Hassell

THE ELSTERNWICK CLUB NEW OPEN SPACE CONCEPT



Prepared for
Glen Eira City Council

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Document Control

Rev	Date	Approved By	Description
01	26.05.2025	Adam Gardner	Design Competition
02	23.07.2025	Adam Gardner	Concept Refinement
03	21.08.2025	Adam Gardner	For Community Consultation

THE BRIEF

A VISIONARY OPEN SPACE DESIGN CONCEPT.

Community Feedback

→ ***71**% Shaded areas with trees or structures, comfortable spaces providing cooling and shelter

→ ***40**% Flexible green spaces (lawns and open areas for gathering or small events)

→ ***47**% Social gathering areas (spaces with seating for informal socialising)

Sustainable

Showcase innovative and sustainable design principles that create an inclusive and engaging environment for all community members.

Flexible

Prioritise accessibility, heritage interpretation, environmental resilience, and the creation of a space that serves multiple functions and diverse needs.

Site Response

Integration of retained heritage building and of landscape with Sandham Street and Allison Road and sense of address.

***Data from Glen Eira City Council Community Engagement Survey**

SITE CONTEXT

Over the next 10 years, Elsternwick's population is forecast to grow by 11%[1], resulting in an increase in high-density housing, limiting future residents' access to outdoor space and their own backyard.

With less than 3sqm of open space per person[2], Glen Eira already has limited open space diversity, stressing the importance of delivering public spaces that service the community, encourage public interaction and foster social cohesion for all.

We have completed an audit of the site's surrounding open space to identify gaps in amenity and reveal what the future of the Elsternwick Club could be...

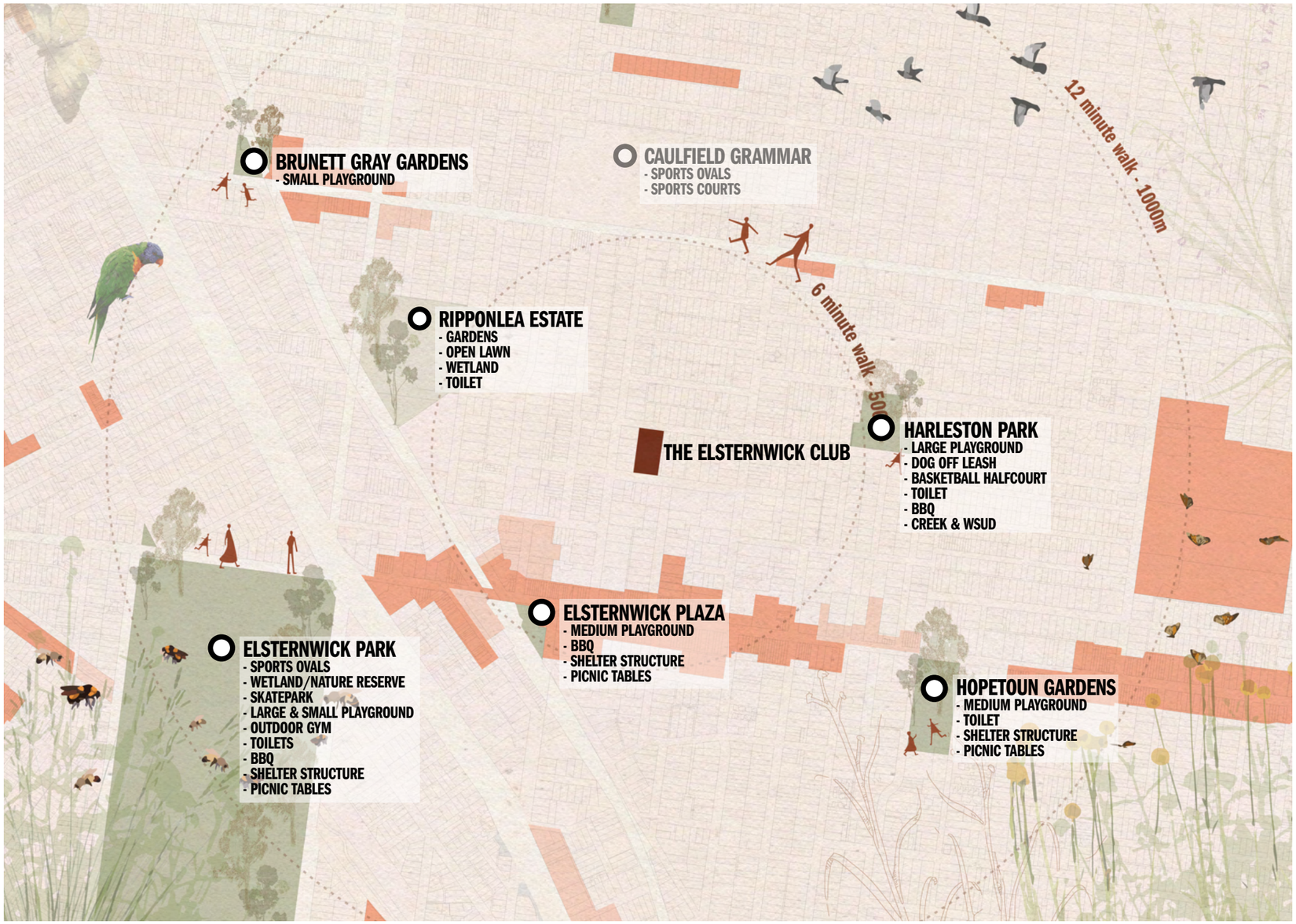
1 - Elsternwick Structure Plan 2023, Glen Eira City Council, 2023
2 - Elsternwick South Master plan, Draft Place Analysis Report, Glen Eira City Council, 2019


Rippon Lea Estate


Yalukit Willam Reserve (Elsternwick Park)


Harleston Park


Elsternwick Plaza



How can we create a distinct identity for the Elsternwick Club, set apart from adjacent open space offerings?



THE COMMONS

Commons
noun
1. land or resources belonging to, or affecting the whole of a community.

The Commons is an open and inclusive place for everyone. Designed as an extension of the suburban backyard, The Commons is vibrant and familiar, where daily rituals and incidental encounters play out amongst family, friends and neighbours. Playful, warm and inviting, this space evolves throughout the day and across seasons in response to how people inhabit the space. The Commons will provide a social, environmental and culturally significant gathering space for the Elsternwick community that responds to the identified gap in community needs and surrounding public open space.



OPEN & INCLUSIVE

EVER-EVOLVING

GROUNDED & RESPONSIVE

CONCEPT

An urban mosaic

Mosaics are an ancient art form, composed by assembling small, irregular pieces of materials, such as stone, glass and tile. Through this process, these once disconnected fragments take on a new identity, a sum greater than their individual parts.

We envision the Elsternwick Commons as a rich and diverse mosaic, crafted from a carefully curated palette inspired by people, places and their stories.

We begin, as always, with Country. We explore and celebrate First Nation's history and narratives and understanding the ecological systems and processes that have shaped land upon which we work. We embrace the site's heritage features as a grounded presence in the site, taking cues from its the materiality and character.

To organise these elements, we draw upon characteristics from familiar urban typologies; the plaza as a democratic heart, the local pocket park as an accelerator of social interaction, and the playground as the spark of whimsy and wonder that connects people of all ages to their inner child.

Through a cohesive design strategy, these individual elements are fused to create a new urban landscape; a civic stage for gathering and connection, one with a distinct identity and an unparalleled offering.



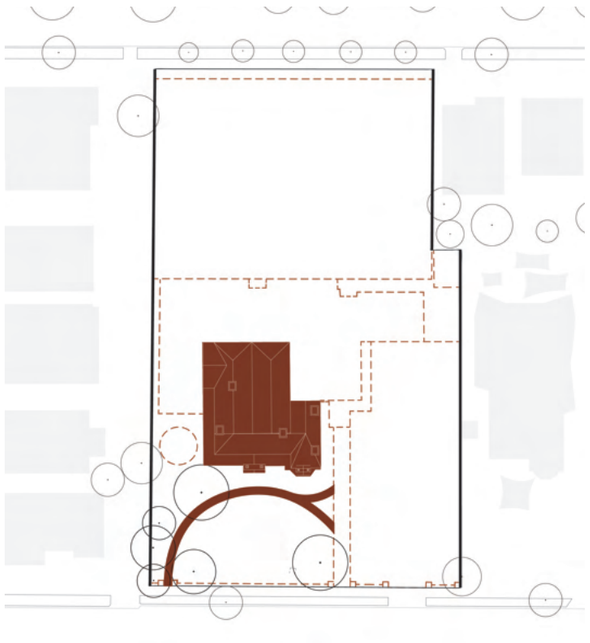


The Elsternwick Club | photos by Hassell



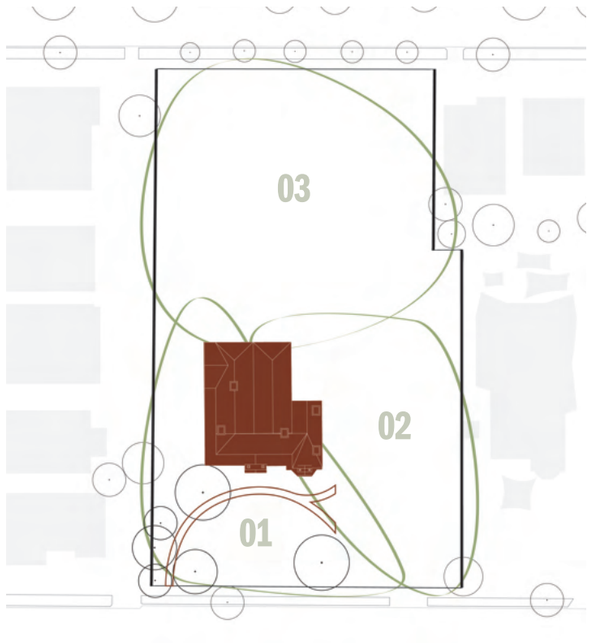
Park Güell, Barcelona | Gaudí

DESIGN APPROACH



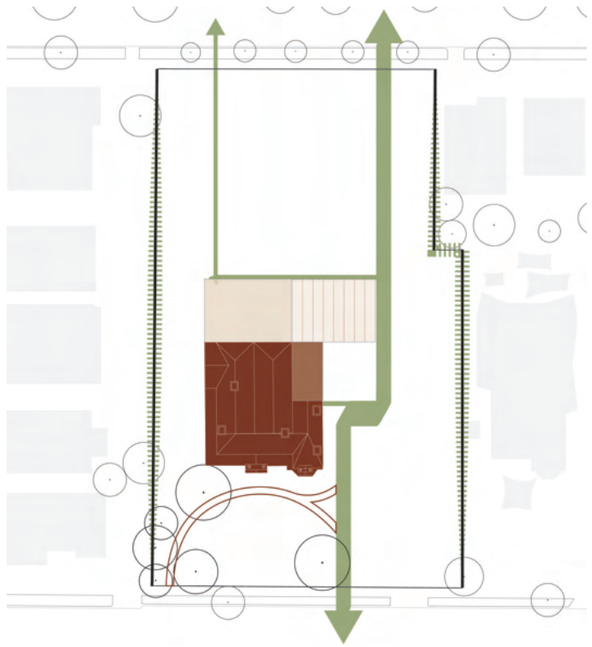
1. REVEAL HERITAGE

→ Existing barriers and structures are removed to reveal and celebrate historic elements, anchoring the site and maximising open space.



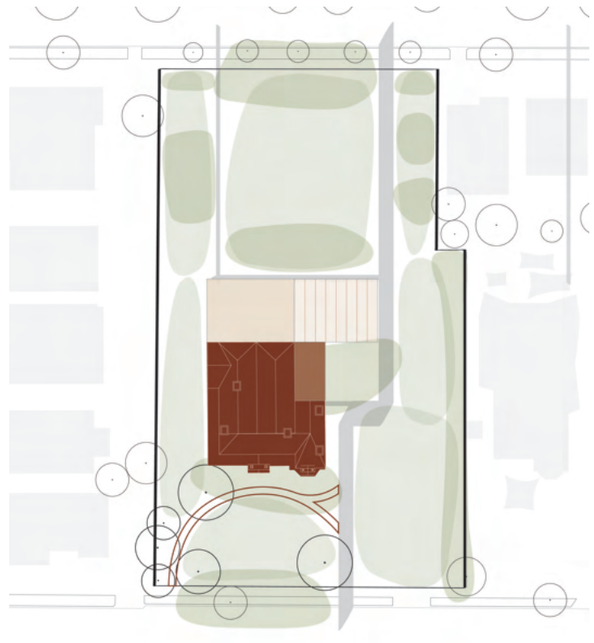
2. THREE GARDENS

→ Three gardens are formed within the site, each with their own distinct character and offering.



3. ENHANCE PERMEABILITY

→ Street frontages are connected through key movement spines, guiding movement and providing an accessible and inviting entry.



4. DEFINE SPACES

→ Create a series of diverse spaces, able to host a wide range of activities.

CONCEPT PLAN



1. Community centre (existing heritage building).
2. Quiet, relaxing heritage lawn framed by native vegetation.
3. Informal, meandering 'kangaroo trail' amongst native vegetation providing a connection to local fauna and flora.
4. Sandham St road narrowing to accomodate planting for traffic calming, benching seating, bicycle parking and updated raised pedestrian crossing.
5. A grove of trees with meandering gravel pathways that cut through planing, circular benches allow for moments under the shady canopy.
6. Play area with sand and natural bespoke play equipment, family's can watch on from the semi-open pavilion.
7. Semi-open pavilion with flexible tables and chairs.
8. Covered pavilion with a flexible floor space to host performances, and events.
9. Terraced edge folding out onto the open lawn allowing spill out seating and edges to perch on.
10. A spectators arena for games such as table tennis.
11. The central village green, a flush, flexible open lawn space and games area framed by tall canopy trees.
12. Carved out seating nooks for quieter, more protected moments within the garden.
13. Flush interface with Allison Rd to allow ease of access and site permeability.
14. Allison Rd road planted verge, benching seating, and bicycle parking.

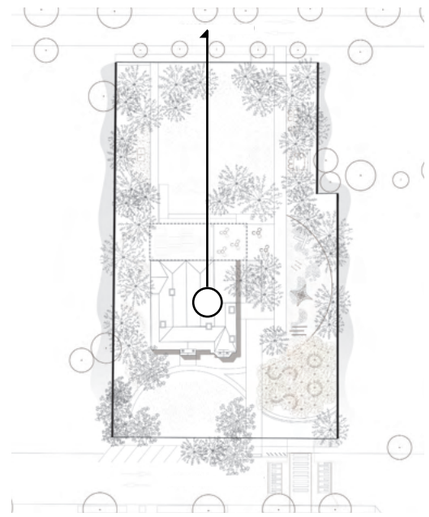
1.500 AT A3

ARRANGEMENT PLAN



1.500 AT A3

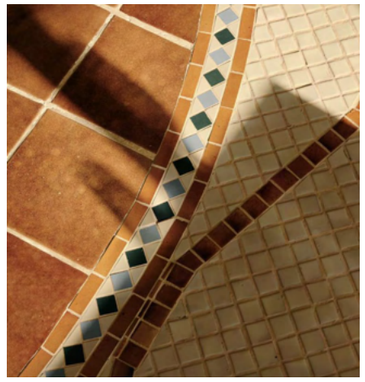
SITE SECTION

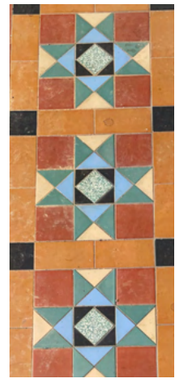
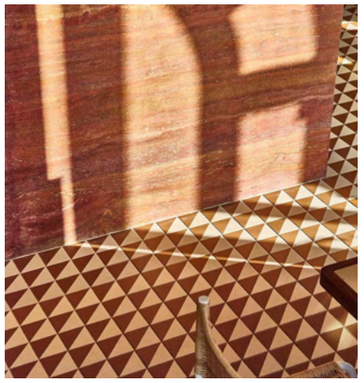
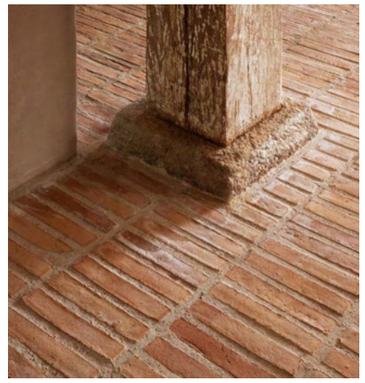




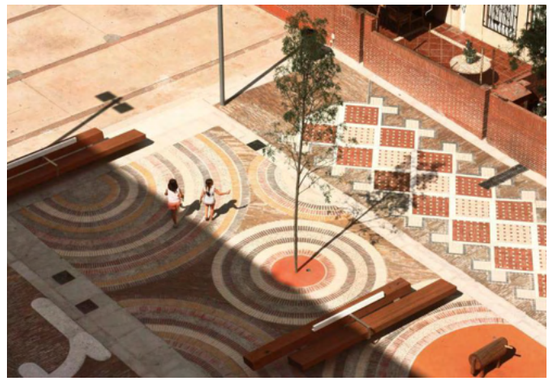
SITE CHARACTER







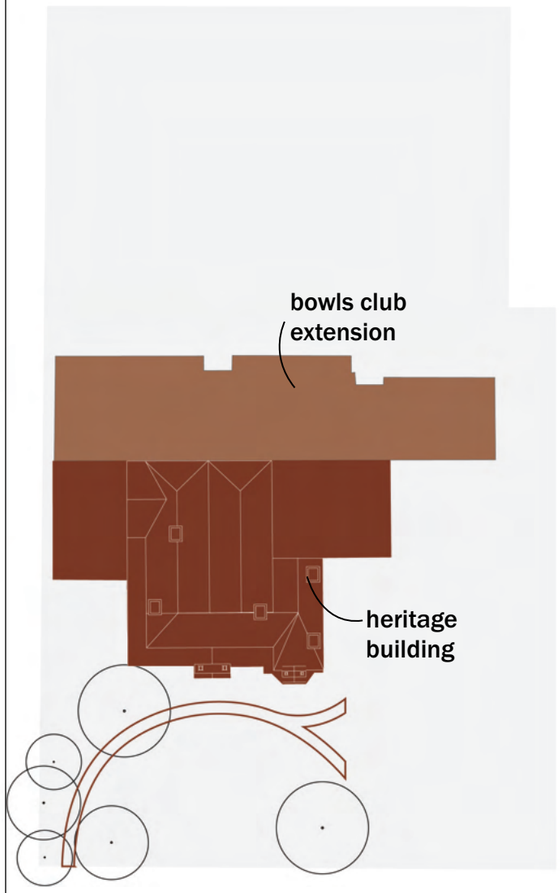




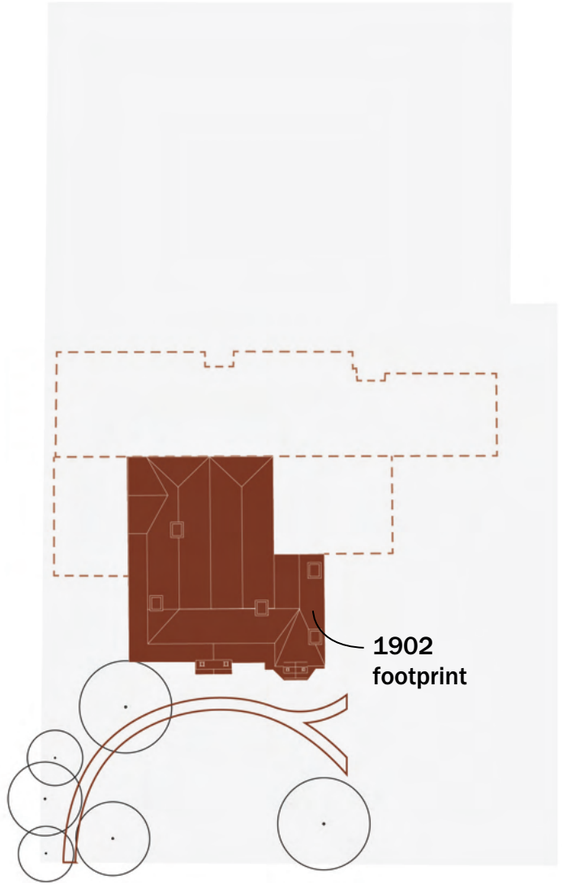


HERITAGE BUILDING

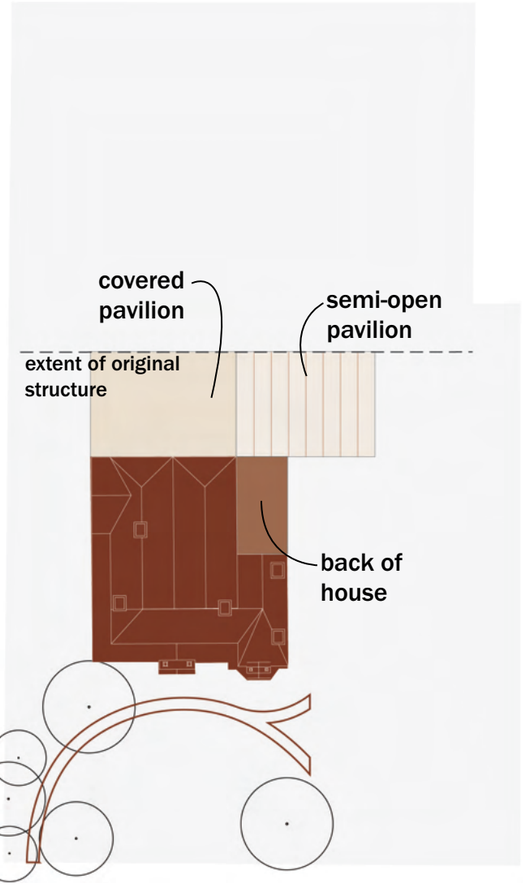
From an exclusive club to an inclusive and welcoming community centre



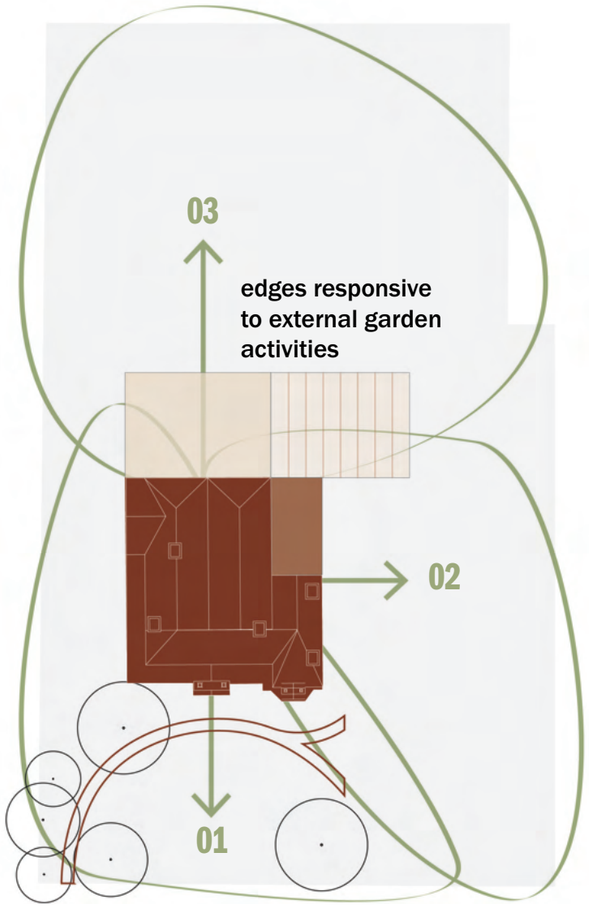
1. EXISTING



2. REMOVED



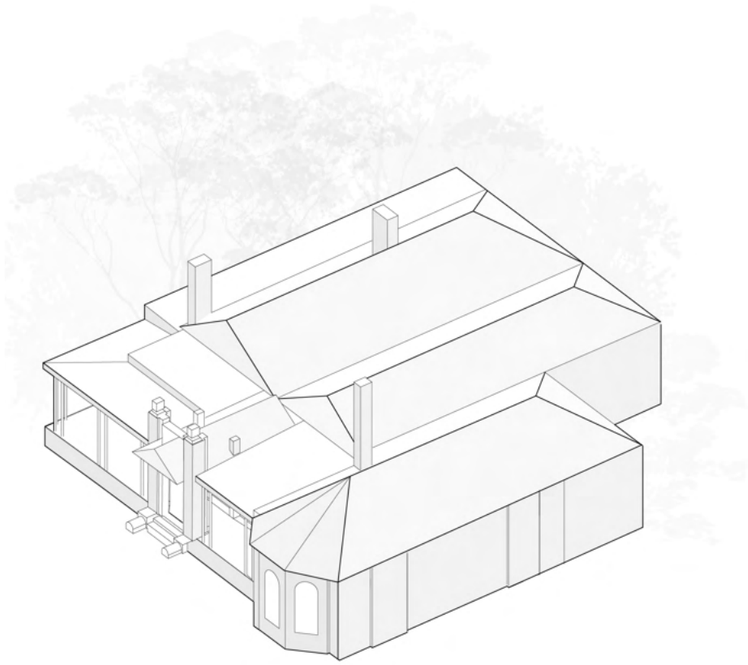
3. PROPOSED

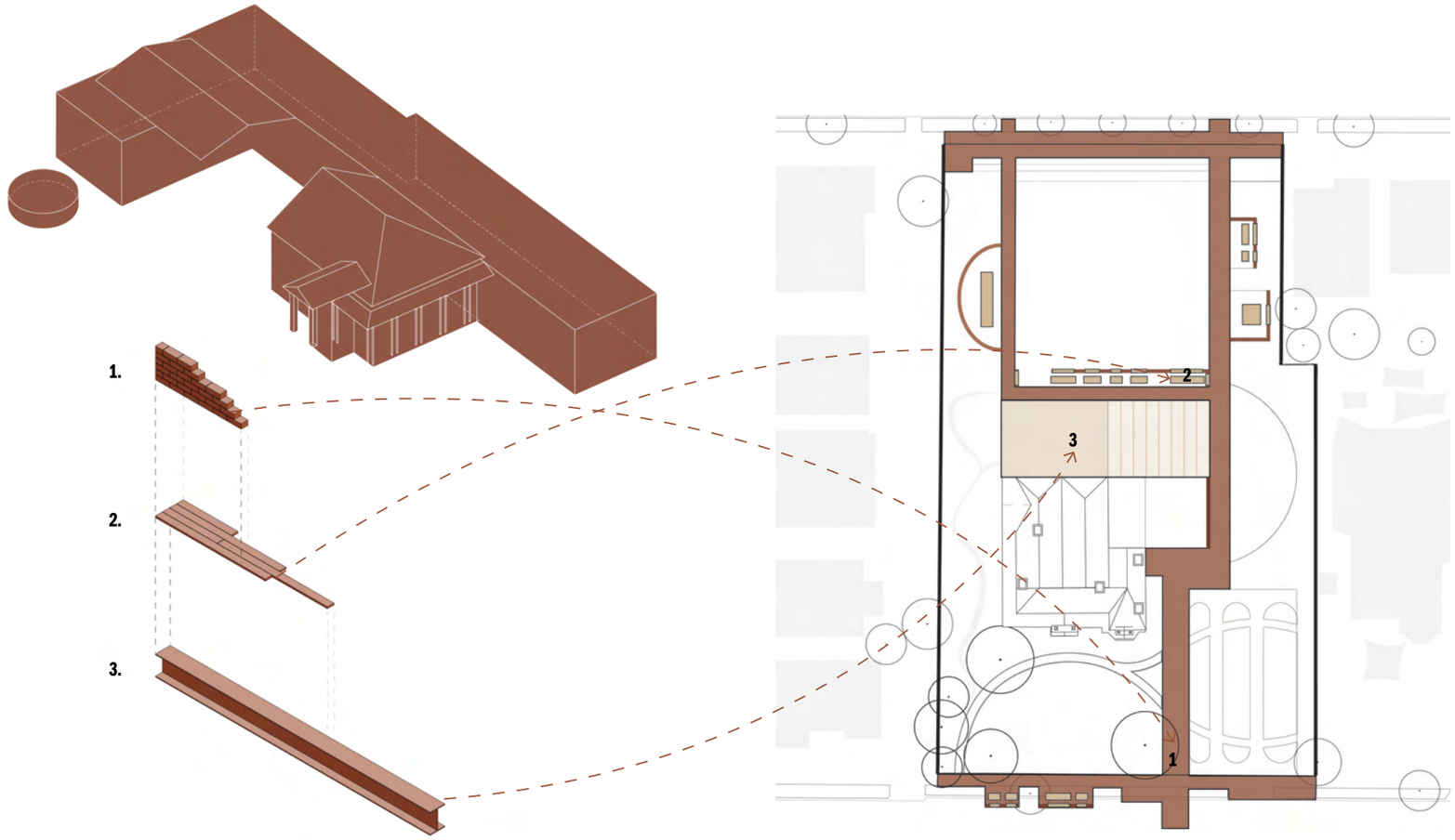


4. PROGRAM

MATERIAL REUSE

An sustainable design approach that re-uses site materials to reduce carbon footprint and celebrates it's heritage





PROTECT & PRESERVE

- → Celebrate and enhance the presentation of the heritage bulding constructed in 1888 place by removing the later additions and allowing the building to sit as a central object within then park.
- → Repurpose the building as a 'Community Hub', that facilitates community programs, events and classes.
- → The community hub can be supported by a hospitality venue such as cafe or wine bar, providing both day time and evening activation opportunities.

SALVAGE & RECLAIM

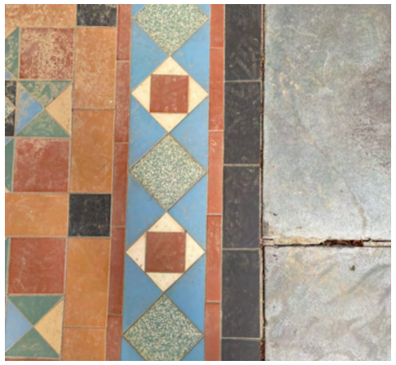
- → Materials from the removed buildings and existing site have the opportunity to be salavaged and reclaimed for future use within the public realm.
- → Bricks, timber decking, steel structures and other material can all be salvaged and repurposed to reduce the projects carbon footprint and minimize the need for new material resources.

REUSE & REIMAGINE

- → Reused bricks provide and central boulevard and mosaiced ground plane that provides universal access into and throughout the precinct. Further re-use of the material also provide opportunity for terraces and retaining walls.
- → Timber is proposed to be reused for fixed furniture elements and on-grade decking to define specific spaces like outdoor classrooms or yoga spaces.
- → Steel I-beams can be repurposed as the framing and structural elements of the new pavilion structure, provided weather protection and shade.

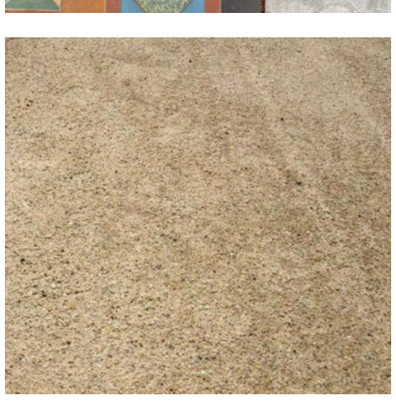
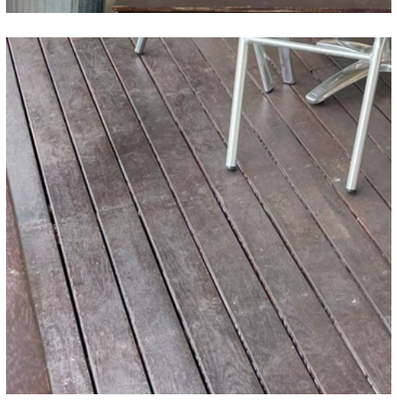
MATERIAL PALETTE

Current fabric of Elsternwick club.
Retention of character wherever possible.

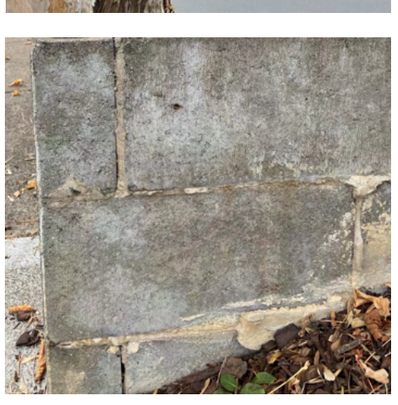
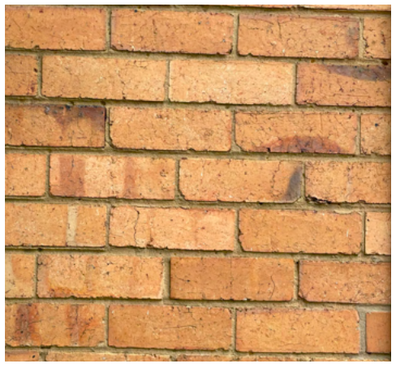




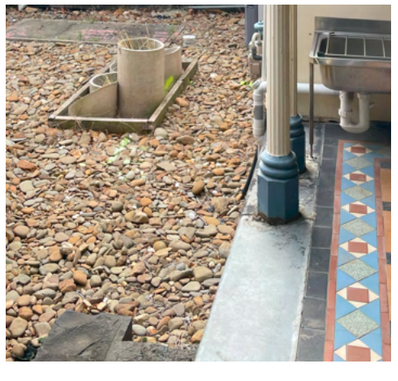




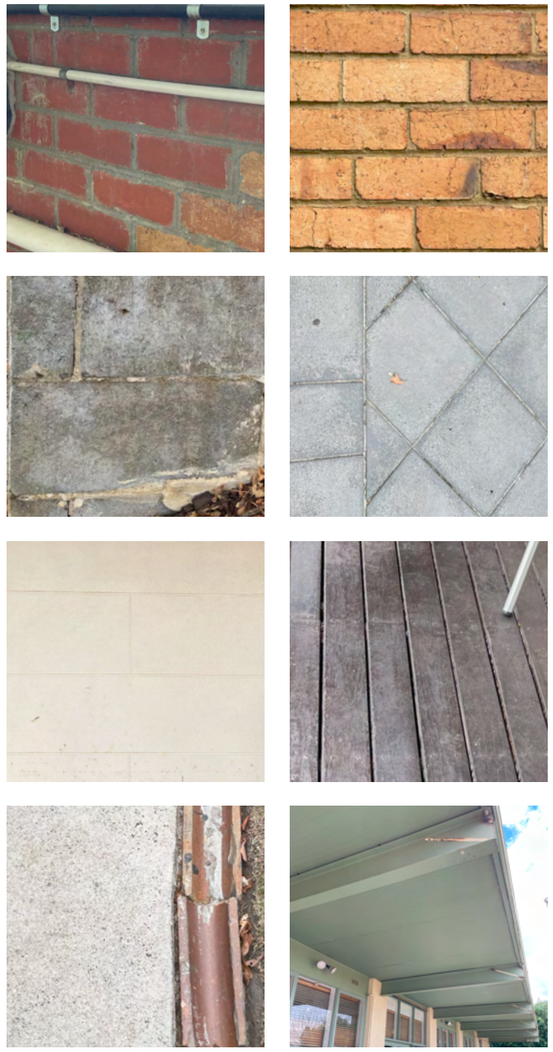


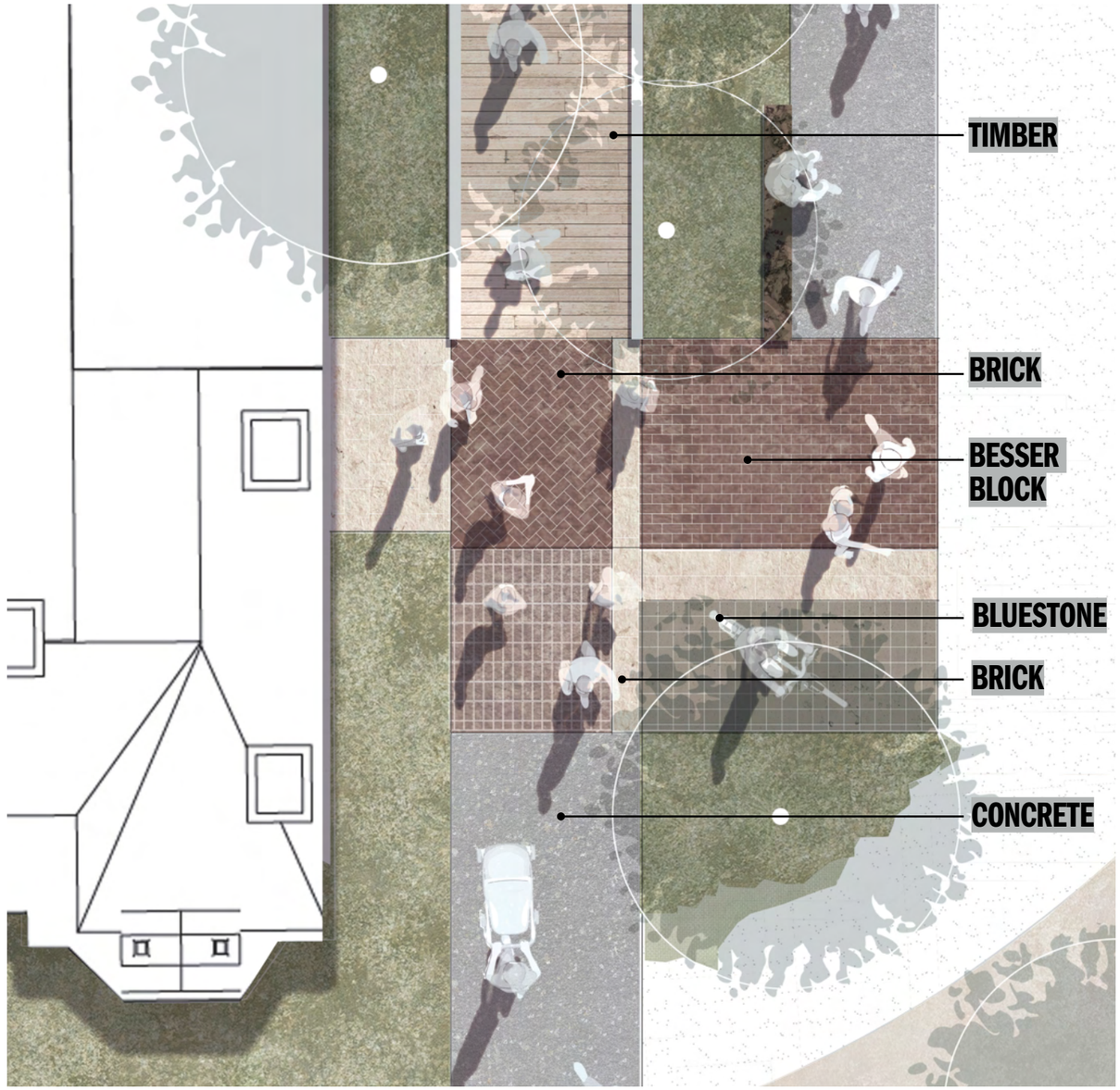


MATERIAL PALETTE

The design intent for the material palette of the Elsternwick Club New Open Space is to reclaim, reuse and re-purpose as much existing material on site as possible. This approach will retain and celebrate the sites heritage and character, whilst minimising it's carbon footprint through the procurement of new material.
The concept of an 'Urban Mosaic' allows materials to be interchangeable, depending on availability and quality. This framework also facilitates the use of additional material from surrounding construction sites, developments or Glen Eira depots as required to deliver the overall vision.

POSSIBLE CONFIGURATION OF REUSED MATERIALS:





PLAY SPACE

A flexible, imaginative and unique play space will accommodate and include equipment for various ages and abilities. Ensuring fun and dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, wing or spin.

Target groups include:

Areas for 0 - 3 year olds:
A focus on sensory experience, soft surfaces, low platforms and crawling spaces.

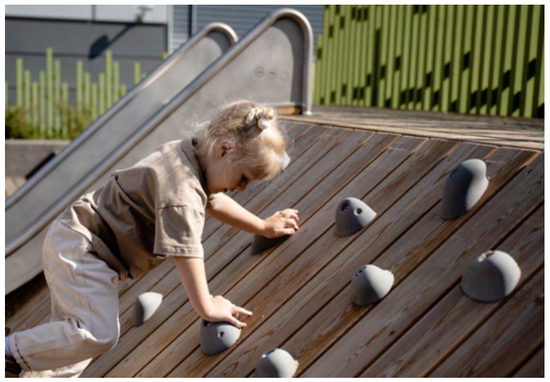
Areas for 3 - 6 year olds:
Small slides, imaginative play, climbing and balancing structures for social interaction.

Areas for 6 - 12 year olds:
Higher climbing opportunities, adventure elements. Places to gather and hangout exp

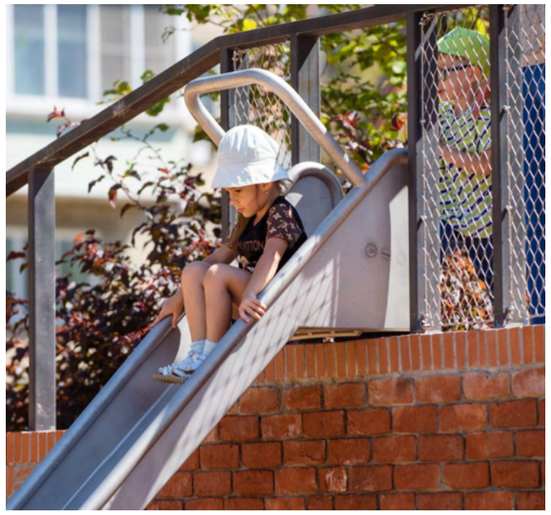












PLAY SPACE

Inspired by the club house, the play space pulls from the heritage Victorian-era geometries. Reinterpreting these to create create and engaging play opportunities. Architectural forms and ornamental motifs are abstracted into structures and play elements, By embedding these heritage references the design celebrates the sites history.





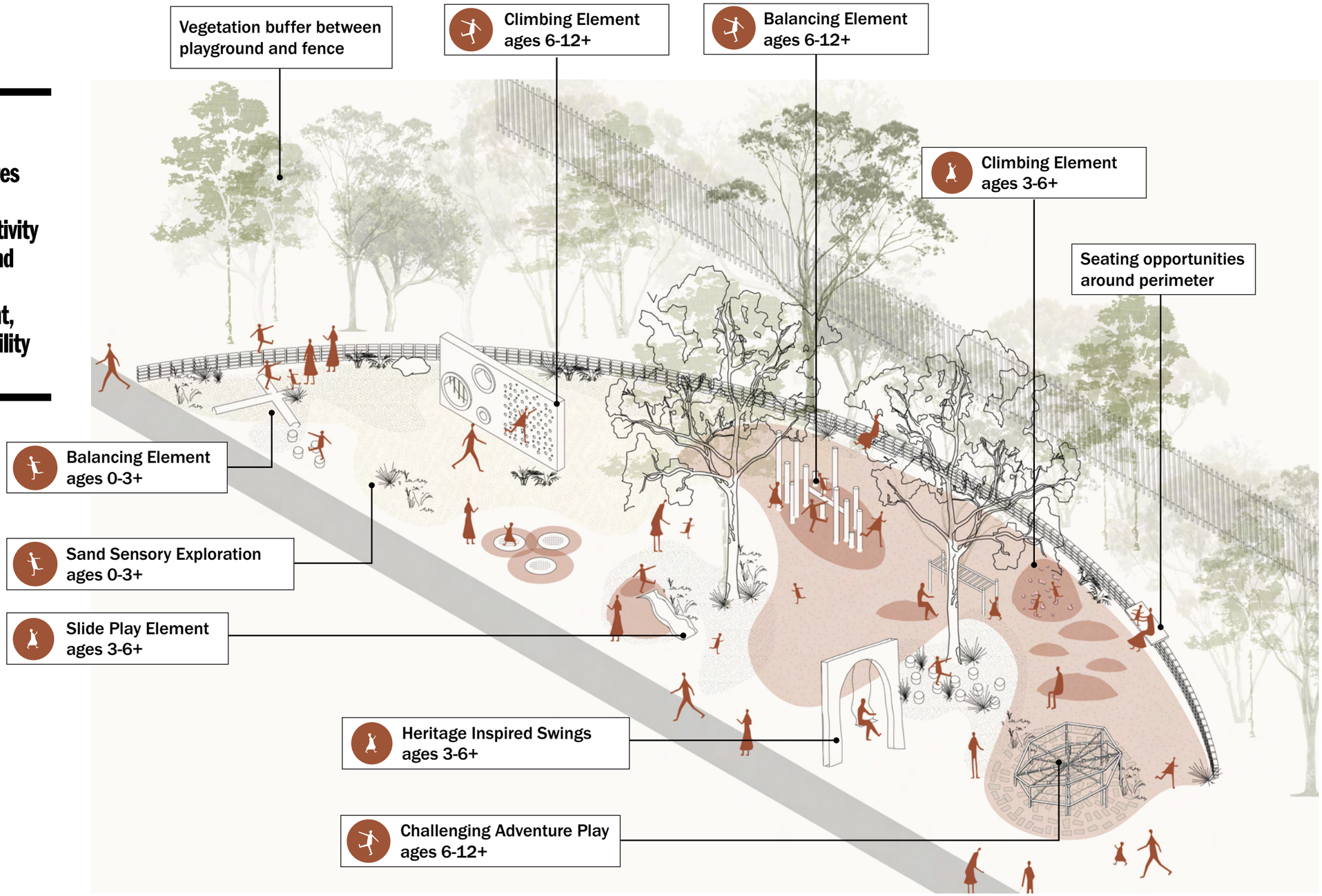


St Peters Fences Playground by Mike Hewson



PLAY SPACE

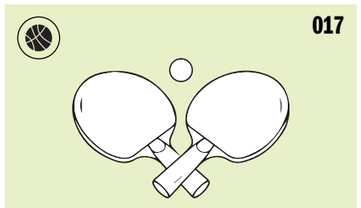
The play space incorporates creative, site-responsive play opportunities that integrates landforms, custom structures and heritage inspired elements to encourage exploration, open-ended activity and a diversity of play opportunities and types. Natural materials and planting provide shade and sensory engagement, while ensuring durability and accessibility for all ages and abilities.

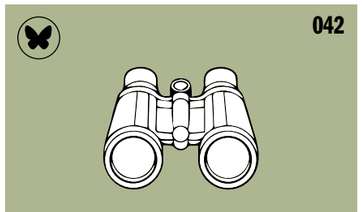


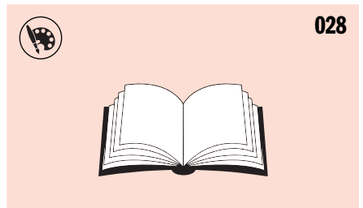
Hassell ©

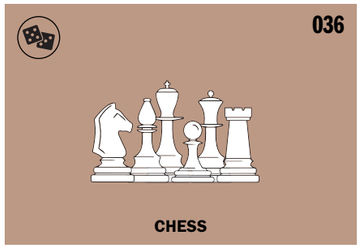
ACTIVITY TOOLKIT

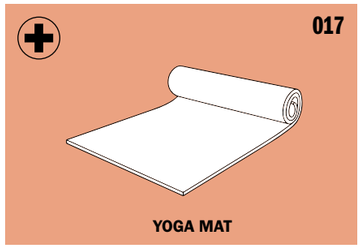
A custom suite of flexible and interchangeable elements, unique to the Elsternwick Commons

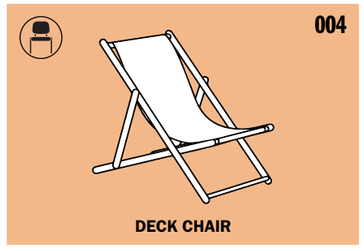


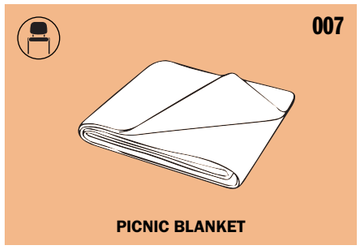


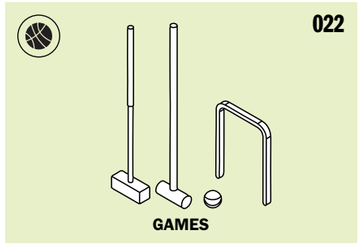


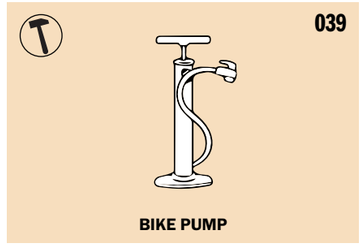






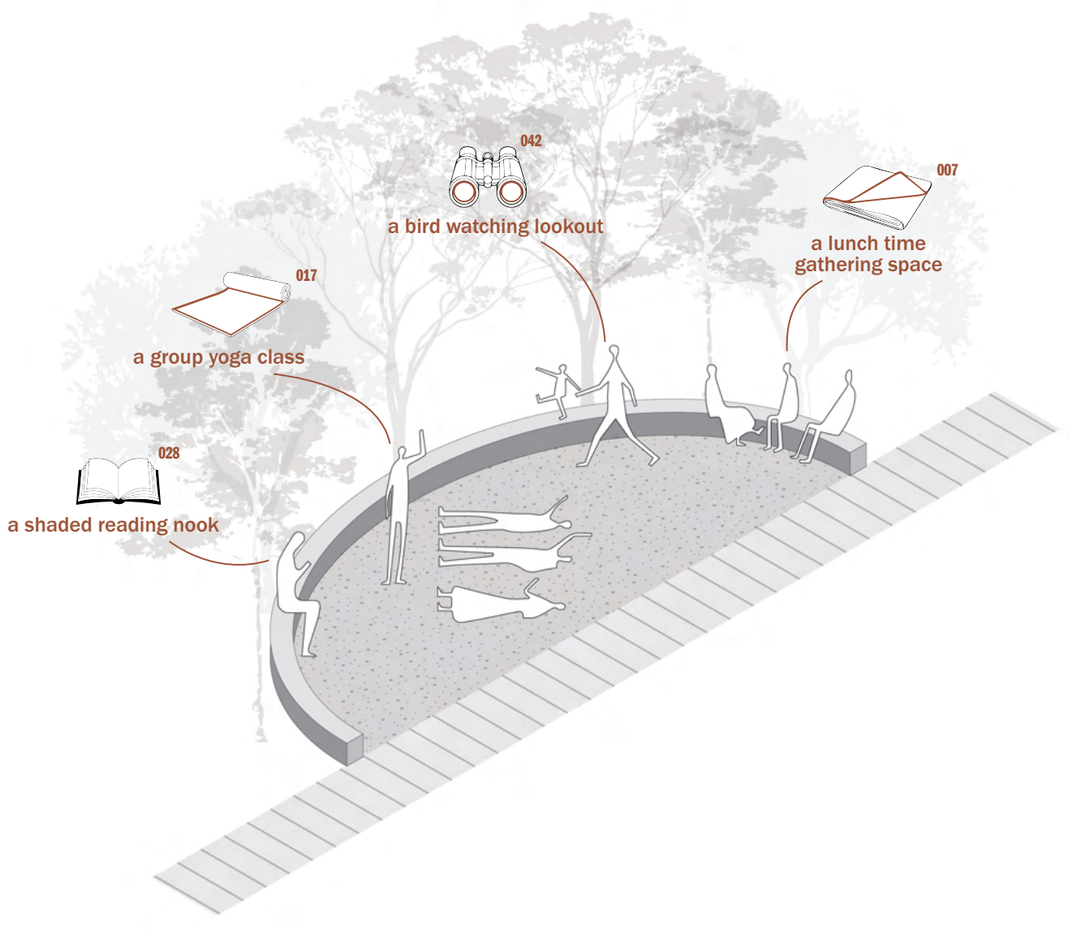






TOOLKIT CATALOGUE

→ Drawing upon the 'library of things' concept implemented by many local councils, the Activity Toolkit is a custom designed catalogue of elements that can be borrowed from the community centre and used within the site.



FLEXIBLE SPACES, ENDLESS POTENTIAL

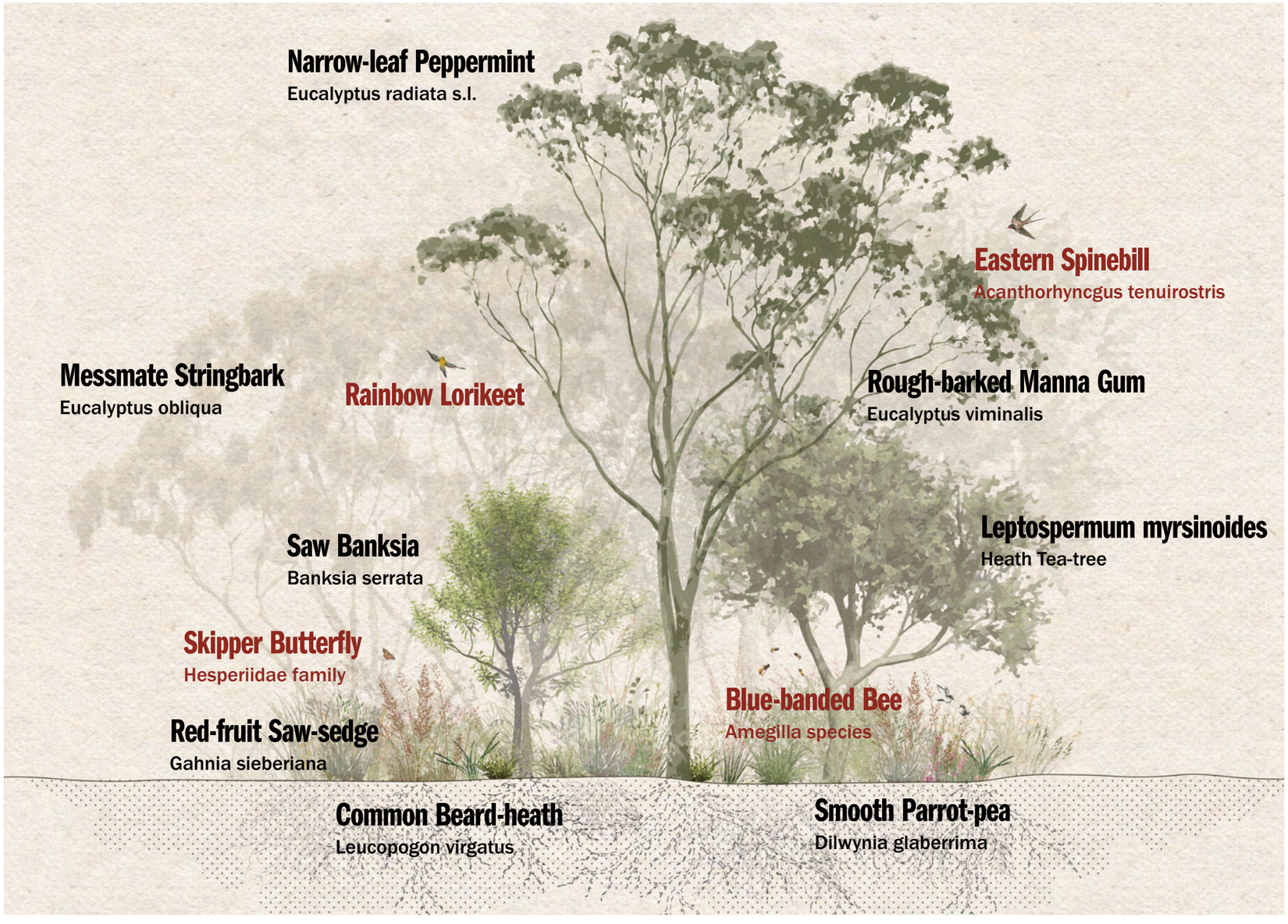
→ The site design creates a series of programmable spaces, which can be transformed through the use of various toolkit elements, allowing people to curate their own experience within the gardens.

→ These elements can be added to or interchanged depending on community feedback and other site events, allowing The Commons to remain flexible to the community's evolving needs.

PRE-1750 ECOLOGY

Heathy Woodland

The pre-clearing vegetation of the site is heathy woodland, characterised by a low eucalypt canopy and a diverse, dense heathy understorey of shrubs grasses and herbs. Reflecting this character in the planting design of the public space, there is an opportunity to provide habitat, food and shelter for a variety of small birds, insects and pollinators, including those listed in the City of Glen Eira 'Biodiversity Map', and allow the local community to learn and engage with these species.

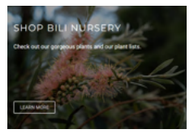


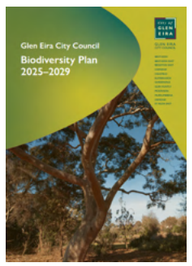
PLANTING PALETTE

The planting design responds to Glen Eira's location within the Melbourne sandbelt, with species selected to suit the area's sandy, well-draining soils. This ensures long-term resilience and minimal maintenance. Designed to support biodiversity, the planting attracts birds, insects, lizards, and frogs by providing food, shelter, and habitat. Native and locally adapted species help strengthen ecological connections across the site.

Varied colours, textures, and seasonal interest make the planting visually engaging and encourage interaction, creating a vibrant and inviting space for people and wildlife alike.



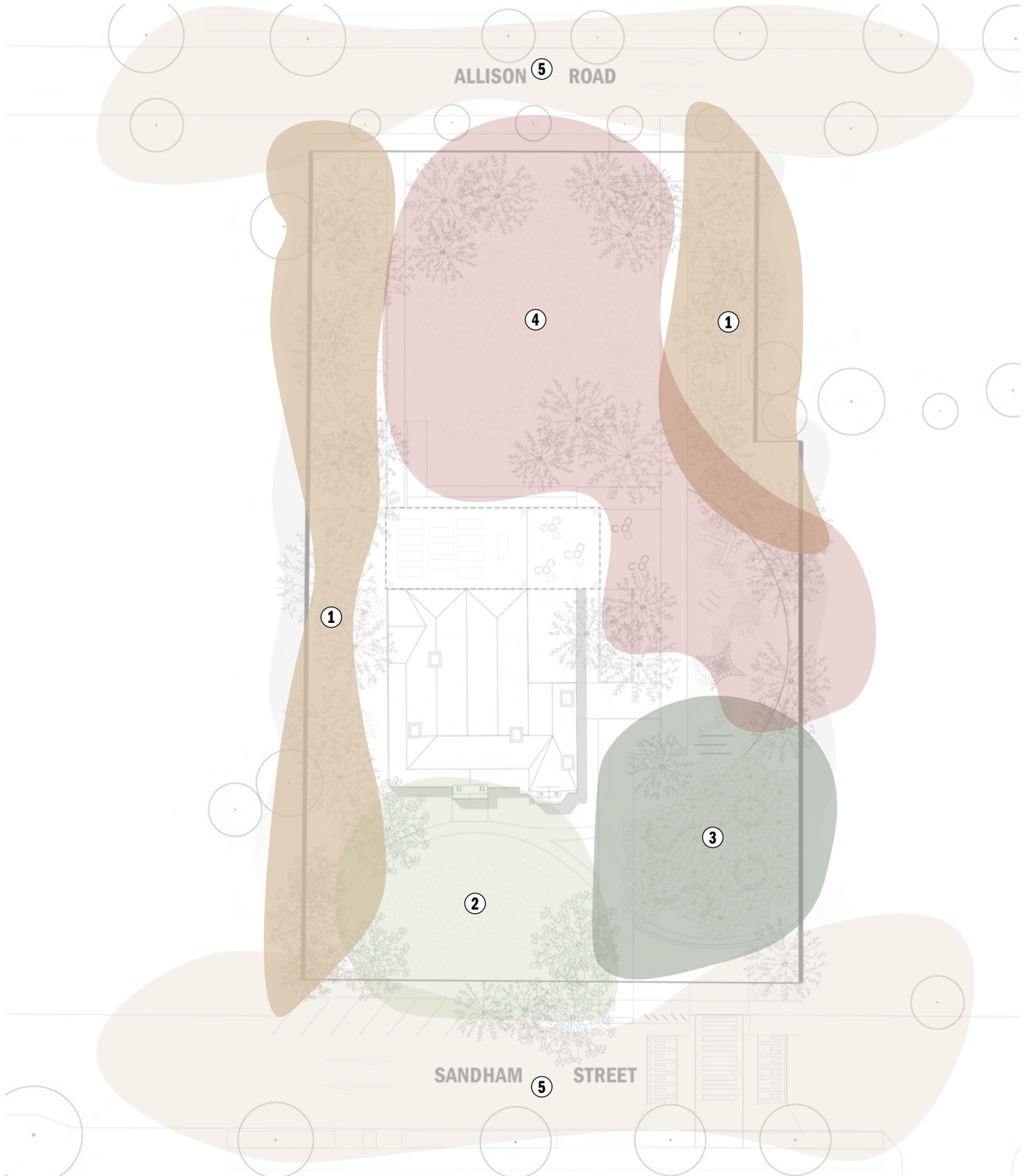






SERIES OF ZONES

- → 1. BOUNDARY
- → 2. NATIVE HERITAGE GARDEN
- → 3. URBAN FOREST/ATTACTOR
- → 4, VIBRANT HEART
- → 5. ROAD INTERFACE



PLANTING PALETTE

TREES


Eucalyptus mannifera


Corymbia citriodora


Acacia melanoxylon


Bursaria spinosa


Melaleuca ericifolia

SHRUBS


Banksia Integrifolia


Correa alba


Acacia acinacea


Atriplex cinerea


Ozothamnus turbinatus


Leptospermum myrsinoides


Epacris impressa

GRASSES & HERBS


Chrysocephalum apriculatum


Themeda triandra


Microlena stipoides


Chorizema varium


Chrysocephalum semipapossum


Dichelachne crinita


Xanthorrhoea minor ssp. lutea

GROUND COVERS


Wahlenbergia stricta


Kennedia prostrata


Atriplex semi baccata


Brachyscome cardiocarpa


Dichondra argentea 'silver falls'


Grevillea Bronze Rambler

PLANTING PALETTE

SHRUBS


Grevillea rhyolitica


Leucophyta brownii


Bossiaea cinerea


Olearia ramulosa

GRASSES & HERBS


Austrostipa flavescens


Poa sieberiana


Craspedia variabilis


Imperata cylindrica


Xerochrysum palustre


Brunonia australis


Pimelea humilis


Ficinia nodosa


Vittardinia gracilis


Rytidosperma geniculatum

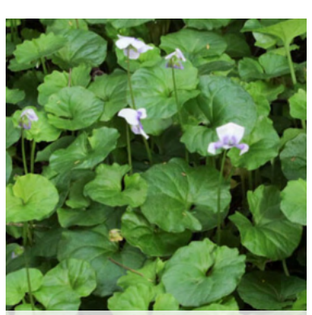

Arthropodium strictum


Linum marginale

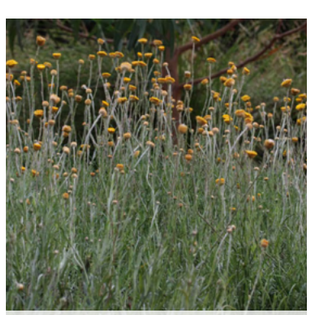

Austrostipa stipoides

GROUND COVERS


Disphyma crassifolium


Viola hederacea


Calocephalus lacteus


Coronidium scorpioides

“What suburbia cries for are the means for people to gather easily, inexpensively, regularly, and pleasurably — a ‘place on the corner’.”

Ray Oldenburg