

The Gong Embankment Wall

Objectives

- Consider how the impending works to the Gong embankment wall can be used to better integrate the upper and lower areas of the BBG, physically and conceptually;
- See the revegetation of the new Gong embankment wall as an opportunity to extend the collections of the BBG (and City of Ballarat), as well as providing a considered and heritage-sensitive backdrop for the memorial Sequoia and ponds;
- To redesign Cornish Street edge to improve pedestrian access and experience from the perspective of both safety and greater amenity;
- To use the new interface of the Gong embankment wall to create a thriving, indigenous, aquatic landscape for habitat, amenity and cultural importance;
- To use the Gong embankment wall works to enable a staged vegetation replacement strategy which will progressively rid the Gong of weed species and replant with indigenous, water's edge species.

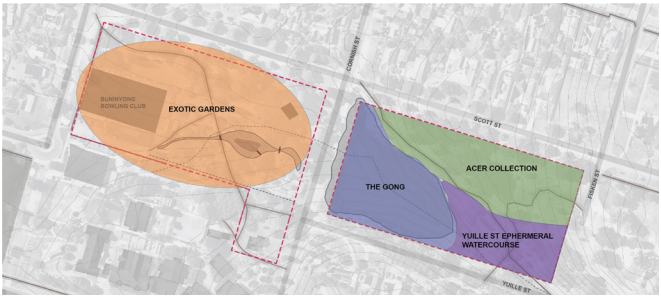


Fig. 1 Existing

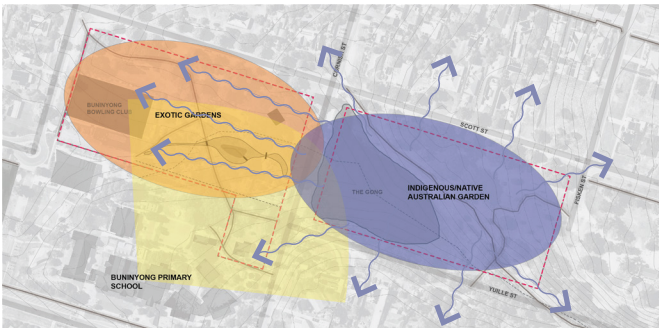


Fig. 2 Concept Diagram



Fig. 3 Plan of the Township of Buninyong (1856) indicating 'springs and tea tree' on the Botanic Gardens site

Gong Embankment Wall Reconstruction

- The reconstruction will remediate the leaking wall and bring it into line with current standards to secure safety for the Buninyong Community;
- Replanting of the embankment is constrained to a soil depth of 300mm in order to ensure the wall structure remains intact. Solutions which may provide greater depth of planting medium for the inclusion of larger species, such as terracing, are being explored and are subject to Engineering approval.

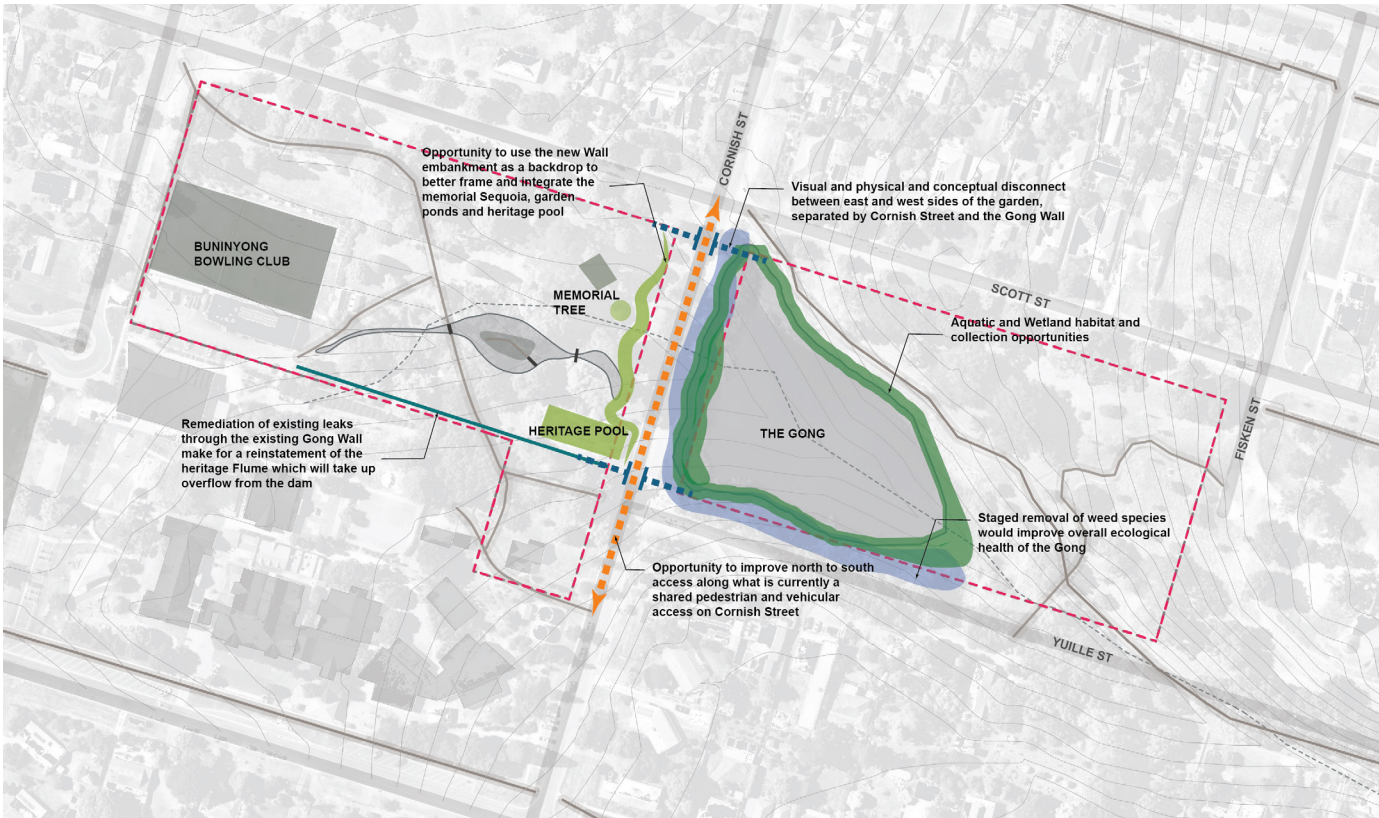


Fig. 4 Opportunities and Issues

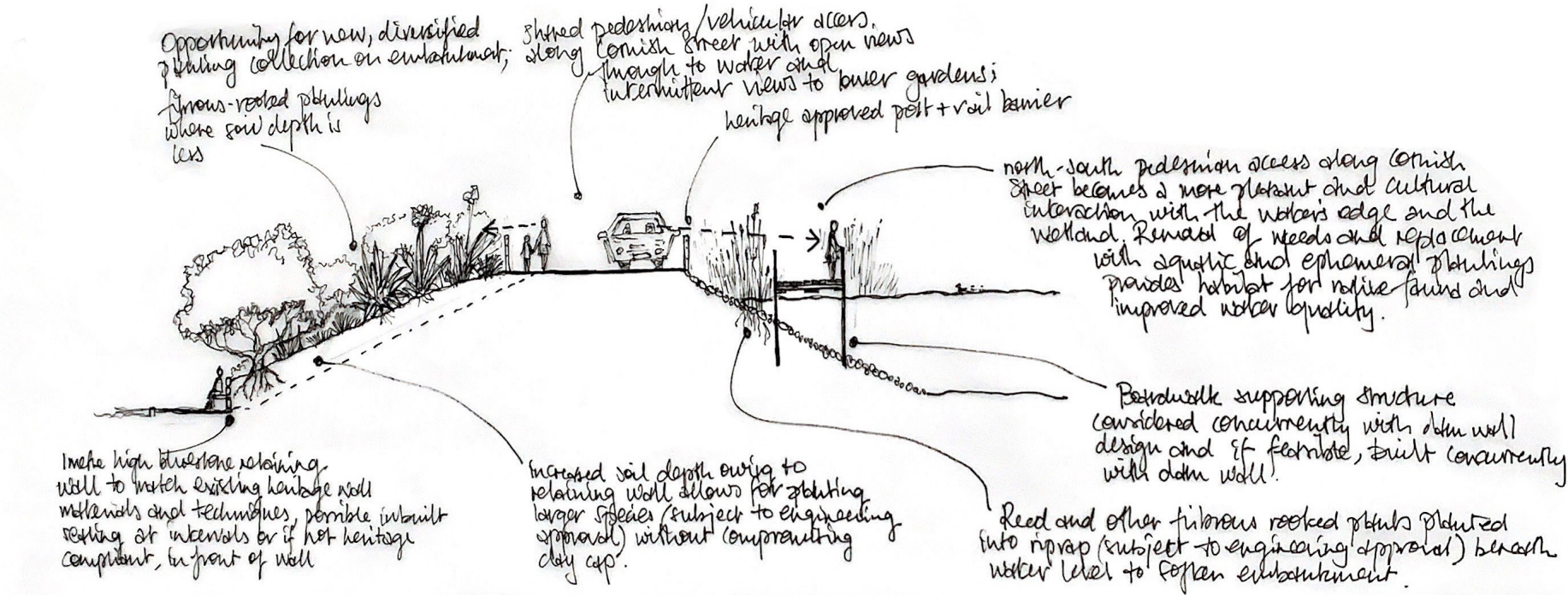


Fig. 5 Indicative Gong Wall Section (Subject to Engineering Approval)

Waterway + Aquatic Health

Objectives

- To consider monitoring and physical works to improve the water quality in the Gong;
- To remediate the health of the wetlands and riparian environment and their appearance through improved water filtration and increased biodiversity;
- Improve the amenity and function of the decorative pond system in the gardens;
- To explore opportunities for water harvesting to provide a sustainable source of irrigation for the gardens;
- To collaboratively explore opportunities for cultural experience and interpretation relating to water and Caring for Country with the Wadawurrung.

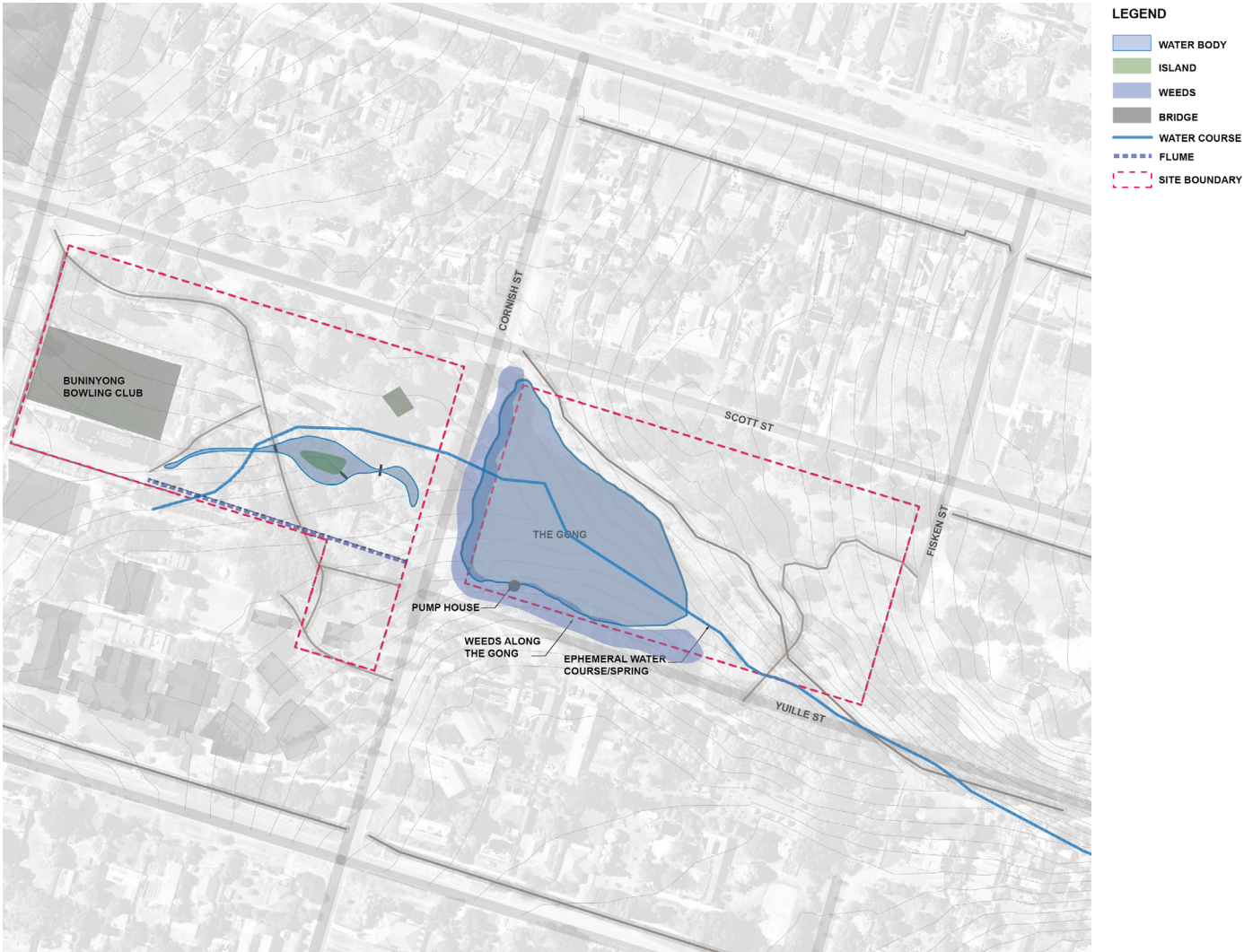


Fig. 6 Existing Water Conditions



Above: Existing Conditions;
Anti-clockwise from bottom right: Architectural award-winning
The Mill Hide, Kinross; Natural wetlands on Wadawurrung
Country (Photo: Jen Kongsai); North Gardens Indigenous
Sculpture Park Wetlands, Threatened indigenous fauna - the Blue-
Billed Duck (Photo: Richard Hall)



Access & Circulation

Objectives

- Through the documentation of destinations within and outside of the BBG, to determine the adequacy of existing paths and establish where there are missing links;
- To consider universal accessibility across all pathways;
- To provide a hierarchy of paths and trails for leisure, education, cultural experience and ease of travel.



Above: Koonung Creek Boardwalk, for the City of Manningham, 2017 (Urban Initiatives)



Fig. 7 Existing Connections



Fig. 8 Potential Connections

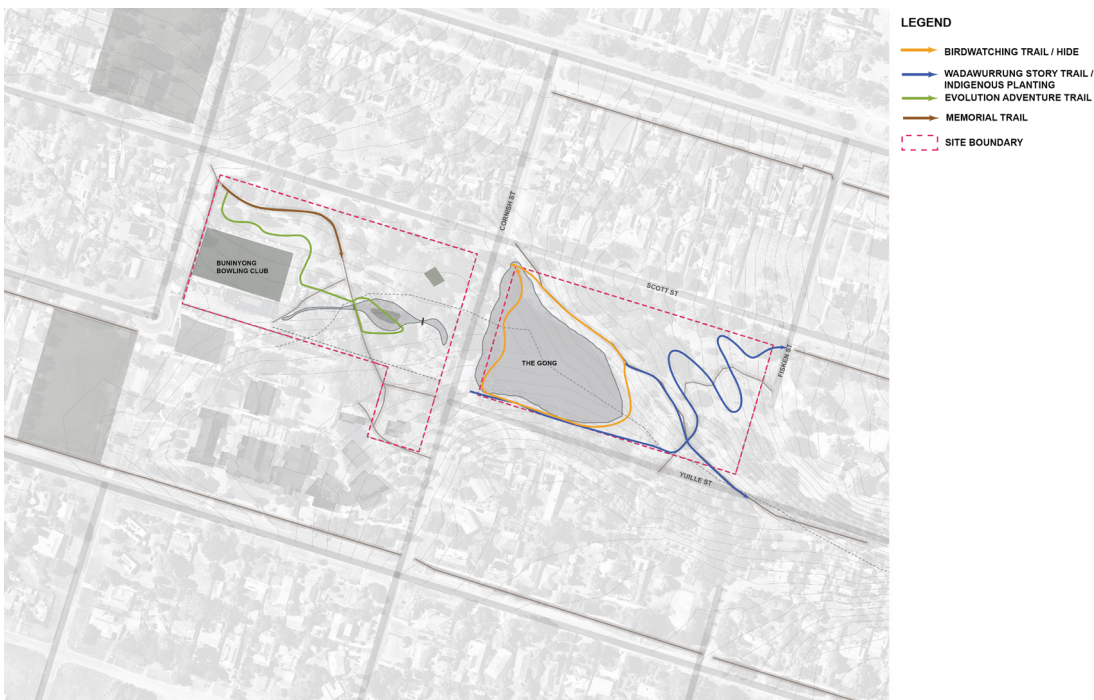


Fig. 9 Educational/Play/Interpretive Trail Ideas

Trees, Vegetation & Collections

- To use the City of Ballarat’s Living Collections Strategy to determine a planting strategy for the BBG which is consistent with the ‘Education’ theming for the Gardens and one which is complementary to that of the City’s existing collections;
- Following the Gong Wall works, to establish an Indigenous/Native plant collection in the upper gardens, where there are currently no defined collections;
- To proactively seek out opportunities within the Garden’s existing landscapes and microclimates for diverse, new plantings which in turn provide habitat for wildlife;
- To advocate for a tree replacement strategy which considers the removal of weed species, the Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) of existing tree plantings and climate change in establishing new, enduring and sustainable specimen plantings;
- To collaborate with the Wadawurrung to plant species of cultural significance, ie. for crafting and food sources eg the Murnong (Yam Daisy);
- To plan for future collaboration to traditionally manage the indigenous/native areas of the garden and waterways.

**Possible Collection Gaps
(The Living Collection Strategy)**

Cross Garden Focus Collection

- a representation of the original flora extending from the botanic garden to the summit of Mount Buninyong

Collection Extensions New Collections

- | | |
|------------------|------------|
| • Conifers | • Palms |
| • Viburnum | • Begonias |
| • Acer | |
| • Aquatic | |
| • Non-coniferous | |

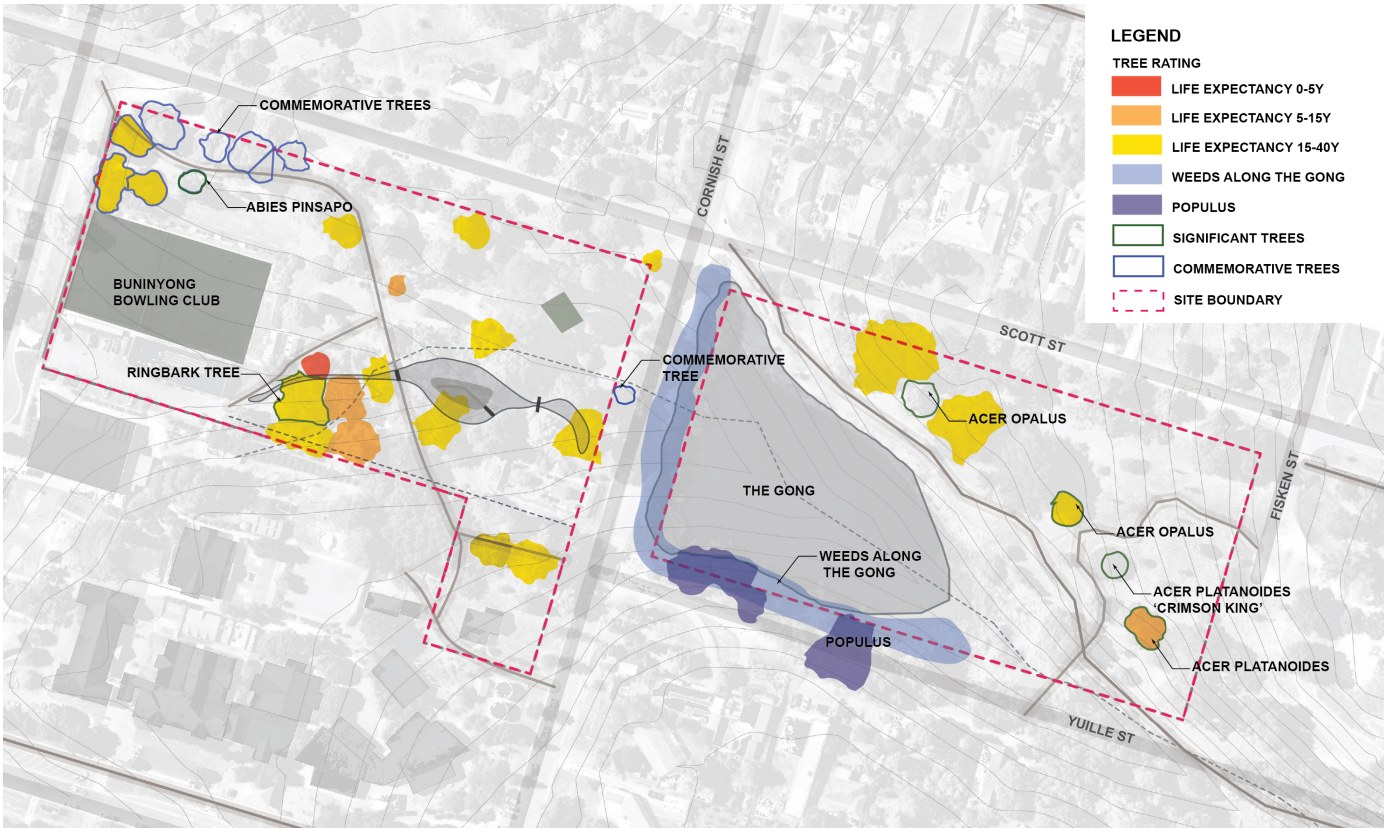


Fig. 10 Existing Specimen Rating

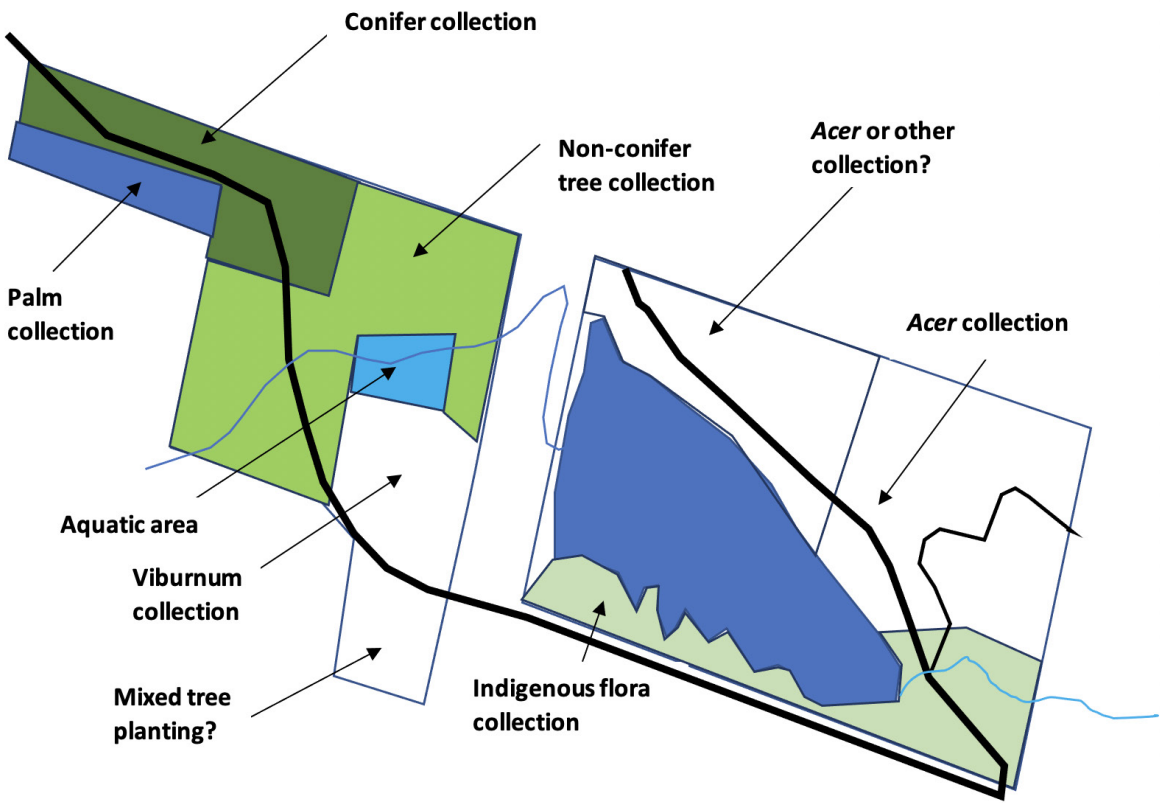


Fig. 11 Living Collection Strategy: Proposed Collections



Interpretation, Stories & Education

Objectives

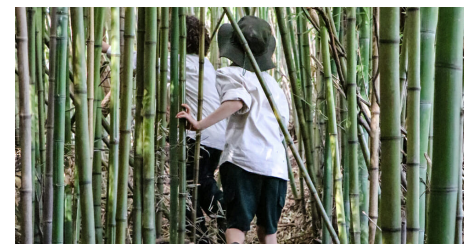
- Through collaboration with the Wadawurrung and the rest of the Buninyong community, to seize the opportunity of the integration of the two halves of the garden to consider the purpose of a Botanic Gardens in a contemporary and cultural context. This includes addressing and educating around themes such as climate change, reconciliation and Caring for Country.
- To consider the 'Educative' role of this Botanic Gardens as outlined in the City of Ballarat's Living Strategy and as complementary to the City of Ballarat's other Gardens;
- To appropriately share stories of the diverse Buninyong Community;
- To explore opportunities for 'learning through play' and what that looks like in a Botanic Gardens;
- To ensure educative/interpretive opportunities for the Ballarat Botanic Gardens are maximised and include themes such as
 - Wadawurrung and Cultural;
 - Historical; and
 - Botanical.



Fig. 12 Wadawurrung Country and the Buninyong Botanic Gardens

'We are here on Bongerimennin [Flagstaff Hill lookout in Linton], we have a view of Bonan Youang and Derrinalum. Bonan Youang is now at Mount Buninyong, which means a man lying on his back with his knees raised. Terrinalum is now called Mount Elephant. Terrinalum actually means place of the sea terns, which are like swallows. The story is told by the old people that Bonan Youang and Terrinalum argued and challenged each other to a fight and they came to together to fight at a place called Pitfield. Terrinalum had a spear. Bonan Youang had an axe. And as they fought Terrinalum pierced Bonan Youang's side with his spear. Buninyong hit Terrinalum on the head and spilt his head with his axe. They were so angry that they spat fire at each other, but they were also hurt so they retired back to their campsites to rest. They turned to stone. You can still see them today. If you look at Bonan Youang you can see where Terrinalum's spear pierced his side. If you look at Terrinalum you can see where Bonan Youang's axe split his head open.'

Above is Uncle Bryon's telling of the creation of Wadawurrung Country by the volcano warriors Derrinalum and Bonan Youang. The Gong lies directly in the line of fire between these two fearsome warriors. Their battle ground is the Victorian Volcanic Plains and Wadawurrung ancestors witnessed this fight. Their country, with it's unique geology, flora and fauna now lies peaceful.



Clockwise from bottom left: Fun within the *Ficus macrophylla* buttresses, Sydney Botanic Gardens; Plants labelled with Woi Wurrung names, at The Living Pavillion, Melbourne University (Thrive Hub, CAUL, CLIMATE's 2019 Festival); Bamboo Forest, Ian Potter Children's Garden (Laidlaw & Laidlaw); Log thrones, Castlemaine Botanic Gardens (Urban Initiatives); Growing Wild Playspace, Melbourne Zoo (Jeavons); Close observation of foliage through a microscope, Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanic Gardens, Ohio; Commemorative tree and plaque, Buninyong Botanic Gardens; Collaborative Aboriginal fish artwork, Jubilee Park (Urban Initiatives with Baluk Arts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation); *Muehlenbeckia* topiary, Ian Potter Children's Garden (Laidlaw & Laidlaw).

Amenity

Objectives

- To increase the beauty and diversity of spatial offerings and experiences throughout the garden;
- To provide adequate shade, shelter, seating, toilets, BBQs, drinking fountains etc to ensure using the gardens is practical and comfortable.
- In collaboration with the Wadawurrung, to consider the appropriateness of an addition of a gathering space for Wadawurrung culture and teaching somewhere in the gardens.



Above: Wadawurrung dancers (Wadawurrung Facebook Page);
Open performances, Buninyong Botanic Gardens, Buninyong
Community Website;

Far Right from Top: Site Photos;
Colleen & Paul's wedding (Buninyong Brewery Website);
Community gathering, (Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens
Facebook); Open performances (Buninyong Community Website).

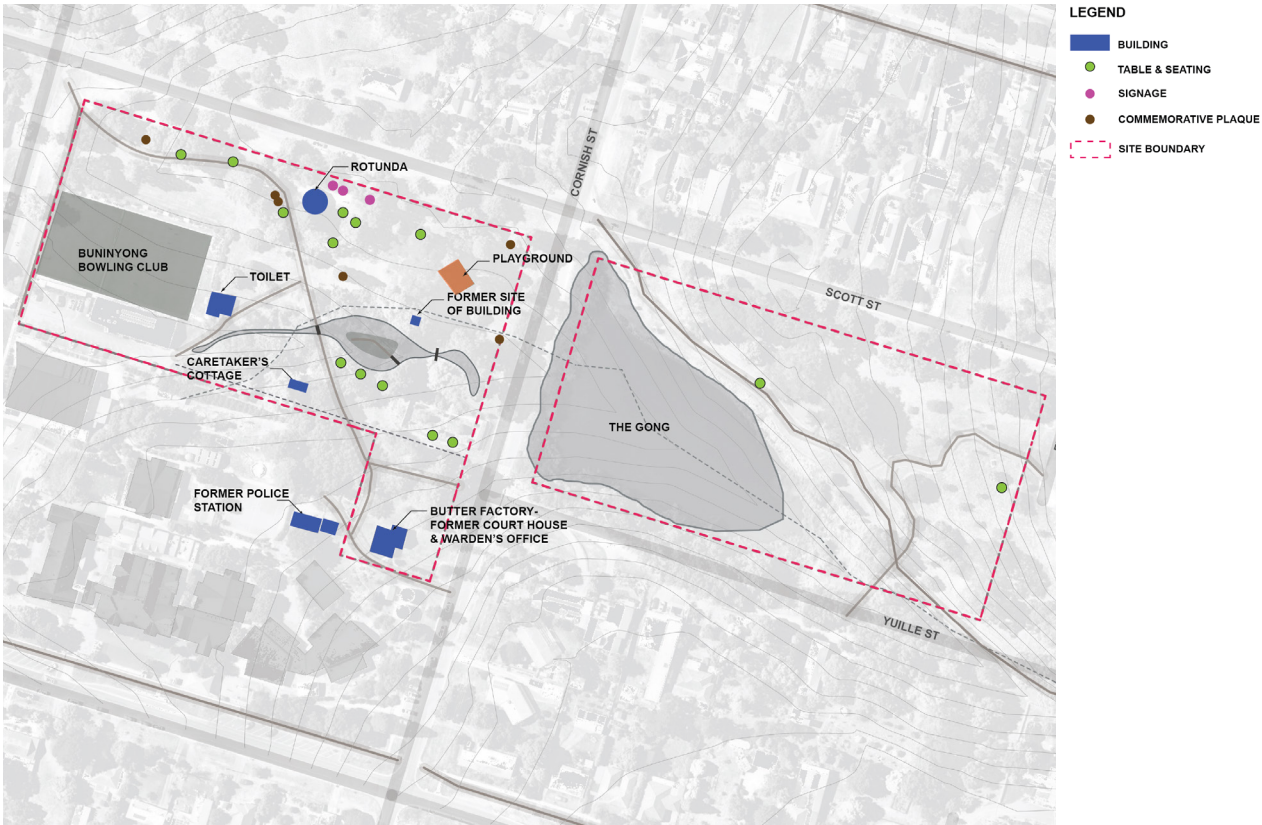


Fig. 13 Existing buildings & Amenities

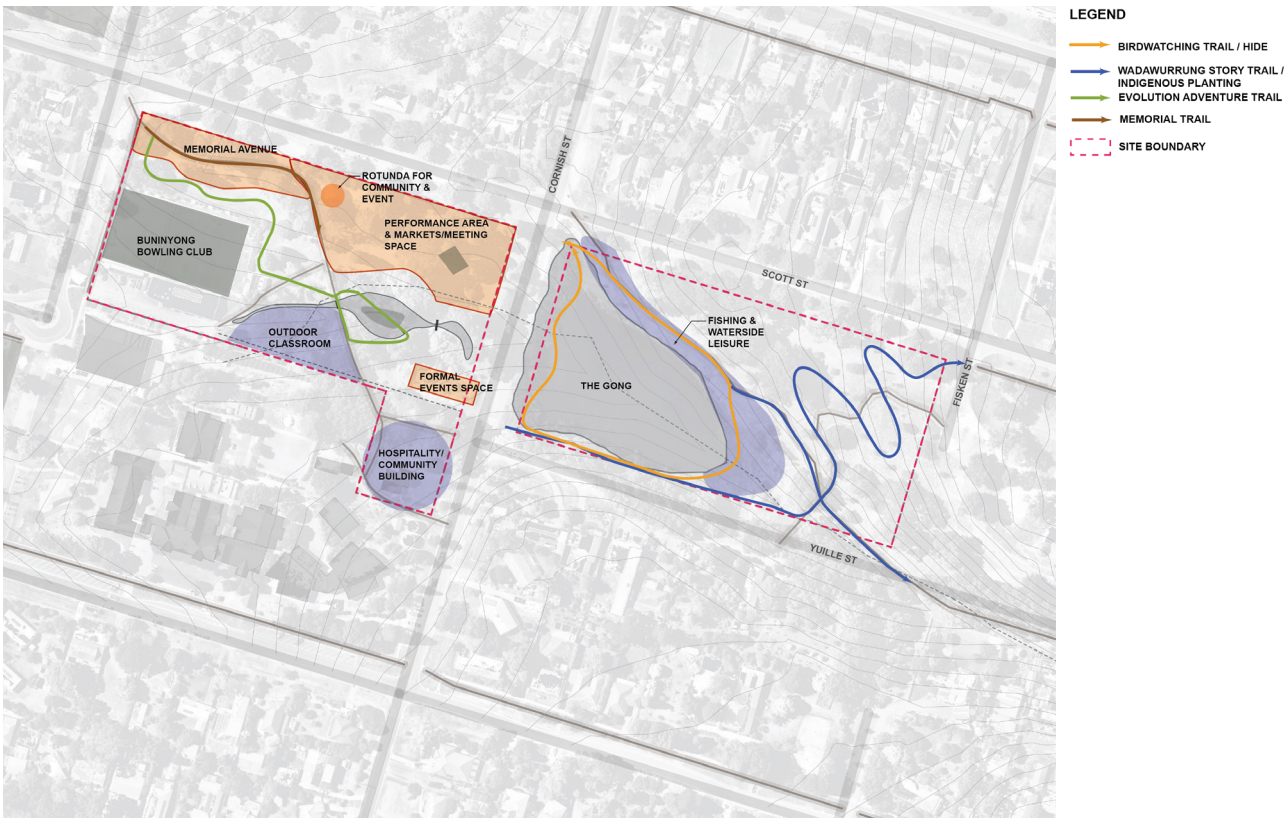


Fig. 14 Programming Ideas



Fig. 15 Strolling through the Gardens (1903)