

**Hassell**

with Christine Johnson

# VANITY LANE UPGRADE



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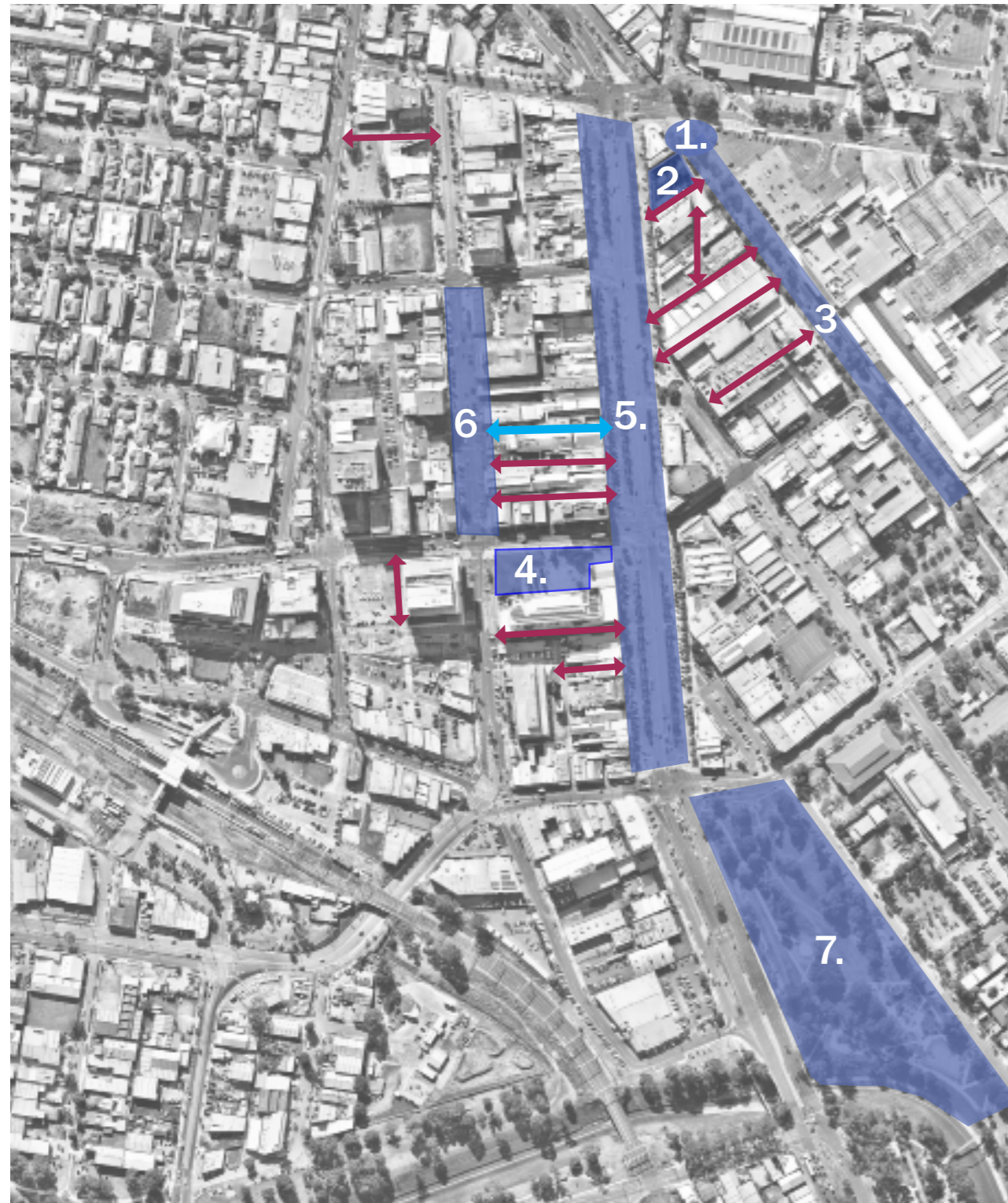
<b>1.</b>	<b>Site Analysis</b> Context The Site	<b>03</b>
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An aerial photograph of a city grid, showing a dense network of streets and buildings. The image is tinted with a light blue color. The text 'SITE ANALYSIS' is overlaid in the center in a large, bold, black font.

# **SITE ANALYSIS**

# CONTEXT

## OPEN SPACE NETWORK + LANEWAY CONNECTIONS



↔ LANE + ARCADE CONNECTIONS

VANITY LANE



1. ANZAC PILLARS OF FREEDOM, PALM PLAZA



2. POCKET PARK (NAME UNKNOWN)



3. PALM PLAZA



4. HARMONY SQUARE, DANDENONG LIBRARY



5. LONSDALE STREET



5. LONSDALE STREET, GARDEN ROOMS



6. AFGHAN BAZAAR, THOMAS STREET



7. DANDENONG PARK

# CONTEXT

## ENVIRONMENT - VEGETATION CLASSES PRE 1750

The City of Greater Dandenong has more than 10 known EVCs represented in its parks and bushland reserves, including:

- Plains Grassy Wetland (EVC 123)
- Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55)
- Floodplain Riparian Woodland (EVC 56)
- Damp Sands Herbrich Woodland (EVC 3)
- Heathy Woodland (EVC 48)



**Grassy Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 175  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Lower Slopes or Hills Woodlands  
 Subgroup: Grassy

**Plains Grassy Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 55  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Plains woodlands or forests  
 subgroup: Freely draining

**Creekline Herb-rich Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 164  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Herb-rich Woodlands  
 Subgroup: Alluvial terraces and/or creeklines

**Swampy Riparian Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 83  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Riparian scrubs or swampy scrubs and woodlands

**Heathy Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 48  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Heathy Woodlands

# CONTEXT

## ENVIRONMENT - VEGETATION CLASSES

### PRE-1750 EVC CHARACTER:



**Plains Grassy Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 55  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Plains woodlands or forests  
 subgroup: Freely draining

**Grassy Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 175  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Lower Slopes or Hills Woodlands  
 Subgroup: Grassy

**Swampy Riparian Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 83  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Riparian scrubs or swampy scrubs and woodlands

**Heathy Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 48  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Heathy Woodlands

**Creepline Herb-rich Woodland**  
 EVC Number: 164  
 Bioregion: Gippsland plain  
 Group: Herb-rich Woodlands  
 Subgroup: Alluvial terraces and/or creeklines



**Allocasuarina littoralis**  
 Black She-oak tree  
 Medicinal



**Acacia mearnsii**  
 Black Wattle Tree  
 Medicinal



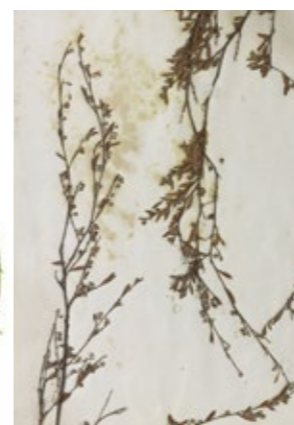
**Acacia melanoxylon**  
 Blackwood Tree  
 Medicinal



**Melaleuca ericifolia**  
 Swamp Paper-bark Tree  
 Medicinal (EVC 83)



**Exocarpus cupressiformis**  
 Cherry Ballart  
 Medicinal



**Leptospermum continentale**  
 Prickly Tea-trea  
 Medicinal



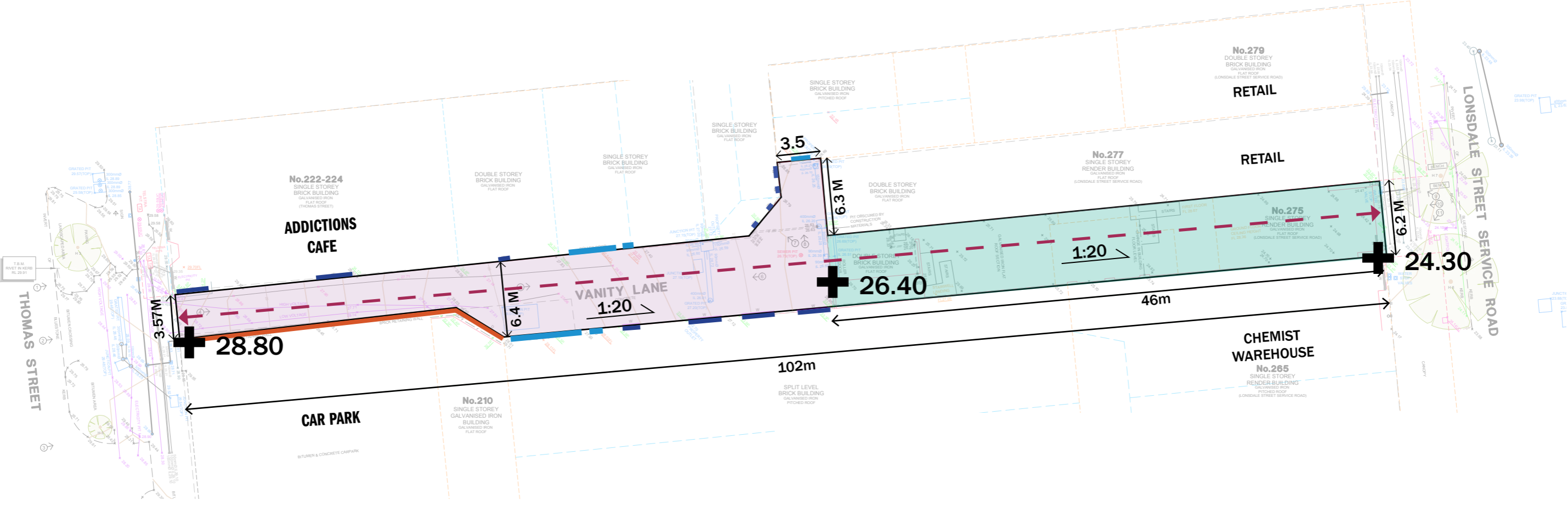
**Astroloma humifusum**  
 Cranberry Heath Shrub  
 Medicinal



**Pteridium esculentum**  
 Bracken Fern  
 Medicinal

# THE SITE

## CONSTRAINTS



- Retaining Brick Wall
- Doors and Roller Doors
- Windows
- Demolition site + Future Lane connection
- Vehicular access Zone
- - - Pedestrian Access

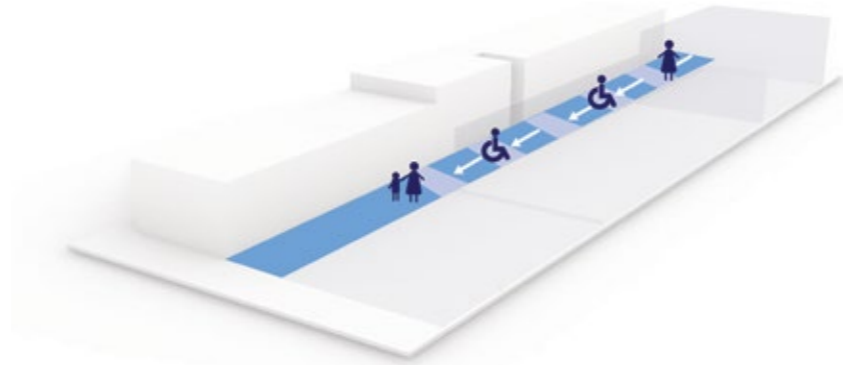
An aerial photograph of a city grid, showing a dense network of streets and buildings. The image is monochromatic, with a blue tint. The text 'COMMUNITY INPUT' is overlaid in the center in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in two lines: 'COMMUNITY' on the top line and 'INPUT' on the bottom line. The background shows a mix of residential and commercial buildings, with some larger structures and many smaller ones. The streets are clearly visible, forming a grid pattern. The overall scene is a detailed view of an urban environment.

**COMMUNITY  
INPUT**



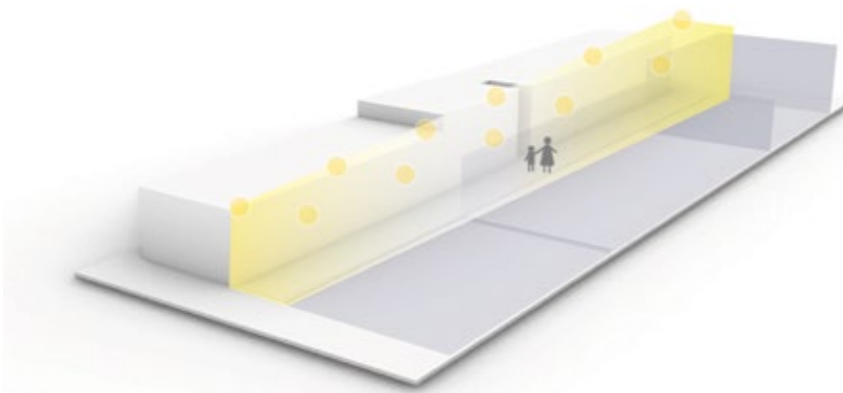
# 3 KEY MESSAGES

## ACCESSIBILITY



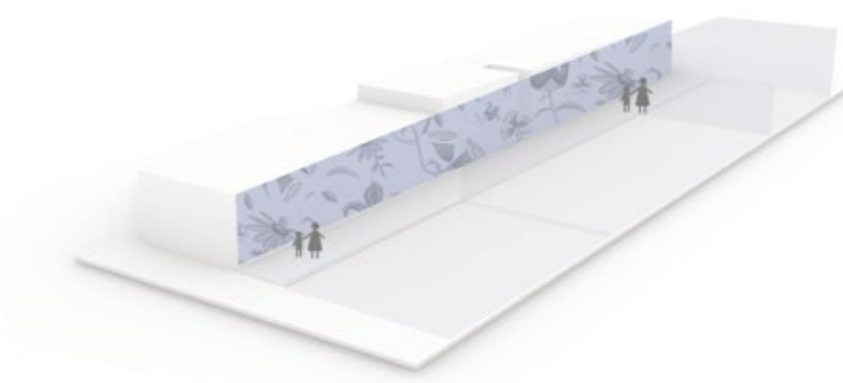
- Provide better access for all abilities
- Design smooth surfaces with no trip hazards

## SAFETY



- Vanity lane needs to be a safe and welcoming space
- Provide clear sight lines with no blind spots for people to hide
- Provide CCTV for additional security
- Safety and Feature lighting to high levels

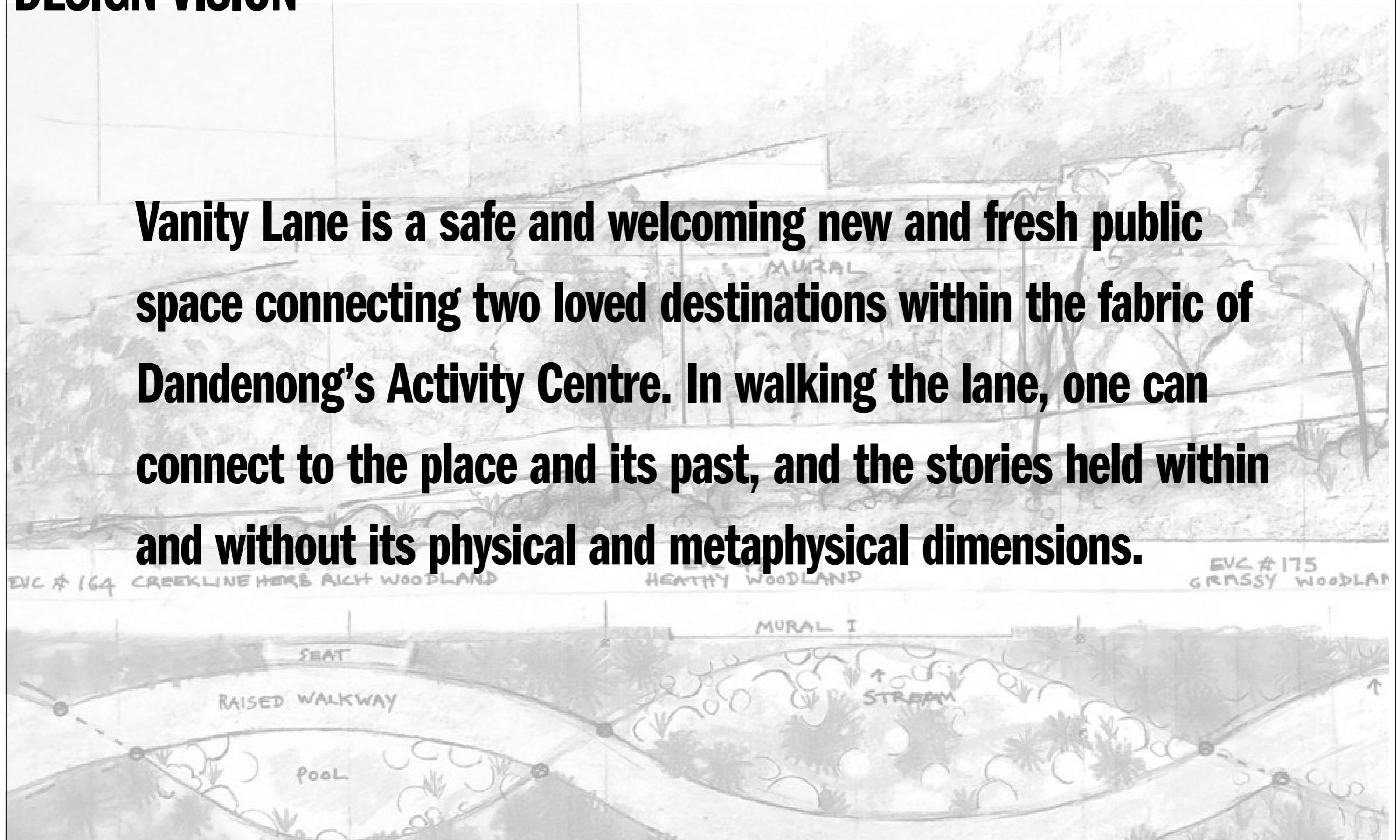
## AMBIENCE



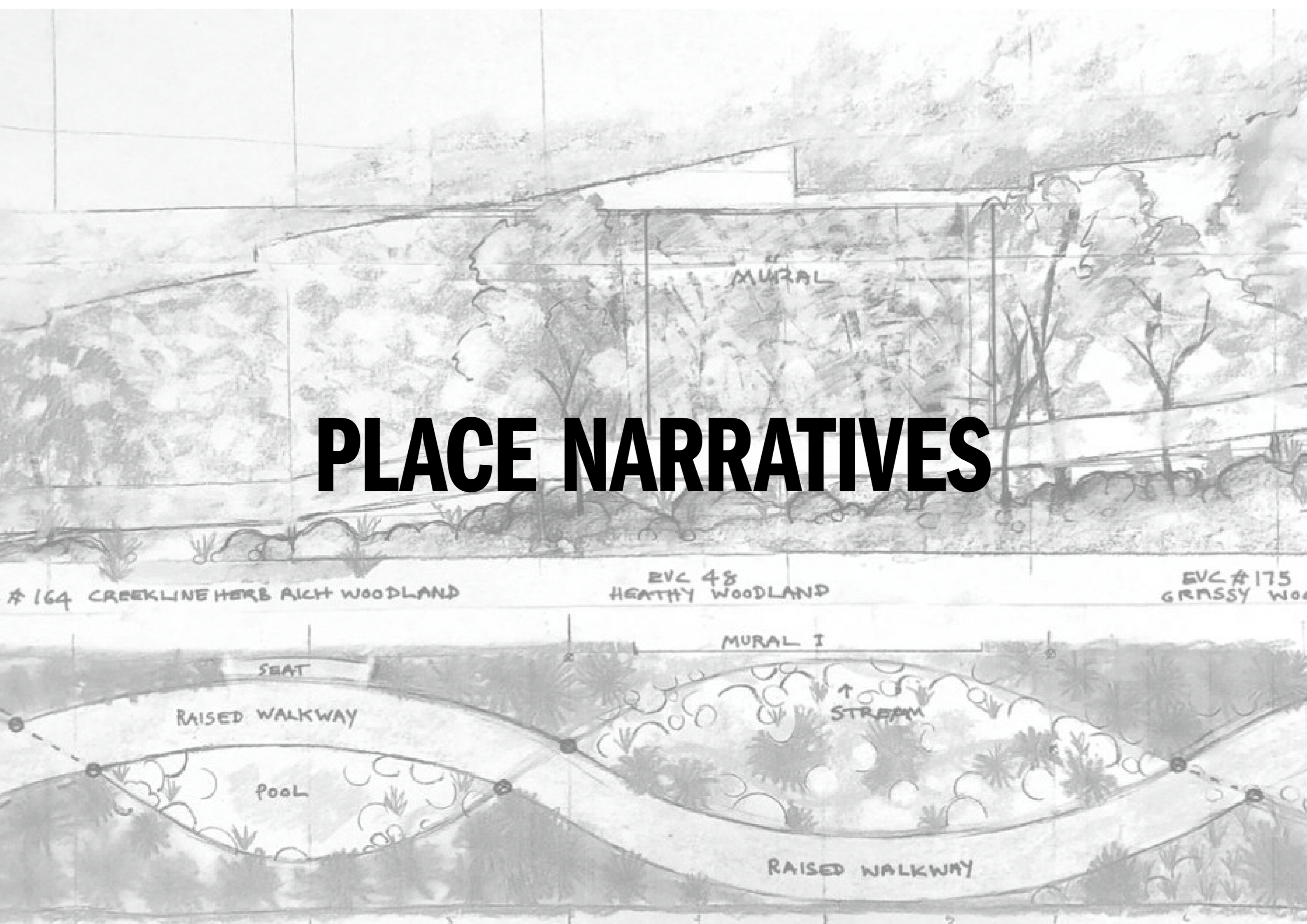
- Provide a space that is inviting to linger
- Consider weather protection to enhance comfort in the lane
- Provide a space that is enhanced through public art and is telling the story of the place

# DESIGN VISION

**Vanity Lane is a safe and welcoming new and fresh public space connecting two loved destinations within the fabric of Dandenong's Activity Centre. In walking the lane, one can connect to the place and its past, and the stories held within and without its physical and metaphysical dimensions.**



# PLACE NARRATIVES



# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS

## A VISUAL NARRATIVE

### VISION:

To uplift the visitor on a walk through a sanctuary of natural beauty in the heart of Dandenong.

### Our aim is to create:

- a safe, well-lit pedestrian route for all the community to interact with, value and appreciate.
- a place which honours the pharmacy families who have served the community on this site and featuring the Couve family story.
- a place where the history of the site is felt through the design – a design reflecting the link between nature and science, botany and pharmacy.



A path, based on the double helix shape of DNA, will wind through the laneway, unrolling like a scroll, telling the history of the site forwards or backwards in time. In a series of ramps and rest areas, the journey will take us through three distinct time zones, via portals, marked by overhead structures, leading us from one era into another.

The theme of the link between botany and pharmacy will be experienced throughout with plantings of native flora, artworks, colour themes, pavement and wall treatments and overhead structures all delivering their part of the story.

As we enter the laneway from Lonsdale St, we can learn about all the pharmacy families who once worked here. Their names will be on interpretive signage at the Lonsdale St entrance: Titcher, Couve, Finlayson, McKeon, etc

### Zone 1

#### The pre-European landscape The First Portal

At the Lonsdale St entrance, a subtle experience of the pre-European landscape will be created by an overhead shade structure mimicking the dappled light of this once herb-rich woodland.

### Zone 2

#### A Garden Room The Second Portal

Dandenong's last 150 years: The site as a pharmacy.

At the heart of Vanity Lane is the Couve family and their story. The Couve family story is significant for Dandenong. It is a story that begins in Dandenong's glory days when pharmacist, Joson Couve opened his first pharmacy in Dandenong in 1884.

### Zone 3

#### Now and then... The Third Portal

The upper laneway and transition to the Afghan precinct.

This is a place where we can honour those who have served community during Covid. Medical people are the heroes of our time. They care for people in hospitals at great personal risk, and scientists and biochemists strive to find a vaccine to protect us.



### Zone 1

#### The pre-European landscape First Portal

*"When Europeans arrived in Dandenong in the 1830s, the banks of Dandenong Creek were blanketed in maidenhair ferns along with 'wild raspberries, wild black currants, native laurels, myrtles, silver wattles and other pretty shrubs.'<sup>1</sup> Birds, marsupials and fish all called the area home and provided rich sources of food for the Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung, Boonwurrung and Bunurong peoples." Roulston*



The Lonsdale St entrance will be a white, luminous space, shaded and weather protected. At night it will be transformed by back-lighting. By day we will see beyond the structure to blue sky overhead. The overhead structure will be in white, so that the view to the blue sky above creates a 'ghost' image - a symbol of something absent but remembered.

# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS

## A VISUAL NARRATIVE

### Zone 2

#### A Garden Room and the Second Portal

At the heart of Vanity lane is its history as a pharmacy.

The Couve family story encapsulates many of the themes which are significant for Dandenong.

Joson Couve was a French Mauritian migrant, from the aristocratic Couve de Murville family. He came to Australia in the 1883 and opened his first pharmacy in Dandenong in 1884.

After the death of his first wife, he married Minnie Ladson and had a daughter, Hilda Eileen and two sons, Alan and Tom.

Alan and Tom played football for Dandenong and were local sports heroes. Both Alan and Tom were killed at Gallipoli in 1915 within two weeks of each other.

Their deaths had a huge impact on the community. The loss prompted the establishment of the Roll of Honour at the Dandenong Town Hall.

After the war Joson Couve, his wife Minnie and Eileen left Dandenong for Red Cliffs, near Mildura, where they opened a pharmacy in Red Cliffs to provide support to returned servicemen settling in the region.

Red Cliffs is where Eileen's story as a plant collector and nature writer begins. She felt the loss of her brothers very keenly, but became an avid plant collector and botanist. She corresponded frequently with the National Herbarium about her discoveries and also became a feisty conservationist.

In 2020 we will bring Eileen's story back to Dandenong. Eileen's legacy and contribution to botany will be celebrated with a back-lit perforated metal mural at the centre of the site.



Eileen Ramsay née Couve, botanising along the Murray River with entomologist, John Plant.



In Zone 2, we enter an open space, a garden room. We can look up at the sky. It is an open space in place of the old pharmacy - another ghost image. The Couve family are long gone but here we can remember them.

Hidden in the paving and in the line of the path is a double helix. The double helix signifies human presence and our creative and healing act of remembering and reclaiming this place.

The walls are covered in creepers. There are places to sit on the terraces and gently sloping path. Here there are several trees, slim trunks of Lilly Pilly or Brachychiton. One day their canopies will connect to join in making a canopy over the whole. It is something like an old medic garden, with medicinal plants growing and the sound of running water, a soothing, quiet place to sit.

This is where we can begin to learn about the Couve family, about Joson Couve and his journey from Mauritius, his marriage to Minnie Ladson, their sons, Alan and Tom, and daughter Eileen.

Information will also be conveyed in subtle messages for the interested visitor:

- Engraved into the paving
- Colour themes in paving in reference to the Couve's Mauritian homeland
- Plants with medicinal uses
- Plantings of blue cornflowers - the French bleuet or flower of remembrance, in memory of the Couve brothers

# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS

## A VISUAL NARRATIVE



### The Second Portal

This second portal is a covered structure in perforated metal and can be back lit at night, celebrating Mallee botanist, Eileen Ramsay, née Couve. After the war and the death of Joson Couve's two sons, Alan and Tom, the remaining family moved to Red Cliffs, on the banks of the Murray River, near Mildura. Joson Couve opened a pharmacy to help returned servicemen. Botany and pharmacy are re-united in Eileen's plant collecting. We celebrate Eileen's legacy as a botanist by bringing her work back to Dandenong where she spent much of her childhood. In reference to Eileen's plant collecting in the Mallee, and based on cyanotypes made from her herbarium collection, the images will mimic the style of old botanical drawings in strong graphic elements. A sound system will enable soundscape works to be played from behind this structure.



Example of botanical illustration style for this structure



# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS

## A VISUAL NARRATIVE

### Zone 3 Now and then... and the Third Portal

As we move out into the open again we are back in the Dandenong of today. The laneway has a cul de sac defined by an angled red brick wall. It has the texture and urban feel of some of inner Melbourne's laneways. It might take a leap of the imagination but this part of the site could have a possible future use for a mobile café, with seating and umbrellas, where people can gather. The greening of the laneway will extend along the lines of the path.



VANITY LANE

In Zone 3, we can find ways to honour the people who have served the community during Covid. It would be good to involve community groups here and extend the healing themes of the laneway, exploring the links between nature and science, botany and pharmacy. This could be done with creative workshops, planting projects and paving treatments. It would extend the life of the project and create an opportunity for participation and a sense of ownership for the community.

The third portal brings us closer to Thomas St where we will enter the Afghan precinct of Dandenong. We make this transition through a structure of intricate geometric design, in perforated metal, an inviting 'open weave' gateway. Continued botanical themes and plantings offer an inviting feeling to the visitor who may enter from here.



# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS



# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS

Combines the winding, double helix pathway with seating plinths beside it and the staged narrative of pharmaceutical uses of planting transitioning to an islamic geometric abstraction of planting at the Thomas Street end to tie into the Afghan Bazaar character.

This design uses the idea of portals that create thresholds along the journey through the lane. These would be established in perforated metal with integrated artworks developed by Christine Johnson referencing both original vegetation types and pharmaceutical plants.

## ACCESS + MOVEMENT:

Lonsdale end is established as a meandering walk through a lush native garden with open seating platforms. Establish accessible path at 1:20 grades at Lonsdale end with landings leading to flat seating plinths. No handrails or tactile markers required.

Garden strips follow the general 1:20.

Seating platforms may offer tables for lunch breaks.

Vehicular access to servicing and loading remains at Thomas Street end but may be limited to specific time slots.

## ENVIRONMENT

Native endemic planting as groundcovers and smaller tree canopy. Supported by vegetation that references family connections to Mauritius and ties connections to arabic and middle eastern planting. Remains clear sightlines at eye level. Planting selected with preference of having medicinal purposes.

The gardens function further as rainwater channelling and infiltrating channels.

## LIGHTING

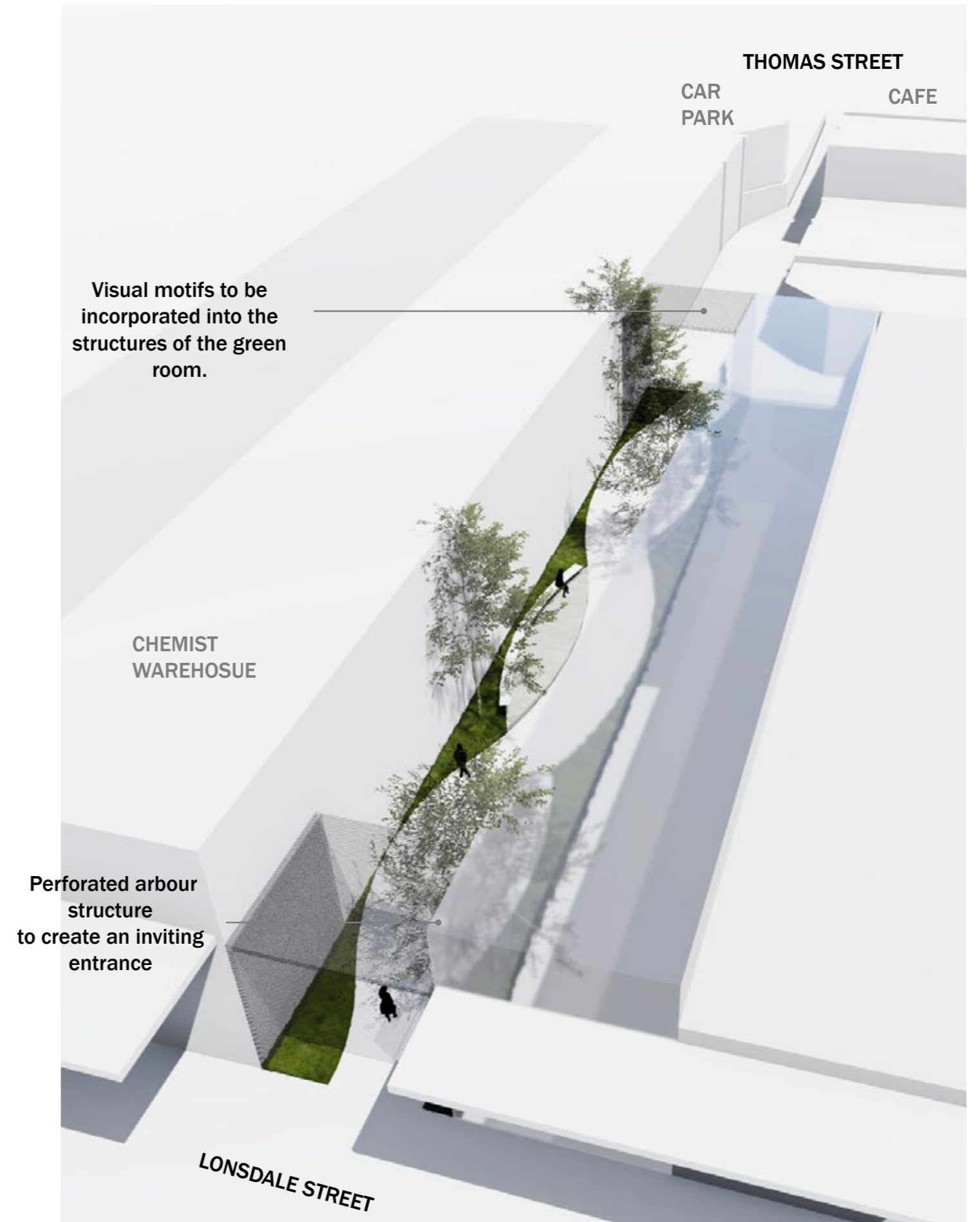
Functional lighting via wall mounting - P6 light level

Atmospheric lighting within planting and from behind wall screen

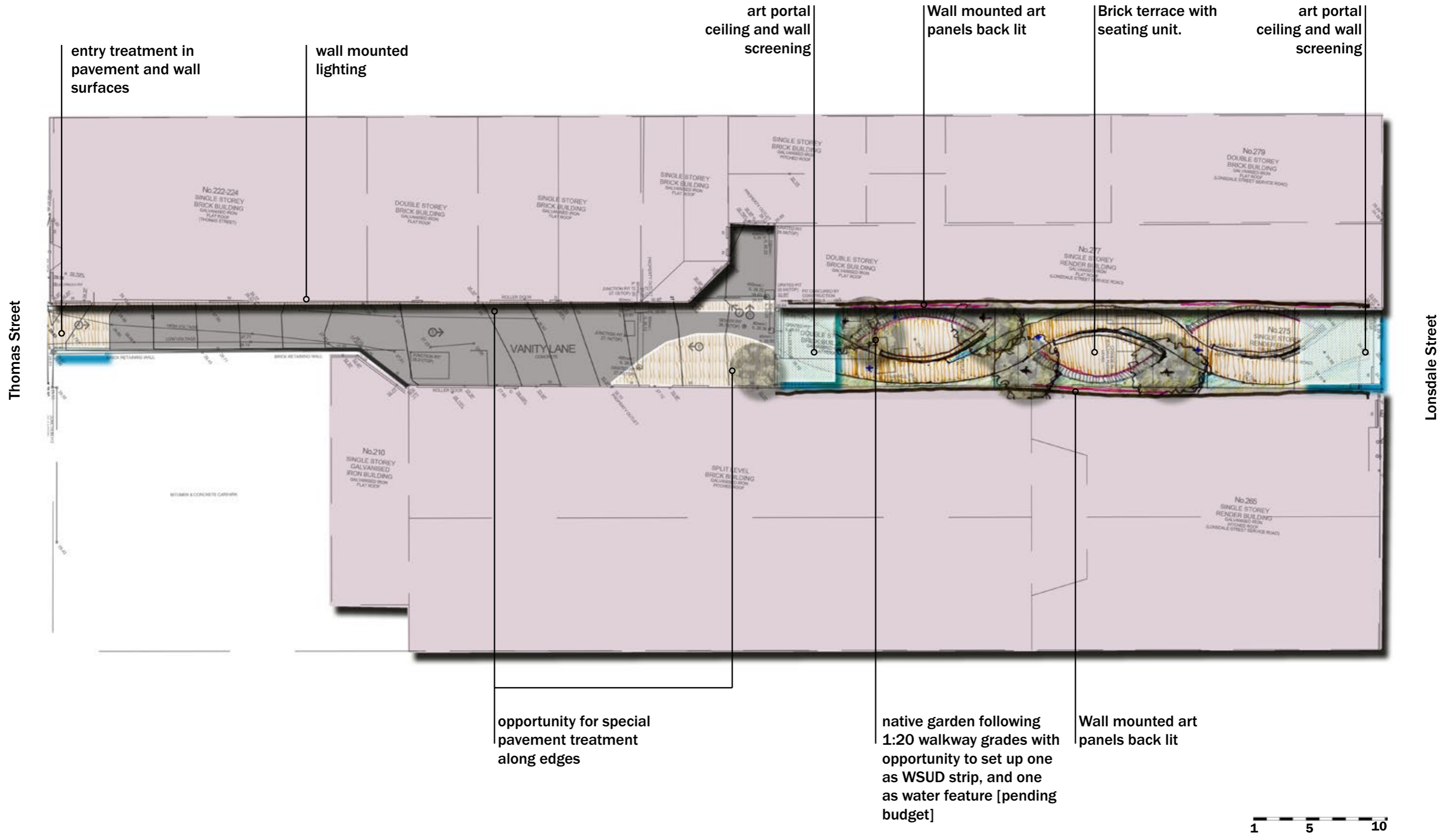
## IT/CCTV/ SERVICES

Wifi, CCTV via wall mounting. smart street technology [people counter]

services outlets to support coffee cart or small performance events [on platforms or in middle sections]



# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS



# GARDEN LANE WITH PORTALS



View through the Lonsdale Street portal up towards Thomas Street



View through the mid lane portal down towards Lonsdale Street



Resting and seating plinth between art portals



Aerial view onto the Lonsdale Street end

# PRECEDENTS



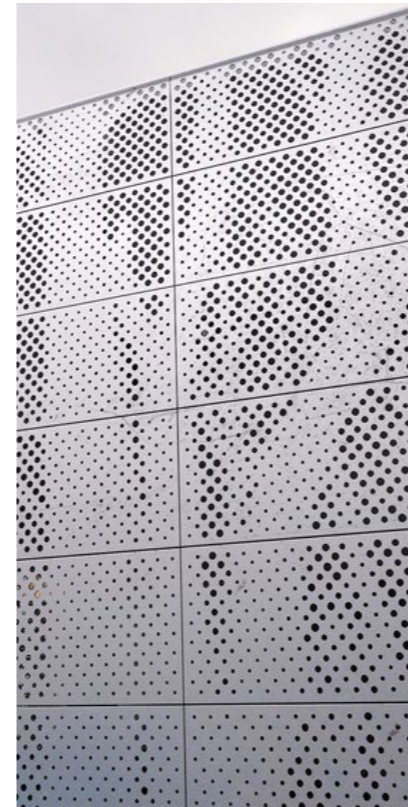
Radial red bricks create a smooth winding path



Dappled light through vegetation projects shadows on to the path



Winding pathway defined by contrasting gravel and vegetation



Perforated image in aluminium panels.



Light and shadows cast by a graphic canopy



White steel perforated canopy projects patterns of light to path below



McKEON'S

PHARMACY

Judd's

RADIO TV  
& ELECTRICAL

McKEON'S PHARMACY  
AND CANADA CENTRE

ASTOR ASTOR

Judd's ELECTRIC