

Uralla Shire Council Open Space Strategy



Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy

Prepared for The Uralla Shire Council

Rev K



Moir Landscape Architecture Pty Ltd
Studio 1, 88 Fern Street
PO Box 111
Islington NSW 2296
admin@moirla.com.au

Ph.(02) 4965 3500
Fax.(02) 4965 3555
www.moirla.com.au
ACN: 097 558 908
ABN: 48 097 558 908

Contents

01	Executive Summary
02	Objectives
03	Community Consultation
04	Guiding Policies
05	Design Principles
06	Analysis - Uralla
07	Opportunities
08	Existing Open Space Inventory Audit
09	Open Space Development Plan
10	Catalyst Projects
11	Uralla Shire Hamlets and Villages

1. Executive Summary

Uralla Shire Council local government area is a unique and distinctive area of regional NSW. It has a rich cultural heritage and a thriving active community, demonstrated through its large number of community initiatives and working groups. As a destination, Uralla Shire has a wealth of unique experiences on offer and is an exceptional place to live and work.

Post COVID-19, regional NSW has seen a sharp increase in the level of domestic based tourism, higher demand for access to functional green space, as well as increased numbers of people leaving city centres in exchange for rural lifestyles. Uralla Shire Council has identified the development of an Open Space Strategy as an opportunity to assess the existing condition of the Shire's open space assets and to identify how these assets can be strengthened to better serve the community, promote tourism, attract people to reside in the Shire and develop a plan for future development of the Shire's open space.

Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy is underpinned by the NSW Government planning and design guidelines, primarily 'Greener Spaces' and 'Better Placed'. These policies have helped to unlock and identify opportunities to enhance open space throughout Uralla Shire. This has also been supported through application of best practice principles from Australia and around the globe which give guidance on topics such as green infrastructure, accessibility, changing trends in recreation, supporting park infrastructure, street tree networks, and resilience.

The Strategy provides an extensive analysis of the Shire's green networks, pedestrian accessibility and shade amenity provisions to determine where opportunities lie to support and bolster the overall network. The analysis presents an in-depth inventory audit of the open space and recreational facilities throughout the Shire to better understand and highlight any deficiencies in recreational offerings. Using this analysis, the Strategy proposes a range of development interventions which have been designed to be implemented over a 5, 10 and 15 year timeframe.

Finally, the Strategy proposes a number of catalyst projects, which have been chosen for their ability to fill gaps in the open space offering of the Shire, as well as their potential impact on the wider green space network. For each project, in-depth recommendations direct and inform the future offerings.

2. Objectives

The Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy intends to build on the success of work previously undertaken by Uralla Shire Council to their recreational facilities and open spaces.

The Strategy identifies opportunities, provides guidance, and informs the future planning and development of Uralla Shire's open space assets.

The Strategy establishes a framework which will assist Uralla Shire Council to make planned and targeted decisions which will address issues facing their open spaces, ultimately helping to improve the overall liveability of the Shire and an enhanced visitor experience.

The Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy seeks to achieve the following:

- Establish best practice principles and demonstrate how they can be used to support and strengthen Uralla Shire's overall open space strategy.
- Itemise the existing open spaces assets of the Shire, make comment on their overall condition and level of accessibility, and to understand how these spaces can be strengthened and improved to facilitate the needs of the community now and into the future.
- Identify missing or underutilised portions of Uralla Shire's open space assets and comment on their suitability to contribute to the wider open space network.
- Propose recommendations to improve green connections to encourage activation and movement.
- Deliver objectives that will guide development and management of open space within Uralla Shire for the next 15 years.
- Provide input into catalyst projects identified by the community.

3. Community Consultation

In December 2017, the Uralla Shire Council undertook an online survey to understand how the local community use the Shire's public open spaces and recognise how they can better serve the community through future developments.

Over 200 responses were received. A snapshot of the outcomes are listed below.

Key Outcomes

- Of the community members that responded, 39% said they accessed parks within the Shire on a weekly basis.
- 83% of respondents stated that Alma Park was the recreation space they visited the most, with the Uralla Swimming Pool and the Uralla Sporting Complex the second and third most popular.
- The elements that the community liked the most about the open space facilities they visit was the proximity to their house and the shade amenity they provide.
- The features that the community valued most or wanted most in a park was quite varied. Of the 194 responses to this question, 52 mentioned more emphasis on play equipment, 49 mentioned additional shade tree planting, and an increase to safety levels was mentioned 29 times.
- When asked what the barriers were for accessing the open space facilities, 69 people answered with lack of variety, and 66 respondents had issues relating to maintenance of the spaces.

4. Guiding Policies

The Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy is underpinned by best practice principles and procedures through the guidance of the following NSW government design framework documents, placing the Uralla Shire Council in a position to achieve best possible outcomes.



4.1 Better Placed

Better Placed recognises development has the potential to transform quality of life for people, stimulate the economy and enhance the environment. The design of the built environment shapes the places where we live, work and meet. The quality of design affects how spaces and places function, how they integrate, what they contribute to the broader environment, and the users, inhabitants and audiences they support or attract. *Better Placed* is a policy for collective aspirations, needs and expectations in designing NSW. It is about enhancing all aspects of our urban environments, to create better places, spaces and buildings, and thereby better cities, towns and suburbs. (*Better Placed 2017, GANSW*).

4.2 Greener Places

Greener Places is a design framework produced by Government Architect NSW to guide the planning, design, and delivery of green infrastructure across NSW. It aims to create a healthier, more liveable, and sustainable urban environment by improving community access to recreation and exercise, supporting walking and cycling connections, supporting and maintaining Aboriginal culture and heritage, and improving the resilience of urban areas.

Greener Places emphasises the need for an integrated design approach involving all aspects of the built environment and all scales of design, and advocates for the use of green infrastructure in urban environments. (*Greener Places 2020, GANSW*).

5. Design Principles

5.1 Open Space Design Principles



The following design principles will be used to assess existing components of Uralla Shire’s open space assets and provide direction on how they can be improved. The following principles are underpinned by state, national and international best practices in the field of urban design.

5.2 Green Infrastructure



The concept of Green Infrastructure is globally considered to be best practice. It highlights the need to actively plan green spaces, often integrating stormwater and other traditional infrastructure functions. The variety of open spaces within Uralla Shire as well the existing creek systems that flow through the towns and street tree network provide a great framework to build on.

Green infrastructure is crucial to deliver socially inclusive places that promote recreation opportunities. Creating connections with sufficient canopy coverage enables movement through urbanised areas. These corridors often create far reaching benefits that improve the appearance and lifestyle offered by the town. It has been shown that strategically placed street trees can lower surrounding temperatures significantly, better regulating ambient temperatures and making spaces more appealing and more comfortable to use.

Urban forests, park systems, drainage corridors and constructed wetlands are all part of green infrastructure. Street trees play an important role in this system, providing connections, habitat for wildlife, and improved urban aesthetics.

Implementing green infrastructure can be challenging, with perceived possibilities of management and maintenance issues. Globally, research suggests that the principal task for local government areas to overcome is the traditional grey infrastructure practices and accept that green infrastructure is an emerging, yet permanent urban feature that is imperative for the longevity of communities.

5.3 Accessible Green Space



Walking distance to open space is a common method for determining the quality of open space in an area. Number 11 of the NSW Premier's priorities is to 'Increase the proportion of homes in urban areas within 10 minutes' walk of quality green, open and public space by 10% by 2023. This measure of 10 minutes is widely recognised as the amount of time pedestrians are willing to walk before they opt for other modes of transport. Ensuring that Uralla Shire's open space network be largely accessible by a 10 minute walk is a critical component in overcoming deficiencies.

5.4 Changing Recreational Landscape



People and communities are always evolving in the ways in which they recreate, and as such, open space should be adaptable. Space should be able to be used in a number of ways as demand changes over time and be able to service a number of different needs within the community. It is also important to design parks with a variety of uses, flexibility of activity, and limit replicating facilities and opportunities in parks in close proximity to each other.

Developing a balance between active sport and passive recreation is important. Trends indicate that membership of sporting clubs are on the decline in favour of more informal use of parks. During recent years, an increase in small fitness groups, including walking, running and cycling have been observed throughout NSW.

It is anticipated that the expectation within communities to have spaces and networks that facilitate these kinds of activities will continue to increase.

5.5 Strengthening Parks and Green Spaces



Small, local level and pocket parks are great open space assets for any community, however if these spaces have limited accessibility or are disconnected from green links they are often underutilised or misused.

When parks form part of a larger green network and walkway route, they are more likely to be utilised by the public. By connecting these spaces, a comprehensive network is created that connects residential areas, the town centre and various points of interest throughout the community. Incorporating schools and other public assets within the network further strengthens and encourages alternative transport options for residents. In doing so, socially inclusive places promote and share social and cultural recreation opportunities, thereby building a stronger community.

5.6 Developing a Street Tree Network



A comprehensive street tree network is critical to providing urban streets that are liveable, attractive and pedestrian friendly. Street beautification is frequently seen as an unnecessary expense, however as regional cities and towns compete for investment, new residents and tourism, points of separation become ever more important. Research suggests a substantial social and economical return on design investment may be achieved when the necessary emphasis is placed on developing shaded streets with a well-developed canopy cover.

5.7 Resilience



Integrating the needs of the environment into the Strategy will result in a much more resilient network more capable of withstanding change. Building resilience to natural hazards such as fire and flood is also of importance to maintain the longevity of Uralla Shire's open space assets. Incorporating offset buffers to dense bushland, planting and regenerating creek banks, as well as opportunities for water sensitive urban design outcomes should all be explored.

Open space networks have the potential to function as biodiversity links, allowing for the movement and habitat creation for endemic species. Drainage corridors and detention basins especially provide opportunity to contribute to the biodiversity within Uralla Shire.

Planning for resilience and climate change also includes selecting plant species that are more drought tolerant and reduce the opportunity for fuel build-up in fire prone areas.

6. Analysis - Uralla Township

6.1 Analysis Intent

This section aims to demonstrate a high-level analysis of Uralla’s green space assets, which can then be used to identify opportunities to strengthen the overall network.

6.2 Green and Blue Spaces

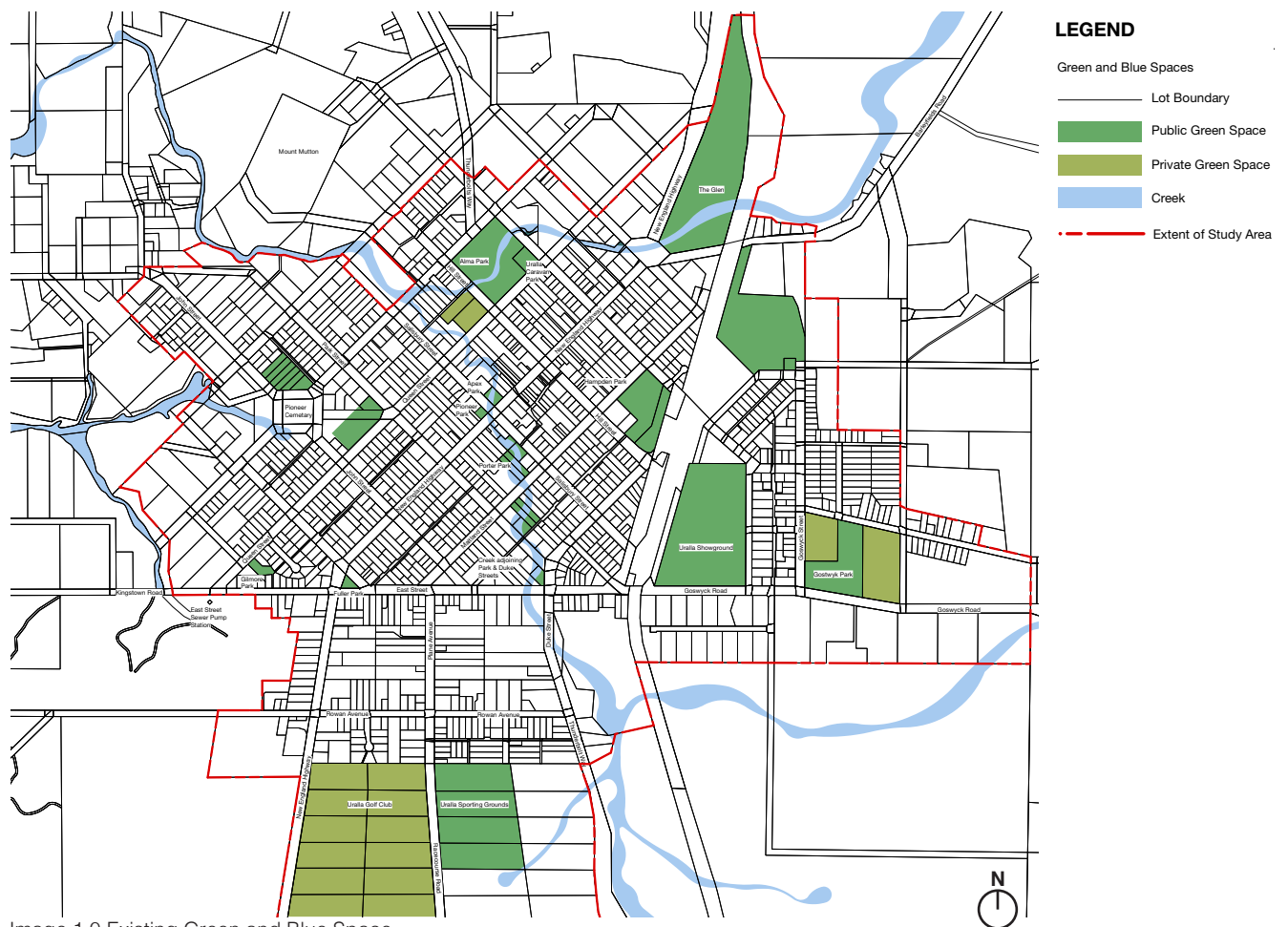


Image 1.0 Existing Green and Blue Space

The green spaces within the Uralla township encompass approximately 33 hectares of land, which amounts for 7% of the total land use space of the township study area.

The green space is comprised of a mix of public sporting fields, playgrounds, mixed-use recreational facilities and passive recreational parks.

Image 1.0 shows the location of the publicly and privately owned recreation facilities and green spaces within the township of Uralla.

Uralla Creek meanders through the town in a north-south direction, with Rocky Creek dissecting it in an east-west axis to the north of the Uralla Bowling Club. Many well-established trees in the town follow these existing creek lines, contributing to the overall shade amenity of the town and helping to develop an ecological corridor for endemic species. A visual assessment of the existing creek lines undertaken on 22 January 2021 showed the creek lines to be in a fair to good condition, with minimal erosion identified, and substantial healthy plantings lining the banks.

6.3 Heritage

Uralla has a rich architectural history, with many well-preserved and maintained historical buildings lining Bridge Street. Many more can be found within walking distance to the town centre. Much of this rich architectural history dates back to the 1860s and is a significant tourist attractor for the town. A heritage trail has been established to showcase these historical assets.

Notable buildings include: McCrossin's Flour Mill (1870), Railway Gatekeeper's House (1882), Masonic Hall (1884), and Uralla Courthouse (1885).

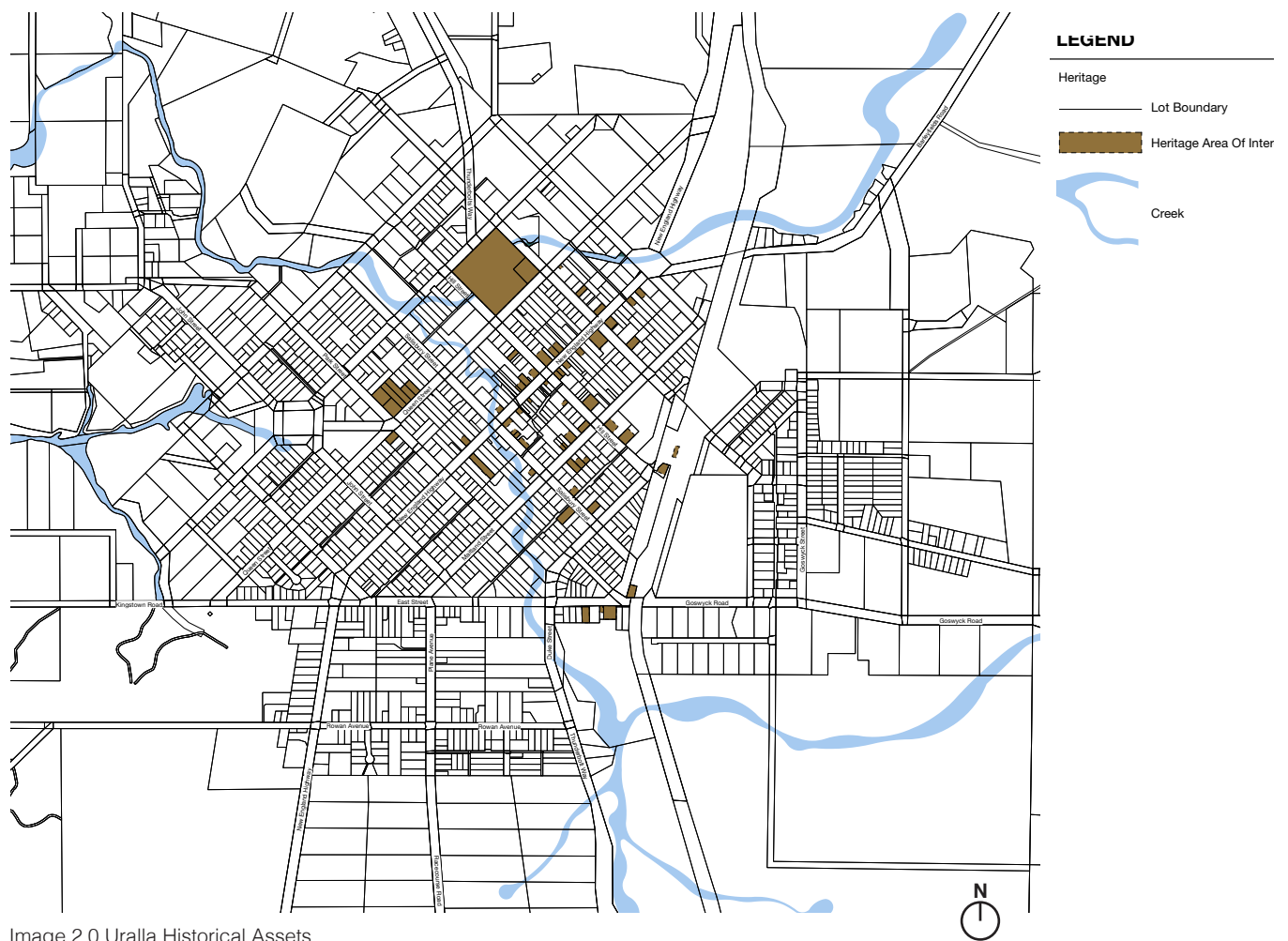


Image 2.0 Uralla Historical Assets

6.4 Points of Interest and Community Facilities

To achieve the best outcome for the Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy, and ultimately increase the level of liveability for its residents, it is crucial that points of interests within the town and facilities such as schools and aged care facilities are integrated into the wider green network. Increasing walkability and access to such facilities will help to develop an active community and increase overall well-being.

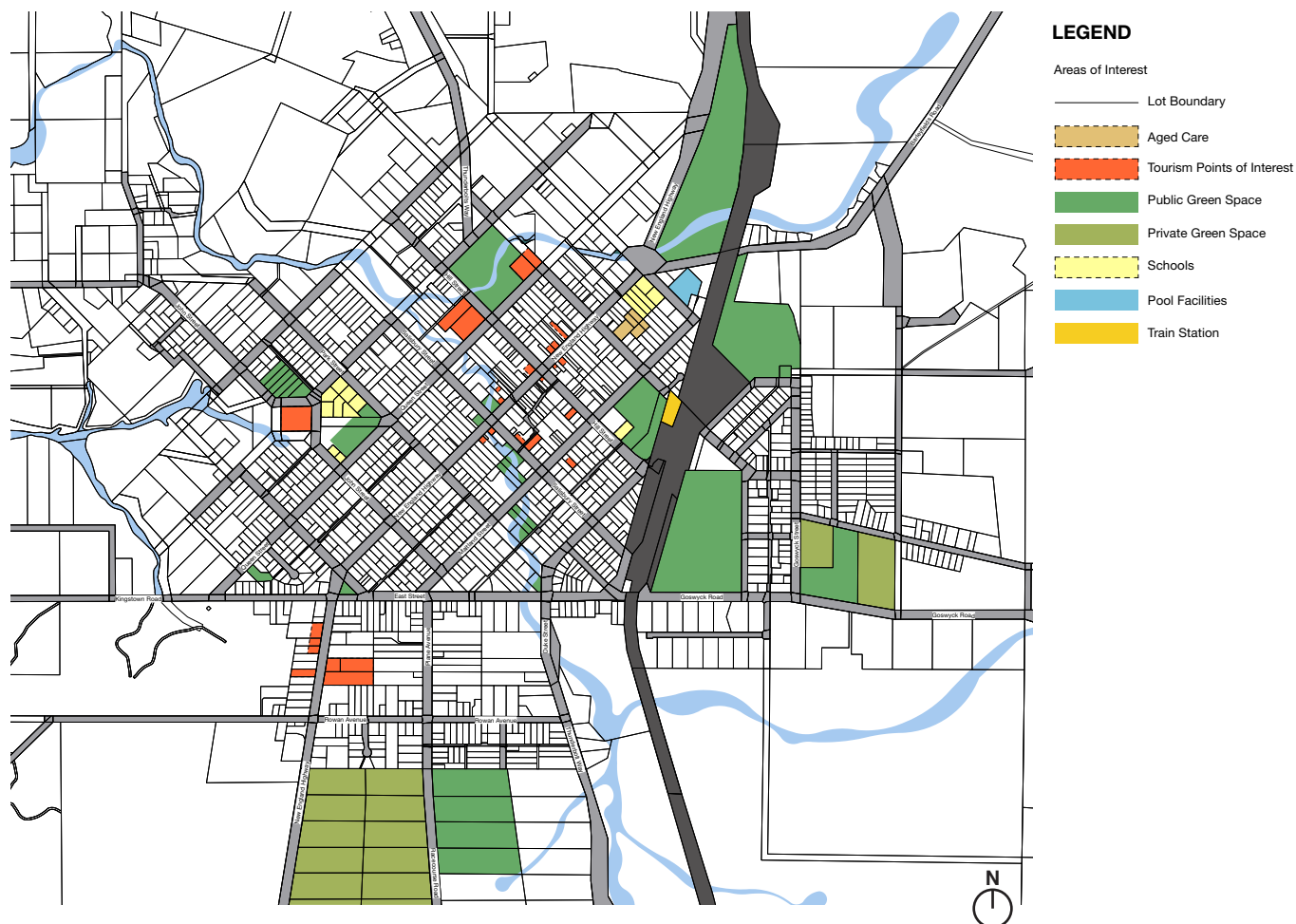


Image 3.0 Points of Interest and community facilities

6.5 Street Tree Network

The Climate Change in NSW fact sheet states that the climate across NSW has already been impacted by warming of 0.9°C since 1910 and the prediction is that warming will continue into the future. The near future projection (2020 – 2039) is for temperature increases by a further 0.7°C.

By 2030 there is projected to be up to 110 more heatwave days per year and by 2070, up to 33 more in northern NSW. Heatwaves are also expected to last longer.

To safeguard communities against this increase in predicted temperatures it is crucial that towns throughout the state strengthen their street tree network. By providing a planned and connected street tree network, the community will be encouraged to engage with the towns green spaces and lead a more active lifestyle.

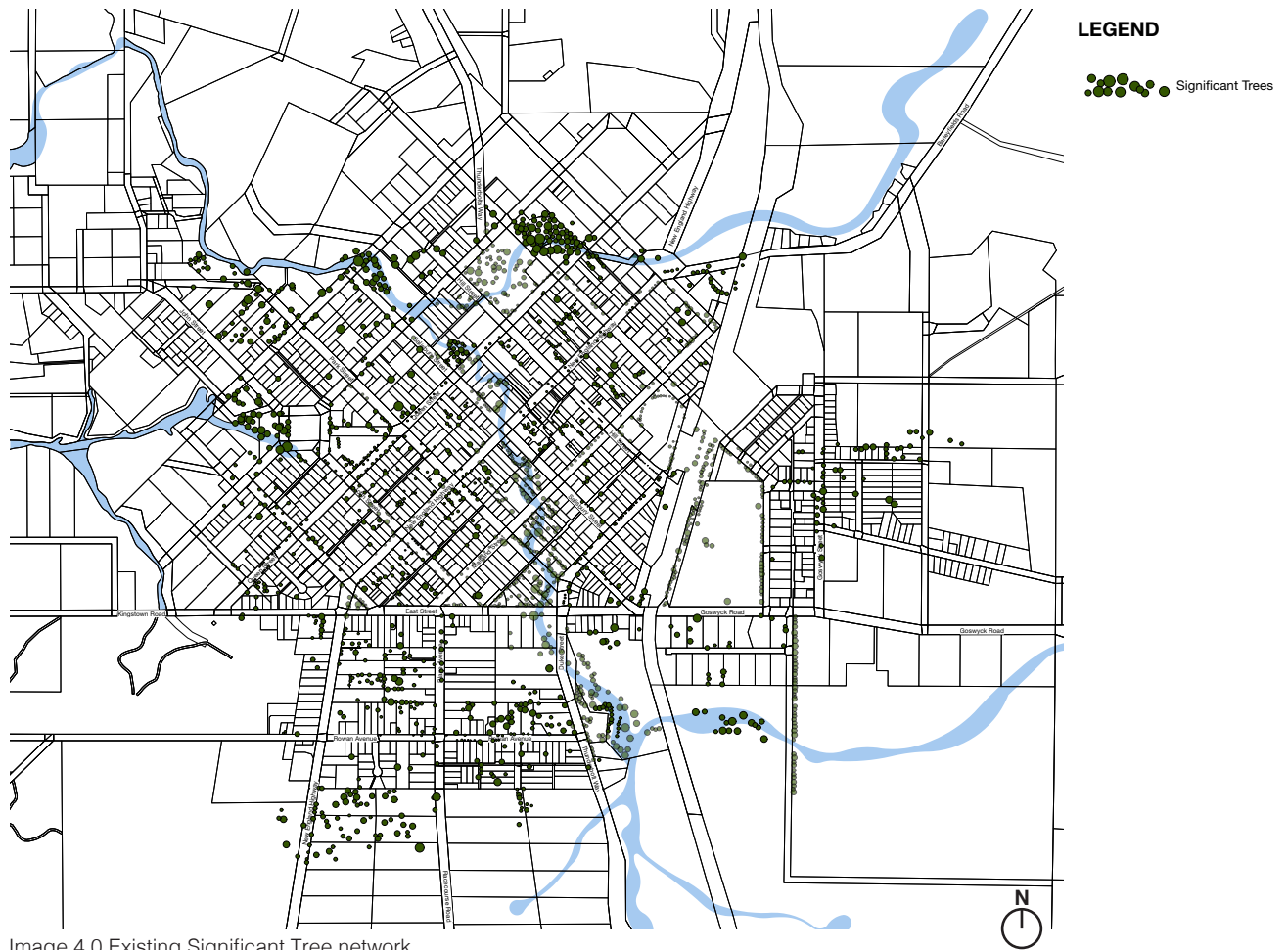
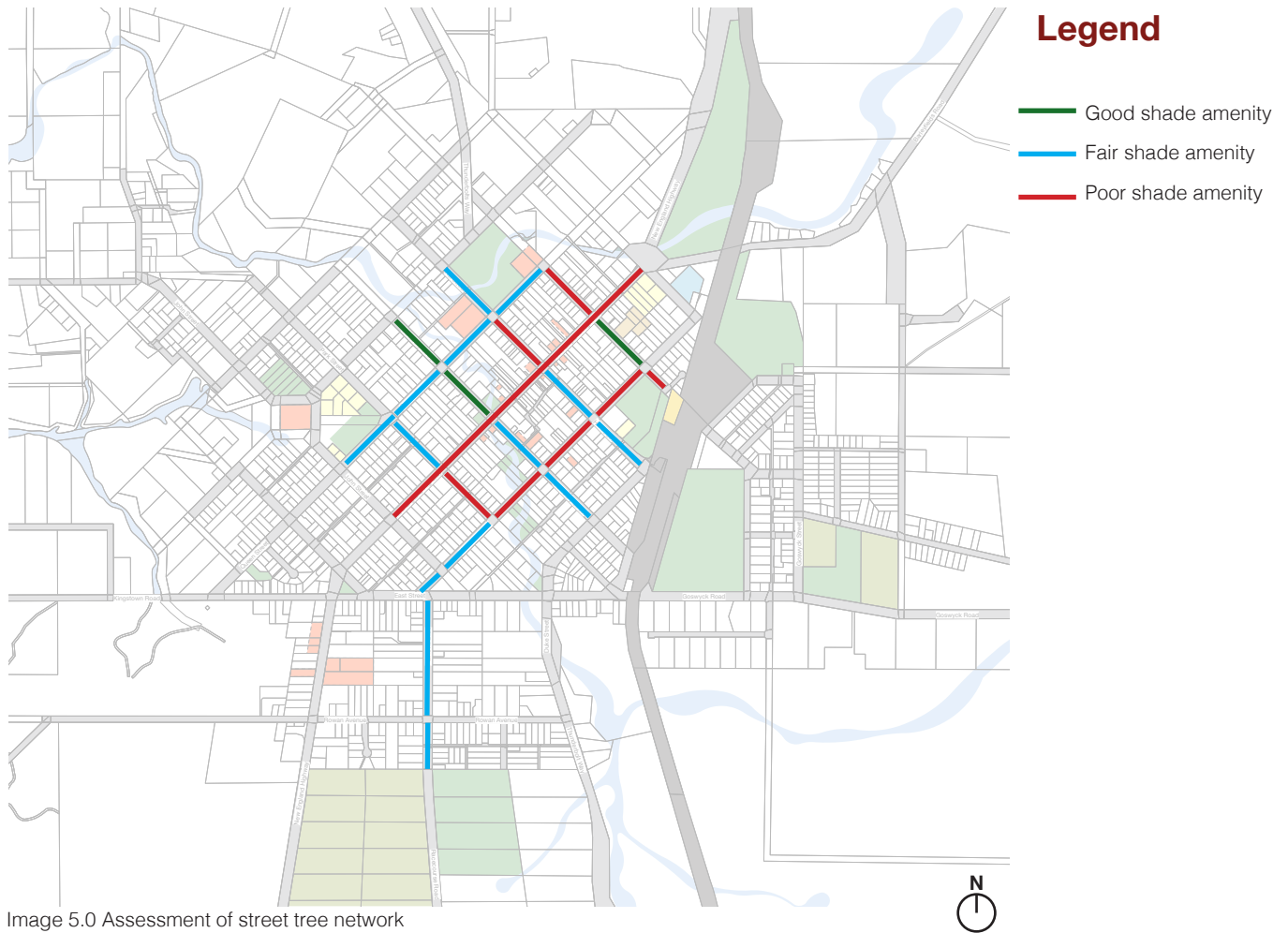


Image 4.0 Existing Significant Tree network

Image 4.0 shows the significant trees within the Uralla township. Large significant trees play a crucial role in cooling ambient temperature, as well as establishing ecological movement corridors, and habitats for endemic fauna.

Image 5.0 shows an analysis of the existing street tree network in the core streets of the Uralla township. The colour communicates the following:

- Red: Poor to low shade amenity and lack of continuity.
- Blue: Fair level of shade amenity and average level of continuity.
- Green: Good level of shade amenity and continuity.

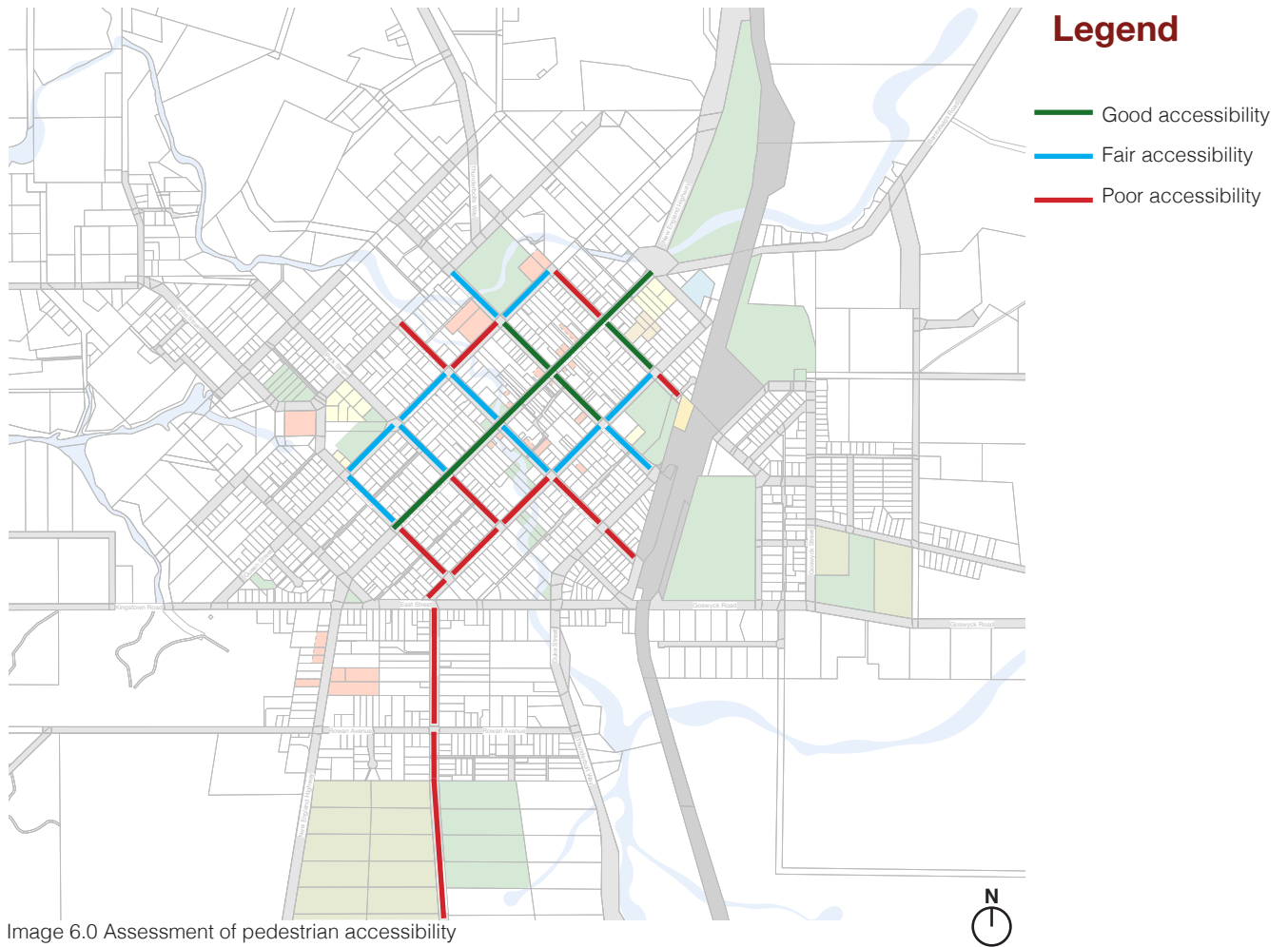


6.6 Pedestrian network

Much of the points of interest, both for residents and tourist alike, are located within the central heart of the Uralla township. Cycling and walking should be encouraged by improving accessibility to these networks and developing links to the town centre and streets, thereby connecting points of interest.

The smaller scaled grid layout makes the town ideal for walking routes where a variety of experiences are within easy walking distance with many points of interest along the way. By encouraging pedestrian movement, it not only adds to the experience of visiting Uralla, it also creates further business opportunities for local enterprises.

Enhancing Uralla's pedestrian network is a core component to the success of the Uralla Shire Open Space Strategy. The importance of encouraging walking and cycling routes should not be underestimated, with pedestrian and cycle networks being cited as a critical component to enhance liveability by the Greener Places charter. The health benefits of supporting active pedestrian networks have been well documented, and links can also be made to their effect on reducing crime in residential areas. Street tree coverage is also a core component in achieving walkability and increasing the liveability of a town.



Pedestrian access is fundamental in supporting and strengthening the movability of a town. Enabling all members of the community to move safely and unimpeded is vital to achieving a high level of liveability. Image 6.0 shows an analysis of the existing pedestrian accessibility within the township.

The analysis is based on the level of accessibility, determined by:

- Pedestrian paths on 1 side of the road.
- Pedestrian paths on both sides of the road.
- No pedestrian paths.

6.7 Walkability

Analysing walking distances can help determine if residential areas have deficient access to green space. A 10 minute walk to a green space area is generally considered an appropriate amount of time people are willing to walk before opting to use other modes of transport.

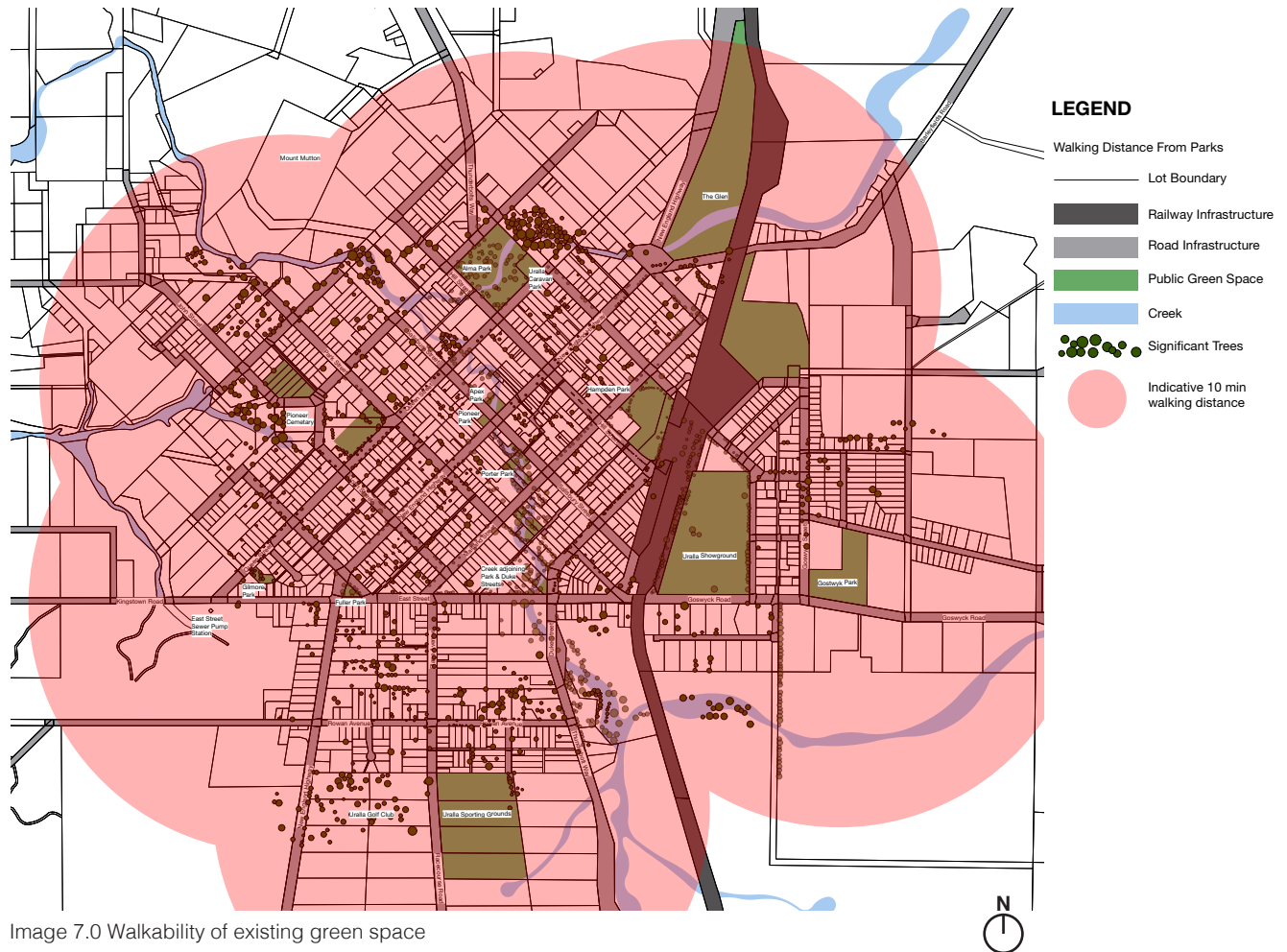


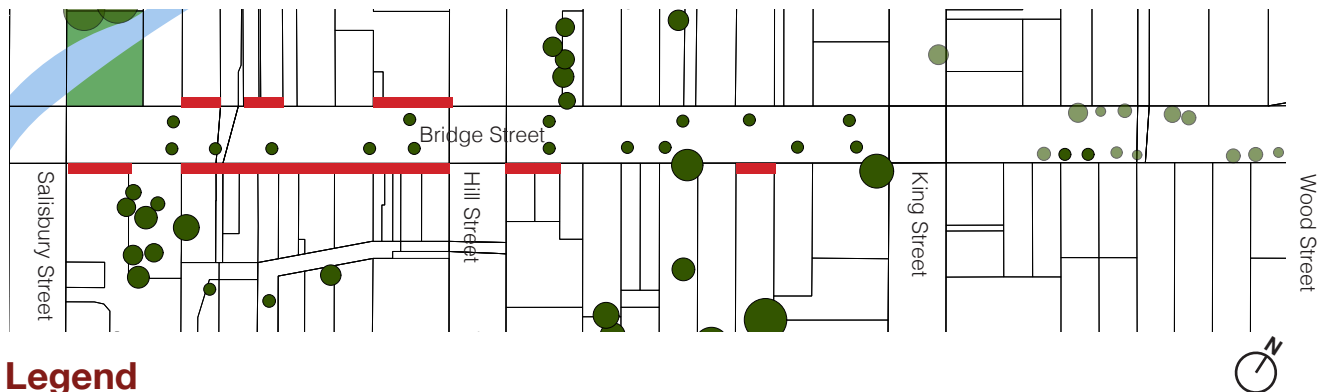
Image 7.0 demonstrates that there is currently sufficient access to green space for all residential areas within Uralla. This may change with Uralla's future land release areas and is a factor that should be considered in the development of these areas.

6.8 Uralla Main Street

The New England Highway transitions into Bridge Street, which is Uralla's main street. It is lined with local businesses occupying both new and historical buildings, with the southern side of the road having a fairly consistent colonnade from King Street in the north to Salisbury Street in the south. The Bridge Street carriageway is quite generous, boasting a 9m carriageway and rear-in parking on both the northern and southern sides. Although the colonnades to the building frontages provides a moderate level of shade protection, there are minimal street tree plantings.

Given the expansive carriageway, street trees play a crucial role in mitigating the radiant heat from the road surface and help to significantly lower ambient temperatures. Studies show that providing spaces with sufficient shade amenity and comfortable ambient temperatures stimulates the economy significantly and extends time spent in a business district.

Image 8.0 Bridge Street Shade Analysis



Legend

- Colonnade shade coverage
- Existing tree planting

Image 8.0 shows the locations of the existing tree canopy and locations of the existing colonnade coverage along Bridge Street. This area relies heavily on the existence of built form structures to provide shade onto the streetscape, most notably at its southern end.

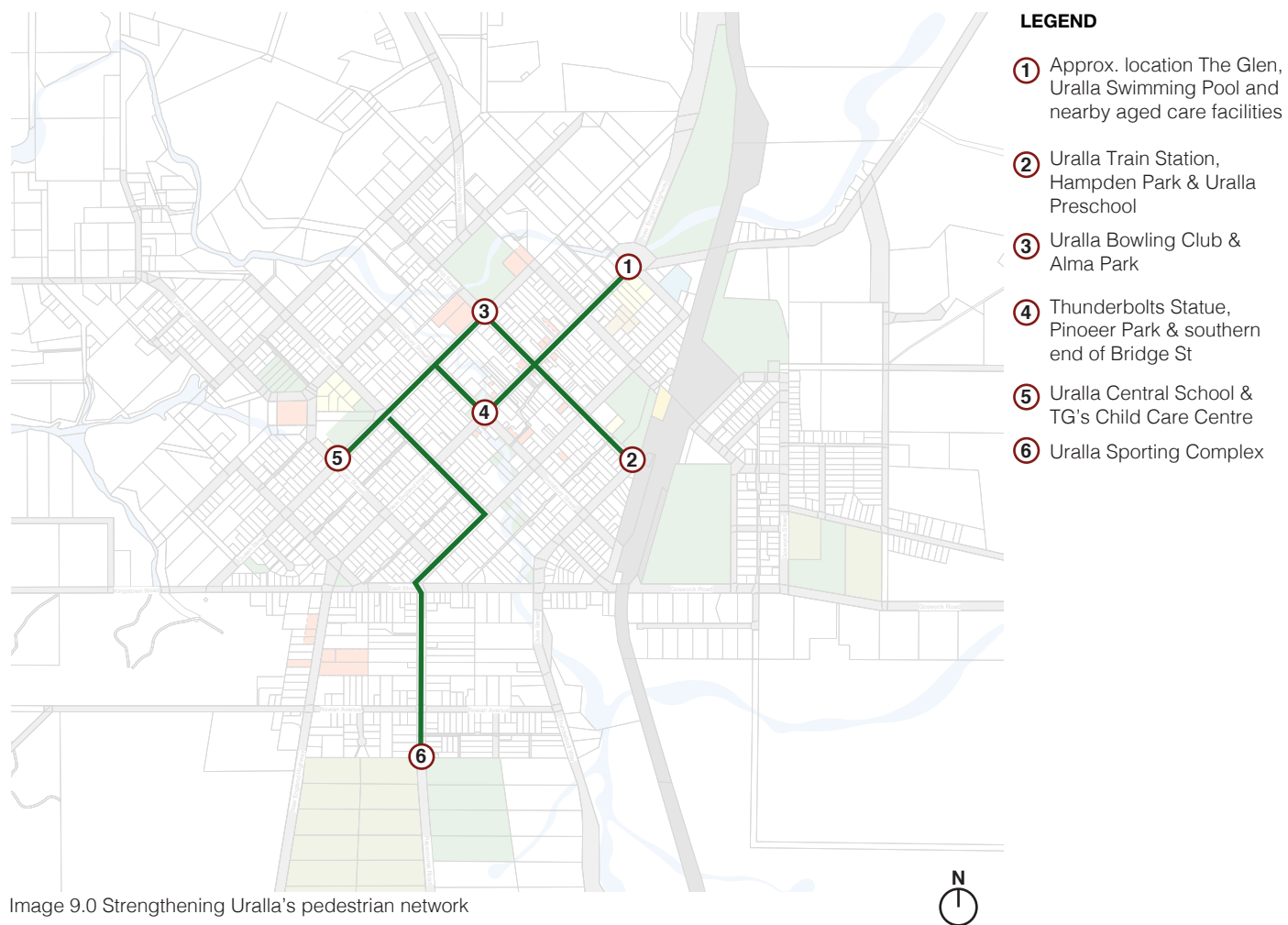
7. Opportunities

7.1 Overview

Utilising the information gathered from Section - 5.0 analysis of this document, a series of opportunities have been identified that will help develop strong connections to important green infrastructure, activate underperforming open spaces, and increase the overall liveability of the town.

7.2 Strengthening Pedestrian Movement

Safe, accessible and intuitive pedestrian connections are crucial to developing walkability and increasing liveability of the town. Image 9.0 shows where emphasis on strengthening the pedestrian network is required.

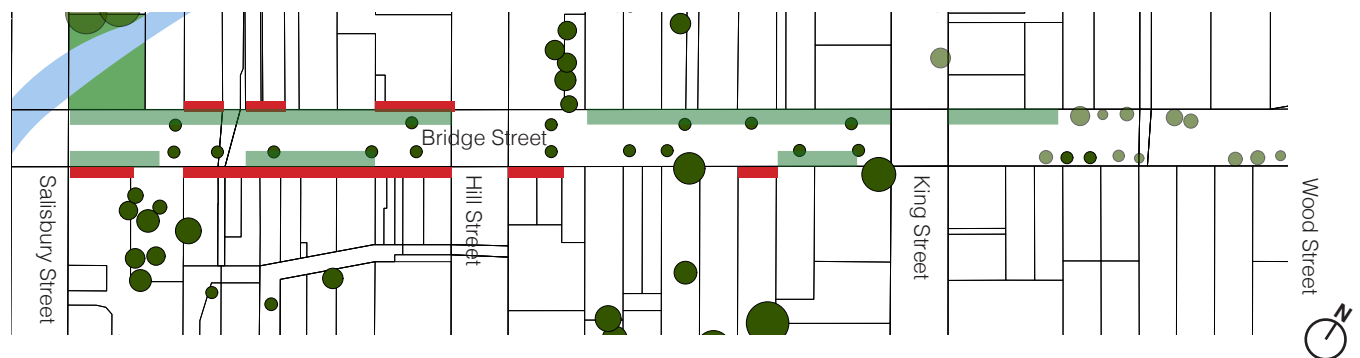


7.3 Strengthening Bridge Street

Bridge Street is Uralla's main street and very much the lifeblood of the community, providing a place for interaction, social well-being and economic opportunities. To maintain the longevity and ongoing useability of this streetscape, the street must adapt and change to both social and environmental pressures. In its current condition the central area of Bridge Street (between King and Hill Street) is particularly devoid of shade coverage, with the southern portion of Bridge Street (between Hill and Salisbury Street) relying heavily on colonnades to shade the streetscape.

Investing in shade amenity in urbanised areas has significant social, environmental and economic returns, all of which have been widely documented both nationally and internationally. Bridge Street's wide carriageway provides a great opportunity to significantly increase the shade coverage to the streetscape through a strategic and curated street tree planting strategy which will also help to develop a green and unique arrival experience into the township.

Image 10.0 Bridge Street Shade Analysis



Legend

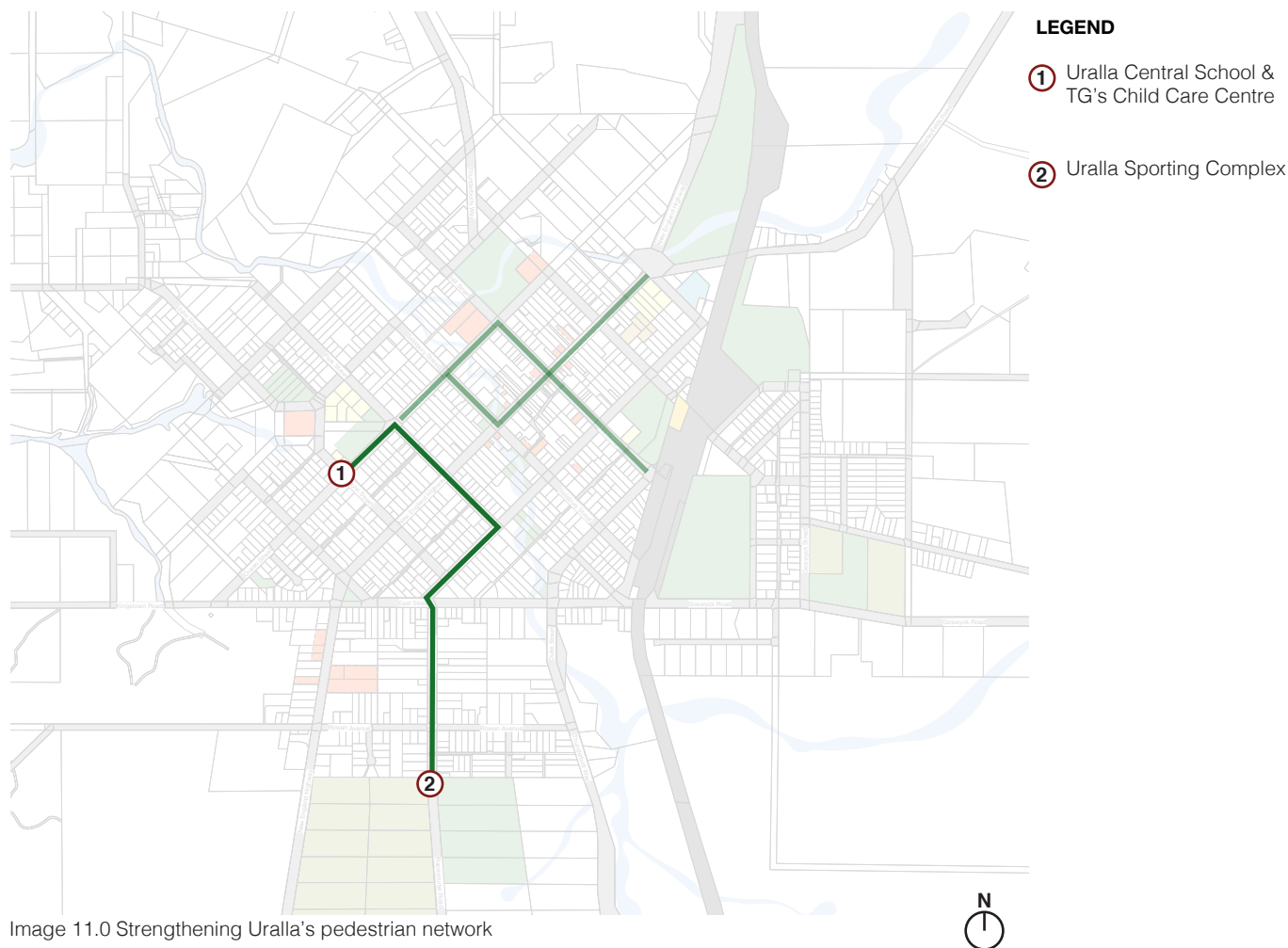
- Colonnade shade coverage
- Existing tree planting
- Additional street tree coverage required

Bridge Street Design Principles

The following points are design principles that can be adopted to help increase shade amenity, enhance pedestrian safety, and encourage users to occupy the space for longer.

- Tree planting should be strategic to the existing condition i.e. planting areas should be consolidated to reduce fragmentation, thus decreasing the chance of damage to planting areas whilst supporting parking amenity within the street.
- Tree pits and plantings should be protected. To ensure the survival of street tree plantings tree pits and planting sizes should be increased to reduce chance of damage from cars, especially in areas of 'rear-in' parking. Raised kerbs should be encouraged to reduce damage from reversing vehicles.
- Existing streetscape trees should only be removed once replacement trees have been established. Removing shade amenity without equitable replacement shade is strongly discouraged.
- Pedestrian calming measures should be mitigated through the use of natural elements rather than built form elements, such as guard rails.
- Safe pedestrian cross over points should be allowed for to support flow of pedestrian movements along Hill Street.

7.4 Connecting Key Facilities 01

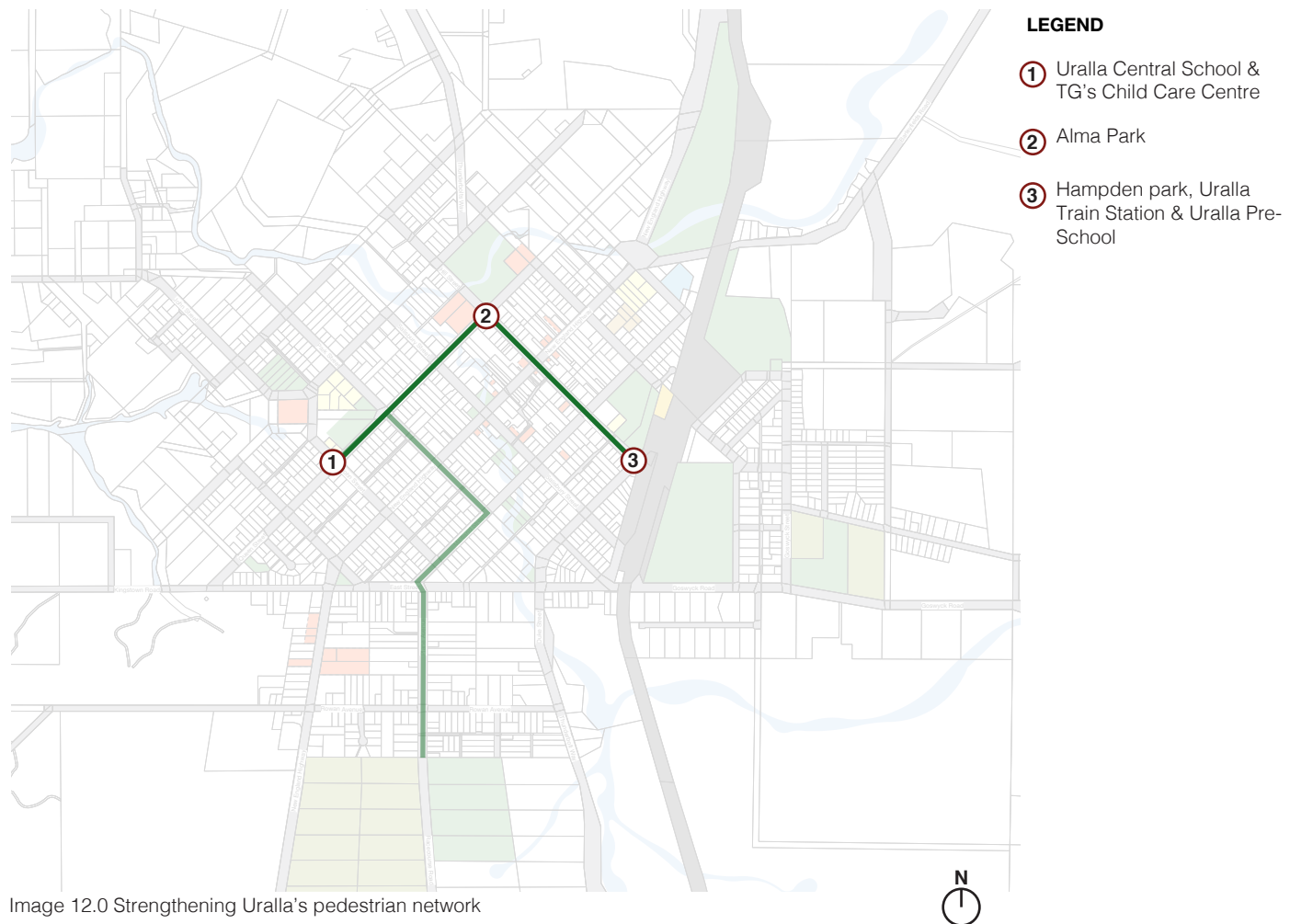


One of the primary user groups of the Uralla Sporting Complex is school aged children. Many after-school activities and sporting practices are held at this facility when school finishes for the day, seeing many children needing to commute to the complex. Providing this demographic with a safe and accessible pedestrian link from the Uralla Central School and TG's Child Care Centre to the Uralla Sporting Complex will help to encourage participation in recreational activities and decrease the reliance on parents to facilitate transport. When viewing this connection in the context of its existing condition, three barriers need to be overcome to achieve an effective connection as follows:

- Minimal levels of pedestrian access that connect these two locations.
- Minimal level of shade amenity
- Issues crossing the New England Highway.

To address these concerns, it is recommended that pedestrian infrastructure is put in place to accommodate safe movement between these points. Street tree planting, pedestrian paths, and if applicable, bicycle infrastructure will help facilitate this to develop a succinct and direct connection. Furthermore, to facilitate the safe crossing of the New England Highway, traffic calming devices such as traffic lights should be investigated to promote safety.

7.5 Connecting Key Facilities 02



Schools and childcare centres are vital assets that contribute to supporting a growing and changing community. Integrating these facilities into the wider pedestrian corridor network helps to encourage walking and active movement within the community. Often, these facilities are accessed by parents walking their children to school or day care and rely on accessible pedestrian facilities to make their journey safe and enjoyable.

Studies show that children and families are the primary users of recreational facilities. Linking schools and day care centres to recreational offerings helps to encourage community activation and supports healthy lifestyles.

There is great opportunity to create a safe and accessible link between Uralla Central School and TG's Child Care Centre to Alma Park. Linking these assets would strengthen after-school activation of Alma Park, whilst also allowing families with younger children to access the park while older children are at school or day care. Furthermore, developing a succinct link between Hampden Park and the Uralla Central School will help facilitate the use of the skate park for older children, as well as facilitating a link between Alma Park and the Uralla Pre-school.

7.6 Developing An Arrival Experience

There is an opportunity to utilise Uralla's existing open space facilities to assist in developing a unique and appropriately scaled arrival sequence, subtly notifying visitors the township is ahead.

To the south of Uralla, Fuller Park offers an opportunity to house a beacon or large artwork which would develop this arrival experience. The park's location on a corner of the New England Highway, before the road straightens and turns into Bridge Street, will see motorists slowing. Minor clearing to the park frontage will increase its street presence and provide a direct view into the park.

The Glen offers an opportunity to become the host of the northern arrival sequence location. Also located off the New England Highway, the space is already home to the 'Constellations of the South' art installation under development, and has sufficient space to house additional pieces of art. Although The Glen is located roughly 2m below the highway level, if the beacon or artwork can be seen by passing motorists it would create intrigue and raise curiosity.

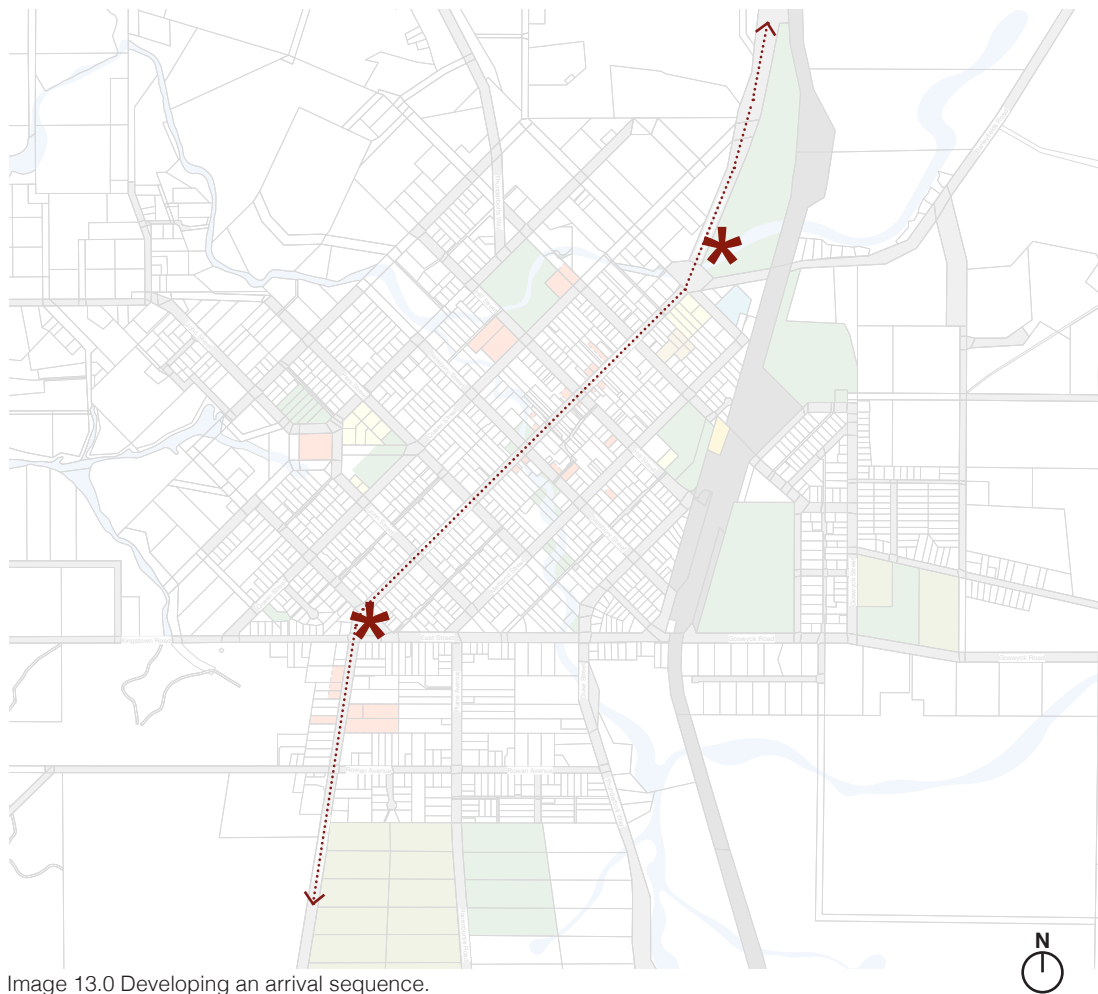
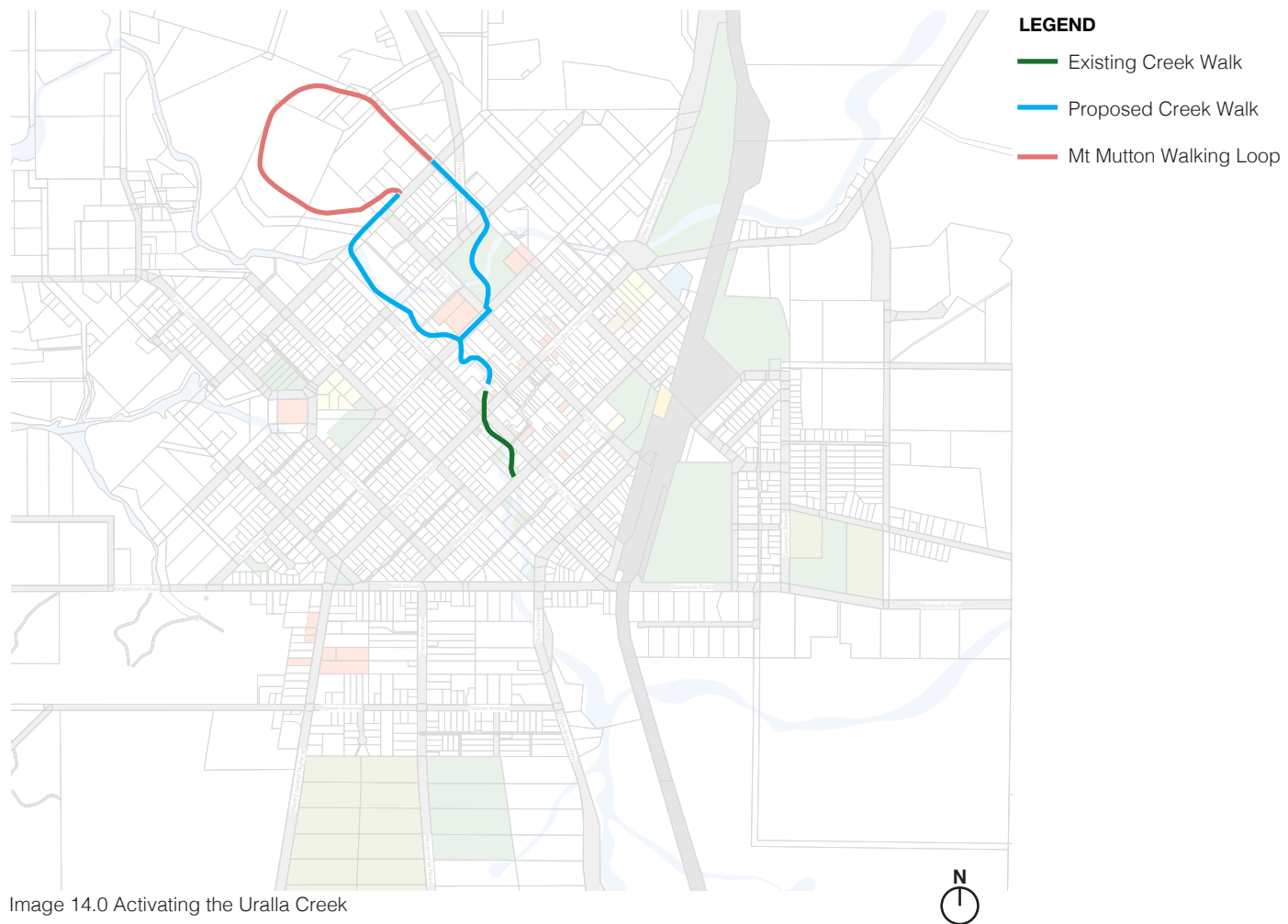


Image 13.0 Developing an arrival sequence.

7.7 Activating The Uralla Creek

Uralla Creek meanders through the town in a north-south direction, with Rocky Creek dissecting it in a east-west axis at the northern portion of Salisbury Street. Many well-established trees in town follow these creek lines, contributing to the overall shade amenity of the town. The creek offers an opportunity to develop an alternative pedestrian route through the township, connecting residential areas to the town centre. Utilising the cooling evaporation micro-climate of the creek, there is opportunity to develop walking and cycling routes along this natural green spine.

Through site investigations, some existing pedestrian infrastructure has been identified along the creek line along Salisbury Street, however it terminates at the underpass of the New England Highway. Developing this blue link along the Uralla Creek, to Alma Park and Rocky Creek, and then onwards to the Mt Mutton walking track would develop an exciting and marketable environmental and recreational experience.



8. Existing Open Space Inventory Audit

8.1 Overview

The existing open space inventory audit will be used to help Uralla Shire Council understand its existing recreational and open space assets and their existing conditions. This inventory will also be used to help identify gaps in the recreational offerings of the Shire and provide recommendations on how to strengthen existing assets. The existing open space inventory will use the following abbreviations to comment on asset condition:

GC - Good Condition

FC - Fair Condition

PC - Poor Condition

The following parks and areas of open space have been investigated:

- Uralla Sporting Complex
- Alma Park
- Hampden Park
- The Glen
- Pioneer Park
- Fuller Park
- Racecourse Lagoon
- Dangar's Lagoon
- Gilmore Park
- Porter Park
- Rotary Park
- Apex Memorial Park
- Woodville Reserve
- Pioneer Cemetery
- Wooldridge Reserve
- Yarrowyck Crossing Reserve
- Rocky River Tennis Courts
- Barry Munday Reserve

8.2 Uralla Sporting Complex

Description

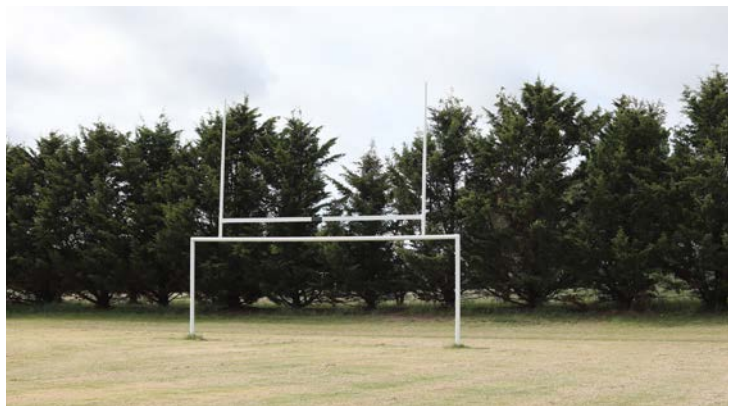
The Uralla Sporting Complex can be considered the Shire's premiere sporting facility, catering for a large number of sporting and recreational pursuits. The site offers a dense tree lined perimeter which provides a natural wind break to prevailing winds and a natural backdrop for spectators and players. The facility is furnished with a number of tennis courts, multi-use courts, playing fields, and opportunities for shelter and shade amenity. The facility has received major upgrades between 2017-2020 and the overall condition and functionality of the site is considered good.

The accessibility of the site would be categorised as low. There is currently poor pedestrian access to the facility, with no pedestrian paths or street tree coverage along Plane Avenue.

Comments/Recommendation

Improvements can be made to the arrival experience of the facility. Entering through the driveway, a series of large concrete pots line the pedestrian access. There is opportunity for these to be removed and replaced with a tree avenue either side of the driveway. This inclusion will help build a sense of arrival whilst providing shade amenity. Access could be improved by accommodating a stronger pedestrian connection to the town centre through the implementation of shaded pedestrian paths that encourage multiple methods of transport.

The complex would also benefit with the extension of the existing shade amenity. There is opportunity to plant the northern edge of the tennis courts, as well as supplementary planting to the banks of the cricket field and children's play area.



8.2 Uralla Sporting Complex - Continued

The siting of the outdoor gym equipment should also be considered. Currently the equipment is placed in natural earth, making it difficult for maintenance crews to successfully maintain the space. Siting on a concrete pad or softfall should be explored.

Facility Audit

- Synthetic tennis courts x 6 - GC
- Lighting to courts x 6 - GC
- Multi courts x 2 - GC
- Picnic seating facing tennis courts x 4 - GC
- Tennis clubhouse - GC
- Amenities block with canteen - GC
- Drinking fountain - GC
- BBQ - GC
- Small childrens play area with shade sail - GC
- Junior soccer field/ netball with multi posts and lighting- FC
- Aluminium grandstand seating- GC
- Senior soccer fields x 2 - GC
- Cricket practice nets x 2 - GC
- Synthetic cricket pitch with fence - GC
- Seating surrounding cricket field (limited) - FC
- Fitness equipment - GC

8.3 Alma Park

Description

Alma Park, established in 1893, can be considered Uralla's premiere park facility. Centrally located just 280m, or 4 min walk from the Uralla main street the park offers users both an active, and passive park experience. The park has well maintained lawn areas with large established shade trees and colourful annual planting palette. The park is home to a number of significant memorials and a historical rotunda. The playground at Alma Park is the premier playground facility within Uralla with a large climbing structure, slides and a variety of smaller play opportunities. The park also has a recently completed amenity building and picnic shelters.

Comments/Recommendation

Alma Park boasts numerous opportunities for passive recreational opportunity. The newly constructed footpath to the park frontage provides increased accessibility, and the park provides ample shade opportunities.

Facility Audit

- Double picnic shelter - GC
- Bins x 2 - GC
- Zip line - GC
- Swings and climbing structure - GC
- Picnic shelter x 2 - GC
- Seating x 8 - GC
- Major play structure - GC
- Swings x 5 - GC
- Liberty swing x 1 - GC
- Rotunda - GC
- Memorials x 2 - GC
- Maximum shade amenity
- Amenities block - GC



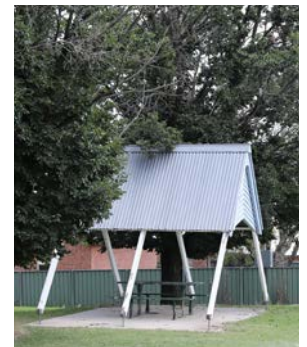
8.4 Hampden Park

Description

Hampden Park is a major sporting facility for the Shire. The park can be categorised as a programmed sporting facility and provides a varied offering of sporting and exercise-focused pursuits, such as skating, cricket, basketball and outdoor gym equipment. The primary entry into the facility is via Hill Street, with gravel access paths offered from Maitland and King Streets. The park is located opposite the Uralla Train Station and is a 5 minute walk to Bridge Street.

Comments/Recommendation

The current access into the site would be classed as poor. The asphalt parking loop is in a poor condition and would benefit from being formalised and re-surfaced. There is also a lack of a footpath to link the carpark to the recreation offerings throughout the park. A formalised footpath to the basketball court, picnic shelter and outdoor gym equipment would greatly increase the accessibility of the park. There is an opportunity to strengthen access into the site from Maitland Street through the inclusion of adequate shade coverage to the newly installed pedestrian paths. There is also an opportunity to develop a stronger connection with the train station. Formalising the train station carpark area has the potential to accommodate overflow parking for the park and provide accessibility to the existing park facilities.



Facility Audit

- Synthetic cricket net x 2 - GC
- Amenities building - GC
- Bins x 2 - GC
- Drinking fountain x 1 - GC
- Picnic shelter x 1 - GC
- Picnic shelter (A-frame) x 1 FC
- Basketball half-court x GC
- Fitness equipment x 6 x GC
- Skate park - GC
- Cricket field with synthetic pitch - GC

8.5 The Glen

Description

The Glen is a large tract of open bushland, commonly used by recreational walkers and dog walkers. Situated between the New England Highway to the west and the train line in the east, the parkland is vegetated with a mix of native eucalyptus and melaleucas as well as some exotic plantings such as willows. The parkland is home to a series of large sculptural elements, which are a partially completed artwork series called 'Constellations of the South'. The large monolithic sculptures are situated in a large clearing with informal seating dotted around the peripheries. Rocky Creek transects the parklands, east to west, cutting off access to the northern portion of the parklands when the creek level rises. Access to The Glen is via Barleyfields Road, and crosses a low lying swampy area before arriving at an informal parking area.

Comments/Recommendation

Please see section 10 Catalyst Projects.

Facility Audit

- Large artworks x 2 - GC
- Unsealed carpark - FC
- Signage rotunda - PC
- Large open field - GC
- Shade coverage - GC
- Healthy creekline - GC
- Enclosed fencing - FC



8.6 Pioneer Park

Description

Pioneer Park is one of Uralla’s most used open space facilities. The space is primarily used as a rest stop area for passing tourists due to its close proximity to some of Uralla’s main attractions and opportunities to park cars with caravans. The park has newly refurbished toilet facilities and other amenities that cater for short stay visitors. Much of the park is comprised of an open lawn area with a dense screening buffer to the north and east edges of the park, which limits visibility in and out of the park.

Comments/Recommendation

Please see section 10 Catalyst Projects.



Facility Audit

- Amenities building - GC
- Drinking fountain - GC
- Bins - GC
- Picnic seating - FC
- Existing Birch trees - GC



8.7 Fuller Park

Description

Fuller Park is a small pocket park located off the New England Highway. The park is surrounded by roads on all sides, making the park's function and possible programming quite limited. The park has a mixture of both native and exotic plantings, most of which provide a high level of shade amenity to the space, mixed with areas of open lawn. The park's installations are quite scattered and lack any level of hierarchy or discernible order. The park houses a shade structure, small picnic setting and two stone memorials.

Comments/Recommendation

Please see section 10 Catalyst Projects.

Facility Audit

- Picnic shelter x 1 - FC
- Shade structure x 1 - FC
- Water point x 1 - GC
- Concrete planter pot x 1 - FC
- Mature trees - GC



8.8 Racecourse Lagoon

Description

Racecourse Lagoon is a Crown reserve, designated as part park and part natural wetland area. The lagoon is commonly frequented more by the residents of the Shire rather than visitors. Located 6 minutes' drive from the Uralla main street, the space is utilised by dog owners and recreational walkers. The site's natural setting is its major draw card, with an expansive view of wildflower meadows leading up to the lagoon area. Currently the arrival space accommodates two picnic tables and a signage pavilion.

Comments/Recommendation

Approaching the space, there is little in the way of wayfinding, direction or a general arrival sequence. Once visitors enter the space, it is hard to discern where one should park, or if access is even permitted.

Incorporating a small sealed carpark area would help to welcome visitors, raise the perception of safety and boost the overall accessibility of the space. Leveraging off the site's natural beauty and ecological significance, there is opportunity for educational signage to showcase the endemic flora and fauna. The existing picnic tables are outdated and show signs of rot and should be replaced. There is also opportunity for a small toilet facility to the north of the entry space if visitation increases.

Facility Audit

- Picnic settings x2 - PC
- Unsealed carpark - PC
- Signage (Flora and Fauna) - PC
- Large open lawn - GC
- Shade coverage - GC



8.9 Dangar's Lagoon

Description

Dangar's Lagoon is one of the largest bodies of water in the area and provides a critical habitat for migratory and endemic bird species. Located off Thunderbolts Way, the lagoon is a popular stopping point for travellers as well as bird enthusiasts and recreational walkers.

A walking track aligns the western and southern portions of the lagoon, linking to Sanctuary Road, facilitating a complete walking loop around the extents of the lagoon. A bird hide, picnic table and educational signage can be found along the eastern and southern edges of the lagoon.

Dangar's Lagoon is designated as a wildlife refuge and is governed by the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Comments/Recommendation

The lagoon is located in a 100 kmph zone and the existing National Park signage can be easily missed. Introducing a larger signage element would help to alert motorists of its presence earlier and provide sufficient warning time to slow down and enter the lagoon site safely. As the site is popular amongst travellers, there is potential for the addition of a toilet facility and additional picnic settings.

Facility Audit

- Walking track - GC
- Picnic table x1 - FC
- Parking - FC
- Bird hide - GC



8.10 Gilmore Park

Description

Gilmore Park is a local level park that services the residents of south-east Uralla. The park has a multi-use play structure with a slide and swings, and an associated shade structure that spans the play area. The park has large established eucalyptus and bottlebrush trees which provide large amounts of shade amenity and attract local birdlife.

Comments/Recommendation

Accessibility to the site has the potential to be improved. A kerb ramp to Queen Street and an associated pedestrian path would help facilitate access for parents with prams, as well as access for the elderly.

The existing trees within Gilmore Park, although healthy, are perhaps nearing the end of their lifespan as trees in close proximity to a play space. Succession planting should be investigated so that Gilmore Park maintains its level of shade coverage into the future.

Facility Audit

- Bin x 1 - GC
- Seats x 3 - GC
- Shade structure - GC
- Play structure - GC



8.11 Porter Park

Description

Located off Salisbury Street, Porter Park is nestled on the eastern bank of Uralla Creek and behind the Uralla Library. Established in 1982, the park has a wealth of large shade trees which line the banks of the creek. The park can be accessed via Maitland Street in the south, Salisbury Street in the east, and the Uralla Library carpark in the north. The park has a number of picnic and seating opportunities as well as a newly constructed multi-play piece and shade structure.



Comments/Recommendation

Although the park has many points of access, there is opportunity to strengthen its level of accessibility through the inclusion of a pedestrian loop, which would connect the carpark to the other access points and pieces of park infrastructure. It could also double as a learn to ride track. There is opportunity to screen the fence line to the western edge of the playground to better reinforce the natural character of the site, as well as incorporate additional natural play elements such as boulders and stepping logs.



Facility Audit

- Bin x 1 - GC
- Seats x 3 - GC
- Shade structure - GC
- Play structure - GC
- BBQ - GC
- Picnic setting - FC
- Timber balance beams - FC
- Timber climbing elements - PC

8.12 Rotary Park

Description

Located off Barleyfields Road, Rotary Park is a quiet outdoor spot with great vistas north to Uralla Creek and offers many shaded picnic opportunities. The park can be accessed via a looped road and there are sufficient informal parking spots. The park has a number of picnic and BBQ facilities as well as an amenity building, making it popular with travellers. The south of the park adjoins the local community garden, which offers opportunity to develop a stronger connection between the spaces.

Comments/Recommendation

The access road into the park can be categorised as fair condition. Some sections are rutted out and would benefit from patching of holes or resurfacing the entirety of the road. The concrete kerb to the entry road also needs attention as there is significant damage and cracking which has resulted in areas of concrete completely dislodging and spilling onto the road. The wooden picnic setting that sits to the front of the park is quite outdated and should either be refurbished with new picnic furniture or removed and a feature tree planted in its place to enhance the arrival sequence. It is also suggested that the horizontal timber log bollards within the park be removed, as they increase the level of maintenance required whilst not increasing the level of public safety.

Facility Audit

- Bin x 1 - GC
- Seats x 3 - GC
- Steel shade structure x 2 GC
- Wooden picnic structure - PC
- Amenities building - FC
- BBQ - GC
- Horizontal wooden bollards - FC
- Access road - FC



8.13 Apex Memorial Park

Description

Apex Memorial Park is located on the corner of Bridge Street and Salisbury Street, opposite Pioneer Park. The park is relatively small in size (approx. 240m²) and is home to a WWII anti-aircraft gun which sits on a concrete pad. The park also houses a small wooden picnic setting, flagpole and an Apex Memorial Park sign. To the south-east of the site, a gravel driveway transects the site which allows access to the rear of the Memorial Institute building and the Central Chambers Building. Uralla Creek runs to the north of the park, which is heavily wooded. An underpass runs under Bridge Street and can be accessed via the park.

Please note: The park is not Council property and any upgrades would have to be done in consultation with the landowner.

Comments/Recommendation

This park serves its function as a small pocket park, allowing people to stop, rest and inspect the anti-aircraft gun. A better interface with the Bridge Street underpass could be explored, as well as opportunities to engage with Uralla Creek, and extend the creek side footpath which winds through Porter Park. There is also an opportunity to incorporate screen planting to the western edge to delineate the boundary with the adjacent Memorial Institute building.

Facility Audit

- WWII anti-aircraft gun - GC
- Picnic shelter x 1 - FC
- Flag pole x 1 - FC



8.14 Woodville Reserve

Description

Woodville Reserve is located next to the Uralla Rugby League field and contains the Uralla BMX track. The park comprises of a learn-to-ride track, amenities building, a BBQ, and series of picnic shelters. The car park area adjacent to the amenities building is well laid out with enough parking spaces to service a park of this size.

Accessibility into the site can be categorised as fair, with connection from the carpark to the facilities of the park lacking.

Comments/Recommendation

To increase the accessibility of the site, connecting the park facilities such as the BBQ shelter, bin, and picnic shelters is recommended. Tree planting to foster shade amenity will also help increase the accessibility of the park.

Facility Audit

- Amenities building - GC
- Picnic shelter x 2 - GC
- Car park - GC
- Learn-to-ride track - GC
- Shade structure - GC
- BBQ facilities x 1 GC
- Planted areas - GC
- Bin - GC
- Drinking fountain - GC



8.15 Pioneer Cemetery Picnic Area

Description

The picnic area is located next to the Pioneer Cemetery, which is the final resting place of Captain Thunderbolt and a major tourist attractor for the town. The picnic area comprises of a small picnic shelter and setting, small toilet facility, campervan dump point and informal parking area.

Comments/Recommendation

The existing picnic shelter is showing significant signs of wear and should be replaced. There is also opportunity to plant screening shrubs to soften the impact of the dump point and toilet building.

Facility Audit

- Toilets - FC
- Caravan dumping point - GC
- Picnic shelter - PC
- Bin - GC
- Large trees - GC



8.16 Wooldridge Reserve

Description

Wooldridge Reserve adjoins the banks of Rocky River and is popular amongst day-trippers, campers and fossickers. The reserve is located approximately 6km from the centre of Uralla and primarily accessed by vehicles. Set in a bushland setting, the reserve is spread over a large area and has amenities such as BBQ facilities, toilets, short-term camping opportunities and non-potable water.

Comments/Recommendation

As the reserve is set in a bushland setting the graded earth parking area is suitable for this area with regular grading. Additional natural style bollards (granite boulders) will help to prohibit access into restricted areas of the reserve. The toilet blocks show signs of vandalism and have the potential to be upgraded in the coming years.

Facility Audit

- Male and female toilets - PC
- BBQ area - GC
- Picnic tables - GC
- Park benches along the creek - GC
- Formalised parking at the fossicking area - GC



8.17 Yarrowyck Crossing

Description

Yarrowyck Crossing Reserve is located on the banks on the Gwydir River, overlooking Mt Yarrowyck, roughly 20 minutes' drive north-west of the Uralla township. The reserve offers free overnight camping, pit toilet facilities, BBQs, rubbish bins and is dog friendly. The reserve is popular in the warmer months, offering a great opportunity for swimming and fishing.

Comments/Recommendation

The reserve functions well as a free camping location, with suitable amenities to service the community and encourage respect and stewardship of the site. The BBQ facilities are outdated and need to be replaced, and the toilet facility should be upgraded or refurbished in the coming years. Access to the site is generally good, but should be monitored after heavy rains.

Facility Audit

- Toilets - FC
- BBQ - PC
- Open lawns - GC
- Rubish bin - GC
- Fire pits - GC
- Picnic setting x 2 - GC



8.18 Rocky River Tennis Courts

Description

The former Rocky River Tennis Courts are located roughly 10 minutes' drive from the centre of Uralla and at present is infrastructure that has not been used or maintained for a significant period of time. The remnant facilities include a small club house and the boundary fence of the tennis court. The degradation and dilapidation of the facilities is quite notable, with large trees growing through the former court space and the boundary fence posts leaning at significant angles. Access into the site is quite difficult, and the facility's street presence can be categorised as low.

Comments/Recommendation

Returning the site into a functioning tennis court facility would require a substantial intervention. Almost none of the existing infrastructure has the potential to be reused, and all new built form elements would have to be installed. Its siting and location does not facilitate ease of access or develop a street presence, which is a critical component in attracting active users. The Uralla Sporting Complex has recently upgraded its existing courts, and that facility has the potential to expand to accommodate for an increase in active users.

Facility Audit

- Facilities are dilapidated to the point where no usable infrastructure remains.



8.19 Barry Munday Reserve

Description

The Barry Munday Reserve is located at 82 Munday Lane, Saumarez Ponds. The reserve is Crown land and is managed by Uralla Shire Council. The reserve has a long and varied history of recreational uses beginning in the late 1800s, most notably as a local cricket field and tennis court, however in recent years has been relatively unused for recreational pursuits.

The reserve has been identified by members of the local community as an asset that has the potential to be revitalised, made accessible to the public, and serve the residents of Saumarez Ponds. Community members have formed a group called the 'Friends of the Barry Munday Reserve' and have submitted a project work plan to outline the steps needed to be undertaken to reinstate the reserve as an operational asset for the Shire.

The project work plan proposes the following:

- Weed identification and eradication;
- Assessment and removal of dangerous trees or limbs from the established pine trees that line the southern edge of the reserve;
- Removal of the dilapidated tennis shed, with the option to salvage timber for onsite reuse;
- Establish a mowing roster in conjunction with Council's maintenance and operations team;
- Plant trees to replace trees to be removed;
- Repair existing infrastructure including BBQ facility, reinstate tennis court and associated infrastructure, upgrade/repair reserve fencing;
- Build new infrastructure including picnic tables, seating, tennis shed, community garden and additional fencing to tennis court; and
- Address drainage issues.

As of February 2021, the 'Friends of the Barry Munday Reserve' have refurbished the existing tennis courts, refurbishing the clay-court surface, replaced the net posts, installed a net and marked the courts.

Opportunities

In order to assist in the ongoing upgrade of the Barry Munday Reserve, there is potential for Council to direct funds towards conservative upgrade works subject to future grant funding.

Facility Audit

- Refurbished clay tennis courts - GC
- Tennis shed - PC
- Fencing - PC
- Drainage to field - PC
- General maintenance to open space - PC

8.20 Audit Summary

The recreational and open space offerings of Uralla Shire are quite comprehensive and diverse. Outside the Uralla township, open spaces such as Racecourse Lagoon, Dangar's Lagoon and the Mount Mutton walking trails offer opportunities for open space and nature based recreational activities such as walking and hiking. This provides the community with unique interactions with the existing environment and an overall immersive experience. Within the town, the recreational offerings are more programmed and targeted to specific recreational pursuits, such as soccer and tennis.

The township has 2 cricket fields, a premiere football field (privately managed) and numerous multi-fields at the Uralla Sporting Complex. This number of large open sporting fields comfortably accommodates the current demand for programmed sports and also facilitates the demand for informal recreation such as bootcamps and other fitness groups.

The audit identified 3 playgrounds within the town (Alma Park, Gilmore Park and Porter Park) and a small play structure at the Uralla Sporting Complex. With only 3 opportunities for play, all of which are structured and programmed, there may be demand for an additional playground facility within the town that focuses on nature-based play and learning. Many notable studies suggest interaction with nature and exposing children to nature play learning has many physical and mental benefits, such as increased critical thinking, advances in problem solving, confidence building and lowered levels of aggression.

Over the past decade, scooter riding as a recreational activity has become extremely popular amongst young children and adolescents. Generally, children utilise 'learn to ride' play spaces to learn how to ride their scooters, however as their skills progress they demand more challenging and exciting course opportunities. Providing the community with a scooter focused park is one such addition that would diversify the offerings of the Shire's open space facilities.

Accessibility to Uralla's existing facilities is an area that can be strengthened throughout the town. Emphasis on developing clear lines of sight will help raise the perceived level of safety, and providing equitable access will help to encourage use and activation.

Finally, shade amenity within the existing open space facilities requires significant enhancement. In order to maintain activation and usability, ambient temperatures need to be comfortable and access to the shade coverage needs to be abundant.

Possible Actions:

- Emphasis on accessibility.
- Scooter park.
- Succession planting.
- Nature-based play.

9.0 Open Space Development Plan

9.1 Overview

The following section proposes possible development options based on the findings of the Open Space Inventory Audit and how these can be prioritised over 5, 10 and 15 year time periods.

See Section 10 Catalyst Projects for development opportunities for:

- The Glen;
- Pioneer Park; and
- Fuller Park.

9.2 Uralla Sporting Complex

5-year plan

- Avenue tree planting to driveway.
- Formalise entry – renew bollard selection.
- Resurfacing of south-west tennis courts.
- Extension of pedestrian paths to develop connections to the eastern playing fields.
- Re-siting of gym equipment i.e. softfall or concrete base.
- Succession planting/infill planting around cricket ground.
- Increase pedestrian accessibility.
- Planting buffer to the north of tennis courts.

10-year plan

- Replace sporting field lighting.
- Expand carpark to south-west and to the east.
- Replace sporting field goal posts.
- Replace cricket oval fencing.
- Succession planting to perimeter vegetation buffer.

15-year plan

- Re-surface multi-courts.
- Re-surface cricket pitch and cricket nets.
- Renew playground equipment.
- Replace fencing to tennis courts and multi-courts.
- Succession planting.

9.3 Alma Park

5-year plan

- Succession planting on northern side of Rocky Creek.
- Planting buffer to northern edge of park.
- Weed management in Rocky Creek.

10-year plan

- Succession planting on southern side of Rocky Creek.
- Upgrade Digger Elks Bridge.
- Weed management in Rocky Creek.

15-year plan

- Replace play equipment.
- Preplace shade structure.
- Refurbish amenities building.
- Succession planting.

9.4 Hampden Park

5-year plan

- Removal of concrete pads on playing fields (if possible).
- Upgrade/refurbish toilet block.
- Resurface gym equipment area.
- Planting around gym equipment.
- Resurfaced and formalised carparking area.
- Formalised path from carpark to sporting field .
- Planting to western edge of the south-east spectator slope.
- Planting to pedestrian path on Maitland Street.
- Planting to northern entry of the site.
- Upgrade of A-frame picnic shelter.

10-year plan

- Inclusion of playground area.
- Fence to cricket field.
- Expansion of train station carpark to become primary carpark for facility.
- Sports field lighting.

15-year plan

- Refurbish skate park.
- Refurbish exercise equipment.
- Additional shelter facilities.
- Succession planting.

9.5 Racecourse Lagoon

5-year plan

- Formalised parking area.
- Small amenities building.
- Replace picnic settings.
- Improved signage.

10-year plan

- Education signage along the existing walking trail.
- Elevated boardwalks to the edges of the lagoon to promote interaction with nature.

15-year plan

- Seal Racecourse Road.
- Incorporate a natural play area.

9.6 Dangar's Lagoon

5-year plan

- Larger and clearer signage element.
- Formalised slip lane into central picnic area.
- Additional picnic shelters.
- Upgrade of educational signage bay.

10-year plan

- Formalised slip lane into Sanctuary Drive.
- Rest stops and seating along walking track.

15-year plan

- Assessment of existing tree stock and possible succession planting.

9.7 Gilmore Park

5-year plan

- Kerb ramp and pedestrian entry path.
- Succession planting throughout the site.
- Addition of drinking fountain.

10-year plan

- Learn to ride/scooter track around play area.
- Succession planting throughout the site.
- Additional seating.

15-year plan

- Replacement of play equipment.
- Succession planting.
- Replacement of shade structure.

9.8 Porter Park

5-year plan

- Screen planting to fenceline.
- Pedestrian loop/learn to ride loop.
- Pedestrian access from carpark to play area.
- Selective clearing of tree stock on Salisbury Street to open sightlines.

10-year plan

- Succession planting.
- Nature play elements.

15-year plan

- Succession planting.

9.9 Rotary Park

5-year plan

- Remove or refurbish wooden shade structure.
- Remove timber log bollards.
- Refurbish amenities building.
- Develop stonger connection to community gardens via decomposed granite path.

10-year plan

- Succession planting.
- Resurface or refurbish entry road.
- Bolder signage element.

15-year plan

- Succession planting.

9.10 Apex Memorial Park

5-year plan

- Screen planting to adjoining building.
- Planting to signage element and flagpole.

10-year plan

- Refurbishment of signage.
- Replacement of shade structure.
- Succession planting.

15-year plan

- Succession planting.

9.11 Woodville Reserve

5-year plan

- Extend pedestrian path to connect park elements and increase accessibility.
- Shade tree planting.
- Shrub planting to surrounds of learn to ride area.

10-year plan

- Learn to ride expansion.
- Succession planting to street frontage.

15-year plan

- Succession planting.
- Replacement of shade structure.

9.12 Pioneer Cemetery

5-year plan

- Replace picnic shelter.
- Formalise parking area.
- Screen planting to toilet facility.

10-year plan

- Install drinking fountain.
- Captain Thunderbolt interpretive signage.

15-year plan

- Refurbishment of toilet facility.

9.13 Wooldridge Reserve

5-year plan

- Install natural bollards to restrict unauthorised use.
- Install gravel paths to formalise picnic area.
- Grade road to increase accessibility.
- Information signage to educate visitors about the area.
- General wayfinding and signage.
- Arborist assessment and succession planting to disturbed areas.

10-year plan

- Install drinking fountain.
- Seal road to promote access .
- Refurbish toilet facilities.
- Arborist assessment and succession planting to disturbed areas.

15-year plan

- Additional seating if required.
- Arborist assessment and succession planting to disturbed areas.

9.14 Yarrowyck Crossing Reserve

5-year plan

- Replacment of BBQs.
- Additional picnic settings.
- Succession planting.

10-year plan

- Replace or refurbish toilet facility.
- Grade access road if required.

15-year plan

- Succession planting.

9.15 Barry Munday Reserve

5-year plan

- Removal of hazardous trees.
- Succession planting to frontage.
- Graded gravel access road and parking area.
- Weed eradication.
- Maintenance schedule
- Tree planting to perimeter of cricket field.
- Drainage management.

10-year plan

- Tree planting.
- Small amenities building.
- Fencing to perimeter.
- Fencing to cricket field.
- Formalised seating areas/picnic opportunities.

15-year plan

- Succession planting.

10.0 Catalyst Projects

10.1 Overview

Through discussions with the representatives of the Uralla Shire Council and incorporating suggestions of the Uralla Township and Environs Committee (UTEC), three catalyst projects have been identified. The following section provides recommendations for how these sites can be developed to strengthen the overall open space amenity of Uralla Shire.

The catalyst projects are as follows:

- Pioneer Park;
- Fuller Park; and
- The Glen.

10.2 The Glen

Description

The Glen is a large park on the northern end of Uralla, situated adjacent to the New England Highway. The park has a dense bushland backdrop with substantial shade coverage, with Rocky Creek transecting it east to west. The park opens onto a large clearing which houses a number of large sculptures which is a partially completed installation called the Constellations of the South, which are metal sculptures placed on large monoliths. No formalised footpaths are present, only worn trails from recreational walkers. The park is popular amongst dog walkers due to its natural barriers to the road and strong natural setting. The entry road and carpark are fairly informal, with no line markings and no formalised carparking area.

UTEC Recommendations

Engage with Uralla Arts in relation to their proposal to design a makeover for The Glen.

Engage Uralla Arts to provide a strategy for completion of the “Constellations of the South” art installation.



Recommendations

The location of the existing sculptural pieces makes for a perfect outdoor exhibition space. Its natural backdrop fully immerses users in the space and helps focus attention on the artworks as well as the central lawned area. The addition of supplementary sculptural elements, perhaps placed in a circular arrangement, will help enclose the space and further develop a sense of immersion within the landscape. To accompany this, the addition of natural seating elements such as granite boulders will help reinforce the naturalised setting and not detract from the artworks.

To capitalise on the site's proximity to Rocky Creek, there is opportunity to create meaningful engagement with this unique water system. Interventions such as a boardwalk or viewing platform over the water that brings people close to the feature has the potential to showcase the aquatic flora and habitats of species. By providing opportunities for engagement with water, coupled with the site's natural bushland setting and performance space, the site is perfectly positioned to attract small school groups to use the space as an outdoor classroom, encouraging children to explore and interact with the natural environment. Furthermore, in times of wet weather, access to the northern portion of the parklands is restricted by the rising waters and bridging the creek will facilitate the usability of the entire park all year round.

Participation and interaction with the site can be enhanced further by formalising and extending the walking trails throughout the site. To accompany this, informative wayfinding and interpretive signage could be included to educate and inform users of the site's unique qualities and history. There is also opportunity to introduce a series of exercise stations along the walking trails to give users the opportunity to engage in calisthenic type exercise. These exercise elements should strive to incorporate natural elements e.g. stepping logs, rather than 'off-the shelf' manufactured pieces in order to maintain the natural bushland setting.

It is recommended to formalise the parking area with the addition of a sealed asphalt area with line markings. This might further encourage use of the space and increase the capacity to cater for larger events.



Outdoor classroom



Showcasing the creek



Additional sculptural elements



Natural stone seating elements

10.3 Pioneer Park

Description

Pioneer Park is located opposite the Captain Thunderbolt statue and Uralla Visitor Information Centre on the corner of Bridge Street and Salisbury Street. Due to its central location, it is frequented by passing visitors and used as a rest stop to utilise the facilities before continuing on, or as a place to park larger vehicles and explore the town.

The park has a newly renovated amenities building, rubbish bins, drinking fountain and picnic tables. There is a significant slope falling from frontage east to west which is turfed with a number of medium sized birch trees dotted throughout. The park itself has very little street presence due to dense clusters of birch trees that front Bridge Street and Salisbury Street.



UTEC Recommendations

Explore options for interpretive signage.
Incorporate heritage elements to showcase the towns history.



Recommendations

Pioneer Park has been noted as being popular amongst passing visitors due to its location and the facilities it offers travellers. Catering for a diverse range of users within the space is key to encouraging users to stay in the space and ultimately stay in Uralla for longer.

Using the open space mapping in the previous sections of this report, it is apparent that there are no playgrounds located along the New England Highway and Bridge Street. Although Alma Park has great play facilities, its location has no street presence for passing travellers and its primary user group is local residents.

Providing a play space in this location would help to encourage families to use the space and allow children to expel pent up energy on long road trips.

A finding from the existing Open Space Inventory Audit highlighted the deficiency of nature-based play within the Shire noting this is a growing trend in play typology across Australia and abroad. The benefits of nature play are widely documented with its ability to strengthen problem solving skills, encouraging collaborative learning, reduce levels of aggression and frustration, and develop stewardship of the environment.

The site presents as a great opportunity to incorporate a nature-based play area which could be coupled with the UTEC's desire to incorporate heritage. Elements such as former heritage infrastructure pieces and equipment have the potential to become play elements whilst showcasing the town's heritage.

The existing slope at the south of the site has the potential to facilitate a slide or climbing element, whilst the flatter area can house the more naturalised play space.

To address safety concerns, a simple fencing element can be introduced to prevent children from running onto the highway, and thinning out the existing vegetation could open sight lines into the space.

The space also provides an opportunity to showcase the local flora species endemic to the area through a series of naturalised display gardens and educational signage, helping to strengthen the identity of the town.



Incorporate heritage



Nature play



Display gardens

10.4 Fuller Park

Description

Triangular in shape, Fuller Park is a small park wedged between the New England Highway, East Street and Dumeresq Street. The park is home to a diverse selection of native and exotic trees as well as large pebblecrete planting pots. The park also houses an old shade structure which can be described as being similar to a heritage style bus stop shelter, as well as a small picnic shelter and a stone monument.

The park's function is unknown and due to its location, is not suitable as an active recreational space.

UTEC Recommendations

Develop options for Fuller Park refurbishment.



Recommendations

In its current state, Fuller Park is an underperforming open space asset within the Shire. Accessibility issues and little to no street presence means the park receives very little visitorship.

This said, the park does offer a great opportunity to capitalise on its existing assets and location.

Fuller Park, in some regards, marks the entry to Uralla for northbound traffic as the highway curves into the straight section that turns into Bridge Street. This threshold poses a great opportunity for a sculptural element to welcome/farewell visitors into/out of the town. This sculptural element has the potential to explore ideas of the Fibonacci sequence, as recommended by the UTEC, referencing Uralla's postcode as a Fibonacci sequence.

Selective clearing of trees will help attract people into the space, developing clear sight lines and defined movement corridors. There is potential to capitalise on the healthy shade coverage with the addition of seating elements, allowing people to view the sculpture(s).



Sculpture opportunities

11. Uralla Shire Hamlets and Villages

The hamlets and villages surrounding the Uralla township include Bundarra, Yarrowyck, Kingstown, Kentucky, Invergowrie and Wollun, all of which bring their own unique character and contributions to the cultural fabric of the Shire.

The following section investigates the current open space offerings within these areas, and provides recommendations on how these assets can be strengthened into the future.

11.1 Bundarra

Overview

Located on the banks of the Gwydir River, Bundarra is a small hamlet approximately 80km north-west of Uralla on 'Thunderbolts Way'. According to the 2016 census, the town had a population of 394 with another 676 people in the surrounding area. The word Bundarra is the Kamilaroi word for the grey kangaroo, and there are many indigenous stories that reference the landmarks which surround the town. Many of the buildings that line the main street were built between 1860-1880, and both the police station and courthouse have been heritage listed.

Bundarra offers a vast range of nature-based recreational offerings, including fishing, camping, bushwalking, canoeing and horse riding, as well as active recreational sporting clubs.

Existing Open Space & Recreational Offerings and Audit

Bundarra Sport and Recreation Club

Bundarra Sport and Recreation Club is located off Thunderbolts Way, opposite the Bundarra Racecourse. The facility offers a multi sports oval, cricket nets, golf course, licensed clubhouse and amenities building with change room.

- Amenities building – GC
- Sporting field – GC
- Parking – FC
- Shade amenity - FC

Bundarra Nature Reserve

Bundarra Nature Reserve is located slightly south of the Bundarra General Store, and offers a quiet and peaceful place for visitors to stop and rest before exploring the heritage buildings of Bendemeer Street.

- Undercovered picnic setting – GC
- Informational signage – FC
- Unsealed parking area - FC

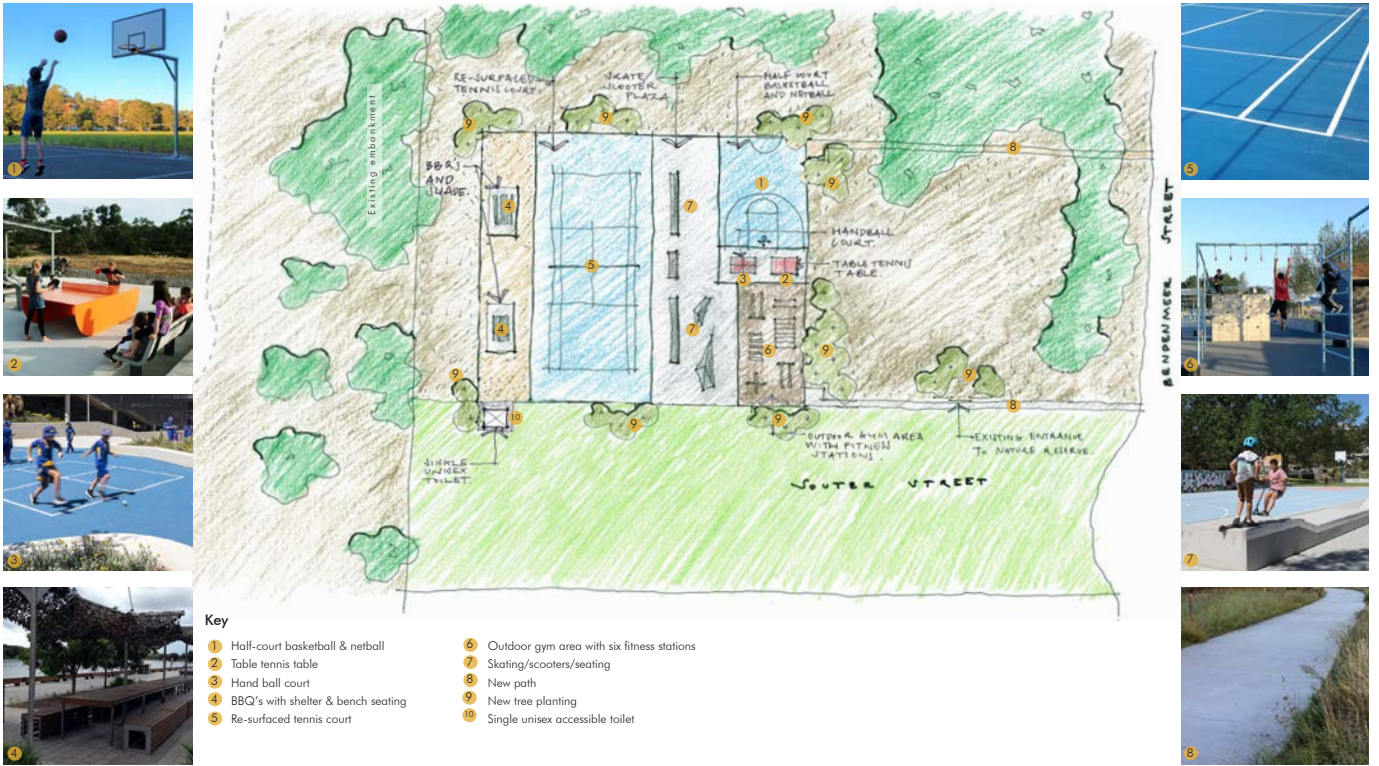
Bundarra Tennis Courts

The Bundarra Tennis Courts are located on the eastern corner of Bendemeer Street and Souter Street, south of the Saint Marys Anglican Church.

In 2019, Uralla Shire Council identified opportunity to incorporate a premiere play and recreational facility on the site of the Bundarra Tennis Courts. Please refer image 15.0 for detail.

Construction of the facility was completed in mid 2021 and offers the following amenity:

- Basketball / netball half court.
- Skate / scooter area.
- New tennis court.
- BBQ and picnic facilities.
- Outdoor fitness equipment.
- Universal access toilet facilities.
- Table tennis table.
- Handball court.



- Key**
- 1 Half-court basketball & netball
 - 2 Table tennis table
 - 3 Hand ball court
 - 4 BBQ's with shelter & bench seating
 - 5 Re-surfaced tennis court
 - 6 Outdoor gym area with six fitness stations
 - 7 Skating/scooters/seating
 - 8 New path
 - 9 New tree planting
 - 10 Single unisex accessible toilet

Date	Revision	Description	By	Checked
18.12.2020	A	Concept Options	SW	DK
02.02.2021	B	Revised Concept Option	SW	DK
03.03.2021	C	Revised Concept Option	SW	DK
24.03.2021	D	Revised Concept Option	SW	DK

Drawing title
Revised Concept Option
Sheet No.
SK04

Drawing Status
Concept
Scale
NTS @ A3
North

Image 15.0 Proposed Tennis Court Upgrade

Green Network

Bendemeer Street has good quality shade trees planted in the central median, providing a moderate level of shade amenity to the streetscape. Due to the small verge widths along Bendemeer Street, there is minimal opportunity to incorporate additional street tree planting on the eastern and western verges. There is opportunity however to realign the existing kerb in some locations to provide planting beds in the existing carriageway. This would be most beneficial of the eastern side of Bendemeer Street to soften the western sun and create an accessible green link between the Bundarra Central School and the Bundarra General store, and the Bundarra General Store to the new Bundarra multi purpose court facility.

Assessment

The Bundarra Sport and Recreation Club, combined with the completion of the Bundarra multi courts facility, will ultimately meet the recreational and open space requirements of Bundarra.

Emphasis on shade tree planting will help to encourage an active community and ultimately increase participation and visitation numbers.

Formalising the existing parking area, as well as additional informational signage and shade tree planting within Bundarra Nature Reserve will help to encourage use of the space, as well as better facilitate a rest stop area for visitors.

11.2 Kentucky

Overview

Kentucky is located approximately 10 minutes' drive south of Uralla via the New England Highway. The town is known for its Merino wool, high quality beef cattle and variety of fruit orchards.

The recreation needs of the Kentucky are serviced by two facilities, the Kentucky School, which has a small playground area, full size basketball court and full sized fenced tennis court, and the newly refurbished Kentucky Park.

Description - Kentucky Park

Kentucky Park is located between the rail corridor and Noalimba Ave, very close to the Kentucky General Store.

The newly refurbished park offers residents a well-equipped local level park with BBQ facilities, amenities, shaded picnic setting, rubbish bin, playground area, and shade sail.

Comments/Recommendation

The park fulfils its recreational role as a local level park to the residents of Kentucky. The park could increase its level of accessibility through the inclusion of pedestrian footpaths that link all the park facilities together. It would also benefit from the inclusion of shade tree planting.

Facility Audit

- Amenities building - FC
- Picnic tables - GC
- Shade Sails - GC
- Multi-Play structure - GC
- BBQ - GC
- Rubbish bin - GC
- Parking area - FC



Green Network

The primary entry into Kentucky is southbound off the New England Highway via Kentucky Road. Noalimba Avenue is considered the main street, with both the general store and local school located off this road. There have been efforts to plant the eastern side of this road with poplar trees, iconic to the New England region. There is an opportunity to continue this style of planting on the western side of the road, which will help strengthen the arrival experience into the hamlet and increase visual amenity.

11.3 Invergowrie

Overview

Invergowrie is located 20 minutes' drive north of Uralla and consists of primarily rural lifestyle lots. The community is serviced by a small local level park called Penelope Park.

Description - Penelope Park

The newly refurbished park is located on the corner of Invergowrie Road and Bilga Road and serves as the major recreational facility for the area.

The park consists of 2 picnic shelters, multi-play playground equipment, double shade sails covering the play area and an open lawn area to the east of the play area which facilitates passive recreation.

Comments/Recommendation

The park has great street presence from northbound traffic, as well as traffic movement along Bilga Road. The park facilitates use as a local level park for the Invergowrie community. There is opportunity to increase shade coverage through the addition of shade tree planting throughout the space, placement of which will need to be balanced with allowing for sufficient open lawn area.

Facility Audit

- Amenities building - GC
- Picnic tables x 3 - GC
- Shade Sail - GC
- Multi-Play structure - GC
- Lawn area - GC



11.4 Kingstown

Overview

Kingstown is a small hamlet located 40km north-west of Uralla. Kingstown is serviced by a single local level playground, called Kingstown Park.

Description - Kingstown Park

Kingstown Park is located along Kingstown Road, close to the Rural Fire Service Shed and is classed as a local level park, catering for play opportunity for young children. The park houses a small multi play climbing frame, metal flying fox, monkey bars, swing set and set of shade sails.

Comments/Recommendation

The park fulfils its recreational role as a local level park to the residents of Kingstown. The park has recently had upgrades, and the play equipment offering caters for 2-10 year olds. The park would benefit from additional tree planting to boost shade amenity and to assist in lowering ambient temperatures.

Facility Audit

- Shade Sails - GC
- Multi-Play structure - GC
- Swing set - GC
- Softfall - GC



