

Our Ref: RACC/CC/210625

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Key Site Assessments  
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

FAO: Anthony Witherdin

**Taronga Reptile and Amphibian Conservation Centre (SSD – 17483577)**

**Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirement – Principle's Action in Draft Connecting with Country framework**

According to SEARs, the EIS must demonstrate that the planning and design of the development has been informed by and responds to Aboriginal cultural connections to Country, having regard to the commitment and principals for action in the Draft Connecting with Country framework, Nov 2020 (Section 3.10).

As the SEARs were received following the commencement of the Reptile Amphibian Conservation Centre (RACC) project, the formal process of Connecting with Country has not been documented as per the requirements of the draft Framework published by the Government Architects Office. However, the ethos of the Connecting with Country Framework is embedded throughout all Taronga projects and programs on Cammeragal and Wiradjuri Country.

Taronga's strategic objective, Commitment to Country, provides a framework to support the design development and interpretation through ongoing and meaningful consultation with the Taronga Aboriginal Advisory Group (TAAG) and Indigenous staff - consultation that has been ongoing throughout the course of this project and others prior.

Taronga prioritises a whole-of-Zoo approach to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage interpretation; sharing, documenting and interpreting cultural knowledge in a truthful and respectful way. Furthermore, the consultation undertaken as part of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA) (Urbis, 2021) for this project has facilitated the development of an understanding of cultural heritage values across the site, and Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) for this ACHA have been consulted on the design development.

A recent outcome and response to these consultation processes and through advice received from Traditional Custodians and represented RAPs, has been to incorporate interpretation of Country through the retention and re-use of the sandstone boulder on site in the landscape design, that what is on Country should remain so.

The re-use of this boulder as a landscape element in the design also interprets the original sandstone landscape of the Bradley's Head Peninsula and evokes a Connection to Country through the retention and interpretation of original landscape elements.

Taronga's Commitment to Country ensures meaningful consultation with First Nation Peoples as an ongoing process that will continue throughout all elements of design and construction of the project, supporting best practise in embedding and understanding cultural commitments and protocols across the organisation.

Kind Regards



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I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which I live and work, and pay my respect to Elders both past & present.