

DRAFT

MITCHELL CREEK CONCEPT REPORT

UDLA + **Hames
SHARLEY**



city of
PALMERSTON
'A Place for People'

TABLE 1 EDITION DETAILS

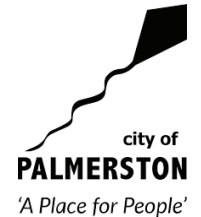
MITCHELL CREEK CONCEPT REPORT	
Title	Concept Report
Production Date	23rd September 2025
Prepared By	UDLA
Author	Tessa Bradbury/Shea Hatch
Status	Final
UDLA Project Code	MITCCP

TABLE 2 DOCUMENT REGISTER

DOCUMENT REGISTER			
Version	Date	Amendments	Prepared By
DRAFT	18/07/25	Issued to City of Palmerston for feedback.	TB/SH
DRAFT	18/07/25	Issued to City of Palmerston for feedback.	TB/SH
FINAL	08/08/25	Rev A	TB/SH
FINAL	10/09/25	Rev B	TB/SH
FINAL	23/09/25	Rev C	TB/SH
FINAL	23/10/25	Rev D	TB/SH
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We acknowledge the Larrakia people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Mitchell Creek project site stands today. We pay respect to the Larrakia people, and Elders both past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has and will ensure the continuation of cultural and traditional practices.

1.0 INTRODUCTION



PROJECT INTRODUCTION

UDLA has been engaged to lead the concept for the transformation of the Mitchell Creek project site into a vibrant and accessible bushland reserve for the City of Palmerston. This document presents a concept that supports sustainable development, environmental stewardship, and meaningful community use of the Mitchell Creek project site.

The concept establishes a long-term vision for the catchment, proposing a phased development approach that balances recreational infrastructure with ecological and conservation priorities. It considers the broader urban and environmental context, including surrounding developments, proposed infrastructure upgrades, and the anticipated transfer of land management responsibilities from Crown Lands to the City of Palmerston.

Central to the approach are the environmental values of the area. The plan's primary strategy is to improve access and amenity to the project site, which is supported by environmental management through vegetation preservation and weed control.

Extensive stakeholder engagement has underpinned the concept planning process. Input from community members, government agencies, and environmental stakeholders has helped shape the vision, ensuring alignment with the City of Palmerston's Community Plan and long-term aspirations for the area.



SITE APPRECIATION

SITE:

The project site encompasses land within the suburbs of Johnston (Lots 4250) and Zuccoli (Lots 4251 and 4250). Adjacent areas include essential services infrastructure, planned housing developments, public open spaces, as well as a planned duplication of Roystonea Avenue on the reserves western border.

The wider Mitchell Creek catchment area extends to 1,573 hectares and 20 km in length including tributaries. It forms a natural drainage system flowing from the Palmerston Escarpment east of the City Centre, north of the Stuart Highway, and into the Elizabeth River.

The following environmental values has been identified via onsite investigations, community and stakeholder engagement and based on existing reporting including the Friends of Mitchell Creek Catchment Natural Resource Management Plan (2012) & Mitchell Creek Catchment Management Plan City of Palmerston (2022)

ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES:

Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity

- Mitchell Creek project site provides habitat diversity due to its structure spanning drier uplands to wetter lowlands, forming an important ecological corridor.
- While no current records confirm the presence of threatened species, past observations identified potential vulnerable flora, including *Typhonium praetermissum*.

Remnant Vegetation

- Significant patches of remnant native vegetation including Eucalyptus and Pandanus Communities remain.
- These patches provide important ecosystem functions and wildlife habitat.

Amenity and Recreational Value

- The creek corridor currently supports limited informal passive recreation (walking, cycling, birdwatching).

Cultural and Community Significance

- The area holds value for Traditional Owners (Larrakia) and is supported by a community-based stewardship network through organisations.

Water Quality and Hydrological Function

- The catchment contributes freshwater flow into the Elizabeth River and Darwin Harbour.
- It plays a role in local flood mitigation and supports riparian health, though urban development has significantly degraded these functions.



BIODIVERSITY HABITAT



NATIVE BIRD LIFE

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

SITE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The opportunities and constraints have been identified through a combination of onsite field studies, existing reports, site appreciation study and community/ stakeholder engagement.

These findings provide critical insight into the site's environmental value and ecological characteristics, existing infrastructure, and community use/ future use. Together, they form the foundation for the emerging concept and future project stages by highlighting areas of potential improvement and key challenges that must be addressed to ensure a balanced, sustainable, and accessible outcome.

OPPORTUNITIES

Ecological Restoration and Protection

- Restore degraded riparian and upland zones impacted by weeds, erosion, and fire.
- Protect and retain remnant vegetation.
- Enhance habitat complexity and structural diversity in degraded areas.
- Manage and rehabilitate important habitat zones for fauna (e.g. nesting trees, wetlands).

Biodiversity Enhancement

- Revegetate degraded areas and close unwanted access tracks.

Cultural and Community Engagement

- Potential to engage with Traditional Owners regarding cultural heritage, educational way finding and art.

- Build on existing community stewardship groups.

Enhanced Access

- Rationalise and enhance existing tracks for defined community access.
- Improve signage and entry points.
- Provide pedestrian connections to existing amenities such as surrounding public open space, schools, and shops.
- Provide safe road crossing points for improved pedestrian connectivity.

Water Management and Stormwater Improvement

- Improve storm water management. Consider interventions to enhance natural flood mitigation and water quality (e.g. biofiltration, swales, erosion control).

Recreation and Amenity

- Develop low-impact recreational infrastructure (walking tracks, bird hides, cycle paths) aligned with ecological goals.
- Expand passive recreation to increase community use.

Creekline

- Potential to make the creek edge physically or visually accessible for recreational activities and improved connection to nature (e.g. via fishing platforms or lookouts).

CONSTRAINTS

Environmental Degradation

- Invasive weed management.

- Feral animals management.

Hydrological and Flooding Issues

- Areas below 11m elevation maybe considered prone to inundation during wet season and require careful design considerations.
- Presence of aging, unused or outdated stormwater infrastructure needs reviewing and rationalising with WSUD methods of water management.

Urban Development Pressures

- Continued land clearing and infrastructure expansion (e.g. Roystonea Avenue duplication) fragment habitats.
- Encroachment reduces the ecological buffer and increases edge effects on remnant patches.

Access












- Restrict unwanted vehicle access to prevent erosion, dumping, and habitat degradation.
- Busy four-lane roads (Roystonea and Lambrick Avenue) limit pedestrian connectivity, improve pedestrian crossing safety to the site.
- Existing topography is steep at the southern end of the site, proposed access should aim to ease grade transitions and prevent wash-out risks.

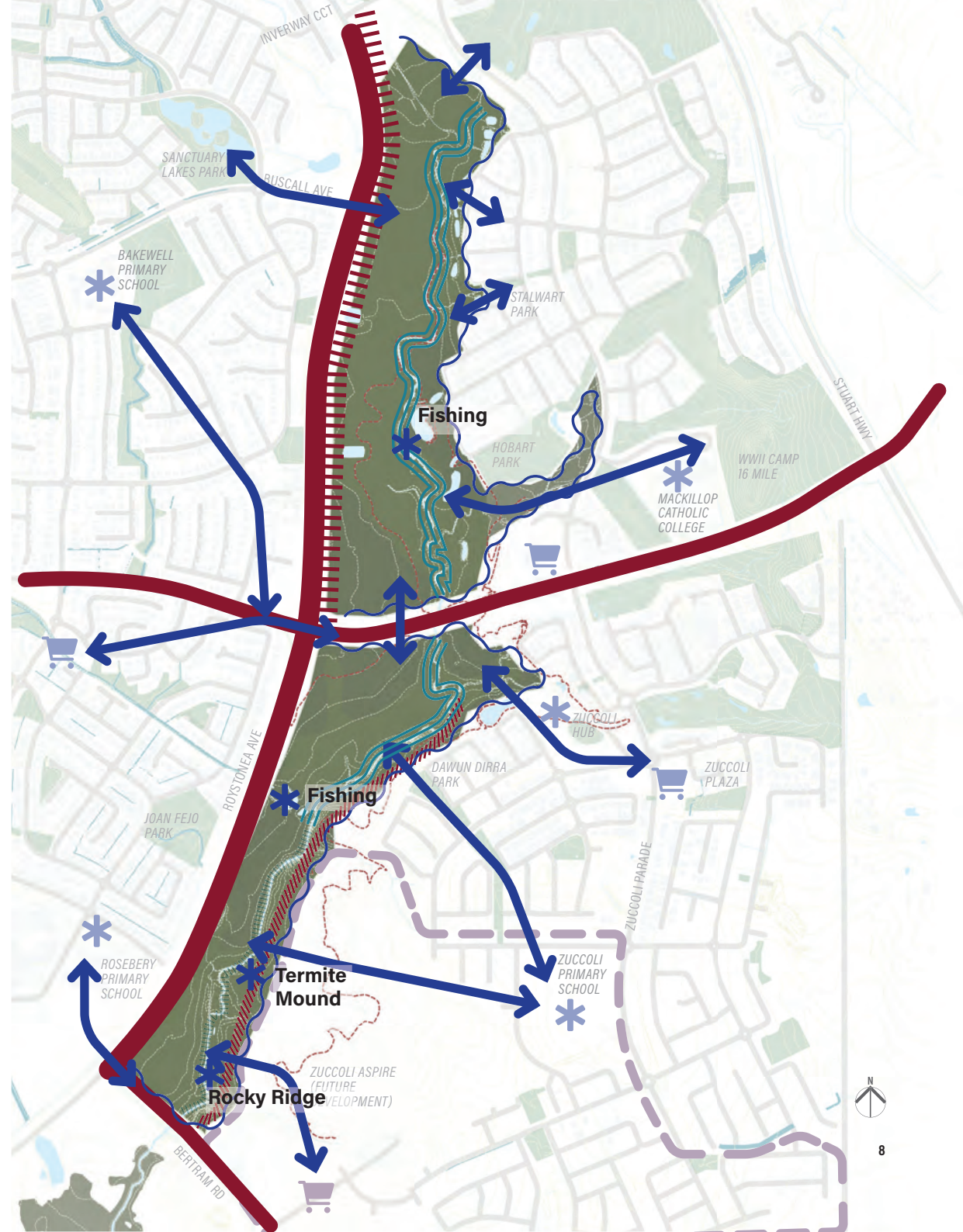
Limited Community Capacity and Engagement

- Low public awareness of the project site.
- Unmanaged access legal and physical access barriers may complicate restoration or recreational planning.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

KEY

-  Contours
-  Busy road & restricted pedestrian crossings
-  Roystonea Ave Widening
-  Steep level changes
-  11m Contour
-  Welcome edges
-  Accessible Creekline
-  Creekline less accessible
-  Points of interest
-  Future Development
-  Future Connections



2.0 ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



WHAT WE HEARD

As part of the development of the Mitchell Creek concept report, a two-stage engagement process was undertaken by UDLA and Hames Sharley to ensure the future vision for the project site is informed by local knowledge, community values, and stakeholder priorities. This process involved targeted consultation with residents, developers, Council, community groups, and government agencies.

Engagement Approach

The engagement process, outlined in the Engagement Report (refer Appendix C), was structured into two rounds:

Round 1 (April 2025) focused on information gathering and vision-setting through workshops and interviews. Round 2 (June 2025) tested and refined the concept through open discussions and a public pop-up session.

Key Insights

Through both rounds, participants expressed a strong connection to the project site and a shared preference for a nature-focused, low-intervention approach.

Priorities included:

- Improved access: enhanced path networks, creek crossings, and signage.
- Conservation and management: weed and fire control, erosion mitigation, and long-term maintenance responsibilities.
- Community connection: cultural interpretation, recreational use (e.g., walking, cycling, fishing), and engagement with land care.

Community Priorities

- Maintain and protect the natural bushland character.
- Provide accessible, safe, and shaded paths.
- Introduce low-key infrastructure such as seating, picnic nodes, bird hides, and interpretive signage.
- Ensure clear wayfinding and improve the visibility of the project site to residents beyond adjacent neighbourhoods.

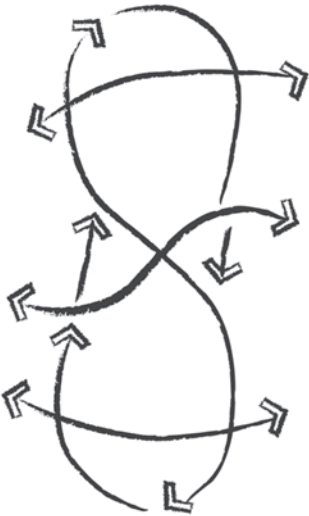
The Engagement Report (refer Appendix C) provides detailed outcomes from each consultation event and serves as a critical input into the concept development. It ensures the concept is not only technically sound but also locally relevant and supported by those who use and care for the project site.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

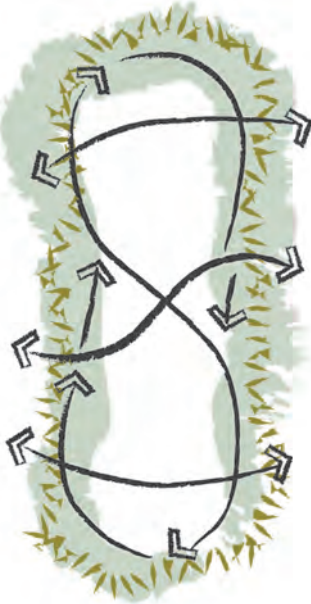


PROJECT OBJECTIVES

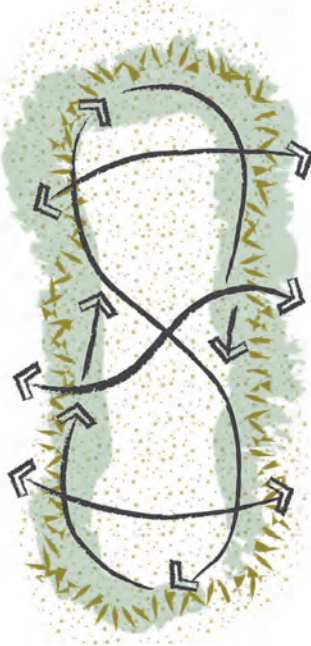
The project Objectives were developed from the first round of engagement workshops with key stakeholders and the community. **The overarching vision is enhancing the accessibility and amenity for all users while celebrating and restoring the rich ecological value of the site.** The following project drivers stem from this.



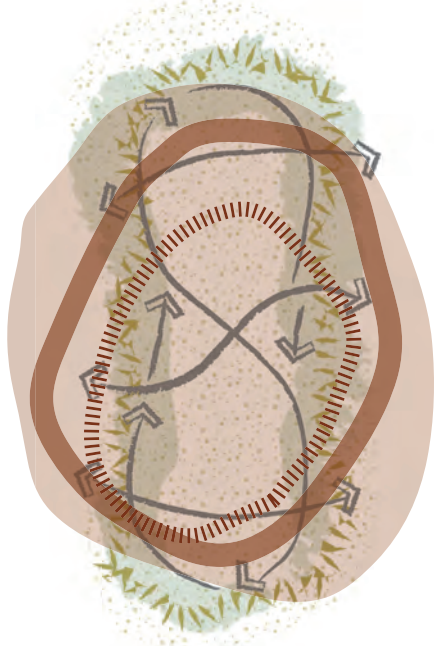
CONNECTED TRAIL NETWORK



WELCOMING ENTRY POINTS



ACTIVE MAINTENANCE



CONTINUE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT & LOCAL COMMUNITY

MATERIALS PALETTE

The materials palette has been carefully selected to respond to the local climate, landscape character, and functional requirements. Emphasising durability and low maintenance, the palette features robust materials with a long lifespan, capable of withstanding the region's harsh weather conditions.

The main path network consists of compacted gravel, providing a natural and cost-effective surface, while key walking loops and amenity nodes are treated with in-situ concrete to improve accessibility and comfort.

Metal boardwalks are introduced at creek crossings and low-lying areas prone to inundation, offering a resilient solution that ensures year-round connectivity.

Locally sourced stone boulders are strategically placed to support water runoff management, provide informal seating opportunities, and act as a barrier to deter unauthorised vehicle access, all while reflecting the local geological character.

The materials palette is intended to be refined as the design develops in future stages.



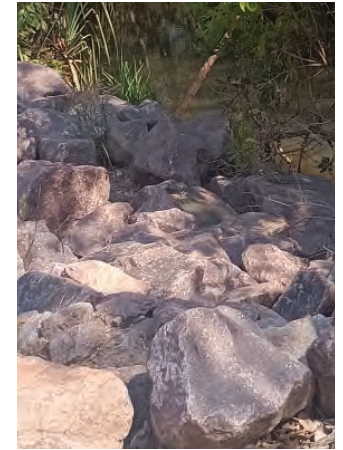
AMENITY NODES - EXPOSED CONCRETE



STANDARD PATHS - COMPACTED GRAVEL



CREEK CROSSING OR AREAS OF INUNDATION - STEEL GRATE DECKING



BOULDERS - RUN OFF MANAGEMENT



METAL DECK STRUCTURE IN AREAS OF INUNDATION



NATURAL & SEAMLESS INTEGRATION OF MATERIALS

APPROACH TO AMENITY

The approach to amenity adopts a 'tread lightly' philosophy, providing additional amenity to the community while minimising impact on the landscape so as not to detract from the incredible natural environment.

The amenity and furniture palette for this project prioritises durability, low maintenance, and contextual sensitivity to Palmerston's harsh climatic conditions. Elements have been selected for their robust performance and alignment with local materials and the character of the site.

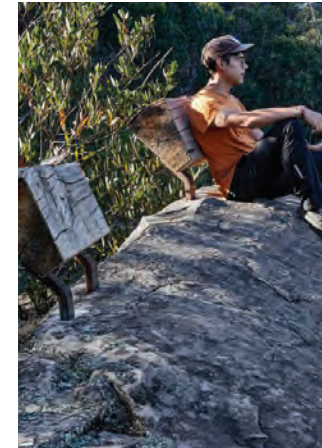
Steel shelters provide essential shade and rain protection, with finishes that withstand high UV exposure and heavy rainfall.

Informal boulder seating offers a playful and naturalistic option, while concrete wall seating with integrated backs and armrests enhances comfort and accessibility in key locations.

Amenity nodes are thoughtfully considered to include picnic tables, water tap points, metal deck picnic platforms, and accessible lookout points. Additional features such as bird hides and fishing platforms encourage a range of recreational uses while reinforcing the connection to the surrounding landscape.



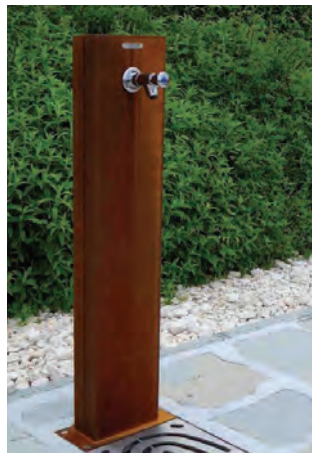
SHELTERS - STEEL



SEATING - BOULDER SEATING



SEATING - RAMMED EARTH



WATER POINT



REST POINTS - PICNIC PLATFORMS



AMENITY NODES - LOOK OUT POINTS, CREEK FISHING PLATFORMS, PICNIC SPOTS

APPROACH TO WAYFINDING, SIGNAGE & ART

The approach to wayfinding, signage, and art for this project is grounded in creating a cohesive, intuitive, and engaging experience that respects and enhances the natural beauty of the site.

A clear hierarchy of major and minor directional signage will guide visitors through the site, while remaining subtle and sympathetic to the landscape. Educational signage focused on the local flora and fauna will be strategically located to encourage learning and appreciation of the natural environment.

Wayfinding and artistic elements will be thoughtfully integrated into amenities—such as paving treatments, shelters, seating, and sculptural features within the bushland—ensuring they feel embedded rather than imposed. These elements will be designed to blend seamlessly with the surrounding landscape, avoiding visual clutter and reinforcing a sense of place.

Future stages of the project should prioritise collaboration with Larrakia Traditional Owners and local artists to develop culturally meaningful signage, art, and interpretive elements that reflect and celebrate the site's cultural and ecological significance.



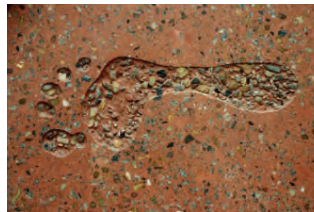
SHELTER ART OPPORTUNITIES



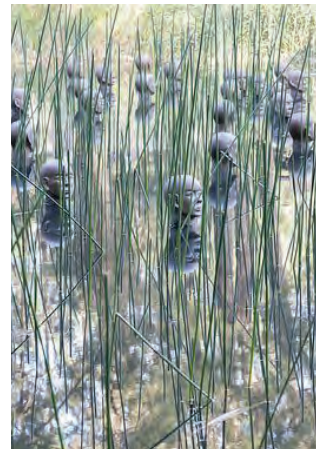
MAJOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNS



MINOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNS



ART IN THE GROUND PLANE



SCULPTURE INTEGRATED WITH THE LANDSCAPE



ART & WAYFINDING INTEGRATION



ART & EDUCATIONAL WAYFINDING

4.0 CONCEPT PLAN
















CONCEPT RESPONSE

The following outlines how site appreciation, opportunities and constraints, and community engagement have informed the concept development:

- The placement of paths and amenities avoids sensitive areas, retains significant native plant communities, and minimises additional vegetation removal to support habitat corridors.
- The trail concept primarily refines and enhances existing tracks to prevent further vegetation and habitat loss.
- Particular attention has been given to the site's topography, with all land below the 11m contour identified as inundation prone during the wet season. As a result, infrastructure has been carefully located to avoid low-lying areas susceptible to washout where possible. Where this isn't possible, raised boardwalk infrastructure should be considered.
- Seasonally inundated areas are left undeveloped or enhanced as passive open space, seasonal wet areas, or biodiversity-focused WSUD nodes. This approach minimises impact and ensures the long-term durability of recreational assets.
- A strong understanding of the surrounding urban context has also informed the concept. The northern section of the site adjoins more established suburbs, where older infrastructure and limited amenity present an opportunity for upgrades and improved connectivity. In contrast, the southern end is undergoing continued development, including new infrastructure and emerging residential areas, particularly around Zuccoli. The approach responds by creating a connected open space network that links key community destinations such as schools, parks, the WWII Camp Walk, suburban centres, and the new Zuccoli hub.
- Pathways are aligned to integrate with existing cycle networks, capitalise on current road crossing points, and connect with nearby destinations like Sanctuary Lakes—ensuring the site functions as a central and accessible green corridor for the broader Palmerston community.
- Emphasis in the concept is placed on management (fire, weeds, and feral animals) and vegetation restoration to rehabilitate degraded remnant vegetation affected by weeds, unauthorised vehicle access, erosion, and fire.
- Clear wayfinding is proposed to denote future entry points and provide navigation within the future reserve, with opportunities to communicate environmental knowledge of the catchment.
- Low-impact recreational uses and infrastructure (walking tracks, bird hides, cycle paths) are proposed for the future reserve, aligned with the ecological values of the site. Which align with the community's aspirational uses.
- Safe and targeted creek edge access points (both physical and visual) will be created for passive recreation, helping to prevent unauthorised access and erosion.
- A natural buffer will be re-established between the busy four-lane roads (Roystonea and Lambrick Avenues) to facilitate pedestrian connectivity and provide safe crossing points.
- As the southern end of the site features steep topography, proposed access should aim to ease grade transitions and mitigate washout risks.

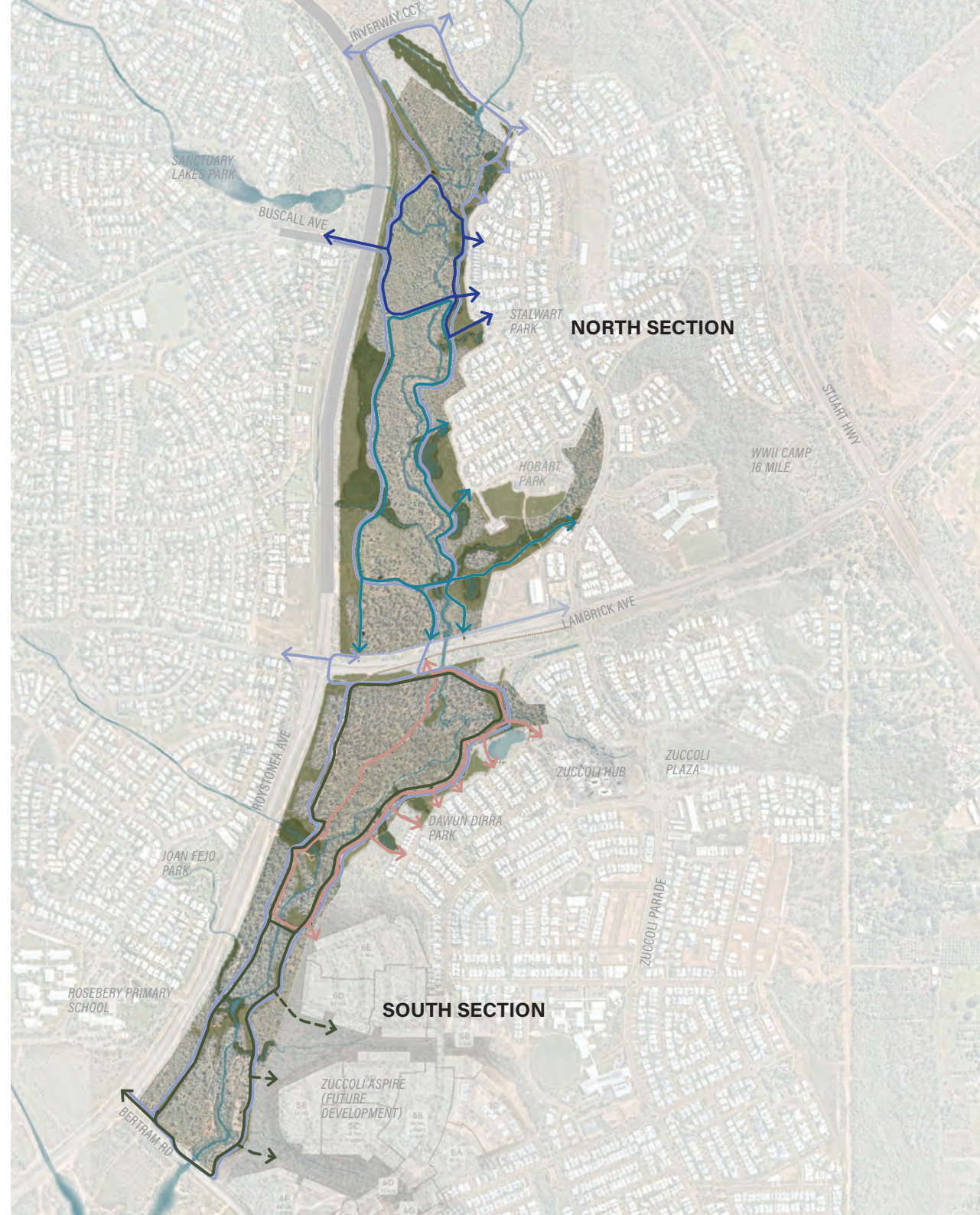
CONCEPT PLAN

KEY

-  Contours
-  Roystonea Avenue Duplication
-  Riparian Revegetation Area
-  Revegetation Area
-  Proposed Path
-  Amenity Node
-  Creek/Open Drain/ Drainage Basin
-  Boardwalk or Bridge Creek Crossing
-  Mitchell Creek Loop
-  Sculpture Trail
-  Natural Trail
-  Water Trail
-  Playful Trail















UDLA – MITCHELL CREEK CONCEPT REPORT



CONCEPT PLAN NORTHERN SECTION

KEY













- A** Minor Entry Node
- B** Major Entry Node
- C** Picnic Area
- D** Lookout
- E** Rest Point
- F** Fishing Platform
- G** Bird Hide
- H** Rest Point with Shelter
-  Major Wayfinding Signage
-  Minor Wayfinding Signage
-  Roystonea Avenue duplication
-  Potential New Connections with Future Development
-  Existing Connections
-  Proposed Crossing Points
-  Contours
-  Riparian Vegetation Area
-  Revegetation Area
-  Proposed Path
-  Amenity Node
-  Creek/Open Drain/ Drainage Basin
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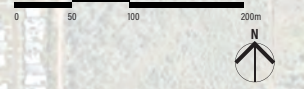


CONCEPT PLAN SOUTHERN SECTION

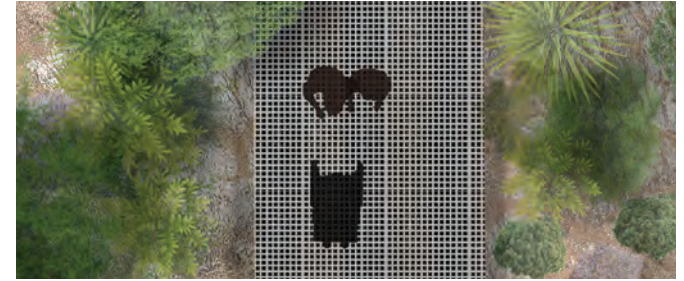
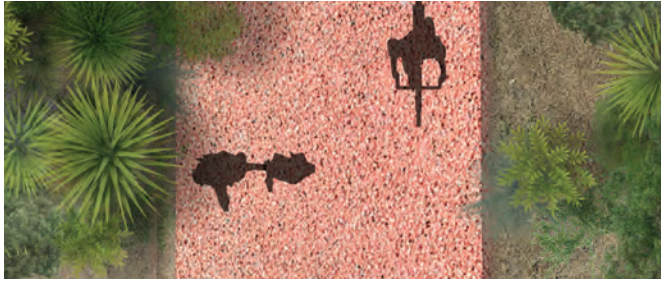


KEY

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PATHS



PRIMARY PATH

Material: Compacted gravel

Width: 2.5m

Use/Purpose: Walking, cycling, running, maintenance access

SECONDARY PATH

Material: Concrete

Width: 1.8m

Use/Purpose: Walking, cycling, running, universal access.

SECONDARY PATH BOARDWALK

Material: Metal grate boardwalk

Width: 2.5 or 1.8m

Use/Purpose: Walking, cycling, running.

ENTRY POINTS

PRIMARY ENTRY NODE

Location: Major entry points to the Mitchell Creek project site, located at key links to existing or future public open space, crossing points and town centre locations.

Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Function:

- Major access point to the site
- Meeting point
- Wayfinding point
- Rest point

Amenity: Primary entry nodes to include:

- Shelter structure
- Rubbish bin
- Water point
- Seating
- Major wayfinding signage
- Art opportunity



PRIMARY ENTRY NODE

ENTRY POINTS

SECONDARY ENTRY NODE

Location: Secondary entry points to the Mitchell Creek project site, located at to existing crossing points and streets interfaces.

Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Function:

- Minor access point to the site
- Wayfinding point
- Rest point

Amenity: Secondary entry nodes to include:

- Seating
- Major wayfinding signage
- Art opportunity



SECONDARY ENTRY NODE

SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING

MAJOR WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Location: Major & minor entry nodes, all entry points and rest points.

Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Content:

- Trail map
- Locating points of interest and amenity
- Wider surrounding connections
- Kms/times to key destinations



MINOR WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Location: Located at path crossroads and creek crossings.

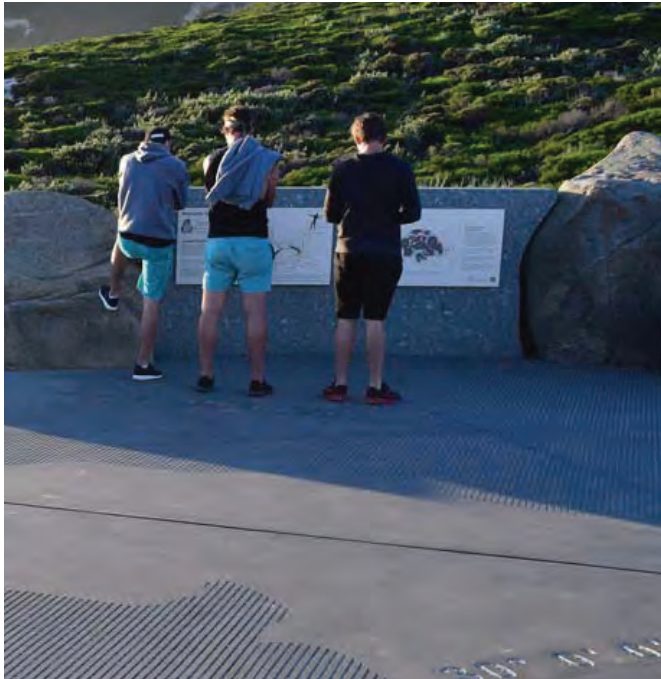
Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Content:

- Directional signage
- Kms to next destination
- Walking loop identification



SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING



EDUCATIONAL SIGNAGE

Location: Located at points of interest along the trail or amenity nodes.

Content: Signage could include information about local flora and fauna, including pests, within signage strategy to raise awareness of visitors, educate on cultural uses of flora and fauna and support positive behavioural changes. Potential to develop further with Traditional Owners, artists or local contractors.



ART & WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Location/Content: Potential to develop further with Traditional Owners, artists or local contractors.



AMENITY

FISHING PLATFORM

Location: Located at existing fishing spots identified through community engagement.

Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Function:

- Safe access to water's edge
- Formal point to visually connect with the creek
- Rest point

Amenity:

- Informal seating
- Educational way finding
- Art opportunity



FISHING PLATFORM

AMENITY

PICNIC AREA

Location: Located at points of interest (creek water whole, termite mound, natural viewpoint etc.).

Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Function:

- Picnic area
- Rest point

Amenity:

- Seating
- Picnic table
- Educational way finding



PICNIC AREA

AMENITY

BIRD HIDE/SHELTER

Location: Located within area of mature tall trees and near water bodies to capture a variety of bird life.

Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Function:

- Bird watching
- Shelter
- Rest point

Amenity:

- Seating
- Bird watching hide
- Educational signage
- Art opportunity



BIRD HIDE/SHELTER

AMENITY

LOOK OUT

Location: Located at natural highpoint.
Refer to the concept plan for proposed locations.

Function:

- Lookout
- Rest point

Amenity:

- Seating
- Educational signage
- Art opportunity



LOOK OUT

TRAIL LOOPS NORTHERN SECTION

The five walking loops each offer a distinct experience, drawing on the site's natural and built features to express their themes. Consistent amenities, supported by interpretive signage, art and small installations, enhance each trail's character. Clearly defined routes invite exploration, guiding visitors through varied, purposeful experiences that encourage greater use of the Creek area.

Water Trail

Focuses on the seasonal creek system and wetland habitats, promoting ecological awareness. Located where the waterline widens out and is more visually accessible.

Interpretive opportunities:

- Water birds and animals
- Seasonal changes
- Connection to broader water systems across Palmerston

Key Amenity: Bird Hides and Fishing Platforms

Playful Trail

A shorter link that weaves through interactive spaces for families and children, blending recreation with discovery. Located close to residential areas, schools and with connection to recreational parks.

Interpretive Opportunities:

- Animal Movements
- Bush Crafts
- Building Bush Shelters

Key Amenity: Picnic Spots and Rest Points



TRAIL LOOPS SOUTHERN SECTION

Sculpture Trail

Features integrated public art that celebrates local culture and environment in an area highly accessible to the local community and connected to amenity to support broader visitation.

Interpretive opportunities:

- Fishing / Historical Recollections of Fishing on Site
- Fauna and Flora of the Site
- Seasonal Changes

Key Amenity: Fishing Platform and Rest Points

Natural Trail

Immerses visitors in native bushland, offering a quieter, more reflective experience reflective of the landscape which changes quiet significantly in this location to rock outcrops and lower vegetation.

Interpretive opportunities:

- Landscape Changes Across the Site
- Connection to the River

Key Amenity: Lookout and Rest Points

Mitchell Creek Loop

Provides a 7.5km scenic journey along the creek line, highlighting its rich biodiversity, perfect for trail running and biking. Connects most amenity on site for a full site experience.

1. Simple Trail Markers can highlight routes as required.



5.0 NEXT STEPS

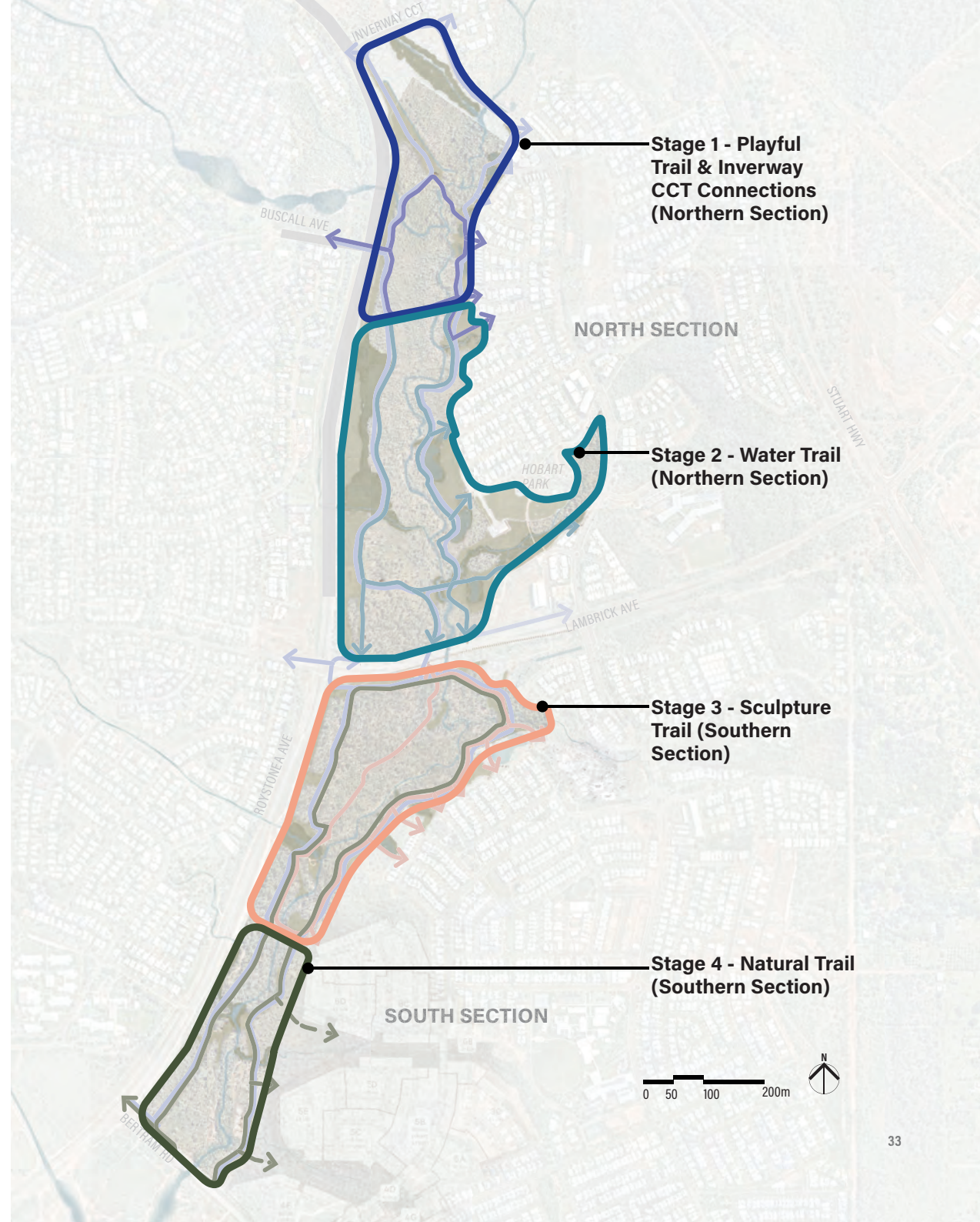


APPROACH TO STAGING

The project can be delivered in four staged phases to effectively manage budgets and ensure alignment with future development in the southern areas. Given the vast scale, the rollout can occur over several years, coordinated with council grants, funding opportunities, and budget allocations. The proposed stages align with trail loops, thereby creating succinct projects for each stage.

Each stage needs to consider the following:

- Legislative approvals
- Design Development
- Ongoing maintenance and management









REVEGETATION STRATEGY

The revegetation strategy should prioritise weed control, closure and restoration of unwanted tracks, rehabilitation of degraded wetlands/waterways, and suburban bush interfaces where weed species have spread.

This should be developed further in future design phases.

KEY

-  Riparian Revegetation Area
-  Revegetation Area
-  Proposed Path
-  Amenity Node
-  Creek/Open Drain/ Drainage Basin
-  Boardwalk or Bridge Creek Crossing



MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

While most elements of the concept will be developed further through future design development stages. The items below highlight management and operational items which could support the design development process.

ITEM	POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTIONS
<p>Vehicle Movement Vehicle access onsite is a key consideration for management. Current uncontrolled access poses significant safety risks to users, along with ongoing degradation of vegetation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicle access should be restricted to maintenance access only.
<p>Fire Management Use the best available knowledge (including Indigenous burning methods) to plan and implement strategic and adaptive fire management programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with NTFRS, NTG, Traditional Owners and City of Palmerston to establish Implement a sustainable fire management plan for the area.
<p>Naming & Use of Language Whilst Mitchell is an established name for the site, consideration should be given to renaming/dual naming of the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop dual naming with City of Palmerston and Traditional Owners in Wayfinding & Signage Design
<p>Litter and Waste Refuse Illegal dumping and litter impacts visitor experience and negatively impacts native flora, fauna and water quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a Waste Management Plan that considers sustainable management of waste and prevents illegal dumping.
<p>Vegetation and Weed Management Management of vegetation and weeds should be based on the Mitchell Creek Catchment Management Plan City of Palmerston (2022). It should strategically enhance sightlines, support passive surveillance, ecology, and improve the overall amenity and safety of trail entrances and surrounding paths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and implement a landscape & revegetation management plan.
<p>Risk Assessment & Safety in Design As the use and function of the site is proposed to change, this will introduce more public use and potential risks associated with this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Risk Assessment based on future site uses.
<p>Water Monitoring, Drainage & Stormwater Pollution/contamination of Mitchell Creek project site should be monitored. Existing drainage and stormwater infrastructure needs to be assessed to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets City of Palmerston standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an assessment of the existing drainage and stormwater infrastructure. Undertake baseline water quality testing.

7.0 APPENDICES

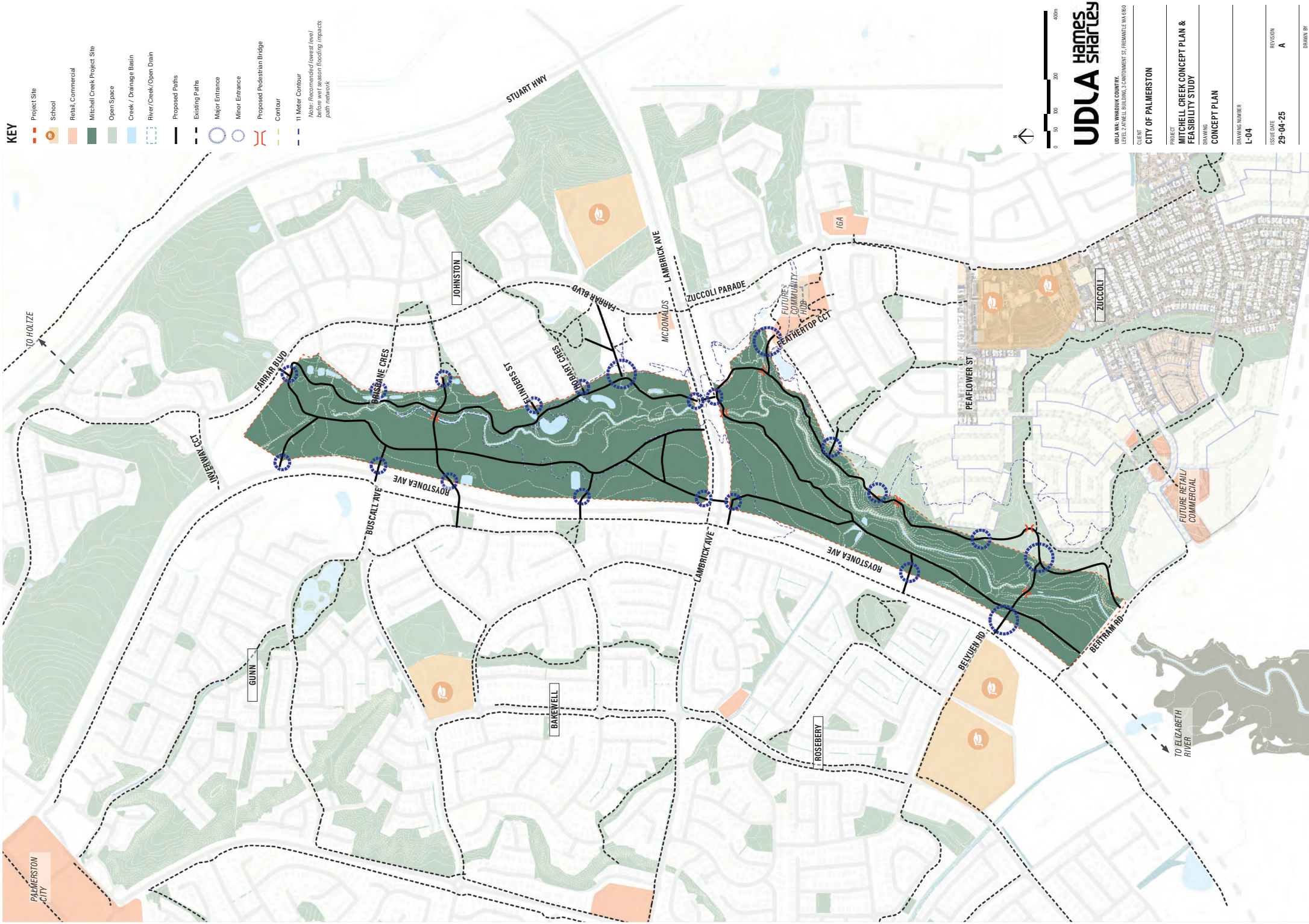


APPENDIX A.

KEY

- Project Site
- School
- Retail, Commercial
- Mitchell Creek Project Site
- Open Space
- Creek / Drainage Basin
- River/Creek/Open Drain
- Proposed Paths
- Existing Paths
- Major Entrance
- Minor Entrance
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
- Contour
- 11 Meter Contour

Note: Recommended lowest level before wet season flooding impacts path network



UDLA Hames Sharley

UDLA VIA WINDHAM COUNTRY, LEVEL 2, FIVE BUILDING, 3 CANTONMENT ST, FRENCHTOWN WA 6100

CLIENT: CITY OF PALMERSTON

PROJECT: MITCHELL CREEK CONCEPT PLAN & FEASIBILITY STUDY

DRAWING: CONCEPT PLAN

DRAWING NUMBER: L-04

ISSUE DATE: 29-04-25

REVISION: A

DRAWN BY: TB

KEY

- Project Site
- School
- Retail, Commercial
- Open Space
- Creek / Drainage Basin
- River/Creek/Open Drain
- Contour
- Areas of High Maintenance
- Eucalyptus Woodland Maintenance Area
- Riparian Planting Maintenance Area
- Proposed Paths
- Maintenance Entry
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
- 11 Meter Contour

Note: Recommended (lowest level) before wet season flooding/impacts path network



UDLA Hames Sharley

UDLA VIA WINDHOLE COUNTRY,
LEVEL 2, RIVIER BUILDING, 3 CANTONMENT ST, FRENCHS CREEK QLD 4008

CLIENT	CITY OF PALMERSTON
PROJECT	MITCHELL CREEK CONCEPT PLAN & FEASIBILITY STUDY
DRAWING	MAINTENANCE PLAN
DRAWING NUMBER	L-05
ISSUE DATE	29-04-25
REVISION	A

DRAWN BY: TB

APPENDIX B.

MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

FLORA AND FAUNA MANAGEMENT

On-going management of the flora and fauna is critical to the success of the approach to the Mitchell Creek concept. Management should be conducted in line with the Mitchell Creek Catchment Management Plan City of Palmerston (2022)

Feral Animal Control – Rabbits, Foxes, and Cats

Introduced or feral animals can adversely impact native flora and fauna, negatively affecting the broader ecosystem.

Management at the Mitchell Creek project site should focus on pest species (referred to under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007) which are subject to legislative requirements for control, and which are identified as impacting native flora and fauna onsite. This should most likely include pigs, foxes, feral cats, and rabbits.

Protection of Native Fauna

The intent of management at the Mitchell Creek project site is to ensure native fauna, including migratory birds, are not adversely impacted by the increase of human activity in the future reserve.

Protection of Native Flora

All native flora onsite is to be protected and free from disturbance with the exception of:

- For the creation of paths, amenity nodes, maintenance access, or signage opportunities. In these situations, clearing of vegetation shall be considered in areas of flora degradation and kept minimal.

- For emergency vehicle access or fire management and control.

A landscape and revegetation management plan should be developed as the design develops to ensure ongoing protection and conservation of native flora across the site.

Fishing & Crocodiles

Crocodiles should be managed in accordance with the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act and in line with the Crocodile Management Program.

Fishing should be managed in accordance with DEPWS regulations.

Dogs

Mitchell Creek project site should be a dog friendly area. Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times.

VEGETATION & WEED MANAGEMENT

Management of vegetation and weeds should be based on the Mitchell Creek Catchment Management Plan City of Palmerston (2022). It should strategically enhance sightlines, support passive surveillance, ecology, and improve the overall amenity and safety of trail entrances and surrounding paths.

Weed Management

Weed infestation is high across large areas of the site. These sites should be prioritised to ensure control and protection of native flora. Weed management should focus on areas of high weed concentration, invasive species, the creekline and wetland areas, and along trail edges.

Landscape and Revegetation Management plan

The development of landscape management plan for weed removal, revegetation efforts, and regular upkeep of the trail network is critical to supporting the site and ensuring its functionality, safety, environmental health, and longevity

The management plan should consider collaboration with community groups, volunteers, and local networks to support maintenance efforts and build a sense of shared responsibility.

ACCESS CONTROL

Vehicle Movement

Vehicle access onsite is a key consideration for management. Current uncontrolled access poses significant safety risks to users, along with ongoing degradation of vegetation.

Vehicle access should be restricted to maintenance access only. Bollards and boulders should be used to limit undesired vehicle access.

Fencing

Existing fencing is to be rationalised.

Signage

Existing 'No Entry' signage is to be removed.

MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

RISK ASSESSMENT

City of Palmerston will be taking full responsibility for the Mitchell Creek project site land parcel at handover. As a site that is open to the public and includes several 'risky' activities, City of Palmerston and local contractors need to understand the risks they are taking on and how these may be mitigated to protect themselves, their community, and their assets. It is recommended that the following reports are arranged for the site as soon as possible:

- Risk Assessment
- Fire Management Plan

WATER MONITORING, DRAINAGE & STORMWATER

Pollution/contamination of the Mitchell Creek project site should be monitored. Existing drainage and stormwater infrastructure need to be assessed to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets City of Palmerston standards.

LITTER AND REFUSE MANAGEMENT

Littering impacts visitor experience and can cause damage to native flora and fauna.

Consideration will be given to the location of several bins at main entrance points to the site. Servicing these bins must be coordinated with the City of Palmerston and local contractors

Litter left behind by visitors, dumped by trespassers, or washed up will be collected and disposed of by the local contractor team.

All rubbish is to be removed from all areas, with priority given to creekline and path areas.

NAMING AND USE OF LANGUAGE

Whilst Mitchell is an established name for the site, consideration should be given to renaming/dual naming of the area. City of Palmerston & LN should develop a Site Branding Style Guide, that would include

- Site Naming
- Site Logo
- Site Typography
- Colour palette
- Graphic elements.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Use the best available knowledge (including Indigenous burning methods) to plan and implement strategic and adaptive fire management programs to:

- Create a fine-scale patchy mosaic of burnt and unburnt areas, reducing the likelihood of frequent, extensive, and intense fires later in the dry season.
- Maintain a diversity of post-fire vegetation stages, including retention of old growth areas.
- Provide protective reduced-fuel buffers around fire-vulnerable habitats and other assets as necessary.
- Avoid the spread of weeds through inappropriate fire regimes (e.g. buffel grass, grader grass).
- Maintain species and the extent and composition of communities that may be more fire-sensitive or have very specific fire regime requirements.

Analyse fire history and carry out research as necessary to help inform fire management for flora conservation, including identification of fire-sensitive species and communities, and identification of improved fire management-related KPIs specific to the parks (if required).

SAFETY & CPTED

The Mitchell Creek project site lacks passive surveillance due to the topography, scale and adjacencies of the site. It is acknowledged that surveillance can't be provided across the whole site but the following should be considered to improve safety across the site:

- CCTV at key access points to deter illegal dumping and reduce environmental pollution.
- Weed management and slashing at entry points, along paths, and fire breaks between the site and residential developments
- Regular & ongoing maintenance program
- Review the need for lighting in areas of high use, selecting areas carefully while mitigating the risk of wildlife disturbance.

APPENDIX C.



Hames Sharley acknowledges the Kurna, Jagera, Turrbal, Larrakia, Wurundjeri, Whadjuk Noongar and Gadigal people, as the traditional custodians of the land upon which our studios stand.

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DATE	REASON FOR ISSUE
2025.05.06.	Draft Engagement Report for Review
2025.07.04.	Draft Engagement Report for Review
2025.07.18.	Final Engagement Report
2025.09.19.	Final Engagement Report REV A





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UDLA
UDLA WA

**MITCHELL CREEK
ENGAGEMENT REPORT**
September 2025

project overview.

Overview

The City of Palmerston engaged UDLA (as main consultant) and Hames Sharley (as engagement lead) to develop a comprehensive concept plan and feasibility study (the Project) for Mitchell Creek in Zuccoli, a unique natural corridor with significant potential for nature-based tourism, recreation, and enhanced environmental management.

Vision

The project aims to transform the creek corridor into a usable community space featuring walking paths, picnic areas, fishing platforms, car parking, and potentially mountain biking trails, while supporting environmental stewardship and connectivity to surrounding neighbourhoods.

This concept plan and feasibility study not only provides the foundation for the sustainable and phased development of Mitchell Creek but also aligns with the City's vision of delivering enhanced recreation, tourism, and environmental outcomes as a 'Place for People'.

Scope of works

The concept will identify distinct "operational nodes" within the creek area to facilitate staged development, ensuring a balance between recreational opportunities, conservation efforts, and future infrastructure needs. This initiative aligns with the City of Palmerston's Community Plan and will serve as a critical step in transferring land management responsibilities from Crown Lands to City of Palmerston, maximising the area's benefits for the community.

The Project scope encompasses land within the suburbs of Johnston (Lots 4250) and Zuccoli (Lots 4251 and 4250). Adjacent areas include essential services infrastructure, planned housing developments, public open spaces, and a pump track, as well as a planned duplication of Roystonea Avenue on the creek corridor's western border.

Cultural and environmental context

A cultural heritage assessment identified three archaeological sites, including two low-density stone artefact scatters with shellfish remnants and one believed to be a WWII heritage site built on another stone artefact scatter. Additionally, five threatened species are either known or likely to inhabit the project area:

- + *Cycas armstrongii*
- + *Typhonium praetermissum*
- + Northern Brushtail Possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula arnhemensis*)
- + Black-footed Tree Rat (*Mesembriomys gouldii gouldii*), and
- + Mertens' Water Monitor (*Varanus mertensii*).

The area also contains three significant vegetation types:

- + Riparian vegetation within Lot 4250 (Johnston) and Lot 4251 (Zuccoli);
- + A mangrove community in Lot 4251 (Zuccoli);
- + Large hollow-bearing trees along the creek.

Relevant recent works and initiatives include:

- + catchment management plan commissioned in 2022
- + Off-leash Dog Park opened in 2023
- + Pump Track, Skate Park, Basketball Court, Walking Trail & BBQ Facilities (in the pipeline)
- + Zuccoli and Surrounds Community Hub (in the pipeline)

Scope of engagement

Hames Sharley's services on this project include the following components:

- + Design and implementation of an engagement strategy to gather input from key stakeholders on the draft plan, including community members, traditional owners, local businesses, and relevant government agencies.
- + **Round 1 (information gathering) stakeholder and community consultation** in April 2025: 'Tell us what you think?'
- + **Round 2 (confirmation of draft concept report) stakeholder and community consultation** in July 2025: 'Did we get it right?'
- + Development of an engagement report summarising outcomes of the consultations.

Project area as identified in the RFQ.



engagement - executive summary.

Overview

Being a major public open space within Palmerston, Mitchell Creek falls in the sphere of interest of many. As part of the design process, UDLA and Hames Sharley has been delivering a two-phase engagement process including a wide range of stakeholders: community members, developers, Council and Government representatives.

This report summarises the outcomes of the two-round consultation process.

The engagement plan is outlined in Chapter 1.

The Round 1, information-gathering engagement, was carried out between the 8-9th of April 2025 and engaged the following stakeholders: City of Palmerston, NT Government, developer groups, the Community Reference Group and the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

Meeting minutes from Round 1 is found in Chapter 2.

The Round 2, engagement, was carried out on the 13th of June 2025 and engaged City of Palmerston representatives and the general public. Other stakeholders were approach through email correspondence.

Meeting minutes from Round 2 is found in Chapter 3.

Round 1 outcomes

The first round of consultations demonstrated a strong consensus about what the top priorities are for the improvement and the long-term management of the creek area.

The discussions revealed that the creek corridor is already a beloved bushland recreational area that is appreciated for its tranquil, natural and unprogrammed setting.

Workshop and interview participants emphasised that the long-term success of Mitchell Creek lies in its management. Key considerations for management include:

- + flood management and erosion control,
- + fire management,
- + weed management and the regeneration of native vegetation.

The governance model and the allocation of roles and responsibilities must be the subject of further discussions, involving all relevant stakeholders.

In terms of future developments, improved connectedness and a good network of shared paths came out as top priority. Overprogramming and over-development shall be avoided, however, opportunities for complimentary developments might be recognised by the Concept Report.

Finally, stakeholders recognised the importance of wayfinding and character, most importantly around the edges of the creek area. It was mentioned that interfaces between the creek and the surrounding

roads and residential areas must be clear, inviting and easy-to-navigate. Signage and trailheads can potentially play an important role in drawing people into the bushland and the creek corridor.

Interim engagement

Parallel to the development of the Draft Concept Report runs an online community feedback survey.

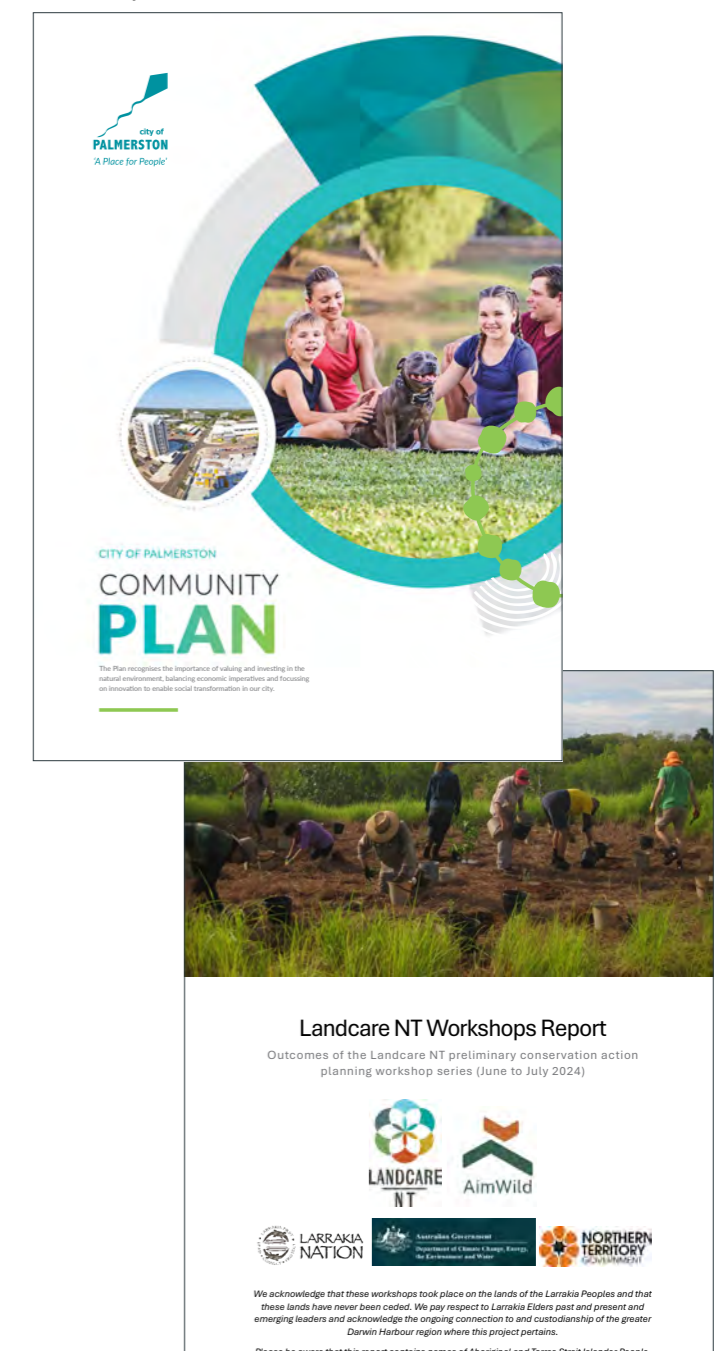
Round 2 outcomes

The second round of consultations reaffirmed the community's strong connection to Mitchell Creek and their support for a low-key, nature-focused and feasible concept that can guide the long-term improvement and maintenance of the area.

Themed and well-connected multi-use paths, nature conservation, easy-to-maintain infrastructure, good signage and improved safety were mentioned - amongst other things - by the participants.

The consultation also revealed that many residents of Palmerston and Darwin were unaware of the creek or the planning process. Regular users are primarily those living in close proximity to the creek, within walking or cycling distance.

Various stakeholders, strategic plans and documents inform the Mitchell Creek Project.





01

ENGAGEMENT PLAN

- 1.1 ENGAGEMENT PLAN
- 1.2 ROUND 1 - WORKSHOP PLANS
- 1.3 ROUND 2 - ENGAGEMENT PLANS

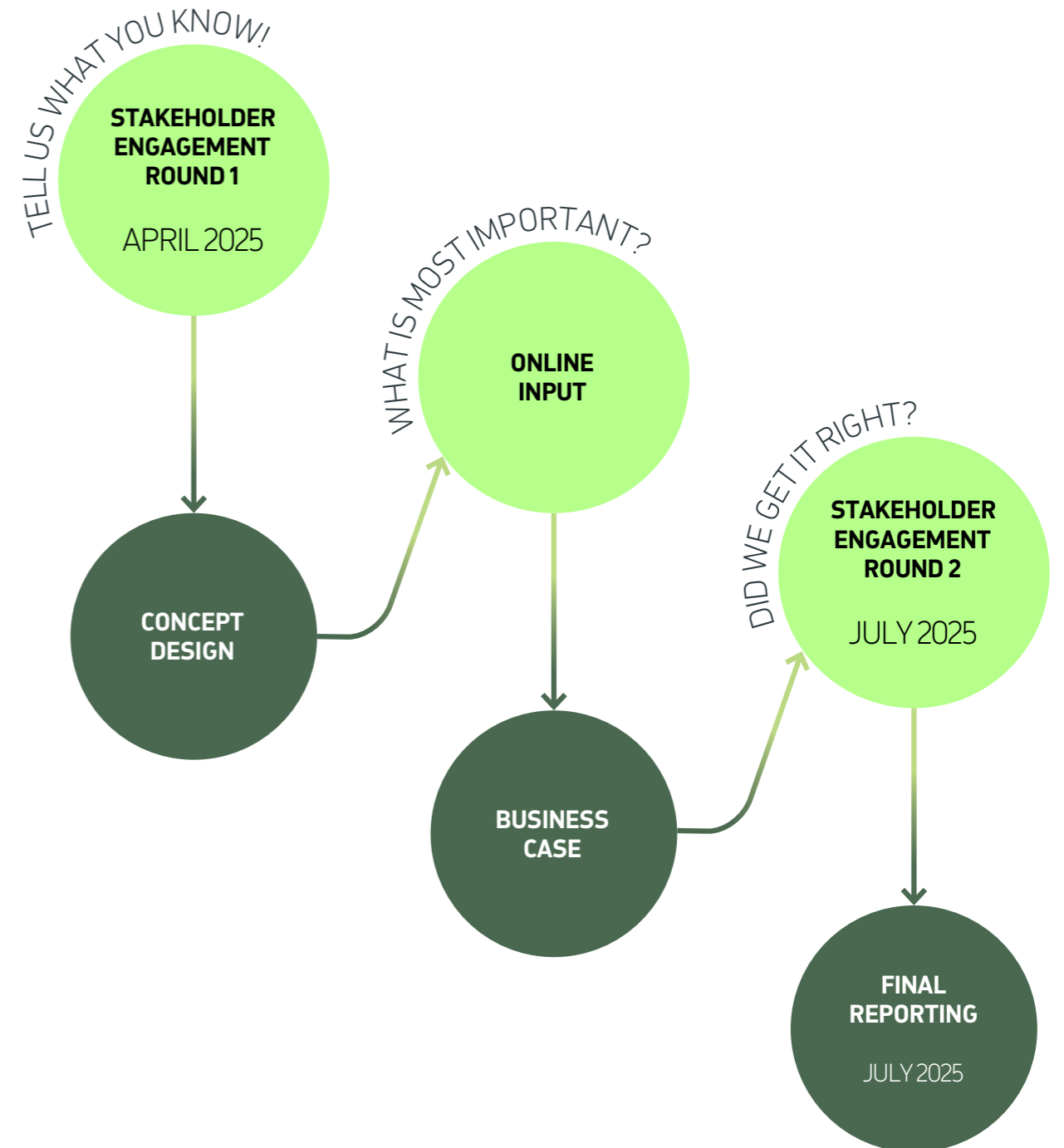
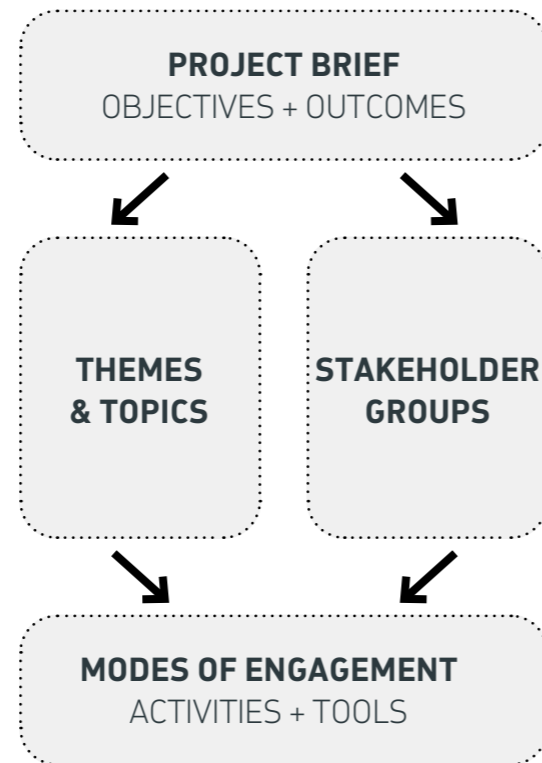
1.1 engagement plan.

1.1.1 Definition of the Engagement Plan

The Engagement Plan is directly informed by the project brief, which, together with initial client discussions, captures the key aspirations, objectives and expected outcomes for the Mitchell Creek project.

Understanding in depth the stakeholder groups and the client's project aspirations helps define the type of information we expect to get out of the engagement sessions to best inform the design process.

The right modes of engagement are then selected to match the stakeholder group and the themes and topics to be explored with each group.



1.1.2 Project Brief

Based on the project brief and the project initiation meeting the City of Palmerston, key objectives and outcomes for this project are:

- + **Functionality:** active and passive recreation (walking, jogging, cycling, fishing, dog walking, cultural and natural trails, etc.)
- + **Infrastructure:**
 - recreational facilities and infrastructure / network
 - services infrastructure: power, lighting, water, waste management, etc.
- + **Access:** vehicular and non-vehicular
- + **Theming and branding:**
 - nature-based tourism
 - distinct operational nodes
 - wayfinding and character
- + **Environment:** conservation and regeneration
- + **Safety:** safety and security
- + **Maintenance:**
 - Council maintenance
 - community stewardship
- + **Implementation:** staged development

1.1.3 Themes

The following key themes were proposed to be explored during the stakeholder and community reference group consultations:

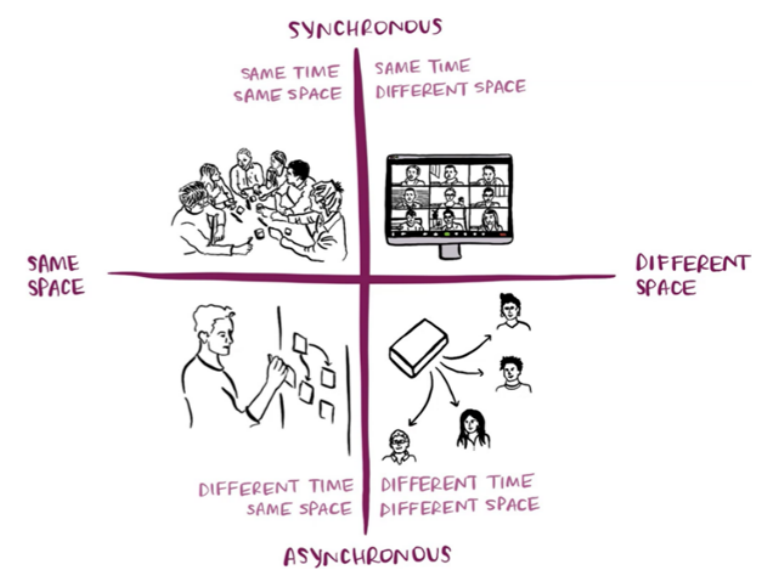
- + **Mitchell Creek now**
This theme aims to gain a shared understanding of how Mitchell Creek is currently used, including aspects that work well and aspects that require improvement.
- + **Vision for Mitchell Creek**
The goal of the second theme is to develop a shared vision for the creek area and understand what are the aspirations that are shared by multiple stakeholder groups.
- + **Roadmap & priorities**
The last theme focuses on the roadmap required to achieve the shared vision for the area, exploring 'quick win' and long-term, as well as 'must have' and nice to have' development goals.

1.1.4 Modes of Engagement

Modes of stakeholder and community engagement can be wide and varied: in-person vs online or synchronous (same-time) vs asynchronous (different time). For best outcomes, modes of engagement should be selected based on their appropriateness for the stakeholder group/s and topics to be explored with the participants.

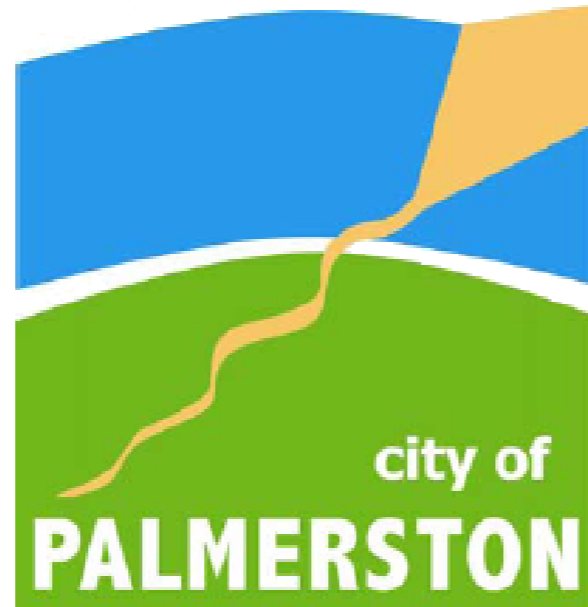
For the Mitchell Creek stakeholder and community consultations key objectives for the selection of activity types and tools were the following:

- + To gain information about the strategic and/or sensitive aspects of the project (e.g.: political, economic and social context) in-person modes of engagement were used that create safe and comfortable environment for participants to talk.
- + To understand and record existing conditions we combine activities seeking quantitative, narrative (qualitative) and spatialised information. Mapping activities are best carried out as part of smaller group workshops with suitable facilitators (design team).
- + To explore new ideas and foster future-thinking we utilise activities that maximise interaction between participants and ask questions that support thinking outside the box, like small-group brown-paper brainstorming, mapping exercise and discussions. These activities also allow to address some challenging topics, where clashing of opinions is beneficial and sparking new ideas is required.



Bottom: Modes of engagement in regard to space and time. Source: Davis, A, Wallace, N, Langley, J and Gwilt, I 2021, 'Low-contact Co-Design: Considering more flexible spatiotemporal models for the co-design workshop' SDRJ, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 124-137.

Client



Council

The client group is best positioned to provide insights on the strategic aspects and political context of the project. The early and continuous engagement of this group is crucial for the success of the project.

Level of Interest:



Level of Influence:



Stakeholders



NAIDOC Flame Tree Ceremony Palmerston, 2024

Traditional Owners

The engagement of First Nations organisations and custodians is essential to ensure that the proposed Concept Report is culturally appropriate, creates meaningful connection to Country and represents the Traditional Owners of the land.

Level of Interest:



Level of Influence:



Government

Similar to the local Council, Government organisations can provide strategic-level input on multiple aspects of the Project.

Level of Interest:



Level of Influence:



Stakeholder list:

1. Heritage Branch
2. Dept. of Lands, Planning, Environment
3. Dept. of Land and Infrastructure
4. Crown Land Estate

1.1.5 Stakeholder Mapping

Mitchell Creek is situated both in the context of a sensitive riparian and estuarine environment and a dynamically evolving suburban area of Palmerston. Hence, a range of stakeholders and community groups may have interest in the shaping of the future of the creek.

Different stakeholder groups have different perspectives, knowledge and power to influence decisions, which is crucial to understand to effectively engage each group.

In the following stakeholder groups are categorised based on the above aspects, including the client group as well as the wider community. An important subgroup within this latter one are grassroots community groups, who, despite having limited formalised power may have high level of interest in the design process and substantial knowledge about the area.

Community Reference Group



Aerial view of the Zuccoli Village by Urbex



Zuccoli Primary School pupils



Community planting day organised by Friends of Mitchell Creek Catchment Landcare Group Inc in 2013



Darwin Festival in Palmerston 2024, by City of Palmerston

Developers

Local developers may have strong interest and high level of influence in shaping the creek area. Engaging this stakeholder group early ensures that new residential developments have better connection with public outdoor spaces for the benefit of the wider community.

Level of Interest:

● ● ● ●

Level of Influence:

● ● ● ●

Stakeholder list:

1. Collie
2. Urbex
3. Territory Life
4. Costa Property Group

Local institutions and organisations

Local institutions and organisations may include local businesses, schools and other organisations. They may represent a special group of users, e.g. children / youth.

Level of Interest:

● ● ● ● ●

Level of Influence:

● ● ●

Grassroots community groups

Grassroots community groups are most embedded in the local community, in most cases being run by members of the community. They may also represent a special group of users, e.g. children / youth.

Level of Interest:

● ● ● ●

Level of Influence:

● ● ●

General community

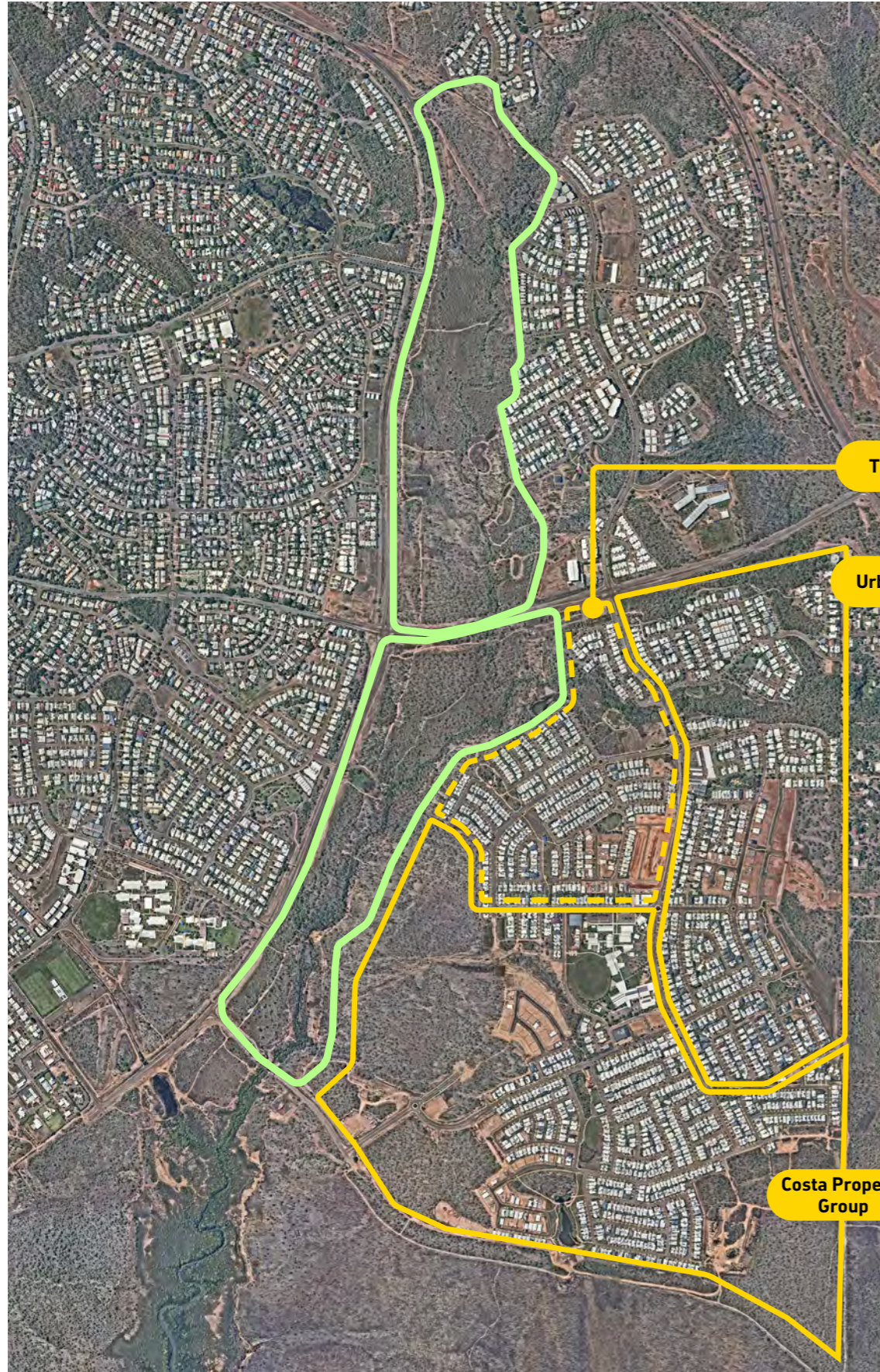
Local residents are the direct users of the subject area, and they benefit the most from quality outdoor recreational opportunity near their home. Listening to this groups is crucial to get their buy-in.

Level of Interest:

● ● ● ● ●

Level of Influence:

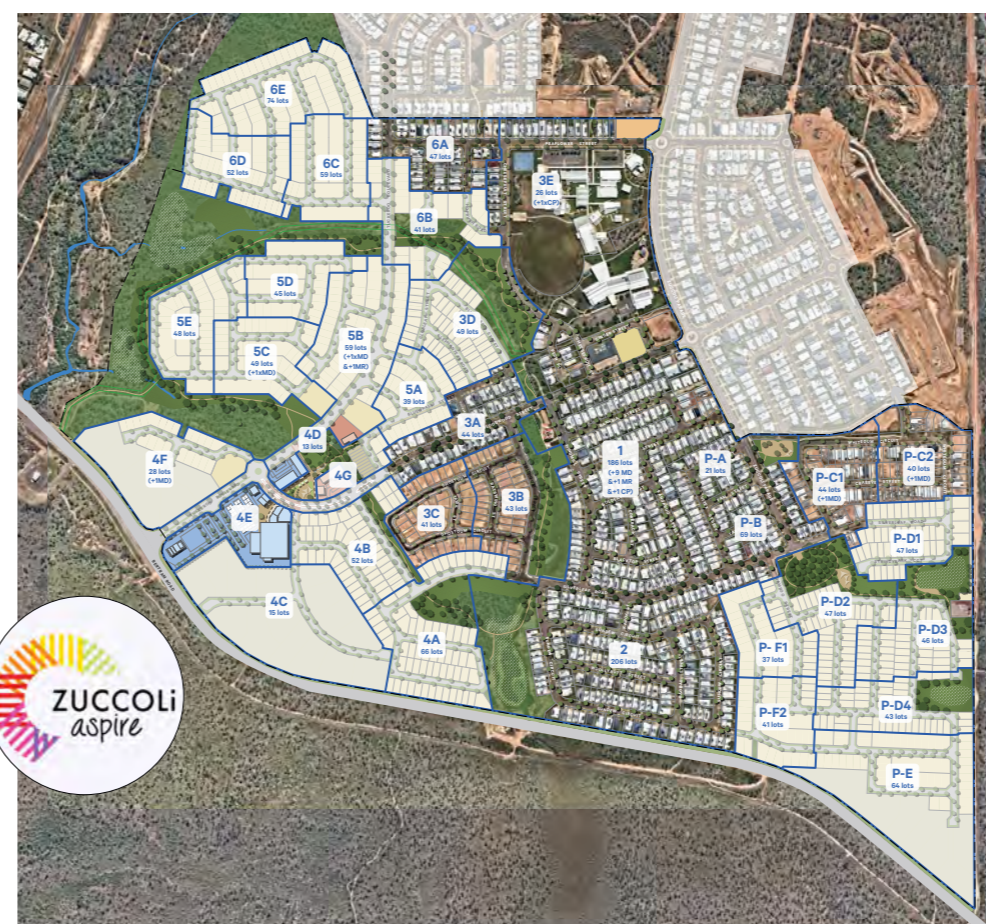
● ● ●



Territory Life

Urbex

Costa Property Group



Master plans of partly of fully developed new residential developments in Zuccoli.

*Condition of existing paths
along the creek.*



1.2 round 1 - workshop plans.

1.2.1 Workshop Agenda with City of Palmerston

Mode of engagement: small focus group-session

Expected contribution:

- + understanding current and future residential developments, residential precinct master plans and the residential development business case;
- + challenging the the business-as-usual;
- + exploring: quality access and connections, Mitchell Creek as a unique value proposition, and what it means living at the doorstep of nature as a lifestyle opportunity.

Agenda:

- + Introduction 5-10 mins
- + Presentations 20 mins
- + Discussion 1 : Mitchell Creek and Zuccoli now 20 mins
- + Discussion 2: Vision for Mitchell Creek and Zuccoli 20 mins
- + Discussion 3: Roadmap & Implementation 20 mins

Discussion 1 Questions:

- + What makes Zuccoli attractive to local residents?
- + What is the lifestyle choice that residential developments offer?
- + Does Mitchell Creek contribute to what makes living in Zuccoli attractive? How?
- + How do residential developments connect to Mitchell Creek?
- + How do residents use the creek now?
- + What are the positives of the creek area? / What

works well?

- + What are the negatives of the creek area? / What doesn't work well?
- + What structure do the project follow?
- + What is non-negotiable?
- + Where is room for co-design?

Discussion 2 Questions:

- + What future developments are in the pipeline for the future?
- + How could the improved creek corridor influence the lifestyle offer of future residential developments?
- + What are the key opportunities for the creek and new developments to create a better connection?
- + What are the key constraints?
- + What could be a shared vision for the different stakeholders: City of Palmerston, developers, general public?
- + What is the measure of success?

Discussion 3 Questions:

- + What are the 'must have' improvements?
- + What are the 'nice to have' improvements?
- + What improvements would be quick-wins?
- + Which are the long-term investments?
- + What is good investment on money?

1.2.2 Workshop Agenda with Developers

Mode of engagement: small focus group-session

Expected contribution:

- + understanding the big-picture context, Council's vision for the City of Palmerston, complementing vs competing future uses, residential growth plans, strategic planning frameworks, environmental frameworks and management plans, and financial frameworks;
- + challenging the the business-as-usual;
- + exploring project opportunities and constraints, opportunities for eco-tourism , opportunities for co-management of environment, and compatible / complementing offerings in the creek area.

Agenda:

- + Introduction 5-10 mins
- + Presentations 20 mins
- + Discussion 1 : Big picture and local context: opportunities and constraints 20 mins
- + Discussion 2: Vision for Mitchell Creek 20 mins
- + Discussion 3: Roadmap & Implementation 20 mins

Discussion 1 Questions:

- + What is the big picture context of the project?
- + What are the key strategic frameworks that impact on the project?
- + What are the key opportunities offered by these frameworks?

- + What are the key constraints posed by these frameworks?
- + What is the local context of the project?
- + What are the recent major developments the creek area is situated within?
- + What are the planned future major developments the project must consider?
- + What are the existing / planned complementing uses?
- + What are the existing / planned competing uses?
- + What is the current character and identity of Mitchell Creek?

Discussion 2 Questions:

- + What is the Council's blue-sky thinking?
- + What future character do you associate with / envision for Mitchell Creek?
- + Who are the different target users of the future area?
- + How can the creek area stay activated and inviting all-year long?
- + What improvements would deliver the most benefit for local residents and other users?
- + What forms of eco-tourism could take place in the creek corridor?
- + What is the measure of a successful future Precinct?
- + What maintenance and co-management models could work? Why?
- + What are the main risks?

Discussion 3 Questions:

- + What are the 'must have' improvements?
- + What are the 'nice to have' improvements?
- + What improvements would be quick-wins?
- + Which are the long-term investments?
- + What is good investment on money?

1.2.3 Workshop Agenda with Community Reference Group

Mode of engagement: small focus group-session

Expected contribution:

- + understanding Palmerston lifestyle and identity, the diverse community of Palmerston, what Mitchell Creek means for the locals, current usage patterns, and the creek now: what works / what does not work;
- + challenge what works well elsewhere, and what the desired atmosphere, look and feel of place might be;
- + explore aspirations for the future, what could make the creek more attractive, what needs to be preserved, and opportunities for nature-based education, nature-based recreation and environmental stewardship.

Agenda:

- + Introduction 5-10 mins
- + Presentations 20 mins
- + Discussion 1 : Mitchell Creek now 20 mins
- + Discussion 2: Vision for Mitchell Creek 20 mins
- + Discussion 3: Roadmap & Implementation 20 mins

Discussion 1 Questions:

- + Who are the people who use the creek area?
- + How do they use the creek now?

- + What makes Mitchell Creek attractive to local residents?
- + What works well?
- + What doesn't work well?
- + What character and identity does the creek have that can inform future theming?
- + 'User heat map' using sticky dots:
 - Perception of safety (green: feels safe, red: unsafe)
 - Perception of cleanliness and health of nature (green: clean, red: rubbish, bad smell, dirty waterway, dying plants, etc.)
 - Favourite spots (nice view, point of interest, etc.)
 - Access routes (mark regular point of access and routes frequently taken)

Discussion 2 Questions:

- + How do you imagine Mitchell Creek in the future?
- + What future identity & theming could this park have, that is currently not part of its identity or is just emerging?
- + How can the creek corridor stay activated and inviting all-year long?
- + What would make you visit more often?
- + What improvements would deliver the most benefit for local residents and other users?
- + How could the community contribute to the management of the creek area and the catchment?
- + Precedent images: Adding sticky dots to precedent images with attractive look/feel/ atmosphere.

Discussion 3 Questions:

- + What are the 'must have' improvements?
- + What are the 'nice to have' improvements?
- + What is good investment on money for the community?

Source: blinkux.com



Source: blinkux.com



1.3 round 2 - engagement plans.

The Round 2 consultations sought feedback on and endorsement of the Draft Mitchell Creek Concept Report, most importantly from the wider public. An open discussion session with key City of Palmerston personell was also proposed.

The Round 1 consultations gave consistent feedback on the stakeholders' and community's expectations for the Creek area, mainly that a low-level of programming, simple improvements and good maintenance routines are expected. Hence the second round of enagagment was planned with less structured agendas, allowing participants to enter into open discussions about the proposals of the Draft Concept Report.

Some stakeholder groups were sent the Draft Concept Report electronically for written feedback.

1.3.1 Workshop Agenda with City of Palmerston

Mode of engagement: open discussion in form of small focus group-session

Agenda: Draft Concept Report and plans

Expected outcome:

- + Expert feedback from Council representatives looking after specific areas of Council's operation and asset maintenance.

1.3.2 Community engagement

Mode of engagement: pop up community consultation

Equipment and materials: A1 - A4 prints of proposed plans, precedent images and feedback boards to aid discussions.

Agenda: Draft Concept Report and plans

Expected outcome:

- + Raising community awareness of the project.
- + User feedback on the proposed improvements.
- + Identifying any gaps the Draft Concept Report does not address but the community expects to include.



Sticky note feedback sheets.

*Mitchell Creek at the end of
the wet season. March 2025*





02

ROUND 1 CONSULTATIONS

- 2.1 WORKSHOP MINUTES
- 2.2 INTERVIEWS

2.1 workshop minutes.

2.1.1 Workshop with Developers

Date and time: 09/04/2025, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Location: Councillors' Room, City of Palmerston

Participants

- + Katie O'Niell City of Palmerston
- + Christopher Tickner City of Palmerston

- + Shea Hatch UDLA
- + Tessa Bradbury UDLA (online)
- + Alex Quin Hames Sharley
- + Gingi Engloner Hames Sharley

- + Kassi Picken Urbex
- + Tom Gaetan Jacobs / Territory Life
- + Samuel Hare Clouston Associates /
Territory Life
- + Tony Cox "(online)
- + Clement Williams Bellamack

Consulted separately by City of Palmerston

- + *Hermanus Louw* *Costa Property Group*

Minutes

Project:

- + The Project is funded by the DLI Cooling and Greening Grant.
- + Future grants are required for activation.

Governance:

- + The creek corridor is currently owned and managed by Crown Land. Participants noted that there are issues with the current management regime.
- + It is planned that the creek area will be handed over to the City of Palmerston on a long-term lease, with ownership remaining with Crown Land. Any infrastructure on the site is to be owned by the City.

Management and infrastructure:

- + Mitchell Creek is a temporary waterway with several permanent pools along the creek that retain water throughout the year.
- + The drainage system was noted to be dangerous due to flash floods. However, the network of retention basins have reduced flood peaks in the creek.
- + There is no risk of flash flooding within the residential areas.
- + There are existing management issues with the retention basins, for example, some turned into

- weedy/grass basins. The management of lakes requires extensive resources from the City.
- + Mosquito problem also increases when WSUD measures are not maintained properly. Currently, the City of Palmerston does not carry out mosquito management.
- + Developers noted that the lack of awareness and understanding of WSUD measures contributes to the negative public perception of lakes. Council members added that while the community looks for these features, their natural form is unappealing to many. It was proposed that interpretive signage and storytelling could help raise awareness and change public perception.
- + Gamba grass is present on site.
- + Developer groups take custody of the creekline and perform regular weed management.
- + Monthly fire break maintenance are undertaken within the 4 meters buffer zones adjacent to properties as part of the fire management regime.
- + Ad-hoc community additions pose fire hazards and management issues.
- + Further coordination is required to establish a fire management regime that delivers maximum benefit for the community.



Participants on the Developers Workshop, 09th of April 2025.

Plans:

- + Initial plan for the Zuccoli area is captured in the 1993/4 Master Plan by Ecosystem.

Use of the creek and its surrounding:

- + The creek corridor is already in use by the community.
- + Promoting passive recreation is a priority for the future.
- + Off-road motorbike rides are popular in the bushland around Zuccoli.
- + Some participants noted that creating a cross-connection across the creek might attract 'regional traffic', especially once the Zuccoli Community Hub is realised, and is undesired.
- + Participants mentioned that there is a shifting understanding of value of nature.
- + Trail heads at the threshold of residential areas and the creek are crucial to establish connection and help wayfinding.

Lifestyle:

- + Land sales are advertised with the proximity of nature and generous public open spaces, including Mitchell Creek.
- + Developers noted that they intend to create a community legacy development in Zuccoli.

2.1.2 Workshop with City of Palmerston and NTG

Date and time: 09/04/2025, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Location: Councillors' Room, City of Palmerston

Participants

+ Katie O'Niell	City of Palmerston
+ Richard Azzopardi	City of Palmerston
+ Matthew McNamara	City of Palmerston
+ Nadine Nilon	City of Palmerston
+ Ben Giesecke	City of Palmerston
+ Meghan Davey	City of Palmerston
+ Lee-Ann Joy	City of Palmerston
+ Patrick Lovell-Davis	City of Palmerston
+ Russell Smith	City of Palmerston
+ Saru Darji	City of Palmerston
+ Shea Hatch	UDLA
+ Tessa Bradbury	UDLA (online)
+ Alex Quin	Hames Sharley
+ Gingi Engloner	Hames Sharley
+ Rohan Langworthy	NTG DLPE
+ Simon Flavel	NTG
+ John Paul	NTG
+ Sarah Walkington	
+ Sarrah Hubbard	NTG Heritage Branch
+ Ryan Crough-Heaton	NTG Heritage Branch
+ Caroline Villaflor	NTG TBAR

Minutes:

Management and infrastructure:

- + Crown Land-managed detention basins are overgrown and filling up with silt. In addition, there are erosion issues along existing tranches.
- + The updated Crown Lands Management Plan, developed by Parks and Wildlife, identified high-risk urban management areas.
- + Underground services and low-flow pipe exist within the area.
- + The City of Palmerston has flood management modelling available.
- + The creek has very different characters and flow regimes throughout the year depending on the actual season. It is a 'chain of ponds' during dry seasons, whereas it can quickly break banks in the wet. This diversity can be an opportunity for the Project to tap into, but also a risk to be managed.
- + This risk exists predominantly from a visitors point of view. Existing infrastructures unlikely to be damaged by flooding as their location has been informed by the flood modelling.
- + Issue related to fire management arose on this workshop too. Prescribed burns (but not in the form of back burning) currently happen annually to protect the urban setup. However, public perception of these burns needs to be managed better.

- + New proposed infrastructure and burning practices need to mutually consider each other.
- + Low maintenance needs, stormwater management and sustainability must be key considerations for the Project.
- + Another major maintenance issue is the illegal dumping.

Plans:

- + An overarching concept is much needed.
- + Residential developments 'turned back' to the creek, however, there is opportunity to change this.
- + Connection to Greater Holtze green link (under Stuart Highway) is an opportunity. This is a habitat corridor that needs to be retained and enhanced. Questions emerged around what activities could be integrated on the other side of the highway to create a link.
- + 'Booking' and defining both ends of the creek is a potential key move for the Project.

Heritage:

- + There are know heritage archaeological sites within the area.
- + NTG Heritage Branch representatives recommended undertaking a desktop heritage assessment. There is need to better understand

where the archaeological sites are to be able to delineate them for future protection.

- + It was noted that in the long term a Cultural Heritage Management Plan needs to be developed and be part of the ongoing management of the creek area.

Use of the creek and its surrounding:

- + Public art trails have been realised in other areas of Palmerston and there is opportunity to expand this network with new art trails within the Mitchell Creek area. The Melbourne Zoo art trail was mentioned as a relevant precedent: small stopping points within a large activated area.
- + The Darwin Off-Road Cyclists group uses steep hills near the hospital site. There might be areas in and around the creek area that can be utilised the same way for active recreation purposes.
- + The creek is more likely to attract 'local tourists' than interstate or international visitors. Future programming should be defined accordingly.
- + Business travellers and interstate family visitors might be some of the non-local visitors that Palmerston expects to cater for in the future. 1-2-night stays are the most typical bookings in accommodations in Palmerston.



Mapping of the creek on the Community Reference Group Workshop, 09th of April 2025.

2.1.3 Workshop with Community Reference Group

Date: 09/04/2025
 Time: 6:00 - 7:30 pm
 Location: Community Room, Palmerston Recreation Centre

- + It was also added that the concept must keep in mind the demographics of the area, i.e.: path must be pram-friendly and accessible where possible, stabilised gravel or similar surfaces must be used that are not prone to erosion, with concrete sections around known water flows and erosion points.

Participants:

- + Katie O’Niell City of Palmerston
- + Shea Hatch UDLA
- + Alex Quin Hames Sharley
- + Gingi Engloner Hames Sharley
- + Rob Hanterlmann Darwin Off-Road Cyclists
- + Jason Tong “
- + Andrew Swart “
- + Katie Grimshaw Palmerston Conservation Group
- + Ian J. Hutton “
- + Darryn Wilson “
- + Richard Boyne “
- + Mike Clark “
- + Jim McInnerney community member

Minutes:

In a nutshell, people see the following three items and top priorities for the Mitchell Creek Project:

1. Accessible paths
2. Weed control
3. Erosion control
4. Fire management

Vision:

- + Participants highlighted that the creek is already beloved by the local community and no major transformation is required.
- + It is better kept simple, natural and accessible.
- + They would like to see the creek area to be better used, which is best facilitated through improved connections through arterial roads and the creek and more internal pathways.

Management and infrastructure:

- + Mosquitoes and midges are present along the creek, especially in the southernmost, estuarine area. Development must be considerate of minimum buffer zones for amenity.

- + Crocodile can also be expected along the creek corridor, however, they rarely venture north to Bertram Road, due to the existing crocodile barrier. Most participants did not see crocodiles being a major public safety issue. The Council, on the other hand, does not support the formalisation of the identified swimming holes on the basis of the official NT Government advice about crocodile safety: “Any body of water in the Top End may contain large and potentially dangerous crocodiles.”

Recreational activities:

- + Bike riding (dirt bikes) and dog walking are popular recreational activities in the creek corridor.
- + The bird life also attracts visitors, and there is opportunity to tapping into birdwatching.
- + Fishing is another recreational activity that would attract existing and new visitors.
- + There are a few known swimming holes used by some community members in the northern section of the creek near the Ninja Warrior Park.
- + The Project must be considerate of the elderly and young users, e.g.: paths must be accessible and easily navigable. For older kids and the

youth, however, more challenging terrains and surfaces might be created.

- + Some people also ride the horses on off-road tracks.
- + In general, the section of Mitchell Creek considered for the Project is seen as a more accessible and inclusive section, while the undeveloped, southern estuarine areas will remain destinations for more 'adventurous' activities, such as off-road biking, motor bike riding and horse riding.
- + The reference group noted that it is important that the track form various loops for users to choose from.

Additional offerings:

- + Some participants mentioned that a cafe could complement the recreational offerings of the area.
- + Other, longer-term developments may include: retirement village, church or shops. A good location for these uses was suggested to be the relatively higher-lying land at the intersection of Lambrick Avenue and Roystonea Avenue.
- + Another higher-lying and potentially developable area is situated at the intersection of Roystonea

Avenue and Bertram Road.

- + More and formalised carparks for easier access is needed, especially along Roystonea Avenue.
- + Some mentioned that army personnel but also other joggers might use a 2.4 km track in the future.

Context:

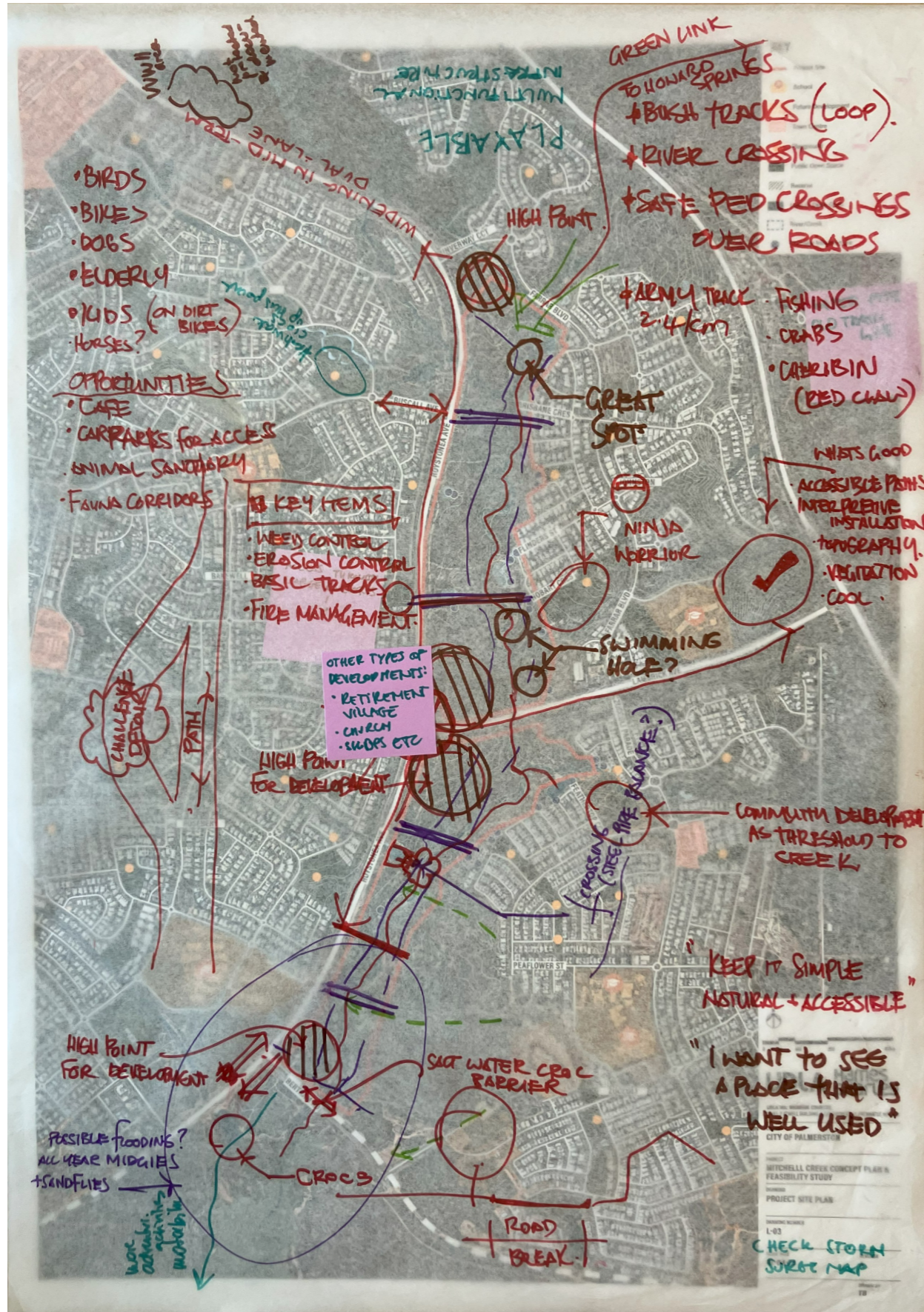
- + The new Zuccoli Community Hub can function as a threshold or entry point to the bushland and creek area.
- + The WW Camp 16 Mile was mentioned to be a great precedent for how a simple, nature-based recreational area could look like in Zuccoli. Accessibility, the microclimate and the interpretive signage and artworks were praised.
- + Participants shared that Roystonea Avenue is subject of widening to become a 2 x dual lane road.

Nature:

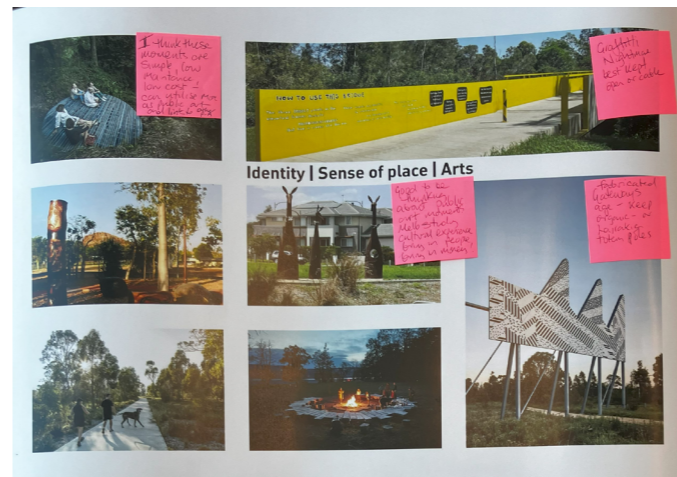
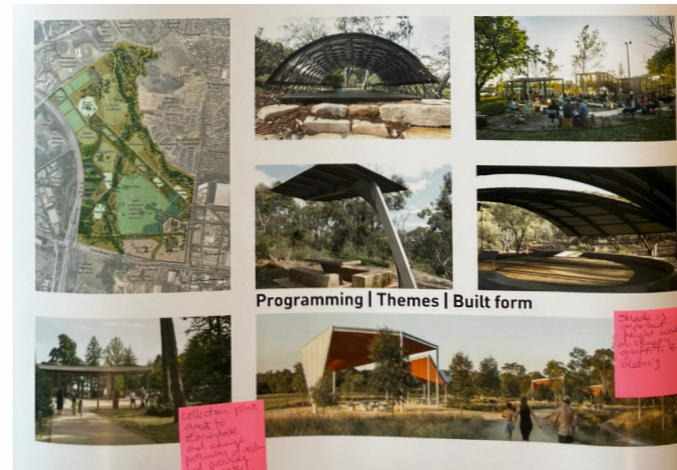
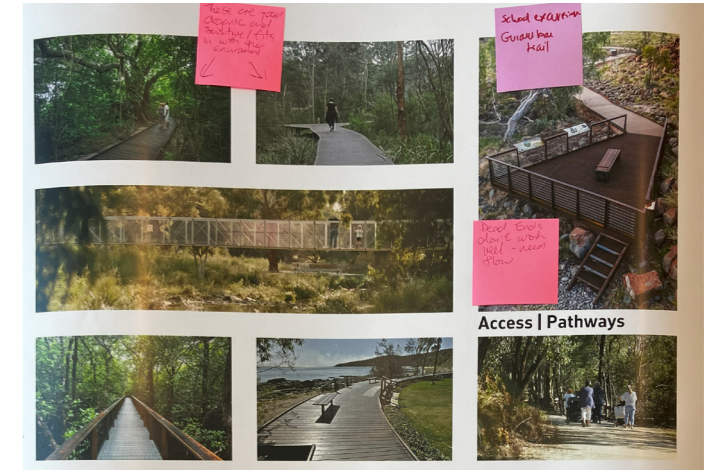
- + Mitchell Creek is well positioned to be enhanced as a wildlife and habitat corridor, contributing to a continuous link between Mitchell and Shoal Bay.
- + Fishes, crabs and cheribin (red claw) are present in the waters.

Participants on the Community Reference Group Workshop, 09th of April 2025.





Workshop notes about the Mitchell Creek Project (left) and the precedent images (below) from the Community Reference Group Workshop, 09th of April 2025.



2.2 interviews.

2.2.1 Interview with Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation

Date: 08/04/2025

Time: 3:30 - 4:00 pm

Location: LNAC Office, Coconut Grove

Participants

- + Shea Hatch UDLA
- + Gingi Engloner Hames Sharley

- + Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation rangers

Summary

The Mitchell Creek catchment is situated on Larrakia Country and has been a gathering and hunting place for millennia, as it is proved by stone artefact scatters and shellfish remnants. Today, Larrakia ranger look after Country and co-manage the creek corridor with Land Care.

UDLA and Hames Sharley engaged the Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation (LNAC) to understand the Traditional Owner's current involvement in the management and their vision about the future of the creek corridor.

LNAC representatives shared that as per the the current management model, the Land Care group engages the LNAC Rangers. However, in the future there is interest from Larrakia Nation and the rangers to be more involved and take leadership in the management of the creek.

The rangers noted that gamba grass is present and that they contribute to the fire management within and beyond the site.

There is need for more resources, and the Corporation has a ranger training program that aims to address this need.

In regard to the delineation and protection of sacred sites or sites of significance, it was recommended that a comprehensive AAPA clearance is to be undertaken.

The discussion touched on future programming of the creek and potential partnerships between LNAC and local organisations.

Boardwalks were seen as potential additions to the creek. The Gurumbai Trail along Rapid Creek was acknowledged as a successful precedent for Mitchell Creek delivered in collaboration with the Airport Development Group. Cultural Tours are carried out on this trail. Another precedent is the evolving partnership between local Palmerston schools and the Corporation, who provide on-site day tours and learning opportunities for pupils.

The Larrakia Youth Council was mentioned as a potential stakeholder group for subsequent consultations, given that the future Mitchell Creek will deliver the highest benefits for the younger generations.

For traditional knowledge and cultural protocols, the engagement of relevant Elders was recommended.



Larrakia Rangers (L-R) Jessica Puntoriero, Kyle Lew-Fatt, Nelson Williams-Browne and Jimmy Que-Noy in front of a shell midden (not within Mitchell Creek). The middens show that Larrakia people have been custodians of Darwin Harbour for millennia. Photo: Amanda Lilleyman. Source: nespthreatenedspecies.edu.au



03

ROUND 2 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 CONSULTATION MINUTES

3.1 consultation minutes.

3.1.1 Discussion with City of Palmerston representatives

Date: 13/06/2025

Time: 3:30 - 4:30 pm

Location: Councillors' Room, City of Palmerston

Participants:

+ Katie O'Niell	City of Palmerston
+ Jelise Camilleri	City of Palmerston
+ Saru Darji	City of Palmerston
+ Shea Hatch	UDLA
+ Tessa Bradbury	UDLA
+ Alex Quin	Hames Sharley
+ Gingi Engloner	Hames Sharley
+ Ivan Ng	City of Palmerston
+ Diane Knobs	City of Palmerston
+ Lee-Ann Joy	City of Palmerston
+ Meghan Davey	City of Palmerston

Minutes:

General observations:

- + The southern sections of the creek, around and within the Costa Property Groups proposed development are too wet to accommodate housing. It is planned that some of those areas will remain undeveloped. Clouston Associates can provide further input.
- + It is acknowledged that the developers group and the City of Palmerston need to continue coordination about developments and the Mitchell Creek project plans.
- + The Hobart Park and its surroundings are currently excluded from the Project. Connections are to be considered. Further discussion is required around which areas will be handed over.

Connections and accessibility:

- + The Project should guide connection points between the two sides of the creek.
- + There are existing, unofficial crossing points along the creek that provide access when water levels are lower. It has been discussed whether newly built crossing points should reinforce these unofficial routes.
- + Topography and the types of vegetation also effect where crossing points can be established.

- E.g.: in the southern stretches there are thick mangrove vegetation and the terrain features some steeper slopes.
- + Safe pedestrian and cyclist crossing at arterial roads is another accessibility question the participants discussed. It was acknowledged that active crossings (controlled by traffic lights) might be pushed back from a traffic management point of view, while passive crossings might not be a safe option due to the high speed limits on the roads in subject (80 km/h). A potential flyover or overpass is a costly option, while underpasses are often avoided by the community due to poor wayfinding and visibility, and low perception of safety.

Wayfinding, signage and art:

- + It was also added that overpasses and other structures can provide surface for emerging local artists and help strengthen a sense of place. This may include graffiti walls.
- + Wayfinding signage is a critical component of the Project. This would enable regular, local users to chose from a range of routes based on their fitness level, interest or daily training goals. This would include distance markers and other signage.



City of Palmerston representatives discussing the Draft Concept Report and plans on the 13th of June 2025.

- + Interpretive signage are more relevant form a tourism perspective. Signage may provide information about the naming and history of surrounding neighbourhoods.
- + There is opportunity to connect the creek to a larger art trail network to attract more tourists.
- + Participants shared that the loose theming of the Project provides room for subsequent refinement and definition of themes.
- + An annual allocation for infrastructure upgrades could include allowance for artworks.

Maintenance:

- + Cyclone-proof construction is required throughout the creek corridor.
- + Vandal-proof and easy-to-maintain equipments and structured preferred throughout.
- + Water taps are preferred over bubblers for easier maintenance.
- + PVC is to be avoided on play equipments.
- + Paths and crossing points should be trafficable (design maintenance vehicle TBC), slip free and pressure-washable.
- + Trafficable sections are required to be sealed for longevity and easy maintenance.
- + Any gates need to be aligned with crossings.

3.1.2 Community Engagement

Date: 13/06/2025
 Time: 5:00-8:00 pm
 Location: Palmerston Market, (Goyder Square, Frances Mall, Palmerston)

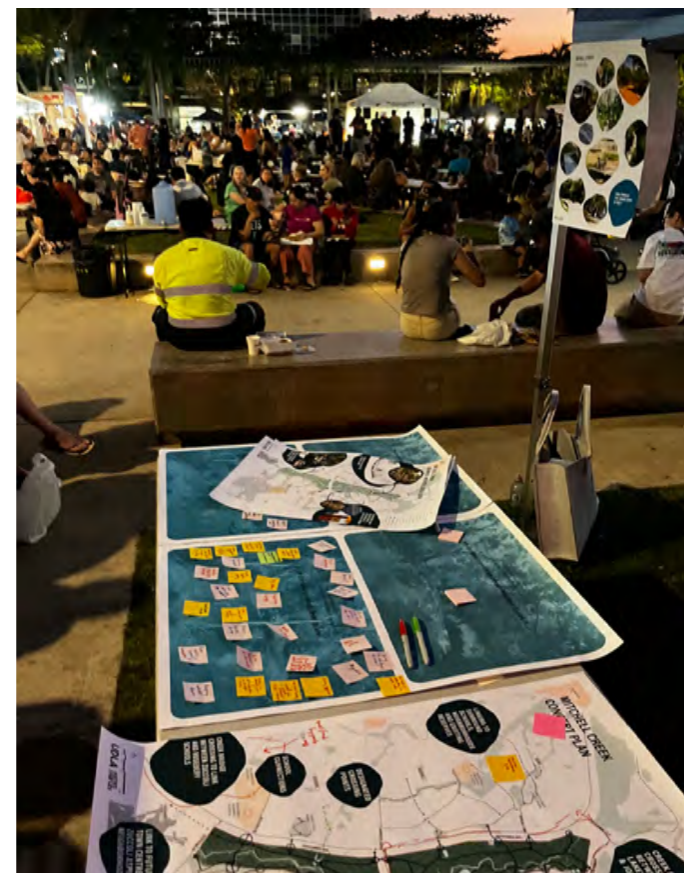
Conducted by:

- + Shea Hatch UDLA
- + Tessa Bradbury UDLA
- + Gingi Engloner Hames Sharley

- + The paths and access points shall be designed with maintenance and universal access in mind, however, uncontrolled access is to be avoided. Removable steel bollards might be required to manage access.
- + Participants shared that the sediment retention basins in the northern section of the area do not fill their intended purpose anymore, instead create mosquito-problems. These basins could be filled up and allow stormwater to enter the creek directly via sheet flows through the landscape. When concentrated flows are expected, speed dissipaters can be installed, e.g.: in form of vegetation.

Programming:

- + Bird watching and the installation of bird hides were seen to be more suitable for the northern section loops.



Pop-up consultation stall advertising the Draft Concept design on the 13th of June 2025.

The pop up community consultation session enabled the design team to engage directly with a diverse cross-section of Palmerston residents. The feedback received closely aligned with the insights gathered during the first round of consultation.

Participants supported the idea of a themed and upgraded network of paths designed to accommodate a variety of uses, including walking, jogging, cycling, and outdoor learning. Clear wayfinding, visitor safety, and the preservation of the creek's natural environment were identified as top priorities.

However, a significant portion of respondents were not previously aware of the project and learned about it for the first time during this community engagement.

In addition, some participants were unfamiliar with Mitchell Creek itself or lacked knowledge about how to access it and the recreational activities it currently offers. Residents living in neighbourhoods further from the creek reported that they rarely or never visit the creek. In contrast, those living nearby were generally well aware of this green open space and reported using it regularly.

In the future, people would like to see:

- + conservation areas
- + conservation of existing endemic vegetation
- + bird hides
- + support for aquatic and terrestrial fauna to return to the creek and thrive in their natural environment (fresh water clam, longbum snail)
- + fishing opportunities

- + solar power being used for electricity generation
- + lighting for improved public safety, especially for evening joggers
- + wildlife-friendly lighting

- + more crossing point along the creek
- + car parking for better access

- + passive surveillance

- + variety of paths and loops to chose from
- + connection of loops to existing neighbourhoods
- + sufficiently wide paths
- + running loops
- + boardwalks
- + better / more cycling routes
- + more formalised paths

Termite mound within the Mitchell Creek area.





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