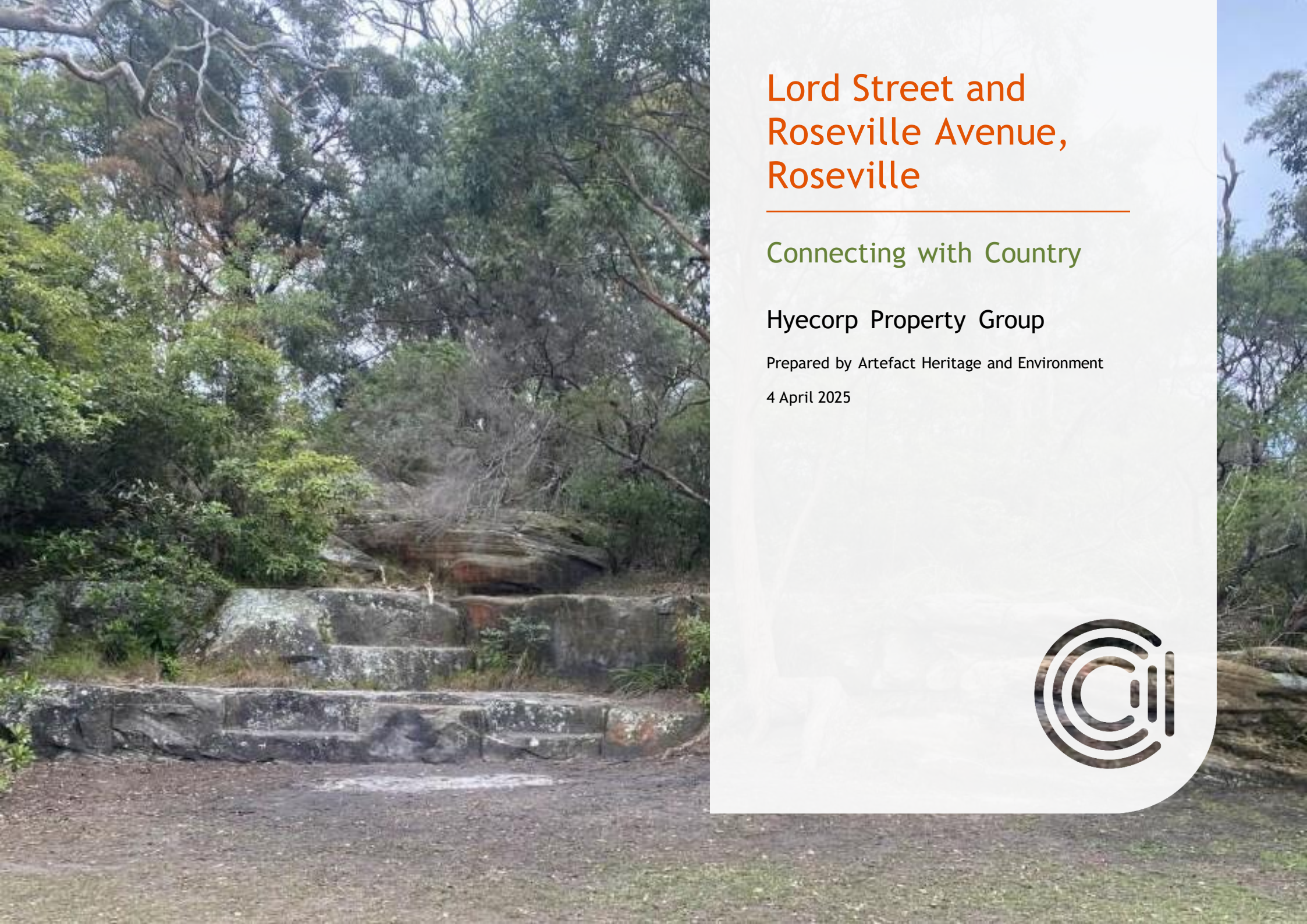

Lord Street and Roseville Avenue, Roseville

Connecting with Country

Hyecorp Property Group

Prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment

4 April 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

We acknowledge the Gadigal people as the custodians of Pirrama (Pyrmont) where our Sydney office is located, the Awabakal, Worimi and Wonnarua peoples of the Hunter Region where our Mulubinba (Newcastle) office is located, and the Wiradyuri people of the Central West where our Bathurst office is located. We pay our respects to them, their culture and their Elders past and present. We extend our respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with whom we work.

When we travel to Country, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we walk. We acknowledge the Gamaragal (Cammeraygal) people of the Lower North Shore, 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: Balls Head, Waverton 14 January 2025 (source: Artefact)

Document History

Revision	Date Issued	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved	Review type
1	12 February 2025	Carolyn MacLulich, Artefact Heritage	Carolyn MacLulich, Artefact Heritage	18 February 2025	Internal Draft
2	3 March 2025	Hyecorp Property Group	Hyecorp Property Group	11 March 2025	Draft
3	24 March 2025	Hyecorp Property Group	Hyecorp Property Group and Urbis with comments	2 April 2025	Final v1
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Name of Project	Lord Street and Roseville Avenue Chatswood
Document Version	Final

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

CONTENTS

FIGURES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Connecting with Country report has been prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment (Artefact) to accompany a detailed State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for a residential development including in-fill affordable housing at 16-24 Lord Street and 21-27 Roseville Avenue, Roseville. The site consists of 9 detached dwellings and has been consolidated into an area of approximately 0.94ha. The legal description of the site is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Legal description

Property Address	Title Description
16-24 Lord Street & 21-27 Roseville Avenue, Roseville, NSW 2069	▪ 16 Lord Street – Lot 14 Section B DP3277 ▪ 18 Lord Street – Lot 15 Section B DP3277 ▪ 20 Lord Street – Lot 16 Section B DP3277 ▪ 22 Lord Street – Lot 17 Section B DP3277 & Lot 1 DP104781 ▪ 24 Lord Street – Lot 18 DP1173328.21 Roseville Avenue – Lot 9 DP1046734 ▪ 23 Roseville Avenue – Lot 66 Section B DP3277 ▪ 25 Roseville Avenue – Lot 65 Section B DP3277 ▪ 27 Roseville Avenue – Lot 64 Section B DP3277

The report follows the guidelines in the Government Architect New South Wales, 2023. *Connecting with Country* and was informed by the cultural connections to Country shared by Aboriginal stakeholders. These cultural values and connections are used to inform actions, outcomes and design principles to embed Country into the development of the project, as well as identify Country narratives and interpretive themes for the development and provide a best-practice framework for designing with Country.

For consultation the Aboriginal Heritage Office recommended independent Aboriginal heritage consultant, David Watts, to design and deliver a program to share cultural heritage values of the area with the project team.

On 14 January 2025, a workshop on Aboriginal history with a special focus on Gamaragal Country was led by David Watts at Hyecorp's Heritage House, Victoria Avenue, Chatswood. David Watts then led a Walk on Gamaragal Country in the afternoon, following the workshop. The walk took place at an area that is now referred to as Balls Head Reserve, Waverton. The Walk on Country was attended by Artefact staff and members of the project team.

Cultural heritage values (section 6), Design Principles (section 7.2)and examples of design realisations (section 7.3) were then developed for the project, as well as broader outcomes and recommendations (sections 9 and 10).

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

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The application seeks consent for the demolition of existing buildings and structures on the site and development of 259 residential apartments with affordable housing and basement parking. Specifically, the SSDA seeks development consent for:

- Demolition of existing buildings and structures and removal of selected trees.
- Excavation & construction of a 3-level basement.
- Construction of a residential flat building up to 9-storeys in height (RL121.5m) to provide 259 apartments including affordable housing, residential amenities and services.
- Provision of car parking spaces at basement level and bicycle parking.
- Provision of hard and soft landscaping.
- Associated works for the provision of infrastructure and servicing.

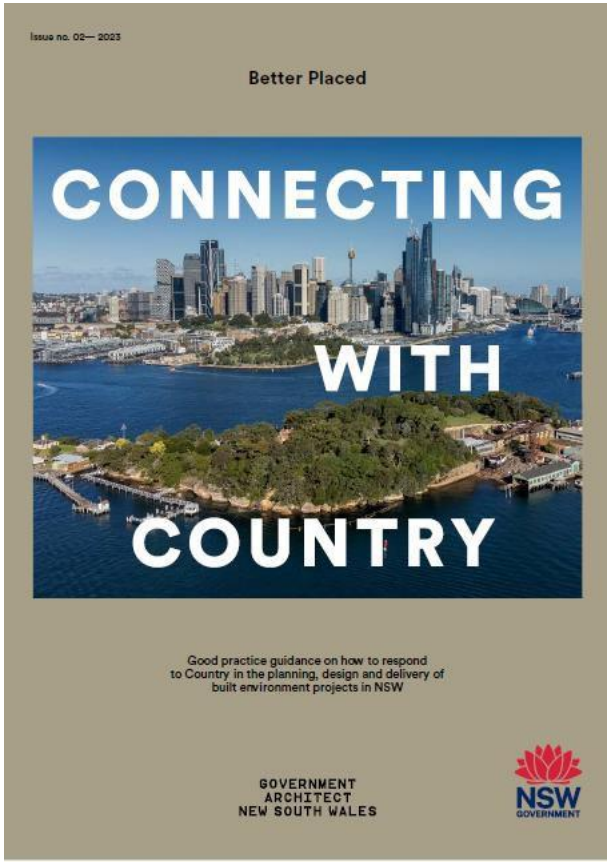
1.2 Scope of report

Artefact Heritage and Environment (Artefact) has been engaged by Hyecorp to develop a Connecting with Country report for this project, which is Informed by the cultural connections to Country shared by Aboriginal stakeholders. These cultural values and connections are used to inform actions, outcomes and design principles to embed Country into the development of the project, as well as identify Country narratives and interpretive themes for the development and provide a best-practice framework for designing with Country.

1.3 Guiding documents

The following guiding documents have been consulted during the preparation of this Connecting with Country Framework.

- Government Architect New South Wales, 2023. *Connecting with Country*.
- Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), 2013, *Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*.



1.4 The site

The site is located at 16-24 Lord Street and 21-27 Roseville Avenue, Roseville within the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area. The site has a site area of 0.94ha and is legally described as:

Table 2: Legal description

Property Address	Title Description
16-24 Lord Street & 21-27 Roseville Avenue, Roseville, NSW 2069	▪ 16 Lord Street – Lot 14 Section B DP3277 ▪ 18 Lord Street – Lot 15 Section B DP3277 ▪ 20 Lord Street – Lot 16 Section B DP3277 ▪ 22 Lord Street – Lot 17 Section B DP3277 & Lot 1 DP104781 ▪ 24 Lord Street – Lot 18 DP1173328.21 Roseville Avenue – Lot 9 DP1046734 ▪ 23 Roseville Avenue – Lot 66 Section B DP3277 ▪ 25 Roseville Avenue – Lot 65 Section B DP3277 ▪ 27 Roseville Avenue – Lot 64 Section B DP3277

The urban context surrounding the site is characterised by low-density residential development and Roseville Centre. The surrounding locality is described as:

- To the north the site is bounded by Roseville Avenue. Existing development consists of low-density residential uses, beyond which is Roseville Park and the suburb of Lindfield.
- To the east the site is bounded by Martin Lane which separates the site from low density residential development consisting of detached single and two storey dwellings beyond which is the Roseville Presbyterian Church.
- To the south the site is bounded by Lord Street. Development consists of low-density residential uses, beyond which is Roseville College, Bancroft Park and Roseville Lawn Tennis Club. Boundary Street is situated approximately 450 m to the south.
- To the west of the site are low and medium residential uses including three storey walk up flat buildings, beyond which is Roseville Local Centre (Hill Street Precinct) which accommodates a mixture of local scale commercial, retail and health care facilities as well as Roseville train station.

The site is situated within convenient walk distance of Roseville Railway Station (200m), with existing pedestrian access to the station available from Lord Street and Roseville Avenue. Regular, train services are available to North Sydney, Chatswood and Sydney CBD to the south, and Hornsby to the north with a direct connection to the Sydney Metro available at Chatswood Station. Bus services are also available on Pacific Highway providing services to Chatswood and Sydney CBDs and the wider Kur-ring gai locality.

The existing development consists of 9 detached residential dwellings. There are several large trees and vegetation located throughout the site.

1.5 Project description

The proposal is for the construction of an in-fill affordable housing residential development within 200m of Roseville train station including:

- Construction of 259 residential apartments in buildings up to 9-storeys in height.
- Provision of 30,391.5m2 GFA

- Provision of:
    - 28 no. 1-bedroom apartments
    - 117 no. 2-bedroom apartments
    - 104 no. 3-bedroom apartments
    - 10 no. 4-bedroom apartments
- Provision of 344 basement car parking spaces and bicycle parking.
- Provision of 17% affordable housing in a mix of units (5,191.8m2).
- Provision of residential amenities and services on site, including swimming pool, gym, media and games rooms and kids' club.
- Retention of existing significant trees and provision of landscape planting.
- Provision of central courtyard.

The purpose of the project is to deliver high quality market and affordable housing within convenient walking distance of Roseville Station.

Figure 1: Architectural site visualisation (source: Fender Katsalidis/Hyecorp)

Figure 2: Architectural site visualisation (source: Fender Katsalidis/Hyecorp)

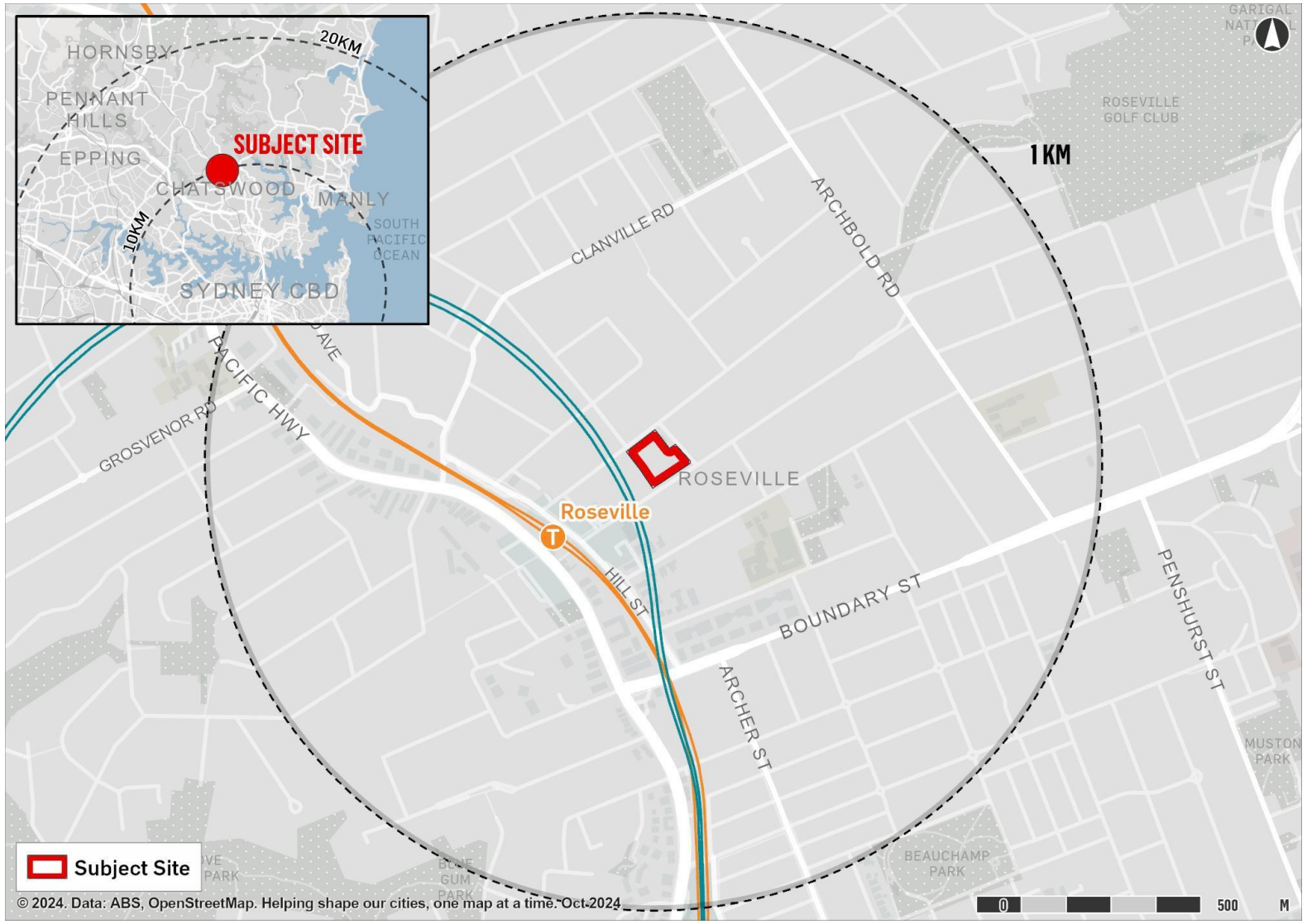


Figure 3: Local context (source: Urbis, 2025)

Figure 4: Aerial view of the site bounded by Lord Street and Roseville Avenue (source: Artefact)

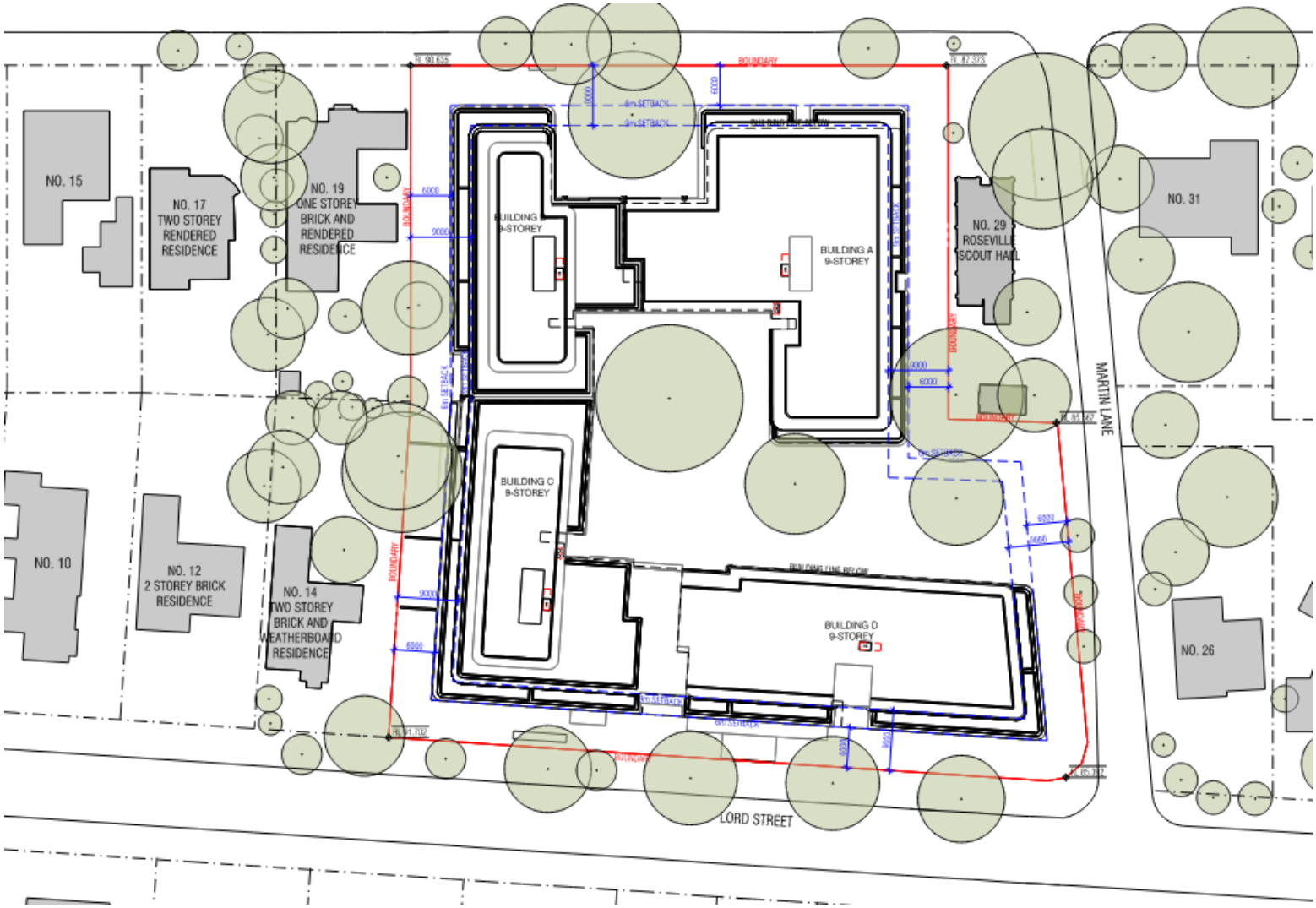


Figure 5: Site plan (source: Fender Katsalidis/Hyecorp)

1.6 Terminology

Due to the huge disruption of colonisation, the challenges of cross-cultural communication, and the translation of Aboriginal language into written form, there have been a variety of ways of referring to and recording the names of the Aboriginal peoples and clans of the Lower North Shore area. This report uses a variety of spellings interchangeably depending on the historic source. Spellings include, Gamaragal, Gameraygal, Cammereygal, Cameragal, Kameraigal, and Gamaraigal. As language is revitalised and more knowledge is shared, terminology may continue to change.

1.6.1 Cultural context

A number of key contextual issues are important to consider when developing a Connecting with Country report 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.

1.7 Cultural warning

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

1.8 Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property

Artefact has prepared this Connecting with Country report for the Hyecorp Property Group, Lord Street and Roseville Avenue, Roseville project. The 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 ICIP 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.

1.9 Authorship and acknowledgements

This report has been prepared by Rebecca Conway (Senior Heritage Consultant, Artefact), Stephen Gapps (Senior Historian, Artefact), and Hannah Matagia (Aboriginal Heritage Officer, Artefact) with input and review from Alexandra Gaffikin (Team Leader, Country and Culture, Artefact) and Carolyn MacLulich (Principal, Artefact).

Artefact has worked in collaboration with Aboriginal knowledge holders for this report and would like to thank all knowledge holders for their generosity in sharing cultural knowledge.

Figure 6: Walk on Country, Balls Head Reserve, 14 January 2025 (source: Artefact)

Figure 7: David Watts leads Walk on Country, 14 January 2025 (source: Artefact)

2. GANSW CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY

2.1 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.

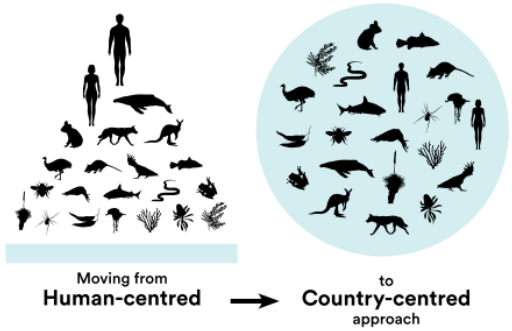


Figure 8: Human-centred or Country-centred approach (source: GANSW Connecting with Country, 2023)

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.

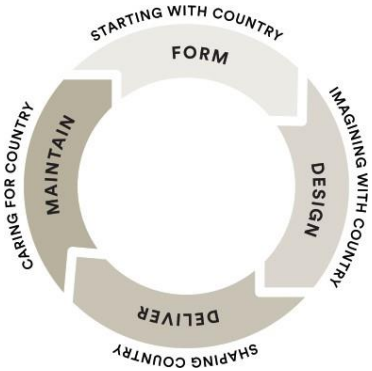


Figure 9: Project lifecycle from an Aboriginal perspective (source: GANSW Connecting with Country, 2023)

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.

2.1.1 GANSW Designing with Country discussion paper (2019)

The Government Architect NSW draft *Designing with Country* discussion paper (2019) predates the *Connecting with Country Framework* (2023) 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.

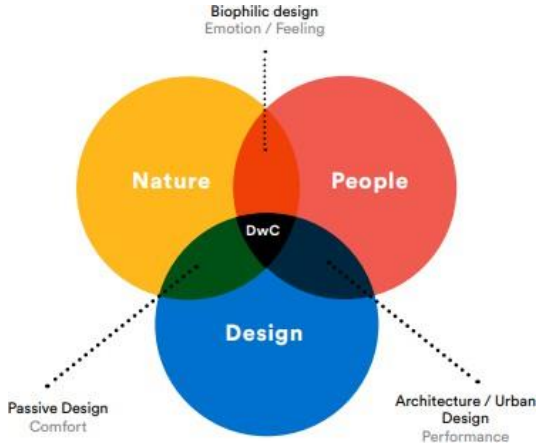


Figure 10: Elements of Designing with Country (source: GANSW Designing with Country Discussion paper. Considering Country)

[1] GANSW, 2020b.

3. CONSIDERING COUNTRY

3.1 What is Country?

> *"This bush - nature - is right here in Sydney. We can step out of Sydney as a city - and into this!"*
>
> *Aboriginal cultural heritage specialist, David Watts, Walk on Country, Nov 2024*

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.

> *"Everything and everyone is Country, woven together in collective agency that makes life happen"*
>
> *Sara Judge, First Nations Content Producer, Australian Museum*[2]

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'[3] 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.

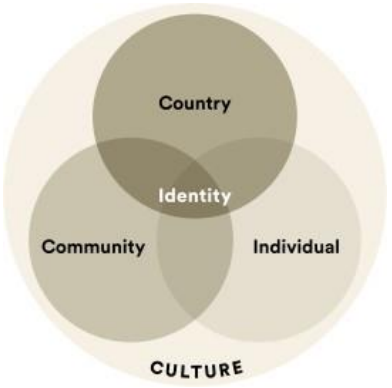


Figure 11: Interrelationships between Country, community and individuals (source: GANSW Connecting with Country, 2023)

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

[2] https://australian.museum/learn/first-nations/burra/who-is-country/
[3] GANSW 2023. Connecting with Country Framework

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.

> *"Despite everything that's happened here, it is still a special place. It's up to everyone to protect what's left, especially for the younger generation"*
>
> *Aboriginal cultural heritage specialist, David Watts, CwC Workshop, Nov 2024*

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.

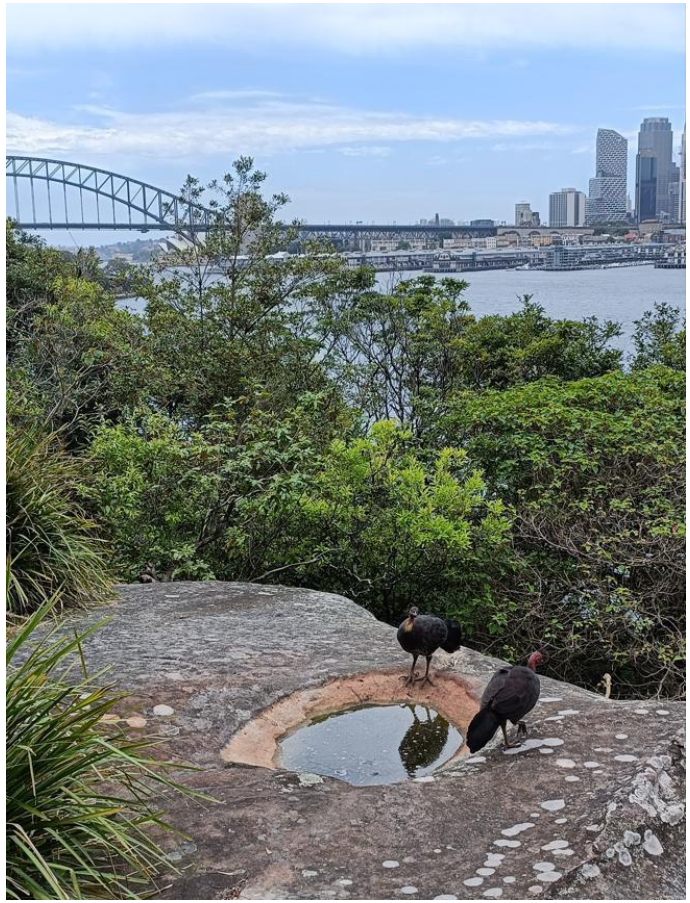


Figure 12: Balls Head Reserve, Waverton, 14 January 2024 (source: Artefact)

4. ABORIGINAL HISTORIES OF THE AREA

4.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the history and culture of the traditional owners and custodians of Country of the area around what is now known as Roseville. It includes information collated from colonial sources and should be read with this in mind.

4.2 Aboriginal histories of the area

4.2.1 Early history

Aboriginal people have lived in the Sydney area for tens of thousands of years, for 'time immemorial', caring for Country. Over the last few decades, archaeologists have found evidence of human habitation in Australia at around 60,000 years ago or more. 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.[4]

Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal people living in the Sydney region from Shaw's Creek west of the Nepean River is dated at around 14,000 years ago and numerous other sites in the area have been dated at around 15,000 years 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.[5]

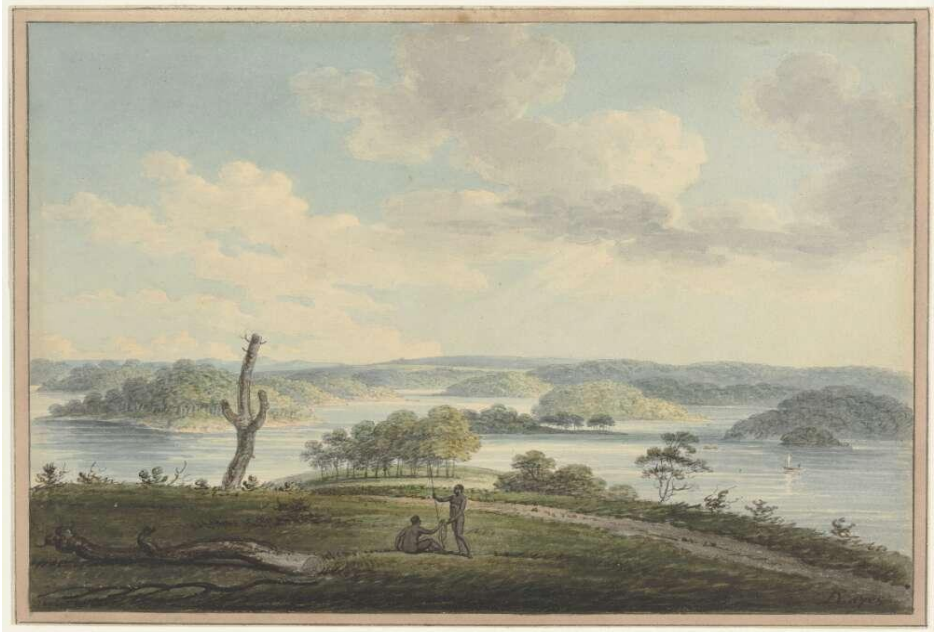


Figure 13: Parramatta River with a distant view of the western mountains, taken from Windmill Hill. E. Dayes, 1797 (source: National Library of Australia, PIC Solander Box A28 #R288)

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

[4] Belshaw, Nickel & Horton (2020), ***Histories of Indigenous Peoples and Canada***; Griffith (2018), *Deep Time Dreaming: Uncovering Ancient Australia*, p. 112; Karskens, G (2009), ***The Colony. A history of early Sydney***, p 25; Munro in Currie (2008), ***An Aboriginal history of Willoughby***, p. 4.
[5] 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; McDonald, Jo (2005), 'Heritage Conservation Strategy for Aboriginal sites', pp 4, 87-94; Attenbrow, 2012, ''Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal life in Sydney'. See Williams et al., 2012, 'A terminal Pleistocene open site on the Hawkesbury River' for comparison of site ages along Dyarubbin. Karskens, Burnett & Ross are confident that 'Aboriginal people were living on Dyarubbin/ the Nepean River as long as 50,000 years ago' (2017, 'Traces in a Lost Landscape', p. 4).

rose to fill the 'drowned river valley' of what is now Sydney Harbour until it reached present levels around 6,000 years ago[6].

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 (Gabro; mangrove worm) gal (people) at modern day Cabramatta. Clan groups moved around a 'limited and deeply known' areas. There were also forms of more sedentary agriculture and aquaculture, and villages such as those described by early colonial diarists at Kamay-Botany Bay. In 1788, Watkin Tench described how on 'the northwest arm of Botany Bay [the Cooks River] stands a village, which contains more than a dozen houses, and perhaps five times that number of people.'

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.[7]

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 the 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.

Figure 14: Watercolour illustration of a group of Aboriginal people fishing, c1790s. Phillip Gidley King (source: State Library of NSW)

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.[8]

[6] There are now at least 21 identified oral stories around Australia that describe ancient sea-level rise. See 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 Estuary, Australia*, pp 217-219.

[7] Gammage, B (2012), *The biggest estate on earth.* (Paul Irish, 2017, *Hidden in plain view*, pp 22-27).

[8] Banks, 1770 [2005], 'The Endeavour Journal'; Attenbrow, 2010, *Sydney's Aboriginal past*, 38. Collins, 1789, *An account of the English colony*, p. 557.

As one of the early colonists Lieutenant William Bradley observed in 1788:

> *'The Natives strike fish with their barbed Spears from the rocks & sometimes from the Canoe in with they stand up: in general, we observe the Canoe occupied by the Women who fish with hook & line, which I never noticed any of the Men to use or that the women use the Spear. The line appears to be made from the inside / bark of the Cabbage tree, it is laid of two strands well twisted & strong.*
>
> *Their hooks seem to be made both from the claws of Birds & the inside of a shell resembling the pearl Oyster Shell, from the latter I have seen a hook made, they rub it down on the rocks until fit for their purpose & then shape the hook in a curve with a sharp shell or stone; we found vast quantities of Oysters & other shell fish in the Harbour & Oysters of an amazing size in the uppermost Coves.'*

Inland, there were fruits, seeds, nuts and grains. Nectars, rhizomes and tubers were also harvested. Some parts of plants would have required special preparation to remove any poisons, but the seeds of all native grasses are edible. David Collins noted the difference between the inland areas and the foreshores, although did not observe the use of plants as closely as he might have:

> 'The woods, exclusive of the animals which they occasionally find in their neighbourhood, afford them but little sustenance; a few berries, the yam and fern-root, the flowers of different banksia, and at times some honey, make up the whole vegetable catalogue'

Men used wooden spears and women wooden digging sticks - two of the most important possessions of Aboriginal people in the pre-colonial past. The Melaleuca tree's paper-like bark was used as shelter, wrapping, containers and for fire lighting.

In 1791 John Hunter described how Aboriginal burning the ground on the north side of the harbour, opposite the settlement', was a practice 'constantly' done when the weather was dry. 'Firestick farming' was the practice of burning land to create new green shoots and thereby attract kangaroos for hunting, but fire was also used to control undergrowth and prevent larger bushfires.

Figure 15: Aboriginal people using fire to hunt kangaroos, Joseph Lycett, c1817 (source: Trove, National Library of Australia)

Due to the predominance of relatively soft sandstone around Sydney Harbour, hard stone of the kind used for axes and scrapers in particular, was traded from areas such as the basalt gravel beds along the Nepean River. Trading was extensive and far-reaching. Silcrete from an outcrop near present day Plumpton Ridge on the Cumberland Plain in Sydney's west and mudstone from the Hunter Valley or near Warragamba dam have been found around Sydney Harbour.

4.2.2 From Gamaragal to Garigal – Aboriginal people from the North Shore to Broken Bay

The present-day suburbs of Sydney's North Shore sit on sandstone ridgelines and spurs which have been carved by creeks and rivers as they run into Sydney Harbour, Middle Harbour and the Lane Cove River. Before the British colonists arrived and began clearing the trees, these creeks and rivers created sheltered environments for plants and animals. It was in these areas where Aboriginal people lived for thousands of years, with the often-exposed ridgelines and sandstone outcrops likely to have been travelling and hunting routes and ceremonial areas.

Along with the creeks and rivers, the coastline to the north of Sydney offered areas of abundant saltwater resources from present day Manly through the Northern Beaches up to the southern shores of Broken Bay. A variety of fish were caught, and rock oysters, cockles, mussels and clams were also consumed. Evidence of this is seen in the shell middens which can still be seen through the north shore and northern beaches.

Inland, there were fruits, seeds, nuts, grains, nectars and rhizomes and tubers which would have been important components of the staple diet for Aboriginal people. Some parts of plants would have required special preparation to remove any poisons, but the seeds of all native grasses are edible. The Melaleuca tree's paper-like bark was used as shelter, wrapping, containers and fire lighting.[9]

While the coastal foreshores, beaches and coves were prolific food sources, the forests inland were less used. David Collins noted that 'the woods, exclusive of the animals which they occasionally find in their neighbourhood, afford them but little sustenance; a few berries, the yam and fern-root, the flowers of different banksia, and at times some honey, make up the whole vegetable catalogue'.[10] Collins overstates the distinction, but there was certainly a difference between inland Country and the economies of Aboriginal groups like the Gamaragal, whose territories included foreshores.

In 1791 John Hunter described how Aboriginal burning the ground on the north side of the harbour, opposite the settlement', was a practice 'constantly' done when the weather was dry. 'Firestick farming' was the practice of burning land to create new green shoots and thereby attract kangaroos for hunting, but fire was also used to control undergrowth and prevent larger bushfires.[11]

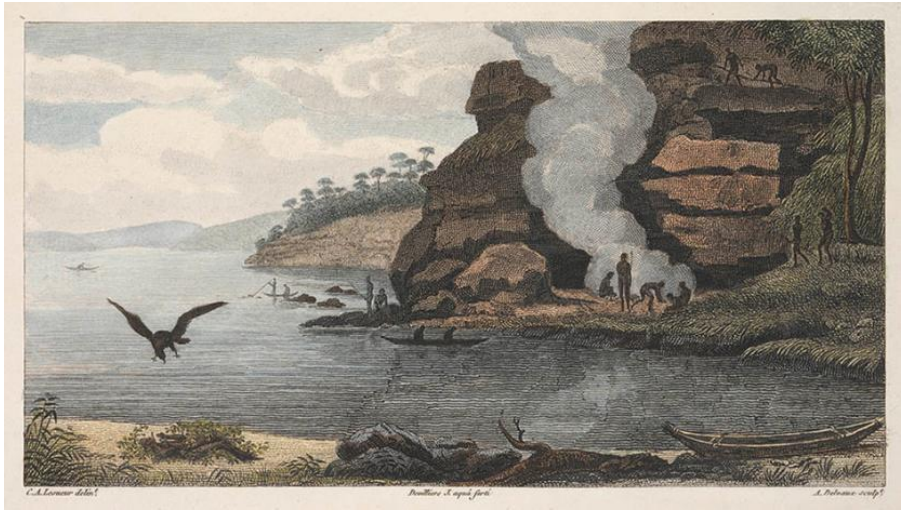


Figure 16: Charles Alexandre Lesueur From the collections of the State Library of New South Wales [a1477011 / Q82/41, 11] (from 'Voyage de découvertes aux terres australes by Francois Peron, 1824) (source: Dictionary of Sydney). The painting shows Aboriginal people fishing and cooking around a rock shelter on what is believed to be the north shore of Sydney Harbour.[12]

[9] Currie 2008: 10-15.
[10] Collins 1789
[11] Hunter 1793: 361
[12] Hoskins, 2019

Men used wooden spears and women wooden digging sticks - two of the most important possessions of Aboriginal people in the pre-colonial past. The other vitally important items for coastal women were fishing lines and fishhooks. Watkin Tench was especially impressed: 'the fishhooks are chopped with stone out a particular shell and afterwards rubbed until they become smooth… considering the quickness with which they are finished the excellence of the work, if it be inspected, is admirable'. [13]

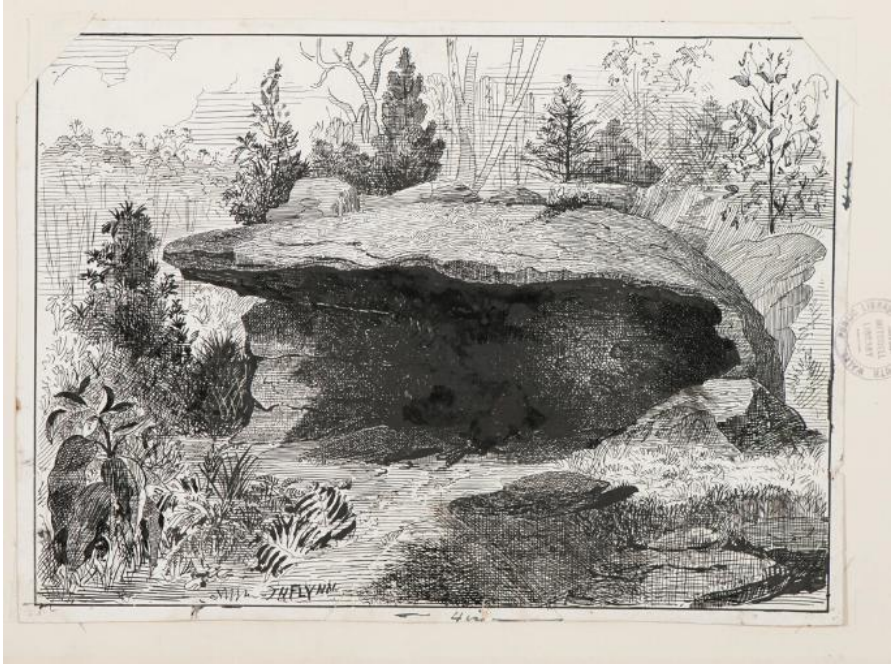


Figure 17: Aboriginal people's shelter, Balmoral Beach, Middle Harbour, J.H Flynn, 1880s (source: State Library NSW, FL1067097 / FL1067133)

Due to the predominance of relatively soft sandstone in the northern Sydney region, hard stone used for axes and scrapers in particular was traded from areas such as the basalt gravel beds along the Nepean River. Trading was extensive and far-reaching. Silcrete from an outcrop near present day Plumpton Ridge on the Cumberland Plain in Sydney's west and mudstone from the Hunter Valley or near Warragamba dam have been found in Sydney's north. Numerous grinding grooves for sharpening stone can still be found in the northern suburbs of Sydney in close proximity to water sources or waterholes.[14] In the present-day Willoughby area, the earliest archaeological evidence of occupation appears around 6,000 years ago, at around the time sea levels stabilized to near present-day levels. A small quantity of stone artefacts from an excavation of a midden site at Castle Cove in Middle Harbour were analysed and have been dated to around 1,650 years ago. Quartz, quartzite and silcrete were being modified for use as tools and one quartzite artefact found had a retouched edge and traces of resin indicating hafting onto a wooden handle. The shellfish retrieved from this site were mainly Sydney cockles, rock oysters, hairy mussels and the spiny oysters.[15]

Today, there is significant remaining historical and archaeological evidence of the presence of Aboriginal people across the Northern Sydney region. An extensive Aboriginal pathway on the north shore probably became the route of the Pacific Highway of today and there was a 'well-marked pathway' that led from Manly to Pittwater. Waringa (Warringah) – noted in the 19th century as Middle Cove - is one of many Aboriginal words that remain in place names in the area. Others such as Turranburra have been replaced (Lane Cove River) but the names survive in historical records.[16]

Rock images in the northern Sydney region include kangaroos, wallabies and emus. People and spiritual beings are also commonly represented along with tools and weapons such as spears, shields, digging sticks and

[13] Tench 1789: 284
[14] Currie 2008: 15
[15] Attenbrow 2005: 19; Currie 2008: 15-16.
[16] Currie 2008 :69; Karskens 2015; Larmer 1898 [1832]: 223-229

boomerangs. Large engravings of the great sky spirit Baiami, his wife Birrahgnooloo and his son, alternatively known as his brother, Daramulan, can be found across the Sydney region with remarkable sites within the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

Charcoal and ochre artworks are often found in rock overhangs and shelters, where they often remain well preserved. Drawings and stencils in charcoal and red, white and yellow ochre are common at sites in the lower north shore. These include white ochre fish and hand stencils, a red ochre eel, charcoal drawings of spirit figures and many others the subjects of which are no longer distinguishable. A source of high quality red and white ochre is known at North Head; however, exactly what sources were used by which clans is not known. Trading of high-quality ochre was common between clans and previous studies have shown that, like stone and other geographically specific resources, ochre can be traded over long distances.[17]

In the Warringah, Willoughby, Lane Cove and North Sydney Local Government areas alone there are today approximately 1,000 Aboriginal sites including middens, rock engravings, axe grinding grooves, carved trees and stone arrangements. Several engravings depicting sharks can be found in the lower north shore of Sydney, suggesting that these animals may have been particularly important to the Gamaragal, and may have been a food source. Whales, fish and stingrays are also commonly depicted in rock engravings in the surrounding North Shore and Northern Beaches areas.

In fact, as North Sydney historian Ian Hoskins notes, 'North Sydney's foreshore areas have some of the finest cultural sites on the lower north shore' with hand stencils and drawings still visible in caves and rock shelters. Two major engravings on Berry Island depict a large sea creature – possibly a fish or a whale. Nearby this is a small hollowed out rock basin with grinding grooves and an engraving on a sandstone platform near Balls Head shows a large whale or fish with a human figure inside. According to a Bundjalung man from the north coast of NSW the man inside the whale 'is a clever fella' and the whale engraving was 'a place of ceremonies, a place where the whales were sung into the shore'.[18]

Figure 18: Contemporary stingray rock engraving, Mowbray Park, Lane Cove (source: Artefact)

[17] Currie 2008: 50

[18] Hoskins 2015: 6-7

4.2.3 Gamaragal

The Gamaragal people have long been associated with Country around what is now known as Sydney's Lower North Shore. Governor Arthur Phillip noted that the Gamaragal inhabited 'the northwest side of Port Jackson'. North Sydney historian Ian Hoskins notes this is 'now thought to extend from Cremorne in the east, to Woodford Bay in the west, and probably to Middle Harbour which forms a natural boundary to the north'. Phillip also referred to a group called the Wallumedegal as occupying the 'opposite shore' (to Sydney Cove). Hoskins and others consider the Wallumedegal clan group to have extended from Lane Cove westward to Parramatta and the Borogegal clan to have lived around Bradleys Head. Further to the north, it seems the Garigal lived on the southern edges of Broken Bay.[19]

After the massive dispossession of Country by the British colonists from 1788 and the smallpox epidemic of 1789, traditional Aboriginal society was decimated. Few historical records by early colonisers are accurate or reliable, often misunderstanding Aboriginal culture and land tenure. 'Cammeray' is the name of the area to which the people belonged, and the addition of 'gal' refers to the people from that place. The Gamaragal clan group may have taken their name from the gamy/camy, a common term for a spear in the Sydney area (they were regarded as a fierce and war-like clan).

There has long been confusion around the language spoken on the north shore of Sydney Harbour. As Jessica Currie notes in her history of the area around Willoughby, *Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go. Yesterday Today Tomorrow*, 'it has been long accepted that the Gameraygal clan are part of the Guringai language nation, however, there are also claims that the Darug language extended through this area.' The 2015 Aboriginal Heritage Office report 'Filling a void – Guringai language review' notes that the first use of the word 'Guringai' was in 1892 and was based on a Hunter Valley group 'Gringai or Guringay' in an attempt to fill a void in language information to the north of Sydney. More recent research has identified Karikal or Garigal as the clan group associated with the southern side of Broken Bay. The term 'Kuringai' (Guringai) has now been rejected by the Aboriginal Heritage Office and other researchers.[20]

Patyegarang was believed to be Gamaragal [21] and she shared her language with William Dawes and helped him compile a dictionary of the Sydney Language. Many of the words therefore in The Notebooks of William Dawes may be from the Gamaragal dialect.

As Currie also notes, 'as the Aboriginal population in the Willoughby area was severely diminished following the British occupation in 1788, oral accounts of the Gamaragal available to us today are all but non-existent.' Today, much of what we know about the traditional lives of Aboriginal people on the north shore of Sydney Harbour comes from the often imprecise and limited pens of colonial diarists such as Watkin Tench and David Collins.[22]

4.2.4 Invasion, colonisation and disease

Soon after the British colonists arrived in January 1788, they started to traverse the northern side of the harbour. In late January, around Middle Head and Manly, Captain Hunter and Lieutenant Bradley were welcomed on their survey of the harbour by Aboriginal people on the beaches and coves. When they ventured further inland, the Europeans noted the land was steep and rugged. One expedition went by boat into Middle Harbour and by foot from Manly Lagoon, through the modern day lower north shore suburbs including Willoughby, looking for rivers and land suitable for agriculture. They passed through Gamaragal Country, and although they rarely saw any

[19] Hoskins 2019: 3; Currie 2008: 33
[20] AHO 2015: 40-41; Currie 2008: 3; Attenbrow 2010: 22-25; Collins 1798: 453; Smith 2016: 10
[21] Gibson, 2012
[22] Currie 2008, p. 3

people, found extensive traces of them in the many rock engravings, particularly on the ridge tops. More detailed mapping surveys were conducted in April 1788.

At Middle Harbour in April, Lieutenant Bradley noted a difference between the people on the north side of the harbour and other areas; 'All the Natives in this part of the Harbour, except the Old Man were very shy & would not come near us … we did not find any Huts, they were in Caves formed by shelving rocks, at the outer part they make a fire which serves both for roasting their Fish & giving them heat during the night'.[23]

After an initial period of curiosity between two vastly different cultures, soon enough, interactions between the British and the Sydney Aboriginal people began to sour. Lieutenant Bradley's journal shows a picture of increasing conflict during the first year – many historians have suggested this was because Aboriginal people soon realized the Europeans were here to stay and were competing for their resources.[24]

In March, Bradley reported six instances of conflict. Several convicts were wounded or beaten and by the end of the month, Aboriginal people 'would not come near the ship' and others who were approached when fishing, 'paddled to the shore and ran into the woods'. By August, Bradley wrote that all those in the 'upper harbour were very friendly' but in the 'North Arm [they] were not so friendly'.[25]

By September he was convinced the Sydney people were only friendly when 'we have them in our power' or the colonists 'are well prepared by being armed'. He noted that lately 'they have attack'd almost every person who has met with them that has not had a muskquet & have sometimes endeavoured to surprise some who had'.[26]

David Collins provided the most extensive historical account of the people who lived on the north shore. In his overview of the Aboriginal people of Sydney he noted that 'those who live on the north shore of Port Jackson are called Cam-mer-ray-gal, that part of the harbour being distinguished from others by the name of Cam-mer-ray.' Collins was told by the Wangal man Bennelong that they were 'a very powerful people' who had a significant role in the wider Sydney region.

The Gamaragal were able to 'oblige' other clans to 'attend wherever and whenever they directed' and Collins believed they had a 'decided superiority over all the tribes' the colonists had encountered. Contests were delayed until the Gamaragal arrived, and for Collins, 'it was impossible not to observe the superiority and influence which their numbers and their muscular appearance gave them over the other tribes.' They also had the 'extraordinary privilege of exacting a tooth from the natives of other tribes inhabiting the seacoast'.[27]

Collins described the Gamaragal as the 'most robust and muscular' of all the Sydney people. It seems it was the Gamaragal who Governor Phillip met when he first entered Port Jackson in January 1788 and saw around 20 warriors who showed 'confidence and manly behaviour'. The Governor was not expecting such a display, as reports from James Cook's 1770 voyage along the east coast of Australia generally described Aboriginal people as timid. He duly named the place 'Manly Cove' – even though it already had a name, Kai'may.[28]

Collins also noted that there were several 'Car-rah-dy and Car-rah-di-gang' – now known as Karadji (doctor or 'cleverman') among the Gamaragal. It seems Collins was noting that there were more Karadji among the Gamaragal than other groups. Collins also described male and female initiation and other ceremonies including tooth evulsion, bone nose

[23] Bradley 1802: 103
[24] Karskens 2010; Gapps 2018
[25] Gapps 2019
[26] Gapps 2019
[27] Collins 1789: 456
[28] Collins 1789: 453-458

piercings and finger joint removal or 'Mal-gun'. He mentioned meeting a 'Cameragal' woman named Gooreedeeana, who he was shocked to see had many 'contusions and scars' on her head from the way 'women are treated'. Tench met Gooreedeeana who came to his hut in search of food, and he wrote that 'she belonged to the tribe of the Cammeraygal and rarely came among us… She excelled in beauty all the females I ever saw…'.[29]

As the conflict grew throughout 1788, Governor Phillip became increasingly desperate to establish communications with the Sydney people. As Watkin Tench put it; 'Tired of this state of petty warfare and endless uncertainty, the governor at length determined to adopt a decisive measure by capturing and retaining them by force…' On the 31st of December Phillip ordered Lieutenants Ball and Johnson 'to seize and carry off some of the natives.'

The first of many Aboriginal people to be captured or forcibly removed was Arabanoo, 'a dignified and gentle man who refused to play the role of cross-cultural envoy'. He was also one of the first people to die from another impact of colonization, disease.[30]

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!''[31]

While Watkin Tench first noted the people on the north of the harbour had 'suffered less from the ravages of the smallpox' than other groups, the disease seems to have hit further north severely. Collins wrote that 'On visiting Broken Bay, we found that it [smallpox] had not confined its effects to Port Jackson, for in many places our path was covered with skeletons, and the same spectacles were to be met with in the hollows of most of the rocks of that harbour'.[32]

Figure 19: Thomas Watling's depiction of Cameragal. The notation accompanying the painting states: 'This man's name is Cameragal the chief of the most powerful Tribe that we at present know of in New South Wales. He holds two fighting spears and a Fizgig in one hand and two throwing sticks in the other.' [Bernard Smith & Alwyne Wheeler (eds), The Art of the First Fleet, Oxford University Press, Australia, 1988, p.42] (source: Sue Rosen Associates)

[29] Collins 1789: 453-458; Tench 1793: 246-276
[30] Karskens 2015
[31] Gapps 2019; Karskens 2009: 50
[32] Tench 1789: 285; Collins 1798: 496

After several months being kept a prisoner at Sydney Cove, Arabanoo succumbed to smallpox and died in May 1789.

Such massive decimation of the Aboriginal population of Sydney forced many groups to move away or unite with other groups. While some Gamaragal people did survive and return to their land, some later regrouped around the Ryde area and became known as the 'Kissing Point Tribe' and others moved or continued to live relatively unmolested, known as the 'Broken Bay Tribe'.[33]

4.2.5 Barangaroo and Bennelong

Following Aranbanoo's death, Governor Phillip ordered that another 'native' be taken at the first opportunity. It was not until November 1789 that Bennelong and Colby were seized at Manly in a manner similar to that of Arabanoo. Colby, a Gadigal man from the southern side of the harbour, escaped two weeks later, leaving Bennelong alone at Sydney Cove. By April 1790, the trust between Governor Phillip and Bennelong had grown and Bennelong was released from his shackles and allowed to walk freely around the settlement. The colonists learned a great deal from Bennelong – a Wangal man from the southern side of the Harbour, west of present-day Darling Harbour - about the Sydney people.

Bennelong's wife Barangaroo was a Cammeragaleon – a woman from the Gamaragal. As David Collins noted, wives 'are always selected from the women of a different tribe, with whom they are at enmity'. Barangaroo often travelled to the north shore with her husband Bennelong. Tench described how Bennelong openly stated his hatred of the Gamaragal - perplexing the colonists by his visits to Cammeray whilst at the same time encouraging the Governor to send soldiers to kill all the Gamaragal, and at other times saying they were 'good men'.34

Barangaroo was known to be constantly at odds with Bennelong's interaction with the colonists. Karskens suggests this could have emanated from the increasing loss of Aboriginal women's status as their role in food providing of the staples (fish and plants – perhaps 80 percent of their peoples' diets) was diminished by the colonisers' fishing and farming. So too, the colonisers would only deal with men, not women, which was at odds with traditional Aboriginal practices. [35]

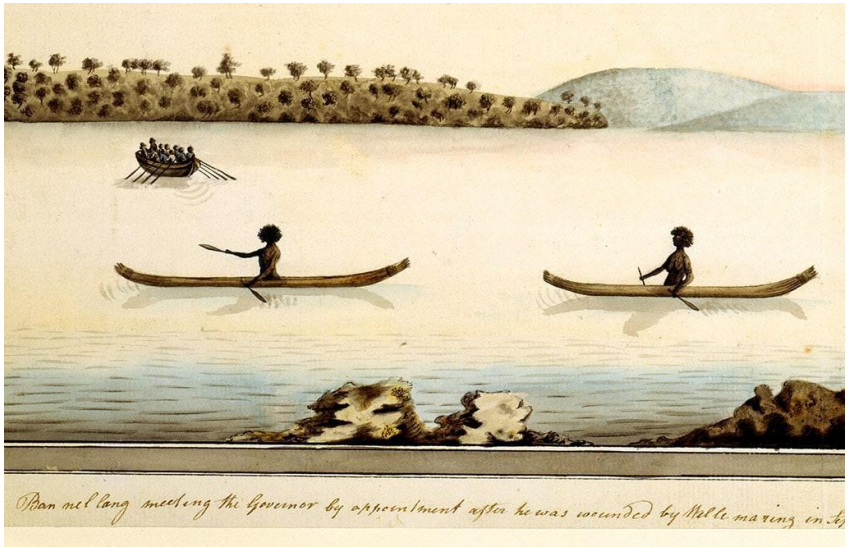


Figure 20: Bennelong and Barangaroo, September 1790 (source: Natural History Museum London)

Inter-clan marriages such as this meant that Gamaragal women like Barangaroo frequented both sides of the harbour. The early colonists described her as a spirited person who visited Sydney town, and the Governor's residence at her will. She defied overtures to cover herself when in the European settlement and was a defiant presence. On one occasion

[33] Currie 2008
[34] Tench 1798: 118; Collins 1798: 362; Hunter 1793: 327

[35] Karskens 2014

she intervened in the flogging of a convict by attacking the soldier carrying out the sentence. When Barangaroo died in early 1790s she was given a traditional burial. Her body was cremated on a funeral pyre of wood and grass accompanied by a basket and some fishing equipment she had used A burial mound, or tumulus, was constructed around her remains.[36] After Barangaroo's death Bennelong had a 'a severe contest with Wil-le-mer-ring, whom he wounded in the thigh' with the spear he had used to rake up her ashes after her cremation. Bennelong said that Willemering, the Aboriginal doctor who speared Governor Phillip in September 1790, had not come quickly enough to treat her when she was ill, and he had sent for him.[37]

4.2.6 Nineteenth century

The first significant European forays into the Gamaragal and others lands on the north of the harbour were timber-getters who exploited the tall forests of the North Shore. On the coast, middens were dug up in order to produce lime used in building construction in the expanding settlement. By the early 1800s, these were followed by more permanent farms, including orchards and the Lane Cove River became an important route for the transportation of goods to and from Sydney.

In 1793, 30 acres of Gamaragal land directly across the harbour at Kirribilli had been given to the ex-convict Samuel Lightfoot. Lightfoot promptly sold his new 'farm' to political exile Thomas Muir who built a house there – the first major European habitation on the north shore. In 1800, the grant was taken over with an added 90 acres by marine, Robert Ryan. It was subsequently leased by James Milson – whose family's name would come to denote the area. In 1814 Captain John Piper acquired 700 acres extending from Neutral Bay to Middle Harbour and gave this to his son-in-law Alfred Thrupp. In 1817 another 80 acres of Gamaragal land was given to ex-convict Billy Blue. The grant extended back from the point that had been called Warungareeyuh, and Europeans came to know as Blues Point. Within five years, 524 acres of land encompassing present-day Wollstonecraft, Waverton and much of Crows Nest was granted to the merchant Edward Wollstonecraft. With that, more than half of the Gamaragal's land had been deeded to individual colonists.[38]

4.2.7 Resistance

The occupation of Gamaragal and others lands to the north of Sydney did not go uncontested. While much of the broader initial resistance was led by Pemulwuy around the west and south of the settlements, at times, the conflict reached Lane Cove and Broken Bay.[39]

During the 1790s timber getters and others had regular confrontations with Aboriginal people around Lane Cove. In 1797, David Collins remarked that they were 'exceedingly troublesome to the settlers in Lane Cove, burning a house and killing some hogs belonging to one of them'. By 1800 a stockade had been established on the river on the eastern side of Woodford Bay for a detachment of soldiers and security for convicts employed in the government saw pits.[40]

In August 1804 the farm of James Wilshire at Lane Cove was raided by a large group of Aboriginal people. They took over the farm, tying up the convict workers and then forced them to cook meals for all. Wilshire was in Sydney at the time and when notified of the attack, rounded up 'several armed persons' and rowed across to his farm. Here, the armed party was confronted by 'shouts of defiance' and 'brandished spears'. Wilshire first fired blank rounds and then 'small shot' at the warriors and their families, who retreated to some rocks where they were joined by more people – their numbers now 'exceeded 200'. Then, they took their plunder and moved off

[36] (Hoskins, 2015: 14-15).
[37] Collins 1789: 139; Hunter 1793: 462-463; Smith 2016).
[38] Currie 2008: 69; Hoskins: 17-18
[39] Collins 1793: 349
[40] Gapps 2018: 3).

through the bush that was still thick around the relatively unsettled north shore.[41]

4.2.8 Adapting and surviving

While resistance warfare was adopted by some, other Aboriginal people found working with the colonists a way to survive the onslaught of colonisation. The two men working as salt boilers and who had been plundered of all their clothing and provisions at Broken Bay were guided back to Sydney by six Aboriginal people who had defended them against attack. They were rewarded 'by an abundant supply of food, with which they retired amply satisfied for their salutary labour and humane assistance' according to the Sydney Gazette.[42]

Bungaree (Boongarie) was born around 1775 and was from Broken Bay. He took up a role as a mediator between the colonists and Aboriginal people, often working as a guide with various colonial expeditions including Matthew Flinders circumnavigation of the continent in 1803. From 1810 he found a patron in Governor Lachlan Macquarie, who made Bungaree 'Chief of the Broken Bay Tribe'. Macquarie set aside land at Georges Head on Sydney Harbour and gave him a boat for fishing. As the *Sydney Gazette* newspaper wrote in 1815:

> *Sixteen of the Natives, with their wives and families were assembled, and His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR, in consideration of the general wish previously expressed by them, appointed Boongaree (who has been long known as one of the most friendly of his race, and well acquainted with our language), to be their Chief.*[43]

The families lived at Georges Head for several years, however, the attempt to farm quickly fell into disarray, with crops abandoned for the more traditional methods of fishing and hunting. The families travelled long distances, when necessary, on foot and by boat, to Parramatta and Sydney township. When Bungaree left Sydney in 1817 to sail to north-western Australia on an expedition with Phillip Parker King, his family and others returned to Broken Bay, forsaking the Georges Head site. On occasion, Bungaree and the other families returned to Georges Head when it suited them to do so. Bungaree and his wives Matora and Cora Gooseberry ('Queen Goosberry') were often seen on the North Shore during the early to mid-1800's and Bungaree was known to row out to greet incoming ships in Sydney Harbour. Cora Goosberry's father was a Gamaragal man. Bungaree and Gooseberry's son, 'Long Dick', also frequented the North Shore and interacted with the British settlements.[44]

In early 1820s, Port Jackson was visited by a series of Russian ships. The Russians established an observatory on the North Shore and documented many of their interactions with Aboriginal people from the area. In 1820, the Russian, Simonov, described Aboriginal women wearing blankets like a toga, wrapped around their bodies and tied around their necks with string. In another adaptive use of the blanket, the Russian Rossiysky, described the blankets being used to wrap babies that would then be tied to the backs of the women. Many of these people may have been Gamaragal (though possibly also from other areas of Sydney).

Aboriginal people continued to live something of a traditional way of life on the lower North Shore of Sydney into the 1820s and the Russians also witnessed a corroboree in 1820. In 1834 and 1835, James Backhouse met an Aboriginal family on 'the north shore' of the harbour. While still camped, perhaps near their traditional lands, they were now very much dependent upon the settlement.[45]

[41] Sydney Gazette, 2 September 1804
[42] Sydney Gazette, 28 April 1805: 2
[43] Sydney Gazette, 4 February 1815
[44] Currie 2008: 78
[45] Barrat 1981: 42, 48, 52, 66; Backhouse 1843: 233-240

Figure 21: 'Willoughby Falls', John Skinner Prout *c.1843*

(source: Mitchell Library, SLNSW)

By the mid-nineteenth century, there were still Aboriginal people on the lower north shore. Old residents recalled seeing Aboriginal people at Balmoral and the artist John Skinner Prout painted two images with Aboriginal people at this time near the harbour. Gatherings still happened in the 1860s with a camp at Cremorne Reserve at the time of the annual blanket returns. There were reports of an Aboriginal family living at Middle Harbour in 1910.

JF Mann, writing in 1932, recalled people he saw as a boy living in Neutral Bay in the 1860s. They came from 'far and near' for the annual Queen's Birthday distribution of blankets and rations, supplementing their rations by hunting possums. Mann assembled a list of words that he obtained from the son of Bungaree and Cora Goosebery. Neither were Cammeray people, but Mann specifically described the words as 'Cammeray' terms and Bowen and Cora may well have spoken the same, or a very similar form, of language.[46]

In the 1860s and 1870s, many areas of the north shore had not yet seen the massive urban development that was occurring on the south side of the harbour. Aboriginal people were noted as still camping 'at the North Shore' – specifically at Berry's Bay in 1878. In a published letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, E. Dowling suggested that Aborigines should be given some of the islands in the harbour – instead of camping near where he lived at Blues Point:

> *THE ISLANDS OF PORT JACKSON AND THE ABORIGINES. TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.*
>
> *Sir,---- I hope I may be pardoned for suggesting that the claims of the original owners should not be overlooked when dedicating the islands in the harbour as reserves. It is recorded that one of the aborigines, named Bennilong, inherited Goat Island from his father, and announces his intention of leaving it as a gift to his descendants (Dumont d'Urville, " Voyage de 1' Astrolabe.") Many aborigines now come to Sydney yearly from Shoalhaven and other parts of the colony, and*

[46] Hoskins 2019: 4-6; Mann c.1890

> *they are compelled to camp at North Shore, often to the great discomfort of its permanent residents. If one of the islands in the harbour could be devoted to these blackfellows, I believe that they would be far more comfortable than in Berry's Bay and removed from much temptation and annoyance. Considering the vast territory which has been wrested from these poor people without any compensation, I take it that it would be a graceful act to allow them the privilege of pointing to one of these small islands at the entrance to the metropolis as still their own. Blue's Point, November 20. E. DOWLING.*

Despite Dowling's claim these people were an 'annoyance', he recognized their dispossession. Unexpectedly, over 140 years after Dowling's suggestion, in 2022, the NSW government announced Goat Island would be returned to Aboriginal people.[47]

As North Sydney historian Ian Hoskins notes, 'recognition of dispossession' was again expressed in 1890, this time using Aboriginal names for the new suburbs and areas being rapidly constructed on the north shore.[48] Public servant and local resident Alexander Oliver suggested the name 'Cammeray' for the new Council area created by the amalgamation of three pre-existing boroughs. Oliver was familiar with the early colonial diarists' accounts and scathing of the use of contemporary place names:

> *… the name "Cam-mer -ray," I would respectfully submit to the proper authorities, and to those others whom it may concern, that it should be gradually substituted for the meaningless term "St. Leonards," and the very vague one "North Shore." We have evicted these poor people from their lands, and we have civilised them into absolute extinction. The least reparation we can make to the great Cammeray tribe, which we have driven out of their heritage, would be to preserve the old melodious name of their country for the most beautiful of our suburban districts, and, for the future, say "Cammeray" instead of "North Shore" or "St. Leonards"*[49]

The 1891 report of the Aboriginal Protection Board did not record any Aboriginal people in the North Sydney area. Yet as Hoskins notes, the Holtermann family photographs 'show Aboriginal man Fred Grunway working as a groom on their large Crows

Nest estate, St Leonards Lodge and at least one other Aboriginal boy worked on the estate in the 1870s'. It is quite probable that other Aboriginal people were employed as domestic labourers in the area in the late 19th and early twentieth centuries.

Figure 22: Aboriginal shingle splitters, Middle Harbour c. 1870s (source: AHO)

[47] Shams 2022
[48] Hoskins 2015: 25
[49] Sydney Morning Herald, 9 June 1890: 6

4.2.9 Twentieth Century

The end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century are associated with one of the worst legacies of colonisation, that being the removal of Aboriginal children from their families and homes. Many were relocated to the North Shore during the 20th century, often working as domestic servants. In 1909 the New South Wales Aboriginal Protection Act sought to separate 'full blood' and 'half caste' Aboriginal people in the belief that the former would die out and the latter would be best incorporated into the general community. By the 1920s numbers of mixed descent Aboriginal children were being forcibly removed from their homes by State officials – they became known as Stolen Generations.

Figure 23: Five unidentified women working in Sydney under the auspices of the Aborigines Protection Department, NSW from the article, 'Aboriginal girls as domestic servants', Sydney Mail 24 May 1922, p23 (source: TROVE/NLA)

4.2.10 Demanding rights

Throughout the twentieth century there was a growing movement for Aboriginal political rights. Important campaigns to promote Aboriginal rights were initiated in North Sydney – at the small flat owned by Faith and Hans Bandler on the Pacific Highway. The Bandlers were immersed in the progressive intellectual community of post-war Sydney. Faith was the daughter of a Melanesian man who had been stolen, or 'blackbirded', from his island home to work in Australia in the late 19th century. She was visited regularly by her friend and Aboriginal activist, Pearl Gibbs. Gibbs had helped establish the Aboriginal Progressive Association which protested the 1938 Sesquicentenary. Now she wanted to enlist white support for Indigenous rights and finally persuaded Bandler to join with her in the struggle'. In 1956 a meeting was held at the Kirribilli flat of writers Muir Holburn and Marjorie Pizer. The groundwork was laid for formation of the Aboriginal Australian Fellowship which became the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI).[50]

Upon the insistence of human rights activist Jessie Street, the Fellowship set as its task the repeal of the clauses in the Australian Constitution that gave the States exclusive power to make laws relating to Indigenous people and excluded Aborigines from the Census count. The Bandler's North Sydney flat became a meeting place for luminaries in the battle for Aboriginal rights; people such as Harold Blair, Doug Nicholls and the writer Dorothy Hewitt. The consequent passing of the 1967 referendum on Aboriginal affairs resulted in Indigenous people being included in the national Census and the Commonwealth Government given power to make laws relating to Aborigines where previously the States had enacted many different and often discriminatory laws. For many Aboriginal people this win, rather than the right to vote granted five years earlier, symbolised the long-deferred achievement of citizenship.[51]

[50] Hoskins, pp. 27-28

[51] Hoskins, pp. 27-28

Figure 24: 1967 Referendum poster and members of FCAATSI in Canberra (left-right) Gordon Bryant, Faith Bandler, PM Harold Holt, Doug Nicholls, Burnum Burnum, Winnie Branson, and Bill Wentworth (source: NACCHO ATSI Health News)

Figure 25: Evonne Goolagong went to Wiloughby Girls High School. In 1971 she won the women's singles at Wimbledon and was named Australian of the Year (source: Getty)

In 1998, 88 people identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders in the North Sydney Council area. In the greater Northern Sydney region, 1077.

4.2.11 Twenty first century

More recently, other Aboriginal people have moved into the area – most notably the well-known Evonne Goolagong and Ray Martin. A 2011 series of 'life histories' of 'Aboriginal people associated with the area of the Shire of Hornsby' collated a diverse range of people, including Dharug woman Aunty Edna Watson and other people who had family ties outside Sydney but had grown up in Hornsby.

Efforts to understand the histories of Aboriginal people in the area such as those conducted by the Northern Sydney Region Aboriginal Heritage Office continue.[52]

Since 2000, the broader northern Sydney region has embraced reconciliation in various ways including dual place naming and establishing local reconciliation groups. In 1999, North Sydney Council became the first Local Government Area in Australia to employ an Aboriginal Heritage Officer –David Watts, former Sites Officer with the Metro LALC. Since that time the program has grown to encompass Aboriginal heritage work in Lane Cove, Ku-ring-gai, The Northern Beaches, and Willoughby Council regions.[53]

[52] Hoskins 2015: 26; Salt 2011; Currie 2008: 86-89.

[53] Hoskins 2015: 31

In addition, the Guringai Festival, also referred to as the Gaimariagal Festival, has been held every year since 2001. The aim of the festival is to raise awareness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island causes and programs, and honour traditions, history and culture. The festival involves 11 councils north of the harbour including Willoughby, Warringah, Pittwater, North Sydney, Mosman, manly, Ku-ring-gai, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove. The festival, held every year in between the end of May and end of July, coinciding with National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. During the festival First Nations organisations host workshops, exhibitions, competitions and an array of other events, inviting all Sydneysiders to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures.[54]

Figure 26: Aboriginal Heritage Office info stall, Northern Beaches (source: AHO)

[54] https://www.gai-mariagal-festival.com.au/our-people.html

5. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

5.1 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.

5.2 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. [55] 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 Charter:[56]

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 (2023)* recommends the following strategy for building relationships 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 (LALCs).*

The *GANSW Connecting with Country (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.*

5.2.1 Stakeholder identification

Stakeholders were identified through consultation with the Aboriginal Heritage Office.

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

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

5.3 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 stakeholders.

5.3.1 Ku-ring-gai Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (2016-2036)

On 17 March 2020 the Ku-ring-gai Council adopted its first Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)[57]. The LSPS draws together the priorities and actions from Councils existing Strategic Plan, land use plans and policies to present an overall - economic, social and environmental - land use vision for Ku-ring-gai over the next 20 years (2016-2036).

The LSPS has four themes, *Infrastructure and Collaboration, Liveability, Productivity* and *Sustainability*.

Aboriginal Communities and Cultural Heritage are discussed as an aspect of *Liveability* within Kur-ring-gai and include the following priorities:

- Strengthening recognition and support for Aboriginal communities and cultural heritage
- Protecting, conserving and managing Ku-ring-gai's Aboriginal heritage objects, items and significant places

Figure 27: Council identity (source: Ku-ring-gai Council)

Ku-ring-gai Council is guided by the Sydney Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council whose approach to land use planning matters encompasses healing and wellbeing; culture and heritage; tourism and international education; employment and education; and sustainability.

Since 2006, Ku-ring-gai Council has also partnered with the Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO), in relation to site protection, care and management, and community education. Council also seeks to engage and empower the local community to respect and protect these sites through the AHO community volunteer site monitor program[58]

[57] Ku-ring-gai Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (2016-2036) https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Planning-and-development/Planning-for-the-future/Ku-ring-gai-Local-Strategic-Planning-Statement

5.3.2 The Aboriginal Heritage Office

The Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) was also identified as an important resource. The AHO has a partnership with six Councils (Lane Cove, North Sydney, Ku-ring-gai, Willoughby, The Northern Beaches, and Strathfield), to assist with protection, management and conservation of sites within their regions. They also provide educational programs (talks, walks, workshops, activities and videos) on Aboriginal history and heritage, and Indigenous perspectives on the local landscapes to the public. The AHO has a Museum and Keeping Place at Freshwater, on the Northern Beaches, which is open Tuesday – Thursday, 9:00am – 3:00pm: www.aboriginalheritage.org

Figure 28: Aboriginal Heritage Office Museum and Keeping Place (source: AHO)

5.3.3 Lord Street and Roseville Avenue, Roseville, Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (Artefact, 2025)

A visual inspection of the study area was undertaken by Sammuel Sammut (Heritage Consultant, Artefact), Beatrix Ye (Graduate Heritage Consultant, Artefact) and Katrina Eckford (Graduate Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer, Artefact) on 21 January 2025. The visual inspection examined the external areas of all nine addresses of the study area.

It was assessed that ground disturbance and landform modification had affected the preservation of any Aboriginal objects that could be in the area. It was concluded that the study area contained low potential for Aboriginal objects and a low likelihood of impact on Aboriginal objects during construction due to historical disturbance.

A eucalyptus tree with a scar was seen at 23 Roseville Avenue, but it was determined that it was unlikely to be a culturally scarred tree or an Aboriginal object but likely scarred during historical land clearing. No Aboriginal objects were identified within the study area and no sandstone outcrops were observed during the visual inspection of the area. Given the significant disturbance, which likely redeposited or destroyed any Aboriginal objects, no areas of archaeological potential were found.

For more details please see the *Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment - Lord Street and Roseville Avenue Roseville* (Artefact, 2025).

5.4 Project specific consultation

5.4.1 Cultural Awareness Workshop, 14 January 2025

The Aboriginal Heritage Office recommended independent Aboriginal heritage consultant, David Watts, to design and deliver a program to share cultural heritage values of the area with the project team.

On 14 January 2025, a workshop on Aboriginal history with a special focus on Gamaragal Country was led by David Watts at Hyecorp's Heritage House, Victoria Avenue, Chatswood. David Watts is a Ngemba man, born and raised on Gamaragal Country, who has delivered Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and education programs since 1997 in Australia and the USA. David Watts was mentored by Aunty Jenny Munro, who encouraged him to establish the Aboriginal Heritage Office (see 5.3.2) of which he was manager 1999-2024. He was involved in the documentary series *Whiteys Like Us* (1999), which followed a group of non-Indigenous Australians participating in an 8 week Reconciliation Learning Circle. He has extensive experience in managing Aboriginal heritage issues, from archaeological survey, site excavation and assessment, to cultural tourism advice, and design/interpretation of the AHO museum and Aboriginal Heritage walks.

The workshop was devised and led by David Watts and attended by representatives of the clients Project Team and Artefact. The purpose of the workshop was to provide an insight into Aboriginal people and histories of the area, ahead of the Walk on Country.

5.4.1.1 *Attendees*

- David Watts, Aboriginal Stakeholder and consultant
- Patrick Abolakian, Director (for commencement), Norelle Jones, Mona Chao, and Josh Algie, Hyecorp Property Management
- Holly McNamara Urbis, planning
- Anita Zhou, Land & Form Land & Form, landscape design
- Rob Mirams Fender Katsalidis, architect
- Rebecca Conway and Hannah Matagia Artefact, cultural heritage

5.4.1.2 *Agenda*

- Acknowledgement of Country, Hannah Matagia
- Introductions
- Workshop by David Watts
- Design presentations by Rob Mirams, FK architects
- Discussion

Figure 29: David Watts Workshop 14 January 2025, (source Artefact)

5.4.1.3 *Topic areas covered*

Pop quiz

The cultural awareness training began with an 'ice-breaking pop-quiz' run by David Watts to explore the groups general knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage and social history. Questions covered how many Aboriginal cultures people could name, the meaning of some commonly used Aboriginal colloquialisms, colours of the Aboriginal flag, and learning that first Australian sports team to tour England was an all-Aboriginal Cricket team in 1868.

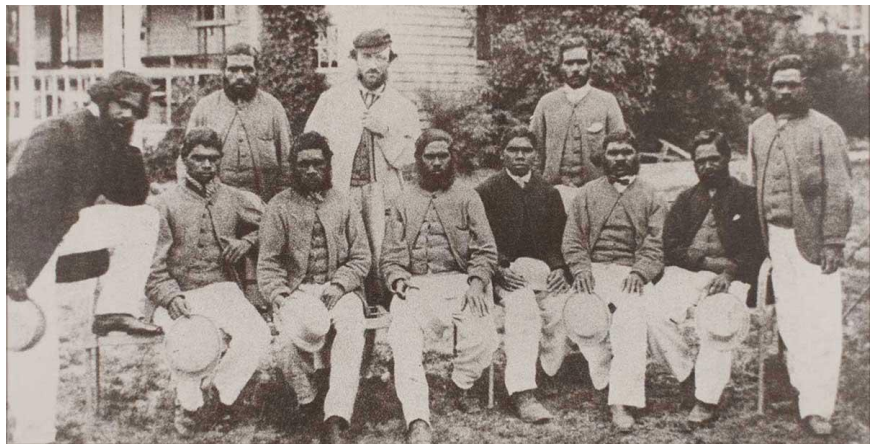


Figure 30: The Aboriginal cricket team, photographed in Melbourne 1866 (source: NMA)[59]

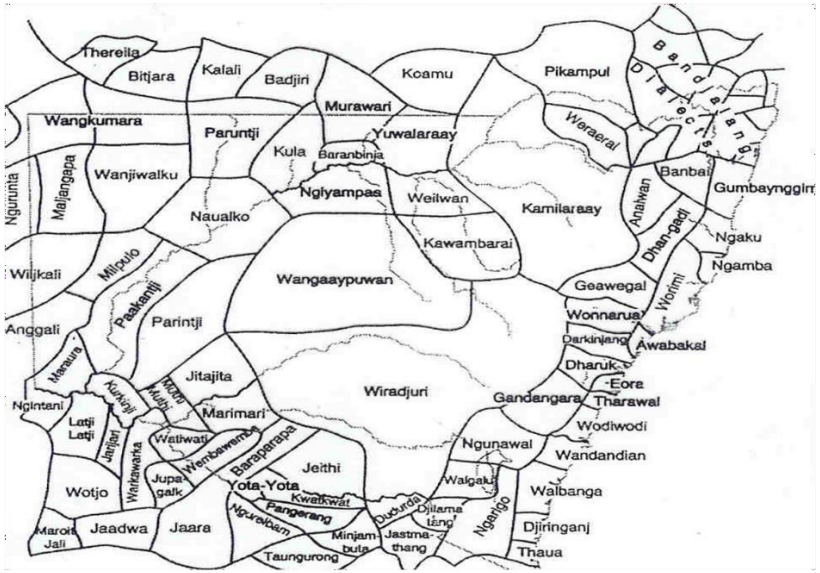


Figure 31: Language map of NSW. Ngiyampaa (alt. Ngemba), is David Watt's grandfather's traditional Country (source: AHO)

Acknowledgement of Country

Artefact's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer, Hannah Matagia, gave an "Acknowledgement of Country".

Hannah Matagia is Kamilaroi, grew up on Dharug lands in Western Sydney and now lives on Darkinjung Country. Hannah used wording provided to her by her maternal aunt, artist Aunty Kayelene Slater, *"We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country, and we recognize the continuing connection to the land, waterways and culture. We pay our respects to our Elders, from past to present, and extend respect to all that we may meet on our journey"*

[59] Aboriginal Cricket Team https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/aboriginal-cricket-team

- David Watts explained that cultural protocols and ceremonial processes are diverse and vary according to region and locality.
- An “Acknowledgement of Country" can be done by anyone, but they should always be from the heart and not be tokenistic. Acknowledgement means ‘recognising a truth’, Aboriginal people never ceded their Land.
- A "Welcome to Country" can only be given by Traditional Aboriginal Custodians, it is a personal welcome to their Country. Traditional Custodians have a commitment to caring for Country and sense of responsibility towards those that enter their territory.
- David Watts highlighted the immense cultural and linguistic diversity of Australia, with a focus on greater New South Wales and the Sydney region.
- Maps like those shown in Figure 31 and Figure 32 are indicative of Countries, clans and language groups but are not exact or definitive; not always agreed borders. Some borders may have been wrongly recorded historically, some are contested, and some regions were shared by different groups. David Watts suggested that if you think of all the Countries and languages in Europe and apply this idea of diversity to Australia, you will have a better sense of the diversity of pre-invasion Aboriginal cultures, languages and dialects.
- Based on his extensive research and experience working in the area, David Watts favours the use of clan names to distinguish between different groups of Sydney Aboriginal peoples and the spelling ‘Gamaragal’ for the people of the lower north shore.
- Historically, Gamaragal were renowned as a very strong group culturally. They are said to have coordinated many of Sydney’s corroborees and initiations. The neighbouring group to their north, whose territories may have overlapped somewhere between Chatswood and Roseville were the Darramuragal clan. Historically the area the Darramuragal have been most strongly associated with is Turramurra, and the headwaters of the Lane Cove River. Other neighbouring groups include the Wallumedegal and the Birrabirragal.
- It is part of the history we share now - that there is no real certainty around tribal names, language groups or dreaming stories on the lower north shore; so many Aboriginal people lost their lives to smallpox, other introduced diseases, violence, land was stolen and cultural connections damaged in the invasion of Sydney. This needs to be acknowledged.

Figure 32: Map showing general areas of Aboriginal clans in the Sydney region (source: AHO)

Country, The Dreaming, and Totems

- Country is a term to describe the lands, waters and seas to which people are connected. The term contains complex ideas about spiritual belief, cultural identity, and Aboriginal Law; rights and responsibilities.
- The Dreaming is a widely used term to try and understand Aboriginal religion or spiritual Law. The Dreaming establishes the rules governing the relationships between ancestral spirits or creation beings, people, land, animals and all things
- Across many Australian Aboriginal cultures, the concept of time in relation to The Dreaming is cyclic, rather than linear.
- In southeast Australia, the major creation being is Baiame, often described as a sky god. There are rock engravings that feature Baiame, and also particularly around Sydney an ancestral man referred to as Daramulan and a woman, his wife. Engraved footprints called *mundoes* record their movements across Country.
- David Watts talked briefly about totems within Aboriginal communities, using his own as an example (inherited from his grandfather). Known as 'Black George' David's grandfather was a Ngemba man from northwest NSW.
- Totems define your relationship to your family, other members of your clan, rules about marriage, as well as relationships and responsibilities to plants, animals, and Country. David Watts noted that because of the devastating effects of colonisation, the totems for Gamaragal people are not well known.

History of Sydney and invasion

- Sydney as an Aboriginal place was largely open forest which included areas cleared to enable easy hunting. Cool (not hot) burning was one of the techniques used to manage the landscape.
- The British immediately modified the landscape in ways that served them but did not serve Aboriginal people or Country. They didn't understand Aboriginal burning practices and actively tried to stop them. These changes immediately affected Aboriginal people and their livelihoods.
- The British used the trade routes and pathways of Aboriginal peoples for their own colonising purposes, often building their roads along well-established routes used by Aboriginal people, e.g. Parramatta Road.
- Smallpox and other diseases had a huge impact in Sydney and beyond. Estimates are that between 50-80% of the Aboriginal population died due to the disease. So many people died that there weren't enough people to carry out proper burial rites, pass on cultural knowledge, or maintain the care and management of Country.
- As the colony grew people were pushed further away from their own traditional lands, and dispossession, violence and massacres increased.
- All these aspects of colonisation still resonate down to today and impact all Australians; this includes loss of specific knowledge about Country on the lower north shore.

Aboriginal Heritage: Aboriginal community perspectives

- Aboriginal people have survived across Australia.
- It sometimes surprises people to hear that the largest population of Aboriginal people is in New South Wales.
- There are ongoing arguments about historical change and what it means for culture, tradition versus contemporary. Colonialisation had a devastating impact, and things are not the same as they once were – but there is continuity of culture in caring for Country.
- With such major changes to Country and the environment, people were often forced to find new ways to make a living and support their

families. Women sometimes worked as housekeepers, including in many houses on the North Shore. For men, jobs often drew on their bush knowledge.

- David Watts stated that like any community, there are different views amongst Aboriginal people, and groups and individuals don't always agree with each other.

Archaeological and academic perspectives

- Legislation to investigate and protect sites is often initiated on academic priorities or because of developments, not because of requests by Aboriginal people.
- While many sites have been lost with changes to land use and building developments, many sites remain, have been identified, cared for, and are still being located all the time on the lower North Shore.
- David Watts talked about the poor record of Aboriginal heritage site protection, destruction, damage, and issues of how to best protect.

Aboriginal sites in the lower North Shore

There are hundreds of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites on the lower North Shore including:

- Rock art sites, stencils and paintings (usually in shelters)
- Rock engravings (usually on open expanses of sandstone)
- Grinding/tool sharpening sites (generally on sandstone close to water)
- Shell middens, created through site use over many, many generations
- Open sites, camps with artefact scatters (an Aboriginal stone axe and variety of stone tool types shared with group for handling)
- Scarred trees, evidence of extraction of bark for shields, containers, canoes (these are now rare; mostly destroyed; only one well known tree on north shore remains)
- Burial sites (always reported to Police in first instance)

David Watts gave an overview of the types of sites with specific examples from his work on the lower north shore. He talked about the type of work needed to respect and protect them. The whole Country is a cultural landscape, new sites are regularly uncovered during development work. This overview introduced the project team to the types of Aboriginal places they would encounter on the Walk on Country.

Figure 33: Anita Zhou handling Aboriginal artefacts as part of the Workshop (source: Artefact)

Aboriginal Heritage Office and Museum

The Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) is an award-winning partnership of local Sydney Councils working to protect Aboriginal sites and promote Aboriginal history and heritage in each of Councils' areas. The AHO's activities are based on three main areas: site management, Council support and education.

David Watts invited everyone to visit the AHO to view their exhibition about Aboriginal Sydney there. The displays include a variety of perspectives including an Aboriginal knowledge perspective, historical, and a general community perspective.

Recommended resources, David Watts recommended the following resource list: https://www.aboriginalheritage.org/resources/readinglist/

5.4.2 Walk on Country, 14 January 2025

David Watts led a Walk on Gamaragal Country in the afternoon, following the workshop. The walk took place at an area that is now referred to as Balls Head Reserve, Waverton. The Walk on Country was attended by Artefact staff and members of the project team.

5.4.2.1 *Attendees*

- David Watts, Independent Aboriginal heritage consultant
- Anita Zhou, Land & Form
- Mona Chao, Norelle Jones, Maya Baracat, Hyecorp
- Holly McNamara, Urbis
- Rob Mirams, Fender Katsalidis
- Rebecca Conway, Hannah Matagia, Artefact

5.4.2.2 *Agenda*

- Meet at Balls Head Reserve headland
- Walk to point to take in a view from Gamaragal Country
- Investigate shell midden
- Examine stencil art in small cave shelter
- View local animal and plant species
- View rock engravings (site near Coal Loader, Waverton)

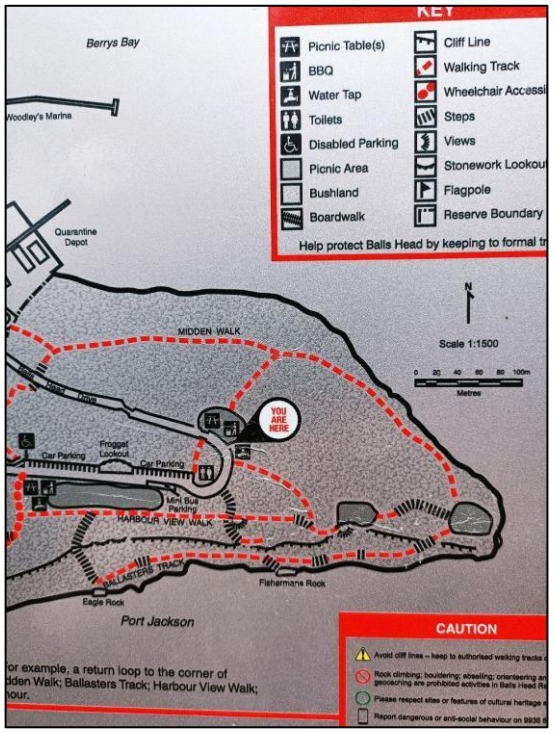


Figure 34: Map of Walk on Country route - Balls Head Reserve (source: Artefact)

5.4.2.3 *Encounters and themes of the Walk*

David Watts shared cultural knowledge and heritage values throughout the Walk on Country. The Walk on Country gave the participants an opportunity to reflect on the histories and information shared by David during the Cultural Awareness Workshop in the morning while viewing tangible examples of the Aboriginal cultural heritage site types discussed.

The Walk on Country involved walking a headland track on Gamaragal Country in bushland now known as Ball's Head Reserve. The Walk was through an open forested high sandstone landscape with extensive views of Warrane/Warrang (Sydney Harbour). The Walk was followed by a visit to a rock engraving site near the Coal Loader, Waverton historic site.

Gamaragal people have lived in this area for thousands of years. From the Headland people no doubt watched the British ships sail in and the European settlement grow. Some evidence points to Gamaragal people continuing to live here until as late as the early twentieth century. The number of rock art sites across the headland indicates that sacred ceremonies were likely performed in the vicinity and the area would have had layers of spiritual meaning as well as providing sites for family life and general living.

Plants / Animals and People

At Balls Head Reserve the group walked through the bush, experiencing the sights, colours, sounds, and smells of Gamaragal Country.

During the Walk, the project team saw and heard a variety of animals, including birds such as the Brush Turkey, and Water Dragons. Plants pointed out included *Themeda Australis*, a grass used for weaving bags and baskets, and She-Oak *Casuarina*, often used as a safety marker between Aboriginal women and their children.

Figure 35: View of Warrane (Sydney Harbour) from Balls Head, Waverton, 14 January 2025 (source: Artefact)

The shell midden at Balls Head headland is extensive. The scale of it represents generations of shared seafood meals based on oysters and other seafoods gathered only a short distance away on the shoreline and in the harbour waters. Gamaragal women gathered shellfish and fished with lines from canoes, men speared fish around the water's edges.

Shelters and stencils

David Watts showed the project team sandstone caves and overhangs carved by the wind and rain that appear all around the headland. These types of spaces have provided homes and shelter from the elements to Gamaragal people for millennia; places providing protection from sun and

rain, places to stay warm during winter and cook food out of the wind, places to sleep, rest or just look at the view.

Evidence of the use of shelters as living sites is usually seen in the form of black smoke staining on the roof of shelters. Larger shelters are susceptible to graffiti and other forms of vandalism and damage, especially in highly populated areas like Sydney.

David Watts pointed out a small low shelter, providing just enough space for someone to crawl in and decorate with hand stencils and other designs in now fading ochre. These designs are produced by blowing a mix of ochre and water from a person's mouth over an out reached hand or object. The low and protected nature of this shelter has meant the site remains quite well preserved. Gamaragal would have returned to the site over time, renewing stencils and perhaps adding new ones. There is no one appropriate to continue this particular cultural practice.

Figure 36: Hand and fish stencils inside sandstone shelter (source: Artefact)

Figure 37: David Watts showing hand stencils and fish stencils, (source: Artefact)

Engravings and spirituality

David Watts showed the Project team a major rock engraving site near the historic Coal Loader site. The engraving was uncovered and protected by the AHO during the renovation of the Coal Loader site.

Known colloquially as "whale rock" the engraving more closely resembles a giant shark. Due to the passage of time the engravings are quite shallow and now quite difficult to see. The designs were etched or cut into the rock with stone tools into the sandstone; they also include fish and ancestral spirit figures.

The number of rock art sites located across Balls Head suggest that it was an important spiritual and cultural landscape. The promontory and broad platforms of sandstone provide an almost 360° view of this part of Gamaragal Country, with extensive views to the south, east and west up and across the harbour. Aboriginal ceremony was often conducted on high grounds such as these.

Figure 38: Engraving on sandstone platform at Balls Head, Waverton (source: Artefact)

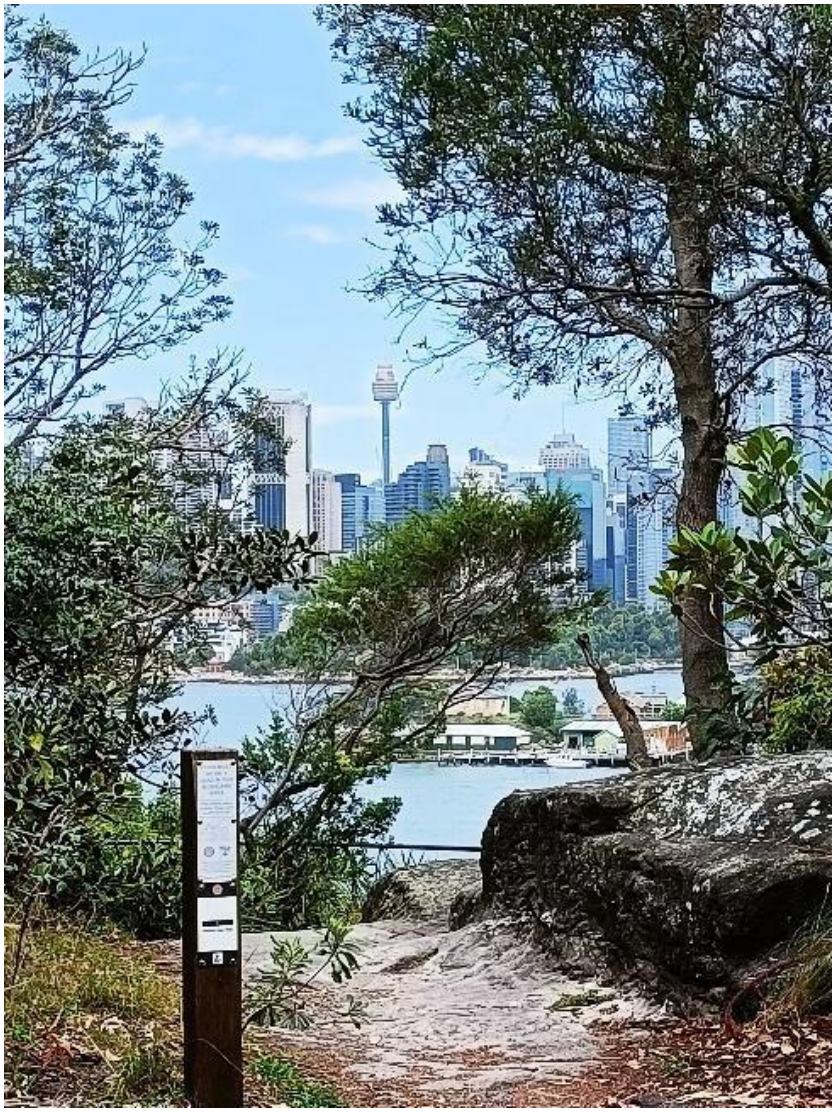


Figure 39: View south from Balls Head Reserve, now towards Centrepoint tower (source: Artefact)

5.5 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, during the SSDA stages.

Consultation and engagement could include:

- Engagement of Aboriginal owned businesses and organisations.
- Commissioning of artistic works from locally connected Aboriginal artists and in collaboration with Aboriginal Artist Cooperatives such as Eora Centre & Boomalli Artists Cooperative.
- Ongoing advice from Aboriginal knowledge holders
- Educational cultural tours and Walks on Country.
- Training and internships for early career Aboriginal professionals and students.

Figure 40: Discussion during Walk on Country 14 January 2025, (source Artefact)

6. ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES

6.1 Introduction

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

6.2 Cultural Values

6.2.1 Lands of the Gamaragal People

Gamaragal Country is a place rich in Aboriginal cultural history. Across the landscape cultural heritage and the physical environment intersect to reveal a sustained relationship between Gamaragal people and their traditional lands. Despite the urban development of Sydney, evidence of an enduring connection persists. Archaeological and cultural sites illustrate past land use, habitation, and spiritual connections. While acknowledging the profound disruption caused by colonization, the preserved cultural landscape, along with the interpretations provided by contemporary Aboriginal people, offer a valuable opportunity for shared understanding of history and place through a connection to Country.

6.2.2 Caring for Country

Aboriginal people have a customary spiritual connection to Country. Everything in the landscape has significance. Land, waterways, plants and animals, all have cultural use, interrelationships and spiritual meaning. They are tied with Dreaming stories, cultural learning and maintenance activities. While on Gamaragal Country some of the deeper spiritual knowledge has been lost through the disruption of colonisation Aboriginal people need access to Country to meet a deep cultural imperative to look after it now and for future generations. Aboriginal people carry leadership in Caring for Country, but all people can and should care for Country.

6.2.3 Environment

Gamaragal Country has a great diversity of plants, animals and environments. This includes part of Sydney Harbour, creek and river systems like the Lane Cove River, and higher inland area like Chatswood and Roseville. The Gamaragal people made comfortable lives for themselves across these environments by supporting and managing the natural systems in ways that valued all life forms equally and encouraged them to thrive. These practices involved close observation of the environment with sustainability at its core. Gamaragal Country should continue to be home to native plant and animal species, they belong here and thrive best.

6.2.4 Education and heritage

Passing on cultural heritage and ancestral knowledge to the next generation is important to Aboriginal people. It is critical to identity and cultural survival. It is also important to educate non-Aboriginal people in Australia about the history, culture and heritage of Aboriginal people in Sydney. Interpreting Aboriginal heritage sites and promoting truth-telling in historical narratives is important so that non-Aboriginal people learn to respect Aboriginal culture and its contemporary context. Aboriginal people should have the lead role, interpreting their heritage and lived experiences from their perspectives.

6.3 Registered Aboriginal sites

NOTE: 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 search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) was undertaken on 20 January 2025. The search area was defined as the study area and 4 x 4 km region surrounding it to inform the characterisation of the local archaeological context. The extensive search identified a total of 25 AHIMS sites within the wider search area. The most prevalent site features were 'Shell, Artefact' sites (see Figure 42: Location of AHIMS sites (study area is marked in red).

There were no AHIMS registered sites located within the study area. The closest identified AHIMS site to the study area is approximately 1.5km to the northeast. The extensive AHIMS search identified a clear patterning of sites within the search area, in which almost all of the sites were located in close proximity to Lane Cove River, Middle Harbour, or in the upstream area of one of their tributaries. The concentration of sites in these areas likely reflects the bountiful natural resources these locations would have provided for Aboriginal groups, and their suitability as occupation sites.

Additionally, the absence of identified Aboriginal sites in the more developed portions of the wider search area suggest that these locations were less suitable for Aboriginal groups, or that significant levels of historical disturbance have displaced or destroyed Aboriginal objects or sites which may have been present in these locations.

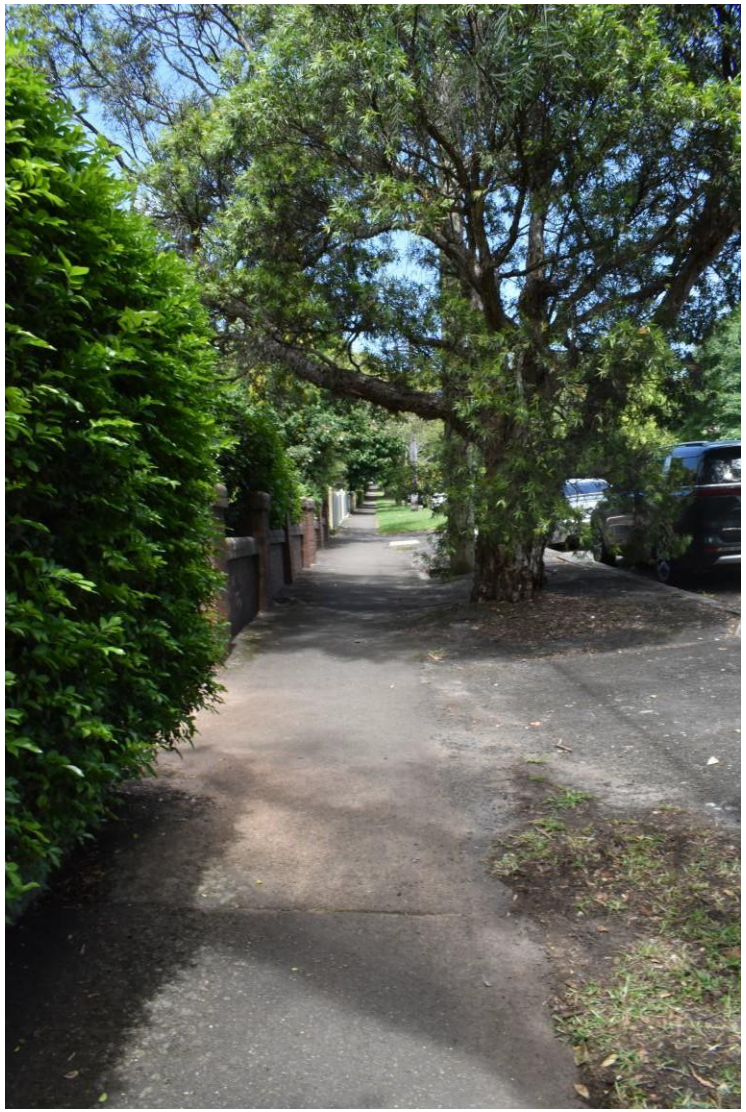


Figure 41: Roseville Avenue (source: Artefact)

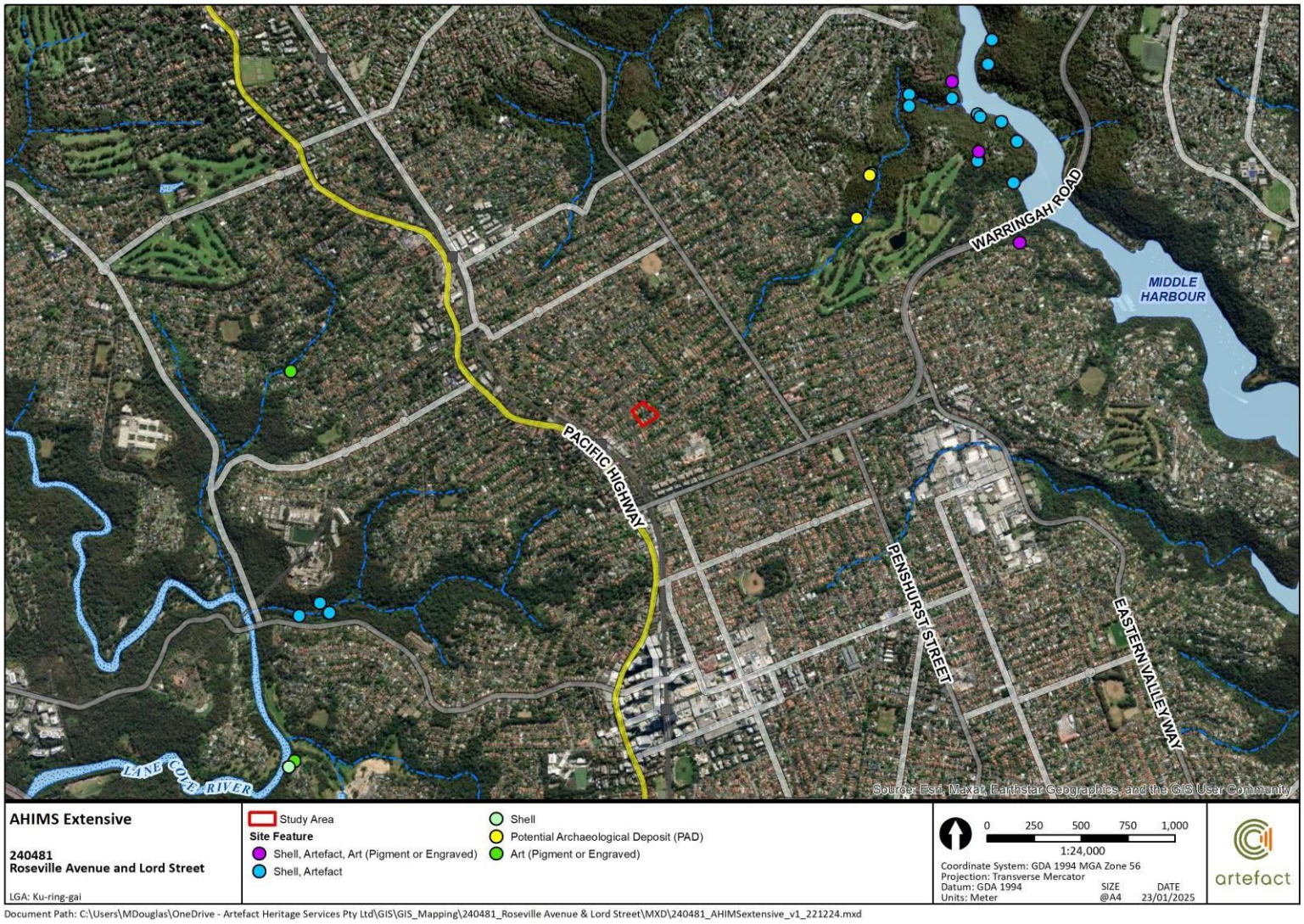


Figure 42: Location of AHIMS sites (study area is marked in red)

7. DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY

7.1 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.

7.2 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. The icons were designed by Dharug artist Adam Laws.

Acknowledge Country

Provide acknowledgement, interpretation, and resources about Gamaragal People and Country. Learning about and having access to cultural heritage information relevant to the site is important. Meaningful interpretive signage and use of local Aboriginal language can acknowledge Gamaragal Country and history. Invite Elders to do Welcome/Acknowledgement of Country at milestone events and community gatherings.

Connect with Country

Connect site users to Country through nature-based experiences such as multisensory and bush tucker gardens. Use native plantings and replicate natural systems in proposed landscaping. Include species Indigenous to Gamaragal Country. Where possible, use locally sourced materials in landscaping and construction, such as native timbers and sandstone,

Interpret Country

Interpret Gamaragal heritage and local Aboriginal social histories for non-Aboriginal residents and community. Engage and encourage community to learn about the natural environment, Aboriginal heritage and histories. Undertake additional consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders and consider education programs run by Aboriginal companies to offer opportunities for residents to learn more.

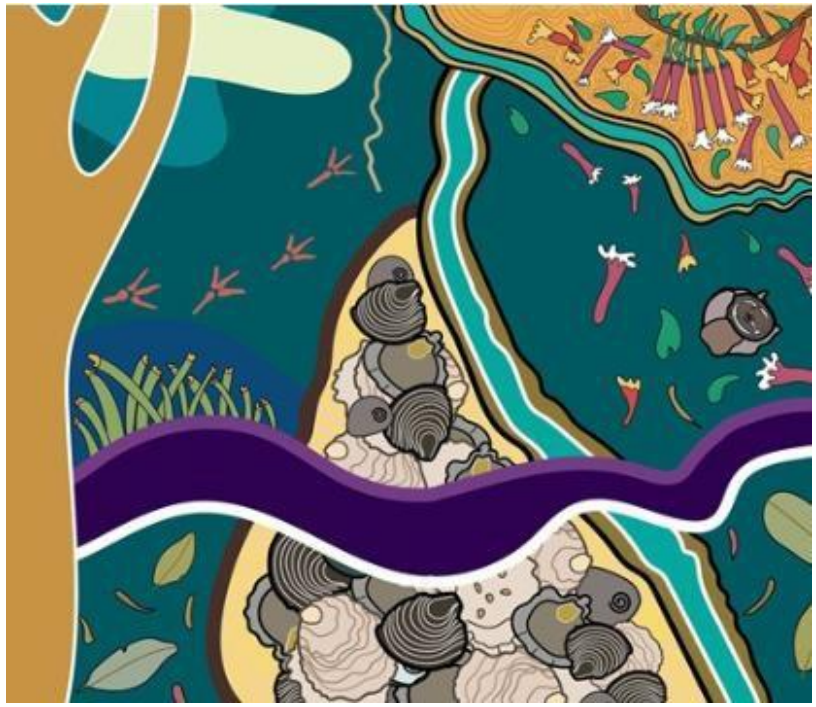
View Country

Maintain views across Gamaragal Country to emphasise landscape connections and cultural relationships, eg. local bushland, river valleys, known Aboriginal sites, proximity to Sydney Harbour. Maintain ongoing cultural engagement to interpret the site and its context and interpret the landscape from an Aboriginal perspective

7.3 Examples of design realisations

7.3.1 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.



Emma Hicks, Untitled (detail), 2024, Cammeraygal Country, digital artwork (source: Willoughby Council)

7.3.2 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.

An Acknowledgement of Country feature could be placed at a key entry point to the new development.

Left: Marrickville Library Acknowledgement of Country; right: University of Sydney Acknowledgement of Country, both created in consultation with Aboriginal artists

St Leonards Health Complex - Darug language on sandstone hard landscaping

7.3.3 Integration of Indigenous designs and forms into 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 for new developments, providing a visual exploration of the history of each 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 interpretive media 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.

Burrinja Cultural Centre, In Melbourne's Dandenong Ranges

Wee Hur designs for student accommodation, lower facade based on Gadigal weaving patterns

7.3.4 Landscape geometry and plantings

Interpretive landscaping is an effective approach to evoke past structures, gardens and landscapes within public and private developments. Landscaping devices, including use of turf and hardstand, geometry and shapes, use of water and planting certain species, can create an immersive space for site users that gives a feeling of being surrounded by environment and heritage.

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 are a powerful interpretive approach for landscaping. Planting patterns, where trees and understory plants were clumped rather than planted in lines, are preferred to enhance the naturalistic feel and to echo Country.

Yarning Circle, Curtin University, Noel Nannup and Simon Forrest

7.3.5 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.

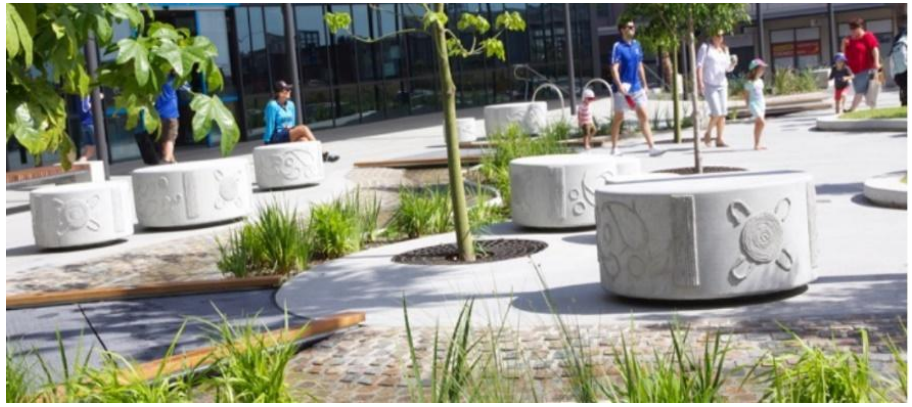
Embedding Aboriginal design elements into the ground plane of a site can connect a new development directly to Country, providing a tangible aesthetic reference to significant physical, social, or spiritual features of the land. By installing such ground plane elements into outdoor spaces, a strong visual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

Range of ground plane element designs

7.3.6 Gathering spaces and seating

New developments provide an opportunity to integrate heritage interpretation elements into functional components such as stairways, seating, shelters, balustrades and screens. As well as being essential elements of public space, these items can be canvases for heritage content.

Embedding 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, roofs, shopfront awnings or shade structures for portraying images or Aboriginal designs are opportunities for unique expressions of a destination's heritage.



Aboriginal motifs incorporated into concrete seating

7.3.7 Play spaces

Play spaces act as community focus points, drawing young families to a space of recreation, safety and relaxation, a key element in placemaking for a new development. A well-designed play space providing a rich and diverse play opportunities allows children and adults alike to engage with heritage in new ways. By incorporating heritage interpretation in a play space in creative and subtle ways, both children and parents can encounter new ideas and integrate educational experiences into everyday play.

Play equipment and topography can be customised to the heritage experience, with local materials, and natural shapes creating a strong sense of connection to the land. Visual/tactile design features and simple text could be incorporated into the play space to support play-based learning.

Left: Wawai Ngurra inclusive adventure playspace by Leanne Mulgo Watson and Blacktown City Council (Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation and Blacktown City Council) right: Yirran muru (Many pathways) - Dharawal Interpretive Play Space, Shellharbour Civic Centre[60]

[60] https://letschatshellharbour.com/aboriginal-interpretive-play-space

7.3.8 Interpretive panels

Well-designed and clearly written interpretive panels are excellent media for conveying key stories and rich narratives in an accessible manner. If integrated into the design of a site, they can be strategically located to gain appropriate exposure. Interpretive panels, as text-based media, are ideally suited to tell more details of site-specific stories providing contextual information in a succinct and engaging manner.

Panel text can encourage visitors to look more closely at their surroundings or can be used to pose questions to stimulate conversations. Text panels should be located in spaces which allow for a longer dwell time or in natural pause points such as lobbies, lift wells, gardens, or seating areas.

QR codes can be added to panels to link with further layers of information on the site's website.

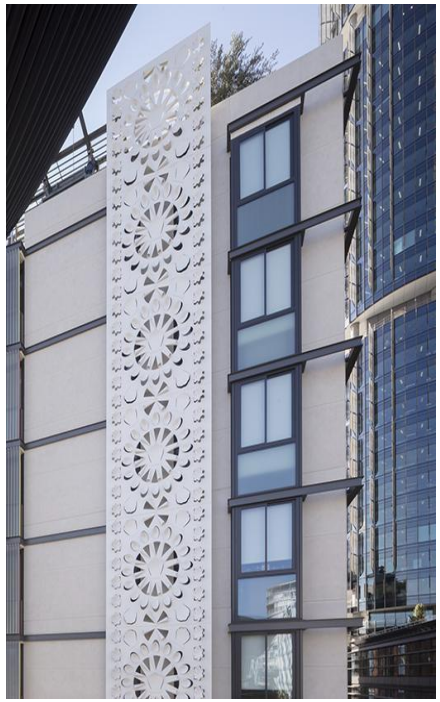
Left: Artist's statement at 11 Gibbons Street (source: Artefact), Right: Bidjigal woman Jordan Ardler's artwork on trail signage, in collaboration with the Gujaga Foundation and local Indigenous community (source: Centennial Parklands)

Top and bottom: standalone signage interpreting local Aboriginal heritage

7.3.9 Artworks

Large-scale artworks are an effective method of interpreting and expressing Aboriginal heritage values. This type of interpretive media creates a visual statement about the cultural heritage of an area and can be an important aspect of place-making. Public art is a powerful tool of cultural expression, using strong graphic imagery to visually communicate cultural messages to a large audience.

Important consideration needs to be made in selecting appropriate Aboriginal artists relevant to the interpretation of the site.

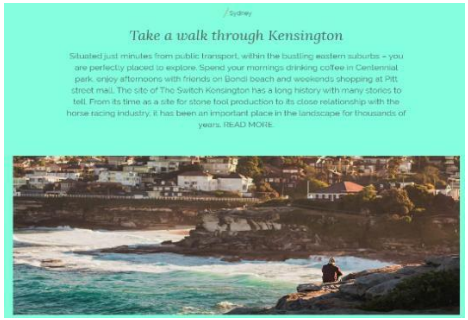


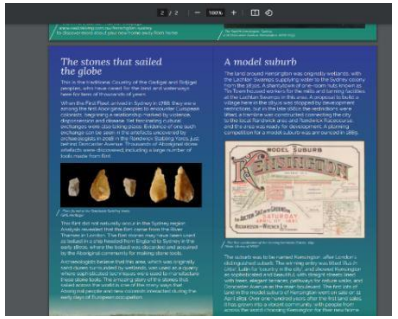
Left: Earth, Wind, Fire, Water glasswork, by Bronwyn Bancroft, Royal North Shore Hospital. Right: shell wall 2015 by Esme Timbery and Jonathan Jones.

Left: Journey into Healing, Kempsey Hospital 2022, Pearl Depoma; Right: 'Ancient Highways' lift foyer by Maddie Gibbs at Stanmore Station;

7.3.10 Webpage

As a more traditional form of digital engagement, webpages have continued to be popular with a wide range of audience groups. Dedicated pages within a website can provide a vehicle for layering of information and easy access to a wide range of images, photographs and historical information. Websites can also host blogs, oral histories, presentations and news updates which can be frequently updated to present the most recent, relevant heritage stories. Web-based, native and hybrid apps can offer similar content but tailored to devices.





Switch Kensington website with link to downloadable heritage guide, Switch/Artefact

7.3.11 Possible locations of design realisations

Figure 43: Artist impression (source: FKA)

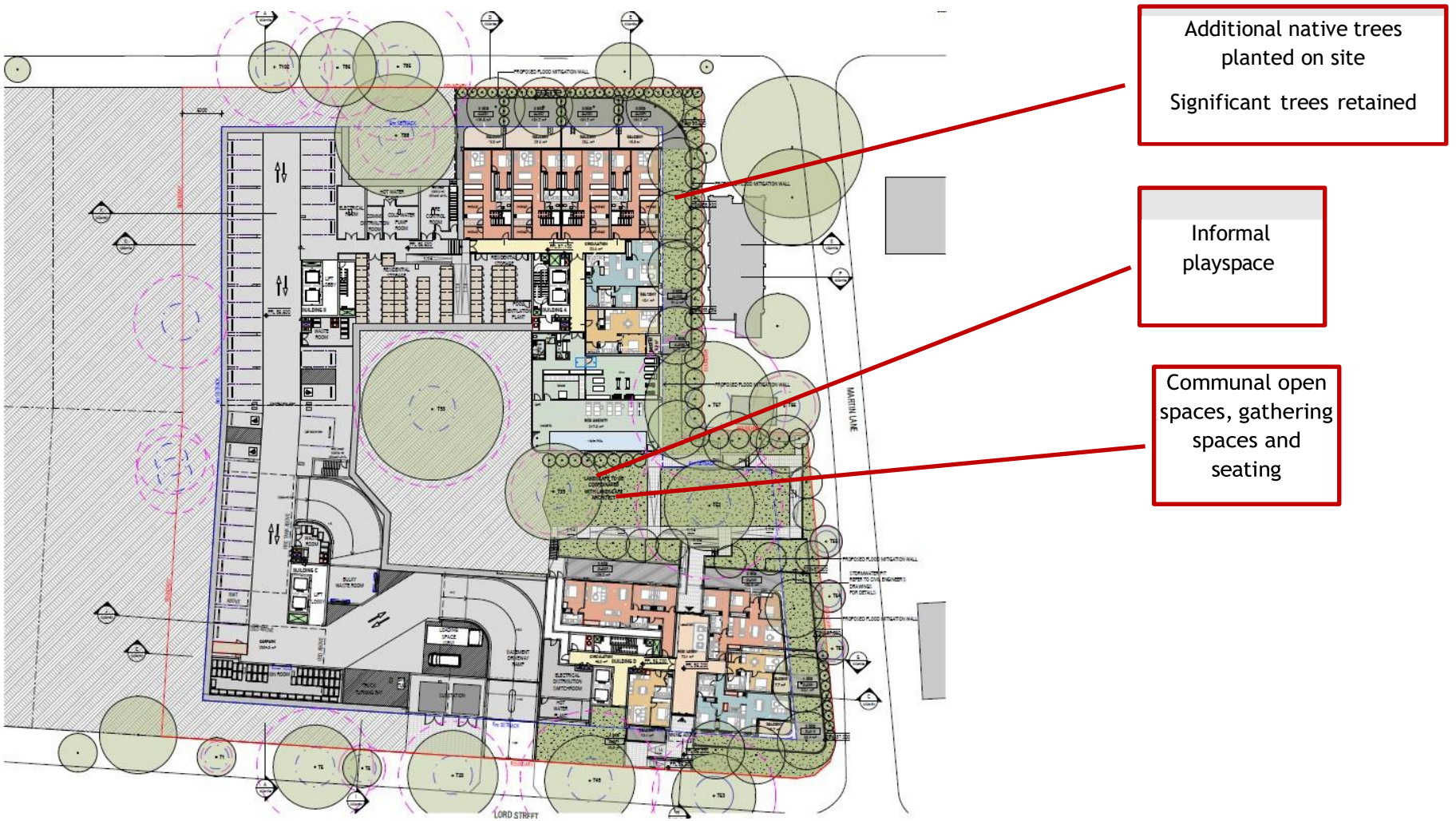


Figure 44: Landscape (source: FKA)

8. PRACTICES

8.1 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.

8.1.1 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

8.1.2 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

8.1.3 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

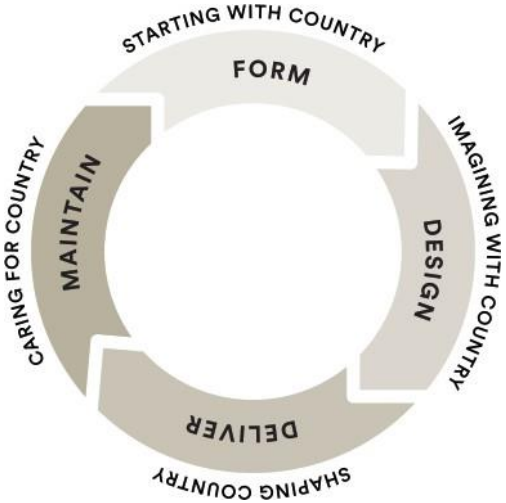
- Ensure Aboriginal people retain authorship and control of their cultural knowledge and intellectual property, and how it is shared with others.
- Invite Aboriginal people to co-design and co-manage projects rather than just being asked to provide their cultural knowledge, stories and insights to help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

9. MITIGATION MEASURES

9.1 Introduction

This section discusses actions 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. The tables below identify actions that have been taken in the preparation of this report which demonstrate how the Country-centred approach has been achieved and provides recommendations for further actions required to start with Country.



9.2 Form – Starting with Country

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timiing
Research and prepare	Locate previous Aboriginal cultural heritage and technical studies relevant to the project.	Outcomes See previous consultation and reports in section 5.3	
		Recommendations All project team members should review this *Connecting with Country report*	Pre-lodgement
	Considering undertaking cultural awareness training, including identifying the Aboriginal stakeholders you will be working with	Outcomes Project team members attended cultural awareness Workshop on 14 January 2025 Project team members attended a Walk on Country on 14 January 2025	
		Recommendations Cultural awareness training should be undertaken by all future project team members.	Ongoing

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timiing
Allocate time and resources	Allocate sufficient time and resources for the community to participate, ensuring there is flexibility with timing and location of meeting	Outcomes Artefact organised consultation with key stakeholders at a suitable time and location for all attendees	
		Recommendations Project teams should ensure that project timelines and budgets account for knowledge sharing workshops that are flexible	Ongoing
Empower	Enable the Aboriginal community to lead and guide the project from the outset and throughout the project lifecycle, including financial decision making	Outcomes The Aboriginal Heritage Office was contacted and, on their advice, Independent Aboriginal Heritage consultant, David Watts was engaged to design and deliver a program to share cultural heritage values with the project team (Cultural Awareness Workshop and Walk on Country on 14 January 2025)	
		Recommendations Consider carrying out additional consultation at later stages of the project, for example: consultation specific to Aboriginal plantings landscaping, interpretation and public art strategies for the site.	Ongoing
Collaborate	Follow established community engagement protocols	Outcomes David Watts was asked how he would like to be addressed, despite his extensive cultural knowledge he prefers not to be called 'Uncle', a term often used in deference to Aboriginal learned status. ICIP and other protocols are part of an ongoing discussion with David Watts and the AHO	
		Recommendations The ICIP guidelines outlined in section 1.8 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 7.3.8	
		Recommendations	Post-lodgement

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timiing
		The preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy would assist in identifying and conveying key cultural relationships and historic narratives	
	Listen to community concerns about building development and how it will affect Country	Outcomes Concerns and opportunities about the protection of tangible Aboriginal Heritage in development projects in general were discussed at the activities on the 13 November 2024 and 26 November 2024	
		Recommendations The project team should review and respond to the discussion feedback outlined in section 6.2	Pre-lodgement
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 1.8	
		Recommendations The ICIP guidelines outlined in section 1.8 should be followed in future consultation – particularly in development of public art and Aboriginal heritage Interpretation. Remunerate 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 discussion on the 14 January 2025 and will be reiterated on provision of the draft report to clients. David Watts was sent meeting notes and a copy of the draft report for review and approval This report and notes from the discussion on the 14 January 2025 were shared with stakeholder David Watts to check he approves of the representation of his knowledge and how it is shared	
		Recommendations Redact sensitive information when reports are made publicly available. Establish protocols to maintain communication with cultural stakeholders	Ongoing

9.3 Design – Imagining with Country

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
Design basics	Use first place names	Outcomes The Aboriginal Heritage Office and David Watts recommended "Gamaragal" as the preferred spelling	
		Recommendations: Incorporate the word "Gamaragal" into signage and wayfinding if appropriate Where possible use Gamaragal dialect (Sydney Language) and/or Dharug Language in wayfinding and interpretive signage	Ongoing
	Connect to broader landscape settings	Outcomes The importance of views across the Country and the appreciation of understanding sites in their cultural landscape context was a key outcome of the stakeholder consultation.	
		Recommendations Consideration of cultural landscape view lines to be included in the project's design Consult with Aboriginal knowledge holders when conducting and developing environmental management recommendations to educate wider community, to support the maintenance of this knowledge, and improve the health of ecosystems	Pre-lodgment and post-lodgement
	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 Aboriginal Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment was prepared for this project (Artefact, 2025)	
		Recommendations Consider the development of an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy	Post-lodgement
	Acknowledge shared history	Outcomes An Aboriginal history of the area was compiled into this report in section 4.2	

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
		Information about Aboriginal history was shared during the Workshop and Walk on Country – see section 5.4.1. Truth-telling is an important aspect of understanding shared history of the Sydney region.	
		Recommendations Preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy would assist is presenting the different historical narratives	Post-lodgement
Design opportunities	Learning from traditional Aboriginal architecture	Outcomes: Examples of good practice in incorporating Aboriginal design into development are given in section 7.3 The Aboriginal histories section 4.2 also includes examples of traditional Aboriginal homes	
		Recommendations Further consultation needs to be organised to ensure the Aboriginal community approves of any design concepts that reference Aboriginal cultural knowledge and histories.	Ongoing
	Supporting living systems: Earth, Water and Sky	Recommendations Environmental assessment recommendations and design concepts should be prepared considering cultural knowledge shared and that promote Indigenous environmental restoration, healthy Country	Pre-lodgement
	Reawakening memory	Outcomes Ideas about integrating Aboriginal cultural heritage into developments have been included in sections 6.2 and 7.3.8	
		Recommendations Consider the preparation of an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation and Art Strategy	Post-lodgement

9.4 Deliver – Shaping Country

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
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 the local Aboriginal community to determine culturally appropriate handling, repatriation and reburial of any ancestral remains or artefacts	Outcomes A significant amount of information and recommendations were shared by David Watts about the preservation and care for tangible Indigenous heritage during the cultural awareness Workshop and the Walk on Country, 14 January. These recommendations have been summarised in section 5.4. Consideration should be given to these recommendations as well as the recommendations in the, *Lord Street and Roseville Avenue, Roseville Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment* (Artefact, 2025)	
	Undertake a skills audit of the community before construction	Recommendations Provide training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal community members and businesses in various stages of the project's development	Ongoing
Celebrate	Plan for community participation and ceremony. Look for opportunities to involve community throughout the	Recommendations Commission a Welcome to Country ceremony for important milestone events, breaking ground, official opening etc., noting that a Welcome to Country needs to be done by a formal Aboriginal representative (eg AHO, Metro LALC). Invite members of the local Aboriginal community to events as guests.	Post-construction

Activity	Action	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
	development process, such as -Invitations to perform Acknowledgment / Welcome to Country -Invitations to attend official events	Consider how the development might interact with local celebrations of Aboriginal culture, festivals, Sorry Day, NAIDOC	

9.5 Maintain – Caring for Country

Activity from framework	Action from framework	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
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/have access and feel welcome, culturally safe while doing so. Consider inclusion of areas within the development where Aboriginal community members can interpret their own history and relationships to Country from their own perspectives (heritage, history, environment, art)	Pre-lodgement
Monitor and evaluate	Undertake post-occupancy evaluations to establish project success and areas for improvement	Recommendations: Commit to undertaking post-occupancy evaluations, build on successes and create action plans for areas identified as needing improvement.	Post-construction
	Maintain ongoing relationships with community	Recommendations: Embed Aboriginal engagement as an important element in the development, including its future life.	Ongoing

Activity from framework	Action from framework	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
	Continue to develop and strengthen cultural awareness	Recommendations: Consider inclusion of areas within the development where Aboriginal community members can interpret their own history and relationships to Country from their own perspectives (heritage, history, environment, art) Consider cultural awareness projects which can be implemented, for potential residents, neighbours, and wider community. For the lower north shore there is potential to connect to the educational offerings of the Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO).	Pre-construction

10. OUTCOMES FOR COUNTRY

10.1 Introduction

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

10.2 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	Timings
Healthy Ecology	High biodiversity includes a wide variety of plant and animal species, including those that are rare or endangered	Include endemic species within landscape designs	Pre-lodgement
	Ecological systems are resilient to impacts from drought, floods and fires, as well as human-induced disturbances such as habitat destruction and pollution	Consider consulting with Aboriginal stakeholders over fire and flood management if required	Pre-lodgement
The physical form of Country remains recognisable	Interference with natural water systems is minimal	Consider how to minimise erosion in the development	Pre-lodgement
and restored where possible			

10.3 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	Timings
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	Acknowledge the 'Gamaragal' people in the development	Ongoing
Training	Training is provided to develop communities' spatial design skills and understanding of planning and design processes	An early-career Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer Hannah Matagia attended the site visit in order to develop her skills and experience in	Pre-lodgement

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and Recommendations	Timings
		cultural heritage and planning and design processes.	
Employment opportunities	Jobs are created that allow people to stay connected to community and Country,	Creating jobs that cater to the Aboriginal community in ways to help their Country and to look after Country. Have more understanding of the land and Culture. Aboriginal owned businesses are encouraged to keep going as they are supported.	Ongoing
	Employment opportunities are provided throughout all stages of project life cycles		Ongoing
	Aboriginal businesses are supported in the project procurement strategy		Ongoing

10.4 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	Timings
Aboriginal cultural advisers guiding project teams and clients	Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected and celebrated within planning and design outcomes.	Follow the guidance and recommendations given by David Watts during the Cultural Awareness workshop and Walk on Country on 14 January 2025 Follow the recommendations in the Roseville Avenue and Lord St Aboriginal Heritage Impact Assessment (Artefact, 2025)	Ongoing
Access to Country is provided	Access to Country enables community to practice ceremony and undertake obligations to care for Country.	Consider how the project can maintain important cultural views across Country	Pre-lodgement

10.5 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	Timings
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.	Cultural awareness training was undertaken by the project team on the 14 January 2025 and should be undertaken by all future project team members	Pre-lodgement
	Cultural awareness training is embedded into continuing professional development. Requirements		Pre-lodgement
	Proof of cultural awareness training is required in procurement contracts		Pre-construction

10.6 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	Timings
Planning and design projects create places that are connected with Country	Project sites are connected to broader landscapes beyond property or project boundaries Where possible, locally sourced, sustainable building materials are used; they have a relationship with and belong to the Country they come from.	Landscaping would incorporate native plants and views across to the creeks Use sustainable local building materials for use throughout the development where possible Consider how to maintain views across Country	Pre-lodgement
	First placenames guide design and planning outcomes: placemaking, dual naming and wayfinding.	Consider Aboriginal place naming if appropriate, for example “Gamaragal”	Ongoing

What it looks like	Indicators for success	Outcomes and recommendations	Timings
	The memory of significant cultural, historic and natural events can be read and traced within Country's landscape	Consider development of a Heritage Interpretation Strategy	Post-lodgement
Planning and design outcomes support Living cultural practices	Projects support ongoing opportunities for on-Country tours, ceremony, and sourcing Indigenous food and materials.	Create spaces where ceremony and activity can occur Consider ceremonies at key milestones through project development	Post-construction
Original landscapes are repaired or restored	Landscapes are regenerated.	Consider use of endemic species in planting schemes	Pre-lodgement

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 Conclusion and recommendations

This Connecting with Country report for the Hyecorp development, Lord Street and Roseville Avenue, Roseville has been prepared to align with the principles and guidelines of the *GANSW Connecting with Country Framework (2023)* and associated best practice documents.

This report has been prepared in consultation with Aboriginal cultural heritage specialist David Watts and provides a vision and design principles to embed Country into the proposed 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 SSDA and future development of the site – see section 7.2
- Actioning appropriate recommendations from the Outcomes for Country – see section 10
- Integrating meaningful interpretation/artwork/landscape elements within the design development stages of this project, through the development of a Heritage Interpretation and 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 45: Port Jackson fig tree growing out of sandstone, Balls Head Reserve, 14 January 2025 (source: Artefact)

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13. APPENDIX A: CONSULTATION LOG

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic
Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO)	11/12/2024	Artefact	Email	Early mention of project to gauge interest. AHO recommended David Watts. Independent Aboriginal heritage consultant and previous AHO manager.
	22/01/2025	AHO	Email	R Conway received email from AHO on behalf of David Watts regarding ICIP concerns over image use and details in Workshop minutes.
	28/01/2025	Artefact	Email	Discussed concerns. Will reiterate ICIP with client. D Watts will have opportunity to review draft report.
David Watts, Aboriginal stakeholder	11/12/2024	Artefact	Email	Early mention of project to gauge interest
	11/12/2024	Artefact	Email	Meeting invite sent
	16/12/2024	Artefact	Email	Discussion for Workshop and Walk on Country development
	07/01/2025	Artefact	Phone	Discussion of dates, locations, plan for Workshop and Walk
	09/01/2025	Artefact	Phone	Confirmation of Workshop and Walk on Country, including numbers of Developer's project team attending
	13/01/2025	Artefact	Email	Sent developers doc (in confidence); support on logistics, parking
	14/01/2025	Artefact	In-person	Workshop and Walk on Country for project team
	14/01/2025	Artefact	Email	Thankyou message; follow-up to Hyecorp J Algie meeting notes
	22 & 28/01/2025	AHO - Artefact	Email	See entries 22 & 28/01/2025 AHO (above)
	10/02/2025	Artefact	Email	Sent draft report notes
	24/3/2025	Artefact	Email	Sent draft report for review. Report updated following comments from David Watts.

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