



ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO

REDEVELOPMENT



SUMMARY

The Rockhampton Regional Council is seeking funding for the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo to support a multi-million dollar program of redevelopments throughout the next 10 years.



This project will transform the Botanic Gardens into a botanical collection of regional and national significance, with playground areas, new pavilion structures, a new Fernery, reinvigorated food and retail offering, and will unlock unexplored areas of the Gardens through strategic botanic curation.

The Zoo will shine as a leader in animal exhibitions, conservation and welfare, and will provide exceptional visitor experiences and new animal attractions for locals and non-local visitors to enjoy.

The redevelopment of the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo will culminate in a memorable destination of regional prominence by providing new, exciting and unique experiences in the heart of Central Queensland.

Supporting a **resilient local tourism industry**

Enhancing the **identity of Rockhampton**

Increasing business activity through tourism expenditure

Ensuring **long-term viability of heritage landmarks** for future generations

Providing **diverse employment, training and volunteering opportunities**

Increasing **liveability and social amenity** of the region

Providing **new and unique experiences**

Increasing **visitation length of stay** in the region

CONTENTS

- SUMMARY 2
- OUR ICONIC SITE 4
- OUR VISION 6
- OUR PLAN FOR THE ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO 8
- KEY REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES 10
- DELIVERING REGIONAL BENEFITS 32
- DELIVERY TIMEFRAME 33



OUR ICONIC SITE

As one of the region's most popular destinations, the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo attracts over 300,000 local and tourism visitors per annum. The heritage-listed gardens were established in 1869 and have been a key asset in the region for over 150 years. The Zoo has been operational since 1925, and is set to celebrate its centenary in a few short years.

The Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo is centrally located within Rockhampton and provides unique recreational and botanic experiences.

Situated on 50 hectares with a further 23 hectares available for development, the site includes:

- **A Zoo, home to 150 animals across 60 native and exotic species**
- **Botanical collections and places of respite**
- **Heritage structures**
- **Murray Lagoon boasting an abundance of birdlife**
- **Pathways providing connections between the gardens and the zoo**
- **Food and beverage offering and visitor amenities**
- **Operations and administration buildings**

To support the long-term viability of the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo, a redevelopment is required that will:

- **Develop a consolidated vision for the site**
- **Support long-term operations with refurbishment of key infrastructure assets**
- **Increase visitation and support an increased length of stay in the region**
- **Respect the heritage of the Gardens and ensure continued education for future generations**
- **Increase visitor experience with a focus on interaction**

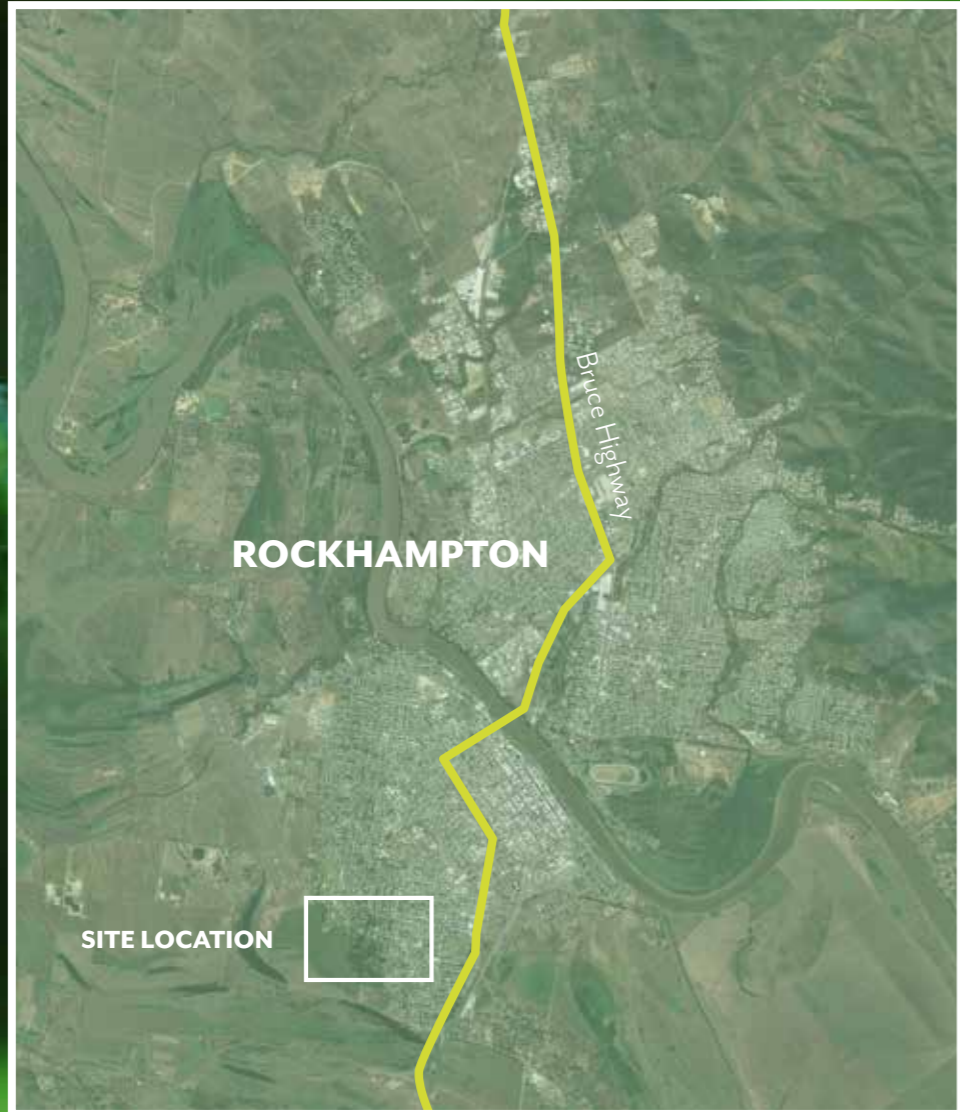


OVER 300,000 VISITORS PER YEAR.





THE ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO IS SITUATED ON 50 HECTARES WITH A FURTHER 23 HECTARES AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT.



OUR VISION

The vision for the redevelopment is to *revitalise, develop and integrate the facilities, infrastructure and operations across the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo, to support its future growth, while focusing on the preservation of its history.*

The rejuvenation of the site will:

- Create a memorable destination
- Bring one of Rockhampton's cultural heritage gems to life
- Increase accessibility and connections internal and external to the site
- Champion botanic and zoological excellence, conservation and education
- Increase useable outdoor spaces for visitors

Our redeveloped site includes:

- New and enhanced animal exhibits
- Educational amphitheatre
- Unique flora and fauna experiences
- Re-establishment of a Fernery structure and collection of significance
- Multi-purpose events space
- New pedestrian path network to unlock the southern zone of the Botanic Gardens
- Nature and animal play experiences
- Night activation
- Live music facilities
- New playground facilities



These images are conceptual and may not reflect the final built structures.



**SUPPORT ITS FUTURE GROWTH,
WHILE FOCUSING ON THE
PRESERVATION OF ITS HISTORY.**



Artist impression of the Zoo entrance and Visitor Hub

OUR PLAN FOR ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO


 1 Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo Visitor Hub

 2 Zoo Operations and Administration Upgrade

 3 Zoo Enclosure Refurbishment Program

 4 Hugo Lassen Fernery and Events Courtyard

 5 Curators House and Curators Cottage Refurbishment

 6 Tea Rooms Amenities and Kitchen Refurbishment (Kiosk)

 7 Tea Rooms Floating Timber Decking




 8 Lagoon Pathway Upgrade and Pavilions

 9 Band Stand Refurbishment

 10 Botanic Gardens Central Spine Pathway

 11 Zoo New Animal Enclosure Program

 12 Zoo Play Area, Secondary Amenities and Educational Amphitheatre

 13 Botanic Gardens Playground Refurbishment

 14 Southern Precinct Expansion



Artist impression of the Tea Rooms



ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO VISITOR HUB

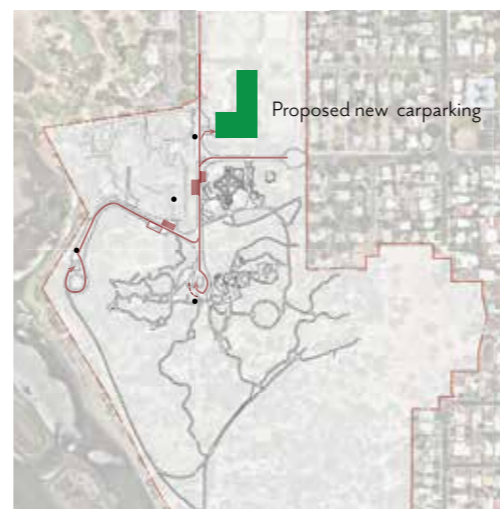
The existing entrance to the Zoo is constrained by nearby trees of significance and animal enclosures, which inhibits the ability to provide a landmark entrance and gathering space.

The Zoo Visitor Hub (Stage 1) addresses this by relocating the Zoo entrance to the south where there is capacity to create a forecourt gathering space. Removal of some on-street parking will create a shared pedestrian and slow vehicle zone.

The Zoo Visitor Hub (Stage 1) project encompasses:

- **A landmark contemporary entrance arbour/structure**
- **Amenities facilities to cater for all-abilities**
- **Multi-purpose indoor building space for use by school and tour groups**
- **Gathering space and courtyard for pre- and post-visitation experiences**
- **Series of high quality outdoor interpretive panels along the walkway from the carpark to the entrance**
- **Upgrade of the existing car park to provide additional parking opportunities**
- **Visitor experience infrastructure such as digital interactive displays, interpretive signage and animal statues for photo opportunities**
- **Hard and soft landscaping elements**
- **Additional car parking**

This project initiates the redevelopment of the broader site and will raise the profile of wildlife tourism in the region, improve public amenity of the site, increase visitation and length of stay in the region, and generate greater local and tourism expenditure.



- 1 All existing parking removed
- 2 Raised pavement to create shared area
- 3 Raised pedestrian crossing
- 4 Vehicle intersection
- 5 Zoo entrance and amenities
- 6 Multipurpose room





ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO VISITOR HUB (STAGE 2)

Stage 2 of the Zoo Visitor Hub extends the shared zone by relocating parking to the periphery of the site, thereby encouraging more pedestrian activity in to the central location. This also provides an opportunity to enhance wayfinding, interpretation and visitor experiences.

Stage 2 provides increased safety benefits for pedestrians through the removal of on-street parking, the inclusion of additional off street parking and the creation of a passive recreational use atmosphere that encourages exploring the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo.



- 1 All existing parking removed
- 2 Raised pavement to create shared area
- 3 Raised Pedestrian crossing
- 4 Vehicle intersection
- 5 Short term parking for pick-up / drop off
- 6 Accessible parking bays



ZOO OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION UPGRADE

The joint operational and administration building within the Zoo is approaching its end-of-life serviceability and its current capacity inhibits any future growth or diversification of the zoological collection. The current facility places considerable strain on the ongoing operations and future planning for the Zoo. Expansion of the zoological collection cannot occur until this infrastructure is in place.

The design and construction of two split (but adjoining) buildings for staff administration and operations will provide the capacity to undertake planned expansion of the Zoo's animal collection.

The administration building includes key elements such as desk and office space, with staff amenities, storage and waste disposal.

The operations building includes a public facing animal food preparation area and enrichment room, along with necessary dry food storage and fridge/freezer areas.



- 1 Zoo operations & food preparation
- 2 Administration
- 3 Holding pens

Entrance building & visitor amenities included in the Zoo Visitor Hub (Stage 1) project





Live. Learn. Conserve.



ZOO ENCLOSURE REFURBISHMENT PROGRAM

The project will provide a number of significant upgrades and refurbishments to existing enclosures at the Zoo. This program will ensure the long-term viability of the enclosures, supporting animal welfare and ensuring the safety of facility staff. The refurbishment of existing enclosures has been prioritised over the construction of any new animal enclosures to ensure that Council maintains current assets before looking to take on additional assets.

Some of the refurbishments to existing enclosures include:

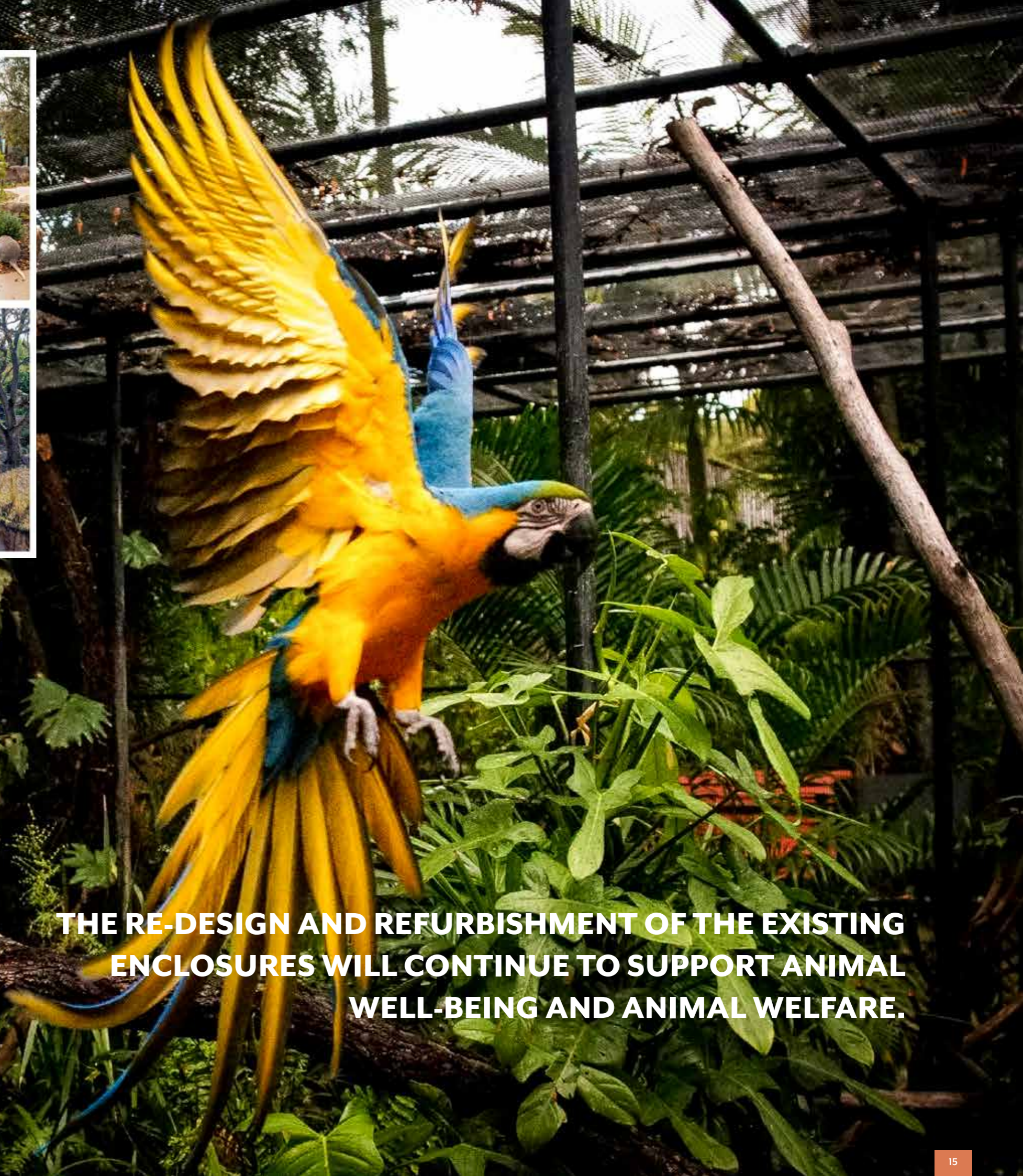
- **Aviary Upgrade:** To prepare it for a walk-through display with small active animals in the tree canopy and ground-dwelling animals below. Renovate the boardwalk to cater for flow-through visitor traffic and install an animal encounter space.
- **Chimpanzee:** Redevelop and expand the current chimpanzee display to provide an additional space for the troop.
- **Arboreal Primates:** Renovate the previous lion-tailed macaque display suitable for animals such as arboreal primates. Introduce climbing and swinging facilities for the new animals to use.
- **Wombat Research and Conservation:** Renovate and open the Wombat Research Facility. Plan and promote more wildlife and community conservation programs that save species in the wild.
- **Wombat:** Refurbishment of the existing wombat enclosure.
- **Kangaroo and Emu:** Redesign the current kangaroo and emu display to allow visitors to walk in the same space as the two species and improve animal encounters.
- **Jungle Python:** Refurbish the old jungle python enclosure adjacent the aviary to provide a new animal exhibit space.

The re-design and refurbishment of the existing enclosures will continue to support animal well-being and animal welfare. The re-design of the enclosures will increase the interactive display between visitors and the animals, increasing the attractiveness of visiting the Zoo and enhancing visitor interest in the collection.





Example character images



THE RE-DESIGN AND REFURBISHMENT OF THE EXISTING ENCLOSURES WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ANIMAL WELL-BEING AND ANIMAL WELFARE.



HUGO LASSEN FERNERY AND EVENTS COURTYARD

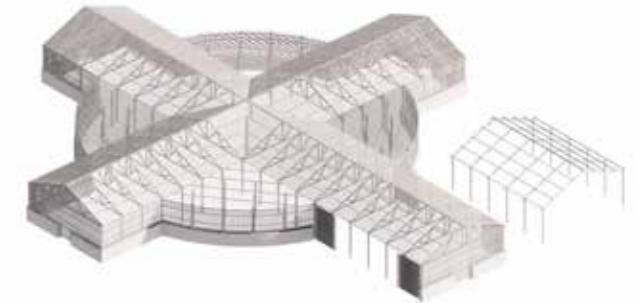
The Hugo Lassen Fernery has a number of significant limitations and is in a state of disrepair, where the facility is not currently open to the public. Access to the Fernery is constrained by the greenhouse, glasshouse and administration building surrounding the site.

The aim of this project is to reconstruct the Fernery and enable it to be experienced by the public once again. The project will improve the view towards the Fernery from site entry points by removing intrusive buildings surrounding the facility.

The project includes the design and construction of:

- **A nationally significant structure to be used as a Fernery. Design elements will ensure access by people with disability.**
- **Internal courtyard with a flexible flat floor to support multiple different uses in the south wing of the Fernery**
- **Refurbished nursery yard with sufficient space for temporary marquee setup**
- **Large tree plantings for shade on the periphery of the courtyard**
- **A catering bump-in facility (with appropriate water/power/gas outlets)**
- **Terraced seating and landscaped area**

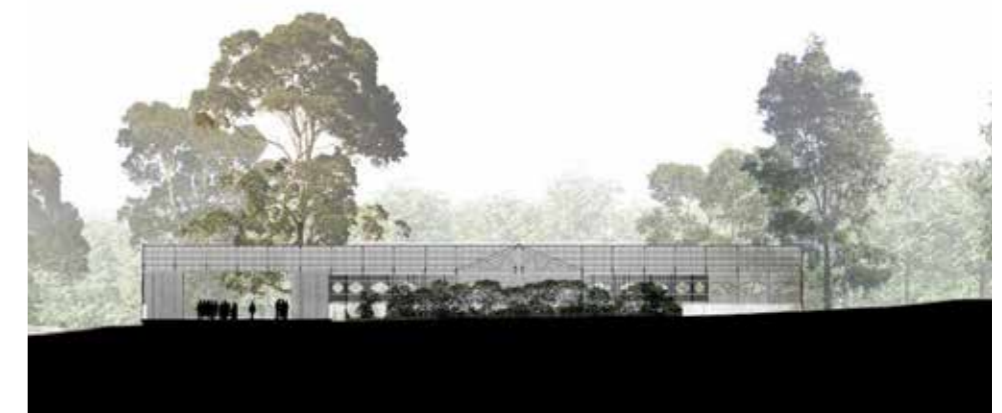
The Fernery will provide an additional event and function space in the region, increasing amenity for local residents. This significant structure will enhance visitor experience, and its architectural significance will provide a key landmark for the region.



- 1 Reconstructed Fernery
- 2 Flexible south wing to allow multiple uses
- 3 External Nursery Yard acts as an 'events platform'



- 1 Open event lawns space
- 2 Open and formalised entrance
- 3 Nursery yard events area
- 4 Terraced landscape area





Artist impression of the Hugo Lassen Fernery and Events Courtyard



CURATORS HOUSE AND CURATORS COTTAGE REFURBISHMENT

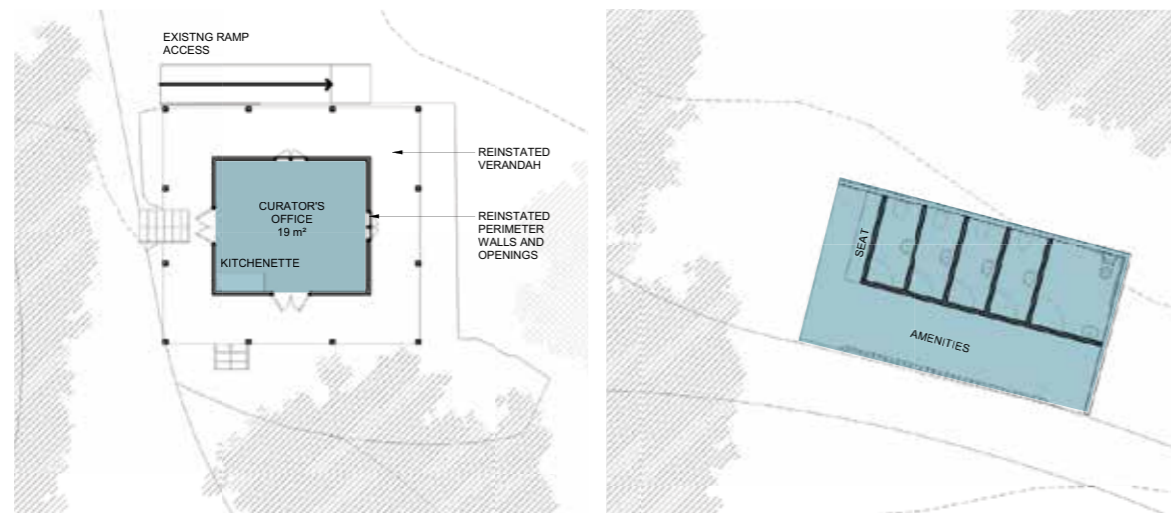
The Curators House and Curators Cottage hold significant heritage status for the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo dating back to the late 1800s.

The Curators House will be restored with original west verandah stair in keeping with the heritage of the structure. The building will be repurposed and used as the 'Friends of the Gardens' facility with reception, office, meeting, exhibition and interpretive display spaces.

The project also includes:

- **The Curators Office – which will be restored to its original function as an office for the Botanic Gardens Curator with an external wrap around veranda**
- **Design and construction of a new visitor amenities to service this area of the site; and the nearby Fernery**

The project will ensure these significant heritage landmarks remain and cement their long-term viability for future generations in the region. The project will also support the study and education of the Botanic Gardens history.



**PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL EVENT
AND FUNCTION SPACE IN THE
REGION, INCREASING AMENITY.
FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS.**





TEA ROOMS AMENITIES AND KITCHEN REFURBISHMENT (KIOSK)

The current Kiosk facility forms a visual barrier to the Banyan forest – home to 150-year-old Banyan Figs that were established at the founding of the Gardens and have now become the key focal point and heart of the Gardens.

The refurbishment will address the site lines, with views to the Fernery, Zoo Entry, Playground, and War Memorial to incorporate pleasing geometry to the Garden's layout. This project will also remove intrusive structures that are currently surrounding the Rotunda.

The project includes:

- **Refurbishment of the Rotunda to its original form. This will open the viewing experiences of the banyan fig area by separating the Kiosk, amenities and kitchen.**
- **A new commercial kitchen facility with appropriate accessible entry paths**
- **A new amenities detached and set-back to reduce visual impact on the Rotunda and allow for access away from dining areas**

This project will also provide a direct connection to the hub/central precinct, which will increase the connectivity between the Botanic Gardens and the Zoo. The Kiosk refurbishment will provide an enhanced dining and entertainment area for locals and visitors, on par with other entertainment and dining experiences in the region.



- 1 Reconstructed Rotunda
- 2 New Kitchen/ Amenities Block





TEA ROOMS FLOATING TIMBER DECKING

The position of the Banyan Figs and their expanding and evolving root structures constrains the space available for dining and visitor seating. As pathways and pavers have buckled over time, the Tea Rooms dining areas have become non-compliant for disability access.

Raised decking will be established around the Kiosk area, which will enhance the dining experience and enable a greater number of events to be hosted. The floating timber deck over the existing kitchen footprint will not only complement the atmosphere of the area, but will also allow for ground/tree root movement.

The project includes:

- Extending useable dining areas
- Consolidate level transitions
- Development of a generous front entrance point

The floating decking located around the Tea Rooms will provide an elevated dining experience, making the most of the surrounding Banyan forest. The combination of flat and tiered dining areas is an innovative solution that will preserve and enhance a valued destination within the Gardens and generate return visitation.





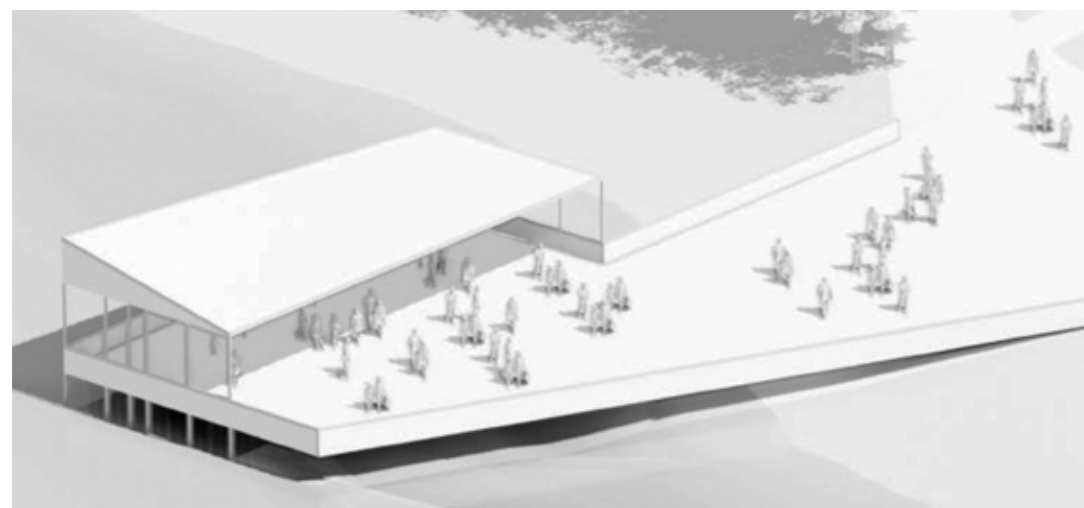
LAGOON PATHWAY UPGRADE (STAGE 1)

Although the lagoon waterfront is a key asset for the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo, the site does not leverage and make the most of this iconic setting. There is a limitation of accessible footpaths to encourage passive recreational use.

The project will support greater integration of precinct within the larger site through new paths linking the south of the site along the Kauri pines. To further activate the precinct, event spaces will be created to provide flexible areas that can accommodate a variety of uses.

The project will include:

- A lagoon edge path to connect the Gardens to the lagoon
- Provide a new link from the path network to the existing bird hide
- A landscape that will enable full pedestrian access to the lagoon edge through a sub-tropical boulevard



LAGOON PATHWAY UPGRADE AND PAVILIONS (STAGE 2)



To further activate the precinct, event spaces will be created to provide flexible areas that can accommodate a variety of uses.

The project will include:

- Small pavilions will incorporate a covered BBQ and entertaining areas with decks joining the waterfront lagoon path that can be raised to accommodate lagoon flooding. Pavilions can be hired for small gatherings and events.
- A large pavilion will include a covered BBQ and entertaining area with decks joining the waterfront lagoon path that can be raised to accommodate lagoon flooding. The pavilion can be hired for large gatherings and events. There will also be an adjoining amenities block.





BAND STAND REFURBISHMENT

There are a limited number of options available for outdoor event spaces within the Rockhampton region. The current use of the band stand area is limited due to the lack of power and level space for the stage and seating.

The project will support the enhancement and increased utilisation of an existing open-air Amphitheater, situated underneath and within a bamboo forest. The project will provide another key location for outdoor events in the Rockhampton region.

Enhancement of the Amphitheater and Band Stand will include the addition of power, a floating deck and general beautification of the area and surrounds. The stage area will be re-configured to the western side to enhance the attractiveness of the site and integrate with the natural environment.

The project will support activation of the lagoon precinct and provide much needed outdoor space for entertainment events and concerts.



Band Stand

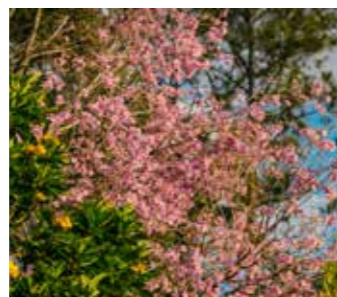
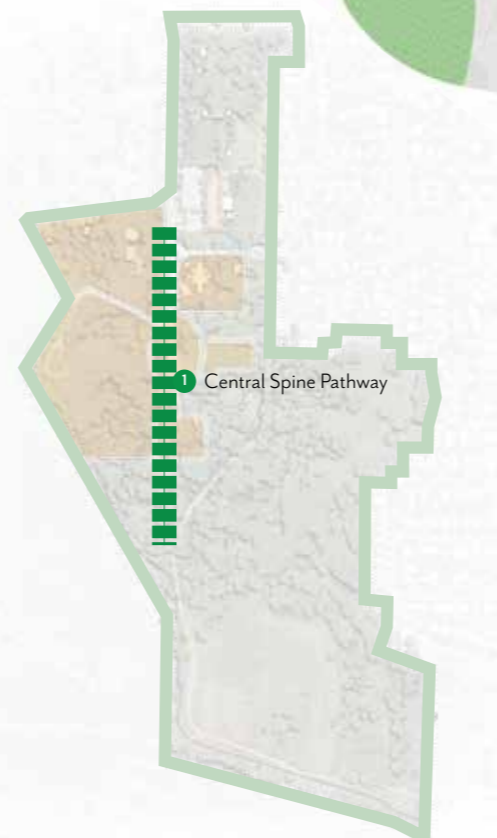


BOTANIC GARDENS CENTRAL SPINE PATHWAY

For the Gardens to be a meaningful and evolving destination, it needs to become a place of many experiences, drawing visitors back time and again to explore. The main destination experiences of the Zoo, Fernery, Dining Precinct, Lagoon and Gardens and open space support a variety of smaller sub-precinct experiences.

This project is pertinent to provide direction and connectivity of the site and ties together the sub-precincts situated within the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo. A balanced mix between direction clarity and relaxed exploration will be made possible which creates opportunities and options for future development of the site.

The Spine Pathway is also integral to spatial organisation of the botanic collection and ordering the variety of surrounding experience destinations. Through the creation of a formal central spine, visitors will be able to navigate the Gardens more easily, allowing for greater exploration of the site and improving access to areas that have been underutilised.





new
**WHO'S WHO
IN THE ZOO?**

● New Animal Enclosures





ZOO NEW ANIMAL ENCLOSURE PROGRAM

The welfare and safety of the Zoo's animals is paramount. A key factor for any zoo is the creation of enclosures that provide suitable environments for animals to live and thrive, as well as being safe for staff and visitors.

Zoos also need to be adaptable to manage changes in their zoological collections and to cater for growth.

The Zoo is embarking on a program to expand and develop its zoological collections to create a richer experience for visitors that is also contributes to Australia's community of exhibiting zoos. To achieve this, the Zoo's animal enclosures will be developed to maximise available space to accommodate growth and provide an engaging experience for visitors.

The new enclosures have been designed to draw visitors further into the site, with the medium-level attractor placed at the entrance, followed by high-level attractors.

The proposed new animal enclosure program includes:

- Design and construction of a medium-level attractor display immediately after entrance to the Zoo. This display would be a naturalistic, open facility for medium sized mammals that are diurnal, active and live in large groups. The new enclosure would include appropriate viewing areas, night houses, keeper areas and holding areas.
- Design and construction of a high-level attractor display after the medium-level attractor to continue drawing visitors into the site. The display would be a naturalistic, open facility with the potential for commercial animal experience opportunities. The new enclosure would include appropriate viewing areas, night houses, keeper areas and holding areas.
- Demolish the current eagle and macaw display and replace them with three adjoining, naturalistic displays with glass viewing areas.
- Demolish the current unoccupied displays near the kangaroo display, and construct a flight display suitable for rehoming Valerrie our eagle.

The new animals will increase the attractiveness of the Zoo, inducing additional visitation from both locals and non-locals. The new exhibits provide visitors the experience to see the animals up close, while providing spacious enclosures for our new animals to live and play.





ZOO PLAY AREA, SECONDARY AMENITIES AND EDUCATIONAL AMPHITHEATRE

The Zoo redevelopment includes the construction of additional visitor amenities and the establishment of a small 'pop-up' café with seating and shade adjacent to the amenities block. A children's play and rest area will also be constructed, adjoining the café.

The Zoo redevelopment will also include the design and construction an educational Amphitheater in the southern corner of the Zoo to support approximately 100 – 150 people.

The seating would be tiered and overlook a centre stage with a backdrop to the Murray Lagoon and is paramount in expanding the educational opportunities for the Zoo.



1 Zoo entrance art piece display



2 Play space with signature play piece



3 Informal tactile play along the pathways / photo opportunities along the pathways



4 Educational amphitheatre





BOTANIC GARDENS PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT

The existing Botanic Gardens Playground is well-beyond its serviceable life and is in need of a refurbishment to bring it in line with community expectations for a modern playground in a Botanic Gardens & Zoo.

The refurbished Botanic Gardens Playground will be comparable in size and offering to that of Kershaw Gardens and will be a premier playground location for the region.

The refurbished Playground will draw influence from both a botanical and zoological aspect and include nature and animal themed play.

The Playground will be located in close proximity to the War Memorial and Tea Rooms and provide a key entertainment area for children.

Critical in the refurbishment of the Playground is the consideration of inclusivity for kids with disabilities of all types.

Stage 1 of the project focuses on revitalisation of the Playground equipment with new nature and animal themed playground facilities along with appropriate considerations for shade and seating areas.

Stage 2 of the project expands on the previous stage with additional nature and animal themed Playground facilities along with additional shade and seating opportunities.



These images are conceptual and may not reflect the final built structures.





SOUTHERN PRECINCT EXPANSION

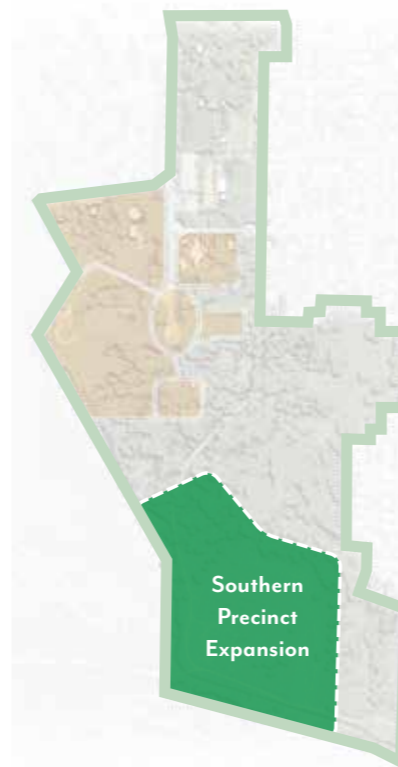
The Southern area of the Botanic Gardens is currently undeveloped and is where the natural expansion of the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo will occur.

Whilst this project is directly outside of the initial ten year program, a preliminary concept has been developed to identify the key moves under this project.

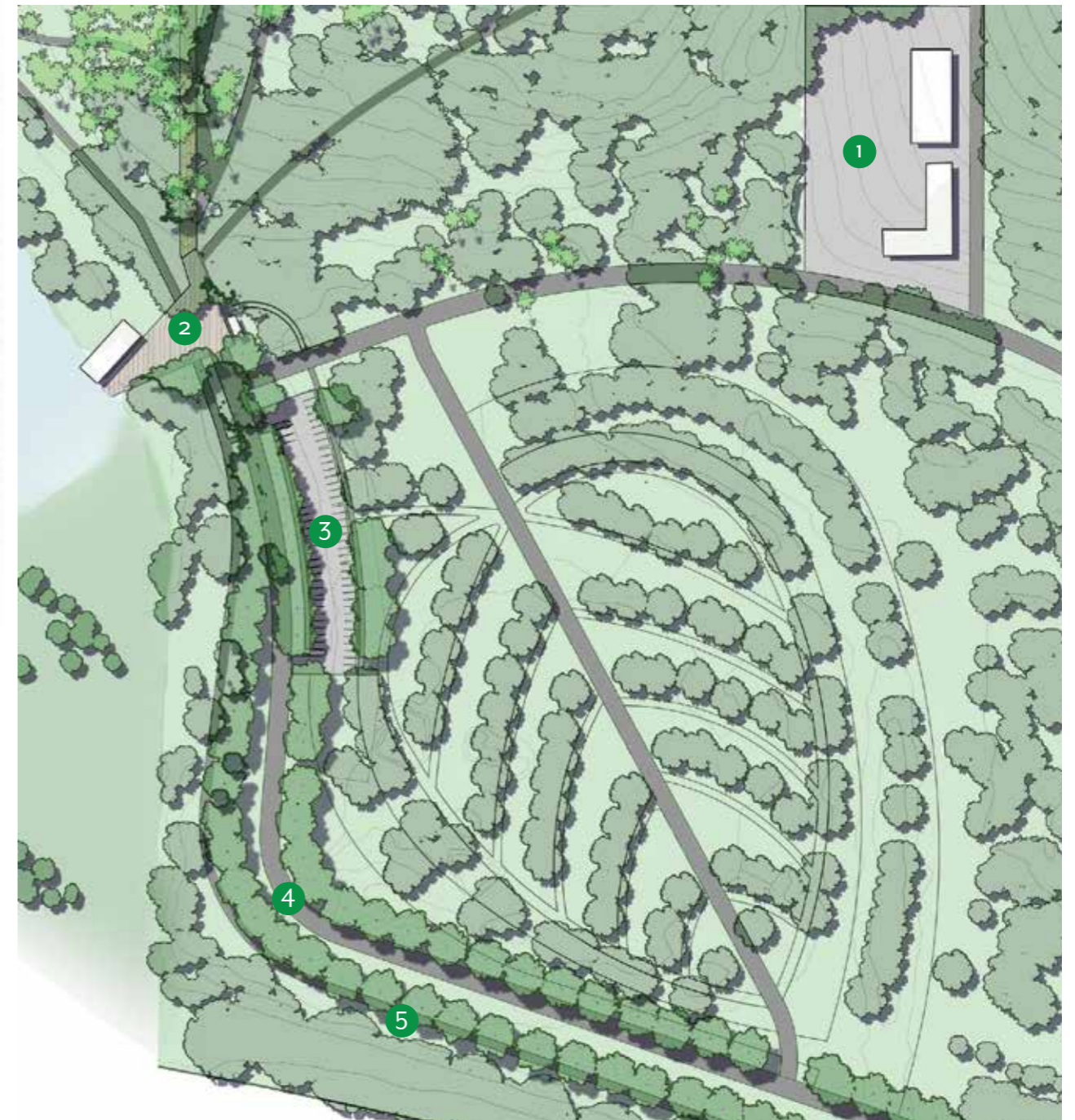
This includes:

- **Third formal entrance into the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo from Blackall Street in the south**
- **New public car park terminating at the Southern end, which connects into the Lagoon Pathways**
- **New entry plaza and amenities to service the southern expansion**
- **Refurbished active transport path adjacent the entrance road**
- **New botanic collection**

Funding opportunities would be sought to advance design development work and refine the concept for the Southern Precinct Expansion.



- 1 New depot
- 2 New entry plaza
- 3 New public car park
- 4 New boulevard access road
- 5 Refurbished active transport path





**RESPECT THE HERITAGE OF THE
GARDENS AND ENSURE
CONTINUED EDUCATION FOR
FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

DELIVERING REGIONAL BENEFITS

- **Enhanced identity of Rockhampton** – By improving public spaces, the redevelopment will ensure the iconic and unique identity of Rockhampton is enhanced and maintained. The addition of new and exciting animals into the Zoo will place Rockhampton on the map as a must see and do experience in the region.
- **Supporting COVID-19 recovery** – This project is crucial to support local jobs for economic recovery efforts in both the short- and long-term.
- **Induced visitation** – By providing an enhanced Gardens and Zoo, the site can generate additional visitor expenditure within the region. Council are aiming to double visitation and increase length of stay within the region.
- **Increased liveability, amenity and community pride** – By improving the visual aesthetic of the area and providing a number of enhanced event spaces for general gatherings and special occasions (weddings), the redevelopment will support an increase in amenity for both locals and visitors.
- **Increased activity in the city centre** – Additional visitation at the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens & Zoo has the potential to increase foot traffic within the CBD, which is only located 3.2km from the site.
- **Environmental Education** – To ensure that visitors walk away with a greater understanding and appreciation of nature.
- **Events space** – The redevelopment will include enhanced and new event spaces that are hireable for gatherings or larger events such as weddings.
- **Social cohesion** – The redevelopment will include a number of event spaces and nature play areas for children to encourage informal socialisation within the community.
- **Environmental benefits** – The redevelopment will support an increase in biodiversity, conservation and awareness of the diversity of our flora and fauna species.
- **Preserving heritage assets** – The redevelopment will ensure the heritage assets remain cemented in the Rockhampton region for future generations. The project will support the long-term viability and subsequent continued education of the history of the Botanic Gardens.



Priority A: Year 1-3



ROCKHAMPTON BOTANIC GARDENS & ZOO VISITOR HUB



ZOO OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION UPGRADE



ZOO ENCLOSURE REFURBISHMENT PROGRAM



BOTANIC GARDENS PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT (STAGE 1)

Priority B: Year 3-7



HUGO LASSEN FERNERY AND EVENTS COURTYARD



TEA ROOMS AMENITIES AND KITCHEN REFURBISHMENT (KIOSK)



LAGOON PATHWAY UPGRADE

Priority C: Year 7-10



BAND STAND REFURBISHMENT



CURATORS HOUSE AND CURATORS COTTAGE REFURBISHMENT



ZOO NEW ANIMAL ENCLOSURE PROGRAM



ZOO PLAY AREA, SECONDARY AMENITIES AND EDUCATIONAL AMPHITHEATRE



BOTANIC GARDENS CENTRAL SPINE PATHWAY



TEA ROOMS FLOATING TIMBER DECKING



BOTANIC GARDENS PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT (STAGE 2)



LAGOON PATHWAY UPGRADE AND PAVILIONS



SOUTHERN PRECINCT EXPANSION

DELIVERY TIMEFRAME

To ensure the success of the redevelopment, projects were grouped into three priority categories to be delivered across a ten-year period.

