

# UNSW N13 STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

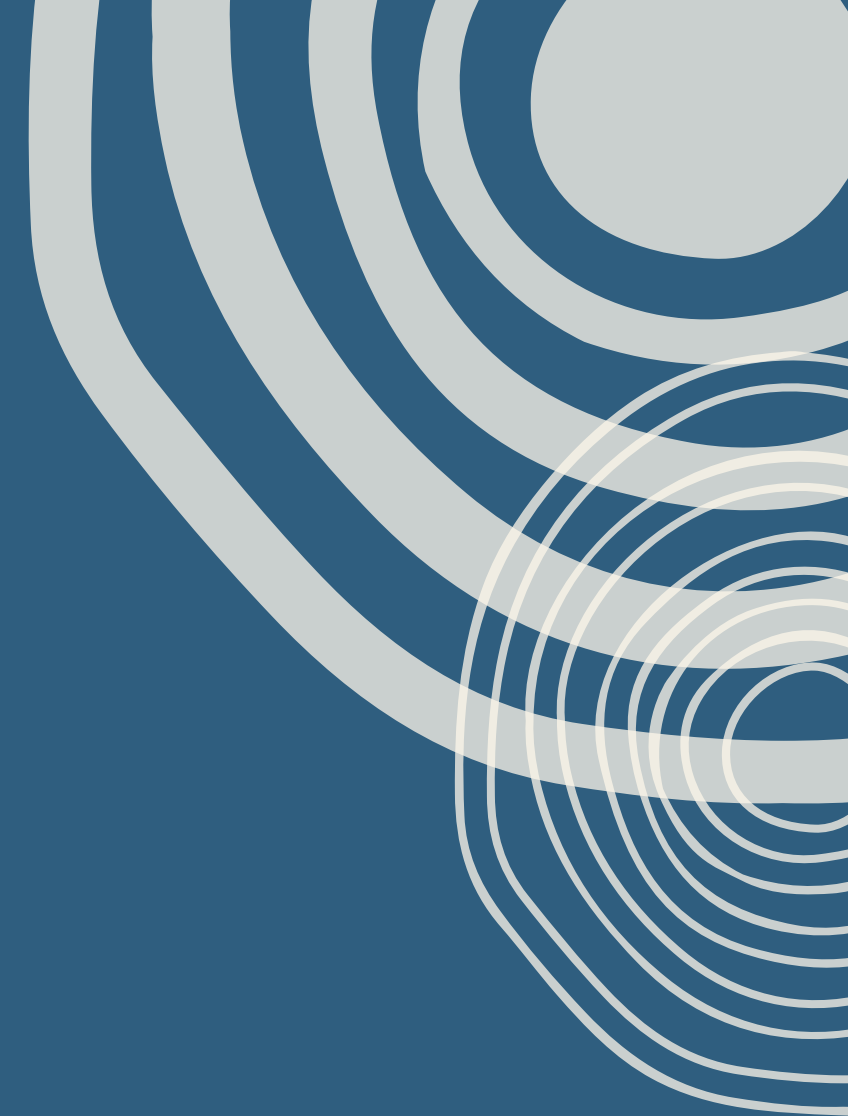
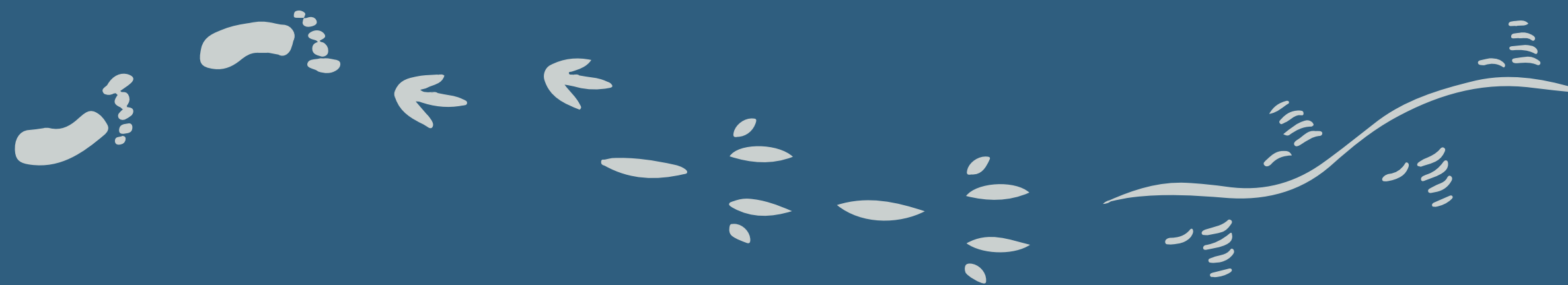
CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY  
CWC DESIGN REPORT - FINAL | OCTOBER 2025



*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this document may contain voices/images, names of people who have passed away.*

*We acknowledge the Cultural Landscape that we are working upon, and the Bidjigal Peoples of Dharwal Country as the Traditional Custodians of the Country where the UNSW N13 project is located.*

*We acknowledge all First Nations people and their ongoing connection to culture, lands and waters and their valuable contribution to the community. We recognise, acknowledge, and extend our respects to many others who have custodial obligations for Country who have been connected to Country for many generations, including their Elders past, present and emerging.*



*Yerrabingin is an Aboriginal owned design studio. At the core of our work is custodianship and care for Country. Our expertise encompasses Designing with Country, landscape architecture and urban design. We are recognised for our collaborative design approach, bringing together cultural knowledge and sustainable design solutions. We walk together to amplify the powerful language of Country for the betterment of our collective future.*

*We are guided by the inspiration of Country, the stories and knowledge a place contains and gifts us. We acknowledge its contribution to wellbeing both mental and physical, providing a refuge and safe place to learn and share.*

*Our Vision is that sensing and caring for Country is something that transcends cultural differences and highlights the many values that are similar across the cultures of our contemporary communities, supporting a socially inclusive, resilient, and innovative community based on, and honouring the wisdom and kinship of all cultures, captured through the lens of custodianship.*



Figure.1 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Coastal Flora

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	7	<b>PLANT / COLLABORATE</b>	Design Development	28	Design Development	38
			<i>CWC Opportunities / Actions</i>		<i>Knowledge Tree: Celebrating Bidjigal Wisdom</i>	
<b>CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY DESIGN</b>			Design Development	29	Design Development	39
Introduction to CWC Design	9	How Might We?	<i>A Hearth, A Home: Tending to Enduring Legacy</i>		<i>CWC Opportunities and Actions - Knowledge Tree</i>	
<i>Beginning with Country</i>		<i>Our Design Challenge</i>				
GANSW Connecting with Country Framework	10	Walk on Country	Connecting with Country Opportunities / Actions	30	Connecting with Country Opportunities / Actions	40
<i>Policy Context</i>		<i>Listening to Country</i>	<i>A Hearth, A Home: Tending to Enduring Legacy</i>		<i>Knowledge Tree: Celebrating Bidjigal Wisdom</i>	
Yerrabingin Pillars	11	Collaborative Design Workshop	Design Development	31	Designing with Country	41
What guides our work		<i>Discussion and Findings</i>	<i>CWC Opportunities and Actions - A Hearth, A Home</i>		Inclusive and Interconnected Communities	
Yerrabingin Collaborative Design Methodology	12	<b>NOURISH / ITERATE</b>	Design Development	32	Design Development	42
Our Design Process			<i>Watermark: Sensing Ripples of Saltwater Country</i>		<i>Elements of Country Exploration</i>	
		Ideation Development Workshop	Connecting with Country Opportunities / Actions	33	Design Development	43
<b>COLLECT / EMPATHISE</b>		<i>Discussion and Findings</i>	<i>Watermark: Sensing Ripples of Saltwater Country</i>		<i>Answering the How Might We Question</i>	
Introduction	14	<b>TEND / SUSTAIN</b>	Design Development	34	Project Legacy	44
Bidjigal Country	15		<i>CWC Opportunities and Actions - Watermark</i>		<i>Future of Connecting with Country</i>	
<i>Place in Country</i>		Community Feedback Session	Design Development	35	Figures List	45
Bidjigal Country	16	<i>Discussion and Findings</i>	<i>First Light: Nurturing Emerging Connections</i>		References	46
<i>The Randwick Hearth Stones</i>		Design Development	Design Development	36		
Educational Legacies	17	<i>Draft Report Feedback</i>	<i>CWC Opportunities and Actions - First Light</i>			
<i>Site Specific Opportunities</i>			Connecting with Country Opportunities / Actions	37		
			<i>First Light: Nurturing Emerging Connections</i>			

DOCUMENT NAME	REV	DATE
YB_CWC_FDR_194	REV A	2025 10 30

## AUTHORSHIP

At Yerrabingin, we acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians and ancestors of the lands we walk across.

The terms First Nations, Indigenous and Aboriginal are used interchangeably throughout this report. When referring to a specific group or individual, nation or language group names are used.

This report includes reproduction of words and descriptions in historic quotes written in the past that may be confronting and would be considered inappropriate today.

Yerrabingin abide by the Australian Indigenous cultural and intellectual property (ICIP) guidance in the GANSW Connecting with Country Framework, which notes that ICIP refers to 'the rights that Aboriginal people have to protect their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and cultural expression... It is the product of generations of accumulated knowledge and expression, and reflects the unique history, values and traditions of Aboriginal people. Care and respect is always needed, to ensure cultural knowledge is not appropriated or interpreted without permission from the Aboriginal community to which this knowledge belongs' (p.23). The cultural knowledge included in this report can only be used for the purpose it was provided, to share background information to the project team. In this and future stages of the project, Aboriginal people need to be recognised as the ongoing guardians of this knowledge and how it is used, and engaged on the use of knowledge for design.

Permission to publish the graphic materials from archival collections and previous publications has not been obtained as part of this study. Permission should be sought from copyright holders if the report is published with the graphic material or the graphic material is used for other purposes.

*Cover Image - Yerrabingin. 2024. Saltwater Country*



*Figure.2 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Lush, verdant Bidjigal Country*

## GLOSSARY

### *Key Words and Terms*

To better understand key terms referenced throughout the report, please consult the glossary.

The following terms derive from the GANSW (2023) Connecting with Country Framework.

- **Aboriginal Community:** Within the context of Sydney, the Aboriginal Community refers to a range of peoples that often include Traditional Custodians, Knowledge Holders, Elders, RAPS (Registered Aboriginal Parties), LALC (Land Councils), and local Aboriginal members of the community.
- **Built Environment:** Understood as distinct from the natural environment. It includes all aspects of our surroundings made by people. The built environment encompasses cities and towns, neighbourhoods, parks, roads, buildings, infrastructure, and utilities like water and electricity.
- **Country:** Country includes Earth, Waters, Sky and our Non-human Kin. It encompasses tangible and intangible aspects, knowledge and cultural practices, belonging and identity, well-being and relationships. People are inhabited by Country and Country inhabits us.
- **Design:** Design is both a process and an outcome - a way of thinking and a result of making. It involves a combination of creativity and problem-solving skills to generate ideas and concepts, followed by a systematic and often iterative process to develop those ideas into a tangible form.
- **Engagement:** A process whereby a particular group is engaged to gather their input in relation to a proposal, challenge, or outcome.
- **First Nations:** Is an encompassing term that acknowledges the diversity of Aboriginal Communities, while also communicating that sovereignty was never ceded. This term is growing in preference for First Nations Australians but may also be interchanged with Aboriginal and Indigenous in this report.
- **Knowledge:** Aboriginal knowledge comes from different nations and family groups. Knowledge is multifaceted and may incorporate many different views. It encompasses the information and skills that people accumulate over time, enabling them to comprehend the world, make informed decisions, and solve problems.
- **Peoples:** Peoples is used in plural to reference First Nations peoples, recognising that there are many nations and family groups.
- **Place:** A social and physical concept, a physical setting, point, or area in space conceived and designated by people and communities. In this sense, place can describe different scales of the built environment; for example, a town is a place, and a building can be a place.
- **Practices:** Practice or cultural practice refers to the various customs, traditions, rituals, behaviours, and activities that are collectively shared and passed down within a specific cultural group, serving as a means of expressing identity, values, beliefs, and social cohesion

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been developed by Yerrabingin through our Collaborative Design Process, in partnership with The University of New South Wales (UNSW), Bates Smart Architects, and Aboriginal community members who contributed through the Walk on Country, How Might We, Collaborative Design, and Ideation Workshops. The purpose of this document is to share the cultural insights, collaborative findings, and tangible design recommendations that emerged through this process for the N13 Student Residential Colleges at UNSW Kensington Campus.

The report begins with **Connecting with Country Design**, outlining Yerrabingin's philosophy of custodianship and our understanding of Country as a living system that connects people, culture, and environment.

The **Contextual Analysis** section situates the N13 project within Bidjigal Country, recounting its deep-time significance as a landscape of dunes, wetlands, and hearths of cultural gathering. This section also explores UNSW's contemporary role as a learning institution positioned to honour and embed Aboriginal knowledge and legacies through design.

The **Collaborative Design** section details each stage of engagement: from the How Might We workshop that framed the design challenge - *How might we imagine student colleges to be inclusive and interconnected communities that celebrate culture, relationships, and Country?* - to the Walk on Country with Elders and community members, and the Collaborative Design Workshop, where collective visions emerged around inclusivity, sensory experience, and cultural connection.

The **Ideation Development** section captures the translation of these visions into four key Connecting with Country design opportunities that express the project's cultural and spatial narrative:

- *A Hearth, A Home* – Tending to enduring legacy through gathering, ceremony, and shared care.
- *Watermark* – Sensing ripples of Saltwater Country through materiality, movement, and flow.
- *First Light* – Nurturing emerging connections through light, orientation, and inclusivity.
- *Knowledge Tree* – Celebrating Bidjigal wisdom through embedded storytelling and place-based learning.

Together, these concepts reimagine student accommodation not merely as housing but as an ecology of belonging—one that integrates culture, learning, and care for Country.

The final section, **Towards Final Design**, outlines the Community Feedback Session and describes how these opportunities have guided the detailed design and delivery of the N13 project. The report concludes by reaffirming the legacy of this collaborative process: a commitment to long-term stewardship where the principles of custodianship, regeneration, innovation, and legacy continue to shape UNSW's future relationship with Bidjigal Country.

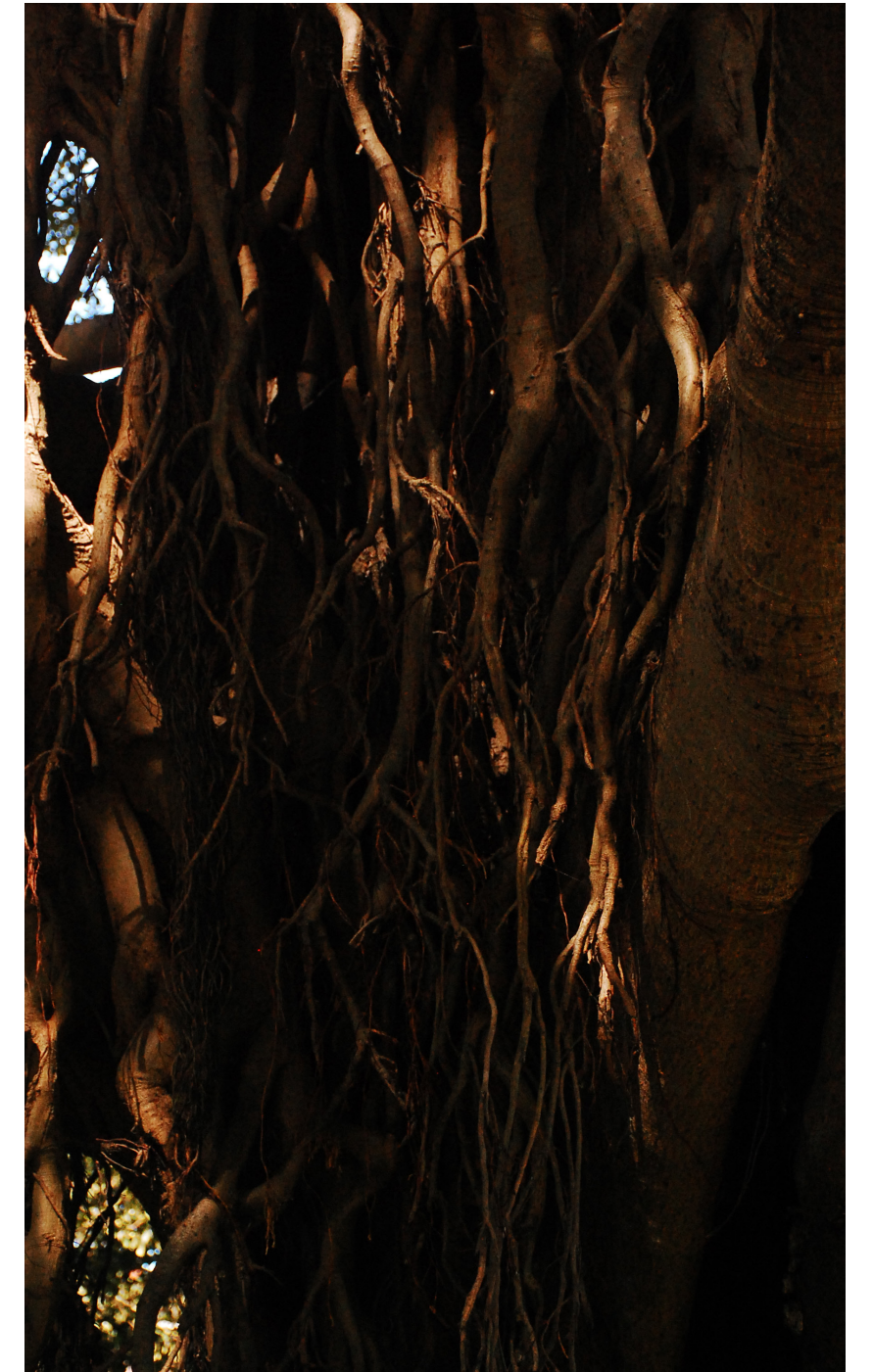


Figure.3 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Bidjigal Country



**CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY DESIGN**

## INTRODUCTION TO CWC DESIGN

### *Beginning with Country*

*Country is our mother, our teacher, our library and our kin; it sustains us, inspires us and surrounds us. The experience of Country is both individual and collective, both new and familiar. From her we learn, share and flourish. Continuing to care for Country is central to our being and our identity.*

*Christian Hampson, Yerrabingin*

Country reaches into and across the earth and into the sky. The unique and distinctive elements of Country are connected, and open to everyone. They are the connective tissue, the interstices, the flow between Water, Earth, Sky, our Non-Human Kin, and ourselves. In this way, we are part of the system of Country and have a responsibility to future generations. Our actions must always be Country positive.

### **Country-centric**

We inhabit and are inhabited by Country. To inhabit Country and connect with Country is to be grounded in the landscape and to practice the cultural knowledge stored within it. This encourages physical and emotional wellbeing for people and Country.

The innate symbiosis of being connected to Country moves us into being Eco or Country centric, rather than being Human centric. This connection and position in relation to Country is a central component of Aboriginal people's ideology. It is a cultural value that places humans within the ecological and landscape system, not as dominators but as caretakers and custodians. This function requires constant interaction and observation, being tuned in to reactive requirements and response.

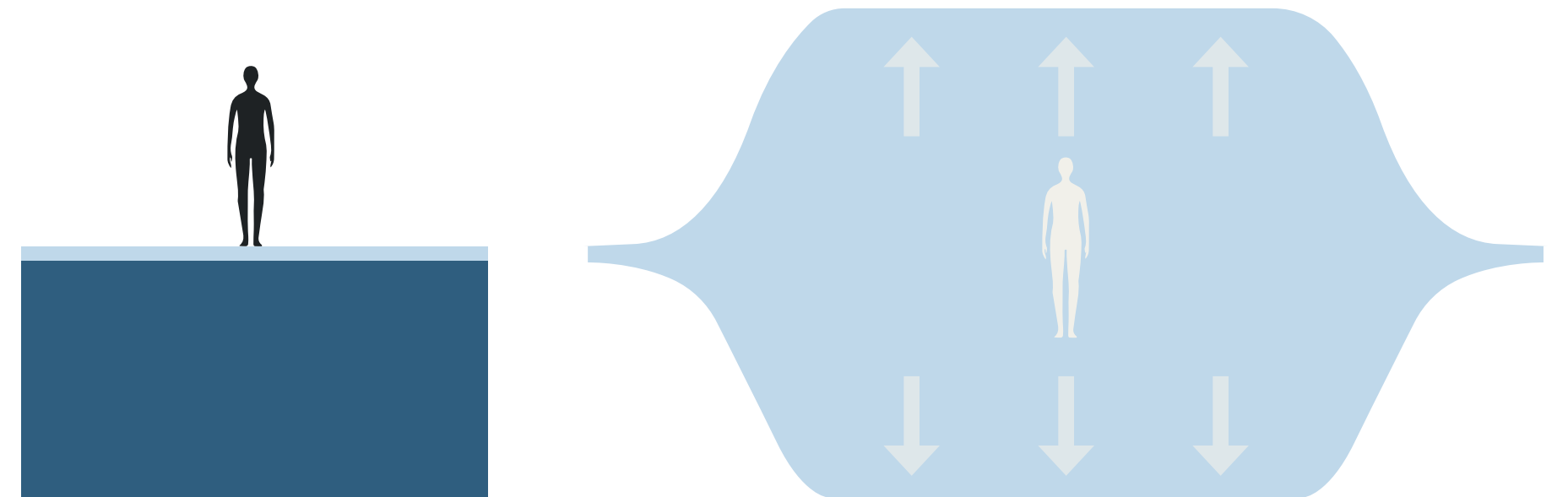


Figure.4 - Yerrabingin.2024. We inhabit and are inhabited by Country

# GANSW CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY FRAMEWORK

## Policy Context

In 2023 the Government Architect New South Wales released the Connecting with Country Framework to guide Designing with Country projects in NSW. The Framework covers several areas of Designing with Country work, including:

### Practices for taking a Country-focused approach:

Combining traditional cultural knowledge and practices with a behavioural science approach to create a system of Communing with Country / Thinking, Sensing Country / Feeling, and Being on Country / Behaving to guide projects. The image to the right illustrates this relationship.

### Guidance on design considerations:

Considering the project scale to determine what design considerations should be factored into decision making and design. This project is precinct scale, therefore we are taking a contextual and site specific perspective.

### Outcomes for Country:

The Framework describes five Outcomes for Country to help project teams focus on their commitment to Country. The outcomes are: Healthy Country, Healthy Community, Protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage, Cultural Competency and Better Places.

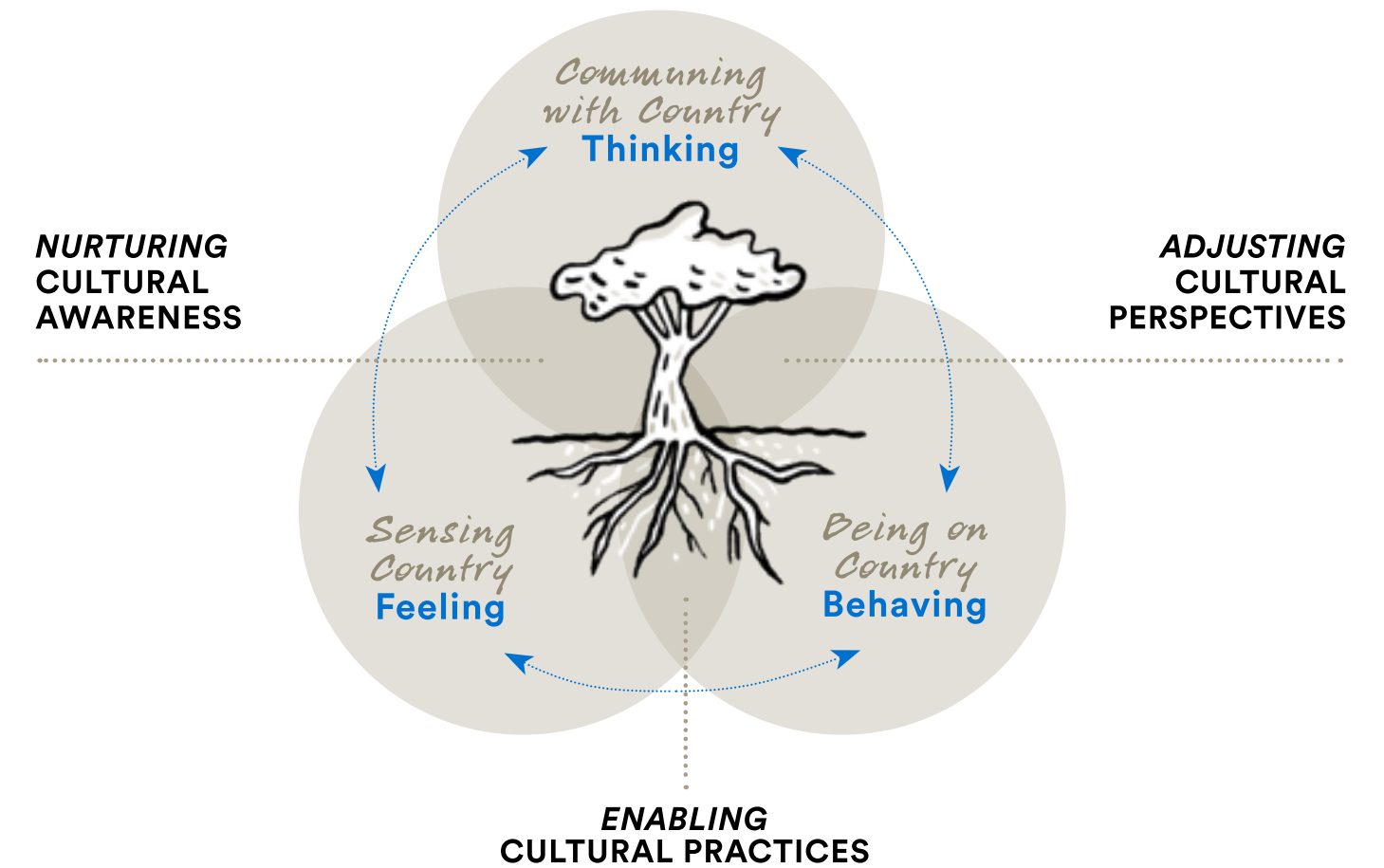


Figure.5 - GANSW. 2023. Combining cultural practice and behavioural change systems

## YERRABINGIN PILLARS

### What guides our work

Yerrabingin has four pillars that guide our work. The pillars link together our values, Country, culture, professional practice, and cultural practice.

Each pillar is one part of the larger task of caring for Country. Together they contribute to a holistic commitment to care and design for Country. The pillars are Custodianship, Innovation, Legacy and Regeneration. The project offers an opportunity to work with the pillars and this is explored within this report.



### Innovation

*We are a transformative force for change. We draw on ancient wisdom, guided by ecological kinship, to share the powerful voice of Country and disrupt conventional systems and perceptions. Inspired by Country, we take a holistic view, centring creativity, adaptation and reciprocity. Our work propels us towards a collective future that considers the life of all kin.*

### Regeneration

*We deeply understand the connections between all things and work towards balance. We overcome limitations in conventional design thinking by centring the needs of Country and all kin. We create places for people to experience the many ways Country sustains and holds them, to connect them with their role in the system of their place. Learning from Country, we take a long-term view, with the knowledge that health and healing will come, given the right conditions of care.*

### Custodianship

*We are custodians of Country. We draw on cultural knowledge to advocate and care for Country. It is our responsibility to improve the health of Country and our diverse communities through our work. In our role as designers, we listen deeply to the needs of Country and walk together with our partners to foster connection. Country benefits and grows in our care.*

### Legacy

*Our works sits at the intersection of culture and design. We are industry leaders in collaborative design, bringing together First Nations communities and built environment professionals for an enduring conversation. By introducing people to Country, we transform the experience of belonging and connection to place in Australia. We show people that if we care for Country, she will care for us in return. Healthy Country and connected communities are our legacy.*

# YERRABINGIN COLLABORATIVE DESIGN METHODOLOGY

## Our Design Process

Our design methodology is informed by components of design thinking, user-centred design and Connecting with Country design disciplines to create our Country-focused, collaborative design approach.

### Country-focused

What sets us apart from conventional built environment design is our recognition of the interconnection of Country with human activity and our imperative to consider the needs of Country in the design solution. Empathetic observation and consideration of Country is central to our approach.

The outcome of our Country-focused approach is that Country is designed for and cared for, allowing Country to care and provide for future generations.

### Collaborative

Inspired by the natural processes of fostering and sustaining life on Country, our design methodology follows a cyclical, collaborative process: we collect, plant, nourish and tend.

The Connecting with Country Design Report – Final contributes to the Tend / Sustain stage in our methodology.

### Design Methodology Stages

**Collect** - First, we collect by empathising with our project partners and with Country. We gather ideas, inspiration, facts, desires, research and limitations. This occurs in the discovery and ‘How Might We’ session.

**Plant** - After understanding the design challenge, we plant. Collaborative design workshops involve First Nations peoples and the wider team involved to generate diverse and innovative design solutions.

**Nourish** - Following the collaborative design sessions, we nourish through iteration. We share the collaborative outcomes to develop design solutions and concepts further based on feedback.

**Tend** - Finally, we tend to our creation. We tend by ensuring that the partnerships and outcomes created are sustainable and have ongoing positive outcomes for Country and communities.

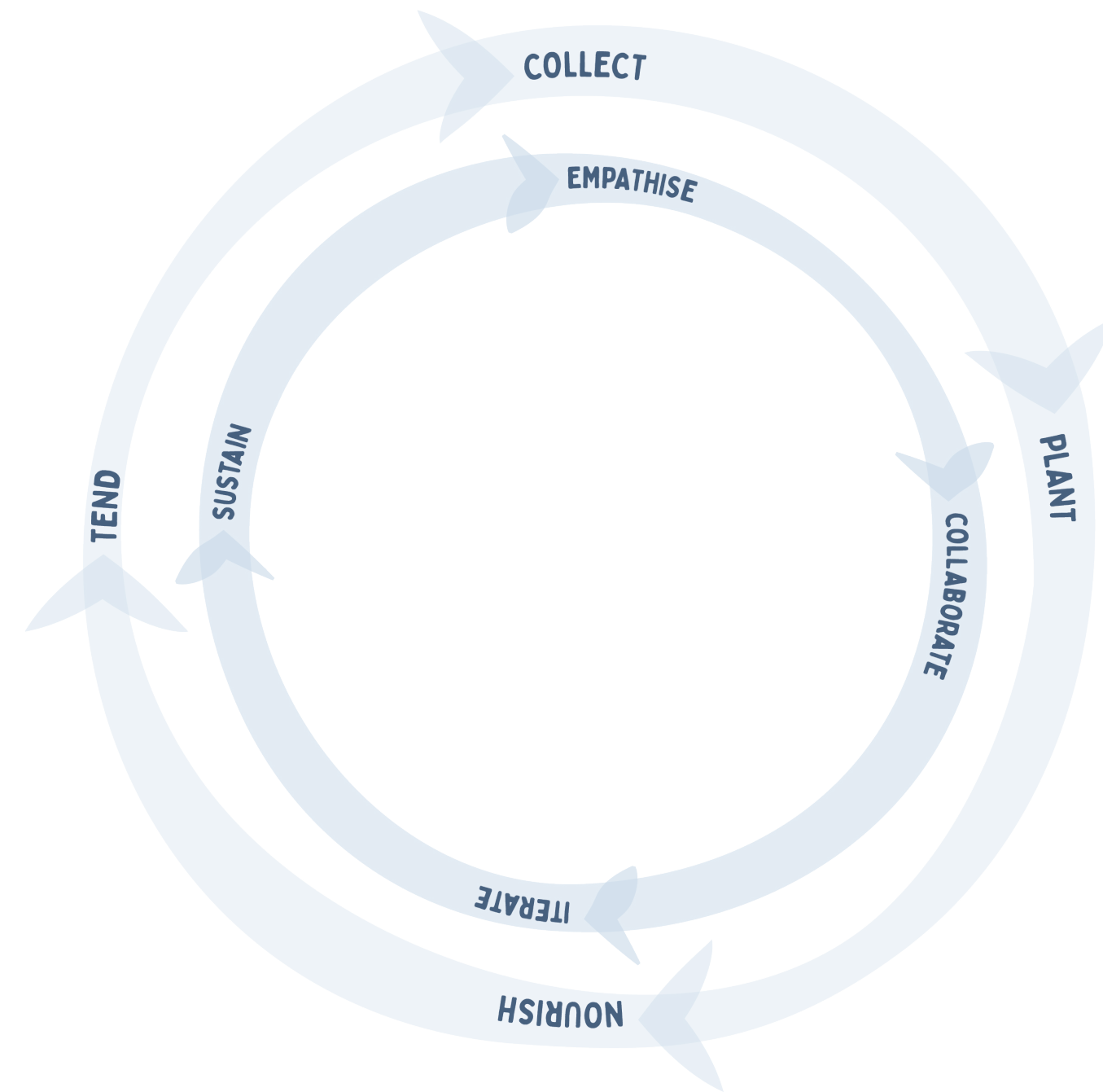


Figure.6 - Yerrabingin. 2024. Methodology Process

**COLLECT / EMPATHISE**

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

## INTRODUCTION

### *Project Overview*

UNSW plans to develop new student accommodation at N13 Barker Street to support its long-term campus expansion and growing student population. The 721-bed facility will reflect UNSW's global standing, offering a safe, inclusive, and sustainably designed environment. Aligned with the university's *Progress for All* strategy, the project aims for high sustainability standards, including 5-star Green Star and Gold WELL ratings, with features like solar panels, natural ventilation, and timber construction.

The development will consider climate resilience, flood mitigation, solar access, and the protection of mature trees. It will also enhance the surrounding public spaces, upgrade the Physics Lawn, and provide bike and end-of-trip facilities. In line with the UNSW Indigenous Strategy, feasibility testing will explore including an Indigenous Residential College alongside other student communities, promoting cultural inclusion and educational equity.



Figure.7 - Yerrabingin. 2025. *The vibrancy of Saltwater Country*

## BIDJIGAL COUNTRY

### *Place in Country*

The UNSW Kensington campus sits on Bidjigal Country, part of a broader Dharawal-speaking region in Sydney's east, long cared for by Bidjigal peoples whose connection to land and sea spans thousands of years. Bidjigal Country encompasses Botany Bay, La Perouse, and stretches west along the Cooks and Georges Rivers. As coastal saltwater people, the Bidjigal have sustained themselves through rich ecosystems shaped by shifting sand dunes, wetlands, and swamps, relying on fish, shellfish, native fruits, and materials for tools, shelter, and ceremony.

The region's dynamic geology and climate - from ancient dunes formed during the Pleistocene to fluctuating freshwater systems - has supported diverse flora and fauna, which Bidjigal peoples have used with deep ecological knowledge. Their cultural practices include sophisticated fishing and toolmaking techniques, with archaeological evidence pointing to extensive trade networks and long-term land use, such as the 8,000-year-old hearth found on Avoca Street.

Despite colonial disruption, Bidjigal peoples maintain enduring connections to Country. Their traditions and stories, rooted in both land and ocean, reflect a profound relationship with place that continues to inform their identity and survival.

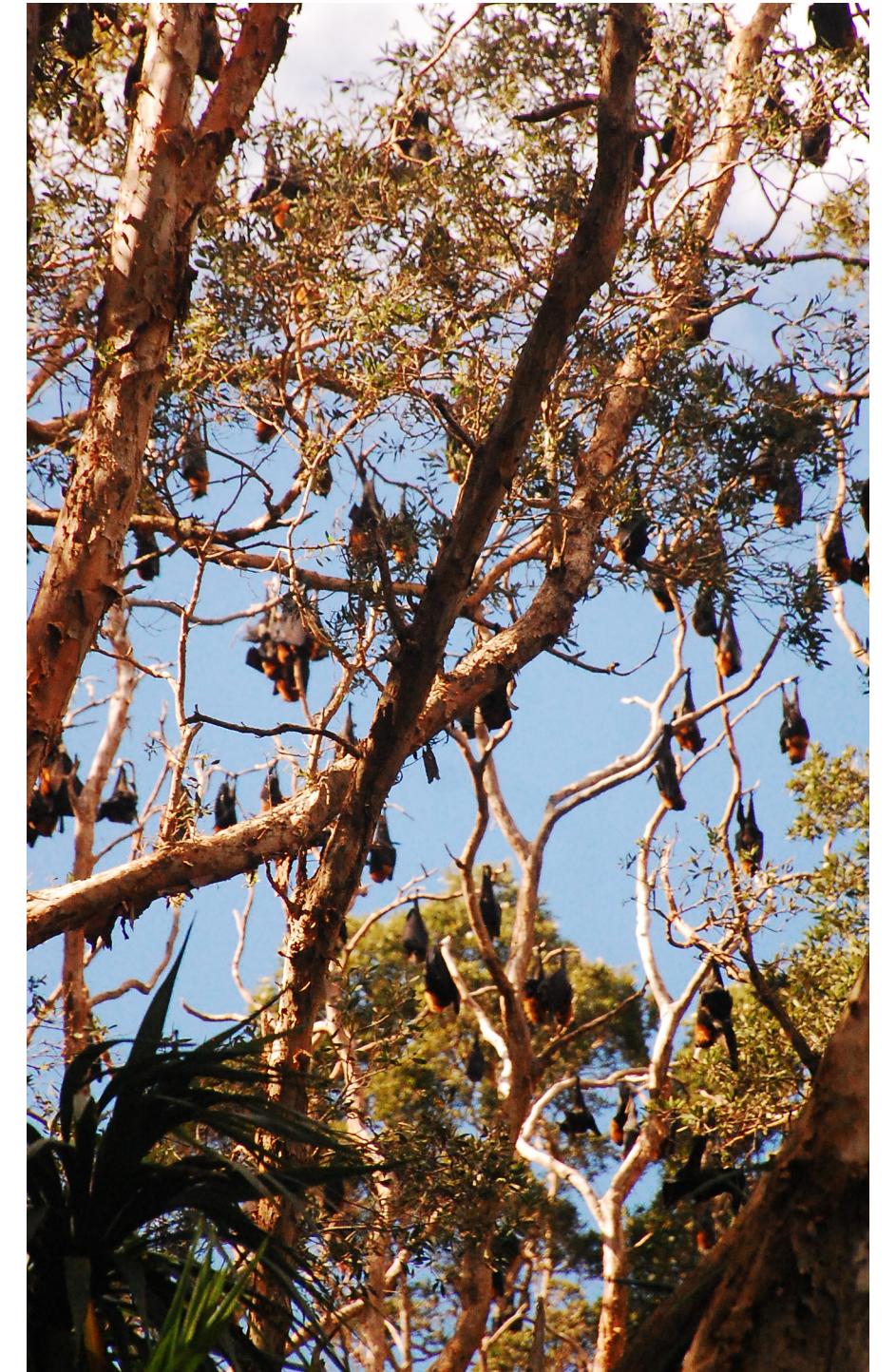


Figure.8 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Cabbage Tree Palm    Figure.9 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Flying-fox colony at nearby Lachlan Swamps

## BIDJIGAL COUNTRY

### *The Randwick Hearth Stones*

The Randwick campus sits on what has long been a landscape of dunes, swamps, and freshwater soaks. In the 1990s, and again during hospital redevelopment in 2019, archaeologists uncovered two sets of hearthstones here. Arranged as small sandstone cobbles, the features were dated to around 8,000 years ago - older than Stonehenge, or the Pyramids (NSW Government, 2023a; Tilt Industrial Design, 2023). Residue analysis showed traces of freshwater fish, linking the hearths not to the coast but to the wetland ecologies of the Botany dune system.

What this tells us is simple but profound: Aboriginal families have long camped here, gathered together, and used fire to cook food and to live. Around those fires people would have eaten, talked, shared stories, and passed on knowledge. At night, the glow of the hearth naturally opened onto the sky, making fire a focal point for both survival and reflection. While the archaeology shows cooking, the cultural memory of hearths speaks to connection - to each other, to Country, and to cycles of time (South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, 2023a; 2023b).

These stones are rare in metropolitan Sydney. Their survival is exceptional, and their return to Country matters. Rather than being removed to a museum, they have been conserved through deep-freeze treatment, stabilised on original dune sand, and placed beneath a sealed glass dome in the public forecourt of the Prince of Wales Hospital (National Indigenous Times, 2024; Partridge, 2023). The installation is framed by a polished concrete ring and brass panels engraved with Dharawal language and motifs, developed in collaboration with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council and Gujaga Foundation (Tilt Industrial Design, 2023).

Hearths have always been centres of care: they provide warmth, sustenance, and a place for people to gather and support one another. Student accommodation plays a similar role today - bringing people together, creating community, and offering a sense of belonging. The hearth becomes a threshold where students step into a place of learning and living while also passing by 8,000 years of Aboriginal presence.



Figure.10 - Tilt Industrial Design. n.d. The Randwick Hearth Stone

## EDUCATIONAL LEGACIES

### *Site Specific Opportunities*

Beneath the built landscape of UNSW's Kensington campus lie the remnants of the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrubland, once rich with sand dunes and swampy heaths. Though altered by early colonial development, this ancient ecology persists in the geological bedrock. Future construction, including the N13 Barker Street accommodation, must engage with this deep history of Country, respecting the Bidjigal people's enduring connection to the land.

Colonial development imposed foreign values and materials upon Indigenous lands, often ignoring the need for care and understanding. Today, as a globally respected university, UNSW is well positioned to integrate Aboriginal knowledge into its planning, education, and research. The N13 project presents a chance to honour Indigenous legacy through thoughtful design that fosters awareness among future residents.

The dynamic landscape of the Sydney Basin, shaped over millennia by wind and water, offers a model for adaptive, responsive development. The new buildings should reflect this by anticipating climate extremes and including strategies for flood mitigation. Designs should align with the elements of Country — wind, water, and local fauna — and encourage the return of native plants and animals to the area.

Just as the dunes evolved through shifting natural forces, so too will the student community fluctuate with time. The accommodation should be flexible, with infrastructure that communicates its design intent. Signage and artworks could share stories and Indigenous knowledge, fostering a legacy of education that honours Bidjigal culture and history. Though the sand may never return, its spirit can inspire a meaningful and respectful approach to building at Barker Street.



*Figure.11 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Nearby Lachlan Swamps, an example of Bidjigal Country's swampy heath*



# COLLABORATIVE DESIGN METHODOLOGY

## Process and Progress

As described above in the introduction to Yerrabingin’s Collaborative Design Methodology, our design process is made up of four stages, Collect / Empathise, Plant / Collaborate, Nourish / Iterate and Tend / Sustain. Each project is unique, and we tailor our design approach within each of the four stages for each project.

### Our Progress

We have completed the Collect / Empathise, Plant / Collaborate, and Nourish / Iterate stages and we are now working on the Tend / Sustain stage.

The graphic to the right shows the Collaborative Design Methodology for this project and where we are up to in the process.

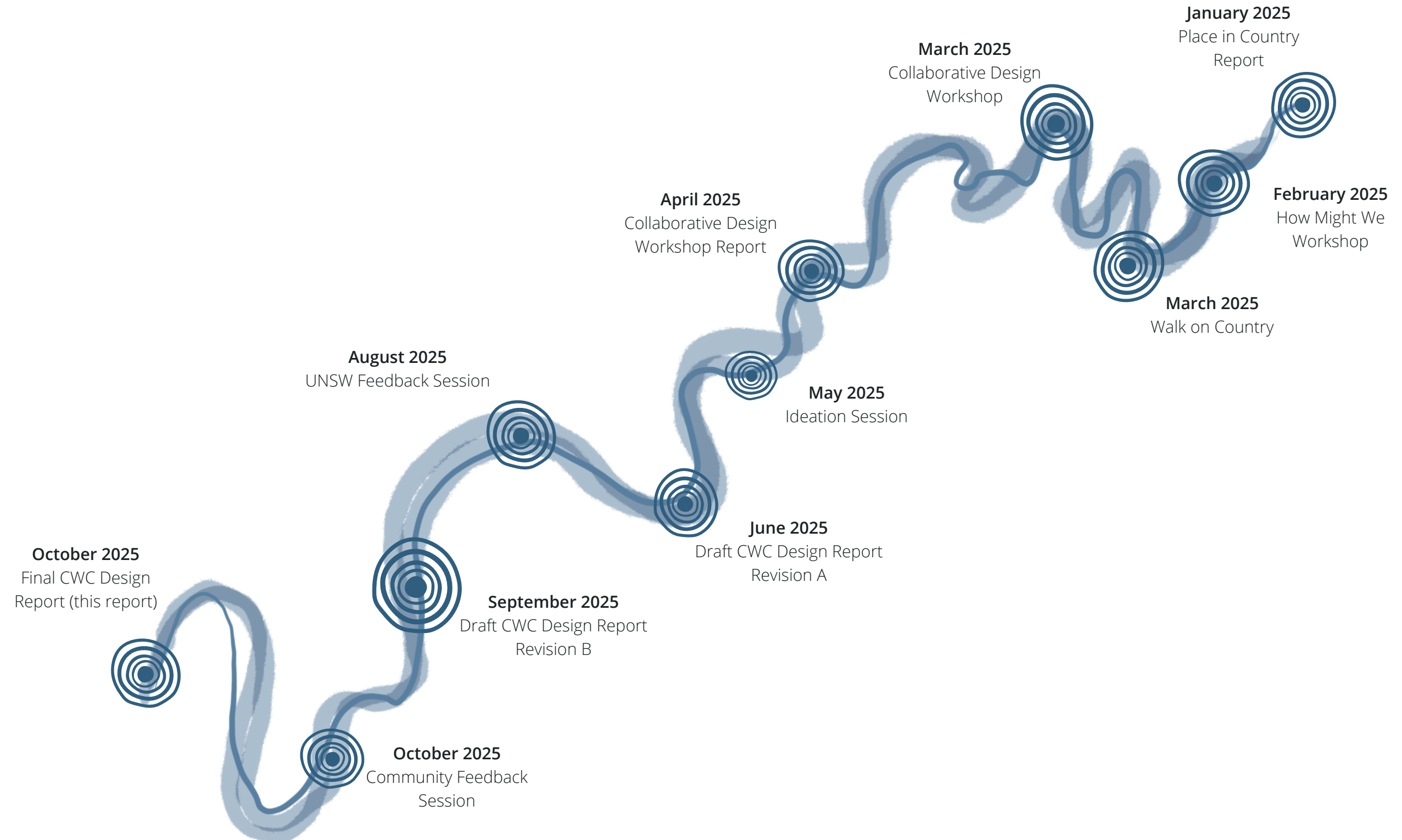


Figure.12 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Timeline of Yerrabingin’s engagement in the project

# HOW MIGHT WE?

## Our Design Challenge

The *How Might We* session was held online on the 18th February 2025 with the team from Yerrabingin, Bates Smart (Architects) and ASPECT Studios (Landscape Architects).

In the How Might We Session, we worked with the project team to learn as much as we could about the aims of the project and to introduce the design team to our process. We created the following How Might We statement for the project:

*How Might We imagine student colleges to be inclusive and interconnected communities that celebrate culture, relationships, and Country?*

We use the How Might We statement to understand the design team's thoughts on the project users, impact, connection and value. By gaining as much information as we can from the beginning, we aim to ensure that we can direct the project more accurately and generate more impact. We use the How Might We statement to define our design challenge.

**Activity One** looked at sparking curiosity by looking at the Melaleuca tree - *Melaleuca quinquenervia* - to ask questions. The overarching responses fell into three core themes: Ecological Connections, Innovative Purpose and Cultural Kinship.

**Activity Two** was centred around investigating the needs of users, what the project aspirations are, thinking about emotion and how people will feel in the space, and understanding how the project can reflect the Country it sits within.

**Users:** A home away from home. Local, national and international students. Existing trees.

**Value:** Evolving spaces over time. Dynamism and legacy. Built form and landscape that is Country Positive. A space where community can be formed.

**Emotion:** Curiosity and wonder. Welcoming sense of community. Connected, interconnected and belonging. Safe, warm and welcoming.

**Connection:** Water Country, Deep Country, Non-Human Kin Country, and Move with Country. Common themes in responses were strong connections to nature using local and endemic flora, hydrology, and celebrating First Nations communities and their knowledges.

**Activity Three** was focused on impact areas; regeneration, unique site features, fostering active participation, and legacy - based on Yerrabingin pillars.

**Regeneration:** Community - collaboration involvement and connection; Regeneration - native vegetation, a new place to live- to create an on-campus community, built form informed by landscape.

**Innovation:** Providing a home to grow with a community of students who come from all different parts of the world. Providing a unique sense of belonging.

**Custodianship:** A place for everyone- welcoming, adaptable, and deeply connected to community and Country.

**Legacy:** A living space - designed to evolve, adapt, and return to nature.

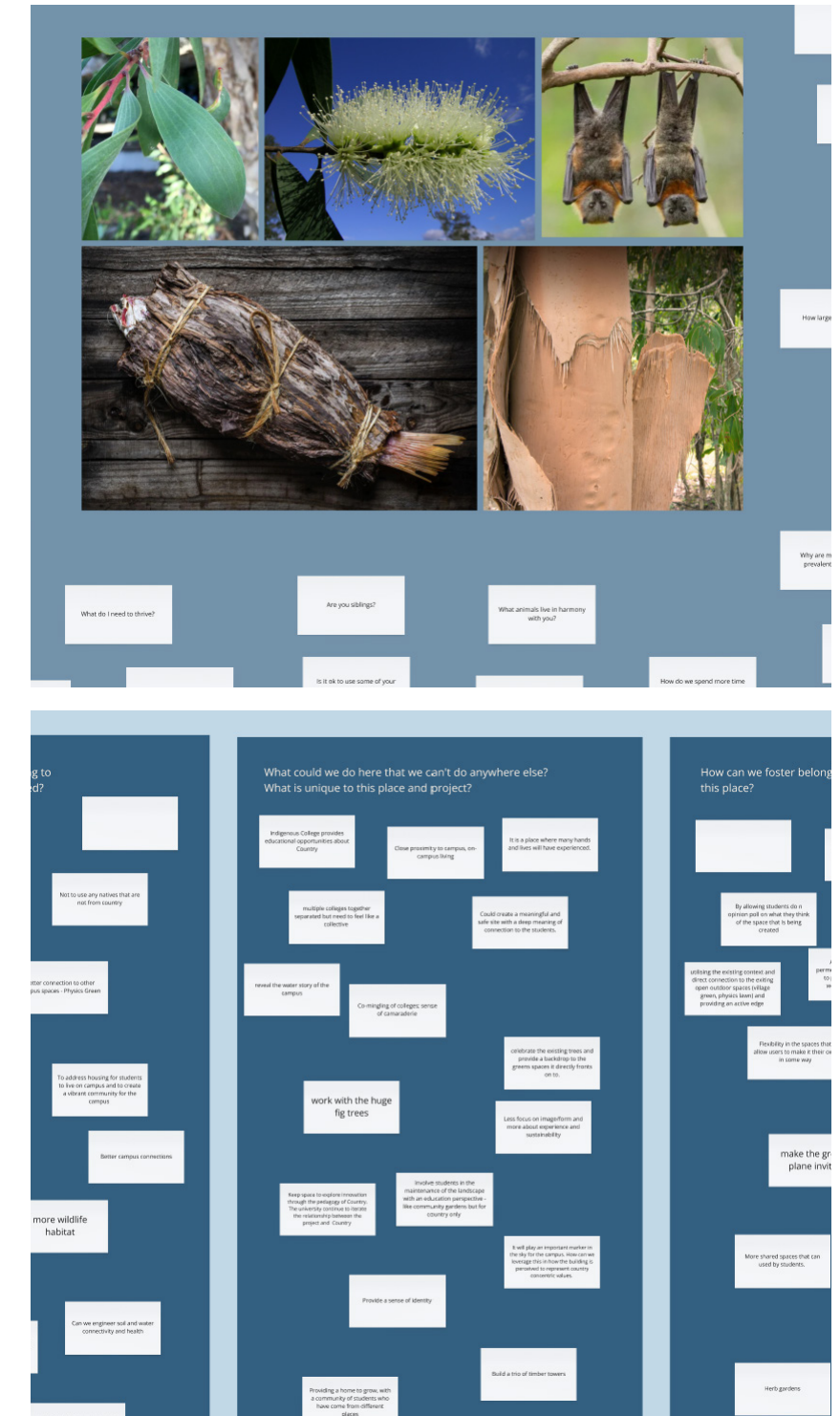


Figure.13 - Yerrabingin. 2025 Screenshots of the How Might We workshop

## WALK ON COUNTRY

### *Listening to Country*

The Walk on Country was completed as part of our Collect stage. We visited the site of the project with the project team and two local Aboriginal Elders to understand the context of the site, the needs of Country in this place, and to get to know each other.

**When:** Friday 21st March, 2025

**Where:** Barker Street Apartments (N13), UNSW Kensington campus

**Who:**

- 2x Local Aboriginal Elders:  
Aunty Barbara Simms and Aunty Lola Ryan
- 4x Bates Smart Architects
- 2x Aspect Studios Landscape Architects
- 4x UNSW Staff members
- 3x Yerrabingin staff

The Walk on Country offered foundational cultural and ecological insights, including native species selection, medicinal uses, and cultural site knowledges.



Figure.14 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Collection of Images from the Walk on Country

## COLLABORATIVE DESIGN WORKSHOP

### Discussion and Findings

The Collaborative Design Workshop was broken up into five activities, and was held in The Terrace Room at the Juniors Kingsford.

**When:** Wednesday 26th March, 2025

**Where:** The Terrace Room at the Juniors Kingsford

**Who:**

- 18x First Nations Community members:
  - 9x Local Aboriginal Community
  - 9x UNSW Indigenous Community
- 3x Bates Smart Architects
- 1x Aspect Studios
- 1x UNSW Staff members
- 7x Yerrabingin staff

The workshop began with an introduction from Yerrabingin on our approach to designing and caring for Country, and a project introduction from Taylor Coyne and Bates Smart Architects. Followed by the workshop activities, which aimed to explore the 'How Might We' question.

The How Might We question that was explored was: "How might we imagine student colleges to be inclusive and interconnected communities that celebrate culture, relationships, and Country?"

During the workshop participants collectively envisioned student housing that blends natural elements, cultural safety, and shared community space. Themes of inclusivity, connection to Country, and sustainability were emphasised. Clustering and sketching activities led to ideas such as shared and private spaces, fire and water gathering spaces, sensory gardens, and communal areas interwoven with Indigenous languages, signage, and public artworks.

Each design team proposed a concept:

- "Ripples of Purpose" highlighted interconnectedness through water and landscape.
- "Yarra" emphasised cultural integration and shared communal spaces.
- "Ngaganbi" focused on dual-purpose fire/water areas, QR-code storytelling, and cultural symbolism.
- "Connected Hearts" envisioned tree-root metaphors to link shared and personal spaces, balancing social interaction with solitude.

Three overarching design outcomes emerged: **A Hearth**, **A Home** (tending to enduring legacy), **Watermark** (sensory ties to Saltwater Country), First Light (nurturing emerging connection) and **Knowledge Tree** (honouring and embedding Bidjigal wisdom). The workshop affirmed that Country-focused, inclusive, and resilient design is integral for the N13 development.



Figure.15 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Images from the Collaborative Design Workshop



**NOURISH / ITERATE**

IDEATION DEVELOPMENT

# IDEATION DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

## Discussion and Findings

Following the Collaborative Design Workshop with Aboriginal Community members and the project team, we held an Ideation Development Workshop with the project team. The purpose of this was to review the summary of outcomes of the Collaborative Design Workshop and investigate ideation opportunities, expand thinking, understand constraints and limitations. Together, this has enabled us to develop the next stages of the Connecting with Country design work.

The discussion and findings under the topic areas explored is as follows:

- There was discussion on the Hearth/Fire outcome. After much continued dialogue, this outcome was first removed in Revision A and then subsequently reinstated in Revision B.
- There were discussions on materiality and the facade, as well as landscape opportunities, and the challenges on designing with Country in a way that met the Community's aspirations for subtle cues and cultural meaning, rather than brash, graphic representation.

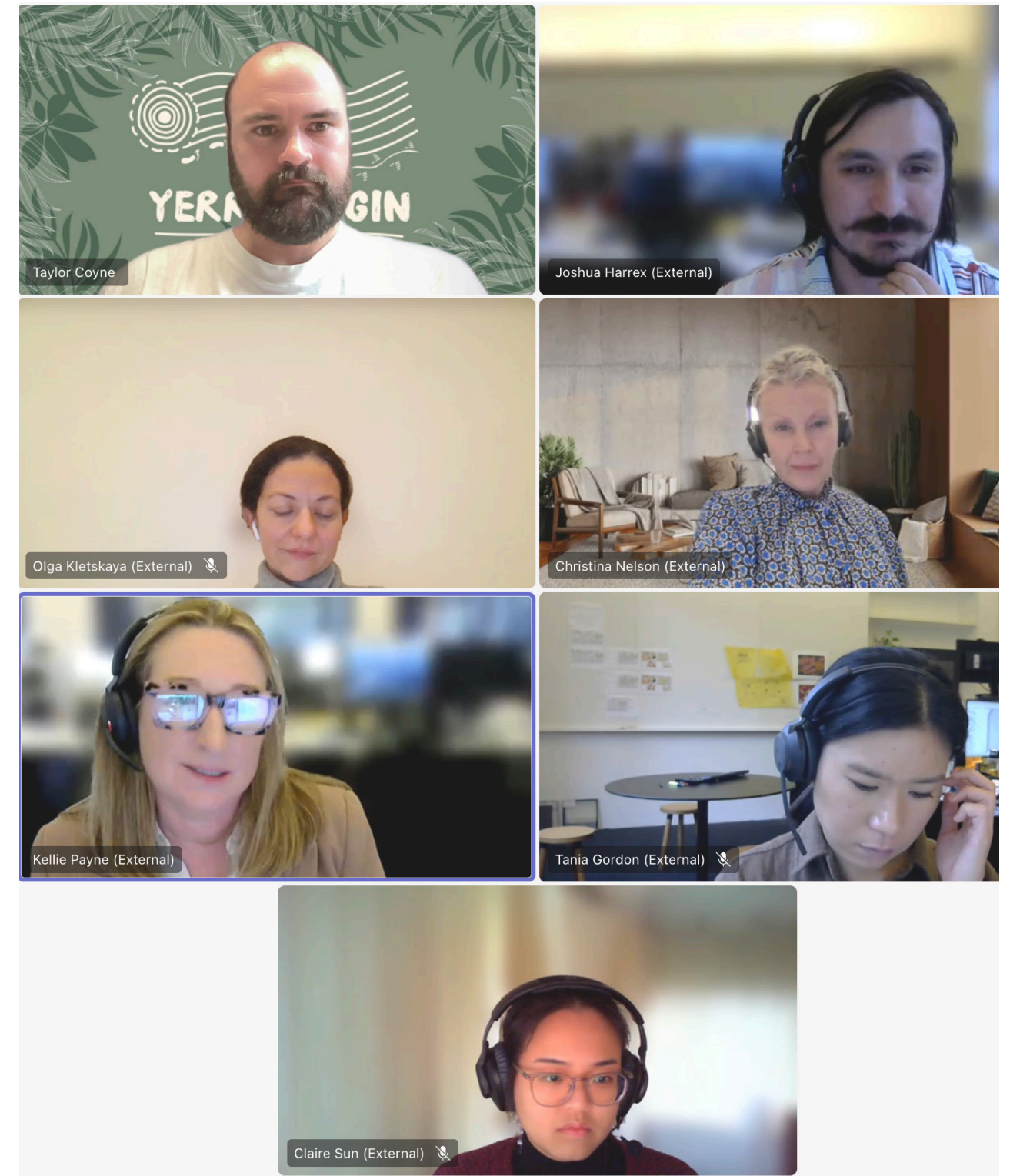
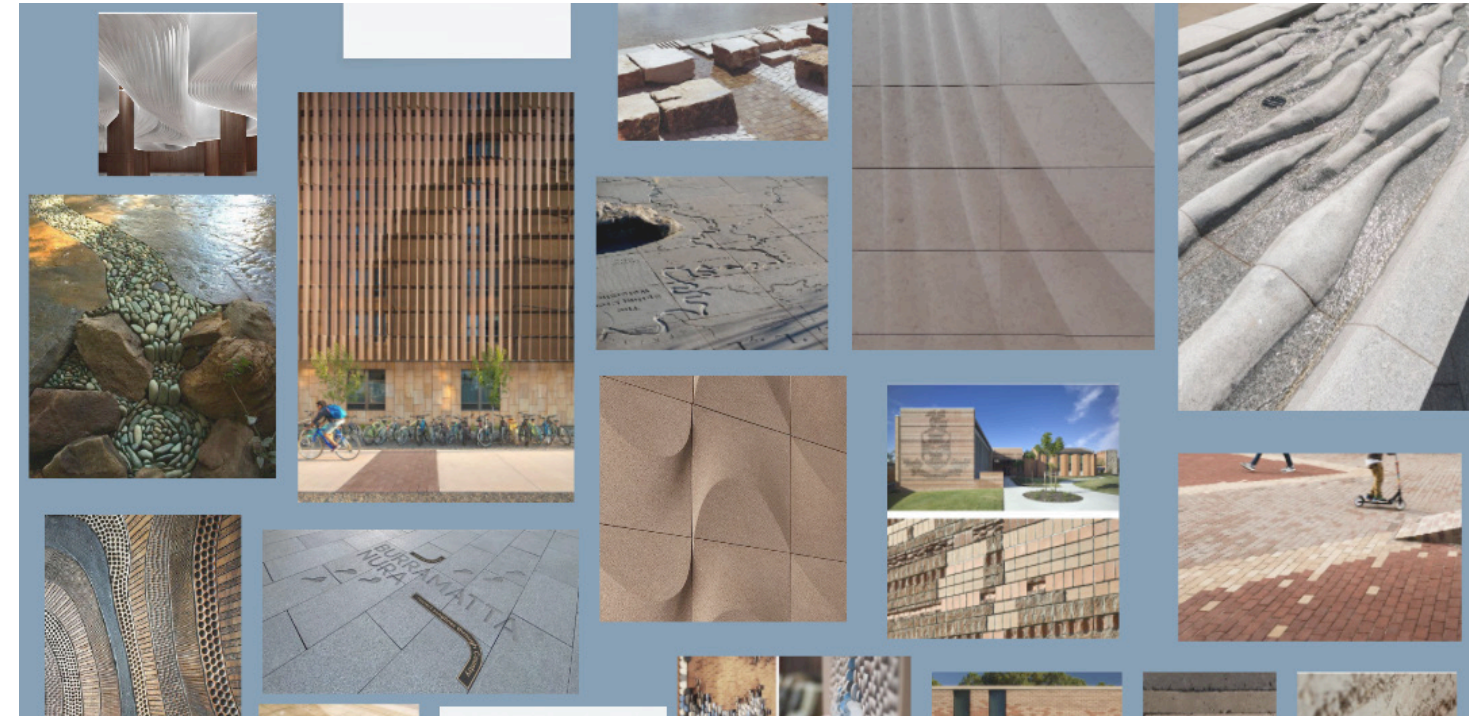


Figure.16 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Screenshots from the Ideation



**TEND / SUSTAIN**

TOWARD FINAL DESIGN - UNSW N13 STUDENT ACCOMODATION

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SESSION

### *Discussion and Findings*

The design development progress was presented at a Community Feedback Session held by Yerrabingin on 15 October 2025. The session was attended by First Nations Community members, as well as representatives from UNSW, Bates Smart, and Aspect Studios.

This session provided an important opportunity to review how the design had integrated the First Nations knowledge, ideas, and contributions previously shared, and for the community to see how these had been developed into the evolving design.

The session ran in two sections, the first was focused on the Architecture and the second was focused on the Landscape Architecture.

After each section, participants were invited to provide feedback and engage in discussion, guided by the following prompts:

- What has been done well and why?
- What could be improved and why?
- Are there any missed opportunities?

The feedback and discussion that were had emphasised the importance of creating a coherent and continuous experience across all architectural and landscape elements. Participants valued the consistency of materials, warm tones, and shared cultural motifs that tie the colleges together. This unified ground plane and architectural rhythm were seen as successfully weaving Country through the project, grounding students in a shared sense of belonging, connection, and care.

Community members responded positively to the project's flexible, living character. They encouraged spaces that could transform with purpose - for study, rest, or ceremony - without rigid design boundaries. The inclusion of the family apartment and cultural activation areas was celebrated as embodying this ethos. Participants imagined smoke ceremonies, informal learning, and chance encounters as part of everyday life, reflecting a campus alive with movement, adaptability, and cultural vitality.



Figure.17 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Images from the Community Feedback Session

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *Draft Report Feedback*

The design development progress was shared with the design team in the Connecting with Country Design Report – Draft.

In the report, we shared our Collaborative Design process and proposed a number of Connecting with Country opportunities for the UNSW N13 project, with the aim of answering the How Might We statement.

We received the following feedback on the Connecting with Country Design Report – Draft:

There was continued discussion on the outcome ‘A Hearth, A Home’. After lengthy discussion with the team from UNSW, Revision B reinstated the outcome. Feedback otherwise was generally positive with comments regarding application of outcome into opportunities.

Based on this feedback, we have produced visual aids like maps to show where outcomes can be seen throughout the precinct. Deeper conceptual look-and-feel imagery has also been provided to help focus the design development as it progresses..



*Figure.18 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Bidjigal Country*

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *CWC Opportunities / Actions*

The design development to date for the Connecting with Country design has integrated the findings from the place analysis, Collaborative Design Workshops and Ideation Workshop into four key Connecting with Country opportunities for the UNSW N13 project:



*Knolwedge Tree*  
*Celebrating Bidjigal Wisdom*



*Watermark*  
*Sensing Ripples of Saltwater Country*



*First Light*  
*Nurturing Emerging Connections*



*A Hearth, A Home*  
*Tending to Enduring Legacy*

*Figure.19 - Yerrabingin. 2025 Moreton Bay Fig*

*Figure.20 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Ripples*

*Figure.21 - Beletsky, Y. n.d. Startlight Bushland*

*Figure.22 - Pinterest. n.d. Hearth*

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *Watermark: Sensing Ripples of Saltwater Country*

**Watermark** is guided by the memory and movement of Saltwater Country - a place shaped by waves, stories, and deep cultural presence. Rather than imposing upon the land, design here must listen, respond, and move with Country. This approach honours the living legacy embedded in the ground, air, and people, recognising that true design emerges through balance, not dominance.

Drawing on the rhythms of water and the softness of sand, the design ethos is one of sensitivity and connection. Materials, textures, and spatial flows reflect natural patterns, creating environments that invite reflection, sensory engagement, and cultural presence. It's not about boundaries or ownership, but about creating space for care, respect, and collective responsibility.

Watermark fosters inclusive, interconnected communities through places that honour First Nations knowledge and invite shared experience. By foregrounding embodied relationality, *watermark* encourages people to feel the responsibility of being here - to deepen awareness of place and one another.

The project's legacy isn't marked by permanence or form alone, but by the ripple it leaves behind - a gesture of understanding, a shared breath with Country. Design becomes not a static imprint, but a continuing conversation - one that listens, flows, and carries memory forward. Not a boundary. A ripple.

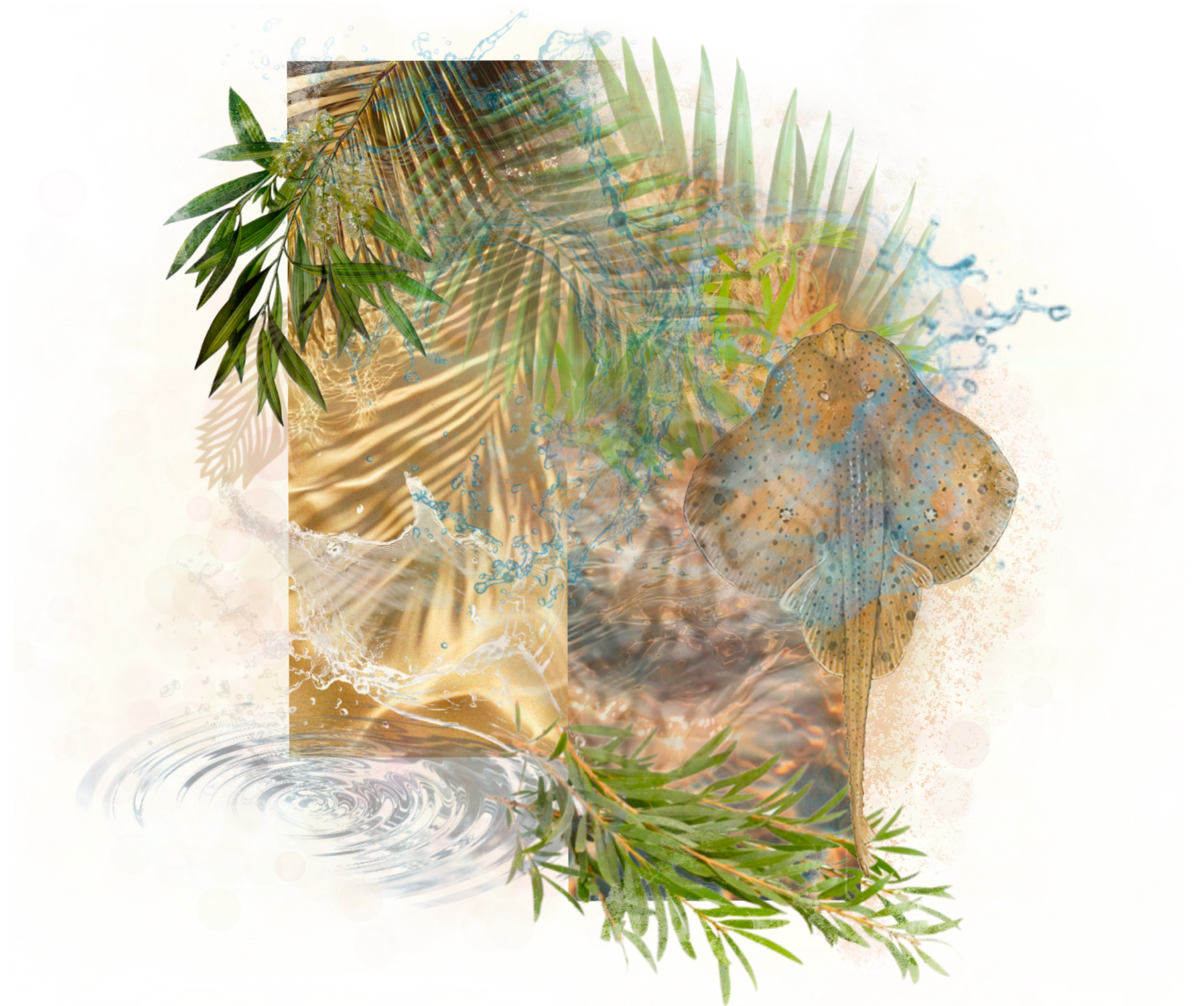


Figure.23 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Watermark

## CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY OPPORTUNITIES / ACTIONS

*Watermark: Sensing Ripples of Saltwater Country*

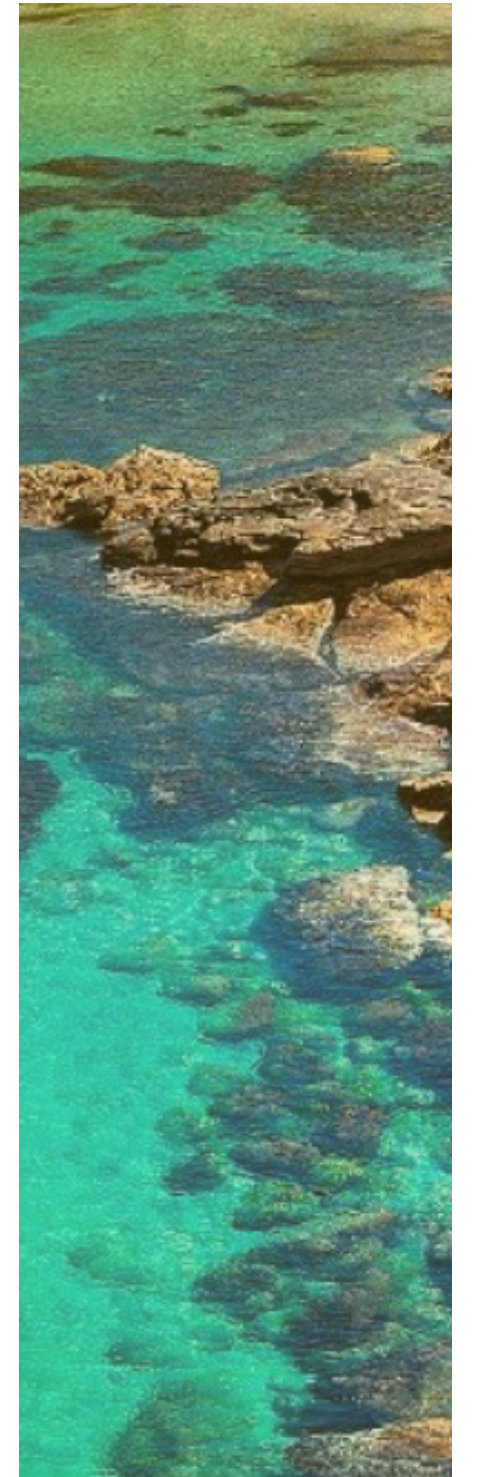
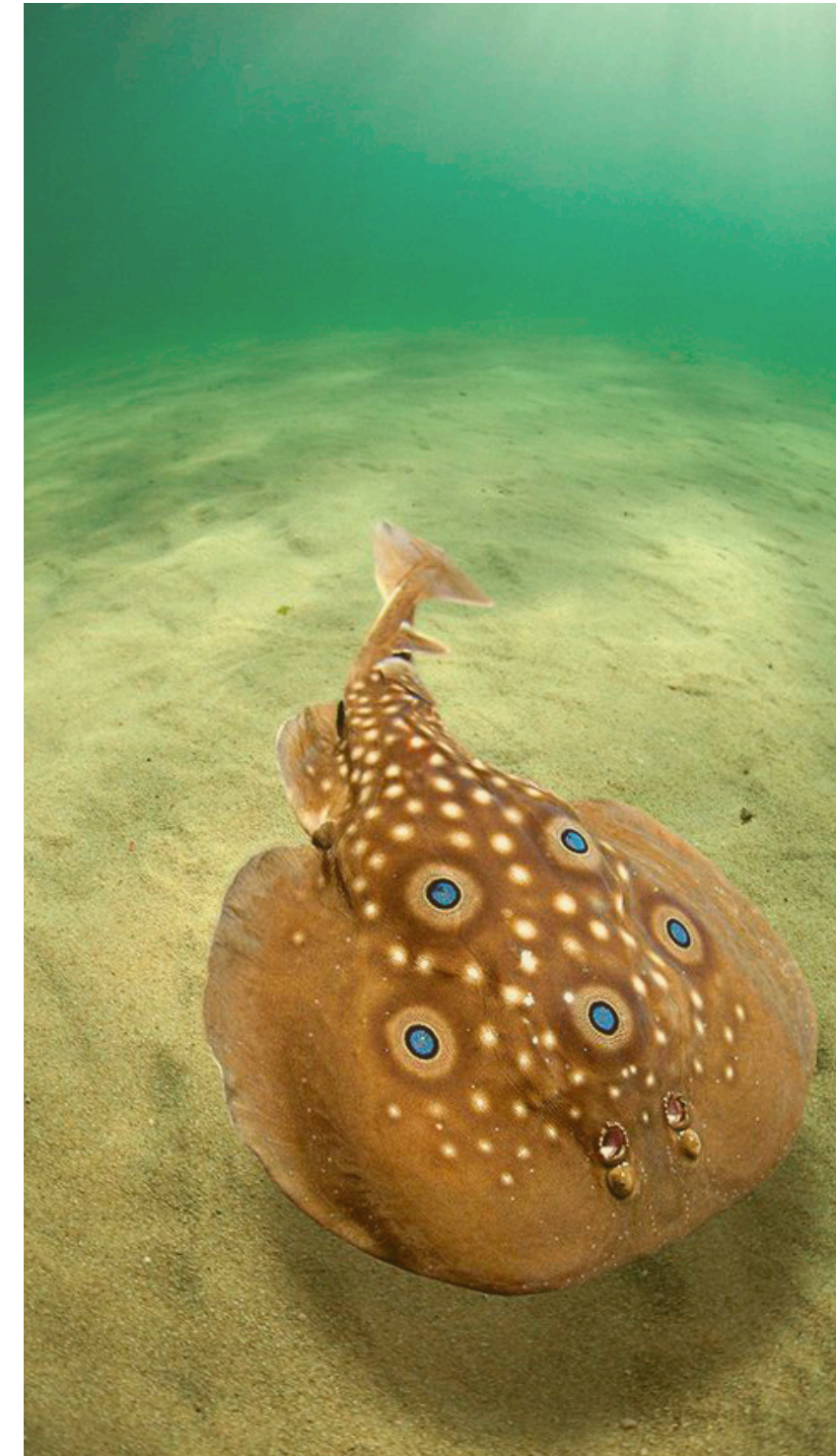
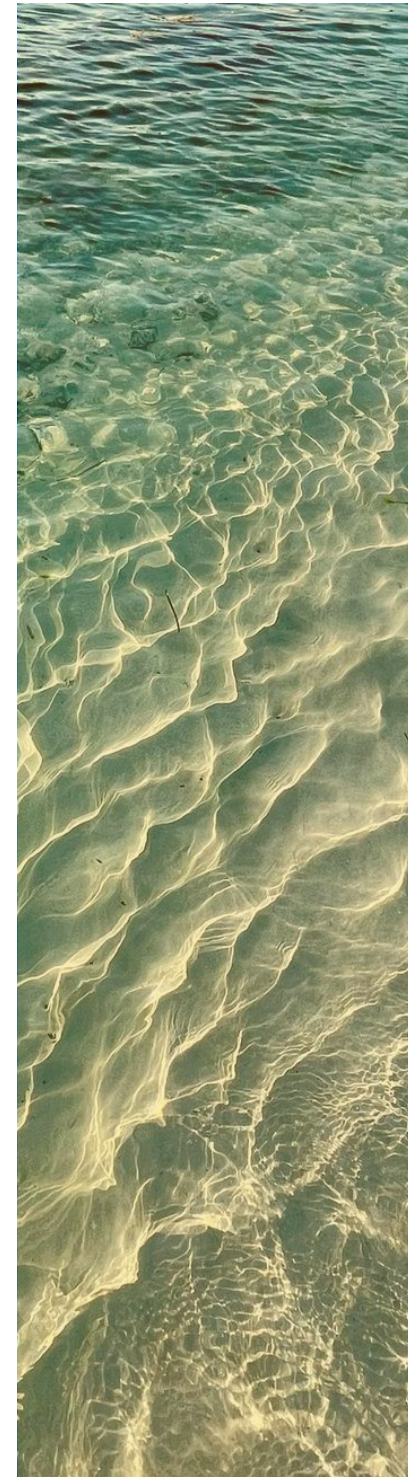
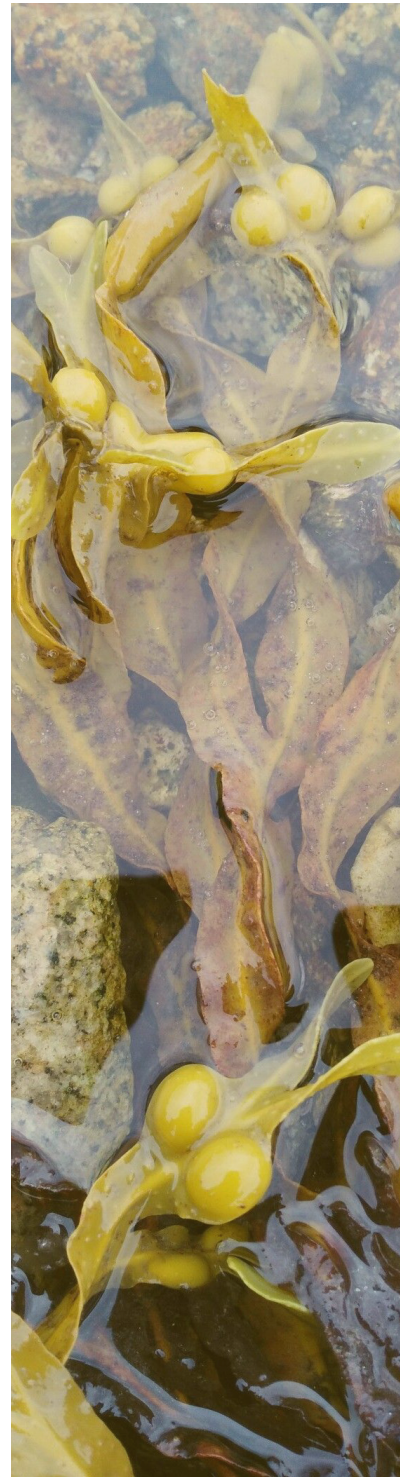
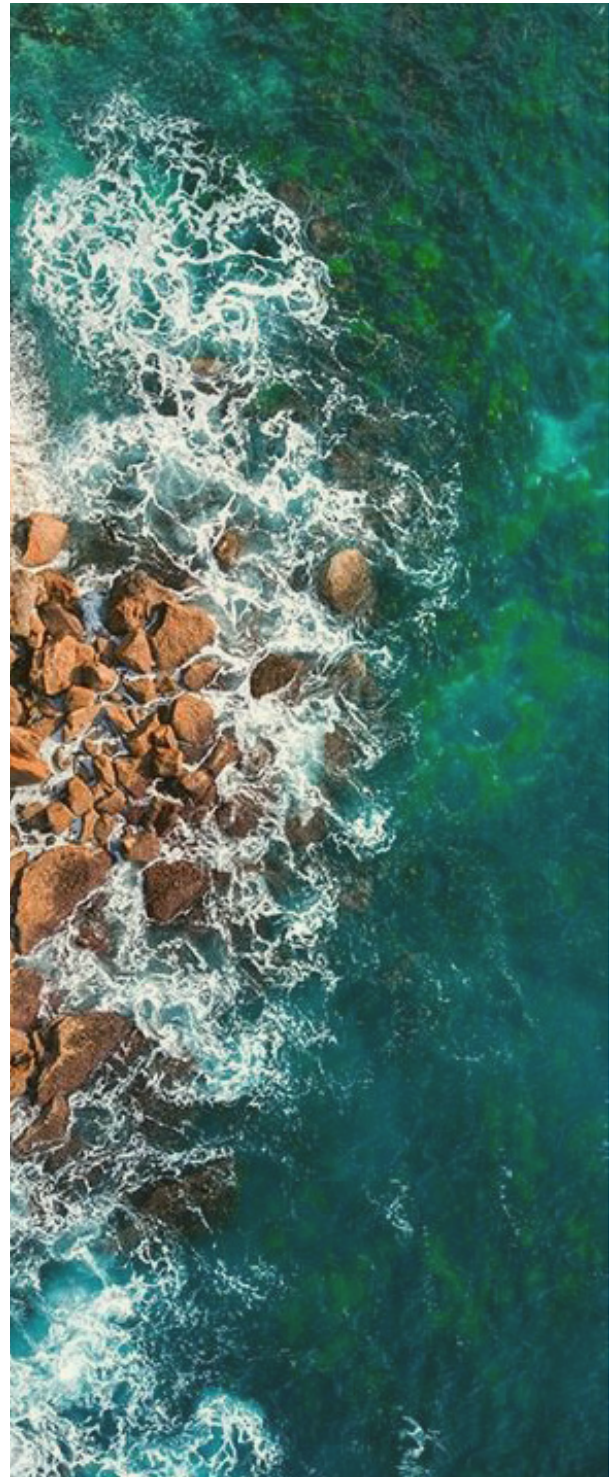


Figure.24 - Benham, A. n.d. Coast    Figure.25 - Linfield, S. n.d. Saltwater life    Figure.26 - Khan, A. n.d. Ripples.    Figure.27 - Fletcher, C. n.d. Saltwater Ripples    Figure.28 - Schultz, S. n.d. Southern Fiddler Ray    Figure.29 - Hirsty. n.d. Nearby Gordons Bay, Bidjigal Country

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### CWC Opportunities and Actions - Watermark

#### Opportunity

- Dynamic, sensorially vibrant water features
- Kinetic, tactile haptic moments throughout
- Carpet and soft furnishings that evoke water
- Soft, sinuous detailing on wall cladding
- Moments woven across the precinct that provide clues to Bidjigal stories and culture
- Features in the facade that suggest fluidity and movement

#### Answering the How Might We

By embedding the rhythms and memory of Saltwater Country into the built environment, this design fosters shared spaces that honour culture, nurture relationships, and invite all students into a meaningful connection with place.

#### Yerrabingin Pillars

Legacy is not only what we build, but how what we build deepens connection, respect, and care for Country.

#### Element of Country

Water Country; Wind Country; Deep Country

#### Users

##### Students

For the students who live in the colleges, their experiences with the stories of water can be materialised through daily immersion in fluid forms, curving lines, and colours and textures that evoke the powerful dynamism of Saltwater Country.

##### Visitors

Visitors to the precinct can be drawn in through sinuous shapes that invite and welcome them into the embracing space. Curious moments throughout can situate and educate visitors.

##### Non-Human Kin

Regenerated Water Country can help Non-Human Kin flourish by ensuring healthy systems across the Botany Wetlands.

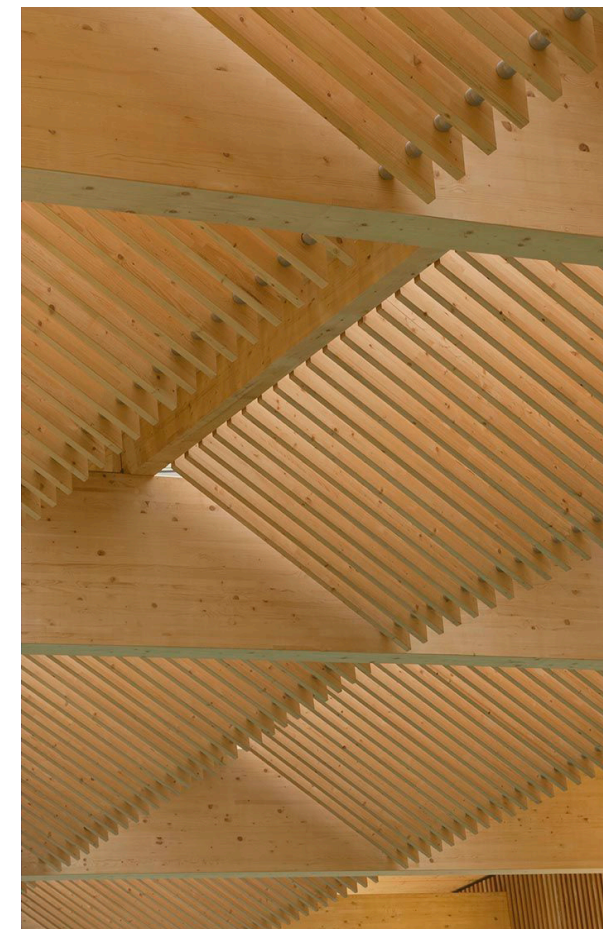
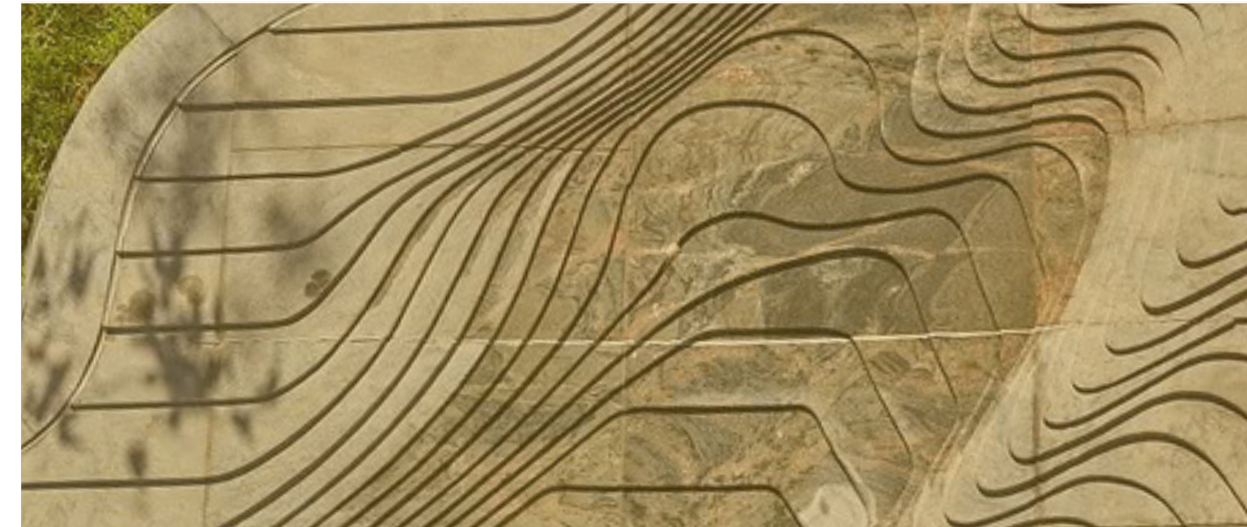


Figure.30 - Brickworks, n.d, Fluid Groundplane Figure.31 - Pinterest. n.d. Water and stone  
Figure.32 - Guy, D. n.d. Soffit and ceiling fixtures to reflect the patterns of Saltwater Figure.33 - Dynamic Furnishings evoke water's movement | Studio Blenda

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *First Light: Nurturing Emerging Connections*

**First Light** begins not with structure, but with sky - vast, ancestral, and alive with memory. It draws on the quiet constancy of starlight, the guiding rhythm of the moon, and the bold promise of the rising sun. These celestial movements connect us all with Bidjigal ancestors and each other, forming a shared narrative across time and space.

This approach to design honours light as both symbol and source - of knowledge, belonging, and renewal. Architecture becomes an expression of that light, not a boundary, but an invitation. Shared spaces open to sun, moon, and stars foster moments of gathering, reflection, and care, while private rooms provide rest without disconnecting from the communal rhythm. The campus becomes a constellation of connection, rooted in cultural respect and collective presence.

First Light envisions a campus where students from diverse backgrounds find unity under the same sky. It supports choice, inclusion, and a sense of belonging, creating an environment where people feel seen, safe, and part of something larger. Its true legacy lies not in its physical form, but in the everyday acts of care it enables. This is where connection, like light, radiates from a shared source. Community here is not constructed, but cultivated into a constellation of meaning and camaraderie. It begins with First Light.



Figure.34 - Yerrabingin. 2025. First Light

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### CWC Opportunities and Actions - First Light

#### Opportunity

- Open, shared environments to congregate in bright, welcoming spaces
- Wide or tall windows to allow an abundance of natural light into rooms and corridors
- Woven motifs or colours threaded into the built form connecting across corridors, floors, and precincts
- Warm textures and colours that evoke a sense of movement, and light
- Courtyards and communal spaces that encourage viewpoints out to significant sight-lines
- Celestial designs integrated into ceilings and/or lighting choices

#### Answering the How Might We

Connected by light, spaces honour both individuality and togetherness - designing for choice, cultural safety, and shared experience, connected in relationships that grow in place.

#### Yerrabingin Pillars

Cultural connection, shared experience, and care for Country are woven into the life of future communities.

#### Element of Country

Move with Country; Sky Country; Wind Country

#### Users

##### Students

Welcomed by morning sun streaming through tree branches, their experience of Country will be shaped throughout the day and the night with engaging, novel moments.

##### Visitors

Grounded by sunlight, embraced by the moon, visitors to the precinct will be bathed in starlight, connected to a grand story of Country

##### Non-Human Kin

Sensitive lighting at night will provide space for Non-Human Kin to rest gently. Bright spaces, open to sun provide space for cold-blooded animals to thrive.

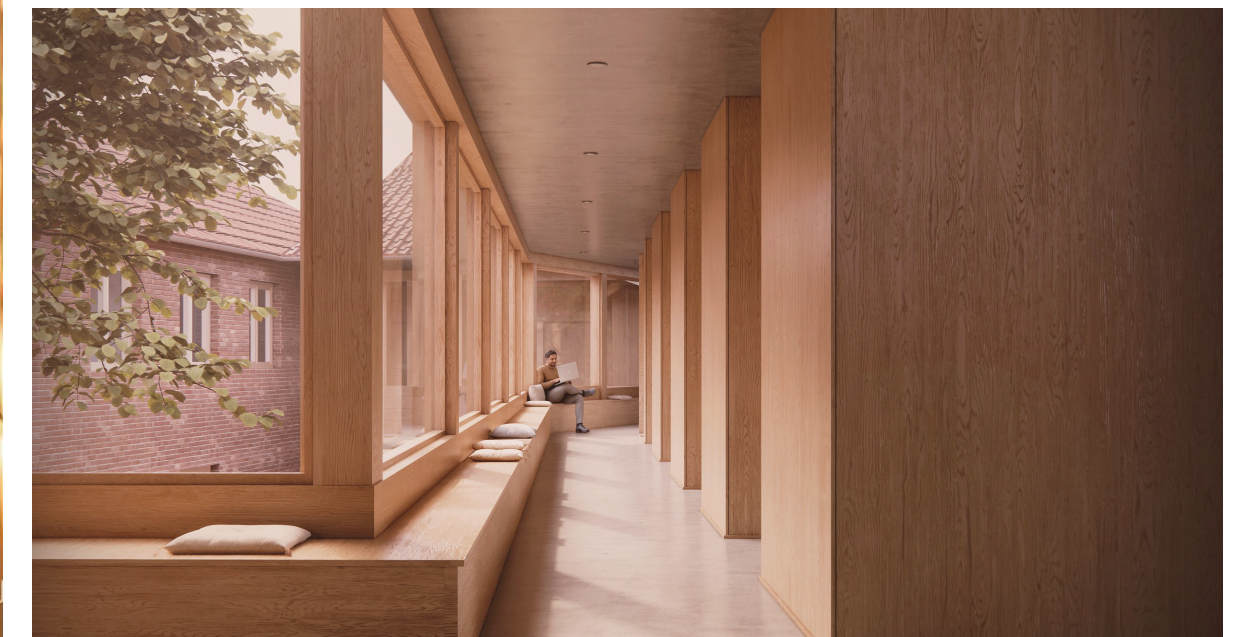
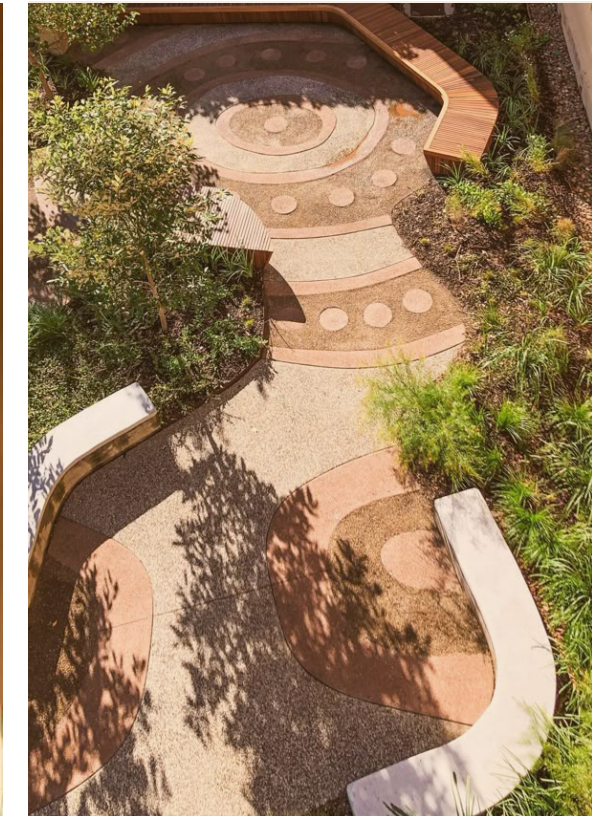


Figure.35 - Trang. n.d. Interiors which invite and celebrate natural light      Figure.36 - Arcadia. n.d. Spaces to gather  
Figure.37 - Afflelou n.d. Light and shadow.      Figure.38 - Loop Architects. n.d. Spaces to rest, bathed in sunlight

## CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY OPPORTUNITIES / ACTIONS

### *First Light: Nurturing Emerging Connections*

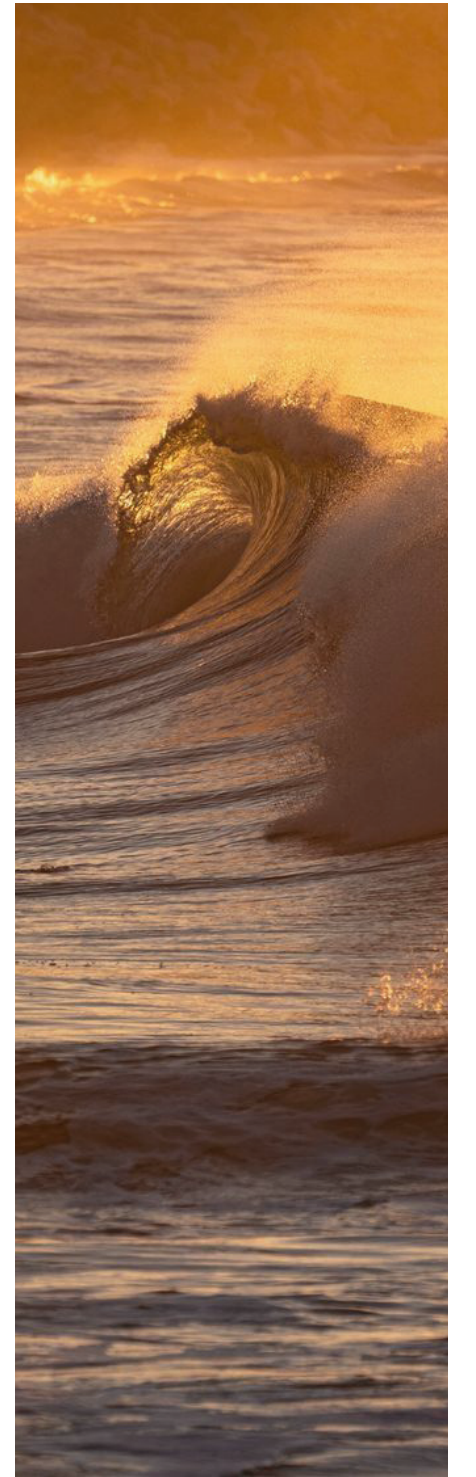
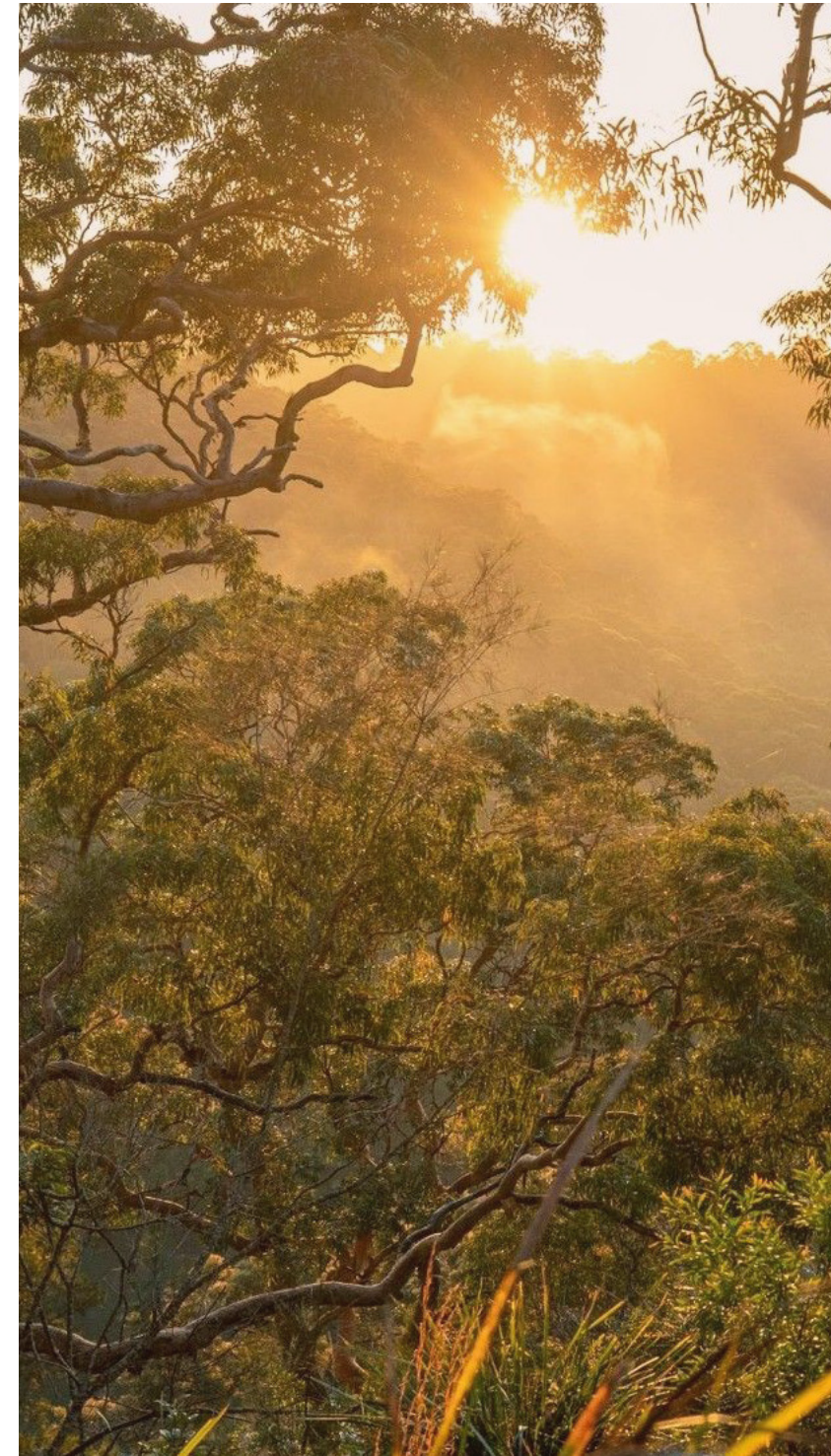
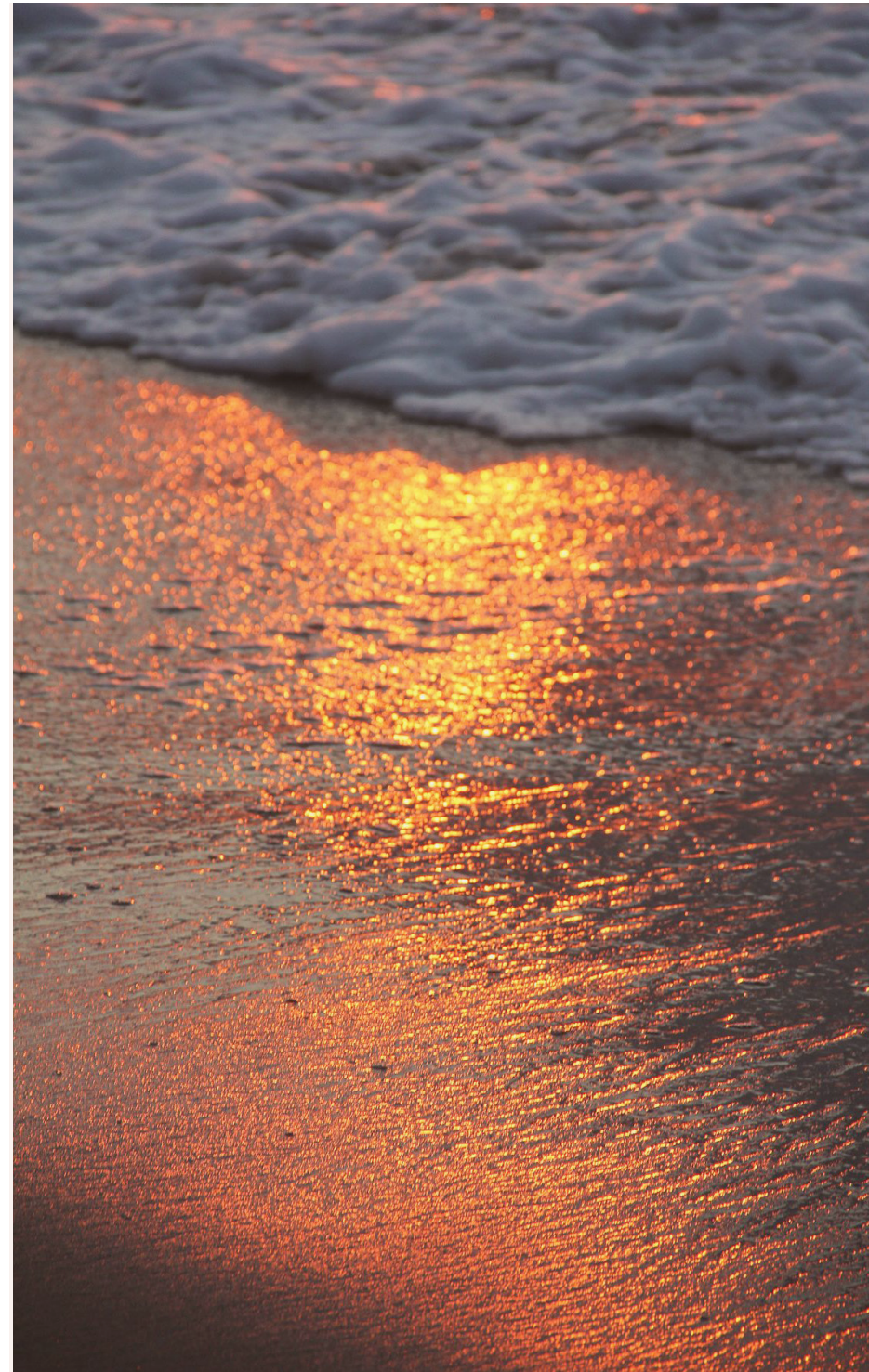
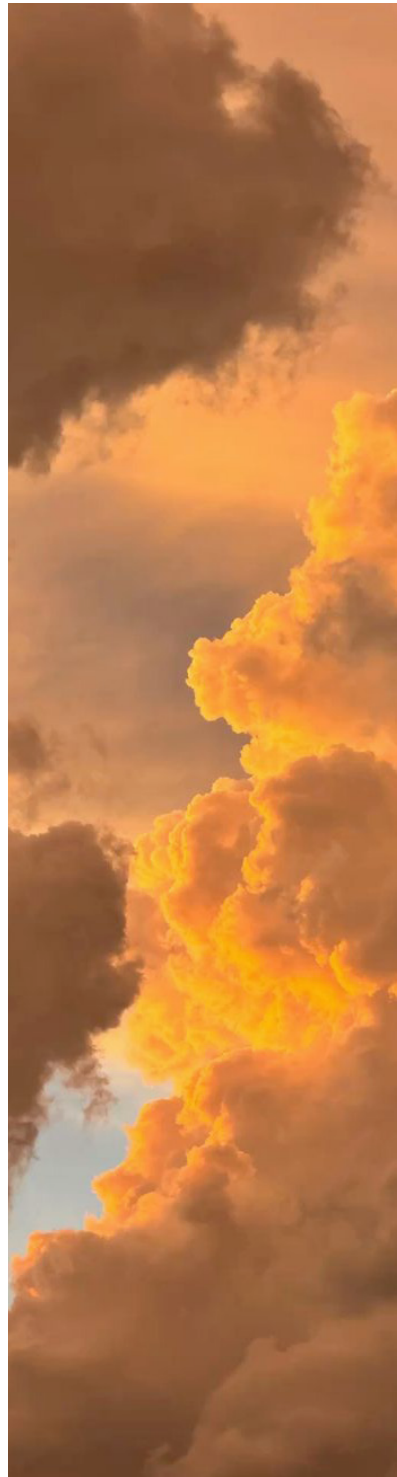


Figure.39 - O'Grady, 2015. Bathed in light    Figure.40 - Jellybears. 2017. Connections to Sky Country    Figure.41 - LuxeWellness. 2025. Golden hues    Figure.42 - EyeEm. n.d. First Light over Saltwater    Figure.43 - Getty Images. n.d. Sunlight through trees    Figure.44 - Pinterest. n.d. Sunrise over waves

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *Knowledge Tree: Celebrating Bidjigal Wisdom*

**Knowledge Tree** honours Bidjigal Peoples and Country as a living archive, where knowledge lives in roots, rocks, and relationships not only in books. Drawing on the idea of the tree - grounded, connected, and ever-growing - this design approach envisions student colleges as living systems of learning.

Learning is place-based, continuous, and deeply relational. Architecture is shaped to hold and transmit story, embedding cues from Country in materials, symbols, and language that teach as they shelter. These spaces do more than house students; they listen, remember, and speak, creating environments where cultural knowledge can be seen, heard, and passed on.

By rooting learning in Country and community, *Knowledge Tree* fosters an inclusive and respectful educational experience emerging from reciprocity, shared responsibility, and connection across generations. Students are invited to engage with cultural wisdom in everyday moments, cultivating awareness that learning is not a destination, but a journey carried forward by each person.

Its legacy is not simply structural, but alive. It is a growing system of knowledge, story, and care. Not just a building, but a place that teaches. A place that belongs, and helps others belong.



Figure.45 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Knowledge Tree

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### CWC Opportunities and Actions - Knowledge Tree

#### Opportunity

- Signage and wayfinding that engages directly with local First Nations' knowledges
- Sculptural elements throughout that celebrate First Nations storytelling
- Situated, interactive artworks and wayfinding to locate the users within Country
- Terraces and courtyards open out to surrounding canopies
- Timber finishes throughout, including of different textures, colours, and treatments like burning, lacquer, and paint.
- Seating uses materials, colours, and textures that connect to Deep Country

#### Answering the How Might We

These are living places of learning, where cultural knowledges are embedded in everyday interactions that are grounded in respect, relationships, and deep connection to place.

#### Yerrabingin Pillars

Cultural knowledges are rooted in place and continue to grow through each generation that passes through.

#### Element of Country

Non-Human Kin Country; Deep Country; Move with Country; Sky Country

#### Users

##### Students

Places to rest alone or gather together provide opportunities to connect with surrounding landscape at all moments of their day.

##### Visitors

Signage, wayfinding, and artworks share knowledges and stories of Country.

##### Non-Human Kin

Retaining and celebrating trees provides habitat for Non-Human Kin. Drawing on form, colour, and textures of plants and animals can provide powerful, consistent themes throughout the precinct.

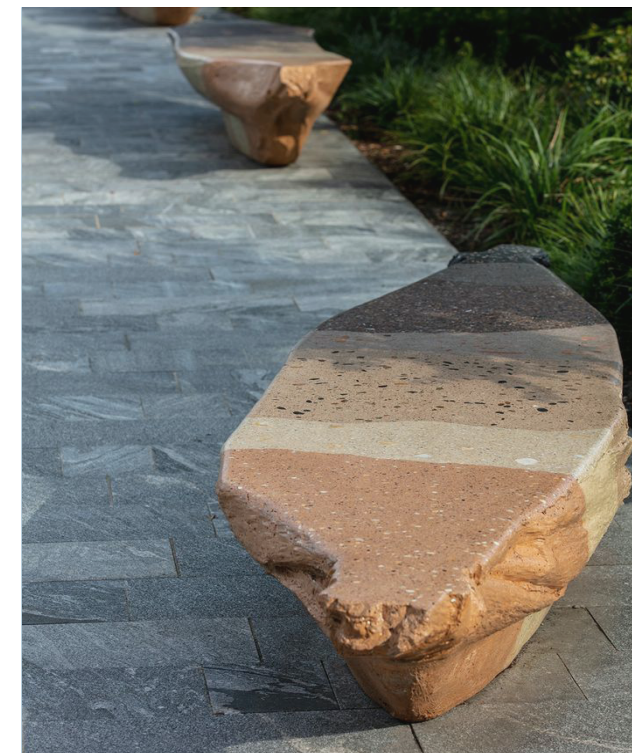


Figure.46 - Yerrabingin. 2024. Terraced Courtyard Figure.47 - Jones, H. n.d. Educational signage  
Figure.48 - Brett Broadman Photography & Steve Brown Photography. n.d. Seating, rich with grounded materiality  
Figure.49 - Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. 2023. Hand-carved wooden sculpture

## CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY OPPORTUNITIES / ACTIONS

### *Knowledge Tree: Celebrating Bidjigal Wisdom*

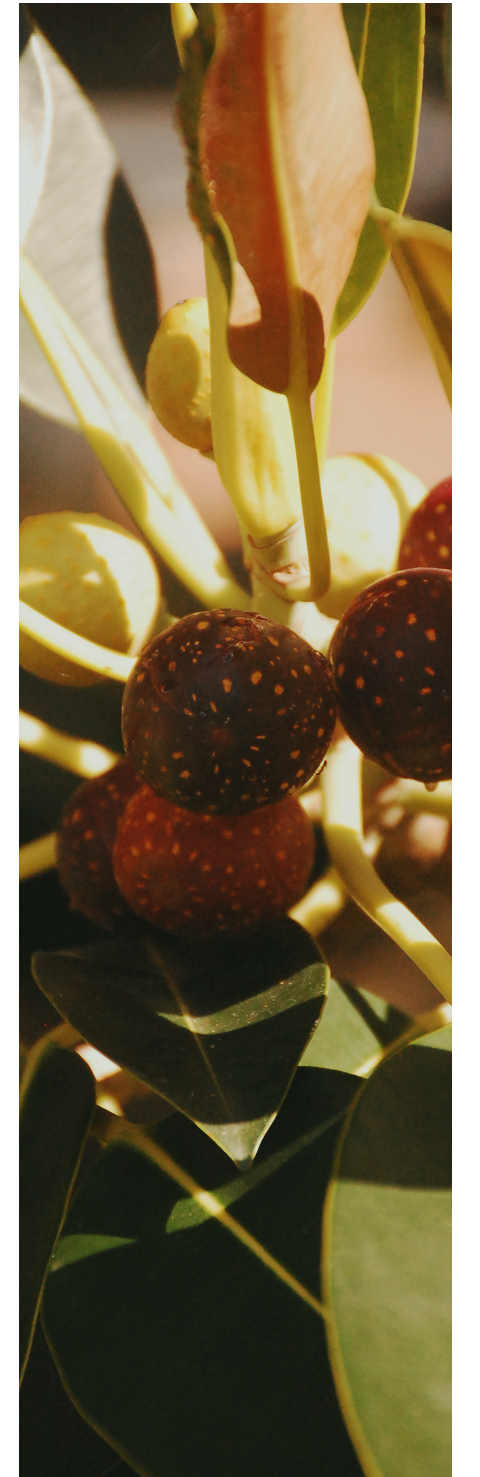
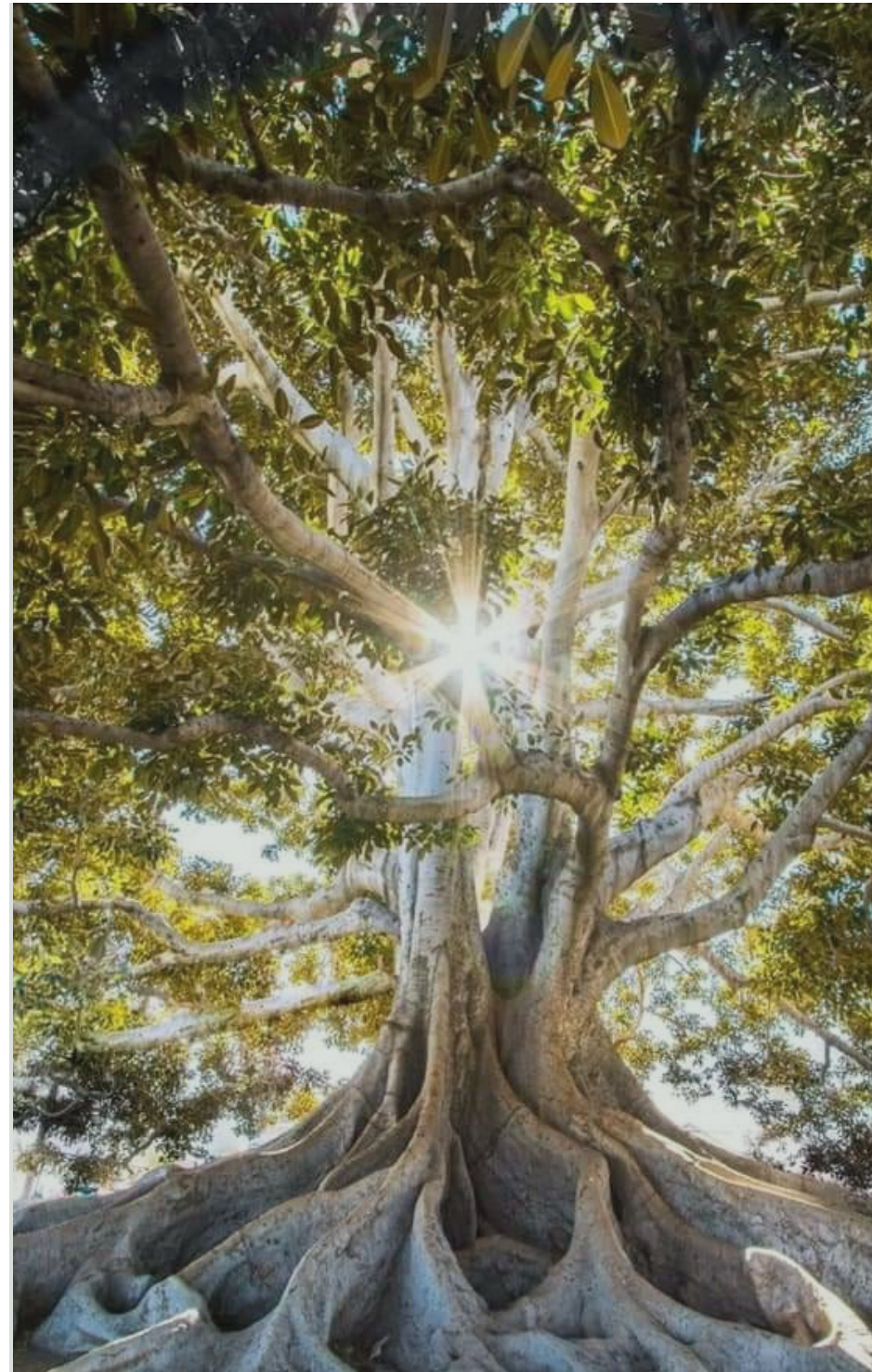
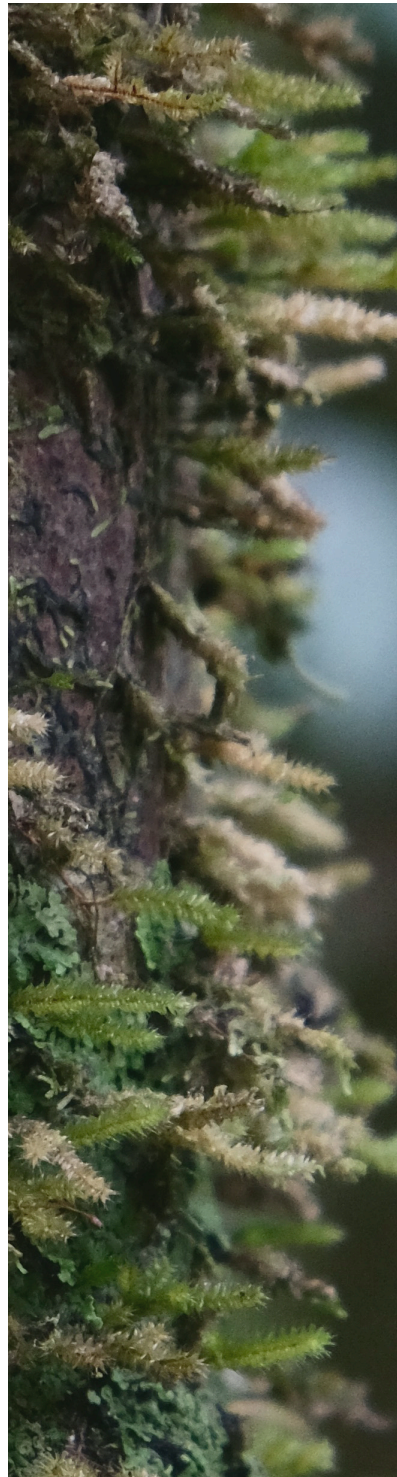


Figure.50 - Bakanova. 2015. Growth. Figure.51 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Scales of Country Figure.52 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Layers. Figure.53 - Bishop, J. n.d. The Majesty of the Fig Tree Figure.54 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Bundles of leaves and fruit Figure.55 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Nourishing Fruit

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *A Hearth, A Home: Tending to Enduring Legacy*

**A hearth, a home**, where Country's spirit is sustained through enduring legacy. A place where culture, ceremony, and story remain present across deep time. During the workshop, First Nations participants expressed a desire to see a central fire hearth - whether physical, symbolic, or conceptual - as a representation of warmth, gathering, and connection. They also called for spaces that hold cultural practices and shared experiences: a yarning circle for dialogue and learning, a smoking ceremony area to welcome and cleanse, a gathering space for performance to share story, music, and culture, and a water feature with flames to symbolically unite Fire and Water.

Participants stressed that these places must be designed with openness and permeability, encouraging spontaneous encounters and inclusivity. In this theme, fire is more than heat and light; it is a symbol of connection, community, and care. It reminds us that thriving requires the right conditions - space, support, and presence. By creating places that make all people feel welcome and included, we honour this truth by fostering environments where new connections can grow.

The hearth becomes a symbol of shared energy: a gathering place that invites warmth, storytelling, and belonging. Through design that incorporates circles for conversation, spaces for ceremony, platforms for performance, and elemental features that evoke both water and fire, we are invited to kindle relationships gently and with intention, tending to them as we would a flame. This is a call to nurture spaces that support growth not through force, but through balance, reciprocity, and shared care.



Figure.56 - Yerrabingin. 2025. A Hearth, A Home

## CONNECTING WITH COUNTRY OPPORTUNITIES / ACTIONS

*A Hearth, A Home: Tending to Enduring Legacy*

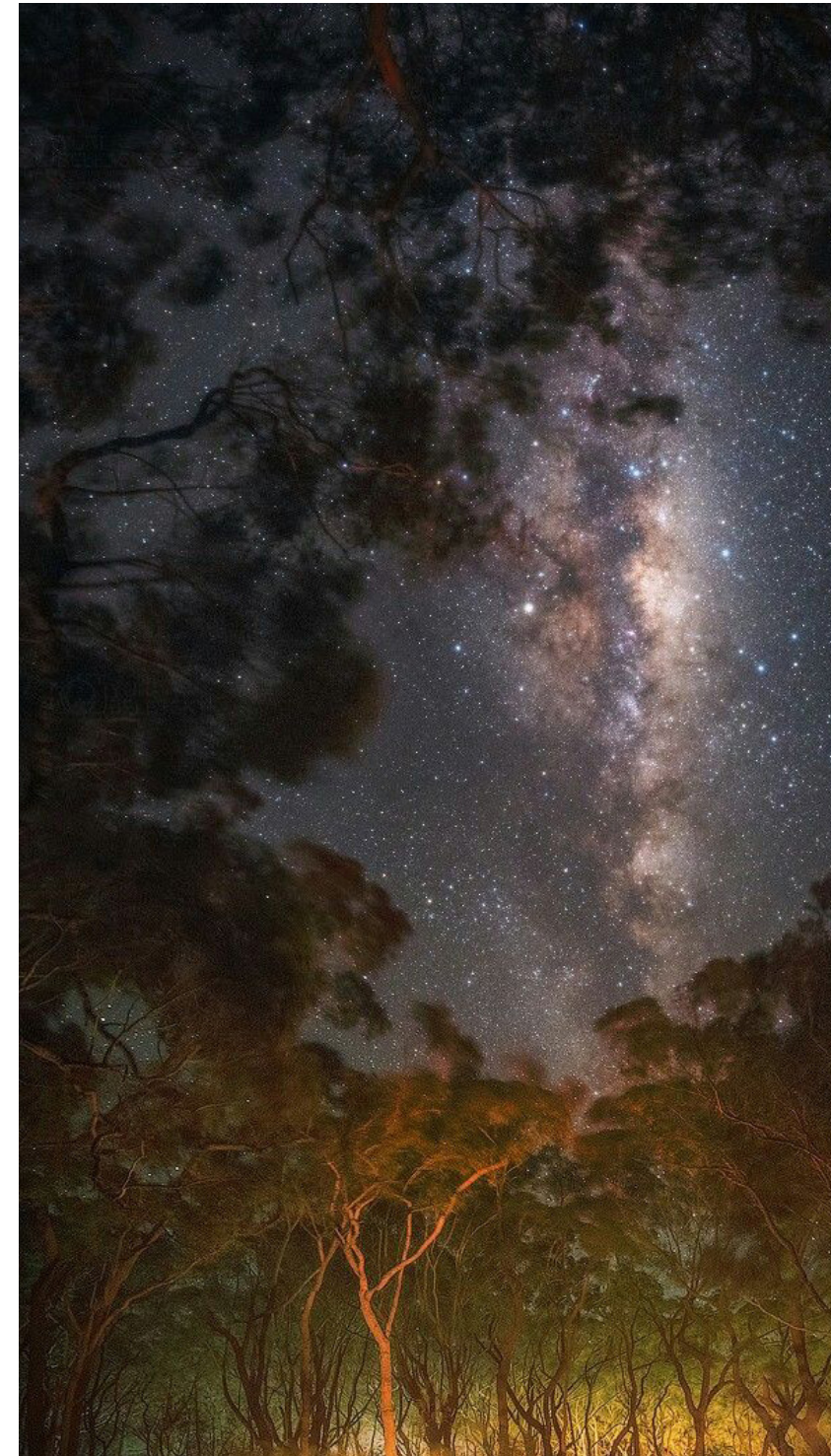


Figure.57 - Earl, I. n.d. Warmed by the hearth's glow Figure.58 - NMR Studio Design. n.d. Smoke Figure.59 - Glover, S. n.d. Nourished. Figure.60 - O'Brien, E. n.d. Of Country Figure.61 - Beletsky, Y. N.d. Starlight Bushland Figure.62 - Cooley, K. Cleansed by smoke

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### CWC Opportunities and Actions - A Hearth, A Home

#### Opportunity

- Yarning circle as a central social anchor for dialogue and shared learning.
- Smoking ceremony area at the threshold to welcome and activate the precinct.
- Gathering space for performance that supports storytelling, music, and cultural events.
- Water feature with symbolic flames uniting Fire and Country in one gesture.

#### Answering the How Might We

By embedding the gathering, ceremonial, and symbolic functions of the hearth into the design, the student accommodation precinct becomes a place that honours culture, nurtures relationships, and invites all students and visitors into a meaningful connection with Country.

#### Yerrabingin Pillars

The hearth references ensure that connection, respect, and care for Country are lived daily through ceremony, conversation, and performance.

#### Element of Country

Move with Country; Deep Country

#### Users

##### Students

For students living in the colleges, the hearth framework creates daily opportunities to connect with peers, with Aboriginal culture, and with place. Shared yarning spaces, illuminated thresholds, and the interplay of water and fire imagery provide both belonging and learning.

##### Visitors

Visitors encounter an immediately legible cultural welcome through the smoking ceremony area and water-fire feature. The gathering performance space doubles as a site of education, offering interpretive moments about Bidjigal history and living culture.

##### Non-Human Kin

Acknowledging fire's role in ecological renewal, plantings and habitat zones around the hearth spaces can be designed to regenerate local species. Water features also sustain birdlife and insects, linking cultural symbolism with ecological health.



Figure.63 - Aquascape. n.d. Fire Piece    Figure.65 - Hassey n.d. Dance    Figure.64 - Gardenier, R. n.d. Landscape inspired by coastal environment  
Figure.66 - UNSW. n.d. Spaces for Smoking Ceremony | UNSW    Figure.67 - Doherty, Y. n.d. Yarning Circle

## DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY

*Inclusive and Interconnected Communities*



Figure.68 - Yerrabingin. 2025. A unified vision of an inclusive and interconnected communities thriving at UNSW N13 Student Accommodation

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### Elements of Country Exploration

#### Move with Country

Cultural activation, art spaces, and dedicated music rooms and performance opportunities allow First Nations students to celebrate culture.

#### Wind Country

Places where Smoking Ceremonies can take place, as well as fires around a yarning circle can enable people to connect to Country.

#### Non-Human Kin Country

Preservation and celebration of the large fig trees on site showcases the web of life present across Bidjigal Country.

#### Sky Country

Glass windows capture the morning sun, and look out to the vastness of Country. The night sky can be seen, connecting all under a shared canopy of stars.

#### Water Country

Ponds create dynamic settings where the sound and presence of water can be felt by passers by. Signals around the precinct connect to Saltwater Country Non-Human Kin

#### Deep Country

The roots of the trees signal a journey into the underground. Expressions of coastal sandstone is seen across the precinct in colour and material choices.

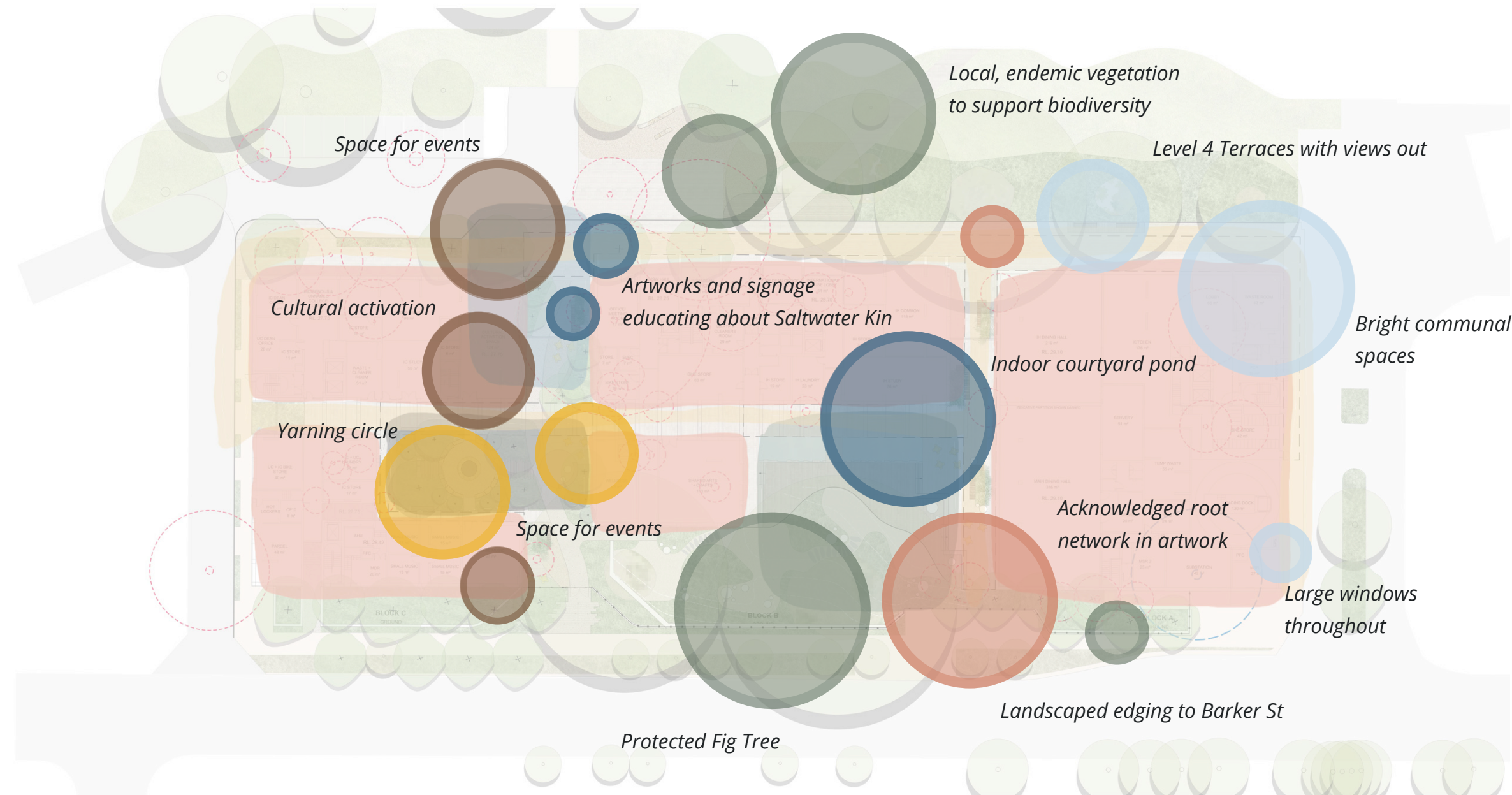


Figure.69 - Yerrabingin, 2025. Designing with Country opportunities mapped out on site.

## DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

### *Answering the How Might We Question*

The Connecting with Country opportunities presented in the preceding pages together form the answer to our How Might We question.

*How Might We imagine student colleges to be inclusive and interconnected communities that celebrate culture, relationships, and Country?*

From the nourishing burst of first light, the enduring wisdom held within Country, through to the movement of water across and within Country, and the powerful reverence held within the ancient hearth stones, considered together, the opportunities and actions addressed in this report makes use of the gifts Country provides.

As a whole, these opportunities ensure the student colleges are inclusive and interconnected communities. Culture, relationships, and Country are celebrated through dedicated spaces for First Nations people, pathways for water to be honoured, and the strength of Bidjigal wisdom to be respected and integrated into design.



#### **First Light**

Large windows and open communal spaces allow abundance of light into the building.

#### **Knowledge Tree**

Honouring and celebrating the trees on site and tapping into the vast wisdom entangled in the trees deep history

#### **Watermark**

Artistic interventions which showcase First Nations art and connections to Saltwater Kin,

#### **A Hearth, A Home**

Creating dedicated spaces for cultural events that connect to the powerful, enduring presence of nearby hearth stone artefacts.

Figure.70 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Design moves shown across the site.

## PROJECT LEGACY

### *Future of Connecting with Country at UNSW N13 Student Accomodation*

We have followed our Collaborative Design process to first define our design challenge, and then with the project team and Aboriginal community members, worked together to develop a solution to our challenge in the form of an answer to our How Might We Question as shared above.

At the beginning of the process, Yerrabingin identified the opportunity to explore bringing the pillars into the design solution, and our process has focused on developing design solutions that will achieve long term outcomes for the project site.

Together, the opportunities of ***A Hearth, A Home; First Light; Watermark;*** and ***Knowledge Tree*** will contribute to bringing this pillar to life at the site in the short term, and into the future.



Figure.71 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Bidjigal Country

## FIGURES LIST

Figure.1 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Coastal Flora

Figure.2 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Lush, verdant Bidjigal Country

Figure.3 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Bidjigal Country

Figure.4 - Yerrabingin. 2024. We inhabit and are inhabited by Country

Figure.5 - GANSW. 2023. Combining cultural practice and behavioural change systems

Figure.6 - Yerrabingin. 2024. Methodology Process

Figure.7 - Yerrabingin. 2025. The vibrancy of Saltwater Country

Figure.8 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Cabbage Tree Palm

Figure.9 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Flying-fox colony at nearby Lachlan Swamps

Figure.10 - Tilt Industrial Design. n.d. The Randwick Hearth Stone. <https://tilt-industrialdesign.com/projects/prince-of-wales-hospital/>

Figure.11 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Nearby Lachlan Swamps, an example of Bidjigal Country's swampy heath

Figure.12 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Timeline of Yerrabingin's engagement in the project

Figure.13 - Yerrabingin. 2025 Screenshots of the How Might We workshop

Figure.14 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Collection of Images from the Walk on Country

Figure.15 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Images from the Collaborative Design Workshop

Figure.16 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Screenshots from the Ideation Workshop

Figure.17 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Images from the Community Feedback Session

Figure.18 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Bidjigal Country Saltwater

Figure.19 - Yerrabingin. 2025 Ripples

Figure.20 - Beletsky, Y. n.d. Starlight Bushland. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nightscaper/posts/1808887812755470/>

Figure.21 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Moreton Bay Fig

Figure.22 - Pintrest. n.d. Hearth

Figure.23 - Yerrabingin. 2025. A Hearth, A Home

Figure.24 - Earl, I. n.d. Warmed by the hearth's glow. <https://www.indiaearl.com/canyoning-yoga-camping/>

Figure.25 - NMR Studio Design. n.d. Smoke <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/328129522872214236/>

Figure.26 - Glover, S. n.d. Nourished. <https://au.pinterest.com/baragisladottir/sea-sons-seasons/>

Figure.27 - O'Brien, E. n.d. Of Country. <https://emilyobrienlifestyle.com/products/waterhouse-conservation-tasmania-iv-photographic-print?variant=40758140928070>

Figure.28 - Beletsky, Y. N.d. Starlight Bushland. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nightscaper/posts/1808887812755470/>

Figure.29 - Cooley, K. Cleansed by smoke. <https://www.ignant.com/2014/03/06/controlled-burns-by-kevin-cooley/>

Figure.30 - Aquascape. n.d. Fire Piece

Figure.31 - Gardenier, R. n.d. Landscape inspired by coastal environment <https://landscapeaustralia.com/articles/2021-national-landscape-architecture-awards-landscape-architecture-award-for-cultural-heritage-1/>

Figure.32 - Hassey n.d. Dance. <https://www.australiantraveller.com/nt/arnhem-land/east-arnhem-land-4wd-cultural-tour/>

Figure.33 - UNSW. n.d. Spaces for Smoking Ceremony

Figure.34 - Doherty, Y. n.d. Yarning Circle. <https://good-design.org/projects/curtin-university-indigenous-learning-circle-yarning-circle/>

Figure.35 - Yerrabingin. 2025. Watermark

Figure.36 - Benham, A. n.d. Coast. <https://www.gusha.com.au/products/syd4030-bronte-pool>

Figure.37 - Linfield, S. n.d. Saltwater life. <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/308848486936978084/>

Figure.38 - Khan, A. n.d. Ripples. <https://ch.pinterest.com/pin/559853797448392834/>

Figure.39 - Fletcher, C. n.d. Saltwater Ripples. <https://christianfletcher.com.au/products/sand-patterns-broome-north-western-australia>

Figure.40 - Schultz, S. n.d. Southern Fiddler Ray. <https://fishesofaustralia.net.au/home/family/369>

Figure.41 - Hirsty. n.d. Nearby Gordons Bay, Bidjigal Country. <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/939774647242558741/>

Figure.42 - Brickworks, n.d, Fluid Groundplane

Figure.43 - Pinterest. n.d. Water and stone. <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/751749362824502201/>

Figure.44 - Guy, D. n.d. Soffit and ceiling fixtures to reflect the patterns of Saltwater Country. <https://www.ozetecture.org/ozetecturecommunity/2016/07/northern-england-david-guy.html>

Figure.45 - Studio Blenda. n.d. Dynamic Furnishings evoke water's movement

Figure.46 - Yerrabingin. 2025. First Light

Figure.47 - Trang. n.d. Interiors which invite and celebrate natural light

## FIGURES LIST

Figure.49 - Afflelou n.d. Light and shadow. <https://www.afflelou.com/images/afflelou/france/cms/contenu/communiqués/lookbook-202504.pdf>

Figure.50 - Loop Architects. n.d. Spaces to rest, bathed in sunlight. <https://looparchitects.dk/portfolio/det-maritime-skolehjem/>

Figure.48 - Arcadia. n.d. Spaces to gather. <https://arcadiala.com.au/projects/learning-environments/university-of-queensland-reconciliation-garden/>

Figure.51 - O'Grady, 2015. Bathed in light. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/29815134@N06/23846138252/>

Figure.52 - Jellybears. 2017. Connections to Sky Country. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/60990547@N06/36483951001/>

Figure.53 - LuxeWellness. 2025. Golden hues. <https://www.luxewellness.com.au/service-page/9d-breathwork-sound-experience>

Figure.54 - EyeEm. n.d. First Light over Saltwater. [https://www.freepik.com/premium-photo/scenic-view-sea-sunset\\_105601848.htm#fromView=keyword&page=3&position=4&uuid=3f826311-8a24-492d-87fa-40afae51c263&query=Dawn+on+sandy+beach](https://www.freepik.com/premium-photo/scenic-view-sea-sunset_105601848.htm#fromView=keyword&page=3&position=4&uuid=3f826311-8a24-492d-87fa-40afae51c263&query=Dawn+on+sandy+beach)

Figure.55 - Getty Images. n.d. Sunlight through trees. <https://www.abc.net.au/religion/stan-grant-bach-arvo-part-music-of-the-soul/104384814>

Figure.56 - Pinterest. n.d. Sunrise over waves. <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/524036106662820531/>

Figure.57 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Knowledge Tree

Figure.58 - Yerrabigin. 2024. Terraced Courtyard

Figure.60 - Brett Broadman Photography & Steve Brown Photography. n.d. Seating, rich with grounded materiality. <https://tract.com.au/projects/central-acute-services-building-westmead-hospital/>

Figure.61 - Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. 2023. Hand-carved wooden sculpture. <https://www.botanicgardens.org.au/royal-botanic-garden-sydney/gadigal-country/yerung-spirit-tree>

Figure.59 - Jones, H. n.d. Educational signage <http://www.heinejones.com.au/environmental/city-of-dandenong-bush-land-reserves/>

Figure.62 - Bakanova. 2015. Growth. <https://www.stocksy.com/photo/708001/giant-fig-tree-in-tropical-rainforest?zs=1>

Figure.63 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Scales of Country

Figure.64 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Layers.

Figure.65 - Bishop, J. n.d. The Majesty of the Fig Tree. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/afdelaziz/2018/11/04/the-power-of-purpose-abundance-is-the-new-sustainability/>

Figure.66 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Bundles of leaves and fruit

Figure.67 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Nourishing Fruit

Figure.68 - Yerrabigin. 2025. A unified vision of an inclusive and interconnected communities thriving at UNSW N13 Student Accommodation

Figure.69 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Designing with Country opportunities mapped out on site.

Figure.70 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Design moves shown across the site.

Figure.71 - Yerrabigin. 2025. Bidjigal Country

## REFERENCES

Government Architect NSW. (2020). Designing with Country discussion paper. <https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/projects/designing-with-country>

Government Architect NSW. (2023). Connecting with Country framework. <https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/gamedia/files/ga/case-studies/connecting-with-country-framework.pdf?la=en>

National Indigenous Times (2024) 8,000-year-old artefacts preserved and displayed at NSW hospital. Available at: <https://nit.com.au/16-02-2024/9825/8000-year-old-artefacts-preserved-and-displayed-at-new-south-wales-hospital>

NSW Government (2023a) Randwick Cultural Program. Available at: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/health-infrastructure-projects/community/randwick-cultural-program>

Partridge (2023) Hearth Dome. Available at: <https://partridge.com.au/hearth-dome>

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (2023a) The story behind the 8,000 year old hearth stones. Available at: <https://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/news/story-behind-8000-year-old-hearth-stones>

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (2023b) Celebrating 8000 years of connection to Country. Available at: <https://www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/news/celebrating-8000-years-of-connection-to-country> (Accessed: 3 September 2025).

Tilt Industrial Design (2023) Prince of Wales Hospital Hearth Installation. Available at: <https://tilt-industrialdesign.com/projects/prince-of-wales-hospital> (Accessed: 3 September 2025).

UNSW Indigenous Strategy, Education & Research (n.d.a). 'Culture and Country'. Micro-Treaty. Online. accessed 13 Jan 2025. <https://www.indigenous.unsw.edu.au/strategy/culture-and-country>.

UNSW Indigenous Strategy, Education & Research (n.d.b). 'History'. Micro-Treaty. Online. accessed 13 Jan 2025. <https://www.indigenous.unsw.edu.au/strategy/culture-and-country/history>.

UNSW Indigenous Strategy, Education & Research (n.d.c). 'UNSW Indigenous'. Micro-Treaty. Online. Accessed 14 Jan 2025. <https://www.indigenous.unsw.edu.au/strategy>.



**YERRABINGIN**

**WE ARE YERRABINGIN. WE WALK TOGETHER.**