

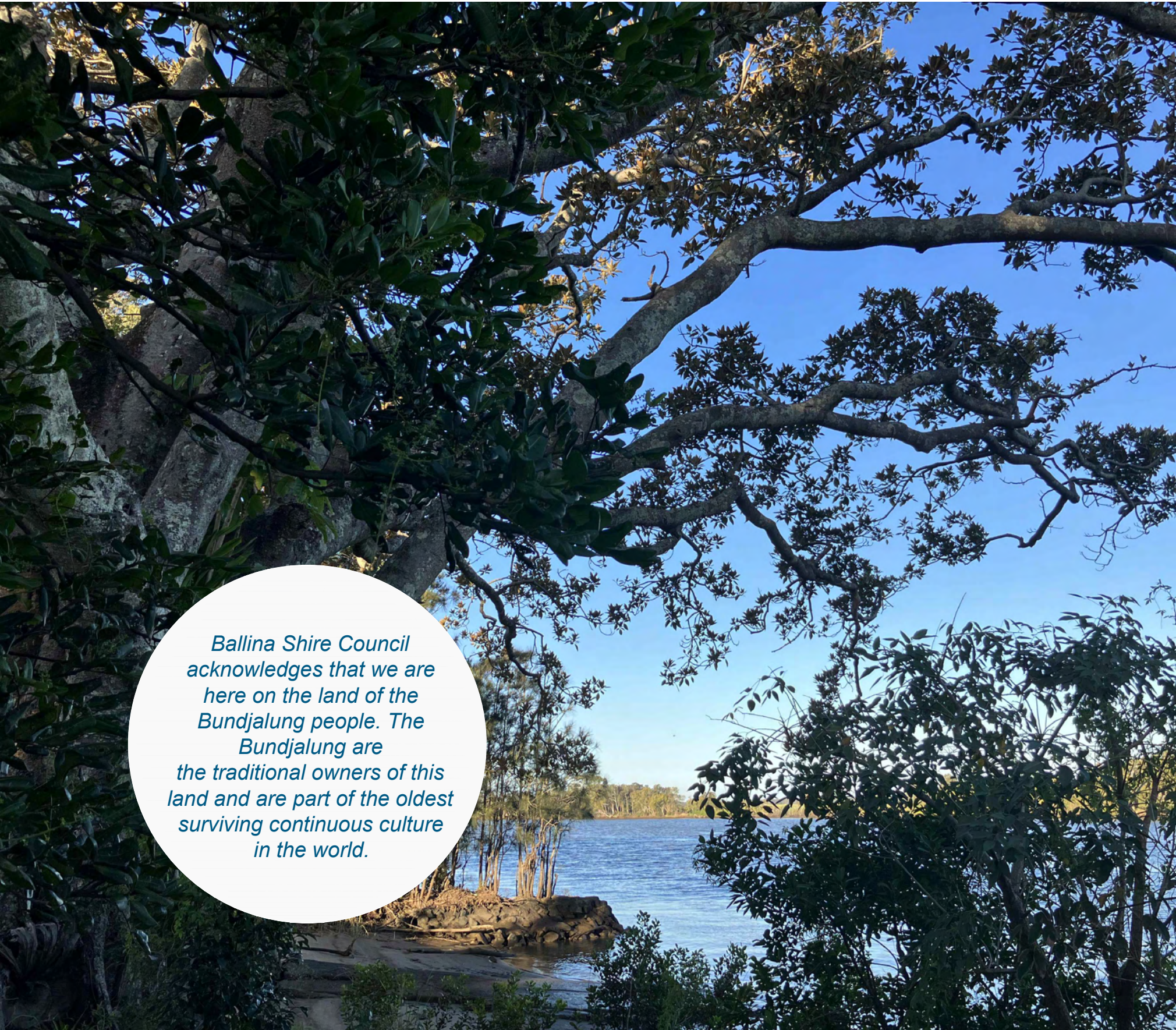


Wardell Village Centre Revitalisation

MASTER PLAN

Adopted 23 November 2023

ballina
shire council



Ballina Shire Council acknowledges that we are here on the land of the Bundjalung people. The Bundjalung are the traditional owners of this land and are part of the oldest surviving continuous culture in the world.

Contents

	Page
The Project	
Background	3
Process	3
The Big Picture	
Strategic Context.....	4
The Place	
Focus Area.....	5
Observations + Considerations	6
The People	
Engagement	14
Community Insight Surveys	14
Community Conversations + Directions	15
The Vision	
Master Plan Strategy.....	17
Key Moves	17
Master Plan Snapshot	18
Up Close	19
Focus Area - Connecting to the River	19
Focus Area - The Street	22
Focus Area - A Community Green Space	25
The General 'Look and Feel'	28
Implementation	
Community Initiatives and Quick Wins	29
Where to next?	30
References/Acknowledgements / Copyright Note	31



The Project

BACKGROUND

Wardell was recently severely affected by catastrophic flooding. In this regard, at the April 2022 ordinary meeting Council adopted the Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2022/23 - 2025/26 including:

“Distribution of the \$1m State Government Recovery grant for \$900,000 to undertake town centre beautification works for Wardell, in line with actions identified in the Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035...”.

Within the context of the key actions of the adopted Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035, this project seeks to deliver a master plan for revitalisation of the Wardell village centre precinct which, upon implementation will reinstate key street amenities, help improve the place experience, build community capacity, and provide impetus to attract and support tourism and future investment in the business centre and envisioned arts and crafts, antiques and boutique food sectors.

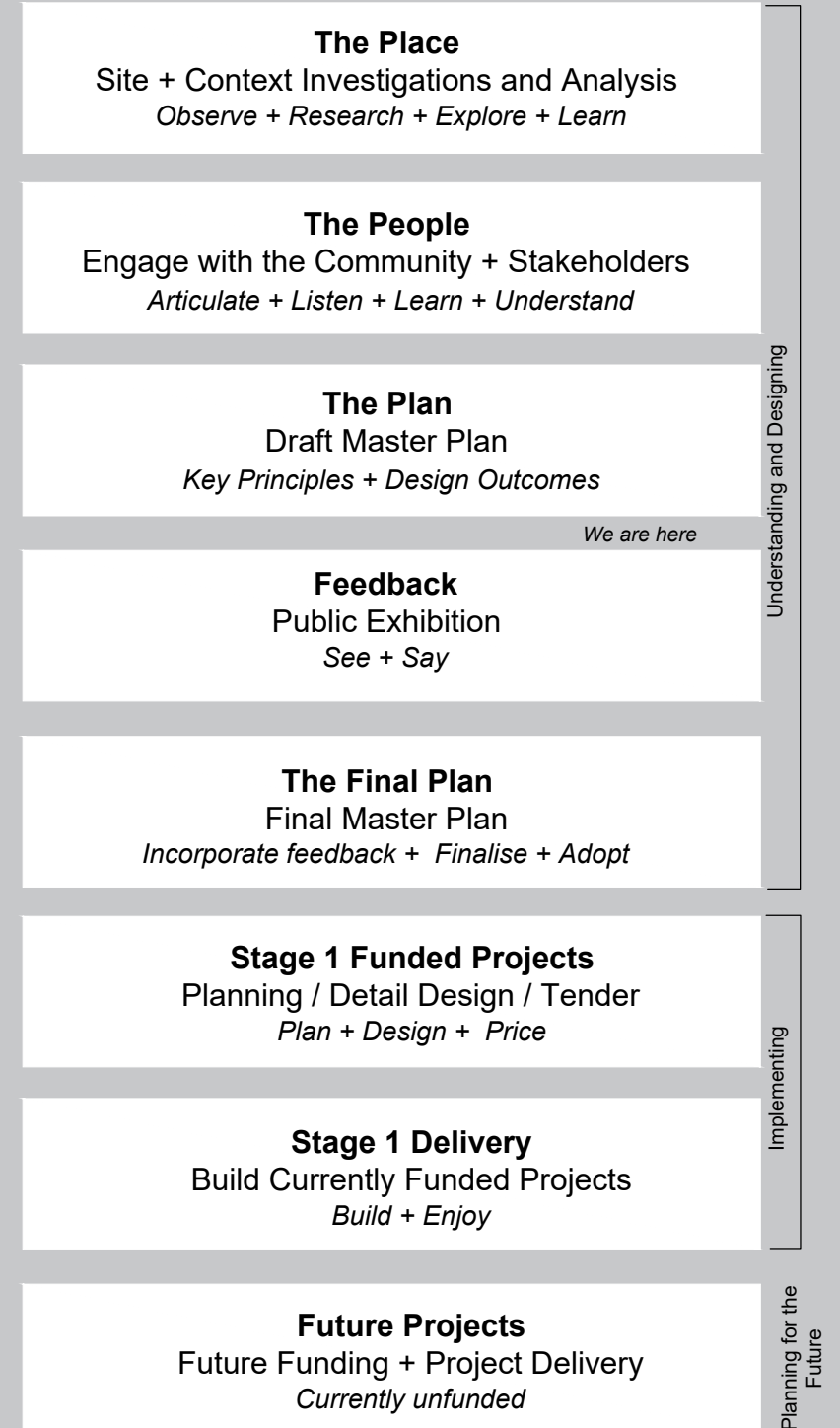
In addition to this, the master plan articulates the community needs and aspirations into a longer term but modest vision which will provide a strategic tool to support future investment, planning and implementation of improvement works.

Project Objectives

This process and the final master plan seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- meaningfully engage with stakeholders and the community to better understand the intricacies of the place and community values;
- determine community priorities for physical infrastructure and social activation within the village centre which address community needs and aspirations and are, where possible consistent with key actions of the Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035;
- identify priority works to be implemented with the available funds in accordance with Council's resolution.

PROCESS



The Big Picture

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

North Coast Regional Plan 2041

The North Coast Regional Plan 2041 (NCRP) acknowledges the continuous Aboriginal connection to the land, water, sea and skies in the region and the important role this connection plays in the cultural identity of the region and its places. This and the natural environment are defining characteristics, and must be valued, respected and carefully managed and protected.

The NCRP sets a framework for the future of the region which has consideration to the broader environmental context and hierarchy of places. The plan envisages strong regional growth, an aging population, an increase in smart technologies, new job opportunities and a need to protect assets such as farmland and the natural environment. The plan envisions the region as a collective of *"healthy and thriving communities, supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy that builds on the region's strengths and natural environment"*.

Within the context of this plan, Wardell is a small riverfront village set within the "coastal strip" east of the Pacific Highway with identified opportunities for urban expansion and growth. This potential is also reinforced by the Ballina Local Environmental Plan 2012 which identifies land zoned for increased medium density uses within the existing village footprint. The community is well connected to the regional centre of Ballina by the Pacific Highway which was recently upgraded to bypass the village. This bypass presents opportunities for the village to reunite, refocus on the river and improve connectivity between community assets, residential areas and the village centre.

The Wardell community, through an extensive engagement process undertaken in 2014, have articulated their vision for Wardell into a locally relevant strategic plan. This vision was prepared prior to the village being bypassed and also prior to the catastrophic flooding of 2022 but remains a relevant strategic direction for the community.

Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035

The Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035 sets out the community vision for the development of the wider Wardell village to 2035. The Plan identifies the village centre as being an area focused on arts and crafts, antiques and boutique food businesses. The recommendations of the Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035 are intended to guide future development in Wardell. Therefore, this master plan aims to provide design solutions which link to the following strategic plan actions as they relate to public land in the main village centre precinct:

- **Action 04** Recognise the potential for the River / Royal Hotel and adjacent area to form a focal point for activity in Wardell.
- **Action 09** Investigate the establishment of a monthly farmers market and farm and craft trail centred on Wardell village.
- **Action 13** Investigate opportunities for footpath works and shared paths (cycling) within Wardell village and subject to the allocation of funds, incorporate agreed works within Council's delivery program.
- **Action 19** Installation of public art within the central median of Sinclair Street south of Richmond Street.

COMMUNITY VISION
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
WARDELL VILLAGE TO 2035

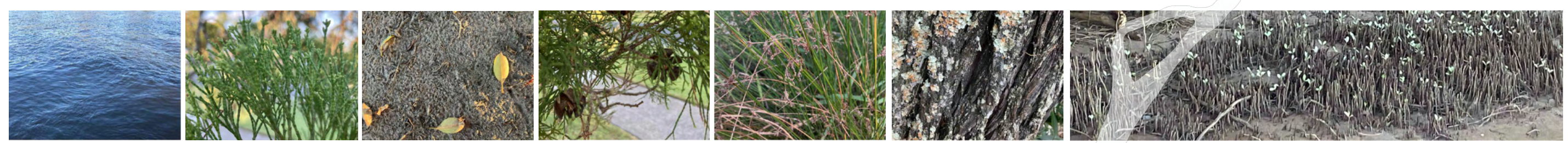
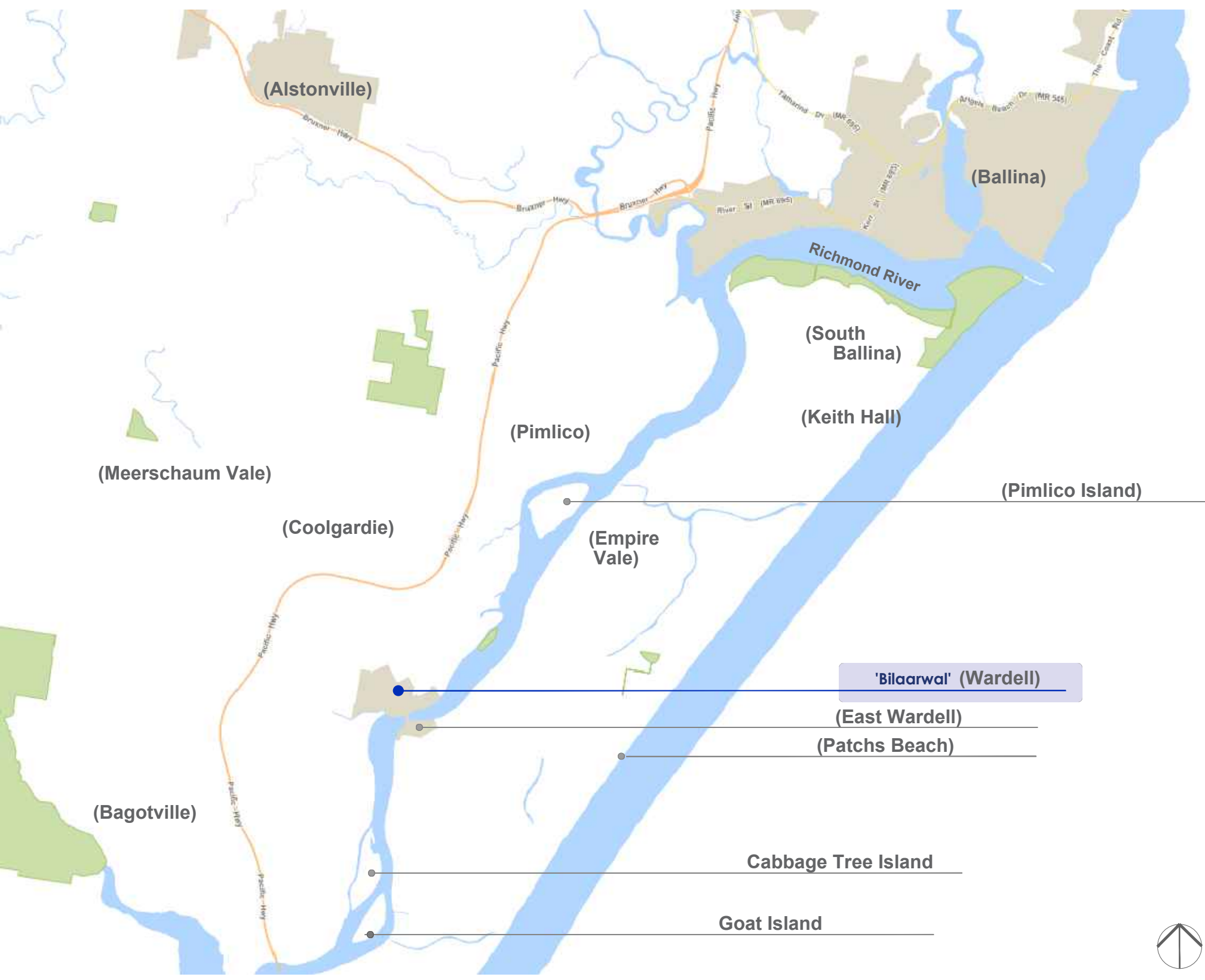
Utilising comments made by local residents at public meetings, and resident's survey responses, the following community vision for Wardell Village has been compiled.

- 01** CREATION OF A VIBRANT AND BEAUTIFUL RIVERSIDE VILLAGE WHILST RETAINING SMALL VILLAGE ATMOSPHERE
- 02** ENCOURAGING TOURISM CENTRED ON THE RIVER AND BASED ON ARTS AND CRAFTS THEMES
- 03** WORKING TOWARDS BETTER CONNECTING OUR VILLAGE TO MAKE IT MORE ACCESSIBLE
- 04** ENHANCING OUR VILLAGE THROUGH VILLAGE ENTRY AND STREET LANDSCAPING, BUILDING MAINTENANCE, AND NEW BUILDINGS WITH SPECIAL CHARACTER
- 05** ENSURING THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IS STAGED, PROGRESSIVE AND AFFORDABLE

The Place

Wardell (known to the First Nations people as 'Bilaarwal') is located within the broader cultural landscape of the Nyangbal people of the Bundjalung Nation, approximately 10 km geographically (18km drive) south of Ballina township on the Richmond River. The broader Wardell area consists of "Wardell" and "East Wardell" located on the northern and southern sides of the Richmond River respectively.

The locality is a patchwork of residential hamlets, rural / agricultural farmlands and transitional vegetation with synergies between the upper Blackwall Range and eastern coastal areas. The Wardell Planning and Environment Study (2015) notes the area to be biodiversity significant with many plants and animal species which are of regional, state and national significance. The broader Wardell area remains significant to the Nyangbal people of the Ballina and Cabbage Tree Island areas with the Ngunya Jargoan Indigenous Protection Area located to the west of the village to conserve ecosystems and habitats together with cultural values and traditional natural resource management systems.



The Place

FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

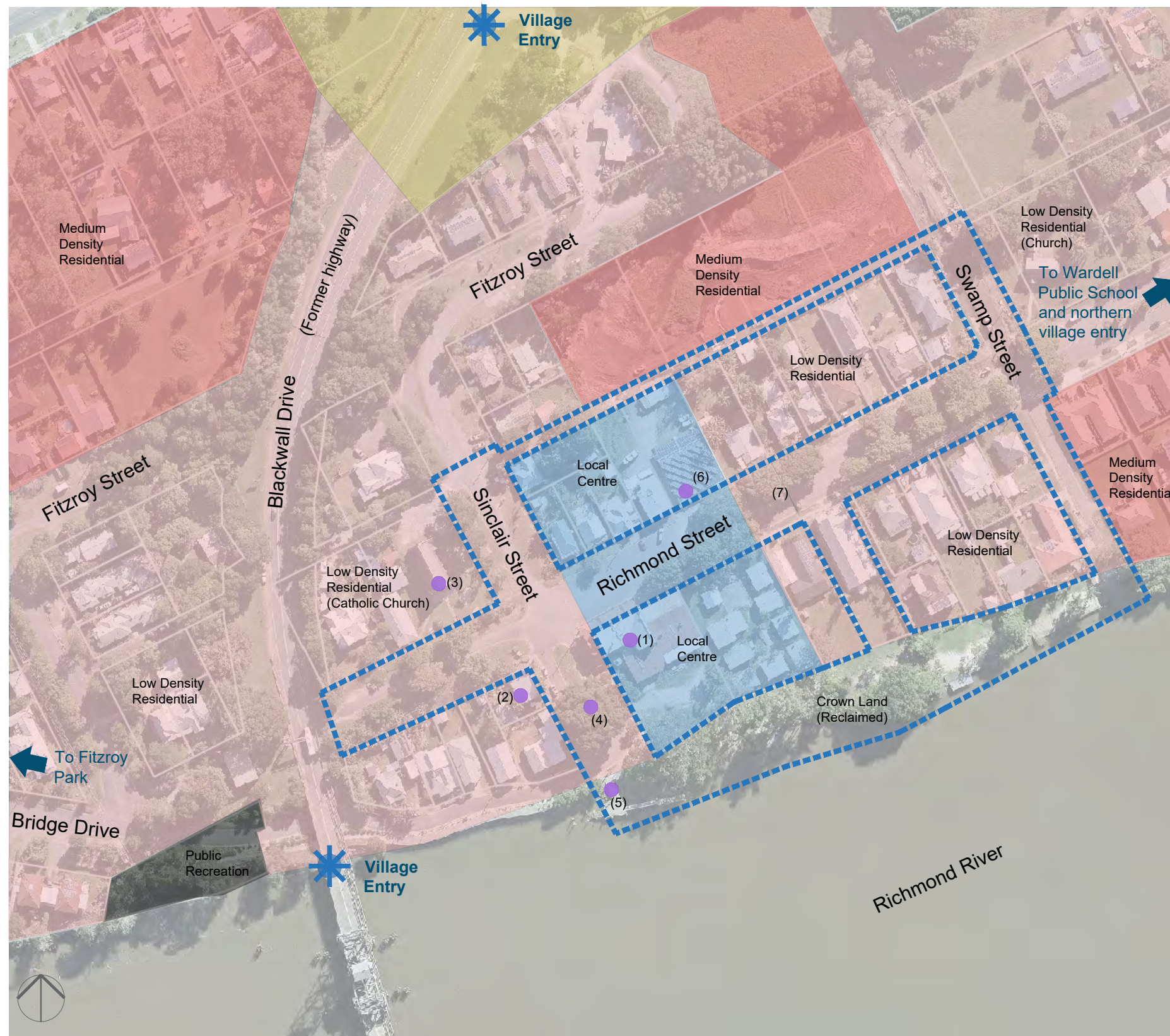
The focus area for the village centre revitalisation is shown on the adjacent map and represents the core business and activity centre of the present village and associated riverfront.

The “Wardell” area is bisected by a major roadway which was formerly the Pacific Highway. This roadway and the adjoining corridor, now known as Blackwall Drive, are elevated to connect to the bridge over the river and, at present form a significant barrier to access and physical connectivity.

Pockets of zoned medium density residential land provide opportunity for a future increased population around the business centre.

Wardell's main streets, Richmond Street and Sinclair Street support a small local business centre with some iconic buildings and large fig trees of colonial historic significance. The impacts of catastrophic flooding in 2022 are still evident in the streetscape with some buildings remaining unoccupied and in need of repair including the anchor business of the River/Royal Hotel. Only two buildings within the local centre zone and the former bank building, occupied by Wardell Community Organised Recovery Effort (C.O.R.E) are open (at the time of the study) providing some essential and other services to the local community.

The urban environment is strongly influenced by a biodiverse natural environment, the riverfront context, circa 1900 - 1950's architecture and colonial roots in agriculture, timber and as a river port. Evidence of these historic activities are scattered along the riverfront but many sites are not easily accessed.



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| - - - - Study Area | ● Key landmark | |
| Local Centre Zone | 1. River/Royal Hotel (currently closed, residence only) | 5. Riverfront jetty and boardwalk (currently under repair) |
| Low Density Residential Zone | 2. Former Bank (occupied by Wardell CORE) | 6. Pie shop |
| Medium Density Residential Zone | 3. Catholic Church and associated land | 7. Avenue of fig trees |
| Public Recreation Zone | 4. Fig tree in central median | |
| Rural Landscape Zone | | |

The Place

FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

The following sections discuss some key aspects of the place important to consider when developing a plan for the revitalisation of the village centre.

Trees + Vegetation

1. Large fig trees in Richmond Street and Sinclair Street provide a green avenue/canopy over the street and shade to the footpath. The canopy and sculptural trunks are a feature of the street in Wardell. Many of these trees are heritage listed or significant and require protection.
2. There is a community perception that the grass areas around the base of some fig trees looks messy as the roots make it difficult to maintain.
3. The fig tree in the central median in Sinclair Street, with a river backdrop is a focal point on the entry to Wardell from Blackwall Drive. The symmetry of this view is accentuated by the heritage buildings of the hotel and former bank.
4. Coast cypress on the western side of Sinclair Street are significant protected native tree species.
5. New street trees have been planted on the eastern side of Sinclair Street as part of a street tree planting program.
6. There is a large portion of reclaimed Crown Land along the river front which contains some open space, large amenity trees and water access.
7. There is no public village green within the centre. A central village green is a common feature of many Northern Rivers villages which supports community activity and attracts people to the business centre.
8. Food and other native trees at the rear of properties on Richmond Street provide a functional screen on steep land at the rear of residences.

Design Considerations:

- Retain existing native and heritage listed trees as dominant features of the streetscape and ensure that constructed works will not adversely impact the tree root system or tree health. This may impact the scope of work possible in the roadway.
- Retain the symmetry of the entry vista with the fig tree and river backdrop as a key feature of this view.
- Investigate opportunities to open up and improve access to and along the riverfront.
- Look for opportunities to provide an informal green space within the village centre.
- Existing food trees could be embellished as a street food garden.



The Place

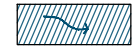


FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

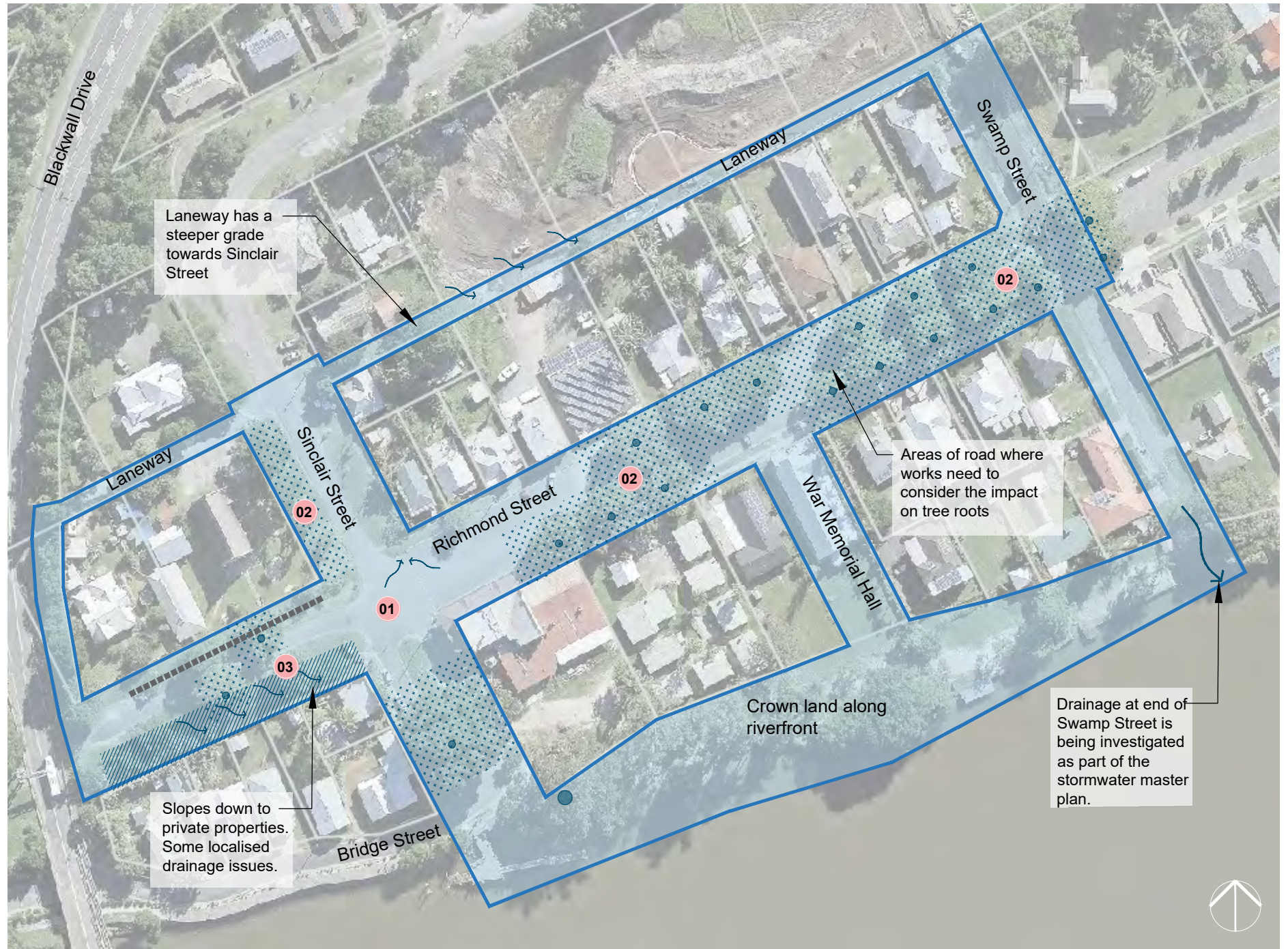
Drainage

1. Streets are wide and road formations are informal, some with a layback style kerb and others without formal kerb or gutter.
2. A stormwater drainage study and master plan is being prepared for Wardell. Any drainage works will need to balance the stormwater needs with significant and heritage listed trees and buildings.
3. There are some localised drainage on Richmond Street near the Sinclair Street intersection which impact private land.
4. The unformed laneway behind Richmond Street currently receives overland flow from adjoining residential lots.

Design Considerations:

- Address any drainage issues within the study area identified by the stormwater investigations and master plan.
- Address localised drainage issues at the western end of Richmond Street.
- Ensure that any drainage works are balanced with protection of significant and heritage listed trees and buildings.
- Address overland flow on the laneway in any design.
- Consider flood resilient materials and design options.

-  Localised drainage issue
-  Sensitive tree root area
-  Rock wall



The Place




FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

Built Form

1. Heritage buildings are a visual feature the streetscape.
2. Buildings are predominantly 1-2 storeys
3. The allotment arrangement in the village centre is a traditional grid layout with provision for rear lane access to the buildings in the business centre. This is typical of villages in the Northern Rivers and enables improved footpath amenity.
4. Orange/red/brown brick is a feature of landmark buildings in the business centre.

Design Considerations:

- Maintain heritage buildings as landmarks and features of the streetscape.
- Investigate opportunities to open up the laneway for rear access to the business centre which enables improved footpath amenity which is unconstrained by driveways.
- Include improvements which utilise materials that complement the materiality of existing heritage buildings.

-  Sensitive tree root area
-  Heritage building facades a visual feature of the streetscape
-  Rock wall



The Place

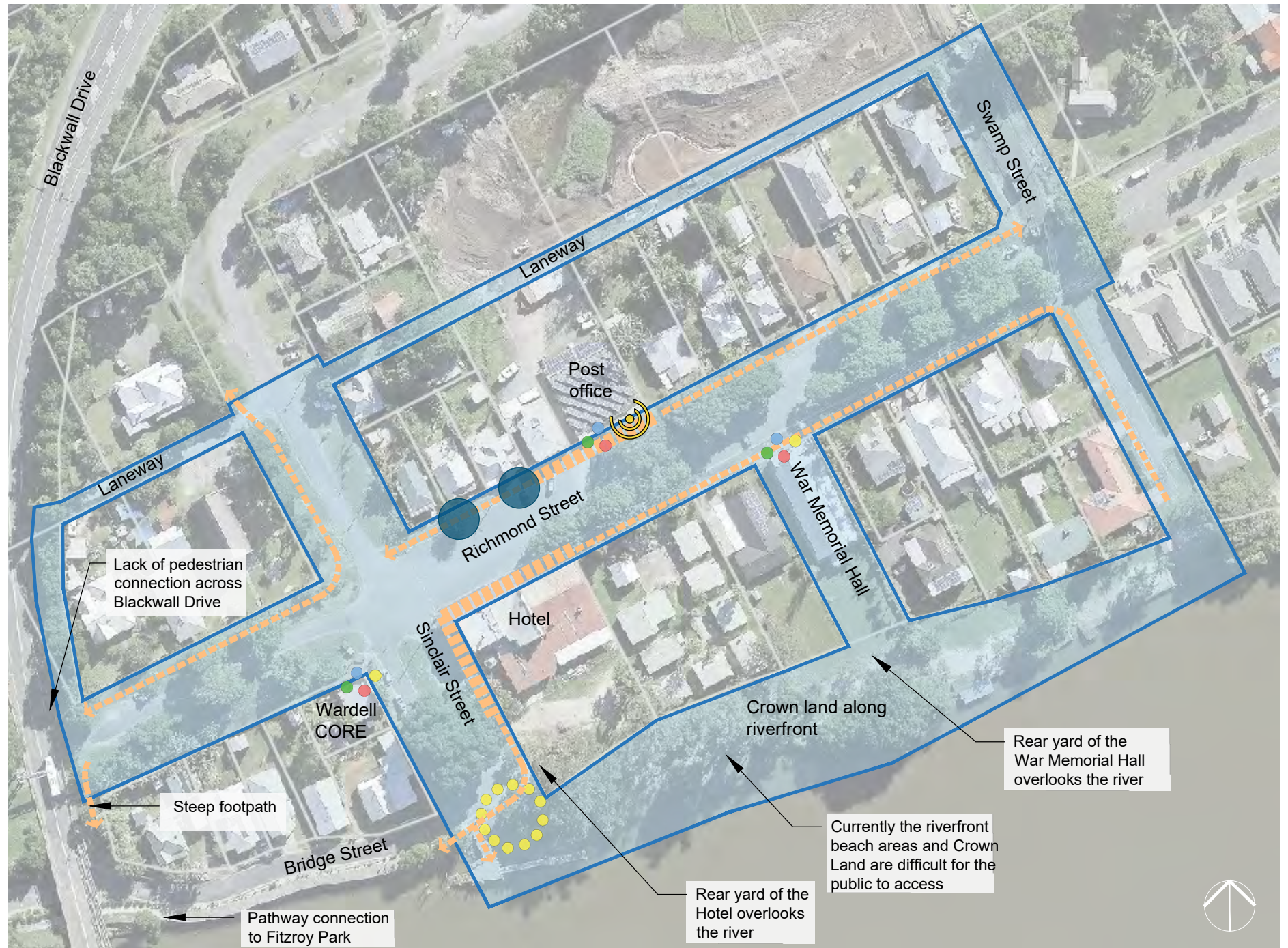
FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

Footpath Amenity + Seating

1. There are no places to sit in the street or near the shops.
2. The existing pub is run down and whilst an important privately owned iconic building and residence, it's closure has an adverse impact upon street amenity and social activity.
3. In the absence of seating, people use the timber fig tree surrounds.
4. There are no amenities to entice people to stay in the streets for longer (e.g. places to sit, gather, eat, drinking fountains, weather protection).
5. There are many dogs in Wardell and few facilities for dogs.
6. Footpath surfaces are old and cracked in some locations.
7. The fig trees provide shade over the footpath but there are large gaps in this canopy where fig trees have died (in Richmond Street and the central median in Sinclair Street) and not been replaced.
8. The streets exude an unstructured and relaxed vibe which is appealing.
9. At night the streets are dark with the post office complex exhibiting strong bright light to a localised area in front of the building.
10. There is no night street activity. Although there are some onsite activities from time to time at the War Memorial Hall and Wardell CORE.
11. There is a lack of connectivity across Blackwall Drive.

Design Considerations:

- Look for opportunities to provide individual and group seating near the shops and in green spaces, and facilities for when people bring their dogs.
- Identify places for additional street tree planting to provide shade to the footpath and street.
- Make design choices which reinforce the relaxed vibe of the village centre.
- Make provision for services such as power supply to enable feature lighting to be installed into or near trees or at future gathering places.
- Balance the need for improved footpath surfaces with protection of tree roots.



- Existing wide footpath (poor condition)
- Existing narrow footpath (varied condition)
- Strong lighting (other areas contain limited lighting)
- Areas of existing activity
- Space available for street trees
- Existing public seating

The Place





FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

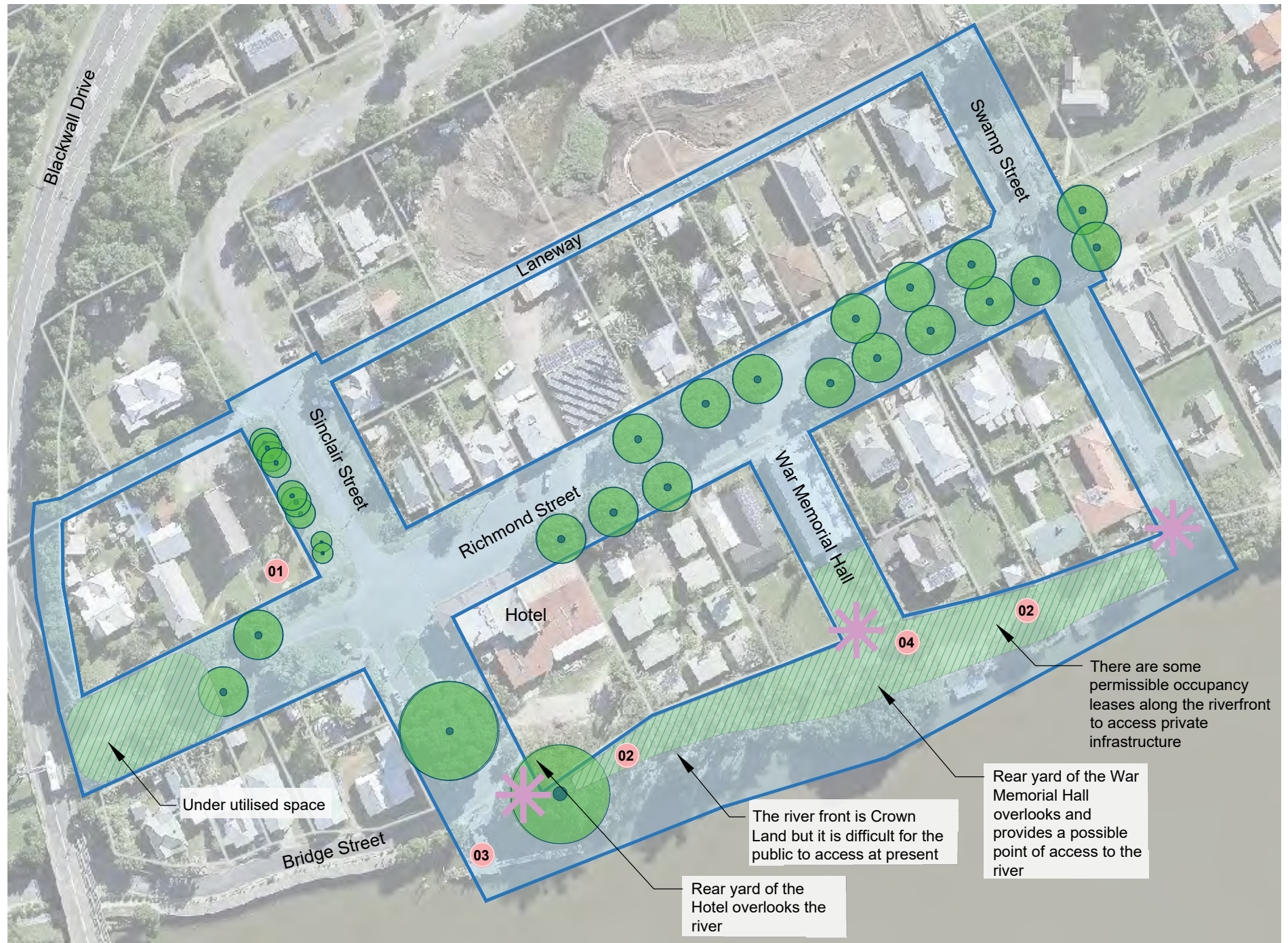
Green Space + Connections to the River

1. There is a significant amount of open green space associated with some municipal buildings such as Churches. These green areas are a shared aesthetic from the streetscape.
2. The river front between Sinclair Street and Swamp Street is Crown Land and contains some historic infrastructure and natural points of interest. Some of the Crown Land is presently overgrown and under-utilised by the general public because access is difficult. Some permissible occupancy leases allow for landowners to access private jetties and pontoons.
3. Physical public access to the river is presently limited to the boardwalk and jetty areas.
4. The rear of the War Memorial Hall is a public green space overlooking the river some of which is currently leased to the Wardell Progress Association. This land and the Crown Land could be used for a broader public benefit.
5. There is currently no village green or green space to support the business centre.

Design Considerations:

- Look for opportunities to increase green space for public benefit.
- Explore opportunities to improve public access and visual connections to the riverfront.

-  Significant trees
-  Under utilised public space
-  Possible point of public access to the riverfront
-  Natural areas connected to the river



The Place





FOCUS AREA OBSERVATIONS + CONSIDERATIONS

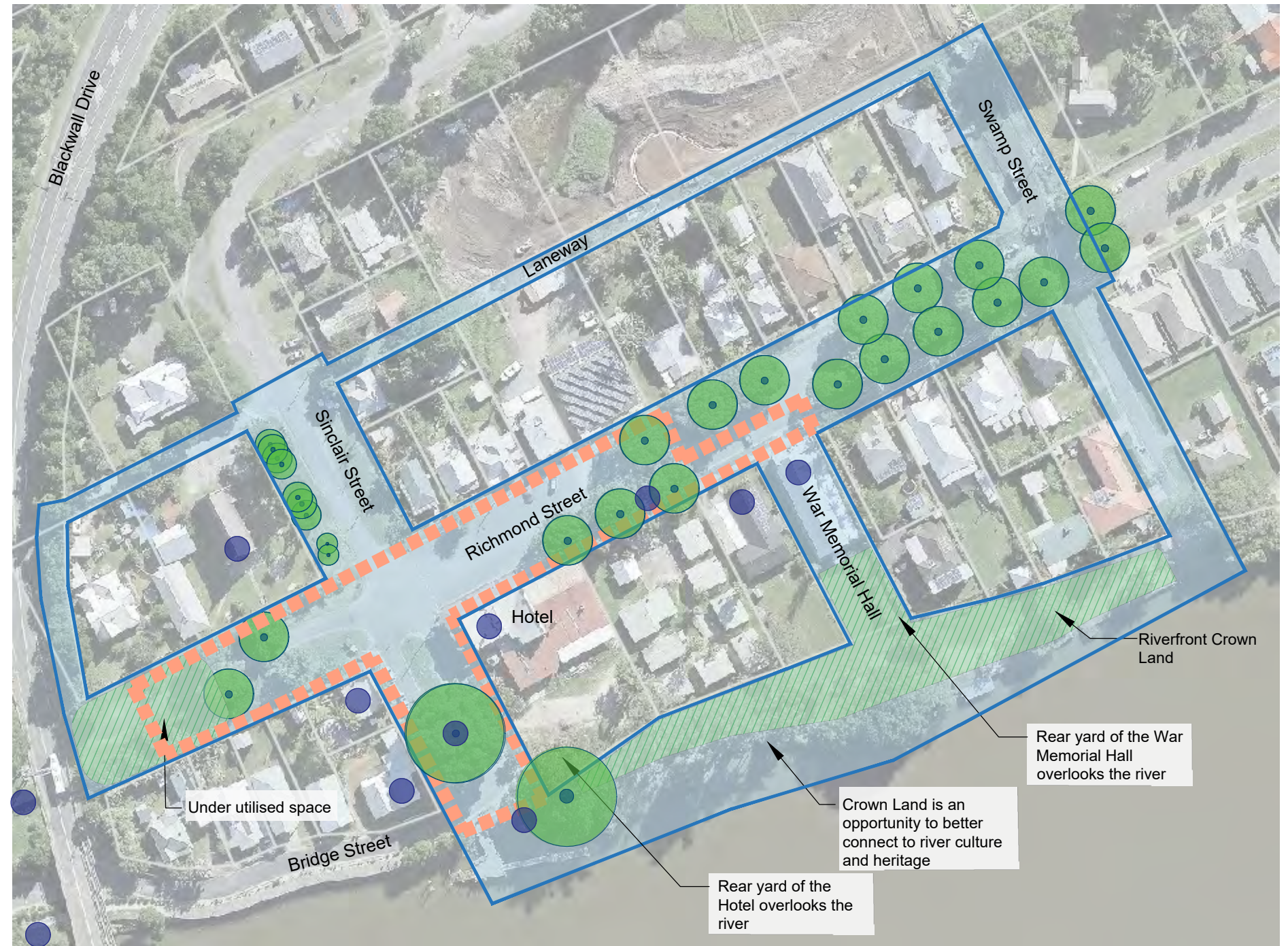
Culture + Heritage + Art + Activation

1. Wardell has a rich Nyangbal / Bundjalung cultural heritage.
2. The village contains many historic buildings and infrastructure remnant from past timber and shipping industries. These are points of interest in the village centre.
3. Heritage buildings such as the hotel, bank, churches and residences are visual landmarks.
4. Since the floods there are few places for the community to gather for social activity. The former bank building (Wardell CORE) and the War Memorial Hall (Wardell Progress Association) are places available from time to time for community gathering.
5. There is currently no permanent art in the public realm, although Wardell has a history of arts and crafts events. Murals have recently been installed as part of this project.

Design Considerations:

- There are opportunities to increase education and information about cultural heritage stories and features.
- Explore opportunities for local art in the public domain.
- Involve the community to articulate the unique cultural heritage narrative of the village into immersive and sensory experiences throughout the village centre (story telling, sound trails, art).
- Make better use of the western end of Richmond Street as a space to support community events and activities.

-  Significant trees
-  Points of cultural or heritage interest
-  Under utilised public space
-  Precinct or edge with potential for activation



The People

ENGAGEMENT

In late 2022 and early 2023, Council consulted widely through a variety of forums to obtain insights into community values, needs and aspirations.

Community and Stakeholder Notification

Letterbox drop, web site content, social media, print media
September - October 2022

Community Insights Surveys

'Place Score' Community Care Factor + Place Experience Assessment
2 day street stall
October 2022

Community Conversations

Listening + mapping special places + desired improvements
3 day street stall
This also included online mapping opportunities between October 2022 and February 2023 via the Your Say Ballina portal.
November 2022

Community Design Charette

A community design group was formed from a publicly advertised expressions of interest process. A facilitated design charette was undertaken with 20 community participants to confirm issues and opportunities, priorities, big and small ideas (quick wins) and community directions.
March 2023

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS SURVEYS

Following is a summary of some high-level insights captured by the Place Score survey process undertaken in October 2022. They cover the priorities of the main street and recommendations to help deliver a village centre loved by the community, visitors and customers.

Community Values

Most Valued Attributes

- #1 Overall look and character of the area
- #2 Cleanliness of public space.
- #3 Having access to groceries and fresh food businesses.

Least Valued Attributes

- #50 Shop window dressing (visual merchandising)
- #49 Diversity of price points
- #48 Free and comfortable group seating

Place attributes that relate to improved street life and thriving local businesses are a priority for the Wardell community including, provision of grocery and fresh food businesses, evidence of public events happening, outdoor restaurants and seating, a cluster of similar businesses and cleanliness of public space.

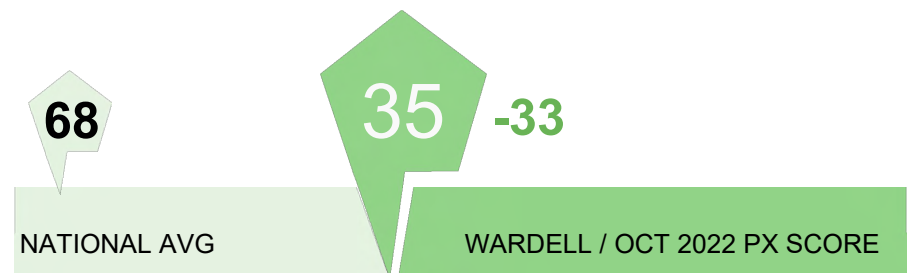
Richmond Street Performance

Best Performing Attributes (Richmond Street)

- Car accessibility and parking (6.9/10)
- Physical comfort (6.3 /10)
- Vegetation and natural elements such as street trees (6.3 /10)

Worst Performing Attributes (Richmond Street)

- Things to do in the evening (0.4/10)
- Evidence of public events happening (1.0/10)
- Spaces suitable for specific activities (1.4/0)



Based upon 104 "Care Factor" surveys and 58 "Place Experience" surveys being received.

The People

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversations with community members revealed the following loud messages as they relate to the Wardell Strategic Plan objectives. There were no items aligned with Strategic Plan objective 5.

In addition to these loud messages, the community told us that there are *other areas that should be prioritised*. Some common examples included Fitzroy Park, P. V. Walsh Park, a dog park, community garden and improvements at Patches Beach.



01 Creation of a vibrant and beautiful riverside village whilst retaining the small village atmosphere.

We need a place to have a beer with mates!

The community needs a meeting place and social spaces to interact and get together.

Getting businesses operating, especially the pub, is key to revitalisation of the village centre.

Space for outdoor dining.

Leave it alone or just tidy it up.

Provide more green space / a village green or space for a regular market.

Cultural heritage is valued and important.

02 Encouraging tourism centred on the river and based upon arts and crafts themes.

Opportunities for picnic shelters and BBQ or social space at the back of the memorial hall or along the river.

Connect to the river.

Culture and heritage walk.

Bush food walk

Provide activities and things to do.

Activate businesses in Sinclair Street.

Places to sit near the river.

Regular street closure for market activity (ideally once a week) to bring life into the village.

03 Working towards better connecting our village to make it more accessible.

Formalise carparking.

Improve parking in Sinclair Street.

Better access and connections.

Improve public access along the river front.

Signage and wayfinding connecting key places.

Safer places to cross the road.

04 Enhancing our village through village entry and street landscaping, building maintenance, and new buildings with special character.

We need improved street amenity (bike racks, dog bowls, seating, fresh paving, planter boxes...)

Landscaping and art.

Fix the drainage.

Improved maintenance.

We love the fig trees but the base looks messy.

A toilet near the main street.

Covered walkways.

A clean and tidy, well maintained appearance - better maintenance of streets in the business centre.

We need places to sit in the main street - social spaces.

Encourage new business.

The People

COMMUNITY DIRECTIONS

The community of Wardell are resilient and passionate. Despite the hardships that this community have endured through the 2022 flooding they exhibit a united love for their village, the river context, cultural heritage and the unique narrative of the people and place. To support regeneration and recovery, social infrastructure to enable place activation was identified as being needed in addition to physical infrastructure improvements.

The community design charette revealed the following community directions for the future of the village centre:



Community Directions: Community Spaces

- More space that can be used by the community.
- Outdoor spaces that support local businesses.
- Connect the village to the riverfront.
- Flexible spaces that support events.
- Opportunities to share assets.



Community Directions: Street Improvements

- Rebalance the amount of space dedicated to roads and parking versus community use, including the relocation of car spaces.
- Provide spaces which allow for temporary activations.
- Use sustainable and resilient materials and systems.
- A green, people friendly, organic, creative, resilient and well maintained main street with a unique local narrative.



Community Directions: Programs/Activities/Events

- Ongoing and regular events and activities that bring the community together with potential to become self-sustaining.
- Unlock existing community assets.
- Harness community resources and work together to achieve more impact.
- Any activities to be grounded in a local narrative and histories that tell the unique story of their town and people whether that is in events, art or tourism.

The Vision

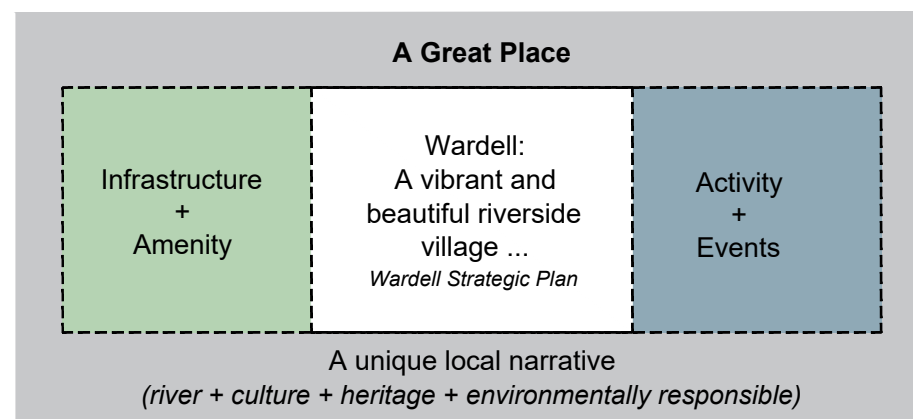
MASTER PLAN STRATEGY

The community vision for Wardell to 2035 identified in the Wardell Strategic Plan is:

- A vibrant and beautiful riverside village whilst retaining a small village atmosphere;
- Encouraging tourism centred on the river and based on arts and crafts themes;
- Working towards better connecting our village to make it more accessible;
- Enhancing our village through entry and street landscaping, building maintenance, and new buildings with special character;
- Ensuring that future development is staged, progressive and affordable.

There is a community desire to celebrate local character and the unique Wardell narrative which the community has identified as being underpinned by the river, culture, heritage and environmentally sound decision making.

Great places are more than functional infrastructure and amenity. They are active, social and thriving places loved by locals. The community, through conversations and the design charette process identified that to achieve the strategic plan vision, improvements to infrastructure and amenity are needed alongside opportunities for activity and events and that all of these things should be underpinned by a unique local narrative.



THE KEY MOVES

The key moves that work towards delivery of the community directions are summarised in the following illustrations:

Community Spaces

- CP1** Unlock the riverfront crown land by providing accessible public access to this area for passive recreation.
- CP2** Embellish the western end of Richmond Street as a community space which can be adapted for activities or events.
- CP3** Open up the laneway providing access to the rear of business premises allowing for active footpath areas on the Richmond Street frontage.

Street Improvements

- SI1** Provide improved footpaths and places for people to come together and to sit in the street.
- SI2** Slow traffic speeds consistent with a people and place-based centre.
- SI3** Protect the existing street trees and provide additional suitable trees to reinforce the avenue.
- SI4** Make art an integral part of the public domain.
- SI5** Allow for a possible future pedestrian connection from the western end of Richmond Street across Blackwall Drive to reconnect the village.

Programs/Activities/Events

- PE1** Provide intuitive wayfinding (visual/sound/sensory) which tells the unique story of the place and people.
- PE2** Implement some of the 'small idea'/quick win community initiatives from the design charette process.



Key Moves: Community Space and Programs /Activities / Events



Key Moves: Street Improvements

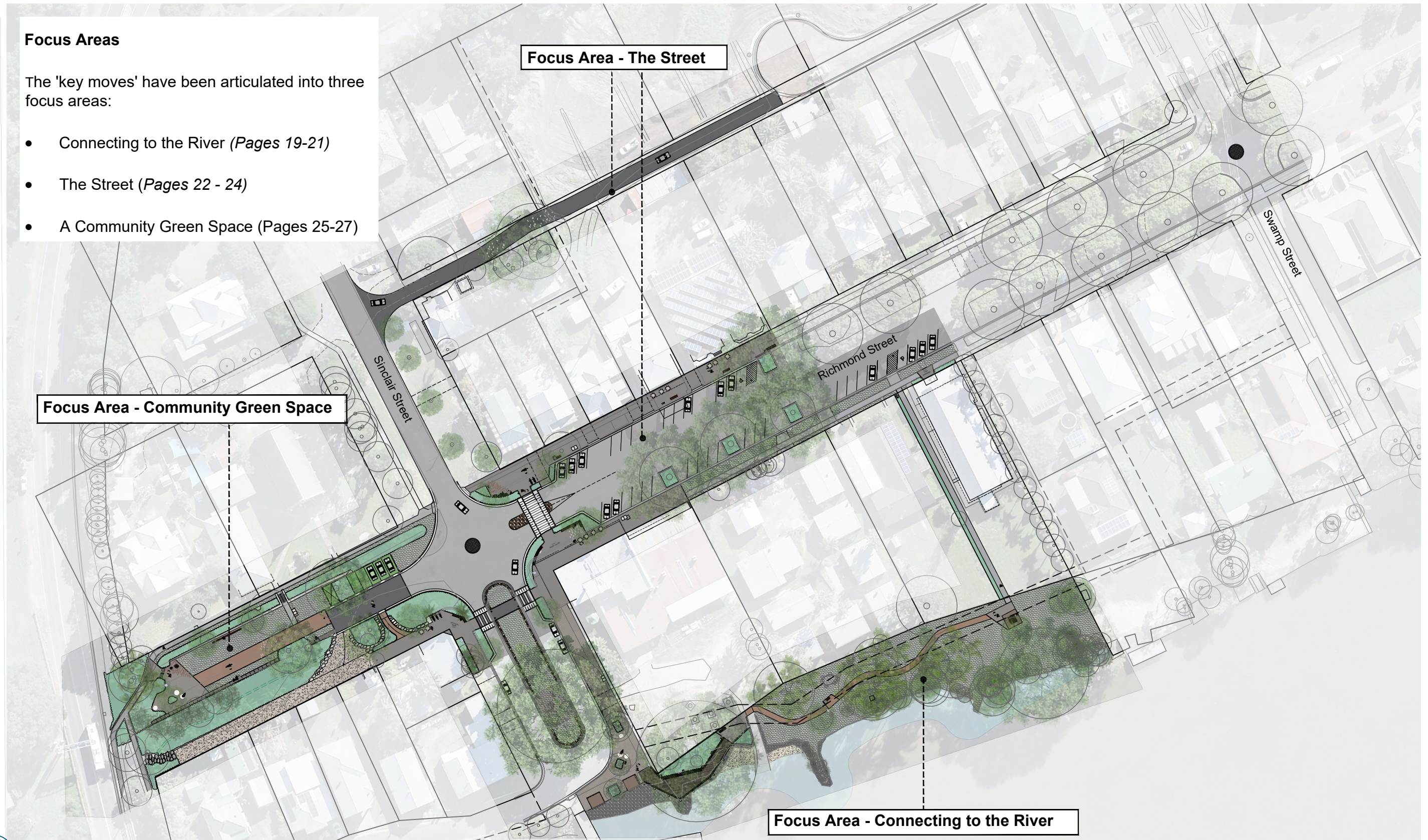
The Vision

MASTER PLAN SNAPSHOT

Focus Areas

The 'key moves' have been articulated into three focus areas:

- Connecting to the River (Pages 19-21)
- The Street (Pages 22 - 24)
- A Community Green Space (Pages 25-27)



0 5 10 20 30 50m

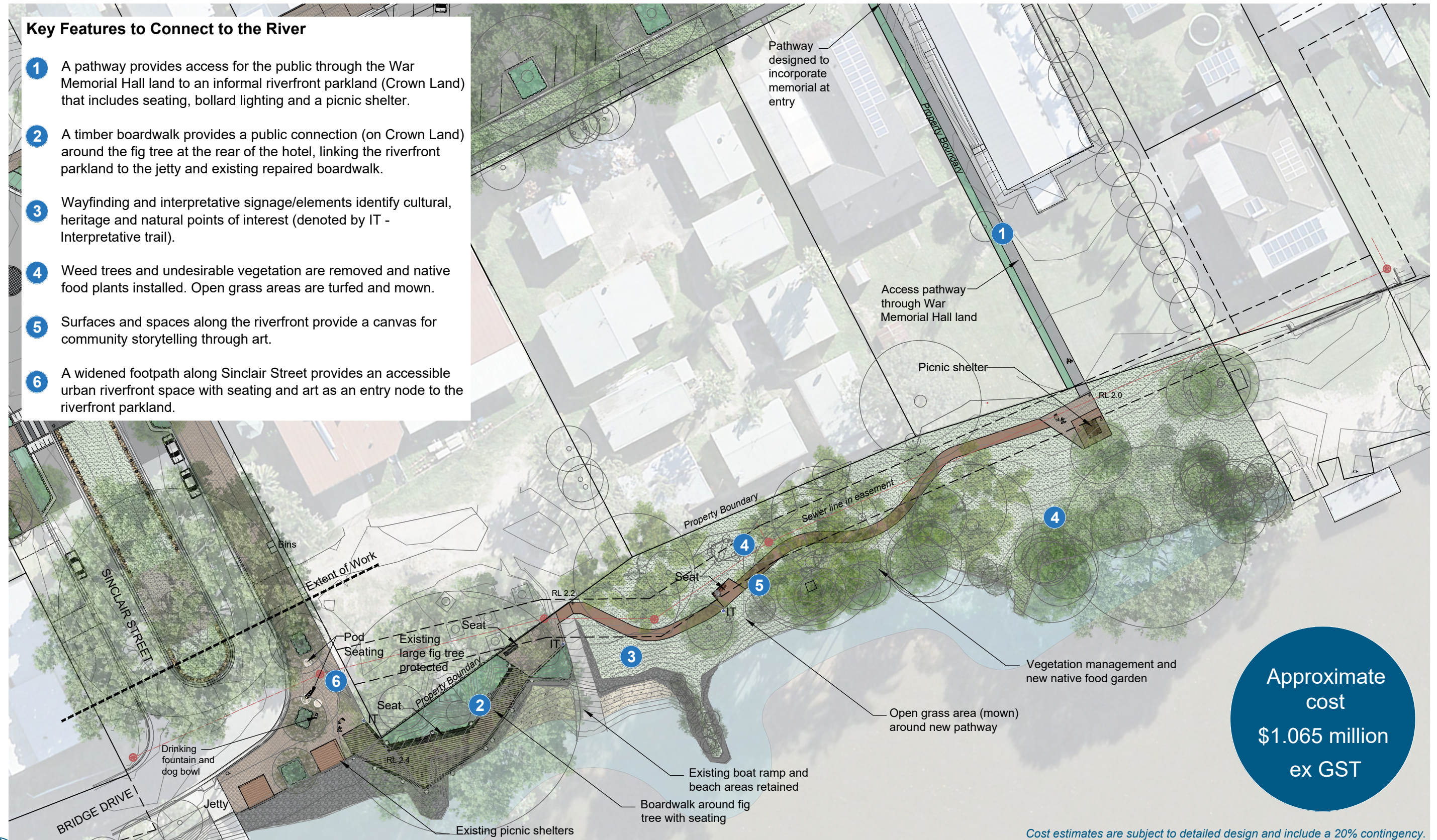
All features of the master plan are subject to detailed investigations, design and approvals.

The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - CONNECTING TO THE RIVER

Key Features to Connect to the River

- 1 A pathway provides access for the public through the War Memorial Hall land to an informal riverfront parkland (Crown Land) that includes seating, bollard lighting and a picnic shelter.
- 2 A timber boardwalk provides a public connection (on Crown Land) around the fig tree at the rear of the hotel, linking the riverfront parkland to the jetty and existing repaired boardwalk.
- 3 Wayfinding and interpretative signage/elements identify cultural, heritage and natural points of interest (denoted by IT - Interpretative trail).
- 4 Weed trees and undesirable vegetation are removed and native food plants installed. Open grass areas are turfed and mown.
- 5 Surfaces and spaces along the riverfront provide a canvas for community storytelling through art.
- 6 A widened footpath along Sinclair Street provides an accessible urban riverfront space with seating and art as an entry node to the riverfront parkland.



Approximate cost
\$1.065 million
ex GST

Cost estimates are subject to detailed design and include a 20% contingency.

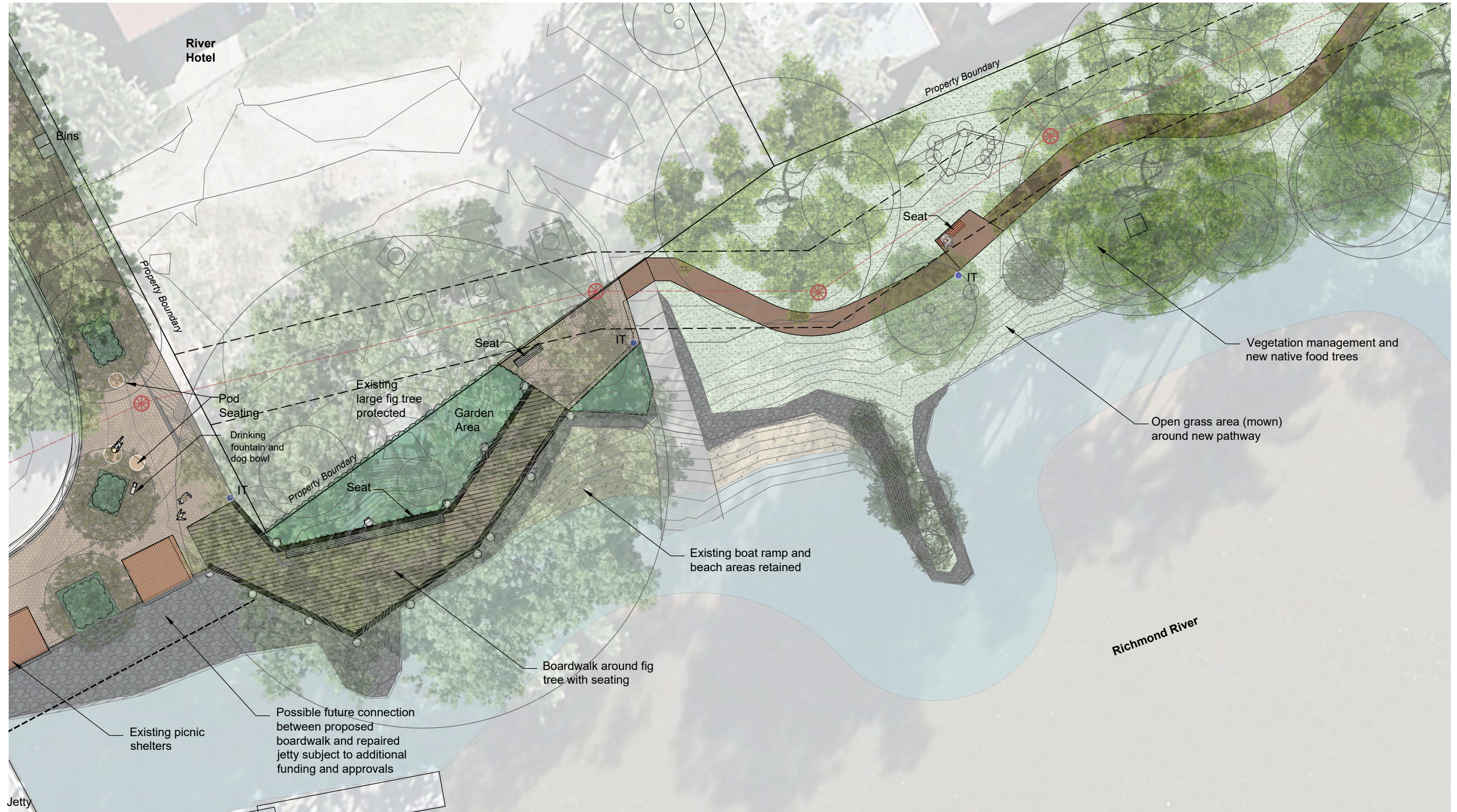


0 5 10 15 25m

All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

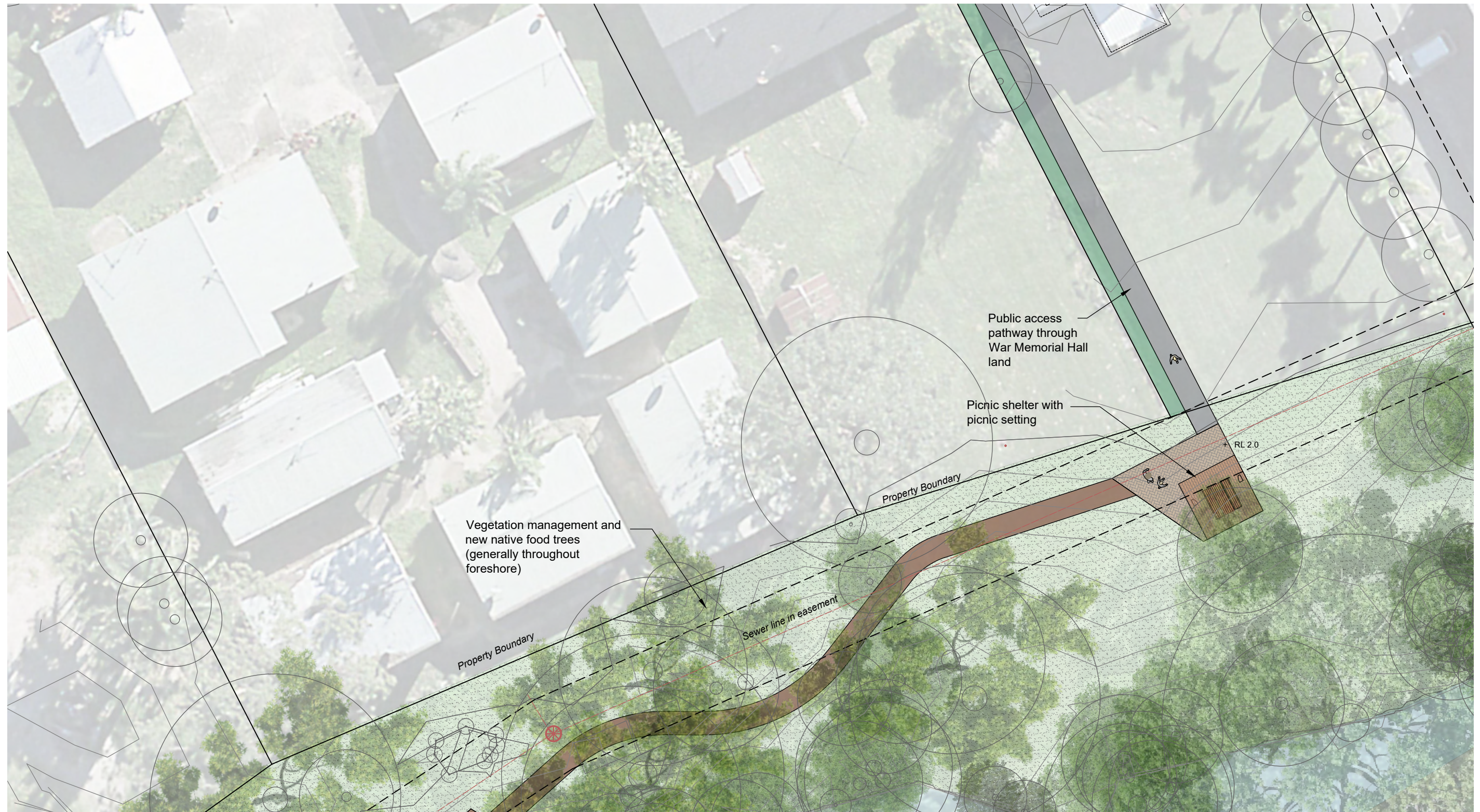
The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - CONNECTING TO THE RIVER (ENLARGED VIEW)



The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - CONNECTING TO THE RIVER (ENLARGED PLAN)

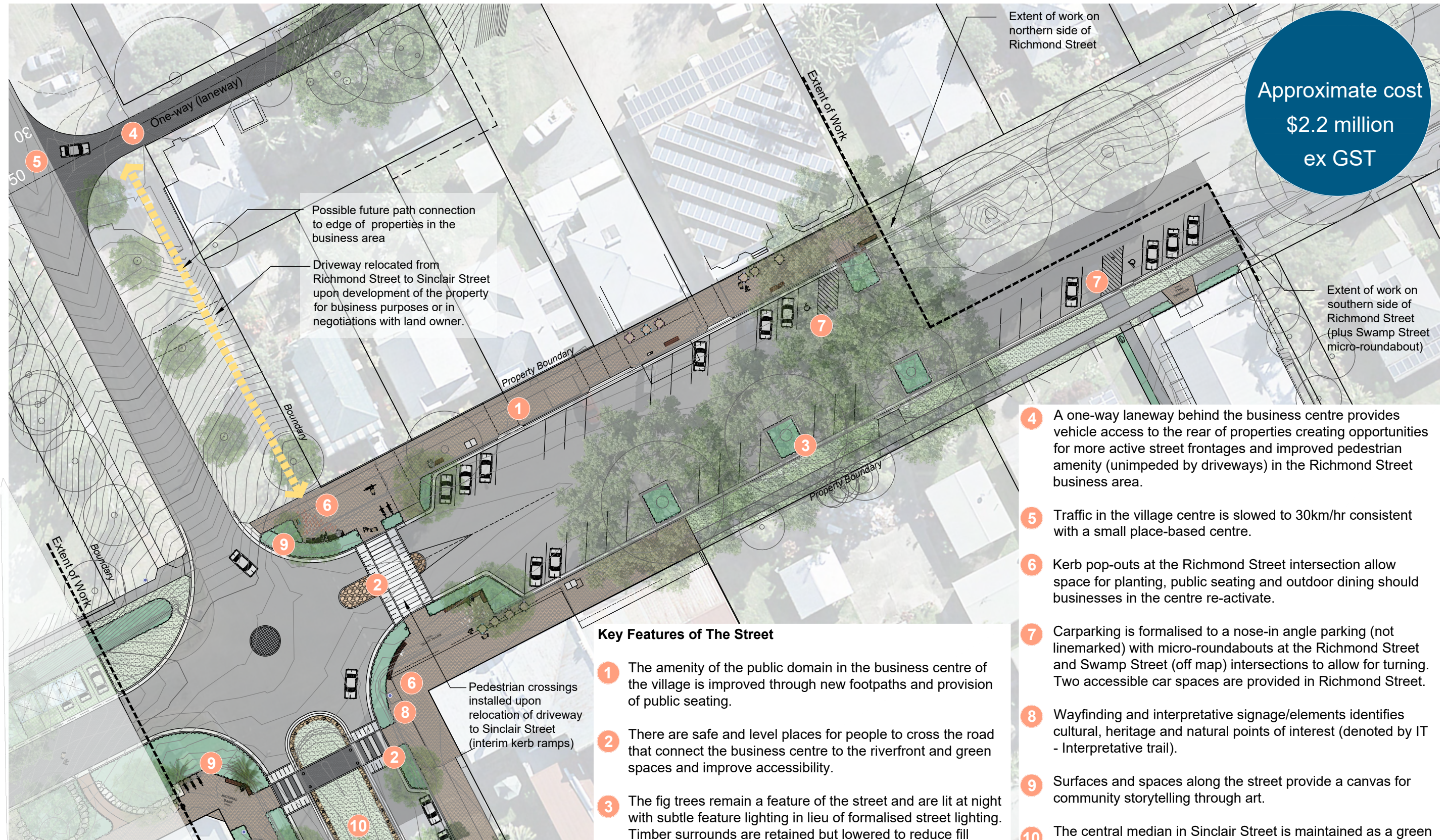


All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - THE STREET

Cost estimates are subject to detailed design and include a 20% contingency.



Approximate cost
\$2.2 million
ex GST

Possible future path connection to edge of properties in the business area

Driveway relocated from Richmond Street to Sinclair Street upon development of the property for business purposes or in negotiations with land owner.

Extent of work on northern side of Richmond Street

Extent of work on southern side of Richmond Street (plus Swamp Street micro-roundabout)

- 4 A one-way laneway behind the business centre provides vehicle access to the rear of properties creating opportunities for more active street frontages and improved pedestrian amenity (unimpeded by driveways) in the Richmond Street business area.
- 5 Traffic in the village centre is slowed to 30km/hr consistent with a small place-based centre.
- 6 Kerb pop-outs at the Richmond Street intersection allow space for planting, public seating and outdoor dining should businesses in the centre re-activate.
- 7 Carparking is formalised to a nose-in angle parking (not linemarked) with micro-roundabouts at the Richmond Street and Swamp Street (off map) intersections to allow for turning. Two accessible car spaces are provided in Richmond Street.
- 8 Wayfinding and interpretative signage/elements identifies cultural, heritage and natural points of interest (denoted by IT - Interpretative trail).
- 9 Surfaces and spaces along the street provide a canvas for community storytelling through art.
- 10 The central median in Sinclair Street is maintained as a green space. Bollards prevent parking on the median.

Key Features of The Street

- 1 The amenity of the public domain in the business centre of the village is improved through new footpaths and provision of public seating.
- 2 There are safe and level places for people to cross the road that connect the business centre to the riverfront and green spaces and improve accessibility.
- 3 The fig trees remain a feature of the street and are lit at night with subtle feature lighting in lieu of formalised street lighting. Timber surrounds are retained but lowered to reduce fill around trunk and buttress roots. Root barriers installed in new works.

Pedestrian crossings installed upon relocation of driveway to Sinclair Street (interim kerb ramps)

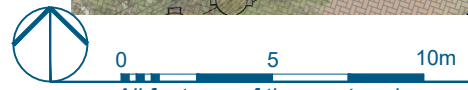
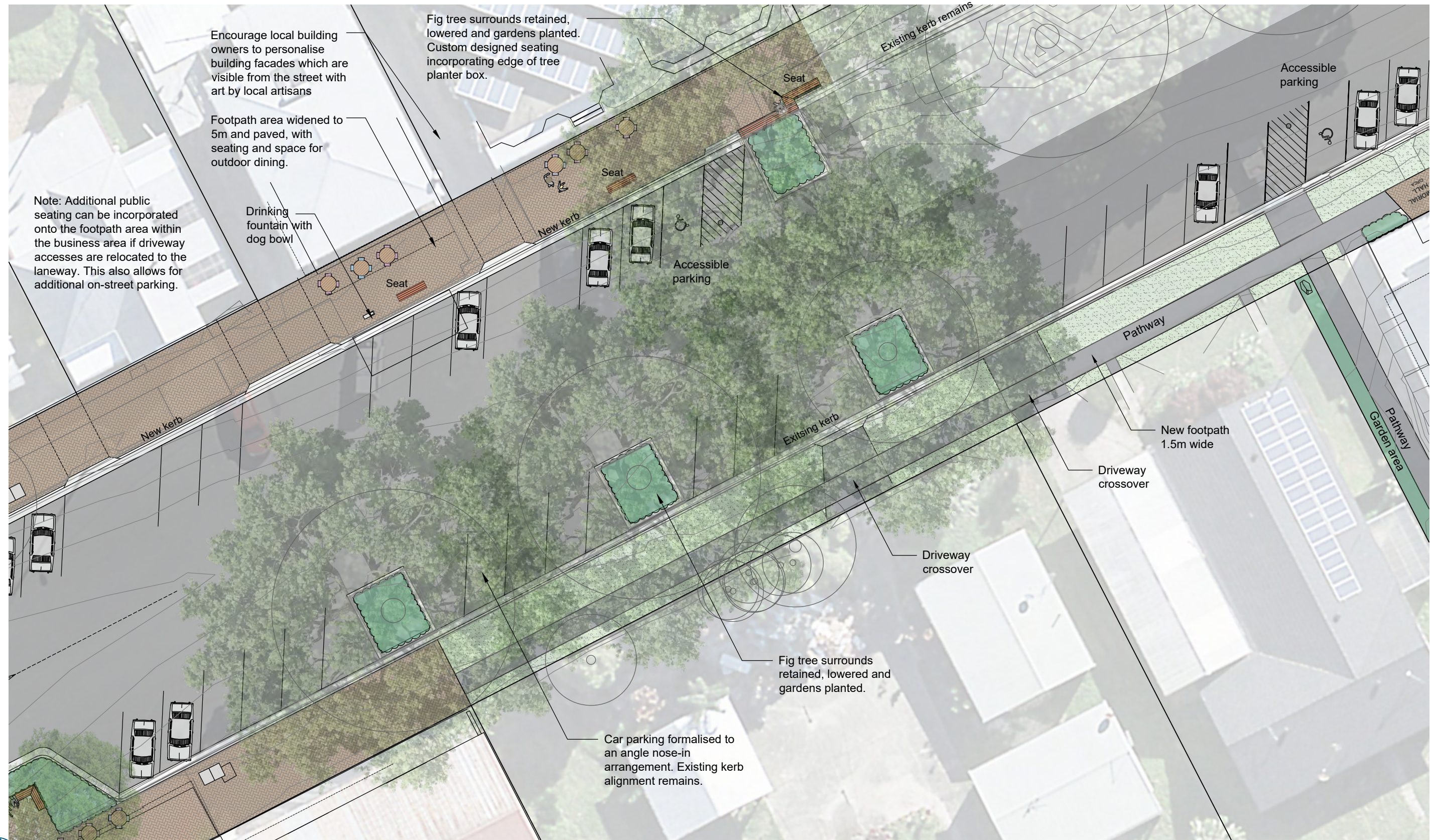


0 5 10 15 25m

All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - THE STREET (ENLARGED PLAN)

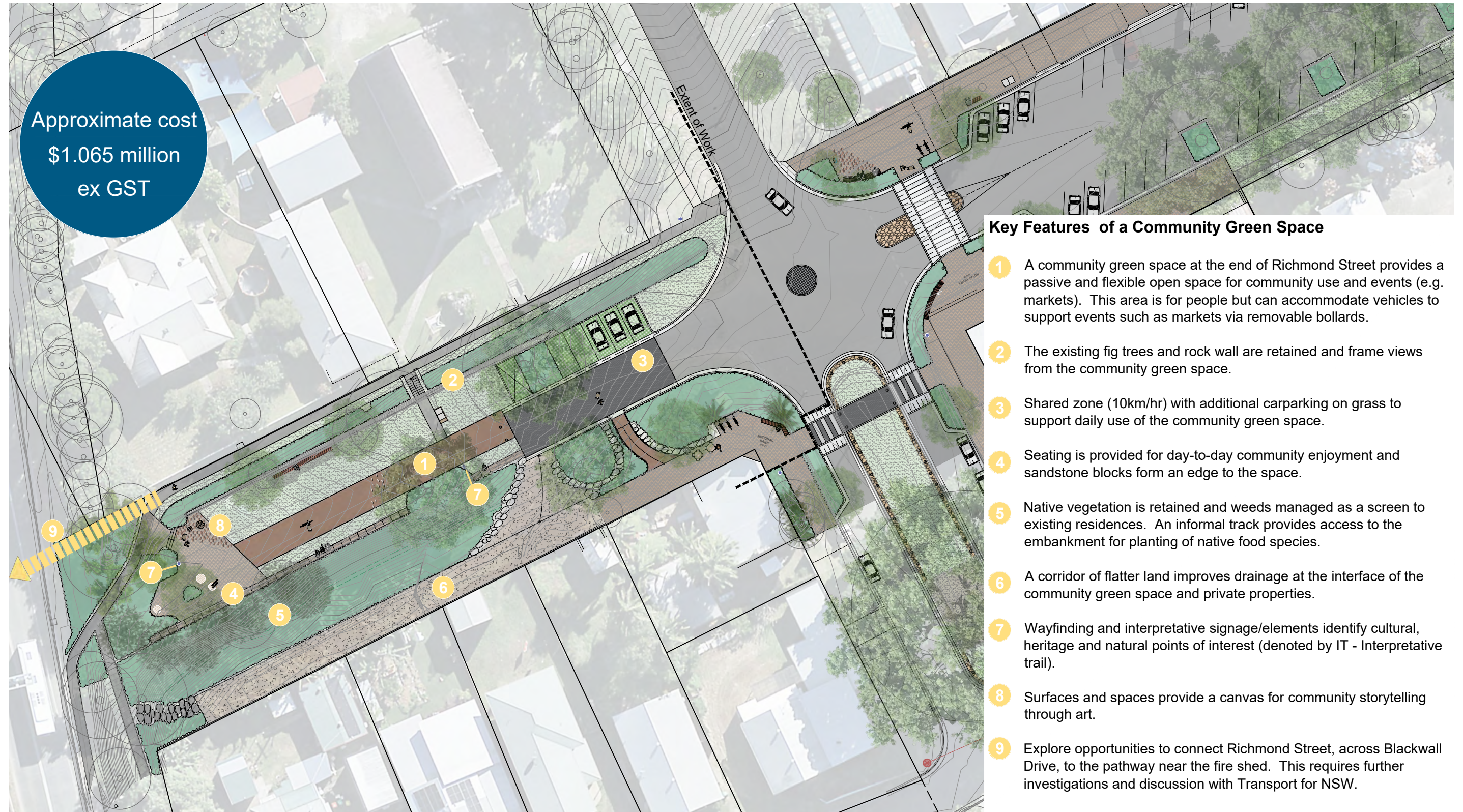


All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - A COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE

Cost estimates are subject to detailed design and include a 20% contingency.



Key Features of a Community Green Space

- 1 A community green space at the end of Richmond Street provides a passive and flexible open space for community use and events (e.g. markets). This area is for people but can accommodate vehicles to support events such as markets via removable bollards.
- 2 The existing fig trees and rock wall are retained and frame views from the community green space.
- 3 Shared zone (10km/hr) with additional carparking on grass to support daily use of the community green space.
- 4 Seating is provided for day-to-day community enjoyment and sandstone blocks form an edge to the space.
- 5 Native vegetation is retained and weeds managed as a screen to existing residences. An informal track provides access to the embankment for planting of native food species.
- 6 A corridor of flatter land improves drainage at the interface of the community green space and private properties.
- 7 Wayfinding and interpretative signage/elements identify cultural, heritage and natural points of interest (denoted by IT - Interpretative trail).
- 8 Surfaces and spaces provide a canvas for community storytelling through art.
- 9 Explore opportunities to connect Richmond Street, across Blackwall Drive, to the pathway near the fire shed. This requires further investigations and discussion with Transport for NSW.



0 5 10 15 25m

All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

The Vision

MASTER PLAN UP CLOSE - A COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE (ENLARGED PLAN SHOWING POSSIBLE MARKET LAYOUT)



0 5 10m

All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

The Vision

THE GENERAL 'LOOK AND FEEL'

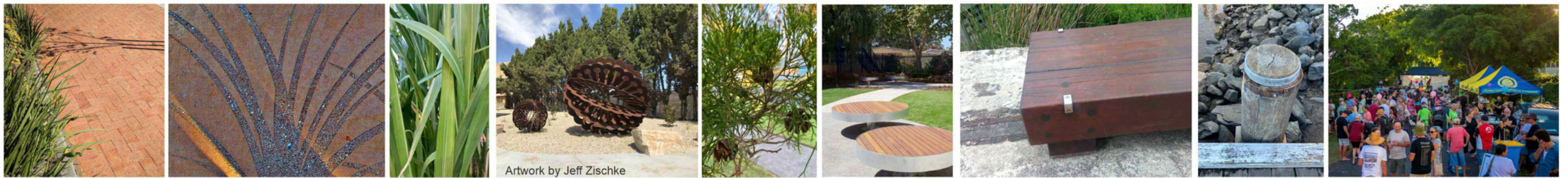
'Connecting to the River'



'The Street'



'A Community Green Space'



Artwork by Jeff Zischke

Imagery is intended to demonstrate the look and feel of the proposed work and does not represent exact proposed materials and finishes.



0 5 10m

All features of the master plan are subject to further detailed investigations, design and approvals.

Implementation

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND QUICK WINS

At the community design charette, the group identified a number of small ideas (quick wins) that they would be prepared to implement to assist with working towards their community vision. The purpose of enabling these ideas was to empower the community to come together, share stories, and to support and learn from each other, building community capacity and a legacy in memory or physical place.

These projects were community initiatives encouraged and supported by Ballina Shire Council through a variety of government funding streams. The following projects were implemented in 2023 from this process:

- Temporary seating - Council's 'parklet', a mobile community seating pod was placed in Richmond Street to provide temporary public seating and a community gathering space.
- Community Feast (free event) - Community members came together, after some time apart, at the War Memorial Hall in June 2023 to share stories over local food. This community initiative was intended to support social recovery in the absence of community meeting places since the flood.
- Cultural Language Workshops (free event) - A strong recurring theme of the design charette was connecting to the cultural foundations of Wardell and the local people. Two, 8 week programs of Nyangbal / Bundjalung language workshops were held to share cultural language and awareness.
- Mural Art (free holiday workshops) - Local youth who attended the design charette wanted to make Wardell more creative and interesting. The community, through Wardell Public School and Wardell CORE collaborated to produce mural art on panels which are installed in the streetscape.



Photo Source: Wardell Connect Facebook page



Photo Source: Wardell Connect Facebook page



COSTS

Council has allocated grant funding of \$900,000 towards works in Wardell to revitalise the village centre. Through extensive community engagement, this Draft Master Plan outlines three project focus areas where this money could be spent. Some options exceed the grant funding amount and would require further consideration of the Council to fully fund. Alternatively, a select or reduced scope of works within these options, matching the funding amount, could be implemented (e.g. part of the street instead of all of the street).

Community engagement during the public exhibition will seek comment on the preferred area for which to spend the funding. It should be noted that the funding is subject to a deadline necessitating quick decision making regarding the preferred option and scope of work.

'Connecting to the River'

Pathway public access to the river front, timber boardwalk connection, picnic facilities, wayfinding, art, Sinclair Street seating and riverfront parkland entry node.

Approximate cost: \$1,065,000 (Ex GST)

'The Street'

New footpaths, public seating and furniture, safer places for people to cross the road, slower speeds, fig tree lighting, laneway to rear of properties, kerb popouts and landscaping, stormwater improvements, parking accessibility, wayfinding and interpretative signage and art.

Approximate cost: \$2,200,000 (Ex GST)

'Community Green Space'

A flexible space for public use and events, shared and slow zone, public seating, weed management, native plantings, drainage works, wayfinding and interpretative signage and art.

Approximate cost: \$1,065,000 (Ex GST)



Where to next?

Feedback - Public Exhibition

The Draft Master Plan was placed on public exhibition in October 2023 to obtain further feedback from the community relating to the content of the master plan and the construction priorities.

Final Master Plan Adoption

Feedback received as a part of this exhibition process was considered and the master plan finalised. The final Draft Master Plan will be presented to Council for adoption and identification of the key scope of work to be constructed with the stage 1 funding. All other works are unfunded.

Implementation of Priority Work

The works identified to form the scope to be built with the remaining grant funding will be designed and constructed or implemented. This may include planning approvals and a tendering process which will be determined upon confirmation of the construction scope.

Future Projects

All other works currently remain unfunded.

References

Ballina Shire Council, 2015, *Wardell Strategic Plan 2015 - 2035*

Ballina Shire Council, 2015, *Wardell Planning and Environment Study 2015*

Place Score, 2022, *Before Investment 2022, Impact Maximiser Report, Richmond Street Wardell Village*

Place Score, 2023, *Wardell Village Revitalisation Workshop*

NSW Department of Planning and Environment, 2022, *North Coast Regional Plan 2041*

Acknowledgements

Council acknowledges and thanks the Wardell and surrounding community for the extensive input provided towards the preparation of the Draft Master Plan - Wardell Village Centre Revitalisation.

Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and Copyright Notice

ICIP and copyright of the Aboriginal content reproduced in this document is held by the Indigenous contributor/s. Permission to reproduce elsewhere should be sought from the relevant custodian.



Ballina Shire Council

40 Cherry Street Ballina NSW 2478
p: 1300 864 444 e: council@ballina.nsw.gov.au

ballina.nsw.gov.au