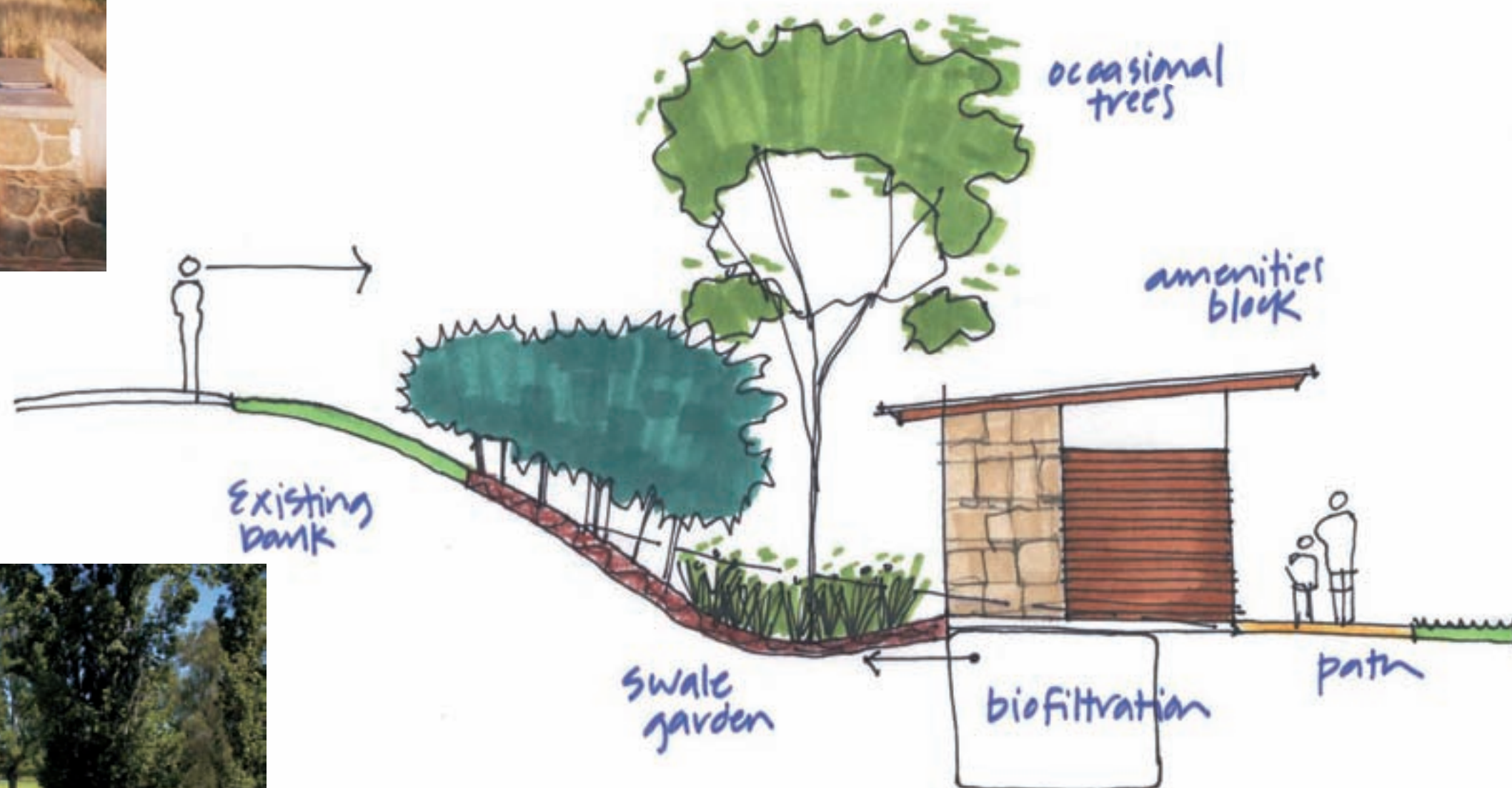




A new picnic shelter with table and chairs and BBQ facilities will be established in a couple of locations on site behind existing trees.

Better Amenities and Facilities

On the Eastern part of the site, an amenities building will be set into the base of the existing embankment by the roadway. A garden with trees will be established above the building to harvest the recycled water. The buildings would feature stone faced blockwork, timber screens and good ventilation. It would be easily seen and reached from the rest of the park, but set out of the views of residents on the street.



BEFORE

AFTER
swale garden and amenities block

1: 50 @ A3



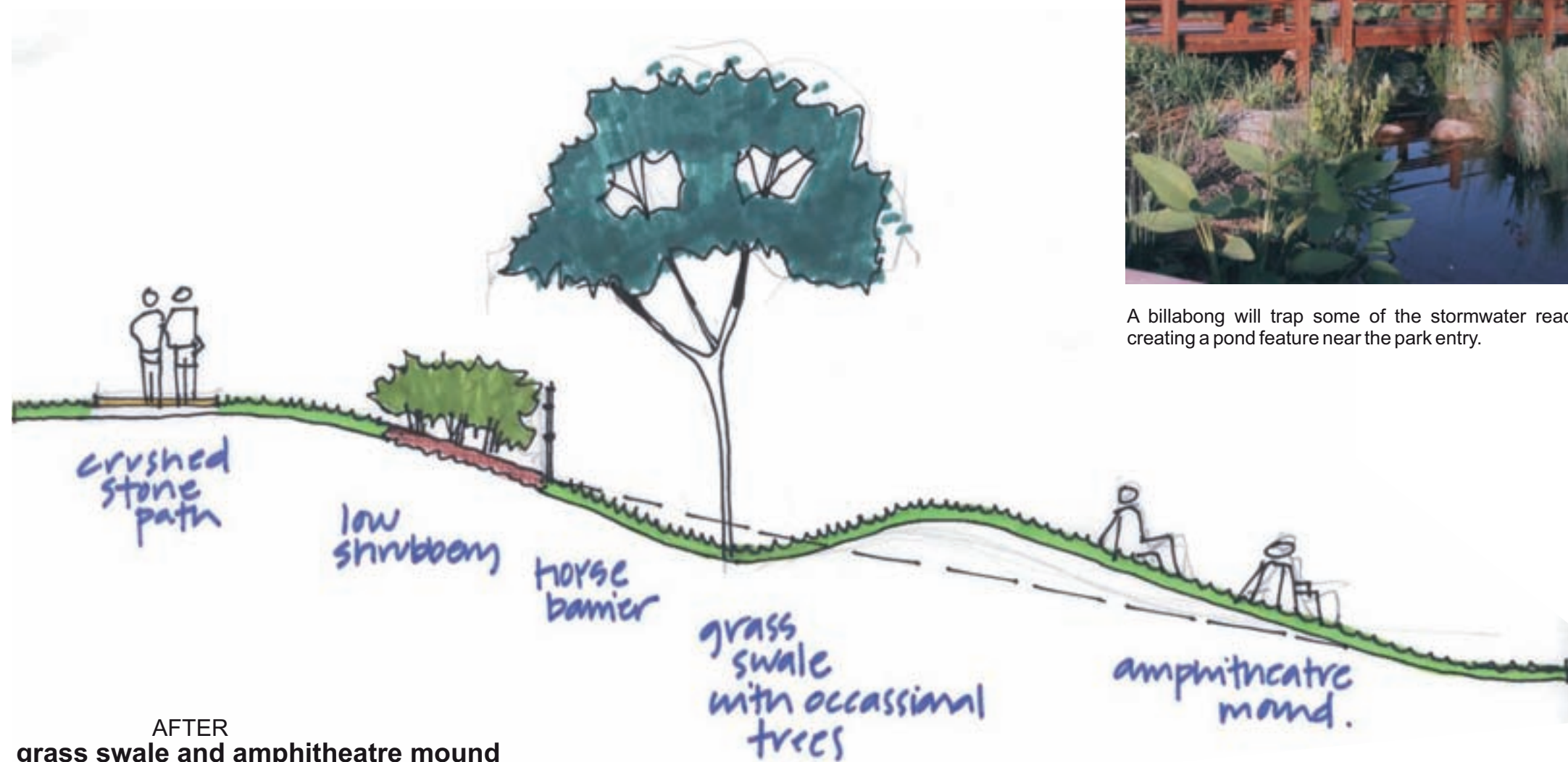
A Natural Amphitheatre

The site currently provides for informal recreation for vehicular and pedestrian users of the river. The gently undulating land contains some scattered shade trees.

The improved park will create a drainage swale and garden central to the slope to drain and absorb stormwater from the town centre falling down Maitland Street. A post and rail fence will limit horse grazing to the lower slopes and protect garden plantings. The low grasses and plantings will hide the fence and also trap/harvest site stormwater. The swale soil will be used to shape a more defined slope to act as a natural outdoor amphitheatre for events and picnics.



A billabong will trap some of the stormwater reaching the site creating a pond feature near the park entry.



AFTER
grass swale and amphitheatre mound

1: @ A3



Paths and Walkways

Angled car parking will be simply created by limiting vehicles across the grass with cut boulders set into ground approximately five metres from the existing fence toward the roadway. The fence will be removed and an adjacent walking path built, thus visually enlarging the park space.

The rocks will create a geological walk which interprets geomorphological patterns in the Bingara district. The path may feature crushed compact stone in the same geomorphic materials.

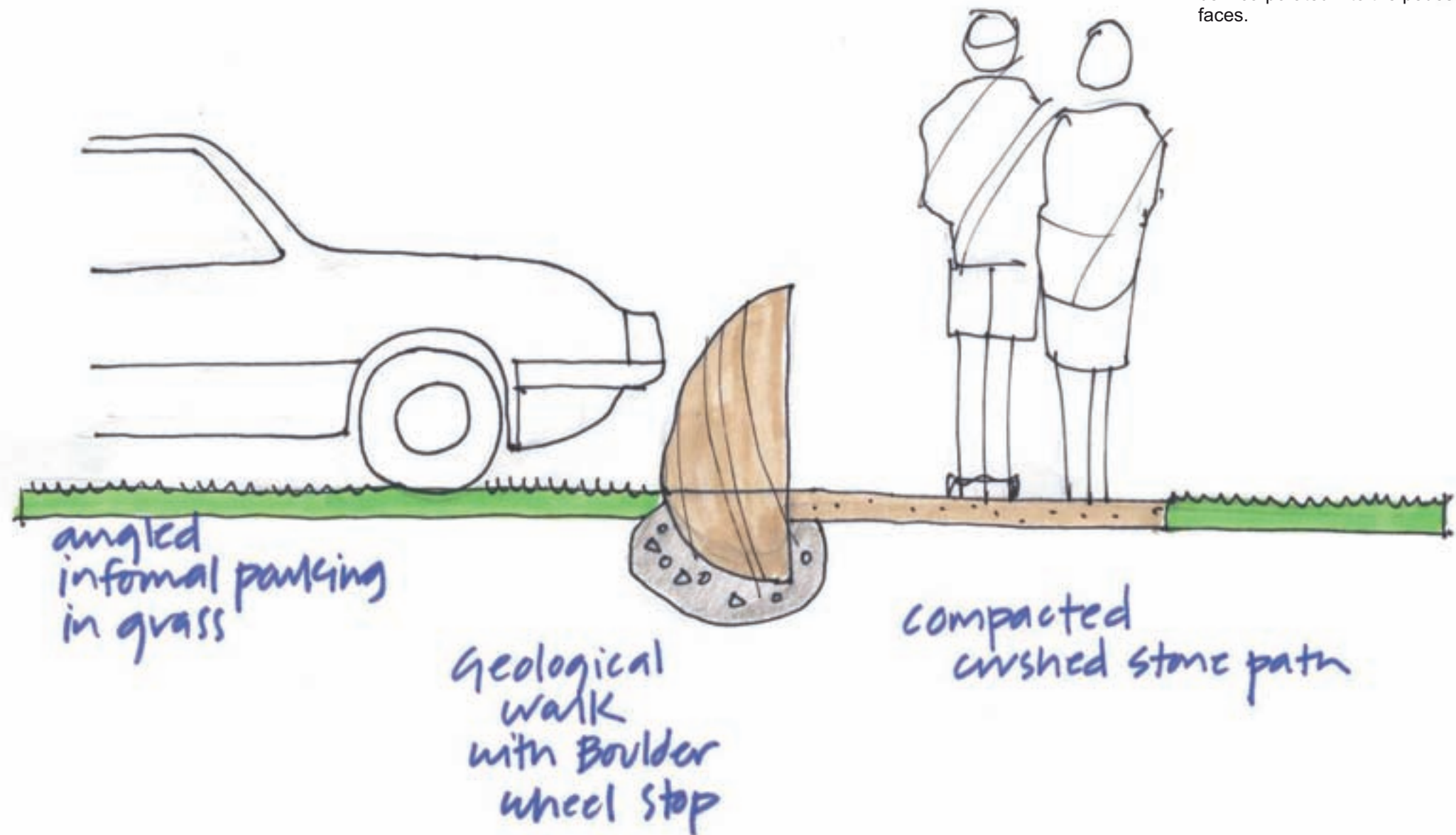
In the eastern part of the park the grass is too steep to park on, so parallel parking can be adequately provided on the existing bitumen carriageway and will be linemarked.



Cut or flat boulders can be installed into the pathway edge and act as vehicular barriers. Signage can also be incorporated into the pedestrian faces.



Interpretive signage will provide information and points of interest for visitors.



AFTER
geological walk - boulder wheel stop and stone path

1:20 @ A3

The Living Classroom



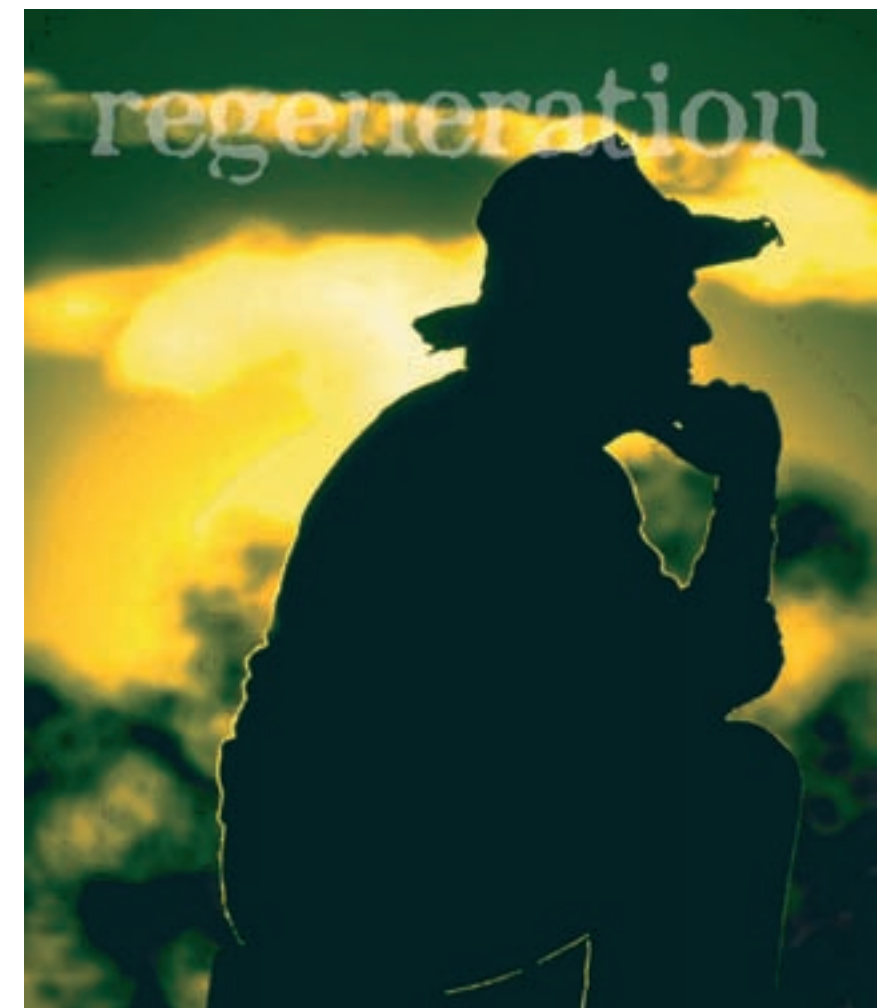
The Living Classroom and The Centre for Regenerative Agriculture and will be a first in Australia. It is a truly unique and interactive experience showcasing the best of traditional agricultural methods and combining them with the best of new ideas.

The Park highlights the district's rich heritage and displays the agricultural diversity of the region. It will be THE Australian destination for people to discover 'regeneration'. The Living Classroom will be a way for the community to expand its self sufficiency in food, water and energy.

The Park will be a major Australian destination for people to discover 'regeneration'. It will be a place trialing "cutting edge" techniques including Permaculture, aquaculture and biodynamic farming technologies.

It will be a place which educates, involves and enthralls all ages. The Park will lead visitors and students into a discovery of the area's true wealth, value and tenacious character. A place to "regenerate" and get down and dirty.

The Living Classroom and The Centre for Regenerative Agriculture is a community project, involving all who want to participate, from pre-schoolers to seniors. It plays a major role in bringing the urban and rural populations together. It is cooperative, well organised and managed. It provides a teaching environment and is a major tourist attraction. The project is commercial, and provides employment opportunities. The majority of the town's green waste is turned into compost on site and utilised on the farm.



The Living Classroom



Vision

Our VISION for Bingara and District for the year 2020 has been created by the whole community. It seeks to inspire and embrace everybody.

Our VISION seeks to build on the strengths of the town and district in 2005, and to preserve and enhance those things our community values.

Our VISION is built around the theme of REGENERATION. It details the future of each major asset - our people, our infrastructure and our environment.



In the year 2020...
The Common, now known as Bingara Gardens Interpretive Agricultural Park, resembles a luxurious and productive garden and provides a major enhancement to the town environment.

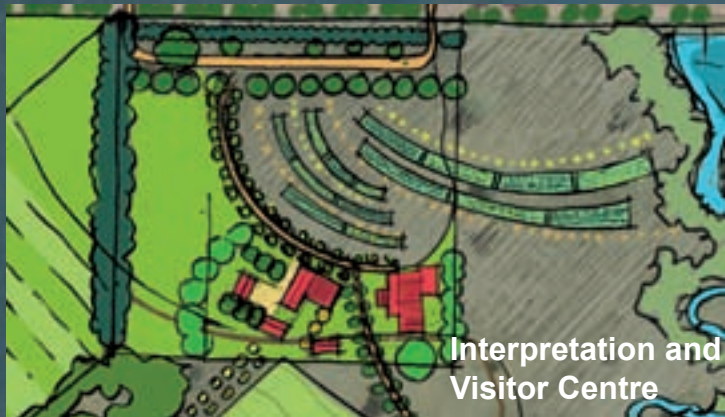
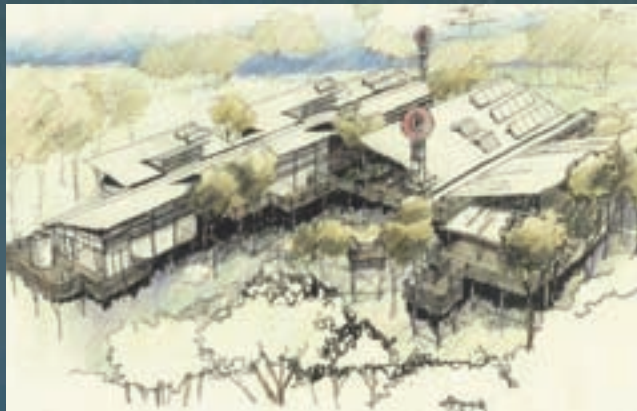
Bingara Gardens Interpretive Agricultural Park, an area of 150 hectares, is now an 'agricultural oasis' producing a multitude of products. The farm is designed utilising the best of lessons from permaculture, biological farming and traditional farming and is at the forefront of agricultural design. Enterprises are 'stacked' so that each compliments the other. The project utilises both plants and animals.

Buildings on the site are unique structures utilising environmentally effective materials designed for maximum efficiency and aesthetic appeal.

The project is designed for maximum water efficiency. It largely utilises 'grey' or recycled water which is pumped to the back of the Garden, filtered through a natural waterway, then meanders through the site as a permanent stream (utilising the north facing slope) to emerge and link with the hatchery. There is the opportunity to 'shandy;' fresh water as the town now has a second reserve.

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The Living Classroom



The Interpretive parkland will highlight the districts rich agriculture: the full spectrum of local grazing and crops, as well as cutting edge permaculture and aquaculture technologies and practices.

Bingara Gardens Interpretive Agricultural Park will be an Australian destination for people looking at sustainability in the country. It will be a place to trial new ways of improving agriculture and connecting contemporary ecology and environmental strategies to solid rural practices.



By 2020...

Bingara has largely achieved its goal of being self-sufficient in fresh produce. The produce is grown organically and is marketed, through local retailers, as a range of fresh and processed product under the label 'Bingara Organics'. This compliments other locally produced branded product.

As a promotion for the District's strong stud cattle industry, each stud agists a top quality cow and calf so that there is a display of cattle representing every breed. Additionally, promotional material is included in the building on-site.

Bingara Gardens Interpretive Agricultural Park is unique in Australia. The whole process, from design through to management, has been facilitated by the community which continues to own the project (various partnerships with industry and government having assisted the project where appropriate).

Bingara Gardens Interpretive Agricultural Park will be a way for the town to feed itself: a place to grow local produce and stock, future proofing the community from oil and global impacts. It will also heal a landscape on the periphery of the town and provide a way to harvest stormwater and prevent flooding in the town.

The Living Classroom Masterplan



The Living Classroom



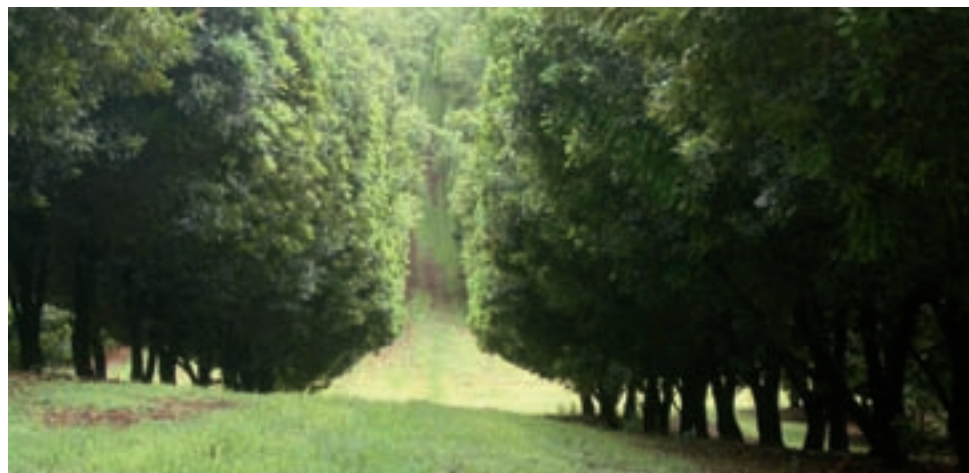
Gwydir Shire is a leading ‘learning’ and agricultural community and it makes sense that The Living Classroom has a strong educational focus around these local skills and practices. An interpretive centre focussing on world class agriculture will form the visitor focus of The Living Classroom in the future.

The Living Classroom could produce enough food to help make Bingara more self-sufficient in the long term, as increasing oil prices force communities to produce more goods locally.

The Living Classroom has the potential to help Bingara become a tourist and visitor destination, drawing international attention as a model for agricultural education and sustainability and in the process, attract people to stay and live in the area.



The Living Classroom



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TAFE and University students will collaborate with the local community to establish productive gardens and orchards, and to build grazing lots and forestry lots on The Living Classroom.

Gwydir Shire has high quality farming lands and The Living Classroom is intended to feature the stock and crops of the region: it will become a unique interpretive agricultural parkland where, for example, twenty of the area's top cattle stock will be rotated through grazing lots that incorporate forestry corridors to provide shade and sequester carbon.

