

EVERICK  
HERITAGE



Design with Country

# Castle Hill Residential Development

93-107 Cecil Avenue & 9-10 Roger Avenue, Castle Hill

A+ Design Group

Everick No.: NSW10243

MELBOURNE | BRISBANE | SYDNEY | BYRON BAY | TOOWOOMBA | CAIRNS | TOWNSVILLE

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Ver.	Date	Author	Technical Review	Authorised
1	12.11.2024	Alice Steedman	Tony Brassil	Kylie Christian

# Connecting with Country



Connecting with Country provides “Country” with leverage to influence design. The spokespeople for Country are the Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders of the Country. The process of including Connecting with Country knowledge and content is called Design with Country. It is fast becoming a vital strategic component of today’s design and development process. It can create a deeper cultural connection between the land, the development and its people. It aims to restore the balance between Indigenous, colonial and migrant histories through bold and sustainable design.

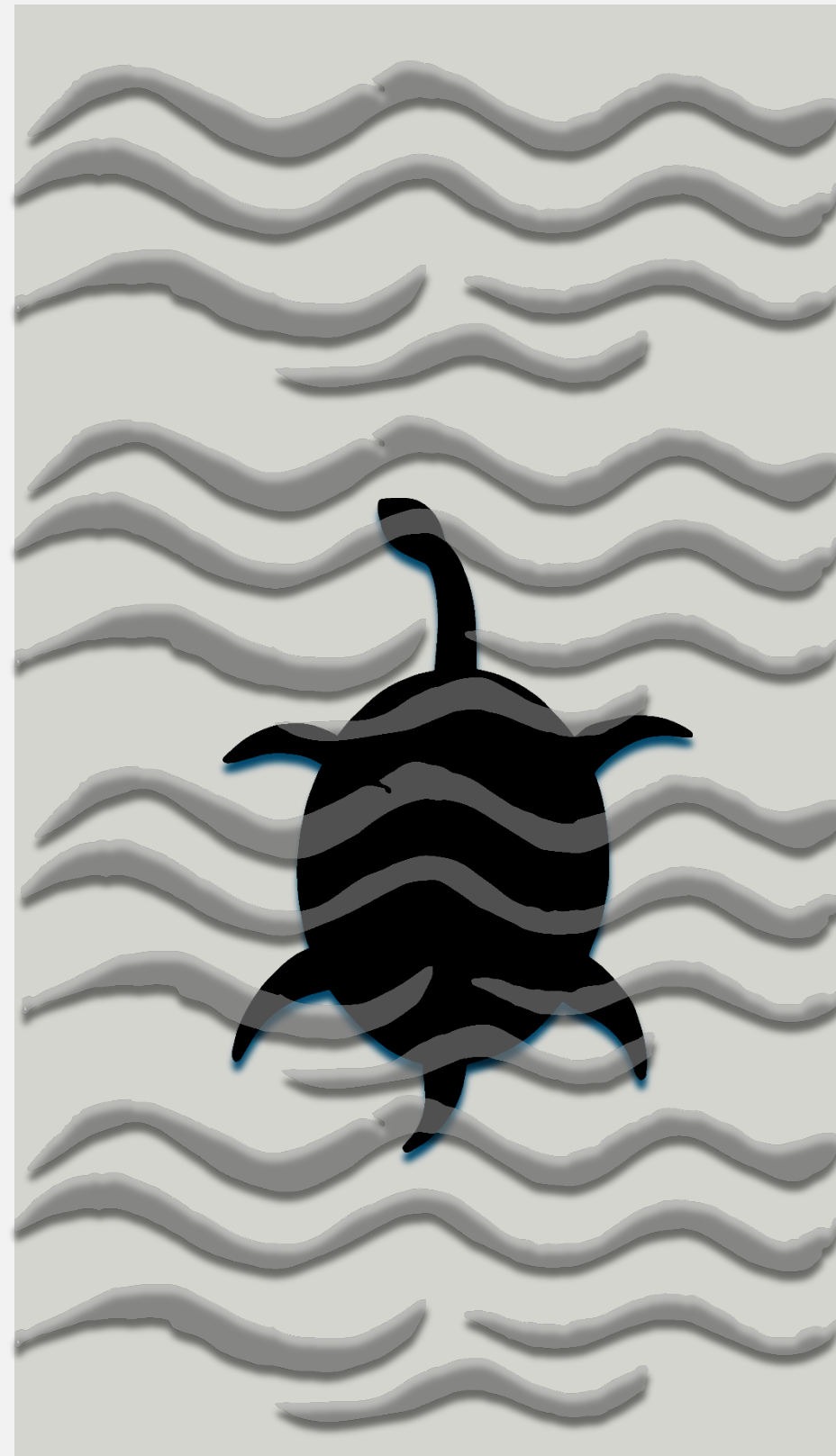
It is a collaborative process that aims to build genuine respect and trust between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal members of the design team. It is best implemented at an early stage of design, with its ability to provide a nuanced understanding of site, and consequently influencing site analysis and schematic design response. Due to its recent adoption by the NSW Government, it is often currently implemented in Concept Design or Design Development. At its most minimal, it is represented as a piece of installed artwork within a development with no other representation or response to Country.

The degree of involvement, demonstrated design response and quality of that design response is the choice of the site’s developer. It is important for all involved to have a clear understanding of the level of commitment in the project, acknowledging that Traditional Knowledge Holders are asked to share important cultural information that is fundamental to their identity.

All artwork included in this document has been provided by Leanne Redpath and should not be reproduced without express permission.

Cover image: *Dharug Land*

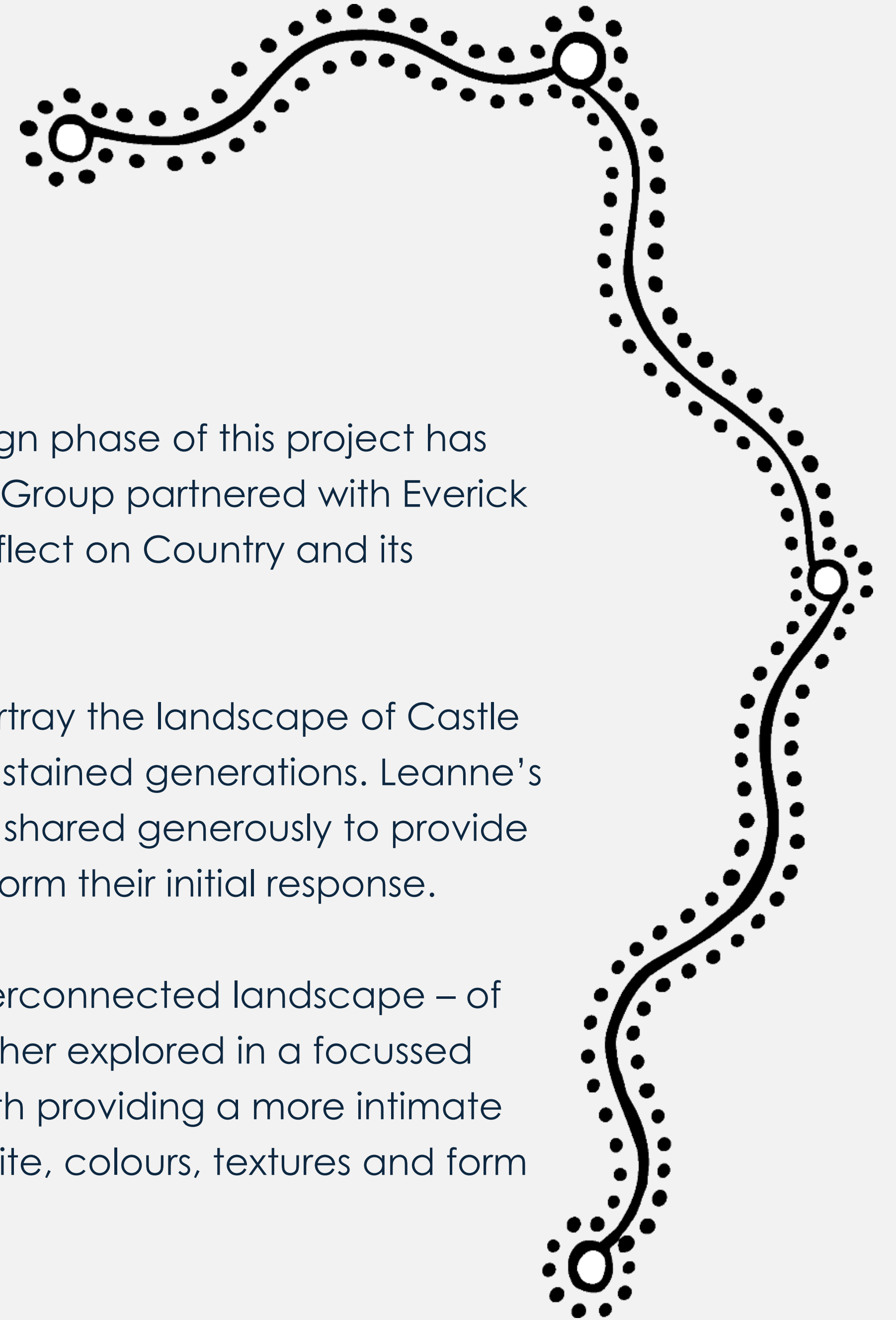
# Design with Country



The process undertaken during the Concept Design phase of this project has been in the form of a design esquisse. A+ Design Group partnered with Everick Heritage and Dharug artist Leanne Redpath to reflect on Country and its influence on site and design.

The dramatic site presented an opportunity to portray the landscape of Castle Hill, its sandstone, plants and animals that have sustained generations. Leanne's bond, responsibility and respect for Country were shared generously to provide A+ Design with firm understanding on which to inform their initial response.

The response followed the rich narrative of an interconnected landscape – of movement, growth and connection. This was further explored in a focussed response by Everick Heritage and Leanne Redpath providing a more intimate and detailed thematic palette of Country, story, site, colours, textures and form to integrate in design.



# Leanne Redpath



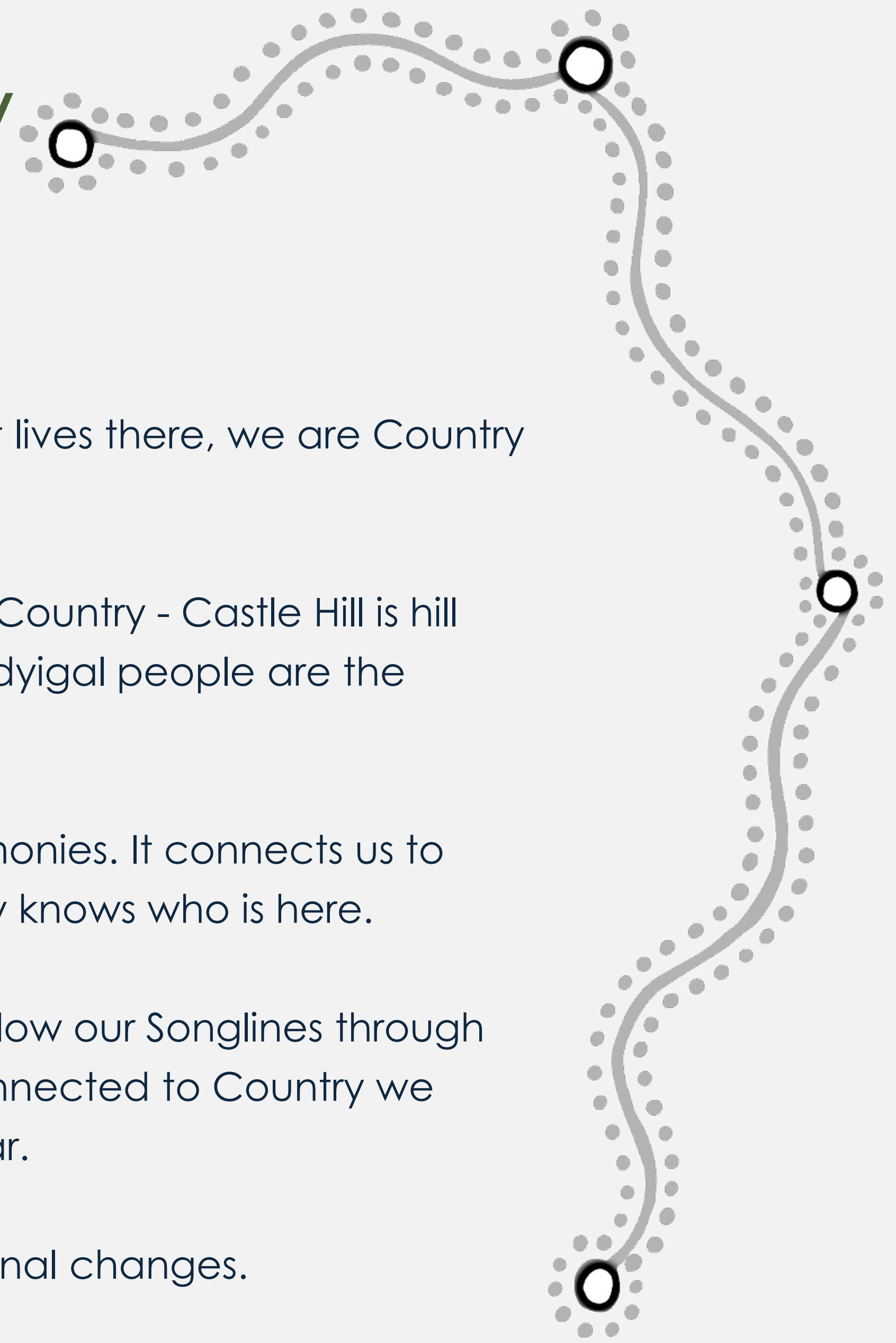
This work would not be possible without the participation and collaboration of Leanne Redpath. Her artwork is shown throughout this document.

Leanne is a Dharug woman, an artist, educator, knowledge holder and author. She is commonly known in the Aboriginal community as Mulgo, meaning Black Swan. The daughter of Aunty Edna Watson and Uncle Allan Watson, elders of the Dharug community, Leanne was born and raised in Sydney. She is now a mother and grandmother and has spent her life living, promoting and protecting Dharug culture, people and places.

Leanne started painting at a young age, taught by her mother Aunty Edna Watson and her brother Bundeluk Watson. Now an accomplished and highly sought-after artist, her paintings and artwork are renowned by many. Leanne's artwork is inspired by her family, Dharug country, the environment and life experience.



# Site analysis – defining Country



The Dharug people define Country by the family that lives there, we are Country and Country is us.

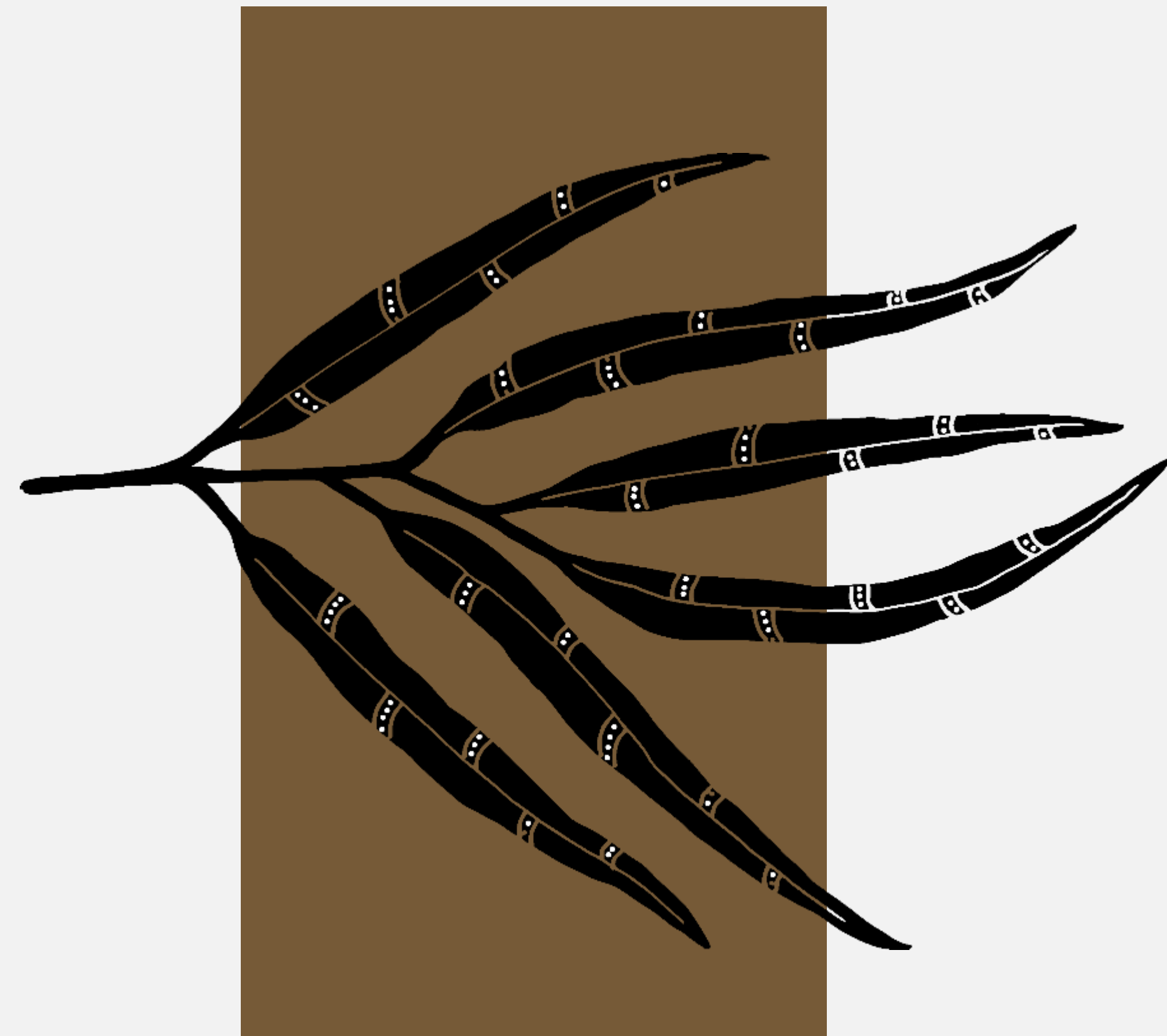
We always acknowledge the land and people from Country - Castle Hill is hill and sandstone country of the Bidygal people. The Bidygal people are the people from the white clay Country.

We use Ochre (white clay) during many of our ceremonies. It connects us to Country. We kick our feet into Country so the Country knows who is here.

When we know whose Country we are in, we can follow our Songlines through Country to find the resources we need. By being connected to Country we know what resources are available at all times of year.

The sky also guides us through country and the seasonal changes.

# Site analysis – story from Country



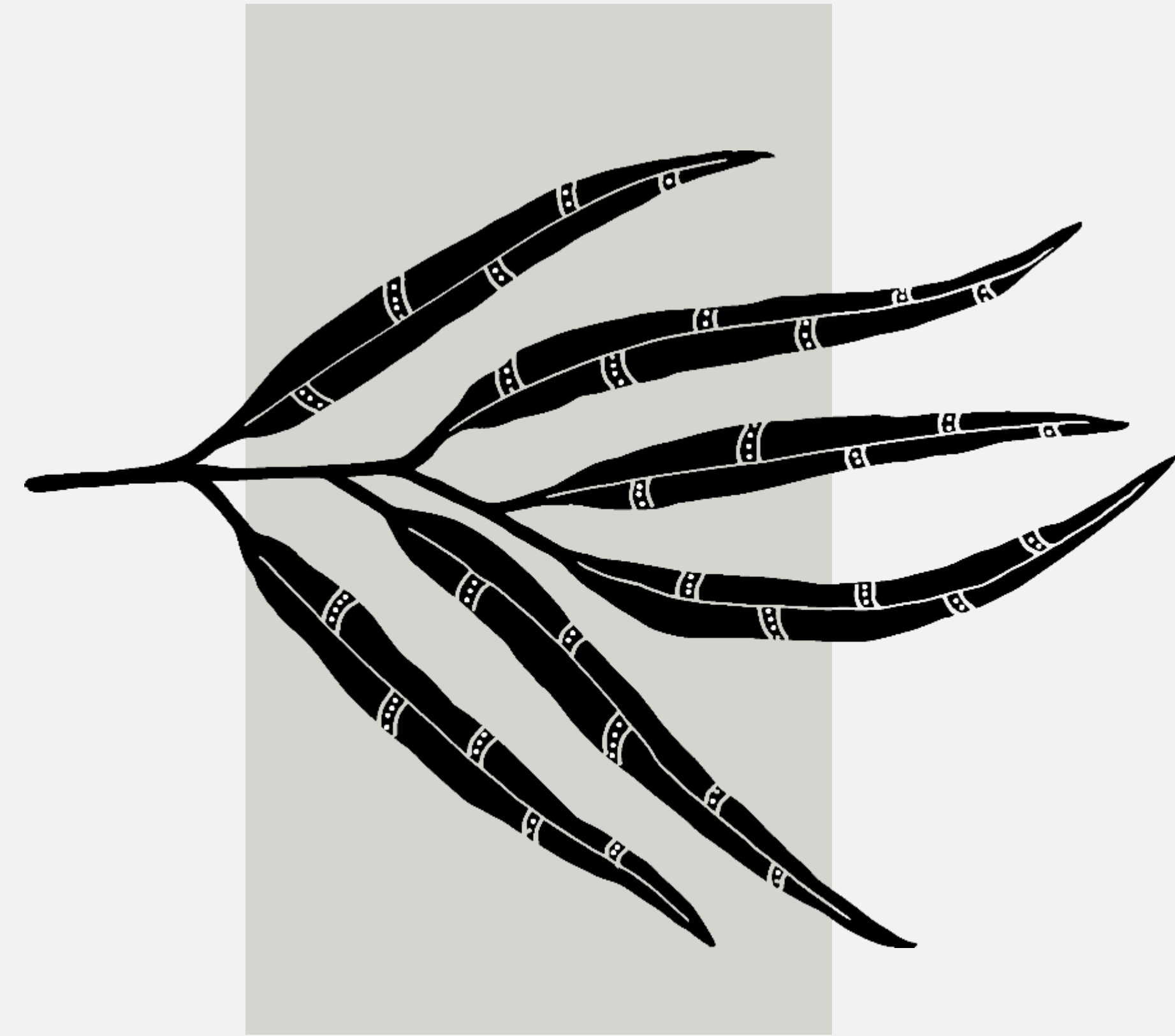
From the moment we are born, we are told stories about our Country. These stories contain all the information we need to learn about every part of our country, including the sky and constellations, water, plants, and animals.

We learn through storytelling that is passed down through generations, so we are aware of everything in our country.

Today, we tell our stories through art, language, and text. It is a way we keep our culture alive and pass it down to future generations and wider communities.

It is important to Aboriginal people's identities to have stories and language on Country.

# Site analysis – story from Country



It is important to the Dharug people that we respect *ngurra* (country) our country is our mother, and she is alive and needs to be cared for in a cultural way.

Although the development site has been impacted and modified it still holds our stories, Songlines and our kin, along the ridgeline at Castle Hill is an ancient pathway. In close proximity to this site is land that was covered in large trees, many that were used to during the building of Sydney.

It is important that we acknowledge the large trees from here, to the Dharug people these are our old people. This was very difficult during the initial removal of these trees for us to see, the creeks throughout this area also sustained our people for thousands of years with many sites still intact in this area.

Our waterways were also living and were traditionally named after our body parts.

This area is significant to our people, and it is very important to tell our stories about this place.

# Site analysis – Castle Hill

Castle Hill is sandstone country with creeks cut deep into the earth. The water falls and nurtures lower ground.

This was country of tall trees and water with plentiful food supply provided from a wide range of plants and animals.

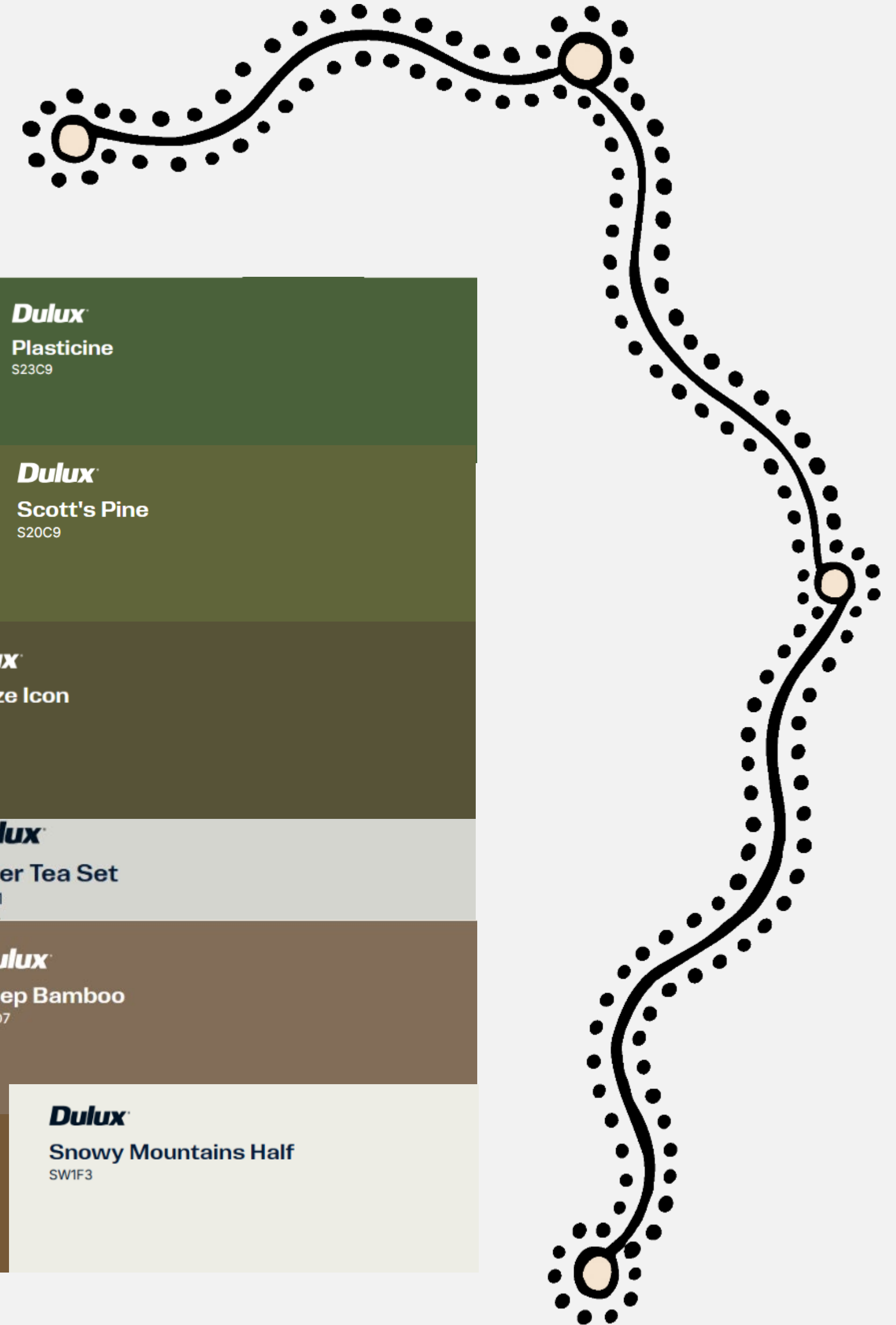
The site provides the opportunity to recreate and pay respect to Country through the response of building form and public domain.



Justin LeGrier  
PHOTOGRAPHY

# The colours of Country

The colours of Country vary with the changing light of seasons; however, the richness remains.



# Site analysis – texture from Country

Look closely at the textures of Country.

How does the light reflect and absorb on different materials and surfaces?

Where is water held in the plants and in the land?

This knowledge sustains us and allows us to rest.

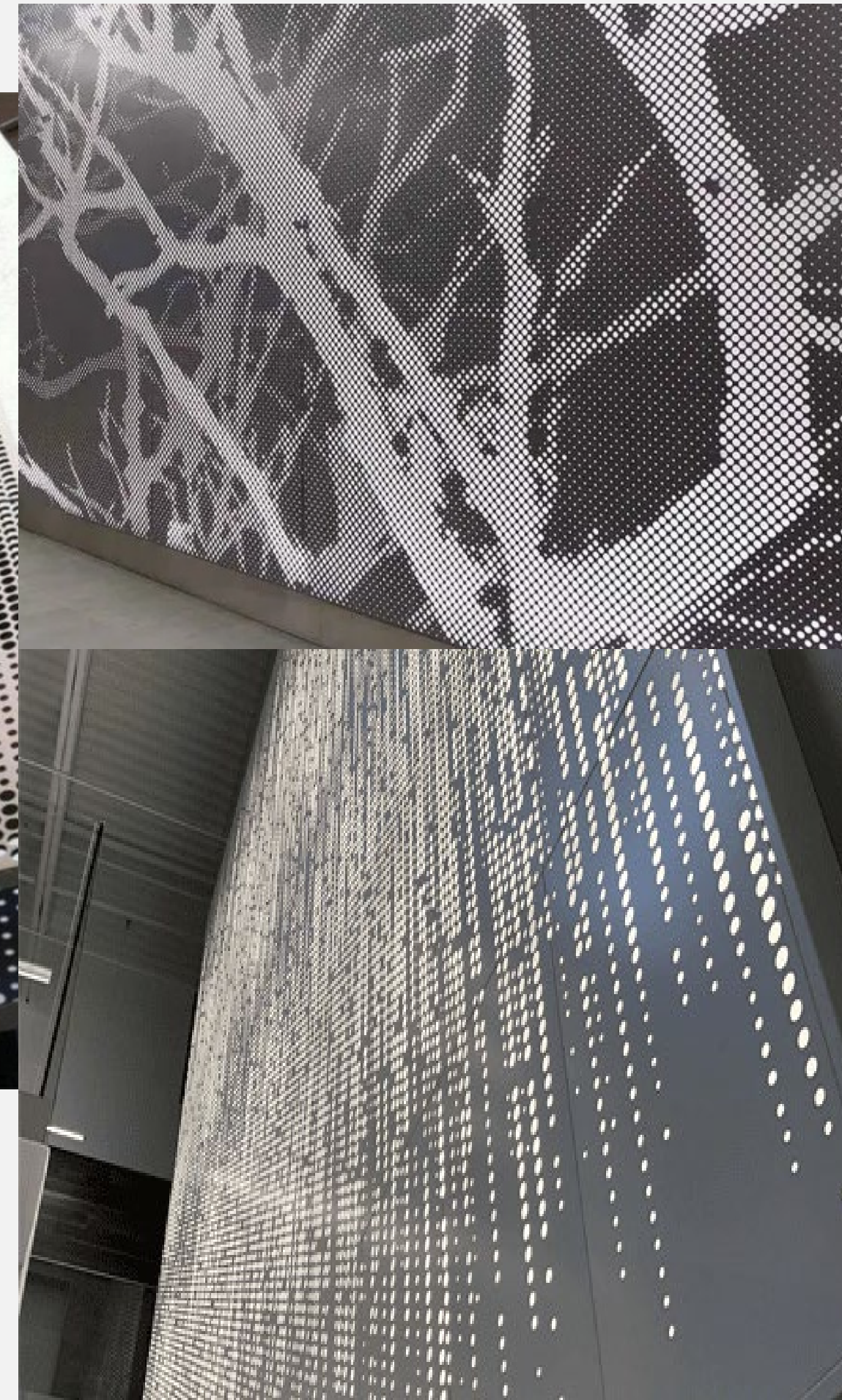


# Site analysis – texture from Country

An example of textures from Country is the many connections we have to Country.

The Kurrajong tree bark is a replica of the eels' skin and the bark is also used for fishing.

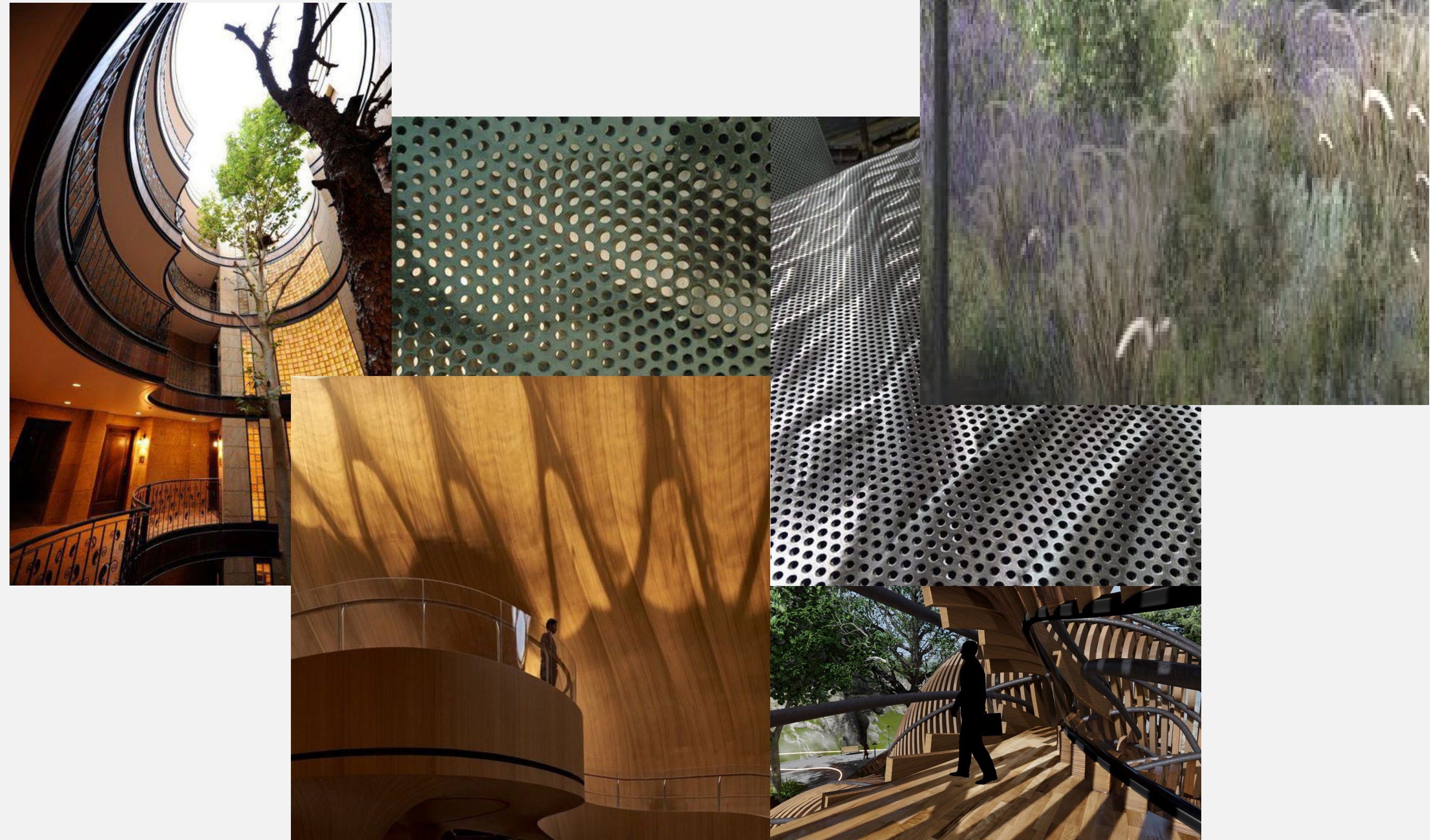
It is important that the textures we use can tell a story of Country and what Country holds for us.



# Site analysis – texture from Country

Shadow and enclosure are important. Country protects us from the elements in its own form and fabric and it provides us with materials to modify for our needs.

Treat Country with respect. Don't take too much, just what you need. Don't damage Country in the process.



# Building design

## Buildings are trees

Naming each building after a native tree species found within the Dharug region will connect the place to Country through language. It serves as both a tribute to the land and an educational tool, inviting users to connect with local flora and cultural significance. In turn, each building will incorporate tree inspired design into form, imagery, pattern and shadow. The play of shadow will also play an important part over the public domain.



Stringybark  
**Buran**



Gum tree  
Eucalyptus sp.  
**Yarra**



Sheoak  
Casuarina  
**Guman**



Waratah  
**Warada**



Banksia  
**Wandangari**

# Building design

## *Canopy and Understory*

The buildings can reflect Castle Hill Country by creating a tree canopy and an understory. The planters and hanging gardens present an opportunity to explore the enclosure and intimacy of the forest, while the towers can reach for the sky like the tallest Stringybark (Buran). The understory and smaller buildings can derive inspiration from the Warada (Waratah) and Wandangari (Banksia). Their smaller form and vibrant colours can permeate the lower levels and extend into the landscape.



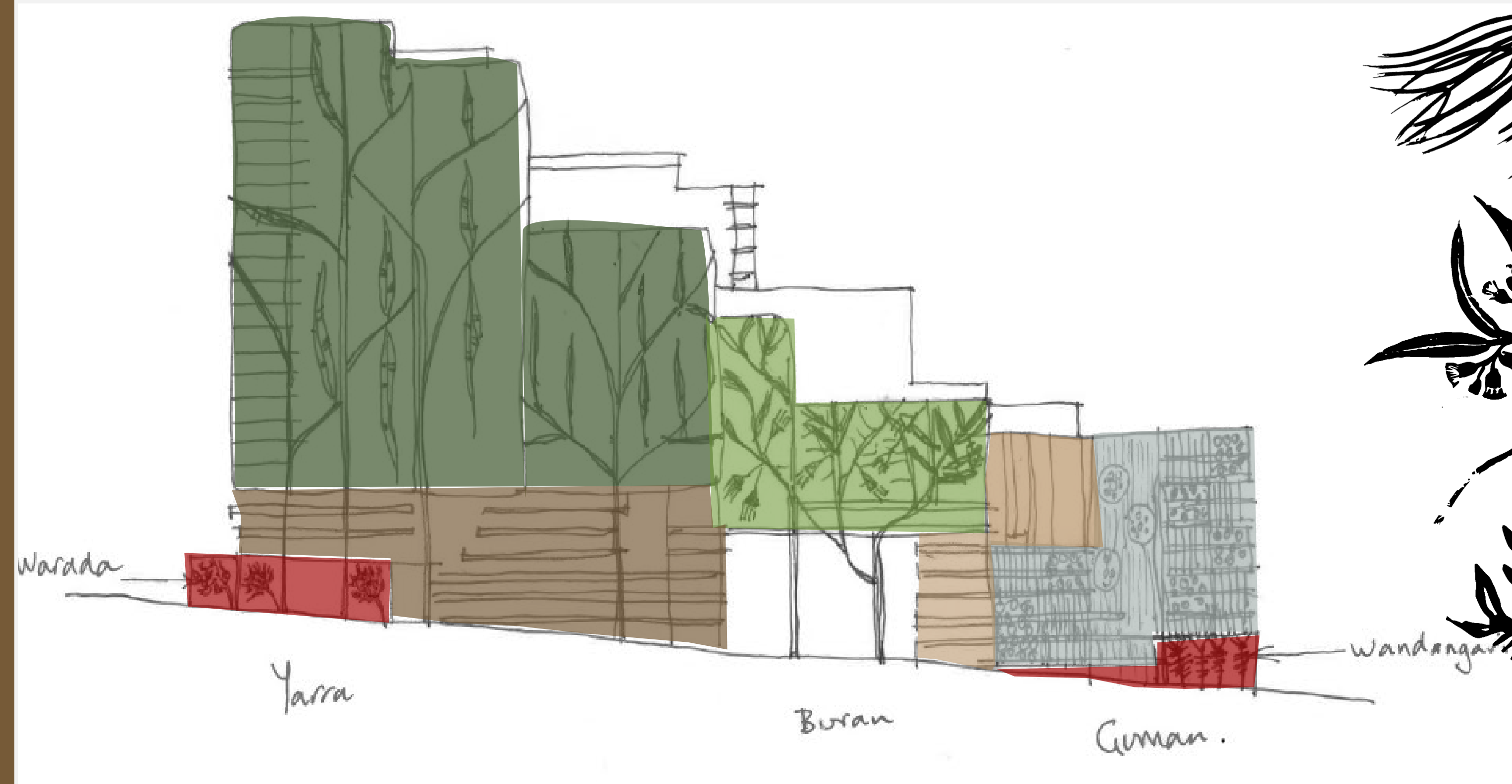
# Building design

## Place-specific language

Naming each building after a native tree species found within the Dharug region will connect the place to Country through language.

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In turn, each building can incorporate tree inspired design into form, imagery, pattern and shadow.



# Public open space and landscape

## They are us and we them

Incorporating native species in the landscape design reflects the significance of the Dharug peoples' relationship to the landscape.

Birds and animals can be selected to integrate with the selected plants and micro-ecosystems developed through the open spaces.

The names of different characters within the landscape can be incorporated in paving or signage.



Crow  
**Wugan**



Cockatoo  
**Garad**



Lorikeet  
**Warin**



Magpie  
**Wilbung**

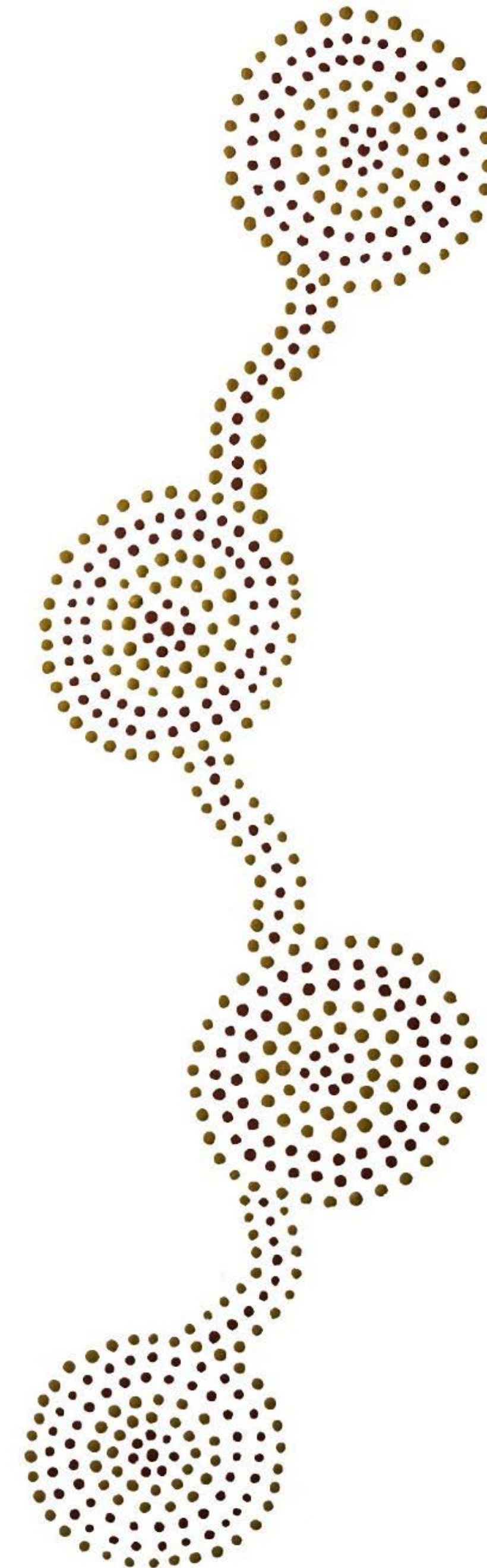
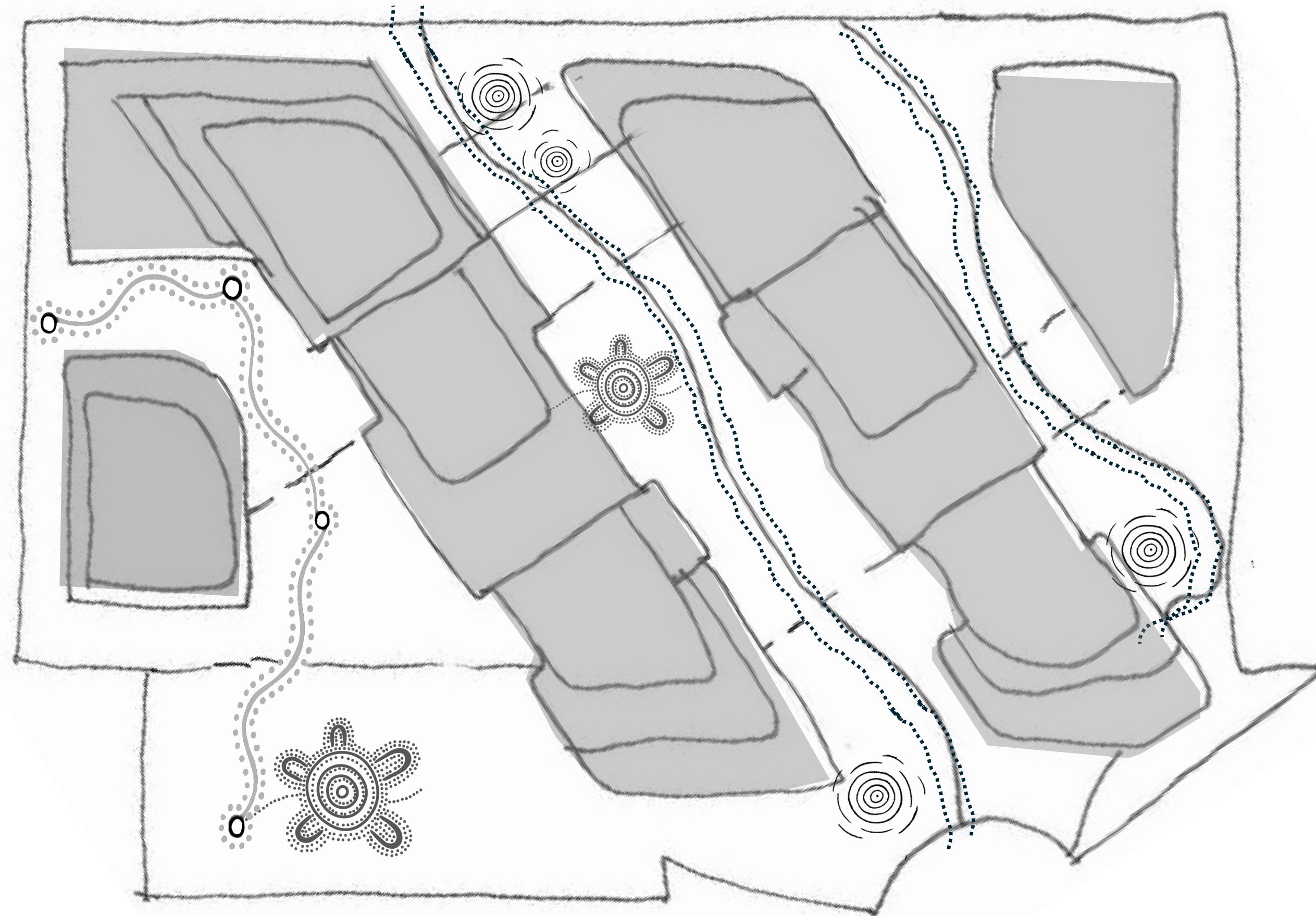
# Public open space and landscape



# Public open space and landscape

## Nourishing Country

Water and people moving over Country is an important part of Castle Hill. While creating creeks and water features may not be feasible, water and its movement can be represented in the open spaces.



# Public open space and landscape



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