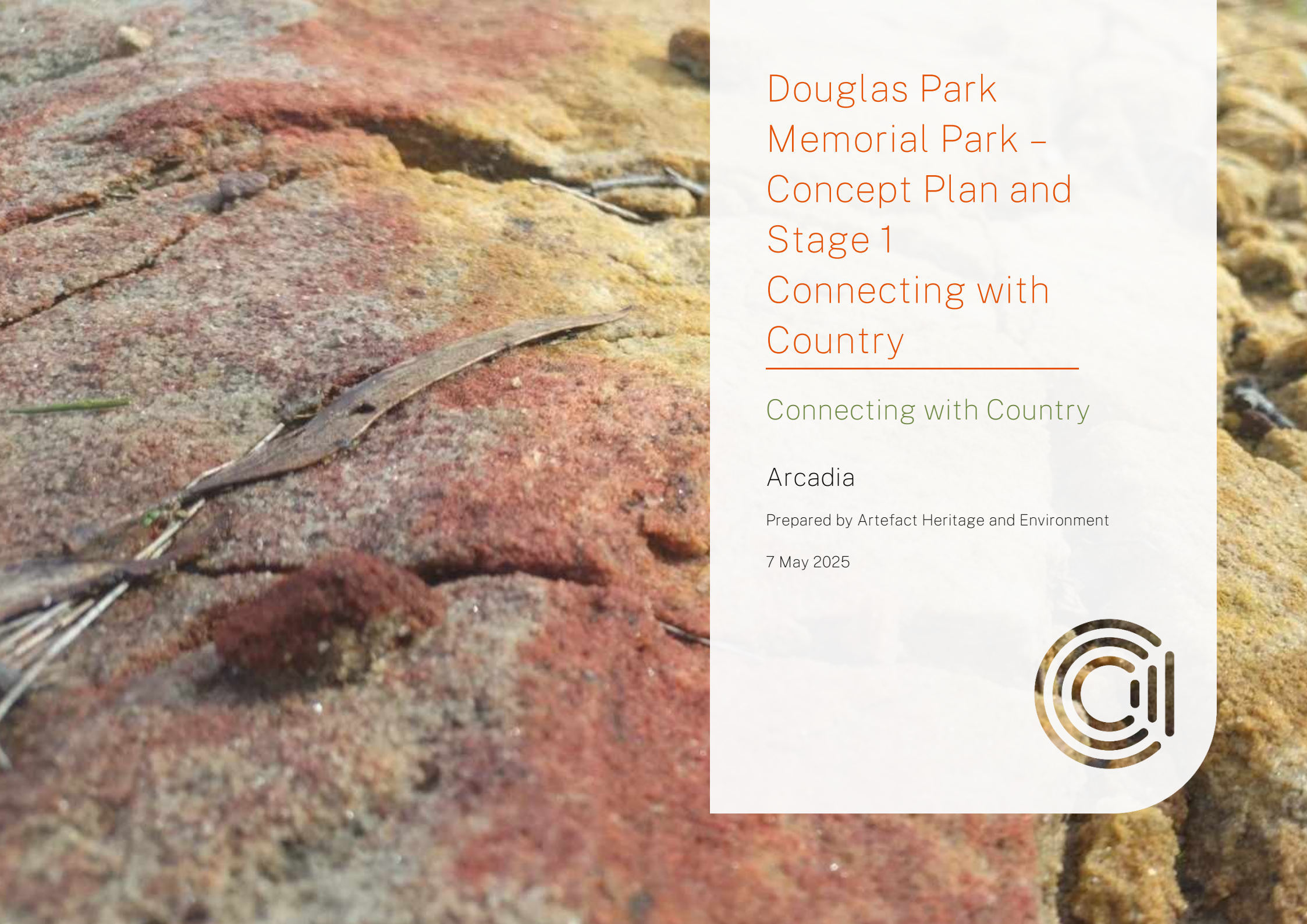




Douglas Park Memorial Park – Concept Plan and Stage 1 Connecting with Country

Connecting with Country

Arcadia

Prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment

7 May 2025



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Artefact acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of our land, Australia.

We acknowledge the Gadigal and Wangal people of Pirrama (Pyrmont) where our Sydney office is located, the Awabakal, Worimi and Wonnarua of the Hunter Region where our Mulubinba (Newcastle) office is located and the Wiradyuri of the Central West where our Bathurst office is located.

When we travel to Country we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we walk. We acknowledge the Dharawal, traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waters where this project was undertaken. We thank them for sustaining and caring for Country for millennia.

Front cover: Sandstone at Douglas Park site (source: Artefact)

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Cultural warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this report contains the names and images of people who are deceased.

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1. DECLARATION

CONSULTANT DECLARATION

PROJECT DETAILS	
PROJECT NAME	
Application number	SSD- 68287712
Address of subject land	430-490 Douglas Park Drive, Douglas Park
Lot / DP	Lot 2 in DP 250359.
APPLICANT DETAILS	
Applicant name	Benima Pty Ltd
Applicant address	
REPORT DETAILS	
Name of report this declaration relates	Douglas Park Memorial Park – Concept Plan and Stage 1 Connecting with Country
Report reference no.	240208
Report date	7 May 2025
Company name (inc. ABN / ACN)	Artefact Heritage Services Pty Ltd ABN 73 144 973 526
Author names	Kelly Barton, Alex Gaffikin, Katrina Eckford, Dr Stephen Gapps, Hannah Matagia
Author qualifications	Lead author Alexandra Gaffikin – BA Indigenous Studies
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PROJECT DETAILS

DECLARATION BY CONSULTANT

Name Alexandra Gaffikin

Registration no.

Organisation registered with Artefact Heritage

Declaration

The undersigned declares that Douglas Park Memorial Park – Concept Plan and Stage 1 Connecting with Country

- has been prepared in accordance with the following policy, guidelines, or legislative requirements:
 - Government Architect New South Wales, 2023. Connecting with Country.
- contains all available information relevant to the environmental assessment of the development, activity or infrastructure to which the Connecting with Country relates;
- does not contain information that is false or misleading;
- identifies and addresses the relevant Planning Secretary's environmental assessment requirements (SEARs) for the project;
- identifies and addresses the relevant statutory requirements for the project, including any relevant matters for consideration in environmental planning instruments to which the Connecting with Country relates;
- contains a consolidated summary of the proposed or necessary mitigation measures

Signature



Date 7 May 2025

2. REFERRAL AGENCY TABLE

Item	Agency / Stakeholders	Relevant Section of the report
1	Tharawal LALC	Section 7.4.2
2	Aunty Glenda Chalker	Sections 7.4.3 and 7.4.4
3	Rebecca Chalker, Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd.	Section 7.4.4
4	Danièle Hromek, SDRP	Section 7.4.5
5	Artefact's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officers and their families	Section 7.4.6
6	Neane Carter, Teri Janke Lawyers	Section 3.8
7	Aunty Gwenda Jarrett and Aunty Jodie Stewart, South Coast Native Title Claimants	Section 15
8	Zion Engagement	Section 15
9	Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative	Section 15
10	Wollondilly Shire Council	Section 15

3. INTRODUCTION



3.1 Introduction

This *Connecting with Country* report has been prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment (Artefact) on behalf of Benima Pty Ltd for a combined Concept Plan approval and Stage 1 detailed works for a new multi-denominational cemetery at 430-490 Douglas Park Drive, Douglas Park (Douglas Park Memorial Park - Concept Plan and Stage 1).

The site is located at 430-490 Douglas Park Drive, Douglas Park within the Wollondilly Local Government Area (LGA). The site is irregular in shape with a total size of 16,7940m². It is legally described as Lot 2 in DP 250359. The site is mostly vacant with scattered vegetation and a single, residential dwelling with driveway accessible from Douglas Park Drive. The site comprises two street frontages, to the east is Mitchell Place and to the west is Douglas Park Drive.

This report accompanies a State Significant Development Application that seeks approval for a combined Concept Plan approval and Stage 1 detailed works for a new multi-denominational cemetery.

Concept approval is sought for the use and operation of the site as a cemetery with a maximum, staged capacity of up to 37,107 burial plots including a crematoria and chapel, vaults, remembrance sanctuaries, general site layout and all associated groundworks, roads, pathways, landscaping and ancillary buildings. Refer to Figure 1.

The Stage 1 works comprise the following (refer to Figure 2).

- *All preparatory site works including vegetation protection, enhancement and removal, demolition of existing structures, bulk excavation for burial zones, general ground works and utility service augmentation;*

- *Vehicular access / egress from Douglas Park Drive with separate vehicular egress only to Mitchell Place;*
- *Construction of internal roads, pathways and parking areas for approximately 118 car parking spaces inclusive of 1 hearse car parking space;*
- *Perimeter memorial pedestrian pathway with remembrance sanctuaries;*
- *Burial zones with a maximum capacity of 15,447 comprising shallow, single and triple layered burial plots;*
Construction of single storey chapel, single storey administration building and single storey storage shed and garage;
- *Site landscaping, fencing, lighting and entry signage; and*
- *The cemetery operating hours, including public access, will be between the hours of 6:00am and 6:00pm, 7 days a week. The*
opening hours of the Chapel and Administration Building (including café) will be between 8:00am and 5:00pm, 7 days a week

The burial zone preparation works within Stage 1 will be carried out sequentially within each burial zone and will be based on the demand for burial plots.

For a detailed project description refer to the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Ethos Urban.

3.2 Scope of report

This *Connecting with Country* report, developed by Artefact, has been informed by the cultural connections to Country shared by stakeholders, and provides actions, outcomes and design principles to embed Country into the development of the site, identifies Country narratives and interpretive themes for the development, and provides a best-practice framework for designing with Country.

3.3 SEARs reporting

The project is seeking approval for a State Significant Development Application (SSDA). Project specific SEARs have been issued by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI). The following SEARs requirement is addressed by this report.

Item	SEARS Requirement	Relevant Section of Report
4.	Design Quality Demonstrate how the development will achieve: - design excellence in accordance with any applicable EPI provisions. - good design in accordance with the seven objectives for good design in Better Placed. Demonstrate that the development: - where required by an EPI or concept approval, or where proposed, has been subject to a competitive design process, carried out in accordance with an endorsed brief and Design Excellence Strategy; or - in all other instances, has been reviewed by the State Design Review Panel (SDRP) where required under the NSW SDRP: Guidelines for Project Teams.	Section 9 includes Designing with Country recommendations including: Section 9.2 Design Principles Section 9.3 Examples of Design realisations
5.	Built Form and Urban Design Demonstrate that Aboriginal culture and heritage is considered and incorporated holistically in the design proposal consistent with the Connecting with Country Framework.	Section 7.4 includes the recommendations for design by the Aboriginal Stakeholders consulted Section 9.2 are the Design Principals developed following consultation

3.4 The study area

The study area is lot 2 Douglas Park Drive near the village of Douglas Park, located in Sydney's south west. See Figure 1.



Figure 1: Concept Site Plan (source: Arcadia Landscape Architecture)

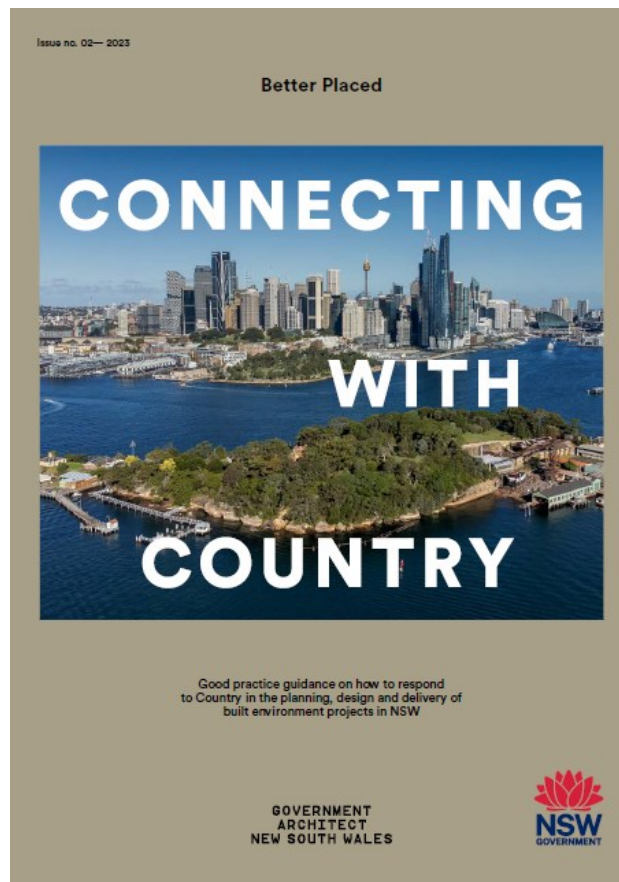


Figure 2: Stage 1 Works (source: Arcadia Landscape Architecture)

3.5 Guiding documents

The following guiding document has been consulted during the preparation of this Connecting with Country report.

- Government Architect New South Wales, 2023. *Connecting with Country*.



3.6 Terminology

Due to the huge disruption of colonisation and the challenges of translating Aboriginal language into written English, there are a variety of ways of referring to the Aboriginal peoples and languages of the Bradfield area. As language is revitalised and more knowledge is shared, terminology may also change. This report therefore uses different terminology and spellings interchangeably depending on the source, for example Dharawal and D'harawal.

3.6.1 Cultural context

A number of key contextual issues are important to consider when developing a Connecting with Country framework for a new project:

Country, culture and community: The many interpretations of Country are often expressed by Aboriginal communities through cultural practices.

Caring for Country: Caring for Country is a cultural obligation that Aboriginal people undertake with a deep sense of responsibility, ownership and stewardship. Caring for Country includes caring for the wellbeing of Country's interconnected systems now and for the future.

Identify: For Aboriginal people, Country is at the core of identity. Aboriginal peoples' connection with Country has continued over thousands of years, from deep time. It is a source of valuable wisdom and knowledge that can guide all of us to improve the way we plan and design the places where we live and work.

Cultural safety: Cultural safety is about creating a socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually safe space where there is no challenge or denial of a person's identity. For Aboriginal people this means feeling safe, valued and able to participate in their cultural, spiritual and belief systems, free from racism, discrimination and lateral violence.

Indigenous cultural and intellectual property: Australian Indigenous cultural and intellectual property (ICIP) are the rights that Aboriginal people have to protect their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and cultural expression.

3.7 Cultural warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this report contains the names and images of people who are deceased. Further, this report may contain words and terms in quotations from works written by non-Indigenous people in the past that may be confronting and considered inappropriate today. Artefact does not endorse these views or the use of these terms. These historical sources have been included because they provide information on the lives of Aboriginal people in the region.

3.8 Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property

Artefact have prepared this Connecting with Country report for the Douglas Park Memorial Park project. This report, and the information and cultural knowledge gathered in its preparation, are to be used for the above project only. This project aims to facilitate a meaningful, considered, and functional framework for understanding the relationships between Country, community and individuals and integrating this understanding into design principles for the site.

Please note that all cultural knowledge shared by Elders, knowledge holders, Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) and the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) that is included in this document remains the intellectual property of those who have shared it. The rights of Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) must be protected at all times.

The following best practice ICIP guidelines from the GANSW Connecting with Country (2023) will be followed:

- Payment made to knowledge holders for their traditional knowledges shared.
- Credit of organisations or individuals for their traditional knowledges.
- Information and guidelines about IPIC included in reports.
- All usage of the information must be approved by the organisation or individual before finalised or published.
- If requested by the organisation or individual, ICIP can be included in a written agreement with the organisation or individual.

This work embodies the cultural heritage, traditional knowledge or traditional cultural expression (ICIP) of the Aboriginal stakeholders listed in the consultation log. It was created with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent. Dealing with any part of this work for any purpose that has not been authorised by the Aboriginal stakeholders is a serious breach of customary law and may also breach the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth). For enquiries about permitted reproduction of the ICIP contained in this work, contact Artefact at office@artefact.net.au.

3.9 Authorship and acknowledgements

This report has been prepared by Alexandra Gaffikin (Senior Associate, Artefact), Katrina Eckford, Hannah Matagia, Cole Perry, Kelly Barton (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officers, Artefact), Dr Stephen Gapps (Historian, Artefact), Katherine Chalmers (Heritage Consultant, Artefact), with input and review from Dr Sam Higgs and Carolyn MacLulich (Principals, Artefact).

Artefact has worked in collaboration with a number of Aboriginal knowledge holders in preparing the report and would like to thank all knowledge holders for their generosity in sharing cultural knowledge for this project.

4. GANSW CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

The *Connecting with Country Framework (2023)*, prepared by the Government Architects NSW Office, seeks to assist design project teams to integrate Aboriginal culture into development projects. The predominant message of the framework is that the current design approach mentality needs to shift from Human Centric to Country Centric, to create a healthy Country with culturally diverse and safe spaces that simultaneously address the growing environmental problems that society face today.

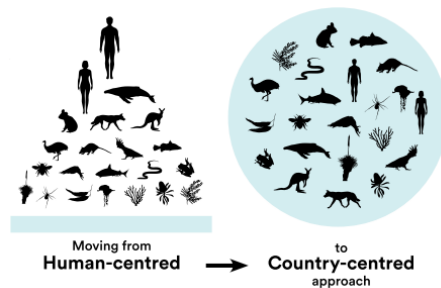


Figure 3: Human-centred or Country-centred approach (GANSW Connecting with Country)

It advocates for an integrated approach that combines Aboriginal knowledge and western science which recognises and appreciates the interconnectedness of all elements of society and the environment. The essential message is that if we look after Country, Country will look after us. To facilitate the behavioural change required to put Country at the forefront of new design, the framework expands upon three components of Aboriginal cultural knowledge systems and aligns them with three cognitive elements (Thinking, Feeling, Behaviour):

- **Communing with Country (Thinking):** the connection to Country through mind and spirit as demonstrated through forms of cultural expression.

- **Sensing Country (Feeling):** immersive cultural practices to provide insight into the emotional connection to Country.
- **Being on Country (Behaving):** working together to share knowledge and perspective to create cohesive and respectful designs.

To implement this Country centric approach, the framework identifies how Country can be incorporated into each phase of the design process as guided by the Aboriginal community:

- **Project formation** – starting with Country – ensuring that the project teams understand the nuanced concept of Country through cultural awareness training.
- **Project design** – imagining with Country – designing led by interpretive cultural narratives and an understanding of Country.
- **Project delivery** – shaping Country – design and construction led by the need to protect and promote Country.
- **Project maintenance** – a commitment to nurture all parts of Country, of which the new development project is part.

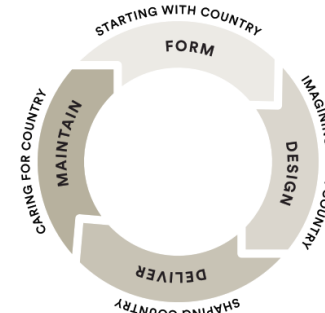


Figure 4: Project lifecycle from an Aboriginal perspective (GANSW Connecting with Country)

The framework has specific guidance around ways to Design with Country, exploring opportunities for design to support connection to Country in built environment projects. These include:

Design focus:

- Language use and first place names.
- Connect to the broader landscape.
- Promote and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Acknowledge our shared history.

Design opportunities:

- Learn from traditional Aboriginal architecture.
- Support living ecosystems.
- Reawaken memories.
- In between spaces.
- Indirect connections.

The framework also provides practical assistance for how Country can be considered in project design at a precinct wide level, a building-scale project level and a small-scale project level.

4.1.1 GANSW Designing with Country discussion paper (2019)

The Government Architect NSW draft *Designing with Country* discussion paper predates the *Connecting with Country* framework and fed into its development.¹ It posed questions around developing practical guidance for

the design industry to respond to current directions in planning policy. Its aim was to contribute to better understanding of, and better support for, a strong and vibrant Aboriginal culture in our built environment.

- It stated that there are three essential elements of designing with Country: nature, people, and design:
- Architecture considers design and people (informed by nature). Architecture without people is just a sculptural object.
- Passive design considers design and nature, and when used by people becomes environmental design.
- Biophilic design considers the innate relationship between people and nature. Informed by design, this relationship could be understood as a genesis for Indigenous architecture.

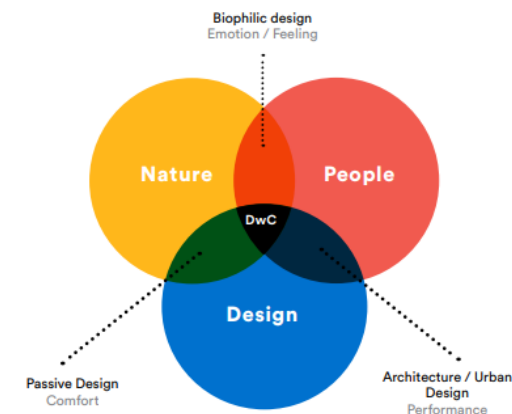


Figure 5: Elements of Designing with Country. Source: GANSW *Designing with Country* Discussion paper. *Considering Country*

¹ GANSW, 2020b.

5. CONSIDERING COUNTRY

5.1 What is Country?

The concept of Country does not have a corresponding concept in Western culture but is a deeply personal yet universal worldview fundamental to Aboriginal and First Nations people. Individual relationships with and definitions of 'Country' are deeply nuanced, and can vary depending on a person's life experience, place, and personal beliefs. It is key, therefore, to deeply listen to the perspectives of Aboriginal people and remove Western biases when thinking about Country.

A definition of country as 'land' may be the initial association made by a Western person, but this is far too simplistic; instead, the idea of Country is an all-encompassing continuum of past, present and future, connecting tangible things like ecosystems, water, and people, as well as intangible concepts like story, identity, and home.

Country and identity are deeply linked for Aboriginal people, and an understanding of Country is key to understanding both themselves and their community.' Country encompasses everything. It includes both living and non-living elements. It holds everything within the landscape, including Earth, Water and Sky Country, as well as people, animals, plants, and the stories that connect them'² Therefore, a person's identity and personal value cannot be separated from Country and is connected to all elements around them. A person's actions can positively or negatively affect all aspects of Country, including themselves.

Country, just like people, can be healthy or sick, and requires care and respect. A network of mutual care between the land, animals, plants, and people stretches into deep time and must be constantly protected and nurtured to ensure the health of Country. Knowledge of how to maintain this network of mutual care is expressed through Aboriginal language, stories, and cultural practices and provides the bedrock of First Nations

cultures. The network is interconnected and interdependent; changes in language, for example, affects all other elements.

Country is both spiritual and physical. Country is something that can be experienced, and that physical experience is key to the mutual health of First Nations people and Country itself. Walking on Country, feeling the touch of the air, sun, and wind, speaking to and listening to Country, and hunting on Country are ways of practicing culture that have been passed down for many generations. The act of being on Country and feeling the connection with place is deeply significant for Aboriginal communities and a way of ensuring that individuals and families can thrive.



Figure 6: Interrelationships between Country, community and individuals (GANSW Connecting with Country, 2023)

² GANSW 2023. Connecting with Country Framework

Cultural practices (also called cultural law/protocols) and the languages used to refer to Country, are deeply diverse, reflecting the development of thousands of communities across Australia over millennia. All practices, however, are rooted in the idea of responsibility towards Country.

Country has been significantly disturbed by the colonisation of Australia. Delicate physical and spiritual ecosystems that have been nourished and maintained since deep time have been damaged by deforestation, loss of biodiversity, dislocation of community, and general development. The Western systems of thinking and land-use cannot maintain or nourish Country, and some knowledge of how to care for Country has been lost.

The resilience of Aboriginal people across Australia and the strength of cultural practices, however, has allowed much cultural knowledge and lore to survive colonisation. The knowledge of Aboriginal people of how to care for Country is diverse, and includes practices of agriculture, health, spirituality, and sustainability. This deep knowledge, based on the idea of mutual responsibility, should play an essential part in future placemaking and planning.

Designs that echo traditional forms and stories and their contemporary interpretations are increasingly being integrated within new developments, sending strong, respectful messages about the timeless links between First Nations peoples and the landscape, and allowing for reflection and connection to Country. Traditional knowledge, when embedded meaningfully into development, has positive outcomes for communities and the environment. The significance of such design integration does not just lie in its aesthetics, but in the empowerment that public statements of value bring and the value of sustainable future development.

The involvement and authority of Aboriginal knowledge holders and Aboriginal architects, designers, and artists is paramount in developing

future projects that connect meaningfully with Country and promote, sustain, and nurture the health of Country.



Figure 7: Douglas Park site, 24 October 2024 (source: Artefact)

6. ABORIGINAL HISTORIES OF THE AREA

6.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the history and culture of the Aboriginal people of the area. It includes information collated from colonial sources and should be read with this in mind.

6.2 Early history

Many Aboriginal people, like other Indigenous or First Nations people around the world, state that they have been living on Country for ‘time immemorial’ – that they have always been here, and their origins lie in the creation of the land and animals.

Over the last few decades, archaeologists’ knowledge of deep human time in Australia has expanded from just a few thousand years in the 1950s, to 25,000 years in the 1960s, then 40,000 years, to now around 60,000 years or more.³

Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal people living in the Sydney region from Shaw’s Creek west of the Dyarubbin (Nepean) River is dated at around 14,000 years ago and numerous other sites in the area have been dated at around 15,000 ago. While Cranebrook Terrace, near Penrith in Western Sydney, has been dated to 41,700 years and a site near Parramatta at

30,000 years old, there is growing consensus among archaeologists and historians that people have lived across the Sydney region from around 50,000 years ago.⁴

More ancient sites lie off the coast and in river valleys, now deep under water. Before the major sea level rise event at the end of the last ice age around 17,000 years ago, Aboriginal people living along the Parramatta River could have walked downstream along the riverbanks to the sea about 30 kilometres beyond the current day coastline. Over generations they would have watched and told stories about the gradual change as the sea rose to fill the ‘drowned river valley’ of what is now Sydney Harbour until it reached present levels around 6,000 years ago.⁵

Given the devastating impact of violent dispossession and disease upon Aboriginal people in the Sydney region during colonisation, the precise identification of language groups and historical traditional lands or Country for a given area is often difficult today. Early colonial observer Watkin Tench believed there was at the least coastal and inland dialects of the same language and, while this is challenged by some historians who prefer less distinction between what were all ‘canoe cultures’ around Sydney’s coast and waterways, there seems to have been an alignment with inland economies of the rivers, creeks and open forests of the Cumberland Plain, and coastal ‘saltwater’ focused groups.⁶

³ Belshaw, Nickel & Horton, 2020. ‘Histories of Indigenous Peoples and Canada’; Griffith, 2018, *Deep Time Dreaming*, p. 112; Karskens, *The Colony. A history of early Sydney*, 2009, p 25. Munro in Currie, *An Aboriginal history of Willoughby*, 2008, p. 4

⁴ Attenbrow, 2010, *Sydney’s Aboriginal past*, pp 18-20; Nanson, Young & Stockton, 1987, ‘Chronology and palaeoenvironment of the Cranebrook Terrace’, p. 77; Williams, et al., 2017, ‘The Cranebrook Terrace revisited’, pp 100-109; Jo McDonald, 2005, ‘Heritage Conservation Strategy for Aboriginal sites’, pp 4, 87-94; Attenbrow, 2012, ‘Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal life in Sydney’. Williams et al., 2012, ‘A terminal Pleistocene open site on the Hawkesbury River’. Karskens, Burnett & Ross (2017) ‘Traces in a Lost Landscape’, p. 4).

⁵ Nunn & Reid, 2016, ‘Aboriginal Memories of Inundation of the Australian’ p. 11; Attenbrow: 2010, *Sydney’s Aboriginal past*, pp 154-155; Birch, 2007, ‘A short geological and environmental history of the Sydney’, pp 217-219.

⁶ This historical overview does not seek to contest traditional or current definitions of affiliation with Country and acknowledges that multiple interpretations of such identity may exist. A frequently used indication of Country is language identity. However, far more complex factors are known to have often taken precedence over language in determining Aboriginal people’s definition of Country. See Aboriginal Heritage Office, 2015, *Filling a void: a review of the historical context for the use of the word ‘Guringai’*; Stanner, 1965, ‘Aboriginal Territorial Organization’, pp 1-26. There is debate on the extent and name for the language itself, some preferring to use ‘The Sydney Language.’ Watkin Tench observed that though the coastal and inland men he met conversed and understood each other, many words for common things bore no similarity while other words were only slightly different (1793 [2004], *A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson*, p. 122).



Figure 8: Indigenous Australians using fire to hunt kangaroos, c1817, Joseph Lycett (source: National Library of Australia)

Prior to colonisation, Aboriginal people in the relatively resource rich Sydney region lived in extended family groups estimated at around 30 to 50 people. These groups were associated with certain territories or places that gave clan members particular social and economic rights and obligations. Each of the estimated 30 clans in the Sydney region had a name often associated with a place or resource such as the Cabro (Gabra) gal (people) at modern day Cabramatta. Clan groups moved around a defined area in response to changing seasons and the availability of food

and other resources. European observers mistakenly took this as a nomadic lifestyle, when in fact they moved around a 'limited and deeply known' area. There were also forms of more sedentary agriculture and aquaculture, and villages such as those described by early colonial diarists at Kamay-Botany Bay and later accounts of '70 huts' at Bent's Basin on the Nepean River west of Sydney.⁷

Some areas, particularly resource rich ones, had shared boundaries or reciprocal rights with bordering and neighbouring groups. With appropriate permission and protocols, people could travel through and hunt on other groups' lands. On special occasions such as feasts associated with the beaching of a whale; a kangaroo hunt on the open forests of southwestern Sydney; trading or exchanging stone, tools and other items, as well as ceremonial occasions, people would often travel long distances around and from outside the Sydney region.⁸

With several rivers and estuarine coastal areas, the Sydney region sustained a comparatively large population, unlike more arid inland areas. Fish and shellfish were a major part of Saltwater peoples' diets. The *nawi* (tied-bark canoe) was a common sight both day and night in rivers and creeks and was even dexterously paddled off the coast. There are many accounts by early colonists of Aboriginal people in canoes fishing and cooking their catch on small fires on hearth stones within the vessels. Women were the primary fishers from *nawi* (men usually fished with spears). Women were highly skilled with shell hooks and twine fishing lines and thus played an important economic role in Sydney. They were noted as cradling their children while fishing, as their songs floated across the waters of Sydney Harbour.⁹

⁷ Gapps, S. (2010), *Cabrogal to Fairfield City*, pp 26-60; Attenbrow, (2010), *Sydney's Aboriginal past*, p. 78; Karskens, (2009), *The Colony*, p. 36; Gammage, B. (2012), *The biggest estate on earth*, pp. 281-304.

⁸ Gammage, (2012), *The biggest estate on earth*. As Paul Irish (2017, *Hidden in plain view*, pp 22-27).

⁹ Banks, 1770 [2005], 'The Endeavour Journal'; Attenbrow, 2010, *Sydney's Aboriginal past*, 38. Collins' estimates of the population of the Sydney region as a whole vary between 3,000 and 20,000 (1789, *An account of the English colony*, p. 557).

People living inland across the Cumberland Plain focused on hunting small animals, gathering plants and catching freshwater fish and eels. Banksia flowers, wild honey, varieties of yam and burrawang nuts (macrozamia - a cycad palm with poisonous seeds that require processing to remove toxins) were recorded as important food sources. Xanthorrhoea, also known as the grass tree, had many uses - the nectar was eaten, the stalk used as a spear and the resin as a glue. Small animals such as bandicoots and wallabies were hunted with traps and snares. Watkin Tench noted the skill in cutting toeholds in trees to swiftly climb to hunt possums.¹⁰

The landscape and environment before Europeans arrived was a finely managed one. In 1790 John Hunter observed people ‘burning the grass on the north shore opposite to Sydney, in order to catch rats and other animals’. In 1804 Henry Waterhouse described the land around Cowpastures as ‘a beautiful park, totally divested of underwood, interspersed with rich, luxuriant grass ... except where recently burnt’. These forests that had been managed by many generations of Aboriginal people through such methods as what is known as ‘firestick farming’. Fire was an important tool and also used to open up tracks, to ‘clean country’, drive animals into the paths of hunters, cooking, warmth, treating wood, cracking open stones and for a place to gather, dance and share stories and knowledge.¹¹

The Sydney region was a landscape rich with the imprints of activity, art and culture such as rock engravings and paintings, scarred and carved trees, ceremonial rock and mound structures, cooking ovens, villages of bark huts, stone tool quarries, grinding grooves and tool-making sites, burial and other shell middens, and other artefacts. All this activity had a lasting impact on the landscape, and many elements such as rock

engravings in particular survive, or have been kept intact or cared for by community members. Over time, many Aboriginal pathways were taken up by the colonists and made into roads, some still on the same routes today. ‘Kangaroo grounds’ became colonial estates, fishing creeks became drains, hills and peaks used for communication became signalling stations and lookouts, and shell middens became the limestone for the bricks and mortar of early colonial buildings.¹²



Figure 9: Engraved kangaroos or wallabies at Shaws Creek, Nepean River, Australian Museum

The large swathes of Hawkesbury sandstone across the Sydney region were the canvas for what has been likened to an enormous open air art gallery – engravings of the outlines of spirit creatures, marsupials, birds,

¹⁰ Tench, 1793 [2004], A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson, p. 82, 230; Kohen, 1985, Aborigines in the west, p. 9; Attenbrow, 2010, Sydney's Aboriginal past, p. 41.

¹¹ Hunter, An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, (1787-1792, 1793), p. 312; Waterhouse quoted in Historical records of New South Wales Vol. 5, p. 359; White, 1790

[2003], 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales', p. 163; Gammage, 2012, The biggest estate on earth, pp 163-185; Griffith, 2018, Deep time dreaming, p. 240.

¹² Griffith, B (2018), Deep time dreaming, p. 241; Gammage, (2012), The biggest estate on earth, p. xix; Attenbrow, (2012), Sydney's Aboriginal past.

fish, weapons, footprints and even European boats alongside people, showing a continuity that carried on beyond the arrival of British colonisers in 1788. This Sydney art tradition was distinctive from other regions such as inland New South Wales where carved trees were more prominent, or further south where painting dominates. There are more than 4,000 known rock art sites and more than 3,000 rock shelters with pigment or painted art, often featuring hand stencils. The Sydney Basin has been compared to Kakadu National Park in terms of the vast numbers of Aboriginal sites that remain today.¹³

6.3 First Encounters

The first encounters between the British colonists and the Sydney people were initially based in curiosity, with both sides attempting to comprehend each other. However, misunderstandings or transgressions of Aboriginal law and protocol soon escalated into violence and retribution. Unarmed convicts outside the encampment at Sydney Cove were increasingly targeted during 1788. However in April 1789, what Sydney Aboriginal people called *galgala* or smallpox broke out and more than half - possibly even 80 percent - of the population around Sydney Harbour were dead within a month. Captain John Hunter wrote that “it was truly shocking to go round the coves of this harbour [seeing] men, women and children, lying dead”. David Collins wrote that those who witnessed the Sydney man Arabanoo’s grief and agony could never forget either – on being taken on a

boat around the harbour Arabanoo ‘lifted up his hands and eyes in silent agony [and exclaimed] ‘All dead! All dead!’”¹⁴

Despite such massive death and disruption to Aboriginal lives across Sydney, in 1794 resistance warfare against the colonisers began in earnest along the new settlements on the Dyarubbin (Hawkesbury) River and was to carry on through the 1790s, largely under the leadership of the famous warrior Pemulwuy. This ‘constant sort of war’ as one colonist described it, continued until Governor Macquarie ordered the now infamous military campaign across the Sydney region that ended in the Appin Massacre of April 17th 1816.¹⁵

Sydney Aboriginal society was not static and did not cease after contact with Europeans. Both material and cultural traditions of Aboriginal Sydney continued after the devastation to Aboriginal society, sometimes for example, by incorporating non-Aboriginal materials in traditional elements such as using glass and ceramics to make spear points and other tools. Twenty-nine engraved and pigment art sites have been dated to the period after European arrival. Some creation and other stories told to R. H. Mathews by Gundungurra (Gandangarra) people in 1901 were carried on for generations and survive today.¹⁶

As the Cumberland Plain became more closely settled during the 1800s, Aboriginal people continued to live near their traditional Country where they could. Some managed to live in the centre of the growing city of Sydney such as a group of families who caught and sold fish at Circular Quay and others at Rose Bay, while other families continued to live on the

¹³ Karskens, G. (2009), *The Colony*, p. 32; Griffith, 2018, *Deep time dreaming*, p. 188; Mulvaney & Kamminga, (1999), *Prehistory of Australia*, pp 284, 376-381; McDonald, 2007, *Dreamtime Superhighway*.

¹⁴ Gapps, S. (2019), “They have attack’d almost every person who has met with them” – Re-reading William Bradley; Karskens, 2009, *The Colony*, p. 50. Evidence of smallpox, including dead and sick people, was also found well away from Sydney. See Gapps, 2018, *The Sydney Wars*, pp 55-56.

¹⁵ Gapps, S. (2018), *The Sydney Wars*, pp 125-155, 226-255.

¹⁶ Irish & Gowan, (2013), ‘Where’s the evidence? The archaeology of Sydney’s Aboriginal history’, p. 61. Artefact Heritage, 2022, ‘Aspect Industrial Estate’, p. 18. See also Goward, 2011, ‘Aboriginal glass artefacts of the Sydney region’; Meredith, 1989, *The Last Kooradgie*. According to Smith & Jennings, a site near the Wollondilly River has ‘post-contact creation or restoration of a traditional subject by Traditional Owners’ (2011, ‘The petroglyphs of Gundungurra Country’, p. 241).

outskirts of populated areas such as at La Perouse and at Salt Pan Creek on the Georges River. From the 1880s, others moved to or were forced on to reserves such as Sackville in the northwest. Families such as the Locks, descendants of Maria Lock, continued to live near Blacktown and descendants of Lucy Leane at Liverpool. All carried knowledge of their ancestors and their Country down to this day. During the 1800s many Aboriginal women married European men. Some families knew of their heritage but often kept it hidden. Others only found out much later through family history work from the 1980s.¹⁷

Much language spoken across the Sydney region was in effect stolen from Aboriginal people who were forced to learn English and not speak traditional languages at school or in public under threat of their children being taken away. Still, a number of early colonial word lists such as those given by Sydney woman Patyegarang to William Dawes, form the basis of language revival today. Some Sydney words became widespread across Australia such as corroboree, dingo, cooe, waratah and woomera. In many suburbs across Sydney, Aboriginal placenames were incorporated into suburbs or street names such as Maroubra, Bondi, Turramurra, Cabramatta and Bunnerong.¹⁸

Many of Sydney's roads and streets today follow the original tracks and pathways that had been used for millennia by Aboriginal people. Indeed, the shape of the city's road networks and the city itself owes a great deal to the early colonists simply taking the easiest and most practical solution in building roads along pre-existing trackways. When the colonists arrived in 1788 and began journeying out from Sydney Cove they often followed pathways, or as Surgeon John White wrote in May 1788, 'we fell in with an Indian path'. As Sydney language expert Jakelin Troy notes, it often made

sense the colonists would use established pathways particularly in avoiding dense forest areas and rugged terrain. Troy has noted how these pathways were used for 'visiting family, collecting food or conducting ceremonies'. According to Paul Irish, the Europeans pronounced the local Sydney Aboriginal word for a pathway or track as 'maroo'. Many of these maroo underpin the structure of Sydney to this day.¹⁹

6.4 Darug, Dharawal and Gandangarra Country

As the British colony expanded out from Sydney Cove across the Cumberland Plain during the 1790s and early 1800s, Aboriginal people along the Nepean River and around its headwaters to the southwest of Sydney had been relatively immune from closer settlement as had occurred near Parramatta and Windsor.

From 1798 to 1804, the colonists sent parties to the south of Sydney to find wandering cattle, escaped convicts and a way across the rugged fringes of the Sydney Basin. They all began at Prospect Hill and followed what was to become the Cowpastures Road. In 1802 Ensign Barrallier was guided by a man from 'Liverpool or the Cowpastures' named Kogi (Cogey) who took him along this route which almost certainly connected the southern Gandangarra and Dharawal people to the Warmuli clan of Darug around Prospect.

Modern day Cabramatta Road was another Aboriginal pathway. At present day Carne's Hill at the junction of Cowpastures and Bringelly roads, in 1804 the botanist George Caley (who was informed by his guide 'Daniel' Moowattin) described a 'native pathway'.²⁰

¹⁷ Johnson, (2003), *Aunty Joan Cooper*. Kohen, 2009, *Dharuganora: Dharug Country*. As Goodall & Cadzow (2009), *Rivers and resilience*, p. 41).

¹⁸ Dawes, W. (1791), *Notebooks on the Aboriginal language of Sydney*, pp v-vii; Troy, 1992, *The Sydney Language*; Karskens, 2009, *The Colony*, p. 33.

¹⁹ White, 1790 [2003], 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales', 30 May 1788; Daniel, 2018, 'Walking in their tracks'.

²⁰ Flynn, (1997) 'Holroyd history and the silent boundary project', p. 17; Gapps, (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, p. 87-8



Figure 10: View upon the Nepean River, at the Cow Pastures New South Wales 1824-1825 Joseph Lycett (SLNSW)

As linguist Jeremy Steele has noted, it is difficult to be precise about traditional language ‘boundaries’ in the Sydney region today. To the south and east of the large northern loop of the Georges River, it seems the Norongerragal group of the Dharawal language group bordered the Cabrogal across the river. Resource rich areas such as the upper reaches of the Georges River – where the tidal influence reaches nearly 30 kilometres inland – may have been shared boundaries, or boundaries with accepted access rights. Indeed, the ease with which Aboriginal people moved in nawi

(tied-bark canoes) along the waterways of the Sydney basin suggests hard boundary distinctions should be limited.²¹

After several reports from returned convict ‘bolters’, as well as a report of an Aboriginal dance that included what appeared to be the action of a charging bull – Governor Hunter decided in 1795 to investigate the southern area where it seemed the cattle that went missing in 1788 might be. Hunter and his party found ‘a fine herd of cattle’ and the governor decided not to bring them in but to exclude people from the area so they would be a productive source for the government in future. He called the area ‘Cow Pasture Plains’. The cattle were not only the subject of an Aboriginal dance but were depicted in art at what is now known as the Bull Cave near Campbelltown.²²

Up to 1810, Aboriginal people living around present day southwestern Sydney were largely only visited by travellers, land seekers and surveyors. In 1803 the botanist George Caley led an expedition that passed through the Mulgoa Valley, Badgerys Creek, Bringelly and South Creek. Caley was guided by the Aboriginal man ‘Daniel’ Moowattin. Moowattin was born near Parramatta and from the age of 14 he assisted Caley by acting as his interpreter, guide, ‘plant getter’ and hunter on Caley’s botanizing expeditions around Sydney.

In 1802 the Engineer Francis Barrallier witnessed a patagorang (kangaroo) hunt near Menangle Swamp. This was obviously a combined group hunt with large numbers of people involved. Barrallier was impressed at how the hunters were spaced ‘30 paces [apart] and formed a circle which contained an area of 1 or 2 miles’.²³

²¹ Steele (1892), ‘The Aboriginal language of Sydney’, p. 8. Hill and Thornton, Notes on the Aborigines of New South Wales etc., Sydney,. Goodall and Cadzow, (2009), *Rivers and resilience*, esp. chapters 1 and 2.

²² Gapps, Cabrogal to Fairfield, (2010) p. 83. See also McDonald ‘Rock art and cross-cultural interaction in Sydney’ esp. p. 7 and Dreamtime Superhighway, pp. 4-5

²³ Barrallier, (1802), Journal of the expedition etc., p. 3

In 1805 and 1806, acting-surveyor James Meehan undertook a survey of South Creek to determine the suitability of the region for land grants, with the earliest grants in the region at Bringelly in 1805.

In 1807 Caley travelled south again, this time looking for a koala specimen. In appreciation of Moowattin's skills, and obviously with Moowattin's knowledge of Country, they passed a river and series of waterfalls and Caley recorded it as the 'Cataract of Carrung-Gurring' and called the river 'Moowattin Creek'. These names appeared in Matthew Flinders 1814 Atlas of Terra Australia but were later changed to the Cataract River and Appin Falls.²⁴

Then, in late 1810, after a tour of the entire fringe of the Sydney Basin, Governor Macquarie declared the districts of Minto, Airds and Appin to the south of Liverpool, open for settlement. The southern frontier of the colony around Sydney now moved further into Dharawal land.²⁵

Initially, the influx of colonists was small. In 1810 'Liverpool' was merely a sign in the bush saying 'This is Liverpool'. However by 1814, Liverpool was the fourth largest centre in the colony and there were over 800 colonists in the district.

In the 1810s the districts of Airds, Appin and Minto were settlements of family groups of mainly ex-convicts and soldiers who often took up land grants near their relatives. At Appin, the first grant was 1,000 acres to William Broughton in 1811 and for the next five years smaller grants of 40 to 150 acres were issued.

Broughton's farm was at the centre of a gently undulating plateau that stretched to the southwest of where the township of Appin had been designated. The edges of the land grants were defined by sharp creeks,

ivers and rocky terrain that had been cut away by the Carrung-gurring (Cataract) and Upper Nepean Rivers. The group of farms around Broughton's were on the edge of the colony in the Sydney region, connected to it by a single road to the north. To the south, rugged terrain limited colonial expansion.

But this terrain also seems to have provided an area where Aboriginal people could engage with the Europeans - a labyrinth of sandstone overhangs along such areas as the Rocky Ponds Creek provided shelters for family groups who could continue to camp with access to water, a safe route back away from the settled areas, as well as access to the farms around Appin.

While Appin was at the centre of a point of intensive engagement between European and Aboriginal people in the area, the colonists' farms were also in effect the first line of defence if conflict broke out. Many of the settlers were related to each other and their choice of neighbouring land grants was undoubtedly in part consideration of their security, and if required, defence. William Broughton called his parcel of land 'Lachlan Vale' in honour of the governor. Broughton's second wife was the widow Elizabeth Simpson whose brother was John Kennedy, who had been granted 200 acres he called 'Teston Farm' on 22 May 1811, adjoining Broughton's grant. Kennedy's aunt Elizabeth married Andrew Hume, also granted 100 acres nearby which he called 'Hume Mount' in 1812.

Of the early colonists at Appin, Broughton, Kennedy and Hume in particular actively sought to establish good relations with Dharawal. Governor Macquarie visited their farms in 1815 and was impressed with the clearing of land and the flourishing wheat crops – which had been done with the help of local Aboriginal people. The governor noted that 'those Natives [at

24 Smith, (2005) Moowattin, Daniel (1791-1816)', ADB online,

25 Perry, 'Meehan, James (1774-1826) ADB online; Irving, 'Blaxland, John (1769-1845)' ADB, online; Sales, The History of Luddenham Methodist Church, p.3. See Gapps, The Sydney Wars, esp. pp. 196-201

Appin] live in a state of perfect peace, friendliness, and sociality with the settlers, and even shew a willingness to assist them occasionally in their labours'.²⁶

6.5 Resistance warfare and conflict: 1814-1816

The summers of 1812 and 1813 had been dry, and by early 1814 the entire greater Sydney region was in a period of drought. In May 1814 the Gazette reported 'violences between the natives and our selves, which from the tranquillity and good understanding that for the last 5 or 6 years' it had hoped 'were not again likely to occur.' But in February and May there were attacks at George Cox's farm at Mulgoa and at Governor Macquarie's private secretary John Thomas Campbell's farm near Wallacia.²⁷

The conflict soon spread to the Appin district. On 7 May 1814, Isaac Eustace and two other ex-NSW Corps soldiers in the Veteran Corps were working on the farm of Robert Myles (or Miles) at Mallaty Creek, near Gilead just north of Appin. The men saw 'a large body of the natives who were plundering the corn fields of a settler'. When the raiders 'refused to desist' and made 'use of every term of provocation and defiance', menacing their spears 'in token of a determined spirit' the three men fired and 'a native boy was unfortunately killed'. Eustace and his two comrades were then 'immediately attacked'. While his comrades managed to evade their pursuers, Eustace 'was killed on the spot'. His stripped and mangled body was later found with one hand cut off.

The warriors then attacked the nearby farm of John Butcher. An armed party of 14 soldiers, constables and settlers was gathered and defence quickly spiralled into reprisal. That night the party 'fell in with' a 'group of

natives' and fired on them, apparently 'in the most treacherous manner'. As Governor Macquarie later described it, 'a Native Woman and two Children were in the dead Hour of Night, and whilst sleeping, inhumanly put to death'. A 73rd Regiment soldier and 'Henry McKudding' [McCudden] a constable at Liverpool, were implicated. They had shot a woman and some children, and then set about mutilating them, possibly in a frenzy of revenge for the mutilation of Eustace.

The very next day the warriors who had killed Eustace retaliated. According to John Macarthur's nephew Hannibal, they then 'inhumanly murdered' one of John's 'old favourites', shepherd William Baker as well as a shepherd's wife Elizabeth Durant at the Macarthur's Upper Camden Yards.

With settlers clamouring for action, Macquarie immediately requested more troops and arms from Britain, continued earlier efforts to expand the constabulary and encouraged the formation of civilian paramilitary 'Associations'. He ordered a 'a small military Party to the disturbed District' but was disappointed that on the troops arrival 'the Natives retired without being attacked or Suffering in any degree for their temerity'. Still, the Governor was confident an 'unprovoked cruelty' led to retaliation and there would be no 'further attacks on the Settlers unless provoked, as before, by Insults and Cruelties'.

Macquarie's hopes were soon dashed. In June, there were apparently 'hordes of natives' near the 'Cow Pasture Settlement' creating 'considerable alarms among the Settlers' many of whom were fleeing like war refugees; 'wives and children have forsaken their dwellings, and sought shelter in securer places'. In what was a remarkable and alarming report if true, the Gazette newspaper continued;

²⁶ Whittaker, *Appin The Story of A Macquarie Town*, pp 5-10. Macquarie *Journals of His Tours*, 113-27

²⁷ Macquarie to Castlereagh 30 April 1810 HRA VIII, 258; *Gazette* 16 November 1811; Suttor to Banks 12 November 1812 Banks Papers ML CY 3681, 397-400; Macquarie to Bathurst 19

January 1814 HRA VIII, 121. Perry, *Australia's First Frontier*, 30; Turbet *The First Frontier*, 194-98; Inquest into the death of William Reardon SARNSW 6021 4/1819, 539-46.; *Gazette* 7, 14 May; Connor *The Australian Frontier Wars*, 46; R. F. Holder. 'Campbell, John Thomas (1770-1830)' ADB

'The natives of Jarvis's Bay are reported on good authority to have coalesced with the mountain tribes [and] ... have declared a determination, that when the Moon shall become as large as the Sun, they will commence a work of desolation, and kill all the whites before them'.

It seemed that what was in effect a declaration of war had been made.

While there was no major offensive, on June 15, 'a body of natives' descended on William Broughton's farm 'Lachlan Vale' west of Appin. Despite Broughton's amicable relations with Aboriginal people, his stockworkers were the target of possible 'payback' or revenge killings. Broughton's workers John Price and Dennis Newingham were, according to the Gazette, 'not apprised of the attack until the assailants were within 20 yards of them' and 'one of the unhappy sufferers fell instantly, covered with spear wounds; and the other defended himself to the last extremity'. Writing some 70 years later, William Byrne (whose father owned a neighbouring farm to Broughton) recalled that 'Noonan' [Newingham] was 'killed on the spot' but 'Price, though he had several spears sticking into him, managed to run about 200 yards, as far as Mr. Kennedy's gates ['Teston' farm bordering Broughton's farm to the west], when a well-directed spear went through his heart'.

Conflict was more widespread than merely payback killings however. Other attacks on colonists occurred at Bringelly. Governor Macquarie's response was swift and formidable. On 21 July the 'bush constables' John Warby and John Jackson were placed in charge of ten hand-picked convicts and 'four friendly Native Guides' in a party ordered to hunt for five people; 'Goondel, Bettagallie, Murrah, Yellaman, and Wallah', all supposedly involved in 'the late acts of Hostility and Murders committed on European Settlers'. While the party returned three weeks later empty handed, the show of force may have had some effect and there were no reports of conflict or raids for the rest of 1814.

In October 1815, Macquarie toured the southern districts, guided by the 'bushman' John Warby. He passed along 'a short but very rough road (what

is almost certainly modern day Brooks Point Road) to Broughton's 'Lachlan Vale', then on to Kennedy's 'Teston' and William Sykes farms (probably passing along what is now Quarter Sessions road). Macquarie was impressed with the clearing of land and wheat crops at the Appin farms – very much aided by local Aboriginal people. He was confident that 'those Natives ... live in a state of perfect peace, friendliness, and sociality with the settlers, and even shew a willingness to assist them occasionally in their labours'.

Despite this cooperation with settlers, in December 1815 conflict escalated once more and some settlers at the 'distant farms' in the southwest either abandoned their properties or had them destroyed by fire. In early March 1816 Aboriginal warriors killed five men at Bringelly and attacked and plundered other farms in the area. At the Lewis farm on the Nepean a woman and convict worker were, according to the Gazette 'cruelly murdered'. 'Depredations' were reported on farms as close to Sydney as Lane Cove. The Gazette urged travellers to go in company on the roads between settlements.

Macquarie's response to the attacks was to station small detachments of soldiers around the southwest region at Bringelly, at present day Elderslie and Kirkham, (John Oxley's farms) and a detachment of 'a non-commissioned Officer and six soldiers' were sent to the aid of the Macarthurs at Camden. In early March 'a group of 20 or 30 natives' plundered the huts of George Palmer's servants on his farm on the Nepean River near Bringelly. The next day a party 'four of Mr. Palmer's men' along with three other nearby workers, including 'William Brazil, a youth in the employ of Mr. Edmund Wright' was cobbled together. They crossed the Nepean River, apparently 'in the hope of recovering the property that had been taken away the day before' but they were 'immediately encircled by a large body of natives', who then 'commenced a terrible attack', not only 'by an innumerable shower of spears' but 'as well by a discharge of the arms they had captured'. In a complete reversal of the usual picture of Aboriginal

people being shot, here were warriors shooting unarmed white men down with their own muskets.

Attacks and raids continued through March of 1816. On the 10th of March, Samuel Hassall, son of a missionary turned landowner who had property at Macquarie Grove was informed 'that the whole boddy (sic) of Gundenoran [Gandangarra] natives intended to attack Mr Mearthar's farm [Upper and Lower Camden] to plunder and murder all before them'. From there they were supposed to be proceeding 'down to Mr Oxley's to act with them in the same manner' and then attack Hassall's farm. Hassall immediately sent his family to safety and rushed to magistrate Robert Lowe's farm, 'Birling', near Bringelly, where a detachment of soldiers had been stationed. Lowe assembled a scratch force of local settlers and convicts and marched to lower Camden.

As Hassall reported, they had not travelled far along the nearby Razorback Range when a 'small company of the more friendly natives' told the militia that their enemy was upon them and they 'immediately began to dance in a manner daring our approach'. Lowe's militia attacked and the warriors 'threw a shower of spears'. The militia was disordered as 'the enemy was posted on an high perpendicular rock' and 'spears and stones came in great abundance'. According to Hassall, 'the natives would fall down as soon as the men would present their muskets to them and then get up and dance'. In a secure defensive position, with rocky cover, the warriors were using an excellent tactic against flintlock muskets. The militia, while exposed to stones and spears, had to fire, reload and advance up a rocky hill if they were to press an attack. The warriors just had to wait until they were close enough for their 'showers of spears' to begin to take an irresistible effect.

The militia retreat turned into a rout. Hassall, on horseback, 'could scarce keep up with some of them, whom 'even threw off their shoes to enable

them to run fast'. But the warriors then broke off their pursuit and Lowe managed to rally his routing band and establish a defensive position between Macquarie Grove and Oxley's Farm.

Across the region settlers and shepherds were 'leaving their flocks behind to the mercy of the storm.' Macquarie later noted that 'many of the Settlers have entirely Abandoned their Farms in Consequence of the late Alarming Outrages'. For the traditional owners in the southwest of Sydney, this was a tactical victory in limiting colonial expansion into their homelands. The response from Governor Macquarie was to commence the largest military campaign the colony had yet seen and would ever witness.²⁸

On 18 March Governor Macquarie wrote to Lord Bathurst in London informing him that 'the Native Blacks of this Country, Inhabiting the distant Interior parts, have lately broke out in Open Hostility against the British Settlers residing on the Banks of the River Nepean near the Cow Pastures, and have Committed most daring Acts of Violence on their Persons and Depredations on their Property' and that 'no less than five White Men have been lately Killed by the Natives'. The governor's response was to send a military detachment 'so as to Strike them with Terror against Committing Similar Acts of Violence in future.' He wanted to 'drive the Hostile Natives across the mountains' and clear 'the Country of them entirely'.²⁹

The death and mutilation of Mrs Lewis and her male servant in March at 'Kearns Retreat' at the junction of the Nepean and Grose River stirred talk of revenge. Charles Throsby reported hearing 'some of the most absurd assertions and obstinate threats of vengeance' against some of the Aboriginal people thought associated with the warfare – in particular Bitugally, Dual and Yellooming. When Throsby heard of Macquarie's plan, he wrote to Superintendent of Police D'arcy Wentworth contending he had

²⁸ Hassall Family Correspondence ML A1677/3, 619-22, 627-30

²⁹ Macquarie to Bathurst 18 March 1816 HRA I, IX, 53-54; 10 April 1816 LEMA; Gazette 30 March, 4 May 1814.

been in the bush with these men at the time of the murders and was convinced they were innocent.

The situation grew tense for those Aboriginal people living in and around the settlements to the south of Sydney. Throsby said Gogy, Budbury, Young Bundle, Nighgingull and their families were at his farm seeking safe haven and identified others from near Bringelly as the ‘troublemakers’.

A group of Aboriginal people at Throsby’s Glenfield farm, were surprised by a visit from the ‘bush constables’ John Warby and John Jackson. They were looking for Gogy, who wasn’t there at the time, and they spoke with Budbury and others. Whatever was discussed, the people at Throsby’s farm were put into a ‘state of fear’. There may well have been some threat made, as within a week Budbury and Bundle were enlisted as guides for Macquarie’s campaigns.³⁰

In what has been described as ‘one of the most elaborate operations ever carried out by the British Army on the Australian frontier’ on 9 April Macquarie issued Captain Schaw of the 46th Regiment a detailed set of instructions. While there was no formal declaration, Macquarie’s instructions had all the hallmarks of a campaign during wartime;

On any occasion of seeing or falling in with the Natives ... they are to be called on, by your friendly Native Guides, to surrender themselves to you as Prisoners of War.

If they refused to surrender, Schaw was ordered ‘to fire upon and compell them to surrender’. After destroying their weapons, any dead were to be ‘hanged up on trees in conspicuous situations, to strike the Survivors with the greater terror’.

³⁰ D’arcy Wentworth correspondence ML A752, CY699, 183-6; Turbet The First Frontier, 212.

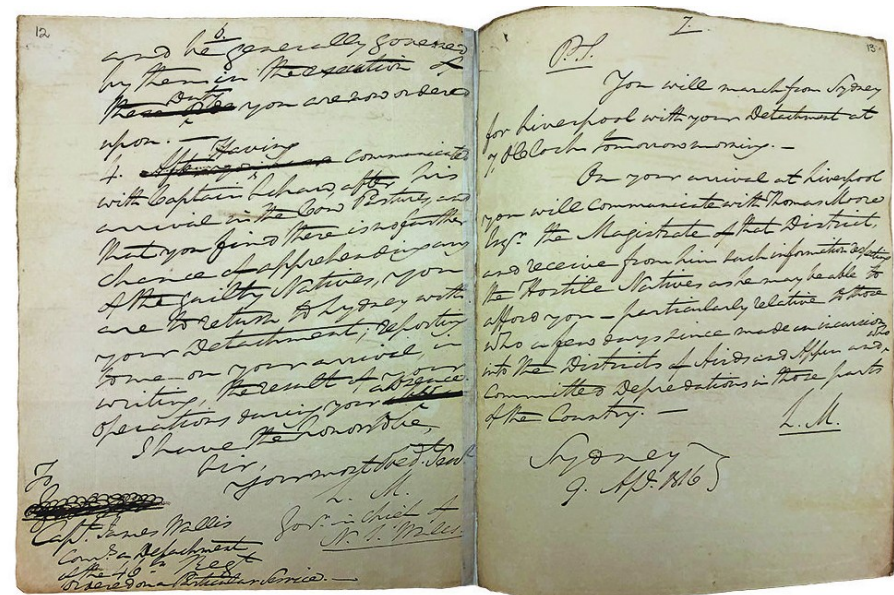


Figure 11: Governor Lachlan Macquarie's Instructions to 46th Regiment Commanders, 9 April 1816, Image: Supplied by NSW State Archives & Records (source: Australian Museum)

Any Aboriginal people encountered at all - including women and children - were to be held and delivered up as ‘Native Prisoners of War’ to Windsor or Parramatta to prevent intelligence of the campaign spreading. Of any ‘fine healthy good-looking children’ they brought in, twelve were to be selected and sent to the Parramatta Native Institution. Macquarie’s military plans were also wedded to his ideas on how to ‘civilise’ the ‘Natives’.

Initially, the campaign was to be a sweep around the edges of the Cumberland Plain by a large force under Captain Schaw, moving from the north and west towards a smaller force under Lieutenant Dawe to the south, meeting at the Cow Pastures. But in a postscript to Macquarie’s

orders another detachment was ordered as well. On 8 April reports had arrived of large groups of people in the Airds and Appin districts ‘committing all sorts of outrages and depredations’. A third detachment was formed under Captain Wallis and ordered to the district, ‘where the Hostile Natives have recently assembled in considerable Force’.³¹

Captain Wallis marched on the 10th of April to Liverpool, and then with the guides Warby, Budbury and Bundle, headed south to clear Airds and Appin of any hostile warriors, and then link up with Schaw at the Cowpastures.³²

While Schaw and Dawe covered terrain along the Nepean River to the north, Captain Wallis operated in the Appin district with the strongest force of thirty-three soldiers, Lieutenant George Adamson Parker and two sergeants. At Liverpool on the 10th of April they learned of a large group of people including Gogy on the farm of Andrew Cunningham, near modern day Bankstown Airport. John Warby said that apart from Gogy, the rest of the people were ‘friendly’, so Wallis decided against moving on them, afraid word of the soldiers’ presence would spread to the ‘more hostile tribes’ and the element of surprise would be lost.³³

The Aboriginal guides with Wallis - Budbury and Bundle - were reluctant to go with the expedition and Wallis ordered a close eye kept on them. At the Woodhouse farm just north of Gilead however, they made off, and Wallis suggested Warby – whose long experience in the bush appears to have led to some sympathy toward the Sydney people – had ‘winked at the escape of Bundle and Budbury’.

One of the Hume brothers, young sons of settler Andrew Hamilton Hume and familiar with the bush, had informed Wallis that ‘all the worst characters’ were at Lachlan Vale at Appin. On the 12th Wallis marched his men there. At Kennedy’s farm, Wallis was informed by Kennedy that there was no one but ‘some inoffensive natives on his farm’. On interviewing them, Wallis found two to be on Macquarie’s list – ‘Yallaman and Battagalie’ – but Kennedy assured Wallis ‘they were harmless, innocent men’ who ‘protected his and Mr Broughton’s farm’ and that if Wallis took them, Kennedy ‘must abandon the country’.

It was a complex relationship with Aboriginal people that local colonists had to negotiate with the military at this point. People such as Warby, Throsby, Kennedy, Broughton and Hume all had working relationships with Aboriginal people on their farms and depended on their guiding skills in the bush. Hume then told Wallis he had actually seen Macquarie erase their names from the list, leading Wallis to ‘defer putting His Excellency’s instructions into force’.

Despite the earlier conflict at Kennedy and Broughton’s farms, Aboriginal people were still regularly camping on or nearby these farms in the Appin district. Close to the water sources of Rocky Creek and Carrung-Gurring (Cataract Gorge), and with farmers who seem to have developed close relations with the local traditional owners, the area around what might be called the Appin plateau had become a significant connection point between Aboriginal people and the southern British settlements.

³¹ Macquarie quoted in *Historical Record of the Forty-Sixth*, 41, 49-50. Instructions for Capt. W. G. B. Schaw, 9 April 1816, SARNSW Reel 6045, 4/1734, 149-68; Instructions for Captain Wallis, 9 April 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 7-13; Instructions for Lt. Charles Dawe 9 April 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 1-6. Instructions for Lt. Charles Dawe 9 April 1816 SARNSW Reel 6045, 4/1735, 1-6; Macquarie to Bathurst 25 May 1816, HRA IX, 139 and note 36, 854

³² Instructions for Lt. Charles Dawe 9 April 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 1-6; SARNSW 6004, 4/3494, 448; Connor, *Frontier Wars*, 49; Turbet, *The First Frontier*, 288

³³ *Gazette* 11 May 1816. Report of Captain Schaw to Governor Macquarie, 8 May 1816 SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 33-41; Report of Captain James Wallis of the 46th Regiment to Governor Macquarie, 9 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 50-59; Report of Lt. Parker of the 46th Regiment 8 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 60-62; Report of Lt. Dawe of the 46th Regiment to Governor Macquarie 8 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 29-32; SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 50-59.

6.6 The Appin Massacre

The military expedition pressed on as two reports came in of ‘large bands’ of Aboriginal people, one near Minto and the other at ‘Lachlan Vale’, Appin. Wallis headed toward the Minto farm of William Redfern but there were no warriors to be seen. On the 16th of April, Wallis continued the search and that night received news that a band of Aboriginal people with ‘seven murderers among them’ were camped near Broughton’s ‘Lachlan Vale’ farm. One of them was apparently the famed warrior Cannabaygal³⁴.

The military and settlers had learned from long experience that the only way to get close to Aboriginal people who wanted to evade them was to use local guides to find their camps and approach at dawn. At ‘a little after one o’clock’ in the morning of the 17th of April, Thomas Noble, a convict servant of William Sykes, led Wallis and his soldiers through the darkness to the place he had seen an encampment. Wallis later reported that when they arrived there, ‘the fires were burning but deserted’. In what was a common tactic to reduce the element of surprise, the group were in fact sleeping a short way away from their decoy campfires.

Wallis was about to leave when the soldiers heard a child crying nearby. He quickly ‘formed line ranks, entered and pushed on through a thick brush towards the precipitous banks of a deep rocky creek’. Wallis provided only a short description of what occurred next;

‘...the dogs gave the alarm and the natives fled over the cliffs, a smart firing now ensued – it was moonlight the grey dawn of morn appearing so dark as to be able only to discern their figures bounding from rock to rock ...’

³⁴ SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 1-13; 20-21; 29-41; 44-62; Turbet *The First Frontier*, 241; Connor *Frontier Wars*, 51

³⁵ SARNSW, 6065, 4/1798, p. 45; SARNSW, 6045, 4/1735 p.51. For some of the most florid accounts of the Appin Massacre see Elder *Blood on the Wattle*, 16; Smith *King Bungaree*, 84

Considering the tense situation of military patrols in the area, the camp may well have been deliberately situated in a position that offered a viable escape route from a surprise attack. Steep, rocky terrain would have made pursuit difficult and offered an escape route – if given some warning. However the decoy campfire had failed and the sound of a child crying just at the wrong moment had given the soldiers the opportunity to approach swiftly. If this was indeed an escape route, it now turned into a death trap.

Wallis later reported that he had made it clear to his troops before they set out that they were to ‘take as many prisoners as possible, and to be careful in sparing and saving the women and children’. Whether this is embellishment after the fact or not, when the firing began he said his ‘principal efforts’ were directed in sparing women and children, but he regretted ‘some had been shot and others met their fate by rushing in despair over the precipice’.

Wallis’s words have resonated ever since. Historians have suggested people ‘threw themselves in terror over the cliffs’. Yet a careful reading of Wallis’s report suggests they may have been trying to escape down through the rocks, some perhaps falling to their deaths as they did so under fire in a terrified haste in the breaking dawn, with others being shot by soldiers firing down at them. It is difficult to imagine the warrior and leader Cannabaygal not attempting to save his people by escaping, or perhaps even by attempting to defend them while they escaped. Apparently, he was found with five bullets in his dead body.³⁵

Wallis noted that his mission was partly successful in taking ‘two women and three children’ alive; ‘they were all that remained, to whom death would not be a blessing’. Wallis suggested there were some terribly wounded

and for a more considered response, Harman *Aboriginal Convicts*, 22.. Macquarie letters 4,5 June 1816, LEMA; Proclamation against the Natives’ 4 May 1816 SARNSW NRS 13696, 24-36; Gazette 4 May 1816. Macquarie to Bathurst 8 June 1816 HRA I, IX, 139-145.

people that he could or would not do anything for. He counted fourteen dead, among whom were ‘Dunelle’ (Durelle) and Cannabaygal, but there could well have been more.

Following Macquarie’s orders, Wallis had the bodies of these two men who were the only known wanted ‘hostile’ warriors among the dead, hung on trees on a prominent hill nearby. Many years later William Byrne said the bodies were taken to ‘McGee’s Hill’, just north of today’s Wilton Road near Appin. Byrne recalled that after the bodies were strung up, ‘they ... cut off the heads and brought them to Sydney.’³⁶

A few days after the massacre there was still a large group of warriors in the area and the military saw them as a threat. On the morning of the 22 of April, Lieutenant Parker marched a detachment to George Woodhouse’s farm north of Mount Gilead and ‘received the same evening Duall and ‘Quiet’ [Quayat], two hostile Natives who had been taken on Mr. Kennedy’s Farm’. Parker sent Duall with constable Henry McCudden (still in his official role despite being involved in shooting women and children) to Liverpool but ‘detain’d Quiet, who had volunteer’d to show me that Body of Natives to which he belong’s’.

William Tyson, a constable at Appin, and Thomas Noble then told Parker they had seen ‘the smoke from their fires’ of Aboriginal people the night before ‘in the rocks at the back of Mr. Kennedy’s Farm’. Parker believed his small detachment was unable to attack them ‘unless with two considerable bodies of men acting together’. Wallis ordered Parker march to Kennedy’s farm and then conduct a sweep down to the Illawarra region.

The reasons for such a large gathering of people immediately after the massacre have not been considered by historians. They were gathered in the ‘in the rocks at the back of Mr. Kennedy’s Farm’, which can only be the

headwaters of Rocky Creek, close to the massacre site. Nowhere was it noted if they were only warriors, with no women and children. Perhaps warriors had gathered, drawn to the massive sounds of volleys of gunfire that would have rung out for miles around on the morning of the 17th of April. Or perhaps people had gathered to collect bodies and conduct sorry business. Further archaeological investigation of both the massacre area (looking for a spread of musket balls) or the ‘rocks at the back of Mr. Kennedy’s Farm, might provide more information about what happened that morning, and the few days after.

After another march to the south, Schaw and Wallis decided to return to Sydney and arrived there on the 4th of May. Parker returned from the Illawarra to Appin on the 2nd of May. He increased the detachment stationed at Appin to a corporal and six privates and then continued on to Sydney, now with 16 prisoners, who were lodged in the gaol in Sydney on the 5th of May.

It remains unclear whether he made an on the spot decision to cut off the heads of the two men who were hanging from trees at McGee’s Hill. Whatever the case, Parker returned to Sydney with the gruesome – and at the time valuable in scientific circles in London – trophies; the heads of Cannabaygal and Durrelle, and apparently one other person, in sacks.

6.7 ‘The Carnanbigal War’

Large groups of hundreds of warriors were not seen in such numbers in the southern region again. The intent of the British had been made clear – resistance warfare would be met by a massive military response that could

³⁶ Karskens *The Colony*, 508. Report of Lt. Dawe of the 46th Regiment to Governor Macquarie 8 May 1816, SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 29-32; *Sydney Gazette*, 11 May 1816; Report of Sergeant Broadfoot SARNSW 6045, 4/1735, 72-3

result in a deadly massacre and women and children taken prisoner. There is no record of further raids or attacks in the Appin area.

The resistance across the southwest of Sydney and the Appin Massacre were long recalled by the colonists. Some 20 years later, Major Thomas Mitchell referred to it as ‘the Carnanbigal war’. Mitchell was defending his own actions in firing upon a group of warriors and killing several. He referred to Governor Macquarie’s campaign as one of several ‘instances of necessary chastisement [that] have recurred with the Aborigines wherever the colonization of New Holland has hitherto extended.’ He noted warfare in the Hunter Valley in the 1820s and what he called the ‘Carnanbigal war’ in 1816³⁷. Obviously, the memory of Cannabaygal as a leader of the resistance warfare had remained prominent among the colonists. Perhaps it should still be called Cannabaygal’s War to this day?

On the 4th of May, Macquarie issued a proclamation designed to set the colony at rest over the period of warfare. It was to be ‘stuck up in the most conspicuous and frequently resorted places, read out at church services and published in the Gazette’. It outlined how the campaign had served to ‘strike Terror amongst the surviving Tribes, and deter them from the further Commission of such sanguinary Outrages and Barbarities.’

He also introduced four regulations for Aboriginal people that were to be ‘rigidly enforced’. None would in future be allowed within a mile of any town or farm carrying spears or other weapons ‘on Pain of being deemed and considered in a State of Aggression and Hostility, and treated accordingly’. No more than six Aboriginal people could congregate at farms, and spear-throwing contests were banned. Any Aboriginal person wishing to live peaceably among the colonists would be required to carry a passport, signed by Macquarie, to prevent the person being molested or injured by anyone.

Macquarie added what was to prove a tragic precedent in the subsequent history of Australian Frontier Wars and massacres. Any ‘Natives coming armed, or in a hostile Manner without Arms, or in unarmed parties exceeding Six in Number’ to farms in the interior, were to be told to depart, and if they committed ‘any kind of Depredation, they are then to be driven away by Force of Arms by the Settlers themselves, or troops if they can be called upon’. This edict seems to have set the scene for many future responses to resistance conflict and given colonists a sense that it was their right to shoot Aboriginal people who stole or killed stock. A few years later at the height of the Bathurst War Macquarie’s proclamation was recalled by some colonists as justification for killing Wiradjuri people.

Macquarie’s plans for the development of the colony required security across the Cumberland Plain and absolute military suppression of the warfare that had plagued Sydney between 1814 and 1816. Soon after the military campaign, on 18 May, Macquarie ordered Surveyor General John Oxley to measure out land grants that had been promised for the last 18 months in ‘the districts of Minto, Airds, Appin, and Banks Town’. One of the best means of ongoing defence was to populate the frontier districts with more colonists.

For his efforts, Captain Wallis was appointed Commandant of the penal settlement at Newcastle. He may well have been told of this appointment at a dinner held at Government House to congratulate the officers involved in the April 1816 campaign. At the tables were the governor and his wife Elizabeth, Captain John Piper, Dr William Redfern, the governor’s secretary and friend J. T. Campbell as well as 7 officers of the 46th Regiment; Captains Wallis, Schaw and Gill, Lieutenants Charles Dawe, Adamson Parker, John Watts and Regimental Paymaster John Campbell. In British army tradition, a celebratory dinner was held after a victorious campaign

³⁷ Executive Council minute no 30/36 19 December 1836,

and an opportunity for senior officers to hear further details of campaign events.

During late 1816 some raids on farms continued around Mulgoa, Kurrajong and at the Hawkesbury around the Colo region. But the ‘terror’ of the military campaign and the Appin Massacre had a significant effect on conflict and by November Macquarie could order that ‘all hostile Operations, Military or other, against the said Native Tribes’ were to ‘cease and determine’.

The governor’s November proclamation also urged magistrates to make it widely known that ‘a General Friendly Meeting of the Natives was proposed to be held at the Market Place in Parramatta, on Saturday the 28th Day of December’. Those who attended were to be advised by the Governor of his ‘Plan of Life they may be inclined to adopt for their own Comfort and Happiness’. They were to be treated ‘with plentiful Refreshments of Meat and Drink’. When the day came, one hundred and seventy nine ‘men, women and children’ attended.

By April 1817, Macquarie could write with ‘much pleasure’ to Lord Bathurst that his measures to quell and subdue the ‘hostile spirit of violence and rapine, which the black Natives or Aborigines of the Country had for a considerable time past manifested against the White inhabitants’ had ‘long since ceased’. He said his measures of offering inducements as well as punishments led ‘the principal Chiefs to come in at the heads of their respective Tribes to sue for peace and to deliver up their arms’. The ‘Friendly Meeting’ of December 1816 was clearly the end of what the British recognised as a war, and the Appin Massacre a significant turning point in the Sydney Wars. One side had, according to Macquarie, come to ‘sue for peace’ and ‘deliver up their arms’.

The colonists in the southwest of Sydney, particularly in the Appin area, may well have believed conflict would continue there. While further historical and archaeological investigation may reveal more detail, several extant early colonial stone buildings on the Appin plateau such as the

‘Beulah’ homestead and at ‘The Vines’ show defensive architectural elements such as rifle slits. The Appin massacre may well have lived long in the memories of the Kennedy, Hume, Broughton and other families as it did in the Byrne family. William Byrne’s memories in 1903 of events he witnessed as a child - while perhaps slightly different to official accounts (he recalled 16 dead and three bodies hung in trees) - were certainly vivid. Historians have suggested the Appin massacre story may also have circulated among and possibly shaped frontier stories of similar events elsewhere. A 1907 account of a massacre of Europeans by ‘Cocogong’ (Cookoogong, who assisted Charles Throsby) and his ‘whole tribe’ at ‘Appletree Flats’ apparently ‘between Camden and Razorback’, has no other known evidence. The writer noted the site was long afterwards called by the settlers ‘The Slaughteryard’.



Figure 12: Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony, picture: Robert Pozo (Source: The Daily Telegraph)

The Appin Massacre was the most significant massacre event in the history of the Sydney region and a turning point in the occupation of the

Cumberland Plain and its surrounds. As it was conducted by the military as part of a broad campaign ordered by Governor Macquarie, rather than by armed colonists on the frontier, it was also the most documented massacre in Sydney's history, and one of the most documented in Australian history.

6.8 Surviving in the south-west: 1820s-1880s

After the end of the Sydney Wars in 1816, many Aboriginal people in the southern Sydney region found work on farms or in guiding and tracking. Bundle, from the 'Cowpastures Tribe' was recommended to become a constable at Minto. Other families camped and worked on farms – some at the Macarthurs' 'Camden Park' and 'Denham', where the Macarthurs allotted an area of land for Aboriginal people to live on, and this became a meeting place for people travelling, with corroborees noted as being held with hundreds of people for many years at least through the 1820s.

Others such as James Tegg worked on Charles Throbsy's 'Glenfield' estate. Some women such as Lucy Leane and Maria Lock married British men. A few children from the district who had been in the Orphan School near Liverpool were sent to the reopened Native Institute at Blacktown in 1826, and when this ultimately failed, several were sent to the care of Reverend Robert Cartwright at Liverpool and then on to the mission at Wellington in central west NSW.³⁸

What was called the 'Liverpool Tribe' was reported by missionary William Walker in 1821 to be 'not more than 15 to 20 people' under their 'Chief' named 'Cogie' (Kogi, Gogy). In 1826 the so-called 'Liverpool Tribe' were, along with the 'Illawarra districts' reported to be in 'hostilities' with the 'Cowpastures Tribe' – suggesting traditional disputes were still being settled.

³⁸ Gapps, Cabrogal to Fairfield, p. 148-149. Three boys 'Billy, Johnny and Wallace' were recorded being moved to the school.



Figure 13: Aboriginal people of the Nepean River Region, E. Forget, 1819 (Source: State Library of Victoria)³⁹

In 1827 a 'Corroborree' at 'Denbeigh' near Camden had 'over 400 people' in attendance. According to the Hoy family, 'Hoy's Hill' on the Liverpool road (Hume Highway) was a 'nightly stopping place inward and outward' on the 'Illawarra and Cowpastures tribes' annual visits to the feast at Parramatta. Even in 1836, James Hassall reported a 'large corroborree' at the Cowpastures as well as a traditional fight.⁴⁰

During the 19th century Aboriginal people moved around and in and out of the southwest Sydney region. They regrouped under the pressures of colonisation and made new families and alliances. Sometimes their movement was based on traditional connections across long distances such as those recounted by William Russell or Werriberrie. Described in 1914 as

³⁹ <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/399931>

⁴⁰ Gapps, S. (2010) Cabrogal to Fairfield, p. 150

‘chief of the Gun-dun-gorra aboriginals of the Burragorang Valley’, Russell’s mother ‘Wonduck’ was from ‘near Richlands’ and his uncle ‘My-an-garlie’ from ‘Connor’s Plain, near Bathurst’. According to Russell, Myangarlie ‘became principal man of our tribe’ in the mid-nineteenth century and his ‘chief camping ground’ was the Burragorang Valley. Russell ended up with his family at Oaks Creek ‘nine miles from Camden’ and recalled ‘many convict men, as well as aboriginals, used to help reap the crop and do bush work’ for the Reilly family and on John Wild’s property ‘Vanderville’.

Russell recalled ‘Mr. William Antill, of Abbotsford, Picton’ and that Aboriginal people ‘were never interfered with on any property of the Antill family, which included all the Picton Valley’. He described ‘the old aboriginals about Camden’ as from ‘a different tribe to those of Burragorang (Gandangarra) and that ‘Old Bundle’ was their chief and ‘Gurgur’ their language.⁴¹

By the 1860s most Aboriginal people in the expanding southern suburbs of Sydney had either moved, or were moved, to other areas. However, a handful continued to work and live within the growing non-Indigenous population. At Liverpool in the late 1800s, ‘Black Tommy’ was reported by local newspapers as ‘the last full blood man of the Georges River’. In the 1888 celebrations for the centenary of the colony, Tommy rode a white horse at the head of the parade down the main street of Liverpool. Another woman who lived in Liverpool in the late 1800s, also described as ‘the last Aborigine in the area’ was known as ‘Black Eliza’.

But Tommy and Eliza were not the last Aboriginal people in the district. During the 1890s, Aboriginal children were removed from the families and brought to the ‘Children’s Home’ at Liverpool. And on the Georges River, an Aboriginal woman named Lucy Leane was struggling with the Aborigines

Protection Board. Lucy had married ‘an Englishman’ and lived on an orchard farm by the river. In 1893 she petitioned the Board for a boat ‘for the purpose of carrying on a trade on the George River’. Her petition was supported by respectable citizens who described her as ‘a most deserving woman’, as well as ‘the only surviving Native woman of the Georges River and Liverpool district’. The petition failed and Lucy died in 1895 and her grave headstone is now in the ‘Liverpool Pioneers Memorial Park’. Lucy had 13 children and her descendants are still in the area today – Cathy Leane remarked in 2011 that it was ‘quite amusing’ that a ‘blackfella is buried in a pioneer park’.⁴²

Along the Georges River throughout the late 19th century Aboriginal families were attempting to hold on to portions of their own land, in different ways. They also kept up a broader community and wider family networks by moving around Country, in similar ways to how they had done pre-invasion. One of the most recorded was Biddy Giles, who in the 1860s and 70s with her non-Aboriginal husband Billy often took people on fishing and hunting excursions from Mill Creek down the Georges River and into Kamay-Botany Bay. In the 1910s, William Rowley and his family moved upriver from Towra Point on Kamay-Botany Bay to the community at Salt Pan Creek.⁴³

While this ‘east-west’ movement along the Georges River was important for Aboriginal people in southern Sydney, by the turn of the twentieth century there was another movement – of people from outside Sydney into these communities. Some came from as far as Brungle in southern NSW, the Castlereagh area and even Western Australia. Many were drawn by work opportunities and all could stay in the camps such as Salt Pan Creek, outside but still close to the city.

⁴¹ ‘Bush Memories’, *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 11 August 1914, p. 44; Russell, ‘My Recollections’ pp. 9-13

⁴² Gapps, S. (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, pp. 227-228

⁴³ Goodall and Cadzow, (2009) *Rivers and Resilience*, pp. 71-72, 92-100

The impact of the Aborigines Protection Board from the 1880s cannot be overstated. While some people managed to in effect 'hide' along the reaches of the Georges River, others were moved to agreed places such as La Perouse where they could be under the surveillance of the Board. Some were removed far from Sydney to missions and reserves such as Cummeragunja on the Murray River.⁴⁴



Figure 14. Typical Sydney forests being cleared, 1830 (Source: State Library of NSW).

⁴⁴ Goodall and Cadzow, (2009) Rivers and Resilience, pp. 107-8, 113

⁴⁵ Fowlie, T., 'History of Granville', 1918, ML, SLNSW, p. 10; Gapps, *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, p. 29; 'Aboriginal Relics Liverpool', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 February 1934, p. 10

6.9 Agitation and Activism: 1900 to today

In the early twentieth century, the riverbanks in the Fairfield, Liverpool and Georges River areas were being scoured by amateur historians and others for Aboriginal stone artefacts. Thomas Fowlie in his history of Granville and surrounding districts recalled in 1918 that he and several other people had 'found several of their [Aboriginal people] axes along the riverbanks, as well as recalling still noticeable stone 'axe-marks' in older trees. In 1931, a Fairfield resident dug several mogos or hand-axes from their garden in East Parade and donated them to the Australian Museum. So too in 1934, a Mr C. Giles 'while ploughing along the George's River near the Quarries [near Liverpool] ... unearthed a stone axe and part of a spear and boomerang'. A Mr. R. Tapping, 'an old resident of the town, recalled that the Georges River tribe had a camp there, and that the aborigines made frequent hunting trips in the country between George's River and the Nepean'.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, further down the river, Aboriginal families had managed to purchase several blocks of land at Salt Pan Creek and continued to allow other families to camp there and in the bush nearby. They used the river to fish and sell their catch, but also had a supply of bush tucker at their doorstep. A growing interest in Aboriginal souvenirs from non-Indigenous people during the 20th century meant boomerang making and other cultural works were in demand and could be sold to growing numbers of day-tripping Sydney-siders and tourists who were visiting La Perouse.⁴⁶

By the 1930s, the Salt Pan Creek community had continued to grow - often in response to the tightening restrictions and policing of Aboriginal people by the Aborigines Protection Board. People who were being forced off missions and reserves for being 'too white' or were in fear of their children

⁴⁶ Goodall and Cadzow, Rivers and Resilience, pp. 118-120

being taken away from them, chose the area that was still relatively unmonitored by the Board. There were also other camps at nearby places such as Wolli Creek that could offer some security as well – sometimes as temporary refuges while the authorities were around.

During the 1920s the Australian Aborigines Progress Association (AAPA) had been formed and political activism found its way to Salt Pan Creek. A young boy Jacko Campbell had fled from the Burnt Bridge Aboriginal Station at Kempsey when the Protection Board threatened he would be taken from his parents, and he found refuge at Salt Pan Creek. Jacko recalled the discussions and ‘unfolding activism’ at the camp. By this time, Aboriginal people had increasing numbers of allies in trade unions and political movements.

In 1933, the Dharawal man Joe Anderson famously appeared in a Cinesound newsreel that screened in cinemas around the country. He was standing on the banks of Salt Pan Creek. In a profound speech arguing for Aboriginal rights, he said at one point;

There is plenty of fish in the river for us all, and land to grow all we want ... The black man owned Australia, and now he demands more than charity. He wants the right to live!

Anderson was also making a plea for the families that had been living along the Georges River and were now facing eviction from Salt Pan Creek due to the growing pressure of suburban Sydney. By the late 1930s, local white residents were complaining that the Salt Pan Creek camp was ‘spoiling’ the area. By 1939, the remaining people had been forcibly removed to La Perouse.⁴⁷

In the 1950s and 1960s Aboriginal people lived in and around the Fairfield and Liverpool districts. Some seem to have been trying to avoid the

Aboriginal Welfare Board and were ‘camped’ in the hills behind Cecil Park. Some were working and sending their children to school – where people recalled they won ‘all the athletics races’, but also that they were directed ‘not to speak their language’. Some families ended up at the Hargraves Park ex-army camp awaiting public housing.⁴⁸

The Finch family lived in Smithfield from the 1940s and Harry Finch drove the local bus. His father ‘Old man Finch’ mended shoes, but ‘lived in the scrub’ at the back of Smithfield. Some picked grapes on the vineyards in the district while the Higgenbottoms family operated a dairy beside Orphan School Creek. From the 1960s, the Aboriginal population in the area and right across Sydney began to grow. With changing government policies on restricting Aboriginal families and movement, many chose to move to the city for work. While many went to the Aboriginal ‘hub’ at Redfern, some moved into assisted housing in south and western Sydney. New attachments to the rivers, creeks and remaining bushland in the Liverpool, Fairfield and Georges River areas were formed.⁴⁹

To the south of the lower Georges River a huge swathe of bushland had been occupied by the Holsworthy military reserve since 1912. The area had been largely undisturbed ever since and when an airport was proposed there, a thorough investigation of Aboriginal sites revealed an amazing array of rock engravings in particular. The Cubbitch Barta area was included in the Register of the National Estate in 1998.

⁴⁷ Goodall and Cadzow, (2009) *Rivers and Resilience*, pp. 154-160

⁴⁸ Gapps, S. (2010) *Cabrogal to Fairfield*, pp. 336-339

⁴⁹ In the early 1990s, Jim Kohen estimated that there were 20,000 descendants of Sydney Aboriginal people in the wider Sydney region and beyond. Kohen, *Dharuganora*, p. 2



Figure 15. Rock art at Cubbitch Barta National Estate Area in the Holsworthy Military Area.⁵⁰

6.10 Dharawal communities today

The Appin massacre continues to be remembered to this day at the annual Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony, held on the Sunday nearest to the date of the massacre of April 17th. The ceremony takes place at the Cataract Dam Picnic Area. There have been calls for protection for the site of the massacre with a 2011 petition by Dharawal and Gundungurra family groups to protect the site from development and prevent further trauma to the community.

The ancestral remains of Cannabaygal and two other Dharawal people taken as skulls to the University of Edinburgh were returned to Australia in 1991 and 2000. There have been extensive calls from community for the

remains to be repatriated and buried on Country, having been held in safekeeping at the National Museum of Australia since their return to Australia⁵¹.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise approximately 5% of South Western Sydney's population. The suburb of Airds has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of approximately 13%. The area's Aboriginal community is represented by Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council which was established in 1983 under the Aboriginal Lands Rights Act NSW 1983. Based in Airds, Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council provides health, housing and social programs as well as cultural heritage site assessments and a number of cultural education programs. The logos for both Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council and Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation include the lyrebird, one of the totems for the Tharawal People.



Figure 16. Lyre Bird image, from *Our Voice our Place*, Campbelltown Council

⁵⁰ <https://www.defence.gov.au/news-events/news/2023-11-28/ancient-indigenous-sites-protected-holsworthy>

⁵¹ Bertola, V. (no date) Ancestors to rest in peace in their homeland of appin, The Daily Telegraph. Available at: [https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/macarthur/ancestors-](https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/macarthur/ancestors-to-rest-in-peace-in-their-homeland-of-appin/news-story/70c8ce93fc1928d41d63312821a001d4)

to-rest-in-peace-in-their-homeland-of-appin/news-story/70c8ce93fc1928d41d63312821a001d4 (Accessed: 26 June 2024).

7. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

7.1 Introduction

An understanding of the relevance and importance of the Aboriginal cultural landscape is fundamental to sensitive cultural design development aligning with the Connecting with Country principles. This understanding provides opportunities to explore Aboriginal peoples' unity with the natural environment and their traditional knowledge of spirit, places, land uses and ecology. These understandings are best developed through authentic and sustained consultation with Aboriginal knowledge holders and professionals.

7.2 Consultation planning

As the Traditional Custodians of the land, the local community maintains a dynamic connection to Country which informs their identity, culture, language, and ways of living.⁵² The depth of this connection requires that appropriate, effective consultation with relevant community members must take place for any archaeological or heritage works occurring on their traditional land.

Under the Burra Charter⁵³:

Article 12. Conservation, interpretation and management of a place should provide for the participation of people for whom the place has significant associations and meanings, or who have social, spiritual or other cultural responsibilities for the place.

The GANSW *Connecting with Country Framework (2023)* recommends the following strategy for building relationship with Aboriginal communities:

Building relationships with Aboriginal people requires appropriate allocation of time and resources to develop personal connections in ways Aboriginal people recommend and feel comfortable with.

Because cultural connections with Country differ between Aboriginal peoples and communities, projects need to be guided by those who are acknowledged by their communities as knowledge-holders for Country, and often in combination with nominated Aboriginal organisations such as local Aboriginal land councils.

The GANSW *Connecting with Country Framework (2023)* also highlights categories of stakeholders who could be involved:

Engagement should be undertaken in an inclusive way, and project teams should be open to diverse groups of people and points of view. In addition to LALCs, the groups that should be invited to join the engagement process include:

- 1. Traditional Custodians who have ancestral connections to a place*
 - 2. people from surrounding groups/tribes/ mobs/communities/nations*
 - 3. those who have moved to the area since colonisation and are integrated into the community*
 - 4. everyone else who wants a say.*
-

7.2.1 Stakeholder identification

Stakeholders were identified through review of the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP) list prepared by Travers Bushfire & Ecology, liaison with the Tharawal LALC and through previous work carried out by Artefact in the area.

⁵² Australian Heritage Commission, 2002. Ask First: a guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values.

⁵³ Australia ICOMOS, 2013. Burra Charter – The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance. 3.

7.3 Previous consultation and reports

The GANSW *Connecting with Country Framework* (2023) recommends the activity ‘research and prepare’ and specifically ‘locate previous Aboriginal cultural heritage and technical studies relevant to the project’ so ‘to avoid consultation fatigue and prevent duplicating time and effort when information is already available.’ This section provides a summary of Aboriginal cultural heritage values discussed in existing resources and reports which consulted with Aboriginal stakeholders.

7.3.1 Consultation work with D’harawal Elders, 2023-2024

The following are cultural heritage values from recent Connecting with Country work carried out by Artefact with D’harawal Elders Aunty Gwenda Jarett and Aunty Jodie Stewart on Dharawal Country. Aunty Glenda and Aunty Jodie gave permission for these points to be shared with this project:

- In its important to conserve and communicate the Aboriginal history of an area.
- It is important to respect Country and follow customary law/lore. It is also important to follow protocols and speak to Elders who can speak for Country.
- It is important to recompense Aboriginal people for their knowledge and time.
- Look to the future and encourage more sustainable living, veggie gardens, solar panels and clean energy sources.
- Non-Aboriginal members of project teams should carry out cultural awareness training on Country.
- Aboriginal cultural heritage work on Country should involve both male and female sites officers to cover men and women’s business.

- Developments should focus on regeneration of native plants including plants used for medicines. This offers an opportunity for the next generation to learn how to grow, cultivate and use native plants.
- It would be positive to include spaces for ceremony in new developments. These could be spaces for smoking ceremonies or other ceremonies. It is also recommended to include spaces for education and teaching young people – like a yarning circle.
- Developments should consider how Aboriginal culture can be interpreted in new and innovative ways using the latest technologies.

7.3.2 Our Voice, Our Place

Though Douglas Park is in Wollondilly LGA, neighbouring Campbelltown Council (also on Dharawal Country) have previously carried out community consultation with 150 Aboriginal people in the area for development of the report *Our Voice, Our Place – Aboriginal Interpretation Strategy* (2019) which outlines the expectations the Council has for developers seeking to upgrade public spaces and the requirements to incorporate Aboriginal heritage interpretation into the built form. Key Aboriginal cultural heritage values from the report include:

- **The** land within and around the area has been home to the Dharawal people. It is a fertile place with abundant food sources, bushland and wildlife. A central feature of Dharawal Country is Mount Annan (as it is now known), a significant place for gathering
- The Dharawal were known as the ‘peace makers’
- The lyrebird is a totem animal of the Dharawal, a symbol of peace and conciliation
- The first military ordered massacre of Aboriginal people in Australia occurred at nearby Appin. It is commemorated each year at a ceremony near the site.

- The Waratahs **are** significant to the Dharawal people
- The Georges River and the bushland along the river banks is a place where people go to connect to Country and each other.
- Campbelltown was a gathering place for Aboriginal people from around the region
- Educating one another and in particular the younger generation about the stories of the Dharawal people and land is important
- Important events include: the Appin Massacre Memorial, NAIDOC week, Sorry Day, Close the Gap Day, ANZAC Day
- The community require accessible and welcoming places and spaces to gather
- Design principles include:
 - Creating welcoming and accessible spaces
 - Including opportunities for weaving in education and knowledge sharing
 - Engaging with community

The results of that consultation and report have been incorporated into this report.

7.3.3 Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (2024)

The Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (TLALC) website shares the following cultural heritage values:⁵⁴

- The TLALC recognises Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the Country.

- The TLALC respects the heritage and the cultural values and needs of their members and community
- Collaboration should be open, transparent and accountable, Confidentiality, duty of care, ethical behaviour, fairness, honesty, integrity and empathy are important when consulting or working with Aboriginal people
- Education about Dharawal and Aboriginal culture is important. It is important that Aboriginal children are aware of their traditional culture and they have a sense of belonging and pride.
- Teaching Aboriginal children their culture ensures the Aboriginal Culture and traditional language survives and thrives for future generations.
- The TLALC also encourages learning about Aboriginal culture by non-Aboriginal people in the wider community.
- Healing Country is an important aspect of the work of the TLALC.

By protecting sacred sites of cultural significance, conserving green spaces, removing rubbish and pollutants from our waterways, and introduced species of animals and plants from our land and replacing these with the revegetation of traditional native plants and species to heal our country so it can be enjoyed for many future generations to come.

Tharawal LALC, 2024⁵⁵

- Cultural heritage, human remains and artefacts should be cared for appropriately 'human remains discovered will be reburied on country in a safe, secure place with sensitivity, dignity, and respect.'

⁵⁴ <https://www.tharawal.com.au/about-us/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.tharawal.com.au/culture-heritage/#land>

7.4 Project specific consultation

7.4.1 Douglas Park Memorial Park Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024)

Travers Bushfire & Ecology are developing the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment for the project. As part of that process they advertised for Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs). The following groups registered as RAPs for the Project:

- Barraby Cultural Services
- Butucarbin Aboriginal Corporation
- Corroboree Aboriginal Corporation
- Cubbitch Barta
- Didge Ngunawal Clan
- Guntawang Aboriginal Resources Incorporated
- James Davis
- Kamilaroi Yankuntjatjara Working Group
- Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services
- Mundawari Heritage Consultants
- Mura Indigenous Corporation (icn:8991)
- Murra Bidgee Mullangari Aboriginal Corporation
- Thomas Dahlstrom
- Wurrumay Pty Ltd

- Yulay Cultural Services
- Yurrandaali

7.4.1.1 Cultural heritage values

In his registration for the project Uncle James Davis noted that he was a 'registered native title claimant and knowledge holder for The South Coast People'. Uncle James stated that he was a Wodi Wodi Dharawal and Yuin Traditional Owner with 'strong connections to the Dharawal Community'.

Uncle James Davis shared his connections to Country through his grandmother Muriel Davis nee Bell, and his grandfather James 'Jimmy' Davis. He has been an Aboriginal Senior Sites Officer for 25 years.

Aboriginal cultural values expressed by Uncle James Davis included:

- That the Country is Dharawal Country
- When carrying out work on Country, Elders should be consulted
- Employment opportunities should be prioritised for those that belong to Country
- It is important to follow Aboriginal cultural protocols and ascertain who has been given permission to speak for Country by Elders within the community.
- Muriel Grace Davis, nee Bell, was a noted Aboriginal woman of Dharawal Country.

7.4.2 ACHAR site survey with Tharawal LALC, 2 July 2024

On 2 July 2024 Artefact was invited to join an ACHAR site survey organised by Travers Bushfire & Ecology and the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council. During the site survey Artefact recorded heritage values shared by the representatives of the Tharawal LALC.

7.4.2.1 Attendees

- Shazda Brown, Site Officer, Tharawal LALC
- John McInnes, Site Officer, Tharawal LALC
- Sam Riley, Travers Bushfire & Ecology
- Cole Perry, Artefact
- Alex Gaffikin, Artefact



Figure 17: Travers, Artefact and Tharawal LALC representatives on site

7.4.2.2 Heritage values

Country

- This is Dharawal Country. It would be important to acknowledge the land in the new development.

Waterways

- The site officers also noted the significance of the waterways nearby. The site is close to the Nepean River and a creek runs through the site.

Views

- The area is surrounded by hills and ridges, and the view lines of the hills are important. The site officers noted that there would have been less trees and brush in the past so that there would have been clearer views for wayfinding as well as to see animals, or possibly enemies coming. See Figure 20: View of hills to the north, 2 July 2024 (source: Artefact)

Iron barks

- The Tharawal LALC representatives noted the presence of hard iron bark wood. This is typically used in the production of weapons to create weapons for war, and tools for hunting and gathering. For example, hook boomerangs in the shape of a '7' were used for war.

Peel the bark off, let it dry out naturally, and then start to work it. Take it down to the size of a boomerang you want. – John, 2 July 2024

- The sandstone in parts of the landscape would have been used for grinding weapons and tools into shape.
- This may have been an area for hunting food while groups travelled down to Wollongong.
- Site Officer Shazda Brown talked about men's initiation ceremonies including learning routes down the coast through lands of the Dharawal people – the "whale people".



Figure 18 : Typical Iron bark branches that could be used for making boomerangs

Plants and animals

- A number of edible plants and animals on the site were pointed out by the TLALC site officers.

“Witchetty grubs in this area are found in some small wattle trees, they dig their way down into the root system so if a storm comes the branch or trunk of the tree wouldn’t break.” – John McInnes and Shazda Brown

- Endemic plants mentioned included:
 - Paperbarks – grow where there is a lot of water, so are signposts for water
 - Iron barks – a slow growing, hardwood tree
 - Grey gums or snappy gums – for coolamons
 - Kangaroo grass – ground up to make a gluten free flour
 - Acacia – would have grubs in the roots
- John McInnes noted that the Iron bark was used by farmers and miners for fence posts and props, so many of the old trees with rings or scars would have been chopped down by the colonisers.

‘When you see green plants – a dark green a nice green – it means water is in the ground.’ – Shazda Brown 2 July 2024



Figure 19: Seeds used to make bread (source: Artefact)

Seasons

- Aboriginal people have different seasons to the four European ones. For example, plant indicators show when it may be time to fish. “So soon we will have wattle bloom so it’s time to build eel traps” – John McInnes
- Aboriginal people travel through the seasons to access different food. Elders would teach the youngest the routes and knowledges as they travel.

Appin Massacre

As an area close to Appin and Broughton Pass, the study area is known to have a high level of spiritual connections to the local Aboriginal people due to the geographical location. The site holds social and cultural values particularly related to shared histories and early colonial history. The site is a short walk to Broughton Pass where the massacre occurred (see section 6.6 for more details).

Heritage management

The Douglas Park Memorial Park ACHAR (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024) will cover recommendations for unexpected finds and ongoing Aboriginal cultural heritage management.



Figure 20: View of hills to the north, 2 July 2024 (source: Artefact)

7.4.3 Online meeting with Aunty Glenda Chalker, 5 September

On the 5th of September 2024 an online meeting took place to consult with Aunty Glenda Chalker from Cubbitch Barta Native Title Corporation about the site and the proposal.

7.4.3.1 Attendees

- Auntie Glenda Chalker, Dharawal Elder, Cubbitch Barta Native Title Corporation
- Andrea Banaag, Arcadia
- William Singer, HT Building
- Juliet Wittenoom Louw, Ethos urban
- Alexandra Gaffikin, Artefact
- Farah Georges, Design Cubicle

7.4.3.2 Cultural heritage values

- Aunty Glenda Chalker talked about the Nepean River and how it is of cultural significance. She discussed its history and importance, both for local Aboriginal people and how other groups would come and rely on the river during times when there was no water elsewhere. Aunty asked questions about possible leaching into the river as the site is relatively close to the junction of the Cataract and Nepean River.

“Nepean River was a life of blood in times of drought”-

Auntie Glenda Chalker, 5 September 2024

- Aunty Glenda Chalker noted how the site has intangible histories and sits within a broader landscape. She talked about the Appin Massacre that happened in 1816 at the Gorge, close to the site.

- Aunty asked about Geotech carried out on the site because she noted that the Country has hardly any soil and is predominantly rock which could be difficult for burials.
- As part of the connection to Country process Aunty Glenda would like to have an on-ground opportunity to look at the site and would like to know more about the technicalities of the site.
- Aunty raised the importance of assuring RAP consultation process should be done with those who are connected/from that Country and has knowledge about the Country/site. She raised her concerns that she should be invited to site surveys in the area so that she can review archaeological findings.

As a result of the meeting, Aunty Glenda Chalker and Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd. were invited to a Walk on Country and site survey in October.

7.4.4 Walk on Country and site survey, 24 October 2024

A Walk on Country was organised on the 24 October 2024 with Aunty Glenda Chalker to view the site physically from ground level. This was combined with a heritage field survey by Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd.

7.4.4.1 Attendees

- Aunty Glenda Chalker, Dharawal Elder, Cubbitch Barta Native Title Corporation
- Nyimarlli Chalker, Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd.
- Ebony Chalker, Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd.
- Rebecca Chalker, Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd.
- Greg Smith, HT Building

- William Singer, HT Building
- Alexandra Gaffikin, Artefact

7.4.4.2 Cultural heritage values

History

The Chalkers discussed their long history with their area and their ongoing connections, as many of them live locally.

Geotechnical and Ground Water

Aunty Glenda Chalker asked to see the Geotechnical Survey and the project team discussed the sandstone bedrock, ground water and contamination. The project team discussed compliance with the assessments of the Ground Water Team and EPA regulations. [The Geotech report was subsequently sent to Aunty Glenda on 1 November 2024].

Plantings and landscape management

The project team discussed the landscaping concept of the cemetery which is to keep it relatively untouched in terms of landscaping or formal gardening. Previous schemes were quite western and the new concept wanted to feel less formal, with winding paths through the site. Aunty Glenda Chalker noted the importance of planting species endemic to the area on the site and noted a few of the existing trees and plants in the area which would be worth keeping or cultivating (some of which appeared to have been marked with blue tape). Particular species noted by Aunty Glenda on the site visit included:

- Bush cherry/bush tucker - Grow off the roots of other trees, a lot of parasitic relationship of some kind. The broad leaf and the narrow leaf type are located on the site.
- Iron barks

- Gums, forest red gums
- Grass trees – Aunty noted their usage to make spears
- Native grasses

The group also talked about fire management and the use of cool burnings or “Cultural burning” techniques to manage fire on a site like this. Aunty noted that a “wilderness area” on the plans would need fire management, and that Cultural burning is a controlled, low intensity way of managing the land and reducing the impact of wildfires.

Aunty Glenda Chalker also discussed the importance of allowing dead trees to stay in situ as dead trees are as important as live ones. She discussed “hollows” that form in live trees when their branches fall off, she also discussed dead trees and their importance as habitats for wildlife. She noted the importance of a management plan for the site to include retention of dead trees.

Aboriginal funerals and ceremonies

The group discussed usage of the site. Aunty Glenda Chalker noted the following:

- Could possibly be too expensive for Aboriginal people and families to bury their dead due to all the rock on the site and the cost of excavation which is going to make the burial site a lot more expensive.
- A funeral for an Aboriginal person may include a smoking ceremony, dancing and singing.
- Sometimes smoking ceremonies can be an issue due to the lighting of a fire, and sourcing leaves from a certain type of tree which isn't easy to find. It would be useful to discuss this with someone responsible for smoking ceremonies to see which trees/plants could be planted in the vicinity to assist with this.

The group also talked about cremations and scattering of ashes and that it would be important to discuss these locations so that they are in appropriate spots.

7.4.4.3 Heritage field assessment

The Heritage Field Assessment by Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd. has been included in Section 18 Appendix D. Key details include:

- Noted the remnant eucalypt trees (iron bark, grey box, forest redgum)
- There are no culturally modified trees in the project area.
- Three water gullies were visible within the project area
- Landforms suggest that the water gullies were likely to contain exposed sandstone platforms, though these have been removed and utilised as a natural resource during the historic period.
- Sandstone platforms in gullies that contain regular waterflow were utilised traditionally for the purpose of tool making, food preparation and communal gatherings
- No artefacts were visible in areas of high visibility and exposure.



Figure 21: Grass tree (source: Artefact)

7.4.5 SDRP review – feedback from Danièle Hromek, 20 November 2024

A State Design Review Panel presentation of the project was held on 20 November 2024. The session was attended by Danièle Hromek, a member of the panel, who is from the South Coast and has connections to Dharawal Country. Her feedback included:

- Exploring further how cultural burnings / cool burnings can be used in landscape maintenance, caring for Country and perhaps even as ceremonial practice. Noted that it can be hard to find practitioners. Asked if it could go into the maintenance plan.
- The importance of further consultation with Aboriginal funeral directors and funeral directors with experience in organising funerals for Aboriginal families. In particular what spaces for ceremonies and cultural activities there would be (specifically asked about yarning circles which would need a specific purpose). Also ask about practices eg directions for processing in and out?
- The importance of broader consultation with Aboriginal families about the range of types of requirements for Aboriginal funerals.
- Where can smoking ceremonies happen? – anywhere or specific places? What plants/trees need to be planted in the spaces? Ask specifically about smoking ceremonies for funerals (as opposed to other types of smoking ceremonies).
- Danièle Hromek asked about the size of the numbers of people who can attend a funeral as Aboriginal families can be big groups
- Avoid term “totem poles” for wayfinding signage
- Danièle commented on the positive initiatives to keep native plants and keep materials on site.

7.4.6 Contemporary Aboriginal Funerals and ceremonies

Following on from the advice from Aunty Glenda Chalker and Danièle Hromek, Artefact carried out further consultation on Aboriginal funeral and ceremonies with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage officers Hannah Matagia and Katrina Eckford and their families.

Activity	Facilities
Aboriginal family funerals often have large numbers of people attending	• Lots of seating • Large rooms/spaces • Adequate facilities for example toilets and car parking
Smoking ceremonies, sprinkling ash on grave	• Places to do a smoking ceremony • Permissions to light fires • Appropriate trees, so that their leaves can be used for smoking • Places to put ash, return to Country
Dancing	• Decent changing rooms (not just toilets) • Washing facilities
Singing, music (clap sticks and didgeridoos)	• AV equipment • Sound proofing

Activity	Facilities
Carved trees – surface bark of live tree carved to face burial	• Would there be live trees that could be carved? • Permissions to engrave in trees
Allowing grave goods (stone tools or personal ornaments)	• Approvals to allow grave goods • Maintenance of grave goods
Sorry day/business Mourning period can take over a week – maybe even a month	• Consideration of opening hours to allow access to mourn • Awareness that attendance at the cemetery could be over multiple days
Yarning circles (for gatherings)	• Yarning circles – both physical seating as well as areas where large circles of people can stand • Space for a fire in the middle of the yarning circle • Wheelchair accessible
Bora circles / rings (circular rock formation on ceremony grounds) for ceremony ⁵⁶	• Either space for a temporary Bora circle to be created during a service OR permanent Bora circle (created by an Elder or Knowledge Holder)

Activity	Facilities
	• Could be placed on top of a grave, around or next to (can be small)
Food Catering	• Bush tucker, providing traditional meals to be cooked on site e.g. Kitchen/ fire pit • Space to provide larger scale catering e.g. set up trestle tables, space for an urns etc to cater for free
Rituals using ochre	• Washing facilities • Places on Country to return ochre that may have been hoovered up
Weaving	• Lomandra grass
Spaces for possible repatriation and burial of human remains	• Marked and unmarked areas for burials and reburials
Returning bodies to water (traditional practice) which has become putting cremated ashes into running water	• Scattering ashes in a river (?) • Information and permissions about where ashes could be scattered in water e.g. river or sea

⁵⁶ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/visiting-and-exploring-nsw/locations-and-attractions/aboriginal-bora-ring>

Activity	Facilities
Specialist traditional funeral practices	Website that offers welcoming, sensitive and accessible information and contact details for families who have specialist traditional funeral practices
Walk on Country / Being on Country	- Ensure the area is and feels natural - Plants used by broad Indigenous communities e.g. paperbark trees - Plenty of plants and trees to attract wildlife. - Opportunities for traditional land maintenance e.g. cultural burning

7.5 Cultural burnings and cool burnings

Following on from the recommendations by Aunty Glenda Chalker and advice from Danièle Hromek, Artefact carried out additional research on cultural burnings and cool burnings.

For thousands of years Aboriginal people have been using fire to hunt animals, maintain ecosystems and manage the land. In a practice called Cool Burning,

⁵⁷ <https://www.watarrkafoundation.org.au/blog/aboriginal-fire-management-what-is-cool-burning>

⁵⁸ <https://www.bundanon.com.au/our-stories/landscape/natural-resource-management/cultural-burning>

often referred to as Cultural Burning, small blazes are set alight to clear the underbrush. This process generates patchy habitats preferred by small animals and prevents lightning and wildfires from consuming the land. Unfortunately, with centuries of Euro-Australian suppression of Aboriginal people, the practice of Cool Burning has diminished. Early settlers viewed fire as a threat and were unable to perceive of Cool Burning as a landscape-management practice. This has since exacerbated ecosystem degradation and put much of our land at risk of wildfires. The life severe consequences of this shift in land management became apparent during our recent bushfire season, which consumed more than 18.626 million hectares of land and killed 1.25 billion wild animals. There has since been a surge of interest from farmers, landowners and communities wanting to learn about these traditional burning practices and how they could be implemented nationwide.

Watarrka Foundation⁵⁷

7.5.1 Cultural burns

Cultural burning – of which cool burning is one aspect - describes burning practices developed by Aboriginal people to enhance the health of Country and culture. Cultural burning includes fire-stick farming, burnings and prevention of burning. Also known as ‘the good fire’, cultural burning plays a role in accessibility to, and management of, cultural heritage sites. Culturally fire plays a ceremonial role in welcoming people to Country and as a gathering place.⁵⁸

7.5.2 Cool Burns

The central idea of Cool Burns is fire management using a ‘cool’ fire. Night times and early mornings are ideal for these fires as nightly dew helps cool down the fire and the winds are often gentle. ⁵⁹

⁵⁹ <https://www.watarrkafoundation.org.au/blog/aboriginal-fire-management-what-is-cool-burning>

Cool burns were carried out at night times and early morning as nightly dew helps cool down the fire. This practice has been around for thousands of years, to ensure that seeds and nutrients in the soil are not baked and destroyed.

“Cool burns are a way for us to heal Country and Country to heal us.”⁶⁰

Cool burning is a practice where the fire burns at a much lower heat intensity than a wildfire or a modern large scale fuel reduction burn. This sophisticated use of fire burned at such a low intensity ensures that the tree canopy remained protected. The fire only burns the undergrowth.

Cool fires help change the vegetation structure by reducing the density of low plants like Bracken Fern or Casuarina which lead to extreme fuel loads. But hot fires, such as hazard reduction burns, encourage their regrowth. Aboriginal people who execute cool fires usually stay with the fire to manage it.⁶¹ Cool burns are to be done by Aboriginal people, usually by traditional owners as most Countries prefer/require them to do so. However, there are programs for cultural burns and cool burns to educate people on why the Aboriginal peoples are continuing these practices.

*The practice involves lighting low fires in small areas on foot, with matches or, traditionally, with fire sticks. These fires are closely monitored, ensuring that only the underbrush is burnt. Cool Burns not only clear areas of land, they also ensure that seeds and nutrients in the soil are not baked and destroyed. In fact, these fires assist in changing vegetation structures by reducing the density of risk factor plants such as Bracken Fern or Casuarina which lead to extreme fuel loads.*⁶²

⁶⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwClbZhsPWc>

⁶¹ https://www.gtansw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2_Appendix_Guided-Reading_Cool-burning.pdf

⁶² <https://www.watarrkafoundation.org.au/blog/aboriginal-fire-management-what-is-cool-burning>



Figure 22: Campaign On Country | Malachi Williams, Associate Fire Practitioner x Germaine Paulson, South East QLD Regional Coordinator Credit: Magpie Goose X Firesticks Alliance Collaboration (source: firesticks)⁶³

A list of companies that undertake cultural burning and cool burning is in section 17 Appendix C.

⁶³ <https://firesticks.org.au/insights/magpie-goose-x-firesticks-alliance-collaboration-empowers-indigenous-artists-and-fire-practitioners-for-economic-growth-and-environmental-conservation/>

7.6 Ongoing consultation

It is recommended that consultation be carried out by current and future project teams throughout the lifetime of the development of the site. Consultation and engagement could include:

- Engagement of Aboriginal owned businesses and organisations.
- Training and internships for early career Aboriginal professionals and students.
- Commissioning of artistic works from locally connected Aboriginal artists and in collaboration with Aboriginal Artist Cooperatives such as Eora Centre & Boomalli Artists Cooperative.
- Ongoing approvals from Aboriginal traditional knowledge holders.
- Consult with local Elders.
- Cultural tours and walks on Country.
- Involvement of RAPs in potential archaeological and heritage work.



Figure 23: Site, 24 October 2024

8. ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES

8.1 Introduction

A summary of the Aboriginal cultural heritage values from historical research, previous consultation and ongoing consultations is provided in this section.

8.2 Values

8.2.1 Dharawal Country

This is Dharawal Country. Dharawal people are the Traditional Owners of this Country - sharing boundaries with the Darug and Gandangarra peoples. Important places include Mount Annan to the north and Appin to the east. The landscape at Douglas Park is significant because it is surrounded by hills and ridges with clear views for wayfinding, hunting or spotting dangers. To the north and east of the site is the Nepean River. Native plants include paperbarks, iron barks, grey gums, kangaroo grass and acacias.

8.2.2 Appin Massacre

In March and April of 1816 Governor Macquarie began a series of military campaigns against Aboriginal people – and specifically the Dharawal People south of Sydney. The 46th Regiment was despatched to demand the surrender of Dharawal people in order to gain intelligence about Aboriginal resistance. The military expedition was eventually led to an encampment near Appin and at 1am on the 17 April formed lines and began pushing forward towards the creek. The soldiers opened fire, killing Dharawal people including women and children, and wounding others. Others died trying to escape down the cliff and 14 people died during the

massacre. Today the Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony is held annually to honour the people who perished in the attack.

8.2.3 Education

Education and communication are important cultural heritage values for Dharawal people. ‘Educating one another and in particular the younger generation about the stories of the Dharawal people and land is important’⁶⁴. Dharawal people are coordinating a resurgence in language teaching and are keen that the wider community learns more about Dharawal history and culture. Embedding language in new developments emphasises the ongoing presence of Dharawal culture.

8.2.4 Protocols and ceremony

Protocols, permissions and ceremonies are an essential part of Dharawal culture that need to be followed in order to create an environment of safety and respect. Protocols include gaining permission to enter Country from Elders and speaking with people who can speak for Country. Not following protocols and customary lore may be disrespectful to the traditional custodians and Country. Elders, groups and organisations offer ceremonies to ensure protocols are followed and protections are in place.

8.2.5 Caring for community

Providing support to all members of the community is of the utmost importance to ensure the longevity of the local Aboriginal community. New developments have the opportunity to empower younger members of the community and support Elders, by creating safe spaces that encourage the passing of knowledge from the one generation to the next.

⁶⁴ *Our Voice, Our Place – Aboriginal Interpretation Strategy* (2019)

8.3 Registered Aboriginal sites

The location of Aboriginal sites is considered culturally sensitive information. It is advised that this information, including the AHIMS data appearing on the heritage map be removed from this report if it is to enter the public domain.

An extensive AHIMS search was undertaken on 14 May 2024 by Travers Bushfire & Ecology. There are no recorded sites located within the study area. Three Aboriginal sites - two art sites and a potential archaeological deposit - were identified within two kilometres of the study area.



Figure 24: AHIMS extensive search results (source: Travers Bushfire & Ecology)

9. DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY

9.1 Introduction

The *GANSW Connecting with Country Framework (2023)* provides direction on ways to explore opportunities for design process and practices to support connection to Country in built environment projects. Bringing an understanding of Country into these processes can help improve project outcomes. The icons used in this section were designed by Dharawal artist Wirrin Ward-Lowe.

9.2 Design Principles

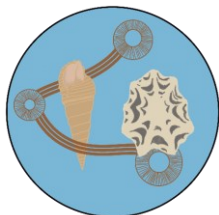
These broadly applicable set of design principles are a useful tool for designers and developers to create places that reflect Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Acknowledge Dharawal Country



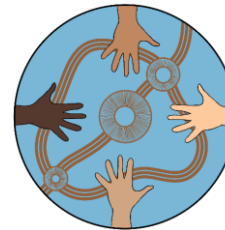
Provide acknowledgement, interpretation and resources about the Dharawal people. Learning about and having access to cultural heritage is important. Meaningful interpretive signage and artworks can acknowledge the Dharawal and Dharawal Country while Elders could be invited to give a Welcome to Country at events.

Heal the landscape



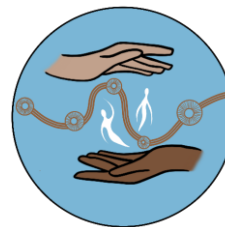
Reconnect site users and local communities to Country by returning sight lines of the hills and ridges around the area. Note the importance of the waterways nearby; the Nepean River and the local creeks. Regenerate Country with the removal of non-native plants and an emphasis on planting local endemic plants and trees.

Connect with Country



Connecting with Country is an important cultural heritage value for Aboriginal people. Create spaces and opportunities which are calm, tranquil, and which offer contact with sky, land, water and fire. Offer spaces for reflection and ceremony which benefit health and wellbeing for Indigenous and non-Indigenous visitors to the cemetery. Consider inclusion of appropriate ceremonial places for Aboriginal families organising funerals.

Long term care



Maintenance of plants and landscapes should be considered so that Country is cared for in the long term. Low maintenance landscapes ensure longevity. Consider how to maintain the wilderness aspect through Cultural burnings. Similarly, expressions of Aboriginal culture like artworks need to be protected and cared for so that they aren't disrespected by vandalism.

Interpret Dharawal cultural history



With sensitivity and in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders, identify sites where Dharawal cultural history can be shared in order to educate. Interpretation of the stories of the Dharawal people and land is important, particularly for younger generations.

9.3 Examples of design realisations

9.3.1 Introduction

This section showcases some possible ways that the Design Principles could be realised in the architecture, landscaping and interpretation of the site. Please note that these examples are from a range of Aboriginal heritage interpretation from different Aboriginal Countries.



Figure 25: Artwork commemorating Bogan Biddy's grave, Parkes (source: Artefact)

9.3.2 Acknowledgement of/Welcome to Country

A key method of communicating the importance of Country to audiences at the site is by providing a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country message. A Welcome to Country is given by the traditional custodians/knowledge holders of the area welcoming people to their land, while an Acknowledgement of Country is a sign of respect to the traditional owners of the land stated by the asset holder. The example below demonstrates an eye-catching signage for Acknowledge Country through graphics, language and sculpture.



Figure 26: Monero-Ngarigo Welcome to Country signage (source: tide signage)

9.3.3 Integration of Indigenous designs and forms into the built environment

Creative practices relating to place-making and the built form are powerful devices to incorporate and reflect the heritage values and stories of a site in a new development. Heritage values embedded within the site can be expressed through innovative architectural design responses, providing a visual exploration of the history of the site. This can be realised through the form of new buildings, integrated applications within new developments and the shaping of the landscape's geometry.

This option is an effective approach to integrating Aboriginal cultural values into the built form. Designs that echo traditional forms, spaces and narratives and their contemporary interpretations are increasingly being integrated within new developments worldwide, sending strong, respectful messages about the timeless links between Aboriginal people and the landscape, and allowing for reflection of contemporary connections to the land.



Figure 27: Puntukurna AMS Healthcare Hub by Kaunit

9.3.4 Designing functional spaces

This cemetery provides an opportunity to integrate culturally sensitive design into buildings and public spaces, as well as being essential elements of public space, these items can be canvases for expression of the site's heritage.

Embedding heritage interpretation elements within the seating, ground plane, and shade structures within gathering spaces provides a rich context and points of engagement and conversation. Patterning, text, or graphic image-based seating inserts are effective forms of interpretation, strategically positioned to engage people who have some time to pause, read and reflect absorbing messages and stories about the site. Similarly, utilising overhead elements such as canopies, or shade structures for portraying images or First Nations designs are opportunities for unique expressions of a site's heritage.



Figure 28: Yarning Circle, Curtin University (Noel Nannup and Simon Forrest).

9.3.5 Gathering spaces, ceremonial circles and seating

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been using ceremonial circles for thousands of years. A ceremonial circle is a physical circle of seating or a place with enough space for people to come together to stand or sit in a circle. It is a space to build relationships, educate and have a spiritual connection. Today they are often used as spaces for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities to come together.

The design of a ceremonial circle should be carried out in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders as there are different designs with different meanings and purposes. The ceremonial circle should have a strong connection to the landscape.



Figure 29: Bulanammung Yarning circle, Marrickville Public School

9.3.6 Plantings

Plantings of species that were in the area prior to European arrival, and therefore part of the Indigenous landscape experienced by the local Aboriginal community, is a powerful interpretive element, and supports the Connecting with Country principles. Planting patterns, where trees and understory plants are clumped rather than planted in lines, are preferred to enhance the naturalistic feel and to echo Country. Community gardens are an opportunity to engage local Aboriginal gardening businesses and encourage residents to learn about bush foods and medicines.



Figure 30: Barangaroo Reserve: planting involved 84 different species that were native to the Sydney region at the time of European settlement. (Source: Janna Schreier Garden Design).

9.3.7 Ground plane elements

Ground plane elements embedded in public domain areas are a subtly effective heritage interpretation medium. Paving colours, metal inlays or sandblasted patterns may be installed into ground planes, forming artworks, tracing the footprints of former structures or containing small ‘bites’ of textual information, quotes or dates creating a narrative as paths are traversed.

Embedding Aboriginal design elements into the ground plane of a site can connect a new development directly to Country, providing a tangible aesthetic reference to significant physical, social, or spiritual features of the land. By installing such ground plane elements into outdoor spaces, a strong visual message about the Aboriginal heritage of the site can be created.



Figure 31: Wingarra-Murra, sandblasted paving design, University of Sydney; right: Auckland Metro

9.3.8 Artworks

An eye-catching, large-scale artwork is an effective method of interpreting Aboriginal heritage values in an engaging way. Public art is a powerful tool of cultural expression, with strong graphics able to tell stories and visually communicate cultural messages to a large audience. This type of interpretive media creates a visual statement about the cultural heritage of an area and is important in place-making.



Figure 32: Aboriginal Survival Memorial artwork by Nicole Monks and Maddie Gibbs (source: Inner West Council)

9.3.9 Naming/Use of language

For Aboriginal people, connection with Country is intrinsically connected to identity through language, cultural practices and long held relationship between people and the land.

Using Aboriginal words or phrases as elements in the paving, to name key features in new developments or as dual naming for streets and public spaces is an interpretive option that recognises Aboriginal cultural heritage values. All language usage should be done in consultation with Aboriginal knowledge holders.



Figure 33: Left: St Leonards Health Organisation building, Nicole monks Middle: Darumbal Language stairs, Barry Street Yeppon, Right: Edge of Trees, Museum of Sydney Forecourt

9.3.10 Maintaining culturally significant views

Maintaining culturally significant views of the hills, ridges and waterways near the site allow visitors and users to get a holistic sense of the landscape and its cultural significance. High points allow for sightlines across the landscape and walkways can give access to viewpoints or rest points to allow visitors and users a chance to immerse themselves on Country.



Figure 34: Views across country to trees on ridgeline at the study area (source: Artefact)

10. PRACTICES

10.1 Introduction

This section explores how key elements of Aboriginal knowledge systems can be aligned with cognitive concepts of thinking, feeling and behaving, which are fundamental in the Connecting with Country design process, and provides examples of actions that can be undertaken by project teams to reframe their design approach to be Country centred.

10.1.1 Thinking

‘Communing with Country’ describes a cultural practice used by Aboriginal people to connect with Country through their mind and spirit. The word ‘communing’ has been selected to convey a specific meaning: being in deep and intimate conversation with Country but not in a religious sense as some may understand it. Communing with Country is presented as an invitation to explore the deep connection Aboriginal people have with Country, demonstrated through various forms of cultural expression. Project teams can learn about cultural practice as a way to deepen cultural understanding, guided and mediated by Aboriginal people.

Activities

- Engage in cultural awareness training,

10.1.2 Feeling

Understanding how emotions and feelings shape our responses to experiences and knowledge is an important step towards changing our approach. Where guided by Aboriginal people, being immersed in Country can awaken our senses and feelings and inform a deeper understanding of Country.

Activities

- Walk on Country
- Participate in appropriate ceremony

10.1.3 Behaving

Being on Country refers to the experience of being connected to and living in harmony with Country. Being on Country requires an understanding and balancing of complex systems of knowledge sharing, interrelationships, protocols and behaviours.

For many Aboriginal people, being on Country is also an important part of their identity and sense of belonging. It provides a connection to their ancestors and other living entities, to their cultural heritage, and to the broader community of humans and living beings that inhabit Country. A vital part of being on Country is through knowledge-sharing practices to support the health and wellbeing of Country. Knowledge is contained and shared within the cultural expression of many Aboriginal peoples.

Activities

- Ensure Aboriginal people retain authorship and control of their cultural knowledge and intellectual property, and how it is shared with others.
- Invite Aboriginal people to co-design and co-manage projects rather than just being asked to provide their cultural knowledge, stories and insights to help develop projects.
- Respect Elders and family
- Listen and observe closely, and be modest
- Ensure the design process is collaborative and inclusive.

11. OUTCOMES FOR COUNTRY

11.1 Introduction

The outcomes of a Country-centred approach to planning new developments are presented in this section as practical indicators of success.

11.1.1 Healthy Country

Healthy Country describes healthy, interconnected natural ecosystems, supported by regenerative practices based on Aboriginal knowledge.

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
Healthy Ecology	High biodiversity includes a wide variety of plant and animal species, including those that are rare or endangered	Landscape plans should be developed which incorporate native flora which encourage the regeneration of endangered species
	Porous developments allows rainwater to soak the ground as well as flow freely across the land into original waterways	Conduct a Hydrology study and implement designs which seek to manage water through the development and provide access to waterways in open space areas
	Ecological systems are resilient to impacts from drought, floods and fires, as well as human-induced disturbances such as habitat destruction and pollution	Implement native planting schemes that are resilient to or thrive in the environmental conditions, based on advice from Aboriginal community members
The physical form of Country remains recognisable and restored where possible	Interference with natural water systems is minimal	Ensure designs protect the natural flow of the surrounding creeks and waterways, ascertained through a hydrology study

11.1.2 Healthy Community

Built environment projects can provide opportunities for employment and capacity building within the Aboriginal community, and support Aboriginal communities' connection to their cultural identity, which supports positive health and wellbeing.

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
Strong cultural identity, connected to place and community	Aboriginal community sees their cultural heritage appropriately reflected in the design of places where they live and work	- Identify appropriate areas for the scattering of ashes - Consider ways to overcome barriers to local Aboriginal families using the cemetery to bury their dead - Plant native species that contribute resources for smoking ceremonies

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
		Consider development of a Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy
Cultural safety	Aboriginal people feel safe, respected, and supported in how they express their cultural identity	- Identify appropriate areas for the scattering of ashes - Ensure consultation is ongoing
Relief for Aboriginal communities who are fatigued by the workload imposed on them by project teams seeking their advice on Country	A strategic plan or register is established to identify technical and cultural skills of Aboriginal community Community is involved early in the decision-making about which projects they are best placed to work on	- Employ Aboriginal specialists when required e.g. see Supply Nation - Continue to consult with Aboriginal stakeholders through the project
Training	Financial supports including scholarships encourage community to pursue a career in built environment professions	Identify opportunities for scholarships
Employment opportunities	Jobs are created that allow people to stay connected to community and Country,	Identify ways to support Aboriginal communities through traineeships and employment. See list of some Aboriginal business in section 16 and identify businesses through Supply Nation
	Employment opportunities are provided throughout all stages of project life cycles	
	Aboriginal businesses are supported in the project procurement strategy	

11.1.3 Protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage

It is critical that Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected in the built environment, both through the design and development of projects, and by acknowledging and respecting the rights of Aboriginal people and community over their cultural intellectual property.

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
Aboriginal cultural advisers guiding project teams and clients to better connect with Aboriginal community	Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected and celebrated within planning and design outcomes.	Follow the recommendations in <i>Douglas Park Memorial Park ACHAR</i> (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024).
Project teams and processes for project delivery respect ICIP	Aboriginal community endorses the project outcomes and behaviour of the project team.	The ICIP guidelines are outlined in section 3.8

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
Aboriginal language placenames are used	Aboriginal placenames are used for parks and streets. Dual naming, or returning the original name, is used for natural features	Consider usage of Dharawal language in the design
Access to Country is provided	Access to Country enables community to practice ceremony and undertake obligations to care for Country.	- Consider the use of spaces for Aboriginal ceremony in the project's design - Consult further with Funeral Directors experienced in arranging funerals for the Aboriginal community - Consult further with Aboriginal organisations that do smoking ceremonies, music and dance to gain practical guidance in developing facilities for funerals for the Aboriginal community

11.1.4 Cultural competency

Implementing the *GANSW Connecting with Country Framework (2023)* through built environment projects provides educational opportunities for project teams, clients, and the public, to develop a deeper cultural awareness and respect for Aboriginal people and culture.

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
Cultural competency ongoing cultural awareness training develops skills and competency in delivering Country centred design projects	Workplace culture supports training, immersion and learning for built environment professionals, including individuals, project teams and across agencies.	Continue to ensure project team members carry out cultural awareness training
	Cultural awareness training is embedded into continuing professional development.	
	Requirements (e.g. NSCA) Proof of cultural awareness training is required in procurement contracts	

11.1.5 Better Places

Adopting a Country-centred approach creates better places, informs sustainable designs, integrates with the broader landscape to form place-based design responses, and promotes strong community engagement to create welcoming and accessible places.

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations
Planning and design projects create places that are connected with Country	Project sites are connected to broader landscapes beyond property or project boundaries	- Consider connections to: - Views of the surrounding hills and ridges - The Nepean River - The sites proximity to Appin and discussions about the wider landscape of early colonial-era conflict - Continue to consult over usage of Dharawal language in any placemaking - Heritage interpretation has to be carried out with sensitivity and consultation given the tragic history of this area
	Where possible, locally sourced, sustainable building materials are used; they have a relationship with and belong to the Country they come from.	
	First placenames guide design and planning outcomes: placemaking, dual naming and wayfinding. The memory of significant cultural, historic and natural events can be read and traced within Country's landscape	
Planning and design outcomes support Living cultural practices	Projects support ongoing opportunities for on-Country tours, ceremony, and sourcing Indigenous food and materials.	Look for ways to support Aboriginal businesses
Original landscapes are repaired or restored	Landscapes are regenerated.	Reinstate the views (where possible) of the hills and ridges visible from the site

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 Conclusion and recommendations

This Connecting with Country report for Douglas Park Memorial Park has been prepared to align with the principles and guidelines of the *GANSW Connecting with Country Framework (2023)* and associated best practice documents. It has been prepared in consultation with key Aboriginal stakeholders from the area and provides a vision and design principles to embed Country into the future development of the site.

It is recommended that the project team consider key elements from this Connecting with Country report within the future planning for the site including:

- considering the Design Principles within the design stages for the current Planning Proposal and future development of the site – see section 9.
- actioning appropriate recommendations from the Outcomes for Country – see section 1.
- facilitating ongoing consultation with the Aboriginal stakeholders during subsequent key development stages.
- considering the integration of meaningful interpretation/artwork/landscape elements within the design development stages of this project, through the development of a Heritage Interpretation Strategy or Public Art Strategy that requires consultation with key stakeholders.
- arranging Cultural Awareness Training for current and future project team members.
- updating Aboriginal stakeholders on the progress of the future development of the site.

Artefact would like to thank all stakeholders for their generosity in sharing their expertise and cultural knowledge during this project.



Figure 35: Douglas Park site, 24 October 2024 (source: Artefact)

13. ACTIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

13.1 Introduction

This section discusses actions and mitigation measures which can be undertaken throughout the lifecycle of a project to facilitate the shift from Human-centric to Country-Centric development. It is presented under the four categories: Form (Starting with Country), Design (Imagining with Country), Deliver (Shaping Country) and Maintain (Caring for Country).

The preparation of this Connecting with Country report is fundamental to shifting to the Country-Centric design approach, as it identifies Aboriginal cultural values and provides practical means of ensuring these values are reflected in the development.

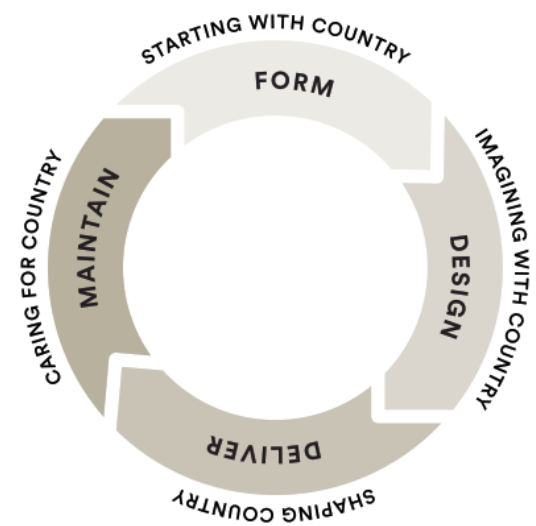


Figure 36: Project lifecycle from an Aboriginal perspective (GANSW Connecting with Country)

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
Form – Starting with Country	Research and prepare	Locate previous Aboriginal cultural heritage and technical studies relevant to the project.	Outcomes - See previous consultation and reports in section 7.3. Recommendations - All project team members should review this <i>Connecting with Country</i> report	Completed
		Considering undertaking cultural awareness training, including identifying the Aboriginal stakeholders you	Outcomes - Project team members from Travers Bushfire & Ecology and Artefact attended a site survey and discussion of local heritage values with site officers from Tharawal LALC - Project team members from Artefact attended a site survey with Aunty Glenda Chalker, Cubbitch Barta Native Title Corporation and Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd. on 24 October 2024 - Arcadia sponsored the 3Bridges NAIDOC Week Family Festival, which featured cultural activities, music, food, art, and sports to celebrate NAIDOC Week.	Completed

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
		will be working with	Recommendations Cultural awareness training should be undertaken by all future project team members	Ongoing
	Allocate time and resources	Allocate sufficient time and resources for community to participate, ensuring there is flexibility with timing and location of meeting	Outcomes Artefact has organised consultation with key stakeholders at a suitable time and location for attendees	Completed
			Recommendations Project teams should ensure that project timelines and budgets account for knowledge sharing workshops that are flexible	Ongoing
	Collaborate	Follow established community engagement protocols	Outcomes - This process has engaged with stakeholders who were identified through the ACHAR process and through self-identification as people with a connection to Country. - Protocols were discussed with Dharawal Elder Aunty Glenda Chalker – see section 7.4.3 - ICIP and other protocols were discussed at the site surveys	Completed
			Recommendations The ICIP guidelines outlined in section 3.8 should be followed in future consultation – particularly in development of public art and Aboriginal heritage Interpretation.	Ongoing
	Share knowledge	Discuss with all involved how historic events and cultural narratives will be supported	Outcomes Through consultation and historical research this CwC has identified key historical and cultural narratives. Example of how these narratives can be interpreted are described in section 9.3.	Completed
			Recommendations The preparation of a Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy would assist in identifying and conveying key cultural events and historic narratives	Ongoing
		Listen to community concerns about building development and	Outcomes - Concerns, mitigations and opportunities were discussed at the site surveys and online meetings - The project team reviewed and responded to the discussion feedback outlined in section 7.4.2 and the Douglas Park Memorial Park ACHAR (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024).	Completed

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
		how it will affect Country		
	Respect ICIP	Establish ICIP protocols that will ensure knowledge and other intellectual property (e.g. Artwork) is protected and appropriately credited	Outcome The ICIP guidelines are outlined in section 3.8	Completed
			Recommendations - The ICIP guidelines outlined in section 1.4 should be followed in future consultation – particularly in development Aboriginal heritage interpretation and. public art. - Renumerate key stakeholders for the sharing of cultural knowledge	Ongoing
		Keep confidential records of all engagement sessions. Report back to community on how ICIP is being used and seek permission before sharing information	Outcomes - ICIP and other protocols were discussed at the start of the site survey on 2 July 2024 and during the walk. Sensitive information is noted and recommendations to redact this information have been included in this report. - Redact key information when reports are made publicly available. - This report will be shared with stakeholders to check they approve of their knowledges being shared	Completed
	Create Employment Opportunities	Consider engaging an Aboriginal cultural advisor	Outcomes - Stakeholders were identified and paid for their knowledges - Collate a list of Aboriginal owned business and services in the area who can contribute to this project at all stages	Completed
Design – Imagining with Country	Design basics	Use first place names	Outcomes Liaise with Dharawal language holders if considering using Dharawal language on site	To be resolved prior to Construction or Occupancy
			Recommendations: - Start incorporating Aboriginal place names into reports - Incorporate place names into design concepts	Ongoing

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
			Use Dharawal language in wayfinding and interpretive signage	
		Connect to broader landscape settings	Outcomes - Landscape features noted in this report include: - Views of the surrounding hills and ridges - The Nepean River - The sites proximity to Appin and discussions about the wider landscape of early colonial-era conflict	Completed
			Recommendations Consult with Aboriginal knowledge holders when conducting and developing environmental management recommendations to encourage the maintenance of this knowledge and improve the health of ecosystems	Ongoing
		Protect Aboriginal cultural heritage	Outcomes - The production of this report is a key step in identifying Aboriginal cultural values, and provides information for future developments about means of celebrating and protecting Aboriginal heritage - An ACHAR for the project has been produced <i>Douglas Park Memorial Park ACHAR</i> (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024).	Completed
		Acknowledge shared history	Outcomes Histories and cultural heritage values have been outlined in this report – see sections 6 and 7	Completed
	Design opportunities	Learning from traditional Aboriginal architecture	Outcomes: Examples of good practice in incorporating Aboriginal design into development are given in section 9	Completed
			Recommendations Further consultation needs to be organized to ensure the Aboriginal community approves of design concepts	Ongoing
		Supporting living systems: Earth, Water and sky	Outcomes - Consider recommendations by stakeholders included in section 7 with respect to landscaping, places of healing, access to the sky, and access to water and soil. - The project will follow the recommendations in the Ground Water and Geotech assessments - The project will comply with EPA regulations	Completed
			Recommendations Environmental assessment recommendations and design concepts should be prepared in light of knowledge shared by community that promote healthy Country	To be resolved prior to Construction or Occupancy

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
		Reawakening memory	Outcomes Histories and cultural heritage values have been outlined in this report – see sections 6 and 7,	Completed
Delivery – Shaping Country	Construct with Country	Consider how the building of the place will become part of Country once completed When significant items are discovered during subsoil investigations, collaborate with local Aboriginal community to determine culturally appropriate handling, repatriation and reburial of any ancestral remains or artefacts	Recommendations Follow the recommendations in <i>Douglas Park Memorial Park ACHAR</i> (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024).	To be resolved prior to Construction or Occupancy
		Undertake a skills audit of the community before construction	Recommendations Provide training and employment opportunities for community	Ongoing
	Celebrate	Plan for ceremony. Look for opportunities to involve the	Recommendations - Commission a Welcome to Country ceremony at important milestone events - Plant native plant species that provide resources for ceremony, e.g. smoking ceremonies	To be resolved prior to Construction or Occupancy

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
		community throughout the development process, such as -Invitations to perform a Welcome to Country ceremony at important milestone events, noting that a Welcome to Country needs to be done by Traditional Custodians -Invitations to attend official openings		
Maintain – Caring for Country	Provide access to Country	Support the return of community to Country by providing access to sites where projects are being developed and delivered	Recommendations • Ensure the design concept includes a space where community can gather	To be resolved prior to Construction or Occupancy
	Monitor and evaluate	Maintain ongoing relationships with community	Recommendations: • Continue to liaise with the Tharawal LALC over recommendations in <i>Douglas Park Memorial Park ACHAR</i> (Travers Bushfire & Ecology, 2024).	To be resolved prior to Construction or Occupancy

Project Stage	Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timing
		Continue to develop and strengthen cultural awareness	Recommendations: Develop cultural awareness which can be implemented throughout the development to the non-Aboriginal community	Ongoing

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15. APPENDIX A: CONSULTATION LOG

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic
Aunty Gwenda Jarrett and Aunty Jodie Stewart	21 June 2024	Artefact	Email	Sharing previous knowledges and ICIP
Zion Engagement	26 June 2024	Artefact	Email	Sharing previous knowledges and ICIP
Site officers, Tharawal LALC	2 July 2024	Travers Bushfire & Ecology and Artefact	Site survey	Site survey
Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative	30 July 2024	Artefact	Email	Permission to license icons and artwork
Wollondilly Shire Council	1 August 2024	Artefact	Email	Protocols for connecting with the Indigenous Culture & Heritage Advisory Group
Aunty Glenda Chalker	12 August 2024	Artefact	Email	Contacted about project and walk on Country
	5 September	Project team	Online	Online meeting
	9 October 2024	Artefact	Email	Sent ACHAR
	24 October 2024	Project team	On site	Discussed the plans for the site, concerns and recommendations
	1 November 2024	Artefact	Email	Sent meeting notes for review
	18 March 2025	Artefact	Email	Sent draft report for review
	21 March 2025	Artefact	Post	Sent printed draft copy
Rebecca Chalker, Dharawal Environment & Heritage Pty Ltd.	1 October 2024	Artefact	Email	Contacted about field survey
	2 October 2024	Artefact	Email	Sent background docs
	9 October 2024	Artefact	Email	Sent ACHAR
	24 October 2024	Project team	On site	Heritage field survey

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic
	18 March 2025	Artefact	Email	Sent draft report for review
Danièle Hromek, SDRP	20 November 2024	Project team	SDRP meeting	Feedback on CwC – feedback included in report
Into the dreaming, SBR and Aboriginal Funerals	21 November 2024	Artefact	Email and online forms	Requested info about Aboriginal funerals
Artefact's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officers and their families	22 November to 27 November	Artefact	Phone calls	Aboriginal funerals
Neane Carter, Teri Janke Lawyers	6/3/25	Artefact	Online	Discussion about ICIP protection for Aboriginal cultural knowledges on the project. Reported updated.

16. APPENDIX B: SELECTION OF LOCAL ABORIGINAL BUSINESSES

A list of examples of Aboriginal businesses operating in and around the Sydney area. For more please see Supply Nation: <https://supplynation.org.au/>

Category	Company	Contact	Website / contact details
Employee assistance programs	Tribal Warrior Talent	Marie Hiles	http://www.tribalwarrior.org
Cultural Education / cruises	Tribal Warrior		https://www.tribalwarrior.org
Bush regeneration	Wildflower, Gardens for Good	Roman Deguchi	http://www.wildflower.org.au
Architecture / interior design / Art	BlackandWhite Creative Pty Ltd and mili mili	Nicole Monks	https://nicolemonks.com/
Graphic Designers	Mumbulla	Charmaine Mumbulla	mumbullacreative.com.au
Nursery, Cultural immersion and development programs	Indigigrow		https://indigigrow.com.au/
Gardening / landscaping	Jiwah	Clarence Slockee	https://www.jiwah.com.au/contact
Dance	Jannawi Dance Clan		https://www.instagram.com/jannawidanceclan/
Dance	Wagana Dance	Jo Clancy	https://www.facebook.com/waganadancers/
Cultural awareness training, native nursery, caring for Country	Muru Mittigar	Wayne Cornish	https://www.murumittigar.com.au/
Artist cooperative	Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative		https://boomalli.com.au/
Cultural awareness training and graphic design	Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Services	Robert Young	www.konanggo.com

17. APPENDIX C: COMPANIES/ORGANISATIONS CARRYING OUT CULTURAL BURNING

Company	Services	Location	Website	Contact
Yarrabin Cultural Connections Pty Ltd	Aboriginal Cultural burning, Cultural burning workshops and Smoking ceremonies	Yarrabin	https://www.yarrabin.com.au/	Phone: 0401 442 232 Email: fire@yarrabin.com.au
Crown lands (NSW Government)	Cultural burn program	Various	https://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/	Phone: 1300 886 235 Email: fire@crownland.nsw.gov.au
Firesticks	Cultural burns	Various location's Via website	https://firesticks.org.au/	Via Website
Forestry Corporation	Cultural burning program working among NSW government disaster management program	Pennant Hills	https://www.forestrycorporation.com.au	Phone: 02 9872 0111 Visiting forests enquiries: 1300 655 687 General inquiries: info@fcnsw.com.au Media inquiries: media@fcnsw.com.au

18. APPENDIX D: ADVICE MEMO

DHARAWAL ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE Pty.Ltd

ABN:73673453177

24 October 2024

Alexandra Gaffikin

Senior Associate

Artefact Heritage and Environment

0414742859

Via email: alexandra.gaffikin@artefact.net.au

Dear Ms. Gaffikin,

Re: Douglas Park Cemetery Field Assessment/ Connecting to Country

Thank you for inviting Dharawal Environment and Heritage (Dharawal EH) to participate in an additional heritage field survey in conjunction to the connecting to country with Cubbitch Barta Native Title Corporation (CBNTC), and the opportunity to provide feedback in regard to the proposed development. The contents of this letter are from an archaeological heritage perspective, and do not reflect the intangible cultural values that may be relayed by CBNTC through the connecting to country consultation.

As requested by CBNTC, Dharawal EH undertook an archaeological field assessment at Lot2/DP250359 on Douglas Park Drive, Douglas Park, being the location of a proposed cemetery (the Project). During the field assessment it was noted that the Project area has been historically cleared with no more than 10 remnant eucalypt trees (iron bark, grey box, forest redgum) remaining in the Project area. Native vegetation dominated the internal spaces of the Project area, consisting of shrubs and grasses, with less than 5% visibility and exposures. There are no culturally modified trees in the Project area.

The Project area slopes northeast, towards the Nepean River, with the boundary distances extending between 380m to 1095m parallel to the Nepean River. Three water gullies were visible within the Project area. Exposures within the water gullies provided clear subsurface soil horizons up to a depth of 50cm in parts.



Landforms suggest that the water gullies were likely to contain exposed sandstone platforms, though these have been removed and utilised as a natural resource during the historic period. Evidence of this remains across the Project area. Sandstone platforms in gullies that contain regular waterflow were utilised traditionally for the purpose of tool making, food preparation and communal gatherings. Due to the removal of the sandstone, with no sandstone platforms visually remaining in the Project area, the tangible archaeological evidence associated with sandstone outcrops in the Project area is considered low.

The trail parallel to the inside boundary provided no less than 90% visibility and up to 5% exposures. It was noted that visually the soil appeared to be shallow with no distinct organic layers, of a light grey colour. Iron stone pebble inclusions dominated the surface on the trail. Erosional exposures on the trail provided a visual of the subsurface soil profile. No Artefacts were visible in areas of high visibility and exposure. Considering the landscape disturbance during the historic period, the potential for Aboriginal Objects to remain in-situ within the Project area is considered low.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact via the details below if there is anything further you would like to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Chalker BAppSc, MA Arch
Archaeologist/ Heritage Consultant
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0448480754

DHARAWAL ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Douglas Park Cemetery – Artefact Heritage

1 of 1



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