

# WARRINA LAKES COMMUNITY PARKLANDS

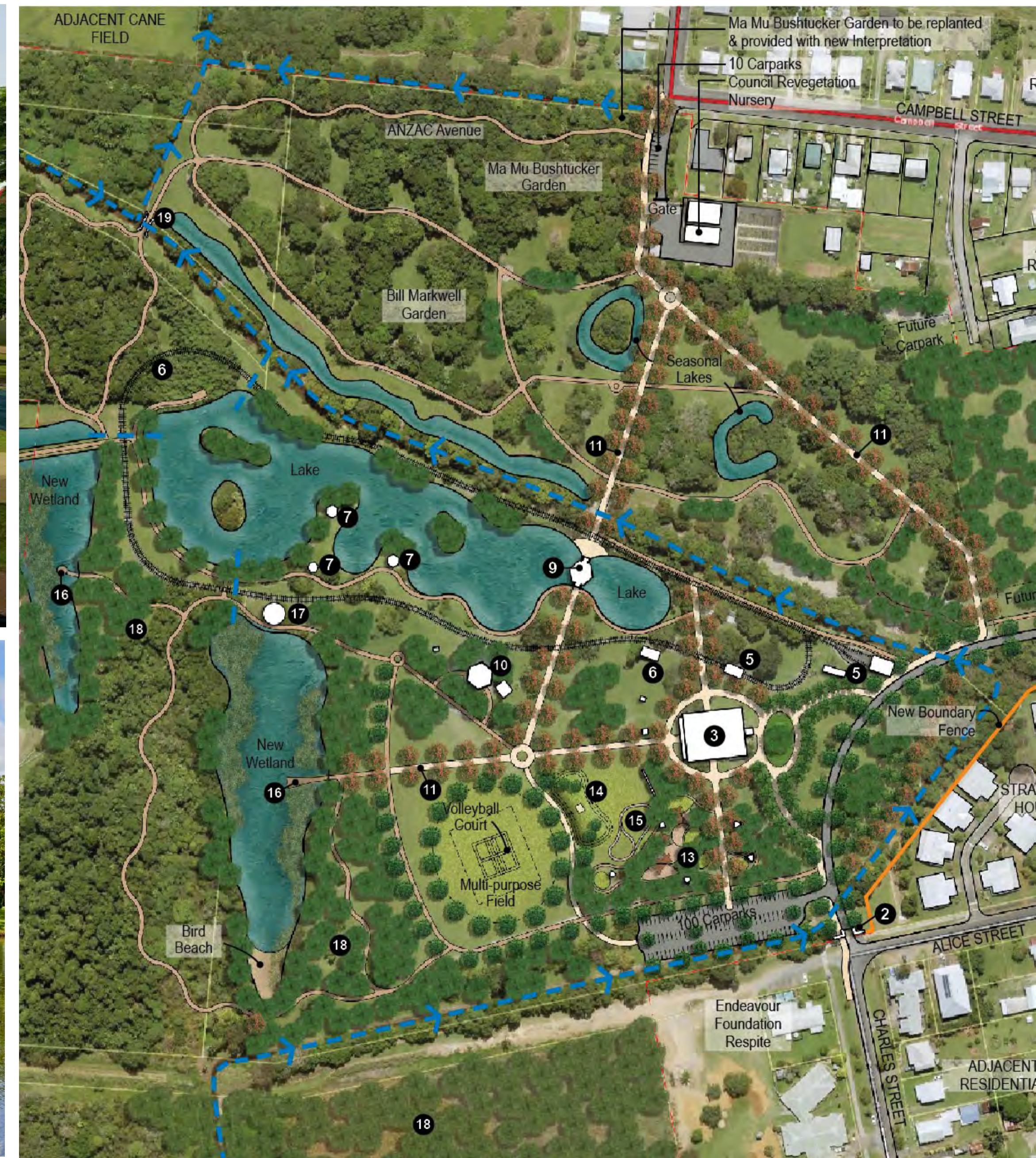
I N N I S F A I L



# WARRINA LAKES STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

INNISFAIL, QUEENSLAND

March 2022 - Issue J



Urban Design & Landscape Architecture  
Office Location:  
457 Draper Street, Cairns QLD 4870  
Postal Address: PO Box 5397, Cairns  
T +61 7 4031 3993  
E info@LA3.com.au

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Vision

Open and green spaces have a positive effect on community sociability, local economy and ecology. These spaces are particularly important in towns and cities where people live, work and recreate. Cassowary Coast Regional Council is seeking to grow the awareness and use of Warrina Lakes by making it an even more inviting and interesting place to visit. The master plan will provide further opportunities for visitors and locals to appreciate and experience Warrina Lakes' natural assets, its laid back atmosphere and lifestyle opportunities.

The Warrina Lakes Strategic Master Plan has four core outcomes:

- To develop attractive, welcoming and functional places through improved amenity and design;
- To create a memorable visitor experience by showcasing the natural assets and improving the environmental values of the site;
- To enhance opportunities for tourists and locals to interact and socialise within the area through art and cultural spaces; and
- Provide a practical framework that raises the profile of the Warrina Lakes which will grow the awareness and patronage of the facility.

### Objectives

Principally, the objectives of the project are to:

- Create and grow attractive spaces that invite locals and visitors to stay and enjoy the area;
- Provide opportunities and encouragement for 'passing traffic' to stop and enjoy the the Warrina Lakes area;
- Provide for a safe and easily accessible place for everyone regardless of age, ability, culture or income within a diverse range of settings;
- Provide an improved space for community events and opportunities for social interaction;
- Provide modernised, refreshed and co-ordinated ancillary infrastructure such as footpaths, lighting, water fountains, bike paths, signage, shelters, seating, shade, toilets, play equipment and rubbish bins;
- Create welcoming and memorable spaces that are aesthetically pleasing, function effectively and contribute to a sense of place;
- Establish a design that is sympathetic to and enhances the natural values of the area;
- Establish a design that provides opportunities for art and cultural spaces;
- Identify opportunities for integrating signage and new technology to improve the visitor experience within the Warrina Lakes area; and
- Ensure options are reasonably market tested for practical delivery

### Consultation & Current Condition

Based on community comments Warrina Lakes needs to cater for many different needs and wants. These range from environmental appreciation and conservation, viewing botanical collections, more modern play and active recreation facilities. The Mini Train is popular. The central facility made from the old timber sheds is a good facility for family gatherings and events.

While the gardens are well maintained and facilities clean, much of the infrastructure is becoming outdated and need replacing with those meeting current design standards. While locals know where to go, for a visitor the gardens are not that easy to find and the way around the gardens confusing.

Over the years a couple of major cyclones damaged the original environmental and botanical plantings and the Ma Mu Bushtaker Garden have deteriorated along with most of the botanical labelling. Visiting botanic gardens, horticultural and garden shows, open gardens and parks is a world wide recreational activity that Warrina Lakes could be part of should this aspect of the gardens be revived.

The Warrina Lakes precinct is large enough for all of this.

### Initiatives

The overall idea is to enhance existing facilities, remove old and tired elements and develop multiple attractions and experiences. This is achieved by:

#### 1. Improving legibility of access and wayfinding - how to get to and around Warrina Lakes

- Improving circulation of movement around the precinct through development of a primary circulation network via establishment of strong axes.
- Expanding vehicular access and car parking to cater for a higher usage.
- Clearing and defining how to get to the Warrina Lakes including encouraging the use of all corners of the site for access.
- Moving maintenance facility and storage to the northern nursery area to free up the new through roads and main entry roads.
- Repairing and replacing deteriorating pathways.
- Extending pathways and building additional bridges and boardwalks to make better access around the site.

#### 2. Maintaining and enhancing what we have - keeping and improving what makes Warrina Lakes important now

- Enhancing and extending the lakes system
- Keeping the Mini Rail and helping upgrade infrastructure
- Refresh repaint and upgrade of the historic timber shed central facility to give a more contemporary look while keeping it's heritage
- Replacing outdated picnic and barbecue facilities

#### 3. Developing attractions - what extra can make Warrina Lakes a more special place to visit

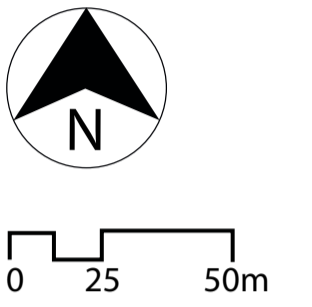
- Improving children's play by developing an adventure playground.
- Developing paths and rest spots suitable for residents from adjacent aged care to use.

- Facilitating the development of a series of boardwalks and bird hides to increase bird watching and environmental appreciation.
- Building a feature bridge across the lakes designed to be a key point for photo opportunities.
- Facilitating the development of an Orchid house & fernery to display orchids, ferns, tropical foliage plants & houseplants.
- Facilitating the development of a frog habitat facility for the breeding and release of native frogs.
- Further planting up of the gardens to enhance the environmental and botanical appreciation including an emphasis on spectacular flowering trees and shrubs as a key attraction.
- Lighting will be limited to main area near carpark to movie area and possibly the lake bridge.



The Warrina Lakes miniature train.

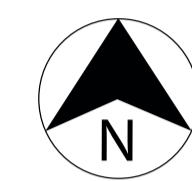
# Warrina Lakes



**LEGEND:**  
 - - - - - Extent of Site



# Warrina Lakes



0 25 50m

### LEGEND:

- Adjacent Key Main Roads
- Access Road
- Vehicle Access Points - Main Arrival Points
- Pedestrian Access Points
- Existing Footpath - Sealed path accessible for pedestrians. Limited legibility and no framework or clear hierarchy.
- Existing Gravel Track - Gravel path for pedestrians. Temporary solution.
- Existing Miniature Train Rail Network
- Crossing Culvert / Bridges
- Carparking Area
- Tidal Waterways / Drain to Saltwater Creek
- Former Swimming Pool
- Permanent Feature Lake
- Seasonal Lakes & Wetlands
- Remnant Lowland Rainforest Vegetation
- Native Gardens Surrounded by Mown Grass
- Ornamental & Exotic Gardens
- Other Adjacent Vegetation Areas
- Mown Grass Areas
- Existing Playground
- Existing Picnic Shelters
- Existing Structures
- Extent of Site



# Warrina Lakes



0 10 25m

### LEGEND:

- Adjacent Key Main Roads
- Access Road
- Vehicle Access Points - Main Arrival Points
- Pedestrian Access Points
- Existing Footpath - Sealed path accessible for pedestrians. Limited legibility and no framework or clear hierarchy.
- Existing Gravel Track - Gravel path for pedestrians. Temporary solution.
- Existing Miniature Train Rail Network
- Crossing Culvert / Bridges
- Carparking Area
- Tidal Waterways / Drain to Saltwater Creek
- Former Swimming Pool
- Permanent Feature Lake
- Seasonal Lakes & Wetlands
- Existing Vegetation
- Large and Attractive Specimen Trees
- Mown Grass Area
- Existing Playground
- Existing Picnic Shelters
- Existing Structures
- Extent of Site

## 03 EXISTING CONDITIONS - AMENITY AREA WARRINA LAKES COMMUNITY PARKLAND MASTER PLAN

Emily Street, Innisfail, QLD  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 - Issue J



www.LA3.com.au

## CURRENT USAGE ZONES

The Warrina Lakes gardens have evolved in an organic and somewhat ad hoc way. Some previous uses have changed and/or no longer exist. The zones of existing usage can be clearly defined. This usage demonstrates the fragmentation of the gardens and the need to integrate & interconnect areas with an equal level of attractions and efficient use of space.

### 1. Amenity

This Amenity Zone is used for arrival and departure, carparking, access to the central Historic Covered Shed building, picnic shelters, pathways and the mini train, playground area and central ornamental lake edge. This area also has maintenance buildings and misc structures mixed within the other facilities. This area has evolved in over the years in an unplanned manner. The zone is located on the south eastern side of the site and detached from other parts of the total Warrina Lakes experience. Overall site signage and legibility for visitors is not adequate to guide visitors to appreciate the whole of the gardens environs.

### 2. Ornamental Lake

This majestic ornamental lake is the 'centre piece' of the gardens but it is more attractive to the west where more 'open water' is present. The areas on the east are smaller, cluttered and appear to filtrate less and where views are blocked by islands. At the moment the links or connection to the amenity zone are not ideal nor attractive for a central feature of the gardens. The link across the lake is unremarkable and legibility or wayfinding to discover other garden areas is absent.

### 3. Grassed Fields

These expansive fields are under utilised and a huge maintenance undertaking. They are currently not being used by regular sports teams or events and provide little for the overall gardens. Shade is limited and useful spaces are undefined. Rationalisation of this open grass area will provide more quality spaces and new garden experiences.

### 4. Walking Area

This zone is a mix of themed plantings that are in over-grown condition. The mix of plantings includes a Ma-Mu themed planting, a local botanical ecological style planting with seasonal billabongs based on a botanical garden design by Siteplan in 1990 and an ANZAC themed planting. In its entirety the area is fragmented from the rest of the gardens and serves as just a walking zone. The area has an uneven segmental block pathway circuit through a planted arcadia with grass foreground. The path network does not link well in the western side of the garden or to the lake due to the lack of a bridge connection in the northwest of the garden

### 5. Natural Environment

These areas are densely forested and either remnant lowland forest or revegetated and represent one of the last remaining lowland rainforests in the area. These areas also have some wetlands or drainage areas which promote very good bird habitat. Infill revegetation will enhance this area greatly. Some simple pedestrian trails penetrate these forest areas however there is no interpretation node signage to enhance the experience or assist with wayfinding. Lookouts and well planned trails will enhance these areas.

### 6. Unutilised

An open grass field exists to the north east of the gardens and is currently not used for anything. It adjoins a residential area and is convenient to the Ernest Street entrance.

### Seasonal Lakes

These seasonal lakes around the gardens work as wetlands and hold water during the wet season only. The ecological benefits of these should be assessed or converted to permanent bodies to make them more easily managed.



0 25 50m

### ZONES LEGEND:

- 1. Amenity Zone
- 2. Ornamental Lake Zone
- 3. Grassed Fields Zone
- 4. Walking Area Zone
- 5. Natural Environment Zone
- 6. Unutilised Area
- Seasonal Lakes
- Extent of Site



www.LA3.com.au

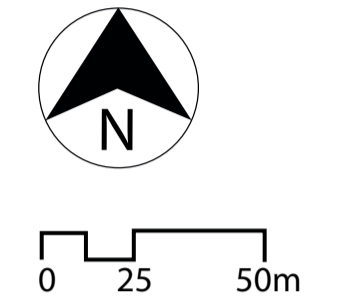
# Warrina Lakes

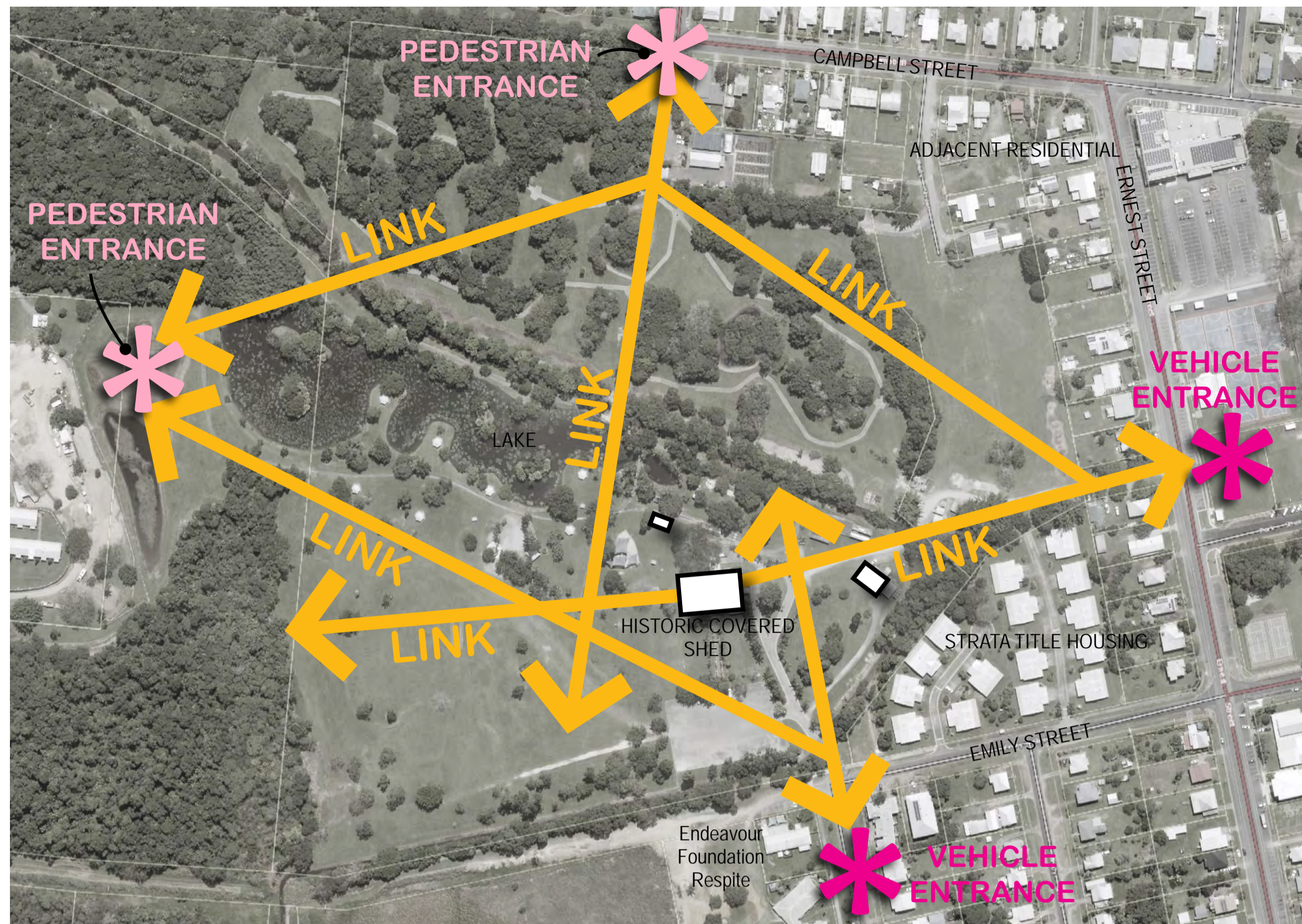
## Key Community Issues / Ideas

Listed below and located on the plan adjacent is a summary of key community feedback.

What we heard:

- Increase functionality of the area.
- Increase casual surveillance and security of the area.
- Weddings, functions, kids activities are important.
- Keep the mini rail.
- Environmental function important and can be enhanced. Add more lakes?
- Provide linkage to Warrina Home (retirement village to the west).
- Provide more shade.
- Practical improvements, building on what's already there.
- Provide cultural opportunities. Council to arrange more events.
- Build a Nature Play area.
- Upgrade BBQ's, seats and signage.
- Improve Lighting.
- Plant name tags
- Basketball Court and define Volleyball Court
- JES - reinstate wetland. Attract birds, frogs, turtles and freshwater crocodiles.
- BMX pump track.
- Walkng trails and running tracks
- All-abilities access
- Animal attraction
- Chinese or Feng Shui Garden
- Create a destination for tourists or activate the space.





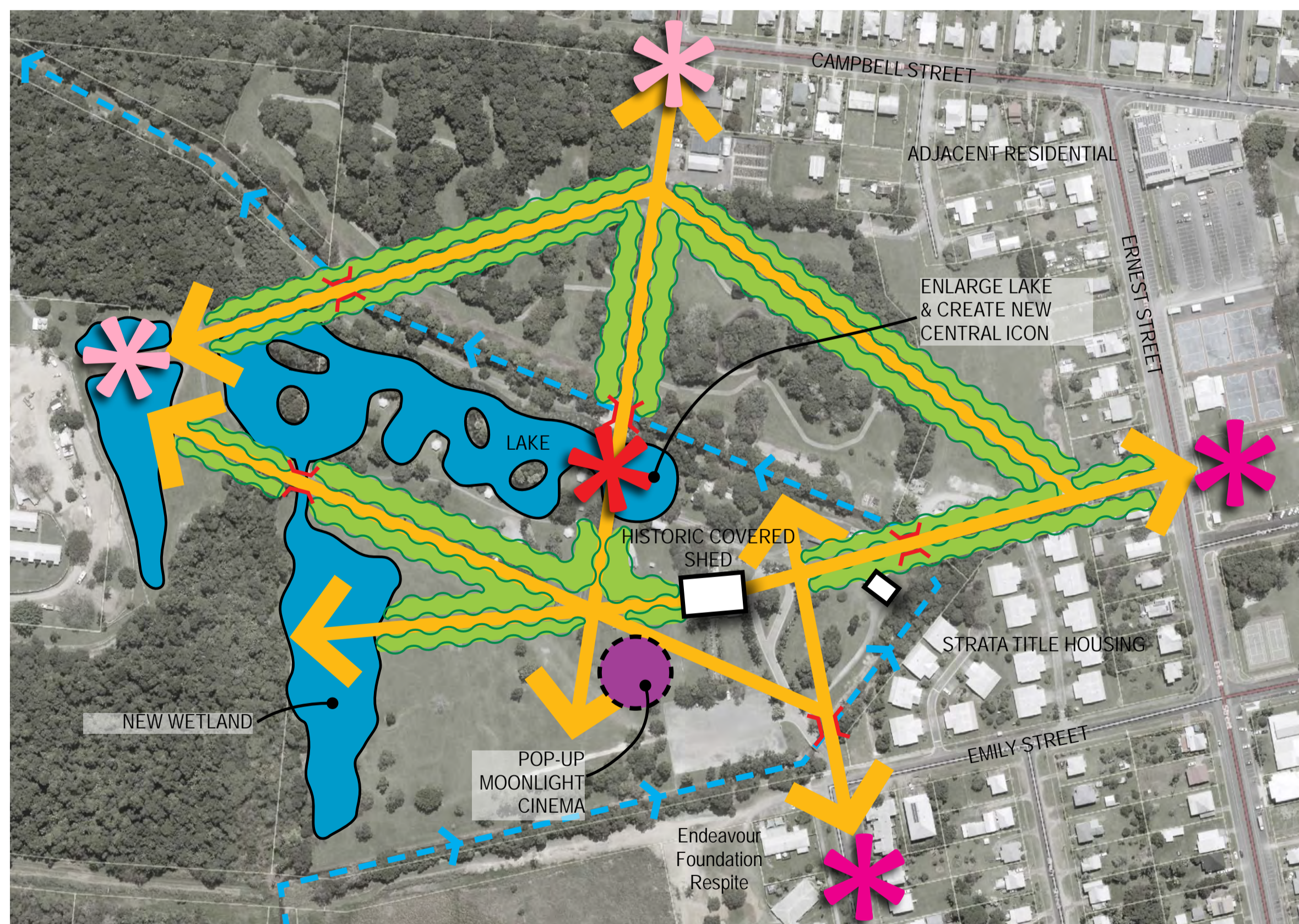
## ENTRANCES & SITE AXES

Warrina Lakes needs a strong framework and linkages from several entrances not just one entrance.



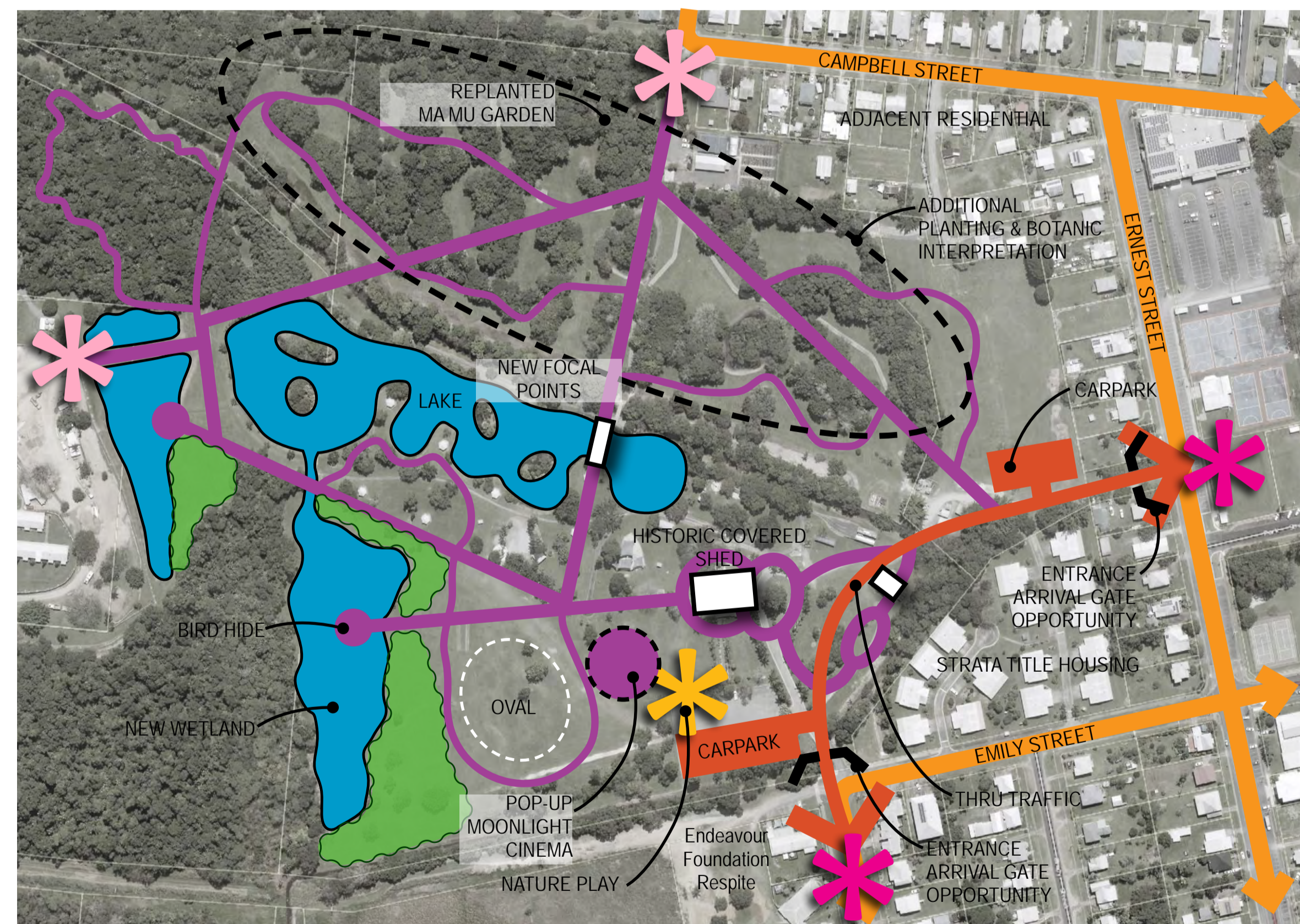
## DOG FREE ZONE

The whole parkland is a dog-free zone.



## NEW FOCAL POINTS / MORE LAKES

The gardens need new focal points such as a new central icon and an environmental interpretative centre to complement new axes.



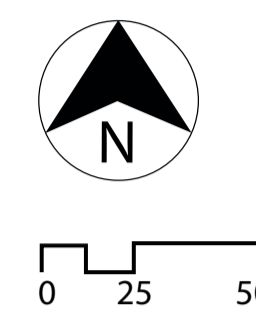
## CONNECTIVITY & INCREASED ATTRACTIONS

Develop a network of pathways & roadways that increases and improves connections & access across the gardens.

- LEGEND:**
- Site Axis  
Provide linkages through and throughout the large gardens
  - Key Access Road
  - Adjacent Key Main Roads
  - Proposed New Footpath Network
  - Entrance Arrival Gate Opportunity
  - Key Vehicle Access Points
  - Pedestrian Access Points
  - Crossing Culvert / Bridge
  - Tiday Waterways / Drains to Saltwater Creek
  - Dogs Off-Limit Zone
  - Lake / Wetland
  - Avenue Tree Plantings
  - Revegetation Planting
  - Nature Play



# Warrina Lakes



- LEGEND:**
- 1 Arrival Feature Sign
  - 2 Upgraded Through Road & Feature Gates (Lockable)
  - 3 Historic Covered Shed
  - 4 Miniature Train
  - 5 Railway Clubhouse
  - 6 Upgraded Sealed Carpark
  - 7 Upgraded Shelters
  - 8 Proposed Iconic Lake Bridge & Wedding Platform
  - 9 Orchid House (by Others)
  - 10 Upgraded Paths and Shade Trees
  - 11 New Nature Playground w/ BBQ Shelters
  - 12 New Grassed Mound and Pop-up Moonlight Cinema
  - 13 New BMX Pump Track
  - 14 New Wetland & Bird Hides (by Others)
  - 15 Frogarium (by Others)
  - 16 Future Carpark accessed from Gladys Street
  - 17 New Fence along Villanova
  - 18 New Link Bridge
  - 19 Revegetation
- 2.0m Wide Deco Footpath
  - 3.0m Wide Footpath
  - Exposed aggregate finish
  - New Access Road (5m wide)
  - Existing Miniature Train Rail Network
  - Grassed Areas
  - Tidal Waterways / Drain to Saltwater Creek
  - Extent of Site
  - New Fence along Strata Title Housing Boundary

**LEGEND**

The new master plan consists of the following amenities:

**1 Arrival Feature Sign**

The master plan proposes that this Ernest Street entrance becomes the promoted Main Entrance to relieve traffic from Alice and Charles Streets. At this point a feature sign should be erected facing Innisfail township (south). The actual gate would be on the site boundary and will allow pedestrian only access at times.

**2 Upgraded Through Road & Feature Gates**

The master plan proposes a rationalised vehicular entry system and the establishment of a 'Thru Road' network only not the current turnaround. A 4-metre wide path will still existing on the current alignment to cater for special events, occasions and maintenance. At either boundary of the through road will be a lockable feature gate to mark the threshold of entering the gardens. There would be a smaller gate to allow pedestrians only at times and car parking capacity outside the gate at either end. Internal car parking will be split between a north and south more rationalised compliant car park and allow for an expansion to approx. 100 cars.



**3 Historic Covered Shed**  
 This building should be retained in its current form however a colour scheme in keeping with the theme of the gardens would be more attractive for long term. At the moment the facility is well used and provides a solid tool, kitchen, stage, seating and event space with ample storage and capacity for more usage by the majority of community groups in the area.

**3B Bromeliad Display**  
 The roundabout at the front of the Historic Covered Shed lends itself to a large bromeliad display. In full sun a large collection of bromeliads will enliven the frontage and make the now pedestrian orientated arrival loop more attractive.



**4 Miniature Train**

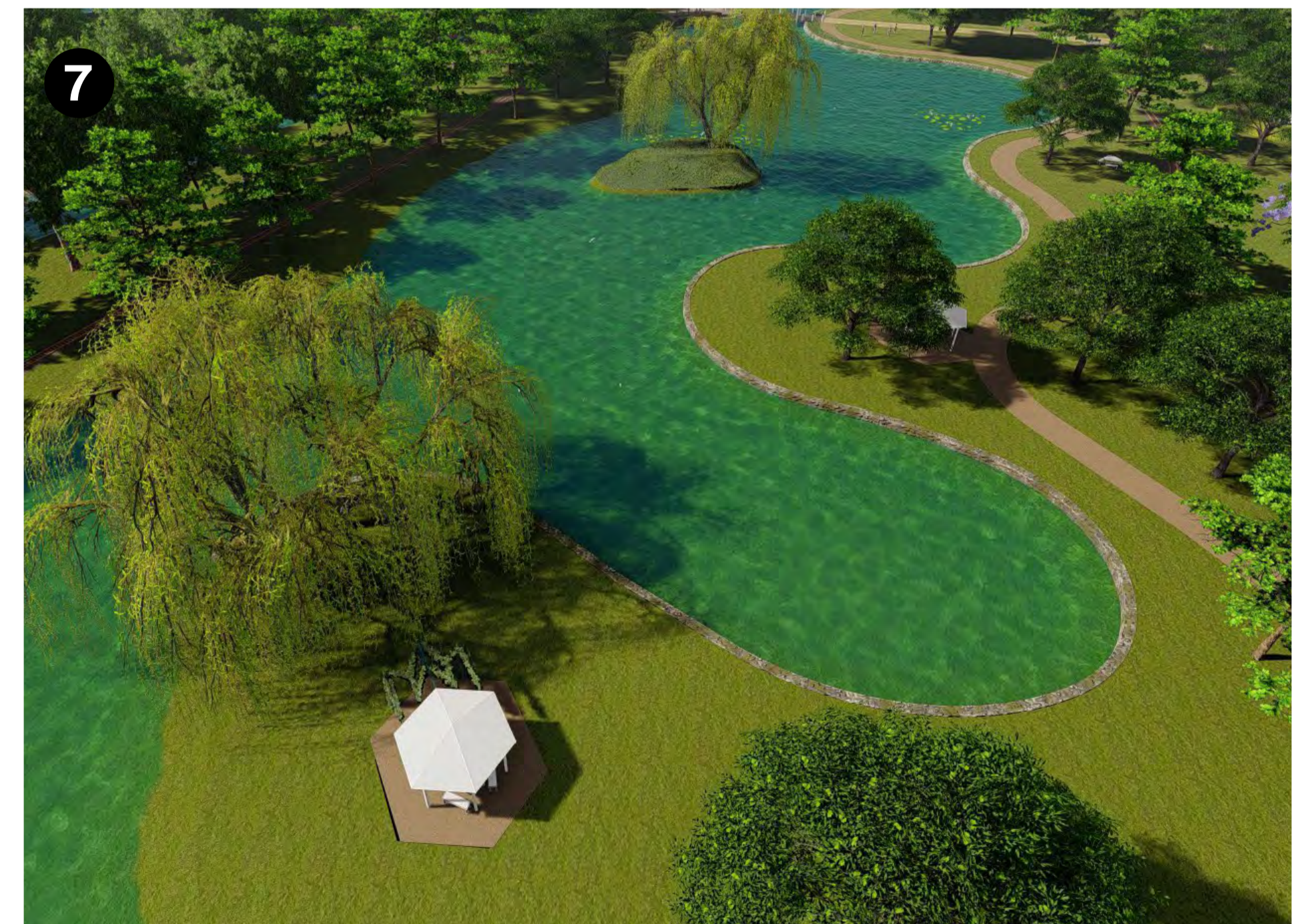
The Miniature train is popular and includes the extensive large loop track around the main lake and the railway storage cars is a very popular element of the garden. We would propose that the storage cars are repainted and planted out. Crossings of pathways need to be made more prominent but overall the masterplan works with the infrastructure and enhances the journey for users on events. The enlarged pathway network has been rationalised to ensure only 6 crossings of the rail loop occur.

**5 Railway Clubhouse**

This building will remain in the current form and position but again may need to be painted to match a colour scheme down the track.

**7 Upgraded Shelters**

The shelters are mostly in good positions but some could be relocated. We suggest a repainting and pergolas attached to expand the usable space. A concept sketch is provided.



**8 Proposed Iconic Lake Bridge & Wedding Platform**

The central ornamental lake needs a central iconic structure that capitalises on the reflective serenity of the lake. The master plan positions this bridge on the axis with the current creek crossing to the north. The plan proposes some lake reshaping and enlargement at the eastern side, the removal of one island and establishment of a stepped lakeside pathway to appreciate the new centerpiece better and provide an interface with the lake for duck feeding or turtle watching.

The bridge should be of a character in keeping with the main buildings which are historic in nature and from an era when buildings promoted the flow of fresh air and permeability. A concept sketch is provided.

**9 Orchid House**

The old swimming pool site lends itself to replacement by a new attraction. To enhance the botanical collections and balance out the active/passive uses of the gardens an Orchid House which is closed at night housing stunning and remarkable plants would add to the attractiveness of the overall experience. This house would be shaded in part and enclosed and similar to the Conservatory building at Flecker Botanical Gardens but be of unique character and collection for Warrina Lakes. Enclosed would be orchids, ferns, and unique tropical plants of the world. A concept sketch is provided. Should the Local Orchid Society have capacity to develop and maintain an Orchard House, Council can provide space and opportunity for a lease.



- 10 Upgraded Paths & Shade Trees**  
The park needs better connectivity and what better way than to build avenues of trees which line axial linking paths throughout the gardens to facilitate good transition to different areas. These avenues would be of large trees and would be a striking addition to the overall experience at the gardens.
- 11 Nature Playground with BBQ Shelters**  
A nature-play themed playground will be built adjacent a reconfigured car park on the southern entrance. The older playground in the centre of the gardens should be removed as it is dated and past its use by date. This new playground will include age divisions and specific facilities geared to adventure.



**12 Grassed Mound and Pop-up Moonlight Cinema**  
A grassed mound and amphitheatre is proposed to provide an elevated seating to spectators of the adjacent multi-purpose open field, the BMX Pump Track and the pop-up moonlight cinema. On top of the mound is a concrete pad used to accommodate a cinema box / projector for the adjacent moonlight cinema screen.

Watch the biggest movies past sunset and under the stars in this multipurpose field. This area will be a hub for festival activities.

**13 BMX Pump Track**  
A BMX Pump Track will be built adjacent the nature playground. The volleyball activities will be held on the multi-purpose open field. Volleyball nets will be portable and stored when they're not in use.

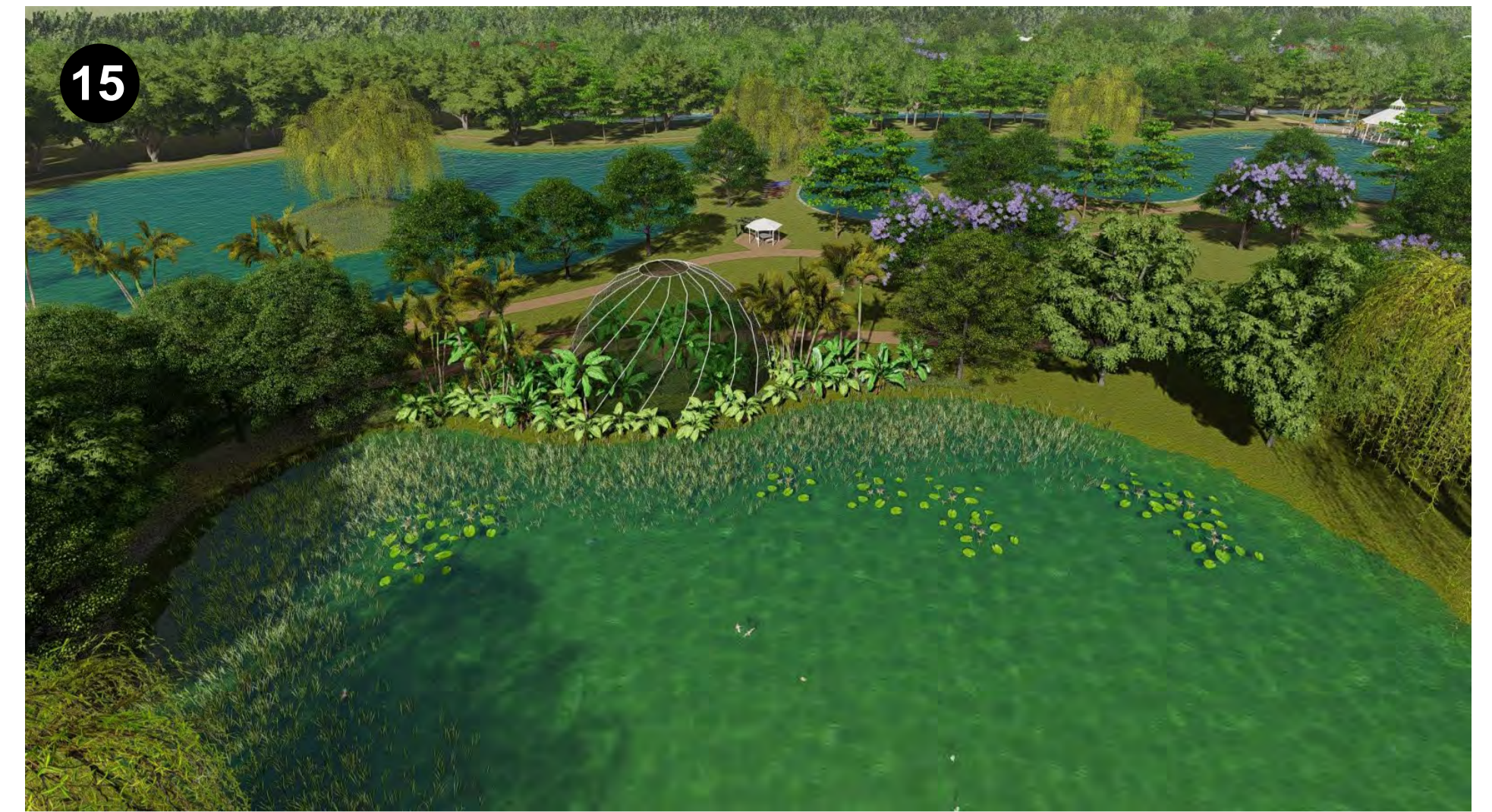


**14 New Wetland and Bird Hides**

A new wetland should be constructed including a beach for species diversity adjacent the lowland forest. A network of access trails and bird hides on a loop for walkers only should be constructed. The central bird hide would form an endpoint on the central axis from the covered shed and arrival area. Should the Local Bird Watching Society have capacity to develop and maintain a Bird Hide, Council can provide space and opportunity for a lease.

**15 Frogarium**

With the expansion of the wetlands and the popular existing activity of birding (Bird watching) as well as the many other environmental aspects of the remnant lowland forest the development of a frogarium would complement the location. This showcases the region's various species of frogs. Should the Local Frog Society have capacity to develop and maintain a Frogarium, Council can provide space and opportunity for a lease.





**18 New Link Bridge**

The community identified the need for an additional crossing in the north-west crossing the main creek. A bridge similar to the existing crossing to the east would suffice. This will help with connectivity and circulation around the gardens.

**19 Revegetation**

An opportunity exists to revegetate and strengthen the environmental aspects of the site particularly surrounding the new wetland and linking the remnant forest of the north and south sides of the gardens.



*Warrina Lakes*

# Warrina Lakes





Warrina Lakes





ZONES LEGEND:

-  1. Core Amenity Zone
-  2. Sport Zone
-  3. Environmental Zone
-  4. Active Trails Zone
-  5. Nursery Maintenance Zone
-  6. Environmental Zone
-  Extent of Site



- LEGEND:**
- Ma Mu Bushtucker & Traditional Use Garden
  - RSL Memorial Planting
  - Australian Rainforests
  - Feature Shade Trees
  - Feature Flowering Trees
  - Traditional Garden
  - Bromeliads
  - Fernhouse & Orchid Display
  - Lowland Rainforest
  - Extent of Site

## Project Implementation Plan

All projects listed within the implementation plan are subject to detailed design considerations and final costings will be determined at this stage. The costs associated with the implementation of the projects outlined below will be a matter for Council's further consideration, as part of its annual budget deliberations and implementation of its works and maintenance programs. The implementation plan will be used (where appropriate) to apply for state and federal funding to assist in the delivery of the plan.

Short	0-3 Years
Medium	3-5 Years
Long	5-10 Years
Retained – No Action Required	N/A
Ongoing	N/A

Project Number	Project Details	Timeframe
1	New Arrival Feature Sign	Short
2	Upgraded Through Road Feature Gates (Lockable)	Medium
3	New Directional signage on Bruce Highway/Grace Street/Ernest Street/Campbell	Short
3	Historic Covered Shed	Retained – No Action Required
4	Miniature Train	Retained – No Action Required
5	Railway Clubhouse	Retained – No Action Required
6	Upgraded Sealed Car Park (100 Car Parks)	Short
7	Upgraded Shelters	Medium
8	New Iconic Lake Bridge and Wedding Platform	Long
9	Orchid House (* Constructed, Funded, Maintained and Managed by a Third Party)	Long
10	Upgraded Paths and Shade Trees	Medium
11	New Nature Playground With BBQ Shelters (*Includes Removal Of Existing Playground)	Short
12	New Grassed Mound and Pop-Up Cinema	Medium
13	New BMX Pump Track	Short
14	New Wetland and Bird Hides	Medium
15	Frogarium (* Constructed, Funded, Maintained and Managed by a Third Party)	Long
16	Future Car Park Accessed From Glady Street	Long
17	New Fence Along Villanova Boundary	Medium
18	New Link Bridge	Medium
19	Revegetation	Ongoing

MA MU BUSHTUCKER & TRADITIONAL USE GARDEN



Various Traditional Fruits

Bush Cherry

TRADITIONAL QUEENSLANDER GARDENS



AUSTRALIAN TROPICS (Featuring Spectacular Flowering Trees)



Waratah Tree

Golden Bouquet

Firewheel Tree

HOUSE PLANT DISPLAY



WORLD TROPICAL FEATURE FLOWERING TREES



Pink Trumpet

Amherstia Tree

Brownea

FERNS



BROMELIADS



ORCHID DISPLAY



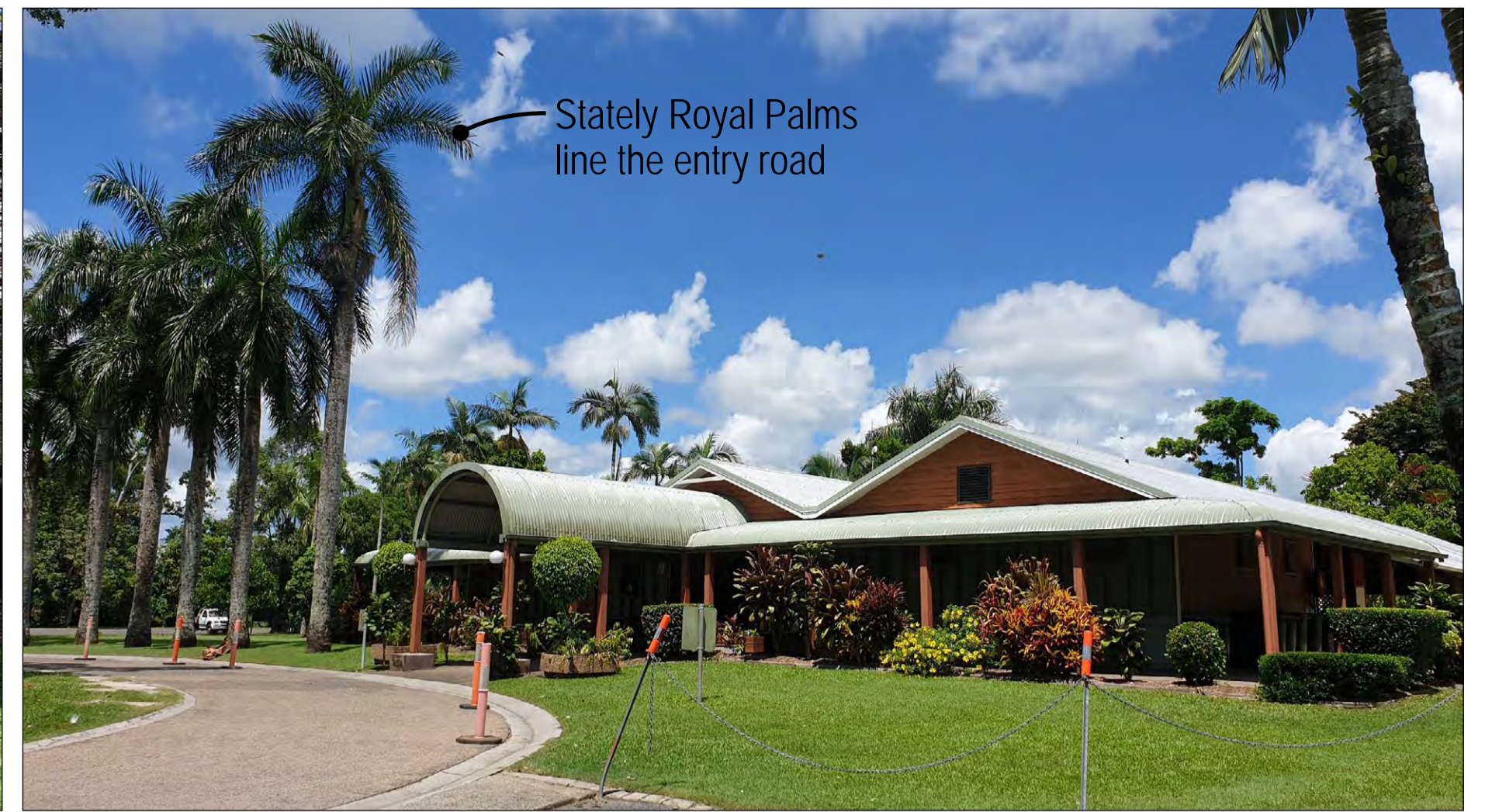




Arrival from Emily Street along a grand avenue of Royal Palms.



Access road from Ernest St. An opportunity exists to upgrade & promote this entrance.



Historic Covered Shed (formerly WTMA) is the main building at the gardens.



Side carpark near Covered Shed building and BBQ shelter.



Mini rail shelter and triple track area.



Mini train clubhouse complements the rail loop.



Picturesque view from Historic Covered Shed building toward carpark. Well maintained gardens on access path.



Lookout at lakeside. Unremarkable views.



Existing playground is dated and old style. It needs rubberised soffit under.



Typical picnic shelter. Side panels could be removed for better CPTED.



Open grassed fields

Uneven segmental paving

Small avenues and garden structure.



Mini train between picnic shelters.



Decomposed granite path beside lake linked to aged care.



Picturesque open grassed area.

Path in full sun

Uneven segmental paving

Typical view from garden area. Paths need upgrading. Interpretation of specific trees will enhance the experience.

Warrina Lakes



Reflections on the lake.



Wildlife in the lake.



Picturesque figs overhanging lake.



Mini train loop next to lake.



Sculpture beside the lake.



Attractive palm row.



Reflections of trees overhanging lake side.



Lowland rainforest pathway.



Covered Shed building arrival.



Covered Shed building.



Existing picnic shelters are very unremarkable.



Small avenues and garden structure.



Typical grassed lake edge.



Epiphytes on trees are strikingly beautiful.



Historic memorials to be retained.





Access link to Aged Care from lakeside. Wetland in foreground could be upgraded linking environmental areas either side.



Lakeside vegetation on the western side of main lake. Large figs frame the bend. Path access needs to be formalised.



Vast grassed open fields with volleyball nets and a basketball ring. These spaces need rationalisation.



[www.LA3.com.au](http://www.LA3.com.au)

Urban Design & Landscape Architecture

**Central Queensland**

1/27 Sunlover Avenue, Agnes Water QLD 4677

**North Queensland**

457 Draper Street, Cairns QLD 4870

Postal Address: PO Box 5397, Cairns QLD 4870

T +61 7 4031 3993 E [info@LA3.com.au](mailto:info@LA3.com.au)