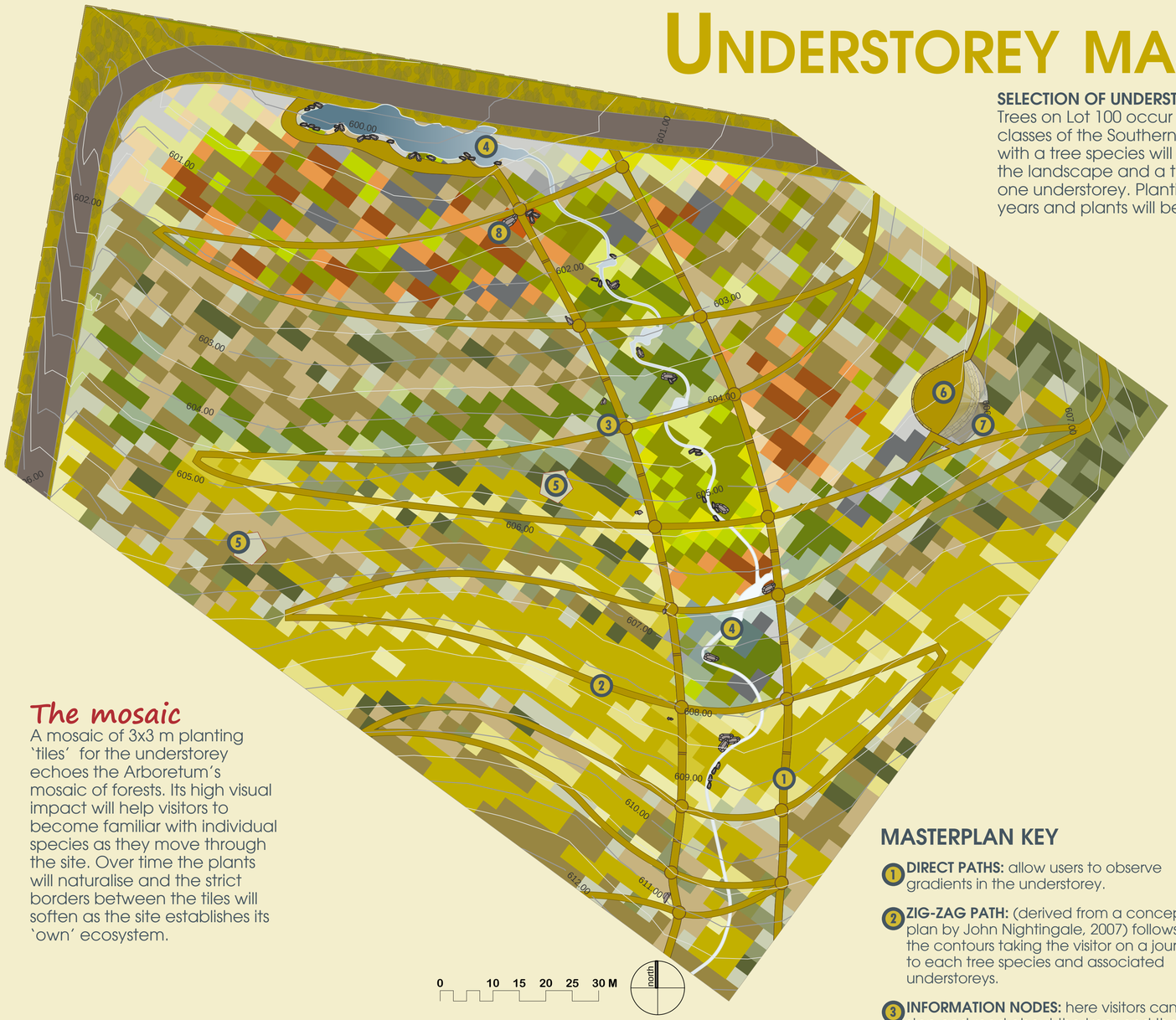
A REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN

Telling the understorey

STAGE 2

UNDERSTOREY MASTERPLAN



The mosaic

A mosaic of 3x3 m planting 'tiles' for the understorey echoes the Arboretum's mosaic of forests. Its high visual impact will help visitors to become familiar with individual species as they move through the site. Over time the plants will naturalise and the strict borders between the tiles will soften as the site establishes its 'own' ecosystem.

SELECTION OF UNDERSTOREY PLANTS

Trees on Lot 100 occur naturally in a range of vegetation formations and classes of the Southern Tablelands. The understorey plants associated with a tree species will differ depending on where the tree is found in the landscape and a tree species can be associated with more than one understorey. Planting of the understorey on Lot 100 will take several years and plants will be selected with the following in mind:

- Structural diversity (height, horizontal cover and vertical layering)
- Representation of indicative species in each vegetation class
- Representation of species indicative[1] of more than one vegetation class to show vegetation gradients
- Key plantings of iconic, rare, threatened and less common species in keeping with the arboretum's theme
- Significance in Aboriginal culture
- Longevity and hardiness in this location (in the short term this will exclude some species such as orchids until the micro-climate is suitable)
- Representation of the range of plant families in each vegetation class
- Representation of species which support rare and threatened fauna in the area
- Availability of suitable plants.

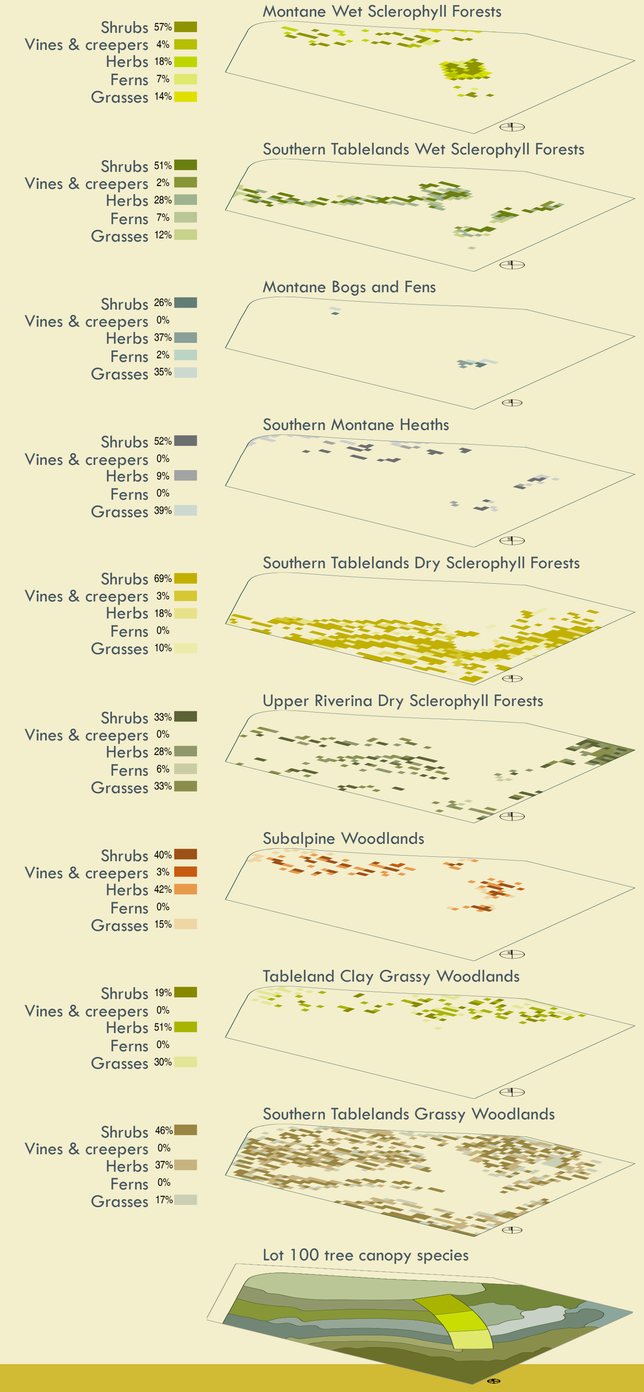
1.'Indicative species' selected by David Keith from regional or local studies as characteristic, frequently occurring, visually prominent or otherwise noteworthy.

SOURCE: DAVID KEITH *OCEAN SHORES TO DESERT DUNES* 2004

MASTERPLAN KEY

1. **DIRECT PATHS:** allow users to observe gradients in the understorey.
2. **ZIG-ZAG PATH:** (derived from a concept plan by John Nightingale, 2007) follows the contours taking the visitor on a journey to each tree species and associated understoreys.
3. **INFORMATION NODES:** here visitors can stop and read about the trees and their associations.
4. **EPHEMERAL DRAINAGE LINES AND WETLAND:** create opportunities to grow plants tolerant of boggy conditions and sympathetic environments for insects and other animals.
5. **ENVIRONMENTAL SCULPTURE:** sharp turns in the path provide opportunities to surprise the visitor with a sculpture glimpsed through the trees.
6. **THE CLEARING:** a partly covered space with gabion seating where groups may gather to meet, hear lectures, have lunch and take in the sounds and sights.
7. **STORAGE SPACE:** on-site storage of STEP resources and a potential site for experimental roof garden using local species.
8. **ROCKS** relocated from elsewhere in the arboretum provide amenity for visitors and a micro-climate for plants, insects and other animals.

UNDERSTOREY KEY



LOT 100 NATIONAL ARBORETUM CANBERRA

SOUTHERN TABLELANDS ECOSYSTEMS PARK