Vision
Our Vision

Gordonvale was settled in 1877 by the Alley and Blackwell families, who cut a road through to Trinity Inlet so that they could haul out the Red Cedar logs Toona ciliata. It is upon the Red Cedar that the vision has been formed.

We believe that the unique and irreplaceable value of the asset warrants creating more than just a district park. We believe that Kennick Park in the heart of Gordonvale, should be the next logical location for an iconic facility to rival and complement the Cattana Wetlands, the Botanic Gardens, MMP and Sugarworld.

We believe that we have the opportunity to create a public asset that will not only serve the local community, but will draw visitors from across the region, and attract tourists visiting the region.

The major elements will be the creation of a Tropical Arboretum, and the construction of an iconic Play Structure.

Tertiary elements that should also be addressed include:

- A Community Hub
- Public Toilets
- Off street Car parking
- Passive recreation spaces
- Spaces for community cultural events
- Off the leash dog areas
- A new BMX facility
- A Skate bowl
- An exercise loop
- A water element
Gordonvale...

home of the iconic Walsh’s Pyramid, Gordonvale was first settled in 1877 by the Alley and Blackwell families who cut a road through to Trinity Inlet so they could haul out red cedar logs - Toona ciliata.

Since that time it has had a rich tradition of sugar growing, centred on the Mulgrave Central Mill...
we believe...

...that we have the **opportunity** to create **more** than just a park...

...that **Gordonvale** should be the next logical location for an **iconic** facility to rival Cattana Wetlands, the Botanic Gardens, the Esplanade, **MMP**, and **Sugarworld**.
our vision...

regional, tropical arboretum

“a park that will not only serve the local community...but will draw patrons from across the region”.

iconic play structure
The Structure

The result is a simple, but effective structure, which will form the underlying fabric of the park design.

The basic principles require:

- Isolating and defining distinct areas of activity
- Maximising the natural assets external to the site such as:
- Proximity to other open space activities and,
- The exceptional views of the Mulgrave Central Mill, Walsh’s Pyramid, and the Goldsborough Valley
- The creation of a safe and inclusive environment
- A facility which caters for the local community, while drawing patrons from across the region and beyond
- A fun, family oriented parkland, with activities for all ages
- An experience that will not be a "one time only" visitation, but will keep patrons coming back again and again

The park will be anchored by a central spine from Dempsey Road to Fisher Road, in the form of a 5m wide path which will allow efficient movement across the site for not only pedestrians and cyclists, but also for maintenance and surveillance personnel.

At either end of this spine are off street carparks that will service the main entry points in to the space.

All good park design includes a loop path for those who want to exercise, whether it will be walking, jogging or cycling. In this case, the loop path also resolves the issue of entry into the park from the surrounding community by picking up the park access points to the south, and the Kenrick Street access point to the north.

A Neighbourhood Centre will be sited on the Dempsey Road Frontage for close proximity to the bus route. The centre will open up onto the first "glade" at the western end of the site.

Distinct lawn areas - or "glades" will be created for passive recreation activities such as picnicking, birthday parties, or simply throwing the Frisbee. These glades will be defined by mono-specific stands of trees, with each glade identified by an individual species.

The final glade will be significantly larger, and be contoured to form a shallow bowl, with a gentle slope running down to an artificial lake. This “Community Common” will be complimented by a toilet facility, and at a future date - a water stage for community activities.

The skate and BMX facilities will be re-located to the other side of the drain on the Fisher Road boundary for ease of surveillance. Buffer planting will be undertaken between the BMX track and the drain, and again in the separation between the residences to the south and the track.

The active play precinct will be to the northern portion of the site, with the iconic play and viewing tower located approximately in the space that is currently occupied by the skate facility.

The linear drainage corridor to the east of the site is ideally suited to an off the leash dog area. The site will cater for almost unlimited car parking opportunities, and although within close proximity to Kenrick Park, still maintain suitable physical separation from the other activities.
arboretum

noun

Borrowing from Latin arborētum ("place with trees growing").

The Arboretum

What is an arboretum?
An arboretum is not a botanic garden. Rather, it is a display of trees that are grown as specimens in ideal conditions which allow them to maximise their full potential in cultivation.

It is our vision to create a uniquely "tropical" arboretum that is distinctly different to others throughout Australia. It will take advantage of our distinctive monsoonal climate and growing conditions to grow species that will create a sensory experience that will not be seen elsewhere, and will consequently draw lovers of trees, horticulture and botany from across the country.

At 5.7Hs, the proposed arboretum will be quite modest, but by careful manipulation of the ground plane, a sinuous suite of sculptural landforms will result in a truly unique landmark for the region.

Although on a different scale, the associated images of the National Arboretum in Canberra are an example of what is achievable by a synergy of sculptural earthworks and structured tree planting.

The arboretum will become the setting for a host of activities, from weddings to children's birthday parties, and a variety of community events.

As an additional element we are proposing the construction of a lake. The shape of this lake will work in harmony with the proposed landforms to create a cooling element in the centre of the park.
The Glades
Glades will be formed to provide distinct lawn areas that will be defined by the mono-specific planting of a tapered ring of trees that will create a sense of enclosure. They will be approximately 80m long and 25 m wide, and will include the provision of picnic shelters.

The range of uses that these multi-purpose passive recreation spaces may be put to is almost endless, with the only limitation being imagination.

Lagerstroemia speciosa
The role of this parkland in the suite of open space activities in Gordonvale is to be a community cultural facility. To this end, a larger multi-purpose area is proposed.

The Community Common will be composed of a gently sloping grassed amphitheatre, with the lake as the focal point. A boardwalk will traverse the lake, with a modest stage seemingly “floating” on the water. In reality, the stage will be on a small island, which will assist with the hydrology of the lake.

The stage will be available for community events, and compliment activities already being held in Norman Park.

The timing of the construction of this facility would be in a future construction stage.
community facilities

Also in a future stage of construction will be a neighbourhood centre.

Themed on the leaf of the Red Cedar, the building consists of a multi-use open space, with an office and toilets at one end, and a possible concession at the other for a low key commercial activity such as a coffee shop or community bookstore.

The large overhang covers an outdoor space that will break-out on to the adjacent glade.

Two options are shown: a concave, and a convex leaf form. The convex leaf form incorporates a series of skylights which will provide ample natural light and ventilation into the building. The shape of the convex roofline allows more direct light into the interior, creating an alternate ambience.

The toilet building will be cantilevered out over the water to create a "loo with a view".
Mega Play Element

Along with the arboretum, the second major drawcard to the park will be the mega-structure.

To create something that is truly iconic, it is important that it is bound to its location. Something that screams Gordonvale! So...

“What makes Gordonvale... Gordonvale?”

The natural response is the imagery of Walsh’s Pyramid and of course, the Mulgrave Central Mill.

The criteria that were set for the structure included:

- Something that is visually connected to Gordonvale
- An exciting play element that will stir the imagination of children across the region
- A viewing tower to take advantage of the views to the Mulgrave Central Mill, Walsh’s Pyramid and the Goldsborough Valley
- A viewing tower that will allow patrons to look down on the fantastic sculptural landforms, tree plantings and lake that have been created
- A safe structure
- A structure that will be a visual cue when approaching the park
- A structure that is interactive
- A structure that is suitable for users of all abilities
- A structure that is innovative... bespoke... not off the shelf
- A structure that promotes healthy activity

The proposal is to construct a combined play and viewing tower in the approximate location of the existing skate and hardcourt area. This will take maximum advantage of the fantastic vistas surrounding the park.

It is intended that the tower is in the vicinity of 15m high. Drone footage of this view is attached to this document.

To give an idea of scale, the Speers Point all abilities tower at Port Macquarie is approximately 12m in height.

We propose that a tower is constructed with vertical laminated posts in the shape of the old water tower which is synonymous with the tank which once stood in Norman Park. Within this structure will be a spiralling walkway around the perimeter of the tower which would allow access to the viewing deck at the summit. Within the structure will be an option for climbing nets and floors of suspended rope obstacles for balancing and fitness activities. Enclosed tube slides will descend from a variety of levels ranging from 12m down to the bottom level which would have an open, all abilities slide.

Much in the way that the tower at Speers Point has been designed to reflect the popped head from the top of a mine shaft in reference to the near-by Hunter Valley, the Kennrick Park tower will reference the water tower which was once recognisable as an integral part of the visual landscape of Gordonvale. Coincidentally much as the water tower was also used as a lookout tower in World War 2 the Kennrick Park tower will also function as a viewing tower to the 360 degree breath taking vistas that radiate from the site.
historic water tower