

SITE B

CASTLE HILL PLANNING PROPOSAL

CLIENT:

QIC

30 JUNE 2025

STATUS	PP SUBMISSION
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PREPARED BY	GF EJ
APPROVED BY	NB

ASPECT Studios

ASPECT Studios acknowledges the Bidjigal people, the traditional owners of the land where Castle Hill is situated and we pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.



Document History & Status					
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Context

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC) (the Proponent) to support a Planning Proposal (PP) for amend The Hills Local Environmental Plan 2019 in relation to 17-25 Castle Street, Castle Hill (the Site).

The PP will facilitate the development of the Site to accommodate a well-designed, mixed-use neighbourhood that contributes positively to the Castle Hill Strategic Centre. It will deliver a public benefit to the community through the provision of high-quality and diverse housing within walking distance of amenities, the Castle Towers Shopping Centre and the Castle Hill Metro Station. It will also provide the growing community with a new public open space integrated with the surrounding pedestrian network.

The PP will complement the transforming urban environment of Castle Hill, spurred by the nearby Castle Hill Metro Station, the Pennant Street Target Area and the vision for the Castle Hill North Precinct.

OVERVIEW

This report has been prepared as part of the PP documentation for Site B Castle Hill. ASPECT Studios was engaged by QIC to undertake the landscape and public domain component of the design. Aspect collaborated with Hatch and CHC in the development of the PP concept.

PROPOSED LEP AMENDMENTS AND INDICATIVE MASTER PLAN

The Planning Proposal is supported by an Initial Public Benefit Offer to support the delivery of the new public park. It is accompanied by an indicative Master Plan that sets out the development vision for the site, including:

- Conceptual design of the new public park and public domain connections
- Indicative vehicular connections to Showground Road, Kentwell Avenue and Castle Street and proposed internal street layout

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The proposed landscape treatment has been designed in accordance with;

- Hills Future 2036 Local Strategic Planning Statement, The Hills Shire Council, Oct 2019
- Environment Strategy, The Hills Shire Council, Oct 2019
- The Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012 Part C Section 3 Landscaping Process

Introduction

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Castle Hill Strategic Centre includes parcels of land in the heart of the centre that when developed will support growth and future viability of the core centre.

Refurbishment and renewal of existing areas of the centre should:

- Place importance of high quality open space to underpin the success of future developments; and
- Look to improve the quality, character and pedestrian experience of the urban centre.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is bounded by Showground Road, Kentwell Avenue, Castle Street and Pennant Street, Castle Hill. Generally square in shape and is largely undeveloped. A row of existing single storey houses is located along the site's Kentwell Street frontage. An existing nine storey building containing the Castle Hill Library and residential dwellings is located on the same block as the site on the corner of the Castle Street and Pennant Street. The site's centre primarily comprises vacant land with scattered remnant vegetation, particularly toward to the southwest of the site.

The site's topography gradually declines from the Showground Road and Pennant Street corner at the site's south toward the Kentwell Avenue and Castle Street corner in the north. The site does not contain any heritage items nor is it located in a heritage conservation area.

'Site B', the QIC landholding, lies to the south-western corner of the existing Castle Towers Shopping Centre and the Castle Hill Metro Station. The site has a total area of 39,388 sqm.

PROPOSAL

The proposal will make a significant contribution to the urban fabric by:

- Supporting pedestrian connectivity in a generally car-dominated precinct, by connecting the neighborhoods to the urban centre.
- Providing a focus on streets as social space and community meeting place to improve the user experience between the development and the urban centre promotes wellbeing and social connection. The currently limited open spaces will be vastly improved though the developments high quality additional and varied range of open spaces.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES

Successful strategies should:

- Provide linked interconnections that encourage pedestrian movement and place activation.
- Provide specific design solutions that create unique public space and landscape character to reflect various uses.
- Create a unified and consistent urban character across the QIC sites and the urban centre.

LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW

Key elements of the landscape design are:

- An Urban park approx. 4,200m² featuring an urban forest, play space and recreation.
- Kentwell link, a key pedestrian link and shared driveway.
- Showground link, key through-site link. Shared vehicle driveway and pedestrian zone with pocket park pedestrian permeability.
- Greenway link key through-site link improving pedestrian permeability.
- Urban Plaza north-facing shared zone for outdoor cafe seating and retail frontage.
- New internal road network, high quality, robust and durable public realm streetscape treatments consistent with Hills Shire Council standards.
- Water sensitive urban design measures in the streetscape including bioswales and permeable pavements.
- Habitat creation through use of indigenous plant species.
- Mitigation of heat island effects through significant number of new proposed native trees.
- Promoting walking and cycling through provision of high-quality and generous footpaths with seating at regular intervals and bike racks.
- Podiums and green roof system on every building maximize to reduce heat island effect and improve habitat.



Context Diagram | *not to scale*

Existing Public Domain Conditions

The site is situated on the corner of Showground Road to the south which has recently been upgraded with new footpath and turning lane onto Pennant Street to the east, both are busy five lane roads. Castle Street to the north is a key two lane street connecting to the high school and other amenities. Kentwell Avenue to the west, is a small local dead end street.



Existing Site Conditions | *Castle Street - North*



Existing Site Conditions | *Pennant Street - West*



Existing Site Conditions | *Kentwell Avenue - East*



Existing Site Conditions | *Showground Road - South*

A New Urban Public Space

As illustrated on the adjacent plan there are limited number of existing open spaces in the broader precinct, however these offer limited recreation and park amenity (see images).

A new urban park for Castle Hill is proposed as part of the development as well as smaller pocket parks. The central, urban park is new public open space in the heart of Castle Hill, with no other significant open space in the vicinity. Green links will connect into the adjacent residential precincts through the Kentwell and Greenway links.

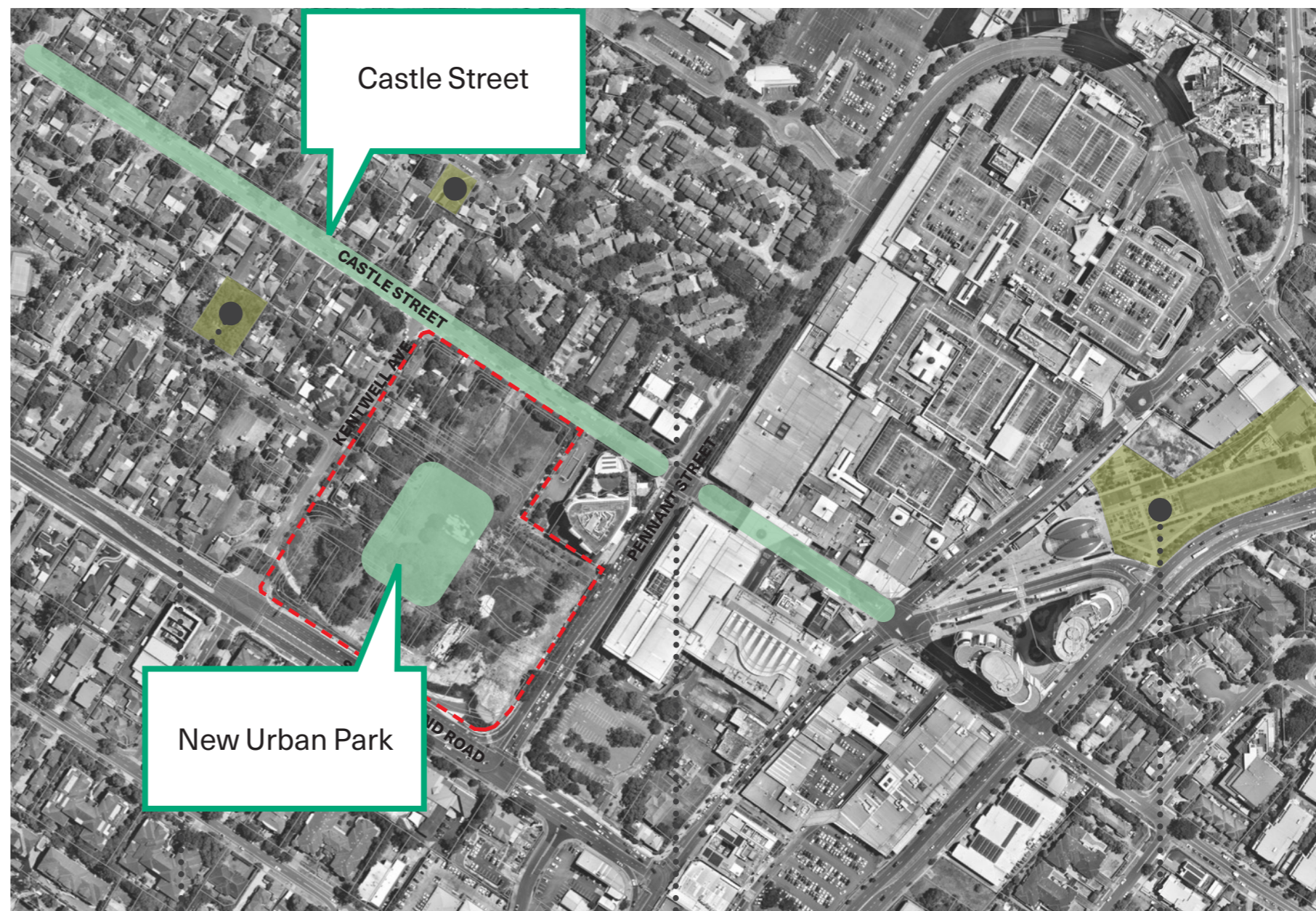
The revitalisation of Castle Street offers the opportunity to provide public domain upgrades and additions that extend the network of existing open space and provide improved connections to future open spaces.

New generous green setbacks to Castle Street will feature:

- A wide furniture/ planting zone that allows for regular spaced furniture and tree planting behind the kerb.
- Bike path and active transport lane.
- Paved roadway/ shared way condition that enables a safe, slow speed, pedestrian prioritised environment.
- Wide mass-planted setback with street trees; creating a comfortable pedestrian environment with shade.

Key

- Project Boundary
- Existing Open Spaces
- New Public Space



Worthington Avenue Reserve



Larool Crescent Reserve



Castle Hill Station - Arthur Whitling Park





Public and Active Transport Network

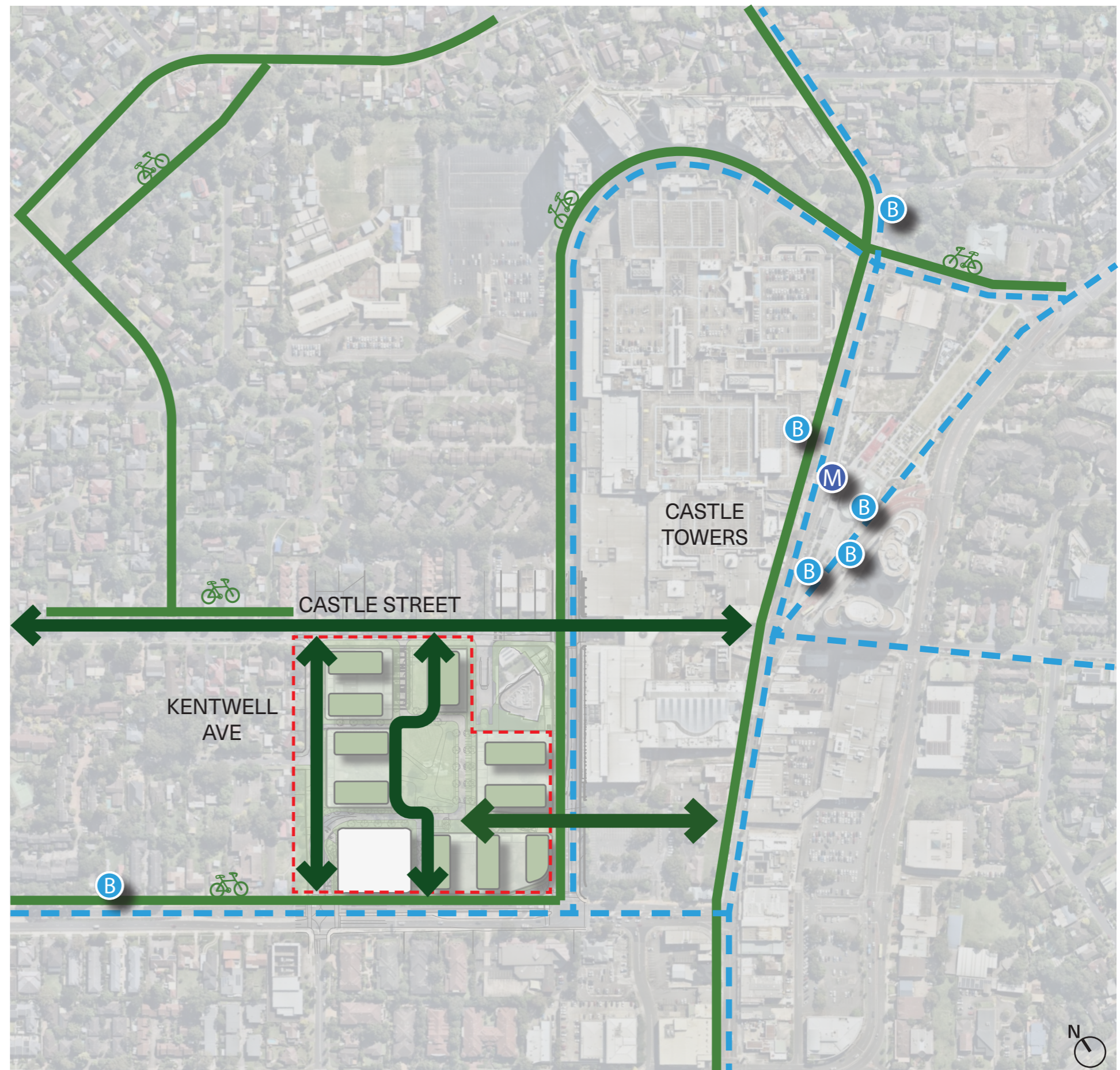
The proposed street and open space network for Site B has been designed to ensure clear and direct connections through the site, and connecting to broader pedestrian and cycle networks. The key principles that have guided the design of open spaces and streets are;

- Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, encourage use, and reduce reliance on vehicles.
- Clear and direct path networks link to key destinations and public transport nodes.
- Provide generous pedestrian and cycle paths on Kentwell Avenue and through-site-link east of Woodward.



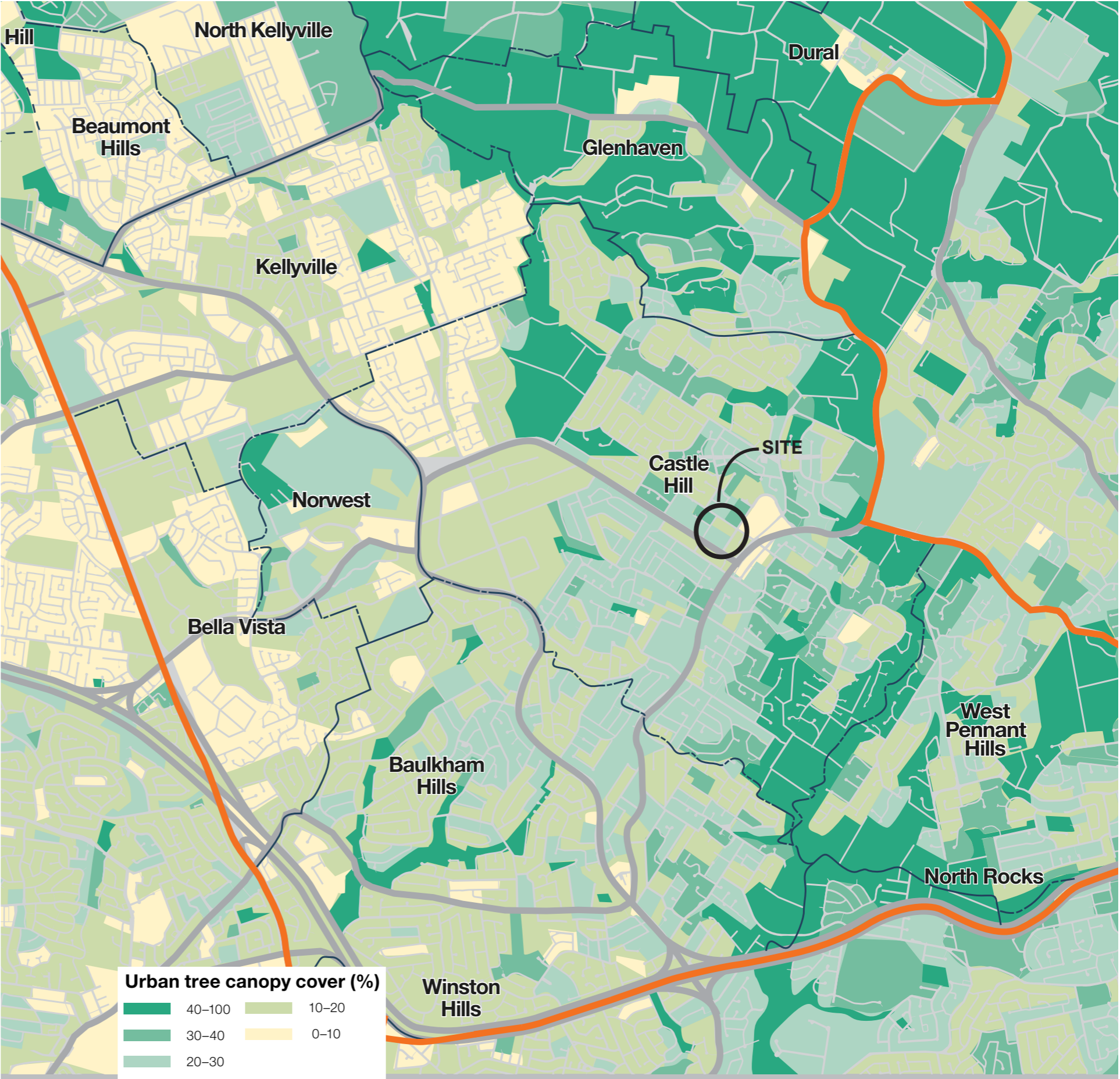
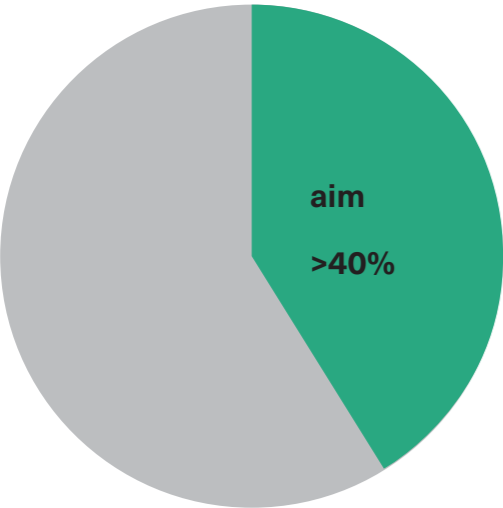
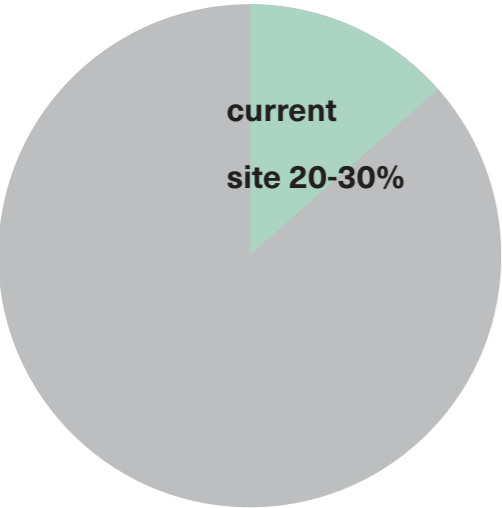
KEY

-  Future Council Cycle Routes
-  Key proposed pedestrian and cycle links
-  Bus Routes
-  Site Boundary



Maximise Canopy Cover

The site currently has a 20-30% canopy coverage.
 More than replenish, we aim to **exceed the canopy cover 40%.**



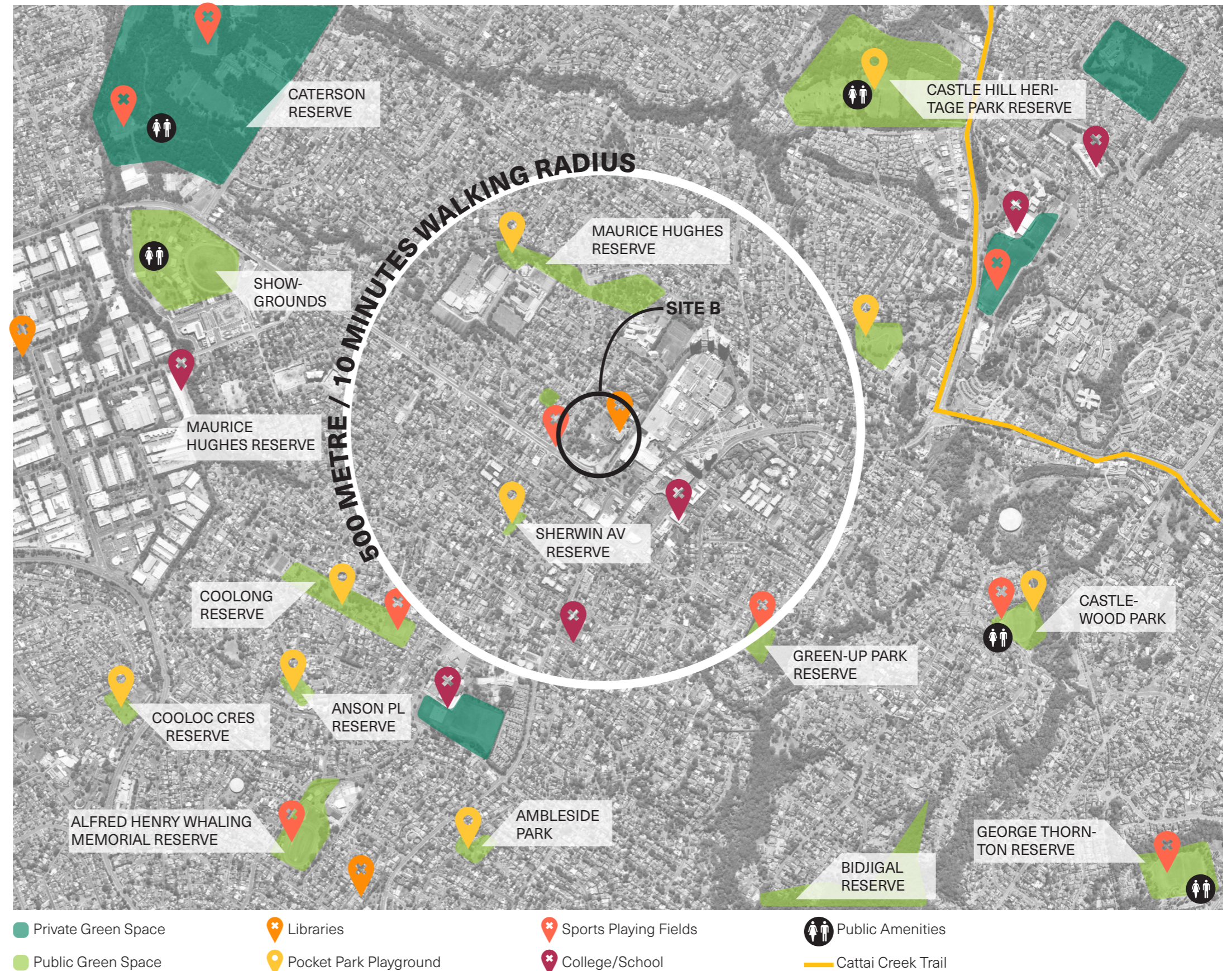
Extracts from Hills Future 2036 - Local Strategic Planning Statement

Site Context | Open Green Space

Site B is located adjacent to a number of schools, a library and in close proximity to Castle Towers Shopping Village. Existing open space within 10min walking distance is limited and consists of unprogrammed open turf areas with no real amenity and limited sporting facilities lacking variety.

The new open space at Site B will be an important passive and active recreation space for:

- New residential community on Site B and adjoining developments to gather, connect and establish a community.
- A place-focused on providing health and leisure activities for all ages and a wide variety of uses, in particular, teens with the inclusion of the Woodward proposal, which will activate and complement the Site B development proposal in the interim.
- Improved canopy cover and assist in mitigating heat-island effects within Castle Hill.



Design Intent and Principles

Plenty of inclusive outdoor

**community
focused** zones which
are active, flexible and
accessible

Providing a health focused
and interesting precinct for
active recreation to
appeal to local youth

Promoting healthy
population and air quality
with a **well
connected** pedestrian
and cycle focus

High quality and durable
materials combined with
forward design thinking to
future proof the
development

Enhance biodiversity by
retaining and increasing
tree canopy and WSUD
focus, for a **green and
sustainable**
development

Masterplan

VISION STATEMENT

Site B will be an urban oasis, embracing green infrastructure through water quality and stormwater management, living systems that are integrated seamlessly into the architectural fabric, open spaces are designed to cool the environment and improve biodiversity and habitat, and where people have access to a wide range of green spaces.



Proposed Landscape Approach: Key Moves

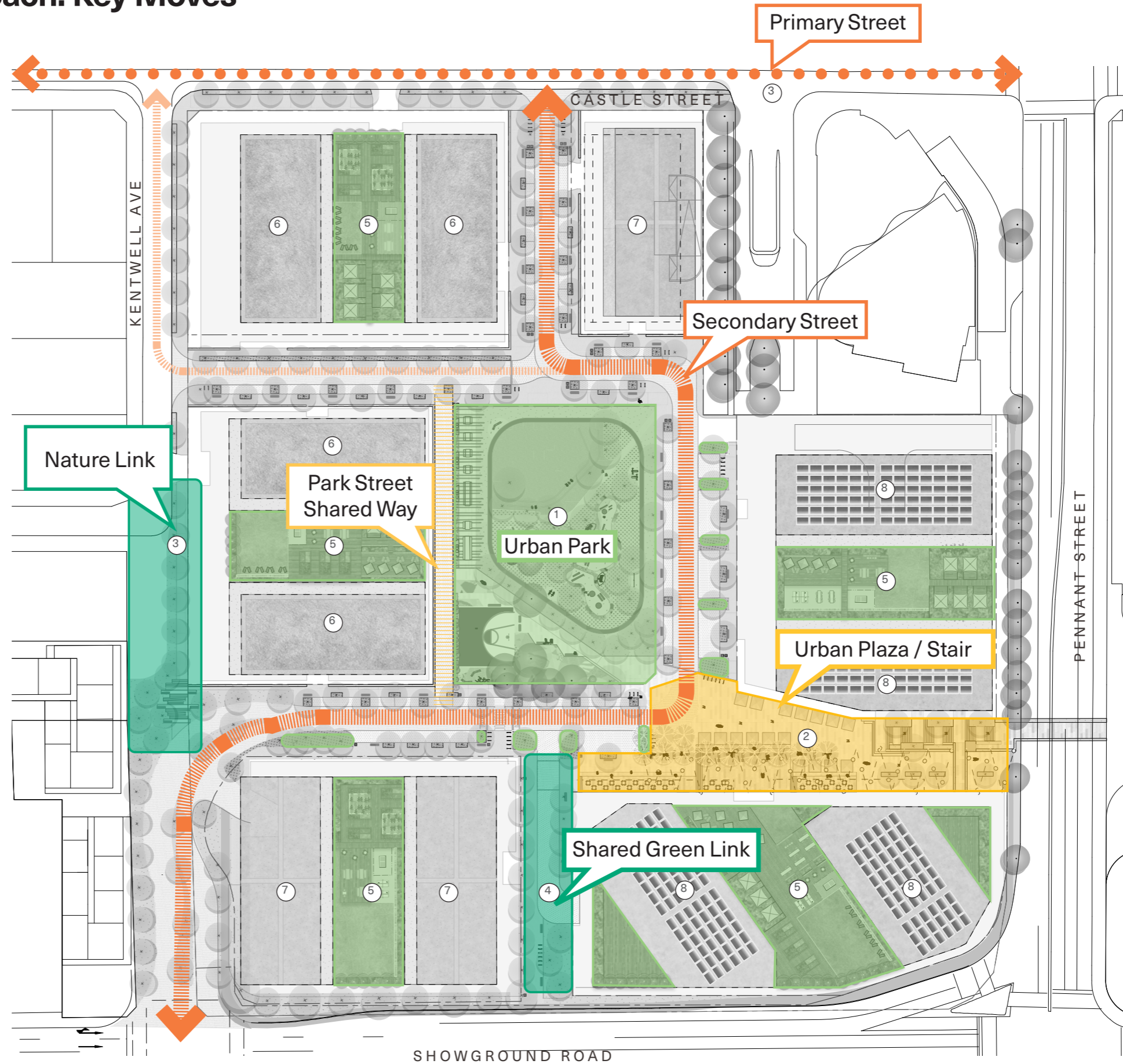
The landscape approach will focus on safe, legible connections throughout the site, and maximising the provision of high-amenity open space to complement the proposed urban park and plaza offering.

The approach is structured by six key moves:

- Castle Street upgrade
- Urban park
- Urban plaza and stair
- Nature link
- Shared green links
- Internal streets

KEY

1	Urban Park
2	Open plaza and stair
3	Nature link
4	Shared green links
5	Podium Landscape
6	Accessible Green Roof
7	Green Roof
8	Biosolar Roof



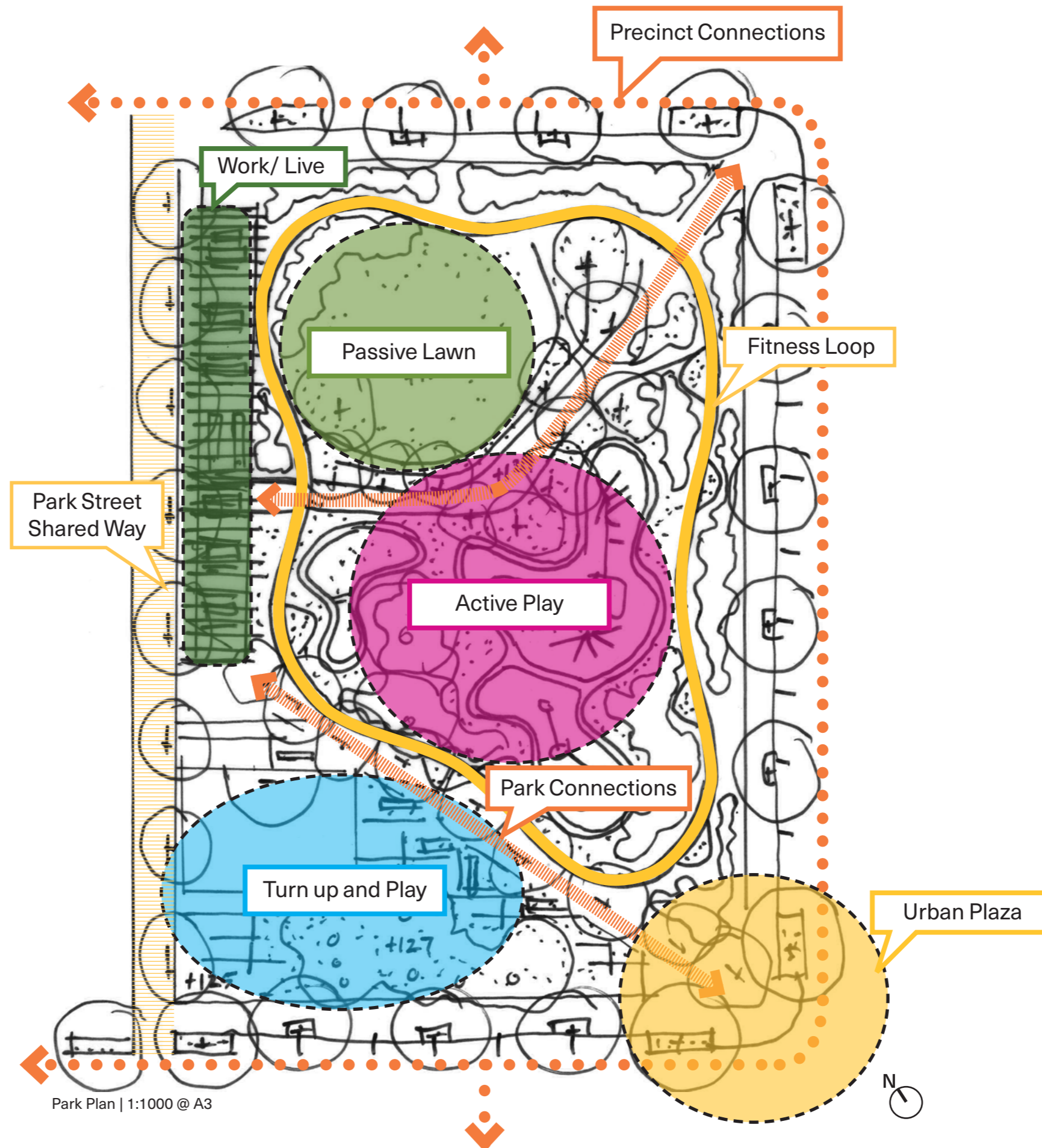
Urban Park

The landscape concept has been driven by the need for an urban parkland asset for the area with significant recreational green space as a part of the Site B development.

A diverse space featuring an array of recreation activities and events, multiple uses for leisure activity, new connectivity to the park's passive recreation assets and pedestrianised links to surrounding urban spaces and street network.

The masterplan includes;

- Turn up and play active recreation space expanding the active recreation offer within the adjacent Woodward development.
- An exercise track with integrated workout stations.
- A centrally located nature play space where all age groups are catered for, with a variety of age appropriate equipment.
- A north facing passive lawn space with terraced seating utilising natural landform, that can cater for community events.
- Covered live-work spaces including seating with wi-fi and power, and BBQ and picnic areas.
- New tree planting and garden planting.



Urban Park



Park Plan | 1:1000 @ A3



NOTES

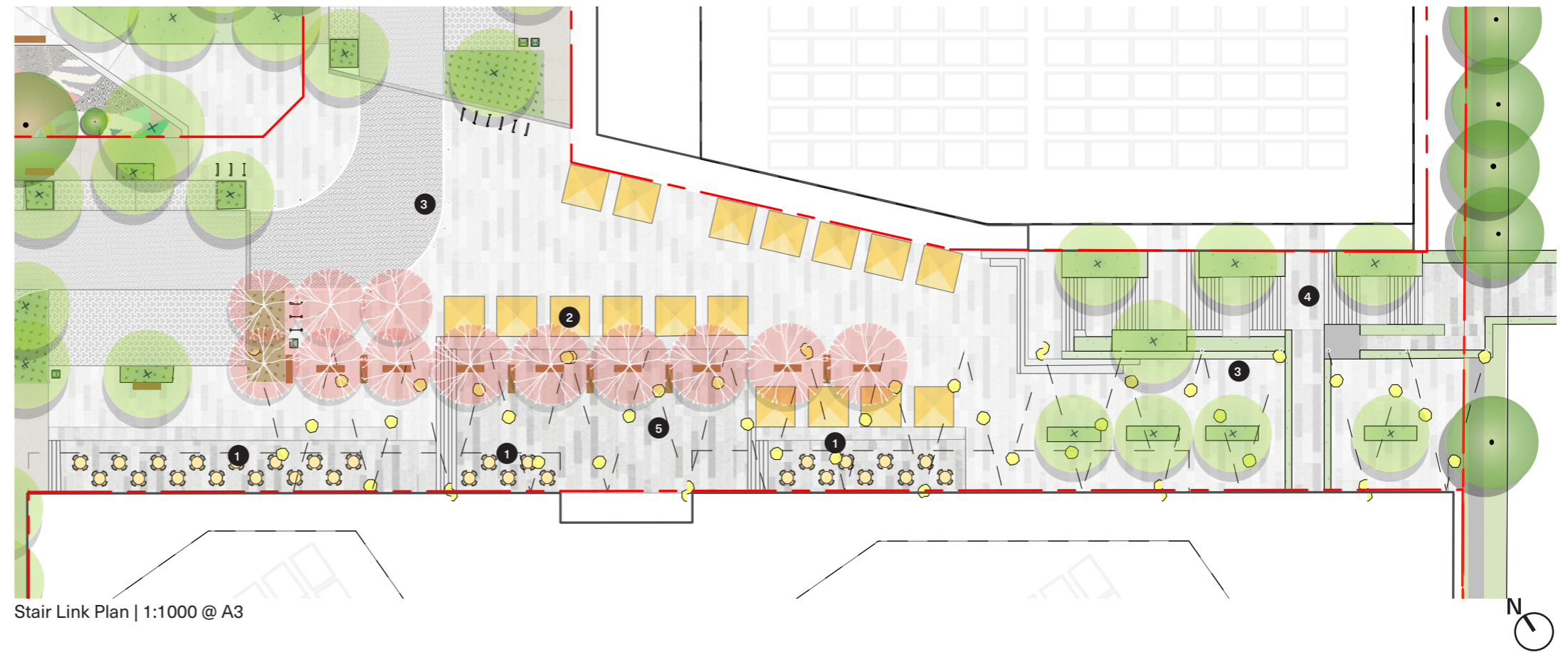
- 1 Open lawn space for multipurpose events surrounded by amphitheatre seating and framed by greenery.
- 2 Extensive play area, natural play theming where all age groups are catered for, with a variety of age appropriate equipment.
- 3 Exercise circuit connects fitness stations with varying equipment around an exercise track.
- 4 Half basketball court and active recreation, handball, fitness, linemarksins with integarted seating.
- 5 Live work area, picnic table and BBQ Area protected under a pergola for a range of social activities and gathering.

Urban Plaza /Pedestrian Stair

An open pedestrian plaza leads to a lane-way that connects to a network of public spaces. The lane-way creates a fine grained link within the development lined with cafe and retail uses, public furniture/ art, and well-considered building interfaces. The public domain is composed of robust, yet beautiful materials. The simplicity of the landscape elements allow the activity of the plaza to take centre stage, and offers opportunity for event/market overlays.

NOTES

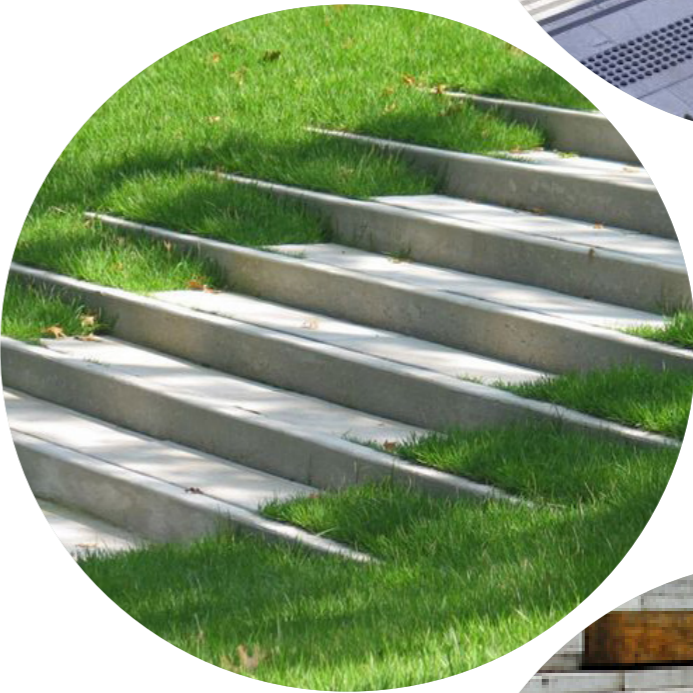
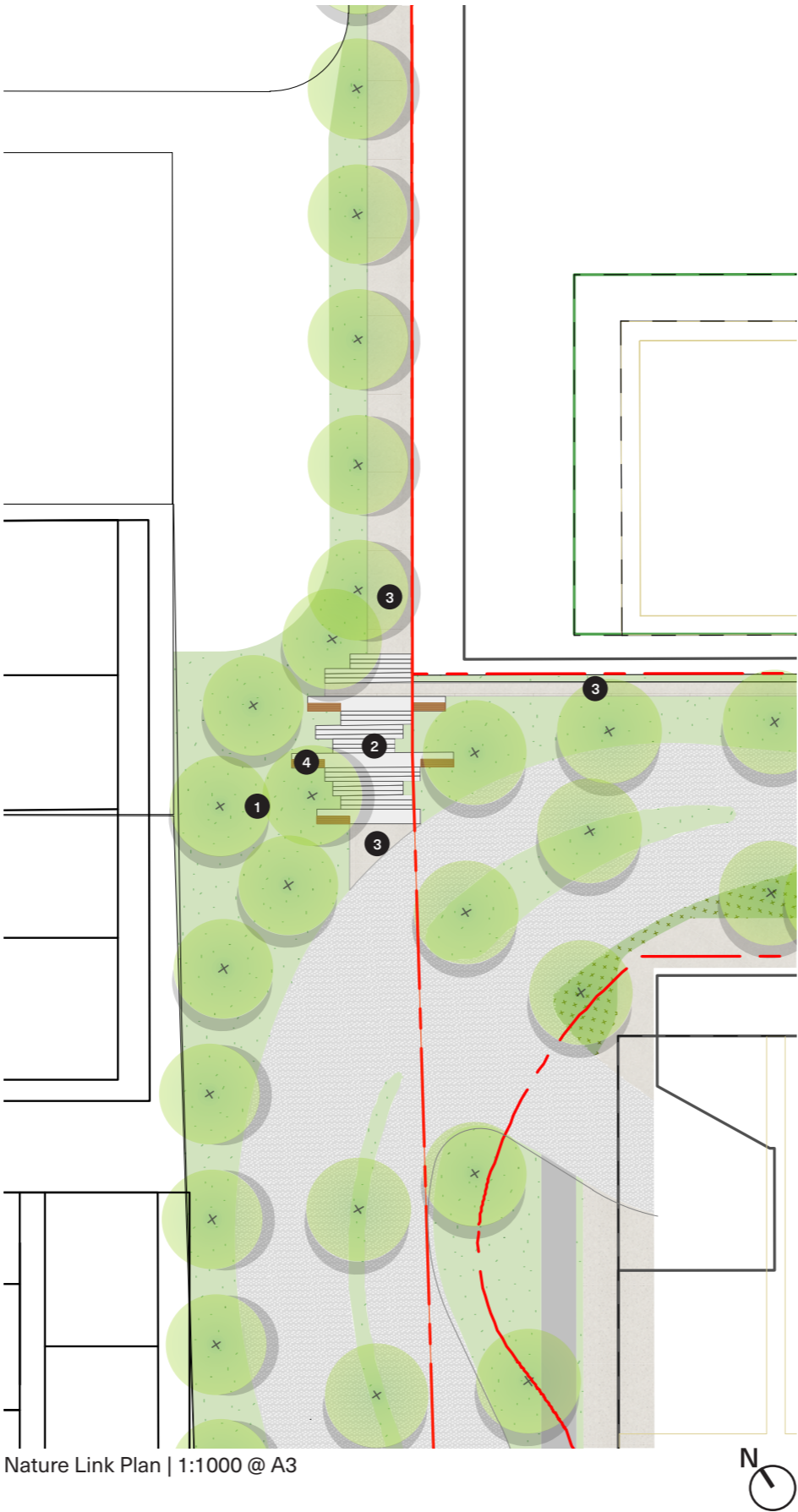
- 1 Cafe/ retail area with terraced seating edge opens up dining opportunities
- 2 Urban plaza captures the northern sun with deciduous trees for shade in summer. Market umbrella overlay to show potential use.
- 3 A clear pedestrian path is maintained through the plaza for access between the park and connection to other developments
- 4 Pedestrian stair integrated with planting and trees incorporates a lift to access adjacent building levels and future pedestrian bridge (delivered in separate PP)
- 5 Catenary lighting brings human scale to the space and atmosphere



Nature Link

Stairs interwoven with landscape planting mediates a steep level change from Kentwell Street to plaza level, dense planting integrates the concrete stair treads dispersed with seating elements, to create a peaceful place to rest or wander through as people connect through the site.

NOTES	
1	Mass planting with trees creates a dense landscape to mediate the steep level change
2	Stair link to Kentwell street - concrete steps integrated with planting
3	In situ concrete footpath connects the stairs at each level
4	Bench seating dispersed among the steps provides a place to rest along the way



Internal Streets

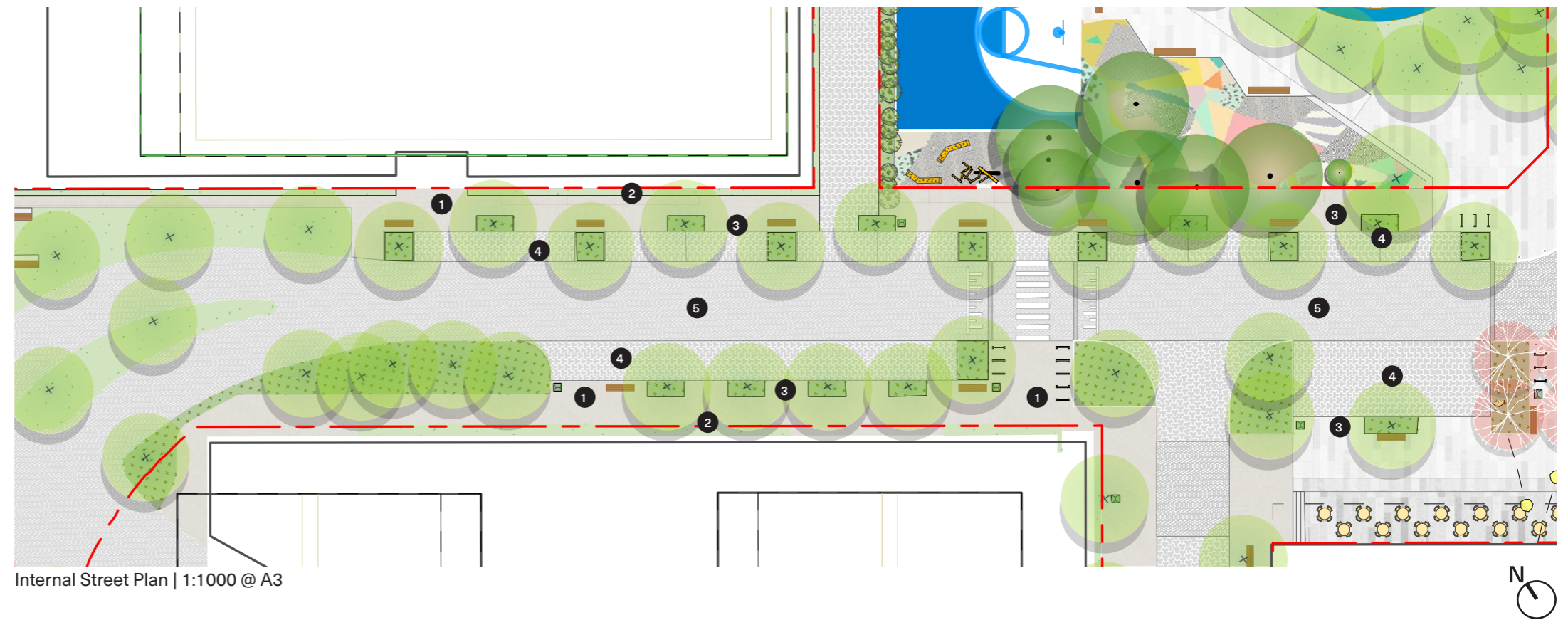
Local Street/ Urban Street/ Castle Street Link

Internal streets vary in width depending on car parking either side 14.7m, 18m and 20.3m. The proposed street arrangement will be consistent for the internal roads across Site B as a whole. They have been designed to ensure;

- Generous footpaths are provided on both sides of the carriageway.
- A 1200mm wide furniture/ planting zone that allows for regular spaced furniture and tree planting behind the kerb
- Parking on street at 2.3m width to align with Council standards. Bio-swale tree pits within the parking lane provide a second staggered row of trees and collect and filter stormwater from road surfaces.
- A 500mm width buffer planting zone to boundaries to allow for planting to mediate built form

NOTES

1	Insitu concrete footpath. Width varies 1300-2600mm. 2600mm path on southern side of street becomes shared path further east.
2	Mass planting buffer building setback 600mm width
3	1200mm wide furniture and tree planting zone with permeable paving
4	Parking Lane with trees in raingardens and permeable paving. 2300mm wide except where bus stop located increased to 3000mm width
5	Carriageway



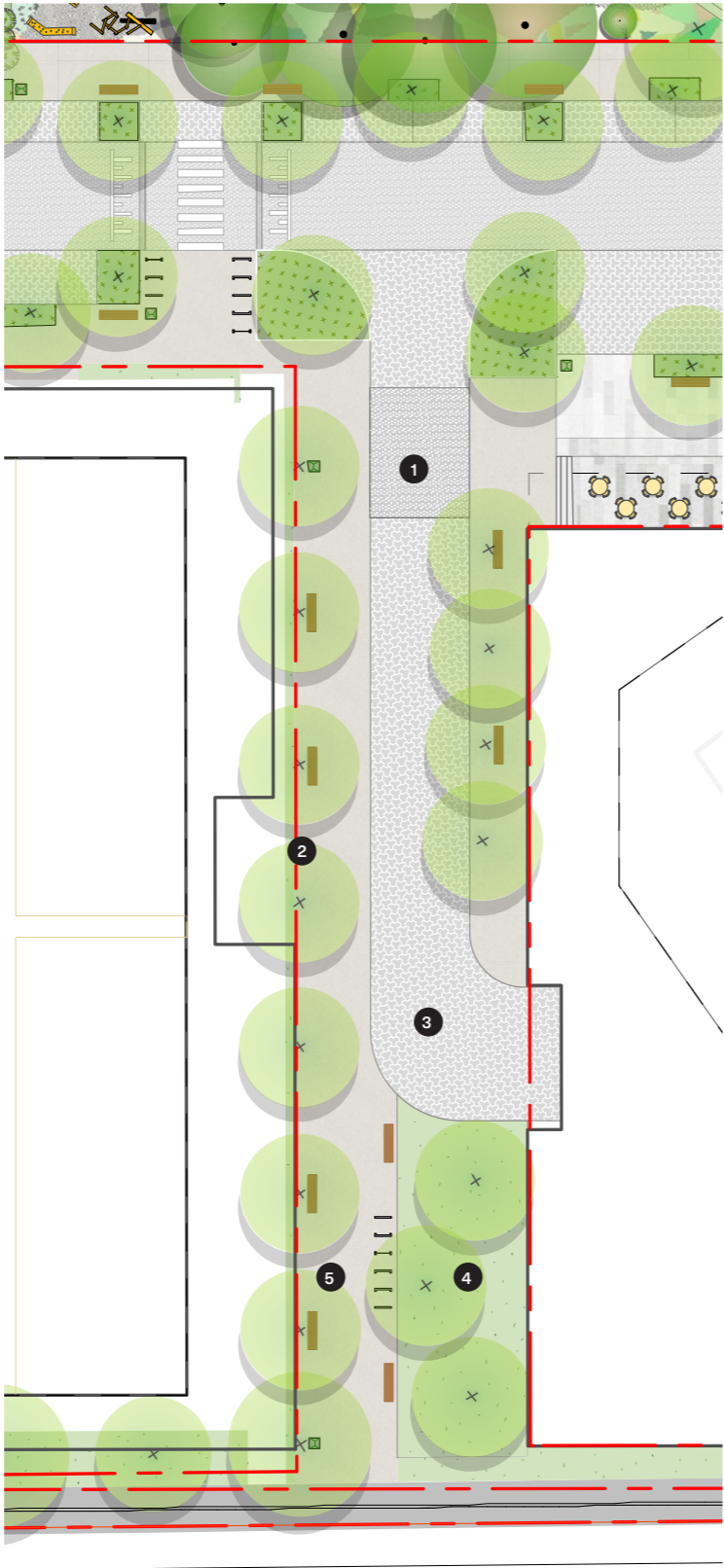
Internal Street Plan | 1:1000 @ A3



Shared Link

Access way 12.9m wide between Superlot D - street design is consistent with internal street principles. Permeable paving, rain gardens and landscape buffer edge the paved share way street. A pocket park on the southern portion beyond the basement entry.

NOTES	
1	Paved share way street scape
2	Mass planted setback to building with trees
3	Permeable paved road surface
4	Local pocket park
5	Flexible paved area with seating and feature trees



Access way | 1:1000 @ A3



Podium Landscape

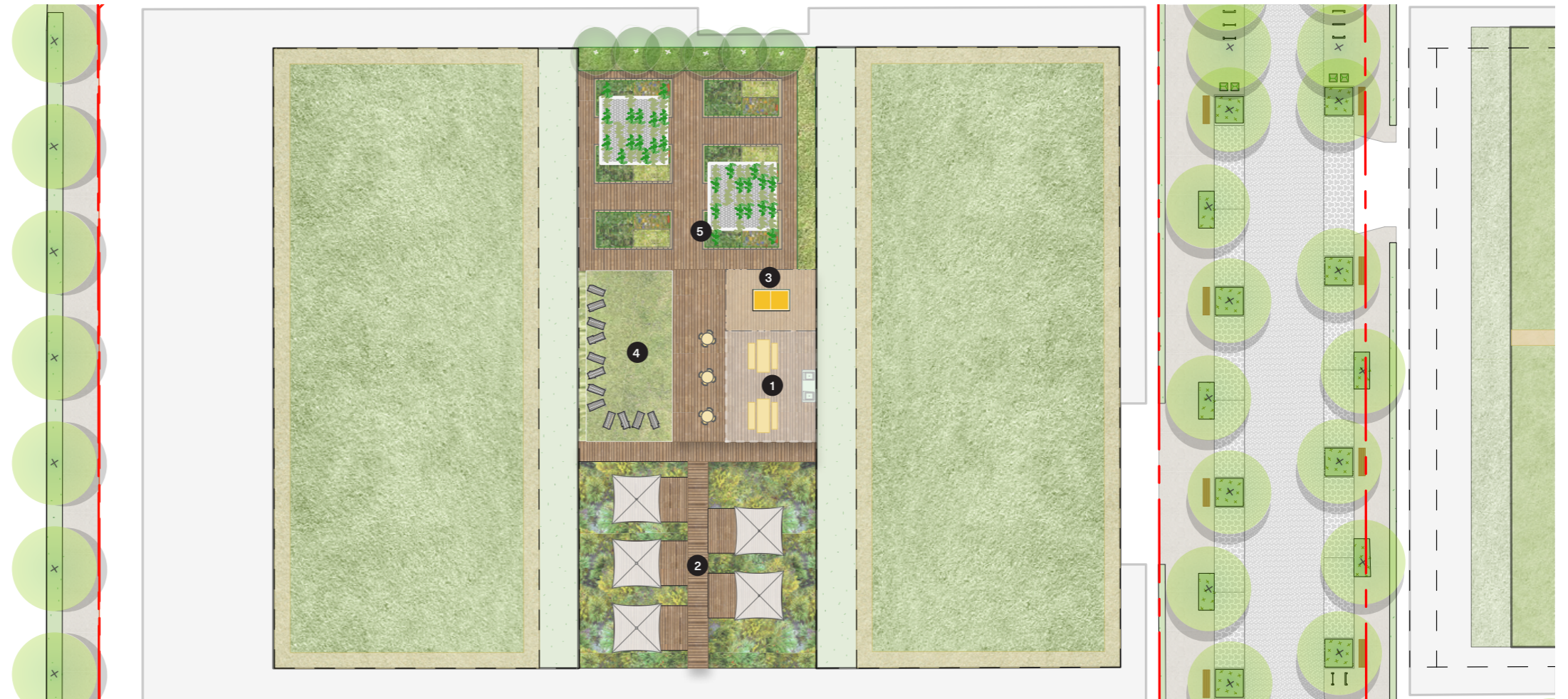
The podium provides generous spaces for private shared use through an arrangement of outdoor spaces. Gathering spaces including picnic tables that sit adjacent to BBQ's, a mix of fixed and flexible furniture, active recreation areas, flexible open lawn area for passive recreation and spaces that offer a more quiet place .

Community vegetable gardens, herbs, fruiting vines sit aside trees placed to provide shade, sun and scented gardens.

Planting feature a range of evergreen lush and productive plant species with ample decking allowing maximum flexibility.

NOTES

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Communal congregation areas with generous seating, bbq's and picnic tables. |
| 2 | Quiet landscape areas with dense mass planting for depth and trees to provide shade and a green outlook |
| 3 | Recreational activities, ping pong, table tennis, handball etc |
| 4 | Turf area for passive recreation, flexible activities or seating |
| 5 | Community vegetable gardens, compost bins and work farm to promote sustainability and community |



Podium Plan | 1:1000 @ A3



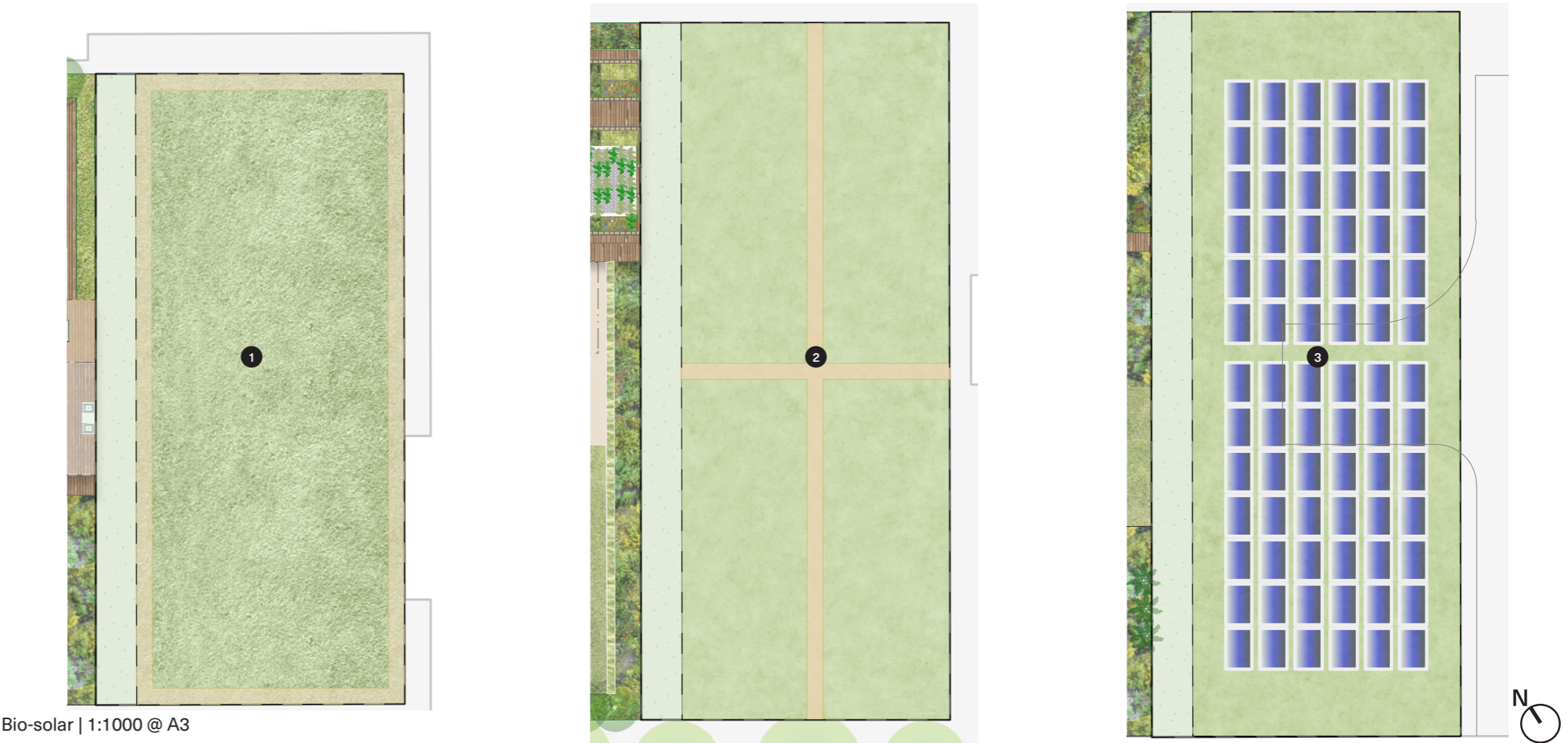
Rooftops

Rooftop space is envisioned to be optimised by being used as a green roof/ bio-solar/ solar roof.

Green roofs provide niche habitats which encourage biodiversity, can be used for food production, reduce urban heat, enables water recycling, improves air quality, extends roof life, and provides social amenity.

Bio-solar roofs integrate solar power and green roofs technologies to enhance the way the roof can work. Green roofs help to keep ambient temperatures around the panels at the ideal temperature for solar energy production. The diversity of vegetation and fauna using the green roof should increase with the PV panels providing shaded areas underneath and rain run-off creating damper areas to the front and drier areas to the back. This creates a 'habitat mosaic' which allows a wider variety of vegetation to flourish and, in turn, attract a wider range of butterflies, bees, beetles and other species.

NOTES	
1	Accessible green roof - usable outdoor area and for residents to enjoy among planting access to sunlight and views
2	Inaccessible green roof - use of endemic and native plant species to increase biodiversity and reinstate local ecologies
3	Bio-solar - integrate solar power and green roofs technologies enhance the way the roof can work.



Public Realm Planting Palette - Street Scape

All planting is comprised of native plant species selected as appropriate for the location and climatic conditions that changes across the site (wind, high solar exposure, heavy shade).

Tree and understorey planting throughout the site will provide a rich diversity of endemic species. The palette has been developed to create urban ecologies which may provide habitat or food sources for native birds, bees and insects. The planting design will:

- establish a strong local character to the precinct through use of endemic species
- contribute to habitat creation through establishment of local flora that encourages pollinators and large scaled trees for nesting
- be low maintenance and low water use species
- contribute to improving water quality through use of sedges and reeds within raingardens
- ensure sufficient soil volumes to establish large scaled trees
- provide seasonal variation through selection of flowering trees and understory

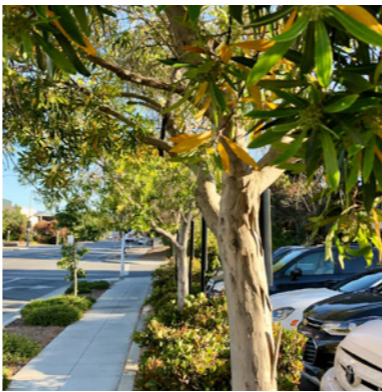
Street trees consist of;

- Melaleuca folribunda- a water tolerant native species to be located within raingardens
- Eucalyptus microcorys - a large scaled endemic tree to be located within central verges as a gateway marker for the precinct
- Waterhousia floribunda- a medium scaled tree with regular habitat to be located along street footpaths
- Tristaniopsis laurina- a small to medium native tree to be located along the eastern side of Woodward and create a pedestrian scaled environment for this future laneway link
- Syzygium leuhmannii- an endemic species that thrives in a variety of climatic condition proposed for the southern side of Woodward to improve the streetscape amenity on Showground Road

TREES



Syzygium leuhmannii



Tristaniopsis laurina



Melaleuca linariifolia



Waterhousia floribunda



Eucalyptus microcorys

MASS PLANTING IN TREE PITS



Grevillea lanigera



Helichrysum italicum



Callistemon 'Little John'



Dianella longifolia



Drosanthemum floribundum



Grevillea 'Aussie Crawl'

WSUD MASS PLANTING IN RAINGARDENS



Carrex appressa



Dianella longifolia



Ficinia nodosa



Lomandra hystrix



Lomandra 'Tanika'



Viola hederacea

Public Realm Planting Palette - Open space

Native Australian plants are a key factor in the selection of the plant species and has strongly influenced the planting character of Site B.

The planting seeks to improve user experience through the following principles:

- Provide shelter and comfort and protection from wind and sun through providing adequate tree canopy cover
- Selection of appropriately scaled tree species which respond to the site and spatial requirements
- Utilise native and endemic plant species where possible
- Create a distinct sense of character throughout the precinct using carefully selected species
- Specific selection of exotic tree species for seasonal colour variation and deciduous character for winter solar access.

Existing tree species have been retained on site where possible in the centre of the site.

Refer to Arborists report for further information on existing trees.

PARK



Dianella longifolia



Myoporum 'Yareena'



Viola hederacea



Brachycombe 'White Delight'



Hibbertia scandens



Dichondra repens



Casuarina Glauca 'Couisin It'



Westringia fruticosa 'Flat'n'Fruity'



Russelia equisetiformis (red)



Callistemon 'White Anzac'



Grevillea 'Moonlight'



Grevillea 'Royal Rambler'

BUILDING BUFFER

DECIDUOUS / COLOURFUL TREES



hardenbergia 'Snow White'



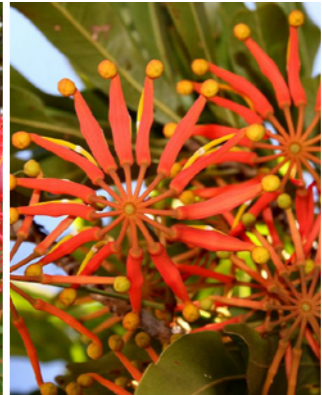
Kennedia rubicunda



Pandorea pandorana



Corymbia ficifolia



Stenocarpus sinuatus



Pyrus ussuriensis

Public Realm Materials - Streetscape



The material palette has been selected to deliver a high-quality, durable and low maintenance public realm.

Water sensitive urban design measures have been implemented through permeable pavements and bioswale tree pits within the parking lanes, as well as a significant amount of softscape areas to verges and building interfaces.

Concrete pavement for footpaths aligns with Hills Shire standards. Width of footpaths vary but are generous at 1300-2600mm wide, encouraging walking and cycling as a priority in the development.


Timber benches are spaced at regular intervals to allow for respite on streets and bins/ bike racks are located at key locations to provide high amenity streetscapes.

PAVING





Insitu concrete footpath (widths vary)

PERMEABLE PAVING



Ecotrihex permeable pavement (Parking bays and furniture zone)





PLANTING



Bioswales with inlet kerbs

Mass planted verge treatment with new trees planted at 8m spacing

FURNITURE AND FIXTURES



Timber bench seats (stainless steel legs, sub- surface fixed)

Bin enclosure to Hills Shire standard

Bike racks to Hills Shire standard

Light poles to Hills Shire standard

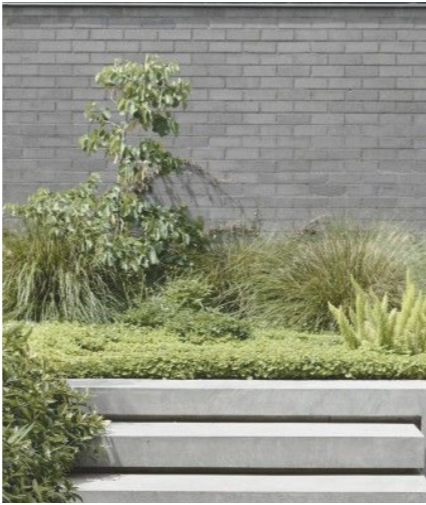
Public Realm Materials - Open Space

The selection of materials is robust and enduring, fit for purpose materials of quality and durability throughout. Benches are made with Australian hardwood battens, celebrating local materials in close to natural form. Highly finished elements of concrete footpaths and stone plaza and to the civic nature of the space. as do high quality steel edging of planted area.

Materiality in the park has the opportunity to use fun and playful elements incorporating the local character of the area creating unique spaces and place making. Play elements to be custom made and considered in response to people and place.



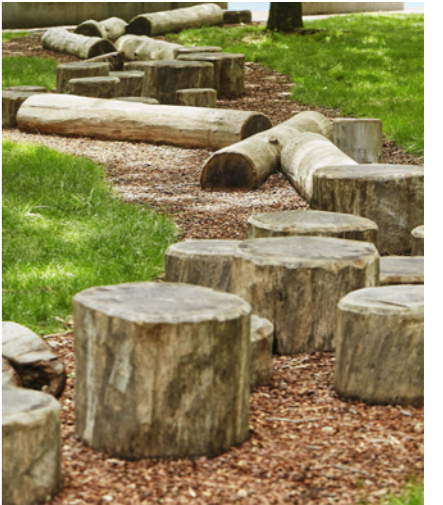
SANDSTONE AND LOCAL GRAVELS



CONCRETE PAVING AND EDGES



STONE PAVING AND EDGES



PLAYFUL FURNITURE AND FIXTURES



PLAYFUL FURNITURE AND FIXTURES

INTEGRATED ART & INTERPRETATION

Sustainability

Streescapes are particularly vital components of the public realm when considering ecology, sustainability and biodiversity. Adequate provision for trees within the streetscape helps mitigate the urban heat island effect via natural cooling abilities and improve the ecology and biodiversity of the precinct.

The landscape design seeks to increase connections to the existing and proposed links across Castle Hill, and Hills Shire Local Government Area. Establishing streets where people and bicycles are provided with safe and generous pathways encourage a move away from vehicular use and a reduction in emissions.

Mindful use of materials and species

- Selection of robust and enduring, fit for purpose materials.
- Celebrating local plant communities
- Use of permeable pavement that recharge ground water and reduce loads on the stormwater system
- Maximise endemic and native plant species to help increase biodiversity and reinstate local ecologies

Incorporate technologies

- Aim towards carbon zero by drawing on technologies such as solar power energy, EV charging stations, recycling water, and composting
- Modular approach; elements which can be dismantled and reinterpreted for new purpose.
- Capture and reuse rainwater on site; through the use of rainwater tanks and/or sculptural water features which feed the water back into the site for irrigation purposes

Design to be climate responsive

- Strategic positioning of spaces and elements to benefit from micro-climatic conditions.
- Create ample shade through maximising tree canopy.
- Generous footpaths and considered design of pedestrian and cycle links encourage a move away from car use.
- To knit into the green grid via increasing connections to existing ecological, recreational and hydrological systems.
- Promote community through gardening and producing their herbs, vegetables, honey etc



Green roof or bio-solar roofs generates power for the development and with planting on more surfaces improves biodiversity and reduces the heat island effect.



Exploring opportunities to innovate



Openly celebrate self-sustaining functionalities in the design



Use of endemic and native plant species to increase biodiversity and reinstate local ecologies



Implement recyclable materials which can be dismantled and re-purposed into new elements



View sustainability as a community engagement tool and form of social infrastructure. This can take form as a community garden or productive landscape



Channeling stormwater runoff to street trees



Structural soil systems to maximise soil volumes and establish mature trees



Streets and lane design that contribute to achieving canopy cover target with street trees planting