



SOUTHERN MEMORIAL PARK

a 'bush cemetery for the bush capital'

MASTERPLAN REPORT

Final

31 MARCH 2021

Rev F

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LABORATORY

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Site Investigations



Vision and Aspirations /
Design Principles



Masterplan Review
- Options Development



Masterplan Review
- Recommended Options



DRAFT Masterplan



FINAL Masterplan



Stage 1 PSP

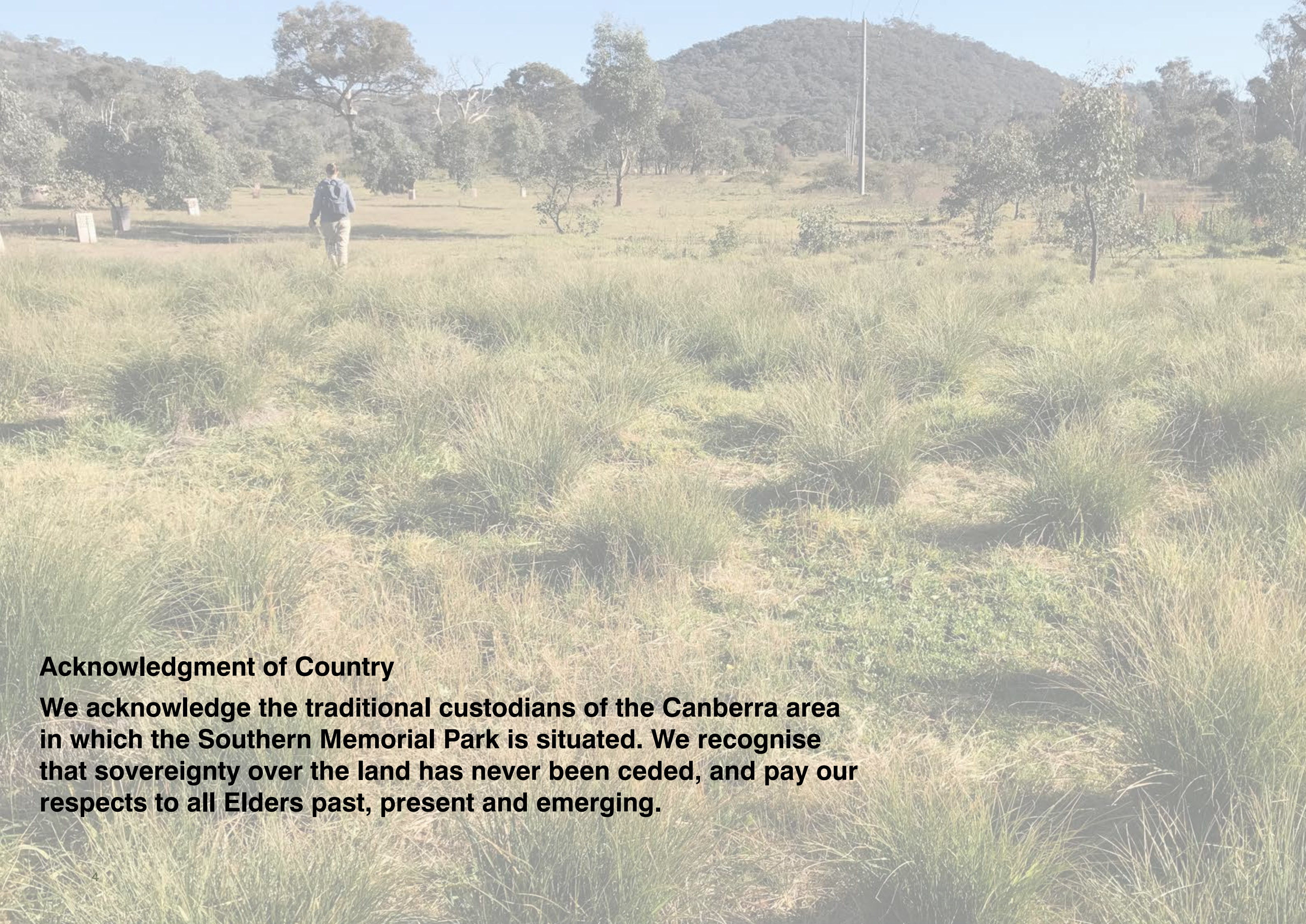
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Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Canberra area in which the Southern Memorial Park is situated. We recognise that sovereignty over the land has never been ceded, and pay our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There are currently three public cemeteries in the ACT: Woden, Gungahlin and Hall. These memorial parks are nearing capacity and insufficient to meet projected demand, particularly for south Canberra where there is a gap in burial and crematorium services.

The ACT Government proposes to develop Southern Memorial Park (SMP) as a major new memorial park, on a greenfield site in Hume, to meet this demand and ensure ongoing and geographically equitable interment, crematorium and memorialisation services for the Canberra community.

To enable this a SMP Masterplan prepared in 2012 has been reviewed and revised resulting in this SMP Masterplan 2021.

The SMP Masterplan 2021 is intended as a guide to inform a strategic and staged approach for implementing the cemetery development. It is informed by higher level detailed assessments of the site, investigations that have resulted in a better understanding of the physical and planning contextual setting, including the impacts of facilities bordering the site.

The intent is to enable the SMP to be delivered progressively to meet ongoing community needs with reference to a plan that is flexible enough to accommodate changes that may be needed over the time the full project is delivered. SMP will service the Canberra community for over 100 years.

The proposed identity for SMP is a 'bush cemetery for the bush capital' capturing the significance of its beautiful bush setting, its iconic status, and potential prominence in the Canberra community.

The plan acknowledges the traditional custodians of the Canberra area in which the Southern Memorial Park is situated. SMP is an opportunity to improve relationships and understanding between non-aboriginal people and aboriginal people through acknowledgement of the indigenous spiritual connections to the land.

Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) is the current custodian of the site and leases the land for horse agistment. The planning and staging of SMP facilitates the ongoing use of the site not being occupied by Canberra Cemeteries for horse agistment for approximately another 50 years.

New geotechnical investigations, site surveying and additional environmental and cultural heritage investigations have been undertaken and recorded in reports as part of the Masterplan review. There have been detailed investigations into traffic planning, civil engineering requirements, stormwater management and water sensitive urban design (WSUD) assessments; reporting on service utility requirements as well as preliminary conceptual architectural designs for the future memorial park key buildings. These investigations and studies are provided as discrete chapters in this report or as appendices.

The extensive analysis of site opportunities and constraints and the early investigations into potential site planning options for the new memorial park, that preceded development of this Masterplan, are also included as appendices to this document.

The Masterplan is the culmination of the above inputs, along with ongoing intensive process of review with targeted government and external stakeholders, as well as the guidance and contribution from a cemeteries subject matter expert.

Following public consultation and government endorsement of the Masterplan, Stage 1 of the project will progress to detailed design. It is intended that further consultation will occur with key external stakeholders throughout the development of SMP.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The ACT Government proposes to develop Southern Memorial Park (SMP) to ensure ongoing and geographically equitable internment, crematorium and memorialisation services for the Canberra community.

The site was identified in the Tuggeranong region on Mugga Lane in 2010. The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) is currently the custodian of the site and it is leased for horse agistment, Rose Cottage Horse paddocks.

1.1 Site Description

The 764,881m² site is bounded to the east by a solar farm, to the north by Mugga Lane Waste Management Centre and west and south by Wanniasa Hills Nature Reserve and Wanniasa Hills Special Purpose Reserve.

The proposed SMP site is located across Blocks 1695, 1676, 1521, 1673 and Block 1520 which is a services zone for power cables.

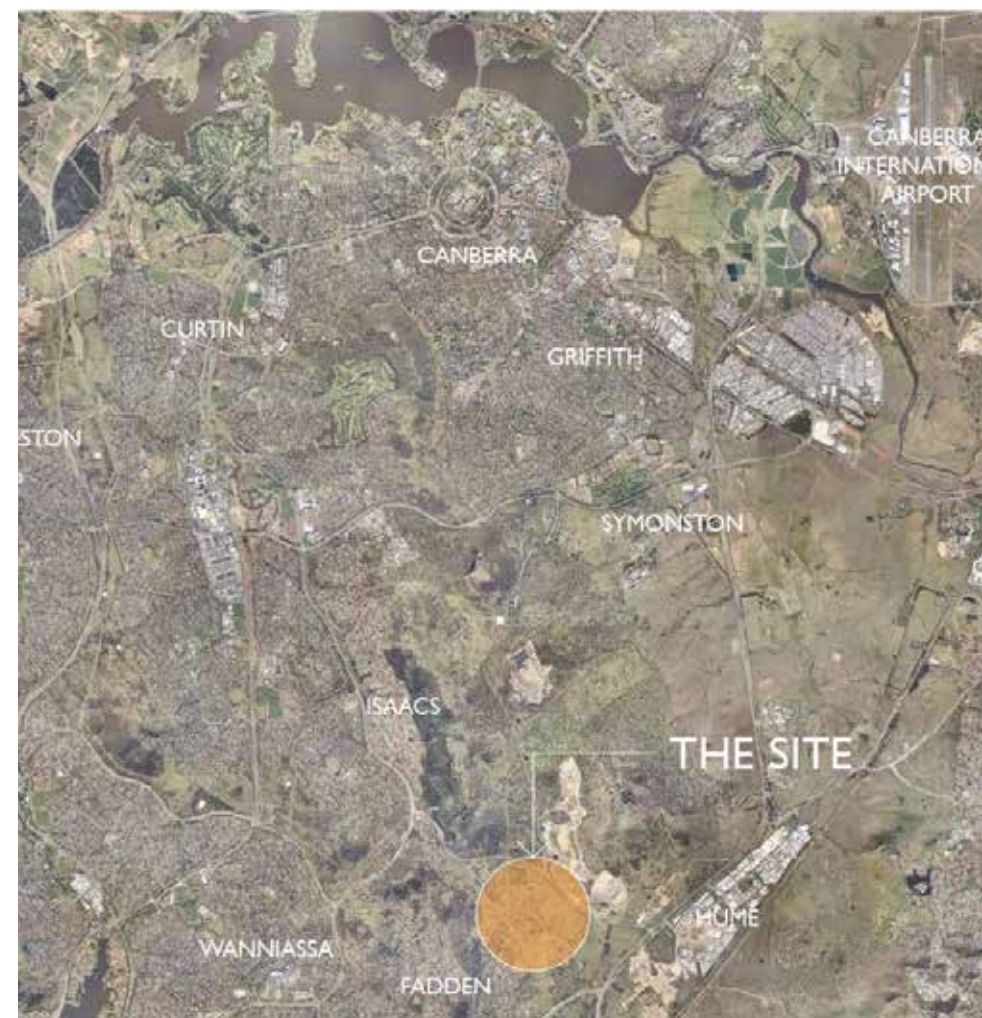


Figure 1. Site Location

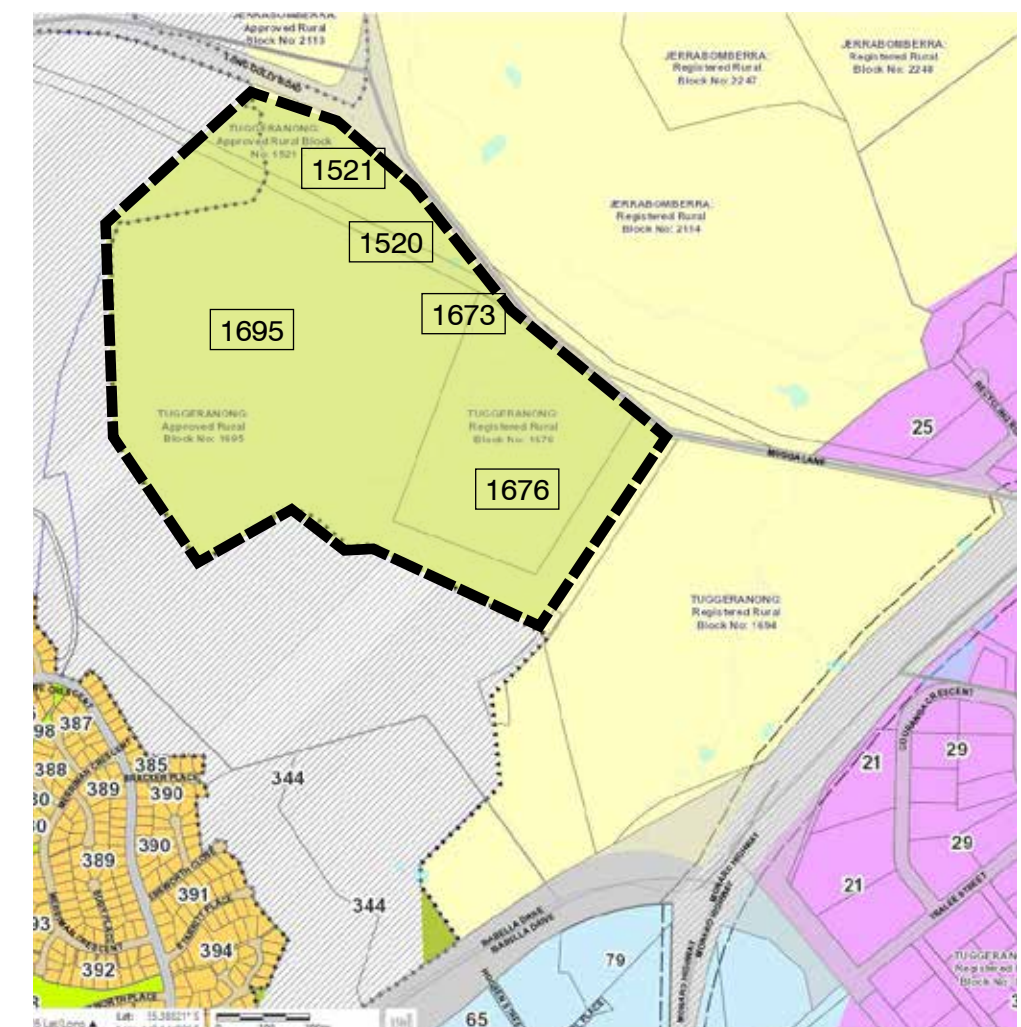


Figure 2. SMP site is located across Blocks 1695, 1676, 1521, 1673 and Block 1520 which is a services zone for power cables.



1.2 Project Purpose

The Southern Memorial Park (SMP) Masterplan was initially prepared in 2012. The Masterplan 2012 was supported by geotechnical investigations, survey, environmental and cultural heritage reports and business modelling.

Being eight years since the Masterplan 2012 was completed, the first phase of the current project was to review and update the Masterplan. This required undertaking further cultural heritage, geotechnical, environmental, and transport investigations.

The revised Masterplan also enables the SMP to be delivered progressively to meet ongoing community needs.

1.3 Design Process

A staged design process was undertaken to review the SMP Masterplan 2012 in order to develop the SMP Masterplan 2021.

Investigation into and analysis of the physical, cultural and ecological attributes of the site resulted in evidence and a report that identified the opportunities and constraints of the SMP site (Refer to **Appendix A** for a summary). Subsequently design options for the cemetery were developed to align with guiding principles which had been developed through a vision and aspirations workshop with the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority (ACTPCA) Special Project Committee (SPC) in late May 2020.

In following these principles, the masterplan design is intended to be sustainable, fit for purpose and financially viable for the long term meanwhile remaining beautiful and iconic.

Two design options, one formal design and the other organic design that reflects the existing topography, were assessed again in detail; the estimated implementation costs were also considered. The assessment resulted in the organic design approach

being recommended to proceed as the new SMP Masterplan design; this was presented to the SPC in the Recommended SMP Masterplan Option Report (31 August 2020). (Refer to **Appendix B** for a summary).

The organic approach to the SMP planning was progressed to reflect the site investigations and assessments undertaken to ensure important remnant ecological and heritage sites were protected, take full advantage of the best inherent assets of the natural landscape of the site and fully inform a feasible interment and memorialisation strategy for the new SMP.

Visitor experience and levels of service expected; site movement, circulation and wayfinding, and operational planning for attending staff and maintenance crews were also considered in the planning.

The SMP design and each of its elements were evaluated continuously throughout design development to ensure alignment with the identified design principles that support the vision for a world-class memorial park designed for a life of one hundred years and attuned to demand and changing expectations in interment and memorialisation services in the ACT population.

This Masterplan Report summarises the work undertaken, which includes site investigations, and detailed assessments and analysis by a multidisciplinary team. It covers traffic planning, civil engineering, surveys, water sensitive urban design, environmental planning and cultural heritage. Requirements for site utility services and planning pathways are also identified. Full detailed reporting on these aspects of the masterplan are provided as Appendices.

The masterplan is supported by analysis that identifies functional requirements for the built facilities for SMP. Conceptual architectural designs for the key new buildings are included in the Masterplan.

A staging plan for works implementation has also been prepared and is supported by cost estimates.

Government stakeholder and asset manager input to design and review of draft reports and proposals was undertaken at key design development stages and additionally as required, to inform design directions as completely as possible. Consultation with targeted external stakeholder representatives also informs the design.

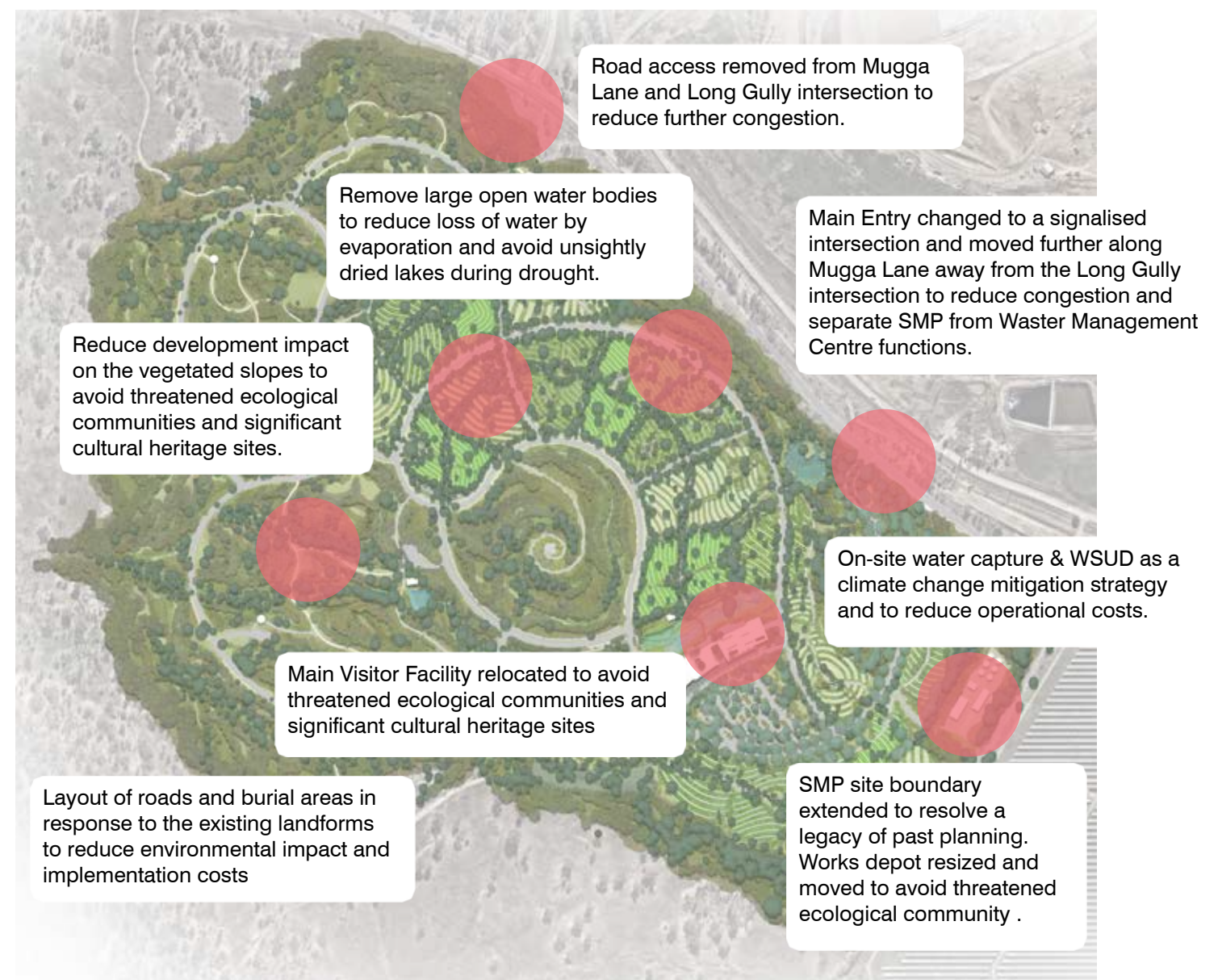
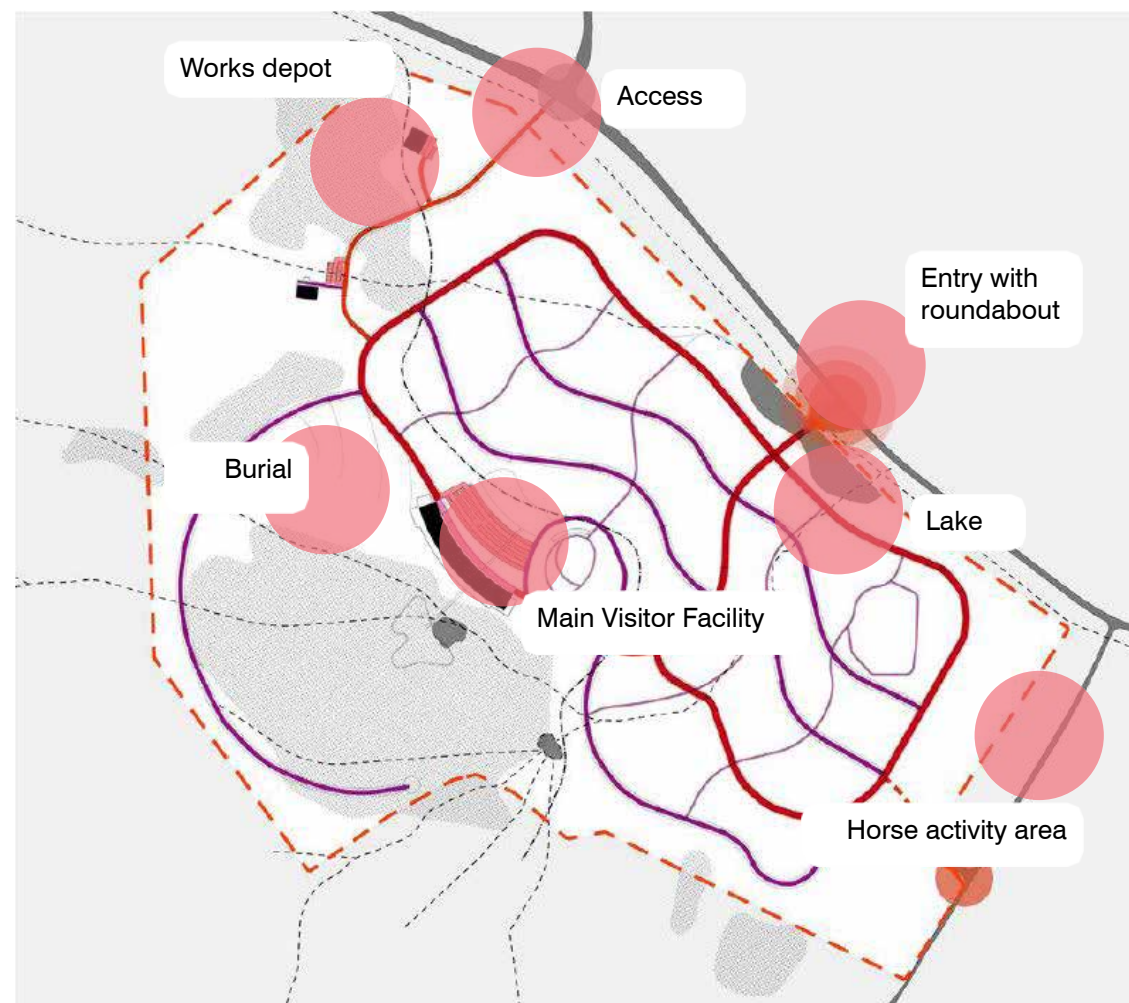


Figure 3. SMP Masterplan 2012 and summary of key modifications as a result of the Masterplan Review.



2.0 MASTERPLAN CONCEPT

2.1 Guiding Principles

Five key principles were identified to guide the revision of the SMP Masterplan.

Principles developed by the SMP Masterplan 2012 were used as a starting point.

An updated set of guiding design principles were proposed following a Vision and Aspirations workshop with the ACTPCA Special Project Committee in late May and formulated in a Discussion Paper (July 2020).



01 Developing a Memorial Park for the Future

Principle Objectives

- Fully integrate SMP into the portfolio of sites under ACTPCA management.
- Plan the delivery of major infrastructure in a rational and cost-effective manner allowing for incremental growth of interment spaces across the site.
- Accommodate a variety range of-traditional and non-traditional interment types.
- Provide opportunity for a diverse range of cultural interment rites and traditions.
- Acknowledge future changes in public expectations of interment.
- Provide a flexible and fully integrated digital infrastructure overlay



02 Delivering a high-quality Visitor Experience

Principle Objectives

- Deliver a world class, positive visitor experience that encourages the celebration of life.
- Provide a high level of visitor comfort and well-being with an emphasis on creating spaces that are welcoming and of a human scale.
- Deliver a professional customer service.



03 Responsiveness to Place: the site & its cultural history

Principle Objectives

- Recognise and comprehensively respond to the site's significant cultural history.
- Sympathetically develop the site to embrace and enhance the natural topography.
- Pro-actively respond to the constraints of the underlying geology in planning.
- Acknowledge the local fire ecology in planning.



04 Restoring the Natural Landscape & Showcasing Sustainability

Principle Objectives

- Protect existing threatened endemic vegetation.
- Regenerate the natural ecological systems of the site and region through re-vegetation and habitat creation.
- Restore and enhance the natural waterways.
- Use water sustainably and incorporate water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles across the site.



05 Engaging with Community

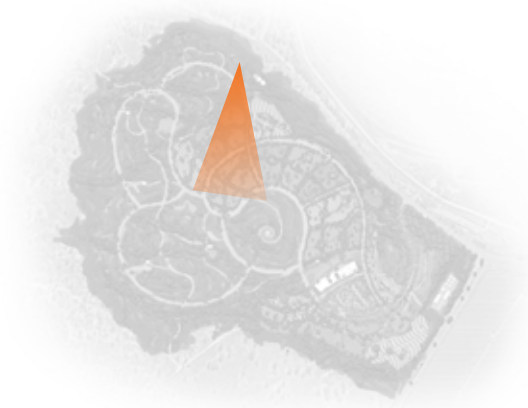
Principle Objectives

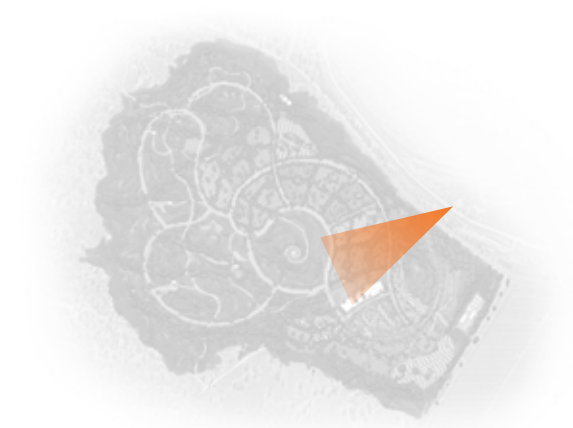
- Celebrate community diversity.
- Acknowledge the culture of local indigenous communities.
- Be an open place providing a range of recreational activities to the whole community.

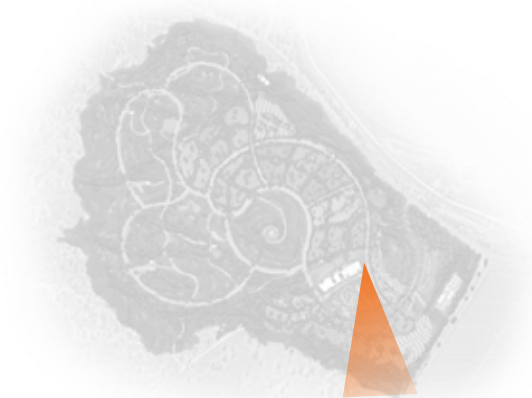
2.2 Overall Masterplan

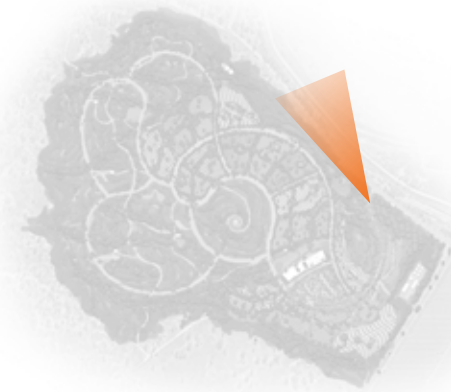


Figure 4. Overall Masterplan









2.3 Masterplan Components: Arrival

Entry and exit to the SMP will be via a new signalised intersection on Mugga Lane. The detailed design of the intersection will be developed in full consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure the intersection meets technical requirements and standards necessary to accommodate funeral processions, and memorial park operational requirements, while allowing normal Mugga Lane traffic to flow with minimal disruption.

The location of the intersection has been specifically selected to be appropriately distanced south of Long Gully Road and entry points to the adjacent Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre, to minimise impacts on these existing busy traffic intersections.

A main road, of approximately 500metres length, takes people from the entry gates to the main visitor precinct. This tree-lined boulevard fulfils an important role in transitioning visitor's experience from a busy, traffic dominated environment to a natural, calming landscape setting. The road winds around a naturally occurring hillock, past a striking 'forest' of tall eucalypts and a string of small wetland ponds, located to capture stormwater runoff from this low lying section of the site and further enhance the sense of entering a natural landscape retreat.

Refer to Chapter 6 and Appendix C for details about Transport Planning and Traffic Engineering.

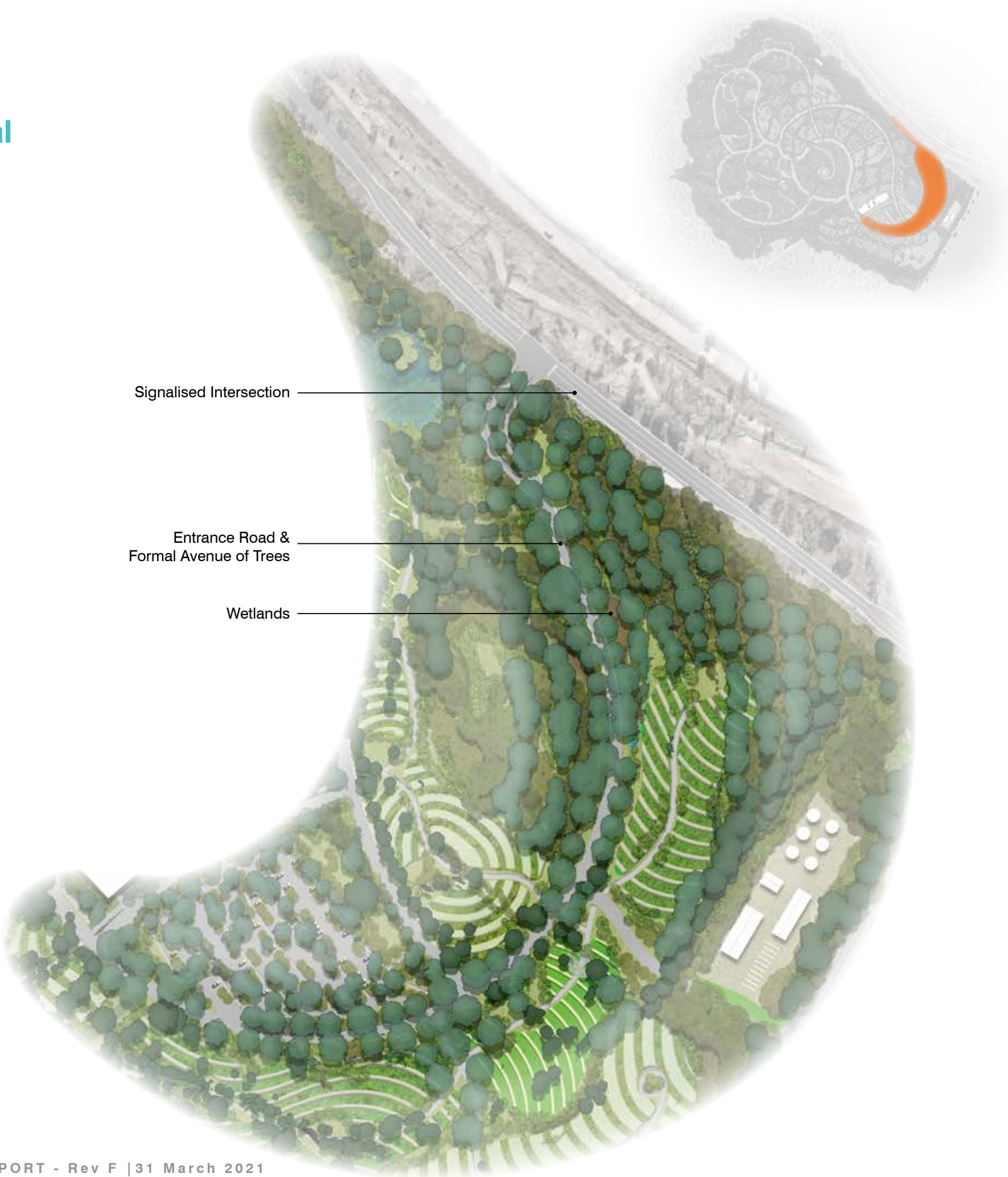


Figure 5. Arrival



2.4 Masterplan Components: Main Visitor Facility

The central focus of SMP will be the main visitor facility. The complex of buildings consolidates all the visitor functions in one location. It includes a central administration and office, large and small memorial halls, a crematorium, two multi-purpose function halls and a cafe with a retail outlet which includes a florist.

The main visitor facility is located on a relatively flat, north-facing site, nestled between two hills, alongside the southern-most of the natural gullies that traverse the site. The careful positioning of buildings makes best use of the natural topography at this location, shielding the precinct from intrusive elements such as traffic noise and views to the adjacent waste management facility and solar farm. Instead views are directed northward across the site toward the larger of the re-vegetated hills and the distant range of hills on the horizon beyond.

The pavilion-like forms of the buildings have been developed to emphasise an environment dominated by a natural landscape.

Generous hard-paved spaces surround the outside perimeters of the buildings and are suitable for gatherings before and after services and events.

Localised landscaping softens these areas to create intimate and private function spaces.



Figure 6. Main Visitor Facility

The complex overlooks a restored waterway on the northern side, where wetlands are proposed. These wetlands serve multiple purposes. Firstly, for water quality treatment, taking in runoff from the surrounding site and new infrastructure, then filtering pollutants before the water is harvested and stored in tanks for site irrigation. The wetlands will be a landscape feature as well as re-established habitat and magnet for native frogs, wading birds and other wildlife.

A small dedicated playspace is proposed adjacent the cafe and function halls to cater to the immediate needs of parents and children attending services.

A paved concourse provides a ceremonial access point for hearses, passenger drop-off and deliveries. Next to the main visitor facility is a carpark with over 150 spaces for staff and visitors. The carpark is designed to minimise its footprint while allowing the landscape to dominate.



2.5 Masterplan Components: Site Facilities

The design and location of a range of facilities across the site are proposed to support the efficient functioning of SMP and address the needs of its users. The site facilities also encourage broader public visitation and recreational use of the site.

An outdoor chapel with a large outdoor pavilion is provided higher on the natural bush slopes, for those who prefer a more relaxed, open environment for dedication services as alternative to formal indoor funeral services and functions. The outdoor chapel takes advantage of an existing dam under mature trees to create a sheltered retreat.

A 'nature play' space for children and their carers is located near the main visitor facility in the filtered shade of an impressive stand of existing riverine eucalypts. The play space will be available to those visiting memorial sites, who have attended services in the park, as well as visitors who are attracted by the beautiful bushland setting. The play space incorporates a place for sand and mud play, rope climbs, tunnels, and natural log balance beams, all weaving through the natural woodland landscape.

Complementing this play facility is a smaller dedicated playspace adjacent to the functional halls and cafe.

The potential of the northern gully is realised by using the natural forming amphitheatre for an event space. It could be used as a venue for memorial services, and be available for community activities such as theatre or music performances.



Figure 7. Site Amenities

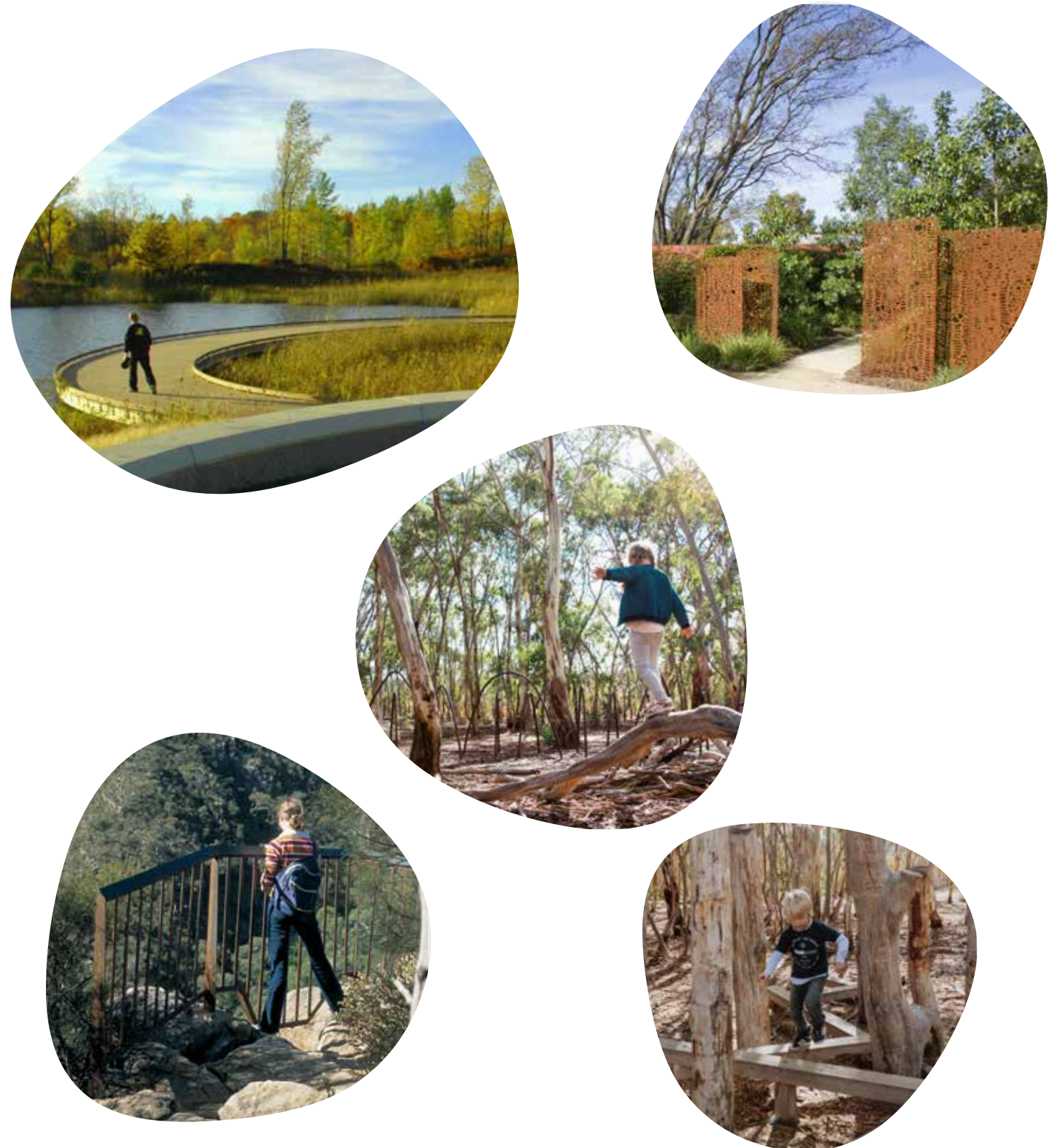
A series of lookout points and picnic spots, linked by an access road and bush walking trail, are located along the highest slopes of the site. These will form part of a new trail through the site with connections to the established and popular Canberra Centenary Trail. Existing horse-riding trails at the perimeter of the site that connecting adjacent horse paddocks will be retained.

Works Depot

The works depot is located in the southern corner of the site. It is situated behind an existing densely planted tree windbreak which will reduce its visual and physical impact from day one. The screen will be further enhanced by additional tree planting.

An existing driveway off Mugga Lane, currently used by the horse agistment users and a neighbouring health facility will be sealed to enable occasional use by service vehicles accessing the works depot. All other visitors including funeral directors, funeral processions, staff and deliveries will be required to use the signalised main entry.

The works depot will include office space, staff amenities, work sheds, bulk storage for landscape materials, and washdown areas for equipment. Large tanks for harvested stormwater are located within the compound, with pumps that redistribute water for landscape garden irrigation.



2.6 The 'Bush Cemetery'

Southern Memorial Park has been designed to be welcoming and inclusive. The design is flexible to allow different faith and cultural groups to practice their specific rituals.

Interment is in three broad categories: 'traditional' burials, 'natural' burials which is an emerging trend and ashes memorialisation.

There is an opportunity for designated burials areas dependent on demand. As SMP progresses, Canberra Cemeteries will liaise separately with faith and cultural groups to allocate dedicated areas as required.

The overall approach is to accentuate the natural landscape of the Canberra region as the setting for interment creating a 'Bush Cemetery for the Bush Capital'.



Figure 8. Location of Traditional Burial Portions

Traditional Burials

‘Traditional’ burials include lawn burials with standardised memorial plaques, as well as more elaborate monumental plots with masonry vaults and headstones. Traditional burials may also take innovative forms such as garden plots amongst gravel paths.

The Masterplan dedicates a large area of the site to traditional burials. To accommodate the necessary excavations for double depth burials as a minimum (or up to triple depth in areas where ground conditions allow), the traditional burial area stretches across the lower plains on the eastern side of the site. These areas provide the flattest terrain and deepest soils most suited to deep burial.

To maintain the sense of a “bush cemetery” in a designed landscape, the Masterplan proposes sixteen portions, each designed as ‘garden rooms’ or ‘bush clearings’ enclosed by native trees and shrubs.

Walking trails through the perimeter native planted corridors loop through and connect the ‘clearings’ for those wishing to walk rather than travel by car. An encircling ring road with widened verges for parking also links the burial grounds.

The ‘bush clearings’ provide private and intimate spaces at a human scale for interment and dedication.

Laid out sequentially, each portion presents a different burial typology: lawn burial plots, garden and gravel plots in various arrangements, and monumental headstone plots. By interchanging the typologies across the sixteen ‘rooms’ there is choice of a range of burial options and various levels of affordability for the Canberra community.

As the site is developed incrementally over time, demand for certain typologies will inform how the park takes form. The interchangeability of the garden rooms also allows for non-denominational burials as the default, but equally provides spaces for dedicated denominational, or culturally specific areas, to meet public demand as need changes over time. Other specialised burial needs, such as soldiers’ memorials, can also be accommodated in these settings.

Each garden room has its own native garden retreat space, or spaces, providing a setting for complete reflection, rest, or small gatherings of celebration.



Natural Burials

Areas of the upper western slopes, with the most intact remnant vegetation and cultural heritage sites, will be protected, re-vegetated, and will remain largely undeveloped.

This area provides the ideal opportunity for 'natural burials', an emerging trend consisting of returning a body as naturally as possible to the earth, in shallow earth and a simple casket or shroud, in a protected natural landscape.

The Masterplan anticipates that a large area of the upper slopes will be available for natural burials, with necessary ongoing ecological and heritage advice provided to park management to identify areas best suited to natural burials as portions of the upper slopes are opened up for this activity. To ensure the most sensitive areas are protected, sites for burial plots will be selected to minimise adverse impact on trees and other important vegetation, culturally significant sites, and to avoid areas of potential erosion or increased overland water flow.

Permanent markers are not intended for natural burials and graves blend into the surrounding bushland. The locations of these graves are electronically tagged and mapped, with records made available to visitors at the memorial park administration offices or via a web page.



Figure 9. Location of Natural Burial Areas

Cremation and Ashes Interment

There is a variety of opportunities for cremation memorialisation throughout SMP.

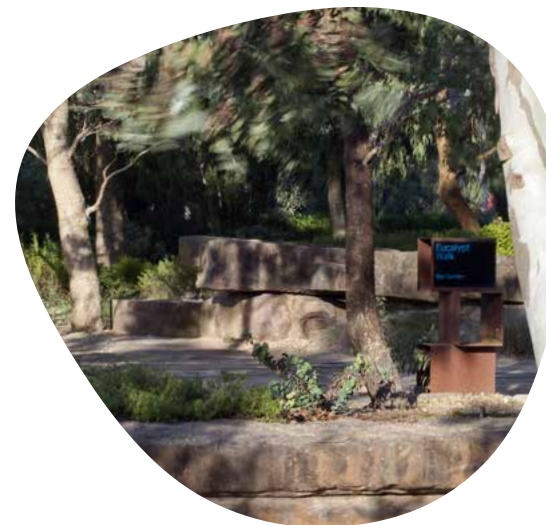
This includes placing small commemorative monuments or plaques in bush clearings and garden rooms, along the planted walkways connecting them and on park furniture.

Each of the proposed bushland lookout locations across the site also provide dedicated settings for ashes memorialisation.

Other Interment

A mausoleum with space for 100 crypts, has been proposed immediately across the creek line from the main visitor facility. It is supported by a small carpark. The requirement for a mausoleum is subject to future demand and further assessment. There are many potential locations within SMP for other mausolea dependant upon demand.

The interment of ashes in running water, as some faith groups prefer, cannot be accommodated at this site due to the intermittent flows of the site's natural gullies.

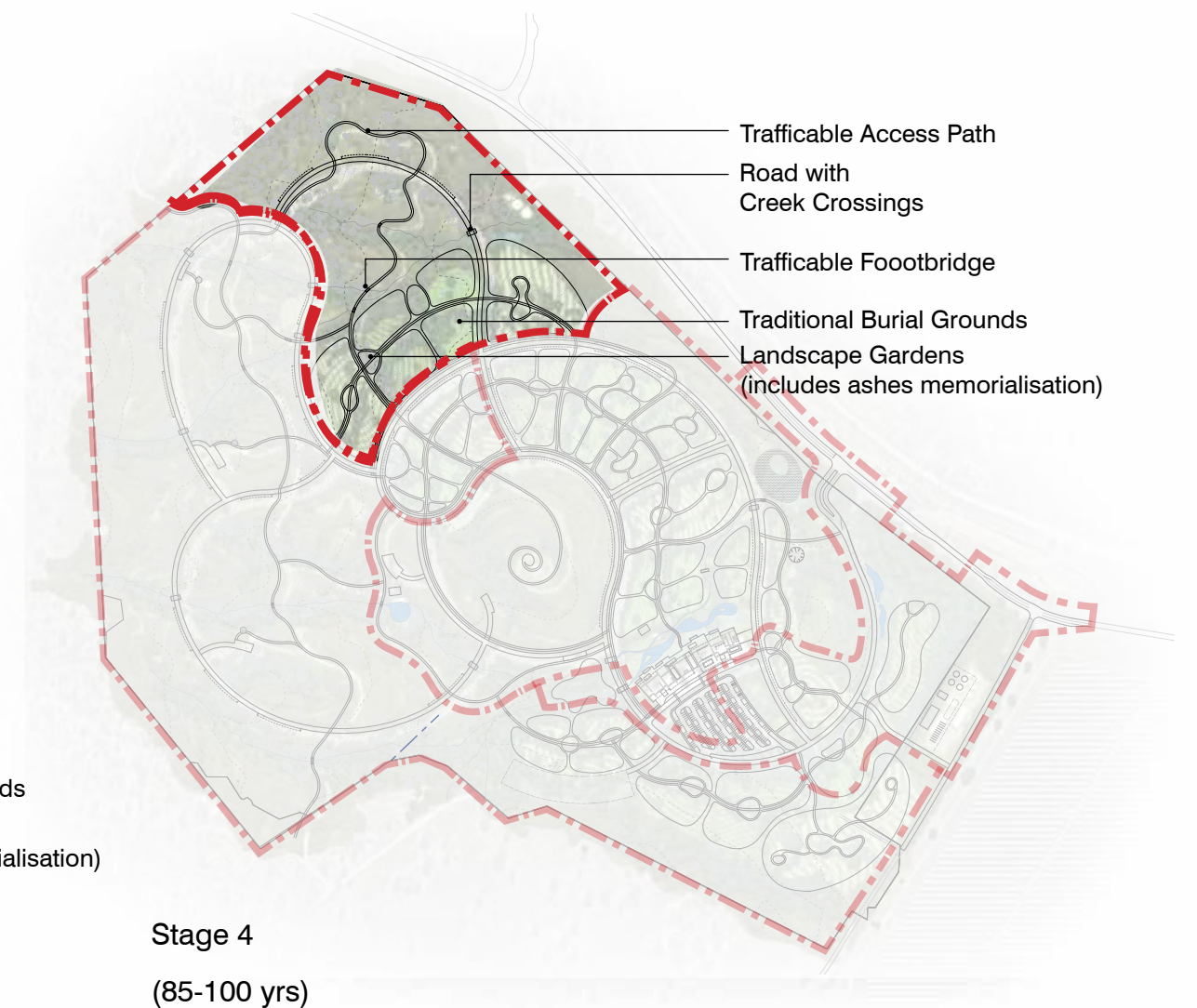
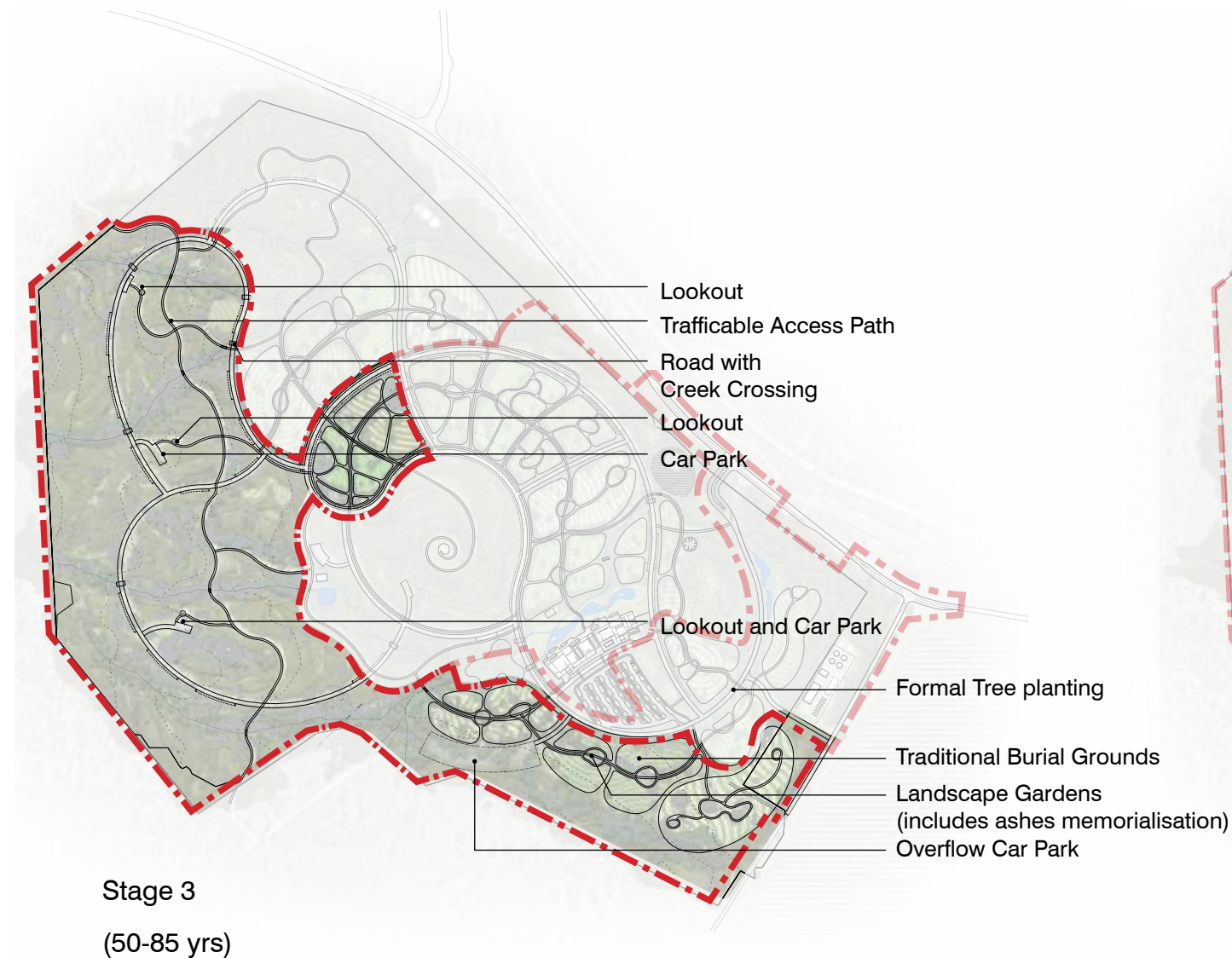


2.7 Staging

The proposed SMP development staging orders the delivery and quantum of future work within an indicative timeframe. This is based on the understanding that development will occur incrementally with detailed design to precede construction. The time required for development is also subject to the statutory approvals process, for example Development Approval for Stage 1 works and environment approvals for further stages. Four stages are proposed over the estimated 100+ years of the facility’s life of active interment.



Figure 11. Staging Diagrams



2.8 Burial Strategy

Inherent constraints of the SMP site are strong determinants of how the site can be developed.

Areas with existing cultural artefacts and indigenous heritage significance; remnant vegetation with important ecological values, and adverse subsurface geotechnical factors have been considered in the cemetery design. These key constraints are described in **Appendix A**.

A burial strategy that fully considers the site constraints has been prepared to guide a strategic approach to staged development of the site and provisioning of long-term interment. The cemetery design and implementation strategy has been developed with advice from and review by a cemetery design subject matter expert, independently engaged by Transport Canberra City Services (TCCS) to provide technical advice. **(Refer to Appendix C)**

A summary of the details of the assessments and calculations undertaken to test the site viability and area suitability for traditional and natural burials includes:

1. The assessments show that approximately 28-36 ha (approx. 40% of the total site area) have relatively low-level constraints and are therefore best suited to higher levels of development. All traditional deep burials, and the majority of site infrastructure, are planned to occur within these areas.
2. The remaining 43-50 ha of the site (approx. 60% of total area), largely on the western upper slopes, show relatively higher level constraints reserved for low impact interment - natural burials and ashes interment

– in regenerated natural bushland and areas of ecological value where this is permitted. This approach to planning for the upper slopes of the site where soils are shallowest, reinforces the sense of a memorial park located within a tranquil, natural bushland landscape. These areas may also be utilised for low impact recreational activities such as bushwalking, bird watching or nature photography.

3. The calculations presented below represent a simplified modelling of the assessments of the burial plot area availability and yield estimates based on the proposed site masterplan layout, noting the following:
 - Area figures shown are for space exclusively dedicated to burial portions. Roads, carparking, buildings and other site infrastructure have already been subtracted.
 - Yields are calculated based on an allowance of one 'natural' burial plot per 10m², and 'traditional' burials at two different densities: higher density - one plot per 6.5m², and lower density - one plot per 10m².

BURIAL PLOTS AVAILABLE

Assuming Low Constraint areas used for traditional burials only.

Low Constraint Areas allocated for burial portions: 160,000m²

107,000m² (67%) @ 6.5m²/plot

54,000m² (33%) @ 10m²/plot

Total of traditional burials is 21,800 plots

Assuming High and Moderate Constraint areas used for natural burials only

High+Mod Constraint Areas allocated for burial portions: 100,000m²

Natural Burial Plots (@ 10m²/plot): 10,000 plots

Total of natural burials is 10,000 plots

YIELD CALCULATIONS

Natural Burials (1 pax/plot): 10,000 pax

Traditional Burials (2 pax/plot): 43,600 pax

Total Yield: 53,600 pax (82% Traditional / 18% Natural)

ESTIMATED MEMORIAL PARK LIFE

Assuming the following rates of burial for SMP:

200 burials per annum for first 10 years: 2,000 burials

400 burials per annum for next 20 years: 8,000 burials

600 burials per annum for next 70+ years: 42,000+ burials

53,600 burials equates to approximately 103 years of memorial park life

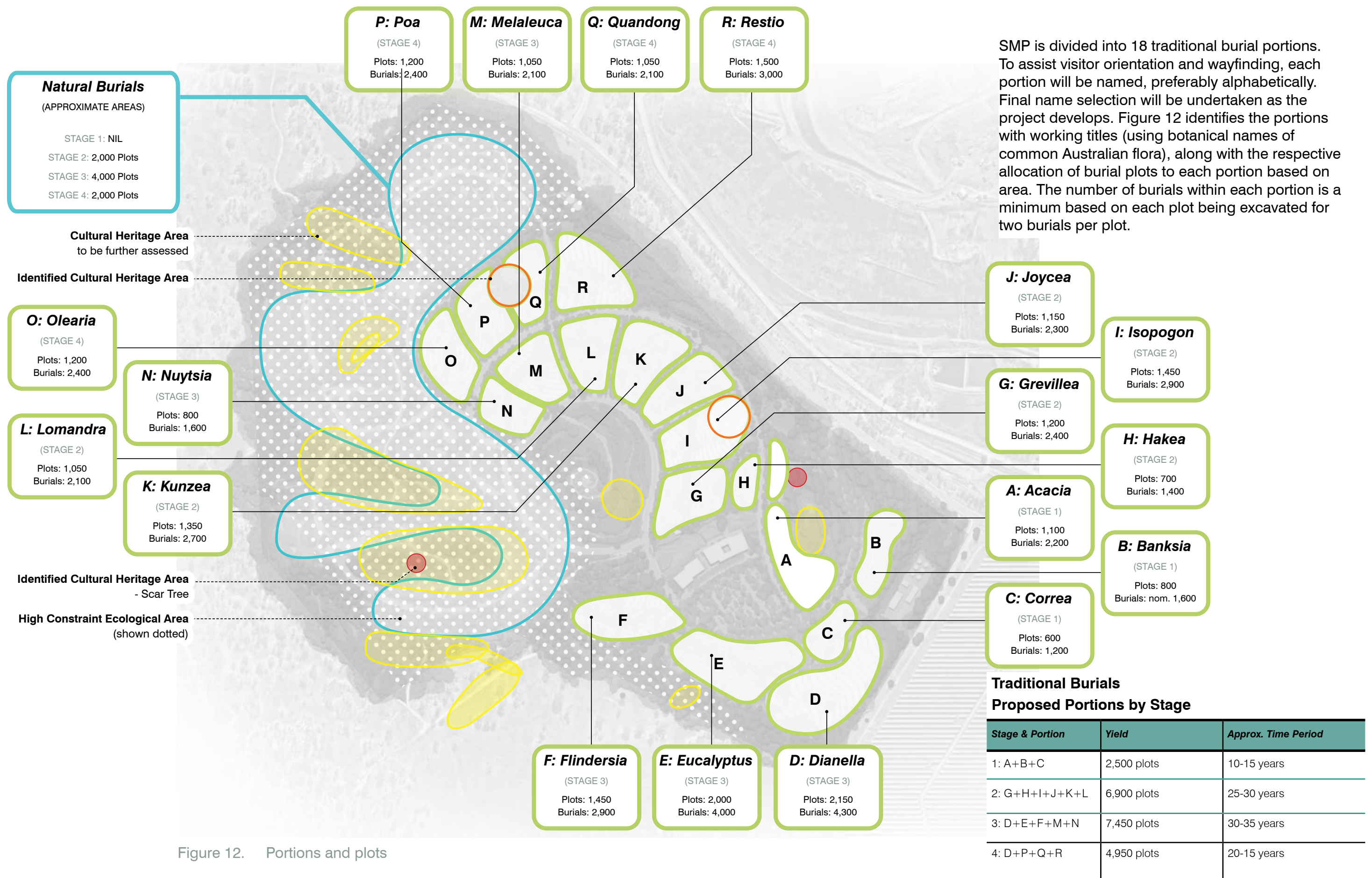


Figure 12. Portions and plots

2.9 Access and Wayfinding

Vehicle Movement

The main entry to SMP will be signalised intersection located on Mugga Lane, 600 metres south of the Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road intersection.

The road network proposed for SMP is an arrangement of hierarchical loops based on anticipated volumes of use.

High visitation roads surround the high use central core of the site and roads for lower visitation areas radiate out across the site from this core. Roads and paths follow the longest stretches of natural site contours. When looped back, the routes are on flatter terrain, such as at the main visitor facilities.

Aligning roads and paths along site contours reinforces the organic design, creates a more comfortable, accessible pedestrian environment and is more cost effective to deliver. Improved access for visitors with impaired mobility is also possible.

The looped ring roads and curvilinear layouts enable users to easily return to their starting point. Sequential alphabetical naming of the burial gardens will help people find their way. Strategically placed signage and maps will further assist visitors.

Maintenance staff based at the works depot will use the road network to access all parts of the park.

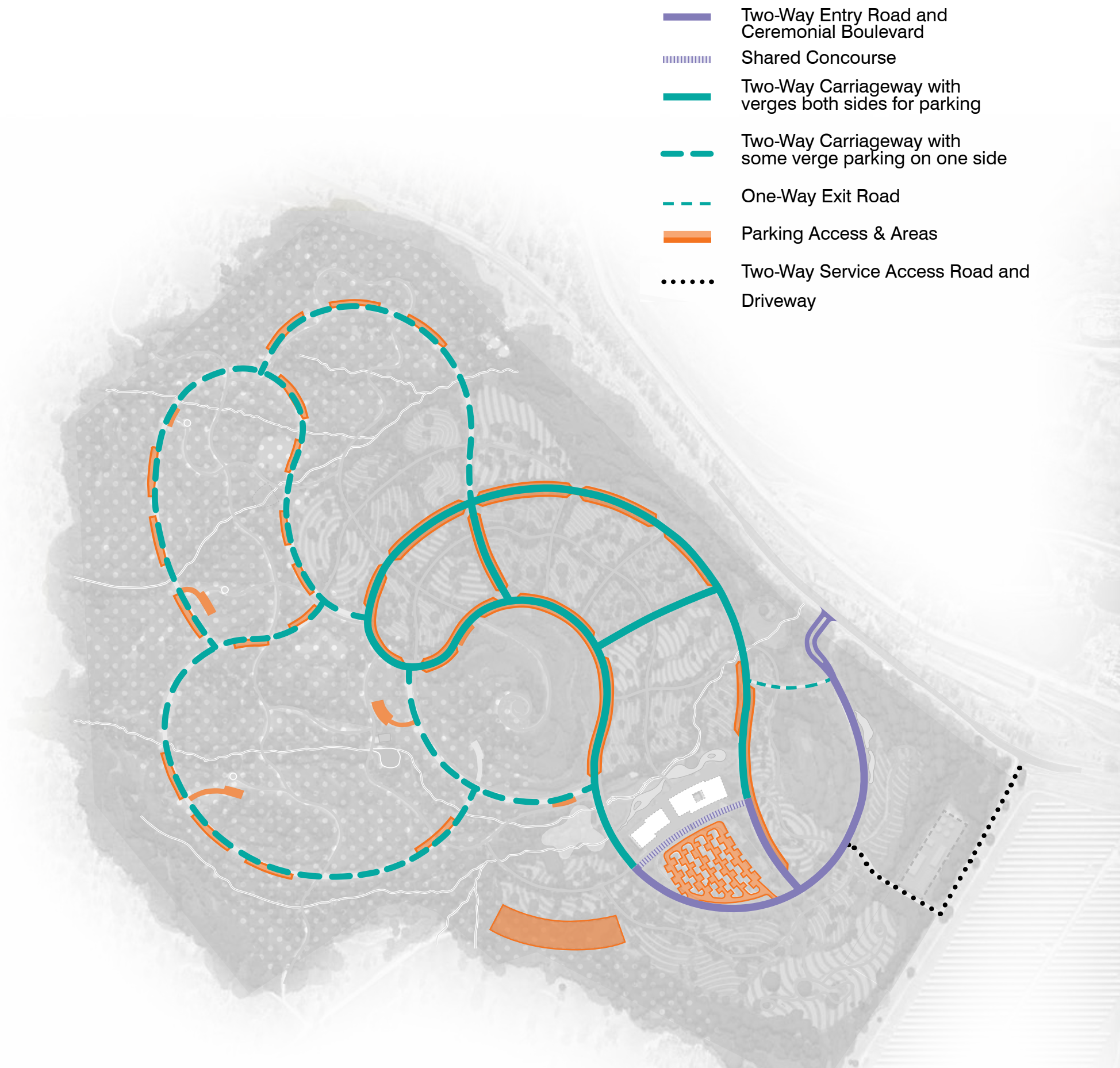


Figure 13. Vehicle Movement

- Memorial Garden Trails
- - - Bush Walking Trails
- ... Equestrian Trails

Paths and Trails

The connecting paths and walking trails that thread through both traditional and natural burial areas are designed for pedestrians but are wide enough (3metres width) and robust enough (asphalt or concrete surfaced) to provide the necessary access to burial plots for visitors and maintenance vehicles.

The main north-south orientated walking trail through the upper slopes and natural burial area is designed for both SMP visitor access and recreational walkers.

The trail also connects to the Canberra Centenary Trail network.

The existing horse-riding trails along the perimeter of the site connecting to adjacent horse paddocks are retained.



Figure 14. Trails

2.10 Water Management

The SMP site has several natural waterways that have become degraded from past land use and vegetation clearing. These creeks will be rehabilitated and made features of the landscape.

The waterways in conjunction with strategically placed wetlands will capture and treat stormwater generated on the site to meet regulatory requirements to protect downstream waterways. These ephemeral waterways and wetlands will celebrate the landscape character of the site and enrich the park as wildlife habitat and visitor experience.

The proposed 'water sensitive urban design' (WSUD) approach enables treated water from the wetlands to be harvested and used to irrigate the park, thus reducing reliance on potable water.

The major contribution for water conservation at SMP will be the stormwater collection, treatment, storage, and reuse system that will be developed to supply irrigation for the burial plots. Of the various external water supply sources investigated at the site (Refer to Section 8: WSUD) only on-site stormwater was found to be viable, and therefore maximising its harvest has been adopted.

The proposed system of stormwater harvesting will not only capture water for re-use but will also enhance the ecology of the park and protect downstream waterways. Vegetated wetland systems constructed at key locations to treat the runoff and improve water quality will do this. Flows from the roads, car parks and buildings will be directed to the wetlands as well as natural flows along the rehabilitated watercourses.

The wetlands will be shallow permanent bodies of water that are extensively vegetated. They will contain some deeper pools of open water and will be configured to fit naturally into the landscape. Water levels in the wetland will fluctuate over the year and during long dry spells water will recede into the deeper pools.

It is estimated approximately half of the water demands of SMP can be supplied from harvested water collected on the site through a strategy that captures surface runoff and roof water, uses water efficient fitting and fixtures, improves water quality through natural filtration, storage in wetlands and tanks, and reuse.



2.11 Public Art

Art can be a powerful tool in evoking landscape and a sense of place. Public art in a memorial park setting has even greater potential to engage with people on a contemplative, even spiritual level, and as such, incorporating site-specific art into the landscape can be an important component of SMP.

Public art and interpretative landscape installations can be varied and multi-layered; commemorative with specific reference to certain people or sections of the Canberra community interred at the Park, or elements in the landscape intended to provoke a particular sentiment, tell a particular story, interpret the site, its ecology or geography, or be simply be decorative and awe-inspiring.

Public art is also an opportunity to acknowledge the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples as the traditional custodians of the Canberra, improve relationships and understanding between non-aboriginal people and aboriginal people, and acknowledge of the indigenous spiritual connections to the land.

As such, works can be in the form of:

- Enduring iconic pieces or stand-alone works, at large or more intimate scales
- Temporary installations
- Performance or works using various forms of interactive media such as sound or projection
- Integrated artistic elements such as custom designed sculptural architectural elements, wayfinding and building signage, artistic elements within shelters, paving and urban furniture.

The Masterplan is flexible to enable art to be positioned anywhere across the site, within the constraints of setting, scale and views.

The strongest public art and interpretation outcomes will be achieved through the commissioning of artists and designers to develop site specific works. The response and concept of such works will consider location, scale, form, and materials. Public art, craft or specialist design that is site-specific has an inherently direct relationship with the fundamental principles that support the functioning and specific users of SMP.

As proposed in the SMP Masterplan 2012, it is recommended that a Public Art Policy be specifically developed to set in place standards to guide the quality, durability and appropriateness of future artworks.



2.12 Landscape and Planting Strategy

As fitting for the “Bush Cemetery for the Bush Capital”, SMP will be designed with a natural bush character showcasing local plant species.

The landscape is also designed in response to the limited availability of water for irrigation. Irrigation will be restricted to areas of the park which are intensively used or where irrigation is necessary. Alternative treatments to the lawn burial, replacing lawn with alternative materials such as gravel while maintaining a ‘green’ appearance will be explored in Stage 1 preliminary design. Plant selection will be based on drought tolerance and suitability for local conditions.

The portions will be designed to be different from each other and therefore more easily remembered and identified on return visits. Themed planting using selected species or flower colour will also make locations more recognisable, thus avoiding large areas of ‘sameness’ that often makes wayfinding in memorial parks difficult even for regular visitors.

The upper slopes of the site, including remnant pockets of important ecological plant communities, will be restored to a natural condition with the intention of improving the ecological value of the site. These areas will be dedicated to natural burials and ashes interment.

The natural gullies and waterways will be restored and enhanced with the introduction of new wetlands.

The memorial gardens, the main visitor facility, carparking areas and road verges will be densely planted with low water use native shrubs and trees known to thrive in local conditions. The plants in these landscapes will emphasise the flora of the Australian bush with a focus on flower colour and beauty appropriate for a memorial park setting.





Wahlenbergia stricta



Eucalyptus rossii



Acacia pycnantha



Angophora costata



Eucalyptus polyanthemos



Eucalyptus melliodora



Eucalyptus moorei



Eucalyptus pulverulenta

Figure 15. Locally occurring trees proposed to be used in SMP