

Bank Street Park
Blackwattle Bay / Tjerruing

SSD-53386706

Appendix P

Preliminary Heritage Interpretation Framework (GML)



December 2023

Bank Street / Tjerruing Park Preliminary Heritage Interpretation Framework

Interpretation Framework
November 27, 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and acknowledge the First Nations of the lands and waterways on which we live and work, their rich cultural heritage and their deep connection to Country, and we acknowledge their Elders past and present. We are committed to truth-telling and to engaging with First Nations People to support the protection of their culture and heritage. We strongly advocate social, cultural and political justice and support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Cultural warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this report may contain images or names of First Nations people who have passed away.

Report Register



The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/Description	Issue Date
23-0126	1	Draft Report	4 August 2023
23-0126	2	Final Report	18 October 2023
23-0126	3	Final Report II	27 November 2023

Quality assurance

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

Indigenous cultural and intellectual property

We acknowledge and respect the inherent rights and interests of the First Nations in Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to be acknowledged and attributed for their contribution to knowledge but also respect their rights to confidentiality. We recognise our ongoing obligations to respect, protect and uphold the continuation of First Nations Peoples rights in the materials contributed as part of this project.

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Introduction

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Introduction

Infrastructure NSW (INSW) has engaged GML Heritage (GML) to prepare a preliminary heritage interpretation framework for 1–3 Bank Street.

This report has been prepared in response to the Planning Secretary’s Environmental Assessments Requirements (SEARs) issued on 11 May 2023 for application SSD-53386706.

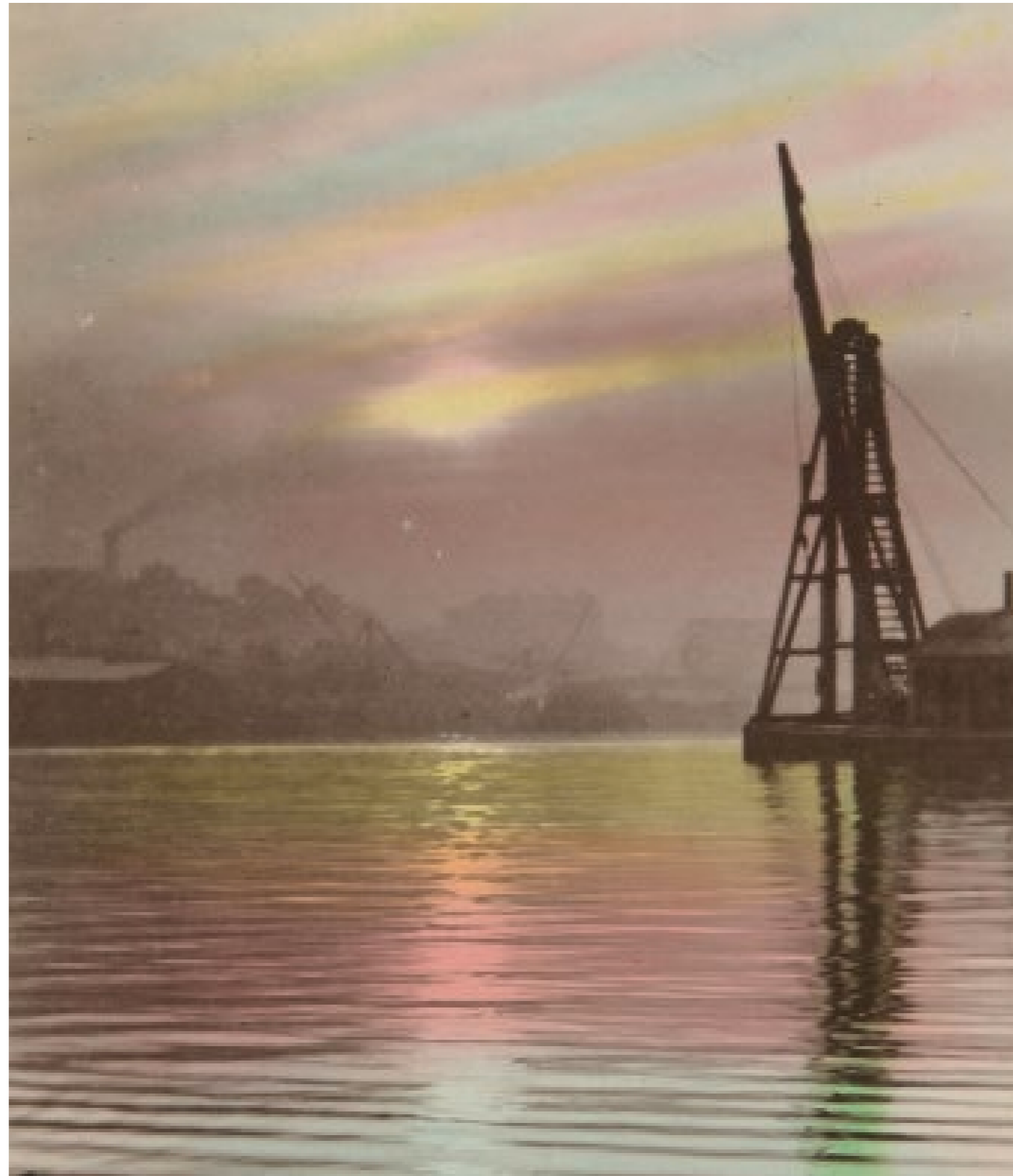
Item	SEARs	Relevant report section(s)
4	Consider how the proposed design responds to the context, site constraints (land contamination, hydrology, flooding, wind etc), site opportunities, access and circulation, heritage, character and visual amenity, character and spatial qualities for play and recreation, streetscape and existing and future character of the locality, including the interface with the water and future development of the Blackwattle Bay Precinct.	All sections
7	Address how the development incorporates heritage interpretation that integrates Connection with Country, built heritage and historical archaeology considerations.	All sections

Limitations

Limited additional archival research has been undertaken in the preparation of this history.

Authorship

This report has been prepared by GML Heritage, by Minna Muhlen-Schulte (Associate) with strategic input and review from Julian Siu (Principal) and design by Beau Vandenberg (Design Manager).



At sunrise, Blackwattle Bay, Glebe. (Source: National Museum of Australia)

Project Background

This heritage interpretation framework sits within a broader body of work that Infrastructure NSW (INSW) has engaged GML to provide, including a Statement of Heritage Impact (SoHI), Historical Archaeological Assessment (HAA), Maritime Archaeological Assessment (MAA) and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR).

Requirements under Item 7 of SEARs include the specification to address 'how the development incorporates heritage interpretation that integrates Connection with Country, built heritage and historical archaeology considerations'. The SoHI is to include a section on heritage interpretation for built heritage and historical/maritime archaeology.

INSW proposes to develop the subject site as Bank Street / Tjerruing Park, a multi-purpose public space with dragon boat storage, marine facilities and community spaces.

What does heritage tell us about this site?

Remnant buildings

Building D will be adaptively reused in the proposed development. Interpretive landscaping is proposed for Building A.

All buildings were initially built in the 1930s. Buildings A and D face Bank Street to the east and their street façades demonstrate interwar period architectural design commensurate with their construction in the 1930s. The remaining external elevations of the building group are utilitarian, with little architectural ornamentation.

Glebe Island Bridge

To the north of the proposed Bank Street Park is the eastern abutment of Glebe Island Bridge. Sandstone rubble from the quarrying of Glebe Island was used to form the abutment, which was then faced with sandstone when the bridge was constructed from 1899 to 1903. Although the study area of the park is outside of the State Heritage Registered curtilage of the bridge, the area directly adjacent to 1A Bank Street is part of this abutment.



An overview of 1-3 Bank Street, showing the buildings in the site. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay)

What does archaeology tell us about this site?

Aboriginal archeology

Aboriginal archaeological test excavations were undertaken with the aim of archaeologically sampling deposits with PAD identified in prior geotechnical testing of the Bank Street site. Deposits with PAD were encountered in two locations during archaeological excavation. These locations were then subject to hand excavation in the form of 500 by 500mm test units, for a total of two test units, or 0.5m² excavation. A single Aboriginal object was identified, a flint flake. Flint is not a naturally occurring material within Sydney, and should be understood to be a contact-period (ie post-1788) artefact. It is likely the flint was transported to Sydney from Britain, potentially as ship's ballast, before being discarded upon arrival in the colony. First Nations people recognised that flint was a workable material, and opportunistically adopted its use for the manufacture of stone artefacts using traditional manufacture techniques.

Historical archaeology

Preliminary archaeological testing revealed historical archaeological remains associated with the development of the site from the c1840s, including evidence of the historic quarrying and reclamation of Blackwattle Bay, as well as structural features associated with former timber stores and yards. Sections of a sandstone seawall were previously exposed during excavation works as part of routine maintenance of the Anzac Bridge eastern pylon. These remains demonstrate the historical evolution and pattern of development of the Bank Street Park site and have some potential to provide new information that would supplement what is known from other documentary sources.



Blackwattle Bay, 1975. (Source: City of Sydney)

Project Methodology

GML has worked collaboratively with the design team to develop the interpretation framework.

The report has been prepared according to the principles and approaches for heritage interpretation set out in *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* (the Burra Charter) and Heritage Interpretation Guidelines produced and endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW in August 2005.

Background review

GML has reviewed the concurrent and previous design documentation to inform the development of the interpretation framework. This ensures that storytelling in the wider area of Blackwattle Bay and Sydney Fish Markets is not duplicated or developed in isolation from Bank Street / Tjerruing Park.



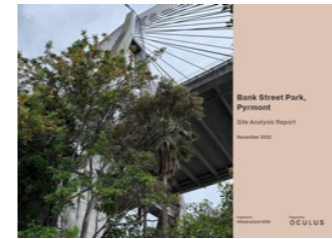
Preliminary Heritage Advice, 2022 (City Plan)

Documentary sources for the site's history with reference to heritage remnants and key figures



Preliminary Public Art Plan, New Sydney Fish Market (Cultural Capital)

Curatorial framework for the New Sydney Fish Markets precinct providing understanding of future public art commissions adjacent to Bank Street Park



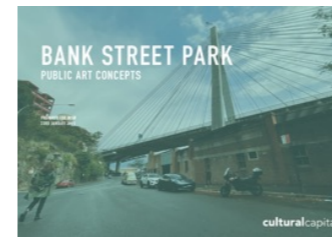
Bank Street Park, Site Analysis Report, 2022 (Oculus)

Relationship of key design spaces, future user groups and heritage



Greenshoot

Overview of Aboriginal cultural heritage, history and values in the surrounding areas of Bank Street



Bank Street Park, Public Art Concepts 2023 (Cultural Capital)

Rationale for public art at Bank Street Park and alignment with curatorial themes



Bank Street Park Wayfinding Concept Package

Wayfinding and signage concept package developed by Buro North to connect people to the site and its history



Designing for | of | with Country

Collaboration between Greenshoot Consulting, Greenaway Architects and Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders to assist in the design translation of Aboriginal history and culture, and to meaningfully and respectfully embed Aboriginal history and culture within the design opportunities of Bank Street Park

Community Consultation

Greenshoot Consulting, Greenaway Architects and INSW met with Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) representatives on 15 April 2023 to identify key storytelling themes at Bank Street Park as well as to summarise the initial aspirations and feedback provided by MLALC representatives regarding the design development of Bank Street Park. Key themes were:

- **Revealing Blak Diggers' history:** The first Blak Diggers March took place at Redfern Park and MLALC have a lot of information and knowledge on the Blak Diggers.
- **Fishing and Gadigal women:** Gadigal women and their mastery of fishing is a significant narrative surrounding Blackwattle Bay.
- **Representation of Country:** Representation of the local landscape and flora (eg mangroves and bush tucker) and fauna (eg eels and sharks) to reflect the deep history and stories of Country.
- **Truth-telling:** All stories connect First Peoples and it is critical that truth-telling is embedded through all actions to represent and acknowledge the continuation of culture.

MLALC also identified principles for design and the project at large:

- **Changing narratives:** There is a need to change the narrative around 'finding' artefacts. They are not found, but First Peoples have granted access.
- **Intellectual property:** First Peoples deserve the right to their own stories and history. They belong to First Peoples.
- **Ways of working:** The development of consistent and respectful ways of working will ensure longevity and maintenance of culture.
- **Self-determination:** There is an opportunity to effectively and efficiently develop respectful relationships with local people to ensure First Peoples decision-making.

Greenshoot Consulting and Greenaway Architects also met with the Blak Diggers group regarding the design development of Bank Street Park who underlined the importance of:

- **Revealing Blak Diggers' history:** It is important to acknowledge and represent Blak Diggers in the park design due to the park's unique location and close proximity to the Anzac Bridge.
- **Honouring significant Blak Diggers:** Significant figures such as Douglas Grant and Rod Holtham should be honoured and represented in the park.
- **Self-determination:** Ongoing consultations and conversations should support Blak Diggers self-determination and their aspirations to inform design outcomes.

Design Principles

The *Designing for / of / with Country* strategy revolves around three principles:

- Healing Country
- Revealing Country
- Caring for Country

The desire to achieve all of these outcomes ensures an integrated approach providing clear social and environmental benefits and a rich embedding of culture across the site.

These principles are expressed through a wide range of design elements, outlined on the following page.

Audience Analysis

Effective interpretation models consider who the potential audience might be and how they engage with the interpretation provided.



Audience group	Engagement with interpretation
<p>Workers will likely use or pass through the public spaces on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Time pressure might result in shorter bursts of engagement and visits. Visually bold interpretive content will result in more engagement due to limited engagement with text.</p>
<p>Tourists and special interest groups may seek out and visit the precinct because of the cultural institution.</p>	<p>This type of visitor may prefer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visually engaging content that is easy to consume; • interactivity with multiple devices; • avenues for further investigation (ie a digital overlay and website); and • displays of original primary sources and artefacts.
<p>Families and local visitors seek activities and learning experiences.</p>	<p>Emphasise interactive interpretation and bright, colourful design.</p>

Signage and Placemaking

A number of opportunities to use Aboriginal language in the park emerged from Greenshoot Consulting's consultation process. INSW and the project team have identified the appropriate approval pathway to implement Aboriginal place names as guided by the City of Sydney Naming Policy (2023).

INTERPRETIVE / INDIGENOUS ARTS
PLAN SUMMARY

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CLIENT Infrastructure New South Wales
PROJECT Bank Street Park
STAGE Concept Design
ISSUE Rev 4 - 18/08/23

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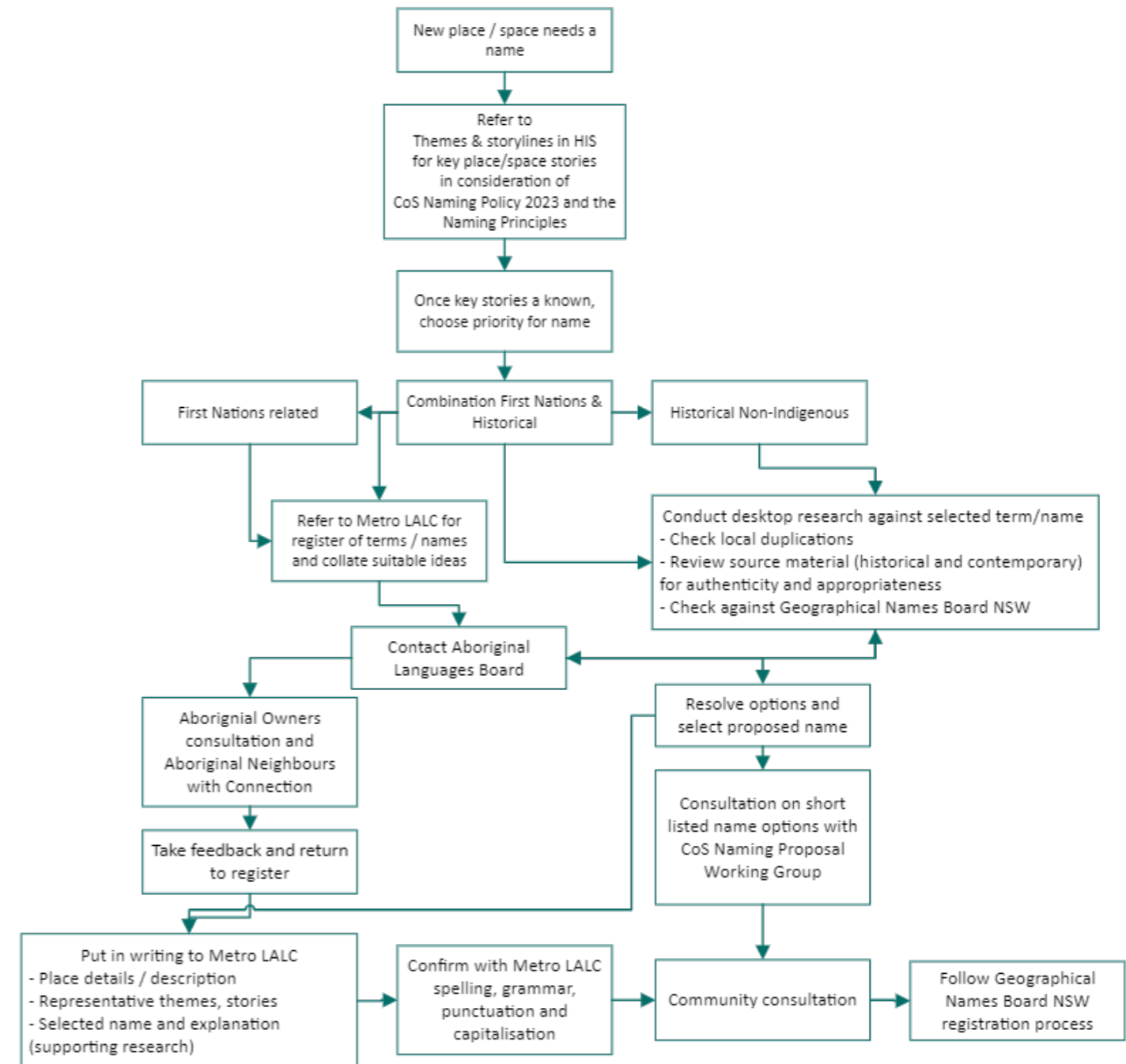
Interpretive Signage and Placemaking

Delivers stories and history of place, connecting to country, and supports the unique place identity. Applied at key zones throughout the park.

PRELIMINARY CURATORIAL IDEAS & THEMES:

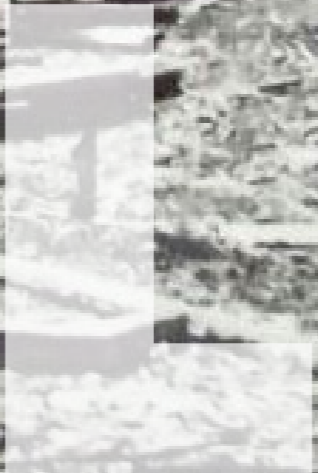
- Revealing Country
- Ceremony
 - Motif
 - Colours of Country
 - Cultural Markers
 - Language
 - Journeys
 - Shelters
 - Black Diggers

Refer to First Nations Consultation Summary by Greenshoots for further information on Interp Signs





Thematic Framework



Thematic Framework

A thematic framework is a method for categorising, understanding and presenting information. Current documentation for Bank Street has provided a number of themes and stories as the basis for landscape and architectural design and public art installations.

The following sections provide links to these themes in an approach to the site. The primary theme is Aboriginal Country. Consultation led by Greenaway Architects and Greenshoot Consulting with Traditional Owners and Custodians guided the key cultural and historical content to be interpreted. The themes also use the remnant and intangible heritage of the site, including the vegetation and fauna of lost landscapes and the materials that once dominated it, to enrich the storytelling potential of the design.



Proposed pavillion design. (Source: Greenaway Architects)

Primary Theme



Aboriginal Country

These stories have been identified in consultation by Greenshoot Consulting and Greenaway Architects:

- Revealing Blak Diggers' history
- Eora fisherwomen
- Representation of Country
- Truth-telling

Secondary Themes



Colonial industry

- Timber, steel, coal and sandstone industries
- Pollution of Blackwattle Bay



Migrant fishing


- Mediterranean migration to Sydney and the shaping of the Blackwattle Bay fishing industry
- Carlo Caminiti's business at Bank Street
- The continuing cultural tradition of the Blessing of the Fleet

Thematic Map

This map depicts the locations where themes can be interpreted, noting that the basis of the landscape and architectural design is Aboriginal Country.

- **Aboriginal Country**
- **Colonial industry**
- **Migrant fishing**





**Aboriginal Country
Primary Theme**

Tjerruing (Blackwattle): Aboriginal Country

Blackwattle Bay has been bound to Aboriginal Country in Sydney Harbour for an estimated time extending to 35,000 years. 500–1200 years ago a new fishhook called bara appeared in the harbour and Eora fisherwomen came to dominate the harbour waters, traversing the waterways in their nowie (canoes).

The intersection of the freshwater of the colonially named Tinker’s Well with the saltwater of Blackwattle Bay would also have been a significant resource for Aboriginal people. Rehabilitating and healing Country after colonisation is a key tenet of the interpretation and design of Bank Street Park.

The importance of rebalancing the memorial landscape was also highlighted through consultation. The Anzac Bridge overarching Bank Street was dedicated on Remembrance Day in 1998 in memory of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (known as Anzacs) who served in World War I. The public and civic recognition of Aboriginal servicemen has only recently been recognised in contemporary Sydney with a mural on Eveleigh Street, Redfern and another by Tony Albert in Hyde Park.

The interpretation of this theme will be integrated into the park through a public art commission and landscape design featuring cultural references to the use of:

- shell and bones for fishhooks and tool production;
- traditional wooden shields;
- painted clan markings; and
- sandstone engraving sites.



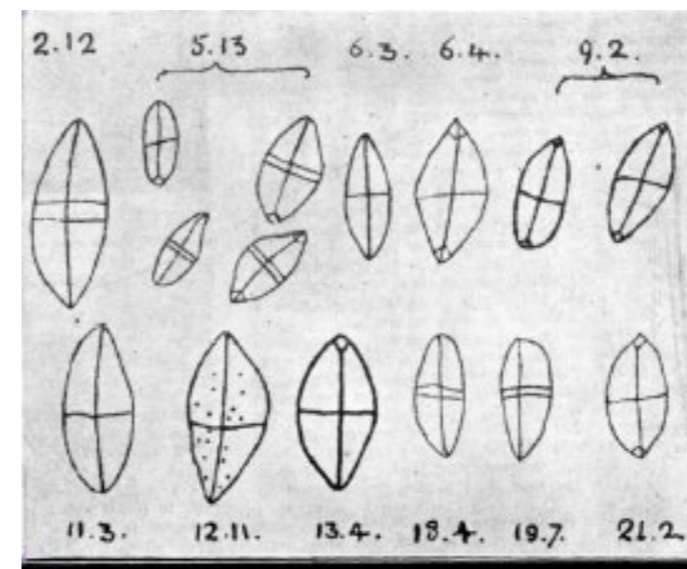
Bara fishhook. (Source: Australian Museum)



Shell reference material. (Source: Greenaway Architects)



Aboriginal World War I servicemen (L-R) Arthur Murdoch, George Kombo, Frederick Prentice and Robert George Garner (Source: Jai McAllister)



Shields or Spanish 'victory symbols'? (Reproduced from WD Campbell 'Aboriginal Carvings', 1899)



A rare Sydney shield (Source: Art Galley of NSW) and fishing line made of twisted brown bark fibre from Port Jackson, pre-1844. (Source: British Museum)

Interpretive devices and locations



1. Wayfinding/interpretive signage

Theme: Aboriginal Country
Story: Aboriginal language and naming
Location: Throughout park

Multifunctional signage that provides wayfinding and interpretive educational content about Aboriginal culture.

2. Public art commissions

A
Theme: Aboriginal Country
Story: Blak Diggers
Location: Bank Street Park multipurpose sports surface

The Bank Street Park multipurpose sports surface is transformed into a large scale canvas for art.

B
Theme: Aboriginal Country
Story: Revealing Blak Diggers' history and truth-telling
Possible locations:

- Architectural and/or landscape integration
- Façade treatment
- Ground plane integration
- Lighting integration
- Embedded language on site
- Honour Roll of Blak Digger names within balustrade of viewing deck.
- Viewing deck to use materials/colours of Country.

3. Themed landscape structure

Theme: Aboriginal Country
Story: Blak Diggers
Location: Shelter integration

4. Endemic planting

Theme: Aboriginal Country
Story: Representation of Country
Possible Locations:
 Garden beds throughout the park



Colonial Industry Secondary Theme

Colonial industries

Initially dominated by John Harris's estate, the Pyrmont Peninsula was thoroughly exploited for its resources including water and the quarrying of sandstone, as well as abattoirs further upstream. Bank Street in the latter part of the nineteenth century was filled with the activities of timber yards, steel works and skin stores. Incursions into the water itself were represented by not only the jetties but also by the pollution and sedimentation of the bay from industrial runoff. The head of Blackwattle Bay, known as Blackwattle Cove or Swamp, was infilled from 1876 in an attempt to counter the smells from these industries.

The exploitation and extraction of these resources altered the landscape forever, 'right up to the beginning of the present century [but this] regrettably was one of the landmarks that disappeared as the cliffs were quarried back'.¹

By the early twentieth century, the blood, sweat and tears of the labour history of Blackwattle Bay was indelibly associated with the site:

*the very core, life, and being of Sydney's Timber Industry, where timber is piled in stacks and supine forests along the water's edge for near a two mile stretch; in a locality and atmosphere, that talks, eats, drinks, and thinks timber. 24 hours out of the 24; where the workmen at the machines all carry shavings in their hair.*²

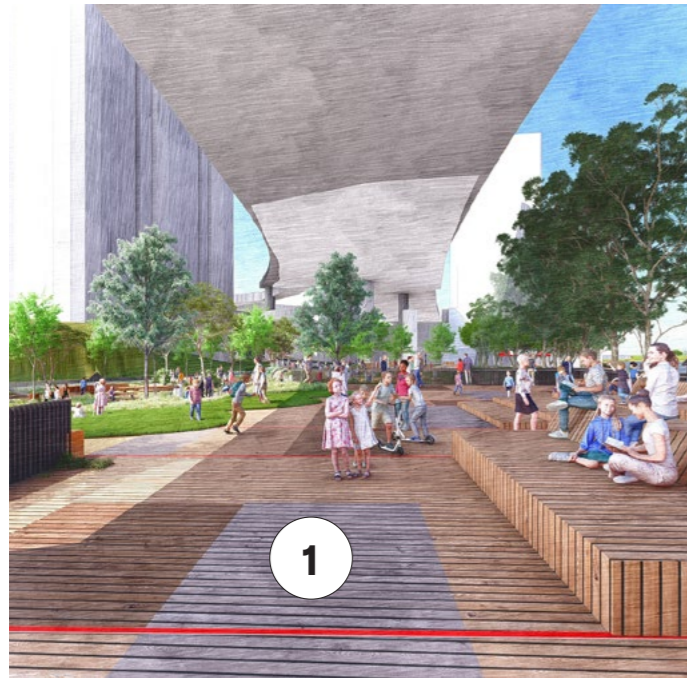
Around this time the 5 Bank Street site included the Allen Taylor & Co timber store, Wallis Brothers sawmills, McEnnally Bros and Co lightermen and tugboats, and Puech's skin store³, where it was advertised that:

*the wool on sheepskins may be transformed into velvet. Up to the present time sheepskins, tanned with the wool out, have only been need for mats, linings, of coats ... Mr Puech conceived the idea of cleansing the skin and wool of all impurities, and of so preparing and dressing them that the hairs would so well preserved.*⁴



1-3 Bank Street from Bowman Street, 1932. (Source: CoS archives)

Interpretive devices and locations



1. Materiality - Sandstone Blocks and Timber

Theme: Colonial industry

Story: Timber, steel, coal and Sandstone industries; pollution of Blackwattle Bay

Location:

- Timber boardwalk areas
- Sandstone seating
- Sandstone blocks terracing into water

2. Remnant heritage

Theme: Colonial industry

Story: Timber, steel, coal and sandstone industries

Location: Building A remains



Migrant Fishing Secondary Theme

Migrant fishing

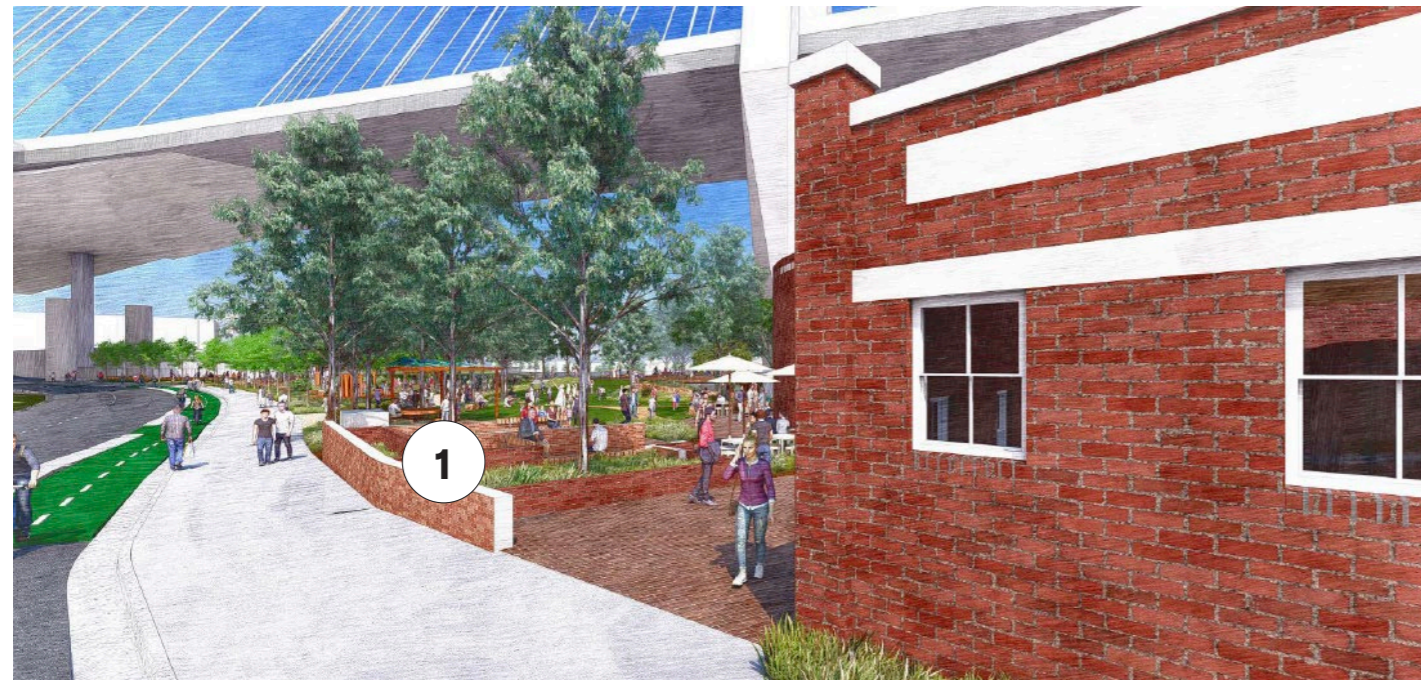
The influence of southern Mediterranean families who migrated to Sydney during the interwar and post-war periods continues to shape the culture and business of Blackwattle Bay. Many families brought with them traditional fishing practices of their own, building vessels from scratch and trying their luck in Australia. The annual Blessing of the Fleet at Blackwattle Bay, still practised today, is part of a centuries-old tradition, practised in fishing villages along the Mediterranean coast and brought to Pyrmont by the migrant families of southern Italy.

In 1932, Carlo Caminiti purchased lots on Bank Street. His family had moved to Australia in the nineteenth century to the New Italy settlement near the Richmond River in northern New South Wales. With World War II looming, Carlo took the precaution of anglicising his name by deed poll to Charles Cam. His business, Cam & Sons, became one of the biggest fish suppliers in Sydney. In 1940 during World War II, eight Cam & Sons steam trawlers, the majority of the company's fleet, were requisitioned by the Royal Australian Navy for use in minesweeping operations. The Cam & Sons boats commissioned by the Navy were the *Alfie Cam*, *Beryl*, *Coonabee*, *Goorangai*, *Mary Cam*, *Olive Cam*, *Patricia Cam* and *Samuel Benbow*.



Bagnato Family, Sydney Fish Market. (Source: Sydney Fish Market)

Interpretive devices and locations

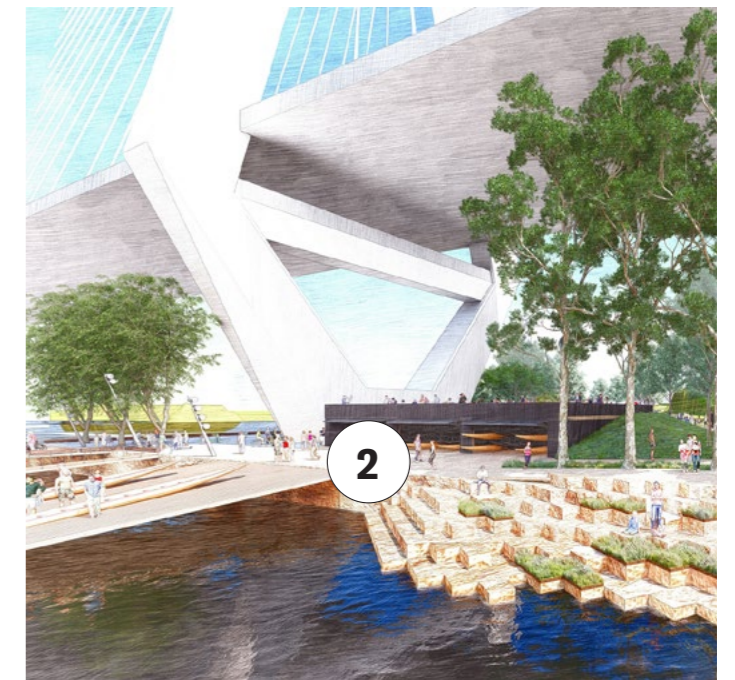


1. Remnant heritage

Theme: Migrant fishing

Story: Mediterranean migration to Sydney and the shaping of the Blackwattle Bay fishing industry; Carlo Caminiti's business on Bank Street

Location: Building A remains



2. Etched interpretive wording

Theme: Migrant fishing

Story: Mediterranean migration to Sydney and the shaping of the Blackwattle Bay fishing industry; Carlo Caminiti's business on Bank Street

Location: Deck next to kayak launch

Endnotes

- ¹ Ecology of Pymont peninsula, p 415.
- ² SA Mills, The firm that has reduced the Australian timber trade ... to a science, A & E Ellis Ltd, Sydney, 1909, p 2.
- ³ Urbis 2017, Heritage Impact Statement & Archaeological Assessment: Bank Street Commercial Wharf, 5–11 Bank Street, Pymont NSW, report prepared for Urbangrowth NSW, p 17.
- ⁴ WOOL VELVET, 23 July 1881, *Mount Alexander Mail* (Vic: 1854–1917), p 4.