



10 Dangar Street, Wickham
Connecting with Country
Country-Centred Design & Cultural
Integration Framework
March 2026

Prepared by 
ngurra
advisory



Acknowledgement of Country

Ngurra Advisory acknowledges that this project is located on Awabakal Country.

We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present and recognise their enduring connection to these lands, waterways and skies.

For thousands of years, Awabakal people have cared for this Country, guided by deep knowledge systems that understand the relationships between land, water, sky, plants, animals and community.

We acknowledge Awabakal Knowledge Holders and community members who continue to share their knowledge, stories and perspectives, helping to guide how Country is understood and respected through this project.

We recognise the shared responsibility of all who live and work on Awabakal Country to care for and respect Country, protecting its ecosystems, honouring cultural knowledge, and ensuring that Country remains healthy for future generations.

This project is guided by the understanding that Country is a living system, and that caring for Country is essential to creating places that are respectful, sustainable and connected to culture.

Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property Rights

We aim to work respectfully with First Nations people and communities to protect the rights of Culture and Country.

This framework has been informed by engagement through discussions with selected stakeholders.

While this work is the copyright of Ngurra Advisory, it is important to note that any Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) rights remain with those Indigenous peoples or groups from whom it originates.

ICIP refers to the rights that Indigenous people's have, and want to have, to protect their traditional knowledge, resources, knowledge systems, arts and culture

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Project Overview
 - i. Project Vision
 - ii. About this Country
 - iii. About the Site
 - iv. Project Team
3. Community Engagement
4. Design Principles
 - i. Architecture & Built Form
 - ii. Landscape & Open Space
5. Opportunities
 - i. Employment & Skills Development
 - ii. Procurement
 - iii. Caring for Country
 - iv. Community Benefits
6. Implementation & Action Plan
7. Ongoing Evaluation & Accountability

Disclaimer: The information contained in this report is specific to the property located at 10 Dangar Street, Wickham.

It has been prepared based on the unique characteristics, context, and circumstances of this site. This report must not be relied upon or applied to any other projects or locations without appropriate review and adaptation by Ngurra Advisory and the Traditional Custodians, Elders and Knowledge Holders who have been involved in the consultation of this report.

This document is considered ICIP and should not be shared without the permission of Ngurra Advisory.

A Message from Ngurra Advisory

At Ngurra Advisory, we approach our work with the understanding that Country is living and holds deep cultural meaning that continues today.

This project sits on Awabakal Country, within a landscape shaped by water, movement and long-standing connection. Water has always been a connector here, linking people, places and stories. Where water flows, culture flows, and those connections continue to shape how this place is understood.

Engagement with Awabakal Traditional Custodians is currently being developed, with further opportunities for input planned as the project progresses. This Framework represents an early step, providing guidance for the project while allowing space for cultural knowledge, perspectives and priorities to be shared and embedded as relationships continue to build over time.

Our focus is on ensuring the project moves forward in a way that is respectful and considered, avoiding assumptions, and creating opportunities for culture to be meaningfully embedded when guided by community.

Central to this is a commitment to leaving Country healthier than when we found her, and to ensuring that any response to place is grounded in care, responsibility and respect.

Through this approach, the project can respond to Country in a way that feels genuine, and support outcomes that are connected to water, to place, and to culture.



Amy Barnes
Managing Director



Mat Cornwell
Managing Director

Introduction

This Country-Centred Design & Cultural Integration Framework is submitted to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) on behalf of UPG Wickham Pty Ltd (UPG) (the Applicant), to support a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) and concurrent Rezoning Report for the construction of a 43-storey mixed-use development at 10 Dangar Street, Wickham (the site).

The site is located within the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) and occupies a prominent corner position immediately north of the Newcastle Interchange.

The project has been selected by the NSW Housing Delivery Authority (HDA) as a key development to help accelerate the delivery of well-located, diverse and affordable housing across New South Wales. Commencing in early 2025, the HDA plays a coordinating role across government agencies, focusing on unlocking complex sites through strategic planning, infrastructure coordination, and streamlined assessment pathways.

Following the Applicant's expression of interest (EOI 240837), the HDA recommended to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces that the project be declared State Significant Development under Section 4.36(3) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) on 23 June 2025. The development was subsequently declared SSD pursuant to the State Significant Development Declaration Order 2025 (No. 10), Part 2, Section 1(a), dated 30 June 2025.

Ngurra Advisory Approach

Ngurra Advisory has prepared this Framework to guide how Connecting with Country principles are considered across the project.

Sustained efforts have been made to engage with Awabakal Traditional Custodians, with engagement currently developing and continuing on an ongoing basis.

Ngurra Advisory has held high-level discussions with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), building initial awareness of the project, with further detailed engagement to be progressed over time. The LALC has indicated that the greatest opportunity lies in employment and procurement outcomes, highlighting the presence of a skilled Aboriginal workforce and capable Aboriginal businesses.

A Walk on Country was undertaken with Awabakal Knowledge Holder Amos Smith, with insights from this, alongside research and Ngurra Advisory's experience, informing the development of this Framework.

Ngurra Advisory recognises the importance of cultural authority and will continue to seek opportunities to engage with Traditional Custodians as the project progresses. This Framework provides an early foundation to guide a respectful and considered approach, while allowing space for cultural input as relationships develop.

Project Vision

The vision for 10 Dangar Street, Wickham is to create a place that responds to Awabakal Country in a way that is considered, grounded and open to future cultural input.

Located at the edge of the Newcastle Interchange, the site sits within a landscape shaped by water, movement and transition. Historically connected to harbour systems and wetlands, this place has long been defined by the flow of water, people, and activity, and continues to operate as a point of arrival, exchange, and connection.

While the site now forms part of a highly urbanised environment, these underlying systems remain an important part of how Country is understood. Where water flows, culture goes, and this relationship provides a key lens for how the project can respond to place.

At this stage, the project vision has been developed by the project team, guided by early insights including a Walk on Country and an understanding of the broader landscape. It is intended as a starting point, with the expectation that it will evolve as engagement with Awabakal Traditional Custodians and Knowledge Holders progresses.

The vision is to create a development that is not only functional and well-connected, but also reflective of its setting, a place that supports movement, gathering, and everyday use, while acknowledging the layers of history that have shaped it.

Through architecture, landscape and public domain design, the project seeks to:

- Respond to water, light and movement
- Support the connection between people and place
- Integrate natural systems into the urban environment

There is also an opportunity for the project to contribute to the visibility of Aboriginal culture within the precinct over time. This will be guided by appropriate engagement and cultural authority, ensuring that any future cultural elements are meaningful, respectful and community-led.

Ultimately, the vision is to create a place that sits comfortably within its context, one that reflects both the evolving city and the enduring presence of Awabakal Country, and that can adapt and grow as relationships with community develop.

About this Country

The site is located on Awabakal Country, within the coastal landscape of Newcastle.

Awabakal Country is shaped by strong connections between land, water and sky. The harbour, coastline, wetlands and waterways form part of an interconnected system that has supported life, movement and cultural practice for thousands of years.

Water is central to this Country. The harbour and surrounding wetlands once defined how people moved through the landscape, where they gathered, and how resources were accessed and cared for. While much of this has been altered through urban and industrial development, these systems remain an important part of how Country is understood.

The rhythms of Country, including seasonal changes, shifting water levels, plant cycles, and animal movements, continue to shape the health and function of these systems and how people understand and respond to place. These waterways supported rich ecosystems, providing fish, shellfish and plant-based resources that sustained communities over generations.

This area has long been a place of movement and exchange. Pathways across land and water connected people, places and neighbouring groups, forming part of a broader network of relationships across the region.

The site at Wickham sits within a highly modified part of this landscape, shaped by transport infrastructure and industrial use over time. Despite these changes, it remains part of Awabakal Country and connected to the broader systems that continue to define this place.

Awabakal people continue to maintain strong connections to Country through cultural practice, community leadership and the sharing of knowledge. These connections remain important to how Country is cared for today.

Recognising Country within an urban context is not only about acknowledging the past, but about understanding that these connections continue. Projects such as this present an opportunity to respond to Country in a way that is respectful, considered and grounded, while creating space for Aboriginal perspectives to be included as engagement develops over time.



Project Overview

About the Site

The site is located at 10 Dangar Street, Wickham, within the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA). It occupies a prominent corner position with triple street frontages, including a primary frontage of approximately 64 metres to Dangar Street, and secondary frontages of approximately 61 metres to Hannell Street and 50 metres to Charles Street.

The surrounding locality comprises a diverse mix of residential, commercial and light industrial uses, reflecting the area's ongoing transition. The site's frontage to Hannell Street, a major arterial road, provides strong connectivity to the broader metropolitan area. It is also located immediately north of the Newcastle Interchange, which services bus, rail and light rail networks.

Strategically, the site sits at the intersection of the Newcastle West End, Wickham and Honeysuckle precincts, positioning it to support the city's transition toward a higher-density, mixed-use metropolitan centre.

The site is currently vacant following demolition works approved under DA2018/01197 (as modified).

While the site is now highly urbanised, it sits within a landscape that was historically shaped by harbour systems, wetlands and movement corridors. These underlying conditions continue to influence how the site connects to the broader area, particularly in relation to water, movement and access.

The site's location adjacent to major transport infrastructure reinforces its role as a point of arrival, transition and exchange. This presents an opportunity for the project to respond to both its urban context and its connection to the broader systems of Country.



Figure 1 illustrates the location of the site.

Project Team

This project is a collaborative effort that brings together a diverse team of professionals and cultural advisors, each contributing their expertise to ensure the development reflects the values of respect, reconciliation, and cultural connection.

Connecting with Country and Community Engagement Consultants

Ngurra Advisory is leading engagement with Awabakal Knowledge Holders & Community Members to embed cultural values, knowledge systems, and community aspirations throughout the project



Developer

Urban Property Group is the project proponent and developer responsible for the delivery of the proposed development. They are leading the overall vision for the project and coordinating the project team to deliver a high-quality mixed-use development that contributes to the evolving character of Newcastle.



Planning

Beam Planning are the planning consultants responsible for coordinating the State Significant Development Application and preparing the supporting planning documentation for the project. They are guiding the project through the statutory planning process and ensuring the proposal responds to relevant planning frameworks and policy requirements.



Architect

SJB are the lead architects for the project, responsible for the design of the built form and overall architectural response. Their role includes shaping how the development responds to its urban context, scale and experience.



Landscape Architect

Land and Form are responsible for the landscape design and public domain, focusing on how open space, planting and movement contribute to the overall experience of the site. Their work supports the integration of natural systems within a highly urban environment.



Public Art

Creative Road are responsible for curating and delivering the public art strategy, bringing a placemaking and storytelling approach to integrate artistic outcomes that respond to place and contribute to the identity of the development.



Together, this diverse team is committed to delivering a development that meets architectural and environmental standards and fosters cultural respect, understanding, and a strong sense of belonging for all who engage with the space.



Community Engagement Summary

Who we engaged

Ngurra Advisory has undertaken initial engagement with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) and a local Awabakal Knowledge Holder.

The LALC is aware of the project and, at a high level, has identified employment and procurement as key areas of interest, noting the presence of a skilled Aboriginal workforce and capable Aboriginal businesses that could be involved in the project.

When & Where

Engagement has taken place during the early planning phase and has included:

- Initial engagement attempts with Awabakal Traditional Custodians (Oct–Dec 2025)
- Telephone discussion with the CEO, Awabakal LALC (28 Jan 2026)
- Meeting with Awabakal LALC, including Chloe Smith (Feb 2026)
- Walk on Country with Amos Simon, Muurrung Marai (Mar 2026)

How we engaged

Engagement has focused on building initial project awareness with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council, alongside a Walk on Country to understand the broader context of the site.

While deeper engagement would have been welcomed, the LALC has had other priorities at this time and engagement has remained at a high level.

This Framework is informed by these early conversations and site-based insights, and will continue to evolve as engagement progresses.

Engagement & Consultation

Our Engagement Approach

Ngurra Advisory's approach to engagement is grounded in respect, recognising the importance of Aboriginal knowledge, lived experience and ongoing connection to Country.

For the 10 Dangar Street, Wickham project, engagement has focused on establishing initial relationships and building project awareness with the Awabakal community. While multiple attempts have been made to engage with Traditional Custodians, engagement to date has been limited and has remained at a high level.

Initial discussions with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council identified employment and procurement as key areas of interest, highlighting opportunities to involve Aboriginal workforce and businesses in the delivery of the project.

A Walk on Country was also undertaken with an Awabakal Knowledge Holder, providing an opportunity to begin understanding the broader landscape, site context and connection to place. Insights from this, alongside research and Ngurra Advisory's experience, have informed the development of this Framework.

This approach recognises that meaningful engagement takes time and must occur in a way that aligns with community priorities. Ngurra Advisory will continue to seek opportunities to engage with Awabakal Traditional Custodians as the project progresses.

Traditional Custodian and Aboriginal Community Involvement

Engagement is currently developing and has primarily involved high-level discussions with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council and a Walk on Country with an Awabakal Knowledge Holder.

While detailed cultural input has not yet been established, these early conversations have helped inform an initial understanding of the site and broader landscape, as well as identify areas where the project can provide value to the local Aboriginal community.

This includes a strong emphasis on employment, procurement and opportunities for Aboriginal participation as the project progresses.

Engagement & Consultation

Engagement Activities

To date, our engagement activities have focused on building initial relationships and understanding the site context, as outlined below.

Discussions with Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council

Initial engagement included a series of telephone and email attempts to the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) to raise awareness of the project. This was followed by a telephone discussion with the CEO, Kumarah Kelly, and a meeting with Community Engagement Officer Chloe Smith.

These discussions focused on building awareness of the project and identifying areas of interest for the community, particularly in relation to employment and procurement opportunities.

Walk on Country

A Walk on Country was undertaken in March 2026 at Glenrock State Conservation Area with Awabakal Knowledge Holder Amos Simon of Muurrung Marai.

This provided an opportunity to experience Country in context, observe relationships between land, water and landscape, and begin understanding how the project site sits within the broader systems of Country.



Engagement & Consultation

Outcomes of Engagement

Given the current level of engagement, outcomes have been limited but have provided an initial direction for the project.

Key outcomes include:

- Identification of employment and procurement as priority areas, with opportunities to support Aboriginal workforce participation and engagement of Aboriginal businesses
- An initial understanding of the site within its broader landscape context, particularly in relation to water, movement and its connection to surrounding systems
- Recognition of the importance of ongoing engagement and the need to continue building relationships with Awabakal Traditional Custodians over time

These early insights have informed a cautious and considered approach within this Framework. This means avoiding assumptions or overstatement, and allowing the project to respond as engagement continues.

Cultural Themes Identified

Based on early insights and site understanding, the following preliminary themes have been identified:

Water and Movement

The site's connection to water, wetlands and surrounding infrastructure highlights its role as a place of flow, movement and transition.

Layers of Change

The site reflects a history of natural landscapes, seasonal patterns and ongoing change, from water and ecological systems through to industrial use and urban development.

Connection to Place

Opportunities exist to strengthen how people experience and move through the site.

Note: These themes are preliminary and will require validation through further engagement.



Engagement & Consultation

Integration into Design

At this stage, cultural integration focuses on building a thoughtful, grounded approach that responds to Country, while leaving room for further input as engagement develops.

This includes:

- Responding to landscape and natural systems, particularly water, movement and the broader setting of the site
- Avoiding assumed or applied cultural narratives, and not embedding cultural elements without appropriate guidance
- Creating opportunities within the design for future cultural input, including public domain, landscape and potential art outcomes
- Supporting employment and procurement pathways for Aboriginal people and businesses
- Considering how spaces are experienced, including movement, gathering and everyday use
- Ensuring the design remains flexible and able to respond as engagement continues

This approach supports a project that is respectful and considered, while remaining open to evolving cultural input over time.

Strengthened Cultural Capability

Time spent on Country with an Awabakal Knowledge Holder has played an important role in building cultural awareness within the broader project team.

Through this, Ngurra Advisory has supported the team to begin developing their understanding of Country and how it can be considered within planning and design. This has been further supported by the involvement of a First Nations architect within the SJB project team.

This experience, alongside early discussions, has helped establish a more informed and respectful approach moving forward. There is a strong intent to build on this as the project progresses, with the hope that broader engagement with Awabakal community can be established over time.

Commitment to Ongoing Partnership

The project team recognises the importance of continuing engagement with Awabakal community.

Future engagement will focus on:

- Continuing conversations with Traditional Custodians and community

Engagement & Consultation

- Opportunities for Aboriginal employment and procurement
- Potential involvement of Aboriginal artists and creatives
- Further input into design development where appropriate

This approach supports the project to evolve over time, allowing for cultural input to be meaningfully incorporated as engagement continues.

Cultural Protocols & Knowledge Sharing

All engagement has been undertaken with respect for cultural protocols and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).

Any cultural knowledge or content will only be included where appropriate and with permission.

Next Steps in Engagement

As the project progresses, the focus will be on:

- Continuing efforts to engage with Awabakal Traditional Custodians and build relationships over time
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- Maintaining communication with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council and providing updates as the project evolves

- Identifying opportunities for Aboriginal participation, particularly in employment, procurement and potential cultural collaboration
- Refining design in response to future input, ensuring flexibility to incorporate cultural perspectives where appropriate
- Exploring opportunities for involvement of Aboriginal artists and creatives as the project develops
- Supporting a project team approach that remains informed, respectful and responsive to Country

This next phase of engagement will focus on building trust and creating opportunities for input as they arise. The project will continue to remain open and adaptable, allowing it to respond to community and evolve in a way that is respectful of Awabakal Country.



Engagement & Consultation

Cultural Governance

As the project progresses, opportunities will be explored to establish a First Nations Working Group to support ongoing engagement and input into the project.

This group would provide a structured approach to engagement, creating a consistent pathway for input across key stages of design, delivery and future operation. It would support regular touchpoints between the project team and Awabakal community, ensuring that the project remains informed by Country as it evolves.

Purpose

The role of the Working Group would be to:

- Provide ongoing advice and input at key project stages
- Support continued engagement with Awabakal community
- Inform design development, landscape and public domain outcomes where appropriate
- Guide opportunities for cultural inclusion as they arise

The establishment and structure of the Working Group will be guided by community interest and availability, recognising that participation must align with community priorities and capacity.

Participation

Ongoing engagement may involve:

- Awabakal Knowledge Holders and Community Members
- Ngurra Advisory, providing cultural facilitation and governance support
- project partners including architects, landscape architects and consultants where relevant.

Participation will continue to be guided by cultural protocols, respectful engagement and the protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).

Long-Term Relationship

The project presents an opportunity to build relationships over time.

While engagement is still developing and guided by community priorities and capacity, there is a commitment to continue seeking opportunities to connect with Awabakal Traditional Custodians in a respectful way.

Where engagement is welcomed, the project will respond and incorporate input. Where it is not, the project will proceed carefully, ensuring it remains respectful of Awabakal Country.



Design Principles

Architecture & Built Form

Landscape & Open Space



Architecture & Built Form

This section explores how the built form responds to Awabakal Country through its scale, materiality and relationship to the surrounding urban context.

The approach considers how architecture can reflect the character of the site and its connection to water, movement and place, while creating a development that is functional, grounded and enduring.

Response to Country

The architectural approach recognises the site's location on Awabakal Country within the coastal landscape of Newcastle.

While the site sits within a highly urbanised environment, it remains connected to broader systems of Country, particularly water, movement and the underlying landscape that has shaped this part of the city over time.

The built form responds to this context by acknowledging these relationships in a considered and restrained way, allowing the development to sit comfortably within its surroundings while contributing to the evolving character of the area.

Architecture is therefore understood not as a standalone outcome, but as part of a broader system of place that continues to hold meaning.

Design Intent

The design intent is to create a built form that responds to its setting and supports a strong sense of place.

Given the current level of engagement, the architectural response focuses on being grounded and adaptable, avoiding applied cultural elements, while creating a framework that can support the meaningful integration of Aboriginal perspectives as engagement progresses.

The built form seeks to:

- respond to the site's role as a place of movement and transition
- create clear and legible arrival points
- support a strong relationship to the surrounding streets and public domain
- contribute to a cohesive and functional urban environment
- allow for Aboriginal perspectives to be incorporated over time through design refinement and future input



Colours and Materials of Country

The architectural palette is informed by the character of the site and its surrounding context.

Rather than directly referencing cultural elements, materiality focuses on creating depth, texture and variation across the built form. This includes:

- use of layered materials and finishes
- consideration of light and shadow across façades
- subtle variation in tone and texture to create visual interest

This approach supports a built form that feels grounded and responsive without overstatement.

Reading the Site

The architectural response considers how the site sits within Awabakal Country and its broader connections across the landscape.

Located adjacent to the Newcastle Interchange, the site functions as a place of movement, arrival and transition. These patterns of movement are not new. They reflect longer-standing connections across Country, where people, places and pathways have always been linked.

The built form responds by:

- supporting clear movement through and around the site
- creating legible edges and entry points
- reinforcing connections between surrounding streets and precincts

This approach recognises the site as part of a broader network of connections, and positions the development to respond to both its urban context and its place within Awabakal Country.

Light, Sky and Orientation

The design considers how the built form responds to light, sky and environmental conditions, recognising their importance in how Country is experienced and understood.

Across Awabakal Country, changes in light, weather and seasonal patterns influence how place is read over time. While detailed cultural input has not yet been established, these broader relationships provide a basis for a more considered architectural response.

Opportunities include:

- orienting buildings to maximise natural light and ventilation
- designing façades that respond to changing light conditions throughout the day
- creating variation in built form that reflects movement, seasonal change and environmental patterns
- considering how light and shadow shape the experience of spaces across different times of day

These responses support both environmental performance and a stronger connection to natural cycles, while allowing for further cultural input to be incorporated as engagement progresses.



Cultural Expression and Future Opportunities

At this stage, cultural expression within the built form is approached with care.

Given the limited engagement to date, the project avoids embedding specific cultural narratives or references without appropriate input.

Instead, the architecture provides a framework that can support future opportunities, including:

- integration of Aboriginal art or cultural elements where appropriate
- opportunities for interpretation within shared spaces
- potential incorporation of language and naming as engagement develops

All future cultural elements will be guided through ongoing engagement.

Architecture as Part of Place

The built form contributes to how the site is experienced and understood over time.

Through scale, materiality and spatial arrangement, the architecture supports a place that is functional, connected and responsive to its context.

Rather than seeking to define cultural meaning, the approach focuses on creating a strong and adaptable foundation, one that allows the project to evolve as engagement continues and deeper connections to Awabakal Country are established.

Landscape & Open Space

This section explores how landscape and open space respond to Awabakal Country through planting, public spaces and the integration of natural systems.

It considers how landscape design can reflect the character of the site and its connection to water, movement and environment, while supporting ecological function and everyday use within a highly urban setting.

Response to Country

Landscape design acknowledges the site's location on Awabakal Country within the coastal landscape of Newcastle.

While the site is highly urbanised, it remains connected to broader systems of Country, particularly water, low-lying land and movement across the landscape. These underlying conditions continue to influence how the site is experienced.

The landscape approach seeks to strengthen this connection by integrating planting, natural systems and open space that respond to the site's setting.

Rather than separating the built environment from nature, the design supports a relationship between people and place, recognising that Country continues to exist within the city.

Design Intent

The landscape design aims to create open spaces that are functional, comfortable and responsive to their environment.

Given the current level of engagement, we have focused on staying grounded and adaptable, avoiding assumptions about cultural narratives and creating opportunities for future input.

The landscape seeks to:

- respond to water, climate and environmental conditions
- support movement and connection through the site
- create spaces for gathering, rest and everyday use
- contribute to a stronger sense of place

Planting and landscape treatments are informed by local conditions and aim to reflect the broader character of the area, while remaining flexible to incorporate further cultural input over time.

Planting and Ecological Response

Planting strategies focus on supporting ecological functions and reinforcing the site's environmental character.

This includes:

- use of native and climate-appropriate plant species
- planting that supports habitat for birds, insects and pollinators
- layered planting that creates depth and variation
- integration of planting that contributes to shade, cooling and comfort

These approaches support biodiversity and help strengthen the role of landscape within the urban environment.

Seasonal Change and Natural Cycles

Landscape design acknowledges the role of seasonal change and environmental patterns in shaping how places are experienced.

Planting and open space design considerations include:

- variation in colour, texture and growth throughout the year
- how planting responds to local climate conditions
- the changing qualities of light, shade and weather

These elements support a landscape that is dynamic and responsive over time, reinforcing a connection to natural cycles.





Public Spaces and Connection to Place

Open spaces within the development provide opportunities for people to move through, gather and connect with the site.

These spaces support everyday use while strengthening the experience of place within a dense urban environment.

Opportunities include:

- clearly defined pedestrian pathways and connections
- spaces for rest and informal gathering
- integration of planting within shared areas
- creating comfortable and accessible environments

These elements support a public domain that is active, connected and easy to navigate.

Cultural Expression within Landscape

At this stage, cultural expression within the landscape is approached with care.

As engagement continues to develop, the design avoids embedding specific cultural narratives or references without appropriate input.

Instead, the landscape provides a framework that can support future opportunities, including:

- integration of Aboriginal artwork or interpretation
- opportunities for cultural input into planting and design elements
- incorporation of language or naming where appropriate

All future cultural elements will be guided through ongoing engagement.

Landscape as Everyday Experience

Landscape and open space play a key role in how the site is experienced day to day.

Through planting, movement and spatial arrangement, the landscape supports:

- opportunities to pause, gather and move through the site
- interaction with natural elements within an urban setting
- a stronger sense of place

These spaces reinforce that even within a highly developed area, connections to Country can still be felt through the way the environment is designed and experienced.





Opportunities

- Employment
- Skills Development
- Procurement
- Caring for Country
- Community Benefits

Opportunities

Opportunities for Aboriginal Participation and Community Benefits

The 10 Dangar Street, Wickham project presents opportunities to support meaningful social, cultural and economic outcomes for Awabakal community and the broader Aboriginal community.

While this Framework focuses on design and place outcomes, it also recognises that development projects can play an important role in creating pathways for employment, skills development, Aboriginal business participation and ongoing care for Country.

Initial discussions with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council identified employment and procurement as key areas of interest, highlighting the opportunity to engage a skilled Aboriginal workforce and capable Aboriginal businesses throughout the life of the project.

By embedding Aboriginal participation across the project, from construction through to ongoing operation, the development can contribute to economic participation, community benefit and longer-term connection to place.

This section identifies practical opportunities that support Aboriginal participation while contributing to broader community outcomes.



Employment

The project presents opportunities to support Aboriginal employment across both construction and ongoing site operation.

Examples of opportunities include:

- targeted Aboriginal employment opportunities during construction and project delivery
- apprenticeships and traineeships supporting skills development in construction, landscape and related trades
- employment in landscaping, site maintenance and environmental management roles
- partnerships with Aboriginal employment organisations and community-controlled organisations to support culturally appropriate recruitment

These pathways support long-term economic participation while creating opportunities for Aboriginal people to be involved in the delivery and ongoing care of the site.



Pictured: Kyle from Aboriginal-owned Doolan Plumbing receiving the 2023 Indigenous Apprentice of the Year award from the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (PICAC).

Skills Development

The project also presents opportunities to support training and capability development for Aboriginal people.

Examples of opportunities include:

- partnerships with training providers such as TAFE NSW and Aboriginal employment programs to support construction and trade-based training
- work experience and mentoring opportunities linked to project delivery
- opportunities for training in landscape management and environmental practices
- cultural awareness training for project partners and contractors to strengthen understanding of Awabakal Country and respectful ways of working

These initiatives support both economic participation and the development of knowledge and capability across the project.



Procurement



Aboriginal procurement provides a practical pathway for supporting Aboriginal-owned businesses and enterprises throughout the life of the project.

Initial discussions with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council highlighted procurement as a key opportunity, noting the presence of capable Aboriginal businesses that could be engaged across the project.

Examples of opportunities include:

- engagement of Aboriginal businesses across construction, landscaping and project services
- sourcing materials, plants and services from Aboriginal suppliers where possible
- working with organisations such as Supply Nation, the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce and YARPA to identify Aboriginal suppliers
- encouraging contractors and project partners to adopt Aboriginal procurement commitments within subcontracting arrangements
- breaking down larger scopes of work into smaller, more accessible packages to support participation by Aboriginal businesses

Embedding Aboriginal procurement supports local business development and strengthens economic participation within the Awabakal and broader Aboriginal community.

Community Benefits



Beyond the physical development, the project provides opportunities to contribute to the broader community and strengthen awareness of Awabakal Country within the precinct.

While engagement to date has been developing, there is an opportunity for the project to support community benefit over time through continued connection, participation and shared outcomes.

Examples of opportunities include:

- opportunities for Aboriginal artwork and cultural storytelling within the development (subject to appropriate engagement)
- partnerships with Aboriginal organisations supporting education, culture and environmental initiatives
- initiatives that promote greater awareness and respect for Awabakal culture within the community
- opportunities to support local community programs or events where appropriate
- creating spaces within the development that are inclusive, accessible and support everyday use and connection

Over time, and where engagement is welcomed, these opportunities may be further developed in collaboration with Awabakal community to ensure they are meaningful and appropriately informed.

Through these contributions, the development can support a place that is not only functional and well-designed, but also connected to Country, community and long-term social outcomes.

Implementation & Action Plan

To support the delivery of the Country-Centred Design & Cultural Integration Framework, an Action Plan will guide how key principles are carried through design, delivery and ongoing operation of the project.

The Action Plan will establish clear actions, responsibilities and timing, ensuring that the approach outlined in this Framework is translated into practical outcomes across each stage of the project.

Given the current level of engagement, the Action Plan is intended to provide a flexible structure, allowing the project to respond as further input is received and opportunities for engagement develop.

Key areas of implementation may include:

- integration of cultural interpretation, language and storytelling within architecture, landscape and public spaces (where appropriate)
- delivery of ecological and Caring for Country initiatives
- implementation of Aboriginal employment, training and procurement opportunities
- commissioning of Aboriginal artists and opportunities for cultural collaboration

- ongoing engagement with Awabakal Traditional Custodians and community

As the project progresses, opportunities will be explored to establish a First Nations Working Group to support ongoing engagement and input. This would provide a structured pathway for collaboration across key stages of the project, subject to community interest and availability.

The Action Plan will be a living document, evolving alongside the project as new insights are gained, design develops, and engagement continues.

Through this approach, the principles of Connecting with Country can be carried through the lifecycle of the development in a way that is practical, adaptable and respectful of Awabakal Country.



Ongoing Evaluation & Accountability



A structured evaluation and reporting process will be established to monitor the implementation of the Country-Centred Design & Cultural Integration Framework and ensure commitments are carried through the life of the project.

Regular progress updates will allow the project team to review outcomes, identify opportunities for improvement and respond to any input received through ongoing engagement. Where established, a First Nations Working Group may also provide input into this process.

Evaluation may include monitoring progress across key commitments such as:

- Aboriginal procurement and employment participation
- delivery of design responses across architecture, landscape and public domain
- implementation of Caring for Country initiatives and ecological outcomes
- participation in cultural learning and awareness initiatives

Progress reporting at key project milestones will document achievements, lessons learned and opportunities for refinement.

This process supports accountability across the project, while remaining adaptable as engagement with Awabakal community evolves.

Through this approach, the principles of Connecting with Country can continue to be embedded throughout the life of the development, supporting outcomes that are respectful of Awabakal Country and responsive over time.



Note of Acknowledgement

This report has been prepared by Ngurra Advisory, informed by early engagement and insights shared by the Awabakal community.

Ngurra Advisory acknowledges the time and input provided through initial discussions with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Walk on Country undertaken with Awabakal Knowledge Holder Amos Smith of Muurrung Marai.

These early contributions, alongside research and experience, have helped shape the direction of this Framework and support a respectful approach to Awabakal Country.

Ngurra Advisory recognises the importance of ongoing engagement and acknowledges that this Framework represents an early step. The intent is to continue seeking opportunities for input and guidance from Awabakal Traditional Custodians as the project progresses.

Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) Statement

Ngurra Advisory acknowledges the ongoing ownership and custodianship of all cultural knowledge, stories, language, and perspectives shared throughout this process by the Awabakal Knowledge Holders and Community Members.

This information remains the intellectual and cultural property of the Awabakal people and is shared within this document with permission for the purpose of this project only. It must not be reproduced, shared, or used for any other purpose without the express consent of the Awabakal Knowledge Holders and Community Members.



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