



3-7 Middlemiss Street and 64-66 Lavender Street, Lavender Bay

Connecting with Country Report

Central Element

Prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment

4 March 2026



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

We acknowledge the Wangal and 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 Wiradjuri 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 Cammeraygal People, the 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: © Aunty Pamela Young, 2025

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

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Connecting with Country report has been prepared by Artefact Heritage and Environment to accompany a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) SSD-86797708.

This report has been prepared to address the Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) issued for the project.

The report was developed following guidelines in the Government Architect New South Wales, 2023. *Connecting with Country* framework.

Declaration		
Qualified Professional Name	Alexandra Gaffikin	
Qualified Professional Qualifications	BA Indigenous Studies, University of South Australia, 2025 BA Hons Humanities, Open University UK, 2016 NVQ Level 4 Cultural Heritage, Greenwich College, 2009 MSc Science Communication, Imperial College London, 2003	
The undersigned declares that this Connecting with Country report has been prepared in response to the following SEARs requirements issued for the Project on 30 June 2025 (EIS) and 2 July 2025 (Rezoning Report) for SSD-86797708:		
SEARs item no.	SEARs Issue and Assessment Requirement	Relevant Section of this Report that addresses SEARs Requirement
4.	<i>Engagement</i> • <i>Demonstrate that engagement and consultation activities have been undertaken in accordance with the Undertaking Engagement Guidelines for State Significant Projects and identify how issues raised, and feedback</i>	<i>The CwC is not the Engagement Report but outcomes from the CwC report feed into the Engagement process.</i>

Declaration		
	received have been considered in the design of the project. • If the development would have required an approval or authorisation under another Act but for the application of s 4.41 of the EP&A Act or requires an approval or authorisation under another Act to be applied consistently by s 4.42 of the EP&A Act, the agency relevant to that approval or authorisation must be consulted	Minutes/notes from consultation sessions including “issues raised, and feedback received” see section 6.3.3 Outcomes and recommendations of how feedback was “considered in the design of the project.” see section 9 A consultation log see section 12
Signed 		
Dated	4/3/2026	

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

The Trustees for CE Lavender Bay Trust are seeking approval to redevelop the property located at 3-7 Middlemiss Street and 64-66 Lavender Street, Lavender Bay NSW 2060 as a State-Significant Development (SSD-86797708). The proposal includes the construction of a new residential development with the provision of affordable housing.

2.2 Scope of report

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

2.3 The study area

The study area is located consists of 64-66 Lavender St and 3-7 Middlemiss St, Lavender Bay NSW 2060 and includes the following lots:

- SP538
- SP52429
- SP52428
- Lot 4 DP 19368
- SP70601

The study area is located within the boundaries of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and within the North Sydney Council Local Government Area (LGA). It is situated within a residential area and is

bounded by Middlemiss Street, the rail corridor and Sydney Harbour Bridge to the north and east, Lavender Street to the south and Arthur Lane and other residential houses to the west. Currently the study area consists of five residential buildings containing multiple units and associated landscaping.

2.4 Project description

The proposed development seeks approval for the rezoning of the site and development consent for the construction of a residential development.

The SSDA specifically involves the following works:

- Demolition of the existing buildings on site;
- Site excavation, and other preparatory site works;
- Construction of a 32 and 23-storey residential flat building including 3% designated affordable housing consisting of approximately a total of 160 dwellings,
- Five levels of basement parking,
- Vehicular access from Lavender Street and loading access from Middlemiss Street,
- A new public accessible open space, including through-site link and site landscaping and
- Site amalgamation,
- Utility and services augmentation as required.

To accommodate the proposed SSDA, a concurrent rezoning is sought to increase the site's maximum building height.



Figure 1: Site plan (source : Planning & Co)

2.5 Terminology

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

2.6 Cultural context

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

2.6.1.1 Definitions from First Nations Advisory Committee with spatial designer Danièle Hromek (2025)

These definitions have been produced by the First Nations Advisory Committee with spatial designer Danièle Hromek. For more definitions, please see *Resource: First Nations Terminology* (2025) and *Resource: Concepts and shared understandings* (2025):

Caring for Country: Caring for Country refers to the reciprocal obligations Indigenous People have to cultural landscapes to ensure balance and continuity. Based on traditional practices, it includes landscape management techniques such as ceremony, knowledge sharing, periodic burning practices (often known as cultural fire or cultural burning), management of water, bush regeneration, bush harvesting or hunting, invasive species control, biodiversity management, and art making, management and maintenance of art sites. Given cultural practices adapt to new technologies and contemporary limitations, caring for Country has many contemporary iterations where Traditional Custodians continue to express and perform their cultural obligations to care.

Community: A community relates to a geographically located group of people, it may involve both Traditional Owners and those who now live in an area due to colonial movements. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People might belong to a number of communities, for instance, the community of their traditional Country groupings, as well as the community in which they now live.

Connecting to Country: Country is at the heart of First Nations communities; a connection to Country provides a sense of belonging and identity for First Nations Peoples. Many First Nations Peoples say our connections to Country run far deeper and longer than our own lifetimes, and include cultural and ecological responses. The action of connecting with Country is a physical, sensorial, emotional, spiritual and psychological act that First Nations Peoples take as part of both their own health and wellbeing, but also their actions of caring for Country.

Country Centred Design: Country Centred Design is a design methodology of First Nations Peoples. Country Centred Design integrates relationships, as well as tangible and intangible aspects of Country, in design outcomes. Country Centred Design is a process that enables deep history understandings, care for Country, stewardship activities, kinship, culture and cultural practices, spiritual and Indigenous ways of knowing to be integrated into the design process.

Cultural safety: Cultural safety creates an environment that is safe for all people, in which there are no challenges or denial of others' identities. Actions that create culturally unsafe environments include demeaning or disempowering others, and can originate from individual positions or systemic policies, procedures, or practices. Cultural safety requires self-awareness of one's own values, beliefs, perspectives, and attitudes that may intentionally or unintentionally harm others.

2.6.1.2 Definitions from the GANSW FAQs (2025)

Environmentally sensitive approach: When responding to Country without the involvement of the Aboriginal community you take an environmentally sensitive approach.

Country centred approach: When responding to Country in collaboration with Aboriginal community, you can take a 'Country centred' approach.

2.6.1.3 Definition from Danièle Hromek (2025):

Designing with Country: Designing with Country needs the involvement of qualified and experienced First Nations built environment professionals. Designing with Country needs the designer to be able to read, feel and sense the spirit, energy and story of Country as known and guided by local communities.

2.7 Sources

This report may include information from a number of sources, such as historical records and community knowledge, which at times may contradict each other. This may occur because over time new information and interpretation of sources arises. Further consultation and research should be carried out when developing any future Heritage Interpretation or Public Art Strategies for this project.

2.8 Cultural warning

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

Section 5 provides a summary of the history and culture of the Aboriginal people of the area. It includes information collated from colonial sources and should be read with this in mind. It contains descriptions and terms which reflect the views of the period in which the content was created but may not be considered appropriate today.

2.9 Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

Artefact has prepared this Connecting with Country Report for the project. This report, and the information and cultural knowledge gathered in its preparation, are to be used for the above project only.

This project aims to facilitate a meaningful, considered, and functional framework for understanding the relationships between Country, community and individuals and integrating this understanding into design principles for the site.

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

The following best practice ICIP guidelines from the *Connecting with Country framework* (GANSW 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.

This work embodies the cultural heritage, traditional knowledge or traditional cultural expression (ICIP) of the community. It was created with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of the community. Dealing with any part of this work for any purpose that has not been authorised by the

Traditional Owners is a serious breach of customary law and may also breach the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth). For enquiries about permitted reproduction of the ICIP contained in this work, contact office@artefact.net.au.

2.10 Authorship and acknowledgements

This report has been prepared by Alexandra Gaffikin (Senior Associate, Artefact), Hannah Matagia (Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer, Artefact), with input and review from Dr Stephen Gapps (Senior Historian, Artefact).

Artefact has worked in collaboration with a number of Aboriginal knowledge holders and people with association of Country, on this report and would like to thank everyone for their generosity and kindness in sharing cultural knowledge for this project.



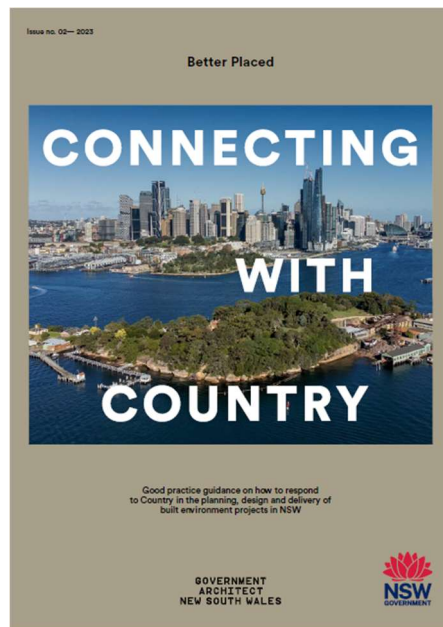
Figure 2: View across Cammeraygal and Gadigal Countries from Clark Park, 29 January 2026 (source: Artefact)

3. GUIDING DOCUMENTS



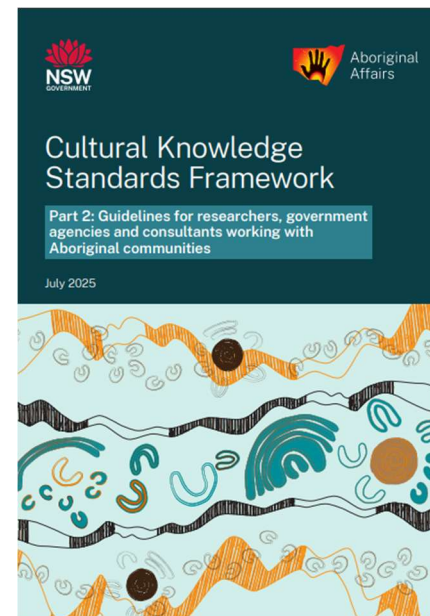
3.1 *Connecting with Country Framework (GANSW, 2023)*

The *Connecting with Country Framework* (GANSW, 2023), prepared primarily by Indigenous architects and designers within 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 faces today. The report includes guidance on carrying out consultation as well as best practice examples of *Connecting with Country*.

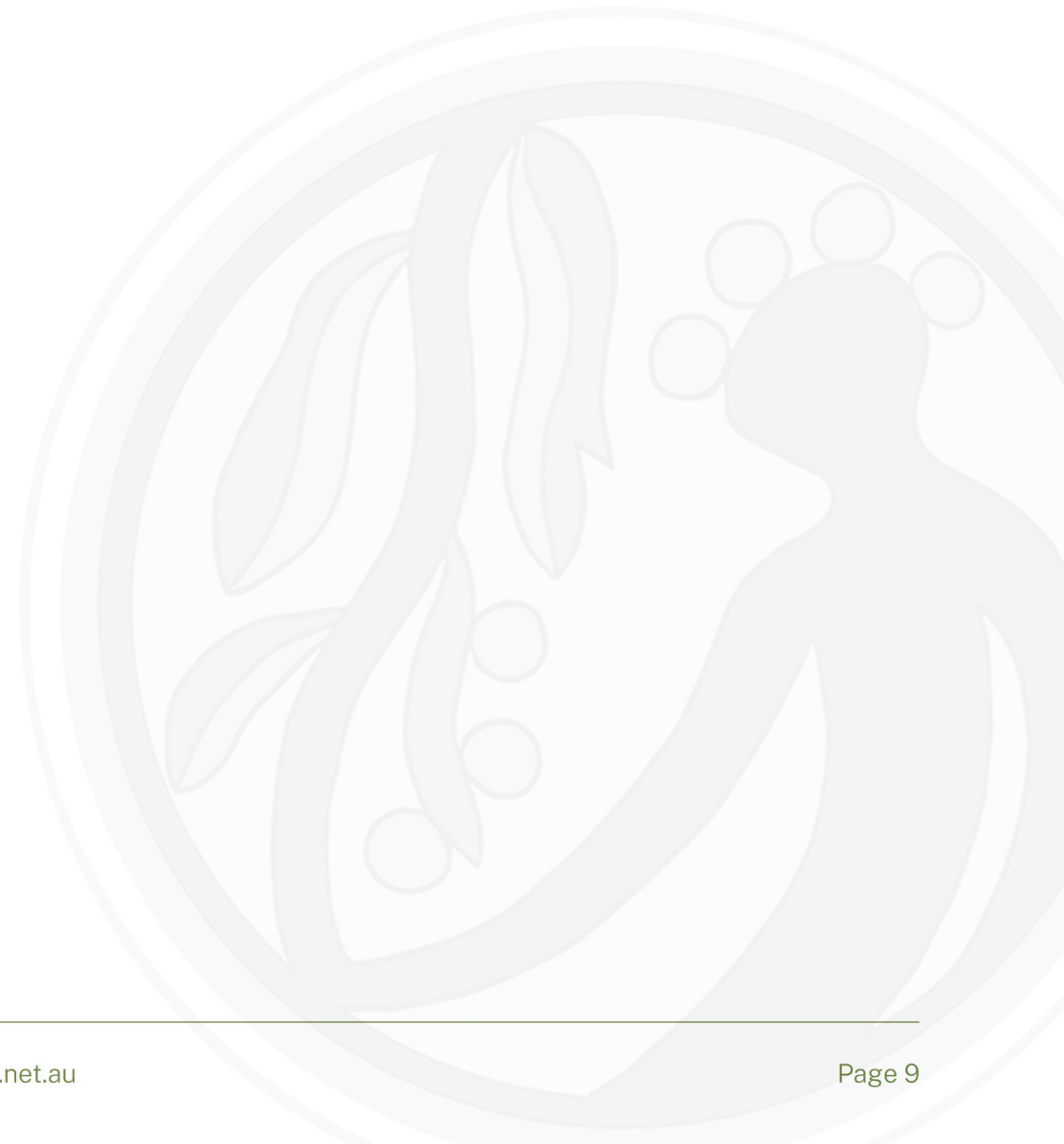


3.2 *Cultural Knowledge Standards Framework Part 2 (Aboriginal Affairs, 2025)*

The *Cultural Knowledge Standards Framework – Part 2* provides guidance for researchers, consultants, and government agencies working with Aboriginal communities in NSW. It sets expectations for respectful, ethical and culturally safe engagement when accessing or using Aboriginal Cultural Heritage or cultural knowledge. Key requirements include obtaining Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC); recognising Aboriginal custodianship and Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP); ensuring confidentiality for sensitive or sacred information; and following Indigenous Data Governance and Data Sovereignty principles. Artwork featured on cover is *Living Culture* by Saretta Fielding.



4. CONSIDERING COUNTRY



4.1 What is Country?

“When we say Country that means our Connection to Country and how we look after it because it is Mother Earth. But it is also the respect of Country. To me it’s also a sense of belonging.”

Auntie Pamela Young, 29 January 2026

“Country is broadly understood as a holistic worldview that incorporates humans, non-human and all the complex systems that connect them. Country relates to Indigenous Peoples’ cultural groups and the places to which they belong. It is understood in cultural, spiritual, and tangible ways.

An understanding of Country includes intangible ideas about place, Law, lore, language, customs, spirit, cultural practice, identity, and kin. It is very important to recognise that Indigenous Peoples understanding of Country differs between groups, individuals, and contexts.”¹

“When we talk about Country it is; our Connection to Country, how we live on Country, how we work with people on Country, how we heal Country and our responsibilities of healing Country”

Auntie Pamela Young, 29 January 2026

“Country (capital ‘C’) has specific and significant meaning for Aboriginal peoples. Country relates to the nation, cultural group and region that Aboriginal people belong to, yearn for, find healing from and will return to. Country is the literal place of origin for Aboriginal peoples.

There is no universal way of defining Country. Descriptions of Country, particularly traditional associations, will differ from individual to individual, depending on the associations passed down through the family and community.”²

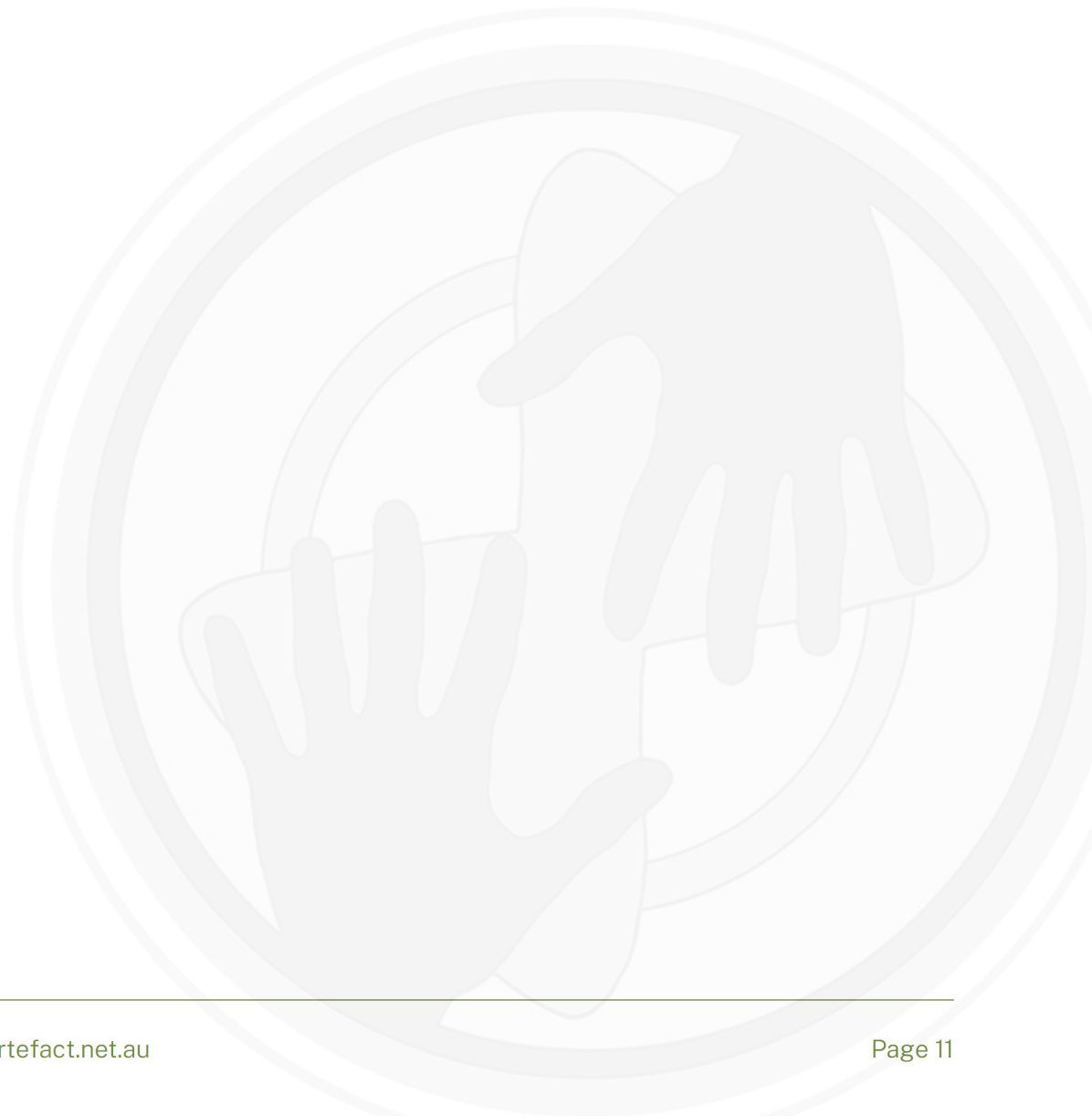


Figure 3: Interrelationships between Country, community and individuals (source: GANSW, 2023)

¹ First Nations Advisory Committee with Danièle Hromek, First Nations Terminology

² Connecting with Country framework, GANSE 2023

5. ABORIGINAL HISTORIES OF THE AREA



5.1 Introduction

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

5.1.1 Early history

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

Over the last few decades, archaeologists’ knowledge of deep human time in Australia has expanded from just a few thousand years in the 1950s, to 25,000 years in the 1960s, then 40,000 years, to now around 60,000 years or more.³ Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal people living in the Sydney region from Shaw’s Creek west of the Dyarubbin (Hawkesbury-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.⁴



Figure 4: Charles Alexandre Leseur from ‘Voyage de decouvertes aux terres australes...’ Atlas, 1807, by F Peron and L de Freycinet, Paris 1807-1817 (Mitchell Library). State Library of NSW.

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

⁴ Attenbrow, 2010, Sydney’s Aboriginal past, pp 18-20; Nanson, Young & Stockton, 1987, ‘Chronology and palaeoenvironment of the Cranebrook Terrace’, p. 77; Williams, et al., 2017, ‘The Cranebrook Terrace revisited’, pp 100-109; Jo McDonald, 2005, ‘Heritage Conservation

Strategy for Aboriginal sites’, pp 4, 87-94; Attenbrow, 2012, ‘Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal life in Sydney’. 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).

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, clan groups including Gadigal, Wangal, Cammeraygal and Wallumedegal would have watched and told stories about the gradual change as the sea rose to fill the 'drowned river valley' of what is now Sydney Harbour until it reached present levels around 6,000 years ago.⁵

Many of Sydney's roads and streets today follow the original tracks and pathways that had been used for millennia by Aboriginal people. Indeed, the shape of the city's road networks and the city itself owes a great deal to the early colonists simply taking the easiest and most practical solution in building roads along pre-existing Aboriginal trackways. When the colonists arrived in 1788 and began journeying out from Sydney Cove they often followed pathways, or as Surgeon John White wrote in May 1788, 'we fell in with an Indian path'. According to historian Paul Irish, the Europeans pronounced the local Sydney Aboriginal word for a pathway or track as 'maroo'. Many of these maroo underpin the structure of Sydney to this day.⁶

The large swathes of Hawkesbury sandstone across the Sydney region were the canvas for what has been likened to an enormous open air art gallery – engravings of the outlines of spirit creatures, marsupials, birds, fish, weapons, footprints and even European boats alongside people, showing a continuity that carried on beyond the arrival of British colonisers in 1788. This Sydney art tradition was distinctive from other regions such as inland New South Wales where carved trees were more prominent, or further south where painting dominates. There are more than 4,000 known

rock art sites and more than 3,000 rock shelters with pigment or painted art, often featuring hand stencils. The Sydney Basin has been compared to Kakadu National Park in terms of the vast numbers of Aboriginal sites that remain today.⁷



Figure 5: Stone artefacts from the Moores Wharf midden (image credit: Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority) <https://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/moores-wharf-midden/>

The Sydney region was a landscape rich with the imprints of activity, art and culture such as rock engravings and paintings, scarred and carved trees, ceremonial rock and mound structures, cooking ovens, villages of bark huts, stone tool quarries, grinding grooves and tool-making sites,

⁵ 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', pp 217-219.

⁶ White, 1790 [2003], 'Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales', 30 May 1788; Daniel, 2018, 'Walking in their tracks'.

⁷ Karskens, 2009, The Colony, p. 32; Griffith, 2018, Deep time dreaming, p. 188; Mulvaney & Kamminga, 1999, Prehistory of Australia, pp 284, 376-381; McDonald, 2007, Dreamtime Superhighway.

burial and other shell middens, and other artefacts. All this activity had a lasting impact on the landscape, and many elements such as rock engravings in particular, survive or have been kept intact or cared for by community members. There are many other legacies of Aboriginal history and presence in the modern landscape of Sydney. 'Kangaroo grounds' became colonial estates, fishing creeks became drains, hills and peaks used for communication became signaling stations and lookouts, and shell middens became the limestone for the bricks and mortar of early colonial buildings.⁸

5.1.2 North Shore Sydney

The present-day suburbs of Sydney's North Shore feature ridgelines and spurs with creeks and rivers that over millennia gouged their way through sandstone and run into bays and inlets in Sydney Harbour. Other waterways flow into Middle Harbour and the Lane Cove River. Before the British colonists arrived and began clearing the trees, these creeks and rivers had 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 more likely to have been travelling and hunting routes and ceremonial areas.

The shoreline of present-day North, including the sheltered Lavender Bay, offered areas of abundant saltwater resources. A variety of fish were caught and rock oysters, cockles, mussels and clams were also consumed, opened either with a thumbnail or stone oyster hammer. Shell middens can still be seen in many places on the north shore and northern beaches.

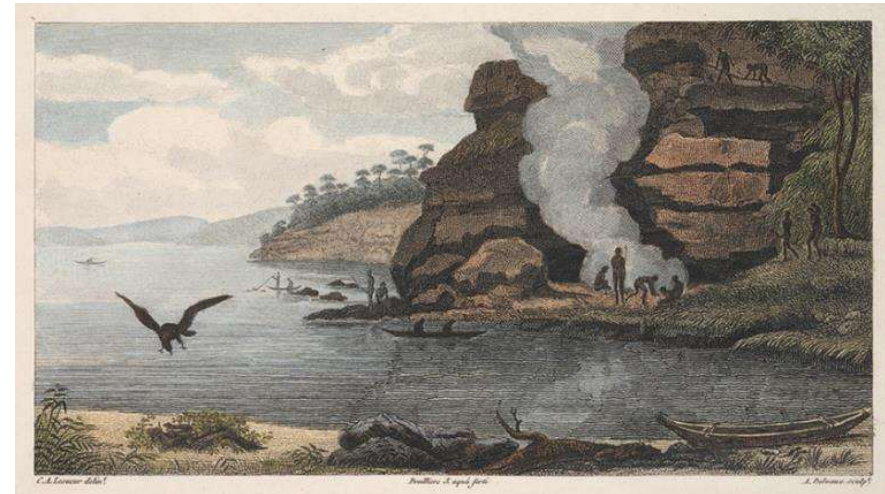


Figure 6: Charles Alexandre Lesueur, from 'Voyage de découvertes aux terres australes' by Francois Peron, 1824 (Source: State Library of New South Wales [a1477011 / Q82/41, 11]) The painting shows Aboriginal people fishing and cooking around a rock shelter on what is believed to be the north shore of Sydney Harbour.

Inland, there were fruits, seeds, nuts, grains and nectars and rhizomes and tubers 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

⁸ Griffith, 2018, Deep time dreaming, p. 241; Gammage, 2012, The biggest estate on earth, p. xix; Attenbrow, 2012, Sydney's Aboriginal past.

⁹ Currie, Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go. Yesterday Today Tomorrow. An Aboriginal History of Willoughby, 2008, pp. 10-15



Figure 7: Basin Aboriginal Art site, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park. Photo copyright Andrew Richards (source: <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/aboriginal-sites/basin-aboriginal-art-site>)

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.¹⁰

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 fish hooks 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.'¹¹

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.¹²

In the present day North Sydney 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.¹³

Along the ridges particularly behind the northern beaches there are large flat sandstone outcrops that still today have many significant engravings. Many, such as the cluster of engravings at 'Whale Rock' near Mona Vale Road, are located in prominent locations over the surrounding area with

¹⁰ Hunter, An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, 1787-1792, 1793, p. 361

¹¹ Tench, A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay and A complete account of the settlement at Port Jackson, 1789, 1793, p. 284

¹² Currie Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go. Yesterday Today Tomorrow. An Aboriginal History of Willoughby, 2008, p. 15

¹³ Attenbrow, Sydney's Aboriginal Past. Investigating the archaeological and historical records, 2010, p. 19; Currie Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, pp. 15-16

views to the north and south, demonstrating the connection between the 'Saltwater people' of the area and the surrounding region. Their locations on the ridge lines and the inclusion of mounds (footprints) suggests connections between the engravings that have been called 'ancestral pathways'.¹⁴

Today, there is significant remaining historical and archaeological evidence of the presence of Aboriginal people across the North 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. As a route along a ridge line, Military Road may well have been a travel route.¹⁵

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 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 Kuring-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

¹⁴ Kellerher Nightingale, 'Mona Vale Road Upgrade' Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Constraints Mapping and Archaeological Survey, Report Prepared for Roads and Maritime Services NSW, 2015, p. 34; Symons, (Artefact Heritage Services) and Welsh, (MLALC) Pers. Comm., 2021

¹⁵ Currie, ; Currie Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, p. 69; Karskens, 'Manly Cove, Kai'ymay', Dictionary of Sydney, 2015; Larmer, 'Native names of points of land in Port Jackson

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.¹⁶



Figure 8: Local Aboriginal people on Sydney Harbour, depicted by Port Jackson painter c1790 (Thomas Watling Collection, Natural History Museum, London).

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

(south shore) and native names of points of land, north shore of Port Jackson...'. 1898 (1832), pp.223-229

¹⁶ Currie Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, p. 50

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. Whales, fish and stingrays are also commonly depicted in rock engravings in the surrounding North Shore and Northern Beaches areas.



Figure 9: Rock engraving of Echidna in Ku-ring-gai National Park (source: Stuart Humphreys copyright Australian Museum)

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.'¹⁷

5.1.3 Cammeraygal (Gamaragal)

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. However the earliest colonists were inquisitive and among the officers of the First Fleet there were several diarists with some skill. Watkin Tench noted that

'the tribes derive their appellations from the places they inhabit: thus Càmeeragal, means the men who reside in the bay of Cameera [Cammeray].'

Thus 'Cammeray' is the name of the area to which the people belonged and the addition of 'gal' refers to the people from that place.¹⁸

It has been suggested the Cammeraygal may have taken their name from the camy, a common term for a spear in the Sydney area (they were regarded as a fierce and war-like clan). Governor Arthur Phillip noted that the Cammeraygal (Gammeraigal) inhabited 'the north west side of Port Jackson' and John Hunter that 'the tribe of Camerra inhabit the north side of Port Jackson.'¹⁹

¹⁷ Hoskins 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2015, pp. 6-7

¹⁸ Tench, A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay, 1793, p. 292

¹⁹ Hunter, An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, 1787-1792, 1793, p. 275

While it is difficult to determine precisely, the Cammeraygal have been associated with Country around what is now known as Willoughby, Lane Cove, Ku-ring-gai and North Sydney Council areas. Hoskins notes Cammeraygal Country 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'. Early colonist John Hunter noted that 'The tribe of Wallumede inhabit the north shore opposite Warrane, or Sydney-Cove, and are called Walumetta' and Phillip also referred to the Wallumedegal as occupying the 'opposite shore' (to Sydney Cove). However, Hoskins and others consider the Wallumedegal clan group to have extended from Lane Cove westward to Parramatta. Another group mentioned - the Borogegal clan - may have lived around Bradleys Head, however there is very little historical information on this group. Further to the north, it seems the Garigal lived on the southern edges of Broken Bay.²⁰

There has long been confusion around the language spoken on the north shore of Sydney Harbour (as elsewhere across Sydney, the colonists often misinterpreted Aboriginal people or failed to ask pertinent questions). 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 Cammeraygal 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.²¹

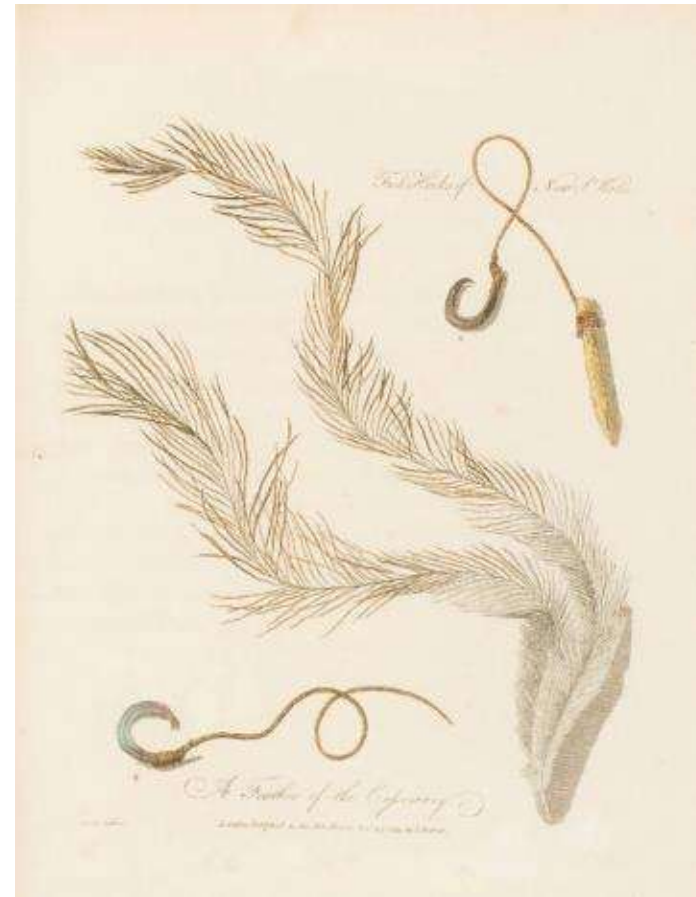


Figure 10: Fishing hooks crafted by Aboriginal communities living around Sydney Harbour, John White, 1790 (source: State Library of NSW).

²⁰ Hunter, *An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, 1787-1792, 1793*, p. 275; Hoskins 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019, p. 3; Currie, *Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go*, 2008, p. 33

²¹ AHO, 'Filling a void - Guringai language review' 2015, pp. 40-41; Currie, *Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go*, 2008, p. 3; Attenbrow, *Sydney's Aboriginal Past*, 2010, pp. 22-25; Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, 1798, p. 453; Smith, *Eora: Mapping Aboriginal Sydney*, 2006, p. 10

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 Cammeraygal 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

5.1.4 Invasion and colonisation

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 on their survey of the harbour were welcomed 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, looking for rivers and land suitable for agriculture. They passed through Cammeraygal Country, and although they rarely saw any people, found extensive traces of them in the many rock engravings, particularly on the ridge tops.

A more detailed mapping survey was undertaken of Middle Harbour between 21 and 24 April 1788. During the survey the grave of a cremated Aboriginal person was discovered. With scant respect, Lieutenant Bradley described the 'method for farewelling the dead' and 'found the earth thrown up in the manner of a Grave, which we turned up & found the ashes of some deceased person.'²³



Figure 11: In this drawing the bark canoes appear to be the Sydney region style of tied-bark nawi probably drawn at Kamay-Botany Bay. This is a rare image of Aboriginal people drawn by another Indigenous person.

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.'²⁴

²² Currie, Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, p. 3

²³ Bradley, 'Journal : A Voyage to New South Wales, December 1786 - May 1792', 1802, p. 103

²⁴ Bradley, 'Journal : A Voyage to New South Wales, December 1786 - May 1792', 1802, p. 103

After an initial period of curiosity between two vastly different cultures, soon enough, interactions between the British and the Sydney Aboriginal people began to turn 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 realised the Europeans were here to stay, and were competing for their resources.²⁵

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'.²⁶

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 musket & have sometimes endeavoured to surprise some who had'.²⁷

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. They 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 Cammeraygal 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 sea coast'.²⁸

It is perhaps no wonder then that the people Bradley noted at the 'North Arm' (Middle Harbour) were the first to limit their contact with the colonists. The increase in conflict after the Cammeraygal were reported as 'not so friendly' may have meant they had decided to resist the colonisers and other groups followed, or were obliged to follow, their lead.

While it is now more widely understood that different clan groups had different roles and responsibilities, Collins felt this 'deference' to the Cammeraygal was a sign of Aboriginal 'government' and was of the 'nature of a constituted authority'. He (probably mistakenly) believed this was largely due to 'their superiority of numbers' (rather than other cultural obligations) as they were 'by far the most numerous tribe' in Sydney.

Collins described the Cammeraygal as the 'most robust and muscular' of all the Sydney people. It seems it was the Cammeraygal 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.²⁹

Collins also noted that there were several 'Car-rah-dy and Car-rah-di-gang' – now known as Karadji (doctor or 'cleverman') among the Cammeraygal. It seems Collins was noting that there were more Karadji among the

²⁵ Cf. Karskens, *The Colony*, 2010 and Gapps, *The Sydney Wars*, 2018

²⁶ Gapps, "They have attacked almost every person who has met with them" – Re-reading William Bradley', 2019

²⁷ Gapps, "They have attacked almost every person who has met with them" – Re-reading William Bradley', 2019

²⁸ Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, 1798, p. 456

²⁹ Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, 1798, pp. 453-458

Cammeraygal than other groups. Collins also described male and female initiation and other ceremonies including tooth evulsion, bone nose 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'. Watkin 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...'.³⁰

As the conflict grew throughout 1788, Governor Phillip became increasingly desperate to establish communications with the Sydney people. As 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.'

As Watkin Tench described the scene;

The boats proceeded to Manly Cove, where several Indians were seen standing on the beach, who were enticed by courteous behaviour and a few presents to enter into conversation. A proper opportunity being presented, our people rushed in among them, and seized two men. The rest fled, but the cries of the captives soon brought them back, with many others, to their rescue, and so desperate were their struggles that in spite of every effort on our side, only one of them was secured; the other effected his escape. The boats put off without delay and an attack from the shore instantly commenced.³¹

The first of what was to become many Aboriginal people to be captured or forcibly removed, Arabanoo, was, according to historian Grace Karskens, '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 colonisation, disease.³²



Figure 12: John Skinner Prout, 'Aboriginal person sitting by Willoughby Falls,' circa 1843. (Source: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales. PXD 75).

³⁰ Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, 1798, pp. 453-458; Tench, *A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay*, 1793, p. 246-276

³¹ Tench, *A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay*, 1793, p. 94-95

³² Karskens, *'Manly Cove, Kai'ymay'*, 2015

5.1.5 Galgala

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 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!"'.³³

While Watkin Tench first noted the people on the north of the harbour had 'suffered less from the ravages of the small pox' 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'. We can only imagine if Lavender Bay was such a site of death and sickness. Considering the huge number of fatalities, it is more than likely.³⁴

Such massive decimation of the Aboriginal population of Sydney forced many groups to move away or unite with other groups. While some Cammeraygal 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'.³⁵

After several months being kept a prisoner at Sydney Cove, Arabanoo succumbed to smallpox and died in May 1789. Governor Phillip immediately 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 'Cammeraygal'. 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. Watkin Tench described how Bennelong openly stated his hatred of the Cammeraygal - perplexing the colonists by his visits to Cammeray whilst at the same time encouraging the Governor to send soldiers to kill all the Cammeraygal, and at other times saying they were 'good men'.³⁶

Barangaroo was known to be constantly at odds with Bennelong's interaction with the colonists. Historian Grace 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.³⁷

³³ Gapps, "They have attacked almost every person who has met with them" - Re-reading William Bradley', 2019; Karskens 2010, The Colony, p. 50

³⁴ Tench, A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay, 1793, p. 285; Collins, An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, 1798, p. 496

³⁵ Currie, Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, p. 33

³⁶ Tench, A narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay, 1793, p. 118; Collins, An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, 1798, p. 362; Hunter, An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, 1787-1792, 1793, p. 327

³⁷ Karskens, 'Barangaroo and the Eora Fisherwomen', 2014

Inter-clan marriages such as this meant that Cammeraygal 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 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 and a burial mound, or tumulus, was constructed around her remains.³⁸



Figure 13:: Oyster Shells – Middens, 2022 by Frances Belle Parker. Commissioned by the Northern Beaches Council with Urban Art Projects to create public art for the Aboriginal Art and Storytelling Project, for the Coast Walk Public Art Program. Source: <https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/recreation-area/coast-walk-public-art-aboriginal-art-storytelling-project-narrabeen>

After the smallpox epidemic, Lieutenant Ralph Clark's diary is one of the few early records that showed both the death toll, and those who survived on the north shore. In February 1790 Clark wrote that he 'went up the Harbour in my Boat and went into Lane Cove where I was Yesterday to See Dourrawan and Tirriwan the two Natives that I exchanged the hatchet with Yesterday for their two Spears'. While his convict servant was afraid to meet Aboriginal men, Clark noted that these men were also 'much afraid of our Guns'. Clark was under orders from Governor Phillip to bring in to the settlement some people who the colonists could communicate with. Bizarrely, Clark offered Dourrawan and Tirriwan his hat in exchange for their two children. Unsurprisingly, they refused. A long future history of child removal was averted, for the moment.³⁹

Another Cammeraygal man was Carradah, who befriended Lieutenant Lidgbird Ball, commander of the ship HMS Supply. The relationship between the two men was significant enough for Carradah to exchange names and adopt the title 'Mr. Ball' for himself. It was a gesture of friendship and respect that had similarly marked the relationship between Bennelong and Governor Phillip. North Sydney Historian Hoskins suggests that Carradah 'may well have aided the Lieutenant in his explorations of north shore areas such as Balls Head, which was named in the Englishman's honour'.⁴⁰

David Collins was especially impressed by Carradah's bravery during a ritual 'payback' spearing in December 1793. Dutifully confronting the relatives of a person he had injured, 'he was suffered indeed to cover himself with a bark shield, and behaved with the greatest courage and resolution'. In the first round of spearing Carradah successfully deflected the projectiles. On the second day, however, the nerves of his arm were cut leaving his left hand 'very much convulsed'. The retribution was apparently enacted between friends who remained respectful of each other. Collins

³⁸ Hoskins, 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019, pp. 14-15

³⁹ Clark, The Journal and Letters of LT. Ralph Clark 1787-1792, 1790, pp. 109-110

⁴⁰ Collins, An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, 1798, p. 328; Hoskins, 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019, p. 17

was somewhat confused by the 'extraordinary' episode but aware that he had witnessed the enactment of law and custom.⁴¹

Another person from the north of Sydney was to nearly very much change the course of Australian history. On 7 September 1790, around 200 Sydney Aboriginal people had come to Manly to feast upon a whale that had been washed ashore there. When Governor Phillip, at nearby South Head, was informed Bennelong was among them, he was keen to meet with him and went across to the feast. While the precise motivations of Bennelong and others have been debated, the meeting ended in the spearing of the Governor by a man called Willemering. While the Governor recovered from the spearing and it sparked a period of 'reconciliation' with many Sydney Aboriginal people, if he hadn't survived, we can only wonder what the British response to their leader's death would have been.

Collins noted that he was 'the car-rah-dy Wil-le-me-ring' - an Aboriginal doctor or 'clever man' from the Garigal (Caregal Karigal or Karegal) at Broken Bay. While little more is known of Willemering, when Barangaroo died in late 1791, Bennelong had '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 had not come quickly enough to treat her when she was ill and he had sent for him.⁴²

5.1.6 Occupying Cammeraygal lands

The first significant European forays into the Cammeraygal 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 Cammeraygal 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 Cammeraygal 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 Cammeraygal's land had been deeded to individual colonists.⁴³

5.1.7 Resistance

The occupation of Cammeraygal 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 the Hawkesbury and around the Georges River and further south, an 'open war', as David Collins described it, was conducted across the Sydney region

⁴¹ Collins An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, 1798, p. 328

⁴² Collins, An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, 1798, p. 139; Hunter, An historical journal of events at Sydney and at sea, 1787-1792, 1793. Pp. 462-463; Smith. 'Willemering', 2016

⁴³ Currie, Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, p. 69; Hoskins, Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019, pp. 17-18

through the 1790s and early 1800s. At times, the conflict reached Lane Cove and Broken Bay.⁴⁴

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.⁴⁵

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 through the bush that was still thick around the relatively unsettled north shore.⁴⁶

5.1.8 Bungaree and the 'Broken Bay Tribe'

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*.⁴⁷

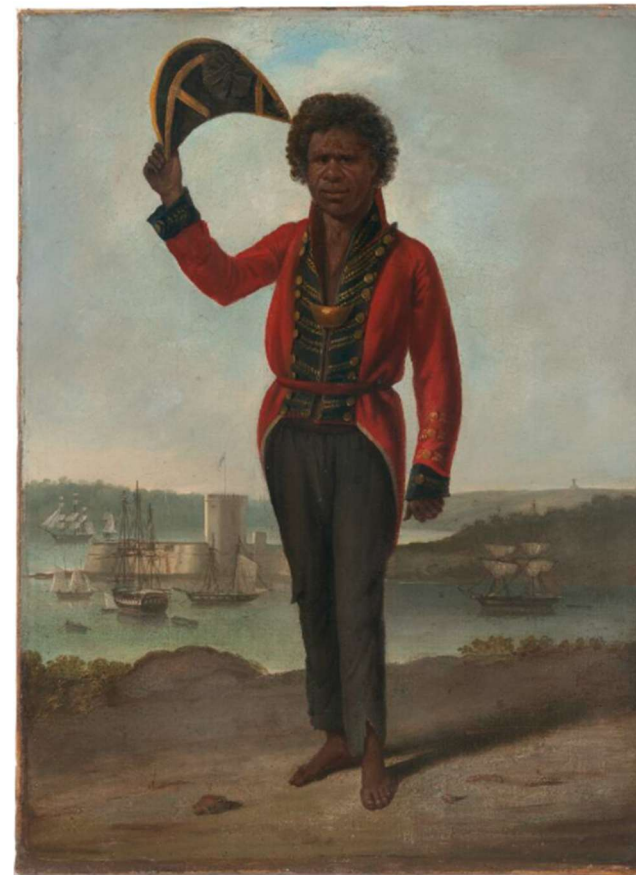


Figure 14: Bungaree wearing military clothing given to him by Governor Macquarie. Earle, Augustus, 1793-1838 (source: State Library NSW)

⁴⁴ Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales*, 1798, p. 349

⁴⁵ Gapps, *The Sydney Wars*, 2018, p. 3

⁴⁶ *Sydney Gazette*, 2 September 1804

⁴⁷ *Sydney Gazette*, 28 April 1805, p. 2

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.⁴⁸

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. 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 Cammeraygal man. Bungaree and Gooseberry's son, 'Long Dick', also frequented the North Shore and interacted with the British settlements.⁴⁹



Figure 15: John Skinner Prout 'Aboriginal person sitting by Willoughby Falls', circa 1843 (source: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales. PXD 75)

⁴⁸ Sydney Gazette, 4 February 1815

⁴⁹ Currie, Bo-ra-ne Ya-goo-na Par-ry-boo-go, 2008, p. 78

In 1814, 1820 and 1822, 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 Cammeraygal (though possibly also from other areas of Sydney). The Russians also noted the effects of alcohol on Bungaree's people at Georges Head as they exchanged their fishing catches for 'drink or tobacco' and 'every evening they went back drunk'.

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.⁵⁰

In the 1830s, reports continue of a 'Broken Bay Tribe'. In April 1837 'Bowen' (undoubtedly Bowen Bungaree the son of Bungaree) told Constable Brophy that several bushrangers he was after were 'on an island near Mooney Mooney Creek' on the Hawkesbury River.⁵¹

The same year, Bridget Riley was charged with drunken behaviour in Sydney and 'ordered to betake herself' to Broken Bay, where she said she came from. In March, a group of people from the Illawarra region arrived in Sydney, apparently 'to fight the Broken Bay tribe'. The *Sydney Monitor* newspaper suggested 'their fights are now practiced as much to please

the whites as the blacks' and the paper called 'the attention of the Police to the subject', who were widely criticised for the 'sufferance which is given to the aboriginals'. The *Sydney Gazette* newspaper suggested they should be 'thrown back upon their native wilds'.⁵²

Bowen Bungaree, like his father, was an outstanding figure in colonial Sydney. Bowen (Boin, Bowen Toura, 'Black Bowen') was a Garigal man born around 1804, the eldest son of Bungaree and his first wife Matora, who was probably from the Hunter River region.

Bowen is attributed as the first documented Aboriginal artist on paper with the sketch 'Representation of a woman by a native of NSW', in 1823. The image is in Surveyor General John Oxley's note books from November 1823, when he was in Moreton Bay (Queensland). Bowen had taken up a similar role to his father Bungaree and sailed from Sydney with Oxley on the cutter HMS *Mermaid*. Bowen has been noted as a 'fisherman, sailor, interpreter, guide, go-between and tracker'.⁵³

Bowen was well-known in the Pittwater region, tracking escaped convicts and bushrangers. A report in the *Sydney Mail* in 1861 noted that in about 1829 Bowen had shot and killed a bushranger named Casey. Bowen had apparently 'been given a rifle by the Governor, was very proud of this and took it with him everywhere'. Like his father, who often wore a military jacket and cocked hat, Bowen liked to wear European clothing, especially a dress coat with a swallow tail, but wore his hair 'knotted up behind, and three feathers stuck in it'.⁵⁴

Bowen and his wife Maria often spent time in the Sydney area. They had two children, baptised as Mark and Theela (Theeda) at St. Mary's, Sydney. In 1834 members of Bowen's 'tribe' were listed as Maria, Jane, Bob, Yama,

⁵⁰ Barrat, *The Russians at Port Jackson 1814-1822*, 1981, pp. 42, 48, 52, 66; Backhouse, *A Narrative of a visit to the Australian Colonies*, 1843, pp. 233-240

⁵¹ *Sydney Herald*, 17 April 1837, p. 3

⁵² *Sydney Gazette*, 2 February 1837, p. 2; *Sydney Monitor*, 6 February 1837, p. 2; *Sydney Monitor*, 3 March 1837, p. 2; *Sydney Gazette*, 4 March 1837, p. 2

⁵³ Smith, 'Bungaree', 2011

⁵⁴ *Sydney Mail*, 10 August 1861, p. 2

Tobin (Toby, Bowen's brother) and Dinah. As one news report wrote, Toby was known as 'Toby, the Prince of Broken Bay' and had 'five other aliases'. In 1837, when he was sentenced for public drunkenness, Tobin could not pay the 5 shillings and was sentenced to an hour in the stocks.⁵⁵

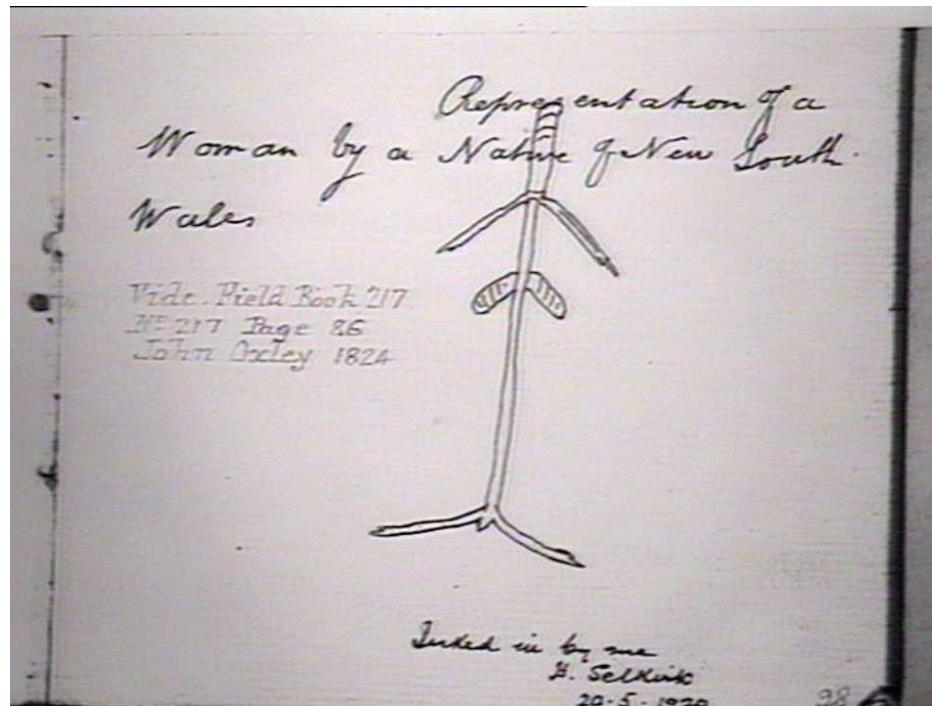


Figure 16: Bungaree, Bowen, c. 1797-1856, Representation of a woman by a native of New South Wales (source: State Library NSW)

5.1.9 Surviving through the 19th century

While prominent for their public 'disorder', the 'Broken Bay tribe' was also well-known for giving exhibitions of boomerang throwing in Hyde Park and often camped in the Domain. Bowen died in 1853 at the reputed age of fifty-six. In 1861, an 'old timer' Nat Farrell claimed that Bowen had been ambushed, shot and killed by bushrangers in the Pittwater area while sitting at a campfire.⁵⁶

By the mid-nineteenth century there were still Aboriginal people on the lower north shore as well. 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 even 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. 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.⁵⁷

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, an 'E. Dowling' wrote to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* with a suggestion they should be given some of

⁵⁵ *Sydney Gazette*, 10 June 1837, p. 3

⁵⁶ *Sydney Mail*, 10 August 1861, p. 2; Smith, 'Bungaree', 2011

⁵⁷ Hoskins, 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019, pp. 4-6; Mann, 'Aboriginal names and words of the Cammeray Tribe, [between 1884-1907]' c.1890

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 l' Astrolabe.") Many aborigines now come to Sydney yearly from Shoalhaven and other parts of the colony, and 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. Incredibly, over 140 years after Dowling's suggestion, in 2022, the NSW government announced Goat Island would be returned to Aboriginal people.⁵⁸

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.⁵⁹ 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".⁶⁰

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.⁶¹

Some Aboriginal people such as Lucy Willerri, who were forcibly removed from their parents under the incredibly racist actions against Aboriginal people at this time, 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.

⁵⁸ Shams, 'NSW Government takes first step to returning Me-Mel/Goat Island to Indigenous Community' 2022

⁵⁹ Hoskins, 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019, p. 25

⁶⁰ Sydney Morning Herald, 9 June 1890, p. 6

⁶¹ Hoskins, 'Aboriginal North Sydney', 2019. P. 25

5.1.10 Demanding rights

Throughout the twentieth century there was a growing movement for Aboriginal political rights. As Hoskins notes, important campaigns to promote Aboriginal rights had been 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 taken, 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 commemoration of British arrival in 1788. 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 nearby at the Kirribilli flat of the writers Muir Holburn and Marjorie Pizer. The groundwork was laid for formation of the Aboriginal Australian Fellowship which would become the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders.⁶²

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.⁶³

According to the 2021 Census, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the North Sydney Council area was 278 people, representing 0.4% of the total population.. 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 Darug woman Aunty Edna Watson and other people who had family ties outside Sydney but had grown up in and around North Sydney. Efforts to understand the histories of Aboriginal people in the area such as those conducted by the Northern Sydney Region Aboriginal Heritage Office continue.⁶⁴

⁶² Hoskins, ‘Aboriginal North Sydney’, 2019, pp. 27-28

⁶³ Hoskins, ‘Aboriginal North Sydney’, 2019, pp. 27-28; North Sydney, 2021 Census, <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/IQSLGA15350>

6. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

6.1 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.

6.2 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.⁶⁵ 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 Charter⁶⁶:

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 *Connecting with Country Framework* (GANSW, 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 *Connecting with Country Framework* (GANSW 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.*
-

6.2.1 Stakeholder identification

Stakeholders were identified through previous work and consultation in the area.

⁶⁵ Australian Heritage Commission, 2002. Ask First: a guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values.

⁶⁶ Australia ICOMOS, 2013. Burra Charter – The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance. 3.

6.3 Previous consultation and reports

The Connecting with Country Framework (GANSW 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.

6.3.1 The Aboriginal Heritage Office

North Sydney Council is a supporter of the Aboriginal Heritage Office (AHO) is a valuable resource. The AHO has a partnership with six council across North Sydney and the Northern Beaches and assists them to manage Aboriginal sites located in their area.

The AHO plays an important role in site protection, management and conservation. They provide educational programs (talks, walks, activities and videos) on Aboriginal history and heritage, and indigenous perspectives on the landscape to the public. The AHO has a Museum and Keeping Place which is open to the public by appointment three days a week.

For more information see <https://www.aboriginalheritage.org/>



Figure 17: Aboriginal Heritage Office Museum and Keeping Place (source: Artefact)



Figure 18: Bushfood Garden at the AHO (source; Artefact)

6.3.2 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocol Guidelines (North Sydney Council, 2021)

These guidelines were developed by North Sydney Council in 2021⁶⁷. They note that they are a 'guide' and not 'the best or only way of doing things'. Council welcomes feedback on the guidelines from Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.

The guidelines include:

- A brief history of Aboriginal people in North Sydney
- Terminology guidelines
- Community engagement protocols
- Significant ceremonies
- Information about flags, respecting arts and cultural heritage
- Significant dates
- And sources of additional information

6.3.2.1 Important considerations

The following points are important considerations when carrying out work with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in North Sydney:

- North Sydney Council acknowledges the Cammeraygal People and includes the name in the coat of arms for the Council
- The last census data referenced in the guidelines are from 2016 showing that there were 201 Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders living in North Sydney. Numbers of Indigenous Peoples have

been steadily climbing since 1986 though the report notes that it is also because there may be an increased willingness of people to identify themselves on a census

- The guidelines note that on 17 March 2006, North Sydney Council signed a Principles of Co-operation agreement with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council.
- The guidelines note the importance of community consultation including transparency, consulting widely and partnering with Aboriginal businesses and services



Figure 19: North Sydney Council coat of arms (source: North Sydney Council)

⁶⁷ <https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/52/2021-update-on-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-cultural-protocols-website-1-3-2022>

6.4 Project specific consultation

6.4.1 Walk on Country, 29 January 2026

A walk on Country was conducted on 29 January 2026 attended by Aboriginal Stakeholders, as well as representatives from Central Element, SJB and Land and Form and Artefact. The group met at Clark Park before walking around the site.

6.4.1.1 Attendees

- Aunty Pamela Young, Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Services
- Uncle Bob Young, Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Services
- Ashleianne Wymarra, Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Services
- Wes Grunsell, SJB, Project Director
- Samantha Chin, SJB, Architects
- Ryan Bennetts, Central Element, Head of Acquisitions
- Hugh Roberts, Central Element, Design Manager
- Zara Stanley, Central Element, Assistant Development Manager
- Ranine Hamed, Land and Form, Landscape Architect
- Hannah Matagia, Artefact, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer
- Alex Gaffikin, Artefact
- Kathy Arbuckle, Artefact

6.4.1.2 Agenda

- Acknowledgement / Welcome
- ICIP
- Introductions

- Discussion about Country
- Site visit



Figure 20: Walk on Country Thursday 29 January 2026, KACHS, Land and Form, SJB and Artefact (source, Artefact,)

6.4.1.3 Cultural values / discussion points

Acknowledgement of Country

The Walk on Country started with an Acknowledgement of Country from Uncle Bob Young. Uncle Bob talked about that we were on Cammerygall Country - which the suburb Cammeray is named after. Uncle Bob later talked about the view from Clark Park and the different Countries and important sites that can be seen from the view.

- The site is on Cammeraygal Country but neighbouring Countries like Gadigal Country are also visible.
- Uncle Bob talked about an ochre place and men's business happening at the Botanic Gardens.
- Uncle Bob noted that the suburb 'Barangaroo' was named to honour Barangaroo but that she lived on Goat Island or Me-Mel.
- Barangaroo's second husband was Bennelong who also had a hut at the place which is where the Opera House now is.
- Uncle Bob also pointed out Berry Island where they often run tours. He talked about the numbers of shell middens around the Island and the harbour.

Fishing and middens

Uncle Bob gave an explanation of middens, explaining that they were a way for different groups to indicate what they had already eaten so as not to over fish or over harvest a species from an area during a season.

"It's managing, protecting and conserving – whether it is saltwater or freshwater"

Uncle Bob Young, 29 January 2026

Uncle Bob also talked about women being the main fishers, and fishing from nawi canoes.

What Country means?

Aunty Pamela, Uncle Bob and Ashleianne talked about what Country means to them. Aunty Pamela said 'Country' has a lot of definitions and she talked about her connection to Country, looking after Country and having respect for Country. Aunty Pamela talked about a sense of 'belonging' and 'healing' and 'capabilities'. Aunty Pamela explained that Australia is actually made up of a lot of different Countries. She talked about the protocols of being Welcomed into Country.



Figure 21: Site visit, 29 January 2026 (source: Artefact)

Protocols

Leading on from the discussion about Country, Ashleianne talked about the protocols of working on Country and issues / accidents that might arise if people don't follow protocols.

Connecting to Country

Ashleianne talked Connecting to Country being a 'birthright'. She noted 'we have been here for a very long time' and mentioned some Dreaming Stories about megafauna. She talked about caring for Country and obligations to Country. She talked about how doing activities like this Walk on Country and Workshop are important: "you are having Indigenous people be a part of the process and looking at this Country from a decolonised perspective'.

Respecting Country

The Stakeholders discussed with the group the importance of Respecting Country. Understanding that no matter where you go Country is everywhere, "Everyone can see, hear, smell and feel Country surrounding them", "always acknowledge the Country you visit, work or live on". The Stakeholders noted that though the non-Indigenous project team members may see Cammeraygal Country as we see it today, all built up, "it actually holds thousands of years' worth of knowledge, truth, stories which have been passed down and ancestral connections to the land."

Development, Affordable and social housing

The project team then talked about the development of the site. This led to a discussion about Affordable and Social Housing. This was of particular interest to Ashleianne who noted the high levels of homelessness and housing crises in the Aboriginal community.

- Ashleianne asked about the affordable housing and the project team mentioned the number of units and how those units would be assigned to affordable housing in perpetuity. This led onto a broader discussion about social and affordable housing.

- Uncle Bob talked about how he didn't like the phrase "social housing" as it can be segregating. Uncle Bob talked about the benefits of housing that is mixed.
- Auntie Pamela agreed and talked about the importance of ensuring people of different economic backgrounds feel welcome. She said it isn't enough to provide the housing, but people had to feel integrated. Auntie Pamela shared experiences of growing up in Sydney and how her family was known in the street as the "Aboriginal family" which could feel alienating.
- This led to a discussion about Housing suppliers and St George as a Community Housing Provider.



Figure 22: Looking at plans of the site (source: Artefact)

Environment and design

As the group walked around the site the Project Team showed some plans of the site.

- The group talked about using traditional plants. Uncle Bob noted the sap coming out of a tree that can be used for medicine.
- Aunty Pamela noted the amount of noise in the area and the importance of checking vibrations and noise pollution
- Aunty Pamela also spoke about the wind and looking at the nature that flows with the wind “The trees that are leaning shows you the way the wind directions is and will continue to go on”
- Uncle Bob mentioned that the opening of the new development looks like a shell and he suggested taking inspiration from the shoreline and the connections it has with fisherman
- Aunty Pamela suggested looking at the native plants in the area and using them in the landscaping
- Aunty Pamela talked about the responsibility the developers have to “set a model for society to embrace a new beginning”
- Uncle Bob noted the importance of having archaeologists on hand when demolishing the site. This led to a discussion with Hugh who have see the work being done at Darling Harbour and the discoveries made during the renovations. Hugh talked about the benefits and the learnings that the project team made, learning about the traditional uses of the area.
- The group noted that the area was a sandstone area.
- The project team and stakeholders visited the “pocket park” and talked about the potential uses of that space.



Figure 23: Sandstone along Middlemiss Street (source: Artefact)

6.4.2 Workshop 29 January 2026

Following the Walk on Country and site visit the group went to the offices of Central Element for a workshop.



Figure 24: Workshop, 29 January 2026 (source: Artefact)

6.4.2.1 Cultural values / discussion points

Heritage

The group viewed the AHIMS search results and Auntie Pamela talked about heritage considerations. The group noted the number of shells and middens in the broader landscape and Uncle Bob talked about how

middens were used by Aboriginal people. Uncle Bob also talked about how midden sites around Sydney Harbour were excavated and used by the colonists in building construction.

Auntie Pamela noted the importance of following guidelines in the ACHAR and ATR that are being prepared by Artefact.

Using heritage as inspiration

Auntie Pamela made some of the following suggestions:

- Using shells and shell shapes and colours as inspiration
- Engravings from artwork as inspiration for shapes but designers couldn't use the actual engraving shapes as they are Aboriginal cultural property.

Uncle Bob talked about the colours of the building reflecting ochre and shell colours, especially Abalone.

Ashleianne talked about reflection and glass and the effect of heat and light coming into the buildings.

Economic benefits to communities and businesses

- Uncle Bob talked about contacting and using local businesses and Ash spoke about partnering with Aboriginal businesses. Ash spoke about the breadth of different types of Aboriginal business and how it was important to partner with Aboriginal businesses so that connecting with Country didn't feel tokenistic:

"Beautiful and love the design... but how do Aboriginal people fit into this? Heritage, landscaping, demolition, cultural awareness training - does the conversation end with us, or where does it go next? Don't want to contribute to the erasure of Indigenous presence."

Ashleianne Wymarra, 29 January 2026

The group brainstormed ideas for businesses including:

- Supply Nation
- Bush to Bowl
- Wildflower
- KACHs (also noted that they offer Cultural Awareness Training)

The group noted that Lachlan Champley, Gamilaraay/Wiradjuri man and Architectural technician at SJB is also on the project team. The group talked about the importance of including Aboriginal voices on the project team and the Aboriginal Stakeholders noted the importance of Lachlan feeling supported – especially with respect to “cultural load”.

Cultural safety

This led to a discussion on cultural safety:

- Uncle Bob talked about the “two worlds we live in, and we have to go home safe”. After the meeting Uncle Bob talked about a racist incident that had happened to him outside the building there in North Sydney and he reiterated how important it is to ensure Aboriginal people feel safe in the area.
- And when consulting with Aboriginal people that it was important to consult with a male and a female

Design ideas

- Artworks
- Use of shells
- Water features
- Ashleianne noted that w.r.t landscaping the “Botanic garden theme fits in well”.

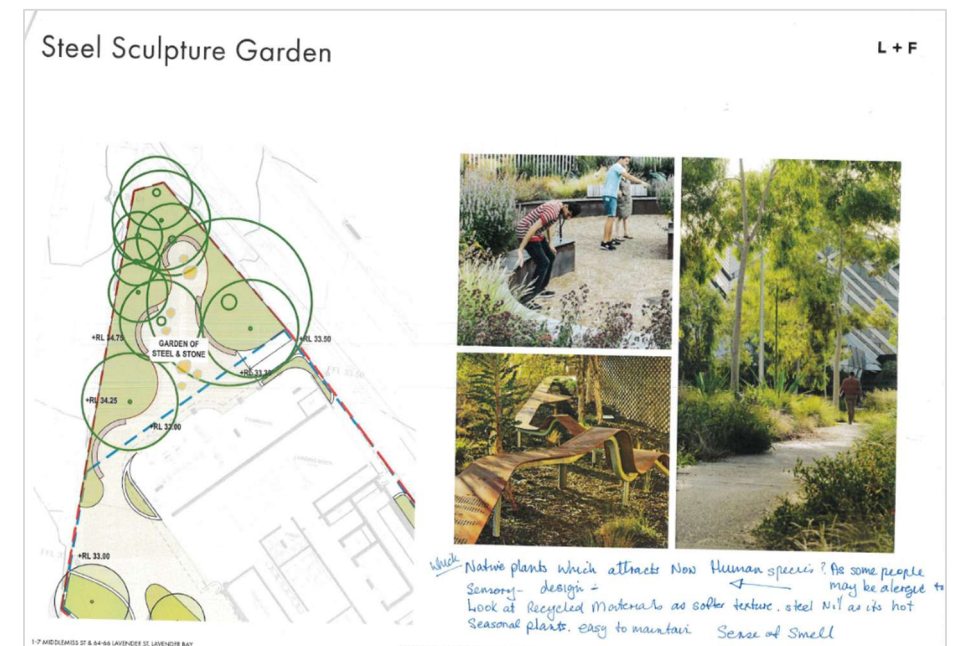
- Aunty Pamela, Uncle Bob and Ash talked about having a water feature, allowing it to connect back to the shorelines and also works as a noise barrier.
- Sensory features, e.g. Sandstone, Steel, bush tucker garden and hearing

Dogs

The group had a discussion about the integration of dogs and families into spaces. Ashleianne noted that pets can have a detrimental effect on local native wildlife.

Steel sculpture garden

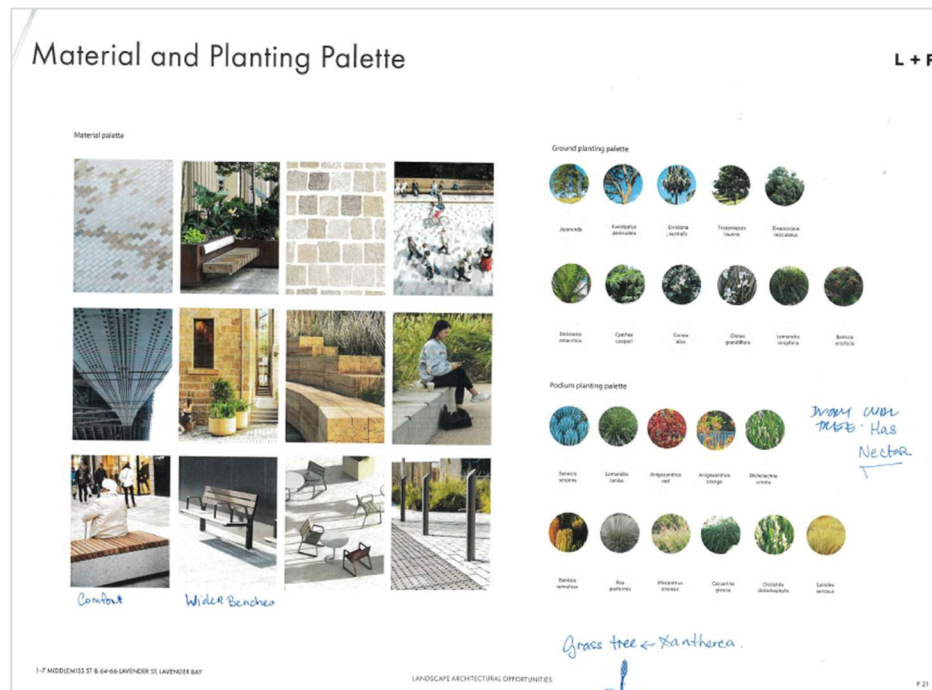
Ranine showed plans of the steel sculpture gardens



Aunty Pamela made the following notes:

- Consider native plants to attract non-human species
- But note that some people may be allergic to some plants
- Consider 'sensory design'; for example plants with scent
- Look to use recycled materials which have a softer texture
- Be careful when using steel which can get hot
- Seasonal plants are easier to maintain

Materials and planting



Auntie Pamela made the following notes about materials and planting palette:

- Consider the ivory gum tree which has nectar
- Consider the grass tree xanthorrhoea
- When designing benches think of including wider benches for comfort and accessibility

Design notes

Aunty Pamela also made the following design notes

- Take inspiration from the fish hook design



- Aunty Pamela noted the proximity of site to the artwork *bara* by Aboriginal artist Judy Watson which is a major permanent artwork to celebrate the First Peoples of Sydney. Located at the Royal Botanic Gardens it features a monumental *bara*, the fish hooks crafted and used by Gadigal women for thousands of generations.
- Consider use of Language
- Consider use of textures with grainy textures or inspired by the texture of the ground/earth and etchings
- Consider materials which are reflective and which reflect the Sky while also allowing light inside
- Ensure windows have sound proofing

6.5 Ongoing consultation

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

- Contracting Aboriginal owned businesses and organisations.
- Following local Aboriginal owned businesses and organisations on social media.
- Attending cultural awareness training.
- Attending cultural tours and walks on Country.
- Attending important festivals and events.
- Offering training and internships for early career Aboriginal professionals and students.
- Sponsoring, supporting and partnering with local Aboriginal organisations.
- Commissioning artistic works from locally connected Aboriginal artists and in collaboration with Aboriginal Artist Cooperatives
- Seeking ongoing approvals from Aboriginal traditional knowledge holders.
- Engaging Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP)s in potential archaeological and heritage work.
- Requesting a smoking ceremony and/or a Welcome to Country from Elders.



Figure 25: Aunty Pamela and Hugh at workshop, 29 January 2026 (source: Artefact)

7. ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES



7.1 Introduction

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

7.2 Values

Cammeraygal (Gamaragal) People

The Cammeraygal (Gamaragal) people are the Traditional Custodians of much of Sydney's lower North Shore, including Mosman, North Sydney, Willoughby, Lane Cove and parts of Ku-ring-gai. Early colonial observers described the Cammeraygal as influential, physically strong and culturally authoritative within the wider Sydney region.

Rock engravings and artworks across the North Shore depict animals, spirit beings, ancestral figures and ceremonial motifs, including Baiami and Daramulan, reflecting complex spiritual and social systems. Despite confusion in colonial records regarding language and boundaries, contemporary research affirms the distinct identity and enduring legacy of the Cammeraygal. Although colonisation devastated populations and disrupted knowledge transmission, Cammeraygal presence persists through place names, archaeological evidence, descendant communities and ongoing cultural recognition.

Cammeraygal Country

Cammeraygal Country encompasses ridgelines, sandstone outcrops, foreshores and waterways rich in food, materials and cultural meaning. Fishing, shellfish gathering, plant harvesting, hunting and firestick farming were central to daily life.

Cultural landscape and engravings

The sandstone landscapes of the Sydney Basin form an extensive open-air cultural archive. Rock engravings, pigment art, shelters, grinding grooves, middens, carved trees and stone arrangements document ongoing cultural practices over millennia. With more than 4,000 engraving sites and 3,000 rock shelters, the region is comparable in significance to internationally recognised cultural landscapes such as Kakadu.

Middens

Shell middens are a significant Aboriginal cultural heritage feature across the Sydney Harbour and North Shore landscape. Formed over thousands of years, middens record long-term patterns of occupation, diet and resource use, particularly the harvesting of shellfish such as Sydney cockles, rock oysters, mussels and clams. Located along foreshores, creeks and estuaries, middens reflect Aboriginal people's deep knowledge of seasonal abundance and sustainable food practices.

Following colonisation, many middens were quarried for lime used in early building construction, making surviving midden sites especially important as enduring markers of Aboriginal presence and connection to Country.

7.3 Registered Aboriginal sites

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

A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) was undertaken on 5 August 2025 for a search area measuring approximately 3km x 2km surrounding the study area.

A total of 38 registered Aboriginal sites were identified within the search area. See Figure 26. There are no registered Aboriginal sites within the study area. The closest AHIMS site identified in the search area was a ‘Shell, Artefact’ site, which is located approximately 140m south of the study area.

The most common site type identified from the AHIMS search was ‘Shell, Artefact’. This site type, often referred to as shell midden, represents the remains of resource gathering of shellfish, these sites can range in size from small single meal events to very large deposits representing many years of reusing the same location and shell beds. Fish and other faunal bones, stone tools, fishhooks made of shell and even human burials can be found in these types of sites.

The frequency of ‘Shell, Artefact’ sites reflects the marine nature of the study area, as they are generally located on the foreshore and in proximity to water sources, such as Lavender Bay, Berrys Bay, Neutral Bay, and Balls Head Bay. Furthermore, a high proportion of the ‘Shell, Artefact’ sites were classified as ‘closed’, indicating their association with an enclosed context, such as a rock shelter. The natural protection and obscurity provided by shelters is favourable for site survivability and reflects the natural

Hawkesbury sandstone geology of the region. This is consistent with reports documenting the vast amount of shell middens found on Hawkesbury Sandstone which are well recorded within the Port Jackson Catchment⁶⁸

A high frequency of ‘Art’ sites is also present and again indicative of the underlying Hawkesbury sandstone geology, as shelters and flat outcrops are a common landform within this geological landscape. Art sites in a range of forms have survived around Sydney Harbour – figurative paintings and stencils have survived on the walls of rock shelters; engravings on sandstone platforms and boulders, often depicting fish, other fauna and mythical beings are common. Grinding grooves formed by sharpening stone axes on soft sandstone may be also encountered in these landscapes.

Table 1: AHIMS Site Features located nearby

Site Feature	Description
Art (Pigment or Engraved)	Art is found in shelters, overhangs and across rock formations. Techniques include painting, drawing, scratching, carving, engraving, pitting, conjoining, abrading and the use of a range of binding agents and the use of natural pigments obtained from clays, charcoal and plants
Artefact	Objects such as stone tools, and associated flaked material, spears, manuports, grindstones, discarded stone flakes, modified glass or shell demonstrating evidence of use of the area by Aboriginal people

⁶⁸ Attenbrow 1991; 2010

Non-Human Bone and Organic Material

Objects which can be found within cultural deposits as components of an Aboriginal site such as fish or mammal bones, ochres, cached objects which may otherwise have broken down such as resin, twine, dilly bags, nets etc

Potential Archaeological Deposit (PAD)

An area where there is potential for Aboriginal objects below the ground surface

Shell

An accumulation or deposit of shellfish from beach, estuarine, lacustrine or riverine species resulting from Aboriginal gathering and consumption. Usually found in deposits previously referred to as shell middens. Must be found in association with other objects like stone tools, fish bones, charcoal, fireplaces/hearths, and burials. Will vary greatly in size and components

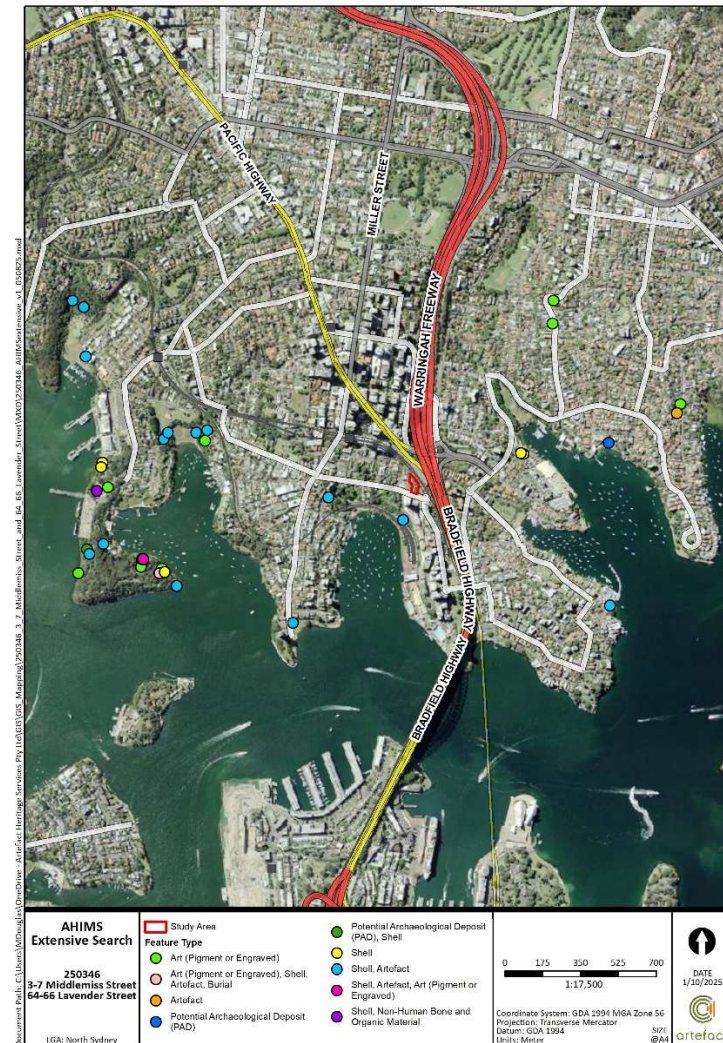


Figure 26: AHIMS extensive search results

8. DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY



8.1 Introduction

The *Connecting with Country Framework* (GANSW 2023) provides direction on ways to explore opportunities for design process and practices to support connection to Country in built environment projects.

8.2 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. These icons were designed by Darug Artist Adam Laws and reproduced with permission.

Acknowledge Cammeraygal Country



Country is everywhere and holds thousands of years of knowledge, stories and connections passed down through generations. Acknowledgement is both a protocol and an act of respect, reminding people that they are visiting, living or working on Cammeraygal land. It recognises neighbouring Countries, shared boundaries and responsibilities, and the continuing presence of Aboriginal peoples despite dispossession.

Inspired by Country



The Aboriginal cultural landscape is layered with meaning through pathways, engravings, middens, grinding grooves and ceremonial sites. Design should draw inspiration from textures, patterns, colours and forms found in sandstone, ochre, shells and engravings – without directly replicating or appropriating sacred imagery. Subtle abstraction,

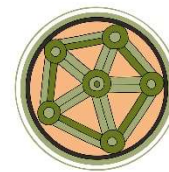
material selection and spatial organisation can honour cultural knowledge while protecting Aboriginal intellectual and cultural property.

Care for community and create safe space



The consultation highlights the importance of cultural safety, further consultation and following protocols to ensure Aboriginal people feel welcomed, heard and protected on Country. Safe spaces support connection across generations, genders and economic backgrounds, avoiding segregation and fostering belonging. Mixed and inclusive environments reflect Aboriginal social values, where community wellbeing extends beyond housing to dignity, visibility and respect

Respect and relationships



Design must be grounded in respect, consultation and ongoing relationships with Aboriginal people. The text repeatedly emphasises the importance of protocols, cultural safety, and engagement with both male and female knowledge holders. Projects should create opportunities for cultural continuity through the use of Aboriginal businesses, inclusive spaces, employment pathways and long-term community benefit. Design is not just a physical outcome but part of a continuing story, where reciprocity ensures Aboriginal presence is visible, valued and sustained into the future.

8.3 Examples of design realisations

8.3.1 Introduction

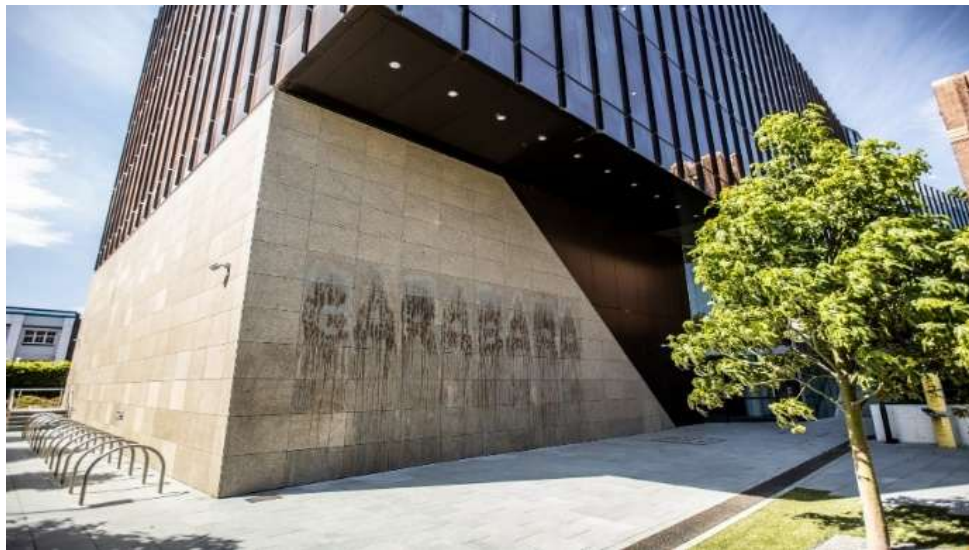
This section presents a series of tangible examples illustrating how the Design Principles outlined in Section 8.2 might be meaningfully expressed through the project's architecture, landscaping, and interpretive elements.

These examples, drawn from a diversity of Aboriginal Countries, demonstrate that there is no singular approach – rather, there are many ways to thoughtfully embed these principles throughout a project. The design outcome opportunities are grouped into broad thematic categories.

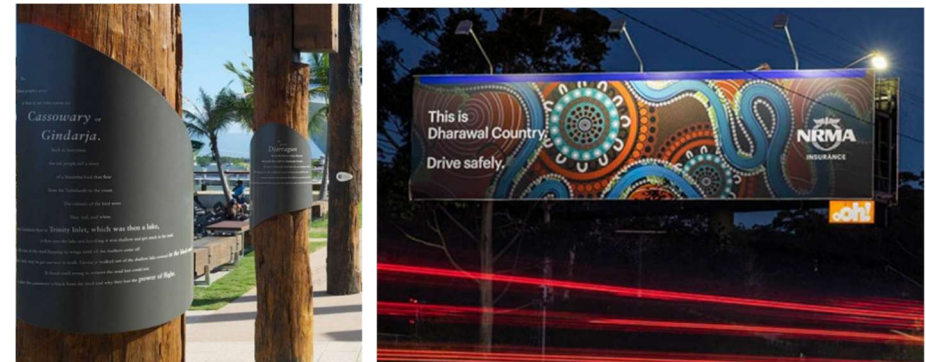


8.3.2 Acknowledgement of/Welcome to Country

A key method of communicating the importance of Country to audiences at a site is by providing a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country message at a main entry point. 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. Any content for these devices (text, graphics, use of local language) is to be developed with/by local Aboriginal knowledge holders.



Acknowledgement of Country, University of Sydney



Left - Interpretive panels acknowledging Country, Cairns Foreshore Redevelopment. Right - Acknowledgement of Dharawal Country road sign (NRMA)



Interpretive Acknowledgement of Country panel, Jamie Eastwood for Roussel Road, Axle West (source: Artefact)

8.3.3 Naming/Use of language

For Aboriginal people, connection with Country is intrinsically connected to identity through language, cultural practices and long held relationships between people and the land. Using Aboriginal words or phrases as elements in the paving, as audio recordings, to name key rooms or buildings in new developments or as dual naming for streets and public spaces is an interpretive option that recognises Aboriginal cultural heritage values. All language usage development should be done in consultation with Aboriginal knowledge holders.



Left: Dharug language incorporated into building and seating, St Leonards Health Centre right: Darumbal language stairs, Yeppoon'



Dharawal language incorporated into metal sheet, Billabong Campbelltown



Yirran muru (Many pathways) - Dharawal Interpretive Play Space, Shellharbour Civic Centre

8.3.4 Integration of Indigenous designs and forms into the built environment

Creative practices relating to place-making and the built form are powerful devices to incorporate and reflect the heritage values and stories of a site. 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, Melbourne's Dandenong Ranges



Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service allied health services hub in Newman. (Noel Nannup and Simon Forrest).



marri ngurang, Nicole Monks, Redfern

8.3.5 Traditional and sensory gardens and bush tucker

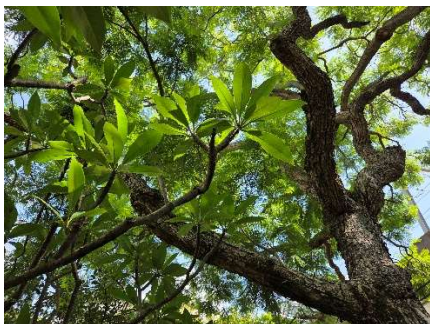
Integrating native flora and bush tucker into rooftop gardens or the broader landscape design promotes sustainability and creates learning opportunities about Aboriginal cultural heritage and native flora. Bush tucker plants offer unique flavours, nutritional benefits, and resilience to local climates. In rooftop gardens, bush tucker plants can thrive, offering fresh, local produce. In landscape design, these plants can create aesthetically pleasing, low-maintenance green spaces that support local wildlife and celebrate Aboriginal culture.



All images - South Eveleigh Native Rooftop Farm, South Eveleigh, Sydney, by Yerrabingin and collaborators

8.3.6 Textures and colours of Country

Incorporating colour schemes that reference local materials and plants in new building designs provides an opportunity to design in harmony with Country. By drawing inspiration from the natural hues of ochre, sandstone, and bark, spaces can resonate with the cultural and environmental heritage of the area. This approach not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of new developments but also fosters a deeper connection to the landscape and its history. Embracing these design principles allows for the creation of environments that respect and celebrate the traditional knowledge and practices of local Aboriginal communities, ensuring that new structures are both beautiful and meaningful.



Colour pallets of Country , based on photographs from walk on Country. (source: Artefact)

8.3.7 Views and visual links across Country

Placemaking is enhanced by vistas and viewpoints which allow visitors and users to get a holistic sense of the landscape. High points allow for sightlines across rivers and urban areas. Walkways can give access to viewpoints to allow residents and users a chance to immerse themselves on Country.

Creating visual links to nearby green spaces connects people with Country and can significantly contribute to their well-being. Built design that facilitates experiences with nature, allowing people to see, hear, and physically connect with the natural environment enhances this connection. Incorporating elements like large windows, open spaces, and utilising natural light can seamlessly integrate the built environment with the surrounding landscape.



8.3.8 Incorporating local and natural materials

Incorporating materials into the building and broader domain design which are prevalent in the area, including sandstone, timber and quartz, can help connect the new development to the natural landscape and cultural heritage of the region.



Timber paneling on façade at Centre for Nyoongar Culture and Environmental Design (iredale pedersen hook architect)



Meandering brick paving contrasted by natural sandstone blocks and native plantings at Bendigo TAFE, Six Degrees Architects.



Barangaroo Reserve, with sandstone walls (source: Janna Schreier Garden Design)

8.3.9 Reuse of salvaged material

Reuse of materials salvaged throughout the project aligns with the value of keeping Country on Country. Elements of the landscape such as rocks and trees that have to be removed to enable construction could be reused in functional elements such as seating and shelters, could be reinterpreted as sculptural pieces or used to establish new animal habitats which were destroyed by construction. Reusing material is not only sustainable but is a physical reminder of the cultural values of keeping Country on Country.

The condition of any such materials should be assessed to ensure that the material is safe to re-use.



Salvaged timber seat in Pyrmont Sydney

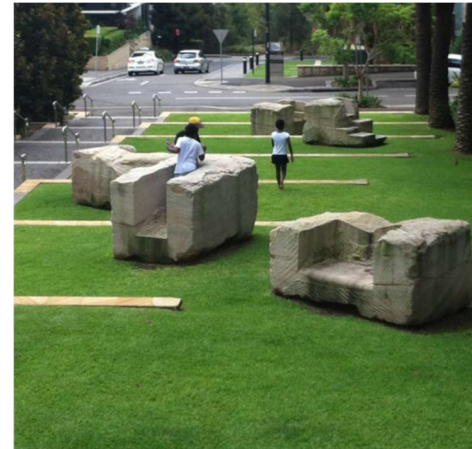


Figure 27: Sandstone seating, Camperdown (source: Artefact)



Nowra based Warwick Keen's contemporary dendroglyphs⁶⁹

⁶⁹ <https://www.warwickkeen.com.au/revive-lost-practice-carved-trees/>

8.3.10 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.



Wingarra-Murra, sandblasted paving design, University of Sydney



Example of ground plane elements at the Nurranginy Reserve in Doonside, by Jamie Eastwood (source: Artefact)

8.3.11 Artworks

Eye-catching, large-scale artworks are effective mediums for expressing Aboriginal heritage values in new developments. Public art is a powerful tool of cultural expression, with strong graphics able to tell stories and visually communicate cultural messages to a large audience. This type of interpretive media creates a visual statement about the cultural heritage of an area and is important in place-making.

Artworks can be stand-alone features, graphic designs used in site signage, or integrated within building facades, soffits, foyers or landscaping. Aboriginal artists with connection to the local area should be engaged if artworks are to be considered for integration a new development.



Caring for Country, by Jamie Eastwood for Roussell Road, Axle West (source: Goodman)



Mural, by Elizabeth Close, Adelaide⁷⁰



The Way Home, artwork by Joe Hurst, Redfern

⁷⁰ <https://www.adelaideartwalls.com/portfolio/elizabeth-close/59>

8.3.12 Water features

The Aboriginal people of the Sydney area have a strong connection to salt water and fresh water. Water features in landscapes enhance both aesthetic appeal and ecological health. They create serene environments, promoting relaxation and mental well-being with the sound and aesthetics even with small scale elements like mini fountains and running water. Ecologically, water features support biodiversity by providing habitats for various wildlife, including birds, amphibians, and beneficial insects. They also help regulate local microclimates, moderating temperatures and increasing humidity.



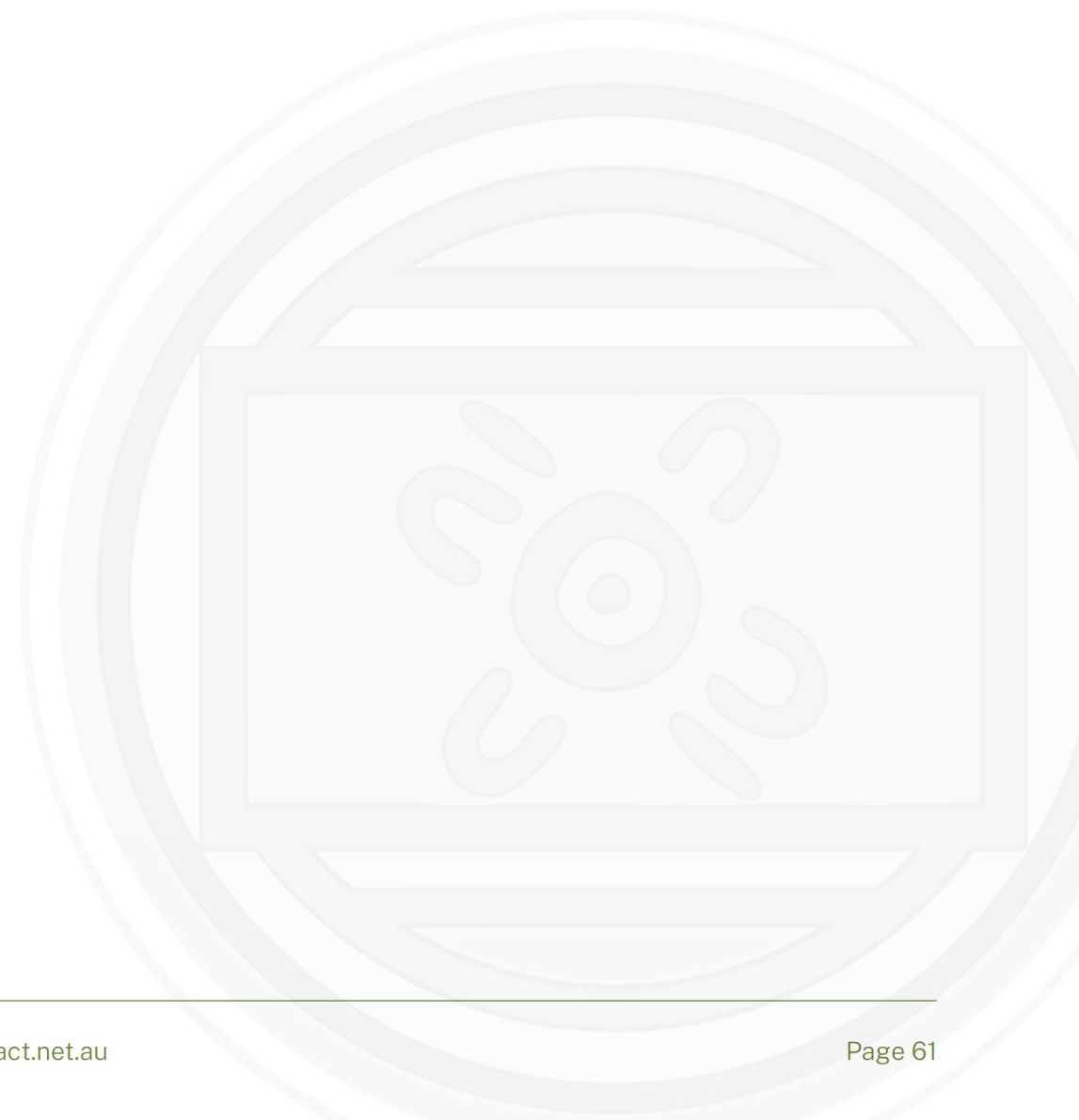
Stone with water features (source: gardening with Angus)



Gunnedah Indigenous Water Feature Rainbow serpent sculpture Chandos Street. (source: Waterforms international)⁷¹

⁷¹ <https://www.waterforms.com.au/page/about-us/>

9. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



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. Project planning should address the four stages in the project lifecycle:

- Form (Starting with Country)
- Design (Imagining with Country)
- Deliver (Shaping Country)
- 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 all stages of the project. The tables below identify actions that have been taken in the preparation of this report which demonstrate how the Country-centred approach can be achieved and provides recommendations for future stages of the project.

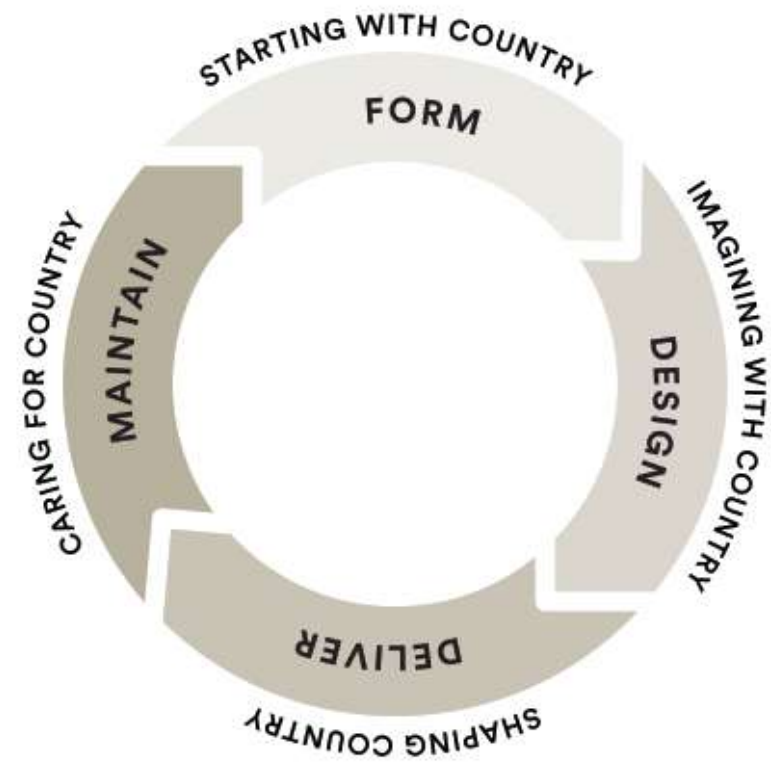
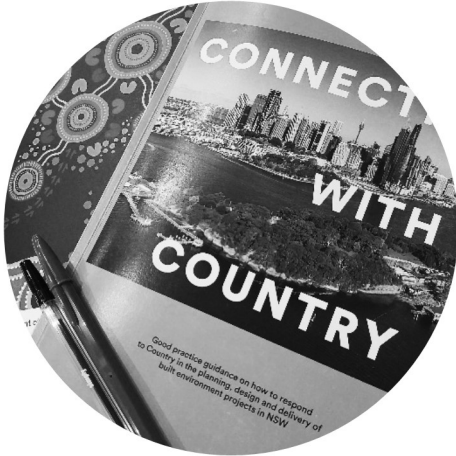


Figure 28: Project lifecycle from an Aboriginal perspective (GANSW 2020)

9.2 Actions and outcomes

9.2.1 Research and prepare

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
Researching previous work and carrying out cultural awareness training are important preparation tasks to avoid Aboriginal Stakeholder consultation fatigue. 	• Project team members attended the Walk on Country and workshop on the 29 January 2026 • Artefact reviewed previous consultation reports and technical studies in section 6.3 • Project team members will review this CwC report. • Artefact worked with Aboriginal stakeholders to identify which Country the project is on-Cammeraygal Country. • Through consultation and historical research this CwC report has identified key historical and cultural narratives - see section 5	• Future team members should undergo cultural awareness training.

9.2.2 Establishing protocols and ways of working

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
Collaboration with Aboriginal stakeholders is important to establish protocols and a common understanding for how to communicate and behave with community. 	• Stakeholder identification is discussed in section 6.2.1 • Stakeholders were asked during engagement activities how they would like to be addressed • Protocols were introduced at the beginning of the Walk/workshop/discussion on the 29 January 2026 • Stakeholders were reimbursed for their time and knowledges • Consultation activities on 29 January 2026 started with an Acknowledgement of Country and discussion about cultural protocols • Cultural safety was discussed with the stakeholders on 29 January 2026	• Continue to follow established protocols for community engagement and cultural safety • Commission a Welcome to Country ceremony at important milestone events. • Consider ongoing opportunities for on-Country tours, ceremony, and sourcing Indigenous food and materials.

9.2.3 Respect ICIP

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
Respecting ICIP protocols is important. 	• ICIP protocols are included in section 2.9 • ICIP and other protocols were discussed at the start of the workshop and Walk on Country activities. • The ICIP protocols in this report have been compiled in consultation with Terri Janke lawyers.	• Keep records of all engagement sessions and report back to the community on how ICIP is being used. • Seek permission before sharing any information. • Follow ICIP protocols to protect knowledge and intellectual property for future work (e.g., artwork) and ensure proper credit is given in development of public art and Aboriginal heritage Interpretation. • Redact AHIMS and any other sensitive information in publicly available reports.

9.2.4 Create training and employment opportunities

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
The creation of opportunities for training, education and employment of Aboriginal people should be considered throughout the lifetime of the project. 	- Aboriginal stakeholders were engaged for this CwC report - Aboriginal owned business and services were discussed on 29 January 2026 - Early career Aboriginal heritage officer Hannah Matagia attended the Walk on Country on 29 January 2026 - Lachlan Champley Architectural Technician (Gamilaraay/Wiradjuri) is on the project team - Opportunities to learn more about planning and design were given at the Workshop on 29 January 2026	- Provide training to develop communities' spatial design skills and understanding of planning and design processes - Consider financial support including scholarships to encourage community to pursue a career in built environment or heritage professions - Consider financial sponsorship of Aboriginal events like Yabun, Blak Markets, NAIDOC week - Support Aboriginal businesses in the project procurement strategy, and provide employment opportunities throughout all stages of the project life cycle

9.2.5 Share Knowledge

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
Aboriginal stakeholders should have the opportunity to share knowledges and historic events. Cultural narratives will be supported and interpreted as part of the project. 	- Stakeholders had an opportunity to share cultural knowledges at the Walk on Country / Workshop on 29 January 2026 - Examples of design and interpretive ideas have been developed based on recommendations by Aboriginal stakeholders – see section 0 - Concerns and opportunities about the project were discussed on the 29 January 2026 - The project team will review and respond to the feedback in section 5.1 - Cultural heritage values are summarised in section 7	- Preparing a Heritage Interpretation and Public Art Strategy would help identify and communicate key cultural and historical narratives. - Schedule ongoing consultation during detailed design stages so cultural narratives will be supported - Listen to community concerns about building development and how it will affect Country

9.2.6 Design with Country

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
Designing with Country is a key consideration of Connecting with Country. 	• Design workshops and discussions were held on 29 January 2026 • Design principles have been included in section 8.2: – Acknowledge Cammeraygal Country – Inspired by Country – Care for Community and create safe spaces – Respect and relationships • Design realisations have been included in section 8.3	• Schedule in future opportunities for consultation and working with stakeholders • Implement the design principles • Develop a Heritage Interpretation and Public Art Strategy to identify and communicate key cultural and historical narratives through a range of media • Consider incorporating Aboriginal place names and language into reports and signage • Where possible, use locally sourced, sustainable building materials and incorporate colours of Country • Support living ecosystems and ecologies in landscaping • Consider access and cultural safety in landscape and architecture • Ensure the Aboriginal community has an opportunity to provide feedback on the detailed design concepts • Ensure the design concepts include a space where community can gather/have access

9.2.7 Consider Country

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
The project team must consider Country throughout the construction period, ongoing maintenance and future usage. 	Recommendations for construction and maintenance have been shared by Aboriginal stakeholders in section 6.3.3	- Consult Aboriginal knowledge holders when developing environmental management recommendations to preserve their knowledge and enhance ecosystem health - Consider plants which are low maintenance - Develop a maintenance plan for artwork and interpretation elements - Carry out evaluation with Aboriginal stakeholders post occupancy

9.2.8 Protect Aboriginal cultural heritage

Action	Project outcomes	Recommendations
Aboriginal cultural heritage should be protected and celebrated within planning and design outcomes. 	• The project design has considered access to Country • The project design has enabled the physical form of Country to remain recognisable and restored where possible • A draft Archeological Technical Report and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report is being prepared by Artefact	• Follow the recommendations given in the draft Archeological Technical Report and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (Artefact 2026) • Develop a Heritage Interpretation and Public Art Strategy to identify and communicate key cultural and historical narratives through a range of media

10. CONCLUSION



10.1 Conclusion and recommendations

This Connecting with Country report for 3-7 Middlemiss Street and 64-66 Lavender Street has been prepared to align with the principles and guidelines of the *Connecting with Country Framework* (GANSW 2023) and associated best practice documents.

This document has been prepared in consultation with key Aboriginal stakeholders from the area and provides a vision and design principles to embed Country into the future development of the site.

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

- considering the Design Principles within the design stages for the current Planning Proposal and future development of the site – see section 8.2
- actioning appropriate recommendations from the Actions/Recommendations – see section 9
- facilitating ongoing consultation and design workshops with the Aboriginal stakeholders during subsequent key development stages.
- integrating meaningful interpretation/artwork/landscape elements within the design development stages of this project
- 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 29: Site visit, 29 January 2026 (source: Artefact)

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12. APPENDIX A: CONSULTATION LOG

Person / organisation	Date	Contacted by	Mode	Topic
Uncle Robert Young Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Services	14 January 2026	Artefact	Email	Invitation
	15 January 2026	Artefact	Email	Confirmation of attendance
	21 January 2026	Artefact	Email	Correspondence and permissions on taking images for social media
	22 January 2026	Artefact	Email	Sent agenda
	29 January 2026	Project team	In person	Site visit and workshop
	02 February 2026	Artefact	Email	Sent and confirmed notes
	24 February 2026	Artefact	Email	Sent draft report
Aunty Pamela Young Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Services	29 January 2026	Project team	In person	Site visit and workshop
Ashleianne Wymarra, Konanggo Aboriginal Cultural Services	29 January 2026	Project team	In person	Site visit and workshop



Artefact Heritage and Environment
ABN 73 144 973 526

Sydney Office:
Suite 56, Jones Bay Wharf
26-32 Pirrama Road
Pyrmont NSW 2009
Australia

Newcastle Office:
Unit 71, 8 Spit Island Close
Mayfield West NSW 2304

Bathurst Office
4/112 Keppel Street
Bathurst NSW 2795

+61 2 9518 8411
office@artefact.net.au
www.artefact.net.au