

Muttama Creek

Master Plan Report

DRAFT

Prepared For



COOTAMUNDRA-
GUNDAGAI REGIONAL
COUNCIL

July 2025



1.0 Introduction

The Master Plan for Muttama Creek (the Creek) in Cootamundra, Wiradjuri country, has been prepared in conjunction with proposed flood mitigation works and preliminary community consultation by Martens and Associates and ecological assessment by Land Eco Consulting for the Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC).

The Master Plan will

- provide a framework to revitalise the riparian corridor,
- integrate flood mitigation, and
- create a sustainable open space ecological network within the town centre of Cootamundra.

The study area is limited to a 2km length from Adams Street to Lloyd Conkey Avenue as shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 Study Area

2.0 Context

Muttama Creek, a major tributary of the Murrumbidgee River system traverses the town centre of Cootamundra. Aboriginal for swamp and turtles, the town has long experienced localised flooding and inundation of properties along the riparian corridor.

Rivers and creeks are an inherent part of many regional town centres and contribute to the identity and vitality of the place. The revitalisation of Muttama Creek provides an opportunity to reduce the impact of flooding, contribute to the well-being of the town centre and its residents, enhance its sense of place, acknowledge the Traditional Owners and their continued connection to country and attract tourism to Cootamundra.

The Master Plan is consistent with key focus areas in the Cootamundra-Gundagai Community Strategic Plan which includes:

1. A Vibrant, Safe and Inclusive Community
2. A Region for the Future
3. A Protected and Enhanced Environment

3.0 Precincts

There are four distinct character precincts along the 2km length of Muttama Creek within the Master Plan.

- Bradman Precinct
- Sport and Recreation Precinct
- Town Centre Precinct
- Local Community Precinct



3.1

Bradman Precinct



3.1 Bradman Precinct

This precinct comprises two blocks commencing at Adams Street through to Cutler Avenue and extends south to Poole Street.

3.11 The Place

The precinct comprises two key important places:

- The oval, named after Sir Donald Bradman; and
- Bradman's Birthplace Museum, which is a Local Heritage Item and tourist attraction.

The oval has no definition and minimal surrounding tree canopy and there is no signage to Bradman's Birthplace nor any reference to Bradman other than the name of the oval.

Characterised by the cricket oval, the Bradman precinct contains, cricket nets, public amenities, pathways and play equipment with residential dwellings to the east of the creek. These properties have been severely affected by flooding and the riparian corridor is barely discernible, appearing as a grassed swale along the edge of the oval.

The original alignment of the creek was located to west of the current crossing on Adams Street, in the centre of Bradman Oval.

Flood mitigation works only are proposed for the block between Cutler Avenue and Poole Street.



3.12 Opportunities

Bradman's Birthplace Museum is a tourist attraction within walking distance of the creek. It presents an opportunity to integrate with the Creek and develop a walking trail and signage along Cutler Avenue and Adams Street to and from this tourist attraction.

There is an opportunity to define the oval with a traditional fence in honour of Sir Donald Bradman and integrate it with the revitalised creek.

Additional trees surrounding the oval and along the Creek will provide shade and improve the aesthetic quality of the riparian corridor.



The proposed flood mitigation provides an opportunity to both revitalise the waterway and increase the trees and plantings alongside the Creek to visually reinforce and link it to the town centre, and also increase the tree canopy surrounding the oval and integrate it into the revitalised waterway.

The current pedestrian crossing at Cutler Avenue is not disabled accessible and below the level of the road. There is an opportunity to provide a level crossing to the oval and improve the flow of water. The flood mitigation work creates a wider deeper waterway and may necessitate an additional Creek crossing to improve pedestrian access to Bradman Oval from the town centre to the east.

The section of creek to the south of Bradman Oval is in private ownership and does not permit a continuous walk along the waterway.

There is an opportunity however to connect this precinct with the Sport and Recreation Precinct from Cutler Avenue to Crown Street and Nicholson Park along the right of way or along a right of way on land in private ownership.

The revitalisation provides an opportunity to reduce the impact of flooding with mitigation work which widens and deepens the Creek as well as create a gateway to Muttama Creek at Adams Road.

In this precinct there is the potential to acknowledge its historic alignment in swampland as well as its cultural significance to the Wiradjuri Traditional Owners of the land.

3.2

Sport and Recreation Precinct



3.2 Sport and Recreation Precinct

This precinct comprises two blocks, commencing at Poole Street and extends alongside Clarke Oval to the John Rees Bridge and Wallellendoon Street. It is surrounded by Nicholson Park and Fisher Park to the north, residential to the north west, Jubilee Park to the south west and the town centre to the east.

3.21 The place

The upper section of the Creek, either side of Poole Street is in private ownership and includes a pedestrian bridge as the road has a very steep incline and is subject to inundation.

The waterway adjacent to private property on the Onley Street side of the block is currently not easily accessible due largely to the topography. A pedestrian bridge provides access over the Creek at Onley Street as there is no vehicular access.

The character of this large open space precinct is dominated with active recreation uses such as Clark Oval, Nicholson Park, Fisher Park and the sports stadium as well as the Cootamundra Pool.

There is a skateboard park and outdoor fitness equipment and the passive recreation area in the George Vesperman Park. These spaces currently provide disparate recreation uses for several different user groups.

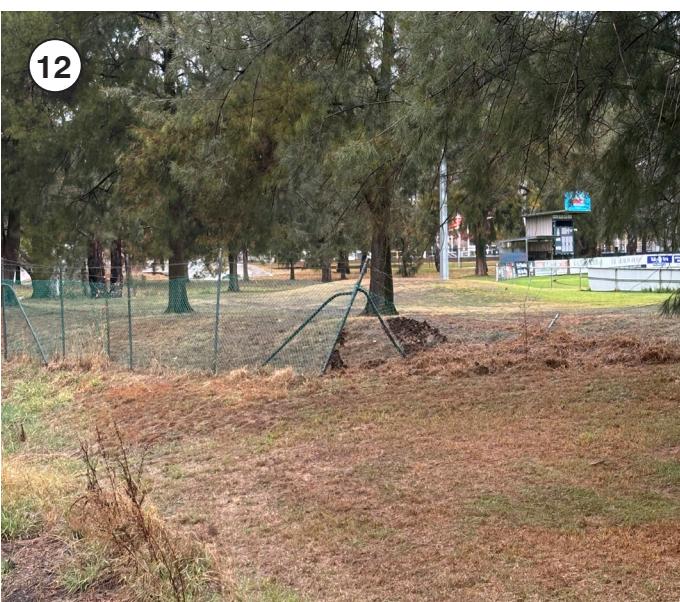
There are no continuous paths along the creek and the tree canopy is relatively low.

The existing remnant chain-link fence around the oval is unnecessary and visually obtrusive.

The existing waterway is very narrow in parts and does not positively contribute to the aesthetic quality of the precinct. The realignment of the Creek occurred around Clarke oval.

3.22 Opportunities

The existing topography and vegetation in the Poole Street block presents an opportunity to improve this section of creek for flood mitigation and ecological purposes, limiting public access.



There is an opportunity to enhance the visual connection of the creek to the surrounding ovals and better integrate the revitalised creek as a passive recreation space and as a destination.

The proposed flood mitigation works would provide a wider waterway with deeper sections for ponds within the corridor which will also improve the ecology of the Creek and reinforce the presence of the riparian corridor during times of limited rainfall.

The revitalisation of the creek provides an opportunity to define Clarke Oval with new fencing and provide a nature playground as a concurrent activity.

There is an opportunity to provide a new creek crossing and paths in this precinct to connect to the town centre precinct.

A revitalised waterway may also provide opportunities for investment in the existing disused buildings along Murray Street.

3.3

Town Centre Precinct



3.3 Town Centre Precinct

The town centre precinct comprises two blocks commencing at John Rees Bridge, Wallendoon Street and extends under the Stratton Bridge to Mackay Street.

3.3.1 The Place

It is characterised by its proximity to the main street of the town, with access from Parker Street and Wallendoon Street. It is bounded by the Ex-Servicemen and Citizens Memorial Club to the north, the Scout Hall to the south and the caravan park to the west.

The topography in the section at the rear of the Ex-Servicemen and Citizens Memorial Club is quite steep, and the existing concrete path is located along its boundary. There appears to be an informal track along the edge of the creek indicating pedestrian use. There is no pedestrian crossing other than the pedestrian bridge along Wallendoon Street and there is no seating or picnic tables.

The tree canopy is also relatively low and the cumbungi within the Creek in this section is particularly dense. It should be noted that at the time of writing this report Council recently cleared the cumbungi and undertook minor desilting works either side of the bridge, consistent with the permit from Fisheries NSW.

There is a footbridge on the western side of Stratton Bridge and a fence which prohibits access to the open space adjacent to the Scout Hall with access limited to the northern side.

The southern section of the creek extends under Stratton bridge and the existing accessible pedestrian route is via the driveway of the Ex-Servicemen and Citizens Memorial Club.

The section of Creek on the other side of Stratton Bridge is linked by a footpath from the town centre, however the ramp is located opposite the driveway to the Ex-Servicemen and Citizens Memorial Club and is not easily accessible. There is no continuous footpath from the town centre to the creek on the eastern side as it terminates at the Court House.



The recent addition of a concrete path and additional trees have improved the scenic quality of the open space in this section, and it presents as an attractive location however there are no tables and seating.

There is a small informal car park along Parker Street with direct access to the open space however there are no tables or seats.

3.32 Opportunities

In this precinct there are several opportunities to visually link the Creek to the town and enhance it as a destination within Cootamundra, improve safe access and enhance opportunities for passive activities such as having lunch and enjoying the local environment.

The flood mitigation proposes a new pond on the western side of Parker Street which would be the feature of this precinct and ensure water is retained, similar to the existing ponds to the north and south. It would both enhance the aesthetic of the environment and provide habitat opportunities. The existing tree canopy is relatively low and additional trees with the new pond would provide a shady cool location close to the town centre to mitigate urban heat in the summer months.

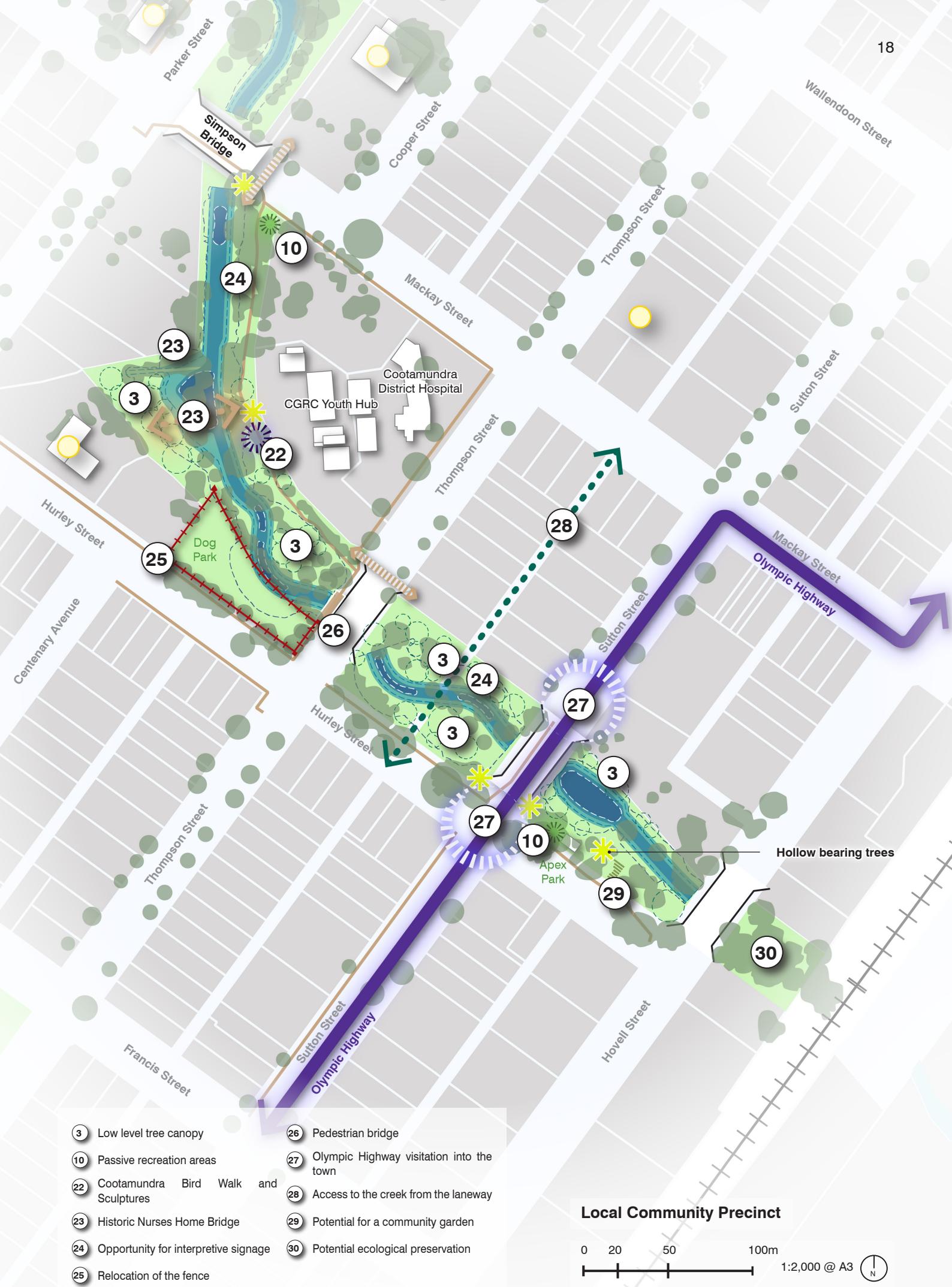
Jubilee Park and the Captain's Walk tourist attraction are proximate to the creek in this precinct. An opportunity to enhance the connection with signage and street tree planting would encourage movement between the spaces; footpaths along the creek to John Rees Bridge and along Wallendoon Street

The informal carpark on Parker Street provides an opportunity to encourage visitation and include a nature playground.

Improved access across Parker Street at the Stratton bridge, such as a raised pedestrian crossing would assist to link the open space .

3.4

Local Community Precinct



3.4 Local Community Precinct

This precinct comprises four blocks and extends from Mackay Street to the Railway line and Lloyd Conkey Avenue.

3.4.1 The Place

The four blocks within the precinct are characterised by large open areas with the central riparian corridor. The existing tree canopy is relatively low, however the significant work from the local Muttama Creek Regeneration Group is clearly visible. The cumbungi within the Creek in this precinct is quite dense in some sections and this may contribute to flooding issues.

The block between Parker Street and Thompson Street, commencing at the Simpson Bridge on Mackay Street contains a pathway, seating and picnic tables on the eastern side. It is surrounded by the dog park, the historic district hospital and the CGRC Youth Club. There is some interpretive signage and some recent plantings by the Muttama Creek Regeneration Group. The Bird Walk and sculptures on the eastern side of the creek are to be retained and relocated as required to accommodate the revitalised creek corridor.

The block between Thompson Street and Sutton Street (Olympic Highway) is of similar character to the block to the north; open areas with a central waterway. There are however no formal paths or seating and the tree canopy is relatively low. It is bounded by residential on one side and roadway on the other three sides, including Olympic Highway and includes an elevated pedestrian crossing on Sutton Street

The section bounded by Sutton Street and Hovell Street is characterised by the existing pond, which creates a focal point to Apex Park. There are no continuous paths however there are public amenities, picnic tables and seats.

3.4.2 Opportunities

An opportunity to acknowledge the Traditional Owners in this precinct with interpretive signage describing the historic Aboriginal cultural significance of the Creek as a travel route to



ceremony with Wiradjuri language used to describe the local flora and fauna.

A new large pond is proposed to assist with flood mitigation and provides an opportunity to create a water feature in this precinct and re establish the historic Nurses' Home Bridge which would overlook the new pond. The proposed batters also provide the potential for additional appropriate riparian plant species and rocks which also provide informal seating.

The proposed flood mitigation works and the addition of a new bend in the creek will impact part of the existing dog park and require the relocation of the fence.

The creek revitalisation provides the potential to increase the tree canopy cover which creates additional ecological habitat and shade and assists with flood and heat mitigation.

The elevated pedestrian crossing on the northern side of Thompson Street would be retained to ensure safe access with pedestrian crossings across Thompson and Sutton Streets.

The block between Thompson Street and Sutton Street (Olympic Highway) is of similar character to the block to the north; open areas with a central waterway. There are however no formal paths or seating and the tree canopy is relatively low. It is bounded by residential on one side and roadway on the other three sides, including Olympic Highway and includes an elevated pedestrian crossing on Sutton Street. The revitalisation of the creek along Olympic Highway has the potential to attract visitation into the town; an attractive open space with walking trails. Additional signage illustrating the creek and direction into town.

This section of the waterway is also accessible through the mid-block laneways which provides an opportunity to formalise access from the laneway to paths along either side of the revitalised waterway.

The lack of existing distinct uses provides the opportunity to create a small community garden on the western side along the Hurley Street and the mid-block laneway improves connection to the residential areas. The community garden

could also include native and local bush foods.

The section bounded by Sutton Street and Hovell Street is characterised by the existing pond, which creates a focal point to Apex Park. There are no continuous paths however there are public amenities and picnic tables

4.0 Community Engagement

A letter was prepared informing the community of the proposed masterplan and included a request for early feedback on what should be considered in the masterplan process. A page on Council's website was created informing the community of the early feedback phase (which included a link to the letter) and also indicated that residents were to receive a mailout and details on how to make comment/submission. The early consultation period was between 6 May and 21 May 2025.

Based on the feedback received, the following particular areas were identified (we note this is a summary and not an exhaustive list):

- Flooding – generally, flood mitigation works appeared to be the most important aspect of the masterplan. There were also concerns with rising insurance premiums.
- Creek management / maintenance – comments received indicated that debris (shopping trolleys, waste etc.), in-stream vegetation and silt accumulation exacerbates flooding and needs to be removed, and the creek should be managed on an ongoing basis by Council to manage weed regrowth and buildup of debris.
- Ecology – retaining and improving ecological characteristics of the creek should be undertaken but flood mitigation works should be prioritised.
- Alternative proposals – ideas such as a levee bank along McGowan Street and including land north of Adams Street were suggested. Consideration of alternative proposals is to be included in the future Review of Environmental Factors (REF).
- Public recreation and enjoyment – the masterplan should incorporate improvements such as new footpaths, enhancement of current walking trails a community garden, signage etc.
- Aboriginal cultural significance – the masterplan should include aspects to incorporate local Aboriginal cultural significance and history. These include Wiradjuri signs that relate to the landscape e.g. native vegetation and local wildlife.

5.0 Master Plan

5.1 Objectives

- Ensure the impact of flooding is reduced to the surrounding properties
- Establish new recreation opportunities to accommodate all users
- Revitalise and enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the Creek
- Provide new habitat opportunities along the Creek
- Connect the open space creek corridor to the surrounding streets and parks
- Improve the access to the Creek to ensure all users are accommodated
- Encourage the protection and biodiversity of the riparian corridor
- Acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and ensure the Aboriginal cultural significance of the Creek is identified
- Ensure the European history of the creek is also acknowledged
- Provide locations for passive recreation, picnics and nature play
- Establish street tree planting to increase tree canopy cover in and around the creek.
- Ensure pedestrian waterway crossings are designed to the appropriate engineering standards.
- Ensure water sensitive urban design principles are incorporated into the revitalisation of the Creek



5.2 Overall Strategies

- Increase the existing tree canopy in and around the creek and town centre

Street tree benefits (source Local Government NSW 2025)

Biodiversity support and provision of important habitat corridors for native plants and animals

Lowering heat through transpiration, shade and passive cooling

Increasing energy efficiency by reducing the need for air conditioning

Improving air and water quality

Increasing human health and wellbeing

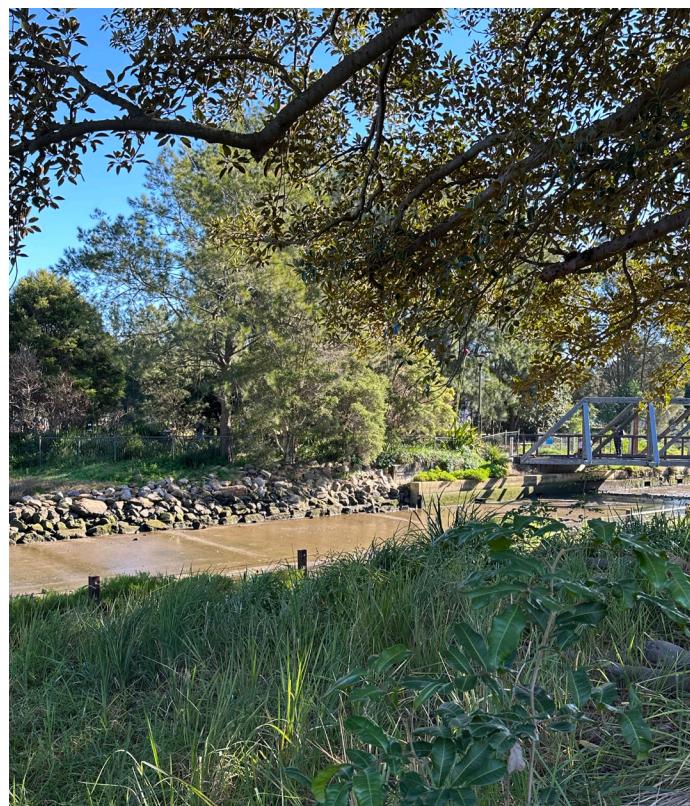
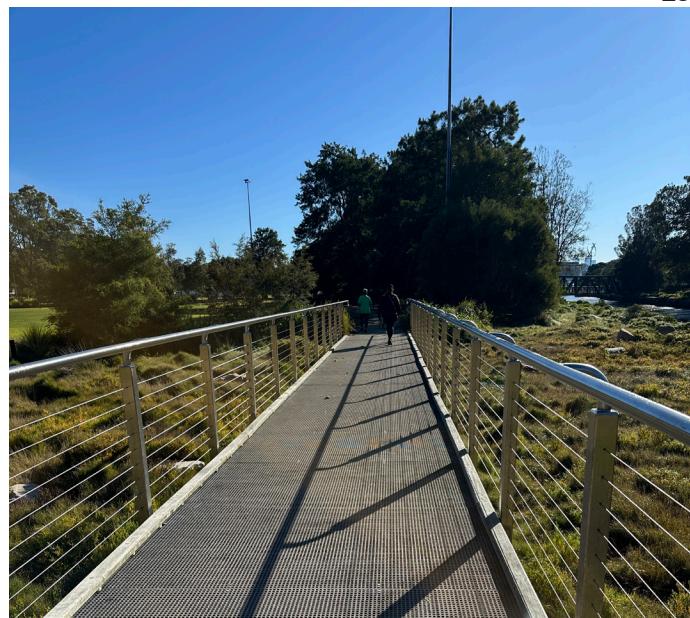
Enhancing water absorption by slowing stormwater and reducing peak flows

Enhancing property values

Reducing noise

Potential wild life corridors especially birds, connecting the creek to the surrounding rural area

- Protect the existing habitat and offset any unavoidable impacts required to reduce flooding
- Connect existing paths and propose new wider paths to facilitate continuous movement along the open space network
- Introduce new passive recreation areas for rest, relaxation and to enjoy nature
- Provide interpretive signage to inform people of the historical, ecological and cultural importance of Muttama Creek



5.31

Bradman Precinct





5.3 Precinct Strategies

5.3.1 Bradman Precinct

- Plant new trees and shrubs in clumps to identify the commencement of the waterway at Adams Road
- Locate new paths commencing at Adams Road along the creek to Cutler Avenue and a new bridge crossing to improve access to the oval and amenities
- New interpretive signage illustrating the original Creek alignment and its importance and cultural significance to the Traditional Owners, the Wiradjuri people and its meaning; Cootamundra derived from the Wiradjuri word Gudhamangdhuray, swampland long-necked turtles and swamp.
- Plant new trees and shrubs in clumps along the creek to visually identify the riparian corridor and improve the ecology and function of the Creek
- Install solar lighting along the path and additional seating and bins
- Provide signage with directions to Bradman's birthplace from the Creek to Cutler Avenue
- A new traditional style picket fence to define and enhance the cricket oval named in honour of Sir Donald Bradman
- Provide signage and street trees along the right of way from Cutler Avenue to create a continuous path back to the Creek, diverting around the waterway that is within private property, for walking and cycling
- Plant new trees around the oval to increase the tree canopy cover.



5.32

Sport and Recreation Precinct





5.32 Sport and Recreation Precinct

- Limit access and preserve the section of Creek between Olney Street and the laneway
- Provide a new pedestrian crossing over the Creek
- Provide new wide footpaths to accommodate a variety of users.
- Remove the existing chain link wire fence around the oval and replace with a new traditional picket fence.
- Provide additional seating and tables adjacent to the revitalised Creek to integrate with George Vesperman Park.
- New street trees along Murray Street and Wallendoon Street to provide visual linkages to the Creek.
- Interpretive signage illustrating the historic alignment of the Creek, the transition from the ox bow lakes in the middle of the last century to the current alignment around Clark oval.
- The signage would also include the ecological and cultural significance of Muttama Creek to the Traditional owners and its historic refuge for the eastern snake neck turtle.
- Signage incorporating Wiradjuri language for the local flora and fauna along
- A new nature playground alongside the Creek
- Provide new solar lighting
- New raised pedestrian crossing at Murray Street and Wallendoon Street



5.33

Town Centre Precinct



5.33 Town Centre Precinct

- A new raised pedestrian crossing on Parker Street to provide safe movement between the open space
- Widen the existing path to accommodate all users
- Planting and rocks used for seating around the proposed new feature pond
- A new accessible crossing and lookout over the feature pond
- New solar lighting
- New trees along the creek to increase the tree canopy cover
- Remove the fence alongside the Scout Hall
- Interpretive signage describing the history of the Creek and the town
- A new nature-play area, tables and seatings adjacent to the informal carpark and new public amenities
- A new pedestrian bridge crossing along the eastern side of Stratton Bridge



5.34

Local Community Precinct

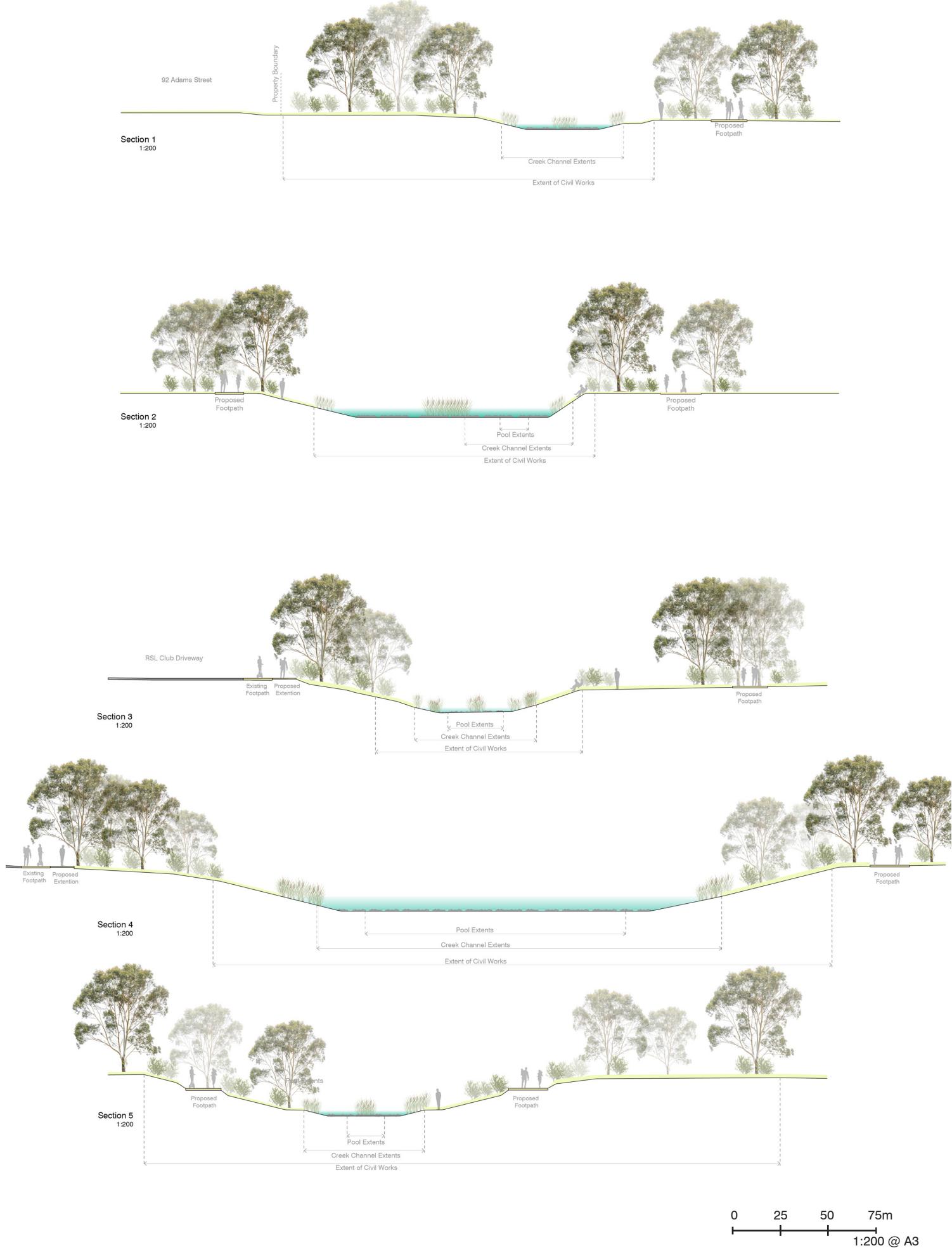




5.34 Local Community Precinct

- New paths along the creek to accommodate all users
- New trees around the Creek to increase the tree canopy cover
- New street trees along Thompson Street and Mackay Street to link to the open space
- Interpretive signage of the Aboriginal cultural significance of the Creek
- A community garden in Apex Park along Hurley Street including native and local bush foods
- A new nature playground adjacent to the existing coloured tractors
- New seats along the paths
- New pedestrian crossings at Thompson Street and Sutton Street





6.0 Implementation

Precinct	Immediate	Medium term	Long term
Bradman Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood mitigation • New trees and shrubs • New paths • Signage to Bradman's birthplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar lights, seats and bins • Interpretive signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picket fence around oval • Pedestrian bridge crossing
Sport and Recreation Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood mitigation • New trees and shrubs • New paths • Remove chain link fence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables, seats, bins • Solar lights • Interpretive signage • New nature play-ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picket fence around oval • Increase width of existing paths • Pedestrian bridge crossing
Town Centre Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood mitigation • New trees and shrubs • Solar lights • New raised pedestrian crossing • Remove fence alongside the Scout Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New nature play-ground • Picnic tables and seats and bins • Interpretive signage • New footpath to creek along Parker Street • Interpretive signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New public amenities • Increase width of existing paths • Improvements to carpark • Pedestrian bridge crossing alongside Stratton bridge
Local Community Precinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood mitigation • New trees and shrubs • Pedestrian zebra crossings • New paths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community garden • Solar lights, seats and bins • Interpretive signage • New nature play-ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian bridge crossing

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