



Back to Nature

The Sunshine Coast
Ecological Park
Master Plan

A refuge for people and wildlife, creating ecological habitat, encouraging nature-based recreation, interaction and learning.





Acknowledgement of Country

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledge the Jinibara and Kabi Kabi peoples and the peoples whose lands and waters we all now share. The Traditional Owners' unique values and ancient and enduring cultures deepen and enrich the life of our communities.

Through important cultural events such as the Bunya Festival, this region has been a place of celebration, abundance, connection and kinship for thousands of years.

Every three years from December to February, thousands of First Nations people from across Queensland descended on the Sunshine Coast to feast on the bunya nut, meet friends and relatives, and engage in trade, governance meetings, cultural activities, marriages and dispute settlement. Many people walked hundreds of kilometres for this important festival.

Truth telling is a significant part of our journey. We are committed to better understanding the collective history of the Sunshine Coast and the experiences of First Nations people. Legacy issues resulting from colonisation are still experienced by Traditional Owners and First Nations people. We recognise our shared history and will continue to work in partnership to provide a foundation for building a shared future with the Jinibara people and the Kabi Kabi people. Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Sunshine Coast, and pays respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

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Acknowledgements

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Disclaimer

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01 Introduction

'Back to Nature' the Sunshine Coast Ecological Park Master Plan, establishes a framework for a new destinational park which expands the green space of the region.

The project provides an opportunity to create a unique park in-tune with the natural environment. The new Ecological Park will service the entire Sunshine Coast, providing a significant green space for people to enjoy, while celebrating the amazing biodiversity of the region's natural environment.

Purpose of this Master Plan

This Master Plan provides a road map to guide the park's establishment and evolution for coming generations. The plan reflects a range of ideas and strategies that have been informed by stakeholder engagement, community feedback and technical investigations.

Policy context

Sunshine Coast Council has a strong established policy framework to support facilitating the vision of the Sunshine Coast as 'Australia's most sustainable region - healthy, smart, creative'. Two key policies provide the strategic framework for the Ecological Park:

1. The Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017 provides detailed strategic directions for the natural, built and how we live in the environment, with a strong focus on integration. It contains policy positions relating to themes of landscape character, social infrastructure, biodiversity, open space and sustainable design, which are all overarching drivers for the Ecological Park. To activate and implement these policy positions, the following transformational actions contribute to these themes:

- Transformational Action 14
-Expanding the green space
-Securing and activating space for future generations through an accelerated strategic land program to improve conservation, flood mitigation and sport and recreation opportunities'.
- Transformational Action 14.4
-Establish the ... Ecological Park Land as a major conservation and recreation destination for the region'.

2. Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 includes a Strategic Priority to 'expand the green space by establishing five major green spaces, two major sport and recreation precincts, creating a major Ecological Park and continuing to work with major developers to secure public land'. The five major green spaces are identified in both the Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017 and Council's Corporate Plan:

- 1 Regional Inter-urban Break
- 2 The Coast
- 3 The Blue Heart
- 4 Lower Mooloolah River
- 5 Mountain View

The Ecological Park is located within the 'Mountain View' green space and provides an opportunity to strengthen and expand the existing Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve (MCSR) in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

The Ecological Park is a project of regional significance providing opportunities for nature-based tourism and investment in the region



Legend

- Indicative boundaries of major green spaces identified in both the Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017 and Council's Corporate Plan

0 5km 10km

N

Part of the Sunshine Coast's continued green future

Responding to growth

The Sunshine Coast is well known for its natural beauty and green spaces. These green spaces surround our neighbourhoods and towns contributing to both the liveability and identity of the region. The region's national parks, environmental reserves and recreation parks provide space for conservation, visual relief, as well as sport and recreation.

As the Sunshine Coast continues to grow and emerge as a city-region, it is well positioned to respond to the opportunities and challenges that rapid population growth will bring over the coming decades. The region's current population of nearly 350,000 people is projected to continually grow in the next 20 years, to over 500,000 residents by 2041. This growth has the potential to place increased pressure on existing coastal parks and green spaces.

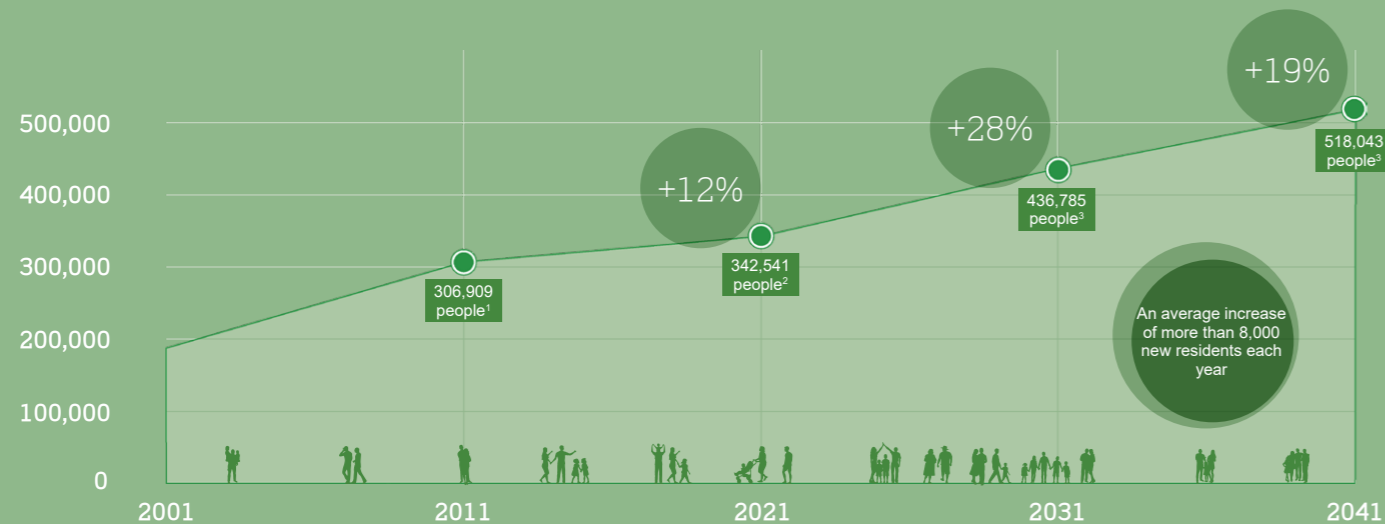
The Ecological Park is a significant opportunity to assist in alleviating the shortfall of Council-wide recreation parks and take pressure off coastal parks - which are already well utilised.

Continued green future

A key priority of Council's Environment and Liveability Strategy is to maintain the rate of open space to 5ha per 1,000 residents and ensure an equitable distribution of publicly accessible open space. The Strategy also targets a no net loss of native vegetation by 2041.

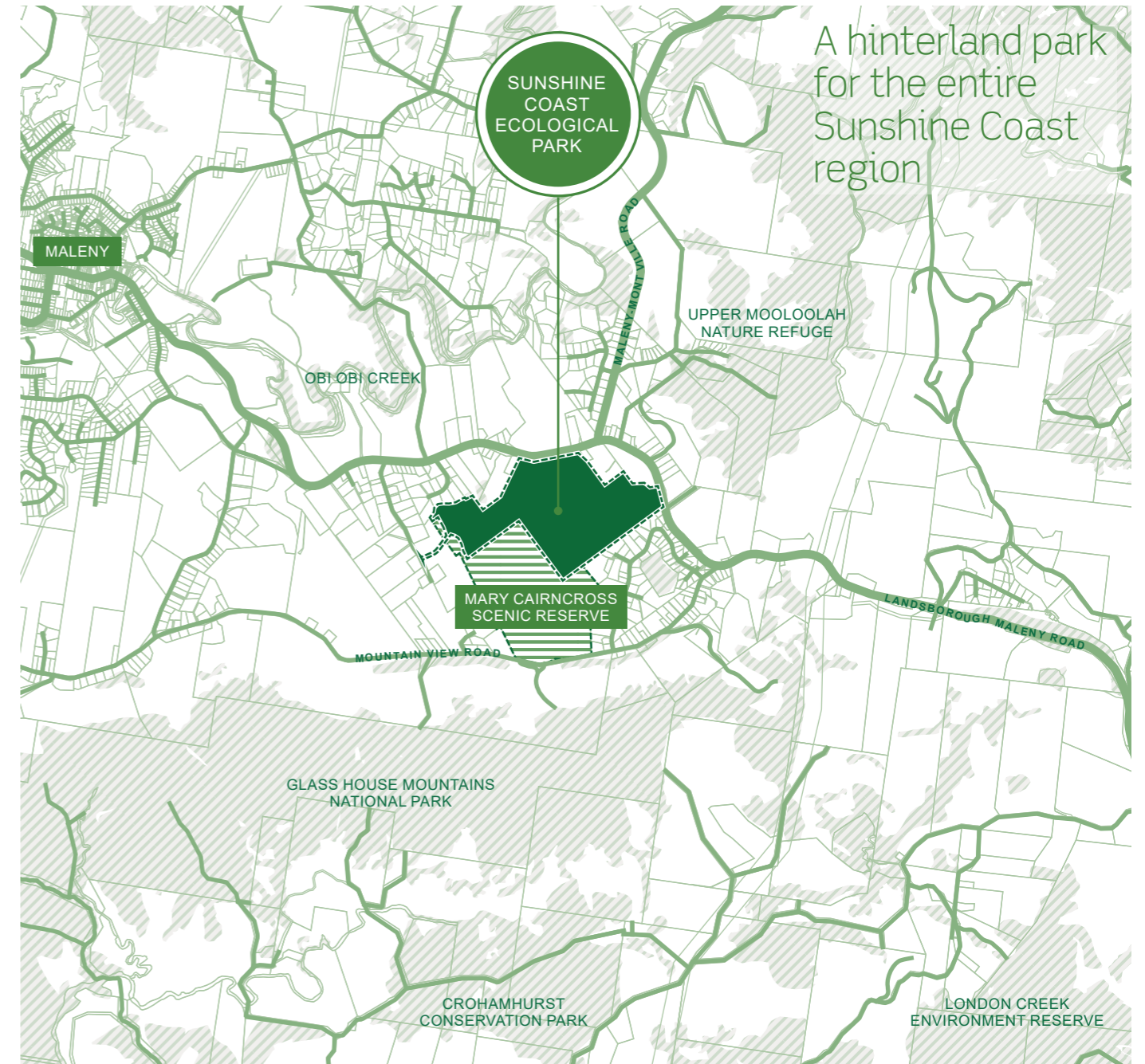
The Sunshine Coast Ecological Park (SCEP) will expand and enhance the Sunshine Coast's open space network in the hinterland area of Mountain View. It will establish a major green space to bolster the Sunshine Coast's liveability for all residents and visitors for years to come. The Ecological Park will celebrate the landscape, create connections and support nature-based recreation, as well as compliment the existing adjacent Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve.

The park will continue the Sunshine Coast's legacy as a green and sustainable city - boosting the attractiveness of the region.



Source:

- 1 2011 population figure sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Census of Population and Housing 2011
- 2 2021 population figure sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Census of Population and Housing 2021
- 3 2021-2041 population figures sourced from Queensland Treasury, Queensland Government population projections, 2018 edition, medium series



Strong ties to Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve

The Sunshine Coast Ecological Park is a major new open space with the potential to become a regionally significant destination. Strategically located adjacent the natural jewel of Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve (MCSR), the park presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen and expand this ecological asset.

Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve comprises 55 hectares of subtropical rainforest overlooking the Glass House Mountains. The Reserve is a living museum of diverse plant and animal life that once covered the Blackall Range and an amazing ecological asset for the community to enjoy. The Sunshine Coast Ecological Park will deliver a 'release-valve' from the current visitor pressures on MCSR and protect the diverse ecological value of the old growth forest.

The Ecological Park will heal Country - embracing First Nation's cultural knowledge and continue the work of caring for and protecting the Country that sustains us

Background

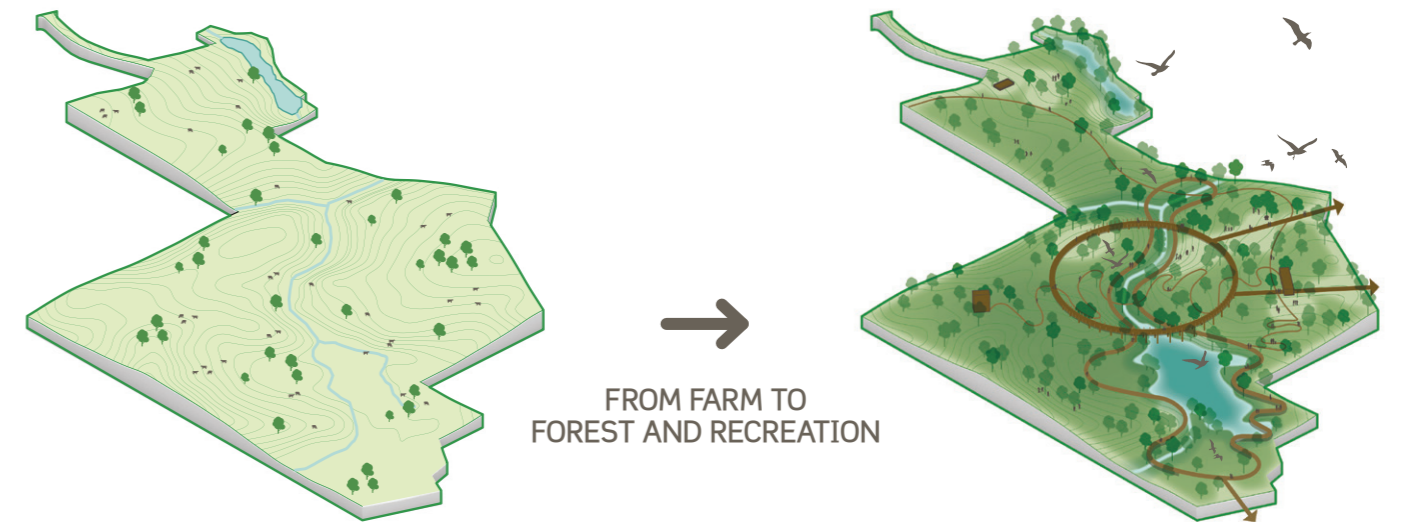
Council acquired 65 hectares of land between 2016 and 2018 for the creation of the Ecological Park. Four rural lots were purchased using funds from the Sunshine Coast Council Environment Levy and the Local Government Infrastructure Plan – Parks and Land for Community Facilities.

Prior to colonisation the site was part of a lush subtropical rainforest ecosystem, featuring waterways and undulating topography. It was, and still is, the land of the Jinibara People. In recent history the site has been modified for farming practices through clearing of remnant vegetation and alterations to the waterways and wetlands.

The Ecological Park will be a story of repair, recreation and education, that delivers significant environmental and social benefits. The project will transform existing pastoral land into a cherished park space, that will grow and develop with the Sunshine Coast community. The existing farmland provides an unfettered canvas to realise unique nature-based spaces, amenity and elements. Affording opportunity for curated community and cultural programming within a restored forest setting.

The park will provide a green asset that allows people to have a deep engagement with nature and be inspired by a Traditional Owner philosophy of 'Healing of Country'.

Healing of Country



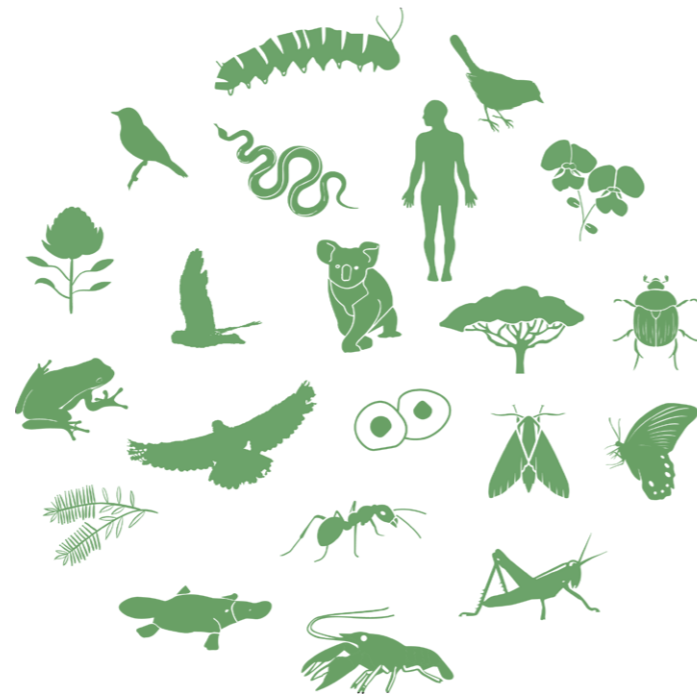
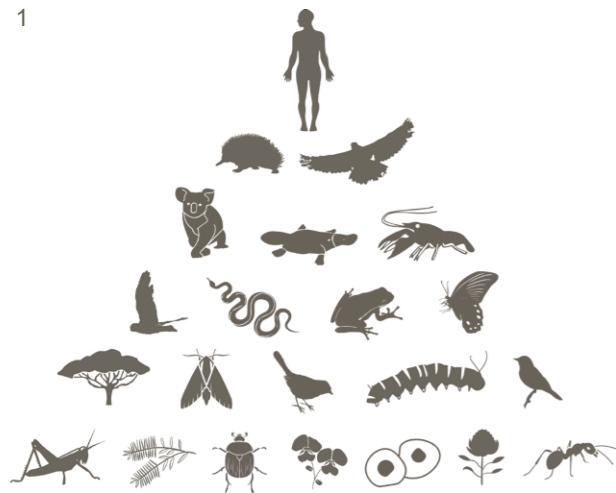
Returning endemic rainforest to create a legacy for future generations



A new kind of park

The Ecological Park presents a significant opportunity to create a new style of park that considers people, wildlife, resources and vegetation equally - a genuine balance of recreation and ecological restoration.

1



HUMAN-CENTRIC TRADITIONAL PARK

Source:

1 Diagram adapted from German architect Steffen Lehmann, Eco v Ego diagram 2010

NEW CO-HABITATION ECOLOGICAL PARK

Cohabitation

The Ecological Park will create a distinct open space that balances the needs of people, wildlife, resources and vegetation equally; a place that establishes a genuine balance of recreation and ecological restoration.

The concept for the park explores the idea of co-habitation, which fosters a relationship within living systems and a sharing of the same place. It is critical that we expand open spaces design beyond a 'human-centric' approach, conceived for our 'own' personal comfort and create a shared space for all species. A place which aligns with First Nation ideas of 'Caring for Country' and creates habitat and space for all.

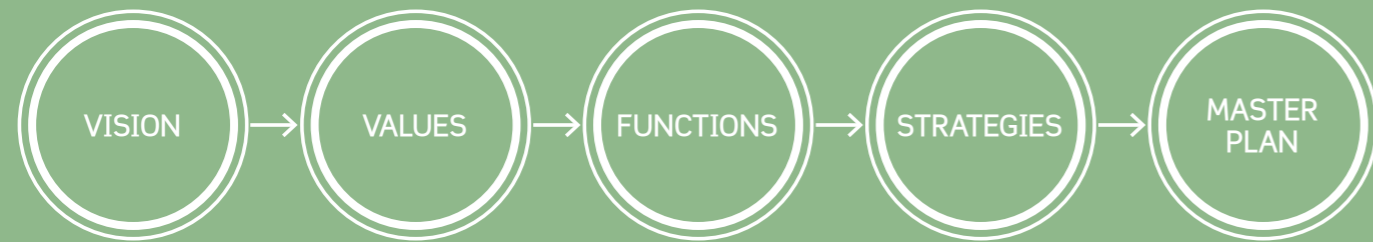


02 Our Vision

A place of cherished nature and ecological wonder for generations to discover and enjoy

Strategic process

To ensure that the Ecological Park delivers on Council's vision, environment and liveability aspirations, as well as community feedback, a strategic process has been developed to guide all phases of the project.



The 'Vision' provides an aspirational narrative of the place outcome and guides the evolution of the project. It acts as sounding board to test future planning and decisions.

The 'Values' establish a framework to guide decision making, aligning ideas and investment to deliver the vision.

The 'Functions' articulate the vision and values into core themes and the primary roles of the project. They provide direction to the strategies of delivery and the key physical elements.

The 'Strategies' provide specific moves to realise the vision, values and functions.

A spatial reflection of the vision, values, functions and strategies that responds to the site's physical attributes, opportunities and constraints.

Our Values

1

AN ECOLOGICALLY VALUABLE, RESILIENT AND CONNECTED LANDSCAPE.

4

AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE THAT PROMOTES BALANCE, RESPITE AND REVIVAL.

2

A PLACE THAT WELCOMES PEOPLE TO LEARN, PLAY AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUTURE.

5

A PLACE OF UNEXPECTED AND SPONTANEOUS DISCOVERY.

3

A PLACE TO BE INSPIRED BY NATURE.

6

A PLACE THAT SHARES THE STORIES OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE REGION.

A park that will grow and develop with the Sunshine Coast community



03 Community Engagement

This Master Plan has been prepared with the input from the community to ensure that the project delivers a balanced mix of park activities, education and ecological restoration.

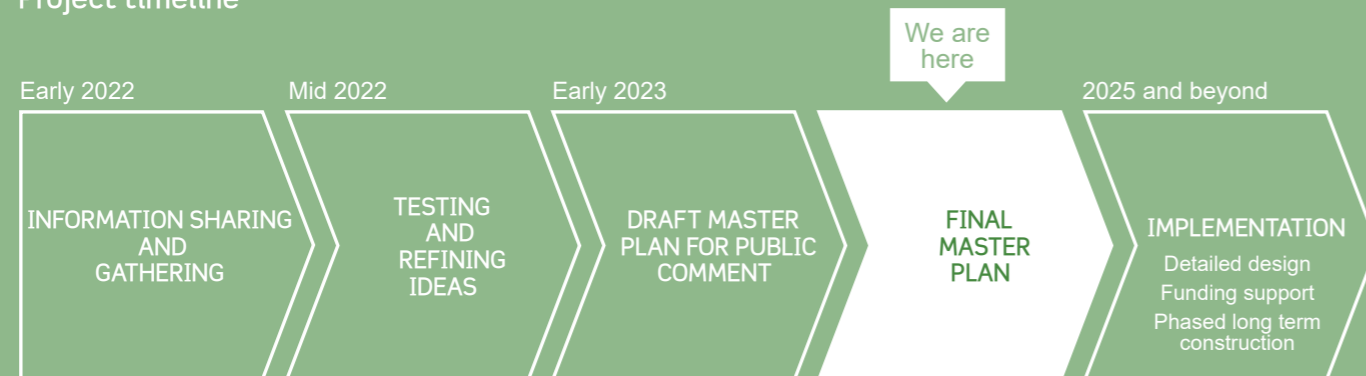
Engagement process

To guide this Master Plan, the community was asked to contribute their ideas and input for the Ecological Park. The park's vision, values, strategies and a draft concept were shared to help shape the direction of this Master Plan. Engagement activities included pop-ups, online questionnaires, advisory groups, information sessions and meetings with Jinibara Traditional Owners were conducted.

The engagement activities highlighted three core themes that were important to the community. These themes have formed the basis of this Master Plan strategies, and have defined the three overarching functions of the park.



Project timeline



Three key functions emerged from the community engagement:

Recreation and Wellness

Nature based recreation was supported, with a preference for creating places of calm respite and passive activities in nature. There was a desire to avoid highly active elements such as zip-lines and sports fields. The creation of a variety of safe and comfortable outdoor rooms that provide a range of experiences and natural adventures, including nature-play was supported.

Respondents identified the creation of a network of connected paths and trails, both within and linking outside the park as important. Walking trails were well supported and identified as the highest priority for survey participants.

Community feedback was strongly in favour of accessibility for people with mobility issues and activities for all ages and abilities was a priority.

Ecology and Restoration

Respondents supported ecological strategies, including corridors for wildlife movement and vegetation buffers to protect Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve. Restoration and regeneration of the park received overwhelming support. Creating habitat for wildlife and the planting of indigenous plants is considered a priority for the community.

Regeneration of wetlands to re-establish the natural waterways, so they once again become a place of importance to native animals such as fish, macro-invertebrates, frogs and birds was also strongly supported.

People recognised that the adjacent Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve as 'over-loved' and that there was opportunity to expand and enhance offering through the creation of the new park.

Research, Education and Culture

Spaces to experience the stories, history and values of Jinibara People, the traditional custodians of the area, was overwhelmingly supported by the community.

Respondents highlighted support for exhibitions, interactive installations and artworks that interpret and reveal stories of the people and natural history of the region.

Strong support was recorded for stewardship opportunities, restoration and legacy planting with volunteers keen to help and lend their expertise, skills and time to support the restoration works of the Ecological Park.

Other suggestions included the facilitation for research and education to learn about local ecology and history.

Interface with Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve

The relationship of the new Ecological Park to Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve (MCSR) is mutually beneficial, and Council are acutely aware of the responsibility that comes with working adjacent to this significant natural asset.

Community support for connections to Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve varies between enthusiastic endorsement to connect the two spaces and 'share the load', while others feel that connecting the two spaces may potentially impact on the Reserve.

Any interfaces proposed within this Master Plan have been strategically arranged to minimise potential impacts on MCSR. The proposed connection will be subject to further detailed studies, reviews and expert advice during future detailed design stages to ensure final solutions are sensitively integrated in an ecologically responsible manner.

'The interaction between people and nature seems balanced...'

Community feedback from May 2022 Information Sharing and Gathering Phase

04 Functions and Strategies

Twelve strategies to guide the future of the Ecological Park

Three overarching functions and twelve strategies reflect the aspirations and themes the community shared during the engagement process - providing clear roles and objectives to realise the vision and values.

Functions:

Strategies:

Recreation and Wellness



A focused community heart

Cluster core community infrastructure to create vibrancy and activity – nurturing recreation and conservation throughout the park.



A series of Forest Rooms

Establish a diverse collection of spaces defined by vegetation, offering adventure, play, discovery, reflection and gatherings.



A sustained connection to nature

Create a green refuge for the community, promoting health and wellbeing through immersive experiences within nature.



A connected and accessible park

Provide a safe and accessible park for everyone, sensitively connected within and to the surrounding landscape.

Functions:

Strategies:

Ecology and Restoration



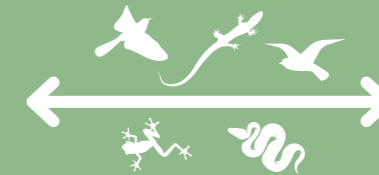
Expand and buffer Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve

Complement the mosaic of ecosystems within Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve and safeguard the existing old growth forest.



Protect, enhance and celebrate water

Rebuild the ecological function and resilience of the wetlands and creek system and allow water to be a valuable part of the park experience.



Improve fauna connections and biodiversity

Boost ecological diversity and resilience through establishing habitat and connections to improve fauna movement into the wider landscape.



A beacon of environmental sustainability

Apply environmental excellence in all aspects of planning, construction and operation - supported by community involvement and stewardship.

Functions:

Strategies:

Research, Education and Culture



Experience the evolution

Engage all generations throughout the restoration journey to strengthen knowledge and understanding of ecological values and respectful interaction.



Celebrate local history and ecology

Inspire intergenerational learning by sharing stories of the land and people through art, interaction and interpretive elements.



Connecting to Country

Provide a cultural conduit that promotes caring for Country and respects Aboriginal knowledge in partnership with Jinibara Traditional Owners.



A place to nurture community involvement

Facilitate activities which engage the Sunshine Coast community, fostering a sense of generational connection, ownership and pride.

Note: Refer Section 8 for further detail on Strategies

05 Spatial Layout

An understanding of the sites natural and technical attributes has informed a series of spatial moves which define how the site can be transformed into the future park.

01 Consolidate activity north of the creek

Focus core community activities on the northern side of the creek, leveraging proximity to the site's main road frontage, as well as the existing flatter terrain. This consolidation of activity allows a stronger ecological role on the south adjacent Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve.

02 Connect into surrounding natural corridors

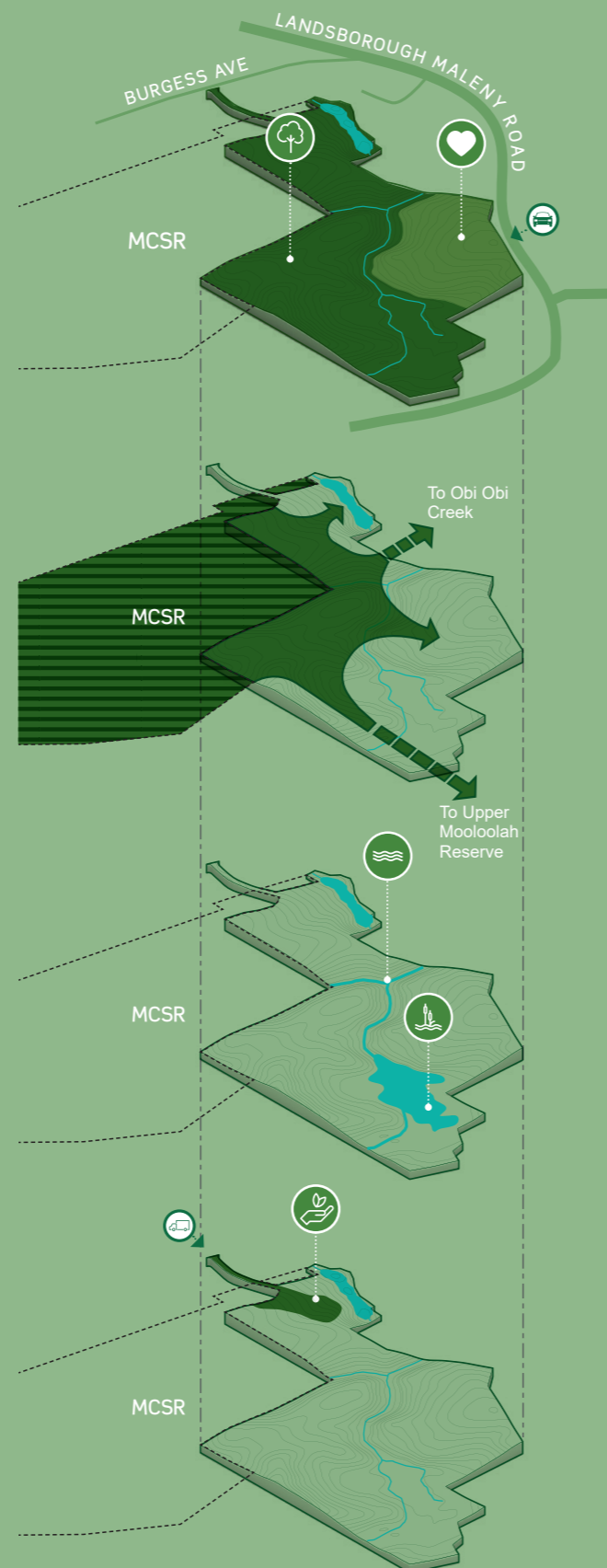
Protect, expand and enhance the ecological integrity of the adjacent Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve with significant restoration which will connect to a broader network of surrounding natural corridors.

03 Restore waterways

Restore the existing degraded wetland and creek located on the lowlands of the site - repairing aquatic habitat and boosting water quality.

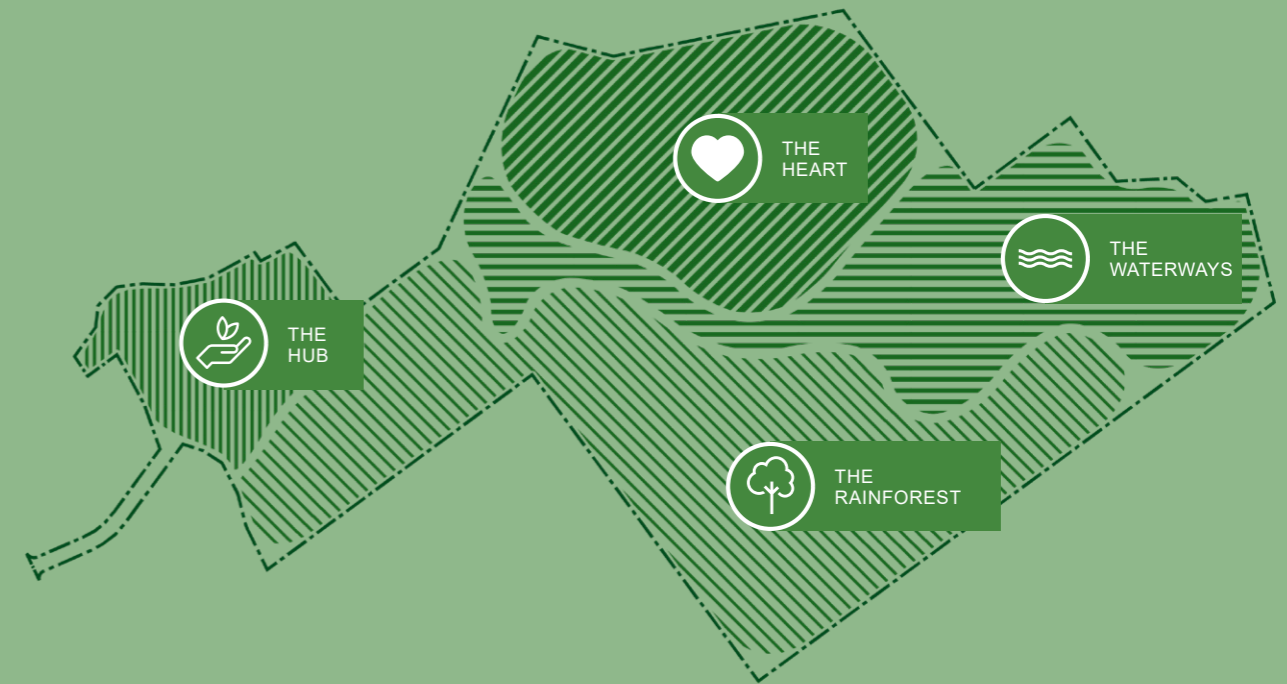
04 Focus research, stewardship and operations

Research, stewardship and operation activities will be focused off Burgess Avenue to control vehicular movement through adjacent residential areas. Located at the junction of MCSR and the Ecological Park the space provides a convenient and central location to manage and learn from both sites.



06 Defining the Precincts

The spatial moves clearly define four distinct but interconnected landscape precincts: The Heart, the Rainforest, the Waterways and the Hub. This Master Plan proposes these precincts to define, and cultivate essential characteristics and experiences that leverage the sites natural features and context. Altogether the four landscape precincts combine to create a unified park offering something for everyone.



The Heart

A lush people-oriented community destination for park visitors, the Heart will accommodate the more active uses and programs of the park. The precinct will function as a diverse collection of community focused spaces nestled in a reconstructed forest - providing a unique civic heart embedded in nature. As the entry point for many of the park's visitors, the precinct will provide a welcoming green arrival which connects visitors to core amenity and broader parkland experiences.

The Rainforest

The Rainforest focuses on the restoration journey of the park - complementing the adjacent MCSR. The precinct will focus on the establishment of robust and thriving habitat that celebrates the amazing biodiversity of the local environment. The Rainforest will prioritise nature with controlled immersive insertions for community interaction, education and enjoyment.

The Waterways

After years of use as pastoral land, the site's natural creek and wetland will be restored to improve ecological function. The waterways will showcase the ecological diversity of the ephemeral wetlands, improve water quality and boost aquatic habitat. With a variety of immersive features, this precinct will be an area that invites interaction with water and celebrates its natural systems.

The Hub

Located on the western end of the park, The Hub will be the home of operations, research, and community stewardship. It is the 'engine-room' of the park, where Council and community come together, learn and are inspired to get hands-on with nature. A place where opportunities for participation and knowledge sharing will be initiated and then spread across the park.

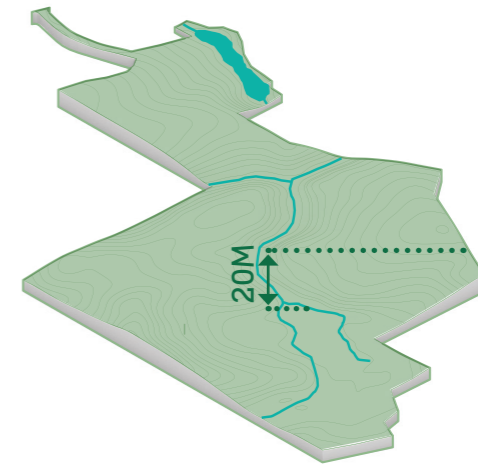
Note: Refer Section 9 for further detail on Precincts

Treetop Bridges will unify the two sides of the park and deliver a highly accessible pathway that leverages the site's natural terrain to create a unique nature-based attraction

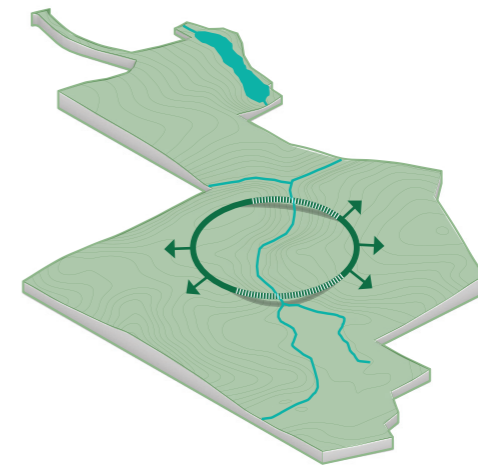
Organising the precincts and taming the terrain

While the precincts respond to the site's natural features, the park's steep terrain represents a key challenge. With a significant level change of 20m from the main entry to the creek, the site's existing topography creates a natural barrier.

This Master Plan flips this challenge into a major opportunity through the proposed Loop Path and Treetop Bridge. The Treetop Bridge unites the two sides of the park and delivers a highly accessible pathway for all. The Treetop Bridge leverages the site's natural terrain to create a unique nature-based attraction set within the lush canopy. The Loop Path and Treetop Bridge creates a legible, central organising element to connect the park's various precincts and spaces.



The site is divided by steep terrain, with a 20m level change from street to creek



The Loop Path and Treetop Bridges will link the two sides of the creek and provide access for all

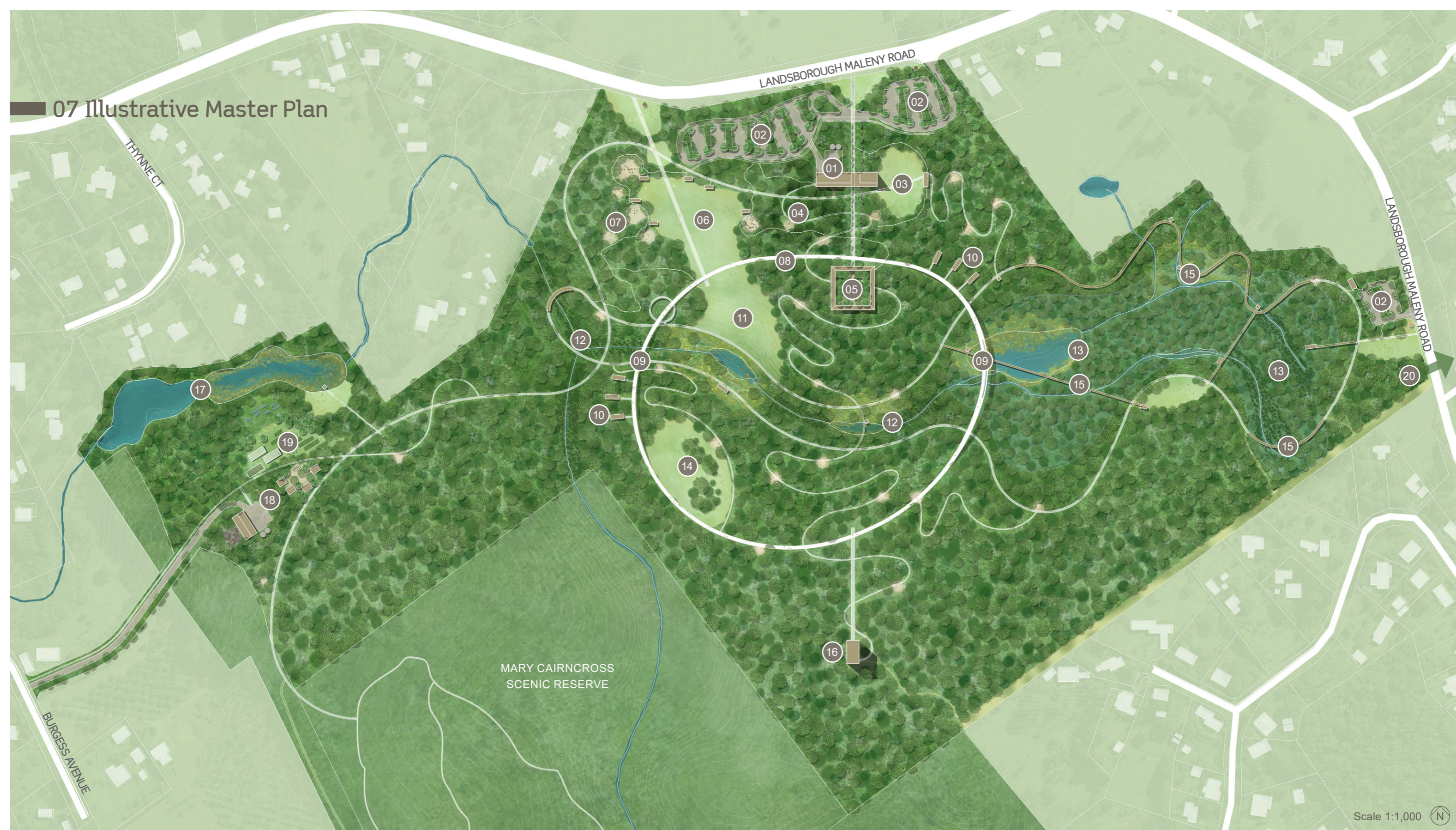


'Accessibility for different abilities is especially important in the Hinterland. There needs to be more access for people in wheelchairs in parks and recreation areas.'

Community feedback from May 2022
Information Sharing and Gathering Phase

Diagrammatic Section of Treetop Bridge

07 Illustrative Master Plan



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Community Pavilion | 6 BBQ Lawn | 11 Amphitheatre | 16 Forest Lookout |
| 2 Car park | 7 Play Forest | 12 Creek | 17 Dam / constructed wetland |
| 3 Event Lawn | 8 Loop Path | 13 Ephemeral wetland | 18 Operations and research facility |
| 4 The Grove | 9 Treetop Bridge (Loop Path) | 14 Rainforest Green | 19 Bush food community garden |
| 5 Forest Plaza | 10 Tree-houses | 15 Boardwalk | 20 Fauna crossing |



08 Realising the Strategies

The twelve strategies and three overarching functions outline clear objectives for the future Ecological Park. Each strategy is supported by a series of spatial moves and key manoeuvres which will enable its realisation and assist in bringing the vision to life.

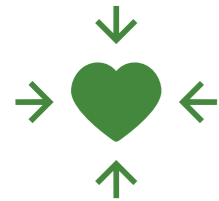
Note: Refer Section 4 for full list of Strategies and Functions



Recreation and Wellness

A focused community heart

Cluster core community infrastructure to create vibrancy and activity – nurturing recreation and conservation throughout the park.



At the heart of the park, community infrastructure is centralised to provide a recreational and social gathering space for activity-focused functions. The concentration of active uses allows the majority of the park to play a more passive and ecological role delivering a genuinely balanced outcome.

Spatial moves

- 1 Car park:** a 'green' car park including generous tree canopy and stormwater filtration gardens providing primary access to the park
- 2 Community Pavilion:** a multi-functional and adaptable facility including space for events, amenities and retail
- 3 Event Lawn:** a flexible and level space for community use which can be utilised for boutique events
- 4 The Grove:** a pocket of existing rainforest, with opportunities for gatherings, play and informal trails below the mature tree canopy
- 5 Forest Plaza:** a heavily shaded and open outdoor room for groups to dwell or host local markets
- 6 BBQ Lawn:** an open area for picnics or to throw a ball supported by BBQ shelters
- 7 Play Forest:** a collection of unique nature play spaces and elements for all ages and abilities
- 8 Amphitheatre:** a natural lawn amphitheatre flowing down to the creek for everyday relaxing in the sun or small performances

Key manoeuvres

- Co-location:** create a critical mass of core amenity co-located to establish an active and safe heart, as well as allow ease of use and maintenance due to proximity
- Social value:** create social value by creating a community destination which reaches out to the Sunshine Coast community, ensuring that the park will lead to lasting positive impacts in terms of health and well-being, quality of life, diversity, inclusion and future outcomes





A place where 'nature'
is the hero

BBQ Lawn and Play Forest with views to the Forest Lookout



Artist impression only

Recreation and Wellness

A series of Forest Rooms

Establish a diverse collection of spaces defined by vegetation, offering adventure, play, discovery, reflection and gatherings.



This Master Plan acknowledges that the park's broad range of users may value and utilise open space differently, resulting in a range of space types being embedded within the park's fabric. Throughout the park, visitors can find an exciting and variable array of nature-based experiences to be unlocked as they travel through the pathway system.

Spatial moves

- Intimate Forest Rooms***: unique spaces immersed in nature where visitors experience a sense of surprise and delight as they discover varied and distinct 'outdoor rooms' across the park - creating unexpected and playful spaces, carefully nestled within the forest

- Large Forest Rooms**: larger park spaces are to be defined by dense vegetation to create 'walls' and structure to strengthen the connection to nature

*Note: Final locations and sizes of 'Intimate Forest Rooms' are indicative pending further detailed investigation

Key manoeuvres

Comfort and scale: ensure a variety of space sizes and scales within the shade of the forest for individuals and groups to lose themselves in nature

Nature-based recreation: create unique opportunities for nature-based play and recreation for both adults and children



Forest Rooms offer a variety of nature experiences

A selection of intimate Forest Room spaces will be seeded within the park forest and wetlands to offer moments of unexpected discovery in nature. A variety of potential Forest Room typologies are outlined below.

Forest Room Design Ideas



Play - swings and steppers



Learning pod



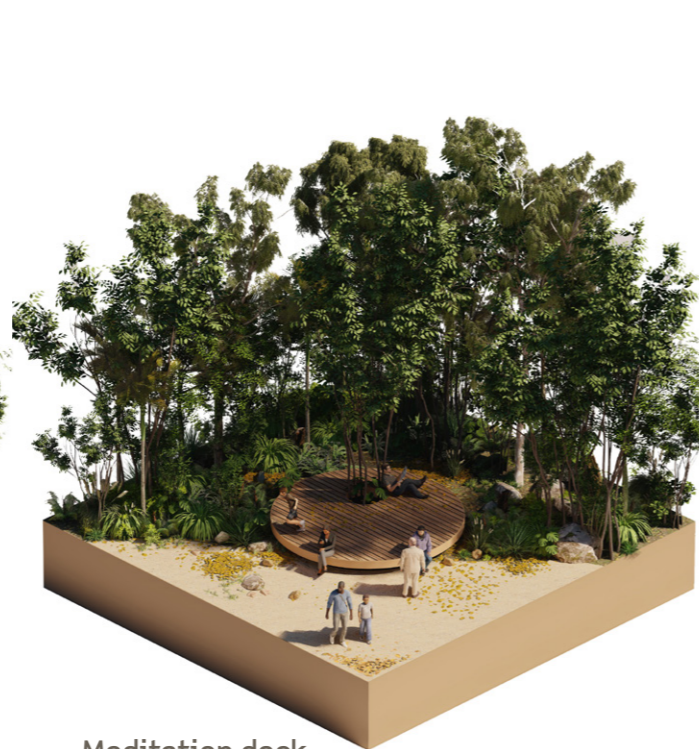
Seating pod



Bouldering wall



Lookout deck



Meditation deck



Hammock grove



Slide

Recreation and Wellness

A sustained connection to nature

Create a green refuge for the community, promoting health and wellbeing through immersive experiences within nature.



Accessible and habitable nature-focused spaces support relaxation, wellbeing and overall health for visitors. Offering an immersive experience means that the park should feel like a place apart from daily life, allowing authentic interactions with the outdoors. The park should engage all the senses (memory, hearing, touch, smell and where appropriate, taste) encouraging a deep connection to nature.

Spatial moves

- Tree canopy**
- Pathways:** promote health and wellness with multiple walking tracks through the revegetated forest
- Retreat spaces:** focused sanctuary spaces of quiet calm to recharge and reconnect with nature
- Tree houses:** elevated pavilions providing a sheltered space to experience the growing forest

Key manoeuvres

- Tree cover:** over 70% of the site will be revegetated to ensure that a deep connection to nature is ever-present within the park
- Balanced experience:** spaces are to be separated and buffered with vegetation to ensure the nature experience is not diminished by crowds



Immersive experiences in nature around every corner

Wellness and nature

Regardless of age or culture, humans find nature restorative. Gardens, parks and natural landscapes have been shown to have beneficial effects on human health, such as encouraging physical recovery processes and promoting mental and emotional well-being¹.

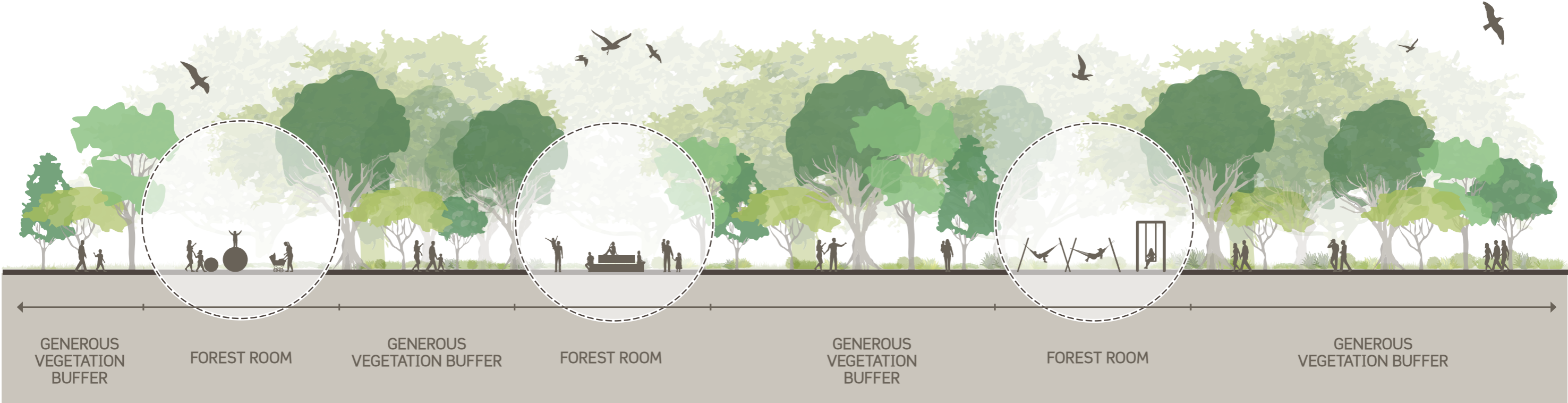
A place of respite from the urban world

The Ecological Park will be a place of retreat and relaxation for the entire Sunshine Coast community. The park will deliver restorative and healing spaces including select Forest Rooms, a Sensory Garden, walking trails and a high proportion of natural landscape. A significant number of sanctuary spaces

complement the more programmed and active parts near the Heart to create a balanced approach which delivers meaningful opportunities for healing and wellness. Offering something for everyone, the park will align with the relaxed outdoor lifestyle of the Sunshine Coast.

Unless revealing a view or a key connection, each space within the park will be separated by generous vegetation buffers ensuring visitors are continually immersed in nature as they journey from one space to another. This continued celebration of nature as part of the parks journey will assist people in maintaining their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Always moving through nature to discover a new space.



Section not to scale

'Forest bathing' or immersing oneself in nature has been shown to significantly reduce blood pressure and stress levels²

Source:
 1. Healing Gardens, Cooper-Marcus and Barnes, 2006)
 2. Blood pressure-lowering effect of Shinrin-yoku, Y. Ideno et al, 2017

Recreation and Wellness

A connected and accessible park










Provide a safe and accessible park for everyone, sensitively connected within and to the surrounding landscape.



Pedestrian movement

Providing clear, legible and accessible circulation around the park is integral to the visitor experience. A clear hierarchy of pathways will assist visitors to navigate the park, whether their goal is to wander, linger, enjoy the park itself, or to find a direct route to a desired destination.

Spatial moves

-  **Loop Path** (1.1km*)
-  **Loop Path Treetop Bridges**
-  **Entry paths**
-  **Water Circuit** (2.5km*)
-  **Dundalli Walk** (1.7km*)
-  **Sensory Walk** (0.36km*)
-  **Mary Cairncross Walk** (1km*)
-  **Existing MCSR connection**
-  **Minor paths**

*Note: 400m is approximately 5 minutes walking

Key manoeuvres

Create a network: Establish a diverse network of integrated routes that take people on a journey of ecological discovery

Journeys for all: establish a diverse hierarchy of pathways that cater to the needs of all ages and abilities and planned stay time

Universal access: all pathways will provide compliant access to the steep terrain of the site

Buggy access: provide opportunity for buggy access to remote park destinations (including the Forest Lookout) to allow people with disabilities and the elderly to experience key park elements



Vehicular and cycle movement

This strategy is about finding a balance between providing easy access to the park and limiting interventions into the landscape. It prioritises the reduction of day-to-day vehicle activity in the park's core by restricting public vehicular movements to the fringes of the park. Maintaining vehicular circulation to the periphery unlocks the internal pedestrianised pathway system, improving park safety and amenity, and supports and protects the park's flora and fauna.

Spatial moves

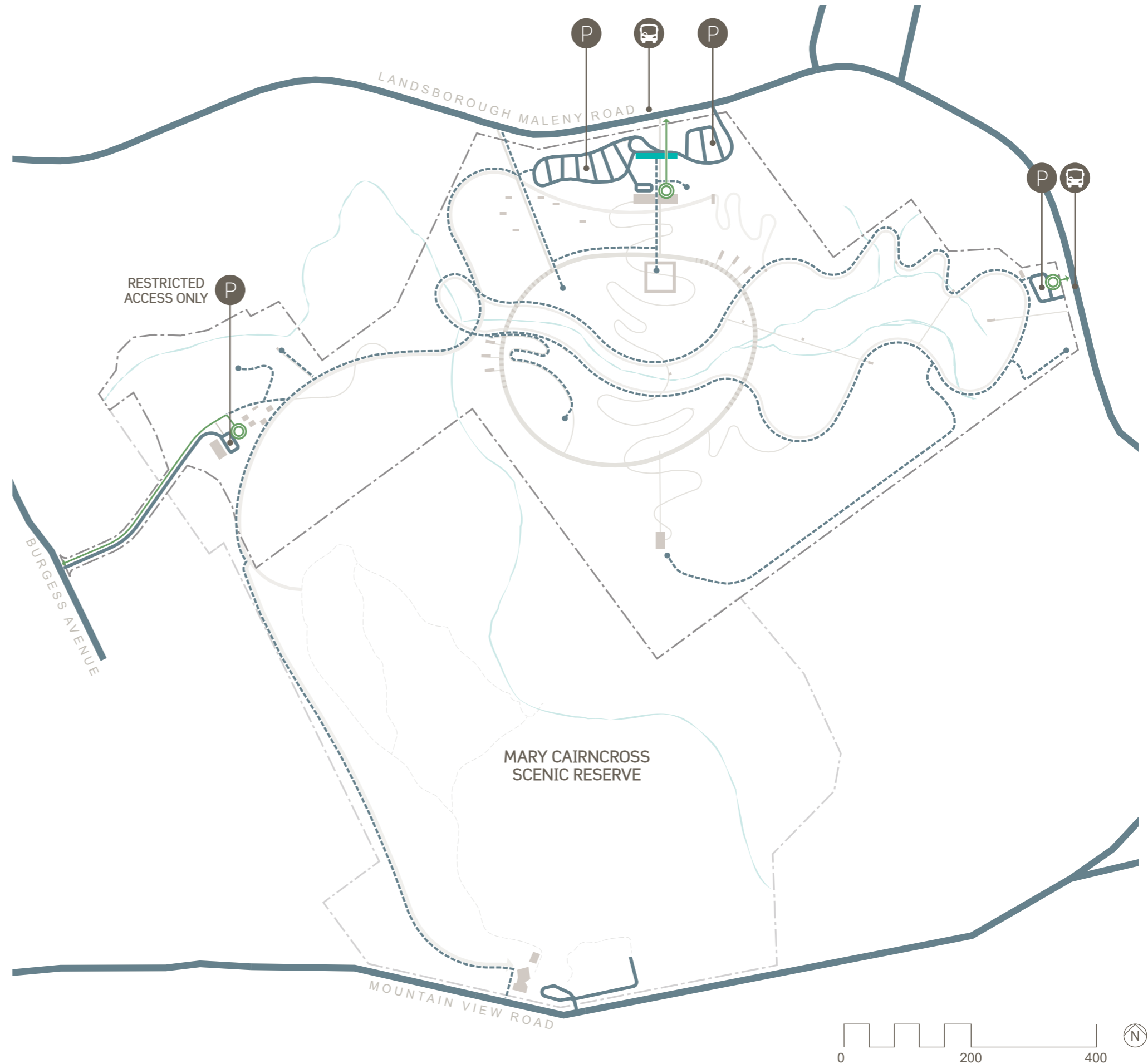
- Vehicular access
- Maintenance, event and emergency access
- Coach drop-off
- P Car parking
- P Potential bus stops
- Cycle access
- P Cycle parking

Key manoeuvres

Cycle access: limit cycle access to parking areas and the Community Pavilion only, to protect fauna from cyclists

Vehicular movement: vehicular movement will be restricted to the edges of the park to ensure the centre is focused on nature and people as a priority - maintenance and emergency vehicles will have controlled access on focused pedestrian paths

Boost public transport connections: reduce reliance on private vehicle use and increase connectivity



Beyond the park

The Ecological Park will be a park for all of the Sunshine Coast. Embedding the park into the community and its surroundings will boost the entire region's open space network and natural amenity.

Key manoeuvres

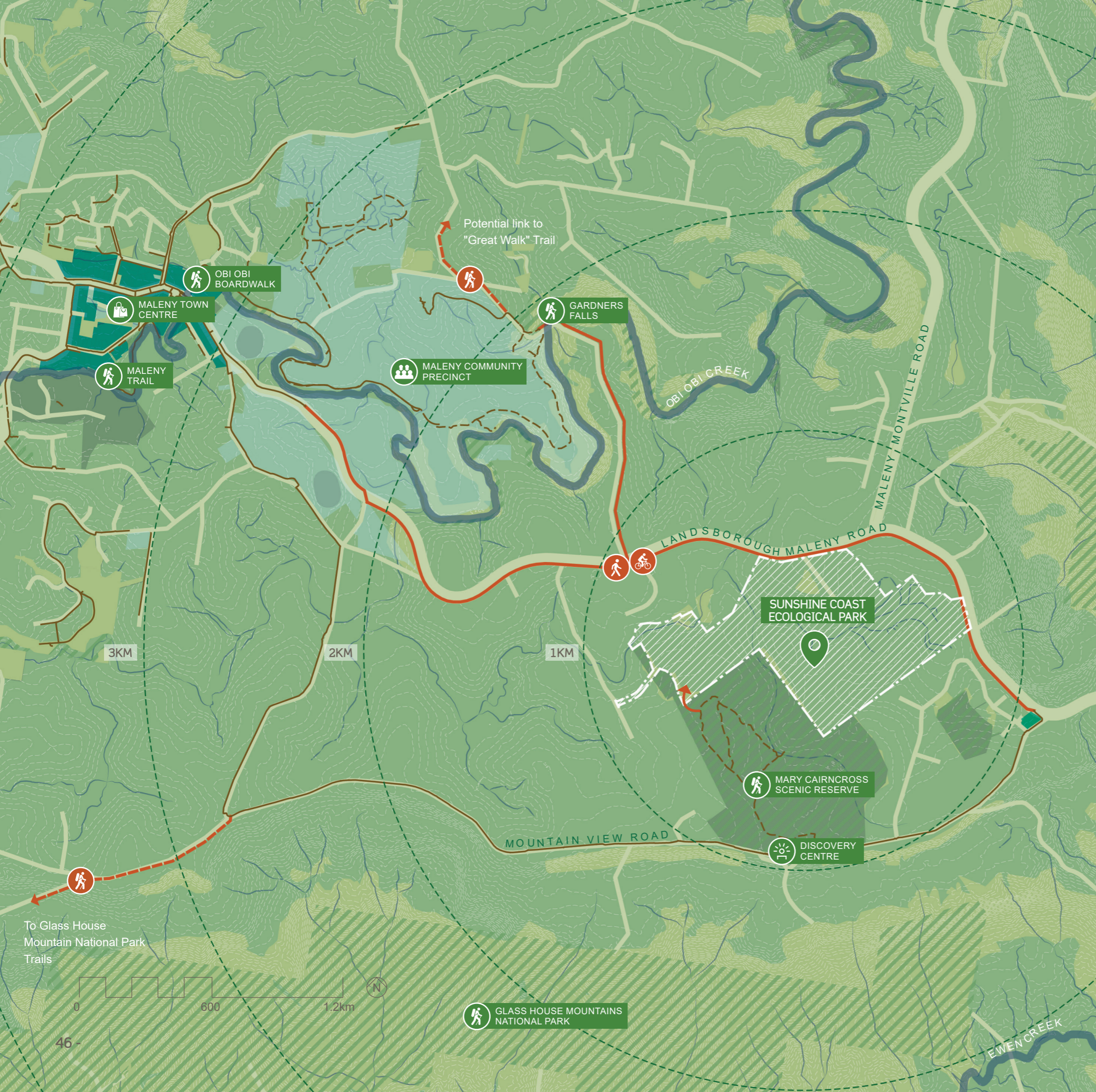
Permeability and linkages: ensure the park is integrated within the local context to provide a porous and connected open space

Broader trails: create opportunities to connect to walking trails beyond the park, including those in MCSR, Maleny Community Precinct, Maleny Trail, Gardner Falls, the Glass House Mountain National Park and potentially the hinterland 'Great Walk'

Upgrade footpath to Landsborough Maleny Road: create a shared footpath connection to Maleny Town Centre, and local retail centres (corner of Landsborough Maleny and Mountain View (Maleny Community Precinct) to increase connectivity and encourage walking and active transport (subject to TMR approval)

Legend

- District centre
- Local centre
- Community facilities
- Vegetation management essential habitat
- Open space and recreation
- Environmental management and conservation
- Major roads
- Minor roads
- SCC paths
- SCC recreational trails
- Potential future paths
- Potential future recreational trails
- Waterways



To Glass House Mountain National Park Trails



GLASS HOUSE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

Ecology and Restoration

Expand and buffer Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve

Complement the mosaic of ecosystems within Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve and safeguard the existing old growth forest.



Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve speaks for itself; a stunning and well-loved piece of ecological infrastructure that has long provided value to the region. The Ecological Park wishes to complement the reserve, while preserving its individual integrity.

Revegetation treatments

- 1 Vine Forest:** RE 12.8.3 – complex notophyll vine forest
- 2 Tall Forest:** RE 12.8.8 – small pockets of *Eucalyptus Grandis* - with vine forest understorey
- 3 Watercourse Forest:** RE 12.3.1a – complex to simple notophyll vine forest
- 4 Riverine Wetland:** derived from RE 12.3.1a – *Waterhousea Floribunda* predominant fringing stream channels - includes Piccabeen stands
- 5 Palustrine Wetland:** RE 12.3.4 on floodplain area canopy of *Eucalyptus Robusta* with understorey sedges and macrophytes
- 6 Low shrub/grass/sedge managed areas:** floristics derived from RE 12.3.1/12.3.4 – strategically used on northern side of open water bodies to limit shading, and on the bulk fill area – limited canopy

- 7 Existing open waterbody:** Macrophyte plantings to open waterbody edges and benches – floristics derived from RE 12.3.1/12.3.4
- Buffer:** provide and prioritise a significant buffer to protect the existing old growth forest within MCSR (reduces edge effects including light and weed pressure impacts on the boundaries of the park)

Key manoeuvres

- Forest restoration:** establish a series of ecosystems to improve existing biodiversity and reflects the historic landscape types of the area
- Improve soil:** improve and ameliorate site soil to ensure the long term maturity of revegetation, while also supporting micro-organisms and resilient ecosystem processes
- Bio-security:** foot-wash stations will be strategically located at entry and control points to minimise risk of visitor bringing pests or disease-causing organisms into the park
- Habitat quality:** revegetation and restoration to provide long term extended fauna 'home ranges'



+ Planting will predominantly match the ecosystems present in the adjacent MCSR

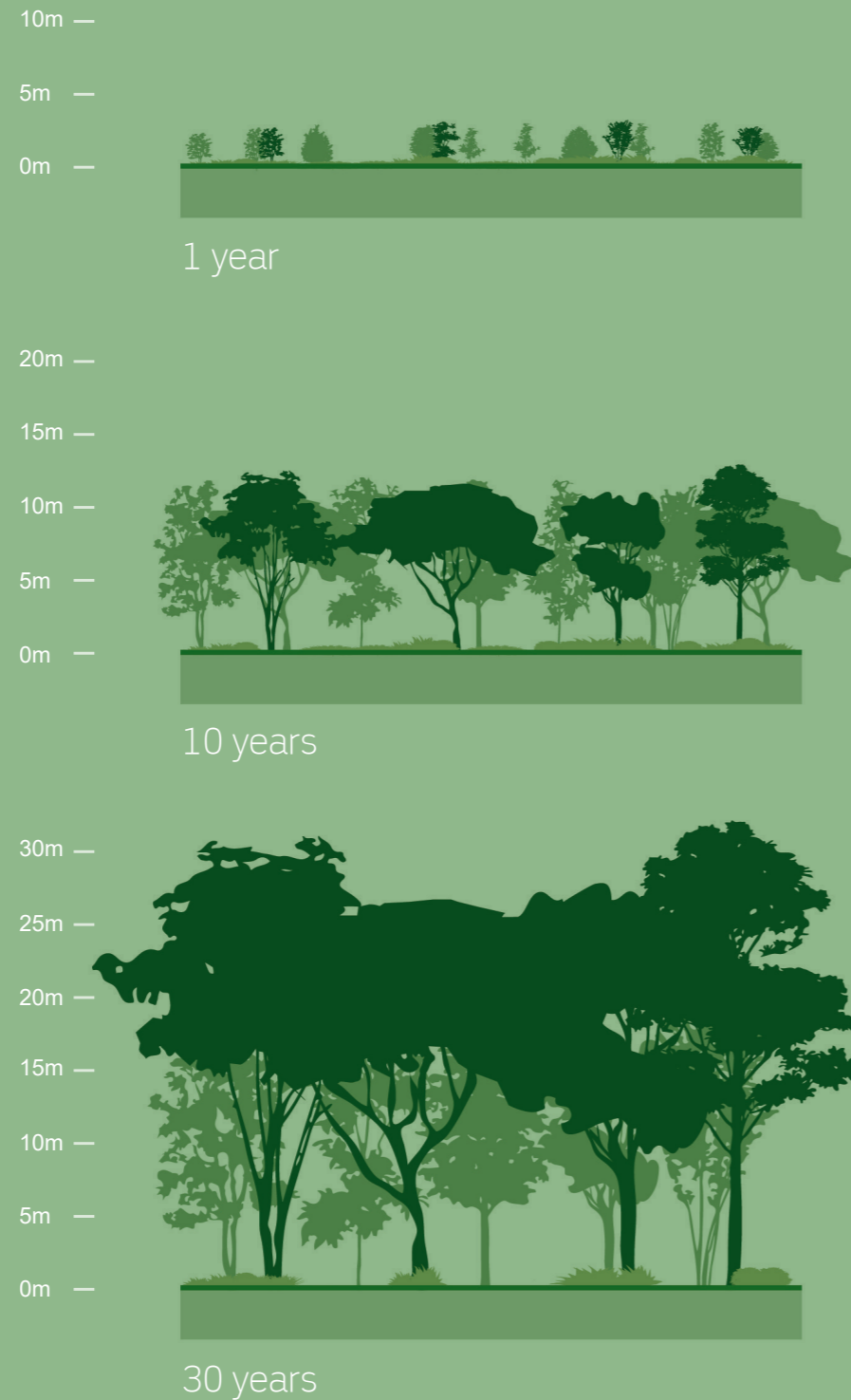
The evolution of the Vine Forest

The Vine Forest will be the primary habitat restored on the site.

The Complex Notophyll Vine Forest (RE 12.8.3) will be the major ecosystem reinstated at the Ecological Park and will complement the dominant typology of old growth Complex Notophyll Vine Forest existing in Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve. The Vine Forest along with the various vegetation treatments proposed within the Ecological Park will support the site's biodiversity.

The adjacent sections illustrate the indicative growth projections of the Vine Forest over 30 years, outlining the process and common fauna species that will emerge over time.

Typical Sections over time



Description

The forest after 1 year

As revegetation is established, fauna habitat opportunities for butterflies, reptiles and small birds are maintained in the first year. The forest will evolve to support a more diverse range of species as the canopy establishes.

Common Fauna Species



Butterflies



Reptiles



Small birds

The forest after 10 years

Planted vegetation now achieves 8 -12m with a closing juvenile canopy. As the canopy closes, the forest fruits and shelter is provided. Gregarious bird species from MCSR, are likely to move into the site, including the Paradise Rifle Bird, Green Cat Bird and the Noisy Pitta. Timber pile habitats will now provide refuge for reptiles, frogs and small mammals.



Paradise Rifle Bird
(*Ptiloris paradiseus*)



Green Cat Bird
(*Ailuroedus crassirostris*)



Noisy Pitta
(*Pitta versicolor*)

The forest after 30 years

The forest is now increasingly resilient to disturbance. Populations of uncommon species have migrated out into rehabilitated areas, including the Great Barred Frog and the Vulnerable Cascade Treefrog. The tree canopy is well advanced and able to support hollow dependant fauna such as Squirrel Gliders. Shrub and groundcover layers provide sufficient security for macropods to move throughout the site, expanding MCSR habitat range for Red-Legged and Red-Necked Pademelons.



Great barred Frog
(*Mixophyes fasciolatus*)



Vulnerable Cascade Treefrog
(*Litoria pearsoniana*)



Squirrel Gliders
(*Petaurus northolcensis*)

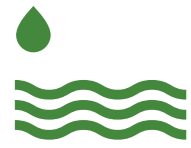


Red-legged and Red-necked Pademelon
(*Thylogale stigmatica*, *T. thetis*).

Ecology and Restoration












Protect, enhance and celebrate water

Rebuild the ecological function and resilience of the wetlands and creek system and allow water to be a valuable part of the park experience.



Revitalising the park's waterways will deliver functional enhancement, maintain and enhance biodiversity, ensure aquatic fauna passage connectivity and provide opportunity for improved resilience, all while adding a slow meandering experience for people to traverse and enjoy at strategic locations and access points. The creek corridors will be made accessible to the public, providing pedestrian access through specific infrastructure to the waterway system along with interpretive material, delivering social amenity and improving environmental appreciation.

Spatial moves

-  **Boardwalk**
-  **Fish-friendly weir**
-  **Steppers**
-  **Water terraces**
-  **Shelters and platforms**
-  **Ephemeral wetland**
-  **Constructed wetland**
-  **Macrophyte pool**
-  **Dam**
-  **Dam wall**
-  **Waterway**

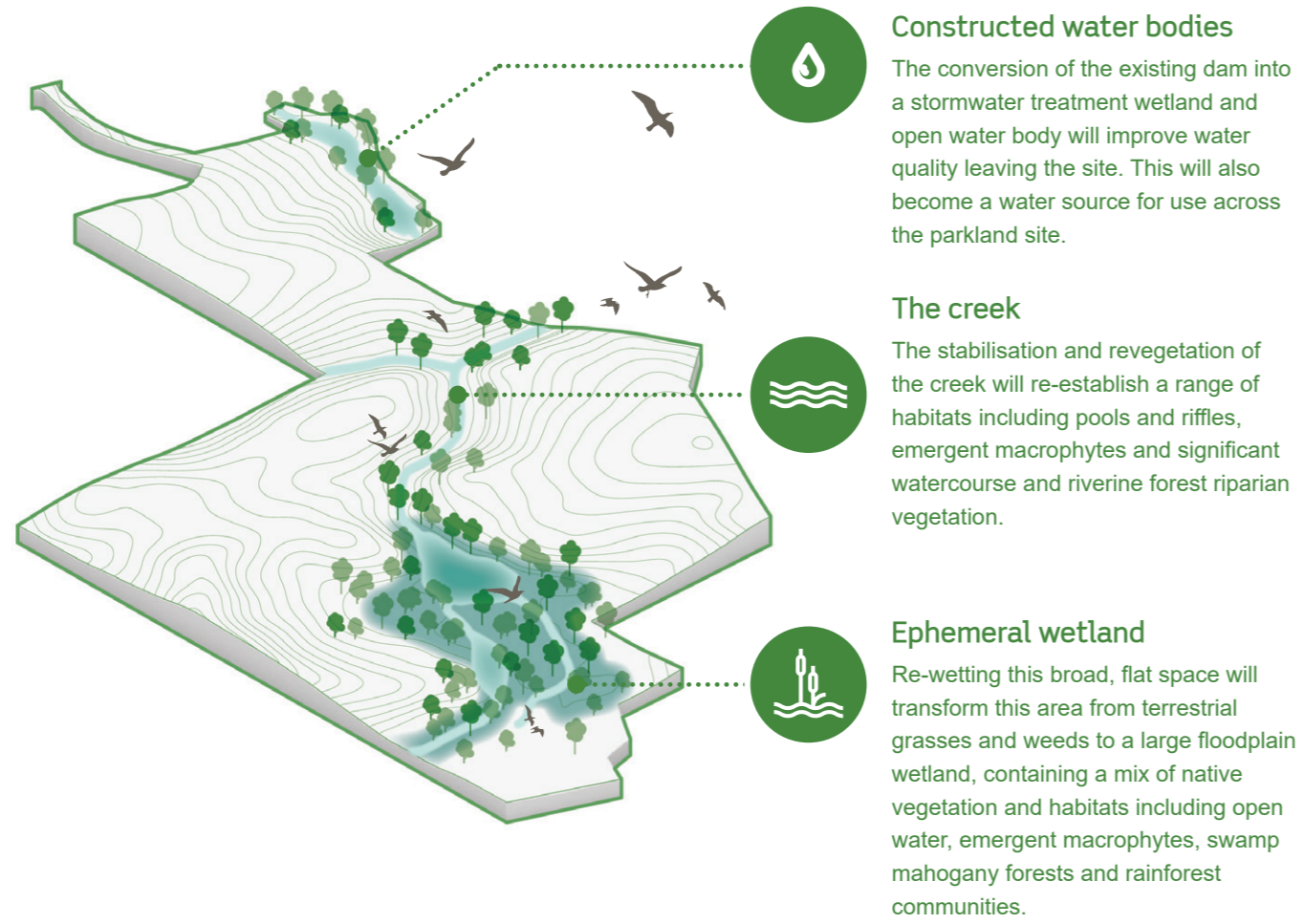
Key manoeuvres

- Rehabilitated aquatic habitats:** improve waterway habitat supporting fauna, such as the Cascade Treefrog, Giant Barred Frog and Maleny Spiny Crayfish and Platypus (simultaneously decreasing habitat for introduced fish species such as *Gambusia Holbrooki*)
- Water quality:** restore wetlands to improve water quality and reduce nutrient loads (eg. nitrogen)
- Spaces to interact:** create focused spaces for visitors to interact with water on-site via steppers, water terraces, boardwalks and shelters



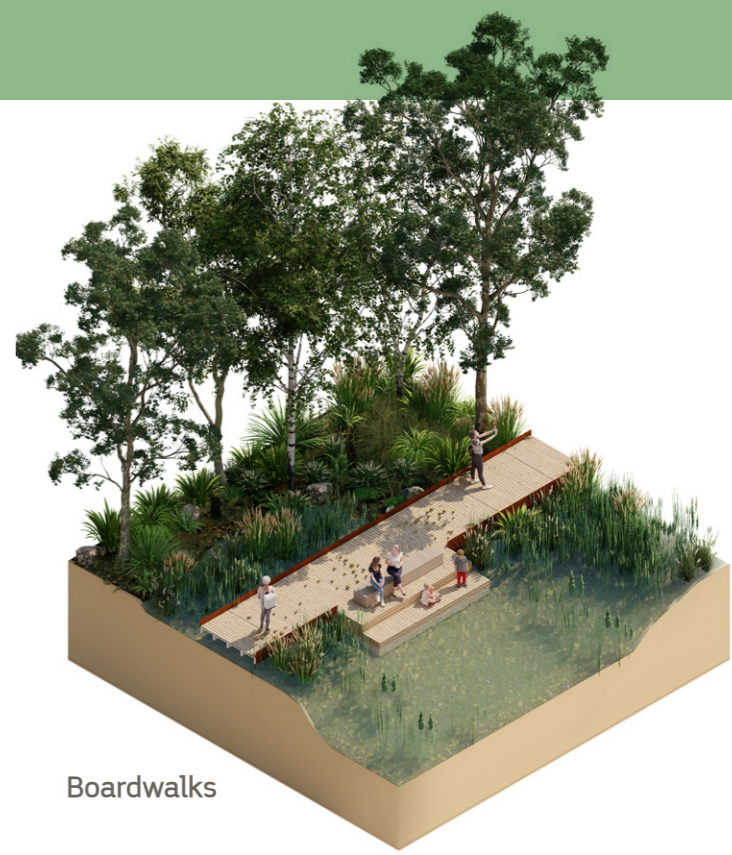
Water will bring life and richness to the park

Restoring the ecological function and resilience of the wetland and creek system will allow water to be a valuable part of the park experience. Waterway restoration incorporates three distinct zones: the ephemeral wetland, the creek and the constructed water bodies.



Creating places to connect with water

Water is a key element in nature and many great parks, and the Ecological Park's creek and wetland will be important destinations. Visitors will be encouraged to get up close to riparian features and habitat, with both views and controlled physical access being provided. Spaces for birdwatching, meandering along boardwalks, jumping across stepping stones and dwelling on water terraces will all be provided within the park. These activities will strengthen people's connection with the natural world.



Boardwalks



Water terraces

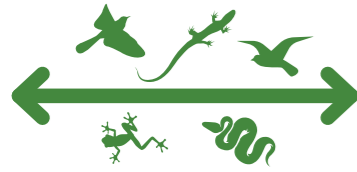


Steppers

Ecology and Restoration

Improve fauna connections and biodiversity

Boost ecological diversity and resilience through establishing habitat and connections to improve fauna movement into the wider landscape.



The park provides key environmental linkages through the site, Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve and beyond to the wider landscape. The park recognises the value of the regional ecological character and understands its role in the wider fabric. Integration into the surrounding context is of the utmost importance, boosting habitat connectivity, resilience and improving fauna movement regionally.

Spatial moves

➔ **Fauna connection***

➔➔ **Soft fauna connection:** allow connections beyond the site through 'soft' mechanisms such as 'Lands of Wildlife'

⊙ **Fauna crossings:** to ensure safe passage of fauna over or under roads (final location and detail subject to TMR approval)

▨ **Fauna priority areas:** focused on the southern side of the creek adjacent MCSR where visitor interaction is restricted to select locations

*Note: Location of fauna connections are indicative only

Key manoeuvres

Connectivity and resilience: establish strong terrestrial/ arboreal fauna connections to improve the home ranges and genetic viability of species in the wider regional landscape (especially to the Upper Mooloolah River Nature Reserve)

Increase endangered ecologies: increase the threatened Complex Notophyll Vine Forest (RE 12.8.3) and Gallery Rainforest (RE 12.3.1a) in the upper Mary Catchment.

Lighting and after-hours use: to minimise impact on nocturnal fauna movement, lighting will be restricted to car parks, the Community Pavilion and operations facility. After-hours use of the park will be limited to occasional events and select guided tours

Increase koala habitat: establishment of Tall open Forest RE 12.8.8, and use of specific tree species in revegetation, to contribute to increased koala habitat opportunities in the broader landscape

Restricting pets: similar to MCSR, dogs and pets will not be allowed within the Ecological Park to protect native fauna

Rewilding: explore opportunities for the rewilding of target fauna species, such as the Land Mullet (*Bellatorias Major*)



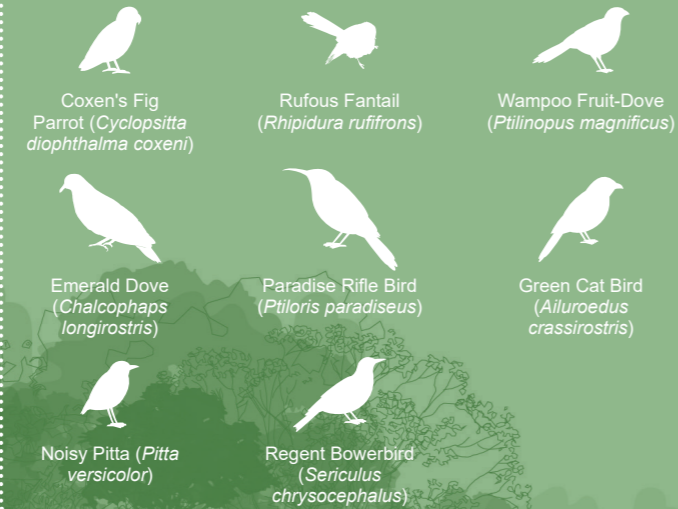
A rich array of species to share the park with

Significant restoration works will provide quality habitat for a range of native fauna and facilitate movement through the broader landscape of the hinterland.

ARBOREAL MAMMALS



RAINFOREST BIRDS



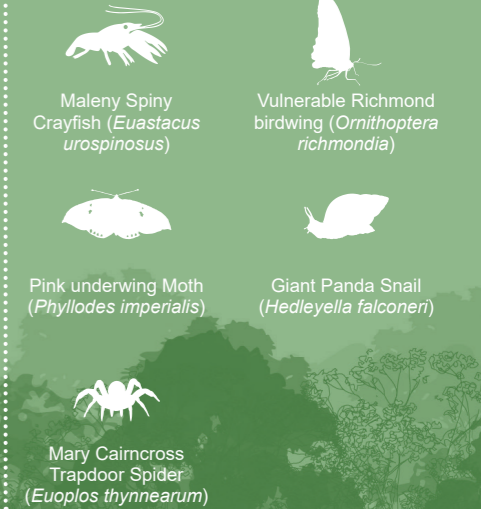
WETLAND BIRDS



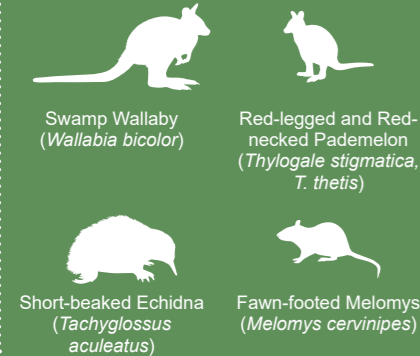
FOREST AMPHIBIANS



VINE FOREST/RIPARIAN SPECIALISTS



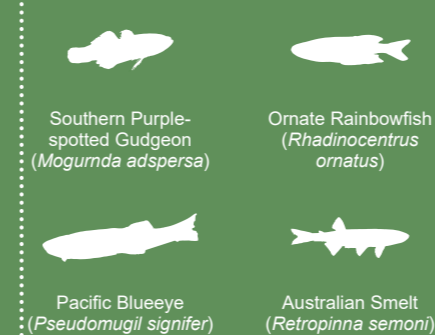
TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS



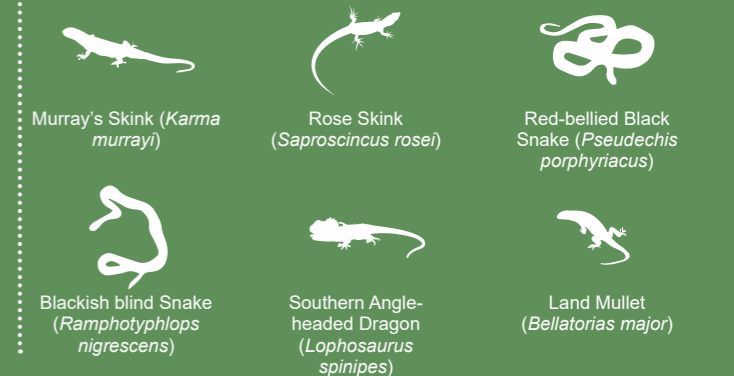
WETLAND AMPHIBIANS



FISH



REPTILES



Selection of biodiversity species that will find a home in the Ecological Park

Ecology and Restoration

A beacon of environmental sustainability

Apply environmental excellence in all aspects of planning, construction and operation - supported by community involvement and stewardship.



The Ecological Park will rigorously consider environmental sustainability. Best practice principles are embedded in design and planning through restoration, reuse, and rehabilitation activities.

Spatial moves

- 1 Solar farm
- 2 Seed collection and native nursery

- Car park bio filtration
- Polishing wetland- treating filtered waste water for reuse
- Turf wicking irrigation - sourced from car park runoff
- Green waste recycling
- Electric car charging station
- Solar
- Rain water tank
- Stormwater tank (underground)- sourced from car park runoff
- Septic treatment
- Carbon sequestration through revegetation

Key manoeuvres

Carbon: create a carbon positive facility which sets a new benchmark in sustainability for the region

Construction and operations: undertake best practice sustainability measures in the construction and on going operations of the park

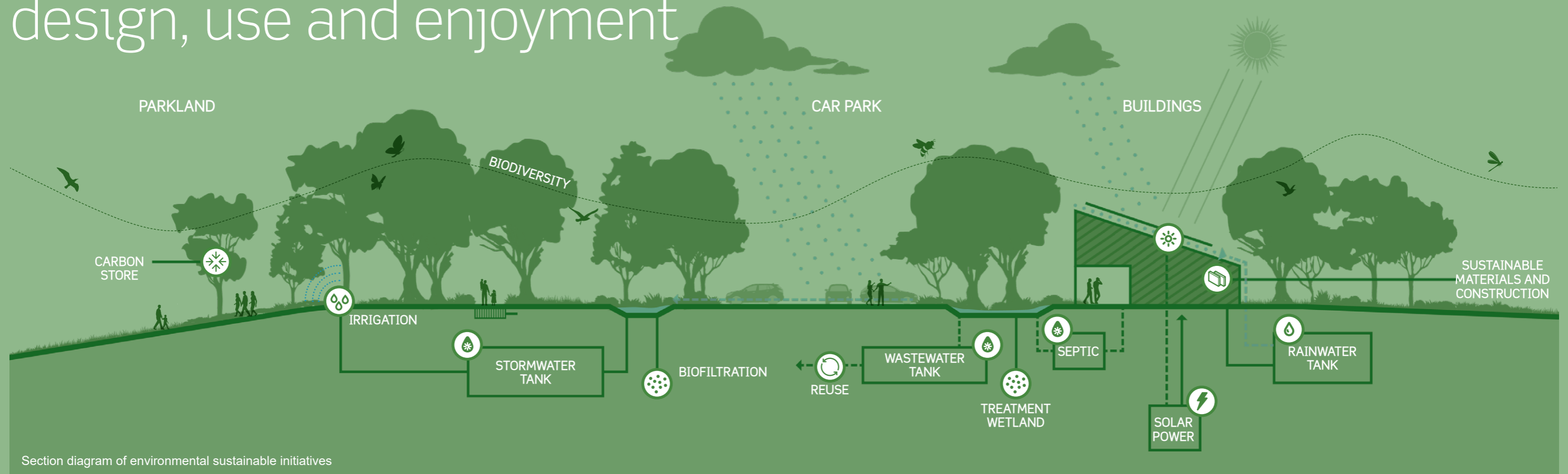
Plant selection: utilise only endemic and native planting from the Sunshine Coast hinterland

Water harvesting: capture and treat roof rainwater and car park stormwater for reuse on site



+ The park will use 100% native hinterland species

Sustainability at the core of the park's planning and design, use and enjoyment



Best practice sustainability principles will be utilised throughout the park - aligning with Council's goal to be Australia's most sustainable region.

Net zero water

This Master Plan targets a net zero water demand through water reuse and storage. A water collection system will capture roof rainwater from buildings for potable re-use. Building wastewater will also be treated and stored for reuse within the park.

The park's irrigation and maintenance needs will be largely sourced from captured and treated run-off from car park areas. During establishment, the park's irrigation demand may require supplementation by other sources, such as the existing dam and bore water.

Carbon capturing

Restoration and revegetation of cleared area and ephemeral wetlands will be used to sequester carbon in the atmosphere. These heavily vegetated areas will also create significant increases in biodiversity, providing habitats for a multitude of plant and animal species. The resulting improvement in soil nutrition and stability will increase soil water storage and reduce erosion.

Material selection

The design will aim to eliminate the use of materials that have high environmental and social impacts, including high toxicity materials, plastics, non-renewable sourced timber products and high-VOC materials.

This Master Plan will demonstrate a preference for locally sourced, ethically produced and low embodied carbon materials. Future designs will also focus on material efficiency - using structural and design techniques to use less material and utilise detailing techniques that will preserve the value of materials for as long as possible.

Energy

The overall design will target renewable energy outcomes to reduce the carbon footprint of the park. Rooftop photovoltaics and a focused area of solar farming combined with battery storage will be utilised to minimise energy consumption. Passive design strategies will also be employed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions including, natural ventilation, orientation, thermal mass and insulation.

Regenerative design

The design will undertake life cycle carbon and cost assessments throughout the future detailed design process to inform decision-making. Zero waste strategies will be incorporated into the building and landscape design, including features that promote circular thinking. Following circular economy principles, the park will aim to minimise waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, and regenerate natural systems.

Ecology and Restoration





Experience the evolution

Engage all generations throughout the restoration journey to strengthen knowledge and understanding of ecological values and respectful interaction.



The restoration journey of the park offers a two-way street between nature and the community - the ecology of the park will be transformed and strengthened over time, as will the community who engages with it. The restoration journey offers a powerful opportunity to pull the community in and spread genuine care and knowledge of ecological values, respect and responsibility.

Spatial moves

-  **Potential research facility** (subject to partnership)
-  **Treetop Bridge vantage point:** elevated location to watch the forest evolve over time (including Tree houses)
-  **Water circuit and boardwalk vantage point:** an at-grade pathway to watch the forest evolve over time
-  **Temporary education trails:** paths to learn about the revegetation works and observe butterflies and small birds present during early phases of restoration
-  **Pollinator garden:** support pollinator population growth and learning opportunities about the role of pollinators in nature

Key manoeuvres

- Living laboratory:** the park provides a significant opportunity to study, research and share information on topics such as restoration, biodiversity and rainforest environments at elevation across the entire park
- Showcase the progress:** utilise the Community Pavilion and digital platforms to share and document the restoration journey of the park to allow the community to interact and engage with ease



Transformation as part of the experience

The Journey

The Ecological Park will undergo a long restoration journey which will not be done overnight. This evolution is a key part of the park's experience, where the processes of ecological repair and revegetation are an ever-changing component of the park's narrative. The growth and change of the park's forests will help educate visitors to understand and appreciate local ecologies.

The Loop Path and Treetop Bridge will be key elements to ensure that the park provides spaces for people to enjoy and appreciate the inherent beauty of nature - providing a platform to experience the restoration process, and develop a sustained and meaningful connection with the park and the natural world.

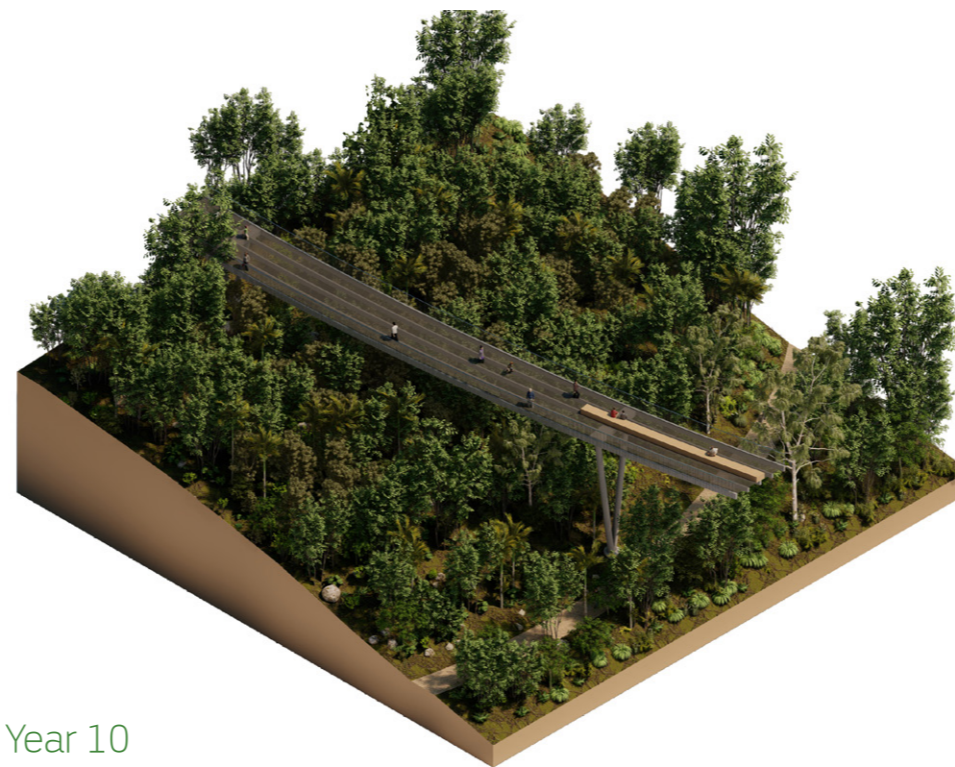
Creating a deeper understanding

The park and its experience should be designed to spark conversation and intrigue about the natural world, so that the knowledge and appreciation goes beyond the site's boundary, extending into people's homes and communities. The park will create opportunities for people of all ages to learn, pause, engage and reflect on their personal relationship with the environment and help foster a stronger connection to nature.

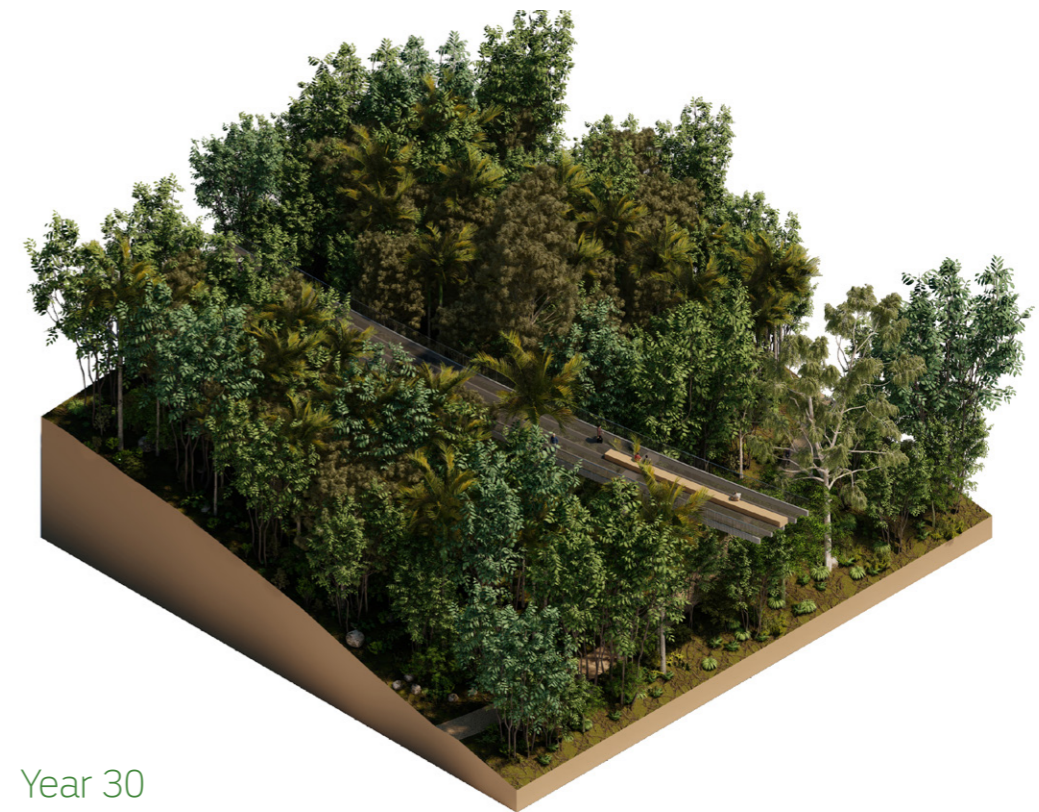
The Treetop Bridge over time



Year 1



Year 10



Year 30

Research, education and culture

Celebrate local history and ecology

Inspire intergenerational learning by sharing stories of the land and people through art, interaction and interpretive elements.



The Ecological Park will offer a full suite of educational opportunities for people of all ages to expand their knowledge of local ecology and history. Beyond promoting learning about nature, the Ecological Park offers opportunity to strengthen ties between the community itself and appreciation of the timeless interconnection between the land and people.

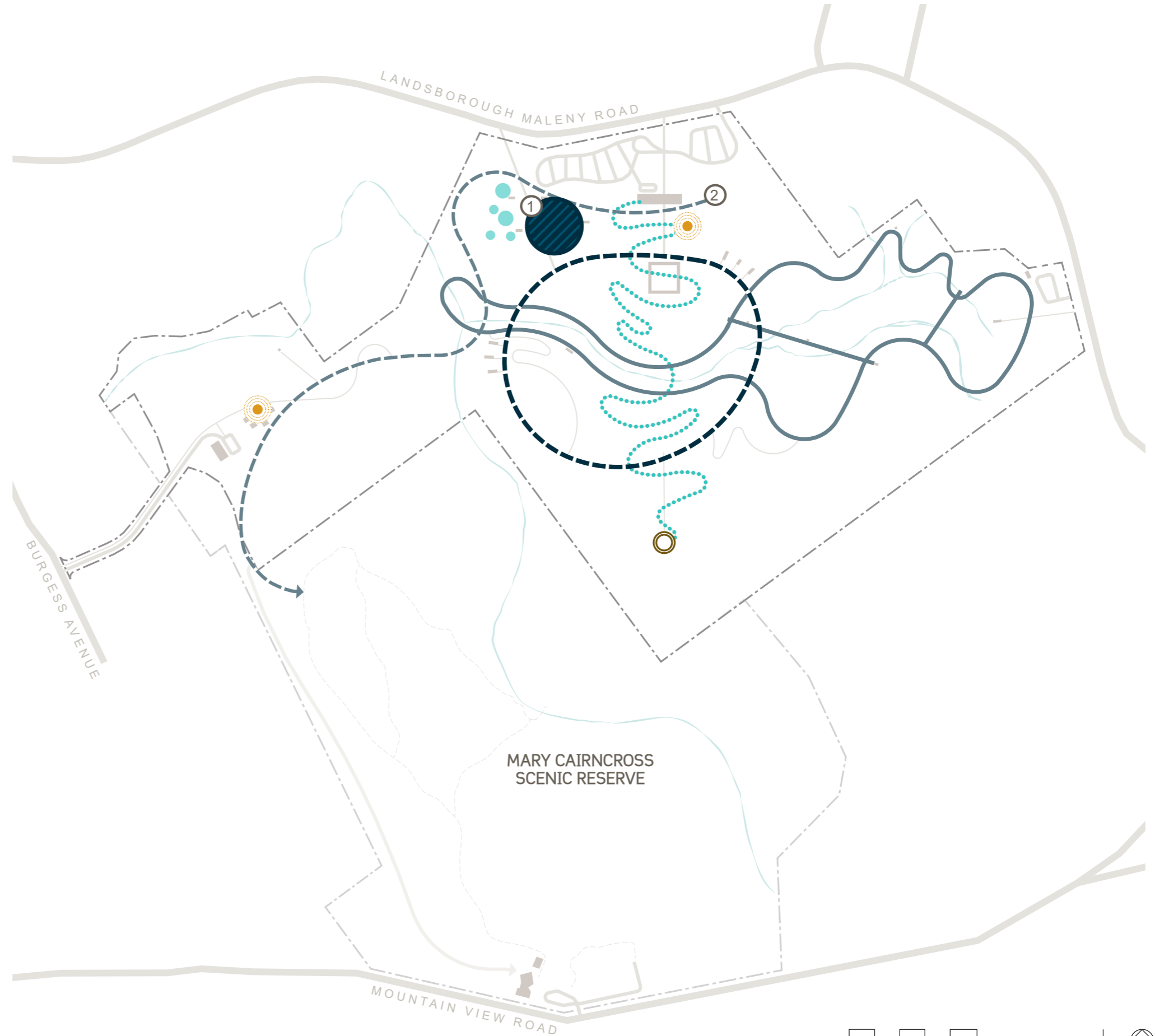
Spatial moves

- 1 **Night sky venue:** a venue for stargazing protected from urban light pollution
- 2 **Sensory Garden:** highlighting local endemic species

- Bat fly out venue**
- Outdoor classroom (Yarning Circle)**
- Interpretive play elements**
- First Nation interpretive walk**
- Local history interpretive walk**
- Ecological interpretive trail**
- Night tour walk:** along Loop Path and Treetop Bridge

Key manoeuvres

- Making green infrastructure visible:** ensure environmental elements such as biofiltration, water collection are on display and are part of the informal learning experience
- Something for all ages:** create learning opportunities across all age groups
- Self-guided education:** utilise digital, audible and physical interfaces to share knowledge with all users
- Curated artwork:** provide contemporary artwork, both fixed and temporary, revealing the stories of the Sunshine Coast



A place to share cultural and natural heritage

Education elements

Signage, experiences and insertions will be utilised throughout the park to tell stories and bring meaning and interest for the enjoyment of visitors. Revealing the layers of the past, builds an authentic experience grounded in 'place' where education, learning and conversations can occur. Interpretive elements will be utilised to:

- Promote local heritage (both Indigenous and European)
- Teach sustainable practices
- Build a meaningful place narrative
- Celebrate natural history

The following outlines potential educational opportunities to be explored in the park:



Traditional interpretation

Markers, signage and graphics can be installed throughout the park at specific locations to highlight key features, stories and recognise historical figures and practices.



Digital

Digital storytelling (and audio platforms) offer a contemporary method to present ever-changing information and curate narratives which can adapt with user interest and the park's evolution over time.



Ecological heritage

The restored ecosystem will showcase the lush historic landscape of the site, set against the remnant vegetation of Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve, revealing a strong story of the natural world and regeneration.



Art

Whether temporary or permanent, creative works have the ability to create memorable and meaningful experiences that share and interpret the histories and ecology of the area.



Program

Walking tours, events, outdoor classrooms and educational classes, all offer methods to share details and stories from the past and about the natural world.



Research, education and culture

Connecting to Country

Provide a cultural conduit that promotes caring for Country and respects Aboriginal knowledge in partnership with Jinibara Traditional Owners.



Working in partnership with Jinibara Traditional Owners, the Ecological Park will be a space focused on the promotion on the acknowledgment of the connection that exists between land and people. The ecological park will be a place where the knowledge and centuries-long practices of Indigenous peoples can be understood and celebrated - benefiting both the ecology and community.

Spatial moves

- 1 Community Pavilion:** a curatable venue to share knowledge and culture
- 2 Jinibara office:** a physical space (meeting room /office) for Jinibara, co-located with park operation facilities

●●● Dundalli Walk: First Nations interpretive walk

■ Cultural performance/event spaces

● Yarning Circle/outdoor meeting place: Spaces to practice culture on Country

⊕ Forest Lookout: with interpretive signage regarding surrounding Country and the Glass House Mountains

● First Nation artwork gateway markers

● First Nation public artwork

🐝 Native bee hive: revealing stories of the Jinibara Totem

🌿 Bush food community garden

Key manoeuvres

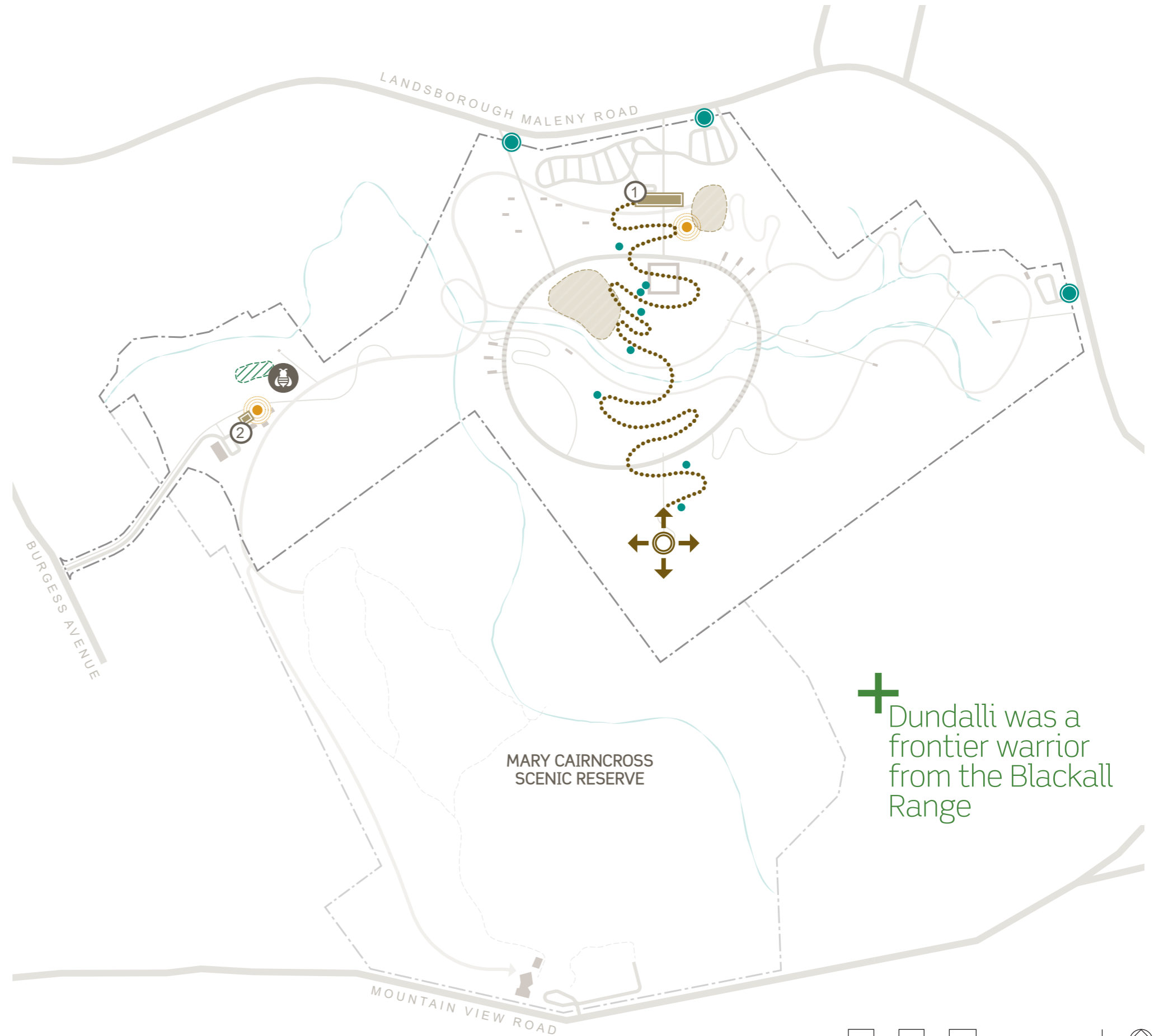
Create a partnership: creating a genuine and ongoing relationship with Jinibara at the Ecological Park - supporting their active involvement and access to the parklands, as well as designated space for Jinibara to meet on Country

First Nation ranger program: support Indigenous people to combine traditional knowledge with conservation training to protect and manage their land and share knowledge with the community

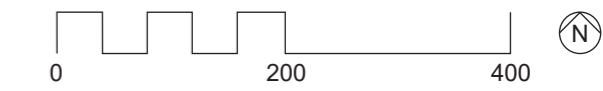
Co-design: ensure Jinibara continue to be engaged through the detailed design of the park to ensure culturally safe and relevant outcomes

Education and learning programs: to share knowledge with children and adults

Create a culturally safe place: through using elements such as 'language' and artworks to create welcoming natural spaces which invite and encourage First Nations people to utilise the space



+ Dundalli was a frontier warrior from the Blackall Range



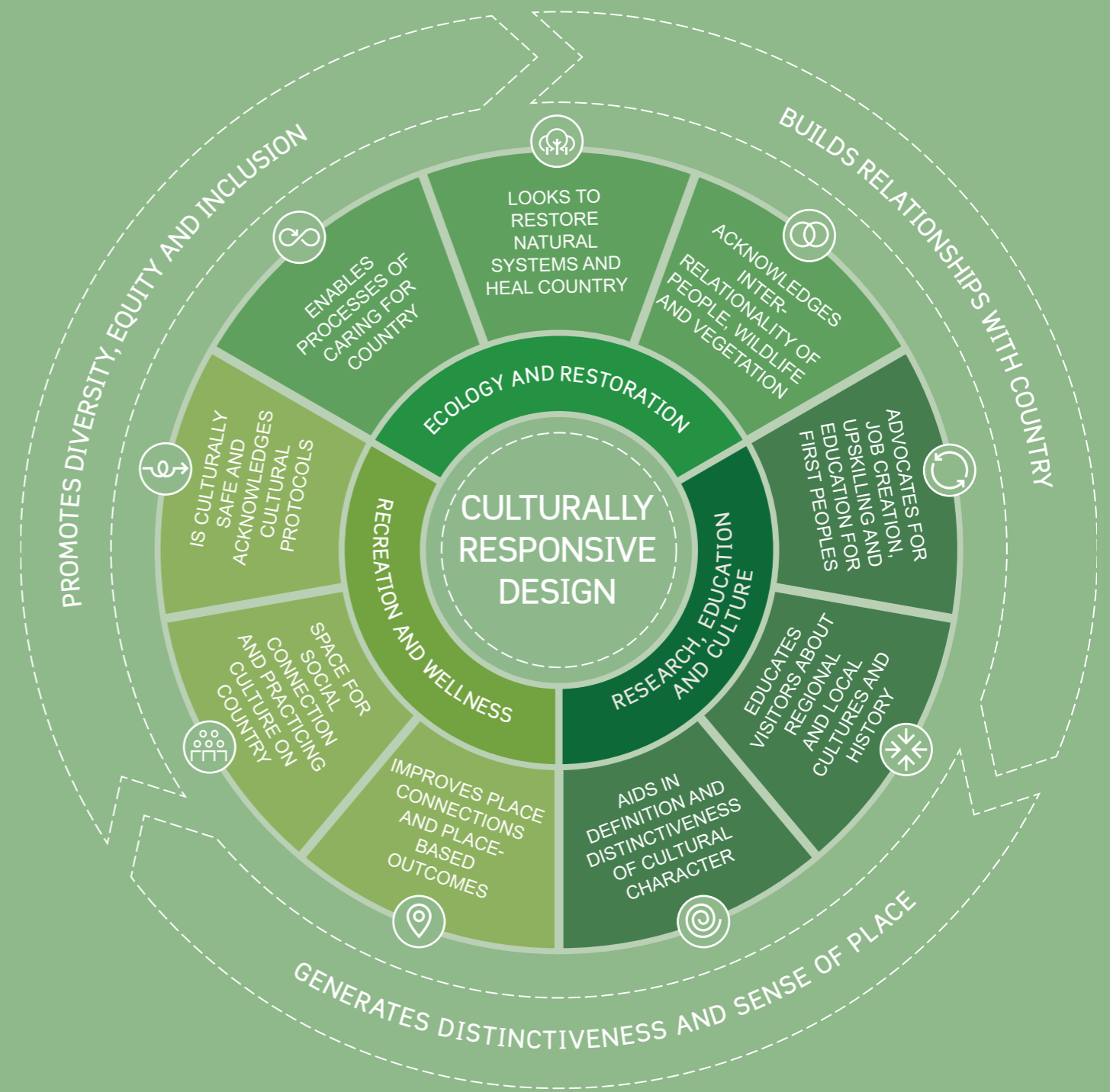
Building a partnership with Traditional Owners

Sunshine Coast Council is committed to creating a genuine partnership with Jinibara Traditional Owners in both the design of the Ecological Park and in establishing a place to practice culture on Country.

The restoration of pastoral lands to a rainforest ecology offers significant opportunity for cultural partnerships in the journey of healing Country, with opportunity to participate in on-site learning about Country through the restoration of land and waterways.

Sunshine Coast Council and Jinibara share a vision that the park is a welcoming and culturally safe space for both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, providing grounds for truth telling, healing and cultural knowledge sharing. Sunshine Coast Council will continue to develop an ongoing relationship and engagement framework with Jinibara Traditional Owners to ensure culturally responsive design outcomes at the Ecological Park. Council will look to establish meaningful and inclusive processes to understand and embed First Nations knowledge, viewpoints and voices into all phases of the development and implementation of the park.

A potential framework for culturally responsive design outcomes



Research, education and culture

A place to nurture community involvement

Facilitate activities which engage the Sunshine Coast community, fostering a sense of generational connection, ownership and pride.





The Ecological Park is fortunate to be surrounded by an active and engaged community. To truly serve this community, the park's range of activities needs to reflect the people who visit, offering opportunity for all to gather, connect and enjoy. In a truly reciprocal relationship, the park can be both take care of and be taken care of by the community.

Spatial moves

Event Spaces:

- 1 **Community Pavilion**
- 2 **Events Lawn**
- 3 **Forest Plaza**
- 4 **Amphitheatre**
- 5 **The Hub:** utilise operations area as HQ to organise stewardship programs

 **Bush food community garden and nursery**

 **Key community focused restoration areas**

Key manoeuvres

A regular calendar of events: service a broad range of the Sunshine Coast community from markets to restoration events - always grounded in the 'place' and values of the park

Community Pavilion: create a flexible multi-functional space which can adapt over time to support cultural events, performances, art, education programs and potentially an artist or researcher in residence

Community partnerships: build community partnerships through stewardship programs to collaboratively deliver conservation and biodiversity outcomes - empower communities to develop resilience through park features that build community cohesion and inclusion

Community and gatherings: provide large event open spaces for families and community to gather, picnic, celebrate and foster a sense of connection



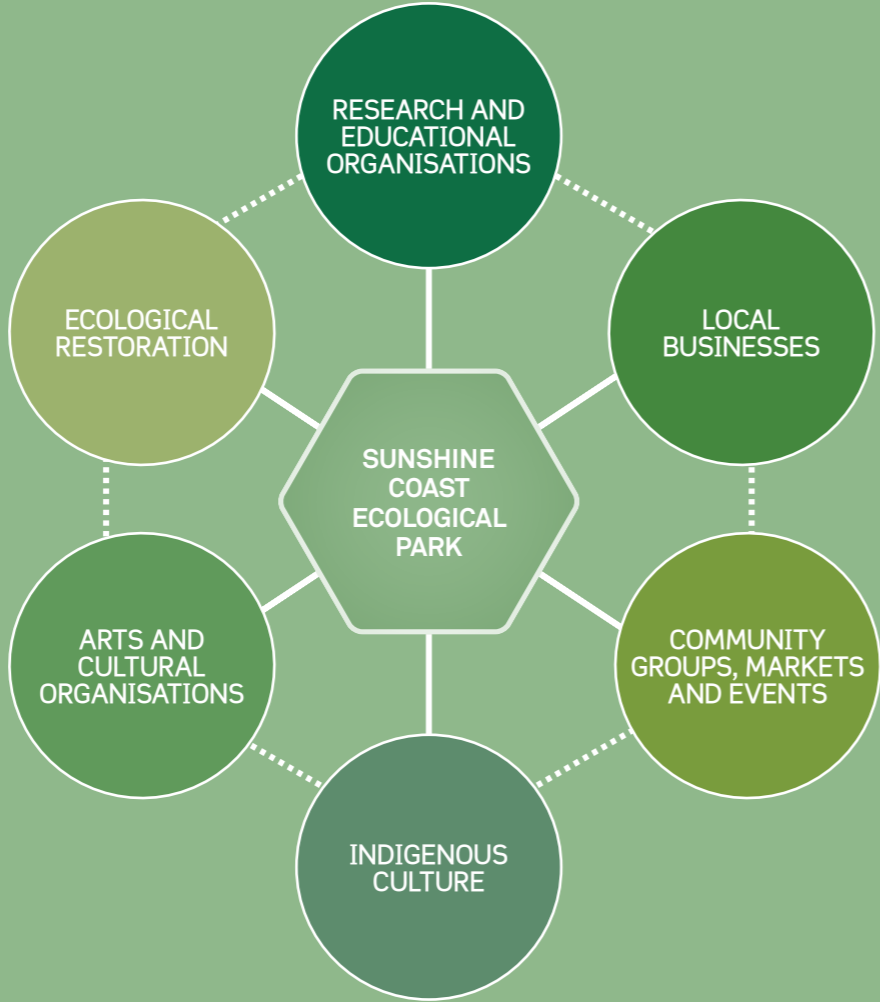
Program and partnership

Program Aspirations

The Ecological Park offers the community of the Sunshine Coast a place of wellness, relaxation, civic participation and natural discovery. The park will foster a sense of inclusivity for a growing population through shared experiences and connections to the land and nature. In addition to everyday use, this Master Plan creates a series of flexible spaces which can adapt to a range of programs and have broad community appeal; offering something for everyone and ensuring the park supports the changing needs of the community over time.

Park partnerships

Partnerships create opportunities for mutually beneficial relationships between the park and organisations, businesses and institutions. Partnerships provide potential for increased activation, funding and community appeal for the park. Council will explore partnerships which align with the vision and values of the park and ensure that the park nurtures community involvement.



POTENTIAL PARTNERS DIAGRAM

Stewardship

Restored natural landscapes require rigorous stewardship during early establishment and over the longer term to create a resistant and sustainable landscape. The Sunshine Coast community is well-versed in these caring for 'Country' activities; especially throughout the hinterland. The Ecological Park aspires to continue this legacy of stewardship and involvement, leveraging the knowledge of an active community

of professionals and volunteers about horticulture, ecology, soil health, weed management and cultural land practices. Stewardship will be an essential park program to continue to share knowledge and educate everyday users. The result will be an ecologically diverse and rich nature environment for all.



BACK TO NATURE

BACK TO NATURE

09 Precincts

Four landscape precincts combine to create a unified park offering something for everyone.

LANDSBOROUGH MALENY ROAD

LANDSBOROUGH MALENY ROAD



THE HUB



THE HEART



THE WATERWAYS



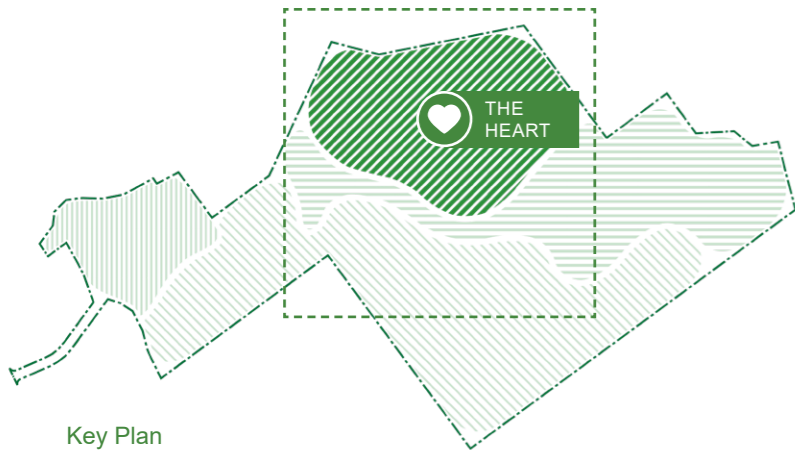
THE RAINFOREST

MARY CAIRNCROSS SCENIC RESERVE

BURGESS AVENUE

The Heart

A lush people-oriented community destination for park visitors, the Heart will accommodate the more active uses and programs of the park. The precinct will function as a diverse collection of community focused spaces nestled amongst a restored forest - providing a unique civic heart embedded in nature. As the entry point for many of the park's visitors, the precinct will provide a welcoming green arrival which connects visitors to core amenity and broader parkland experiences.



Key Plan

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>1 Entry path: a pedestrian-focused connection for those walking in from Maleny</p> <p>2 Gateway artwork: large sculptural markers to assist in wayfinding</p> <p>3 Buffer planting: to screen car park from Landsborough Maleny Road</p> <p>4 Car park: a green car park including generous tree canopy and stormwater filtration gardens</p> <p>5 Coach drop-off and entry drop-off</p> <p>6 Entry path: key arrival pathway from the drop-off and car park</p> | <p>7 Community Pavilion: a flexible community meeting space to house events, amenities and classes with café and amenities</p> <p>8 Back of house area: for Community Pavilion</p> <p>9 BBQ shelters</p> <p>10 Play Forest: a collection of unique nature play spaces and elements</p> <p>11 BBQ Lawn: an open area for picnics or to throw a ball, supported by BBQ shelters</p> <p>12 The Grove: a pocket of existing rainforest with opportunities for sitting, play and informal trails</p> | <p>13 Events Lawn: a flexible and level space for community use which can be utilised for boutique events</p> <p>14 Shade pavilion: to support the Event Lawn</p> <p>15 Sensory Garden: a quiet and immersive collection of curated native forest vegetation including public artworks</p> <p>16 Dundalli Walk</p> <p>17 Forest Rooms</p> <p>18 Forest Plaza: a heavily shaded and open outdoor room for groups to dwell or host local markets</p> <p>19 Loop Path</p> | <p>20 Tree Top Bridge (Loop Path)</p> <p>21 Tree-houses: elevated pavilions providing a sheltered space to experience the growing forest.</p> <p>22 Spiral ramp: connection from Treetop Bridge to Water Circuit</p> <p>23 Amphitheatre: a natural lawn amphitheatre flowing down to the creek for everyday relaxing in the sun or small performances.</p> <p>24 Water terraces: tiered seating terraces down to the waters edge</p> <p>25 Water Circuit</p> <p>26 Mary Cairncross Walk: connection towards MCSR</p> <p>27 Shared footpath upgrade</p> |
|---|---|---|--|



Yarning Circle looking towards Community Pavilion, Events Lawn and the Grove

Artist impression only

Community Pavilion

The Community Pavilion will be a flexible multi-functional space that combines exhibition and event space with a generous covered outdoor area, café and amenities to create a curated and dynamic venue that will appeal to a large spectrum of Sunshine Coast residents – providing a new experience on every visit. The facility will be open and flexible to adapt over time and could house offerings such as small events, temporary galleries, education programs or artist or researcher residency programs.

The Community Pavilion is located adjacent to a mature pocket of remnant rainforest vegetation (the Grove) creating a strong connection to nature from day one. This pocket of vegetation will be expanded to surround and immerse the Community Pavilion to create a truly distinct venue.

Positioned close to the car park and main drop-off for ease of access and servicing, the Community Pavilion will establish a key orientation point to showcase the park's recreational, educational and cultural initiatives before people explore the variety of offerings.

The Grove

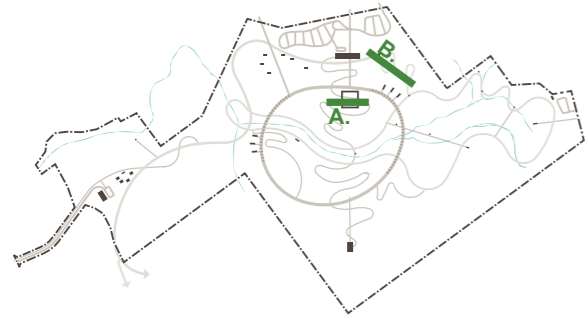
An established existing pocket of remnant rainforest vegetation in the centre of the Heart, the Grove is a substantial natural asset which must be protected and enhanced. Paths and Forest Rooms will be sensitively inserted into the Grove to create unique opportunities to dwell, play and relax below the mature tree canopy.

The Events Lawn

Located adjacent to the Community Pavilion and car park, the Events Lawn will be graded to create a level open outdoor space to accommodate relaxed events and community gatherings. The events lawn will be supported by a shade pavilion which will supply infrastructure and amenity to support 'bump-in bump-out' event requirements. Day-to-day, the Events Lawn will provide a kick about and breakout space to relax and play with visibility from the Community Pavilion café.

Both active and quiet spaces to enjoy nature

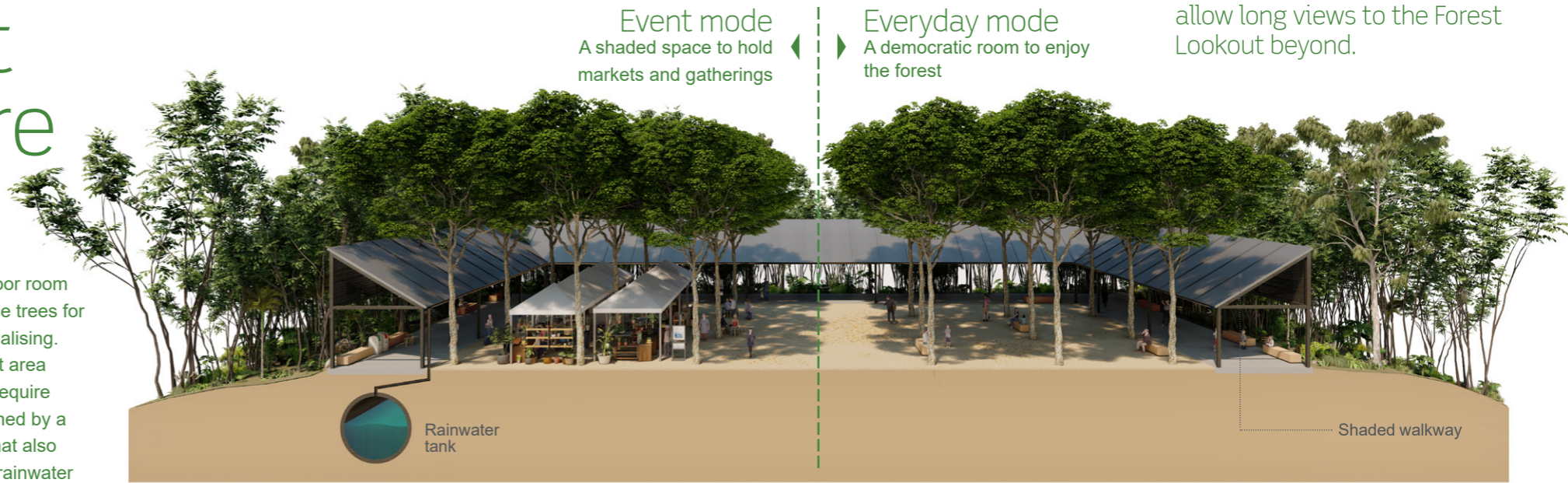
+ Tree placement will be aligned with market stall sizes and to allow long views to the Forest Lookout beyond.



Key Plan

The Forest Plaza

The Forest Plaza is a unique open outdoor room set below a bosque of high canopy shade trees for events and everyday relaxation and socialising. The space will be levelled to create a flat area for markets and boutique events which require hardstand. The Forest Plaza will be defined by a walkway shelter to enclose the space, that also provides additional roof area to capture rainwater for reuse within the park.



A. Forest Plaza section

Sensory Garden

A quiet retreat space curated to evoke the senses. The garden will utilise plants from the whole hinterland region to celebrate sounds, colours, fragrances and textures to create an engaging environment to help relax, stimulate and learn. The Sensory Garden will meander down the slope of the site and be punctuated with supporting Forest Rooms, temporary artwork and learning opportunities to boost amenity and encourage people to dwell and linger.



B. Sensory Garden Section



BBQ Lawn and Play Forest with views to the Forest Lookout

Artist impression only

BBQ Lawn

Located next to the Play Forest and main car park, the BBQ Lawn provides a convenient family recreation space, supported by a series of shelters housing barbeques, as well as ample seating and tables. The gently graded lawn is a flexible space to play, kick and throw, picnic or simply relax in the sun.

Amphitheatre

A natural lawn amphitheatre flowing down to the creek for everyday relaxing and recreation or small bespoke performances. The amphitheatre will interface with the creek through a series of water terraces with seating amenity and informal opportunities for people to interact with the water's edge or admire from afar.

Play Forest

The Play Forest will offer both kids and adults an opportunity to immerse themselves in an oasis of nature-play and adventure. The Play Forest will be designed to cater for all ages and abilities in a dramatic rainforest landscape in which children are encouraged to run, jump, play, learn and discover the 'wilder-side' of life. It will encourage children to get lost in the wonder of nature with a large destination playspace, including both traditional adventure-based equipment, and

spaces where natural materials are arranged for exploration and exposure to the uncertainty and excitement of the natural world.

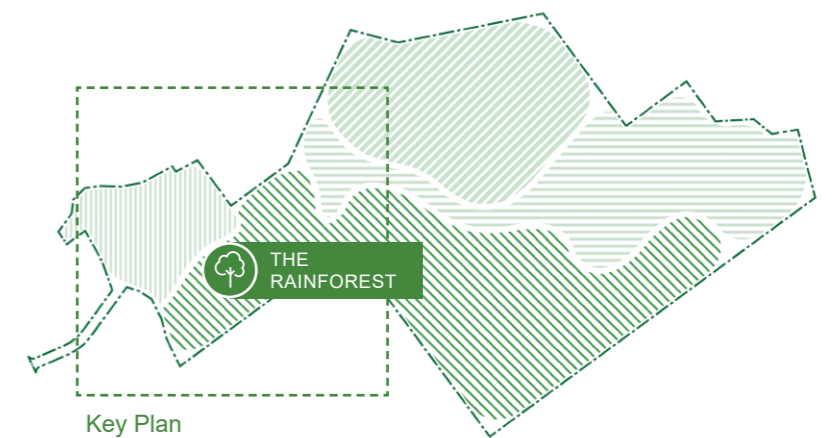
The Play Forest will separate activities and styles of play to minimise the potential for large groups that could detract from the nature experience. The unique play space will provide children with opportunities to reconnect with nature, and be interwoven with educational stories of ecology to foster a lasting respect and connection to the natural world.

The Rainforest (West)

The Rainforest focuses on the restoration journey of the park - complementing the adjacent MCSR. The precinct will focus on the establishment of robust and thriving habitat that celebrates the amazing biodiversity of the local environment. The Rainforest will prioritise nature with controlled immersive insertions for community interaction, education and enjoyment.

Legend

- 1 **Mary Cairncross Walk:** Connection between MCSR and Community Pavilion
- 2 **Forest Room**
- 3 **Control point to MCSR existing track:** a gateway point including foot-wash station and outpost to control access
- 4 **Tree-houses**
- 5 **Rainforest Green**
- 6 **Treetop Bridge (Loop Path)**
- 7 **Loop Path**
- 8 **Fauna priority forest:** where human connections and interfaces are kept to a minimum
- 9 **Maintenance track:** to MCSR Discovery Centre, utilising existing fire track where possible



The Rainforest (East)

THE HEART

CREEK

THE WATERWAYS

MCSR

Boundary

Boundary

THE RAINFOREST

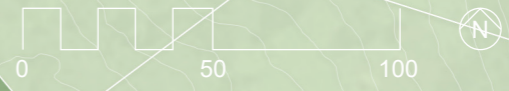
Key Plan

92 -

- 93

Legend

1	Tree Top Bridge (Loop Path)	7	Water Circuit
2	Loop Path	8	Dundalli Walk
3	Forest Room	9	Forest Lookout: a lookout tower nestled in the forest offering views to the Glass House Mountains and coast
4	Tree-houses: elevated pavilions providing a sheltered space to experience the growing forest	10	Maintenance trail / fire break
5	Rainforest Green: large open lawn space secluded in the forest	11	Fauna priority forest: where human connections and interfaces are kept to a minimum
6	Amphitheatre stage: platform to support performances occurring on the adjacent amphitheatre		



360 degree views of the hinterland and out to the coast

The Forest Lookout

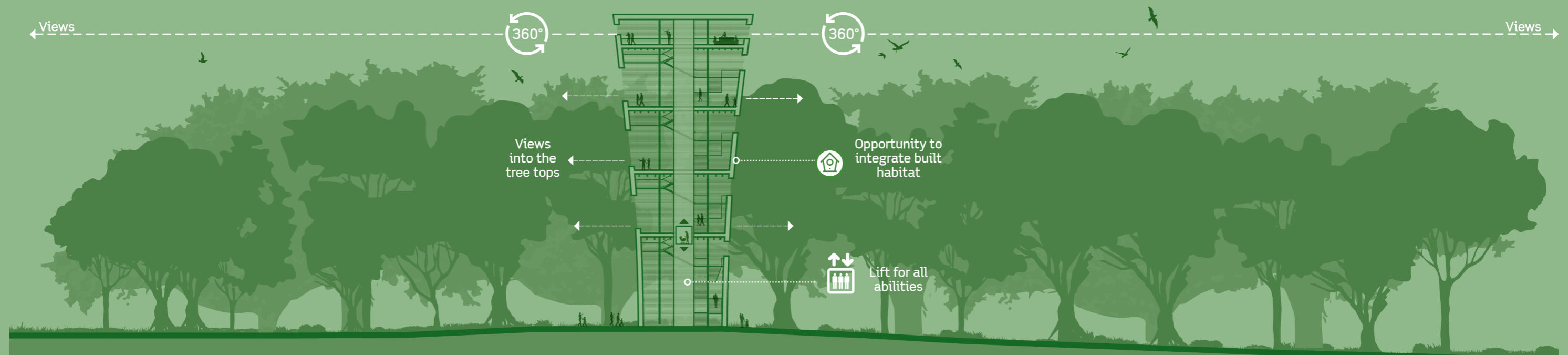
Located in the southern end of the park, the Forest Lookout provides a significant park landmark encouraging people to explore and walk through the forest to climb this destinational structure. It offers 360 degree views to the hinterland and out to the coast, as well as providing a new vantage point to capture panoramic views of the Glass House Mountains - a distinct landmark of the region. The Glass House Mountains area is spiritually significant to the Traditional Owners, and the lookout offers a major opportunity to share stories and views to the surrounding Country.

The Lookout will offer multiple platforms to engage with different levels of the forest as one moves vertically up the structure. The Lookout also has opportunities for built habitat (e.g. bird boxes), interpretive elements, and possible venues for watching bat colony 'flyout' and 'dark sky' events. The scale of the structure will require a carefully crafted design response that is timeless and still allows nature to be the 'hero' of the experience.

Views to the Glass House Mountains are one of the key attractions for the adjacent Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve. The Forest Lookout offers a 'release valve' to spread the visitor pressure on the existing ecological asset.



Image: View to Glass House Mountains, Photography by L. Allanson.



Forest Lookout diagrammatic section



Treetop Bridge looking towards the Tree-houses

Artist impression only

Loop Path and Treetop Bridges

The widest and most accessible route, the Loop Path and Treetop Bridges provide gentle grades and large flat sections to create a highly accessible connection that welcomes the community to engage with the natural environment. The Loop is a key organising element that connects the various spaces of the park and bridges over the central waterway. The Treetop Bridges provide a place to experience the different vegetation levels of the forest from lush understorey,

to mid storey, where epiphytic plants like birds-nest ferns are nestled in tree trunks, and then up into the tree canopy. The strong, easy-to-understand circular form will be a key wayfinding element for the park, establishing a common element within the forest to orientate oneself. The Loop Path also offers opportunities for seating, interpretive elements and night tours.

The curved form of the Loop Path controls long views as one moves, so that the forest is continually revealing its beauty through the journey.

Tree-houses

The Tree-houses will be elevated pavilions projecting from the Treetop Bridge, and will provide sheltered dwell spaces to experience the growing forest. Each Tree-house has the ability to create a unique function to engage with nature, including outdoor class rooms, hammock netting, interpretive display and gathering spaces, all with framed views and outlook to the forest.



Tree-house looking out into the rainforest

Artist impression only

The Hub

Located on the western end of the park, The Hub will be the home of operations, research, and community stewardship. It is the 'engine-room' of the park, where Council and community come together, learn and are inspired to get hands-on with nature. A place where opportunities for participation and knowledge sharing will be initiated and then spread across the park.

Legend

- 1 Dam wall
- 2 Dam: open water to be utilised for irrigation and visual amenity
- 3 Constructed wetland: part of existing dam conversion with increased water quality treatment
- 4 Wetland lawn
- 5 Maintenance shed
- 6 Maintenance yard
- 7 Maintenance car park: restricted access only
- 8 Operations and research facility
- 9 Solar farm
- 10 Pollinator garden and native bee hive
- 11 Native nursery
- 12 Bush food community garden
- 13 Mary Cairncross Walk: connection to MCSR
- 14 Maintenance entry road
- 15 Control point to MCSR existing track: a gateway point including foot-wash station and outpost to control access



Key Plan

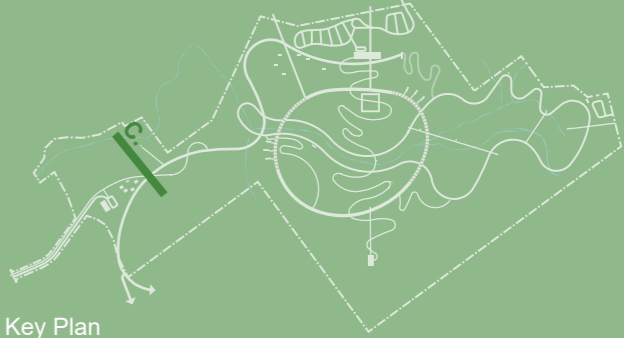


A place of stewardship and learning

Bush food community garden and native nursery


These managed community spaces will showcase locally indigenous plant species used traditionally by the Jinibara people, and unique and rare species found in the local ecology. The garden and nursery will be places for people to learn, and get hands-on with nature. Positioned next to the operation and research facilities, these space will complement the stewardship and restoration planting programs. The garden and nursery will terrace with the sloping terrain, with limited tree planting to the north to maximise sunlight.


Bush tucker will have the potential to be used within the retail offering to create a unique 'Forest to Plate' experience. The space will be accompanied by native bee hives and a pollinator garden to educate about plant-pollinator relationships.




Key Plan

 Constructed wetland to treat water quality

 Solar farm to reduce park's carbon footprint

 Pollinator garden and native bee hives

 Bush food community garden provides visitors with an opportunity to explore native foods and test native pant species.



C. Section



The Ecological Park will be a model for waste management, minimising landfill through recycling and green waste re-use

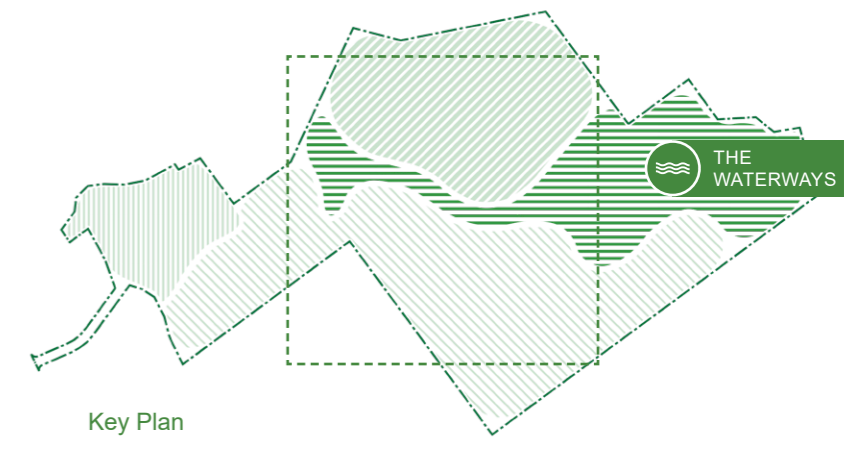


The Waterways (West)

After years of use as pastoral land, the site's natural waterways will be restored to improve ecological function. The waterways will showcase the ecological diversity of the ephemeral wetlands, improve water quality and boost aquatic habitat. With a variety of immersive features, this precinct will be an area that invites interaction with water and celebrates its natural systems.

Legend

- 1 Treetop Bridge (Loop Path)
- 2 Bridge
- 3 Forest Room
- 4 Creek channel
- 5 Macrophyte pond
- 6 Creek steppers: informal stepping stone to connect over the creek
- 7 Water terraces: tiered seating terraces down to the waters edge
- 8 Water Circuit
- 9 Fish-friendly weir: to control water level of wetland
- 10 Amphitheatre
- 11 Amphitheatre stage: platform to support performances occurring on the adjacent amphitheatre

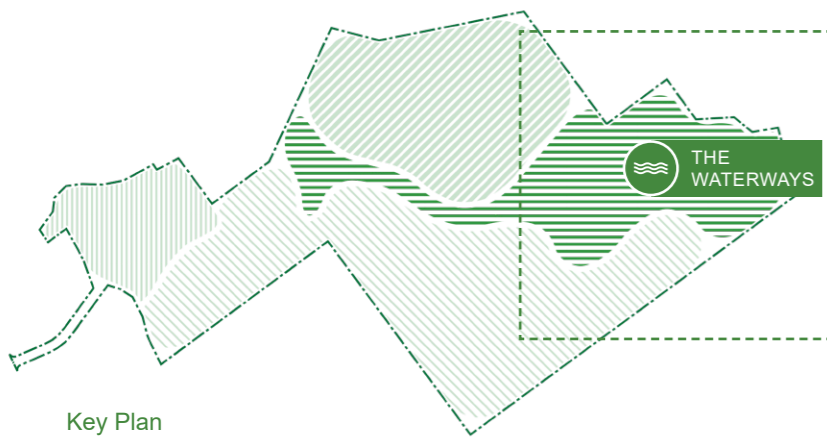


Key Plan

The Waterways (East)

Legend

- 1 Water Circuit
- 2 Tree Top Bridge (Loop Path)
- 3 Forest Room
- 4 Boardwalk
- 5 Wetland pavilion
- 6 Water terraces: tiered seating terraces down to the waters edge
- 7 Ephemeral wetland
- 8 Creek channel
- 9 Macrophyte pond
- 10 Pond
- 11 Wetland lawn: small recreation lawn featuring an interface with the wetland
- 12 Entry lawn: an open space welcoming visitors into the park from the east
- 13 Gateway artwork: large sculptural markers to assist in wayfinding
- 14 Eastern car park: a green car park including generous tree canopy and stormwater filtration gardens
- 15 Amenities
- 16 Fauna crossing: detail subject to TMR
- 17 Maintenance trail / fire break
- 18 Acoustic treatment: along Landsborough Maleny Road to minimise vehicular noise and improve the nature experience
- 19 Shared footpath upgrade



Key Plan



10 The Experience

What a day at the park might look like...



Susan

A collection of personas have been developed to show the Ecological Park's variety of offers and experiences throughout the day.

Susan and her family are looking for a day of discovery and play at the Ecological Park, away from the hustle and bustle of the coastal parks. First stop, a walk through The Grove, a remnant rainforest patch, where her children are in awe of the huge trees towering above them. The family then venture over to the Play Forest, a unique nature play area set amongst dense vegetation.

Growing hungry the family set up at one of the BBQ shelters for lunch. After lunch Susan and her family walk along the Treetop Bridge and down into the forest. They weave back jumping across the creek steppers and discovering playful Forest Rooms to stop along the trails. By late afternoon a soft tune is playing in the distance and Susan and her family discover a small performance at the Amphitheatre lawn. The family sit together soaking up the last of the afternoon sun listening to the music.



Journey plans



Gary

Gary and his partner have taken the shuttle up from the Maleny Town Centre for a morning visit to the Ecological Park. Retiree Gary is an avid photographer and is keen to capture the parkland flora and wildlife in action and his wife Carol is interested to learn more about the local ecology. From the central Loop Path and Treetop Bridge Gary and Carol have an easy, level and wheelchair friendly route to explore the Ecological Park.

Gary captures a butterfly and plenty of birds in the restoration plantings from the Treetop Bridge, while Carol learns about the local ecology from interpretive signs. They stop to relax in a Tree-house and soak up the atmosphere perched amongst the trees.

Gary and Carol journey over to the Forest Plaza and discover the market offerings of native saplings, local craft and gourmet produce. They head up to the Community Pavilion to view a local art exhibition and finish with a long lunch at the café featuring seasonal hinterland produce.



Tai

Tai has been selected by his school to participate in an Ecological Park educational day along with his friends Tom, Liam and Maggie. They begin their afternoon at the Community Pavilion to view an interactive exhibition on understanding the ecological and cultural significance of the area.

Afterwards they take an educational guided walk through the Loop and walking trails learning about the rainforest and buffer plantings protecting Mary Cairncross. The group take respite in a Tree-house, which doubles as a flexible outdoor classroom for discussion and extending learning of local ecology and habitat connections created on site.

As the sun sets the group head up to the BBQ lawn to meet other students for an organised presentation to learn more about the night sky with a stargazing experience.



Cassie

Cassie has ventured up to the park for her Ecological Park stewardship team catchup. Arriving by bus, Cassie travels along the boardwalk through wetlands, pausing to view the bird hide. She is excited to see the restoration plantings to the creek corridor are now thriving and attracting new bird life.

Cassie walks over to the Hub to roster on and have a cup of tea and yarn with the stewardship community before she gets started on helping with sapling plantings for the next phase of revegetation works.

After planting works the stewardship team have an opportunity to meet with a couple of the First Nations Rangers. Cassie learns about some of the land management strategies the ranger program is implementing on site to enhance conservation and build cultural knowledge.



Izzy

Izzy has planned a day trip in the hinterland and begins her journey on the Dundalli Walk, a First Nations interpretive trail at the Ecological Park. The trail meanders through the rainforest with creek crossings in between, and opportunities to pause and share in the cultural history of Jinibara Country.

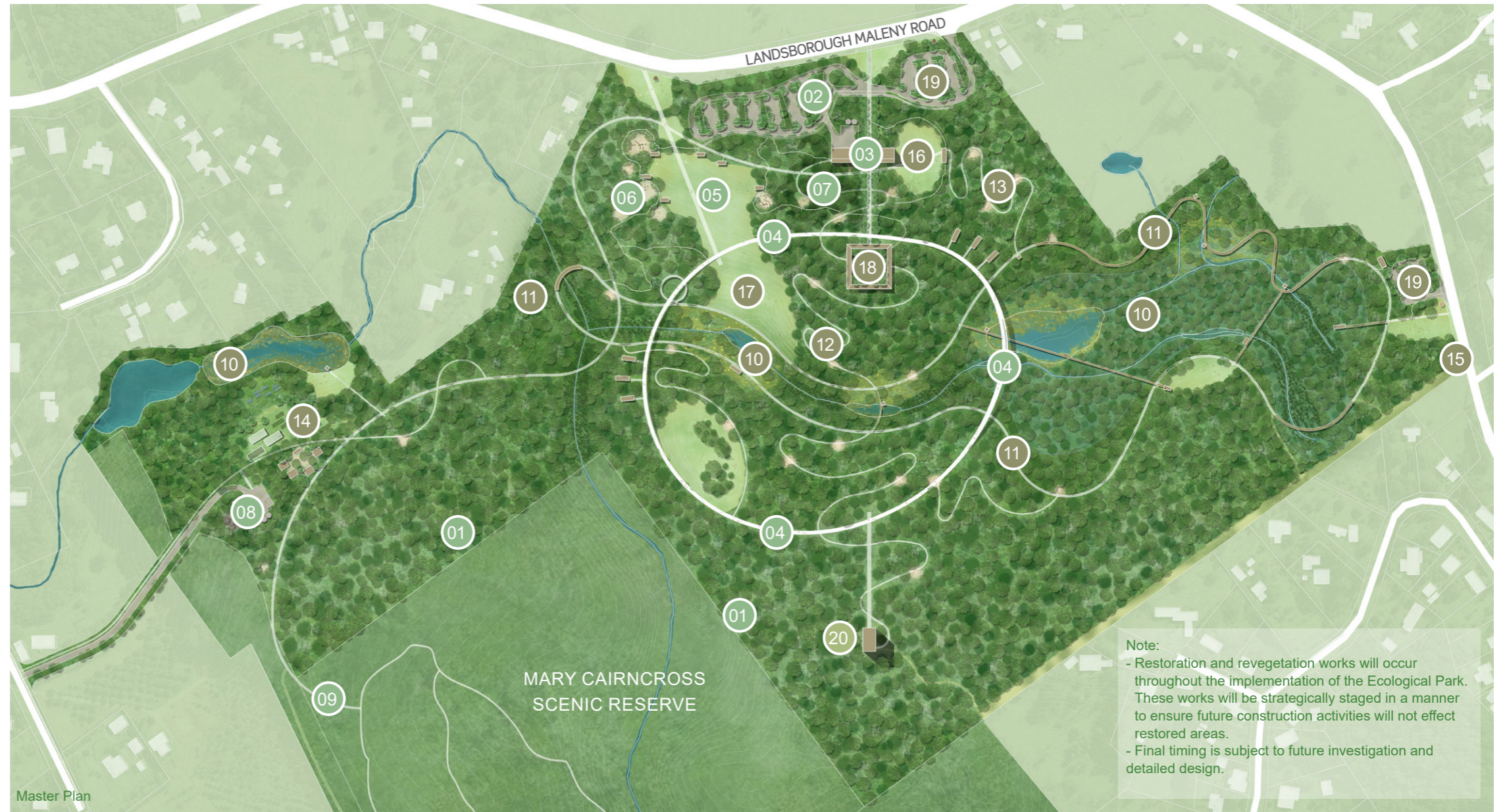
The walk takes her all the way to the Forest Lookout, where she takes in spectacular views of the Glass House Mountains. The distant views across to neighbouring First Nations Countries are marked Waka Waka to the West, Gubbi Gubbi to the East. Izzy takes a snap and uploads to her Instagram profile #aweinspiring.

Izzy follows the Loop Path over to the Sensory Garden. She has packed her own lunch and sits in the garden with a book to read, pausing to enjoy the peaceful sounds of birds in the forest surrounds. After lunch she takes a walk along the park's boardwalks before heading to Maleny to grab dinner with a friend.



11 Implementation

This Master Plan is just the beginning of the transformation of the existing pastoral land into an inclusive and unique space for community and ecology. For a park of this size and complexity, the full implementation may take decades and will be separated into various stages. The indicative staging for delivery of key elements within the Draft Master Plan, has been separated into short, medium and long-term as outlined adjacent. The timing of delivery will be subject to funding, partnerships and detailed design.



SHORT-TERM

1. Buffering and ecological restoration to edges of Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve
2. Main car park (partial)
3. Community Pavilion
4. Loop Path and Treetop Bridge
5. BBQ Lawn
6. Play Forest
7. The Grove
8. Operations facility (partial)
9. Mary Cairncross Walk: focused connection to existing MCSR trail network

MEDIUM-TERM

10. Waterway and wetland restoration
11. Boardwalks and Water Circuit
12. Dundalli Walk
13. Sensory Garden
14. Bush food community garden and native nursery
15. Fauna Connections over road
16. Events Lawn
17. Amphitheatre
18. Forest Plaza
19. Additional car parking

LONG-TERM

20. Forest Lookout & surrounding restoration works

The park will continue the Sunshine Coast's legacy as a green and sustainable region

Key Facts:

-  Creates a 'release valve' for busy coastal parks and Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve
-  Establishes unique nature-based recreation opportunities
-  Over 70% tree cover
-  A 1km of waterway restoration
-  Over 10km of forest walkways
-  Significant increases in habitat and biodiversity
-  A cultural destination for local First Nation knowledge



Wetland boardwalk looking towards the Treetop Bridge



Artist impression only

