their effectiveness and inform future hub design.

7.2 Initiate a pilot that employs staff in liaison roles with relevant experience to coordinate with service organisations and assist PLP in station environments, without providing direct services.⁶

⁶ The types of tasks they would oversee would include: assisting train station staff to make decisions about how to respond to specific scenarios (often called ‘secondary consultation’; liaising with social service providers, police, etc. to coordinate direct service delivery for PLP in stations; engaging with existing networks to coordinate service delivery in/surrounding train stations; coordinating a lived experience advisory group of people living precariously for TfNSW).

7.3 Pilot peer navigator/greeter roles at stations, employing people with lived experience to welcome PLP and connect them to services.

Priority 2

7.4 Pilot reduced or rent-free leases for service providers to operate a service hub at or near a major station.

7.5 Test a social services accreditation system to help TfNSW to regulate use of spaces.

7.6 Explore temporary modular accommodation trials with Homes NSW and councils.

Recommendations by Domain

Table 9: Key Learnings and Recommendations by Domain

Domain of Action	Priority 1 – Foundational	Priority 2 – Enhancing
Governance	1.1 Partner with Sydney Zero 1.2 Establish station-specific governance frameworks 1.3 Advocate for housing mix in TfNSW precincts	1.4 Support City of Sydney logistics work 1.5 Co-develop JEC & StreetCare guide
Inclusive Station Design & Infrastructure	2.1 Integrate built + programmatic design 2.2 Deliver inclusive amenities (toilets, charging, lockers) 2.3 Ensure high-quality, adaptable design when facilities are allocated for social service provision 2.4 Deliver inclusive seating design	2.5 Promote inclusive engagement & culture of care (art, greening, boards, libraries) 2.6 Provide larger receptacles & item removal policies
Access to Services & Mobility	3.1 Provide discreet, high-quality signage for PLP 3.2 Offer free transport when engaging with services	3.3 Allocate spaces for mobile service provision
Staff Capability & Support	4.1 Deliver trauma-informed training 4.2 Define and communicate referral and enforcement protocols 4.3 Equip and support staff to maintain passenger safety	4.4 Provide cross-agency briefings 4.5 Expand training modules
Lived Experience & Advisory Engagement	5.1 Establish advisory group with paid lived experience reps (incl. Aboriginal and CALD voices)	5.3 Support alternative advisory models (e.g. StreetCare)
Research & Evaluation	6.1 Maintain/expand research partnerships 6.2 Monitor impact across all recommendations	6.3 Develop shared data platforms
Pilot Initiatives	7.1 Trial safe rest and wellbeing spaces at high-need hubs 7.2 Trial liaison roles to coordinate with service organisations 7.3 Trial peer navigator/greeter roles in stations	7.4 Trial reduced or rent-free leases for service hubs 7.5 Test accreditation for volunteer-run services 7.6 Explore modular accommodation trials

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