

# ***motorway through the city centre***

REED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

# Roads vs Public Space

Cities around the world are full of roads. Our urban environments are designed for them, often at the expense of the humans for which cities were created. Main roads in particular, are detrimental to our health and many occupy parts of cities that could otherwise be great public space.

An exemplar of this is seen in Brisbane, Queensland, where the recently completed Queen's Wharf stands barely used, whilst the neighbouring Southbank oozes with life. A key difference between the two, is the raised motorway that runs through the Queen's Wharf development. On the Queen's Wharf side, this channels almost all of the city's vehicular traffic through the public space, bringing with it the smells, sounds and bright lights of a motorway; 24 hours a day.

***Needless to say the adjacent public space is quite uninhabitable.***

However this is not a unique issue to Brisbane. Throughout Australia and around the world, roads prohibit quality greenspace. In the instances where they are raised, like in Brisbane, they still greatly reduce the quality of greenspace, despite being physically separate.

Tunnels present a permanent solution but are very expensive, disruptive and take an age to complete. This issue demands innovation. A solution that takes the best parts of a tunnel and makes it more accessible and achievable is needed.

The roads must be enclosed.

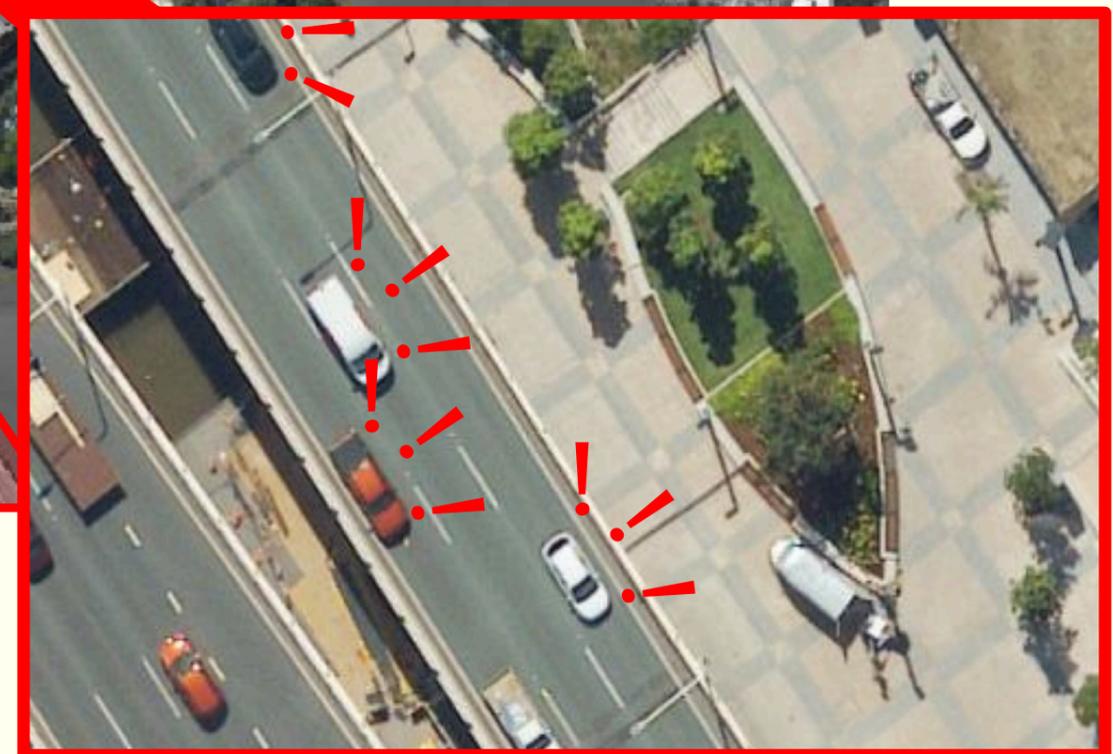




## A Critical Error

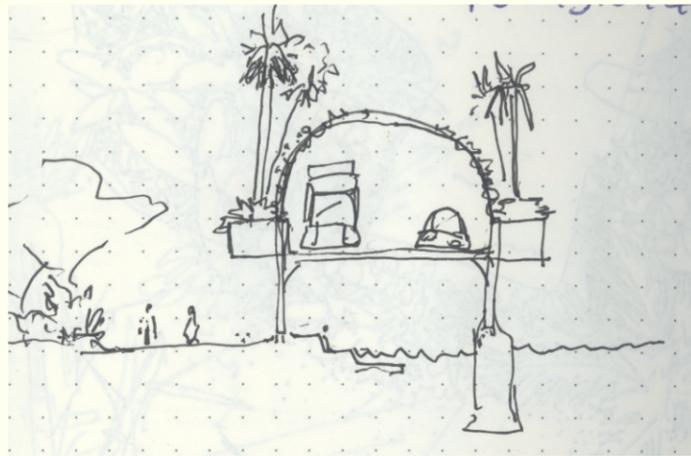
In Brisbane, the raised M1 motorway dominates the riverfront, a relic of 1960s planning. Nowadays, this infrastructure is just as well used, if not more, but is costing the city.

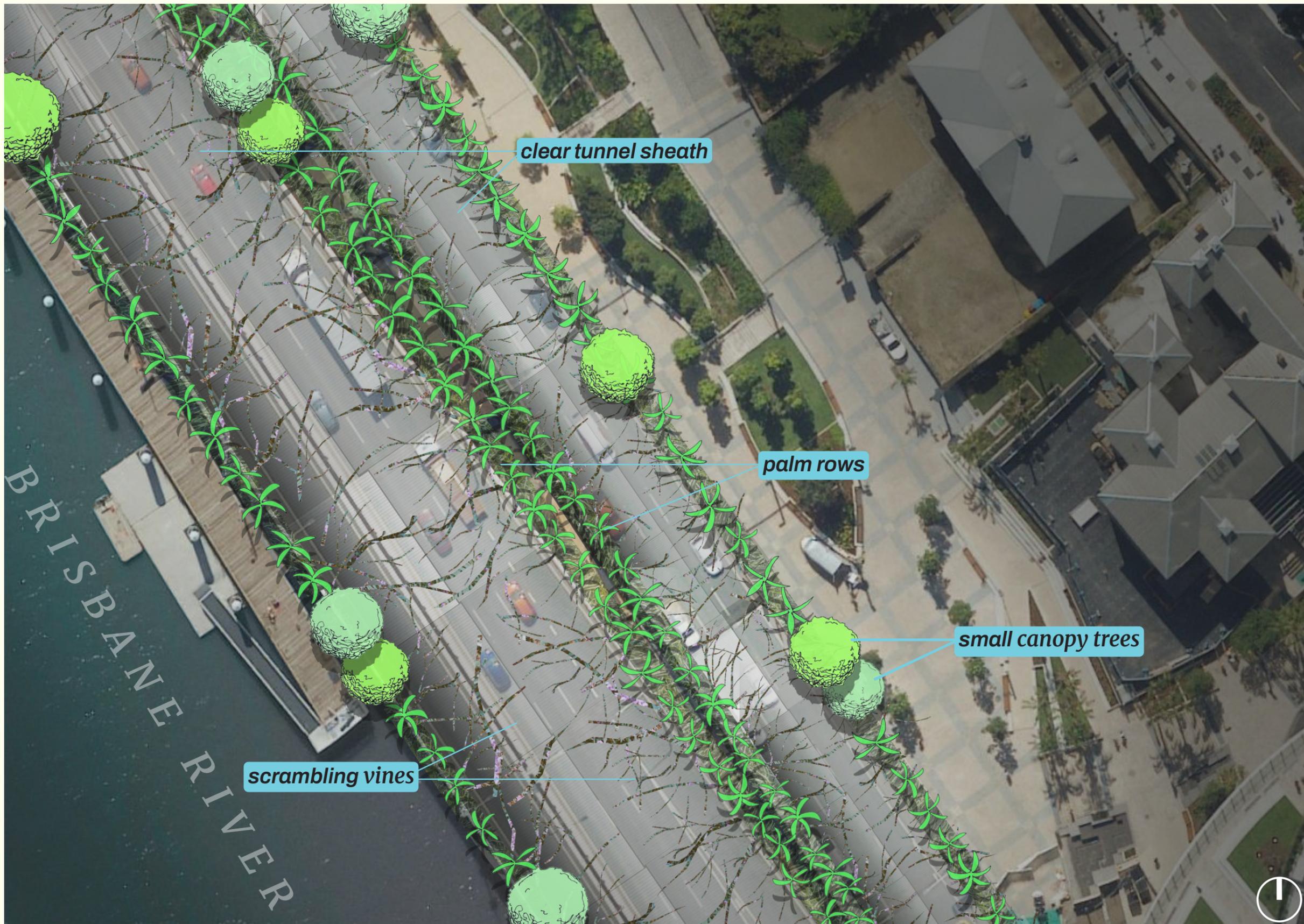
The welcomed new public space adjacent is suffering heavily from it's proximity to the main road.



An enclosure that is able to be retro fitted to roads can provide several benefits. Immediately, it will be able to greatly reduce errant noise, light and fume pollution in the city. There is also great potential in increasing habit alongside the road, with zero collision between cars and fauna.

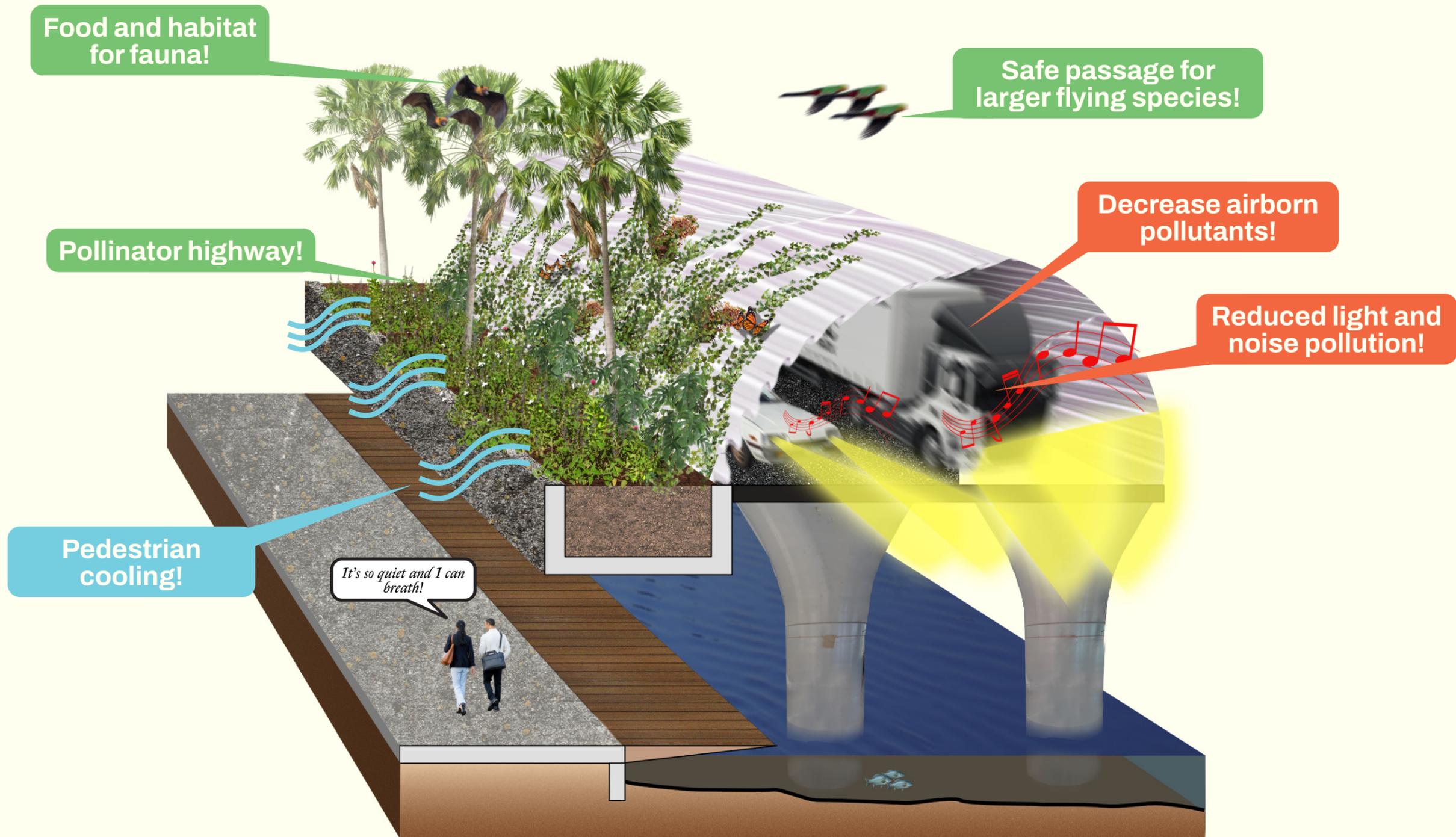
Vehicle enclosures are also able to be installed in sections, with higher priority areas or budgets dictating what can be installed and when.





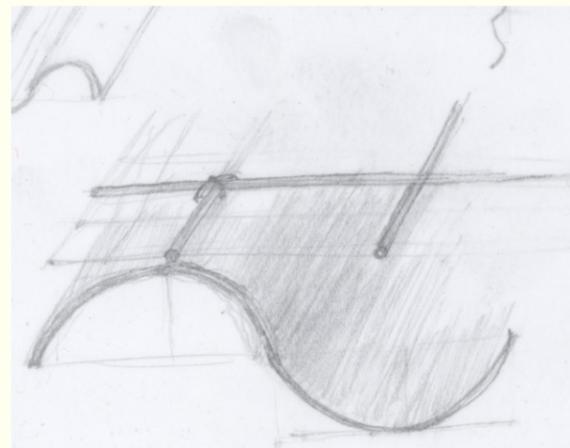
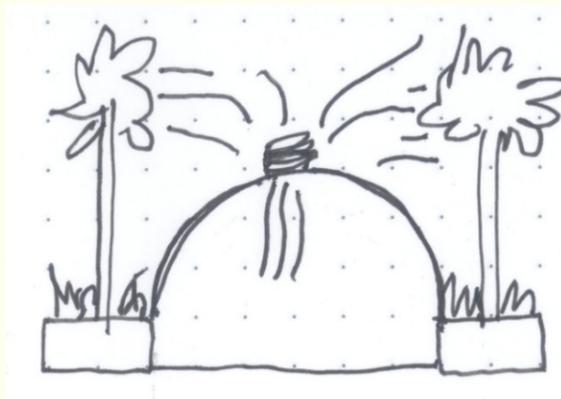
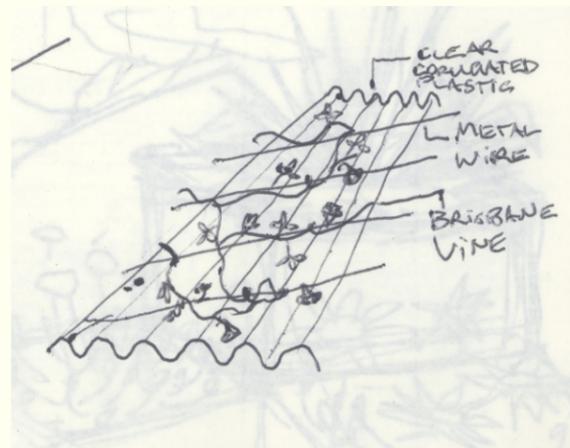
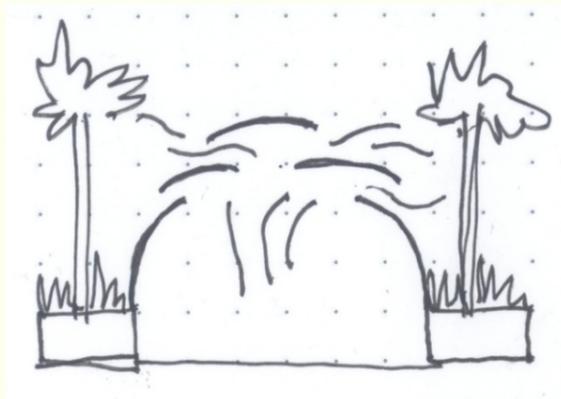
# The Shield

To enclose a road is not just to create better adjacent public space, but is an opportunity to create unique and flourishing ecosystems .



Enclosing the road allows for the **addition of habitat across the road's entire length**. Unlike traditional roadside planting, the trees and shrubs in this system will be able to **sustain large and small fauna without risk of vehicular collision**. *Drastic reduction of road noise will be a valuable gift to cities*. A reclamation of adjacent public space amounts to a **wealth of land unlocked for leisure**. The addition of vines clambering across will enhance the in-vehicle experience, whilst shading the occupants and the road surface, **increasing road surface longevity**.

Crafting the installation will vary site to site, but broadly speaking, it will exist no differently from any other raised planter box. In the case of the covering, using a product that is sympathetic to the locale is suggested. Broadly, the material should be long lasting with the ability to be replaced and able to withstand the elements. With a trellis attachment covering, the suggested corrugated plastic will be somewhat protected from UV degradation as vines cover it. Metallic trellis will be braced for wind but otherwise contribute to a lightweight structure.



Suggested ventilation can be more diverse with breaks in the structure allowing fumes to escape well above pedestrian height. The addition of vegetation at the source of the fumes will also add to collection and reduction of airborne particulate matter, enhancing human health in public space.



Corrugated Plastic Roofing



Metal Trellis with Native Vine



Concrete Planter Box

# Materiality

Low cost and easy to source, these basic materials suggest a simple but highly effect method of construction yielding far greater returns than their simplicity would suggest.



Vehicular corridors are weaved throughout the city fabric, but they need to be doing more than just transporting cars. There is a responsibility that they contribute to the health and wellbeing of the human and non-humans that call cities home.

Urban environments have been at the mercy of roads for over a century, it's time they gave something back.

***end***

*A note about the production of this competition entry:*

To the best of my knowledge, no AI was actively used in this project. No Large Language Models (chatGPT etc.) were used for any of the text and no image generating software was used.

Affinity Suite was used to produce this documentation and the photo montages seen. Adobe Software intrinsically uses AI and I believe unfairly charges students in the creative industries for use of their software.

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